



EDITORIAL

Introduction

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This regular issue of IT-AEC starts with the paper by Shaaban and Kamara on online information access systems (OIAS) in the construction industry. The paper reviews currently available systems and, using the results of end-user surveys, assesses their effectiveness. It then provides suggestions on how these can be improved through the appropriate use of visualisation techniques.

The paper by Anshuman and Kumar addresses the relationship between architecture and HCI (human-computer interaction) by reviewing trends towards an integrative approach to designing responsive space. It discusses in detail the key issues in design of responsive spaces using Computer-Aided Architectural Design techniques and highlights the shortcomings of existing approaches. It then explores recent developments that have the potential to inform physically responsive environments and suggests how these can be integrated in heterogeneous architectural design processes.

Sutrisna et al's paper presents a knowledge-based system for valuing variations in civil engineering works. This is intended to avoid the conflicts and disputes that often arise when variations occur. The development and evaluation (using industry practitioners) of the prototype system are also described in the paper.

Edwards et al present a computer-based tool for assessing plant operatives' productivity. The prototype system utilises information extracted from a range of factors and variables that exhibit a significant correlation between machine production and operator attributes. Details of the system, which is based on an artificial neural network model, and its testing and validation are presented in the paper.

The final paper in this issue is by Tesfagaber and Bouchlaghem. It is concerned with the automation of process information exchange between AEC software applications using the Process Specification Language (PSL). It presents an overview of PSL and the details of its use to facilitate automatic process information exchange between three disparate software applications. A number of extensions to PSL are proposed as an outcome of the study.

As usual, this issue contains a good mix of quality papers that will be of interest to both academics and practitioners. Enjoy!

