

Top Track 250 press release

Thursday 13 October



MIDLANDS AUTOMOTIVE COMPANIES SHINE ON NATIONAL LEAGUE TABLE OF BRITAIN'S LEADING MID-MARKET PRIVATE COMPANIES

Twenty-three companies from the Midlands, including 11 automotive related companies, have earned a place on the latest **Sunday Times HSBC Top Track 250**, the league table of Britain's leading mid-market private companies published this weekend.

Despite tough economic conditions, the 23 companies headquartered in the Midlands (compared to 31 last year) have made a strong contribution to the local economy. Together they have achieved combined sales of **£7 billion** and employ **32,300 people** – up 1,400 people from last year.

Now in its seventh year, the Top Track 250 represents the next tier down from the Top Track 100 UK private companies with the biggest sales. To be included, companies must have also reported increased sales or operating profit in their latest available accounts.

All 11 companies based in the Midlands and operating in the automotive sector increased sales in their latest year. Sports car maker **Aston Martin** saw a 36% increase in turnover to £474.3m in 2010 following the launch of its first four-door sports car, the Rapide. It also expanded its distribution network to 135 showrooms, with recent openings in India, South America, and further dealerships planned for China.

Midlands companies new to the league table include **KTC (Edibles)** which saw a 16% increase in sales to £188.3m in 2010. The company manufactures and distributes edible oils and fats as well as supplying ethnic foods that range from ground Indian spices to tinned mackerel.

The companies headquartered in the Midlands feature on the league table alongside national household names such as **Vue Entertainment, Selfridges, Virgin Active, Manchester United, Nando's, Dreams** and **Betfred**.

The Top Track 250 is sponsored by HSBC and Grant Thornton. It is compiled by Fast Track, the Oxford-based networking events and research company which champions the UK's top-performing private companies.

Leading mid-market companies in the Midlands

Rank [2009 rank]	Company Activity	Location of HQ	Sales £m	Profit £m†	Staff	Year end	Main shareholders
10 [29]	bet365 Online bookmaker	Stoke-on-Trent	†501.4	†95.4	1911	Mar 11	Coates family (93%), Will Roseff (7%)
16	Aston Martin Sports car maker	Warwickshire	474.3	36.1	1188	Dec 10	Investment Dar (63%), Adeem Investment (32%), David Richards (3%), Dr. Ulrich Bez (2%)
30	Perrys Car dealer	Northampton	433.3	5.3	1373	Dec 10	Denise Millard (60%), Ken Savage (20%), management (20%)
38 [81]	Crown Crest Group Grocery/FMCG wholesaler	Leicester	†409	†20.0	5000	Mar 11	Aziz Tayub (100%)

40 [48]	IM Group Car distributor	West Midlands	†402.8	†42.5	538	Dec 10	Lord Edmiston (100%)
42 [42]	Allen Ford Car dealer	Northampton	395.5	3.5	728	Dec 10	Camden Motor Trustrees (53%), Paul Dunkley (26%), David Hammond (16%), others (5%)
48 [60]	Pentagon Car dealer	Derby	384.6	3.6	788	Dec 10	Reeve family (90%), Andrew Flinn (5%), Graham Hall (5%)
69	Rybrook Car dealer	Birmingham	332.6	4.1	746	Dec 10	Interamericana Trading Corp (50%), Whale family (50%)
71	Hillesden Investments Poultry producer	Northamptonshire	328.1	7.5	2098	Apr 10	Faccenda family and family trusts (100%)
81 [66]	Motorpoint of Derby Car dealer	Derby	315	1.5	382	Mar 10	David Shelton (49%), Gary Warren (49%), Paul Winfield (2%)
106 [125]	Pertemps Recruitment agency	Warwickshire	286	8.7	489	Dec 10	Tim Watts and family (53%), management and staff (47%)
108 [94]	Center Parcs Holiday resort operator	Newark	†*285.1	†*43.4	5329	Apr 11	Blackstone Group (93%), RBS (5%), management (2%)
114 [117]	Aurum Jewellery retailer	Leicester	280.6	12.0	1697	Jan 11	Landsbanki (67%), management (33%)
133 [157]	Thomas Vale Building, engineering contractor	Worcestershire	251.6	3.6	736	Mar 11	Management (100%)
137 [116]	GSH Group Facilities maintenance provider	Stoke-on-Trent	249.5	6.9	2056	Jul 10	Ian Scarr-Hall (98%), Schrodgers (2%)
150 [175]	99p Stores Discount retailer	Northampton	231	6.5	2970	Jan 11	Barclays Ventures (25%), Lalani family (51%), others (24%)
185 [163]	TC Harrison Group Car dealer	Derbyshire	197.9	5.1	537	Dec 10	Harrison family (100%)
186	Opus Energy Gas and electricity supplier	Northampton	197.7	16.5	284	Mar 11	International Power plc (29.99%), Telecom Plus plc (20%), management (50.01%)
193	Cromwell Group Tool and equipment supplier	Leicester	193.2	9.5	1722	Aug 10	Michael Gregory (100%)
198 [198]	Johnsons Cars Car dealer	Redditch	192.5	2.7	623	Dec 10	Management (53%), Dale family (47%)
203	KTC (Edibles) Cooking oil manufacturer	West Midlands	188.3	1.4	196	Dec 10	Management 100%
226 [202]	Sandcliffe Car and van dealer	Nottingham	172.7	2.6	522	Dec 10	Woodhouse and Barton families (100%)
248	Holdcroft Car dealer	Stoke-on-Trent	162.1	2.0	344	Dec 10	Terry Holdcroft and family (100%)

† Operating profit before exceptional items † Figures are pro forma, draft, or not yet filed at Companies House * Annualised figure

Ian Henley, UK head of Corporate & Structured Banking at **HSBC**, the title sponsor of the league table since its inception seven years ago, praised the region's mid-market stars:

"It is great to see a significant number of privately-owned companies in the Midlands – including some which HSBC has helped to support – making such a positive contribution to the UK economy despite tough trading conditions."

The national picture

The 250 companies generated combined sales of £71.2 billion and employed 465,000 staff – equivalent to roughly 5% of GDP and 1.5% of the UK workforce.

Demonstrating resilience in the face of the economic downturn, a majority of companies (160) increased their headcount over their latest financial year, while more than two thirds (170) improved their profit margin.

Companies on the league table are actively pursuing opportunities overseas. Sixty percent generate sales outside the UK, and almost half have foreign subsidiaries. Of these, 53 have at least one subsidiary in an emerging country.

The Top Track 250 companies are predominantly based in London (65) and the Southeast (54). The remainder breaks down as follows: Northwest (32), Midlands (23), Scotland (20), Northeast (19), Southwest (12), East (11), Northern Ireland (10) and Wales (4).

The full league table will be published in a special 12-page broadsheet supplement with the business section of **The Sunday Times** on 16 October, and at www.fasttrack.co.uk.

The Top Track 250 is compiled by **Fast Track**, the UK's leading networking events and research company focusing on top-performing private companies and entrepreneurs, with title sponsorship from **HSBC** and main sponsorship from **Grant Thornton**.

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WHEN USING THIS INFORMATION PLEASE CREDIT: THE SUNDAY TIMES HSBC TOP TRACK 250

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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 14 years, and its invitation-only events provide a valuable opportunity for entrepreneurs to network and also 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.

League table criteria:

Companies are ranked by sales in their latest available accounts. The league table complements the Sunday Times Top Track 100 league table of Britain's private companies with the biggest sales, listing the next 250 biggest companies, provided they have either reported an increase in sales or in operating profits in their latest accounts.

Companies have to be registered in the UK, unquoted, and not subsidiaries. Companies may have their ultimate holding company offshore.

Companies where the majority of turnover is generated by a quoted subsidiary are excluded, as are not-for-profit companies, cooperative societies, member-owned buying groups, mutual societies, provident associations, betting exchanges, and partnerships such as lawyers and accountants. The research was carried out by Fast Track and accounts filed later than 10 September 2011 may not have been considered in compiling the league table.

About HSBC

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