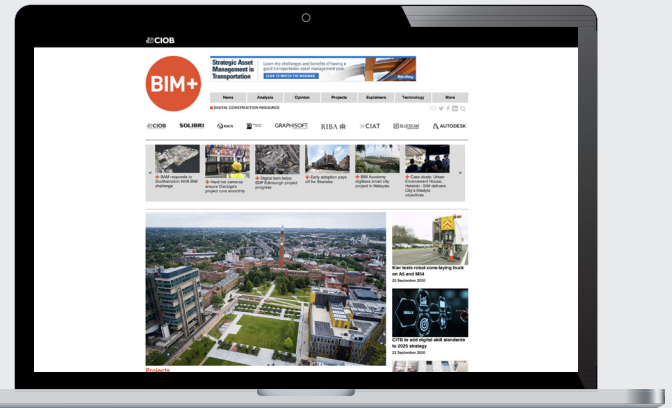


KEY OBJECTIVES

To deliver a highly targeted campaign to influence and engage with the education estates sector to secure customers for its CDE (Common Data Environment) product.



Education direct mail – “From desk clutter to digital order: how to build trust in your project and asset information”



Digital estate solutions

The journey to digitising university estates by Richard Draper Bim & Digital Assets Manager, University Of Birmingham

The advent of technology is well and truly upon us. Organisations from all four corners of the globe are utilising digital solutions to better manage their business and daily operations. For the higher education sector in particular, these technologies are having multiple benefits in terms of how universities oversee their current and future built assets.

The University of Birmingham has embarked on such a process, implementing its One Estate Initiative to provide one true version of all asset data. With other institutions planning to follow suit, the University

of Birmingham explains why it is digitising its estate, giving insight into how the transition will help streamline capital project delivery and control vast amounts of asset information spanning the university's estate.

Established in 1900, the University of Birmingham is one of the UK's foremost research-led institutions. Continually delivering high-quality university experiences for staff and students alike, the university is currently in the middle of a £1 billion development programme designed to create outstanding new facilities across the Birmingham campus – set in the

leafy Edgbaston – and the new global base in Dubai.

To guarantee these facilities perform to their best, the university is digitising its assets, to improve decision-making and ensure its assets are fully reflective of the university's world-class status.

What is a CDE?

The University of Birmingham desired a solution which would both digitise the estate and underpin its capital investment programme over the next five to 10 years. To form the foundation for this One Estate Initiative, a common data environment (CDE) was selected to

ensure single, secure access to all documents, drawings, 3D Models and data regarding the university's circa 250 buildings.

Becoming all the more commonplace in day-to-day business operations, an asset information management housed CDE is transforming the delivery, function and maintenance of built assets and entire estates, mitigating risks, improving the availability of secure data and ensuring projects can be completed on-time, to budget.

In essence, a CDE securely connects and maintains both project and asset data, which gives supply chains access to an asset's entire information from one accessible resource. With collaboration at the core, CDEs are going some way to resolving the notorious fragmentation which plagues construction-related projects, ensuring everyone is on the same page and can access shared information appropriately.

What was the process?

To identify a CDE which worked for the university, we, the University of Birmingham, collaborated with asset information management provider

GroupBC. As a starting point, we took into account our unique processes to see how the software could complement our way of working. It was better for us to tailor a model that we knew could be customised to our processes, as opposed to selecting a generic solution which may not give us the adaptability we needed.

It was really crucial for us to identify what we wanted the CDE to do, as these demands would then feed into how the CDE would hold the university's data. From there, we were able to create a system which we had complete confidence in.

Prior to the implementation of a CDE, project and asset information resided in multiple disparate legacy systems and was held by the university's various supply chain, which was somewhat unreliable to say the least. A CDE however, will enable the university to streamline project governance, portfolio and information management, and ensure we own the data.

Hosted by GroupBC, the CDE can be utilised by the university, our design teams and contractors to track and report upon milestones,

changes and key decisions for project governance purposes. In effect, this will drive efficiency within the existing estate and the delivery of capital projects, and will also improve the visibility and control of important information and data across our Estates department. The university has over hundreds of thousands of files and this new CDE will ensure the safe storage and access of this data, all the while being fully compliant with the university's security requirements including ISO 27001 – a specification for an information security management system. The CDE also supports ISO 19650, ensuring compliance to BIM standards and futureproofing the system to ensure data is accessible and maintainable for years to come.

Furthermore, rather than wasting time identifying the right information to inform decision-making, the CDE will have a solution which gives us the flexibility to deploy our own processes, we will also have a system with the right gateway approval processes to keep things secure – something which is of



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high value to higher education organisations.

Keeping cyber criminals at bay. As well as allowing staff and the supply chain to find information easily, the CDE will ensure the information is protected.

In February 2020, the University of Saskatchewan, Canada narrowly missed a targeted cyber-attack, which could have severely impacted its staff, students and its operations. Last or compromised data can cause significant disruption to an entire university, not to mention the supply chain which might require asset information at any point in time.

Where cyber security is critical, a CDE will prevent any problems and allow universities to mitigate the risk of information loss in the event of an attack and a supplier dispute or insolvency during the design or construction phases.

Such data reliability and accessibility become all the more essential when bearing in mind

the catastrophe that is Grenfell. As well as bringing into debate quality control, it also brought Dame Judith Hooper's Golden Thread into the limelight. The Golden Thread is now being championed across the industry and its adoption will mitigate risks, improve handover quality and ensure information can be identified.

In 2018, 2019 and 2020, the University of Birmingham's Tower Inquiry, the implementation of a CDE, owned by the asset owner, will complement the Golden Thread of information, creating an unbreakable chain where every piece of data regarding a built asset can be acquired at any time. With a clear audit trail of all asset data and changes made, the asset owner can question and query a trusted data store to answer everyday enquiries about assets in the estate at any stage, even if a project is momentarily suspended or if a business involved in the

delivery collapses. Surely this is a key solution to one of the industry's biggest problems?

Impressively, GroupBC's CDE is already enabling better planning, enhanced communication, real-time information sharing, easier document management, smoother handover and maintenance of assets once the buildings are operational. It is providing the university with the foundation to open up their documentation and data, making it easier to link, interpret, find and manage information.

It is quite evident that this type of technology is strengthening the University of Birmingham's position as a world-leading institution, and to success will, hopefully encourage fellow universities to consider adopting a CDE for more efficient asset information management.

For more information please visit www.groupbc.com

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