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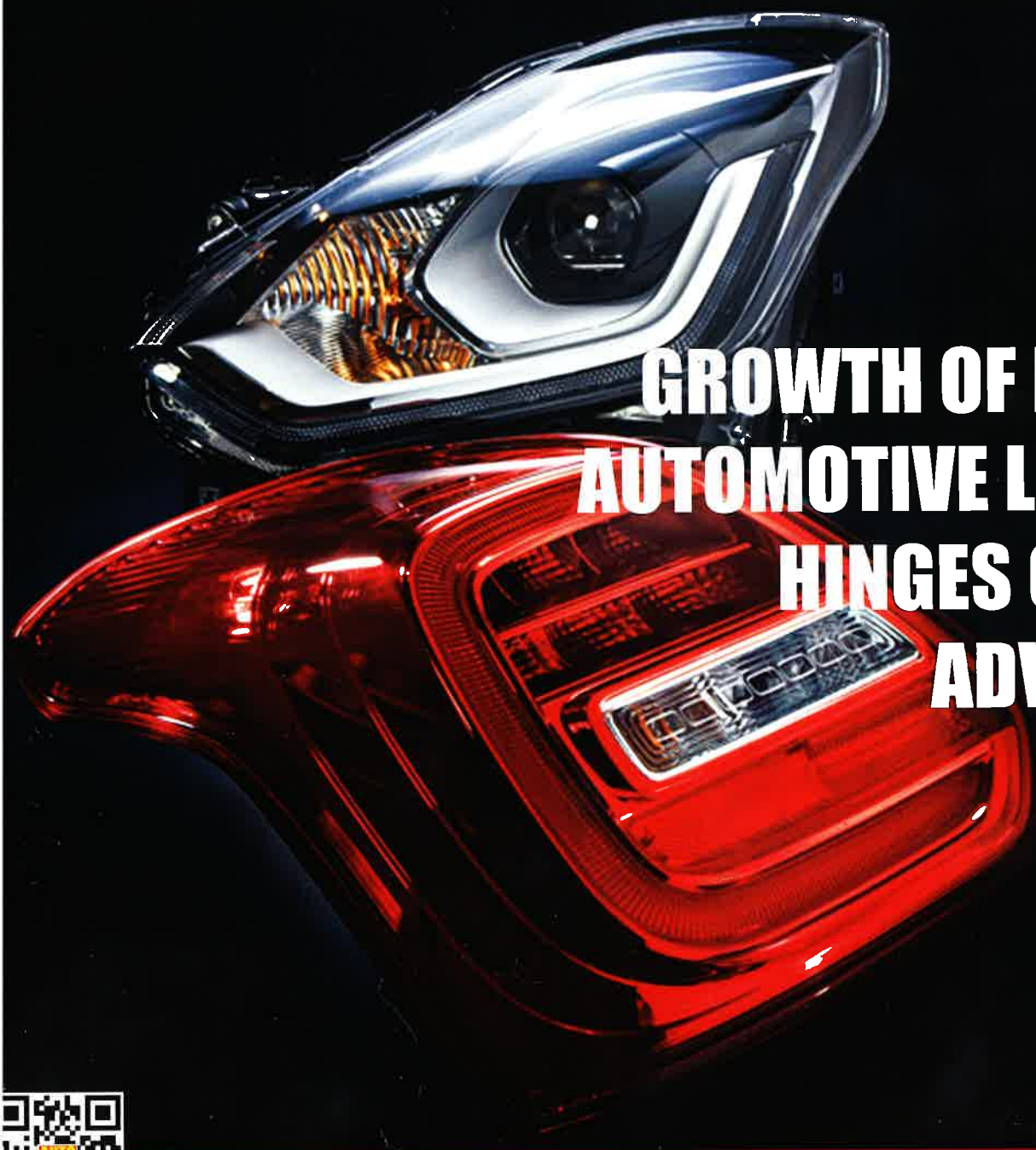
INDIA

VOICE OF THE AUTOMOTIVE SUPPLIERS

MAHINDRA REVEALS BSVI PLAN



GROWTH OF NEWGEN AUTOMOTIVE LIGHTING HINGES ON COST ADVANTAGE



INTERVIEW: GIRISH WAGH, PRESIDENT, CVBU, TATA MOTORS



Lumax is ready with products for new lighting trends

Story by:

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Light weighting is a major trend in the global automotive industry. The process of bringing down the weight of a vehicle comes from various factors including its components. The automotive lighting company Lumax Industries is working on products that weigh less to complement the new trend in the Indian market. As a market leader, the company is also ready with products for the future.

"There are many changes in the automobile industry. One of the biggest changes is in the technology of passenger cars, two-wheelers and commercial vehicles. This is mainly due to the regulatory changes by the government. With BS-VI pushing in for a lot of changes and as it takes shape, most of the vehicles have gone back to the drawing board stage. Therefore, one has to include a lot of sensing mechanism. This is because the safety norms and regulations increase the cost. To offset that, a lot of things are happening like light weighting, combining parts, value engineering etc. The main target is to launch a vehicle that the customers are used to, with a minimum cost impact by changing designs," Vineet Sahni, CEO and Senior Executive Director, Lumax Industries Limited, told *Auto Components India*.

"Keeping lightweighting in mind, we have made a few changes

to the lightings as well. For example, the thickness of the plastic parts that we use has changed. The outer line that we use on our headlights that used to be 3.2 mm is now reduced to 1.9mm - 2 mm in the new design. This is done by using a different manufacturing technology that we have. Similarly, we were also

able to save a few grams in the lens. By designing the housings of the other plastics parts we could still reduce the weight. The safety factor was also taken into consideration as it should not be affected. These are the various elements that we took into consideration at the design stage and brought down the

Lumax supplies head lights and tail lights for the new Maruti Suzuki Swift



Vineet Sahni,
CEO and Senior
Executive
Director, Lumax
Industries Limited



weight. We are also looking at the possibility of using alternative materials to bring down the weight," Sahni said.

Started as a trading company in 1945, Lumax Industries is now a market leader in the automotive lighting business. The company offers a range of automobile lighting systems and solutions for four-wheelers, two-wheelers, trucks, buses, earth-movers, tractors and a variety of diverse applications. As a leading company in the automotive industry with the latest technology and expertise to manufacture world-class products, it aims to make most out of the opportunities in the near future. The company provides quality solutions to various segments including, four-wheeler, two-wheeler and

commercial vehicles for the Indian and global markets. The company always looks to develop processes for cost-effectiveness and increased efficiency in operations. With over 60% market share in Indian automobile lighting business and a strong three decades-old technical and financial collaboration with Stanley, Japan, a world leader in vehicle lighting and illumination products for automobiles, Lumax is progressing each day in trying to bring new solutions.

With design playing a major role in the vehicle, Sahni feels lighting also plays a major role in determining the design aspect of a vehicle. "Since most of the vehicles have gone back to the drawing board, there is an electrical requirement and a lot of sensors are getting added. As this increases, there might be an increase in the consumption of power. In the lighting industry, the current trends are towards the LEDs. With the use of LEDs, the voltage goes down with the same or better light output. LEDs can also help OEMs in styling the car, as it plays a major role as a deciding factor for the customers in choosing a vehicle. When the OEMs bring out a new vehicle, it has to be attractive and lighting plays a major role here," he said.

"The customer demand and the OEMs pressure is a normal business cycle which will happen and has been happening for a long time. It is only increasing now and we are ready to manage it. But, we need to be technically prepared to offer a solution to the customer and we are prepared to do that. We have the right resources for it and we keep hiring as per the changing market needs," he added. Sahni feels that India is on par with automotive technologies



in the world. "Most of the technologies we witness in the global market are already present in the Indian market as well, he said. "Nowadays, technology comes out more or less at the same time. Sometimes, it is launched in India first and then in Europe and sometimes it is the opposite. In the past, it took a long time to implement the technologies that are in the global market. But now, it has changed. Many new technologies are happening in India at the same time as in the global market," Sahni said.

□ Into the future

At the end of Q1FY19, the company had a net worth of Rs 381 crore. With a 5000-strong workforce Lumax has taken automotive lighting to a new level. It will continue to invest in infrastructure, technology, product development, processes and of course, in human capital. Through Lumax Charitable Foundation, the company engages in CSR initiatives for improving access towards education and healthcare of the disadvantaged communities around its plants.

With a lot of other new trends in the market, Sahni said that LED is the current trend and we could see many changes in the same. For the future, the company is working on a variety of concepts, for all categories. The lighting company will be ready with products when the market demands.

"In the near future, we will have every vehicle getting converted into LEDs. The changes will continue from the bulb projectors to LED projectors. And, in some case, they are still using two projectors for high and low beam separately. This will become

one. Projectors are becoming lighter now. Later, LEDs will change to OLEDs. We can see such technologies coming in about 5 years and we are working on many concepts including, matrix lighting. Though India is a cost-effective market, we will see people accepting the new technologies as they did with the LEDs," he said.

The lighting manufacturer has plants with advanced technologies. They are producing automotive lighting products in huge quantities in sync with the customer requirements and standards. This is being at par with the world's best plant engineering standards. The state-of-the-art manufacturing plants are in many States. Three technologically progressive units are located in Gurgaon, Dharuhera and Bawal in Haryana, 2 in Pune, Maharashtra, 2 in Uttarakhand (Pantnagar, Haridwar), each in Sanand, Gujarat, and in Bidadi, Karnataka. The company has 2 R&D centres in India and 1 design centre in Taiwan. Its growth has been catalysed by more than three decades old collaboration with technical and financial collaboration with Stanley Electric Company Ltd, Japan, a world leader in Vehicle Lighting and illumination solutions. The company's business operations are spread across four-wheeler, two-wheeler and farm equipment segments of leading OEMs.

"We are having a lot of localisation here in India. The R&D support that we provide to our customers is very different and the support we get from Taiwan is something unique that many do not have. We also have our Japanese designers

and Korean designers here in India to support our customers. We constantly expand when required and we have been doing it. Recently, we acquired a company that specialises in drive simulators. With this, we can simulate and see how a vehicle drives in various conditions. We are also constantly increasing our strength in Design Studio," Sahni said.

The company's business turnover is: 40% from the passenger vehicle, 25% from the two-wheeler market, 15% from the aftermarket, and the rest from the commercial vehicles. The company sees good potential in the aftermarket. "We expect positive growth overall in the market," Sahni said. **ACI**

