

Effectively outsourcing medical and laboratory equipment procurement

With investigator sites located across the globe, it is increasingly important to ensure that they all have the right equipment to undertake a clinical trial to its successful conclusion. Robin Wickham, general manager, explains how **Woodley Equipment Company** can source the most appropriate equipment for you, and ensure a smooth trial is delivered on time and in budget.

When outsourcing the procurement of equipment, it is beneficial to have a central contact to manage your project. It is important to select a company that will provide a dedicated account manager to understand your specific requirements and create a package entirely tailored to your needs. Combining information (such as expected trial length, site locations and equipment requirements), your account manager should be able to provide a package comprising purchase, rental, management, logistics and tracking to give you the best-value-for-money solution.

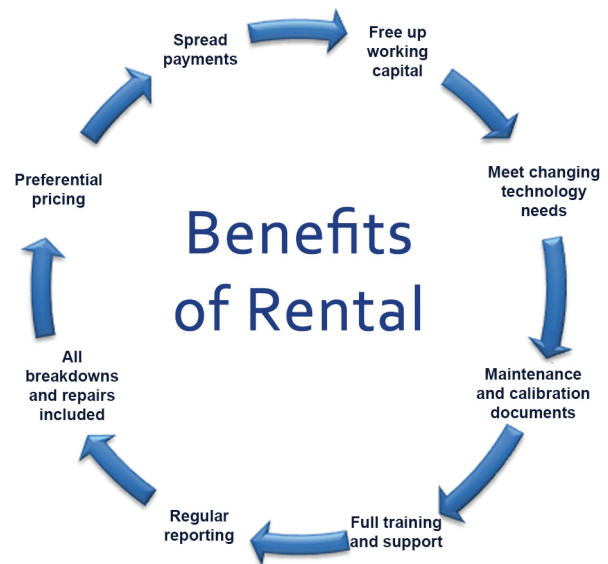
Today's pharmaceutical environment depends upon technologically advanced equipment to accurately and reliably trial the latest drugs and their effects. With constant technological advances and the high capital outlay involved, it can often be difficult to decide what products will provide longevity and value for money. It is worth considering an alternative solution; renting your laboratory and medical equipment will allow you to use the most advanced equipment and cutting-edge technology, and offer complete peace of mind, knowing that any breakdowns will be replaced immediately.

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Selecting the right equipment

Many equipment providers limit themselves by only working with a set product range, and then focus on selling these specific items to their clients regardless of whether there is a more suitable product on the market. By selecting a supplier that, while having a core selection of products, has relationships with multiple suppliers, you will ensure that you have the most appropriate equipment sourced for your trial and the correct consumables supplied for the duration of your study.

Detailed knowledge of the global equipment market will ensure smooth shipments and shorter lead times. Considerations of voltage, frequency, registration and licensing should be left to your equipment provider ensuring a one-stop solution with all the benefits of sourcing locally.



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Full logistics and management

Your supplier of choice should have a logistics team with the experience needed to organise the shipment of equipment to each investigator site on a worldwide basis. Using a network of global and local couriers, freight forwarders and cold-chain experts will ensure that the issues usually faced when shipping overseas will not occur. It is also important to consider whether the company you choose to work with has the global infrastructure and partners to facilitate the resolution of any issues before they arise, reducing expensive costs and delays.

Another key consideration is the level of ongoing management throughout a trial. Look at whether your procurement specialist can provide full tracking and budgeting information on a regular and ongoing basis, and equipment management services to complement your procurement.

When the study is complete, your supplier should organise the collection of the equipment from each investigator site and provide end-of-life recycling, charitable donation, or recalibration and servicing ready for your next trial – ensuring you receive a full service from initial enquiry to final collection.

Advanced technical support

Technical support should be provided free of charge by a highly qualified team of service engineers: medical electronics technicians and biomedical scientists who are also registered chartered scientists.

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Their advice and support can minimise equipment downtime, ensuring the study continues with limited interruption and undue delay. Should the need arise, a replacement should be available to be sent at short notice. Technical support requirements include:

- advice during initial equipment set-up
- advice on maintenance issues as they arise
- troubleshooting issues, including advice on laboratory protocol to resolve issues relating to the interpretation of results and recalibration advice to avoid the need to return equipment
- configuration and calibration of medical analysers and the supply of quality control samples
- dedicated telephone and email support.

Service department

Medical electronics is a highly specialised field, and includes the maintenance and calibration of all patient monitoring devices; it is essential in ensuring that equipment is safe, functional and properly configured. Working within a well-equipped service centre, it is also highly advisable that experienced and qualified engineers use their technical expertise to carry out calibration, safety checks, maintenance and repair of all non-patient-related equipment.

Tailored training service

Look for a supplier who can organise personalised training delivered by someone appropriately qualified for the equipment. For example; biomedical scientists should train on laboratory-based practices and point-of-care devices whilst specialised nurses should train on patient monitoring devices.

Experience

There is no substitute for experience and expertise in clinical trials, and Woodley Equipment Company has been providing laboratory and medical equipment rental solutions to the industry for over 20 years. Woodley is a leading specialist global supplier of laboratory and medical equipment for rental or sale to the clinical trials industry with unrivalled levels of customer service and support. Woodley can provide a ‘one-stop’ solution that can bring simplicity to your most complex trial. ■

Further information

Woodley Equipment Company
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Supplying the Clinical Trials Industry for over 20 years:

- Full Servicing, Calibration and Technical Support
- Total Asset Management and Tracking
- Complete Global Logistics
- A Fully Tailored Service



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