THE BRIEF DEVELOPMENT MANAGER AS AN IT TOOL FOR MANAGING DYNAMIC BRIEF DEVELOPMENT IN CONSTRUCTION

Ayman A. E. OTHMAN¹, Tarek M. HASSAN², and Christine L. PASQUIRE ²

¹ Commercial Buildings Management, Finance Department, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. P.O.Box 46172 Tel: 009712 6672545; Mobile: 0097150 5665372; E-mail: aothman@emirates.net.ae
² Department of Civil and Building Engineering, Loughborough University, Loughborough, United Kingdom.

Abstract
The Value and Risk Management Protocol (VRMP) is an innovative decision making tool developed by the authors to manage dynamic brief development in construction projects. Application of the protocol on real case studies showed that it is a time-consuming tool and there is a large amount of information that needs to be managed. In order to overcome these limitations, facilitate the use of the protocol and escalate its efficiency, this paper presents a computerised version of the VRMP called the Brief Development Manager (BDManager) prototype software. Because of their importance, the role of Information Management (IM) and Information Technology (IT) in managing dynamic brief development is illustrated. In addition, development, system architecture and description of the BDManager are described. Furthermore, three questions are asked to evaluate the BDManager. They are: what to evaluate, how to evaluate, and when to evaluate. In an endeavour to ensure its success as an effective IT tool to manage dynamic brief development, the reliability and validity of the prototype are discussed. Results of the evaluation questionnaire are presented and the users’ comments are applied to improve the performance of the prototype software.

Keywords
Brief Development Manager, Information Management, Information Technology.

INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH BACKGROUND

The VRMP is presented as an innovative decision-making tool designed to manage dynamic brief development in construction. It aimed to enable clients and construction professionals adopt the proper brief development decision on the basis of value addition and risk management. In addition, it aimed to achieve client satisfaction, respond in an innovative manner to the influences of brief development drivers, manage project change orders effectively, and improve the performance of the briefing process through feedback and learned lessons. The VRMP is an outcome of four years Ph.D. research work carried out at the Department of Civil and Building Engineering, Loughborough University, UK. The research focused on integrating value management and risk management to manage dynamic brief development in construction (Othman, 2004).

The VRMP consisted of four steps: identifying problems, structuring objectives, scrutinising alternative solutions, and adopting development decision. Application of the protocol on real case studies at different stages of the project life cycle showed that it is a time-consuming tool and there is a large amount of information that needs to be managed (Othman, 2005). In order to overcome these limitations, facilitate the use of the protocol and escalate its efficiency, IM and IT were utilised to formulate a computerised version of the VRMP called the BDManager.