

# Feeding Creativity All Day, All Night and All Around Town

## THE CDM GROUP

Susan Slagg: Vice President, Director of Facilities



### The Challenge

The CDM Group (CDM) is comprised of nine agencies that provide a wide range of integrated medical and healthcare marketing and communications services, including brand development, advertising, media buying and patient relationship marketing. With a robust client roster and more than 1,000 employees, CDM's offices are always bustling. Both internal and client meetings take place all day long, and employees work late into the evenings creatively burning the midnight oil on any number of client projects.

Susan Slagg is CDM's Vice President, Director of Facilities. Susan and her team are responsible for overseeing the office food ordering. Susan explains, "The biggest challenge for us was dealing with all of the expense reports. There were hundreds of expense reports for dinners related to employees working late. Trying to manage all of the expense reports and tracking the proper information to bill out to clients was, well, chaotic. And even that is putting it mildly."

Susan was also in charge of managing the catering orders for internal and client meetings. The company maintained 4 house accounts, and manually tracked the information needed to bill out to clients or allocate properly to internal budgets. Another challenge with the catering arrangement was that, over time, the lack of variety pushed people to order from different caterers. In these cases, employees paid the invoices with personal credit cards and expensed the meals, which largely defeated the purpose of maintaining house accounts.

In addition, the company was trying to reign in the overall spending. CDM had a general guideline for food ordering, but with no way to enforce the rules before a purchase was made, they were often forced to absorb costs related to over-spending. The company also had an issue with absorbing costs that should have billed to a client, but weren't because of incomplete or missing billing information.

CDM knew they needed a new process that would give them greater control and insight into spending, an easier way to capture client billing information and the ability to offer greater variety. CDM decided that an online service would be the best approach for them.

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### The Seamless Solution

CDM opened their Seamless corporate account in April of 2008 and consolidated all of their ordering into one account. Employees had immediate access to more than 500 restaurants and caterers. By mandating that all employees use Seamless, every single food order – from late night meals to catering for a breakfast meeting – was included on one invoice. This immediately solved two big issues for the company: lack of variety and the massive amount of paperwork created by employees incurring expenses on personal credit cards. Now, CDM would receive one invoice, complete with information regarding who ordered, where they ordered from, and why they ordered.

Next, Seamless implemented a way for CDM to track all their orders back to a specific project or client. CDM needed a job code associated with every meal so the company could bill out to clients and track for internal bookkeeping. Seamless created a custom checkout page that required a valid job number before an order could be placed. If the order did not have a valid job number, the order would not be processed. For a catering order, the checkout page also required the names of the people attending the meeting. This guaranteed that when the company received their invoice from Seamless, they would have a valid job number associated with every order. To bill out to a client, the Accounting Department just had to sort by that client's number to see the total billable amount for any given date range.

Lastly, CDM used Seamless to help enforce time restrictions (no dinner orders could be placed before 8 p.m.) and spending limits (each employee had a set dinner budget). Susan's team, and others who needed to order catering, received a different set of rules to ensure they could properly order catering for large meetings and events. All rules would be enforced at the point of purchase to ensure complete business compliance without limiting anyone's specific job function.

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## The Result

The CDM Group rolled out Seamless to their company in 2008 and it continues to be an essential component of their cost control process. In fact, the service was so successful at the main office location in New York that the Company rolled out the service to each and every one of their offices. Now, employees can order food to the corporate account regardless of which office they are in. This is a huge benefit for those employees who travel between offices regularly.

CDM reports several other benefits including:

- Improved tracking of billable costs
- Increased efficiency in account payable
- Greater control over spending
- Happier and more productive employees

“We make sure all new hires are given a Seamless login on their very first day because it is one of the ways we keep costs in check. Employees also really appreciate having the ability to order food without having to use a personal credit card” said Susan. “It just makes life so much easier for everyone. No one has to worry about expense reports. We don’t have to try to figure out which client to bill or for which project. We’re also not worried about going over our budget. Seamless streamlines the entire process and saves more time than I would ever be able to quantify.”

When asked about her favorite Seamless benefit, Susan is quick to answer. “The #1 benefit of Seamless is the increased satisfaction and happiness of our employees. Everyone is fed and everyone loves that they can eat whatever delicious dinner they are craving.

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## About Seamless

Seamless is an online food-ordering service that makes it easy to feed the office. We provide companies and their employees with access to more than 11,000 restaurants and caterers, offering fast and convenient online ordering and sending just one invoice for all orders placed. From individual meals and late-night group orders, to catered meetings and blowout parties, Seamless makes it easy to keep your hungry offices happy.

