

**TALK THE TALK**

**John Slyne: First job was in a petrol filling station.**

Managing director of Populis, John Slyne, talks to **Niamh Hennessy**

**Tell us about yourself and the line of work you're in?**

I am a proud Cork man. I attended Cork Institute of Technology where I studied Business and Accounting. I am FCCA qualified and experienced accelerated career development due to the international pool of business in the Cork and Galway regions. In October 2010 we re-launched GoAdv as Populis which has been a very exciting time for our company. Populis has its European headquarters in Dublin and is the European leader in the production of multilingual content on demand. We have a network of over 600 web properties which are visited by almost 24 million unique users each month.

**What was your first job and how much were you paid?**

My first role was in a petrol filling station and I think I earned £1 an hour

**What is your best investment and why?**

My education may seem the most common answer but it is true.

**What has been your worst investment and why?**

Starting a family is an expensive business and parting with cash for all the items needed for a new baby is not the most natural thing. I was assured of the strong investment value so we purchased a great deal as most first-time parents do. Can you imagine our surprise, the second time round, when we discovered twins were on the way and of course, a second of everything had to be bought.

**What is the most expensive item you have purchased apart from your house and car?**

A sailing course.

**Whom do you most admire in business and why?**

A son will always look to his father for a strong work ethic and business acumen. I was fortunate while studying in Cork and in my early career to also work alongside my father and siblings in our family business. The success of the business is a tribute to his ability to always consider customer care and manage a strong team of talented people.

**What is your most prized possession and why?**

My Irish passport, it has allowed me to do business successfully in every country I have visited,

**What is the best piece of business advice you have received?**

Build a strong team.

**What is currently pressing your passion button and why?**

The digital media sector and the opportunities that exist, particularly in languages.

**Are the more difficult trading conditions impacting on your business?**

There are always challenges but I see challenges as opportunity.

**Anything else we should know about you or your line of work?**

The combination of technology and innovation blended with an extremely talented group of multilingual people makes Populis a very exciting place to be right now.

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Irish Examiner  
Monday 30.05.2011