



Enterprise Ireland Exhibition to attract 50,000 visitors

9th February 1999

Details of the second Enterprise Ireland Exhibition were announced on Tuesday 9th February by An Taoiseach Mr Bertie Ahern TD. Enterprise Ireland was last held in 1997 and proved to be an enormous success. This year, with over 50% of space already sold to exhibitors, the organisers and sponsors believe that the event will be even more successful.

The Exhibition, which will be held in the RDS next October, is being organised by the Small Firms Association and sponsored by Eircell and AIB Bank, to encourage and promote entrepreneurial culture and to increase growth in the indigenous sector in Ireland.

Announcing the exhibition, Mr Ahern said: "While the Irish economy is currently riding the crest of a wave and is held up internationally as the role model for others to emulate, we cannot become complacent. We've got to maximise the benefits this success has brought and harness them to encourage still further the entrepreneurial spirit that has been released in recent years. The Enterprise Ireland Exhibition is the perfect forum to do just that."

43,000 attended the last event and 1,500 new businesses were created. It is estimated that over £10 million business was conducted and in the subsequent two years there have been record results in the small and medium firms sector. 37,000 new businesses have been formed since 1997.

Speaking at the launch, Mr Kieran Crowley, Chairman of the SFA said: "This initiative has been devised by the SFA to maximise the current climate of growth in small businesses. The driving force behind Enterprise Ireland is the belief that small firms are the backbone of the nation's economy."

The exhibition is a "one stop shop" for entrepreneurs and small businesses. People hoping to put their ideas into action will gain from attending the event. As well as catering for people who run their own businesses, advice is also on hand for students, the unemployed and emigrants wishing to return and set up their own firms.

"I am delighted that Eircell is again working with the Small Firms Association and AIB on Enterprise Ireland. Today the number of Eircell customers using mobile phones to stay in touch with their business contacts and friends has grown to nearly 650,000. Indeed one in twelve Irish people now own a Ready to Go phone. Staying in touch is essential for owners of small firms who need to make the most of every minute of every day. In many cases a mobile phone is the only link they have with their business suppliers and customers." said Mr Stephen Brewer, Chief Executive, Eircell.

There will be a panel of experts available for free consultation on finance, business plans, legal issues and technology. Consultation will also be available on issues such as foreign trading, travel and insurance. Along with advice centres and seminars, psychological business testing will also be available.

Speaking at the official launch in AIB Bankcentre, Mr Tom Mulcahy, Chief Executive, AIB Group said, "Ireland cannot afford to overlook the importance of coaching entrepreneurs and early stage companies, they are the economic fuel supply of the future particularly in the areas of technology, innovation and job creation."

To book space at the exhibition contact:

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or visit the Enterprise Ireland Web Site at [www.bizex.ie](http://www.bizex.ie)