Therapure Biopharma

Developing Biopharma

Located in Mississauga, Ontario, Therapure Biopharma manufactures, purifies, and packages therapeutic proteins.

It’s not as complicated as it sounds. If you ask Thomas Wel in easier terms. In his words, “Therapure’s primary business (CDMO) for biotech and pharmaceutical companies molecules. Biologics are gleaned from a living source, critical for biologics since the process starts

Therapure attracts large, multinational providing development and bioman ensuring clients benefit from both source to manufacture bio
ACEUTICALS

Therapure is an integrated biopharmaceutical company that develops, manufactures and distributes biopharmaceutical products. In his role as President and CEO of Therapure, he explains what his company does best: focus is to perform contract development and manufacturing services. The company specialises in biologics, which are different than pills or small molecule drugs; for example, a cell, bacteria or an animal.” Consistency of manufacturing is critical with a living source.

Therapure serves pharmaceutical and biotech customers, as well as small, start-up biotech companies. The company's manufacturing services allows Therapure to stay at the forefront of biomanufacturing techniques, from the scale up of a manufacturing process, as well as the breadth of potential applications. The second aspect to the business is pursuing their own discovery research—also...
focused on biologics. “We are developing a set of products that is focused around using haemoglobin—the body’s most abundant protein—as a drug carrier,” explains Wellner. “We attach drugs to haemoglobin and it naturally transports the drugs to organs like the liver, spleen and bone marrow. It’s an efficient use of a natural process to get a drug to the body. Therapure is also doing development work for rare blood disorders, bone growth and bone regeneration.”

The product side is still in its early stages of development. Some of their products won’t go into the clinic for testing for another year or two. Even after that, they won’t be approved for a while. “The drug approval process is at least five years,” Wellner says. “You have to do clinical work just for proof of concept and then you need to perform pharmacokinetic toxicological studies that are required by the health regulators to allow you to go into Phase One clinical studies in healthy volunteers.”

Phase One involves trying the product on a healthy person. Phase Two looks at a few people with a particular disorder, and in Phase Three, you do tests on a broader population to make sure it’s safe and efficacious. “After all that, you provide the data that’s been analysed to gain marketing approval. And that process can take six to eight years and many millions of dollars,” says Wellner.

**Industry trends**
As research, technology and knowledge
advance, the medical industry experiences constant change. One of the major trends that has been significant for Therapure Biopharma is the growth in demand for biologics. “The growth has been tremendous in vaccines and monoclonal antibodies,” says Wellner. “The biologics industry is growing at three times the rate of general growth in medicine. Biologics are being used to target diseases and areas of the body that previously couldn’t be treated.”

Another positive change affecting the company is the desire to outsource. Ten years ago, pharmaceutical companies did everything inside their own walls, reluctant to use service providers. Due to the economic climate, there has been a shift in the way pharmaceutical companies are spending. “They are trying to use capital in the areas they’re good at and outsource for non-core areas,” Wellner explains. “The trend to partner with biomanufacturing and drug development services has been great for us. That’s why we’re in the services business, because the trend has been so strong.”

Will the trend reverse when the economy turns around? Maybe not. Wellner believes it’s sustainable. It might be the industry is realizing that this is an efficient way to focus their capital on high-value areas, while allowing competent service providers to provide support.

No matter what industry, money is always a concern. Who pays for particular products
Legal counsel from a business perspective

Aird & Berlis LLP is a leading Canadian law firm with an established local, national and international practice.

We are pleased to be general corporate counsel to Therapure Biopharma Inc.

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in the system is something that is certainly becoming more prevalent, as is building a case for financial support. Twenty years ago, there was a lot more freedom around what a system would provide and pay for. In his last 10 years, Wellner has seen a real tightening on which products gain support and approval for funding from centrally funded Government systems.

“We have invested a lot of time, capital and effort into getting our facility up to full capacity so we want to make sure our cash in is equal to or exceeding our cash out,” reasons Wellner. “We booked positive revenues last year and we have an aggressive revenue growth plan for 2009 and beyond.”

“The long-term goal is to continue to see that services revenue grow and to have some of the early investments start to bear fruit,” Wellner concludes. “Some of the internal developments and joint-development products will start to create some additional uplift for our business that will allow us to continue to grow nicely. Eventually, Therapure wants to be a fully integrated biopharmaceutical company that provides both services to others and also has our own innovative products to sustain long term growth.”

Ramping up
As Canada invests more in developing its healthcare and medical industries, Therapure Biopharma is one of those companies that is sure to succeed since the company provides high-value services which are not widely available from one service provider. Positioning itself for that success, Therapure is aggressively ramping up their client base to build revenue.