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Curtains up on Russian trade mission, plus targeting China’s soaring aviation market

A FRACKING OPPORTUNITY
Bringing cleantech and wireless to North America’s fracking scene

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What the Irish built and what next in London and Poland

HAIRY BABY GROWS BIG
Targeting the new diaspora, who want to wear the t-shirt

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LEARNING TO LOVE THE PAPERWORK

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Two new overseas ‘business ambassadors’ to promote Ireland

Enterprise Ireland has announced the appointment of Liam Casey as its Start-up Ambassador for the Greater China region. Last year, Enterprise Ireland launched a dedicated €10m International Start-Up Fund to target investor ready overseas entrepreneurs to start their business in Ireland. The fund is open to company promoters anywhere in the world, but is targeted particularly at the Irish Diaspora, international expatriates, the ‘New Diaspora’ (people from overseas who have previously worked or studied in Ireland), as well as serial and mobile entrepreneurs.

Founder and CEO of PCH International, Casey is one of Ireland’s most successful entrepreneurs in China. He has 17 years experience in the region and will work ly with Enterprise-Ireland to highlight Ireland and what it has to offer for technology start-ups.

Separately, Education in Ireland announced the appointment of leading Irish cricketer Kevin O’Brien to help promote Ireland as a destination for world class education to young Indian students. Enterprise Ireland manages ‘Education in Ireland’ – the umbrella brand under which Irish higher education and English language schools are promoted overseas. Kevin will work closely with Education in Ireland to promote Ireland as a destination of world class education to Indian students through one-to-one meetings with students at Education Fairs, participation at Trusted Agents’ Workshops and Press briefings.

New Enterprise Ireland division to help companies ‘Get Export Ready’

A new division has been established within Enterprise Ireland to identify more domestically trading Irish companies with the potential to sell overseas and to provide focussed, targeted supports to these companies. The initial target is to provide support for some 1,800 first-time or low-volume exporting companies in 2012.

The ‘Potential Exporters’ division is backed by a ‘Get Export Ready’ programme of supports, aimed specifically at pre-export and early-stage exporting firms. These include workshops, seminars and training across the country; mentoring and advocate support; access to market information; a new website with ‘how to’ guides, links to relevant information, self-assessment tools and templates, a new helpdesk; access to advice from successful exporting companies and access to a range of Enterprise Ireland financial supports.

The Get Export Ready website, which contains many advice articles and case studies from The Market magazine, can be accessed at www.enterprise-ireland.com/getexportready

Want to Excel at Export Selling?

The Excel at Export Selling workshop series, which aimed at rapidly embedding the proven tools of best international selling practice into Irish companies, is ramping up over the coming weeks. Workshop topics scheduled for June include developing a compelling value proposition, market intelligence and partnering. For further information, see our Events guide on page 10 or visit http://tinyurl.com/ca72m6r

25 Irish companies in Turkey for Trade mission

Twenty-five Irish companies travelled to Turkey for a recent trade mission, co-ordinated by Enterprise Ireland. During the visit, ESB International announced the opening of an office in Ankara. Kells Stainless announced a new strategic alliance with Umde, one of Turkey’s leading stainless steel fabricators, to jointly target the €10bn Turkish pharma industry. And the mobile marketing company, Brandtone, used the occasion to launch its promotional campaign for Cif – the Unilever household cleaner range – as well as officially opening its new office in Istanbul.

Trillions required to fund global infrastructure investment, says OECD

Construction may be at a standstill in Ireland. But a new Report from the OECD, ‘Strategic Transport Infrastructure Needs to 2030’, predicts that globally air passenger traffic could double, air freight could triple, and port handling of maritime containers worldwide could quadruple by 2030, while most of the current gateway and corridor infrastructure could not handle even a 50% increase in demand.

The OECD estimates US$53 trillion of investment, equivalent to an annual 2.5% of global GDP, will be needed to meet demand over the coming decades. Over US$11 trillion of that will be required for ports, airports and key rail routes alone.

Some countries have begun linking strategic infrastructure planning to long-term infrastructure funds, as is the case in Canada, Denmark, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. But other countries, including Australia, India and the United States, should improve financing mechanisms to ensure funding is consistent with strategic infrastructure needs, says the report.
Irish firms need to hire Chinese-speaking staff if they’re to realise ambitions for China. Dou Ming, a principal at Beijing Orient Dairy, China’s leading agribusiness advisory, told a Bord Bia briefing in Beijing that the market is “already aware of the quality of Irish agriculture but a lack of Chinese-speaking staff makes it very hard for Chinese buyers to communicate with Irish companies.”

Dou was speaking during a mid-April trade mission to China led by Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Simon Coveney. A highlight of the trip was the announcement of a model Irish farm for China’s agricultural north.

Head of Enterprise Ireland’s Beijing office, Alan Buckley, confirmed that University College Dublin (UCD) will set up a farm in Inner Mongolia, with local milk firm Dairy United. The farm, which will be built from August this year, will provide Irish research, advice and technical assistance to improve Chinese dairy yields and hygiene standards.

**AGRI-FOOD**

Irish agri-themed companies announcing deals during the trade mission included Samco Agricultural Manufacturing Ltd, which will distribute its corn silage system through Pioneer, the seed operation of US conglomerate DuPont, and its Chinese joint-venture partner Dunhuang Seed Pioneer Hi-Bred Co. Limerick-based Samco has developed a machine that lays a thin layer of biodegradable plastic film over the soil at the time of sowing, which increases soil and air temperature allowing seeds to germinate faster.

Another Irish agri-equipment firm, export-oriented Keenan will also soon announce a distribution deal in China, according to Buckley. Keenan, he explained, is hoping to announce a deal to distribute its unique cattle feeding systems to Chinese dairy farms, which are struggling to raise productivity.

One of the more ambitious stories to emerge was the announcement of an Irish partnership in a US$2 billion ‘Horse City’ equestrian project in the east coast city of Tianjin. However, at the time of going to press, building work had yet to commence on the project, which, when it was first announced in 2010, was due to be largely completed this year.

On more grounded footing, Irish animal feed company Connolly’s Red Mills secured a rare licence to import horse feed into mainland China, concluding a registration process that began in 2007 for the Kilkenny-based firm, which also exports to Japan’s lucrative racing scene. Connolly’s managing director Joe Connolly said, given that betting on racing is still not allowed in China, it’s very difficult to estimate the value of this business, “but the potential for Red Mills as a first mover could be very significant.”

Then there was the launch of a UHT Kerrygold milk brand ‘Avonol’ – a whey protein concentrate powder from Glanbia Ingredients Ireland. Glanbia currently supplies 9,000 tonnes of dairy and ingredients to China from a trading base in Shanghai and a plant in Suzhou. Likewise dairy co-op Dairygold supplies bulk milk products to China’s second largest dairy processor, Yili (which also ranks among the world’s top 10 in output terms).

**OTHER SECTORS**

The March visit by the Taoiseach and Minister Richard Bruton saw Irish firms announce €35 million worth of business. One of the major plans launched was the €25 million investment announced by the Saon Group to expand its China headcount and office network.

The mission also featured a visit to Parkview Green, a green-themed luxury Beijing real-estate project, which uses Irish firm Cylon’s building energy management system to monitor and control energy usage.

Alan Buckley says the profile and the networking opportunities offered by high-profile political visits and business breakfasts allowed Irish firms to raise their profile with clients. Obviously much will depend on follow-up and resourcing of Chinese-speaking staff and a presence in the world’s number two economy.

He points with optimism to a new Shanghai office opened by Waterford Institute of Technology, a new presence in Beijing for Galway-based Biomedical Research (BMR) and the sales potential of mobile applications specialist Easytop, which counts the leading mobile operator China Unicom among its clients.
Three-year strategy catapults Irish company onto the international stage

Three years is how long it has taken the web content management software firm TerminalFour to pivot from being a domestically focused business to one where international sales are driving growth. Exports accounted for 91 per cent of new revenue in 2011, and, last year, the company won more than €3.6 million worth of new business in emerging markets.

Ironically, competition in the Irish market helped the company to raise its game for international competition, says CEO Piero Tintori. “We found there were loads of companies in the content management space in Ireland and that pushed us to build a really good product,” he says.

The Dublin software house has customers across five continents and created 15 new jobs, adding to its senior management team and bringing total employment to 70 people.

Explaining the strategy, Tintori says: “We use the higher education market as a beachhead and then we expand into other markets.” Site Manager runs more than 1,800 university websites, which TerminalFour claims is more than any other commercial web CMS vendor.

The company also sells to various government agencies worldwide – a diverse group ranging from UK councils to organisations like the UN and OECD. It is also continuing to grow in the UK and Canada.

Financial services is another growth sector. TerminalFour has signed a deal with IBM, which has increased its presence in a market where many companies are using IBM technology elsewhere.

Super security-conscious clients generate growth and jobs for Morrigan Partners

A company called Morrigan Partners might suggest a mid-sized law firm but the name refers to a Celtic goddess, not a solicitor, and its only connection to the law comes from its customers.

The Dublin-based company specialises in security for mobile devices like smartphones. Its patented technology encrypts communications, be it voicemail, calls or text messages – even photos taken with a smartphone.

For confidentiality reasons, Morrigan does not publicly name its customers, as they come from security-conscious sectors like international security forces, police forces, government agencies, high-level financial services firms, telecoms networks and the corporate sector.

“Some of our clients are the largest financial institutions in the world,” says founding director Trevor McDermott. Customers like these put a high value on being able to protect sensitive data and prevent it from being intercepted – even when it is sent by speech over a mobile phone connection.

Entering new markets will continue to be a focus in 2012, and TerminalFour recently won its first customers in South Africa and Hong Kong as well as opening its first office in Sydney. “In everything we do, we’re thinking international first,” says Tintori.

With operations now in Dublin, Boston, London and Sydney, the company operates a follow-the-sun customer support service, whether on the West Coast of the USA or Australia.

[David Miller, COO and Piero Tintori, CEO of TerminalFour with Paul Browne, Senior Development Advisor, and Jim Cuddy, Manager with Enterprise Ireland’s Software Division.

“Three-year strategy catapults Irish company onto the international stage

We found there were loads of companies in the content management space in Ireland and that pushed us to build a really good product.”

Gordon Smith]

McDermott says criminals are increasingly looking to eavesdrop on phone calls over VoIP or Wi-Fi networks as a way to steal valuable information, and the equipment needed to do so is easily available at low cost.

“When we started, there wasn’t recognition of the risks to voice communication. You presume security and integrity of that data is a given, but it’s not,” says McDermott.

Though founded in 2008, Morrigan is no ingénue start-up. Backed by the private equity group Cardinal Capital, the team spent the first two and a half years developing its technology, so the company has only been in sales mode for just over 18 months.

The company is now active in several markets including the UK, the US, Indonesia, Brazil and Mexico. It does not disclose revenues but says business is growing.

Last October, Morrigan was invited to present to internal delegates at the Department of Homeland Security Federal Cyber Security conference in Baltimore. Its presentation, “Smart Phones, Dumb Security”, was positively received and has sparked interesting conversations with potential customers, says McDermott.

The 15-strong company is in the process of raising investment and plans to create 25 new jobs over the next 12 months.

[David Miller, COO and Piero Tintori, CEO of TerminalFour with Paul Browne, Senior Development Advisor, and Jim Cuddy, Manager with Enterprise Ireland’s Software Division.

“We found there were loads of companies in the content management space in Ireland and that pushed us to build a really good product.”

Gordon Smith]
Dublin firms put knowledge in the hands of executives worldwide

If knowledge really is power, then there’s a business in putting information in the hands of people who need it. That’s the approach of Research & Markets, an online-only seller of business products like market research reports, industry newsletters, e-learning products, directories and webinars to a customer base that now spans most of the globe.

The Dublin company has agreements with 1,500 of the leading publishers and information providers, ranging from well-known names like the Economist Intelligence Unit, Reuters and Mintel, to niche research houses that produce far fewer titles per year. Its website, www.researchandmarkets.com, currently has 1.5 million titles for sale.

“We’ve had sales in close to two hundred countries, so it’s a fairly global business. When we first began the business ten years ago, we put a map of the World up in the office and we put a pin in each new country where we had a sale; we’ve covered a fair portion of it now,” CEO Ross Glover tells The Market.

While most revenues come from the US and Europe, Glover reports a significant rise in the percentage of business coming from the BRIC countries and from Asia. Less than five per cent of business is generated within Ireland.

The company considered opening offices abroad but decided it could serve publisher partners and clients better by having a central hub in Dublin. It now offers twenty-four-hour customer support and Glover says it would be hard to replicate the same levels of service elsewhere.

Revenues have increased in recent years, but Glover candidly describes the growth as “unspectacular”. Nevertheless, he forecasts low double-digit growth for 2012. “Our focus is on sustainable growth and we have invested heavily to make sure the business is in a position to continue to grow in the coming years,” he says.

[Gordon Smith]

From nuns to miners, Zartis web portal offers new take on situations vacant

The online referral programme Zartis.com could save you tens of thousands of euro on your recruitment costs by allowing you to harness the power of social media and your existing employees’ connectivity.

Developed by a team led by John Dennehy, CEO of AssemblyPoint, Zartis is now being offered across the globe in 11 languages and has users ranging from an order of nuns in California to a mining company in Brazil. “There is a free first-go facility,” says Dennehy. “After that you pay for a monthly or an annual subscription. Of those who sign up for the paid service, most are IT companies, typically with between 25 and 5,000 staff members.

“These companies are crying out for staff, but they find it really hard to reach passive candidates, those who aren’t actively looking for a job. You pay a recruitment consultancy a fee equivalent to 15% of salary to find someone, but the day he walks into the office, he says hello to five of his friends and acquaintances. If you had got just one of the staff members to refer the new hire, you wouldn’t have needed to pay the recruitment consultancy.

Zartis provides customers with a web portal specific to a particular job vacancy, allowing for easy in-house management of the recruitment process with a candidate tracking system (CTS), plus the ability to post news of the vacancy via social media such as Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn. The basic Zartis employee referral programme annual subscription will allow you to advertise 20 different vacancies for $960 plus whatever reward you pay those employees who make successful referrals.

In Caeser’s time, Roman soldiers were awarded half a year’s salary if their referral resulted in a new recruit for the imperial army, in Zartis’s own corporate example the reward is $1,000 plus a weekend away at a posh hotel – it’s a nice reward, but one that costs less than the €3,000 you would expect to pay a recruitment consultancy for a techie straight out of university, significantly less than you would pay for a specialist with experience. Dennehy says: “Referred candidates are more likely to fit in with your corporate culture, they’re more likely to be productive and they are more likely to stay with your company. They are the best job applicants to have.

“Users are delighted so far. We’re getting customer feedback from people who have saved thousands. When Version One used Zartis with its 300 employees, it generated more staff referrals in a week than they would normally get in a quarter.

“We’re getting 100 new companies signing up with us every week now, but that number has to continue to grow. When you are offering a low cost solution, you need a mass market.” [Cian Molloy]
A new range of hand-held electronic magnifiers for the visually impaired has earned technology company Ash Technologies and its industrial designers Dolmen of Naas another prestigious RedDot award.

The awards, established in 1955 by the Design Zentrum Nordrhein Westfalen in Germany, put Ash on a comparable standing, in design terms, with Siemens, Apple, BMW and a host of other quality product manufacturers.

“It’s always nice to win an award from a prestigious German institution like Red Dot. Germany is our biggest export market and we distribute to other European countries from there,” said Ash Technologies MD Hugh Maguire.

The Ash Crystal + and XL are handheld magnifiers with push-button controls for adjusting magnification while reading or writing.

The Crystal XL retails for €699 and is seen as a great value at that price in European markets, says Maguire, but in Ireland some people perceive it as expensive.

“Hearing aids cost three times that amount and qualify for government subsidies but, I would argue, visual aids like these give a much greater level of independence. With a magnifier, an old person doesn’t need someone to read their medicine prescriptions, deal with their household bills or consult basic information like bus timetables.”

Previously, Ash and Dolmen won a RedDot honourable mention in 2010 for the Quicklook 2 Electronic Magnifier, a reading and writing aid with an additional camera for magnifying objects in the middle distance. The company, founded in 1994, is now a leading player in low-vision industries. At present, the US accounts for 20% exports and last year turnover grew to about €3.5m.

“A lot of our R&D has been focussed on aids for the visually impaired, but this year our R&D focus will be on developing new visual aids for industry,” said Maguire. “We are getting increasing numbers of enquiries from industry wanting to use our products for inspection and testing, from components on a circuit board to biological samples in a laboratory.

“We’ve a number of new products in development, including something better than a traditional microscope; it won’t give you eyestrain or back pain and it will automatically record images for sharing with others. We see a lot of opportunities in industry.”

[Cian Molloy]
Full speed ahead as reverse logistics firm opens Thai office

Reverse logistics specialist WiseTek has opened its first base outside Cork in Laem Chabang, Thailand. The development builds on WiseTek’s relationship with existing clients in the electronics industry, notably EMC with whom it has an ‘all markets outside North America’ contract.

“It’s a good location for us on the other side of the world,” said MD Seán Sheehan. “Like Cork, where we are located, it’s another deep water port. Like Shannon, it is also a free port – we can bring stuff in and out without having to pay tariffs and excises. It’s also located in an area that isn’t prone to flooding.

“We’ll be using the plant in Thailand primarily to serve EMC, but it opens up new opportunities for us across Asia.”

Reverse logistics is about maximising the value of raw materials, by-products and end-of-life goods. Of course, e-scrap can be melted down and separated into various raw materials, but often devices and components can be repaired and or renewed with WiseTek offering services erasing PC hard-drives for re-use and reworking printed circuit boards. Additionally, the company offers asset recovery, testing and assembly.

“At the moment, most countries outside Europe are catching up with us on electronics waste legislation; as a result we are in a great position to help companies meet their growing obligations in this area.”

[Cian Molloy]

Business begins to buzz in the UK

Bitbuzz, the Irish company you’re probably familiar with if you regularly avail of Wi-Fi hotspots in hotels, cafes and bars, is expanding in the UK with the appointment of three new staff in its London office.

After only 18 months in the UK Wi-Fi business, Bitbuzz has gained significant traction with a client list including Ibis Hotels, Elegant English Hotels, stayCity Apartments, Kensington Rooms, Days Hotels, Holiday Inn Express and Leeds Bradford Airport, according to Director of Business Development Russell McQuillan. “We have already been appointed as the preferred Wi-Fi supplier by some of the leading hotel and hospitality brands in the UK and we are now looking to build on these partnerships,”

he told The Market.

BitBuzz currently has 740,000 registered users and is achieving 10,000 peak logins per day across Ireland and the UK. At the end of last year, it had more than 350 Wi-Fi hotspots and there were more than 8,500 hotel bedrooms in its network. [Cian Molloy]

From our next issue, out in August 2012, The Market will accept advertising.

THE MARKET IS NOW ACCEPTING ADVERTISING

The Market is Enterprise Ireland’s business magazine for exporting companies. It is dedicated to inspiring Irish companies to internationalise and to providing know-how and market intelligence on overseas markets and strategies for selling internationally.

Are we reaching your market?
The Market reaches directly onto the desks of CEOs and executive teams in over 5,000 Irish companies; these are the people involved in export, marketing or strategic planning. In addition, The Market is read by our subscribers in banks, third level business schools and legal and financial consultancy practices.

What do the people who know about magazines say about The Market?
Our editor was named Magazine Ireland’s Business Magazine Editor of the Year 2011. In addition, The Market was named Magazine Ireland’s Customer/Client Magazine of The Year in 2007 and 2009 and B-2-B Magazine Design of the Year in 2009.

What do our readers say about The Market?
The following is the results of a recent readership survey.

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If you feel The Market is targeting your market, talk to Elaine McKenna. For further information and rates.
E: Elaine.mckenna@enterprise-ireland.com, T: 01 7272947 or email the.market@enterprise-ireland.com

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Irish pharma service providers add Germany to their target list

Irish exporters will be adding to the buzz of the 30th ACHEMA chemical engineering congress in Frankfurt this June. Held every year since 1923, ACHEMA is now Germany’s lead event of its kind, and, this year, 10 Irish companies exhibiting.

...in streams, rivers and drinking-water piping.

Meanwhile, Innopharma’s new particle-imaging system, eyecon, will be on display at the stand of Solvias, a Swiss chemical engineering consultancy that recently signed a partnership agreement with the Dublin firm to oversee the sale and installation of eyecon and eyemap.

“The partnership gives us the benefit of Solvias’s scale and their contacts in the industry,” said Innopharma CEO Ian Jones. “We are already very busy with installations in Spain, Belgium and Austria. We employ 12 people and expect to have turnover of €2m this year.

The other three Irish firms exhibiting are the high-purity process system designer and installer BCD Engineering, the packaging firm Prodieco and containment and sampling equipment manufacturer ProSys, which recently moved into new larger premises in Carrigtwohill, Co. Cork, and increased its workforce there.

Irish exporters can expect the German pharma market to continue to grow over the next few years, but the pace of growth will be slow, says Samina Siddiqui, Enterprise Ireland’s market executive for lifesciences in Germany, Austria and Switzerland. “One area of opportunity is in the refurbishment and renewal of existing production facilities,” she said. “There is a reluctance here to switch production to low-cost labour markets, because there is a perception that the same savings can be made at existing locations by doing things more efficiently.”
Initiatives launched to enhance software product management

The ISA Software Skillnet has launched two new initiatives to enhance product management skills: the Postgraduate Diploma in Product Management and the Masters Degree in Product Management, both for the software and technology sectors.

"While there is always magic and genius in the creation of truly great products, building great software and hardware products begins with effective product management," commented Sean O’Sullivan CEO of Avego and SOS Ventures. "Thanks to this initiative, the magic and mysteries of product management are being revealed as methods and procedures to a new generation of product managers in Ireland."

Cash IQ launches as new source of company intelligence

CashIQ has launched as a new, free business search engine, detailing financials based on accounts filed at the Companies’ Registration Office, company status, age and group structure, business activity, products and services, contact details, auditors, registered address, bankers, commercial legal judgements, shareholders, and current and past directors for over 8 million companies and 15 million directors, in both Ireland and the UK.

As well as checking the business credentials of a potential supplier or customer, its founders say that CashIQ will help in identifying sales opportunities, managing business risk and credit control, and researching potential employers and employees. "At its simplest level, people can instantly check up on local service providers, from builders to accountants, to verify their business background and financial status."

Procurement Pledge initiative to help contractors forward plan for UK business

As part of its ‘Procurement Pledge’ initiative, the UK government has launched new and updated data on contracts potentially worth billions that it may launch in the future. The information identifies £70 billion of potential future contracts over the next five years, across 13 different sectors, including construction, property, medical and police equipment.

See www.contractsfinder.businesslink.gov.uk

SolarPrint to head €850k European-funded project

SolarPrint, a fore-running developer of dye-sensitised solar cells (DSSC) for low-light applications, which operates a pilot-production facility in Dublin, Ireland, is to head an EU-funded €850k project.

The project brings together a world expert in dye manipulation, and an institution with unique skills in electrolyte design and characterisation for DSSC, with results to be made available for the three SME project participants. The work is being funded by the ‘Research for the benefit of SMEs’ element of Europe’s Framework Seven programme.

SolarPrint hopes to use the technology to access the billion-euro building control by providing a renewable power source for wireless sensor networks.
Summer Diary

What's on

MAY

NAFSA 2012
May 29 to June 4
Education in Ireland will be exhibiting along with key Irish HEIs involved in JYA and Study Abroad programmes in the USA.
V: Houston, Texas
E: gill.roe@enterprise-ireland.com
T: +353 (1) 7272365

ICT Solutions for the Newly Consolidated Spanish Banks
May 29
This event is an opportunity for client companies to meet with Spanish banks and showcase their solutions to simplify the lives of their IT departments. All the major banks will be there including BBVA, Banco Santander, Bankia and La Caixa.
V: Madrid
E: john.roche@enterprise-ireland.com
T: +34 (91) 4340909

Aviation IT Forum - Russia & CIS
May 30
Aviation IT Forum will bring together strategic and commercial IT decision-makers from airlines and airports, travel agencies and business solutions providers, set the ground for regular meetings, expertise exchange and networking.
V: Moscow
E: olesya.chaplynska@enterprise-ireland.com
T: +7 (495) 9375943

IT for Travel Showcase: Opportunities in Southern Europe, Middle East & Africa
May 31
One-day networking event bringing hotel chains and OTAs from Southern Europe, Middle East and Africa to Ireland to meet with Irish travel technology companies.
V: East Point Business Park, Dublin 3
E: sara.bonomi@enterprise-ireland.com
T: +39 (02) 880099233

JUNE

Ireland Islamic Finance as a contributor to global fiscal stability
June 5 to 6
Two-day conference on Islamic financial systems, and their applicability to the current fiscal crisis.
V: Gresham Hotel, Dublin
W: http://islamicfinanceeurope.blogspot.com/2012/03/ireland-call-for-papers-conference-5-6.html

Spotlight on Ireland at MIFA 2012
June 6 to 8
The Animation Market MIFA at Annecy is a prestigious European market attracting key decision makers in the world animation industry. The 2012 event will have a special focus on leading Irish animation featuring the theme of 'Spotlight on Ireland'.
V: Annecy
E: eileen.bell@enterprise-ireland.com
T: +353 (01) 7272148

Compelling Value Propositions with the Business Battlecard
June 7
Part of the Excel at Exporting workshop series.
V: East Point Business Park, Dublin 3
E: bridging.mcdonnell@enterprise-ireland.com
T: +353 1 7272734
W: http://tinyurl.com/ca72m6r

Sourcing Funding
June 12 & 13
This workshop, part of the Finance for Growth series, will examine the types of funding suitable for a company based on its lifecycle, exploring when equity is more appropriate than debt. It will also explore the various sources available to a company on raising finance and how to make your company investor ready.
V: Galway (12th) & Dublin (13th)
E: tom.early@enterprise-ireland.com
T: +353 (1) 7272942

Market Intelligence Workshop
June 13
Part of the Excel at Exporting workshop series.
V: East Point Business Park, Dublin 3
E: bridging.mcdonnell@enterprise-ireland.com
T: +353 1 7272734
W: http://tinyurl.com/ca72m6r

Facebook for business workshop
June 14
With over 900 million active users across the globe, Facebook is the most successful social media platform online. This course is designed to help participants learn how to develop creative page content and turn fans into customers in fun and engaging ways.
V: Dublin
E: training@daracreative.ie

Sales Side Partnering
June 15
Part of the Excel at Exporting workshop series.
V: East Point Business Park, Dublin 3
E: bridging.mcdonnell@enterprise-ireland.com
T: +353 1 7272734
W: http://tinyurl.com/ca72m6r

Trade Mission to Russia
June 18 to 21
Minister of State, Joe Costello will lead a five-strand technology trade mission to Russia, with the focus on education; ICT; energy/energy efficiency/sustainability (including construction); transport and agriculture & agribusiness. This event will provide opportunities to network with existing/potential customers/partners and generate PR/media opportunities.
V: Moscow
E: gerard.maccarthy@enterprise-ireland.com
T: +7 (495) 6806500

Compiled by Teresa Lyons
ACHHEMA 2012
June 18 to 22
ACHHEMA is the world forum of the process industry and the trend-setting technology summit for chemical engineering, environmental protection and biotechnology.
V: Frankfurt
E: jane.greene@enterprise-ireland.com

M2M for Spanish Mobile Operators
June 19
M2M is the latest, sustainable, revenue opportunity for the new generation of mobile operators. This event gives client companies the opportunity to meet the major mobile operators in Spain (Telefonica, Vodafone and Orange), and present to their vertical solutions in transport, telemetry, security, payments and e-Health.
V: Madrid
E: raul.marigorta@enterprise-ireland.com
T: +34 (9) 1436492

LeWeb‘12 London
June 19 & 20
LeWeb London will explore the idea of ‘Faster than Real Time’.
V: Central Hall Westminster, London
W: http://london.leweb.co/

Partner Skills Development
June 19
Part of the Excel at Exporting workshop series.
V: East Point Business Park, Dublin 3
E: bridging.mcdonnell@enterprise-ireland.com
T: +353 1 7272734
W: http://tinyurl.com/ca72m6r

Business Transition to the Cloud Workshop
June 20
Part of the Excel at Exporting workshop series.
V: East Point Business Park, Dublin 3
E: bridging.mcdonnell@enterprise-ireland.com
T: +353 1 7272734
W: http://tinyurl.com/ca72m6r

JULY

EARMA 2012
July 9 to 11
The EARMA conference will focus on the upcoming HORIZON 2020, ongoing research management and professional development. Key speakers include: Maire Geoghegan Quinn – European Commissioner for Research, Innovation and Science; Thomas Estermann – European Universities Association; Brendan Hawdon – Head of Unit, Framework Programme and Simplification European Commission; and Julia Lane, US National Science Foundation, STAR Metrics Programme.
V: Trinity College Dublin

Ireland @ Microsoft WPC 2012
July 9 to 13
This event provides a forum for companies to connect with Microsoft channel partners and staff, and to learn about the latest Microsoft programs, strategies, and cutting-edge technologies. Twelve to 15 Enterprise Ireland client companies are being offered the opportunity to participate in a “Best Connected” Ireland stand at Microsoft WPC 2012.
V: Toronto
E: nick.marmion@enterprise-ireland.com
T: +001 (650) 2944081
W: http://www.digitalwpc.com/

Euroscience Open Forum 2012
July 11 to 15
This five-day event is Europe’s largest general science meeting and is held in a leading European city every two years. It is an interdisciplinary, pan-European meeting, held under the auspices of Euroscience. Dublin was awarded the honour of hosting ESOF in 2012, following an open competition.
W: http://esof2012.org/

SEPTEMBER

Womenswear Trend Forecast Autumn Winter 2013
September 5
The trend forecast seminars present the yarn, colour and styling international trend forecasts for 12 months ahead for apparel, knitwear and industrial weaving companies to facilitate their new product development in line with international market trends.
V: East Point, Dublin 3
E: lorraine.egan@enterprise-ireland.com
T: +353 (1) 7272865

International Markets Week 2012
September 17 to 20
International Markets Week gives an opportunity to the clients of Enterprise Ireland to discuss their exports plans and ambitions with our team of over 100 marketing 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

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

Finance for Growth
Ongoing
Series of monthly workshops, primarily for exporting SMEs, which seeks to address the key issues facing SMEs with regard to the current environment.
V: Dublin, Shannon, Cork and Galway
W: http://tinyurl.com/7764vvx

Email details of your forthcoming business events to the.market@enterprise-ireland.com
“From the website to Facebook, everything is oriented towards ‘80s Ireland.”

One look at the product range of Hairy Baby t-shirts and you quickly realise that here is a successful Irish company whose business meetings set out to raise a smile.

“We used to have weekly meetings in a kind of a boardroom style,” admits Hairy Baby founder, quiet-spoken Daragh Murphy, a former audio/visual engineer with a liking for well crafted/worded t-shirts, “but I’m not sure that really worked. We found ourselves having meetings in the printing room, or out the back, knocking a ball around. We just bounce ideas about, really.

Of course, I would have meetings that are more serious with my production manager and other different departments, but in general, when we’re coming up with ideas for t-shirts, everyone is involved. And those meetings are always on a Monday because you never know what you’d hear over the weekend.”

Singular Irish phrases, buzzwords, slogans and sayings form the basis of the appeal of Hairy Baby t-shirts. With product lines for men (Givin’ It Socks, What’s The Story Rory?), women (Fine Thing, Boys Are Eejits), kids (Culchie Beag, Wine Makes Mummy Silly) and babies (I’m Happy In My Nappy, I’ll Talk When I’m Good And Ready), being ordered online every day, over the past seven years, Hairy Baby has gone from strength to strength.

The compact e-commerce company currently employs eight people, operates out of a 5,000 sq-ft unit in Little Island, Cork, and, according to Murphy, expects to hit the €1m turnover figure in 2012. “We’re growing year-on-year, which is fantastic,” he says.

The success of what some people might regard as a frivolous or insubstantial product is down to Murphy’s passion for not only a good article of clothing but for what he earnestly refers to as “an alternative form of Irishness – Irish t-shirts for Irish people.”

The influences of the Hairy Baby brand come directly from his upbringing in the 1980s. “A lot of what we do is...”

The new diaspora aren’t looking for Tara brooches or leprechauns. Generation X, Irish abroad have talked the talk, seen the TV series and now want to buy the t-shirt. Tony Clayton-Lea reports.
steeped in nostalgia,” he readily admits. “From the website to Facebook, everything is oriented towards ‘80s Ireland.”

According to Murphy, Hairy Baby was never supposed to be a business, but rather a supplementary income to his work as an audio/visual engineer. “I was planning to set up a website, go to work, and on my return home, I’d hope to get a few orders in, package them up, ship them off, and then be on my way out to work the next day. But it didn’t pan out like that – it was more

I’d have to give up my job. In other words, I had to make a decision to do the t-shirts seriously, or drop the idea altogether.”

At this point, there seems to be no end in sight for Irish people at home and abroad to avail of Murphy’s ethos of “Irish t-shirts for Irish people”. Interestingly, the percentage breakdown of sales has shifted in recent times.

“I’m both sad and happy to say that, because of the way things are in Ireland at present, our export market has grown in the past 12-18 months. We were very strong domestically for a long time; upwards of 85% of our market was within the country. Now we’ve got about 30% going abroad into Europe and further into areas like Australia and New Zealand – daily. That’s poignant, of course, but we’re helping people to retain an Irish identity abroad, in a way, to be in a kind of a club.”

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Being self-employed, comments Murphy, isn’t always easy. Mention the work/life balance to him and he’s more amused than annoyed.

“It’s more a work/work balance, to be honest. I always say that I gave up the day job to work a day and night job. Seven years on, and I’m still working all the hours, seven days a week.”

His brain, he says with what sounds like a hint of regret, will just not switch off, and he is always trying to think of new ways to develop his business. “I’d go home in the evening, put the child to bed, and then the laptop would come out, and I’d be working away again.”

Fortcoming product lines include the referencing of classic RTE quiz shows (Quicksilver, Know Your Sport, Murphy’s Micro Quiz-M) and (following the acquiring of a licence for sales in the UK and Ireland) a series of t-shirts featuring phrases from the classic comedy series, Father Ted.

“It’d be a different if I hated the work, of course.” Murphy draws in a breath and slowly blows it out. “Thank God I have a very understanding wife!”

Daragh Murphy on Hairy Baby’s Online Strategy

- As a totally e-commerce business, Hairy Baby has to apply a stringent online strategy. We’re on our third Hairy Baby website now – the most recent, which we regard as a shop ‘refit’, was commissioned a few weeks ago – and each site has been a learning curve. The new one is, I hope, the one where all the problems have been ironed out. You learn all these things as you go on.

- One of the most important lessons learnt from the business on the e-commerce side is, I suppose, that the language we use on our website is fundamental to the success of the business. The way we script the content and the way we relate to the customer on the website is key. We also have a policy that we don’t offend anyone with any of the wording on the products, which is another reason for our success.

- Search Engine Optimisation is something to get right. The Hairy Baby website is very optimised. Ironically, the actual brand name itself has worked very well for us in that area.

Although we’re a t-shirt company – and there are an awful lot of other t-shirt companies out there – we have a unique name which allows us to optimize the website extremely well. There was a plan to call the company something very generic. Thankfully, we didn’t.

- Cash flow is very important to any company, obviously, but luckily for our business, we’re paid straight away. Once you click the ‘proceed with my order’ button on the website we’re paid within a few minutes. We don’t supply any retail outlet units – although we have plans to start selling at Dublin Airport quite soon – so I’m not waiting to be paid by anyone. Not many companies can say that.

- We’re very heavily focused on Facebook, and we road test a lot of our products and ideas there. A lot of favourable response is given to anything we do that connects with growing up in Ireland in the 80s. The ideas that aren’t received well are the ideas we drop.
Fewer than one in four Irish SMEs are currently selling on the web. James Gargan, a director of the digital design agency Continuum Technologies, wonders why.

**WHY AREN’T MORE IRISH COMPANIES SELLING ONLINE?**

In today’s uncertain economy, e-commerce is a lifeline connecting Irish companies to new markets. Today’s consumers are just as likely to turn to the web as to the high street when it comes to researching and purchasing products and services. Research from the Pew Internet & American Life project has repeatedly shown how more than one in two consumers research online before buying, and similar trends have been seen elsewhere.

Although Ireland’s overall e-commerce presence is growing, our bricks-and-mortar business community still has some catching up to do when it comes to embracing the potential of selling online. In fact, fewer than one in four Irish SMEs are currently selling on the web, according to the IE Domain Registry.

What’s the reason for this reluctance? Sometimes, companies are holding back because they’re not convinced e-commerce is right for them. Often, they don’t believe their customers want to buy online. That notion persists despite a sharp increase in web-based purchasing in both business-to-business and business-to-consumer retail environments. Forrester Research has forecast continued growth for online retail in both the US and Western Europe – increasing by 10 per cent every year to 2015.

As far as brand perception is concerned, when properly executed, an e-commerce presence can reinforce your company’s brand, bringing it to a wider audience, and establishing deeper customer loyalty and engagement.
Some companies tend to perceive e-commerce as a costly investment, not realising the revenue potential that adding “clicks” to their bricks-and-mortar strategies can offer. Others are worried about diluting their brand, assuming it’s impossible to recreate the personalised service their customers enjoy when shopping in a physical store.

In both cases, the opposite can be true. You can expect to invest between €8,000 and €20,000 for a truly effective, world-class e-commerce system. No two websites are the same, so the final price will depend on the complexity of your needs. The more features you need, the more your site will cost to develop but that investment is usually recouped within six to 12 months through online sales revenues and new customer acquisition.

As far as brand perception is concerned, when properly executed, an e-commerce presence can reinforce your company’s brand, bringing it to a wider audience, and establishing deeper customer loyalty and engagement (see panel over).

Building a perception of trust is especially vital when targeting customers based beyond Ireland, since their impression of your website is all they have to go on. Your web store should inspire confidence in your company in order for would-be buyers to commit to a sale. There is no precise formula to follow but there are some basics that ought to be as a minimum. A professionally designed website is a good starting place, reinforced through strong, prominently displayed customer service calls to action such as a no-hassle returns policy, contact addresses and telephone numbers, and logos of secure payments partners such as Realex, PayPal or Worldpay TPS. Displaying a SSL cert from Verisign or Comodo also strengthens the impression you make as a bona fide operator.

Choosing the right partner to deliver the project is critical. Your decision should be based on a provider with both the technical knowledge and the marketing expertise to help you implement the right solution for your business.

The shift to e-commerce is changing the way the world does business. But with rare exceptions, it’s not a case of clicks replacing bricks. Smart businesses will approach e-commerce strategically as a way to complement and strengthen their existing sales channels, throwing the door wide open to invite more customers.

**Myths about Cost and Brand**

**Building Trust**

**Adding Clicks to Bricks**

Shoes have traditionally been thought of as a difficult product to sell online, because of the complexity involved in sizes, colours and fits. That makes providing good customer service essential.

In the case of the Irish shoe retailer Korky’s (www.korkys.ie), that approach starts with displaying its returns policy prominently on the site so that potential customers can see it. In fact, it offers a free returns policy for customers in Ireland and the UK.

To replicate the effect of walking into a physical store and being helped by a shop assistant, the site’s extensive search capability lets people find shoes by size, colour, brand, price range or any combination of these. The example of Korky’s proves that small or medium businesses can have this level of feature – one that’s normally associated with much larger e-commerce operations.

The site is integrated with the company’s ePOS [electronic point of sale] system, which is another important factor because it co-ordinates stock levels between all parts of the company’s retail operations, and ensures that the site isn’t showing items for sale when they’re out of stock.

Korky’s also has a very active social networking presence, with more than 7,100 likes on its Facebook page. Here, consumers can leave comments and feedback such as requests for shoes in certain sizes, or in a particular shop, or they can ask if a particular shoe might be out of stock. “An essential part of selling online is to be where your customers are, which is social networks,” says Korky’s managing director John Corcoran.

The site went live in September 2010, and generated sales almost immediately, even when it was in soft launch mode, before it had been promoted online. Since the official launch, online sales have grown 1,000 per cent in 15 months. “We began from a standing start – we had never had a website before, never mind selling online. Since the launch, Korky’s has attracted customers from all over the world: across Europe, the USA, Canada and Australia,” adds Corcoran.
EMBRACING TENDERING:
WHY YOU SHOULD TREAT PUBLIC PROCUREMENT LIKE ANY OTHER TARGET MARKET
Buyers can be risk-adverse and are looking for value for money like never before. It’s hard work, you won’t always get a yes, and there’s bound to be lots of paperwork. Sounds familiar? Sure, because public procurement is a lot like any other geographic or sectoral market. As recent public-contract wins by Irish companies show, success comes from having a clear focus and strategy, putting in the research and groundwork, building a great team and staying with it for the long haul.
STEP 1: PUT IN THE GROUND WORK AND BUILD A GREAT TEAM

Lights, camera, action. An Irish communications consortium just got itself on an elite list to tender for contracts worth €40 million over the next three years. Ian Campbell finds out how.
A n Irish communications consortium has won a multiple framework contract with the EU commission, becoming one of only four companies that will be invited to tender for jobs as they arise. The Irish firms involved have found themselves on an elite European shortlist, competing for contracts with a total value of €40 million over three years. It serves as a timely reminder that lucrative work is still available in Europe to indigenous companies that are prepared to participate in a thorough procurement process.

The Directorate General for Enterprise and Industry is looking to promote sustainable competitiveness among EU businesses and chose Ascent Communications to be part of the framework, a three-way partnership that came together specifically for the tender. Animo Communications, Wilson Hartnell Public Relations (WHPR) and Conference Partners covered the three required bases of video production, public relations and event organisation to land a place on the shortlist.

With a number of sub-contractors also in the mix, including an Italian company, it was a carefully crafted tender response that ran to nearly 1,200 pages, ticking all the required boxes. All of this was achieved within the 90-day window, from the publication of the tender to the closing date for submissions. But preparation had started much earlier reveals Donal Brady, business development director at Animo.

GROUND WORK
Brady was on the ground in Brussels up to eight days a month, familiarising himself with the lie of the land long before the tender was even published. “You need to show that you understand the challenges the EU face and the issues they want to communicate. You probably could do it without setting foot in Brussels, but it would be more difficult,” he said.

Once the tender was announced, there was a tricky procurement path to negotiate. Aside from a legal requirement to demonstrate business solvency, the consortium had to show that its employees had the qualifications and experience to deliver the services. A technical proposal had to provide evidence that processes and procedures were in place that would enable them to achieve the tender’s objectives. Then the consortium’s creative capabilities were judged on the response to a series of scenarios. After all that, they were finally evaluated on cost.

“We were in the middle of the pile when it came to cost. Clearly, it’s important, but it’s the last thing they look at, and it’s not a deal breaker,” said Brady. “You qualify by getting marks across the board so you have to sit down and go through the requirements line by line. You have to work out what you are qualified to do and what partners you need. Then you start writing the actual tender document.”

Animo had worked for the Commission in the Nineties when it was part of Windmill Lane, but lost the appetite to compete for business when the requirements became more complicated. “We took a decision to go after tenders again as part of a strategy to build sales out of Ireland,” said Brady. “Brussels is a logical starting point because there is lots of Commission work, but also because it has more lobbyists than Washington, and they all have communication requirements.”

In order to compete, Animo set about forming a consortium. “It was organised very quickly, very much as equal partners. We had already worked with WHPR before, and Enterprise Ireland introduced us to Conference Partners,” said Brady.

Although WHPR’s parent company, the Oglivy Group, has worked for the Commission it was the first time that WHPRs had led a win. “It’s been a big learning curve,” said Séamus Carey, account manager. “The biggest challenge is getting to grips with the detail in the documents. You have to align planning and processors and make it as cohesive as possible.”

Carey describes it as an “important foot in the door” with each subsequent tender process proving to be a little easier. “You do learn as you go along and build up your expertise,” he said.

HELPING HAND
Enterprise Ireland has been working hard to improve participation in EU tenders. In a 2010 survey, Ireland was among the countries with the lowest number of companies competing – 157 compared to 436 in Croatia, for example. It’s a hangover from the Celtic Tiger days, according to Patrick Torrekens, EI’s market advisor in Belgium.

“There used to be more Irish companies coming after the business, but during the boom, there was so much opportunity in the home market that they withdrew. But we’re gradually seeing companies coming back.”

There is very little chance of winning a contract if you only step in when the tender comes out.

EU funding opportunities
Worth a total of €975 billion, there are four main blocks of money available from the main EU funding programme (2007-2013):

- EU structural funds for infrastructure, education and training in lower GDP countries
- EU external aid for telecommunications, infrastructure, environment, health and education in future member states and underdeveloped neighbouring countries
- EU economic recovery plans, focused on areas like energy efficiency, ICT and the environment for member states and, globally, countries
- “Commission as a customer” programmes, selling direct services to EU bodies such as Director Generals, administrators and agencies. This is the block where Ascent Communications was successful.
Working with EI’s public procurement team in Dublin, Torrekens helps guide client companies through a complex procurement process, even opening up the EI offices for them. “We’re in the same building as the embassy, a short walk from the European parliament. Ascent used it for breakfast meetings.”

Like Brady, he stresses the importance of visiting Brussels for pre-tender preparation. Rules don’t allow any dialogue with the parties involved, either before or during the tender process, but there is plenty of information in the public domain to glean insights into what’s expected. There are information sessions and seminars organised by the different EU institutions, and all the tenders are made very public through web sites, supported by stacks of online information.

“There is a whole framework of procurement within European institutions that starts with people coming together and working out where they want to put the money,” he said. “To win the business, you have to understand where the tendering document comes from, what policy is driving it, or the problem that it hopes to solve.”

According to Torrekens, there is very little chance of winning a contract if you only step in when the tender comes out. “It’s not about influencing the process,” he stressed. “It’s about understanding the construct.”

For firms with limited resources, it may sound like an insurmountable process, but the EU does want to encourage first-timers and remove barriers to entry. There is no doubt, however, that having won a previous contract helps. Reference sites are vitally important, particularly if they are in the public sector. “It’s not a must,” said Torrekens, “and you can always cope by teaming up with companies that do have that experience.”

Right now, there are big budgets around for construction and security projects. Director Generals and the various agencies are actively looking for consortia, and it’s a big plus if the bidder can partner companies from other countries. “The more international you are, the better your chance of winning,” said Torrekens. “European institutions want to get rid of country boundaries and see companies co-operating across borders.”

While he urges Irish business to participate, he also advises caution. “A lot of companies see a big tender, jump in after it and underestimate the amount of work involved. Talk to us; attend meetings and workshops; analyse what’s required. Don’t do it cold.”

Right now, there are big budgets around for construction and security projects.
STEP 2: BUILD AND LEVERAGE REFERENCE SITES

A tele-monitoring project in Northern Ireland got the S3 Group on the radar of a health technology company in Italy, helping them land a deal in what is the largest chronic disease management service in Europe. Lucille Redmond reports.
Dublin company S3 Group has won a huge contract in Italy to provide care to patients in Milan. S3 Group, a 20-year-old company that started as a hive-off from TCD’s engineering department in conjunction with Dutch multinational Philips, won the contract because it is already providing the service to tens of thousands of patients across Northern Ireland.

‘TeleHealth’ - monitoring of symptoms through machines linked to health centres by phone – is urgently needed to ease the strain on hospitals caring for chronically ill elderly patients.

Five incurable chronic diseases are the greatest challenge in First World healthcare: diabetes, chronic heart failure, hypertension, COPD and chronic artery disease. In Britain, for instance, the five conditions eat up 69% of National Health Service spending, and 72% of people lying in hospital beds are there because of these diseases.

They are mainly illnesses of the old, and worldwide the ageing demographic is recognised as a healthcare emergency. Last October, Health Minister James Reilly was one of 50 prime ministers and health ministers who attended a UN conference – only the second time the UN had met collectively on a health issue – on the biggest health problem facing developed nations: the care of an ageing population.

Technology can play a part in keeping chronically ill people in their own homes, safe and independent with a good quality of life. Normally, one nurse can visit 10 patients in a day. But if telemonitoring is used, the same nurse can check the symptoms of 20 or 30 patients to see which ones need help, and then visit those patients’ homes.

S3 Group runs the Remote Telemonitoring Service in Northern Ireland. “This is the only countrywide monitoring service in Europe,” said global business development director Dr Malachy Rice. “We are currently contracted for 6,000 patients, and, in Milan, it may serve 45,000 people.”

Forty-six international bidders pitched for the Northern Ireland contract, which was won by a consortium of three companies: S3 Group, Fold Telecare, and Tunstall. Northern Ireland’s five healthcare trusts have combined to offer 6,000 patients a single service, based out of a monitoring centre in Holywood in Belfast. This service puts monitors in the homes of patients with the five chronic diseases to teach them how to manage their own health better.

“The patient sees, typically, a blood pressure monitor that talks to a device beside the telephone the size of a child’s lunchbox,” said Dr Rice. “Patients check their blood pressure and use the monitor to send it wirelessly to the phone line, then the box asks questions such as ‘How are you feeling today’ and ‘Did you take your medication’.”

The blood pressure result, plus the answers to the health questions are sent to Fold Telecare’s...
monitoring centre for checking by nurses. The effect of this type of monitoring has exceeded the wildest hopes of its proponents. A two-year independent, randomised study funded by the British Department of Health was expected to find something like 15% reduction in hospital admission.

To the scientists’ astonishment, the result was a 45% reduction in mortality for patients monitored through this type of technology. “So it’s become a moral argument – if this were a drug, if you could give an elderly person a drug that would cause reduction in mortality, they would be clamouring for it,” said Dr Rice.

Building on the success of the Northern Ireland service, S3 Group’s business plan was to expand into Britain, Germany and France. There are currently 15m people with a chronic disease in England, and prime minister David Cameron’s ‘3 Million Lives’ programme plans to provide telemonitoring to 20% of these, saving Britain’s health service £1.2bn over five years. France and Germany have a growing elderly population for whom telemonitoring will be a lifesaver.

S3 Group promoted its telemonitoring offer through the Telecare Services Association publication, at international conferences, through the health monitoring umbrella body Continua Health Alliance, at conferences in the US and Europe, in trade editorial, and advertisements in journals. “We were promoting ourselves quite heavily as the supplier for Europe’s only countrywide monitoring service,” said Dr Rice.

Then Telbios, a company involved with a co-operative of 340 GPs in and around Milan that came together in a bid for the contract, spotted the Irish company. They had heard about the Northern Ireland programme and were impressed by it.

Telbios is an Italian company whose background is in heart monitoring – monitoring pacemakers after heart attacks, and monitoring people who have been given an ECG device for their homes.

“Telbios and the GP co-operative formed a partnership to co-bid on the service for the city of Milan. Telbios then approached S3 Group to help then design a service and write a bid proposal. We did, and they won,” said Dr Rice. “Telbios is our customer, the GPs are Telbios’ customer.”

The approach by Telbios and the GPs allowed S3 Group to avoid the cultural difficulties of bidding for business in Italy. “The procurement method is more local and personal, and, in this case, only GPs were allowed to bid for this contract, not companies, so none of the international vendors that would normally bid on such a contract even considered bidding,” said Dr Rice. “We were awarded the service by the GPs.

“We started in January this year with a patient education programme, then set up coordination with the patients, helping people to understand what a diabetes care plan is, and what their personal diabetes care plan should be,” said Dr Rice. “In October the technology will go in, reporting to the Telbios monitoring centre in San Raffaele hospital. Maybe 5% of the people in this project will have technology in their homes permanently. Others will have it for three or four months while they learn about the disease and we learn about them, and then the boxes will be cycled into new patients’ homes.”

The technology, says Dr Rice, is an interesting way of teaching people how to control their health. “It shows people the link: ‘if I eat this high-sugar product, then my blood sugar will spike like this.’ Once people understand this link, having visible evidence that their eating or exercise can immediately affect their health, they normalise healthy behaviour in themselves.

This will be the largest chronic disease management service in Europe. For S3 Group, it could be the gateway to the huge markets that are the world leaders in aged care – the UK, the US and Japan. For the old and chronically ill of Lombardy, it will be a lifesaver.

S3 Group promoted its telemonitoring offer through the Telecare Services Association publication, at international conferences, through the health monitoring umbrella body Continua Health Alliance, at conferences in the US and Europe, in trade editorial and in advertisements in journals.
For the Irish construction companies that won contracts to build the stage for Olympics 2012, the main legacy is the experience and market knowledge that is now winning them further deals. Fiona Reddan report on the Irish staying in this market for the long haul.
It’s a remarkable achievement. No other country, outside of the UK, won a higher value of contracts than Ireland did on the build for this summer’s Olympic Games in London. But for the companies that successfully tendered, that achievement alone isn’t enough and the drive and ambition that saw them succeed in the Olympics, is now leading them to seek out new opportunities in the UK market. So, while most of us settle down to watch Usain Bolt dash by in the 100 metres, or pin our medal hopes on Katie Taylor in the boxing ring, Irish companies will already have turned their attention to the next challenge.

For many Irish construction companies, their experiences in the UK started around the time the Irish construction market started to run out of steam. Derek Platt, a director with Platt & Reilly, a partition and ceiling specialist, recalls the impact of the downturn in Ireland on his company.

“We have had to look at ourselves as a company. We have had to strip down our company into a lean mean machine. The recession in Ireland has taught us so much. We have never been so aware of costs, cashflow management etc,” he says.

So, when talk around the London games started to rev up, Irish companies, such as Platt & Reilly, started looking to opportunities in the UK. And they were particularly successful. Indeed Irish companies won construction and fit-out contracts worth more than €250 million for the 2012 games, putting them just behind the UK in the league table.

Now these companies are hoping to learn from their experiences in the games to grow their business further in the UK.

**PLATFORM TO GROW BUSINESS**

Sisk is just one of the Irish companies that has used the platform of the Olympics to grow its business in the region. While it has been active in the UK market for some 27 years now, its work on the Olympics project, which included providing accommodation in The Athletes’ Village project, has driven further growth. Indeed Sisk saw revenues in its UK division increase by about 80 per cent in 2010, leading to a doubling of its UK-based workforce to about 400 people, and in the most recent Construction Index of the Top 100 companies in the UK industry Sisk has jumped into 47th position, up from 71st last year.

More recently, it joined forces with the Spanish company Dragados on London’s Crossrail project, the biggest construction project currently under way anywhere in Europe, while it is also set to work on the landmark Shard building, which is transforming London's skyline – and is a project so significant that Channel 4 recently dedicated a full television programme to its construction. The Shard will be the tallest building in western Europe, and Sisk has won a contract to fit-out the luxury Shangri-La Hotel, which will be located across 18 floors in the Shard building.

Also working on the Shard is Platt & Reilly, which worked on the Athletes Village as well as the International Broadcasting Centre. For Platt, the company’s experience in the Olympics has been key to enabling it go on to win other projects such as the Shard.

“In completing two of the projects on the Olympics, we were able to demonstrate our ability to deliver our package to high-spec projects, on time and on budget. This allowed us to tender and win the Shan-Gri La Hotel in the Shard among others,” he notes.

While Bennett Construction didn’t actually work on the specific Olympics project, it has nonetheless benefited from the resulting construction boom. “It wasn’t necessarily the Olympics that drove us there [UK], more that things were completely drying up here,” recalls Paul McGee, construction director with Bennett Construction, which started working in the UK in 2009.

Since then, it has completed hotel projects such as the Premier Inn in Suffolk.

**DEMANDING MARKET**

Working in the UK isn’t necessarily all plain-sailing. EDC Consulting Engineers worked on Eton Manor, which will host training facilities for Olympic swimmers. “It was a demanding job – but a good job,” says Richard O’Farrell, managing director, who linked up with Jones Engineering and Mansell on the project, noting that the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) required “extreme detail and service”.

“They had some strict procedures that they had set out across the entire project, so it was different to a normal project. From a design point of view, they wanted the same standards across all projects, so it was a learning curve in terms of what they required,” he adds.
Of course, while the Olympics has undoubtedly proved to be a boon — at a much-needed time — for the Irish construction sector, the UK market has not been immune to the impact of the global downturn. Indeed 2009 was one of its worst years since the end of the Second World War, while more recent data suggests that the business would fall off by more than £5 billion (€6.2 bn) this year, as recession rears its ugly head once more in Europe and the UK.

For Platt & Reilly however, a downturn can bring with it opportunities, with Platt noting that it means that clients are more likely to shop around. “In 2006, companies were happy with their supply chains because they were busy, they were making money and their supply chains were performing. Why fix it if it’s not broken? It is different now. Companies that are not adapting to these difficult times are getting left behind,” he says, noting that main contractors that were previously seen as “closed shops” are now letting companies like Platt & Reilly tender. “Initially this may only be for a price comparison or to get a feel for our company, but that’s all you need, the opportunity. I believe there are opportunities there for us to chase,” he adds.

In any case, London appears to be bearing up a lot better than outside the capital. “The UK is in recession but London is a different economy. It’s in its own bubble,” notes McGee, while O’Farrell agrees. “The UK is in recession but we’re not. We’re flying it”. And there is also the possibility that working in the UK will eventually lead to growth elsewhere.

Already Bennett Construction has dipped its toe tentatively in the German market, with McGee noting that it’s as of yet at an “early stage of development”.

However, given that it’s “hard to foresee much growth” in the Irish market in the short-term, as McGee says, overseas is where Irish construction companies can expect to blossom.

“From a design point of view, they wanted the same standards across all projects, so it was a learning curve in terms of what they required.”
Who did what?
The Irish gold behind building the London Olympic stage: selection of contracts won

**ABM Precast:** Secured work on and around the infrastructure development of the Olympic Park for precast concrete.

**Anord Control Systems:** Secured the package for the supply of switchgear to the site as part of the infrastructural cabling works.

**Aston Crean (Crean Mosiacs):** Supplied and installed floor coverings to the athlete’s village and the media broadcast centre.

**Banagher Concrete:** It secured the order for pre-cast concrete terracing for the Buckingham Group’s Hand Ball arena on the Olympic Park.

**Clearpower:** Involved in the design, supply and installation of biomass boilers to the Olympic Park Energy Centre.

**Coilte Panel Products Limited:** Provided floors and fittings to numerous venues including the Velodrome and shooting range.

**Donseed:** Provided biometric access control combined with a web-based platform to record attendance and health and safety information on the Stratford site.

**Dortek:** Engaged in the manufacture and supply of GRP doors to the Aquatic Centre.

**Jones Engineering:** Secured the design and installation of mechanical and electrical services to the Eton Manor Complex.

**John Sisk & Son:** Won a significant contract award on The Athletes’ Village project from Bovis Lend Lease for athletes’ accommodation, as well as the construction of two single-span pedestrian and cycleway bridges and other projects.

**Leinster Reinforcements:** Contract for the manufacture and supply of reinforced steel cages for piles to the Aquatic Centre and Handball arena.

**Platt & Reilly:** Secured drywall and ceiling contracts for the athletes’ village and the new media broadcasting centre.

**Techcrete:** Provided precast concrete external facades for the athletes’ village.

*Source: John Hunt, Construction Market Advisor, Enterprise Ireland, London*
SHALE GAS RUSH: A FRACKING OPPORTUNITY
The US shale gas rush is on, with fracking now happening in 40 States. Solar energy entrepreneur, physicist at the University of Houston in Texas and active member of the Global Irish Network, Seamus Curran, tells Anthony King why now is the time for Irish companies to clean-up.

An unexpected boom in shale gas production has rippled across the US for the last five years. Dry shale gas production rose from one trillion cubic feet in 2006 to 4.8 trillion cubic feet, or 23 per cent of the total US dry natural gas production, in 2010.

The US is on the cusp of significant economic gains due to hydraulic fracturing (fracking) and other technologies, Philip K. Verleger of the Peterson Institute for International Economics predicted in the Financial Times in April.

Low-cost energy provided primarily by shale gas production advances can contribute to a US investment boom, argued Verleger, with only Canada enjoying similar competitive conditions. Some commentators say this resource will make the US energy independent and support hundreds of thousands of jobs, with industries returning to the US for cheap energy.

Opportunities to support this industry, via high-tech innovations, include software, cloud computing, sensor technologies, off-grid renewable energy and water filtration, says Seamus Curran, a physicist and nanomaterial scientist at the University of Houston in Texas. He also predicts prospects are opening for engineering, software, medical, education and even catering companies.

HYDROCARBON BOOM
“The amount of fracked gas that is available is on a scale we have never seen since the Texas oil boom a hundred years ago,” says Curran. He describes it as a fledgling process, but “by the time we get to 10 or 15 years from now, you are going to have a huge conveyor belt of frack sites throughout the US and generating a lot more gas.”

Now is the time for Irish businesses and Irish academics to step in and be aggressive in chasing potential business in this market.” It is happening in 40 states in the US right now,” says Curran, adding “fracking is here and it is going to be around for a long time.”

The shale gas industry has been hit by accusations that the technique used to extract the gas – which uses high pressure water to crack shale beds deep underground and release the gas – is harmful to the environment. In Pennsylvania and Wyoming, there have been reports of water contamination and a fierce debate is ongoing in many states on whether to frack or not to frack. During the process, thousands of gallons of water are pumped below ground, but not all water is recovered. Moreover, returning water can pick up all sorts of natural chemicals, including arsenic and radiochemical particles.

OPPORTUNITIES TO CLEAN UP
“There are 350-odd different chemicals used in fracking,” says Curran, “and some of these are very nasty chemicals.” But he’s optimistic that the process will be improved and this represents an opportunity for Irish innovators.” What we
need to do is clean up the process,” he adds, arguing that Ireland’s investment in research and strengths in areas like nanotechnology give it a clear advantage in competing for business to reduce water consumption, clean the water and improve the overall efficiency of the process.

There are opportunities in monitoring systems, so that means sensors and sensor technology, which will have a huge role to play, Curran predicts. Some of the drilling sites are in remote locations, so there will be a demand for all kinds of infrastructure, including telecommunications and off-grid power. With the possibility of new regulations from the US Environmental Protection Agency, companies are on the lookout for green solutions.

LARGEST FIND IN US HISTORY
Curran, a graduate and former lecturer at Trinity College Dublin and an active member of the Global Irish Network, is not an oil man; he’s an advocate of solar energy. Three years ago, he saw a need to deliver power to remote off-grid locations for the extraction process.

Thousands of feet beneath the states of Montana and North Dakota, the Bakken shale basin could contain 3.65 billion barrels of oil, making it the largest find in US history, according to a 2011 report from US Department of Energy (Review of Emerging Resources: U.S. Shale Gas and Shale Oil Plays Review). Connecting desolate areas of North Dakota to the grid is not feasible, so diesel generators are brought in.

Curran’s company – C-Voltaics – provides portable solar energy generators to bring power to such off-grid locations. The initial water pumps for shale gas extraction are power hungry, downing maybe 50 or 200 kilowatts. In response, the company is developing a larger solar generator to fit on 40-foot flatbed trucks. But it’s not just power that’s in demand.

When Curran attended an oil and gas convention in Houston before Christmas, he asked around to find out who was involved in North Dakota. “Every one of them said they were involved in North Dakota. And they said they have sites purchased there. They don’t have the people, they don’t have the facilities, and they don’t have the infrastructure, but they are up there. They are buying the land, buying the mineral rights,” he adds. “It’s open season.”

Irish academics and businesses need to step up and start chasing after business, nobody is going to wait for them over here, says Curran. “Come to Houston and go to the people who are involved in this industry. Ask the questions: What do you need, what do you want, how can we help out? How can we make your business better and cheaper?”

Though Texas was first to the draw in developing and rolling out the technology of hydraulic fracturing, it will very likely be copied in many countries outside the US (see panel). Speaking of Irish companies that can provide goods and services to this booming industry, Curran says: “It’ll be an export-led business.”
Druid’s magic

Druid Software is an Irish company looking at serving some of the remote mining locations opening up in Canada with a software application that would allow companies deploy complete mobile network applications. “We sit on top of a coverage solution, whether that solution is a 2G or 3G radio network,” explains Michael O’Dwyer, sales and marketing director of Druid. “We do not provide the radio element of it; all those base stations connect back into the fixed network and we would manage all the switching and manage how people roam onto the network. We switch calls back out to mobile network users as well.”

The software will allow a company set up a mobile network quickly, easily and cheaply; it also will allow for telemetry, voice, data and messaging applications. A company could place a camera at the end of a drilling tool to monitor its operation and run this media stream over a 3G service, or hook up an air quality monitoring device, for instance.

Alternatives exist, but O’Dwyer says their solution offers clear advantages: “It’s our ability to deploy something quickly and over a wide area and which doesn’t need special handsets.”

Canada also beckons

The Canadians are already extracting their own unconventional hydrocarbon resource – tar sands. “The technology and the price of oil together are creating opportunities for new projects to come online,” says Ross O’Colmain in Enterprise Ireland’s Canadian office, who predicts more of the same next year.

“We’re seeing a growing interest in Irish companies, not around the actual extraction itself, but more downstream,” says O’Colmain. Irish engineering firms, electrical contractors and project management companies are either working or looking at this market. But O’Colmain hopes to see other kinds of companies stepping up to the plate, those which might not consider themselves traditional oil and gas players such as software and product technology firms.

The shale gas will also be exploited one way or the other, says O’Colmain. “It is probably going to be fracking technology, but the fracking technology is probably not acceptable [to many] in its current form. But it will be refined and used.”

O’Colmain wants to hear from companies that might have technology that could be applicable to this industry. And with oil and gas moving into remote territories in Canada, all sorts of services will be required. For instance, the energy company Suncore has one of the largest airlines in Canada, due to its corporate jets which serve the oil and gas industry.

“There is so much fringe stuff going on that we could be taking advantage of.”

Enterprise Ireland has a trade mission to Canada scheduled from November 5 to 8 2012. “That’s an opportunity to come and work with us and try and explore these opportunities in more detail.”
A head of a trade mission taking place from 18-22 June, many Irish companies are likely to be paying closer attention to the Russian market. At official levels, recent progress has helped to make Russia open for business. In December 2011, it was finally accepted as a member of the WTO. A month previously, Ireland and Russia signed a programme for trade and economic cooperation, which it’s hoped, will involve a new level of engagement between Irish Government departments and state agencies with their Russian counterparts.

John Goodwin, managing partner with Linklaters law firm in Moscow, makes a case for putting Russia ahead of other emerging economies. “It’s the nearest of the BRICs to Ireland, and you can make money and take money out,” he says.

Doing business in Russia is becoming easier from a practical standpoint, Goodwin adds. “Most companies in Russia are prepared to do a contract under UK law, and that gives you great protection. It is [also] possible to do business under Russian law. Don’t be afraid of it, but be clear about what you want.”

Enterprise Ireland estimates there are around 120 Irish companies already doing business in Russia, with more than 60 classed as ‘active’. Annual trade between the two nations has been estimated at close to €2 billion.

Opportunities range from ICT, aviation and agri-systems to sustainability (a broad umbrella that covers construction), food and healthcare.

Some of the usual suspects are present; CRH says it is at the early stage of evaluating opportunities. By virtue of its scale, Kerry Group tends to be at the forefront of Irish companies making waves in new markets. Its history in Russia dates back to 1998 when it acquired the food ingredients business of Dalgety, a UK company with operations across Europe including a presence in Russia.

Building on that, Kerry set up its own direct sales capability in Moscow, which employs 35 people. Director of corporate affairs Frank Healy strikes a familiar refrain when he says Russia can’t be served remotely. “Like all markets it has its own culture and preference and in terms of understanding the needs of our customers, you need a direct presence with management of that business. It’s a market that we’re quite focused on and we see significant opportunities.”

Not every Irish company has Kerry’s resources so for many, entering the Russian market will mean frequent visits at the start to make connections and establish business relationships (see panel).

Brandtone, the mobile marketing specialist, has yet to make a formal decision about entering the Russian market but CEO Donald Fitzmaurice estimates the company has made at least 10 business trips there. “If you are based on Pearse Street and selling to somebody in Ranelagh, the first thing they will say is ‘come and see me’. The fact that the customer is in Moscow doesn’t change that. If you’re selling things, it’s a face-to-face proposition even still, especially for a foreign company with a new product in a new market,” he says. “You do as much preparation as you can, but in the end you have to roll up your sleeves, go over there and get stuck in.”

Tony Maher, the Irishman who oversaw the $3.8 billion sale of Russia’s largest food company Wimm-Bill-Dann to PepsiCo in 2010, recommends no more than three or four meetings in a day for Irish companies. He advises keeping presentations short, and suggests never arranging meetings after 4.30 when you are likely to be tired and your pitch will suffer.

Maher says the gaps in such a schedule can be used productively. “Fill in the time by going in and out of shops, looking at what people are doing and what they are buying – stuff you can’t do by research at home. (Continued on page 36)
Mission to Moscow: first impressions

On arriving in Moscow, there’s no denying the culture shock takes a little longer to absorb than in many other big cities, with preprogrammed impressions yet to be shed and the Cyrillic script on every road sign and billboard from Domodedovo airport to the city centre reinforcing the initial sense of displacement. But a stroll along Moscow’s wide boulevards and the imposing beauty of its buildings give a sense of the scale of the place.

What’s also quickly apparent is how European it is. Visitors can ease their way into Moscow life with a visit to one of the many cosmopolitan restaurants that clearly gaze westwards. There’s a palpable buzz in the Russian capital: drop in to one of the many coffee chains around the city and it’s hard to escape an echo of Celtic Tiger Ireland in full boom.

The comparisons end there, however. Russia appears to have weathered the financial crisis better than most European countries. Last year its GDP grew by 4.2 per cent and growth for this year, while lower, is estimated at around 3.6 per cent.

Another impression is how commercial Moscow is: advertising is everywhere, mixing Russian domestic brands with familiar international names – befitting a country that’s forecast to be one of the world’s largest consumer market by 2020.
Sustaining an idea

EC3 Design was formed by three independent Irish architects specialising in sustainable buildings. They established the venture specifically to seek out opportunities in Russia and made the first fact-finding visit in late April 2012. The potential in Russia centres on five-story apartment buildings dating from the Khruschev era that comprises around half of the country’s housing stock. EC3 has devised a retrofitting option to make these blocks sustainable and energy-efficient. As for identifying the gap in the market, EC3 director Sean Harrington suggests the founders’ background helps. “Good architects think instinctively about what isn’t around,” he says.

Harrington and fellow director Jay Stewart’s three-day business trip was preceded by nearly 200 person-hours of extensive research and preparation. “We did a very image-based presentation that didn’t rely heavily on language. We used a very refined, distilled amount of text. Every page had captions in English and Russian so there was almost a storyboard of the project idea,” says Harrington.

The presentation itself mixed old and new technology: paper notepad and Apple iPad. “We took 15 A4 bound reports. People love taking away something, and electronic presentations only leave the memory. And, that was a very cost-efficient thing to do,” adds Harrington.

He credits Enterprise Ireland’s support in providing translators, transport and opening doors to potential contacts. If successful, the initiative could create opportunities for other Irish companies. Harrington believes. “We’re like the prow of the ship: lots of other businesses can follow architects after project has been established.”

The visit was intensive but promising, and plans are already underway to return in June. “We came back with 30 to 40 business cards. The networking in a three-day period was absolutely immense. We came away knowing for sure that we’re on the right track and that there’s a great opportunity for what we do,” says Harrington.

Learn about the place while you’re there. Go into a supermarket at six in the evening when it’s busy, and go on the metro: see if people are reading Kindles and listening to their iPods,” he says.

As a relatively untapped market by Irish standards, Russia has much to offer but it’s not without challenges. Last year the Irish Exporters Association spoke of concerns at “the high level of bureaucracy, customs delays, high duty and excise tariffs as well as logistics logjams”. Meanwhile the ever-present elephant in the room is corruption. Some companies The Market interviewed spoke off the record about a “Wild West” and “ripoff” culture. One executive complained: “You’re going to deal with bureaucracy and corrupt practices and you make a decision as a business to work within the system or circumvent it and do what people are generally doing.” His company chose not to make any corrupt payments and its sales in Russia are growing. Others took a similar line and gained a reputation for playing by the rules.

Encouragingly, Transparency International’s most recent Corruption Perception Index saw Russia’s ranking fall to its lowest level since 2007. What’s more, others say such practices usually involve public officials and Irish SMEs are unlikely to encounter this.

Avril Conroy, who sits on the Global Irish Forum’s advisory board and works in Moscow, says a new generation of emancipated Russians wants to leave that culture behind. “Russians want to live differently. They don’t want to do what they were doing 10 or 15 years ago,” she says.

One way to cut through the bureaucracy and avoid the pitfalls is to find a locally based partner who knows the territory. Travel software firm OpenJaw took this approach and it has worked, says SVP of sales Declan McGuinness. “Identifying a person that has that network in the vertical you’re targeting is very important, because relationship building is the cornerstone of doing business in Russia... Essentially Dublin handles most of the selling; our representative facilitates the meetings and negotiations.”

Another option is to send a member of your own staff. In its Finance Bill 2012, the Government introduced a tax deduction scheme to incentivise employees to spend prolonged periods developing foreign markets like Russia for their employers. The Foreign Earnings Deduction (FED) scheme allows a maximum annual income of €35,000, and the scheme will operate until the 2014 tax year.

With ever more barriers coming down, and lobbying behind the scenes for regular direct flights between Ireland and Russia, the world’s largest country seems to be edging a little closer.

“It’s the nearest of the BRICs to Ireland, and you can make money and take money out.”

Trade Mission to Russia

An Irish trade mission will visit Moscow on June 18 to 21, 2012. For further information, talk to Garry Forde, High-Growth Market Advisor, Dublin.

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What is it with Irish boys and their aeroplanes? Mark Godfrey doesn’t have the answer. But he does report that Beijing is becoming a hot stop for our high fliers. As China’s aviation sector soars, so too do opportunities for aviation service suppliers.

FAST PLANE TO CHINA

When the International Air Transport Association (IATA) annual congress opens in Beijing in early June, two Irishmen will have the attention of Chinese aviation executives keen to know how to run airports and airlines. Speaking at the annual meeting of the aviation industry’s representative body, Willie Walsh, CEO of International Airlines Group (which owns British Airways and Iberia) and Alan Joyce, head of Australian carrier Quantas, will also no doubt be looking to learn how aviation will grow in China, the fastest-growing source of air passenger numbers and aircraft sales.

China’s air passenger numbers are forecast to increase from 266 million last year to 700 million in 2020 while the country’s airlines will purchase 5,000 new jets in the 20 coming years according to the IATA. Aviation industry experts in China point to long-term growth potential. Linda Kuang, head of China sales at European aircraft equipment supplier Avio Diepen [and formerly Airbus China] says the growth of Chinese carriers and aviation travel has aircraft manufacturers struggling to keep up. “Hence aviation lease companies have a big role to play; they have access to supply.” She also points to huge local demand over the next decade for aircraft parts, pilots and training.

THE IRISH LAND

Irish firms already meeting China’s demand are Parc Aviation, which recruits pilots for local airlines, and Aer Rianta, which this summer will open a large retail concession in one of China’s largest airports in southwesterly Kunming city. Edgewater from County Louth, meanwhile, is teaching aviation English to pilots here, while Dublin-based aircraft leasing firm Avolon has an office in Shanghai. Aviation firms joining a recent trade delegation to China included Inflight Dublin, which supplies inflight entertainment videos to several Chinese airlines, and two private aircraft brokers: Private Sky, based in Shannon, and Mach Aviation Services in Swords.

Drogheda-based Edgewater has taught English to 1,000 Chinese pilots since it started operating in China. Here since 2001, Edgewater in 2008 became the first foreign-owned firm to get a licence to teach English to pilots on-site in the country. The firm has an office in Beijing and counts China as its top Asian market (it’s also active in other countries in the region like India and Kazakhstan). Edgewater, explains CEO Finian Connolly, drives its business through cooperation with Chinese airlines as well as China’s aviation regulators and aircraft makers like Airbus, which assembles airplanes in China.
Pilots’ Progress

Mark Godfrey talks to Parc Aviation about China

Based near Dublin airport, Parc Aviation has supplied 55 pilots to 11 clients in China. Pilots come from all over the world, including Ireland, explains Padraig Toolan, until recently head of the company’s China operations. “We are bringing in quality, experience, not cadets: six to seven years and a minimum 4,000 hours. Most have 10 to 15 years experience.”

Finding pilots is a lot of hard work, explains his colleague Senan Haugh, Parc’s client services manager. China’s domestic airlines will require about 3,000 new pilots every year, while training schools in the country can supply only 2,000 annually, say analysts. An estimated total of 180,000 pilots will be needed in the Asia-Pacific by 2030, according to statistics compiled by American aerospace company Boeing. Civil Aviation Flight University (CAFU) of China predicts China will account for two thirds of that demand: CAFU predicts a shortage of 18,000 pilots in China by 2015. The situation is urgent: Shanghai-based Spring Airlines scaled back its expansion plan from 100 to 50 new planes between 2011 and 2015 because of a shortage of pilots. The bankruptcy of European carriers such as Spanair and Malev has created a surplus of pilots in Europe. Parc Aviation updates jobs on its website and also advertises at the International Pilots Federation conferences. Based on new aircraft deliveries, China is the world’s number one market for pilots, followed by India and the Middle East.

While Haugh notes that “not every pilot wants to move their family to Shanghai”, there is a key attraction: pilots flying Airbus A320 jets on one to 3.5 hour routes can expect US$17,000 a month and bonuses. They do, however, have to adjust to the culture. There’s also a lot of red tape: it can take up to a year until a pilot gets into the cockpit of a jet. “Chinese authorities are very conscious of quality of the pilots,” explains Haugh.

“Chinese cadet pilots must have passed English proficiency tests before going to overseas training schools. Chinese line pilots have to undertake a proficiency test also,” explains Connolly. Edgewater, which recruits teaching staff locally in Beijing, counts flagship carrier Air China among its clients. Training takes a minimum six months, and pilots typically sit two-hour classes a week. “It’s a challenging course,” explains Connolly. Contracts vary in length and scope: it could be for three months or for 12 months. “You may be teaching 200 pilots, and next time you get 50 pilots, whatever the airline needs at that time.”

AIRPORT BUILDING SPREE

An airport building spree in China has offered an opening for Dublin Airport Authority (DAA). Subsidiary Aer Rianta International (ARI) in 2011 signed a strategic collaboration agreement with the Yunnan Airport Group, which operates 11 airports in south-west China. As part of that agreement, ARI will from June 28 this year operate 11 (duty paid) retail outlets at Yunnan Airport Group’s new Kunming Changshui International Airport. The Irish firm brings its Chinese partner retail know-how as well as a track record for excellence in service as well as detailed research into what passengers want, explains Vincent Wall, a DAA spokesman.

The Kunming operation marks a return to China for ARI, which in the 1990s provided retail consultancy services to Beijing and Hong Kong international airports. Kunming was a long process, says Wall, who believes the signing in 2010 of a Strategic Collaboration Agreement between Yunnan Airports Group, a state-owned firm, and the DAA, was crucial. Wall says the Chinese aviation sector, firmly in government hands, was reassured by his company’s semi-state background as well as its flexibility about control of the business. “We’re not hard and fast about ownership structures,” he adds.

Kunming airport is on course to handle about 24 million passengers by 2012 and 50 million by 2020 as Southeast Asia traffic ramps up. A long-time outlook for ARI comes in the chance to grow into Yunnan’s satellite airports. Crucially, it also allows ARI to learn more about Chinese consumers, vital information for ventures globally, including a JV with Korea-based Shilla to bid for Los Angeles airport where 30% of traffic is Asian.

ARI, which operates duty free shops at the new Terminal 3 at Indira Gandhi International Airport in Delhi, has posted a dedicated Business Development Manager, John Woodhouse, in the southern city of Shenzhen to pursue other retail opportunities at Chinese airports.

COMPETITION

Connolly sees opportunities for Irish pilot training schools but points out that the regulatory Civil Aviation Administration of China (CAAC) has, for the time being, stopped approving overseas schools to take Chinese trainee pilots. The CAAC currently recognises only qualifications from Australian or
US flight schools. Others also want to get in on the action, among them New Zealand flight schools: the country’s transport ministry has claimed New Zealand flight schools can train Chinese pilots at half the RMB800,000 yuan (US$126,000) figure that it costs to train a pilot in China.

There’s also low-end local competition to contend with. Connolly believes his firm’s competitive advantage is its provision of native English-speaking trainers – and quality. “As is often the case, the market tends to look for the cheapest solution at first and then later realises that the cheapest solution does not solve the problem…This can be frustrating when competing in the market, as the quality we offer comes with a price.”

Likewise Senan Haugh at Parc (see breakout panel) says newcomer local competitors, spotting a potentially lucrative business opportunity, haven’t been able to offer the support (and on-time payment processes) that Parc has perfected for pilots. “Competitors have yet to offer the industry knowledge and contacts it’s taken Parc years to build up,” explains Parc’s Padraig Toolan.

Ireland will see plenty of competition in the leasing sector. Avolon CEO Domhnal Slattery predicts Singapore will become the next aerospace hub, offering financial and legal know-how as well as global tax treaties which made Ireland a hub for the industry over the past decades. Chinese banks like Bank of China and ICBC (which last year ordered 42 A320 aircraft) have begun to use Singapore’s stock market to raise funds, he explains. Avolon sees a solid future business in Asia – it currently has offices in Hong Kong and Shanghai – said Slattery, who’s considering where to base the company’s Asian headquarters to capitalise on opportunities in China in particular.

**NEXT WAVE OF GROWTH**

Beyond the growth of the commercial aviation business here, the next wave of growth will come from general aviation and the rise of privately owned carriers. Linda Kuang points to a long-expected relaxation of restrictions on sky controls opening airspace to private planes and helicopters. Indeed industry data suggest that while China will purchase 2,500 more commercial aircraft by 2015, there’ll be 10,000 civilian helicopters in the country’s skies by 2020, also creating more demand for pilots.

A new wave of private commercial airlines also offers opportunities. Kuang describes Shanghai-based Juneyao Airlines as “good customers” since they’re young and small, thus more open to new technologies and services than the state-owned giants like Air China and China Southern. The performance so far of Juneyao suggests the private carriers have a good future, says Kuang. Spring Airlines, China’s biggest low-cost carrier, grew its passenger numbers to 7 million passengers in 2011, compared with 5.78 million the previous year. “They’re going to be big, and China’s airlines will be the world’s biggest,” predicts Kuang.
**Mike Hogan reports from Warsaw on the Irish project that fans travelling to Euro 2012 will be able to name-check and provides a topical reminder of the wider opportunities this local ‘emerging market’ offers.**

As Irish football fans descend on Poland, during the second week of June, for the Group stages of the Euro 2012 Championship, many may not realise that on their route to Gdańsk and Poznan, they will see the results of the ‘green jersey’ put on by Irish business, who have been involved in delivering infrastructure and services to make the Euro 2012 championship possible.

The masses of Irish fans traveling by car and camper vans to Ireland's second match against Spain in Gdańsk will travel on part of the new A2 motorway where Irish construction companies such as Sisk, Roadbridge and SIAC are partners of consortia to deliver the motorway infrastructure.

Arriving for the match, Irish fans will enter the PGE Arena Gdańsk via a pedestrian tunnel built by ABM from Swords. And within the tri-city area of Gdańsk/Gdynia/Sopot, where the Irish squad will be based, fans will pass the ongoing construction at Gdynia-Kosakowo Airport, where Ireland's Tobin Engineering has been actively involved in designing facilities.

In downtown Gdańsk, fans looking for a quick bite to eat in one of the many McDonalds will be able to play a Euro 2012 promotional scratch card designed by Playprint from Dublin. Meantime, fans in Poznan for the matches with Croatia and Italy can take other refreshments by pouring their own pints at a Draft Table from Waterford’s Ellickson International installed in the Warta bar chain run by Heineken / Grupa Żywiec.

These are just some small examples of how Irish businesses have established very strong footholds.

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**Does Poland represent an opportunity for your company?**

Part of the reason that Poland is so attractive for Irish business is that Poland is still largely building out its infrastructure. This is taking place in tandem with an expansion of its domestic production capacity, especially in food and agriculture, while at the same time, Poland is emerging as the destination of choice for foreign multinationals wishing to set up shop in central and eastern Europe. All this activity has created wide ranging opportunities for Irish business.

The top five sectors for Irish business in Poland are:

- **INFRASTRUCTURE**
  - Poland is rapidly upgrading its road and rail transport systems, and this has already generated work for hard-pressed Irish construction companies. While the years ahead will see some slackening off in the build-out of the motorway infrastructure, substantial EU funds are allocated for the development of Poland’s rail system, which is vital in creating a North/South and East/West transportation hub for freight, given Poland’s vital central geographic position in Europe.
  - In aviation, Ireland is connected to 12 Polish airports by carriers such as Aer Lingus, Ryanair and Wizz. However Poland remains under-provisioned in airport infrastructure, with existing airports continuing to be developed, in addition to new ones being built in Modlin and Lublin. Ireland’s recent experience in upgrading our own transport infrastructure gives companies a unique opportunity to bring their insights and experience to Poland.

- **SERVICING FOREIGN MULTINATIONALS**
  - Poland was initially slow in attracting foreign direct investment (FDI), and tended to lose out to countries such as the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary.
  - The situation has changed dramatically in recent years, and Poland is now attracting foreign multinationals, producing electronics, white goods, auto manufacturing and components. Poland is, for example, the leading producer of LCD screens in Europe thanks to investments by LG, Philips and Toshiba.

- **CLEANTECH**
  - In the service sector, Poland has developed a strong presence in back office services (BOS) and business process outsourcing (BPO). It is now an established pattern for Irish SMEs servicing foreign multinationals in Ireland to service them in Poland, and for Irish companies that have developed businesses complementary to the activities of FDI in Ireland to do so in Poland.
Poland has become Ireland’s local ‘emerging market’, a growing market at Ireland’s back door, which has escaped the European recession and has demonstrated GDP growth of 3.4% throughout the crisis.

Poland is a market that is not without its problems. Irish companies in general find levels of Polish bureaucracy very difficult to deal with as compared to Ireland, payment terms are longer, which can place pressure on precious cash flow, and margins in general tend to be lower than in Ireland. However, Poland plays a valuable role in most Irish companies’ export footprint in what is a steady market, which not prone to systematic shocks, delivers steady returns and is moderately growing. Poland is not the market in which Irish companies will make their fortune, but it will certainly help them on their way.

**SCORE IN POLAND**

during 2012-2016, primarily to upgrade its water and waste infrastructure, largely driven by EU environmental demands.

Within the green energy sector, Poland will be spending up to €20bn on renewable energy projects in the next decade, primarily in wind and biomass to meet its EU commitments and to lessen its energy dependency on Russia. Enterprise Ireland clients are already active across cleantech in Poland, and this is a trend we expect to accelerate.

**AGRICULTURE AND FOOD PROCESSING**

Poland is fast developing as eastern Europe’s agricultural and food powerhouse, servicing its own internal market of 38m consumers, while being situated on bordering countries with a combined population of 300 million. Since EU accession in 2004, Polish agriculture has matured through consolidation of farm sizes, use of modern technologies and upgrading of farm equipment. The development of the agribusiness sector in Poland is far from complete, however. Many Irish companies successfully service the sector, and there are significant opportunities for additional Irish companies to become involved.

The facts speak for themselves: Polish food exports have expanded 400% since EU accession, and, on foot of the likely changes to the EU milk market in 2015, significant upgrading of Polish dairy farms is already underway. Poland is the third largest producer of sugarbeet and pork in the EU, and it is ranked fourth for milk and wheat. All of these sectors are seeking higher efficiencies. Enterprise Ireland in Poland already works with Irish companies selling agricultural machinery, animal nutrition, veterinary chemicals and ICT solutions for food and farming, and this sector is booming with a marked increase in exports in 2011/2012.

**RETAIL**

Poland’s retail markets are continuing to be built-out, but are dominated by foreign giants such as Tesco, REAL, Auchan, Lidl, Carrefour and Jerónimo Martins. Irish food and drink products have already achieved a level of penetration, with Irish cheeses and meat on Polish shelves and a wide range of Irish whiskeys and beers readily available.

Although not reaching the scale of the Polish food aisle in Irish supermarkets, there continues to be opportunities either for Irish companies to sell food and drink products into Poland directly or through established channels with international chains.

In a similar vein, the construction, retro-fit and upgrading of retail facilities has already generated business for Irish companies supplying equipment and solutions to the food and non-food retail sector, including companies such as Novum in supermarket refrigeration, and Nualight in LED lighting.
Irish tolling expert Easytrip has created a new division, Trans Europe, via a strategic partnership with Dutch operator Transpass. The deal allows commercial vehicle operators and haulage companies to access significant reductions on their tolling costs across Europe, as well as savings on VAT recovery and excise duty on fuel across Europe.

Easytrip Trans Europe operates in 12 countries throughout the continent, including France, Spain, Italy, Germany, Poland and the Czech Republic.

Managing Director of Easytrip, Dermot MacEvilly, explains the affiliation with Transpass: “The partnership came about as a result of one of those funny coincidences. We were looking for a European partner and had Transpass on a list of potential people to talk to. We were about to engage with them, and then a shareholder suggested we talk to one another and made the introduction. The two companies were introduced to one another and saw the benefits, and it helped to have that initial introduction through a mutual contact.”

The deal with Transpass offers Easytrip exclusive licence to offer these reductions to Irish hauliers, but also allows Transpass to cross-sell Easytrip’s services to their clients, who may be doing a lot of business importing into Ireland and can avail of savings on Irish tolls.

The motivation for finding a European partner was driven at European level; the European Commission has recognised that tolling is now the norm in many of its member countries, and it has been the norm for up to 30 to 40 years in many places. As such they have introduced the European Electronic Tolls Services (EETS) Directive, to create a system whereby you can have one account and one billing system to pay tolls anywhere. Easytrip decided that they wanted to be a part of a European offering, as well as giving additional services to their customers.

The tolling scene across Europe has been necessarily fractured, as tolling is normally constrained by national boundaries, but this may be coming to an end thanks to the EETS Directive, and Easytrip wants to be involved, said MacEvilly.

“Each country offers its own tolling scheme, which by its very nature has very little value overseas. This is still the standard practice, but in another 10-15 years we will see more consolidation. And you have to be aware that it is not always the people who are the original operators in a certain space who are the ones to take it to that level. However, we would like to be a part of an overall offering.”

As the deal currently encompasses only one partner and covers some, but not all, European countries, there is scope for expanding, notably in the UK.

“The UK is the one market that we feel we need to address for our clients. In one way, it’s a funny market as there are very few toll locations over there, only three or four in total, so there’s...
never been a drive over there to offer a cover-all solution. We are in talks directly with each toll to look at doing something. As a result, there are four or five elements to getting it to work. It’s an obvious target for us. It’s something we’re working on, and we’re quietly confident we will have something in place by the end of the year,” said MacEvilly.

For Easytrip, this is not just a quick win, accessing new toll discounts; it is part of developing a more strategic solution to key clients. MacEvilly said: “We see this as a long-term initiative. We have already invested in this scheme by hiring two additional members of staff to support the service. The offering is still in the early stages, and we are still looking to bring it to market and communicate that message. We are looking to maximise the commercial opportunity we have at the moment. We see this as a multi-year play and part of a longer term strategy to provide solutions across a number of markets.

The Trans Europe offering is actually a combination of two advantages. The first is, thanks to the agreement with Transpass, that the haulage companies can get the maximum reduction from the group scheme, up to 8% in France and 13% in Italy. The second element is that Trans Europe will make available key language and local knowledge to help members recoup additional funds through VAT recovery.

The combined benefit of the overall operation is, according to MacEvilly, that “there are no individual bills or receipts, it is all centralised through us. It creates an advantage because of its ease-of-use, and there is no longer a need for bank accounts and bank guarantees in various European countries, which is still the case for companies looking to pay commercial haulage tolls on the continent.”

“The tolling scene across Europe has been necessarily fractured, as tolling is normally constrained by national boundaries, but this may be coming to an end thanks to the EETS Directive, and Easytrip wants to be involved.”

DERMOT MACEVILLY
MD, EASYTRIP

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As Facebook grows in popularity with every demographic, non-participation is increasingly not an option for SMEs. But without gaining a clear understanding of how the platform’s marketing tools work and developing an engagement strategy, many businesses may be wasting their time.

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING LIKED.

WHY FACEBOOK MEANS BUSINESS FOR SMES
B2B companies who want to consolidate their online reputation and open up an important communication channel to their core audience, a Facebook Page filled with relevant and interesting posts is an affordable and effective method.

The obvious appeal of Facebook has driven a mass migration of SMEs onto the platform. Some surveys show that 90% of small businesses in the US have some kind of Facebook presence, and Facebook is the most popular social networking site among B2B companies.

But a lack of knowledge about the platform and its key features is hampering engagement. Many business Pages are updated less than once a month, and 25% of potential Facebook merchants in one survey admitted they did not know how to use Facebook advertising properly.

Training options include attending a day-long seminar (a fairly hefty investment for smaller businesses) or picking up the basics by browsing some of the hundreds of websites, blogs and “how-to” videos available online. The second option might be free, but it does require a sizeable investment of time. And there is also no guarantee that this content, much of it generated in order to promote services, will be accurate, reliable or applicable.

MindLeaders Facebook Trainer for Business offers businesses a low-cost, self-service way to understand how to get the most out of Facebook.

The biggest argument for the majority of SMEs to be active on Facebook is the fact that their target market is already there. There are now over 845 million active Facebook users across the world, and over two million users in Ireland. Compared with other social networks, consumers log on to Facebook more frequently and spend a longer time on the site. It’s estimated that 50% of users access the site every day and in total, 1 in 8 minutes of all minutes spent online is spent on Facebook.

The expanding Facebook population is no longer limited to students and tech savvy young people. In Ireland, the majority of Facebook users are spread fairly evenly over the 18 – 24, 25 – 34 and 35 – 44 age groups, but the fastest growing age groups are 55 and over. The growing universality of Facebook means that increasingly, in order to have a credible online presence, non-participation is not really an option.

The world’s largest social network also stands apart from other popular platforms like Twitter when measured by the quantity of data it gathers about users. Facebook profiles include demographic details such as age, location, employment, marital status along with often quite precise information about the personal interests of users. Whenever a Facebook user joins a group, becomes a Fan of a Page or shares a link to a website, even more data is generated that is highly valuable to advertisers.

For consumer-facing small businesses offering specialised services, it’s easy to tap into this wealth of information and quickly find a path to their target market. A photography company specialising in wedding photos, for example, is able to create an ad which targets women who have listed their status as “engaged” within a certain geographical area. The result is a rapid return on a small outlay that would be unimaginable without Facebook.

In-built “shareability” and social interaction on the Facebook platform also offer potential advantages which businesses shouldn’t ignore. Every time a customer engages with a company or its content on Facebook, that interaction is automatically shared with all their friends. From the user’s perspective, that business is identified with a person they already know and trust.

By leveraging this feature through social advertising on Facebook, businesses can dramatically extend their reach with a digitised form of that most traditional and low-cost marketing tool: the power of word-of-mouth.
Timeline

The introduction of the Timelines to business Pages on March 31st led to the usual chorus of discontent that accompanies the changes Facebook makes to the platform. But Timeline Pages actually offer smaller enterprises the chance to compete with larger brands by making it easy to create a more visually engaging Page and to pique user interest by telling the story of their business.

Producing a large, high resolution “Cover” image is vital. No promotional text in the image is permitted by Facebook, who intended Timelines to humanise business Pages and improve the user experience. Companies should embrace this aspiration and take the opportunity to showcase some of the people who make the services they offer special, or pick out imagery which encapsulates their vision and philosophy.

The next step is to add a set of new “milestone” posts to the Timeline which mark important moments in the company’s development. Timelines allow new posts to be added at any point in the past, so it’s an opportunity to develop a lively potted history of the business.

The app is filled with tips and guides to best practice. Any business hoping to benefit from Facebook marketing will find the following pointers useful:

CREATE A “CONVERSATION CALENDAR” TO PLAN YOUR ENGAGEMENT AND FIND THE RIGHT RHYTHM

It’s important to set aside a small amount of time each day to update your Facebook Page and to post at regular intervals. Fans don’t like to be updated too frequently; usually about one post a day is just right.

SHOW PERSONALITY AND REWARD YOUR FANS

Vary the content you post to Facebook and include more than just sales messages if you want your Fans to share that content with others. Pictures and video are far more likely to be shared than weblinks, and offering special offers and deals is a great way to keep Fans coming back.

TEST OUT WHAT WORKS

Don’t expect your engagement strategy to work perfectly the first time round. Use Facebook Insights to understand what is the best way to drive more “Likes” for your page and test out multiple targeting options and versions of your Ads using Facebook Ad Manager to make sure you get the best return on your spend.

For more information on how to purchase MindLeaders Facebook Trainer for Business, go to www.training4facebook.com or the Facebook Page at www.facebook.com/trainerforbusiness
Germany is one of the biggest market in the world for medical technology. Claire O’Connell looks at what Irish companies need to know to establish a presence there.

SIZING UP GERMANY FOR MEDTECH

There’s an often-quoted sound bite about the Irish medical technology sector. It describes how, per capita, Ireland is the second-largest exporter of medical devices in Europe. And who’s the largest? Germany.

But Germany also imports: it is the largest medical device market in western Europe and one of the largest in the world. So are there opportunities for Irish companies to establish a presence in that market, and if so, what do they need to know?

“Germany, being home to some of the world’s leading medical device manufacturers, is not only Europe’s most desirable export market, but its strong economy and close proximity to Ireland make it an ideal export location for Irish companies,” says Düsseldorf-based Jane Greene, Life Sciences Market Advisor with Enterprise Ireland for Germany, Austria and Switzerland. Local industry tends to be geared up to supply export markets – the majority of goods manufactured in Germany are exported – leaving the greater part of the domestic market to be supplied by imported products, she notes.

However, companies that are looking to the German market need to be aware of the terrain: “Its healthcare system can be quite complex, and requires a level of knowledge in its policies and regulations, specifically regarding its reimbursement system,” says Greene.

LEARNING FROM DOING

One person with plenty of experience of doing business in the German healthcare system is Cathal O’Donnell. He was previously MD of Irish company BMR/Neurotech in Germany, starting there in the late 1990s. “We grew the company in Germany from zero up to a company that has 50 per cent market share in this market for pain therapy and rehab devices,” says O’Donnell.

“We worked with 75 per cent of all private practice orthopaedic surgeons and a significant percentage of the gynaecologists as well with up to 95 to 100 per cent of the insurance companies. We were treating in excess of 300,000 patients in Germany every year.” Today, he has a Konstanz-based consultancy, Valdon Healthcare, and specialises in reimbursement for healthcare products.

“Health is a huge business in Germany,” says O’Donnell. “One in seven people work in the health sector in Germany, and there are about 200,000 people working in the medtech sector here. About 60 per cent of the product would be exported.”

One of the keys to Germany’s success is that it has a robust medical device market of its own – reimbursement is available and the population is ageing. “The market is growing here at five per cent across all sectors,” says O’Donnell. “Unemployment is down to below seven per cent, the lowest since reunification,
and that enables a lot of funds to go into the health insurance coffers to pay for new and innovative products going through. If we were to describe the German medical device sector at the moment, it’s strong because you have a good market here and because the insurance companies are still paying for the product.”

Mid-sized companies “rule the roost” in the medtech space in Germany, according to O’Donnell, and the sector has held up well during the recession. New legislation has been introduced to help move innovative products faster through the system and health reforms are ongoing. Plus while there are around 150 health insurers in Germany today, that figure has come down from more than 400 in 2000.

However, German companies are struggling with the trends of falling reimbursement and rising volumes, notes O’Donnell. “You have an increased demand for care, increased demand of volume of five percent and the eroding prices – you are running harder to stand still from a profit point of view.”

**GETTING IN**

Irish companies should be aware that there are different sub-sectors in the market – home-use products, hospital-based products and professional products for private practice – and each has a reasonably well defined path for entry, says O’Donnell.

“If you want to bring your product into the home use, you need to go via a medical device register (Hilfsmittelverzeichnis or HMV),” he explains. “And for home use, with the CE mark and clinical data gathered you are talking between three and six months if you do it well.”

If you are bringing a new hospital-based product to the market, you need to establish where the product fits in among the ‘diagnosis-related groupings’ or DRGs, which cover in-patient services and devices. New treatments need to be assessed before being embedded in a DRG and this can take up to three years in some cases. Meanwhile, for private practices, you need to determine how the product fits into the EBM (or uniform value scale) code, says O’Donnell, pointing out that the private practice landscape in Germany is quite different to that of Ireland.

“There are more than 100,000 private practices here. A town of the size of Athlone in Germany could have four or five orthopaedic surgeons, one or two neurologists and maybe 10 private practice gynaecologists,” he says. “You need to find the end market and understand why a professional doctor might pay €30,000 for that piece of equipment that gives a competitive advantage.”

And across the sector, innovation is a driver, he adds. “If you are bringing out purely a generic product you can’t expect to see a large adoption because the pricing is already very competitive. You need to be looking at innovative and disruptive technologies, it needs to have something special.”
“It’s a great market to be in, and if you did nothing else but create a clear roadway in Germany, you would be doing your company a favour.”

**REIMBURSEMENT - FORTUNE FAVOURS THE PREPARED**

One of the key pitfalls awaiting the unprepared is the area of reimbursement, according to O’Donnell. “You can get a CE mark fairly quickly once you have your QMS systems in place and carried out your risk management, but if you don’t have a reimbursement strategy in place, you could be sitting twiddling your thumbs for another two or three years,” he says.

“It’s like a second CE mark, and without that second CE mark you will not be able to sell effectively into a lot of different countries.” Waiting to cross that bridge when you come to it could incur delays that spell the difference between leading the market and losing it, and O’Donnell stresses the need to prepare for the reimbursement system early.

“When someone has a prototype of their product they should already have a reimbursement strategy written,” he says. “And if someone in the medtech sector in Ireland is developing a product, then for me Enterprise Ireland would be an early port of call.”

More generally, he advises that companies should expect year on year price erosion due to the normal market forces. But despite the hurdles of regulation and reimbursement, O’Donnell argues that if you do it right, it’s worth doing. “It’s a great market to be in, and if you did nothing else but create a clear roadway in Germany, you would be doing your company a favour.”

**GETTING READY**

Many Irish companies have already made that leap and another currently looking to the German market is MitaMed. The spin-out from the Cork Cancer Research Centre is developing a new device, currently in human trials, for treating colorectal cancer. By encouraging tumours to take up anti-cancer drugs more readily, the aim is to make treatment easier and improve patient outcome.

“We are a start-up, and need support for market access and reimbursement in the German market,” says company co-founder Dr Declan Soden. “And we are finding the support and expertise very useful as we prepare a roadmap for entering this market.”

MitaMed’s device should be assessed through a mechanism for innovative products, and Soden anticipates that it will take around four to six months between application and approval for reimbursement.

For any other Irish medtech company that’s eyeing up the opportunities in Germany, Jane Greene from Enterprise Ireland offers these tips: “Research your market, understand who your competitors are both locally and internationally, understand your USP [unique selling position], acquaint yourself with the Medical Device Reimbursement system and plan accordingly.”

For more information contact Jane Greene at Jane.Greene@enterprise-ireland.com
With the biggest medical technology inward buyer visit to Ireland set to take place again this autumn, Conor Delvin spoke to visitors at last year’s Med in Ireland to see what brought them to the Dublin expo.

“We are looking for both innovative and the tried-and-tested products.”

Over 800 delegates descended on The Convention Centre Dublin last October to participate in Med in Ireland 2011. As the largest medical technologies event to be held in Ireland to date, Med in Ireland is the only forum where the full spectrum of medical technologies companies, customers, researchers, clinicians, FDI MNCs and financiers are represented along with leading international hospital systems such as the Cleveland Clinic, USA. Over 250 international decision makers from 30 countries were brought to Ireland to meet and visit Irish companies at both the convention centre and their sites throughout Ireland in the run up to the event. Moreover, almost 1,000 formal one-to-one partnering meetings took place on the day.

Speaking to The Market, Marie O’Malley, a senior director of supply management at US-based Medtronic CardioVascular, explained that her main objective was to meet with current suppliers to discuss additional opportunities and to get introductions to new suppliers who may fit the company’s future needs. “We are looking for both innovative and the tried-and-tested products. Our therapies are becoming less invasive, which is driving us to some innovative materials that will enable our devices to be smaller in size.”

“This has led us to work very closely with our suppliers to incorporate and sometimes develop higher performing components. In addition, we are working closer with our preferred suppliers to partner with them early in the development cycle so that their design input and recommendations can be incorporated. This will lead to ensuring long-term manufacturability, lower costs and higher quality of our products,” O’Malley said. “We are also looking to shift from buying discrete components to partnering with suppliers earlier in the development process to identify options to source more sub-assemblies as a more cost effective solution.”

Barbara Parham, a senior buyer with Boston-based Arstasis, said that she was looking to meet with companies that might be able to produce some of the new component parts for a device as well companies that might package the device if her company decided at a future date to sell in Europe.

“The first thing I look for in a company is their technical capabilities and what their core competencies are. If they look promising in that area, then I would be looking to see if they have all of their quality systems in place,” she said. “When a company has the technical capabilities, the quality systems in place, then probably one of the biggest factors for me is communication and service.”

Parham, who found a suitable company to work with at the event, has since entered into a purchase agreement. “We were impressed with the companies we visited. Their facilities were clean, modern and efficient and the people were very knowledgeable and nice,” she said.

Likewise, Jonas Tynnerstå, a director of design and development with Swedish based company BONESUPPORT AB, was upbeat about Med In Ireland. “There is a long tradition in the medtech industry in Ireland, people have done it before and we do not need to teach them how to work with medical devices. This makes it easier to focus on the core business and what really adds value to our customers.”

But he was also happy to share tips about what some companies could do better. “As an engineer I want to meet with the engineers from the Irish companies. Unfortunately, this is not always the case. Many times, the companies send their sales representatives and leave the engineers in the office,” he told The Market. “I believe there is a natural conflict in the meeting of engineers/sales persons. The engineer wants answers to their technical questions and the sales person wants answers to what the annual order quantity would be.”

As a general point, he also advises companies to be careful about passing on confidential or sensitive information during a sales pitch and always clearing it with the customer before showing their products on a stand or even mentioning their names as clients.

Finally, he stressed the importance of follow-up. “Too many companies promise things, but after the convention, it never happens. I know companies that have promised to send quotes and samples, but never did. Even though the actual incidents were many years ago, I still do not visit their stands, nor do business with them. There’s too much competition to bother.”

All three buyers, impressed with the offerings at the expo, said they looked forward to Ireland’s next showcase, and advised that suppliers should continue to evolve their understanding of the product landscape so they could continue to provide proactive solutions to device manufacturers.
French customers have a reputation for being incredibly demanding and finicky. And why not? They are buying on their own soil for some of the biggest multinationals in the world, and there are plenty of local suppliers who would be happy to get their business. This was the message Donal Nugent got when he caught up with Irish companies after the recent Intermat construction trade fair in Paris. Here they offer their top tips and explain why they are willing to invest so much time and effort in keeping their French customers smiling.
With world-class expertise in the manufacture of drill bits and blast-hole hammers, Mincon is a global player in areas such as quarrying, water-well drilling and geo-thermal drilling. However, its core business, mining, is what’s central to its current success in the French market. To understand why, one need only do as the company’s export sales manager Gerry O’Connor does every day, and track the price of precious commodities.

**MAKE IT ONE-TO-ONE**

“Gold is retailing at $1,600 per ounce, and mining activity for precious metals has grown rapidly around the world as a result,” he told The Market. The opportunity in France comes through distributor Eurofor, which the company has been working with since 2008. “In the last 12 months, business has really taken off, and it is down to mining in North Africa’s French-speaking regions, which Eurofor sells into.”

Mincon joined Eurofor on its exhibition stand at Intermat in Paris in April. It was the first time the company had shared a stand with a distributor, and the approach proved hugely positive in terms of relationship-building.

While a lot can be made of cultural difference, O’Connor says that years of experience with international companies shows that some basic truths will out. “We have found that, time and time again, there is an immediate upsurge in turnover in a market once we take the time to go and meet people.” While the focus should be on face-to-face, he further emphasises the importance of one-to-one. “We all make the mistake of meeting people two-on-two or three-on-three, but if you meet someone one-on-one, in our experience, it proves invaluable in terms of building a relationship with them.”

**TAKE A LONG-TERM VIEW**

A family business founded in 1974, Burnside is, today, one of the largest manufacturers of hydraulic cylinders in Europe and the largest employer in the company’s native Co. Carlow. Burnside Autocyl is one of five manufacturing companies within the group and, for more than half of the company’s 38-year history, France has been a target market. “The businesses we deal with don’t see themselves uniquely in a French context,” marketing and sales manager Catherine Kelly explains. “They need dedicated engineering know-how on an international basis.”

Gaining traction in this market, she adds, is about taking the long view. “We opened an office in France in 2002, recognising the need for a presence on the ground. We would say that any company serious about the market would have to have to take that approach.”

Contrasting this with their experience with Europe’s other large engineering market, Germany, where significant progress was made much more quickly, Kelly explains that “the reality in France is that you are dealing with very strong local competition, who will often have been set up to serve the needs of larger companies in a very dedicated way.”

The years of hard work have paid off as the company currently directs 20% of its output to the French market and would like to see that figure growing to 30% in next three years. “You have to have patience,” Kelly says. “To go into the French market and expect a quick hit would be naïve. You have to prove yourself first. As a company, we have always been happy to take that approach. We are in the game of holding customers for the long term.”

Like Mincon, the company has recently begun to change its approach to exhibiting. “With events like Intermat, we are attending trade fairs where our end customers are exhibiting our products. In the past, our approach would have been to go where our competitors were. The great thing about this approach is
you can point customers to a stand and say "our cylinders are on this machine and that machine", so it's a very strong testimonial to the strength of our offering."

**GO PREPARED AND STICK IT OUT**

Patience is also the first word that comes to mind for William Egenton, managing director of hitch-attachment manufacturers Dromone, when he describes the French market. Realism, he adds, is not far behind. “You have be patient, resilient and very focused. You must be prepared to go a long way through the process and not win the business.”

Illustrating the point, Egenton references a recent deal secured with the largest distributor of construction attachments in France. “The incumbent was in place for 18 years. When we closed the deal, the owner of the company said to me that it had taken us one month for every year the incumbent was in place to win this business.”

France is one of 36 markets where Dromone exports, and it now ranks in the top-two in terms of sales. “It is an incredibly large economy. The baseline business is very strong there, even when things are going bad,” Egenton says.

In 2011, the company took the decision to set up its own full-time presence in Paris. Like Mincon, Dromone takes the view that meeting people face-to-face is the key to getting traction.

“It may be very basic advice, he says, “but I advocate going over, gaining your leads through different media and, with the right language skills, going in and getting meetings. Of course, you’ll have the door shut in your face many times but, if you take offence at that, don’t go at all.”

**THINK FRENCH, FRENCH, FRENCH**

Instant Upright manufactures and supplies tower systems, scaffolding, platforms and podiums. Having successfully diversified from the construction industry in recent years, the company is now at the starting point of its entry strategy to the French market. Overseeing this is sales manager Rémy Perron. With long experience of selling in France, Perron understands why it can seem a daunting prospect. “It is quite a big and a tough market to enter. A key difference is the very high level of awareness around safety requirements among customers.”

For Instant Upright, Perron says a three-year strategy is in place. “The first year is about testing different channels to see which is best; the second is about implementing the strategy; and the third will be about getting some return.”

Regarding the overall conditions of the economy right now, he adds that competition is strong and new arrivals will find competitors well placed in terms of distribution and logistical optimisation. Meeting the language requirement and understanding the French mentality are essentials for challengers, and he has three pieces of advice for Irish companies in entry mode: “French, French and French: you need to have all your communications in French, and you need to understand French regulations and you need to know the French specifications in terms of new products. These are the minimum entry requirements to the market.”

“You need to have all your communications in French, and you need to understand French regulations, and you need to know the French specifications in terms of new products. These are the minimum entry requirements.”
You won’t let the HR guys choose your staff, if you take Karren Brady’s advice. Britain’s best-known businesswoman, who has run football clubs, is Alan Sugar’s sidekick on business reality show *The Apprentice*, and was the youngest managing director of a PLC in Britain.

Brady left school at 18. Which means – as she points out in *Strong Woman* – that her CV would today be tossed straight into the no-thanks pile by the HR manager. As it was, she joined Saatchi & Saatchi to sell ad space, and by 23 she was managing director of Birmingham City football club.

She started out with a whim of iron, it seems; she tells of being left in her grandad’s care at three, and setting up a tea-party with dainty cups of vodka, creme de menthe and sherry. When her grandfather gently admonished her, she told him this was her house and she’d do as she liked - and he let her!

On her first day in school she walked in, pulled another child off a chair and told him “That’s my seat. Move.”

She writes for the *Sun*, and there’s a certain hands-on-hips air about the prose: “I’ve said it before and I’ll say it again...” But her descriptions of doing business are fascinating, especially when she writes about selling shares in Birmingham City during the flotation. “I did the flotation in three months, largely on my own because we wanted to do it as cheaply as possible, so I learned a lot,” she writes. She did – she turned the ailing club around and sold it for £82m.

At the back are Ms Brady’s 10 rules for success, starting with Work Hard and ending with Communicate. An interesting book for every business person, though reminiscent of being lectured by your most successful aunt.

The *Transformation Roadmap* is the tenth book from Paul Mooney, an organisational development consultant trained in industrial sociology, industrial relations and organisational and individual change. It is useful because this is an Irish-focused study. “For many years I have argued that Irish managers are overly reliant on organisational concepts and change models developed in other countries,” he writes.

Few Irish executives (or other workers) would like to wear the ‘GE is Me’ T-shirts he saw in General Electric in Ohio – The case studies peppered through the book demonstrate how to harness the humour (and cynicism) that is an integral part of the Irish culture.

The case studies are excellent – honest and revealing. When Irish Rail had improved its rolling stock and tracks, it set to its customer service, and research revealed some scathing attitudes: customer experience “a hotchpotch”, punctuality “we need to run on time – no excuses”, signage “hard to know where we are”. Mooney shows the steps taken to approach the problem and seek a solution.

A supplier of ready-made meals was facing strong staff resistance to change. The problem turned out to be literacy – people were afraid of their weakness being revealed, afraid of being exposed. In this case, the steps taken were psychological,
Mobile phones are everywhere, and they’re handy little devices for putting your company right into the pockets of everyone who owns them.

\textit{M-Commerce} is a guidebook to boosting your business using the mobile model. E-commerce is already part of our world – 93\% of adults responding to a Pew Research study in the US had researched goods online, and 66\% had bought online. The next step is to use mobile phones to taste and try and then to buy.

M-retailing.net editor Paul Skeldon’s useful book gives an overview of the operating systems - iOS, Android OS, Nokia’s Symbian OS, Windows Mobile OS, Windows Phone 7 OS and Blackberry - who would have thought there were so many? - and the app stores serving the markets.

There are informative case studies. One is of Monitise and UlsterBank’s mobile banking app, initially for iPhone and later moving to other OSes. Another is of Turkish bank Garanti Bank, which joined forces with mobile operator Avea to provide NFC-enabled (smartphone) SIM cards.

Indie band Ministry of Sound sells tickets through an app. Bangalore phone shop Sangeetha Mobiles uses proximity marketing, and so on. Every app maker, and every business whose model could conceivably involve mobile content, should have this book.

What would you reckon was the best business idea of the last 50 years? It’s a bit like the question put to scientists some years ago about the most important innovation in history; the winner was the discovery that grass could be dried to make hay – which meant that the mass of grazing animals no longer had to be slaughtered at the end of the autumn and their meat salted down for winter. Instead, farmers could keep a stock of animals overwintered, vastly increasing their flocks and herds.

The first invention cited in \textit{50 Best Business Ideas of the Last 50 Years} is the pill, which freed generations of women from the burden of early or unplanned childbearing and child rearing.

“According to a 2002 study led by Harvard University, the number of female graduates entering professional programmes increased substantially just after 1970, and the age at which women first married also began to rise around the same year. Progress has remained steady since then; in fact, the proportion of women on the boards of Europe’s top companies increased from 8\% in 2004 to 12\% in 2010. If the current rate of growth is maintained, gender parity could be achieved by 2026.”

The next triumph listed is the disposable nappy, invented by ex-Navy man and chemical engineering ace Vic Mills (though entrepreneur Marion Donavan had tried a similar idea earlier). Another 1960s invention, surprisingly, was satellite TV, brainchild of sci-fi writer Arthur C Clarke, brought to fruition by NASA, the Soviet Union and Canada.

Even Ryanair is name-checked, in a piece on budget airlines and their impact on travel around the world. Email, medical scanners, computer games, ATMs, bagless vacuum cleaners – the ideas kept on popping. It was as late as 1991 before an international overnight courier service came into being, and swipe cards came from South Korea and Hong Kong in the mid-1990s.

\textit{50 Business Ideas} is an irresistible dipper-into, listing wonderful inventions decade by decade, ranging from contact lenses to biometrics to e-readers.

Strong Woman: Ambition, Grit and a Great Pair of Heels
by Karren Brady, published by Collins

The Transformation Roadmap
by Paul Mooney, published by Oaktree Press

M-Commerce
by Paul Skeldon, published by Crimson

50 Best Business Ideas of the Last 50 Years
edited by Ian Wallace, published by Crimson
Well this is cute. Sony’s first smartphone solo outing since splitting from Ericsson is eye-catching, and it feels good. A slightly curved back rests neatly in the hand, almost discreet enough to forget it has a larger form factor than average with a 4.3-inch screen that hints at its multimedia credentials.

Matt black minimalism is the main aesthetic, only interrupted by a thin shaft of plastic near the bottom of the phone. This see-through strip contains little icons for the principle interface controls (Back, Home, Menu) which light up when a call comes in. The actual buttons that do the work, however, are on the main body of the phone, marked with three tiny white spots. Very cool if a little confusing. At first, you keep pressing the icons, and when you do get the hang of the touch buttons, they are a little unresponsive.

The Xperia S joins the growing ranks of smartphones that require a micro SIM, which is fine except you have to take off the back to slip it in, the only time you’ll ever take off the cover because it comes with an irremovable battery.

Xperia S is an Android phone, running the 2.3 version of the operating system; not the latest, but a 4.0 upgrade is promised. The phone has a speedy 1.5GHz dual-core processor and is jam-packed with features and functionality, befitting a top-end smartphone. A strong spec includes front and rear cameras (1.3 and 12 megapixels respectively), NFC for emerging applications, including contactless payment, an HDMI connection for playing back HD content on a TV, and turn-by-turn satnav using Google Maps.

Just as well it packs a whopping 32GB of flash storage because there’s no slot for an SD card. If you want more memory – though I suspect it’s only minority that would – you better buy another phone.

Up and running, it comes preloaded with plenty of widgets to keep you amused, spread across five screens easily navigated with a touchscreen interface. Hold down the power button on top and you can select airplane and silent modes or take a snapshot of your screen.

Talking of which, the mammoth 720 x 1,280 pixel display is excellent and comes into its own when browsing the web – streaming video looks vibrant, static websites pin sharp. Pictures from the main 12 megapixel camera are rich and textured though the HD video is a tad jerky, possibly caused by the built-in image stabilisation.

A dedicated camera button, fast zoom and smart autofocus, coupled with a bunch of other shooting options, make the Xperia S one of a growing band of camera phones that are impacting on standalone compact sales. You just don’t need one. Panorama and 3D modes are interesting but a little too gimmicky for my tastes.

Gripes aside, this is a very classy phone and pitches effortlessly into the higher end of the market occupied by the iPhone 4S and Galaxy S2, where screen quality and style are an expected part of the package. The Xperia S leaves you in no doubt that Sony has assumed its place among the heavyweight smartphone contenders.
Internet radio is an unlikely phenomenon in an age when video proliferates, but its popularity is on the increase. You can access stations from a computer or smartphone, but die-hard radio fans will doubtless prefer the growing number of standalone devices that combine FM and DAB (Digital Audio Broadcasting) with a wi-fi and web capability.

A case in point is the Stream 205 from Roberts, one of the big names in digital radio. Its styling is deliciously retro, with a big silver dial on top of a curvy chassis that wraps around the speakers. Once you have logged on to your local wi-fi network there is a vast list of global radio stations available that you can search out by name, genre or country and store them as favourites. Podcasts can also be saved for the radio equivalent of a TV catch-up service.

Alternatively, you can select your listening preferences online. Like other internet radio manufacturers, Roberts aligns itself with a web site directory where you can register your device and select station preferences without even touching your radio.

Once you have logged on to your local wi-fi network there is a vast list of global radio stations available that you can search out by name, genre or country and store them as favourites.

Why splash out €160 on Nintendo 3Ds when the V-Screen can turn existing PSP games into a 3D experience for just €21.99? This neat add-on is made by RealView Innovations, an Irish company that developed ‘depth enhancing screen technology’ to give 2D images that extra dimension. It works surprisingly well, making games a little more immersive and fun.

Built to work with the PSP 1000, 2000 and 3000 series, it’s light and neatly packaged with its own case that the handheld console slips into. The optically enhanced screen folds out to sit a few inches above the PSP to give you 3D without the glasses.

The company makes the add-on for any type of monitors, including TVs and smartphones, but success for RealView will surely depend on the extent to which the public takes to the 3D experience. Maybe they’ll like it more without the silly glasses and with V-Screen.
Compiled by Enterprise Ireland’s Information Centre team

MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Enterprise Ireland’s Information 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 and Mintel. Here is just a sample of the types of research and reports to which the centre has access.

ICT/SOFTWARE

The Future of Mobile eBusiness is Context

Forrester

May 2012

Consumers will adopt and use convenient services and products. In mobile, this translates to services that offer immediacy and simplicity through a highly contextual experience. The ability to deliver highly contextual experiences will evolve in sophistication with technology in the phone. Imagine the buying and selling opportunities that will emerge when phones can make size, colour and scent recommendations. The focus of this report is on how eBusiness and channel strategy professionals must leverage context to deliver the right information at the right time to the right place to increase conversions.

The Changing Cloud Agenda

Forrester

April 2012

As the market and the understanding of cloud computing grows, the drivers and deployment scenarios that framed the initial cloud agenda are becoming increasingly irrelevant. Today, companies expect benefits that go way beyond cost savings and efficiency and are starting to focus increasingly on cloud solutions that facilitate business innovation and growth. This report analyses the changing value proposition and usage scenarios for cloud services and will help CIOs and other decision-makers understand what value contribution cloud computing is going to deliver in the future.

Make Software Delivery More Responsive To The Business

Forrester

April 25 2012

This report explores how software delivery approaches can be re-engineered to respond to rapid and fundamental changes in both business and technology. While traditional software delivery approaches sought to optimise technologies, assets, and specialised functions in pursuit of efficiency, their supposed efficiency, modelled on mass production, doesn’t work when the definition of the problem keeps changing. Because app delivery leaders find it difficult to change their processes, technology, and team composition in response. Lean is an effective approach to bringing this change, but realising its promise requires delivery leaders to develop a new way of working.

US Tech Market Outlook For 2012 To 2013

Forrester

April 2012

With the US tech market projected to grow by 7.5% in 2012 (7.1% including telecommunications services) and even faster in 2013, CIOs should be more focused on increasing, not cutting, tech budgets. Equally important, CIOs need to know where to spend. This report breaks down the 2012-to-2013 US tech outlook by specific products and services to show which ones are growing rapidly or slowly. It also profiles the US tech outlook by industry, and it explores trends in US information and communications technology (ICT) budget benchmarks relative to revenues.

The European Telecommunications Industry and the Emerging Smart Industry

Frost & Sullivan

April 2012

In western Europe, demand for machine-to-machine (M2M) SIM devices is expected to increase from 15.3 million in 2010 to 60.8 million in 2015. This paper seeks to evaluate the healthcare, transportation, and energy smart industry sectors. In addition, it explores how rapidly expanding smart technology offers the telecommunications industry a tremendous opportunity, not only in manufacturing new devices, but also by offering services to make those devices useful.

Strategic Insight into the U.S. Mobile Wallet Market

Frost & Sullivan

April 2012

This strategic insight on the US mobile wallet market presents an analysis of the key trends in the US near field communication (NFC)-driven mobile payment industry. A brief overview of several other payment-related value-added services (VAS) that can also be offered via the mobile channel is also provided.

Digital Trends – Spring UK 2012

Mintel

April 2012

This new series of Digital Trends investigates the technology products that consumers already have at home and also what they are looking to buy in the coming months. Findings from Mintel consumer research are placed in the context of the wider technology market, including innovations and activities from manufacturers and retailers, to reveal changing tastes and attitudes towards technology products.

FOOD, RETAIL AND CONSUMER PRODUCTS

European Retail Briefing

Mintel

April 2012

European Retail Briefing is a monthly briefing providing news and analysis that includes company results, store openings, cross-border moves, M & A activities, executive changes and property developments. Additionally each month, European Retail Briefing focuses on a key issue or specific European retail sector.

The Retailing of Food and Drink – UK

Mintel

March 2012

In the context of a changing marketplace for food, this report explores a number of key questions. For example, has the share of the supermarkets
peaked? And if superstores have stopped growing, who will be the winners? What about newcomers? Is online going to come to dominate? What can one learn from the problems of Tesco?

**Paint, Wallcoverings and Woodcare Market Report - UK 2012-2016 Analysis**  
*AMA Research*  
March 2012

While demand has suffered due to the difficult trading conditions seen in the past few years, rising product prices have led to value growth within the market for paint, woodcare and wallcoverings during 2010 and 2011. This report provides an assessment of developments in terms of product mix, supply and distribution structures; an analysis of key factors influencing the market in recent years and a look at future prospects for the sector.

**Consumer Health in US**  
*Euromonitor*  
April 2012

This report reveals that consumer health value sales reached their highest ever level in 2011. Despite lingering high unemployment and repeated government funding scares, which hampered economic growth, the consumer health market again proved resilient. High healthcare costs and growing consumer interest in proactive solutions continued to drive sales of OTC products and vitamins and dietary supplements, while sports nutrition grew due to increasing mainstream appeal and interest in exercise supplementation.

**The Innovations Driving Packaged Brands: What Sells?**  
*Datamonitor*  
May 2012

This report identifies eight key consumer mega-trends that influence consumer demand; four product benefits vital for successful innovation; and six key touch-points that packagers can leverage to influence their packaging. In addition, it explores brands that have seen market success as a result of their packaging and the brands that have failed due to their packaging.

**Sensory and Indulgence in Personal Care**  
*Datamonitor*  
April 2012

Research revealed in this report found that sensory skincare benefits were the third most influential attribute in consumers' skincare product choice out of 10 listed factors. It concludes that, ultimately, the desire for maximum sensory appeal is driving cosmetic brands to move beyond one-dimensional sensory product cues and leverage multisensory branding.

**CLEANTECH, LIFE SCIENCE, CONSTRUCTION AND INDUSTRIAL**

**Global Markets and Technologies for Wireless Sensors**  
*BCC*  
February 2012

This report presents the forecasts for wireless sensor devices employed in PANs and LANs for 2011 through 2016 on a volume and value basis. These forecasts are further broken down by the various parameters that can be measured by the sensors, by end applications and by geographical regions.

**Global Markets for Coronary Stent Devices**  
*BCC*  
February 2012

The study analyses select coronary stent devices for treating various cardiac diseases such as coronary artery disease, peripheral vascular disease, valvular heart disease, congestive heart failure and many others, providing an understanding of the global market from different standpoints and addressing issues and trends affecting the market.

**Terahertz Radiation Systems: Technologies and Global Markets**  
*BCC*  
March 2012

BCC estimates the market for terahertz (THz) radiation devices totalled $83.7 million in 2011 and predicts that this market will grow to $1.27bn in 2016. The diversification of the THz market is expected to accelerate after 2016, and the total market should reach $5.70 million by 2021, a compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) of 35% from 2016 to 2021. This report assesses the technological progress made toward bridging the terahertz gap and the likely commercial potential of THz radiation devices over the next five to 10 years.

**Global Commercial Aviation Cabin Interiors Market Assessment**  
*Frost & Sullivan*  
March 2012

This report looks in detail at the market trends, drivers, restraints and market participants in the global cabin-interiors market. The major segments covered are lighting systems, passenger seats, galley equipment and lavatories. The report discusses requirements of end-users across various regions and provides a market forecast as well as strategic recommendations for suppliers.

**Point of Care Diagnostics**  
*BCC*  
January 2012

According to BCC, the global point of care (POC) diagnostics market reached $13.4 billion in 2010 and $13.8 billion in 2011. It will further grow to $16.5 billion in 2016 for a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 3.7% between 2011 and 2016. This report provides an examination and description of selected products, current and emerging technologies and company profiles, as well as covering issues regarding regulation of POC testing, international developments and patents for POC technologies.

**The Future of Offshore Wind Power Generation**  
*Business Insights*  
October 2011

This report explores the drivers shaping offshore wind power generation technology development in the electricity industry. The questions addressed include power-generation costs, now and in the future as well as the offshore wind power generation technology types likely to be winners and losers in the future in terms of costs, technology and winning acceptance with manufacturers.

Enterprise Ireland clients may obtain market research information from the Information Centre, free of charge, by a simple phone call or email. Alternatively, clients can visit the centre or regional offices, by appointment, to view publications such as those listed above.

To set up an appointment, contact the Information Desk on 01 727 2324. 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 Information Centre are available on www.enterprisireland.com/information.
EU and US agree to recognise each other’s ‘trusted traders’

EU and US certified trusted traders are set to enjoy lower costs, simplified procedures and greater predictability in their transatlantic activities, as a result of a mutual recognition decision signed on May 4, 2012.

Under this agreement, the EU and the US will recognise each other’s security certified operators. Authorised economic operators (AEOs) in the EU will receive benefits when exporting to the US market, and the EU will reciprocate for certified members of the US Customs-Trade Partnership against Terrorism (C-TPAT).

Since 2008, European companies can apply for an AEO status to have easier access to customs simplifications and to be in a more favourable position to comply with EU security requirements. The AEO status at EU level is aimed at identifying safe and reliable businesses that are engaged in international trade. For the companies, this means fewer inspections on goods are necessary and formal customs procedures are quicker to complete, allowing goods to move faster from one destination to another. There are currently some 5,000 companies approved as AEOs in the EU.

The European Commission says it wants major trade partners across the globe to recognise the AEO status. Currently, Switzerland, Norway and Japan mutually recognise the EU’s certification and a similar agreement is being explored with China.

**EC proposes to get tough to level the playing field in international procurement markets**

The European Commission has launched a proposal to help open worldwide public procurement markets and to ensure European businesses have fair access to them.

Globally, public procurement is estimated at €1,000 billion per year. However, while the EU’s public procurement market has traditionally been very open, the European Commission estimates that only a quarter of the world’s procurement market is open for international competition. The restrictions applied by trading partners affect sectors, it says, where the EU is highly competitive, such as construction, public transport, medical devices, power generation and pharmaceuticals.

The new initiative proposed by the Commission is aimed at increasing incentives for the EU’s trading partners to open up their public procurement markets to EU bidders and allow them to compete on an equal footing. This includes a three-prong approach. Firstly, the Commission could agree that EU contracting authorities, for contracts above €5 million, exclude tenders comprising a significant part of foreign goods and services where these contracts are not covered by existing international agreements.

Secondly, in the event of repeated and serious discrimination against European suppliers in non-EU countries, the Commission could have at its disposal a mechanism allowing it to restrict access to the EU market, if the country outside the EU does not engage in negotiations to address market access imbalances. Any restrictive measures could be targeted, for example by excluding tenders originating in a non-EU country or imposing a price penalty.

Finally, the initiative would increase transparency on abnormally low offers in order to combat unfair competition by non-EU suppliers on the European market.

**Canada Announces New Safety Regulations for Imported Foods**

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) recently announced plans to create new regulations aimed at protecting consumers from unsafe imported foods. The proposed new regulations require food importers to obtain licenses and install methods to keep unsafe food out of the marketplace. For further information, see www.inspection.gc.ca.

**Commission to examine tax measures for cross-border workers**

The European Commission has committed to scrutinising Member States’ tax provisions to ensure that they do not discriminate against cross-border workers, in a targeted initiative launched this April. More than 1.2 million people work cross-border in the EU. The Commission has now said it will carry out a thorough assessment of national direct taxes to determine whether they create unfair disadvantages for workers who live in one Member State and work in another.

**Brussels proposes faster access to medicines for patients**

Aimed at allowing new medicines to enter the market faster, the European Commission has proposed to streamline and reduce the duration of national decisions on pricing and reimbursement of medicines.

In the future, such decisions, it says, should be taken within 120 days for innovative medicines, as a rule, and for generic medicinal products within only 30, instead of 80 days today. The Commission also proposes strong enforcement measures for cross-border workers that create unfair disadvantages for workers who live in one Member State and work in another.

When implemented, the new Directive would represent an important simplification measure and replace the longstanding Directive from 1989, which no longer reflects the increased complexity of the pricing and reimbursement procedures in the Member States, the Commission says.
Plan now to minimise delivery disruptions to London customers during the Games

The 2012 London Olympics are set to bring over 9 million visitors to Britain’s capital this July and August. And with most events concentrated in a relatively small area of the south-east and a few key locations around the UK, businesses with customers in the affected areas should plan now, according to logistics expert Tim Fawkes of the European transport management company 3t Logistics (www.3t-europe.com).

Fawkes offers the following pointers for putting a plan in place:

- Start by identifying the likely impact on customers by using the maps and plans available. The Transport for London (TFL) website has advice for public and freight transport and will have daily congestion maps online during the Games.
- TFL has also released postcode data which can be used with freight operators’ routing software.
- The TFL Freight Journey planner tool (to be launched in May) can calculate the best routes, taking into account vehicle size, time and date, any physical restrictions and any road restrictions. It will also show the nearest legal on street loading areas.
- The LOCOG website has traffic maps and parking information for all Olympic venues.

The Olympic Route Network (ORN) is designed to ensure that athletes, officials and Olympic workers are able to get to events on time. The network, which will use 1% of the capital’s roads, will open on July 25. In a bid to prevent gridlocked traffic, the network will be opened to general traffic when demand is low. However, with the removal of parking and loading bays, temporary banned turns and 33% of the ORN completely closed off from 6am-12pm, if you have customers in or around the ORN you will need to plan accordingly. See www.tfl.gov.uk/orn.

Consult your customer as part of your plan. If planning night-time deliveries, ask about booking in times and site opening hours. Many transport agencies are actively encouraging out-of-hours delivery but there are certain rules that must be followed. Apply well in advance for temporary changes to operator licences to enable out-of-hours delivery and/or to increase the number of vehicles authorised as well as applying for permits or special routeing exemptions.

Like the organisers, companies have had years to plan for the inevitable disruption. So, if you don’t currently have a plan for July and August, now is the time to make it a priority and ensure that you are prepared to meet the Olympic challenge.

NEW KNOCK TO BIRMINGHAM ROUTE Aer Lingus Regional is to open a new route from Ireland West Airport Knock to Birmingham. From June 11, 2012, Aer Lingus Regional, operated by Aer Arann will provide daily flights from Knock to Birmingham, with stated fares starting from €29.99 one way, including taxes.

DUBLIN-TO-LONDON SOUTHEND SERVICE LAUNCHED This May, the first Aer Lingus Regional service between Dublin and London Southend was officially launched. The service, operated by Aer Arann, offers three daily return services between London Southend and Dublin.

US GETS CLOSER OVER THE SUMMER MONTHS Delta Air Lines reinstated its nonstop service between Shannon Airport and New York’s JFK Airport, this May, offering onward connections to more than 45 destinations. Delta Air Lines made a commitment to renew the transatlantic service after cancelling the operation last winter.

Meanwhile, from June, United Airlines will operate a daily direct Dublin-Washington D.C. service, flying from Terminal 2 at Dublin Airport to Washington’s Dulles International Airport – one of United’s east-coast hubs, with more than 80 onward connecting destinations.

ETIHAD TO FLY TO SOUTH AMERICA As part of a significant expansion of its global network over the next 18 months, Etihad Airways has announced plans to launch its first service to South America in 2013 and to increase its footprint in Asia, with new services including flights to Vietnam.
FROM THE AIRPORT TO THE CITY:
Milan has two airports – Linate and Malpensa – that are easily accessible by taxi and bus. At Malpensa, an express train takes you into the city centre’s Cadorna station for approximately €15. Buses (€6 single) for both airports depart from Milan’s extremely busy Stazione Centrale.

SLEEP:
1st Choice: Ideally located in the cultural and business heart of the city (it overlooks the Via Della Spiga), the Carlton Hotel Baglioni is one of the oldest and most famous hotels in northern Italy. A high-quality renovation over three years ago consolidated its position as a top choice for business people. www.baglionihotels.com

2nd Choice: A boutique budget-conscious hotel, Antica Locanda Leonardo is housed in a 19th century building, and is centrally situated on Corso Magenta. www.anticalocandaleonardo.com

EAT:
Lunch: If you’re looking for something of a little gem to while away an authentic Milanese lunch, then pop into Alla Cucina delle Langhe, Corso Como 6. Located in an upmarket (and touristy) part of the city, this wonderful little trattoria (which isn’t at all as fancy as the area it’s in) features classic food from the Piemonte region. www.trattoriaallelanghe.com

Dinner: Acclaimed chef Carlo Cracco has assiduously developed Cracco Restaurant, Via Victor Hugo, into a Michelin-starred temple of Italian gastronomy. The wine list features a staggering 1,800 selection. A good choice for an important business meeting? Definitely. www.ristorantecracco.it

THREE THINGS TO DO IF YOU HAVE A FEW HOURS TO SPARE:
Leisure: If you’re looking for somewhere to totally relax after a hard day’s business, then sit yourself down at Radetzky Café, 105 Corso Garibaldi. It’s one of Milan’s best places for a drink and people watching, with big open windows and comfortable outdoor seating. www.radetzkycafe.com

Shopping: It’s Milan, so shopping is a necessity! Flex your plastic cards along Via della Spiga, Via San’Andrea and Via Montenapoleone (the so-called ‘golden triangle’), as well as along the more affordable Corso Venezia and Corso Vittorio Emanuele II.

Art: At the top of the art appreciation/cultural items list is Leonardo Da Vinci’s Last Supper, which graces a wall within the refectory of Santa Maria delle Grazie, Piazza Santa Maria delle Grazie. There is, however, up to ten days of a waiting list, so if you’re keen to see it it’s best to make a reservation for entrance tickets. www.cenacolovinciano.org

It’s Milan, so shopping is a necessity!
Enterprise Ireland International Network

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China

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