Internship at
IPCA Laboratories, Mumbai

By

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INTERNSHIP REPORT

Introduction:

As part of the MBA program in Pharmaceutical Management, I did my industry internship with Ipca Laboratories Ltd., a respected and well-known pharmaceutical company worldwide. Ipca Laboratories' vast presence in domestic and international markets, combined with its diversified product basket and emphasis on quality, made it an appropriate place for learning through experience.

This internship was an essential link between theoretical learning in the classroom and its use in a fast-paced, real-world business setting. Throughout my stay, I was actively involved in observing and contributing to various operational, marketing, and strategic efforts within the company. These interactions provided a thorough understanding of how various functional departments work together to propel product performance, market visibility, and business expansion in the highly regulated pharmaceutical sector.

The internship experience greatly enhanced my knowledge of industry practices, particularly within the product management, brand strategy, sales planning, and market intelligence contexts. Additionally, it enabled me to acquire foundational managerial skills and learn about existing trends, challenges, and innovations altering the pharma landscape. The knowledge that was gained throughout this period not only supplemented my educational background but has also prepared me with the practical skills required to succeed in the healthcare and pharmaceutical industry.

Objectives of the Internship:

- To comprehend the business and organizational structure of a top Indian pharma company.
- To see the role of marketing, supply chain, and institutional sales in an actual environment.
- To assist in live projects and initiatives focused on enhancing market presence and business performance.
- To bridge theory and industry practices and develop a professional skill set.
- To observe the dynamics and challenges of pharma brand management.

Organisational Profile:

Ipca Laboratories Ltd is one of India's largest pharmaceutical companies with a history stretching back to 1949. Based in Mumbai, the company was originally known as the Indian Pharmaceutical Combine Association Ltd and has since developed into a completely integrated global pharmaceutical enterprise. Ipca has operations in more than 120 countries on six continents and is listed on the BSE and NSE. As a company with over 17,000 workers, it has established itself with an effective presence in the domestic and global markets owing to its rich product line, observance of regulatory requirements, and focus on quality and innovation.

Ipca's business activities are mainly categorized into two segments: Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs) and formulations. The company is a global market leader in APIs like chloroquine phosphate, furosemide, atenolol, propranolol, and hydroxychloroquine, exporting them to leading pharmaceutical firms across the globe. It has invested in more than 15 state-of-the-art manufacturing plants in India, the UK, and the US, several of which are certified by regulatory bodies like the US FDA, UK MHRA, WHO-GMP, and TGA Australia.

In the formulations segment, Ipca has over 350 branded and generic products in therapeutic categories such as anti-infectives, cardiology, pain management, rheumatology, dermatology, and anti-malarials. Some of its leading brands in the Indian pharma market are:

- Zerodol – a well-prescribed brand for pain and inflammation management
- HCQS – employed in autoimmune disorders and as an antimalarial
- Folitrax – to treat rheumatoid arthritis and psoriasis
- Pacitane – a neurology product for Parkinson's disease
- Tendomac – for musculoskeletal conditions
- Rablet – a proton pump inhibitor for acid disorders
- Perinorm – for gastrointestinal motility disorders

Ipca is also among the leading Indian companies that produce anti-malarial products, supplying medicines to national and international malaria control programs, including the WHO and UNICEF.

One of the main drivers of Ipca's success is its emphasis on research and development. The company operates multiple R\&D facilities in Mumbai, Ratlam, Athal, and Baroda, which are accredited by the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR), Government of India. These facilities concentrate on creating new forms of dosage, innovative drug delivery systems, and economic manufacturing processes, specifically for regulated markets. In FY 2021–22, Ipca spent more than ₹160 crore on R\&D, demonstrating its long-term focus on innovation.

The leadership of Ipca is headed by Mr. Premchand Godha (Chairman), Mr. Pranay Godha (Managing Director & CEO), and Mr. Ajit Jain (Managing Director & CFO), with the able support of a professional senior management team and an independent Board of Directors. The values of the company—Digniti, Integriti, Qualiti, Safeti, and Responsibiliti—constitute the backbone of its culture and business. They influence its philosophy for product quality, worker safety, corporate governance, and society welfare.

Through the decades, Ipca has collaborated with multinationals in the pharmaceutical industry, such as AstraZeneca, Merck, GSK, and Sanofi, supplying them with formulations and APIs. It also made strategic investments, including taking a stake in Unichem Laboratories to augment its formulation business. Despite price regulation and regulatory hurdles, the company reported consolidated revenues exceeding ₹7,700 crore in FY2023–24.

Finally, Ipca Laboratories Ltd is a highly respected and innovation-led pharmaceutical enterprise renowned for its solid product brands, strong global reach, high-quality manufacturing facilities, and ethical business practices. Its stable operation and strategic orientation make it an important contributor to the worldwide healthcare industry.

Services provided by the Organisation:

- **Pharmaceutical Formulations:** Wide range of branded and generic drugs across multiple therapy segments.
- **API Manufacturing:** Over 80 APIs for various therapeutic areas, exported globally.
- **Marketing & Sales:** Strong field force across India and global marketing teams focusing on branded generics.
- **Institutional Business:** Supply to government institutions, hospitals, and international health organizations.
- **Global Regulatory Operations:** Compliant with several global authorities such as USFDA, MHRA, and WHO.

Key Activities / Projects Undertaken (Other than Dissertation):

Aside from the main dissertation project, I was meaningfully engaged in various functional support activities and atypical live assignments that exposed me to an overall holistic exposure of major business functions within the organization. These activities bolstered my knowledge of pharmaceutical marketing, decision-making based on data, and cross-functional coordination. Major contributions include:

- **Market Mapping for Ortho Division:** Undertook exhaustive analysis of prescription trends, market share performance, and competitive positions for key brands like Zerodol in priority regions. This exercise helped develop strategic territory-level action planning.
- **Campaign Review and Feedback Gathering:** Helped gather and analyze field force feedback and physician responses to recent promotional campaigns. Insights were utilized to further refine messaging, visual aids, and engagement tools.
- **Monitoring Sales Data and Reporting:** Tracked and interpreted primary, secondary, and tertiary sales data through Excel dashboards. Flagged under-performing SKUs and supported weekly sales review presentation preparation for brand managers.
- **Drafting Promotional Content:** Supported the creation of promotional materials such as product visual aids, brand slogans, campaign ideas, e-detailing copy, and digital banners for use in physical and hybrid detailing.
- **Doctor Targeting and Segmentation Strategy:** Worked with the product management team to refresh the doctor segmentation database by therapeutic focus, prescription volume, and specialty fit. Assisted in prioritizing top prescribers for concentrated brand interaction.
- **Training and Induction Exposure:** Attended internal training programs and brand strategy presentations tailored to field personnel and marketing executives. These training programs gave exposure to new brand positioning, product USP messaging, and objection-handling skills.
- **New Brand Launch Involvement:** Helped develop pre-launch planning and promotional materials design for a new brand launch. Was involved in brand ideation meetings, content alignment with clinical positioning, as well as coordinating with cross-functional teams for launch execution.

- **Competitor Benchmarking**: Helped collect and report competitive intelligence on prominent competitor brands, including therapeutic portfolios, prices, campaign strategies, and field input. The benchmarking was utilized in SWOT analyses and market opportunity evaluations.
- **Field Force Communication:** Authored internal comms and bulletins distributed to the sales force, such as product news, campaign reminders, and inspirational content that corresponds with sales goals.
- **Hospital and Institutional Sales Exposure:** Acquired initial exposure to the institutional sales process, how purchasing occurs, tender submission, and pricing strategy for hospital supply channels.

Key Learnings from the Internship:

Technical/Functional Learnings:

- Insight into **pharma brand life cycle**, campaign development, and scientific promotion.
- Exposure to **CRM systems**, field force management, and **sales funnel analytics**.
- Understanding of **institutional procurement** trends and GPO decision-making processes.

Soft Skill Learnings:

- Improved communication through interaction with cross-functional teams and field personnel.
- Learned time management by balancing multiple projects and deadlines.
- Strengthened problem-solving ability through case-based discussions and feedback implementation.

Strategic Insights:

- Gained knowledge of **UCPMP 2024** and its growing role in ethical marketing.
- Understood the impact of **competitive benchmarking** and real-time market intelligence.
- Learned how **digital tools** are influencing doctor engagement and patient reach.