

In This Issue

- MDC[®] Drone Services
- Convergence of Design & Construction : Like Old Wine in New Bottles
- ABA Construction Forum, Nashville, TN, April 2016
- Industry Events

Current Events

MDC[®] INDUSTRY EVENTS

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THIS WEEK AT



**ABA-Forum on Construction,
2016 Annual Meeting**
Nashville, TN

MDC[®] Offers Engineering Inspection Services Using Drones

MDCSystems[®] is currently offering Facility, Façade and Area Inspection and evaluation services in conjunction with Flexright Solutions using industrial drones and will soon add a DJI Phantom 3 Advanced drone model and imaging package to the service.



MDC[®] expects to have its own personnel FAA approved for drone operations by the Summer of 2016. Engineering evaluations using these drones offer real-time observations and the added benefit of a video record of the observed conditions for maintenance planning, work progress evaluations and scheduling. To explore these new capabilities call for additional information.

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Convergence of Design & Construction: Old Wine in New Bottles

By E. Mitchell Swann, PE, MDCSystems[®]

There are (at least) two patterns or trends rippling through the design and construction industry and they will leave indelible footprints or a busy superhighway to the place that projects will want to be. One of these trends involves the 'product' – the 'what' that we build. The other involves the 'process' – the 'how' that we build. Neither is truly

April 28-30, 2016

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Mitch Swann, PE
ASHRAE DL,
Design Build for Green Buildings
– *Integrated Delivery of an*
Integrated Idea
Cleveland, OH
March 21, 11:30-1:30 pm
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ABA-Forum on Construction,
2016 Winter Meeting
Cutting Edge Solutions for Seismic
Events
San Francisco, CA
January 21-22, 2016
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'new' but then, we've seen skinny ties and lapels and short hair before too. They are like old wine in new bottles sparkling the taste buds because the menu has changed.

Each is self-sufficient and can stand on their own merit, but there seems to be a convergence happening that is pulling (driving?) the two together and newly illuminating each driven by a confluence of events.

First, let's talk the "what."

That 'what' is the answer to what shall we build? We shall build 'green'. Green has become an organizing force around which almost all vertical construction projects in the developed, developing or emerging world are focused. And some horizontal projects too! You would be hard pressed to find any significant project being done today that does not tout some aspect of its sustainability or 'green-ness'. Some see this as a bad thing, a fad, hype. I disagree. Irrespective of your opinions about the quantitative rigor or analytical accuracy of the numerous and varied 'green building' rating, measuring or verifying tools or systems, "green" has returned a consideration and discussion about performance and quality to projects in the built environment. Project teams have now regularly included discussions about energy and water resource efficiency; Indoor Air Quality; local sourcing and construction waste management and recycling. Green buildings aim to be better buildings. These are good things. The objective of having better building requires that participants to the process – the designer, the contractor and the owner - work together so that everyone understands what better means and how it will be obtained, maintained and measured. There has to be agreement on the nuances of the objective so everyone will know what they need to do to get there and what it looks like when they arrive.

Now let's talk about the "how."

The how is focused on the way in which we actually do projects. A rapidly expanding delivery methodology is that of design-build. Design-build has been around a long, long time but in recent years, it has come to be more popular on smaller, commercial projects, complex facility projects and even public sector projects. Part of the driver is the expectation of faster project delivery; part is the expectation of improved coordination and cooperation between design and construction; and part – but little discussed – of the driver is that the anticipated coordination advantages of design-build lessen the pressures on an owner's often thinner internal team to manage as many outside entities. That is a key element. Design-build, with its single point of responsibility construct, moves much of the coordination effort between design and construction out of the owner's hands and into the Design-Build team's. This externalized coordination also reduces the owner's need to have prepared as detailed a set of "instruments of service" (drawings and specifications) which must be "suitable for the intended purpose" (building a building). This moves liability for the 'design' outside of the owner's tent. That is a risk transfer with seemingly little "premium" in its cost.

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[Mitch Swann](#) recently presented to the ASHRAE Chapter in Cleveland, OH as a part of ASHRAE's "Distinguished Lecturer" series. He has been an ASHRAE Distinguished Lecturer since 2007. The Chapter requested that the program look at some major trends affecting the industry.



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