

# SME Export Track 100 regional press release

Thursday 23 February 2017



## TWENTY-THREE COMPANIES IN THE SOUTHEAST WIN PLACES ON LEAGUE TABLE OF BRITAIN'S FASTEST-GROWING SME EXPORTERS

Published this weekend, the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual **Sunday Times Lloyds SME Export Track 100** league table ranks Britain's small and medium-sized (SME) companies with the fastest-growing international sales.

The 23 companies headquartered in the **southeast of England** (compared to 17 last year) include ten new entrants to the league table. Their international sales have grown by an average of 76% a year over the last two years to a total of £159m, and together they now employ almost 1,800 people.

The region's top-ranked company is Romford-based manufacturer **Duronic**, which is a new entrant ranked in the top three. Its consumer electricals range from wireless baby monitors to travel irons. It sells through its five international websites and online marketplaces such as Amazon. Exports hit £4.3m last year.

Another new entrant in the region is Essex-based **Crittall Windows**, ranked at No 45. Founded in 1849, it says it is the world's oldest continuous manufacturer of steel windows, and its art deco and modernist-inspired designs are found in the Houses of Parliament, and were used on the Titanic. Strong sales in the US helped exports to an annualised £4.5m in 2016.

The companies in the southeast appear with businesses from around the UK, including satellite manufacturer **Clyde Space**, online bike retailer **Merlin Cycles** and drinks manufacturer **Fentimans**.

This latest research illustrates how closely connected Britain's export drive is with its trading partners across both the Atlantic and the English Channel. Eighty-five of the companies sell to the continent, making it the most popular market, followed by North America (77).

The league table is sponsored by **Lloyds Banking Group**, **DHL Express** and **Heathrow Airport**, and supported by the government's **Exporting is GREAT** campaign. It is compiled by **Fast Track**, the Oxford-based research and networking events firm.

Gareth Oakley, managing director SME banking at Lloyds Banking Group, the title sponsor, commented:

*"For businesses that take the leap to trade overseas, the rewards can be significant – the strong growth achieved by this year's SME Export Track 100 is proof of that. At Lloyds Banking Group we are committed to helping businesses scale-up and trade internationally, and have pledged to help 5,000 first-time exporters every year until 2020 in support of this. Our International Trade Portal is a valuable source of insight for any businesses looking to explore overseas options".*

International Trade Secretary Liam Fox said:

*"Companies are seizing the huge international demand for innovative UK products and services. We want more businesses to take advantage of this global opportunity, which is why we're supporting the SME Export Track 100 and why we launched our new trade hub, great.gov.uk, providing free local advice, financial and regulatory support and live export opportunities to businesses across the UK."*

### Ordered by county – SME firms in the southeast with the fastest-growing exports

HQ location and county	Rank [2016 rank]	Company Activity	Annual int'l sales growth over 2 yrs	Int'l sales £m	Sales £m	Staff	Year end <sup>†</sup>	Comment
Windsor, Berkshire	67	LA Micro UK IT reseller	45%	*9.6	*17.1	37	Apr 16	America and China are two growth markets for this IT supplier

HQ location and county	Rank [2016 rank]	Company <i>Activity</i>	Annual int'l sales growth over 2 yrs	Int'l sales £m	Sales £m	Staff	Year end†	Comment
Bracknell, <b>Berkshire</b>	<b>81</b> [29]	<b>The Knowledge Academy</b> <i>Training provider</i>	39%	7.4	24.0	178	Mar 16	Its 30,000 courses are studied as far afield as Malaysia and Argentina
Amersham, <b>Buckinghamshire</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>Kiddylicious</b> <i>Children's snack manufacturer</i>	114%	*1.3	*6.4	15	Dec 15	Forecasting sales in China of over \$1m this year, making the country its largest overall market
High Wycombe, <b>Buckinghamshire</b>	<b>23</b> [27]	<b>Miura Systems</b> <i>Payment hardware provider</i>	98%	20.2	24.8	44	Dec 15	Has sold more than 1m payment devices around the world
Milton Keynes, <b>Buckinghamshire</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>SBD</b> <i>Automotive technology specialist</i>	51%	*5.2	*5.9	83	Mar 16	Is setting up an office in China this year
Chesham, <b>Buckinghamshire</b>	<b>69</b> [70]	<b>Global Infusion Group</b> <i>Global events caterer</i>	44%	8.6	17.0	130	Dec 15	Its chefs created bespoke canapes to help launch the Michelin Guide in Shanghai last year
Romford, <b>Essex</b>	<b>In top 3</b>	<b>Duronic</b> <i>Consumer products manufacturer</i>	274%	*4.3	*10.8	45	Oct 16	Is planning to expand into the US, India and the Middle East
Colchester, <b>Essex</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>BULK POWDERS</b> <i>Sports nutrition brand</i>	113%	*11.0	*23.8	100	Dec 16	Its whey protein and superfood powders are popular with bodybuilders in Europe
Hockley, <b>Essex</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>Digiflex</b> <i>Consumer products retailer</i>	100%	*2.3	*5.2	24	Mar 16	Plans to launch its own international website this year
Witham, <b>Essex</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>Crittall Windows</b> <i>Steel window manufacturer</i>	58%	†4.5	†14.4	179	Apr 16	Supplied over 4,000 windows for a new faculty at an Ivy League university
Stanford-le-Hope, <b>Essex</b>	<b>86</b> [46]	<b>Coryton Advanced Fuels</b> <i>Specialist fuel manufacturer</i>	37%	†7.4	†11.4	36	Jun 16	Provides specialist fuels for clients in 26 countries, including Germany, Japan and the US
Southampton, <b>Hampshire</b>	<b>27</b> [39]	<b>Lawton Communications</b> <i>Digital marketing agency</i>	87%	4.5	8.4	92	Dec 15	Helped launch camel milk from Australia's first commercial-grade camel dairy
Alton, <b>Hampshire</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>Elstead Lighting</b> <i>Lighting manufacturer and distributor</i>	51%	*3.9	*10.1	107	Jul 16	Sells more than 2,000 decorative lighting products to customers in 60 countries
Romsey, <b>Hampshire</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>Talley Group</b> <i>Medical device manufacturer</i>	43%	11.1	23.8	210	Oct 15	Hospitals in Finland, the US and Australia use its medical devices
Farnborough, <b>Hampshire</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>Exclaimer</b> <i>Auto-signature software developer</i>	31%	*5.4	*7.0	64	Sep 16	Its software is used by 25,000 customers in more than 150 countries
St Albans, <b>Hertfordshire</b>	<b>25</b> [4]	<b>PrivateFly</b> <i>Online private jet hire</i>	95%	*7.0	*14.7	27	May 16	Opened an office in Miami last year to serve the growing US market
Bishops Stortford, <b>Hertfordshire</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>Grant Barnett</b> <i>Umbrella maker</i>	72%	2.1	10.1	25	Dec 15	Designs and exports fashion-inspired umbrellas, wellies and rain jackets, primarily to Europe
Hemel Hempstead, <b>Hertfordshire</b>	<b>87</b> [92]	<b>Kent Brushes</b> <i>Brush manufacturer</i>	36%	2.4	6.8	47	Dec 15	Exports its handmade clothes and hairbrushes to 65 countries

HQ location and county	Rank [2016 rank]	Company Activity	Annual int'l sales growth over 2 yrs	Int'l sales £m	Sales £m	Staff	Year end†	Comment
Hertford, Hertfordshire	89 [10]	<b>Andusia</b> <i>Waste exporter</i>	35%	17.4	17.4	11	Mar 16	Exports 50 truckloads of waste to Europe every day
Sevenoaks, Kent	91 [96]	<b>Kit for Kids</b> <i>Children's products manufacturer</i>	34%	2.3	7.4	132	Feb 16	Its products are sold in over 30 countries
Oxford, Oxfordshire	8	<b>Anthesis Consulting</b> <i>Sustainability consultancy</i>	135%	3.7	6.9	100	Dec 15	Has made ten acquisitions, including companies in Germany, Sweden, North America and the UAE
Leatherhead, Surrey	31	<b>Touch Associates</b> <i>Event communications agency</i>	79%	†8.9	†14.9	43	Dec 15	Uses technology and digital content to encourage audience participation at its hi-tech events
Shoreham, West Sussex	36	<b>Paladone</b> <i>Gift wholesaler</i>	68%	*8.6	*23.0	66	Jun 16	Exports novelty gifts to over 70 countries and has offices in Miami and Hong Kong

‡ Financial year end of latest available accounts

\* Supplied by company

† Annualised figure

## The national picture

This year's SME Export Track 100 achieved, on average, international sales growth of 72% a year over two years to a total of £677m. They employ more than 8,000 staff, having added almost 3,000 jobs over the period.

The southeast of England is the most popular location for company HQs at 23, followed by London (21). Of the remainder, 13 companies are based in the northeast, nine each in the Midlands, northwest and Scotland, seven in the southwest, four in Wales, three in the East and two in Northern Ireland.

The full league table will be published as a broadsheet supplement in the business section of **The Sunday Times** on 26 February, both in print and in the digital edition, and on [www.fasttrack.co.uk](http://www.fasttrack.co.uk).

**ENDS**

**PLEASE CREDIT IN FULL: "THE SUNDAY TIMES LLOYDS SME EXPORT 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 20 years. 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 had to be registered in the UK and be independent, unquoted and ultimate holding companies. International sales growth was measured by compound annual growth (CAGR) over their latest two financial years.

Total sales had to be between £5m and £25m in their latest financial year, and exports had to account for at least 20% of total sales (companies with sales greater than £25m are covered in our International Track 200). International sales had to exceed £150,000 in the base year and not show a drop from the penultimate to the latest year. Firms had to make an operating profit in their latest available accounts.

A minimum of 25 weeks' trading in their base year and latest years was required. For accounting periods not equal to a year, financials have been presented on an annual basis.

Excluded companies include those with total sales of more than £25m (covered by our sister league table, International Track 200), LLPs, pure property and financial trading companies.

The research was carried out by Fast Track principally between October 2016 and January 2017. The majority of companies were interviewed by the Fast Track research team. The research is based on the limited available data on international sales. Many firms that file full accounts do not disclose geographical breakdown of sales, many others file abbreviated accounts, which are not necessarily required to be audited.

## **About our sponsors**

### **Lloyds Banking Group**

Lloyds Banking Group is delighted to be the new title sponsor of SME Export Track 100.

At Lloyds Bank and Bank of Scotland, we are committed to helping businesses of all sizes and sectors, giving them the funding and support they need to fulfil their growth ambitions at home and abroad. We are working closely with the Government and have planned to help a total of 25,000 new exporters by 2020. This is part of our pledge to help Britain prosper.

[www.lloydsbankinggroup.com](http://www.lloydsbankinggroup.com), [www.lloydsbank.com/globaltrade](http://www.lloydsbank.com/globaltrade), [www.bankofscotland.co.uk/business](http://www.bankofscotland.co.uk/business)  
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### **About DHL Express**

DHL Express is a main sponsor for the first year.

DHL is the global market leader in the international express market, specialising in time and day critical shipment delivery to all corners of the world. It ensures your products are quickly and reliably delivered to your customers all over the world, providing tailored delivery options and returns. DHL also provides expert advice for UK businesses looking to expand into global markets and advises on everything from delivery options on your website to the intricacies of customs duties and taxes.

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### **About Heathrow Airport**

Heathrow is a main sponsor for the second year.

Heathrow, the UK's hub airport, is home to more than 80 airlines connecting to more than 180 destinations, and every year Heathrow welcomes over 75m passengers. These connections drive the UK economy by connecting British businesses to the world's established and emerging markets. Heathrow is also Britain's most important port, carrying more freight, by value, than any other UK airport. Air freight accounts for 40% of the UK's imports and exports and most of that comes through Heathrow.

<https://your.heathrow.com/takingbritainfurther/> @yourHeathrow

## **Exporting is GREAT**

The government's Exporting is GREAT campaign is supporting SME Export Track 100 for the second year.

Exporting is GREAT aims to inspire and support UK companies to export overseas and provides free tools, advice and support for new, occasional or frequent exporters. The find a buyer service enables businesses to become part of a new searchable directory of UK exporters which government will use to match their products and services with worldwide demand. Businesses can also access the best e-commerce opportunities via preferential deals with the world's largest online marketplaces and review live export opportunities.

[www.great.gov.uk](http://www.great.gov.uk) #ExportingisGREAT