

Thinking business with Shannon McNamee

Shannon McNamee is one of Galway's community leaders working with Galway-based software company Ex Ordo, while also taking up a number of other roles in her free time. Here she discusses her passions as well as her love for Galway.

What's your role?

Monday to Friday I work in customer support with our US and Canadian customers, consulting with them and training them to use our product to suit their needs as best possible. My day is tailored to suit their business hours, so I work evenings. Ex Ordo is the type of company where, if you have an idea for a project you'd like to work on, and it aligns with company goals, you take that project and run with it. That's how I got to organise Edify, the talk series we started this year. I also write for the Irish Journal of Music and State Magazine, and help run Louth-based music festival Vantastival.

What are you most interested in?

Music and writing are my biggest interests. I play guitar and like to listen to as much new music as possible. I also write about music so it's a good chance to combine both passions.

What are your ambitions?

I'm at an early stage of my career where I have many possibilities ahead of me, so I don't necessarily want to restrict myself by having one specific path in mind. However, I know that I'll always want to work on my own creative projects - whether it is running my own events, collaborating with festivals or writing my own content. Also, since starting to work with a tech company, I've become more interested in combining elements of technology and creative arts. So I aim to explore that idea more in future projects.

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What drives you?

Seeing local businesses or people I know succeed. This, to me is a huge inspiration and spurs me to work harder and aim bigger.

Who do you admire in business?

The Dough Bros! Their story is such an inspiring story of success, and everything about their business from their food, to their brand and their customer service is phenomenal. I also really admire lifestyle blogger Erika Fox of Retro Flame. There can be a lot of inauthenticity in bloggers and influencers these days, but Erika's content always seems to fit with her brand and she genuinely has a really inspiring work ethic.

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What are we doing well in Galway?

Galway is a very inclusive city with resources and facilities for those with disabilities, in the arts at least. There was a large arts and disability conference here last year called Creative Connections, so I think there's a great awareness of inclusivity in the arts in Galway. Galway businesses and organisations are also huge supporters and creators of art with many arts festivals and events all year round. So with the 2020 Capital of Culture coming up, it's exciting to see what else will pop up around the city.

What makes Galway unique?

Galway is the only place I know where everyone thinks fondly of. The people who grow up here, the 'blow-ins' like myself and people who come from around Ireland and abroad always seem to think overwhelmingly positive of our city. I think this has to do with all aspects of life here, including the welcoming nature of the locals and businesses, the student and research community, the buskers on Shop Street, the night life and the beautiful natural surroundings of Galway bay.