

# Orient Electric: Setting New Industry Standards



**Puneet Dhawan, Sr. Vice President  
Orient Electric** →

Orient Electric is one of India's leading consumer electrical brands with a diverse portfolio that includes fans, home appliances, switchgears, and of course, lighting. The US \$1.6-billion CK Birla Group-company takes pride in its R&D capabilities, spirit of continuous innovation and the commitment to offering contemporary as well as futuristic solutions to meet the needs and expectations of its valued consumers.

The company has a fully integrated manufacturing set-up for making electronic drivers, LED modules and finished bulbs, various LED luminaires e.g. streetlights, floodlights, industrial high-bay lights and indoor lights backed up by a fully integrated in-house R&D team and competence centre.

The company that claims to be the third largest manufacturer of LED lamps in India is one of the first few brands to receive BEE rating in LED bulbs. Orient boasts of it being the only brand to have 5-Star rating, while the industry has been mandated to manufacture and supply 3-star rated bulbs. To know more on the company's lighting business, we, at **LED World**, spoke with **Puneet Dhawan**, Senior Vice President and Head for Lighting Business at Orient Electric. Excerpts are here to follow:



## How do you see lighting automation making way for Orient Electric?

We have already executed few significant projects in association with EESL using automation through CCMS (Centrally Controlled Monitoring System). One of the projects was in Delhi Cantonment where we have installed 11,000 streetlights, while similar system has been replicated in 13 districts of Himachal Pradesh where we have installed 33,000 automated streetlights. Recently, we have installed automated streetlights in Jaipur, where we have offered individual control using mobile SIM- or RF-based technology.

In consumer lighting segment, we have

recently launched smart-lamp wherein one can control the light intensity, besides switching it on or off with the help of a smartphone. We have also developed 2x2 panel, meant specifically for office, with colour-changing, dimming, and switching options. It also incorporates occupancy sensor while the possibility of motion sensor is also there.

Automated lighting market is growing especially with government's enhanced focus on the development of infrastructure. We believe that B2G will remain as the biggest segment for the next few years before the consumer segment starts picking up to become mass from the current niche.

## How do you differentiate intelligent lighting from being simply smart?

Smart will graduate to intelligent. Smart is something which can be controlled with the help of an app, Bluetooth device, or voice commands, etc.; while intelligent is a step ahead where the gadgets get the senses to respond according to the user's routine.

For example, suppose you have an app-controlled fan installed in your home, which you switch on at certain time in the night and then change speed after an hour or so, you switch it off using the same method. Over a period of time, say within 7 or 10 days, the device learns your routine and it would start sending you an alert so that you may not forget. All of this has been made possible by integration of artificial intelligence.

## Where does Orient stand on this front?

We are keenly watching this space and are in advanced stages of launching a range of products with IoT-enabled products. While the technology is catching up with the consumers, the costs are also coming within the reach. Our understanding is that affordability will drive growth in the segment, which we expect to happen with 12-24 month period.

## What is the current scenario of smart/intelligent lighting in India?

The market is growing fast, and automated



and intelligent lighting already is around 4% of the total lighting market. Technology stabilisation and current costs is holding it up, but we expect the market to be in double digit share within next 5-7 years, and we at Orient Electric are geared up for this.

### With whom is Orient partnering for the technology for all this?

We have many partners who are assisting us in providing technical support and our in-house competence centre and R&D team are also working towards developing these solutions. We have now an integrated development team for fans, home appliances, lighting and switchgear to give a common technology platform to all our customers.

### Why should one opt for the brand Orient?

Orient as a brand stands for trust, performance, quality and innovation. It holds the trust of millions of customers worldwide. From being the oldest and the largest fans manufacturer to having a diverse portfolio of lighting, home appliances and switchgears; Orient has come a long way earning its position as a dominant electrical brand not only in India but in over 35 countries. Being part of the C K Birla Group, Orient has been able to nurture and uphold the values of the Group which has helped it to remain as a trustworthy and dependable brand for the consumers.

### What's new in Orient's basket for lighting?

A remarkable achievement at Orient is that we are the first to bring the 5-star rated LED bulb in the market. The government has

recently mandated that no company can sell LED bulbs up to 25W with less than 3-star rating, which we have been offering since the last two and a half years. Now that 3-star has become mandatory, we have graduated to offer the 5-star rated products. We initially launched it in 9W, and then extended the same to 12W as these are the most sought-after wattages. Soon, we would be offering 5-star rated bulbs in variants such as 3W, 5W and 7W also.

### What superiority does the 5-star rated bulb possess over 3-star?

BEE, under its labelling program for LED bulbs, considers luminous efficacy (Lumens per watt) and other safety requirements like photo-biological safety as main parameters to rate the bulbs on a five-star scale for energy efficiency. Orient's 9W 5-star rated LED bulb meets BIS safety standards, has long life of 25,000 hours, and delivers 120 lumens per watt.

5-star is very difficult to make, it has a complicated circuit. The number of LEDs goes up as high light output has to be ensured. There are specifications which one needs to strictly follow for getting the products star-rated. For instance, the required efficacy for a 3-star rated bulb is 90 lumen per watt; while for 5-star, it is 120 lumens. The 5-star rated bulbs offer 30% more illumination than those that are not rated i.e. people are now getting the same light from 9W, what they were earlier getting from 12W.

### What is the process of getting products star-rated?

The process of getting star rating involves stringent testing. For the ratings to be

validated, we get our bulbs, first tested for given specifications at our own well-equipped testing facility and then get the same qualified through Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS). After that we submit the results to BEE, based on which the Bureau issues the star rating.

### How have been the market response and the growth at Orient?

The market has responded well and we have received good response from across the country. Our LED lighting business has grown 8 times in just 2 years. Today, we are one of the largest LED bulb manufacturers in the country in the non-OEM category and a preferred supplier to many government institutions. Over the last 3 years, we have focused most of our investments on new product development, quality enhancement and automation, indigenising components and expanding production capacities. Our products are at par with global standards in terms of quality as well as cost.

### What about the manufacturing capacity & infrastructure?

We have a very robust infrastructure with two well-equipped facilities in Noida wherein we are manufacturing electronics as well as finished products. We manufacture around 1 lakh lamps of various wattages and 7000 streetlights every day, which we are planning to double in next three years in order to feed the rapidly growing market demand. We have a full-fledged R&D center with advanced testing equipment's and latest design software. We have a very capable design team which also at time partners with our associates around the world to engineer and design the finest lighting products.

### How do you see the lighting industry's growth in time to come?

The lighting industry is in transition for now, reflecting very high growth rate. The next 3-5 years are going to be very exciting as the government is seemingly determined to save energy by transiting to LED lighting. In five years from now, we foresee a changed scenario with 100% conversion of streetlights to smart outdoor lighting.

### How do you market your lighting products?

We have a network of 700 distributors catering to the needs of 35,000 retailers, spread across the country. This apart, we are also available online through our e-commerce portal.

### How does your brand associate with Dhoni as the ambassador?

Our association with MS Dhoni has been for over a decade now and grown stronger with time. His persona is similar to that of Orient as mature, strong, cool and classy and his endorsement to the brand has helped us to get emotionally connected with millions of our customers.

