

Top Track 100 press release

Thursday 23 June 2011



MIDLANDS-BASED POUNDLAND WINS PLACE ON NATIONAL LEAGUE TABLE OF BRITAIN'S BIGGEST PRIVATE COMPANIES

Poundland, the discount retailer, is featured for the first time in the latest **Sunday Times Deloitte Top Track 100**, which ranks Britain's 100 private companies with the biggest sales. Now in its tenth year, the annual league table of Britain's private-company elite is published this weekend.

The business joins 17 other companies in the league table that have head offices in the Midlands. Together, they have made a significant contribution to the local economy, employing more than **221,000 staff**, with combined sales of **£40.2bn** and profits of **£2.5bn**.

Poundland has continued to flourish in the recession, reporting sales of £640m in 2010, more than £100m higher than the year before. It has continued its aggressive store-opening programme, now operating from more than 300 sites across the country, and plans further expansion under its new owner Warburg Pincus, the private equity investor which acquired the business for a reported £200m in June last year.

JCB, the Staffordshire construction equipment maker, has rebounded strongly from the hit it took early in the downturn, with sales returning to pre-recession levels, rising from £1.4bn in 2009 to £2bn in 2010.

The companies feature on the league table alongside a host of high-profile brands. Forty-seven of the companies are backed by private equity, such as **Alliance Boots** and **Travellex**, and the remainder are owned by families, entrepreneurs, or management and staff, including **Virgin Atlantic**, **Clarks** and **Dyson**.

Biggest private companies in the Midlands

National rank [2010 rank]	Company Activity	Location of HQ	Sales £m	Profits £m [†]	Staff	Year end	Main shareholders
1 [1]	Alliance Boots <i>Pharmaceutical retailer and wholesaler</i>	Nottingham/Switzerland	23,300	1,442	115,500	Mar 11	KKR
14 [11]	SCH Group <i>IT infrastructure integrator</i>	Birmingham	2,238	34	5,049	Mar 10	Sir Peter Rigby and family
16 [28]	JCB <i>Construction equipment maker</i>	Staffordshire	†2,000	235	8,000	Dec 10	Bamford family (100%)
24 [25]	Wilkinson <i>Value retailer</i>	Nottinghamshire	1,556	109	23,047	Jan 10	Wilkinson family (100%)
33 [30]	Gala Coral <i>Betting and gaming operator</i>	Nottingham	1,168	307	16,560	Sep 10	Apollo (26%), Cerberus (18%), Park Square (8%), York Capital (6%) and 21 other investors
39 [37]	LINPAC <i>Packaging maker</i>	Birmingham	†1,107	†81	7,174	Dec 10	Various (no shareholder holds more than 15% of the equity)
50 [59]	Phones 4u <i>Mobile telephone retailer</i>	Staffordshire	†912	†159	4,973	Dec 10	BC Partners (93%), management (7%)
59 [91]	Greenhous Group <i>Car dealer</i>	Shropshire	819	10	608	Dec 10	Derek Passant (50%), Kerry Finnon (50%)
60 [62]	AF Blakemore & Son <i>Food distributor</i>	Wolverhampton	816	16	5,449	Apr 10	Blakemore family (100%)

61 [75]	Healthcare at Home <i>Home healthcare provider</i>	Staffordshire	†814	†21	1,072	Oct 10	Hutton Collins (35%), management (65%)
68 [89]	2 Sisters Food Group <i>Poultry processor</i>	West Midlands	739	46	4,587	Jul 09	Baljinder and Ranjit Boparan (100%)
69 [81]	Virgin Trains <i>Rail operator</i>	Birmingham	722	69	2,995	Mar 10	Virgin Group Holdings (51%), Stagecoach (49%)
70 [80]	Samworth Brothers <i>Food producer</i>	Leicestershire	†715	n/a	7,200	Dec 10	Samworth family trusts (100%)
73 [87]	Listers <i>Motor vehicle dealer</i>	Stratford-upon-Avon	†702	†18	1,491	Mar 11	Terry Lister (27%), Keith Bradshaw (25%), Geoff Lister (15%), others (33%)
80 [69]	Doncasters <i>Engineering components maker</i>	Staffordshire	673	104	4,901	Dec 10	Dubai International Capital (98%), management (2%)
83 [53]	Bowmer & Kirkland <i>Construction contractor</i>	Derbyshire	667	40	1,495	Aug 10	Kirkland family and family trusts
90 [n/a]	Poundland <i>Discount retailer</i>	West Midlands	†640	n/a	9,000	Mar 11	Warburg Pincus (76%), management (24%)
92 [88]	Bloor Holdings <i>Builder and motorcycle maker</i>	Derbyshire	631	48	2,173	Jun 10	John Bloor (100%)

‡ Profits = EBITDA (Earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation)

† Draft, pro forma, or not yet filed at Companies House

* Annualised figure

Chris Loughran, head of the Midlands region at Deloitte, title sponsor of the league table, commented:

“Large private companies are playing an increasingly important role in the UK’s economy, and it’s really encouraging to see the Midlands feature so strongly again in this year’s league table.

“While current macroeconomic conditions leave no room for complacency, the featured companies have proved that they lead the way in resilience and adaptability; they continue to make an invaluable contribution towards sustaining jobs and growth.”

The national picture

Despite the recession, 78 of the 100 companies increased their sales from the previous financial year. Combined sales have grown since last year by 10% to **£175bn**, and profits (EBITDA) have risen 7% to **£17bn**. Although some of the companies on the table have struggled with financing problems since the onset of the credit crunch, and many still have significant debts, the underlying businesses remain resilient, and together, they employ **1,011,000 people**, more than 3% of the UK work force.

Most of the companies are headquartered in Greater London (31) and the Southeast (25), and nearly a fifth (18) have headquarters in the Midlands. The remainder are split as follows: Southwest (6), Northwest (7), Scotland (4), Northeast (4), East (2), Wales (2), and Northern Ireland (1).

The full findings will be published in a special 8-page supplement with the business section of **The Sunday Times** on 26 June and on www.fasttrack.co.uk.

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THE SUNDAY TIMES DELOITTE TOP TRACK 100**

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Notes for editors:

About the league table

Now in its tenth year, **The Sunday Times Deloitte Top Track 100** annual league table is compiled by Oxford-based research and networking events company **Fast Track**, and it is sponsored by **Deloitte**.

League table criteria

Companies are ranked by sales as reported in their latest available accounts, or more up-to-date figures as reported directly to Fast Track by the companies. Companies have to be registered in the UK, unquoted, and not subsidiaries. Companies may have their ultimate holding company offshore.

Companies with fewer than 100 employees are also excluded, as are not-for-profit companies, cooperative societies, member-owned buying groups, mutual societies, provident associations, and partnerships such as lawyers and accountants. The research was carried out by Fast Track between 1 March and 1 June 2011, and included visiting some of the companies.

About Deloitte

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About Fast Track

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 company directors and 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.

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