



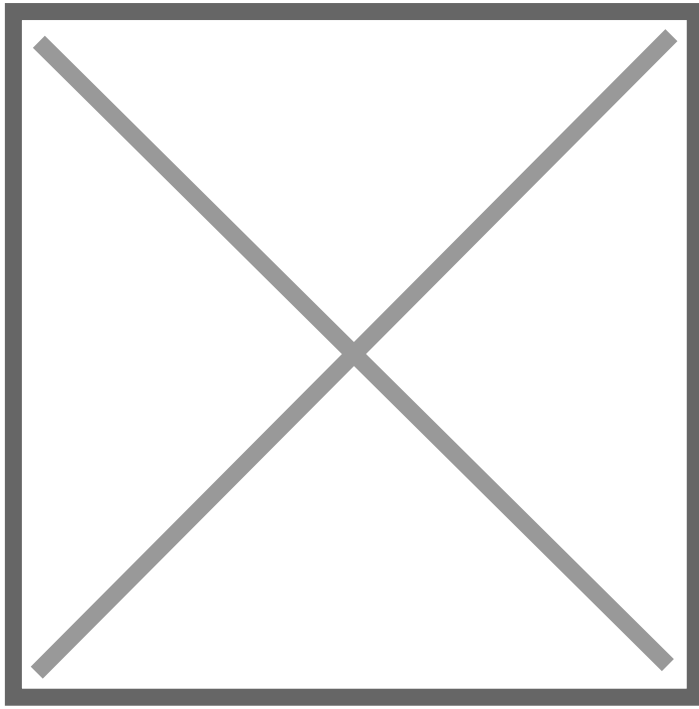
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Customer Satisfaction: All that matters at Bio-Rad

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Bio-Rad Laboratories Inc. was established in 1954. It was basically a brainchild of two university students, David and Alice Schwartz, who started their journey by manufacturing resins for chromatographic studies. Since then Bio-Rad has grown to become a \$900 million corporation headquartered in the Bay Area in San Francisco, with its primary business focused on clinical diagnostics and life science research products. It is serving more than 70,000 research and industry customers worldwide through a network of about 30 wholly owned subsidiary offices spread in many parts of the globe. Today, Bio-Rad employs more than 4,000 professionals worldwide.

A 100 percent subsidiary of Bio-Rad Laboratories USA, Bio-Rad Labs (India) Pvt Ltd is based in Gurgaon, Haryana, and has regional offices at Chennai, Mumbai, Kolkata, Bangalore and Hyderabad. Headed by Dhiren Wagle, country manager, the company is surging ahead and providing its services and products to the numerous research, industrial and clinical laboratories of India. The Indian office is also coordinating all operations in the neighboring countries of Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan and Maldives.

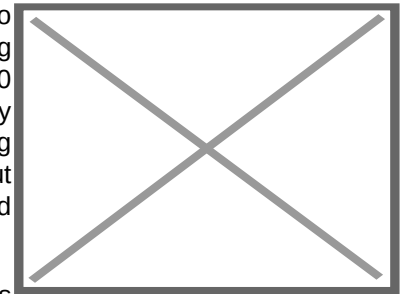
Bio-Rad India has shown constant growth and its turnover has increased from Rs 21 crore in 2000-01 to Rs 33 crore in the financial year 2002-03.

It is a fast-growing company dedicated to bring quality in terms of products, services and innovative ideas into the life-sciences research and health-care sectors. Informing about the latest developments in the company, Dhiren Wagle said, "In our effort to provide more strength to our regional offices, we have connected all the regional offices to the main server through VPN. This will create a direct link between the regional representatives and the head office at US. We hope that this will speed up our operations and bring more efficiency for the customer. In another effort for the same we have started managing the data on the basis of customer satisfaction and responses for our products."

Informing more about products and services offered by Bio-Rad, Atul Sharma, divisional manager (services) informed, "At Bio-Rad we tend to focus on product related training programs for our customers. As a part of this, we organize seminars and build good relations with the customers. Presently, we are catering to the life sciences research industry and clinical diagnostics sector of the industry. For life sciences research we provide equipments for protein purification, DNA diagnostics, isolation of DNA, ELISA testing and several other research purposes also."

"I am proud of my team which is working and giving its full knowledge skills in terms of expanding the business in the Indian market," added Wagle.

Almost from the past four decades, Bio-Rad has broken new grounds by providing a broad range of innovative tools and services to the clinical, diagnostic and life science research markets. The company is world-renowned for its products among



hospitals, universities, research institutions, biotechnology and pharmaceutical firms. "We have built strong customer relationships that have advanced in research and development efforts and supported the commercialization of new technology, specially in the fields of genomics, proteomics, bio-pharmaceutical discovery, food safety and biotechnology education." Wagle further added.

With the expansion of the company, its customer base, global reach and product portfolio has increased substantially. Bio-Rad now manufactures and distributes thousands of products and incorporates a wide range of technologies including electrophoresis, imaging, immunoassay, chromatography, etc. By capitalizing on its expertise and quality, the company is confident in continuing to strengthen its leading role in both existing and niche markets while maintaining its position at the forefront of scientific discovery.

Bio-Rad has two major groups—The Clinical Diagnostics Group (CDG) and the Life Sciences Group (LSG).

Clinical Diagnostics Group

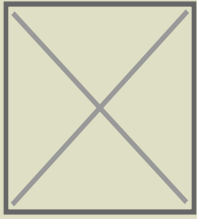
Clinical laboratories throughout the world rely on Bio-Rad's clinical diagnostics business segment to deliver quality instrumentation, reagents, software and quality control systems. With the acquisition of Pasteur Sanofi Diagnostics in 1999, Bio-Rad significantly enhanced the range of its product line. In addition to its historic strengths in diabetes monitoring and quality control management, the company also provides bacteriology product testing, blood virus screening, molecular pathology, toxicology, genetic and autoimmune disorder analysis. As clinical laboratories work to simplify their purchasing processes, Bio-Rad's expanded product line provides the convenience and increased efficiency they require.

Life Science Group

Bio-Rad's Life Science business segment is at the forefront of discovery providing advanced tools for biological exploration. Core product areas include electrophoresis and chromatography equipment and reagents, state-of-the-art imaging instruments, image analysis software and blotting systems. This segment also supports research in molecular biology with materials for nucleic acid purification, sample preparation and gene transfer. Using these products, researchers can streamline complex procedures and improve efficiency in their day-to-day laboratory processes.

Faiz Askari

"Better organization in fighting diseases like diabetes is needed"



Sitting and having a cup of tea with the country manager of an MNC brings a typical big-boss type image to mind. But, that is not the case with Dhiren Wagle, country manager of Bio-Rad Labs (India) Pvt Ltd.

Operating and expanding Bio-Rad's canvas in the neighboring countries of Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, etc, the confident looking manager has the desire to capture the entire market with innovation. Wagle talked at length to BioSpectrum, on the industry dynamics and developments in the company.

How does Bio-Rad rate itself in the industry? What are the recent developments at BioRad India?

We entered the Indian market in 1996 and since then we have had certain priorities—to achieve customer satisfaction and to expand our business in the neighboring countries. On both these counts we have achieved excellent results. Now with the help of a skilled team, I find Bio-Rad an eminent part of the industry.

In terms of recent major developments, we have given more power and liberty to our regional offices. We have done this by connecting all the regional offices directly to the main office in the US. We have six offices in major cities of India, now they can respond to the customers more quickly and independently. This will help them to develop healthy relationships with their respective customers. We have also started maintaining a product feedback record on the basis of the responses of our customers. This will help us to recognize the product's performance in the industry.

Apart from building good relations with the customers what are the other focus areas of the company?

We are entering into microarray technology in the life sciences section of the industry. We are offering process chromatography systems. Our BioLogic DuoFlow chromatography systems offer flexibility with multiple system configurations, many optional upgrades and common control software that is intuitive and easy to follow. Besides this we have developed a complete screening tool for the newborn child—"Neonlta". With the help of this tool a child can be diagnosed for all hormonal diseases and disorders at the right stage. In India, the product is already accepted by leading medical institutes like CDFD, Hyderabad. Dr Radharama Devi of CDFD is using it and in Mumbai Dr Anil Jalan is using Neonlta for carrying tests on newborn babies. It will cost between Rs 1,000-2,000 for any parent who goes in for Neonlta tests.

Bio-Rad has initiated a Quality Control (QC) program for research and pathology laboratories. How successful have you been?

Our QC program is doing well and we are moving in the correct direction in this field. As of now, we have built a network of almost 200 labs all over the country. Initially, we are targeting labs, which are operating in the cities. We have categorized the labs on the basis of their competency. For example, in category 'A' we have identified about 250 labs, in category 'B' we have nearly 2000 labs in India. Right now we are not concentrating beyond these two categories. We are organizing awareness seminars and workshops in collaboration with local hospitals and have already conducted seminars in cities like Hyderabad, Coimbatore, Delhi, Patna, Lucknow and other major cities of the country. We are going to organize similar seminars in Mumbai and Pune soon.

Any challenge that you foresee in maintaining quality control among the labs?

Yes, there are some big challenges in running this program smoothly. The biggest is that there is no law about maintaining any standards or quality in pathology/research labs in India. In countries like the US and Australia, the laws are very stringent. The absence of appropriate laws makes us helpless sometimes.

As a part of Bio-Rad's clinical diagnostics mandate, what progress has the company made into diabetes management?

Bio-Rad has produced some good tools for detecting blood sugar. One example is HbA1c. The machine has the capability of detecting a patient's blood sugar level as an average of the past two months. The present day sugar detectors can only detect the sugar level at the time of test. A blood sugar test through HbA1c costs around Rs 300-400 for any patient. This certainly provides more information than what the other testing machines are offering.

We have also prepared a module for doctors specializing in diabetes care so that a proper methodology can be maintained for doing the tests. Apart from this, we are going to launch D-10 model, which will do all the tests done today by HbA1c and HbA2 (thalassemia) machines.

Unfortunately India has a high number of diabetic patients as compared to other countries. In terms of quality products and technology where are we standing?

It is surprising to know that a small country like Bangladesh maintains records of its diabetic population. But here in India, we do not have any provision of maintaining a database of the diabetic patients. Technology wise we are strong but we have to do many things in developing a proper health infrastructure.