

SUN Mobility rewires old scooters for an electric second life

SURAJEET DAS GUPTA

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Bengaluru-based battery-swap pioneer SUN Mobility is entering the vehicle retrofit business, which entails converting existing internal combustion engine (ICE) scooters into electric at an average cost of ₹30,000 per vehicle. It has also finalised a plan to expand beyond India by building battery-swapping station infrastructure, initially in Africa and later in Southeast Asia.

The company is all set to launch services for retrofitting ICE scooters to electric and supporting them with its swapping infrastructure across 22 cities, where riders can swap electric



Old scooters, recharged

SUN Mobility plugs into retrofit market

- Getting into the retrofit business — converting ICE scooters to electric at an average cost of ₹35,000
- Plans to enter Africa, starting with Kenya — a major swappable battery market; Southeast Asia is next
- India focus currently on the B2B segment — estimates it at 15% of the two-wheeler market
- Expanding its swapping infrastructure by 2.5x by March next year

scooter batteries.

Says Chetan Maini, cofounder and chairman of the company: “There are 200 million scooters

on the roads in the country and over 10 million three-wheelers. And new regulations in many states — like Delhi — are coming

up to move quickly to electric. So conversion of old vehicles becomes more important. It also becomes an economically viable

proposition for consumers.”

The company, in which Indian Oil Corporation has invested, has helped set up over 1,000 charging points at petrol pumps — a number it plans to increase by 2.5x by next March. The tieup gives SUN access to 39,000 outlets across the country.

SUN has also recently raised fresh funds from Helios Climate — a climate-focused fund that has invested \$57 million — part of which will be used for its foray into the South African market, followed by Southeast Asia.

Says Maini: “We are piloting in Kenya, which is the first market, and then will go to other markets.”

Of course, the company’s focus is currently on the business-to-

business (B2B) segment of the battery-swapping market, which accounts for the bulk of its business.

Elaborating on the size of the B2B market in India, Maini says: “If you see the top five delivery companies, they have more than 1 million riders, and it is expanding by 30 per cent annually. And there are another 1 million-plus non-personal vehicles. We reckon it will be around 15 per cent of the total annual two-wheeler market. So it is large. And we get more energy revenues from B2B.”

Maini adds that swapping is cost-effective for this market — the cost of the vehicle becomes 40 per cent cheaper without the battery than an ICE vehicle.