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Cole-Parmer is now a standalone entity and offers a portfolio of industry-leading products in the laboratory market and its Asia-Pacific MD, Mr Aggarwal, in an exclusive interview with BioSpectrum, discusses the company's market dynamics in the region, especially India.

Please share with us a bit on the recent changes and their impact on the Cole-Parmer market positioning and revenue potential?

Cole-Parmer is now an independent company. This provides a tremendous opportunity to expand the existing strong business through newly directed focus and energy. The company's continued focus remains on strengthening the product portfolio and market channels that will help us service and access our various customer segments more effectively and competitively.

With this change, how are your customers in India & APAC region going to benefit?

As we have become a "stand-alone" entity once again, it's time to take a leap both in customer experience and record substantial growth not only in India but also in other Asian countries. In order to achieve this in India, we moved to a new corporate office in Mumbai and opened direct offices in Hyderabad, Bangalore, and Delhi. We have also set up a new warehouse in Bhiwandi with state-of-the-art infrastructure. The aim is to provide our customers with improved support and faster responses and this underscores our continued commitment to serve our customers better.

Cole-Parmer is growing significantly in India-what is the secret of success in competitive as well as challenging markets?

Cole-Parmer has been in India for more than 15 years, with a direct presence in the last eight years. We have a strong presence in the pharma and biopharma markets. Today, a large part of our business comes from biopharma, while the remaining derives from food and processing, chemical, automobiles, and the dyes and pigments industry, besides government-owned research labs.

We were among the early entrants in the industry, when we began via a dedicated channel partner in 1996. Then the

company was acquired in 2006. We carried forward the strong foundation and further invested in application and after-sales support, which are highly sought after by the Indian customers.

We make sure we listen to our customer's needs and deliver the solutions they require. Our customer-centric approach, consistency in delivering quality, and continuous improvement through innovation-combined with the latest, hard-to-find products and value-added services-provide the customer with a safer, more efficient, and more productive work environment.

What are your plans with respect to India and entire APAC region?

We are looking to continue our expansion in the APAC marketplace and serve customers throughout the region. There are various initiatives we are adopting to propel our growth in APAC in the coming years. We continue to strengthen our commercial presence in these regions.

Also, we continue to develop and enhance our product portfolio. Cole-Parmer is known for bringing unique and new products to the market, leading to improved processes and increased productivity. We have introduced many new products recently and will continue to offer the latest technologies to help our customers achieve their goals.

We are also establishing partnerships with our key customers and channel partners in India and APAC. These channel partners have a wide reach in the research markets, three-tier cities, and markets we have not yet fully explored. We give our partners complete solutions from Lab-to-Process through our entire width and depth of products and services. Together, we also offer value-added services such as demos at customers' sites, logistics support, and product sampling, to mention a few. We are regularly investing in our channel partners capabilities by giving them extensive training on our products.

How is Cole-Parmer gearing up to leverage the emerging opportunities in India and APAC?

For biopharma product development, we focus on offering tailor-made solutions to help our customers speed up their product development. We also support them to scale-up from R&D to pilot and finally to bulk manufacturing.

We are already in the bioprocess manufacturing space with our Masterflex Peristaltic Pumps and fully validated pharma tubing. We are the trusted choice of our customers for fluid handling solutions. Now, customers partner with us for their critical bioprocess product requirements as well. We offer end-to-end customized solutions for aseptic fluid transfer, including a wide range of single-use products such as bioprocess bags and liners, manifolds, and EZ Top container closures, for example.

For other markets, we are working tirelessly to bring our customers, the unique and latest products to help them make their processes more efficient and easier. Customers today look for instruments with smaller footprints and user-friendly interfaces. They want data acquisition, protection, and better analytical tools. Research labs today need to produce results fast. High speed, high quality, and dependable lab equipment provides the best returns in the long run.

What have been the recent activities in terms of product launches for you? Any plans for expansion of product lines?

Recently Cole-Parmer acquired Environmental Express, a leading developer, manufacturer, and distributor of environmental laboratory equipment and consumables. The acquisition of Environmental Express is a key step towards further strengthening of our portfolio with their strong position in water, wastewater, drinking water and hazardous waste analysis. We are now bringing these products to our customers in India and APAC as well.

The Digi-Sense brand, re-introduced last year, is a comprehensive new line of test and measurement products. These new technologies deliver accurate readings while withstanding rigorous use.

From environmental testing meters to performance monitoring equipment, many of the Digi-Sense products are precalibrated to save time, cost, and effort. The range of products includes thermometers, infrared devices, humidity meters, anemometers, light meters, manometers, borescopes, and tachometers.

We also introduced a new line of laboratory filtration products providing consistent performance and ensuring high quality results-at an economical price. The extensive range features sterile/non-sterile membranes and chromatography and air vent filters to serve the needs of R&D for universities, institutes, and pharmaceuticals, QA and QC labs, and the food and beverage markets.

Also, we have expanded our selection of safety offerings. Personal protection equipment available now includes safety glasses, goggles, face shields, gloves, respirators, and much more. Product protection includes clean room wipes and gloves, to name a few.

Our next focus is on the food and beverage market, which is expected to be more regulated in the coming years. So, we are investing ahead of the curve to bring some of the latest products in this segment such as shelf life analyzers, protein/nitrogen determination systems, and digestion and distillation systems.

What do you think of the current growth of the lab-equipment market? Has there been substantial growth over the years? What's your outlook for this market?

We are very excited about opportunities in areas such as pharmaceuticals, industrial, process, food safety and environment. India is one of the leading countries in the world in biotechnology development and manufacturing.

We also see that the Indian government is demonstrating more commitment to invest in innovation, science, and technology. We understand there will be significant investments in infrastructure as well as food and testing labs across the country. The market environment is rapidly changing and has become more competitive and challenging. Lab equipment manufacturers and suppliers have to grow faster in order to meet the pressing needs of research and development organizations. The industry is focusing on a consolidated experience for consumers because this is what the customer is looking at today.

Unlike basic laboratory equipment, which generally costs hundreds or thousands of dollars, high-end systems often demand far more significant investments. So, with the new promising government in India, better economic conditions, and focus on a consolidated experience for the consumers, the market looks favorable.