

The region's fastest growing businesses 2018





Businesses motor ahead building growth in the Sheffield City Region

BHP is once again delighted to support the annual Rapid Growth Survey which highlights the 30 fastest growing companies in the Sheffield City Region. To make the 2018 list required a minimum sales growth of 45% over a three year period – a fantastic achievement by anyone’s reckoning and our congratulations go to all the businesses featured in the Top 30.

One noticeable trend in this year’s survey, is the significant number of construction related businesses and automotive retailers that feature. These two industries are often considered bellwethers of how the economy is faring, because both rely heavily on business and consumer confidence.

Confidence is a cornerstone of growth and gives impetus to investment decisions, whether it’s a manufacturer investing in new production facilities or a consumer buying a house or a car, so it’s encouraging to see firms like Henry Boot and CMC Chesterfield Ltd. achieving top 10 places.

However, it’s important to remember that this survey is a reflective one, measuring, in most cases, financial results for periods ending in 2017. It therefore remains to be seen what impact the current uncertainty of Brexit will have on confidence, investment and future growth in the region – only time will tell.

Another trend reflected in the annual survey shows that a number of businesses have achieved rapid growth through acquisition. Harworth Group, Sumo Digital, and Stoneacre (the trading name of Decidebloom) have all achieved impressive results at least in part due to making acquisitions.

Acquisitions can sometimes be viewed as a riskier option compared to pursuing organic growth, and of course there’s some truth in this, but the opportunity to accelerate growth by acquiring an established business can often be compelling.

At BHP we have substantial experience of working with clients to help them develop and execute acquisition strategies and there are a number of common themes that are pre-requisites for success.

The first is clarity of purpose, which means understanding exactly why the acquisition is being made, what benefits it will bring, and ensuring it fits with the strategic aims of the business. Rarely, if ever, is growth for growth’s sake a sound premise to forge ahead.

Secondly, it’s important to embrace the due diligence process. The focus should be on testing the key drivers of the investment proposition and identifying any “red flag” taxation or legal matters that could prove costly.

Price and funding are of course key to any acquisition. Businesses must be aware of “deal fever” and resist the temptation to overbid. A funding structure that gives sufficient headroom to soak up unexpected bumps in the road is also vital. Finally, completing an acquisition is just the start, there will be more hard work ahead. A successful acquisition requires a well thought out integration plan to ensure that the expected benefits come to fruition.

So once again, congratulations to this year’s Top 30. Looking forward to 2019, I am hopeful that our region’s businesses will retain the confidence to invest – whether that’s in new machinery, new buildings or new acquisitions. Certainly, the cranes on the SCR skyline seem to suggest that this will be the case.



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Rapid Growth Survey

2018 ranking	2017 ranking	Company name	Location	Latest accounts date	Turnover latest year end £000	Turnover 2 years ago £000	Turnover growth
1	-	Harworth Group	Rotherham	31/12/2017	53,673	13,172	307%
2	-	Holymoore	Chesterfield	31/03/2017	12,594	3,158	299%
3	6	Henry Boot	Sheffield	31/12/2017	408,486	176,186	132%
4	-	Sumo Digital	Sheffield	31/12/2017	45,850	20,757	121%
5	-	SCX Special Projects	Sheffield	31/03/2017	19,172	9,313	106%
6	-	Fastrack Automotive	Doncaster	28/02/2017	2,061	1,062	94.0%
7	18	CMC Chesterfield	Chesterfield	31/12/2016	34,970	18,224	92%
8	-	Bluetree Design and Print	Rotherham	30/04/2017	27,001	14,412	87%
9	-	F & G Holdings	Barnsley	31/12/2016	51,818	28,063	85%
10	-	Concorde BGW	Doncaster	31/12/2016	19,768	11,046	79.0%
11	-	Saul Construction	Barnsley	31/03/2017	11,275	6,396	76%
12	16	Teampartner	Sheffield	31/12/2016	20,144	11,448	76%
13	-	Galaxy Insulation and Dry Lining (Holdings)	Sheffield	31/12/2017	21,886	12,558	74%
14	-	Kaye Aluminium (Holdings)	Doncaster	31/12/2016	76,227	43,811	74.0%
15	11	Talasey ¹	Doncaster	31/12/2017	33,486	19,398	72.6%
16	24	Wilsons Furnishers (Holdings)	Rotherham	30/09/2017	22,485	13,222	70%
17	-	BKJ Construction	Alfreton	31/12/2016	8,962	5,288	69.5%
18	5	Dearnside Fabrications	Sheffield	31/03/2017	14,231	8,545	67%
19	-	M & D Foundations & Building Services	Doncaster	28/02/2017	15,011	9,125	64.5%
20	-	T. Hayselden (Doncaster)	Doncaster	31/12/2016	40,181	24,784	62.1%
21	-	Decidebloom	Doncaster	30/04/2017	721,243	449,602	60.4%
22	-	GDMA Group	Sheffield	31/08/2017	5,616	3,549	58%
23	-	Keepmoat Homes	Doncaster	31/03/2017	413,009	262,397	57.4%
24	22	Silkstone Finance ²	Barnsley	31/05/2017	39,342	25,194	56%
25	-	Strata Homes Yorkshire ²	Doncaster	01/07/2017	122,405	79,054	54.8%
26	-	Horbury Group	Rotherham	31/05/2017	77,911	50,927	53%
27	-	Wild Life Group	Doncaster	30/11/2016	11,978	7,837	52.8%
28	-	NMC (Group)	Doncaster	31/12/2016	13,603	8,998	51.2%
29	8	H P Construction	Sheffield	31/03/2017	17,830	11,989	49%
30	-	BDB Design Build	Sheffield	31/03/2017	32,631	22,341	46%

¹ Previously featured on the list under the name Natural Paving Products (UK) Ltd

² Turnover and operating profit for the year ended 1 year ago have been pro-rated on a straight line basis to reflect a 12 month period

Survey 2018 - Top 30

Operating profit latest year end £000	Operating profit 2 years ago £000	Activity	Latest number of employees
40,062	34,193	Specialises in the regeneration of former coalfield & brownfield land into employment areas, new residential developments	53
2,402	226	Providing sheltered accommodation for residents with learning disabilities	449
56,198	31,666	A construction and property development group with three main operating segments: land development, property investment & development and construction	486
6,297	3,530	The development of computer games compatible with different games consoles	353
2,295	1,608	Design and manufacture of materials handling and access equipment	59
1,307	245	Software consultancy and supply	12
537	399	Motorcycle dealership and garage for new and used motorcycles, clothing and accessories, as well as services, repairs and MOTs	147
1,606	568	Print and design services including digital services	252
1,165	608	Commercial vehicle dealership and a HGV repairer	139
1,079	444	Design, manufacture and sale of furnishing and construction services	53
3,175	677	Building and civil engineering contractors	64
573	760	Production and sale of snack and confectionery food	125
1,734	1,059	Distribution of insulation materials and associated products	66
4,442	2,546	Production and finishing coating of aluminium extrusions	266
2,299	1,508	Supplier of landscaping solutions	53
1,494	999	Flooring wholesalers and retailers	107
690	241	Civil engineering, property development and rental	8
2,716	713	Multi-sector architectural metalwork and general steel fabrication	103
198	706	Specialist foundation and piling services	67
549	287	Motor dealers	76
9,446	8,208	Sale, repair and servicing of new and used motor vehicles	2,185
182	480	Residential care sector for both young and elderly people and property rental and development	194
37,554	21,394	Private house building development	778
9,379	4,456	Manufacture of kitchen furniture	271
19,591	10,042	Housebuilding	153
2,312	118	Interior fit out subcontracting and joinery contracting	269
3,877	2,397	Development and operation of a wildlife park	213
822	668	Groundworks and surfacing contractors	35
1,254	448	General construction and civil engineering	15
615	501	Design and build of industrial and commercial properties and motor retail developments.	22

BHP Rapid Growth Survey 2018: Criteria

Research finalised 13/7/18. To qualify for inclusion in the survey businesses must have:
 • traded for at least three years • shown year on year growth in turnover over the previous three financial years • recorded a minimum turnover of £2m in the latest financial year • achieved profitability at operating level for the last three financial years • filed a set of accounts subsequent to the previous year's survey • a registered or primary trading address in the Sheffield City Region.

Rapidly growing firms should aim cloud high

When a business experiences rapid growth, like all the companies that feature in this year's survey, some parts of it can struggle to keep up. That's why we recommend moving to cloud accounting software, something that has revolutionised the accountancy industry over the last decade and brings a host of benefits.

Rapidly growing companies often find their back-office processes fall behind, and this in turn can hinder important decision making and further growth. With archaic accounting systems and multiple spreadsheets being used to perform important but mundane tasks, this can lead to inefficient and convoluted reporting. As a quick fix, the knee-jerk reaction for many firms is to throw money at it by investing in more finance and administration personnel, or expensive software upgrades that aren't always the best fit. Implementing a cloud-based accounting system can future proof a business, streamlining the recording and reporting of finances and providing firm foundations for future growth.

Another benefit is the integrity of data processing available through cloud-based accounting software, which enables third party applications to synchronise with business finances, improving efficiency and saving money. The OCR receipt scanning which has replaced the traditional purchase ledger is a great example of this, using Artificial Intelligence powered OCR to quickly read any receipt or invoice and process this in the accounting software.

With cloud-based accounting software there are also numerous industry specific add-ons that can provide cost effective solutions to ensure the quality of the accounting records. This might be a stock system designed for wine importers, or an epos system for restaurants as an example. The cloud-based market place is full of industry specific software that will integrate with the accounting software, all of which has been designed to give even more insight into the figures.

Being in the cloud also give access to financial data in real time, allowing for meaningful analysis and insight in the here and now – not retrospectively. Cloud-based accounting therefore allows for a more forward looking approach, building cash flow forecasts with scenario planning, to help bring clarity and reassurance to the directors of any business.

Any firm that is experiencing rapid growth and isn't already on the cloud really should make the move now. Cloud-based software enables much closer collaboration with a firm's accountant resulting in a deeper understanding about what the numbers actually mean, and most importantly what the next 12 months will look like. It also helps to highlight any cash flow issues before they arise and plan for different scenarios to ensure future growth. Lastly as the requirement of 'making tax digital' deadline looms, the cloud really is the only place to be.



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In their words

BDB Design Build Limited No 30

How would you describe your business?

BDB Design Build Ltd are a family run, local and national building contractor operating in commercial, industrial and retail sectors, with both new build and refurbishment projects.

What are the main drivers behind the recent growth of your business?

Very soon after our formation in 1989, we recognised that retaining a relatively smaller number of clients, but striving to maintain these relationships over long standing periods, worked extremely well for us, our customers and in fact our supply chain. We have no Business Development arm and rely on our product and service to do this for us and this is done solely through the excellent people we employ. Our non-confrontational approach to business, our desire to get from A-B by using the route of least contractual resistance whilst still maintaining a business-like and professional manner, has won us many plaudits as an easy going and trustworthy contractor within the industry. We believe firmly that this is the reason for our company's longstanding and recent success.

What are the biggest challenges that you have had to overcome to achieve this growth?

Survival of, and in fact flourishing since, the recessionary period was key for us. Several of our competitors were not as fortunate and did not survive. Many years of conservative and responsible commercial behaviour most certainly came home to roost for us during this period. We had enough "wool on our back" to ride out the loss in turnover that was unavoidable to most of us within the industry. Furthermore, opportunity arose to appoint key employees and obtain revenue stream from fallen competitors. Despite this, the market is still ferociously competitive, and maintaining an advantage, whilst new entrants to the market crop up all around us, is a constant challenge.

What do you anticipate to be the main challenges to continued future growth?

This may sound at odds with common business practice, but we are not a company that seeks constant future growth. In an effort to expand, often too swiftly, many businesses have come and gone around us. At BDB, the team we have had for the past 5 years has meant that we are the strongest we have ever been. Skill shortages within the industry mean that too much growth, or growth too quickly, can easily bring about your downfall.



BDB DESIGN BUILD LIMITED

Horbury Group No 26

How would you describe your business?

Horbury Group is a collection of construction based businesses focused on interior fit-out, external cladding and property maintenance.

Formed in 1992 the business has grown steadily through acquisitions and organic growth.

What are the main drivers behind the recent growth of your business?

Our main drives behind our recent growth include a combination of planned organic growth both in sector (high rise residential) and geography (London & South Wales), coupled with the launch of our Property Services maintenance business. This has created significant growth over the last 12 months.

What are the biggest challenges that you have had to overcome to achieve this growth?

The biggest challenge has always been to create the right management team to lead the various divisions of the Group. We are proud to have been very successful in this area and enjoy very high levels of staff retention.

What do you anticipate to be the main challenges to continued future growth?

Our main challenges in the future will be rising costs and labour availability. Like many businesses Brexit could place significant pressures on the construction industries resource levels should European immigration become more difficult.



Specialist mechanical handling firm soars to new heights

Sheffield based SCX Special Projects (No 5 in Rapid Growth table) is raising the roof with its financial performance following a wide range of prestigious contracts that include creating a retractable roof for the All England Lawn Tennis Club at Wimbledon and a world-first dividing retractable pitch at Tottenham Hotspur's new stadium.

As a result, turnover has more than doubled from £9million to £19million in the company's latest accounts, and this is expected to climb to around £28million in the current year.

SCX Special Projects provides bespoke handling solutions to organisations across a range of industries including nuclear, aerospace, theatre, architecture, entertainment and sport as well as supplying the armed forces.

The company is part of the SCX Group, which was founded in 1972 and owns and operates Street CraneXpress, which carries out overhead crane maintenance, repairs, modernisation and installation. The third business in the group is Burnand XH, a trade wholesaler of electronic, electrical, electromechanical and pneumatic control components.

Approximately 70 of the group's 150-strong team work for SCX Special Projects, including a large number of design engineers. There are a number of vacancies ready to be filled and plans for further recruitment over the next 12 months. The company is also a significant contributor to the local South Yorkshire economy. Being a design engineer first and foremost, it contracts a wide range of locally based engineering firms to manufacture the solutions it designs.

Tottenham Hotspur's brand new £850million, 62,062 seat stadium is due to open later in the year and will be the first in the UK to feature two pitches within the same bowl. SCX Special Projects has designed, engineered, built and installed a grass pitch that sits

directly above an artificial surface, in three steel trays, weighing more than 3,000 tonnes each, that split and retract under the South Stand to reveal the artificial playing surface underneath. The real grass surface will be used for football matches whilst the artificial pitch beneath will be used for NFL matches, music concerts and other events, in order to protect the integrity of both playing surfaces.

The company is also installing a retractable roof over the new No.1 Court at Wimbledon, which will be complete in time for the 2019 tournament. This follows the delivery by SCX Special Projects of the hugely successfully retractable roof over Wimbledon's Centre Court in 2009, which not only shields the playing surface from rain, but also provides an innovative sunshade for the Royal Box.

Simon Eastwood, managing director at SCX, said: "The SCX name and reputation is quickly spreading around the world thanks largely to SCX Special Projects and the pioneering work it is doing on a wide range of high-profile projects. We are now one of world's leading design engineers of kinetic architecture, with an unrivalled reputation for problem solving in all types of scenarios that involve moving and lifting huge structures, particularly within sporting venues.

"We pride ourselves on nurturing and developing all our design, mechanical and control system engineering skills in-house and these are genuinely world class. We're now expanding this innovative team further and are currently attracting a wide range of leading candidates, as well as continuing to develop our own people via our highly successful apprenticeship scheme, which makes it a hugely exciting time for us.

"The support we've enjoyed from BHP has been hugely valuable in guiding us through many of the challenges that come part and parcel with the growth we've experienced, and we're now looking forward to embarking on the next phase of the SCX journey!"

SCX
Special Projects

