

Metal X UP: A digital platform designed to realize an efficient and valuable steel supply chain

Metal One Corporation (headquartered in Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo, Keisuke Kitamura, president) has developed Metal X UP, a digital platform designed to enhance steel supply chain value and efficiency and save on communication costs. Introduced to the steel plate sector in January 2023, Metal X UP is now expanding its services to the steel sheet and wire sectors.

With the cooperation of multiple business partners, Metal X UP's development was carried out considering user convenience as the top priority. Expanding the platform's capabilities and make improvements to ensure that it resolves user issues, we will strive to provide services that are not limited to particular product types so that Metal X UP serves as many business partners as possible.

Japan is now confronting issues such as labor shortages and carbon neutrality. Although coping with these issues is an urgent task for the steel distribution industry, communication between distributors and customers—handled via phone, fax and email—still involves a lot of paper and operations that are generally too complex and inefficient. We developed Metal X UP as a response to these issues.

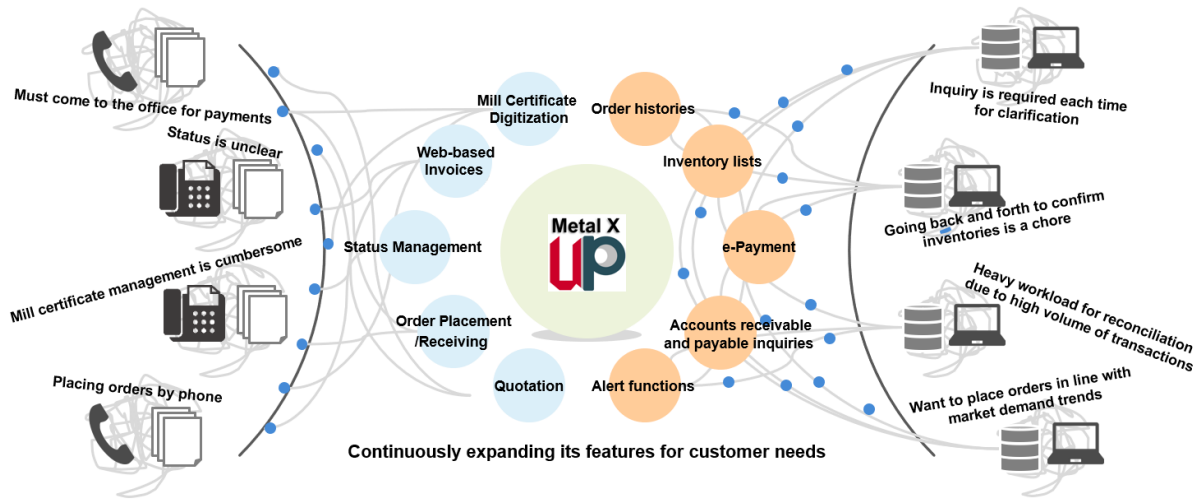
Metal X UP enables users to communicate and exchange documents and data through the platform. The operations Metal X UP covers include electronic delivery of mill certificates, digital invoices, accounts receivable and payable reconciliation, confirmation of steel delivery plan timelines, requests and responses using chat, and order history confirmation.

For example, invoice reconciliation is handled within a brief period right after the closing dates by swapping Excel data, which calls for higher efficiency through the timely delivery of invoice data. On Metal X UP, invoice data can be shared and checked in real time, and automatic matching of data for accounts receivable and payable reduces the amount of work spent checking disparities.

Metal X UP was developed using agile methodology, with specifications based on issues selected from interviews with business partners. Mockups were drawn up quickly, allowing its functions to take form, with services commencing in April 2022. We will be enhancing the platform's convenience for business partners by continuously undertaking improvements related to the user interface and experience.

Digitalizing analog supply chain information

Enhancing the efficiency and advancement of business operations and communication



Metal One believes that working on industry-wide digitalization, including at its Group companies, is necessary to resolve the steel industry's issues. We are also endeavoring to propose systems developed in-house such as Metal X UP to other companies, as well as to link to systems developed by other companies.

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