

ADER

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for Thomas expansion

the charity sector, city man **Thomas** programming into a business

reactions on supercomputers.

How did you get to where you are today?

I always loved programming in college, but when I graduated my real passion was global justice and equality. So I went off to Ghana for two years to do voluntary work and I then worked in the charity sector in Ireland for a further eight years. Programming was always a hobby for me however, and I was experimenting with app development when the business idea came to me.

What made you want to go into business?

A friend in Dublin was opening a cafe and I researched touch-screen point of sale systems for him. I couldn't believe how ugly the software out there was! I get frustrated when I see software that is badly designed or visually complicated. I was motivated to create my own app that met my standards of ease-of-use.

What are your goals for the next 12 months?

We have a fantastic customer base here in Ireland and I'm hoping to extend this to Britain next year by appointing our first distributors. Our focus is on

slow, sustainable growth of the business so picking the right partners who understand what we do will be crucial.

Who do you look up to in business?

It might be a cliché, but I really admire our customers, most of whom are independent owner-managed retailers, including seven out of the top 100 restaurants in Ireland. Being an independent retailer is a really hard job, and I admire our customers' tenacity and commitment to excellence. Part of our aim is to put some of the tools that the big chains have into the hands of independents to help them compete.

In business and life, are you guided by any particular motto?

I've always like the quote from the Dutch computer science pioneer Edsger Dijkstra: 'Simplicity is prerequisite for reliability'. That's certainly the approach we try to take with our own software.

Away from work, what are your pastimes and hobbies?

I love playing German board games, as well as typography, urban planning and cycling.

Region's only bubble wrap maker hopes more success will pop up

IN the run up to the Limerick Leader-sponsored Limerick Chamber Regional Business Awards, we profile some of the nominees.

Why did you establish your business?

I was always interested in working for myself, so when the opportunity came up, I jumped at the chance. I always had a determination to succeed and was never afraid of hard work. To succeed in any business, you must have a passion for what you do.

Why does your business deserve to win a Limerick regional business award?

We are a proud Limerick company employing local people. We have come through a very rough time for manufacturing in Ireland, and we believe this has made Qualpack a stronger firm as we come out of recession. As we have survived, we have become very cost-conscious to be competitive in the market place. We achieved this as we had a very hard working work force, which puts us in a position to be quite a competitive supplier of products to the Irish and UK market.

Where would you like to see the company in five years from now?



Niall Clancy of Qualpack Solutions which has been nominated for an award.

Picture: Michael Cowhey

In five years, I would like to see Qualpack as a leading manufacturer of packaging products, by adding a number of new manufacturing processes to our existing product lines, and to have significantly increased our current workforce.

If you were in government, what would you do to help business?

I'd put in place a structure which offers whatever support is necessary to encourage entrepreneurship in Ireland. SMEs are the spine of the Irish economy, and have made an enormous contribution. I'd also like to see classes in secondary school in how to start-up and run a business.

All Leader Sat Aug 15 2015

Taste prize

at we strive for at The Artisan Food Factory, and the brilliant in that work there



FACT FILE

Company: Qualpack Ltd

Based: Crossagalla Industrial Estate, Ballysimon Road

Product/Service: Manufacturer and distributor servicing a wide range of industries in terms of packaging products. One of only two manufacturers of bubble wrap and bubble bags in Ireland.

Founded: 2000

Employees: Nine