

Interview: Armando Martinez - General Manager, Beckman Coulter Mexico



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23.02.2017

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Armando Martínez, general manager at Beckman Coulter Mexico, explains the company's unique business model Coulter, the strong added-value of its broad and innovative healthcare solutions, and how they help improve the efficiency of laboratories.

Could you please introduce yourself to our international audience as well as the operations of Beckman Coulter in Mexico?

I have been involved in the healthcare and life sciences industry for more than 25 years heading diverse roles in several leading companies in the sector. I rapidly developed a passion for the industry because of the positive impact we create on the quality of life of the patients.

Beckman Coulter is one of the world's leading diagnostics and life sciences equipment companies and it has a longstanding presence of more than 50 years in Mexico; it is currently positioned as the third largest player on the domestic market with approximately 20 percent market share. Our operations here are focused on providing solutions targeted to areas such as hematology, immunology, chemistry, urinalysis and, more recently, microbiology. Automating the labs is one of the benefits we offer to our customers.

We have more than 60 professionals that support our operations with a strong background in both diagnostics and life sciences. I am proud to confirm that our leading positioning is based on the high-quality services and solutions that we provide as well as the continuous innovation that come

from our qualified team.

You were appointed as general manager of Beckman Coulter Mexico one year ago, in January 2016. What was your assigned mission and what have been your biggest accomplishments so far?

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One of my main missions was to properly implement the Danaher Business System (DBS) within Beckman Coulter's operations in Mexico. Even though Danaher acquired Beckman Coulter back in 2011, the implementation of the DBS in the Mexican affiliate has been delayed. I was elected to lead such mission because I already had strong knowledge of the DBS concept due to my prior experience of nearly six years within Danaher's group.

My other two important goals are to give solid and sustainable growth to the affiliate while increasing our market share within the Mexican industry. These three goals are quite linked as DBS is the path of development that will drive Beckman Coulter Mexico towards the other two objectives.

Danaher acquired Beckman Coulter in 2011 because of its quality of product portfolio and solutions in addition to the brand recognition it has in the diagnostics market worldwide. Danaher will improve the company's performance by implementing the Danaher Business System (DBS). You just mentioned that one of your assignments is to properly implement the DBS in the Mexican affiliate of Beckman Coulter. How applicable is the Danaher Business System in the Mexican market?

It is never easy to implement structural changes and I expect to have fully implemented DBS within the affiliate in about three years. This system will help us to become more aligned with the corporate strategy of both Beckman Coulter Inc. and Danaher, taking advantage of the existing synergies within the group. Expanding on DBS' culture, it has three main pillars: lean, leadership, and growth.

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The lean pillar aims to enhance the efficiency and efficacy of the processes and operations of the company but also of our clients since we also apply such a concept in their labs. Leadership tools help us to develop the professional competences and talent of our teams. The growth pillar provides some tools to management teams that help them design and implement a clear action plan ensuring the proper accomplishment of the targets.

The implementation of the DBS in Mexico has been quite successful so far and all our teams of professionals share the same vision and praxis; they are already used to work with numbers and scorecards to undertake the proper decisions. Indeed, we have enhanced the way DBS was used in our affiliate by 70 percent and, as a consequence, we have obtained an outstanding double-digit growth in terms of revenues.

Beckman Coulter is positioned as one of the world leaders in clinical diagnostics and life sciences research presenting a broad portfolio sorted out in two main divisions: life sciences and diagnostics. What is the breakdown of revenues per business division and where do you foresee more growth?

Diagnostics is the main contributor representing approximately 90 percent of our turnover. Nevertheless, we expect to obtain strong growth from our life sciences division in the upcoming years. Even though both divisions are quite separate from the structural point of view, we strongly foster the collaboration between both business lines as well as the rest of the companies within Danaher's group in order to deliver higher value to our customers and take advantage of the existing synergies.

What is your footprint in the public and private market?

80 percent of our total business in Mexico is focused on the public market. We expect to maintain such combination of revenues per segment, while increasing our market shares in both the public and private sector.

Clinical diagnostics and life sciences solutions are starting to converge offering an integral offering resulting from the synergies between them, such as technology. As one of the leading companies in such area, could you explain to our international audience how is this trend affecting your operations?

We are fostering collaboration between both divisions since there are some solutions within our life sciences line that are also useful for our diagnostics division. Such cooperation between our diagnostics and life sciences teams has helped us to bring higher value to our customers improving the efficiency ratios of our clients' labs, while enhancing the quality of life of the patients. Such convergence has helped us to obtain our main commercial focus: bring the best healthcare solutions to healthcare professionals in order to provide the most appropriate and convenient treatment to the patient.

When we met Mikel Arriola, he told us that one of his main objectives is to ensure the financial sustainability of the IMSS, which is quite challenging considering that the government does not have enough resources to treat the national patients' needs. As Beckman Coulter's focus is to create the world's most efficient laboratories, improving patient health and reducing cost of care, could you expand on how you are helping the government to overcome such a challenge as well as enhancing the quality of life of the patients and enlarging the market access to health solutions?

Patient-centricity is the backbone of our company and we are always working hand in hand with our customers in order to fully understand their needs as well as their challenges. Such commercial approach enables us to offer the most suitable solution to our clients according to their service objectives and financial capabilities; in fact, we are as much committed to our clients' goals as them.

In terms of public health institutions, we are highly devoted to finding the most suitable solution to ensure that they are able to reach their service targets as well as reduce the cost of treatment. Beckman Coulter is partnering with channel partners and the Mexican government to understand and define their healthcare needs considering their scope and limitations.

We have perceived that in the medtech industry, technology is breaking diagnostic and research boundaries, through digitalization for instance. As one of the leading companies in your niche, what are your thoughts on that and how is this translated into your product portfolio to ensure that Beckman Coulter remains ahead of the disruptive curve?

Innovation is a big word in the industry and it is a core value within Beckman Coulter's praxis. We are well known within the industry by doing strong investments in order to offer cutting edge IT and equipment solutions. Our innovation approach is to develop those solutions and we believe that they will create a strong impact in the efficiency and productivity ratios of our clients' labs operations. In this sense, Beckman Coulter has IT solutions that are strongly linked to our equipment in order to offer an integral solution bringing fast and accurate results to the healthcare professionals, and enhances the quality of life of the patients at the end.

Medical Education plays an important role in the medtech industry to ensure that the end-users are using the devices to their maximum potential. How is Beckman Coulter helping the Mexican healthcare community to take advantage of such technological developments and cutting-edge portfolio?

It is important to consider that, since you are targeting different healthcare professionals, you need to talk the same argot of the final users in order to deliver successful medical education. Beckman Coulter has training programs targeted to each different healthcare segment to properly communicate the benefits from our offering. In addition, we are also closely working with key opinion leaders within the healthcare industry that support and give credibility to our solutions.

What are the key competitive advantages that make Beckman Coulter the partner of choice for both public and private institutions?

As aforesaid, patient-centricity is the backbone of our strategy and I would like to highlight such commercial approach as one of our main differentiators. Indeed, our sales representatives work hand in hand with our clients to fully understand our clients' needs and, consequently, provide them the most suitable solution to minimize any gap of improvement. I am proud to confirm that Beckman Coulter is positioned as an extensive arm of its clients' clinical and life sciences departments.

What is the final message that you would like to share with our international readers as well as your current and potential clients and partners?

Beckman Coulter has a very solid mission that consists in delivering innovative, reliable and efficient diagnostics solutions to patients across the globe providing advancing healthcare to all the people. I would like to reinforce that such mission is strongly shared by the rest of the affiliates and each one of the employees that form Beckman Coulter; this is our commitment.

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