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ACE list

Vision of the management is what defines roadmap of the company and ultimately its success. Hence, it was compelling for us at The Machinist to understand the mindset of those whose contribution in the automotive industry is immense. We started the ACE List couple of years back featuring some of the leading entrepreneurs from the automotive industry. This year we have a next-generation in the list. These guys have taken their respective legacy to the next level in true sense. On the hand veterans in the list throw light on the transformation of the industry and way forward.

By Swati Deshpande

Abhishek Jain

CEO & MD PPAP Automotive

“**O**utperforming previous results and continuously improving is our aim,” says Abhishek Jain, Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director, PPAP Automotive. Adding further to it, he says “Daily small improvement is our mantra for success. We firmly believe that today’s result should be better than yesterday’s. The team is motivated to take up new challenges and is focused on doing activities more efficiently.”

Speaking about improvements at the company level, Jain mentions, “Our journey on the path of continuous improvement and Muda elimination continued during the year and brought creditable results with the EBITDA margin crossing 21 percent in the

Daily small improvement is our key mantra for success. We firmly believe that today’s result should be better than yesterday’s.

last quarter of the Financial Year 2016-17. In the current financial year, we have targeted to grow at higher than industry rate, acquire more customers and consolidate the improvements achieved.”

The country is undergoing one of the biggest tax reforms in the history. How that is to be affected the automotive industry? “GST regime will definitely support the competitiveness of the automotive industry as it will eliminate the state boundaries and goods can be easily transferred from one state to another. We have already started seeing the OEM’s reducing their prices due to the impact of GST. It is expected to bring in seamless flow of Input Tax Credit and removal of cascading effect of taxes. Increased online working shall reduce the direct interface with the GST departments. It shall ultimately be demand ac-



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cretive as overall efficiencies will be improved.”

With the motto of continuous improvement, the company has brought about innovative product and also has won an ET Poymers Award for Excellence in Automotive. Elaborating on this innovation, Jain mentions, “Body slide moulding for Baleno won the award. And the features that turned to be award worthy were - Weight reduction (by 17 percent), reduced wall thickness and addition of aesthetics with Chrome Insert.”

“Body Side Molding is used to add aesthetics and also provide safety to the vehicle in case of minor accidents. PPAP’s in-house designed part is not only light in weight but also easy to install on the door panel. These features have resulted in improving the vehicle’s fuel efficiency and time saving in part assembly. Despite weight reduction, Product Quality requirements were ensured through DFMEA, Design Reviews, Mould flow Analysis, material testing, PFMEA, performance testing and inspection,” he further adds.

Paradigm shift

The auto industry is going through a transitional phase. Speaking on it, Jain notes, “The paradigm shift taking place in the industry is towards the focus in reduction of fuel consumption and a connected car concept where the car is an extension of yourself. We are continuously challenging our designs and providing lower weight solutions to our customers.”

Also, lightweighting is another area that has been challenging auto makers and auto component makers. “The prime focus on reduction of fuel consumption has led many automakers to focus on reducing the weight of their car by using light weight components. Use of engineered plastic has been

The automotive industry is a highly competitive industry where you are competing with local as well as global players. It is imperative that in order to survive, we supply our components with utmost quality at the most competitive prices.

playing a major role in replacing traditionally used steel in many components. PPAP has been consistently supporting this initiative by efforts towards reducing the cross section of its profiles as well as wall thickness of injection moulding parts, thereby reducing the weight of the components manufactured by it,” he said.

As far as Indian automotive industry is concerned, it is further in transition from regulations point of view. “We will be seeing a lot of technology getting changed on the fuel intake systems, emissions and the exhaust systems. Many component suppliers are ready with the technology to cater to BS VI requirements. The biggest foreseeable change will happen when India decides to adopt hybrid and electric vehicle technology in a big way.”

As the industry goes through a number of transitions, one of the aspect that can not be neglected is skilled labour. While touching upon the topic, Jain mentions, “The automotive industry is a highly competitive where you are competing with local as well as global players. It is imperative that in order to survive, we supply our components with utmost quality at the most competitive prices. Skilled and responsible workforce is the minimum requirement of the industry. Unless we have committed labour force, we cannot be competitive in the long run.”

He further adds that the Government of India is well aware of this gap between availability and need. “Revamping of ITIs, Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) are some of the initiatives being taken. While these initiatives are in the right direction, the implementation is yet to give the desired output of skilled manpower to meet present day requirement of Automotive Component industry,” he concludes. 

