

By Niranjan Mudholkar

## ALL PUMPED UP!

Sloan is working towards designing and making products at our manufacturing and assembling unit at the Gurgaon facility, says **Anup Tripathi**, General Manager, Sloan India

### **Sloan entered into the Indian market in 2016. How's been the journey so far?**

Sloan Valve Company, one of the leading players in the US commercial plumbing market, ventured into India in 2016. So far, we have expanded our presence in most of the tier-1/tier-2 cities PAN India. This year, keeping in line with the PM's vision of Make in India, we established our very first assembling facility in Gurgaon to build solutions for India and the world. As an Indian Green Building Council Member, Sloan strives to help build a greener India. We have already been exporting our products manufactured and designed in India to Middle East, Asia and other countries.

### **How important is the India market in Sloan's global scheme of things?**

India is one of the most important markets for Sloan global as it's one of the top emerging markets and the plumbing and smart restrooms have been growing exceptionally here. Also, Sloan's smart and water saving solutions meets best to the need of Indian market. Sloan has been in India for more than three years and has launched products such as the TruFlush Flushometer that helps address the water crisis several states are facing. This product is designed and developed for India centric requirements and bad quality water. This is our flagship product for this market, and we have already been able to sell this to more than 500 high end customers including large tech companies, hotel, offices, airports, malls, hospitals, automobile showrooms, restaurant chains and housing projects.



**"Five things that are very important to build a self-reliant India are intent, inclusion, investment, infrastructure, and innovation. This mainly covers the dimension of increasing the global competitiveness of Indian production and building connections to global value chains."**

### **What are the three differentiating factors that you bring to this market?**

As the world's leading manufacturer of commercial plumbing systems, Sloan has been deploying innovation in transforming the plumbing industry through more than a century of smart, water-saving, and safe commercial restroom solutions. Thus, water conservation, sustainability and touchless functions are three core areas Sloan is focusing on here in India.

### **How has the Covid-19 pandemic affected Sloan India's business and operations?**

COVID-19 has completely changed the way everyday lives functioned. Without a doubt, the biggest problem facing all of us right now is the uncertainty it brings in. But Sloan's goal is to continue working and developing sustainable and sensor activated or touch free products through this unpredictable time. The COVID-19 crisis has, however, made sustainability crucial as hygiene norms such as repeated handwashing have led to a sudden surge in water usage. Thus, our focus is on touchless technology by bringing in touchless, sustainable and water-efficient products.

Although the pandemic has caused almost all major industries to evaluate how they operate, the construction industry in particular has got a unique opportunity to reform and innovate. This will help in creating the right solution required for any commercial environment.

### **How's been the business for Sloan India in the ongoing fiscal? Do you see things improving in 2021?**

Sloan India anticipates 40 percent to 50 percent growth in next financial year. Our key customers include leading IT companies, Hospitality, Institutes, Schools, Clubs, Airports, High-end housing projects etc. Most of the customers are facing manpower crisis due to pandemic and that will improve in 2021. Also, customers in India have also seen soaring aspirations regarding the look of their bathrooms and plumbing fixtures. There was already a perceptible shift towards sleek, sustainable, smart solutions in bathrooms and restrooms. But the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated this trend



due to high morbidity and mortality rates.

The importance of smart systems with touchless plumbing solutions has gained overnight attention as people seek to avoid touching faucets and other bathroom fittings in minimising their chances of contracting coronavirus. As a result, going forward customers in India are seeking touch-free fixtures.

**Tell us about Sloan India's manufacturing infrastructure and capabilities. Are you manufacturing all your products (sold in India) in India at present?**

Our facility is basically an assembly unit; we source parts from India and a small percentage from globally and assemble them in India. We are working towards creating 100 percent Made in India products. So far, we are producing manual and Sensor activated Flushometer, AER-DEC® Integrated Sink System, Sensor Faucets and many more products will be available as Made in India by next year.

**Tell us about your endeavours in terms of design & engineering to create products that are relevant and appealing to the Indian customers.**

We have a team of experienced engineers who design the products for the Indian market, with same Sloan global standards. Customers in India need a product which has a good aesthetic look, best in functionality and price effectiveness. At the same time, installation and working conditions in commercial environment are quite tough, and product needs to be robust in terms of built and performance. As our focus is water efficiency and sustainability, that is also kept in mind while designing a product for this market.

**Are you planning to introduce any new products in the near future?**

In the coming future, we are planning to introduce ceramic fixtures such as water closets, washbasins and urinals and also planning to launch hybrid urinals which were earlier launched as a pilot project. All these solutions would be available PAN India for our customers

and upcoming projects. We have other toilet product designs as well, that we intend to launch later for the Indian market. We are working on designing products such as flush valves that will work with only four litres of water, sensor-activated urinal flush valves that will use 500 ml water and sensor faucets using only 250 ml of water.

With the current pandemic situation, everyone has realised the need of water saving touchless taps and thus we are also looking forward to expand our already existing faucet line with more variants.

**What kind of growth plans do you have for the India market?**

Sloan is working towards designing and making products at our manufacturing and assembling unit at the Gurgaon facility. By 2021, our efforts are to design and manufacture as many Made in India products as possible at our Indian facility. Sloan will be supporting the mission towards a self-reliant India by manufacturing products domestically, designed for the Indian market. We are also planning to extend our export operations to the Middle East, Asia, South America and the Mexican markets. We are also looking to expand our operations in India by tying up with smart cities, airports, luxury real estate developers, government agencies or authorities in the country. In long term, we are eyeing India as the manufacturing hub for International markets.

**What is your take on PM Modi's vision for 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' in the context of your industry?**

Five things that are very important to build a self-reliant India are intent, inclusion, investment, infrastructure, and innovation. This mainly covers the dimension of increasing the global competitiveness of Indian production and building connections to global value chains. As the real estate in India is booming, people are spending more and more on bathroom fittings and luxuries than their drawing rooms. Everyone needs smart and innovative solutions which are safer and hygienic at the same time. Also, India is facing water crisis for some time; making solutions specifically catering to the need of the hour is very important. Our PM's vision for Atmanirbhar Bharat is giving the plumbing industry an opportunity to expand and design solutions that can save water and maintain best hygiene practices in any restroom environment. By 2021, our efforts are to design and manufacture as many Made in India products as possible at the Indian facility. Sloan will be supporting the mission towards a self-reliant India by manufacturing products domestically, designed for the Indian market. 