

Company announcement no 2017-02

23 February 2017

Management change in William Demant Holding A/S Søren Nielsen new President & CEO Niels B. Christiansen new Chairman of the Board

President & CEO Niels Jacobsen has decided to step down after 25 years as member of the Executive Board in William Demant Holding to become CEO of William Demant Invest A/S. The present Chief Operating Officer (COO) Søren Nielsen will become new President & CEO of William Demant Holding. The management changes will take effect on 1 April 2017. Going forward, the Executive Board will consist of Søren Nielsen and CFO René Schneider backed by a management group consisting of Arne Boye Nielsen (Diagnostics), Niels Wagner (Retail) and Svend Thomsen (Finance). In addition, the Oticon Foundation will announce a number of other management and board changes in the William Demant Group.

On the promotion of Søren Nielsen, the present Chairman of the Board of William Demant Holding, Lars Nørby Johansen, says:

"With Søren Nielsen as President & CEO, the Company gets a strong leader who will safeguard William Demant Holding's continued competitiveness in a dynamic industry. He stands for both readiness to change and continuity and has the ability to carry on the strategy to ensure that the Company continues its growth. With his insight into the industry gained over the past many years, his ability to discover new ways and many commercial successes on his resume, Søren Nielsen is the right person to manage William Demant Holding, where he is already very well-respected as a leader."

Søren Nielsen, who will also continue as President of the subsidiary Oticon, comments on his new role in William Demant Holding:

"I'm proud and honoured to have been given the opportunity to be at the head of a fantastic company, which year after year delivers great results – not least in 2016. We are standing on a very strong platform, ready to take on the competition and be part of the fast development in our industry and together with our customers deliver the most innovative and well-functioning products to the end-users."

Søren Nielsen takes over from Niels Jacobsen, who will assume the position as CEO of William Demant Invest, which is the company from which the Oticon Foundation's business activities arise. In addition, Niels Jacobsen has been nominated as member of the Board of William Demant Holding. The Board intends to elect him Deputy Chairman. In a comment on Niels Jacobsen's 25 years with the Company, Lars Nørby Johansen says:

"With his business acumen, Niels Jacobsen has focused on each company in William Demant Holding being able to act optimally in the ongoing transformation of the Company, and results show that he has been very successful indeed."

On the proposal of Niels B. Christiansen as new Chairman of the Board of William Demant Holding, Lars Nørby Johansen says:

"In Niels B. Christiansen, the Company gets a Chairman who is rightly recognised for his business competencies. As an independent member of the Board, he brings an external and innovative perspective to the table, which will support the Company's future growth."

Changes to the Board of Directors

As a result of the above changes, Chairman of the Board in William Demant Holding, Lars Nørby Johansen, will not stand for re-election at the coming annual general meeting. Lars Nørby Johansen will, however, continue his work in the William Demant Group, as the board of the Oticon Foundation has nominated him for the position of chairman of the board of the Oticon Foundation, where he will succeed Niels Boserup, who wants to step down after more than 10 years as chairman of the Oticon Foundation.

As a consequence of the changes mentioned above, the Board of Directors of William Demant Holding is after the annual general meeting on 27 March expected to elect the present Board member Niels B. Christiansen new Chairman and Niels Jacobsen new Deputy Chairman. The board of the Oticon Foundation supports these proposals. The other Board members, Peter Foss, Benedikte Leroy and Lars Rasmussen, all accept renomination and are expected to be re-elected.

This company announcement is accompanied by a press release from the Oticon Foundation with detailed information on the coming changes to management and board. Please find below biographies and CVs for Søren Nielsen and Niels B. Christiansen. Biographies and CVs for Niels Jacobsen and Lars Nørby Johansen appear from the enclosed press release.

Further information:

Lars Nørby Johansen, Chairman of the Board
Niels Jacobsen, President & CEO
Søren Nielsen, COO
Phone +45 3917 7300
www.demant.com

Other contacts:

Søren B. Andersson, VP IR
Phone +45 5117 6657
Trine Kromann-Mikkelsen, Media Relations
Phone +45 5117 6873

Søren Nielsen

Søren Nielsen will take another step up the corporate ladder when he becomes President & CEO of William Demant Holding. In 2015, he was appointed COO of William Demant Holding, and he has since 2008 been responsible for Oticon where he will continue as President.

For the past eight years, Søren Nielsen has been overall responsible for the whole hearing aid business, and he has had a decisive say in important strategic decisions and acquisitions for the whole Group, most recently also as a member of the Executive Board since September 2015. Søren Nielsen will continue the William Demant Group's hearing healthcare strategy, which he also helped define: To grow

in all areas of hearing healthcare, including hearing aids, hearing implants and diagnostics, and to exploit the Group's infrastructure and know-how with a view to developing the Group's position as market leader.

In the Group, Søren Nielsen is regarded as a hard-working, energetic man, who knows both the customers and the employees well. He is seen as a very committed leader and an adept communicator. He is detail-oriented and knows what goes on both internally and externally.

Søren Nielsen will continue to prioritise the development of the Group's culture and employees, while focusing on the customers and using technology and innovation as important tools for driving the business forward. Highly concerned with the exploitation of synergies across all business activities in William Demant Holding, Søren Nielsen uses every opportunity to emphasise the importance of the further development of the Group's global distribution and shared services.

It is a man who knows the Group better than almost anybody else that will take the reins. The newly appointed President & CEO is 46 years old and has been with the Company for almost half his life. Already when Søren Nielsen studied to become a Master of Science in Engineering at the Technical University of Denmark, he used Oticon as a case in his thesis work, and right after his graduation, he was employed with the Company. That was back in 1995.

In the coming years, he got to know the Group from all angles imaginable in William Demant Holding's subsidiaries all over the world, before he returned to the "mother ship" in Denmark where he became an important part of Oticon's management.

Up through the 2000s, Søren Nielsen took part in ensuring a string of important commercial successes, including Oticon Delta that changed the way in which we design hearing aids. In 2016, he was behind the launch of the game changer Oticon Opn, which is an Internet-connected hearing aid that opens up the sound picture and enables the user to participate actively in complex listening situations.

Søren Nielsen is married to Henriette, who is a doctor. The couple has three children.

CV

Born 1970

1995-2008 A number of management positions in Oticon in such areas as quality manager, development and sales

2008- President, Oticon A/S

2015- COO & Deputy CEO, William Demant Holding A/S

Directorships and positions of trust

Board member in Sennheiser Communications A/S

Member of the Confederation of Danish Industry's committee on health policy

Education

Master of Science in Engineering, Technical University of Denmark (DTU)

Niels B. Christiansen

Niels B. Christiansen is one of Denmark's most recognised top executives. Since 2008, he has run Denmark's largest industrial company Danfoss, and he has done really well. Even though he took over the reins at a time when the world economy was in crisis, Niels B. Christiansen succeeded in steering the renowned company towards new growth.

He grew up in a small town outside Aabenraa where he loved to tinker with mopeds and all kinds of technical devices, among these the computer he bought with his savings when he was in the ninth grade in 1981. Back then, an ordinary computer – with very limited capacity – cost the same as a small family car.

The dream was however to become a fighter pilot, but with his height of 195 cm, Niels B. Christiansen was too tall. Instead, he became an engineer and graduated from the Technical University of Denmark with a grade point average of 12.2 according to the old grading scale where 13 was the highest grade. Having completed an MBA in France, where he was number one in his year group, the trained engineer began his professional career as a consultant with McKinsey & Co. Then he moved on to become head of corporate development with the power drill manufacturer Hilti in Switzerland, and at the age of 31, he became managing director of GN Netcom in 1997.

In 2004, Niels B. Christiansen was "called home" to Southern Jutland by Danfoss where he did such a convincing job that Jørgen Mads Clausen appointed him his successor as President & CEO in 2008.

All through his busy life as an executive, he has given high priority to spending time and travelling with his wife Lene, whom he met in high school, and their two now almost grown-up children.

CV

Born 1966

1991	Consultant, McKinsey & Co
1995	Vice President and head of corporate development, Hilti S.A.
1997	Vice President, GN Netcom A/S
2000	President & CEO, GN Netcom A/S
2003	Executive Vice President and CEO, GN Store Nord A/S
2004	Executive Vice President and CEO, Danfoss A/S
2004	Chief Operating Officer, Danfoss A/S
2007	Deputy CEO, Danfoss A/S
2008	President & CEO, Danfoss A/S

Directorships and positions of trust

Chairman of the board of Axcel
Board member in A.P. Møller - Mærsk A/S
Board member in William Demant Holding A/S
Board member in Technical University of Denmark (DTU)

Education

1991	Master of Science in Engineering, Technical University of Denmark (DTU)
1993	MBA, INSEAD in France