

SmartEnergy

Complete Renewable Energy Intelligence

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INTERVIEW **FACE 2 FACE**



"Consul offers a wide range of solar power products like Solar PCU's, Solar MPPT Charge controllers, off-grid and on-grid solar systems that cater primarily to institutions and business customers"

Sriram Ramakrishnan
CEO & M.D, Consul Consolidated Pvt Ltd

Q.To begin with, could you give us an overview of Consul Consolidated? What have been some of your organization's key highlights and benchmarks achieved since its inception?

Consul is one of the leading Indian companies in the power electronics space. It is one of the few companies that manufacture and supply a full range of power conditioning, power back-up, solar & energy conserver products, services and solutions. Consul solutions and products are backed with over three decades of field experience in developing customised power products that meet the exacting standards of clients in supporting critical and sensitive equipment in various industrial and commercial applications. Consul also assists customers optimize their power protection & energy consumption through tailor-made products & solutions.

The company currently operates 3 modern manufacturing facilities, 2 located in Chennai and 1 in Pune

where we manufacture Servo Voltage stabilizers, UPS, Industrial Inverters, Isolations transformers, Isolation Transformers and Solar PCU's. Consul was recently ranked as the No 3 Power Electric Company (PEC) in India for 2013 by Softdisk at its annual SD awards; Consul has consistently been ranked among the top 5 Indian PEC companies for the last 4 years with an A+ customer satisfaction rating.

We have an enviable base of more than 250,000 successful installations across India, Middle-East, Africa and South Asia representing over 1000 MW of product capacity delivered. Adding on we have one of the largest Pan India service network represented by 250 trained service engineers in 7 regional offices and 75 branch offices spread across the country.

Q.Tell us more about your products and services and the industries you cater to? What are the business seg-

ments that are driving growth and what are the segments that are likely to be the growth drives in the future?

Consul offers the full range of power conditioning, power back up, energy conservers and solar powered products and solutions. This coupled with one of the largest pan India service network covering 75 locations ensures that today we provide products and services to practically all industry segments ranging from manufacturing, banking, telecom, healthcare, hotels, retail, IT & ITES as well as specialized agencies like DRDO, ISRO.

Consul today provides power back up to over 15,000 ATM sites in the country, more than 6000 hospitals today have a Consul product. 5000+ buildings use Consul ELOS to back up their lifts. Over 4000 solar installations and over 10,000 industries using Consul products.

We are preferred partners for OEM's like Wipro GE, Philips healthcare, Siemens Healthcare,

“We are working on new solar products that allows us to be well placed to offer products and services for both off-grid and on-grid solar power”

CNC manufacturers like LMW, ACE Micromatic among others.

We are seeing a steadily growing demand from all segments especially With e-commerce, IT-ITeS, government, SMB, entertainment, banking, healthcare, and telecom sectors growing exponentially there is a further demand for data centers and power back up solutions. Steady demand from industries like process and industrial automation, infrastructure, retail, manufacturing, etc., have also contributed to this growth. The mushrooming of the SMB and SOHO segments and the expansion of the IT/ ITES industry in tier II and tier III cities. We expect e-commerce, e-governance programs, renewable energy programs for industry, rural telephony and rural banking to drive growth in a large way in the near future.

New solutions like large capacity inverters like those offered by Consul have also opened up new segments that were earlier being powered by DG sets. Consul Inverters are a viable and cost effective option for offices & retail outlets instead of diesel genset. The option of DG sets is not a smart idea as cost of diesel is rising and the cost per unit of electricity generated through a DG set is around Rs 15-25 per unit. In situations of extended power cuts power back up customers can consider a solar power system offered by Consul . ELOS (Emergency Lift Operating Systems) another custom solution developed by Consul is opening up new segments in residential and commercial complexes as a cost effective power back-up source for lifts as compared to diesel gensets.

Q. What was the strategic thinking behind acquiring Megatech? With this acquisition what is the growth that you are targeting? Also, share with us your experience of integrating Megatech with Consul?

Megatech is now a 100% subsidiary of Consul Consolidated. Megatech product range complements the existing range of products offered by Consul and positions Consul as one of the only Indian manufacturer to offer a full range of power conditioning, power back up, energy conservers and solar energy products.

The acquisition of Megatech allows us offer our customers a range of innovative solar power products like off-grid solar inverters and solar power conditioning units (PCUs) which have been developed for Indian power and site conditions, tested and approved to IEC standards. With an installation base of over 4000 off-grid solar installations in India, it provides a solid reference base to offer robust solar power products to our customers across India. Through this investment we have moved forward in our aim to be India's leading power solutions provider. We also continue to invest heavily into R&D to develop the next generation solar PCUs and inverters and have a team of over 20 engineers working in our DSIR approved R&D centre. We are working on new solar products

that allows us to be well placed to offer products and services for both off-grid and on-grid solar power.

Q. What are your views on the Power backup market in India? How do you perceive the market in the next five years?

Power or electricity is today the life blood of modern industry and commerce as it powers machinery and equipment used directly in manufacturing of products and enables the delivery of services. Businesses as varied as Retail, Banking, Manufacturing, Hospitals to Restaurants all need reliable power for their operations.

There is a significant growth in the UPS AND Inverters space which is being driven by a number of factors. One of the most important factors is the fact that today almost all equipment and machines used by factories and industries require a power back-up (UPS or Inverter) for protecting the equipment in the event of power failure or disturbances . From coffee machines in popular hangouts to the POS billing machines with attached printers/ electronic cash registers, to large machines used in process industries to lab and diagnostic equipment in hospitals and clinics to ATM's need a UPS or an inverter not just to protect the equipment but also to ensure uptime and minimize the losses due to downtime.

Secondly the demand for the UPS and Inverters is today extending to the Tier 3 & 4 towns and not just restricted to the Metros and Tier1 &2 towns like earlier. Thirdly the large thrust by the Govt with new e-governance initiative and programs is driving the demand for UPS & Inverters to ensure that the programs & services are up and running for the people to use . Lastly new segments data centres,

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IT, ITES, Banking & ATM and Telecom are driving growth in both the low as well as high capacity UPS & Inverters. The new drivers are retail, E-commerce, Cloud Computing.

Businesses as varied as Retail, Banking, Manufacturing, Hospitals to Restaurants all need reliable power for their operations. Businesses are increasingly looking at having a power back up option to ensure uninterrupted operations.

Q. Give us a small brief about your solar power pack, the specific benefits of the products? What are the specific applications and the kind of feedback you have to share with us from your customers?

Solar is a viable alternate source to bridge the deficit between power generation and demand considering that most parts of the country get up to 300 days of sunshine. Consul, one of India's leading Solar power manufacturer offers a wide range of solar power products like Solar PCU's, Solar MPPT (Maximum Power Point Tracking) Charge controllers, off-grid and on-grid solar systems that cater primarily to institutions and business customers. Consul has now launched solar power packs in the range between 500Wp to 100kWp offering 2 to 4 hours of back up. Consul solar power packs come



CONSUL Solar Power Packs

“We have over 5,000 customers and we enjoy high customer retention rate with most customers contributing to repeat business”

built-in with MPPT chargers based with superior algorithm and intelligent battery management system that ensures that we can extract the maximum power from solar panels even during cloudy days.

Consul solar power packs are the ideal solution for small, medium business and home owners looking at using solar power to provide backup power for their houses and offices. Consul solar power packs are off the shelf solar products that eliminate the time and resource intensive activity of sizing the solar power system. The critical factor for solar power pack performance is to correctly match solar panel, battery & Solar PCU (Power Conditioning Unit) and Consul's R&D team has done extensive research to put together the best combination of panel, battery & PCU to deliver maximum energy.

Consul solar power packs are therefore a smart hassle free way of leveraging solar power.

Q. Can you share few success stories of those who have benefitted by using solar power packs?

Would like to illustrate the success of the solar power packs with the installation that was made for an organization working in the social sector. Why this is significant is in terms of the impact that the installation of the solar power pack has done in the work that is being done with a steady power back up source.

The NGO working in the interior of Karnataka a 1.5 hour journey from Mysore helping mentally

challenged patients was facing a major challenge in the smooth running of the facility. The facility was receiving only 7 hours of electricity intermittently in a day which was affecting the cooking, water pumping and other operations. The solar power system from Consul has now ensured that the facility is able to provide on time meals to patients, the administrators and doctors are able to work smoothly.

Q. Give us a brief insight into the EPC solutions that consul offers for roof-top solar power? What are the projects that you have worked and are currently working on?

Consul has completed various roof top projects aggregating to over 2MW for Primary Healthcare Centers, village hostels and hospitals in Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Madhya Pradesh. These were battery based roof top solutions primarily for lighting applications. We have also done On-Grid roof top projects for industrial customers like a 100kW system for a textile mills in Tamil Nadu.

Q. How important is service for the success of product? Tell us more about the mobile application that you have launched recently? What more technology enabled services consul is looking at to introduce in the near future?

We believe Service is a key differentiator for products we sell. We operate a 7x365 days Call Centre with agents where all customers' calls are registered and allocated to our service engineers across

India. We also monitor our TAT (Turn Around Time) to ensure our customers satisfaction.

We have recently launched a Mobile App, the main idea behind this was to give our customers a platform where they can put a service request in a minimal time on a 24/7 basis without waiting for the availability of the customer care centre. Almost everyone in the corporate world today owns a smart phone and we thought what could be better than a mobile app to provide our customers with a convenient touch point.

The main highlight of the app is a customer with an android or an iOS mobile connected to the internet can instantly login from anywhere and register their product or place a request for service, a simple process to avail the benefits of the application. The application is designed to strengthen and fast track the existing customer services as the app is very convenient and easily accessible for customers.

Q.What are the competitive factors that differentiate your products and your company to stay ahead in this market?

The energy and power sector is flooded with brands that offers power back up solutions . In such a scenario it's a challenge to stand out in the market but we have overcome that challenge as we are an Indian company who manufactures products in India and offer solutions for India. All our products are customised to tackle the power crisis problem and also suit the climatic and site

conditions in India.

Consul as a brand has grown over the last 30 years and today is one of the few national Indian power electronic company. We have tie ups with leading OEM's like Wipro GE, Philips Healthcare, Siemens healthcare, LMW, ACE Micromatic. Consul's strength has been its approach to selling, Consul has always sought to be an Power Adviser (Counsellor) while dealing with customers. This approach has been possible because of our intimate knowledge of the Indian power landscape which allows us to develop products that are robust and cost effective in tackling the vagaries of the power environment, it also helps in developing customized solutions for specific industrial needs. This has been amply highlighted through the development of the Energy Conserver for lighting applications that was developed in association with the CII. The DSIR approved R&D centre in Pune is a key pillar in ensuring that Consul is in the technology forefront.

In addition to the products and technical expertise another major strength of Consul is its pan India service network that covers over 70 cities in India backed by a central IVRS (Interactive Voice Response System) call centre supporting 4 languages English, Tamil, Hindi and Telugu. We have also recently strengthened the service response through the rollout of a Mobile App for warranty registration and placing service requests for both android and iOS operating systems.

Q.Consul is bestowed with many awards and recognitions, to what you attribute your success to?

The company is well recognized and respected for several reasons like the broad range of for the products that we offer and we are the preferred partner of renowned brands Wipro GE Healthcare, Philips Healthcare, Siemens Healthcare,Ace Micromatic, Mazak, Amada, MAG etc

Other factors that drive the success of our company is the strong customer base. We have over 5,000 customers and we enjoy high customer retention rate with most customers contributing to repeat business. Some of our clients include LMW, Hitachi, Blue Star, Mazak, Fortis, JIPMER, Apollo Hospitals, DRDO, ISRO, Ford, Hyundai, Kotak Mahindra Bank, HDFC Bank, Toshiba, Indian Railways, Vodafone among others.

Q.Going forward, the next five years, what are some of the critical tasks that need to be accomplished in order to extend your current position?

Five years down the line we aim to be become a one stop shop in the power back up and power conditioning sector. We also have a target to reach 500 crore turnover plus we also have plans to expand our business and take it to the international market.

Consul recently moved its operations to a new factory in Chennai that gives it much needed real estate for expansion of the production facilities. There has been a concerted move to strengthen the human capital of the organization with expansion as well as emphasis on training and development. Continued focus on R&D is also expected to deliver new products and keep a robust product line up to address the power problems faced by our customers ■

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