



Caroline Sugrue

DCS Group

GOING FOR GROWTH PROFILE

NAME:

Caroline Sugrue

BUSINESS

DCS Group

POSITION

Director

WHAT WE DO

Specialists in energy consumption reduction through energy saving projects and/or revenue generation projects

CONTACT US

T: 066-7181836

E: info@dcsgroup.eu

W: www.dcsgroup.eu

Caroline Sugrue's early career in the Advertising Department with the Irish Examiner in Cork and the Kerryman in Tralee seems an unlikely starting point to where she is today. But when she opened a small grocery store in Cork at the age of 19, it gave some indication of her entrepreneurial spirit and her desire to explore new opportunities. Along with her husband Donal she now runs the highly successful, multi million euro environmental services company DCS Group, based in Tralee, specialising in helping companies find cost effective and efficient energy management and energy saving solutions. Today, they employ over 40 people and their customer base includes many leading companies across the pharma, telecoms, retail, education, health and other sectors.

The origins of the company lie in their original electrical contracting business. Demand was high and the business grew year on year. Caroline cites these early years as being critical to the subsequent growth of DCS Group. They built up a very strong bank of knowledge, understanding of customer needs and reputation for quality of service. However, they could see that electrical contracting alone could not sustain a growth company with export ambitions and this gave them the impetus to diversify and specialise in providing a much wider ranging portfolio of energy services and solutions.

Caroline's ambition for the DCS Group has always been to see it recognised as a leader in the provision of energy services and energy cost reduction. According to Caroline, one of the key factors driving their continued growth has been their focus on staying on top of changes in the market and developing products, solutions and systems to deal with these changes. *"We were able to build the new company on the wide experience we had gained at the coal face in the earlier electrical contracting business. But the critical thing is to keep on learning. The energy and regulatory environment is changing constantly, and we prioritise keeping on top of these developments, ensuring that customers see us as respected and recognised experts in the field".*

Caroline cites reputation as a critical ingredient in fuelling their success. *"Reputation is everything. We do not subcontract our services but provide everything in house. We see ourselves as going on a journey with each customer, developing a long term trusted relationship. We help them take a helicopter, strategic approach to their energy requirements and develop tailored solutions and an energy strategy that ties in with their overall business strategy".*

According to Caroline, participating on the Going for Growth Programme was tremendously important in terms of pushing out the boundaries of their growth ambitions and focussing on what really needed to be done to make them happen. *"Working with your group and your Lead Entrepreneur helps you think strategically. It helps open your eyes to what is really happening in the business, what activities are profitable, what you need to do to address any problem areas. You get to know your business and that was hugely helpful for me in terms of growing the company".*

Caroline sees significant opportunities for future growth. She is particularly excited about the company's mini building management system, Smart-E. From their work with customers they saw the opportunity to develop a cheap, flexible, easy-to-use energy control system. Smart-E allows companies control their energy consumption and reduce waste by turning off their energy use during the night and at weekends when the building/facility is empty. This device has saved their customers up to 20% on their utility bill. Smart-E is listed on the SEAI's approved product listing and Caroline is confident that it will prove very successful with customers.

For the future, DCS is prioritising expanding export markets, particularly in the UK. The company is already well established there offering a range of consultancy services. The strategy now is to increase their export footprint, particularly in terms of increasing sales of the new Smart-e system. Caroline says Going for Growth gave her great encouragement for this new growth phase. *"The programme gave me an opportunity to share ideas with the other entrepreneurs, and the opportunity to learn from their experience has been invaluable".*

