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**SHAPING OUR SKYLINES: TOP EXPERTS UNVEIL THE FUTURE OF BUILDINGS’ FACADES IN THE REGION**

*Gearing up for the Future of Facades Summit at the Windows, Doors & Facades Event 2019 (24-26 September, Dubai World Trade Centre), three leading facades experts share their views on the industry’s present and future.*

**Dubai, July 23, 2019** - Facades are what we first see in any building. More than just shaping our city’s look, building envelops have a tremendous impact on the livability of our homes and offices, as well as on their energy consumption.

With technology developing faster than ever, facades are undergoing an unprecedented transformation today.

Ahead of their participation to the Future of Facades Summit in Dubai, [**Benjamin Piper**](https://www.windowsdoorsandfacadeevent.com/speakers/the-future-of-facades-summit-speakers/benjamin-piper/)**, the Partner and Design Principal at Killa Design,**[**Micha Pawelka**](https://www.windowsdoorsandfacadeevent.com/speakers/the-future-of-facades-summit-speakers/micha-pawelka/)**, the Managing Director of Priedemann, and**[**Benjamin Beer**](https://www.windowsdoorsandfacadeevent.com/speakers/the-future-of-facades-summit-speakers/benjamin-beer/)**, the Head of Façades at Ramboll**, discuss current trends and promising technologies that are going to revolutionize our buildings.

**Materials’ science and mechanical systems drive the change**

In the facades sector, Piper points out, there's usually a subtle conflict between architects, who look for the clearest glass, the largest openings, and the best color rendition, and the engineers, who are more concerned with the reduction of the energy load on the building.

Today, thanks to advancements in the materials’ science, the industry is able to meet both the visual performance and the energy performance requirements simultaneously.

“*We can finally have incredibly clear glass with quality visual rendering color that also meets the energy performance standards mandated by the authorities*,” Piper says.

Pawelka agrees: “*Material-wise, we see things getting smart. We have electrochromic glass, the performance of the glass is getting switchable, and prices of these materials are also getting more affordable*.”

Probably the most eye-catching change, however, comes from the facades’ architectural design, which is becoming more and more complex.

“*Architects want to build landmark buildings that have a ‘wow effect’, and this means that buildings are more complicated in terms of geometry and materials*,” states Beer.

“*These curved, twisted, double curved, free form shapes, or blob shape complex facades are amazing and challenging at the same time. They require a lot of research and development to be realised cost-effectively*.”

As a consequence, some of the most interesting technologies that are emerging focus on how facades respond to sunlight, wind, and other dynamic entities. There are two major types of dynamic, responsive facades, Piper explains.

“*The first type is the mechanical façade system that uses moving parts, such as moving louvers or external blinds, to help improve the energy performance of the façade. The second type is the solid-state façade system, which uses material technology to respond to the exposure of a façade, embedding for example liquid crystals*.

“*I think that both these system types offer tremendous opportunities. They also respond to the current requirement for visual clarity and openness while protecting buildings from the energy of the Sun, and providing acoustic comfort to the occupants.*”

**Grander, but also smarter**

“*Digitalization has already changed the way we book a car, or we do our shopping. It will soon change the way our façade industry is acting too*,” Pawelka forecasts.

Big data is a massive trend that will have a major impact on the building envelopes. “*Facades are getting smart: more and more, our building envelops will collect, carry and provide information*,” Pawelka says. “*Digitalization will reach the facades industry and will massively change the way we design and execute facades systems in the future*.”

Beer confirms: “*Going forward, we will have smarter facades reacting to the external environment, featuring switch rubber glazing and double skinned facade systems with active shading*.”

**Sustainability: a challenging opportunity**

Facades are key to reducing the energy consumption of the buildings. According to Beer, “*Today there's a strong push to improve the energy efficiency of the buildings, fostering a more sustainable society*.”

As Pawelka points out, however, sustainability comes with upfront costs, which are somehow slowing down its diffusion in the Middle East’s construction sector.

Beer agrees: “*Sustainability can be quite challenging in the Middle East because of the region’s harsh climate and competitiveness in the construction market. If on the one hand, we aim to design and create more energy-efficient buildings with very low cooling load demands, on the other hand, we must ensure that the clients meet their budget targets.*”

The solution, Beer states, is to think to sustainability as an evolution more than a revolution. “*It is crucial to educate industry stakeholders about how small steps can actually make our buildings more energy efficient and sustainable*.

“*Currently, we see quite a lot of new technologies emerging in the market to make building facades more sustainable. Active facade components, like active shading and glazing, are some of the most promising innovations*.”

“*At Ramboll,” Beer continues, “we are also in close contact with energy suppliers and glass suppliers to develop solar control coatings. It is crucial to push the industry to develop and create better quality glazing and design for human beings*.

“*We always bear in mind that we spend most of our time indoors, and it’s therefore very important to understand how the glass selection affects the quality of the light filtering through the facade, and what impact it finally has on the building’s occupants*.”

**[Read the full interview with**[**Benjamin Piper**](https://press.windowsdoorsandfacadeevent.com/thought-leaders-series-benjamin-piper)**, Partner and Design Principal at Killa Design, clicking**[**HERE**](https://press.windowsdoorsandfacadeevent.com/thought-leaders-series-benjamin-piper)**]**

**[Read the full interview with**[**Benjamin Beer**](https://press.windowsdoorsandfacadeevent.com/thought-leaders-series-benjamin-beer)**, The Head of Façades at Ramboll, clicking**[**HERE**](https://press.windowsdoorsandfacadeevent.com/thought-leaders-series-benjamin-beer)**]**

**[Read the full interview with**[**Micha Pawelka**](https://press.windowsdoorsandfacadeevent.com/thought-leaders-series-micha-pawelka)**, the Managing Director of Priedemann, clicking**[**HERE**](https://press.windowsdoorsandfacadeevent.com/thought-leaders-series-micha-pawelka)**]**

**Beer, Piper and Pawelka are among the key speakers of the “Future of Facades Summit” by Windows, Doors & Facades Event** (WDF), Middle East’s largest industry dedicated event. Taking place on September 24 at the Dubai World Trade Centre, the free-to-attend summit will bring together top industry experts to discuss the future of facades in the region.

Piper says: “*Professionals attending the Future of Facades Summit will gain useful insights into the latest technologies and methodologies. More than that, the conversations that the event will spur, will offer a unique opportunity to understand our industry and build valuable connections with peers, consultants and suppliers*.

“*The work that we do as architects is very much based on keeping abreast of technological developments and trends - that's why I personally love attending WDF’s Summit: it reinvigorates the process of design providing new ideas and opens new possibilities*,” he adds.

**WDF will also offer a wide education agenda including free CPD-certified workshops** on September 25 and 26, the “Facades Seminar Series”, uncovering groundbreaking concepts on building design, BIM, fire and life safety, and glass technologies.

**Over 300 exhibiting brands will showcase their products at WDF and the co-located Gulf Glass**, the region’s largest glass event. Leading brands including Schuco, Orgadata, Gutmann, Elumatec, Reynaers, SaintGobain Vetrotech, Hueck, Emmegi, and MJ Metal already confirmed their participation.

“*One of the fantastic aspects of attending the event is that, as an architect, you get the opportunity to physically touch the products and systems*,” says Piper. “*This physical contact is what really gives you the confidence to specify and make recommendations for a project*.”

According to Beer, “*The facade industry is pushing many new products on the market, and the whole sector evolves quickly in response to client demands. It is therefore very important to attend the event and discover these new products.*

“*WDF is also an excellent opportunity to meet people and network. Most of the facade professionals are at the event. For me, WDF is a sort of family gathering, where all the glass suppliers, facade system suppliers, architects, and consultants come together*,” he concludes.

The fifth edition of the Windows, Doors & Facades Event (WDF) will run from 24 to 26 September at the Dubai World Trade Centre. It is supported by Schüco (Diamond Sponsor) and Reynaers (Gold Sponsor). To know more, visit [www.windowsdoorsandfacadeevent.com](http://www.windowsdoorsandfacadeevent.com/?utm_source=Website&utm_medium=Newsroom&utm_campaign=WDF-newsroom-Opinionpiece&utm_content=&utm_term=).

Click [HERE](https://www.windowsdoorsandfacadeevent.com/education-agenda/?utm_source=Website&utm_medium=Newsroom&utm_campaign=WDF-newsroom-Opinionpiece-summit%20agenda&utm_content=&utm_term=) to discover the “Future of Facades Summit” agenda.

Register and attend the event for free by clicking [HERE](https://register.windowsdoorsandfacadeevent.com/Registration.aspx?utm_source=Website&utm_medium=Newsroom&utm_campaign=WDF-newsroom-Opinionpiece-registrationlink&utm_content=&utm_term=).

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##### ABOUT WINDOWS, DOORS AND FACADES EVENT

24 - 26 September 2019, Dubai World Trade Centre

Windows Doors & Facades Event (WDF) is the largest dedicated platform for the windows, doors and facades industry in the Middle East. An unmissable platform for windows, doors and facades industry suppliers, manufacturers, buyers and decision makers, the event is expected host over 150 exhibitors from around the world.

Organised by dmg events, the fourth edition of WDF gathered over 120 exhibiting companies from around the globe, attracting more than 6,600 visitors. Free educational seminars and the Middle East Facades Summit complemented the event, which showcased the latest and most innovative technologies, products and solutions for the regional windows, doors & facades industry.

In 2019, Windows, Doors & Facades Event will be co-located with Gulf Glass, the largest glass event in the Middle East.

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We aim to keep businesses informed and connect them with relevant communities to create vibrant marketplaces and to accelerate their business through face-to-face events.

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