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Mayoly Spindler wants to be an international reference in gastroenterology. The general manger of the Mexican affiliate discusses how Mexico is contributing to this goal by always being one step ahead of competitors and leveraging innovation.

Could you please introduce Mayoly Spindler to our readers?

Laboratoires Mayoly Spindler is an independent French family-run pharmaceutical company, which was established 80 years ago and has been able to grow and become consolidated as a mature, successful and dynamic group. The pharmaceutical company is now championing its identity as a human-scale firm. In touch with the medical profession, and in its constant aim to improve quality of life and public health, Mayoly Spindler is defined by its strong dynamism and professional approach.

Its activities cover several therapeutic areas such as gastroenterology, rheumatology, general medicine, general public health and dermocosmetics. Most of its products are produced in its three manufacturing sites in France, which are fully equipped with up-to-date means of production, control and shipment. However, the two main lines of development are in gastroenterology, with an expertise and knowledge of the market and a portfolio of seven products, and dermocosmetics — with the Topicrem product range, a very well-known brand in France which was launched in

1993, achieving renown from its very beginning. The company is present internationally through affiliates in Russia, Algeria, Mexico, Brazil, Belgium and Spain, distributors in approximately 70 countries and plans to open more in the near future, among others in the US.

International markets nowadays represent 60 percent of the company's turnover. What is the strategic role of Mexico to the group?

Mexico is very important to Mayoly. The affiliate was opened in 2005, so turns ten this year. So far the business has been 100 percent focused on gastroenterology. The company started marketing two products, MeteoSpasmyl for irritable bowel syndrome and Pepsane for dyspepsia and gastritis. As a result of the global partnership we signed in 2013 with French drug maker Ipsen, recently we also launched Iprikene, a drug indicated in the treatment of acute diarrhea, sold in France under the brand of Smecta. Actually Mexico has a very big responsibility, as it is the first country in the world where we are marketing the drug on behalf of Ipsen.

You were appointed general manager in July 2014. What have been your main priorities since then?

As first Mexican general manager of the affiliate, my main priority has been to transform the organization to drive growth. An important initiative we have undertaken was updating our sales tools to a new and faster system where we use more technology – tablets for example – and less paper. Nowadays, all our sales force uses these new electronics and we are at the forefront when presenting the benefits of our products to the medical community. As a matter of fact 'transformation' was the slogan of our latest sales force convention, where 120 participants discussed what it means to transform the organization and were trained about the use of these new tools. The idea is being always one step ahead of the market – as our products do.

As a personal mission I also decided to implement some initiatives to make the staff feel closer to the headquarters. We decorated the local offices with motives from France and developed a company's philosophy based on our corporate values – respect, pragmatism and responsibility – with the objective of being a reference for the rest of the Mayoly Spindler subsidiaries worldwide. And all employees have the philosophy as a reminder on their desk, as it's not only about having it, it's about living it everyday.

You have been with the company almost since the beginning of its operations on the Mexican market. What have been some of its most important milestones?

One of the most recent milestones was the agreement we signed with Ipsen for their primary care activities. Through the creation of a co-managed commercial platform, the two companies are leveraging their complementary competencies and product portfolios. Mayoly Spindler will benefit from Ipsen's products, while Ipsen will benefit from Mayoly Spindler's sales strength – this agreement leverages the complementarity of each company.

What new product launches can we expect for the Mexican market?

Iprikene and MeteoSpasmyl will continue to be our star products, but currently we have four products in registration process. We'll soon lunch some probiotics, a food supplement for intestinal comfort for children and people who are intolerant to lactose. We have also recently launched fourteen products of the Topicrem® product range, a dermatological premium product line marketed in pharmacies. With these new product launches, we hope to maintain the double-digit growth rate we have had over the past five years.

Where would you like to see Mayoly Spindler in five years from now?

We are determined to maintain our very strong focus in well-defined indications within gastroenterology, ensuring high quality support to our target audiences from hospital specialists to physicians and pharmacists. It is a very competitive area where innovation is scarce. As a small company and a relatively new player in markets outside France, we face very famous brands and very big players— we need to outsmart them.

Our competitive edge, our principal resource, is our people. Part of our mission is to be a good place to work. As a general manager, my obligation is to stay with our people and make sure they are well taken care of within the company. We want our people to feel like an integral part of the company because they really are.

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