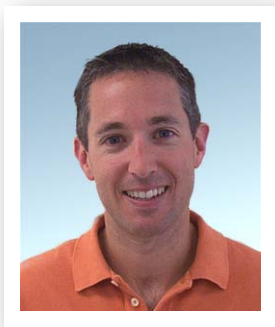


PlanSource Helps Ledcor Construction Manage Risks

Online System Key to Managing Changes in Project Documents

Ledcor Construction is not only among Canada's largest construction firms it is also in the forefront of embracing new technology. The company, which incidentally is celebrating its 60th anniversary this year, was among the first to sign up for PlanSource a computer-based method to issue tender calls and manage tender and construction documents.



Adam Cochrane

has long since divided into six divisions: commercial construction, heavy civil, industrial, mining, pipeline and telecommunications.

Its headquarters are on the Vancouver waterfront in the new Shaw Tower for which it was the general contractor. Among its many current projects is the new Shangri-La tower on Georgia Street in Vancouver. Ledcor has also been named general contractor on the \$1 billion 58-storey Bow Tower to be built in Calgary. It will be headquarters for the EnCana Corporation

Adam Cochrane is senior estimator with Ledcor. There is no doubt he is a fan of PlanSource which was developed and marketed by Infinite Source Systems Corporation (ISSC) of Vancouver. Cochrane

inherited it when he joined the firm after moving west from Toronto two years ago.

Like most general contractors who have turned to PlanSource Ledcor's primary use is in calling for subtrade tenders from their invited list. Cochrane first

used it on the Cross Roads project, a mixed use residential and office development currently going up at the corner of Cambie and Broadway in Vancouver.

He says it has saved him hours of time and stacks of paper. The system is basically fairly simple. Ledcor posts its job on its PlanSource website. An entire "package" is posted. It includes plans,

letters, bid forms, schedules, scope of work, specifications and so on.

"In the old days," says Cochrane, "we had rolled up drawings and a stack of papers five inches thick for each package. We can put all of that on the site. All of the paper work is gone."

He has never sat down and put a dollar figure on the amount of time – and therefore money – PlanSource saves him. But he knows it is considerable.

"Say I'm going out for tender on a job and I'm looking for excavation, shoring, formwork, electrical and mechanical and I'm inviting five companies for each of those. That's a lot of packages. In the old days I would order drawings and specs and send drawings out for copying. I would photocopy all the specifications and print out all my documents and bid forms and the scope of work. That's a lot of administration work. It takes up a lot of staff time. And while I'm doing



"In the old days," says Cochrane, "we had rolled up drawings and a stack of papers five inches thick for each package. We can put all of that on the site. All of the paper work is gone."

that I'm not doing my real job which is to estimate projects."

Trade contractors can use the site to completely preview and review a job. If they decide they are going to bid it they can simply order a set of drawings and PlanSource will have them printed and delivered. In some very simple cases it isn't even necessary to order drawings. Someone bidding on supplying doors, for example, can just count up the number of doors directly from the online site and submit his bid

Another important use is broadcasting addenda, changes and updates to drawings. Sending out addenda and changes and receiving verification they have been received, says Cochrane is "hugely important to us".

"Disputes are rare," he said, "but when they happen they can be large and can cost us a lot of money. It's not as though I can go back to my client and say there is an extra \$250,000 charge because I didn't ensure the contractor got this change."

Once a project is under construction Cochrane's role with it is finished and the project manager takes over. At that point he continues to use PlanSource to handle changes and updated plans. Ledcor doesn't just leave it to each subtrade to watch for them and have them printed. Ledcor has them printed out for them and distributes them personally – often right on the construction site.

"You can't take any chances," says Cochrane. "In a perfect world the subtrades would just go on line. But think of the implications if somebody doesn't get a change. It could cost millions."

Ledcor, he says, remains committed to the ISSC PlanSource system for tendering and for document handling.

