



## **Payback Solutions Ltd., Killarney, Co. Kerry**



“Starting a new business is always a challenge irrespective of previous experience. The owner has to cover all the bases. There’s never enough time in the day.” That’s according to Mary Ann McDonagh of Killarney training and consultancy Payback Solutions Ltd. “I heard of Tech Check through the local business network and the radio ads and I felt I needed someone to look at my I.T. systems but did not know where to start. I thought it could improve my business efficiencies and give me more time to work with my business customers.”

Mary Ann approached Tomás Hayes of the Kerry County Enterprise Board in September 2007 and the audit of her technology and operations commenced two weeks later. The ‘Tech Check’ consultant immediately highlighted the lack of security in the businesses’ data as they were storing the majority of company information and material on a desktop with poor back up structures. Any loss of the company’s electronic material, such as their carefully developed training manuals, would have had profound negative implications for the business. They weren’t using computerised accounts system either and therefore the management of invoicing, statements and ultimately cash flow was at best ad hoc. The consultant also identified that Payback Solution’s customer relationship management was unstructured and though they had a website, it generated little new business leads because of poor optimisation and neglected upgrade. The irony was that Mary Ann’s own I.T. skills are excellent, but like to so many business, finding the time to do all of this was always an issue.

Anne Hannon of Aishling Software carried out the ‘Tech Check’ audit on behalf of the Kerry County Enterprise Board. Her advice has a resonance for all small companies. Ann commented, “Payback Solutions Ltd. is a typical small company where the rush in completing day to day work can be overwhelming. Other matters such as better usage of I.T. can be overlooked. The solutions proposed were relatively straightforward and involved an upgrade of office hardware and back up capability. We also advised that Payback Solutions should invest in accounting and back office software to free up more time and to assist in accurate record keeping. Mary Ann’s work keeps her on the road a lot and the transfer of contacts from Outlook Express to Microsoft Outlook and synchronisation with her Blackberry provided immediate benefits. Our meetings highlighted work to be done, time and cost savings and we set a specific timeframe to undertake these tasks”.

According to Mary Ann McDonagh, “I knew I needed to get to grips with some of the technology in my business. I have upgraded my accounting systems and have

completed some training. I am happy with my back up systems now. The enhanced use of my Blackberry is a blessing as it saves time and allows work on the move. I now have immediate access to emails even when my work takes me out of the country! I still have matters to address but I feel that my investment of €150 in the Tech Check Programme was of great benefit and I would encourage other small businesses to avail of this service. Where else would you get an I.T. expert to come to your business and give you sound practical advice for €150? The recommendations provided were practical and led to immediate efficiencies. Any business no matter how small should contact the Enterprise Board and avail of this service.”