

## The 10 biggest Irish businesses

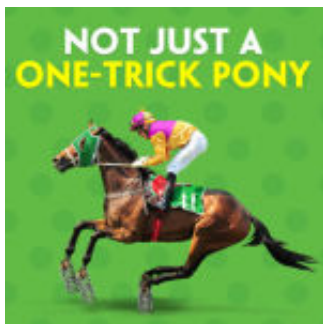
**Google, Facebook, and Apple have headquarters in Ireland, but what about the Irish companies that have spread their wings and gone further afield? Here, we look at 10 Irish companies that are making big noises, both at home and abroad.**

**CRH. Turnover: €18.9 billion. No. of employees: 75,706**

We're sure you've heard of CRH, but what exactly does it do? Cement Roadstone Holdings is a global market leader in the building materials market. A FTSE 100 and Fortune 500 company, it employs over 75,000 people at over 4,000 locations worldwide, and it also holds the title of Ireland's biggest company. Founded in 1970, Roadstone and Cement Limited merged to form CRH. Since then, CRH has grown astronomically. In its infancy, the group had sales of c. €27m. More recently; CRH announced that sales for the first nine-months of 2015 reached €15.5bn. With a strong presence in Europe, North America and Asia, this industrial giant continues to go from strength to strength.

**DCC. Turnover: €14.8 billion. No. of employees: 9,153**

Development Capital Corporation (Now DCC), founded in 1976 by Jim Flavin, is an international leader in sales, marketing, distribution and services. Originally set up as a company that provided venture capital to startups, it completely changed direction and has diversified into four divisions: Energy, Technology, Healthcare and Environmental. DCC provides products, services, distribution and logistical support across all of these sectors, the oil distribution industry being particularly profitable. With a presence in 13 countries, and as one of Europe's biggest distributors of gas and oil, expect DCC's reach to expand outside of Europe.



**Paddy Power. Turnover: €7 billion. No. of employees: 5,000**

Whether you love it or hate it, no one causes quite a stir like this Irish bookmaker. Paddy Power

was originally founded in 1988 when three bookmakers decided to merge their respective shops. Recognised as chief mischief makers, on social media in particular, the firm expanded phenomenally since it first ventured into the world of online gambling. Since forming, Paddy Power has completely changed its value proposition and has expanded overseas - Australia, France, United Kingdom and Canada. With revenues of €7bn, Paddy Power dominates the guerilla marketing arena with bold and outlandish stunts. This is a sure-fire way to drive engagement while also maintaining a remarkably lucrative and innovative empire.

**Kerry Group. Turnover: €5.8 billion. No. of employees: 24,492**

Since starting out as a dairy ingredients plant in Listowel, in 1972, Kerry Group has grown to become an international leader in the ingredients market while possessing an impressive portfolio, within the food, beverage and pharmaceutical industries. Now, Kerry Group, home to household brands such as Dairygold, Denny and Charleville, has a presence in over 26 countries with operations spread across five continents. With revenues of approximately €5.8 billion, its EMEA market accounts for 53%, America 33% and Asia/Pacific 14%. Embracing innovation, it recently opened a new €100m technology and innovations centre in Naas.

[READ MORE: If you have ambitions to be the next billion euro Irish company, start with a great business plan.](#)

**Musgraves. Turnover: €4.9 billion. No. of employees: 7,869**

Ireland's largest grocery distributor, Musgraves, was originally founded in Co. Cork in 1876 by Tom and Stuart Musgrave. With an annual turnover exceeding €4 billion, Musgrave's portfolio is impressive. Musgraves operates both the SuperValu and Centra brands in Ireland as well as Mace in Northern Ireland. While holding the title of the most profitable private company regarding turnover in Ireland, Musgrave has also established a presence in both Spanish and UK marketplaces.

**Glanbia. Turnover: €3.5 billion. No. of employees: 5,202**

Glanbia ('pure food' as Gaeilge) has certainly made an impact worldwide over the course of its short existence. Glanbia was formed in 1997 when Avonmore and Waterford Foods merged, becoming the fourth biggest dairy processor in Europe and the fourth biggest cheese producer in the world. Considering the size of Ireland, that is an amazing achievement. Glanbia, as of 2015, posted revenues of €3.5bn for the previous year. With an incredibly diverse portfolio that includes performance nutrition, cheese, dairy ingredients, and vitamins, with a presence in 24 countries worldwide, Glanbia is making waves right around the world.



**Ryanair. Turnover: €5 billion. No. of employees: 9,500**

Nothing, not even marmite, divides opinions like the Michael O'Leary led, low-cost airline. Originally, in 1985, Ryanair had a small operation transporting passengers from Waterford to Gatwick. Over the course of the year, Ryanair managed to transport over 5,000 people. Fast forward 30 years and Ryanair has over 80 million passengers a year with revenues of approximately €5bn. One man, in particular, was responsible for this transformation: Michael O'Leary. O'Leary observed how successful the low-cost, no-frills model adopted by SouthWest Airlines was in the US. By adopting cheaper fares, Ryanair would no longer focus on customer care; pricing was the most important factor. Presently, Ryanair serves 185 destinations and is a market leader in Europe. In the not too distant future, Ryanair may enter the transatlantic flight market.

**Kingspan. Turnover: €1.9 billion. No. of employees: 6,600**

Instantly recognisable as the sponsor of the Cavan Senior Footballers, Kingspan has been on the go since 1965. Originally, Kingspan was known as Kingsport Construction. While it originally concerned itself with manufacturing steel frame buildings and structural sections, Kingspan has evolved into a worldwide leader in high-performance insulation, building fabric and solar integrated building envelopes. Growth is a word Kingspan knows well. Currently, Kingspan is present in the UK, Mainland Europe, Asia, The Middle East, and the US all while generating revenues of €1.9bn.

[READ MORE: If you need to scale your business and start exporting, here's a useful guide.](#)

**Greencore. Turnover: €1.4 billion. No. of employees: 9,726**

Born out of the privatisation of Irish Sugar, Greencore has experienced tremendous growth over the last few decades. So, what exactly is Greencore? Well, it's responsible for producing a large amount of products that you purchase every week. An international convenience food leader, Greencore supplies some brands under licence from its own label ranges such as Heinz, Weight Watchers, Doritos and many more. Greencore currently possesses the title of the world largest sandwich maker (600 million sambos a year). With an annual turnover of €1.3bn, 22 manufacturing

sites in the UK, US and Ireland, Greencore is making waves on the international stage.



**Stripe. €5 billion (valuation). No. of employees: 210**

While this may be considered a controversial inclusion, (Stripe is headquartered and founded in the US) we're claiming it as our own. A major disruptor in the payments industry, it was founded in 2010 by Limerick brothers John and Patrick Collison. The Collison brothers have overseen an aggressive growth strategy, over the past five years, which has attracted the investment of industry giants such as Elon Musk and Peter Thiel. Visa's recent investment in the company has resulted in its value soaring to \$5 billion. Stripe facilitates transactions between people and businesses over the web and is much easier to manage for businesses than any other offering currently on the market. Available in 23 countries, the world, it seems, is at Stripe's feet.