"India ahead of China in regulatory aspects"

11 April 2006 | News
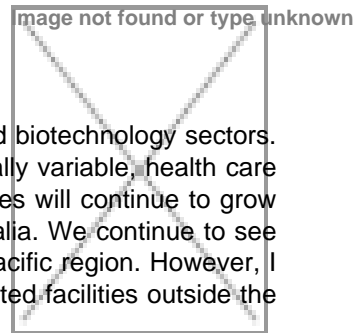

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Robert A Honor, vice president - life sciences, Rockwell Automation

Which is an emerging market in the Asia Pacific region for your range of products?

In the Asia Pacific region, India and China are clearly putting in a lot of efforts in pharmaceuticals and biotechnology sectors. They are definitely the driving markets for life sciences. As the population becomes more economically variable, health care in general is going to become a greater part of the economy. So the demand for drugs and medicines will continue to grow and India and China will lead the way. We are investing in Singapore and recently invested in Australia. We continue to see opportunity in Japan, although it is a matured market. So we see a lot of opportunities in the Asia Pacific region. However, I put India a little ahead of China mainly because of regulatory aspects, for having more US FDA audited facilities outside the US in the world.

How you see the opportunity in India where the pharma, biotech and life sciences industries are growing at a faster rate?

We see great opportunity for our range of products in India owing to a couple of factors. First, the growth of the industry by itself will provide a great opportunity. Second, the export nature. India has the most FDA audited manufacturing plants outside the US in the world. A lot of our products and services will build Indian capabilities to meet the process requirements of the global standards so as to go to the international market. The regulatory aspect is one factor and then the overall growth

of the industry and investments that is the need of the industry itself makes us to look at India.

In India our focus is on two areas. The first one is OEMs. It provides great development environment, automate and improve their individual skills. The second one for drug manufacturers or process control capabilities for MES, again built on the same platform of integrated architecture but our abilities is to control processes and improve processes to meet the regulatory promises. We feel these are the two biggest opportunities in India. I don't want to exclude several other areas that we find very attractive and these include automation, facilities control, providing utilities like clean water, steam, power from motors and motion controls, special packaging and material handling, mixing and blending. But we tend to focus on OEMs and MES.

IT companies are focusing on Radio Frequency Identification (RFID). Since Rockwell too has products in this space, how do you look at market opportunity for RFID?

Globally, we see a lot of ideas and great potential for almost all the manufacturing businesses in the world. The pharma and biotech sectors in particular have unique requirements as have they to comply with the regulatory aspects. And BioIT can ease the requirements in terms of meeting the regulatory aspects specified by variousgovernments. Hence, we see great opportunity for RFID. We also see opportunity into the whole supply chain. This can be best extended to what has already been done in manufacturing in terms of better control, optimized control and extend that throughout to complete the supply chain for all manufacturers. We have been working with IT for more than 20 years now and have a lot of experience in applying IT technologies. And this a great opportunity for pharmaceutical and biotech sectors.

Do you see any competition from IT companies as far as RFID is concerned?

We see them as complementary to each other (the IT companies). We do know what is going on in factory floor. We provide great links. For factory floor information, using our IT technologies into the business systems where the IT companies have a role to play. We feel they are our partners. The IT companies can improve and implement business systems. We can improve and implement with the real time control systems. We have the advantage of being able to tie real time data into business systems through our integrated architecture. We have many specific tie-ups with Indian IT companies but they are our customers.

Narayan Kulkarni