

# Clinical Trials Insight:

# 5 Things to Look for When Picking a Technology Partner



Picking the right technology platform can be a game changer for the way your company analyzes data and runs clinical trials. The right data platform can not only help you mitigate risk, increase patient safety, and keep your trial on track, it can evolve with your shifting needs—and the ever-changing clinical trial landscape. Yet the right choice doesn't rest solely on the platform's features and benefits—the technology company needs to be a good match, too.

Don't underestimate the importance of this statement; while the right technology partner can accelerate your success, the wrong technology partner at best can be a daily irritant and at worst can derail your trial. These five questions can help clarify your thoughts when choosing a technology partner:



# 1. What does “easy technology integration” really mean?

Every company says that their platform set-up is easy and fast and that their technology will integrate with your existing systems; only after the sale is closed do you learn the many exceptions. That not only produces headaches—and perhaps requires investment in additional technology systems or applications—but it slows time to value, the period that elapses before you begin to see return on your investment. Three things to consider:

- Look for a vendor who understands your clinical and safety operations, as well as risk-management, and who can guide you through the set-up process to help you get the most from your new platform.
- Be sure to get a clear demonstration of how set-up occurs, where your responsibilities lie, and what your prospective partner will manage for you.
- Be certain that your choice is truly vendor neutral, to ensure that it not only will work with your current systems, but with any technology you add in the future.



# 2. Is the contract crystal clear—and flexible enough to meet your needs?

In parallel with easy set-up, does the contract actually cover everything you need—or will hidden costs start popping up as soon as you begin implementing the technology, escalating it out of budget? Some vendors charge for each part of a product, which may seem to enable you to only pay for what you need, but in practice often means a drip, drip, drip of expenses. Is the fee set in stone, or will the company get creative to help you finance your new technology? Ask lots of questions and keep your eyes open.



### 3. Can you really manage the platform on your own?

A platform isn't going to help you move forward rapidly if you have to call for tech support every time you want to run your software. That is cumbersome and annoying—and even could impact the pace of your trials or actually prevent you from proactively identifying risks. Look for a platform that is flexible enough to fit into your existing processes and designed so intuitively that during the demo you understand what to click before the sales rep tells you.



### 4. What is the company's customer service reputation?

No matter how intuitive the software is, at some point you will have a question, an issue, or a request for a product enhancement. Will the company listen to you? At some vendors, smaller clients get less attention, and their concerns fall to the bottom of the list. Be sure you are not signing up with one of those vendors. Ask for customer references.



### 5. Is there a good cultural fit?

Last, but absolutely not least: Chemistry matters in any partnership, and the match between a client and technology vendor is no different. Will the vendor nickel and dime you, or are they just looking for compensation equal to the value they deliver? Do they offer customer training and other support gladly, or are they opaque in a bid to gain additional consulting fees? Are they continuing to grow and support the product? Will you look forward to talking to your rep? These factors, both tangible and intangible, are often overlooked in the selection process—but they are absolutely crucial to long-term success.

**In short:** the right technology vendor is one that puts your needs first—every day—rather than shoehorns you into a pre-set plan, then forgets about you. At Remarque, our goal is to help you optimize your processes, increase your efficiency, and attempt to insulate you from unknown events—like a global pandemic. We include all our features for every client but introduce you to them as you grow into the product, and as they meet your needs. Further, we continually adapt, to align with shifting regulatory and trial requirements, so there is no danger of obsolescence.

As sponsors and investigators wrestle with a tsunami of data—with its tantalizing promise of deep insights into human biology, mechanism of action, and even the evidence required to convince regulators and payers of critical efficacy—the need for a cohesive platform to manage it all is increasingly vital. That need is heightened by the rise in decentralized trials, and the parallel imperative for remote monitoring capabilities. Choose wisely.

## Six Bonus Questions to Ask

Of course, the technology itself does matter, too. As you explore new technology platforms, here are some important things to consider:

- What are your most pressing data problems currently—lack of visibility, missing data, delay that prevents you from identifying issues promptly?
- What do you want to achieve with this new technology platform?
- What are the key features you are looking for?
- Are you looking for a new platform altogether or one that can integrate your previous methods?
- Who is going to be using the platform? How easy does it need to be to operate?
- What kind of company do you work well with?