



Client:	Not applicable – Sample (with permission from PT & R and Medidata)
Project:	Voice of the Customer sample
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Topic(s)	Training and customer service
Interviewer(s)	Ray Collia, Creative Director, Word Ferret
Interviewee(s)	Vivienne van de Walle, Medical Director and Founder, PT & R
Notes	We remove filler words, such as ‘um’ and ‘ah’ unless they form a useful or necessary part of conveying the speaker’s message. We will sometimes add words or phrases to aid understanding; these additions will be enclosed in square brackets to show that they are not part of the speaker’s original statement.

My name is Vivienne Van de Walle. I'm a physician, and I own a research site in the south of the Netherlands near Maastricht. I'm a physician by training, and I've been conducting clinical research for almost 25 years. And I've seen things develop from paper based to electronic, to face-to-face meetings with patients, into the more hybrid settings. And, of course, COVID was a time where things were in a pressure cooker, developing more and more into a virtual setting or a hybrid setting.

And what I saw was that [sic] a lot of vendors that already existed or new vendors popping up, and they all have their advantages and disadvantages. And one of the most challenging things for sites is actually the number of vendors we're dealing with in one trial itself, which can sometimes be over 5 to 10 even, with their own portals and their own log-in systems, and also the numerous trainings that we have to do. And some trainings are very good, and they are fit for the job, and others just don't prepare us for the work that we have to do. They are just so generic that the only thing they teach you is, like, this is the difference between a radio button and a tick box and not so much about the protocol itself.

One of the vendors that actually is, for us as a site, nice to work with is Medidata, when we're talking about EDC, because they have a portal, a dashboard, where you can see exactly what trainings we have done, which parts of the systems we are certified [in]—for me and my whole staff—so, if a new sponsor comes along, they can literally tick the box, like, this site is certified to use the system and we don't have to do the training again for a new sponsor. While, for other systems, it might be mandatory to do training again because you didn't do the training for that sponsor, despite the fact that it was the same training. And so, trainings can be very time consuming. They are not often reimbursed for a site when we put them in our budget—that's not always something that sponsors are willing to compensate— and, as I said, it's not always equipped us to conduct a clinical trial.

One of the things that is important for a site, when we're working with vendors, is that there is a suitable help desk: that when you call them they are available, they are available for our patients in the local language, and that they actually can solve [the issue], most of the time on that call—and not generate a ticket and, you know, tell us that they will get back whenever they have the time to do so— because we're there, with our patients, at our desk, and we want to have that resolved on the spot.

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