

Henrik Schimmell – President, Radiometer



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Henrik Schimmell outlines the critical importance of blood gas testing – a field in which Radiometer has long been a pioneer – and how the company’s portfolio of diagnostic tools has evolved over time. Schimmel also touches on what makes Radiometer a great place to work, how it interacts with and leverages its connections to other members of the Danaher Group, and his global aspirations for the firm.

Can you begin by introducing yourself?

I joined Radiometer in 2008 as the Vice President for Research and Development, and have spent the past six years as CEO and President. My previous experience working in the medical device and diagnostic space includes 10 years in the hearing instrument industry as the Senior Vice President for R&D at GN, a global leader in their field, but I actually started my career in telecommunications, working in R&D for digital transmission of video and audio, optical systems, and high-speed electronics and communication.

What prompted you to make the switch from telecommunications to medical devices?

I have a natural interest in technology and, although I was happy where I was, I wanted to make a positive impact on the lives of others. I got that working in GN, helping people restore or adjust their hearing, and now even more so, working in healthcare and making an even bigger impact by helping caregivers save lives through diagnostics. That's something I'm very proud of and a passion that I share with all of my colleagues at Radiometer - making a difference in urgent care and hospital systems and enabling caregivers to take care of patients, assist them in their work, and ultimately help save lives.

What is blood gas testing and why is it so important?

Radiometer focuses predominantly on blood gases as well as immunoassays for cardiac purposes and a few other smaller businesses. We entered the blood gas space during the polio epidemic of the 1950s to deliver measurements on critical parameters in blood. The epidemic drove the need for intensive care and the need for blood gas analysis to measure and control pH levels in polio patients to increase the probability of surviving the disease

In emergency care and triage, diagnosis and intervention time is crucially important. Blood gases are a foundational parameter for urgent care to understand the respiratory status and the status of specific organs of patients in potentially critical situations. Our blood gas analyzers can deliver blood gas results in just 35 seconds and can help healthcare professionals understand a patient's condition and make timely decisions in operating rooms, intensive care settings, and emergency departments.

What is Radiometer's offering and how has it evolved over time?

We provide a comprehensive product portfolio aimed at helping caregivers make diagnostic decisions, from blood banks and the general practitioner's office to critical care settings at hospitals. Our offering is based on a system of different instruments depending on test volumes and needs, as well as cartridges. Testing is completed by placing a small device inside a sensor cassette with a solution pack that can run hundreds of tests to produce results before the cartridge is replaced, similar to a printer or a Nespresso machine

Our products and solutions are connected through a digital solution running securely behind the scenes, bringing data and information to the caregiver and allowing for the remote monitoring and servicing of our products. It also interfaces with other hospital IT systems, can run control, and can incorporate training and certification of users. With the speed of digitalization, and the surge of safe and remote solutions brought about by the pandemic, this area is evolving at rapid speed and is starting to include clinical decision support in urgent care settings based on the interpretation of the data.

Given your R&D background, what do you see as the most important innovations in this field?

Our field and industry are in constant development and many new disruptions are now seeing the light of day. However, I think there are three main things that stand out and I'm humbled and proud that Radiometer has broken ground on the first one: expanding the parameters that define blood gases. Since Radiometer developed the first commercially available blood gas analyzer in

1954, we, and our colleagues in the industry, have innovated to offer an extensive range of critical parameters and we will only get better.

Secondly, we're continuously seeing an increase in patient numbers, so innovating the clinical and operational workflows in a hospital setting, with respect to the products, their interface with the users, and their availability will be critical

Lastly, digitalization is only moving in one direction and there will be no alternative to digital adoption and transformation, which creates a need in our industry for digital infrastructure and connected services for the transfer of information to its required locations in the hospital.

Where are Radiometer's key markets internationally?

We have a presence all over the world with direct representation in 40+ countries and more than 100 distributors covering the rest of the world. We're a global leader within our field. China is the market that has the largest total revenue and growth and, combined with the US and Europe, makes up most of our business.

Does Radiometer's offering differ depending on the level of healthcare development within these different countries?

To some extent, yes, Radiometer has products suited for different regions of the world. In certain cases, the higher-end and entry-level products coexist. The majority of Radiometer's equipment is placed at the point-of-care, with the products varying depending on the region's needs.

Where is the bulk of Radiometer's manufacturing at this point?

Radiometer's manufacturing is spread over several geographies with the majority of the manufacturing completed in a number of European locations.

However, localizing manufacturing in China is a strategic priority for the company to secure both local technology and production capabilities and reduce lead times in the region. This will help serve the broader market in Asia including India and the Middle East.

How have you had to adjust over the pandemic from a management perspective?

Overall, we had two key focus areas while navigating through the pandemic: ensuring the health and safety of our employees and customers and upholding our critical deliveries to hospitals and healthcare professionals around the world.

The significant increase in demand for intensive care led to the expansion of intensive care capacities globally. This required more systems, instruments, and assays as well as increases in test volumes in the intensive care setting. Due to the urgency of serving intensive care units, tests had to be delivered in a timely manner during a period in which global supply chains were facing extreme challenges.

Furthermore, less critical functions in hospitals were reduced to be able to staff and have resources available for intensive care, increasing demand for our services.

Consequently, ensuring a functioning supply chain and maintaining partnerships with suppliers around the globe have become key focuses from a management perspective.

Internally, our Global Response Team is actively monitoring, preparing and managing our global COVID-19 business response 24/7 based on direction from international health organizations, local governments and our own safety protocols. We've had a very careful approach throughout the past 18 months and continue to be careful, with our teams around the world actively focused on keeping themselves and each other safe.

Do you see a reappraisal of the importance of diagnostics from stakeholders following COVID?

There has never been any doubt about the importance of diagnostics in the hospital world. However, diagnostics have become more mainstream and world governments have focused on ensuring that capacity is in place to deal with the number of patients. The pandemic has also highlighted the importance of developing pharmaceuticals and vaccines.

What are the benefits of being based in Denmark for a company like Radiometer?

Denmark as a pharmaceutical hub has a high level of education and a focus on innovation, and due to the number of companies in Denmark working in the pharmaceutical and medical diagnostic space, access to talent in the region is good. However, while we're headquartered in Denmark, the majority of my colleagues are actually based outside of the country as a result of our global presence and global growth, and, in that sense, Radiometer is more of a global than a Danish company.

Do you work independently from other companies within the Danaher conglomerate or are there partnerships to be leveraged with your sister companies?

The answer is both. We own and drive our own strategy and ambitions for the future; however, we're held accountable and responsible for our operations by Danaher. Radiometer has been through quite a journey and has developed significantly since we were acquired in 2004 by Danaher, transforming our operations and sharpening our abilities.

We have a common operating system and language in Danaher - the Danaher Business System. The concept of the Danaher Business System is fundamental for how we operate in Radiometer and has provided strategic leverage for us. Additionally, being part of the Dx Platform of companies in Danaher provides a global network of companies to exchange views and experience with and broadens our offering beyond blood gases or cardiac markers.

As we emerge out of the pandemic, what are your aspirations for Radiometer over the next couple of years?

At Radiometer, we have a vision to improve global healthcare and continue to help caregivers make diagnostic decisions that save lives. That is what fuels us and unites us as an organization, and is a guiding star that has served us well for many years. Weâ??re a niche company working in urgent care across blood gases, cardiac markers, sepsis, and a number of other areas â?? and we believe thatâ??s also the best path forward.

Ultimately, we want to be the obvious first choice â?? for customers and for talent in our industry â?? and to do that we will strive to be the best at understanding and working with caregivers around the world to understand their workflows and expand our offering to enable them to focus on what matters the most to them, patients. Lastly, we need to broaden our global reach while maintaining the quality and functionality of our supply chain.

What has been your talent acquisition and retention strategy up to this point?

I personally canâ??t think of a better place to work â?? a workplace with a stronger and more fulfilling purpose. This extends far beyond Radiometer to the rest of Danaher. Together with the Danaher family of companies, we offer career opportunities across industries and brands and unrivalled leadership and development programs for employees at all levels of the organization.

Whatever comes next, we make sure life comes first is the promise we make â?? to our customers and our employees, and I hold myself and our leaders across the organization accountable for making sure that we keep that promise. Always putting life first â?? whether itâ??s by putting the health and safety of our employees first during a pandemic, by continuously growing and developing our teams, or through meaningful work that pushes the boundaries of whatâ??s possible.

We aim to welcome everyone into our company just as they are and have a continuous focus on bringing in a diverse slate of people with their own unique personas and viewpoints â?? and encourage them to keep those. We set metrics for ourselves to keep us focused and continuously help us fight unconscious biases.

As a CEO, what kind of culture are you building at Radiometer?

In short, I want everyone to belong. All our colleagues should feel included and able to bring their true and authentic selves to work. Weâ??re a flat organization and one with a strong focus on the team and on bringing forth and nurturing our individual and unique strengths. â??Best team winsâ?? is our mantra, and this applies to both the way we work together and the way we work with our customers. I aim for us to always be a fact-based and apolitical organization with facts, opinions, and good discussions leading decision-making.

With the pandemic, and the surge of hybrid work, my main focus has been, and will continue to be, to ensure that we maintain the strong culture we have in Radiometer. We should all continue to feel a strong sense of togetherness, whether we work remote, on-site or in a hybrid system.

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