

01/11/2004



To the Awards administrators

My name is Mary Cryan and I am chairperson of the Enterprise Ireland Mentor Programme. I am also a mentor and I was appointed as mentor to Eoin Costello, managing director of Novara Technology, in August of 2003.

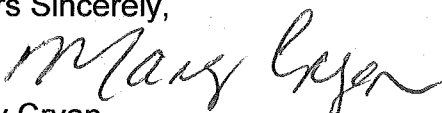
At my first meeting with Eoin we established that the company faced a number of serious problems. The most pressing of these were identified and an action plan was drafted and agreed by us.

The problems we identified fell under a number of headings:

1. **Overly dependent on key personnel.** Novara was highly dependent on their technical manager (who had built their in-house hosting platform).
2. **Novara's hosting clients were on multiple, unreliable hosting platforms in the wrong data centre.** To address this Novara devised a migration strategy to move their 2,500 hosting clients off the old hosting platforms and onto a new platform in their new data centre, Serve Centric.
3. **Lack of focus on sales function:** At the time of our first meeting the managing of the technical function over-shadowed the other activities of Novara. To address this Novara have strengthened their sales team and engaged the professional services of a specialist technical IT marketing consultancy firm, Comit Marketing. A detailed sales plan for 2005 has been devised.
4. **Administration and financial systems:** At our first meeting it became apparent that hard facts about the operations of Novara were difficult to extract as Novara were using a static accounting system called MYOB. It provided very little information that the Board and the sales department needed to run the company efficiently. Novara have now migrated all their financial and client information to the in-house developed Novara Customer Management system. It can provide detailed information on sales in terms of products sold, renewal rates and the degree of churn of customers.

Eoin had a lot of challenges to face up to, and in a very short space of time he has turned the company around. This was accomplished by Eoin's positive nature and his tenacity. I am very pleased to recommend Eoin and Novara for this award. I believe that Eoin is an example of entrepreneurial tenacity at its best.

Yours Sincerely,


Mary Cryan

ENTERPRISE IRELAND

Merrion Hall
Strand Road
Sandymount
Dublin 4
Tel: (01) 206 6000
Fax: (01) 206 6225

LEDU

Upper Galwally,
Belfast,
BT8 4TB.
Tel: (442890) 491031
Fax:(442890) 691432