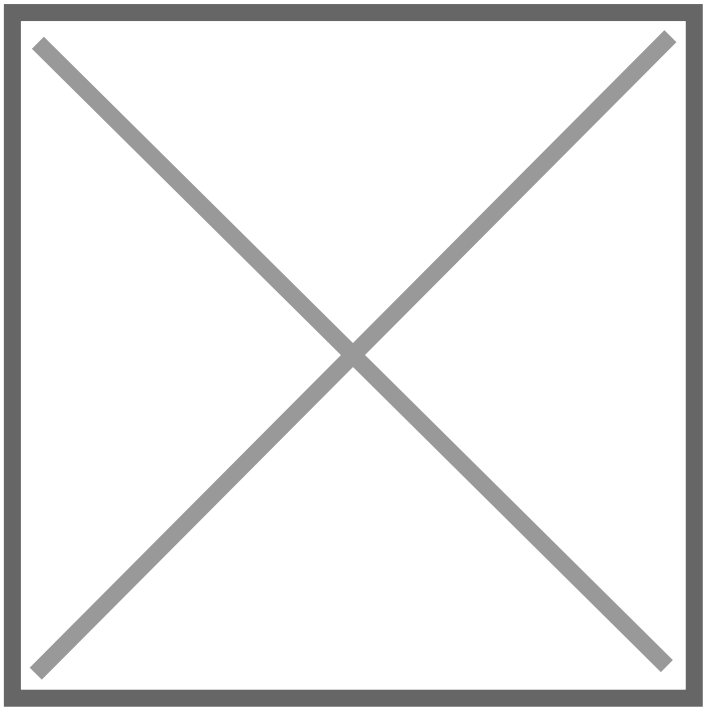
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'13% of our revenue comes from APAC'

13 September 2011 | News



Syedjafry1photo

Mr Syed Jafry,
senior VP & president,
Thermo Fisher Scientific,
Asia Pacific and South America

Thermo Fisher Scientific inaugurated its new Center of Excellence (CoE) for chromatography consumables and specialty products in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, to provide enhanced application support for customers working across a broad range of applications, including pharmaceutical, environmental, and food and beverages in the Asia Pacific region. The facility, located in the city's pharma SEZ and spanning across an area of 3,500 square feet is adjacent to the existing Fisher Biopharma Services facility (inaugurated in 2008), which currently has an employee strength of around 70 people. This is the company's first CoE in the APAC region. Mr Syed Jafry, senior vice president and president, Thermo Fisher Scientific for Asia Pacific and South America was in India to inaugurate the CoE. In a conversation with BioSpectrum, Mr Jafry throws light on the importance of this facility in India, the company's strategy for India and the APAC region as a whole.

Q Can you give a snapshot of the new chromatography Center of Excellence at Ahmedabad? How important is this facility in your overall APAC strategy?

We established our facility in Ahmedabad in 2008, focused on providing clinical trial services, distribution, warehousing and logistics support to pharmaceutical companies. Currently, with investment-friendly policies in India, our customers are expanding their manufacturing capacity as well as investing in R&D. This gives us an opportunity to invest further. Therefore, we have invested in a state-of-the-art application center that focuses on chromatography consumables and specialty products. We have installed mass spectrometry and chromatography systems in this facility that will help us to support our customers in the creation of stringent application development methods, not only in India but also in the Asia Pacific region.

This center of excellence will be very closely connected with our Runcorn facility in the UK, from where we will get direct assistance from our specialists and technologists. The initial staffing here will consist of five highly-trained scientists. We will continue to expand the staff over the next 12 to 18 months. The facility will also be used for post-sales support and training.

Q Globally, Thermo Fisher Scientific has made some major acquisitions (Dionex and Phadia) recently. What impact do you think these acquisitions have on your APAC business?

On the acquisition front, we look at almost every opportunity. But we have a strict list of criteria that needs to be met for us to even consider taking a deal to the next step. They need to strengthen our strategic position, enhance our customer offering

and create shareholder value. Around 13 percent of our revenue comes from the Asia Pacific region. Dionex generated more than 35 percent of its revenue from the APAC region. In India, Dionex is strong in pharmaceuticals and in the rest of Asia Pacific, it is well established in the environmental segment. We believe that we can leverage the Dionex position in Asia Pacific, now that we are one company. Phadia too has a strong presence in the Asia Pacific region.

Q How bullish are you in segments like specialty diagnostics and mass spectrometry are concerned?

Both specialty diagnostics and scientific instruments are growth platforms for Thermo Fisher. In the specialty diagnostics market, we acquired BRAHMS, based in Henningsdorf, Germany, which brought us a portfolio of biomarkers used in the testing of sepsis, cardiovascular and pulmonary diseases. The biomarker testing business is part of a trend towards personalized medicine, which is popular in countries like India and China. We also see opportunity to expand the use of in vitro allergy testing which comes from the Phadia acquisition.

Mass spectrometry is a market in which Thermo Fisher Scientific has the world's leading technology, Orbitrap. Earlier this year, we introduced three new mass spectrometry product platforms that will continue to drive new areas of research. At the same time, we continue to demonstrate our leadership position in vertical markets such as food safety and in more routine applications.

Q Where do Asia Pacific and particularly India and China stand in the company's overall global strategy?

Our intent is to develop the infrastructure to support the development and manufacturing of products for consumption in key markets such as China and India. We have opened a second demonstration center and a technology center in China in the last 12 months and we recently announced the first technology center in India. These are investments that will enable us to attract more customers in the region. We are also engaged in recruiting talented engineers and scientists from Indian universities, so that research and development work can be done locally.

Could you give us a comparative perspective of Thermo Fisher Scientific's business in China and India? Our Asia Pacific revenue is 13 percent of the total revenue or approximately $1.3 billion, of which 32 percent is from China and 10 percent from India.

Q Could you share with us some of the company's achievements in Asia Pacific during the last one year?

Financially, we have been doing very well. If you look at the last five years, our cumulative growth has been close to 17 percent. We continue to increase our workforce here to expand local support. Last year, we added 225 commercial function manpower in Asia Pacific. We have been active on acquisitions. As I said, in India, we acquired Qualigens and Chemito. In Australia, we acquired Lomb Scientific, which is known for its lab chemicals and instruments.

Nayantara Som in Mumbai