

Media Coverage

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AusBiotech 2010: national conference looks to create "global solutions"

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(Source: Datamonitor) AusBiotech 2010, the annual conference of the Australian biotechnology industry, has sought to educate attendees about recent trends in the global pharmaceutical market, and how they can best take advantage of current conditions. This includes exploring opportunities with regional Asia Pacific neighbours, with a potential collaboration between Australia and India one of the key talking points.

Dr Bornadata Bain of Datamonitor delivered a plenary session on the opening morning of AusBiotech 2010, summarizing recent trends in the global pharmaceuticals industry and explaining how such trends are affecting the key industry players. This laid the foundations for exploring opportunities to work with global partners, and a range of international experts were on hand to offer their insight and advice.

Representatives of the largest pharmaceutical companies in the world discussed what they are looking for, and provided recommendations on how to interface with local scouts. Option-based partnering deals were the topic of discussion in another well-attended session, while the subject of partnering and alliance opportunities within neighboring countries in the emerging Asia Pacific region was also broached. For example, in one of the final sessions of the conference, a diverse panel of speakers from both Australia and India highlighted the potential for high calibre clinical research collaborations between the two countries.

India is rapidly emerging as a mature destination to outsource high quality but low cost early stage R&D and preclinical work. However, Indian pharmaceutical companies are primarily generics manufacturers, and the market lacks significant innovation. Australia, on the other hand, is a highly innovative market and has experience in later-stage clinical trials, but struggles to compete with the cost savings available in nearby emerging markets.

The combination of these strengths would make for a very competitive offering, and would bring more business to the region than either country would likely be able to achieve alone. Dr Swapan Bhattacharya, managing director of TCG Lifesciences in India, noted that "India needs collaborations to take its expertise to the next level of innovation" and that he was "impressed by the breadth and depth of innovation in Australia," which "could be used more cost-effectively when outsourced to India."

Despite this potential, Datamonitor's soon to be published report 'Pharmaceutical Licensing and Alliances in the Asia Pacific Region' (HC00026-001) shows that no significant partnering activity has been reported between Australian and Indian companies or research institutes over the past year. In seeking to create "global solutions", the theme of AusBiotech 2010, Australian companies must align themselves not only with partners in the traditional major markets, but also in the much higher growth emerging markets.

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