

Insights from the Republic of Korea: Development and Globalization of Construction Management

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Invited Viewpoint

THIS VIEWPOINT GIVES INSIGHTS INTO THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS OF CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT IN THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA. It presents the genesis of the discipline and gives a time perspective of how it all began. Furthermore it gives a list of past construction management events. It is evident that construction management is now fast becoming one of the pillars of the construction industry in the Republic of Korea. The paper stresses that construction management has become a necessity and an essential part of the construction industry in the world.

Keywords

Korea, construction management, development, insights, conferences

It was at the end of 1996 that Construction Management (CM) was first introduced to Korea. A law in Korean construction, under the umbrella of the Ministry of Land, Transport and Maritime Affairs (MLTM). The following year, in 1997, the Construction Management Association of Korea (CMAK) was formally launched and started propagating CM on the Korean construction market.

In March 1998, with the support of the MLTM and the National Assembly, the 1st CM event was held to vitalize CM in Korea. However, due to various CMAK internal issues, the CM event did not take place in subsequent years until 2005. In 2005, the 2nd ConsMa event (http://www.cmak.or.kr/eng/html1/in_conferences_r.asp?no=2) and the 1st CM Seoul Forum took place with the title “For the Prosperity of Mankind”.

As CMAK began to propagate CM in earnest in Korea, the events in 2005 became the starting point, where overseas CM specialists, the government, the academia, and CM industry experts all gathered to discuss ways to propagate CM in the global construction market. The event included comparative analysis of CM models in different countries. All those present at the event undertook to cooperate in exchanging knowledge and resources for the further development of CM in the world.

The word ‘ConsMa,’ which first appeared at the 2005 event, was coined by joining the first syllables of ‘construction management’, CM. ‘ConsMa’ has since been used in all subsequent events and will continue to be used in the future.

2005 CM Vitalization Conference, as the title of the conference denotes, took place to promote vitalization of CM, to boost the morale of the stakeholders in the CM industry, as well as to induce the active role they could play in vitalizing CM. The CM Seoul Forum, which took place at the same time, was an international event to exchange and share CM related techniques, laws and policies from Korea and overseas. WTO (World Trade Organization), which was born out of Uruguay in 1986, is still called the Uruguay Round or UR Round, regardless of where the subsequent WTO meetings are held. Following this example, when initial discussions were held to name the Forum, it was decided that CM Seoul Forum would always be called CM Seoul Forum, regardless of where in the world the event takes place in successive years. It was for this reason that a decision was made to put 'Seoul' after 'CM'

The 2ndConsMa CM Seoul Forum with the theme "CM, Where To From Here?" took place in 2006 (http://www.cmak.or.kr/eng/html1/in_conferences_r.asp?no=3). The 2ndConsMa CM Seoul Forum was co-hosted by CMAK and CMAA (Construction Management Association of America) as both associations felt there was an urgent need for increased international cooperation in exchange of resources, knowledge and techniques. The construction market was fast changing, with domestic and overseas markets ordering patterns which were becoming more complex, larger and advanced, prompting the supply patterns to evolve and become more specialized. In order to actively deal with such changes in the demand and supply environment and to secure business domestically and internationally, there was a need for international cooperation and a model of CM, which was consistent in theory and in practice. Action had to be taken to further establish CM in the construction market around the world.

2007 saw the 10th anniversary of the establishment of CM in Korea. The 3rdConsMaCM event (http://www.cmak.or.kr/eng/html1/in_conferences_r.asp?no=4) took place in 2007 to celebrate the 10th anniversary of establishment of CM in Korea with the theme "CM, the Last 10 Years, the Present and the Future." The event provided an opportunity to look back over the past 10 years and, by highlighting the CM status at the time, provided an opportunity to reaffirm that CM will play a pivotal role in the construction market in the new millennium.

With the theme, "CM as the Power of Innovation in the Construction Industry", the 3rdConsMa CM Seoul Forum took place in 2008 with the emphasis on finding strategies and knowledge to counter the ever changing domestic and international construction markets (http://www.cmak.or.kr/eng/html1/in_conferences_r.asp?no=5). Rather than resting in the comfort of the current status quo, it was felt that it was the right time to equip ourselves with counter strategies by predicting accurately the construction market situation that would arise in the future. This event in 2008 was co-hosted by CMAK, CMAA (the Construction Management Association of America) and ICPMU (the International Construction Project Management Union).

The 4thConsMa Construction Management Innovation Event took place in 2009 with the theme "Overcoming Crisis with Wisdom", a fitting theme as the world was gripped by the financial crisis that started in 2008 (http://www.cmak.or.kr/eng/html1/in_conferences_r.asp?no=6). Even though the area of activity for construction management was expanding and the market was demanding the best quality of service from the CM suppliers, the stakeholders in the industry were boxed into their past practices, with market entry limited to a select number

and those enjoying the wrong protective effect being unable to look outside the box. It was vital that such practices were done away with, to reclaim the market by evolving the services and improving the quality provided to clients. The 4thConsMa event saw that innovative management skills were needed to redefine CM and expand its supply to the construction market in order not only to overcome the crisis at the time but also to make sure that in demand and supply, CM becomes an industry that will not be affected by any outside factors.

The series of ConsMa events with domestic and international organizations from 2005, led to CMAK being invited by the organizers of CMAA National Conference in October 2009 in Orlando, USA, to present a paper on the current status of CM in Korea. Consequently, it was while preparing the presentation paper for the Conference with the topic "CM: The Present and the Future in Korea", that the idea came to my mind of an International CM Day where all the stakeholders in the CM industry around the world could get together and celebrate CM. The presentation paper and the proposal for the International CM Day were emailed to CMAA. It was mentioned in the email that a discussion in more detail about this concept of the International CM Day could take place in Orlando in October at the CMAA National Conference. After sending off the email, serious thought was given to how to go about establishing the International CM Day. On 25th October 2009, at the CMAA Board Meeting, after making the presentation "CM: The Present and the Future in Korea", the proposal for the International CM Day was officially put to CMAA. On the following day, on 26th October, at the CMAA International Committee Meeting, a detailed discussion was held on the concept. Further discussion about the International CM Day was held in Bangkok in March

2010 at the IECM (International Engineers and Construction Management) Forum with CMAA and CIOB (Chartered Institute of Building). At this event in Bangkok, along with agreement from IPMA (International Project Management Association) and CMAJ (Construction Management Association of Japan), CMAA, CIOB and CMAK agreed to declare the 2nd Monday of March each year to be 'International CM Day'.

At the ConsMa CM Seoul Forum in 2010, the theme of "For a Complete Construction in the Global Village" was adopted and it was at this ConsMa event (http://www.cmak.or.kr/eng/html1/in_conferences_r.asp?no=7) that the 1st Global CM Contest was inaugurated. It was once again urgently felt that if we did not take active measures to counteract the fast changing world financial environment, as well as the construction market, we would be faced with irreversible difficulties. In order to secure CM as a knowledge-based industry that would not be affected by outside factors, it was believed that only the ever increasing propagation of CM in the world was the right approach. Accordingly, for the first time, the 1st Global CM Contest was incorporated into the ConsMa event, to discover, share and promote the best CM practices from around the world.

Additionally, as was agreed at the IECM Forum in Bangkok in March 2010, on 30th April 2010 in Seoul, the 2nd-Monday of March each year was de-

clared as the 'International CM Day' and the Declaration signed by representatives from CMAA, IPMA, CIOB, CMAJ and CMAK. The meaning behind the International CM Day was, firstly, to give stakeholders in the CM industry a sense of belonging and responsibility and thereby increase the quality of service provided, as well as boost the morale of all those involved in the industry and secondly, it was expected that the celebration of the International CM Day each year would have an immense impact on accelerating the promotional effect in globalizing CM. As can be seen, the ConsMa event played a major role in bringing the International CM Day into reality.

Following the 2010 ConsMa event, in 2011 the 1st International CM Day was celebrated all around the world with great success (http://www.cmak.or.kr/eng/html1/cmday_world.asp). CIOB had celebratory events and used twitter, making it possible to promote and spread the news of the International CM Day to anyone anywhere in the world. IPMA also held celebratory events in the Netherlands. In particular, CMAA held a celebratory event at the IDCM (International Design and Construction Management) Forum in Bangkok with representatives from international CM related associations and organizations attending (CMAA, CMAK, CIOB, IPMA and CMAS (Construction Management Association of Spain)). At the IDCM Forum, CMAS expressed an interest in becoming part of the International CM

Day member association. It is interesting to note that in the USA, President Obama sent an International CM Day congratulatory message to CMAA. It was overwhelming to see the inaugural International CM Day celebration become a worldwide celebration for all in the CM industry.

The ConsMa event (http://www.cmak.or.kr/eng/html1/in_cmday_world_r.asp?no=10) in March in Seoul this year took place with the theme "CM is a Necessity, not an Option". The event incorporated the 5th CM Seoul Forum, the 2nd Global CM Contest and the 2nd International CM Day) celebrations. CM people from around the world gathered at the event and shared and exchanged knowledge and information for the advancement of CM in the world. It is now without a doubt that CM is fast becoming one of the pillars of the construction industry alongside design and building all around the globe. With continued hard work and effort, I have no doubt that CM will one day become a necessary and essential part of the construction industry in the world.

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