

Selecting the Right Clinical Research Database Software at Your Institution

This resource is designed to help academic researchers:

- Understand the capabilities, competencies and potential obstacles of REDCap
- In situations when teams need to explore a solution like QuesGen Systems for multi-faceted study setup, data complexity, and/or multi-site data curation

Clinical research is not a simple endeavor – not to mention the complexities that come with the vast amount of **DATA COLLECTION** and analysis necessary for success. And in fields where a single error could result in substantial consequences, data management software has proven to be a researcher's best friend.

At QuesGen, we recognize that many academic researchers utilize a popular free tool called REDCap – however, they may experience challenges and obstacles if/when their studies expand beyond the capabilities of this platform such as multisite or multi questionnaire needs; or if/when they require assistance with study needs such as participant recruitment and onboarding.



QuesGen vs. REDCap: A quick run-down

Both QuesGen and REDCap offer researchers the ability to aggregate and analyze their data, supporting the specific needs of research teams with easy-to-use, web-based solutions.

QuesGen

URL:

[HTTPS://WWW.QUESGEN.COM/](https://www.quesgen.com/)

FOUNDED:

2004

USERS:

60,000+

ABOUT:

Focused on brain health and general research, QuesGen offers a robust solution for clinical researchers. Privately owned and operated by an industry-experienced team. Known for powering more complex research, larger amounts of data, along with the ability to expand to a full CRO suite of services.

WHEN TO USE QUESGEN:

QuesGen is an ideal tool for more in-depth research studies, which may involve relational data sets and require full-featured data reporting and querying. The cost of the platform includes set-up and design by experienced data professionals. Unlike REDCap, QuesGen is virtually unlimited in its data management, design, and reporting capabilities.

REDCap

URL:

[HTTPS://PROJECTREDCAP.ORG/](https://projectredcap.org/)

FOUNDED:

2004

USERS:

1.9 million

ABOUT:

Established by Vanderbilt University, REDCap has grown to become one of the most well-known free EDCs, with a consortium of partners to help grow the knowledge base. Free to non-profit organizations – but does not have support or research teams associated with it for additional help.

WHEN TO USE REDCAP:

REDCap is an ideal tool for early-career researchers who may have a very limited budget and a simple data model. The platform has hard limitations, but the dollar cost may be low or nil. The researcher must design and develop instruments and export/reporting tools, or else locate consultants or volunteers to do so.

Platforms at a Glance

FEATURES	QUESGEN	REDCAP
Electronic Data Capture system with database and survey functionality.	x	x
Secure and compliant – meeting standards including HIPAA and FISMA	x	x
Integrated reporting capabilities with the option to export all data or specific tables	x	x
Customizable data export	x	
Platform cost	<i>Included in service</i>	Free
Development and design of study logic, eCRFs, surveys, reporting, etc.	<i>Included in service</i>	
Data validation and skip-logic in eCRFs	x	x
Extensive eCRF library	x	x
Fully customizable layout of eCRFs	x	
Easy multi-site implementation	x	
Ongoing support and maintenance	x	
Participant recruiting	x	
Recruitment dashboard and graphs	x	
Fully relational data structure	x	
Basic reporting (sorted/ordered lists, outlying data)	x	x
Custom and advanced reporting and querying	x	
ePro/Participant Portal	x	
CRO services	x	
FITBIR submission services	x	

Which one is right for your academic research study?

This first requires an adequate understanding of the goals and challenges of your study. This means moving beyond the simple conversation about investment and price and looking at things like:

- setup time
- complexity of data over the course of the study
- accuracy for the field setup
- ability to manipulate and analyze the data post-study
- and more

Below are six key areas for comparison to help guide your decision on which software solution best serves your research purpose.



1. SET-UP AND EASE OF USE

In terms of set-up and ease of use, both QuesGen and REDCap rank highly. While their systems are run and hosted differently, functionality is user-friendly across the board allowing for teams to get up and running quickly and efficiently.

QUESGEN

- Cloud based
- Ongoing support and maintenance
- Supported anywhere, regardless of server network or hardware

REDCAP

- Web-based application
- Must be managed by internal team and self-hosted



2. COST

The cost of a data capture platform is often very important when evaluating which solution to choose. It may not be straightforward to compare different options. Most QuesGen clients leave most of the database definition and setup to the QuesGen team, whereas REDCap is a self-service option. It's kind of like the difference between hiring an architect and a contractor to design and build your house vs. designing and building your own house.

QUESGEN

- Software as a Service (SaaS)
- Cost based on number of users and complexity of setup
- Includes the relational database design expertise of QuesGen Team

REDCAP

- Free for non-profit organizations that are part of the REDCap Consortium
- Additional costs for definition, configuration and analysis



3. QUALITY AND RELIABILITY OF DATA COLLECTION

Both systems offer multiple means of data input, including surveys and manual data entry. In terms of compliance, both solutions are [secure](#) and HIPAA compliant, capable of meeting a host of standards based on the needs of your studies. Their means to do so, however, vary:

QUESGEN

- Secure and encrypted
- Ability to centrally grant or revoke access to specific pages
- Ability to restrict PHI

REDCAP

- Ability to grant or revoke access to specific pages
- Meeting compliance standards is up to individual license holders



4. COMPREHENSIVENESS AND COMPLEXITY OF STUDY

The complexity of your study will be the biggest deciding factor between a free solution (like REDCap) and a more robust offering. While REDCap is an excellent choice for more basic projects, should your research team need more flexibility and functionality, you may find that REDCap does not meet your needs sufficiently. Solutions like QuesGen have proven to be especially effective for more robust research needs, allowing for more advanced functionalities like field and form-driven data validation. The QuesGen platform is truly relational, which means you can have a series of one-to-many data relations such as Sites-Participants-Encounters-Outcomes. REDCap functions as a flat-file system with workarounds that allow it to mimic *some* relational structure.

QUESGEN

- Easy-to-use data management
- Full CRO services
- Truly relational data structure
- Data validation
- Branching logic
- Matrix ranking
- Study logic
- [ePro](#)
- Data curation

REDCAP

- Data entry
- Survey capabilities
- Simple data model
- Minimal data analysis
- Data validation
- Branching logic
- Matrix ranking



5. REPORTING AND ANALYSIS CAPABILITIES

In conjunction with the complexity of the study, should your reporting and analytics needs go beyond the standard reports, you may find REDCap to be limited in its capabilities.

QUESGEN

- Custom data extraction
- Data snapshots for real-time review of
 - Demographic data
 - Recruitment process
 - Data completion compliance

REDCAP

- Sorted/ordered lists
- Outlying data
- Downloadable data for robust analysis outside of software



6. ADDITIONAL PROJECT FEATURES

Should you find that your study requires more time or labor than your team can handle, additional resources may be a decision-maker in terms of data management solution. In this category, REDCap does not offer any additional management or research support.

QUESGEN

- FITBIR data submission services
- Participant recruiting
- Ongoing support
- CRO services
- Data alerts
- Financial aspects

REDCAP

- No additional management or research support available

Finding the right data management solution is essential to the success of your research. Understanding the capabilities and capacities of each offering will be a deciding factor behind what makes sense for you and your clinical trial research.

If you'd like to explore this in-depth, please let us know or request a call to get an inside look at the QuesGen data management platform.

Visit [QuesGen.com](https://www.quesgen.com) or call **650-777-7617**.

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