

Pharmaceutical Research Automation and Project Management

Background

Advent Design was asked by a multi-national pharmaceutical manufacturer to coordinate the specifications development and bidding for a customized robotic system for the automated preparation, storage, and retrieval of pharmaceutical samples. The company had been working on the project for over two years, but with limited in-house engineering resources and a highly complex system to be procured, it was decided that an outside engineering firm would be the best option for the management of the project.



Project Description

Advent Design developed the automation concept and functional requirements for a new automated compound solution storage and distribution system. Advent Design's initial focus was to fully develop the draft request for proposal (RFP) into a document suitable for use in bidding and to examine and qualify the potential vendors for the automated sample preparation and distribution system. This involved the development of system operational requirements including storage capacity, throughput rates, accuracy, and reliability. Functional requirements for safety and fire protection were also developed. The Advent project team met weekly with the customer's project team, and after two months, the finalized RFP was ready, and it was sent to seven qualified vendors who had pre-screened by the combined project teams.

After allowing the vendors one month to examine the RFP and develop their estimates, four proposals were received and evaluated. After a series of project meetings and review meetings with the bidders over three weeks, Advent Design evaluated the bidders and coordinated the final selection of a vendor based on a combination of cost, technical capability, and overall system design.

Advent Design then worked with the customer and their project team to draft the capital appropriation request for the actual procurement and installation of the system.

Impact

With the selection of a vendor and the determination of the actual system cost, the customer was able to proceed with a critical project, which will relieve a major bottleneck in their research and development operations. This will enable them to increase the number of drugs in the development pipeline and allow for continued growth of the company. Advent Design will manage the final engineering and installation of the new system starting in June, 2002. Installation is planned for late 2003.



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