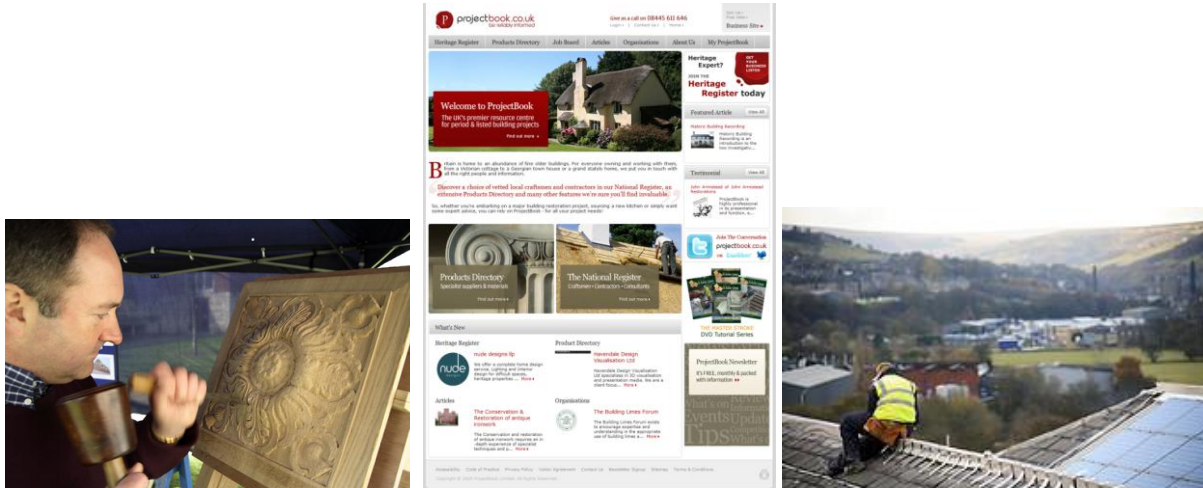


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ProjectBook's first birthday celebrated by heritage builders and craftsmen

ProjectBook, the UK's premier resource for period and listed buildings, is celebrating a successful first year promoting skilled craftsmen, suppliers and builders trained to work on old buildings

From its low key launch on January 1st 2009, ProjectBook, an essential resource for owners of period and listed buildings, has rapidly become an essential marketing tool for anyone trained in traditional craftwork and period properties.

Horrified by some of the 'repairs' he had seen carried out on heritage properties, heritage building expert James Mott saw the need for a comprehensive national database of vetted professionals who were trained to understand the special needs of properties built prior to 1919.

Until around 1919 lime mortars and renders had generally been employed in construction, but from this point cement mortars and renders began to be widely used. Unlike lime, cement is impermeable and stops a building from 'breathing'. As a consequence, using cement mortars and renders to repair older homes can be hugely damaging and often leads to problems with damp and rot.

Many builders are no longer trained to understand these different building techniques, which is why, according to the Wedgewood Markham Survey undertaken in 1995, an estimated 70% of heritage maintenance work is undertaken by unskilled practitioners, often with irreversible damage to the property they are 'repairing'.

Using his extensive contacts, Mott created an online database of qualified professionals vetted by their peers, many of them leading experts in their fields. Some of these craftsmen have been traditionally trained in skills lost to modern construction. As marketing may not be a core skill, many would be difficult or impossible to find without ProjectBook.

ProjectBook Facts:

- In total, over 700 businesses specialising in period and listed property work can be found on ProjectBook
- ProjectBook's Heritage Register contains over 540 registered businesses, the largest directory of its type in the UK
- ProjectBook's Products Directory lists 150 suppliers

In addition, ProjectBook offers features from leading experts in their fields including historic paint analysis, wrought iron, damp issues and the use of laser scanning.

New for 2010

Content and resources will be continuously added, offering site users even more choice.

ProjectBook will also be providing increased support for business members, introducing initiatives such as:

- Expanded entries, now including a projects list and social media links
- Expanded marketing including professional PR support. A dedicated ProjectBook blog on members will be appearing weekly on CountryLife.co.uk
- A widget which allows businesses without a website to buy a domain and point it at their ProjectBook entry (over 70% of businesses working in the sector currently have no website)
- Networking groups will be piloted in Surrey. If successful, these will be set up around the country. These groups will bring together all players involved with old buildings – property owners/managers, councils, sector organisations along with the UK's best craftsmen, contractors & Consultants from PB.
- Website redesign to make navigation even easier
- Events - shows, courses, seminars, open days, exhibitions, CPD Lectures. Uniquely, the PB website will allow site users and members to input their own event information, ensuring all content is accurate and up to date
- Advisory Group – this group will meet monthly to discuss sector issues, new initiatives and pioneer change. The conclusions reached by the group will be posted on our blog to allow our members to submit comment
- A blog forum offering topics for debate, PB news, member posts and guest blogs of benefit to members

For more information, please contact James Mott, founder and managing director of ProjectBook on Tel: 08445 611646 or Email: info@projectbook.co.uk

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