

Irish Examiner

25.08.2008

A Limerick firm is reaching out to concert-goers with event guides and updates transmitted via their mobiles, writes TRISH DROMEY

Targeting the next generation

LIMERICK-based company MobaNode is one of a generation of new companies who are tapping into the marketing potential of the mobile phone. Aiming to become an international player in the mobile proximity marketing space, it provided information and content for Oxegen-goers this summer and will be doing the same this weekend at Electric Picnic.

"At Oxegen, MobaNode provided concert-goers with an event guide and it created two mobile applications, one which turned a mobile screen into a torch, so festival-goers could use their phones to light their way, and another that turned a mobile screen into a disco-light which could be held in the air to locate friends.

"It also ran a competition and sent out selected music tracks," says MobaNode founder Shane McAllister.

All of this is done through Bluetooth wireless technology and nodes set up by the company at a venue.

Concert-goers with Bluetooth-enabled mobiles can read notices at the event



Shane McAllister: The possibilities are endless.

and opt in to accept the content being offered.

Mr McAllister says the possibilities of this type of technology is huge. "It can be used at any event that has fans, who welcome content related to an event, especially when it's free," observes Mr McAllister.

MobaNode has used its technology at the Carlsberg Comedy Festival, the Taste of Dublin and Green Energy Festival. It now has its sights on the UK, where there are 500 festivals a year.

The idea for the company came to Mr McAllister in 2006 when he subscribed to a Vodafone service for highlights of a Munster

rugby game. An electronics engineer, he had previously worked for software company MagneticTime and for elearning company, Prime-Learning.com.

Using his own funding and a feasibility grant from Enterprise Ireland, he set up MobaNode in October 2007. In January this year the company moved into the Enterprise Acceleration Centre in Limerick, signed up to participate in a Venture Start 2 programme and was identified by Enterprise Ireland as a high potential start-up.

MobaNode's new service had its first outing at the Chernobyl Children's fundraising ball in February

and in May the company secured the contract to provide Bluetooth services at the Green Energy Festival in Dublin Castle.

MobaNode has focused mainly on music events because the age of concert goers is perfect for this type of service.

"They are young, mobile savvy and consume a lot of information and content on their mobiles," says Mr McAllister.

One of the company's aims is to have MobaNode equipment permanently installed at all major concert venues.

And for the future? Britain is the big target, he says.

Factfile

- **Company: MobaNode.**
- **Location: Enterprise Acceleration Centre, Limerick.**
- **Founder: Shane McAllister.**
- **Staff: One.**
- **Business: Mobile proximity marketer.**
- **Website: www.mobanode.com.**