

Synergy With Sri Lanka

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Siemens, the global powerhouse in electronics and electrical engineering, operating in the industry, energy and health care sectors set up its Sri Lanka representative office a decade ago. Dr Armin Bruck the Managing Director, Siemens and Chief Executive Officer of Siemens South Asia speaks of their journey in Sri Lanka and the bright future ahead for the company as they synergise with the Country's strong economic growth trajectory.

By Manisha Wijegoonewardena

As a person who visits Sri Lanka every year, what are your thoughts on this year's visit with the local office celebrating ten years?

Once a year I come to Sri Lanka because it is a part of our cluster in South Asia, where I am the CEO. India and Bangladesh also falls under this group. Sri Lanka has been very successful during the past years and we are optimistic about Siemens' future in the country.

How has the past ten years been for Siemens in Sri Lanka?

We have a fantastic partnership with Diesel & Motor Engineering (DIMO). The partnership between Siemens and DIMO goes back fifty years therefore it was rather easy for us to enter the market as a company because Sri Lankans already know who we were.

Until Siemens set up office here, it was DIMO which basically represented us in the country. But thinking about our customers we decided to open a representative office in Sri Lanka and so far it's been a wonderful experience.

What can you tell us about the set up of the representative office in Sri Lanka?

We follow a lean organisation model with only a small group of staff. This set up allows us to offer the latest and the best in the industry at competitive and affordable prices. All our business is channelled through our partners in Sri Lanka and our local office provides technical support and business expertise. This model also gives customers dual benefits. Customers can approach the direct local support through partners and technical expertise from the principal.

If our local office cannot handle a particular task, they will approach our office in India, which is the largest in the region. If the team in India also cannot do it, the problem will be handled by our headquarters in Germany. The model followed in the local Siemens office is very successful to the company as well as the customers because it allows for quick responses and is very cost effective. Our fantastic partnership with DIMO once again helped us to continue this model.

Do you plan on expanding the business in Sri Lanka?

We would not plan to expand dramatically in Sri Lanka because we are satisfied with the current business model set up here. But our expansion will be focused on training our business partners such as DIMO. At the moment our plan is to continue only a representative office in Sri Lanka for the next couple of years.

We Are Definitely Geared To Accompany The Country On Their Fantastic Growth Path. Siemens Is An Ideal Business Partner On One Side And An Ideal Supplier From Another

Is the current set up of the representative office here scalable to cater to the growth in the country?

This model has the maximum scope to scale-up due to multiple support layers. Our channel partners offer the most flexibility in adding right expertise and resources to their offices as per demand. That provides for the immediate local push. More importantly, we have the ability to pull expertise and technical support from all over the world to cater to business demands across sectors. We work on the principle of centre of competency. Depending on the customer need, we offer unique solutions from the location which is an expert in the field.

How do you see the current Sri Lankan economy contributing to your business?

This time my duration of stay here is double than that of in the past. Siemens visualized the potential for Sri Lanka more than a decade ago that was why we set up an office here. Today, what I hear, see and read about Sri Lanka and its economy is very impressive. The prognosis for the future is unbelievable, through the discussions I have had here, it's clear that Sri Lanka is very stable and this should be carried forward. Sri Lanka is a key future economy of South Asia in the long run and it will be beneficial for the development of Siemens in this region.

Who are your key channel partners in Sri Lanka?

Our largest and strongest channel partner in the country is DIMO. They represent us in the area of healthcare, energy and building technology. Their reach across the country and service support along with the competency of the technical staff, is their unique proposition. Apart from the technical knowhow, the long lasting partnership between the house of Siemens and DIMO has contributed for our success here.

We also work with few other partners on a small scale, in different sectors such as automation systems and low voltage switchgear products.

In the health care sector what is unique about what Siemens offer?

It is clear that Siemens is the top notch supplier of technology such as MRI, Cath Lab, CT and so forth. The service ability and the service force of Siemens also make us stand above the rest. And in Sri Lanka the structure and the first level support given by DIMO is another added advantage. We guarantee to our customers that all our products are manufactured to a top quality standard.

How involved is Siemens in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)?

Globally Siemens is very active in terms of CSR, and we have our own Siemens trust that covers many projects around the world. This aspect has always been a focus area. We have always been conscious about contributing back to the society. In Sri Lanka, we have had funded projects alongside universities. We also played a significant role in the post tsunami recovery work.

How do you see Siemens contributing to Sri Lanka's economy?

The house of Siemens is well equipped to serve infrastructure, energy and healthcare sectors and these are areas that a growing and emerging economy requires. I would say that the services of Siemens have a fantastic synergy with Sri Lanka itself. We are definitely geared to accompany the country on their fantastic growth path. Siemens is an ideal business partner on one side and an ideal supplier from another since we are one of the exceptional companies that offer a one stop shop experience.