

**Purpose** The construction industry's business model is mainly based on the interaction among the architecture office, the engineering office and the construction company. The performance and practices of architects' offices, unlike those of the other actors, are difficult to characterize and there have been few studies on these issues. To better understand architects' performance, the purpose of this paper is to develop a benchmarking tool based on real practices identified by managers of Chilean architecture offices.

**Design/methodology/approach** The research method includes a complete literature review, followed by a study of a sample of nine Chilean architecture offices, with whom a series of four workshops was developed, to establish both performance indicators and relevant management practices. Finally, these metrics were applied in an architectural office as a pilot case.

**Findings** Four management dimensions were defined: client management, external coordination, internal organization and human resources. Key performance indicators were divided into process, financial and quality indicators. The workshops carried out with the architectural offices demonstrated the relevance of benchmarking tools such as the one developed, which enables the systematic measurement of both management practices and performance indicators.

**Originality/value** Although there have been several efforts to create benchmarking tools for the construction industry, few efforts have focused on architecture offices. Therefore, this research aims to explicitly identify management practices that can be used for this type of organization and to coordinate among multiple actors to find the best way to measure their performance, other than the fulfilment of schedules and budgets.