


# In safe hands

Ongoing technical support and training can be a major concern for laboratory instrument providers looking to outsource development of new platforms. Can the OEM supplier provide sufficient training for engineers and applications specialists? Will ongoing support be available for the lifetime of the instrument? And what happens if in-house engineers can't fix a problem?



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Effective routine maintenance and responsive technical support are vital for clinical laboratories, ensuring correct and efficient operation of equipment and allowing the laboratory to provide timely turnaround of results. As a result, all major healthcare equipment providers have dedicated service organizations that are responsible for both the upkeep of equipment at customer sites and the provision of expert technical and application support when required. Although most of these organizations will provide in-house training for their application specialists and service engineers, this may not always be possible when instruments are designed and manufactured by a third-party OEM provider.

Siemens Healthineers has a long-standing relationship with Tecan's Partnering Business, working with the company to provide advanced liquid handling and logistics solutions to complement its advanced diagnostic testing product portfolio. The Quadriga BeFree® System is an example of how this approach benefits customers, offering seamless integration of a sample processing module with up to three BEP® III Systems to provide an effective high throughput solution for blood donor screening. Frontline support for this platform is provided through Siemens' global service network, with expert technical back-up from Tecan's engineering and application Expertline team if an immediate solution cannot be found.

Based on Tecan's advanced liquid handling know-how, the Quadriga BeFree includes a number of technologies not found on other instruments in the Siemens portfolio, requiring the company's engineers to undertake specific training to ensure effective product support. Mohammed Fatouh, IB & Service Process Manager at Siemens Egypt, explained: "Although the Quadriga BeFree has been on the market for a number of years, this platform has not been available in Egypt until now. Our sales team was keen to offer this instrument to new and existing customers – ensuring we maintain our leading position in the market by providing complete automated solutions – and so it was vital that we undertook

the technical training necessary to install, service and repair it."

Mohammed Mattar, Customer Service Supervisor at Siemens Egypt, added: "Most of our training is provided by other engineering staff from within the global Siemens service organization, but Tecan runs a dedicated training program for the Quadriga BeFree at its global headquarters in Männedorf, Switzerland. This ensures we have the appropriate knowledge and technical understanding of the platform, and gives us a chance to draw on the company's many years of experience for troubleshooting any issues we may encounter."

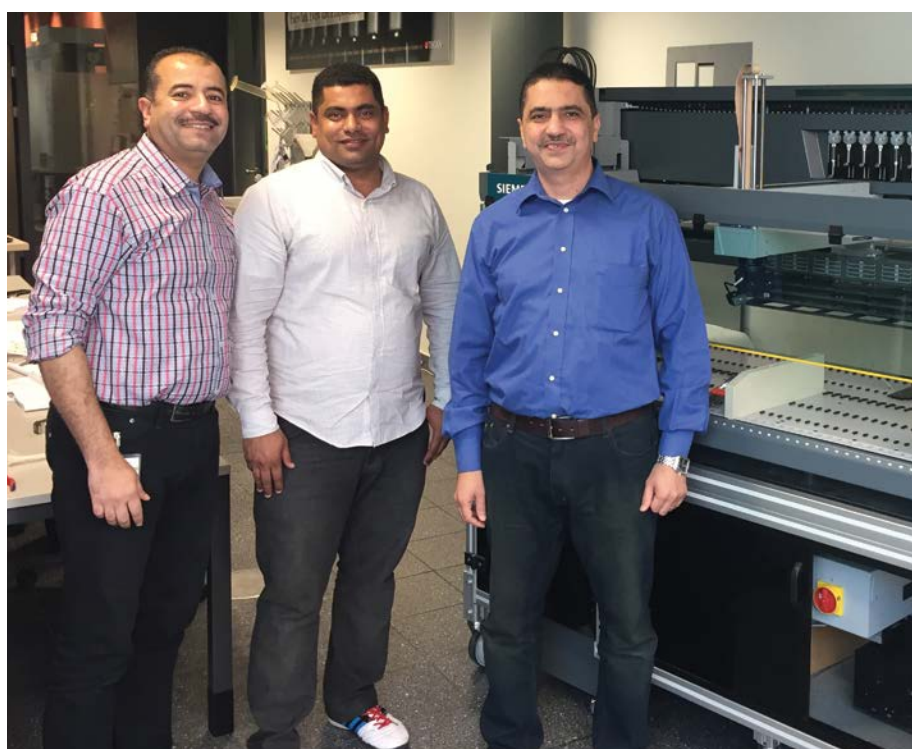
Shawqi Mohammed Ibrahim, Field Service Engineer & Healthcare Informatics Specialist from Siemens Saudi Arabia, took up the story: "The training is divided into a theoretical element and hands-on work with the instrument. The theoretical section gives an overview of the system – looking at the important parts, what they do and how they work – then the practical section covers how to install and set up the machine, as well as how to troubleshoot, strip and rebuild the various modules. As this platform is connected with our BEP III Systems, it is also very important that everything is connected

together and aligned correctly, and that the differing maintenance and calibration requirements for each system are adhered to. It really has been very comprehensive; our trainer – Roger – has been very open, answering all our questions in a logical way, and has provided the level of insight we need to effectively support this system."

Mohammed Mattar continued: "Training in this kind of low pressure environment is invaluable as a service engineer, giving you the opportunity to get hands-on and really explore an instrument with the assistance of a knowledgeable trainer. This helps you to develop a picture in your head of how the machine works – and what issues there could be – before you get to a customer site, where the customer is obviously keen to get the instrument back online as quickly as possible."

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Left to right: Mohammed Mattar, Shawqi Mohammed Ibrahim and Mohammed Fatouh at Tecan's Männedorf training center