

Anees Ahmed



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Chairman

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1. What are the top 3 innovative trends Mistral sees in ESDM technology?

New domains and applications with high growth potential are continuously emerging in the ESDM space. Some of these markets where we can expect to see significant growth and focus are: personal mobile devices; which are becoming more versatile, powerful and application rich. Technology is also getting more advanced and intuitive in automotive, industrial, defense and consumer electronics segment. So you have more powerful and complex SoC's with lower power consumption.

2. What part does India play in the overall technology and marketing strategy of Mistral?

Mistral's product design services in the embedded domain cater to product developers across the globe from different verticals. In India, Mistral specifically focuses in the Defense and Homeland Security segment. Mistral is a well-known and trusted partner for Indian DRDO laboratories, supporting them in their system engineering and programs for RADAR, SONAR, Avionics, Telemetry, Electronic Warfare, and NAVAL applications.

3. With the Government of India giving complete support to the manufacturing ecosystem, in terms of various policies, what is the stand taken by Mistral?

Doing business in India is still a nightmare with all the rules, regulations and harassment from dozens of agencies. A lot of bandwidth, cost, focus and resources get wasted for the wrong reasons. While the Indian government is talking about giving complete support to the manufacturing ecosystem, there has not been any reflection of this focus in the Union Budget 2012-13 announced in March this year. We hope that the much awaited National Electronics Policy is forward looking and offers more benefits for the Electronic Systems Design and Manufacturing in India.

4. What are the critical challenges facing companies looking to develop or expand existing semiconductor companies' operations in India?

The only operations in India are design. There is no manufacture. This could be because of restrictive policies and lack of infrastructure.

5. How do you place the competency of Indian product companies as compared with MNCs?

The key strength of Indian companies lies in designing or realizing a product concept. As a nation, we need to build our skills in the areas of product conceptualization and marketing. We lack exposure to global product development markets.

6. What would be the key market drivers in 2012?

For Mistral, it would be new designs based on latest generation silicon in the market, more handheld & wireless gadgets, smart devices and growing requirements from Indian defense and homeland security.

7. How do you see the Indian engineering education scenario? What do you think are its strengths?

The Indian engineering education has a long way to go in terms of meeting the industry demands. Having said this, the changes undertaken by the academicians in modifying the curriculum and content of the engineering courses is worth mentioning. From increased focus on industry interactions, practical exposure and bringing the syllabus up-to-date, the students have been given the opportunities to get a glimpse into the industry during their courses.

The key strengths would be the focus on innovation through research and practical experiments and projects. Inculcated at the foundation, students will be capable of incorporating research and development into their day-to-day life, leading to higher productivity and effectiveness in the work place.

8. How does your company plan to leverage the unique needs of India in the various market verticals?

Mistral has over the years moved up the value chain and positioning itself as complete product engineering company. We have already moved away from doing parts of hardware, firmware or middleware to having the ability and mindset to focus on entire product development involving innovation, product architecture and envisaging product use case scenarios.

9. How is the regulatory environment in India impacting the Indian semiconductor industry?

The Union Budget 2012-13 did not reveal any direct policy changes that affect the semiconductor industry in India. Faster refund of service tax and increase in service tax to 12% affects the overall services sector, including the software services or the IT sector. As mentioned earlier, we hope that the much awaited National Electronics Policy is forward looking and offers more benefits for the Electronic Systems Design and Manufacturing in India. The regulatory agencies in other countries are service oriented and guide you in case of any mistakes. Here you can expect harassment from agencies.