



with David Dwane

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Money & Business

Critical time for start up businesses

"HELPING emerging businesses is not just a nice thing to do - at this stage in Ireland's economic development, actively supporting more start ups is now a survival issue", says businessman, Alfie Kane, former Chief Executive of eircom.

Alfie Kane was speaking at the launch of the 2008 David Manley Emerging Entrepreneur Awards. Now Chief Executive of Baker Capital Corporation, USA, Kane is also Chairman of the Panel of Judges for the Award.

The aim of the David Manley Emerging Entrepreneur Awards is to nurture Ireland's entrepreneurial spirit. The winner of the 2008 David Manley Emerging Entrepreneur Award will receive 'the gift of time' in mentoring and consultancy worth over €80,000 from a selection of top Irish companies as their prize as well as a cash prize of €10,000.

"Given the global and local economic slow down - if not recession - that we are facing into over the next few years and our continuing loss of competitive edge in the world market and, dare I say it, the mismatch between our cost base and GDP growth rates - I believe we are going to be even more dependant on internally generated business activity," Kane said.

"And the majority of that additional activity will, in the main, come from the SME sector. The seeds from which these SME firms

emerge are the very same start up or emerging businesses that we in the David Manley Awards Committee are seeking to support. So I say that encouraging and supporting entrepreneurs' start up new businesses is no longer just a good thing to do - for Mayo and every other county in Ireland now it is virtually an economical survival issue".

The David Manley Emerging Entrepreneur Award is in its sixth year and rewards the enterprising spirit in Business, the Arts and in the Social community.

Entrants for the Award will be judged primarily on Innovation, Impact, Sustainability and Execution. Entrepreneurs interested in entering the Awards should be current participants in an enterprise support programme run by a Business Innovation Centre, Incubation Centre or associated with Business to Arts or Social Entrepreneurs Ireland.

Dublin businessman and community activist David Manley died in 2002, aged 50. He was an accountant and business strategy consultant with an active interest in arts and sports. He was company secretary of Rehab Lotteries Ltd from its inception in 1987, playing a key role in its development both in Ireland and the UK. As President of the Dublin Chamber of Commerce in 2000 - 2001, David was particularly active in spearheading the interests of small and medium sized businesses through his role.

In 2001 he was appointed to the Railway Procurement Agency, but his contributions to the LUAS project were short lived.

His energies were all encompassing as he played a leading role as CEO for the Not For Profit Business Association, which represents the business interests of its members as service providers to people with disabilities.

The David Manley Award was established by a group of David Manley's friends in the Dublin Chamber of Commerce to honour his contribution to, encouragement and mentoring of SMEs during his short life time. Entry forms can be secured from www.david-manleyawards.ie and the closing date for entries is Monday September 1st 2008.