

BRAND POST

Anubhav Gupta: A firm believer of the concept of 'Learning on the job'

With a focus on identifying and evaluating opportunities for APL Apollo Tubes Limited (APL Apollo) with his innovative and well-calculated strategic planning and vision, Mr. Gupta is contributing to the company's growth.



By HT Brand Studio

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Anubhav Gupta, Chief Strategy Officer, APL Apollo(APL Apollo)

As the Chief Strategy Officer of APL Apollo, Mr. Anubhav Gupta's focus has been on market share gains, lighter balance sheet, innovation, cost control measures and enhancing brand equity.

Mr. Gupta has travelled a long way prior to joining APL Apollo. Starting his career as an investment banker over more than a decade back, Mr. Gupta would have never imagined that his out-of-box thinking and far-sighted vision would make such a huge difference in the industry. He worked on investment banking deals with promoters who had created successful business models. All through his journey he learnt a lot from the successful entrepreneurs while working with different companies listed on Indian stock exchanges. While working in investment banking industry, he was majorly covering equities.

Contributing immensely to the growth of these companies one after another as their top seeded executive in equity research domain, Mr. Gupta has been consistently ranked in the top three equity research analysts in the country when it comes to mid-cap coverage according to Asia Money Polls. It is through the deployment of his pragmatic strategies that he helped those firms raise funds at various intervals for expansion as well as successful debt reduction.

An MBA and a major in Computer Science, Mr. Gupta also gained expertise in infusion of private equity funds into real estate sector while working with Singaporean investment banking firm Kim Eng Securities at the beginning of his career. Kim Eng had the mandate to invest private equity funds into Indian real estate sector and Mr. Gupta was the first employee of Kim Eng when it set up its office in Mumbai in 2007. Four years later, Maybank, the biggest bank of Malaysia, acquired Kim Eng and Mr. Gupta eventually became the employee of Maybank.

In 2016, he joined as the Head of Mid-Cap Research at a boutique equity research firm Emkay Global which had its primary focus on mid-cap companies. There Mr. Gupta worked closely with the promoters and helped them in their fund-raising exercise while maximising their shareholder value. Simultaneously, Mr. Gupta learnt quite a bit of business skills by prioritizing on working with the mid-cap companies. In all these years, a keen observer of the technical and market trends, Mr. Gupta remained equally involved in setting up of businesses, dealing with regulators and getting all the necessary licenses and clearances for various companies.

Mr. Gupta joined APL Apollo in 2019 and ever since he has been advising on corporate development, communications, and marketing of the APL Apollo brand. His strategies are aimed at creating a strong positioning of APL Apollo within the domestic and global markets, and in his day-to-day decision-making process his experience in fundamental research, and analysis in the investment world as well as the expertise he has gained through his leadership positions across different companies, have become immensely helpful. Under his astute leadership and guidance, APL Apollo has emerged even stronger as India's largest branded structural steel tubes manufacturer with 50 per cent of the market share and global ranking in the top-five players.

Says Mr. Anubhav Gupta, Chief Strategy Officer, APL Apollo Tubes Limited, "By virtue of pioneering pathbreaking technologies for steel tubes, APL Apollo has been creating new markets for itself, and our products have extensively replaced conventional construction

products. For us, the next two-three years will be years of consolidation and we are going to heavily focus on rural areas. We are also looking to increase our value-added product portfolio and for that, we are going to come up with new products and applications.”

Regardless of the obstacles created by the pandemic, APL Apollo has managed to increase its sales volume by 32% to 481k tons while its EBITDA has increased by 135% to ₹1,691mn.

The company’s interest cost declined by 41% to ₹159mn during this period while its net debt declined to ₹3 bn in 1HFY21 from ₹7.9 bn on 31 Mar’20.

“We have also created a huge distribution network and are selling our products to 800 distributors and 50,000 retailers pan India. We also have fabricators in the value chain like plumbers, carpenters and our products are brought by 400,000 fabricators. In the branded steel tubes manufacturing in India, we are the pioneer when it comes to bringing in any new technology,” he concludes.

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