

DoneDeal chief executive John Warburton says the site will not restrict itself to senior-level jobs
Picture: Mary Browne



Website will provide fresh job offers on a daily basis

BY GARETH NAUGHTON

Online classifieds website DoneDeal has launched a jobs board that has the potential to significantly shake-up the industry.

Allowing advertisers to come in at a relatively low price point and promising jobseekers unique content on a daily basis, DoneDealJobs.ie, poses a significant challenge to the established players in the market.

Launched last year, the jobs site is an extension of the hugely successful DoneDeal classifieds business which was launched in 2005 and has experienced rapid and consistent growth.

Chief executive John Warburton said that the move into the jobs classified business is a natural fit for the company – the customers are different but the fundamentals that made the general classifieds site successful are the same.

“We started mainly because we were inundated by businesses large and small looking for an area to advertise their jobs,” he said.

“It was obvious that there was a gap in the market for

an affordable and easy-to-use solution both for jobseekers and advertisers. We went off and conducted some research to discover what they wanted from a website and then we built it.”

The pricing structure on DoneDeal Jobs is flexible, but the basic fee of €99 to place an advertisement for two months is an affordable starting point for SMEs. Employers can post their job themselves without having to deal with an account executive if they don’t want to, but the site is also aiming to pull-in business from large companies looking for multiple hires, and tailored packages with dedicated account managers are available.

For jobseekers, the promise is that the site will provide unique content on a daily basis so you won’t be wasting your time by revisiting it only to find the same roles being advertised.

“You can go to some jobs sites and they are basically lots and lots of different agencies offering the same job. Sometimes they have slightly different titles so you can end up applying for the same job multiple times. We have had a lot of feedback about that so we wanted to make sure,

to the best of our ability, that we can supply unique content or jobs on our site. That is one of the key focus areas for us,” Warburton said.

A concerted effort has also been made to ensure that the site is not flooded with “fake jobs” posted by agencies on a fishing mission.

“We handpicked all of the agencies to make sure that we did not overpopulate in each county so there were unique jobs, and we make sure that our account managers speak to those agencies every day to make sure that the content is as fresh, new and unique as possible,” said Warburton.

“It has proved to be a massive time-saver for many of the businesses that we have looked at all over Europe and, more importantly, it gives them a list of people they are looking for in real time. It is literally a matchmaking service, a technological Doormail,” he said.

Having established the site, the coming year will see the company stepping up the marketing effort designed to get the word out about it. This includes front page advertisements in papers across the country, an extensive radio ad campaign, advertisements across the Luas system, sponsoring Jobs Expos and making their presence felt at the Na-

tional Ploughing Championships with its 200,000 visitors. “It is an investment, but it’s what you have to do,” said Warburton. The aim is to make DoneDeal Jobs an automatic go-to site for both employers and jobseekers.

Warburton is keen to emphasise the openness of the site – people will be able to find full-time, part-time and seasonal jobs on it, across a broad range of sectors and including everything from entry level to senior management.

“It is the same ethos as the DoneDeal site – it is a site for your community so we shouldn’t be restricted to senior-level jobs which in a lot of cases is where the money is on a lot of these jobs boards. If you are looking for any type of work we will have it for you on DoneDeal,” he said.

Warburton said that the effect of DoneDeal’s entry into the market has been to improve competitiveness across the board. “I do believe that it is affecting pricing throughout the industry, which is only a good thing for consumers. It was the same thing when DoneDeal entered the market for classifieds, and it is no different in jobs,” he said.

Employers can post their jobs themselves



Sarah Cunningham of Brown Bag Films is recruiting for roles across the animation industry

Brown Bag drawing up plans for the future

Irish animation powerhouse starts recruitment drive for highly-skilled workers

BY GARETH NAUGHTON

The buoyant Irish animation industry continues to grow as highlighted by the recent announcement that Brown Bag Films is once again expanding its workforce.

Having already recruited an extra 30 bodies last year to bring staffing levels to nearly 150 at its offices in Smithfield in Dublin’s north inner city, the company is looking to immediately recruit another 16 people across a range of skills with plans for more.

“We currently have five productions in-house,” said Susan Cunningham, HR manager at Brown Bag.

“One of them is ramping-down at the minute, but another is ramping-up, so we have continued development in-house, which is great.

“We had a huge increase last year with 30 people and, at the moment, we are looking for 16, but we will be looking for staff throughout the year.

“This is just the first of our recruitment drives. Things are looking very positive for us for this coming year,” she said.

Among the projects under way at Brown Bag are the popular and Annie Award nominated Disney Jr show Doc McStuffins, Bafta-nominated Peter Rabbit for Nickelodeon, another Disney Jr pre-school show Henry Hugglemonster,

and the Emmy-nominated Octonauts, which airs on CBeebies.

The present recruitment drive is not solely confined to animators – the company is looking for people to fill roles across the production team and many of those recruited will be working on multiple projects.

“We are talking about roles for a full production crew from production co-ordinators, assistant production managers, through to animators and textures, so from the very broad skill set of animators into the very specific skills of people who do effects texturing and lighting – very highly skilled roles across the production,” she said.

“An animation company is known for animation roles, but a crew is an awful lot more than just the animators, and it is across all the functions within a crew that we are trying to hire for.”

Brown Bag has spearheaded the surge in Irish animation since it achieved worldwide acclaim for the Oscar-nominated short film Give Yer Aul Sins in 2002, following that up with another nomination for Granny O’Grimm’s Sleeping Beauty in 2010.

Ireland’s animation sector has been singled-out by the government as an example of somewhere that the country can make a name for itself, supported, of course, by

Section 481 tax breaks. There are more than 1,000 people working in animation here with substantial growth experienced over the past five years.

That does mean that competition for good talent is intense, however, especially because the industry is often also competing against gaming companies for the same personnel.

“We have to look for key talent and talent is what is going to grow Brown Bag Films across all of the roles that we have, not only from our key production roles but our support structures in terms of finance and IT,” said Cunningham.

“Finding key talent has been a challenge in Ireland, and we do look abroad as well as here. We have really, really good talent in animation skills in Ireland, but when you look specifically at things like lighting, they are key skills that can be very hard to find. We do not rule out anything.”

The industry is very buoyant at the moment, said Cunningham, with plenty of development and growth going on.

“It certainly offers highly-skilled employment for people so it is a good sector for people to think about in terms of careers.

“There is a lot more to producing a TV production than just animators – they are central obviously – but there is a huge amount of other employment around it,” said Cunningham.

For more information, visit brownbagfilms.com/jobs

People Problems Relationship Breakdown

Dealing with casual and part-time employees

BY GERALD FLYNN

Employment contracts have become more difficult to manage in recent years, as casual and part-time employees have secured more protections, particularly from firms that tried to keep them on rolling temporary contracts.

Managing this situation became a big headache for Dublin Institute of Technology recently.

In late 2006, a DIT chemistry lecturer, Dr Michael Cox, was granted a career break and the vacancy was advertised.

It was filled by Noelle Cunningham, a former quality manager with Helsinn Chemicals, as an assistant lecturer on “a temporary whole-time assis-

tant lecturer” contract.

Before her appointment, Cunningham received her fixed-term renewable contract, which was due to expire at the end of August 2007, with a letter noting that “this is a specified purpose contract insofar as you are replacing a permanent member of staff who is on career break for the academic session 2006-2007.”

The following summer, she received a notice from DIT stating that her fixed-term contract was coming to an end in August 2007, but adding that the faculty head had recommended her re-appointment, as Dr Cox had been granted an extension.

DIT offered her a specified-purpose contract. A year later, the correspondence was repeated, noting that the

second temporary contract would end in August 2008, but the faculty head had again recommended Cunningham be offered the replacement position as the original lecturer and been granted a further extension of his career break.

Strictly, there was no need to provide a new fixed-term contract in 2008. Cunningham was on a continuing specific-purpose contract, without a termination date, as the lecturer she was replacing was on a further extension so the specific purpose was continuing.

By 2009, DIT was subject to public sector employment restrictions, which banned renewal of fixed-term contracts and no fixed-term renewal was sent.

In July 2010, however, she was issued with a “specified-purpose contract update”



Gerald Flynn

letter, as the lecturer had received yet a further career break extension, adding that it would last until at least the end of August 2011.

It looked to her as if this pharmacy teaching work

would continue for a long time as she heard from industry sources that Cox, whom she was replacing, was busy working on contracts with pharmaceutical firms.

Then, in the summer of 2011, she received a further notice that the career break would end in August as the permanent chemistry lecturer would return for the new academic year after a four-and-a-half year break.

The lecturer then, however, applied for a “job-sharing” role, which was approved, and is applied by DIT on an annual basis. The institute advertised for a pro-rata, part-time assistance lecturer to facilitate this part-time or “job-share situation for the 2011-12 academic year”.

Cunning was again offered this part-time work with a

letter from DIT’s human resources managers, noting that it was a specific-purpose contract arising from a job-share arrangement and would end when the permanent lecturer returned to full-time duties.

She claimed that the “job share” lecturer was rarely in the college and his boss, Professor Declan McCormack, told the Employment Appeals Tribunal that he had seen him once there in September 2011, and recalled meeting him on another occasion to discuss his resignation.

With his anticipated departure, Cunningham approached the HR managers, seeking a contract of indefinite duration or effectively a permanent job. In November 2011, the permanent lecturer did, in fact, quit his job and Cunningham was sent a letter stating that her spe-

cific contract and part-time job would end in December as there would no longer be a job-share situation.

Weeks later, she was told to no longer correct students’ exam scripts or assist post-graduate research students. She accused DIT of failing to show humanity when it gave her two weeks’ notice to leave after teaching there for five years.

DIT rejected that it had breached any employment contract, but said they were so many and varied, that it was up to the Employment Appeals Tribunal to untangle them, interpreting the Protection of Employees (Fixed Term Workers) Act 2003.

It concluded that the series of contracts – some fixed, some deemed specific-purpose and others implied –

extended over five years. No contract had been issued in 2008, so it became an implied fixed-term contract and, therefore, Cunningham was entitled to an indefinite duration contract after the fourth fixed-term contract expired and was awarded €14,978 for her unfair dismissal.

After completing three years of continuous employment, a person may only be offered one more fixed-term contract for a maximum of one year.

In other words, you cannot employ someone continuously for more than four years without offering them a permanent job contract.

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Philip Lee Solicitors has appointed a new partner to its environment and climate group. Rachel Minch joins from Barry Doyle and Co, where she was a senior associate for ten years. Prior to that, she was a solicitor with McCann FitzGerald for five years.



Alicia O’Connor is Skoda Ireland’s new head of sales. O’Connor has been the company’s head of planning since March 2012, when she joined from Audi Ireland, where she was area sales manager for six years.



Boots Ireland has appointed Liz Kerr to the dual roles of director of pharmacy and pharmacy superintendent. Kerr has been head of region for Boots Stores Ireland for 12 months and, before that, spent one year as an area manager with the company.



Labouré O’Reilly is joining Mediaworks in the role of client manager. O’Reilly has been account manager (media planner) with Carat Ireland for the past 15 months, having joined the company just over a year before that as account executive (media planner).