



The LDC Top 50 Most Ambitious Business Leaders 2025

When: Wednesday 8th October 2025 | Where: BAFTA, Piccadilly, London

ldc.co.uk/Top50

Congratulations!



Celebrating Ambition

Now in its eighth year, The LDC Top 50 Most Ambitious Business Leaders, in partnership with The Times, is dedicated to shining a spotlight on the drive and ambition of Britain's best and brightest entrepreneurs.

The LDC Top 50 focuses on the UK's most important – and often neglected - tranche of the economy: growing medium-sized businesses with a turnover of up to £50 million. Despite making up just 0.7% of UK companies, medium-sized businesses – with 50 to 249 employees – account for 13% of jobs and are responsible for almost a fifth of national turnover.

Since 2010, the number of companies representing the UK's equivalent of Germany's Mittelstand has grown by 29%. Their contribution to the economy will only become more marked in the coming years.

This is the kind of ambition The LDC Top 50 was created to celebrate. With a combined turnover of £1.2bn and pre-tax profit of £140m, these businesses employ almost 10,000 people, from Port Glasgow to Crawley. Most are expecting to at least double in size within three years.

The LDC Top 50 showcases the diversity of the nation's entrepreneurial talent, with representation reflecting the true make-up of modern Britain. Leaders come from a broad range of industries from dairy to digital entertainment experiences, mental health to technology in tracking devices. They're showing us what's possible when it comes to creating new categories, overcoming hardship, reaching global audiences, and taking care of themselves and others.

Meet The Top 50 Most Ambitious Business Leaders of 2025 ►

◀ Individual award winners from The Top 50 and Ones to Watch of 2024, and The Top 50 Judges.



The Drive to Succeed

From innovative tech companies to healthcare disruptors and high street brands, the leaders in The LDC Top 50 are defying the odds to deliver growth and supercharge Britain's economic future.

One thing that unites these extraordinary leaders is that they never give up. No matter what obstacles lie in their path - intensifying competition, staff shortages, challenging supply chains, an uncertain global economy. They continue to navigate complex markets with ingenuity and persistence, achieving remarkable results.

◀ **Holland Cooper** - Jade Holland Cooper founded the British luxury brand when she was just 22.



Lou Ellis-Frankland

CEO, Mansfield Pollard

Lou Ellis-Frankland joined Mansfield Pollard as sales director in 2017, planning to stay just two years. Instead, she developed a strong connection with the 160-year-old manufacturer, known for designing and producing precision air handling systems that cool data centres and deliver clean, controlled air to healthcare and critical environments. In 2020, she led a management buy-out and became CEO. Since then, Mansfield Pollard's sales have grown from £10 million to nearly £30 million, with a target of £50 million by 2027. Lou has reinvested 40 per cent of last year's profits into people, technology and facilities. "I'm ambitious for growth," she says.



Souroush Honary

Co-Founder and CEO, System Loco

Inspired by the work ethic of his Iranian parents, who came to the UK in the 1970s to study, Souroush Honary earned a PhD in satellite communications before founding System Loco in 2016. "I wanted to bring order to the crazy – 'loco' – world of modern supply chains," he says. Based in Lancaster, the company makes smart tracking devices used by clients such as Google, Apple and Sony to monitor high-value shipments. More than 90 per cent of revenue comes from the US. Now expanding into pharmaceuticals, perishables and reusable packaging, the firm is targeting £100 million turnover within four years.



Mark Fitzgerald

CEO, CTR Group

A recycling industry veteran, Mark Fitzgerald takes the UK's unwanted goods and finds new homes for them overseas, recycling the rest. "Zero to landfill, that's our promise," he says. In 2014, Mark began wholesaling second-hand clothes. He now handles unwanted stock for retailers like Lidl too. "We create opportunities and wealth around the world," he says. "In Zambia, we supply a cooperative of female traders who sell our products in their street market." Uttoxeter-based CTR employs 440 people and will turn over £45 million this year. Mark says: "70 per cent of the world's population wears second-hand clothes so the opportunity is immense."



Bevis Tetlow, Toby Crawford, Michelle Crawford & Viren Kataria

Senior Executive Team, Imaginera

Toby and Michelle Crawford launched Imaginera in 2013 with a bold goal – to reimagine how technology serves the reinsurance and specialty insurance markets. “We saw an opportunity to rethink how the industry works,” says Toby. In 2019 Bevis Tetlow joined as CEO from a successful career as a senior underwriter at Hiscox Bermuda, and Viren Kataria as Chief Strategy Officer. From early staff-augmentation projects, the team went on to create Orca, a cloud-native InsurTech platform now used by major (re)insurance businesses worldwide. Imaginera has grown to 100 employees. “Seeing clients run their businesses on our platform is hugely rewarding,” says Bevis.



Siôn Roberts

Founder and CEO, Eagle Eye Innovations

Siôn Roberts joined the RAF at 18 and spent 22 years operating everything from Nimrod MR2s to UAVs. “I saw an opportunity to build a drone training and consultancy business, using my skill set as my USP.” In 2014, he started Lincoln-based Eagle Eye Innovations, which has since trained thousands of people – from farmers to the Game of Thrones crew – to operate drones. Eagle Eye also partners with The Air League to offer drone scholarships and bring new talent into the industry. “No other UK company has our credentials or experience. I want to show that drones are a safer, greener and cheaper alternative to traditional aircraft.”



Jade Holland Cooper

Founder and Managing Director, Holland Cooper

Jade Holland Cooper founded British luxury brand Holland Cooper when she was just 22, spotting a gap in the market for stylish country clothes. “I’d go to equestrian and country events and everyone was wearing the same thing,” she says. “No brand had touched this market.” She launched at Badminton Horse Trials in 2008 with a 2-metre stand and 30 tweed miniskirts. Today, Holland Cooper is a full lifestyle offering from fashion to homeware. It employs 120 and expanded into the US last year. “I’m always challenging myself. Can we beat last year? Are we evolving? Complacency isn’t an option.”



Dr Steven Compton

Founder and Director, DSC Nutrition

After four years of running a direct-to-consumer nutrition brand, Dr Steven Compton was ready to throw in the towel. “It was too competitive. I couldn’t see a way forward,” he says. Then came the pivot. He switched to manufacturing vitamins and supplements for other brands and the business took off. Based in Waterlooville, DSC Nutrition produces 20 million tablets and capsules and fills 40,000 pouches and bottles every day. “We’re known for quality and scientific accuracy. My PhD credentials give me an edge.” Turnover has more than doubled in the last 12 months. Steven’s goal? “To become one of the UK’s top three nutraceutical manufacturers.”



Peter Ellse

Co-Founder and CEO, Cosy Direct

Peter Ellse came up with the idea for Cosy Direct while wrangling with his children at a “horrible soft play”. Having already built and sold education supplier TTS Group, he spotted an opportunity to create nature-inspired learning spaces: “I wanted to build something that’s craft based and gets kids outdoors.” The Staffordshire-based company now supplies more than 6,000 imaginative, affordable, eco-friendly resources to schools and nurseries in 46 countries, and received a King’s Award for International Trade this year. Peter also donates 10 per cent of profits to grassroots charities and owns a farm and campsite in the Peak District, home to local charity Derby Kids’ Camp.



Lee Brooks

Co-Founder and CEO, Production Park

From Beyoncé to Coldplay, Production Park is where the world’s biggest artists come to play. The company was co-founded by Lee Brooks in 2015 on four acres of land in South Kirkby: “Film had Pinewood Studios. TV had MediaCity. We wanted to build a home for live entertainment in West Yorkshire,” he says. With revenues set to hit £30 million this year, Production Park now spans 25 acres, with production studios, rehearsal space, manufacturing, an R&D centre and the Academy of Live Technology to train up the next generation of talent. It also houses other creative companies: “We’re developing an entire ecosystem to support and shape the industry.”



Dominique Kent

CEO, Bluecrest Wellness

“Our mission is to help people live healthier for longer,” says Dominique Kent, CEO of health assessment provider Bluecrest Wellness. Since taking the helm in 2023, she has driven significant change, improving customer service, boosting staff satisfaction and cutting carbon and waste – all while increasing profits year-on-year. To date, Bluecrest has completed just over one million health assessments, each undertaken within 15 minutes of a customer’s home. Her aim now is to expand Bluecrest’s reach even further, making preventative health checks the norm. “Collaboration between the NHS and private sector will be vital if we’re going to solve today’s health challenges,” she said. “I hope that can be my legacy.”



Mark Bridges

CEO and Chair, Ranger Fire & Security

“It’s rare in life to be given a blank piece of paper and asked, ‘What do you want to build?’ It’s incredibly exciting,” says Mark Bridges. After leading Domestic & General international business and Pimlico Plumbers, he launched Ranger Fire & Security in February 2024 with a mission to create a one-stop shop for fire and security services and raise standards in a fragmented sector. The business has since made 10 acquisitions and now employs 215 people, with revenues of £35 million. It offers services from fire doors and intruder alarms to sprinkler systems. “I’m not a steady-state person,” says Bridges. “I much prefer fast growth and spinning lots of plates.”



Pip Murray

Founder and CEO, Pip & Nut

Frustrated by the lack of natural, palm-oil-free nut butter in supermarkets, theatre producer Pip Murray decided to make her own. Pip & Nut turns over £26.5 million and is stocked in 5,000 stores, from Sainsbury’s to Waitrose. It’s now the UK’s number one nut butter brand. “It’s bonkers that something I started on a market stall is on the brink of becoming a category leader,” Murray says. The company now has snacks and chocolate spread and is launching a foundation, with 10 per cent of profits going to food poverty charities. “However big we get, we’ll always stay true to our mission of better nuts, better taste, better business.”



From Problems to Possibilities

Britain's historical reputation for innovation thrives today, as visionary entrepreneurs redefine established sectors with technology-driven solutions to global challenges - from mental health to R&D procurement.

The UK leads the OECD when it comes to government financial support for business R&D and ranks fifth in the Global Innovation Index.

The spirit of invention is alive and well among The LDC Top 50, who are creating new categories with groundbreaking products, fresh thinking and novel approaches to traditional industries.

◀ **KOMI Group** - Andrew Trotman, Sam Lenehan and team are celebrating 96% year-on-year growth.



Jeremy Ranson

Founder and CEO, Praesto Consulting

Jeremy Ranson founded Praesto Consulting, a data-focused IT consultancy, in 2009. After moving back to Darlington for the birth of his first child, he was commuting to London because he couldn't find a job. "I had a two-month-old and was away six days a week," he recalls. "I resigned so I could take six months off." Fate intervened: three FTSE 100 companies contacted Ranson within three weeks and Praesto was born. "We started with two people, and I emptied my savings to pay wages, and now we have 180, with revenues of £25 million. We'll double that in three years."



Rob Young

Founder and CEO, Infinity Group

Rob Young started tinkering with computers when he was just 15. Fast-forward to 2001 and he founded Infinity Group, a managed IT consultancy. Having grown the business 20 per cent year-on-year since inception, Young had a wake-up call during the Covid-19 pandemic: "Growth flatlined," he says. "I sat at home thinking about what we needed to build." In 2024, having made senior hires and moved into the booming AI sector, Infinity Group was growing again. "I'm hugely ambitious," he says of his expansion into Europe and the US. "We're at 200 people now, spread all over the globe. We'll grow 30 per cent again this year."



Shaun Young & Rebecca Young

Co-Founders, The Estate Dairy

Husband-and-wife team Shaun and Rebecca Young founded The Estate Dairy in 2016, combining his coffee industry experience with her family's dairy farming roots. "Milk makes up 80 per cent of most drinks in cafés but no-one was focused on its quality or how it was sourced. We wanted to do for milk what Fever-Tree did for tonics," says Shaun. Today, The Estate Dairy supplies premium milk, cream, butter and Greek style yoghurt to more than 1,000 customers across coffee, food service and retail, from Sainsbury's to Claridge's. Committed to sustainability and paying farmers a premium, it aims to reach £50 million by 2028.



Barty Walsh

Co-Founder, ORDO

Barty Walsh co-founded ORDO in 2019 after identifying a lack of effective, affordable options in the electric toothbrush category. "I wanted to make better oral health accessible to everyone," he explains. Consumers worldwide have flocked to the brand and ORDO is now the third largest player in the UK. Walsh is using his market clout to take direct action in addressing Britain's children's oral health crisis by working with charities, retailers and the government. And his ambitions go beyond oral care: "I have the unwavering belief that we will be one of the biggest electrical personal care brands in the world," he says.



Andrew Trotman & Sam Lenehan

Founder and CEO, KOMI Group

If you want to understand what makes a video 'go viral', Andrew Trotman is your man. He created KOMI Group – then known as It's Gone Viral – in 2015. A few years later, Sam Lenehan came on board and together they've built a business which racks up 5 billion views each month. The group comprises a publishing arm, content business and talent agency. It grew 96 per cent year-on-year after the pair raised growth capital and their sights are now on world domination. "We already have a small office in the US," says Lenehan. "The next phase is about competing on a global scale."



Laura Earnshaw

Founder and CEO, myHappyMind

When Laura Earnshaw's child struggled to settle in primary school, she taught them the same coping strategies she was instilling in FTSE 100 CEOs. "We worked on self-regulation, self-esteem and resilience," explains the former Global Head of HR. "It had such an impact that the school called me in. They had other kids that needed help." She left her corporate career to start myHappyMind in 2016 and now her NHS-endorsed and King's Award-winning programme is being taught in 2,000 schools, improving the lives of one million children, parents and teachers. "We have to start taking preventative mental health education seriously."



Nick Frogbrook

CEO, Blueleaf Care

When Nick Frogbrook joined Blueleaf in 2022, the family-owned business that supplies consumables, equipment and furniture to care homes across the UK had lost its way. “It had diversified, hadn’t adapted to the changing market and had lost direction across the business,” he says. Nick quickly took it back to its foundations, closing underperforming divisions, acquiring a complementary competitor and launching n-kind, a new plant-based cleaning range now used in almost one in 10 care homes. Nick expects the business to now hit £100 million turnover within five years. He says: “We’ve not just righted the ship, but we’ve set it back on the right course.”



James Hanson & Alicia Dean

Co-Founders and Co-CEOs, Curve Analytics

After quitting their jobs in 2019 to start consultancy Curve Analytics, the then twenty-somethings James Hanson and Alicia Dean moved back home to Yorkshire and worked out of a shed in Dean’s parents’ garden. She recalls: “There were moments we wanted to give up.” But their persistence and focus on providing genuine consumer insights, surfaced from searches, conversations and reviews online, has helped them to win clients like BAT and Danone. “We want to be a £25 million-revenue company in three years,” says Hanson. “We’ve won six clients in the last 18 months. This is a new way of listening to and learning from consumers.”



Omar Hamdi

Founder and CEO, Pathos Communications

Former BBC presenter Omar Hamdi is on a mission to democratise media access for the world’s small-to-medium-sized businesses. His media-technology company, Pathos Communications, uses AI to deliver premium press coverage at a fraction of traditional public relations (PR) costs. Founded in 2019, the agency now serves over 5,000 clients across 55 countries, with the potential to generate £100 million in turnover within a decade. Hamdi says most of his 60-strong team came from industries unrelated to the media or technology, “I don’t care where they’ve been, only where they’re going. The question is, do they share my ambition to make Pathos THE global SME PR engine?”



Nick Hutchinson

**Founder and Managing Partner,
Glider Technology**

An IT graduate who entered the paper-heavy building data industry in 2004, Nick Hutchinson has driven digital transformation across the sector ever since. He started Glider Technology in 2016 with no external backing, creating a tech platform to manage data on complex buildings. The company now works with seven of the UK's 10 biggest contractors and major public sector clients including the Ministry of Defence and HMRC. Hutchinson has tripled revenues since 2022 and is using AI to further disrupt the industry. He's targeting a £0.5 billion valuation within five years: "Our technology will become part of a building's fabric."



Caroline Briggs

Founder and CEO, Amici

Scientists driving life-changing discoveries trust Amici to power intelligent LabOps - the discipline behind efficient, compliant and cost-effective labs. Founded in Glasgow in 2005 by former scientist Caroline Briggs, Amici partners with fast-growing biotechs and major pharma companies across the UK, Europe and the US. Its scale has enabled investment in cutting-edge software designed for life sciences, combined with one of the world's largest buying networks and deep LabOps expertise. "We free scientists to focus on science while ensuring best practice and operational excellence. Now, as the UK leader, we're targeting exponential growth in the US and Switzerland," Briggs says.



Richard Betts

CEO, Vizst Technology

After building and selling several successful tech companies, Richard Betts tried retiring, and quickly realised it wasn't for him. "It was the worst thing I've ever done! I missed the energy, the pressure, the motivation." In 2021, he founded Vizst Technology, uniting three acquired businesses into a single, full-service cybersecurity and managed services provider. Based in Poole, Vizst supports clients including Vodafone, the MOD, and Crew Clothing, employs over 45 staff, and has been recognised as one of the UK's Best Workplaces for two consecutive years. "I enjoy succeeding - and bringing people along on the journey."



Ideas Forged in the Fire

Through sheer determination, resilience and a strong work ethic, some of the country's most promising self-made business leaders have overcome adversity and risen to the challenge.

Social mobility remains a significant challenge in the UK. Yet the leaders in The LDC Top 50 are challenging that narrative by proving that the ability to become a successful leader is not always defined by one's start in life. Many have overcome hardship to build thriving businesses.

◀ **Safer Group** – Founder Ryan Clark spotted an opportunity to disrupt the CCTV and intruder detection market.



Breandan Flynn

Executive Chair, IES Utilities Group

Breandan Flynn has done every job going in the utilities industry, from digging holes for pipes to installing telegraph poles. Even now, as Chair of IES Utilities Group, he can often be found in the yard. “It’s the only time I can switch off,” he admits. He bought the loss-making business back in 2018 and has transformed its fortunes. “We have an order book worth £450 million, with extensions of £550 million.” Talent shortages plague the industry, so Flynn recruited 500 linesmen from South Africa, which will help him expand into Europe. He says there’s no problem he can’t solve: “If I say I’ll do something, I deliver it.”



Ryan Clark

Founder and Group CEO, Safer Group

Former security guard Ryan Clark founded Safer Group in 2016 after spotting an opportunity to disrupt the CCTV and intruder detection market. He worked tirelessly for eight years until his Port Glasgow-based company, which protects everything from railways to retailers, had the resources to build its own product. In 2023, Clark launched his solar-powered, fully autonomous system; it was an instant hit. “We did the same turnover in one year as we did in the previous six combined,” he says. His products are now shipped across Europe, and he has embarked on his most ambitious innovation yet: a rapidly deployable drone protection system.



Dr Oskar Wenbar & Dr Thuria Wenbar

Co-Founders, Evaro

Thuria Wenbar moved to the UK from Iraq as an asylum seeker in 1999 and later qualified as a doctor. While working in A&E, she was struck by how many patients came in with minor health concerns. “25 per cent didn’t need to be there,” she says. In 2018, she and Dr Oskar Wenbar, a medical researcher and pharmacist, set out to tackle the issue. Their NHS-licensed platform Evaro lets brands offer prescription treatments for everything from acne to menopause, fulfilled via their Norwich-based pharmacy. With 240 staff, 400 treatments and one million patients served, Evaro is transforming how people access healthcare: “Online banking revolutionised money, we’re doing the same for health.”



Mike Brennan

Founder and CEO, Outdo

Mike Brennan entered the world of outdoor advertising as a salesman in the nineties before buying into Community Partners in 2012. The Halifax-based business, now called Outdo, works with public and private sector clients, managing ads on 30,000 outdoor media sites, including billboards, banners, roundabouts, transport interchanges and airports nationwide. Turnover has tripled in five years, the company employs 75 people: “Many are remote workers, including single parents and people who want flexible working.” Brennan’s loss of his two youngest children, along with support from his wife Sue and son Dan, have driven him forward. “You always have a choice: give up or carry on.”



Matt Travis

Managing Director, Enzygo

Matt Travis was studying for a PhD in climate change and water management when he pivoted from academia into business. “I worked for four different consultancies and kept thinking, I can do this better,” he says. In 2008, he co-founded environmental consultancy Enzygo and completed a management buyout in 2023. Today, Enzygo employs 83 people, advising clients including Hill Group, Whitbread and Park Holidays. As President of Barnsley and Rotherham Chamber of Commerce and former chair of governors at Northern Education Trust, Matt is also committed to supporting the local community. “I’d rather be the most influential entrepreneur you’ve never heard of.”



Nazanin Nankali

Founder, Powertutors

Born in Iran and raised in Ukraine, Nazanin Nankali struggled at school. “I’m dyslexic and autistic. I used to hide my scorecards from my parents because I was ashamed of failing.” At nine, her mother arranged a maths tutor – a turning point. “She taught me in a way I could understand. That changed my life. Suddenly, I was good at something.” After moving to the UK and completing a maths degree at City University, Nankali founded Surrey-based Powertutors in 2016. The agency now has a network of 200 tutors and supports around 350 children annually through personalised education. “My ambition is simple: to help children believe in themselves.”



Russell Teale

Co-Founder and CEO, Vivify

Raised on a council estate in Wythenshawe, Russell Teale learned the value of hard work from his single mother, who juggled three jobs to make ends meet. “From Victim Support to caring for the elderly, everything she did helped others. That was ingrained in me.” In 2020, he launched Vivify, a tech platform that helps schools rent out their facilities – from pools to pitches – to local communities. Backed by Arete and former Tesco CEO Sir Terry Leahy, it now employs almost 500 people and has generated £10 million of additional revenue for schools. “Success is if this business is still here in 100 years delivering social impact,” he says.



Stuart Browne

Founder and CEO, Resulting IT

Revenue, profit and headcount are one thing but, for Stuart Browne, success is measured by what he calls “the poke in the eye” effect. “We have no right to have the brand profile we do,” says the Resulting IT founder. “I’m from a small northern town, built this from my spare room, and now we’re getting talked about in the head offices of the world’s biggest companies.” Browne raised investment for his IT consultancy in 2023, and it just spurred him on. He’s expanding fast into the US and plans to double the size of the business in three years. “When you’re the underdog, people don’t see you coming.”



Jen Elliott

CEO, EPM

From an early age, Jen Elliott knew she wanted to lead a business. “My dad was a managing director, so I had insight into how a company worked from a young age,” She joined Cambridgeshire-based education consultancy EPM as an alternative to university and was immediately keen to invest in it. “I wanted to help shape the business, not just work in it.” Rising to CEO, the company sold in 2017, before she and a business partner bought it back in 2023. Today, EPM’s 188-strong team supports over 2,500 schools and 200 trusts, and has launched a network for education leaders. “I love helping young people supercharge their careers.”



Brendan Doherty

Founder and CEO, Intellica

Qualified actuary, Brendan Doherty, founded Intellica in 2014 to revolutionise pension data management. In 2020, he accelerated growth by assembling a permanent team, establishing a board and launching Constellation, proprietary software that enables real-time data analysis within clients' networks. Intellica has since acquired Cosan Consulting and been named one of The Sunday Times' Best Places to Work in 2024 and 2025. The 85-strong company trains graduates to become actuaries and is expanding into the insurance de-risking market. "Fatherhood reshaped my priorities. My focus is on guiding with integrity, living with balance, and leaving a legacy of kindness, strength, and opportunity."



Cathy Acratopulo

Co-Founder and CEO, LACE Partners

Psychology graduate Cathy Acratopulo co-founded LACE Partners with Aaron Alburey in 2014 to help FTSE 250 companies solve their people challenges. "We wanted to disrupt consulting in a nimble way that was different to the big firms," she says. Acratopulo's laser focus on HR & Payroll transformation has helped LACE to stand out from the Goliaths: "We grew revenues 39 per cent last year against a consulting market that is struggling," she says. Headcount will reach 125 people this year and LACE is on track to double the business by the end of 2027. "We want to seize our position as a disruptor," she says.



Craig Letton & Benjamin Walker

CEO and CGO, Hyble

"Our story is unconventional," says Craig Letton. "I joined in 2012 when we had 12 staff and £500,000 turnover." Edinburgh-headquartered Hyble has since transformed from a printing business to a marketing technology disruptor, helping reps from the alcohol industry to quickly create compliant print sales materials. Benjamin Walker became Chief Growth Officer (CGO) in 2021 and, in 2023, Craig moved to Boston to grow the business in the US. Hyble now employs 130 people and generates 70 per cent of its £16 million revenue Stateside. Letton says: "We'll hit £50 million in the next few years."



Local Roots Global Reach

Retaining close links with their home regions and basing their companies in smaller towns and cities around the UK doesn't stop these innovative leaders making a mark on the world stage.

The LDC Top 50 hail from 67 different towns and cities. Some are going global, putting their corners of the UK on the export map. Others are focusing on their home market, bringing jobs and capital to the local area and maximising impact on home turf.

◀ **CONDUCTR** - Founders Peter and Jos fuse creativity and tech to deliver world-class attractions from their Manchester HQ.



Dr Paul Dickinson, Dr Marcel de Matas MBE & Dr Paul Stott

**Chief Scientist, Chief Business Officer
and CEO, Seda**

Drug makers across the globe turn to Dr Paul Dickinson's Stockport-based specialist when developing new medicines. "We help them decide whether to put the drug into a tablet or an injection and work out the doses to set," explains the clinical pharmacologist, who co-founded Seda Pharmaceutical Development Services (Seda) with Dr Marcel de Matas in 2015. Dr Paul Stott joined as CEO in 2019 and last year, they invested £8 million into a cutting-edge new laboratory, which means Seda can provide drug manufacturing services too. "We are one of only a few companies creating high-value roles in applied science in the North of England."



Chris Garner

Founder and CEO, Avensure

Chris Garner founded Avensure in 2011 after spotting the opportunity to create an outsourced HR specialist that included an insurance product to protect businesses against employee tribunals. He's since bolted on many more features, including health and safety support, people management software, onsite training, immigration services, and employee wellbeing offerings like counselling, GP services, and employee perks. Now based in Manchester, the business is a UK leader in employment support, generating £20 million in revenue from over 7,000 clients. "I'm so proud of what we've built," he says. "We could triple in size in the UK alone, and our software is designed to go global."



Derek Phillips & Debra Phillips

**Co-Founders and Managing Director
and Commercial Director, Clarus Networks**

In 2014, Derek and Debra Phillips left steady jobs to start Clarus Networks with a budget of just £20,000. Within three months, the first-time founders had landed their first contract. Their telecoms business supplies internet and voice connections to infrastructure businesses operating in remote locations such as railways and offshore oil rigs. Pivoting from older technologies to become a reseller of SpaceX's Starlink service two years ago has supercharged their ambition: "We've gone from a turnover of £2.5 million in 2022 to £34 million this year," says Derek. Clarus Networks is just getting started adds Debra: "Once you start winning, and keep winning, it feels natural."



Richard Fox

Co-Founder, Global Commissioning

Richard Fox's career began at 15 when he joined the Army, an experience he credits with giving him the "desire to be better". It laid the foundations for a successful career in engineering, taking him to major international projects, including The Shard. He went on to establish Global Commissioning, a commissioning specialist that gets data centres and other critical infrastructure up and running. The business now operates in eight countries across Europe and South Africa, supporting one of the fastest-growing sectors in the global economy. "There is massive growth in the market - people can't build data centres quickly enough to meet demand," says Fox.



Josie Morris MBE

CEO, Woolcool

CEO of Woolcool, Josie Morris, is leading the sustainable packaging revolution. The Staffordshire-based business, founded by her mother Angela, uses 100% wool to create natural insulated packaging for food and pharmaceuticals. Josie joined in 2014, becoming Managing Director two years later, aged 28, and CEO in May 2025. Under her leadership, Woolcool has grown 20 to 30 per cent annually. It is the first packaging company of its kind to achieve B Corp certification in the UK and saved over 3,000 tonnes of polystyrene from going to landfill last year. "We're building a legacy that puts people and the planet first."



Alan Stephenson-Brown

CEO, Evolve

When Alan Stephenson-Brown took the reins at tech firm Evolve in 2012 it had five employees and less than £1 million in sales. "I love the challenge of scaling a business." Today, Evolve has 130 people and a turnover of £21 million, delivering Managed Network Solutions to brands including Pret a Manger and Home Bargains across 9,500 sites in 12 countries. The ambition? To hit 25,000 sites and double turnover within five years. With a 6,000 sq ft warehouse and newly refurbished HQ in Wigan, Alan says culture is key: "We've built a place where people want to be. Nothing makes me prouder than seeing that energy every day."



Nico Master

Managing Director, Altomed and Mid-Optic

Nico Master has had an eclectic career. After studying medicine at Oxford, he worked as a junior doctor before switching to investment banking. Keen to run his own business, he began researching SME opportunities: “I liked the idea of taking a good business and making it even better.” In 2018, he acquired Gateshead-based Altomed, a long-established supplier of ophthalmic surgical devices, and added Mid-Optic, an established supplier to the optician and optometry sector, in 2021. The group has grown into the UK’s leading independent supplier to the eyecare market, shipping 1.5 million products a year. “Now we want to use our dominant UK position to grow the business internationally.”



Jos van der Steen & Peter Cliff

Co-Founders, CONDUCTR

“We’re proud to be flying the flag for Manchester, creating world-class, kick-ass attractions from our Trafford HQ,” says Peter Cliff, co-founder of CONDUCTR. Alongside Jos van der Steen, he’s built a fast-growing business that blends creativity with cutting-edge tech to deliver immersive experiences. From The Curse at Alton Manor to the world’s first outdoor interactive LED sports court for Norwegian Cruise Line, their work is attracting global demand, with new studios launched in North America and the Middle East. “We make bold ideas happen,” says van der Steen. “The goal has always been to stop chasing briefs and become the brand everyone wants to work with – that’s finally happening.”



Heather Staff & Tom Staff

Co-Founders, Street Group

Heather and Tom Staff are the brother-and-sister duo behind Street Group, the Manchester-based proptech firm reinventing the home-moving experience. Raised by estate agent parents, the siblings saw firsthand how outdated systems were holding the industry back. “I spent time in our dad’s agency and began automating manual processes. That led to Spectre, our first product,” says Tom. “Heather joined to help scale the business. There was huge potential to transform one of the UK’s most complex and underserved sectors.” Today, their platform supports 15,600 agents across the UK and 130,000 monthly active users. “We want to elevate the profession with world-class technology,” adds Heather.



Toby Gibbs

Group Director, Logika Group

Inspired by the natural beauty of Cornwall, where he grew up, Toby Gibbs built a career as an ecologist. He launched Logika Consultants in 2020, and together with Air Quality Consultants and Noise Consultants they formed Logika Group. “We believe that we’ve built the largest multidisciplinary, independent environmental consultancy in the UK. Now we want to go global,” he says. He remains hands-on, leading the environmental work on a variety of projects including in the renewable energy sector and for Heathrow Airport. “Protecting the planet gets me out of bed every morning,” he adds.



Sally Alington

Founder and CEO, Ethos Farm

Sally Alington founded Ethos Farm in 2016 with bold ambitions: “I wanted to build a global consultancy. My goal was to compete against the Big Four.” Her company specialises in customer experience strategies for high-footfall locations such as airports, malls, stations and cruise liners. Today, Ethos Farm counts Westfield, Heathrow and LaGuardia among its clients. “We’ve been in bids against consultancy giants – and we’ve won.” The business now employs 1,200 people and is close to £40 million in turnover. “I read that only 80 women in the UK have built a business beyond £50 million in revenue. I’d love to add my name to that list.”



Manny Athwal

CEO, School of Coding and AI

In 2015, Manny Athwal was jobless with a child on the way. “I couldn’t put food on the table,” he says. He taught himself to code in under three months and spotted an opportunity to create a coding programme for kids. When he launched the School of Coding and AI, he was teaching just two pupils a week. Seven years on, his multimillion-pound business now helps adults retrain in AI. Last year, Athwal opened a university with 1,500 students and the business is now international, with offices in Dublin, India and soon, Saudi Arabia. “Nothing will stop us becoming a unicorn in five years.”



Chris Bunch

CEO, NoBlue2

Since joining NoBlue2 in 2024, Chris Bunch has set an ambitious path for growth: the new business pipeline is up 30 per cent and he plans to increase profits at the Nottingham-based enterprise software provider by £1 million every year. The company was formed by bringing together NoBlue and Elevate2 – hence the name – and it has been on the acquisition trail ever since. Bunch, a software sales veteran, says that impatience is his superpower. “I like to win. It’s a matter of personal pride,” he says. “I’ve always been a problem-solver and I’m inquisitive and hard-working, all the entrepreneurial traits.”



Tom Craig, Aaron Dicks, Mikey Emery & Liam Wade

Directors, Impression

Aaron Dicks and Tom Craig started digital agency Impression in 2012 shortly after graduating. “As marketers, we were tired of working with digital agencies that over-promised and under-delivered – so we decided to create our own,” says Tom. They built up a client base outside of their day jobs and in 2014, opened their first office in Nottingham alongside directors Liam Wade and Mikey Emery. Together they’ve grown Impression into a 120-strong, B Corp-certified agency with clients including Clarins and Specsavers. “We aim to triple turnover in the next few years. Few agencies have reached that size and remained independent. We believe we can,” says Mikey.

Ones to Watch

These entrepreneurs are on the path to great achievements – they're already pushing boundaries in their chosen fields, whether improving national security, sourcing healthcare workers or making it easier to return a parcel.

The Ones to Watch all have the drive and determination needed to succeed, create jobs and generate growth within their respective sectors.

Meet the Ones to Watch of 2025 ▶



Darren Auld

ClearSky Logic

“ClearSky Logic is the tech enabler for mid-market. We combine strategic thought leadership with high-paced implementation across bespoke software, data and AI. Our mission: unlock exponential growth, empowering clients to become the UK’s next unicorns.”



Caitlin Barrett

Marco Paul

“At Marco Paul, I’m focused on building something that lasts, strengthening our brand beyond marketplaces and growing a culture where people thrive. My ambition is simple: create a business that performs brilliantly because people feel they belong and want to stay.”



Tim Bolot

Tendable

“Tendable is a global digital platform transforming quality improvement across all health and social care settings. I’m passionate about providing frontline teams with the tools they need to drive measurable, organisation-wide improvement – and make a real difference to patients and residents.”



Kathryn Brown

Rubicon Bridge

“Rubicon Bridge’s software solves regulatory compliance challenges for brands across Europe. Female founded and built without institutional money, more than 40 per cent of our revenue comes from overseas trade – with revenues tripling over the last three consecutive years.”



Jonathon Clarke

Locate a Locum

“At Locate a Locum, we’re driven by a simple ambition: to mobilise the world’s healthcare workforce. It’s incredibly rewarding to create technology that ensures professionals are exactly where they’re needed. My proudest achievement? Empowering over 40,000 locums to make a real difference.”



Tom Cox

Humara

“We’re on a mission to create a virtual sales agent that performs better than a human sales agent. Uniquely combining AI with consumer psychology, Humara is proud to simplify the digital sales journey and build buyer confidence for leading global brands.”



Oliver Deane & Guy Jones

The GoodNet

“The GoodNet is a data company delivering ESG-powered advertising performance. We help brands align media investment with sustainability goals – proving that low-carbon, responsible advertising drives stronger results.”



Chris Down

OpenWorks Engineering

“OpenWorks produces precision, AI-powered electro-optical systems for the defence and security sector. Our mission is to help protect the airspace of the United Kingdom and our NATO allies. We’re enormously proud when we see our equipment being used to save lives.”



Tom Dunlop

Summize

“Summize is a global Contract Lifecycle Management (CLM) solution that prioritises business-wide CLM adoption through seamless integrations, expert implementation plans and powerful AI. We help businesses achieve contract clarity across the whole company.”



Matthew Dunne

Despatch Cloud

“Despatch Cloud is powering the next generation of logistics. We’re on a mission to put enterprise fulfilment into the hands of every business. Our easy to adopt software helps customers move faster, ship smarter – and work without the chaos.”



Thomas William Dunning

Ad Signal

“Ad Signal provides world-first content intelligence and understanding services for any video, image or audio content. We’re on a mission to reduce our clients’ content storage & AI cost and carbon by 60 per cent – and save 1 per cent of global CO2 emissions.”



Rick Flemming & Philippa Flemming

Aspire Scientific

“At Aspire, we do things differently: staying proudly independent, putting people first, and striving for impact. Our talented team transforms complex clinical data into communications that improve patient care. While our corporate responsibility efforts aim to build an enduring legacy.”



Greg Freeman
Data Literacy Academy

“Our proudest achievement? Creating a category where none existed. Data Literacy Academy is now setting the global standard in business data & AI literacy, and building a brand that top talent choose as the best career decision they’ve ever made.”



Malcolm Glaister
Sirius Insight

“We’re proud to be the UK’s leading maritime surveillance business, employing our proprietary AI technology to enhance efficiency, resilience and responsiveness against complex threats at sea. In 2026, we look forward to strengthening our growth in UK and international markets.”



Chris Green
Xapien

“Xapien is transforming how the world manages risk in business relationships, through AI-powered insights on any company or person in the world. We believe every organisation should have access to clear, transparent and actionable information about who they’re engaging with.”



Derry Green
The Secret Garden Glamping

“At The Secret Garden Glamping, we’re redefining outdoor hospitality by blending boutique hotel service with immersive woodland stays. Our mission is to create unforgettable, personalised experiences – and we’re proud to be leading innovation across the glamping sector in the UK and beyond.”



David Griffiths
FISCAL Technologies

“FISCAL Technologies provides technology and services that empower finance teams to protect their spend. We aim to help finance teams across the world to defend against bad things happening to them – including fraud, financial leakage, errors and inefficiencies.”



Jonathan Guest
Safety Shield Group

“The ambition for me and the Safety Shield Group team is clear – to save lives. We’re a pioneering force in AI safety solutions, redefining safety standards across every work site globally. We empower teams to operate smarter, safer and more efficiently.”



Jon Hill
JACK RYAN

"JACK RYAN is an independent, AI-powered media agency transforming communications for public and private sectors worldwide. Our mission: to deliver campaigns that matter – driving measurable growth, inspiring action and behavioural change through innovative partnerships like our life-changing work with the NHS."



Simon John Hill
Xperate

"Xperate's global team combines innovation with empathy, creating powerful, bespoke software solutions for the legal profession, through offshore development and consultancy. With 160+ experts across five continents, we're continuing our bold expansion plans."



**Jacob Hinson, Billy Whiffen
& Craig Swallow**
eLocker

"At eLocker, we're working hard to help retailers improve customer's click and collect experience. Our mission? To make collections and returns efficient and secure through mobile-first technology."



Aaron Holmes
Kani Payments

"I founded Kani alongside a team of specialists who've experienced the challenges of payment reconciliation and financial reporting first-hand. Our team is united by a clear mission: to make complex financial data easier to manage, less time-consuming and more valuable."



Jason Kalwa
Salus

"Salus is an award-winning UK cybersecurity consultancy trusted in national security, defence, and critical infrastructure. We help clients strengthen their cyber posture amid today's evolving geopolitical and security challenges."



Denis Kaminskiy
Arcus Global

"Arcus is redefining public sector innovation, delivering mission-critical SaaS to local Government and regulatory bodies. With products that transform services through AI-driven efficiency, data quality and automation. We're proving SMEs can be powerful forces for good, driving meaningful change nationwide."



Andrew Kays
Socura

“Leading a team responsible for protecting UK businesses and critical infrastructure is a huge source of pride. Being chosen to deliver Wales’ Security Operations Centre was a significant achievement for Socura, made possible only by our people’s talent and passion.”



Javid Khan
Cloud Guard

“Leading CloudGuard to defend the world from evolving cyber threats by leveraging AI and automation, making enterprise-grade protection accessible to SMEs at affordable costs. My mission: utilising revolutionary AI innovation to build technologies that deliver positive impact to the world.”



Jordan Lewis King
Delta Fire

“Delta Fire manufactures world-leading firefighting equipment from our sustainable UK facility. Our mission is to protect lives and the planet through innovation. Winning two King’s Awards is my proudest milestone in our journey to become a global leader in active fire suppression.”



Kane Lewis
Severnside Security

“Severnside Security is a purpose-driven fire and security specialist, committed to growth through partnerships that put social value at the heart. We align technical excellence with social responsibility so we can exist to make a positive difference in people’s lives.”



**Scott Lowe, Dan Stead
& Joe Michael**
endpointX

“endpointX is a preventative cybersecurity company. We reduce organisations’ risk of cyber breaches through expert-led consulting, best-in-class technology, and process automation – ensuring critical tasks like patching and vulnerability management are done effectively and consistently.”



Jefferson Lynch
Red Olive

“We turn data into decisions that matter – from safer social housing to fairer insurance. Doing the right thing with data was why I set up Red Olive, and it’s what drives our work in responsible AI for our clients today.”



Johnny Manning
Connekt EV Charging

“Connekt is a charge point operator that offers hotel, hospitality and destination electric vehicle charging solutions that seamlessly integrate with customers’ lifestyles. Our mission is to become the UK’s premier charge point operator and installer – and ultimately, shape a sustainable future for transportation.”



Nick Mason
Turtl

“Turtl’s mission is to close the revenue gap and elevate content from a cost centre to a measurable driver of growth. We aim to become the leading content platform for brands serious about connecting marketing efforts to commercial outcomes.”



Terry McCann
Advancing Analytics

“Our purpose is to partner with ambitious organisations that see data and AI not just as operational necessities, but as powerful engines of growth. We turn technology into competitive advantage and unlocked revenue, so they can lead, not follow.”



**Jay Gorga &
Andrew McLernon**
Interlink

“At Interlink, we’re combining AI-driven innovation with a people-first mindset to reshape global lead generation. Our ambition is bold: to be the world’s best lead generation company and the best place to work.”



Pete Mills
Crysp

“Crysp simplifies risk and compliance management for organisations worldwide – combining powerful technology with people expertise. With roots in Bradford and a vision for global impact, we’re scaling fast to redefine compliance standards everywhere.”



**Megan Morass
& Ella McWilliam**
Full Fat

“Our ambition is a global benchmark for marketing that protects mental health and delivers results, with care at its core. At Full Fat, our Cultural Resonance Index helps brands grow with integrity by filtering out harmful tactics and prioritising emotional connection.”



Sally Naunton
Bray Healthcare

“Bray is a gem of a company where UK manufacturing is proudly supporting the expansion of global access to healthcare products. As we grow, I’m committed to transformative leadership, continuous learning, and achieving ambitious goals with integrity, resilience, and a forward-thinking mindset.”



Martin Neale
ICS.AI

“ICS.AI is transforming how UK public sector organisations rethink service delivery through AI, achieving £5 million+ savings per council. Our Unified AI Platform is trusted nationwide, helping improve services and ensure financial sustainability.”



Robert Ogden
Renewable Exchange

“At Renewable Exchange, we’re driving an energy transition that thrives without subsidies. We are proud to have democratised the market through technology, proving renewables can outcompete fossil fuels on pure economics – a successful model we are now expanding globally.”



Kevin Orr
Liftango

“Liftango powers successful demand-responsive transport (DRT), fixed route and carpool systems across the world. We work with Fortune 500 companies, global bus operators, and government transport agencies. Our vision is simple: unlock all the good that comes from shared transport.”



Sachin Parab
Ravenscroft Health

“Ravenscroft Health has proudly evolved from a physiotherapy provider to a comprehensive one-stop healthcare solution. Our mission is to enhance the healthcare experience for our service users empowering them to lead healthier, happier lives.”



Harish Praveen
InFynd

“InFynd is a global provider of custom B2B data, combining proprietary AI technology with human verification to set new standards. As a next-gen demand generation partner, we turn data into actionable outcomes – driving growth, building trust, and delivering measurable results.”



Rajiv Ranjan
Complygate

“Complygate delivers AI-powered background screening, due diligence and compliance solutions that enhance operational efficiency, speed and accuracy. Our global platform streamlines pre-employment vetting to help organisations stay compliant, reduce fraud – and make faster, more informed decisions.”



Kay Riley
Spherica Business Solutions

“My ambition is for Spherica to lead the market in delivering automated, cost-efficient services – freeing employees from repetitive tasks to focus on innovation, creativity and growth. This aligns with our mission to prioritise meaningful work over mundane routines.”



Sid Sethi
Specscart.

“Specscart. is one of the UK’s fastest-growing businesses, redefining eyewear by improving prices, experience and delivery speed. With over 325,000 eyes seeing clearly in 132 countries, our ambition is to become the world’s number one eyewear brand – proudly made in Manchester.”



Nelson Sivalingam
HowNow

“At HowNow, we believe the right skills, in the right hands, can solve the world’s biggest challenges. Unlocking that potential is the mother of all problems, but we’re proud to be solving it through our mission to upskill 10 million people by 2030.”



Jake Stevens
Ziipline

At Ziipline we deliver enterprise transformation with start-up agility, getting to impact faster on any scale. Our team has been hand-picked and grown from two to 55 in 18 months – bringing together the very best in the Salesforce consulting ecosystem.”



Mark Stuart
Stuart Energy

“I strive to drive innovation with integrity, empower the Stuart Energy team through trust, and shape a sustainable future. I’m committed to bold action, resilience and purpose in today’s rapidly evolving clean energy landscape.”



Ryan Swann
RiskSmart

“At RiskSmart, we’re turning risk into rocket fuel for growth. Our mission? Make risk management simple and smart. We’re building bold, intelligent tools that help businesses thrive – with ambition in our stride and a smile on our face.”



Mark Sweeny
de Novo Solutions

“We don’t follow trends, we set them. The de Novo Solutions DNA is made of entrepreneurs, pathfinders and risk takers, delivering excellence in digital transformation. In four years, we’ve built a sustainable, profitable £10 million business, creating 100+ jobs. And we’ve just got started.”



Jamie Toyne
Herd Consulting

“As seasoned business analysts, product and delivery folk, Herd Consulting brings pragmatic, proven approaches shaped by hard-won expertise. We’re about leading change through a human-centred, experience-led approach – focused on outcomes over outputs, and on being great to work with.”



James ‘JT’ Turner
Delineate

“At Delineate, we’re redefining how brands make marketing decisions – challenging legacy market research companies with AI-powered insights. From launching operations in rural Wales to partnering with Coca-Cola globally, our ambition is to be the go-to partner for bold, data-driven growth.”



Richard West
Red Flag Alert

“At Red Flag Alert, we’re not just building software, we’re building the future of business intelligence. As the UK’s fastest-growing, full native cloud, predictive business data intelligence and analytics platform, we empower thousands of organisations to make smarter, faster decisions.”



David Youds
Resonant Group

“Resonant is a strategic communications consultancy group that drives engagement with medical and pharmaceutical innovations. It’s my mission to drive the success of this dynamic, award-winning company that sets new standards through its passion and expertise.”



Sara Young-Jamieson

St Eval

“My ambition is to build a brand with purpose and longevity – one that connects people to nature, champions sustainability, and sends light into the world. Our brand is recognised globally for its integrity, circularity, and deep care for the Earth we share.”

Glenn Powell, CEO of FormusPro was awarded ►
'Highly Commended: One to Watch' in 2024.



Where Are They Now?

Since 2018, The LDC Top 50 has celebrated hundreds of exceptional individuals.

In the last 12 months we have reconnected with some of our alumni to discover where their growth journeys have taken them, the impact of being part of the programme and what their ambitions look like today.



Sean Reddington
Founder and CEO, Thrive

When super brands such as Nando's, British Airways and Volvo want to upskill their staff, they turn to Thrive. The learning platform, which was launched by serial entrepreneur Sean Reddington in 2018, is a cross between an e-learning platform and digital communications tool.

Sean featured in The LDC Top 50 in 2023 when Thrive was just about to enter the US. How's it going? "We have smashed through every goal," he reveals. "Revenues are up 46% on last year and not only do we have an established presence in the US, we're now truly global, delivering content in 83 languages. We've even done deals in China, one of the toughest markets to break into."



Sophie Costello

Founder, Costello Medical

Sophie Costello and her husband Richard launched their medical consultancy after a traumatic event made her reassess her career. Now, 17 years on, Cambridge-headquartered Costello Medical has offices on three continents, is a registered B Corp, and is growing 20% a year. From creating symposia for pharmaceutical clients to writing NICE submissions for drugmakers, “Our ultimate goal is to help patients get access to medicines,” she explains.

Costello featured in The Top 50 in 2022 and was named a ‘Rising Star’ and, despite turbulence in the global pharmaceutical industry, she has since doubled turnover to £40m and grown headcount from 300 to over 500 people. “The macro-economic climate has been challenging,” she says. “But a bit of uncertainty can be a good thing. It forces you to stress-check the business.”



Mo Hussain & Alan Rock

Co-CEOs, Moasure

Alan Rock first prototyped his idea for a motion-powered measuring tool in 2004, but it took a decade before the concept became commercially viable. “I knew the idea was sound, but the technology at the time was too expensive, energy-intensive, bulky and heavy,” he explains. In 2018, he and co-CEO Mo Hussain launched Moasure and their flagship product, which was targeted at landscapers and other outdoor professionals, came to market in 2019.

The Warwick-based company was recognised in The LDC Top 50 in 2023. Since then, Alan and Mo have doubled the size of the company. Today, they employ 72 people and turn over £16m in revenue, with 95% still coming from overseas customers. Moasure also went on to win not one but two King’s Awards last year, and turnover is set to double again in 2026.

“

Featuring in The Top 50 was a proud milestone and felt like a real validation of the decisions I’ve made over the years.”

Howard Moss, Astonish



Rachel Jenkins
Managing Director, Curvy Kate

Rachel Jenkins is on a mission to empower women through confidence-boosting lingerie. Curvy Kate specialises in D to K cup sizes, fills a gap in the market by offering stylish, supportive bras for bodies often overlooked by mainstream fashion.

Since appearing in The LDC Top 50 in 2021, Rachel has established the business as a category front-runner: “We’ve evolved from being a noisy challenger brand to being one of the trusted category leaders.” Her proudest achievement in the last four years? Being recognised as one of The Sunday Times Best Places to Work two years in a row. “Our goal is for the team to feel happy and challenged, so we’ve invested in tech and communication of the vision to help everyone perform at their best. We want our employees to cartwheel into work!”



Howard Moss

CEO, Astonish

Astonish was founded in a Leeds shed in 1971 by Alan Moss. His son Howard took the reins two decades ago and has built the business into the UK's only vegan, cruelty-free cleaning brand, with 80 products sold in 28 countries.

"I have to pinch myself when I think how far we've come," he says. Since featuring in The LDC Top 50 in 2021, he has moved operations to a £30m purpose-built, state-of-the-art facility in Bradford, bringing R&D, manufacturing and packaging all under one roof. Pre-tax profits have tripled to £12m but Astonish's core values have remained the same: "We're a family business focussed on making best-in-class products that people can trust."



Robin Modak

Founder and Chair, GENMED

Robin Modak launched GENMED from his garage in 2007, supplying services, equipment and consumables to the NHS. Today, the Cwmbran-based business has 65 staff and over 200 contracts across pathology, endoscopy and surgery. Robin featured in The LDC Top 50 in 2019 and faced his biggest business challenge just a year later: the pandemic.

"Hospital theatres became Covid-19 wards and elective surgeries stopped. It hit our balance sheet hard, but we got through it without furloughing anyone." Now Chair, he's proudest of backing young talent. "Work should be a place to grow," he says. "We've always taken risks on early-career hires, given them hands-on experience and then watched them fly. Yes, we lose people to head-hunters, but that's our contribution to a stronger UK workforce."

“

Featuring in The Top 50 gave the team a massive sense of pride and validated the culture we have built here.”

Barney Kent, Touch Medical Media



Mark Scott

Co-Founder and Non-Executive Director, Bella & Duke

Mark Scott and Tony Ottley launched raw pet food brand Bella & Duke to help cat and dog owners give their pets a better diet and a happier life. Founded in 2017, the business tapped into pet owners' desire for quality food, without filler or preservatives. The pair featured in The LDC Top 50 in 2023 and since then, Bella & Duke has won a listing in Pets at Home and expanded its range of products, improving “palatability”. As Mark says: “Cats especially can be fussy.”

Bella & Duke also has a vibrant online community of customers, affectionately known as ‘The Pack’. Now numbering 35,000 people, up from 30,000 two years ago, they provide constant feedback. “They keep us on our toes and keep us transparent,” he adds. Mark and Tony have grown the company to revenues of £30m.



Martin Taylor

Co-Founder, Content Guru

Anyone dialling 999 for an ambulance today, and many dialling the same number for the police, will have their call triaged by Content Guru. The Bracknell-based cloud communications specialist has worked wonders with ambulance response times and helps the police answer emergency calls within 10 seconds. Founded in 2005 by brothers Martin and Sean Taylor, who earned their spurs running Big Brother's phone lines, Content Guru has since gone global.

"We now run vital services on behalf of a number of national governments," Martin reveals.

Content Guru featured in The LDC Top 50 in 2020, during the global pandemic. "That was a watershed year for the business," he says. "Our success running the Test and Trace service led to us winning the contract to run 111 NHS services nationally, and we kept growing from there. It's a process of demonstrated competence."



Barney Kent

CEO, Touch Medical Media

Barney Kent, along with co-founders Tim Sheldrick and Matt Goodwin, launched Touch Medical Media in 2012 with a mission to help healthcare professionals around the world improve patient outcomes. Offering high-quality, free-to-access videos, peer-reviewed articles and podcasts, the network has increased user numbers from two million to three million since featuring in The LDC Top 50 in 2023.

Since then, the business has weathered a global slowdown across the pharmaceutical industry. "2023 was the perfect storm," explains Kent. "We pivoted quickly, tightened spend, listened to our audience and made significant improvements to our platform and product offerings at the same time." But Barney remains optimistic: "Profit levels haven't dipped, we're seeing record traffic to our platforms, and our success is now at an all-time high. We're as ambitious now as we ever have been."



Supporting Youth Ambition

LDC's long-running partnership with The King's Trust is inspiring the UK's next generation of entrepreneurs. To-date, we've been able to help more than 5,000 young people from a diverse range of backgrounds to start, sustain and grow their own business.

In 2024, we marked the fifth anniversary of our partnership by launching Business Advance, a programme providing young entrepreneurs access to a designated mentor, structured business reviews, specialist workshops and networking opportunities.

This year, alongside The Top 50, we will announce the 'The Youth Ambition Award' - recognising a young entrepreneur who has demonstrated remarkable success and potential.

At The LDC Top 50 national celebratory event, we host a King's Trust Marketplace showcasing the inspiring young entrepreneurs supported by LDC through our funding of the charity's Enterprise Programme - celebrating innovation, ambition and the next generation of business leaders.

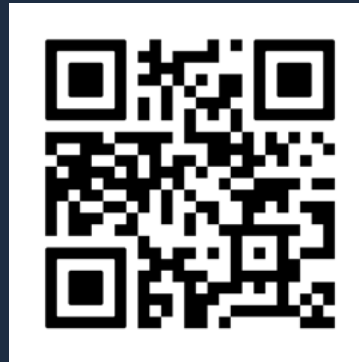
Kwame Boateng, Founder of Ingrained Oil at The King's Trust Entrepreneur Marketplace during The Top 50 event in 2024 ►



The Top 50 2026

**Do you know someone who should be featured in The Times
as one of The UK's Most Ambitious Business Leaders in 2026?**

Scan to nominate



“

For more than four decades, we've been trusted to support the ambitions of British businesses and we want to continue to champion those who are creating jobs and driving our economy forwards. The leaders of medium-sized business are often the unsung heroes of UK business, and we continue to celebrate their success.”

Sam Grey

Chief Marketing Officer, LDC