



Triona MacGiolla Rí

Aró Digital Strategy

GOING FOR GROWTH PROFILE

NAME:

Triona MacGiolla Rí

BUSINESS

Aró Digital Strategy

POSITION

Co-Founder and Director

WHAT WE DO

Provide design, technology and online marketing strategies to luxury hotels and brands

CONTACT US

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Aró Digital Strategy entered into the online sphere at a very early stage of the technology revolution. Set up by Triona Mac Giolla Rí and her husband Alan Rowe nearly 20 years ago, the company provides a comprehensive range of digital services to the hospitality sector. What started off as an experimental business idea is now recognised as one of the leading digital agencies in Europe with over 300 acclaimed partners. *“Aró provide design, technology and online marketing strategies to luxury hotels and brands. We create successful digital campaigns for our clients. We have a dedicated team of over 30 highly skilled professionals who have been core to the success of the company to date. Our main office is based in Co. Galway, while our UK base is located in central London.”*

In 1996, Triona and Alan began their business working with Golf Clubs. Within a year, they had won the Irish Times *Business Website of the Year* for golfclubireland.com. Before 2000, Aró had secured contracts with Jurys Doyle Hotel Group and Bord Fáilte, establishing themselves as a leading web design and online marketing company in the Irish tourism sector.

Today, the company focuses on luxury hotels with a client portfolio containing some of the top 4 and 5 star hotels around the world. Winning a significant contract with the Dorchester Collection was a major part of entering into the high end luxury market. *“60% of our business is now international. We are concentrating on expanding in Europe, particularly in London. We opened our London office in 2003 and began working with the Red Carnation Hotel Group, Leading Hotels of the World and 51 Buckingham Gate.”*

Aró have developed a number of software products, modules and upgrades. Most recently in 2014, the company launched AróSuite, an integrated product for their clients. *“AróSuite is a seamless interface for all our products and services. It allows the end users to control their content in one place; update their websites, access customer databases, reporting and sales analysis.”*

With the company's office based in the heart of Connemara, Aró has been supported by Udaras na Gaeltachta and received a grant to undertake a *Lean Plus* assignment in 2015. *“Lean Plus helped us get tight processes in place and increase our productivity. We saw great improvements in the quality of services we provide to our customers.”*

Triona took part on the 6th Cycle of Going for Growth in 2014 and found it *very supportive and beneficial* to her business. *“The programme is greatly relevant to the needs of ambitious, motivated businesswomen who are focused on growing their businesses. I was invited to join a group of positive, creative and committed women. Trust quickly built up creating a forum where each participant could discuss their particular challenges and developments and gain insights from the others' experiences. The format was very efficient and professional. The time spent was most valuable and worthwhile.”*

For Triona, her company's biggest achievement has been keeping up with the latest technology within the digital space. Aró have remained at the cutting edge and survived many ups and downs including the Dot Com bubble burst in 2000 and the recent economic recession. Triona and her team have the experience and dedication to help grow their clients online market share. They have recently rebuilt their eShopping system and are now targeting luxury retailers. The company have begun working with the Lowell Hotel in Manhattan, USA but plan to continue their focus on expanding in the UK and Europe. *“We have confidence working in these markets and have established a network there. The predominant reasons that clients choose to work with us include the beautiful websites we build, the fact our software converts visitors to buyers and we provide an exceptional level of service to our clients. We help hotels bring in direct low cost business in a market where they are paying huge commissions to Online Travel Agencies.”*

Prior to setting up Aro Digital Strategy, Triona ran a Desktop Publishing agency *Triskele Design* in Galway city centre. Triona is a mentor for Coder Dojo Galway, an organisation aimed at teaching children how to code, develop websites, apps, programmes and explore technology in an informal and creative environment.



Going for Growth is a project funded by Enterprise Ireland and KPMG

