

"Keen understanding, innovation and business impact is our key strategy"

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-Art Caputo, president, Waters Division, Waters Corp. and Dr Rohit Khanna, vice president, worldwide marketing, Waters Corp.

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In an exclusive interview to BioSpectrum, Waters' top global executives share the company's plans and expectations from its India operations.

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KV Venugopalan, president, Waters India, Art Caputo, president, Waters Division, and Dr AK Dasgupta, director, Lambda Therapeutics Research, announce the pact.

What is Waters Corporation's strategy as a global corporation?

Our global strategy can be summed up in five words-keen understanding, innovation, and business impact. Our focus is on understanding the customer's challenges and creating advantages for them by delivering practical and sustainable scientific innovation and help customers make faster discoveries, optimize lab operations, and ensure regulatory compliance.

You have announced an agreement with Lambda. What are your expectations?

We were here to set up a collaboration with Lambda Therapeutic Research. Lambda Therapeutic Research is an internationally known expert in clinical research. And the agreement will enable Lambda to meet its international business goals by fulfilling its needs for innovative laboratory equipment. Additionally, Waters will share its keen understanding of scientific and laboratory management through dedicated training opportunities. This is not a commercial agreement. Partnering with such leaders would make us know the future challenges, meet those challenges and dominate the market. This is part of our globalization process. A case in point is our Ultra Performance Liquid Chromatography (UPLC) system. This technology was introduced in March 2004 and was the outcome of a similar agreement with a customer. UPLC technology utilizes a packing material with small, uniform diameter particles and a specialized instrument (ACQUITY) to accommodate the increased pressure and narrow chromatographic bands that are generated by these small particles. By using the ACQUITY UPLC, researchers and analysts are able to achieve more comprehensive chemical separations and faster analysis times in comparison with many analyses performed by HPLC. During 2005 and 2006, Waters experienced growth in the instrument systems product line primarily from the sales of the ACQUITY UPLC. We are the clear leaders. We brought UPLC three years back and till now no one has come up with the technology to build UPLC systems.

We now expect to come up innovative products now in the CRO space and take the lead.

Is this the first such agreement in India?

This is the first such collaboration from a company in India. We would be looking at having more such collaborations.

What are the focus areas of Waters Division?

If we look at what is happening in technology, we focus very much in the areas in which our customer base has the highest degree of challenge. So separation, mass-spectrometry, and informatics-all these are key areas of challenge. Our approach is to stay focused in the areas in which the customers are facing difficulties, for instance informatics. UPLC is still at infancy but tremendous developments are taking place in these areas. UPLC is the most ideal technology and growing very quickly. It is an ideal tool for method development.

HDMS is again a new technology, which has been launched this year. We introduced a new Tandem Quadrupole device (TQD) and a new hybrid quadrupole-time of flight technology system, the Synapt HDMS. The Synapt HDMS system integrates ion mobility technology within a Q-ToF geometry instrument configuration and allows researchers to glean molecular shape information, a novel capability for a mass spectrometry instrument. The introduction of these new products has augmented the recent growth of the MS instrument systems.

We continue to drive the old technologies while putting more effort towards developing new technologies. Innovation and performance is what have been driving us.

What will your India technology center cater to?

India's business for Waters is one of the fastest growing. In 1997, we made a decision to form a company which was a \$2-3.5million and now in 2007, it has grown to a \$60-million company. We have inaugurated a technology center in Bangalore for which we have made large investments. It has been set up for multiple purposes-to provide support to the customers and train the customers and the staff as well. We will also bring experts from outside Waters. At present it is a 27,000-sft facility and we have made substantial investment in the center. The investment on the equipment alone is Rs 6 crore and much more has been spent on the manpower and infrastructure. We see India as a very important market to make good investment and India will represent one of the important opportunities.

How do you operate globally?

We have operation in all corners of the globe and we operate directly. In Asia, we have direct operations in India, China, Singapore, Japan, Australia and Taiwan but in places like Indonesia, Philippines and Thailand, we operate through dealers. Customer support and customer success is most critical. Most companies in our industry invest a lot on sales and little on service and support. We spend almost two-thirds of our efforts on service support and the rest in sales.

Where do you do your R&D and manufacturing?

Application support, labs and chemists are the most of the important segments for us. We have primarily four manufacturing centers--Milford, US; Manchester, UK; Wexford, Ireland and Singapore. UPLC is manufactured in the US and some of our mature products like HPLCs are manufactured in Singapore. In India, we manufacture equipment specifically required by the

Indian market, for example the S-10 pumps.

How big is the analytical market?

It is a \$20-billion market worldwide and the liquid chromatography and mass spectrometry account for \$5 billion. We have 25 percent share in the worldwide business. Our share of business in Asia is 25-30 percent. The Asia business is getting very close to the Europe market and the US. The Asian market is growing at a very fast speed and we have probably made more investments in the Asia Pacific region than the US and Europe.

What are the trends in Asia?

We invested in Asia many years ago and we have the luxury of direct operation. Japan is a very mature market. The two big drivers are India and China and the next driving market is Korea. All the three markets are totally different and the only thing common is the growth market.

India has built a strong market with the growth of biopharmaceutical industry, CROs and biogenerics. Food safety and environmental concerns are few of the upcoming trends, and hence we are planning to increase our interest in these sectors. So an analytical company like ours has tremendous opportunity.

The market is very diverse today. In China we have two big application centers and we have already started with food, environmental and water quality testing there.

Jahanara Parveen