

Fast Track 100 regional press release



Thursday 3 December 2020

THREE COMPANIES IN THE SOUTHWEST OF ENGLAND WIN PLACES IN SPECIAL COVID-19 EDITION OF LEAGUE TABLE OF BRITAIN'S FASTEST-GROWING PRIVATE COMPANIES

Published this weekend, the 24th annual Sunday Times Virgin Atlantic Fast Track 100 league table ranks Britain's private companies with the fastest-growing sales.

Three companies headquartered in the **southwest of England** (compared to four last year) have won places on the table, including **two new entrants**. Their sales have grown by an average of 42% a year over three years to a total of £48m, all are profitable, and they employ 352 people. The figures largely relate to financial periods before Covid-19 struck.

The region's highest-ranked company is **Real Wrap Co.**, based in Bristol, which has grown sales 44% a year to £10.9m in the year to March. It was founded in 2012 by childhood friends Jason Howell, 34, and Phillippe Gill, 31, and supplies sandwiches, wraps and hot food, mainly to schools, universities and NHS hospitals. During the first national lockdown, it teamed up with councils to provide recipe boxes for low-income households.

One of the new entrants is **AnTech** (No 97), based in Exeter, which works with oil and gas companies to revitalise old wells and avoid new drilling. Under managing director, Toni Miszewski, 63, sales have grown 39% a year to £5.9m in 2019. All of its products are manufactured in the UK, with 80% being sold overseas – the company has offices in Texas and Saudi Arabia. Its facilities and services have remained operational this year.

The companies from the southwest appear with businesses from around Britain, including **BrewDog**, the brewers, and fitness clothing brand **Gymshark**, both valued at more than £1bn. Past star alumni include chip designer **ARM**, which featured in 1997 with sales of £16.7m and is in the process of being bought by American technology giant Nvidia for £31bn, and drinks maker **Fever-Tree**, which floated in 2014 at £154m and is now worth £3bn.

The Fast Track 100 is sponsored by **Virgin Atlantic**, **BDO**, **DHL Express** and **N+1 Singer**, and is compiled by **Fast Track**, the Oxford-based research and networking events firm.

Sir Richard Branson, founder of Virgin Atlantic and Virgin Group, which has supported Fast Track 100 for all 24 years, said:

"While we are living in extremely uncertain and challenging times, there is one thing I am certain of: entrepreneurs are the dreamers, the doers, and the innovators that have the power to have a positive impact on society. There are so many inspiring examples of this on the Fast Track 100 league table showing this is just as true, if not more so, in 2020 as it ever has been."

Private companies in the Southwest with the fastest-growing sales, by rank

HQ location County	Rank [2019 rank]	Company Activity	3-year annual sales growth	Sales £m	Staff	Year end ‡	Comment
Bristol Avon	79 [37]	Real Wrap Co. Food-to-go manufacturer	44%	*10.9	210	Mar 20	Provided recipe boxes for low-income households during national and local lockdowns
Bristol Avon	89	Precision Resource Group Recruitment consultancy	41%	*31.3	122	Apr 20	Helped local authorities hire public health specialists during the pandemic
Exeter Devon	97	AnTech Oil drilling products manufacturer	39%	*5.9	50	Aug 19	Saudi Aramco, one of the world's most valuable companies, has been an investor since 2013

‡ Financial year end of latest available accounts * Supplied by the company

The national picture

This year's Fast Track 100 achieved, on average, sales growth of 73% a year over three years to a combined total of £4.4bn. The companies are all profitable, and together they employ 32,000 staff, having more than tripled their combined workforce over the period.

Geographical spread: The region with the most company HQs is London (31), followed by the southeast (19). The third most dominant region is the north of England – 18 companies are based there, with 10 in the northwest and eight in Yorkshire and the northeast. There are 16 companies based in the Midlands, five in Scotland, five in the east of England, three in the southwest, two in Wales, and one in Northern Ireland.

The full league table is published on 6 December as an 8-page supplement with the business section of **The Sunday Times**, both in print and in the digital edition, and on www.fasttrack.co.uk.

ENDS

PLEASE CREDIT IN FULL: "SUNDAY TIMES VIRGIN ATLANTIC FAST TRACK 100"

For further information please contact:

Jonathan Sinclair, deputy research manager, Fast Track: 01865 297035 or jonathan.sinclair@fasttrack.co.uk
Richard Tyler, director of editorial, Fast Track: 01865 297011 or richard.tyler@fasttrack.co.uk

Follow us on:

LinkedIn: The Sunday Times Fast Track
Twitter: @ST_FastTrack
Instagram: @thesundaytimesfasttrack
#VirginAtlanticFastTrack100

Notes for editors

Fast Track has published league tables of the UK's top-performing private companies with **The Sunday Times** for the past 24 years. The company was founded and is run by Dr Hamish Stevenson, who also holds an associate fellowship at Green Templeton College, Oxford University.

League table criteria

Companies were ranked by the compound annual growth rate in their sales over their latest three financial years.

They had to be registered in the UK and be independent, unquoted and ultimate holding companies.

Annualised sales had to exceed £250,000 in the base year and £5m in the latest year, and an increase in sales from penultimate to the latest year was required. Firms had to have 10 employees or more, and make an operating profit of at least £500,000 in their latest available accounts.

A minimum of 25 weeks' trading in their base and latest years was required. For accounting periods not equal to a year, financials have been presented on a pro-rated, annualised basis.

Recruitment firms, payroll services providers, energy firms and media agencies are required to have gross profits of at least £5m in their latest available accounts. Sales for recruitment, payroll and energy firms are the total gross amount invoiced to clients.

Excluded companies include technology firms (covered by our sister league table, Tech Track 100), LLPs, pure property and financial trading companies, and companies with turnover of £500m or greater.

The research was carried out by Fast Track in 2020 between August and November. Most of the companies were interviewed by telephone or met via video calls by the Fast Track research team.

About our supporters and sponsors

Virgin Group

Virgin has been a supporter of the Fast Track 100 league table since it was first published in 1997.

Virgin is a leading international investment group and one of the world's most recognised and respected brands. Conceived in 1970 by Richard Branson, the Virgin Group has gone on to grow successful businesses in multiple sectors. There are now more than 40 Virgin companies operating in 35 countries and employing over 60,000 people. Richard spends much of his time working with the Virgin Group's foundation, Virgin Unite, on entrepreneurial ideas to drive positive change in the world.

www.virgin.com

@Virgin

Virgin Atlantic

Virgin Atlantic is delighted to continue its title sponsorship of Fast Track 100. Sir Richard Branson started Virgin Atlantic in 1984 with one plane and the pledge that "air travel should be exciting and enjoyable". In 2019, the airline carried 5.4 million customers and was voted Britain's only Global Five Star Airline by APEX.

Whether travelling for business or pleasure customers are in safe hands when travelling with Virgin Atlantic. Throughout the journey they add personal touches allowing customers to simply sit back, relax and enjoy the in-flight experience and arrive at their destination feeling revitalised.

www.virginatlantic.com

@VirginAtlantic

BDO

Accountancy and business advisory firm BDO is a main sponsor for a seventh year.

We are proud to put our clients and their challenges at the centre of our focus. These businesses are the ambitious and high growth businesses that fuel the economy. Strong, professional relationships are important to us, which is why we continue to sponsor a number of Fast Track's programmes. During these uncertain times, we will utilise the talents of BDO's workforce to continue to help our clients succeed and to champion medium-sized businesses, the economic engine of the UK.

www.bdo.co.uk

@bdoaccountant

DHL Express

DHL Express is a main sponsor for a second 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 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 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.

www.DHLguide.co.uk

@DHLEExpressUK

N+1 Singer

N+1 Singer is a main sponsor for a third year, having previously been an awards dinner sponsor for two years.

N+1 Singer is a leading investment bank, dedicated to advising and funding ambitious growth companies in the UK. The firm has banking professionals with long-term experience serving companies throughout their life cycles – from early stage, growth companies to established multinational corporates.

This year, N+1 Singer have raised over £1 billion in growth capital for their clients, and are consistently ranked as one of the top 3 Financial Advisers and Brokers by number of clients on the London Stock Exchange's AIM market.

www.n1singer.com

@nplus1singer