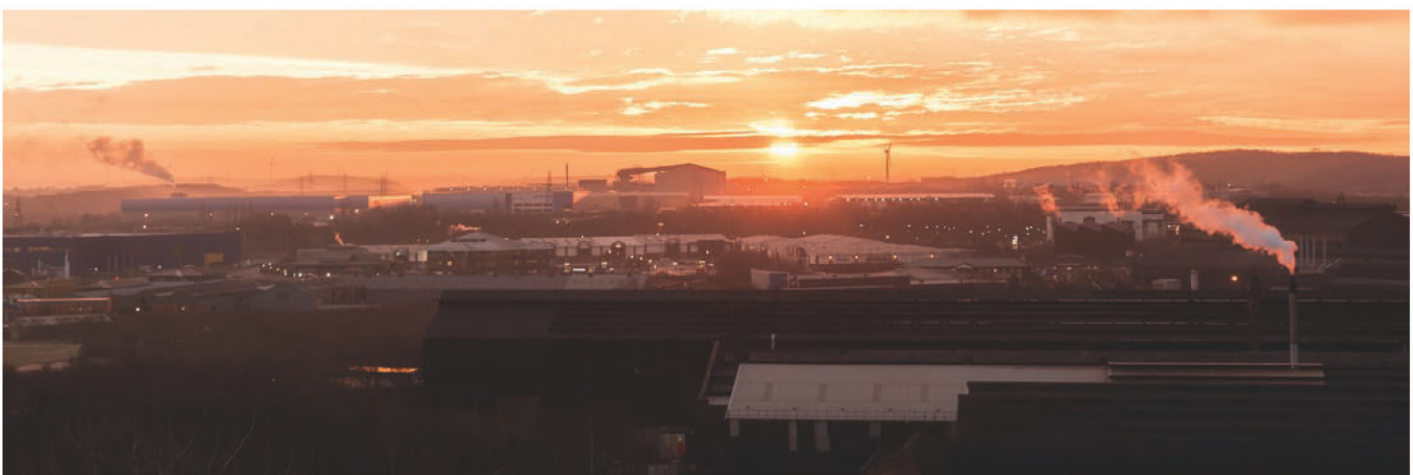


# The region's fastest growing businesses 2019









# A recipe for success

**BHP is once again delighted to support the annual Rapid Growth Survey which highlights the 30 fastest growing companies in the Sheffield City Region.**



**Don Gray**  
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This year's top 30 covers a variety of sectors from software and communications through to more traditional manufacturing and engineering. Of further note is that about a quarter of the Top 30 are linked to the construction sector.

Whilst each company's growth story will be unique, there are some common ingredients in the recipe for success and, with a nod to the new series of GBBO, I would suggest that there are two particular ingredients which feature amongst our star 'business' bakers.

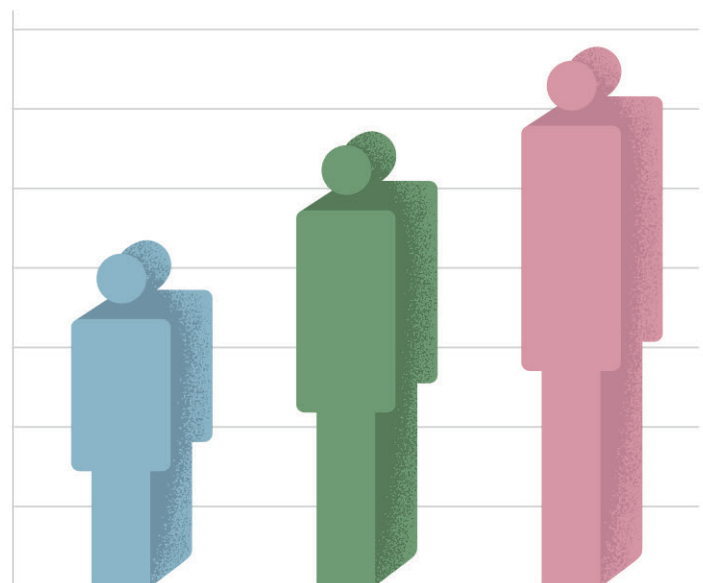
Firstly, there is recruitment. This is the biggest issue I hear business owners talk about when discussing growth plans. The competition to recruit the right calibre of people is intense. Competition exists both within SCR itself and between SCR and other regions. Many manufacturing businesses I talk to report that competition for skilled workers within SCR is increasing as more and more firms are attracted to the advanced manufacturing hub. For our software and technology businesses, the pull of Leeds and Manchester can be particularly strong. This challenge is not restricted to SCR with the most recent British Chambers of Commerce survey suggesting that more than 30% of firms will be forced to raise prices due to wage inflation.

It is no surprise, therefore, that we are increasingly seeing successful companies focus on their overall employee proposition. Short term recruitment needs can be fulfilled by competing on headline wages. However, for growth to be sustainable it is far better to recruit and retain employees through a combination of reward, training, job satisfaction and a culture that respects that employees have lives outside of work. The cynics might mutter about 'snowflakes' but the reality is that the way younger generations engage with their employers has changed.

The second key ingredient we see in growth businesses is investment. Whether it is new premises or an expansion of existing facilities, investment is the oxygen of business growth (or if we are using the baking analogy should that be carbon dioxide?). Investing is not without risk of course. A common dilemma for business owners is whether they invest in anticipation of growth or in response to growth. Speculative

investment is at the riskier end of the spectrum and requires a level of confidence that, to paraphrase Kevin Costner's character in Fields of Dreams, 'if you build it, they will come'. The contrary argument is that there is a risk that if you don't build it, someone else will and the opportunity will be lost. This is a particularly common thread of discussion in these times of Brexit but on balance I would say the majority of businesses we are talking to are continuing to invest to secure future growth. Fortunately, as my colleague Mark Storey points out in his article, the appetite to fund such investment remains strong.

So, congratulations to this year's Top 30. Let's hope that despite the ongoing political machinations, the continued determination and entrepreneurialism of our region's businesses will mean that 2020 is, in GBBO parlance, a showstopper.







# Rapid Growth Sur

2019 ranking	2018 ranking	Company name	Location	Latest accounts date	Turnover latest year end £000	Turnover 2 years ago £000	Turnover growth
1	-	GO2 Foods	Doncaster	31/03/2018	13,010	3,116	318%
2	-	Portland Investment Group	Sheffield	31/10/2018	64,237	20,357	216%
3	5	SCX Special Projects	Sheffield	31/03/2018	28,402	9,565	197%
4	-	Evogo Limited	Sheffield	31/12/2017	101,189	38,760	161%
5	1	Harworth Group	Rotherham	31/12/2018	78,055	33,693	132%
6	-	Clowes Developments (UK)	Ashbourne	31/03/2018	104,931	46,568	125%
7	4	Sumo Digital	Sheffield	31/12/2018	60,859	28,279	115%
8	-	Stonebridge Homes	Sheffield	31/12/2017	24,713	12,319	101%
9	-	Chesterfield Poultry	Doncaster	30/06/2018	119,717	59,803	100%
10	13	Galaxy Insulation and Dry Lining (Holdings)	Sheffield	31/12/2018	27,820	14,166	96%
11	-	Dransfield Properties Investments <sup>1</sup>	Sheffield	30/09/2018	9,867	5,130	92%
12	-	A1 Comms	Alfreton	31/03/2018	120,282	65,478	84%
13	-	National Accident Repair Group	Doncaster	31/12/2018	3,020	1,644	84%
14	-	Pricecheck Toiletries	Sheffield	30/04/2018	73,073	43,596	68%
15	25	Strata Homes <sup>1</sup>	Doncaster	30/06/2018	154,067	93,424	65%
16	-	Carver Engineering Holdings	Doncaster	31/03/2018	9,030	5,492	64%
17	-	Carlton Forest Group	Worksop	31/08/2018	4,796	2,950	63%
18	-	Jigsaw Foods	Mansfield	31/05/2018	39,036	24,132	62%
19	-	Haughton Textiles <sup>1</sup>	Barnsley	31/12/2017	26,300	16,275	62%
20	-	Underwood Meat Company	Rotherham	31/10/2018	74,084	46,099	61%
21	8	Bluetree Design And Print	Rotherham	30/04/2018	31,699	19,898	59%
22	-	Hadee Engineering Co	Sheffield	30/04/2018	6,287	4,054	55%
23	-	A.E. Spink	Doncaster	30/11/2018	30,581	19,838	54%
24	-	HR Essentials	Chesterfield	31/03/2018	23,812	15,835	50%
25	-	John Sinclair (Sheffield)	Sheffield	30/06/2018	7,191	4,875	48%
26	-	Straightset	Worksop	31/12/2018	12,491	8,499	47%
27	-	Ronald Hull Jnr	Rotherham	31/01/2018	27,952	19,106	46%
28	-	Advanced Engineering Techniques	Barnsley	31/10/2018	15,093	10,382	45%
29	-	Breasley Pillows	Matlock	30/04/2018	36,002	24,923	44%
30	-	Eoth Limited	Alfreton	31/01/2018	54,161	37,826	43%

#### Notes on Top 100 SMEs Yorkshire

Results finalised 16/8/19

Figures compiled by BHP Chartered Accountants using latest published financial information at the time of carrying out this survey filed at Companies House and financial data provided by Bureau van Dijk's Fame. 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.

# Survey 2019 – Top 30



Operating profit latest year end £000	Operating profit 2 years ago £000	Activity	Latest number of employees
1,823	562	Food manufacturer, specialising in Yorkshire Puddings and associated products	148
1,330	450	Provision of human resources, training requirements and online job boards	407
813	201	Design and manufacture of material handling and access equipment	69
5,966	5,013	Brokerage of motor vehicle finance, sales and the rental of motor vehicles	294
32,979	45,161	Specialises in the regeneration of former coalfield & brownfield land into employment areas and new residential developments	58
32,367	19,084	Development of land, buildings and properties	40
2,565	4,735	The development of computer games compatible with different games consoles	424
3,865	623	Construction and sale of residential housing	40
4,131	2,174	Supply of wholesale halal poultry	85
1,548	1,716	Distribution of insulation materials and associated products	73
5,967	3,048	Specialises in retail led regeneration schemes	23
1,038	1,256	Retail sale of mobile communication products and services	188
408	253	Motor vehicle repair management	37
4,247	1,253	International wholesaler of FMGC products	123
18,166	1,952	Housebuilding	224
1,827	1,131	General engineering and fabrication of steel products	51
567	260	Complete logistical solutions, including storage and distribution, warehouse management and property rental	54
1,106	1,367	Manufacture of chilled, ambient and cryogenically frozen sauces	228
2,600	1,800	Manufacture and distribution of textile products	234
1,408	2,054	Catering butcher and distributor of meat products	333
2,979	250	Print and design services including digital services	273
792	428	Manufacture of metal structures and parts of structures	59
1,920	1,251	Builders' and plumbers' merchants and ironmongers	88
1,402	691	Business consultancy and labour recruitment	64
592	60	Merchandising of china, glassware and kitchenware, accessories and jewellery, including antiques and exclusive branded products	50
862	444	Supply, installation and maintenance of motor garage equipment	85
1,797	1,879	Metal merchants and manufacturer of metal ingots, as well as waste recycling and confidential destruction	145
479	139	Laser engineers, component producer and fabricator	167
746	255	Manufacture of bedding	218
4,330	1,596	Design, manufacture and distribution of apparel and equipment for the outdoor industry	144

For financial periods of more than or fewer than 52 weeks, the figures have been annualised on a pro-rata basis. Private company information can be incomplete: in preparing this table every reasonable effort has been made to ensure that no qualifying companies have been omitted. In certain circumstances the compilers of the table have made exceptions to the qualification criteria and their decision is final.

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





# South Yorkshire print firm expands to new heights



Leading UK online print business, Bluetree Group, has shown significant growth over the past five years and is planning on even further expansion in 2020.



**James Kinsella  
and Adam Carnell**

Based in Manvers, the firm was set up 30 years ago and now employs more than 400 staff members. With a turnover of £41.5M in 2018 and a projected turnover of £55M for this year, the firm is heading for an even bigger year in 2020.

The company was originally set up in 1989 as a screen printer. Then, 20 years later, school friends Adam Carnell and James Kinsella recognised a niche in the market for online print services. They created instantprint.co.uk and merged with Bluetree Group in 2009.

The company now operates through two brands; instantprint – an online print ordering facility that caters to the needs of smaller businesses; and – Route 1 Print – a trade service for businesses who resell print to make outsourcing as simple as possible.

After significant growth in 2018, Bluetree Group expanded its manufacturing facility into a neighbouring unit. This purchase increased their footprint by 45% to 145,000 square foot and now suits the needs of the company's plans for further development.

Managing Director, Adam Carnell, said: "We are in a very good position. Our company is rapidly growing year on year as more consumers buy their print products online. We recognise that, by making our services as easy as possible, our consumers are more likely to come back time and time again.

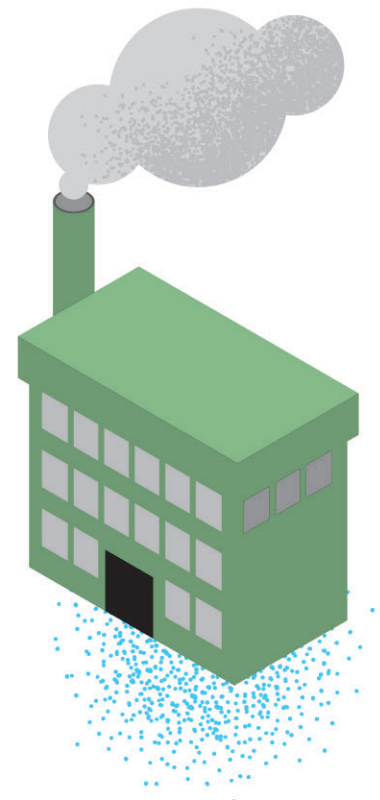
"At Bluetree Group, we pride ourselves on being at the forefront of the industry and, over the past five years, we have invested more than £20M into our production facility. This has not only vastly improved our output and quality, it has meant we can deliver even more quality print to our customers on a quick turnaround."

"Staying ahead of industry trends has been one of the driving factors of Bluetree's recent growth" says Adam,

**"It is essential that we are always ahead of the game, investing in state-of-the-art technology so that we're up to date and can meet the needs of our growing client base."**

In 2018, Bluetree Group scooped the 'Company of the Year' title at the Sheffield Business Awards. The business has also ranked on the Virgin Sunday Times Fast Track 100 on two occasions and represented the UK at the 2017/18 European Business Awards for 'Business of the Year with a turnover of €26-150 million'.

Recruiting almost 250 people since 2015, Bluetree's workforce is now an impressive 409 members strong. Adam Carnell believes it is the company's



**Increased their manufacturing  
facility by 45%**





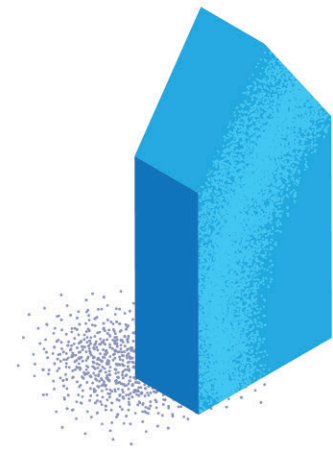
dedicated team that has driven the business forward.

Adam added: "Our staff are at the heart of everything we do, and we have really worked on building a healthy company culture here at Bluetree Group. We really value each team member and strongly believe that if we have a happy workforce, we will continue to have a successful business.

**"We have an incredibly dedicated and passionate team. As part of our**

**vision for the future, we look forward to providing our staff with up to date industry training, good career opportunities and a positive place to work."**

"We are providing opportunities for people in the South Yorkshire region to work and train within our business. As we continue our expansion, we look forward to investing further in our team and to welcoming even more members."



**2019 projected turnover is £55M, up from £41.5M in 2018**







# Accessing the right finance for rapidly growing businesses

The world of finance for growing business, whatever their size, continues to expand. Whether general or specialist funders, there's now more choice than ever and it can be increasingly difficult for a business to navigate the options and determine the most suitable for them.

High street banks continue to play an important role in supporting business funding requirements, particularly where there is already a well-established relationship. They often offer a 'one stop shop' – meeting many different requirements such as working capital, asset purchase, business acquisition and mergers. Utilising this relationship through the growth period of a business can be very beneficial.

There's also now a plethora of 'alternative' banks, grants, and specialist funders including Enterprise Funds which often have an appetite for offering bespoke facilities to specific types of businesses, industries and purposes. This might mean offering specific facility types, such as invoice finance, stock finance, secured short term loans, or only entering certain sectors such as technology or construction.

These types of lenders often have less onerous terms compared to traditional banks and operate short credit processes, so they offer quick decisions with funding sometimes available within just 24 hours. While their rates might be slightly higher, some of the more established 'alternative funders' are now providing facilities at rates that compete with high street banks.

As a business moves through its various stages of growth, an increasingly diverse range of funding facilities begin to present themselves. Initially finance might be required for asset purchase, cashflow, refinance or consolidation of previously secured facilities. However, the most appropriate funding will often change as the business grows and other facility types can become available.

A reputable and experienced advisor, with knowledge of both traditional and alternative finance providers, will offer a solid overview of the wider funding landscape.

It's imperative that advisors work in partnership with the business to understand the exact funding requirements, both short and long term, to accurately source and present all potential options. For example, it's quite possible that a combination of grant funding as well as different types of debt funding will be the most appropriate solution. What's more, the best advisors will have a clear understanding of what a funder is looking for and how to present an application to secure the best deal.

The most important thing to remember is that 'one size doesn't fit all!' BHP's Debt Advisory team is here to provide experienced advice and guidance so do give us a call and we can chat about how to take your business forward.



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