

# **C**Bridge

connecting professionals & technology

# Sakura Bridge Implementation consultancy service

Sakura Bridge is an implementation consultancy service designed to support clients in transitioning to automation smoothly and efficiently. With a structural approach and a multidisciplinary team, Bridge guides the implementation of SMART Automation instruments, optimising workflows and facilitating change. This service ensures an easy transition, minimising difficulties and maximising the benefits of technological innovation in laboratories.

Bridge is Sakura's dedicated implementation service, to ensure the successful integration of all SMART Solutions:

- Implementation with maximum efficiency
- Enhanced laboratory workflow
- Optimal and reliable results







### Introduction

The increasing demand for laboratory testing, coupled with a persistent shortage of medical laboratory professionals, necessitates workflow evaluation and productivity improvements. In histopathology, automation plays a critical role in enhancing efficiency, turnaround time (TAT) and accuracy through standardisation. Automation also enhances output quality by significantly reducing errors associated with manual tasks and streamlining non-value-added activities, such as loading and unloading samples from instruments. However, transitioning from manual workflows to automation comes with challenges, including complex workflow integration, human touchpoints and change management hurdles.

To address these challenges, laboratories require a structured partnership to successfully implement and consolidate operations while optimising workflows. Once financial approval is granted for new instruments, laboratories often have only a few months to integrate solutions into routine operations. Ideally, an eight to twelve-month implementation period allows for a smoother transition, but due to project complexity and resource constraints, laboratory managers frequently struggle to oversee the process alongside their daily responsibilities.

Without dedicated personnel, successful implementation is difficult to achieve. While training, follow-ups and troubleshooting support are vital, they are insufficient to manage the complexity of an automation projects. A dedicated Implementation Consultant (IC) enables laboratory staff to support the project while maintaining focus on daily operations, ensuring seamless integration and adherence to project timelines.

Bridge, the implementation consultancy service by Sakura Finetek Europe, is designed to ensure a seamless transition to SMART Automation. As an integral part of selling SMART Automation, Bridge provides a structured approach to implementation, guiding laboratories through each phase of the transition. By optimising workflows, minimising disruptions and ensuring effective change management, Bridge maximises the benefits of automation and supports long-term operational success.

In combination with effective leadership and access to subject matter experts, the IC plays a pivotal role in reducing project delays, promoting cohesiveness between members of the team and enhances communication around project milestones and timelines.







# The challenges facing histology labs

As histology laboratories strive to meet increasing demands and maintain high-quality standards, they encounter several hurdles that can hinder efficiency and productivity. These challenges arise from outdated manual processes, resource constraints and the complexity of integrating automation. Addressing these issues is crucial to ensure a seamless transition to more advanced and effective laboratory workflows. The most common challenges include:

- · Scalability limitations: Manual processes restrict the ability to scale operations without increasing staff.
- Error-prone workflows: Human decision-making stages introduce variability and potential for mistakes.
- · Bottlenecks in production: Workflow inefficiencies slow down operations and reduce overall productivity.
- Process complexity: Reducing unnecessary steps is crucial to enhancing efficiency and safety.
- Balancing automation and expertise: Histology remains both an art and a science, requiring careful integration of automation without compromising quality.

# Getting buy-in from staff

Ensuring laboratory staff engagement is critical to successful implementation. When staff members feel included in the decision-making process, they are more likely to embrace change. Without their support, implementation efforts may face resistance and ultimately fail.

Consistent and clear communication should be a priority throughout the project lifecycle, ensuring that all staff and project members feel like active participants rather than passive recipients of change. Engaging staff effectively includes regular meetings with the project sponsor and team members to discuss milestones, next steps and quick wins. Celebrating achievements, addressing concerns and easing resistance are all crucial elements in driving change.

Even after installation and staff training, seamless system integration may take time - often a few weeks. During this adjustment period, both staff morale and operational efficiency can be impacted if not managed properly. Laboratory staff will go through a learning curve as they adapt to working with automation. It is important to remain present, actively listen to staff feedback and provide support, allowing time for both the new technology and personnel to integrate smoothly into routine operations.





#### Guiding laboratories through change

Adopting automation and new laboratory processes is a transformative journey that requires careful planning and adaptation. Laboratories must navigate significant operational shifts while ensuring minimal disruption to patient services. To facilitate this process, our structured guidance is essential to support staff, integrate technology effectively and achieve long-term success.

#### Understanding impact

We help customers navigate change by analysing its impact on workflows and processes, ensuring a structured and informed transition.

#### Embracing new processes

We guide laboratories in adapting to new processes and technologies, maximising efficiency and effectiveness.

#### Ensuring a smooth transition

Our comprehensive support enables seamless integration of automation into routine operations, ensuring sustained success.

#### The need for structured implementation

As laboratories face increasing pressure to optimise efficiency, reduce TAT and enhance consistency, transitioning to SMART Automation requires a guided, structured approach. Sakura Bridge mitigates risks and ensures successful adoption of SMART Automation by offering:

- Strategic workflow integration tailored to the lab's specific needs.
- Expert consultancy to facilitate seamless adoption.
- Continuous monitoring and support to drive sustained success.







## The Bridge implementation process

Bridge follows a structured framework with clearly defined phases, deliverables and exit criteria to ensure a successful and smooth implementation. This approach allows for systematic project tracking, risk mitigation and stakeholder management at each stage of the project lifecycle. By adhering to this framework, laboratories can seamlessly integrate automation while maintaining operational continuity.

- 1. Opportunity analysis
  - Discovery meeting: The Implementation Consultant and Sales Representative meet with key stakeholders to define project scope, align expectations and present Sakura's solutions with potential benefits.
  - Scope and impact assessment: Identify necessary changes, affected stakeholders and the urgency driving the transition to automation.
  - Laboratory readiness evaluation: Assess the lab's culture, leadership style and adaptability to change, ensuring effective communication and collaboration.
- 2. Analysis and planning
  - · Conduct a workflow assessment to identify inefficiencies and automation opportunities
  - · Define clear project objectives and developing a customised implementation plan
  - · Align on goals, KPIs and success criteria to ensure a customised implementation strategy
  - Establish a dedicated project team to oversee the transition
- 3. Execution and implementation

A multidisciplinary team collaborates closely with the laboratory to implement SMART Automation. Key activities include:

- Installation and integration of automation solutions into existing workflows
- Training programs for laboratory personnel
- Dedicated workshops to support adaptation and transition
- · Regular performance reviews and iterative adjustments to ensure progress
- 4. Performance review and ongoing support
  - Monitor implementation success through workflow analysis and KPI tracking
  - Achieve the pre-defined utilisation target before transitioning to standard support
  - Deliver a final project report with summary of key results, challenges and recommendations
  - · Provide ongoing technical and operational support for continuous improvement







# Making data-driven decisions through workflow analysis

As part of the implementation process, workflow analysis and utilising 0-100 measurement studies help laboratories evaluate current processes and equipment and identify areas for improvement. Implementing SMART Automation reduces turnaround time, manual labour and enhances productivity. Many laboratories lack in-house resources for workflow analysis, but Sakura's ICs support customers by:

- · Interviewing histotechnologists and lab staff.
- Recording time spent at each workstation.
- Identifying bottlenecks and providing actionable improvements.

A baseline study is conducted before implementation, followed by a post-implementation study to quantify improvements achieved.

## **Roles and responsibilities**

When it comes to SMART Automation projects, ICs are key to successfully navigating implementation challenges and maximising benefits of automation. They are great at keeping projects on track and managing various stakeholder groups. ICs can also improve communication on projects, mitigate risks and streamline projects, including helping to triage and prioritise planned and unplanned challenges to move the project forward, in shorter timeline.

A successful Bridge implementation requires strong collaboration between Sakura and the laboratory team. Responsibilities include:

Customer commitments:

- · Assign a project leader to coordinate internal efforts
- Ensure active participation in training and workflow optimisation
- Implement necessary preparatory actions for automation readiness

Sakura commits to providing a dedicated project team comprising of:

- Implementation Consultant Oversees and leads the implementation execution
- · Application Specialist Delivers training
- Field Service Engineer Manages system installation and maintenance
- Area Sales Manager Ensures customer satisfaction and alignment with goals, maintaining project accountability
- · Conducts regular project evaluations and reviews
- · Offers tailored support based on laboratory needs and challenges







# Conclusion

Bridge is a comprehensive, structured service designed to facilitate the seamless transition of histology laboratories into SMART Automation. By combining expert consultancy, hands-on training and continuous support, Bridge ensures that laboratories unlock the full potential of automation with minimal disruption to their workflow and resource allocation.

Bridge is not just an implementation service, it is a best-practice approach that strengthens customer relationships, enhances laboratory performance and reinforces our leadership in laboratory automation solutions.

Every laboratory is unique, and we prioritise understanding each lab's specific needs to build trust and drive successful workflow optimisation. Engaging all staff members is crucial to achieving long-term productivity and operational excellence.





Learn more about Sakura Bridge: sakura.com

