TCL sets sights on US TV market

2018-10-08

By LIA ZHU in San Francisco |   
 China Daily |  
 Updated: 2018-10-08 22:31

Chinese electronics giant TCL is gearing up to become one of the top three-selling TV brands in the US within the decade. They plan to do it by strengthening partnerships.  
While the TCL name, which stands for "the creative life", has a history of more than 35 years in China, it is still relatively new to consumers in North America, where it was launched just five years ago.  
Eyeing the upscale market, the company introduced the new 6-Series for 2018, based on 2017's P6-Series, as a high-performance package in partnership with Dolby and Roku.  
With improved picture quality and a sleek new cosmetic design, the 6-Series is a TV that "really shows off the performance that we are capable of", said Chris Larson, senior vice-president of TCL North America.  
It also is expected to solidify TCL's position as a leader in North America and the global consumer electronics industry, he said.  
The new series features picture technology developed by Dolby Laboratories that includes an app with trailers and shorts for more than 240 movie titles.  
As the US homes' viewing habits move from video delivery boxes to streaming directly from a TV, TCL partnered with Roku four years ago to develop the first Roku TVs for North America.  
"One of our secrets to success is we don't always focus on what we do in house," said Larson. "We find the right partners and the right technology, whether we invent it or somebody else does, to bring it to consumers, and one of those great partners has been Roku."  
All TCL TVs feature Roku's smart TV platform, which offers more than 5,000 streaming channels, providing access to over 500,000 movies and TV episodes.  
"We see a very different content behavior between the baby boomers and the millennials," Larson explained. "The consumers are moving from the traditional cable or satellite to 'what you want, when you want it', particularly for young people."  
"Our TCL Roku TVs are amazingly popular among consumers," he said, adding that based on TCL's 2017 performance, Larson said their goal of achieving a top three TV brand position in the US market within this decade is well on track.  
The Huizhou, China-based company sold more than 23 million TVs worldwide in 2017, ranking it the third-largest TV manufacturer in the world after Samsung and LG.  
While the overall global TV industry unit sales volume decreased 3.6 percent from 2016 to 2017, TCL recorded a unit sales growth of over 16 percent during the same period, according to the company.  
"We are very happy with the scale we've taken the business to. We continue to invest in the brand through all sponsorships," said Larson.  
TCL recently signed up NBA superstar Giannis Antetokounmpo, Brazilian soccer star Neymar Jr. and professional surfer Tia Blanco as brand ambassadors for a digital marketing campaign.  
The company has extended its sponsorship as the official TV of The Ellen DeGeneres Show for a fifth consecutive season.  
Another strategy is to grow screen size, which is more important to people as their main television, said Larson.  
Last year, TCL broke ground on its newest panel production factory in Shenzhen. When it opens in early 2019, this plant will produce high-performance 4K TV panels of 65 and 75 inches, according to the company.

http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/201810/08/WS5bbb6a4aa310eff3032811b8.html