



Aston Martin to step up sourcing from India

If you are a component maker cherishing high ambitions of adding an exclusive brand or two to your portfolio of customers, here's a chance. Iconic British sports car maker Aston Martin is looking to source from India. Rather source more from India because it has already started with some components in the Vantage unveiled in April this year.

Under the leadership of Andy Palmer, who took charge as CEO a little over three-and-a-half years ago, Aston Martin is scouting for suppliers who can help the OEM enhance its cost efficiencies and thereby support its next phase of the growth plan.

"It starts on the new models. It doesn't go on to the retrospect models. So, it is on all the new models, you will see some Indian content," Palmer told *Autocar Professional* in an exclusive interview.

Palmer knows the Indian automotive industry fairly well, thanks to his earlier stint at Nissan. He was also instrumental in the Japanese OEM's joint venture with [Hinduja Group](#)-owned Ashok Leyland. Aston Martin has engaged the [Hinduja Group's](#) engineering services arm [Hinduja Tech](#) in certain engineering activities as well as to identify suppliers of competitively priced components that meet Aston Martin's quality specs.

"One of the things I asked when I came was (for) some parts; the quality and cost is better coming from India. I asked my purchasing department to be more open-minded about supply. Through [Hinduja Tech](#) and some other help, we have started to source parts from India and are also looking to do some of the engineering in India," says Palmer.

The process of sourcing from India began about two years ago and is growing progressively. More parts could be now engineered in and sourced from India with casting components being key.

According to an existing supplier to Aston Martin, manufacturing at the Gaydon, UK-headquartered carmaker is a "beautiful blend of technology and old-world artisanship". He says that the sourcing strategy over the years has been influenced by the changes in ownership of Aston Martin.

Turned around, focus now on portfolio expansion

For 2017, Aston Martin reported a profit-before-tax figure of 87 million pounds, the first time after 2010, on sales of 5,117 cars, 58 percent more than in 2016. "We have turned it around. Now, we need to grow it," says Palmer.

With financial problems getting solved, Palmer wants to accelerate on product portfolio expansion to make Aston Martin a "sustainable car company". He sees seven clusters in the luxury market, and the plan is to offer at least one model to cater to customers in each of those clusters. "Portfolio expansion is the third phase in the plan and is basically taking us to the areas of the luxury market which we haven't been before," says Palmer. The new thrust will begin from 2019. Perhaps, the most crucial one will be the production version of the DBX concept, Aston Martin's first SUV, followed by a mid-engined model to race against the Ferrari 488. Then there's the revival of the Lagonda, this time as an electric super-luxury car which Aston Martin will pitch against the likes of Bentley and Rolls-Royce.

In all, Aston Martin plans to launch seven models in seven years, each with a life of seven years. That's good news for sports / luxury car aficionados. And that's the opportunity for suppliers who qualify. Are you ready?

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