

“The government's push towards making India a hub for biotech through various schemes has positively impacted the sector”

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With pharma, biotech, and healthcare on an ever-growing trajectory, the demand for medicines, diagnostic equipment, and sophisticated laboratory and analytical instruments has surged. In tandem, Bio Supplier Industry is experiencing remarkable growth with increased investment in Research and Development (R&D). Not just investments in R&D, emergence of new advancements like Artificial Intelligence, and adaptation of cloud computing are fast driving growth exponentially. In an exclusive interview with BioSpectrum India, Dr Rajnish Bharti, Vice President and General Manager of Promega Biotech India, shared his insights on the industry's forward movement, new trends, opportunities, and challenges.



How do you perceive the current market trends for laboratory and analytical instruments/equipment both in India and abroad? What are the major challenges you face in the industry, particularly regarding the production and distribution of laboratory and analytical instruments/equipment?

The market for laboratory and analytical instruments is growing globally, driven by increasing investments in research and development, particularly in pharmaceuticals and biotechnology. In India, the expansion is similarly fueled by rising healthcare demands and a growing focus on regulatory compliance and quality assurance in manufacturing. Challenges include supply chain disruptions, which affect the production and distribution of instruments. Additionally, the high cost of advanced technology and the need for skilled personnel to operate new instruments are significant hurdles.

What recent technological advancements have you witnessed in laboratory and analytical instruments/equipment? Could you highlight some of the new technological developments that have significantly impacted your sector recently?

Recent years have seen significant technological advancements in the field, such as the development of high-throughput sequencing, CRISPR technology, and improved automation and robotics. Promega has been at the forefront of many of these advancements, integrating new technologies into our offerings to enhance precision and efficiency. For example, advancements in automation have led to more streamlined workflows in laboratories, significantly reducing manual labour

and increasing reproducibility and scalability.

How do you evaluate the growth scenario of the Indian market specifically for laboratory and analytical instruments/equipment?

The Indian market for laboratory and analytical instruments is experiencing significant growth, driven by an expanding healthcare sector, increased pharmaceutical and biotech research, and government initiatives to boost the biotech sector. With rising investments in healthcare and a growing emphasis on research and development, the demand for advanced diagnostic and research tools is rapidly increasing. Additionally, the Indian government's push towards making India a hub for biotechnology through various schemes like 'Make in India' has positively impacted the sector. The market is further supported by the growing focus on environmental testing and food safety, which require sophisticated testing and analytical solutions. This burgeoning environment suggests a promising growth trajectory for laboratory and analytical instruments in India.

Are there any regulatory challenges hindering the growth of your company or the industry as a whole?

While regulatory challenges are a reality in the highly regulated biotechnology and life sciences industry, they also present opportunities for growth and improvement. Navigating complex regulatory landscapes requires diligence and adaptation, but it ensures that our products meet the highest standards of safety and efficacy. Promega is committed to maintaining compliance and leveraging regulatory frameworks to innovate and enhance product offerings. This proactive approach not only minimises potential hindrances but also positions us as a leader in developing trustworthy cutting-edge solutions for our customers globally.

Could you give an overview of your company's portfolio and its specialisation in laboratory and analytical instruments/equipment?

Promega Corporation is known for its focus on providing innovative solutions in life science research, genetic identity, clinical diagnostics, and more. Our product portfolio includes a wide range of laboratory and analytical instruments and equipment that cater to molecular biology, cellular analysis, protein analysis, drug development, human identification, and molecular diagnostics. Our tools and technologies have been used for more than 45 years by scientists and researchers in labs. Key products include reagents, automated liquid handling equipment, genetic analyzers, and bioluminescent assays, which are integral in scientific research and diagnostic applications.

What are your company revenues, how much was the growth last year, and how much are you expecting in the coming year?

For the calendar year 2023, Promega Biotech India reported revenues of approximately \$8.00 million, marking more than a 15 per cent increase from the previous year. The outlook for the calendar year 2024 looks to be positive and we anticipate a similar kind of achievement, reflecting our ongoing growth and expansion in the market.

What kind of support do you receive or expect to receive from the government, if any, to foster the growth of the industry?

The laboratory and analytical instruments industry often benefits from government support in various forms, such as subsidies for research and development, grants for technology innovation etc. Governments do provide funding for academic and research institutions to purchase advanced equipment as well.

Could you share any outstanding new products or innovations your company has introduced to the laboratory sector recently?

Promega has consistently introduced innovative products that enhance the efficiency and capabilities of laboratory research. Recent introductions include genetic/ capillary sequencers, enhanced reagents for molecular biology, cell therapy and bioassays. Each of these innovations typically aims to reduce operational costs, enhance scalability, and improve user-friendliness, thereby boosting efficiency and functionality in laboratory research. In the last year, Promega technologies fulfilled customer needs through:

- First-of-its-kind chemistry that enables forensic labs to get more information out of their most challenging DNA samples (PowerPlex 35GY System)
- Luminescent tools enabling whole-animal imaging to study viral infections, gene therapy and immunotherapies (Nano-Glo Fluorofurimazine In Vivo Substrate)
- Methods for accelerating drug discovery efforts using libraries containing billions of novel compounds (DNA-Encoded Libraries (DELs) research)

Are there any expansion plans or initiatives in place for setting up new centres of excellence or exploring new markets? Can provide inputs regarding any new launches, MoUs or partnerships signed in the recent past by your company?

Promega is actively pursuing expansion through strategic initiatives, including establishing a new centre of excellence and entering new markets. Recent efforts include launching innovative products like advanced genetic analysers and sequencers. These moves are part of our broader strategy to leverage cutting-edge technology and collaborative opportunities to drive growth and innovation in the life sciences sector.

For example: Promega and INOVIQ Ltd (Australia) recently announced a partnership to enhance exosome research, focusing on cancer biomarkers to provide researchers worldwide with easy access to cutting-edge exosome research tools and solutions.

The agreement builds on a previous Co-Marketing Agreement and combines INOVIQ's EXO-NET pan-exosome capture tool with Promega's expertise in nucleic acid purification, offering advanced solutions for exosome isolation and analysis.

In your opinion, what future trends do you foresee in the laboratory and analytical instruments/equipment industry, both in terms of technology and market demand? Can you provide insights into the current market size for laboratory and analytical instruments/equipment in India and globally?

The laboratory and analytical instruments industry in India is poised for significant growth, driven by increased automation, expansion in point-of-care testing, and advancements in molecular diagnostics. Integration of AI and big data analytics is also enhancing efficiency and predictive capabilities. The sector is also influenced by the rising focus on precision medicine and molecular diagnostics, alongside a shift towards sustainable practices. These trends indicate a dynamic future for the industry, emphasising technological innovation and market expansion, particularly in emerging economies like India.

Amguth Raju