

The Revival of the Emerald Isle

2012 witnessed the resurgence of Irish self-belief. Our success in the **London Games** saw Irish Olympians and Paralympians



Above: October saw Enda Kenny appear on the front cover of Time Magazine, followed by the awarding of the title 'European of the Year' at the end of the month.

take home a total of 21 medals. The Irish crowd supporting the **Katie Taylor** fight hit record breaking decibel levels, ensuring our sporting victory was seen *and* heard. And despite our poor football performance at the **Euros**, Irish supporters were remarked on for their upbeat spirit.

The arrival of American football giants **Notre Dame** in the capital at the end of August was a signal that Ireland was a desirable tourist destination with a plethora to offer. This, coupled with the successful launch of **The Gathering** on

New Year's Eve, further affirmed the enriching contribution Ireland can make to the world. In fact the CSO recorded a 4% increase in tourism between November and December.

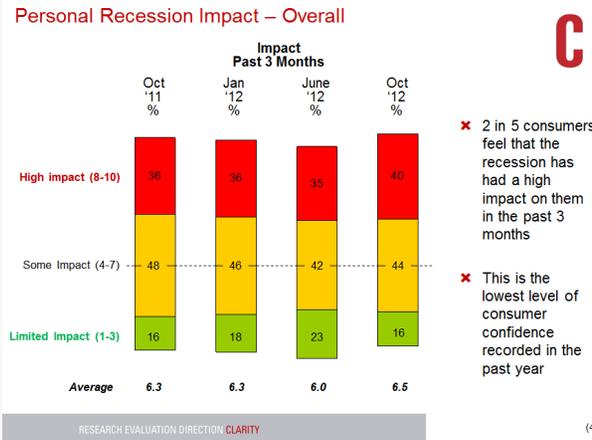
Of course not everything that signified the reawakening of Irish self confidence was celebratory. 2012 paved the way for a multitude of protests. From the **Vita Cortex** workers to the **Carers' Allowance protest**; such protests demonstrated the clarity of a united Irish voice capable of steering its own destiny.

This was the year of empowerment, the year we understood we could contribute to our own lives. 2012 saw Ireland get in on the joke rather than be the butt of it. Even Irish humour found itself triumphing across the pond and across the globe, with **Mrs Brown's Boys** allowing other nations to laugh with us.

2012 allowed the Irish to combat the psychological trauma of the recession; to stop hanging our heads in shame at the events of the past five years and to discover we can effect change.

Highs and Lows

The recession continued to have a negative impact in 2012. A RED C 'Credit Crunch' tracker revealed a decline in quality of life and a reported increase in the impact of the recession on people's personal lives. A further survey conducted by RED C in conjunction with WIN revealed that Ireland remains in the **Top 10 Most Gloomy Countries** across the globe.



Despite these negative consumer sentiments Ireland did take some positive steps towards redemption in Europe with the passing of the **Fiscal Treaty Referendum** in June. Also, despite lower levels of consumer confidence, expectations of the Irish and indeed the Global economy remain unchanged since 2011. Although we are far from out of the woods glimmers of hope are emerging.

The Government faced a tough year as economic recovery, bail out and bank debt remained to the fore. However, Ireland's willingness to play by **EU and IMF rules** placed us top of the class for struggling countries in Europe.



Above: Can Enda kiss it all better?

Year of Protest

Widespread demonstrations took place throughout the year as Irish citizens voiced their displeasure over a range of issues. Protests ranged from demonstrations against **austerity** to rallies of support for disgraced businessman **Sean Quinn**. Campaigners also took to the streets following the tragic death of **Savita Halappanavar**. Marches were also held to rally against the introduction of the new regulations for **septic tanks** and the **household charge**. **Students, farmers,** and other **public sector** workers were also not shy to air their views.



Political Predictions 2013



Although still a long way from regaining their former position it seems Fianna Fáil is experiencing a slow revival. Latest opinion polls reveal that the party has narrowed the election day gap between it and Fine Gael to just 8%, down from 19%. This, coupled with increasing satisfaction rates for party leader Micheál Martin, is certainly positive news for the party.

The Government parties have had a tough time in the opinion polls this year. Both Fine Gael and Labour have experienced a decline in support since election day. However given the tough choices and decisions that were made regarding the economy such decline is far from surprising.

Labour may also have additional cause for concern as a RED C poll in the Sunday Business Post revealed that 14% of party supporters remain 'Loyal' while 52% reported they were 'becoming disillusioned'.



Ireland at the helm of Europe

On taking over at the helm of Europe the Taoiseach promised jobs, growth and prosperity would be the focus of Ireland's tenure. It is hoped that a deal can also be reached regarding bank debt for the entire Eurozone area during the six month period of Ireland's presidency.

Ireland will be host to numerous high profile events throughout the period putting Ireland in the international spotlight and potentially re-establishing our former positive global reputation.



Saorview Success



On October 24th Ireland waved goodbye to rabbit ears and analogue television as we participated in the much publicised **digital switchover**. Saorview was inevitable regardless of gender, age or creed and at 10am on that fateful day the nation took a collective step towards adopting a digital viewing future.



Irish television celebrated more than just the digital switchover in 2012; **RTÉ** also commemorated their 50th anniversary with programming throughout the year honouring their own Golden Jubilee.

These events beckoned to our victorious and creative past while pointing to our progressive and innovative future.

Facebook Flop?

The Facebook Initial Public Offering took place in May 2012. Two days before Facebook's market debut, it was decided an extra 25% of the number of shares initially planned to go to market would be made available due to high demand.

Facebook share prices rose as high as \$45 on the initial day of trading and closed at \$38.23. The subsequent



days saw prices fall even further and by

August the original offering price was 47% above their value.

The results were disappointing and while share prices had risen considerably since the dark days of August, they ended the year 30% below their Initial Public Offering price.

Apple Don't Give a Monkey's

The much anticipated launch of the **Apple iPhone5** in the last quarter of 2012 also saw the arrival of a new version of **Apple Maps**.



The application received criticism for its global blunders, showing the Washington Bridge engulfed by water and Dublin Zoo relocated off Grafton Street. The errors saw the app make it into CNN's 'Top Ten Tech Fails of 2012'.

The Emergence of a Tech Savvy Ireland



Ireland has well and truly embraced technology. In fact, tablets were “prescribed” as the number one Irish Christmas gift of 2012 in the *Irish Independent*’s article “Tablets and TV gangsters give shot in arm to retail sector over festive season”.

Smartphones and **tablets** are paving the way towards a seamless existence. Expectations have heightened and people now demand the world at their fingertips. Research conducted by RED C on the RED Express in early January 2013 outlined high incidences of smartphone ownership among the Irish population, with 46% claiming to own a smartphone while 23% claim to

own a tablet.

Smartphones are becoming inextricably linked with our lives, from socialising, to shopping to hailing a taxi; they are immersed in our lives. They allow us to better manage our time in ways that suit us – going to miss your favourite programme because you’re caught in traffic? Not any more!

Facebook, **Google** and **LinkedIn** have all established either European

or International Headquarters in Dublin in recent years, with **Dropbox** announcing in December 2012 to follow suit. Companies are looking to Ireland to be the hub of this technological advancement.

With 3 of the 4 Irish listed on **the Forbes ‘Top 30 Under 30’** 2012 list involved in technology we can rest assured we’re starting the tech party not just catering for it.



Predicted Trends 2013

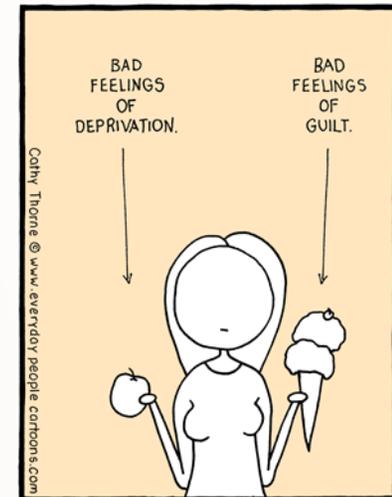


So here we are in the mystical year of 2013. What do the next twelve months hold?

1. Healthy Living

Health is in and it's cool. In fact, if you walk down Grafton Street you'll notice a bottle of branded water is as much a fashion accessory as designer bags. Expect friends, family and neighbours to be talking about their "**MapMyRun** times" and how they're "**Dry for January**". Inexpensive forms of exercise are the way to go, with hill walking, cycling and running being the health kicks of 2013.

Eating healthy is equally as important with people becoming even more aware of calories and sugar as we become further educated in terms of healthy living.



CHOOSE YOUR BAD.

2. Community

With the influx of **The Gathering** and the hosting of events around the country, a focus will be put on community and the importance of knowing those in your locality.

The years of the Celtic Tiger encouraged us to experience the mass rather than the niche and many lost a connection with their local area. Commuter areas were for sleeping not socialising.

As we realise our commonality lies in a silent understanding surrounding the danger of leaving the immersion on and the importance of a good day's drying, 2013 will see a **reinvestment in community**.



3. Private Public Profiles

In light of a year that increased the presence of the role of **social media** in our lives, 2013 will see people approaching this form of social interaction with more caution than previously.

We expect parents in particular will be curtailing children's excess use with greater caution after the tragic deaths of Donegal sisters **Erin and Shannon Gallagher** in 2012.

With more than 2 in 3 Irish claiming to have a social networking account, users will be more vigilant about what they share and who they connect with. This year will see online social behaviour and offline social behaviour becoming more synonymous.

4. Irish Loyalty

Following on from the confidence boost in relation to all things Irish in 2012, 2013 will see an increased awareness of the appeal of Irish.

When it comes to food produce, holidaying, home programming and more, Ireland will further appreciate her offering as we continue to promote the **quality of Irish**, and even more importantly, **buy Irish**.

5. Cash is King

While we become ever more technologically advanced and as banks move further towards e-money our trust in cold hard cash remains.

Consumers feel better value is to be had when paying with cash in store and the idea seems set to stay for the next twelve months. In fact, Elvery Sports launched a '**Haggle Mania**' campaign on their home fitness equipment in January 2013 and encouraged customers to haggle!

Although the advantages of plastic payment are



unending, the price conscious shoppers may still be stuffing their mattresses in 2013.



Above: Elvery Sport Haggle Mania Advertisement.

6. Time Saving Smart Technologies

Could it possibly get any bigger I hear you ask? We predict 2013 will see a supernova-style explosion in terms of **smartphone** use. However this year, smartphone users want functional apps that assist them in their daily lives.

From **apps** to set your heating system at home to those which make you a savvy shopper without trawling the streets or the web, the more practical the app the better. Recent figures published by Thinkhouse reveal that 66% of people prefer useful, helpful and productive apps while 34% of people prefer fun and entertaining ones.

2013 will see Ireland's smartphone user spend more time on their phone to save more time in their lives.



7. Consumer Spending on the Up

Following on from the first **increase in retail spend** in five years, there are glimpses of hope that shoppers will return to Ireland's stores.

People are becoming exhausted with penny pinching and frugality. 2013 will be the year to loosen the purse strings and spend albeit cautiously.

Deals will not be bought this year purely for being an "offer". Value must be met with quality in order for Ireland's consumers to part with their cash. Consequently, we expect sales on **deal sites** to decline when offerings fail to meet the criteria of **authentic**, **exclusive** and **genuine**.

8. Peacocking a Big No No!

The ostentatiousness of the boom years will continue to wane. People are turning away from materialism to a more grounded and contented way of life.

Obsession with possession is no longer in vogue and 2013 will see the rise of stripped back living. Ireland will



be a less pressurised place in which to live, socialise and shop and a return to **pre-Celtic Tiger** ways of life will be the way to go in the forthcoming months.

9. Online Opinion



Have you asked your friends and family for their opinions or recommendations in the past? We don't think you'll rely so much on them in 2013!

This year will see an increase in dependency on expert **online reviews**. If you're interested in buying the latest tablet you'll be less likely to seek the advice of your sister or post it as your Facebook status, but rather speak to those with a relatively expert opinion.

We only have to look at the explosive success of recommendation sites such as **Trip Advisor** to glean an understanding of the importance of an online reputation.

Classifieds



Smartphone Surveys are the latest research tool from the RED C Group, allowing you to reach consumers at every touchpoint with your brand.

1. QR Code Linked Surveys - perfect for advertising, brochures, packaging, in magazines etc.
2. Text Link Surveys – with a survey link sent to customers by text on interaction that allows it to be completed on their phone.
3. Opt In Location Based Surveys – opt in RED C Live panelists can be sent surveys to an app, depending on their location or interaction.
4. In App Surveys - survey for your app with a seamless link directly from your app to our survey system.

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