

contractors outlook⁷



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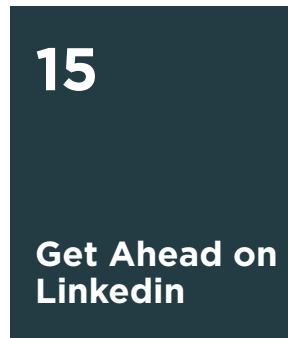
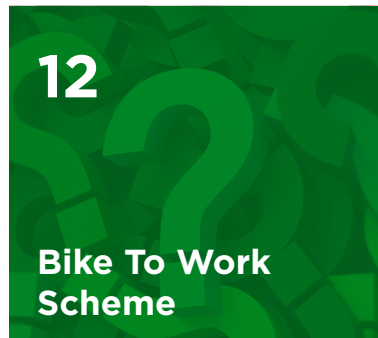
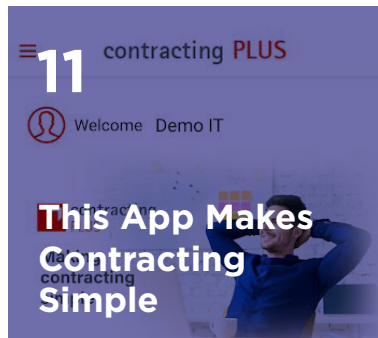
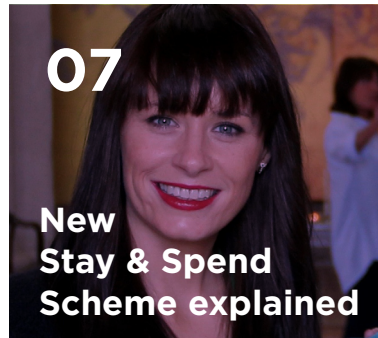
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Autumn 2020

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2021 – The Year of the Professional Contractor



Jimmy Sheehan

I know. I know. It seems strange talking about 2021 but I only realised how close it was when one of my kids told me last week that there were only 99 more sleeps to Santa. Given people are saying how quickly the last six months have passed, I figure with only 99 sleeps to go, it's worth looking at what 2021 has in store for us.

We know the way people work becomes more diverse and more flexible with each passing year. The current environment has forced a lot of remote working; however, the ecosystem of the workforce itself has not changed drastically in the last six months. Dynamic workforces made up of both employees and independent contractors are a proven recipe for success and is set to continue in 2021.

The external workforce (that is, you, the Professional Contractor) allows organisations to be agile. The work you do can typically increase speed to market of a new product/service and you are adept at side-stepping any political hurdles in developing or improving existing products and services.

As a company grows through the innovation of the work you do, so too does their core employment base to service a higher customer demand. Entrepreneurism through outsourcing innovation on a project-by-project basis reaps tangible rewards.

Professional Contractors are key in attracting Foreign Direct Investment to Ireland, all of which helps Ireland's GDP. At Contracting PLUS we have always made representations to Government officials for better rules and flexibility for business expenses for Professional Contractors. Finally, it seems they could be starting to listen. The recent Tax Strategy Group publication outlines a

proposed change to legislation which would allow the minister to specify the allowance of specific expenses for specific industries. While it is too early to say yet what this entails, one would hope that in the current environment of protecting businesses that this is a positive move for the contracting sector in particular.

We'll keep you updated with any developments in this area. In the meantime, grab a coffee and take 30 minutes to flick through this latest edition of the Contractors Outlook – the only publication in Ireland dedicated to Professional Contractors.

There are some great tips to save tax, to stay healthy, to secure your next contract and the chance to win a €500 voucher in time for Christmas – it's only 99 sleeps away after all!

Jimmy Sheehan is Commercial Director of Contracting PLUS and can be reached on (01) 611 0707 or jimmy.sheehan@contractingplus.com

Making Contracting Simple

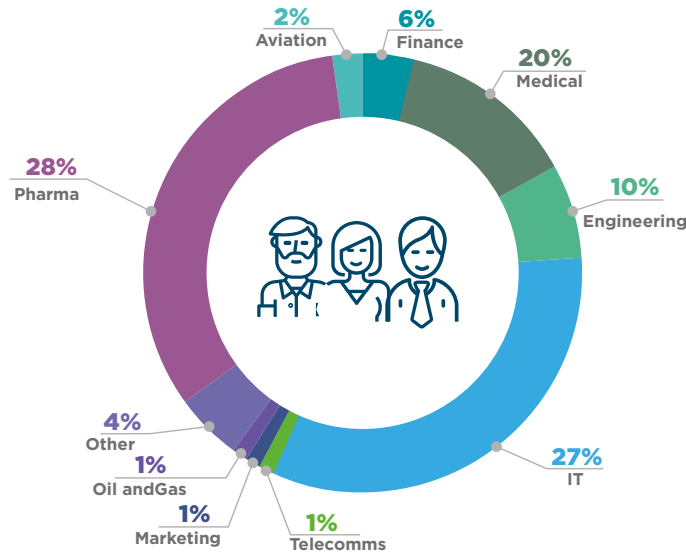
Contracting PLUS is Ireland's premium provider of compliant Umbrella Companies and Personal Limited Companies for Contractors and Business Consultants.

 Dedicated Account Manager	 Free Immediate Set Up	
 No minimum contract	 Switch solutions when you need to	 No charges when you're not working*
 No leaving fees	 Free Financial Review	 Income Tax Return included*
 Claim Business Expenses to maximise earnings	 Same day transfer of funds	 Professional Indemnity Insurance*
 Employer and Public Liability Insurances	 Bespoke Contractor App and Software	 Company Accounts and filings included



Professional Contracting in Ireland - Overview 2020

BREAKDOWN OF THE CONTRACTING MARKET BY SECTOR



Oldest Contractor



78yrs

43yrs

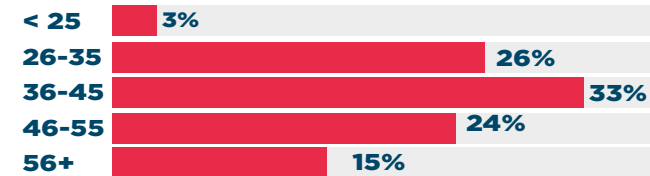
Average age of a Professional Contractor

Youngest Contractor



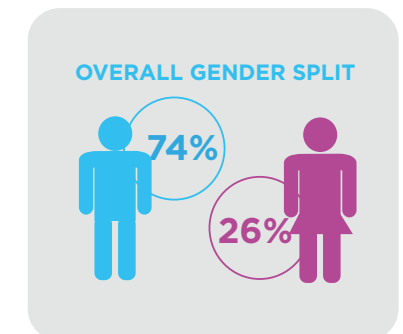
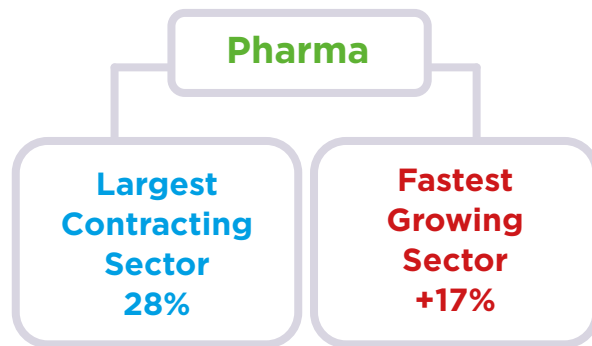
22yrs

TOTAL CONTRACTORS BY AGE %



ALL PROFESSIONAL SERVICE SECTORS SHOWING GROWTH

2019-2020
+7% YTD



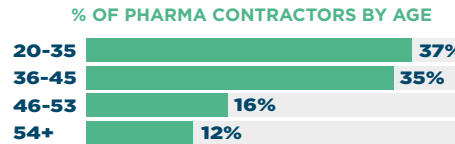
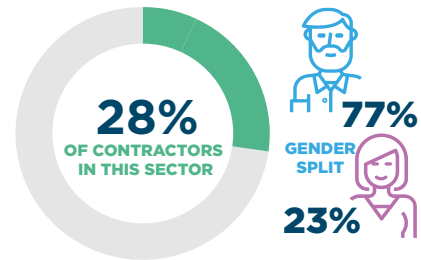


The Professional Contracting Industry - Sector Breakdown

Pharma Life Sciences Sector

Top Pharma Jobs	Avg. Day Rate
Engineer	€359
Validation Engineer	€351
Project Manager	€440
Automation Engineer	€402
CQV Engineer	€419

*Top 5 Contracting Roles in the Pharma sector



Oldest Contractor



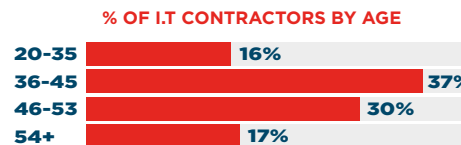
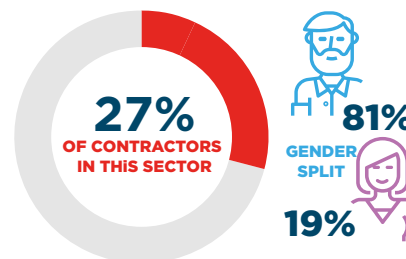
Youngest Contractor



I.T Sector

Top IT Jobs	Avg. Day Rate
Project Manager	€523
Software Engineer	€408
IT Consultant	€479
Software Developer	€421
Business Analysis	€452

*Top 5 Contracting Roles in the IT sector



Oldest Contractor



Youngest Contractor



*The day rates quoted represent the median of the rates being achieved under each job description. Contracting PLUS takes no responsibility for any decisions made on foot of the information presented. In our calculations we have assumed that a working day is 7.5 hours and there are 20 working days in month.

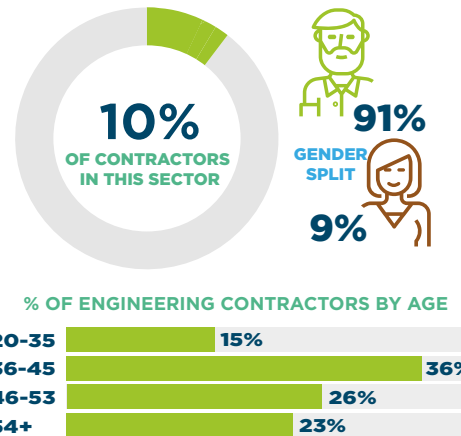


The Professional Contracting Industry - Sector Breakdown

Engineering Sector

Top Engineer Jobs	Avg. Day Rate
Engineer	€395
Project Manager	€520
Mechanical Engineer	€389
Electrical Engineer	€288
CAD Technician	€282

*Top 5 Contracting Roles in the Engineering sector



Oldest Contractor



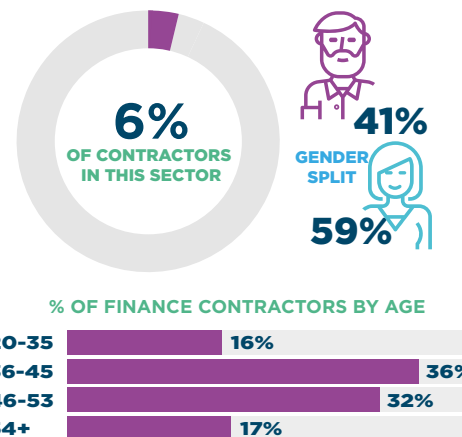
Youngest Contractor



Finance Sector

Top Finance Jobs	Avg. Day Rate
Project Manager	€515
Business Analyst	€422
Consultant	€798
Accountant	€450
Programme Manager	€742

*Top 5 Contracting Roles in the Finance sector



Oldest Contractor



Youngest Contractor





Michelle McManus

Stay and Spend Scheme

It's not often the tax man wants to buy you a meal... but in an attempt to boost the Irish tourism sector, the Government have introduced the new "Stay and Spend" tax credit.

How does it work?

Running from 1 October 2020 until 30 April 2021, a 20% tax credit will be available to you on the cost of certain accommodation, food and drink.

The allowable expenditure includes the cost of staying in hotels, guest houses, hostels, campsites and some self-catering properties. It also includes the cost of any "sit-in" meals and any non-alcoholic drinks.

So, if you spend €500 on a night in a hotel, including an evening meal and some drinks, you can submit the receipts to Revenue and

claim back up to €100, reducing your €500 spend to €400.

Better yet, a nice meal out in your local restaurant for 2 people at a cost of €100 can result in a tax rebate of €20.

Maximum claim

The maximum expense you can claim is €625 per person over the course of the 7 months, meaning the most you can claim back from Revenue when filing your tax return is €125. For couples who are jointly assessed, the maximum expense is doubled to €1,250 giving a total refund of €250.

Restrictions

- No credit is allowed for alcoholic drinks, or for spends of less than €25 per person.
- Businesses must register for Revenue's "Stay & Spend" tax credit in order to allow customers claim their tax credit.
- Registered service providers should also ensure that the receipts they issue to you include all relevant details, including the name of their business and an itemised breakdown of services provided.

How to claim your credit

As an employee, you can claim your credit via your "MyAccount" on [Revenue.ie](https://www.revenue.ie) or through Revenue's Receipts Tracker App.

If you're contracting with us, just hold on to your receipts and come tax return time, we'll make sure that your tax liability is reduced by the credit you are due.



Top tips

- Always look for the "Stay and Spend" logo when deciding where to stay or eat.
- Ensure you receive a valid receipt from the business.
- Employees can download Revenue's new "Receipt Tracker App". If you spend more than €25 per person on food, non-alcoholic drink or on allowable accommodation in a registered business, upload your receipt to the app straight away. You can then bin the paper receipt and avoid the hassle of minding your receipts until tax return time.

It may not be a free meal, but it might just cover the cost of your starter...

Michelle is a Tax Manager with the Contracting PLUS Tax Team. She can be reached on (01) 638 1873 or michelle.mcmanus@contractingplus.com



TaxreturnsPLUS

Completing your 2019 Irish Tax Return



Eimear Larriskey

As a professional contractor, you are obliged to file a personal Irish tax return (Form 11) to the Irish Revenue by 31 October 2020. As always, if you are a Professional Contractor with Contracting Plus we are here to make this process as simple and smooth as possible for you.

In order for us to prepare your 2019 tax return, we need to gather some details from you by asking you to complete a few simple questions on our mobile friendly online checklist. The steps required are explained below and you can simply log in [here](#) to complete your checklist.

If you need any other help with your tax return, feel free to contact our Tax team on (01) 611 0707. Alternatively, you can email our shared mailbox at Ireland@taxreturnsplus.com



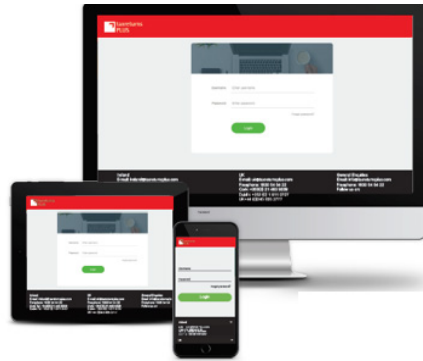
Making Tax Returns Simple



HOW TO USE OUR ONLINE TAX RETURN PORTAL

- 1 Please login to www.taxreturnsplus.com

Login to www.taxreturnsplus.com using your email address and password. If you have forgotten your password, you can reset it by following the simple instructions on the log-in page.



- 2 Once logged in, select the Ireland flag.
- Select Tax Returns Country

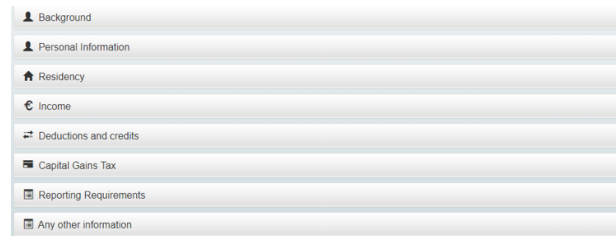


- 3 Have a look at the FAQ/Tax Guide on TaxreturnsPLUS. Once you are ready to start the checklist, select "Start Checklist".

We help you keep your tax affairs in order. Follow the simple steps below. Once you complete the tax checklist we will prepare your draft return and you will receive notification that your return is ready for your review. You must approve the return before we submit it to Revenue on your behalf. For further information, please click on our [FAQ Document](#) here.

- 4 Answer all relevant questions. Make sure to save each section as you go along.

TIP: Review the 'Deductions & Credits' section for ways to save tax!



- 5 Complete the 'Approval' section to submit your checklist. Remember to "Finalise" your checklist when all sections are complete, and we will review your checklist for preparation of your tax return.

Declaration

I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, this checklist has been completed with all relevant details to allow the preparer to process my return.

If, upon processing of this checklist, I am due a tax refund, I hereby authorise Contracting PLUS to proceed with the submission of my return to Revenue.

I confirm my acceptance to this by clicking here

Finalize

NEW FEATURE: If you choose our new PREAPPROVAL OPTION, your return will automatically be submitted to the Revenue Commissioners if you are in a refund position. This removes an extra admin step for you and ensures your refund hits your bank account as soon as possible.

Eimear Larrissey is a member of the Tax Team at Contracting PLUS and can be reached at (01) 6381872 or Eimear.larrissey@contractingplus.com.

Refer a Friend Scheme

Get a €75 Me2You card every time you introduce a friend to Contracting PLUS

We Love giving our Contractors a great experience. Our goal is to keep things hassle-free for you and to make contracting simple. If you're loving the service you're getting from Contracting PLUS please don't keep it a secret, tell all your contracting friends and colleagues about us. As a thank you from us for referring your friends you will receive a €75 Me2You gift voucher everytime one of your friends signs up and uses our service.

To refer your friend introduce them to us through the dedicated 'Refer a Friend' section on your ContractingPLUS App or through your online portal.

You can also refer your friend by sharing their details with your Dedicated Account Manager.



Here's how it works

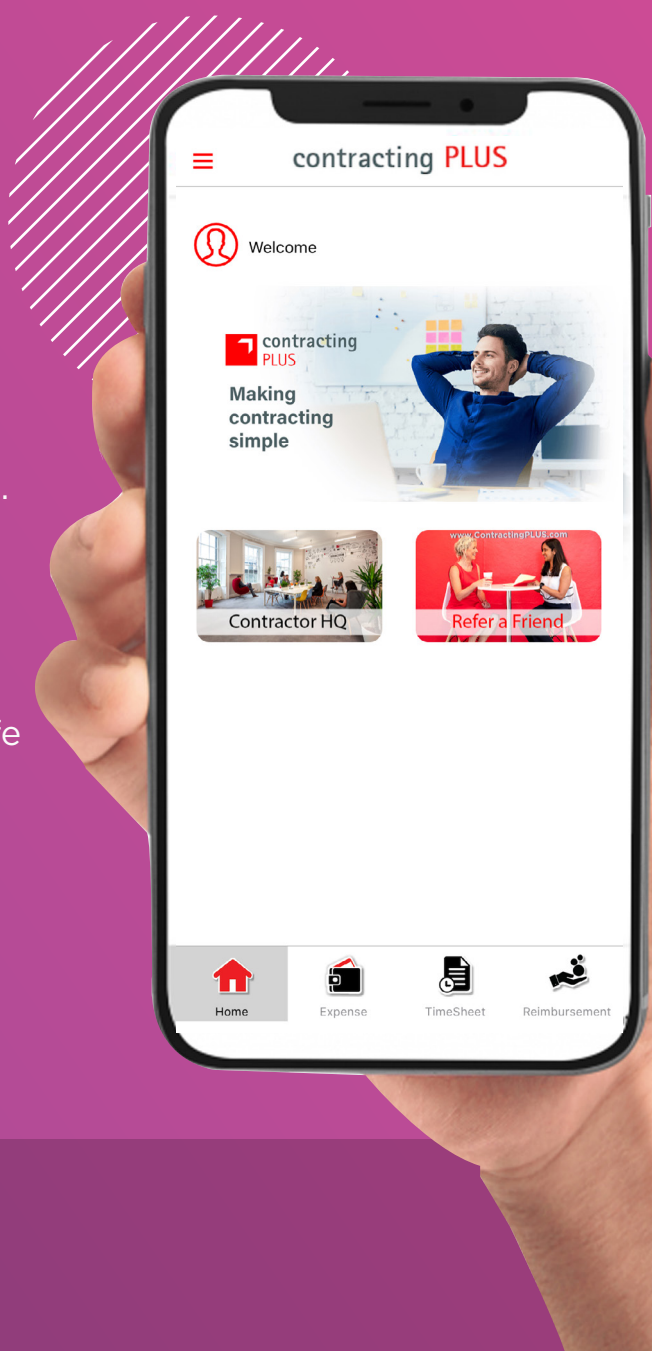
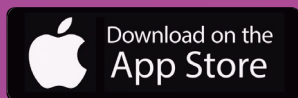
1. Make the introduction through the 'Refer a Friend' section on your ContractingPLUS App or through your online Portal, before your friend contacts us.
2. Your friend signs up to Contracting PLUS and needs to use our service for 2 months.
3. You will receive your €75 Me2You voucher with our thanks, which you can spend in 100's of retail outlets nationwide.
4. There's no limit to the number of cards you can receive – so this is a nice way to get yourself a little treat while treating your friends to some valuable information!

*Please note the offer does not apply to Contractors who've been with us in the previous 18 months.

Technology built for Contractors

Have you downloaded your ContractingPLUS App?

- No more lost receipts. No paperwork piling up.
- Quickly record your expenses as you incur them.
- Submit timesheets.
- Simple, intuitive and designed to make your life easy.



- ▶ Access to a comprehensive list of business expenses so you can check you're claiming everything you should be.
- ▶ Easy, immediate upload of expenses. Just take a photo and a couple of clicks later you're all done.
- ▶ Separately record expenses being reimbursed by your client and those you're claiming to reduce your tax bill.
- ▶ View all your contracts to date.
- ▶ Refer a friend and earn €75 for every successful introduction you make. There's no limit on the amount of vouchers you can get.

Coming soon.....

View all your payslips in one place
Order your €500 tax free voucher

ON YOUR BIKE

A look at the updated rules for the Bike to Work Scheme



Eva Byrne

As a keen cyclist myself to get to and from our office in Merrion Square I am especially pleased with the Governments recent efforts at improving and extending cycle lanes. Now with increases in tax relief...

cycling is good for your pocket as well as your health.

Under the 2020 revised scheme, the limit on allowable expenditure has increased from €1,000 to €1,500 for ebikes and €1,250 for other bicycles and related safety equipment, without a benefit in kind charge. The tax exemption can now be availed of once in any four year period.

We can assist you purchase your brand new bike and equipment and process it through your payroll without you incurring a BIKE charge.

This means that you are saving up to 52% of tax and on a purchase of €1,500 that's a saving of €780, best illustrated by an example:



	Without Scheme €	With Scheme €
Gross income in October 2020	4,500	4,500
Purchase ebike through payroll	-	(1,500)
Taxable salary	4,500	3,000
Tax, USC & PRSI - assume top rates apply	(2,340)	(1,560)
Net income	2,160	1,440
Purchase Ebike not through payroll	(1,500)	-
Cash left in your pocket with the same bike!	660	1,440

Whats the catch?...

There is actually no catch but just some rules to be aware of:

- ✓ As mentioned since 1 August 2020 the limit on the amount you can spend to get the relief has increased to a maximum of €1,250 (or €1,500 for electric bikes).
- ✓ You can spend less if you want but remember you will need to wait 4 years to benefit from the scheme again.
- ✓ To avail of the limits the purchase must be in the one transaction, so you can't decide to buy your helmet a few months later!
- ✓ It only covers new bikes. Second hand bikes and equipment don't qualify for the tax relief. Scooters, e-scooters and mopeds are not covered.



Happy cycling!
Eva Byrne Cycling the
Waterford Greenway

Bike to work scheme

What's allowed?

- Delivery charges.
- Cycle helmets which conform to European standard EN 1078.
- Bells and bulb horns.
- Lights, including dynamo packs.
- Mirrors and mudguards to ensure riders visibility is not impaired.
- Cycle clips and dress guards.
- Panniers, luggage carriers and straps to allow luggage to be safely carried.
- Locks and chains to ensure bicycle can be safely secured.
- Pumps, puncture repair kits, cycle tool kits and tyre sealant to allow for minor repairs, reflective clothing along with white front reflectors and spoke reflectors.

So if this is of interest to you then drop into your local bike shop. You'll be supporting local businesses and saving tax. Of course you can also purchase your bike and equipment from online stores. Just remember, before you sign on the dotted line contact your Dedicated Account Manager to ensure that you can benefit from this attractive scheme.

Eva Byrne is Tax Manager at Contracting PLUS and can be reached at (01) 638 1870 or eva.byrne@contractingplus.com.



LinkedIn: A strategic approach for Professional Contractors

LinkedIn hosts more than 600 million professional profiles. What makes you stand out when a company is looking for your skill?

Both companies and specialist contract-recruitment agencies search LinkedIn daily to find talent to fill available contract roles. Your profile should do two things;

- Include the right information so you stand out for the skills and experience you have, and.
- Follow the right companies and people so your name starts to circulate organically.

Stand out from the crowd

Having a strong personal profile (some hints on this on the next page) is obviously one element of your LinkedIn strategy but you should also consider following companies and relevant

thought-leaders on LinkedIn as they can provide you with dynamic industry information that will keep you ahead of the game.

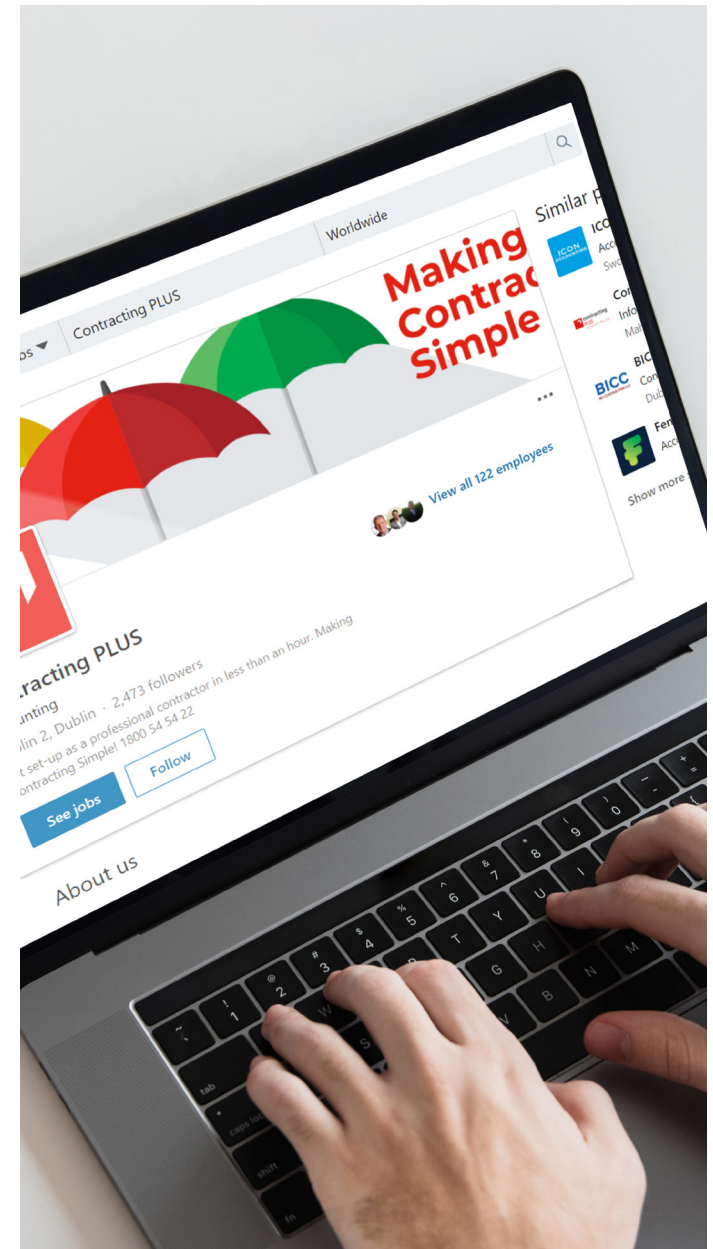
Another benefit of following relevant companies and joining relevant groups, is to ensure you never miss useful advice and tips.

Being active on LinkedIn is an important part of being a full-fledged professional in any industry these days.

Contracting PLUS regularly publishes advice and tips specific to Professional Contractors on everything from useful technology to relevant ways to upskill and information on how to reduce your personal tax and build your wealth.

Follow Contracting PLUS on LinkedIn for all your Professional Contracting Industry News.

Follow us on





5 | Tips to improve your Personal LinkedIn profile



Put Keywords and Search Terms in Your “Skills” Section

Keywords help you get found in search results on LinkedIn. Populating your skills with keywords will make your profile show up when someone searches for that word or phrase. LinkedIn lets you put up to 50 keywords in your skills section. A little effort here can have a big impact on how many times you will appear in search results, making lining up your next role much easier.



Review profiles of thought-leaders in your industry

Look at the skills they are listing. You might find a keyword you didn't think about. Read their headline and see if you can improve yours. Look at a couple of profiles and note what is interesting about them. Try and incorporate these ideas into your own profile.



Lead with your accomplishments under past job

Lead with results and accomplishments in bullet points under each previous job. Use verbs like *increased*, *led*, *managed* and *developed* followed by specific results. Talk about what you've achieved, and how you have been successful in former roles. Include metrics where possible.



Make a good first impression

Your image and your headline (the sentence right below your name on your profile) are your LinkedIn 'first impression' so you need to make sure they work.

Make sure your image looks professional and friendly and consider adding a keyword to your headline if there is any ambiguity in what you do caused by your current job title.



Add recommendations to your profile

Get two or three recommendations from people you know or have worked with in the past.

Don't be afraid to ask people for a recommendation. Recommendations are very powerful, they build trust and credibility and will increase your chances of being considered for a suitable role.

Don't forget to

follow **ContractingPLUS** on LinkedIn



Chris O'Callaghan

Small Benefit Scheme

€500 TAX FREE EVERY YEAR

The ability to claim business expenses is one of the key benefits of being an Independent Contractor. Under the Small Benefit Scheme you can take a non-cash payment of up to €500 every year, Tax Free!

The Government made a small change to the Small Benefit Scheme for tax year 2020. Revenue have announced that for the tax year 2020, the single gift rule does not apply. This means that where previously the full €500 had to be made in a single purchase you can now split this over 2 vouchers, however the total voucher value has not changed and remains at €500.

For example, You can purchase one voucher for €500 in 2020

or

purchase one voucher now for €200 and still purchase another voucher for €300 later in the year.

Vouchers can be purchased from any supplier of your choice, but you need to ensure that the receipts are made out to your Umbrella Company or Personal Limited Company when the vouchers are purchased.

To avail of the scheme simply

- 1. Purchase your voucher (ensure the receipt made out to your company / umbrella company name).**
- 2. Upload the receipt into your Contracting PLUS App/portal/accounts software.**
- 3. The tax relief on the cost will be returned in your upcoming payroll.**

Its important to note however that the concession of the additional voucher is only available to those who continued to work through the pandemic.

Contracting PLUS works closely with Me2You. These vouchers can be used in 1,000's of stores in Ireland. For more information on this scheme click [here](#).

The turnaround to receive the voucher is circa 5-7 working days after your payroll is complete.

You will automatically receive tax relief on the purchase as it is exempt from Income Tax, USC (Universal Social Charge) and PRSI. This will mean the actual cost of a €500 gift card will be around €250 (depending on your effective tax rate).



Chris O'Callaghan manages the team of Dedicated Account Managers in Contracting PLUS. He can be reached at 021 2407146 or chris.ocallaghan@contractingplus.com



Win a €500 Me2You Voucher

Contracting PLUS has teamed up with Me2You to offer you a great opportunity to win a €500 Me2You voucher.

The Small Benefit Scheme is a real bonus for Contractors, and using your allowance is a must. So why not do it now and be in with a chance to get another €500 Me2You voucher absolutely FREE!!!



How to Enter

Simply order your €500 Me2You voucher before October 31st under The Small Benefit Scheme (remember it's tax free!!) and you will be entered in a draw to win another Me2You voucher worth €500.

How to order your voucher

Ordering your €500 voucher is easy. Simply call your Dedicated Account Manager and they will be happy to organise your voucher for you. Or [CLICK HERE](#) to place your order directly.

100's of Great Places where you can redeem your voucher

Remember your voucher can be redeemed in 100's of retail outlets nationwide. Whatever you spend it on remember it is €500 tax free and it's a great way to maximise your take-home pay.

www.me2you.ie





How sleep affects your Immunity



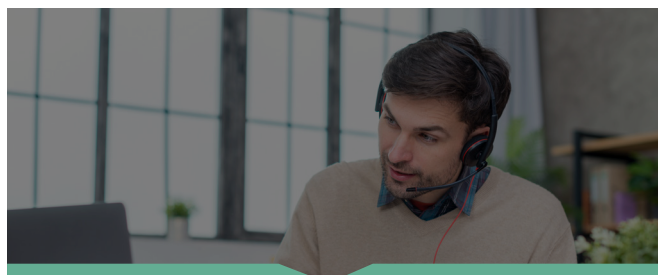
Eat the right food and boost your immune system

Stay positive and productive in the new normal.

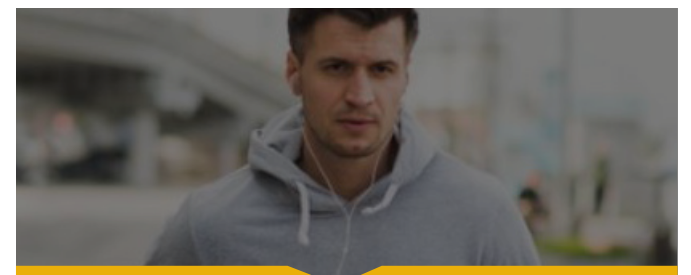
We've curated some expert articles to help you in a number of areas. Click on the article title to read in full.



Calm your mind without meditation



Wellbeing when you work from home



Simple ideas to stay active during the day

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Talk to our Solutions Team to determine the best solution for you.

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