

# DIGITAL HUB TAKES STEPS TO TRANSFORM HOME-BUILDS

Ireland's first ever all-in-one marketplace for home-builds and improvements is now providing homeowners with direct access to construction professionals, products and services in one seamless digital hub. Since Housebuild.ie went live in February, over 20,000 users have logged on to the site to date in search of tradespeople in their area.

**H**ousebuild.ie has signed up more than 2,000 professionals nationwide, ranging from bricklayers, plumbers and carpenters, to surveyors, engineers and architects, offering an all-in-one access to products, professionals, ideas and advice.

With more than 20,000 unique users now logging on to the site since its launch in February, in search of tradespeople, they can also buy from retail partners such as EZ Living Furniture and Tile Merchant, and browse the 'inspiration' section for home decor and interior design ideas.

Housebuild.ie has also a Construction Hub with practical guides and easy-to-follow 'how to' videos on everything from building regulations, planning and costing to energy efficient, Passive House and NZEB projects.

## ALL UNDER THE ONE SITE

"There is no comparable site in Ireland or the UK like Housebuild.ie, offering everything in one online ecosystem. We have everything you need for home-builds, improvements, and decor. From tradespeople you can rate and review, to furniture, fixtures, fittings, and simple how-to guides designed to take the fear out of any project – it's all there, and it's badly needed," Eoghain Ryan says.

Ryan runs the business with his sister Ailish Ryan as co-director, and Kevin McDonagh, an engineer who has joined as MD following a successful 20-year career in the life sciences sector.

Housebuild.ie has been developed over four-and-a-half years at a cost of about €950,000, including financial investment of €450,000 and thousands of man-hours spanning engineering, software and business development.

The tech stack has been developed in conjunction with James Whelton, the Cork-born Founder of CoderDojo, and Joe Smyth, Co-Founder of Altocloud, the successful Galway SaaS company specialising in Customer Analytics.

Both Whelton and Smyth have joined the Board of Directors at Housebuild.ie, which is headquartered in Salthill, Galway, and currently employs 15 people.

## BUILDING REGULATIONS APP

Eoghain and Ailish also run Ryan and Associates, an engineering consultancy based in Salthill which specialises in fire safety. The siblings launched a free mobile app for construction professionals



*With plans to launch into the UK later this year, the team hopes to go live in the US by 2024, notes Eoghain Ryan.*

in 2015, offering a one-stop shop for building regulations.

The Building Regulations app will now be rolled into the Building Regulations, Planning and Guidelines section of the site, adding further value for professionals using the site.

The business model for Housebuild.ie includes five separate revenue streams, including subscriptions for professionals profiled on the site, advertising revenue from consumer brands, an affiliate sales programme for smaller product suppliers and partnerships with financial and insurance providers.

Professionals can sign up for free for now, but when a certain number of professionals and unique users has been reached, a subscription charge will kick in, starting at €9.99.

"We will have an affiliate sales programme whereby we get a percentage of the sale of products featured on the site. We also want to have full e-commerce capability, and are in talks with mortgage providers and home, professional indemnity, and public liability insurers," Ryan noted.