

Ex-Siemens Medical Exec Turns Heads

Christof Lenz is leading the way for heart failure patients to be treated *at home*, noninvasively...

By RONALD C. TRAHAN

So, what does a former venture capitalist and big-business executive, now a medical device entrepreneur, do for fun? In the case of Christof Lenz, 46, he performs traditional Irish folk music at Irish pubs and at outdoor festivals, sometimes in front of a thousand spectators. In the Irish pubs, his act is usually a duo, with a fiddler, but often more musicians join in.

"I really struggled as a college student between a career in music and medicine," says Christof. "I was living in Nuremberg, which is 100 miles away from Munich, where I was going to the university. I would hitchhike to Munich to the university there and then back home to Nuremberg. (Eventually, Christof would transfer to the University of Erlangen in Nuremberg.)

"One day I happened to get a ride from a guy who told me there's an Irish pub where he played regularly and that I should stop by some time. So I did, and I was *immediately* enthralled by this Irish music, which I had not paid too much attention to before. I instantly fell in love with it. The guy who runs the pub is an Irishman and a musician himself, a very good musician. One day one of the scheduled performers was sick, so I borrowed a guitar and did my first set on stage. After that set the pub offered me money to continue, which turned out to be an ideal way for me to earn money to continue my college studies. In fact, I was able to finance a large part of my studies by playing Irish music at Irish pubs all over Bavaria."



"We believe our m.pulse® device may become standard of care for chronic heart failure patients," says Cardiola's Christof Lenz.

I strongly considered a medical career.

"I was majoring in medicine. I passed my first state exam and was just a year away from completing my medical studies and becoming a medical doctor", Christof says. "I did serve as a surgical intern in two hospitals in Bangkok, performing appendix operations and hand surgeries, even assisting a C-section childbirth. But while I fell in love with surgery, I eventually understood that what *really* intrigued me was the *technology* that made medicine possible. In the end, though, Christof decided he could "do more good by combining my love of medicine with my passion for technology" and subsequently earned a degree in electrical engineering.

The Siemens Medical Experience

After a successful four-year tenure with BayTech Venture Capital (he became a Partner one year after joining the firm), Christof was recruited to Siemens Medical in 2005 as Global Innovation Manager, Business Development.

"My role was to create an innovation network for the multinational anatomy of the company," explains Christof. "To help Siemens people talk to each

The Rapid Rise of Christof Lenz

Born:

August 14, 1963 in Bonn, Germany

Job History:

2007-Present: Chief Executive Officer of Switzerland-based Cardiola AG

2005-2006: Global Innovation Manager, Business Development, Siemens Medical, where he identified investment and collaboration opportunities on a worldwide scale

2001-2005: Partner, BayTech Venture Capital, where he invested in U.S. and European medtech and biotech companies from first round to expansion stage including PIPE investments

Education:

Technical Univ. of Munich and Univ. of Nuremberg-Erlangen, Germany, Electrical Engineering Degree, 1995

Univ. of Regensburg and Technical Univ. of Munich, State Exam-Medicine, 1989

Hobbies:

Traditional Irish folk music

Personal:

Married; two sons

other, as well as have outsiders talk to Siemens. I also developed an interdepartmental innovation *process* for Siemens to codify and nurture the early beginnings of product development; *and* develop a process to efficiently filter projects. In multinational organizations, sometimes it's difficult to *start* an innovative project, and sometimes it's even harder to *stop* it. The truth is that every project needs to be managed within a framework of the entire innovation portfolio."

Today, Managing A Significant Innovation in Cardiology

Cardiola's *m.pulse*® with **Muscular CounterPulsation(MCP)** device *non-invasively* helps a failing heart do its main job of pumping blood. In time, this may lead to an increase in a patient's exercise capacity of up to **60 percent**, clinical studies showed. Additionally observations in these clinical studies made during *m.pulse*® treatment showed that patients experienced relaxation and stress relief; many often fell asleep during their *m.pulse*® treatment.

"We strongly believe that empowering patients to be treated at home in a noninvasive manner for their CHF has the potential to become standard of care," concludes Christof □

