

Executive Summary

The construction industry is notoriously slow at adopting new technologies which could revolutionize even their most standard processes and result in substantial and immediate cost savings. One of these processes is that of tracking and approving technical drawings. As a project is completed, drawings finalized through the collaboration of many different stakeholders. These include the architect, engineers, the client, sub-contractors and the general contractors themselves. The general contractor is responsible for managing the approval of these documents and assuring that all documents are not only approved, but approved quickly such that the sub-contractors are not waiting idly for approvals. Efficiency is especially crucial in new design-build projects where construction is started before the building is finalized. In such projects, entire sites can be on hold waiting for a critical aspect to be finalized and approved. Any such delays can result in massive costs to be born by either the client or contractor.

Acknowledgements will revolutionize this process by offering a full document approval and tracking system. By migrating document transmission to a single online service, the process of sharing drawings will be greatly simplified. Robust version control will assure that all parties are working from the same documents, and that no one is ever working from an out of date drawing. Not only will document revisions be managed, but the entire process of having stakeholders approve revisions of documents will be managed from a single system.

At the beginning of a project, the general contractor will create a new *Acknowledgements* project. During this process they will select the different people responsible for aspects of the project, and the standard flow of documents during approval processes. *Acknowledgements* will be accessible not only by the general contractor, but the architecture, engineering and other related firms will all be able to login to a central system. Once the project is initialized, drawings will be added to the system. Drawings will then be automatically “delivered” to different stakeholders through *Acknowledgements* rather than by standard mail or E-mail. Since drawings will always be transmitted through *Acknowledgements*, the state of each document will be known at all times.

General contracting companies will be the initial target clients for *Acknowledgements*. As the company coordinating a construction project, they have the most to gain by implementing *Acknowledgements*. If a general contractor is using *Acknowledgements*, all associated contractors will also be required to use the interface. This will force the distribution of *Acknowledgements* throughout the industry as multiple general contractors will use the same architecture or engineering firms. While *Acknowledgements* will be initially designed specifically for the construction industry, many other possible applications exist in any industry where technical drawings are prevalent and undergo constant revisions (i.e. manufacturing).

As a web application, the distribution of *Acknowledgements* is greatly simplified. The