Interview: Tatiane Galindo – Executive Director, Ortosintese, Brazil



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Tatiane Galindo, executive director of Ortosintese, Brazil's and Latin America's leading implant company, provides insights into Ortosintese's historical commitment to the highest quality standards and her ambitions to further bolstering the development of innovative projects as well as the company's international footprint, while Ortosintese's implants are already available in over 30 countries around the world.

Could you please provide our international readers with a brief introduction to Ortosintese and document the company's current positioning?

My father Sebastião Galindo originally founded Ortosintese in 1977. At that time, Ortosintese's production plant only held a total surface of nine sq.m, and the company therefore had an extremely limited manufacturing capacity. However, since its beginnings, Ortosintese's approach has always been based on high-quality products, which has led the company to experience a continuous growth throughout its history. In 2003, we moved to a new industrial complex of 8,000 sq.m, which holds a state of art orthopedic production unit, as well as another 4,000 sq.m only dedicated to the development of hospital equipment such as autoclaves, surgical table, surgical lightning and thermo-cleaner among few other special designed products.

Today, we have more than 300 employees that are fully committed to the development of our twofold business model by leveraging our metrology room, water cutting machines and polishing

robots. As a matter of fact, Ortosintese has been the leader in Brazil's and Latin America's orthopedic markets for over 15 years. Ortosintese also proudly stands as Brazil's leading exporter of orthopedic implants, as 29 percent of our production is exported to over 30 countries around the world.

As you took over the helm of the company in 2013, what have been your strategic priorities to further develop the company?

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My first and foremost objective was to trigger a deep and comprehensive professionalization phase, in order to reinforce a new cycle of growth on both domestic and international stages. We have already reached huge progress in this regard, and we are now investing in an industrial management system and in personnel training overseas. However, one should not see Ortosintese's optimization efforts as a one-off process, as we truly follow a continuous improvement approach and aim at importing best practices from international markets, where our products are available through distributors.

The second aspect of my strategy relates to the strengthening of innovative projects' development. On this line, we teamed up with reputable manufacturers of raw materials as well as with well-known universities in Sao Paulo such as the Universidade de São Paulo (USP) and Faculdade de Ciências Médicas de São Paulo (FCMSP), and invested overall more than three million dollars in 4.0 technology projects.

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Finally, we have been pioneers in Brazil in the development of virtual reality tools in the orthopedics business, which will enable doctors to digitally explore patients' tomography in a very immersive manner. This new offering is almost ready, and we will present it in May 2018 at the next Hospitalar Trade Fair for Hospital Equipment & Supplies in Sao Paulo, as we expect to launch it in Brazil in June 2018.

Ortosintese exports its products to more than 30 countries, which is particularly eye-catching for a Brazilian company. How have you been developing the company's international footprint over the past years?

It is true that most Brazilian companies have historically been focused on their domestic market, while Ortosintese has always embraced a true global approach since its foundation by Mr. Galindo. Since I took over, I have been keeping up with this international model and ensuring we are up

front with new strategies tackling challenging markets and economic instability, therefore increasing the numbers of international markets in which we operate in.

As an example, in 2014, Venezuela collapsed because of political and economic turmoil, whereas it was Ortosintese's largest international market and we held a 70 percent market share there. As a result, I decided to prioritize the development of our business in other Latin American markets such as Colombia, Argentina and Chile, where we now hold a market share of more than 28 percent.

We are now focus on developing a stronger presence in fast-growing markets, notably in Eastern Europe and in the Middle East. Finally, Ortosintese's products are now available in some of the most promising healthcare markets in Africa, such as Angola, Kenya, and Egypt.

What would you highlight as Ortosintese's competitive advantages in international markets?

Above all, Ortosintese boasts a high-precision, high quality production capacity that is absolutely unrivalled across Latin America. To give you a concrete example, we stand as one of the only implant companies owning a production capacity for additive manufacturing *[the industrial version of 3-D printing – Ed]*.

In the meantime, our continuous efforts to be as cost efficient as possible have enabled us to keep our production costs as low as possible, so our prices are particularly competitive in both emerging and advanced markets.

Finally, innovation is truly at the core of our company, and – as illustrated before – I want this aspect to further gain in importance in the coming years.

What are some of the main challenges you face when propelling the development of the company?

Our main challenge is to remain up to date with the new regulations implemented in Brazil as well as in Europe while controlling costs and taxes which can be abruptly influenced by the political and economic scenarios.

Nevertheless, we are confident that Brazil is now about to find its way back to positive growth numbers, which can definitely contribute to propel our country's domestic industry.

How do you want the Ortosintese brand to be perceived globally?

We want to be seen as a global, established, and trustworthy brand that has more than 40 years of experience in Brazil, one of the world's largest healthcare markets. In this regard, we are particularly proud that Ortosintese has already caught the attention of international medtech players, which were ready to invest in our company.

In the grand scheme of things, patients and physicians are at the center of everything we do: Mr. Galindo's pioneering philosophy was to develop implants that all our employees would recommend to their relatives with their eyes closed – and this spirit is still driving the way we develop our activities.

What is your final message to our readers?

Beside our strong international footprint, Ortosintese still stands as a 100 percent Brazilian company and we are particularly proud of this specificity. To put it bluntly: Ortosintese deeply believes in Brazil. When difficulties arise, the most important is to keep working with integrity and dedication; as Brazilian nationals and professionals, we developed ourselves through challenging times that tremendously strengthened our resilience. As my father says: "*when you face challenges in your life, wake up earlier, work harder, do not feel sorry for yourself – and you will solve them*."

As a company and as citizens of this country, we want to show to the world that Brazil's potential is not only limited to its huge market, as our country also holds a strong healthcare industry that is fostered by Brazilians' creativity, strength and resilience.

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