

Lars Lehne joins Incubeta as group CEO



By [Evan-Lee Courie](#)

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Lars Lehne has been appointed group CEO of Incubeta, the South African-born, global independent digital marketing services group.



Lars Lehne, the new group CEO of Incubeta

The former Syzygy AG CEO will be taking over from the founder Alan Lipschitz, whose company, Interface, made the reverse acquisition of IncuBeta Holdings in 2011. Lipschitz will be moving into the role of chairperson of the Board of Directors of Incubeta.

Lehne brings with him more than 30 years of industry experience. Prior to Incubeta, Lehne spent four years as Global CEO at Syzygy, a publicly listed WPP Group company. Before that, he spent seven years at Google as country director Agency DACH, paving the way for the tech giant quadrupling revenues in Germany. He has also held various senior management positions in agencies including Maxus, GroupM, Carat and MEC.

In addition to his current role as new group CEO of Incubeta, Lehne is a member of the advisory board of Yext, and betterplace.org, a Berlin based NGO. He's also an angel investor in claimini GmbH.

I chat exclusively to Lars Lehne about his latest appointment and what we can expect to see in the upcoming year.

■ Congrats on your appointment as the group CEO of Incubeta. How do you feel about it?

I'm very excited and overwhelmed by the warm welcome from the whole team at Incubeta. I'm also very eager to learn more about the company and the amazing group of people that work tirelessly to make it such a success.

“ Starting a global leadership role right in the midst of a pandemic is a first for me, but this is a situation no one could have ever predicted. ”

As a result, we are all having to reinvent the rules of communication and leadership via our laptops at home.

■ **What does your role entail?**

This is a good question. What does the role of a global CEO actually entail? Well, Incubeta is already a very successful and wonderful company, so my role will include giving it a clear direction and vision in unifying the three brands; NMPi, DQ&A and Joystick, into one strong global brand through Incubeta.

“ My aim is to provide the company with a unified voice and to make it easier for the global team to build on the company's success. ”

I will also be on the lookout for emerging innovative companies that can add value to our clients and fit seamlessly with the services we provide.”

■ **How and when did this come about/when does it take effect?**

I was first approached in the late summer of 2020. I then went through a perfectly organised virtual interview process with all the regional CEOs where I gave a presentation as to how I would approach and implement the strategy for the next three to five years for Incubeta. I joined as global CEO on 1 January 2021.

■ **What excites you most about joining Incubeta?**

Apart from working in a more disruptive and predominantly digital space, I'm quite frankly fascinated by the calibre and outstanding qualification of people that Alan Lipschitz, the founder and my predecessor, has attracted and assembled over the years.

“ Being a technology driven company, it is crucial to have the right team bridging the gap between technology and people to achieve the best outcomes for our clients. ”

After all, it's a people driven business in the most positive sense.”



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■ **What do you love most about your career, the industry and what you do?**

I love that this industry is ever-changing and never stands still. I have the pleasure to work with wonderful people from different cultures around the globe. I also like that I'm not caught up in a corporate structure that suppresses innovation and change. Incubeta gives me and the global team around me maximum flexibility, entrepreneurial freedom to take risks and to come up with new innovative ideas.

■ **Innovation and creativity is key, especially in the time of Covid-19. What can organisations no longer ignore when it comes to strategy?**

Change is predominant and nobody can foresee the future.

“ *Businesses and people have to be agile, curious and constantly on their toes.* ”

Without the willingness to change and the ability to adapt quickly, it will be difficult to survive and thrive. This is the most common misinterpretation of Charles Darwin, it is not about survival of the fittest but survival of the most willing to adapt.”

■ ***Most companies have had to accelerate their digital delivery and digital marketing is becoming increasingly important for operations. What advice do you have for other organisations?***

It's now or never - we will never go back to square one. The pandemic has accelerated digital and given it the final push to become more prominent, if not necessary, in all areas of business and life.



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■ ***What trends could we expect to see in the coming year?***

This year we will continue to see heavy investment in e-commerce as many retailers and brands across the world continue to be affected by Covid-19. Further to this, I imagine there will be a strong focus on enhancing the consumer experience online and providing virtual experiences that mimic real-life shopping experiences.

One thing that all businesses should continue to be aware of is the evolving privacy regulations that will continue to make data usage more complex. Investing in first-party data will be crucial to remaining competitive, particularly as the digital ecosystem becomes further saturated during these unprecedented times.

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