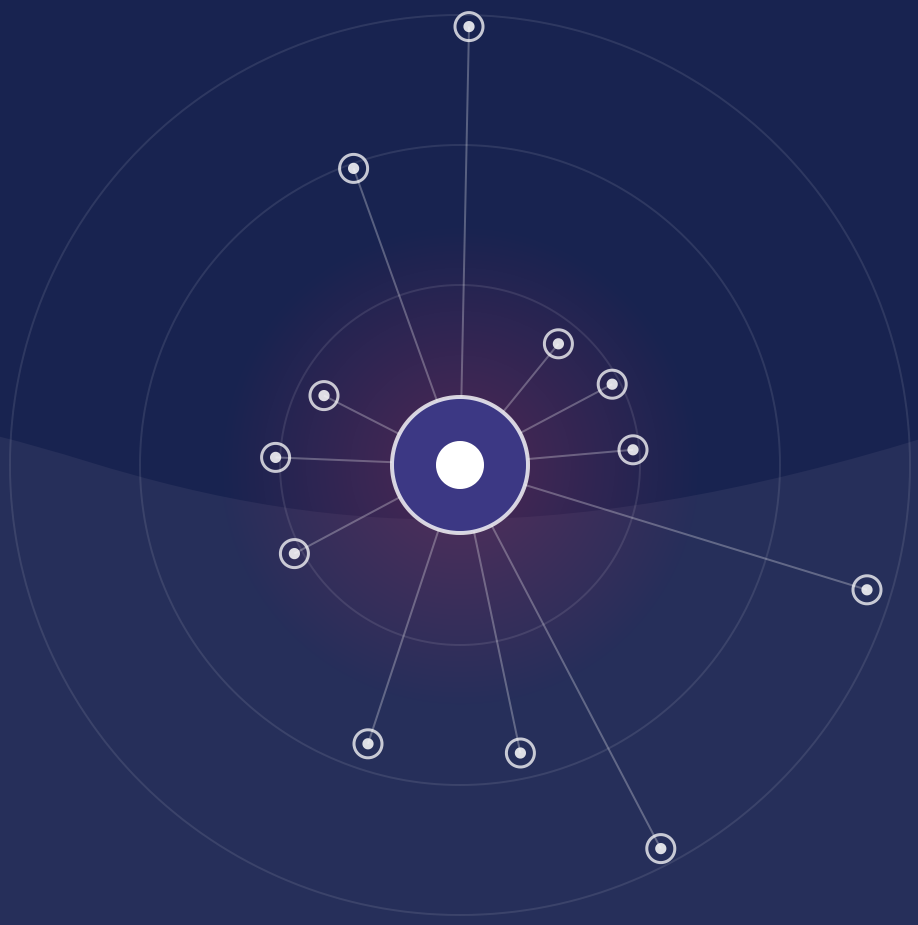
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Top 5 Observations from CDMO Live Americas

Digital collaboration has moved from a nice-to-have to the foundation of every serious sponsor–CDMO partnership. Five takeaways from Boston, drawing on the CDMO Growth Report 2026.



Joe Miles · Member of the Board of Advisors – Global GTM, Collabrix Inc. · 26-Oct-2026 **Collaborate for life.**

Top 5 Observations from CDMO Live Americas

Joe Miles Member of the Board of Advisors – Global GTM, Collabrix Inc. Published 26-Oct-2026

I recently spent several days in Boston at CDMO Live Americas, held October 20–21, 2026. The event was focused on bringing together the world's leading biopharmaceutical sponsor, CDMO and CMO organizations to discuss the rapidly evolving external manufacturing and outsourcing market.

Over the two days, it was clear from the conversations with the attendees that digital collaboration has moved from a nice-to-have to the foundation of every serious sponsor–CDMO partnership. That was the most strategic message from the event that brought together more than 450 attendees, more than 65 CDMO partners and over 1,200 pre-scheduled partnering meetings.

Across the agenda tracks, the same questions kept surfacing. How do sponsors see inside a partner's plant? How do CDMOs serve dozens of sponsors without a bespoke interface for each? And how does the industry get there without waiting for every partner to become fully digital?

Alongside the event, Simon-Kucher published the CDMO Growth Report 2026, developed with PharmaSource and CDMO Live from a survey of pharma companies and CDMOs. Its central finding is a "partnership execution gap": both sides agree on what a strategic partnership should be, but delivery lags behind. Below are my top 5 observations, drawing on that report, the event's themes and what Collabrix sees running Mosymphony across roughly 50 CDMO sites worldwide.

1. Sponsors Want Strategic Partners, Not Transactional Suppliers

The PartnerMatch format at CDMO Live, with meetings booked before attendees arrive, shows how sponsors now select partners: deliberately, for the long term. According to the CDMO Growth Report, 65% of emerging biopharma say strategic partnerships are becoming significantly more important, and about 80% of CDMOs expect business development to shift from transactional selling to strategic partnership management.

Once selected, sponsors expect shared planning, joint risk management and a partner who flags a problem before it becomes a missed shipment. That relationship cannot run on monthly status calls and emailed spreadsheets. It needs a shared, governed record of the work, from forecast and purchase order through manufacturing, quality, inventory, shipment and goods receipt, so both parties see the same facts at the same time.

2. Manual and Paper-Based Processes Are Still the Norm

For all the talk of AI, most sponsor–CDMO work still moves through email, spreadsheets and PDFs. Purchase order changes are negotiated in inbox threads, certificates of analysis are re-keyed by hand, and inventory is reconciled monthly, if at all.

The result is stale information, problems discovered too late and coordination effort that multiplies with every new partner, region and compliance demand. Planners spend their days chasing status rather

than managing supply. This is where the execution gap shows up: in the report's pairing of established pharma with late-phase CDMOs, goal alignment is 77% but expectation fulfillment only 44%. And 46% of pharma respondents say almost no or only a few CDMOs meet their expectations on timelines and total cost transparency.

3. Point-to-Point Integration Does Not Scale, but Industry Standards Do

When every sponsor builds its own interface to every CDMO, integration effort grows as sponsors × CDMOs: three sponsors and four CDMOs means 12 bespoke builds. A standards-based hub grows as sponsors + CDMOs, so the same network needs only seven connections, each one reused. As Taner Ata, Team Lead External Digital Collaboration IT at Vetter, told BioPhorum, CDMOs constantly field sponsor integration requests and want a standard playbook with standard integration paths.

The answer is a shared language. BioPhorum's DISCO / ITDD work and its Digital Integration Specification (DIS) define more than 100 standard messages across forecast, purchase order, manufacturing, inventory, quality, logistics and technology transfer, from Batch Status Updates to CoA, Deviations and Batch Genealogy. Collabrix is an active BioPhorum participant, and every Mosymphony message is built on the DIS, so each CDMO integration is built once and reused across sponsors.

4. Real-Time Manufacturing Data Is the Currency of a Strategic Partnership

The fastest way for a CDMO to move from supplier to strategic partner is to share what is happening on the shop floor as it happens, not in a document at batch release: live batch status, milestones planned against actual, test results, critical process parameters, deviations, yield and batch genealogy. When that data flows in near-real time, out-of-specification results are flagged immediately and a slipping milestone is visible to the sponsor's planner the same day.

A delayed batch can be evaluated against current stock to see what the network can still produce. Real-time data also answers the CDMO Growth Report's sharpest resilience finding: 58% of pharma respondents expect CDMOs to prove they maintained supply during past disruptions, yet only 13% of CDMOs have measures in place to show it. A continuous, auditable record of batches, milestones and deviations is that proof. Transparency is what earns a CDMO a seat at the planning table, and a price premium for resilience.

5. The Value of Digital Collaboration Is Now Measurable

Sponsors are past the pilot stage and want hard numbers. A global biopharmaceutical sponsor that deployed Mosymphony across roughly half of its CDMO network reports a 30% reduction in the man-hours needed to support CDMO activities, 20% faster batch release, a 15% reduction in obsolescence and safety stock inventory, and 25% lower integration run costs. One sponsor's first year on Mosymphony shows where gains like these come from:

Table 1. Year-one value drivers at a global biopharmaceutical sponsor

Value Driver	Year 1 Result
Productivity	72% of PO negotiations written back to SAP closed without a planner decision
Scale	7,034 POs under management across 11 CDMO sites; daily write-back rate up 2.7× in a month
Visibility	12,500 CDMO documents digitized; 12,177 sponsor–CDMO exchanges tied to the PO they concern
Batch control	99.7% of 2,566 tracked batches reach production complete and CDMO QC release
Adoption	118 active users across supply planning, oversight, logistics and CDMO teams
Compliance	Communication that lived in email and paper is now structured, searchable and auditable

Lot mismatches, once checked by hand against paper, are now caught automatically on about one batch in 50. Median support-ticket resolution fell from 7.3 days to under 1.5 days. Shared, transaction-level KPIs such as on-time in-full delivery, cycle time and touchless processing also make new commercial models workable: 65% of emerging biopharma and 60% of established pharma want to use performance-based pricing more, which depends on performance data neither side can dispute.

From Integrations to an Industry Digital Backbone

The shift CDMO Live Americas pointed to is network-level: from point-to-point integrations to standardized collaboration, from email to structured data exchange, and from manual coordination to real-time visibility. The question is no longer whether to digitize external manufacturing, but whether we keep building one-off integrations or a shared, standards-based backbone every sponsor and CDMO can join.

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