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SpexNews – Second Edition

This is the second issue of SpexNews, Digicon's new primary information channel to get industry specification-related topics to you in a regular manner. We intend to publish one of these newsletters each calendar quarter, to coincide with the publication of a summary of changes to our flagship specification products.

Our “sponsored” web site for OmniClass 2006 Edition 1.0 has been very active, with industry firms downloading the new version. We have had many phone calls from firms actively adopting it for organizing their resource information.

It has been our observation that MasterFormat 2004 acceptance in the industry has been swift with very few pockets of resistance left. Industry practitioners on the contracting side have been silent on this aspect – as they have realized that there was very little difference from the norm, and the change had very little impact on them, their work, and their role in the industry.

Specnique Gets a Facelift

Digicon is anticipating delivery of a greatly updated Specnique version from the software developers sometime in July. The new version will include long-anticipated enhancements such as the ability to include custom Table of Contents entries (for non-specification items such as Drawings), a project section cross-referencing tool, the ability to track database versions, more and improved reporting features, and a number of user-interface improvements to make the software even easier to use.

A more complete list of enhancements will be published when the software is ready. Existing Specnique subscribers will be notified by e-mail when the updated software is available.

SpecSuite 2006-Q3 Update (July)

Sections Updated

This quarter, only Canadian Master Specification (CMS) sections and MiniSPEC (MS) sections have been affected. The new and updated 30 CMS sections have been updated, and four new sections added. MiniSPEC has 4 updated sections. Most sections are civil engineering oriented, but some are relevant to other packages as well.

A summary of sections, and their changes, are listed here:

Spec	Section Number	Section Title	Discipline* Packages	Status
CMS	03 11 00	Concrete Forming	ACSL	Updated
CMS	03 20 00	Concrete Reinforcing	ACSL	Updated
CMS	03 30 00	Cast-in-Place Concrete	ACSL	Updated
CMS	03 35 11	Concrete Floor Sealing	ACS	Updated
CMS	03 35 12	Concrete Admixtures	ACS	Updated
CMS	03 37 13	Shotcrete	ACS	Updated
CMS	03 52 16	Lightweight Insulating Concrete	A	Updated
CMS	03 54 00	Self-Leveling Underlayment	AH	Updated
CMS	04 01 21	Masonry Restoration and Cleaning	ASL	Updated
CMS	04 04 05	Mortar and Masonry Grout (number changed from 04 05 13)	ASL	Updated
CMS	04 04 15	Masonry Anchorage and Reinforcement (new)	ASL	Added
CMS	04 04 25	Masonry Units (new)	ASL	Added
CMS	04 04 75	Stone Masonry Units (new)	ASL	Added
CMS	04 23 00	Glass Unit Masonry	A	Updated
CMS	04 26 13	Single Wythe Masonry	ASL	Updated
CMS	04 26 16	Veneer Masonry	ASL	Updated
CMS	04 26 19	Reinforced Unit Masonry	ASL	Updated
CMS	04 27 13	Composite Unit Masonry	ASL	Updated
CMS	04 27 23	Cavity Wall Unit Masonry	ASL	Updated
CMS	04 29 13	Shop Fabricated Masonry Panels	A	Updated
CMS	08 80 50	Glass and Glazing (name change from "Glazing")	AI	Updated
CMS	23 64 00	Water Chillers - Packaged	M	Updated
CMS	23 64 10	Water Chillers - Air Cooled	M	Updated
CMS	23 64 13	Water Chillers - Water/Steam Absorption	M	Updated
CMS	23 64 14	Water Chillers - Gas Fired Absorption	M	Updated
CMS	23 64 15	Water Chillers - Gas Fired Unitary Absorption	M	Updated
CMS	23 64 19	Water Chillers - Centrifugal	M	Updated
CMS	23 65 13	Cooling Towers - Forced Draft	M	Updated
CMS	23 65 16	Cooling Towers - Induced Draft	M	Updated
CMS	23 65 43	Cooling Towers - Ejector	M	Deleted
CMS	32 31 40	Electronic Security Gate (new)	E	Added

Spec	Section Number	Section Title	Discipline* Packages	Status
MS	03 05 00	Cast-in-Place Concrete	A	Updated
MS	03 35 10	Concrete Floor Finishing	A	Updated
MS	03 54 10	Self-Levelling Underlayment	A	Updated
MS	08 80 55	Glass and Glazing (name change from "Glazing")	A	Updated

* Discipline package coes: A = Architectural, C = Civil Engineering, E = Electrical, H = Heritage, I = Interiors, L = Landscape, M = Mechanical, S=Structural

Affected SpecSuite Packages

Sections updated this quarter affect the following packages:

- CMS Complete
- CMS Architectural
- CMS Civil Engineering
- CMS Electrical
- CMS Heritage
- CMS Interiors
- CMS Landscape
- CMS Mechanical
- CMS Mechanical / Electrical
- CMS Structural Engineering
- MiniSPEC Complete
- MiniSPEC Architectural

Concrete and Masonry Sections: Canadian CSA standards for concrete and masonry underwent considerable changes recently, we believe for the better. We have revised our spec sections for CMS and for MiniSPEC accordingly. For CMS, after careful consideration, we decided to change the way in which masonry specification sections were edited by our users. We now have two groups of specification sections; effectively five (5) product sections for the basic masonry materials and seven (7) "work result" sections. This means that it will take two (2) sections to address a single masonry application – effectively together the same size of section as before. But if there are two or more differing masonry wall types, the net page count for a project will be less. This change permits reduced specification size overall, as duplication of basic materials is stated once, in one section only. This change will permit us to update the sections more easily, quickly and frequently - as standards and industry practices change.

Mechanical Sections: Ejector cooling towers have been deleted, since they are no longer available. The remaining cooling tower and chiller sections have been updated with newer Canadian standards.

CCDC 2 Update

Our check with the powers that be, on the status of the (still) forthcoming CCDC 2 (Canadian standard form of contract for stipulated price) indicates a strong possibility of a 2006 Edition.. We await this impending revision release. Our Divisions 00 and 01 sections will all be impacted by this new Edition. The current sections relating to the 1994 Edition will be kept available for a while, separate from the new sections that will address the new contract form.

BrandedSPEC

Digicon is almost set to begin offering the public it's new master specification system called BrandedSPEC, due sometime in July or August. And best of all, the new system will be FREE to users!

As it's name suggests, BrandedSPEC is a compilation of branded (proprietary) master specifications that have been written to specify a particular manufactured product. The cost of development and maintenance of BrandedSPEC sections is borne by the manufacturers themselves, and offered to the public at no cost.

The BrandedSPEC offering is a better solution than existing specifications offered by manufacturers themselves (or those offered by the popular internet portals), because the file formats will be 100% compatible with the existing

Digicon editing software options. In addition, Digicon will be enforcing our high quality standards for text content before they are offered to the public.

Digicon plans to encourage product manufacturers to develop ProductFormat documents for their individual products, which enable specifiers to accurately specify their products for a project using the matching BrandedSPEC documents.

Manufacturers should contact Digicon at Spex.ca if they wish to participate in the BrandedSPEC program.

ProductFormat

ProductFormat is a standard which Digicon has developed and honed over the last 10 years or so, and its primary purpose is to standardize on the format (or presentation) of product information in a manner which parallels a specification section.

ProductFormat is anticipated to do for product information what SectionFormat does for specification sections in a Project Manual. ProductFormat:

- provides a useful and consistent organization of technical data for a specifier or designer to assess, as they make their decisions on whether or not to accept and specify a product for a project,
- encourages product manufacturers and distributors to cite their product's properties in a manner that assists a specifier's decision making process,
- organizes critical product data in a manner which is necessary for project applications utilizing BIM (Building Information Model) technology (refer to the BIM description elsewhere in this newsletter).

This document is intended for manufacturers to explain all of the relevant product properties, in a format which is easily reviewed by specifiers. With the advent of impending standards that allow electronic linking between 3D CAD / costing / specifications, we will need a standard such as ProductFormat to connect the relevant product properties to these other applications.

Building Information Model (BIM)

The Building Information Model (BIM) is a new buzzword being widely circulated (in global circles, not just North America), and refers to the concept of building a virtual model of a building, in a computerized environment. BIM goes beyond the storage of geometric (CAD) information, and incorporates other types of information about the objects being modeled (such as materials, costs, etc.).

The concept of storing and tracking CAD objects as building models is not a new one, although in practice, few design offices work in this mode. Recent applications outside of the CAD world are beginning to use models that are being produced by CAD software of today, and so the BIM concept is now becoming a reality.

One long-desired application is that of CAD/specifications links, so that the tedious job of generating a specification from existing data can be automated, rather than creating it from scratch using humans to make the translation as it is done today by 99% of our industry. Digicon is taking a pro-active stance and investing in research to making this link through our Specnique software.

Look to the next issue of our newsletter, for more information about our plans for Specnique to meet the goal of BIM from a specifications point of view.

Digicon Partners Recently Returned from ICIS

David and Wayne Watson (owners of Digicon Information Inc.) have recently returned from a week of meetings at the International Construction Information Society (ICIS), held this year in June in Durban, South Africa. ICIS is an organization of companies from around the world who produce and market specification systems for the construction

industries in their respective countries. ICIS meets annually and have been doing so since 1992 – but more formally organized since 1994. That inaugural meeting hosted 16 countries, and was held in Banff, Alberta, Canada.

This year's conference focused on a forthcoming evolution of electronic tools being used by industry design and construction firms, using CAD and similar electronic tools to produce and use project documents. These changes are recognized as a significant improvement to the industry, over tradition processes of producing drawings, specifications, costing, and product identification individually, over existing methods to produce these same processes.

This technology is being piloted around the world, and Digicon will be performing detailed research in this area for it's Canadian products over the next several years. The OmniClass document recently developed and mentioned above will be providing a method of categorizing information into these new electronic tools.

We'll keep our subscribers posted on this development, starting with the brief BIM article in this newsletter.

Relevant Links

This section will not evolve into a network of links everywhere, but serve to link readers to topics which are included in our newsletter.

- Construction Specifications Canada (<http://www.csc-dcc.ca>)
- Construction Specifications Institute (<http://www.csinet.org>)
- Digicon Information Inc. (<http://www.digicon.ab.ca>)
- OmniClass (<http://www.omniclass.ca> and <http://www.omniclass.org>)
- Spex.ca (<http://www.spex.ca>)

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