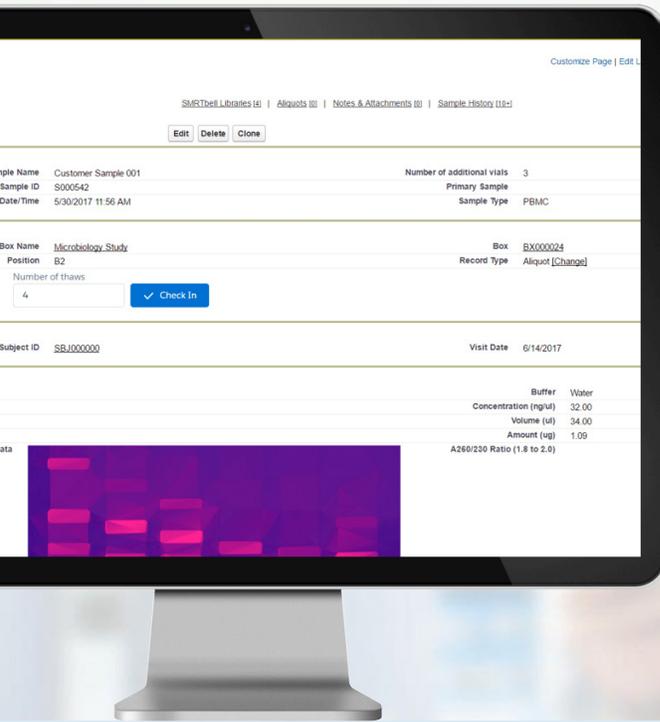# Streamlining Study Management with Lockbox

BIOSCIENCE LABORATORIES

For many busy laboratories, tracking study participants effectively is as important as tracking samples. That's the case for BioScience Laboratories, a 21 CFR Part 11 compliant Montana-based lab that specializes in studies requiring subject participation. When BioScience customers hire the lab to test their skin care products, disinfectants, or other specialty items, test subjects are a necessity.

Subject recruitment, however, has its intricacies and complexities—and BioScience Labs had an arduous legacy process to keep track of their subject pool.

"When we start signing subjects up, we have to screen them," explains Shawna Durney, CCRC, BioScience Labs supervisor of subject recruitment. "We have to gather all their health information and submit it to consulting physicians who confirm it's okay for the subject to participate. Then we have to remind the subjects of their testing."

That's just a small portion of the work involved. Durney and team have to manage what she calls "a few more leaps and bounds" just to get to the testing stage. Their old approach to tracking it all? A handmade system of too many tools and too much work.

"I would need three spreadsheets and a database. Excel. Word. Access database," says Durney. "It got to be excessive if we were running multiple tests—which is most of the time." About 40 to 50 percent of BioScience Labs' business requires subject recruitment.

At one stage of the process, one staff member would "lock themselves in an office for one or two days" with Excel spreadsheets to check the data accuracy of subjects' health information before sending it to doctors.

This all comes after test subjects are contacted and recruited, of course. That process had its own sets of painstaking review, across multiple lists.

Applying Lockbox LIMS to the process

In January 2018, the BioScience Labs team implemented Third Wave Analytics' Lockbox Lab Information Management System (LIMS) to ease their ongoing administrative stress. They had reviewed other options before landing on Lockbox LIMS.

"We had gone through four or five different attempts to find something," recalls Durney. "We needed something much greater than what the existing individual applications did. When we found Lockbox, we knew that was it. Lockbox wraps up all the functionality we need into one program—and it's easily customizable."

With Lockbox LIMS, BioScience Labs could finally streamline their entire process. But first, as any good laboratory manager might, Durney tested the system with BioScience Labs systems administrator and QC specialist, Jeremy Duley. She was curious to see just how far they could take Lockbox LIMS.

"Jeremy came to me with all these great ideas, and I was waiting for something to break! We would go through the process, side-by-side with our old method. It helped make sure we were okay, not compromising integrity or subject safety, or falling out of regulation."
The flexibility, ease, and 21 CFR Part 11 compliance of Lockbox LIMS fit the bill for BioScience Labs' layered processes and needs. The time-saving benefits have been significant.

"The first medical letter we generate for doctors can take about eight hours of someone's day. Now it takes exactly 15 minutes," says Durney. "It's beautiful." The system has also helped the team reduce time spent on one-on-one subject interviews.

Unexpected benefits

Lockbox LIMS also meets a unique need of BioScience Labs: With about a third of their subjects coming from nearby Montana State University, assessing previous participation is imperative. The Lockbox system helps them speed through the qualification assessment.

"This is a wonderful side effect of Lockbox LIMS' reporting functions—being able to filter and pull out information we need on subjects who qualify or not," says Duley. "Previously, we would go through an Excel database line by line." says Durney. "We'd review old test schedules and test lists, and figure, okay, these people might want to come back and participate." One lab staffer would make the list and another would call possible subjects.

This process would take the team about three days. "Now," says Durney, "it takes about a half-hour."

"We specifically needed those filters," explains Duley, "like knowing which subjects have been in during the last six months. Now, it's paying huge dividends. This program has an infinite amount of customization and malleability. I'm bending it to my will."

Savings in time, money, effort

The benefits of Lockbox LIMS have meant bottom-line success at BioScience Labs. Projects wrap on time, with fewer resources expended.

"It's helped us meet more study timelines," says Durney. "We're able to work more effectively and meet client needs more easily. Subject recruitment costs have come down because of Lockbox LIMS."

The team can now delegate the more labor-intensive work to lab technicians, who review subject reports for particular demographics and reach out to participants.

Throughout BioScience Labs' process of reviewing, implementing, and customizing Lockbox LIMS, they've seen one constant: excellent service from Third Wave Analytics.

"Their customer service is a dream team," says Duley. "They showed the benefit of the system to the people putting up the dollars. They've helped me with every bump I've run into, and smoothed the road to go even further. I really can't say enough about them and how they've helped us."

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