DIGITAL CIRCLE

The Northern Ireland Digital Content Sector Leadership and Representative Organisation

DIGITAL WHO?

- Currently a sub-group of Momentum, the ICT federation for Northern Ireland

- One full-time employee (me!)

- Steering Group made up of 5 industry individuals. Voted in by the members.

- Nearly 400 people in the social network, 150+ companies

WHAT WE DO

- We organise events, help you attend events, help you make money

- 155 attendees for DevDays in Belfast, 170 in Dublin

- helped 17 members attend Web2Expo09, 12 attend SXSW10, 33 attend WWDC09. Next up: WWDC'10, GDC'11 and others.

- helped local companies achieve more than £2M revenue

IDENTIFICATION/CREATION OF NETWORKS

- Games

- Mobile Content

- Web Content

- E-Learning/Serious Gaming

- OpenData

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

- Networking events held for Web, Mobile and E-Learning groups with intention of identifying others in the sector.

- Networks are, by their nature, informal. Members of Mobile group formally rejected attempts to impose terms and rules.

- Responsibilities are taken on in a democratic process by volunteers, e.g. http://apps.ie or RefreshBelfast

- Networks have been guided to the appropriate end goal - the pursuit of additional business through collaboration.

EXTERNAL COLLABORATION

- Mobile Content group has worked with FE/HE, other networks and industry outside of NI

- OpenData working with local tech companies, local designers and Translink to create "OpenTranslink"

- DC has facilitated industry involvement in University of Ulster and BMC courses such as music technology with industry acting as advisors.

- New collaborations: NRC, SWRC

COMMERCIAL SUCCESS

- Promotion of funding schemes responsible for £400K+ of funding to client companies. Through CIIF, NIScreen, InvestNI and private sources

- Revenue estimates for the network are £700K over three years. We've blown that out of the water reporting over £2M of revenue after the second year.

WIDER CLUSTERING

- Facilitation for >150 companies has been moved to a NING social network: http://digitalcircle.ning.com

- received funding for a new showcase site from the Creative Industries Innovation Fund for http://digitalcircle.org

- Target was 4 events per annum. Digital Circle has been involved in more than 15 local events over the past year: DevDays, Refresh, Code4Pizza, BarCamp, BizCamp, XCake, CreativeCamp, events with eSynergy, PROPEL

FDI

- DC performed facilitation for

  - HandsOn Mobile - mobile games company

  - Apperian - mobile enterprise solutions

  - Spindrift - e-commerce solutions

  - Turbulenz - games for PS3, XBOX

  - all looking to hire teams in Northern Ireland.

TRADE

- Investigating possible links to NZ via UKTI
    - What can our film-makers learn?
    - What can our Digital Content sector teach?
    - What tech-swap/culture-swap can we enable?
    - See http://www.digitalstrategy.gov.nz
- What other regions have active strategies?
    - Hong Kong
    - Singapore
    - Montreal

INVOLVEMENT

- Connected Health - we want to get the community more involved with eHealth as a vertical market. DEsperate need for UI designers.

- Code4Pizza - getting idle hands to create public service value works in return for pizza. e.g. opening up Translink data or helping charities develop a funding management application.

- StartVI - 6 companies for 6 months for 6% of equity. Involving Mentoring - Incubation - Investment. Tied into external groups like the ITLG.

CREATING STARTUP CULTURE

- promoting business development events
- encouraging folk who could be entrepreneurs
- guiding startups and connecting them to seasoned mentors
- surveyed and profiled ICT culture in NI (with NISW)
- finding new private funding sources (ITLG)
- investigating incubation options (we have a Virtual Incubator)
- can we create a $50M company?   (Yes, see StartVI.)

STUFF COMING UP

- 25K Awards - funding and recognition for digital media/software - applications close next week!

- WWDC'10 - for mobile/web - 50% funded by InvestNI

- DevDays II, The Game Plan, INGAGE,

YOU

competitive?

risk taker?

perfectionist?

aggressive?

dependable?

creative?

independent?

entrepreneurial?

respected?

professional?

tax paying?

ahead of the game?

are you FTW! or WTF?

@faeriebex: **don't work for free.**
you'll get no respect and probably end up not working in your desired area at all because you need the money.

You can work for 'portfolio' but to put more precisely if you work and are promised pay make sure you get it and aren't fobbed off

@hamstarr: **Be SO noticeable online** (portfolio/communities/etc) that your prospective employer knows of you before you sit down for interview

@webtwozero: I'd say put a portfolio online with links to your social networks, flickr, Twitter, facebook etc. **And keep tweets pro!!!**

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(this includes Facebook. At least until you're well known)

@_shorty88_: i'd say to them to get experience while they're at Uni to make it easier to get a job after graduation. **But that goes without saying**

@hamstarr: **They should be so good, they're well known already.** If they're not, they're shit.

@zero37: ...they should **collaborate** with CS students to create innovative iPhone-based projects...

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Remind me to play the video!

@stuartmackey: online portfolio is v. important. Not just a list of uni projects. **Show that they have done their own work to get experience.**

@webtwozero: if they're being interviewed outside of their locale and the employer doesn't know them,**having links to your online presence is essential**. I have first hand experience of this

@IanRobinson:
Projects are the new résumés.

THANK YOU

- http://digitalcircle.ning.com

- New website to be built on http://digitalcircle.org

- Email: matt@digitalcircle.org

- Twitter: @digitalcircle for announcements