



## Steps to BIM – some essential tips

With the Government's January 2016 Building Information Modelling (BIM) deadline fast approaching, Keysoft Solutions has consulted with key industry stakeholders in the public and private sectors to identify some essential tips to help organisations to achieve Level two compliance.

The Government has mandated that BIM Level two must be used on all centrally-funded building projects by 2016. This means that local authorities and private businesses working in the highways, construction and landscape sectors need to be able to collaborate with central government departments by ensuring their technology and processes are BIM compliant.

1. **Start at the end.** Work out why as a business you need to do BIM and what you want to achieve. Start by talking to clients and finding out what projects BIM will be required on, to what level and in what format information will be shared. Like any other business decision, we recommend you develop your own BIM implementation plan. This is your company's blueprint for introducing BIM over a period of time. It should align to your three to five year business plan. With each project, try to look for new BIM wins, i.e. a new process, system, procedure, software purchase, training, etc. that can be introduced to move you along your BIM timeline.
2. **Ask more questions.** When you are involved with a BIM project begin by asking what they mean by BIM and find out as much information as you can so you are fully aware of the project requirements and your responsibilities. This is no different any other project.
3. **Remember BIM is a process, not a software solution.** Although BIM requires a minimum of 2D CAD, with, where appropriate, managed 3D data that can be held in separate BIM

applications with the data attached, people often think that this means that the solution to achieving BIM lies in buying new, expensive software and hardware. Many planners and engineers are already working at BIM Level 1 so only need to make a few changes in working practices to achieve Level 2 compliance without significant expenditure.

4. **Planning is key.** You need to identify project leads, teams and stakeholders at the outset. Working to a defined brief, the BIM Execution Plan (BEP) will be the central tool for integrating the project partners, objects, data exchange and plans. It fundamentally defines what BIM means on the current project and, just like no project is identical, the BEP will be different for each project. There are number of free resources available to help you understand what is required. The NBS BIM Toolkit (Digital Plan of Works) <http://www.thenbs.com/bimtoolkit/> provides step-by-step help to define, manage and validate responsibility for information development and delivery at each stage of an asset's lifecycle. In addition, there are BEP templates online that can guide you through the process and identify all of the areas that need to be covered (e.g. <https://aecuk.files.wordpress.com/2012/09/aecukbimprotocol-bimexecutionplan-v2-0.pdf>). Once you have a project BIM execution plan in place, work back and see if you can deliver the requirements through your existing software and processes or whether change or investment is required.
5. **Take a long-term view.** BIM Level 2 is about sharing information at project modelling stage and ironing out the glitches in the virtual world before you build it in the real world where mistakes can be costly. Ultimately, its aim is to deliver efficiencies and therefore scrutiny of processes and upskilling staff. Sharing information in a timely manner can support cost savings in both the public and private sectors through better decision making, as well as driving up competitiveness and business growth in the private sector.
6. **Embrace change.** Building a case for BIM is getting easier as more and more organisations assess the impact that BIM has had. Testimonials from organisations that have embraced BIM reflect the positive long-term benefits and lessons learned. Use these to support the case for BIM to be taken seriously within your organisation, participate in networking and events to learn from others and don't be afraid to ask questions and seek out those who are practiced in BIM.

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