

Renault India targets 4 times sales rise in 3 yrs

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Kolkata: French carmaker Renault has set an internal target of quadrupling sales in India in the next three years.

Renault India CEO and managing director Sumit Sawhney, who was in Kolkata to inaugurate the second dealership in the city, said the company needed to step up on the gas and record incremental sales hike to become a leading player in India. "We are eyeing a 5% market share in India in the medium term, up from its current share of 2.6%," he said. What it essentially means is that the company which sold 60,000-plus cars last year has to sell 2.4-lakh cars by 2017-18. The Indian auto industry is projected to reach 4.8 million units by then.

Renault India has a three-pronged strategy to go into the sales overdrive: beef up its portfolio, add more sales points and increase the number of service outlets. "We have to become a complete car company with products that are smart and practical, sales outlets across the geographies so that the cars are within reach of customers and service



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outlets across the country to inspire confidence," Sawhney said. The carmaker has decided to dump the re-badge route and introduce cars that are different from its alliance partner Nissan. Till now, the two companies sold the same cars with cosmetic changes to them like Renault Duster and Nissan Terrano in small SUV segment, Renault Scala and Nissan Sunny in sedan and Renault Pulse and Nissan Micra in small car.

These apart, Renault has luxury sedan Fluence and SUV Koleos. Though Nissan X-Trail is also based on the Koleos platform, they do not share the common looks. Renault has considerably upgraded its existing portfolio and has a new Koleos and Duster. Next in line is the new Fluence, followed by the 4x4 Duster.

"Re-badge was needed to enter the Indian market with multiple products in the shortest possible time. Now that the company has established itself and has five products, it will chart its own course. Renault and Nissan will continue to share platforms but the cars will be distinct," he said.

Hence, Renault will not launch the rebadged version of Nissan Evalia but go in for a new MPV, possibly based on Dacia Lodgy. This apart, Renault is banking heavily on a sub Rs 4-lakh small car, the first product off common module family (CMF) platform. "With its five products, Renault is currently present in 37% of the Indian automotive segment. Once the small car joins the family next year, it will jump to 87%," said Sawhney, adding that the company would in two years look at only those cars that address mobility and ring in the numbers.

On the dealership front, Renault plans to grow from 125 outlets in 2013-end to 175 by end of this year. In the east alone, the number will go up from 10 to 25. As for service centers, the numbers will rise from 105 now to 160 by the year end.