

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR



Scott L. Melnick

While most subscribers will receive this magazine at their office or home, nearly 2,500 readers will pick up a copy at the North American Steel Construction Conference in Baltimore. Most of the feature stories in this issue are adapted from papers to be presented at the Steel Conference, and I'm sometimes asked why we do this. After all, the same papers are also contained in the Conference Proceedings.

The answer is simple. One of AISC's primary functions is to disseminate information about designing and building with structural steel. Whether in the pages of this magazine, at the Steel Conference, or at one of the more than 70 seminars we hold annually around the country, AISC is in the business of gathering information, packaging it to make it clear and understandable, and providing it to practicing professionals as economically as possible.

And we take this mission very seriously—both the providing of information and the economical dissemination. *MSC* prides itself on the value of its editorial content, yet it's free to readers and advertising rates are far below industry averages. Likewise, registration fees for both the Steel Conference (with more than 40 technical sessions offered) and AISC seminars are much lower than those of other organizations.

Recently, AISC has embarked on a new campaign to make information even more readily available.

Many of you are already familiar with AISC's extensive website (www.aisc.org). We offer free access to all of AISC's specifications, free downloads of a variety of Steel Tools (such as the Clean Columns spreadsheet that calculates cost savings created by the removal of stiffeners), and a freely accessible and extensive knowledge database. The database ranges from reviewed answers and technical questions (for example: "How is a masonry shelf-angle designed?") to the complete library of Steel Tips and *Steel Interchange* questions and answers. You also can search and download

Engineering Journal articles (free to members; \$10 each to non-members) and view six years' worth of *MSC* articles.

AISC also has created the Steel Solutions Center, where engineers, architects, fabricators and others can call (866.ask.aisc) or email (solutions@aisc.org) to get quick answers to all of their questions. Currently, the Solutions Center handles about 200 inquiries a week—and almost always provides an answer within 24 hours. The Solutions Center also focuses on providing project-specific information. Its goal is to make it easy for you to explore traditional and innovative solutions, and to find, compare, select and specify the right system for your project. You can find specific information on typical framing and structural systems, project costs, and schedules.

AISC's latest offering is online continuing education. While nothing fully can replace the advantages of hearing a lecture first hand, interacting with your peers, and asking questions, the online continuing education program offers the advantage of taking a course at your own pace from the comfort of your home or office—without incurring travel costs.

The first AISC online course is "Fundamentals of Connection Design," offered by Virginia Tech's Tom Murray, one of the countries leading experts and best lecturers on the subject. The course, which costs only \$100 for AISC members and \$150 for non-members, covers the art and science of designing and evaluating the connections displayed on shop drawings, including bolting, welding and connecting elements. The program also offers insights into the design of shear, moment, bracing and connections used in steel structures. The program offers 0.4 CEUs or 4.0 PDHs. For more information, or to enroll, visit

www.aisc.org/onlineseminars.htm.

Hope to see you soon (either in Baltimore or maybe online!)

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