



## FIEC warns of BIM challenges

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Written by Sandy Guthrie - 19 May 2017

Kjetil Tønning

BIM (building information modelling) is improving productivity and competitiveness, but there are still challenges, according to a manifesto from FIEC (the European Construction Industry Federation).

Kjetil Tønning, vice president of FIEC and president of its Technical Commission, said, “BIM is transforming construction, and the industry needs to lead the effort to encourage widespread uptake across the entire value chain.

“With this background, FIEC has launched its manifesto, to highlight the potential of BIM in terms of facilitating the implementation of EU policy.”

He said the document, Making BIM a Global Success, also summarised the challenges that could delay full adoption by all companies in all sectors.

Tønning has led a working group made up of representatives of FIEC’s member federations, as well as contractors, industry and academic experts, and a former government minister.

FIEC said its manifesto was just one activity among several being undertaken to support contractors with the transformation of the industry as a result of what is being known as Industry 4.0. It said that the BIM actions would be followed by others on digitalisation and industrial production.

As well as retaining control of data platforms and, in particular, access to essential data, FIEC stressed the need for interoperability of systems and unlimited access to essential information.

Tønning said, “One of the key impacts of BIM is that it both facilitates and relies on closer collaboration across the entire value chain, on a scale not seen in the industry until now.

“Such collaboration between the various sectors and people involved in a construction project will be impossible without open and free access to all the essential data stored in a Building Information Model.”



He said that any control exerted by a non-construction company, “interested only in profits and not in the quality of construction” would jeopardise the successful implementation of BIM and the future competitiveness of contractors.

FIEC is emphasising the need to find solutions for SMEs (small and medium-sized enterprises) so that they are not left behind as a result of a lack of appropriate hardware or software, relevant knowledge and/or finance.

It said policy makers and public sector clients had a role to play, to ensure that SMEs received adequate support.

Also, although FIEC said it believed that standardisation was important, it felt that any other regulation should be limited only to what was absolutely essential to facilitate the digitalisation of construction.

FIEC is recommending a balance between top-down and bottom-up action, it said, with the latter as the preferred approach whenever possible.

On the other hand, it said, EU policy makers were set to benefit from the digitalisation of construction.

Tonning said, “BIM, in particular, is changing the way we build, with benefits for the circular economy, energy efficiency, smart cities, climate goals and new jobs for young people that have previously been deterred from working in construction.

“We are looking forward to strong partnership with the EU institutions, which will deliver win-win results for EU society and our economy.”

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