

Laboratory Automation.

Electronic Document Management/Document Control – Integration with LIMS

Mark Ferrero - PWave

All laboratories are facing increasing challenges to manage the growing volume of data and related documents that are produced as part of testing and studies. The combination of regulatory requirements and the need to provide scientists with tools for powerful querying and analysis of the information has made electronic document and data management systems a necessity in the modern laboratory.

In the past laboratories were able to get by using paper based systems or store files in stand alone data silos. This approach results in information not being readily searchable and retrievable and information is not under the control of a system that tracks changes or prevents authorized access.

Having an integrated electronic document management and LIMS system allows laboratory personnel to capture and control information anywhere in the laboratory in a compliant manner. It also enables metadata tagging, cataloguing and circulating valuable information to the lab or any facility elsewhere in the organization through a web interface.

The integration of a web based document management and a LIMS (web or client based) is through standard protocols such as XML-RPC, WebDAV and HTTP. By using these standard protocols, data and documents can be exchanged seamlessly between the LIMS and Document Management system. This integration facilitates the long term storage of data and documents and file types not readily supported by LIMS systems. It can also enhance reporting capabilities by enabling the compilation of data and various documents into a cohesive report delivered in a standard format such as PDF.