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Contents

THE MARKET

Enterprise Ireland

The Plaza
Eastpoint Business Park
Dublin 3
T: +353 1 727 2954/2000

PUBLICATIONS MANAGER

Duncan Black

E: duncan.black@enterprise-ireland.com

EDITOR

Mary Sweetman

E: mary.sweetman@enterprise-ireland.com
T: +353 1 727 2990

EDITORIAL ADMINISTRATION & SUBSCRIPTIONS

Teresa Meagh

E: teresa.meagh@enterprise-ireland.com
T: +353 1 727 2954

ADVERTISING

Duncan Black

E: duncan.black@enterprise-ireland.com
T: +353 1 727 2820

DESIGN & PRODUCTION

Boyle Design Group

PROOF READING

Anthony King

PRINTED BY

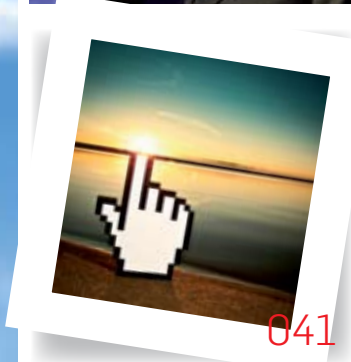
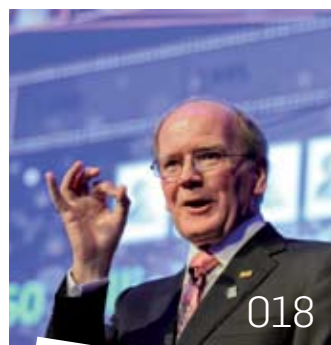
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COVER STORY

014 Where are you?

Western Australia calls out for engineering and infrastructure capability

REGIONS AND SECTORS

020 The Bollywood bounce

Ek Tha Tiger to boost Ireland's profile in India

022 Following the Northern Lights

Can-do's and Can-donts for doing business in the world's second biggest country

031 Come to the carnival

Competing in the economy that puts the 'B' in BRIC

037 Selling to German hospitals

Targeting the German market with IT for healthcare

039 Let's talk France

Having walked the walk, Irish companies talk the talk

041 Wish you were there?

IT for travel finds a place in the sun

COMPANIES AND PEOPLE

012 Reframing the proposition

ServiceFrame CEO Diarmuid Barry on the need to continually adapt

018 How to build a billion dollar business

Alltech founder Pearse Lyons on rules to win

029 Start, grow and go

Software investor Pat Donnellan on achieving fast growth and a profitable exit

BUSINESS

026 Sky's the limit

Using the cloud to grow international sales

035 Aid for trade

Five Irish start-ups whose businesses are all about making life easier for exporters

044 Cheap as China?

Ireland's contract manufacturers fight back

REGULARS

002 Noticeboard

News for and from the export community

010 Diary

What's on, where and when

048 Good Reading

Business book reviews

050 Gadgetry

Staying connected

052 Market Intelligence

Recently published market research

054 Trade regulations

Trade regulation and negotiation update

055 Travel News

Flights and travel update

056 City Guide

Antwerp



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Tiger times for Irish ad agency

It's time for a Tiger at Rothco – the Irish advertising agency has been appointed global advertising agency for the Tiger Beer brand.

Following the deal with Asia Pacific Breweries, Rothco will be devising TV commercials, magazine adverts, billboard and digital campaigns for use on four continents. "It is probably the first time that an Irish-owned agency will have carried out such a large campaign," said client director Richard Carr, who pointed out that there were very few brands or companies that were in a position to commission a global advertising campaign.

Tiger Beer is a pale lager sold in more than 60 countries worldwide, often under the marketing slogan 'It's time for a Tiger', which has been in use since the 1930s when the beer was first launched. Tiger is the flagship brand of Asia Pacific Breweries, and which owns 30 breweries in 12 countries selling 120 brands of beer.

Heineken International is in the process of buying APB, and it was Rothco's work last year with Heineken that won it a place among the seven advertising agencies initially invited to pitch for the Tiger contract. Rothco's 'Brief Encounter' advert for Heineken debuted in Ireland on St Patrick's Day last year and is the first of three international TV spots to be devised by Rothco. These seven agencies were then whittled down to a shortlist of three.

"Once the shortlisted agencies made a fuller submission of their ideas, APB then market researched those propositions in 16 different markets around the world before deciding that our ideas would work best with consumers," said Carr. "I can't go into details, but we've come up with something that is very much about where Asia is now and we think it will work well. We expect the campaign to be launched before the end of the year."

Asia Pacific Breweries commercial director Edmund Neo said, "Rothco's proposal stood out with interesting ideas that we believe will effectively deliver the brand essence of Tiger. We keenly look forward to creating exciting works with them to bring Tiger to the next level of success."

Founded 17 years ago, Rothco employs 70 staff members including three of its founding share-holders. Carr said, "We've done very well and wouldn't be in this position without the continuing support of our Irish clients, which include AIB, Liberty Insurance and Meteor."



Mott MacDonald aims to get back on track with Norway deal

The Irish office of engineering company Mott MacDonald has won a contract to design 'Stage 3' of the Bergen Light Rail Transport System (Bybanen) in Norway, plus associated works, including power substations and ancillary buildings.

"We would have quite a bit of expertise working on light rail projects in Ireland and overseas and would regularly assist Mott MacDonald offices in other countries working on rail projects," project manager Jim Sherry told *The Market*. "We would be keeping an eye on rail developments across the world, so the Bergen contract would naturally come to our attention. Although Norway is not part of the EU, they do follow EU procurement procedures, so the process is quite straight-forward. We had to pre-qualify before submitting our winning tender."

"With the reduction in infrastructure spending in Ireland, we have had to look overseas for contracts. In Mauritius, we are working on an LPG terminal and in the Caribbean we are involved in two separate power projects."

Costing an estimated €220m, the 'Stage 3' of the Norwegian project comprises 7.2km of double track, 2.8km of tunnels and more than 1km of structures, including a feature bridge over the main road to Flesland airport.

Combined with other contracts in Africa and the Caribbean, Mott MacDonald's staffing levels may recover to the levels they were at when the Irish construction boom was at its height. The company opened offices in Dublin in 1975 with a staff of 12, which grew to almost 300 in 2007.

US's distressed property sector provides rich pickings for Kerry firm

It really is a case of 'next parish Boston' for Tralee-based Aspen Grove, which is turning the US property market meltdown to its advantage by providing web-based software to manage the maintenance, marketing and tracking of distressed properties.

Aspen Grove and its sister companies, Donseed and DCS Energy Savings, have an unusual business model that involves discussions with financial services providers holding the properties that are in default and need managing and, in some cases, on-going maintenance and repair. Ultimately, it is the real estate agents and the work-providers who use and pay for the software.

The US in particular has proved to be a fertile hunting ground for the company. Its largest client is one of the top five banks, and the company has 5,500 real estate agents subscribing to its solution, along with an additional 1,500 work-providers who perform tasks such as house inspections or maintenance and repair. The company is also active in the UK.

"We had some knowledge of the market space from previous work we did with law firms. In 2008, when we did a buyout of all of the shareholders, we made a decision to focus on that market in the

US, and the timeliness was significant," says CEO Sean Ryan.

Ryan has been shortlisted in the 'emerging' category for this year's Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year award, and the company's growth shows why. It tripled revenues between 2008 and 2011, growing staff numbers from 25 to 70 in that time. Ryan is bullish about the future. "We're on target to be a €30 million company by 2016," he says.

According to Ryan, the company has been profitable every year, has no debt and has not taken on VC funding. It will continue to be profitable even allowing for "significant" continued investment in product development, particularly around delivering the software on mobile devices, he says. "We've invested very heavily in product development and capability, so we're at the point where we feel that the technology is very strong and the growth in employees will be much more on the business development side."

The company puts a strong emphasis on ensuring it meets stringent security procedures around its systems. "We set out to be in the enterprise application software space, and in order to play in that game with financial institutions, there's a certain bar you have to be at. We had to meet that level of security," he says.

Irish software to keep Tokyo Stock Exchange running like clockwork

Irish-founded Corvil has expanded its global footprint, adding to offices in New York, London, Singapore and Dublin, with a new presence in Tokyo. The move follows selection by Tokyo Stock Exchange of its software this July, as part of an investment aimed at increasing transaction handling capacity and cutting order processing time at the Japanese exchange.

Corvil specialises in monitoring and managing network latency – on other words, the delay in a data package travelling from one location on a network to another – in environments such as electronic trading where latency issues and transaction bottlenecks must be quickly resolved to ensure high-speed order response times and reliability.

When Corvil was founded by a group of mathematicians from the Dublin Institute of Advanced Studies in 2000, the industry norm was to monitor network performance at one minute or one second intervals. However, the Dublin team realised that granular measurement was the key to guaranteeing low latency and, having pioneered millisecond measurement, today Corvil's software solutions monitor with nanosecond precision. The company's CorvilNet solution will provide TSE with real-time analysis of market data distribution, allowing detection, capture, alarm and reporting on message sequence gaps.

Commenting on the expansion of Corvil's presence in Asia, the company's VP Sales Asia Peter O'Connor said that he saw continued growth in this region "fuelled by the need for exchanges to showcase their technology; global investors seeking higher returns and diversification in an expanding and developing market; as well as local trading firms who are seeking to capitalise on new opportunities and demanding faster technology and lower latencies".



FitKids limbers up for India launch

The FitKids organisation, which offers gymnastic fitness classes, camps and parties for children aged two to 12, is limbering up to launch new franchises in India.

The Dublin-based company was founded in 2003 by Anne-Marie and Maurice Byrne when Anne-Marie, a gymnast and a mother of two young children, found that while there were many sports clubs catering for older children, there were few physical education opportunities available for those who were her children's age. Additionally, she found that in many sports activities for children there was a strong emphasis on competition, which she believed was off-putting, especially for those who were not natural athletes.

Using easily transportable equipment that can fit into the back of an average family saloon, Anne-Marie devised a programme that was suitable for pre-schoolers and primary children that developed the fundamentals of fitness – flexibility, agility, balance, co-ordination, strength and endurance – while being non-competitive.

Originally established as an owner-managed company, FitKids expanded across Leinster, but increasingly the Byrne's found that they were getting bogged down in aspects

of business administration that didn't appeal to them. "In order to meet the demand from parents for sessions in their area, we were effectively operating as a recruitment agency," said Maurice. "We thought there might be a better business model and approached the Irish Franchise Association. They gave us a lot of advice on how best to invest in developing a good support system for franchisees and it has really worked well for everyone concerned.

Already, there are 20 FitKids franchisees in Ireland, and the company is now trying to export the offering. "With Enterprise Ireland's support we've been looking at setting up franchises overseas," said Maurice. "We see real opportunities for us in India, where there is a growing middle-class in which childhood obesity is a growing problem. Indian parents place a high premium on education, and they appreciate the importance of physical education for their children."



Frontline heroes propel international expansion for D4H

An Irish software company is expanding internationally on the back of customers 'just doing their job'.

Used by search and rescue services, fire departments and police services in the United States, Canada, Iceland, Australia, New Zealand, the UK and Ireland, D4H helps emergency services monitor training compliance, equipment maintenance schedules, rostering and attendance, with inbuilt SMS messaging to alert crews as to when they are being put on stand-by, when they are being stood down or when they are being called in for duty.

Initially, the product was called 'Decisions 4 Heroes', which was great for generating media coverage, says CEO Mark Blandford. However, the software was recently rebranded to a name more in keeping with the modesty of its customers. "We found that our clients were uncomfortable with the name, and, in fact, it was they who first started calling it D4H."

The first commercial user of the software in 2009 was a small sheriff's department in Mississippi. "God knows how they found us. It was probably because we offered a free three month-trial version, and they

liked what they saw," says Blandford. "Now 60% of our revenue comes from the United States, and we are doing well in most English-speaking markets. The UK has proved hard to crack because the emergency services there are very centralised, but we are being trialled by the coast guard there. We are already being used by the Irish Coast Guard and by CHC Helicopters who have the search-and-rescue contract for Ireland.

"In the United States, the market is easier because in almost every county there is a sheriff's department or a fire department with its own purchasing budget.

"In Iceland, we've done extraordinarily well – better than in Australia or New Zealand, but it's been chiefly with voluntary Icelandic groups.

"For us, the real target market, the one with the most commercial potential, is with oil and gas companies and we are building up a bit of traction there. We will soon have a Spanish-language version, because we are getting queries from potential customers in the oil and gas sector in South America, and, after that, we will have a Portuguese-language version for Brazil."

Dutch entrepreneurs target Middle East beauty-care market from Cork

All-in-one beauty products by Cork cosmetics firm Human+Kind are proving a natural winner in the Middle East, which accounts for about 50% of the firm's turnover.

Human+Kind was founded by two Dutchmen living in Cork, Rene van Willigen and Jeroen Proos, after Rene overheard his wife and his sister complaining to one another, one evening in 2009, about the sheer number of cosmetic products that they were using and the fact that many of these products contained potentially toxic additives. Rene did some research and devised his own 'more natural' formulations and then, while seeking market advice, met with company co-founder Jeroen, who coincidentally also comes from the Netherlands.

The two took further marketing advice from the branding consultancy Think Tank and worked on their packaging with M&H

Plastics before launching their first two products, an all-in-one family remedy cream and an all-in-one anti-aging cream, at the Beauty World ME trade show in Dubai in May 2010. Branded with the phrase 'No chemicals, No colourants, No Parabens, No perfume, No Animal Testing and No Additives', both products are doing very well.

"We chose to focus on the Middle East for several reasons," says Proos. "People there haven't been as affected by the global economic downturn, so there is disposable income to try out new products. The biggest growth areas for natural products are the Middle East and Asia and, also, it is easier to build a brand in the Middle East than it is in, say, Europe or North America, where the cosmetics market is very crowded.

"Our sales revenue is now split 50/50 between Europe and the Middle East. In

Europe, we are trading in Ireland and in Holland, but we are planning to enter the UK market very soon and then the US market in the near future. What has been key for us is finding the right partners and also using an online presence and online sales to build the brand."

With the addition of an all-in-one body oil and an all-in-one day-and-night cream, Natural+Kind's product range has doubled and more products are due to be added.

By definition, the company can't have a vast product range: part of its USP is that it allows women to avoid having to use a wide range. "We will probably not expand to much more than 10 products," says Proos. "But this year, we are looking to introduce an all-in-one shampoo and body wash and a multi-tasking body lotion. We are also looking at a skin whitener for the Middle Eastern market that will be made with natural, non-toxic ingredients."



Forthcoming trade mission to South Africa

South Africa is on the agenda for the an Irish minister-led trade mission in Q4 of this year. The mission, which will take in Johannesburg and Cape Town, from November 12 to 14, is to focus on telecoms, education, financial services, medical devices and life science.

For further information, contact fred.klinkenberg@enterprise-ireland.com, T: +27 (10) 0030218

Irish SMES punching above their weight with European research funding



Irish companies are punching above their weight when it comes to obtaining EU funding for research, with our SMEs standing out as high achievers.

"We are ranked number four of the member states in terms of SME funding targets," Enterprise Ireland's Imelda Lambkin, director of the national support network for the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7), told an information session in Dublin in July. Irish participants in FP7 have already drawn down €384 million, with companies securing €96 million.

While the European Commission has been disappointed in falling industry participation over successive programmes, Irish SMEs have shown that they know how to use the programme. In terms of participation per 100,000 SMEs, Ireland ranks number one. "Ireland has had a huge success story when it comes to SME participation in the programme, and we are looking to grow it," Lambkin said.

Maire Geoghegan-Quinn, European Commissioner for

Research, Innovation & Science, was in Dublin to present the final call for FP7, which contains €8.1 billion for new EU research projects. The commission is to fund more close-to-market projects in this FP7 round and in future. But funding will go to all types of research organisations, individual researchers and innovative businesses.

Industry participation in the programme stands at 24% of funding. "This is not good enough," said Geoghegan-Quinn. "We have already simplified participation and put a big focus on SMEs and we are starting to see results. There is a package for SMEs of up to €1.2 billion in this budget." However, the commissioner added that she was preaching to the converted in Ireland. The Commission has a target of 15% of funding to go to SMEs in FP7, but Ireland's SME figure is well over 20 per cent.

Lambkin stressed that this is an opportunity for companies to get match fit for the next framework. "These are the test beds of Horizon 2020.

They are the new approaches," she explained. "This is an opportunity to get in early, build up a portfolio and then we will be in a much better position for Horizon 2020."

Eighty-five per cent of new jobs in the EU between 2002 and 2010 were created by SMEs, but less than a third of SMEs have innovative activities. R&D expenditure by SMEs is lower in the EU than in the US. Speaking at the information session, Dr William Donnelly, head of research and innovation at Waterford Institute of Technology, said Irish companies are missing out. "My experience in Irish industry, and particularly in ICT, is that they look towards California. But we have a major single market here on our doorstep and industry has access to that market through the framework programme." Donnelly is a veteran in EU research project, with his telecommunications software and systems group having been involved in 62 projects, 60% of which they led themselves.

Pilot clustering programme to support cooperation between businesses

A new €2m pilot clustering programme aims to encourage groups of businesses to collaborate to achieve specific business objectives, improve competitive advantage, create mutual financial gain – and ultimately create jobs.

The objective of the programme to support time-limited collaborative projects that will bring measurable benefits to members of the group. This could include companies working together to, for example, explore export market opportunities, achieve supply-chain optimisation, enhance productivity, realise economies of scale, increase innovation and knowledge transfer or explore potential convergence

opportunities. Projects, which will be eligible for funding of up to €100,000, must involve a minimum of five companies.

The initiative is aimed at a broad range of businesses serviced by the enterprise development agencies, and clusters will be encouraged to also include members from other jurisdictions, including Northern Ireland, as well as global corporations with a presence in Ireland, trade/business associations, academic institutions and suppliers.

The call for applications will remain open until 18 September, 2012. For more information, see www.enterprise-ireland.com/clusteringprogramme or email jean.mullen@enterprise-ireland.com

eTail at the Embassy

This June, a host of industry representatives gathered at the Irish Embassy in Knightsbridge, London, to celebrate the exciting technologies coming out of Ireland in the retail space. A selection of Enterprise Ireland client companies with innovative solutions for eTail met with representatives from leading UK retailers Agent Provocateur, A Suit That Fits, TJX, Arcadia, Tesco.com, John Lewis, ASDA, Firebox, MandM Direct, The Mama Group and Dixons.

The UK is Europe's leading eTail economy. At £68.2bn in 2011, e-tail now accounts for 17% of all UK retail sales, and there are now 37m online shoppers in the UK. Furthermore, according to IMRG (Interactive Media in Retail Group), UK eTail sales are expected to reach £77bn in 2012.

For more information on the Retailer Solutions initiative, see www.retailer-solutions.com. The initiative is run by Allyson.Stephen@enterprise-ireland.com, and supported by Aislinn.Mahon@enterprise-ireland.com.



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The following is the results of a recent readership survey.

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rated the quality of the magazine as good/excellent.

82%

rated the magazine as good/excellent at keeping up to date with the latest news and supports available for Irish exporters.

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felt the articles were pitched at the right level.

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33%

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BComm China students do the honours at UCC

The second cohort of Chinese Studies Commerce students are due to graduate from University College Cork this year, and the head of their course, Prof Fan Hong, expects them to take up jobs or set up their own businesses in mainland China.

“Last year’s graduates are spread across China in Shanghai, Beijing and Guangzhou,” the Professor said. “After spending their third year in China, they are now completely fluent in Chinese, and, in fact, because they have passed either HSK exam level four or five, they are qualified to teach Chinese.”

The BComm (International) Chinese Studies course was set up to provide students with an understanding of the dynamics of the modern Chinese economy and the way it operates at an individual and corporate level. The degree was developed to appeal to employers such as multi-nationals, international organisations and Irish companies with Chinese interest, but about half of last year’s graduates are now self-employed, albeit while studying for Masters degrees in China.

Professor Fan said: “Because UCC has a high number of Chinese students, we were able to hold pairing parties, where Irish students on our course hooked up with some of the Chinese students. They would then help each other learn each others’ language. What has been great is the friendships that have developed. Chinese students have spent Christmas with the families of their Irish friends and the Irish students have been invited to China on holidays.

“This year, we will have 10 BComm graduates, but the number of students taking the course is growing steadily, which is good because of the growing importance of China and other Asian countries in the global economy. I think learning a foreign language should be part of every BComm course – if you can speak a few sentences of a potential client’s native language, it immediately reduces the distance between you and makes working together easier. It also just makes it simpler to get around a country and to do things by yourself.”

RICHARD BRUTON, T.D., MINISTER FOR JOBS, ENTERPRISE AND INNOVATION AND MARTIN D SHANAHAN, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, FORFÁS, LAUNCHING THE REPORT, KEY SKILLS FOR ENTERPRISE TO TRADE INTERNATIONALLY.



Boost in foreign languages and international sales skills required to drive exports

Ireland needs to increase the numbers with foreign language skills and international selling skills if we are to continue to grow exports, according to the finding of a study published by the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (EGFSN) and Forfás this June.

The study involved consultation with over 60 companies – both foreign affiliates and indigenous. The companies surveyed expected their employment levels to increase by between 15% and 20% over the next three years. However, they envisaged difficulties in recruiting international sales staff, people with foreign language proficiency and software engineers.

“The companies that we spoke to are telling us that they are finding it difficult to get skills in international sales and in foreign languages,” said EGFSN Chairman Una Halligan. “Expanding into new markets requires a ramping up of skills and experience levels. Absolutely key in this regard are our abilities to sell effectively and for staff right across functional areas of companies to be able to communicate and understand those markets. An improved supply of domestic foreign language capability, including German, French, Spanish and Italian as well as Mandarin Chinese

and Japanese, would be a major boost to enterprises achieving their export potential.”

Halligan said that firms have a main role to play in communicating the value of foreign languages proficiency to students, parents and teachers. “At third level, findings are that there is a relative lack of Irish graduates with foreign language proficiency and international market experience.”

The report makes a range of specific recommendations, including boosting the supply of foreign language skills (both numbers and proficiency) at third level. It also highlights the need to increase formal international sales training at third level, including compulsory modules on international sales in business courses and the introduction of a degree and post-graduate diploma in international sales with foreign languages.

The study has identified 2,200 potential job opportunities arising within exporting companies that could be filled through tailored skills conversion courses, developed in partnership with industry – in the areas of ICT, customer sales and service support with foreign languages, design engineering, international sales with foreign languages and project management.



Irish ICT companies target CommunicAsia

Seven Irish companies were at CommunicAsia – one of Asia's major telecoms and communications exhibitions and conferences, which attracted 35,000 trade attendees from around the world this June. Singtel, Singapore's local mobile provider and internet service provider, and Starhub, ASEAN's leading satellite TV provider were there, along with LinkedIn, Google, Intel, Apple, Microsoft, Atos and the Li Tong Group.

Among the Irish companies present were Altobridge from Tralee; SLA Mobile from Belfast; Ideal Systems, an Irish-owned broadcasting company headquartered in Hong Kong, with an office in Singapore; Tektronix Communications, formerly AranTech, the S3 Group; Tango Telecom and Nastech.

Applications opening for 2013 Farmleigh Fellowship MBS in Asian Business

The Farmleigh Fellowship is set to start accepting applications for its 2013 MBS in Asian Business in August/September 2012. The aim of the MBS programme is to make the Asian marketplace of the future as real and as relevant to people's lives in Ireland, as America and Europe are today. The concept grew out of the first Global Irish Forum at Farmleigh, where it was seen that Ireland had vast opportunities to grow its business interests in Asia but lacked sufficient qualified professionals on the ground.

The fellowship provides an opportunity for Irish businesses to sponsor an experienced professional or graduate, who will work on market research and developing a network of contacts for the company in Asia.

Kicking off in January 2013, the MBS aims to place candidates on a one year work-study programme, with their time split between generating a live Asian

business development report for the sponsoring company and studying for a Master's in Asian Business, awarded by UCC and delivered in partnership with Nanyang Business School at NTU, Singapore. During this time, the graduates are supervised by industry and academia and assigned an experienced business mentor from the local Irish diaspora.

Sponsorship costs a company about €20,000 for the year, with additional support coming from the Department of Foreign Affairs, while the graduate covers their own day-to-day living and accommodation costs, ensuring strong motivation and commitment from applicants. 2013 sponsoring companies include China International Duty Free; CRH; Cut-E; Diageo; Digicel; DPS; Glanbia; Ideal Systems; Saongroup; Taxback.com and Treasury Holdings.

See www.farmleighfellowship.com

SAP launches programme to help Irish software companies tackling 'big data'

SAP, the German headquartered global player in enterprise software, has launched a start-up programme for Irish software companies, coinciding with the official opening of its 'App Haus' office at the Citywest Business Campus in Dublin this July. App Haus will be the primary hub for SAP in Ireland to conduct research and development for innovative software applications.

The SAP Start-Up Focus programme, which is to be delivered in co-operation with Enterprise Ireland, is open to Irish-owned companies with revenues under €40m. Essentially, it centres on SAP's new database technology called SAP HANA, which is a tool for companies that need to manipulate large volumes of data. The programme is designed to provide SMEs with the tools, training and support to leverage the SAP HANA platform as the technology foundation to tackle and crunch 'Big Data' issues.

Launched last year, the platform is already proving to be the fastest-growing product in SAP's 40-year history. It is widely applicable outside SAP's traditional environment and could be of interest to many start-ups as well as established and scaling Irish companies. The Start-Up Focus programme is an opportunity for companies to work closely with SAP to enhance their products using the technology. SAP is targeting companies interested in fast data analytics. The platform can complement their existing database; they can avail of free developer licences, and it can run on Amazon web services infrastructure.

Internationally, the SAP Start-Up Focus programme also works closely with SAP Ventures, a venture capital division within SAP, to identify and cultivate ground-breaking start-up companies that can deliver high quality solutions to real-world problems using SAP HANA. In April 2012, SAP Ventures announced the establishment of the U.S. \$155 million SAP HANA real-time fund, to spur development of applications compatible with SAP HANA.

For future information, contact martha.cahill@enterprise-ireland.com



**SEPTEMBER****Business Opportunities in Chile***September 7*

An Enterprise Europe Network - Dublin event with speaker Matías Mori, Executive Vice-President of the Chilean Government's Foreign Investment Committee, followed by pre-arranged one-to-one meetings with Matías Mori.

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E: international@dublinchamber.ie

EAIE*September 11-14*

International higher education professionals from around the world will meet in Dublin for the 24th Annual EAIE Conference.

V: Convention Centre, Dublin
E: lucia.reynolds@enterprise-ireland.com
T: +353 1 7272359

The 4th Cloud Computing Summit*September 12*

Event aimed at business and IT decision-makers.

V: Croke Park
W: www.eventznet.com/evx/acs/iquest/cloudsummit12/Default.aspx

International B2B Meetings at SPACE 2012*September 12 & 13*

SPACE is an international show for livestock professionals.

V: Rennes, France
W: www.space2012.b2b-match.com/p_index.php

Supporting Women Entrepreneurs Business and Mentoring Seminar*September 14*

Event co-organised by Galway Chamber and Business and Professional Women Association (BPW).

V: Salthill Hotel, Galway
W: www.een-ireland.ie/eei/events/register.asp?eventid=478

Cloudbusting-Dispelling the myth of the Cloud*September 14*

Conference supported by HP, examining the technologies and services offered in the cloud.

V: GMT, Galway
E: damien.joyce@live.ie

Market Access & Development*September 17 & 18*

The focus of this workshop is on the various methods for entering foreign markets, examining the tax and financial implications, benefits and risks of establishing subsidiaries, using agents, acquiring business abroad, etc.

V: Cork (17) & Dublin (18)
E: tom.early@enterprise-ireland.com
T: +353 1 7272942
W: www.enterprise-ireland.com/en/Events/Event-Detail/?id=3122

International Markets Week 2012*September 17 to 20*

International Markets Week provides clients of Enterprise Ireland the opportunity to discuss their exports plans and ambitions with over 100 market specialists from Enterprise Ireland's network of 30 offices, representing over 60 markets.

V: RDS, Dublin
E: jim.maguire@enterprise-ireland.com
T: +353 1 7272456

EU-China Business & Technology Fair VII*September 19 to 21*

This year's theme is "EU-China Innovation Cluster Cooperation" and the focus will be on bio-pharmaceutical, environmental protection, new energy and IT sectors.

V: Chengdu, China
W: www.eu-china.org.cn/en/index.asp

Developing a Value Proposition*September 20*

Workshop presented by Futurecurve as part of the Excel at Export Selling series.

V: bridgin.mcdonnell@enterprise-ireland.com
T: +353 1 7272734
W: http://tinyurl.com/ca72m6r

The Digital Ireland Forum*September 21*

Dedicated panel discussions on the changing nature of the consumer and the opportunities this presents for Ireland's existing businesses, for new start-ups, and for winning the next wave of FDI.

V: The Shelbourne Hotel
W: www.digitalirelandforumsep.eventbrite.com/

Developing a Sales Pipeline*September 25*

Workshop presented by Michael McGowan as part of the Excel at Export Selling series.

E: bridgin.mcdonnell@enterprise-ireland.com
T: +353 1 7272734
W: www.tinyurl.com/ca72m6r

OCTOBER**World Dairy Expo 2012***October 2*

Enterprise Ireland is hosting a market study visit to the World Dairy Expo 2012, bringing together a cluster of clients with innovative products and equipment for the agricultural industry.

V: Madison, Wisconsin
E: simon.barcoe@enterprise-ireland.com
T: +1 212 5460473

Mipcom 2012*October 8*

Enterprise Ireland will host an 'Ireland on Screen' pavilion at the world's entertainment content market, MIPCOM.

V: Cannes
E: damien.mccarney@enterprise-ireland.com
T: +353 1 7272181

Medtec-Ireland*October 10 & 11*

Expo for the medical device manufacturing industry.

V: Radisson Blu Hotel, Galway**W:** www.medteceireland.com/**Trade Mission to Brazil***October 8 to 11*

Minister-led trade mission to Brazil, supporting clients in winning new export sales in Brazil and accelerating their growth in the market.

V: TBC**E:** david.byrne@enterprise-ireland.com**T:** +353 1 7272828**Partner Skills Development***October 9*

Workshop presented by Giant Steps part of the Excel at Export Selling series.

E: bridgin.mcdonnell@enterprise-ireland.com**T:** +353 1 7272734**W:** www.tinyurl.com/ca72m6r**Business Transition to Cloud***October 10*

Workshop presented by Giant Steps part of the Excel at Export Selling series.

E: bridgin.mcdonnell@enterprise-ireland.com**T:** +353 1 7272734**W:** www.tinyurl.com/ca72m6r**Animation & Transmedia Market Study Visit to Spain***October 10 to 12*

The 4th Edition of the International Animation and Video Games 3D Wire Market brings together producers, broadcasters, buyers and other professionals from Spain and Latin America. Enterprise Ireland is inviting client companies from the animation and transmedia sectors to participate.

V: Segovia, Madrid, Barcelona**E:** thomas.redmond@enterprise-ireland.com**T:** +34 91 4364086**FX and Export Finance***October 16 & 17*

One-day workshop examining how you can partner with your bank to internationalise your business.

V: Shannon (16) & Dublin (17)**E:** tom.early@enterprise-ireland.com**T:** +353 1 7272942**Business Mission to Brussels***October 17 & 18*

In advance of Ireland's EU Presidency in January 2013, this year's Dublin Chamber of Commerce Business Mission to Brussels will include access to senior European Union representatives.

V: Brussels, Belgium**W:** www.dublinchamberofcommerce.newsweaver.ie/DublinChamberofCommerceEzine/xfw3w94loxo**Water and Recycling Exhibitions***October 17 & 18*

Resource Ireland 2012 will comprise two co-located exhibitions: The Irish Water Exhibition and The Irish Recycling & Waste Exhibition.

V: RDS, Dublin**W:** www.resourceireland.net**4th International Conference on Ocean Energy (ICOE)***October 17 to 19*

The ICOE is held every two years and is the leading global marine energy event for industrial development of renewable energy.

V: Convention Centre Dublin**W:** www.icoe2012dublin.com/ICOE_2012/**Future Jobs Forum 2012: Winning the Battle for Global Talent***October 19*

Forum posing the question: How is this country to fill the gap in order to ensure prosperity and growth?

V: CITI, Dublin**W:** www.futurejobsforum.eventbrite.com/**SIAL MATCH 2012***October 22 to 24*

An international brokerage event targeting companies in the food production and processing sectors.

V: Paris**W:** www.b2match.eu/sial2012/**CEO Forum***October 25*

Jointly sponsored by Enterprise Ireland and Deloitte, this is an invitation-only event, provides an opportunity for CEOs to share information and air their views.

V: Convention Centre, Dublin**E:** jackie.whelan@enterprise-ireland.com**T:** +353 1 7272742**NOVEMBER****Trade Mission to Canada***November 6 to 9*

Minister-led trade mission to Canada.

V: Toronto and Calgary**E:** ross.ocolmain@enterprise-ireland.com**T:** +1 (416) 9345033**Trade Mission to South Africa***November 12 to 14*

Minister-led trade mission, focussing on telecoms, education, financial services and medical devices / life sciences.

V: Johannesburg and Cape Town**E:** fred.klinkenberg@enterprise-ireland.com**T:** +27 (10) 0030218**MIS and Implementation***November 13 and 14*

Workshop focused on developing and communicating an management information system (MIS) strategy.

V: Galway (13th) and Dublin (14th)**E:** tom.early@enterprise-ireland.com**T:** +353 1 7272942**ONGOING****EnterpriseSTART workshop series***Ongoing*

EnterpriseSTART is an introductory workshop series, geared towards those considering launching an export-oriented, start-up business. The workshops take place over two afternoons, at various dates and locations around the country.

V: Various locations in Dublin and regionally**W:** www.enterprise-ireland.com/en/Events/**Exploring Exporting - 2 Day Workshop***Ongoing*

New series of two-day workshops (delivered approximately 3 weeks apart) to assist early and pre-export companies make sound business decisions on whether exporting is for them, understand how to export and how to plan for successful export entry.

V: Various locations in Dublin and regionally**E:** rena.cushion@enterprise-ireland.com**T:** +353 (1) 7272695*Email details of your forthcoming business events to the.market@enterprise-ireland.com*

Having landed a major contract with Ericsson, which involves seven different telco providers across 15 African markets, enterprise software provider ServiceFrame shares the lessons of how focus and a willingness to adapt have positioned this young company on the journey towards a scalable business model. Gordon Smith reports.

REFRAMING THE PROPOSITION

DIARMUID BARRY
CEO, SERVICEFRAME



If at first you do succeed, what happens when you try again – and don't? That was the conundrum facing the founders of start-up ServiceFrame. With version 1 of its software freshly unwrapped in 2010, the company racked up early sales only to find the pipeline run dry later that year.

ServiceFrame addresses a gap in the market left by the business maxim, 'what gets measured gets managed'. Its web-based software monitors outsourcing or shared services contracts between companies and their external service providers. It allows organisations to constantly check these deals against a range of metrics such as cost or quality of service – reducing the considerable risk that the outsourcing arrangement will fail to meet targets.

TARGET RANGE

Founded in 2009, ServiceFrame originally targeted several industry sectors, including financial services, insurance, digital media and telecoms. Early customer wins included Unisys and Serco in the financial and accounting shared services sectors, along with RSA, and Colt Telecom in IT services, Ericsson in telecoms and Steria in business process outsourcing.

CEO Diarmuid Barry picks up the story: "The challenge came when we sought to repeat that business – for example we sold to one insurance company and then tried to sell to others. Effectively, we learned it was too many different markets with different needs. It was accidental that we secured those initial sales."

After the success and subsequent stonewall came the soul searching, but the company didn't retreat into its shell. "One thing we are good at doing as a business is asking for help," Barry says. Through Enterprise Ireland's London office, ServiceFrame was introduced to the Rapid Innovation Group, a specialist consultancy for early-stage businesses. "We sat down and tore our sales process apart. It involved a lot of hard questions," Barry recalls.

"Through the course of that very productive but painful process, we realised we didn't actually know why customers bought from us, in many cases. The exercise was painful but in the right way – it told us what we needed to learn and get better at. We recognised the need to focus and the need to understand where the need is for the customer, what proposition resonates in that segment, who the buyer is and the stakeholder mix," he says.

That exercise, spread over three months, prompted the decision to concentrate purely on managed telecoms services, where operators

outsource management of their networks to a third party. "Focusing on one segment is a necessary step in terms of fine-tuning the proposition and having a business model that's repeatable," Barry says.

Equipment vendors like Ericsson, Alcatel-Lucent, Nokia Siemens Networks and Huawei are increasingly becoming service providers to their network customers, and deal sizes are in the tens of millions. Barry estimates the total addressable market in this space alone is around €2 billion.

ServiceFrame's efforts to gain traction in the market are helped by customers' willingness to embrace new ideas, while the size of the outsourcing deals ensures all parties want to get value for the considerable amounts of money being spent on these agreements.

ServiceFrame signed its first deal in the telecoms sector two years ago, involving Ericsson and Sprint in the US, which remains one of the largest managed services deals of its type in this space. The Dublin company recently landed another major contract with Ericsson, which involves dealing with seven different telco providers across 15 markets in sub-Saharan Africa. Its software provides a continent-wide or country-wide breakdown of key performance indicators, allowing the customer or service provider to assess the level of service against a series of metrics.

For reasons of commercial sensitivity, ServiceFrame can't reveal what kinds of savings have been achieved on some of its projects, but Barry says certain customers have seen significant improvements in service delivery since implementing the software.

PRICING AND PROPOSITION

Another element to emerge from the discussions with Rapid Innovation Group was that ServiceFrame hadn't been charging enough for its software. "If you are very cheap, positioning yourself as very high value is problematic – and we believe we have a high value proposition," says Barry.

Consequently, the company adjusted its sales model so that, as well as providing software, it oversees an implementation process. This involves a period of research and analysis of the customer's data, as well as providing end-user training and customising the software front-end. Barry emphasises that this isn't a long-term consultancy but a relatively short engagement that typically lasts between eight and 12 weeks.

The changes also had a knock-on effect in

the levels of support that ServiceFrame needed to provide to customers. While the company charges for project work, Barry says this isn't a way of making additional margin on deals but a way of ensuring the software is more accurately measuring what the customer needs, and reporting in a way they can understand.

The fruits of those changes are now coming through. ServiceFrame is forecasting revenues of €750,000 by year end. "Our expectation is that we will be two and a half times that by the end of 2013 and our business plan forecasts annual revenue of €10 million in three years or so," says Barry. He calls this target "realistic" based on the rate at which the company is accelerating and the number of deals in the pipeline.

Before reaching the latter revenue target, the company will seek further investment early next year in Ireland and the UK. It also hopes to create 25 further jobs over the next two years. ServiceFrame currently has 10 employees, having doubled staff numbers in the past four months alone.

EVOLUTION AS USUAL

Popular start-up narrative often focuses on the 'pivot' moment where a company changes direction. For Barry, "there is no one moment of epiphany and everything then follows a pre-ordained path. We are constantly engaged in a change of direction or focus." He prefers to call it "evolution" and adds that it isn't just change for change's sake.

His response reflects the experience born of a 17-year career at Microsoft, and it's possibly no surprise that company founders Traolach Collins and Daniel Berman also have stints at multinationals on their CVs; Collins at Ericsson and Berman at Accenture. Barry joined ServiceFrame in 2010 as an investor and fulltime employee, and became CEO in April 2011 following a €950,000 funding round.

Barry's measured delivery is low on hype and high on realism but his perspective is valid for many other types of entrepreneur. "We're on our way to being a business, is what I would say. A business is at a level that can sustain itself and we're not quite at that point. Start-ups go through a cycle of learning and change to see if there is a business there," he says. "Every day, you are figuring something out, you're changing something a little bit thanks to talking with customers, advice from peers or conversations with the newest employees. You have to be prepared to learn and change constantly. Every day something is different and you have to think about that and react to it."

"Every day, you are figuring something out, you're changing something a little bit thanks to talking with customers, advice from peers or conversations with the newest employees."

WHERE ARE YOU



Western Australia is experiencing a serious boom, driven by mineral and petroleum extraction and processing. In the great vastness of this state, skilled engineering, geotechnical and infrastructural people-power is in short supply; there are business opportunities to be tapped. And the message is: where the hell are you? Anthony King reports.

An Australian tourism ad promises visitors “we’ve poured you a beer,” “saved you a spot on the beach” and “got the roos off the greens,” but there are plenty of business attractions down under too.

Australia, right now, is a multi-speed economy. “Construction-related activity related to house building is in sharp decline, the retail sector is suffering and manufacturing is dead,” says Paul Burfield, Enterprise Ireland’s Director for Australia. “But the services sector is quite strong, and anything that is aligned to mining and resources [such as construction] is booming.”

MINING BOOM

The state of Western Australia comprises a third of country; it is home to just one in ten Australians. It is now the main engine for Australian exports, accounting for nearly half the country’s total, with merchandise worth over Au\$120 billion exported in 2011. (At the time of going to press, Au\$100 was equal to about €85).

China, Japan and South Korea are hungry for Australia’s resources. The value of its minerals and petroleum production has more than tripled in the last ten years. And a resource boom spill-over is rippling through the western state’s economy, with unemployment now under 4%. “The level of investment in infrastructure projects related directly to mining and mining-related construction across Australia is in the

J?





Perth: Western Australia's Capital

Western Australia revolves around one big city, Perth. It dominates the economy in this region and is the state's capital, but it's half the size of Sydney. "It's a whole different country over there," says Paul Burfield. "What you find in terms of lifestyle is big country town feel, a fantastic Mediterranean climate all year round and a beach lifestyle. The iconic Australian lifestyle is in Perth, probably more so than what you would experience here in Sydney."

Perth is in the same time zone as Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia and Beijing, which attracts companies looking for an Asia-Pacific base. It has been recognised by companies as a launch pad to Asia for decades now, says Skipworth. "Instead of being based out of Singapore, they work out of Perth where they are familiar with the language and customs and the legal set-up is similar to Britain and Europe." And there is a strong community of Irish and British expats. "It's not hard to make an Irish connection in Perth," adds Skipworth.

In terms of practicalities, Perth is closer to Irish time than the east coast cities. So at 9.30am in Dublin, it is 4.30pm in Perth but 6.30pm in Sydney. And Perth's connectedness is on the up. Perth Airport is to spend hundreds of millions of dollars expanding its international terminal. You can fly Dublin to Dubai to Perth in around 19 hours with Emirates, and Etihad is looking to fly in from Abu Dhabi next year.

vicinity of Au\$300 billion, already started, commenced or reaching completion. But what is particularly exciting is there is an equivalent value in planning," says Burfield, who sees enormous opportunities for Irish companies out west.

"The local economy does not have the capacity to complete these projects within a defined timeframe. The Western Australian and Australian government is open to foreign direct investment to support local industry in delivering these projects," he explains, and Ireland can take a share.

Kevin Skipworth, senior trade and investment manager in Europe for the government of Western Australia, says there is a great need for construction service support industries in particular, and related white collar businesses. "We've a great need for construction sector businesses, from project design to construction contracting groups, just to help support the development of a range of infrastructure projects we have earmarked for development," he adds.

There are notable differences between Western Australian and the heavily populated east coast. Generalising, the east coast is a domestically driven market, Skipworth says, while the west coast is an industrial-demand-driven market. "We've got the heavy engineering process plants, 250 tonne mining trucks and the 3-kilometre ore trains."

Perth, the one big city on the west coast, is the fulcrum of activity for businesses in this part of the world, but mining royalties are being pumped into regional development too. Infrastructure is needed to support the development of two towns in Pilbara – Port Hedland and Karratha – into 'cities' of 25,000 people. These are about 1,000 miles north of Perth, a twenty-hour road trip. Big liquid natural gas (LNG) projects include Gorgon (Au\$43 bn), Browse (Au\$30 bn) and Wheatstone (Au\$29 bn). Gorgon on the northwest coast is being developed by Chevron, Shell and Mobil, but there's plenty of room for smaller players.

Project owners, including Chevron, Shell and BHP, will often contract the large infrastructure players such as Leightons, Kentz, and Cimvec to build these enormous projects at contract values in the billions. Burfield says that these same players will often split contracts into "bite sized chunks," for smaller subcontractors, and Irish companies can compete in these spaces.

But it's not all about big energy projects. Au\$5 billion will also be invested in healthcare building projects over the next five years. Rail, road and port facilities are to be upgraded at Bunbury Port, south of Perth, to cope with demand. And Perth is crying out for more hotel, office and tourist infrastructure.

Skipworth lists mining software; exploration and consulting services; front-end engineering and design and environmental management and rehabilitation as especially sought after. "There are fabulous opportunities for our engineering and construction services companies in particular," Burfield stresses. But how can Irish SMEs size up opportunities in Western Australia?

"It's a big step and a long way to go, but I suggest you go to Perth. Make an exploratory visit," says Skipworth. "Talk to me and my staff here [in London] to help you plan a visit. We can assist you in terms of introductions to relevant regulatory and licensing authorities, and you can gain some appreciation of the market potential in whatever industry you are talking about."

AN IRISH COMPANY THAT'S DONE IT

AGEC is a small geotechnical engineering consultancy in Bagenalstown, Co. Carlow, which this year set up shop in Western Australia. "We did reasonably well [in Ireland] even after 2008, but really after 2010 it started hitting us a bit. The bigger projects weren't going to come back," recalls MD Turlough Johnston. The firm's accountant suggested that they take a look at Western Australia.

"I looked at the Middle East and northern Africa and really didn't like what I saw. Project-wise, there were loads of them, but we would put ourselves in jeopardy easily in those places," says Johnston. AGEC searched for potential clients over the internet that didn't have strong geotechnical departments in-house.

The shortfall of suitably qualified and experienced geotechnical staff within the oil, gas, mining and civil engineering sectors had been well flagged. AGEC had worked with big contractors in Ireland like Shell and the National Roads Authority" and replace with "AGEC has worked on major projects in Ireland for Shell, the NRA, Irish Rail, ESBI and major contractors and consultants, and its 14 staff included highly qualified and experienced geotechnical engineers and engineering geologists. They met Paul Burfield at an Enterprise Ireland conference in August

2011 and drew up a brief. A two-week trip was arranged for November.

"We saw five or six firms within the first week of the trip. The fourth firm we saw had a small geotechnical unit," says Johnston. "Within 15 minutes of sitting down with this CEO, he said why don't we do a joint-venture? That gave us a lot of food for thought." An alternative option was to establish an AGECE office in Perth. That was deemed onerous and complicated. Or a small geotechnical firm could be bought, but that would take time, effort and expense. They opted for the joint-venture, and the new company, a 50/50 partnership, was incorporated in January.

"Within a couple of weeks, we had our first job, and we are now on our fourth job," says Johnston. One job is a design and construction project at an iron ore stockyard in Port Hedland. "I think in the next couple of years we will be able to exceed what our revenue was in 2008 by 50%. I would suggest that 65% of it will be coming from Australia, with the remainder from Ireland and the UK," says Johnston.

It's not all smooth sailing. One of AGECE's staff opted to return home. And it takes a while for a project to get going, Johnston says. "There is a lot of paperwork. They have the attitude that everything has to be crossed and dotted to the nth degree. I'm not saying it shouldn't be, but it takes time," he says.

It's important to understand the visa situation, he advises. AGECE now has two people on four-year working visas, and Johnston visited on 3-month visas for business development purposes.

Another factor to consider is that personal and business overheads can be extraordinarily high. Perth is expensive for accommodation, and Western Australia rates are higher than east

coast rates, says Johnston. "A pint of beer in the middle of Perth would cost you maybe 10 dollars."

People are receptive and it is easy to open doors, but not so easy to get projects. "Enterprise Ireland was absolutely brilliant at getting us into big companies," says Johnston.

EASY TO DO BUSINESS

Doing business in Australia is very easy, says Burfield, who adds: "The principle benefits over say the Middle East are much higher prices for work, the conditions in which the people are deployed are vastly superior and – perhaps most importantly – the likelihood of getting paid is certain." It helps too that Perth has a strong Irish community, there are no real language difficulties and standards are comparable to Europe. Then there are the advantages we take for granted about Australia. The country scored well in the World Competitiveness Yearbook 2010 in terms of political stability (2nd of 58 countries); a culture open to foreign ideas (7th); government efficiency and business legislation (5th); and protectionism not impairing business conduct (7th).

Yet Western Australia's business opportunities echo a sentiment in the tourism ad, when the young Aussie looks around an idyllic empty beach and asks: "So where the bloody hell are you?"

Speaking from his Sydney office, Burfield is impatient for more Irish firms to pitch in and get a piece of this action. "Engage with Enterprise Ireland, talk to your contacts in Dublin who can put you through to our office here and we will be delighted to advise you on opportunities," he says. Burfield hopes to greet Irish firms this October, when a trade mission to Australia is scheduled.



Need to know: Visas

Business (Short Stay) visa (subclass 456): For business people who make a short business visit to Australia for up to three months. Business activities may include a conference, negotiation or exploratory business.

Business Entrant (Long Validity) visa (subclass 956): Business people can stay in Australia for up to three months on each visit for the life of the passport (multiple entry.)

Temporary (Long Stay) Business visa (subclass 457): Employers (Australian or overseas business) sponsor overseas workers to work in Australia on a temporary basis up to four years.

For more information see: www.immi.gov.au/

Find out more: Useful Contacts and Websites

Paul Burfield, Director - Australia/New Zealand, Enterprise Ireland:
paul.burfield@enterprise-ireland.com

Stuart Russell, senior trade and investment manager, Government of Western Australia European Office:
stuart@wago.co.uk

Government of Western Australia's European office:
www.wago.co.uk

Small Business Development Corporation: an agency focused on the developed of the small business sector:
www.smallbusiness.wa.gov.au

Around 2,000 business opportunities listed:
www.projectconnect.com.au/

Enterprise Ireland's Australia office:
www.enterprise-ireland.com/en/Export-Assistance/International-Office-Network-Services-and-Contacts/Australia.html



Dr Pearse Lyons is the County-Louth-born founder of Alltech, a Kentucky headquartered animal nutrition business that turned over one billion US dollars last year. On a return visit to Ireland, he took Anthony King through his paces on the sprint to success.

HOW TO BUILD A BILLION-DOLLAR BUSINESS

Here's the biography in brief: Dr Pearse Lyons founded Alltech with \$10,000 and created an empire with one billion in turnover. Headquartered in Lexington, Kentucky, it trades in 128 countries. Alltech's stated mission is to improve animal health and performance by adding nutritional value to feed, naturally, through innovative use of yeast fermentation, enzyme technology, algae and nutrigenomics. The company remains in private ownership and has grown 20 to 25% annually. And Lyons is not content to stand still: his aim is for the company to ratchet up from one to four billion in annual sales.

In the tearoom of Dublin's Shelbourne Hotel, Lyons energetically maps his path to success for *The Market*, while expressing heady enthusiasm regards growth. "We don't see an economic crisis. We just see unbelievable opportunities. We have a target to go from one to 4 billion [US dollars] in five years with no outside capital, without going public. We just had the most successful year we ever had. Profitability has never been better." Life science is next for Alltech.

Lyons races on, distilling down his philosophy: "The speed of an entrepreneur and the curiosity of a scientist: if you put those two together, especially if you are any kind of a salesman, then that is a dynamite combination." Lyons, a keen sports enthusiast, keeps up a blistering sprint, while marking out winning moves. He runs at 5am each morning. And here is his tick-list for those still on the blocks.

KNOW WHEN TO QUIT! Graduating with a first-class degree in biochemistry from UCD in 1967, Lyons headed off to Birmingham, UK, for a master's degree in brewing. He went on to do a research PhD in fermentation there. "I was very pragmatic about the value of a PhD," he says. "How do you take a background like that and go into business? First of all quit." The Dundalk native returned to Ireland and Irish Distillers as a biochemist, later moving to Lexington, Kentucky, and setting up Alltech in 1980.

JUST DO IT: Lyons advises budding entrepreneurs to "take a

chance, any chance". Sometimes I say we have a PhD in mistakes, but that's our strength too, he tells *The Market*. Listening to people, the wrong people, is a mistake. Here's some advice he dispensed to his Sunday morning running companion. "Take a little bit of council, but just go and do it. The more people you talk to, the less likely you are to do it. Be your own council and make decisions faster." Alltech snapped up one of the world's largest algae production plants in the world. "We bought it, and we bought it at an opportunistic price," he says, adding that a multinational paid many times more for a similar plant a few weeks later. Beware "energy vampires," those who say it can't be done or if it could it would have been done.

USE AND BUILD ON YOUR EXPERTISE: Get out there and use your expertise, Lyons says. His research training in yeast propelled him forward in the animal feed business. "Yeast was my core competency," he says. Now he's moving into crop science and even human health, looking for answers to Alzheimer's disease and HIV infection in yeast. "You stick to your core competency, but you add to it by working with universities," he emphasises. At the University of Kentucky, Alltech sponsored over 50 PhDs in seven years. "There is not a department in the University of Kentucky that has done that, but we've done it," he says proudly, describing it as the cheapest and best research you can get. "By us tapping into PhDs, we tap into their enthusiasm."

GET THERE FIRST: "Go there, be there, get there first," says Lyons, who practices what he preaches. "Let me tell you about yesterday. I left here at 5am in the morning, and I went to the west coast, drove three hours. Then drove back; got to Dublin at 1pm. Then we flew to near Gdansk, Poland, and looked at a plant there. It was an hour drive, there and back. And we got back here at midnight," he says. "That is curiosity; that is going faster. If you were coming up



“I THINK IN IRELAND, SOMETIMES WE ARE TOO DRIVEN BY THE DOLLAR. IT’S ABOUT NOT BEING DRIVEN BY THE DOLLAR, BUT BY THE OPPORTUNITY THAT MAY BE THE DOLLAR.”

against me, wouldn’t you be a little daunted to find out that I put in 19 hour days? But the point is that is what you have to do.” When Lyons first read about gene chips a decade ago, he went directly to the academic scientists with his director of research to find out more. He waves a small pig gene chip in the air, to hammer home his point. Alltech has improved the quality of meats by turning on the right genes through better nutrition, he explains.

IT’S NOT ALL ABOUT DOLLARS: It’s not all about the money, is a tune he hums forcefully. “I think in Ireland, sometimes we are too driven by the dollar. Longevity is key,” says Lyons. “It’s about not being driven by the dollar, but by the opportunity that may be the dollar.” A boss must be enthusiastic and create a culture. “Alltech has a songbook,” he tells *The Market*, deadpan. He’s serious. “If you give us a song, we’ll stick it in there. When we have our get-togethers, we sing a song. This is not a cult. This is about being smart.” Lyons says his daughter, a clinical psychologist, likes to say there are people from Kentucky, and they are Kentuckians; there are people from America, and they are called Americans; and there are people from Alltech, the Alltechians. “We have a culture.”

STAY PRIVATE: Lyons is animated when discussing new breakthroughs in science or articles from *Scientific American* magazine. He is passionate too about the need to stay private. “Don’t have a partner; do it yourself,” he advises. “You stay private to keep control; you stay private to keep focused; you stay private to keep passionate.” Those who go public will tell you that their life changed immediately because “now they have to explain their stupidity to somebody else”. We are looking for the next blockbuster, he enthuses, but we don’t have the weight of investors’ expectations on our shoulders. “We have the weight of our own expectations, and that is enough, thank you.” Alltech has had to be inventive about fund raising, Lyons admits, and being a private company means

you can’t take the big risks. But you can still take risks.

THINK BIG: We are visible in over 120 countries right now, Lyons says. The split in terms of sales is 25 per cent each in North America, South America, Europe and Southeast Asia. “Within those spheres, there are places you have got to pay attention to: Russia is one. Brazil is another,” he says. China is growing rapidly and is a huge market for Alltech already. The company has two factories there so far, and Lyons now has his son in China. “There are rules of doing business in China, and one of those rules is that the boss has to be there. They don’t like people helicoptering in and out.” Lyons brushes off concerns over intellectual property and criticisms of China. “The Chinese do not copy; they improve,” he chides. Asked about patent protection during his keynote speech at ESOE, Lyons says if you move fast enough, you don’t have to worry so much about IP.

KNOW WHEN TO LET GO: Asked about mistakes made, he says Alltech should have divested earlier. “We held onto things. We thought we had to be all things to all men,” he explains. “We invented it; therefore, we should stay with it, rather than we invented it, now get rid of it.” In the last five years or so, Alltech has begun to divest what had been considered core parts of the business. If it is not growing as it should or is holding the firm back, it’s out. “So I would say divest earlier and use that for a cash flow. That is what we are doing now.” Alltech must feed its acquisition strategy.

LOOK SUCCESSFUL: You got to look successful, Lyons admonishes. “I drove a Mercedes. I didn’t drive a Ford.” To this day, people say he drove that Mercedes with the product in the back. “All I can say is that as the years went by, the boot must have got larger and larger,” Lyons says. Appearance is big, and Lyons is a consummate salesman. “You look successful because you dress successful, because you talk successful.”



BOLLYWOOD TIGER TO ROAR FOR IRELAND

With the launch of *Ek Tha Tiger*, the first Bollywood movie to be partly shot in Ireland, Mary Sweetman look its potential impact in raising Irish profile in India.

While Bollywood was celebrating the launch of *Ek Tha Tiger*, partly filmed on the campus of Trinity College Dublin, education and tourism interests in Ireland were hoping the expected blockbuster will boost this country's profile in India.

Staring Bollywood box office queen Katrina Kaif and India's bad boy Salman Khan, the film kicks off when a spy code-named Tiger (Khan) is sent to Dublin to observe a scientist of Indian origin suspected of sharing his research with the Pakistanis. Khan begins to fall in love with Zoya (Kaif), who is studying at a fictitious dance academy in Trinity, and from there, the action moves on.

Off screen, the movie has already generated plenty of spice. Think of a Brad Pitt and Jennifer Aniston style on-screen reunion: Khan and Kaif are former real-life lovers, who split acrimoniously. Moreover, in claims vigorously rejected by director Kabir Khan, the family of Ravindra Kaushik, a former agent with Indian's external intelligence agency RAW, says the film has been inspired by Kaushik's life.

Given the hype and box office appeal of the two leads, the producers (Yash Raj Films) expected to net an audience of over 100,000 million in more than 20 countries.

ATTRACTING INDIAN STUDENTS Separate to the movie being filmed, TCD set up a recruitment office in Delhi this July. Currently,

there are about 130 students with an Indian address studying in Trinity.

"We want to double our number of non-EU students, and obviously that includes Indians," said Jane Ohlmeyer, a Professor of Modern History, who was recently made Vice-Provost for Global Relations at Trinity – a new position created as part of strategy that will see the college build relations in territories from North America to as far as Russia, Kazakhstan and right into India, China and Japan.

After North America, India is currently Trinity's number two priority, says Ohlmeyer. "The language of instruction is English, so you don't have language barriers. We are interested in postgraduates – taught and by research – and in undergraduates – across the board. We are as interested in recruiting for arts or history or sociology, as much as for medicine or health science or computer science."

The objective is for Trinity to attract the best and brightest – from wherever they may be – and to increase India's visibility on the Dublin campus. Among the students being targeted are those seeking the kind of "liberal arts education" offered by Oxford, Edinburgh, Stanford or Kings' College, Ohlmeyer says, adding that those kids are connected at the highest level into the Indian corporate and business world. "The alumina network is terribly important," she explained.

Of course, fees from overseas students are also a valuable source of revenue for Irish

colleges, and having an international student mix is a factor in establishing top rankings.

Of the approximate 200,000 Indian students who travel overseas to study every year, currently less than 1,000 choose Ireland. However, while the UK and US have been tightening visa requirements, Ireland has loosened its. Indian students are permitted to work here in the year after they graduate.

EDUCATION IRELAND Currently almost 30,000 international students are studying in Ireland, and, in 2010, the Government launched a new five-year strategy for international education 'Investing in Global Relationships', with the aim of increasing international numbers by 50% over the next five years.

Enterprise Ireland manages 'Education Ireland' – the umbrella brand under which Irish higher education and English language schools are promoted overseas. Doreen McKeown, an education sector advisor for China, India and Russia with Enterprise Ireland, says that the limited number of colleges and universities in India and the large number of Indian students who go abroad for higher education present an opportunity. "For a population of over 1.2 billion, there are only 563 universities in India. Many high-performing candidates, especially in professional courses, are seeking to pursue education abroad.

"Overseas education is perceived to be superior to that provided by most Indian institutions and is valued highly in the job market. With the expanding middle-class in India, parents are willing to support their children's education in universities abroad, and banks provide educational loans at attractive interest rates."

Pat O'Riordan who heads Enterprise Ireland's presence in India, agrees that *Ek Tha Tiger* could help build profile. "If you want to connect with an Indian, talk cricket or Bollywood," he advises. Earlier this year, Education Ireland announced the appointment of Irish cricketer Kevin O'Brien to help promote Ireland as a destination to young Indian students. "Now we have the Bollywood tie," he said, pointing to the massive impact of the 2011 stag party/road journey movie *Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara* on Spain's tourism image in India.

Ireland probably already generates more resonance in India than it does in, say, China, with shared cultural experiences such as the relationship between Eamon de

Valera and Jawaharlal Nehru, a leader in the Indian independence movement and the first independent Prime Minister of India, or the role played by Irish Christian Brothers in Indian education. However, O'Riordan believes that it is important to keep ties relevant for a new generation of Indians and that education is a means of creating a form of Irish diaspora in territories where it wouldn't otherwise naturally exist.

DCU LOOKS TO INDIA Dublin City University is also keen to build Indian visibility. Rather than simply attracting Indian students onto the campus, DCU President Professor Brian MacCraith says that the university is targeting joint-research projects and aiming to promote a greater understanding of India in Ireland.

"It's the biggest population centre in the world; we are entering a world where India will play a greater role," he said. "The companies that will employ our students will have strong interest in India." Currently, the global management consultancy firm Accenture employs 60,000 in India.

"We will be offering various modules, but its more about exposure to everyone on campus; all the time, our students will be exposed to India, so while the formal learning is important, the informal learning is more important."

Earlier this year, Minister for Education and Skills Ruairi Quinn launched the Ireland India Institute, a new national centre at DCU. Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, an Indian entrepreneur and founder, chairman and managing director of Biocon, has been named patron of the institute. Mazumdar-Shaw, who has extensive ties with Ireland, has been reported to be the richest woman in India.

Among the initiatives to be promoted by the institute will be an Ireland-India Research Fund, which is aimed at helping fund research into the "grand challenges" affecting both states in areas such as sustainable technologies. In addition, Ireland India Institute Scholarships are to be established to support Indian scholars and researchers studying in Ireland.

Of interest to business leaders will be an Ireland India Institute Seminar Series, which aims to bring some of the most significant thinkers and business leaders on contemporary India to Ireland. "Many of the lectures will be open to the business community, and Ireland should see it as a resource," MacCraith said.

INDIAN AND IRISH STUDENTS CELEBRATING THE HOLI FESTIVAL AT TRINITY IN MARCH.



"If you want to connect with an Indian, talk cricket or Bollywood."

An Irish trade mission will visit the major economic centre of Toronto and the oil and gas capital Calgary this November. In advance, **Marguerite Bourke** highlights some hot opportunities and provides a list of do's and don'ts for doing business in Canada. Interviews by **Viraj Desai**

FOLLOW THE NORTHERN LIGHTS

It has the second biggest crude oil reserves in the world, the world's best banking system, an open economy, which escaped the global downturn relatively unscathed...yet Canada is still a relatively untapped market for Irish companies.

Canada has always been overshadowed by its powerful neighbour, but Canada is on a steep growth curve and is beginning to emerge as a model for other economies. Despite being the second largest country in the world, Canada is a tight, less fragmented market than the US. Its three major economic centres focus around Toronto, Quebec and the Western Provinces. So where are the opportunities?



NATURAL RESOURCES

Alberta is the centre for oil and gas activities in Canada. It is a big and mature industry, with a 30-year build-out plan. Clark Grue the CEO of Rainmaker Global Business Development, which is based in Calgary, advises that companies evaluate where their products fit into the oil sands market chain and “talk to the smaller guys; the engineering companies and fabricators, not just the majors such as Shell and Exxon Mobil.” He suggests that companies should be willing to deliver turnkey solutions to the Alberta market and to supply the manpower to implement them.

FINANCIAL SERVICES

The Canadian market emerged from the global downturn in pretty good shape; its financial institutions are well capitalised, well regulated and continue to invest. There are six big Canadian banks, and they are all headquartered in Toronto. Philip McAuliffe of BMO Capital Markets, one of the largest Canadian banks notes: “The banks talk to each other, with the result that they have many common platforms and solutions.” The buying cycle for banks is November to January, and, for insurance/credit unions, it’s January – March, but you need to be talking to buyers well in advance.

TELECOMS

The Canadian telecoms market is worth \$17 billion, having grown by 8% in 2011. Once solely dominated by three giants – Rogers (35%), Bell (29%), Telus (28%) – the market was recently deregulated and now boasts four rapidly growing entrants: (Wind Mobile, Mobilicity, Videotron and Public Mobile), providing new prospects for suppliers. Enterprise Ireland has identified opportunities in rural telecoms, WiFi Offload, network optimisation, LTE, M2M, and CapEx-OpEx reductions.

SO WHAT ARE THE CAN-DOS AND CAN-DONTS, WHEN APPROACHING THE MARKET?

Do not treat Canada as the 51st State | The first rule of thumb is to never mistake a Canadian for an American in business or otherwise! Canadians expect that you do your homework, know the major players in your sector and legal frameworks, which can be quite different to the US. Corvil, which supplies front-office trading infrastructure to banks and foreign exchanges, learnt this firsthand when the company approached Canada from its US headquarters in

New York. Neil Boyd, Head of Sales, advises, “It is critical that customers understand that Canada is an important part of your strategy: they do not want to be the “step child of New York”.

Do cite European reference sites | Canada has a close affinity with Europe, and similar models of doing business. Gabriel McCaffrey, an advisory board member of International Enterprise Partners, who has been based in Canada for 20+ years, explains: “European reference sites have more resonance in Canada than in the US. Once you have built up your Canadian reference sites, use them to enter the US market.”

Canada can be a more manageable market for Irish companies to approach as their first foray out of Europe, and it has paid dividends for Dublin Company, Mapflow, which provides location-intelligent software solutions for property and casualty services. Mapflow initially approached the US and Canadian markets simultaneously in 2009 but quickly learnt that tackling both proved a daunting task. Bill McCarthy, CEO explains: “The key lesson learnt was that the US proposition needed more work before putting people on the ground, and we have since retrenched.” Mapflow found that the Canadian insurance and regulatory frameworks were more similar to Europe and that many of the Canadian global insurance players have significant presences in the UK. McCarthy says the company’s UK reference sites are “more meaningful in Canada” and ultimately led to Mapflow winning its first reference customer in Canada. Mapflow has since hired a Sales Director in Toronto and engaged with a partner in Canada.

Don’t rush the relationship | As an American approaching the Canadian financial services market, Neil Boyd of Corvil was struck by the more ‘local’ approach to doing business north of the border. “In the financial services sector, Canada feels like a small community, and, as such, we found relationships to be key for business development there. In fact, I would say relationship building would be ten times more important than anything else in Canada,” he commented.

Canadians by their nature are more risk-averse and conservative buyers, so for them, getting the ‘people-fit’ right is as important as the product or service you are selling them. The sales cycle can be slow, up to 18 to 24 months in the financial services industry as investment data management specialists, Moneymate have learnt. Conor Smyth, SVP, advises companies not to be

DID YOU KNOW?

- Canada’s national sport is lacrosse, the official animal is the beaver and food of choice is poutine (mélange of chips, gravy & cheese)
- 80% of Canadians live within 160km of US border
- The Greater Toronto Area (GTA) represents nearly 50% of Ontario’s economic activity and is the fourth largest metropolitan area in North America
- Ireland is the fourth largest receiver of Canadian Foreign Direct Investment



FIND OUT MORE

Canada is a buoyant market, and companies who have reference sites in Europe can excel here. Do your research, engage local partners and consultants, be here regularly, and talk to EI and other business networks.

Enterprise Ireland, Canada will be hosting a Trade Mission to Toronto and Calgary in November 2012, with ample opportunities for networking and business development. The primary sectors we will be focusing on are financial services, telecoms software and natural resources (Calgary). For more information visit: www.enterprise-ireland.com/canadatrademission



naïve: “It is not realistic to expect that hopping on a plane to Toronto a couple of times a year is enough. Canadians want to see you here more frequently to ensure you are properly committing to the market.”

Meanwhile, John O’Hare from the telecommunications company Azotel says that it’s also to provide reassurance that you can support Canadians remotely: “Make the effort to be physically present at critical meetings and respond to queries quickly; act as if you are a local company,” he advises.

Kieran Daly of Shimmer Research, suppliers of wearable sensors for research and medical devices, has experienced fast and direct sales cycles in the US. But he too warns Irish companies should not expect the same in Canada. “In contrast, there appears to be a more considered approach taken in Canada – potential customers like to meet a few times to get a sense of who you are; the decision-making process is more collaborative with input sought from a wider team.”

Multiple decision-makers make the buying-cycle longer, but ultimately you get more buy in across the organisation, Daly agrees: “Once a relationship is built, it is deeper and longer lasting.”

Do have a Canadian address | Over 55 Irish companies have a presence in Canada, and Enterprise Ireland expects that between 10 and 15 Irish companies will establish here in 2012.

Companies need to demonstrate a commitment to this market through some sort of local presence, whether that is through a local office or a partner.

“Local people with a built-up network, who understand the business culture,” is the kind of representation McCaffrey recommends. “It’s more crucial to secure someone with segment expertise as opposed to being a product expert,” he believes.

To find the perfect partner, companies should look at complimentary suppliers who have an established presence in Canada and ensure their end-customers fit into their own customer sweet spot.

The collections’ software supplier Expert Revenue Systems (XRS) identified a Canadian partner that was selling into its target market – financial services companies – by looking at Vendors of Record lists. Head of Sales and Marketing Tony Kelly cautions that companies should formalise relations with their partner: “setting strategic milestones and being prepared

to put in the work”.

“Jointly set expectations in detail – down to roles and responsibilities, targets, and milestones to be achieved,” he adds. And while it’s important to work collaboratively with your partner, don’t expect them to take the lead on sales: that is your job.

Don’t forget Quebec | There are specific opportunities in Quebec, particularly in digital media and gaming. Dublin-based Keywords International provides localisation testing of video games and has hired 25 staff in Canada one year after winning contracts with tier 1 multinational video games companies.

A local partner can be even more critical for success in understanding the vast cultural and language differences in this part of Canada. However, Paul Loftus, an intercultural consultant in Montreal, advises that the language barrier is “not a deal breaker” as most international businesses are bilingual.

Keywords International CEO Andrew Day attributes his company’s success to its commitment to the market. “Without having a local presence in Quebec, we would probably not have won these deals. The industry cluster is tight-knit, and, in order to take advantage of tax credits on offer and to get closer to potential customers in the province, and North America as a whole, setting up here was definitely advantageous.”

Do feel their pain | When pitching to Canadian companies, don’t give them the marketing spiel: this is a common mistake. Instead focus on their point of pain. Know your target company inside out and aim to impress.

Enterprise Ireland’s in-market contacts advise that companies should prepare a 15-minute pitch and hit them with hard cold stats. For example: “By implementing our technology, within one-year, your operating costs will reduce by 30%.”

John O’Hare of Azotel comments: “Make sure to research ahead of time and tailor the platform or product to address the Canadian format including ‘look and feel’. To overcome the hesitancy of potential customers to go with an overseas company, demonstrate your flexibility to customise; listen and respond to their demands and use examples of adaptations made when you entered other countries.”

*Marguerite Bourke is a market advisor with Enterprise Ireland’s Toronto office.
E: marguerite.bourke@enterprise-ireland.com*

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Three Irish technology companies tell Ian Campbell how they are leveraging a combination of the cloud and digital marketing to go global.

SKY'S THE LIMIT

If your response to all the hype about the cloud was to put your fingers in your ears and wait for the noise to subside, you could be waiting for a long time. All the signs suggest that the predicted paradigm shift in the way IT is delivered and consumed is gaining real traction and impacting on every type of business.

Early movers who saw an opportunity have emerged with new businesses and go-to-market strategies that were unimaginable a decade ago. Particularly fruitful have been software-as-a-service (SaaS) companies with applications accessed over the internet on a pay-to-use basis, a model embraced by established software vendors looking to reinvent themselves – as well as start-ups.

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

Galway-based Copperfasten Technologies shifted its focus to the web back in 2005, determined to find an easier way of selling its products overseas. Living out of motorway hotels trying to deploy appliances into UK customer premises was hard work and time-consuming. Since its strategic shift to a download-and-SaaS model, 95 per cent of the company's business now comes from outside Ireland.

To make the model work, the products had to be simplified for the new delivery channels. Then the company taught itself to use the web as a sales tool to expand into new territories, harnessing the power of search engine optimisation and Google AdWords.

The adoption of social media has also been useful and much more cost-effective than traditional public relations, according to CEO Ronan Kavanagh, though he believes Twitter and Facebook make more sense for consumer-focused brands. He does, however, recommend blogs as a way of generating regular content that will catch the attention of Google's search radar.



Partners were another part of the process, and a tie-in with virtualisation specialist VMware was crucial for some early wins. "They launched a virtual appliance marketplace, a sort of iTunes for enterprise, and we featured among their top ten products. That was very significant for us," said Kavanagh.

"What's fantastic for Ireland and export-led companies is that the internet makes it a level playing field," he said. "You can sell software as easily from the west of Ireland as Silicon Valley."

Big Red Cloud's Marc O'Dwyer puts it another way. "After nearly twenty years selling software the traditional way, we could have sat back and seen out the life of Big Red Book and faded into the ether. Or we could go with the future, go to the cloud and turn this company into a €100 million business."

Big Red Cloud was born, but it wasn't easy. The goal was to transition an accountancy software product that was sold as a CD into a SaaS application. There were false starts, including a local development firm that went bust, before O'Dwyer decided to set up his own team in Belarus. It took nine months and 15 developers to successfully rewrite the application, reducing 600,000 lines of code to less than 20,000, now run out of Microsoft's Azure platform in the cloud.

"In retrospect, we are in a much better place than we would have been if we'd gone with the original plan," said O'Dwyer. "We would have had ended up with a legacy system converted to run in the cloud rather than a cloud product written with the latest technology."

The SaaS version had to be good because online accountancy is a hot market with lots of competition from products built with the web in mind. They are slick, easy-to-use and very affordable. O'Dwyer smiles at the irony: "After twenty years in the business it's the first time accountancy software has been considered in the least bit sexy."

Right now, he's in the process of migrating his Irish customers over to the SaaS platform, still tweaking the features to give accountants what they want while retaining the user-friendliness that defined the original product. With 350 trials and around 100 sales, he's close to the point where he can launch a product outside of Ireland for the first time.

A few years ago O'Dwyer visited Australia on a trade mission with Enterprise Ireland and saw a potential market that he is now able to pursue. At the time, setting up a sales channels and promoting physical CDs was prohibitively expensive. Now, in the cloud and through a partnership with Microsoft and its channel partners, Australia is on his list of targets along with the UK and New Zealand, English-speaking countries with the same accounting rules.

"The only way an indigenous software company like ours can expand internationally is in the cloud," said O'Dwyer. "The costs are so low and it's all done through search digital marketing and engaging with the right bodies in each territory. In the UK, for example, we're already talking to the Institute of Certified Bookkeepers, which has 6,500 members."

The company's website also benefited from free search engine optimisation, provided by Google which identified accountancy and CRM as the fastest growing online business products. One of the reasons is that it's easy to migrate customers from trialling the software as a free download to making a fully-fledged purchase.

"The only way an indigenous software company like ours can expand internationally is in the cloud."

"They can use it as their accountancy package from day one, and if they like it at the end of the trial, they are good to go. They get 24/7 support and unlimited users. It's always backed up, always the latest version and always virus free," said O'Dwyer.



BIG RED CLOUD

For Big Red Book, a firm with a 19-year history of selling accountancy software to small Irish businesses, the cloud was an opportunity to expand into overseas markets. Managing director Marc O'Dwyer had a "Road to Damascus" experience at an early Enterprise Ireland event when a speaker listed reasons why a company would consider selling its products or services via the cloud. Big Red Book ticked all of them.

SALES REPS

Vitar is a Dublin-based start-up that has also harnessed the cloud to turn a familiar process into a SaaS solution. It has developed a cloud-based visitor management system hosted on the Amazon EC2 platform. A suite of easy-to-use tools help manage all visitors and contractors on any customer premise, replacing manual sign-in systems with a single solution that can be accessed by multiple sites. It requires little or no IT management and helps eliminate reception queues.

After eighteen months of development, the first product went live last October and it wasn't long before hundreds of customers across five continents were signed up, with many more trialling the software.

The company's sales and marketing director, Justine Cross, said that choosing a traditional path to market was important despite the product's cloud origins. "Whether you're selling a product worth a dollar or a million dollars, it's all about having channel partners. People like to trade locally even if it's in the cloud. They want a local reseller or distributor, and we want them because they understand the local scene and help us grow our market much quicker."

When it comes to choosing partners, Cross looks for executive buy-in from the company and individuals that will champion the technology and make good use of webinars and new media for selling the product. "You have to sit down with each partner and ask what they want to get out of it in terms revenue expectations. But it's important that you still provide the direct touch, lead generation and brand awareness," she said.

The company explored the various public cloud platforms to see which would be most suitable to run its application. "We looked at approaching the market in a different way to make it scalable, affordable, secure and easy to use. We couldn't afford to build a data centre to host one application, so we investigated who could give us the best value and chose Amazon," she said.

Vitar enjoys the same benefits as its customers, utilising the cloud with no upfront IT investment. It applies the same ethos to internal processes and uses SaaS products for CRM and invoicing. A further sign of the times is that a growing number of its partners are cloud service providers who sell baskets of web-based apps to resellers as well as direct to customers.

"We are trying to live and breathe the technology we believe in," said Cross, "and that extends to marketing." She favours small and repetitive campaigns rather than 'big bang' hits and elaborate PR campaigns that are expensive to sustain. A favourite medium is Google AdWords and LinkedIn, which is useful for lead generation. The company is also starting to Tweet.

Strategy is also determined by the target market. In some countries like Africa, print is still powerful, and Vitar will work with partners on co-funded campaigns. Cross said the hardest thing is to capture the first customer in a territory. "When you get one, you quickly do a case study and get a video testimonial that you put out over social media. From that, you will typically get five other customers and you can start to build the business in a territory."

Product localisation is also part of the process. Different language versions are a standard requirement, and it typically takes six to 12 weeks to translate the software for a new market. But sometimes the functionality of the product has to be tweaked. In Scandinavia, for example, receptionists are not part of the corporate culture. In South Africa, they are more important and will demand more visitor information, such as photo ID or a passport number.

START, GROW AND GO

Some entrepreneurs want to make building a company their life's work. But software investor Pat Donnellan tells Gordon Smith that the strategy pursued by one of his former start-ups, AEP Networks, offers a blueprint to Irish companies seeking fast growth and a profitable exit.

"A company that can talk about a strategy of building, of merging and creating scale whether through acquisition or merger, investing in sales and marketing is what now resonates as opposed to 'I've figured out the next great thing!'"

Ireland's small market size makes it inevitable that indigenous technology companies quickly start looking beyond these shores to achieve ambitious growth targets – but for many, that international focus stops at sales alone. There is an argument that this template needs to touch every aspect of a company's entire strategy. Once companies move beyond the start-up stage, they should consider relocating the business closer to key customers and actively beef up the company through acquisition.

As chief executive of AEP Networks from 2002 until 2011, Pat Donnellan followed that formula. He and his team recast a company forged with technology developed at Dublin City University and had its original head office in Bray, Co Wicklow. In 2004, the then six-year-old company merged with Netilla Networks, which led to the company fixing its corporate HQ in New Jersey, with London designated as its main international office.

Other landmarks along the way included buying the security technology assets of Baltimore Technologies in 2002, the 2005 acquisition of V-One Corporation, a technology provider to the US Government, and the purchase of UK communications firm Vados in 2008.

The ultimate goal driving all of this activity was to build the firm into a more attractive proposition to buyers. In AEP's case, it got the desired result when it was acquired by the UK defence contractor Ultra Electronics in September 2011, a deal valued at up to €59 million.

THE SERIOUS SALES AND MARKETING PHASE

Now a security software investor and entrepreneur, Donnellan says the lessons learned from his AEP experience can be broadly applied. The key moment comes, he believes, when a company starts earning good revenues in markets such as the UK and US and is evaluating where to go next.

"If you want to sell in the US, I can tell you for a fact you've got to be in the US with a substantial presence. You've got to put some serious roots there," he tells *The Market*. "You've got to start re-routing your investment into building those markets. The mindshare of the CEO, as it was in my own case, switches pretty dramatically. I've now got to think of revenue, mergers,

who's going to buy me, and I spend a lot of time talking to my competition and my customers," he says.

"I think there is an inflection point, to use that awful term, as you're moving into the serious sales and marketing phase with an exit in mind. I'm not saying this works for every company but the prospect for a start-up in any country is getting to be less and less of a thing. A company that can talk about a strategy of building, of merging and creating scale whether through acquisition or merger, investing in sales and marketing is what now resonates as opposed to 'I've figured out the next great thing'. It's now a proper game."

Donnellan realises that his message won't necessarily be warmly received by everyone. But he is unequivocal about the need for a business to be present in the market it sells in and argues that a business started in Ireland can still remain a significant Irish employer even after being acquired by a foreign owner. "They have to open their minds to success of originating enterprises that will remain predominantly Irish employers," he says, adding: "What types of industry have a profile where you can have the core of your company based in Ireland – which from the standpoint of selling internationally is a bit of a tall order? It is fine to be [in Ireland] at the start-up stage but when you're moving into the heavy-duty sales and marketing phase, rattling from trade show to trade show and through product releases, briefing and meeting analysts, the name of the game is: you've got to sell your company someday."

BUILD AND GO A solid merger strategy is an essential pillar of the plan because it gives companies a size and reach they could seldom hope to reach as a standalone entity, Donnellan explains. "The whole premise with AEP was to have a broader offering that really competed against bigger competitors where we thought our technology was better but we didn't have a brand. We also had a sense that the scale and profitability were important in terms of an exit. The big guys who are acquiring have a threshold when talking about acquisition: you've got to have a certain scale before they will think about buying you. That was informing our strategy very clearly as we set about

building a global business: to have scale, be profitable, and address a number of technology niches."

Donnellan is currently working with a group of European and US investors on a strategy to merge a set of companies in the software security space "with a view to going public in the near term".

The group is looking at a number of areas where there's a strong need for security. "The new opportunities that I think are emerging – because a lot of the hills are well and truly occupied by the dominant players – are the whole area of cloud and mobility," Donnellan says. "There is the new context of bring your own device, where people coming to work are not necessarily issued with a corporate laptop or fixed terminal. They're using a smartphone or whatever mobile device they happen to have, and the question of security arises with all that. The traditional perimeters in enterprises are almost meaningless as you're bringing this myriad of devices in and out of the organisation. The issue is how you manage all that, and then there's this underpinning theme of cloud."

Another opportunity is around distilling the reams of risk-related information into report form that can be easily understood by senior executives in organisations. This falls into the broad category of governance, risk and compliance, or GRC in industry shorthand.

Donnellan says this is a significant opportunity because the traditional way to do this has involved throwing bodies at it, which is expensive for many customers at a time when IT budgets are not increasing. "The niche is to automate, to productise solutions that may already exist in consulting mode but that can be delivered in an automated form," he says.

With a nod to his background, Donnellan confirms that the group will evaluate Irish companies or a research group as part of this process. That's good news for a sector that has been growing in prominence recently; it's now estimated there are close to 50 indigenous firms addressing the broad information security market, along with a range of groups in universities carrying out research in this area.

Beyond security, it will be interesting to watch whether other Irish technology start-ups look to AEP's example as a recipe for growth.

As the country that puts the B into BRIC, Brazil is set to be a major player in the world economy for some time to come, and the EU being able to strike a deal with the Mercosur bloc could be a game changer for European business prospects in the region. In the meantime, Irish firms serious about becoming international players are taking on this market and don't see the potential receding any time soon. Gordon Smith reports.

COME TO THE CARNIVAL



It's unlikely Brazil's renowned writer and thinker Paulo Coelho dabbled much in commerce, but one of his sayings could be taken as useful advice for Irish companies looking to trade with his home country: "Be brave. Take risks. Nothing can substitute experience".

Waiting to be experienced is the world's fifth largest country and its seventh largest economy. Over the past decade and more, Brazil's economic growth has been both impressive and, most commentators agree, reasonably well managed. During that time, per capita income rose from US\$5,000 to US\$13,000 as of 2011, while the ranks of Brazil's middle class swelled by more than 20 million people.

Winning back-to-back hosting rights for the 2014 World Cup and 2016 Olympics are the signposts among many other leading indicators. Those events have fast-tracked major

construction projects, and identified Brazil as a market following a study trip after the slowdown in the local construction market. The company's main customer to date in Brazil is Construtora e Incorporadora Rossi, a billion-dollar company and a key player in the Brazilian government's 'Minha Casa Minha Vida' public housing programme.

Enterprise Ireland facilitated Mantis' introduction to Rossi, and, crucially, it was directly to the company's CEO. What's more, the backing of an Irish Government agency helped to win over an initially sceptical customer. "Out there it's different: it's all about who you know. Getting introductions at the right level is extremely, extremely important. We were fortunate that we got to know someone who knew someone who got us into Rossi, and we were fortunate that we had the contact at a high level. They're very hard to get. Personal

"It's going to be a market around for the next 10-15 years at least, and we're very positive about it."

DERMOT BEIRNE, SURETANK



ROBERT BRUTON CTO (L) AND TREVOR MC DERMOTT COO (R), MORRIGAN PARTNERS.

infrastructural projects, and the overall good health of the economy can be seen in Brazil's rapid rebound from the 2008 financial crisis.

In short, Brazil is not to be ignored by any company with ambitions for global growth, but nor is it to be taken lightly. A common experience of Irish companies already selling to Brazil is the need for time. For all the opportunity – and there's plenty of it – Brazil is a market that rewards persistence and patience. Relationships are fundamental to doing business there, and developing these takes time – as does navigating the obstacles that Brazil's protectionist economy puts in an exporter's way.

IRISH CRANE MAKER CONNECTS WITH CUSTOMERS

Donegal-based Mantis Cranes designs and manufactures self-erector cranes for

introductions are critical," says Mantis CEO Seamus McMenamín.

Following a demo programme, Mantis received an order for 11 units worth in excess of €1 million. The first shipment to Brazil left in late 2010. "We are not going to make money on this order, but we knew that from day one. But it is giving us a number of things: a presence in the market and more importantly a presence, with a very prominent, recognisable company," explains McMenamín. "We saw that, if Rossi Residential was prepared to work with Mantis and if we got their stamp of approval, it would carry weight elsewhere. It was to get that presence in the market."

Mantis has Rossi's permission to show the cranes on site to other potential buyers and recently received the company's official endorsement following an embargo. The Irish

firm is planning a PR campaign to capitalise on the opportunity.

Mantis sells via Seur, a distributor from the south of Brazil, which had previously worked with an Irish company. Seur also helped Mantis to source a PR company, as McMenamin says PR is an important part in establishing the company's name in Brazil.

REAL DEMAND

Brazil's growth presents opportunities well worth exploring, says Emanuel Carvalho, EI's manager for Latin America. "The demand is real across the sectors. This isn't Government subsidies funding things or a false level of activity," he says.

Enterprise Ireland estimates there are around 110 Irish companies actively selling to Brazil, and demand suggests a further 20 could be doing business there in some form by

management capability and knowledge start appearing," says Carvalho. Evidence of this is to be found in the 'Ciência sem Fronteiras' (Science without Borders) initiative launched by the Rousseff government in 2011 to address those same skills gaps. Ireland recently signed a deal worth €25 million to accept up to 1,500 scholarship students from Brazil to study in Irish higher education institutions.

The big challenges for Irish companies, on the other hand, are the barriers to entry. Some feel Brazil is best suited to established companies that are set up to do business in different countries, and have the means to deal with all that involves. A recurring theme among exporters to Brazil is the labyrinthian tax system and heavy regulatory burden of doing business there. Careful advance planning is essential.

"The level of tax is incredibly complex," confirms Ronan MacNioclais, tax partner with



RONAN MACNIOCLAIS, PwC



SEAMUS MC MENAMIN, CEO, MANTIS

the end of this year. EI anticipates six or seven large deals are set to be announced at the trade mission scheduled for October which is set to be a large delegation, led by President Michael D Higgins.

More broadly, Enterprise Ireland has identified several sectors where prospects seem especially good for Irish firms: engineering is a wide-ranging category that covers oil and gas, along with agricultural technology; education includes e-learning and dovetails with major government investment in this area. Software opportunities abound in the financial, travel and security sectors. Life sciences and veterinary chemicals are another growth area. Built environment, encompassing clean technologies, is also one to watch.

"The big challenges Brazil faces as it grows is managing that growth – that's where gaps in

PwC. "There are tax consequences where none would be obvious to most of us. It is more expensive to do tax compliance in Brazil than in many other countries. Some of that is because we're not used to it. It's more to do with the layers than any single feature of the tax system."

There's no escaping tariffs and duties when importing goods into Brazil, and it can add significantly to the mark-up of products when they get there. "It's very difficult to get products into the market," says Mantis Cranes CEO Seamus McMenamin. "First, the importation taxes are astronomical, you have about five or six different taxes and they differ from state to state. And they're compounded on top of each other. There are some exemptions: they have a scheme you have to go through a process on. If the product [category] is not made in Brazil, the tax is reduced from 14% to 2% and you get a

"Demand is strong, so you can usually get your price. They're not skinning you to the bone. Customer encouragement is strong – they need the service."

MICK MCCARTHY, CEO, ELECTRONIC PRODUCT SERVICES

BRAZIL – BEARISH OR BULLISH?

Brazil is the B in BRICs, the acronym which glued it together with the high-growth economies of Russia, India and China. Until recently, Brazil's boom was there for all to see: steady growth of 5 per cent in recent years, peaking in 2010 when GDP rose 7.5 per cent. Even though this fell in 2011 to 2.7 per cent, Brazil nevertheless overtook the UK to become the world's seventh largest economy thanks to record exports of \$256 billion and a trade surplus of \$29.7 billion.

This year has not seen the same story. As *The Market* went to press, the government was considering ways to stimulate the economy that slowed noticeably over the past year – partly due to the global slowdown and deliberate measures aimed at curbing inflation. Interest rates have been reduced and another of the possible options would see two of the more complex federal taxes being combined into one, although this is by no means definite.

Bearish analysts suggest Brazil's growth can't continue as before, but other market watchers point to the continued high levels of foreign investment into Brazil as a sign that in the country of 'Carnival', the party's not going to end for some time yet.

TRADE MISSION TO BRAZIL

An Irish Minister-led Trade Mission to Brazil is planned for October 8 to 11, 2012.

**For further information:
E: david.byrne@enterprise-ireland.com
T: +353 (01) 7272828**

two-year exemption – but it took three months to get that. Even with that, you're looking at close on 40 per cent, so a product that leaves here at €100 costs €140 by the time it gets there."

CUSTOMER ENCOURAGEMENT

Companies *The Market* spoke to for this article say Brazilian customers usually accept this when buying products from foreign companies, since by definition it means the products probably can't be sourced from within the country. "Demand is strong, so you can usually get your price. They're not skinning you to the bone. Customer encouragement is strong – they need the service," says Mick McCarthy, CEO of Electronic Product Services, which distributes and configures electronic components and semiconductors.

Arguably as important as tariffs is the time involved in physically moving goods into the market. Delays at customs are common and this summer, strikes by Brazilian customs officers at the country's major ports were causing further setbacks.

For services-based companies, a direct presence quickly becomes a necessity. "It's very hard to sell services from the outside. You need to be in the market there," says PwC's MacNioclais. While Irish executives found English is spoken in some business circles, Brazilian Portuguese is the language of choice. This, along with the cultural preference for trusted personal relationships, makes it essential to work with a partner or to hire a locally based business development executive.

Morrigan Partners, the Dublin-based developer of mobile security software, opted for the latter. "Like any market, you need to have local expertise. We understand the global client needs but there are always local nuances," says director Trevor McDermott.

"Particularly when you're talking on a technical basis; it's important that your client is comfortable when you're talking at that level of detail and that there is no issue over interpretation. The product has to be in the local language. We are in the process of having our materials translated into Portuguese for the Brazilian market."

Suretank, which manufactures chemical and acid transport tanks, uses a locally based consultant for business development, having first worked with that person on a market research project. "He's not employed by our company. I would advise other companies

to do the same. You don't have to register for [employee related] tax – it puts the onus for tax on the individual," says Dermot Beirne, finance director at Suretank. Another option to consider is basing a representative close to, but not in, Brazil. S3 Group has a business development person living in Florida and commuting regularly from there.

If an Irish company plans to work with an external partner or facilitator, Enterprise Ireland advises that companies should run appropriate due diligence on the individual or agency. Best practice is not to deal on an exclusive basis, and ideally work on a short-term project before settling on any longer term commitment.

THE LONG-HAUL

As with many aspects of Brazilian business, connections and personal networks count for a lot. One Irish executive reaches out to peers for recommendations. "When I meet any Irish companies that have done business in Brazil, I try to get the names of two advisors they use. People are sick of me asking. I don't do that in any other country."

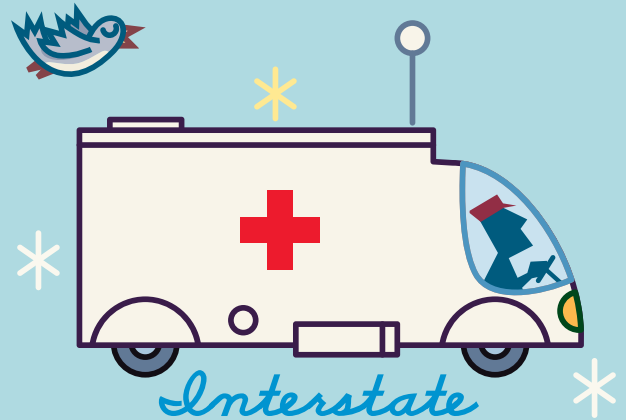
Deciding where to locate in Brazil is a further consideration: Rio may be the default destination for tourists, and Brasilia is the State capital, but when it comes to commerce São Paulo is the undisputed choice. "São Paulo is the business centre for the Brazilian market," says Morrigan's Trevor McDermott.

It's estimated that more than 60 per cent of companies doing business in Brazil choose the city – Brazil's largest and the fifth biggest in the entire continent – as their base. Irish companies might feel at home there – it's dubbed locally 'the city of drizzle'. PwC rates São Paulo as tenth in the world by GDP. It's also a significant hub for multinational investment. That's a growing feature of the Brazilian business landscape, and its levels of foreign direct investment (FDI) recently overtook Ireland's.

Echoing a common refrain, Dermot Beirne of Suretank says it takes time to build a pipeline in Brazil. For that reason, he recommends companies should take a medium-term view and not expect quick wins. "It's a slow burner, there's no instant impact, and I can't see any short cuts in it. You have to take your time to get set up and do things right. It's a big market in our area so it's going to take some time to establish itself and for us to get established into it. It's going to be a market around for the next 10-15 years at least, and we're very positive about it."

Lucille Redmond gets the elevator pitch from five new 'high-potential' Irish start-ups whose businesses are all about making life easier for exporters.

AID FOR TRADE



AtlasFX: cloud to cloud

The volcanic ash cloud that grounded flights all over the world in 2010 led to another kind of cloud. Gavin O'Donoghue, now chief information officer in AtlasFX, was delayed in New York, and headed to San Francisco to see some friends he had worked with in Hewlett Packard.

They got chatting about technology, and Mr O'Donoghue described a solution that was on the market to manage foreign exchange risk for corporate customers. We can do

this better, they figured, and they started working together on their ideas for a stronger, cloud-based SaaS solution. They opened for business in early 2011. "There's huge interest - you'd be surprised; even large companies don't have a handle on working out foreign exchange risk; ours is a unique approach," says O'Donoghue.

"Our solution automatically extracts and aggregates the exposures out of a company's ERP (enterprise resource planning) system, and creates a forecast for future periods (for both the balance sheet and income statements)," he says. "We marry the forecast with aggregated FX contract data from the company's treasury management system - to create the trades needed to mitigate the risk to the company from volatility in foreign exchange rates. And the solution provides detailed reporting and analytics on the FX program results and manages counterparty credit risk."

www.atlasca.com/fx

MeetingsBooker: meet cute

It could drive you out of your mind trying to set up a conference in a foreign country. You don't know where the hotels are, whether they're on an easy route to the airport, in a rough area, whether people can stay locally, whether the costs are fair.

MeetingsBooker managing director Ciaran Delaney worked in Bord Fáilte and Tourism Ireland, in Italy, and in Dublin as internet manager. He was well acquainted with the horrors of booking rooms and halls for meetings and conferences.

"We set up in 2008 and the website went live in 2009," he says. "We started with a couple of Dublin hotels, then took in London, Amsterdam, Paris - now we have hotels in 100 countries," he says. "If you need to book a meeting room in Madrid, Hong Kong or New York, we have the information for all those. It's a global site for booking conference rooms online - just today, we received bookings for France, Ireland, Israel, Venezuela, South Africa and Belgium. Large companies use the service - BP, Gucci and IKEA; and Rolls-Royce booked a conference for 200 people in Amsterdam.

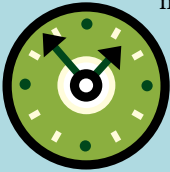
Year-on-year, the company and its revenue are growing, and it looks like the only way is up. This year, the website is being localised into French, German, Spanish, Italian and Japanese.

www.meetingsbooker.com



Sim Local: phone home

Intercontinental travellers can pay horrifying amounts if they use their US or Chinese or Australian SIM – which turns out to be a business opportunity for a creative Irish company. Sim Local’s Dublin Airport shop in the arrivals hall in Terminal 1 and in the Spar shop in Terminal 2 sells local phones for €39 upwards and SIMs for €20 up, each giving travellers €20 free credit, as well as prepaid semi-smart phones and sims that can cut data roaming costs from €30 a day to €3 a day.



“We help them through the process at the shop in Dublin Airport,” says business development director Michael Murphy, a Dublin Airport Authority veteran and entrepreneur who got together with telecoms man Killian Whelan to start the company two years ago.

Sim Local also works with language schools, universities, conference centres and hotels.com to drive business to its website, where customers can pre-buy SIMs or phones to be sent to them or collected at the airport.

Business is good, with revenues of over €600,000 by year-end 2011; Sim Local is about to put a sales unit into Shannon and Cork airports, and is negotiating with major European airports.

www.simlocal.com



Tradefacilitate: SaaS for Customs

Sending goods across borders got a lot harder after 9/11. The United States, wary of terrorism, decided that goods could no longer enter the country without US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) knowing in advance what was coming in.

Tradefacilitate’s SaaS (software as a service) helps SMEs to send their goods across the water. “Our founder and CEO Conor O’Riordan’s idea was to have a single electronic document, based on the global standard, to comply with new custom and trade rules,” says business manager John Pierce.

“We looked at what customs authorities wanted: electronic documents with data such as goods, quantity, prices, classification. We link buyer and seller through this document, and they collaborate electronically to move the goods, with the information passed to shippers, freight forwarders, and customs.”



What was started by the US has been taken up by the EU and China; soon everyone in the world who needs to export or import goods will have to use electronic forms.

Tradefacilitate started in 2007. It has offices in major access points – Athens, where the Chinese have leased ports to move their shipping containers into Europe; Portugal, where goods come in from South America; Melbourne; Shanghai, and a new office in Budapest, the overland access point for Russia and Asia.

www.tradefacilitate.com



Channel Mechanics: tech for sales

Channel Mechanics moved to Galway from Britain because of the abundance of technical people there. CEO Andy Simpson has worked a lifetime in high-tech industry – for IBM, Siemens, Cisco, Motorola – helping manufacturers to figure out how to get their products to market.

With 600,000 tech dealers around the world, ranging from shops to value-added resellers who buy others’ technology to create solutions for customers, it can be difficult for manufacturers to push out pricing and promotions.

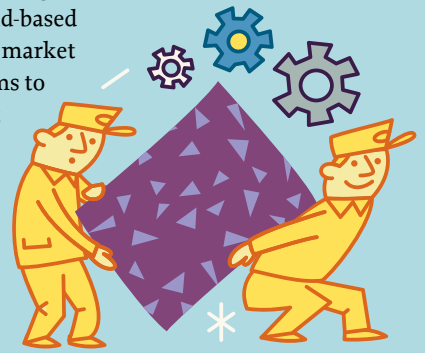
Channel Mechanics’ cloud-based technology allows vendors to market their promotions and programs to their reseller base, to segment their market by geography, technology, capability of reseller or vertical industry.

This software product sells as a service, priced according to how many services a company takes up.

“We built the software in a multi-tenant environment, so the same software is used for different companies. It’s highly configurable and can expand with demand, because it’s on the cloud,” says Simpson. “It has been built based on our strong relationship with Microsoft in Ireland, which gives confidence to our customers that the platform we have is ready to integrate to their applications and is highly secure.”

A new office opens in NUI Galway this summer, and Channel Mechanics has sales offices in Texas and Britain.

www.channelmechanics.com



SELLING TO GERMAN HOSPITALS

Following a report on the Germany reimbursement system in our last issue, **Cian Molloy** looks at the **Entscheiderfabrik** project, which aims to develop and trial new IT solutions for healthcare, and other considerations when targeting the German market with innovative healthcare technology.

At the end of the nineteenth century, Bismarck played a leading role in the unification of Germany, thus giving all Irish exporters their biggest European market. But he was also responsible for introducing statutory health insurance, which means that not only is the German health system relatively well-funded, it is more open to adopting procedures and practices that improve patient care and/or introduce new efficiencies.

UNDERSTANDING THE MARKET “Every patient walking into a German hospital effectively has money in their back-pocket,” says Seán Bay, CEO of SureWash, a developer of a hand-hygiene training and compliance system. “In Germany, every additional patient is additional revenue for the hospital. In Ireland, hospitals are given a set budget every year, and every additional patient is an additional drain on that budget. The dynamics are different, and you can see how a German hospital might be keen to innovate to attract more patients to it.”

Another notable feature of the German healthcare system is that it is not centrally controlled, says Dr Pierre-Michael Meier, vice-

chairman of Entscheiderfabrik, a collective applied-research organisation. “There are about 2,200 hospitals in Germany, and, in each hospital, the CEO is in charge of his own budget and his own purchasing. More precisely, because of a process of mergers and acquisitions and the growth in the number of ‘hospital chains’ or ‘hospital associations’, each CEO of a hospital chain is in charge of his own purchasing policies.

“When I worked in Siemens healthcare years ago, there were countries where if you did not make a sale in a particular region that was it: that region was closed to you. In Germany, if you do not make a sale in one hospital or hospital chain, you can still make a sale at the next hospital or hospital chain down the road.”

However, IT for healthcare developers should be aware of specific data protection rules. “Patient confidentiality is a very big issue here,” Dr Meier continues. “If you are having a hip operation, your orthopaedic surgeon is only permitted to access medical records relating to your hip problem. He is not allowed to access, for example, information about any psychiatric treatment you may have. However, a radiologist, by law, must be able to access your complete x-ray history.





Literally meaning the decisionmaker-factory, the Entscheiderfabrik is an annual, nine-month long, co-operative, applied research process aimed at finding the best IT solutions available for the most common, current hospital problem.

Any software that deals with patient records must accommodate these complexities.”

TARGETING THE BUYER Germany has been an important market for decades for the cardio-respiratory diagnostic device company Vitalograph, which has its manufacturing operations and marketing headquarters in Ireland. The company has 10 sales people on the road in Germany, where country manager Sascha Zagermann said: “The hospital chains, or hospital associations, have well established relationships with their suppliers. If I was a new venture entering the market with a new product, I would find a local partner, a German manufacturer or a distributor, to work with. And I would think of setting up my own sales office in Germany as a second step later on.”

Zagermann’s recommended approach is the one taken by SureWash, which has appointed Kreienbaum Neoscience as its partner in Germany. Bay said: “Enterprise Ireland helped us draw up a shortlist of potential partners and we met all the candidates at the Medica Conference in Dusseldorf last year.”

Dr Meier agrees that a local presence is a benefit, but he believes that German hospital CEOs, CIOs and heads of medicine or patient care are open to meeting with salespeople from abroad, providing the right pitch is made. “If the technology is good enough, we will buy it no matter where it comes from,” he argues. “If you have a good proposition, and you telephone a hospital CEO, or a head of purchasing or a clinical or care director, they will meet you, especially if you have a good existing reference client in Germany.”

THE ENTSCHIEDERFABRIK PROJECT But how do you find your first German reference client? One way is by participating in the Entscheiderfabrik project of which Dr Meier is vice-chairman. Literally meaning ‘the decisionmaker-factory’, the Entscheiderfabrik is an annual, nine-month long, co-operative, applied research process aimed at finding the best IT solutions available for the most common, current hospital problem, be it administrative or clinical.

“The process starts in February at a meeting of representatives of the German Association of Hospital Directors, the VKD, and the German Association for Health Informatics, the VKI, where there are presentations on the IT problems facing hospitals across Germany, and then there is a vote to choose the five most pressing problems,” said Dr

Meier. “Once the five problems that need solving have been chosen, hospitals and private companies bid to form partnerships to work together to find solutions to these problems. As well as working on the hospital site, the research parties come together in June at an Entscheiderfabrik ‘summer camp’, where progress is reviewed with consultants, there is an update on progress and work that still needs to be done and then, in November, a presentation is made about the trial at the annual Medica conference, which is Europe’s biggest medicine and healthcare event.

“For the hospitals involved, they get a solution to their problem plus a nine-month free trial of that solution. For the companies, if the solution works, they get a contract after the nine-month trial, plus an important reference client, usually a large university hospital that will have given them a valuable contract. I would say about 90% of Entscheiderfabrik trials result in a concept being widely adopted. It is not just one company that is involved in each trial; often there are smaller companies involved doing part of the work, so there are opportunities for companies of all sizes.

The Entscheiderfabrik process looks mainly at problems in informatics. For example, in 2010 it looked at providing mobile access to patient data; case management software; image management; IT benchmarking and document processing.

RAISING PROFILE Another way to raise your profile is via Germany’s myriad professional associations. In each of the 16 states, each profession has its own association, with a federal association for each profession at a national level.

But in many cases, it is not the hospital consultants who are the drivers; it is the GPs. “Patients follow their GPs advice,” says Meier. “If GPs start recommending to patients that they go to particular hospitals because they have adopted this particular course of treatment or technology, the other hospitals take note.”

And if your technology is one that creates efficiencies, the structure of the German health system is such that it may be that the health insurance companies are the best entry route, as they have a strong, albeit indirect, voice in how hospitals are run.

“Yes, the German health system is complex, but it is manageable,” Meier says. “It is a big market, but it is a market that you can take step-by-step, one hospital at a time and you can scale-up gradually. You will probably find that you need a larger sales force here than in any other country.”

During the recent trade mission to France, over 30 Irish companies with an established presence in the market gathered to brainstorm and share ideas on what it takes to fully tap into the potential of this large market. Karen Hallez reports from Paris.

LET'S TALK ABOUT FRANCE

France is the third largest export destination in the world for Enterprise Ireland client companies. But it is still a market that Irish companies have yet to fully exploit: France's economy is both larger and more diversified than the UK economy. Moreover, France is home to more Fortune 500 companies than anywhere else in Europe. In fact, only Japan and the US rank higher on this score. But exports by Enterprise Ireland client companies to France total only 15% of that figure for the UK.

Helping clarify, debate and brainstorm what it takes to succeed in this market and share war stories, over 30 Irish companies with a presence in France participated in a roundtable discussion, chaired by Markus Karlson, a journalist at France 24, during the Irish trade mission to France earlier this year.

Another big French name, participating on the panel, was Christian Sautter, Paris's deputy mayor and a former minister of finance, industry and the economy, alongside Irish companies Morgan McKinley, Bookassist and Killarney Plastics; Gillian Quinn de Schonen, President of Network Irlandie, and Gary Fallon, Manager for Enterprise Ireland, France.

One fact all the panellists agreed on is that France is a relationship-based market. The French are inherently mistrustful of short-term "Anglo-Saxon" business practice, and business can only be won in France by investing resources and cultivating close relationships with target customers over a long period of time. For SMEs,

this requires considerable resources, and shorter term gains may be available elsewhere.

French companies are also very hierarchical; purchasing decisions are firmly taken at the top. This requires careful navigation through the politics of the target customers' organisation to get face-time with the real decision makers — again, representing a considerable investment of time and resources.

Furthermore, business is almost exclusively conducted through French, meaning that at some stage in their market plan, Irish companies must invest in language resources — preferably based in-market. Panellists made reference to the fact that even simple remedies like having a French telephone number help.

However, the big upside of the market, they stressed, is that French buyers don't change suppliers lightly, so companies that win business here tend to keep it longer — a view supported by the top 20 Irish-owned exporters to the market, which between them account for 90% of the value of all indigenous exports to France.

Additionally, French SMEs tend not to export as they are penalised from growing through heavy employer taxes. Therefore, Irish companies competing here have the advantage of international experience, and the rewards are there for the taking.

ATA Tools Group has been in France for over five years, serving the aerospace, marine, automotive and steel fabrication markets. "The French market is complex due to the variety of

Irish-French trade: a blossoming relationship

- France is Ireland's fourth largest export market in the world and the third largest for exports by indigenous company (after the US and UK). France is also Ireland's second largest global market for food and drinks and first for seafood and lamb.
- In 2010, two-way trade in goods and services between Ireland and France was €14.7 billion, 2:1 in Ireland's favour. And in 2011, two-way Franco-Irish trade in goods alone was € 7.0 billion, 5:2 in Ireland's favour.
- France is the fourth ranking source in the world for tourist numbers into Ireland (approaching 400,000) and the fourth largest source of FDI into Ireland.
- In 2011, exports to France by indigenous Irish company grew by about 14% (with some sectors seeing growth of over 20%). This rate of export growth was eight times that of France's GDP growth (of +1.7%) for the year.
- Half of all Irish-owned companies exporting to France in 2011 were not trading with the country before 2006, emphasising the number of new Irish entrants to the market. Furthermore, 48 new exporters are projecting first-time exports to France in 2012.
- Fifty Irish companies with a direct presence in France employ almost 12,000 people. This is double the number of Irish companies that had a direct presence in France in 2008.

Top 10 indigenous exporters to France in 2011:

1. Kerry Ingredients
2. Kepak
3. Expod
4. Kildare Chilling
5. Irish Country Meats
6. Liffey Meats
7. Anglo-Irish Beef Processors
8. Dunbia
9. UDV
10. Irish Distillers

Top 10 non-food indigenous exporters to France in 2011:

1. Keenan
2. Icon Clinical Research
3. Nolan Transport
4. Masonite
5. Freefoam Plastics
6. Barclay Chemicals
7. Occipital
8. Combilift
9. PM Group
10. Punch Industries

For further information contact
E: karen.hallez@enterprise-ireland.com



GARY FALLON, MANAGER, FRANCE, ENTERPRISE IRELAND; MIKE STACK, MANAGING DIRECTOR, KILLARNEY PLASTICS; JEREMY CANNING, COO, MORGAN MCKINLEY; PASCAL GAUTHIER, COO, BOOKASSIST; CHRISTIAN SAUTTER, DEPUTY MAYOR OF PARIS AND FORMER MINISTER OF FINANCE, INDUSTRY AND THE ECONOMY; GILLIAN QUINN DE SCHONEN, PRESIDENT, NETWORK IRLANDE.

Who's who: the three Irish companies on the panel

Killarney Plastics is a global supplier of composite products and technology, notably water storage tanks and environmental products. The company employs 225 people and has seven trading operations across Ireland, the UK and France. Following a €2.2m investment in its environmental division (Tricel) in 2009, Killarney Plastics invested a further €1.6m in the formation of the French operation (Tricel SASU) and a manufacturing facility on an 8,600-sq-m site in the town of Naintré, employing 10.

Bookassist provides online strategic solutions, allowing hotels to drive

increased business through their websites. Over the past 12 months, Bookassist has doubled turnover, and, over the past four years, the company has more than doubled its employees, from 30 to 67. France is Bookassist's third largest market in Europe, and its French turnover is expected to grow significantly over the next 18 months, due largely to new customer acquisitions in the luxury hotel sector.

Morgan McKinley is a global professional services recruitment consultancy, with 21 offices across the UK, Europe, the Middle East and Asia-Pacific, connecting specialist

talent with employers in multiple industries and disciplines. The company decided to establish a presence in France for a number of reasons. This included France being the third largest recruitment market in the world; it having been at least 9 years since a major global search and recruitment business entered the Paris market, and the potential of the office to serve as an EMEA hub and to become a significant market and profit contributor to the group. Currently with 14 employees in France, the company is planning to increase staff numbers to 20 by the end of the year.

routes to market, its size, the hierarchy within the decision-making process and the requirement to speak French," acknowledges MD Peter Cosgrove. "Nevertheless," he adds, "France is a large country, where all industries are well developed, and once success is gained, it is there for the long-term."

Gilbert McCarthy, General Manager of Kingspan Century agrees: "For those who dedicate the time, effort and resources to understanding the market and developing their product and services for the French market, the awards are significant."

The French are inherently mistrustful of short-term "anglo-saxon" business practice, and business can only be won in France by investing resources and cultivating close relationships with target customers over a long period of time.

Irish IT-for-Travel businesses, targeting Southern Europe, gathered for a workshop and meet-the-buyer sessions in Dublin earlier this summer. Afterwards Ronan O'Connor caught up with some of the companies and local market consultants to get their take on finding a place in the sun.

WISH YOU WERE THERE?



Upcoming trade events:

No Frills takes place in Bergamo in September: www.nofrills-expo.com

TTG Incontri is in Rimini in October: www.ttgincontri.it

BuyTourismOnline: www.buytourisonline.com

Emitt (the Eastern Mediterranean International Travel & Tourism Exhibition) is on in Istanbul in January 2013.

www.emittistanbul.co

EIBTM, a global event for the meetings, incentives, events and the business travel industry, takes place in Barcelona in November, 2012: www.eibtm.com

FITUR: Spain's premier International Travel Fair takes place in January 2013: www.ifema.es/fitur_06/Informacion_general/Presentacion/index.htm

For further information on Italy and Turkey: talk to Sara Bonomi in Milan

T: +39 02 880099233,

E: sara.bonomi@enterprise-ireland.com

For further information on Spain: talk to Thomas Redmond in Madrid

T: +34 914364086,

E: thomas.redmond@enterprise-ireland.com

Southern Europe is proving to be a hotbed for growth in the tourism IT sector, and Irish companies can take advantage of this. A number of elements have come together to make this a good time for overseas expansion into tourism destinations like Spain, Portugal, Italy and Turkey. The make-up of the market and the collapse of traditional travel agents has allied with the expansion of online booking, fast internet and smart phones to drive a demand for a more sophisticated IT function in many hotels and other tourism outlets.

DIFFERENT MARKETS While all tourism markets are different, there are many hotels and small chains in Southern Europe that do not have access to large IT systems or international brand management. This has fuelled a drive for new technology from many smaller operators. What's more, although none of the major southern European tourist markets have been unaffected by the global economic downturn, all offer potential positives for software suppliers that can find the right fit for their product.

The 'Arab spring' is helping countries such as Spain and Portugal in terms of international arrivals (Spain saw a 7.6% increase in 2011), according to Francesco Canzoniere, a Spanish internet travel marketing consultant. Moreover, package holidays are seeing a resurgence from the past as a consequence of the economic downturn. And a weak euro is also benefiting (non-euro) international arrivals to the Iberian Peninsula.

Italy, Europe's second largest tourist market when ranked on hotels, has undergone a major transformation in the quality end of the hotel sector over the past five years, and although 2012 has, to date, been a disappointing year for the tourist industry there, Italy too is starting to see an increase in visitor numbers from emerging markets.

Meanwhile, Turkey, one of the few European countries still achieving strong GDP growth (8.5% in 2011) is on a significant upwards trajectory in terms of tourism numbers, having welcomed over 34 million tourists in 2011, up from just over 10 million a decade previously. According to Vedat Beyrak, owner of Delano Travel, a Turkish travel agency, the country is now fourth in world package tourism, after France, China and Spain.

When it comes to the make up of the industry itself, the market in Spain is quite consolidated, with a number of larger chains in the country. (A small chain in Spain would have 10 to 15 hotels, compared with say the Carlton group, which is

the biggest Irish hotel chain, with 10 hotels). In contrast, the industry in Italy and Turkey is much more fragmented, made up of many single site operators and small chains and consortia.

In Italy, over 93% of hotels are independent. In fact, the majority of hotels are family owned, often resulting in limited resources (financial and skills/qualification) for innovative distribution and online marketing solutions.

Proving frustrating for larger IT players, this highly fragmented market provides scope for smaller providers, although, of course, deals won in the more consolidated Spanish market tend to be of a higher value.

FINDING CUSTOMERS Vedat Beyrak advises making a trip to see the lie of the land. "Ideally you should travel over and meet with 10-15 companies. If you talk to 10 hotels about your services, it will allow you to form your own opinion on the market and its possibilities. It is important to understand where the organisations sit in the IT environment and understand their business. Then you can offer them a tailored solution."

Meanwhile, Giancarlo Carniani, event coordinator with Buy Tourism Online in Italy, is an advocate of the trade show route. (See panel for upcoming events)

Key to deciding to move into a market is the availability of real demand, says Kieran Fives, co-founder of BookAssist, an Irish company which offers online booking solutions and support: "When looking at potential markets to move into, we might have an inquiry from a couple of hotels in one city, and we'll explore that area. We looked at Rome three years ago; it is a high-value, high-volume destination. That and the fact that there are lots of individually owned and small groups of hotels made it a good fit."

LOCAL LINK Eventovate, a wedding software specialist for the hotel market, which is beginning to build momentum in Southern Europe, only has staffing in Ireland, as founder Jonathan Ruane explains: "We have employees based in Ireland, who deal with foreign markets and commute out there as needed. If you look at bigger models, Google doesn't have an office in Spain, yet it still has a big Spanish business based in Dublin. Our customers aren't unlike the core Google customer base."

However, in most cases a local approach is seen as they way to. "Cold calling from a list of contacts will just not work in this environment," Canzoniere argues. "You need someone local to get you a meeting; someone

who has a friend in a company, who is a former colleague or really understands the market.”

Beyrak says that a local partner can be an intermediate strategy, providing a bridge to the market before the company has sufficient business to justify a dedicated presence. But of course this option isn't always plain sailing.

“The option of a local partner is a nice idea to get a foothold in a country – we've done it in places,” Bookassist's Kieran Fives says. The Dublin company has partner or reseller arrangements in four countries and has opted for its own offices in six markets.

“But it is hard to make it work. It can be hit and miss, depending on the partner you choose. It's always useful to have someone that's well known in the industry, but these people have their own businesses and agendas, and it can often be very slow progress in the first two years, so it needs patience and understanding.”

PRICING AND PAYMENT TERMS One point all those who spoke to *The Market* do agree on is that price can be a major hurdle. Local knowledge is vital when it comes to pricing, and the payment structure needs to fit both parties.

Whether it is a commission-based system or SaaS (software as a service), it is essential to minimise up-front expenditure for the client and instead get them to commit to an arrangement that is reliable and tailored to grow with success, they say.

“What people are willing to spend depends on how comfortable they are with the technology to begin with. If it is something they know, they will immediately look to minimise their outlay and get a solution that works. If it is something unknown, they will seek to reduce their exposure to risk and will look to arrange a commission-based payment, so that if the solution doesn't work out, they won't have to pay for it,” comments Canzoniere.

Good to know before you go

Local consultants offer some quick-fire bullets on the nuances of their market.

Francesco Canzoniere's take on Spain:

Recession: With staff numbers in all companies having been slashed, those still lucky enough to be in a job are too busy to pencil in a meeting to just 'view a demo'.

Moving away from the operators:

Many hotels are not yet taking full advantage of the opportunities that exist in the IT sector. This is driven by the lack of necessity in the past; there was no need to look online to fill rooms, so it wasn't explored.

OTA presence: Spain is a market dominated by local OTA (online travel agency) players – such as eDreams, Rumbo, Logitravel, Atrapalo, Muchoviaje, Destinia.

Smarter and fewer: Spanish travel companies that survived the last few years emerged with two positive takeaways: they grabbed a bigger market share, and they've become smarter and leaner.

Giancarlo Carniani on Italy:

Big yet small: Italy has the second highest number of hotels in Europe (33,500, second behind Germany) and is fourth globally in terms of total number of rooms. Yet, only 5.6% hotels belong to a chain in Italy.

Troubled: 2012 has not been a great year, to date, for the industry as a whole. Resorts have seen a 20% drop in visitors on the east coast and a 10-12% drop on the west coast.

BRIC Growth: However, there is growth in visitors from the BRIC economies, particularly India, Russia and Brazil, although this increase is coming from a relatively small base number. China is expected to deliver growth, but in future years.

Talk is good: There is a constant need for contact in Italy. You will need to do a lot of work to convince people to finally sign a contract with you. It requires talk, talk, talk! It requires a lot of work but success can be had.

Vedat Beyrak talks Turkey:

Growing Reach: In recent times, there has been a huge marketing push and business growth of Turkish Airlines. The airline now connects Turkey to every point in Europe and is in expansion mode globally.

Visit: To do business in Turkey, you need to come here and understand the culture and the clients, see what they need and offer them a solution and ongoing service so that they can grow their business.

Then Stay: It is not always enough to come here and sign a couple of contracts. Turkish companies will prefer to deal with someone who has a presence and a commitment here and is contactable.

Language: As tourism is such a big industry in Turkey, English is always spoken at the corporate level. Any companies looking to buy these kinds of services will speak English, as you will be dealing with the CEO or someone in upper management.

Fast fact

Over 40 specialist Irish travel software and services companies generate €170m pa in revenues and employ close to 600 staff.



CHEAP AS CHINA?

‘Let’s get it made in China’ has become a business mantra. But the Irish contract manufacturing industry is challenging the notion that Asian-made is necessarily cheaper, particularly for volumes that fall short of true mass production. Here they tell Cian Molloy that companies should at least consider letting local manufacturers pitch for the business rather than automatically looking East.

It makes sense for some companies to concentrate on product design and marketing and to leave manufacturing to a third-party contractor. Not only does partnering with a contractor mean that you avoid the capital cost of plant and machinery and the rental costs of factory and warehouse premises, a good contractor will advise you on how to add value to your product, will help ensure good quality control and compliance with international standards and will suggest design-for-manufacture options that will further reduce production costs.

COMPETING ON PRICE

At the height of the Celtic Tiger, 10 years ago, there were more than two-dozen contract equipment manufacturers in Ireland, but with the economic downturn and the exodus to the East, there are now less than half-a-dozen ‘pure’ contract equipment manufacturers operating in the country claims David Bradshaw, CEO and MD of Beta-Electronics in Ashbourne.

Those Irish CEMs that remain in operation have done so partly by specialising in particular niche markets and partly by providing Irish firms with a service that includes prototype development. Now with wage inflation hitting China, Irish contract manufacturers are claiming that they can also compete on price, and some industry observers agree.

“The Chinese government has taken the macro-economic decision to increase the buying power of its citizens so that they will fuel the country’s economic growth,” said Bernard Hughes, a senior development advisor for the electronic sector with Enterprise Ireland. “Chinese wages have increased by 9.8% in urban areas and 12.7% in rural areas in the last year. I know of at least one Irish company that has introduced lean manufacturing techniques and is now strongly considering switching production in China back to Ireland.”

“People claim that they can get things manufactured for half the price in China, but they don’t consider the total cost of ownership,” adds Bradshaw. “In addition to paying, say, a fiver for the product, there is the shipping costs; there is at least a month’s delay while the product is being shipped to you; there is the finance cost of having to pay when you order, not when you receive the goods; there is mitigation against risk; there are the extra communication costs – and you may have to travel to China to seal the deal, and there is the

risk that instructions will get mistranslated because of language difficulties.”

EASE OF COMMUNICATION

Irish CEMs also flag their quality credentials. Julie Colclough, founder and MD of Eurobase in Waterford, argues that because land prices in China are rising, manufacturing facilities are being moved inland, to areas where there is less specialist manufacturing expertise, with the result that quality problems are becoming more prevalent.

“With us, if there is a change needed, you can pick up the phone, and we’re in the same time-zone; if you want a face-to-face meeting, that’s easy to organise,” she says. Originally founded as a logistics firm 20 years ago, her company now also offers prototype and box-build services. In recent years, Eurobase has built-up particular expertise in serving the LED lighting, medical devices and the clean-tech industries. She promises: “We can get you to medium-run production level – to the stage where it makes sense to switch to a plant that can handle true mass manufacture.”

Whatever the background, David Bradshaw recommends full openness and transparency in the relationship. “If you have spent six weeks trying to source a component for less than, say, €10 without success, let us know so we aren’t wasting our time searching in the same places that you have looked: if a component costs €200 on the open market, that is the price to us. We can’t charge €100 for something that costs €200; be realistic.

“If your business development plan is that once you reach a certain level of critical mass, you plan to switch production overseas that is fair enough, we will help you to get to that level,” he adds. “But you might want to give us an opportunity to bid for mass production and be pleasantly surprised at the deal we can offer you. Plus you don’t want to give us a nasty surprise because that will harm the relationship should you wish to come to us with prototype development and early-stage production.”

BENEFITING FROM EXPERTISE

One of the value-adds a CEM can offer is the expertise they bring to the table. Pat Hobbert is business development manager with Qualtech in Galway. “Our business model is not to make money from developing prototypes, but we want to use that development to get the opportunity to partner with you once you go to market. We provide services to a wide range of

sectors, but we’ve built up a notable speciality in medical devices that are fitted with electronic components. These aren’t really mass market products: quality, reliability and assurance that they will run error-free for many years are key factors. For those developing a medical device, your customers will get a level of comfort and confidence from knowing that you are working with us because of our reputation for quality assurance.”

Hobbert stresses the benefits for the customer of engaging early with their chosen CEM. “Many of our clients are experts in their fields, with PhD qualifications in engineering or the sciences, but they risk drifting into manufacturing with no personal knowledge of logistics or supply chain management or any experience of getting FDA or CE certification. With medical devices, for example, we have the expertise to significantly reduce your time to market.

“Putting a proof-of-concept device together in a laboratory is dramatically different to making a product fit-for-purpose that can be manufactured repeatedly and that will comply with regulatory standards,” he continues. “Frequently, clients come to us with a specification that includes components that are no longer manufactured in volume. It just so happened that they had that component in their store room when they were making their first prototype, or the specification will have a unique component that would be better replaced with a generic alternative that can be sourced, at best price, from several different suppliers.”

Another reason for leaving design for manufacture to the specialists, says Julie Colclough, is that it frees up your own management time to concentrate on other essential areas of the business such as “researching further applications for the product, building better customer relations or anything that needs attention in the early phases of the company’s growth”.

Irish CEMs aren’t naïve. They know that businesses that survive source from wherever they get the best deal – but they say that when the full business case is considered, there is no reason why that can’t be Ireland. “I reckon that there is a CEM manufacturer that will meet the needs of most Irish electronic start-ups 70 miles away from their base,” agree Bernard Hughes, “and they will do as good, or much better, than a contract manufacturer based on the other side of the world.”

“We can get you to medium-run production level – to the stage where it makes sense to switch to a plant that can handle true mass manufacture.”

JULIE COLCLOUGH
FOUNDER AND MD, EUROBASE

The IMI's approach is very much focused on the practicing manager and about making an immediate difference to the way people and businesses perform, Head of Graduate Studies, Dr Jonathan Westrup tells The Market.

PRAGMATIC, REAL-WORLD LEARNING AT IMI

At the Irish Management Institute, Dr Jonathan Westrup, Head of Graduate Studies, is proud of the Institute's practical and pragmatic approach to executive education. "Businesses are in a very different position now to where they were a few years ago. People are demanding an experience that's going to make an immediate difference to their business," he explains. "The executive education sector, with IMI at its forefront, is driving the skills needed to manage and lead in the present climate, where if you are not moving forward, you are, in effect, moving backward in the context of your competition.

"Business managers are trying to meet a very broad ask: the environment is more challenging and demanding than it's ever been, because of the economy and the rate of change in technology amongst myriad other factors. Our approach is focused on the practicing manager: it's not theory for theory's sake. It's about making a very immediate difference in the way people and businesses perform."

In addition to its suite of graduate studies programmes, the IMI offers customised programmes that are developed in partnership with businesses and are tailored to their specific needs and challenges.

The Institute's Open Enrolment portfolio of short-to-medium length programmes addresses common challenges experienced by many modern managers and leaders. This may include upskilling non-financial managers with the necessary tools to deal with financial information and/or responsibility for budgets, or assisting developing leaders to master advanced business skills through the ever popular 'Mini MBA' five-day boot camp.

Westrup's department is focused on longer form accredited programmes, where one can undertake IMI diplomas that lead to a full masters degree. His graduate studies department offers a range of IMI Diplomas, equivalent to a third of a masters degree, ranging from the IMI Diploma in Management to more specialised options such as Business Finance, Cloud Strategy and Strategy and Innovation.

These diplomas have been developed over the past decade, and in the last three years, they have been packaged together as a suite to create a Master of Business degree, delivered through a uniquely flexible model of modular day release. This gives the participant the choice of completing just one IMI Diploma in an eight-month window, progress to completing their full Master of Business

degree in as little as two years, or completing the Masters over a five-year timeframe to fit around their life and work commitments. Such flexibility is ideally suited to executives who cannot afford to lose sight of their day jobs.



A GROUP OF IMI GRADUATES CELEBRATE THEIR ACHIEVEMENT

Westrup points out that flexibility is not the only standout feature of the offering. The IMI Diploma suite, making up the Master of Business, allows the participant to gain breadth with a subject like management or to dive deep with a subject like strategic marketing or strategy HRM.

"We found that there was a desire in the marketplace for an offering that's not an MBA: our participants are looking for something different. They're experienced managers who are looking to develop specific capabilities. In an MBA, you skim across a whole range of

subjects. We offer a deeper dive. What executives want is very practical, focused information that's really going to help them the following week when they go back into their workplace."

Offering an interactive environment, the IMI has been around for six decades and has built up a wealth of experience in educating executives with the end-goal of enhancing management and leadership practice and performance.

Founded in 1952 and based at the Sandyford campus in south east Dublin, the approach rests on three pillars: mould-breaking, innovative courses; close partnership with members and an alliance with UCC, which accredits all of the Institute's Diplomas and Masters. On top of all that, the Institute's offering is informed by best global practice.

"We front-end our programmes with smart and informed people, and much of the learning comes from one's peers in the room," explains Westrup. "It's an interactive environment. It's a unique offering in the market, and it really works for people and their businesses."

With each IMI Diploma, there comes an in-depth strategy audit of a participant's business or a unit within their business. "They can apply and use the information in a very practical way. We work very closely with CEOs and senior management teams to ensure that the learning is very much applied towards the immediate challenges that businesses face," he says.

Those individuals and businesses that choose to learn at the IMI are determined to guarantee they are not left behind, Westrup says. They know they need to keep up to date: there is no other option in today's world.

BECOME A MASTER OF BUSINESS



I came to IMI intending to do only one Diploma, but I completed two Diplomas and the Business Research Project within a timeframe that worked for me. This Autumn I will be conferred with the title "Master of Business" accredited by UCC. I thoroughly enjoyed the experience and my career has taken off from there!"

Sylvia Fee
Financial Controller
O'Mahony Pike Architects



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The Master of Business and its constituent IMI Diplomas are accredited and awarded by University College Cork - National University of Ireland, Cork ("UCC") as Post Graduate Certificates (Level 9) in accordance with the National Framework of Accreditation ("NFQ"). UCC is in the process of accrediting the "IMI Diploma in Organisational Behaviour as a Post Graduate Certificate (Level 9) in accordance with the NFQ.

Lucille Redmond's reviews for this issue roam from Africa to the Cloud, via the story behind a billion dollar company and advice on how to keep your employees switched on.

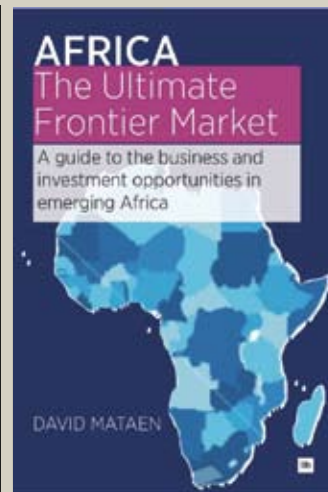
MARKETS AND METHODS

AFRICA is inchoate to many westerners, an undifferentiated group of countries. Yet this huge continent with its rocketing population, the least researched of the emerging markets, may hold rich promise for the adventurous.

David Mataen, head of corporate finance at Faida Investment Bank in Kenya, starts his guide *Africa – the Ultimate Frontier Market* with demographics: sub-Saharan Africa's population has quadrupled in 55 years; this population is predominantly young, but life expectancy, currently averaging 50 years, is stretching.

The first third of Mataen's book is a backgrounder on African history, the centre section looks at the business plans of African governments from 2000 to 2010. But read the last third first – here Mataen lays out the areas of opportunity in this young market.

Agriculture is an area of interest to Irish business people. Africa has 60 per cent of the world's uncultivated arable land, but is the continent most threatened by climate change. Yet Mataen shows that western agricultural technology has the potential to revolutionise African land use – he instances the Brazilian research company Embrapa, which crossbred the African brachiaria grass to produce a new grass,



The first third of Mataen's book is a backgrounder on African history, the centre section looks at the business plans of African governments from 2000 to 2010. But read the last third first – here Mataen lays out the areas of opportunity in this young market.

braquiarinha, which can grow 20 times the amount of feed per hectare. Raising a bull for slaughter used to take five years; with braquiarinha it takes 18 months.

A warning, however – profits

may not be easy to take from this problematic export market: Mataen rages against the EU's and US's "deliberate and systematic trade-distorting practices" and tariffs on African produce. But the yields are extraordinary: he writes that a basic-sized Kenyan greenhouse, continually harvesting tomatoes for eight months of the year, can yield up to 25,000 tonnes of tomatoes per year.

The book lists opportunities in real estate, consumer retail, financial services, transport and logistics, manufacturing and processing. In telecoms, mobile penetration increased by more than 10 times between 2000 and 2006, almost all in urban areas, and M-commerce is a growing market.

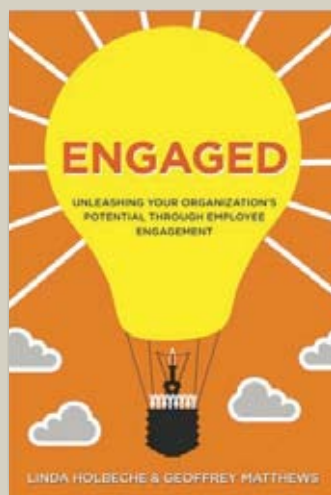
Mataen writes honestly of the factor that makes many western business people cautious of investment in his beloved continent: corruption. "With limited exceptions, the cancer of corruption in African countries completely refuses to let go, and remains by far the single most cited reason for the failure of aid to develop Africa. Political parties and their leaders strive to get to power largely in pursuit of the vast enterprises of corruption in the government-business complex."

For anyone thinking of entering the African market, this is a great basic guide to the background of the continent's possible opportunities.

Pamela Isom, IBM's chief architect in its cloud and enterprise application delivery, and Kerrie Holley, IBM's global CTO for application innovation services, are the authors of *Is Your Company Ready for Cloud?*, a book on the need for a cloud adoption strategy, with guidance on cloud investment decision-making.

How much should your company be using the cloud? Should all of your computing resources be on a server somewhere, rather than taking up space, company time and wages by living on a server in your own offices? Or should you be using limited cloud services – for instance, for skills improvement, or industry-specific processes? Isom and Holley's highly technical book lays out the advantages – and the risks – of moving to the cloud. And from their experienced viewpoint, they advise on how to mitigate these risks – by studying what the risks are first, working with companies you already know, or contractually stipulating that the other company is liable for the risk.

If you are considering using the cloud, or have started already and are considering going in deeper, this is well worth reading, with a thoughtful notebook by your side.



Why should workers be committed to the company where they work? With job security and prospects uncertain, what is the point of engaging with a company that might not be there – or that you might not be part of – in a year's time?

Increasingly in the 21st century, working people are looked on as fungible, as commodities. People who have put years of hard study into learning their craft feel angry, betrayed and insulted when they are seen as replaceable cogs in a corporate machine.

HR writers and practitioners Linda Holbeche and Geoffrey Matthews' *Engaged: Unleashing your Organisation's Potential through Employee Engagement* write of the insecurity, lack of meaning and loss of job satisfaction that lead to what they call "the growing engagement gap".

The main elements of employee engagement, they write, are intellectual – is the job stretching and interesting; emotional – does the worker care about the organisation and its stakeholders and share its values, and social – is this an organisation where the workers feel they belong, are part of a good team and are serving the community?

Engaged is an excellent source for human resources executives

and for managers generally, giving straightforward advice from experts.

But how important is it that workers be engaged with their company? More than you might think. Holbeche and Matthews quote a survey by Marks & Spencer, who asked their 80,000 staff key questions relating to engagement. The scores of the stores with the highest and lowest levels of engagement correlated strongly with their sales figures, mystery shoppers' scores and absence rates.

The world's most famous nerds were behind Pixar Animation Studios, whose *Finding Nemo*, the *Toy Story* series, *A Bug's Life*, *The Incredibles* and a host of other hits made children happy and Pixar's executives rich.

Business journalist and historian David Price's book *The Pixar Touch* is a blow-by-blow history of the company, and especially the fratricidal rows between its creative executives – people like Apple founder Steve Jobs, genius animator John Lasseter, and Disney's Jeffrey Katzenberg.

Price tracks Pixar from its start as a computer hardware company then an animation software firm whose members made unprofitable ads, through its reincarnation as Walt Disney



minion and on to billion-dollar status as Steve Jobs' story engine.

The Pixar Touch is full of surprises – it was Pixar, not Apple, that first made Steve Jobs a billionaire, Price reveals: in 1986, Jobs acquired the computer graphics division of Lucasfilm, which was then spun off as Pixar. He made his first billion when Pixar went public a week after the release of *Toy Story*. There are a few surprising insights into the writing process, too: the team watched such classics as *Thelma and Louise* and *48 Hours* for tips on buddy movies.

An earlier book by Price was on the history of the disastrous Jamestown colony settled by 500 workshy Puritans of whom 61 survived, and its infighting and treachery. *The Pixar Touch* shows the same meticulous touch and taste for arrogant, resourceful people and the successes they make from unpromising beginnings.

Africa – The Ultimate Frontier Market: A Guide to the Business and Investment Opportunities in Emerging Africa

by David Mataen, published by Harriman House

Is Your Company Ready for Cloud? Choosing the Best Cloud Adoption Strategy for Your Business

by Pamela Isom and Kerrie Holley, published by IBM Press

Engaged: Unleashing Your Organisation's Potential Through Employee Engagement

by Linda Holbeche and Geoffrey Matthews, published by Wiley

The Pixar Touch: The Making of a Company

by David Price, published by Vintage

This month Ian Campbell reviews a laptop, a camera and a radio – three pieces of kit that are continually reinventing themselves to stay relevant in the digital world.

STAY CONNECTED

Sony Vaio T13 ultrabook

€859

When it comes to working on the move, the travelling executive has more options to choose from than ever before. Tablets, netbooks and notebooks are all vying for attention, but arguably the strongest contender for their cash is a new generation of ultrabooks.

Netbooks may be smaller but sacrifice power to hit the €300 price point and are so painfully slow that they have become an endangered species. With the exception of Apple's iPad, tablets are struggling to make a mark. Designed for consumption of content rather than creation, by the time you pay for a keyboard accessory to be able to work more effectively, you might as well buy a laptop.

Sony's Vaio T13 typifies the advantages of an ultrabook, ticking all the boxes for portable computing with no compromise on specification. Weighing in at 1.6kg and measuring 226x17.8x323mm, there are sleeker and slimmer models available, but the T13 achieves a nice balance between convenience and performance at an affordable price.

Running Windows 7 with an Intel Core i3-2367M processor, you can build on the basic spec with a number of

configurations that mix and match SSD storage with a traditional hard drive that starts at 330GB. A range of connectivity options includes a faster USB 3.0 slot alongside an HDMI socket and obligatory Ethernet connection. Headphones and an SD/MMC media slot are also provided.

Three boot-up keys offer quick start shortcuts that are welcome on any portable device. The web button lets you bypass the traditional Windows start-up and get online in seconds. That said, powering up the operating system from scratch is also pretty nippy and certainly a lot faster than anything a netbook has achieved.

The magnesium and aluminium livery isn't just eye candy, giving the Sony a reassuringly robust finish despite its minimalism. A built-in web cam takes care of conferencing needs via an adequate if unexceptional 13-inch screen with

standard 1,366 x 768 resolution. An 11-inch version is also available.

With up to nine hours of battery power (depending on usage and configuration), it will see you through a busy working day, aided by a neat standby mode. Activated when you close the lid, it slips into an energy-efficient deep sleep, keeping your data stored safely for up to 30 days without running out of power.

Apple's MacBook Air defined and still dominates the ultra light laptop category. But for business people looking for a Windows equivalent, the T13 certainly does a job.





Samsung ST200F compact camera

€210

Digital camera sales have been on the decline since smartphones started to make 8 and 12 megapixel cameras part of their specification, putting pressure on camera manufacturers to come up with features and functionality to persuade us that it's worth splashing out on a separate camera. Samsung are doing a better job of it than most, probably because they are market leaders in smartphones and understand what people want to do with their pictures.

All of its 2012 smart camera line-up includes wifi as standard, making it easier to share, store and print out pictures. In the social media age, where sites like Facebook have encouraged people to take more pictures than ever before, sharing and storing have become more important than printing. More than half of the estimated 2.5 billion digital camera owners in the world share their photos online, according to the Korean manufacturer, and there are over 100,000 wifi hot spots in more than 75 countries to help them

move their pictures around.

At €210, the 200F is the entry-level product pitched at a tempting enough price point, especially when it comes with a 10x 'superzoom', one of the reasons why you might consider a standalone camera. The optical zoom delivers far better quality than the digital equivalent you will find on a smartphone which are ergonomically constrained from having a protruding lens.

Samsung is cleverly selling its cameras as part of an ecosystem of connected products. You can use wifi and a mobile link feature to connect with other Samsung devices, instantly viewing photos on a tablet or TV. The Smart Remote Viewfinder feature even lets you remotely control your camera settings and set-up shots via a Samsung smartphone.

The other selling point is picture quality, and there's no doubt that this 16 megapixel Samsung delivers bright and vivid images that its camera phone counterparts would struggle to match.

Pure Evoke Flow internet radio

€125

Here's another in a growing band of radios that pack the latest technology into a deliciously retro design that recalls the heyday of wireless, while connecting to the web.

Touch-sensitive controls and a large auto-dimming OLED display are very modern, while a classic pull-up aerial reminds you that it can go old school and FM if you have to. But the real joy is exploring free internet broadcasts over wifi, accessing every conceivable genre from every corner of the globe.

Nice features include the ability to store podcast links and stream music from PCs on your home network. Annoyingly, it doesn't take standard batteries, and the rechargeable pack costs extra – not really delivering on the portable promise that the design suggests. It only has a single mono speaker, but the sound is warm and bright. Thoroughly recommended for anyone who loves radio.

But the real joy is exploring free internet broadcasts over wifi, accessing every conceivable genre from every corner of the globe.



Compiled by Enterprise Ireland's Market Research Centre team.

MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Enterprise Ireland's Market Research Centre hosts Ireland's most comprehensive collection of business information and is staffed by specialists who can aid quick and effective searches. The team can help clients of Enterprise Ireland find information on markets, products, companies, technical standards and management.

The centre subscribes to a wide range of databases, including

- Datamonitor Profiles
- Espicom
- Frost & Sullivan
- Mintel

Here is just a sample of the types of research and reports to which the centre has access.

ICT/SOFTWARE

European Information and Communications Technology Market 2012 to 2013: Spending Growth Comes to a halt as Europe Slides into Recession

Forrester

June 2012

Based on Forrester's economic analysis for Europe, it is predicting that business and government purchases of IT goods and services will eke out barely positive growth of 0.3% in 2012. The key conclusions of this report are that weak growth or recession mean little growth in European tech spending in 2012; northern European tech markets will do a bit better than southern European and outsourcing will be the only tech-product category that will see much growth.

Global Social Media Adoption Landscape: The Social Marketing Playbook

Forrester

June 2012

The large majority of online adults in North America, Europe, urban Asia and Latin America use social media regularly. Providing an overview of the

social media market for the social marketing playbook, this report explores how people around the world use social media and is aimed at helping marketers tailor social programs to fit their audiences' habits.

Understand The True Cost Of Cloud Services Budgeting And Planning: The Cloud Computing Playbook

Forrester

June 2012

This report is aimed at helping CIOs considering an investment in cloud computing to understand when and how the cloud could help their organisations save money. Forrester applies its Relative Cost of Operations methodology to show how costs can differ depending on usage patterns and the cloud options selected. The study concludes that pay-per-use cloud services will cost less for many workloads, but only if used in the right situations. It also warns that cloud services vary in terms of their base security and resiliency features, so that even if they cost less to start, they might not be an acceptable replacement for on-site infrastructure.

Developments in Near Field Communication (Technical Insights) : Reliable short-range communication technology - moving towards ubiquitous world

Frost

June 2012

This report explores key stakeholder activities across the near field communication (NFC) value chain. It assesses innovations and trends relating to a range of stakeholders, including hardware providers, handset manufacturers, application providers, trusted service management providers and mobile network operators. In addition, the report evaluates the influence of these stakeholders in enabling adoption and growth of NFC; assesses initiatives undertaken by stakeholders to address challenges and evaluates competing technologies for mobile payments.

Mobile Financial Services - A Technology and Market Analysis

Frost

June 2012

This report explores the mobile financial services market from the standpoint of a relatively high uptake of mobile-banking (m-banking) services, the emerging adoption of m-payments and an opportunity for long-term growth in international m-remittances (mobile money transfers). Moreover, convenience and the pervasiveness of smartphones both are factors that likely will drive growth in the market.

The Global Payment Card Market: Mapping the Opportunities

Datamonitor

June 2012

This report provides an overview of the state of payment cards across 60 key markets worldwide.

Smart Card Technologies and Global Markets

BCC Research

July 2012

This study aims to determine the current status of the global smart card industry, assess its growth in recent years (2011 and 2012) and make an educated forecast for the near future (2017). Two reports are available – one focusing on North America, the other on Europe.

FOOD, REATIL AND CONSUMER PRODUCTS

Consumer Health: Trends, Developments and Prospects: Global Briefing

Euromonitor

June 2012

Consumer health is flourishing under the influence of key demographic, regulatory, public health and corporate trends, including ageing populations, widespread urbanisation in developing markets and increased consumer confidences bolstered by greater regulatory oversight. This reports contains statistical material aimed at helping companies assess markets for expansion.

Beauty & Personal Care in China

Euromonitor

May 2012

Beauty and personal care has witnessed dynamic value growth in China. Consistent economic growth during the review period pushed up disposable income levels, which, in turn, led to higher expenditure on beauty and personal care. This report is aimed at helping companies to evaluate category spend and track other companies involved in the market.

Trends and Innovations in European Convenience Retailing - Strategies for Success in the European grocery market's most dynamic sector

Datamonitor

July 2012

The changing dynamics of the grocery sector and the consumer trend towards top-up shopping provides opportunities for innovative retail strategies. In this analysis, Verdict provides guidance for c-store operators across five core strategic areas.

Trends in UK Leisure Activities 2012

Key Note

June 2012

According to projections in this report from Key Note, consumer expenditure on recreational and leisure activities in the UK will continue to increase year-on-year throughout the 5-year forecast period, rising by 15.5% from £180.97bn in 2012 to £209.07bn in 2015.

Men's Toiletries & Fragrances - Market Assessment 2012

Key Note

January 2012

In this report, Key Note is forecasting growth for both men's toiletries and fragrances over the next five years. It estimates that by 2015, the total market will reach £1.10bn, and that growth will be driven by new product developments and continued economic recovery, which is likely to boost consumer spending in the future.

CLEANTECH, LIFE SCIENCE, CONSTRUCTION AND INDUSTRIAL

Healthcare Information Technology in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Countries

Frost & Sullivan

July 2012

This study provides an in-depth analysis of parameters affecting the healthcare IT market, based on chief information officer (CIO) interviews of various leading healthcare organisations in the GCC countries. The base year is 2011, with forecasts provided up to 2018.

European Markets for Heart Valve Repair and Replacement Products

Medtech Insight Report

January 2012

This report includes an analysis of products, current and forecast markets, competitors and opportunities for suppliers of heart valve repair/replacement products targeting the European market. The healthcare markets covered include France, Germany, Italy, Spain, the UK and the Benelux countries.

LED Lighting Market Report UK 2012-2016

AMA Research

May 2012

This first edition of the UK LED Lighting Market report reviews the LED lighting market and identifies key suppliers and influences. The report assesses recent developments within the market and analyses the market and distribution channels, with indications of future trends and opportunities.

The Green Deal

AMA Research

July 2012

This report covers energy and sustainability issues and products in the construction industry. Other sectors reviewed include solar, wind power, nuclear energy, ground and air source heat pumps, insulation, waste management and timber frame housing. The research includes an analysis of market size, trends, product segmentation and supply and distribution structures, together with forecasts of possible future development and key drivers

Analysis of the US Cancer Biomarker Testing Market

Frost & Sullivan

June 2012

This research analyses the US cancer biomarker testing market from 2009 to 2017, providing an overview of the market, along with definitions, metrics, drivers and restraints. It also evaluates ongoing technology trends and major market competitors in terms of their corresponding market shares and product offerings.

Pricing and Reimbursement Strategies for Medical Devices

Business Insights

February 2012

Recent widespread austerity measures have resulted in medical device markets that are increasingly fragmented and difficult to enter without in-depth market knowledge and fluid pricing strategies. The routes to medical devices being purchased within public healthcare systems vary significantly between countries. The major markets of the US and Europe are examined in this report, along with the strategies being used by medical device manufacturers to sell and succeed within them.

The Cardiovascular Market Outlook to 2017

Business Insights

June 2012

This report covers antihypertensives, antidiabetic, and antithrombotics, which are the three leading categories of cardiovascular therapies by sales. It provides current and forecast sales of leading established brands in these categories and identifies growth brands, key drug classes and leading players through to 2017. Major pipeline products are profiled, including the estimated filing year.

Enterprise Ireland clients may obtain market research information from the Market Research Centre, free of charge, by a simple phone call or email. Alternatively, clients can visit the centre or regional offices to view publications such as those listed above. (Please make an appointment if visiting a regional office).

To set up an appointment, contact the Market Research Centre at 01 727 2324 or email: market.research@enterprise-ireland.com. Please note that access to the material summarised on this page is covered by copyright restrictions. Reports may not be loaned or sent out to client companies. Further details about the Market Research Centre are available on www.enterprise-ireland.com/en/Export-Assistance/Market-Research-Centre

An update on customs compliance, trade regulations and negotiations

TRADE REGULATIONS, INFORMATION AND NEGOTIATIONS

Information on export duties and regulation is available in the 'Export' section of Enterprise Ireland's website.

New guidance notes for Authorised Economic Operators (AEOs)

Authorised Economic Operator (AEO) is a status that facilitates passage through customs in the EU, granted to organisations and businesses meeting specific criteria on customs compliance, appropriate record-keeping, financial solvency and, where relevant, appropriate security and safety standards. Economic operators can apply for AEO status either to gain easier access to customs simplification or to be in a more favourable position to comply with the new security requirements.

The European Commission recently published new AEO Guidelines to reflect experience gained and to ensure harmonised implementation of the rules throughout the EU.

The Commission has also published an information note to explain the matching procedure between EORI and MID numbers, following the agreement this May on mutual recognition of the Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (C-TPAT) programme in the United States and the Authorised Economic

Operator (AEO) programme of the European Union.

See http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/resources/documents/customs/policy_issues/customs_security/infonote_aeo-ctpat.pdf

Commission to open negotiations for a Free Trade Agreement with Japan

This July, the European Commission submitted a proposal to Member States to start negotiations with Japan on a bilateral Free Trade Agreement (FTA). Priority in the negotiations will be the elimination of non-tariff barriers to trade on the Japanese market, as well as access to Japan's public procurement market.

The negotiating directives foresee that Japanese non-tariff barriers would have to be eliminated in parallel with any tariff reductions on the EU side, and that the European Commission should suspend negotiations if progress on the non-tariff barriers and railway and urban transport roadmaps does not materialise within one year from the start of the negotiations.

Japan is the EU's second biggest trading partner in Asia, after China, and together with the EU, accounts for more than a third of world GDP. The Commission says that a trade deal with Japan could boost the EU's economy by 0.8%, and EU exports to Japan could increase by 32.7%, while Japanese exports to the EU would increase by 23.5%.

EU signs Association Agreement with Central America nations

This July, the EU signed an association agreement with Central America (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama), which contains what the European Commission describes as an ambitious trade component, as well as chapters on political dialogue and cooperation. According to the Commission, European exporters will save around €90 million on customs charges per year, and European service providers, in areas such as telecoms and transport, will gain greater market access.

EU signs Trade Agreement with Colombia and Peru

On June 26, the EU signed a trade agreement with Peru and Colombia, which, the European Commission estimates, will ultimately relieve EU exporters of €270 million in duties annually.

Once fully implemented, the agreement should eliminate tariffs in all industrial and fisheries products, increase market access for agricultural products, improve access to public procurement, services and investment markets, further reduce technical barriers to trade and establish common disciplines including on intellectual property rights, transparency and competition.

The proposed deal also includes measures on the

protection of human rights and the rule of law as well as commitments to effectively implement international conventions on labour rights and environmental protection. The agreement still needs to be ratified by the European Parliament, national parliaments and Columbia and Peru.

The provisions related to the free trade area will enter into force at the end of this year, while the agreement as a whole will enter into force as soon as it is ratified by all parties.

EU news on VAT

The European Commission is to establish an EU VAT Forum to enable business representatives and tax officials to share their experience, with a view to improving the way EU VAT system works in practice, in particular by reducing administrative burdens.

The latest VAT rates applicable in the EU Member States as at July 1, 2012, are available at http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/taxation/vat/how_vat_works/rates/index_en.htm

Submissions sought on EU-US trade and economic relations

The EU has launched a public consultation to gather detailed views relating to the future trade and economic relationship between the European Union and the United States. Stakeholders are invited to submit their contributions by 27 September 2012. <http://ec.europa.eu/yourvoice/ipm/forms/dispatch?form=ustradefinal3>



New African low-cost airline to take off in October

FastJet, Africa's new low-cost carrier, backed by easyJet founder Stelios Haji-Ioannou and the pan-African investment group Lonrho, has announced that it will launch its first services by October. Lonrho's exiting Fly540 carrier is to be rebranded as FastJet, and the new airline will offer services in Ghana, Kenya, Tanzania and Angola – four countries seeing an increase in living standards on the back of high oil and gas prices.

C'est Combien?!

Paris is the most expensive city in the world to order a Club Sandwich, according to data released by Hotels.com. The hotel booking site has developed the Club Sandwich Index (CSI) to rank the cost of the classic chicken, bacon, egg, lettuce and mayo sandwich in hotels around the world. In the fun piece of research, the CSI average price was calculated by taking the real prices paid by guests for a Club Sandwich in 30 hotels in the capital and major city of each country measured. In total, Hotels.com surveyed Club Sandwich prices in 750 hotels in the five, four and three star category across 26 countries.

In the French capital, the CSI showed prices ranged from an extraordinary £33.44 for a 'Club' in a five-star hotel to a more reasonable £13.72 in a two star establishment, with the Paris average cost of Le Club coming in at £20.43.

Dublin came in twentieth at a more reasonable £9.61, while Delhi was the cheapest of 26 cities, with a hotel Club costing an average of just £5.91.



Bike it around the apple

New York is the latest city to get its own self-service bike-share scheme, launched this summer.

Privately sponsored by Citi and MasterCard, with no public funding, 10,000 Citi Bikes are available at 600 docking stations located around Manhattan, Brooklyn and Queens. See <http://citibikenyc.com/>



Average Club Sandwich Price (£)

1. Paris £20.43
2. Geneva £20.10
3. Oslo £18.83
4. Tokyo £17.07
5. Rome £14.95
6. Helsinki £13.99
7. Stockholm £13.67
8. Canberra £12.20
9. Copenhagen £11.65
10. London £11.55
11. Hong Kong £11.33
12. Seoul £11.15
13. Berlin £10.97
14. Brasilia £10.97
15. New York £10.45
16. Amsterdam £10.27
17. Moscow £10.11
18. Madrid £10.00
19. Toronto £9.91
20. Dublin £9.61
21. Singapore £9.13
22. Beijing £8.94
23. Bogota £8.70
24. Buenos Aires £6.61
25. Mexico City £6.29
26. New Delhi £5.91

In brief

Aer Lingus Regional, operated by Aer Arann, has launched a once daily service from Ireland West Airport Knock to Birmingham in the UK.

Aer Lingus is to switch operations from Belfast International Airport to George Best Belfast City Airport this autumn. The winter schedule will include three flights daily to London Heathrow and London Gatwick.

In early 2013, the airline is to also move its New York operations from Terminal 4 at John F. Kennedy International to JetBlue's Terminal 5 at JFK. According to the company, the move to Terminal 5 will reduce the minimum connection time from European arrivals to US departures to just 60 minutes.

In partnership with The Travel Gateway, Stena has launched an addition to its online booking system, enabling customers to book over 1,000 additional ferry routes across Europe and beyond. See www.steneline.com

Air Canada completed the first ever transatlantic flight powered by biofuel this July. The flight from Montreal to London, which carried a number of Canadian athletes to the 2012 Games, was on an A330 Airbus, powered by a 50:50 mix of regular jet fuel and biofuel derived from recycled cooking oil.

FROM THE AIRPORT TO THE CITY:

Antwerp's airport caters for CityJet flights to/from London and Manchester and is just 15mins from the city centre. By train, Antwerp is 35mins from Brussels (€7 one-way) and 1hr from Amsterdam by high speed rail (from €50).

SLEEP:

1st Choice: In the art nouveau district of Antwerp city, the Sir Plantin Hotel offers distinctive rooms, decorated using classical art pieces in a modern context. Offering free internet and minibar, this is a great hotel for those who love vivid and contemporary styling. www.sirplantin-antwerp.com

2nd Choice: Located in the centre of the shopping district, a 17th century restored house makes up the modern, yet private, 10-roomed De Witte Lelie Hotel, which is a pit-stop for out-of-town designers visiting this fashion city. www.dewittellelie.be

EAT:

Lunch: Located in the Jewish quarter, the biological kitchen at Cullinan will serve you up seasonal offerings by an experienced macrobiotic chef. Here, the food is not just decoration but aims to feed the soul. www.restaurantcullinan.be

Dinner: If you like quality in a relaxed atmosphere, try Huis de Colvenier for an open-kitchen restaurant, offering three-, five- or seven-course dinners, cooked up by chef Patrick Van Herck and washed down with wine from cellars, dating back to 1897 and housing more than 20,000 bottles. www.colvenier.be

CITY GUIDE**ANTWERP**

By Eva McLaughlin

The city's name, Hand-Werpen, derives from a myth about the giant 'Antigoon', who cut off the hands of anyone who refused his crossing toll and threw them in the river Scheldt.

Today's Antwerp is an altogether more civilised place, having developed over the past four centuries to become a trading hub and glistening diamond capital, with over €7.8bn worth of the polished gems exported annually. In addition, the city boasts the world's highest concentration of chemical industries, due to its location as a natural harbour – Europe's second largest – and is regarded as an important economic centre in the BeNeLux region.

Antwerp also stacks high on artistic credentials, as home to Rubens for much of his life, and having had a strong influence on many other seventeenth century Baroque painters. More recently, the city gave birth to the Antwerp Six – six influential fashion designers, schooled by designer Linda Loppa at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in the early 1980s, who are credited with putting Antwerp on the international fashion map.

Other attractions for the visitor include around 2,500 bars, where one can enjoy the locals' favourite beer, Bolleke De Koninck, in between sampling the wares of the city's chocolatiers and designers. Use the 'ThisIsAntwerp' app to track-down unique finds.

THREE THINGS TO DO IF YOU HAVE A FEW HOURS TO SPARE:

Leisure: To see Antwerp from below, take a walk through The Underworld. The tunnels are steeped in history, having been originally dug out as forts to guard the city, and today serve as its sewers. Dressed in protective pants and with books, jacket and torch, you will see Antwerp as never before. Tel:+32 (0)3 232 01 03.

Shopping: Antwerp is the fashion capital of Belgium, and its main shopping street, the Meir, offers all the usual high-street brands. But turn onto the Nationalestraat, and you will be enticed into 'Designer Central,' a small collection of stores, fronted by the Antwerp Six (including Dries Van Noten and Ann Demeulemeester).

Art: Housed in a 700-year-old building, once a courtyard and chapel, the De Zwarte Panter museum of historic art includes works both hanging and standing. Here you can enjoy paintings by Sam Dillemans and Pjeroo Roobjee, while taking a break from the busy city centre, just outside. www.dezwartepanter.com

Eva McLaughlin is a market researcher at Enterprise Ireland's Amsterdam office. E: eva.mclaughlin@enterpriseireland.com

[More recently, the city gave birth to the Antwerp Six – six influential fashion designers, schooled by designer Linda Loppa at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in the early 1980s, who are credited with putting Antwerp on the international fashion map.](#)

Enterprise Ireland International Network

Head Office

REGION/OFFICE	TELEPHONE	FACSIMILE	ADDRESS
Dublin	+(353 1) 727 2000	–	The Plaza, Eastpoint Business Park, Dublin 3, Ireland

Northern Europe

Amsterdam	+(31 20) 676 3141	+(31 20) 671 6895	World Trade Center, Strawinskylaan 1351, 1077 XX Amsterdam, Netherlands
Brussels	+(32 2) 673 9866	+(32 2) 672 1066	Park View, Chaussée d'Etterbeek, 180 Etterbeeksesteenweg, Bruxelles 1040, Brussel, Belgium
London	+(44 20) 7438 8700	+(44 20) 7438 8749	2nd Floor, Shaftesbury House, 151 Shaftesbury Avenue, London WC2H 8AL, England
Paris	+(33 1) 5343 1200	+(33 1) 4742 8476	33 rue de Miromesnil, 75008 Paris, France
Stockholm	+(46 8) 459 21 60	+(46 8) 661 75 95	Box 5737, Sibyllégatan 49, 114 87 Stockholm, Sweden

Germany, Central and Eastern Europe and the Balkans

Budapest	+(36 1) 301 4950	+(36 1) 301 4955	Bank Centre, Szabadság tér 7, Budapest 1054, Hungary
Düsseldorf	+(49 211) 470 590	+(49 211) 470 5932	Derendorfer Allee 6, 40476 Düsseldorf, Germany
Moscow	+(7495) 937 5943	+(7495) 680 5362	c/o Commercial Section, Embassy of Ireland, Grokholski Pereulok 5, Moscow, Russia
Prague	+(420) 257 199 621	+(420) 257 532 224	Trziste 13, 118 00 Prague 1, Czech Republic
Warsaw	+(48 22) 583 1200	+(48 22) 646 5015	Ulica Mysia 5, 00-496 Warsaw, Poland

Southern Europe, Middle East and Africa

Dubai	+(971 4) 329 8384	+(971 4) 329 8372	4th Floor, Number One Sheikh Zayed Road, PO Box 115425 Dubai, United Arab Emirates
Johannesburg	+(27) 100030218	+(27) 117834383	82 Maude Street, Sandton, 2196 Johannesburg, South Africa
Madrid	+(34 91) 436 4086	+(34 91) 435 6603	Casa de Irlanda, Paseo de la Castellana 46 – 3, 28046 Madrid, Spain
Milan	+(39 02) 8800991	+(39 02) 8690243	Via S. Maria Segreta 6, 20123 Milan, Italy
Riyadh	+(966 1) 488 1383	+(966 1) 488 1094	c/o Embassy of Ireland, PO Box 94349, Riyadh 11693, Saudi Arabia

The Americas

Boston	+(1 617) 292 3001	+(1 617) 292 3002	535 Boylston St, 5th Floor, Boston, 02116 MA, USA
New York	+(1 212) 371 3600	+(1 212) 371 6398	Ireland House, 345 Park Avenue, 17th Floor, New York, NY 10154-0037, USA
São Paulo	+(55 11) 3355 4800	–	Rua Haddock Lobo, 1421 – Conj 51, Cerqueira César, São Paulo, 01414-003, SP, Brazil
Silicon Valley	+(650) 294 4081	–	800W, El Camino Real, Suite 420, Mountain View, CA 94040, USA
Toronto	+(1 416) 934 5033	+(1 416) 928 6681	2 Bloor Street W, Suite 1501, Toronto, Ontario, M4W 3E2, Canada

Asia-Pacific

Beijing	+(86 10) 8448 8080	+(86 10) 8448 4282	Commercial Section, Embassy of Ireland, C612A Office Building, Beijing Lufthansa Ctr., No. 50 Liangmaqiao Road, Chaoyang District, Beijing 100125, China
Hong Kong	+(852) 2845 1118	+(852) 2845 9240	Room 504 (5/F), Tower 2 Lippo Centre, 89 Queensway, Admiralty, Hong Kong
New Delhi	+(91 11) 424 03 178	+(91 11) 424 03 177	Commercial Section, Embassy of Ireland, 230 Jor Bagh, New Delhi 110 003, India
Seoul	+(82 2) 755 4767	+(82 2) 757 3969	Ireland House, 13th Floor Leema B/D, 146-1 Susong-Dong, Jongro-Ku, Seoul 110-755, Korea
Shanghai	+(86 21) 6279 7088	+(86 21) 6279 7066	Commercial Section, Consulate General of Ireland, Suite 700A, Shanghai Centre, 1376 Najing Road West, Shanghai 200040, China
Singapore	+(65) 6733 2180	+(65) 6733 0291	Ireland House, 541 Orchard Road #08-00, Liat Towers, Singapore 238881
Sydney	+(61 2) 927 38514	+(61 2) 926 49589	Level 26, 1 Market Street, Sydney 2000, NSW, Australia
Tokyo	+(81 3) 3263 0611	+(81 3) 3263 0614	Ireland House, 2-10-7 Kojimachi, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo, 102-0083, Japan

For any other markets not mentioned, contact Market Development Dublin.

For further contact information, visit www.enterprise-ireland.com/contact



**With 3,000
delegates,
they don't
have to
do it on
their own**

**Professor Fergal O'Brien
and Dr. Daniel Kelly**

World Congress
of Biomechanics 2018



Professor Fergal O'Brien and Dr. Daniel Kelly plan to bring the prominent World Congress of Biomechanics to Ireland in 2018.

It will mean 3,000 international delegates and a lot of work but they don't have to do it alone. Fáilte Ireland are here to support them and offer the best advice to ensure their bid is a success.

With our financial assistance, Fergal and Daniel hope to secure this congress which could mean a possible €4.2 million to our economy while advancing Ireland's profile in the global biomechanics industry. Smart thinking all round.



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