

# What Has the AIA Done for Me Lately?

Each day, every day, **THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE**

**OF ARCHITECTS** brings real value to its members through many channels. Here are just a few recent initiatives that demonstrate the AIA's dedication to member needs.



- **Landing on Google Earth**

For the public to understand and respect architects' contributions to quality of life, they need to understand the roles architects play in the design process, whether for a building or for a community. As part of AIA150, our America's Favorite Architecture poll findings and display, plus our 156 Blueprint for America projects, continue to do just that. In an exciting partnership, the AIA and Google Earth have launched layers on Google's global tool that allow users to fly virtually around the country and explore the results of these initiatives. Not only can they read all about it—they can become active participants through links, polls, and online comment boards. This outreach was announced via an exclusive in *USA Today* and a video on YouTube, among other press. Start the journey by viewing the video announcement at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=DpNaMbMrICM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DpNaMbMrICM) and then read how to access the layers at <http://earth.google.com/showcase>.

- **Protecting Digital Assets**

Our Digital Age allows for the rapid dissemination of information, including project correspondence and other documents such as the Architect's Instruments of Service. This ease of dissemination, and the potential for easy document alteration, has led to concerns about protection of intellectual property rights and liability for the subsequent misuse of transmitted data. To address those concerns, the AIA published two new documents: C106™—2007, Digital Data Licensing Agreement, and E201™—2007, Digital Data Protocol Exhibit. These new documents address ownership rights and allow project participants to establish protocols for the transmission of digital data. For more information on these new documents and their key terms and features, please visit [www.aia.org/docs\\_default](http://www.aia.org/docs_default).

- **Delivering Practice Knowledge**

Architecture is a knowledge-based profession, and the AIA is particularly interested in developing and sharing knowledge that helps members better manage their practices. Recent AIA Knowledge Community events have included Webinars and workshops on guidelines for design and construction of health-care facilities; a Design-Build Summit, held in Kansas City, on architects' roles in this rapidly growing project delivery method; Historic Resources Committee programs on preservation education and historic-site documentation methods in Philadelphia; Committee on Architecture for Education programs at the School Building Expo in West Palm Beach, Fla; a Regional and Urban

Design Committee roundtable, “Expanding Scale: Architects as Design Agents in the City + Region,” in Providence, R.I.; and a Committee on Design conference and ideas competition on rejuvenation of American cities on the water in Miami. Check the latest issue of *KnowledgeNet* at [www.aia.org/nwsltr\\_k.cfm?pagename=k%5Fnwsltr%5Fcurrent](http://www.aia.org/nwsltr_k.cfm?pagename=k%5Fnwsltr%5Fcurrent) and the AIA KC Web sites at [www.aia.org/kc3\\_template.cfm?pagename=nav\\_kc](http://www.aia.org/kc3_template.cfm?pagename=nav_kc) for the latest news and resources.

- **Meeting the Needs of Sole and Small Firm Practitioners**

In a 2006 survey, AIA members gave high satisfaction ratings to AIA Contract Documents, but many sole and small firm practitioners lamented that the AIA’s software licenses were either too costly or inappropriately sized to meet their needs. To address that concern, the AIA developed a new software product—Docs 100. This new annual license is smaller (100 document units), more affordable (\$159 a year), and available only to architect and associate AIA members. Because the AIA also recognizes that small firms often design large projects, Docs 100 will provide access to all of the AIA’s more than 100 documents and forms. Docs 100, along with the other AIA Contract Documents software licenses, is available for purchase at [www.aia.org/docs\\_default](http://www.aia.org/docs_default).

- **Telling the World What You Do**

AIA Media Relations placed a total of 856 press stories through May 2007 as part of the “According to the AIA” outreach program. The total number of nationwide media clips featuring AIA national, local components, and member architects was 3,180 for the same period. May placements included CNNMoney, *Dallas Morning News*, *Globe and Mail*, *The New York Times* (America’s Favorite Architecture), and *USA Weekend*. To date, the “According to AIA” coverage has featured AIA senior leadership, Knowledge Community members, and topical experts in a variety of media, including an Earth Day op-ed placed in the *San Francisco Chronicle*. The AIA150 America’s Favorite Architecture poll and Blueprint for America projects are also getting traction in the blogosphere. AIA initiatives, survey data, and positions relative to sustainability, design, and construction help drive awareness of the architecture profession in general, and help keep architects in front of clients, prospects, and the general public.

- **Engaging Potential Clients**

Architects are among the most respected professionals in the country, according to surveys, yet what exactly they do is less understood. To help educate both the public and current and future clients, the AIA launched “How Design Works for You” in February, two interactive case histories on the Web. The sites take users through a residential and a school project, both with sustainability at their cores, via conversations between the clients and the architects. In a five step process, the user goes from origination to occupancy, hearing the thinking, seeing models and plans, and touring the outcomes. Members are encouraged to incorporate links to the sites on their own Web sites to help jumpstart conversations with prospective clients. Explore <http://howdesignworks.aia.org/casestudy-house.cfm> and <http://howdesignworks.aia.org/casestudy-school.cfm>.

- **Putting Money Back in Your Pocket**

In 2006, many members began to benefit from the AIA’s 2004 victory in getting some architectural and engineering services included in the “qualified production activities” deduction that took effect for taxable year 2005. Here’s an example of how it works: In 2005, ABC had \$1 million of QPI (net income from domestic operations) but taxable income of \$750,000 due to foreign losses. ABC got a Section 199 deduction of \$22,500 (3 percent x \$750,000 taxable income). Though the deduction has begun at a relatively small 3 percent, it will grow to 6 percent for tax year 2007 and to 9 percent for 2010 and beyond. Find out more at [www.aia.org/SiteObjects/files/finaltaxmemo.pdf](http://www.aia.org/SiteObjects/files/finaltaxmemo.pdf).