Patricia López – General Director, seca Mexico



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seca is turning ten years old in Mexico in 2015. The general director of the Mexico affiliate discusses how the company foresaw the growing demand for medical measuring systems and scales in the country due to an increasingly overweight population and how the company is helping doctors foster prevention.

In 2015 seca celebrates its 10th anniversary on the Mexican market and you have been with the company since then. What made the company decide to enter Mexico?

seca is a family business founded back in 1840. For several generations we have had an extraordinary demand for our medical devices and I can proudly say that we are leaders worldwide in the market of medical measuring systems and scales. seca's corporate philosophy is to have "the best of tomorrow today": go one step ahead and predict what is going to happen within the health sector. More than ten years ago seca foresaw that Mexico was going to suffer from overweight problems and be in desperate need of high-quality measuring devices, as we're so close to the United States and tend to be influenced heavily by cultural habits such as overeating and appeal to junk food. seca predicted this trend and that finally derived in the opening of the Mexico City's branch ten years ago.

Today seca has subsidiaries in 13 markets and its products are exported to 110 countries across the world. What is the importance of Mexico to the company?

If you take a quick glance at Latin America, including the health sector, you will immediately notice that Mexico acts as a standard and often as a model for the rest of the countries of the region to emulate. In some cases they do not only copy us, but surpass us by evolving our own ideas! At seca we always strive to reach perfection and quality in what we do, always bearing in mind that the design of our equipment must be the result of the needs of our customers. For this reason our engineering department likes to sit down with them, detect what they need and is always looking for feedback from all over the world. And actually it was Mexico who provided the idea that lead to one of our most important product launches of the past few years. So I would say Mexico is definitely a very important country to seca.

How do you make sure the medical community and patients understand the real benefits of your products?

Our marketing strategy is very straightforward: we go directly with the doctors and promote ourselves by proving our equipment. Thanks to the high-quality and precision of our products over these ten years we have earned a lot of trust from the medical world: they have often known our products since they were students and, whenever they travel or do an independent research, they always find our products to help them.

Our main target is the public sector, and there is an easy logic behind this. In terms of numbers the government health system by far outshines the private market because of the massive population it attends – it’s not the same to have as a client a single hospital versus 175 government hospitals. We have also grown rapidly thanks to the word of mouth within the medical community, as many institutions contact us upon recommendation of doctors who are very satisfied with the results of our equipment. Last but not least, we constantly take all our products to fairs, shows and congresses for specialized customers and not. There, we let the doctors help us explain the importance of precise measurement for the health of every patient.

seca manufactures top of the line equipment, which has its corresponding price. What has been the company’s strategy to succeed in a market that might be more inclined to buy from cheaper competitors?

What people seem to like the most about seca is our precision and our reliability. We provide solutions to accurately monitor an increasingly unhealthy population; we help have more precision in measurements for pathologies, which today are heavily affecting the Mexican population, such

as cancer, kidney problems and obesity, as well as all their deriving consequences, which are becoming harder and harder to control and, at the same time, very expensive. For instance, a staggering number of diseases (250) come as a by-product of obesity. The budget of our country cannot cope with so many cases of overweight and heart diseases; it is just an impossible task. And the one and only way to avoid this is through prevention based on early diagnosis – and this is exactly what our equipment is good at. We think prevention is the best method to fight any kind of disease, and especially obesity. Because of modern lifestyle Mexico is becoming an unhealthy country and this is affecting our national economy. Prevention based on early diagnosis has always been very common in Europe, but not in Mexico – and we need to change that.

If you have a healthy population you will have a strong country that can tackle many adversities, as health affects economy, politics and security among many other aspects. So, sometimes it’s very disappointing to hear organizations which do not want to spend in better measuring systems because they “can’t justify” the expenses and do not see the value-added of our products.

How do you bring value to customers beyond that of the product you distribute?

One of the reasons I feel proud for being in this company is the absolute certainty that our products are top-notch and well-received all around the globe. Everyone can provide services to 110 countries but, if your product is not robust enough to endure daily duty, it won’t last more than six months and there is where the problems start. We see our products as high specialty medical devices and as such we take care of every single detail before letting them go to the world. We have spare parts for all our products here in Mexico so it’s very easy for us to renew or rebuild a product. Moreover, we are always geared towards efficiency and avoiding unnecessary expenses because of faulty craftsmanship. To give you an idea, the average life of our products in Mexican institutions is nearly 20 years. Our products are highly priced but much more convenient in the long run.

What are your ambitions for seca in the next future?

In the future I would like seca to have the same worldwide impact and recognition we currently have. Of course that will not come for free; we need to keep up the good work we have done for more than seventeen decades, the dedication, the good customer service and the constant contact with doctors of all specialties. We knocked a many doors before gaining recognition, we wanted to prove doctors that our products were the absolute best in the market and now we need to keep that train which we put in motion advancing towards the future.

I believe in the next five to ten years we will see seca as the most recommended product for precision measurement. I would like to revert back Mexico’s overweight numbers to a healthier balance: instead of having seven overweight people out of every ten, why not having seven healthy people out of ten? We consider that every correct measurement towards the benefit of a human being and every life saved is a contribution we make to the Mexican and world population – and that is what matters the most to us.

What attracted you to seca and keeps you motivated after 10 years?

As a woman with a background in management and business administration, working for seca seemed very exciting to me. Indeed at seca we care a lot about precision, but as an added value, we also give a lot of emphasis to the visual aspect of our products. We want people to feel comfortable while using our tools. We have obtained several international awards and recognitions in the health sector because along quality we care about design and ergonomics. What personally motivates me is also working along with doctors and have the common goal of saving lives.

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