

EVALUATING AN INDUSTRY

What are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing the UAE construction sector as it faces a post-Covid reboot?

STRENGTHS

- Capable of delivering complex and bespoke structures
- Providing employment opportunities
- Economic value creation
- Building the country's reputation
- Supporting local talent and industries



MAXIMISING STRENGTHS

- Uniform regulations at national scale
- Update codes regularly
- Aligning local and in-country value targets for industry with national goals
- Forming pool of project parties to regularly collaborate with on similar projects

MINIMISING WEAKNESSES

- Incentivising sustainability benchmarks; penalising non-performers
- Investment in research and development
- Established long-term pool of suppliers
- Consider both the construction and operations phase in project planning
- Improved payment cycles through open, shared transaction platforms



WEAKNESSES

- Lack of innovation and delayed adoption of technology
- Siloed approach with lack of communication
- Lowest-price-wins culture and smaller profit margins
- Unsustainable building practices and high carbon emission level
- Insufficient knowledge transfer from project to project
- Lack of collaboration
- Using value engineering as a way to cut corners with quality
- Initiating construction without complete designs
- Delayed payments and pay-when-paid clauses

OPPORTUNITIES

- Digital transformation
- New materials and techniques
- Young graduates
- Sustainable construction processes
- Collaboration among industry stakeholders
- Industry 'voice'
- New business markets



MAXIMISING OPPORTUNITIES

- Regulations to drive digitalisation
- Collaboration tools such as BIM
- Combining expertise with incumbent firms in international markets to increase presence
- Contracting models that enable greater exchange of information
 - Transparent procurement and supply chain procedures
 - Standardised components, prefabricated elements
 - Work with academia to identify talent and offer training expertise
 - Continuous project monitoring using digital tools to create actionable insights
 - Reskill workforce

MINIMISING THREATS

- Alternative project delivery mechanisms such as public-private partnerships
- Permanent and semi-permanent visas for professionals on the basis of experience
- Differentiated product offerings through consolidation and partnerships
- Laws to make digital landscape safer
- Strict health and safety and labour laws
- Building an attractive industry for young talent
- Energy-efficient electricity sources such as solar power
- Closed-loop circular economy principles
- Balanced risk allocation



THREATS

- Lower government revenues
- Growing talent gap
- Transient population
- Fragmented and cut-throat
- Adversarial relationships
- Safety issues
- Impact on environment
- Cybersecurity
- Unfair risk allocation on contracts