
Clare digital start-up's constructive approach to building

Kilrush, Clare-based start-up +AddJust has taken a digital and modern approach to managing and implementing construction contracts and is in the vanguard of the digital transformation of the building sector.

[+AddJust](#) captures live data on construction contracts to give more control, clarity and certainty to clients than previously thought possible.

The company has developed a slick way of managing contracts that also reduces the financial and legal exposure of clients during the contract.

“Clients who fund construction projects are often left with little control and visibility on the performance of their projects,” explained +AddJust CEO and founder Pádraig Neylon. “When there are potential cost overruns and contractual issues, they are typically the last ones to know about it. +AddJust gives clients real-time reporting on their projects which will reduce their exposure and de-risk their investment. “

Until now valuable budgeting data has been typically stored on someone's laptop or hard drive and is not connected to a central platform.

“Our cloud-based solutions bring all of that data into a central collaborative environment. Users can then interpret the data and learn from it.”

Saving money and giving peace of mind

Neylon explained that construction contracts are traditionally complex, adversarial and require a lot of expertise to follow and implement correctly.

“Not only this but a good contract requires excellent communication between all the stakeholders – the client, the design team and the contractor. Email and registered letters have, up to now, been used as the primary method of communication. This can lead to a lot of headaches and confusion, particularly when an issue needs to be resolved. When these issues escalate, it ends up costing a lot of money and wasting a lot of time. Our products promote a more collaborative environment where clarity and communication are central.

“Our products +AddJust, +TermPay and +BigWork have taken existing widely-used construction contracts and digitised the processes contained within them. We have extracted the processes, digitised the workflows and made them easier to use, easier to follow and easier to comply with using modern, secure and efficient software. With clearly defined workflows and using instant messaging communication tools, users are guided through the various steps and can fulfil their contractual obligations around payments, change orders, document sharing etc. By gathering the data at a granular level, we can then provide valuable insights to the clients who are funding these projects.”

The company’s target market is split into three segments based on its three core products:

- +AddJust manages small, medium and large scale construction and infrastructure projects for clients with one stand-alone project or a portfolio of projects. “Our typical clients here would be from the real estate, retail, energy, community, infrastructure and public sectors,” said Neylon.
- +TermPay manages entire multi-operator & single-operator framework contracts for public body clients. “At the moment this product is focused on the Local Authority Housing sector who spend over €250m per annum in Ireland alone on housing improvements and maintenance.”
- +BigWork manages domestic house projects including new builds and refurbishment projects. “Typically once the works are valued in excess of €250,000 +BigWork should be used,” Neylon explained.

“If you think of the ‘Room to Improve’ projects and all of the issues that arise, most of these could be avoided by using a system like +BigWork. In 2018 there were in excess of 10,000 of these types of projects including new single houses built in Ireland. +BigWork is also targeting the UK market later this year with our first project in London due to start in July.”

Wealth of experience

Pádraig Neylon and Joe Neylon founded +AddJust in 2017 and were joined in 2018 by Michael Kelly as CTO. All are originally from west Clare and bring a wealth of diverse experience to the

company.

Pádraig, a registered quantity surveyor and registered building surveyor, ran his own building consultancy for a decade before deciding that it was time to change the way construction contracts were being managed using technology. He noted the slow shift towards digital processes in construction and believed that there was a major gap in the market for a Client-focuses solution like +AddJust.

In the 1990s Joe worked in business development for major brands like Coca-Cola & Pepsi in Russia & Eastern Europe. He brings solid experience from growing brands in emerging markets to +AddJust.

Michael Kelly has worked for start-ups in Ireland and the US as a full-stack developer in the past. He has over 15 years of implementing robust solutions in high performance computing in the mobile and web space.

A good place to build

“Ireland is a very good place to start-up a company like ours,” says Pádraig. “There is plenty of help through the various agencies and they tend to work together to promote good ideas, challenge you and bring companies like ours to where we want to get to.

“The standard of start-ups is excellent, but it should be remembered that only the few make it big! I think the banks play a vital role too in terms of promoting big ideas and having their designated venture capital funds and loans for start-ups. There’s always room for improvement, as with everything in life, but I think Irish start-ups are very lucky to be starting off in such a positive ecosystem where everything and anything seems possible.”

+AddJust has just recently closed a round of HPSU funding with Enterprise Ireland and a private investor.

“To date we have raised over €600,000 through NDRC, Enterprise Ireland, CLDC and private investment. Of course, we are always looking at funding opportunities. We expect that our revenues will be healthy enough to sustain us over the next 12 months and beyond. But we are looking at some growth options oversees as well and bringing our products into other jurisdictions will more than likely require a Series A funding round.”

Like all founders the going has been far from smooth and previous experiences add up. “We made plenty of mistakes in the past with a previous start-up and that has stood us in good stead this time around. I’d like to think that we haven’t made any major mistakes this time around. If there was one lesson I would take from our journey to date, it would be to be patient when dealing with larger organisations as prospective clients.”

His advice for fellow founders: “I try to think back to all of the nuggets of advice that we received from various founders and experts and there was some good and some bad. I guess my tuppence worth would be, if you are starting out, first trust your gut, second spend little or no money until you have a solid paying client or clients (or an extremely strong prospect of one), thirdly, be your own harshest critic and finally, be prepared to work harder than you’ve ever worked before.

“My other piece of advice is don’t read too many or be taken in by ‘inspirational’ success stories written by gazillionaires. Read the stories of those who have struggled and failed – there’s more to be learned in those. It will heighten your senses for potential failure, and I believe if you have this - a heightened sense of potential failure - and still have the courage to pursue your dream, then you’ll have a better chance of succeeding.”

Pictured: +AddJust CEO Pádraig Neylon with CTO Michael Kelly

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