

Spotlight on Beyer Blinder Belle

Solution Toolkit:

Autodesk® Revit® and Ideate Automation

BEYER BLINDER BELLE

Beyer Blinder Belle Customizes Ideate Software Solutions to Meet Their Specific Needs

Founded more than 50 years ago with a focus on residential construction, today [Beyer Blinder Belle Architects & Planners](#) (BBB) is a multifaceted, award-winning firm with offices in New York City, Washington DC, and Boston. Best recognized for their architectural work on historic buildings, BBB's other specialty areas include civic, commercial, cultural, education, government, hospitality, interiors, planning, urban design, and multi-family residential.

//We equip our architects and designers with resources that empower them, so they can focus their creative skills."

Ten years ago, BBB adopted Revit as a BIM authoring platform. Around the same time, BBB also established a Design and Construction Technology (DCT) group to support digital practice, increase efficiency, and provide in-house software training. "We equip our architects and designers with resources that empower them, so they can focus their creative skills on creating contemporary designs that reflect appropriate historic, cultural, and civic context," said Nicholas Wright, Director of DCT at BBB.



Courtesy Witkoff, Apollo Global Mgmt, Rendering by NQS Creative

BBB and Ideate Software

[Ideate Software](#) was initially introduced to DCT by a staff member who spoke highly of Ideate Software products. On their recommendation, BBB reached out to learn more. "To get to know the software, we started with Ideate Sticky," said Matthew Breau, Design Technology Specialist at BBB. "We were impressed that it did just what it was supposed to do, and it was easy to learn and use. We added another Ideate Software product, then another. We now subscribe to the entire Ideate suite and encourage all designers at BBB to leverage those offerings in their day-to-day work."

//We now subscribe to the entire Ideate suite and encourage all designers to leverage those offerings in their day-to-day work."

Since the release of [Ideate Automation](#) 2.0 in the summer of 2022, BBB has been leveraging it to centralize weekly tasks that were previously performed by individual teams. Using Ideate Automation, DCT runs these tasks overnight, which allows teams to reclaim valuable time during business hours. "We started looking into the available features in Ideate Automation and how we could get the software to run automatically and export data to a format that would be really useful to the team. For BBB, that initially included weekly DWG exports for coordination issuances to consultants and weekly PDF sets run as check sets or to accompany drawings to consultants," said Matthew.



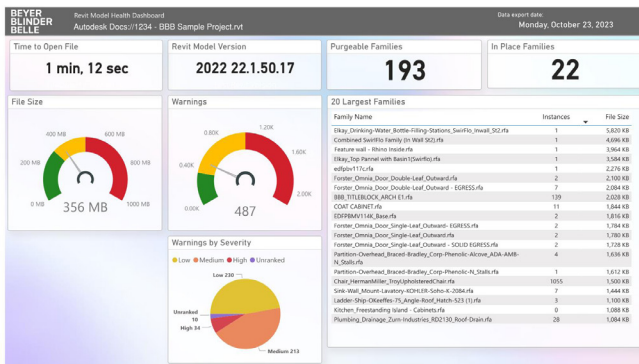
Courtesy Witkoff, Apollo Global Management
Rendering by NQS Creative

Customizing Ideate Software Tools to Address Unique Needs

At the beginning of 2023, BBB decided to explore additional use cases for Ideate Automation and to customize several of the scripts that ship with Ideate Automation. “These customizations have helped us double down on our commitment to building our designers’ knowledge of best practices, supporting firmwide BIM standards, and proactive monitoring of model health,” said Nicholas.

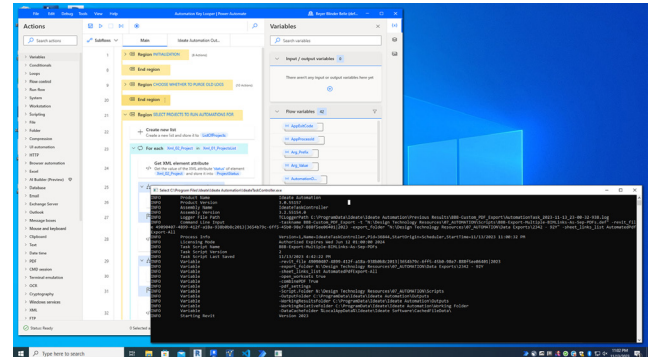
Here are three ways BBB has customized Ideate Software tools to meet their needs:

- 1. Structuring PDFs to Meet Teams’ Requests** – As DCT began offering overnight PDF exports to teams across the company, they heard that overwhelmingly people preferred to get one PDF per type of drawing series (e.g., one for architectural drawings, one for demolition drawings, and one for landscape drawings). “Although Ideate Automation does not come with a script that can structure PDFs in that particular way, it comes with a lot of editable examples. We were able to study the many scripts as references and then we pulled in the pieces we needed and created a hybrid script that performs perfectly,” said Matthew.
- 2. Model Health Reports** – DCT developed a firm-standard model health dashboard by customizing several of the Data Export scripts that ship with Ideate Software tools. The exported data includes information about file-open times, model-in-place families, component family size and naming conventions, view organization, and model warnings. This allows DCT to have deep insight into teams’ models at a glance and to provide proactive assistance and feedback.



“Because we have fully automated the extraction and reporting process, it gives us more time to focus on actually supporting project teams. We have more time for things like tailored trainings and can achieve a regular cadence of check-ins to create more of a focused opportunity around model health,” said Nicholas.

- 3. Scaling Overnight Automations** – To fully integrate Ideate Automation into BBB’s data-centered processes, BBB developed a workflow using Microsoft Power Automate to capture front-end Ideate Automation command line arguments and send them to the backend to run on a specific schedule. This allows for additional tasks to happen before or after Ideate Automation’s data export, beyond the Revit environment. “It is incredible how well Ideate Automation integrates into a larger automation pipeline. The flexibility of Ideate Automation’s task engine and its ability to work independently of the front-end UI is a huge plus for us,” said Matthew.



Support that Goes Above and Beyond

When Beyer Blinder Belle has questions about an existing workflow or needs to build a new one, Matthew reaches out to the Ideate Software support and/or development team. “I can’t say enough about how helpful the Ideate Software team has been to us. Everyone I have spoken to has been willing to dig into understanding my questions and responding insightfully. They don’t just come back with ‘yes’ and ‘no’ answers,” said Matthew.

“For tasks not currently possible in their solutions, they have a real curiosity about what we’re trying to do and why, and they help us customize scripts to meet our needs. Often, we see that our questions and suggestions are addressed in future releases, which demonstrates Ideate Software’s desire to create solutions to real-world challenges,” Nicholas continued. “We are also excited about the new releases; we enjoy digging into the new feature sets, exploring the tools, and discovering new ways to use them.”

“We are so appreciative of how much time and attention they spend on making sure the tools, whether out-of-the-box or with customizations, do what we need.”

About Ideate Software

Ideate Software equips Revit users with unparalleled command over their BIM data with a crafted suite of innovative solutions designed to automate and resolve ongoing difficulties in architecture, engineering, construction, and owner-operator (AECO) workflows.