

working WEEK

John O'Shea is joint managing director of Carlow-based accounting firm Lalor O'Shea. The company was formed in 2003 following the merger of local firms Padraic Lalor & Co, Nicholson & Co and John O'Shea & Co, of which O'Shea was managing partner for nine years prior to the merger.

Lalor O'Shea employs 30 staff and has an annual turnover of more than €2 million. It offers accountancy, taxation, audit and payroll services. In 2006, it launched the online platform Teamwork.ie to provide real-time services to clients over the internet.

The company will open a new office in Ballsbridge, Dublin next month, where it expects to create up to five jobs over 18 months.

What are the main responsibilities of your job?

I am joint managing partner with overall responsibility for audit and accounting services within Lalor O'Shea.

I am also heavily involved in the firm's marketing strategies, particularly in relation to the expansion of our online accounting service, Teamwork.ie.

What are your primary professional motivators?

My main motivator is to continuously challenge our work methods, taking ad-



John O'Shea, joint managing director, Lalor O'Shea

vantage of new technologies and delivering more efficient, cost-effective accounting services. Through this process, I believe we can pass on significant cost-saving opportunities to our clients, while maintaining the highest possible professional standards.

How would you describe your work style?

Flexible, approachable, energetic and open-minded.

What would you rate as the best decision you ever made in business?

Without doubt, it was the decision to merge our individual firms in 2003. It allowed us to recruit and retain the very best people, and offer a broad range of services not typically found in professional firms outside Dublin.

What is the most valuable lesson you have learned so far?

Expect the unexpected

and always be open to learning.

Who do you most admire in Irish industry?

I greatly admire Michael O'Leary, chief executive of Ryanair. While he may not be everyone's cup of tea, his company continues to perform ahead of its peers in what is probably the toughest industry in the world. With Ryanair, you know what you are getting – efficient service at a competitive cost.

What are your expectations for Irish business in the months ahead?

The next nine months will present many challenges to Irish business. While all companies will be affected and many will fail, I believe the spirit of entrepreneurship that prevails in Irish business will help us to come through the recession in a much stronger position, so we can benefit from the eventual upturn in the economy.

What is your ultimate professional goal at this point?

Using the trade name Teamwork.ie, we were the first accountancy firm in Ireland to provide an online accounting service to our clients. My vision is to maintain our leading position in the provision of online accounting services to SMEs in Ireland. The internet has revolutionised the way we conduct our business, allowing us to serve clients throughout the entire country. I am excited about the opportunities this will present over the coming years.