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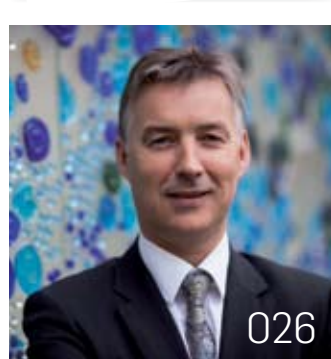
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3V CEO KIERON GUILFOYLE AND SEAMUS MINOGUE, COO

Dublin company 3V secures million dollar investment from Atlanta based VC

Dublin company 3V, which specialises in payment platform technologies, has secured a €5m investment led by Atlanta-based TTV Capital to fund further expansion into US and European markets in 2013.

3V offers customers an integrated approach to payments by combining mobile, card and web based technologies into one solution for both issuing and acquiring payment applications. It functionality suite includes real-time, global P2P transfers, NFC and QR Codes. Clients include Telefonica O2, Visa, PayPal and eBay.

Enterprise Ireland also participated in the company's latest funding round with 3V's existing investors, including Balderton Capital and Atlas Ventures.

Enterprise Ireland helps companies to fill IT jobs

This September, footballer turned entrepreneur, Niall Quinn, launched the IT's Happening Here initiative to promote career opportunities in the Irish-owned software sector, where around 1,500 vacancies are waiting to be filled. IT's Happening Here is targeting software professionals both at home and overseas and offers creative, dynamic positions with multiple responsibilities in Ireland's home-grown software industry.

The campaign is centred around the new ITsHappeningHere.ie website (www.itshappeninghere.ie) where Irish-owned software companies can post their jobs. An aggressive marketing campaign, across social media in particular, is now under way to drive potential applicants to this site and help fill vacancies in companies. Enterprise Ireland client companies can post job vacancies on the site free of charge. Email action@itshappeninghere.ie

€500,000 fund for business start-ups by female entrepreneurs

A new €500,000 competitive start fund for female entrepreneurs has been launched as part of a drive by Enterprise Ireland to boost the number of innovative, export-oriented businesses being set up and led by female entrepreneurs.

The fund is aimed at female-led manufacturing and internationally traded businesses with the potential to become a high growth potential start-up (HPSU). These are companies that can develop scalable innovative technologies, products or services for sale on world markets. Up to 10 companies are expected to benefit under this round of funding, and up to €500,000 is available. The fund will remain open for applications until December 3, 2012. See www.enterprise-ireland.com/csfemale



Empower The User scoops deals in the US and Netherlands

ATCD spinout company that helps organisations develop online role-play training simulations is winning orders for real.

Empower The User (ETU) has invested more than €1m in researching and developing its Talent Development Platform, which allows the easy development of complex, multi-branching, role-play simulations. Already, the system is being used by Farmers Insurance in the US and by the Dutch HR consultancy GITP.

Role-play simulations are useful for all kinds of training, says CEO Declan Dagger – from inculcating leadership skills in CEOs to developing empathy among customer service agents. He adds: "These online simulations allow skills to be developed in context, while iteration and repetition help learning by allowing you to apply your growing knowledge and understanding."

Dagger claims that the platform allows simulations that previously took weeks to be developed to be completed, and validated, in days at a third of the cost.

"Storyboarding a simulation and shooting the video material was always the easy part – the bottleneck was always fitting the content in with the logic of the simulation," he told *The Market*. "Our RolePlay Development Tool allows anybody with subject expertise to rapidly develop powerful assessment and training roleplay simulations with our easy-to-use drag'n'drop interface. With the help of our roleplay development experts, you could have the successful roll-out of a simulation after six to nine days of person effort."

The development tool is fully integrated with ETU's RolePlay Simulator, a software as a service tool that can deliver simulations online to thousands of users. The users perspective in the simulations is similar to that of a player in a first-person shooter video game, except that the simulator has psychometric capabilities and performance coaching to allow critical skills to be tested and further developed.

ETU currently has five staff members, two of whom are involved in sales. The company has two target markets: tier-one multinationals, particularly tech companies and financial institutions that have their own well-developed in-house training programmes and organisations, like GITP, that supply training and assessment programmes to their own client companies.

Altobridge rolls out mobile connectivity to rural communities in Ghana

Kerry-headquartered mobile connectivity specialists Altobridge has partnered with one of Ghana's leading network solutions providers to bring first-time mobile voice and mobile broadband connectivity to rural communities in Ghana.

The initial rollout phase of the satellite-backhauled, solar powered solution on the Tigo Ghana mobile network has now been completed, bringing internet connectivity and communications infrastructure for the first time to these rural village communities.

Horseware gallops ahead with new logistics facility



The Irish supplier of horse blankets and horse clothing, Horseware, has opened a new 100,000 sq ft, state-of-the-art, warehouse facility in Dundalk to cater for the rapid growth in its European and American business.

Founded in 1985, Horseware currently employs 125 people in Dundalk – 50% more than it did three years ago. While some of the company's products are manufactured in China, Cambodia and the USA, its higher value products are all manufactured in Ireland, which is also home to Horseware's R&D, design, marketing and administration facilities.

The company is best known for its four ranges of horse-blanket: Rambo, Rhino, Amigo and Mio, each catering for distinct markets. Horseware



has also expanded into lifestyle equestrian clothing and equine healthcare products, as well as a range of Rambo dog blankets.

"Our fastest growing markets are Scandinavia and Germany," said commercial manager Mel Morgan. "It made logistical sense to base our European warehousing in Dundalk."

"We also have significant growth in the US, where the equine market breaks down into three categories: English-riding, which is like dressage in this country; Western-riding, which includes disciplines such as reining and cutting; and horse racing. We would have coast-to-coast distribution in the US, which accounts for 25% of our business. We are market leaders there in the English-riding category and we are second in Western-riding and horse-racing."

"It made logistical sense to base our European warehousing in Dundalk."



TEKPAK'S JOHN KEHOE RECEIVING HIS AWARD

Sweet success for Tekpak

Tekpak, a Wexford-based export business, which designs and manufactures high-speed packaging machinery for Mr Kipling, Butlers and Heinz as well as other food industry and pharma clients celebrated by having its cake and eating it after winning a prestigious award in the UK.

The winning line, which

began life as a design for a high-volume confectionary customer to load confectionery bars into either shelf-ready packaging or to flow wrap multipacks in a range of different formats, scooped the winning prize for innovation at the year's UK's Processing & Packaging Machinery Association (PPMA) Awards.

National Geographic goes Irish this season

You might know National Geographic for its stunning photography and beautifully produced magazines and documentaries. But the organisation also has an online store, selling hand-crafted goods, sourced locally from destination from India to Bolivia, which it uses to help fund its mission "to inspire people to care about the planet".

"We bring their merchandising team to Ireland for the Showcase trade show every January," Marie-Claire Hoey, VP for Consumer Retail with Enterprise Ireland in New York told *The Market*. "But this year, they also decided to go to Ireland for a week to shoot Irish product and scenery for their Fall/Winter 2012 catalogue, which actually has a larger circulation than their magazine." The print run for this season's catalogue was a whopping three million.

With glossy pages full of Connemara backdrops, Aran knits, thatched cottages and donkeys in the glorious technicolour for which National Geographic is famous, Hoey is expecting it could be a bumper season for the featured Irish products. "Over the last four years, National Geographic has bought nearly US\$4 million worth of Irish products through introductions made by Enterprise Ireland, with over US\$700k purchased in the last year alone," she said

Google scores success for Wicklow plastics firm

Participating in an e-Marketing programme has helped a Wicklow firm to win a UK order that will see 30 extra people employed at the company.

Automatic Plastics was founded in Tinahely by Alfred Lawless Snr in 1972, and the family firm is now run by his son, Alfred Lawless Jnr. Over those 40 years, the company's premises has grown from a small shed to a 33,000 sq-ft facility that usually employs 70 people during the off-peak season and 100 people during the peak season in the first half of the year when the company has additional work manufacturing picnic cooler boxes for the summer.

Now thanks to winning a contract to supply window vents to a UK firm, Automatic Plastics will be employing an additional 30 staff. "This new client first spotted us in the results of a Google internet search," the MD says. "That was probably due to the fact that we got help from Enterprise Ireland to develop our website and got guidance on search engine optimisation and the use of Google key words.

"What also indirectly helped us to win this contract was that the new client liked what they read on our website about how we use automation to reduce cycle times, scrap and downtime while increasing output. We were able to invest in automation cells and robotics thanks to an Enterprise Ireland productivity improvement grant."

While the core business at Automatic Plastics is injection moulding and the company can produce products ranging in size from 1g to 1.5kg, the firm also offers design services, prototyping, materials sourcing, component assembly and full project management.



And the winner is...

Edmond Harty, founder of Dairymaster was named as the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of The Year 2012. Headquartered in Causeway, near Tralee in County Kerry, Dairymaster also has operations in the UK and the US, and employs 220 people, internationally.

Harty, a mechanical engineer by profession, joined the family business in 1998 whilst studying for a PhD in UCD, where he focused on the area of milking performance. A focus on in-house R&D, manufacturing and the application of advancements in engineering technology has

remained core to the business' international success. It has enabled the company to be at the cutting-edge of product innovation, exporting to over 40 countries, while retaining jobs locally – a factor that he believes to be vital to the company's success.

Harty was amongst 24 finalists from across the island of Ireland who made it to the competitive final stages of the 2012 Programme, and he will now go forward to represent Ireland at the World Entrepreneur of The Year Awards, which will be held in Monte Carlo next June.

PICTURED: MIKE MCKERR, MANAGING PARTNER AT ERNST AND YOUNG, WINNER EDMOND HARTY, PRESIDENT MICHAEL D HIGGINS AND FRANK O'KEEFE, PARTNER IN CHARGE OF THE PROGRAMME.

Crospon gains FDA clearance for health insurance reimbursable applications

Medical devices firm Crospon has won FDA clearance for an additional application for its EndoFLIP imaging system allowing it to be used in oesophageal barostat measurements.

The EndoFLIP functional lumen imaging probe is the first product of its kind and it recently won the Frost & Sullivan 2012 European Enabling Technology Award for Surgical Imaging Technology.

Used for measurements related to the health of the gastrointestinal tract and other different parts of the body, it first won FDA clearance in 2009 for use in bariatric, or weight-loss surgery, with surgeons using the device to ensure that gastric bands were fitted properly.

This new FDA clearance is for the use of EndoFLIP in conjunction with software used when taking pressure and dimension measurements of the oesophagus, typically where patients have been suffering difficulties swallowing or suffer from reflux problems or display symptoms consistent with oesophageal sensory hypersensitivity.

This new application has a potential market of only 15% the size of EndoFLIP's original bariatric surgery market, but Crospon CEO John O'Dea says the development is important to the company for two reasons: EndoFLIP can now be marketed in the US for gastroenterology applications and EndoFLIP is now being used in 'reimbursable applications' for the first time.

"A reimbursed application is one that US insurance companies will pay for. The company is continuing to have all applications of the product reimbursed, but it is often the case that reimbursement agreements take longer to achieve than actual regulatory approval of the product. Ultimately, a hospital is much more likely to adopt a technology if it is one that is reimbursed," he told *The Market*.

Because the European medical devices market is so fragmented, Crospon has focused on making progress in the US ahead of Europe, and it will be later this year before the company will seek to get a CE mark for EndoFLIP's use in barostat applications on this side of the Atlantic.

Food for thought as Kerry comes home

Ireland as a location for big business was given a boost last month when the Kerry Group announced plans to locate its global technology and innovation centre in Naas.

The Tralee-headquartered ingredients, flavours and consumer foods group has grown from the opening of its first dairy and ingredients plant in Listowel in 1972, to become a global player with current annual sales of approximately €5.3 billion.

Today, the group employs over 24,000 people, and supplies over 15,000 food, food ingredients and flavour products to customers in more than 140 countries worldwide, has manufacturing facilities in 25 different countries and has international sales offices in 20 other countries.

In this latest move, Kerry is taking its newest technology and innovation centre home, with a €100 million, 28-acre campus set to employ 800 people in 2015 and a further 100 staff when fully commissioned by mid-2016. The €100m investment, part-funded through

Enterprise Ireland, is the largest single investment in food innovation by a company in Ireland.

In the same month, Carbery Group's taste and flavour division Synergy Flavours officially opened a new manufacturing and technology centre in Brazil, during Enterprise Ireland's trade mission of 42 Irish companies to the country. The new facility includes flavour creation and applications laboratories and flavour manufacturing capability.

In recent weeks, meanwhile, Kepak announced it would be creating a further 40 jobs in 2013 at its Kepak's Consumer Food Facility in Watergrasshill, Co Cork, while Luxcel Biosciences signed a distribution agreement with Shigematsu for the distribution of its non-invasive optical sensors for monitoring oxygen levels in food, beverage and pharmaceutical packaging. The signing took place during a specialist Enterprise Ireland food technology, research and innovation trade mission to Japan.

ONE OF KERRY'S ASIAN FOOD LABORATORIES



THE MARKET IS NOW ACCEPTING ADVERTISING

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

Are we reaching your market?

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

What do the people who know about magazines say about *The Market*?

Our editor was named Magazine Ireland's Business Magazine Editor of the Year 2011. In addition, *The Market* was named Magazine Ireland's Customer/Client Magazine of The Year in 2007 and 2009 and B-2-B Magazine Design of the Year in 2009.

What do our readers say about *The Market*?

The following is the results of a recent readership survey.

84%

rated the quality of the magazine as good/excellent.

82%

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

89%

felt the articles were pitched at the right level.

80%

indicated they had taken various forms of action as a result of reading *The Market*.

33%

had considered a new region/geographic location for their business as a result of reading *The Market*.

If you feel *The Market* is targeting your market, talk to Duncan Black. For further information and rates.

E: duncan.black@enterprise-ireland.com, T: +353 1 727 2820 or email the.market@enterprise-ireland.com

It's one of the largest and fastest growing economies in the States – a centre for IT innovation, aerospace and defence manufacturing, beef barons and oil tycoons and home to the SXSW music and media showcase. And in March 2013, and it will be the destination for an Enterprise Ireland ministerial-led cross-sectoral trade mission. Nick Marmion looks at why it's hats off to the Lone Star State.

HATS OFF TO TEXAS

Texas is the second largest economy in the United States and the 15th largest in the world. What's more, it's the largest exporter of goods in the US: Texas currently grosses more than \$100 billion a year in trade with other nations. It's also home to 51 Fortune 500 companies, making it third in line after New York (with 57) and California (53).

Irish companies with operations in Texas include Intuition, Kentz, Sercom, Firecomms, Icon and Trintech. But we believe the state presents further, and as yet barely exploited, opportunities for Irish companies to sell goods and services, develop partnerships and explore research linkages.

In March 2013, we will co-ordinate a ministerial-led, cross-sectoral trade mission to Texas, taking in Dallas, Houston and Austin. This should be of particular interest to companies with solutions in the areas of

- Wireless telecoms, chip and ICT manufacturing
- Medical device and IT for life sciences
- Oil and gas
- Smartfarm products for the dairy and cattle industries

DIVERSIFIED ECONOMY

One of the first industries to thrive in Texas after the civil war was cattle. Due to its long history as a centre of the livestock industry, Texas is associated with the image of the cowboy. However, the state's fortunes expanded in the early 20th century, when the oil started to flow. With strong investments in universities, Texas has developed a diversified economy and high-tech industry. Today, it is a leader in many industries, including agriculture, petrochemicals, energy, computers and electronics, aerospace and biomedical sciences.

ICT HUB

Texas is one of the major hubs in the US for computer components and systems, as well as software. The Austin area is often referred to as 'Silicon Hills' because of the concentration of semiconductor design companies. Dell's headquarters are located in the city's suburb, Round Rock.

Dallas is the birthplace of the integrated circuit, and by some definitions, the birthplace of the microprocessor. The

North Dallas area has a high concentration of IT companies such as Texas Instruments and EDS. In addition, Harris County-based Compaq was once one of the world's largest computer companies, and since Compaq's merger with Hewlett-Packard, HP currently employs more employees in the Houston area than anywhere else in the world.

ENERGY CAPITAL

Texas is a global leader in the energy industry, and Houston is the energy capital of the world. The known petroleum deposits of Texas are about 8 billion barrels – or approximately one-third of known US supply. As wells are depleted in the eastern portions of the state, drilling has moved westward. Several of the major oil companies have headquarters in Texas, including ConocoPhillips, Marathon Oil (Houston), Exxon-Mobil (Irving), Tesoro, and Valero (San Antonio). In addition, many of the world's largest oilfield services firms, including Halliburton, Schlumberger and Dresser, have made Texas home, and major pipeline operators, such as El Paso and Dynegy, along with diversified energy firms such as TXU and Reliant Energy, are also there.

Since 2003, Texas state officials have created various initiatives like the Texas Enterprise Fund and the Texas Emerging Technology Fund to develop the economy of Texas. Texas has become a leader in alternative energy sources, producing more wind power than any other state, and it has also invested in small-scale solar power and experimental wave-power generators.

DEFENCE

A large number of defence contractors are located in Dallas and Houston, creating strong employment for the state. Two divisions of Lockheed Martin



It is a leader in many industries, including agriculture, petrochemicals, energy, computers and electronics, aerospace and biomedical sciences.

have their headquarters in the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) area. Lockheed Martin Aeronautics in Fort Worth is where the F-16 Fighting Falcon, the largest Western fighter craft – and its successors the F-35 Lightning II and the F-22 Raptor – are manufactured. Lockheed Martin Missiles and Fire Control is headquartered in Grand Prairie.

MUSIC AND MEDIA

Running from March 10 to 13, 2013, the Irish trade mission will coincide with the South by Southwest (SXSW) annual week of conferences and festivals. SXSW has become an increasingly important destination for Irish companies interested in the convergence of music, film, internet and emerging technologies, and we expect 30 to 40 client companies from these sectors alone to travel to Houston between March 8 and 17, 2013. So it's come in Houston – and Dallas, and Austin.

For further information, contact Nick Marmion, Enterprise Ireland's US West Coast Manager, E: nick.marmion@enterpriseireland.com, T: +1 650 294 4081.

Six Irish companies are currently receiving expert mentoring and support by a retail panel that includes representatives from the Dune Group, TK Maxx and Venda. Aislinn Mahon reports from London on Enterprise Ireland's Retail Ready programme.

RETAIL THERAPY



There are more than 150,000 online retail businesses in the UK, with a total market value of €78bn (IMRG). This results in a highly competitive market for vendors, and the need to establish credibility and differentiation is strong.

The Retailer Ready Programme has been designed by the New Market Entrants Team in Enterprise Ireland's UK office in association with Conduit Consultancy to provide support for Irish retail technology suppliers to ensure they are as prepared as possible in advance of tackling the highly competitive UK retail sector. The New Market Entrants Team works with Irish companies that are new to exporting and has experience in guiding companies in their early stages to ensure a sustainable strategy as they enter the UK market. "Our role in the Market Entrants Team is about matching client capability to market opportunity. It is no secret that the UK eCommerce scene is booming; we want Irish companies to take advantage of this", says Enterprise Ireland's Allyson Stephen.

"The origins of the Retailer Ready Programme stem from the recognition that although the UK retail market is one of the most vibrant in the world and offers great opportunity to Irish retail technology companies, it is also one of the most competitive markets", said Fergal O'Mullane of Conduit Consultancy. "We wanted to provide an incubator environment for a select number of Irish companies, who would be supported by an expert panel through the programme. Our hope is that they will provide an example for other companies to follow and increase the profile of the Irish retail tech cluster in the UK".

Six Enterprise Ireland client companies (Actus Mobile Solutions, Worldnet TPS, Von Bismark, Touchpoint Interactive Media, Newsletter.ie and Zapa Technology) are currently receiving expert mentoring and support by a Retail Panel that includes representatives from the Dune Group, TK Maxx and global provider of multi-channel commerce solutions Venda. Will Byrne, CEO of online payment solutions provider Worldnet TPS, is enthusiastic about their participation. "As a small company, you can find it difficult to get access to retailers on a large scale. The programme offers us the opportunity to get feedback as to what exactly they are looking for. Enterprise Ireland is helping to give Irish companies that sense of credibility and lift brand awareness".

The panel was assembled to represent a cross section of the retail technology sector, including leading retailers, solution providers and industry specialists. Eva Hoff, co-founder of Skywire, the Luxury and Lifestyle brand interactive agency, is excited to feature on the panel. "The UK online retail space is one of the biggest and most competitive in the world. I believe that Enterprise Ireland's Retailer Ready Programme will offer participants unique insights, selling skills and access to this market place. Being involved in this important initiative and sharing the knowledge I have is a great honour."

The perfect pitch will be delivered by the six participants to an audience including the Retail Panel in East Point at the end of November. For more information on the programme, contact Allyson Stephen or Aislinn Mahon in Enterprise Ireland's London office. And keep up to date at www.retailer-solutions.com.

Anthony King reports on the companies and sectors shining bright in this year's Global Cleantech 100 list.

GLOBAL CLEANTECH LIGHTS UP

The Global Cleantech 100 is a list of companies predicted to make the most significant market impact over the next five to ten years. You might see renewables as high fliers, but energy efficiency topped in the list. Twenty-two of the 100 companies fit in this category, with lighting companies in particular doing well.

"Sustained interest in lighting companies is driven by the great potential for energy savings from innovation in lighting, especially through the commercialisation of LEDs," a report to accompany the list stated. Nualight, which this year became the first Irish company to make the list, belongs to this category.

According to the report, 83 of the 100 on this year's list raised funds since June 2010, in aggregate receiving over \$3.1 billion in venture capital investments. It noted that strategic investors remain a source of growth, industrial expertise and financial capital for cleantechs, with GE, Siemens and Google involved in five or more of the listed companies.

The report acknowledged a shakeout in cleantech, but remained optimistic. "Few meaningful investment returns have been crystallised, and yet all signs and indications remain that the merger and acquisition market will kick-in over the coming 18 months," it concluded.

"There have been plenty of setbacks and individual high-profile bankruptcies but no sign of a general slowdown, which is significant given the economic headwind," said Ronan Furlong of the Green Way, Dublin's cleantech cluster. The report refers to cleantech going inside, but this has already happened, he adds.

"What is really interesting is what Siemens, Intel and others are doing. Cisco is going after the smart grid market, and IBM is going after the smart cities market," Furlong said. Ireland is ideally placed to hook up with some of these big players.

"One of the things we at Green Way are doing is to facilitate organisations like GE who are interested in figuring out what technologies are emerging here. Only a couple

of months ago we brought 20 companies in to learn what IBM do and see if they can partner with them," Furlong said.

In the accompanying report, Richard Youngman of the Cleantech Group wrote that there is now more of a rigid focus on what exact market problem a company can address today. "This leads to a lower tolerance of risk and/or lower tolerance for the big bet."

Furlong agrees, adding: "The big incumbents can afford to stand on the sidelines and then pick winners at a later date. If you are Google or Siemens, you would rather spend \$100 million on a proven company than \$10 million on one of the ones that might be a winner."

The Cleantech 100 list is a very useful report, primarily focused on fast-growing technology companies in the cleantech space, said Barry O'Flynn, who leads the Irish cleantech team at Ernst & Young, which earlier this year produced *Cleantech Ireland: An assessment of the sector and the impact on the national economy*.

"The country has a very strong indigenous and world-class cluster of companies focussed on the cleantech space and it is also home to a number of world-leading ICT companies, many of whom are playing an increasingly important role in the energy sector," he said. "Companies like Kingspan, Glen Dimplex, NTR, Airtricity, Mainstream Renewable Power, Eirgrid and ESB are regarded as major global players in the renewable energy, energy efficiency and energy distribution sectors."

Other Irish companies that could be in the running to make it on the Global Cleantech list include Cylon, Treemetrics, OpenHydro and Wavebob, Furlong adds.

Solar finished runner up as a sector in the Cleantech 100,

with only 12 companies in this year's list, a 40% fall since 2009. Indeed, two previous alumni were among the many solar companies to go bust over the last year, with Odersun and Soltecture joining Solyndra on the list of bankrupt thin film manufacturers.

"The price of installed solar dropped 50% in the last ten years, which mirrors what would have happened in the semiconductor industry or PC market generally," Furlong noted. "A lot of competition comes from China. But the killing off of Solyndra is a Darwinian sign of health in the sector."

Regarding solar firms on the 2012 list, the Cleantech report noted an "evident shift to favour companies who are not trying to compete with the Chinese globally, but to make things happen locally." There is still some appetite for next generation solar technologies, however.

Biofuels and biochemicals joined water and wastewater in equal third position on the list. The smart grid category increased its representation to 10 companies, jumping ahead of transportation and pulling up alongside energy storage. Small, but going in the opposite direction to solar, is the agriculture and forestry category. This is a signal of a shift to a broader energy-efficiency portfolio, according to the Cleantech report authors.

"There have been plenty of setbacks and individual high-profile bankruptcies but no sign of a general slowdown, which is significant given the economic headwind."

Hammered by a collapse in the domestic market, Ireland's timber processors have fought back to become an exporting force, writes Ronan O'Connor.

TIMBER EXPORTERS SEE WOOD FOR THE TREES

Irish companies' creative work will be on show until November 25 at the Venice Biennale, the international contemporary architectural showcase held every two years in locations around Venice. The 2012 exhibition entitled 'Common Ground' attempts to place an emphasis on what people have in common through architecture.

Architectural firm O'Donnell and Tuomey designed 'Vessel' as "a site specific response" to the exhibition theme of Common Ground. The Vessel celebrates

Irish craft, material and tradition. Part of the motivation for the project was to enhance the reputation of Irish-grown timber internationally.

Despite concerns over the impact of Coillte's mooted sale on the flow of raw material, the Irish timber industry is currently experiencing a period of record expansion overseas as suppliers have transformed their businesses to react to the collapse of domestic demand.

A recent IBEC review found that more than three-quarters of the forest products

manufactured in Ireland in 2011 were exported, with a value of €286 million. According to the report from The Irish Forestry and Forest Products Association (IFFPA), the timber export sector has managed to react to lagging domestic demand and become an exporting force.

Glennon Brothers, which supplied the home-grown timber used to craft Vessel, is a case in point. The company surpassed the €10 million milestone in sales to France in July this year and has been shortlisted for the European Business Awards.

Mike Glennon, joint Managing Director at Glennon Brothers, points out that this figure is significant in a large-volume environment where transport costs can be crucial. It was not achieved without considerable pain, however. "We went from supplying timber to 90,000 new housing units [in Ireland] in 2007 to just 10,000 in 2009. We had to cut back to a two-day week and slash our costs to make the business more export friendly," he explained.

In terms of volume, exports (mainly to the UK) had been one-third of the company's business. This has been turned around, and exports now account for two-thirds of revenue. "As a result, we have gone from putting €23 million into the Irish economy in

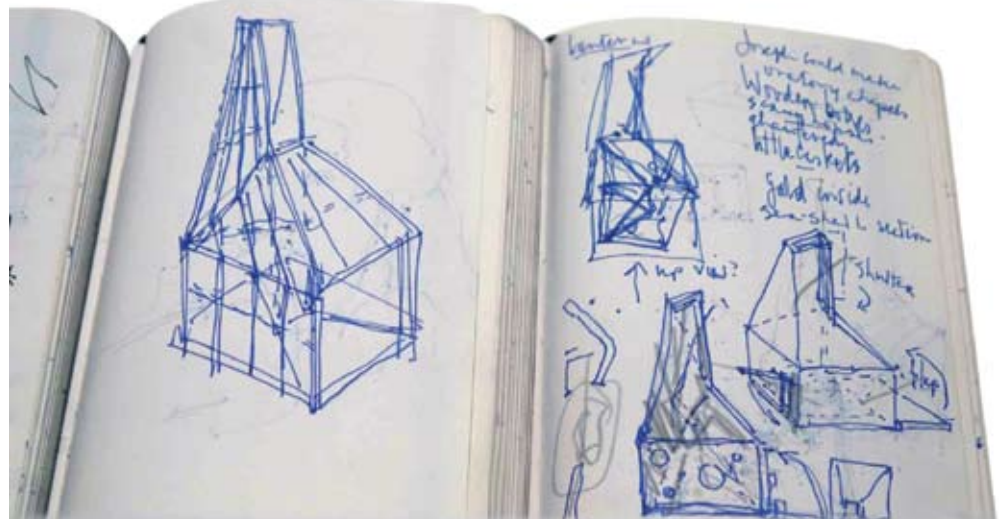
2009 to €35 million in 2011," he told *The Market*.

He adds that "The UK would be the largest importer of wood in Europe, and we would have a strong business there. But we felt that there was an issue with our exposure to Sterling, so we explored the French market, as a euro-to-euro export model makes sense."

Another firm within the industry supporting the Vessel installation, Gem Manufacturing is currently delivering its first significant export contract, the renovation of the London School of Economics.

Gem has been awarded a contract for the design and installation of the complete external timber façade and entrance canopy at the New Students' Centre at the LSE. It is the first new building to be constructed at the school in over 40 years and is at the forefront of the 'Contemporary Westminster' initiative.

"As a result, we have gone from putting €23 million into the Irish economy in 2009 to €35 million in 2011"



**NOVEMBER****Value Proposition - Workshop***November 20*

This workshop on developing a value proposition, which is facilitated by Futurecurve, forms part of the Excel at Export Selling series.

V: East Point Business Park, Dublin 3

E: bridgin.durnin@enterprise-ireland.com

T: + 353 1 7272734

International Investor Forum - London*November 21*

Hosted by Enterprise Ireland, this event offers investors the chance to evaluate over 20 investment opportunities in companies spanning the software, technology, cleantech and life sciences sectors. The format will comprise of a series of elevator pitches from each company. These will be followed by opportunities for one-to-one meetings between companies and investors. The day will also allow investors to get a snapshot of the deal flow emanating from Ireland and provides an opportunity to network with other investors.

V: London

E: cian.daly@enterprise-ireland.com

T: +353 1 727 2684

Branding for International B2B Services - Workshop*November 21*

This workshop on branding for international business-to-business services forms part of the Excel at Export Selling series.

V: East Point Business Park, Dublin 3

E: bridgin.durnin@enterprise-ireland.com

T: + 353 1 7272734

International Lead Generation - Workshop*November 22*

This workshop on international lead generation forms part of the Excel at Export Selling series.

V: East Point Business Park, Dublin 3

E: bridgin.durnin@enterprise-ireland.com

T: + 353 1 7272734

Market Study Visit to Western Australia*November 26-29*

Current & projected investment in Australia's mining-related infrastructure projects is nearing \$500bn. The majority of this investment is focused on the resource-rich Northwest Pilbara region of Western Australia in new LNG plants and iron ore mines. This market study visit aims to help client companies fully comprehend the size and structure of the opportunity.

V: Perth, Western Australia

E: paul.burfield@enterprise-ireland.com

T: +61 (2) 92738505

Big Ideas Showcase 2012*November 28*

The Big Ideas Showcase 2012 provides a platform for the inventors and promoters of commercial opportunities developed in Ireland's higher education institutes to pitch for investment and business partners in order to bring their technologies to the next stage of commercialisation.

V: Aviva Stadium, Dublin

E: charlene.mcmanus@enterprise-ireland.com

T: +353 (1) 7272108

W: www.enterprise-ireland.com/bigideas

Packaging Exhibition & Seminar for SMEs*November 29*

This exhibition and seminar presented by Teagasc is aimed at answering packaging questions for start-up companies, artisan food producers or those adding product lines to their existing food business.

V: Teagasc, Food Research Centre, Ashtown, Dublin 15

E: margaret.hennessy@teagasc.ie

T: +353 1 8059520

W: www.teagasc.ie/food/research/events/20121129.as

DECEMBER**Transport Sector Visit to India***December (tbc)*

Following a seminar on Transport Opportunities in India (Sept '12) and the Transport Showcase, hosted by Enterprise Ireland, a market study visit is proposed to India in early December 2012.

This visit is targeted at companies with products and services on offer to the land transport sector, from planning, construction, to management systems for urban and rural transport.

E: cathy.holahan@enterprise-ireland.com

T: +353 1 7272907

Partner Channel Management - Workshop*December 4*

This workshop on partner channel management, facilitated by Giant Step, forms part of the Excel at Export Selling series.

V: EastPoint Business Park, Dublin 3

E: bridgin.durnin@enterprise-ireland.com

T: +353 1 7272734

2013 Budget*December 13*

This event, which is part of the Finance for Growth series for CFOs, will explore the main implications of Budget 2013 for Irish exporting SMEs.

V: EastPoint Business Park, Dublin 3

E: tom.early@enterprise-ireland.com

T: +353 1 7272942

Star Education Fair*December 15 & 16*

Enterprise Ireland and Ireland's higher education institutes will be attending the Star Education Fair, the premier education promotion event in Malaysia, to raise awareness of Ireland as a location for international students and promote the engineering, information technology, hospitality, science and business education sectors.

V: Kuala Lumpur

E: terry.mcparland@enterprise-ireland.com

T: +353(1) 7272952

JANUARY**Market Study Visit -World Future Energy***January 15 - 17*

The World Future Energy Summit (WFES) 2013 will bring together global leaders in policy, technology and business to discuss the state of the art, develop new ways of thinking and shape the future of renewable energy.

V: Abu Dhabi

E: daniel.cunningham@enterprise-ireland.com

T: +966 1 488 1383

W: www.worldfutureenergysummit.com

Silicon Valley Comes to Ireland*January 22*

The ITLG Global Technology Leaders Summit is a two-day gathering of top executives, entrepreneurs and venture capital investors. The conference will include thought-leadership, panel debates and technology showcases that will provide delegates with an inside look at the latest cutting-edge technology opportunities.

V: City Hall, Cork

E: eventinfo@itlg.org

W: www.itlg.org/events.php

AIME/MRO 2013*January 22-23*

Enterprise Ireland is taking six companies to the Maintenance Repair and Overhaul (MRO) and Aircraft Interiors Middle East (AIME) Show – a platform for aviation industry suppliers, providers and buyers to network and establish new relationships in the Middle East.

V: Dubai

E: anthony.cahill@enterprise-ireland.com

T: +971 4 3760 405 (Direct)

ONGOING**EnterpriseSTART workshop series***Ongoing*

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

V: Various locations in Dublin and regionally

W: www.enterprise-ireland.com/en/Events/

Exploring Exporting - 2 Day Workshop*Ongoing*

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

V: Various locations in Dublin and regionally

E: rena.cushion@enterprise-ireland.com

T: +353 (1) 7272695

Email details of your forthcoming business events to the.market@enterprise-ireland.com

TEST MARKETS

Trinity Biotech's sales manager Stuart Cranmer tells Cian Molloy why a deal with a new distributor in Vietnam looks sweet and how the company is planning to expand in South-east Asia as the diabetes epidemic begins to take hold in the region.

Recently posting an operating profit of more than \$4.3m for the third quarter of 2012, Trinity Biotech, which has three manufacturing plants in the US and one in Ireland, is proving to be one of Ireland's most successful home-grown medical test equipment and reagent manufacturers. Its point-of-care devices, similar in format to pregnancy test kits, are used for the detection of HIV, Legionella and the herpes simplex virus and can be administered very easily by doctors, nurses or even pharmacists. Meanwhile, the company's lab-based equipment can be used for more than 30 different assays for infectious diseases, over a dozen assays for autoimmune diseases and for several haemoglobin assays, including the 'HbA1C' test that is used to diagnose diabetes.

On top of that, the biotech player is currently developing seven new point-of-care infectious disease diagnosis products and is expecting to receive FDA clearance for a new Vitamin D test.

With sales in 75 countries, the company is spreading its wings geographically also, with

a focus on expanding its footprint in Asia, particularly with Premier, its state-of-the-art diabetes analyser, launched in 2011, which has been sold in the US, Europe, South America, South-east Asia, Turkey and Taiwan.

DISTRIBUTION DEAL

Trinity Biotech's relationship with the Vietnamese company Mitalab bodes well for the future, says sales manager Stuart Cranmer, who adds that the Irish company is now eyeing Indonesia as the next new market for its diabetes testing instrumentation. "The focus in Vietnam is on diabetes testing and testing for thalassemia, an inherited blood disorder that is common particularly in South-east Asia," he told *The Market*.

"The relationship with Mitalab started when we were approached by them; we get many approaches from companies who want to work with us. We responded to that approach by looking at their company profile and seeing if it was a good fit. Essentially we did 'sweet spot' analysis, and Mitalab scored well in several areas."



With sales in 75 countries, the company is spreading its wings geographically, with a focus on growing sales for its state-of-the-art diabetes analyser in Asia.

“When we look for a distribution partner, we want more than a company which collects agencies; we want one which has good relations with potential customers already and which has the ability to build on those relations. Mitalab has contacts in a large number of hospitals and their contacts aren’t just with one department in a hospital. They would be across the whole range of pathology departments – clinical (chemistry, microbiology and molecular), haematology, immunology, histology, cytology. They also offered nationwide distribution; there is a risk in Vietnam that you could partner with a company that only does the north or that only does the south.” Mitalab has offices in Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi.

“What was very encouraging from the start was that they said they would want to send two engineers to Ireland for training, and they bought our instruments on the basis of their positive market research findings, before even signing a distribution agreement,” he continues. “That level of commitment is something we would always be looking for.”

Cranmer has also been impressed by what he has experienced of Vietnam to date. “In poorer countries, training and investment in company staff is often an issue, but we’ve been very pleasantly surprised by the level of investment in skills in Vietnam generally,” he said. “The people there are well-trained and the laboratories are no different from, say, a lab in Ireland. The laboratories are accredited and are audited regularly to make sure that they are working well. Generally, it’s a country where people are proficient, they follow the rules they are supposed to follow, and there is little risk of you sending out tools or equipment and them being broken because of misuse.”

THE DIABETES EPIDEMIC

Diabetes analysis is set to become a major growth area for Trinity Biotech as the diabetes epidemic takes hold in countries across the world. Currently, the diabetes analysis market is reckoned to be worth \$300m and is growing at a rate of 12% annually.

“We have seven per cent of the diabetes clinical testing market, and the business is worth US\$25m a year to us,” Cranmer says.

Trinity Biotech’s sales target for its Premier diabetes testing instruments is 200 units this year, and the company is well on target to achieve that. For the Irish company, however, the business model is similar to that

for desk-top printer industry: where printer manufacturers make the bulk of their income from ink sales, Trinity Biotech makes the bulk of its income from the sale of reagents used in its testing equipment.

While ‘type 1’ diabetes is due to genetic and environmental factors outside sufferers’ control, ‘type 2’ diabetes – a growing epidemic in both developing and developed countries – is very much a lifestyle disease. “It’s found where people are sedentary, eat sugary foods and are over-weight. The regions with the most diabetes are the South Pacific and the Middle East,” Cranmer says.

According to the International Diabetes Federation, the countries with the highest percentage of diabetes sufferers are: Kiribati, 24.9%; the Marshall Islands, 22.2%; Nauru, 20.7%; Lebanon, 18.9%; Tuvalu, 19.5%; Réunion, 16.4%; Saudi Arabia, 16.2%; Kuwait, 15.9%; the United States, 15.7%, and Jamaica, 15.7%.

Trinity Biotech’s Premier device measures the level of glycated haemoglobin, or HbA_{1c}, to identify the average plasma glucose concentration in a patient to determine, firstly, if they have diabetes and, if so, how serious it is.

Once diagnosed as a HbA_{1c} diabetic, such patients should have their HbA_{1c} levels tested four times a year. Identifying and managing patients with diabetes is of crucial importance to national health services because of the additional complications associated with the disease, including blindness, kidney problems and peripheral vascular disease, which can lead to the need for amputation of limbs. In developing countries, diabetes is associated with 10% of all cases of tuberculosis, and, in India, it is associated with 10% of all deaths.

In comparison with the rest of the world, Vietnam has a relatively low percentage of diabetes sufferers, estimated at about 2.9%, whereas Ireland has a diabetes rate of 6.1%. However, as the incidence of type-2 diabetes tends to increase with the growing affluence of a country, this situation could change if Vietnam develops its tourist industry and becomes wealthier.

Indonesia is ultimately one of Trinity Biotech’s major targets in the region. Again the incidence of diabetes is lower than Ireland at just 4.7%. However, that is 4.7% of a huge population. “Indonesia is the fourth most populous country in the world and could be a very important market for us,” Cranmer says.

THE INTELLIGENT BUSINESS

Recent research has indicated that weaknesses in continuous intelligence gathering could be one of the single greatest obstacles to the international growth of Irish companies. Mary Sweetman takes a closer look at why the continuous pursuit of 'competitive intelligence' is such a vital practice for marketing and sales teams serious about international growth.



"Competitive intelligence gathering is about more than just competitor analysis, it's about making the organisation continuously more competitive relative to its whole environment and ecosystem of customers, competitors, distributors, technologies."

Imagine any serious football or hurling team heading onto the field without having rigorously studied the form, strengths, weaknesses and tactics of their opponents? It wouldn't happen. Yet, in business, sales professionals routinely find themselves in highly competitive pitches, often where hundred-thousand euro deals are at stake, without having adequately considered the game-plan of the sales teams they are head-to-head against.

Dave Stein, the CEO and Founder of ES Research Group – a US-based sales research consultancy – makes this point when he talks about the work he does with Irish companies to help them raise their 'competitive IQ'.

Stein argues that there are three basic levels of competitive information a sales team needs to know. The first is about their competitor's company – its size, location, financial situation, reputation, etc. That's easy: often it's all available on their website.

The second level is about the competition's products and services. "Strengths are found on their website as well," Stein says. "The weaknesses are harder to come by, but with a network of customers, business partners, and other sales reps, as well as the willingness to do a bit of ongoing research on the internet, it's also possible to understand the challenges competitors are having with their offerings."

However, it's the third area – understanding how your competitor's sales people sell – that can offer the most powerful insights. In an article on the topic, ten questions about opponents that Stein suggests sales reps and sales managers should consider include the following: Who are their largest, happiest – and their most unhappy customers? How high in accounts do they typically call? What is their typical sales process? When do they suggest a demo? A conference room pilot? A survey/needs analysis? When do they submit a proposal? When do they go for the close?

Here are some further examples: What types of sales strategies do they typically employ? Do they attack head on? Or are they more strategic, working on changing the customer buying criteria to what they uniquely deliver? And crucially, how are they measured and compensated? This is important, because Stein makes the point that a salesrep on 50% fixed and 50% variable compensation will be more aggressive than one on a more substantial base and a bonus. "If you've competed against

someone on 100% commission, you'll know what I mean," he says.

MORE THAN COMPETITOR ANALYSIS

Of course, competitive intelligence gathering is about more than just competitor analysis. "It's about making your company continuously more competitive relative to its whole environment and ecosystem: customers and their influencers, competitors, distributors and other partners," stresses Angela Byrne, a senior adviser with Enterprise Ireland's Capability & Mentoring Development Team.

Byrne is part of a team in Enterprise Ireland that recently conducted an in-depth exercise to capture and harness the 'corporate memory' of the hundreds of Enterprise Ireland market advisers who have worked with thousands of Irish companies on their exporting journey. She points out that since Córas Tráchtála Teo (CTT) was established in 1952, followed by the Irish Trade Board and now Enterprise Ireland, we have sixty years' experience of market advisers working with Irish exporters at the coalface in Ireland's overseas export support office network.

Examining best practice in some of the most successful companies and mining the experience of their directors, advisers and business coaches, her team posed the question, what sets winning businesses apart? The short version of that answer is a framework of nine core elements typifying marketing and sales best practice in Irish companies that excel at winning business overseas.

Continuous intelligence gathering is top of the list, Byrne argues. "We have identified this as perhaps the single greatest obstacle to the international growth of Irish companies because it impacts so strongly on how the company acquires itself in the customer encounter," she explains. "Being able to demonstrate up-to-the-minute and relevant intelligence about the industry, the marketplace and, most importantly, about the customers themselves is an excellent differentiator in itself. When our client companies get this right, they arm themselves to face into every other aspect of the internationalisation process with the right set of assumptions. In turn this enables them to develop compelling value propositions and messaging; segment and prioritise target 'sweet spot' customers; select the right channel partners; operate a robust sales process that reflects customer insight, and get the right key people on board," Byrne says.

“Enterprise Ireland has witnessed many situations over the years where client companies decide, based on little or no evidence, that a particular market or set of target customers is suitable for them to pursue,” she adds. Yet subsequently, competitive intelligence analysis often reveals that the opposite is true and shows where the real opportunity lies for the company, providing a deeper understanding of their ideal customer profile.

UNDERSTANDING THE CUSTOMER

Focusing on intelligence gathering for effective lead generation, Ray Clarke of the UK-based consultancy Shaping Business runs workshops for Irish companies through Enterprise Ireland’s Excel at Export Selling series.

“Businesses can waste a huge amount of time targeting the wrong organisations. In that context, intelligence gathering is a vital part of, firstly, developing a well qualified prospect list,” he points out. It’s also important to know how buyers buy, and where they go looking for information to inform their purchasing decisions. Is it, for example, to analyst opinions, blogs, trade publications, sector events and networks or industry portals? You need to know this, so you can ensure you are there too, he says.

Thirdly, you need to know what matters to your customer so that you can get your content marketing strategy right. That enables you to talk their language and address what they care about most right now. Clarke says his workshop helps companies work out how to tick all three boxes.

In reality, none of this is rocket science.

Byrne points out that the one issue all marketing and sales gurus pretty much agree on is the need to ‘put the customer at the heart of everything that they do’ or to ‘walk in the customers’ shoes’ or to adopt a ‘customer-centric’ company culture.

GATHERING YOUR INTELLIGENCE

Moreover, some of the information is incredibly easy to access. Interpreting a company’s annual accounts is something most sales people have been trained to do at some point in their career, points out John O’Gorman of the procurement advisory group ASG. An annual report can reveal a huge amount about a company’s strategy, what it cares about and what it sees as key strengths. More importantly, reading between the lines, fears, pain points and vulnerabilities may be evident. Yet at a recent session with 60 top salespeople in Europe, when O’Gorman asked how many had read the annual report of their

current top target, only two people in the room put up their hands.

Another great way to get an insight into what is important to a company right now, he says, is to see what their CXOs are saying when they speak at conferences. Sometimes their speeches will be online on the company’s website afterwards, or if you can attend the event in person, you may get to shake their hand and have a brief chat.

Thanks to online tools like Google Alerts, it’s never been easier to keep tabs on what your target buying organisations are up to. And this is crucial, O’Gorman says, because, it’s absolutely vital for sales people to connect their solution with their buyer’s strategy. “Currently, return on capital employed (ROCE) is a major issue for CXOs when making a big-spend decision. So for the seller, it is going to be a vital ingredient of building the economic case. *(continued PTO)*

Continuous Intelligence Gathering - Checklist to Evaluate Performance

Key Questions on Your Target Customer - How do Buyers Buy?

- Why, how and when does your potential customer buy – what are the triggers?
- Who within the customer organisation is buying? Is it a technical, operational or executive decision-maker or some combination of these? Who will sign the contract?
- What is your current insight into your customers’ business drivers or buying criteria?
- Who is influencing and advising the customer? How can you influence the influencer?

Key Questions on Your Competitors – How do Sellers Sell?

- What type of competitor benchmarking do you conduct in each of your priority markets or customer segments?
- What do you know about your competitors’ customers?
- How does their salesforce look compared to yours?
- Do you have any insight into how their sales process is run compared to yours?
- What types of sales approaches do they use?
- How good is their marketing/web presence compared to yours?
- Who/what do they consider their biggest competitive threats?
- What is your win/loss ratio against them?

Key Questions on Your Organisational Approach to Intelligence Gathering

- Is the ‘eternal quest’ for customer and market intelligence seen as mission-critical? Is this embedded in the culture of the company?
- What systems are in place for gathering and sharing customer/market/competitor intelligence?
- Who is responsible for collating and sharing competitive intelligence in the company?

Source: Enterprise Ireland ‘Marketing and Sales Strategy Review’ Framework Handbook for Development and Market Advisers

The challenge is to put some structure on things either through the marketing or sales function or a formal CRM system, so valuable tit-bits of information about possible hot sales leads, marketplace shifts or competitor vulnerabilities won't slip through the cracks.

"Sales people sometimes tell me that they don't sell at C-level," he adds. "But ultimately whoever they are selling to may have to get budget clearance at this level, so you're helping them to build their business case and make it easier for them to buy from you."

Making it easier for the buyer to buy is also about knowing where a company is at in its buying cycle, which requires an understanding of their buying process, O'Gorman explains.

Again, this information can often be in the public domain. Fortune 500 companies typically publish a procurement handbook, which will be full of subtle clues about their approach to purchasing. In addition, market research specialists like Gartner publish information on the types of sales processes employed in different industries, and, in fact, most large international companies use a similar seven-stage procurement model.

If you're targeting a tier 1 company, you might expect to spend less than an hour getting your intelligence together. Because of their obligation to keep shareholders informed, much of it will be in the public domain. However, O'Gorman acknowledges it could take more than twice that time to research a tier 2 company. "It involves a bit of hard work, but nobody expects selling to be easy," he says.

DON'T FORGET FACE-TO-FACE NETWORKING

Networking in the real world is important too. Often quite a lot can be revealed over a quick coffee or chat. LinkedIn can be a useful tool to identify people in the know about your target buyer. The key is to contact people who will be friendly to your cause, O'Gorman says.

Your suppliers and supply chain partners, for example, can be an under-used source

Seeing the light: One Irish company's approach to market intelligence

Nualight, which specialises in LED lighting solutions for retail groups, is one Irish company working to formalise its approach to market intelligence. "One of the big changes we have made in the company over the last 12 to 18 months is to start building a very strong product management function, which is the central lynchpin and conduit between the various different functions for intelligence gathering," Nualight's VP for Marketing, Siobhan O'Dwyer, told *The Market*. While this has been a significant move, it's a case of a lot done, but a lot more to do, she says.

"Product management is critical to any organisation that is serious about having a market-beating portfolio and a scalable product platform. But at another level, myself, as head of the marketing area, and my counterpart in market development are working just as hard at the industry level to understand what the big trends are, how the market is

moving, what the competitors are up to and how we can stay differentiated with a strong brand proposition.

"The sales guys are also critical to this. There is no point in them operating in a silo and building up information themselves and not feeding that back in, because we don't get the benefit from it. So the relationships and the structures that you have in order to create these communication channels are terribly important. It is really about setting up a lot of collaboration, and a lot of conversations and a lot of sharing of information.

"There is the formal stuff. We have cross-functional meetings on a weekly basis. I report to the board on a regular basis on market trends and how the market is moving, and we have annual plans, and we are constantly evolving and reviewing our product roadmap. Every time a conversation like that happens, people will throw in all the trends they are seeing. Then on an informal level, someone will

drop me an email. Because we are still a small organisation, we have very good internal communication.

"So I guess it's about having a culture there, and I think that culture has been ingrained in the business from day-one as responsiveness. It's one of our core values, and by virtue of being responsive, you are close to your customers, and everyone in all the crucial points in the company understands that we have to keep adapting to meet customer needs. For us as an organisation, as we grow, it will be a challenge to keep all that informal information flow working efficiently. But the culture is the single most important thing."

of market intelligence. They know what's happening in your industry, and they may also be suppliers to your buyers – or your competitors. Without compromising the relationship by pressing them for sensitive information, you may be able to ask for valuable insights about industry trends – after all they are sales people too, so they know how tough the game is, and your success is important to their success.

Another surprisingly under-used tactic is the obvious one of picking up the phone and asking the customer what matters to them. During the tendering phase, such an approach might be misinterpreted, so timing can be vital. If you're targeting the pharmaceutical construction industry, for example, the point where a drug is coming close to the end of final-phase clinical trials could be an ideal time to suggest a meeting to talk about what you could offer and get some insight on what's being planned. The closer you are to the customer and the more you're seen as a discrete, trusted adviser rather than someone simply pushing through a sale, the more they are likely to share information.

Later, if you've been invited to make a pitch, it can also be perfectly acceptable to pick up the phone and ask your contact in the buying organisation what the agenda is, who will be at the meeting and what each is likely to see as main deal-clincher – e.g. price, fast delivery or specialist knowledge. Remember your contact has shortlisted you, and his/her bosses may be at the meeting, so it's in their interests for you to look smart.

Finally, it's always worth asking for post-tender feedback. You might not always get an honest answer if you've been unsuccessful. On the other hand, a successful sales person may glean massive insight on the buying tactics of an organisation over a celebratory lunch, which will hold them in good stead in future pitches.

One company that spoke to *The Market* said that intelligence gathering through informal networking with customers was so important they had made a strategic decision to hire local rather than Irish business development managers to head all future sales offices in Europe.

PUTTING A STRUCTURE ON IT

Fuld & Company is a Boston-based international competitive intelligence practice

that co-ordinates 'wargames' for some of the biggest companies in the world so they can explore one-off strategic issues like how a competitor might respond to their new product launch or how two merging organisations might disrupt the marketplace as a new entity. In 2012, the company also facilitated a module on Enterprise Ireland's International Selling Programme aimed at helping Irish exporters improve their market intelligence capabilities on an ongoing basis.

In a sense, effective intelligence gathering is about assembling a picture of the evolving market landscape, gathering pieces of the jigsaw wherever you can – whether that's online, offline or through a casual conversation. As Leonard Fuld, the President of Fuld & Company, recently put it, it's like creating an impressionist artwork dot by dot. Most good sales people do some aspects of it well on intuition, but as a company grows, the challenge is to put some structure on things either through the marketing or sales function or a formal CRM system. This means that valuable tit-bits of information about possible hot sales leads, marketplace shifts or competitor vulnerabilities won't slip through the cracks.

The other thing about gathering intelligence is that it needs to be done on an ongoing basis, so you can "keep the back door closed" and continue winning business into the future.

Fuld was one of a number of thought leaders in the area of competitive intelligence that convened in Dublin in early November for the annual European Summit of SCIP - Strategic and Competitive Intelligence Professionals. "Unfortunately, specialists in this field representing Irish companies were notable by their absence," Byrne says. "This is something that Enterprise Ireland will strive to change through the dissemination of its new best practice framework."

"The good news," she adds, "is that, done right, the continual gathering and sharing of market intelligence will help sales and marketing teams to generate better quality leads and prospects; secure better quality meetings; prepare more effectively for the buyer engagement; listen more and ask considered questions of the buyer; position themselves more as 'trusted adviser', win more new business and mine existing customers for additional business."

Turbo-charging your intelligence gathering performance: tools and support available

Enterprise Ireland's **Market Research Centre** provides access to timely, in-depth and highly specific market research reports from companies such as Forrester, Datamonitor and Frost & Sullivan. Access to the reports, which would typically cost thousands of euro, can be provided free-of-charge to client companies at the Market Research Centre in East Point or at one of Enterprise Ireland's regional offices. To set up an appointment or seek assistance with a query, contact the Market Research Centre at 01 727 2324 or email: market.research@enterprise-ireland.com.

Excel at Export Selling – International Lead Generation is a one-day workshop and follow-up coaching programme coordinated by Enterprise Ireland and presented by Shaping Business. It is aimed at b2b companies that are developing their businesses internationally and need to generate leads in markets they have recently entered or to reinvigorate lead generation in existing export markets. The next workshop takes place on November 22, 2012. For further information and future workshop dates, check out the 'featured events' section of Enterprise Ireland's website.

The **International Selling Programme**, Enterprise Ireland's export sales development programme, delivered by Dublin Institute of Technology, has a focus on intelligence gathering in two of eight modules. The international competitive intelligence consultancy Fuld & Company facilitates a module on market intelligence, and John O'Gorman of ASG Group facilitates a module on the international buying process. See www.enterprise-ireland.com/internationalselling

Despite being one of the world's most important life science hubs, incorporating pharma and medical devices, the Greater Philadelphia and Pennsylvania state regions are relatively untapped clusters for many Irish companies. Anthony King takes a closer look.

PHILADELPHIA (AND PITTSBURGH) HERE WE COME



The Taoiseach Enda Kenny opened the new US headquarters of Irish company Zenith Technologies in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, in October.

Zenith services the life science sector and boasts a client list which includes Amgen, Dow, GlaxoSmithKline (GSK), Merck and Pfizer.

The location of its new US headquarters is just outside Philadelphia, the fifth largest city in the US, but Zenith is not alone in seeing big attractions here. GlaxoSmithKline, Shire Pharmaceuticals and Bayer Healthcare have headquarters in Pennsylvania, while Merck, Pfizer and Sanofi have a significant presence.

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

If location matters, then Philadelphia demands attention. The financial muscle of New York is just a one hour train journey away, and the regulatory control centre of Washington, DC, is not much further. "Geographically, it is between the three life science hubs of Massachusetts, Pennsylvania and North Carolina. And Georgia is close by, a state that is coming on well," says Jim Lehane, regional director of Zenith.

Lehane sees a shift in investment in the US. Previously companies had invested in Ireland and Singapore and other places, but now there is also a lot of investment happening in the US, he says. "The number of life science companies there is huge and the industry is very much developing over there," he says. There are openings if you are prepared to put in the time, effort and investment.

Eddie Goodwin of Enterprise Ireland's Boston office views the Greater Philadelphia region and Commonwealth of Pennsylvania (the state's official title) as a natural destination for Irish companies looking to sell in the medical device and life science space. Plans are underway to secure a trade mission to the region next June, with a return leg to Ireland by US companies muted for the third or fourth quarter 2013.

"There are major opportunities for lots of our companies in the pharmaceutical space, especially engineering-type companies that have the technology to make the pharma sector more effective," says Goodwin. "These can go into large companies like Merck and improve their manufacturing processes."

Companies targeting pharmaceutical and medical device sectors should take note. "Despite being one of the world's most

important life science clusters this is relatively untapped cluster for many Irish companies. This trade mission seeks to offer access to manufacturing, R&D and management in the companies in Pennsylvania," Goodwin explains.

"It will be a joint mission targeting the big pharma cluster around Philadelphia and the med device cluster around Pittsburgh," he adds. "Companies looking to target big pharma with products and services from engineering to marketing design work should consider the Philadelphia leg and companies in the med device space should talk to us about the array of companies in the Pittsburgh area."

"It will be an open door for them to push and get into one of the major clusters here in the US," Goodwin promises.

WHERE BUSINESS IS DONE

Bear in mind that 79,000 people are employed by the life science industry in Pennsylvania and the state ranks 4th in the country in number of patents issued. From 2008 to 2011, over 250 biohealth-related firms launched here. "The Greater Philadelphia region is the second largest nationally for overall life sciences support. We recently passed the San Francisco Bay Area in overall life sciences concentration," says Jim Manser of Pennsylvania Bio, the state's life sciences trade group. Greater Philadelphia includes the state of Delaware and part of New Jersey, a cluster centred around the Delaware Valley.

The energy sector is a major driver of economic growth in Pennsylvania, but this is located mainly in rural and northern Pennsylvania. For the two major urban centres, Philadelphia in the southeast and Pittsburgh in the southwest, life sciences is their economic engine.

"The pharmaceutical sector in Pennsylvania and Philadelphia in particular isn't brand new. It's well established and around 80% of the big pharmaceutical players are here. The difficulty for a company is trying to access those companies and get to meet the right people, whether that is the head of manufacturing, head of R&D or purchasing managers," says Goodwin.

"We can save companies a lot of time and energy trying to make contact with these people. Instead of cold calling, they will be getting a warm introduction from local government and from trade associations and getting support at the highest level." Goodwin

Previously companies had invested in Ireland and Singapore and other places, but now there is also a lot of investment happening in the US. The number of life sciences companies there is huge.



“The Greater Philadelphia region is the second largest nationally for overall life sciences support. We recently passed the San Francisco Bay Area in overall life sciences concentration.”

has been working with the local equivalent of IDA Ireland, talking to people with contacts at senior levels in companies like GSK and Merck, and with the trade association Penn Bio.

Carolyn Newhouse, deputy secretary for technology investment at the commonwealth’s Department of Community & Economic Development, says there are 148 Irish companies in Pennsylvania. “Pennsylvanian exports to Ireland account for \$783 million, but that is an increase of 12% since 2010. We have many companies that recognise the value of Ireland.” Her colleague Joe Burke, international marketing executive at the state’s economic development department, says a lot of Irish have come to Pennsylvania and Philadelphia historically, particularly from the west of Ireland.

Speaking about the planned trade mission, Newhouse said: “I’m sure there will be a great dialogue regards imports and exports and exchange of ideas.” The plan is for the trade mission to coincide with a medical device show called Medical Design & Manufacturing East (MD&M East), which is scheduled for June 18-20, 2013, in Philadelphia. “We are certainly interested in companies coming over to do personalised tours and showing them some of our life science centres,” Newhouse enthuses.

Manser says 15% of Philadelphia’s economic activity is directly tied to the life science industry. There hasn’t been a focused effort to connect Ireland to the life science

sector here, from his experience. “But there is tremendous potential and we’d be happy to facilitate that much further.”

Pennsylvania has 15 biotech research institutes, and the state received \$1.1 billion in federal research funding last year, ranking 4th in the US. Moreover, the University of Pennsylvania was the second largest recipient of National Institutes of Health grants in 2010.

But it is not all about Philadelphia. Pittsburgh is another thriving area for life science companies. “Pittsburgh has gone through a rebirth from being a traditional manufacturing city, from its steel days, to a new economic model where intellectual property is now very important. A lot of that is attributed to the life science sector,” Manser explains. The University of Pittsburgh (“Pitt”) and Carnegie-Mellon University in Pittsburgh both rank in the top tier of US research universities, and not far from Pittsburgh, there is the prestigious Cleveland Clinic in neighbouring Ohio.

Speaking about next summer’s trade mission, Goodwin advises companies to talk to the Boston office early about opportunities for them. “Talk to us and we will be able to give you a steer as to whether you should come over,” he says. “We can help with the promotional material and get in touch with the Pennsylvania commonwealth development team who are working with us on this. They can help position it with large pharmaceutical and medical device companies in the area.”

Zenith's regional director Jim Lehane explains why Pennsylvania is the latest US state being targeted by the Irish company.

TAKING IT TO THE ZENITH DEGREE

Zenith Technologies is an automation and engineering company focused on the life science industry. It has 14 offices worldwide, including in Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, North Carolina and California. It was founded in Cork in 1998.

"We take the control systems that companies use to manufacture their products and we design, configure and build those systems," says Jim Lehane, the company's regional director. Zenith also offers consultancy services and assists life science companies in running manufacturing facilities.

Lehane helped set up the company's US operations. Asked about drumming up new business, he says: "It takes plenty of shoe leather and plenty of time. The life science industry is not an industry where you can advertise a lot on the web or market through brochures. You must have a convincing story when you get in front of somebody and talk to them about why they should bring a new supplier into their facility.

"You have to convince them of your value proposition: if they are going to take you on as a new supplier they must get something in return," he says. Ireland's impressive background and education in the life science sector and experience in building and running life science facilities has stood to Zenith.

"I spent the last 15 years involved in life science facilities so when I got in front of clients I understood their problems. I was able to talk to them about helping to solve those problems." One solution Zenith offers is e-learning for staff.

Normally a company would get a trainer and sit employees in a classroom to drill them in running a facility. But Zenith developed an interactive product that is cloud based and simulates conditions in a specific facility. "This has been very successful in two large manufacturing installations, in Massachusetts and North Carolina."

Speaking about the challenges of setting up in the US, Lehane said you must "first get acquainted with all the rules and regulations that a different country has. We got good advice from Enterprise Ireland when we went out there first. They put us in contact with lawyers and companies they had dealt with." Over time Zenith moved into more states. "Each state is like a separate country. They each have their own laws that you must abide by. That was a learning experience."

Much of Pennsylvania is rural farmland but there are also beaches, views onto Lake Erie and skiing in winter time. "From a family point of view, the summers there are really nice, though the winters are cold. But you are never far away from winter sports. There are plenty of opportunities for the kids and, where we lived, it was a two-hour drive to New York," says Lehane.

Zenith broke ground after winning a project with GSK and becoming a global partner with this pharma giant. But Lehane says the culture of the company, "which we can proudly call an Irish culture," has been appreciated stateside. "Irish people have the knowledge and we are prepared to work hard. Those are traits which are very much appreciated in America."

"Each state is like a separate country. They each have their own laws that you must abide by."

BIG IN BELGIUM

It's a small country. But the opportunities are big in Belgium. Enterprise Ireland's team in Brussels highlights five of the top targets.

Along with The Netherlands and Luxembourg, Belgium is one of the three countries making up the BeNeLux region. Although small in area, the region's population of 27 million presents good opportunities to develop European exports. Of this, Belgium represents 11 million people.

Physically Belgium is close to Ireland. As a major logistics hub the transport facilities are excellent and it is a good strategic launch pad to the predominantly affluent European market of 500 million people, especially the French and German markets. Culturally it is not too distant either, with English widely spoken.

The country's attractiveness has not been lost on Irish companies, with increasing numbers finding their way to Belgium. Enterprise Ireland client companies saw a 15% increase on sales in Belgium between 2010 and 2011 and are projecting 33% growth in 2012. So where are the big opportunities?



1 Multinational HQs
Home not only to the EU and NATO, Brussels is an international business hub. It hosts almost 2,000 multinational companies (MNCs), of which 1,400 are American and over 1,000 international associations.

Due to its geographical location, the BeNeLux region is the site for the EMEA headquarters of some 326 MNCs. Many Irish companies target the European HQs of MNCs in Belgium, after success with the same MNC in Ireland. The Irish user-experience consultancy, IQ Content, works across EMEA for the tyre manufacturer Goodyear, having won the business originally at their (Goodyear's) Brussels HQ.

These HQs – given their international character – are open to cross-border sourcing in their quest for the best solutions to their needs.

"European HQs are known to make some of their sourcing decisions for parts of the company that are located in other countries. Consequently, they are often the key decision making centres for Irish companies, particularly in the pharma sector."

James Mackrill
Enterprise Ireland's Manager for the Benelux region.

2 Pharmaceuticals and pharma construction

Over the past decade, Belgium has become a significant centre for pharmaceutical production and distribution across Europe, the Middle East and Africa. One Irish company that has benefited from this boom is ProTek Medical, which specialises in clean room injection moulding for the pharmaceutical and medical device industries. In 2012, the Sligo-based firm completed a €1.4 million manufacturing deal with the Belgian pharmaceutical company Uteron Pharma.

Multinational pharmaceutical companies have made large investments in Belgium and the growth in pharma construction continues. In May Pfizer announced a €140m investment in a new high-tech production unit in Puurs for the manufacture and packaging of pneumococcal vaccines.

In addition, Genzyme has invested a total of €350 million in building a bio-manufacturing facility in Geel. Irish construction company PM Group, which has an office in Belgium, has been working on the design of this latest and largest expansion for Genzyme, worth €200m.

At Enterprise Ireland's office in Brussels, we see pharma construction as an





area of opportunity for Irish companies bringing their considerable experience and capabilities in the sector. "Irish companies have been delivering state-of-the-art engineering solutions for 35 years in Ireland to the same multinationals that are based in Belgium, such as Pfizer, GSK, MSD and Genzyme and consequently have built up expertise and understanding of their customers' needs," says Paul Maguire of Enterprise Ireland, Belgium.

Dornan Engineering, an Irish pharmaceutical contractor, also recognises the importance of the Belgian life sciences sector and has established its European office in Antwerp to target opportunities both in Belgium and throughout Europe. "To date we have secured significant contracts with MSD and Genzyme and have a number of exciting prospects in the pipeline. We are looking forward to future growth in the market, based on our positive experience so far", the company's Business Development Manager, Jack O'Leary told *The Market*.

The Belgian consultancy Inventhiga has been working with Irish construction companies considering expansion into Belgium. "Irish companies have a lot of opportunities to partner with Belgian engineers and construction companies.

Sharing their knowledge is their future," according to Inventhiga's Jeroen Lerno. "If Belgium wants to remain an important player in the pharmaceutical industry, it might also be in our future interests to partner with Irish design and construction companies".

This can be realised in unexpected ways, as one of the current constraints in the sector in Belgium is a shortage of engineers and other building professionals. This is creating opportunities for Irish companies to provide outsourced, skilled, qualified workers, contracted in Ireland, to work on Belgian construction and pharmaceutical projects.

3 Logistics Belgium's location and wide network of roads, rail and inland waterways puts many of Europe's biggest cities within easy reach and makes Belgium a major logistical centre, with easy access all across the continent. "This ready access to Europe has made Belgium an ideal location for the logistical operations of top global companies such as Coca-Cola, Baxter Healthcare and Pfizer," notes Philip Ahearne, Head of Corporate Foreign Exchange Sales at Investec Ireland.

The port of Antwerp is the second largest in Europe and fourth in the world. Canals



are another very important transport option for industry, providing seaport access for inland industries. In fact, it is possible to travel by barge from Antwerp across Europe to the Black Sea, a distance of approximately 3,500km.

4 Test market Its location is seen by marketeers as being on the cusp, between the Latin cultures of southern Europe and the Germanic cultures of the north, making Belgium a good test market to determine if a product or service will be attractive to the European consumer. Major companies – European and non-European – such as Beiersdorf (Nivea) and Coca-Cola – have chosen Brussels as a test market for new ideas before rolling-out across other continental countries. A successful launch in Belgium is a good indicator of similar success in other European markets.

5 EU business Belgium's capital, Brussels, is the *de facto* capital of the EU, and it's estimated that 1 in 10 of the city's total population has a connection with EU institutions. Tendering for work with these institutions presents good opportunities for Irish companies across the continental European market and beyond. For example,

the Irish communications consortium Ascent Communications won a framework contract related to digital media with the European Commission's Director General for Enterprise & Industry, which opens up opportunities for the consortium to compete for business worth €40m. An Enterprise Ireland client, Animo Communications, was part of this winning Irish bid. According to Donal Brady, Animo's Director of Business Development Europe, the company has opened an office in the city "because Brussels is such a confluence of ideas and messages".

Mind your language

Belgium is a federal country divided into three different regions (Flanders, Wallonia and Brussels-Capital-Region), each with its own budget, regulations and language.

Belgium has three official languages (Dutch, French and German) so approaching a certain sector often requires some local knowledge.

Find out more

To find out more, call the Enterprise Ireland office in Belgium on +32 2 673 98 66.



MAKING GREAT CLAIMS

Software company Fineos had 250,000,000 reasons to be cheerful with a recent milestone in export sales. The decision to boost its R&D spending during the downturn means the company can be confident of more growth into the future, CEO Michael Kelly tells Gordon Smith.

Fineos seems to have taken to heart the lesson about never letting a good recession go to waste. The Dublin-headquartered company chose to increase its investment in R&D on its claims management software in the teeth of the economic downturn, which saw some of its customers almost go to the wall while Fineos itself retrenched, reducing staff numbers.

Since then, the market has started to turn around. "Slowly we're seeing purse strings opening and spend happening," says CEO and founder Michael Kelly. Many of Fineos' existing customers are set to upgrade their systems over the next 18 months, and the new features are intended to address customers' needs for a standard system with web capabilities 'baked in', he says.

Fineos sells primarily to two main sectors: insurance providers and government agencies that handle injury and illness compensation schemes. While flying mostly below the publicity radar at home, it has built up a business that recently reached a milestone of

€250,000,000 in software and services exports achieved over the past decade.

In the last 12 months alone, Fineos Claims handled €2 billion of insurance claims payments, and the company estimates that 40 million claims are now in its system worldwide.

The success isn't all historical; in its most recent quarter the company signed four major deals with two US clients and two in Australia – boosting its total customer base by 10 per cent. "There's huge scope in terms of growth if we can keep the research and development going," says Kelly.

That quarter stands out by virtue of the four deals coming to completion, because long lead times have become the norm in the sector. However, the promising sales pipeline makes Kelly "quite optimistic" for future growth. "I think it's justification in terms of the risk we've taken in the last two to three years investing in our products while the market was quiet. Now the market is coming back and companies want to move quicker," he says.

In its most recent quarter, Fineos signed four major deals with two US clients and two in Australia, boosting its total customer base by 10 per cent.

"We are open to acquisitions and further growth. We've just come out of a global crisis. To be fair, we would have had plans which would have been more ambitious than where we are today, but you have to take your hits,"

The company focused its R&D spending on adding to its flagship software Fineos Claims, including the ability to provide self-service web portals for insurance claimants and mobile and tablet app versions of the software.

Another key area has been the development of analytics functions that allow insurers to query the information in their databases for greater insight into trends, business opportunities or patterns that could indicate fraud. Fineos is also building new products designed to work out-of-the-box, to cater for different lines of insurance business and the needs of smaller insurance providers.

At home, Fineos claims a 30 per cent share of the general insurance market but domestic revenues account for no more than 10-15 per cent of overall turnover in any given year. "Our business is overwhelmingly international. It depends on the year, but it would be between 85 and 90 per cent export, and North America would be our biggest market," says Kelly.

Next on the list for expansion is China. "It's a new frontier for us. It's gone from being the sixth largest global insurance market to the third largest in a few years and will be number two in a few years. We have to keep an eye on what's happening," says Kelly.

Fineos is working with Enterprise Ireland to make connections in the market and the company anticipates a long business development cycle. Kelly points out that this isn't so different to the company's experiences elsewhere. "We have no customers [in China] yet, but it took us two years and probably two million dollars' worth of investment to break into the US market and we think it will be the same in China."

The company's approach has typically been to look at a close fit between different markets – which is why most of its customers to date are in English-speaking countries. However, Kelly believes the Chinese opportunity is simply too big to ignore. "We're looking at the easiest markets to enter as a highest priority in terms of the closest in the way of doing business to the countries we're already in. You also have the aspect of the size of the market and the size of the prize, and you have to consider that as well."

Fineos remains mainly a direct-sales organisation but its recent growth has seen it begin working with selected partners, including IBM and the US consultancy CGI that specialises in the property and casualty sectors. It also works with partners where customers

specifically request that way of handling a deal.

"We're not tied to one single model. We are open to acquisitions and further growth. We've just come out of a global crisis. To be fair, we would have had plans which would have been more ambitious than where we are today, but you have to take your hits," says Kelly.

The return to growth is driving hiring in Fineos' international offices: the company created 50 new positions over the past 18 months, bringing total headcount to almost 350 people. This year, the company took a dozen university graduates and placed them on a three-month orientation and training course on its products. The graduates were hired as employees in July, and Kelly says the company intends to do this every year.

Another lesson can be found in how the company has looked beyond its initial core customer set into related areas. Originally, it focused on the life, health and disability insurance markets. Over time it gained a leadership position in those markets. Five of the top eleven group life and disability insurers in the US now use Fineos systems to process claims.

Almost a decade ago, the company looked to add other lines of business. A promising opportunity emerged in the area of government compensation schemes in countries such as Australia, New Zealand and Canada where the authorities take a more managed approach, making regular payments over a long period of time rather than simply awarding one lump sum upfront.

In 2005, Fineos won a large deal in New Zealand and now it's software processes every bodily injury and illness compensation claim in that country, and 30 per cent of those in Australia.

The private sector and government areas may differ but the aim is the same, Kelly explains. "Claims is really what insurance is all about – it's the only customer experience anyone really cares about. That marries very well around the government side and getting the best outcome for citizens in terms of care."

Recalling the darker days of 2009 and 2010, Kelly observes that most companies cut back on spending on innovation when the financial crisis struck. "There was a lot of fear in the markets. Now I think we're in a different space. I wouldn't say we'll ever go back to the older model, but companies are prepared to spend for gain."

LIFT-OFF FOR IRISH AVIATION SUPPLIERS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Ronan O'Connor
and **Shane Leavy**
report on a market
in take-off mode.

The Gulf's big three airlines are seeing some of the fastest growth in history of the aviation industry.

The aviation industry may be in the midst of a malaise globally. But the Middle East region is proving an exception. Rapid expansion of the Gulf's airlines and airport facilities are fuelling opportunities for Irish companies with relevant products and services.

"There are at least half a dozen Irish companies that have great references in the Middle Eastern aviation picture to date," says Dubai-based Anthony Cahill, Enterprise Ireland's Market Adviser for Aerospace in the Middle East and North Africa.

Aircraft interiors specialist Botany Weaving, for example, has won contracts with several Gulf carriers. And IO Systems in Athlone, which manufactures belt conveyor systems, recently announced a significant security equipment project in Dubai International Airport. Other deals have been in engineering support, in-flight entertainment, mobile content and recruitment services.

"You can break it down to three areas," Cahill says. "There is the airport development itself and the ecosystem around that in terms of logistics, travel hubs, hotels, leisure and so on. Secondly, there's travel technology: companies selling to airlines in terms of IT, reservations and so on. And the third one is the MRO [maintenance, repair and overhaul] side, where Ireland has a great story to tell."

Aviation finance is a huge business in the financial services sector, and almost 50% of all aircraft in the world are leased from Dublin, Cahill adds. This may not have a direct relationship to some of the opportunities in the Middle East, but it's a further endorsement for the country as a serious industry player.

MARKET DRIVERS

The Gulf's 'big three' airlines are seeing some of the fastest growth in the history of the aviation industry. Emirates is now the world's largest carrier in terms of international aviation seat kilometres (ASKs). It is also one of the most profitable airlines, reporting profits of more than \$1.6 billion for its fiscal year ending on

March 31, 2011, capping a decade-long run of profitable results.

Qatar Airways has finally joined Emirates as a profitable concern, after years of even faster growth, but heavy losses. The carrier reported a profit of \$205 million for 2011. In addition, Etihad is steadily moving towards joining its larger rivals in the black. The carrier declared its first-ever positive first half EBITDA (earnings before interest, taxation, depreciation and amortisation) result in 2011, all the while growing traffic at double-digit levels. Then there are the low-cost carriers such as Fly Dubai and Air Arabia, which are recording massive growth and profits.

Cahill, however, believes that travel growth in general is shaping up as the biggest market driver. "The Middle East has, both geographically and from an access-to-finance point of view, significant travel market growth potential," he points out. In all, the region is expected to cater for some 400 million passengers p.a. by 2020, and analysts put the possible aviation infrastructure spend at more than \$80 billion across multiple locations. These include Saudi Arabia, Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Qatar, Muscat and Bahrain, with 34 mooted projects in Saudi alone.

MRO MOVER

Already in the market, Eirtech Aviation is an Irish company that came into being in 2009 after a management buyout of what was originally a Lufthansa Technik company. Eirtech has since expanded operations from Shannon to Dublin and Ostrava in the Czech Republic, and it moved into Dubai this year.

"The business is basically divided into two major parts. We have the painting and interiors aspect; then we have the engineering and technical services side of things," explains Group Resource Director Ben Whelan. "In the painting line, we would do about 60% of our business with airlines, and about 40% with leasing companies. On the engineering side, the reverse would apply."

The company deals with five major players in the Middle East: Emirates, Etihad, Qatar

"Over the next six to 12 months, we're planning a number of initiatives for the sole purpose of helping Irish companies penetrate the Middle East aviation market."

Airways, Gulf Air and Fly Dubai, and it has recently secured a contract to paint 22 Qatar Airways craft in Shannon.

When it comes to winning business in the region, Whelan says that buyers are prepared to invest in quality, but suppliers must spend time building relationships. "You need to constantly visit the region and get in front of the airlines to showcase yourself," he explains. "They really appreciate the face-to-face nature of the business, and you also need to follow up on that contact. In many cases, winning business can be slower than in Ireland or Europe, but it is worth it if you do it right. Once you've signed a customer and they're happy with the service and the price, they will be very loyal.

"We have made an impact in the Middle East," he continues, "so now we're looking to consolidate that business and grow our services. One area we have identified is aircraft transfers. This is something we have experience in, and it is going to become a big thing in the region as airlines are looking to offload older aircraft and purchase newer models."

IT SOLUTIONS

Sonru, an Irish company that offers cloud-based video interviewing technology, typically for the initial screening stage, has also won business with the Qatari airline. "Our technology has started to become very popular, especially where employers have an issue in terms of the volume of staff they might require, such as cabin crew for airlines," explains CEO Fergal O'Byrne. There are additional benefits, he adds, when candidates are spread across continents and where multi-lingual skills may be required, both of which can be the case in the airline industry.

"We got involved with Qatar Airways thanks to a partner in Dubai, who resells our product," he told *The Market*. "He already had some sales in the area when he got a pitch with Qatar, and the sale happened very quickly from there.

"The Middle East has only really been a big part of our plans since the latter part of 2012," O'Byrne continues. "We now have four other

large airlines in Asia in our pipeline, and we are predicting some very large growth in this area. It's the nature of the business that expanding airlines need to recruit large numbers of staff quickly, and the traditional hiring process could become flooded by applicants."

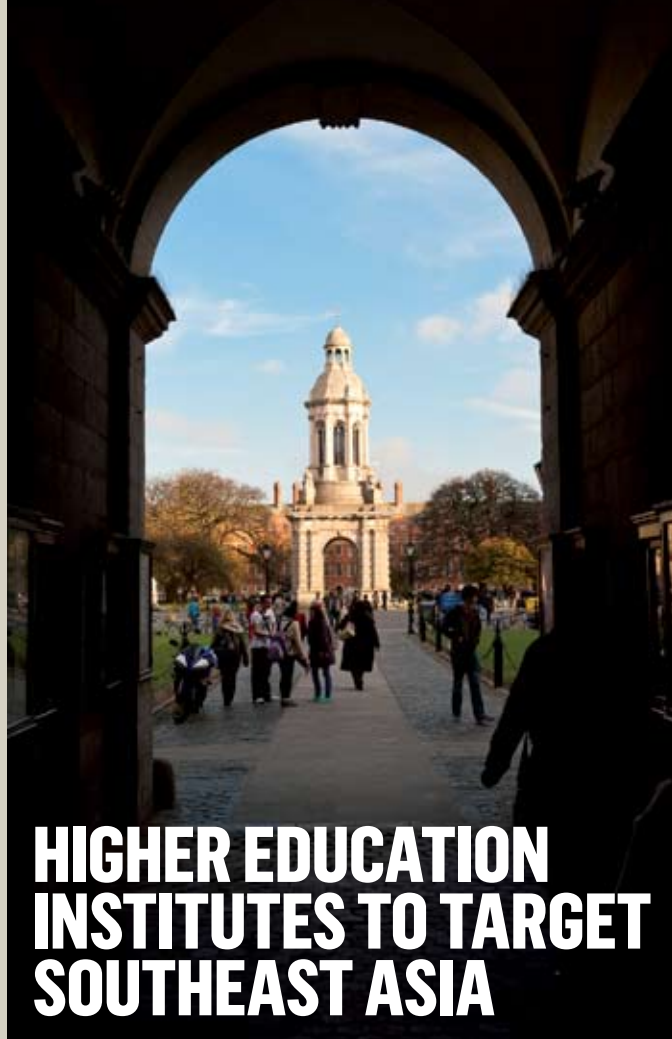
SEIZING THE OPPORTUNITY

Country-to-country, the market within the Middle East varies significantly, and there are very different ways of doing business. "If you look for example at UAE, there are Irish companies successfully selling into the likes of Dubai Airport, in terms of equipment and baggage, but also on the mobile side. For example, one or two companies have done apps for airports or supplied travel distribution software," Cahill says. "On the other hand, we probably haven't got huge traction yet in Saudi Arabia. But, looking ahead, that's going to be the big one, where a lot of future airport expansion is going to take place." Currently, Saudi Arabia's 27 airports handle over 54 million passengers annually, and the numbers are growing at double-digit pace, according to figures from IATA.

"Over the next six to 12 months, we're planning a number of initiatives for the sole purpose of helping Irish companies penetrate the Middle East aviation market," Cahill adds. "For example, in the third week in January, we have an MRO – maintenance, repair and overhaul – show that is co-located with an aircraft interior show. We will have an Irish trade stand, and we're hoping to have six Irish companies there. The primary target will be to engage with the Middle Eastern airlines.

"Separate to that, we have the Arabian Travel Market, which is on in May, and, again, we're looking to bring travel technology companies to that event. We also have the Dubai Air Show, which is on in November. That will be a chance for companies, particularly newer companies, to do a market study visit around the time of what is probably the largest regional aviation event." In the meantime, it's a case of watch this (air) space.

Mairéad O'Reilly reports that educational links between Ireland and ASEAN countries are widening beyond their traditional focus on medicine.



HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTES TO TARGET SOUTHEAST ASIA

The ASEAN market continues to grow in importance for Irish education as Minister Ciaran Cannon and a number of higher education institutions (HEIs) from Ireland go on a trade mission to Vietnam and Malaysia this December. ASEAN is the association of ten Southeast Asian nations: Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Brunei, Myanmar, Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam.

Fourteen HEIs will take part in the Star Education Fair in Malaysia and eight in education fairs at campuses of the Vietnam National University in Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi. Ireland has been a popular destination with ASEAN students for medical related courses for many years. "The Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland began recruiting students over 70 years ago, and there are now over 1,000 Malaysian students studying

medicine in Ireland," says Michael Garvey, director of Enterprise Ireland in ASEAN.

But the educational links between Ireland and ASEAN countries are no longer just about medicine. "More students are choosing Ireland as their study destination for various fields such as business, accounting, applied sciences and engineering from foundation level up to PhD level," says C.K. Chiau, founder of Mystudy, a company promoting Irish education across the ASEAN region.

While Griffith College and Dublin Business School continue to recruit accountancy and business students from ASEAN, Carlow Institute of Technology now has a number of Malaysian aeronautical students and Athlone Institute of Technology has science and engineering post-doctoral researchers from UniMAP in Malaysia. C.K. Chiau highlights that Griffith College and Dundalk Institute of Technology have been particularly proactive in the region with both colleges "offering some form of scholarship to international students".

The health sciences too are making particularly strong inroads in the Singapore market. TCD has recently embarked on an exciting collaboration with Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT) to deliver courses in physiotherapy and occupational therapy.

September 2012 saw the first student intake of 51 students for physiotherapy and 32 for occupational therapy, and the provost of TCD visited Singapore at the end of October for a signing ceremony. "Prior

to the programmes, diploma graduates in Singapore had to travel to Australia or the UK for further study," states Dr Juliette Hussey, programme coordinator. Dr Hussey believes that this initiative "will help to strengthen the reputation of Trinity in Singapore and Asia". The partnership is part of TCD's "engagement with transnational education, the objective of which is to develop a footprint in Singapore, which will assist in opening up a strategically important region".

Such ties can also help Ireland to become better known in the region, leading to increased business and tourism, says Michael Garvey.

Perhaps one of Irish education's best ambassadors is Vietnam's Deputy Prime Minister Hoang Trung Hai. He studied at both TCD and UCD on an ESB International scholarship. Relationships like this are key to promoting Irish education and raising awareness of Ireland. "This then acts as a 'pull' factor in attracting more international students to study in Ireland," states C.K. Chiau.

Students from ASEAN have found that having an Irish qualification has stood them in good stead in their careers at home. Khor Soon Keng graduated with a degree in computer science from Trinity College in 1990, before going on to work for Oracle Corporation in Ireland and Silicon Valley. When he returned to Malaysia seven years later, he was headhunted and offered a lucrative ex-pat deal with Harris Corporation. But how could a Malaysian end up joining an ex-pat team in Malaysia? "Because I have a degree from Ireland," he affirms.

BUILD IT AND THEY'LL COME

Mary Sweetman looks at why international business is beating a path to Qatar's door, and where the opportunities are in what looks set to become the Gulf's next boom state.

Build it and they'll come. That's the vision of Qatar – the Middle Eastern state about the size of Leinster, which raised eyebrows when it won the bid to host the 2022 Soccer World Cup and is now planning to pitch for the 2024 Olympics.

NATION-BUILDING

This is a nation on a mission, with ambitious plans to invest more than US\$200 billion in capital infrastructure over the next five years and the wherewithal to see them through. Ruled as an absolute emirate by Al Thani family – Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani has held power since 1995 – if the Qataris say they will do something, then planning disputes or wrangling over locations are unlikely to get in the way.

Nor does funding look set to be an issue. Nominal GDP per capita is one of the highest in the world, at US\$96,594 in 2011 and projected to rise to US\$106,000 by 2016. Moreover, budget surpluses are likely to average at above US\$40bn per annum over the period, predicts Conor Tubridy, chair of the Irish Qatari Business Council and a senior executive at Habtoor Leighton, one of the largest construction companies in the region.

The Qatar National Development Strategy, the first phase of Qatar National Vision 2030, envisages investment expenditure of US\$225bn between 2011 and 2016, with 42% by government, 10% in hydrocarbons and 48% by the private, non-hydrocarbon sector.

“Construction will re-emerge as a primary driver of economic growth, particularly infrastructure projects such as New Doha Port, Qatar Integrated Rail Network, the Doha Expressway Programme and the Kahramaa Security Mega Reservoirs get underway,” Tubridy told *The Market*.

Then there is everything else needed to serve a modern economy. Qatar Airways is one of the fastest growing carriers in the world, and at the time of going to press, the New Doha International Airport was in the process of hiring 8,000 employees in advance of its opening.

Some 70,000 new mobile phone lines are being added every day across the region, and Qatar is home to Al Jazeera, the biggest media player in the region. The capital, Doha, has a growing ex-pat community. And this is a region looking for solutions to tackle the kind of mounting healthcare concerns, such as obesity and diabetes, which come with prosperity.

Add to that the fact that Doha – a city somewhere between Dubai and Muscat in terms of Westernisation – is a possible anchor location for the region – at just 20 minutes by air to Manama in Bahrain, an hour to Abu Dhabi, Dubai and Riyadh and two hours to Muscat – and there are compelling reasons to consider Qatar.

Demographics-wise, the situation is somewhat unusual in that there are about two million people living in the country right now. However, the Qatari population is just 300,000. Everyone else is there because they are being sponsored, and if and when the work starts to dissipate, ultimately, they will have to move on.

Whatever the long-term sustainability of that situation, however, analysts project that between now and the end of the decade, Qatar’s construction and engineering sector will grow by over 12 per cent year-on-year, and with the gas reserves to payroll it, the country looks set to see continued growth for a least the 10 years up to 2022.

“They’re not just building a country, they are building a new economy,” says Sean Davis, Enterprise Ireland’s Regional Manager for the Middle East and North Africa. “They recognise that the oil and gas will run out, and they are looking to aggressively diversify. So it’s about establishing Qatar as a financial services centre and a tourist destination and developing an SME and innovation culture.

“In order for Qatar to be ready for the World Cup of 2022, it’s more than just building infrastructure, a lot of different things have to happen,” he adds. “The opportunities span a number of sectors. Construction and engineering are obvious ones, but ICT, healthcare, transportation, hospitality, agri-business and aviation technologies are equally relevant. Sometimes you can be almost blinded by the size and the scale of the projects. There are a lot of headlines. What we are in the process of doing right now is to try to drill down to identify specific opportunities for Irish companies.”

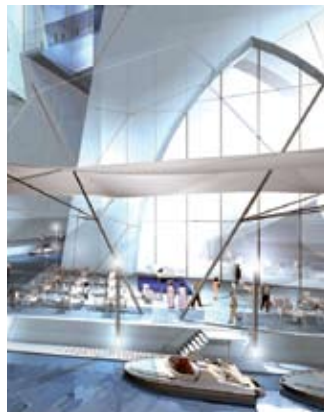
FIRST OFF THE BLOCKS

First off the blocks will be the infrastructural build. Here it will be large multinationals that will compete aggressively and win the big contracts, but Davis is confident that Irish companies will be able to find their place in the

market too. “We have had experience in London [2012 Olympics]; we know how to go in and win business as subcontractors. We will also be looking to identify the 30 to 40 small-to-medium Qatari contracting firms that are likely to win business,” he adds.

“A lot of consultants are working on tenders now, and they will come out in about six months for contractors like us to tender on,” confirms Habtoor Leighton’s Conor Tubridy. “Then the whole adjudication process will take another six to nine months, so within about a year, I think you will see things pick up pretty sharply.” For most Irish companies to be in with a chance, he says “they will have to be willing to make that jump from contractor to subcontractor.”

Byrne Looby Partners (BLP), an Irish civil, structural and geotechnical consultancy, is already on the ground and has entered a joint-venture with a local Qatari consultancy. “We have tendered for about a dozen projects worth \$3.5m in tender value and so far won four projects worth a combined fee of \$0.75m,” explained BLP’s Sam Murdock. The scope of the work to date has largely been in process design and wastewater and water treatment plants, Murdock says. However, the next big tranche of



contracts coming through will be the Q-Train, and the big players are already taking up positions.

Mercury Engineering has had a presence in Qatar for even longer. One of its first high-profile Qatari projects was the Museum of Modern Art in Doha. More recently, the company generated significant PR when it helped demonstrate an innovative solar-powered air-conditioning technology in a 500-seat prototype or 'mock-up' stadium that proved crucial in helping Qatar win its 2020 World Cup bid.

The stadium project was big in terms of PR impact, and the company won it because they could deliver in a short timeframe, Eamon Sweetman, Mercury's country manager for Qatar told *The Market*. However, in terms of revenue and scale, some of the bigger projects that the Irish management contracting and building services company has got its teeth into include a major library development, a shopping mall, and an airport development.

FOCUS ON CORE STRENGTHS

Like EI's Sean Davis, Sweetman says that it is easy to be dazed by the sheer scale of activity. "We could bid on 40 projects, but we need to do this at a sustainable level and choose our projects."

Given the hunger of the construction industry internationally right now, it's not surprising that the world is flocking to Qatar. The competition can be intense, and the Qatari authorities know it's a buyers' market, he says. "They have sent out the signal that they are looking for the best, so it's not a case that the streets are paved with gold. It's a very real and competitive market, where it's survival of the fittest. There is no point in being average and competing with everyone else. You have to have a core strength and do what you do well. If you don't deliver what you promise the first or the second time, then you won't get the third opportunity."

BLP's Murdock agrees that success depends on identifying a core strength, pitching at a realistic level and then teaming up with the right partner. "You need to know your strengths and weaknesses and be honest and realistic about them," he advises. "If you over-hype your capability, once you have soured your relationship, there's no going back."

"All the big water industry players are here and have taken on the role as chief advisers," he adds. "There is a lot of competition, but we are focused below the main threshold."

The company's game plan for Qatar is to pitch on detailed design work as opposed to overall project management, then, with a number of wins under its belt, gradually move up to the higher value area of asset management, with the ultimate objective of becoming client adviser.

Sending a business development manager from Ireland out to the market well over a year in advance of winning any

deals was crucial, Murdock says. "It enabled us to see where the opportunities were and to make contacts. I've seen companies come here and fail. They haven't been able to get traction because they haven't invested in good market intelligence. You need to know what's happening. You also need to be aware that things don't happen over night; you will need to meet people more than once. Qatar is quite heavily regulated in terms of who can do what, and if you're not on their list, you can't pitch."



MAKING CONNECTIONS

"It's definitely going to take a year before you'll start signing business," agrees Davis. "But you won't be starting from a zero-base. There are people like the Irish Qatari Business Council that will help you get connections right from the get-go."

"Over the next year, Enterprise Ireland is going to be organising workshops and events and bringing buyer groups back to Ireland, and we're also going to be working closely with the Irish Embassy in the UAE, because out here, those types of contacts are very important."

"Generally speaking an Irish company will have to have a local sponsor," he continues. "The only exception is when a contract is deemed to be in the public interest, and we have actually had an example of this being the case with an Irish company recently."

"There are lots of resources available to check out who is who, and, looking at sponsors, it's important to get advice. A bad relationship is very difficult to unwind; whereas having an engaged, active sponsor, who brings commercial or expertise synergy, can really help open doors and win business."

Even with a good partner, however, Davis's sense is that Irish companies will need to be on the ground. "Probably more than anywhere else in the world, in the Middle East, personal relationships are important. Ninety per cent of the meeting could be spent talking about Manchester United or family or the weather. They want to get to know you as a person."

In business, timing is everything, and the next six to 12 months will see many of the road and rail infrastructure projects awarded, Tubridy predicts. "Get out here now to get yourself positioned," he advises, adding that companies considering a market study visit could plan their trip to coincide with one of the Irish Qatari Business Council's (www.iqbc.org) regular network meetings. "The association provides a platform where Irish people can meet other Irish or Qatari people," Tubridy says. "Through the business events, you'll meet contacts who'll introduce you to potential partners. It's very important to come out here."

For further information, talk to sean.davis@enterprise-ireland.com, Enterprise Ireland Regional Manager - Middle East, North Africa.

From aviation to agriculture and everything in between, in the years ahead, Qatar will be looking for best-in-class solutions.

BEYOND INFRASTRUCTURE AND CONSTRUCTION: A WORLD OF OTHER OPPORTUNITIES IN QATAR

Qatari opportunities for infrastructure, engineering and construction are clearly immediate or will unfold over the next two to three years. However, in the medium term, other sectors will come to the fore, predicts Sean Davis, Enterprise Ireland's Regional Manager for the Middle East and North Africa. "In the following three to five years, you are going to see the growth of the service sector," he told *The Market*.

The estimated 70,000 new phone lines being connected every day across the region should create significant demand for content. Q-tel is the country's main operator, but mobile content moves across borders, and currently very little app content is being written in Arabic or for an Arabic audience. In addition, Al Jazeera, by far the biggest media brand in the region, with news, sports and kids programming, is Doha-based, and by the time the World Cup comes round, it could be one of the biggest news brands in the world, Davis predicts.

Conor Tubridy, chair of the Irish Qatari Business Council, sees no reason why Irish interests couldn't establish a farm or dairy production presence in Qatar. "Qatar imports all its foodstuff, and a lot of the milk comes from Saudi, but there is no reason why Qatar couldn't produce itself," he told *The Market*. Earlier this year, *Arabian Business* reported that Qatar is planning to develop 1,400 farms in the Gulf state as part of plans to improve food security issues.

Then there will be spiralling demand for all the Western-style services that an expat wants. "They are well provided for at the moment," Tubridy says. "But the boom hasn't started yet; it's just around the corner. There are currently just about enough expat school places for primary and secondary, and although rents are higher than in Dublin, there is adequate housing. But as the boom comes, that availability will lessen."

Mercury's Country Manager for Qatar, Eamon Sweetman, reckons that demand is also likely to pick up for hotels,

restaurants and all kinds of hospitality and tourism services, and he predicts that Qatar-based construction firms would seize upon products that allow for quicker assembly, modular construction or any innovation that could minimise the amount of time workers need to spend outside in the unrelenting heat, with temperatures soaring above 50 °C in the summer months.

"Everyone travels abroad for healthcare," he adds, citing opportunities for service providers along the lines of Hamad Medical Corporation, a non-profit operator in Doha, affiliated with Cornell University, which has had a medical training school and biomedical research centre in Qatar for the past decade.

Hospital construction looks set to get underway over the next two years, Davis confirms, and services will start to come online in the following two to five years, creating demand for medical staff, training, diagnostics, chemicals, medical devices and IT-for-healthcare solutions.

A recent report from Bank of America Merrill Lynch pointed to immense challenges with obesity, diabetes and cancer in the Middle East region, where the spend on healthcare is expected to effectively triple from US\$46bn to US\$136bn between now and 2018. "The Qataris are not shy about bringing in advice at the highest level to ensure they get best in class," Davis says. "So when they start to implement a system here, they will look to best practice. There will be no half-baked approaches."

Ultimately, the government is at the source of virtually everything that happens in Qatar: 70 per cent of spend in the region is by government. So in the years ahead, it will be important for Irish companies seeking business to understand how they send out their requests for tender and who they use for evaluation.

ON THE SOAP BOX

Speaking at industry events can be an important element of any b2b marketing strategy. Gordon Smith settles into his seat to hear how some Irish companies pick their events, hone their message and work the background noise from live blogging and tweeting to their advantage.





We were very prominent on Twitter. There's an example of how we were participating at the event and actively engaging to promote our website, our stand, our story.

TREVOR DAGG
CEO, TALENTEVO



At a time when thoughts can travel around the world in 140 characters, there's still something primal about connecting with a group of people through the oldest medium of all: the spoken word.

For a business looking to make a name for itself or reach out to potential customers in new markets, making a presentation at industry conferences offers a platform to establish credibility or enhance a reputation by showing thought leadership on a particular subject matter. Many Irish companies find such speaking slots a growing part of their marketing mix.

"We don't necessarily link it to our sales, but it's very important for building our brand position and profile. If you don't have an enormous marketing budget, this is a really good, targeted, direct way of raising your profile," says Siobhan O'Dwyer, vice president of marketing at Nualight, the Cork developer of LED lighting for refrigerated food units.

PLANNING YOUR STRATEGY

Plenty of work comes ahead of stepping onto any podium: the message, the audience and the outcome all need to be carefully considered. "Before attending any conference, you need to think about what you want to say, who do you want to say it to and what expectations do you have of a return. You need to have a plan. It can be very tempting

to speak at a whole bunch of different conferences; the truth is you need to pick the right ones," says Andrew Parish, CEO of the ocean energy company Wavebob.

Nualight divides conferences and speaking engagements into two groups: one is for high-level corporate audiences with a view to forming partnerships, while the second element involves specific events for the retail industry, which is its main target market.

"For the very high-level industry conferences, you typically have to submit an abstract. They don't come to you; you have to pitch to them. At industry level, we look for the leading industry association, and we don't look anywhere else," says O'Dwyer.

Sponsoring events often leads to speaking slots but the consensus is that presentations earned on merit carry far more weight with an audience than sponsored talks. "We say no to buying speaking slots," says Owen O'Connor of Cernam (see panel).

For larger conferences, there may not be sponsorship opportunities in any case, which makes advance planning essential to securing a speaking slot. "The best strategy is to attend the conference you want to speak at the following year – that's the time to go up to the conference organisers and say to them: 'Here's how I could have added value to the panel session'. That way they see you not as a cold call but as a customer," says Parish.

In an age where social media is becoming all-pervasive, live blogging and tweeting of events means that a good presentation can reverberate far beyond the confines of a conference room.

ANDREW PARISH
CEO, WAVEBOB



"It's absolutely not a hard sell, it's about sharing information, ideas and best practice."

SIOBHAN O'DWYER
VP FOR MARKETING,
NUALIGHT

SOFTLY, SOFTLY

Talentevo, a start-up that develops staff performance management software, had been using Microsoft's Azure platform to host its systems, and this led to an approach to speak at the software giant's recent CloudArena conference in Dublin. CEO Trevor Dagg has since spoken at panel discussion forums with the Data Protection Commissioner.

Rather than using such events as an overt plug for the company's software, Talentevo prefers to share its experience in building a system with strong information security processes – a message that Dagg says resonates more strongly with audiences. "There's a lot of credibility from presenting at a Microsoft event, and, for a company that's just over a year in business, to be able to refer to that makes our story more compelling, particularly when typically the first question out of our customers' mouths is about security," he says.

While companies might jump at any chance to tell their story to a captive crowd, Dagg warns against turning the timeslot into an extended sales pitch. "I don't think the audience would take well to me harping on about how important performance management is," he says.

O'Dwyer agrees. "It's absolutely not a hard sell, it's about sharing information, ideas and best practice." Conference speaking shouldn't be considered as instant sales lead generation but as strategic activity. "It's a long-term goal – don't measure it otherwise," she cautions.

That being said, some companies have found more immediate benefits from the conference circuit. One presentation in Germany led to Wavebob developing a strategic partnership with an engineering firm, and, on another occasion, it prompted discussions with an investor who subsequently funded a six-figure sum in the Kildare company.

Even if those events don't happen in every case, Parish says there are other ways to measure the success of being involved in a conference. "Wavebob is pre-revenue, so I can't say speaking at a conference will give us a spike in our sales next week. It really depends on the type of conference: if it's a gala event and you're a main speaker on a plenary session, not only do you get the benefit of that, you may get referenced in a press release. You can also see very quickly the number of hits on your website after you put out news about speaking at a conference," he says.

ALL THAT TWITTERS

In a similar vein, Dagg advises companies to amplify their speaking efforts through their other marketing channels. After being asked to present at the Microsoft event, Talentevo staff blogged about it. When it exhibited at the CIPD conference in London last June, a member of staff attended all of the speaker presentations and tweeted about them, while linking to the company's own activities on its stand.

"We were very prominent on Twitter. There's an example of how we were

Express yourself: pointers for more powerful presentations

- Link your activities to your objectives – start with what it is you're trying to achieve as business, whether that is open new markets or build partnerships, and that will dictate the events you choose and what you say at them
- Be ruthless – identify conferences with the right calibre of attendee and right level of audience
- Be brave – don't tell people what they already know.
- Prepare well – you can damage your brand by not being well rehearsed or not having a grasp of the subject
- Keep it visual and try to tell a story – the art of communication is a creative field. Organise what may be dry information in an engaging way to relate to the audience
- Get the insight – be close to customers and prospects, so you can deliver a presentation from their perspective rather than your own view of the world.



CERNAM MD OWEN O'CONNOR

Event success easy as Pi

For the modest outlay of just €30, Cernam ensured a packed house for its presentation in May at the CEIC [Computer and Enterprise Investigations Conference] in Las Vegas. That's what it cost to buy a Raspberry Pi, the uber-geek's must-have but hard-to-obtain gadget, as the giveaway prize.

It was the right pitch at what Cernam's managing director Owen O'Connor describes as a practical, technical event. "At the stage we're at, we're selling to our peers – it's the person who was doing my job five years ago," he says. Before founding Cernam, O'Connor specialised in

information security and data-driven investigations at Elan Pharmaceuticals.

While electronic discovery for the legal sector is maturing, the Dublin company specialises in recovering information from online sources like social networks and cloud services – which is still in its infancy. "Our market still needs education so conferences are the way to go. Our marketing strategy in the US is content-based information and knowledge leadership," says O'Connor.

Some digital forensics events in the US are considered niche conferences but nevertheless

can attract up to 1,000 people, says O'Connor. "They are so much better than a simple adwords campaign or online marketing."

The Raspberry Pi gimmick may not have broken the bank, but overall O'Connor finds conferences can be an expensive marketing channel, and has relied on funding from AIB and Enterprise Ireland to be able to attend some of the international events.

Cernam's experiences echo others that have found the gains are made over the longer term. "Conferences are a lot of work but well worth it," O'Connor says.

participating at the event and actively engaging to promote our website, our stand, our story. We had a lot of retweets at the event, and we also made a lot of really good connections with other exhibitors," says Dagg.

In an age where social media is becoming all-pervasive, live blogging and tweeting of events means that a good presentation can reverberate far beyond the confines of a conference room. "I've been at conferences where there are two screens – one with the presentations, the other with the live Twitter stream. Thankfully I've never had personal comments about the state of my tie," quips Parish.

While the thoughts of an unfavourable tweet could put a nervous speaker off guard, Parish believes Twitter's ability to take the pulse of a collected audience can be invaluable, where it gives the chance to respond to comments and make a presentation more interactive.

"When you're speaking, the challenge is always to understand the tone of the audience and you hope you're delivering to suit that. Twitter gives you a sense of where the interest is ... it forces you to become more comfortable with working on an ad lib basis and less on formal presentations and a script," he says.

He also says that attending the conference lets people start contributing to the event through Twitter, even while sitting in the audience. "Then, when you stand up to make your own presentation later, people know who you are and you can refer back to that. You can

link the conference in a much more strategic fashion."

Conferences invariably involve time out of the office, but O'Dwyer says Nualight handles this by sharing speaking duties between several senior executives. Her role means that she is involved in preparing for every event, helping the people to hone their own presentations and ensuring the message stays consistent.

O'Dwyer points out that public speaking is not a skill that comes naturally to everyone, and it's worth looking for this ability when recruiting staff. In smaller companies, however, that job more often than not falls to the founder or CEO. As for conquering the pre-event nerves, plenty of practice seems the surest way – attending small networking events with 'elevator pitch'-style sessions can help to build confidence.

"I was fortunate when in school, I used to do a lot of drama, so I'm happy enough to stand in front of a group of people. But when you stand in a room full of people who probably know more than you do, the nerves come straight back. You can't try and pretend to know more than anyone else, you just have to be honest," says Parish.

Adds Dagg: "If you're going to go and speak, you've got to have something to say that people are genuinely interested in. And it helps if you're passionate about it, then it comes naturally. I feel most comfortable when I'm in that zone. If you're starting out, I would think – why would they come and listen to your story? You have to achieve something and then talk about it."



CAPE CRUSADERS

At the time of going to press, Irish companies were embarking on a trade mission to Cape Town and Johannesburg in search of new business opportunities. Gordon Smith caught up with a few of the companies already trading with the rainbow nation.

Success in South Africa – advice from experienced exporters

- Personal contacts and relationship-building are critical to doing business in South Africa – build in the time to do this in your business development plan
- Face-to-face meetings are the preferred forum for talking business, rather than communicating by email, letter or telephone
- Plan to visit the market regularly – as often as once every six weeks – at the early stages of building relationships both with a partner network and end customers
- Conferences in South Africa are a good way of networking or making first contact with a prospective customer, as they tend to attract senior decision makers
- The overall business culture is informal, and many South Africans have a relaxed approach to timekeeping. That said, it's best advised to arrive on time for meetings – even if you may end up being kept waiting
- The working day can start very early in South Africa, sometimes before 7am, and meetings are best not scheduled after 4pm
- Thoroughly research the market beforehand: your offer must be compelling and differ from what's already available; if not, South African customers generally prefer to buy locally
- Partners are essential to doing business in many sectors in South Africa: they will facilitate introductions to customers and may act as the first line of support
- Thoroughly vet any potential partners before signing formal agreements: consult Enterprise Ireland, Irish contacts based in the market or even customers for recommendations

Having laid claim to the 's' in the BRICS acronym for high-growth global economies, South Africa has plenty of reasons for Irish companies to consider it a market worth closer inspection.

What's more, it serves a dual purpose as it's a strategic a foothold for branching out into the broader sub-Saharan region.

An added benefit for Irish firms starting in South Africa is its similarity with the home market in some respects. "There's just one hour's time difference between the two countries, the language of business is English, and from being part of the former British Empire, there's still a very strong link in the accounting and legal side. A lot of the software companies find that not a lot of localisation is needed," says Fred Klinkenberg, Enterprise Ireland's manager for the South Africa office.

In the 18 years since the ANC came to power, the economy has consistently expanded apart from two quarters. On an annual basis, growth has typically fluctuated between 3 and 5 per cent. The World Bank rates South Africa in 35th place for ease of doing business. Most market observers agree the economy is well run, and the country appears to have escaped the worst effects of the worldwide downturn from 2008 onwards. Boosted by an abundance of natural resources, the Rainbow Nation also has a growing middle class which signifies increased consumer spending.

At the time of writing, 200 Irish companies are active in South Africa. The number is rising steadily, having increased from 150 in the past three years, according to figures from Enterprise Ireland. Of this number, 30 firms have invested in a local operation and the total number of employees of these companies is 13,000.

Some of the usual suspects top the list, with the food conglomerates especially prominent. Kerry Group employs 500 people there and Glanbia is making progress with a line of 'nutraceuticals' – foods with health benefits. QK Meats supplies a variety of products to leading South African supermarket chains.

Engineering giant Kentz is another prominent Irish name in the mix, employing close to 10,000 people throughout Africa, and the continent generates close to a quarter of its turnover.

The good news for Irish firms that don't have similar scale is that South African buyers are receptive to working with Irish companies of all sizes. A trade mission last autumn saw €15

million of new business announced, and this was divided between several companies across a range of sectors.

Another trade mission will take place from 12-14 November; it's the fourth to the country in five years and is an indicator of "a country on the march," says Klinkenberg. Four sectors in particular offer opportunities for Irish firms, he adds: telecoms, education (primarily e-learning), financial services and pharma/medical devices/ life sciences.

Personal relationships and connections are a crucial part of South African business culture and a prerequisite for making progress, says Anton Smith, CEO of Hambisana, an IT group with operations in Ireland and South Africa.

"It's very much a market where people buy from people. The partner that you select is going to be your sales channel. Brand awareness is going to be very difficult to build. Public relations is going to cost you an arm and a leg, whereas relationships won't cost you that much because there is a benefit for both parties. If I want to find out more about my market sector, I go to my partner or people with international relationships," Smith says.

"In the seven years we've been in business in South Africa, we had one cold call coming in on the energy sector and one on the IT sector, where somebody searched and found our website. The rest of it is only by introduction and building the relationship from there onwards. Your whole marketing plan is going to be based on channel partners, joint ventures and introductions."

Irish companies typically find South Africa a relatively easy place to do business. The two nations' shared love of sport can be a great ice breaker in the early stages of discussions; in the case of the Irish HR software provider Clarigen, a post-rugby match meeting – appropriately, the game was Ireland vs South Africa – ultimately led to a joint venture.

For others, business has found them: Dublin-based Rockall Technologies provides software to banks for handling collateral and limit management. It has been active in South Africa for four years and its first business in the country came about when Standard Bank approached the company at a conference and asked it to tender for some business.

Even allowing for such a promising start, a regular presence on the ground is absolutely essential to build business in South Africa. Leslie Duckett, the company's global sales director,

worked in South Africa in a number of roles for more than 16 years and his experience matches that of many other Irish companies.

Duckett says South African buyers are willing to buy from international companies on two main conditions: firstly, that the product offers features they can't get from domestic suppliers, and secondly, that they can be reassured about the levels of service they will receive – either directly or through a locally based partner.

“You need to be down there very regularly,” he says. “They don't like the idea that you swing by every six months. They like to get to know you and build a relationship and loosen up and do business. They're very cautious people, probably the most financially prudent people I've come across. They'll pay for what they get if they think they're getting good value and a top-tier system from Europe. They'll put their hand in their pocket but you've got to put in the work to get to that stage.”

Travel of one kind or another is likely to feature heavily in Irish companies' business development plans for South Africa and beyond. In certain sectors such as banking, the domestic market has become saturated – which means the institutions are invariably looking outside of the country for growth. This has implications for Irish companies who should also be prepared to scale quickly if needed to.

“If you win business with a South African company, you need to be prepared to work beyond the borders in line with their growth plans, and that brings other challenges for Irish companies: can you get people to go to Nigeria or Zimbabwe? Can you get insurance? You've got to have that in the back of your mind,” says Duckett.

Klinkenberg points out that, of the top ten global growth economies last year, six were in sub-Saharan Africa. Unquestionably the hub remains South Africa, and Johannesburg is its epicentre. “Many major bands in Africa (particularly the FMCG's, banks and telcos) are headquartered out of South Africa. Also, if you are doing business in South Africa our experience is that you must base your local office in Johannesburg, the business capital of the country,” says Padraig McBride, CFO with the mobile marketing provider Brandtone.

Just a few decades ago, the money pouring in to Africa was for charitable purposes, but the wheels of commerce are clearly turning the scenario from one of aid to trade.

Mobile model for building business out of Africa

Adaptive Mobile's story in South Africa could be a microcosm for how to build business on the continent: it has been active in South Africa for five years and has grown its revenues there by close to 40 per cent in that time through a combination of new business and upselling to existing customers. It expects to close €3 million in sales for this year.

The company, which sells security software to mobile operators, is also active in Nigeria, Ghana and Uganda from its Johannesburg base which is a serviced office rather than an incorporated legal entity.

“In South Africa you have unique challenges where you're forced either to incur significant costs either by setting up an operation there, or you're having to use equality local partners [compliant with BEE legislation]. And that can be difficult, whether you're in the telco space or FMCG,” says Adam Crooke, Adaptive's VP of sales for Europe and sub-Saharan Africa.

Adaptive's approach to business development is a blended model that combines regular direct contact with customers and close management of partners. “There is a lot of entrepreneurial activity, especially in the telecoms and technology sector. That means there are plenty of companies you could partner with, so you have to be very selective in your approach. A lot of companies are vying for business, so they're willing to go the extra mile. The best yardstick is to speak to the end customers and see who they recommend,” Crooke says.

When assessing partners, he recommends working on a joint activity and marketing

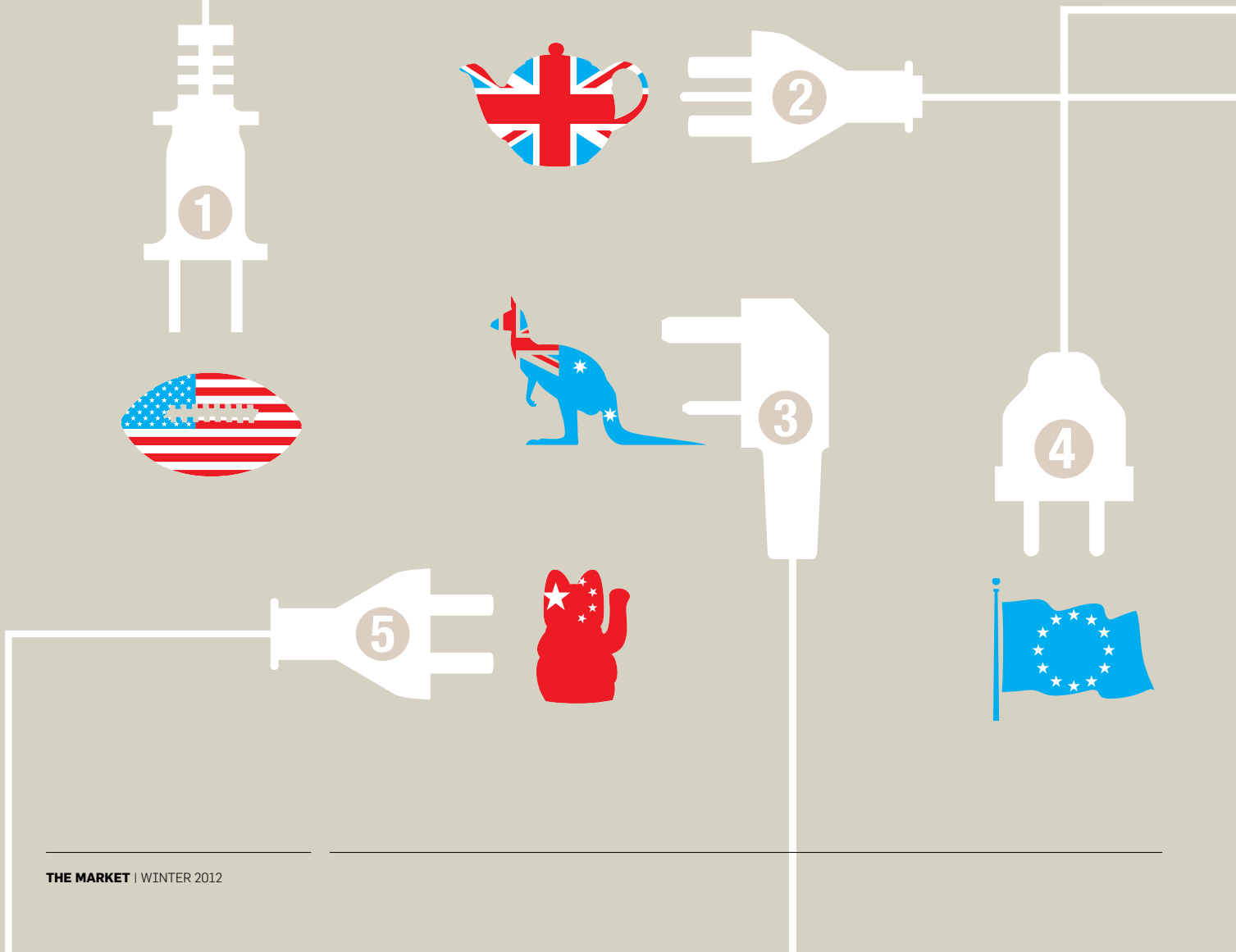
plan with a candidate company, with measurable targets to be achieved. The company also undertakes small, focused marketing activities. “We do a lot of trade shows and things like that rather than a blanket media campaign. Also, work with your partners to do local workshops where you share some of the cost. The Enterprise Ireland trade mission, for us, was great although we were already active in the market.”

Crooke had already been living in South Africa for several years when he joined Adaptive Mobile, and is able to give a wider perspective on the country. “There is a perception that Africa tends to be behind Western Europe or North America in technology. Partly that's true, but partly because of that, it gives companies the opportunity to go in and sell very 'bleeding-edge' technology. I've found South Africa as a country is far more willing to take a risk on new technology and new types of products and services because a lot of the technical infrastructure is out of date... In some respects, they're way ahead,” he says.

South Africa's crime rate can be an issue, but Crooke says this is manageable with caution and common sense. “Whenever we had somebody come from Ireland or anywhere, we would always give certain points of advice: be sensible, don't walk around with your mobile out and your wallet out because you're asking for trouble. You wouldn't walk anywhere. You have to drive, there's no public transport and you do have to be careful all the time. We organise a hire car or driver so there is some extra slight logistical hassle. Also our partner can recommend hotels to stay in, or a restaurant, or bar to have a drink in.”

Setting up its first EMEA office in Dublin taught Marketo, the international revenue performance management company, so much about planning for the first 100 days of new market entry that Fergus Gloster, Managing Director of Marketo EMEA and his team set pen to paper to share their experiences. Here is a shortened version of their advice for step three 'planning your go-to-market initiatives' of their five-step guide.

HOW MARKETING CAN HELP SALES IN THE FIRST 100 DAYS



The specific marketing initiatives that you run in the first 100 days will make or break your market entry. While the exact mix of initiatives will be down to you, we've set out below the seven concurrent initiatives that we ran during our international expansion, to give you an idea of the possibilities.

1. Align marketing and sales

While the primary aim of marketing should be to generate hot, well-qualified leads to pass to sales for conversion, there are other ways that you can help the sales team too. The most critical aspect in aligning sales and marketing is to have an agreed understanding of the revenue funnel and agreed common metrics for measuring success.

In a new market, there are likely to be many new challenges for sales, including unfamiliar competitors, a target audience that isn't familiar with your product or service proposition, and new indirect routes to market. Marketing can help sales to help themselves in many ways, including:

- **Competitor cheat sheets:** Detailing competitor weak points and ways to win against them.
- **Prospecting email templates:** Sample emails that match your marketing messages.
- **Target account profiling:** Working with sales to identify the top 20-50 accounts to pursue, and establishing an account-based marketing plan for each one, augmenting existing knowledge with third-party data about each customer to create a fuller picture.
- **Online demo support:** Providing email invitation templates to live online demos.
- **Lead prioritisation:** Using lead scoring tools to identify the superhot, top-priority leads that are both ready to buy and fit well into your company's target demographic.
- **Partner enablement materials:** Key messages, templates and content to help partners sell.
- **Objection-handling materials:** Slides and other content to answer prospects' FAQs about your product or service.

2. Establish your local web presence

Before you enter any new international market, you'll need to plan and establish your local or

regional web presence. This is likely to mean creating a dedicated website for each country with localised landing pages and localised pay-perclick campaigns to drive traffic to your web content. We recommend carrying out three critical activities as soon as you possibly can:

Register local domains: Register all the relevant top-level country domain suffixes for your domain and keep future expansion in mind as well as the countries you're moving into today.

Develop local content: Decide your initial go local strategy, whether that's full website translation and localisation of content, or 'lighter' sites with links back to your homepage content below a certain level. A key focus here is to develop local versions of corporate content that will resonate with your new market, including localised pricing, customer examples, contact numbers, blogs, etc.

Get optimising: Make sure your sites and content are optimised for search – and remember, not every country has Google as its favourite search engine. For example, Baidu has a 42 per cent market share in China and Yandex has a 60 per cent market share in Russia.

3. Events: Go Where They Go

A web presence is all very well, but if you really want to make a splash with your new target audience, you'll also need to go where they are going. Participating in relevant events is a great way of meeting a lot of people face-to-face, gathering names for your marketing funnel, and starting to build relationships with prospective buyers. At the same time, events can be a significant drain on resources, so it's a good idea to draw on other local teams to help with key activities before, during and after the event. While the exact mix of events will depend on your target audience, objectives, and budget, it's likely that you'll want a mixture of big and small events across your own, industry trade show, analyst and partner events.

Create a database of relevant events for your first 100 days, listing the criteria that matter to you: number of expected delegates, delegate profile, cost to exhibit, cost to speak, cost to sponsor, etc. From this you can prioritise the events that deliver the most value for the available budget, and create an event marketing plan and calendar that maximises your available budget.

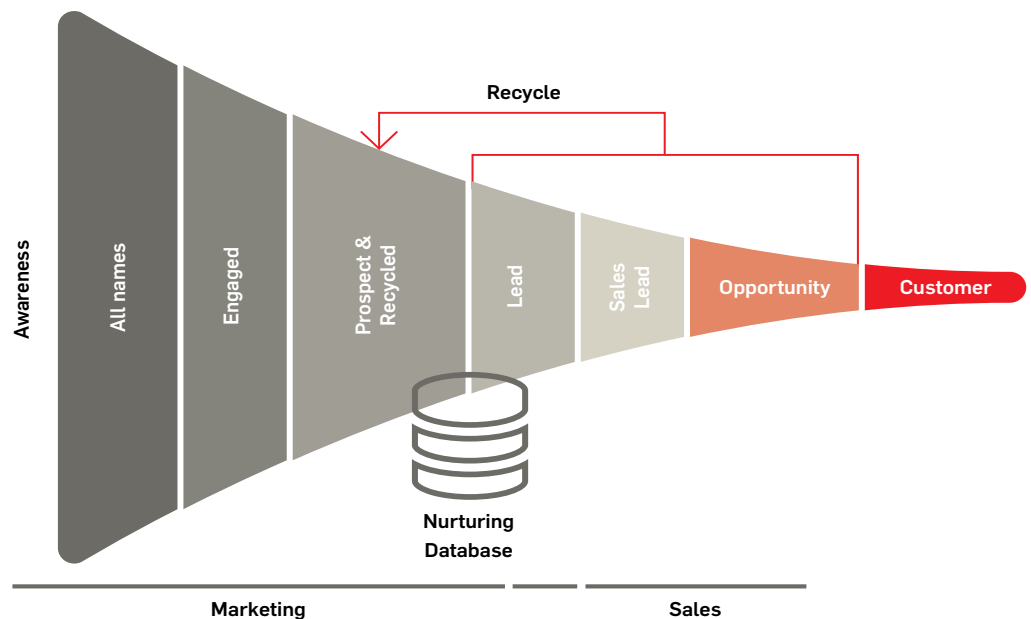


The most important thing you can do in the first days of entering any new market is to start building a solid database of leads and prospects.





MARKETO'S SALES PIPELINE



When we talk about 'relevant' content, we mean topics that will be helpful and useful to your audience, not about how great your business and your products are.



Once you have your events plan, you can get to work developing your content, designing your stand, training your events team, identifying suitable spokespeople and topics, and reaching out to attending delegates and journalists via social media.

4. Build the Database

The most important thing you can do in the first days of entering any new market is to start building a solid database of leads and prospects. Here at Marketo, we're pretty strict on what constitutes a lead, so we prefer to think of the initial name-gathering exercise as just that: gathering names to put into the top of your marketing funnel. What's important is that you start getting those names in there as soon as possible, then use lead-scoring and lead-nurturing tools to start turning them into engaged, interested parties who are willing to buy from you.

You'll undoubtedly have an armoury of demand-generation tactics at your disposal already, but here are some of the ways we started building and using our EMEA database:

Third-party email broadcasts:

Promoting your content via relevant and established email blasts sent out by local publishers, media companies and other third parties. These should link back to a landing page of your own, so you can capture basic contact details for your database.

Webinars:

Webinars are a great opportunity to engage with local thought-leaders and increase your influence in the region by presenting on hot topics together. These influencers will promote the webinar to their community to help drive awareness and attendance.

Email marketing:

Outbound nurturing emails to engaged prospects already in the marketing database, promoting relevant new content and offers. A good marketing automation system can make all the difference here, by enabling you to create personalised nurturing campaigns that are tailored to your prospects' interests based on their previous engagement and interactions with your company and website.

Lead Nurturing:

Regular communication to prospects in the database who are not yet ready to buy. Sending relevant content and personalised offers – based on the prospect's behaviour and level of engagement – builds a relationship over time and gives them more reasons to buy.

Social engagement:

Using the new breed of social marketing apps, to encourage social sharing of your content, track who engages with your content on social platforms, and feed that information back into your lead scoring and nurturing programmes.

5. Compelling Content

Smart marketing teams will already know how high-quality content can generate demand and guide leads through the sales funnel until they're ready to convert into buyers. As you enter a new market, the content you develop for that market is of critical importance.

Any new content you create should be developed with an eye to re-using and re-purposing it in future, either in the same market or in your organisation's wider global marketing initiatives. For example, a practical webinar can easily be turned into a how-to guide, or a "top tips"-style blog post. We call that multi-modal content, and it ensures you get the most bang for your marketing buck – plus it means you don't have to reinvent the wheel every time you need new content.

We find the best approach is to map your content to stages in your customers' buying cycle, and manage access to it accordingly. For example, you may want to make early-stage content, "information-gathering" content – such as best practice guides free to access, but then ask for registration details when a prospect wants to access something – such as a product demo video or a technical webinar – that indicates they are considering a purchase more seriously. By segmenting your content in this way you will be able to score leads more accurately according to whether they're accessing early, middle or late-stage content.

The type of content you create will be dictated by the needs of your target customers, but we found that a mix of blogs, ebooks, how-to guides, video and webinars helped to quickly build brand awareness and generate demand for Marketo across a mix of marketing channels. By the way, when we talk about 'relevant' content, we mean topics that will be helpful and useful to your audience, not about how great your business and your products are!

Once you've established what content you are going to create to support your market entry, you'll need to build a comprehensive editorial schedule for creation and rollout. You may find it helps to build this plan around monthly themes to build your traffic for certain keywords

6. Customer Advocacy

Few things are as compelling as a customer who's bought your product or service and absolutely loves it. This is doubly important in a new market where your products and

services may be unknown and unproven. In the first 100 days, one of your key aims should be to identify key customer advocates and work with them to make that advocacy as visible and compelling as possible.

Your organisation will already have some early customers in the new market – they're likely to be one reason you decided to move into the market in the first place. Work with sales to bring those customers on board as advocates, drawing up a database of which customers are willing to participate in which activities. Some will be happy to do everything from video testimonials to accepting site visits from prospects, while others may only be happy to provide a quote for a press release or presentation.

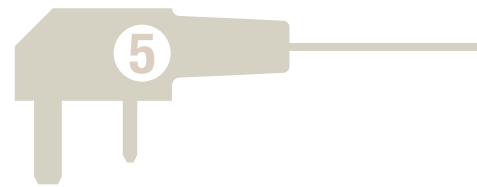
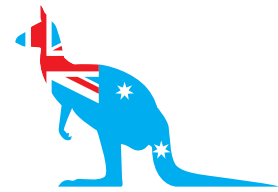
The key is to deploy each customer advocate in the way that has the maximum impact, without overburdening the customer with requests or over-exposing them to your target audience. That means looking for ways to re-use and re-purpose the customer testimonials you have before going back to the customer to ask for more. You may also want to start a local user group to get your customers talking, connecting and sharing best practice.

7. Fuel the Buzz

So far we've focused on marketing directly to your target audience in your new market, but you'll also want to create buzz around your brand by ensuring that key influencers know you've arrived and are primed to talk about you. There are many different types of influencers, and it pays to reach out to as many as you possibly can. Some key influencer types (some may fall into more than one of these categories) include fans, journalists, bloggers/tweeters/facebookers and industry analysts.

Your existing PR agency or agencies may be able to help if you're moving into a new industry or market segment, but if you're moving into a new geographical territory, you'll get the best results by appointing a local agency with strong links to press, analysts, bloggers and other influencers.

Once you have your agency support in place, work with them to identify the key influencers in your new target market and to draw up an influencer marketing plan. This should tie in with your content calendar, events calendar and any existing PR, AR and social media plans your organisation has in place. Best of luck!



Get the book

You can download the complete Marketo e-book 'The definitive guide to international market entry and expansion' free of charge at <http://bit.ly/Muvs3Y>. With lots of case studies and links to other marketing resources, it covers five steps for the first 100 days from establishing the current state of the nation to getting the right team and infrastructure in place planning and executing your go-to-market initiatives, monitoring, measuring and refining your marketing campaigns and closing the loop with HQ.

Handheld products from Sony, Kobo and Samsung are put through their paces this month, as Ian Campbell ponders the difference between e-readers, tablets and smartphones.

READING THE FUTURE



Since Amazon launched the Kindle in 2007, the electronic book, or eBook, has become an object of desire for consumers, disrupting the publishing world in the same way that MP3 players turned the music industry on its head. Physical book sales declined by 11 per cent in the first three months of 2012, the lowest since 2003, while eBook sales continue to grow. In the US, they have jumped 20 per cent since last year.

A number of manufacturers followed Amazon into the eReader market, including Sony and Kobo. The form factor has steadily evolved but stayed true to fundamentals that have made the eBook a success. First of all, they don't use backlit screens; they use E-Ink. Developed by an MIT spin-off company, it emulates the look of ink-on-paper with a soft contrast aesthetic that is much easier on the eye. The black type sits on a background that is a little greyer than a typical page but it works well.

E-Ink has a modest energy requirement, which means longer lasting batteries – a charge will typically last for several days. They mostly come with a USB connector for powering up off a computer rather than a plug. All this plays to the eReader's other big strength: they are lighter than an average paperback and thin enough to hold comfortably between thumb and forefinger.

On top of the basic specification is an array of different features at different price points. They range in price from €80 to €150. Entry-level models will be button controlled, both for accessing your books and turning pages. Pay €110 upwards and you get into touchscreen territory.

The newly launched Kindle Paperwhite comes with a built-in-light, for example, solving one of the caveats of an eReader compared to a tablet – you need to turn on a light to read in the dark. That said, one of the counter arguments in favour

of an eReader is that you can read them in bright sunlight, something you can't do with a tablet.

Other eReader options include models with QWERTY keyboards at the base of the device. Connectivity is important because it's how you get your books on to your device. Wifi is the standard route though you can also copy them direct from a computer via USB. Some devices have 3G which gives you another more mobile option.

All manufacturers support their products with vast online libraries where you can buy books as well as download some classics for free. There is a lot of discussion about which online bookstores do the best deal – it seems to vary by title – but you can take comfort knowing that eBooks are generally the same price or cheaper than traditional books. This wasn't always the case.

You can also use eReaders to download magazine and newspapers but not all these



services work in Ireland so check availability before buying. You can download and read texts as PDFs; some are compatible the EPUB eBook open standard, though not Kindle.

I tried out two six-inch touchscreen models, the **Kobo Touch (€110)** and the **Sony PRS-T1 Reader (€139)**. The Kobo is basic but adequate. Plugged into the computer, I quickly signed up to the online bookshop and downloaded my first title. A power slide button on the top and a single tab at the bottom for taking you back to the home page are the only interruptions to the minimal design.

The Sony is just as easy to get going and supplements the touchscreen with a small array of raised buttons beneath the

screen, including two arrows for turning pages that encourage single-handed use. It also comes bundled with a stylus that you can use for more detailed annotation.

The Sony touchscreen is much more responsive than the Kobo and by the time you get familiar with the extra features you start to think it might be worth paying the €30 premium. While both models let you pick a font and the size, only the Sony lets you pinch and zoom the text tablet-style.

As ever with consumer electronics, you have to decide what you want from a device. If you want a book and nothing else, then these eReaders are perfect. If you want more functionality, then it might be time to think about a tablet.

I tried out two six-inch touchscreen models, the Kobo Touch and the Sony PRS-T1 Reader.

Samsung Galaxy Note II

from €50 with contract

With this and the iPad mini, lines are blurring between smartphones, tablets and eReaders. Bigger than a typical phone but smaller than a tablet, the Note II has a sumptuous 5.5-inch display where colours and the detail jump off the screen. Running the upgraded Android 4.1.1 operating system with a zippy 1.6GHz quad-core processor, it's a fast and intuitive handheld computer.

Samsung is pitching it as a device for creation as well as consumption, including a stylus to push the point. The S Pen slips discretely into a bottom left slot and is Samsung's attempt to bring handwriting into the digital domain. It takes a bit of getting used to but works well, aided by a range of Samsung templates. When you hover the pen over an email, document or image, you can preview content without having to open it.

There's no doubting that Note II is an ingenious bit of kit, reminding us why Samsung is top of the tree in smartphone sales. The danger is that it's almost too smart. As a phone it's a little on the large side; as a mobile workstation, too small and fiddly. It works well with electronic books but the widescreen shape and the backlight make it less engaging than eReaders.

The point, however, is that the Note II does all of the above and much more – we haven't even mentioned the 8 megapixel rear-facing and 1.9 megapixel front-facing cameras. Anyone who spends a lot of time on the move and wants a single device that can support their entire digital life will not be disappointed.

Samsung is pitching it as a device for creation as well as consumption.



Lucille Redmond surveys a mixed bag of new titles that look at promoting your business, managing talent and protecting your ideas.

TALKING THE TALK

SHARING knowledge is the way of the future – none of that keeping your trade secrets close to your chest, according to John W Hayes, newspaperman turned advisor to entrepreneurs and author of *'Becoming THE Expert'*. Entrepreneurs can become business leaders by becoming thought-leaders, writes Hayes – experts who are happy to share detailed insights across a wide range of knowledge, and offer tips, tactics and strategies. Hayes gives an example to show that while it's not risk-free, this is actually a good strategy. Let's say you're a decorator, he suggests: you tell a customer what wallpaper and paste to buy and how to prepare the walls. Will you jeopardise your business by giving away the tricks of your trade?

"No way!" writes Hayes. "I'm going to pick up the phone and ask you to do it for me. Why? Because you've shown me you know what you are talking about and are not afraid to put your work under public scrutiny. In short, you are a thought leader, and I trust you to get the job done right."

To prove his point, Hayes lists a bunch of thought leaders: Ryanair's Michael O'Leary, marketer Seth Godin, the celebrity chef Jamie Oliver – all of whom use TV and books to promote their core businesses. Having laid out the ground, Hayes goes on to tell entrepreneurs how to do it: how to test whether they have what



it takes to be a thought leader, then to find their voice, and find their niche. He gives lots of useful tips, like using brand ambassadors and finding ghost-writers.

Then he turns to his own central expertise: the web. Every business worth its salt should have a blog, he writes; it places you at the centre of your community, Google loves a blog, and it will be picked up by social media, giving your business extra exposure.

The small but concentrated book covers book publishing (self-publishing and finding a commercial publisher), video, public talks, organising your own events and webinars and having a social media presence. *Becoming THE Expert* is chock-a-block with excellent tips on how to publicise your company by making yourself the go-to guy for information about your industry. Every entrepreneur should read this book.

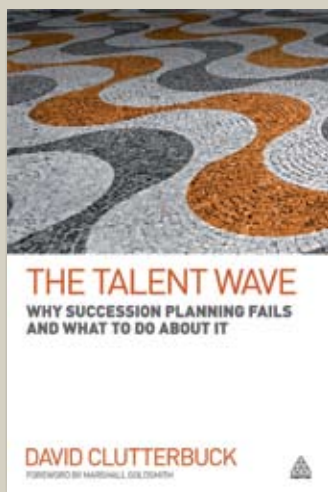
How do you hire, keep and plan for the succession of talented people? In a quote in *The Talent Wave*, mentoring maven David Clutterbuck gives a horrifying figure: US Global 100 companies mis-hire people 80% of the time, and mis-promote people 75% of the time.

Clutterbuck, a co-founder of the European Mentoring and Coaching Council, writes a classic business textbook with case studies boxed off to illustrate his points. This is worth careful study by any business owner aiming to bring new talent in or pass the reins to fresh management.

The intense business focus is valuable, but some of the most fascinating parts of Clutterbuck's book are the case studies, illustrating different types of succession planning. Take the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority in Britain. Its former head of HR David Reay says that they realised quickly that people do not want to work longer than three years in one job. But in such a specialised industry as nuclear, it was vital not to lose the rare skills that were their baseline for staff.

"We recognise that succession planning is not just leaders," Reay told Clutterbuck. "It's for everyone, and particularly everyone at critical pinch points in the business." Now, the NDA develops people to be ready for a succession challenge.

Different companies have different styles: Tetley (a subsidiary of India's Tata Group,



surprisingly, given its ee-bah-gum adverts) says its succession planning is bottom-up, not top-down: "We focus on talent, not on jobs," says Tetley's head of learning and development, Alison Jenks.

The Talent Wave will help executives to work out what kind of company they are running, and how to find the talent to work best in that model. Full of interesting questions, it should be in the briefcase for reading on upcoming journeys.

"Succession planning is not just leaders. It's for everyone, particularly everyone at critical pinch points in the business."

Journeys is the latest book on management development from the Irish author and consultant Enda Larkin.

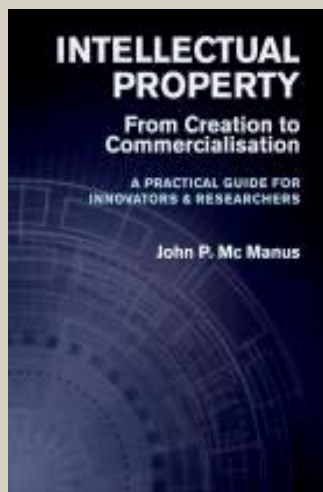
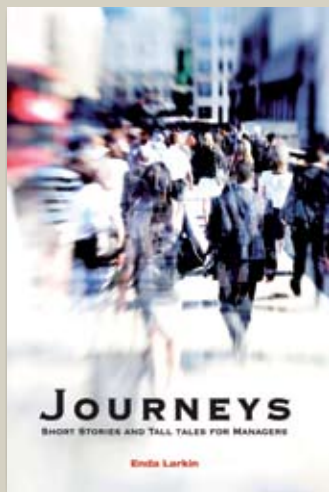
In one of the most powerful management stories in *Journeys*, Larkin describes how Heather Gardner, the new SVP at a major airline's HR department, had been brought in at a time of horrendous trouble. Bosses and workers were locked in a death-grip, with four disputes in two years. Heather laid out to a meeting of angry executives

the reasons for the dispute: the airline was a strongly traditional workplace, where creative executives were scolded and told to simply give their staff orders and expect to be obeyed, and where staff and management routinely referred to the other side as "them".

One line manager she'd talked to had given her some great suggestions – and when she asked why he didn't share them with his own manager, he told her: "I don't get paid from the neck up."

As she went down the ladder, the negativity got worse. In Larkin's telling, the bosses Heather was presenting to were becoming choleric at her description of their company. But having the truth spelled out was the beginning of the end of tit-for-tat rage in the airline; her piercing words opened the management to a new way of dealing with staff – and, it transpired, once the management opened up, so did the unions.

In Larkin's telling, the bosses Heather was presenting to were becoming choleric at her description of their company.



You've got a great idea – but how do you develop it while making sure it remains your property? John P McManus's *Intellectual Property* provides groundwork on how to commercialise your ideas.

This is a solid, workmanlike guide that will give readers a basic understanding of how intellectual property works, with some interesting case studies: Dunnes Stores vs Karen Millen, Monsanto vs Cargill, Ethicon vs United States Surgical Corp.

McManus explains how a researcher's idea becomes a commercial property, and step-by-step, how patents are searched to find that it is truly original, and then how a patent is planned and lodged. In this very technical book, he goes through all aspects of the process, from scientific research in universities – and the conflicts of interest that can arise when these results are patented – to how intellectual property is valued, and how this value is realised in commercialisation. It goes wider, with guides to protecting IP, assessing the most appropriate route to market and presenting your business case to investors.

Intellectual Property is in no way a light read, but it is a useful book for anyone with an original idea to patent, own and develop as a commercial reality.

Becoming THE Expert: Enhancing Your Business Reputation Through Thought Leadership Marketing

by John W Hayes, published by Harriman for Kindle

The Talent Wave: Why Succession Planning Fails, and What to Do About It

by David Clutterbuck, published by Kogan Page

Journeys: Short Stories and Tall Tales for Managers

by Enda Larkin, published by Oak Tree (also in Kindle)

Intellectual Property: From Creation to Commercialisation

by John P McManus, published by Oak Tree (also in Kindle)

Compiled by Enterprise Ireland's Information Centre team.

MARKET INTELLIGENCE

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

The centre subscribes to a wide range of databases, including

- Datamonitor Profiles
- Euromonitor Passports & Sectors
- Espicom
- Frost & Sullivan

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

ICT/SOFTWARE

US Tech Market Outlook Dims for 2012 to 2013: US Tech Spending Growth Will Maintain a Mediocre 4% to 5% Pace

Forrester

September 2012

In this report, Forrester has reduced its projections for US tech-market growth to 4.9% for 2012, with a similar downgrade for 2013 prospects. However, the report envisages business and government spending on new technologies such as cloud computing, smart computing and mobility to grow significantly faster than its overall forecast for the market.

Business Networks will Push the Cloud Beyond IT: The Evolution of Multitenancy in The Cloud is Enabling True Business Technology Innovation

Forrester

October 2012

Although today's CIOs value the flexibility and opex consumption model of cloud-based IT, multitenant computing architectures have really only contributed value in terms of IT

operations and cost reduction. But multitenancy has the potential to really change how enterprises interact with each other beyond cloud computing – to articulate trust relations and dramatically reduce manual effort in an unmatched way. This report introduces the concept of business networks and explores how the further development of multitenancy business models will soon enable the next generation of business innovation.

Smart Body, Smart World: Sensors, Algorithms, and Psychology will Power the Next Phase of Personal Computing

Forrester

October 2012

Sensor-laden devices (SLDs) seem niche today. It's hard for product strategists to quantify the value of the data that sensors capture, and the obstacles to seamless delivery of intelligent experiences are many. However, Forrester envisages the barriers to entering this market falling rapidly as smart product strategists piggyback on already-established mobile ecosystem infrastructure to

build compelling products and services. This report promises to define key scenarios and use cases for SLDs, explain how the "smart body, smart world" promise will become a reality, identify the key success factors of SLDs, analyse how and where these products create value, and describe the consequences of the smart body, smart world transformation in personal computing.

Global Tech Market Outlook 2012 To 2013: Economic Weakness Will Slow But Not Stop Growth

Forrester

September 2012

On a global basis, the European recession and weakening economic growth in the US, China, India, and Latin America will take a toll on tech market growth in 2012, leading to a downward revision in our global tech market forecast to 3.6% (from 5.4% in 2011) growth in local currencies. But only European firms are facing lower tech buying; elsewhere, we expect firms will grow their 2012 tech purchases — by 2% to 5% in North America and Japan and 7% to 9% in emerging markets. While risks of a worse economic picture exist, we expect economic policy makers will do enough to avoid a global financial crisis and recession, thus keeping tech buying in positive territory and setting the stage for stronger growth in 2013.

The State of Mobile Technology Adoption: A Benchmarking Guide for eBusiness Professionals

Forrester

October 2012

Mobile technology for both hardware and software is experiencing a frenetic pace of change. eBusiness professionals have procured the budgets they need to migrate existing digital services to the smaller screen,

but few are funding the bigger, longer-term opportunities associated with more sophisticated services. Evolving technologies such as HTML5, middleware platforms and tactics like responsive design have rescued eBusiness professionals to date by mitigating complexity and lowering costs. This report promises to assist eBusiness professionals in benchmarking their mobile technology offering against the wider industry.

Mobile Payments: Ringing the Changes

Datamonitor

September 2012

After much speculation, the mobile payments sector is finally beginning to take shape. It has branched into remote mobile payments, where handheld devices are used to enact online purchases, and proximity mobile payments, where a handheld device is used to enact a purchase in person at the POS. A third branch is now emerging involving mobile POS acceptance, with significant implications for the industry. This report provides an overview of the different types of mobile payment now emerging, the challenges they face, and key player case studies on some of the most high profile service launched to date.

Payment Card Competitor Tracker

Datamonitor

October 2012

The Payment Card Competitor Tracker provides expert analysis and opinion on the strategic moves of leading competitors in the payment card market. Produced on a monthly basis, the tracker is a global product and covers over 150 players, including American Express, Barclaycard, Capital One, Citigroup, Discover, GE Money, First Data, HSBC, JCB, MasterCard, Standard Chartered and Visa.

FOOD, REATIL AND CONSUMER PRODUCTS

Successes and Failures in Consumer Packaged Goods Innovation and Marketing in 2012

Datamonitor

October 2012

Effective innovation is difficult to come by, but it is the key to sustained competitive advantage in the consumer packaged goods (CPG) industry. This report compilation examines best-in-class examples of innovation and marketing - supported by consumer insight research - to drive success in this increasingly challenging environment.

Kitchen Manufacturers Industry Analysis, UK

Plimsoll Publishing

November 2012

This Plimsoll Analysis of UK kitchen manufacturers comes in two sections. One provides an individual analysis of each of the UK's top companies, including an overall financial rating and a valuation, plus a "future year" outlining the steps needed to improve its health and increase its value. The other section is a 100-page overview of the latest developments in the market, including a 10-year trend analysis, detailing changes in the market, a list of exceptional performers in over 15 categories and a breakdown of the industry's KPI's from sales growth to profitability.

Social Media Marketing

Keynote

October 2012

Despite the increasing impetus now put on social media marketing (SMM) by agencies, companies and brands alike, there is still much room for growth. The report argues that the majority of marketing agencies still depend on existing staff members to develop their own understanding of SMM, rather than employing a 'digital native' or out-of-house specialist social

media firm.

CLEANTECH, LIFE SCIENCE, CONSTRUCTION AND INDUSTRIAL

Energy Management Opportunities: European HEMS and BEMS Markets

Frost & Sullivan

August 2012

The European energy management market is growing, driven predominantly by EU legislation warranting implementation of smart metering technologies. According to this report, building energy management systems (BEMS) represent the larger product segment of the market, while home energy management systems (HEMs) contribute a smaller proportion, but greater growth. Moreover, the more nascent HEMS segment is concentrated in the United Kingdom, as opposed to BEMS, which has wide-spread reach across Europe.

Printed Electronics: The Global Market

BCC Research

March 2012

The global market for printed electronics totalled almost \$2.7 billion in 2010, nearly \$3.5 billion in 2011, and BCC estimates the market will be more than \$12.6 billion in 2016, a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 29.4% over the next five years. The scope of this report covers the global market (excluding military applications) for all types of printed electronics between 2010 and 2016.

Assessment of the Water and Wastewater Sector in the United Arab Emirates

Frost & Sullivan

May 2012

According to Frost & Sullivan, the water and wastewater sector in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) is expected to grow in the coming years, mainly due to urbanisation and

increasing population growth in the country. With huge infrastructure development all over the country and increasing participation and investments from the private sector in desalination and other wastewater projects, the sector is expected to be in the growth stage for the next five years.

Impact of LIFT and P21 on Healthcare Construction Market Report, UK 2012-2016

AMA Research

May 2012

This report reviews the future of key construction programmes and procurement routes under the new NHS structure, focusing on government reform of the NHS, analysis of the new operating structure, implications of the Health & Social Care Act 2012 for the construction industry, etc.

Biosimilars

BCC

May 2012

According to this technical market research report, the global demand for biosimilars totalled nearly \$2.5 billion in 2011 and should reach \$3.6 billion in 2016, a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 7.7% over the five-year period. The expiry of patents of the first-generation biologic drugs has opened up a new market opportunity to develop biosimilars, drugs based on the extensive scientific and clinical learning available from long experience with the original products. But this new opportunity also brings significant scientific as well as regulatory challenges.

Global Market for Animal Therapeutics and Diagnostics

BCC

May 2012

The animal health sector is dominated by large numbers of products with small revenues. Although there are hundreds

of products, only about 30 have sales exceeding \$100 million per year. The fastest growing therapeutic categories are in the area of companion animals, specifically in the arthritis and pain segments of the market. This report focuses on providing the reader with an understanding of trends in the industry, market segments, market forecasts, leading players, market drivers and inhibitors.

Mergers, Acquisitions and Strategic Alliances in Healthcare IT

Frost & Sullivan

May 2012

The scope of this short issue-based research service is to provide a top-level picture of the various mergers and acquisitions in the healthcare IT sector in Europe, with a focus on merger and acquisition trends with respect to Healthcare IT companies as well as information technology software and solution providers, focussing on specific segments in the healthcare IT sector.

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

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

An update on customs compliance, trade regulations and negotiations

TRADE REGULATIONS, INFORMATION AND NEGOTIATIONS

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

European Commission publishes the Single Market Act II

In the run-up to the 20th Anniversary of the Single Market, this October, the European Commission published the Single Market Act II, setting out a number of proposals to improve the way that the single market works and adapt it to new ways of doing business. Specifically, with the Single Market Act II Brussels is calling for action to further develop transport and energy infrastructure across the EU; reforms to support the digital economy and promote the mobility of citizens and businesses across borders and action to strengthen social entrepreneurship, cohesion and consumer confidence.

AEOs to benefit from favourable US security inspections and controls

The European Commission has published an information note outlining practical steps that Authorised Economic Operators (AEOs) holding the AEO(S) or AEO(F) certification can take to benefit

from favourable customs inspection and control treatment when entering the US.

The recent decision of the US-EU Joint Customs Cooperation Committee concerning the mutual recognition of the US's C-TPAT and EU's AEO programmes allows certified trusted traders to be favourably considered when risk assessments are made concerning the need or otherwise for security inspections and controls. This favourable treatment is expected to lower costs, allow for simplified procedures and also increase the predictability of transatlantic business activity.

In order to prepare for the practical implementation of mutual recognition procedures, AEOs need to link their EORI (Economic Operators Registration and Identification) number to a MID (Manufacturer's Identification) number issued by the US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) authorities. AEOs can now register their EORI number and organise its association with their MID number via a new web application which the CBP has recently launched.

Ireland to have key role in helping Europe overhaul 'outdated' data rules

Speaking in Dublin this September, European Commission Vice-President, Viviane Reding, said that Ireland would have a key role in negotiations aimed at establishing one single set of data protection rules for Europe. Responding to developments in the use of the internet for social and business needs, the Commission has proposed an overhaul of EU data protection rules. Given that Ireland is home to many tech giants and also takes over the six-month stewardship of the European Union in January 2013, the country will have a key role in these talks, Vice-President Reding said.

B2B products to be targeted with next phase of the Ecodesign directive

In addition to the 13 existing and 20 forthcoming ecodesign measures for products, over the next two years the European Commission will adopt measures for business-to-business (B2B) products. There are also plans to include 'energy-related' products in the ecodesign strategy: products which do not directly use energy themselves, but promote energy saving.

The Ecodesign Directive provides consistent EU-wide rules for improving the environmental performance of energy-related products. To date it has mainly addressed consumer products such as washing machines, standby power use and light bulbs, but the next phase will address B2B product groups, for example, electricity transformers, professional refrigeration equipment, commercial ventilation systems, and metal and wood-working manufacturing tools.

Reduced import duties with Russia's WTO accession

After 18 years of negotiations, Russia has officially joined the World Trade Organisation (WTO.) The impact for Irish exporters will include a reduction in import duties from a current average of 10% to an average of 7.8%.

In some areas, such as the automotive sector, the import duty reductions are more significant (decreasing from currently 30% to 25% upon accession and to 15% after seven years). Meanwhile, in the telecommunications sector, Russia will phase out its current equity caps (49%) for foreign investors within four years.

Other areas of progress include agreement on customs procedures, the use of health and sanitary measures, technical standards and the protection of intellectual property. It is estimated that the overall tariff reduction will result in savings of €2.5 billion annually in import duties for EU exporters. Furthermore, the reduced tariffs are estimated to stimulate €3.9 billion of additional EU exports to Russia per year.

EU launches public consultation on reduced VAT rates

Citizens, businesses and other stakeholders are being asked for their opinion on certain reduced VAT rates, in a public consultation launched by the Commission this October. They are also being asked to consider what a change in EU rules in this area might imply. The consultation is part of the wider work being done to fundamentally reform the EU VAT system, in order to make it simpler, more efficient and more robust. It will run until January 3, 2013.

Business travel to Africa set to boom

Greater political stability and a well-established wealth of natural resources are fuelling an unprecedented rise in business travel across Africa according to Hogg Robinson Group (HRG), an international corporate travel and expense management company. South Africa's status as the dominant business travel market in the region is facing an increasing challenge from a number of rapidly emerging economies, in particular Nigeria, Ghana, and Kenya, the company says.

According to the most recent economic indicators, Africa accounts for seven of the world's fastest growing economies. Ghana's economy alone grew by more than 14% in 2011 and is tipped for strong growth in 2012. Meanwhile, some industry analysts predict that Nigeria will overtake South Africa as the leading African economy within the next five to ten years.

While natural resources remain a significant draw for multinational organisations, a more general relaxation of government restrictions on foreign investment has led to greater development in a number of sectors, including infrastructure, telecommunications and agriculture.

"After decades of sluggish progress, Africa is emerging as a focal point for international investment – growth in some countries is even outpacing the BRIC nations," HRG's Manager for Regional Business & Partner Management, Africa, Chris Schuitmaker, said.

He adds that South African Airways is placing renewed focus on the regional market and has just cancelled the Cape Town/London route to make more aircraft available on other Africa routings, specifically to Accra, Lagos, Abidjan and Brazzaville. The number of low-cost carriers operating in the region is also increasing, albeit from a relatively low base.

HRG's most recent hotel survey found hotel rates in the Nigerian capital Lagos are the second most expensive in the world for business travellers. For the eighth year in a row, room rates in Moscow were far and away the highest of any destination monitored by HRG. However, Lagos emerged as the second most expensive destination due to the high volume of inbound business travel connected with the oil industry. Travellers to Lagos are also conscious of the city's well-documented security issues and are more inclined to stay in five-star accommodation, HRG said.



Shannon-Chicago service for summer 2013

United Airlines is to launch a five-times-weekly non-stop service between Shannon and its Chicago hub, O'Hare International Airport, during the period June 7 to August 27, 2013, subject to government approval. The Shannon-Chicago flight, UA67, will depart Shannon at 11:00 am daily (except Wednesday and Thursday), arriving in Chicago at 1:05 pm the same day. The return flight, UA66, will depart Chicago at 6:00 pm daily (except Tuesday and Wednesday), arriving in Shannon at 7:30 am the following day.

Ryanair increases services to Brussels, London and Poland with winter schedule

Marking Ireland's upcoming six-month Presidency of the Council of the EU, which will commence on January 1, 2013, Ryanair is to provide an additional daily return flight between Brussels Charleroi and Dublin from November 7, 2012.

The airline has also announced five new routes from Cork to Gdansk, Krakow, Warsaw, Wroclaw and Vilnius from November 2012, and a new Dublin-to-Lublin service starting on December 18.

Meanwhile businesses in the south-west will benefit as the airline increases its service linking Kerry and London Stansted from three return flights per week to a daily return flight from November 7, 2012.

Flight delays on the up at Heathrow

If you're hoping to get to London on time, then Heathrow might not be your best bet. The airport, which is currently running at close to full capacity, recorded the lowest on-time percentage among the UK's 10 major airports over the period between April and June 2012, with only 73 per cent of flights arriving punctually. Heathrow's average delay was 14 minutes, up from 12 minutes last year, according to the report by the UK Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). City Airport recorded the highest level of punctuality of the 10 UK airports, with 88 per cent of flights coming in on time.

UK proposals to impose new charge on foreign lorries

In a move to boost its haulier industry, the UK government has launched a proposal to introduce a new charge on foreign lorries using British roads. The move could see hauliers coming from abroad and travelling in the UK charged up to £1,000 annually.

Emirates increases flights to the Philippines, Indonesia and Malaysia

From this December, Emirates is to increase its services to the Philippines, Indonesia and Malaysia. Meanwhile, Indonesia's Lion Air is to launch a joint venture airline with Malaysia's National Aerospace and Defence Industries, operating under the name Malindo Airways. The new carrier, which will be based in Kuala Lumpur, will initially serve routes up to four hours from KL.

**FROM THE AIRPORT
TO THE CITY:**

International visitors arrive into Pearson International Airport. Taxis, obviously, service the airport-to-city route, but the most economically efficient method (if not the quickest) is by Pacific Western Airport Express buses, which drop off passengers at many downtown hotels. The journey takes less than 50 minutes and costs up to \$17 (single) or \$30 (return).

SLEEP:

1st Choice: Four Seasons Hotel Toronto has just opened its doors in the exclusive Yorkville neighbourhood. If you want luxury that's also minutes away from the downtown business district, then here's the place. www.fourseasons.com/toronto/

2nd Choice: Best Western Plus Executive Inn, 38 Estate Drive, is located in the East Business District, which is a short distance from downtown. Rooms have fridges and microwaves, and the hotel also offers fitness facilities and free Wi-Fi. www.bestwesternontario.com

EAT:

Lunch: Bistro & Bakery Thuet, 609 King Street W (at Portland Street), is a quality eatery overseen by acclaimed chef Marc Thuet, who delivers generous portions of Gallic atmosphere, artisan breads, toothsome main courses and gorgeous desserts - as well as, quite likely, the best coffee in town. www.thuet.ca

Dinner: Mixing modernity with tradition, the formal, elegant Chiado, 864 College Street (at Ossington Avenue)

CITY GUIDE**TORONTO**

By Tony Clayton-Lea

With a population of just over 2.5 million, Toronto is the largest city in Canada and the provincial capital of Ontario. It is also Canada's commercial capital, one of the world's primary financial centres, home to the Toronto Stock Exchange (the world's seventh largest in terms of market value), and contains more corporate headquarters than any other Canadian city.

According to *Forbes* magazine, Toronto is the 10th-most economically powerful city in the world and one of the fastest growing among the G7 nations. Despite the economic pedigree, its residents know how to relax, as proven by the amount of restaurants, bars and attractions operating in the city.

sees business people blend with young couples in the mutual enjoyment of experiencing the best fish dishes in the city. Prepare to be impressed, also, by the wine list, which really has something for everyone. www.chiadorerestaurant.ca

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

Views: If you have a head for heights and an appreciation of genuinely awesome views, then a visit to Toronto's CN Tower is a must. Pluck up the courage to get to the Sky Pod, which is at a height of 447m (1,467ft). On windy days, you can feel the tower sway.

Shopping: Recognised as one of the world's best food markets, the St Lawrence Market, 92 Front Street E (at Jarvis Street), is also one of the oldest (it's been trading for over 200 years). No matter what your foodie favourite is you'll find it here, including items you possibly knew never existed.

Museum: The Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art (MOCCA), 952 Queen Street W (at Shaw Street) features regularly alternating exhibitions that draw on a wide range of disciplines and styles. www.mocca.toronto.on.ca

[According to *Forbes* magazine, Toronto is the 10th-most economically powerful city in the world and one of the fastest growing among the G7 nations.](#)

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