

MINUTIA

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If, as Meis Van der Rohe said, "God is in the details", then can it be said that we, specifications writers, are the "Minutia"? I think so, and with no stigma involved.

Think how often you become involved with one detail (at a time) and how many items within that one drawing, deserve or require your attention. It is rather amazing--try it!

Meis, and others of his era, designed in a manner that left the details exposed; open to view and part of the overall design scheme. In that they had to have not only good to excellent details, functionally, but also visually. That era produced a change in the old design approach but that has moved on to what we now encounter today--more complex concepts, highly innovative massings, unique uses, amazing technologies and forms of materials, materials used in new and different ways that require them to literally be different, etc.

In that movement, specifications also have had to transition, to a large degree. Not only are there more materials and systems, but slight nuances in them create a massive plethora of "opportunities" and alternative uses and detailing. The specs, of course, need to follow suit as they relate to the project work and in support of their related partners, the drawings.

Too often we specification writers are dissed for being anything from just Monday morning cranky to overly meticulous and extraordinarily "picky" in how we do things--and indeed in what we do. Hey, we and our work are truly "crutches"! We support other elements as we provide new, added, and in-depth information, expertise, perspective and insight. If the rubber tip on a crutch is removed/lost or is worn/askew, it can allow the crutch to slip and imperil the user. Are not our products much the same way?

In large measure, too, the internet has created a sort of license for us, in that there is soooo much information out there, that we are hard-pressed, at times, to preen it down to just what we need to use and produce appropriate documents. Often we just "click" a gob of info over into our file and zip it along into the Project Manual. Must be careful there, and stand tall, snap ourselves to attention and move forward with new, starched, disciplined, directed, and high-skilled professionalism.

We can still, for the most part, say it correctly, and "say it once", but may be we need not say so very much. The old Greeks used to say, "Moderation in all things"!

Remember "minutia" is just a sophisticated name for "trivia"!