



Mr. Manni Kantipudi – CEO

ARAGEN

In Every molecule is the possibility for better health

CAN YOU PLEASE GIVE AN OVERVIEW OF YOUR PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND LEADING UP TO AND INCLUDING YOUR CURRENT ROLE?

My journey with Aragen (formerly, GVK BIO) started way back in 2007. I joined as the President and then became the Director and CEO in 2009. Over the years, the company has emerged as a leading R&D and manufacturing solutions provider to the global life sciences industry. During this tenure, Aragen Biosciences (based out of CA, USA) was acquired in 2014 to expand service offerings for large molecules. We were probably the first Indian CRO to make an overseas acquisition as a part of our inorganic growth. In my current role, I am responsible for the overall growth, providing strategic direction and shaping the culture of the company.

WHAT HAVE BEEN SOME OF THE SIGNIFICANT HIGHLIGHTS OF ARAGEN LIFE SCIENCES HISTORY?

Our journey over the last two decades has been a journey demonstrating our consistent growth, our continued transformation to meet our customer's ever growing needs. We started as an informatics company in 2001. Ever since then, we have brought in diverse range of capabilities /capacities in chemistry, biology, process development, manufacturing, formulation development and analytical services to become an end-to-end integrated discovery-development-



manufacturing solutions partner to our customers. From a single site operation in Hyderabad, we now operate out of seven locations (including one in US). To reach out to our customers, we now have a global BD team situated out of US, EU and Japan. We are now recognized as one of the market leaders from Asia and this is a testimony to the team that we have assiduously built over the years. Our acquisition of Aragen Biosciences in 2014, enabled us to expand our discovery and development service offerings from small molecules to biologics too.

During this time, we have also been able to attract some of the best investors - Sequoia Capital and ChrysCapital who have been very satisfied and rewarded with their investment and association with us. Our current investor - Goldman Sachs brings worldwide network and experience that will help expand Aragen's portfolio of differentiated offerings and client base to accelerate the company's growth. We have been recognized and accredited by leading regulatory agencies like US FDA, AAALAC reflecting our industry leading practices and systems in

place. We are also one of the few CROs who have been recognized twice as 'Great Place to Work', won Asia's best employer brand award and Best-of-Breed COVID Champion Award from National HR Development Network. the best places to work

WHAT ARE SOME OF ARAGEN LIFE SCIENCES'S KEY VALUES AND BELIEFS? HOW IMPORTANT IS CUSTOMER'S SATISFACTION?

Very much aligned to our purpose- In every molecule is the possibility for better health, the customer has always been the universe around which we operate. Whether large Pharma or small biotech, small or large molecule, our empowered teams give equal importance to every project. The values we offer at Aragen is with the vision of accelerating our customer's pathway to success.

WHAT DO YOU THINK SETS YOUR BUSINESS APART FROM ITS COMPETITORS?

Our differentiator have been the ability to implement our thoughts into actions to benefit all our stakeholders – customers, employees, investors and the ecosystem that we operate in. These are outlined below.

Customer at the Center - We give complete attention to each customer, offering a reliable and seamless experience.

Agile Partnerships - Every drug program is different and customers require agility and adaptiveness. We meet this challenge through responsive customer service, quick-to-adapt solutions, enabling technologies, and a partnership approach to every engagement.

Innovation Mindset & Empowered Teams - Leveraging our innovation mindset, rich scientific talent and empowered teams, we consistently deliver value to our customers.

Technology-enabled Platform & Operational Excellence - Our proprietary technologies and operational efficiencies compress

development timelines, offer a secure and seamless experience, and accelerate speed to market of customer products.

Concept to Commercial - We are end-to-end, full service partners to our customers, offering scalable and flexible solutions along the bio pharma value chain.

Corporate Sustainability: let us include a few lines here)

Our new brand mark embodies the brand promise, Together Ahead. We believe in collaborative partnerships and transparency. We collaborate and not compete. What we do is transparent business without any competing interest with any of our customers. We are not affiliated to any pharma companies nor do we invest in assets nor in equity of our partners. Our philosophy has been clear from the start and this value is what sets us apart from the rest.

HOW HAVE YOU FOUND THE BIO INDUSTRY IN INDIA?

With significant capital flowing into life sciences industry, every company, whether a large pharma or a young biotech, all have externalization as key element of their core growth plan. In 2020 alone, the industry attracted over \$23B in venture investments. These new firms all need CRO services. Especially with the recent trade wars and India having cost advantages, we can expect it to be the beneficiary of such capital trends.

HOW IMPORTANT IS CULTURE TO THE BUSINESS? HOW DO YOU INSTILL THIS IN YOUR EMPLOYEES?

Aragen's core values that are abbreviated as ETHICS guide our decisions, express our beliefs and define our culture. These are deeply embedded in our DNA that we live by every day. It is what determines 'how we do what we do' to our customers.

E- Empowerment: Employees are given the freedom to make a difference

T – Team Work: We function as agile, cross-functional teams focused on addressing customer problems and accelerating solutions

H - Honesty & Integrity: We are mindful of our role in the global bio-Pharma ecosystem and fully aware of our responsibility in providing reliable, consistent and quality data to accelerate the programs of our customers

I – Innovation: It is about developing solutions that are more effective and commercially relevant

C – Customer Focus: By providing flexible, integrated, end-to-end services along the concept-to-commercial continuum, we give our customers effective and timely solutions. Our customer repeat rate of over 90% is a reflection of our relentless focus on customer centricity.

S-Safety & Compliance: 'Safety and Compliance Always' is a way of life at Aragen.

Regular reviews, training, seminars, and implementation of technologies, demonstrate our commitment to embedding and continuously improving company-wide safety and compliance.

WHAT ARE THE PLANS FOR THE FUTURE IN TERMS OF EXPANSION AND GROWTH?

Over time, we have emerged as a global leader and partner of choice in small molecule discovery. We are rapidly expanding on small molecule development and manufacturing.

In large molecules, we are known for Cell Line Development where we help our partners succeed in expression of the most challenging proteins. We will continue to invest discovery footprint both in Hyderabad and Bangalore, we see clearly that the discovery needs are growing rapidly. In Development and manufacturing, we recently invested significantly in expansions, and now have the capacity to meet our customer's immediate future needs. In Biologics, we are



advancing downstream, and investing in a manufacturing facility in the US to offer a single seamless solution to our customers that want to develop and manufacture, all at one place

WHAT STRATEGIES DOES ARAGEN LIFE SCIENCES HAVE IN PLACE TO IMPROVE YOUR SUPPLY CHAIN AND BUILD LONG TERM RELATIONSHIPS WITH KEY PARTNERS?

Being part of service industry, our supply chain needs to be highly responsive towards business requirements and it's also critical to maintain profitability as well as focus on sustainability. Project based solutions requires to have long term forecast or standard BOQ/ MRP. Sometimes, this creates challenges to have long term contract or advanced planning. some of the key pillars to drive high performance in supply chain are technology adaption, continuous performance improvement, robust processes, supply risk mitigation, techno commercial resources, reliable/ effective supply partner base and industry benchmarking.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE KEY GOALS MR. MANNI KANTIPUDI AND ARAGEN LIFE SCIENCES COMPANY HAVE ACHIEVED SINCE THEY BEGAN THEIR ROLE AS THE CEO?

The Year 2021 is a defining milestone on our journey so far. It marks the 20th anniversary of GVK BIO's resilient growth story and its transformation into Aragen, a trusted R&D and manufacturing partner to the global life sciences industry. We have come a long way from where we started as an informatics company to Sequoia Capital investing in the company acquiring Aragen Bioscience in the U.S, we have had rapid expansions. In 2014, we established the second R&D facility at Mallapur. The year 2016 was significant for us in the sense that we expanded rapidly by starting a vivarium in Morgan Hill, CA and third R&D campus at Bangalore, India. The same year, we welcomed ChrysCapital as an investor. Along with this, we got recognized several times for our employee friendly work culture. It has been a great achievement that we have been certified as Great

Place To Work, twice in a row. In the year 2021, we underwent an extensive branding exercise and rebranded ourselves

HOW DOES ARAGEN LIFE SCIENCES COLLABORATE WITH AND DEVELOP RELATIONSHIPS WITH KEY SUPPLIERS AND WHAT BENEFITS AS A COMPANY DO YOU SEE FROM THIS COLLABORATION?

Highly engaged supplier base is very crucial for high performance of our supply chain on critical parameters of cost, OTIF and Compliance. It also helps us to improve our Agility, Competitive advantage and have better visibility of opportunities and challenges based on intelligence from our supplier systems. We have various interventions as below to engage our key suppliers or supply partners as we call them

i. Supplier Segmentation: We categorize our supply partners basis spend categories and various Risk associated with them, this helps us to prioritize the relationship with supply partners involved in high-risk procurement, those with the highest spend or strategic spend categories

ii. SRM Meetings: Strategy based discussion with senior management from both sides including value drivers like new offerings, risk reduction, Best Practices adoption, Green Initiatives, Technology Adaption etc are part of SRM meeting agenda. This helps in driving long term Strategic Alignment and Track and manage joint strategic initiatives

iii. Supply Partners Performance Management - Monthly Supply Partners performance is evaluated through Balance scorecard on critical parameters such as Value of spend, Delivery adherence, Credit terms, Quality performance, Documentation and final score is assigned. Basis the performance trend, focus areas of improvement are identified and respective Partners are engaged to improve the same

iv. Supply Partners Grievance Redressal – Process was designed to centralize and document, monitor and review the resolution of various grievances raised by

Various Partners. This is reviewed by SCM Head on weekly basis and updated to Management on monthly basis. Monthly grievances have got reduce by 30% and resolution time has improved by 40% in last 1 year resulting a more satisfied and engaged Partner's base.

v. Supply Partners Satisfaction Survey – Supply Partners satisfaction & feedback is utmost important in progress of any supply Chain team. Annual survey of top 80 % spend based Supply Partners was conducted on important parameters of Ethics, Compliance and Sustainability, Business Practices, Quality & accounting practices, Supply Partners Evaluations and Relationship process and Partnership. Overall score was improved by 15% over last year, with score of 4.3 on scale of 5

vi. Supplier base Consolidation: There is Constant focus to consolidate our supplier base across all spend categories focusing on tail

end spend, non-performing Supply Partners, High performing Supply Partners and Future business opportunities resulting in Improved Supply Partners relationship, increased purchasing power, Increase in compliance, reduced process cost & Reduced Risk.

vii. Forward Supply Opportunity engagement – Basis the feedback from Customers and in line with our business strategy, we continuously engage our Suppliers for potential projects across the spend categories to drive value from collaborated efforts and Innovation

ANYTHING ELSE YOU WOULD LIKE TO ADD OR EXPAND UPON?

As we step into this new phase where we have a brand new identity and a new investor joining us, we are excited to see what the future holds for us and look forward to the coming decade with our purpose of serving our customers and keeping them ahead in the race for better health.

