

FOCUSING THE RESPONSE OF IRISH BUSINESS TO BREXIT

ENTER THE EUROZONE PROGRAM
ENTERPRISE IRELAND,
ESMT BERLIN, IMS MARKETING

ESMT
BERLIN



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Republic of Ireland, committed to staying in the EU single market, faced a major challenge when its nearest neighbor decided to leave (Brexit). Despite diversification efforts spanning many years, some sectors of Ireland's Small to Medium business (SME) base remained exposed to UK markets.
- Enterprise Ireland, as an Irish government agency, was tasked with accelerating efforts to address this situation. It sought partners to design and deliver a unified program drawing on the success of Irish companies that had already diversified. ESMT Berlin (Training delivery) and IMS in Galway (one-to-one Business Advisors) were selected due to the quality of their teams and their experience in similar projects.
- As a joint team, the partners had three months to design, recruit, and deliver an effective program before the original Brexit date of Oct 31, 2019. The team also had multiple internal stakeholders, as well as the 20 client companies committing to join each cohort.
- The program needed to build on existing sales and marketing frameworks, while bringing in specific market entry knowledge from the partners. By describing the program as a journey, clients could gauge the time investment needed and the likely outcome – a Market Entry Plan (MEP), working towards a first contract in the market.
- By describing Learning and Development (L&D) as steps on a journey, clients who might have been hesitant bought into the process. The program successfully blended Eurozone locations (Berlin and Paris) for inspiration, Irish locations (Dublin) for convenience, and online e-learning (supported by Business Advisors) for effectiveness.
- The learning activities were designed at many levels (one to many, one to one, peer to peer) to ensure clients of varying capacities would progress to gain the skills needed. The activities were designed to build on each other – gathering market intelligence, preparation, decisions, and skills for execution.
- During program delivery, considerable effort was spent on communication between the partners and with clients to ensure an almost seamless delivery. This was supported by shared technology platforms, a common design, and frequent briefings.
- The progress clients made between Day 1 and the finale (with a specific, costed market entry plans with clear targets and next steps) was dramatic. Enterprise Ireland will work with this group and measure further outcomes in terms of contract wins. This progress has led to the confirmation of repeat programs and has inspired companies not yet on the program to consider diversification.

