

# The Southern Fried Architect

(A clear, complete, concise, and mostly correct, view of stuff happening in the design/construction industry)

August 2006

**Dennis J. Hall, FAIA, FCSI, SCIP:** Guy who writes this stuff

**Nina M. Giglio, CSI, CCS, Assoc. AIA, SCIP:** Editor, Spec Winch, and she who fixes this stuff

---

## **AIA to Revamp Architectural Graphic Standards**

The 11<sup>th</sup> edition of *Architectural Graphics Standards* is in production and you can some expect major changes. These changes will include a new organizational structure for the book by building elements, new improved text, cross references between chapters, new page design, and coordination of terminology with other industry standards and publications. We anticipate that the CD ROM will be searchable by OmniClass titles and numbers for about five to six of the tables. The publication date is not scheduled until next March 2007, but this will not be your father's AGS. Stay tuned for further updates.

## **2007 Architect's Handbook of Professional Practice**

Speaking of the AIA, Joe Demkin, AIA is the AIA's point man on the new 14<sup>th</sup> edition of the Architect's Handbook of Professional Practice currently in production. Expect the brand new edition out sometime in early 2008. The AIA did not want to come out with two new \$200+ books in the same year, as both are considered "must have" books for the architectural community. Of course, we will keep you posted on the changes, as publication time gets closer.

## **McGraw-Hill Introduces New Network for Products**

In March, McGraw-Hill Construction introduced its new construction product search tool at <http://www.mcgrawhillconstruction.com>. The site allows searches by products name, manufacturer, and MasterFormat number. MasterFormat 2004 numbers provide greater search ability. I think these guys have the right idea, but the data needs work. The 3-Part specs many times need professional help and the CAD details are not what an architect needs to incorporate into a set of construction drawings.

## **CSI Signs Alliance Agreements with ARCOM and BSD**

Speaking of CSI, in June the CSI Board approved new alliance agreements with ARCOM, producers of MASTERSPEC and Building Systems Design (BSD), producers of SpecLink and PerSpective. These alliances will provide a closer link between CSI and the two major producers of commercially available guide specifications in the US. Who knows, maybe they will even patch up relations with the Construction Science Research Foundation producers of SpecText next.

## **SCIP Board Recommends Changes**

The new Board of Directors for the Specifications Consultants in Independent Practice (SCIP) have taken office and are recommending changes to make the organization more responsive to its members. Among the changes include articles of incorporation, updated bylaws with an expanded Board, new committee structure, and much more. Having signed alliances with the Construction Specifications Institute and Construction Specifications Canada this spring, the presidents of all three organizations met in Washington, DC in June to discuss cooperative initiatives. The new SCIP Board is meeting monthly via teleconferences to make the organization more responsive to the needs of independent specifiers and their membership.

## SFA - Section B

---

Welcome to another issue of *Sticks + Stones*, where we provide marginally professional advice to our readers based on our many years of creating and observing problems in the construction industry. This month we will continue to limit our discussion to one subject and try to cover it in some depth rather than our traditional practice of commenting on a variety of issues. The SpecWinch had to work on paying work this month, so you get to blame me this month's product review.

### It's a Wiz ! (10 14 64 – Electronic Messaging Devices)



There are just some ideas that are so ingenious that you say to yourself, “why didn’t I think of that?” Well, this may not be one of those ideas, but the great minds at Healthquest Technologies have done it again, this time creating Wizmark, the first interactive urinal communicator. Yes, you read that correctly, that is how they market this device. The gadget is positioned within the urinal, directly above the drain. It automatically recognizes the presence of a “visitor” and after a brief delay allowing the viewer to get properly positioned, proceeds to emit a very audible 10 to 15-second prerecorded promotional message and displays informational graphics on the 3.5-inch waterproof display screen. The possibilities are endless! Optional flashing display lights can also be incorporated with the audible enunciator to ensure that you grab the attention of the patron.

Just in case you were wondering, and we know you were, the Wizmark uses lenticular images that are digital files that have been printed on the back of a thin transparent lens material. The images when viewed through lenticules or cylindrical lenses appear to move or to change to another images as it's being viewed from different angles.

Primarily intended for advertising and public service messages in restaurants and bars, the Wizmark is the latest invention from this contract consumer product design and development company. Dr. Richard Deutsch, a bio-engineer and inventor of the patented, plastic wonder says “there is no more of a captive audience than a man at the urinal. Now when nature calls, there is something educational to look at and listen to and the public can greatly benefit”. My question is “just which institution of higher learning gave this guy a PhD and in what?”

I acknowledge being a gadget freak, but I am just not too sure about a urinal that is trying to sell me something or give me advice. Hey, this might be a good way to advertise the *SFA*. We have certainly been told plenty of times that we had our head in the toilet. Maybe we should change our slogan to “your business is our business.”

We want to acknowledge product guru Gary Beimers, FCSI for sending us information on this new amazing product. We would not want anyone to think that we went looking for this all by ourselves. But, if you are interested in getting more information go to <http://www.wizmark.com>.

# Technically Speaking

SFA - Section C

---

## ecobuild Federal

Ecobuild Federal the 3-day gathering place for the federal government and design professional is scheduled for December 4-7 in Washington, DC. They are planning more than 100 technical sessions in 10 educational tracks. The Specifications Consultants in Independent Practice will present a panel discussion entitled "Advances in Construction Specifications Resources" moderated by Mark Kalin, FAIA, FCSI, SCIP. They have even asked little ol' me to join in on a presentation entitled "Current Issues in Specification Management and Technology" Hope to see you there.

## BART to Consider NCS

Speaking of our good friends at BART, after taking the lead in the transportation industry in the implementation of MasterFormat 2004 as the organizational structure for their master specifications, they are now turning their attention to updating their drawing standards. As you can imagine the transportation industry has some unusual needs when it comes to symbols, diagrams, and other drawing stuff. BART could help expand the National CAD Standard thinking beyond buildings to horizontal construction.

## NSCA Embraces MasterFormat

Speaking of speaking, our good friends at the National Systems Contractors Association has invited us down to Myrtle Beach in October to speak at their annual business gathering on the integration of MasterFormat in communications. We even got a call last week about working with a group on designing bio-diesel facilities because they thought MasterFormat was a great way to organize information about processing facilities. It seems MasterFormat is definitely spreading beyond conventional general construction fulfilling the intent for it to be used for all construction, both horizontal and vertical.

## Setting the Record Straight on BBQ

Our good friend Richard Robinson, FCSI, AIA from Dallas, Texas (making that clear so you don't get confused with Dallas, North Carolina) knowing our fondness for barbecue, gave us a book on Texas barbecue. It is entitled the "Legends of Texas Barbecue" by Rob Walsh. For those of you who are not familiar with Texas barbecue it is dead cow cooked over an open flame until crisp and then burnt for another 20 minutes just for good measure, called a brisket. Now let's not think that I have anything against dead cow. I have been known to throw cow parts on the barbee in a heartbeat.

I have found that there are three ways to insult a man: 1) for another man to tell him he is a bad driver, 2) for a woman to tell him he is a bad lover, and 3) to tell a Texan that you can't taste the difference between his so-called BBQ and the charcoal it was cooked over. Given that Dick is our good friend and a true southern gentleman, I would never think of insulting him, so in return for his kindness, we are sending him a book on North Carolina Barbeque we picked up while at Bubba's Barbecue.

*The Best Tar Heel Barbeque: Manteo to Murphy* written by reformed lawyer and BBQ aficionado Jim Early, critiques 140 of the best BBQ restaurants in the state, discusses the history of BBQ, and provides snippets of other good BBQ information. Besides, proceeds from the book go to Special Olympics North Carolina.

BTW: Walsh's book is full of recipes from Pit Bosses all over Texas and includes recipes for beef, turkey, pork, sauces, and a lot of other tasty fixings. Maybe some of the Texas stuff is not so bad after all. I think I might even whip-up a batch of Garlicky Guacamole from page 199 this weekend.

# People in the News, or Not

SFA - Section D

---

## Why are these Canadians smiling?



Construction Specifications Canada's (CSC) Executive Director, Nick Franjic and CSC President, John Cook are happy because they have just been presented their very own **Carolina Hurricane 2006 Stanley Cup Champion** T-shirts, by *The Southern Fried Architect*. Now who says that we aren't nice to Northerners?

## Southerners Named to NBIMS Committee

I feel much better about the future of the National Building Information Model Standard knowing that two great southern gentlemen, Paul Bertram, FCSI, LEED AP of Orlando, FL and Michael Hill, AIA, CSI, LEED AP of Silver Springs, MD have been named members of the National Institute of Building Sciences' NBIMS Committee. The NBIMS Committee under the leadership of another great southern, Deke Smith, AIA with the US Department of Defense in Washington, DC expects to have the standard in good shape by early next year.

## Paul Bertram Forms PRB Connect

Speaking of product marketing genius Paul Bertram, who sold his firm PRB Design to a mega firm in November 2005, he has recently formed a new firm, PRB Connect to assist product manufacturers with marketing construction products and sustainable design positioning. He can be contacted at 407-256-5317 or paul@prbconnect.com.

## Smith Gets CAD Society 2006 Leadership Award

And speaking of our old friend Dana K. "Deke" Smith, he was the recipient of the 2006 Leadership Award from the CAD Society at the Congress on the Future of Engineering Software meeting in Scottsdale, Arizona last April. A long time advocate of the National CAD Standard and all things data and meta-data, Deke has worked tirelessly to improve the process of creating and sustaining the built environment. Congratulations Deke!

## Quote of the Month

When I'm working on a problem, I never think about beauty. I think only how to solve the problem. But when I have finished, if the solution is not beautiful, I know it is wrong. - R. Buckminster Fuller

# Editorial Section

SFA - Section E

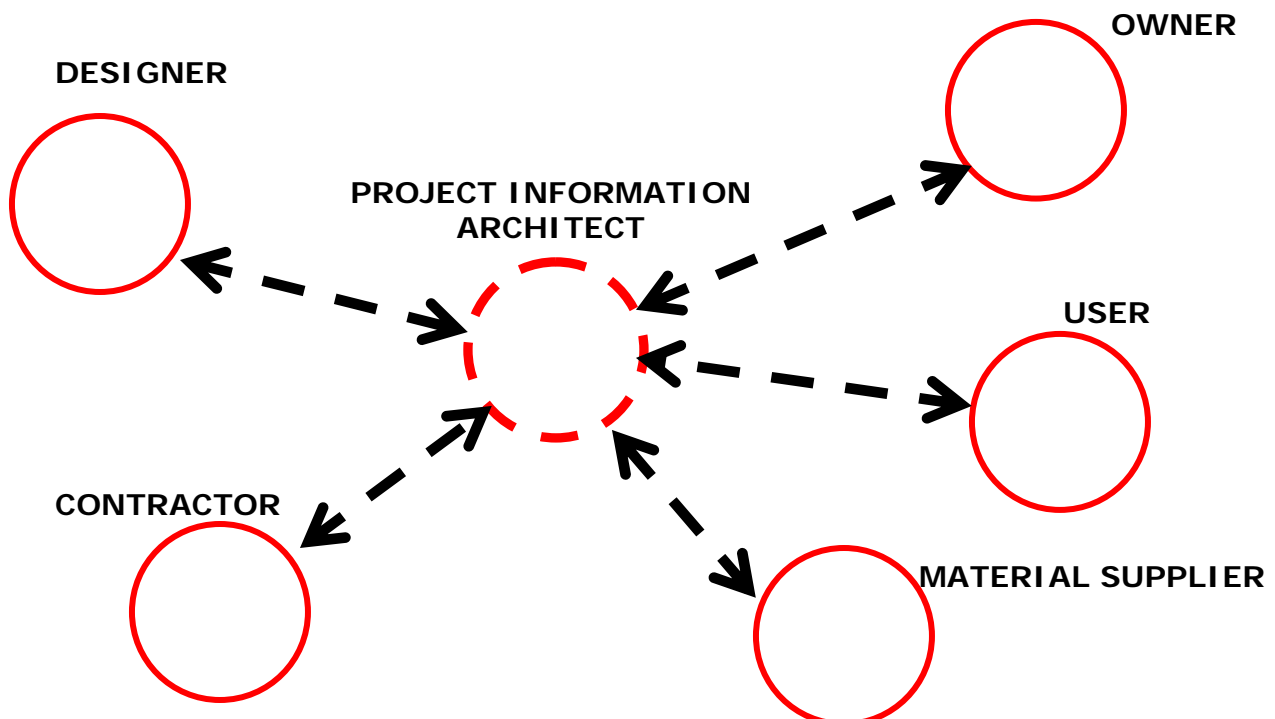
## Information Architect?

by Dennis J. Hall, FAIA, FCSI, SCIP

It seems that within the last couple of weeks, I have seen or heard from a number of firms that claim to be “information architects.” What the heck is that? It seems that Richard Saul Wurman, who wrote a book with the same title, coined the term back in 1976, and according to Wikipedia the term “information architecture” or “IA” is congruent with activities involved in the creation of “taxonomies”. There is even the Information Architecture Institute (IAI) with more than 800 members in 40 countries. It “serves to advance the design of shared information environments” and “supports a global community infrastructure that connects people, ideas, content, and tools”. WOW!

Not to be out done, the AIA is working on its own information architecture also known as the “AIA Classification System”. So I guess you could say it is the AIA IA, we wouldn’t, but you could. This 11,000 plus term organizational structure is largely based upon the CSI/CSC MasterFormat (6,000 terms), UniFormat (a couple thousand terms) and a few more thrown in just for good measure. The AIA plans to classify all things AIA on it’s website via this structure to enhance the “findability” of information to its members.

It also seems that the term “project information architect” or “PIA” is creeping into the lexicon of architecture design. This term refers to a person or firm that performs coordination of project or facility information to ensure that information is only generated once and is shared by all members of the project team. The entity tracks decisions made by the project team, when they were made, and by whom. I believe the PIA will become a critical player in design and construction as architects take a greater role in managing information for the entire lifecycle of a facility and not just construction. The AIA has been referring to this process as “integrated design” and it will be the foundation to the way architects practice in the near future.



IA is not just about architecture, but we as architects, specifiers, and other design professionals must begin to address the world of IA. And just like you don't have to be an automotive engineer or even a mechanic to drive a car, a basic understanding of how this whole thing works, is a good idea. IA professionals who are architects or have knowledge of project delivery, construction materials, and design and construction technology will develop applications to assist the architect who chooses to participate from a distance. However, the design professionals who truly understand and control information will control the projects of the future. This is what is known as "knowledge management" or "KM".

We are working with the AIA on a chapter for the new Architect's Handbook of Professional Practice and we hope to be presenting some pretty cool tools we are working on next year at the AIA and CSI Conventions involving IA for architects. The Specifications Consultants in Independent Practice is sponsoring these sessions if they are accepted. So, stay tuned for information on being an information architect.