

Collaborative BIM Tools for Crossrail

Bentley Systems, USA, has announced two initiatives to support the construction phase of Crossrail through London - Europe's largest construction project. The initiatives are aimed at integrating the whole Crossrail supply chain to create best practices in information modelling for construction. They are in keeping with the UK's Government Construction Strategy, which calls for replacing adversarial cultures in projects with collaborative ones.

To get to this stage, Crossrail's Enterprise License Subscription (ELS) for Bentley's application software portfolio will be broadened to serve the extended "Crossrail enterprise", now encompassing its Tier 1 contractors. Crossrail's ELS connects project participants through the ProjectWise system of collaboration servers and services and eB software for controlling project information.

A newly chartered Crossrail/Bentley Construction/BIM Academy will support the Crossrail 'extended' enterprise with innovative applications of Building Information Modelling (BIM) for the Crossrail construction phase. The new academy will help Crossrail project participants discover and assess, in a collegial environment, the benefits of advanced technology. It also will offer advice on accomplishing technology deployments in a coordinated manner, and is designed to support Crossrail's goals of efficiency, cost savings, and increased safety.

These two initiatives are the first components of an agreement between Crossrail and Bentley to augment the intent of BS1192: the British standard for collaborative production of information, by introducing a project role for a strategic technology partner. Crossrail has asked Bentley to serve as this partner for its 'construction enterprise' to enable the Crossrail contractors to collaboratively contribute to information modelling and business processes.

Crossrail Chief Executive Andrew Wolstenholme said that infrastructure projects of the scale and complexity of Crossrail do not come around very frequently. He aims to use the Crossrail opportunity to move the whole industry forward in a number of areas which includes the use of Building Information Modelling (BIM) through the delivery and lifecycle phases of major projects. Many of the project contractors involved are already developing their own capabilities in this important area. BIM is about a different way of working.

Bentley Systems CEO Greg Bentley said to be delighted to have the opportunity to continue the strategic technology partnership with Crossrail by helping to introduce innovation in information modelling.

The Crossrail route will pass through 37 stations and run 118km (73 miles) from Maidenhead and Heathrow in the west, through new twin-bore 21 km (13 miles) tunnels to Shenfield and Abbey Wood in the east.

When Crossrail opens it will increase London's rail-based transport network capacity by 10%, supporting regeneration across the capital, helping to secure London's position as a world leading financial centre, and cutting journey times across the city. Crossrail services are due to commence through central London in 2018.