



PROFILE
MIKE HEARY

TITLE
Entrepreneur/Advisor

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Michael Heary, looking back over his life, recognises the influences that the economic and social norms of the times he lived in had on his choice of profession and early career. "I grew up in a time when a good steady secure job was the ideal. Ireland at the time was characterised by high levels of emigration and unemployment. My goal was to earn a living and to be in a position to provide for a future wife and family". Michael qualified as a chartered accountant. Becoming an entrepreneur or pursuing a route involving risk would not have come into Michael's mind at that time.

Like many of his friends, Michael spent many years working overseas, forging out a good career for himself. He returned to Ireland in a position to retire. But retirement in the conventional sense was not on his agenda. Now for the first time in his life, Michael found himself in a position to engage in what interested him.

Michael's wife is American and it was through her that he became acquainted with magazines aimed at the active and enquiring over 50s. He felt that there was a gap in the market for something similar in Ireland. Now in his mid sixties, and without any experience of publishing, Michael decided to give it a go. "Living It!" was the result. The magazine was positive in outlook and emphasised the sense of adventure that he believed was latent in the over 50s and often not catered for.

All the elements of editorial, production and advertising were outsourced. The magazine grew steadily until it reached a circulation of about 6,000. After four years, the advertising proved the stumbling block. While Michael had thoroughly enjoyed the experience while it lasted, sound commercial sense prevailed and he discontinued publishing rather than face certain losses.

While publishing "Living It!" Michael Heary had become friendly with the two



owner managers of Absolute Graphics (www.agraphics.ie), which was contracted to do the layout and printing for the magazine. When the magazine was discontinued, the executives asked him if he would give them the benefit of his financial and commercial skills. He was happy to do so. At this stage he has 10% shareholding through sweat equity in the business and has worked closely with the executives to install new management and financial systems and to make the hard decisions that the current challenging times require.

Now aged seventy, Michael Heary is delighted to be able to put his skills to good use helping others in a way that makes a real difference to them and their business. "I believe that there are many others that have a lifetime of experience but whose latent potential as advisors and mentors has not occurred to them. These people can make a real contribution through advising and mentoring others, having learnt from their own failures as well as their successes. It seems to me that not only would they make a difference in strengthening businesses to meet their current challenges, but that they would have great fun doing just that - just like I am!"

