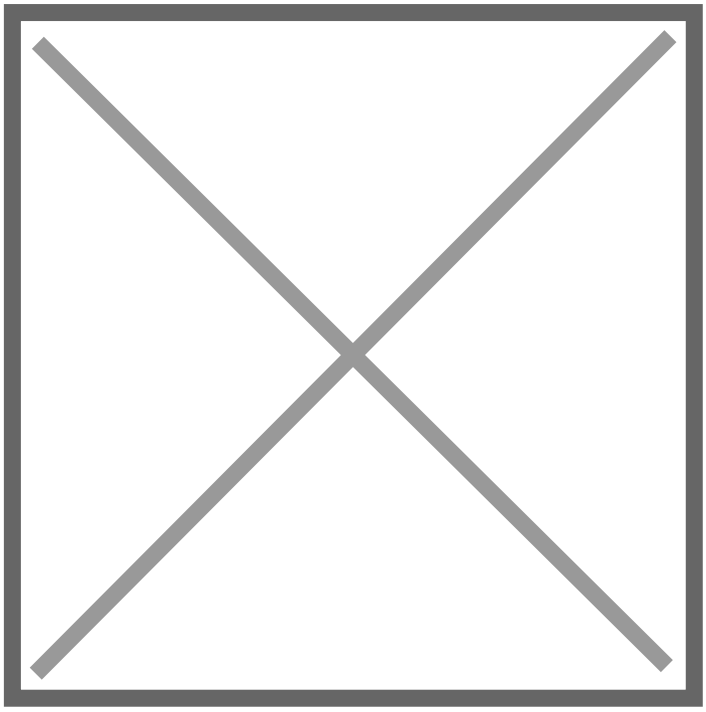


Bioinformatics

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Bioinformatics sector grosses Rs120 crore:

The Bioinformatics sector in India is estimated to have grown to Rs 120 crore in 2005-06 compared to the previous year's figure of Rs 100 crore. Though the figure may not be so big, the industry in 2005 has showed positive overtones. For example, it is estimated that Strand Lifesciences, which was one of the first few to focus in the bioinformatics space, has notched Rs 10 crore in revenues and is on its way to be a profitable company. Further IT companies have also stepped up their focus on the life sciences vertical. Companies like Infosys, Cognizant Technologies, HCL, MphasiS, and TCS have been made significant strides in this space.

MphasiS Technologies offers software solutions in the areas of healthcare and life sciences technology vertical. In life sciences, its expertise spans across designing software, developing device drivers, embedded solutions, instrument control software for analytical instrumentation, biological data management, data and image analysis, agro sciences and in ensuring compliance to 21 CFR Part 11, GAMP, and CLSI. Its revenues from this vertical stood at Rs 35.7 crore in 2005-06.HCL Technologies, another leading IT major, which has strong focus in biopharmaceuticals and CRO space in the life sciences sector, doubled its revenues to Rs 15.4 crore in 2005-06.This vertical is called the"Global LifeScience and Healthcare Practice". It has tie-ups with institutes and companies spanning different countries-Tokushina University, Japan, IIT Delhi,and Synchron, a CRO.TCS made a major announcement last year that it has tied up with Congenia, a biotechnology start-up promoted by Italy's Genextra Spa group to provide advanced fragment-based lead optimization solutions for drug discovery. This is the first of its kind for an IT company. TCS is also putting in place a complete suite of offerings in the life sciences segment, spanning genomics and proteomics, database integration, drug discovery, and preventive healthcare. It has also developed "Bio-Suite". The Indian IT services companies today offer a range of solutions. They are looking at customized and cutting-edge solutions in clinical trials and US FDA compliance requirementstoR&Dprocess enhancements.Cognizant offers solutions for the life science industry too. It has associated with IMS and provides solutions like application management for legacy systems, e-Business, data portals, ERP implementation, upgrade, and maintenance services, prescriber behavior analysis and insight, longitudinal prescription data management systems, clinical trial solutions, and 21CFR11 assessment solutions.

Standalone bioinformatic companies like Strand Life Sciences, Ocimum Biosolutions, Helix Genomics and Molecular Connections have about 5-8 products in their kitty. Ocimum Biosolutions, which has competencies biomedical literature.Molecular Connections has licensed NetPro to global players like Lion Bioscience Research Inc and GSK. Strand Life Sciences is focused as in silico technologies innovation company. It focuses on early target discovery through pre-clinical development services, cheminformatics modeling platforms like Admetis and proprietary in silico predictive models for small molecule drug properties like ADME and cardiotoxicity, and partners with discovery contract research companies to combine

in silico and wet labs to offer services starting from compound library design to lead generation.Another major trend has been BioSuppliers like Waters now strongly focusing on the informatics products and solutions. In fact India is now being targeted as a resource center for products too. Aris Global, a global leader in the area of pharma safety software, has software development center in Bangalore that houses over 370 employees.

Mascon Life Sciences, a division of Mascon Global Ltd, aims to make its center a world-renowned center for research and development in computational biology. Mascon has developed a broad spectrum of seven-eight software tools, applicable in wide range of activities from genome mapping to molecular modeling. IBM Life Sciences, which is helping clients manage explosion of data, accelerate discovery and development, and respond to compliance and security mandates, has a center of excellence at IIT Delhi. Sun Microsystems has set up a dedicated Center of Excellence (CoE) for bioinformatics with the Centre for DNA Fingerprinting and Diagnostics in Hyderabad to address this vertical. Clearly, there has been an increased focus by the IT and bioinformatics companies in this space.