

NEWS RELEASE



IBEC AND FORFÁS JOIN FORCES TO LAUNCH DEFINITIVE BUSINESS USER'S GUIDE TO TELECOMMUNICATIONS

“When your customers and suppliers want you to do business with them electronically, will you be ready?” This is a key question posed in **“Telecommunications for Business : A User’ s Guide”**, which has been jointly published by IBEC and Forfás in recognition of the challenges faced by all businesses in the digital age and the lack of clear information. This comprehensive booklet sets out guidelines for business to enable them to participate in this new era and capitalise fully on its opportunities.

The main aim of the new booklet is to communicate some of the challenges and opportunities afforded by new technologies and new services.

To accomplish this, the booklet :

- describes clearly and simply the changes taking place in the telecommunications market in Ireland;

- summarises the range of advanced networks and services available to customers; and
- describes the strategic and operational implications of these changes for business operations as well as new opportunities and threats arising.

The booklet also offers a unique set of “coverage maps” for broadband service availability throughout Ireland.

This new guide is intended to be of value to businesses in a number of ways. For some, the glossary will be helpful in dealing with the plethora of new jargon that has sprung up with the new information and communications technologies. For others, the directory at the back of the booklet will give easy access to all the key players in the Irish market. But for most people, this guide will simply, and in plain English, explain what is happening in what is being called the digital revolution and what their businesses should be doing to capitalise on these changes.

Commenting on the booklet, the Chief Executive of Forfás, **Mr John Travers** said that the so-called digital revolution is bringing with it new challenges that the Irish business community must be ready to meet. “One of the most dramatic changes is the rapid introduction of electronic commerce as a whole new way of doing business. Liberalisation is clearly working and significant investments have already been made by a number of companies in digital networks.”

“As a result, there are now major opportunities for companies to improve profitability and growth. There has been more investment in networks than

is recognised and a greater reach is being achieved by these networks around the country – giving local companies the same opportunities as those in urban areas. However, many people in business are not clear about what services are available to them, whether the new developments are relevant to their business or how they can exploit the new technologies.”

The Director General of IBEC, **Mr John Dunne** commented that the investments being made by the telecommunications sector created unique opportunities for Irish business, as well as the need to adapt. Business in Ireland had been good at adapting to change, but “the difference now is the speed at which these changes are taking place. All sectors will be affected by this new scenario. In the dynamic environment of present-day Ireland, these new opportunities must be grasped to ensure long-term viability and prosperity for Irish industry in the future millennium.”

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