

Tech Track 100 press release

Wednesday 14 September



SEVEN COMPANIES IN THE MIDLANDS WIN PLACES IN LEAGUE TABLE OF BRITAIN'S FASTEST-GROWING TECHNOLOGY FIRMS

Published this weekend, the 11th annual **Sunday Times Microsoft Tech Track 100** league table ranks Britain's one hundred privately-owned technology, media and telecoms (TMT) companies with the fastest-growing sales over the last three years.

There are seven companies headquartered in the Midlands on the league table (compared to nine last year). They have made a strong contribution to the local economy over the last three years, despite the tough economic conditions. Together they employ **2,400 people** and have achieved combined sales of **£550m**.

Sutton Coldfield-based **Workspace Technology**, the region's highest-ranked company, features on the league table for the first time. The company designs, builds and manages data centres. It also provides construction services, helping clients to install energy-efficient infrastructure such as cooling and cabling systems. Sales grew 87% a year from £1.1m in 2007 to £7m in 2010.

Intelligent Energy, headquartered in Loughborough, makes a second appearance on the league table after a six-year absence. The company is developing hydrogen fuel cells to provide clean energy for applications ranging from consumer electronics to taxis. Sales grew 72% a year from £1.5m in 2007 to £7.8m in 2010.

Stoke-based online bookmaker **bet365** appears on the league table for the sixth time. Its turnover of £501m in 2011 is the highest on the league table, up 47% a year from an annualised £156.7m in 2008, and it also has the biggest pre-tax profits at £93m.

The companies in the Midlands feature on the league table alongside emerging brands such as online money lender **Wonga**, price comparison website **Gocompare**, and music recognition services provider **Shazam**.

The Tech Track 100 is sponsored by **Microsoft**, **Barclays Corporate** and **BDO**. It is compiled by **Fast Track**, the Oxford-based networking events and research company.

Fastest-growing private technology companies in the Midlands

National rank [2010 rank]	Company Activity	Location of HQ	Annual sales growth over 3 yrs	Latest sales (£000)	Staff	Latest financial year end†	Comment
21	Workspace Technology <i>Data centre designer</i>	Sutton Coldfield	86.69%	7,045	40	Dec 10	Has developed energy-saving airconditioning systems for data centres
34	Intelligent Energy <i>Clean power systems developer</i>	Loughborough	72.41%	7,811	134	Sep 10	Has re-engineered planes and motorbikes to use hydrogen fuel cells
59	Keycom <i>Telecoms services provider</i>	Stafford	51.48%	6,138	67	Sep 10	Supplies internet connections to military barracks
67 [31]	bet365 <i>Online bookmaker</i>	Stoke-on-Trent	47.36%	†501,413	1,911	Mar 11	Its website is available in 17 languages, including Greek, Slovak and Chinese
71	Hermes Datacomms <i>Communication systems provider</i>	Shrewsbury	45.26%	†17,089	159	Dec 10	Sponsored the Turkmenistan deaf Olympic team in Greco-Roman wrestling

80 [45]	Node4 <i>Hosting services provider</i>	Derby	42.16%	†8,907	45	Mar 11	Founder Andrew Gilbert started the business when he was 23
95	Red Box Recorders <i>Digital recording technology developer</i>	Nottingham	37.77%	5,056	43	Dec 10	Records phone and radio conversations for Cambridgeshire Police

† Draft, audit exempt or not filed at Companies House

Scott Dodds, general manager, business strategy and marketing at Microsoft, the title sponsor of the league table, commented:

“Privately-owned technology companies are making a great contribution to the economy despite difficult trading conditions. It is especially encouraging to see that cloud computing continues to provide such significant opportunities by helping technology firms to open up new markets and cut costs for their customers.”

The national picture

This year's Tech Track 100 companies achieved, on average, sales growth of 74% a year over the last three years of accounts, from a combined total of £680m in 2007/08 to **£3.1bn** in 2010/11. They almost tripled their combined workforce to **13,500** over the three years, with more than **8,800** jobs being added over that period.

Demonstrating a renewed appetite to invest among venture capital and private equity firms, **22** companies on the Tech Track 100 raised funding from these sources in the year to August 2011. A total of 45 have venture capital / private equity backing. This compares to six from last year's league table that secured funds in the 12 months to August 2010.

Companies offering **outsourced IT services**, such as cloud computing and managed hosting, made a strong showing on the league table, with 21 companies operating in this sector. Other prominent industries include telecommunications, represented by 17 companies, digital media and entertainment (15) and online consumer services (13).

The majority of companies on the league table are headquartered in London (55) and the Southeast (13). Of the remainder 12 are based in the North, 7 in the Midlands, 5 in the Southwest, 3 in the East, 3 in Scotland and 2 in Wales.

The full findings are published in a special eight-page supplement within the business section of **The Sunday Times** on 18 September and on www.fasttrack.co.uk, where you can access a searchable database of all 100 companies, as well as past league tables.

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WHEN USING THIS INFORMATION PLEASE CREDIT:

THE SUNDAY TIMES MICROSOFT TECH TRACK 100

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Notes for editors

Fast Track has published league tables of top-performing private companies with **The Sunday Times** for the past 14 years, and its invitation-only events provide an opportunity for entrepreneurs to network and meet its sponsors. The company was founded and is run by Dr Hamish Stevenson, who holds an associate fellowship at Green Templeton College, Oxford University.

League table criteria

Companies had to be unquoted, independent and registered in Britain. They were ranked by their compound annual growth rate (CAGR) in sales over their latest three financial years between 2007 and 2010, or 2008 and 2011.

For financial years lasting less or more than 52 trading weeks, figures were annualised on a simple pro-rata basis. Annualised sales had to exceed £250,000 in the base year (2007 or 2008) and £5m in the latest year (2010 or 2011). Companies had to also show an increase in sales in their latest year, but not necessarily be in profit.

The research was carried out by Fast Track between May and August. The majority of companies were interviewed by telephone and more than almost nine-tenths (89) were also visited by the Fast Track research team.

About Microsoft

Founded in 1975, Microsoft (Nasdaq "MSFT") is the worldwide leader in software, services and solutions that help people and businesses realize their full potential.

www.microsoft.com

About Barclays Corporate

The Barclays Corporate Technology, Media and Telecoms team have more than 40 sector-focused specialists located across the UK. This dedicated team works with most of the listed UK TMT companies and more than a quarter of all Tech Track 100 businesses operating in the sector.

www.barclayscorporate.com

About BDO

BDO is the award-winning UK member firm of the BDO international network, the world's fifth largest accountancy organisation, with more than 1,000 offices in over 100 countries.

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