

## Improving Efficiencies with Technology



### The GMC Commercial Metals Story

**Hybrid Solution, Technological Advancements, and Streamlined Preliminary Notice and Bond Claim Processes Improve Overall Efficiency for Steel and Metal Manufacturer**

## Who is CMC?

CMC Steel Fabricators Inc. dba CMC Construction Services (CMC) maintains one of the largest construction product inventories in the U.S. and provides a myriad of products and services including straight and fabricated rebar, forming and shoring, tilt wall, and equipment rentals. Since 1915, CMC has supported construction projects nationwide.

## CMC's Preliminary Notice & Deadline Management Challenges

For over 25 years, Brenda Koch has dedicated herself to credit management. Brenda has been with CMC for 17 years and is currently the Credit and Collections Manager.

"Our credit team, like so many others, is incredibly busy. Our team is responsible for a variety of credit related tasks including collection calls, managing disputes, handling short pays and tax reports, releasing orders, maintaining account records, and managing lien waivers. In addition to these typical credit responsibilities, we were trying to manage a preliminary notice and bond claim process internally, but we were missing so many deadlines." Brenda explains.

Prior to enlisting the assistance and services of NCS, CMC's internal process was time consuming. Their process would start when a project was booked. After the project was booked, the credit team would obtain project information from the sales team, then collectors would research the project information through county property records, Dodge Reports, and CMC's internal system. Once they confirmed the project and party information, they would print their preliminary notices or bond claims, manually stuff the envelopes, manage the certified mail cards, and track their deadlines through a spreadsheet.

Brenda adds "The entire process was too much to handle. With each deadline we missed we were losing our claim rights, which meant we were losing money. Not to mention, we were losing valuable time to tasks like stuffing envelopes. We needed a more efficient way to manage the process, and most importantly, a system to track our deadlines."

Brenda turned to NCS for help. With NCS' intuitive online platform and knowledgeable staff, Brenda knew NCS could save CMC time and money, while preserving their claim rights.

## The NCS Solution

The NCS team, National Account Representative Robert Clark, Account Representative Peter Pozzuto, and IT Developer Brandon Kirsch, had several discussions with Brenda and the CMC credit team. NCS spent time learning about CMC's current process and focused on truly understanding CMC's pain points. After careful consideration and partnered discussions, a new and vastly improved process was developed, tailored specifically to meet CMC's needs.



*"We strive to minimize our client's workload, and our customized hybrid solutions allow us to do that. Between our technology and expertise, we can design a program to fit your needs. We provide clients a convenient way to proactively protect their payment rights and easily manage projects throughout the lifecycle."*  
– Craig Slimmer, NCS Director of Sales & Marketing

## **NCS Notice & Mechanic's Lien Services, LienTracker™ Online, and API: The Perfect Process**

It was important to CMC that they continue to manage their preliminary notice process without the burden of data entry and updating, printing documents, stuffing envelopes, and dealing with certified mail cards. The NCS team created a hybrid solution for CMC comprised of LienTracker™ Online and NCS Express Bond Claim Services, paired with customized APIs to import new and update existing projects.

### **The NCS Solution: LienTracker™ Online**

Brenda continues "For every project, I can see what changes were made, when, and by who. I can see who generated preliminary notices, when the notices were mailed, and copies of the documents and certified receipts are automatically uploaded to the project. The increased visibility across the department and process is awesome."

LienTracker™ Online is the construction industry's leading cloud-based project management solution. This program is designed to calculate, track, and manage more than 1800 statutorily determined deadlines plus user-defined dates. Users can create and manage unlimited number of projects, generate statutorily written notices, print and mail notices via NCS mailing service, calculate deadlines, create email alerts, track online history of all project changes, generate and manage lien waivers, and use a variety of search and reporting options. Additionally, LienTracker™ Online is housed within NCS Online Services, making managing projects across multiple services easy.

*"Knowing I don't have to deal with printing the documents, stuffing the envelopes, messing with the certified cards, and getting to the post office in time, is a huge relief. I feel I can dedicate my time to more important tasks, like ensuring orders are timely released and keeping up with our aging report."* – CMC Credit Team Member



"We needed better deadline tracking and LienTracker™ Online provides it. The system sends email alerts of upcoming deadlines. We have our internal standard operating procedure, but each member of the credit team can create additional alerts. Plus, the interactive NCS Online Services Dashboard displays urgent activity and the reporting in Account Management means we should never miss a deadline. It is exactly what we needed!" said Brenda.

## The NCS Solution: NCS Express Bond Claim Services

In addition to managing their preliminary notices, CMC needed a service to streamline their bond claims. CMC had been serving bond claims on their own, but the process wasn't an efficient use of their time. Based on the project information CMC obtains and the confidence in the accuracy of the information, NCS recommended a low-cost bond claim solution: Express. With the Express service, CMC can easily switch the project from LienTracker™ Online to NCS, and NCS will take care of serving the bond claim on CMC's behalf.

"Having the option to flip a project to NCS is convenient. We don't have to deal with the hassle of printing and mailing documents." Brenda notes.

NCS solutions are flexible, not rigid or contract restricted. Which means, if CMC encounters a high-risk project or if they are struggling to obtain the proper party information, they can easily submit a request to NCS for our Premium or Attorney services.

## The NCS Solution: Dual Customized APIs

NCS' IT team developed two APIs for CMC data. The first API is an Excel spreadsheet containing current and new CMC projects and the second API is an Excel spreadsheet containing data on all open/unpaid invoices for CMC's projects. Both API feeds are generated from CMC's ERP system and transmitted to NCS.

*"NCS invests in their clients through technology. We are here to ensure our client's technology experience is seamless. NCS' system is flexible and can be customized to meet any need, with minimal requirements from our customer's IT staff. We can accommodate any existing data format, such as .xlsx files, as well as develop custom restful APIs. We partner with our client to develop a statement of work which defines the project scope, deliverables, and estimated timeline for the deployment of the integration. Once completed, our customers can use the integration process for as long as they'd like, with ongoing technical support from NCS."*

*– Mike Cheselka, NCS Director IT Services*



The first API, also known as the Project File, is transmitted to NCS every night. The file contains all relevant data including project information, name & address information for the parties in the ladder of supply, the CMC collector responsible for the project, the project type, and a unique CMC identifier. Upon receipt of the file, NCS' system scrubs the data against existing CMC projects to prevent duplicate projects from being entered. The new projects are then imported to LienTracker Online and CMC collectors can begin managing their projects.

The second API, also known as the Invoice File, was designed to complement the Project File. Ultimately, the Invoice File contains all data relevant to open and unpaid invoices for CMC's projects. The file information includes invoice numbers and dates, original invoice amounts, and unpaid balance totals. The information is matched to the projects in LienTracker Online and in turn updates CMC's last furnishing dates and claim and contract amounts. Last furnishing dates are key, as project deadlines are frequently calculated from the date of last furnishing.

Brandon Kirsch, NCS IT Developer adds "These two data feeds provide a pretty nice experience: new projects created in CMC's system automatically appear in LienTracker Online, complete with mailing addresses, contract & claim amounts, and furnishing dates. Existing projects are updated automatically so that LienTracker Online is consistent with the latest information in their system. Everything is monitored by our Deadline Tracking system, which CMC uses to prioritize their Notice & Bond Claim processes."

## Summary

The CMC credit team was overwhelmed and tangled in a spreadsheet mess, missing deadlines, and losing bond claim rights. They needed a technologically friendly program that would streamline their notice and bond claim processes, and track deadlines. NCS and CMC partnered to design a customized solution that has saved CMC time and money.

"Since implementing a new process through NCS, our DSO has improved by 23%, we have reduced at least 27 hours of overtime per week, which is a cost savings of \$51,000 a year. Not to mention, employee productivity has significantly increased." states Brenda.

NCS' hybrid solution and technological advancements have vastly improved CMC's overall efficiency. CMC collectors can now focus on core credit responsibilities while ensuring they never miss a deadline. With LienTracker™ Online and NCS Express Bond Claim Services, CMC has:

- Increased employee productivity,
- Improved our DSO by 23%, and
- Reduced overtime by as much as 27 hours per week, a savings of \$51,000 a year.





“...our DSO has improved by 23%, we have reduced at least 27 hours of overtime per week, which is a cost savings of \$51,000 a year. Not to mention, employee productivity has significantly increased.”

– Brenda Koch, Credit and Collections Manager at CMC Steel Fabricators Inc.

*To Learn More:*

Call 800-826-5256

Email [SecureYourTomorrow@NCScredit.com](mailto:SecureYourTomorrow@NCScredit.com)

Web [NCScredit.com](http://NCScredit.com)

