LabVantage®
MEDICAL SUITE

Five Myths That Drain Time and Money From Your Healthcare Lab
SWITCHING TO A TRULY INTEGRATED LIS COULD TRANSFORM YOUR LAB'S EFFICIENCY

Many of us have experienced the difference that informed and efficient healthcare makes. We've sat opposite a doctor, waiting for test results. Whether those results arrive quickly or not, are detailed or sparse, clear or ambiguous, comes down to a gestalt of people, technology, and processes in the modern healthcare laboratory.

These labs, responsible for so much, are at an inflection point. You've downloaded this white paper because you know this already: today's population is presenting with increasingly complex healthcare needs, while regulators are bearing down with stringent compliance criteria. This is putting labs like yours under tremendous pressure. To satisfy regulators, to streamline and improve your lab's operations, and to improve the safety and quality of patient care, you need more from your lab technology, starting with your Laboratory Information System (LIS). More automation. More integration with lab instruments and data systems. More harmony between lab disciplines.

Often, having more means having to migrate. And migrating to a new LIS is expensive, right? It takes a long time. It's hard. And there's no telling whether it will improve on what you already have, so you might as well carry on as you are.

This debate (making do versus migrating) is often premised on outdated assumptions, which are in turn sustained by a risk-averse industry. But for the sake of your lab's efficiency, and for the patients who depend on you, we'd like to correct the record.

In this paper, we will topple five of the most common assumptions that hold labs back from improved operations and reduced spending:

> The debate of *making do* versus *migrating* is often premised on outdated assumptions.

1 *"We already have an integrated LIS."*

2 *"Making do hurts less than switching to something new."*

3 *"A new LIS will mean new hardware costs."*

4 *"We don't have the IT staff to handle implementation."*

5 *"We'll outgrow a new LIS in a few years. Why switch now?"*

We already have an integrated LIS.

Efficiency is, at its core, a simple calculation. It's the aggregate of all the instruments and solutions and operators and disciplines that move data back and forth in order to get the job done. Reduce the number of moves on one side of that equation, increase the speed on the other.
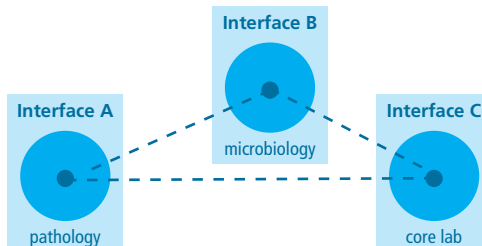
TRUE INTEGRATION

A truly integrated lab solution means fewer points of transition, which means faster outcomes.

That's why so many labs trust vendors who promise an integrated lab management solution. Integration means fewer points of transition, which means faster outcomes. Using a truly integrated solution, labs can move data smoothly and automatically along a straight and uninterrupted line.
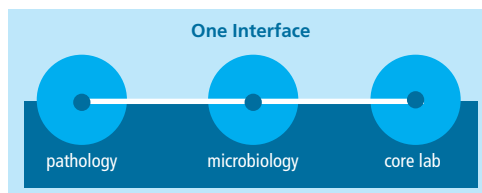
The trouble is, some labs believe they have a straight line when what they have is a series of connected dots. A pathology system that's connected to a core diagnostic LIS which in turn feeds an interface engine may bear the appearance of seamlessness, but true integration is something else.

It's core diagnostics and digital pathology and point of care testing within the same system. One platform, with one single interface, built on a common architecture that delivers users from multiple disciplines into a harmonized and searchable database. That is true integration.

ADJACENT SYSTEMS

Interface B
microbiology

Interface A
pathology

Interface C
core lab

TRUE INTEGRATION

One Interface

pathology   microbiology   core lab

How do you know if you have true integration from your LIS? By knowing if you don't.

IF...

...your staff spends time "context switching" between interfaces

...you're paying multiple vendors and managing multiple interfaces in order to cover all of your lab disciplines

...your database includes information that's not easily searchable, like notes dictated into a manual system

...then you have adjacent systems, not true integration.

THE TRUTH

To streamline your lab activities, switch to an LIS that's truly integrated.

Your LIS should meet the individual needs of your core lab, microbiology, pathology, and genetics labs, and it should integrate those disciplines through a common, automation-driven platform.

Making do hurts less than switching to something new.

The status quo can be painful. Each time one of your lab operators has to interrupt their workflow to troubleshoot an IT issue, recover a lost password for yet another interface, or manually hunt through a handwritten report dictated from another discipline, the cut gets deeper. Expensive re-work accumulates. Time that could be spent on valuable activities is siphoned away on avoidable trivialities. From the perspective of a lab director, *that hurts.*

Sometimes, though, the road to something better appears too steep to climb, and studded with potential landmines. This perception leaves many in a state of suspended animation, not risking any change at all. Which is a shame. Change *is* uncomfortable, but with the right solutions team on your side, that discomfort is only momentary, a brief experience on the way towards something far better and, in the long run, pain-free.

After making the switch to an integrated LIS that's purpose-built for multidisciplinary healthcare labs, you'll leave behind:

- **The headache of manually "translating" between interfaces.** With every discipline in your lab working from one platform, your technologists and lab staff will spend less time pushing data around and more time delivering accurate diagnoses.

- **The sting of lost productivity caused by human error.** A modern LIS with configurable, lab-specific workflows and lockout rules is your best safeguard against the quality and compliance issues that can cost your lab dearly.

- **The convulsions of a system not designed to scale alongside your lab.** A truly integrated LIS harmonizes activities between multiple lab instruments, systems, and external contributors, and gives you the option to "turn on" new licenses as you grow.

THE DNA OF YOUR LABORATORY

DESIGNED BY EXPERTS. BUILT ON A LEGACY.

LabVantage Medical Suite is a LIS developed for healthcare laboratories. Like the modern solution generalized in this paper, it integrates all medical laboratory disciplines, meeting the individual needs of your core lab, microbiology, pathology, and genetics labs while harmonizing them on a single shared platform.

THE TRUTH

Sticking with the status quo becomes a lot less tolerable once you're aware of the pain-free alternatives.

A new LIS will mean new hardware costs.

The days of expensive on-premise hardware installations are so recent that many believe we're still living in them. But modern LIS providers offer 100% web-based, cloud-ready solutions that are deeply configurable and that require no hardware spending. This heralds the end of high maintenance fees, lengthy upgrade periods, and awkward VPN setups for those working remotely, like an offsite pathologist waiting for digital screens. On a modern LIS, that pathologist can receive and review lab screens via integrated conferencing tools, streamlining the path to diagnosis and treatment options. All lab operators have access to the relevant and accurate data they need, right where they need it, while eliminating a significant line item from your IT budget.

THE TRUTH

A modern LIS installation can reduce your overall IT spending by hosting your solution on a scalable, configurable, and secure cloud-based server.

MYTH #4

We don't have the IT staff to handle implementation.

If you've participated in a new software installation at some point in your career, this assumption can feel especially entrenched. You had an up-close view of the toll that such a process can take, leaving internal IT teams hamstrung as they try to ease complex new software into position without interrupting operations or hurting productivity.

Times have changed. The best LIS providers today are more than peddlers of next-gen software; they're also experienced and responsive solutions engineers, who are trained in implementing and configuring your software to meet your lab's specific needs. They know how to migrate your legacy data smoothly and accurately from the old system to the new. As a result, lab directors can plump their pillows and rest easily with an expert team working behind the scenes to ensure a successful rollout.

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THE TRUTH

If you have the right service partner, you won't need a massive internal IT team to have a smooth and rapid implementation and data migration experience.

MYTH #5

We'll outgrow a new LIS in five years. Why switch now?

Even once you've updated your assumptions based on the previous four revelations, this one might still tempt you to tap the brakes. Sure, you realize that true integration is out there, and your lab needs it; you realize that the temporary discomfort of a change is worth its lasting benefits; you're on board with the cost efficiencies of the cloud and the advantages of having a trained team to assist with implementation. But even after all that, you might be asking yourself: what happens later, once we've grown? Shouldn't we wait a few more years? Wouldn't it make sense to switch once we're bigger, so we don't have to go through this twice?

These questions are based on the assumption, born out by some traditional IT vendors, that you need to lock yourself into a certain size of software installation. Small, medium, enterprise-level: the nomenclature may change, but these are your options. When you outgrow one, you need to migrate to another.

That's no longer true. Using today's cloud-based lab technology, you can have an LIS instance that's both fully integrated in your workflow, harmonizing operations across all of your lab disciplines, and that's dynamic and scalable. You can add licenses as needed, growing your LIS in lockstep with your lab. When regulatory standards evolve, the software evolves with them, continuously introducing new traceability functions and audit trail technology, for example. And these updates won't interrupt your workflow; because modern LIS installations are cloud-based, they're continuously up-to-date.

THE TRUTH

If you choose a modern LIS solution that offers integration and scalability, this will be the last switch you'll ever have to make.

CONCLUSION

The prospect of migrating to a new LIS can seem daunting, but with the right team of specialists overseeing your move to the right system, it doesn't need to be. And choosing to make that move now, rather than waiting until your lab operations are so complex that migration is mission-critical, means you'll have greater control over the process and a clearer path through its complexities. At the end of the day, you'll be making a wise decision to improve efficiencies and lower unnecessary spending in your lab, ultimately ensuring that doctors and their patients get the accurate results and timely treatment options they're counting on.

FOR MORE ABOUT how a truly integrated LIS could transform your healthcare lab, visit labvantageclinical.com

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