

Does Collaborative Working (Partnering) enable the more effective Integration of Surveying Services ?

John M.D.BACON, FRICS FCI Arb FInstCES FICE
United Kingdom

1. Introduction

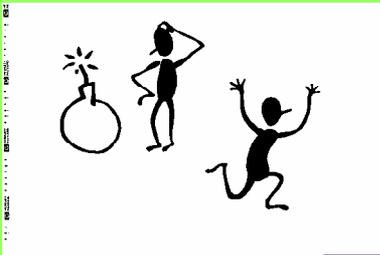
Employers and Contractors who work closely together will, sooner or later, reach a stage in their relationship when they want to move even closer together, just like couples. This process is carried out in the business world, in exactly the same way as with human beings.

If two companies want to merge, we call it a **merger**. The two companies become one and the same company. With humans, we call it marriage.

However, if the companies want to get very close together, but still retain their own independent natures, then, in business, we call this **partnering**. With humans, we call it living together.

But first, what exactly is Partnering ?

Is it this ??



Or this ??



Partnering is a pro-active, co-operative approach to doing business, developing a long-term commitment between key players involved in a project(s) to achieve specific business and project objectives.

Partnering maximises the effectiveness of every participants' resources through creating a relationship based on trust, mutual respect, integrity of action and common goals.

It focuses the parties respective energies and expertise into achieving the required objectives in an optimum manner, instead of diverting resource into fighting each other in order to gain a superiority.

The aims of project partnering include:

1. Setting mutual project objectives.
2. Achieving better project buildability through earlier contractor involvement.
3. Lowering the overall project cost.
4. Reducing the project time and improving quality.
5. Establishing a more dynamic project organisational structure and clear lines of communication.
6. Measuring achievements against reset targets and industry benchmarks
7. Achieving mutual benefits to be derived from longer term considerations.

The Benefits of Partnering frequently include :-

- Enhanced genuine Customer focus:
- Less claims and litigation:
- Enhanced quality:
- Relationships clear:
- Improved efficiency:
- Faster projects:
- Greater certainty:
- Greatly improved Responsiveness:
- Synergistic teams:
- Improved design:
- Innovation:
- Better safety records:

What is needed for Partnering to work ?

There are three key aspects of partnering:

- the corporate and human commitment to mutual objectives,
- the potential for, and, realisation of proven improvement,
- a quick, simple, painless, problem-resolution process.

These elements are resolved during a workshop and embodied in a written Charter, which is signed by all key stakeholders.

Strategic Integration of Surveying Services

What does this actually mean ?

only geospatial and land and engineering survey side of a project ?

that above, AND with the commercial, quantity surveying, cost planning, cost management and contractual aspects of a project ?

Or the whole of the complete cycle of activities necessary for the execution of a construction activity throughout its whole life ?

~~~~~  
If the latter, then the strategic integration of the complete management service means nothing more or less, than the execution of the complete function in a coherent, integrated (seamless) manner.

Does Partnering enable effective Strategic Integration of Services ?

Yes ! Experience in the UK shows that the majority of large, mega-projects are currently being delivered by variants of Partnering mechanisms involving highly integrated service delivery teams.

Effective and coherent integration can only be achieved by partnering, notwithstanding that other, more conventional contractual mechanisms might be the primary choice of the arrangement between the parties.

Can Partnering deliver effective Strategic Integration of services on projects better than alternative contractual relationships ?

Given that the benefits are

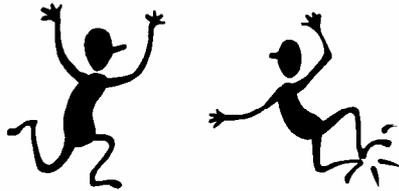
- Alternative methods of construction can be evaluated by the purchaser in conjunction with the contractor in an open-book accounting environment
- Greater emphasis on sharing risks properly i.e. The party who is best able to mitigate the risk, takes the liability for the consequences of that risk
- “us and them” situation is not allowed on partnering contracts
- Substantially reduced incidence of claims and time and cost over-runs
- Non-adversarial forms of contract allow all the expertise of the respective parties to be devoted to the successful and timely outcome of the project. This is especially important on high risk projects

Can Partnering deliver effective Strategic Integration of services on projects better than alternative contractual relationships ?

- Enables faster starts to be made to projects
- The early involvement of the contractor in the design stage (even if the contractor is not responsible for the design) enables improved “buildability” to be incorporated into the design and thereby create savings in time and cost
- Ability to more harmoniously incorporate modifications into the project without generating claims consequences

And given further that these benefits are benefits of the partnering ethos as measured against the attributes of conventional contractual mechanisms, then the answer is clearly

**‘Yes !’**



Will it be this ?

Can Partnering deliver effective Strategic Integration of services on projects better than alternative contractual relationships ?

Partnering can deliver effective Strategic Integration of services on projects better than alternative conventional contractual relationships. That does not of course, mean that they will automatically; only that when partnering is properly used and committed to, it is a fact that it is much more likely to successfully deliver the strategic integration of services.

**But**, the whole of the partnering team must be educated in, must know, and most importantly of all, must be committed to the success of a non-adversarial style of contract. **There is no place in non-confrontational contracting for traditional prejudices.**

Or this ?!!



It is not a style of contracting that sits comfortably with the traditional adversarial contracting methods (“us and them”), and, as a fact, it has had mixed success in use in the UK. An increasing number of major players on the UK construction scene, have used Partnering with outstanding success, and those successes have led to the establishment of major term agreements between different parties that have withstood the test of time, by achievement. It is indeed now so successful that a number of standard forms of Contract are now available for use on Alliancing contracts.

However, adherents to the philosophy of collaboration and Alliancing, and non-confrontational construction contracting, invariably become passionate about Alliancing as a highly successful way of dealing with difficult, complex and large construction projects.

As one who has been the Commercial Director of a number of such collaborative and otherwise exceedingly difficult projects which turned out to be a major success, it is clear to me, that Partnering does enable the more effective integration of Surveying, and indeed, the whole construction management service, and furthermore, when partnering is properly, and committedly entered into, that it does so better than alternative conventional contractual relationships.