

A STUDY OF IT USE IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

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Abstract:

The rapid development in the IT use in Construction during the last two decades has not been systematically studied in Sweden. A few wide-ranging surveys were carried through by Byggtjänst during the eighties. After that, our knowledge of the use of IT is partial. Big changes in the use of IT have occurred lately. For example, the use of CAD is far more frequent than a few years ago, the access to Internet and computer communication has increased, and the use of common administrative software's that is not trade specific, has also increased greatly.

This paper describes a survey method and a survey tool, to be used for broad and recurrent investigations of the IT situation in the Swedish Construction sector, and the result of the first implementation of the survey, 1997/1998. The survey provides a possibility to make comparisons over time and between countries. The survey will be performed by some other countries in parallel and can be repeated with two or three years interval. The result of the survey can be used by everyone who in some way invests in IT, those who sell, buy and use IT-tools as well as those who work with research and development.

The survey is divided in two parts, one postal questionnaire and one more extensive interview questionnaire. Totally the survey is send to almost 3000 statistically chosen companies in the Construction industry, which includes contractors, architects, technical consultants, property managers, manufacturers, property developers and town planning offices. The questionnaire is divided into three main areas, where the first handles the quantity, quality and distribution of different types of IT tools in the sector. The second area will provide information about the extent, distribution and sophistication and trend of use of different types of IT tools. The last area handles the impact of IT on the companies business, such as the outcome of IT use in terms of cost, time and quality, the effect of IT on the business areas, and the attitude and expectations to IT.

A similar postal survey, based on the same questionnaire, has been carried out in Denmark in the spring of 1998 and a corresponding Finish study is underway.

The result of the surveys will be presented at the conference but the statistical analysis is, at this moment, not finished.

