

Pitch perfect: Entrepreneurs embrace online pitch events

Despite Covid-19, entrepreneurs are finding greater engagement from investors during online pitch events, says HBAN.

[Halo Business Angel Network](#) (HBAN) has claimed that despite Covid-19 it has been continuing to match companies with investors by moving their pitching events online and they have actually found greater engagement from investors in doing so.

The organisation's all-island director John Phelan says that it is helping them to introduce investors and company founders that wouldn't have otherwise met and he doesn't see HBAN going back to solely in-person pitches in the future.

Since COVID-19 restrictions were implemented across the island of Ireland, HBAN has continued to facilitate investment into Irish companies by holding its pitching events online. To date, seven events have been held with 25 companies seeking investment. A further three online events will be held in the next four weeks.

Pitching into the new normal

HBAN has recorded increased investor engagement for all events held online so far. Each event has attracted an average of 25 angel investors – which in some cases is up to 50pc higher than normal attendance at in-person events.

The highest online pitching event attracted 40 angel investors, with companies pitching from a number of sectors including IT and communications, life sciences and medtech. Companies have been pitching to individual angel investors, as well as angels from syndicates across the island of Ireland including the HBAN Bloom, Boole, MedTech, SEBAN, Ulster and WxNW syndicates.

“Since Covid-19, many of us have discovered how restrictive some of our previous ways of working were,” Phelan said.

“Until March, we held events across the length and breadth of the country to allow Irish start-ups to pitch their businesses to potential investors. However, travel and time restrictions were always an issue, especially for many time-poor investors. The online events are now allowing us to introduce companies and investors that wouldn't have otherwise met.

“We have always called ourselves a dating service for start-ups and investors; now we are moving that service online. Even when social distancing measures are eased – whenever that may be – I

don't see us going back to solely in-person pitching events.”

“Investors are a little more wary of parting with their money in these uncertain times. However, we have heard from our investor community that they have a strong appetite for company pitches as they know this won't last forever and are keen to continue investing in the businesses of the future.

“Some may wait until things return to greater sense of normal, however others are influenced by the countless cases of iconic companies that were founded in the teeth of recession, such as Microsoft, Apple and Netflix.”

Pictured at top: HBAN all-island director John Phelan

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