

There is a lot of dependency on the application in the pharma environment

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From pesticides to pharmaceutical residues to trace metals, Agilent provides fast, accurate and sensitive methods for monitoring contaminants affecting quality of life. Agilent partners with pharma and biopharma collaborators to support the early development of drugs and ensure the quality of life-saving medicines. Agilent also focuses on providing solutions, service and support to enable pathologists to provide better answers to inform patient diagnosis (and predict likely treatment response).



Agilent Technologies Inc., has introduced the newest member of its family of triple quadrupole liquid chromatography mass spectrometers (triple quad LC/MS). The Ultivo triple quad is a transformative approach to LC/MS that integrates several hardware and software innovations designed to deliver even more improved business results for customers.

Last month Jim Yano, Vice President of Marketing, Mass Spectrometry Division, Agilent Inc. USA, visited the country, accompanied by Bharat Bhardwaj, Country Manager, Agilent India, for the launch of their latest product, Ultivo, a Triple Quadrupole Mass Spectrometer., at the analytica Anacon India and India Lab Expo. BioSpectrum had a chance to interact with them.

Excerpts of the interview-

Please share a brief on the new product launched by Agilent.

Jim Yano: Ultivo, the newest LC triple quadrupole mass spectrometer is focused on high throughput food, environment,

pharma and clinical research. It has robust operation. The product is 1/4th the size and saves laboratory space. The servicing and maintenance is easier. There is minimal cost of ownership, lifetime cost is low for servicing. 4 patents have been filed for those objectives.

Bharat Bhardwaj: Agilent is a leader in latest technology. Over the last few years, using the feedback we get, we made a user friendly, smaller, up to speed on a fast track, designing new methods, taken in to account when designing the new product - from a 6 ft. product to 1-1.5 ft. product - for lab owners and managers. This allows the lab to have a lot more instruments in a smaller footprint – plus we have uplifted, the performance. The performance is better, size is smaller and it is easier to use, the cost of ownership is bare minimum. We started this journey 5 years ago, we just completed another round of lab manager surveys, globally – with over 700 lab managers – to make sure the product was still going to meet the customer's lab requirements.

How will the Indian market benefit from this product?

Bharat Bhardwaj: This product exactly addresses the need of the Indian market, providing the latest technology, faster tests, simpler setting up methods and design, a special library, which takes care of all the work, which is globally collated, the results are already there in the library.

The laboratory space is the most expensive. Residential space compared to lab space is cheaper. The smaller size allows you to accommodate more systems, a lot more profit. It is always about generating more business using minimum investment. Ultivo addresses the Indian market needs.

Jim Yano: Inputs from the customers who are using these instruments on a daily basis, other procedures, have told us that it's the need of the hour. As manufacturers we have reduced the size, cost of ownership, we routinely bring specific, VIP customers to run the instrument and share feedback on how the performance and changes we have made are meeting those objectives. We brought in two of the original tandem quad technology inventors Prof. Chris Y. & Prof. Chris R., who have the initial patent in 1970s – to make sure the product is meeting the key objective.

What advantages does the new product offer to the pharma industry?

Jim Yano: The main advantage of this product is its robustness and size. Pharma labs are usually very crowded. A lot of activities such as QA, QC needs to be done. Ultivo does it all in a more robust way and the platform is completely reliable. What Agilent does really well for Pharma is the combination of all the tools that we provide like our bravo sample assay prep platform, which lets the user prepare the samples easily and is used extensively in Pharma labs.

In a Pharma environment, there is a lot of dependency on the application. The analyst uses 70% of the time into using software. Thus it is very important to have an easy to use software. So, our software takes care of all these parameters.

Along with this we are also launching our HPLC prime, particularly for customers who would like to go for a high pressure LC.

What are the key research areas Agilent is focusing on in India?

Bharat Bhardwaj: Our large portion of the business is with the generic segment since the generic trend being tapped on globally. We provide latest technology, software to address the therapeutic needs, but we don't go after that in particular. Agilent creates diagnostic assays that are developed along with the pharmaceutical companies to provide new levels of insight for physicians who are treating the patients. Agilent's Dako's CDx tests enable pathologists to provide oncologists with important information about the likelihood that an individual patient will respond to cancer therapy, which can help guide treatment regimens.

Is Agilent planning any biopharma collaboration in India in the coming year?

Bharat Bhardwaj: We have been working with some of the major pharma clients. It is a course of natural progression for pharma companies to move into biopharma space. We are offering multiple solutions, not just HPLCs, we have specifically designed BIO LCs exactly addressing the Biopharma need. In the biopharma space, bio columns and SPE cartridges are most commonly used. Now, from a collaboration point of view, we have some in place and we are looking for more to make it easy for customers working in the Biopharma area.

Jim Yano: We do not announce collaborations until we make them public. We did release a bio confirm software, that is specifically designed for Biopharma laboratories. It provides the user with turn-key application workflows like in-tech proteins, peptide mapping from monoclonal antibodies and glycan software processing. We have tried to focus on more graphical use interface, more workflow orientation, making it easy for biopharmaceutical labs to get the solutions they need.

What are the new solutions being offered by Agilent in the future?

Jim Yano: We don't talk about products under development, but our focus has shifted from developing just platforms or just a product to focusing on the actual workflow. We need to address concerns such as analyzing presence of pesticides in drinking water, by taking care of the of the entire workflow involving the sample preparation, services, and software. We have a consumables organization, LC division, spectrometer division, and support organization, to work together for ensuring success of our customers.