



## **Flux, HBN, thinkstep and Google Collaborate to Launch the Quartz Database at VERGE 2015**

*First collaborative, open data initiative to combine health and environmental impact data on building materials empowers AEC industry to achieve greater sustainability*

**San Jose, Calif. – October 27, 2015** – Flux, a technology company founded to deliver collaboration tools for increasing efficiencies in building architecture and engineering, together with [Google](#), a global tech company committed to creating healthy and sustainable workplaces, [Healthy Building Network \(HBN\)](#), a nonprofit devoted to reducing toxic building materials, and [thinkstep](#), a global sustainability software, data and services firm, today introduced the Quartz database at [VERGE 2015](#).

The Quartz database is the result of a year-long collaboration known as The Quartz Project, whose overall mission is to promote the transparency of building product information. Now freely available to building owners, architects and sustainability specialists, as well as to the general public, the database brings together for the first time data on the impacts building materials have on both human health and environmental sustainability.

The Quartz database will be unveiled in a presentation, [Open Data, Collaborative Action: The Scalable Approach for Designing Healthier Buildings](#), on Wednesday, October 28, at the VERGE Conference ([#VERGECon @VERGE365](#)). In addition to showcasing the key elements of the database, the discussion will examine the ways in which simplified, open and streamlined access to a common dataset of building products will impact the built environment.

“Google is deeply committed to building the healthiest environment possible,” said Drew Wenzel, Campus Design Technical Specialist at Google. “Using healthy products and materials is integral to this mission. In our experience, the process of vetting commonly used building products is very complex, consumes a substantial amount of resources, and does not scale well. The Quartz Project is providing actionable health and environmental data that project teams can use to efficiently and reliably make decisions based on these factors at a much earlier stage in the design process.”

### **About The Database**

The Quartz database will serve as a catalyst for more sustainable materials by providing baseline information for the AEC industry. The database aggregates and standardizes the industry’s current supply of isolated, disjointed data into an open database of relevant, valuable and actionable information that is well organized and easy to understand. For the first time, key AEC stakeholders will have a truly open, vendor-agnostic mechanism to

compare, contrast and evaluate materials based on their impact on the environment and human health.

“Information gaps and incompatible datasets can make data difficult to analyze, stifling decision making from whole building design to product selection,” said Heather Gadonniex, director of sustainable building and construction at thinkstep. “We believe transparent and open data can help solve the challenge of curating the enormous amount of information necessary for meaningful analysis.”

Beginning today, the Quartz database ([www.quartzproject.org](http://www.quartzproject.org)) will provide a collection of product profiles for 100 commonly used building materials. Specifically:

- Quartz is a free and open dataset, integrating both LCA and health-hazard data into a single information source using widely accepted and consistent methodologies, such as Pharos Project/GreenScreen hazard screening, TRACI 2.1, and ISO14044.
- Data is vendor-neutral and covers 100 building products across a range of categories, such as concrete, drywall and insulation. Products are compared by composition, health impacts, and environmental impacts.
- Data is licensed under Creative Commons BY 4.0, meaning there is no restriction on the use, redistribution, or modification of the data. This openness will enable the AEC community and the general public to become more educated about the potential impacts of materials in buildings and communities, and to put this data to creative and productive use.
- Through consistent language and metrics, stakeholders will be empowered to have productive dialogue with building products manufacturers, driving the industry towards increased sustainability.

### **About the Quartz Project**

The Quartz Project aims to facilitate the global AEC industry to develop healthier, better performing buildings - more efficiently and with less environmental impact than ever before. A collaborative, open data initiative, Quartz was founded by a diverse group of technology and sustainability stakeholders, including [Flux](#), [Google](#), [HBN \(Healthy Building Network\)](#) and [thinkstep](#). For more information, please visit [www.quartzproject.org](http://www.quartzproject.org) or join the conversation at <https://twitter.com/quartzproject>.

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