



PROFILE

JOHN BROPHY

COMPANY

CARRIG SOLUTIONS

TITLE

**FOUNDER AND
MANAGING DIRECTOR**



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PROFILE JOHN BROPHY



John Brophy was approaching his 50th birthday when the unimaginable happened. After 11 years working at a senior level in IT management in a major multinational, he was made redundant. The news came without any warning. He was initially shell-shocked but within 48 hours had made the decision to start up his own business.

The notion of becoming an entrepreneur was something John had toyed with over the years. But there was always an excuse to postpone the decision. The push provided by the unexpected redundancy was exactly what was needed to turn the idea of becoming an entrepreneur into a reality.

I had felt for some time that I could provide a better service for customers than my employer was doing and now I had the opportunity to prove that I could deliver on that long held opinion. In 2009 Carrig Solutions was incorporated and in 2010 it started trading.

When John was made redundant, he had received a redundancy payment. *I decided to invest the entire sum in the business and it was the best financial decision I ever made. In addition, by involving my Bank from day one, and by keeping my promises to them, I found it relatively easy to obtain credit facilities after we had built up a track record. Banks will not support a badly-thought out scheme and they will always look for figures – not words.*

John Brophy drew on his considerable previous experience and was clear from the start that Carrig Solutions would offer their customers, the benefits of over 30 years IT expertise in a friendly and personable manner. The focus would be on enhancing customers' IT Infrastructure in ways that would add real value. Excellence in service delivery was to characterise the company from the start and small test orders soon grew as the company proved itself.

Carrig Solutions has just taken on its 8th full time direct employee and also has two part time employees, as well as a network of sub-contractors. It now provides IT infrastructure support services to blue-chip companies across Ireland and the UK.

Entrepreneurship is not for everyone. You

have to really believe in what you are doing and what being your own boss, with all the risks and uncertainties that that entails, really means. It should not be a fall back situation when someone cannot find alternative employment. It is certainly not a soft option.

John Brophy cautions about the hard work that is involved in getting a new business off the ground. He laughs as he refers to taking Sunday mornings off – *my four hours off a week!*

For John the biggest challenges to date have been getting the right staff and finding the right premises. *We are an IT support company and the availability of skilled staff, with the right attitude, has been a consistent challenge. The poor broadband infrastructure in Wicklow has also restricted us in terms of suitable premises.*

The highs have outweighed the challenges, however. John refers to the day the sign went up over the door as a moment of considerable pride and emotion. *Even though I had been in business for nearly six months at that stage, somehow seeing the sign up made it very real.*

John Brophy is very clear that in a service business, the business is only as good as the people within it. His philosophy is to surround himself with excellent people and to build a winning team from the outset. *We are only as good as the people on our team and seeing the team punch above its weight by working together is extremely satisfying.*

John Brophy has clearly shown that age is no barrier in setting up a business that can grow from strength to strength in a relatively short period. He acknowledges the support he received from Wicklow Country Enterprise Board particularly their support for his undertaking a Management Development Programme, which he found excellent.

Carrig Solutions is constantly recruiting and building its team as the number and diversity of customers increases. *The one thing I have learned is that you can't stand still but by being positive and not setting any limits there is no knowing what you can achieve. The advantage of being a little older when starting a business is that you know what doesn't work!*

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