



BSI Case Study: Curtins

Certification: BSI Kitemark™ for BIM Level 2 Design and Construction



How BIM Level 2 capability, backed by the BSI Kitemark™, has given Curtins a competitive edge

“There are very few in the built environment industry who have achieved BSI Kitemark certification. It has put us ahead of the curve, differentiating us from a lot of other consultants and giving us a competitive edge to drive the business forward”

Neil Parkinson,
Director, Curtins

Client background: Curtins

Curtins is an award-winning consultancy working within the built environment. Best known for its work as a civil and structural engineer, it also provides expertise in areas ranging from infrastructure and transport planning to conservation and environmental services.

Over nearly 60 years, Curtins has developed from a small consultancy in Liverpool to employing over 400 staff in 14 offices across the UK and Ireland. Still independently owned, it takes pride in working as a team, and through effective co-operation with clients and supply chain partners, to deliver excellence. A key element in its collaborative approach has been its BIM capability, demonstrated by its recent BIM Level 2 certification to the BSI Kitemark for Design and Construction.

BSI Kitemark Certification:

- Provides reassurance to clients of best practice in Building Information Modelling (BIM) Level 2 for Design and Construction
- Demonstrates compliance with the government's 'condition of contract' requirement for BIM Level 2
- Shows successful contract fulfilment, customer satisfaction, and effective supply chain management
- Drives business efficiency
- Strengthens the Curtins brand
- Differentiates the company, creating competitive advantage



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BIM at a glance

BIM is defined by the UK Government BIM Task Group as “value-creating collaboration through the entire life-cycle of an asset, underpinned by the creation, collation and exchange of shared 3D models and intelligent, structured data attached to them”.

Essentially, from the development phase of a project onwards, BIM is a process to ensure all the right information is available to the right people, at the right time, and in the right format. It brings together all the components that create a built asset, creating a common language, shared knowledge and increased transparency between all the parties involved, from developers, architects and consultants, to contractors, sub-contractors and asset managers.

A suite of standards supports BIM, including PAS 1192-2, which address the BIM requirements for the design and construction phase of a project. Since April 2016, companies looking to secure Government building and infrastructure contracts have been required to demonstrate BIM Level 2 capability, or face exclusion from public sector tenders.

Early adopter

In the 1980s, Curtins was one of the first engineering practices in the UK to invest in digital technology. By 2005, still long before the Government’s BIM mandate, it became one of the first investors in Autodesk Revit Structure software. The firm recognized early that BIM was not just an evolution in drawing technology, but the catalyst for a broader shift in the way teams worked together on construction projects. For the first time, BIM created a framework and quality standard that all in the built environment industry could embrace, enabling them to integrate processes and collaborate more effectively.

As Neil Parkinson, Director, explains, “Our staff and clients benefited from this early adoption, and our position at the forefront of BIM is not an unusual place for us, given our extensive history of technology investment.” Lee Barnett, Curtins’ Digital Delivery Manager, continues, “We steadily developed a talented and multi-skilled workforce, empowered with a multitude of BIM authoring software – we use Autodesk Revit and AutoCAD 3D Civils as our main engineering BIM tools.”

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BIM Verification

By collating accurate information, from drawings and specifications to materials and measurements, BIM could ensure that problems would be avoided throughout the supply chain, saving time, costs and waste. But Curtins also needed a way to differentiate itself from other businesses delivering BIM projects, especially those making unsubstantiated claims about their BIM capability.

To set itself apart, Curtins decided to pursue independent certification of its BIM capabilities. It sought BIM Level 2 Verification from BSI, which reviews process compliance with PAS 1192-2 in all areas of BIM implementation.

“We chose BSI as our auditor as they are a highly credible third-party,” says Barnett. “In November 2017, we achieved BSI Verification, which recognized that our business had the necessary expertise and processes in place to work on BIM Level 2 projects across our offices. It meant our clients and supply chain partners could be confident that our working methods had been properly documented, rigorously assessed and independently verified.”

The BSI Kitemark ‘gold standard’

Not content to rest on its laurels, Curtins saw the launch of the new BSI Kitemark PAS 1192-2 as a means of setting its BIM quality bar even higher, and as a way of further sharpening its competitive edge. For over a century, BSI Kitemark-approved products and services have been seen to achieve the highest standards and, similarly, BSI Kitemark PAS 1192-2 acts as a seal of approval for built environment businesses around the world. It is based on the assessment of three main areas: completed BIM projects, client satisfaction, and supply chain management.

While BIM Level 2 Verification for Design and Construction had provided valuable evidence of Curtins’ BIM Level 2 capabilities, BSI Kitemark certification would show a higher level of BIM maturity, demonstrating the company’s commitment to best practice by assessing Curtin’s delivery of actual BIM projects. “Throughout 2018, we further developed our BIM specialism, culminating in BSI Kitemark certification,” says Barnett. “It’s the ‘gold standard’ in terms of recognizing our success in delivering BIM Level 2 projects.”

Benefits of certification

Barnett describes the BSI Kitemark as “a powerful tool”, for three key reasons. First, it provides the highest level of assurance to Curtins’ clients of successful delivery and final completion of projects under BIM, proving the firm is consistently able to meet and exceed the specific requirements of contracts, for example, in terms of quality and delivery times.

Second, the certification demonstrates that Curtins monitors client satisfaction against delivery of project outcomes. It shows the firm defines its project-specific customer satisfaction objectives, and then measures their level of fulfilment.

Third, it shows that Curtins manages its supply chain effectively, giving customers confidence in its ability to work collaboratively, using digital technologies to add value to projects and cut out waste and inefficiency.

Looking ahead

Curtins is determined to remain at the forefront of the engineering application of BIM within the built environment industry. “Our BIM process forms an important part of our quality management systems and we’re working to integrate these better, improving on the quality and efficiency of our delivery,” says Barnett. “We have also further refined our digital delivery capability to ensure a consistent approach across our specialisms, particularly the civil and structural engineering disciplines.”

The BSI Kitemark will continue to underpin Curtins’s digital transformation. Neil Parkinson concludes, “There are very few in the built environment industry who have achieved BSI Kitemark certification. It has put us ahead of the curve, differentiating us from a lot of other consultants and giving us a competitive edge to drive the business forward.”

Contact us to find out how BSI certification can help your business make excellence a habit.

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