

High-Tech for Good Causes

Marketing Manager Jeff Lee finds meaning in AP Sensing's technology

AP Sensing headquarters in Böblingen has fewer than 30 employees. But this was one of the reasons why Jeff Lee accepted the Marketing Manager position at the high-tech company. "I deliberately chose a small company," says the American, who has lived for over 25 years in "Schwabenland". He had alternatives: "I could have gone to a larger company. But the technology and the people here made a great impression in the interviews. "

Jeff Lee may have quietly made comparisons. For example, with IBM, where he began his career path in Germany as a technical writer and graphic illustrator. Perhaps the former student of the philosophy of science would still be in Austin, Texas, if his fiancée had not convinced him to move Germany in 1984. After learning German for a year in Munich he made the move to Stuttgart and IBM. Lee likes the swabian mentality and, except for 2 years commuting to Hamburg, has remained loyal to the Stuttgart region.

After IBM Lee changed to the no less famous Hewlett-Packard and began a new career path in Marketing Communications. In 2011 came the move to a fascinating spin-off from Agilent Technologies, AP Sensing. With over 30 employees worldwide, AP Sensing's fiber-optic based technology is used in a wide variety of applications to measure and monitor temperature, but in a truly modern way. A fiber optic cable is installed, typically over several kilometers, to measure the temperature along the route. Traffic and freight tunnels (e.g., the entire Euro Tunnel) are safer. Monitoring high-voltage power cables around the clock or oil and gas reservoirs protect valuable assets. "It's amazing," said Jeff Lee, "how our technology can be applied to bring greater security for businesses and people. And how it is used in such a wide variety of applications. I like to say: High tech for a good cause. "



Apart from the technology, he enjoys the versatility of his job. "I'm responsible for all marketing, for the website and documentation to newsletters and exhibition organization. Every day is different." Lee also likes the spirit at AP Sensing: "A successful start-up with a good mix of young and experienced colleagues. Everyone has more than enough to do. But all questions are answered, and there's a great collaborative team spirit and very flat hierarchy." Everyone has the freedom to decide

what to do. "That is very important," said Jeff Lee, "It's better to make decisions that matter in a smaller company than to be a small fish in a large corporation".

"And that," says Lee's manager, Managing Director Gerd Koffmane, "is what we wanted to emphasize from the beginning. Our philosophy is to give every employee as much responsibility as they can handle." And this has worked extremely well. "Even the young tech support staff decides which trips they make and the customers they visit. We rely on them to make sound decisions."

For CEO Clemens Pohl, Jeff Lee's high motivation is not an isolated case, "Everyone thinks similarly," he says, and points to the twice-yearly employee satisfaction surveys: "On a scale of 28 points we average 25." He sees a large part of the satisfaction in the decision to manage by objectives. "Every employee can figure out the best way to achieve his or her goals. We set the objectives but not the way to achieve them."