

The background of the top half of the page is a photograph of a modern building with a curved, metallic facade and large glass windows, viewed from a low angle looking up. The image has a halftone or dot-matrix texture.

Case Study

The Royal Institute of British Architects

Architecture.com

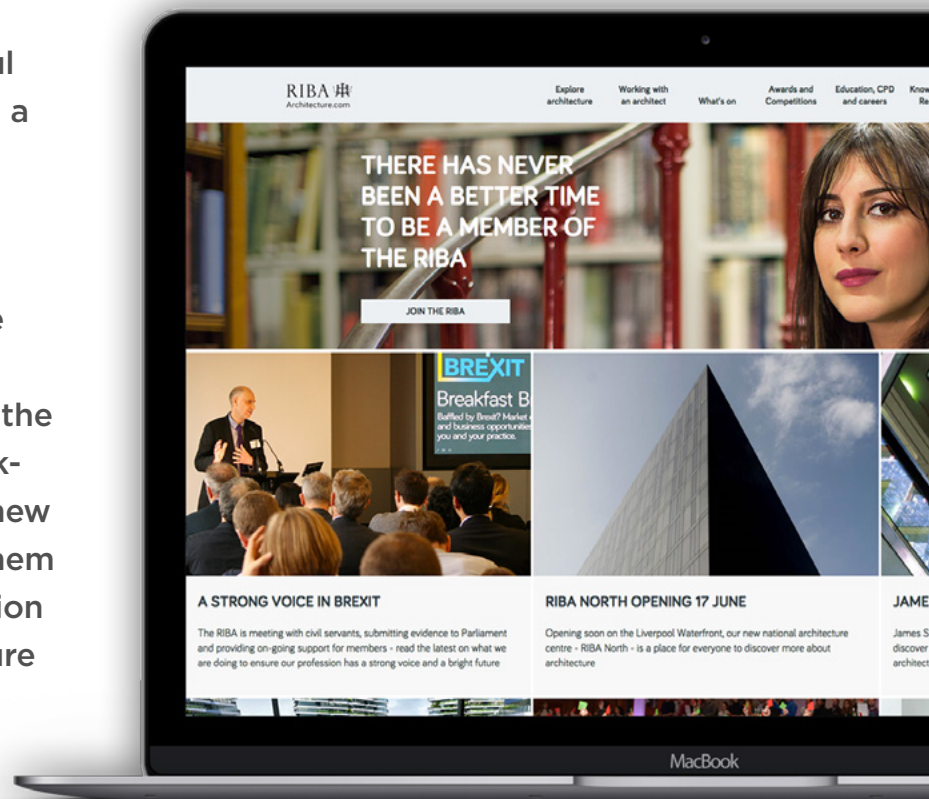
- ✓ Implementation of new Sitecore-powered digital platform
- ✓ Improvements to online members' area and joining journey
- ✓ Supporting the institution's wider digital transformation strategy

The Royal Institute of British Architects can better support members, students and clients of architecture alike with a new Sitecore-powered website.

To ensure that they continue to fulfil their mission of “driving excellence in architecture”, the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) must keep up with growing demand from their community of over 40,000 members to do more digitally.

The institution therefore embarked on an organisation-wide programme of digital transformation, with an overhaul of their existing online platform a central pillar of this.

In transitioning their website [architecture.com](https://www.architecture.com) to the Sitecore Experience Platform, we have delivered vast improvements to the user experience, significant back-end process efficiencies, and a new online joining journey - giving them an exceptionally strong foundation from which to manage their future transformation initiatives and secure long-term, strategic success.



“ Technically they’re brilliant, we’re very pleased with the new beta of our website... We wanted a company that was able to create a highly usable website for our members, and they’ve absolutely delivered on that front.”

- Paul Drinkwater, Head of Digital, the Royal Institute of British Architects

Doing more digitally

Like many membership institutions, RIBA has been grappling with the challenge of how best to embrace digital technologies, in order to move away from the more cumbersome paper-based processes traditionally employed and ultimately improve the member experience. It was crucial, therefore, that the demands and concerns of RIBA members be addressed as part of their digital transformation programme, particularly with regards the membership institution’s new online platform - a primary touchpoint for members seeking specialist information, resources and services.

Consequently, RIBA conducted in-depth research with members at the outset of their transformation, to help define the key strategic drivers behind the website. These included:

- Delivering an optimal user experience, regardless of the device being used
- Widening the appeal of the site to all who visit including students and clients of architecture
- Improving the process of creating and managing content through the implementation of a more powerful and flexible system

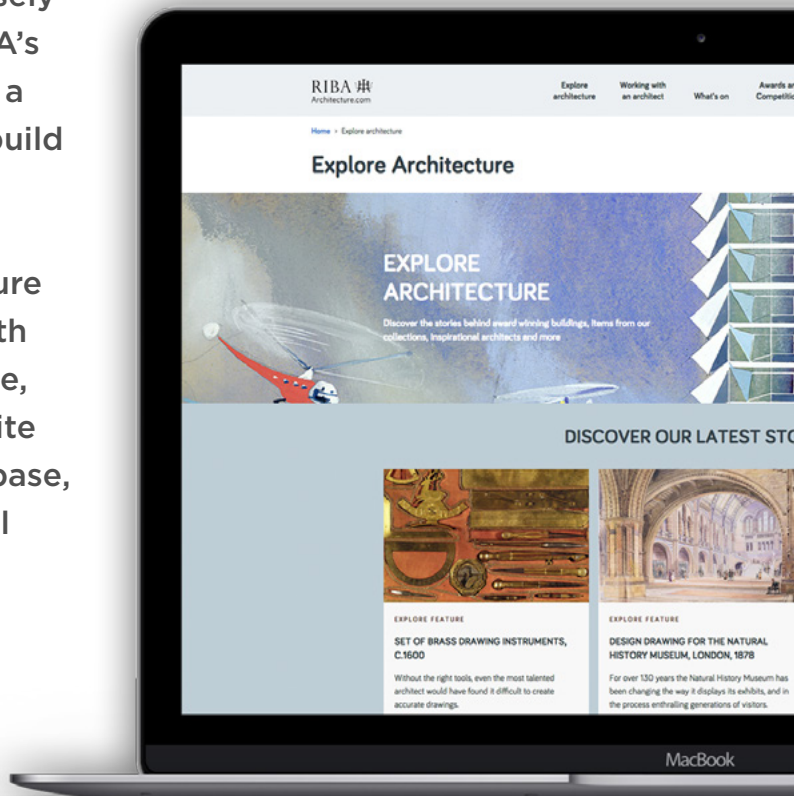
Another key challenge that the project had to address was bringing the member joining journey online. As member joining had previously been handled offline - involving multiple documents and subsequently long turnaround times - this meant thinking about how the processes at the very heart of the institution could be streamlined.

Getting started - discovery

The initial research proved extremely useful to our consultants during the [early 'discovery'](#) phases of the project. In reviewing the documentation provided by RIBA alongside conducting stakeholder interviews and exploring the site's existing information architecture, we were able to validate the key themes and priorities previously identified, producing:

- A user story map communicating project requirements in a clear, concise way that could be understood by all stakeholders
- [Wireframes](#) detailing how the site might look and feel, to kick-start the design process
- An appropriate [plan of action](#) to ensure the above could be implemented in a way that enables RIBA to achieve its strategic goals

At this stage we also began to work closely with senior staff / stakeholders and RIBA's internal Transformation Steering Group, a relationship that we then continued to build on throughout the project. By regularly reporting our progress we could share good practice across the team, and ensure that the work we were doing aligned with activity going on elsewhere. For example, it was crucially important that the website integrate with RIBA's membership database, to provide a holistic picture of individual members - this was achieved by using a custom API, built by RIBA, that ensured information could be shared between systems and updated in real-time, to safeguard accuracy.



Better serving members

With the direction of the project confirmed, we then set about identifying the technology that would underpin the new RIBA website, finding our ideal solution in the [Sitecore Experience Platform](#), which combines powerful content management capabilities, exceptional customer intelligence, and multi-channel

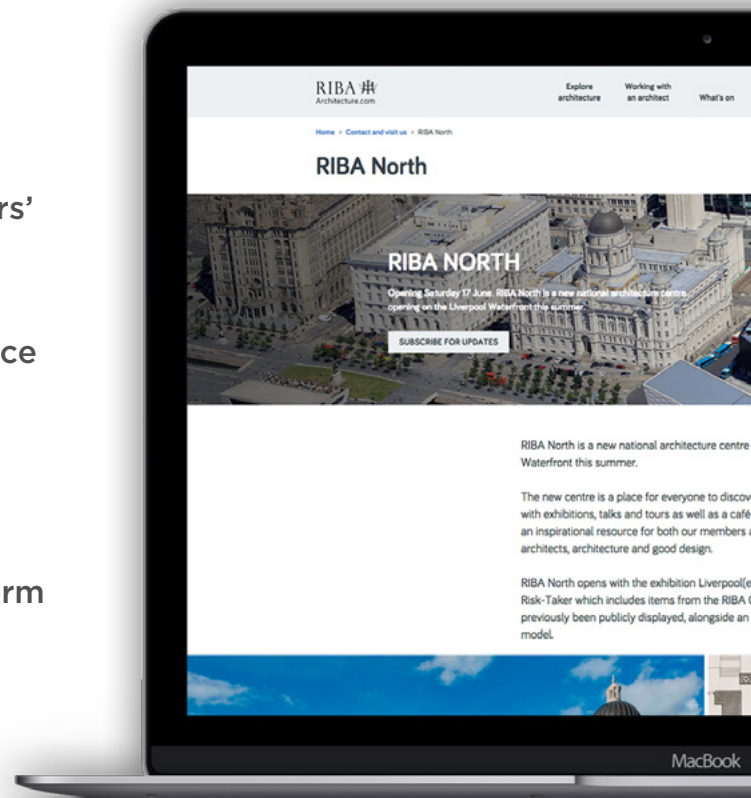
delivery. By building a [responsive framework](#) on top of the platform, we were able to provide members with access to important information and services whenever and wherever they need them. Our [User Experience \(UX\)](#) consultants further enhanced the site's usability and content findability by ensuring that key areas and journeys across the site were as streamlined and intuitive as possible.

This included, of course, defining a new joining journey - in collaboration with the RIBA membership team - to consolidate a previously disparate and highly manual process that had seen the team receiving up to 20 emails a day with queries about membership, and processing over 9,000 applications a year. Another point of particular focus was RIBA's legacy members' area, which was completely overhauled to bring as many member services online as possible. Additionally, elements of this space were opened up to additional audiences, to help engage and convert prospective members and clients.

Architecture.com provides an online platform through which it will be able to engage its members and other audiences via digital services. As RIBA progresses with its digital transformation it will be increasing self-service capabilities for prospective and current members and clients alike - dramatically reducing administrative overhead for their internal teams, and allowing them to concentrate instead on improving the member experience.

Process efficiencies

To further reduce administrative burden for the RIBA team, we also recommended that the membership institution move away from its legacy content editing platform to the much more user-friendly, centralised and



collaborative system, [GatherContent](#). Integrated with their Sitecore implementation, this system allows RIBA to maintain control over the quality of their content, while delivering cost-savings through reduced training overheads - and as the membership institution is now better able to release timely thought leadership pieces it has also helped cement RIBA's reputation within their industry and support their mission to uphold the highest standards within architecture.

A powerful new platform

RIBA now has a far more usable website that:

- Is focused on the needs of their disparate user groups
- Support faster, more efficient processes
- Introduces valuable new functionality to help the membership institution grow and thrive

Released in beta initially, architecture.com will continue to be iterated over time based on user feedback and RIBA's strategic roadmap. This phase will also serve as a transitional handover period between Box UK and RIBA, during which time we will continue to provide support to the membership institution to help them eventually become self-sufficient in the running of their digital platform.

Thanks to Box UK and Sitecore, RIBA now has a strong, stable platform at the heart of its digital transformation strategy - and if you're looking for the same, [we're just the people you should be talking to.](#)

Skills

- › Software Consultancy
- › Discovery
- › Roadmap Planning
- › Sitecore Experience Platform
- › Software Development
- › User Experience (UX)

Similar Projects

- › Royal College of Nursing Digital Transformation
- › Chartered Trading Standards Institute
- › BCS SFI*Aplus*



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