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INTERVIEW | RAKESH KAUL, President and Chief, Consumer Business, HSIL

Your lifestyle statement, smart water purifiers

RAKESH KAUL, president and chief of consumer business, HSIL Limited, talks about the importance of drinking pure water for a healthy living, in a freewheeling chat with *The Indian Express*

HSIL Limited, a reputable sanitary ware company with a rich legacy of over 5 decades, forayed into the Consumer Products Business in 2014. It was a strategic diversification to optimise the growing opportunities in the 'consumer products' category and has already proved itself as one of the fast growing vertical of HSIL today. We offer technologically smart products in water-heaters, kitchen appliances and purification domain, under this new business which achieved 95% of its business target in the year 2015-16. We expanded our footprint from 650 to around 4000 retail touch points, and also embraced the popular e-commerce route to reach end consumers. Riding on this enthusiastic consumer response, we aim to triple our business target in 2016-17 over 2015-16. The focus will be on building new brand 'moonbow' under which we offer purification products while simultaneously we will strive towards enhancing market share of our other product offerings.

When did you launch water purifiers?

We introduced water purifiers under the 'moonbow' brand of consumer product business in August this year. Realising the need for this product and the enormous requirement for clean water in a developing country like ours, we ventured into water purifiers segment, and ever since its roll-out we have received a very favourable re-

sponse. We launched them in our core markets, Hyderabad and Bangalore in September this year and in markets in the North as well. We intend to be present in more than 50 cities by end of this year.

What products are available under moonbow water purifiers?

Purity is priceless and in pursuit of purity, HSIL Limited strives to make quality healthcare accessible to all consumers and offers a wide range of products that are simple to understand and easy to use, while also providing value for money.

Hence, we have introduced moonbow water purifiers in five variants, namely Oceanus Premium, Oceanus, Achelous Premium, Achelous and Ezili.

How have the water purifiers been priced?

We aim to be the most customer-centric company in the Indian subcontinent and pricing plays a vital role there. Therefore, the prices for the five variants fall within the Rs 12,990-26,990/- range. Another deciding factor is the target audience which are small and nuclear families in the metros and mini metros, and pricing for our water purifiers has been done keeping in mind their budgets.

In general, as a brand our price brackets for moonbow products helps us to be the preferred choice of consumer in the categories

where we operate. Our aim is to bring consumer delight at each and every step of our interaction and to provide, not marginal but meaningful changes in their lives.

What is the USP of your water purifiers?

The feature of these models are distinct from each other. The RO based water purifiers utilise the Hexapure technology which ensures extremely pure, safe and healthy drinking water, along with having an extremely elegant design and aesthetics.

Reverse osmosis (RO) and ultra-violet (UV) filtration are available in the five different models: Oceanus Premium, Oceanus, Achelous Premium, Achelous and Ezili.

While the market for RO water purifiers in India is growing at CAGR 15 per cent, it will touch 3.5 to 4 million units (RO) in the next two years. However, in terms of penetration it is less than 4 per cent.

What is your distribution network and how do you plan to reach customers in tier-2 and tier-3 cities?

Our water purifier have found great response in all segments. We are aggressively expanding to penetrate into tier-II and tier-III cities and would retail 1,000 outlets in the key markets by middle of 2017. We intend to be amongst the 3 largest players in the water purifier category within next 3-4 years. Our distribution network expanded from 100 distribution points to 350, and re-

tail points from 650 to 4,000 from start of the year 2015 to end March 2016.

How is the service network setup? How long will it take for HSIL to respond to customer queries?

When it comes to delivering great customer experiences, it means giving exactly what your customer wants. Why we stress on the word 'exactly' is because a minimal deviation from their expectation is all it takes to trigger a thought process that would eventually lead to losing that customer. In today's ultra-competitive market, service is one function which can differentiate you from the competition by delivering differentiated experience at all touch points all times. While, the service network is stable, robust and established already for all our products, we are logically set out to capture 10% market share in 3 years time. We have a wide network of service partners who have vast experience in customer service. There is a team of expert field technicians available who support customers in case of any technical issues. In past one year we have created around 100 service points which are catering to Pan India customers. Our target is to complete 95% service request with in 24 hours whereas in top 10 cities (NCR, Mumbai and suburbs, Bangalore, Chennai, Hyderabad, Pune, Kolkata, Ahmedabad, Chennai and Chandigarh) we are now focusing on same day closure of service requests. Customers can reach us for any support through dedicated contact centre which is available all seven days through out the year. In addition we have facility of e-mail and website through which customers can send their service requests. We have a cloud based CRM tool which is the backbone of our service op-



erations wherein most of the activities are automated and it also gives real time customer history and extensive analytics which helps in customer handling. This CRM helps us in keeping the customer informed (KCI) about the end-to-end progress of their service requests at every stage and customer needn't call contact centre multiple times. We offer different kind of services to customers like installation, warranty service, pre-sales demo, post sales demo, preventive maintenance, de-installation and re-installation service etc. In order to avail these service all that the customer has to do is to reach out to us. The quality of service is measured through a happy code process which is 4 digit code sent to customer's mobile after the service request is logged and customers are re-

quested to share this happy code with the technician, only when they are delighted with the service.

Currently we hovering at 90%+ in this measurement. We are connecting back to the customers who don't give the happy code to technician so that we can get real time feedback on the gaps in the process. We are putting our intensive thrust in the training of the people, specially those who are touch point for customers like field technician and contact centre agent. These people are crucial in formation of customer's perception about our service quality. With the help of our CRM we will change the orthodox process of selling the annual maintenance contract / Extended warranty contract with the customers.