# Online visibility key to securing specification

Building product manufacturers and suppliers need to adapt their sales and marketing strategies in order to increase their chances of securing specification, according to Databuild CEO Morag Evans, as architects and specifiers are increasingly turning to the online realm to source products and materials for their projects.
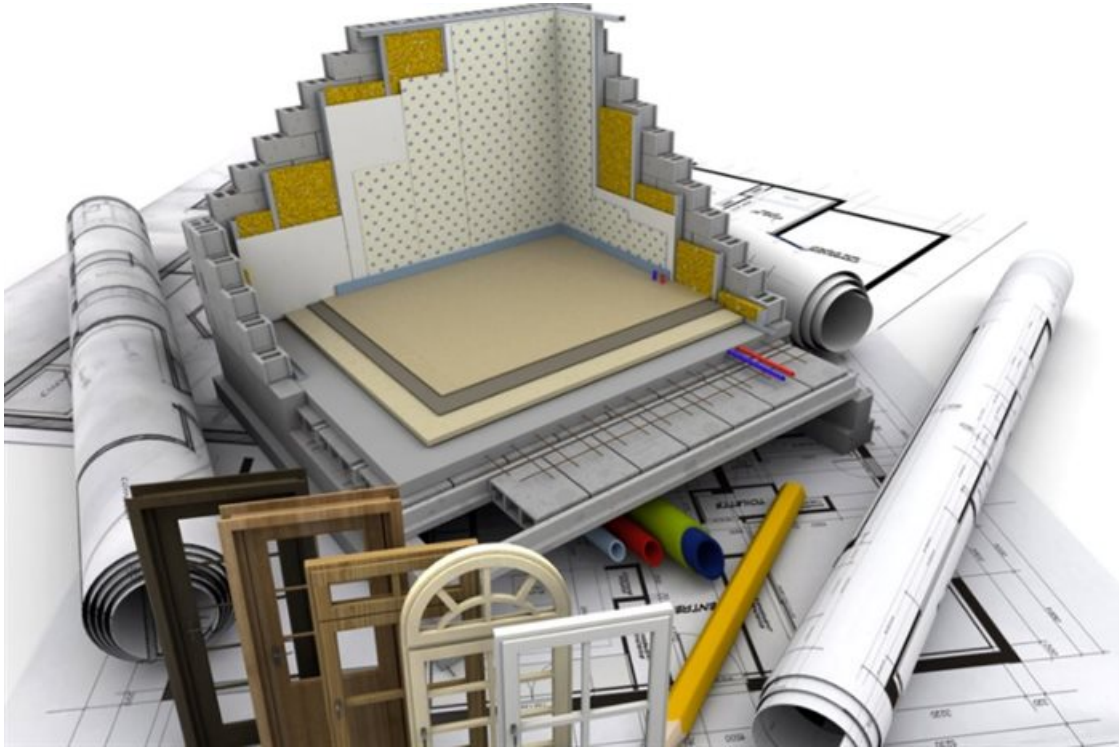
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"Studies show that the large majority of professionals prefer researching information about products and materials online, rather than attending CPD presentations and trade shows, or going through industry journals and catalogues," says Evans.

This is not to say that these channels don't have an important role to play in opening doors and putting a company brand on specifiers' radar, she adds, but manufacturers should not rely on them to secure specifications.

"The reality is that architects are not actively looking for a particular product when they attend CPD presentations and trade shows. Even if they do promise to keep your company in mind in upcoming projects, they're probably giving the same assurances to other company representatives they meet, so the chances are good you will quickly fall into oblivion.

"Consequently, the best manufacturers can hope for is that the architect will remember their product when they identify a need for it and come back to them."

What architects need to see in manufacturers' architectural specifications
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Online visibility is key

According to Evans, manufacturers and suppliers stand a far better chance of being specified by being visible in the online areas where professionals actively look for products during their research process.

"Just like everyone else, architects and specifiers almost always start their research with a Google search, which invariably takes them to manufacturers' websites and product directories.

"A strong and effective online presence is therefore imperative. This begins with identifying the words and phrases specifiers use in their search queries and optimising your website accordingly so that it ranks high in the search results.

"Once specifiers land on your website, it should be easy to navigate and contain relevant, comprehensive and up-to-date information on your products."

Product directories are also a great go-to for specifiers when doing research because they feature numerous products in one place, which makes it easy for architects to search and compare products when doing their research, Evans continues.

"A presence on these portals is not only essential, but is even more effective when used in conjunction with a product specification service such as BuildConnect, which is specifically geared to assisting manufacturers develop meaningful relationships with professionals that help them secure more specifications and thus grow their business."

Evans concludes: "Companies that include these channels as core components of their marketing strategy and actively monitor their exposure and reach across them will give themselves a significant edge over their competitors and ensure they are the among the first architects turn to when specifying products for their projects."

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