Innovation in Clinical Outsourcing!

Why Generic Sourcing Solutions are Unfit for Clinical Outsourcing

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Often when we initiate discussions with new biopharmaceutical companies or CROs about Clinical Maestro, we learn that the organization has already invested in a "generic" procurement platform such as Ariba, GEP, Jaggaer, Workday, etc. The frequently asked question is "Why do I need a second procurement solution? How is Clinical Maestro different?"

Before answering this question, please take a quick look at your phone apps. How many "booking" solutions can you find? Do you have at least 5, say Uber, Expedia, Door Dash, Open Table, TripAdvisor? Why is that? Most people will procure services and book business on specialty apps because of the ease of use, high degree of "fit for purpose", little to no customization to the intended use. Will all these apps ultimately merge into one super app? I doubt it, because specialization and diversity are essential to innovation.

Now, let's go back to the R&D procurement question. Does an organization need only one solution to procure a wide range of services, from early R&D and scientific products to IT products, assets and complex clinical or lab services? Of course not, because the one solution would be exorbitantly expensive, would take too long to develop, would require a high degree of customization and it would never be able to keep up with such diverse industry trends such as outsourcing model changes. We compiled the key feature comparison into the table below - specifically targeting clinical outsourcing.

Key Feature or Functionality	Clinical Maestro	Generic Procurement Solutions
Clinical and R&D Procurement Workflow	Yes	Custom
Clinical RFP/RFI Templates	Yes	Custom
Clinical Study Assumptions	Yes	Custom
Bid to Specifications (CRO proposes to Sponsor assumptions)	Yes	Custom
Clinical Study Intelligence	Yes	No
Clinical Cost Benchmark, including CRO cost intelligence	Yes	No
Due Diligence Engine (unit, effort, rate comparison at activity level)	Yes	No
Rate Card Library	Yes	No
Fixed Unit Bid Grid Management	Yes	No
Change order reconciliation engine	Yes	No
Bid to resources (CRO provides detailed resources by activity)	Yes	No
Bid to expertise (CRO modifies Sponsor assumptions)	Yes	No
2-way Bid Grid Mapping (Sponsor - Clinical Maestro standard)	Yes	No
3-way Bid Grid Mapping (Sponsor - Clinical Maestro Standard - Provider)	Yes	No
Statement of Work generation using smart fields	Yes	No
AI-enabled Processes	Yes	No
Clinical Service Provider Database	Advanced	Basic
Vendor Performance Management	Yes	No
Communication Engine	Yes	Yes
Documents Library	Yes	Yes
Integrations with Other Systems	Yes	Yes
Provider Fees (service commissions)	No	Yes
User Provided Feedback (ease-of-use)	High	Low

Let's take a deeper look at some of the more unique features that make Clinical Maestro the most advanced R&D sourcing engine in the market. For example, clinical outsourcing templates: Biotechs typically don't have any. They need an intelligent system that comes equipped with best-in-class standards. On the other hand, large pharma templates are very complicated, typically in Excel format with 5-10 tabs containing study specifications, fixed and variable unit grids, a large variety of structures, meetings breakdown tabs, resource breakdown requirements at the minor task level, complicated responsibility matrices, payment schedules and much more. Programming this complexity into a generic system is beyond time consuming, extremely expensive and the resulting sourcing interface is typically plagued with problems because customizations are difficult to maintain, and sourcing models are constantly changing. It's no wonder that after significant investments in generic solutions, the system owners revert to the ubiquitous Excel spreadsheet!

Large pharma organizations are streamlining operations and seeking to reduce costs. The need to embark on an overall process of simplifying the complexity of outsourcing is critical.

This can be done through fit-for-purpose solutions that are easy to use, self-configurable and natively equipped with the intelligence required to outsource clinical services. These solutions need to handle granular clinical study assumptions, bid grid mapping, rate card library, fixed cost templates, milestone payments and have benchmark costing intelligence that can be leveraged during the negotiation process.

Transforming a change adverse industry and even more change resistant outsourcing process is no easy undertaking. At Clinical Maestro we are up to the challenge and are seeing the tide begin to turn. For the last 4 years we have surrounded ourselves with some of the brightest minds in clinical outsourcing to build the pharmaceutical industry's first truly dedicated engine for R&D procurement that has all the "bells and whistles" of professional R&D sourcing. It also benefits from the latest technology trends, such as artificial intelligence to drive the next generation solution set that saves >75% of the time required to source clinical services using alternative methods. Add to the benefits, >10% cost savings per RFP associated with benchmarking alone, scalability without having to add staff, study modeling know-how, advanced due diligence engine, flexible sourcing models and outstanding service. Transformation is now a reality!