

WHY ISO 9000 CERTIFICATION MATTERS TO MANUFACTURERS

By Dan Fielding

This is the third in a four-part series looking at ISO 9000 certification. To read the second part, "Understanding ISO 9000 certification," [click here](#).

Aristotle once said, "Quality is not an act, it is a habit."

That sentiment holds true today as a yardstick that pharmaceutical manufacturers can use to measure their 3PL. One of the best ways to measure the habits of quality is through International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 9000 certification.

That's because it examines operations and quality management over time, so manufacturers can be certain their third-party logistics (3PL) provider meets stringent guidelines that are assessed regularly. Manufacturers are then free to focus on other core needs.

BRINGING VALUE TO MANUFACTURERS

With this bottom-line value, ISO 9000 is viewed as the gold standard in the industry. In fact, only one American 3PL is fully certified from top-to-bottom in every location and offers its range of services: ICS, a division of the AmerisourceBergen Specialty Group. There are other 3PLs that have ISO 9001:2008 certification in areas of their business, but none in the U.S. offer full certification and the focus on improving the quality and efficiency of the supply chain for pharmaceutical products that require special handling.

ICS' certification covers all locations where the organization is represented. This means ICS is entirely focused on quality throughout its entire organization, from program management and customer service to distribution and accounts receivable. Supporting functions like quality, IT and project management are also covered under the certification.



HOW ICS IS DIFFERENT

ISO 9001:2008 certification differentiates ICS and offers great value to manufacturers. It provides a framework for proving to clients and supply chain partners that they are working to define and continuously improve in all business areas. These include:

- **Secure controlled substance vault**
Improves management of narcotics with full medication accountability by providing 24/7 inventory management, as well as an automated audit trail to comply with regulatory standards and increase efficiency

HOW ICS IS DIFFERENT

- **Full order-to-cash for receiving and processing customer sales**
Dedicated teams of logistics, accounting and customer service associates utilize their experience and extensive training to facilitate a smooth path, from order receipt to customer receipt and revenue capture
- **Multiple locations**
Three fully-certified distribution centers in Reno, Nevada, and Brooks, Kentucky, and World Courier partners in 52 countries around the globe
- **Comprehensive disaster recovery plan**
Full data redundancy through offsite servers
- **Multiple storage sites**
- **Ability to transmit orders utilizing alternative methods**
- **Contract Management and Chargeback Processing**

This sets them apart, and offers “gold standard” value to manufacturers, one that proves quality that is a habit.

In the final installment of this series, we will look at the specifics of ISO 9000 certification, like audits and expectations.

[Part One](#)

[Part Two](#)

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ABOUT ICS

ICS partners with pharmaceutical manufacturers to provide third-party logistics (3PL) that improve the quality and efficiency of their supply chain for products that require special handling. From controlled substance storage and handling to business processes, ICS is the industry's only 3PL service provider to carry best-in-class ISO certification for its full scope of service. ICS is a division of the AmerisourceBergen Specialty Group, part of the AmerisourceBergen Corporation, and is able to connect customers with expanded services to improve performance at every stage of the product lifecycle.

For more information on ICS, go to icsconnect.com

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Dan Fielding has been with ICS since 2002 and currently serves as the Senior Director of Quality. He has implemented and maintained ISO 9000 systems in a variety of industries. Dan currently holds seven American Society for Quality credentials, including Certified Pharmaceutical GMP Professional and Certified Manager of Quality/Organizational Excellence.