MBP

From Ideas to Impact:
Key Takeaways from MBP's Annual Innovation Forum

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WE ARE INNOVATIVE is one of MBP's six core values. It is ingrained in our culture and a constant call to action for our entire team. This can sometimes be challenging, as many of our services often involve adhering to existing processes or procedures established by others.

One way MBP lives out the innovative value is through our annual Innovation Forum, an opportunity for any team member to share ongoing developments or to present possible new solutions. In the latter categories, team members with ideas can make a pitch (think Shark Tank) for management or monetary support for research and development efforts. In our fifth annual and most recent forum, a two-hour session involving 14 presentations and 17 presenters, we focused on innovation implementations underway throughout the firm.

As I reflect on MBP's ongoing innovations, it's clear that the construction industry is in the midst of a marked adoption and adaptation of rapidly evolving technologies. Considering artificial intelligence, robotics, virtual reality, and other emergent technologies, it is pretty easy to foresee massive changes in how design and construction activities are accomplished, such as:

- The deployment of complex spatial, computational, and visual tools to streamline design tasks.
- The empowerment of construction equipment with the ability to interpret design and spatial information while robotically assembling building components.
- The emergence of new materials that will facilitate new forms of construction, such as 3D printing.

As I listened to our team's presentations and saw the work we are doing throughout MBP, a few key takeaways emerged:

- **Image capture is an essential transformation.** Our first three presentations related to image capture technology and how to utilize the resulting data. Over the last decade, MBP has maintained an active drone program and has greatly expanded the use of HoloBuilder cameras in the last three years. If a picture is worth a thousand words, regular 3D and aerial imaging produces an encyclopedia of information that is an incomparable resource in conveying progress, resolving conflicts, and documenting quality, among other uses. On even modest-sized projects, there's really no excuse for continuing to rely on periodic still photography for documentation purposes.

- **"AI" is more than language generation.** While it seems that all media sources are awash with discussions of artificial intelligence, the focus on conversational tools is too narrow. To me, "AI" can be really two things, "artificial intelligence" and "all information." We often spend much of our time processing, re-processing, and re-generating information that emerging tools can do for us. We had three presentations where our teams were using simple technology tools and templates to process data more effectively and efficiently.

- **We are in good hands with the next generation of construction leaders.** As a longtime participant in the construction industry, it did not escape me that most of our presenters were at least a generation younger than me. And while our emerging leaders are unsurprisingly well-versed with technology, they also bring fresh perspectives to team dynamics. When we consider how increased collaboration, partnering, and shared tools can help break through traditional information silos, mistrust, and unclear communications that often frustrate project success, I'm excited to see our team advance a more positive communication environment.

Looking forward, it is evident that technology tools, coupled with better collaboration, will be the driving force behind successful project delivery. Our commitment to innovation makes us better leaders, guiding our clients toward achieving better project outcomes.

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