



Strong Business Interest in Finance Seminars

Over 70 local businesses attended October's Free Business Seminar at the Ramada Woodland Court Hotel in Bray. Entitled "Funding Your New Business" guest speaker Mr Lar Burke fielded questions on all aspects of financing a new business venture.

Lar's wide-ranging experience in financial services and industry, most recently in establishing the HALO Business Angel Partnership, gave seminar attendees a valuable insight into what lending institutions and investors are really looking for in a business proposal, stressing the importance of frugal cashflow management and a proven track record in credit control. The seminar concluded with a lively Question & Answer session highlighting the importance entrepreneurs place on this topic.



Speaker Lar Burke responding to questions at October's Free Seminar Funding Your New Business



Eddie Sheehy [Chairman], Thalia O'Toole [KPMG] and Sheelagh Daly [CEO, Wicklow CEB] at the December Budget Briefing

On Thursday 6th December Sheelagh Daly, welcomed guest speaker, Thalia O'Toole, Associate Director, KPMG to the annual WCEB budget briefing. Thalia and her team at KPMG had digested Minister Cowan's fourth budget statement delivered the previous day and had worked late into the night to prepare a copy of 'Taxing Times' as a synopsis of the main budget changes. A full ballroom of 60 attendees received KPMG's summary, and had an opportunity to ask the guest speaker questions that directly related to their businesses.

Wicklow Businesses Awarded Certification



Presentation of KESP Certificates at Glenview Hotel

Last December, over 30 entrepreneurs gathered at the Glenview Hotel to receive their certificates from Wicklow County Enterprise Board for accredited training courses completed in 2007.

Participants from two training courses – the 'Management Development Programme and the 'Knowledge Economy Skills Passport (KESP)' received certificates from the awarding bodies, IT Carlow and the National College of Ireland.

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Five Year Strategic Plan Launched

Wicklow County Enterprise Board launched its 5 year Strategic Plan at the September Board Meeting in the Parkview Hotel, Newtownmountkenny. The strategic plan is focused on strengthening businesses in County Wicklow and supporting them to realize their growth. It has been designed to be client focused and responsive, and has been developed to take account of the international, national and county circumstances that will prevail in the coming years.

Speaking at the launch of the plan, Mr Eddie Sheehy, County Manager and Chairman of Wicklow County Enterprise Board, outlined the key values driving the work of the Enterprise Board, stating "The mission of Wicklow County Enterprise Board is to foster a strong entrepreneurial culture in County Wicklow and to actively support the development of businesses, in particular those with the potential to grow.



Board Members, Evaluation Committee and Staff at the Launch of the Wicklow County Enterprise Board 5 Year Strategic Plan

National Women's Enterprise Day



Minister Martin, Clare Byrne, Pamela Fitzmaurice and Sheelagh Daly Promoting National Women's Enterprise Day 2007

In November 2007, the first ever National Women's Enterprise Day was held in Mullingar. Over 350 entrepreneurs attended, representing every county in Ireland. The whole day was a huge success with famous names such as Clare Byrne, Ruth Badger and Pamela Fitzmaurice adding to the quality of the

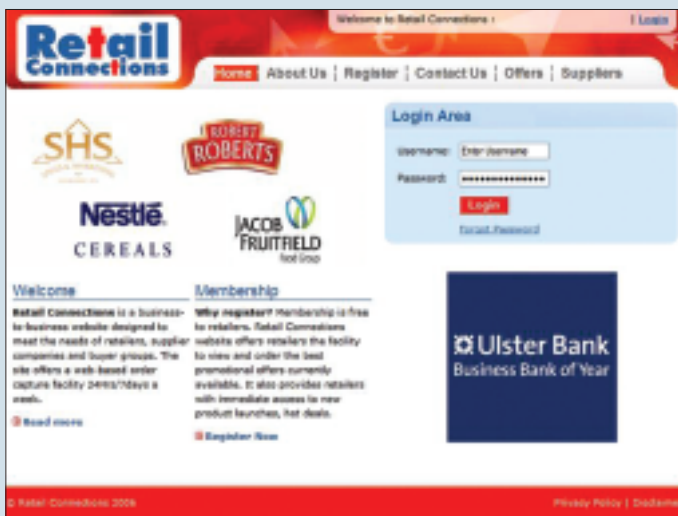


Wicklow delegates at National Women's Enterprise Day 2007

event. Delegates have called the day a "Brilliant, motivating, inspirational" experience. Due to popular demand it is hoped that a similar event will be hosted again in 2008.

"Brilliant, motivating, inspirational"

Retail Connections Brings Innovation to the Grocery Market



A Screen Shot from Retail Connections Homepage

A new service from Bray based company Retail Connections Ltd. is set to revolutionise the relationship between suppliers and retailers using the web as a one stop shop. Retail Connections is an online portal through which independent and Symbol Group retailers will be able to order products and services and obtain information from their suppliers. The service is free to the retailers, gives them more opportunities

to order, better access to promotions and new launches, and ultimately puts them in a better position to compete with major multiples.

Suppliers benefit from the direct contact with retailers, both in terms of downstream communications including special promotions and product information and in terms of gaining critical information on their customer base obtained from direct upstream communications by retailers and also from being able to monitor purchasing directly. Suppliers who have already committed to the service are well known in the Irish market and include Jacob Fruitfield, Jeyes, Nestlé Cereals, Robt. Roberts and SHS distributors.

Once established on a strong footing in the Irish market, Retail Connections see excellent opportunities for rolling out the service in the UK and European markets. The company has benefited from seed capital investment by Wicklow County Enterprise Board.

Contact Details:

Paul Kelly, Retail Connections Ltd.,
Fort Wilton House, Unit 6,
Cedar Industrial Estate, Killiney Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow.
Tel. 01 2760111 or 086 8218465.
www.retailconnections.ie

Blacking out is Big Business

Drapeage Ltd. truly is a unique business - the only Irish company of its kind to manufacture and supply 'blackout' drapes for the entertainment industry. Having recently relocated to new premises (almost 5,000 sq ft in size) at the Network Enterprise Park, Kilcoole, this business is primed for growth.

Founded by Dave Maxwell and Paul Solino in January 2001, Drapeage Ltd. manufacture high quality drapes, 'blackout' cloths, tracking and soft goods set material, which is used as a backdrop at theatres, concert venues, corporate events and on TV and film sets. 'Blacking out' the background of a stage is an important element in the organisation of any event. 35% of corporate events and functions today are held in temporary structures, and even those that are not require blacking out. Both Dave Maxwell (pictured) and Paul Solino have extensive experience in the lighting and sound industry. Their company has catered for events on a worldwide scale including Formula 1 Grand Prix, the MTV European Music Awards 1995 (London) and major world tours including Oasis and Eric Clapton.

The company's main customers are events organisers; exhibition

companies, theatre companies, concert promoters, schools, colleges and TV & Film production companies and over a third of sales derive from exports. The company currently employs 8 people full time and employment numbers are increasing as the company grows.

The company are working with Wicklow County Enterprise Board to further develop the business with supports such as Capital Grants and mentoring.

Drapeage Ltd. were nominated to represent Co. Wicklow in the annual 'National Enterprise Awards 2008' - a competition which is organised by County & City Enterprise Boards nationally.

Contact details:

Dave Maxwell, Drapeage Ltd., C1 Network Enterprise Park, Kilcoole, Co. Wicklow.
Tel. 01 2762840 or 086 2469030.
www.drapeage.ie



Dave Maxwell of Drapeage Ltd.

Tech Check a hit with Wicklow businesses

Tech Check is a new service provided by County & City Enterprise Boards to businesses of all types in Ireland with less than 50 employees. An Advisor visits the business premises and makes an assessment of the current use of technology, making practical recommendations for improvements. A Tech Check costs the business only €150 and is heavily subsidised by the local Enterprise Board. Wicklow County Enterprise Board provides the service for Co. Wicklow based businesses.

The service was launched in Autumn 2007, and there has been tremendous interest in County Wicklow, where over 35 Tech Checks have been carried out so far, with businesses ranging from Tourism product providers to professional services, engineering firms and retail outlets.

One local business that benefited from a Tech Check is Abingdon Insurances, based in the Whitethorn Financial Services Centre, Kilcoole. Colette Murphy, Director of

Abingdon Insurances Ltd. was delighted with the service she received. Speaking about the experience she said "We were looking for an IT solution to the administration of a new financial services product for a client management system which could integrate with existing systems.

We were very impressed with the Tech Check assessment we received from our Advisor and I would recommend an independent Tech Check to any business whatever their current level of IT use".

Colette can be contacted at (01) 2016111 or www.abingdon.ie



Wicklow Success at SHOP Exhibition

Five Wicklow food producers exhibited at the SHOP Exhibition in September 2007 under the County & City Enterprise Board banner. The show was a great success for Janet's Country Fayre, Wicklow Fine Foods, Oasis Savoury Foods, Fresh 2 Cook and Le Paysan.

In addition to launching new packaging, Alan Brophy [Fresh 2 Cook] was presented with one of the prestigious Product of the Show Awards, receiving the Judges Commendation out of 150 entrants in the Best Chilled/Frozen Product Category. Janet Drew [Janet's Country Fayre] received excellent feedback on her new product, and was able to source some

exciting new ingredients. Jim Healy [Wicklow Fine Foods] took the opportunity to introduce his existing customer base to some new products coming on stream.

Rona O'Mahony [Oasis Savoury Foods] were overwhelmed by the positive reactions to their new "On The Go" nuts and snacks range - a healthy snack option for when you are stuck in traffic. Thierry Peurois [Le Paysan] was delighted with the number of leads generated from the show, he met contacts from many of the national retail chains as well as high quality independent food stores. The National CEB Stand is managed by Wicklow County Enterprise Board.



Janet's Country Fayre at SHOP 2007



Wicklow Fine Foods at SHOP 2007

Business & I.T. Training Courses

Whether you are in the initial stages of business or are interested in growing your existing business, Wicklow County Enterprise Board has a broad selection of training supports available to you this season.

Topic	Cost	Venue	Start Date
Seminar: "Lift -Off - Launching your New Business" (Glen o'the Downs)	FREE	Glenview Hotel	17/04/2008
Seminar: "Hiring the Right People the Right Way" (Newtownmountkennedy)	FREE	Marriott Druid's Glen Hotel	12/03/2008
Workshop: "Time Management" (venue & date TBC)	FREE	Check back for updates!	22/02/2008
Start Your Own Business (February: Wicklow)	€100	Wicklow Enterprise Centre	18/02/2008
Start Your Own Business (March: Bray)	€100	Ramada Woodland Court Hotel, Bray	11/03/2008
Start Your Own Business (April: Blessington)	€100	Avon Rí Conference Centre	02/04/2008
Basic Bookkeeping for Start-ups (Arklow)	€120	Arklow Business Enterprise Centre	27/03/2008
Selling Skills for Start-ups (Bray)	€120	Ramada Woodland Court Hotel, Bray	24/04/2008
Low Cost Web Design for Start-ups (Wicklow Town)	€120	Wicklow County Enterprise Board - IT Suite	20/02/2008
How to Build an Online Shop (Wicklow Town)	€120	Wicklow County Enterprise Board - IT Suite	08/05/2008
TAS Books (Wicklow Town)	€120	Wicklow County Enterprise Board - IT Suite	11/04/2008
How to Get Paid on Time (Bray)	€100	Ramada Woodland Court Hotel, Bray	07/03/2008
Company Law Update (Glen o'the Downs)	€100	Glenview Hotel	19/02/2008
Planning for Growth (Newtownmtkennedy)	€120	Parkview Hotel	24/04/2008
SAGE Instant/SAGE Line 50 (Wicklow Town)	€120	Wicklow County Enterprise Board - IT Suite	26/02/2008
Using eBay in your Business (Rathnew)	€80	Wicklow County Campus (Clermont) - IT Room	16/04/2008
Website Optimisation (Rathnew)	€90	Wicklow County Campus (Clermont) - IT Room	25/04/2008

For further information on the Spring/Summer 2008 Training Programme or to book a place call Wicklow County Enterprise Board at 0404-67100 or visit www.wicklowceb.ie



Investing in your future