

Bridge the Technology Gaps

How Advarra Strengthens Site-Sponsor Collaboration

Understanding Today's Collaboration Challenges

One of the biggest barriers to effective study collaboration is the disconnect in how sponsors, CROs, and sites think about technology. According to **Ashley Davidson, VP and Product Lead for Sponsor Tech Solutions at Advarra**, this gap appears in nearly every early customer conversation.

When Advarra meets with sponsors or CROs to discuss collaboration solutions, the team often begins by explaining that sites operate within their own established technology ecosystems. **However, even common terms carry different interpretations.** Sponsors may hear "CTMS" and think of their own core systems. Sites may immediately think of Advarra. These differences illustrate how easily misalignment can occur.

This lack of shared understanding can lead to inefficiencies, confusion, and collaboration tools that work well for sponsors but fall short for sites. Advarra sees this as a major barrier to meaningful partnership across stakeholders.

Navigating Current Industry Pressures

In addition to the disconnect on technology, site pressure continues to grow as teams manage increased workloads with fewer resources and tighter budgets. Ashley noted that technology vendors must avoid adding unnecessary burden and instead focus on improving operational efficiency.

To better understand these pressures, Advarra hosts regional Innovation Summits. These sessions bring together sponsors, CROs, and sites to discuss shared challenges, from operational timelines to budgeting and technology gaps.

"Those sessions have been eye-opening," Ashley said. "They highlight that meaningful improvement requires transparency, shared understanding, and a commitment to practical solutions."

Advarra's Approach: Meet Sites Where They Are

With an appreciation for the importance of understanding site pressures, Advarra's approach focuses on strengthening collaboration by respecting site workflows, building on familiar tools, and integrating site voices into every step of the development process.

Because Advarra leads the industry in **IRB services** and provides widely adopted site-facing CTMSs—including **Clinical Conductor** and **OnCore**—the company maintains close relationships with sites. These connections give Advarra a real-time understanding of site needs, challenges, and expectations.

"Sites are often not consulted on technology chosen by a sponsor for any given study. Our goal is to make sure no matter who provisions the solution, that it reduces burden on end users, most often, sites," Ashley said.

Advarra uses this mission to design purpose-built collaboration solutions that fit naturally into site operations instead of creating new hurdles. Many sponsors already have study specific technology, yet adoption is often low because those systems lean heavily toward sponsor workflows. Sites may log in only to find limited functionality or misaligned processes.

Advarra takes a different approach. Instead of asking sponsors to replace existing systems, the company integrates a site-facing layer that is already familiar and widely adopted by sites. Take Advarra's **Study Collaboration solution**, for example: Last year, Advarra **expanded the solution** by introducing guided site journeys, a site-facing milestone tracker that offers sponsors and CROs real-time visibility into study progress, while allowing sites the flexibility to follow and perform study startup tasks in a sequence that best maps to their internal processes. This reduces friction and makes it easier for sites to participate meaningfully in sponsor studies. By building on what sites know, Advarra creates a more balanced and effective collaborative environment from the start.

The impact is clear: higher adoption, less burden on sites, and better visibility for sponsors and CROs.

Built-In Relationships That Reduce Burden

The approach is successful because it builds on Advarra's existing footprint across the site community and creates significant opportunities for efficiency. For example, data shows that 90 percent of sites already use some form of Advarra technology. This familiarity allows Advarra to streamline collaboration for sponsors and CROs without forcing sites into new or additional systems. **Since many sites already log into Advarra tools, adding sponsor collaboration components through single sign-on is a natural and low-burden extension.** This reduces friction and increases the likelihood of consistent site participation.

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Embedding Feedback Through Advisory Boards and User Communities

Understanding the challenges faced by sites is important to Advarra. That is why site feedback is embedded in Advarra's development process. The organization maintains formal Customer Advisory Boards for academic medical center's oncology sites, and commercial sites and hospitals. These groups meet regularly to provide feedback on new features, refine product vision, and discuss trends and opportunities for collaboration.

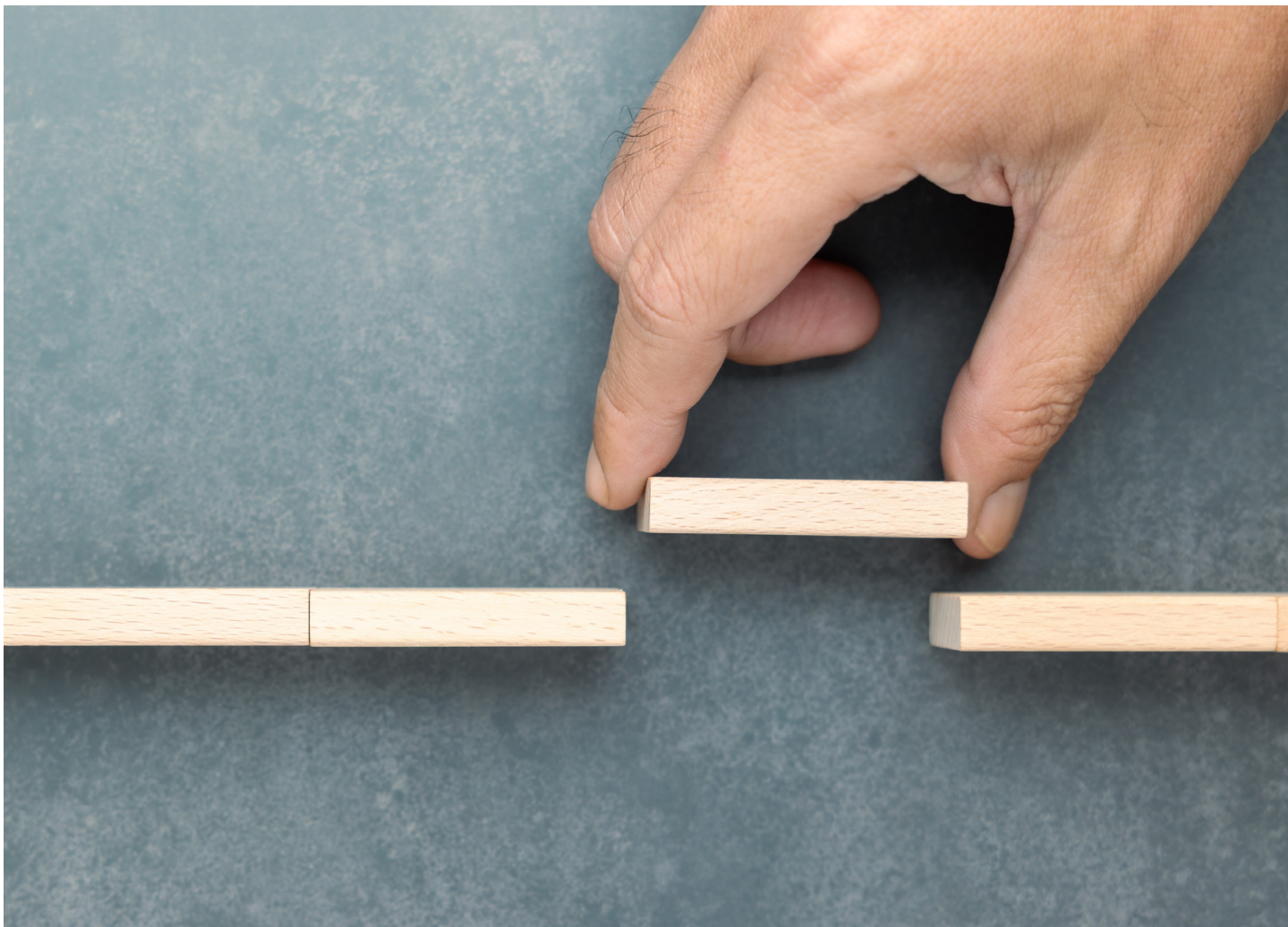
Advarra also hosts the annual **Onsemble Conference**, a gathering of Advarra CTMS users who share insights, best practices, and operational challenges.

Beyond these groups, Advarra hosts the **Site-Sponsor Consortium**, an equally weighted coalition of sponsors, CROs, and research sites led by Christine Senn, SVP of Site-Sponsor Innovation at Advarra. The Consortium, which co-develops standards and processes that drive progress, strengthen collaboration, and dismantle operational silos for all study stakeholders, recently published its inaugural deliverable: the **Master Mutual CDA Template and Report**, designed to tackle an early bottleneck in study startup.

Turning Site Feedback into Product Enhancements

For Advarra, listening to site input directly yields results through a recent product enhancement. When developing the aforementioned milestone functionality within Study Collaboration, the original design centered on sponsor-facing milestones. After speaking with sites, the team learned that corresponding visibility for sites was essential.

"We built a specific site-facing feature that mirrors the sponsor-facing milestones so sites can see what's being requested and why. It helps remove the sense that the process is a black box," Ashley noted.



In Summary

Advarra's work demonstrates how stronger collaboration begins with understanding site realities, designing technology that aligns with daily workflows, and creating space for continuous feedback. By meeting sites where they are and amplifying their needs, Advarra helps sponsors, CROs, and sites work together with greater clarity, efficiency, and trust.



Collaborate Forward Takeaways

- **Start with understanding.** Effective collaboration begins with a clear picture of site workflows, systems, and operational realities.
- **Design for sites first.** Tools that reflect site needs result in higher engagement and better study outcomes.
- **Build on familiar systems.** Integrating collaboration features into tools sites already trust reduces friction and increases adoption.
- **Use structured feedback loops.** Advisory boards, conferences, and workshops ensure continual improvement aligned with site needs.
- **Lead by listening.** Leadership engagement reinforces a culture of responsiveness and shared accountability.

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Let's keep moving forward. **Together.**

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