

Pre-analytics made even easier

Gruppo MultiMedica has been using Tecan's FE500 pre-analytical workstation to provide automated sample sorting and processing since October 2003, and has now upgraded to the FE500pro™ for even greater flexibility.



Error-free sample processing ensures peace of mind for the technical team.

Gruppo MultiMedica is a healthcare provider based in Milan, Italy, which provides clinical and primary care services to the city and surrounding areas through its four hospitals and multiple walk-in centers. The Group's laboratory facilities, directed by Dr Ermanno Longhi, perform a wide range of biochemistry, serology, hematology and microbiology tests for diagnostics, as well as maintaining an extensive program of focused clinical research. The clinical diagnostics

service runs over two million tests a year, and uses a variety of automated laboratory systems to help meet its high throughput demands. Maurizio Ghiraldini, head of technical staff, explained: "Automation is vital to achieving the throughput requirements of our laboratory. High sample numbers, combined with limited staffing, mean that we must rely on robust automated processes to ensure prompt analysis and reporting of results, as these may be crucial to a patient's care."



“In addition to automation of analytical processes, efficient pre-analytical sample sorting and secondary tube generation is an important aspect of this strategy, preventing a bottleneck as samples come into the laboratory. This requires a reliable automated system capable of effectively cataloging and organizing all the samples on arrival. We originally started using Tecan’s FE500 front-end platform for this task in 2003, and this system was perfectly matched to our throughput and sample sorting requirements. We receive samples in barcoded primary tubes from a variety of sources – including hospitals, clinics and doctors’ surgeries – and the FE500 is able to communicate directly with our LIMS to determine the testing requirements for each sample. We were very impressed with the performance of the FE500 system, and have recently upgraded to the FE500pro. The new platform builds on the strengths of the previous system, while offering even greater ease-of-use and reliability. It also has a number of new safety features to maximize operator safety, and report generation has been made easier. Installation of this new instrument was straightforward, and the high level of support we receive from Tecan has made the transition to the new platform even easier.”

To find out more on Tecan’s FE500pro, visit www.tecan.com/fe500pro



Peter Siesel, Vice President of Sales and Marketing at Tecan US

Leading the debate

Flexibility has long been an important buzzword in our industry and Tecan recognized its significance early on. Regardless of the product, we have succeeded in chasing the continually moving bottlenecks, usually at the cutting edge of scientific research. And, by solving those areas that need to be streamlined or accelerated, we have defined that flexibility means more than what can be done today, but also what might need to be done tomorrow.

But what does the immediate future hold for flexibility?

While Tecan started as an engineering company, over the years it has adapted to integrate scientific disciplines into its corporate culture and product solutions. Whatever the application, we are now in the enviable position to manage bottlenecks because we understand scientists’ specific needs and can even anticipate them, streamlining processes in real time. It’s also because of our structure, in the sense that we’re both global and very close to a broad scope of customers, that we can be very quick to react to changes in the industry.

Currently, we are seeing two trends in the industry. Firstly, customers want and need more turn-key solutions. The trend towards more, faster and better results has driven us to create desirable application packages based on our unmatched flexible platforms. The innovative NanoQuant™ plate, for example, solves the need for rapid and precise low volume DNA quantification on a diverse multimode microplate reader. Another example is our recently released Freedom EVOware® software wizard for bioprocessing applications, which enables scientists to automate very complex applications using the tools and the language they have mastered in their discipline. The other trend is in basic research, where there is always a need for the latest and most powerful research tool. Whether that’s a multimode plate reader, or a liquid handler that can switch from a single pipetting channel to 384 pipetting channels, we still have that basic flexibility inherent in all our instruments. This flexibility is the key to enabling us to develop solutions, offering our customers a myriad of possibilities.

Email talk@tecan.com to tell us what you think about our product and application-biased flexibility or any other life science topic of your choice.

