

"Our facility will reshape India's analytical sector"

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AB SCIEX, a global leader in life science analytical technologies, recently inaugurated a new analytical facility at Gurgaon. Set at an estimated cost of Rs 16 crore, the unit was established with the aim to give scientists and laboratory technicians across India, an access to the latest innovations in analytical technologies. In November 2011, the company's Indian unit expanded, with AB SCIEX acquiring the mass spectrometry business of Labindia.

BioSpectrum spoke to Mr Rainer Blair, president of AB SCIEX, USA about the company's present operations, opportunities, marketing strategies and future plans.

What is the objective of setting up this new facility in India?

Mr Blair: This state-of-the-art, scientific support centre is designed to help address some of India's biggest analytical challenges, including food safety, environmental protection, vitamin D analysis, biomedical research, testing of banned drugs of abuse, and the development of new therapeutics and generic drugs. Moreover, scientists and lab personnel in public and private sectors are expected to use it as a destination for proof-of-concept studies, development of new work flows, extensive training and troubleshooting support in method development. The facility in India will allow us to take the lead with our customers to reshape analytical science in this amazingly forward-thinking region of the world.

What according to you are the major challenges of doing business in India? What is your strategy?

India is a large country and the challenges here are of many fold. First, coverage of all the areas is a challenge along with building capabilities for new technologies. As the new regulatory regimes are being quickly put in place, the high standard needs to be maintained accordingly. To enable that, there has to be an increased need for awareness among the researchers about the latest technology upgradation. Another challenge is the investment in research by the government and the venture capitalists as it is directly related to their purchase capacity.

The worst fear for a company is the recall of its product from the market. So new methods have to be developed to suit the

requirements of the clients. Our marketing strategy is based on the same and we also believe in creating innovative technologies for the clients. We work relentlessly every day to be a trusted partner with Indian scientists and lab managers.

How has the acquisition of Labindia helped in the growth of the company?

Labindia's acquisition has helped the company to create new opportunities for scientific interactions, collaborations and innovation. With its growing local presence and dedicated global resources, AB SCIEX is opening new job opportunities in Indian economy, thereby attracting top talent in science and technology to its portals.

Tell us about your unique offerings to clients in India?

We are committed to responding to and meeting the growing needs of India's research and applied analytical testing communities. Our new product SWATH will revolutionize the entire proteomics industry. It is changing the way scientists work in quantitative proteomics. Driven by superior speed and high-resolution performance of TripleTOF 5600 system in both mass spectrometer (MS) and MS/MS mode, this technique provides comprehensive quantitative data on every component in a sample in a single injection. As research evolves and new hypotheses are formed, one can re-interrogate a sample without the need to re-acquire data.

Another product, AB SCIEX 6500 series provides unprecedented level of sensitivity never before achieved in an LC/MS/MS system. Using the IonDrive technology, new innovations have been implemented in every part of the system.

How do you look at the opportunities in the Indian and Asia Pacific market?

We are looking at providing the country's highest-rated service and support to Indian customers, who analyze compounds, contaminants and proteins in various fields. We are also catering specially to the biosimilar and biological drug research companies and would like to mention that one of the India's leading companies in this area is using our technology. I find Indian market much bigger than other countries in the Asia Pacific. One thing that is unique about India is its CRO industry. The country is fast developing and the demand for technology is going to multiply in the coming years.

How has the growth been in MS market?

The growth in the MS market has been tremendous. The demand has increased at an average of 20 percent every year and we are proud to say that we continue to hold a larger share of the market.

What is the future outlook for the company?

We have achieved the milestone of double digit growth record, which is pretty much unheard of. In the next five years, I see the company's growth to be atleast five times than that of today's size. Our motto here is that, in India, we will always be there for India.