



# New book is a 'must read' for Irish business sector

By JACQUELINE HOGGE

AN ABBEYKNOCKMOY man is hoping to reverse Ireland's economic fortunes by teaching students how to be innovative managers, by using international rockstars U2 as his example.

Dr James Cunningham, the Director of NUI Galway's Centre of Innovation and Structural Change, believes the key challenge for Irish businesses is in the way they are managed.

His book *Irish Management 2.0* combines articles, case studies and management reflections into a compelling commentary on the future of management practice and business education in Ireland.

Among the case studies featured is an indepth examination of the business acumen of U2, who are described in the book as models of innovative management, personal creativity and a global mindset.

"Thirty years on, U2 is far from finished and continue to invent and refresh," the book states.

The book points to the example of how the band survived the ruthlessness of the global music industry where artists often struggle to maintain top billing beyond a few years.

Launched recently by Pádraig Ó Céaidigh, founder and CEO of Aer Arann, the book has been described as a must read for the business sector.

"The world is moving and here in Ireland we have to move faster to be competitive. In order to achieve this we need to continually re-invent ourselves like those highlighted in the case studies in this book, successful brands such as CRH plc, Bulmers, O2 and even U2," he said.

"I have never read a book like this, and its timely publication makes it a must-read for the business sector including entrepreneurs, education institutions and

their students, to face difficult challenges in the current economic climate."

Dr Cunningham wrote the book with Dr Denis Harrington of Waterford Institute of Technology and both men believe that Ireland is facing into a new management revolution.

"The concept of the knowledge economy has changed the management paradigm for Irish managers," said Dr Cunningham.

"As our economy shifts from an over-reliance on construction over the coming years, the key challenge for all Irish businesses will lie in fundamentally changing the way Irish managers and business do business and through international competitiveness."

The U2 case study attributes much of the bands' business success to their manager Paul McGuinness, who the authors believe has the ability to 'think the future' which they say is a significant yet often overlooked asset.

"His courage to take bold decisions that allowed the band members to exploit their creative talents over the decades has ensured U2 maintains a commercial and temporal relevance," they write.

The authors believe that the key for Irish businesses hoping to compete on a global scale is to develop the breadth and depth of managerial excellence; increase levels of organisational flexibility; unleash the personal innovation capacity at a firm level; and building new collaborative organisational forms that span several industries.

In order to hone managerial excellence in Ireland, *Irish Management 2.0* argues that there must be greater investment in managerial development at firm level; an alignment of management styles and paradigms to the knowledge economy; changes in

managerial mindset, conceptualisation of organisations and competitive contexts; and significant changes in collaborations between Irish managers and business school academics, both nationally and internationally.

Dr Cunningham says the role of manager extends beyond that of planning, leading, organising and controlling, which are core to the management function, to becoming that of an enabler rather than a doer.

"A strong national pool of managerial talent is a key competitive requirement if Ireland is to become an exemplar knowledge-based economy," added Dr Cunningham.

"With respect to future development of Irish managerial talent, we still have a long way to go if we compete effectively in global markets."

With an introduction by Harvard Business Review Editor Thomas A Stewart, *Irish Management 2.0* is a valuable resource for practitioners, students and for anyone interested in the future of Irish business and is available from Blackhall Publishers, Dublin [www.blackhallpublishing.com](http://www.blackhallpublishing.com), €30.

The book is supported by the MBA Association of Ireland and Enterprise Ireland.

The Centre for Innovation and Structural Change (CISC) is an interdisciplinary research centre at NUI Galway.

The key objective of CISC is to build an internationally recognised programme of research and research training on the innovation processes and policies that are fundamental to the development of a knowledge-based economy.

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**AT the launch of *Management 2.0: New Priorities for a Changing Economy* were editors Dr James Cunningham, Director of Centre for Innovation and Structural Change, JE Cairnes School of Business and Economics, NUI Galway, Dr Denis Harrington, Head of Graduate Business, Waterford Institute of Technology and Pdraig O'Ceidigh founder and chairman CEO of Aer Arann and Executive in Residence for the Executive MBA programme at the JE Cairnes School of Business at NUI Galway.**