Landscape Institute
Technical Guidance Note

BIM Implementation Plans

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This guidance note aims to clarify what a BIM Implementation Plan is, why you should write one and things to consider and plan for when considering a move towards a Building Information Modelling (BIM) process.

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1. Introduction

BIM processes, standards and guidance are published by various groups, which you may find useful in developing your understanding of BIM prior to developing your own BIM Implementation Plan. See www.landscapeinstitute.org/bim for further information.

A BIM Implementation Plan is an company's plan for implementing BIM, assessing current systems, setting out the reasons for implementing BIM, and the strategy for achieving this, including timescales and budgets. BIM is a collaborative process which is adapted for individual projects; there is no off the shelf solution, so implementation of this process will require analysis of the type of work you do, who you do it for and who you do it with.

The typical contents of a BIM Implementation Plan might be:

- Assessment of current procedures working practices
- The business case for BIM implementation.
- Changes required to current procedures
- BIM implementation strategy
- Implementation targets
- Implementation programme
- Implementation budget
- Commitment to the strategy at all levels

2. Assessment of current working practices

Before considering implementation of BIM it is useful to set down a baseline of your current working practices to identify whether you are in fact already engaging in a BIM process, perhaps at Level 1, or how close you might be to that level of BIM maturity. You should also consider who your client base is and whether they are likely to require you to engage in a BIM process, and what the nature of your work is: for example garden design might not require engagement with BIM whereas large scale infrastructure work most probably will. Consider what skills are available to you and how easy it will be to make the leap from current working methods to a BIM process. Assess your current IT capability and its capacity to support a BIM process, not only hardware and software but also network infrastructure and data security policies. Finally assess your current Quality Assurance policies and how they might need to adapt to this new process.

3. The business case for BIM implementation

There has been a lot of focus on the government deadline of 2015 as a drive for implementing BIM; however there are many other reasons why you might wish to or be required to do so. One of the key reasons for implementing BIM is to improve efficiency and accuracy in information management. This in turn should lead to a reduction in waste, not only of materials but also time; improvements in design arising from more time spent designing; improvements in the communication of design, both visually and technically; improved coordination between design team members, and ultimately reduced cost. Clients

may already have recognised the benefits of BIM and may require you to engage in that process also. This is not restricted to the public sector: many private sector clients now recognise the long term benefits of collaboration through a BIM process.

4.   Changes required to current procedures

There is a common misconception that implementing BIM simply requires the purchase of some new software. BIM is much deeper than this and may require changes to many aspects of a business; for example, changes to quality control procedures, calculation and invoicing of fees across the work stages, and the standard approach to projects. There may be legal and contractual implications to consider. Appropriate training will certainly need to provided throughout the company and new hardware and software may be needed for interoperability with your clients and co-consultants. Finally BIM protocols will need to be put in place to define how you will manage your data and collaborate with others.

5.   BIM implementation strategy

Depending on how close you currently are to BIM Level 1 or 2 your implementation strategy may be relatively simple or it may prove more complex. Whichever is the case it is important to set out a strategy for moving from your current position to where you want or need to be, while being realistic with regard to the time and budget available to take those steps. Many firms have found it useful to identify "BIM champions", who are passionate about this new way of working and who may already have developed skills and knowledge which will be invaluable as these new processes are implemented.

6.   Implementation targets

It may be helpful to set some targets when implementing BIM; for example you may decide to achieve a particular level of BIM maturity on all projects, or focus on realising cost savings and increased profitability, or reducing the number of construction phase changes.

7.   Implementation programme

Successful implementation of BIM will require a clear programme setting out chronologically the steps required to complete implementation. You may wish to consider a pilot project prior to rolling the new process out across your entire workload. Ensure adequate time is allowed to review and adjust processes after the pilot before rolling the new system out.

8.   Implementation budget

As with any business activity it is essential to have a realistic budget for implementation of BIM. Much of the cost associated with implementing BIM will already be identified within the normal business activity of a practice, for example staff training, and hardware and software renewal and upgrade. You should also budget for research and development, and for extra time for the pilot project as new processes are tested and refined.

9.   Commitment to the strategy at all levels

The most important aspect of BIM implementation is to have "buy in" at all levels of the company, from the board to the teams modelling the information. Everyone must fully understand and engage with the process for it to be successful in delivering a more efficient working process.

10.   Further information

For further information and links to relevant resources visit www.landscapeinstitute.org/bim

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