

FUELLING GROWTH

IN THE FAST MOVING WORLD OF IT, THERE'S NO TIME TO STAND STILL. **ADRIENNE MCGILL** HEARS FROM **PAUL TROUTON** ABOUT HOW HIS COMPANY IS MOVING INTO POLE POSITION WITH A NEW NAME AND LOOK.



Paul Trouton, the power behind Fuel.

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A Craigavon based IT company is powering its way, with a high octane drive, into the future with a new name and rebrand which takes off this month.

Fuel – High Performance IT is the new name for Micro Computer Solutions (MCS) which was established in 1991 by Managing Director Paul Trouton while he was studying Computer Science at Queen's University, Belfast.

Fuel has grown to become one of the leading IT providers in Northern Ireland. With a strong foundation in infrastructure, communications and Sage products, the company provides a large range of IT services to clients across an array of sectors.

It was one of the first firms in Northern Ireland to provide custom built PCs and Servers for both home and business markets.

Explaining the reason behind the name change and rebrand, Paul says: “The name Micro Computer Solutions was right at the time when I set up the company – but times have changed and computers are now less to do with a machine which sits on a desk and more to do with how technology is pushed into everybody's lives.

“Twenty years ago mobile phones were just starting to come onto the market and people were using them purely to make calls – but

now smart phones are so much more than phones – they are a complete communication device across the internet.

“There has been a shift about where technology lies and how it affects people in their day-to-day activities.

“Through our rebrand, we wanted to reflect this change and the speed at which technology is moving.

“As a company, we live, eat and breathe high performance IT – that is what we do every day for our clients. We love technology and computers. The new name conveys exactly what we are about.”

The imagery accompanying the rebrand connects the company to ground breaking high tech developments over the years and the race to be first including missions to the moon and the design of Formula One engines.

“We might not be going to the moon but it is pretty much the same approach – the imagery gets across the connection between design and technology. It also conveys how a company can go to a new level using our expertise.

“Fuel and high performance describes us perfectly – it is incredibly hookable and catchy,” says Paul.

Fuel, which employs 14 people at its base in

Carn, offers a range of software solutions to help businesses manage and integrate their various divisions and functions. It also develops applications to suit specific requirements.

There are two sides to the business – the sage application software development and the Microsoft systems which they run on.

“They operate as one unit but are two magnets which attract customers,” says Paul.

The company has won the Sage Circle of Excellence award three times which recognises and rewards firms who provide outstanding customer service and whose customers are most likely to recommend them to friends and colleagues.

The firm is the first in Northern Ireland to have become a Sage Platinum partner and as a

Sage provider offers an extensive portfolio of Sage suites including accounts, payroll, HR, and financial forecasting.

Paul says Fuel's expertise lies in helping firms find the right balance of functionality, performance and price across systems.

“We take the headache of IT away from customers. We look at everything that is available from an IT

perspective and see how that applies to your business. Our job is to understand all of that and present you with what best suits your needs.”

The company has built up particularly strong partnerships with customers who are involved in export markets.

“We make sure their communications systems are safe, secure and are connected with one another. This covers infrastructure and hardware support. As technology has become smarter, the need for security and encryption has increased so we are constantly finding out what's new in the market,” says Paul.

“We look at where new technology increases efficiency, drives down cost and simplifies communication. I am looking at how it will benefit customers in running their businesses.

“When the iPad came along, I knew it would revolutionise the way people worked. Most people can't be bothered waiting for their laptop to boot up but an iPad gives you the internet instantly on a screen. That is what people want – immediacy. Technology is changing and it is changing people's lives at a rapid rate – it is incredibly exciting.”

It seems Fuel is intent on racing ahead as it continues to steer customers towards the most effective technology for their needs.