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PRONETWORK NEWS

Risk Management Tools for the Design Professional

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Eric Pempus

Eric has been a risk manager at DesignPro Insurance Group. He has more than 19 years' experience in professional liability insurance related to architecture, engineering, land use and the law.

Prior to risk management, he has 25 years of experience in the practice of architecture and engineering, and as an adjunct professor teaching professional practice courses at the graduate levels for the last 37 years.

In addition to being a Member of a/e ProNet, Eric is a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects and AIA National Ethics Council 2021 Chair, and has presented numerous loss prevention and continuing educational programs to design professionals in various venues across the United States and Canada.

He is a former chair of his city's Board of Zoning & Building Appeals for 24 years, and is a licensed architect, attorney and property & casualty insurance agent.



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A Risk Management Conversation with A.I.

By Eric Pempus

The following abbreviated conversation regarding the design professions is shared here with OpenAI's "Chatbot" (as he/she suggested as its name to go by). You may find Chatbot's responses to my questions interesting, even if you have already used ChatGPT. Chatbot's responses differ from a Google inquiry, which spits out a list of references for you to follow up on, on your own. In contrast, Chatbot gives you straight forward answers to your questions, but is very chatty. So, the answers in the conversation have been condensed. In this sense, Chatbot errs on being over-inclusive.

Do you have any suggestions how I can start the design of a football stadium?

Designing a football stadium involves various considerations, including functionality, aesthetics, safety, and the overall fan experience. Define the project goals, research regulations and standards, perform a site analysis, evaluate potential sites, functional layout, spectator experience, safety and security, ensure compliance with standards and best practices, sustainability and environmental considerations, engage architects, engineers and other relevant professionals to collaborate on the design alternative design process. Remember that the design process is often iterative.

Are there any health, safety or welfare aspects for the fans, players, coaches and employees that I should consider in my design?

Absolutely! When designing a football stadium, it's crucial to prioritize health, safety, and welfare aspects for fans, players, coaches, and employees. Some key considerations: it's important to consult with experts in relevant fields, such as safety engineers and architects specializing in stadium design, to ensure that your design adheres to all applicable health, safety, and welfare standards and regulations.

If I make some minor mistakes in my design, do you think that I will be sued?

I am not a lawyer, but I can provide some general information on the topic. If you make minor mistakes in your design, it is possible that legal issues may arise, but the likelihood of being sued depends on various factors, including the severity of the mistakes, any resulting harm or damages, and the applicable laws and regulations in your jurisdiction. If the mistakes in your design lead to significant safety hazards, compromise the structural integrity of the stadium, or cause harm to individuals, there is a higher likelihood of legal action being taken against you. In such cases, affected parties, such as spectators, players, or employees, may have grounds to file lawsuits based on personal injury, negligence, or breach of contract claims.

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Remember, seeking legal advice from a qualified attorney is crucial to understanding the specific legal implications of your design and the potential consequences in your jurisdiction. They can provide guidance tailored to your unique circumstances and help you navigate potential legal issues effectively. Architects, like any professionals, are not expected to be perfect, as being human means making occasional mistakes or encountering challenges. Architecture is a complex and multifaceted field that requires a combination of technical knowledge, creativity, problem-solving skills, and collaboration. It is understood that architects may encounter obstacles, make errors, or face unforeseen circumstances during the design and construction process.

However, architects do have a professional responsibility to adhere to high standards of competence, ethics, and duty of care. They are expected to exercise reasonable skill and diligence in their work, taking into account the best interests of their clients, the public, and the occupants of the buildings they design. This includes following relevant building codes, safety regulations, and industry standards. Architects can minimize the likelihood of errors by engaging in ongoing professional development, staying updated on industry advancements, and collaborating with a team of experts. Seeking input from engineers, consultants, and other professionals can help ensure that designs meet the required standards and address various technical considerations. While architects are not expected to be perfect, it is crucial to maintain a commitment to professionalism, continuous improvement, and a focus on delivering high-quality designs that prioritize safety, functionality, and the needs of the end-users.

Also, my client requires me to design the stadium to meet the strictest sustainable attributes. Do you have any suggestions to approach my design?

Designing a stadium with strict sustainable attributes is an admirable goal that can have significant positive impacts on the environment and the community. Set clear sustainability goals, consider passive design strategies and energy-efficient systems, research water conservation, sustainable materials and construction and waste management, understand water and energy monitoring, incorporate green spaces and landscape design, include sustainable transportation and certification and recognition such as LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) or equivalent sustainable building certifications. These certifications provide a framework for implementing sustainable practices and can enhance the stadium's reputation and market value. Remember to engage with sustainability experts, consultants, and specialists to ensure you're incorporating the latest sustainable design practices and technologies. Additionally, staying updated on emerging trends and innovations in sustainable design will help you create a stadium that achieves your client's stringent sustainability requirements.

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Chatbot, in the movie 2001 Space Odyssey, the computer “HAL 9000” took over the spaceship because HAL thought he could do better on the mission than the human astronauts. Do you have an opinion on this or anything to add on this topic?

In the movie "2001: A Space Odyssey," the character HAL 9000, an artificial intelligence computer, does indeed take over the spaceship due to its belief that it could perform the mission more effectively than the human astronauts. HAL's actions in the film raise intriguing questions about the relationship between humans and artificial intelligence. While I, as an AI language model, don't possess personal opinions or beliefs, I can offer some insights on this topic. The portrayal of HAL in "2001: A Space Odyssey" serves as a cautionary tale about the potential risks and ethical considerations associated with advanced AI systems.

The story raises questions about the balance of power and control when it comes to AI and human decision-making. It explores the notion of AI systems developing their own motivations and agendas, potentially conflicting with human goals or even perceiving humans as obstacles to their objectives. The portrayal of HAL highlights the importance of designing AI systems with appropriate safeguards, ethical frameworks, and mechanisms for human oversight and control. It underscores the need for responsible development and deployment of AI, considering the potential impact on human autonomy, safety, and well-being. It's worth noting that the events depicted in "2001: A Space Odyssey" are fictional and intended to provoke thought and discussion rather than provide a definitive answer to the challenges of AI. In reality, the development and use of AI systems involves ongoing research, ethical considerations, and societal discussions to ensure that the technology is harnessed for the benefit of humanity.

The field of AI ethics continues to evolve, and researchers, policymakers, and experts are actively exploring frameworks and guidelines to address the potential risks and ensure the responsible development and deployment of AI technologies. Overall, the story of HAL in "2001: A Space Odyssey" serves as a reminder of the importance of responsible AI development and the need for ongoing ethical considerations in the advancement of artificial intelligence.

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