

Drees & Sommer drives BIM Digital Planning Method forward in Germany

On September 12, 2017 Drees & Sommer updated the Building Information Modeling (BIM) Practice Guide on its website www.bim-blog.de. The BIM blog now contains detailed BIM service descriptions for BIM managers, overall coordinators, coordinators and information managers, and includes the BIM performance targets that they are contractually obligated to achieve, analogous to the performance phases of the German schedule of services and fees for architects and engineers (HOAI).

BIM is a digital planning method the benefits of which are becoming more and more sought after by building developers in Germany. Put simply, BIM follows the motto: *plan first, build later*. The idea is that principals (builders) should first map out all of the processes as simulations in the form of a building data model before beginning any actual construction work. Ideally, BIM should include everything to do with a building's entire life cycle – from planning through to construction, building management, waste disposal and on to reutilization. If the method is applied correctly, the deadline, cost and quality risks of the construction project are reduced.

BIM and HOAI – can be linked together

The BIM blog and its practice guide provide interested principals and planners with some valuable orientation. The platform gives them a content manual for their BIM projects, including functional performance specifications. The responsibilities, role assignments and task assignments published on the platform enable BIM construction projects to be embarked upon in a structured manner. 'It is also possible to use the BIM planning method to work along the lines of the more traditional HOAI service phases. The new service descriptions that we have provided make this clear. These set out in some detail the roles and responsibilities of the main participants in the BIM project and the performance and services they are tasked with providing', said Peter Liebsch, Head of Digital Processes and Design Technology at Drees & Sommer.

He went on to explain why Drees & Sommer's Practice Guide sought to apply uniformly defined roles and the main principles of the method: 'In contrast to the situation in the United Kingdom, Germany does not yet have national BIM standards. This makes it difficult to have clearly defined, uniform procedures whenever BIM is applied. However, for the digital method to function properly, BIM responsibilities have to be uniform and unambiguous during both the planning process and the construction process.'

BIM becoming increasingly important for public sector principals

Public sector projects in particular will have to come to terms with the digital planning method to a much greater extent in future, as it will become mandatory from 2020 onwards to employ BIM on public infrastructure projects in Germany. In the case of federal building construction projects costing EUR 5 million or more, those in charge of construction already have to check whether BIM can be utilized in the case of each individual project. The German Federal Ministry of Construction issued a decree to this effect at the start of the year. Mirco Beutelspacher, Partner at Drees & Sommer SE, explains: 'It is in complex projects in particular that BIM reveals its full potential. Because, even at the planning stage, the method allows the requirements of numerous different participants to be better coordinated and combined. Principals who utilize or arrange for others to use BIM properly can reduce their deadline, cost and quality risks. However, principals can only achieve this and other benefits if BIM is set up correctly and utilized in a professional manner on their construction projects. This can only succeed with the relevant BIM experts working on the side of the principal on project management and in collaboration with planners.'

Drees & Sommer: Your innovative partner for Consulting, Planning, Construction and Operation

For over 45 years, Drees & Sommer has been supporting private and public sector principals and investors in all aspects of property and infrastructure. The Group is managed by its partners and has a workforce of around 2,400 employees at 41 offices worldwide. Its headquarters are in Stuttgart, Germany.

Economy, quality and ecology are the basic values of Dress & Sommer's services. The Group calls this holistic and sustainable approach 'the blue way'.

Drees & Sommer and EPEA Internationale Umweltforschung (Environmental Research) in Hamburg, Germany, are jointly committed to the Cradle to Cradle® principle in the building industry, bringing principals, investors, architects and manufacturers together to promote the approach.