

Building the future: A conversation with Davitt Lamon on the value of BIM Certification

Building Information Modelling (BIM) has been part of the construction sector for decades, but it is receiving renewed focus in Ireland as it becomes central to public sector procurement. We sat down with Davitt Lamon, Head of BIM at the National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI), to discuss his work and the role of NSAI in the sector.

Davitt, tell us about the setting up of the BIM Department at NSAI?

The BIM Department was established at NSAI in December 2024.

It was a direct response to an industry need for a rigorous, independent certification scheme for ISO 19650, the international standard for managing information over the lifecycle of a built asset.

Our role extends beyond just issuing certificates. We are here to drive Ireland's digital transition and enable a more productive construction industry.

Since our establishment, we have supported clients ranging from SMEs to large Tier 1 contractors in achieving certification.

Beyond auditing, we are heavily invested in stakeholder engagement and research, such as our recent collaboration with TU Dublin on benchmarking organisational BIM certification, to ensure our schemes remain at the centre of the construction sector's needs.

There seems to be a lot of misconceptions around BIM Certification and what it entails. Can you talk us through that?

The biggest misconception is that BIM is solely about 3D modelling or complex software. It's not.

It is fundamentally about Information Management. It is about getting the right information to the right person at the right time.

Another common myth is that certification is only for bigger companies working on large-scale projects.

That is simply not the case. All companies, regardless of size, manage information every day.

We see this diversity in our own client base. On the one hand, you have a large main contractor like John Paul Construction, who uses BIM certification to provide certainty and quality assurance on large-scale residential housing projects.

On the other hand, we have TJ O'Connor & Associates, a 35-person



Davitt Lamon, Head of BIM at the NSAI

SME consultancy using the exact same ISO 19650 framework to manage civil and structural information for infrastructure projects like wastewater treatment plants.

For both, certification isn't about the software they use; it's about verifying that they have a robust information management process for their projects.

Walk us through the process of certification. What can a prospective client expect?

The process is designed to be structured, transparent, and educational.

It begins with the application, where we tailor a quote to your specific scope.

Once you apply, we move to the Readiness Assessment. This is a collaborative stage where we review your documentation and identify gaps early, so you aren't going into the final audit blind.

Next is the Implementation Audit, where we assess your processes in practice.

We pride ourselves on the quality of this engagement.

Clients like John Paul Construction have noted that our auditors have 'actual industry backgrounds'.

We aren't just tick-box checking; we are challenging you to maintain high standards and identifying opportunities for improvement.

Once successful, certification is issued for three years, with annual surveillance audits to ensure you stay on track and continue to improve.



What feedback have you received from NSAI clients so far?

The feedback has been exceptionally positive.

In our recent benchmarking study, certified clients rated the value of NSAI BIM certification at 4.15 out of 5, and 100% of participants stated they would recommend it to others.

The benefits they report are tangible. 69% of companies cited improved consistency and quality in their documentation, while 62% highlighted the value of independent validation of their capability.

Crucially, certification is viewed as a strategic asset and an investment in future readiness.

It standardises the way we deliver projects and manage information.

This standardisation is the foundation for innovation; you cannot automate a process you don't understand or control.

By standardising their process, these companies are laying the groundwork for future digitisation and productivity.

Can you tell us about the role of BIM in public procurement?

The landscape has shifted significantly. The public sector introduced a phased BIM mandate in January 2024, which government-led initiatives like the Build Digital project support by providing essential



resources and guidance to the industry.

This isn't just a generic requirement. It involves specific technical standards including ISO 19650 for process, Uniclass for classification, IFC for open data exchange, and ICMS 3 for lifecycle cost and carbon reporting.

BIM certification is becoming the 'passport' for this new environment.

It is a natural evolution of other management system certifications like ISO 9001. It serves as a pre-qualification marker that instantly tells public sector clients that a company

has the capability to meet these rigorous digital requirements.

Looking ahead, what can we expect for the BIM sector?

We are expecting continued significant growth. As the mandate matures, the demand for verified capability is rising.

In 2026, we are looking to expand our certification pathways to meet this need.

We are currently exploring Individual Certification to verify personal competency, as well as Project Certification to validate the delivery of specific high-value assets or pilot projects.

The industry has expressed a strong interest in these areas, particularly for roles related to information management.

Our goal is to continue building a certification ecosystem that supports the entire supply chain, from the individual practitioner to the organisation and the project itself.

Any final words of advice to share?

If you'd like to find out more, I'd recommend visiting the NSAI website at [NSAI.ie/BIM](https://www.nsa.ie/BIM).

You can find detailed case studies there of the companies we've mentioned earlier, which really bring the benefits to life.

To support the industry, we have also developed specific BIM Standards Collections designed for different stages of your journey.

The BIM Essentials Collection covers the core ISO 19650 standards and national guidance, while the BIM Advanced Collection covers broader lifecycle and exchange requirements.

Whether you are an SME or a Tier 1 contractor, the tools are there to help you standardise your business, reduce risk, and prepare for the future of digital construction.



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