

# Construction **business** and **finance** conference

*Threats and opportunities in a turbulent market*

Venue: Croke Park Stadium  
(Hogan Mezzanine), Dublin 3  
Date: Thursday 26th June, 2008

"THERE'S A LOT OF CORRECTION TO BE  
DONE...SEVERAL BUILDERS AND  
DEVELOPERS WILL GO OUT OF BUSINESS"

(recent media comments from a leading property developer)



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The front page quote would have been regarded as shocking had it been stated more than 6 months ago. In today's rapidly changing and often negative construction business environment we are getting used to such comments.

With each passing day, there is more news of deterioration in the building sector. Companies are dealing with significant economic uncertainty, bank debt issues and credit restrictions, and most importantly, a rapid loss or at best, postponement of clients work and the resultant problems that arise with such a slowdown. Examinership and company restructuring as the "next big thing" for the construction industries, a leading trade journal recently headlined.

Too many companies still feel they can struggle through and be ok, mentally operating on the previous year's business attitudes. Therefore balancing debts, chasing turnover at the expense of profit margins, shedding staff without planning, and being reactive rather than proactive to their business means many are indeed just surviving. This is akin to moving chairs around the Titanic, the final outcome being inevitable. Construction companies have to acknowledge the future success of their business may demand a rethink. Cash flow, the petrol to the engine of business, needs to be kept running along with working capital, future project finance needs and your business operational strategies have to be clearly identified.

You can compete for projects, deal with rising costs, submit competitive tender prices, even those involving GCCC contracts, and you can operate with tighter margins, as long as it is a margin. But this can only be truly determined when you have reviewed and possibly re-organised your business to determine what your actual costs are and what margins you need to make to continue in these extremely turbulent times. Undertaking this is a positive thing to do in the current climate.

That's what the construction business conference is about. Its about getting back to "first principles" of business, looking for the tell-tale signs of trouble brewing, having the knowledge to help you get paid on time, knowing what to do to work closely with the financiers and lenders, knowing how to work your cash-flow harder, and watching out for when you take on new work/new clients and where some of that new work is at.

This event will appeal to companies, large and small, who operate in the building industries, be they in materials, design, engineering, building, distribution or services. It's for those who want to stay aware of the challenges and opportunities facing all companies in the Irish construction industry. This event is different because of two key points. It is specifically geared to the specialist business information needs of companies across the construction sectors. It is also organized by Commercial Events Ltd, the largest conference organizers in Ireland for the build environment.

## The programme

**8.00-9.00 Registration with tea/coffee on arrival**

**9.15 Opening remarks: Conference Chairperson:**

**9.30 Keynote Address:**  
**Rossa White, Chief Economist, Davys**

**9.40 Financing in a credit crunch climate**  
**Speaker: Irish Banking Federation**

- No more mister nice guy? How are lenders attitudes changing?
- What kind of guarantees are lenders demanding?
- You've ticked all the boxes; now what funding options have you got?
- When to go for multi-source financing: explore all the angles.
- Acquisition in your sights? How to fund it?

**10.10 Getting paid on time**

**Speaker: Farrell Grant Sparks**

- Getting paid on time and keep the client (if you want to!)
- Why enforce credit terms from the start and how to manage them.
- Design consultants - is copyright a weapon to help you get paid?
- Going legal - what's involved once it kicks in; are there alternatives?

**10.40 Coffee break and opportunity to visit sponsors stands**

**11.10 Spot the danger signs**

**Speaker: Terry McAdam, George Maloney, Baker Tilly Ryan Glennon**

- Staying in the green, profitable and efficient zone
- Spot the danger signals that financial trouble is brewing.
- 30% rise in insolvency, 3 times higher than normal. Why?
- Mismanagement is the main cause of insolvencies - what are the typical errors and how to avoid them?
- When you need help - corporate recovery

**11.45 Your first loss should be your best loss, why?**

**Speaker: TBC**

- Once bitten! What should take on board from your first loss??
- You have monthly income/fee reports, why not management reports: quick steps to take now.
- Getting back in black – steps to offset losses
- Key reasons for cost overruns: making cashflow work harder!

**12.10 Run for cover - expect the unexpected**

**Speaker: TBC**

- What can you do if a client goes wallop - or what should you have done!
- Safeguarding your business against bad debt
- Rocky road - don't take the hit for project disruption or hick-ups.
- Protect yourself against past and future liabilities
- Forewarned is forearmed - the critical risks

**12.45 Lunch break**

**2.10 How to manage people and business in a downturn**

**Speaker: Sean McNamara, BDO Simpson Xavier**

- You need to downsize; how quickly can it be done?
- Redundancies and layoffs – the legal concerns?
- Restructuring - make it work for morale and efficiency
- Outsourcing, is it for you?

**2.40 Chasing the business**

**Speaker: Davis Langdon PKS (TBC)**

- What sectors offer most promise and why
- Is the investment and speculator market completely dead or just harder to find?
- Are State projects where you need to be? Why so
- Should you look to the UK, where to look and how to go about it

**3.15 Tax planning in a turbulent market**

**Speaker: Grant Thornton**

- Don't fall into the tax traps; keep up to date.
- Are tax investments schemes still worth looking at?
- What coming down the tracks in terms of corporate tax?
- Are you sure you claimed for everything?

**3.40 Closing remarks by the Chairperson**

**3.45 Conference close**

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**Dublin 3**

**Date: Thursday 26 June, 2008**

**To register, Tel: 01 764 2413 Fax: 01 283 3045**

**email: sarah@commercialevents.ie**

**Booking: €645 + VAT (Total cost: €780.45)**

## Booking Form

No. of bookings

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