AbSci, a biotech startup based in Portland, Oregon, has invented a powerful protein expression platform for producing high yields of potent yet hard-to-manufacture antibodies.

Currently licensing the technology to major pharmaceutical companies, AbSci is helping its customers scale-up production and bring promising new antibody-based therapeutics to market.

The fast-paced research environment often has staff members working through the night to push scientific progress, so naturally they want to be sure that their lab productivity tools are giving them an edge, not holding them back.

To that end, Dr. Phil Barish, the company’s vice president of operations, knew from the start that AbSci’s laboratory notebook would be electronic, not paper.

The reasons were obvious—“being able to look back at your research, being able to search your data, and having it be accessible to everyone”—but the question remained: Which electronic notebook?

The situation

Members of the team had experience with notebooks from various vendors and found them lacking. They had been frustrated with their inability to organize data, protocols, and notes in a manner that made sense. While inputting data was relatively easy, they were finding it increasing difficult to extract meaningful insights due to the notebooks’ lack of search capabilities and their inability to organize page layouts as anything other than long, overwhelming lists.

They wanted something that went beyond paperless documentation. Something that could do more than store and secure their intellectual property. Something that could help them analyze and share results with each other in a meaningful way—especially during shift hand-offs.
Since team members also work remotely, they were seeking a way to give everyone—from the CEO to bench scientists—easy access to the information they need to analyze results, track progress, prepare presentations, and make faster, better-informed decisions.

The company also wanted to bring data off a public cloud and into their own private server.

The solution

Barish and his team selected the Agilent OpenLAB Electronic Laboratory Notebook (ELN).

“We did competitive analysis,” he says. “The cheaper notebook that we looked at didn’t have the capabilities of Agilent. We narrowed our decision down to Agilent and another competing vendor, and the other vendor’s prices were higher. Agilent had comparable capabilities at a better price.”

The capabilities include the following:

• The ability to tag notebook pages with keywords so that entries can be located in several ways instead of forced to reside inside of a single folder.

• Greater flexibility to organize data using chapters, tabs, tables, images, hyperlinks, and more. (Say goodbye to long overwhelming lists.)

• A choice of cloud or non-cloud options.

With Agilent OpenLAB ELN, the team can position the data that’s most important front and center on the page, with auxiliary information kept out of the way yet still easy to find as additional chapters, tabs, or hyperlinks.

In short, everyone can quickly find the information that they’re looking for, and the company has a solid foundation for maximizing their intellectual property assets.

The software enables them to mine and integrate scientific information, quickly and easily, across many experiments over time. As a result, the whole company can make better-informed decisions, faster and more efficiently.