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Why Rural Ireland Needs More Than Online Services

New initiative argues that technology should strengthen communities—not replace the personal connections that have always been at the heart of rural Ireland.

Across Ireland, more services than ever are available online.

From banking and government applications to healthcare appointments, shopping and information, digital technology has transformed everyday life. While these developments have created significant benefits, they have also introduced new challenges—particularly for many rural communities where face-to-face services continue to decline.

For many people, especially older residents or those with limited digital confidence, access to information is no longer simply a question of internet availability. It is increasingly about having trusted places where people can ask questions, receive practical guidance and connect with others.

A new Irish initiative believes that the future of rural Ireland should not be framed as a choice between digital services and personal support.

Instead, it argues that both should work together.

The **Local Link – Rural Digital Hub Initiative**, developed by Final Resurrection Ltd., explores how existing independent village shops could become modern community hubs that combine technology with personal interaction, creating practical everyday support while strengthening local businesses and community life.

Rather than replacing public services, the initiative is designed to complement them by helping people access information, digital tools and local services in a familiar and trusted environment.

Potential services could include digital guidance, AI-assisted information services, visitor information, promotion of local businesses, community noticeboards, parcel collection, local event information and signposting to relevant public, voluntary and commercial organisations.

According to Morris Wagner, Director of Final Resurrection Ltd., successful innovation should always place people before technology.

“Digital services have transformed society and will continue to do so. However, technology is most valuable when it strengthens human relationships rather than replacing them. Rural communities have always been built on trust, local

knowledge and personal interaction. We believe technology should reinforce those strengths.”

The initiative also highlights the importance of supporting independent retailers, many of whom remain central to everyday life in towns and villages across Ireland.

By expanding the range of services available through existing local businesses, the project aims to create additional reasons for residents and visitors to support local shops while making practical services more accessible within their own communities.

The organisers emphasise that every community is different. Any future pilot projects would be developed collaboratively with local stakeholders, ensuring that individual communities shape solutions that reflect their own priorities, strengths and opportunities.

Final Resurrection Ltd. is currently inviting discussions with community organisations, local authorities, rural development professionals, independent retailers, tourism organisations and other partners interested in exploring how technology and community life can work together to strengthen rural Ireland.

Further information about the Local Link – Rural Digital Hub Initiative is available at:

<https://ireland.finalresurrection.ie/local-link-retail-revitalization-driven-by-emotion/>

About Final Resurrection Ltd.

Final Resurrection Ltd. is an Irish research and innovation company dedicated to developing practical concepts that support rural development, community innovation, local enterprise and sustainable regional growth. Through independent research and collaboration, the company explores innovative approaches that strengthen communities while embracing the opportunities offered by modern technology.

Media Contact

Morris Wagner

Director

Final Resurrection Ltd.

Email: ireland@finalresurrection.ie

Telephone: +353 86 032 5153

Website: <https://ireland.finalresurrection.ie>