



FROM
CONCERT
TO

COCOON



Pictured: Michael Brady | Cocoon (Europe) Ltd.

Cocoon (Europe) Ltd.

Several years ago, Lisburn Architect, Michael Brady, attended an open air concert which was a washout due to horrendous weather. As he stood in the pouring rain, just one of the few people who turned up at the event, it occurred to him how great it would be if the organisers had been able to deploy some form of temporary covering, a cocoon-like structure which could be operated at the flick of a switch.

Six years on, Michael is about to patent his Cocoon concept and the mobile retractable canopy is poised to take the world by storm.

"For a long time I just toyed with the idea," says Michael, "and it was only when I discussed it with Jonathan Scott, a friend who is a Mechanical Design Engineer, that I really began to take the idea seriously. Together we began to draw plans for a prototype, but had no idea how to move the concept from paper to a working business structure. I contacted Invest NI who helped us to establish the company, Cocoon (Europe) Ltd, and advised us to apply for the Transform programme."

Michael's original idea was for a permanent cocoon, a large scale retractable enclosure system, housed under the ground in specially prepared basement chambers when not in use, which could be installed at sporting venues and entertainment sites.

"Whilst we know this is feasible," says Michael, "we grasped early on in the Transform programme, that to create a prototype for this structure would be way beyond our financial capabilities at this stage. So we began to concentrate on another product, the Mobile Cocoon, a visually exciting, labour saving and cost effective alternative to the marquee. We had initially imagined this would be our secondary product, but, thanks to Transform, we realised it would in fact become our flagship product and concentrated on developing a 16ft prototype."

Michael and Jonathan's creation has already been enthusiastically received by potential customers such as marquee hire companies, event organisers and military establishments and has attracted attention from potential manufacturers in Europe and North America.

"Cocoon has the potential to be a global product," says Michael, "and I can honestly say that if it wasn't for Transform we probably wouldn't be in this position for another three years."

