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## Could scarcity be the new mother of innovation?

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There is no question the next decade will be a defining era for the A/E/C industry. Or, should I say, a redefining era. The methods in which buildings and communities are designed and constructed have exponentially changed the landscape of the built environment. Technologies such as BIM and 3D laser scanning have completely morphed the way A/E/C teams work together.

Our industry is in the midst of a renaissance spurred by innovation and a few key emerging markets. One of those emerging markets is the clean energy economy here in Massachusetts. In a recent report published by the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center, Massachusetts is 2nd, only to California, and is amongst the top 15 states leading this new economy in clean energy.

"It was the best of times - it was the worst of times." ~ Charles Dickens

We're in the worst recession since the 1930's. Yet we're fortunate enough to live in a state with world-class academic and innovation resources, an active venture capital community, a highly educated workforce, and a deep commitment to energy efficiency. Discussions about sustainability and energy use are no longer confined to the macro-level at the annual World Economic Forum. It's at the forefront of everyone's mind - especially our clients'.

As a construction manager, it is important we help our clients reduce their energy-related costs by helping them assess and increase their energy-efficiency. We do this in a number of different ways. Some methods are based on universal standards, such as the LEED rating system. Other methods are implemented via a systemic approach within the parameters of a deferred maintenance program or a facilities assessment, including energy audits.

It is for these reasons Columbia has launched a new Energy Division. Our primary focus is in upgrading and retrofitting older buildings. Our primary goal is to provide solutions that help building owners and/or lessees save money in operating costs. The added value is helping our clients reduce their carbon footprint on the world.

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