



Ciaran Bolger C.F.O. RT Smart Data and Kenneth Kenny, Sales Manager with SKS Communications Ltd, with Head of Enterprise at Local Enterprise Office Carlow, Kieran Comerford and Sean Swan, Swan's Electrical Expert Carlow.

CLIENT FOCUS

OPENING UP THE COUNTRY AFTER A PANDEMIC

BUT WHILE FOR SOME BUSINESSES, THIS WILL SIMPLY MEAN OPENING UP THEIR DOORS AND ENSURING SOCIAL DISTANCING MEASURES ARE IN PLACE, OTHERS WILL HAVE TO ADAPT THEIR WORKPLACES AND EVEN THEIR BUSINESS MODELS.

SO, IN ORDER TO HELP MAKE THE TRANSITION AS SMOOTH AS POSSIBLE, A NUMBER OF ENTREPRENEURS HAVE COME UP WITH SOME INNOVATIVE NEW PRODUCTS AND SERVICES.

WITH THE LIFTING OF MANY RESTRICTIONS, THE COUNTRY IS SLOWLY BEGINNING TO GET BACK ON ITS FEET.

RT Smart Data in Carlow

Founded by Chief Financial Officer Ciaran Bolger, RT Smart Data have developed and launched an innovative person-to-person Ultrawide Band (UWB) smart wearable device to assist employers and employees in adhering to social distancing.

The device emits a soft vibration to remind the user of social distancing requirements and provides a detailed traceability contact report in the event of an employee contracting Covid-19. It can be worn on the wrist, upper arm or on a lanyard.

Supported with a Feasibility Study Grant from Local Enterprise Office Carlow, it offers a simple answer to the social distancing issues many businesses will face in the coming weeks.

"Deploying this cost-effective solution means that employers are using the very latest technology to address social distancing guidelines and contact tracing problems," says the CFO.

"It allows employees, customers and suppliers to feel confident that all is being done to protect their safety."

He says that despite the lockdown and restrictions associated with working from home, the team have been 'extremely busy' in developing and launching this solution to market – and they have already received positive feedback.

"From the discussions and enquiries we have already received from customers, in Ireland, the UK and USA, we are hoping to ramp up the rollout in the coming weeks."

Developing and growing a business can be difficult, particularly during the current economic climate, but Bolger says a combination of financial and practical support from the Local Enterprise Office in Carlow helped them to achieve their goal. And he encourages other companies not to lose sight of their ambitions.

"Our Local Enterprise Office was instrumental to our success by listening to our idea and supporting us quickly," he says. "And they provided us with a grant which helped in the rapid development of our solution."

"My advice to other companies, would be to review their business model and see how it can be adapted to the current trading climate. Sometimes opportunities arise in times of crisis, so businesses always need to be ready to identify potential prospects and respond quickly to same.

"And it's important to be adaptable and flexible where possible so talk with your bank and be honest about your concerns. There are lots of supports available to small businesses, so make sure to see what is available to you."

rtsmartdata.com





Fetch in South Dublin

James Redmond and Darren Boylan of Fetch

Fetch is an application which allows businesses to outsource deliveries using an on-demand service to carry out all pick-up and drop off requirements.

Founded by James Redmond, Darren Boylan, and Gerard Sweeney in 2018, the company, which provides an 'Uber service for deliveries, is supported by Local Enterprise Office South Dublin and has also benefited from a Business Priming Grant and a Trading Online Voucher.

Boylan says the growing demand for a 24/7 delivery service is the reason behind their current success.

"Since the onset of the Covid-19 crisis, the need for deliveries has increased so Fetch has experienced a surge in demand and the response has been very positive," he says. "The number of deliveries carried out per week has increased by 230% and this has allowed us to acquire contracts which are projected to last long into the future."

And the co-founder says this is due to a combination of good fortune, hard work and making sure the necessary adaptations for social distancing were put in place from the start.

"We have provided training courses for all our drivers and some of the measures we implemented included non-contact delivery and having the correct Personal Protective Equipment [PPE] while carrying out deliveries to minimise the risk of spreading the virus," he says.

"This instilled confidence into our business partners as they knew we were doing everything to ensure optimum health and safety measures were in place.

"Also, we were very lucky to be operating in a sector which is viewed as an essential service, so our business has had huge growth during the crisis. The measures we put in place were not only important from a public health perspective, but also from a business perspective.

"So now, Fetch is launching innovative and safe solutions for major retailers with store to door same-day delivery and collection solutions which can be rolled out and active in a number of days."

In addition, Fetch will be entering the global delivery software market with their advanced last-mile delivery product.

Boylan says help from his Local Enterprise Office has made this possible. "We received several supports from our Local Enterprise Office, including a substantial Business Priming Grant and a Trading Online Voucher, which was really beneficial to us," he says.

"But while there is no one-sizes-fits-all solution, I think business owners need to adapt at the point where they meet their consumers. In terms of a physical premises, consumers will want to feel safe and confident, so high standards of PPE along with fixed barriers and procedures should be put in place, in such a way which still allows for an enjoyable experience."

"Also, businesses which don't sell online or offer delivery & collection services will be leaving themselves at risk as there has been a huge shift towards online services and there is no guarantee that these consumers will return to physical purchasing anytime soon."

www.justfetchit.ie

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