

DIGITAL ARCHITECTURE AT A CROSSROADS – TRANSITION FROM SIMULATION AND VISUALISATION TO INFORMATION MODELLING

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Abstract. Digital architecture is at an exciting but challenging stage of its development. Past decades have witnessed important developments in computer-generated architectural representations. These tools have complemented and, in some cases, superseded the traditional forms of design and communication. In parallel with progress in computer graphics, advances in computer generated architectural representations have evolved to deliver photorealistic computer generated imagery. However, there is evidence to suggest that these advances have not significantly enhanced collaborative practices. It was acknowledged that to address the fragmentation of the industry, a fundamental change to deliver digital architecture was needed. Dealing with the requirements for an improved co-ordination and co-operation between designers and other stakeholders to encourage more integration has therefore become a central issue in the last decade. It was also recognised that significantly more intelligence needs to be brought to bear on the decision-making process if the targets set by the sustainability agenda are to be met. The quest for an improved quality of information and decision making has shifted the emphasis from computer-generated imagery to integrated building information. The recent emergence of building information modelling (BIM) constitutes one of the most exciting developments in the field. It was suggested that BIM will deliver considerable sophistication and judgment in decision-making. This keynote speech seeks to examine the implications of the transition of digital architecture from simulation and visualisation to information modelling. It aims to shed light on the methodological and technological challenges facing practitioners, researchers, and software developers, as a result of the early adoption of BIM.