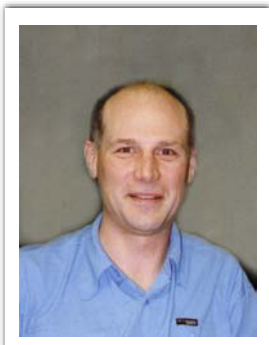


# Eton-West Claims Win-Win with PlanSource

## Online Technology Saves Both General Contractors and Trades Time and Money

Eton-West Construction Ltd is among the latest general contractor to turn to 21st Century technology to handle its bid documents.



**Peter Poburan**

Eton-West, with a head office in Edmonton and a second office in North Vancouver is well known in the world of commercial construction. It has completed a long list of retail and office projects. Among them have been some 30 Canadian Tire Stores and 10 Extra Foods supermarkets.

Peter Poburan is project manager with Eton-West in North Vancouver. He has been with the company for two years. Poburan comes from a subtrade background. He was

trained as an electrician at the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology in Edmonton. Among the firms he worked for over the years is Bridge Electric in the Lower Mainland. It was as a tradesman Poburan became aware of early attempts to use technology to streamline the bidding process.

Some years later when he wanted to modernize the approach at Eton-West he went looking on the Internet to find what if anything had been developed. His exploration led him to a Vancouver firm, Infinite Sources Systems Corporation (ISSC) of Vancouver. He contacted them and they were happy to introduce him to PlanSource.

Plansource is an online system that allows general contractors to manage their bid documents as well as construction documents and confidential documents all in one file.

So far Poburan has been using PlanSource to organize both his data base of approximately 1,000 subcontractors and manage his entire bidding process. Although he says he will no doubt move on to use the system's other features handling his subcontractor data files and managing the bidding process were his first goals. He can now report that they are goals his company has achieved.

Firms that Eton-West has pre-qualified to bid on their projects are given a password to access plans and information on a specific job. They can move around at will studying the job. If they decide to bid and want drawings they can either download them to their own suitable printer or plotter if they have one or they can order



prints to be couriered to them.

Infinite Source Systems is well armed with statistics to show the savings to be had using PlanSource over traditional paper systems. They are able to point to a project

case in Burnaby from last year. Using a traditional paper based system the bidding process would have cost \$10,968. Instead, using PlanSource the cost was less than half – \$5,422. Under the traditional system 20 full sets of documents would have cost \$10,650. Under PlanSource the online fees were only \$3,855. There were also other smaller savings.

PlanSource is a winning system for both the general contractor and the sub-contractor, says Poburan. The sub-contractor no longer has to run around, getting caught in the Lower Mainland's famous traffic jams to view plans or deliver bids. Both of those jobs can be done right from his own desk.

The general contractor, on the other hand, gets the benefit of a modern data organizing system. The subcontractors can be listed in any way he chooses and there is infinite room to make notes about past performance, particular specialties and so

*“The sub-contractor no longer has to run around, getting caught in the Lower Mainland's famous traffic jams to view plans or deliver bids. The general contractor, on the other hand, gets the benefit of a modern data organizing system.”*

forth. In addition the general gets the convenience of being able to instantly alert all the subs bidding a project of any addenda as soon as they come along. Also very important is the fact the general contractor can see that each specific subcontractor has received notices of addenda. There is no dispute that they weren't sent out.

“We've been using PlanSource for eight months now,” says Poburan and we're getting used to it.” There was, he said, only a minor learning curve for Eton-West and for its subcontractors.

“The first time around there were a lot of questions about how to use it,” said Poburan. “But after the subs had used it once there was no problem. It is a fairly easy system to learn.”

All of Eton-West's subcontractors have switched over to using the online system – with one exception. There is one subcontractor who apparently absolutely refuses to deal with the world of computers.

Poburan, an apparently very tolerant man, goes along with him

“It's just one guy,” he says. “If it were one hundred, I'd have a problem.”

