

EMERGING NEW BUSINESS



Rachel O'Donnell, founder, The Ux Studio

“I wanted to create something that was made of high quality material but was soft enough so you can bend and work out while wearing them”

innovation and product design to set her on the right path.

“I wanted to create something that was made of high quality material but was soft enough so you can bend and work out while wearing them. The leggings are like a combination of tights and Spanx – soft like tights, but with enough hold to give you a streamlined shape,” she explains.

Now women of all shapes and sizes, including celebrities such as Vogue Williams, are backing the brand with its distinctive heart shape on the bum. Within a year, Peachy Lean has built up 14,000 followers on Instagram and sold around 4,000 units in Ireland and 24 other countries. Keegan works from her kitchen table and outsources the manufacturing to China.

The community aspect of the brand has been central to its popularity. A campaign called ‘I am Peachy Lean’ called out to women on Instagram to get involved in a photo shoot. Nearly 650 women registered their interest and Keegan decided to turn it into an event at the DCU Ryan Academy in Citywest, Dublin.

“We took women in groups of ten into a room and asked them to tell their stories as well as put compliments on stickers on each other. Twelve winners were picked for their unique stories and are now brand

ambassadors.” One of these is Trisha Lewis, who lost 100lb in a year and was on The Late Late Show in January.

www.peachylean.com

THE UX STUDIO

Established in Galway two years ago by Rachel O'Donnell, The UX Studio specialises in building digital products and interfaces by focusing on both user needs and the business objectives of its clients.

“Instead of sitting at a boardroom table deciding what end users want, we ask them directly and involve them throughout the process,” O'Donnell explains.

One of The UX Studio's key projects to date which illustrates this has been with med-tech multinational Medtronic. In the clean rooms at its Galway facility, there are multiple machines with different interfaces. “Having numerous

interfaces from different vendors was not intuitive to the users' needs. This was getting in the way of Medtronic's two core goals – that of reducing downtime and maintaining quality,” says O'Donnell. “We spoke to operators, engineers, R&D people as well as maintenance staff actually doing the job on a day-to-day basis and defined a set of requirements.”

The team highlighted to Medtronic management that they needed to consider colour blindness, for example, and got around this problem by using icons and words instead of colours.

The UX Studio's proof of concept with Medtronic has led to referrals in the med-tech sector. Now employing seven people, it also works with SMEs in Dublin, helping them with e-commerce solutions. “We don't design run-of-the-mill standard websites; it is more about functionality,” says O'Donnell.

“An auctioneering firm came to us saying they wanted a website, but we asked them to tell us about their business

and the problems they had. One was the fact they didn't have time to upload property listings on different platforms. We looked at how their users want to absorb information and found they had a short attention span and preferred to watch rather than read. The solution we came up with allows the firm to upload photos and a video for each property on multiple platforms.”

www.theuxstudio.ie

ZARRDIA

With over 20 years' experience between them working in IT companies, Finn Killeen and Martin Davis set up Zarrdia in 2016 because they are “fundamentally passionate about helping people”, according to Killeen.

“What we found was that the IT industry is predicated on sales vendors and the agendas of the larger vendors in the world which provide software and hardware. We felt there was nobody sitting on the side of the customer in these conversations,” he says.

“We can sit with a customer and help them to make very strategic and tactical IT decisions, whether it is in relation to the management of their existing IT legacy estate, moving into the Devops and cloud native environments or a hybrid solution thereof.”

“We already have 11 major clients who can see we are helping them to make decisions that aren't based on our own sales agendas”

The backbone of Zarrdia's business is to focus on areas that will give clients the most competitive advantage and how to use IT to enable that. “Technology is changing at such a pace and we're the worst industry in the world for following buzzwords. We call it ambulance chasing when customers feel scared to spend money on different types of solutions,” says Killeen.

“This is wrong because every business is at a different maturity level. For some it is the right decision to leave the IT estate they have as it is, while others should jump at new technologies.

“What we try to do is develop small pieces of work to demonstrate what we're about. From there, things have snowballed. A ten-day piece of work becomes an 80-day engagement, for example. We already have 11 major clients who can see we are helping them to make decisions that aren't based on our own sales agendas.”

Zarrdia generated over €1.5m in revenues in its first full year (2018). It employs 11 people and also uses up to 30 contractors on a flexible basis when required.

www.zarrdia.com



Finn Killeen and Martin Davis, co-founders of Zarrdia