

CASE STUDY: STRATEGIC COUNTRY LEADERSHIP APPOINTMENT IN INDIA

Driving leadership transformation for a European automotive-component MNC in India



Context

Asia is a critical growth region for our client, a UK-headquartered global leader in automotive drive systems, contributing approximately one-third of its global revenue. Within Asia, India – where the company has had a presence for nearly four decades – plays a vital role in the company's global operations, with multiple manufacturing facilities serving several large customers, both domestic and global original equipment manufacturers (OEMs).

Over the past few years, the company significantly expanded its footprint in the northern and southern parts of the country and was preparing to launch a fourth manufacturing facility in Western India to meet anticipated demand.

As the market continues to expand, maintaining leadership with close to 65% market share was mission critical. To steer this next phase of expansion, the company needed a leader who could own and steer regional growth, formulate actionable strategies, and deepen relationships with key customers, in a high growth market and in a sector that was evolving quite rapidly.

Objective

The aim was to identify a seasoned, high-impact executive to lead the India business as managing director. The ideal candidate would bring a strong business development acumen, with a deep understanding of core operational areas like sourcing, manufacturing, and supply chain. Deep understanding of India's automotive industry particularly the auto-component manufacturing ecosystem was essential, along with prior experience in leading cross-functional and cross-cultural teams.

This role called for a leader with a strategic mindset and executional depth—someone capable of formulating actionable growth plans, achieving ambitious targets in revenue and margins, and fostering long-term partnerships with auto-OEMs.

Impact

To deliver on this mandate, a market-focused search strategy was developed, targeting leaders from global automotive firms with strong presence in India that shared similar strategic direction and cultural values. The focus was on identifying candidates with 15–20 years of leadership experience, particularly those who had managed the profit and loss (P&L) of a business with revenues exceeding £300 million, and who demonstrated a track record of scaling operations and driving commercial outcomes for an engineered product business.

We successfully placed a highly qualified leader with an engineering background and over two decades of senior leadership experience across operations, and commercial management, with stints both in India and Europe, along with P&L responsibility, mostly in the automotive sector. In his most recent role, he led the India business of a global automotive component manufacturer, a joint venture with an Indian partner, where he doubled revenue growth and scaled the business to £145 million. He now leads the India operations as the managing director, focusing on driving growth, delivering operational excellence, and building long-term customer partnerships to support the company's continued expansion in one of the company's most strategic markets.



HOW CAN WE HELP?

Partner with us to unlock the full potential of your organisation's leadership capabilities.

Contact our Industrial Practice consultants

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