

INTERVIEW: NITISH KAPOOR

MANAGING DIRECTOR, RECKITT BENCKISER INDIA

Working on distribution network to expand presence across the country

Reckitt Benckiser India is betting big on its strategy to fight competition in the domestic markets. The company has products like Dettol soaps, Mortein coils, Harpic and Lysol, and is increasing its distribution network in both urban and rural markets to reach out to more people. After acquiring Paras Pharma four years ago, RB is looking at more acquisition opportunities for growth in the domestic and global markets alike. In an interview with Lalitha Srinivasan, Reckitt Benckiser India managing director Nitish Kapoor speaks on the company's growth plans. Excerpts:

After taking over as the managing director of RB this year, what are your key priorities?

We are a high-growth business in a high-growth industry. The challenge is to bring more consumers towards our brands. Our priority is to increase RB's reach in India. Innovative products improve the level of presence in all the areas. Therefore, we are investing in R&D projects as well. The way we talk to people has changed with social media, which plays an important role today. We are investing in this medium too. At the heart of whatever we do, I would say it is our presence in more areas that will take us forward.

How do you plan to improve your distribution network



to fight competition?

Our main focus is on expanding our presence. For the purpose, we are increasing our distribution network across the country. Rural areas are definitely a bigger opportunity. Earlier rural distribution mainly relied on wholesale channels. Now, rural

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al sector has a dedicated distribution structure. We are taking our brands such as Dettol soaps, Mortein coils, small sachets of Harpic and Lysol to rural markets in a big way.

Has Reckitt Benckiser set up any hub in India for its global operations? How important is RB India in your worldwide operations?

RB Worldwide has invested in R&D innovation facilities for one of the categories which is pest control in India. In fact, global pest control innovation is led out of India. We have invested in global innovations out of India. We have set up healthcare capabilities in India and we have factories here that supply for our operations in other countries. India plays a very significant role in our worldwide operations.

Tell us about RB India's

power brand strategy. Are you bringing any of your global brands to India?

Globally, we have 19 power brands in our portfolio in three categories—health, hygiene and home. In India, we have 14 power brands, including Lysol, Dettol, Veet, Mortein and Harpic. We will follow our global power brand strategy in India. We have just brought in Gaviscon from RB's stable. We will keep bringing in our global power brands to India.

We plan to grow our local brands such as Paras Pharma brands in India. We have recently extended the portfolio of DermiCool with the launch of toilet soaps.

Have you taken your acquired brands from Paras Pharma to foreign markets?

Yes, Some of Paras Pharma brands now have a presence in the Middle East and North Africa (Mena).

What are RB India's advertising strategy?

We are one of the biggest advertisers on television. In addition, we are investing in digital advertising which includes mobile advertising. Our focus is also on social media communication. We have roped in Bollywood actor Amitabh Bachchan as the campaign ambassador for Dettol's Baneega Swachh India programme. Through social media, we want to create an awareness for hygiene products.

Company