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Ã¢â?¬Å?APAC accounts for 18% revenueÃ¢â?¬?

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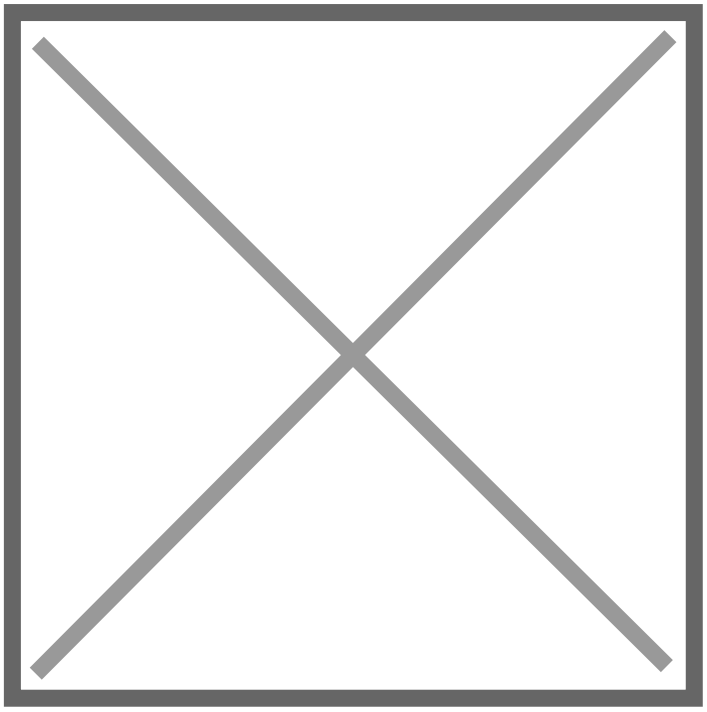

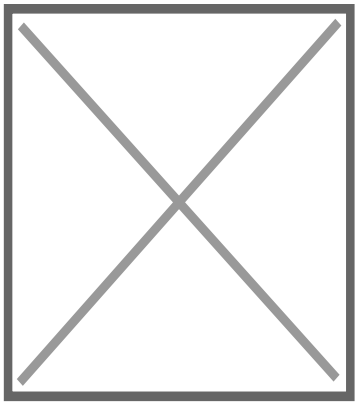

-Dr Joachim Kreuzberg, CEO, Sartorius AG, Germany

Within two decades, Germany-based international laboratory and process technology provider, Sartorius, has built up a strong position in India and Asia by gaining a wider customer base that includes biotech, pharmaceutical and food sectors.

Sartorius India has recently established a new production and R&D facility in Bangalore, that spreads across 107,640 sq.ft. with an investment of 6.5 million euros (Rs 45 crore). Sartorius sees India and Asia Pacific as high growth areas for its business. BioSpectrum finds out more from Dr Joachim Kreuzberg, CEO, Sartorius AG, Germany about the company's growth in Asia.

What percentage of Sartorius Group's revenue is from the Asia Pacific region?
We will get the initial revenue figures for the full year of 2009 in February 2010. Our nine-month sales revenue was estimated at 445 million euros (Rs 2,966 crore); the Asia Pacific region accounted for around 18 percent of this figure.

How is the growth rate of the company?
Asia is an important growth market for both of our group divisions. This will continue to be so in the future as well. In recent years, eight percent growth rate has been registered. For the year 2009, I expect a growth rate of 10 percent.

What are the major steps taken by Sartorius in Asia?
For many years, Sartorius has been active with its own sales and production companies in Asia. Twenty years ago, we started our activities in India by entering the local market to establish our presence. Sartorius founded a sales and service organization in Hong Kong, China, in 1988. Since 1996, Sartorius has its presence in Beijing with its manufacturing site for laboratory balances and industrial scales.

The new plant in India is the second-largest investment of Sartorius in Asia in the recent years. In the meantime, we have been employing over 800 people in the Asia Pacific region, of whom 200 work in China and 400 in India. There is an intensive transfer of know-how between colleagues in Germany and their counterparts in Asia in order to maintain global quality standards in locally manufactured products.

Can you elaborate on the growth plans for Sartorius' biotechnology division?
Our biotechnology division is undergoing a growth phase as the demand for medications will continue to rise worldwide. Experts predict that the global pharmaceutical market will grow approximately at a rate of five percent, whereas the compound average growth rate of the biopharmaceutical segment is expected to reach 11.5 percent by 2014. Sartorius Stedim Biotech is excellently positioned to be a part of this growth.

We have a presence in all key pharmaceutical markets, a wide and innovative product portfolio and a very strong brand; and our customers' awareness of our brand is also high. In addition, the biopharmaceutical industry is in the midst of a technology change from reusable to single-use production equipment, which we as suppliers and partners are strongly propelling forward. In the case of single-use products, we have gained a leading position in the market, which we plan to extend in the next few years.

What are the key areas of focus for Sartorius in the coming years?
As a growing number of medications are now being manufactured using biotechnology, our biotechnology division has given more importance to meeting the needs of the biopharmaceutical industry. We are concentrating on developing innovative products and efficient technologies for laboratory applications, cell culturing and fermentation, filtration, purification, liquid transfer/handling and an entire range of services.

We offer our customers a wide array of products, which is mainly based on single-use components, such as filter capsules or bags. We also provide integrated solutions for the convenience of our customers to match our completely preconfigured, perfectly compatible single-use equipment with their individual process steps. In the mechatronics division, we plan to concentrate even more strongly on the food and pharmaceutical industries. In these segments, we consider process analytics as an attractive business field that has a promising future, and we also have plans in place to substantially extend our activities in this area in the coming years.