

## Virgin Media's Backing Business Community: Fostering SME Growth and Collaboration



In the wake of the pandemic, small businesses faced unprecedented challenges. The economic landscape shifted, and businesses had to adapt rapidly to survive. Recognising the plight of SMEs, **Virgin Media** launched its **Backing Business** campaign. Over 400 businesses were promoted across Virgin Media's platforms as a result. However, the challenges SMEs face are not limited to the pandemic; they are ongoing and multifaceted. Today, Virgin Media Business celebrates not just the success of the original campaign, but the dawn of a

new and even bigger initiative, aimed at propelling SMEs towards growth.

This year, as well as expanding its network reach, Virgin Media Business is expanding its commitment to small businesses through an initiative called the Backing Business Community, aimed at addressing ongoing challenges and fostering growth for SMEs. At the heart of this initiative is the creation of a vibrant community network, where SMEs can share experiences and knowledge and access invaluable resources. Debbie Behan, Business Products, Sales, and Marketing Manager at Virgin Media Business, aptly captures the essence of this initiative: "SMEs are facing numerous challenges; rising costs, increased taxes and more. We acknowledge their struggles and are committed to leveraging our resources and platforms to foster connections, share

experiences and knowledge, and promote as many small businesses as we can, ultimately aiding them in moving forward."

In February, the community celebrated its official launch, welcoming esteemed past Backing Business winners to the panel. Their words underlined the profound impact of the Backing Business initiative on their businesses. Through candid discussions and shared experiences, these entrepreneurs highlighted the lonely journey of small businesses, emphasising the crucial and transformative power of support and collaboration in driving business success.

This burgeoning community offers Irish SMEs a fertile platform for expansion, learning and prosperity, fostering networking opportunities and uncovering new avenues for growth. The Backing Business Community promises to shine

a spotlight on its members through social media features and monthly newsletters, while also offering enticing prizes such as TV slots and ads, print advertising and free broadband, as well as making sure the community members will gain exclusive access to enriching networking experiences through their monthly virtual and online events.

This exciting hub is open for everyone, whether you are a Virgin Media Business customer or not. Behan concludes: "Our community is open to every SME, it's free to join for all. We are aware of the challenges small businesses face and we are here to help."

To register your business to this bold and energetic community, all you have to do is to search "Backing Business" or join via [virginmedia.ie/business/the-hub/backing-business/](https://virginmedia.ie/business/the-hub/backing-business/)

## Elevated Meetings and Events at The Johnstown Estate's Conference Centre

Conveniently located just 35 minutes from Dublin Airport, experience the newly reimagined **Conference Centre at The Johnstown Estate**. Featuring luxurious design accents, cutting-edge technology, infusion of natural daylight and captivating garden views, this revitalised space offers world-class meeting facilities for your next company meeting, event or conference.

The stand alone Corporate Centre exudes sophistication from the moment guests enter through a private entrance and boasts of opulent meeting rooms, the grand Gala Ballroom and a newly fashioned lobby lounge, which provides an intimate setting for private conversations, breakout sessions or exclusive events, adding to the centre's allure.

Complementing this space are dedicated meeting areas and the magnificent glass atrium of the Orangery, which features a stylish cocktail bar with an adjoining terrace overlooking the manicured lawns and walled garden. During warmer months, the terrace is



perfect for corporate retreats, team-building activities, relaxed barbecues or evening alfresco receptions beneath lantern-lit trees.

The great Gala Ballroom, renowned for formal conferences, easily transforms to host glamorous parties, launches and receptions, offering versatile options for diverse events.

Furnished with state-of-the-art audio-visual facilities, high-density wi-fi, and adaptable setups, the

Corporate Centre ensures seamless interaction between on-site and remote participants, enabling dynamic meetings, conferences and events – all supported by a dedicated on-site technical team.

These stunning renovations have redefined social spaces and elevated interiors, creating bright, spacious areas with high ceilings, large windows and plush furnishings ideal for both daytime gatherings and evening events. This versatile centre

can cater to groups of any size, accommodating intimate gatherings or seating up to 1,200 delegates, offering endless possibilities for event planners.

Elevate your event with inspiring menus from the renowned Fire & Salt restaurant or The Coach House Brasserie, tailored to suit every occasion – whether an extravagant gala dinner, relaxed barbecue, professional business luncheon or an intimate private dining experience.

Additionally, the centre offers direct access to the hotel's 127 guestrooms, suites and 40 lodges, the Parterre cocktail bar and an award-winning Spa. There is also a helipad, complimentary on-site parking and electric vehicle charging facilities, including six Tesla supercharging bays.

A dedicated team of exceptional event planners ensures the success of every meeting or event, providing personalised attention to detail and service excellence throughout your experience at The Johnstown Estate.

[www.thejohnstownestate.com](https://www.thejohnstownestate.com)

## Unlocking Automated Gates: NEAT Gates' New Turnkey Solution

Located in a state-of-the-art factory in Damastown, Co Dublin, **NEAT Gates** produces Europe's finest hand-finished aluminium gates.

The automation of NEAT Gates adds convenience and security to what has traditionally been a potential headache involving the co-ordination of surveyors, gate manufacturers, fitters, electricians, civil contractors, automation experts and landscapers – all in concert with potential delays, miscommunication and frustration.

After customers choose their gate design, NEAT Gates makes the process simple by completing the specialist work within its factory. A specially designed frame that includes the gates, posts and automation is created. Everything, including automation and wiring, is factory-installed and tested to



operate exactly as desired. All that is required is to install the posts and the cross-driveway frame, which includes pre-wired ducting. Once set, the gates are hung and the system is plugged in using prewired

connections. Although professional teams are available for assistance, there is a self-install option for any competent tradespersons or experienced DIY enthusiasts, who can handle the installation with

ease. A suitable tested power supply (5/6 amp, which is isolated at the dwelling) must be provided at the gate location, completed by a qualified electrician.

The beauty of NEAT Gates' approach lies in its simplicity. The automation is installed, set up and commissioned within factory-controlled conditions, all operating to the customer's precise requirements.

See [www.neatgates.com](http://www.neatgates.com) or contact on 01 5253259. Or why not arrange a factory visit to view the wide range of exceptional aluminium gates.

*The Phoenix* received the above exclusive pre-launch information for the launch of this new automatic aluminium gate solution expected in May 2024.

## Lifeline Ambulance Service: Leading the Way in Care and Innovation



**Lifeline Ambulance Service** holds the position of the second-largest ambulance provider in the state. Established in 1998 by CEO David Hall, Lifeline operates from 11 different bases nationwide, with its headquarters located in Leixlip, Co Kildare. Since its inception, Lifeline has been steadily treating and transporting an increasing number of patients each year, achieved through the employment of high-quality staff equipped with the latest technology and equipment.

Lifeline Ambulance Service stands as a wholly owned Irish private ambulance company and over the years it has witnessed continuous growth, solidifying its status as Ireland's largest private ambulance company. In addition to its primary service, the company offers the Lifeline Ambulance Education programme, headquartered in Galway, providing a range of courses such as CFRA and EMT. Managing an average of 38

ambulances on weekdays and 13 on weekends, Lifeline transports 24,000 patients and travels four million kilometers annually. It also operates an exclusive organ transplant transport service nationwide, boasting a fleet of 49 ambulances, with 20 new vehicles expected in 2024, alongside 10 dedicated organ transplant transport vehicles. The company's workforce exceeds 200 employees, comprising dispatchers, EMT's, and paramedics.

With an unwavering commitment to values such as patient-centred care, compassion, professionalism, safety, reliability, innovation, ethical practices and employee development, Lifeline Ambulance Service aims to be the preferred choice for transportation. Setting the standard for excellence in the industry, it seeks to make a positive difference in the lives of those it serves while ensuring the highest quality of care and support. [www.lifeline.ie](http://www.lifeline.ie)

## Expanding Horizons: Sandoz's Strategic Move in Ireland

In a bold strategic move, **Sandoz Limited**, the world's largest generic and biosimilar company, has acquired the remaining shares in **Rowex Ltd**, a prominent supplier of prescription and non-prescription medicines in Ireland. This acquisition marks the culmination of a successful 30-year joint venture between Sandoz and Rowa Pharmaceuticals, solidifying Sandoz's position in the European market and highlighting its potential for standalone growth.

With its base in Bantry, Co Cork, Rowex Ltd brings decades of expertise in developing pharmaceutical products to the table. Sandoz plans to capitalise on this expertise by continuing to invest significantly in the business, with the aim of launching more affordable medicines to meet patient needs and create additional highly skilled jobs. Importantly, all staff at Rowex Ltd will remain with the company, ensuring continuity and stability in operations.

Diane DiGangi Trench, Country Head and General Manager for Sandoz UK & Ireland, commented: "We are delighted to expand fully into

the Irish market after a long and successful joint venture. We have ambitious plans to grow the business and see a huge opportunity for the Irish healthcare system to have better access to more affordable medicines."

Brigitte Wagner-Halswick, owner of Rowa Pharmaceuticals Ltd, reflected on Rowex's remarkable journey over the past three decades: "Rowex Ltd started operations in 1993 and has grown to be a significant presence in the Irish markets providing high-quality and cost-effective medicines to healthcare professionals and patients. I am excited for the future of the company and I would like to wish Sandoz and all the team at Rowex Ltd every success in the years to come."

This acquisition not only strengthens Sandoz's European foothold but also underscores its commitment to pioneering access for patients worldwide. With a portfolio of over 1,500 products addressing a wide range of diseases, Sandoz continues to lead the way in delivering affordable healthcare solutions to millions of patients globally.