



#MakingItHappen together with Huku Balance



Cathal Sheridan of Huku Balance in Donegal

MOST OF US TRY TO STRIKE A BALANCE BETWEEN WORK AND PLEASURE BUT SOME PEOPLE ARE LUCKY ENOUGH TO COMBINE THEIR FAVOURITE PASTIME WITH THEIR CAREER.

This is exactly what Cathal Sheridan did when, backed by Local Enterprise Office Donegal, he created Huku Balance in 2018.

The industrial designer has a passion for surfing and was always trying to find ways to improve his wave-riding skills. So after several design iterations, he launched the Huku Original Balance Board. It was an instant hit, so he decided to set up his own company making health and wellness products which help the user to increase their coordination, balance, core strength and improve posture.

“Our products are the perfect remedy to today’s office worker who spends most of their day sitting in front of their computer,” says Sheridan who now has four employees. “We offer help to negate the effects of long-term sitting and inactivity and our range of balance boards are also the perfect tool for getting a workout at home.”

“After setting up the website in October 2019, sales began to increase. Then when COVID-19 arrived, I decided to stop my work as a freelance designer and focus entirely on Huku Balance which saw sales grow even more. Then in the summer of 2020, I took on my first employee, with three more coming on board in the Autumn.”

Although faced with some issues, the Donegal-based entrepreneur has managed to ride out the worst of the pandemic and Brexit.

“Our sales were always set up for online trading, so we were in a good position this time last year and continued to grow with the help of Local Enterprise Office Donegal,” he says. “Our biggest challenge has been in production as we only allow one person in the workshop at a time.”

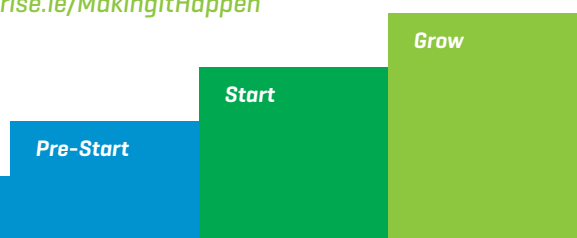
“WITH REGARD TO BREXIT, OUR SALES INTO THE UK LAST YEAR GREW AT A SIMILAR PACE TO OUR TRADE WITH MAINLAND EUROPE AND SO FAR, WE HAVEN’T EXPERIENCED ANY PROBLEMS WITH SALES. HOWEVER, IT HAS BEEN A CHALLENGE GETTING ORDERS DELIVERED IN A TIMELY FASHION DUE TO THE BACKLOG IN CUSTOMS AND WE ARE CURRENTLY WORKING WITH A NEW COURIER COMPANY TO RESOLVE THIS SO THAT WE CAN CONTINUE TO GROW OUR UK MARKET SHARE.”

Sheridan has also started the North West Export Programme with LEO Donegal to focus on his global ambitions. Over the next 12 months, he hopes to expand the company and launch new products with the help of a Business Expansion Grant from LEO Donegal.

He credits his Local Enterprise Office with providing much needed support.

“From the very beginning, the Local Enterprise Office were very supportive of my goals,” he says. “The Donegal team were always on hand to offer advice and we also received financial support, including a Business Priming Grant and Trading Online Vouchers. We won Start-Up of the year 2019 and received excellent mentoring along the way.”

To find out more about Local Enterprise Office supports for your business, please visit LocalEnterprise.ie/MakingItHappen



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