

# Interview

Samtel Avionics is a key Indian player in high-technology products for avionics and military applications and cockpit displays. It has quickly emerged as a leader in its space attracting global majors such as Thales, General Dynamics Canada, Honeywell, Curtiss Wright, HAL etc to forge partnership with this young company. And the man behind its stupendous success has been **Mr Puneet Kaura, MD & CEO, Samtel Avionics** who has put a great deal of energy into building Samtel's core competence to compete on a global scale. Under his leadership, Samtel has been awarded with **Frost & Sullivan Hot Investment Opportunity Award 2009 and Indian Innovation Award 2010**. Excerpts from an interview with **Aviation World...**

**Under your leadership, Samtel has fast emerged as the preferred Indian R&D/JV/collaboration partner for global aerospace majors! What's attracting global giants to join hands?**

Innovation and re-innovation of technology has always been the 'mantra' at Samtel. Ours is a dynamic industry, and it is very important for a company in this industry to foresee and ride the trends. From the very inception of the Samtel Group, we have developed an innate tendency to track future technologies and prepare ourselves well in advance to be ready with solutions when the industry demands it. It is due to this quality of Samtel that we have been able to successfully forge partnerships with the leaders in the industry, and will continue to enhance our focus on this.

This has also paid handsome dividend, both in terms of product innovation and reputation building which is evident from the fact that despite being a comparatively young player in the defence industry, Samtel has managed to carve a niche for itself. We are already partnering with at least five of the top ten leaders in the global aerospace and defence domain. We have also been granted the MSME status by the Indian government, which entitles its partners to get Offset multiplier of 1.5 as per current procedure.

**Tell us about your avionics solutions**



**“Our strong focus on R&D, quality and delivery commitment has paid handsome dividend”**

**and where that market is heading?**

The company operates in the domains of Displays, Built-to-Print for Avionics LRUs and Opto-electronics. Its products and services include Multi-Function Displays (MFDs), Smart Multi-Function Displays (SMFDs), Full Colour Displays (FCD) for commercial aircraft, Head Up Displays (HUDs), Helmet Mounted Sight Displays (HMSDs), Automated Test Equipment (ATEs), Multifunction Indicators: 3ATI & 4ATI, EL Displays, Optronics (Infra Red Search and Track (IRST)), Rugged displays for Land, Naval and Airborne platforms, Built-to-print (BTP)/ Built-to-Specs (BTS) manufacturing, MRO services, and Obsolescence Management.

The Indian aerospace industry is now on its way to stand tall in the global arena. Given the current dynamics of the Indian industry, this would definitely be the start of many new things and the results will be visible over the next few years.

**Tell us more about your JVs with HAL and Thales?**

Samtel HAL Display Systems Ltd. (SHDS) is a JV between HAL and Samtel Avionics, and was created to address the avionics requirements including Test Benches and Systems for all HAL star platforms - both fixed and rotary wing. As we stand today, approx. 120 sets (840 units) of MFDs have been delivered by Samtel-HAL JV for induction on Su-30 MKIs, and are already flying. Moreover, we have constantly been working to develop products for other HAL Star programs. Samtel's joint venture with HAL is a prime example of how DPSUs can successfully partner with private sector to leverage on the strengths of both the companies to support indigenous production.

The Samtel Thales JV was signed in 2008 with an aim to bring Thales'

technological expertise to India as part of Thales's strategy of partnering with leading industry players around the world. The JV specialises in the design, development, production, sale and support of aeronautical products for the Indian defence markets. Currently, the Samtel-Thales JV is partnering with Thales on the Mirage 2000 upgrade project. The JV has already started dispatching the displays for Mirage 2000 from its production facility in Delhi/NCR. Besides this, the JV will create offsets in the avionics and optronics fields as well as redesign and the treatment of obsolete materials.

**Are you also pursuing other collaborations?**

As mentioned above, Samtel is in various kinds of partnerships and contracts with world leaders in aerospace and defence. Besides our JVs with HAL and Thales, we have a long-term contract with Honeywell and are supplying avionics equipment to them for their general aviation range in the US. We are a tier-II supplier to Bell, Sikorsky and Agusta Westland through our partnership with Curtiss-Wright Controls Defense Solutions (CWCDs) UK, where we are collaborating for a new generation of intelligent, rugged displays for the defence and aerospace markets. Besides these, Samtel has partnered with General Dynamics Canada for co-production and co-marketing of products for military/ ground market. Along with these, we are in discussion with various other market leaders for partnerships and collaborations, the details of which cannot be divulged at this moment. Samtel is on an accelerated path of growth, and with the world focus on Indian defence industry at the moment, Samtel is truly poised to become a partner of choice for all avionics system integrators across the world. ■