



Martin Daly [Local Enterprise Office Fingal], Alan Hickey [WeBringg] and Sean Murray [WeBringg].

Photography credit: Simon Burch

# Start

## Making It Happen: LEOs bring it for WeBringg

### *Local Enterprise Office Fingal delivers success for delivery- technology business.*

Necessity may be the mother of invention but for WeBringg co-founder Alan Hickey, it was all about his wife.

He had forgotten his wife's birthday and suggested to friend Sean Murray that he would buy something online and have it delivered that day. Murray told him it wasn't possible. "I thought, why not?" said Hickey.

Together they teased out the idea of a crowd sourced 'last mile' delivery service for high street retailers. "We could see the switch to instant gratification had started, from having a Paddy Power app on your phone to watching movies on demand via Netflix."

Traditional retailers, who had spent millions on customer acquisition, were being disrupted by companies such as

Amazon. In 2016, the pair developed a crowd-based delivery platform to connect retailers and consumers - from store to front door. "At that start-up stage we were doing deliveries ourselves, as well as sales, accounts, everything," he said.

They contacted their Local Enterprise Office, LEO Fingal, for help. "Today we have an annual run rate of €5m a year. When we went to LEO Fingal we had a turnover of €10,000."

An opportunity had emerged to partner with restaurant delivery operator Just Eat but "the volumes were going to be 10 times what we had anticipated and we didn't have the money to get it over the line. LEO Fingal provided us with the oxygen of funding," he said.

They secured Feasibility Study Grant funding from it in June 2016. "That allowed us to do the development work we needed," he said.

LEO Fingal's support gave the nascent business "credibility", as did the award schemes it nominated the pair for. WeBringg won 'Best Start-Up Business' in Ireland's Best Young Entrepreneur competition and was a regional winner in the National Enterprise Awards, generating invaluable press coverage.

As it grew, the business secured business priming grants from LEO Fingal, enabling it to add staff as demand for its services grew.

Today the business has a team of 38 plus more than 1000 independent drivers worldwide. It has a number of revenue streams, from providing crowd sourced deliveries directly to partnering with retailers such as Musgrave to provide dispatch technology, as well as data driven consultancy.

A First Time Exporter's grant from LEO Fingal supported a market study visit to Australia. Today WeBringg operates in the UK, Spain, Australia and New Zealand.

The pair participated on Hi-Start, a LEO management development programme. "That got us investor-ready. As an entrepreneur you only see the positives of your business. Hi-Start helped us step back and focus on the weaknesses an investor would see, and how to solve them."

The Hi-Start programme also introduced WeBringg to Enterprise Ireland, which identified it as a High Potential Start Up. The company subsequently went on to raise seed funding of €850,000.

Throughout its start up, growth and scaling stage it received the benefit of mentoring, guidance and advice from LEO Fingal. "Cash was brilliant but it wasn't just the cash, it is the people that really count, like-minded individuals and the doors they can open for you."

This combination of soft supports such as mentoring and management development, plus timely financial assistance, is what makes the LEO

offering so effective, said Oisin Geoghegan, Head of Enterprise at LEO Fingal.

"Our first involvement with WeBringg was with mentoring. We offer a panel of expert mentors with a mix of skills to clients. Our mentors provide a confidential one-to-one service to help a business in many ways, such as options to raise finance and making sure it is putting its best foot forward in terms of its value proposition."

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**Alan Hickey,**  
WeBringg

LEOs excel in speed of decision making. "Start-ups and growing businesses need decisions to be made quickly if they are not to miss opportunities," said Geoghegan. "We do our best to make the application process relatively easy and to turn around the approval rapidly. Once approved, it is important that the business receives their funding quickly so they can implement their start-up or growth plans."

The timing at which a LEO support comes is crucial to its effectiveness, whether it's a Feasibility Study Grant to assess a market opportunity, a Priming Grant aimed at companies in their first 18 months to enable them get traction, or a Business Expansion Grant for those beyond 18 months to help them scale.

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**Oisin Geoghegan,**  
Local Enterprise Office Fingal.

"As in WeBringg's case, we can also fast track a business into Enterprise Ireland, where a company with very strong potential is able to avail of more investment," he said.

"All along the way we offer wrapped supports such as management development and mentoring. Everybody turns to friends and family for guidance when they are starting out and that's great but LEOs come with no baggage. We offer a confidential service whose only agenda is to give you the best support for your business - and it's a service you can avail of locally right around the country."

**If you want to grow your start-up, talk to us.  
Together, we can make it happen.**