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NOW, TIME FOR SMART FANS

RAKESH KHANNA, CEO of Orient Electric, talks to SANGEETA YADAV about the new Aerostorm fan with winglet technology and its vision for 2018

■ Tell us about the recently launched Orient Aerostorm fans?

Aerostorm is a one of its kind fan that will have winglet technology inspired from modern aircraft, something that no other fans have. Winglet helps to streamline the air much better and minimises the vortex in the wings that makes the fan work at a higher speed and make less sound. It also has sturdiest and heaviest 18-pole motor design for longer life.

■ How is it different from the Aeroquiet fans launched last year in the Aero series?

Although Aeroquiet fan was giving the highest amount of air, consumers wanted a little more and that is the difference between the two fans. While a normal fan gives you air up to 220 CMM, the hi-end fans including the Aeroquiet go up to 240 CMM. But Aerostorm will give you 300 CMM of air speed and lesser sound.

■ How does the new design contribute to innovating new technology?

The consumers want minimalistic and premium finish with an aesthetic design and that is the first area where we have worked upon. We have got PU finish in our new Aerostorm design which is really expensive but we are glad to get it right. It makes the blades 100 per cent rust free, bend-proof and easy to clean the dust. Second is the material. One can't get the profile in steel or normal plastic. Thus, we used ABS glass-filled material which is

used in automobiles for retaining the strength for a longer period.

■ How much of research work has gone into bringing this technology?

It took us three years of R&D to launch Aerostorm fans. We had aeronautical engineers working on it along with being associated with the educational institutes using software and their facility for the aeronautical designs.

■ What has been the inspiration behind the new launches?

Being a part of the CK Birla Group, we live up to the philosophy and inspiration of CK Birla and emphasise on 'Switch to smart' which is our tagline. Today, any product that is futuristic and efficient is called smart — be it a smart TV or a smartphone. Therefore, everything that we do is moving towards being smarter. Also a lot of inspiration comes from the smart generation who is open-minded, looking at things in a different way and questioning why it is so and how to make things better and convenient.

■ What will be the cost of Aerostorm fans?

The Aerostorm is priced at ₹5990 and will be available for sale offline from the last week of January. It has been launched on Amazon at an exclusive offer price of ₹5399 with an additional cash back of ₹500 for a limited period. It also comes with interest-free EMI option for Amazon buyers.



■ How has the consumer behaviour changed over the years?

The demand of having a fan which makes no sound, has always been there all through life but because nobody asked for it and brought it up as a product, people didn't feel that there is a need. But now, consumers have changed and are opting for products that are not only energy saving, but also have unique features like remote-operated and in-build LED lights in fans.

■ How has the growth of Orient Electric over the years been?

During the launch of Aero Storm fan, we faced the aftermath of demonisation, high commodity prices and the transition of GST. But we have emerged a lot stronger and better through this process of evolution. Apart from fans, we have grown by leaps and bounds in LED lighting business, both in sales and manufacture. We have also made a good headway in the commercial

and street lightening business and are working closely with the Government to ensure that India quickly moves into LED street lighting to save electricity and bring down the cost.

In appliances, our high-quality product is now getting very good reviews from the market both the consumers and the trade products. Orient switchgear, which was started a year before, has now well established itself as the safest switchgear in the Indian industry because of its SDB technology. The latest technique of noise free fans has now surfaced after people have experienced what a noise free fan means. The share of business in premium fans has grown by 300 per cent in last one year. We have also constantly got the support from the Amazon team in popularising the Aero Series that are aesthetically designed and have the aerodynamic technology.

■ What are the company's plan for this year?

I hope we too take the market by storm too with the launch of Aero Storm that will redefine the journey of ceiling fans in India and globally. We will invest in more and more R & D to innovate high-quality products across our all business divisions including fans, lighting, switch gears and home appliances and to also provide a delightful after sale services experience to our customers. We will also air a new commercial featuring our brand ambassador MS Dhoni.

Photo: Pankaj Kumar