

HORIZON Lab Systems Improves Reporting Performance 15 Times with Telerik Reporting

CASE STUDY

HORIZON®

INDUSTRY
Software

PRODUCT
Telerik Reporting

SUMMARY

When HORIZON Lab Systems needed more robust and faster reporting for its clients who manage lab samples and results, it chose Progress Telerik Reporting.

“The reporting tool we had been using for 15 years was really embedded in our operations. So, the fact that we were able to swap it out in just one product release cycle was a pretty big win for us.”

Wendy Elliott-Smith,
Vice President Software Development, HORIZON Lab Systems

Challenge

For over 30 years, HORIZON Lab Systems has been a leader in the laboratory information management space, serving public health, water/wastewater, and clinical diagnostics laboratories. HORIZON's application allows labs to track and manage their results and ultimately report back to their customers. It is used by municipal water labs for testing before wastewater treatment is performed, by state and municipal public health labs for testing, spanning from COVID-19 to rabies, and by clinical diagnostic labs and toxicologists.

The associated reporting from samples is critical for HORIZON's bottom line. As the end deliverable to customers, it often needed to be highly customized. Having the need for an enhanced and extensively configurable reporting tool, HORIZON sought a replacement of its existing report designer when the product was no longer able to meet the reporting needs of its clients.

A user of Telerik® DevCraft™ for more than six years, Kevin Carter, Vice President, Project and Product Management at HORIZON Lab Systems, decided to turn to Progress for a solution to this need as well. As he explained, “Progress developer tools are great, and we know that we can integrate with them easily because we've done it with the Kendo UI web controls throughout our UI. We figured it'd be a good, consistent look and feel to also leverage Telerik Reporting. It was an easy decision to look there early on, but we certainly did go through a pretty intensive evaluation process.”

Solution

The move to switch to Telerik Reporting was a natural fit, not only because HORIZON was already working with the Progress® Kendo UI® web controls, but also because the tool could be integrated with HORIZON's existing reporting structure, eliminating the necessity to be beholden to a third-party reporting server.

“One of the other things we've been doing with our product over the past five years is trying to streamline the tech stack as much as possible. Rely on fewer third-party vendors. Develop as much as we can in-house to make the product easier to use for our customers so that they can more easily take upgrades,” said Wendy Elliott-Smith, Vice President Software Development, HORIZON Lab Systems.

Integration wasn't the only consideration when seeking a vendor. HORIZON looked at performance, reporting speed and efficiency, reporting customization and support and the ability to seamlessly

move to the new tool to avoid any level of customer disruption. “It’s not at all uncommon for a customer of ours to run more than 30,000 samples a day, each of those equating to at least one report. So, our reports have to be very fast.”

It only took HORIZON one product release cycle to implement Telerik Reporting and HORIZON allowed its customers to use both tools within its application so that there was no immediate impact. As Wendy explained, “The reporting tool we had been using for 15 years was firmly embedded in our operations. So, the fact that we were able to swap it out in one product release cycle was a pretty big win for us.” Additionally, the fact that HORIZON’s customers, “can go directly to the knowledge base for support was a big bonus for us. They don’t necessarily have to come through us to learn about using the Telerik report designer,” Wendy continued.

Results

Even before COVID-19, HORIZON’s customers had high-performance requirements. After the pandemic hit, the demand for some laboratories to output reports tripled. Public health labs tasked with COVID-19 testing had to handle a dramatic volume increase of 4000% more samples each day. There were a lot of associated logistical challenges with staffing (such as at drive-through testing facilities), which resulted in higher demand for HORIZON’s application.

To keep pace with the expanded needs from these laboratories (both for internal reports and reports on test results shared with clients), reporting needed to be fast, efficient, and delivered electronically to produce a PDF output. “Telerik Reporting runs roughly 100 times faster than our old reporting tool. We also looked at load testing and estimated it takes 1 second to run complex reports in Telerik Reporting versus 15 seconds in our prior solution,” said Kevin Carter.

In addition to the efficiency and speed of the reporting, there were also a number of other benefits. The integrated barcodes that Telerik Reporting delivers on the internal reports that the labs themselves use helped streamline data entry. Being able to use HORIZON’s own reporting tool has made it easier for their customers to understand and manage their own end-user reports. Finally, reports produced internally for management purposes at the lab use charts to easily identify backlogs or positivity rates on certain tests. These can now be produced a lot more easily.

“The fact that we can pull images and reports directly from the database is really key,” Wendy further explains. “Our old solution was very clunky because we would have to have another wedge in there to pull out of the database, write it to a file system and then pull the image from the file system into the report. It was an extra step that we don’t have to do anymore. That has been really critical for our customers because they often require multipage PDFs that might include a custom report, but also the original chain of custody for the sample.”

About Horizon Lab Systems:

HORIZON (a member of the Dohmen family of companies) is today’s approach to laboratory information management, based on more than 30 years of industry leadership. HORIZON LIMS is an efficient, configurable, secure and cost-effective solution to transform a lab. HORIZON will change the way collection, sampling and processing are done and results are provided. From simple data entry to complex analyses, HORIZON ensures that every facet of a lab’s operations work more effectively than ever before. Some of the most mission-critical marketplaces apply HORIZON’s product – each one important to millions every day. From large government public health labs to small, private clinical labs, HORIZON is designed to be the LIMS of choice for any lab. HORIZON focuses on flexibility, accuracy and most importantly – people.



To learn more, please visit:
telerik.com/products/reporting.aspx