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by Mark Kalin FAIA FCSI

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One More BIM Update

More than 60 people attended my session on Integrating BIM and Specifications at Ecobuild in Washington DC. Strong interest! More importantly, Stephen Hagan FAIA and Calvin Kam with GSA presented "Implementing BIM for Planning and Design: The GSA Story." GSA has had tremendous success with their BIM prototype projects, with reports of 'eliminating thousands conflicts in design, 40 percent less waste at the site, months saved in construction time, useful on both new and existing buildings.' My personal opinion is that BIM has already started to sweep the architectural industry and firms will not be able to compete without using it. The possibilities for improved coordination are staggering, but the point is to adopt BIM sensibly without doing the same to your firm (staggering, that is). Firms from 6 people to 600 people have already adopted BIM, for as long as 5 years. ARUP engineers based in London (17 offices worldwide, 8,000 employees) has adopted BIM worldwide in their firm. Email mkalin@kalinassociates.com for the BIM and Spec seminar materials.

SCIP AND BIM

The Board of Directors of SCIP (Specifications Consultants in Independent Practice) has established a BIM Committee, and has already started a dialog with the creators of NBIMS (the National Building Information Model Standard). The primary goal of the committee is to help shape the integration of specifications as we know them today with the BIM models of the present and future. Email Dennis Hall, dhall@hallarch.com if you're interested in participating.

Specifying Submerged Logs

Who knew? Triton Logging harvests underwater standing trees from forests that were submerged decades ago by manmade reservoirs created by hydroelectric dams. They estimate there is more than 100 billion board feet of salvageable underwater timber. Their Sawfish unmanned logging submarine harvests the wood and brings it to barges where it is sent to mills. The lumber is all certified as SmartWood Rediscovered by the Rainforest Alliance. I hope the contractor doesn't chuckle when I specify certified wood from submerged forests. More info at www.tritonlogging.com

MBMA Manual Updated

The Metal Building Manufacturers Association has just issued a new edition of their Metal Building Systems Manual. Updates include revisions to the International Building Code for 2006, and is a great resource if you work with metal buildings. The manual is more than 600 pages long and includes a fully interactive and searchable CD with metal roof details in AutoCAD format. The price is \$249. More info at www.mbma.com

Gypsum Recycling Expanded

Gypsum Recycling International is the first company to have implemented a complete and commercially viable voluntary system for recycling all kinds of gypsum and plasterboard waste. They turn the waste into a gypsum powder which the plasterboard plants can use as raw material to make new plasterboards with. The system with its patented technology is now implemented in 7 countries. In the US, gypsum recycling has started in the Boston area, and the company also is accepting used ceiling panels as part of the USG Ceiling Panel Recycling Program. More info at www.gypsumrecycling.biz

Metal Recycling by Percentage Questioned

The International Council on Mining and Metals (ICMM) has issued a declaration on recycling principles aimed at encouraging product policy-makers, designers and manufacturers to adopt life cycle thinking when developing metals recycling policies. Interestingly, their position is that specifying a minimum or target level of recycled material content in a product ignores the environmental costs and benefits associated with achieving this goal. Indeed attainment of the goal may lead to an increase in economic and environmental costs when metal available for recycling is diverted to the manufacture of a particular product away from one where the recycling loop is more economical or environmentally efficient.

The Declaration is a consequence of metal producing companies extending their interest beyond the plant gate to a consideration of the whole life cycle of their materials. This focus on materials stewardship is in the interests of environmental and economic efficiency, achieving regulatory compliance and enhancing reputation through responsible behavior. Their Declaration and more info at www.icmm.com

Green Buildings and the Bottom Line

Congratulations to Building Design and Construction Magazine for publishing "Green Buildings and the Bottom Line," the fourth in a series of annual reports on the green building movement. At 62 pages long, topics range from environmental causes to financial opportunities, to the new reality of green. Topics are arranged by commercial market, industrial market, and institutional market. If you're still trying to come up to speed on green, this publication is a real jumpstart. More info at www.bdcnetwork.com

USGBC Stronger Than Ever

USGBC reports they now have more than 7,200 member organizations representing millions of employees. Over 92,000 people engaged with USGBC this year in workshops, web sessions, and Greenbuild. More than 33,000 LEED APs have been certified. There are more than 6,000 registered and certified buildings and USGBC has certified buildings in all 50 states and 16 countries around the world. The General Services Administration, the world's largest landlord, along with 10 other federal agencies, endorses LEED as its tool of choice. Quite the hot ticket to green. More info at www.usgbc.org

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