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# CONSTRUCTECH

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## In the News

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### A Platform for BIM in Residential

Being able to predict early on in the process what type of impact BIM (building information modeling) will have on a project's profitability is highly valuable. Having this type of information early could transform the way in which homebuilders look at BIM. But it is up to the software vendors to create the links across all stages.

Companies like BuilderMT, [www.buildermt.com](http://www.buildermt.com), Lakewood, Colo., have made it a point to form strategic alliances in order to link workflow to other areas of a builder's business. For example, its partnership with Sales Simplicity, [www.salessimplicity.net](http://www.salessimplicity.net), Chandler, Ariz., helps connect to customer and sales management tools, while another partnership with CG Visions, [www.cgvisions.com](http://www.cgvisions.com), Lafayette, Ind., pushes this out to design and modeling services associated with BIM.

Now comes word of ITW Building Components Group, <http://itwinstinct.com>, entering the mix from a building component perspective. ITW offers engineering services, design and management software, cutting and manufacturing equipment for truss and wall components, a trimmable end floor truss system and metal truss connector plates to the component industry. Its software product line has been expanded to include design and manufacturing programs that streamline the entire building process.

At the Intl. Builders Show in Orlando, Fla., last week, the four companies announced an alliance around enabling the workflow associated with BIM for the residential market. The alliance helps customers engage in a design-and-build process that is driven by digital workflows and 3D BIM models. For the customer it presents a process that is highly interactive and engaging, but for the builder the efficiencies are centered on things like being able to generate accurate material estimates and building component designs. The goal, ultimately, is for the builder to gain more insight into profit at an early stage.

The collaboration will make it so that builders can link BIM models with software from these four companies, including the ITW BCG programs that incorporate such third-party products as VisionREZ, hsbCAD, VIEW, intelliVIEW, and IntelliBuild.

The four companies are looking to create a framework around which the workflow components associated with using BIM will flow naturally. Take ITW, for example. The main piece for the company under this alliance is its INSTINCT-Residential Design Systems. This is not a piece of software, but rather a system that integrates data through a single, interchangeable file format that the entire supply chain will use. In this case, companies like BuilderMT, Sales Simplicity, and CG Visions have all linked to this system, meaning the information that the builder leverages from each system throughout the process will use this common file format.

This becomes important for every piece in that supply chain. Take, for example, CG Visions, which provides services and consulting. But it also provides BIM Pipeline, software which builds a bridge between different modeling software tools and backoffice systems. By embracing a common file format, it is ensured that the data being used at early design and modeling stages is carried through to the backoffice costing and financial systems. This goes back to one of the original intents of the alliance, which is to help builders predict profit at an early stage in the process.

Such an alliance is certainly one to watch, as all parties involved provide a critical piece to the processes associated with using BIM. Having one platform in which a common file format carries a piece of data from conception through completion, and beyond, could provide a valuable piece for helping builders embrace BIM over the long run.