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**Issued by the President of the South African Institute of Architects (SAIA)**

### **Open Letter to Autodesk and Graphisoft**

In a developing country such as South Africa, with over half of our architectural practices being either micro or small practices (1-2 people), and with over half of the number of projects being modest in value, it is critical that the large software developers engage with various key role players to understand their needs, as opposed to telling them what their software offers.

The essential software is increasingly being sold in bundles containing many different applications, several of which will not be used until higher levels of BIM are attained. It should also be noted that some other essential networking functions are NOT part of the bundled packages. Consider for example, that a stand-alone Revit Lite license is relatively affordable, but as soon as one wishes to network two together the full package needs to be subscribed to, twice. Licensing policies have also changed from multi-user to single and named user, massively decreasing the flexibility, and increasing the cost. Not everyone is using the software all the time, and flexibility of use is key to increased adoption of BIM.

BIM implementation and the digitization of the construction industry will continue to benefit large practices only, making the affordability of it exclusive and available to only to those Practices that can afford to invest in the cost of the software (now annual), the hardware and the training. Financial predictability is important, where many of the larger projects take years to deliver and fees are often fixed for long periods of time. In contrast, the major software developers think nothing of raising subscription costs annually and/or related to currency fluctuations.

We are not the only national body that has made similar requests which to our knowledge, have been ignored.

Let us hope that by adding our voice to the growing criticism, the monopolies/duopolies will finally listen and engage.

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