

Cover story

eType Ireland

Established in April, eType Ireland is an offshoot of Visualise, the ambient marketing company best known for its advertising panels on supermarket trolleys. Ciaran Fitzgerald, rugby legend and founder of Visualise, is managing



Keith O'Reilly

director of eType Ireland, while another Visualise director, Keith O'Reilly, is sales director. Coca-Cola, MindShare and Mediaedge:cia executive Michael Quilty takes the role of chairman.

The company is a 50-50 joint venture between Visualise and eType, a UK-based internet sales house owned by Media Initiatives Group (MIG), the UK's largest independent internet sales house which holds contracts with a number of high-traffic websites including The Weather Channel, Miniclip and National Rail Enquiries.

O'Reilly believes the timing is good for an internet sales house with strong performance-measurement credentials.

"Performance-based charging and performance-based pricing is where the market is going. And with the business climate starting to tighten up, there's a greater need to understand which advertising is performing and which isn't."

Jason Cooper, key account manager at eType Ireland, argues that, to date, the Irish market has operated on a CPM or CPC model and needs to be "re-educated" about the value of performance-based charging, where 'cost per

'Online media has reached a point where it's delivering results. It's continuing to evolve but the web has come of age over the past couple of years'

acquisition' or, more broadly, 'cost per action' (CPA) is the relevant metric.

However, O'Reilly emphasises that CPA is not relevant to every campaign and eType can also use the traditional CPM or CPC charging models.

"The analogy we use is that it's like direct response advertising. It's not necessarily applicable to every campaign's objectives. Many campaigns are just about building brand awareness and not about making a sale."

But eType Ireland offers more than just a range of different metrics. A software tool called 'Accelerator', developed by its UK sister company, works out how best to sell a particular product on behalf of the client. "We optimise the advertising towards whatever business goal is required," O'Reilly explains. "We have intelligence in our ad server that will work out what creative, ad size and type of publisher is needed to achieve that business goal."

The company also sells online ad space to companies who want to target Irish visitors to international websites that are clients of eType UK. Amazon.co.uk is one example. "But we're not going to offer a big portfolio of Irish websites. The thing that differentiates us is performance-based advertising," says O'Reilly.

www.etype-ireland.ie

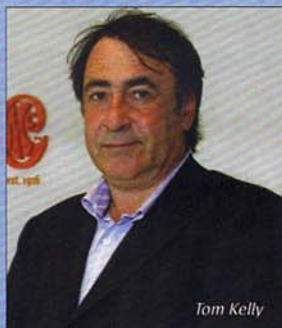
McConnells Interactive

An even newer entrant to the digital services market is McConnells advertising whose digital services arm, McConnells Interactive, has only just come into being. Heading it up is Tom Kelly, a heavyweight of the internet scene, whose pedigree goes back to 1994 when he started two of the first ISPs in the country, MediaNet and Club Internet (Clubi).

Kelly's task, as he sees it, is to "put more focus" on McConnells digital media services, which have been offered for some time but not under a separate banner. The new unit will be staffed by

"We have been recruiting and will continue to recruit over the next year. We're looking at five or six people at the moment and that will grow to at least ten, possibly more, in the coming year."

According to Kelly, McConnells Interactive offers a "full spectrum" of digital media services from search marketing consultancy to banner campaign management. Concept creation and development will also play an increasingly important role in the business, he says. This will require a combination of creative skills and the deep



Tom Kelly

Kelly is in no doubt that the time is now right for such a venture.

"In people's minds, online media has reached a point where it's delivering results. It's continuing to evolve but the web has come of age

iBelieve

iBelieve began trading on July 7th. The business was co-founded by Lee Thompson, former commercial director of Yahoo



UK & Ireland and founder of Metro Ireland, the free-sheet, and Dermot O'Reilly, a 12-year veteran of the digital agency sector.

"I suppose the basic pitch of the business is that we're a digital marketing services agency. Our job is to provide an outlet for agencies and clients wishing to advertise online," says Thompson, who is sales director of the new venture.

There are two sides to the business. The first is to act as an outsourced internet sales house, selling space on behalf of web publishers. The second is selling consultancy services to ad agencies and corporate clients to help them optimise and get a greater return from their search and affiliate marketing activities.

The business is so new that contracts are still being negotiated with a number of web publishers, although Thompson claims to have two in the bag already, with a number of others pending. While not willing to name names, he says they are "all branded content sites, both Irish and international".

He continues: "The focus for us is on partnering with sites that can deliver a good brand experience and strong audience demographics for our advertisers. There are some people out there who are selling gazillions of page impressions. We're more interested in selling people and profile and audience – that's now traditional media is typically traded."

Thompson believes that technology has played a crucial role in making the online medium attractive to advertisers. "A few years ago rich media didn't really exist. Now you have video advertising, podcasting, very sophisticated email marketing software; you have ads that are dynamic, experiential, pull-downs; ads that can be targeted to you based on cookie information – the scope of things you can do has widened enormously."

But he also thinks there is too much focus on the merits of one type of performance measurement tool over another. To his mind, each type of user activity – be it seeing an ad, clicking on it or buying a product – has merit and value to the brand owner.