



## Looking back over the last 30 years, what advance has had the greatest impact on the industry – and why?

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*Note – this is an excerpt from the original article.*

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In recent decades, clinical trials have moved from paper-based, site-centric models to agile, patient-first engines that advance vital therapeutic development. Central to this shift has been technology – innovations, such as electronic data capture, wearables for remote monitoring, predictive analytics, and now AI, have collectively transformed the way we conduct clinical research.

These tools have improved efficiency, enhanced patient engagement, and enabled more data-driven decision-making across studies of all sizes and complexity. And the influence of technology is by no means at its final chapter, as there are important learnings from recent decades we can put into place today to ensure the next wave of our tech-enabled clinical research evolution happens seamlessly.

As these digital and analytical tools emerged, the industry has found new ways to manage increasing complexity while remaining flexible and efficient. The shift toward functional service provider (FSP) models over the last few years reflects this, as clinical trial sponsors recognize that augmenting existing internal capabilities or full-service outsourcing (FSO) arrangements with FSP partners provides fast access to specialized expertise and resources to fully leverage these new technologies. The same approach will be necessary today as we embrace AI, ensuring sponsors have access to specialized expertise and resources to implement new technologies effectively while maintaining oversight and control.

Three decades of progress have brought us to a time when trials are more digital, global, and patient-centric than ever. Looking ahead, the successful adoption of next-generation technologies, such as AI and advanced analytics, will be critical for accelerating therapy development. Flexible trial delivery models support sponsors in leveraging these tools efficiently, ultimately delivering therapies faster and more reliably to patients worldwide.