

Expansion of Athlone technology start-up creates 20 new jobs

Athlone-based technology start-up WPA Mobile plans to create 20 high-value positions as part of a €2m investment at their headquarters in the Midlands Innovation and Research Centre (MIRC) at Athlone Institute of Technology (AIT).

WPA started operations in Athlone and Dublin a year ago with an initial staff of three people that has now grown to 11 full-time employees. WPA has also just opened a fully serviced office with two employees in the UK.

WPA provides mobility solutions which enable field workers in service companies to access desktop-like functionality while on the move using a handheld device. Technicians can enter orders online, register working hours and report on quality issues through a laptop or pocket PC.

According to the Technical Director of WPA Mobile, Kevin Rice: "The key to our success in the Irish market has been our ability to tailor the product for individual client needs together with the flexibility to integrate with any back

office."

The development of WPA's technology is being supported by the Software Research Centre at AIT under Enterprise Ireland's Innovation Partnership Programme.

"WPA Mobile is a good

example of the type of regionally based start up business that Enterprise Ireland is encouraging. The business is export-focused and is based on technological innovation. In addition, it is led by an experienced management team with

strong sales and marketing skills. This capability is essential in developing a successful business in international markets," commented Pat Byrne, Regional Director, Enterprise Ireland.

According to Dr Pat Mulhern, Head of Development at AIT: "WPA is exactly the type of knowledge-intensive start-up that the MIRC aims to support while AIT provides a ready-made research capability for the development of WPA's technology".

According to WPA Director Oliver Heaney: "The MIRC and Enterprise Ireland are creating the right conditions for the emergence of high-growth innovative technology companies in the Midlands. Today's announcement testifies to the strength of the high-tech skills base in the Midlands and the confidence of promoters in their ability to develop international software services companies in the region - drawing on locally available skills and research resources to meet their clients' needs."



Oliver Heaney, WPA Director, is pictured with Pat Byrne, Regional Director, Enterprise Ireland.