1.) What’s the biggest challenge your customers are asking you to tackle today?
To meet the contradictory requirement of tire performance like further improvement in lowering rolling resistance (fuel efficiency) without sacrificing dry and wet traction (safety) and continuous improvement in ride and comfort (addressing noise and vibration). Besides this, in emerging markets like India and China customers are demanding improvement in durability (longer life and improvement in retreadability factor) and continuous reduction in cost per kilometer in all segments.

2.) What trends are pushing your company to innovate?
- Green Movement - Change in economic model from crude based economy to circular economy for green mobility (shifting from IC Engine technology to hybrid and electric vehicles) and sustainability.
- Legislations & Regulations – meeting tire labeling criteria at international markets
- Changing consumer behavior with respect to customization and buying pattern (improvement in fleet management through ‘Fleet Telematics’, selling miles instead of setting tires, online buying etc.)

3.) How will the supply chain for tire manufacturing differ in five years from what it is today?
- New Concept Development - Dematerialisation, shared used of the product, integration of functions, functional optimisation of products and components
- Selection of low impact material (non-hazardous material, non-exhaustible material, low energy content material, recycle material and recyclable material)
- Reduction of material - Reduction in weight, reduction in volume
- Optimisation of production techniques (fewer production process, low/clean energy consumption, low generation of waste and few/clean production consumables)
- Efficient distribution system - Less/clean packaging, efficient transport mode, efficient logistics
- Reduction of the environmental impact in the user stage - Low energy consumption, clean energy source, few consumables needed during use, clean consumables during use, no energy/auxiliary material use
- Optimization of initial life time - Reliability and durability, easy maintenance and repair, modular product structure, classic design, user taking care of product
- Optimization of end-of-life system - Reuse of product, re-mfg./refurbishing, recycling of materials, clean incineration

4.) When it comes to the future of the tire industry, what opportunities are you most excited to embrace?
- Bio sourcing of tire raw material (bio refinery)
- Vehicle technology and telematics will continue to drive change in tire industry
- Development of smart material specific for tire industry
- Intelligent tire (development of new generation TPMS, RFID, self-inflation technology; use of artificial intelligence for overall control of the vehicle)
- Energy harvesting system using piezoelectric sensors
- Non pneumatic tires
- Application of 3D printing technology in tire industry (retreading)