

# BLINDS & THE PATHWAYS TO SUSTAINABILITY

## NORFOLK BLINDS

**1** Formal  
CPD  
Point

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Jan Henderson, Editor, Indesign Media Asia Pacific  
Paul Humber, Managing Director, Norfolk Blinds  
Ben Roco, External Furnishings Manager, Norfolk Blinds

**6<sup>th</sup> October 10:30AM–11:30AM**



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## ABOUT THE FACILITATOR

# Jan Henderson

Editor, Indesign Media Asia Pacific

Jan Henderson is currently an Editor and Program Director of the INDE.Awards at Indesign Media Asia Pacific. Her previous roles have included Acting-editor of *Indesign* magazine, Associate Publisher at Architecture Media, Editor and Co-editor of *inside* magazine and Interiors Editor of Architel.tv. Jan is a regular speaker at events and has participated as a juror for industry awards. She is passionate about design and through her different roles supports and contributes to design in Australia.



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# BLINDS & THE PATHWAYS TO SUSTAINABILITY

With their ability to block, screen or limit sunlight, blinds play a significant role in improving thermal efficiency of buildings. As a result, they also contribute to reducing energy costs and cutting carbon emissions.

In other words, if used judiciously, blinds – and particularly those that are digitally connected and operated via building management systems – have an important role to play in a sustainable future. However, specifiers seeking ‘environmentally-friendly’ products need to be cautious as thermal efficiency is only part of the story.

Evaluation of products should also consider several other factors, including the manufacturing process and its associated waste, raw materials, packaging, transport, and more. And it must factor in the concept of ‘embodied carbon’.

It’s a quite a complex path and one that can be difficult for specifiers to follow. So how should you go about evaluating the sustainability of blinds and what tools are available to help you do so?



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# LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this presentation you should be able to:

- Explain the concept of 'embodied carbon' as it applies to blinds and window coverings.
- Outline the role that window coverings can play in improving energy efficiency and cutting carbon emissions.
- Identify some of the harmful by-products of blind manufacturing and how they can be minimised.
- Explain the role that automation can play in improving the efficiency of blinds.
- Identify environmental certifications that you should look out for when choosing products.

Learning outcomes are requirements for formal CPD. Please keep a copy for your records.

## COMPETENCY/S

This presentation will deliver outcomes related to the following Competency/s from the National Standard of Competency for Architects:

**Design: Project Briefing** 1.2, 1.4, 1.5

**Design: Conceptual Design** 3.3, 3.4, 3.7

**Design: Schematic Design** 4.2, 4.4, 4.6



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# SPEAKERS



**Paul Humber** Managing Director, Norfolk Blinds

Paul took a break from an intended career in the metal engineering field in 1990 to join his father's window furnishings business and has been in the industry ever since. Paul went out on his own in business to pursue his own manufacturing of window furnishings and now has manufacturing facilities in NSW, Victoria and Tasmania and has installation teams in all states.



**Ben Roco** External Furnishings Manager, Norfolk Blinds

With 20+ years experience in Sales and Technical capacities, Ben has refined his skills developing business relationships with a keen understanding into the window furnishings market he operates in. His proficiency in designing, specifying and implementing external shading solutions for residential and commercial developments is pivotal to his successes.



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Project:  
Description/Photographer  
Courtesy of Norfolk Blinds





Project:  
Description/Photographer  
Courtesy of Norfolk Blinds

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## ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

### 1. Define the concept of 'embodied carbon' as it applies to blinds and window coverings.

Embodied carbon refers to all the CO2 emitted during all phases of production, including extraction, transportation, manufacturing, etc.

### 2. How can blinds help to improve energy efficiency, and therefore reduce carbon emissions?

According to the US Department of Energy, 76% of sunlight that enters standard double-pane windows becomes heat and 30% of heating energy is lost through windows. By blocking this sunlight and preventing this heat loss, blinds are able to limit the need for artificial heating/cooling and reduce energy consumption.





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## ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

### 3. What are some of the potentially harmful by-products of the blind manufacturing process?

The manufacturing of PVC blinds can create toxic by products such as hydrochloric acid, vinyl chloride, mercury, cadmium, lead and, dioxin.

### 4. What is 'Sick Building Syndrome' and do blinds ever contribute to it?

Building in which occupants complain of symptoms like headache; eye, nose, throat irritation; and nausea. Blinds made with materials containing residues of harmful substances have been known to contribute.



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## ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

### **5. How can automation help improve the efficiency of blinds, and therefore reduce energy usage and cut carbon emissions?**

When blinds and other window coverings are automated and controlled via a Building Management System, their operation can be optimised. In this way, it is possible to ensure they are drawn during the brightest, hottest parts of the day and therefore it is possible to minimize the need for air conditioning.

### **6. What key Environmental Certifications should specifiers look out for when choosing blinds?**

Certifications include Global GreenTag, Health Product Declaration, LEED, GECA, Ecospecifier, Greenguard, Life Cycle Analysis (LCA), C2C – Cradle to Cradle, ISO 14001, Green Tick, etc.

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