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Digital Construction Report **2025**

Thank you to all 559 people who took the time to complete the survey, helping us build a clearer picture of digital transformation across the construction industry.

Contents

Foreword

Including our predecessor publication, the NBS National BIM Report, this report marks 15 years since we started surveying the construction industry on digital transformation and BIM (Building Information Modelling). This year's report provides a snapshot of the current usage of, and attitudes towards, a range of digital technologies, and reports on their impact on the built environment.

Dr. Stephen Hamil
Innovation Director

For years viewed with scepticism by some industry professionals, digital transformation is increasingly becoming an integral part of how we design, construct and maintain the built environment. This year's report shows an industry that's adapting to change and, in some corners, rapidly accelerating towards adopting new technologies.

Over the past 15 years of reporting on BIM, we've been intrigued by how professionals are redefining BIM in practice, and our continued tracking reveals some surprising shifts in both adoption and application. But perhaps the most compelling story emerging from this year's research centres on artificial intelligence (AI). What began as a tentative newcomer in our previous surveys is now undergoing a noteworthy transformation, and so is our industry's relationship with it.

The findings reveal a construction sector in the midst of a digital awakening. AI adoption has surged across the industry, accompanied by a widespread conviction that we're witnessing the dawn of a new era in our ways of working. Yet, beneath this optimism lies a curious tension; while most believe AI will unlock unprecedented gains in productivity, opinions are sharply divided on its implications for jobs and traditional professional roles.

Our research also uncovers compelling insights about cloud computing's changing role in reshaping how and where we work, while revealing which emerging technologies may hold the greatest promise for transforming our built environment.

We've also seen how digital tools are changing environmental impact assessments.

Perhaps most intriguingly, when we ask respondents to benchmark construction against other industries, a picture emerges that challenges long-held assumptions about our sector's relationship with innovation. We see an industry that's gaining confidence in its digital future.

Since our previous report in 2023, we have seen the introduction of the EU Construction Products Regulations 2024 and the roadmap to Digital Product Passports, therefore the survey looks at levels of awareness and support for these initiatives. As well as approaching architects and engineers, construction product manufacturers were included in those taking the survey, to ensure we receive a wide range of views on this subject.

Read on, to better understand what construction professionals are thinking and to see how they are applying digital technology and facing up to new challenges. We hope that readers will absorb the findings from this report, and begin to actively apply them, sparking fresh conversations that will help shape the future of our industry.

As ever, we are hugely grateful to our partners who took time to share their views and to all those who supported the survey by promoting it on our behalf.

Introduction

The NBS Digital Construction Report 2025 offers valuable insights into the current state and future direction of digital construction. Two years have passed since our last comprehensive report, and the pace of change shows no signs of slowing. If anything, the construction industry's relationship with digital technology has deepened, becoming more sophisticated and purposeful.

Our report, based on insights from 559 construction professionals across the UK and internationally, captures the current state of digital adoption while highlighting emerging industry trends. From the steady march of BIM implementation to a surge in artificial intelligence, the data reveals an industry becoming increasingly confident in its digital capabilities.

Our respondents are predominantly from the design and specification side of the industry (66.5%), so it is important to bear this in mind when interpreting the results, as the perspectives may be more heavily weighted toward design professionals. (For a detailed breakdown of respondents' profiles, please see the Appendix.)

A wide range of organisation sizes is represented and, similar to the 2023 report, this current report continues to present a picture of the views of UK professionals as well as perspectives from across the globe.

BIM: Where are we now?

Building Information Modelling (BIM) continues to anchor the construction industry's digital transformation, though perhaps its story in 2025 is more one of deepening maturity rather than explosive growth.

We recognise that BIM has evolved significantly in recent years, and we wanted to gain a clear picture of current industry perceptions; what is BIM's relevance now? And how do professionals define it? Does it still mean different things to people in different disciplines?

We began by asking respondents how would they describe BIM in 2025? Is it just about working with 3D parametric models? Or is it simply, "Better Information Management"? Is it about following the process defined in BS EN ISO 19650 standards? Or would they regard it as, "the foundation of digital transformation"?

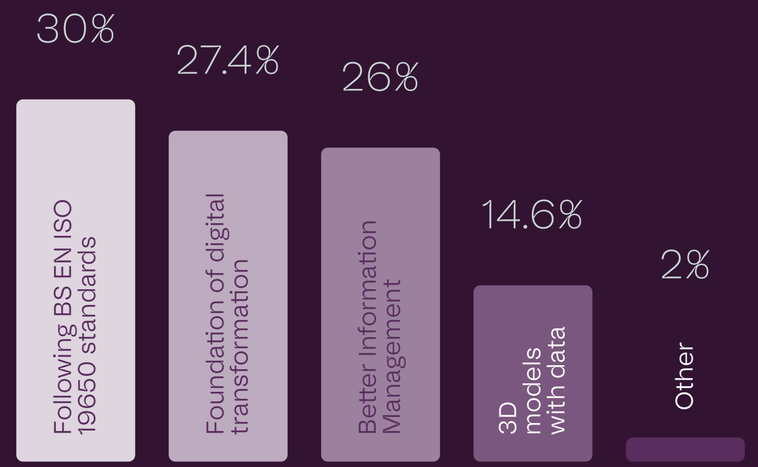
Our survey results indicate that views on BIM's role are still a combination of all the above, most likely dependant on their function and adoption journey. Though, a distinct trend is emerging, with responses given indicating a maturing understanding of BIM. 30% now view BIM as following BS EN ISO 19650 standards and 27.4% see it as the foundation of digital transformation. In 2023, these figures were 22% and 29%, respectively.

In 2025, only 14.6% are still describing BIM as "3D models with data," whereas in 2023's survey 26% held that view. This decline suggests the industry is in the process of moving beyond the basic definition to a more comprehensive understanding of BIM as a sophisticated process and methodology.

Arguably, the essence of BIM is to manage information better, and 26% of respondents (down from 31% in 2023) still hold this view. This solid quarter of responses may be due to a desire to limit use of jargon, and such a definition potentially appeals to those working on smaller projects.

These varying descriptions of BIM represent a healthy market response where adoption and usage align with the genuine needs of the diverse construction industry. We are seeing a situation where different project types, scales and client requirements create different incentives for, and views around, BIM implementation.

How would you describe BIM in 2025?



"The industry is in the process of moving beyond a basic definition to a more comprehensive understanding of BIM as a sophisticated process and methodology."

BIM adoption: Here to stay

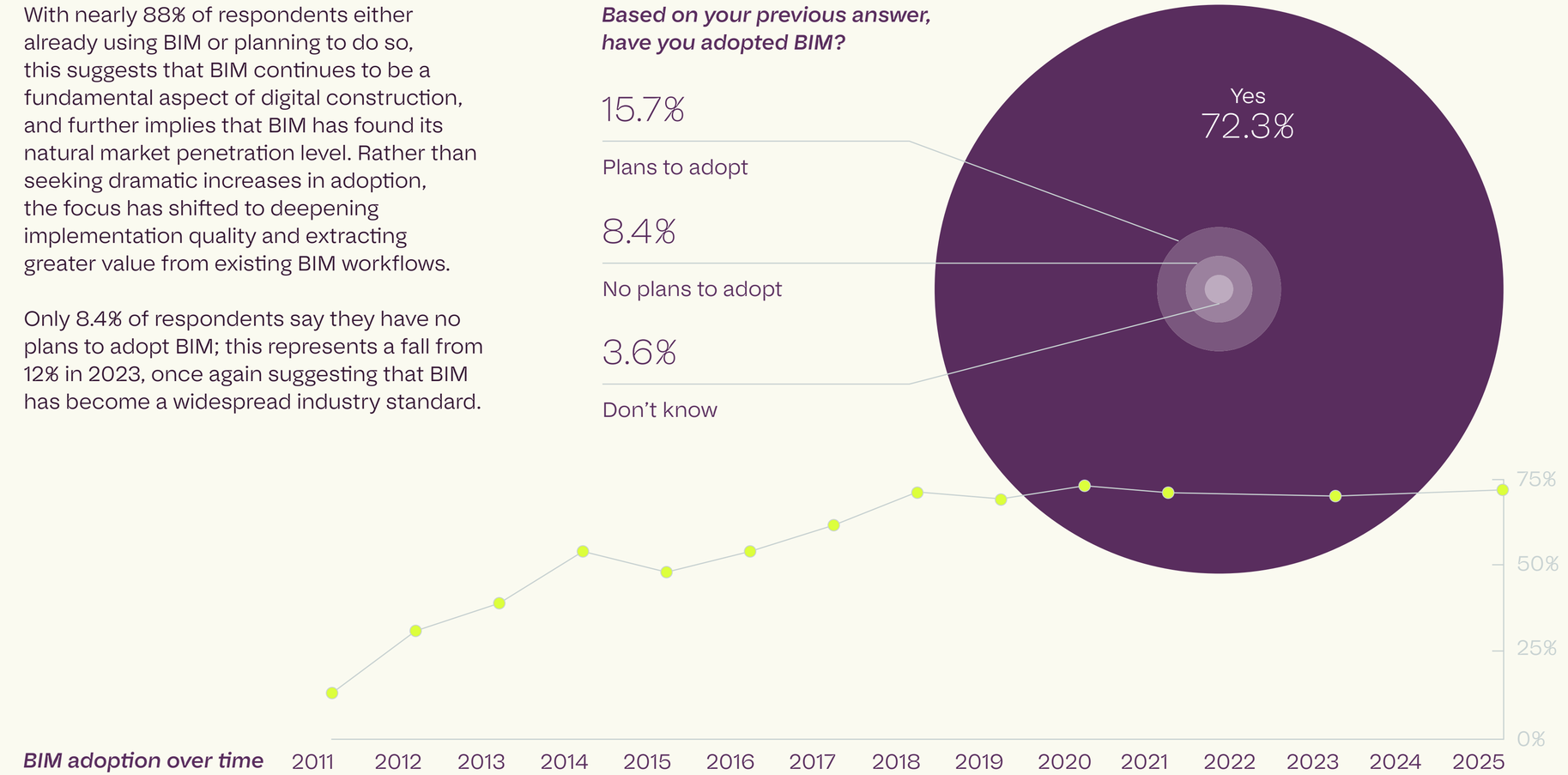
BIM adoption remains strong with a significant majority of construction professionals (72.3%) saying they have adopted it, which represents a slight increase on 2023's (70%) and 2018's (71%) surveys. This means in seven years, the proportion of respondents adopting and using BIM has remained largely unchanged.

This year's 2.3 percentage point increase may seem modest, but the broad consistency suggests the stabilisation of BIM as standard practice. The technology has moved beyond the early adopter phase into mainstream acceptance, with an additional 15.7% of professionals in this year's survey, saying they plan to adopt BIM in the coming years. In 2023, 14% were planning to adopt BIM within 0-3 years.

With nearly 88% of respondents either already using BIM or planning to do so, this suggests that BIM continues to be a fundamental aspect of digital construction, and further implies that BIM has found its natural market penetration level. Rather than seeking dramatic increases in adoption, the focus has shifted to deepening implementation quality and extracting greater value from existing BIM workflows.

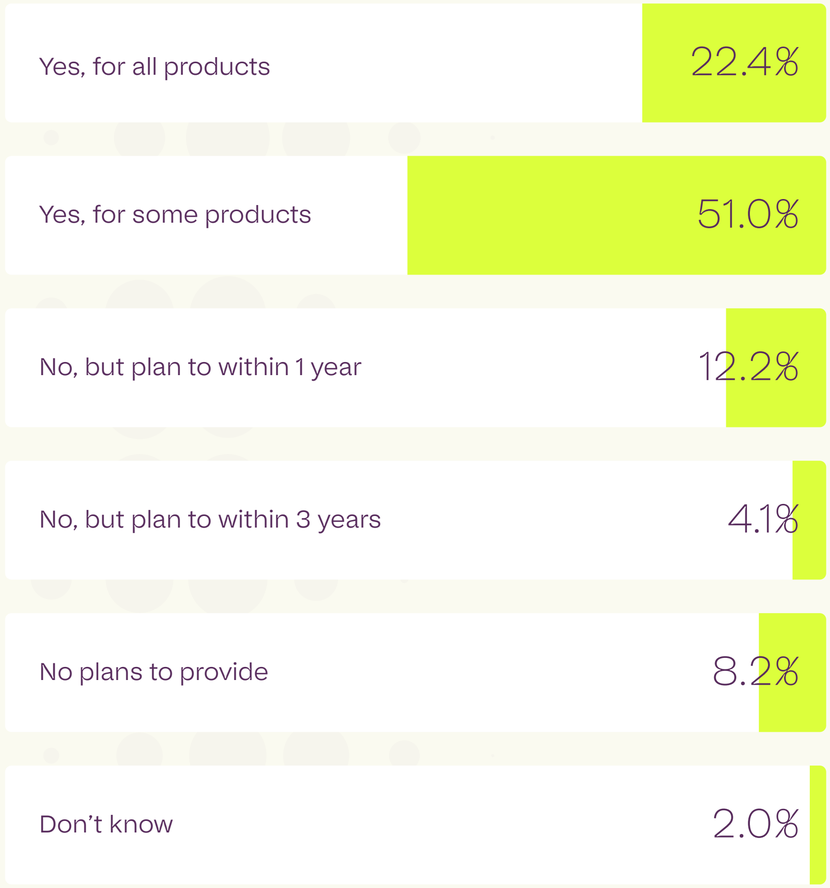
Only 8.4% of respondents say they have no plans to adopt BIM; this represents a fall from 12% in 2023, once again suggesting that BIM has become a widespread industry standard.

Based on your previous answer, have you adopted BIM?



BIM adoption over time

Do you currently provide information about the materials, products or systems that you supply, in the form of BIM or digital objects?



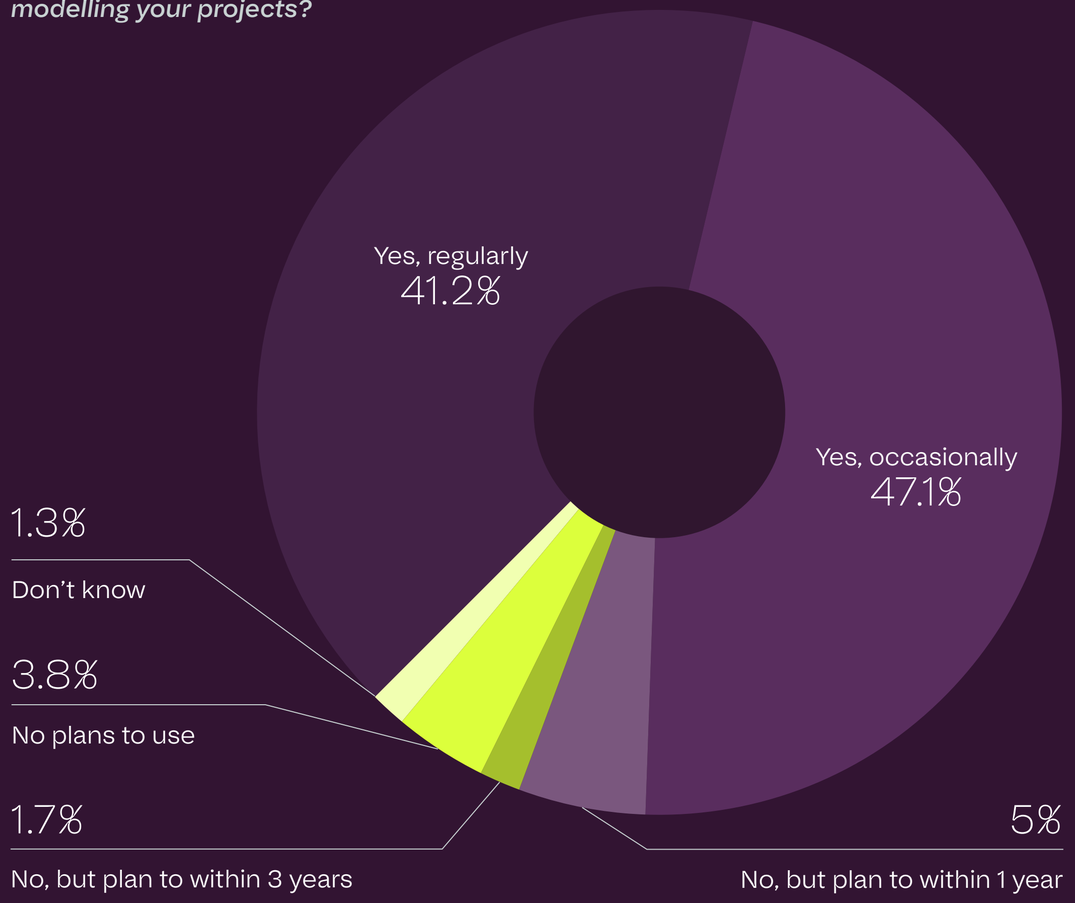
Digital objects

One of the most significant developments supporting BIM usage has been the dramatic improvement in digital object availability. This year's survey reveals a marked upward trend in the provision of digital objects by manufacturers and other suppliers, with 73.4% of manufacturers and suppliers saying they currently provide BIM/digital objects for at least some of their products. This includes 22.4% of suppliers who say they offer digital objects for their entire product range. These figures track against the 56% in 2023 who said they provided digital objects for most, or all, of their products. This was an increase from 52% in 2021.

We have witnessed a jump of more than 20 percentage points within four years. This is a substantial increase that addresses one of BIM's historical pain points. This 20% surge in digital object provision points to a growing recognition among manufacturers that BIM-ready content is no longer optional, but is increasingly essential for market participation.

This year's survey shows an additional 16.3% who say they plan to implement BIM objects within the next three years; indicating there's still a strong momentum towards further digital product representation. Over time, the availability of high-quality, standardised digital objects should remove friction from the BIM workflow and enable more accurate, efficient specification processes. Only 8.2% of suppliers maintain they have no plans to provide BIM objects, suggesting that digital product information is fast becoming an industry expectation and norm.

Do you currently use BIM or digital objects provided by manufacturers when modelling your projects?



On the building designer side, there is an even stronger engagement with digital objects, 88.3% of consultants already use manufacturer-provided BIM objects (41.2% regularly and 47.1% occasionally). Only 3.8% have no plans to use these digital assets, while 6.7% plan to start using them within the next three years.

These results demonstrate a robust ecosystem of BIM object creation and usage, with strong alignment between supplier provision and consultant utilisation. However, the high percentage of consultants using BIM objects (88.3%) compared to suppliers providing them (73.4%) suggests there is likely increasing market pressure on the remaining suppliers to develop digital representations of their products to meet designer expectations.

"Our BIM 3D design production modelling is advanced, the specifics are tailored to client briefing requirements. Our next step is looking at integrating our design models with specifications."

Consultant/Designer

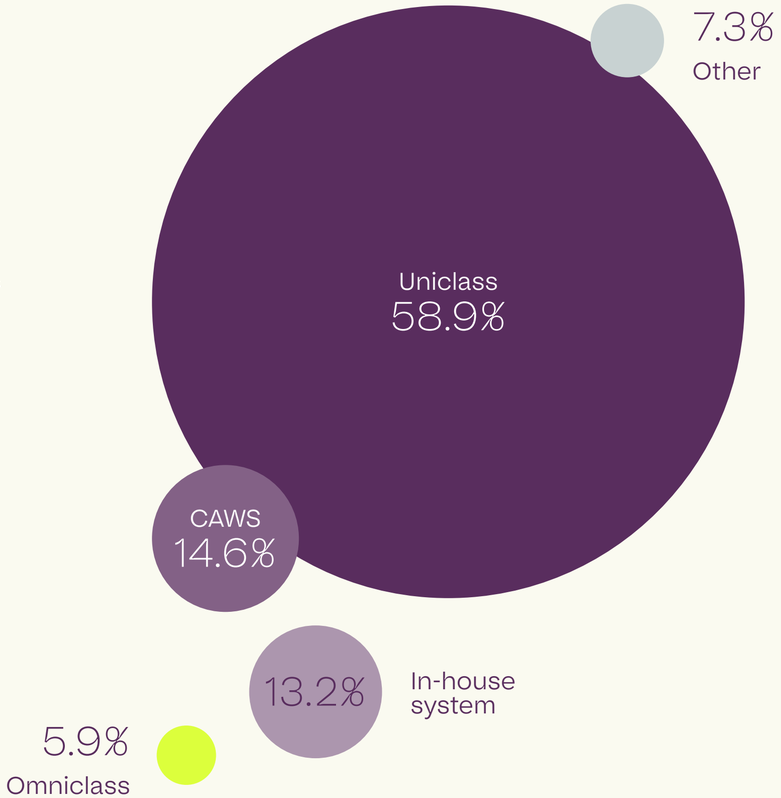
Classification systems

Our 2023 Digital Construction report revealed that a relatively high percentage of respondents (18%) 'didn't know' what classification system their organisation commonly applied. In 2025 this lack of awareness continues, with just under 20% saying they are 'not sure' which classification system their organisation uses. This is now an ongoing trend over several reports, with almost a fifth of respondents unaware.

Once we remove those who aren't sure, we find that Uniclass continues to be by far the dominant classification system with 58.9% of respondents saying it's most commonly used. This is a considerable advance from 2023's figure of 46%, which itself was an increase from 2021's responses. This high percentage of uptake aligns with the status of Uniclass as the recommended classification system in the UK for BIM projects.

Common Arrangement of Works Sections (CAWS), despite being older, still maintains some usage (14.6%), but this represents a sharp decline from 2023 when 33% said they used the system. We know from the usage statistics from our specification platform that CAWS is still used by many practices for specification. So even though Uniclass appears to be the dominant force for BIM projects, we suspect that there will be mixed classification employed on many projects between model and specification. This is something we will explore further in future surveys.

What type of classification is most commonly used on the projects that you work on?



BIM's envolving role

As its uptake has increased and its integration deepened, BIM appears to have established itself as the critical infrastructure framework for the construction industry's digital future. Of course, it's not now, nor likely to be, entirely universal. Its value isn't just in achieving immediate productivity gains, but in enabling future innovations, providing the foundational layer upon which other digital innovations can be built.

Cloud computing and flexible working

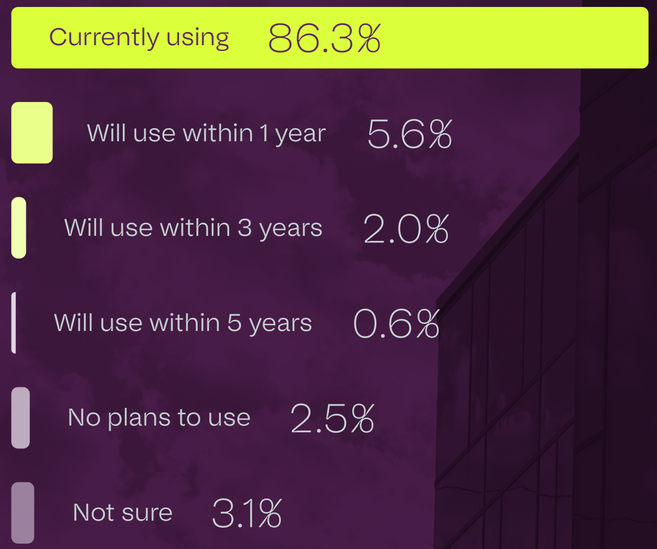
If BIM represents the potential foundation of construction's digital transformation, then perhaps cloud computing could be viewed as its operating system. The technology is reaching near-universal levels of adoption, with 86.3% of construction professionals currently using cloud-based solutions, a notable increase from the 80% recorded in our 2023 survey.

This 6.3 percentage point increase over two years demonstrates the accelerating usage of cloud technologies across the construction sector. What particularly stands out is the low resistance to adoption; with only 2.5% of respondents maintaining they have no plans to implement cloud computing, while an additional 8.2% say they are planning to adopt the technology within the next five years, the majority of these within one year.

The path to ubiquity

The survey reveals a clear implementation pipeline: 5.6% of respondents plan to begin using cloud computing within the next year, followed by 2.0% within three years and 0.6% within five years. If those intentions hold, then cloud usage will exceed 90% inside one year. And, by 2027, penetration of cloud computing could exceed 95% across the construction industry. This would make cloud technology as essential to daily operations as email or mobile phones.

Within your organisation, do you use cloud computing?



"What particularly stands out is the low resistance to adopting cloud computing technology."

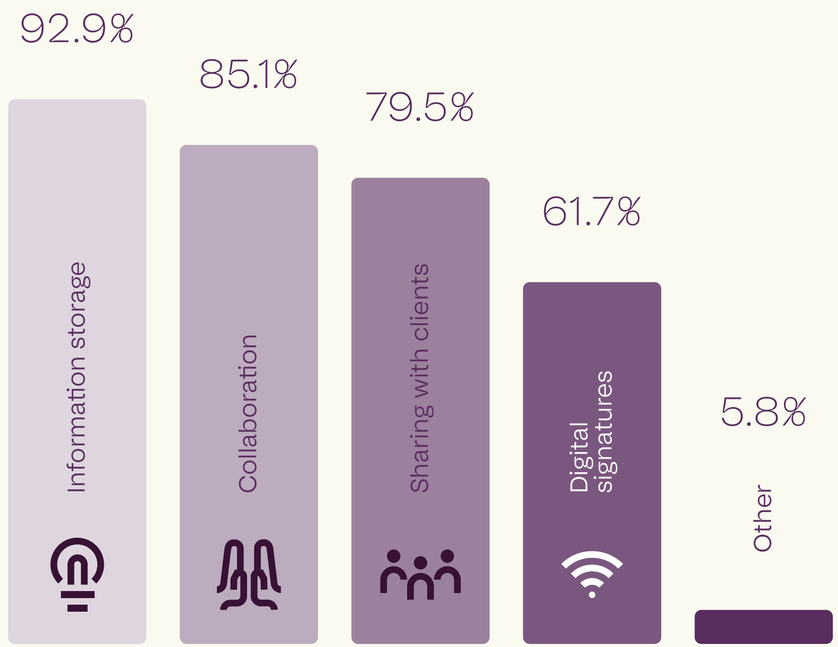
How cloud computing is transforming work

Given that cloud implementation is now a reality, how do people actually use it? This year's survey reveals that cloud adoption has evolved beyond simple file storage to become the backbone of collaborative construction workflows. The most common application remains information storage, with 92.9% of respondents using cloud services for this purpose, representing platforms such as OneDrive, Google Drive and iCloud. In 2023, that figure was 89%.

However, it's the uptake of collaborative applications that truly demonstrate cloud computing's potential for transformation. 85.1% of respondents now use cloud computing to collaborate with project team members to work on models, specifications and other documents. That's an 11% increase in just two years. This represents a major shift in how construction teams are working together, enabling real-time collaboration regardless of physical location.

In terms of client-facing work, 79.5% of respondents use the cloud to share documents and information with clients (77% in 2023). While 61.7% use it for digital signatures, contracts, and forms of appointment. While this latter figure is lower than other applications, it represents significant growth from the 32% recorded in our 2023 survey, indicating rapid adoption of fully digital contracting processes. This trend toward cloud-based legal and administrative processes shows the industry is becoming more comfortable with digital tools, moving past design and collaboration, to also include project management functions.

What aspects of cloud computing do you use?



The hybrid working foundation

The rise of cloud computing coincides with construction's embrace of flexible working schedules. The technology has proven essential in enabling hybrid working models that have become standard practice across many construction organisations, particularly in design and consultancy roles.

The integration of cloud computing with other digital tools, particularly BIM platforms, allows design professionals to access, modify and share complex models from any location. Similarly, project managers can maintain real-time, remote oversight of multiple projects.

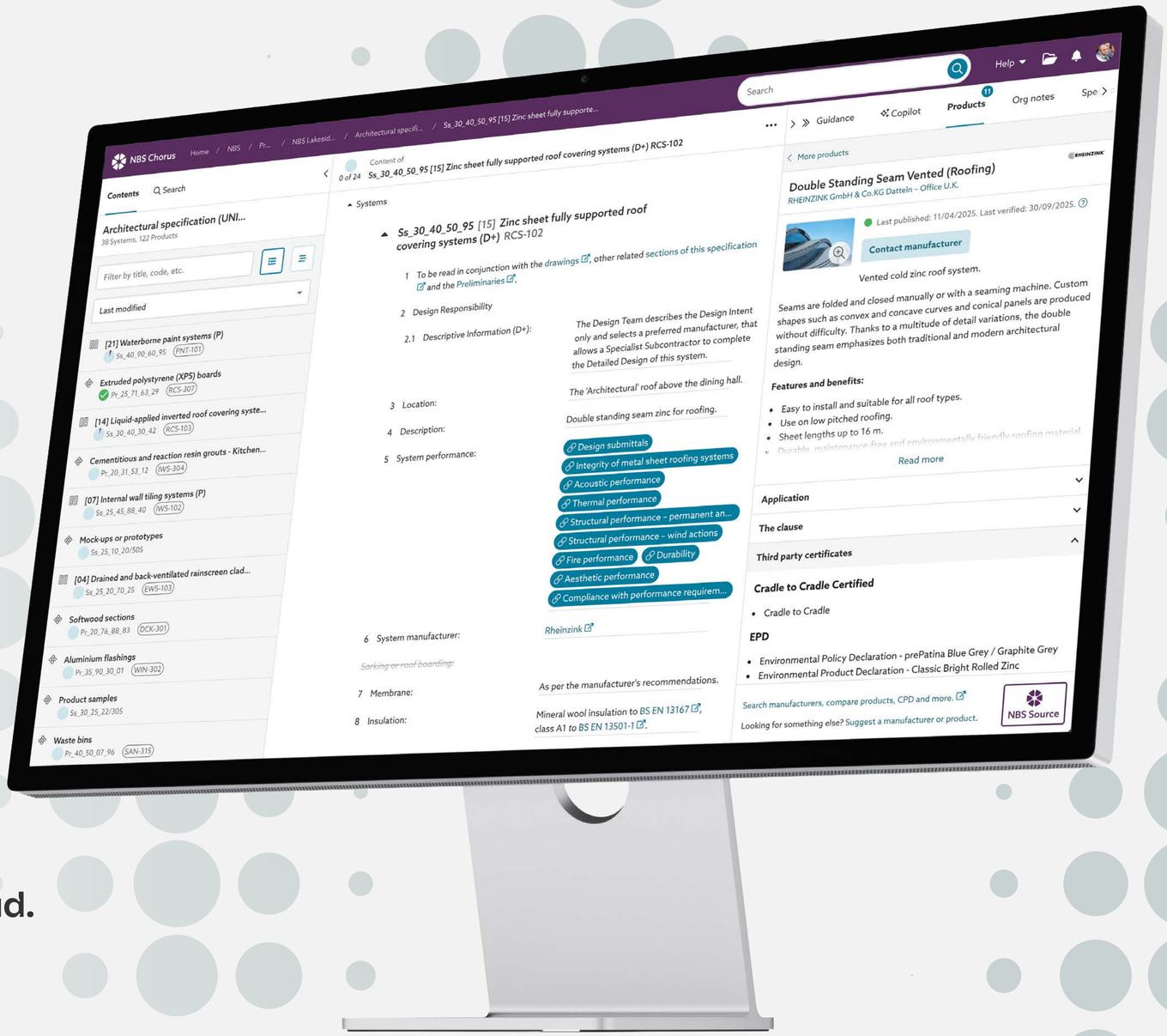
A gathering cloud

The ongoing shift toward greater cloud-based client collaboration has been hastened by changing requirements around project transparency and the greater need for real-time access to project information. Increasingly, clients expect almost instant access to project data, progress reports and design iterations; expectations that traditional file-sharing methods simply cannot meet.

With cloud adoption approaching universality and applications continuing to expand, cloud computing has become integral to operations, and now represents a foundational rewiring of how the construction industry operates. For the overwhelming majority, the question is no longer whether to adopt cloud technologies, but how to maximise their usefulness in an increasingly connected, collaborative and data-driven construction ecosystem.

NBS Chorus

Every successful project starts with a clear specification



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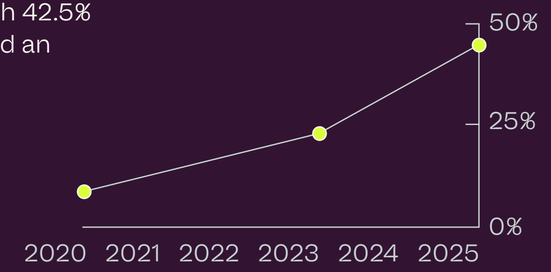
Artificial intelligence (AI): an emerging frontier

The construction industry's rapidly deepening relationship with AI represents one of the most dramatic shifts captured in our 2025 survey. While still emerging, AI adoption has accelerated at a remarkable pace, with potentially profound implications for the way professionals approach their daily workflows and long-term strategic planning.

To understand this transformation, it's necessary to examine the trajectory of AI adoption over recent years. In 2020, 38% said that they didn't know whether their organisation used AI, and only 9% of construction professionals reported that their organisations used it. By 2023, this figure had more than doubled to 22% reporting use of AI, with a further 20% planning implementation within a year. However, a significant portion of professionals (43%) indicated no plans for adoption at that time.

This year's survey reveals a fundamental shift in these attitudes and adoption patterns. From 9% uptake in 2020, AI adoption is now substantial, with 42.5% of respondents already using AI tools and an additional 37.7% planning to implement them within the next five years.

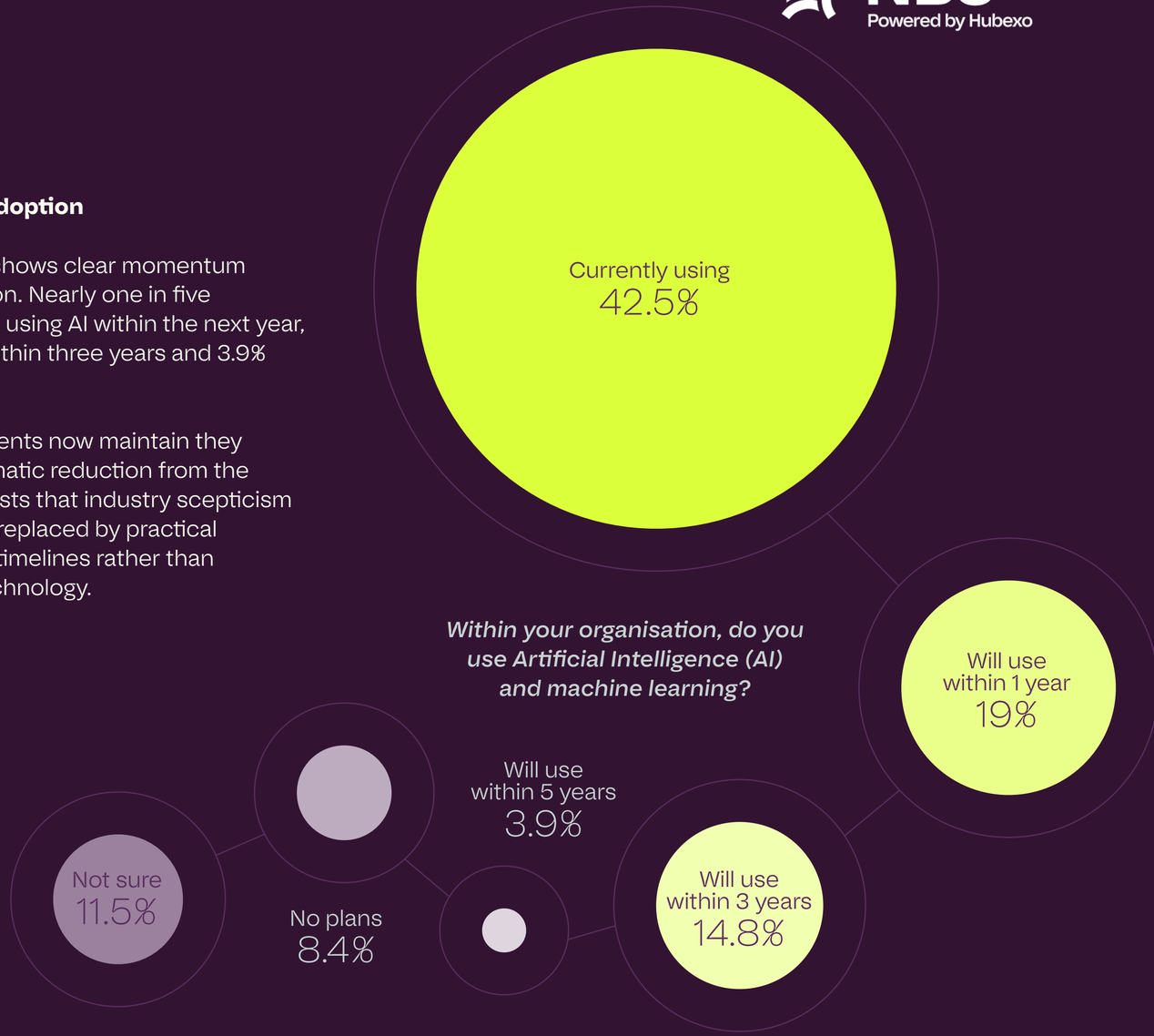


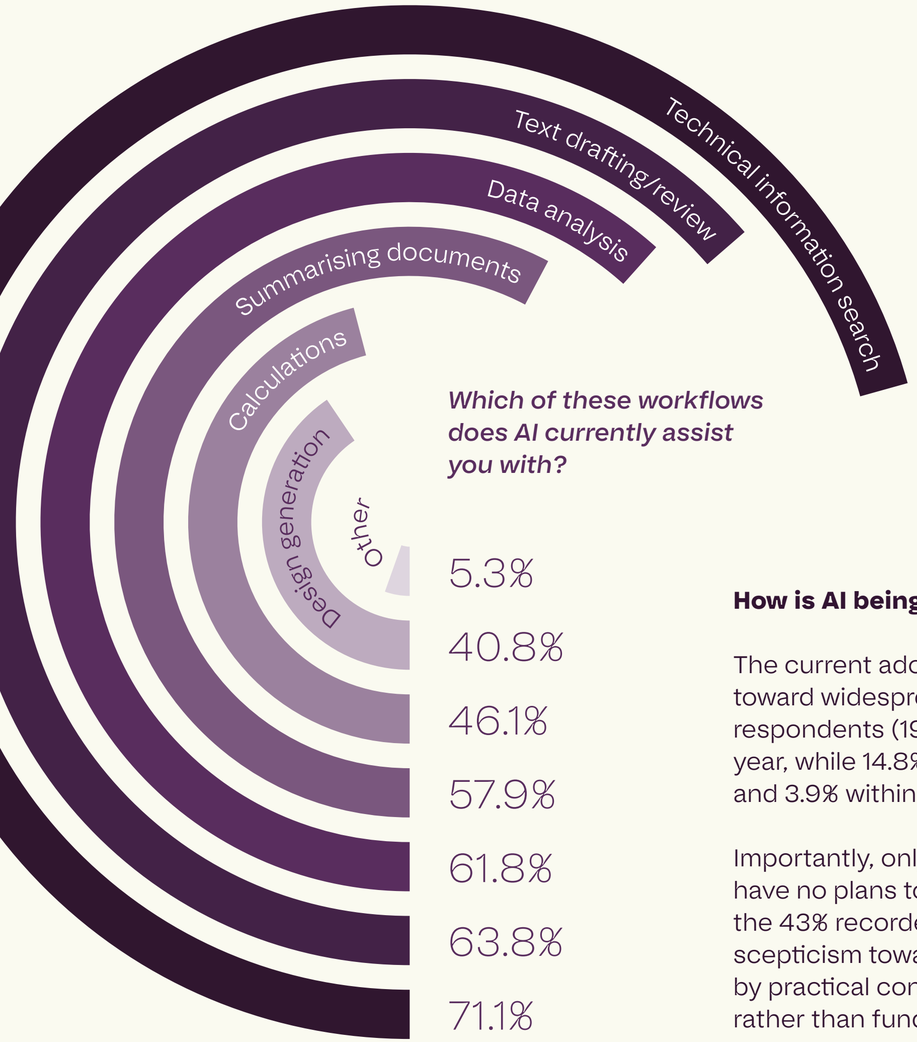
AI adoption over time

The steady acceleration of AI adoption

The current adoption landscape shows clear momentum toward widespread implementation. Nearly one in five respondents (19.0%) plan to begin using AI within the next year, while 14.8% anticipate adoption within three years and 3.9% within five years.

Importantly, only 8.4% of respondents now maintain they have no plans to adopt AI – a dramatic reduction from the 43% recorded in 2023. This suggests that industry scepticism toward AI has largely evaporated, replaced by practical consideration of implementation timelines rather than fundamental resistance to the technology.





Which of these workflows does AI currently assist you with?

5.3%

40.8%

46.1%

57.9%

61.8%

63.8%

71.1%

How is AI being applied?

The current adoption landscape shows clear momentum toward widespread implementation. Nearly one in five respondents (19.0%) plan to begin using AI within the next year, while 14.8% anticipate adoption within three years and 3.9% within five years.

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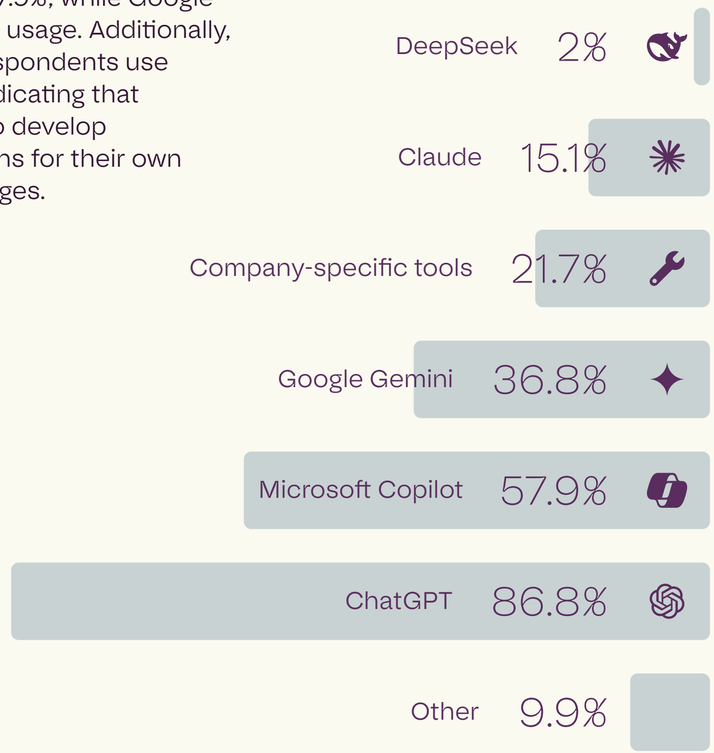
Who's being prompted?

Perhaps unsurprisingly, given its wider category dominance, ChatGPT dominates the AI tool landscape among construction professionals, with 86.8% of current AI users employing the platform. Microsoft Copilot follows at 57.9%, while Google Gemini accounts for 36.8% of usage. Additionally, more than a fifth (21.7%) of respondents use company-specific AI tools, indicating that organisations are beginning to develop proprietary, tailored AI solutions for their own construction-specific challenges.

Which AI tools are you currently using?



How do you expect AI to impact your own work over the next 2–3 years?

Future workflow forecasts

Construction professionals hold remarkably optimistic views about AI's potential impact on their work flows. When asked about expected changes over the next two-to-three years, 88.8% of respondents anticipate AI will bring either significant or transformative change to their work. Specifically, 23.0% expect transformative change, while 65.8% anticipate significant impact.

"Organisations are beginning to develop proprietary, tailored AI solutions for their own construction-specific challenges."

Changing attitudes towards AI

Our survey also presented respondents with a series of statements about AI's potential impacts in the construction industry, revealing generally positive but subtly nuanced attitudes. A significant majority (85.2%) agree that AI will have a positive impact on the construction industry, while 88.8% believe it will increase productivity.

Strong agreement also exists around AI's potential to improve reliability (72.6%), sustainability (69.3%) and safety (64.5%). However, opinions become more divided on AI's impact on employment. While 56.2% agree that AI will reduce staff numbers, views on whether AI threatens professions are more polarised, with 34.6% agreeing and 40.5% disagreeing.

AI adoption sentiment

Given the broader industry interest, the increasingly rapid uptake and sheer novelty of AI, we invited our survey respondents to provide additional comments on how they actually use the technology, with a view to understanding the potential it may have for meeting the challenges within the built environment. The responses we received highlight both opportunities and challenges associated with AI adoption in construction. They also outline the benefits in terms of specific use cases such as cost estimation, clash detection and automating mundane tasks. For example:

Respondents also mention the importance of human oversight and collaboration with AI tools.

“I use AI in my QAQC process on projects. I am looking for and extracting data, that is tedious to get to, in no time. I am also automating mundane and repetitive tasks to save time and get results faster.”

BIM Specialist

“AI can be used as a tool to improve efficiency and output... It cannot replace the human interaction required to allow these buildings to function correctly.”

Architectural Technologist

These comments reflect broader themes in respondent feedback, which consistently emphasise AI’s role as a productivity enhancer rather than a replacement for professional judgement.

Many comments also addressed practical challenges, including difficulties and challenges around integrating AI into existing workflows, concerns about cost and accessibility for smaller firms, and the ongoing need for training and education.

Thoughts on AI

“AI can be used to optimise existing work practices so key project issues can have further focus. I use AI to speed up contractual communications, commercial reports and understand key drivers of guidance notes. AI is an aid to optimise existing knowledge / practices whilst gaining new knowledge. There is an opportunity to rationalise lessons learnt with AI quickly and apply to future projects.”

Quantity Surveyor

“AI is being used for checking and assisting reviews, and is being looked at for assisting in design tasks. It will be a valuable checking tool but must be used in conjunction with a human ‘checker’ for sign off.”

BIM Professional

“Accuracy is the issue, the majority of the AI Hype Bubble at the moment is surrounding LLMs which hallucinate and generate inaccuracy but in very credible and believable ways (until someone checks the fine detail). This has to be resolved first before any AI really becomes of use within the Construction Industry where accuracy is an absolute requirement.”

Technical Product Specialist

“I use AI to in developing cost estimates, providing detailed and deeper inferences on construction processes, materials, plant hours and man-hours.”

Quantity Surveyor

Thoughts on AI

"It is another tool in our toolkit that we should leverage not fear. People cannot be chained to spreadsheets and keyboards for the rest of their lives. We have to change, especially now we are in the second quarter of the 21st Century."

Consultant/Designer

"I am using AI for general productivity including drafting emails, writing reports and analysing data. I am also heavily using AI for deep research which is allowing me to engage with new topics and an increased rate. [And finally,] I am also using AI to assist with writing code to create custom tools."

BIM Consultant

"With the implementation of BIM methodology in projects, we have begun to build comprehensive project databases. Artificial Intelligence can serve us to perform predictive analysis for future projects by considering information already collected from previous projects. For example, we can prevent common issues that have been reported in other projects or improve the frequency of preventive maintenance activities."

BIM Implementation Leader

A snapshot of the current human-AI partnership

Over all, the comments we received reflect a mature approach to AI adoption, striking an appropriate balance between technological enthusiasm and human-centred implementation. It's an approach that leverages technology's capabilities while preserving the professional judgement and creative problem-solving that remain essential to construction projects.

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Looking forward

The data suggests that AI adoption in construction is moving beyond the experimental implementation phase, and has begun shifting toward systematic integration into daily workflows. While challenges around training, cost, and workflow integration remain, the considerable optimism and rapid adoption rates indicate that AI is transitioning from being an emerging technology to fast becoming an essential industry tool.

Success in construction with AI will likely depend on maintaining the balance between technological capability and human expertise that current adopters have identified as crucial to effectively implementing AI.

AI in construction: Empowering humans, not replacing us

Artificial intelligence is transforming construction faster than many expected. Many professionals are already using AI tools, and the results speak for themselves; faster project delivery, fewer errors, and more time for the creative work that drew us to the industry in the first place. Yet questions remain about what this technological shift means for our roles and expertise.

The answer is more encouraging than you might think; AI isn't your replacement; it's your most capable co-worker, helping you do what you do best.

Dr. Stephen Hamil
Innovation Director

The Current State of Play

The statistics tell a compelling story. At NBS, our recent research for the 2025
Digital Construction Report reveals that 42.5% of construction professionals already use AI tools, with another 37.7% planning to adopt them within five years. These aren't reluctant adopters being dragged into the digital age; 85% of surveyed respondents believe AI will positively impact the construction industry. The professionals leading this charge are using AI to amplify, not replace, their expertise.

Where AI Excels (And Where It Doesn't)

Think about your typical day. How much time do you spend on administrative groundwork? Compliance checking, cross-referencing product databases, validating technical details against standards. These tasks are essential, but they're not why you became a construction professional.

AI excels at exactly this kind of work. It processes vast volumes of technical information without fatigue. It spots inconsistencies humans might miss. It handles the repetitive tasks that might otherwise consume hours of human resources but that don't require creative thinking.

What AI cannot do is understand the nuanced requirements of a client briefing. It can't navigate the complex relationship between budget constraints and design aspirations. It can't walk a site and instinctively know something isn't quite right. It can't weigh up the practical feasibility of sustainability goals, applying the wisdom that comes from years of project experience.

This is where the 'magic' happens; not human versus machine, but human *plus* machine.

Real-World Applications Today

Consider specification writing; often seen as mundane, but still critically important. AI can support with the research when developing the specification. It can then support with the quality control of final documentation, checking editorial style and with cross reference checking. When researching product specification options, AI can align and compare technical characteristics across products to help with decision making.

In sustainability, where the Green Building Council tells us 25% of UK emissions stem from the built environment, AI rapidly analyses product data, checks compliance with environmental standards, and models lifecycle impacts. However, architects and engineers set the sustainability vision, weigh complex trade-offs, and ensure environmental principles are embedded throughout the project.

For technical information searches, AI processes manufacturer databases, standards documents, and regulatory updates at superhuman speed. But it falls to construction professionals to interpret this information within project frameworks, making informed decisions that balance competing priorities.

The Collaboration Advantage

The most successful AI implementations in construction involve collaboration, not replacement. Where AI acts as a research assistant, data analyst, and compliance checker; handling the systematic tasks that support better decision-making.

This partnership delivers measurable benefits; early adopters report faster project delivery, fewer errors, more comprehensive analysis of design options. It lets professionals focus on high value activities; such as creative problem-solving, strategic thinking, and strengthening client relationships.

Modern AI systems are increasingly sophisticated, understanding context and integrating seamlessly with existing workflows. They offer transparent decision-making processes, so professionals can see how recommendations are generated and refine them accordingly.

Preparing for the Future

A good way to start using AI is by identifying routine tasks that consume time yet don't require creative input. Experiment with tools for technical research, data analysis, and documentation tasks. Most importantly, experienced professionals should focus on the uniquely human skills that no algorithm can replicate; creativity, judgement, and the ability to understand what clients truly need.

The Human Touch Remains Essential

Construction will always need human expertise. Projects require vision, creativity, and the ability to navigate complex stakeholder relationships. They need professionals who understand that buildings aren't just technical achievements; they're spaces where people live, work, and thrive.

AI will not be the end of human expertise in construction. It's the beginning of human expertise amplified, freed from routine tasks to focus on what we do best; creating exceptional, sustainable, functional buildings that serve human needs.

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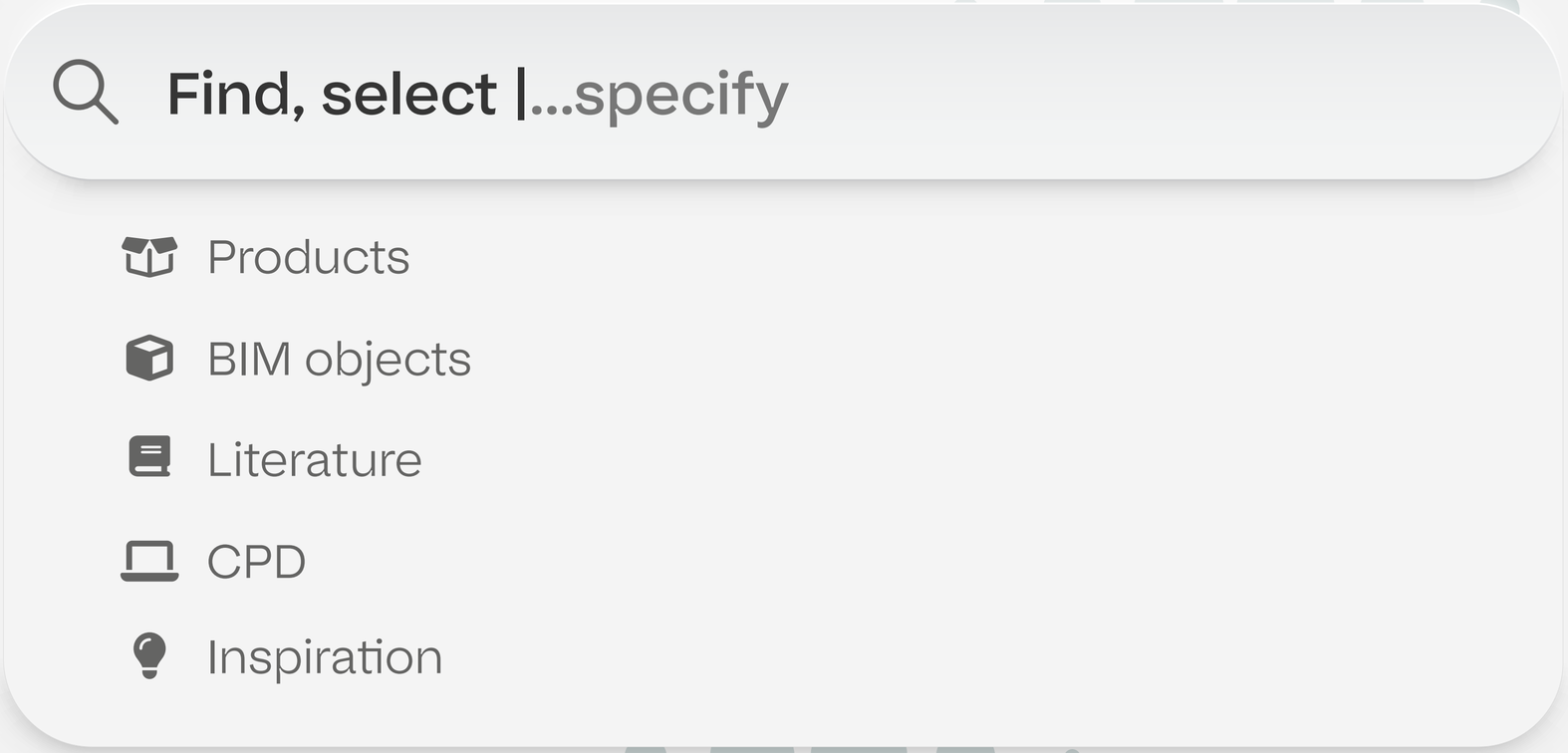

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RIBA and artificial intelligence

The RIBA's Expert Advisory Group (EAG) was established to assist RIBA address the rapid advances in AI, generative design systems and data. It aims to use research and expertise to enhance architects' core competencies, broaden the scope of what architects do, help integrate new working methods into practices, and improve compensation.

Adrian Malleson
Head of Economic Research and Analysis, RIBA

Adrian is an experienced economist and research analyst, with work focusing on sustainability, economics, and technological innovation. Adrian led the RIBA's Artificial Intelligence Report 2025 and is a member of RIBA's AI, generative design, and data expert advisory group.

As a part of this work, the RIBA AI Report 2025 provides an overview of the current use and adoption of AI among architects. In 2025, 59% of respondents reported using AI for at least the occasional project, up from 41% in 2024. Clearly, the use of AI is accelerating. UK architects are again at the forefront of the digitisation of the construction industry, embracing the opportunities AI offers to designers and design.

AI is increasingly being used in the early design stages. AI design tools (or existing tools with AI embedded) enable architects to rapidly create, explore, assess, and refine, a wide range of options towards the start of the design process. This offers the potential to deliver better functionality, more effective cost control, and improved societal outcomes. The quantifiable value of design may be demonstrated, early in a project.

Amid an accelerating climate crisis, AI tools are also set to be more frequently used to model and improve a building's embodied carbon, energy use, environmental impact, and future resilience.

Beyond design, AI is becoming integrated into the day to day of running a practice – creating bids, scheduling projects, writing reports, and doing marketing, for example.

But AI poses risks - it's not axiomatic that digitisation is always beneficial to processes, projects, or people. The risks of AI are significant. There are real concerns within the profession about AI posing a threat to practices, displacing professional roles, facilitating imitation, and enabling those without sufficient professional competence, or appropriate insurance, to provide building design services. There are also significant legal risks that need to be carefully assessed when using AI.

Consideration of these AI risks has renewed focus on the human: client engagement, ethical probity, professional responsibility, design originality and understanding the significance of place.

Through RIBA Horizons 2034 and the subsequent Future Business of Architecture programme, RIBA is exploring the longer-term dynamics between technological innovation and architecture.

RIBA will continue to monitor AI in the profession and wider industry, providing research, guidance and forums for knowledge exchange and learning.

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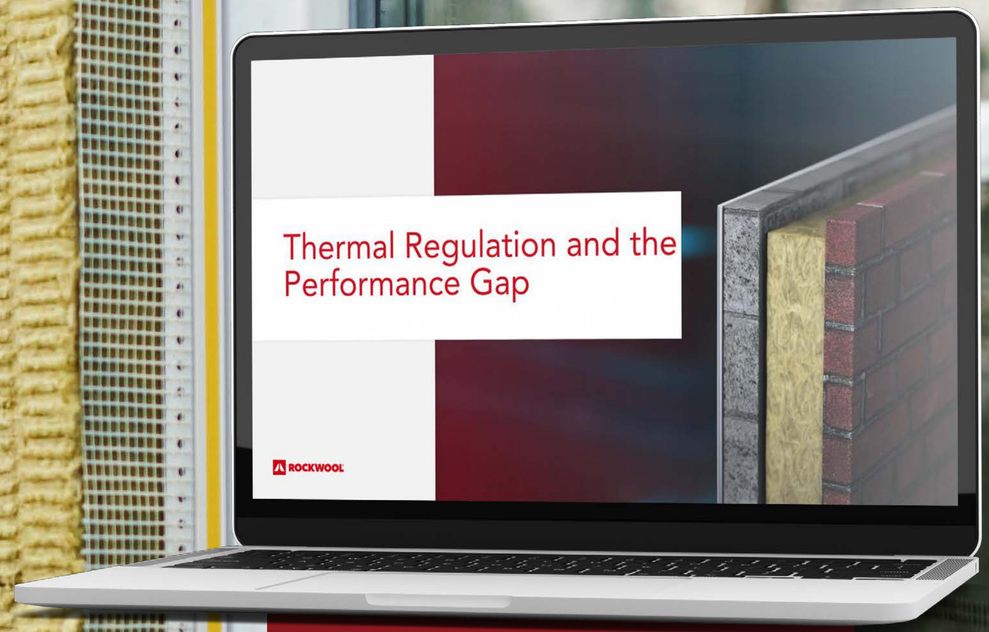

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Product data and supply chain innovation

Behind the scenes of construction's digital transformation lies a quieter but equally significant revolution: the restructuring of how product information flows through the supply chain. While BIM and AI are seemingly capturing all the headlines, the important work of data management and product information systems are simply part of the essential infrastructure that makes modern construction possible.

Product Information Management (PIM) systems may lack the glamour of cutting-edge technologies, but they are also proving to be transformative. The construction industry's relationship with product data is shifting from reactive information gathering, to a proactive data strategy, with far-reaching implications for specification processes.

"The implementation and understanding of these critical systems isn't always well communicated; a potential red flag for data governance and strategic alignment."

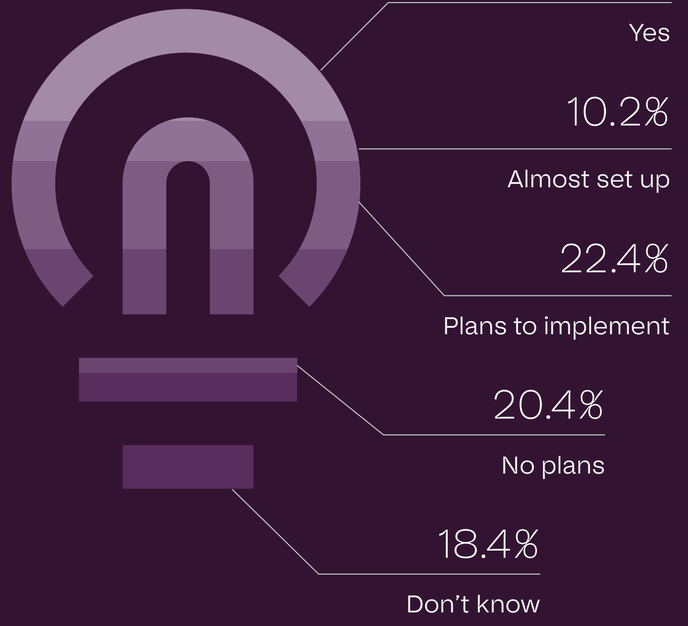
The PIM system: Making slow but steady progress?

PIM systems represent the backbone of modern product data strategies, yet their adoption shows an industry that's still getting to grips with its use. Our survey shows that 28.6% of suppliers currently use a PIM system, with an additional 10.2% in the process of setting one up and 22.4% planning implementation. Essentially, this represents little change from 2023 although there is a slight decrease in those with no plans to use PIM (down from 25% in 2023).

Interestingly, a diversity of platforms are being deployed. Rather than converging around a single dominant solution, organisations are using a variety of PIM platforms including Akeneo, Drupal PIM, Odoo, PEP, Power BI, Salsify, Source of Truth, Syncforce, ePIM and others. This ecosystem diversity suggests that construction's product data needs are more complex and varied than simple standardisation might address.

The 18.4% of respondents who "don't know" whether their organisation uses a PIM system is revealing in itself. It suggests that even within organisations, the implementation and understanding of these critical systems isn't always well communicated; a potential red flag for data governance and strategic alignment.

Do you use a Product Information Management (PIM) or similar system?

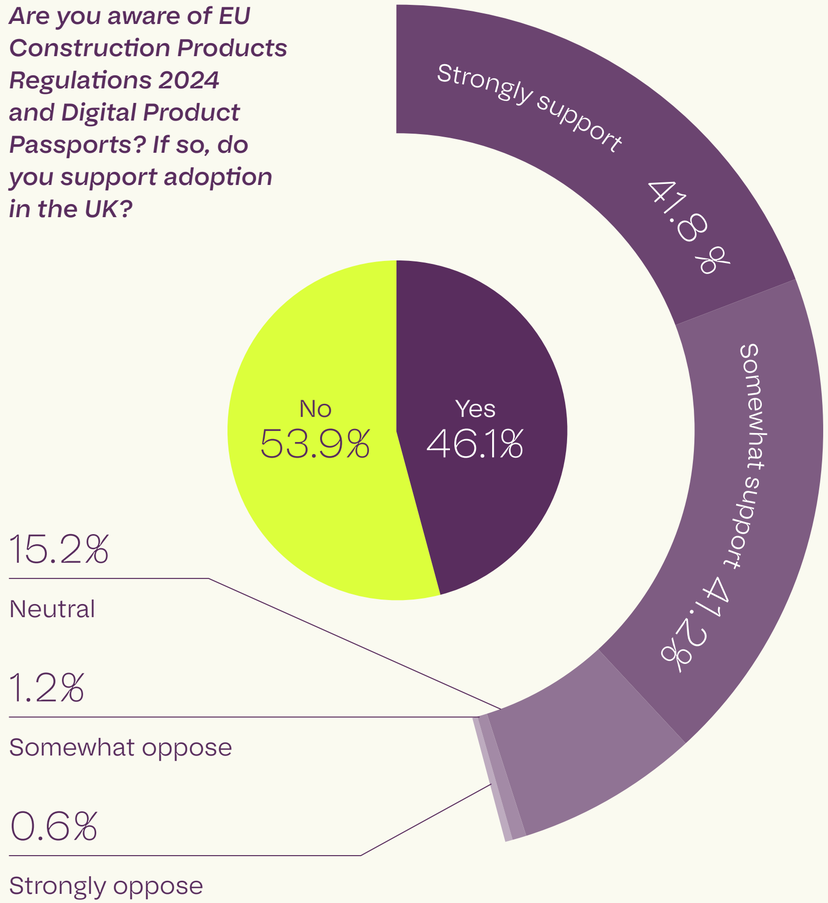


Digital Product Passports: The new regulatory wave

The emergence and adoption of Digital Product Passports (DPPs), driven by EU Construction Products Regulations 2024, has the potential to become a significant long-term trend. While awareness remains moderate at 46.1%, among those who are familiar with the regulations, there appears to be solid support for UK adoption, with 83% either strongly or somewhat supporting UK implementation.

Arguably, those industry professionals who do understand DPPs recognise them not as regulatory burden but as a market opportunity. The implications of DPPs extend beyond compliance, representing a move towards greater transparency, traceability and data-driven decision making in alignment with broader digital transformation trends.

Are you aware of EU Construction Products Regulations 2024 and Digital Product Passports? If so, do you support adoption in the UK?



The competitive landscape shift

What emerges from this data is a picture of an industry where information advantage is becoming competitive advantage. Organisations that have successfully integrated their product data systems report benefits that extend beyond operational efficiency to encompass strategic capabilities such as demand forecasting, market intelligence and client insight.

The construction industry's relationship with product data is clearly evolving from reactive information management to proactive data strategy. In an increasingly complex and demanding construction environment, information quality and accessibility have become as critical as product quality itself. Therefore, as regulatory requirements evolve and client expectations shift toward greater transparency, organisations with robust product data infrastructure will find themselves well-positioned to meet market demands.

"As an Information Manager, the regulations will only impact if clients believe there is a benefit. If it can be incorporated into other initiative such as circular economy there may be a greater benefit."

Director of BIM Services

Sustainability and environmental impact

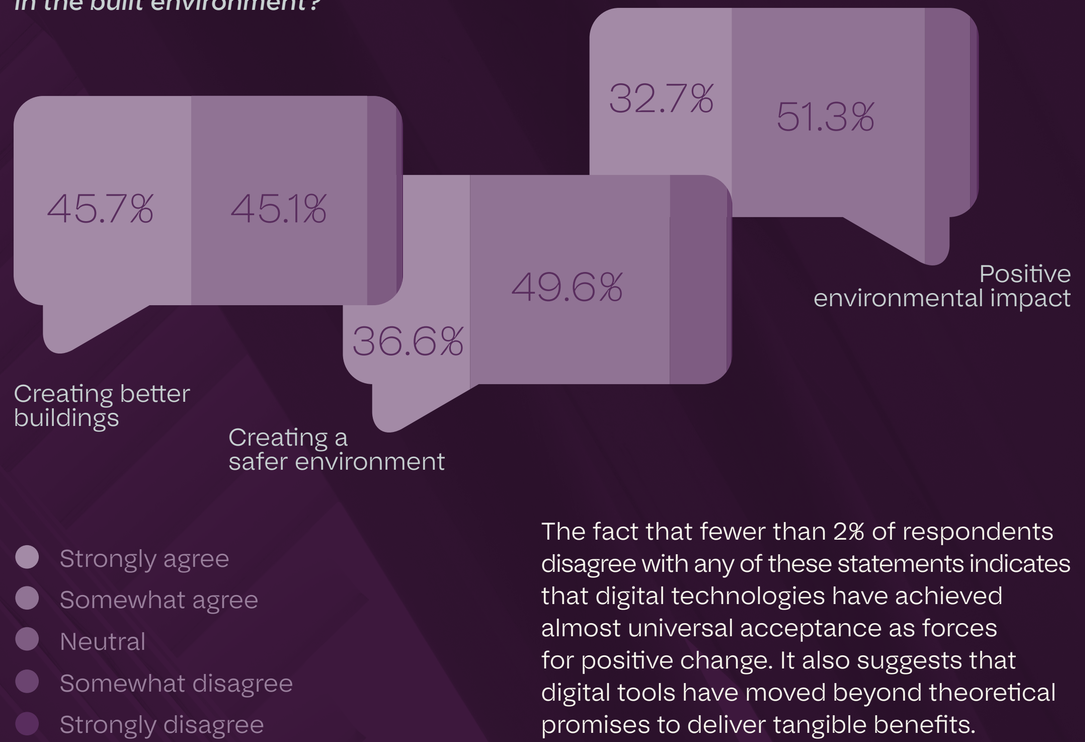
Perhaps no aspect of construction's digital transformation carries as much weight as its environmental effects. The industry faces intensifying pressure to demonstrate measurable progress toward sustainability goals and digital technologies have emerged as both enablers and auditors of these efforts.

The 2023 Digital Construction Report highlighted widespread belief among construction professionals that digital technologies were helping to improve environmental sustainability (72%), creating a safer built environment (73%), and helping create better buildings and spaces (almost 80%). Two years later, this positive outlook has grown further and solidified into an almost universal conviction.

In 2025, there is overwhelming agreement at 90.8% that digital technologies are creating better buildings, as well as having a positive environmental impact (86.2%) and creating a safer environment (84%). This represents a remarkable shift in industry sentiment. There's a widely positive view of the contributions that digital technologies can make to the built environment.

Professional perspectives on digital technology's impact

What are your views of the adoption of digital technologies and ways of working in the built environment?



The fact that fewer than 2% of respondents disagree with any of these statements indicates that digital technologies have achieved almost universal acceptance as forces for positive change. It also suggests that digital tools have moved beyond theoretical promises to deliver tangible benefits.

The measurement revolution

Behind this confidence lies a data-driven revolution in how the industry measures and manages environmental impact. Digital technologies are increasingly used to calculate varied metrics indicating environmental sustainability.

In 2023, 40% used digital technology to measure embodied carbon, 38% to assess energy demand, 32% to undertake lifecycle analysis and 18% to calculate waste. Our 2025 survey reveals a dramatic acceleration in these practices, with digital technologies now widely adopted for environmental impact assessment.

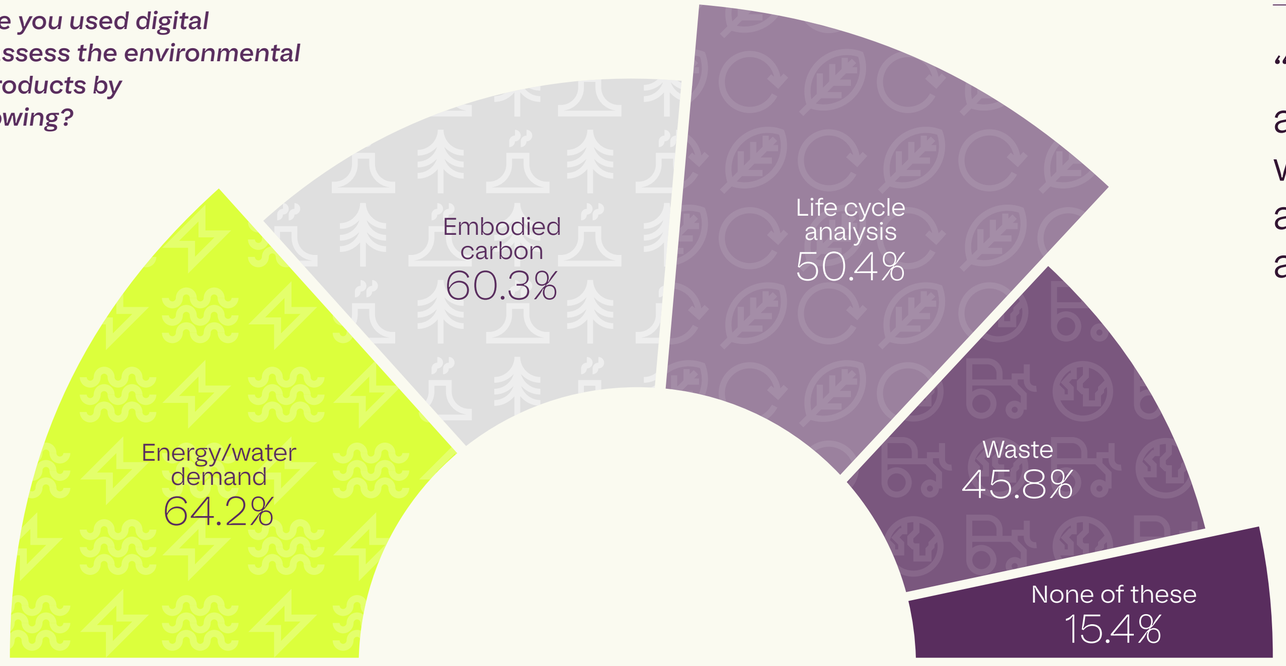
The growth in these figures is outstanding. Energy and water demand assessment has increased from 38% to 64.2% – a 26-percentage point jump in just two years. Embodied carbon measurement has grown from 40% to 60.3%, while lifecycle analysis adoption has risen from 32% to 50.4%.

Perhaps most significantly, only 15.4% of respondents don't use digital technologies for these assessments. Sustainability is now shifting from an industry aspiration and specialism to systematic measurement and management.

Beyond compliance: Strategic environmental management

The ability to provide accurate, real-time environmental data throughout a project's lifecycle is increasingly valued by clients, investors and regulators. Digital tools enable this transparency while also providing the insights needed to optimise environmental performance during design and construction phases.

In the past 12 months, have you used digital technologies to help you assess the environmental impact of your projects/products by calculating any of the following?



"Our 2025 survey reveals a dramatic acceleration in these practices, with digital technologies now widely adopted for environmental impact assessment."

Attitudes and outlook

The construction industry's relationship with digital transformation is changing in terms of growing confidence and ambition. Despite the challenges, the data reveals an industry increasingly optimistic about its digital capabilities.

Closing the innovation gap

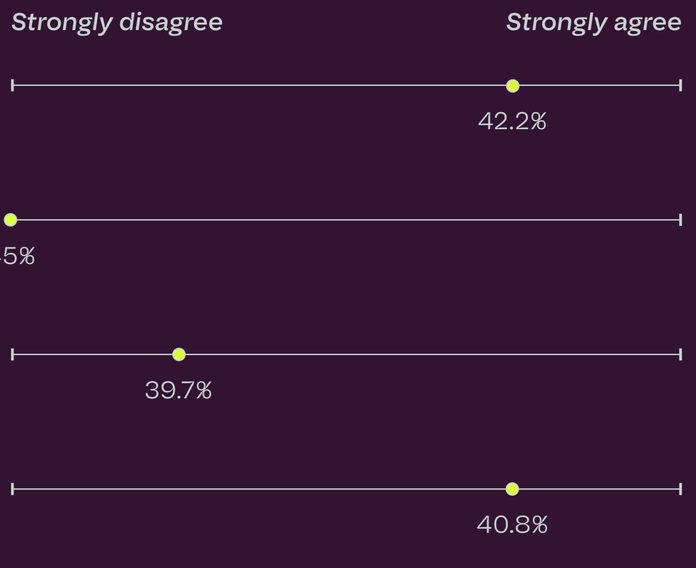
One of the most significant changes in industry sentiment relates to perceptions of digital laggardness. The long-held view that construction lags far behind other sectors in digital adoption is now being challenged by emerging evidence of growing progress.

In 2023, only 27% of respondents disagreed that the industry was lagging behind other sectors, while 47% maintained it was still playing catch-up. Our 2025 survey reveals a reversal in this outlook: a slim majority (51.4%) now believe the construction industry is no longer lagging behind, while only 32.7% disagree.

This shift represents more than changing perceptions; the widespread adoption of cloud computing, the acceleration of AI implementation, and the development of BIM workflows are all signs of increased confidence in the industry's digital capabilities.

"The long-held view that construction lags far behind other sectors in digital adoption is now being challenged by emerging evidence of growing progress."

Reports suggest construction lags behind other industries in adopting digital technologies. To what extent you agree or disagree with the following?



Universal relevance, yet persistent anxiety

The data also reveals a paradox. While confidence in digital progress has grown, so too has anxiety about keeping pace with change. In 2025, a majority of respondents (57.6%) worry about being left behind in digital adoption, compared to just 36% in 2023.

This apparent contradiction, increased confidence coupled with growing anxiety, arguably reflects a sophisticated understanding of digital transformation. Professionals recognise that industry has made significant progress, yet the pace of change continues to accelerate.

The concern about being left behind is particularly pronounced among respondents from smaller organisations, suggesting that the benefits of digital transformation may not be equally distributed.

One encouraging and contradictory trend from the data is the growing rejection that digital transformation is only for large organisations. In 2023, 49% strongly disagreed with this statement; by 2025, this figure has jumped to 69.3%.

This shift suggests that digital tools are becoming more accessible and that smaller organisations are now finding ways to implement digital workflows. The combination of cloud-based solutions, affordable AI tools, and increasingly user-friendly BIM platforms have all lowered barriers to digital adoption. This democratisation of digital transformation is crucial for industry-wide progress.

“Professionals recognise that industry has made significant progress, yet the pace of change continues to accelerate.”

Transformation potential: Ranking the technologies that matter

Which of the following technologies or ways of working do you think have the potential to transform the built environment for the better over the next five years?

	Overall rank
BIM	1
Artificial Intelligence	2
Cloud computing	3
Offsite construction	4
Digital twins	5
Virtual/augmented/ mixed reality	6

When asked to rank technologies by their potential to transform the built environment over the next five years, respondents provided clear priorities that reflect both current adoption patterns and future expectations.

The clear leaders – BIM and AI – represent both established foundation and emerging frontier. BIM's top ranking reflects its role as essential infrastructure for digital construction, while AI's second-placing demonstrates industry recognition of its transformative potential.

Cloud computing's third-place ranking might seem modest given its near-universal adoption, but this likely reflects its role as enabling technology, rather than direct transformer.

"BIM, machine learning and AI influences must be determined by the user, and be used with care. They are here to help carry the heavier repetitive loads."

Architect

Further views on digital adoption

We invited respondents to comment further on digital transformation, BIM and other new technologies. This prompted a variety of responses, revealing common themes.

Data management and interoperability emerge as persistent challenges, with many professionals highlighting the need for better integration between different digital tools and platforms. This aligns with the survey findings on integration benefits and suggests that workflow connectivity remains a priority.

Training and education concerns feature prominently, indicating that while digital tools are becoming more accessible, the knowledge and skills needed to use them remain barriers to adoption, particularly in smaller organisations.

Implementation challenges in smaller firms receive significant attention, reinforcing the survey data showing ongoing anxiety about being left behind, despite growing confidence in industry-wide progress.

The consistency of these themes across different types of respondents suggests that while digital transformation is accelerating, fundamental challenges around skills, integration and organisational capacity remain stubbornly persistent.

“I think education in design and project management would be of great advantage. Applying technologies without understanding the requirement is a waste.”

BIM Specialist

Concluding thoughts

The NBS Digital Construction Report 2025 captures an industry at a pivotal moment of transition. Two years after our last comprehensive survey, we see that construction has continued its digital evolution and is now moving into a new phase of more confident, strategic technology adoption.

Digital dividends

Perhaps the most significant finding in our 2025 survey is evidence of greater digital sophistication across multiple technologies and applications. BIM adoption remains robust at 72.3%, but the industry's understanding of BIM has evolved beyond 3D modelling to encompass standards compliance, process integration, and strategic digital transformation.

Similar progress is evident across all major technology categories. Cloud computing has achieved near-universality at 86.3%, changing from useful tool to becoming essential infrastructure. Meanwhile, AI has emerged from being an experimental novelty to mainstream acceptance, with 42.5% of organisations now implementing AI solutions and the vast majority planning future adoption.

It appears our respondents are thinking more strategically and making increasingly sophisticated choices about which digital tools deliver genuine value, drawing up purposeful digital strategies that support business and project objectives.

The confidence transformation

One of the most striking aspects of the 2025 data is the uptick in industry confidence. The long-held narrative that construction lags behind other sectors in digital adoption can now be challenged by emerging evidence of genuine progress. With 51.4% of respondents now believing the industry is no longer lagging behind – compared to just 27% in 2023 – we see a fundamental shift in self-perception.

This confidence extends to environmental impact, where overwhelming majorities agree that digital technologies are creating better buildings (90.8%), improving environmental sustainability (86.2%), and enhancing safety (84%). The near-universal nature of these views suggests that digital tools are delivering observable benefits.

"The long-held narrative that construction lags behind other sectors in digital adoption can now be challenged by emerging evidence of genuine progress."

The realities of implementation

This increased confidence is countered by realism about the challenges of implementation. Increasingly, professionals are worrying about being left behind; up to 57.6% in 2025, from 36% in 2023. This reflects a greater understanding that digital transformation is a continual journey rather than a final destination.

While digital tools are becoming more accessible, significant challenges remain around skills, resources, and organisational capacity. This is especially true for smaller organisations. The democratisation of digital transformation is progressing but remains incomplete.

Future priorities

The survey reveals clear priorities for future transformation. BIM and AI stand out as the technologies with highest transformation potential, representing both established foundation and emerging frontier. The strong performance of environmental assessment tools, with 64.2% now using digital technologies for energy and water demand analysis and 60.3% for embodied carbon, reflects the industry's increasing focus on measurable sustainability outcomes.

Digital Product Passports, while still not universally understood, show remarkable support among those familiar with them, with 83% backing from UK respondents. This suggests significant opportunity for organisations that can effectively navigate the intersection of regulatory compliance, supply chain transparency, and competitive advantage.

The way ahead

What emerges from the 2025 data is a picture of an industry that has found its digital footing and is now building systematically on solid foundations. The challenges that remain – skills development, integration complexity and organisational adaptation – are challenges of implementation rather than fundamental resistance to digital transformation.

The industry's digital future appears increasingly secure, built on the maturation of core technologies like BIM and cloud computing, the emergence of transformative capabilities like AI, and the development of sophisticated approaches to environmental measurement and management.

Success in this evolving landscape will depend on making strategic choices about which digital tools genuinely enhance work quality, project outcomes and business sustainability. The evidence suggests that construction professionals are increasingly equipped to make these choices, positioning the industry for continued digital progress in the coming years.

> "What emerges is a picture of an industry that has found its digital footing, now building on solid foundations."

About NBS

NBS is a global technology platform that combines quality content and connectivity for anyone involved in the design, supply and construction of the built environment.

For architects, engineers, designers and contractors, NBS' specification platform enables them to work smarter and reduce their risk.

For construction product manufacturers, NBS is a digital marketing platform, exposing your products to decision-makers across the construction project timeline, making it easy for specifiers to find, select and specify your products.

NBS is part of Hubexo, formerly known as Byggfakta Group, which provides cutting-edge data, insights, and software solutions to the global construction industry.

To learn more

- Visit **theNBS.com**
- Email **info@theNBS.com**
- Call **0345 456 9594**

Appendix

559 built environment professionals completed the survey.

As with previous surveys, in terms of organisational project role, consultants make up the largest group: 315 respondents, accounting for 66.5% of the sample. However, 65 (13.7%) are suppliers of products and materials, 57 (12%) are constructors or contractors, 40 (8.4%) are 'other' and 32 (6.8%) are clients. Those roles specified as 'other' include academics, BIM coordinators, digital service providers, surveyors and students.

The fact that a majority of respondents (66.5%) identified as consultants, designers, or specifiers, indicates a strong representation from the design and specification side of the construction industry. This distribution should be considered when interpreting the results, as the perspectives may be more heavily weighted toward design professionals.

Type of organisation

A wide range of organisation types is represented, architectural practices are most common (33%), manufacturers (11%), multidisciplinary practices (7%), building services engineers (7%), main contractors (6%), sub-contractors (4%) and local authorities (4%). 'Other' represents 12% and these include developers, consultants, building control, fire safety, charities, transport organisations and other types of consultancy.

All organisation sizes are represented with the most common being 'more than 1000' (20.4%). The profile of respondents by organisation size is similar to our 2023 survey.

Role/Professional discipline

Individuals describing themselves are architects are the most common professional discipline (24%), followed by BIM specialists (22%). Several other design disciplines such as architectural technologists (6%) and architectural technicians (3%) are represented. The 15% who described their role as 'other' include project managers, surveyors, engineers, facilities managers, landscape architects, interior designers, digital specialists, sustainability managers and quality managers.

Location

259 respondents (72.3%) are based in the UK, and therefore 27.7% are based in other countries. This is similar to 2023. Outside the UK, Europe is the best represented area with 41 (11.6%) followed by 26 in Asia (5%),13 in Africa (3.8%), 9 in the Middle East (2.4%) and 7 in North & Central America (1.9%), 5 in South America (1.4%). Oceania is represented also and therefore there are respondents from all continents except Antarctica.

Age distribution

Respondents include professionals of all (adult) age ranges, with half aged between 35 and 54.

18-24 = 3%
25-24 = 19%
35-44 =30%
45-54 = 20%
55-64 = 21%
65+ = 6%

Methodology

The survey was conducted in 2025, adhering to the Market Research Society (MRS) Code of Conduct and data protection legislation. All responses were treated confidentially. The survey was distributed electronically, resulting in 559 total responses:

- 358 complete responses (64%)
- 114 partial responses (20.4%)
- 87 disqualified responses (15.6%)