

Customer Spotlight: Environmental & Water Testing Colorado Analytical Laboratories, Inc.

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Company Profile:

Founded in 1962, Colorado Analytical Laboratory has developed a 40 year track record providing high quality analytical services. Originally, an agronomic and animal feed testing lab, Colorado Analytical Laboratory has expanded its focus to water and wastewater testing specializing in inorganics, microbiology, and metals. Certified by the Colorado Department of Health and Environment (CDH), they analyze drinking water for organic contaminants (SOC's & VOC's), inorganic contaminants (metals), nitrate & nitrite, cyanide, fluoride, and coliform bacteria. They participate in the Soil Science Society of America's quarterly proficiency testing program that includes soil, water, and plant tissue analysis. Colorado Analytical Laboratory is certified by the U.S. Composting Council for their Seal of Testing Assurance program and is a DMRQA (Discharge Monitoring Report-Quality Assurance) Participant.

Their Challenge:

Colorado Analytical Laboratory needed improved sample organization; faster turnaround; automation for QC data, reporting, and invoicing; and secure web access to data. Once this was implemented, they needed to maintain continuity with current protocols (various reporting formats, matrices, etc.). Due to their overwhelming growth and success, they needed a tool that would provide their customers secure, 24/7 access to laboratory data, reports, invoices and more. In addition to internet access, they also expanded to a second location and needed to expand their LIMS to accommodate their expansion.



Our Solution:

Colorado Analytical Laboratory determined that the modularity of Sample Master® LIMS would best support their data management, automation and expansion needs. They chose the Sample Tracking, Data Entry, Sample Scheduling, QA/QC, and EDT (Electronic Data Transfer) Modules to improve their sample organization. As a result, now hold times don't get missed, results are calculated inside of LIMS without going to Excel, and QA/QC results are linked directly to samples (which their

Colorado Department of Health auditor appreciates), all in a secure environment with multiple approval process levels supporting regulatory compliance requirements. ATL also addressed their need for a web portal by installing Sample Master® Result Point® for secure client access (data is encrypted), with an unlimited user license, which cut back on status calls and the cost of manually sending hard copy reports and invoices. Providing customers with 24/7 access to their sample results, reports and invoices has resulted in increased customer satisfaction.

By far the biggest administrative efficiency enhancement was derived from Sample Master®'s Auto-Reporting, Auto-Invoicing and Auto-Emailing functionality, which provides customization of any report. The Auto-Invoicing feature has allowed Colorado Analytical Laboratory to easily create price

“Customization of our Sample Master® LIMS has been a key advantage. We were able to take Sample Master® and adapt it to the way we wanted it to work for us. In turn Sample Master® created efficiencies that we never dreamed of – worklist creation, a secure sample approval process and fully automated printing and emailing! We couldn't live without it now.

*— Stuart Nielson,
Vice President Colorado Analytical Laboratories*



496 Holly Grove School Rd
West End, NC 27376

(800) 565-5467
(910) 673-8165
atlab.com

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quotes and offer custom pricing on an individual customer basis. When the results are complete and have gone through the approval process, presto! Reports and invoices are immediately available via PDF, and results can be automatically e-mailed. Previously, two administrative employees were needed to accomplish these achievements. Now those full time employees are helping grow their laboratory, having been allocated to open a second site.



The laboratory leverages the professional, secure, and always accessible Result Point® web portal. This allows their clients to access their data on demand, check on sample analysis status, and results if available, and the ability to download and print pdf final reports. With Result Point®, Colorado Analytical Laboratory is “open” and serving their customers 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Another of the larger benefits came with instrument integration. Results entry became automated thanks to the parsers built by ATL for several instruments, including the Dionex IC. The EDT (Electronic Data Transfer) module and integration capability combined have saved several hours per week (per instrument) offering the ability to import results into the LIMS and resulting in increased throughput and enhanced data quality. Colorado Analytical Laboratory also utilizes RS 232 cables to input data directly from their balances into Sample Master®. The laboratory has experienced a reduction of transcription errors from no longer hand-entering data.

Another benefit: Colorado Analytical Laboratory uses worklists to stay organized. Sample Master®'s ability to allow worklists to be created by one employee for another employee has

afforded a supervisor to create specific worklist assignments for other employees. By using the “Master Query” functionality of Sample Master®, end users can retrieve samples by their worklist, tests, due dates, etc. Since worklists can also be printed as a report that can be modified by the end user, this is an excellent method to provide bench sheets.

Throughout the LIMS deployment preparation process, ATL staff did an excellent job identifying the laboratory's needs and fulfilling them. Gold-level support combined with diverse training offerings resulted in strong, responsive, and educational customer service amenities. Colorado Analytical Laboratory feels the LIMS Boot Camp and free quarterly Training Webinars are especially helpful.

“After 15 years of managing the laboratory my business partner and I can take a vacation at the same time! This is all due to the trust that we have in our LIMS.”

— Stuart Nielson,
Vice President, Colorado Analytical Laboratories

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