

Entrepreneur Experience Seasoned Entrepreneurs 2024



JIM BARRY is the Managing Director of Barry Group, one of Ireland's most respected wholesale distribution groups. The company employs over 240 people at its state-of-the-art headquarters in Mallow, Co. Cork. Under Jim's vision and leadership, Barry Group has grown from a once local business to a leading wholesale distribution company. Trading both nationally and internationally and supplying over 1,000 customers, Barry Group manages 270 franchises under the Costcutter, Carry Out Off Licence, and Quik Pick symbols. Jim was listed as a finalist in the EY, Entrepreneur of the Year awards in 2010. Barry Group has been listed as one of Deloitte's Best Managed Companies on numerous occasions along with multiple awards recognising the company at Great Place To Work. Jim was honoured to be named 'Ireland's Most Trusted Leader' at the 2015 Great Place To Work Awards.



MARK BROSINAN, CEO & Co-founder, Getvisibility, has a track record in building SaaS and enterprise-based product companies. Mark has extensive experience in developing, deploying and operating enterprise grade software platforms. Mark spent 9 years as CEO of Xanadu, which builds and supports highly sophisticated, highly transactional data driven platforms, utilising AI and advanced analytics. Mark has a keen understanding of what it takes to build complex enterprise grade solutions for emerging problem sets. Managing and controlling unstructured data at scale is a problem set that Mark and the team at Getvisibility are solving with AI based distributed computing.



TERESA CHAMBERS has been an Angel Investor with the Boole Investment Syndicate for the past decade. She established Inchera Executive Search, dedicated to supporting organisations in sourcing key senior talent, specialising in personalised talent solutions for appointment to C-Suite, Senior Director and Non-Executive roles. Teresa's sound business acumen is underscored by her experience in executive search and in senior leadership roles in several multinational companies spanning over two decades. She served at director level in major multinational organisations where she led large operations and strategy remits across multiple international locations. Teresa enjoys working with people at all levels, has Leadership and Coaching qualifications and is an MBTI Certified Practitioner. She has invested in, mentored and coached several startup companies. Teresa holds a degree in Engineering (Hons) from University of Galway.



BRIAN CROWLEY is Chief Operating Officer of Broadlake and Founder of TTM Healthcare & Resilience Care. TTM is one of Ireland's largest recruitment companies, Resilience Care is one of Ireland's leading providers of home and residential care services for people with complex medical & intellectual disabilities. Employing over 2,500 permanent & temporary employees and generating revenues in excess of €100m TTM & Resilience joined the Broadlake family of companies in 2016. Broadlake's portfolio operate internationally across healthcare, recruitment, workplace wellness & services, manufacturing & beauty. Brian has been a member of the judging panel for Ireland's Best Young Entrepreneur (IBYE) since its inception and was a member of the implementation committee for the Government's Entrepreneurship Strategy. He is a former Irish boxing international and currently mentor's young start-up companies and a number of our international Rugby stars. Brian was a finalist in the international category of the EY Entrepreneur of the Year programme, 2014.



PETER CROWLEY founded Crowley Services and started Dyno Rod in Cork in 1975. Between 1978 and 1985 Dyno Rod expanded into the rest of Ireland and in 1990 Peter started BioFlow, a fats oil and grease (FOGs) management service to food serving establishments (FSEs) and is now the Industry leader. In 1996 he co-founded Communicate 2000 to provide mobile communication solutions to Irish business which he successfully operated, grew and sold in 1999. Peter is currently involved with a variety of projects and startup companies both as a mentor and investor. 2006 saw the start of LowFlo, a water management and leak detection service for industrial, local authority and domestic markets which is being used in Ireland and in the Middle East. Peter sold Lowflo to Charles Dwyer. Peter is currently working with CIT and Nimbus on two separate projects to develop new technologies in FOGs management and control and the pipe and drain cleaning and maintenance area.



JULIAN COSTLEY is a professional chairman/NED, an expert on raising capital, and an occasional angel investor. Most recently he has acquired a small publishing company – Bite Sized Books - which he now runs full-time. But still makes time for his NED roles. He's just joined the board of designer rug company, Urban Rug Co. Prior roles have included Country Manager at the Thomson Reuters news agency, founding CEO of his own TV channel on BSB (later BSKyB), and founding CEO of France Telecom's Globecast UK satellite company. He partnered with venture capitalist Hermann Hauser to create E*TRADE UK, the stockbroking firm resulting in a significant trade sale. He's invested in 27 international companies and become chairman/NED or adviser to many more focusing on the financial services, media, telecoms, and internet markets. Julian is a part-time mentor, course judge, and occasional lecturer at London Business School and more recently INSEAD.



ÁINE DENN is a seasoned entrepreneur with over 30 years of experience in the technology sector, having worked in both the corporate and startup worlds. In 2005, she co-founded Altify (now Upland Altify), a global B2B SaaS company that delivered innovative sales technology. Áine's Altify journey ended on a high note with the acquisition of Altify by Upland Software (UPLD) at the end of 2019. Today, as a Non-executive Director, mentor, and advisor to businesses in Ireland and the UK, Áine is committed to helping others succeed. She is a credentialed coach and holds a Dip IoD. Áine is a board member of Technology Ireland and the Irish Writers Centre and an advisor to the IMRO Technology Committee. Áine actively supports entrepreneurship as a lead entrepreneur for Going For Growth, an Enterprise Ireland HPSU Founders Forum facilitator, and an Entrepreneur in Residence for the Dogpatch Labs Founders Talent Accelerator.



KARL FLANNERY is a business leader and technology enthusiast. As recent Chair of the Irish Software Association he is firmly committed to advancing the profile and needs of the Irish Software and Digital Technology sector in the national and international arena. Currently chair of the Industry Advisory Board for Knowledge Transfer Ireland and chairs one of the Delivery Teams for the governments ICT Action Plan for Jobs. Karl has over 30 years' experience in the ICT industry and in 1995, Karl co-founded Storm Technology, taking the company from a startup operation to a well-respected, profitable company, which focuses on developing business solutions on the Microsoft platform for enterprises. Storm Technology has a team of over 90 staff and operates out of Dublin and Galway. Karl has a B.Sc. in Applied Physics from NUIG, Diploma in Intellectual Property in Information Technology from the Law Society of Ireland and a Post Graduate Diploma in Financial Management from the Irish Management Institute.



DECLAN FOX, serial entrepreneur, technologist, digital marketer, and business coach, co-founded Comnitel Technologies in 1999 and as CEO, grew the company from start-up, raising €30M from leading institutional investors. Comnitel later merged with a US Telco and was acquired by IBM in 2007. Founder of Magellan Partners, a venture & entrepreneurial advisory consultancy, with a focus on innovative technology companies across different sectors. Co-Founded OmniVend, a successful network, revenue and service management company. Declan is actively involved with a number of high achieving early-stage technology companies assisting them scale internationally.



PATRICK HICKEY is currently Partner & Executive Chairman of Mobility Mojo a software business created to make the world a more accessible place. Prior to that Patrick was Founder and Executive Chairman of ROTHCO, part of Accenture Interactive. One of the original founding members 25 years ago, Patrick led Rothco to being acquired by Accenture in 2017. The largest acquisition in Irish advertising history. Under Patrick's leadership ROTHCO became a globally recognised creative agency with many accolades, including awards from every major global show. In 2018 they were awarded 117 international awards. He is active on the speaking circuit, regularly being asked to speak at events and as a coach and mentor he works with three CEO's currently, helping to shape their vision and progress. His passion is around partnering with ambitious people and clients to help them and their organisations achieve their dreams.



JAMES GOVAN is CEO of Sogeti Ireland, a technology and consulting company. Part of the global Capgemini group, Sogeti focusses on helping its clients transform and manage their business by harnessing the power of technology. James joined Sogeti in 2013 and has transformed its structure, operations and team, growing the business 10-fold in that time. He attributes this success to building a strong team, with good foundations in place and a clear vision for the company focussed on strong delivery excellence to clients while enabling the Sogeti team to develop and grow their careers in parallel with the business. Sogeti has over 220 employees in Ireland and an offshore team in excess of 700. James has nearly 30 years' experience with a background in sales, consulting and business transformation across a variety of industries. He has worked with a number of small businesses and start-ups over the years assisting them to grow and succeed within their chosen field.



DAVID JEFFREYS is a seasoned entrepreneur and business leader with a strong track record in the technology sector and has consistently demonstrated expertise in growing and scaling businesses through innovative strategies and strong leadership. As the Founder and CEO of Action Point from 2005 until its acquisition in 2022, David successfully guided the company through multiple phases of growth and transformation. Action Point provided IT Managed Services and Software Development, notably developing the Irish Government's National Passport Applications and Renewal System. Under David's leadership, the company expanded to 125 employees and exceeded annual revenues of €25million. A key highlight of David's career includes the development of a strategic business plan in 2020/2021, which led to a successful trade sale of the company in 2022. During his tenure, David also led and completed three acquisitions, further solidifying Action Point's position in the market.



GRAINNE KELLY is the CEO and inventor of BubbleBum UK Ltd, manufacturer of the world's first inflatable car booster seat for kids. BubbleBum was founded in December 2009 and has rocketed to success, winning major worldwide awards. The product now sells in 26 countries globally with major stores such as Walmart, Target, Tesco, Boots, Halfords, Migros, Naurauto and Aubert. Without the aid of a PR company, BubbleBum has featured on the front page of USAToday, The Wall Street Journal and on major national channels such as RTE, BBC, CBS News and Fox. Grainne has already been named the Belfast Telegraph Businesswoman of the Year 2010, EY Entrepreneur of the year finalist 2011 and Women In Business Award winner 2013.



DAMIEN KENNEDY co-founder of the Wheyhey brand, UK start-up of the year in 2016. Named as a game changer in Foodtech by Forbes magazine. Damien is co-founder & CEO of a brand holding company: groceriX: which develops, manufactures & markets cpg brands such as Wheyhey, MyProtein, Furocity & private label products for retailers in the UK, Europe and the US. Damien is an FMCG industry advisor to PE houses such as Afendis Capital and Davidson Kempner Capital. Damien is co-founder of fashion & jewellery brands 'frkl.' and 'Tranquillity jewellery'. Alongside Angela Scanlon, the brands launched via e-commerce and modern retail channels - the brands are ranged in retailers such as Brown Thomas &, Selfridges.



PEACHES KEMP co-founded Ita... with her sister Domini in 1999 and now have 17 outlets including itsa at the Irish Museum of Modern Art, The Hugh Lane Gallery, The Tearooms at Dublin Castle, and Harvey Nichols. They also run Table Restaurant in Brown Thomas Cork and the Gallery Café in the National Gallery Ireland. Their event catering branch is called Feast and are resident caterers in Powerscourt House, Enniskerry. In 2012 they founded Hatch & Sons Irish Kitchen on Stephens Green, in 2013 they launched a speciality coffee Joe's & 2014 saw the launched Alchemy, an eatery that specialises in cold pressed juices and food focused on health. Ita is director owned and run, has an annual turnover of €6 million and employs 105 people. She won Image Businesswoman of the Year in 2009 and was a finalist in the EY Entrepreneur of the year programme in 2011. She is on the EY EOY Alumni Board and has recently joined the board of ICE (Inner City Enterprise), a non-profit private charity.



KEVIN MACSWEENEY has a proven 15-year track record in Managed Equity Investments in Ireland and the UK, while helping those platform businesses source and acquire businesses internationally for global expansion. Kevin is currently a director and shareholder of Quintas Capital focusing on Managed Equity having spent 15 years in Broadlake on private equity investments, investing in over 7 platform businesses and successfully exiting 2 investments – 1 to a UK plc and the other to US Private Equity. Most recently in 2022 Kevin led 2 strategic investments for Broadlake’s TTM Healthcare while also sourcing and acquiring Broadlake’s newest platform of Children’s Residential Services business called Odyssey Social Care. Kevin is an investor and shareholder in Quintas Capital where he will be investing in the equity opportunities while working with the businesses on their ambitious growth plans.



RENA MAYCOCK is the founder & CEO of Chirp (formerly Cilter), a technology startup developing child protection software for smartphones that detects/blocks cyberbullying, grooming and suicide/self-harm in user-generated content on messaging apps and browsers. Rena also writes a column for business publication The Currency from the coalface of Irish business. Having been appointed by Ireland’s Minister for Finance to the Commission on Taxation and Welfare, Rena Chairs the board of the Irish International Business Network. Rena was named in the Sunday Independent’s Top 30 Women in Tech in 2021. Rena started her career in advertising sales and went on to hold a variety of senior management and director roles in Sky Media, Sunshine and was latterly CEO of the iRadio group. In 2011 she co-founded Ireland’s largest traditional matchmaking company, Intro. Rena has successfully won €2.8M grant towards the completion of the Chirp solution from the Disruptive Technology Innovation Fund and in May 2023 raised €1.67m which is one of the largest seed-raises of a sole female-founder in Ireland.



FRANK MADDEN is an expert in the field of Manufacturing Operations and has a background steeped in manufacturing. Before founding Crest Solutions, he played an integral role in the team responsible for manufacturing at Apple Computers in Ireland. As founder and CEO of Crest Solutions in 1998, Frank is dedicated to providing leading vision and traceability solutions and services to Life Science regulated manufacturing and packaging industries in Western and Northern Europe. Frank has built a multinational business with offices across Ireland, UK, Benelux and Scandinavia, specialising in Industrial vision and serialisation solutions for LifeScience Industries. In 2020 Frank was responsible for creating CXVGlobal through the merger with a US company Xyntek and Belgian based industrial automation company Vistalink. In 2022 Frank sold CXV Global to a US Private equity firm. Today CXVGlobal is known as Catalyx and continues to grow with annual sales of €120Million globally. Frank remains a board member but has stepped back from day to day. Frank has other significant interests in an off site manufacturing company called Framespace and an industrial focused Solar and Battery company, Crest Pro Power.



BRENDAN NEVIN is an experienced Chair & CEO with extensive leadership skills operating at Board level for over 20 years. A proven track record across a range of Organizations and Markets in particular Customer led growth in complex, challenging businesses. He is Co-Founder & Chair of Code Institute, Europe’s leading provider of online software developer training. His most recent Executive role was as CEO of AA Ireland where he led a Private Equity backed MBO in 2016 and subsequent successful sale in 2020. Prior to that he held senior management roles, at Bank of Ireland, Eircom, Coca-Cola HBC, International Distillers and McVities Biscuits.



STEPHEN NOLAN is CEO of Nutritics, a SaaS food tech business that enables hospitality operators run safer, more sustainable and more profitable businesses. Their software helps businesses unlock the hidden value of food data, to manage recipes, create labels, plan meals, publish menus and measure their environmental impact. The business employs 80 people in Ireland, UK and Australia, with 95% of revenues coming from export markets. In 2022, Stephen was named the EY Sustainability Entrepreneur of the Year, He was a participant in the Entrepreneur Experience in 2021. Prior to joining Nutritics, Stephen worked with the Australian bank Macquarie, as part of their infrastructure team in London. He holds First Class Masters of Finance and Commerce degrees from University College Dublin.



NIALL NORTON is a Seasoned commercial leader in complex technology businesses and a business innovator with focus on scaling organisations. A Corporate Finance specialist, turned CFO, turned CEO and then senior Executive in Amdocs. For 4 years Niall was CFO at O2 (Ireland) having been part of the IPO team that divested from BT Group as O2 Group. For over 14 years as CEO, Niall led Openet Telecom, an Irish software company in the Telecoms space, to revenues exceeding \$120m (from \$5m) and employing 800 people. For 3 years post-acquisition and integration of Openet by Amdocs, Niall led the development and execution of the network growth strategy. This included consolidating different business units with more than 3,500 employees, developing brand and value propositions, and growing new revenues. (Amdocs is a Nasdaq listed multi-national software company with revenues exceeding \$4.5B and 31,000 employees).



GER O'MAHONY is an entrepreneur who has accumulated significant experience mainly in technology but also in other industry sectors. He has been involved in a number of successful technology start-ups including being the founder of the software business Engage Technologies Group and its subsequent sale to NorthgateArinso (a FTSE 250 company) and also being the co-founder of the networking systems integrator Bridgecom Group and its subsequent sale to Denis O'Brien's Esat Telecom. He has completed funding rounds, identified and successfully completed and integrated company acquisitions and negotiated company disposals during this period. Recently Ger has focused on helping established technology companies to scale and grow both in Irish and International markets. These include the high growth businesses Action Point Technology Group and Voxpro Communications both of which have achieved revenue growth in excess of 50% year on year.



COLUM O'SULLIVAN (Sully) set up Cully & Sully in September 2004 with Cullen Allen from Ballymaloe House. The business became a multi award winning food company supplying over 3,000 stores in Ireland, the UK and Europe. Cully & Sully is the 50th biggest food brand in Ireland and the number 1 soup brand. They sold the business to US based Hain Celestial in 2012. Following a two year earn out, they created a new Irish entity called Hain Celestial Ireland incorporating other Hain brands such as Hartleys, Sunpat, Cadburys spreads, Linda McCartney, Dream etc and is currently the co-managing director with Cully.



ANTHONY QUIGLEY is a seasoned entrepreneur with over 30 years' experience developing, managing and leading successful businesses. He is a senior board-level advisor to venture companies and start-ups. Anthony founded and led Digital Marketing Institute (which was acquired in 2017), the global certification standard in digital marketing, with courses taught in over 80 countries. He has either founded or held director-level positions in Code Institute, eWare, Xanthal, iQuate, Microsoft, Net Results and Web Kitchen among others. Anthony's clear and commercial understanding of how digital technologies are transforming the business environment has led him to be a sought after presenter on the topic. He is also regular contributor to press, TV and radio discussions



DAVE RONAYNE is Chief Executive of Irish Mainport Holdings. The Mainport Group is an integrated marine services company providing global shipping services to offshore oil & gas exploration companies and international seismic operators. Mainport has offices in Ireland, Scotland, South Africa, Norway, and the Caspian Sea area. Dave holds a Bachelor of Commerce and is a Chartered Accountant, is a past member of Cork Harbour Commissioners and he is currently a member of the IBEC Regional Council. Mainport opened up a new office in Luanda, Angola during 2011 to service the new emerging offshore oil opportunities. Dave was a finalist in the 2007 Ernst & Young Entrepreneur Of The Year Award.



PATRICK RYAN is an experienced entrepreneur, investor, advisor and board member with an interest in technology, financial services, regulatory compliance and social impact. Patrick was born and raised in Dublin and has lived in London, Amsterdam, Hong Kong and Los Angeles over the past 30 years. Patrick has a wide range of interests and is an investor in, advisor to and/or board member of a number of high tech, smartcity, mobility, regtech and fintech companies in Amsterdam, Dublin, Cork, London and New York, as well as interests in web3 development in Amsterdam and Bali and a high-end electric guitar manufacturer in Nashville, Tennessee. Patrick is also an Investment Partner at Amsterdam-based Great Stuff Ventures and a member of the HBAN investor network in Ireland. Patrick is also an investor in PYMWYMIC, a Dutch social impact investment coop and was a member of their inaugural Investment Committee.



PAUL SHANAHAN has gained a wealth of international experience in FMCG, having worked in leading Global Companies such as Kerry Group (30 years), Mizkan & Bunge, in Senior Executive roles in the UK/ROI, North America and EMEA. Paul has led companies in B2C branded & private label consumer goods in the UK & ROI retail & food service markets, and in B2B "technology led" specialty ingredients & flavours both globally and regionally. Paul has huge expertise nurturing iconic brands such as Branston, Sarson's, Haywards & Homepride alongside extensive M&A planning, due diligence & integration activities (12+ acquisitions). Paul has been involved in the execution of proactive change management & business transformation focused on heritage, harnessing entrepreneurial qualities and building Culture, Structure and Strategy.



JOHN STANLEY is founder of EventFalcon, a provider of specialised GPS tracking solutions for the US market, such as Formula 1. John is also an investor in several startups through HBAN Boole syndicate and is very active doing Technical Due Diligences on behalf of HBAN. Prior to EventFalcon, he co-founded GlobeTech with Kevin Kelly and has over 35 years' experience in Software Development and management of advanced technical teams across a range of companies including Apple and Motorola. John was Director for GSM Network Management Development at Motorola, managing over 350 software engineers developing solutions for GSM Phone Networks. During his time in Apple, he formed an R&D team doing software testing and development on Macintosh software and grew to over 200 people and created many software and hardware products for the European market.



DENISE TORMEY has held leadership positions with PlanNet21 Communications, Videnda, 3play Plus, Digital Equipment Corporation (DEC). As President and co-founder of PlanNet21, she has been responsible for leading global expansions into Europe and USA, establishing strategic international partnerships, building the high performing teams and delivering agile and intelligent technology solutions to enterprises. She is an accomplished Leader and Entrepreneur with more than 21 years of success spanning information technology, finance, life science, and manufacturing Sectors. Often described as a whirlwind, extremely passionate and innovative, Denise bootstrapped her company to a hugely successful global technology provider which enables businesses transform their IT. She has spearheaded diversifications from enterprise networking into Cyber Security, Cloud & Data Centre, AI, Machine learning and Collaboration Solutions.