

TECHNICAL ARTICLE

Finding Building Product and Construction Cost Data Internationally

Hugh T. Sharp

Finding reliable data on available building products and local construction costs can eat up significant amounts of project time. This can be a particular problem in countries that enforce laws that compel designers and contractors to look first for products made in that country, before spending money, often from scarce foreign currency reserves, on imported products. It is not unheard of for a designer or contractor to have to justify a product selection to a government official, if a local source is ignored.

This article provides a comprehensive (though surely not complete) list of sources for information on both construction costs and building products from commercial publishers and nonprofit organizations in a number of countries around the world, including information sources on the Internet and other online services (although Internet addresses change unpredictably and you may get through one time and not the next). Importantly, it also covers multicountry information sources. Finally, it offers a methodology to help you find this type of information (to the extent it exists) in any country.

One more point—if you do find a source of construction cost data or building product information for a particular country, it will most likely be in the language of that country, use an unfamiliar classification system (neither UniFormat nor MasterFormat), and technical references will refer to the standards used in that country. These may not be standards with which you are familiar. You can also be quite certain that metric measurements will prevail.

Because international readers of **Cost Engineering** may not be acquainted with sources of construction cost and building product data available in the US, each sec-

tion starts with a brief review of these sources. In addition, sources in other nations may be compared with US sources to describe the way the information is presented.

[Editor's Note: In an effort to make the phone/fax numbers, e-mail addresses, and Internet addresses of the following sources easy to find and read, we've highlighted and changed the justification of them for your convenience.]

US CONSTRUCTION COST SOURCES

The largest publisher of construction cost data is R.S. Means, who maintains a database of 65,000 individual line items, or "items of work." These are also combined into about 25,000 assemblies and are the basis for about 1,500 building models of various types and sizes. In addition to construction costs, Means publishes building maintenance and repair cost data. These data are published in nearly 30 different print titles and about a dozen electronic databases. These are supplied to work in both spreadsheets and in over 20 cost estimating systems. Means data also cover public works projects and environmental site remediation. Means also maintains the US Army Corps of Engineers' **Unit Price Book**—

Internet: <http://www.rsmeans.com>
phone: 800-334-3509; fax: 800-632-6732.

McGraw-Hill has recently returned to cost book publishing. As some may recall, Dodge published a number of annual cost books until the mid-1980s, when this business was sold to Marshall & Swift, who now produces several construction cost books that McGraw-Hill sells. These books also provide estimate worksheets and other

forms on included floppy disks—

phone: 800-262-4729; fax: 614-759-3644.

The Frank R. Walker Company is a general cost book publisher who puts out six annuals (including one that fits in a pocket for use onsite) and estimating forms—

phone: 800-458-3737; fax: 708-971-0586.

Richardson Engineering Services publishes building cost data in a three-volume, loose-leaf format, but is probably best known for its four volumes of process industry construction cost data. Richardson also sells RACF, an estimating program designed to use Richardson cost data—

phone: 602-497-2062; fax: 602-497-5529.

BNI Publications produces eight annual titles covering general construction, public works, residential, etc. Each publication's cost data is on a floppy disk that is included with the publication—

phone: 800-873-6397; fax: 714-535-8078.

Saylor Publications offers six annual cost publications, two electronic databases, and a square-foot estimating program—

phone: 800-624-3352; fax: 818-718-8024.

Craftsman Book Company publishes a number of cost books, many aimed at subcontractors. Craftsman also includes a floppy disk containing cost data with its publications—

phone: 800-829-8123; fax: 619-438-0398.

Similar publications are available from Home-Tech Publications. As might be expected from the name, they focus on the residential market—

phone: 800-638-8292; fax: 301-654-0073.

Many organizations in the US publish cost indexes. Best known, perhaps, is that of McGraw-Hill's construction magazine, **ENR**, whose quarterly cost issues report on the magazine's own index and a number of others. These issues also feature reports on current costs. To contact **ENR**—

phone: 800-257-9402; fax: 212-512-3150.

Two companies, E.H. Boeckh (pronounced Beck) and Marshall & Swift, primarily provide construction cost data to appraisers, assessors, and insurers, in print and electronic formats. However, some construction professionals use these data for estimating, especially for preliminary, or conceptual, estimates. You can reach Boeckh at—

phone: 800-809-0016 or 800-285-1288;
fax: 414-780-0306.

You can reach Marshall & Swift at—

Internet: <http://www.marshallswift.com>
phone: 213-683-9000; fax: 213-683-9010.

MULTICOUNTRY SOURCES OF CONSTRUCTION COSTS

Many US publishers of construction cost data also make international data available. For example, all of them index their data for use in Canadian locations.

Through various alliances, Means has current cost data from several countries, including Russia, Mexico, Canada, and Vietnam. Means also owns North American sales rights to the **European Construction Costs Handbook** and the **Asia Pacific Construction Costs Handbook**. Information for these publications was developed by an international firm of quantity surveyors and cost estimators, and they are published in England by E&FN Spon. Don't be limited by the word *costs* in each title. Both also contain a great deal of information about construction in the countries covered (40 in all) and include lists of information sources available in each nation.

Means also sells Davis Langdon & Seah's book, **Construction and Development in Vietnam**, as well as Rawlinson's **Construction Investment Guide for Vietnam**.

Means' bimonthly newsletter, **Construction Market Intelligence: Russia**, is produced with the aid of Co-Invest, Russia's top construction cost researcher. It provides cost data, project news, and other information for this market.

Through its parent company, Means is a part owner of Bimsa, publisher of **COSTOS**, the monthly publication that is the construction cost "bible" in Mexico. It is available in the US through Means.

The Hanscomb/MEANS Report is a monthly newsletter published by Hanscomb Associates, an international cost consulting firm, for its clients and potential clients. **The Report** often develops an international construction cost index by pricing out a typical building (office building, industrial building, apartment house, etc.) in about 25 cities around the world. The index takes exchange rates into account and provides a useful basis for comparing costs. It contains much useful data, including inflation rates by country, historic price changes, unit costs, and tax

rates by country. It often provides in-depth coverage of the construction market in a single country, including contact information on important organizations and information sources in that country. For information, call—

phone: 404-874-3638; fax: 404-874-1473;
e-mail: hanscorp@avana.net

Hanscomb also is setting up an Internet site, on which they plan to index past articles from the **Report**—

(<http://www.access.digex.net/~hanscomb/home2.html>)

Richardson's International Construction Factors provides location factors, based on typical process plants for 14 major process industry locations around the world, so that a cost estimate prepared using US cost data can be factored to those locations. RACE, Richardson's cost estimating program, also can be used with these factors and with currency conversions to adjust costs to other countries. Twice a year, Richardson presents a 2-day course, *Cost Estimating for International Projects*.

John Wiley & Sons publishes **The 1996 International Construction Costs and Reference Data Yearbook**. John G. McConville, CCC, a respected estimator (he also wrote **Managing Construction Purchasing**), has assembled cost data and other useful information for about 30 countries. You can call Wiley at—

phone: 800-225-5945.

A prime source of construction cost data and location factors for international markets is AACE International. In addition to publishing **Cost Engineering**, AACE International sponsors the Project and Cost Management Forum on CompuServe (GO TCMFORUM). If you haven't visited this forum and met members and visitors from all over the world, you are missing out on a significant construction market information source. AACE International can be reached at—

phone: 800-858-COST or 304-296-8444,
fax: 304-291-5728,

e-mail: 74757.2636@compuserve.com,

Internet: <http://www.aacei.org> or www.cost.org
For an extensive survey of international sources of cost information, including productivity factors and other useful data, contact Dr. Kenneth K. Humphreys, PE CCE, at the International Cost Engineering Council—

phone: 704-728-5287; fax: 704-728-0048.

ICFC is composed of about 20 associations that represent over 40 countries. Dr. Humphreys' book, **Basic Cost Engineering**, the 3rd edition of which was published by Marcel Dekker, Inc., in 1995, and a paper that he gave in 1995 at the 14th International Cost Engineering Congress in Guadalajara, Mexico, list many sources of international cost data and location factors.

E&FN Spon in England, whose **European Construction Costs Handbook** and **Asia Pacific Construction Costs Handbook** were mentioned earlier, also publishes Spon's **Gulf States Construction Price Books**. Volume one covers Lebanon, Oman, and the United Arab Emirates; volume two covers Bahrain, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia. The cost data is edited by Hunter Fleming Associates Ltd. Details are available by calling

(44) 171-522-9966.

Marshall & Swift provides cost data for residential and commercial buildings through its multilingual Building Estimator software, which is based on building models and generates a total building cost, trade breakdown, and components for Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, and the UK. Their European office is in France—

phone: (33) 50-78-489; fax: (33) 50-780-893.

A brand-new source of cost data and cost estimates with multicountry coverage is EURO-COST. This is an electronic service from Barnsley and Partners, Ancliffe House, 50 George Street, Croydon, Surrey CR0 1PD, England—

phone: (44) 181-681-8194;

fax: (44) 181-681-6287;

e-mail: 100546.2776@compuserve.com

Started last spring, EURO-COST is billed as an interactive, international electronic estimating system, which provides cost estimating and cost analysis services for 35 countries in Africa, 27 in Europe, 26 in Asia/Pacific, 17 in the Middle East, 39 in Central and South America, and 4 in North America—148 countries in all. The service provides cost analyses with 40 different cost elements for 114 structure types, from motels to mosques and from barns to bingo halls.

CONSTRUCTION COST DATA COUNTRY-BY-COUNTRY

Now we'll tour the world looking for reliable sources of construction cost data, country-by-country.

Argentina

Revista Vivienda S.R.L., H. Yrigoyen 1176/80, P.B. 1086, Capital Federal, CC 4396 Correo Central;

phone: (54) 381-1813;

fax: (54) 383-4980.

Publishes **Vivienda-la Revista de la Construcción**.

Australia

Cordell Building Publications, 33 Chandos Street, PO Box 124, St. Leonards 2065, NSW;

phone: (61) 2-9934-5555;

fax: (61) 2-9934-5502;

e-mail: wcr@cordell.com.au

Internet: <http://www.cordell.com.au/>

Publishes both print and disk versions of cost databases for industrial buildings, housing, plumbing and drainage, and prices of over 12,000 materials from 155 companies. Also provides estimating software in a Windows format. Puts out the **Cordell Housing Index Price** quarterly. Also publishes a project lead service with reports on construction projects.

Rawlhouse Publishing Pty. Ltd., 1141 Hay Street, West Perth, Western Australia 6005;

phone: (61) 9-321-9851;

fax: (61) 9-481-1914;

e-mail: perrawlinson@peg.apc.org

Internet: <http://www.gmg.com.au/rawlinsons>

Annually publishes both **Rawlinson's Australian Construction Handbook** and **Rawlinson's Construction Cost Guide**. With 900 pages, the former not only provides costs for Australia, but also provides limited data for Brunei, Fiji, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia, New Guinea, New Zealand, Singapore, Thailand, and Vanuatu, as well as some Canadian, US, and UK costs. Also available in a Windows-based, interactive software version for spreadsheet programs. The **Guide** covers housing, small commercial, and industrial buildings in major Australian markets. The company also publishes cost and other construction data for Vietnam

(sold in the US by Means) and provides cost-consulting services.

- **Asia Pacific Construction Costs Handbook**, available from Spon and/or Means.
- **Richardson's International Construction Factors**.

Austria

- **European Construction Costs Handbook**, available from Spon and/or Means.

Bahrain

- **Spon's Gulf States Construction Price Books**, published by E&FN Spon in England.

Belgium

- **European Construction Costs Handbook**, available from Spon and/or Means.
- **Marshall & Swift's Building Estimator**.

Brazil

Editora Pini, Rua Anhaia 964, CEP 01130, Sao Paulo;

phone: (55) 11-224-8811;

fax: (55) 11-224-0314.

This company publishes a monthly magazine, **CONSTRUÇÃO**, which provides cost data for civil projects.

Fundação Getulio Vargas, CEP 20299-999, Rio de Janeiro, RJ;

phone: (55) 21-531-0698;

fax: (55) 21-551-7801.

Publishes **Conjuntura Economica**.

- **Richardson's International Construction Factors**.

Brunei

- **Asia Pacific Construction Costs Handbook**, available from Spon and/or Means.
- **Rawlinson's Australian Construction Handbook**.

Bulgaria

- **European Construction Costs Handbook**, available from Spon and/or Means.

Canada

Construction Market Data Group, 280 Yorkland Blvd., North York, Ontario M2J 4Z6;

phone: 416-494-4990;

fax: 416-756-2767.

Yardsticks for Costing is prepared by the Canadian offices of Hanscomb Associates. It is published yearly and provides unit, assembly, and whole building cost data adjusted for all Canadian provinces and major cities.

Lansdowne, PO Box 9059, London, Ontario N6E 1V0;

phone: 519-681-2282;

fax: 519-681-2581.

David Lansdowne, a quantity surveyor and estimator, publishes a cost book every 2 years.

Also see the US cost publications, all of which provide indexes for key Canadian locations.

- **Asia Pacific Construction Costs Handbook**, available from Spon and/or Means.
- **European Construction Costs Handbook**, available from Spon and/or Means.
- **Rawlinson's Australian Construction Handbook**.
- **Richardson's International Construction Factors**.

Chile

ONDAC, Arzobispo Larrain Gandarillas 35, Provincia Cassilla, 2881 Santiago;

phone: (56) 2-635-2133;

fax: (56) 2-634-6380.

Publishes **El Manual de la Construcción**.

China

Shenzhen Construction Quotation Price Management Department, West, 14th Floor, Jianyi Tower, 6 Zhen Xing Road, Futian, Shenzhen, Guangdong Province. They publish the **Shenzhen Property and Building Price Yearbook** in both Chinese and English.

The local and regional Chinese governments are often sources of local cost data. However, I'm told that data supplied to foreign companies may show higher costs than data supplied to local firms.

- **Asia Pacific Construction Costs Handbook**, available from Spon and/or Means.

- **Richardson's International Construction Factors.**

Cyprus

- **European Construction Costs Handbook**, available from Spon and/or Means.

Czech Republic

Ceská Komora Architektu, Letenská str. 5, Praha 1-Malá Strana;

phone: (42) 2-2451-0112.

This is the Czech Chamber of Architects. It is reported to be a source of cost data for buildings.

- **European Construction Costs Handbook**, available from Spon and/or Means.

Denmark

- **European Construction Costs Handbook**, available from Spon and/or Means.

Fiji

- **Rawlinson's Australian Construction Handbook.**

Finland

- **European Construction Costs Handbook**, available from Spon and/or Means.

France

Le Monitor, 17 rue d'Uzes, 75002-Paris;
phone: (33) 1-40-13-3030.

Le Monitor is the prime magazine for the construction industry in France. They frequently publish pricing information in the magazine and annually issue a 300 to 400-page pricing guide, **Batiprix**.

Éditions Ch. MASSIN et Ciet, 16-18 rue de l'Amiral-Mouchez, 75686 Paris Cedex 14;

phone: (33) 1-45-65-4848;

fax: (33) 1-45-65-4700.

Publisher of **Recueil d'Évaluations des Ouvrages Courants du Bâtiment**.

- **European Construction Costs Handbook**, available from Spon and/or Means.

- **Richardson's International Construction Factors.**
- **Marshall & Swift's Building Estimator.**

Germany

Verlag W. Kohlhammer GmbH., Philipp-Reis Strasse 3, Postfach 421120, D-6500 Mainz 42, Hechtsheim. Publishes an annual book of statistics, which includes the prices of key building materials.

In Germany, regional organizations of architects (architektenkammer) often publish regional cost data.

- **European Construction Costs Handbook**, available from Spon and/or Means.
- **Marshall & Swift's Building Estimator.**

Greece

- **European Construction Costs Handbook**, available from Spon and/or Means.

Hong Kong

- **Asia Pacific Construction Costs Handbook**, available from Spon and/or Means.
- **Rawlinson's Australian Construction Handbook.**

Hungary

- **European Construction Costs Handbook**, available from Spon and/or Means.

India

- **Richardson's International Construction Factors.**

Indonesia

- **Asia Pacific Construction Costs Handbook**, available from Spon and/or Means.
- **Rawlinson's Australian Construction Handbook.**

Ireland

- **European Construction Costs Handbook**, available from Spon and/or Means.

Italy

- **European Construction Costs Handbook**, available from Spon and/or Means.
- **Marshall & Swift's Building Estimator.**

Japan

Kensetu-bukka Chosakai (Construction Research Institute), 11-8, Odenma-cho, Nihonbashi Chuoku, Tokyo 103;

phone: (81) 3-3663-2411;

fax: (81) 3-363-1890.

This firm publishes construction costs monthly. Every few years they also publish an English edition.

Kaizaichosakai, Higashiginza-Mitsui Building, 5-13-16, Ginza Chuoku, Tokyo 104;

phone: (81) 3-3542-9358;

fax: (81) 3-3546-1967.

This organization also publishes cost data monthly.

- **Asia Pacific Construction Costs Handbook**, available from Spon and/or Means.
- **Richardson's International Construction Factors.**

Lebanon

- **Spon's Gulf States Construction Price Books**, published by E&FN Spon in England.

Luxembourg

- **European Construction Costs Handbook**, available from Spon and/or Means.

Malaysia

- **Asia Pacific Construction Costs Handbook**, available from Spon and/or Means.
- **Rawlinson's Australian Construction Handbook.**

Malta

- **European Construction Costs Handbook**, available from Spon and/or Means.

Mexico

Bimsa Cost Services, Calz. Ingenieros Militares #85-205, Col. Argentina Poniente, C.P 11230 D.F.;

phone: (52) 5-357-1222,
or (52) 5-576-4487, or (52) 576-4495;
fax: ask for fax connection, ext. 493.

Major publication is **COSTOS**, a monthly with 3,500 detailed unit costs, 8,000 material costs for each of the three largest cities, 70 material costs for another 51 cities, and cost indexes. **COSTOS** is also available on disk. **Square Meter Construction Costs**, a quarterly, provides costs of 50 different building types. **Heavy Construction** is a monthly with 500 unit costs for earthmoving, paving, land development, wells, pipelines, tunnels, and seaports. Other new cost books are being developed. The company also publishes project news reports.

Centro de Precios Unitarios Prisma, S.A. de C.V., Paseo de la Reforma No. 36 PH, C.P. 06048, D.F.;

phone and fax: (52) 5-566-8166;
e-mail: 104164.152@compuserve.com

Internet site: <http://www.prisma.com.mx>
Prisma publishes the monthly, **Catalogo de Precios Unitarios**, which has 6,000 unit prices for 38 cities, and provides estimating and scheduling software and data, as well software to bid Mexican government jobs.

- **Richardson's International Construction Factors.**

The Netherlands

Nederlandse Stichting voor Kostentechniek, PO Box 443, 2260 AK Leidschendam. This is the Dutch Association of Cost Engineers. They publish **Prijzenboekje**, an annual cost publication.

- **European Construction Costs Handbook**, available from Spon and/or Means.
- Marshall & Swift's **Building Estimator**.

New Guinea

- **Rawlinson's Australian Construction Handbook.**

New Zealand

- **Asia Pacific Construction Costs Handbook**, available from Spon and/or Means.

- **Rawlinson's Australian Construction Handbook.**

Norway

Norsk Byggtjeneste A.S., Haakon VII's Gate 5, Postboks 1575 Vika, N-0119 Oslo;
phone: (47) 22-833-690;

fax: (47) 22-834-233;

e-mail: fimapost@byggjeneste.no

Internet: <http://www.byggjeneste.no>

The Norwegian Building Center maintains a database with descriptions and prices for over 30,000 products.

Statistisk Sentralbyrå, Oterveien 23, Postboks 1260, N2201 Kongsvinger;

phone: (47) 62-885-000;

fax: (47) 62-886-030;

e-mail: art@ssb.no

Internet: <http://www.ssb.no>

Their **Monthly Bulletin of Statistics** includes construction costs and building work started. Current data is on their Internet site.

- **European Construction Costs Handbook**, available from Spon and/or Means.

Oman

- **Spon's Gulf States Construction Price Books**, published by E&FN Spon in England.

Paraguay

Costos SRL, 25 de Mayo 1210, Asunción;

phone: (595) 201-901;

fax: (595) 205-855.

Publishes **Costsos de la Construcción**.

Peru

Malecon Cisneros 790 Miraflores, Lima 18;

phone: (51) 1-446-4006;

fax: (51) 1-445-1057.

Publisher of **1/2 de Construcción**.

The Philippines

- **Asia Pacific Construction Costs Handbook**, available from Spon and/or Means.

Poland

- **European Construction Costs Handbook**, available from Spon and/or Means.
- **Richardson's International Construction Factors.**

Portugal

Associação de Empresas de Construção e Obras Públicas, Rua António Enes, n°9-5°-1000 Lisboa;

phone: (351) 1-353-3193

(or 3194, 3195, or 3196);

fax: (351) 1-356-2816.

They publish cost information for buildings and public works.

Laboratório Nacional de Engenharia Civil, Av do Brazil, n° 101-1700 Lisboa;

phone: (351) 1-848-2131;

fax: (351) 1-849-7660.

They produce many studies on civil and structural engineering, including costs.

- **European Construction Costs Handbook**, available from Spon and/or Means.

Qatar

- **Spon's Gulf States Construction Price Books**, published by E&FN Spon in England.

Romania

- **European Construction Costs Handbook**, available from Spon and/or Means.

Russia

Co-Invest, 29 r.1311, Vernadsky pr., Moscow, 117943;

phone: (7) 095-133-2531;

fax: (7) 095-133-2598;

e-mail: koinvest@glas.apc.org

Many of the Co-Invest staff once worked for the Central Research Institute for the Economics and Management of Construction, which monitored construction costs and set the price for every construction project in the entire Soviet Union. Co-Invest is now an independent company that publishes construction cost data and cost indexes for the Russian Federation and the various regions of Russia, including the all-important Moscow region.

They also monitor and publish construction exchange rates tied to the US dollar and to the currencies of Ukraine and Belarus. They are closely allied to Means and are now publishing a version of **Means Building Construction Cost Data** in Russian. Means makes Co-Invest data available in the US in the newsletter **Construction Market Intelligence: Russia**.

- **European Construction Costs Handbook**, available from Spon and/or Means.

Saudi Arabia

- **Spon's Gulf States Construction Price Books**, published by E&FN Spon in England.
- **Richardson's International Construction Factors**.

Singapore

Construction Industry Development Board, 9 Maxwell Road, Annexe A MND Complex, Singapore 069112;

phone: (65) 225-6711;
fax: (65) 225-7301.

Publishes the **Construction Economics Report**.

- **Asia Pacific Construction Costs Handbook**, available from Spon and/or Means.
- **Rawlinson's Australian Construction Handbook**.

Slovakia

UEOS, Ruzova dollna 27, 824 69 Bratislava;

phone: (42) 07-693-62 or (42) 07-2016-353;
fax: (42) 07-678-97.

This organization was once part of the construction ministry. It is the country's major source of cost data.

ODIS, 011 18 Zilina, Hlinská 40;
phone: (42) 089-641-513 or 440-2428;
fax: (42) 089-641-512.

This organization collects cost data and develops software for electronic estimating.

CENEKON, Stefaniková 47, 811 04 Bratislava;

phone: (42) 07-491-808 or 491-517;
fax: (42) 07-491-517.

This organization also collects cost data and develops software; however, they focus on public works projects.

- **European Construction Costs Handbook**, available from Spon and/or Means.

Spain

Institut de Tecnologia de la Construció de Catalunya, Wellington 19, 08018 Barcelona;

phone: (34) 3-309-3404;
fax: (34) 3-300-4852.

Publishes **Quadres de Preus**, which contains prices of construction products.

Colegio Oficial de Arquitectos de Madrid, Barquillo 12, 28004 Madrid;

phone: (34) 1-521-8200;
fax: (34) 1-521-9265.

In Spain, the various colleges of aparejadores (technical architects) that exist in major cities are often useful sources for construction cost information.

- **European Construction Costs Handbook**, available from Spon and/or Means.
- **Marshall & Swift's Building Estimator**.

South Africa

- **Richardson's International Construction Factors**.

South Korea

- **Asia Pacific Construction Costs Handbook**, available from Spon and/or Means.

Sweden

- **European Construction Costs Handbook**, available from Spon and/or Means.

Switzerland

CRB, Zentralstrasse 153, Postfach CH-8040 Zurich;

phone: (41) 1-451-2288;
fax: (41) 1-451-1521.

This is the Swiss Research Centre for Rationalization in Building and Civil Engineering. It publishes cost data in three languages for the Swiss market.

- **European Construction Costs Handbook**, available from Spon and/or Means.

Thailand

- **Asia Pacific Construction Costs Handbook**, available from Spon and/or Means.
- **Rawlinson's Australian Construction Handbook**.

Turkey

- **European Construction Costs Handbook**, available from Spon and/or Means.

Ukraine

Co-Invest in Russia also supplies construction cost data for the Ukraine.

- **European Construction Costs Handbook**, available from Spon and/or Means.

United Arab Emirates

- **Spon's Gulf States Construction Price Books**, published by E&FN Spon in England.
- **Richardson's International Construction Factors**.

United Kingdom

E&FN Spon, 2-6 Boundary Row, London SE1 8HN;

phone: (44) 171-865-0066;
fax: (44) 171-522-9623;

Internet: <http://www.chaphall.com/chaphall.html>

Spon has four annual price books for the UK market. They are edited by Davis Langdon & Everest, a part of Davis Langdon Seah International. Spon also publishes a **Budget Estimating Handbook**, a **Home Improvement Price Guide**, a **Building Cost Guide for Educational Premises**, and four contractors' handbooks. The latter are edited by Tweeds, quantity surveyors and cost consultants. Spon's cost data is also available in reSPONse, its proprietary computerized cost estimating system. You can find Spon at the Internet site of its parent company, Chapman & Hall (see above).

Glenigan Limited, Info House, 41-47 Seabourne Road, Bournemouth, Dorset BH5 2HU;

phone: (44) 1202-432-121;
fax: (44) 1202-431-204.

Griffiths Building Price Book is an annu-

al that covers both new construction projects (up to £250,000 or \$400,000) and alteration and repair projects (to £25,000 or \$40,000). The Building Cost Database is derived from the price book. It is a fully-interactive database that is said not to have the same project value limitations as the books. The database also facilitates the calculation of regional price variations.

Heinemann Publishers Oxford, PO Box 382, Halley Court, Jordan Hill, Oxford OX2 8RU;

phone: (44) 1865-314-627;

fax: (44) 1865-314-091;

e-mail: bhuk.orders@bhein.rel.co.uk

Internet: <http://www.heinemann.co.uk/>

Laxton's Building Price Book was first published in 1817. It contains unit prices, assemblies, and over 12,000 brands and trade names, plus company addresses. Laxton also publishes a number of specialized price books, including six that are aimed at the small contractor or subcontractor. In addition, they publish a **European Building Price Book**. They are on their parent company's Internet site (see above).

Wessex Electronic Publishing Ltd., Park Place, North Road, Poole, Dorset BH14 0LE;

phone: (44) 1202-735-332;

fax: (44) 1202-742-043.

Unlike other British cost book publishers, Wessex maintains its own staff of construction cost researchers to produce its eight publications. Their cost data is also available on CD-ROM and floppy disk. They produce their own estimating software and supply consulting services.

- **Asia Pacific Construction Costs Handbook**, available from Spon and/or Means.
- **European Construction Costs Handbook**, available from Spon and/or Means.
- **Rawlinson's Australian Construction Handbook**.
- **Richardson's International Construction Factors**.
- **Marshall & Swift's Building Estimator**.

Vanuatu

- **Rawlinson's Australian Construction Handbook**.

Venezuela

Computacion Y Servicios Profesionales S.A.-C.S.P., Parque Central, Caracas 1071;

phone: (58) 574-6289.

They have an electronic database, Banco de Datos de Costos de Construccion.

- **Richardson's International Construction Factors**.

Vietnam

See Rawlinson's **Construction Investment Guide for Vietnam**, which is sold in the US by Means. It contains about 160 pages of cost data, as well as an overview of construction-investment issues.

Yugoslavia

- **European Construction Costs Handbook**, available from Spon and/or Means.

US BUILDING PRODUCT INFORMATION SOURCES

Of US building product information sources, the oldest, and in terms of the number of offerings and manufacturer participation, the most extensive, is McGraw-Hill's **Sweet's Catalog Files**. Sweet's offers over a dozen different print titles. Electronically, Sweet's provides SweetSource, a CD-ROM that contains manufacturers' product data and graphics in a common format. Sweet's also has a site on the Internet (see below). Sweet's is basically a distributor of the catalogs of building product manufacturers. Sweet's identifies the most active offices in the construction market and makes their catalogs available to those offices. With about 2,000 manufacturers participating, Sweet's supplies a wide range of product information from the construction industry's leading manufacturers. They can be reached by—

phone: 800-992-0187;

fax: 800-894-4941;

Internet: <http://www.sweets.com>

ARCAT, published by the Architect's Catalog, Inc., is similar in concept to Sweet's in that it distributes catalogs of manufacturers. While the number of manufacturers participating is much smaller, **ARCAT** also provides extensive directories

of building products and manufacturers. Electronically, **ARCAT** publishes Spec-Disc, which contains manufacturers' specifications. In its site on the Internet (see below), it provides its directories and the manufacturer specifications;

phone: 203-256-1600;

fax: 203-254-8166;

Internet: <http://www.arcat.com>

Architects' First Source publishes comprehensive directories of building products and manufacturers, and also provides formatted building product data. It does not distribute the manufacturer's catalog. It requires all manufacturers to put product data into defined formats to facilitate the user's product comparisons. Outside of the US, many publishers take this approach to building product information. On the Internet (see below) you'll not only find the AFS directories, but also hyperlinks to the homepages of those manufacturers who put their product data in AFS and are also on the Internet;

phone: 800-395-1988;

fax: 800-444-1059;

Internet: <http://www.afsonl.com>

MULTICOUNTRY SOURCES OF BUILDING PRODUCT INFORMATION

Unlike cost information, in which the multicountry data sources actually have cost data from each country, with product information, the multicountry sources basically provide distribution of manufacturers' product data to a number of countries. Typically, they have little or no data from many of the countries in which they distribute.

Sweet's has provided worldwide distribution of manufacturers' catalogs since 1985. Today, there are three editions of **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files**. The Worldwide Edition reaches 13,000 offices involved with international construction projects; the Asia Edition reaches 5,000 offices in Brunei, China, South Korea, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Vietnam, Taiwan, Thailand, and Sri Lanka; and the Latin American Edition goes to 3,000 offices in Argentina, Chile, Columbia, Venezuela, and Mexico. Recipients of these catalog files also receive **Sweet's International**

ProductLine, a quarterly, new product tabloid, and they have access to Sweet's BuyLine by Fax, an international version of the popular Sweet's BuyLine. Most manufacturers represented in **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** are US-based. However, their literature in one of these volumes usually means that they can handle orders from that part of the world. To contact Sweet's International—

phone: 800-754-9767;

fax: 312-616-3236;

e-mail: sgilberg@mcgraw-hill.com

Another multinational source of product information comes from Data Distribution Publications in England. In addition to its multivolume **Architects' Standard Catalogue** for the UK, Data Distribution publishes compilations of building product information for Southeast Asia, the Middle East, Europe, and the Americas. With the printed versions, the company provides its new International Diskindex to 15,000 offices worldwide. A Windows-based product data and specifications directory, Diskindex indexes by product type, trade name, and manufacturer. The disk supplies other useful data and enables users to generate and send fax or letter inquiries to manufacturers. They also publish a twice-yearly **International Building Products & Literature Update** that is sent to 30,000 offices worldwide. While many European firms are represented, most manufacturers in these international publications are US-based. However, they can service orders from the part of the world covered by each of these catalogs. You can reach Data Distribution—

in England phone: (44) 1322-277-788;

fax: (44) 1474-569-627;

and in the US, phone: 219-464-9260;

fax: 219-464-9401.

BUILDING PRODUCT INFORMATION COUNTRY-BY-COUNTRY

As with the cost data, we'll run through countries that have recognized sources of building product data readily available and also note the countries that are included in the multicountry information sources.

Algeria

- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

Argentina

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.
- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

Australia

Sydney Building Information Centre, PO Box 33, Strawberry Hill Post Office, Sydney, 2012 NSW;

phone: (61) 2-318-2988;

fax: (61) 2-319-0565.

This organization has publications and provides a reference library. It also holds product exhibitions.

The Building and Home Improvement Exhibition, 113 Anzac Highway, Ashford 5035 SA;

phone: (61) 8-297-1066;

fax: (61) 8-371686.

As Home Ideas Centres Pty. Ltd., they run exhibitions of home improvement and building products in Australia, Malaysia, New Zealand, and South Africa. As Architecture Media (half-owned by the Royal Australian Institute of Architects), they publish magazines and directories and will have a CD-ROM and an Internet presence to carry product information and specifications. As Building Information Systems, they partner with about 20 organizations publishing codes, standards, and specs.

Another source of information is the Australia AEC Network at the Internet site—

Internet: <http://www.arch.so.edu.au>

More data can be found from Builddata at their Internet site—

Internet: <http://www.ca.com.au/~builddata/>

One more Aussie Internet site—

<http://www.build.com.au>

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.

Austria

See also Heinze in Germany and Schweizer Baudokumentation in Switzerland, since many of the products sold in these countries are also sold in Austria.

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.
- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

Bahrain

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.
- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

Belgium

Centre Scientifique et Technique de la Construction (WTCB-CSTC) Lozenberg, 1,7 B-1932 St. Stevens-Wolume;

phone: (32) 2-716-4414;

fax: (32) 2-725-3212.

Provides exhibitions, a library, an information service, publications, and market research services.

Nationaal Architecten Verbond is an Internet site: <http://www.brenda.be/nav>

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.
- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

Bolivia

- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

Brazil

Centro da Construção, R. Prof. Brandão Filho 70, Suite 102, Rio de Janeiro, Cep, 22450-180;

phone and fax: (55) 21-512-6203.

Holds exhibitions, provides a library, conducts market research, and creates publications.

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.
- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

Brunei

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.
- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

Canada

Sweet's Canadian Construction Catalogue File, 270 Yorkland Boulevard, North York, Ontario M2J 1R8;

phone: 416-496-3113;
fax: 416-496-3104.

Typical Sweet's service, distributed to about 7,000 of the most active offices in Canadian construction.

Buildcore Product Source, 280 Yorkland Boulevard, North York, Ontario M2J 4Z6;

phone: 416-494-4990;
fax: 416-756-2767.

This publication is now a clone of **Architects' First Source**. Both are owned by the same parent company. An Internet site is under construction.

Designers Walk Inc., 168 Bedford Road, Toronto, Ontario M5R 2K9;

phone: 416-961-1211;
fax: 416-928-9683.

They have a permanent exhibit of building products and a reference library.

Another source for Canadian data is Construction Online, an Internet site at—

Internet: <http://www.io.org/~conston>

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.
- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

Chile

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.
- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

China

China Building Technology Development Center, 19 Che Gong Zhuang Street, 100044 Beijing;

phone: (86) 1-899-2567;
fax: (86) 1-832-8832.

Maintains a permanent exhibition of prod-

ucts. Also holds other exhibitions, and provides a reference service.

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.
- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

Columbia

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.
- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

Cyprus

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.
- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

Czech Republic

Architecture and Building Foundation (ABF), Václavské náměstí 31, 11121 Praha 1;

phone: (42) 2-2422-5000;
fax: (42) 2-2426004;
e-mail: info@abf.cz

Internet: <http://www.abf.cz>

Supplies a range of services, including exhibitions, publications, a library, and information service. Does market research and provides lectures and courses. Also has an online service and an Internet site (see above).

SIA Ltd., Ostrovni 8, Box 1095, 11121 Praha;

phone: (42) 2-249-14216;
fax: (42) 2-297-120.

A publisher who also puts on product exhibitions.

Denmark

Byggecentrum, Dr. Neergaards Vej 15, DK-2973 Hørsholm;

phone: (45) 45-767-373;
fax: (45) 45-767-669;

e-mail: byggec@inet.uni-c.dk

A building center with a permanent product exhibit, publications, and an information service.

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.
- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

Ecuador

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.
- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

Egypt

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.
- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

Estonia

Estonian Building Center, ET-Info As, Ravola pst 8c, EE-0105 Tallinn;

phone and fax: (372) 2-424-433.

This building center is a joint venture with the Building Institute of Finland. It provides publications, a building information service, product data, and specifications.

Finland

Rakennustietosäätö (the Building Institute), Runeberginkatu 5, PL 1004, FIN-00101 Helsinki;

phone: (358) 0-694-4911;
fax: (358) 0-693-1537;

Internet: <http://www.vtt.fi/cic/rt.html>

Offers product information files, magazines, books on architecture and construction, exhibitions, market research, and other services. It has subsidiaries in Tallinn, Estonia, and St. Petersburg, Russia. Their Internet site is very useful. It links to a number of other sites around the world.

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.
- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

France

CATED (Centre d'Assistance Technique et de Documentation du Batiment et

des Travaux Publics), Domaine de St. Paul, 78470 St. Rémy les Chevreuse;

phone: (33) 1-3085-2459;

fax: (33) 1-3085-2466.

An information service and reference library; maintains a computerized database on products, techniques, and services.

Centre Infobatir, 20 Rue Lortet, 69007 Lyon;

phone: (33) 472-80-1880;

fax: (33) 472-80-1888.

The building center of Lyon maintains a permanent exhibition of building products from about 150 manufacturers. It also runs temporary exhibitions, distributes technical and promotional literature and directories, provides a library and technical bookshop, produces publications, and performs market research.

Groupe Blenheim, 70 Rue Rivay, 92532 Levallois Perret Cedex;

phone: (33) 1-4756-5000;

fax: (33) 1-4756-0818.

This organization produces **Batimat**, the major exhibition of construction products and equipment in France. They also produce a number of specialized shows each year. Their lists of exhibitors are often a good place to begin a product search.

Le Monitor, 17 rue d'Uzes, 75002-Paris;

phone: (33) 1-40-13-3030.

The prime construction industry magazine in France, they publish much product information and issue an annual product directory.

Data also can be found on the French Architectural Web (BatOnLine) at—

Internet: <http://bems.esiee.fr>

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.
- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

Germany

Heinze GmbH, Postfach 1505, D-29205 Celle;

phone: (49) 5141-50-230;

fax: (49) 5141-50-104.

Heinze has several building product information services. Its main service, **Deutschen Bau Dokumentation**, presents product information in formatted multipage units (similar to **Architects' First Source** in the US, but with larger units). Heinze also has **Bau Datenbank**, an electronic service on

over 50,000 products. These services are described on the Internet site—

<http://www.fachinformation.bertelsmann.de> then click on "Bau und Umwelt"

Bauzentrum München, Radlkoferstrasse 16, D-81373 München 70;

phone: (49) 89-5107-444;

fax: (49) 89-5107-166.

This is a building center with a permanent exhibition of building products, a reference library, and a publishing program; also runs temporary exhibitions.

Fraunhofer Informationszentrum Raum und Bau (IRB), Nobelstrasse 12, D-70569 Stuttgart;

phone: (49) 711-970-2600;

fax: (49) 711-970-2900;

e-mail: arcpnis@irb.fhg.de

This organization maintains a number of electronic databases, both CD-ROM and online, on building and planning in Germany. It also provides a literature service, has a publishing program, and has an associated information consulting service to find products and manufacturers and other market data.

Architektur und Bauen is an Internet site that can be reached at—

Internet: <http://www.tfh-berlin.de/~550652/arch/index.htm>

Other online sources include **Das Architektur-online-magazin** aus Bochum, an Internet source at —

Internet: <http://www.archinet.de/>

Bauen & Wohnen also have an Internet site—

Internet: <http://www.bau.net/>

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.
- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

Greece

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.

- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

Hong Kong

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.

- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

Hungary

Építésügyi Tájékoztatói Központ Kft. (E'TK), Hársfa utca, 21, 1074 Budapest, or PO Box 83, 1400 Budapest;

phone: (36) 1-342-2183;

fax: (36) 1-342-3368.

The **Hungarian Building Catalogue** is available in print and on CD-ROM. Their **Building Fax Magazine** puts product data into a digital system for fax transmission. They also sponsor product exhibitions.

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.

Iceland

Byggingarlinan, Gardastræti 17, 101 Reykjavik;

phone: (354) 1-616-577;

fax: (354) 1-616-571;

e-mail: byggilina@itn.is

Internet: <http://www.abf.cz>

This is a building center that maintains product exhibits and a reference library that includes catalogs of most Icelandic building products, as well as lists of construction professionals. They also maintain an Internet site (see above) that includes an English version of the homepage and links to homepages of other Scandinavian building centers.

India

Grids Catalog Private Limited, E-339, Greater Kailash-1, New Delhi, 110 048;

phone: (91) 11-621-7232

or (91) 11-641-5213;

fax: (91) 11-644-6116.

Grids' Catalog is an annual building products catalog reference for construction and interiors. **Grids' Update** is a quarterly new-product newsletter. FTA is a service through which manufacturers send samples and literature to the market. In addition, this company provides a number of other services for those looking to locate and/or buy building products.

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.

Indonesia

The Construction Ministry's Internet site <http://www.pu.go.id/infoengl.htm> provides industry information.

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.
- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

Iran

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.
- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

Ireland

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.
- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

Israel

The Building Center of Israel (BCI), 40 University Street, PO Box 39027, Ramat Aviv 61390, Tel Aviv 69975;

phone: (972) 3-6425-221;
fax: (972) 3-6410-274.

Maintains a permanent exhibition of building products, a technical library, and a product and technical information service.

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.

Italy

See Trade-Net ITALY on the Internet—
<http://www.tradenet.it>
for a directory of companies and products. Also see the Internet directory—

<http://www.smart.it/aedile>

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.
- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

Japan

The Building Center of Japan, 30 Mori Building 3-2-2, Taranomon, Minato-ku, Tokyo 105;

phone: (81) 3-3434-7155;

fax: (81) 3-3431-3301 or 3431-3302.

This center is under the auspices of the Ministry of Construction. It plays an active role in evaluating methods, equipment, and materials and disseminating the results of these studies. It maintains many education efforts, publications, and exhibitions. It also publishes an English version of the standard building law of Japan, and of other major notifications of the Ministry of Construction. The Building Center also has an office in Osaka.

The Japan Building Center, 2-6-4 Ginza, Chuo-ku, Tokyo 104;

phone: (81) 3-3562-2691;

fax: (81) 3-3562-5889.

This is a different organization from the one described above. It has a permanent exhibition of building products, an information service, and a reference library.

Kajima Institute Publishing Co. Ltd., 5-13 Akasaka 6-chrome, Minato-ku, Tokyo;
phone: (81) 3-3582-2251.

For many years they have published an annual Sweet's-type building products catalog.

Also see the Internet site of ArchiWeb Consulting Services—

Internet: <http://www.archiweb.com/>

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.
- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

Jordan

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.
- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

Korea

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.
- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

Kuwait

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.
- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

Libya

- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

Luxembourg

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.
- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

Malaysia

Building Information Center of Malaysia, Lot 2 Jalan 51A/243, 46100 Petaling Jaya;

phone: (60) 3-777-5850;

fax: (60) 3-777-3082.

Maintains a book store, a permanent product exhibition, and an information service.

Also see the Building and Home Improvement Exhibition listing under Australia.

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.
- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

Malta

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.

Mexico

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.
- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

The Netherlands

Bouwcentrum Advies B.V., Europalaan 101, PO Box 3122, 3502 GC Utrecht;

phone: (31) 30-856-222;
fax: (31) 30-802-294.

This building center provides exhibitions of building products, a library and information service, publications, and market-research services.

Nederlandse Bauw Dokumentatie,
Postbus 23, 7400 GA Deventer;

phone: (31) 5700-48-601;
fax: (31) 5700-42-761.

An annual publication similar to Heinze in Germany. Its parent company, Wolters/Kluwer, publishes both magazines and technical books for the architecture/construction market in the Netherlands.

Another source is BouwWeb, an
Internet site: <http://www.bouwweb.nl/>

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.
- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

New Zealand

See the Building and Home Improvement Exhibition listing under Australia.

Also see the Internet site —

Internet: <http://www.branz.org.nz/>

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.

Norway

Norsk Byggtjeneste A.S., Haakon VII's Gate 5, Postboks 1575 Vika, N-0119 Oslo;

phone: (47) 22-833-690;
fax: (47) 22-834-233;

e-mail: fumapost@byggjeneste.no

Internet: <http://www.byggjeneste.no>

This is the Norwegian Building Center. It provides both permanent and temporary exhibits of building products, a library and information service, a bookstore, and market-research services. Has its own publications and maintains a database with descriptions and prices for over 30,000 products. They also have an Internet site (see above).

- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

Oman

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.
- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

Pakistan

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.

Panama

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.

Paraguay

- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

Peru

- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

The Philippines

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.
- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

Poland

Building Information Center, ul. Senatorska 27, 00-099 Warsaw;

phone: (48) 22-27-2449;
fax: (48) 22-27-9967.

Maintains a permanent exhibition, Bud-expo, at ul. Bartyoka 26, 00-716 Warsaw;

phone: (48) 22-404-662 or 674;
fax: (48) 22-404-662 or 228.

Maintains a publishing program on the Polish building market, an information service, library, and bookstore, and performs market-research studies.

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.

Portugal

Variograma, Rua de Xabregas, Lt. 2, Piso 3, Sala 24, 1900 Lisboa;

phone: (351) 1-868-0781.

Their product, ICONS, is a CD-ROM covering the types, shapes, colors, and the suppliers of stone products from Portugal.

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.
- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

Qatar

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.
- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

Romania

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.

Russia

VNIIESM, Leningradskoe Shosse 16, 127171 Moscow;

phone: (7) 095-150-8600;
fax: (7) 095-150-5697.

Includes a building center with exhibitions, an information service, library, and research services.

VNIINTPI, 1 st Tverskaya Yamskaya St. 6, 147025 Moscow;

phone: (7) 095-251-1795;
fax: (7) 095-250-2558.

This building center also maintains building product exhibitions, an information service, library, and research services.

St. Petersburg Construction Center, 5 Torzhkowskaya Street, 197342 St. Petersburg;

phone: (7) 812-246-2461;
fax: (7) 812-246-0855.

This is a new joint venture with the Building Institute of Finland. It provides a permanent exhibition of building products and performs marketing studies.

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.

Saudi Arabia

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.
- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

Singapore

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.
- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

Slovakia

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.

Spain

Institut de Tecnologia de la Construcció de Catalunya, Wellington 19, 08018 Barcelona;

phone: (34) 3-309-3404;
fax: (34) 3-300-4852.

Maintains a materials register file with data on more than 5,000 products. The file contains data on technical properties and is organized to facilitate product comparison. The data are available in a 17-volume paper service and on floppy disks. In addition, they have graphical product data on a CD-ROM. They also maintain a library of construction information and a bookstore.

Centro Informativo de la Construcción, Roger de Lluria 117, 08037 Barcelona;

phone: (34) 3-215-7738;
fax: (34) 3-215-8415.

Holds permanent and temporary exhibitions and maintains an information service and a library.

Fomento de la Producción, Casanova 57, 08011 Barcelona;

phone: (34) 3-453-5358;
fax: (34) 3-323-3885.

This company publishes an industrial directory that has a construction materials category.

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.
- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

South Africa

See the Building and Home Improvement Exhibition listing under Australia.

Sri Lanka

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.

Sweden

Svensk Byggtjänst (Swedish Building Center), Västra Vägen 7A, S-17188 Solna;

phone: (46) 8-734-5000;
fax: (46) 8-734-5099;

e-mail: svensk.byggjanst@sub.postnet.se

This building center, located in a suburb of Stockholm, holds exhibitions and publishes specifications, books, and a building product information service in both print and electronic formats. They hold training courses and maintain an electronic library of product information for searches.

Byggcentrum Göteborg AB, Göteborgsvägen 97, S-43137 Mölndal;

phone: (46) 31-27-2400;
fax: (46) 31-27-0007.

This is a regional building product center that maintains a permanent exhibition and provides a product information service and a library.

The Internet site Archaid Sweden

<http://www.archaid.se/>

lists Scandinavian design contract interior products.

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.
- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

Switzerland

Schweizer Baudokumentation, CH-4223 Bläun;

phone: (41) 61-761-4141;
fax: (41) 61-761-2233.

Publishes **The Baudoc Library**, a 45-volume, loose-leaf set (34 volumes contain product information). Product data are formatted for ease of comparison, are in German and French, and are updated five times per year. The service is also available on a bilingual CD-ROM that covers 16,000 manufacturers and distributors, 27,000 brands, and 55,000 products and services.

They also publish **Baudoc Bulletin**, a periodical on construction in Switzerland, and they provide an inquiry service on sources of products.

Schweizer Baumuster-Centrale, Talstrasse 9, Börsenblock, CH-8001 Zurich;

phone: (41) 1-211-7688.

Maintains a permanent exhibition of building products and provides an information service.

EPFL, the Département d'Architecture's Internet site—

Internet: <http://www.epfl.ch/> also provides useful information.

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.
- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

Taiwan

• One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.

• One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

Thailand

• One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.

• One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

Tunisia

• One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

Turkey

Yapi-Endüstri Merkezi, Cumhuriyet Caddesi 329, 80230 Harbiye-Istanbul;

phone: (90) 212-247-4185;
fax: (90) 212-241-1101 or 246-2266.

Has a permanent product exhibition, information service, library, bookstore, and publications.

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.
- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

United Arab Emirates

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.
- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

United Kingdom

Barbour Index plc., New Lodge, Drift Road, Windsor, Berkshire SL4 4RQ;

phone: (44) 1344-884-121;

fax: (44) 1344-884-845;

e-mail: mrp@barbour-index.co.uk

Barbour's **Building Product Compendium** was the model for **Architects' First Source**. It contains a comprehensive directory of manufacturers, products, and trade names, as well as illustrated, formatted entries from manufacturers for initial product selection. The **Compendium** also provides an inquiry service to obtain more data. Barbour also publishes on microfiche 175,000 pages of construction-related technical information, including legislation, contract and case law, standards and codes, methods of measurement, costs, statistics, reports, and articles. Also on microfiche are **Barbour's Product Microfiles** with the full text of 7,000 catalogs from about 1,000 manufacturers. In 1995, Barbour launched **Construction Expert**, a two-volume CD-ROM containing both technical and product information. It comes in three versions, for architects, civil and structural engineers, and building-services engineers. A "preview" version is available on floppy disk.

Data Distribution Publications, Apex House, London Road, Northfleet, Gravesend, Kent DA11 9JA;

phone: (44) 1322-277-788;

fax: (44) 1474-569-627.

The multivolume **Architects' Standard Catalogue** is similar to Sweet's in that it distributes catalogs of building product manufacturers. It differs, however, in that pages in **ASC** are roughly half the height and width of a Sweet's page, and **ASC** contains directories of products and manufacturers that are not limited to those whose catalogs are included. An electronic version is available as the **ASC-Diskindex** system. It contains indexes of companies, products, and trade names for about 4,000 suppliers, over 900 of whom provide additional company and product descriptions. A feature of **ASC-Diskindex** is the fax/letter inquiry service. This generates faxes or letters to man-

ufacturers whose products a user finds of interest. A demo disk is available.

RIBA Companies Ltd., 39 Moreland Street, London EC1V 8BB;

phone: (44) 171-251-5885;

fax: (44) 171-490-4434;

Internet: <http://www.ribac.co.uk>

The publishing arm of the Royal Institute of British Architects, RIBA Companies publish product information from 6,000 manufacturers in **Product Selector**, a three-volume print service and **Product Selector Plus**, a CD-ROM issued semi-annually, which also contains other databases and software to send letters and faxes to manufacturers. There is also **RIBACAD**, an electronic service that provides 7,500 design details from manufacturers. They have a new Internet site (see above).

The Building Centre, 26 Store Street, London WC1E 7BT;

phone: (44) 171-637-1022;

fax: (44) 171-580-9641.

Maintains permanent exhibitions of building products and a library and literature distribution center. The Building Centre also has a publishing program, does market research, and provides courses and lectures.

The Building Information Warehouse has an Internet site at—

Internet: <http://www.biw.co.uk>

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.
- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

Uruguay

- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

Venezuela

- One of the editions of the **Sweet's International Building Products Catalog Files** from the US.
- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

Vietnam

Hudmark Group Inc., PO Box 186, Hoboken, NJ 07030;

phone: 201-222-0050;

fax: 201-222-2851.

The **Vietnam Business Directory** is a biennial publication listing contact information for thousands of businesses in Vietnam, including sources of domestic and imported building products. **Vietnam Info** is a quarterly updated CD-ROM that contains both economic and corporate data. Data for both products are compiled by the Vietnam Government's Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

- Rawlinson's **Construction Investment Guide for Vietnam**, sold in the US by Means.
- Davis Langdon and Seah International's **Construction and Development in Vietnam**, sold by Means.

Yemen

- One of the editions of Data Distribution Publications' catalogs from the UK.

THE GENERIC SEARCH METHOD

Assume you have to design or build a structure in a country in which you have had no experience, and the owner wants you to use local products to the extent possible. You are also expected to provide various levels of estimates. Naturally, you will ask the owner about sources of information on that country's building products and construction costs. If you have a local partner, you would want them to provide this information to you. However, to be sure that you obtain access to the broadest range of available data, here are some other steps to take.

Contact the US Department of Commerce, International Trade Administration at

phone: 800-872-8723,

or your local Department of Commerce office. The Department of Commerce is charged with promoting exports of US products and services. In every country, they have commercial counselors attached to the US Embassy, who have many contacts with local business people. Ask them to help you locate local sources of product and cost information. They also can assist with translations, information on local customs and mores, as well as industry standards and business practices. The department administers a host of programs to help US firms working overseas, so use them (after all, you're paying for them).

Contact the American Chamber of Commerce in the country of interest. These organizations often have helped me in digging out information sources in various locations. They can also help avoid regulatory land mines, and they can put you in touch with other US companies working there.

Contact the American Institute of Architects—

phone: 202-626-7415; and talk to Russell Keune. The AIA works with professional organizations worldwide and can usually introduce you to an architectural association in a country of interest to you. Also try the new Architecture Forum on CompuServe (GO ARCH). In this forum, you can reach and “talk” to architects from all over the world. As mentioned earlier, for cost data also contact the International Cost Engineering Council—

phone: 704-728-5287.

When looking for product information, don't forget building centers. The Building Center International Union has 43 building centers or their equivalents in 25 countries as members. To check if there is a member center in a specific country, contact Bernardo Scheinkman at—

phone and fax: 305-935-9808.

One final stop—the Internet. There are many Internet sites (often based outside the US) that provide links to architecture and construction-related databases all over the world. Here are a few to try.

- InterPRO Resources
http://www.ipr.com
calls itself the Internet's premier construction site. It claims to have links to thousands of other sites.
- Tony's Digital Library
http://www.archiweb.com/library/index.html
claims it has links to 750 sites.
- Jeanne Brown's Architecture Internet Resource Guide, compiled by an architectural librarian, seems to move around a lot. The latest address is
http://www.nscee.edu/unlv/libraries/arch/rsrce/webrsrce/index.html
- Brannan maintains an extensive list of Internet site links
http://www.brannan.com/links/
- Building Online
http://www.BuildingOnline.com
claims links to 38,500 building industry webpages.

- An old favorite is the webserver ArchiGopher
http://libra.caup.umich.edu/ArchiGopher/
- The Building Institute of Finland
http://www.vtt.fi/cic/ratas/aecnets.html
maintains a worldwide list of Internet sites that have construction-related information.
- The World Wide Web Virtual Library
http://www.clr.toronto.edu/VIRTUALLIB/arch.html

Finally, thanks to Michigan State University's Center for International Business Education and Research, you can plug into a great deal of useful information on doing business in countries and regions around the world. Go to—

Internet: http://ciber.bus.msu.edu for a link to international periodicals, regional and country-specific databases, statistical data, directories of companies, and lists of trade shows.

I hope the information contained in this quick tour of the world will save you search time and help you make more money on your projects. If you find errors in any of the above listings, or if you have additions or changes to recommend, please let me know by—


fax: 201-573-9686
or e-mail:
103043.1064@compuserve.com

I would be grateful for your help in maintaining this database.



Hugh T. Sharp is the founder and president of Strategic Advantage, L.L.C., a company that provides strategic planning, marketing planning, product development, acquisition analysis, and other professional consulting services. Mr. Sharp previously was the senior vice president of R.S. Means, where he headed all editorial, development, and production activities. He also assisted in the start-up of Architect's First Source. He previously held numerous positions with McGraw-Hill, including editorial and sales for Chemical Engineering, publisher of the Dodge Building Cost Services, and vice president of product planning and development for Sweet's Group. He and his wife bought, developed, and later sold Manufacturers' Agent Publishing Co., Inc., a directory publisher. He is a member of AACE International.

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