



Century Business Technologies Delivers a New Way to Keep Time Claims On Track

Cuts Manual, Nine Month Document Process Down to Two

For an industry built upon the promise of speed, reimbursement for SMART GCA 953's rail workers' time claims was anything but. In order to remain compliant with a time claim process laid out in the Railway Labor Act, any work done outside of rail carrier's original project scope of work had to be submitted for review. With multiple parties involved in the communications, and no way to easily connect systems between the organizations, a review typically took months to process. SMART GCA leadership knew they could do better; and together with Century Business Technologies, designed a way to completely automate their manual time claim process and give chairpersons real-time access to the status of their workers' claims.

For SMART General Committee of Adjustments (GCA) rail workers, payments on even the smallest of jobs outside of a project's contracted scope of work were routinely tied up. Once a job was completed, a formal written detail of the work had to be submitted by the worker to the rail carrier to review for payment approval. Many times, payments were initially denied due to lack of adequate documentation. Even more challenging, all of the communications were sent entirely through the US mail.

Once a claim was submitted, documentation was mailed back and forth between the four communicating parties—the member, their local chairperson, SMART GCA's office, and the rail carrier. SMART GCA's chairpersons also had no way of tracking the status of their worker's claim once it was mailed.

Rail workers would submit claims and wait; sometimes up to six months, before they were paid for their work. In the end, if claims were disputed more than three times, SMART GCA and the rail carrier would settle the case in arbitration, meaning even more wait time for a decision on compensation.

Drowning in Documents

Headquartered in Topeka, Kansas, SMART GCA comprises of 72 local chairmen, who each oversee anywhere from 10 to 200 rail workers within each of their local jurisdictions. With claim submissions from almost 3,500 different workers across 10 states, SMART GCA's volume of paperwork was enormous, and exhaustive.

When a rail worker filed a grievance over additional work that had to be performed to complete a job, known as a time claim, they would submit it to the rail carrier for review. The carrier would have 60 days to vet the claim and either deny or approve the work. If the claim was denied, the carrier would mail the claim to the worker's chairperson for further review.

The chairperson would then have 60 days to appeal the carrier's decision. If denied a second time, the carrier would then mail the claim to Smart GCA's main office in Topeka, where it would be scheduled for a review conference. If denied a third time, Smart GCA and the carrier would use an arbitrator to settle the claim. In some cases, the process could take up to two years to have a final resolution to a time claim grievance.

Solution At a Glance
SMART GCA e-Claims:
Global Search, Global
Capture, Global Action

A screenshot of a web browser showing the "User Login" page for GlobalForms. The browser's address bar displays "claims.railgc.com/view/#!/form/5d08ef0ae41c83158...". The page has a dark header with the GlobalForms logo and the text "eclaims form" and "Not logged in". Below the header, a light gray box contains the text "Please login to view submission". Underneath, there are two input fields: "Name *" with a placeholder "Enter your name" and "Password *" with a placeholder "Enter your password.". A blue "Submit" button is located at the bottom of the form.

The leadership of SMART GCA knew they had to do better for their teams and began discussions with the rail carrier to devise a way to streamline the process. Together, the two companies determined that an electronic document submission process would give the rail carrier the comprehensive information they needed to review claims faster, as well as give SMART GCA the visibility into the approval process.

Automating the Process

SMART GCA turned to Century Business Technologies, their longtime office technology partner, for help. Century conducted a full business review of both SMART GCA's workflow processes and the rail carrier's system capabilities and recommended developing an electronic claim submission workflow with Square 9, a flexible document management software solution.

Square 9's comprehensive platform of document management tools enabled SMART GCA to capture, extract, and classify the rail workers' time claims into usable data that could be delivered automatically into the rail carrier's systems and tracked at any time by SMART GCA.

Phase I: Streamlining the Documents

Century deployed the e-claim solution in two phases. The first phase focused on speeding up the time claim submission process between SMART GCA and the rail carrier by eliminating redundant documents by standardizing the data submitted for all the rail workers.

Each chairman at SMART GCA is responsible for tracking their team's work. Time claims were submitted in a number of ways depending on the worker—sometimes a job would be documented by printing a time slip, hand writing the work detail, scanning the document, and emailing it to the carrier to then process manually into their own system.

Other times, a chairmen might just call the rail carrier and report the time claim over the phone. Ultimately, there was no real standard process, everything was at the discretion of the chairmen, and because both SMART GCA and the rail carrier used different software systems, everything had to be entered manually.

In addition to submitting a time slip that included a detail of the work that was performed, claimants also had to submit supporting documentation as to why they were required to violate the original project plan. If the claim was denied and then appealed by the local chairperson, these documents were often precedent setting, and could include copies of public law board decisions and letters detailing previous project modifications that the carrier paid on. Depending on the amount of back and forth, a single claim could be anywhere from five to 50 pages in length.

Using Square 9's Global Capture module and an html-based process, Century designed a time claim webform that the SMART GCA teams could access online, enter their work detail, and submit

remotely from the field. With Global Forms, SMART GCA now had a single path for time claim submissions to the rail carrier.

Now, once a time claim is submitted, the webform data is organized into a digital filing cabinet that the carrier can access and automatically transfer into their system. Automating this step completely eliminated the need for the carrier's teams to manually enter time claims moving forward.

Phase II: Visibility for All

In phase II, Century developed a way for SMART GCA to have visibility into the status of claims that had been submitted to the carrier and deployed a real-time, virtual dashboard online. Now, chairpersons simply visit the SMART GCA website, login to the GlobalForms portal, and are able to search for a case by a number of different data fields (Claimant Name, Local Chairperson, Local Number or Employee ID). Upon search, the dashboard displays all of the relevant documents, dates, and actions taken related to a claim.

In all, the SMART GCA e-claim project took approximately 7 months to design, develop, and deploy, and resulted in immediate returns for both organizations. By automating their manual document submission process, SMART GCA was able to reduce the average time claim review from nine months down to 60 days or less.

"Square 9 has significantly reduced the amount of time someone here in the office was spending entering everything manually as well as conferring with the railroad, taking calls from the member, and local chairpersons when they inquired about the claim and where it was in the process," said SMART GCA Senior Vice General Chairman, Ian T. Reynolds.

Thanks to the scalability of the Square 9 document management platform, Century continues to work with SMART GCA to refine their document workflow processes for even greater productivity.

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Ian T. Reynolds

SMART GCA, Senior Vice General Chairman

About SMART Transportation Division GO-953

SMART General Committee of Adjustments (SMART GCA) 953 is a transportation labor union representing active and retired railroad workers in a 10-state area on the Union Pacific, Kyle, Nebraska Central, Wichita Terminal, and Portland Terminal railroads. Headquartered in Topeka, KS, SMART GCA is recognized as the leader among transportation labor unions, setting the pace in collective bargaining, and in efforts to improve safety and working conditions on the railroads.

SMART GCA's committee is comprised of 72 local chairmen representing members from the operating crafts in the railroad industry and includes conductors, brakemen, switchmen, ground service personnel, locomotive engineers, hostlers and workers in associated crafts. SMART GCA continues to strive for progressive and innovative contracts that ensure excellent wages and benefits and a healthy pension system for those workers who have devoted their lives to service the railroad industry. Learn more at www.railgc.com.

About Century Business Technologies

Century Business Technologies is a full-service solutions partner dedicated to integrating technology to deliver results. The company provides managed services, workflow automation, and hardware solutions to businesses across Kansas and throughout the United States. The team of solutions specialists and programming experts is backed by a team of responsive support technicians. As a woman-owned business, Century Business Technologies is dedicated to improving the businesses and the communities it serves. Learn more at www.centuryks.com.

