Polytech
LIS

The Five Things to Know When Considering an LIS

1) Do I really need an LIS?

Although a tool like this can increase productivity and cut lab costs, there is a price to pay. LIS software is not shrink-wrap. It is custom software designed in many ways to suit your unique lab set-up, so you need to justify the cost. If you are not ordering at least 50-75 tests per day, you will have a hard time reconciling the price tag.

Other Considerations:
- Have there been any 'human error' mistakes?
- Are you planning to grow your lab revenue?
- Do you lose any lab charges?
- Do you (or will you) need to pass data to/from an Electronic Medical Record?

2) Start the process early.

When it's time to install or replace your LIS, you need to give yourself plenty of time before your "go live" date. After you have done your research and have picked a vendor, then you need to give yourself some wiggle room before you need to implement your new LIS. Your LIS vendor needs to manage their resources, and if you let them know you can work with them on the timeline, it can often result in a discount. A good rule of thumb is six months for the total process.

Other Considerations:
- Do you need to import old data into the new system?
- Is there enough staff to perform the current job AND implement / train on a new system?
- Will you need new hardware?

3) Be thorough!

Your LIS is the nerve center of your operation, so you need to understand which machines need to be talking to your LIS. Before you talk to a vendor, make a list of all analyzers, reference labs, and any EMRs you will need to connect with. This will have everything to do with the process and cost.

Other Considerations:
- Consider WANTS versus NEEDS for your new system.
- Will any machines or systems be replaced (or added) around the time for your LIS?
- Review hardware requirements (Computers, Printers, Bar Code Printers, Modems, etc.)

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4) Understand your goals.

You need to be clear on the course you are setting. Are you trying to get better and more efficient with the volume you are handling now, or are you determined to grow? If you are planning to grow, you need to understand that as you expand with more new analyzers and more users, it is important that you have an understanding with your vendor about future pricing so it doesn't hinder your growth.

Other Considerations:
• For efficiency improvement, understand costs associated with specimen processing, report delivery, management reporting, manual data entry, etc.
• For growth, be sure to align your future needs with the LIS capabilities (connectivity to the system for analyzers, users, and remote systems such as Electronic Medical Records, Billing, Reference Labs, etc.)
• Ensure the network infrastructure is expanded and supported for future growth.

5) You don't have to go it alone!

Every time your LIS needs to talk to another machine, that constitutes a work effort by both the manufacturer or your reference lab and your software vendor. There will always be a cost associated with that effort. But there is help out there. If you buy a new analyzer, most manufacturers will cover the cost of the interface. In addition, many reference labs will do the same if your volume of work meets certain criteria.

If you've taken these five things into consideration and feel your lab could benefit from implementing LIS software, please contact Comp Pro Med at www.comppromed.com!