

Why Healthcare Infrastructure Needs a Common Data Environment

— *And How to Build One*

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THE PROBLEM

Fragmented Information Kills Projects



Drawings in Email Chains

Superseded revisions circulate freely.
Contractors build from outdated drawings.



Siloed Stakeholders

Architects, engineers, QS, and contractors each maintain their own version of truth.



No Audit Trail

When something goes wrong, there's no record of who approved what, or when.



Lost Site Instructions

Critical instructions buried in WhatsApp threads. No formal record, no accountability.

THE COST

What Fragmentation Really Costs

52%

of rework is caused by
poor project data

30%

of construction cost
is wasted globally

13%

of working time spent
looking for information

In healthcare, these failures don't just cost money — they delay patient access to critical facilities.

THE SOLUTION

The Common Data Environment

A CDE is a single, agreed source of information for a project, used to collect, manage, and disseminate documents and data for the whole project team.



**Centralised
Storage**



**Approval
Workflows**



**Version
Control**



**Access
Permissions**



**Real-Time
Notifications**

These are not optional features — they are the pillars of reliable project delivery.

HEALTHCARE CONTEXT

Why Healthcare Projects Need This Most



Complex Regulatory Compliance

Healthcare facilities must meet strict OHSC, infection control, and safety standards — every document must be traceable.



Multi-Disciplinary Teams

Architects, MEP engineers, biomedical specialists, infection control officers — all needing the same information.



Long Project Lifecycles

Healthcare infrastructure projects span years. Information drift compounds without a governed environment.



Patient Safety at Stake

The end-use environment is a hospital. Errors in construction directly affect clinical outcomes.

WHAT WE DID

So We Built One.

BUILDWARE

Connect. Collaborate. Create.

My partners and I developed Buildware as a purpose-built CDE for the South African construction industry. Every pillar of a proper CDE — built into a tool designed for our market.

- ✓ Central document repository
- ✓ Drawing approval workflows
- ✓ Real-time version control
- ✓ Site instruction management
- ✓ Role-based team permissions
- ✓ Push notifications across devices

THE HONEST PART

And It Didn't Take Off.

Buildware solves a real problem with a fit-for-purpose tool.

Adoption has been a struggle.

That failure is the most valuable thing I can share with this room today.

Why Adoption Stalled



Entrenched Workflows

Email and WhatsApp are 'free' and familiar. A new tool — however better — asks people to change habits that already feel like they work.



No Procurement Mandate

Without a client or regulatory body requiring a CDE, every project team defaults to the lowest-friction option.



The 'Free Solution' Trap

Decision-makers compare a paid CDE against the apparent zero cost of email — and ignore the real cost of rework, errors, and lost time.



Recognition Without Urgency

Everyone agrees the problem is real. Few feel enough pain on any single project to drive a change in how they work.

THE REFRAME

This Isn't a Technology Problem.

It's a Leadership and Culture Problem.

The tools already exist. Buildware exists. Better-funded global CDEs exist. The question isn't 'what should we build?' — it's 'what are we willing to change?'

NO OTHER SAFETY-CRITICAL SECTOR WOULD TOLERATE THIS

Aviation. Pharmaceuticals. Nuclear. Each has accepted that information governance is non-negotiable.

Who Needs to Move First



Public Clients

Make CDE adoption a procurement requirement — the way it already is in the UK and parts of Europe.



Professional Bodies

SACPCMP, ECSA, SAIA should treat information governance as a competency requirement, not an optional extra.



Project Leaders

Specify the CDE on day one. Build it into the cost plan. Treat it as infrastructure, not an add-on.

The tools are ready. The industry needs to be.

Thank You

If this talk made you uncomfortable, it did its job.

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Happy to discuss any of this — including the failure part.