

News Release: Monday, 19<sup>th</sup> May, 2008

## **2008 FINALISTS WILL BE A FORCE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE**

- ENTREPRENEURS ACCLAIMED THROUGH COVETED BUSINESS AWARD -

ERNST & YOUNG ANNOUNCES 2008 ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR® SHORTLIST

Twenty-four companies have been shortlisted across three categories for the coveted 2008 Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year® award. Over 115 entries were received and nominees were subsequently interviewed by Ernst & Young, followed by rigorous assessment by a 12-strong panel of judges, chaired by telecoms entrepreneur, and previous recipient of the award, Mr. Denis O'Brien.

Eight companies have been chosen in each of the three categories - international, industry and emerging, and cover a cross section of business interests with healthcare and business IT solutions among the top industries represented. An immediate benefit to each of the finalists is an instant access channel to over 200 of Ireland's leading entrepreneurs through strong networking opportunities the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year® Programme provides.

Announcing the shortlist, Enda Kelly, Ernst & Young Partner-in-Charge of the Programme said "Entrepreneurs play a vital role in economic development and act as invaluable role models for a new generation of entrepreneurs. Our finalists confirm the pattern of previous years of vibrant entrepreneurship present right across the country. All display exceptional entrepreneurial vision, and it is important that we celebrate and recognise their achievement. Their creativity and risk-taking ability acts as the very foundation of our economic prosperity".

The 2008 Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year® programme continues to educate around the strategic value of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and this year's emphasis will be on creating a sustainable environment. The CEO retreat returns to Haiti in June, where finalists, along with previous year's finalists will work with some of the world's poorest communities. Here they will impart their knowledge and expertise, to develop the sustainable businesses, set up by last year's finalists, and, in addition, help create practical solutions to Haiti's environmental disadvantages - deforestation, soil erosion and water pollution.

“Successful entrepreneurs constantly adapt to changes in the business climate, and now that the age of physical climate change is upon us, these are the visionaries who will make global sustainability a reality, added Kelly. In our part, we will complement the hands-on initiatives in Haiti through the provision of a series of ground-breaking presentations on Environmental Corporate Social Responsibility, led by one of the most prominent figures in the field. These sessions will highlight the enormous strategic value of ‘Green Business’, and hopefully encourage participants to place eco-friendly practice at the core of business operation”.

The 24 finalists in the 2008 programme will be profiled in further detail in the Irish Times over the next six weeks, beginning with the International Category on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> May. Each finalist will also feature in a three-part series to appear on RTE in October. The winner will be announced at a televised Awards Ceremony on 23<sup>rd</sup> October, held at City West Hotel, Dublin.

The Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year® Award is part of a global recognition programme, to identify, acclaim and support entrepreneurs. The programme is currently run in over 40 countries, across six continents and in 2008 more than 10,000 entrepreneurs worldwide will be nominated. The Irish programme, now in its 11<sup>th</sup> year, has been identified as one of the strongest worldwide.

Liam Casey, founder and chief executive of PCH International was named as the 2007 Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year®. Liam will represent Ireland at the World Entrepreneur of the Year® Awards in Monte Carlo next month, where award winners representing over 40 countries will compete for the worldwide title.

The Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year® is run in association with The Irish Times, RTE, Enterprise Ireland, InterTradeIreland, Invest Northern Ireland, Trinity Business School and Digicel.

The 2008 Shortlist Finalists - **see attached table**

**-ENDS-**

**The 12 members of the Judging Panel are:**

- Denis O'Brien, Digicel Group (Chair), (Ernst & Young Entrepreneur Of The Year® 1998)
- Aidan Heavey, Tullow Oil PLC (Ernst & Young Entrepreneur Of The Year® 2005)
- Brian Long, Atlantic Bridge Partners (Ernst & Young Technology Entrepreneur Of The Year® 2000)
- Pat Maher, Executive Director, Enterprise Ireland
- Liam Nellis, Chief Executive, InterTradelreland
- Jerry Kennelly, CEO, Kilmackilloge Capital (Ernst & Young Emerging Entrepreneur Of The Year® 2005)
- Pdraig O'Ceidigh, Chairman, Aer Arann Express (Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year® 2002)
- Liam Shanahan, Shanahan Engineering (Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year® 2003)
- Donal Durkin, Director of Creative and Design-based Industries, Invest Northern Ireland
- Ann Heraty, CPL Resources Plc. (Ernst & Young Entrepreneur Of The Year® 2006)
- Pat McDonagh, Third Force (Ernst & Young Master Entrepreneur Of The Year® 2000)
- Michael Carey, Executive Chairman, Jacob Fruitfield Food Group. (Ernst & Young Industry Entrepreneur Of The Year® 2005)

Further information on the finalists and the features of the 2008 programme can be viewed online at [www.eoy.ie](http://www.eoy.ie).

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Entrepreneur	Company	Business Activity	Founded	Location
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### International

John Flaherty	C&F Group	Global Sheet Metal Specialist	1989	Galway
Donal O'Riain	Ecocem Materials Ltd	Carbon Neutral Concrete	2000	Dublin
David Bobbett	H&K International	Restaurant Equipment Systems - Worldwide	2002	Dublin
Sean Keenan	Multis Group	Remanufacturing & Remarketing	1994	Galway
Xavier McAuliff	Spectra Group	Photographic/Hotel & Property Development	1970	Kilkenny
Danny Moore	Wombat Financial Software	Financial Trading Solutions	1997	Antrim
Conor Foley	Worldspreads Group	Financial Spread Trading	2000	Dublin
Brendan O'Regan	Zenith Technologies Ltd	Process Automation & Control	1998	Cork

### Industry

Lord Kilclooney	Alpha Newspaper Group	Newspaper Publishing, Printing, Radio Media	1983	Tyrone
Pat O'Flynn	AVR Safeway Ltd	Sustainable Solutions for Hazardous Waste	1998	Cork
Michael Cullen	Beacon Medical Group	Healthcare	2002	Dublin
Stephen Grant	Grant Engineering (Ireland) Ltd	Engineering	1978	Offaly
Howard Beggs	Helix Health Ltd	Healthcare Information and Communications Technology	1996	Dublin
Neil O'Leary	Ion Equity	Private Equity Investors	2000	Dublin
Orla Corr	McAvoy Off-Site Building Solutions	Off-Site Building Construction	1973	Tyrone
Terence Brannigan	Resource Group	Support Services	2006	Antrim

### Emerging

Tom Marren	CES Energy	CHP/Tri-Generation. District Heating/Cooling & Photovoltaic	2002	Dublin
Eugene Greene	Cooneen Watts & Stone Ltd	Military Clothing	2004	Tyrone
Patricia O'Hagan	Core Systems (NI) Ltd	Biometric Identity Management/ Information Technology	2003	Antrim
Tom Brennan & Patsy Carney	EirGen Pharma	Pharmaceutical	2005	Waterford
Eric Mosley	Globoforce Ltd	Incentive Management Solutions	1999	Boston/Dublin
Sean Rowland	Hibernia College	Education	2000	Dublin
Mark Heffernan	Opsona Therapeutics Ltd	Biotechnology	2004	Dublin
Cathal Power	Zumo Smoothie Bars International	Juices Bars	2001	Dublin