



CASE STUDY: Nadine's Irish Mist

From the old world to the new world to the virtual world

Niall Coyle knew that the move from Derry, Ireland to Sunset Beach, California would be a major life-change for him, his wife and their three grown daughters. But while going from the moist, fertile land of the Emerald Isle to the arid, palm-studded land of Southern California was a major step, succeeding at the bar trade was even bigger.



Figure 1: Derry, Ireland (Image courtesy EuropeUpClose.com)



Figure 2: Sunset Beach, California (Image courtesy About.com)

Located in a beach town of 1,288¹ they had to remodel the building, draw customers amid stiff competition and operate at a profit; a challenge in an industry with failure rates at 60% by year three² and under the pressure of a sliding economy. Making matters worse, the Coyle family had to learn the bar trade from scratch, something completely foreign to the foreign family. One year into operation Niall was introduced to Go Daddy who helped get the business on the Internet, get customers in the door and avoid paying ransom to an Internet domain name thief.

At a Glance

Business: Nadine's Irish Mist

Industry: Bar and Restaurant

Founded: 2009

Location: Sunset Beach, CA

Average monthly website hits:
10,000

Go Daddy Helped Us: Avoid a \$2,500 charge from a disreputable hosting company and increase our Web traffic with better website design and SEO.

Results: Avoided a \$2,500 charge from a disreputable hosting company. They now have a domain name no one can steal (or hold hostage), a great website with increased traffic on reliable, secure servers. All backed

The Daughter with a voice and an idea

"Our middle daughter, Nadine, came here to LA to record some songs in 2005 and fell in love with the area." While little known in the U.S., Nadine Coyle is something of a superstar in the UK and in Europe where she spent [# years] in the band Girls Aloud which achieved fourteen Top 10 singles (two of which have been #1s), four platinum albums and numerous awards.³ Now on her own, the



Figure 3: Nadine Coyle is a rock star in the UK and Europe (Image courtesy Wikipedia)

26-year-old beauty bounces between Sunset Beach and Europe, writing and recording songs. But it was after that visit she set about convincing the family to make the great move. After settling in the L.A. area, the close-knit family acquired a building containing an old bar named Irish Mist, did a major renovation and prepared to launch Nadine's Irish Mist.

Jumping in as the bottom fell out

When most families take that frightening jump into starting their own business, it is because they have some industry-specific knowledge or skills. But as Niall explained with no small amount of laughter; "I didn't even drink until I was in my mid-thirties and I had no experience in the bar trade. None of us did."

In contrast, his extensive business career in Ireland had been banking, the auto industry then commercial radio. Nevertheless, after the extensive (and expensive) remodeling work was complete, Nadine's Irish Mist opened in 2009 ... on St. Patrick's Day of course. "We were unfortunate in that we began operations during one of the most difficult times since the Great Depression."^{4,5} After the excitement of their first year in business, the traffic began to slide and it looked like the new family venture might follow the market down.



Figure 5: Nadine's Irish Mist in Sunset Beach, California (Image courtesy NadineCoyleFanPage.com)



Figure 4: A feeling of being in an actual Irish bar (Image courtesy Daily Mail)

An Irish bar that is ... an Irish bar

No one needs to be told that there are already a lot of Irish bars in the United States; it seems that every shopping mall has one. Festooned with shamrocks, trimmed with kelly green and serving up Guinness and Jameson's they may be packed on St. Patrick's Day but they bear little resemblance to bar life in the old country. No, most American Irish bars are, well, full of blarney; as Niall explained in his natural brogue: "What we tried to do is present a genuine Irish bar exactly the way things are back in Ireland. You come in here on the Friday evening and you may as well be in one of the thousand bars in Ireland on the Friday evening. It's exactly the same." From the interior design to the menu; the pool tables and the dart board; even, well, even the owners ... are Irish to the bone and the public loves it.

Getting noticed, getting customers and getting there

But a fine meat pie, cold beer and a genuine Irish barkeep is not enough; if you are going to succeed you have to build traffic. To spread the word the young pub signed up with a company offering to get them their domain name; create and host website; perform aggressive Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and a host of other services that would kick-start revenues. But even that is not enough. The

company must target its most likely prospects which range from the 30ish worker-bees to the 60ish retirees as opposed to the often younger crowds of Main Street Huntington Beach to the south. It must also try to attract those Seal Beach residents on the north willing to cross the bridge to Sunset Beach.

A man walks into a bar...

Unfortunately the new website was poor, the SEO seemed impotent and the host company began adding on fees until the good deal was anything but good. That's when Frank Redlin showed up and explained how his consulting business was completely different. For one thing they provide concierge-grade service so that when a problem arises they take care of it all for them, often in person, enabling the family to focus on running the bar. Also, as a reseller for Go Daddy, they provide the same reliability, the same website uptime as Go Daddy because they would be on Go Daddy servers.

Frustrated by the poor service of their Internet host, Niall and family signed up with Frank who signed them up with Go Daddy. Among the first order of business was to transfer the domain NadinesIrishMist.com. However, the original hosting company said -- to everyone's surprise -- "We own the domain and won't release it unless you pay us \$2,500." That was all Frank needed to hear. He told Niall to keep the website for a year while he set up a [redirect page](#) that routed traffic to a new home.⁷ "Registering with an honorable domain name registrar is crucial. I re-registered the domain with Go Daddy as a .net and [Nadine's](#) has owned it ever since."^{8,9}

Frank had his own story to tell before partnering with Go Daddy

Before working with Go Daddy and learning how to build websites, Frank had hired a company to build one for him. "After dropping \$10,000 on a website that never worked right I thought, 'you know there's gotta be a better way to do this.' I looked at different providers and then called Go Daddy after seeing an ad. I wish I had taken down his name 'cause I owe the guy a beer at this point. He answered every question I had and helped me learn how to build a website. Then I got set up as a reseller so I could provide Go Daddy services for my clients. He said, 'this is what we are going to do for you, this is what you need to do and this is what it is going to cost.' It was very black and white, very easy to understand and there wasn't a bunch of tech jargon mixed in. And now building websites for my clients is a cake walk."

Sometimes it's when things go wrong that you know what's right

Frank explained: "I call Go Daddy support four or five times a month and in all of the years I have only had one person who was less than really friendly. One week later I got a phone call from a supervisor who apologized and told me that he was no longer with the company. Apparently they actually review these calls they record and I thought wow, that's a company dedicated to making sure they're bringing their 'A-game' every single time somebody calls."

A new domain name that can't be stolen, a new website and lots of new customers

Niall loves to tell how “after the first year, when revenues began to fall, Frank walked into the bar and introduced himself ... and Go Daddy; that was when everything began to change.” Indeed, for now they have a domain name that no one can steal; a great website on servers with 99.99% uptime; all backed by Frank’s 24-hour support backed by Go Daddy 24-hour support; as a result the website averages 10,000 hits each month and revenues on the rise.

Go Daddy helps keep Nadine’s Irish Mist in the black

With Frank and Go Daddy taking care of the website, the Coyle family has been focusing on the now growing business. Certainly, the website deserves some credit, but it helps that the bar is an Irish bar, the beer is cold and when bands play, the place rocks. Further, while Irish pubs are not generally known for their gastronomic finesse, Nadine’s Irish Mist has raised the bar of the bar by making their own Shepherd’s Pie, Steak and Kidney Pie and Chicken Pot Pie all of which have won awards. And everyone, particularly Nadine herself, is happy that Frank and Go Daddy found a way to foil the thief who deserves to be at the wrong end of a shillelagh.¹⁰



Figure 6: Nadine's Irish Mist's new website draws 10,000 hit every month

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1 Sunset Beach, California population, BeachCalifornia.com (bottom of page below photographs): <http://www.beachcalifornia.com/sunset.html>

2 Restaurant Failure Rates, WhiteHutchinson.com: <http://www.whitehutchinson.com/blog/2011/02/the-truth-about-restaurant-failure-rates/>

3 Nadine Coyle Fan Page, PopStarPlus: http://www.popstarsplus.com/music_nadinecoyle.htm

4 “U.S. lost 2.6 million jobs in 2008” by Louis Uchitelle, New York Times, 9 January 2009: <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/09/business/worldbusiness/09iht-jobs.4.19232394.html>

5 “2008 by the numbers” by Mark Hulbert, MarketWatch, 31 December 2008: http://articles.marketwatch.com/2008-12-31/research/30779215_1_dow-gains-stock-market-dow-jones-industrial-average

6 Girl’s Aloud singer Nadine Coyle expands U.S. business empire with an Irish pub in California: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/tvshowbiz/article-1178653/Girls-Aloud-singer-Nadine-Coyle-expands-U-S-business-empire-Irish-pub-California.html>

7 Redirect URLs with Your Hosting Account, GoDaddy.com: <http://support.godaddy.com/help/article/5120>

8 Report Domain Name Theft: The First Stolen Domain Name Database on the Internet: http://tcattorney.typepad.com/domainnamedispute/someone_stole_my_domain_name/

9 “Don’t Lose Your Domain Name to a Shady Web Design Firm”, by Chris London: <http://ezinearticles.com/?Dont-Lose-Your-Domain->