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ing capital finance and Mr. White has suggested that private investors could be an alternative for some. "CPA Ireland has strongly advocated the need for government support to assist our entrepreneurial sector - however in the absence of such assistance, businesses are going to have to row their own boat if new business and growth of existing businesses in the SME sector is to be sustainable."

Think green and save money

Businesses, households and charities can save money by thinking green, according to the man behind Cork-based ecostore.ie.



The Ecostore.ie Eko-kruasher for cans and cartons, €49.95

The website is the retail arm of family business Waste Solutions Ltd, a company that has been supplying waste equipment to local authorities and private collectors all over Ireland since 1990.

Individual households as well as smaller businesses and organisations can now avail of their wide range of products, and Daniel Connolly says there are real savings to be made for all on a long-term basis. "Waste Solutions Ltd was founded by my father Harry and was the first company to bring wheelie bins into Ireland. Past business was always trade-based and even though we would have had households or small companies ringing up looking for one bin or one compost bin, we were never really in a position to deal with them until we got the website online," Daniel explained to the Cork News.

Top selling products include a water butt which collects rainwater, a log maker which turns newspapers into paper briquettes, an Owl Energy Meter and various compost bins. Sales have been driven by the growing need for recycling and energy efficiency, according to Daniel.

"We've certainly benefited from increased awareness (of green issues) but we also have to demonstrate that the product a person is buying will save them money. Maybe not instantly, but, for example, if you buy an Owl Energy Meter, you can save 20% off an energy bill per year. If you think of that over five years, it's not an insubstantial amount and it's not only useful for a householder - we sold one recently to a school. When people

"If you buy an Owl Energy Meter, you can save 20% off an energy bill per year."

Daniel Connolly
ecostore.ie

work it out the sums, the product will pay for itself."

Inquiries coming in through the website are balanced almost evenly between individual needs and those of the business community. ecostore.ie exports outside of Ireland to countries that include the UK, France and Finland and focuses on having a prompt (and flat rate) delivery service to anywhere on the island of Ireland.

"We had a lady from Co. Offaly on the phone this week and she had bought something from a competitor of mine about a month ago and it had yet to arrive. She has now placed the same order with me for a cheaper price and cancelled the other order. At the same time, we had an order from a pharmaceutical company for over €5,000. For us, the website is a great add-on to our main business and allows customers to order products securely over the net."

Check out www.ecostore.ie for all the latest green technology available and get free delivery (usually €5) on any product if you mention The Cork News when placing an order. Call (021) 4214904 or email info@ecostore.ie