

on the GRAPPEVINE

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Any other business...



'LaunchFair' co-founders Peter Duffy, Robbie Skuse, and David Hardwicke, who hosted a lively business event on Monday.

Network with a 'snazzy' twist

Some 300 of Cork's top tech enthusiasts gathered for a 'networking conference with a twist' in city centre nightlife venue, Voodoo Rooms. The event brought together a mix of talented students, graduates and working professionals. The twist? Well, out go the stuffed suits, in comes the rock 'n' roll. Exhibitors vied for attendees' attention from atop whiskey barrels, instead of from conferencing tables. House music, rather than a PA system, was the background track to the

"snazzy" night.

LaunchFair co-founders, Peter Duffy, Robbie Skuse, and David Hardwicke, say they drew inspiration both from UCC's vibrant Entrepreneurial and Social (E&S) society, and from the energy and informality that characterises the Irish start-up community. They hand-picked 20 booming technology companies, all of which are recruiting young, talented students, graduates and professionals.

www.LaunchFair.com

Consumer optimism

Irish people are more confident in the economy, looking ahead, than they have been at any time since the boom years, according to new research by Behaviour & Attitudes.

The number of adults who agree that the economy will improve during the oncoming year has risen by 6% points, to 33%

overall, versus the same period last year. Just one in four (26%) feels that the economy will be worse off in one year's time, down 8% points.

However, the gap in sentiment between Dublin and elsewhere has widened this wave, which highlights a potential two-tier recovery.

Relaunch of Classic to create 50 new jobs

Ambitious young publicans, Phil Ryan and Eamon Walsh, expect to create 50 jobs by giving a new lease of life to The Classic bar on South Main Street, Cork. The €1m redevelopment of the bar and nightclub will take a few months, but work has started and the first phase is due to be open in mid-May.



Publicans Phil Ryan and Eamon Walsh.

Mr Ryan is the former manager of Voodoo Rooms, Sober Lane, An Bróg and Barbarossa. Mr Walsh is an event manager. Mr Ryan said: "We are looking forward to our new venture. We believe there is a gap in the market, especially for the over 23-year-old demographic, so our goal and efforts are to bring something new and exciting to the city."

"We are investing heavily in this venture, such is our belief that through our experience we can bring something very special to Cork's social scene. We have some great plans and will put a huge emphasis on food served until late, followed by live music and DJs, ideal for big-group nights out. The feedback and support we've had suggest that there is a huge appetite for a venue just like we've planned."

Managers spend all day on chores, and far too little time managing

BUSINESSES that fail to create 'active' managers are missing out on a huge opportunity to boost productivity, says Brendan Cahill, of business consultants, BearingPoint.

Mr Cahill is the author of a report entitled 'Walking the walk: making front-line managers successful', which gathers the views of more than 10,000 front-line managers in 40 blue-chip companies. They spend as little as 25% of their time managing, versus 35% of their time on administrative tasks.

The report was produced by the BearingPoint Institute, the research arm of management and technology consultancy, BearingPoint.

The big loss for companies is the missed opportunity to boost productivity. With front-line managers accounting for 10% of total workforce in many companies, 90% of staff are under-performing, due to diminished team leadership.

"Too many front-line managers are doing things like sitting around opening emails, when they should be providing guidance and assistance to their team," says Mr Cahill.

"The big challenge for most front-line managers is to find out what their shirt is, and what they should be looking to achieve."

"Very often, people are promoted into front-line manager roles because they were good engineers, or good journalists, but that does not make them the best-equipped to be team leaders. They then go on and learn how to manage from their peers, but they've also most likely taught themselves."

"As a result, you get a dumbing down of the management function in the business."

"Of course, there are always exceptional people who are just born leaders, but



Brendan Cahill, BearingPoint partner and author of a study which found that managers spend as little as 25% of their time managing, versus 35% of their time on admin tasks.

"Successful businesses are those that optimise productivity. Front-line managers who are actively managing have the potential to unlock substantial, recurring operational improvements within their teams. This is an opportunity that is largely ignored in most organisations."

"Active management is the coaching, guidance and support of staff in the effective performance of their day-to-day roles. In our study, we discovered that transforming under-performing managers into active managers typically achieves performance gains of up to 30% within teams in a matter of months," says Mr Cahill.

He says that, over the past decade, the role of the front-line manager has evolved.

Front-line managers are now required to be active participants in the success of the company, enabling staff to innovate and deliver both incremental and stepped gains.

He says people often become bogged down in administration and other non-value-adding activities, which obstruct their ability to support their teams to deliver performance improvements.

In many organisations, spans of control have been increased, further adding to their managers' daily low-value work burden.

For most businesses, this represents a massive, previously untapped opportunity to realise improvement that can directly impact their bottom lines.

they are rare. The key is to equip managers to do the job that they're supposed to be doing — guiding and leading their teams."

Mr Cahill has been helping companies for more than a decade to resolve this issue, and says they are always surprised that overall productivity rises by 10-15% once he has worked with their front-line managers.

Mr Cahill's premise is that a front-line manager should spend 60% of his/her time leading the team.

Too often, managers do things themselves, rather than building skills within the team.

In his experience, the most successful companies are those with 'active' managers, team leaders who fully understand their function.

Ted Dwyer receives lifetime award

City Life: Wealth Advisors founding director, Ted Dwyer, was presented with the lifetime achievement award at the Irish Brokers' Association's Life Pension & Investment (LPI) Awards in the Mansion House, Dublin.

Some 530 financial services professionals attended the prestigious event, which recognises the professionalism and expertise of brokers. Mr Dwyer founded City Life in 1971. In Cork, and co-founded City Life Galway, in 2011. His son, Eamon, now runs the business.

Ted Dwyer said: "It is a great honour to be the recipient of this industry award. There have been many changes in our industry over my time in it, but it is also true that the more things change the more they seem to remain the same."

"When I started in the business, my work was about helping young people to save some money to buy a home, and then for college fees for their children. The next step



Ted Dwyer making his speech for his Lifetime Achievement Award at the Irish Brokers Association's Awards in Dublin.

was to protect the young couple with life-and-illness insurance, in case they died too early or were unable to continue to work and fulfil their dreams themselves. The final stage was to help them to plan and save for their retirement. So, as you can see, really nothing much has changed."

Under Ted Dwyer's

leadership, despite the horrendous economic crash since 2008, City Life has thrived, and has steered through the recession, maximising the financial situation with clients. A past president of the Life Insurance Association of Ireland, Ted has been a regular qualifier for the (top of) the Million Dollar Round Table,

the premier association of financial professionals internationally, whose members demonstrate exceptional professional knowledge, strict ethical conduct and outstanding client service. Ted is also co-developer of Faithlegg Golf Club in Waterford, and is a former chairman of Euro-style (golfwear).

Murphy prepares programme of activities as new PRCA chair

Sharon Murphy has been elected chairman of the Public Relations Consultants' Association (PRCA).

A director of Wilson Hartnell, she has spent the past 16 years in consumer and brand PR, for FMCG, retail, energy, telecommunications, banking and insurance companies.

She said: "The PR industry is experiencing strong growth, with many member firms continuously recruiting and expanding the service offering, so the outlook for the future is optimistic."

"Along with my colleagues on the board, I look forward to developing and implementing a programme of activity that is focused on the advancement of the profession in Ireland."

A native of Cork, she holds a BA in social science from UCD, specialising in social research. She holds an MA in PR from DIT, a diploma in strategic management from University of Cam-



Sharon Murphy, chair of the PR Consultants' Association.

bridge and a certificate in social media from the PR Institute of Ireland. She joined the board of the PRCA in 2012.

The PRCA is the trade association for Irish consultancies in public relations. It encourages the highest attainable professional standards in its members, the association acts as an advocate for the PR industry. Membership of the Association requires public relations firms to meet strict entry criteria.

Top venue to create 80 new jobs

Owners of a 30,000 square foot, multi-level food-and-drink emporium in Maynooth, Co Kildare, have 80 vacancies to fill.

The jobs at the former Mantra will include management, administration, bar, cocktail, front-of-house, and promotional staff, and chefs, kitchen staff, waiters, security,

cleaners, DJs and entertainers. A consortium of Irish investors bought the venue from receivers late

last year; now, the original owner, Darryl Kavanagh, is back at the helm with his old team.

"My sole focus will be to return the business to be the best entertainment complex in the country, and reintroduce the high standards that it had," said Darryl Kavanagh.

"The venue will be gutted, refitted and re-branded, and will reopen with 8,000 sq ft of tropical gardens," he said.

Jane takes Dublin Fringe job

Jane Russell has been named marketing and development manager with Tiger Dublin Fringe, the arts festival that will stage its 21st edition from September 7 to 20.

She was CEO of the Sky Cat Laughs Comedy Festival and festival producer for Kilkenny Economics Festival. She also managed her own freelance PR consultancy, Pepper PR, building on her earlier background in agency corporate communications, working with clients such as Hewlett Packard and AOL.

She said: "Tiger Dublin Fringe is one of the most innovative and creative festivals in the country; I'm excited to join such a great team and am looking forward to the challenges of working on one of Ireland's foremost cultural events."

Tiger Dublin Fringe artistic director and CEO, Kris Nelson, said: "Jane was instrumental in the Sky Cat Laughs Festival's successes, bringing on

board key sponsors and partners, all the while maintaining an excellent artistic event that means a great deal to audiences." As part of its 21st anniversary events, the festival team gathered 21-year-old fans, audience members, adventurers, buzzers, artists, dancers, workers, theatre goers, clubbers and giggers. It is expected that some of those who responded to a call-out in January will play a part in this year's festival.



Jane Russell, new role with Tiger Dublin Fringe.



Information & Communications Technology

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Peter Morehead, Irish Distillers production director, has been named group operations director of Pernod Ricard. He starts his new role in April, based at global headquarters in Paris. He joined Irish Distillers as GM of Midleton Distillery, in 1996, then head of bottling operations in 2006. He became production director for Irish Distillers in 2008. He has overseen a significant expansion of the distillery in Midleton, including, most recently, the construction of a new distillery and warehousing, in a €200m investment programme. He holds a degree in dairy science from UCC. He is a member of CIMAA, and founding chairman of the Irish Whiskey Association.



Michael Cullen, CEO of Investec Ireland, has been named a non-executive director of the Irish Stock Exchange. He brings vast experience to the ISE board, as an Investec director and as a former director of Gandon Securities, Woodchester Investments and Aviva Ireland. He qualified as a chartered accountant with PwC, and is a graduate of UCD, with a masters in business studies. Investec operates a specialist bank and wealth management business and is an ISE shareholder. It employs 230 people in Ireland and incorporates the former businesses of Gandon Capital Markets and NCB, which was one of the founding shareholders of the ISE.



Lynda McQuaid is TV3 Group's new director of content, and will replace Jeff Ford who is to return to the UK. A Dundalk native, she oversees shows such as *The Apprentice*, *MasterChef*, *The Voice* and *You're a Star*. She has had eight IFTA nominations and two IFTA awards. She has worked with Granada Television on shows such as *Stars in Their Eyes*, *You've Been Framed!* and *This Morning*; she was also Granada's launch producer for the newly formed ITV2. She has worked with the BBC, producing Peter Kay on *The Sunday Show*. Most recently, she has worked as executive producer for CBBC, in Media City, and with Communicorp, in Dublin.



Marvin Sanderson has been appointed chief technology officer with Xanadu, a technology service provider to the online sports trading market, and will oversee the roll out of new developments to the betting exchange for a number of clients, including Matchbook.com and best-odds, high-limits sportsbook, 3ET. He brings 12 years' experience in global roles in the tech sector, and has extensive expertise in the development and implementation of technology projects. Xanadu was founded in 2011, originally with eight employees, and now has 120 employees.



Liam Maddock, a native of Kilkenny and now based in west Cork, is the new engineering team lead at Firebird Heating Solutions. He brings 14 years' experience in engineering, having worked in the oil/gas, pharmaceutical and project management industries, supervising and leading a wide variety of projects. Responsible for engineering and technical guidance, he will also be in charge of Firebirds' BER A3-rated heating solution, as well as client liaison. He is a CIT electrical engineering graduate. The Cork-based company is celebrating 35 years in business this year and has recently been rated No1 in Europe for boiler efficiency.



Michael Tannam has been appointed as project manager with Irish corporate signage company Gaelite Signs. He joins from Dolan Brothers Joinery where he was project manager, and over his 35-year career delivered hundreds of shop-fitting projects for clients such as Spar, Eurospar and Mace outlets for BWG Foods. In his career, he has also delivered a host of key projects abroad over the years, including the American Ambassador's Residence in Moscow and the Arbat Irish House in Moscow. He holds a HDip in Art in Industry and Commerce from Rathmines College.