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Introduction

Architectural practices are constantly juggling resources to balance many complementary, yet competing, demands. These include the demands of stakeholders and individual projects, the need to continually learn and apply knowledge, and the fundamental requirement to run a profitable business. The business provides the opportunity to create and deliver great architecture. Architectural practices that are able to manage the demands placed on them will make a profit and stay in business. Those that fail to effectively manage all of these aspects will struggle and are likely to fail. In this chapter we introduce the background to the book and set out the rationale for the chapters that follow. Our argument, supported by research, is that architectural practices require a guiding management framework in order to stay in business and return a profit on the resources invested.

1.1 An Argument for a Management Framework

Why do we need a (management) framework in which to practise architecture? Surely architecture is a highly creative, intuitive and often spontaneous response to a particular site and client; something that flourishes outside the world of management? It may be an image promulgated in the rarefied world of architectural education, but as practising architects would readily attest, the effective engagement with others in the co-creation of architecture requires protocols to guide the design team to a successful solution. But somewhat contrary to this, we also know that restrictive managerial tools and onerous management procedures are not conducive to supporting our creative endeavours. Architects and fellow designers require an appropriate framework in which to pursue creative solutions to complex challenges; management that supports rather than hinders the creative process. We need simple, straightforward and pragmatic guidance to help us deliver wonderful buildings and return a profit for our efforts. What we need is *better* management, not *more* management.

These are not new concerns. In the 1960s, the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) published *The Architect and his Office* (RIBA, 1962). The report criticised architects for the way in which they managed their business affairs and in doing so formed the stimulus for early work on architectural management. The first book to use the term 'architectural management' was written by three architects in direct response to the RIBA report (Brunton *et al.*, 1964). In addition to defining architectural management as

the interrelationship between the management of projects and the architectural business (see Chapter 3) they also claimed that we knew enough about the management of individual projects, and therefore concentrated on the management of the office. Since this time there has been an explosion in the literature relating to the management of construction projects (project management, construction management and more recently design management), somewhat contradicting Brunton *et al.*'s claim that we knew how to do it. In contrast to the project management literature, there is still a comparatively small body of literature on the management of the architect's office. This is known as practice (or office) management and tends to be concerned with the effective administration of the business, which one could argue is not really about 'managing' the business. In many respects, Brunton *et al.*'s call for better management of the architect's business has largely gone unheeded in the literature. Although both streams offer a valuable knowledge source, by concentrating on only one aspect (project or office) we fail to acknowledge the inter-relationship between the two; and hence fail to address the unique environment in which architects work (see Figure 1.1). It is the dynamic interaction between the creative office and the temporal, creative and pragmatic projects that makes the creation and realisation of architecture so exciting.

Early interest in management by architects tended to wane with the dawn of the 1970s, and it was not until the 1990s that interest once more turned to the need for better management by architects, an idea once again promoted by the RIBA. By this time Brunton *et al.*'s (1964) work on architectural management was largely forgotten. Their work was, however, rediscovered and further developed by Emmitt, some 35 years after the publication of their book. Building directly on the seminal work of Brunton *et al.*, Emmitt's (1999a) work was instrumental in expanding and further developing our understanding of architectural management as the inter-relationship between business management and project management. Underlying Emmitt's work is the argument that significant value can be derived from the strategic management of the office *and* the project portfolio (see Emmitt 1999a,b, 2014, 2017).

These two fundamental components of architectural management (management of office and projects) remained unchallenged until relatively recently. Extensive research by Alharbi (2013) resulted in the extension and development of the 'basic' understanding of architectural management. This included a new definition of architectural management and publication of a new architectural management framework (Alharbi 2013; Alharbi *et al.* 2015a,b) on which this book is based. Alharbi's definition is more inclusive than the original, and better reflects the need to deliver value to all

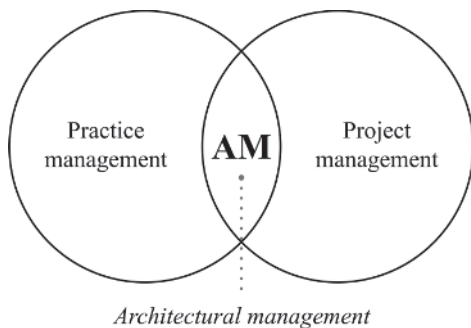
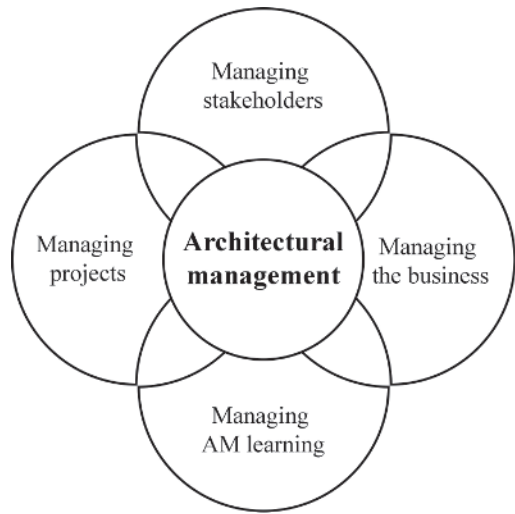


Figure 1.1 The components of architectural management. Adapted from Brunton *et al.* (1964) and Emmitt (1999a).

Figure 1.2 Components of architectural management (source: Alharbi 2013).



stakeholders. This is particularly pertinent to a collaborative and integrated approach to the delivery of projects within a highly competitive marketplace for services. The definition is (Alharbi, 2013):

Architectural management (AM) is the strategic management of the architectural firm that assures the effective integration between managing the business aspects of the office with its individual projects in order to design and deliver the best value to all stakeholders.

Alharbi's architectural management framework introduced two new, additional components: 'managing stakeholders' and 'managing learning' (see Figure 1.2). Although one could argue that the management of stakeholders and the management of learning are implicit in the earlier work, this has now become explicit. And in making the management of stakeholders and the management of learning explicit, it has further emphasised the value of people. Managing stakeholders reflects the collaborative and co-dependent nature of design in the digital age. It also reflects the need for architects to satisfy the needs of many stakeholders, ranging from, for example, the client and investors, through the design and delivery teams to the building users and building managers, through to society in general. To manage these complex and constantly evolving relationships requires an understanding and application of stakeholder management (see Chapter 7). Managing learning relates to the need for professionals such as architects to continually update their knowledge and skills, which can be challenging when dealing with a diverse project portfolio and constantly changing technologies. It includes the development and application of knowledge to office and projects, as well as the need to better 'educate' clients and stakeholders of the value of good design (see Chapter 8). Neither of these additional components had been addressed in an integrated manner in previous work on architectural management.

The four components of the architectural management framework are explained further in this book, providing a comprehensive and unique framework that supports architects in our daily pursuit of excellence.

The need for a guiding framework is also evidenced in typical job descriptions, where the architectural manager's role includes the management and supervision of the office staff (for example architects, architectural engineers and technologists, and BIM technicians), overseeing the entire project portfolio and interfacing with clients to attract and retain business. The role also includes responsibility for staff development and learning, recruitment and retention. The role of the architectural manager is explained more fully in Chapter 3.

1.2 Agenda

The aim of the book is to help readers to better manage their architectural businesses, and hence be better positioned to influence the quality of the built environment. The book is grounded in research in which, for the first time, the components of architectural management have been analysed systematically, tested, and developed into a framework for practical application. The result is the first publication to offer a comprehensive evidence-based framework for architectural practice. By following a number of simple steps, it is possible to evaluate the current status of one's practice and take measures to improve specific areas to suit one's own context. Our main objectives in writing the book are to:

- 1) Provide the tools to help enhance performance and thus enable architectural practices to be more competitive in a challenging marketplace for services.
- 2) Encourage evidence-based practice. The practical, simple-to-follow framework can be applied to practitioners' own context (regardless of physical location, office size and extent of managerial knowledge).

It is not necessary for every member of the architectural office to be passionate about management, but it is crucial to the smooth running of the business that every member of the office appreciates the commercial factors underpinning the majority of decisions made in a business and project environment. This includes an understanding of how people best work together and the ability to value and embrace a diverse workforce.

1.3 Structure

The book is designed to have a simple and easy to navigate structure (see Figure 1.3). In Chapters 2 and 3 we briefly introduce the underlying theoretical aspects in order to set the context for the framework. We appreciate that this may interest some readers more than others, but it is important to understand that the work is grounded in research and to provide the context for the framework. We explain what architectural management is and how this knowledge can help architects in our daily pursuit of great architecture. Emphasis turns to the practical and strategic issues in Chapter 4, where the framework for practice is introduced as a basis for the chapters that follow. Chapters 5–8 explore each of the four components of architectural management: managing the business, projects, stakeholders and learning. The intention is that readers use these four chapters as a source of inspiration, and also as a means of challenging what we are currently doing. These chapters also include some description of common tools. In Chapter 9 we

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Architecture and Management
Chapter 3: Architectural Management (AM)



Theoretical background to architectural management

Chapter 4: Architectural Management Framework



Introducing the architectural management framework and how to utilise it

Chapter 5: Managing the Business

Chapter 6: Managing Projects

Chapter 7: Managing Stakeholders

Chapter 8: Managing Learning



Detailed description of the framework's four components

Chapter 9: Practical Application



Case studies showing scenarios for applying the framework in practice

Figure 1.3 The structure of the book contents.

provide examples of practical application of the framework via a number of scenarios that relate to office size. Examples are worked through based on 'case studies' to help illustrate what needs to be done, when and by whom. Combined, the chapters provide a valuable handbook that can be dipped into as the need arises. The ultimate aim is to continually improve performance, reduce risk and realise better value.

1.4 Value

Many of the complaints about projects, such as poor cost, time and quality control can be traced back to ineffective management. Similarly, many design and realisation problems can be traced back to poor team assembly, poor communication and poor leadership; again, a case of ineffective management. Despite considerable advances in digital technologies, many problems still beset construction and many professional service companies continue to find it challenging to make a profit. Although the application of architectural management will not necessarily solve all of one's problems, it will help to identify the root cause of such failings and hence practitioners will then be in a better position to address the challenges.

Architectural management will provide considerable value to both the owners of architectural businesses and those engaged with the business. The concepts and ideas presented in this book are designed to guide novice and more experienced architectural managers. When applied to one's specific context this will help to bring about more effective and efficient processes, which in turn will impact positively on the profitability of the business, the wellbeing of the staff and ultimately improve the quality of the service delivered to clients. These essential elements will help us to deliver great architecture.

