“All designing, it goes without saying, is illusion. The effect of the illusion is how it appears to the observer.

But the preparation of that illusion is everything—from the detailing of an architectural concept to the installation of a primus/mesh. If the preparation has been sufficient and proper, the execution of the illusion can go ahead without qualms.

Because, before you’ve even started, the detailing of the illusion is complete.”

B ehind that informal piece of philosophy lies a theme called The Dryvit Difference and it is, understandably enough, being pushed fervently by Dryvit Systems, Inc., One Energy Way, West Warwick, RI.

Convinced that manufacturer, contractor and architect needed to be on the same wavelength in the building process, Dryvit in 1986 began development of a new visual concept in architect assistance. Initially the project consisted of a two-volume print presentation called “Designing with Dryvit.” The material consisted of all-encompassing technical, product, specification and detail information on the Dryvit Outsulation Exsulation and Ultralation Systems. This project was completed in early 1988.

Market research during 1987 indicated that by 1990, 80 percent of all architectural firms in this country will have some degree of CAD or computer-aided design capability. Based upon this information the “Designing with Dryvit” program was expanded to make the detail section of Designing with Dryvit available for use with CAD systems.

A multi-disc electronic data file, cadDry™ was created utilizing the 200 plus details originally developed for Designing with Dryvit. The information was initially programmed for use with AutoCAD software.
To Dr. Vincent Tamburrini, Senior Vice President of Dryvit, “Designing with Dryvit” and cad²ry™ are two powerful business and educational tools that should further the understanding of EIFS technology and detailing while promoting a team approach among the architect, general contractor, and applicator on the issue of job quality.

The goal this year calls for placement of Designing with Dryvit and cad²ry™ in the offices of 10,000 architects. That leaves some 40,000 similar firms to go... awaiting the shift to CAD and visuals from the traditional way of communicating product information by literature coded into the CSI specifications system. Thus, when an architect calls in a contractor and says he wants the newest technology in wall systems, the contractor can provide details on a CAD system. The architect can start his drawing by just plugging a data disc into the computer and transferring completed detail to the drawing—swiftly and accurately.

Here is what Dr. Tamburrini had to say about the new program:

DIMENSIONS: This whole system represents a rather substantial effort. How do you know it will exert a favorable impact both for systems applications and for industry benefits?

TAMBURRINI: We very carefully did our homework. We took this whole program to the Construction Specifications Institute convention and the architects swarmed over it.

We got the same reaction at the convention of the American Institute of Architects. Remember, with cad²ry™ they can visualize. They can simply put a disc in the computer and a complicated drawing is complete—and accurate.

There is instant product identity.

DIMENSIONS: But just who is it intended for, though: contractors or the architects? After all, not that many contractors have computer CAD capabilities, do they? Should they get excited about it?

TAMBURRINI: We thought long and hard on that one. Yes, it is tailored primarily for the architect. But it is intended for in-house use as well as a marketing device for the contractor.

Let me explain that a bit. A growing number of contracting firms do indeed possess CAD capability and they will make good use of this program... for working on their own shopdrawing submittals—

DIMENSIONS: —and the average contractor? The one who may or may not have a computer but certainly isn’t involved in CAD?

TAMBURRINI: If a contractor does not possess CAD capabilities, he can still make good use of the “Designing with Dryvit” printed volumes: they contain all the visualized detailing. As for cad²ry™ the contractor can achieve great benefit in directing his marketing efforts toward architects, his customers, with CAD capability, providing them with the cad²ry™ program.

The prudent contractor today conducts at least some marketing to architects in this manner. The cad²ry™ program is perfect for this type of contractor profile. When a contractor or member of his sales force walks into an architect’s office with the announcement, “I can make this system available
to you,” he is talking about a tremendous service to a customer.

Think what that kind of offer would mean to those builder customers who have their own in-house architects, too. That’s another place it can be of great value.

DIMENSIONS: It strikes me that your real goal is to have your applicator assist you in getting this program into as many designer hands as possible—and score a few good marketing points doing it?

TAMBURRINI: Obviously, we want our contractors to get full advantage, too.

What could be better? Everyone gains something.

As a contractor involves himself in sales, he builds a better bond with his customer by providing him with a program that the contractor knows will get maximum backup.

DIMENSIONS: In giving this program to a customer, what must a contractor know or be familiar with? Introducing a sophisticated computer system can be difficult if questions start flying.

TAMBURRINI: The level of contractor sophistication about cadPry™ which is—as I explained earlier—a data base, can be as great or as little as the contractor’s ability.

From the contractor’s viewpoint, it can be as simple as providing a copy of a detail or it can go right up to seeing that an architect has a set of cadPry™ discs. The only thing the architect would need in the latter case is a computer and an AutoCAD application program. CadPry™ is a data base and works with AutoCAD . . . although we’re working to make it compatible with other hardware and software.

In computerese, of course, it works with a MS-DOS or the OS/2 operating systems but is readily translatable to other formats. Architects with an IBM or compatible computer and an AutoCAD system will know what to do with the cadPry™ data base: they won’t need instructions.

If they do, we provide comprehensive back-up and technical support services to our architect customers. Our computer and technical people are a telephone call away and we certainly recognize the fact that customer service is the key to this program.

If the contractor wants, he can simply arrange for an architect to receive cadPry™ and we’ll take it from there, utilizing the resources of ourselves and our distributor sales network. We are committed to making this program of benefit to Dryvit contractor customers.

DIMENSIONS: What is contained in the data files or diskettes?

TAMBURRINI: The discs contain information on the panelized or in-place application with wood, steel or concrete construction. Details specifically address proper use at foundations, roof parapets, doors, windows, as well as specialty graphic or design treatments.

DIMENSIONS: Any?

TAMBURRINI: That’s what I said: any. It will accommodate any
detail condition on a proposed building. If an architect needs a parapet design at the top of the building . . . the connection of a panel to a building . . . in short, any type of design application, then the software has the detail for that condition. It's all just a keystroke away.

DIMENSIONS: How are these materials made available to the architect?

TAMBURRINI: Through our distributor network. They were instrumental in our development of the project. They realize the importance of differentiating themselves in the marketplace. We are sharing equally with them in the costs associated with the distribution of Designing with Dryvit and cad²ry™ to the architect.

The more architects using the system, the better, because it will make an enormous contribution to accuracy and quality control. By using cad²ry™ it becomes much more difficult for a designer or applicator to misinterpret specs and makes errors.

By giving designers tools to do it properly, we know they have the approved details and methods for a successful application of the system. In any job three parties are involved . . . manufacturer, specifier/designer, and applicator. If one party does something wrong, it can lead to system failure, right? We want to avoid that possibility.

DIMENSIONS: Obviously, cad²ry™ is being integrated into the whole Dryvit marketing profile. This “Dryvit Difference” theme cover what?

TAMBURRINI: You’re right about the integration element. “Designing with Dryvit” and cad²ry™ are all part of a comprehensive educational effort to promote quality work and good installations. Toward that end, our entire objective is to place more information into the industry on how to utilize our systems and products.

DIMENSIONS: The more you discuss cad²ry™ the more I get the impression that the details could be used with any EIF manufacturer’s system . . . not just Dryvit? Is that a correct impression?

TAMBURRINI: Of course, it can be used for any system. Given any aggressive marketing program, it will be obvious where the information came from.

DIMENSIONS: How does a contractor get involved? What is it really that you expect of him?

TAMBURRINI: From a practical standpoint, a contractor will always get involved in details, regardless of the size of jobs. That’s a given.

I would expect that every contractor’s office—which is filled with documents—will also feature “Designing with Dryvit,” showing that he’s using this system and conforming to our details. Let’s be frank: the whole idea is to do it right the first time. A contractor can do that simply by opening up a volume and observing the proper detail. It’s at his fingertips . . . either in the volume or in the cad²ry™ discs.

DIMENSIONS: And how will he use it with an architect?

TAMBURRINI: An architect can also ponder the details in designing a building. Now, for him as well, the information is instant. As I mentioned earlier, a contractor can go to his
customer and say, “I have the tools in my pocket to give you a good quality job.” He can print it for him right off the discs or display it with a Dryvit volume.

Accurate, suitable detail material with keypunch accessibility. It’s available. As a matter of fact, for a specific job, a contractor or architect can take the details out of the binder, copy and attach them to the job profile, then show the result to the owner.

DIMENSIONS: They’d come in handy for shop drawings, too, wouldn’t they?

TAMBURRINI: Absolutely. Because the details for any particular job are already worked out, they’d tremendously accelerate a contractor’s ability to prepare shop drawings.

Truth is, the program can almost do everything except put product on the wall with a hawk and trowel.

DIMENSIONS: Let’s talk about back-up. You indicated you felt this was the heart of the program?

TAMBURRINI: You can’t put data this powerful into someone’s hands and then walk away. You must have good follow-up, and we’ve got in place the ability to respond to any questions or problems arising in the discussion of a job.

Any contractor or architect with a computer and modem can call Dryvit and discuss details while we put the same details on our screen. That way our technical support people and the customer are discussing the same details.

DIMENSIONS: But what about changing details? These items can’t be locked into concrete. How would a change in details be handled?
TAMBURRINI: That’s simple enough. In the absence of a modem, where the computers talk to each other, we could make any change in detail at Dryvit headquarters and fax it to the customer.

For example, if a contractor or architect wants detail 127 changed to 1, b, c, then we simply make the changes and fax the finished details.

DIMENSIONS: Let’s talk more about the contractor? Does he have to go to a computer to participate fully in this program?

TAMBURRINI: No, not really, although a computer is certainly helpful. While individual details are obviously available to the contractor, the real benefit is in the contractor’s daily use of both volumes of “Designing with Dryvit” as a reference tool, an encyclopedia of Dryvit, if you will. The hows and whys of all aspects of the use of Dryvit in this regard... the details are almost secondary. If you have the backup information to the use of Dryvit, you will be able to apply that knowledge effectively to improve not only quality but profits.

DIMENSIONS: Something as dynamic as the EIFS industry means that many changes and new entries will need to be accommodated. What would be some of the new information?

TAMBURRINI: Well, we will be adding new specifications to our software package so people can pull up on a computer screen all of the specs for all of the Dryvit systems... no more guessing or hunting.

And to support the data that we’re sending out we have a whole library of materials... videocassettes... printed literature... technical fact sheets... technical and sales support information.

DIMENSIONS: In summary form, would you list the steps that a contractor could take to participate and get the full benefit out of this package?

TAMBURRINI: We have a four step procedure.

First, contact Dryvit and a representative will visit with a video describing how to use the program. It will describe how the program works and how it can be effectively used to the contractor’s benefit in dealing with architect customers and in the contractor’s own office.

Second. If the contractor is interested, he may purchase from Dryvit or the local distributor the two-volume “Designing with Dryvit” and cadDry™ diskettes with operating instructions. These are made available to contractors at Dryvit’s direct cost.

Third. The contractor can immediately begin increasing his product knowledge to more effectively compete in his marketplace. We feel strongly that product knowledge goes beyond the individual detail. It’s the hows and whys of each Dryvit system that are contained in this package.

Fourth. With the contractor’s increased product knowledge he is well-positioned and equipped in his market to carry the Dryvit message to local architects, with materials that will further the contractor’s professional credibility in the local architectural community.

DIMENSIONS: The reason you don’t care if EIFS competitors gain a benefit from this system is that you view your competition in much broader terms... as systems rather than product competitors, right?

TAMBURRINI: If you mean our competition is another method of building a wall, the answer is “yes.” We see our competition in industry terms. Our competitors, therefore, are glass, brick, concrete, steel.

The EIFS wall is at the forefront of technology. We’re in the wall business because we know that any wall must be built of some acceptable or approved material—and we want that wall built with our system(s), Dryvit. We want contractors and designers to know that our wall is preferable to the other alternatives... that it’s fast, economical, and easy to install, durable, and aesthetically pleasing.

That’s the real reason why all of our technical aids are designed to help the contractor do a better job.

DIMENSIONS: And cadDry™ is an extension of this philosophy?

TAMBURRINI: I think so, yes. The main benefit is, it saves time and time is money. It offers convenience with computer-aided design. The vital information is presented in a format and style that designers want and desire.

It’s visual, which promotes better understanding and communication. It’s accurate—and technical support is but a phone call away.