



Cork companies to benefit from subsidised “Tech-Check” Programme which will boost productivity, profitability and growth.

The Government subsidised programme to assist small business in boosting productivity, profitability and growth, is now being delivered by the County and City Enterprise Boards (CEBs). ‘Launched recently by the Minister for Enterprise, Trade & Employment, Micheál Martin TD, the substantially subsidised technology check-up will help small businesses to identify practical solutions which are appropriate and specific to their particular company, helping to stimulate growth’ said Dave Cody, Chief Executive of Cork City Enterprise Board.

Under the ‘Tech-Check’ programme, one of several recommendations emanating from The Small Business Forum set up by the Department, small businesses can apply to The Cork City Enterprise Board or their local Enterprise Board, who will in turn appoint an independent expert to visit the business. Speaking on the new initiative Minister Martin said, ‘I am committed to the implementation of the recommendations of the Small Business Forum to the maximum extent possible and I am determined to deliver on the promise of improving the environment in which small businesses operate.’

Working with the owner/manager, the appointed expert will carry out an assessment of the current technology usage in the business and will identify the key issues, strengths and weaknesses relating to the use of technology in that business. Based on this analysis, the expert will provide the business owner with a clear, action orientated and realistic strategy aimed at developing and deploying appropriate ICT (Information & Communications Technology) skills, systems, hardware and software within the business with the objective of delivering real and sustainable competitive advantage. Tech-Check is subsidised by the Department of Enterprise Trade & Employment, therefore the cost to individual small businesses can be as little as €150.

‘Participation in Tech-Check is not confined to existing Enterprise Board clients but is

open to all small businesses in all sectors of commercial activity’, said Mr Cody. Interested small businesses from the city centre area can apply directly to Ita Murphy, Training Co-ordinator & Business Advisor or Adrienne Rodgers, Asst. CEO, Cork City Enterprise Board, Bruach na Laoi, Union Quay, Cork, or email; adrienne@cceb.ie, or contact their local Enterprise Board.

For further information please call:

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Editors Notes

The Enterprise Boards

The Small Business Forum, which recommended ‘Tech-Check’, was set up by Minister Martin to consider the current environment for conducting small business in Ireland and advise on the adequacy and appropriateness of public policy response.

ENDS

Notes for Editor

* Cork City Enterprise Board is one of 35 County and City Enterprise Boards (CEBs) that were established in 1993 to provide a source of support for small businesses with 10 employees or fewer. The function of the Boards is to develop indigenous enterprise potential and to stimulate economic activity at local level. The Boards provide a single point of contact at local level for new and established small businesses. Subject to certain eligibility criteria, enterprises may qualify for support from the CEBs in the form of feasibility, employment and capital grants. In addition, the CEBs deliver a comprehensive range of development and support programmes designed to help, new and existing enterprises to operate effectively and efficiently so as to last and grow.

* Cork City Enterprise Board is funded by the Irish Government and part-financed by the European Union under the National Development Plan 2007 – 2013

* Each Enterprise Board operates as a stand-alone limited company whose operations are performed on the basis of an operating agreement between it and the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment.

* The Chairman of the Cork City Enterprise Board is Nora Cronin of Cronin's Coaches, Cork, and Board members are drawn from the Cork area. Prior to Board approval grant applications are assessed by an Evaluation Committee which includes representatives from 2 major financial institutions, a credit union , The Marketing Institute, Enterprise Ireland, Local Authority, Cork Chamber of Commerce and an Accountant.

* Recent entrepreneurial initiatives supported by the Cork City Enterprise Board included:
Refundable Capital Grant for a bakery enterprise to facilitate growth
Feasibility study and subsequent equity investment for an electronics engineering graduate project to facilitate an inter-nationally traded project.

Business Mentor for an in-coming work placement/business solutions company to facilitate business growth.

Employment Grant for an Architectural Glass Manufacturer to facilitate business growth.

Management Development Programmes for software developer to grow his knowledge skills to strengthen his company.

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