

Quality Laboratory Services Chooses LabInfo to Automate Its Laboratory

When Quality Laboratory Services (QLS) in Rustenburg decided they needed a laboratory data management system, they turned to Technology Integration Systems (TSI) to make it a reality. TSI has been involved in the support, development and integration of laboratory management systems (LIMS) for more than 10 years. TSI's LabInfo system is a capable and affordable solution for managing information in the laboratory. LabInfo contains a highly modular instrument integration framework, which makes it straightforward to interface with any instrument, and TSI continually expands its library of interface modules.



From left: QLS's Chris Jansen van Vuuren, Timothy Maponga and Ronél TerBlanche

LabInfo offers the following advantages, among others. It employs a multi-user database running on a central server, which enables multiple users to work on the same data, thus reducing unnecessary paperwork. It comes with a number of functions to help laboratories conform to regulatory and other requirements. The use of internet technology means that LabInfo can be operated from any PC using a web browser. Access to the system is secure, and customers

can even view their results on-line, as soon as they are approved.

QLS' main business is analysing ore samples for mines, but it also undertakes mineral and water analyses for the Rustenburg municipality and local government departments. "This is the first minerals laboratory to implement LabInfo, so we're very excited to add this competency to our existing experience and expertise," says TSI's Neill Rosenthal. "Prior to installing the system, QLS was using Excel to store all its sample and result information." He feels that the main benefits of the system are improvements in the following areas:

- **Accuracy.** All samples are registered, results are uploaded directly from laboratory instruments, and barcoding is used on samples and worksheets.
- **Invoicing.** Data is exported from the LIMS and imported into the financial system (Pastel).
- **Reporting.** LabInfo generates customised built-in reports, e.g. certificates of analysis and outstanding results reports. It is now far quicker to generate reports, and clients can access some of these directly via QLS' website.
- **Security.** Users must log on, data is stored in a central database (rather than on multiple Excel spreadsheets, as was previously the case) and backups are done automatically.

Chris Jansen van Vuuren, laboratory manager at QLS, feels that LabInfo has transformed the way QLS does its work. "Prior to installing LabInfo, we had no LIMS in place. Nothing was automated and everything was done manually."

Having made the decision to automate, QLS started to investigate its options. "There are a lot

of LIMS systems available, but most of these are 'off-the-shelf' packages," said Jansen van Vuuren, adding, "They're not flexible and don't allow you to adapt them or tailor them to your own specific requirements."

This is where TSI made all the difference. "They were able to offer us a LIMS geared to our unique needs. With LabInfo, we now have a laboratory that is fully automated - samples are received, worksheets are created, bar codes are generated and samples are tracked. All details are stored within the system, which then calculates the required results and generates reports further thereto."

With LabInfo, every sample is traceable. "Because we no longer need to write results down, as was the case in the past, human error is also no longer a concern," observes Jansen van Vuuren. In addition to being very satisfied with the product, he has high praise for TSI's service and technical support. "Their communication is excellent. Any queries or problems we might have are promptly addressed via online support services, without the need for someone to be sent out to the laboratory."

"We look forward to a long and mutually rewarding partnership with QLS going forward," concludes Rosenthal. ☺



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