

# SME Export Track 100

## Awards dinner press release



Friday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2019

### BRITAIN'S FASTEST-GROWING SME EXPORTERS HONOURED

The owners and directors of Britain's 100 fastest-growing SME exporters were recognised last night at the 5<sup>th</sup> annual *Sunday Times WorldFirst SME Export Track 100* awards ceremony, held at The Hilton London Bankside.

The 214 guests at the dinner included founders and senior directors from 102 companies, such as **Gozney Ovens**, **Joe & Seph's**, **Nosy Crow**, and **Missy Empire**. Guests were welcomed by **Jonathan Quin**, co-founder and chief executive of title sponsor **WorldFirst**. He said:

*"I'm really pleased that we are supporting SME Export Track 100 and celebrating with all of you for what you're doing for the UK. The country needs to export more and we need more international trade."*

The SME Export Track 100 league table ranks the UK's small and medium-sized private companies with the fastest-growing international sales. Over the last two years, they have grown their international sales from between 36% and 360% a year to a total of £833m, and employ 8,900 staff, having added 3,000 jobs over the period.

#### Guest speeches

Before dinner guests heard from **Adam Minto** and **Tom Allsworth**, co-founders and chief executives of **Revolution Beauty** – the Kent-based cosmetics brand which sold 60m lipsticks and make-up products to 143 countries in 2018, generating international sales of £76.3m. They were interviewed by **Peter Evans**, enterprise editor of **The Sunday Times**.

Minto and Allsworth advised entrepreneurs: "Obsess about your consumer, obsess about your product, and the marketing will then take care of itself."

After dinner, **Al Barratt**, co-founder and chief executive of sports nutrition brand **Grenade**, which featured in 2016 and 2017, shared his entrepreneurial story. He set up the company in 2009 and in 2017 Lion Capital acquired the business for £72m. Sold in more than 80 countries, last year Grenade achieved international sales of £13.5m on total sales of £44m. He told the guests: "I would urge anyone with strong UK partnerships that, if you want to get into export, think about who you know, who you can talk to and leverage overseas."

#### SME Export Track 100 awards

The SME Export Track 100 sponsors presented four awards for excellence in the following areas:

The SME Export Track 100 '**Best Newcomer**' award, sponsored by **WorldFirst**, was presented by Jonathan Quin to customer service manager Alix McShane and colleague Rachel Belmar of **Oh Polly**. The fashion retailer, founded in 2015, saw international sales grow 301% a year to £3.8m in 2018, and expects them to double this year.

The SME Export Track 100 award for **excellence in ecommerce**, sponsored by **DHL Express**, was presented by Abi Brodie, vice-president of ecommerce, to brand & marketing manager Kate Woods and ecommerce manager Safura Harrison of **Missoma**. The jewellery brand makes 95% of its sales online, and grew its international sales by 326% a year to £5m in 2018.

The SME Export Track 100 award for **manufacturing excellence**, sponsored by **The Sunday Times**, was presented by Peter Evans to founder and chief science officer Stephen Coulson and chief executive Ady Moores of **P2i**. Its patented plasma technology is used by electronics giants such as Sony, Samsung and Xiaomi to provide water-resistant nano coatings for mobile devices.

The SME Export Track 100 **fastest-growing company** award, sponsored by **WorldFirst**, was presented by Jonathan Quin to co-founder Ish Siddique of **Missy Empire**. The Manchester-based fast fashion firm works closely with its network of social media stars to succeed in markets from America to Australia. In the last two years, it grew overseas sales by an impressive 360% a year to £3.3m on total sales of £13.9m.

Ish said: “Thank you to Fast Track and to all the sponsors. The journey has been amazing for us. We have an amazing team behind us who follow the same vision. We would like to dedicate this award to them.”

Profiles and financial information for each of the winning companies are available on the Fast Track website: [www.fasttrack.co.uk](http://www.fasttrack.co.uk)

**ENDS**

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### **Notes for editors**

**Fast Track** has published national league tables of top-performing private companies with **The Sunday Times** for the past 22 years. Its invitation-only awards dinners provide an opportunity for entrepreneurs to network and meet its sponsors. The company was founded and is run by Dr Hamish Stevenson, who also holds an associate fellowship at Green Templeton College, Oxford University.

[www.fasttrack.co.uk](http://www.fasttrack.co.uk) @ST\_FastTrack

### **About the league table**

The 5th annual **Sunday Times WorldFirst SME Export Track 100** league table was published on 26 May 2019. It is compiled by **Fast Track**, the UK's leading research and networking events company focusing on top-performing private companies.

**League table criteria:** SME Export Track 100 companies had to have total sales of between £5m and £25m in their latest financial year, and international sales had to account for at least 20% of total sales. Firms had to make an operating profit in their latest year.

Companies have to be registered in the UK and be independent, unquoted and ultimate holding companies. They are ranked according to their compound annual growth rate over the latest two years.

Exporters with sales greater than £25m are covered in our International Track 200, which will next be published in The Sunday Times on 16 February 2020.

The research was carried out by Fast Track between January and April 2019. The majority of companies were interviewed by telephone or in person by the Fast Track research team.

### **About our sponsors**

#### **About WorldFirst**

WorldFirst is the title sponsor of SME Export Track 100 for the first year.

Founded in 2004, WorldFirst is a technology based international cross border payments platform, making it faster, easier, safer and cheaper for businesses and individuals to move money around the world.

WorldFirst joined the Ant Financial Services Group in 2019 and together we are building a technology-driven open financial ecosystem to support individuals, small businesses, ecommerce and marketplace sellers engage in global commerce. WorldFirst has presence all over the world and has over 650 employees based in London, Amsterdam, Hong Kong, Singapore, Tokyo and Sydney.

[www.worldfirst.com](http://www.worldfirst.com)

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#### **About DHL Express**

DHL Express is a main sponsor of SME Export Track 100 for a third year.

DHL Express is the global market leader in the international express delivery market, specialising in time and day critical shipping to all corners of the world.

With a network spanning over 220 countries and territories, DHL Express ensures your products are quickly and reliably delivered to destinations all over the world, providing tailored delivery options and returns. Whether you are a new or experienced international shipper, DHL Express is here to help. From improving your website's international appeal, to the intricacies of customs duties and taxes, DHL Express offers support at every stage of the export journey.

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