



Cream Of The Crop

Terry Clune of Taxback.com faces stiff competition for this year's Entrepreneur Of The Year awards. **JOHN KINSELLA** profiles the finalists in the three categories

INTERNATIONAL

John Power Aerogen

John Power set up Cerus Medical in 1997. Cerus merged with San Francisco outfit Aerogen in 2000 and was subsequently acquired by US firm Nektar Therapeutics. Aerogen completed a MBO in 2007 with Power now the firm's managing director. Last year turnover increased by 60% and sales this year will be around €10m. The company has 36 staff.



a rubber floor cover for use on concrete slabs in cattle sheds. The Ballinasloe firm also makes rubber products for the equine, agricultural and construction sectors. Easyfix rubber products are sold in 23 countries, generating annual sales of €9m. The company employs 22 people and exports accounted for 22% of the turnover in 2008.



Cathal Gaffney Brown Bag Films

Cathal Gaffney founded Brown Bag Films with Darragh O'Connell in 1994. The company makes animated short films and television series, and commercials. The firm employs 50 staff with a turnover of almost €9m and offices in Dublin and Toronto. Elements of larger productions are outsourced to studios in Seoul and Mumbai.



Hugh O'Donnell Kentz

Hugh O'Donnell has been managing director of global engineering giant Kentz since 2000, having joined the firm as a project engineer in 1991. O'Donnell has a small shareholding in the group, which listed on AIM in 2008. The company specialises in engineering, construction and management services for the oil and gas, petrochemical and mining and metals sectors. With annual turnover of \$640m and 10,500 employees, Kentz is by far the largest concern among the finalists. But is O'Donnell an entrepreneur or a manager?



Tony Convery CDE

Tony Convery established CDE in 1993. Based in Co Tyrone, CDE designs and manufactures equipment for the sand, wastewater, materials handling and quarrying industries. The firm has trading entities in Qatar, Emirates, Asia and Poland, with 90% of turnover generated overseas. CDE directly employs 100 people.



Orla Kiely & Dermott Rowan Kiely Rowan

Designer Kiely and her husband Rowan design and produce bags, clothing, bedding and towelling, along with a variety of licensed products including furniture, luggage, stationary, wallpaper and candles. Based in London, the Ireland link is tenuous at this stage. Kiely's brand is stocked in 33 countries and the couple have stores in London, Tokyo and Hong Kong.



Barry McCleary Megazyme

Barry McCleary founded Megazyme in Sydney in 1988 before relocating the firm to Bray in 1996. Megazyme provides test kits and reagents to allow the measurement of compounds such as sugar and starches that affect food quality. In 2008, sales increased by 25% and the company employs 23 people. Megazyme exports 98% of its products to over 40 countries, either directly or through a network of distributors.



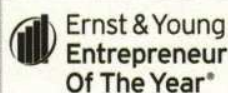
Kevin O'Leary Qumas

Kevin O'Leary founded Qumas in Cork 1994. The firm is a provider of regulatory compliance solutions to companies in the life sciences and financial sectors. Over 80% of Qumas clients are based in America.



Michael Earls Easyfix

Michael Earls established Easyfix in 1997 to manufacture



The Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year awards ceremony takes place in Dublin on October 22. There are three category awards and one overall award. The event will be televised that evening on RTE1.

INDUSTRY

John Flahavan
E Flahavan & Sons

John Flahavan owns this family firm which has been on the go in one form or another for centuries. The Flahavan mill is the country's only remaining oat mill, the base for numerous oat-based consumer products such as porridge and muesli. The company employs 50 people.



Vincent Carton
Carton Group

Vincent Carton runs Cavan-based chicken processing company Carton Group with his brother Justin. The firm has been in the Carton family since 1775. Carton employs 640 people and has annual turnover of €165m. Carton Group slaughters 600,000 birds every week. Seven out of eight chicken legs are exported, mostly to Eastern Europe.



Philip Morrow
PRM Group

In 1998 Philip Morrow established PRM, a chilled distribution business located in Lisburn. Group activities now span haulage, logistics and manufacturing and PRM provides a route to market for national, local Irish and private label brands. PRM had turnover of €98m in 2008, and handled 13 million cases of chilled products to its customer base throughout Ireland from over 40



manufacturing/brand owner partners.

Cathal O'Connell
Paddywagon Tours

Cathal O'Connell founded Paddywagon Tours in Dublin in 1998. The company provides all-island bus tours, catering for around 90,000 tourists every year, mainly 18-35 year olds. The company also operates hostels in Dublin, Cork, Killarney, Derry, Belfast and Dingle peninsula. The company employs 50 people and has a fleet of 20 Mercedes coaches.



Liam Queally
Irish Dog Foods

The Queally family bought Irish Dog Foods in 2002 and managing director Liam Queally has built the company into a major player in the Irish and international market with turnover growing from €3m in 2002 to €25m in 2008. The firm provides dry, wet single serve and pet treat products.



Paul Fitzpatrick
Fitzpatrick Design Collection

From the celebrated hotel family, Paul Fitzpatrick went out on his own in 2001 with The Morgan and The Beacon hotels in Dublin. In 2007, Fitzpatrick purchased the USIT building behind The Morgan in



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Temple Bar and added a further 55 bedrooms, long stay apartments and meeting rooms. The company's turnover in 2008 was €12m and it employs 120 staff.



Terry Clune
Taxback.com
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Brendan Roantree
Zed Candy

Brendan Roantree founded Zed Candy in 1998 with Donal Kavanagh. In 2001 Zed bought Leaf Ireland's chewing gum factory in Kilcock, and went on to purchase Fizz Bombs (UK) in 2003, Tilleys Sweets (UK) in 2005 and Oatfield Sweets (Donegal) in 2006. Roantree made a huge gain when he sold the Kilcock land and buildings for development and the top of the property market in 2006. Zed then set up a new manufacturing unit in China and turnover last year was €29m.



EMERGING

Owen Cooke
The Pallet Network

Owen Cooke founded The Pallet Network in 2004, having previously set up Independent Express Cargo in 1984. Blanchardstown-based TPN is a distributor of palletised freight and provides a UK export/import service.



Declan Gallagher
Oilean Glas Teo

Founded by Declan Gallagher in 2005, Donegal firm OGT harvests and extracts

nutrients from seaweed which is used in fertiliser. It is sold to fruit and vegetable growers and golf courses and sports fields. The company has 15 full-time and ten part-time employees. Eighty per cent of production is exported to plant growers and golf courses in Europe and North America.



James Sheehan
Surecom Network Solutions

Tipperary-based Surecom NS was established in 2005 by Jim Sheehan and his wife Breda. The company, which employs 50 staff, provides engineering services and solutions to telecoms companies, mainly in Ireland.



Triona Campbell
CR Entertainment

Triona Campbell founded CR Entertainment in 2008, having previously established Campbell Ryan Productions in 2001. The company creates and distributes digital content such as Sofia's Diary, a big hit in the UK. In Ireland, Aisling's Diary has also done well.



Mike Fitzgerald
Altobridge

Founded by Mike Fitzgerald in 2002, Altobridge technologies enable mobile network operators in emerging markets to deliver financially viable services in remote communities. The Kerry firm also played a



part in the establishment of Blue Ocean Wireless, which has a big future in providing mobile communications over satellite for the aeronautical and maritime industries.

Ed Murphy & Michael Kearney
Home Instead

Murphy and Kearney are franchise veterans, having overseen the growth of the Snap Printing franchise in Ireland. Home Instead is in the business of providing, though a franchise model, home care for the elderly. Murphy and Kearney acquired the franchise rights for Ireland in 2005 and Home Instead Senior Care now has 15 franchised offices around the country. Group revenues in 2008 exceeded €15m.



Tommy Griffith
PEL Recycling

PEL Recycling was founded by Tommy Griffith in 2005. The company operates from Balla, Co Mayo and is one of Ireland's leading manufacturers of waste reduction equipment, including bottle crushers and cardboard and plastic balers. PEL employs 11 people.



Howard Beggs
Helix Health

Howard Beggs founded Helix Health in 2007. The Dublin firm is behind software which assists the activities of healthcare professionals. Helix's software is used by around 2,000 GPs and 1,000 retail pharmacies. The company employs 98 people.

