



Global Pharmaceuticals, moksha8 will act in emerging markets

By Claudia Fontoura
517 words, 16 April 2008
Portuguese
(c) Reuters Limited 2008

SÃO PAULO, April 16 (Reuters) – moksha8, a brand new global pharmaceutical company was officially launched in Sao Paulo on Wednesday. The company boasts an innovative business model that targets the Emerging Markets exclusively. moksha8, whose headquarters are based in China, with other offices in the United States, has chosen to commence operations in Brazil.

Within the next five years the new multinational intends to invest US\$500 million in Brazil to build a factory for the production of their biotechnology products.

Founded in December 2006, **moksha8** was conceptualized by Simba Gill, former CEO of the U.S.-based Maxygen. moksha8 is backed by the private equity investors Texas Pacific Group (TGP), the global private investment firm with over \$50 billion in capital under management, and Votorantim Nuevos Negocios, of the Votorantim Group. The total amounts of their investments were not disclosed.

The new company will act on three fronts. In its first front, moksha8 will concentrate on the commercialization of large multinational pharmaceutical companies' mature brands within the Emerging Markets. The reasoning behind this strategy is, firstly, that large multinational pharmaceutical companies are presently more focused on Europe and the United States, which represent 90 percent of their income. Secondly these companies are more focused on discovering and commercializing new medications.

"We place ourselves as a trustworthy partner in the emerging markets", said Mario Grieco, **moksha8** Executive Vice-President and Head of Latin America.

With partnerships already established with Pfizer and Roche, **moksha8** plans to commercialize 20 classic brands such as Bactrim, Lexotan and Diabinese. "The products represent a total sales value of R 130 million annually in Brazil", declared Grieco. 60 specialized sales representatives have been contracted to start the promotion work in Brazil. "Within three years, we plan to grow our sales force to over 500-strong", he affirmed. "The objective is to increase sales by 20 percent."

On another front, the company will license and distribute new medications. According to Fernando Reinach, Executive Director of Votorantim Nuevos Negocios, the company will operate both with major laboratories and with biotechnology companies that do not yet target the BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India and China).

"In the U.S. medications are approved of by the FDA (U.S. Food and Drug Administration) and then licensed in the United States and in Europe. **moksha8** will commercialize only approved medications throughout the rest of the world." moksha8 is also preparing to develop and commercialize its own biotechnology products, but this is expected to take up to five years. "We are negotiating with the [Brazilian] government to bring these technologies into the country and the Lula administration has shown great interest.", says Grieco.

Executives of existing major global pharmaceutical companies were chosen to compose the staff of the new company. Mario Grieco, who was appointed to head operations in Brazil and Latin America, is the former President of Bristol Myers Squibb in Brazil. Steen Kroyer, the Executive Chairman of China, previously occupied the presidency of Astra Zeneca in that country.

The company's curious name comes from Sanskrit and is translated to mean liberation, elucidation and freedom. "The number eight, besides representing the infinite, is like a lucky number", says Grieco. **moksha8** will act in eight main territories: Brazil, Russia, India, China, Mexico, Korea, the Middle East and the North of Africa.

(Edited by Alexandre Caverni)