

IBP Awards 2019 - Digital Leadership of the Year

Entrant: **Jamie Harris**, digital editor, Building, Assemble Media Group

In the 12 months from 1 September 2018 to 31 August 2019, [Building.co.uk](https://www.building.co.uk) saw a 71.8% year-on-year rise in users coming to the site, a 74.6% rise in sessions, and an 84.4% rise in page views. Year on year, the number of users coming to the site on a mobile device has increased by 150% and the number of users reaching the site via search engines has almost doubled (97%). This has been achieved through a series of measures to provide the reader with additional context to breaking news and features.

BUILDING PODCASTS

Building Podcasts have generated more than 13,000 listens since I launched the free service in December 2018. With Building Podcasts, I have set out to provide depth and context to the print publication's news, features coverage, and the magazine's themed editions. They also allow the reader to get a grasp of a story while on their commute or on the go, providing a personable and compelling experience around what can sometimes be dry topics in construction.

The Brexit special episode was produced at short notice in response to the Construction Leadership Council writing an open letter in January 2019, when the UK faced the prospect of leaving without a deal in March. Securing interviews with Mace's Mark Reynolds (the CLC chair), Richard Steer of Gleeds and the CPA's Noble Francis offered the listener three unique viewpoints on the current political landscape and its impact on construction. This is still our most listened-to episode, at over 1,600 listens.

This year's feature in Building on the construction of a steel arch over the exploded reactor at Chernobyl was also a great opportunity to use the audio medium to add further colour for the reader, using interviews with people working on site that were recorded by our reporter who went to the Ukraine.

In July this year, I gathered together 27 construction professionals who are driving technological change in their industry – dubbed Building's digital champions. To support the feature, I edited together a montage of my interviews with our champions, discussing what they thought was holding back construction from digital transformation, as well as the innovations they were personally impressed with.

HUB PAGES

Building's news team works tirelessly on long-running stories; from Interserve to Crossrail, HS2 and Brexit, it can be difficult for a reader to keep up with the latest developments. I set up a series of landing pages for each of these subjects to help the reader gain quick answers to some of the more common questions and find links to the news stories as they broke. Readers regularly visit the hub pages – compared with a news story which will experience the majority of page views on the day of publication. The Crossrail hub page has reached more than 7,000 pageviews.

OPEN SOURCE DATA

There is a plethora of open source data in the construction industry, from financial results to payment time and gender pay gap data. Making sense of the numbers for the reader is vital. For the payment times data, I decided to create a sortable table with only the most important figures from the top 50 contractors – too much data will detract from the main angle of the story. The page gets updated as these firms release their latest figures every six months. The payment times page has seen more than 3,500 pageviews between March and August 2019, with three clear spikes in hits.

Supporting documents:

- <https://www.building.co.uk/podcasts/building-podcast-containing-radioactivity-at-chernobyl-whats-next-for-the-hackitt-review/5100192.article>
- <https://www.building.co.uk/podcasts/building-podcast-brexit-special/5097576.article>
- <https://www.building.co.uk/data/payment-times-how-long-do-the-top-50-contractors-take-to-pay-up/5098604.article>

Judges' login for www.building.co.uk

User/email: gerald@geraldbowey.co.uk

Password: IBP2019!