

A Website Reborn

BY BRIAN RAFF

Quality Management Company's revamped online presence makes it easier than ever to learn about AISC Certification.

ANOTHER YEAR HAS PASSED, and what a success it has been for the AISC Certification program! Since November 2007, the program has seen a 9% increase of Certified fabricators (from 694 to 763) and a 26% increase in Certified erectors (from 116 to 155). In addition to increasing the number of program participants, AISC has also launched a new Certification program to support bridge and highway metal component manufacturers. With continual improvement taking place within the AISC Certification program, Quality Management Company (QMC) has kept the momentum going by revamping its website to reflect and better support these program changes.

If you are familiar with the old QMC website, you know that it contained a wealth of resources to help prospective fabricators and erectors through the rigorous Certification process. These resources have not disappeared, but they have been reorganized to make the process of becoming Certified easier.

Intuitively, it makes sense to organize the resources in a way that links to the actual certification process. Instead of having people search through a global list of resources, QMC has compartmentalized the appropriate requirements as they relate to the actual process of Certification. This means that if you are interested in becoming certified, you no longer have to guess which resources are required or appropriate at a particular stage in the process. You simply visit the section that corresponds to your *current* status within the Certification process to find all applicable documents.

For example, if you are a building fabricator and have turned in your application and paid the required fees but have not completed writing your quality manual, you would visit the Documentation Audit section under the Building Fabricator heading (Figure 1) to view everything that needs to be addressed in your manual and corresponding paperwork. For a quick review of the Certification process, you can find and download the process flowchart by clicking on the Become Certified link at the top of the page.

Another example would be an erector that has passed their docu-

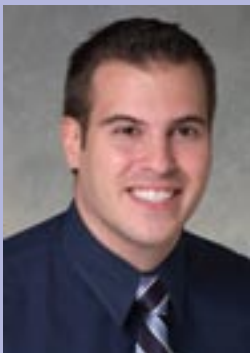
mentation audit and scheduled their on-site audit. What can this erector do to ensure that their on-site audit is successful? They can visit the On-Site Audit section under the Erectors heading (Figure 2) to view the appropriate program requirements and audit policies that will be checked by the auditor.

Resources

Although this new organizational scheme makes it easier for prospective companies to become Certified, there is something to be said for having many different program resources all in one place. Why not have your cake and eat it too? Through a comprehensive analysis of how our old website was used, it was clear that the resources section was the most used section of the site. By grouping most of the resources in one section, it gives specifiers, owners, and contractors the opportunity to browse different program requirements without having to look too deeply into the site. Fabricators can also find sample procedures and a sample quality manual in the resources section.

About Us

By now, you are probably eager to check out the new QMC website for yourself. When you do, the first thing you'll notice on the home page is the friendly face of one lucky QMC staffer, which will change periodically. The purpose of this portrait is to introduce the industry to the people who dedicate their professional lives to the overall quality of the steel construction industry. If you would like to familiarize yourself with the rest of the staff, click on the About Us link across the top of the home page.



Brian Raff is AISC's manager of certification business development.



Figure 1



Figure 2

Quality Corner is a monthly feature that covers topics ranging from how to specify a certified company to how long it takes to become a certified company. If you are interested in browsing our electronic archive, please visit www.aisc.org/QualityCorner.

Quality Corner

If you are reading this article, then it is fair to assume that you are familiar with the objectives of Quality Corner, AISC Certification's monthly feature in MSC. But did you know that you can access every Quality Corner ever written, online? To get you started, the two most recent Quality Corners are featured news items located on the right side of the QMC home page. For all other archived Quality Corner articles, visit www.modernsteel.com.

Contact Us

One of the main purposes of this new website is to provide as much helpful information as we can to make the process of AISC Certification easier. Looking to

speaking with someone in particular? You can find each team member's name, title, and individual e-mail address in the Contact Us portion of the site.

We are extremely excited about the new QMC website and have received some enthusiastic feedback about it so far. However, we understand that these kinds of projects always represent a moving target. If you have any suggestions for additional resources, program information, or general improvements to the site, I would love to hear about them. You can email me directly at raff@aisc.org or call 312.670.2400. Last year was a very positive one for AISC Certification and QMC, and we look forward to an even better year serving the steel construction industry in 2009.

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