



For immediate release
November 13, 2007

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BIM Adoption Accelerating, CMAA/FMI Owners Survey Finds

More than a third of the construction project and program owners responding to the Eighth Annual CMAA/FMI Survey of Owners say they have used Building Information Modeling (BIM) on one or more projects. The rate at which BIM is being adopted in the industry is also accelerating, the survey reports.

The study was conducted by FMI with the support of the Construction Management Association of America, and focused on perceptions and implementation of BIM among construction owners, including public- and private-sector owners who are members of CMAA.

FMI notes that the roughly 200 survey respondents collectively represent approximately \$115 billion in annual construction spending.

About 35 percent of the respondents said they have used BIM on one or more projects.

The rate at which newcomers join the ranks of BIM users has been increasing, FMI reported. BIM usage grew by three percent in 2003, six percent in 2005 and 11 percent in 2006, the study found.

The basis for the survey was this definition of BIM:

***Building Information Modeling (BIM)** refers to the creation and coordinated use of a collection of digital information about a building project. The information can include cost, schedule, fabrication, maintenance, energy, and 3-D models. The information is used for design decision-making, production of high-quality construction documents, predicting performance, cost estimating, and construction planning, and, eventually, for managing and operating the facility.*

CMAA has held a number of full-day workshops around the country during 2007 to update members on BIM, and the association's Emerging Technologies Committee has recently posted a BIM White Paper at www.cmaanet.org.

The Owners Survey found that users of BIM:

- Are much more likely to have a construction program with greater than 50 projects.
- Have capital construction programs nearly one-third larger than non-users.

- Are much more likely to hire a firm/person to act as construction manager or program manager.

In the Owners Survey, both BIM users and non-users were asked to identify the greatest benefits derived from the new technology, and FMI derives an interesting conclusion from the fact that the rankings among the two groups were not very different. This congruence of perceptions, FMI says, means “these organizations are reading the same material and buy into the logical concepts laid out of how BIM use can drive performance improvement in the face of a disruptive and changing industry.”

Detailing the benefits realized by BIM users, FMI also reported: “Highest ranked by both non-BIM and BIM users is improved communication followed by higher quality project execution and decision making.”

About 74 percent of BIM users said they would recommend BIM to others.

However, significant impediments still remain in the path of broader implementation. “Lack of expertise and industry standards are two of the greatest hurdles to collaborative construction processes and BIM adoption,” the survey report concluded.

The preliminary findings of the Eighth Annual Owners Survey were presented at the CMAA National Conference in Chicago in early October. The final report is expected to be published around October 31. Additional information can be obtained from FMI at www.fminet.com.

CMAA is North America's only organization dedicated exclusively to the interests of the professional construction and program management industry. On behalf of its twenty-five regional chapters and more than 4,500 public and private firms and individuals throughout the nation, CMAA promotes the construction management industry and provides professional resources, advocacy, professional development, certification, and business opportunities to its members. CMAA's national headquarters is located in McLean, Virginia and the Association's website is www.cmaanet.org.

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