Interview: Victor Casasola – CEO, Canitec, Mexico



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02.03.2017

Tags: Mexico, Canitec, Medtech, Medical Devices, Strategy

Victor Casasola, CEO at Canitec, explains the unique business model of his Mexican medical devices success story, offering an integral service to its clients, and showcases the high added value and quality of its broad portfolio of laboratory equipment.

Could you please introduce to our international audience the key activities and operations of Canitec?

I founded Canitec in 1997 and have been leading the activities of the company since then. The company is focused on providing high quality and high-technology laboratory equipment; I would like to highlight that we have always run our operations putting the customer at the center of our strategy.

The slogan of our company defines Canitec's mission: "Solutions for a better life." Indeed, we are always doing our maximum to offer the best equipment to our customers in Mexico as well as provide a full service to ensure that the devices remain at the highest level of quality and that our customers are maximizing the use of the equipment.

What has been the main accomplishment of the company over the last five years?

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Canitec has been able to maintain the highest level of servicing, while increasing and consolidating its team in three different offices located in Mexico City, Guadalajara and Hermosillo. I am proud to confirm that Canitec counts over 65 employees to offer the best quality equipment together with the highest level of service to our clients.

Canitec serves different industries such as genomics, pharmaceuticals, electronic and semiconductors, biofuels, mining, forensics, water and environment, chemistry and aliments. How strategically important is the healthcare and life sciences industry within your entire business?

Our healthcare and life sciences division includes both genomics and pharmaceutical lab equipment solutions. The genomics and pharmaceutical business lines are our main contributors, representing around 75 percent of our total revenues.

What has been your strategy to ensure the success of Canitec, considering that Mexico is a quite dynamic and challenging market with highly fragmented public health institutions?

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Customer-centricity has been our main business driver and it has enabled Canitec to remain at the forefront of the industry. Even though Mexico has been passing through several economic challenges, Canitec has been able to identify the opportunities offering the highest level of service to its clients at a highly competitive cost. Moreover, the service surrounding the device is what really positions the company as the provider of choice for lab equipment within the industry.

Canitec has quite a broad portfolio to satisfy the needs of the healthcare and life sciences industry. Could you expand on the added value that Canitec is bringing to its clients in the pharmaceutical and genomic markets?

Canitec has played a crucial role within the industry, collaborating closely with both public and private institutions to raise the bar of quality and the efficiency of the lab equipment that is already in the market. The healthcare and life sciences sector is characterized by its high quality standards and dynamism and Canitec is constantly adapting its policies and action plans accordingly to the latest industry trends.

Furthermore, Canitec was the first company in Mexico to start offering such integral service jointly with the lab equipment. Indeed, we have a team of high-qualified engineers that have close relationships with our clients to provide preventive and corrective maintenance and ensure that the

device is correctly deployed. Such a concept already existed in developed markets such as the US and Europe but not in developing countries like Mexico.

In this sense, Canitec has closely collaborated with Cofepris in order to implement such a concept in Mexico and, as a consequence, it is positioned as the expert in its field. Both Cofepris and our clients rely on Canitec to provide top-notch equipment together with an integral service ensuring that our devices are correctly used and to their maximum potential. We are constantly aiming to enhance the national landscape in our area of action hand in hand our clients.

When we met Mikel Arriola, he told us that one of his main objectives is to ensure the financial sustainability of the IMSS, which is quite challenging considering that the government does not have enough resources to treat the national patients' needs. However, the cost of treatment could be minimized through fostering the automation of the processes in the laboratories. As Canitec's business is focused on automating and implementing best practices in labs, could you expand on how you are helping the government to overcome such a challenge while enhancing the quality of life of the patients?

Automation can improve the quality of the products in two different directions: it provides more accurate results or/and reduce lead times. In this sense, Canitec is offering solutions that implement and automate the best practices in the labs re-engineering the so-called prehistoric processes that, in the end, create benefits for patients, physicians and government.

How do you ensure that you are able to retain and develop the best human capital for Canitec?

It is certainly a challenge and we have developed a very rigorous human resources plan in the company. We are developing our own people and they grow with our values and culture. Canitec offers an attractive career plan within the company as well as an intense training program in Europe and the US to ensure that our teams are fully capable of delivering the best service to our clients as well as preparing them for their next professional step within Canitec. As a consequence, our teams share a long-term vision with us and we are also ensuring the continuous development of our people through training courses.

We have perceived that technology is breaking health boundaries in the equipment industry through digitalization for instance. As one of the leading companies in your niche, what are your conclusions on that?

It is a reality that we are currently passing through a digitalization era and Canitec is already providing cutting edge technologies from Europe and the US in Mexico. Both government and private industry are totally aware of the benefits that could come from such type of solutions, however it takes time to finally implement them in Mexico because of the economic challenges. It is important to remember that there have already been significant advancements but that there is still a long way to go.

Medical Education plays an important role in the equipment industry to ensure that the end-users are properly using the devices and take advantage of its maximum potential. What are your conclusions on that and how is Canitec helping its clients to take advantage of such technological developments?

We are offering end-to-end support to our clients from the counseling to the maintenance. Our most important added value is that we truly help our clients to embrace the new technologies and offer various trainings to ensure that they are taking advantage of the maximum potential of such equipment; this is our commitment.

How is Canitec partnering with leading international companies to ensure that your portfolio remains at the forefront of the latest technology developments as well as the Mexican needs?

On one hand, Canitec ensures towards its international partners that the customers that are using their devices in Mexico will have the best level of support locally and, therefore, such customers will be fully satisfied with their equipment. On the other hand, we expect that our partners will provide a strong and solid product portfolio that will overcome the expectations of our clients.

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

The main priority on my agenda is to ensure that Canitec maintains a high level of service, working closely with its clients, partners and national regulators. Secondly, I aim to increase our stock of lab equipment to offer more cost-attractive solutions while minimizing lead-times of supply. Finally, I want to develop my team of highly qualified professionals to support the operations of Canitec.

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