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'We expect double digit growth in the coming years'

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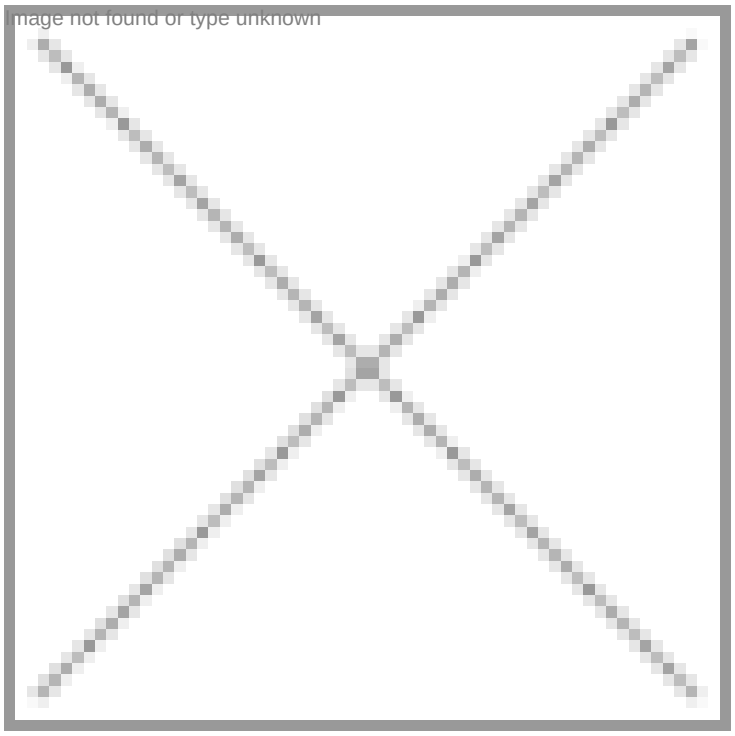

Interview

Biosupplier mrumeshpawa

Mr Umesh Pawa,
MD, AB SCIEX India

AB SCIEX, a global leader in life sciences analytical technologies, recently acquired the mass spectrometry business of Labindia Instruments, a leading life sciences solutions service provider in India. AB SCIEX's expansion of its commercial operations in India is expected to create new opportunities for customer interactions, collaborations and innovation. Headquartered in Gurgaon, the company has a workforce of over 100 people and offices at almost all prime locations in India. BioSpectrum spoke to Mr Umesh Pawa, managing director, AB SCIEX India, on the recent acquisition, market trends and the company's plans.

Q What was the objective behind this acquisition?

Mr Umesh Pawa: The objective behind this move was to leverage the global strength of AB SCIEX and Labindia's expertise in the India market to have a direct presence in the country. This acquisition reflects AB SCIEX's increasing focus in India, combining its global resources, world-class scientific expertise and product development leadership with well-established, local expertise and on-site support to advance science and respond to the growing needs of India's scientific community. The transition of business, including customer relationships, personnel and application support facilities to AB SCIEX is a direct result of the successful track record that AB SCIEX and Labindia have had as partners in India.

Q How big is the mass spectrometry market in India? What is your market share?

Mr Umesh Pawa: The industry indicators suggest that the overall mass spectrometry business in India is in the range of $50 million and $60 million. AB SCIEX is consistently cited as having the highest market share, and we anticipate double

digit growth in the coming years.

Q What are the products and services offered by you?

Mr Umesh Pawa: We have been the pioneers in the field of liquid chromatography and mass spectrometry (LC MS) with over 630 patents registered. AB SCIEX has more than 20 years of history in innovation and is a market leader in mass spectrometry, which is a workhorse analytical technique for a wide variety of scientific applications, including food contamination testing, environmental analysis, biomedical research, pharmaceutical development, forensic toxicology and vitamin D analysis, among other emerging applications in clinical research.

The company has been actively involved in applying the power of mass spectrometry to assist in efforts to protect the health of India's vast population.

AB SCIEX, in 2010, supplied a food safety testing solution to six major laboratories under the pesticides monitoring network project by the Ministry of Agriculture to help reinforce new food safety standards through better monitoring for contamination.

Q What are the current market trends in the segment? How are you catching up with the same?

Mr Umesh Pawa: There has always been a need for technology that will offer both quantitative and qualitative powers in one instrument to enable detection and characterization of molecules at the lowest abundances. While triple quadrupoles are known to have the highest quantitative sensitivity, high resolution and accurate mass instruments are used for characterization.

AB SCIEX launched the TripleTOF 5600 System, which has powers of both these instruments, offering both qualitative and quantitative features in one technology.

It has proved to be very helpful in several fields, such as metabolite identification, proteomics research, biomarker discovery, environmental and food testing, lipids analysis, among others. We have been able to develop the technology due to which these complex analysis have become much easier now. We have also brought down the analysis time from weeks to days by combining the quantitative and qualitative work flows.

Q Do you plan to expand into other segments as well? What is your future outlook?

Mr Umesh Pawa: AB SCIEX is focused on the LC-MS and Maldi Tof market. We see great potential for the use of mass spectrometry to expand into other segments. Expanded use of mass spectrometry for a variety of applications will take the power of this workhorse technology well into the future.

Q What are the challenges before biosuppliers?

Mr Umesh Pawa: There are several challenges that, if addressed with collaborative efforts and consensus, could help the scientific community in the country. We need to make changes in the tender processes to allocate equal weightage for quality and performance, thereby enabling scientists to procure products that offer the best value for money instead of the current two-bid system, which prefers the L1 bidder.

Changes in the customs duty structure, thereby lowering the entry barriers for adaptation of this advanced technology, would also be welcomed. Allowing instruments to come into the country for customer evaluation and subsequent purchase without tax implications during the evaluation phase is one of the directions that should be looked at towards advancing science in the country.

Rahul Koul in New Delhi