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I am delighted to welcome you all to this issue of RegionalNEWS, the first in my new capacity as Head of Regions & Entrepreneurship Division. Having spent more than 20 years with the development agencies, first with the Irish Goods Council, then An Bord Trachtála, and more recently as EI Director for the UK and Northern Europe, I must admit that I am looking forward to this new role and to experiencing yet another dimension of life at the coalface of Irish enterprise development.

Undoubtedly it is an exceptionally busy and exciting time we are facing into, with the establishment of the new National Regional HQ in Shannon and the much expanded role of Regions Division as it assumes responsibility for enterprise development in the Mid-West Region as well as national coordination of the City & County Enterprise Boards. In this regard, I would especially like to take this opportunity to welcome on board our new colleagues who have joined EI from Shannon Development. We look forward to building on the excellent work that has been achieved by SFADCo in the Mid-West and to continuing to support indigenous enterprise in the region within the overall national remit of EI.

Of course, with such changes invariably come challenges, and it will require a concerted effort on all our parts to ensure that we continue to provide the best possible levels of service to our clients during this time. The development of our Regional HQ and all its associated enterprise development functions is, in reality, the first step towards a greatly expanded, more cohesive and fully comprehensive support structure designed to assist indigenous Irish industry across all regions. We all have a role to play in ensuring that we meet the ever-changing needs of our client companies and that we fully meet our objectives for achieving balanced regional development. To that end, the Regional Enterprise Development Strategy 2008 – 2010 sets out a clear outline of what needs to be done to ensure success into the future.

I look forward to sharing the details of that strategy with you over the coming weeks and months ahead and, most importantly, to working with each and every one of you in the EI Regional Network to achieve our goals for successful and sustainable regional enterprise development.

In the meantime, I hope you enjoy this issue of RegionalNEWS.

Brendan Flood
Manager, Regions & Entrepreneurship Division

This is YOUR newsletter. RegionalNEWS is a quarterly newsletter aiming to present regional news, views and happenings. We hope you find our Summer issue interesting and informative and thank those who have contributed. Remember, your suggestions, comments and contributions are welcome on an ongoing basis.

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EI'S NEW REGIONAL HUB – NOW OPEN FOR BUSINESS IN THE MID-WEST

The establishment of a new National Regional Headquarters based in Shannon, Co Clare; the transfer of responsibility for indigenous industry in the Mid-West region; and a new coordinating role in the management of City and County Enterprise Boards, now leaves EI poised to provide its most comprehensive service ever to support developing Irish enterprises throughout the country.

EI's new Head of Regions and Entrepreneurship Division, Brendan Flood, is the man tasked with the challenge of establishing Enterprise Ireland in the Mid-West Region and ensuring a smooth transition of service as all the regional development functions of the agency relocate to a new home in Enterprise Ireland's National Regional Headquarters. No mean feat when you consider that the Regions and Entrepreneurship Business Unit, the new Mid-West Regional Office with all its enterprise development and support functions, together with a new City and County Enterprise Board Coordination Unit are all to be located in the new Regional HQ.

In terms of the physical transition, work is well underway across a number of fronts, (see the update on the following pages) but getting physically established is, however, just the first step in the overall process of furthering EI's regional development agenda, according to Brendan. "Our priority at the moment is, of course, concentrated on getting the Regional HQ up and running, with key staff in place, and transferring the relevant business functions and services with a minimum of disruption to our client companies. Once we are fully established, our focus will then shift to the key objectives and the real opportunities from an enterprise development perspective, that we can fully exploit as a result of this move."

Looking towards the longer term, Brendan has identified a number of key priorities for regional development, which are outlined in EI's new Regional Enterprise Development Strategy 2008-2010 that will be rolled out to staff in the coming months. These include, among others, targeting the many significant large scale employers located



4500 Atlantic Avenue, Westpark, Shannon – the location of the new Enterprise Ireland National Regional Headquarters. The EI offices will extend to 20,000 sq feet in this state-of-the-art new business park situated between the Shannon estuary and Shannon International Airport. Designed by architects Bamber & Reddan, the business park will consist of seven identical buildings linked by a central landscaped area and, when fully completed, will offer a range of amenities including health and fitness centre, bistro, children's activity centre and convenience store.

Almost 200 companies and major corporations like Intel, Avocent, GE Capital, Lufthansa and Veritas Software are already based at Westpark, which opened last summer. On the EI front, it is expected that 35 staff will be located in the new Regional Headquarters by end-June, rising to a full complement of 60 staff by the end of the year.

in regional or rural areas, and actively encouraging these firms to engage more fully with EI and avail of the range of services and supports on offer. "In this way, we can hopefully facilitate these firms to expand and develop their operations in a significant way, to the direct benefit of the local economies in which they are based," adds Brendan.

"In line with this, we also need to clearly illustrate the benefit generally of industrial development to our regional economies. This, in turn, highlights the importance of the work of EI and the impact of our role at the local level, where there is a strong and growing industrial base." Another key priority will be to focus on areas where there is fragmentation in the supports available to developing businesses. In this regard, Brendan intends to concentrate efforts on developing key partnerships with all the relevant players in each region in

order to provide a fully integrated package of assistance to support enterprise and entrepreneurship at the regional level.

Acknowledging that the way forward does indeed present its fair share of challenges, Brendan remains more than confident of the many opportunities that will also arise. "Building on the excellent work that has been, and continues to be, undertaken throughout the EI Regional Network, I believe that we now have a real potential to maximise our impact for enterprise growth throughout all the regions. Our consolidated presence here in the Mid-West, our expanded remit nationally and our involvement with micro-enterprises through the enterprise boards, means that we now have the opportunity to make real progress towards achieving our ultimate aim – the creation of successful and sustainable indigenous Irish industry."

THE NEW EI TEAM IN THE MID-WEST

MICHAEL CALLALY

Manager, City & County Enterprise Boards Coordination Unit

Michael has worked with the enterprise development agencies in Ireland for more than 28 years, beginning his career with the IIRS. He subsequently held a number of positions in both administration and client facing roles.

From June 1999 to April 2002, Michael worked on the Irish Government's information campaign on the euro dealing with changeover issues affecting enterprise. During that time, he was Manager of the Loughrea Euro Town Project, a test-bed exercise that was designed to explore in

practical terms the logistical challenges for a range of businesses in making the switch to euro-based trading.

Prior to his recent appointment as Manager of the CEB Coordination Unit, Michael was Senior Regional Development Executive in EI's Regions & Entrepreneurship Division where he was particularly involved in Regional Strategy development, the Community Enterprise Centre scheme, as well as the coordination of the Business Information Centre (BIC) network.



JERRY MOLONEY

Regional Director, Mid-West Region

Originally from Tynagh in East Galway, Jerry has been based in Tralee, Co Kerry, for the past 24 years. In 1999, Jerry transferred to Enterprise Ireland as part of the HRD team from the FÁS Services to Business Unit, having spent the previous 13 years working with FÁS in the South West Region.

In EI, Jerry initially worked as a leader for the HRD advisory team, particularly in the South East and South West regions. In 2000, he became Manager of the HRD Client Unit in

Industrial Products 1 & 2 Divisions and, for the past two years, he has led the HRD team in the Life Sciences & Industrial Markets Division.

To date, Jerry has worked on the delivery of HRD services to clients on a one-to-one basis for both Enterprise Ireland and IDA client companies. He has also been involved in the design and delivery of group programmes in Strategic Management, Change Management, Sales and Marketing and Succession Planning for a variety of sectors and segments of clients nationally.



RICHARD MURPHY

Manager, Regional Development, Regions & Entrepreneurship Division

A native of Mervue in Galway, Richard has worked overseas for the last 20 years. He joined Enterprise Ireland in 1994 and prior to that worked in a variety of roles including customer service with Reuters, sales and service negotiation with Wang UK, and in market research and analysis with Comet plc.

Within Enterprise Ireland, Richard has worked to date as part of EI's overseas team, working in the London, Dusseldorf and Stockholm offices.

There he has facilitated and assisted client companies across all sectors to develop and expand their export capability in those markets. With the Nordic team in particular, he has helped to double exports to the region in five years.

Richard, who takes up his new position in the Regions & Entrepreneurship Division in July, has also been involved in many of EI's significant strategic and change programmes in northern Europe.

Contact details for the National Regional Headquarters:

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HELLO AND WELCOME...

An Induction Day, arranged earlier this year for the 13 members of staff who have transferred to Enterprise Ireland from Shannon Development, provided the perfect opportunity to say 'welcome to the EI team' to our new colleagues in the Mid-West. In addition to our new staff members, four colleagues are returning to EI following their secondments to Shannon Development.

These 17 staff will work across a variety of positions throughout the business units now located in the new National Regional Headquarters, specifically the Mid-West Regional Office and the Regions & Entrepreneurship Division. A further 12 staff are expected to be appointed to complete the staffing complement in these areas. The recruitment process to fill these positions has already commenced - three posts have been awarded recently and an additional seven are due to be advertised in the coming weeks.

We look forward to working together with all our Mid-West colleagues in the on-going development and support of indigenous enterprise in the region.

Pictured getting acquainted at the Induction Day were:



Brendan Healy, Margaret Fogarty and Sinead Buckley.



Michelle Healy and Billy Wixted.



Pat O'Riordan, Neil O'Sullivan, Julie Sinnamon and John Dillon.



Marian Murphy, Sandra Hegarty, Deirdre McDonough and Enda McDonnell.



Neil Kelly, Margot Marsden and Catherine Hogan.

NEW EI UNIT TO COORDINATE ENTERPRISE BOARDS

The National Regional Headquarters will also be home to a new coordination and support unit, recently established within Enterprise Ireland, to provide central direction, technical support, shared services and quality assurance systems to the thirty-five City and County Enterprise Boards (CEBs) located around the country.

Michael Callaly from EI's Regions & Entrepreneurship Division has been appointed to lead the new CEB

Coordination Unit, which will have a staff complement of fourteen. According to Michael, the primary role of the new Unit will be to provide a range of strategic, administrative, financial and technical supports to the CEBs with the ultimate aim of enhancing their effectiveness, efficiency and impact on the development of micro-enterprises in Ireland. "By establishing this Unit within EI, it is envisaged that all Irish enterprises, irrespective of their particular stage of

development, will be provided with as comprehensive and cohesive a range of support services as possible," comments Michael. "In this way, EI, working in partnership with the enterprise boards, can best facilitate and support the growth of micro-enterprises and assist them to reach their full potential - ultimately strong, successful and sustainable indigenous Irish companies of the future."

EI Hosts Major Irish Medical Devices Exhibition

More than €20m worth of business is estimated to have been generated at 'MedinIreland 2007' – Enterprise Ireland's biennial exhibition and conference for the Irish medical devices sector.

Twenty-seven leading Irish medical device companies exhibited at the event, which took place in the Croke Park Exhibition Centre in April. The event was attended by more than 150 senior decision-makers from over 70 medical devices companies in 20 countries across Europe, the US, South America, Russia, South Africa, China and Japan. These executives were especially selected and invited to attend by EI's network of overseas offices with a view to matching the capabilities of the Irish companies with the needs of global medical device companies.

The Irish-based medical technologies sector employs over 22,000 people in 110 companies with sales in excess of €4bn annually and an annual growth rate approaching 10%. As a result, this sector of the Irish economy is now comparable in scale to the world's largest clusters in Minnesota and Massachusetts, USA. There is also an emerging indigenous SME sector both in sub-supply and own products.

Opening the event, Alan Dixon, EI's Head of Industrial & Life Sciences Markets, said that Ireland has a burgeoning indigenous medical technologies sector characterised by innovation and entrepreneurship in R&D, world-class manufacturing and supply chain strategies. "Irish medical devices companies have the expertise and world-class capability to service and supply the needs of international medical device companies in terms of collaborative design and development, component supply, finished products, medical packaging and specialist services."

"€15m of business was generated directly from Enterprise Ireland's 'MedinIreland' event in 2005. Given the increased capacity

in the 2007 event, we expect to grow this figure by 30% and are confident that around €20m of business will be secured," he added.

Running in parallel to this year's exhibition, a conference and panel debate focussing on 'How to grow a successful global medical devices company' took place with world experts leading the discussions including Patricia Nipper, Cardiovascular Research Foundation, USA, and Ken McDonnell, Global Business Development Manager, Terumo Corporation.



Pictured at the Enterprise Ireland 'MedinIreland 2007' conference and exhibition which took place in Dublin in April were (left to right): Ken McDonnell, Global Business Development Manager, Terumo Medical Corporation; Dan McNulty, Enterprise Ireland Medical Devices Advisory Board; and Gerry Murphy, Executive Director, Enterprise Ireland.

New €21m CEC Scheme

A new €21m Community Enterprise Centre (CEC) Scheme has recently been announced by Micheál Martin, T.D., Minister for Enterprise, Trade & Employment. The scheme, which will again be managed by Enterprise Ireland, will run over three years (2007-2009) with three calls for proposals over this period. Funding for projects will be awarded on a competitive basis.

Since 1989, four CEC schemes have been administered. To date, a total of €44m has been approved for 147 CEC projects (new centres and expansions)

throughout the country. A survey of existing CECs indicates that these centres have been successful in achieving an average occupancy rate of 86%, providing accommodation for more than 840 businesses that in turn employ over 3,800 people. The new €21m CEC scheme provides for both capital infrastructure and management support.

The CEC Scheme is a community led initiative in the form of a partnership between the local community and the State whereby the local community

provides business space in a centre and Enterprise Ireland funds up to 50% of eligible expenditure. The remainder of the funding is actively raised within the community from local sources.

Making the announcement, the Minister said that the new €21m scheme was expected to generate 330 new businesses and create over 1,500 new jobs. "Enterprise Ireland will target funding at those communities where job losses have been most acute and where there is an evident need for this type of initiative," the Minister added.

EI Fund Assists Clients with Competitiveness

Enterprise Ireland's Productivity Improvement Fund (PIF), which is designed to assist SME clients to achieve greater competitiveness by improving their export potential, looks set to benefit almost 300 companies by the end of 2007. The fund provides for investment in new technology and training, enabling client companies to enhance the productivity of their operations, and so gain that competitive advantage.

Launched in 2005, the PIF gives financial assistance of up to 50% (depending on location) for:

- The purchase of machinery/automation equipment (maximum funding €200,000).
- Technology acquisition (maximum funding €200,000).
- Training of management and staff (maximum funding €150,000).

Applications are received monthly, with funding awarded on a competitive basis.

A series of nationwide briefings continues throughout the regions to advise client companies on the PIF and encourage participation. The most recent of these were held in Letterkenny, Monaghan and Athlone with excellent attendances. A further event is scheduled in the coming months for the South West region.

Full details on eligibility criteria, application procedures and closing dates for any clients interested in the PIF can be found at www.enterprise-ireland.com/productivity. More information on the regional briefing sessions, including a schedule of planned events, is available from Rowena Elliott (01-2066264) or Declan Lyons (01-2066420).

Selling Software – New Guide for Firms

Irish companies involved in the business of selling software are set to benefit from a new Enterprise Ireland guide. Produced in conjunction with IT@CORK, a not-for-profit industry organisation that supports IT firms in the Cork region, the guide aims to provide software sellers and providers with a better understanding of the buying process and a clearer view of how to negotiate the deal.

Experienced specialist software buyers are now a part of most large organisations' procurement teams, dealing on a daily basis with software suppliers from around the world. Irish software companies face the challenge of dealing with these experienced buyers and the often times complex processes and procedures that are part of the large organisational buying process.

According to Jackie FitzGerald of EI's Software, Services & Emerging Sectors division, the Irish software sector is a substantial contributor to export-based revenue generation in the economy, and continues to be one of the fastest growing sectors where companies especially need to compete successfully in international markets.

"An essential element in Enterprise Ireland's strategy is to grow Irish companies to a scale capable of competing successfully on international markets. Selling internationally is still a major challenge for our clients and this guide aims to complement the work of our development advisers and network of overseas offices in providing the information companies need to investigate, access, and successfully exploit international opportunities," comments Jackie.



At the launch of the Enterprise Ireland/IT@Cork new international selling guide for software companies were (foreground from left): Micheál Martin, T.D., Minister for Enterprise Trade & Employment; Michael Cantwell, Digital Media, Enterprise Ireland; and Donagh Kiernan, Vice Chairman IT@Cork. Also included are (clockwise from left): Peter O'Connor, Managing Director, Corvil Networks Ltd; Brian Quinlan, EI Regional Director, South West Region; Ray Murphy, Managing Director, Strategic Computing Ltd; and Pat O'Donnell, Chief Operations Officer, Lincor Solutions Ltd.

The guide was officially launched by Minister for Enterprise, Trade & Employment, Micheál Martin, T.D., at a seminar on the same theme held in the Webworks in Cork. The key speaker at the seminar was Ray Murphy, an experienced consultant who has worked with major global organisations in sourcing and procurement. Two successful

Irish companies, Peter O'Connor, Managing Director, Corvil Networks, and Pat O'Donnell, Chief Operations Officer, Lincor Solutions Ltd, also shared their experiences of winning big-ticket software sales in large organisations.

For more information or to get a copy of the guide, contact Jackie FitzGerald at jackie.fitzgerald@enterprise-ireland.com.

76 New Business Start-Ups,
170 Entrepreneurs,
1,260 New Jobs and an
Investment of over €47m...

Introducing EI's Start-Up Class of 2006

2006 saw the creation of a record number of new high growth potential companies, all established with the support of Enterprise Ireland. The 76 export focused start-ups, all in knowledge intensive sectors, are expected to grow rapidly and to create over 1,260 new high skilled jobs and generate exports worth €110m over the next two years. Enterprise Ireland invested €17.5m of the total €47.5m investment in the 76 new start-ups.

The new start-ups were announced at EI's annual HPSU Showcase event, held this year in the Leopardstown Pavilion in Dublin, by Micheál Martin, T.D., Minister for Enterprise, Trade & Employment. Strong regional representation is a key feature of the Class of 2006, with the majority of the 76 new companies (41) located in regions outside of Dublin.

Increasing the number of new high-growth export focused businesses is, of course, a key objective for Enterprise Ireland, therefore it is particularly encouraging to see such a record number of start-ups, according to Kevin Sherry, EI's Manager of the High Potential Start-Up Unit. "We are fully committed to working in partnership with these 76 early stage companies to help and support them build their capabilities and secure international market access for their products and services."

"The Showcase is a unique event in that it not only celebrates the achievements of the 170 entrepreneurs, who, in 2006, realised their ambition of starting their own export focused company, but it also provides an important networking opportunity and a platform for venture capital firms to identify investment opportunities," Kevin adds.

North West Region

Lough Allen Foods

Lough Allen Foods manufactures a range of consumer ready complete meals from its state-of-the-art food production facility located in The Food Hub in Drumshanbo, Co Leitrim.

The promoters behind Lough Allen Foods, Joe Scanlon and Stephen Dowd, have a strong background in the food sector. They are award-winning chefs with previous experience of the food service, distribution and food processing industries.

Now trading under the brand name, Naked Flame, Lough Allen Foods is targeting the food services and retail sector with a specific portioned product. (Products include full dinners, meat/poultry, vegetables, potatoes and sauces/gravy). This product will be chilled for domestic markets with a shelf life of 12 days and frozen for export with a 24-week shelf life. Within the food service sector, the promoters are also actively engaged in discussions with two key sub sectors of this market, post primary schools and the Health service.

Going forward, the company will continue to invest in R&D to develop new products to meet the needs and tastes of its increasing customer base.

Nvolve Ltd

Nvolve Ltd was founded by former Shell Livewire Entrepreneur of the Year, Barry Harper, to develop and commercialise software technology that enables real time monitoring and automatic assessment of trainees in a group environment. The Nvolve system enables groups of people to interact with software applications (such as PowerPoint) through the use of Nvolve's wireless keypads.

The product works as follows: the presenter uses a data projector to project the presentation, which includes Nvolve multiple choice questions, to the group. The group participates by selecting their answer and pushing the corresponding key on their individual wireless keypad. The Nvolve software collects the responses and the aggregated data is graphically displayed immediately within the slide show for all to see. Furthermore the responses given by each keypad to each question are stored and can be used to generate immediate reports showing how each participant or trainee answered.

Nvolve has recently launched its first application to the market and the company has generated significant early sales to clients such as Smurfit Kappa, Coca Cola, Dublin Port, IBEC, Lansdowne Market Research and many schools and colleges. www.nvolve.net



Meabh Conaghan, Senior Development Adviser, EI Letterkenny, is pictured at the HPSU Showcase with Stephen Dowd of Lough Allen Foods (left) and Barry Harper, Managing Director, Nvolve Ltd.

Broadway Bagels

Broadway Bagels was established by husband and wife team, Des and Rosie Sheehan, to produce authentic American style bagels. The couple returned to Ireland from the US three years ago and opened a restaurant in Dungarvan, Co Waterford. The business was moderately successful but they found that their American style products sold very well. They decided to close the restaurant and concentrate on producing bagels.

Bagels, while part of the bread family, are produced in a very different format. Authentic bagels are made of yeasted wheat dough that is boiled in water, or steamed, before it is baked. All the bagels currently available in the retail trade are produced in bakeries using a bread baking process, which does not deliver the dense, chewy, doughy interior that is characteristic of good bagels. They also contain preservatives, which allow them to be sold on the ambient shelves.

Broadway sells its product frozen, in multiple packs of four or six bagels. The bagels do not contain preservatives or additives and this distinguishing message is clearly spelled out on the pack. The company currently supplies to retailers such as Tesco Ireland, Superquinn, Musgrave SVC, Dunnes Stores as well as a number of catering companies. The business plan for the next two years is primarily aimed at establishing the company's position in the Irish market and developing a small sales base in Northern Ireland and Britain. www.broadwaybagels.ie



Rosie Sheehan of Broadway Bagels explains the art of bagel making to Minister for Enterprise, Trade & Employment, Micheál Martin, T.D.

Crospon Ltd

Crospon was founded to develop leading edge non-invasive and continuous blood glucose monitoring products. The products will be used in the home care market by diabetics and in the hospital environment by professionals to monitor patients' glucose levels in recovery after surgery. Current methods are invasive (require blood to be drawn and thus are painful), and in some cases require frequent needle insertion. Crospon's product seeks to address this weakness.

Further investment in R&D and clinical trials over the next three years will bring the product to commercialisation stage. The technology was derived from over 15 years of research by Professors Kell and Woodward at the University of Manchester in England and the University of Aberystwyth, Wales.

Crospon Ltd is promoted by experienced medical device entrepreneurs John and Caroline O'Dea, both founder members of Caradyne Ltd. To date the company has received very encouraging results from the initial animal trial experimentation and is very confident that this technology will be a competitive platform in the emerging next generation of glucose monitoring products.



Seamus Bree, EI Regional Director, West Region, is pictured with John O'Dea of Crospon Ltd.

Skypaq

Skypaq is an aviation software tool designed to replace an existing paper based process, the Aircraft Technical Log (or Tech-Log) common to all airlines throughout the world. The Skypaq system is typically deployed on laptop, tablet PCs or mounted hardware device that have the necessary approval from the appropriate regulatory authority for use in an aircraft cockpit. Using Skypaq, information is transferred from the cockpit to the airline operator's corporate network over a wireless medium.

The deployment of Skypaq dramatically cuts costs associated with this process and enables the simplification and transformation of the business. www.skypaq.com



Pictured at the Showcase event are: (from left to right): John Corrigan, Skypaq Ltd; Alan Hobbs, Enterprise Ireland; Patrick Byrne, EI Regional Director, Midlands Region; and Michael McKenna, Skypaq Ltd. Skypaq is based in Mullingar, Co Westmeath.

Sectoral Breakdown of 2006 HPSUs

Sector	Number
Food & Retail	9
Industrial Markets	24
Software & Services	43
Total	76

Regional Distribution

Region	Number
Dublin & Mid-East (Dublin)	37(35)
South East	7
North West	2
North East	5
West	10
South West	13
Midlands	2
Total	76



Announcing the €6m investment at E&I Engineering at the company's headquarters in Burnfoot, Co Donegal, were (left to right): Barry Egan, EI Regional Director, North West Region; Mary Coughlan, T.D., Minister for Agriculture & Food; and Philip O'Doherty, CEO, E&I Engineering.

67 new jobs for Donegal

E&I Engineering Ireland, a leading designer and manufacturer of electrical distribution and switchgear products, is to invest €6m to expand its operations. Supported by Enterprise Ireland, the investment will be used for research and development, capital investment and management development. 67 new high-value engineering and R&D roles will be created at the company's headquarters in Burnfoot, Co Donegal, bringing total employment to 250 over the four-year lifetime of the investment. Eight of the 67 new roles will be R&D specific.

The announcement was made at the end of April by Mary Coughlan, T.D., Minister for Agriculture & Food. Citing E&I Engineering as "an excellent example of a dynamic Irish company... that is competing successfully in the international construction market", the Minister said that the new R&D centre would enable the company to fulfil its ambitious international plans for growth.

According to Philip O'Doherty, Founder and Managing Director of E&I Engineering, Irish companies can succeed by adopting a vigorous export-led growth strategy, underpinned by a strong focus on innovation. "The development of a new R&D Centre,

with a dedicated R&D team, will help to drive our international competitiveness and growth into the future. The availability of a skilled flexible workforce in Donegal is also a key competitive advantage for E&I."

Welcoming the announcement, Barry Egan, EI's Regional Director, North West Region, said that E&I Engineering is a highly innovative engineering company and a significant contributor to the economy of the North West region, in terms of direct employment, investment and spin-off economic benefits for the region.

With four sales offices in the UK, the company has recently completed major electrical installations at Wembley Stadium, Heathrow Airport Terminal 5, as well as many financial and data centres in the greater London area. E&I Engineering is projecting very significant market growth in the UK in the lead-up to the 2012 Olympics. The company has also recently opened offices in Dubai, following its participation in Enterprise Ireland's Trade Mission to the Middle East.

Enterprise Ireland's Scaling Division is currently working closely with the company to develop international market opportunities.

CEIM Cultivates Success

The CEIM Programme, an Enterprise Platform Programme for the North West region, began the second phase of a four-year programme late last year. Under the Programme, participants can avail of a 12-month intensive course of training and business mentoring designed to assist potential entrepreneurs to establish and manage a successful and sustainable enterprise. Nine entrepreneurs are currently participating on the Programme with four receiving CORD funding.

One CEIM participant is already on the road to success. Paul McNulty of EZDigiMag, based in the Business Development Centre in Letterkenny Institute of Technology, was recently short-listed as a finalist in the 'Prove Your Business Idea' competition run by Irish Entrepreneur magazine.



Paul McNulty of EZDigiMag (third from right) is pictured with some of his fellow CEIM participants (from left to right) - Jane Hughes; Paul Curtain; Melanie McGuirk, Petzone; Alan Gillespie, AerNav; Stephen Butler, EnvAccounts; and Christopher Keane.

EzDigiMag is a software solution designed to assist publishers and other companies to optimise their online presence and maximise revenue potential through the creation of online digital impressions of their hardcopy products and publications. The overall competition winner will receive a cash prize plus an exclusive front cover story in Irish Entrepreneur outlining their experiences of bringing an idea to commercialisation.

The Sound of Success in North West

Entrepreneurs in the North West region had the opportunity to hear just how successful the entrepreneurial path can be when serial entrepreneur, Jerry Kennelly, met with members of the North West Emerging Entrepreneurs Network in Bundoran recently. Organised as part of the Enterprising Donegal Business Week, Jerry travelled from Kerry to talk to the group about his experiences with his company, Stockbyte, which he set up in 1997 in his home town of Tralee.

While running his pre-press business, Kennelly saw at firsthand the frustration of designers at the cost of stock photography. He identified a gap in the market and went on to develop Stockbyte, producing royalty free stock photography for media and design companies throughout the world. In April 2006, he sold the company to his competitor, Getty Images, for \$135m.

The North West Emerging Entrepreneurs Network comprises interested entrepreneurs from Donegal, Leitrim or Sligo who are involved in setting up high value added or innovative businesses in the region.

If you would like further information on the Network, please contact joan.fahey@enterprise-ireland.com.



Attending the North West Emerging Entrepreneurs Network were (left to right): Adrian Brennan, One Touch Ireland, Ardara; Andy McCarter, Brandvis, Ballyshannon; serial entrepreneur and guest speaker, Jerry Kennelly of Stockbyte; John McHugh, Brandvis, Ballyshannon; and Barry Egan, EI Regional Director, North West Region.

AdvanceNW Launched



Pictured with Mary Coughlan, T.D., Minister for Agriculture & Food, at the launch of AdvanceNW were (left to right): Back row standing - Janette Gillen, ITSBC, IT Sligo; Eunan Cunningham, WESTBIC; Liam Kiely, Sligo County Enterprise Board; Ann Finn, EI Sligo Regional Office; Michelle Bonnar, Dungloe Enterprise Centre; Michael Bruen, Drumshanbo Enterprise Centre. Front row seated - Philip Boyle, Chairperson of Advance NW and Manager of Convoys Enterprise Centre; Minister Coughlan; and Keelin Fagan, Coordinator, AdvanceNW.

AdvanceNW, a network representing the organisations that provide enterprise space in the North West region, was launched earlier this year by Mary Coughlan, T.D., Minister for Agriculture & Food.

Formally known as the NWCECA, AdvanceNW will promote and develop the interests of the Community Enterprise Centres and Business Innovation Centres in Sligo, Leitrim and Donegal. According to Keelin Fagan, Network Coordinator of AdvanceNW, there are currently 31 enterprise centres in the North West, providing accommodation for 250 businesses, which in turn employ in excess of 850 people. Of these, 16 centres are based in Donegal, six in Sligo and nine in Leitrim with a number of new centres due to come on stream in the coming months.

“This Network has a vital role to play in assisting and supporting these enterprise centres and their staff so that they can best facilitate the creation of employment and an entrepreneurial culture within our local communities,” she commented. “Our focus is on developing an association that is an effective representative group and networking facility for all of its members. The Network will also act as a conduit for the group purchasing of goods and services, especially in the areas of telecoms, energy, insurance and other areas of interest to members, in order to attain cost savings and reductions.”



NEW LOOK IN LETTERKENNY

The Enterprise Ireland office in Letterkenny re-opened earlier this year after an extensive refurbishment. Staff had been relocated to temporary offices for six months while the refurbishment took place. As well as four EI staff, the Letterkenny office also provides accommodation for two IDA Ireland staff and two staff from the International Fund for Ireland. The new offices have an open plan design with hot desk facilities for visiting EI staff, as well as a newly refurbished boardroom. Special thanks to Marian Roberts for all her hard work in ensuring this project was a success.

EI Letterkenny staff, Meabh Conaghan, Don McSwiney and Marian Roberts, are pictured here outside the new-look office.

‘Apri-COT’ a Winner for CIT Students in 2007 Student Enterprise Awards

Cork Institute of Technology students - John J Barry, Orla Houlihan, Niamh Brady and Regina O'Donoghue - beat off stiff competition from hundreds of third level students across Ireland to win this year's Student Enterprise Awards. Their winning business proposal, Apri-COT, is a specially designed apparatus that acts as a therapeutic sleeping aid for infants. The judging panel was so impressed with Apri-COT that the team scooped not only the coveted €10,000 top prize and title of 'College Entrepreneurs of The Year', but the €5,000 Cruickshank Technology Innovation Award as well.

Apri-COT has been developed as a therapeutic sleeping aid for infants. The benefits of the product include healthy sleeping pattern promotion for both infant and parent, and stimulation of enhanced nutrient absorption in premature babies. Its main goal is to help parents to feel more comfortable knowing that their baby will be sleeping better.

Now in its 24th year, the Student Enterprise Awards had a celebrity entrepreneurial expert on the judging panel in the form of Ruth Badger, star of the hit BBC show, *The Apprentice*, as well as Sky One's *Badger or Bust*. Ruth became well known following her 2006 appearance on *The Apprentice*, narrowly missing out on the chance to work with Sir Alan Sugar to fellow contestant Michelle Dewberry. Since the show, Ruth has gone on to establish her own firm, Ruth Badger Consultancy, as well as starring in the Sky One show, *The Big Idea*, and her own current show *Badger or Bust* where she attempts to turn some of Britain's most struggling sales teams into high performing businesses.

Speaking at the awards ceremony, Ruth said: "It has been extremely encouraging to see students taking part in an enterprise-focused competition such as this. The quality of the business proposals has been exceptionally high and a positive reflection on innovation and entrepreneurialism in

Ireland. I can safely say that this year's finalists presented the judges with a very difficult decision."

The Enterprise Ireland competition was again sponsored in conjunction with Invest Northern Ireland, Ulster Bank and Cruickshank & Co., Patent and Trademark Agents. This year, the competition awarded €47,000 in prizes to the winners and runners-up, making the Student Enterprise Awards the richest third level competition of its kind in Ireland.



College Entrepreneurs of the Year 2007, the Apri-COT team from Cork Institute of Technology, are pictured at this year's awards ceremony in The Royal College of Physicians, Kildare Street, with (back row, left to right): Michael Callaly, Enterprise Ireland; Donal O'Connor, Cruickshank & Co; Ruth Badger; Pat Smith, Ulster Bank; and Paul Brush, Invest NI. Front row (left to right): Apri-COT team members, Niamh Barry, John J Barry, Regina O'Donoghue and Orla Houlihan.

MuseTech Solutions, a team from University College Cork won the Postgraduate Award, and prize of €4,000, for its proposal to provide high quality wireless temperature measurement devices and software to companies operating in the pharmaceutical sector. Another team from UCC finished runner-up in this category with a unique software product based on XBRL (Extensible Business Reporting Language) used in the electronic communication of business and financial data and were awarded €3,000.

There were five runners-up in the overall award category, with each team receiving €3,000. These were awarded to IT Tallaght (for *Cu-Clean*, a water purification system and *Movies on the Move*, an innovative entertainment solution focusing on movie rental and purchase for people on the go and in need

of convenience); DIT Bolton Street (for *Electro-Plast*, a device that speeds up the healing process in a wound within the skin membrane); Queen's University Belfast (for *Flexispec* a soft, easy-to-use vaginal speculum); and UCD Smurfit School of Business (for *Midas Energy*, a proposal based on utilising food waste from businesses in the hospitality sector to generate electricity to supply to the market).

Awards of Merit, and prizes of €2,000, were also awarded to teams from IT Carlow, NUI Galway, University of Ulster Jordanstown, Waterford IT and Cork IT.

S3 Set for Expansion

Client company, Silicon & Software Systems (S3), is set to create 20 new high-value R&D jobs at their facilities in Dublin and Cork following an investment of €9m, which is supported by Enterprise Ireland. The investment will be used for research and development of advanced technologies used for set-top boxes, personal video recorders, high definition television, TV on mobile, and silicon chip design.

The announcement was made by Minister for Enterprise, Trade & Employment, Micheál Martin, T.D. "S3 is an excellent example of an Irish multi-national company developing innovative, leading-edge technology products and services for international markets," commented the Minister. "This €9m R&D investment, with the support of Enterprise Ireland, will enable S3 to continue to develop technologies that can be commercialised into next generation products and services for consumers."

"Sustained investment in innovation and R&D by Irish companies is essential in an increasingly competitive global marketplace. Knowledge intensive sectors such as silicon chip design and software development continue to present rich opportunities for innovative and R&D intensive Irish companies. These are sectors in which Irish companies can create and sustain a competitive advantage," the Minister added.

According to John O'Brien, CEO of S3, the investment will facilitate the company's significant potential for growth.



Pictured with Micheál Martin, T.D., Minister for Enterprise Trade & Employment, at the announcement of the €9m R&D investment by EI client company, S3, were: John O'Brien, CEO, S3 (left), and EI's Greg Treston, Manager, Software Services & Emerging Section.

The investment will be used for research and development of advanced technologies used for set-top boxes, personal video recorders, high definition television, TV on mobile and silicon chip design.

"S3 celebrates 21 years in business this year and we are widely regarded as the leading provider of Connected Consumer Technologies globally. This significant R&D investment enables us to further develop best-in-class solutions across our design centres in both Dublin and Cork, using the latest and most advanced technologies and helps to ensure our long term future competitiveness."

SUCCESS WITH EnterpriseSTART



Enterprise Ireland and FÁS launched the EnterpriseSTART programme in 2005 to give potential entrepreneurs a realistic market perspective on what is involved in creating a competitive and sustainable commercial enterprise. The initiative, which consists of 12 practical sessions organised over six consecutive weekends, is aimed at people who are considering starting their own business in a technology or knowledge intensive area with export potential. Now in its third year, over 250 potential entrepreneurs have participated in 20 EnterpriseSTART programmes across ten regional locations.

Certificates were recently presented to participants on the latest course organised by the Dublin Mid-East Regional Office, which took place at the National College of Ireland's International Centre for Education & Learning Technology in Dublin. Programme leader, Gerry Macken (extreme left), is pictured here along with the course participants.

Limerick Symposium Urges SME Innovation



Pictured at the SNS European Symposium and 'Meet the Buyer' event held in Limerick were (left to right): Liam Brown, Marketing Chairman, Supply Network Shannon and National Contact Point (NMP) Framework Programme 7, Enterprise Ireland; Brendan Flood, Manager, Regions & Entrepreneurship Division, Enterprise Ireland; and Prof Eamonn Murphy, Enterprise Research Centre, University of Limerick.

Supply Network Shannon (SNS), an open sectoral network of engineering and electronics sub-supply companies located in the Shannon Region, hosted a European Symposium on SME Collaboration in Limerick earlier this year.

Incorporated as a limited liability company in 1999, SNS aims to reinforce the Shannon region's position as a world-class source of sub-supply products and services. With a membership of 25 companies, SNS is driven by a voluntary Steering Committee, whose officers are drawn from nine member companies, with ongoing support from Enterprise Ireland and the University of Limerick.

At the Symposium, which was officially opened by Brendan Flood, Enterprise Ireland's new Head of Regions & Entrepreneurship Division, Irish SMEs were urged to "pick up the innovation ball and run with it" or risk commercial failure by Eamonn Murphy, Professor of Quality and Applied Statistics at the Enterprise Research Centre, Department of Mathematics and Statistics, University of Limerick. While significant inroads have been made at national and European level to facilitate and support companies, especially smaller firms, to become more innovative ultimately, however, it falls to the individual company to ensure it can innovate for its own survival and success, warned Prof Murphy.

EI's Liam Brown, who acts as the National Contact Point for Nanotechnology, Nanosciences,

Materials and New Production Technologies (NMP) within the EU's Framework Programmes for R&D, also serves as Marketing Chairman of SNS. Addressing the Symposium, Liam commented that the recent launch of the €54 billion Seventh EU Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7) provides a perfect opportunity for Ireland's SMEs to invest in innovation and R&D activities.

"Researchers in industry received around €40 million from FP6, with small and medium sized enterprises accounting for around two thirds of this figure and multinational corporations accounting for the rest. A primary objective of FP7 is to make the programme more attuned to the needs of industry, particularly SMEs, and a 15% target has been included for SME participation in collaborative research. It is anticipated that Irish researchers will draw down up to €200 million from FP7," he said.

In order to encourage a high level of involvement by Irish industry in FP7 projects, significant additional resources have been allocated to the National Framework Support Unit, which is managed by Enterprise Ireland, including the appointment of a new National Director, Dr Imelda Lambkin. "A number of full-time national contact points and delegates in the various thematic areas have also been appointed, including Sean Burke who is specifically tasked with addressing research for the benefit of SMEs," added Liam.

'MEET THE BUYER' EVENT IS THE BUSINESS

In parallel with the Symposium, Supply Network Shannon also organised a highly successful 'Meet the Buyer' event. Purchasing representatives from some of Ireland's largest manufacturing firms, including Dell, Analog Devices, Bord na Mona, Bombardier, Stryker, Abbott, Schwarz Pharma and Wyeth, were provided with an opportunity to meet with some of the Mid West region's smaller supply firms.

According to Maurice McLernon of Advanced Innovations Ltd, and Chairman of SNS, the 'Meet The Buyer' event was arranged in response to member company feedback that small companies had great difficulty in getting in the door to meet purchasing contacts in the larger MNCs. "Many of our members had identified some of the larger manufacturers as potential customers but found it frustratingly difficult to meet key decision makers to inform them of the services they offer. This event was a unique and effective opportunity for suppliers and buyers to meet face to face and gain an understanding of each other's requirements and services."

Unlike the more usual exhibition-type events, where suppliers take a stand, this event put the buyer on the stand and arranged for the suppliers to meet with them for a defined, pre-scheduled ten-minute slot. In all, over 180 individual meetings between the buyers from large manufacturing companies and sales staff from small local manufacturing and service companies were scheduled. In between the buyer meetings the suppliers also had an opportunity to network with other suppliers and many were able to generate additional business leads from these informal meetings.

Feedback from all participating at this event, both suppliers and buyers alike, has been excellent with many keen to see the event repeated later this year. "We are delighted that participants found the event to be business focused, time and cost efficient, informative and well organised," adds Maurice.

Building Sales Capability

Enterprise Ireland has developed a new management skills programme aimed at assisting clients to adopt best sales practices that will lead to increased business revenues. Championed by Maeve Meehan of EI's SSES HRD team, the Sales Process Capability Programme has been designed to enable CEOs, senior managers and sales professionals to develop the skills necessary to apply an effective sales process model of customer-focused, repeatable steps that will substantially increase a company's win rates, build customer retention and increase revenues, while optimising sales opportunities in overseas markets.

Offered as part of Enterprise Ireland's Management and Skills Development initiatives, the comprehensive practical programme comprises three stages. The first stage is an interactive one-day group workshop with up to four senior executives from each company (i.e. the company's core management team and key sales personnel). A maximum of six companies participate in each workshop covering topics such as proposition development, sales and marketing strategy, and implementation. Each workshop includes tools and templates for ongoing use by the client.



At the conclusion of the workshop, utilising the content, tools and templates, participants then have two weeks to prepare a value proposition and sales and marketing strategy. The final phase of the programme is an individual two-hour implementation review during which each company presents a SWOT analysis of its company, its value proposition and sales and marketing action plan to the coaching tutors and Enterprise Ireland for assessment and the development of a further EI/client action plan.

Pictured at the Sales Process Capability Programme, which was held in the Galway Bay Hotel, were (left to right): Back row, standing - Tom Maguire, Enterprise Ireland; David Bosomworth from UK training consultants, Sales Team; Maeve Meehan, Enterprise Ireland; Wyn Rees, Mapsys Ltd; Brian O'Mahony, Mapsys Ltd; Martin Lavel, Sales Team. Front row, seated - Seamus Kyne, 21st Century Web Design; Tom Kelly, Trade Cert Ltd; Fidelma Ray, Exterra Software Ltd; and Marie Ray, Exterra Software Ltd.



Dr Maria Hinfelaar, Director of LIT, is pictured with newly appointed LEAP Programme Manager, Graham Royce (centre), and Donncha Hughes, Manager of the Enterprise Acceleration Centre, LIT's on-campus business incubation facility.

Entrepreneurs take the LEAP at LIT

Eleven entrepreneurs are set to participate on the first LEAP programme at Limerick Institute of Technology (LIT). LEAP – Limerick Enterprise Acceleration Platform – is a one-year programme designed to provide potential start-ups with a range of supports focused on strategic planning and practical business set-up, including management training, business coaching, mentoring and consultancy. The programme is hosted by the Enterprise Acceleration Centre (EAC) at LIT, which is funded by Enterprise Ireland under the Campus Incubation Programme.

Graham Royce has been appointed to lead the LEAP Programme. An experienced mentor and member of the Enterprise Ireland Ireland mentor panel for the last seven years, Graham has mentored over 75 businesses including five High Potential Start-Ups. Graham has also been actively involved with the Genesis Enterprise Programme organised by Cork Institute of Technology and is a regular presenter on EI's EnterpriseSTART programmes around the country.

EI Supports the Bakery Sector

Enterprise Ireland has developed a new management development programme to assist firms operating in the Irish bakery and desserts sector. The programme, which will be delivered by the Irish Management Institute, was devised following collaboration between EI's Client Management Development Unit (Jean Mullen) and the Food Division (Pat Chaney, HR Adviser, and Una Cahalan, DA). It is aimed at owner/managers of Irish bakery and dessert companies that are seeking to enhance their management, growth and export capabilities. 15 companies from the sector are participating on this first programme.

The overall objective of the programme is to facilitate the creation of a critical mass of key people from bakery businesses with a common understanding of strategic business approaches, export marketing, organisation performance and systems, to drive increased profitability in their business. As with most sectors of food manufacturing, the bakery industry is experiencing the effects of competition. Multiple retailers now control in excess of 60% of the food retail market. Purchasing policies are acting as significant drivers of change and are exposing certain weaknesses within bakery businesses. The aim of the programme is to encourage participants to focus on the development of their companies within an international context while also assisting the companies to improve overall competitiveness through the increased skill of the decision makers.

The initiative follows extensive consultation with potential participants to identify their management development needs, according to Mike Feeney, EI's Executive Director, Food. "Over the past two to three years we have worked intensively with client companies in the bakery and dessert sector to identify the key challenges facing the sector: meeting the requirements of the multiple retailers and the rapidly changing consumer trends. It is therefore essential that those in management in the Irish bakery and desserts sector are fully equipped to anticipate and respond to these market dynamics."

"This targeted management development programme addresses these challenges and will help Irish bakery and dessert companies to enhance managerial effectiveness, identify new growth strategies and increase innovation and international marketing capabilities," he added.

Covering a broad range of practically focused modules, the nine-month programme provides participant companies with access to new product and process ideas from internationally recognised centres of excellence in bakery and desserts. The programme will also provide key networking opportunities for Irish companies within the sector and includes study visits to the San Francisco Baking Institute in California and the Academy of the German Bakery Industry in Weinheim, Germany. The National Bakery School at DIT in Dublin will also host a practical hands-on workshop to develop potential new product concepts identified.



Participants on Enterprise Ireland's new management development programme for the Irish bakery and desserts sector are pictured at the launch of the programme at the Irish Management Institute with (front row, from second left): Jean Mullen, Client Management Development; Siobhán McAleer, Programme Director, IMI; Mike Feeney, Executive Director Food; Pat Chaney, HR Adviser, Food Division; and Una Cahalan, DA Food Division.

FSM are First in Europe

EU client company, Food Surplus Management (FSM), is one of the first companies in Europe to be awarded a 'Category 3 Intermediate Plant Licence'. The licence permits the company to recycle packaged waste food into products for the pet food, animal feed, technical and bio-fuel industries. With supports from Enterprise Ireland, FSM have constructed a new state-of-the-art processing facility at Trim, Co Meath, which is now fully operational employing 25 people.

FSM specialise in the recovery of short-dated and out-of-date packaged food products for the wholesale and retail food sector in Ireland. Family owned and managed, the company began operating in January 2004.

FSM's plant at Trim is the first of its kind to be licensed by the Department of Agriculture & Food for the recovery of packaged food waste and the company are also amongst the first in Europe undertaking this activity. The Trim facility has the capacity to process up to 400 tonnes of packaged food waste per week.

Congratulating the company on its achievement, Minister for Enterprise, Trade & Employment, Micheál Martin, T.D., said that there are significant opportunities for Irish companies in all areas

of waste recycling. "Food Surplus Management is an excellent example of an Irish company providing an innovative solution to address the problem of packaged food waste. Recycling waste food is an extremely beneficial activity from both a business and environmental perspective. FSM create value-added products for sale in international markets by providing the Irish manufacturing, wholesale and retail food sector with an EU compliant solution for handling high quality packaged waste food," the Minister added.



EU client company, Food Surplus Management, is among the first in Europe to be awarded a 'Category 3 Intermediate Plant Licence'. Pictured at the announcement are (from left to right): Adam Lord, Operations Director, FSM; Minister for Enterprise, Trade & Employment, Micheál Martin, T.D.; and Niall J Lord, Sales & Marketing Director, FSM.

Niall J Lord, Sales & Marketing Director at FSM said: "Food Surplus Management offers the Irish manufacturing, wholesale and retail food industry a cost effective and environmentally

compliant alternative to landfill. FSM currently provides this service to many of Ireland's key food producers and distributors including Musgrave Group. FSM is delighted to be the first Irish company to be awarded a Category 3 Intermediate Plant Licence and I would like to thank both Enterprise Ireland and the Department of Agriculture and Food for their support."

Enterprise Ireland is now working closely with the company to identify new European market opportunities for its products.

All-Island Economy to Benefit from Technology Cooperation

A seminar entitled 'Bridging the Border, North/South Business Partnerships' was held recently in Dublin to showcase the research and innovation supports on offer to small and medium sized companies in both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland.

Presentations from Enterprise Ireland, InterTradelreland and Invest Northern Ireland highlighted the advantages of cross-border collaboration between small companies, leading to an increase in sales and exports between the Republic and Northern Ireland.

The event was organised by the Innovation Relay Centre Network, an EU initiative to support innovation and transnational technology transfer in Europe. It consists of 70 centres in 30 countries, and brokered over 1,200 technology agreements in 2006. Enterprise Ireland hosts the Irish centre while the Northern Ireland centre is hosted by Invest Northern Ireland.

Cross-border trade in Ireland has been growing steadily over the past 10 years. Export figures for 2005 showed over €1.5 billion in exports from South to North and over €1.2 billion in exports from North to South.

Speaking at the event, Marion McAneney, Science & Technology Manager with InterTradelreland pointed out that InterTradelreland is working towards a globally competitive all-island economy, built on sharing the island's economic resources. "In addition to improving individual company competitiveness, collaborative all-island initiatives in the areas of science, technology and innovation, sales and marketing and economic and business research will deliver many benefits," she said.

Congratulating the Innovation Relay Centres on their organisation of the event, Enterprise Ireland CEO, Frank Ryan, said that partnerships, strategic alliances, collaboration and licensing are tools that should be put into action by all companies, not just the leading lights. "I'm delighted to see this partnership underway between Enterprise Ireland, Invest Northern Ireland and InterTradelreland, and I wish the Innovation Relay Centres every success in creating collaborative business and technology links among all firms on the island of Ireland."



Alec Reid, Managing Director of InterNETalia. Advice for start-ups – ‘Think carefully about what it is you want to achieve and how you plan to get there’.



Joan Fahey
from EI's
Donegal
Regional
Office.

Developing a Successful Business Solution

InterNETalia is a software solutions provider based in Donegal Town. The company was formed in 1997 and specialises in developing and supplying software solutions, and developing Internet/Intranet specific database applications for clients in the UK & Irish markets. The company's founder and managing director, Alec Reid, shares his start-up experiences with Joan Fahey from EI's Donegal Regional Office.

How did it all begin?

I started writing the original versions of the AccuServ (a call management software tool for engineers in the heating, plumbing and electrical sector) and AccuMet (an ERP tool for the steel stockholding industry) products back in the late nineties when I first returned to Ireland, while subcontracting for different clients in the UK.

When did you decide you wanted to be an entrepreneur?

I didn't wake up one day and decide 'I want to be an entrepreneur, what will I do?'. I had worked for nearly ten years in the UK, writing and implementing software business applications. For an indigenous software company to survive in a place like Donegal, I knew we needed a suite of products that we could develop and sell into niche markets. So that is what I set about doing.

What motivated you to start your own business?

The initial motivation was the need to earn a living after returning to Donegal. I also wanted to build my own company and to see if I could create saleable products.

What has been your biggest achievement to date?

I suppose the biggest achievement is that InterNETalia is still here, based in Donegal Town, and that we have successfully developed and released our products into different industry sectors.

Did you encounter any hurdles along the way?

Way back in the early days there was no help at all. When I approached agencies and banks back then, and explained what I wanted to do, they looked at me like I had two heads. They simply had no understanding of what was involved in developing a company such as InterNETalia. There was absolutely no culture of R&D and no understanding of what is involved in a product development cycle from inception to release into the market place.

So in the early years we did everything ourselves. We funded all our own research and the development of our products by carrying out chargeable bespoke work.

In the beginning, the remoteness of Donegal was also a definite hurdle. This has been alleviated somewhat with the introduction of broadband and the advent of the low cost air travel from Derry and Belfast.

What are your top three tips for success?

Well, first I don't consider myself successful yet. We still have a long way to go. Initially you need to be very motivated because it is hard work and the hours can be very long. You definitely need the support of your family, especially if you are going to be away a lot from home.

Once your business starts to grow, get the right people on board to help you. They need to share your vision.

Automate as much of the mundane but necessary tasks like payroll processing and accounts.

What annoys you most in business?

Shoddy and sub-standard service and believe me there is a lot of it still out there both in the private and public sector in this country. We have had some very frustrating experiences in trying to develop InterNETalia Ltd.

Have you any regrets?

I have made mistakes in terms of product direction and in how I expanded the company. I also didn't think it would take as long to get to where we are today. I also regret the missed time with my family. The thing is, I suppose, to learn from your mistakes and try not to make them again.

What keeps you going day to day?

Four kids and a big mortgage! No, each day brings new challenges. We have so much still to achieve with the company and where we need to get to. I personally feel I still have a long way to go before I can say... 'Right, I've done that'.

What business person do you most admire?

I can't really think of any individual that I would say I admire most. I have met lots of self-made individuals in different industry sectors over the years that have built up successful businesses from nothing. I have a lot of admiration for these individuals.

What advice would you give to someone starting out in business today?

Think carefully about what it is you want to achieve and how you plan to get there. Plan as much as you can in advance and, once you start, stay focused on your core objectives.

What was the main factor in returning to Donegal?

Donegal is one of the best places to raise a family, and the quality of life is as good as anywhere in Europe. Besides, this is where I am from.

For more information, see the company's website www.internetalia.ie

Industrial Technologies Showcase

Some of Ireland's newest cutting-edge industrial technologies, ripe for commercialisation, were unveiled earlier this year at an Enterprise Ireland-organised showcase event held in Glasnevin.

The showcase was designed to give entrepreneurs, business professionals, investors, and industry, an early opportunity to access the latest technologies being developed in Irish third level institutions while providing the academics behind the technologies with an opportunity to meet with those with the necessary business acumen to bring their new ideas to market.

The new technologies featured at this year's showcase included:

- Moisture sensitive holograms for security and packaging industries;
- Microcooler technology for advanced mobile phones;
- Novel biofilm reactor for small scale wastewater treatment for the environmental industry;
- Clinical software tool aiding the prediction of human spinal deformity for orthopaedic surgeons.

Since 2001, Enterprise Ireland's Applied Research Commercialisation programmes have invested over €150m in third level research projects with commercialisation potential. According to Jim Lawler, EI's Director of Industrial Technologies Commercialisation, the projects highlighted at the showcase provide a snapshot of the potential that exists for industry, and individual investors, if prepared to invest their commercial experience in new technologies.

"In addition to the €29m invested in new projects in 2006, Enterprise Ireland's commitment to the commercialisation of third level research has been further strengthened through the recent investment of €8.5m in the Technology Transfer Offices based in Irish third level institutions. Building relationships between academic researchers and potential exploiters in industry is the fastest and most effective way to get new technologies into the marketplace, achieving an increasing return on this investment in Ireland's future," he added.



Jim Lawler, EI Director of Industrial Technologies Commercialisation (third from left) is pictured with some of the promoters behind the cutting-edge new technologies highlighted at EI's recent Industrial Technologies Showcase (from left to right): Prof Patrick McNally, DCU; Prof Conleth Hussey, UL; Dr Ronan Grimes UL; Dr Michael Rodgers NUI Galway; and Dr Suzanne Martin, DIT.

EI Advocate - Coming Soon to a Location Near You!

What is an EI Advocate?

An Advocate is an expert business professional with experience of managing innovation in companies and in delivering new products and processes profitably. The Advocates have been carefully selected to visit inactive client companies who do not appear to be doing enough to develop new innovative products and services.

Where will the Advocates operate?

All 26 counties will be targeted over a two-year period. Working in different regions and following a ten-week cycle, two groups have been covered to date: Cork (Group 1), and Cavan, Monaghan, Leitrim, Louth and Longford (Group 2). The Advocates are currently operating in Galway, Mayo, Sligo and Roscommon (Group 3).

Which companies are being targeted?

The specific targets are inactive clients listed on our CSS database. The Advocate is given a list of companies to phone, with a view to arranging a visit. The DA is consulted prior to the Advocate's contact with the client and a reporting mechanism is in place to feed back an update on these clients to the DA and sectors.

Do the Advocates make cold calls?

No. The EI Advocate Programme team sends a letter of introduction to the specifically targeted and vetted list of companies.

What is the aim of the Advocate Programme?

The Advocate Programme is all about encouraging companies who currently undertake little or no R&D to begin to engage in a more structured R&D programme. If companies are at an appropriate stage in their development, they are encouraged to avail of three days R&D support.

R&D technical consulting can help to guide an eligible company in:

- Establishing the right strategy.
- Identifying the right project(s).
- Developing a project plan.
- Connecting the company to RTI or other appropriate R&D support.
- Improving its productivity, through the productivity improvement fund.
- Recommending corrective action to address any shortcomings.

The objective of the consulting is to instil an understanding of the R&D process in the senior management of companies and to guide them through the process of formulating and defining an R&D programme and, if appropriate, of preparing an application for other R&D or improved productivity supports.

Are non R&D supports discussed?

The programme is also about the careful management of expectations on the part of clients who may seek to avail of a 'menu' of non R&D supports. If the Advocate recommends the need for a non R&D intervention, this can only be as a precursor to an R&D support, or as a vital mechanism for the company's continued survival. The Advocate may not discuss any matters of this nature with the client until the DA has been fully consulted and has advised on the next appropriate step.

Are the results of the Advocate Programme encouraging?

Of the groups visited to date, including during the pilot phase of the programme in Donegal and Waterford, the typical rate of interest in R&D supports has consistently been about 30% of the companies visited.

For more details, contact the Advocate Programme team: Cathy Courtney (01-808 2295) & Margaret Halligan (01-808 2474).

EI INITIATIVE TO BOOST KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY

Enterprise Ireland is investing €8.5m to ensure that ideas, research and technology generated in our third level institutions are used to keep Irish companies at the cutting edge of the knowledge economy. The funding, provided under the €30m Technology Transfer Initiative which is managed by EI, will allow for the appointment of high calibre technology transfer specialists to facilitate the development of strong links between the academic and commercial sectors.

17 such specialists are to be appointed immediately at third level institutions around the country – in UCC (5 posts), NUI Galway (3 posts), NUI Maynooth (2 posts), The Royal College of Surgeons (2 posts) and UCD (5 posts). Other appointments will follow.

A new unit has been established within EI to manage and coordinate this initiative to strengthen the Technology Transfer Offices on campus, which will be headed up by Mary Gillick.

According to Mary, the Technology Transfer Strengthening Initiative is designed to address the challenges that third level institutions face in the areas of awareness, identification, evaluation, capture, protection and commercialisation of ideas.

"These technology transfer specialists, appointed under the scheme, will ensure that the academic institution is best placed, and adequately resourced, to maximise the commercial potential of the research ideas and technologies generated on campus. It is envisaged that this will lead to an increase in patents, licences and start-up companies while EI client companies, at the same time, will benefit from improved access to the excellent technology development and research underway at third level," she comments. "If Ireland is to remain a world leader in the high tech sector then strong links between our researchers and our entrepreneurs is vital."

Ten New Start-ups for Midlands

Ten new entrepreneurs from the Midlands have just commenced the development of their businesses in the Midlands Innovation and Research Centre at Athlone Institute of Technology - as participants on the Midlands & West Enterprise Programme (MWEP). The Midlands Innovation and Research Centre, a hotbed for new enterprise in the region, has incubated and supported twenty-four start-ups since 2003 and is now driving the development of the next generation of innovative companies in the Midlands.

The MWEP is a one-year programme, which is run jointly between Athlone Institute of Technology and the Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology in partnership with Enterprise Ireland. The programme provides participants with the business skills, networks, facilities and supports necessary to navigate the business start-up process. All of the MWEP start-ups are knowledge-based with growth and export potential. Products being developed by participants include pharmaceutical gels, life sciences software, a biodegradable plastic, telecoms software and a high-yielding thermal solar panel.

There have been many success stories associated with the MWEP. BioClin Research Laboratories, a provider of contract research services to the pharmaceutical industry and co-founded by Mary Burke, a participant on the MWEP in 2003, was the overall winner of the Ulster Bank/Irish Independent Business Achievers Award in 2005. "The MWEP greatly assisted BioClin in its early days by providing structured training and support in the key commercial elements of setting up and running a successful business," acknowledges Mary, BioClin's Managing Director.

Pat Byrne, EI Regional Director, Midlands Region welcomed the participants to the programme and emphasised the unique learning and networking benefits that will flow from participation. "There is no question but programmes such as this are crucially important to the future development of HPSU activity in the Midlands region," believes Pat.



Pictured at the Midlands Innovation and Research Centre are the MIRC and GMIT-based participants on the Midlands & West Enterprise Programme, along with Prof Ciarán Ó Catháin, Director, Athlone Institute of Technology; Ann McDonnell, Grants Administration Division, Enterprise Ireland; and Tom Maguire, HPSU Division, Enterprise Ireland.

Michael O’Keeffe Retires From North East Office

EI’s North East Regional Office said farewell to Michael O’Keeffe earlier this year as he retired after 33 years of service given across the development agencies - in IDA Ireland, Forbairt and Enterprise Ireland.



Michael started his career in the Small Business Division of IDA Ireland in Dublin. In 1984, he moved to the Small Business Division in the North East Office where he remained for the rest of his career. For the past number of years, Michael has worked as a Senior Development Adviser alongside Brian Gaffney and his team in the Dundalk office.

Michael is pictured here with his wife, Sheila, and some of his many colleagues from Enterprise Ireland as well as former colleagues from IDA Ireland who gathered at a special reception in Dundalk to mark the occasion. We all wish him every good health and happiness in his retirement.

CAVAN FIRM TO EXPAND WITH EI SUPPORT

EI client company, McCarrens & Co, are set for significant expansion following an investment of €2.5m in the firm. The investment, which is supported by Enterprise Ireland, will facilitate the expansion of the company’s pig processing facility in Cavan and will lead to the creation of 40 new jobs at the facility over the next three years. The investment underpins a move into higher value-added meat products and will also support management development and training initiatives.

The announcement was made by Minister for Enterprise, Trade & Employment, Mr. Micheál Martin, T.D. "This investment, with support from Enterprise Ireland, will enable McCarrens to implement a new strategy based on developing new higher value-added products and responding quickly and innovatively to changing consumer demands internationally. Enterprise Ireland is working closely with the company to increase competitiveness and improve export capability," commented the Minister.

Andrew McCarren Jnr, Managing Director of McCarren & Co, said that the investment marks the next phase of growth for the meat processing company. "At McCarrens, we are now working to increase export sales by targeting the high growth food service and manufacturing sectors in the UK and Europe," he added.

Making the Web Work



At the 'Internet Marketing for the 21st Century' programme, hosted by Enterprise Ireland, were (left to right): Michael Dee, from EI's South East Regional Office; Conor Ryan, HAsH 6 Ltd, Waterford; Aileen Cussen, Enterprise Ireland; and John Coburn, PraxisNow.

Ten companies in the South East participated on an Enterprise Ireland-organised Internet marketing course held earlier this year at the Ramada Hotel in Waterford. The course was designed to provide practical, hands-on training and advice on making the most effective use of modern electronic marketing methods.

According to John Coburn, joint founder of Internet marketing consultancy, PraxisNow, who delivered the course, many companies spend the time and money to build a professional corporate website and then fail to get the website working for them. The result is little more than an electronic brochure that contributes little to the bottom line. This course illustrated to firms how to maximise the potential benefits that can be achieved through a website. It covered a variety of topics and included a session on search engine optimisation, which introduced the participants to programmes and techniques that can help to improve the volume or quality of traffic to their websites directed from search engines. Responsible email marketing, the importance of choosing significant keywords and phrases, and website analytics and statistics were also covered.

According to Michael Dee from EI's South East Regional Office, participants found the course very practical and extremely useful in building their awareness of the need to promote their company websites in a way that can effectively maximise returns.

Media Cube Opens

The Media Cube, a new state-of-the-art digital media centre, is now open for business at the Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design & Technology (IADT). The 1,100 sq metre business incubation facility will support start-up companies and research projects operating in the digital media sector in Ireland. Funded by Enterprise Ireland, under the National Development Plan, the Media Cube's goal is to provide an environment for the growth and development of new ideas and businesses in digital media, and to create opportunities for their application and further evolution through the channels of commercial activity. Dun Laoghaire IADT was founded in 1997 and has a well-established reputation in the fields of media and visual arts.



Pictured at the opening of the Media Cube earlier this year were (left to right): Jim Devine, Director, Dun Laoghaire IADT; Micheál Martin, T.D., Minister for Enterprise, Trade & Employment, who officially opened the new centre; Eugene Regan, Cathaoirleach, Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council; and Fergal Ó Móráin, Executive Director, Enterprise Ireland.

BRITE for Business



At the launch of the new BRITE Programme - Business Related Initiative for Technology-based Enterprises - were (left to right): EI's John O'Dea, Manager, Food Consumer & Retail HPSU; Michael Johnson, CEO, Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Enterprise Board; and Micheál Martin, T.D., Minister for Enterprise, Trade & Employment.

BRITE provides a two-year schedule of one-to-one mentoring, business networking and business skills training. In addition to classroom training, there are networking events, input from industry leaders and the opportunity to learn from the experience of other successful business people. The programme is funded by the European Social Fund and the National Development Plan and coordinated by Accel.

INNOVATION VOUCHERS FOR SMEs

A new Enterprise Ireland scheme aims to encourage Irish SMEs to become more innovative in their approach to enterprise. The €10m Innovation Voucher fund was launched recently by Minister for Enterprise, Trade & Employment, Micheál Martin, T.D., and is designed to assist small companies to more easily access the knowledge and expertise available in the third level sector.

Under the scheme, small firms with a business opportunity or problem they want to explore can apply for an innovation voucher worth €5,000. The voucher can then be exchanged for advice and expertise from any Institute of Technology, University or public research body participating in the initiative as a knowledge provider. Any small company, operating in any sector, in Ireland is eligible to apply for a voucher.

According to EI's Pat O'Brien, Programme Manager for the scheme, Ireland is only the second country to introduce Innovation Vouchers as part of an effort to create a cultural shift in the small business community's approach to innovation. "While small Irish companies continue to improve their productivity performance, few outside the high-tech sector spend more than €100,000 on R&D per annum. Innovation Vouchers will open doors to knowledge providers and give the necessary financial support to start many SMEs on the innovation ladder."

200 vouchers are due to be allocated in the initial nationwide pilot phase of the initiative, which drew to a close at the end of April. A dedicated website www.innovationvouchers.ie has been set up where the application form can be downloaded and more information obtained. Details of further phases of the scheme, to be held later this year, will be announced on the website.



Attending the event were (left to right): Peter Sheridan, EI Dublin Mid-East Regional Office; Liam Ryan, President, German-Irish Chamber and CEO of SAP Ireland Ltd; Lorenz Zimmermann, Council Member and former CEO, Siemens Ireland; Liam Twohig, Council Member and Managing Partner, Baker Tilly O'Hare; and Ralf Lissek, CEO, German-Irish Chamber.

NETWORKING THE GERMAN WAY

This year's AGM of the German-Irish Chamber of Commerce provided an opportunity for Enterprise Ireland to network with leading German companies and to promote EI's EnterpriseSTART Programme. The event took place at No. 10 Ormond Quay in Dublin and was attended by almost 100 people representing German multinationals with operations in Ireland as well as Irish companies doing business with Germany.

National Marketing Conference 2007



The 28th National Marketing Conference, organised by The Marketing Institute of Ireland, took place in the Burlington Hotel in Dublin earlier this year. Enterprise Ireland was represented at the conference, which was attended by over 400 people, promoting the EnterpriseSTART programme. This year's conference theme, 'Understand Your Evolving Customer', focussed on a current key concern of Irish marketing professionals - how to best understand what today's customers will want in the future.

Pictured at the conference were (left to right): Tom Trainor, Chief Executive, The Marketing Institute of Ireland; Christian Majgaard, strategy consultant and former creative director at Danish multinational, LEGO, who was recently featured as one of the '21 Leaders for the 21st Century' in the book by Dutch/British professors, Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner; EI's Peter Sheridan from Dublin Mid-East Regional Office; and Michael Dwyer, founder and CEO of Empathy Marketing, best known for online marketing site, Pigsback.com, which expects to top one million active members in 2007.

Regional Sudoku

Your chance to win €100

To enter, fill in the grids in such a way that every row and every column and every 3x3 box contains the letters Regions HQ

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	I			O	E	Q	

Send your entries to:
Maria Gabard-Daly
 Enterprise Ireland,
 35/39 Shelbourne Road, Dublin 4

Or by email to
maria.gabard@enterpriseireland.com

The closing date for receipt of entries is 27 July 2007. All correct entries will be entered into a draw and the winning entry will receive €100.

Congratulations...

James Clancy, Manager, El Shannon Laboratory, and Emmet Connolly, Client Knowledge Services, Glasnevin, the winners of our competitions in the last issue of RegionalNEWS.

Cover Competition

Your chance to win €100

Can you name the regional location featured on the cover of this issue of RegionalNEWS? If so, then €100 could be yours.

Just send your answers to Maria Gabard-Daly by 27 July 2007 - the winner will be drawn from all the correct entries received.

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