



Save time and big bucks by tendering online

Getting bids from subtrades and suppliers a few short years ago meant rolling up numerous sets of drawings and a stack of papers five inches thick for each package, says Ledcor senior estimator Adam Cochrane.

“Say 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 that I’m not doing my real job, which is to estimate projects.”

Today he posts entire packages to a website called PlanSource and assigns access passwords to invited subs for each job. They can easily browse the documents, and if they decide to bid, they can either download drawings to their own printers or order prints to be couriered to them.

According to Peter Poburan, a project manager with Eton-West Construction Ltd., using PlanSource over traditional paper system cut his costs on one project by about half, to \$5,422 from \$10,968. What’s more, all of the paper work is suddenly gone, saving many hours of tedious busy work.

As for the subs, they no longer have to run all over town to buy or view plans and deliver bids because they can do it all right from their desks.

They can also prepare bids using a host of sophisticated tools to perform various measurements, counts and annotations of the drawings while online.

Another important use for PlanSource is broadcasting addenda, changes and updates to drawings, and receiving instant verification that they have been received. Generals can see that each specific subcontractor has received notices, so there is no possibility of dispute that they weren’t sent.

That is “hugely important” to Ledcor’s Cochrane. “Disputes are rare but when they happen they can be large and can cost us a lot of money.”

Once a project is under construction, project managers can use PlanSource to handle changes and updated plans.

The Construction Association has joined forces with its developer, Infinite Source Systems Corp., to make Plansource available to NWTCA members. For more information, call Don at 867-873-3949.

	Traditional	PlanSource
Document Distribution	2-4 days	Immediate
Document Costs		50-80% reduction
Document Handling		90% reduction
Document Transmittal		100% reduction
Complete Audit Trail	No	Yes
Receipt Confirmation	Courier slip	Digital receipt
Monitoring Activity	Phone??	Real time tracking
Monitor Viewing	None	Every document
Payment	If used or not	Only what’s used
Document Archive	No	Yes

CMHC Yellowknife Housing Market Forum next week

The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) is holding its annual Yellowknife Housing Market Forum on Wednesday, February 13 from 6:30 to 9 pm at the Explorer Hotel. An analysis of 2007 housing market statistics and a forecast for 2008 will be followed by a housing related speech by Mayor Gord van Tighem and a reception. For more information or to register, contact Courtney Peers at cpeers@cmhc.ca.