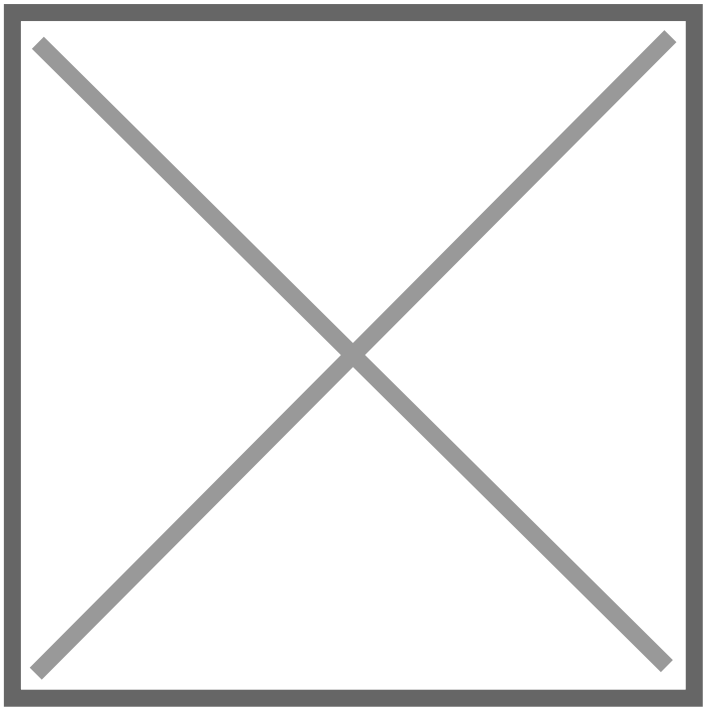
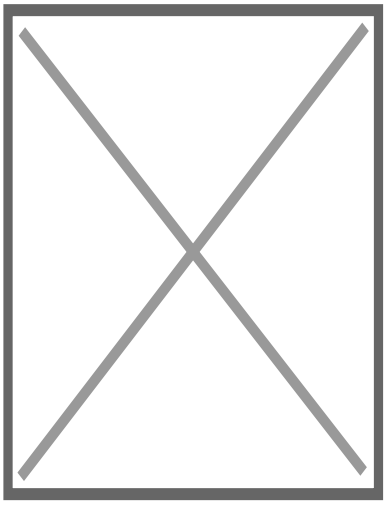
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"The demand for biosafety cabinet is ever growing"

09 August 2006 | News



"The demand for biosafety cabinet is ever growing"



- Lin Xiang Qian, Vice President, Esco Micro Pte Ltd

What opportunity does Esco see for biosafety cabinets in India?

India has certainly the most number of FDA approved facilities outside the US and with new biotech parks and companies mushrooming, there is certainly a huge opportunity for biosafety cabinets. The Indian government has also been pivotal in spearheading this growth and when the same model has been closely case-studied by neighboring countries, it must be good.

How do you see the competition?

Every company has its forte in reaching out to its customers and I learn from the competition. This is actually a healthy competition as we try to improve our products and services in accordance to the demands of the market. We constantly listen to the feedback of our customers and partners to improve on our products and range.

Besides India, which are other countries in the Asia Pacific region where you see growth potential for your range of products?

These countries will include China, Japan and Australia. There is still a lot of work to be done in these markets and we are glad that we have good partners and we work with them very closely.

What are the contributing factors for growth?

The biotech boom in the last 2-3 years has definitely been a contributing factor to the growth. There is also an increase in the awareness for handling of biological agents and the different kind of containment cabinets available. The outbreak of diseases like SARS and avian influenza in the recent years and the establishment of new facilities and laboratories have resulted in an increased demand for biosafety cabinets.

Who are the major players globally in biosafety cabinets?

The big brothers out there are definitely Nuaire, Thermo, Labconco and Baker who has been in the market for a long time. Although Esco only started its export operations four years ago, I am glad that we are ranked up very closely against these big players in the global market as well.

What are the measures Esco has tak en to create awareness about biosafety cabinets in India and other Asia Pacific countries and what are your future plans for India?

With the help of our partners in these regions, we have taken an aggressive but educational approach in increasing the biosafety awareness amongst our valuable customers. This has been achieved by conducting awareness seminars and also regular customer visits. We not only aim to sell the most appropriate product, but also to form close rapport with our customers. This has gone along very well and we have formed very close relationships with many of our customers.

In India, we are taking the same approach and we have formed, I believe, very good rapport with leading companies like Biocon, the Serum Institute, Shreya Biotech, ACTREC and IVRI. In addition, we plan to build a service centre to provide a good and responsive after-sales support.

The plan is to ensure that we will have an office in every metropolitan state in India to ensure responsive sales and technical support. We are also planning to start a showroom to display the entire range of Esco products. A stocking warehouse is also in the pipeline to improve delivery time to our customers.

How do you see the competition for Esco's range of products from Indian manufacturers who are also into exporting?

Esco's focus is different from that of the local Indian manufacturers. We have always ensured that our products are certified as per International standards like NSF49: American Standard for Class II Biosafety Cabinets, EN12469: European Standard for Class II Cabinet and other relevant standards to ensure maximum protection for products and personnel while handling infectious materials. In fact, our flagship model of biosafety cabinet, the Labculture Class II Biosafety Cabinet is one of the most certified biosafety cabinets worldwide after obtaining certification against the American, European, Chinese and Japanese biosafety cabinet standards.

Each of our products is built with the most salient features with the product and operator in mind. The Esco product is tested and certified at the factory before we ship them to our customers worldwide. We are also one of the very few manufacturers worldwide with both in-house certification and microbiology testing facilities.

Narayan Kulkarni

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