



## Change in Top Management: Lea Thomas Smith Appointed New President of 3DSE Management Consultants Inc.

**On May 20, 2024, Lea Thomas Smith took up the position of President and Managing Partner for 3DSE Management Consultants Inc. in Chicago. Mr. Smith succeeds Barbara Riegger, who ran the office since 2023 and is now stepping down.**

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**Munich/Chicago, June 2024** – 3DSE Management Consultants has appointed Lea Thomas Smith as President and Managing Partner for its US operations based in Chicago, effective May 20, 2024. Founded in June 2023, 3DSE's Chicago office has been run by Barbara Riegger, who has also been a part of the global executive management team. Ms. Riegger played a significant role in preparing 3DSE's entry into the US market and succeeded in creating a solid foundation for the company's future US activities.

Dr. Stefan Wenzel and Dr. Armin Schulz, Founders and Managing Partners, expressed their gratitude to Barbara Riegger for her "valuable contributions and high commitment to 3DSE Inc". "We wish her all the best for her upcoming private and professional endeavors."

With Lea Thomas Smith, 3DSE has recruited a strong successor for the President position in Chicago and a valuable addition to the global 3DSE management team. Mr. Smith brings extensive experience in research and development (R&D) as well as innovation to his new role.

Born in Germany and holding both British and American citizenship, Lea Smith grew up bilingual. He earned his Dipl.-Ing. (FH) in Architecture/Interior Architecture from the University of Applied Science in Trier, Germany, and simultaneously studied Design at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts in Copenhagen, where he was selected to represent Denmark & Scandinavia in a global exhibition.

Mr. Smith has a diverse professional background, having worked predominantly in the recreational vehicle and automotive industries, where he held high-level positions with management responsibility. Notable roles include Director of the MBtech Design Center at Daimler AG, Senior Regional Director for MBtech N.A., Head of Design LEAR Corporation and Vice President of Innovation Strategy & Leaderships at Thor Industries Inc.

He has been nationally and internationally recognized for his work as an engineer, designer, and business leader. As an expert in project management, he has been invited to speak at national and international



conventions by the International Project Management Association (IPMA) and the German Project Management Association (GPM) to present new processes, tools, and projects.

“We are very happy to welcome Lea Thomas Smith as our new US Head,” comments Managing Partner Dr. Armin Schulz. “His deep expertise, high commitment to customer engagement and project work, as well as his active network within our key industries in the US, make him an excellent fit for this position.”

“I am thrilled to build upon the impressive preliminary work of the 3DSE team and to continue expanding our US footprint,” says Lea Thomas Smith. “3DSE has already been active in the US for over nine years and, because of its success in serving US customers out of Germany, opened its first US office in Chicago last year. This being the sixth business unit I have the honor to set up and develop, I am highly motivated to bring in all my experience to open up new industries, customers, and projects and lead 3DSE Inc. to success.”

### **About 3DSE**

3DSE Management Consultants GmbH works with the world's leading technology brands to increase their R&D competitiveness. It is the leading independent management consultancy for innovation and R&D in Central Europe. With offices in Munich, Vienna and Chicago, the company has successfully completed over 800 consulting projects for more than 80 international clients since it was founded in 2001. In 2023, the firm decided to extend its US footprint and grow its market share by establishing an office in the US, after already working with several large American clients for years.

The company's services help its customers increase R&D competitiveness by improving performance, sustainable growth and reducing complexity within R&D. 3DSE's proven methods have helped clients shorten the time to market by up to 30 %, increase R&D efficiency by up to 24 % and reduce quality-related costs by up to 35 %.

3DSE holds many industry awards like Handelsblatt Fair Company, 2022 and WirtschaftsWoche Best of Consulting, 2023. In addition, 3DSE promotes cross-industry exchange with various event formats and publishes in-depth, digital content on the R&D Insights online platform. Two members of the 3DSE leadership team are founding members of INCOSE (International Council on Systems Engineering). 3DSE is a corporate member of IPMA (International Project Management Association) and the German-American Chamber of Commerce.

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