CUSTOMER STORY

How PharmaLex Replaced MasterControl with ZenQMS in 100 Days

Better usability, admin flexibility and reporting visibility for a QA organization supporting thousands of users.

QUICK FACTS

WHY THEY MIGRATED

Cost, usability challenges, limited flexibility, and reporting constraints

MIGRATION TIME

100

days, end to end

WHAT IMPROVED

Fewer basic support tickets, easier admin changes, better reporting with Insights, less day-to-day friction for QA

For many organizations, moving off a legacy quality system can feel risky before the work even begins. For PharmaLex, the need for change outweighed the risk of transition. The organization needed a quality management system that would be easier for end users to navigate, easier for administrators to manage, and flexible enough to support evolving quality processes without adding unnecessary complexity.

And they got it. In 100 days, PharmaLex completed its transition from MasterControl to ZenQMS and moved to a platform that better aligned with how its teams needed to work.

> **“ Getting it all done, end to end in 100 days was fantastic for us.**
>
> ELDIN RAMMELL · SENIOR DIRECTOR, QUALITY ASSURANCE, PHARMALEX

Why PharmaLex Decided to Replace MasterControl

PharmaLex's decision to replace MasterControl came down to a combination of:

- ✓ Cost
- ✓ Limited flexibility
- ✓ Usability
- ✓ Reporting and licensing complexity

Cost and functionality

From Eldin's perspective, the total cost of ownership had become difficult to justify, especially when system changes or additional capabilities introduced new budget considerations. "It was expensive. The total cost of ownership was too high," Eldin said.

> *Whenever we wanted to introduce new features, use new modules, it was always an additional cost. We had to somehow try and justify those costs if we wanted to implement different roles.*
>
> **ELDIN RAMMELL**

That same pattern showed up in implementation work. As Eldin recalled, the team spent six months implementing the legacy system's audit module, only to find that using it as intended would require additional module purchases. The experience reinforced the team's broader concerns around time, cost, and complexity.

Reporting and licensing struggles

For Diogo Prisco, Associate Director eQMS, Quality Assurance, the challenges also showed up in day-to-day administration. Reporting was not always easy to pull together across modules, and licensing added barriers when it came to assigning permissions and managing users efficiently.

> *Even doing or setting up something that in Zen can be quite easy and straightforward was very time-consuming and complex to do in MasterControl.*
>
> **DIOGO PRISCO · ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR EQMS, QUALITY ASSURANCE**

As Eldin put it, "It was really around cost, the interface and the inflexibility of the system, which kind of pushed us to look for alternatives."

What PharmaLex Needed in a Replacement eQMS



Easy to use and easy to learn

Usability was at the top of the list of what mattered most to PharmaLex, both for administrators and for the broader population of users across the organization. With thousands of users, the team knew that if a system was difficult to understand, the training burden would be significant and the support burden would follow. For PharmaLex, usability meant a system that felt intuitive from the start.

> *Users didn't actually need training to use the system itself.*
>
> ELDIN RAMMELL

The easier the system was to understand, the lighter that burden would be across the organization.

Real eQMS flexibility

Fit was another major factor. PharmaLex needed a platform that could support different quality environments and processes without forcing users into rigid terminology or workflows that didn't reflect how they actually worked.

> *People in pharmacovigilance are less familiar with the term 'nonconformity.' For us, it's an audit finding or it's a deviation.*
>
> ELDIN RAMMELL

The team wanted a system that would feel intuitive across the business, not one that required users to translate unfamiliar terminology before they could do their work.

Fast migration support

Just as important, the organization needed confidence that the data migration itself would be manageable. For a large organization, replacing an eQMS is never only a software decision. It is an operational project with real business risk.

> *Because of the volume of data that we had, the ease with which this migration was going to actually happen was a big concern for us. We wanted a vendor who could really support us with that migration.*
>
> ELDIN RAMMELL

ZenQMS stood out because it addressed all of those concerns at once: usability, flexibility, and a practical implementation approach the team believed it could trust.

How PharmaLex Completed the Migration in 100 Days

Based on his prior experience, Eldin believed the move could happen quickly. Not everyone agreed.

> *Based on my experience, I kept on telling all the guys here that we can do this in a really short timeline. And everyone said, 'No, no, no way. They're never going to be able to do that.'*
>
> ELDIN RAMMELL

They did.

From the beginning, Diogo said, the implementation approach felt structured and easy to follow. Just as importantly, support from the ZenQMS team helped keep the project moving. PharmaLex had particular requirements, questions, and edge cases to work through, and that support helped the team find workable solutions and maintain momentum.

> *We always had someone from your team that was always able to find a way around and to propose a different approach that would still reach us to the goal that we wanted. That was really helpful and facilitated a lot and speed up the process.*
>
> **DIOGO PRISCO**

The speed of the migration was as practical as it was impressive. The sooner the implementation was complete, the sooner the organization could reduce the disruption that comes with running old and new systems in parallel.

> *Whenever you go through that process, it's always disruptive to the business. So the faster we implemented it, the better for us and the least disruptive.*
>
> **ELDIN RAMMELL**

A Smoother Experience for End Users

The real test of any implementation starts after go-live.

For PharmaLex, one of the clearest signs that the move had been the right one was how quickly the day-to-day user experience improved. Before ZenQMS, the QA team spent a significant amount of time handling support requests related to basic system use, whether that meant finding documents, understanding how to complete actions, or navigating routine workflows.

After the move to ZenQMS, that pattern changed. "When we moved to Zen, our tickets on those kinds of categories were completely reduced." Now, the QA team could spend its time on proactive quality management instead of fielding a steady stream of basic how-to questions.

> **Pretty much anyone who knows how to use a smartphone can use Zen.**
>
> *We really didn't get any tickets or communications complaining about the change to a new system or people having difficulties using the system. It was really smooth.*
>
> **DIOGO PRISCO · ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR EQMS, QUALITY ASSURANCE**

For a rollout of this scale, that kind of response says a great deal. The organization had not only moved quickly. It had moved to a system that users could adopt with far less friction.

More Flexibility for Administrators

ZenQMS also changed the experience on the administrative side. As PharmaLex had seen, large legacy platforms can require significant time, effort, or vendor involvement even for relatively simple changes. By contrast, Eldin and Diogo described ZenQMS as a system that made ordinary change much more manageable.

> *With the best will in the world, you kind of spec out a system, you configure it from day one and then three months down the line, you realize it's not quite right. Rather than having to go back to the vendor and going through a big configuration change, we can just do things on the fly.*
>
> **ELDIN RAMMELL**

Diogo described his own reaction in similar terms. After spending so much time working in a system where ordinary changes were difficult, the relative simplicity of ZenQMS as an admin was almost surprising.

> *At the beginning, when I started working with Zen as a more advanced or admin user, I was kind of in shock because sometimes it just seemed too easy.*
>
> **DIOGO PRISCO**

Eldin pointed to practical examples that quality teams know well: adding a field, adjusting an issue category, or simplifying a workflow when a signature step turns out to be unnecessary.

15 MINUTES TO ADD A FIELD

"If somebody says we really need to record the country for this issue, we can just go in and change the issue category, add a field for country with a dropdown list. And in 15 minutes, it's there."

3→2 SIGNATURES, RELAUNCHED

"We had three signatures and we decided one of them was superfluous, and we only needed two. Again, we just go in, do an update, remove the signature, relaunch it and you've got the new workflow."

For PharmaLex, that kind of flexibility meant the software no longer dictated what the process could be.

"The technology doesn't restrict our ability to change the process."

ELDIN RAMMELL

"From a more admin perspective it is also really helpful that we can do certain actions in bulk," Diogo said. "That facilitates a lot of process and management."

And when support was needed, the experience remained fast and practical. "They are always very helpful. They reply very quickly," Diogo said of the ZenQMS support team.

Better Reporting and KPI Visibility

Reporting was another area where the PharmaLex team saw a meaningful difference, particularly through the Insights module. Previously, reporting had been a recurring challenge, but with ZenQMS, that changed.

> *The reports that we have work really well. They are easier to assess the data.*
>
> **DIOGO PRISCO**

With the ZenQMS Insights reporting tool, the team could:

- ✓ Use custom fields across modules
- ✓ Organize information more consistently
- ✓ Filter data in the ways that made sense for its KPIs and oversight needs

Just as important, it no longer had to rely as heavily on manual data preparation outside the system. "That was really a major advantage and a change from what we had before that required a lot of manual work in Excel," Diogo said.

For the QA organization, that meant faster access to useful information, less time spent manipulating reports manually, and a more standardized way to monitor processes across the business.

A Vendor That Listens and Evolves

For PharmaLex, one of the lasting advantages of the move to ZenQMS has been the sense of partnership that came with the platform. That was visible during the migration, but it continued after implementation as the team identified opportunities to refine and improve the system over time. Diogo said the organization saw clear evidence that ZenQMS was listening to customer feedback and acting on it.

> *Zen really takes into account the feedback of their clients. In just over a year, several of our suggestions were actually addressed in new releases.*
>
> **DIOGO PRISCO**

That responsiveness reinforced the difference between a vendor that simply provides software and one that continues improving the platform in ways that matter to the people using it.

What PharmaLex's Experience Shows

PharmaLex's transition from MasterControl to ZenQMS was not driven by a desire to change systems for the sake of change. It was driven by a clear set of needs: lower friction, greater flexibility, a better user experience, and a more manageable approach to administration and reporting.

ZenQMS offered something different. It gave the organization a more intuitive experience for users, a more manageable environment for administrators, better access to reporting, and a migration path that proved faster and smoother than many large organizations assume is possible.

In 100 days, PharmaLex completed the move and began seeing the benefits quickly: fewer basic system-use issues, easier self-service configuration, better reporting, and less friction across the quality organization.

For teams that believe moving off a legacy platform like MasterControl will take too long, create too much disruption, or be too difficult to manage at scale, PharmaLex's experience offers a compelling alternative. With the right platform and the right support, a transition can happen faster and deliver more value than expected.

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A quick look at simple, compliant quality management software.

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that's ZEN