Reliving it@cork Tech Summit 2019 (#techcork19)

The annual it@cork Tech Summit (#techcork19) took place on the 9th of May in the iconic City Hall, Cork City. This annual tech conference has grown to become one of the largest tech conferences in the country.

The event was bigger and better than ever before and was the first time the event completely sold out with over 450 in attendance.

Some of the key highlights from this year's event were:

- #Techcork19 trended number 1 in Ireland and reached +14m twitter impressions (and counting!).
- It was the first time that we live streamed the event. We chose to live stream the event so that the broader tech community and the Cork diaspora community overseas could view the conference remotely. We were delighted to have viewers online from the UK, US, India, Australia and many other countries.
- It was the first time to showcase interactive sessions in cyber security (live hack) and an engineering skills workshop.
- We showcased a BYTE (Bridging Your Transition in Education) project which is supported by the School's Excellence Fund, an initiative promoting IT in schools. Transition year students from Deerpark CBS and primary school students from Greenmount NS and Morning Star NS gave an excellent demonstration on their robotics project.

There were four main themes to this year's event:

1. The future for cyber security
2. Diversity in tech
3. The circular economy
4. Technology & the future of work

1. The Future for Cyber Security

Robert McArdle, Director at Trend Micro gave a presentation focused on the frightening reality of cyber security threats. With more connected IOT devices in the world (8.4bn) than people, the threat of security breaches has never been greater. It is estimated that a further 125m devices will be connected by 2020. *'Everything in our world is getting more connected, and if it is connected it can be hacked', quoted Mr McArdle.* He also went on to highlight that cyber crime is a human problem and not a technology problem.

Robert McArdle, Trend Micro, #techcork19

Later in the day, a cyber security workshop (sponsored by Trend Micro) featured a 'Livehack'. Cyber security specialists from Trend Micro demonstrated how easy it is to impersonate the public wi-fi system and hack into a personal phone of an attendee at the venue. The reaction of the audience was genuine shock at how simple and quick this process was for hackers. Needless to say, the message to the general public is to be wary and cautious when signing into any public Wi-Fi system.

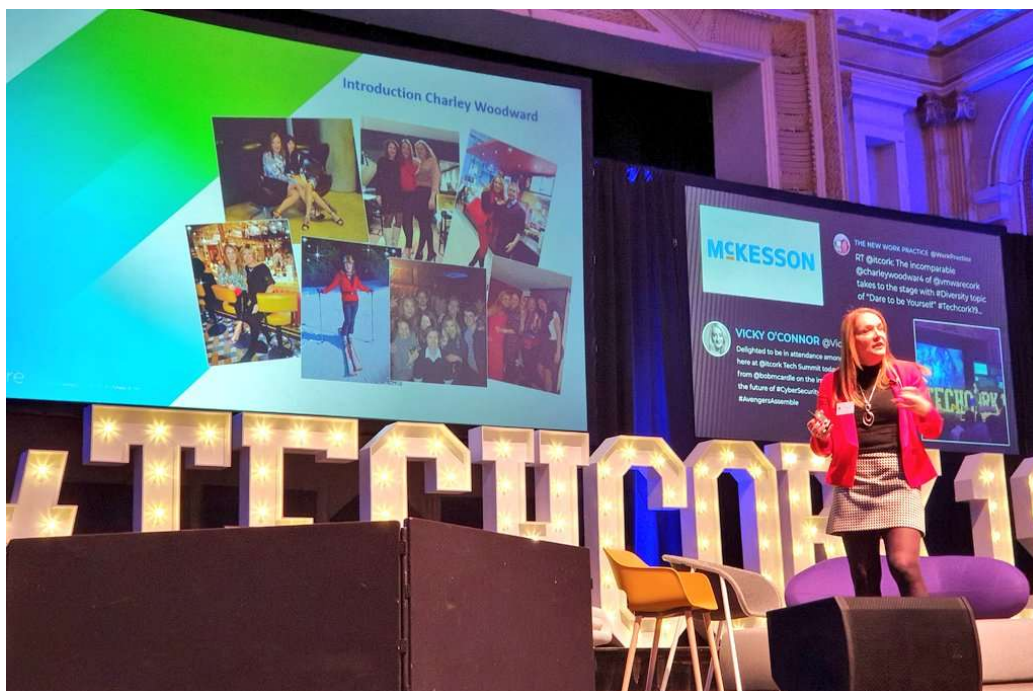**Audience Poll: Cyber Security**

The audience was then asked to consider the following cyber security question: *What do you feel is the biggest cyber security threat to a company over the next 12 months?*

The general consensus clearly being that 'Insufficient information security skills & resources' was the biggest risk to a company's business over the next 12 months.

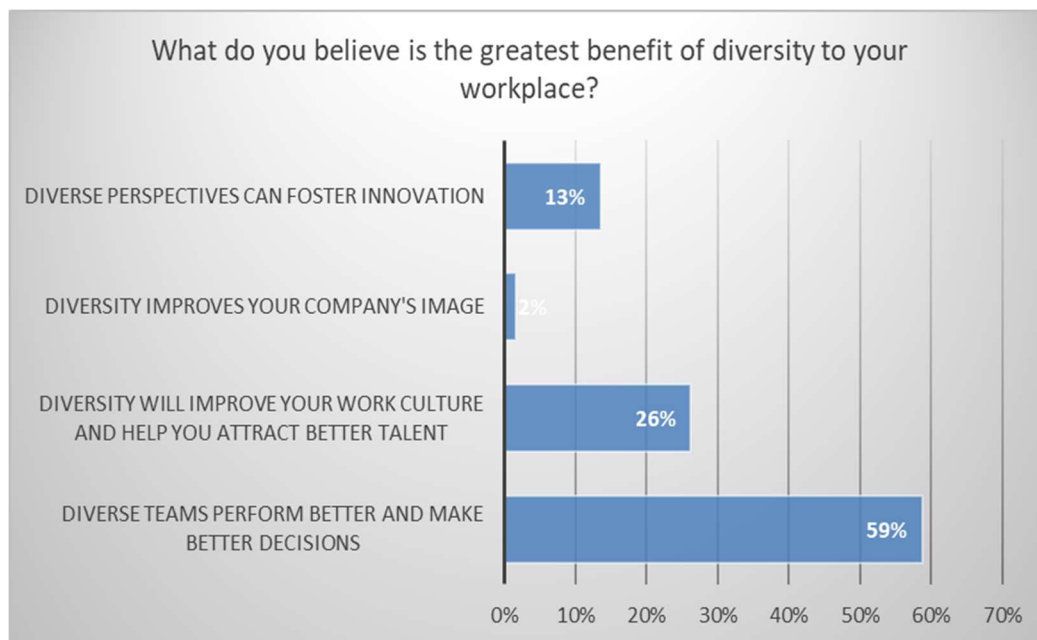## 2.   Diversity in tech – Dare to be yourself

Next up, Charley Woodward gave a stunning and insightful key note on the importance of being your true authentic self in the workplace. Charley spoke about her journey and transition as a transgender woman whilst working as a business leader in the tech industry for over 29 years. Charley spoke about the word bravery & how the importance of a supportive inclusive culture of diversity in the workplace makes it truly possible without fear!

Charley Woodward, VMware #techcork19

Audience Poll: Diversity in tech

The audience was then asked to consider the following 'Diversity in tech' question. *What do you believe is the greatest benefit of diversity to your workplace?*

'Diverse teams perform better and make better decisions' was considered by far (59%) to be the greatest benefit to an organisation.

3. The circular economy

Sean Sheehan from Wisetek gave a presentation on 'The circular economy'. Wisetek is a great success story from Cork. Wisetek are internationally recognised as a leader in end to end IT asset disposition with customers such as Dell EMC, Samsung and McAfee.

The world produces almost 50m tonnes of e-waste (any plug in or battery device) every year, weighing the equivalent of 125,00 jumbo

jets. By 2050, this will reach 120 million tonnes. Wisetek play a crucial role in managing hazardous and toxic e-waste produced by some of the world's largest manufacturers and suppliers.

Sean Sheehan, Wisetek, #techcork19

4.   Technology & the future of work

The final key note presentation of the day was given by Bill Boorman, an internationally recognised speaker on 'talent' and 'the future of work'. Bill's presentation was extremely thought provoking addressing what employers can expect the future work environment to look like.
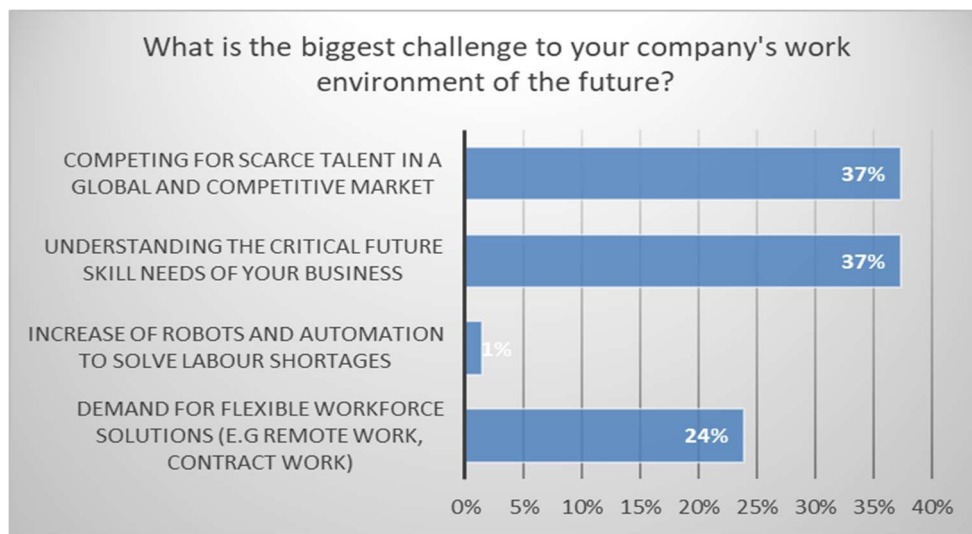
He spoke about the 'gig economy' and how employees are agile and will increasingly look for specialised work that they thrive rather than jobs as we know it. In return, employers will need to provide more flexible working conditions to employees and recognise that '*you need to earn the loyalty and commitment of employees…. people are focused on careers for self and not your company'.*

Bill Boorman, #tru, #corktech19

Audience poll: Technology and the future of work

For the final audience poll of the day, attendees were asked to consider the following 'Future of work' question: *'What is the biggest challenge to your company's work environment of the future'?*

Both 'Competing for scarce talent' and 'understanding critical future skills needs' were identified as the biggest challenges to a company's work environment of the future.

Thank you!

it@cork would like to thank its many contributors and supporters for making #techcork19 such a great success. Firstly, we would like to thank our sponsors & exhibitors:

We would also like to thank our speakers & panellists:

We would like to thank all of you who attended #techcork19 on the 9th of May. We hope you enjoyed it, networked and were inspired!

See you all next year for #techcork20

About it@cork

it@cork is a member led organisation representing over 200 companies from the technology sector in the south west of Ireland. We are a member driven organisation that responds to the needs and requirements of technology companies in the region from the start up, sme and mnc sectors.

it@cork manages the skillnet program for the ICT sector in the south west of Ireland. Over 500 employees/trainees participated in it@cork skillnet courses in 2018 alone.

Furthermore, it@cork is a member of the European Cluster Collaboration Platform (ECCP) and is active in collaboration opportunities with other European technology clusters.

If you are interested in finding more about it@cork membership, please get in touch.

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