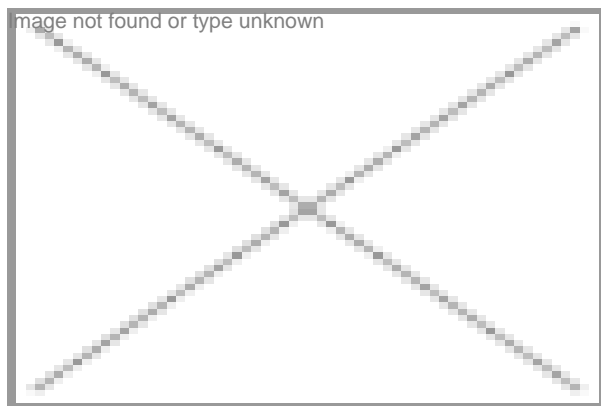


'The QC market is where the money lies'

08 March 2012 | News



Mr David Brookfield
president & CEO, Brookfield Engineering Labs
Mr Sanjay Mehta
co-founder, Amkette Analytics

US-based Brookfield Engineering Laboratories inaugurated its first advanced application lab in Mumbai, supported by its dealer in India Amkette Analytics (part of the ANM Alliance group). The facility is Brookfield's first application lab in South East Asia and will help the company's customers in India with application support and product demonstrations. The lab will also cater to regions in West Asia, Africa and the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) as a knowledge resource center for viscosity, rheology and powder flow analysis. While speaking to BioSpectrum, Mr David Brookfield, president and CEO of Brookfield Engineering Labs, US, and Mr Sanjay Mehta, owner of ANM Alliance and co-founder of

Amkette Analytics, gave their points-of-view as a principal and a distributor, respectively.

Q This is Brookfield's first advanced application lab in South East Asia. Why did you choose India?

Mr Brookfield: India is a very important market, and a fast-growing strong economy. Today, the country has a 10 percent share in Brookfield's total global revenue. The country has the potential for increased volumes and the demand for high-end applications is huge. We work closely with our dealers while setting up our facilities. Fortunately for us, Amkette (who have been our distributors in India) has been forward-thinking and customer-oriented enough to set up this advanced application lab. The purpose of the lab is to conduct upfront testing in order to show the customers the benefits of setting up such a laboratory. Looking forward, we hope that in the coming years, Brookfield, along with its dealers, will set up similar centers in other parts of Asia.

Q What is that one opportunity in India that Brookfield wishes to cash upon?

Mr Brookfield: Although India is an important market, the R&D domain is relatively small here. The quality control (QC) market is where the money lies because if you do not have QC testing, which is accurate and reliable, then the customers will lose millions of dollars. In QC, if you do not follow the right procedure then you get a product that the customers do not accept.

Q What steps and initiatives did Amkette take while setting up this lab?

Mr Brookfield: We are an instrumentation company and we have been in this business in India since 1967. This application lab is a value-added service that we are offering to customers. Over the years, we have observed that new technologies that are in vogue in the industry are rheometers and powder flow measurements. These are state-of-the-art technologies that are not available everywhere and work out to be expensive for customers. This application lab is a solution for them. Now they do not have to invest in this technology by themselves. Also, we have got our people trained by experts from Brookfield Engineering Laboratories, who developed this technology.

Q What investments, in terms of money and equipments, have been made in this application facility?

Mr Brookfield: We have invested about a quarter million dollars in this lab that includes a range of instruments. The purpose of this lab is also to provide training to students from pharmacy colleges and even industries, who want to send their freshers for training on our instruments. Amkette will expand its lab, which will include instruments like gas chromatography-mass spectrometry (GCMS) and liquid chromatography-mass spectrometry (LCMS), and will be the company's service to customers. From Brookfield's side, the investment into this application lab has been in providing process viscometers, rheometers and powder flow testers among others.

Q What are the challenges faced while convincing Indian customers to take state-of-the-art equipment like viscometers and rheometers?

Mr Brookfield: For viscometers, we do not face much challenges but we do face challenges for rheometers and powder flow measurements. These are high-end machines and I feel that it will take time for the machine to get accepted in the QC stream, which is the main market for us. The good news is that R&D labs will now start using these technologies. Once this is set, the demand and volume will definitely catch up with viscometers and then people will start using these technologies for QC too.

Q Since 2008, the global market has been going through ups and downs. Did that affect businesses for Amkette and Brookfield?

Mr Brookfield: We did not experience any downturn until 2009, when we did experience a slowdown. However having said that, we still had a strong year. This is because of our presence in the global QC market, which is a high-volume domain and this factor will keep us strong and will keep us going even when the market (which now) is very weak.

Mr Mehta: Since 2008 until date, the world has seen a slowdown but we at Amkette worked hard to secure a huge growth. We had to work three times more. Now, even the debt crisis in EU will not affect us because science is ever expanding and there are new discoveries everyday and for new discoveries you need new technologies.

Q Brookfield looking at dealing with customers directly and establish an active presence?

Mr Brookfield: We are definitely looking at emerging markets, but in India we will continue to work through Amkette due to their strong presence in the market and they will continue to serve our customers. This is our long term plan for the future. Brookfield does have a representative office in India but that looks after at the overall business in Africa, Middle East and Asia.

Nayantara Som in Mumbai