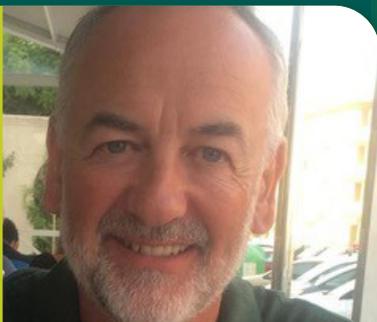


LOCAL ENTERPRISE WEEK 2022

07-11 March

Event Speaker

Brendan McGrath of KrushTech in Galway



A CRUSHING BLOW FOR COMPETITORS

The Covid-19 pandemic was a bolt out of the blue for industry across the globe and while many were unprepared for its onset and related restrictions, the need for climate action is a topic which most sectors, governments and indeed society as a whole, has been aware of for some time.

With this in mind, Brendan McGrath of KrushTech in Galway had his eyes set on the future and in 2018 decided to act on a long-term goal to create a recycling arm to his business.

After buying the company over a decade ago, Brendan, who had previously worked in the construction equipment industry, continued specialising in mixing and dispensing products for paint industries and laboratories. But it wasn't long before he realised, that, as this market was quite niche, another angle was necessary to grow his business.

"I couldn't see potential in that market sector because it had been proliferated with foreign competition and low value, low-cost options," he says. "Then about six years ago, I acquired two large units in Milltown, Co Galway as I always had the long-term goal of developing another business alongside the one I was currently running. And looking at various options, I realised that one of the key areas which had huge growth potential was recycling as there was, and continues to be, a big global push to recycle and reuse.

"In my early career, I was involved in crushing and screening for quarries which involves crushing stone down to a certain size – and it is important that every country tries to recycle demolition materials like blocks, bricks and concrete to reuse them rather than using virgin materials. But my research showed that the EU had a goal plan for 2020 where they wanted 70% of demolition waste to be recycled as a lot of it was just wasted or going into landfill – I also found that these targets haven't been met across the EU, but there is a big push to get to that level."

With this in mind, the entrepreneur realised that not only was there a need for building waste to be recycled, but there was also a gap in the market for on-site options.

"I thought that there was a need for smaller and more compact machines which could be brought into cities and built-up areas so materials could be crushed on site," he says. "This material could then be used for filling on site – instead of the alternative, which involved it being taken away from the sites to either be dumped or alternatively, crushed, recycled and brought back to the same site.

"This seemed like a waste of time and resources, so I approached Galway Local Enterprise Office in 2018 with the intention of doing an R&D project on this and asked for some support. Thankfully they got on board and in 2019, we were able to do our first 'show and tell' of the product and by 2020, we were ready to launch it."

Of course, we all know what happened next and as the Pandemic made itself known, Brendan's new enterprise, Krushtech, was put on hold. But as restrictions have eased, the future looks more promising.

"We were just ready to get started and Covid-19 arrived to put a hold on things," he says. "This held us up dramatically and set us back in terms of getting out to showcase and sell our product – we couldn't travel, and neither could potential customers, so everything ground to a halt. But thanks to the funding we received from our LEO we were able to really push on with getting the product developed as this was absolutely critical to diversifying the business.

"In the last few months, we have begun to get traction as restrictions have been easing a little and we've been able to get out to do demos with the machine. This has been great as we sold our first couple of units and are now starting to push on by getting fully into production so we can ramp up our sales."

The CEO's vision has now begun to take off and he is already looking to expand his market reach.

"The future is looking bright for us at the moment," he says. "The funding we received played a crucial part in that and our LEO was incredibly supportive which made a massive difference to us.

"The feedback we've been getting is that we're absolutely bang on with the product – the customers love it and it's filling a niche they needed. Now that we've established ourselves, we are looking at reaching a much bigger global market as the crushing market globally is worth 2 1/2 billion dollars – and we are only trying to get a little slice of that, so there is very good growth potential.

"We have had dealer interest from countries across Europe as well as a lot of interest from the UK, which is where our first sales have been, so we are really looking forward to cracking on with things now."

FREE SPOTLIGHT EVENT: 9th March 11am - 12.30pm
Agile Ambition: Funding for Innovation
LEO Galway

