



Milena Byrne

Platinum Pilates

GOING FOR GROWTH PROFILE

NAME:

Milena Byrne

BUSINESS

Platinum Pilates

POSITION

Managing Director

WHAT WE DO

Network of studios providing specialist pilates programmes and physiotherapy services.

CONTACT US

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From her early teenage years, health and physical fitness have been at the heart of Milena Byrne's approach to life. It was no surprise then that she began her working career as a fitness and personal instructor in one of Dublin's leading gym chains. Nor was it a surprise that her passion for fitness, and in time particularly for pilates, would ultimately lead her to set up Platinum Pilates in 2010, along with a number of investors. These included her husband William Byrne, who is also an expert in physical science. From small beginnings with just one studio, four employees and 400 clients accounting for 400 visits per week, the business has enjoyed impressive growth. Today, Platinum Pilates has seven studios, 30 employees and over 16,000 clients accounting for 2,000 visits per week.

Milena always kept a keen eye on what was happening in the wider sector, not just in Ireland, but internationally. She always built in time to travel abroad, visit other studios, attend international conventions, and continue her own studies. It was in Germany that she came upon pilates utilising reformer machines. At the same time, research in the US and Australia was highlighting their value in promoting overall health and in particular, promoting longevity in healthy physical movement. While many people practice a form of pilates based on floor work on mats, her experience of using reformer machines completely changed her view. As she describes it, "I couldn't believe I could feel so good after a workout – reformer based pilates was amazing". She was converted.

The first Platinum Pilates studio opened in Stillorgan, in Dublin. Success came fast, as more and more people saw the health and fitness benefits of this type of exercise. Clients included Ireland's international rugby players, impressed by the quality and professionalism of the service, and the excellent outcomes in terms of physical well being. As the studio's reputation grew, demand outstripped their studio space. It was time to expand and position the business for serious growth.

Milena had a very clear vision of what she wanted for Platinum Pilates. This was centred on broadening the scope of the offering and providing a service for clients that she calls a 'Circle of Care'. Their studios are not based on the generic gym model, but offer a much broader health and wellness experience. The studio teams include Pilates Teachers, Physical Therapists, Physiotherapists, Wellness Coaches and other fitness and health specialists that can explore each client's individual needs to ensure they are on a fitness programme that can give them the best outcomes in terms of their overall health as well as their physical well being.

Milena took part in the sixth cycle of Going for Growth, and her participation came at just the right time. It provided a valuable source of support at a crucial period for the business, when the challenge was to develop a unique offering that would drive the business forward. "I found Going for Growth the best support I have ever had in business", says Milena. "It was a place to go and find like-minded people who were willing to share and encourage. It provided a tremendous impetus to help me face up to the many challenges that go with growing a business and moving on to a higher platform".

This is an exciting time for Platinum Pilates. The next step will be to build on the current number of seven studios in Dublin and Wicklow, and explore options to expand further in other areas of high population density, both in Ireland and in the UK. They will continue to grow the physiotherapy element of the business, and plan to expand into related education aspects of fitness and well being. Milena has continued her involvement with the Going for Growth Community and has participated in Continuing the Momentum, a specific programme for former Going for Growth participants that supports their continued growth journey. Milena uses the information and learnings from the sessions to bring back to the team. "This experience is giving me a bigger network and having this continued network will help me achieve my goals", she says.

PLATINUMPilates

