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Landis+Gyr eyes bigger growth in Indian market



"India for me is all about growing possibilities. To grow in India we need to work with mutuality, to create greater possibilities," says Ellie Doyle, Executive Vice President - Asia Pacific, Landis+Gyr

Landis+Gyr, an innovator in energy management, provides a complete range of metering products, systems and solutions for automated meter reading, smart grid, to utilities in India. In an exclusive interview with Subhajt Roy, Ellie Doyle, Executive Vice President - Asia Pacific, Landis+Gyr explains why her company considers India a 'driving engine'.

Ms Ellie, you look at the entire Asia Pacific market. How would you compare India with other geographies in Asia vis-à-vis Landis+Gyr?

Within the Asia Pacific market India is our second largest market after China. It is an open, interesting market with a lot of promise for the future in smart grid. Despite several challenges in the areas of economic development, we consider India as a forward-thinking market.

Landis+Gyr group has an annual turnover of around 1.5 billion. What would be the contribution from Indian market?

Indian market contributed around \$ 44 million last year. Though India is a robust market for us, it is an equally competitive and challenging due to the presence of too many players.

Existence of many other MNCs or existence of unorganised players – what do you consider to be your biggest threat as far as Indian market is concerned?

The products that rush up are for short time, they create unreasonable price pressure in the market. However, we don't consider them as our threat. We have to pay attention toward India to meet the demand in long run and put an impression in the market without compromising on the quality. We are here to offer technologically advanced, sustainable solutions for Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI).

In India, one needs to deliver sustainable products at a competitive cost. In this situation, what are your strategies to remain competitive in the India market?

There is no question that we need to address this situation. Indian market has tremendous potential due to its population. It cries out for a solution – it needs smart power grid, smart electricity. And for smart electricity it needs stable, reliable power supply. Landis+Gyr has the technology and needs foundation for that. Having two large state-of-the-art manufacturing facilities in India is a good way to ensure we remain competitive in India. That's why we want to make India a significant destination for our business.

Now that the government of India plans to build 100 smart cities across the country, how do you look at this opportunity for your business?

The government's plan of building 100 smart

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We believe, for a smart city, everything else will not function without reliable, flexible energy management.



Landis+Gyr interview
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cities is an exciting initiative. It is the indication of foremost thing that will take India to the next level. It is a bright opportunity for what we can provide the foundation for smart cities. For a start, cities cannot be smart without reliable electricity supply. Landis+Gyr provides the foundations for reliable electricity and therefore has tremendous opportunity.

From this perspective, we would like to create partnerships with the government and other stakeholders to offer high-quality, economically viable smart solutions. From the technology standpoint, we seek to deliver proven technologies that are adaptable, flexible.

What sort of solutions you provide for 'reliable electricity'?

The first part of foundation includes smart grid and smart meter to integrate reliable power supply across firms, homes, electricity grid etc. One of the sustainable things we do is, we have the mission critical applications. It's not just the smart metering, but it is beyond metering.

On that note, we have just completed a successful commercial AMI pilot with Tata Power Delhi Distribution Limited. In the pilot, we delivered new and state-of-the-art smart grid solutions that are able to provide reliable electricity for the community.

Another part is social infrastructure systems. Our parent company Toshiba Corporation, a world-leader in electronics and social infrastructure systems, provides solutions to connect homes, water management and emergency services in 36 smart community projects that make a city truly smart. Together with Toshiba, we undertook Asia's largest AMI rollout of 27 million end points for Tokyo Electric Power Corporation (TEPCO) Japan, offering the foundation for reliable power supply and sustainable smart community technologies.

We believe, for a smart city, everything else will not function without reliable, flexible energy management.

India is yet to provide access to electricity across the country. So is it possible to provide 24/7 reliable electricity?

Undoubtedly, India has to achieve sustainable growth though it is difficult. Smart metering or smart grid is one aspect of how we can bring reliability in power supply; however it is not the only solution. It also shows if one can manage with them or not.

What are the challenges the utilities are facing in deploying advanced metering infrastructure?

There are some challenges. First of all, share holders and regulators have to put concerted efforts to remove existing financial hurdles. In India, the government policies, regulatory frameworks and incentive frameworks need to be improved; start by creating a regulatory framework for adopting implementation of AMI.

Another challenge is the adaptation of right technology. The technology that is proven, scalable and adaptable should be accepted to attain the highest degree of efficiency. The utilities also need to accept the technologies which are suitable to local prerequisites and conditions.

There are challenges also lie in terms of implementation. This is the most crucial part in AMI deployment where utilities will find if the solution proposed meet schedule milestones, requirements and successful integration. Landis+Gyr have expertise and references of implementing projects world-wide. We would like to bring-in the global expertise to the Indian market, design a solution that meets the local needs and at the same time lead the industry with world-class solutions.

As the government of India is promoting the 'Make in India' initiative would you like to expand your manufacturing facilities here?

We are really proud of the products we manufacture in India. We have two large, state-of-the-art manufacturing units based in Kolkata and Baddi, Himachal Pradesh. The facilities have capacity of producing 4 million meters annually which can be scaled up to meet market requirements. As of now we are manufacturing around 2.5 million meters annually to meet the demand of Indian market.

We consider India as a centre of manufacturing excellence for our global business. Though manufacturing is a core area, the one thing that I am proud of in India is the Global Development Centre located in Noida. Backed by highly-skilled engineers, the centre works as a driving engine for our product development both locally and globally. In that sense, we are already part of the government's 'Make in India' initiative.

Out of the total production, how much does it contribute to the export market?

As of now we do not, but we would like to make India an export hub for our Asia Pacific market. We are quite optimistic about Indian market and have already initiated a discussion in this regard. We are watching the development related to AMI in Indian industry closely.

What are your long- and short-term objectives for business in India?

It is all about acceptability. One of the beautiful things about India is that it is an open market. India for me is all about growing possibilities. To grow in India we need to work with mutuality, to create greater possibilities.

Indian market offers huge potential for us and is promising. It has the right economics. All we need is the right regulations and government support to be able to offer right solutions to the utilities. ⚡