

HOW DIGITALIZATION IS CHANGING HOW WE BUILD

According to analysts, global construction output will grow US\$12.9 trillion by 2022, with emerging markets accounting for more than half that figure. Within Asean, nearly all member states have increased their infrastructure budgets over the next five years, which is expected to stimulate private sector activity in residential, industrial and infrastructural development projects.

At the same time, construction costs in some of Asia's most developed cities are among the highest in the world. Singapore, for instance, is the fourth-most expensive city in the region to build in, ranking 27th in the world construction cost index, following Hong Kong, Macau and Tokyo, according to industry consultancies.

"Some of the most common pain points in construction projects are poor workflow and building performance management due to inefficiency in capturing construction data in real time, along with a lack of transparency in project performance," said **Brendan O'Riordan, CEO of Dublin-based ZUTEC**, a developer of cloud-based platforms for the construction industry.

"Our technology is a game changer. We help manage processes and workflows in order to prevent paperwork errors and subsequently avoid delays in construction projects, which translates into significant savings. We can build systems to work around clients' current workflow processes to include process and data management, performance tracking and real-time reporting," O'Riordan said.

As industries around the world embrace the value of data in their transition to digitalization, the construction industry lags behind. Architects, engineers, contractors and site owners still rely heavily on traditional methods and conduct their work in separate settings.

"Many companies are still waiting for their competitors to take the first step towards embracing digitalization and new technologies. The general mindset needs

to change and we are seeing some momentum in the right direction. There is a feeling that if you don't adapt now, you will get left behind," O'Riordan said.

ZUTEC has contributed to many landmark projects across the globe, including The Shard in London, Terminal 2 at Dublin Airport, the Midfield Terminal in Abu Dhabi, the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre, Flinders Street Station restoration (also in Melbourne), Hamad International Airport in Doha, Qatar, and Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi, among others.

With a presence in London, Hong Kong, Doha, Abu Dhabi and Melbourne, ZUTEC is aggressively pursuing international expansion, particularly in the Asia-Pacific.

As the first Irish company to go public on NASDAQ First North in Stockholm, ZUTEC has strengthened its global reputation as it looks to cement ties with Asia's top builders.

"The time for us to focus on Asia is now because the industry is ready. People expect to have digital tools in all areas of life and in particular in a work environment. This, coupled with our recent IPO and capital raise, gives us the ability to invest in the region," he said.

"Like any other region we enter, the Asia-Pacific region has scope for improvement in efficiency in construction. We can help provide efficiencies on-site for not just the large megaprojects but also for small projects. We can help to ensure that there is less rework as all stakeholders have access to the right data when and where they need it," he added.



ZUTEC CEO Brendan O'Riordan

Recognizing that its system is just one of many in a client's IT portfolio, ZUTEC develops open platforms that allow easy integration with other programs, such as finance systems, collaboration, building management systems (BMS), building information modeling (BIM) to reduce redundant information handling.

"When procuring a solution across the business, it is important to procure a system that is not only the best now but will also be the best in the future. This form of technology is constantly evolving. Features that are commonplace now, such as mobile tablets and BIM integration, were just ideas five years ago. ZUTEC prides itself on being on a platform that allows constant development easily. ZUTEC undertakes, on average, four upgrades per year to stay ahead of the latest innovations," O'Riordan said. ■

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