

'Innovation and application support are our best strategies'

06 September 2012 | News



Agilent Technologies, a market leader in analytical instrumentation has introduced CrossLab HPLC supplies and services. The new offerings help improve the performance and productivity of non-Agilent instruments, while reducing administrative burdens with a single-source solution. Agilent CrossLab HPLC supplies are manufactured to perform seamlessly with a wide range of non-Agilent analytical instruments. In an exclusive interaction with *BioSpectrum*, Dr Siva Kumar, country manager, life sciences and chemical analysis, Agilent Technologies spoke about the CrossLab initiative, market trends, company's recent activities, collaborations and its future outlook.

How does this new solution help the customers in addressing their issues?

Q Pasupathi: This solution helps users to keep their lab running at peak efficiency, regardless of the instrument manufacturer. From award-winning, multi-vendor qualification and compliance to expert service engineers and a broad portfolio of supplies for both Agilent and instruments from other vendors, Agilent CrossLab has the key which is required to maximize lab uptime. The result is a lab-wide program

that is more personalized, efficient, and cost-effective.

Enlighten us about Agilent's strategy to capture the Indian market?

Q Apart from product innovation, we want to be available to the customer at every point and provide a superior quality solution. We spend approximately 11-12 percent of our annual revenues towards research. It is an effort to constantly remain at the cutting-edge of solutions by offering the very latest in technology while ensuring backward integration. In India, our focus has been to expand our reach further into smaller cities. Given Agilent's diverse portfolio of products, one of the company's biggest opportunities is to develop comprehensive workflow solutions for customer applications that go all the way from preparing samples to analyzing the resulting data.

What is the market size and growth potential for the chromatography equipment and consumables in India?

Q The analytical instrument market is close to \$1 billion. It is divided into instruments and consumables in a ratio of 80:20. While the instrumentation market is growing at 14-15 percent year on year, the consumables are growing at an average 20 percent rate annually. There are tremendous opportunities in these areas, projecting a long-term growth.

Which are the recent India collaborations that have happened at Agilent?

Q Agilent recently partnered with the N G Ranga Agricultural University, Hyderabad and National Institute of Nutrition (NIN) for technology sharing. The main purpose of such collaborations is sharing Agilent's knowledge and expertise with its partners, not just business. We provide application support to users and often publish the research work in reputed journals. This information is then available for benefit of people at large and is also used by us as application notes to propagate our technology. So these partnerships are considered mutually beneficial.

Has the increased research funding in India helped in the expansion of your business?

Q Increased research funding is definitely a strategic growth area for us. It could provide a boost for our chromatography, mass spectroscopy and genomics business. With the 12th Five Year Plan, the government has allocated more than ~~IN 2,000 crore for R&D in India~~ IN 2,000 crore for R&D in India and this will lead to increased investment in research infrastructure by research and academic institutions.

Since the first year of the 12th Five Year Plan has just commenced, we expect that the funds will be released soon. We are hopeful that research bodies such as Department of Science and Technology (DST), Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and others, will also focus on enhancing the infrastructure in their respective institutions.

How do you visualize the growth of overall bio supplier market in India?

Q Most of the technologies prevalent even a decade ago have changed dramatically. For example, the mass spectrometry was earlier considered a high-end technology and was deployed only by a few key organizations. Today, it is commonly used for several applications across markets. HPLCs have a similar story. Due to price reductions and more options available in the market, products like UV-spectrophotometer and FT-IR have become accessible to all, irrespective of the size of the customer.

What is the future outlook of the company?

Q Agilent will continue to innovate and extend its product offerings, introducing cutting-edge technologies to customers. As mentioned earlier, focus on providing state-of-the-art service support including applications and work flow solutions to our customers will be of prime importance to us.

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