

# Tis' The Season – To Submit Nominations for the Blacknight SME Awards

New categories, bigger crowds and loads of surprises

10 DECEMBER 2015, CARLOW, IRELAND

## SUMMARY

*Irish small businesses will be celebrated at the Blacknight SME Awards. Nominations are now open and the cost of entry is zero. SMEs are the lifeblood of the Irish economy and pay more tax than big multinationals like Facebook and Google. If you run a small business you can enter the awards before January 7th 2016*

**T**he holiday season is a time for giving, so why not give an SME the greatest gift, a nomination for a Blacknight SME Award.

Blacknight is pleased to announce that nominations for the 2016 Blacknight SME Awards are currently open through January 7, 2016. The SME Awards celebrate the best of Irish SMEs, with 18 categories ranging from Family Run Business to Environmentally Minded and everything in between. Unlike many business awards, nominations are free, saving smaller businesses hundreds of euros and allowing a broader range of entries. Each business is judged in two rounds before they make the final. The judging panel is comprised of business people and members of the public.

This year's awards promise new categories, bigger crowds and the signature charm of organiser Damien Mulley who explains that the event is important because: "SMEs are the lifeblood of the economy, they employ way more than the Googles and the Facebooks, don't get the press and pay a lot more tax." A recent study done by Vision Net, compliments Mulley's sentiment as it states that 17,300 new businesses were setup in the first 11 months of 2015, with 147 new businesses being created every day in 2015.

Blacknight CEO Michele Neylon agrees, stating: "We are extraordinarily committed to Ireland's SME community and as an SME ourselves understand the importance of being recognised for your hard work. Often, the difference between continued success and early burn out is simply that your community acknowledges your struggle and contribution. A lot of great things come from smaller Irish companies and we want to do everything we can to continue to foster local innovation."

The Blacknight SMEs now in their second year expect upwards of 300 Irish SME representatives. This year, however, there will be one big change - the Startup category is dropped in favour of the category "New Company". "Startup' is becoming a dirty word," Mulley explains. "Last year judges

encountered many businesses for which it appeared that the sole goal was running a startup and they were spending their time talking about the fact they were a startup. Companies that focused on keeping their business alive while gaining new customers to sell a product or service did much better in the competition. The latter are the companies we want applying to this category and "New Company" describes them better than "startup".

Nominations for the Blacknight SME Awards are now open and can be entered online here:  
<http://smeawards.ie/nominations/>

**Nominations close January 7th 2016. Late nominations are €150 per category in the first day and €300 per category if 48 hours late.**

The final takes place on February 27<sup>th</sup>. Attendees, nominees and anyone following the event may **tweet at and follow the** hashtag #LoveSMEs

For more information on Blacknight, please visit [www.blacknight.com](http://www.blacknight.com)



#### RELEVANT LINKS

 **Blacknight SME Awards**  
<http://www.smeawards.ie/>

 **Blacknight Hosting & Domains**  
<https://www.blacknight.com/>

#### QUOTES

*"SMEs are the lifeblood of the economy, they employ way more than the Googles and the Facebooks, don't get the press and pay a lot more tax."*

— Damien Mulley, Mulley Communications

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#### IMAGES



#### SPOKESPEOPLE



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#### ABOUT BLACKNIGHT

Blacknight (<http://www.blacknight.com/>) are an Irish based, ICANN accredited domain registrar and hosting company. Recipients of several awards for their revolutionary use of social media, Blacknight are one of Europe's most cutting edge Internet companies. Blacknight constantly seek to lead the way by introducing innovative solutions for its client base and provide dedicated servers and co-location as well as a comprehensive range of Microsoft Windows and Linux based hosting plans and domain name registration services to business globally. IP transit services and other solutions for more demanding business and academic customers are offered a la carte.

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