



LIMS IMPLEMENTATION PROJECT HINDSIGHTS

How to avoid pitfalls and delays

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This presentation's focus is on a project that had many obstacles, delays, overruns and frustrations by all parties.

What went wrong – What went Right

This presentation is intended to help others to achieve a successful LIMS implementation by sharing our experiences and lessons learned.

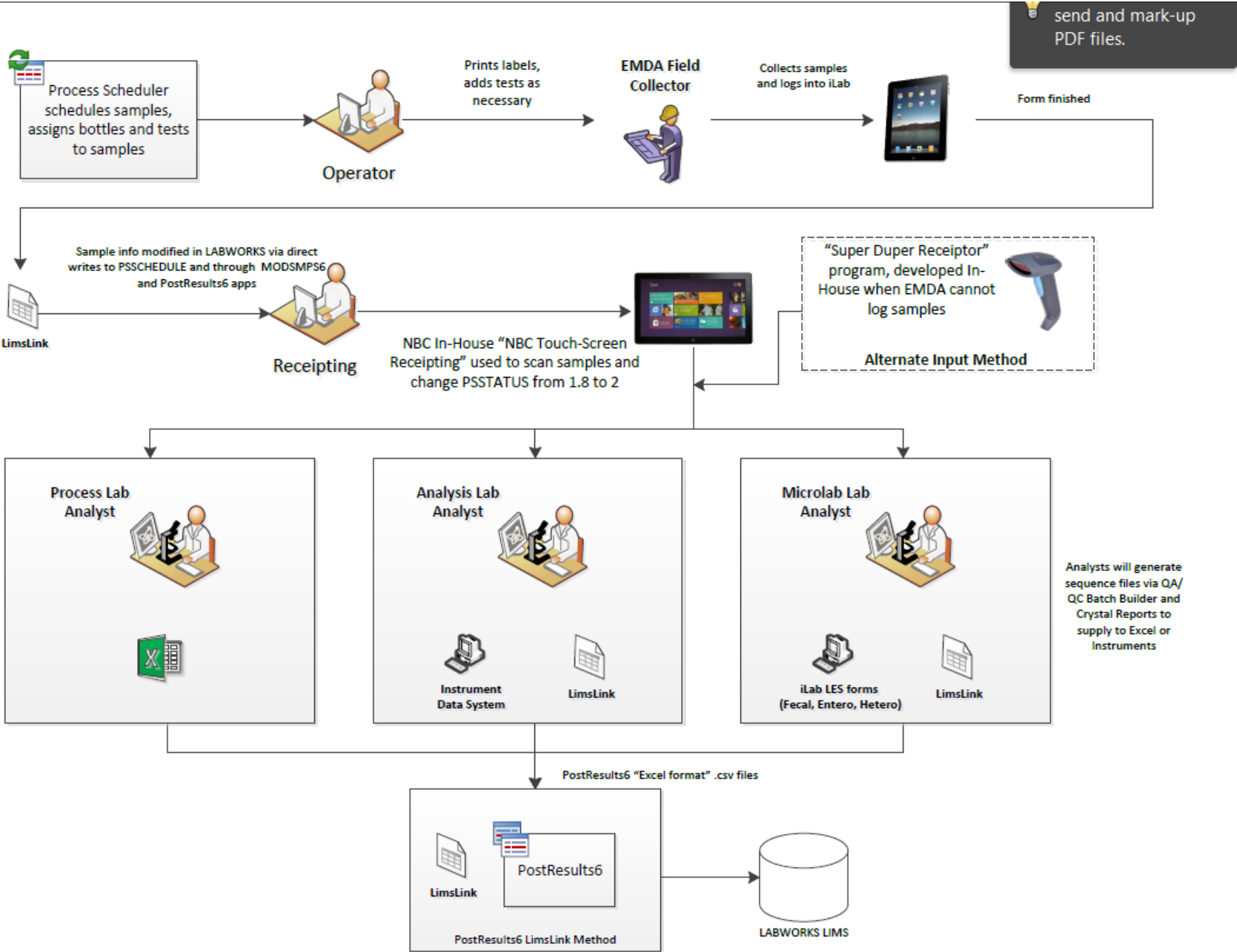
The LIMS Selection process – a crucial part of the LIMS implementation

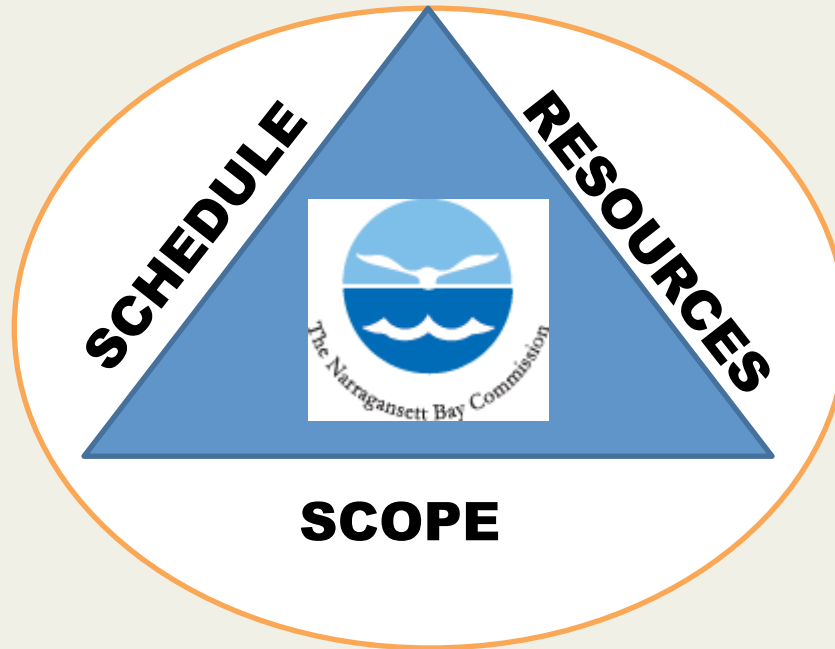
It is very important to select the correct product in the selection process as this has a direct impact on the overall LIMS project. Most systems have about 80% functionality in common; the remaining 20% functionality is of paramount importance in selecting the one with the best benefits for your success and needs.

Select one that has the necessary functionality needed, but at the same time there is little worth in selecting a LIMS with superfluous functionality “just because”.

Common mistakes that are made are not having precise detailed requirements that were easily communicated to the vendor. Workflows? What are the goals? It is about the DETAILS

Once these requirements are defined the selection process can focus on the vendor.





COMMUNICATIONS

Problem Number 1: SCOPE

- ✓ **Deliverables**
- ✓ **Boundaries**
- ✓ **Requirements**

- Clear, Concise and Detailed**
- Putting a Box around it**



SCOPE STATEMENT NEEDS TO INCLUDE:

- **JUSTIFICATION** – Describes the business need the project addresses.
- **PRODUCT SCOPE** – Identifies products, services and/or results your project will produce
- **ACCEPTANCE CRITERIA** – The conditions that must be met before project deliverables are accepted
- **DELIVERABLES** – This identifies the products, services and /or results (the objectives)
- **ASSUMPTIONS** - Statements on how vendor will address uncertain information

- **CONSTRAINTS – Identify restrictions that limit what can be achieved**
- **PROJECT EXCLUSIONS – Statement about what the project will not accomplish or produce.**



Summary: All stakeholders agreed on a set of requirements that in hindsight did not provide sufficient detail.

Detailed understanding of the scope is essential for all stakeholders. Depending on the level of detail in the scope will certainly facilitate the decision making for the go/no go decision by the client and vendor.

The project managers needs to be mindful of scope growth.



What Happened???

Success was hard to achieve, even though in the end we were successful.

Agreement by all parties on deliverables, timelines, differed:

Scope verses discovery

- **The Scope of the project was defined in Statement of Work**
- **Discovery happened after all the contracts were signed; creating many issues instantly**
- **Account Manager should have an active role in the account;**

- **The Account Manager should play a key role, it should be established as to the role of the Account Manager**

Problem Number 2: SCHEDULE

- **The project MUST HAVE a defined schedule with realistic measurable milestones.**
- **All projects are dynamic and need a meaning schedule to accommodate this dynamic.**
- **Both client and vendor MUST be a part of the process.**
- **The schedule is crucial in measuring how well the project is going; and if expectations are being met**
- **Have a defined plan for what happens when the schedule slips or changes -- IT WILL**
- **Without a schedule the project is destined to possible overruns and failure**



Problem Number 3: RESOURCES



- **Ensure resources are identified for project**
 - ✓ **what resources are needed**
 - ✓ **When is the resource needed**

- **Identify internal and external teams**
 - ✓ **areas of expertise**
 - ✓ **how teams will work together cohesively**

- **Identify standard implementation processes**
 - ✓ **Increases team efficiency**
 - ✓ **This will eliminate re-work**

- **Conflict resolution**
 - **Have a documented plan**
 - **Imperative all parties agree with plan**

WITHOUT COMMUNICATIONS THE PROJECT IS BUSTED!

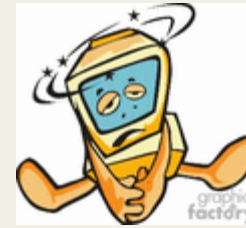
The key to success is communicate communicate communicate



- **No hidden agendas – open communications**
- **Detailed, written communication plan**
- **Professional – show mutual respect for everyone’s contributions**
- **Problems – Identify, document communicate**
- **Accomplishments – communicate to all stakeholders**
- **Conflict Escalation Plan**
- **Identify decision makers ie. Supporters, observers, doers**



TESTING



- Define test procedures**
- A description of the strategies/approach that will be used**
- Define acceptance**

TRAINING

- What will be covered in training**
- Length of training**
- Who will do training**
- What type of training**
- User guides**



Ask Questions – detailed questions



- Never assume – ask**
- What is the state of the financial health of the vendor?**
- What are the future plans for the company?**
- Does the vendor have a large development group**
- Escalation processes for the project and after implementation?**
- Ask for references**
 - Ask about functionality, growth potential, how they see the vision of the vendor for the future**
 - How the implementation went and details of how problem resolution was handled**
 - How qualified was the team that did their implementation; would they recommend them**

What were the top 6 pitfalls?

- Workflow requirements not shared with customer**
- Communication flow between project managers**
- Defining communication flow between the teams and how it should be streamlined for effectiveness**
- Lack of being forthright with schedule and delays;**
- Did not understand how sales and service organizations worked; were they cohesive?**
- There were gaps of time when the implementation team was pulled away for other projects**



What were the positives?



- In spite of many pitfalls and setbacks the implementation was a success and has been well received within our user community.**
- The vendor remained committed to the completion of the project and worked with us through all obstacles.**
- The system integrated new technology, making our user community more productive, data integrity, data defensibility and functionality that promotes future growth.**
- The vendor reached out to us and really stepped up to make things right; a commitment to not cut corners but deliver a solid LIMS.**
- Based on our goals and needs the LIMS is effective and reliable and has met and exceeded the expectations.**

SUMMATION



**The project completed
It did not complete on time
It was an extensive, aggressive schedule and a very large
project**

- Do Not Assume Anything. Come to the table prepared, be willing to challenge decisions made by implementation team. Be a team player.**
- Look to implementation team for options and insist on having them presented so that the best one is selected.**
- Be open to new ideas. Set expectations early on; be firm**
- Ask questions about the implementation process and the success rate of the vendor's**
- Understand how the sales and service organizations worked; were they cohesive?**



So why did the project ultimately succeed in spite of all the problems encountered?

PERSEVERANCE

The commitment of the vendor was always there; along with the commitment from the user community.

All parties remained committed and focused to see the project to completion.