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MARTIN KILMARTIN

Sionnach Buí



From Connemara, Co Galway, Martin Kilmartin desired to experience life outside of Ireland. He opted for Montreal in Quebec, Canada.

Before emigrating, Martin had worked for Traventec, a Galway-based travel software company, after completing a degree in software development at GMIT. “They ended up being bought by another Irish company called OpenJaw Technologies, and I worked for them for a couple of years,” he says.

OpenJaw then opened the door for Martin to move to Canada when they passed his CV to Telus, which managed Air Canada’s loyalty programme, Aeroplan. “As soon as I got to Canada, I met with them, and they made me an offer,” he says.

This work paved the way for Martin to become an entrepreneur when Air Canada hired him directly but required him to set up his own business.

After nine years, a desire to fully embrace entrepreneurship and move back to Ireland prompted Martin to take a break when the pandemic hit. “I wanted to learn

the process of entrepreneurship,” he says.

Still based in Montreal and unable to return to Ireland due to Covid, Martin enlisted the help of his brother in setting up his software company, Sionnach Buí, in Ireland in 2019. “The goal is to move back by 2023,” he says.

Sionnach Buí builds e-commerce platforms for companies in the travel industry. “I have good experience of enterprise technologies within large organisations. I aim to help smaller businesses improve or begin their digital presence in a way that meets their business needs today and into the future,” he says.

The plan to return to Ireland stems from a desire to be closer to family. “I’m married here with children, and my wife is from India, so we’re both far from family,” he says.

Martin found that some of the processes involved in setting up a business in Ireland were more complex than in Canada. Still, he says client acquisition has not been complex, as everyone is working online due to the pandemic.

He says the Back For Business programme motivated him to keep going and he received excellent advice from Áine Denn, his Lead Entrepreneur. He has no hesitation in recommending the programme. “It’s an opportunity not to be missed and may be essential for those returning after an absence,” he says.

Martin’s standout moment for the business so far was very encouraging: “I was paid scheduled payments ahead of time, as well as more than was invoiced. That was quite a moment,” he says. “They decided the service was better than they had experienced in the market.”

As well as Martin, Sionnach Buí currently employs three part-time contractors to service clients in Canada and Ireland. He plans to establish the company as a go-to software partner for companies in the travel and tourism sector. “We would particularly like to work with companies in the Gaeltacht that want to improve their digital presence, as we are big supporters of the Irish language,” he says.

POSITION

Owner/CEO

WHAT WE DO

Software development services primarily focused on e-commerce websites for the travel sector.

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