

Anca Copaescu, **Strategikon** Founder and CEO: “Delivering a comprehensive solution, not just software, is central to our customer engagements, setting us apart in an industry focused on “cookie-cutter” solutions”

In the fast-paced world we live in, Strategikon is addressing critical challenges within the pharmaceutical industry by revolutionizing the infrastructure behind clinical trials. While the industry is renowned for its innovative approaches to developing cures, it has traditionally lagged in modernizing the business processes that underpin complex R&D projects, especially clinical trials. The reliance on outdated tools like Excel has become unsustainable, especially in the face of post-Covid job cuts and inflationary pressures that demand increased efficiency and cost-effectiveness. Strategikon is leading the charge in transforming these processes, recognizing that disruption is essential for the scalability and sustainability of core business operations. With an annual development spend exceeding \$60 billion; the need for efficient technology solutions is more pressing than ever. Strategikon’s innovative approach not only aims to streamline clinical trial management but also to uncover significant savings, thereby enabling more trials and improving patient outcomes.

At the heart of Strategikon’s efforts is Clinical Maestro®, a system born out of both love and frustration by financial and clinical business operations experts with experience on both the Sponsor and Provider sides. This solution reflects the founders’ belief that there had to be a better way to manage clinical trials — and they created it. Driven by a mission to support their customers, Strategikon is dedicated to ensuring that the administration of talent, resources, and budgets in clinical trials is as efficient and effective as

the groundbreaking science behind the treatments themselves.

In conversation with Anca Copaescu, Founder and CEO of Strategikon

Can you explain about your products/services in brief?

The Clinical Maestro platform sets the standard in study modeling, budgeting, procurement, and vendor governance, providing a comprehensive end-to-end solution for the evolving needs of the pharmaceutical industry. Our service team, composed of industry professionals each with over 10 years of experience in outsourcing, proposal management, clinical finance, and operations, provides exceptional support for our technology. Sponsors get operational quickly and see clear results with their very first study, maximizing business value from the start.

Each of the integrated modules contributes to enhancing operational efficiency, accuracy, and collaboration.

PORTFOLIO empowers clinical operations professionals to design study budgets and operational plans without requiring advanced financial modeling expertise. Its sophisticated capabilities extend to the creation of dynamic clinical execution scenarios, such as modeling complex multi-cohort oncology studies. It is backed by the industry’s largest standardized proposal database with more than \$5 billion of self-acquired bids from major clinical service providers, resulting in the industry’s most accurate benchmarking engine that

consistently produces >95% accurate clinical study plans and budgets.

SOURCE replaces outdated Excel-based workbooks providing centralized R&D outsourcing management. Featuring industry-first AI-enabled bid grid mapping functionality and side-by-side proposal metrics, comparisons ensure transparency, informed sourcing decisions, and significant cost savings during negotiations.

LEAD navigates contract complexities by reporting contract activity at the unit level, dynamically tracking study progress, activities, and forecasting. LEAD facilitates data-driven decision-making, enabling Sponsors to negotiate and track completed, forecasted, and out-of-scope activities during clinical trial execution.

VISION, focused on R&D vendor governance, provides unprecedented visibility into category specifics, contracts, governance, qualification status, and performance. VISION streamlines communication, achieving over 90% elimination of manual activities and delivering significant cost savings through an interconnected central hub for vendor management.

How does Clinical Maestro streamline manual processes and enhance collaboration among internal and external stakeholders to optimize R&D procurement in the pharmaceutical industry?

Clinical Maestro fosters collaboration, enhancing communication across teams. It eliminates version control issues and manual errors by

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streamlining transactions, optimizing processes, reducing costs, and improving project efficiency. It strengthens strategic focus with configurable workflows, intuitive dashboards, and robust benchmark data. Clinical Maestro eliminates error-prone Excel entries, preventing 20–25% budget overruns in clinical trials. With a portfolio of trials costing roughly \$34 million, you could save >\$7 million across just a handful of studies, enabling funds to be redirected to research and patient benefits. CFOs and Heads of Operations cannot ignore this level of savings when they are tasked with stretching budgets to achieve more. Clinical Maestro’s proven ROI of x10 to x25 is the highest of any eClinical technology investment. The decision to implement Clinical Maestro is clear.

“Artificial Intelligence” is the talk of the day, with many companies claiming to embed AI in their solutions. How is Clinical Maestro taking advantage of the latest advancements in AI?

AI and Machine Learning are not new to Clinical Maestro; they have been embedded in our applications from the beginning, and we are further enhancing the solution using generative AI. For example, AI-enabled bid grid mapping technology delivers over 90% reduction in effort and eliminates over 99% of mapping errors, generating significant cost savings for Sponsors and Service Providers. We are embedding AI in data extraction and standardization, the RFP creation and due diligence processes, and leveraging the concepts for vendor performance and risk management.

How does Clinical Maestro differentiate from competitors?

Our biggest competitor remains Excel, as generic procurement and procure-to-pay solutions are largely complementary to Clinical Maestro. We offer connectivity to these applications for end-to-end financial and procurement management.

The handful of legacy solutions lack focus and investment. Owned by large corporations, they update infrequently (2–3 years), falling behind in the rapidly evolving tech landscape, especially with AI’s emergence.

We differentiate through a sharp focus on our customer-led product approach and our industry expertise, both driving factors of innovation.

Do you have any new services ready to be launched?

We are expanding our expert consultancy services, leveraging our delivery team’s product and industry expertise. Additionally, we are partnering with both top and highly specialized consulting companies to support the successful implementation and adoption of Clinical Maestro. Delivering a comprehensive solution, not just software, is central to our customer engagements, setting us apart in an industry focused on “cookie-cutter” solutions. We recognize each customer’s unique needs, whether immediate requirements or long-term plans.

What does the future hold for your company and its customers? Are exciting things on the way?

Absolutely! Guided by our users, we’ve received over 400 ideas last year, leading to four major releases in 2024 alone. Many of the features released are breakthrough industry innovations, such as bid-grid mapping and automatic statement of work generation. The 2025 roadmap is equally exciting, as we are launching the industry’s first vendor performance management solution that includes comprehensive KPI management. There will also be a deeper embedding of AI throughout the entire product suite.



Meet the leader behind the success of Strategikon Pharma

Anca Copaescu, Founder and CEO of Strategikon, is renowned for her passion for efficiency and innovation. Her leadership cultivates a culture of creativity, encouraging her team to think “outside the box” and share new ideas. Anca’s dedication and hard work, demonstrated by her demanding travel schedule, set a high standard for the entire organization. Under her guidance, Strategikon is committed to quality, innovation, and customer satisfaction, consistently delivering superior results. Anca’s vision and relentless pursuit of excellence drive the company’s success and continuous improvement.