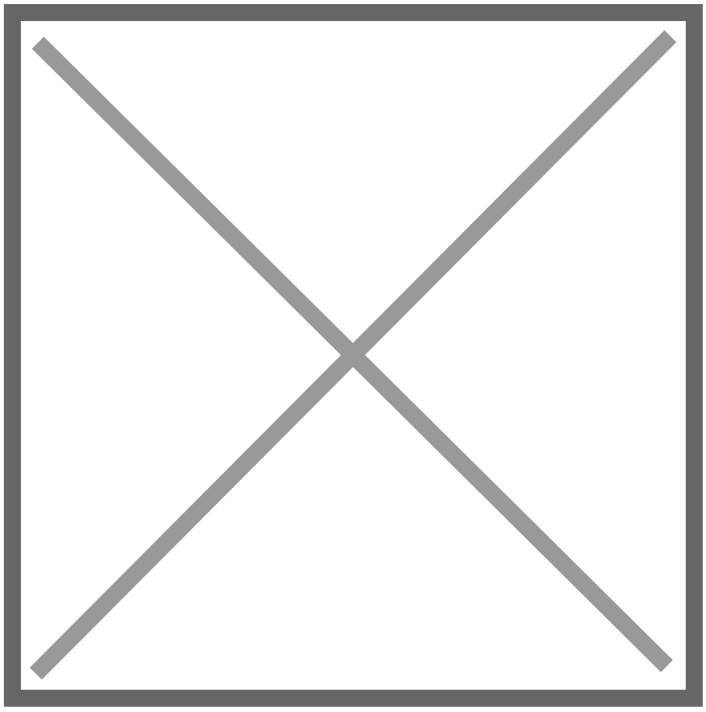
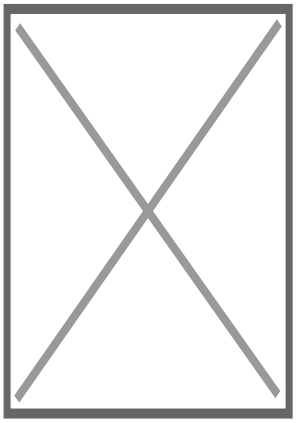
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Growth of Indian biopharma provides opportunities for PAS

14 December 2006 | News



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Honeywell Automation has been helping process industries like oil and gas, petrochemicals, life sciences and biopharmaceuticals, make their processes more efficient, more productive, profitable and safer. Recently, Honeywell came up with its latest Process Knowledge System (PKS), Experion R300 a unified system for process, business and asset management that helps industrial manufacturers to increase their profitability and productivity. In an e-mail interview, Harshavardhan Chitale, managing director, Honeywell Automation India, shared his thoughts with BioSpectrum about the benefits the automation systems can offer to the life sciences/biopharma companies.

How will the automation systems benefit biopharmaceutical/life sciences companies?

The life sciences and biopharmaceutical industry constantly face following challenges: repeating successes at research/pilot stages into commercial stages, time to market, maintaining consistency in product quality, achieving and ensuring regulatory compliances, security and protection of intellectual property, integrating the supply as well as value-chain, and staying competitive

Traditionally, these were "managed" without much of automation and/or integration amongst various functional requirements including manufacturing processes but this was not an efficient way of succeeding in competitive world.

Process Automation Systems provide the answer to meet these challenges. Honeywell's Automation System, Experion Process Knowledge System provides solutions that manages these challenges in the most efficient and integrated manner, that helps customers to reduce risks, to improve operational efficiency, helps in meeting regulatory compliances, besides reducing cost of such regulatory compliance, and to help manage lifecycle cost and to protect capital as well as intellectual investments.

What is the kind of investment these companies have to make on automation systems?

Investing into automation systems definitely is beneficial for any manufacturing industry including life sciences/biopharma. However, depending on the project size and scale, the levels of automation vary. There really is no ball-park figure regarding investments in automation systems as it is 'need' dependent rather than 'want' dependent.

How do you see the market potential in terms of growth rate and present market size for process automation systems as far as the Indian biopharmaceutical/life sciences industry is concerned?

India's pharma industry is currently undergoing a change from being process-patent centric to product patent centric. This change is leading the return of multinational organizations to India for setting up manufacturing facilities, due to India's traditional strength in low-cost contract manufacturing, attractive location for R&D and conduct of clinical trials.

In addition, India's new affluent consumers who lead more western lifestyles, are demanding innovative drugs to treat chronic illness that these changing lifestyle may produce. Last but definitely not the least, India pharmaceutical companies are attaining global player status, since the existing market is expanding plus new ones are opening up, for high quality affordable generic drugs.

The above factors indicate that the Indian life sciences/biopharmaceutical industry will maintain double-digit growth over next few years. This provides increased and sustained opportunities for process automation systems and associated services over next few years.

The current market for process control solutions in India is growing rapidly at the rate of close to 20 percent y-o-y. Besides sheer growth, there is also a qualitative shift in terms of market characteristics.

I would summarize them as: companies are no longer looking at automation as something, which is an 'infrastructure', but it is increasingly being viewed as an enabler of productivity, quality, safety, etc.; Increasing amount of advanced applications such as MES solutions; Tracking and supply chain solutions are being purchased by pharma companies as, experience of last few years has established the high ROI potential of such solutions; Process control solutions are no longer a luxury that only large chemical plants would implement. Even smaller enterprises in industries such as textiles, sugar, dairy, specialty chemicals have started reaping benefits of automation; Companies have started realizing that true value comes not from 'hardware' but from applications and engineering and the propensity of Indian customer's to pay for the same.

Narayan Kulkarni