

Fast Track 100 press release



32 COMPANIES IN LONDON WIN A PLACE ON NATIONAL LEAGUE TABLE OF BRITAIN'S FASTEST-GROWING BUSINESS STARS

32 companies in London, the same number as last year, have made it onto the 14th annual Sunday Times Virgin Fast Track 100.

The league table ranks Britain's one hundred privately-owned companies with the fastest-growing sales over the last three years of available accounts.

The 32 companies have made a considerable contribution to the local economy. Together, they employ **6,606** people, have created **5,078** new jobs over the last three years, and have generated combined sales of **£1.3bn**.

Many are big retailers which have become household names in recent years. Clothing retailer **AllSaints**, known for its signature window display of sewing machines, pushed onto the table for the first time after sales rocketed 71% a year from £26.4m in 2007 to £132.9m in 2010. Equally familiar is lifestyle retailer **Cath Kidston** and clothing chain **Jack Wills**. While the former retailer has grown on the back of the popular "modern vintage" trend, the latter is best-known for its casual, preppy style.

In the online retail market, greeting cards seller **Moonpig.com** continued to grow during the recession, now appearing in the top 100 for a second time. Appealing to shoppers looking for good value, fun gifts, demand for its personalised card service saw the business sending out 8m such cards last year alone and reaching one of the three highest profit margins on the table. Sales have grown 116% from £3.1m in 2007 to £31.3m in 2010.

Private companies in London with fastest-growing sales

National rank [2009 rank]	Company Activity	Location of HQ	Annual sales growth over 3 yrs	Latest sales (£000)	Latest staff	Latest financial year end	Comment
6 [15]	Your Golf Travel <i>Golf travel agency</i>	Central London	158.06%	16,420	41	Dec 09	Co-founders started golf tournament to support Help for Heroes
7	Pathology Group <i>Healthcare recruitment consultancy</i>	London	151.89%	†27,986	27	Sep 10	Claims to have provided doctors to more than 100 NHS hospitals
10 [33]	powerPerfactor <i>Energy-saving device distributor</i>	Central London	140.01%	29,788	67	Dec 09	Claims it has saved clients £57m in energy bills over six years
17 [22]	Moonpig.com <i>Online greeting card retailer</i>	Central London	115.51%	31,285	73	Apr 10	Sent out 8m greeting cards and thousands of flower bouquets in the past year
18 [35]	Directline Holidays <i>Online travel operator</i>	Croydon	113.50%	23,574	65	Oct 09	Sales continued to rise despite the economic downturn and volcanic-ash disruption
19	Green Park Interim and Executive <i>Recruitment consultancy</i>	London	112.62%	21,634	36	Jul 10	Plants one tree in collaboration with the Woodland Trust for every placement made

21	BullionVault.com <i>Gold dealer</i>	Central London	105.87%	277,068	13	Oct 09	Won the Queen's Award for Enterprise in 2009
25 [23]	Miroma <i>Media barter company</i>	Central London	95.55%	†32,560	18	Jun 10	Enables clients to trade inventory for advertising space
29 [47]	Fjord <i>Digital design consultancy</i>	Central London	89.50%	11,860	80	Dec 09	Has gained 20 new clients in the past year
31	Ship Shape Resources <i>Construction services provider</i>	Central London	89.21%	10,703	33	May 09	Eight directors worked a year without pay, and five years on reduced pay to build the firm
35	Natural Products <i>Giftware designer</i>	London	83.51%	†12,662	33	May 10	American subsidiary doubled turnover in 2009 to £4.1m
37	Jack Wills <i>Clothing retailer</i>	Northwest London	80.98%	64,764	1,286	Jan 10	Runs an apprenticeship scheme with a British mill to support British manufacturing
38 [66]	Mayday Healthcare <i>Medical recruitment consultancy</i>	Central London	80.69%	56,178	87	Sep 09	Consultants are available around the clock to meet the staffing needs of clients
40	LOC Consulting <i>Management consultancy</i>	Central London	77.05%	10,016	12	Mar 10	All of its consultants work on-site with clients such as Elsevier
42 [25]	Next Ventures <i>Recruitment consultancy</i>	Central London	76.72%	8,312	37	Dec 09	Rewards good employee performance with weekend trips away
44 [48]	Joseph Joseph <i>Household goods maker</i>	Central London	76.42%	†12,255	30	May 10	A dress made entirely of its plastic chopping boards was modelled at a fashion show
46	Markit <i>Financial information provider</i>	Central London	75.67%	305,392	1,389	Dec 09	General Atlantic paid a reported \$250m for a 7.5% stake in the company in January
47	Black Tomato <i>Luxury travel agency</i>	Greater London	75.49%	6,790	25	Dec 09	Organises bespoke travel to more than 100 countries around the world
49	Knowledge To Action <i>Trader coaching programme provider</i>	London	72.81%	9,497	105	Dec 09	Firm's 35-year-old founder quit his job to set up an eight-screen trading floor at home
50	Rapha Racing <i>Bike apparel manufacturer</i>	London	72.18%	†6,960	35	Oct 10	Collaborated with designer Paul Smith for its new city bike riding range
52	Grand Union <i>Venue and pub-restaurant operator</i>	London	71.86%	†5,883	192	Mar 10	Founder previously worked as a chef in a restaurant with three Michelin stars
54	AllSaints <i>Clothing retailer</i>	Central London	71.35%	132,854	1,961	Jan 10	Uses 10,000 sewing machines as displays in its shop windows
58	Nicoll Curtin Technology <i>IT recruitment agency</i>	London	68.02%	14,500	54	Jun 09	Says it has 150,000 candidates on its database

60	Post-Switch Postal services consultancy	Central London	65.38%	†7,602	11	Aug 10	Responsible for the Conservative Party's campaign mail in the 2010 election
64 [3]	Empiric Solutions Recruitment consultancy	Central London	62.77%	†11,494	19	Aug 10	Counts as clients 50 investors and asset managers, including ING and Fortis
65 [53]	World First Foreign exchange broker	Southwest London	62.75%	8,281	67	Jan 10	Says it donates up to £50 to charity for every customer who completes its survey
67 [72]	McKinney Rogers Business performance consultancy	Central London	62.04%	†12,613	60	Apr 10	Is developing a college modelled on Sandhurst for business leaders
69 [86]	Cath Kidston Lifestyle retailer	Central London	59.62%	†50,369	383	Mar 10	Says it uses enough fabric each year to wrap the M25 twenty times
75	Goodman Associates Media and advertising agency	Central London	54.34%	9,324	10	Dec 09	Specialises in selling travel advertising space, particularly for cruises
87	Morgan Law Recruitment Recruitment consultancy	Central London	47.23%	36,266	52	Sep 09	Celebrated its 10th anniversary this year
96 [64]	BLU 3 (UK) Infrastructure services provider	Croydon	45.41%	†23,252	122	Mar 10	Company is renewing the Victorian water pipes in southeast England at present
98	Ten Lifestyle Management Concierge service provider	Central London	45.27%	11,250	183	Aug 09	Says it answered its millionth request in September 2010

† Draft accounts not yet filed at Companies House

Sir Richard Branson of Virgin, which has sponsored the league table for all 14 years, commented:

"2010 has been a year of much change for the UK in political and economic terms. Business has weathered a couple of the toughest years I can remember, but we are starting to see some pick-up in key sectors. Against this economic background the strong performance of the Fast Track 100 companies is to be especially applauded."

The national picture

Over the past three years the 100 companies featured increased their sales by an average of **85%** a year, to combined sales of **£4bn**. Together they employ **22,633** staff, and have created **16,474** jobs in the last three years.

The single biggest location of Fast Track 100 companies is London (32), followed by the South East (18). The remainder breaks down as follows: Midlands (12), Southwest (12), North West (11), North East (7), Scotland (5), East (2) and Wales (1).

The full findings will be published in a special 10-page supplement, with the business section of **The Sunday Times** on 5 December and on www.fasttrack.co.uk.

The Fast Track 100 is compiled by **Fast Track**, the UK's leading face-to-face networking events company for top-performing private companies and entrepreneurs, with title sponsorship from **Virgin** and main sponsorship from **BDO**, **Microsoft** and **Royal Mail**.

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WHEN USING THIS INFORMATION PLEASE CREDIT: THE SUNDAY TIMES VIRGIN FAST TRACK 100

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Notes for editors:

Fast Track has published league tables of 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 are ranked by their compound annual growth rate (CAGR) in sales over the latest three financial years between 2006 and 2009, or 2007 and 2010. A minimum of 25 weeks' trading in the base and latest years was required. 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 (2006 or 2007) and £5m in the latest year (2009 or 2010). Companies also had to show year-on-year sales growth from the penultimate to the latest year (2008 to 2009 or 2009 to 2010), and a forecast of further sales growth.

Companies had to be registered in the UK, be unquoted and not subsidiaries. They had to demonstrate pre-tax profits in the latest year (2009 or 2010) and employ ten or more employees in that year.

Excluded companies include technology, LLPs, pure property and financial trading companies, and companies with turnover of £500m or greater.

The research was carried out by Fast Track between August and November 2010. The majority of the companies were interviewed by telephone.

About Virgin

Virgin was founded in 1970 by Sir Richard Branson. The group now has more than 200 branded companies worldwide in sectors spanning airlines, trains, mobile phones, financial services, hotels and fitness clubs, as well as sustainable technologies.

Sir Richard Branson is founder of Virgin Group. He is currently focused on growing Virgin's international business and Virgin Unite, its not-for-profit foundation.

www.virgin.com

About BDO

BDO LLP, the UK member firm of BDO, a global accountancy network with more than 1,000 offices in over 100 countries.

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