



2 Beekman Lane, Hillsborough, NJ 08844 ■ Tel 202-595-7757 ■ Fax 202-595-7756 ■ Email info@archresearch.com

Architectural **Research** Associates

■ **September 1, 2013**

Research Sponsorship Offering:

Two studies to be completed in 2014

To be completed May 16, 2014:

(The Biennial Study)

**Architect and Specifier Preferences and
Uses for Electronic and Print Product Files,
Directories, and Manufacturer's Product
Information Sources**

To be completed October 17, 2014:

**Architect and Specifier Preferences and
Responses to Emerging Trends**

■ **Introduction**

For nearly 20 years Architectural Research Associates has examined architect, specifier and designer uses of various types of product information sources and preferences for editorial and promotional materials. We have helped our sponsors stay ahead of the curve as new forms of communication have become more important.

The proposed study will add to the library of exclusive information developed by ARA showing which messages are most effective and exactly how to optimize investments in print and electronic product information sources and other sales and marketing materials.

It is time once again for our benchmark Biennial Study—the key study most clients find indispensable.

■ **Study A: (the Biennial)**
Architect and Specifier Preferences and Uses for Electronic and Print Product Files, Directories and Manufacturer's Product Information Sources

Objectives

The primary objectives of this research are to:

- Identify the usage patterns for paper and electronic product and company information compilations and for key manufacturer-supplied print and electronic information.
- Understand how individuals in various firms use these vehicles, by size of architectural firm, by architect or specifier, by age and level of experience, and by major U.S. region.
- Assess user's perceptions of each of the compilations; whether one vehicle is considered better for a specific purpose than another; and whether the information in one vehicle is considered more valuable, better organized, more up-to-date and more user-friendly.

Major Question Areas

In addition to questions focused on the objectives above, we will also hone in on:

- Reasons for usage of various forms of product information (research, selecting/specifying, communication) by architects and specifiers.
- The frequency of reference to paper and electronic sources of product information.
- Frequency of use of smartphones and tablets for product information.
- Identification and use of favorite building product manufacturers' product directories and BPM websites.
- Clarification of response to various ways of finding websites, such as search engines, direct mail, print advertising, etc.
- A number of new specific areas will be added to the questionnaire based on client feedback.

■ **Study B: Architect and Specifier Preferences and Responses to Emerging Trends**

Objectives

The primary objectives of this research are to:

- Identify the importance of social media and BIM to practicing architects.
- Identify the most important “other” trends according to architect and specifier perceptions.
- Determine how architects and specifiers will change their selection procedures as a result of these trends.
- Understand how individuals in various firms are responding to these trends, by size of architectural firm, by architect or specifier, by age and level of experience, and by major U.S. region.
- Assess user’s perceptions of each of the trends and determine if one is more compelling than another.
- Develop an in-depth understanding of architect and specifier expectations of building products manufacturers as a result of these trends.

Major Question Areas

In addition to questions focused on the objectives above, we will also focus on:

- Identification of importance of specific trends such as Sustainable Building and Universal Design.
- Perceptions of current manufacturer efforts related to each important trend.
- Expectations of manufacturer actions reacting to the trends.

■ **Methodology for Both Studies**

This research will use in-depth telephone interviews to accomplish our objectives.

Through these interviews we will determine respondent perceptions, preferences and uses. Each sponsor will review the preliminary questionnaire and will be able to suggest additions and changes before the study is launched.

We will complete 285 telephone interviews as follows*:

	<i>Project Designer/ Project Architect</i>	<i>Spec Writer</i>	<i>Totals</i>
Large Firms	65	35	100
Medium Firms	125	35	160
Independent Spec Writers	—	25	25
Total	190	95	285

*a special quota of younger and unlicensed professionals will be established for analysis.

Specific Product Areas

A limited number of specific product-related proprietary questions will be included at additional cost. Each will focus on architect/specifier use of communications vehicles related to a specific area (i.e. elevators, glass, roofing, etc.).

Reporting

- Following each research project, we will complete a comprehensive report. Analysis of proprietary questions will be included with specifics given to relevant sponsors. Information related to a particular website will be given only to the relevant sponsor.
- A full set of data tables will also be provided.
- We will conduct a half-day senior management briefing to review and evaluate the significance of the findings of this research.

■ **Management Briefing and Architect Panel Discussion**

At the conclusion of each study a final report of findings, conclusions and recommendations, with supporting statistical tables, will be issued to participating sponsors. Several weeks after the final report of each study has been distributed, ARA will host a Management Briefing for sponsors either online or at the Penn Club in New York City. This is a unique opportunity to explore the significance of the ARA study and to compare notes with key marketing, sales and advertising executives from top firms in the building products industry. An electronic copy of the PowerPoint presentation given at the briefing will be distributed to participating sponsors.