

TYPE

Engineering company

CUSTOMER

D. Vision Architecture Srl

INTERVIEWEE

Armando Casella - Architect

SOFTWARE

STR Vision CPM



SPECIAL BIM

INTRODUCTION

D. Vision Architecture is an architectural company founded in April 2015 by six architects with a long international experience in the field of architectural and engineering, made at Silvano Buzzi & associati in Brescia. They believe in team work and highly specialised information sharing; they are participating in several initiatives making use of BIM not only at design stage but also to define the work life. Together with other professionals, the company has won a large number of tenders of different type and size: the requalification of the Hospital in Sassari, the project for a Primary School in Milan, the extension of the Politecnico in Turin and some design tenders such as the Tolerance Pavilion in Moscow. BIM procedures have been implemented inside the company procedure's protocol and today they are a distinguishing feature of the services supplied. For this reason D. Vision Architecture has created "BIM FACTORY", a brand supplying BIM services to all players in the building chain: contracting authorities, professionals, companies and maintenance technicians.

INFO

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D. Vision Architecture BIM is the future

What are the linchpins of the company's growth?

In every project we carry out a progressive formal and technological research to improve the quality of construction and of life. In addition, thanks to the steady innovation of our management processes, we have completely changed our approach to the project and our company is acquiring a prominent profile in the design and building site management scene, both in Italy and abroad.

How did you get to the foreign market?

I've been working as Manager of the Architectural Department of Silvano Buzzi & associati for twelve years (2003 - 2015): I planned and looked for solutions to better manage and to deal with the effects of the crisis which affects the building sector since 2009. I initiated an internationalization process of the company, which involved investments both at financial and professional levels. I started with a first experience in the U.A.E.: I established a company in Abu Dhabi and since then I've been in touch with a lot of different realities, very far from those we had known before. This personal experience is an important basis for D. Vision Architecture in approaching the international market today.

What are the most important aspects of this experience?

First of all we don't compete with the major international companies capable of supplying turnkey projects which include design, project management, jobs direction, etc. We are mainly focused on the Italian companies abroad and offer them our innovative services relying on our common culture: this is still a trump card. Another important aspect is our decision not to transfer our operative work abroad. We work in Italy with Italian engineers and architects: an additional feature increasing the value of our design and management quality.

Your first important project?

We were charged by Silvano Buzzi & associati with the roofing of the "Grand Egyptian Museum", the new archaeological museum in Cairo. A huge project: a roof of 130.000 sq.mt., consisting of about 50.000 panels in stretched variable-geometry net, 332 km of aluminium profiles, as well as a steel support structure. This was the first project where we applied the BIM process from the very beginning. Our whole experience on the matter has started with the Cairo project.

You were certainly the first ones in the field! How and when did your interest in BIM start?

My interest in BIM dates back to many years ago. I appreciated its huge innovative potential at once, so we invested consequently both in terms of computer equipment technology and staff training.

You're pioneers...

Yes, we are, because we have been interested in this subject for years. We believe that research and technology also involve testing how a process is put into practice. This idea is producing positive results in terms of activities: the market of services related to the BIM process is growing exponentially, requests for offers and projects are strongly increasing, and not only for big projects. These could be important news for the Italian market: even medium-sized or small/medium-sized companies are approaching the BIM method, they're enquiring about its advantages and the impact it could have on their internal production cycle.

Is it easy to explain what BIM is?

Not at all! Not only it's difficult with the players in the building chain, but also with designers, who are still rather behind on the subject. It's useful to explain what BIM is, but every effort should be made to explain what it ISN'T. Clarity is indispensable.

What about designers?

There's a lot to do, because most of them are still using traditional methods. Many designers think that BIM is "only" a 3D model, but it isn't: a 3D model was already used 15-20 year ago. Then data were added and a parametric model was reached. The following step was using the model to check costs, manage variations, planning, execution stages, maintenance, etc. This is BIM.



Does BIM offer so many advantages?

Yes, certainly. They can be appreciated by all players in the building chain. The problem is explaining how the process is advantageous in terms of quality, efficiency and cost-effectiveness. An example: we've recently had an experience with a small company, dealing with a turnkey project. They had to build a hotel in a short time and with a very limited budget. After experiencing the benefits of the BIM process in developing the project and managing the building site, they decided to use it for all their building sites.

Are BIM services the market of the future?

Yes, absolutely. It's the future, no doubt. We've invested a lot, and now we're starting reaping the benefits of our job.

What's STR role in this process?

Of course our job with BIM has required some important investments in IT technology. Their extent depended on the significance of the targets we wanted to reach, such as speed and precision in architectural modelling, reliability of estimates and planning. In both cases we wanted the most performing product on the market; as for the second aspect, we identified STR Vision CPM software (we didn't know it at the time) to start our 4D (times) and 5D (costs) testing. We found it, studied it, chose it. It was the start of an experience which has gone beyond a simple customer/supplier relationship.

What feature was crucial for your choice?

The implementation of the IFC engine in the software was the decisive factor which made us choose STR Vision CPM, and I'm sure it will be the same with many other customers.

What role does the IFC standard play in the BIM process?

It depends on the "philosophical" approach to the process. We've adopted the OpenBIM philosophy, that is BIM is "horizontal", not "vertical", it must be able to "open" to other software products and systems. This implies the magic word "interoperability" and its language is only one: IFC.

Give a comment on how STR Vision CPM operates

Very easily: at present STR Vision CPM is the best software on the Italian market to integrate 4D and 5D within a BIM process. We've tested it both with small and with bigger models and we are very happy.