

Case Study



International distribution partnership takes Australian innovation to the world

One in four people have trouble breathing through their nose, with compromised breathing affecting millions of people. Whether from nasal congestion, obstruction, or chronic or episodic disease, compromised breathing impacts the ability for people to comfortably live their everyday lives.

Rhinomed and BOC Ltd (a member of The Linde Group) saw the opportunity to provide people with sleeping issues a simple and affordable solution. The project was established to start conversations about sleep and snoring with consumers at the pharmacy level, and distribute Rhinomed's breathing technologies as an easy to use, front-line defense for disordered breathing.

The companies focused on equipping pharmacists and general practitioners within communities to play a greater role in identifying sleep issues, and providing access to sleep related solutions, technologies and information to help those with sleep concerns.

Rhinomed's breathing technologies including snoring nasal stent, Mute™ have been designed in Melbourne, with the company locally establishing the full supply chain from manufacture, assembly, distribution to delivery.

Michael Johnson, CEO of Rhinomed: "Mute is unique. It is an Australian developed technology that has also taken into consideration how important it is to facilitate a conversation between a consumer and a pharmacist, and a patient and their clinician. All too often great medical technologies are presented to consumers in an intimidating manner. Our technology is presented in a way that allows it to open up very real, authentic and genuine conversations with consumers and patients about how they sleep."

Internationally renowned sleep dentist, Dr Dennis R Bailey, DDS stated: "A well designed nasal dilator or nasal stent can really help reduce the level of snoring that patients have by improving the quality of the nasal airway. Mute in my opinion, practicing sleep medicine for over 30 years, is one of the best designed nasal stents or nasal dilators on the market today."

Establishing a distribution agreement with The Linde Group (BOC Ltd) was significant validation of Rhinomed's global strategy, and has seen the breathing technologies Mute and Turbine (for sport) distributed in pharmacies, hospitals, sleep clinics and convenience stores across Australia and New Zealand.

Within 12 months, Rhinomed's Mute device has gone from being stocked in 70 Australian stores to being available in over 3,000 stores across Australia, the US and the UK. Since its entry to the US market in 2016, Rhinomed has successfully obtained key export distribution contracts with major international tier 1 pharmacy and retail chains, such as Vittoria Industries, CVS, McKessons, Performance Bike, and Dick's Sporting Goods, as well as accounts with Walgreens and Duane Reade which alone doubled the company's global retail footprint.

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BOC will also fulfil and supply all of Rhinomed's existing contracts within Australia - covering over 700 pharmacies currently stocking the product, as well as online sales.

In the 2016 financial year, Rhinomed experienced a 134% increase in sales over the previous year, with each quarter setting new records - the Q4 results showing a 57% increase on previous quarter and Q1 FY17 has reported a 79% increase.

Colin Smith, Head of Healthcare at BOC comments: "We [BOC] firmly believe that adding Mute to our solution set allows Pharmacists and GPs to open up conversations earlier and allow the pharmacist, the GP and the sleep specialist to work closely together to offer a better solution to patients. Mute is an inexpensive way to start that conversation which makes it a perfect fit for us."