

Online social networking helps property sector go green

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THE commercial property sector is following in the footsteps of online social networking technology like My Space and Facebook with the launch of a new \$1.5 million online encyclopaedia and networking tool to encourage the increased adoption of sustainable building practices and attract young people to the industry.

Designed to function as wiki – a collaborative web tool – Your Building was launched at Stockland's sustainable new headquarters in Sydney last Friday.

According to the Australian Greenhouse Office, the building sector accounts for 10% of the country's greenhouse gas emissions, 12% of water consumption and up to 40% total energy.

Activities around buildings produce 40% of landfill waste and 40% of air emissions in Australia.

A joint initiative of the Australian Greenhouse Office, the Cooperative Research Centre for Construction Innovation and the Australian Sustainable Built Environment Council, Your Building uses internet links to pool thousands of individual sources of information on current sustainability practices, regulation, technological innovations and case studies in a single location.

Your Building creates an online community where members can add their own content, post comments, listen to podcasts and contact each other through their personal profiles.

How-to guides on developing business cases for green developments and refurbishments are also a feature of the site.

During a teleconference on Friday, CRC for Construction Innovation chief executive Keith Hampson said Your Building was an interactive website that had been specifically developed to deliver the Australian commercial building sector.

He said it was a "one-stop internet shop" for all things to do with sustainability for clients, designers, tenants and facility managers.

He said it would encourage the commercial property sector to share its ideas and experiences, fuel debate on important sustainability issues and ultimately highlight how business could profit from sustainability.

It could also be used as a tool to attract and retain young people to the construction industry.

"From an industry perspective one of the things this industry is struggling with is bringing in fresh young talent. The brightest and the best need to be further encouraged to join the Australian construction industry," he said.

"One of the benefits of using this technology is to make this site and this industry somewhat more attractive to attract and retain young talent, both through being more sustainable in our approach, but [also by] improving the attractiveness of the workplace.

"There's a change coming and I think that the sense of young people being attracted to both the technology of this site and also the content to improve their commercial building sector is an important element of preparing ourselves for the future."



The new Your Building website launched to help the commercial property sector adopt sustainable building practices

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