Interview: Gerardo Torres-Septién – General Manager, Grupo Rasch, Mexico



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GM Gerardo Torres-Septién explains how Grupo Rasch has managed to grow during the last two years and showcases the added value of its solutions to help the pharmaceutical industry enhance its cost structure and efficiency ratios.

Could you please give an update to our international audience about the operations and accomplishments of Grupo Rasch in Mexico?

Since we last met in 2014, Grupo Rasch has been growing by entering new markets while enlarging existing ones. We have been highly focused on finding new services to add to our offering and increasing our client portfolio in the pharmaceutical and automotive industries mainly.

Grupo Rasch's operations are primarily targeted to commercializing high-tech products from well-reputed European companies as well as our own branded solutions in specialty areas such as cleaning rooms.

Looking forward, we expect to continue strengthening our business in Mexico by enlarging our footprint in the various industries we are already tapping into. We have been focusing our presence more in Mexico City and Guadalajara but we are already leveraging on El Bajio (San Luis de Potosi, Leon, Queretaro) to increase our geographical coverage in Mexico.

Grupo Rasch has several divisions that serve different industries such as automotive among others. How strategically important is the healthcare industry within your business?

The healthcare business line is our main contributor representing around 85 percent of our total turnover; the remaining 15 percent is mainly concentrated in our automotive and architectural lines of revenues.

Furthermore, we expect a double-digit growth for our healthcare business line in 2017. Our strategy to obtain such target will rotate around two axes: customer centricity in our high-quality solutions and financial mechanisms to make the investment more doable from our clients' standpoint since our technologies represent a capital effort for our customers.

The Mexican healthcare industry has been quite dynamic during the last five years. What has been your strategy to ensure success considering the changing environment of the industry and the crucial role of your healthcare business line?

Since its inception, Grupo Rasch has always been close to its customers in order to fully understand their current and future needs and challenges. In this sense, we have always been positioned as the partner of choice for the right technological tools to encompass their strategies.

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Grupo Rasch has a comprehensive product and service portfolio sorted into four business lines: Rasch Processes together with Rasch Services, Indsutria Metalmecánica Rasch, Rasch Architectural together with Rasch Installations and Techni Rasch. Which are the main contributors to your revenues and where do you foresee more growth?

Rasch Processes and Rasch Architectural remain our main contributors to our business. However, the future growth will come from the combination of all our business lines; we are fostering the cross selling in order to offer an integral solution to our clients. Indeed, we have a well-established company with complementary business units, which permit us to serve our customers in a unique way according to their specific needs.

Considering that the government has recently announced budget cuts in the healthcare expenditure for 2017, how is Grupo Rasch helping the industry gain efficiency and competitiveness to overcome such a challenge?

Our cutting-edge technology and high quality solutions help our clients to improve their operations by reducing their costs in order to enjoy healthier profit margins. Indeed, technology is the lever of the industry to keep up the pace with the financial pressures of the current and future business environment.

How do you manage to ensure that Grupo Rasch is able to showcase the added value of its technological solutions to its current and potential customers?

In 2015 we redesigned our marketing strategy and we decided that we will not assist to any tradeshow, as we used to do in the past, to present our machines. Indeed, we concluded that we should have an in-house open room to invite our customers, experts and potential prospects. The rationale behind such decision is to show directly to all our business stakeholders what is new in the market and what are the outputs that they can achieve through using our solutions. It is worth to mention that we always consider our clients' operational specifications as well as their current and future projects to design a fully targeted commercial proposal with the potential impact quantified.

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I am proud to confirm that the results obtained so far have been quite successful and our customers really appreciate such direct contact with our sales representatives. In addition, this initiative ensures that our customers know the infrastructure and the different investments that support our operations to offer them the best solutions in the market.

Grupo Rasch commercializes high tech products from well-recognized European companies but it also has its own branded products in some business lines. Could you explain to our international readers what is the strategy behind enlarging your own branded product portfolio?

Our own branded solutions are mainly targeted to clean rooms. Such business line is a new concept that we have brought from Europe and, leveraging on our international partners, we have been able to improve the existing technologies in this area. As a result, Grupo Rasch is positioned as one of the best national option in cleaning rooms not only in terms of price but especially due to its added value and high quality.

In order to internationalize our clean room division we decided to create, in collaboration with our current international partners, a new company called CRDB Latina. The objective is to introduce such cutting-edge technology, which has been highly successful in Mexico, to other countries in

America. It is important to mention that, even though our cleaning room solutions are European products, they are engineered and installed by Mexicans.

You are positioned as the national leader in the development and implementation of clean room practices. Could you expand on the benefits that such service can represent for the industry and how you are developing such business?

Our clean room division is a healthcare construction solution that fully complies with the highest global regulation standards such as FDA, EMA and Cofepris. Such compliance is a quality certification of our operations. Therefore, our customers fully rely on us when contracting our services in this area, which enable them to focus on their core business. In fact, we are involved from the beginning with the design to the final implementation of the construction solution.

It is a fact that Cofepris aspires to be the standard of quality in the region, meeting the standards set by the EMA and FDA. How has this been a lever to succeed in such an internationalization process and what are your targets in this regard?

As aforementioned, our solutions come from Europe and they already meet with the highest global regulation standards. Therefore, we have not had any problem to get the approval from Cofepris. That being said, Mexico has drastically improved its positioning within the region in terms of health regulation and it has positively impacted our operations and internationalization process within Latin America.

Expanding on internationalization, what is your competitive advantage that makes you the partner of choice for the industry in each one of the countries that you are looking to enter?

Our competitive advantages are the reliability of our customers, the quality of our products and the high commitment of our employees. These three factors support our operations and help us to be positioned as an end-to-end leading supplier within the industry; we follow our projects from the beginning to the very end.

What are the main business objectives that you would like to achieve in the upcoming three years?

We expect to continue maintaining our leading position in Mexico with Rasch Process, but also in the cleaning room area through Rasch Architectural while enlarging our footprint in the rest of the countries within the region with CRDB Latina.

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