

Havells India looks to double R&D spend and set up design studio

Will bring in disruptive technologies, IoT- and AI-enabled products

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Consumer electrical goods and appliances maker Havells India plans to double its R&D spend in the next couple of years as part of its strategy to transform itself into a technology-driven company. It is working on establishing a state-of-the-art design studio and expanding its R&D team.

Havells recently roped in Siemens' former senior executive Mukul Saxena as its Chief Technology Officer and Executive Vice-President to spearhead these efforts. He was involved with establishing and leading the Siemens Corporate Research & Technologies' India Lab.

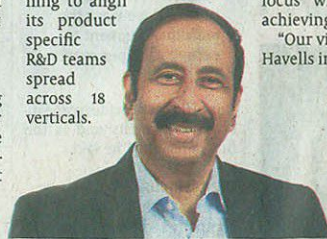
Saxena told *BusinessLine*, "We plan to double investments in R&D in the next 1-2

years. On an average, the company currently spends about 1 per cent of its turnover on R&D, and we will ramp it up to 2 per cent." Last fiscal, the company spent about ₹80 crore on R&D.

Re-skilling team

"We are looking at re-skilling some of the people in our R&D team and adding more people. We are targeting top-notch institutions and talent that has global exposure," he added. Currently, its R&D team is about 330 strong

based out of the corporate headquarters and at various manufacturing facilities. Havells is planning to align its product specific R&D teams spread across 18 verticals.



Havells India last year said it is targeting ₹20,000 crore in revenues in the next 4-5 years and it believes the R&D focus will be the key to achieving this target.

"Our vision is to transform Havells into a proactive, tech-

nology-led and a customer-centric organisation. We want to focus on innovations and bringing in disruptive technologies that will enable us to translate the latent needs of consumers into products," he added.

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CTO and Executive V-P, Havells

As part of this strategy, the home-grown company is establishing a design studio at its corporate headquarters in Noida, which will showcase futuristic concepts to its customers and distributors to aid innovation.

"We want to adopt the solution-based approach of "design thinking", which is all about co-creating or co-innovating with the customers," he added. The company will also collaborate with think tanks and research institutes for the design studio.

Havells is working on a slew of products which will be IoT and AI-enabled in various categories such as ACs, washing machines and LED TV. It will also look at AI-based smart living product concepts for futuristic homes.

"This is a huge cultural shift which is being driven from the top. It is a conscious decision taken by the management. We want to transform the company to ensure that technology becomes a key pillar for future growth," Saxena added.