

The new BIM Bom(b)

Jan Phelps, Principal and IWMS Advocate for Terminal Velocity FM hails the popularity and benefits of BIM for the FM community and asks whether it should be called BOM (Building Operations Modeling)...

As a seasoned FMer, I recall the first space use standards such as COBie, and noticed how similar they were to the typical input data sheets for CAFM, and IWMS Systems. Throughout the years I had watched with interest as GIS entered the marketplace, specifically ESRI. The great reception of BIM presented by industry grew up quickly to present quantifiable geographical information to large audiences on the web and in the office, with mobile applications soon to follow. This trend made a lot of sense, and created a much more effective working environment for civil engineers, structural engineers, architects, and the building trades. I say this, because all of the collision detection systems used in BIM software systems have proven themselves over time to be very cost effective. I for one, being a student of management, watch for quantification of the return on investment realized by the single source of information shared among the trades who build buildings themselves. When you add to this, the apparent return on investment which is not necessarily cataloged as of today, of the fatigue factor which is lessened greatly for those whose job it is to track down inconsistent data in the field, again BIM shows promise with each passing project completion.

The last frontier you might say, in BIM, to me is in operations and within buildings. All the while the GIS revolution was taking place outside the buildings, as an FMer it was fun to watch. It was fun to see technology making work easier, more accurate, and more cost-effective. I recall thinking to myself, "We CAFM creators and implementers have been doing BIM for years, however our BIM might best be called BOM, which I will coin the phrase as Building Operations Modeling". I didn't go into research as to the many other meanings of the acronym BOM, nor did I research if there is such a thing as Building Operations

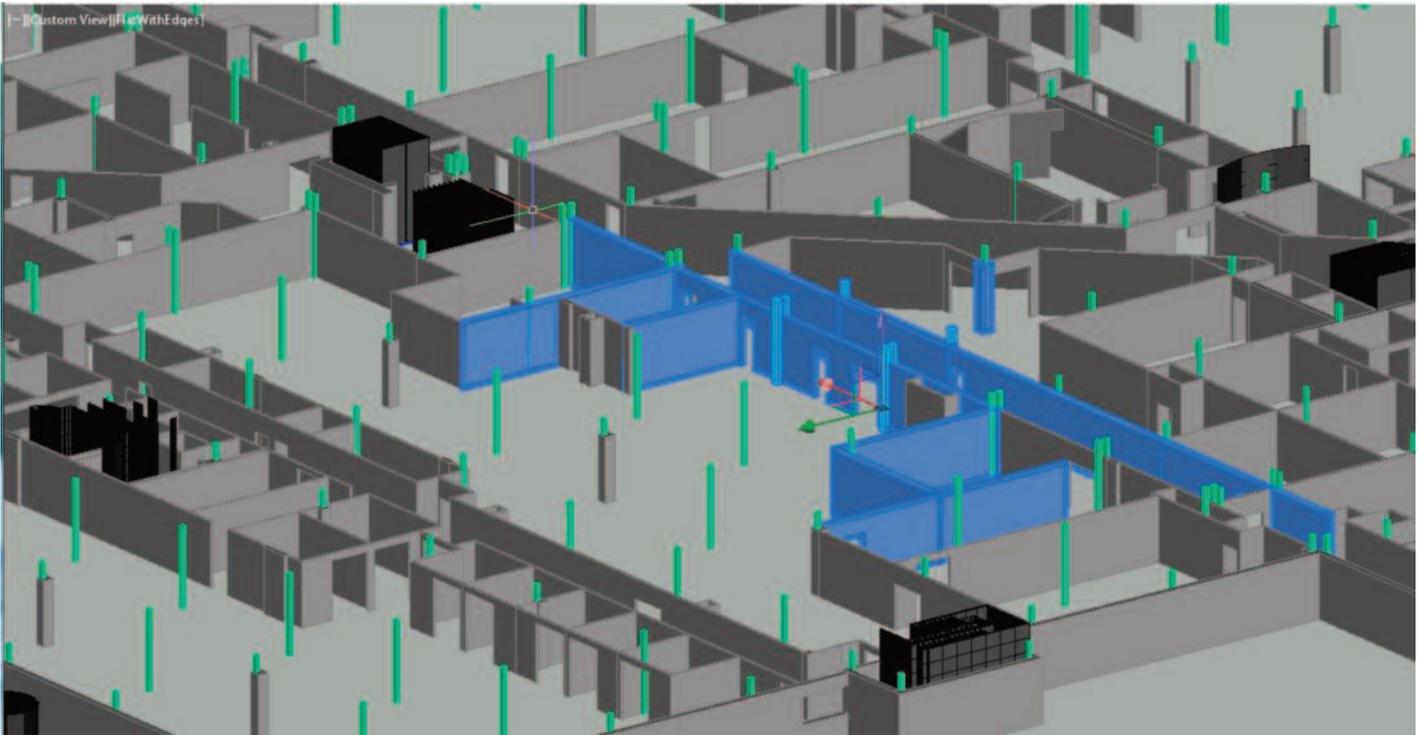


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Modeling. That being said, I believe there is very good reason to speak on the subject as being a new subject. Very recently, Kimon Onuma, President and Founder of Onuma Inc, along with a group from SketchUp and other vendors, participated in a webinar showing how the VA (U.S Department of Veterans Affairs) could use BIM, and with it create standard layouts for medical and dental centers including complete libraries of internal equipment and assets in near real time. As I watched this webinar I was so pleased to see some of the less expensive graphical software such as SketchUp being used for the greater good.

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There is a great opportunity before us in FM to remove the extra time for generic building data input.



I for one look forward to more and more standard office, exam room, janitor closet, reception area, and all the non-uniquely designed spaces being:

1. Made simpler; and
2. Being available in dimensionally accurate models for those who are not astute plan readers in two dimensions.

Throughout my career in FM I have consistently witnessed that the experts involved in what goes into the built environment i.e. the users of space, have been largely underrepresented in the actual design process. How many times have buildings been designed and built, and then occupied only to immediately begin to see many move, add, and change projects by the operations staff in order to accommodate the processes which are necessary in the actual operation of the building for its intended use? A design process in the past which included the end-users in decision-making roles would have been so time-consuming and costly that it would not have presented effective results. As the movement of BIM into the occupancy and operational space continues, I believe we will soon be appreciating greater productivity, happier end-users, and ongoing



lower operational costs. The management guru within me will be offering more insights on space planning and management as we watch the growth within FM of the new BOM. ■

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