

NORFOLK BUSINESS AWARDS 18

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THE WINNERS



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WELCOME

Welcome to our special supplement reflecting the success of our winners at the Norfolk Business Awards 2018.

And what a night it was – a time to celebrate the very best of our county's companies and the people who drive them, hosted with panache by the fantastic Katherine Ryan.

Aside from her wit, I will remember the spirit of the night as being summed up in two moments.

The first was David Parfrey's challenge to the audience to take pride in the achievements of the inspirational Norwich Research Park, and spread the word about its world-leading work far and wide.

The second was the humble admiration from John Dye, managing director of JD Cooling Group, our Business of the Year, as he confessed that seeing so many wonderful Norfolk businesses had been "eye-opening".

In different ways, they illustrated the same point: that we have superb businesses leading the way in their sectors, yet there remains work to be done in ensuring people hear about them.

The Norfolk Business Awards are a springboard on which to raise that awareness, and they would not be possible without the support of our sponsors, to whom we are very grateful.

If you take inspiration from the following pages, please get the date for next year's awards in your diary: November 21, 2019.

Next year's companies will have a hard act to follow, but as this supplement shows, our business community always rises to the challenge.

Mark Shields, EDP business editor



Outstanding Achievement

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Ciaran Nelson (left), of headline sponsor Anglian Water, presents the Outstanding Achievement award to David Parfrey and the team from Norwich Research Park

Pictures: SIMON FINLAY PHOTOGRAPHY



WINNER - NORWICH RESEARCH PARK

Norfolk's business community was challenged to speak up for its success as Norwich Research Park was awarded the Outstanding Achievement award.

David Parfrey, who is leading the plans to grow and promote the park through to 2030, said the park wanted to be known as a place where solutions were found to the major global challenges of the next century.

Listing climate change, food security and healthy ageing, Mr Parfrey said the world was facing "challenges the like of which we have never seen before". "All of those things need serious solutions," he

said. "But it is so wonderful that here in this region we have got a place which is delivering those solutions. It's happening right here in Norwich.

"Our mission with our new vision is for the world to recognise that this is the place where the answers to those global changes are found."

But he told the 550-strong audience: "I need your help. I need everyone to be an advocate for Norwich Research Park and everything we do surrounding it, because it's not just the park which is leading in

innovation and research.

"We can put this region on the global map as the place the world looks to for big problems to be solved. But we can only do that if people start talking about it."

Norwich Research Park was the first organisation to win the Outstanding Achievement award in the history of the awards.

Presenting the award, Ciaran Nelson, director of communications at headline sponsor Anglian Water, said the park's mix of a major teaching hospital, world-class university and globally-renowned research

centres made it unique.

"Whether it's deploying technology first used by Nasa to speed up crop breeding, or exploring the use of insect sex pheromones to help combat agricultural pests, it's the endeavours of the 80 companies, 12,000 employees, 3,000 scientists and clinicians, and 14,000 students associated with the park that are the reason it has received this accolade," he said.

"The whole thing is significantly greater than the sum of its parts," he added. "We are extremely fortunate to have such a fabulous collection of facilities on our doorstep."

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Business of the Year

SPONSORED BY **BARCLAYS**

Tim Seeley (centre), of Barclays, presents the Business of the Year award to John Dye, of JD Cooling Group, with Tom Lyons, of Black Swan International (left)

Picture: SIMON FINLAY PHOTOGRAPHY



WINNER - JD COOLING GROUP

The winner of the overall Business of the Year title admitted he was impressed at the talent on show at the Norfolk Business Awards – and shocked his firm had taken home the trophy.

John Dye, founder of King's Lynn-based JD Cooling Group, called the accolade "a real privilege" after seeing the other companies on show.

The firm was awarded the trophy after an 18-year journey which has seen it develop from a one-man operation to a national player with five offices, more



than 100 staff and a turnover topping £20m.

As he accepted the award, Mr Dye said: "What a fantastic evening. It's opened my eyes to what a fantastic group of businesses we've got in Norfolk.

Judge Tim Seeley, of category sponsor Barclays, said: "Its growth, strong profitability and excellent customer service feedback has been achieved by being a totally people-focused business, the extent to which I have not seen before."

He praised its training regime and staff retention rates, adding: "The company's innovative incentive scheme and shared company ownership has enabled the director to build a very strong, capable team and to deliver an industry-leading approach to its customer base."

ONE TRAVELLER

Judges' comments

This family-owned Norfolk business was set up in 2007 on the proverbial kitchen table. In the last four years it has grown to employ 50 staff and a turnover of £10m in a highly niche market.

It has become a disruptor in the mature sector for solo travellers, and last year took 5,000 guests on fully-escorted holidays to 30 countries. It has achieved a remarkable 80pc rebooking rate. The USP is to provide not only a great holiday but to try to help guests who are single by choice or circumstance to regain confidence to continue to have new experiences.



MILLS & REEVE

Judges' comments

Mills & Reeve is one of Norwich's longest-established businesses, and continues to exercise its influence across the county, the UK and beyond, with its deep sector knowledge and experience. Recognising that technology is driving change and efficiency in a traditionally paper-oriented business, this firm is embracing digitisation in many areas, but in particular artificial intelligence to support data handling and due diligence, document automation, flexibility of employee working patterns. This company ticked all the boxes.

MILLS & REEVE

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BLACK SWAN INTERNATIONAL

Judges' comments

Despite its size, this business has worked hard to be adaptable and allows each care facility to develop its own character.

When recruiting, a panel of residents interview the staff member. The reason? "It's their home," is the answer.

Always conscious the person they are

looking after is someone's loved one, the focus on its people is constant to ensure standards of care are maintained at all times – quite a challenge when you are dealing with 19,000 residents, and their families. Employing 600, people, this group is setting the standard for care of our elderly in this region.



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BUSINESS AWARDS 2018

Best Employer

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FLAGSHIP GROUP

Judges' comments

This is a company which fully embraces change and innovation and is taking its employees along with it on its journey towards continuous improvement in terms of the homes and services it delivers to its tenants and people in need. Its staff are highly engaged and committed, and the company has made significant efforts to drive that employee engagement. It has challenged itself and sought to deliver in all key areas.



The team from the Maids Head Hotel in Norwich, winner of the Best Employer award. From left, Tom Earl, of sponsor Pure, Sarah Prior, Christine Malcolm and Georgina Postlethwaite of The Maids Head Hotel, and Jeanette Wheeler, of sponsor Birketts.

Picture: I DO PHOTOGRAPHY

WINNER - THE MAIDS HEAD HOTEL



The oldest hotel in the UK, The Maids Head Hotel in Norwich, was praised by judges for the way it had engaged its 90-strong staff during a "major change journey" as the 800-year-old venue was renovated to meet the needs of 21st-century guests.

The hotel has been privately

owned since 2012 and in the past four years has embarked on a multi-million pound renovation programme.

The judges said it had embraced change and made a major investment in driving and improving employee engagement, believing that staff should be at "the heart" of the

transformation. It had gone out of its way to create an environment where staff thrived through L&D, career development and reward and recognition.

Staff were not only aware of the purpose and values of the organisation; they are evident in everyday operations.

THE HOLDEN GROUP

Judges' comments

A business which describes itself as a "nice place to work" took on a radical change programme to make The Holden Group a truly great place to work. Since 2015, the group has created a culture which centres on the staff, helping to develop them to be their best in and outside the workplace. The group has gone against industry norm and created a five-day working week and developed a personal training budget to use for any development.

Holden
driving satisfaction

MORGAN SINDALL

Judges' comments

The judges were impressed with the significant efforts and initiatives this company is making to improve inclusion and diversity in its sector - particularly in relation to women in construction and improving social mobility by working closely with schools, and providing

comprehensive training from work experience, apprenticeships, degrees and leadership training. This company has established 27 mental health first-aiders with more to come. Team work, customer and community focus are at the heart of what drives this business and this gives rise to a strong sense of pride in the staff.

MORGAN SINDALL

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Breaking Boundaries

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The team from FXHome which won the Breaking Boundaries category. From left, Shaun Mary, of sponsor Lovewell Blake, with FXhome's Andrea Wake, Josh Davies, Kirstie Tostevin and Daniel Wood. Picture: I DO PHOTOGRAPHY.



WINNER - FXHOME

Norwich-based technology company, FXhome, which has more than 3.2m users around the world, sells its products into 160 countries, developing industry leading software including HitFilm - the fastest growing video software in the world.

Josh Davies, founder of FXhome, said: "In the next few years we're aiming to have 10 million users, and be able to interact with them with more face-to-face



interaction. We'd also like to work more on our VR, AR, and 360 products."

The team of 20 developers and marketers was applauded for creating powerful software at accessible prices.

The judges said FXhome had built a

niche product in a fast-growing market, with a development programme engaging users by constantly delivering regular improvements.

Rapid growth had been aided by an expanding product range, and by listening to what customers wanted. It was clear to the judges that boundaries, both technological and geographical, had been and would continue to be broken in the years to come.

PBD BIOTECH

Judges' comments

PBD Biotech's bacterial infection detection of bovine tuberculosis has already started to break into overseas markets. Its commercial application and wider detection of bacterial infections give PBD Biotech the opportunity to grow exponentially in the coming years.



PLANTGROW

Judges' comments

The judges were impressed by the ingenuity in taking existing infrastructure and processes and raising them to the next level to produce a class-leading plant product that has the potential to turn the market place on its head. As a new product upsetting the status quo, it's difficult to see how this product won't break geographical boundaries very soon.



PANEL GRAPHIC



Judges' comments

With the continued growth of technology-based displays, this company has broken boundaries in securing its products, which are used for visual displays in some of the world's most prestigious luxury cars. With a local highly skilled and engaged workforce, the company is set for continued expansion in a market previously uncharted for Norfolk businesses.

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BUSINESS AWARDS 2018

Customer Care



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CORNERSTONE (EAST ANGLIA)

Judges' comments

Cornerstone (East Anglia) is a family-run business established in 2004 that specialises in the installation of energy efficiency measures and particularly external wall insulation. It has built a business entirely through organic growth over the last 14 years. The core work often transforms the appearance of a property. Customer service strategy is to enhance reputation on every project, resulting in the highest standards of customer care being delivered.



Category winners FXhome with (from left) Jonathan Denby, of sponsor Greater Anglia, and Andrea Wake, Josh Davies, Kirstie Tostevin and Daniel Wood. Picture: I DO PHOTOGRAPHY.

NORSECARE

Judges' comments

One of Norfolk's largest care providers, NorseCare has a person-centred approach to care, which puts its 1,400 residents and tenants at the heart of everything. This was evident in the customer satisfaction measures and scores from internal and external sources. The ethos is summarised in the ethos: "Our customers make our reputation and this is recognised nationally and locally as exceptionally good."



WINNER - FXHOME

Special effects software firm FXhome collected its second award and was commended by judges on the passion of staff in its offices, and for the way they engaged their community of more than 3.2m users around the world.

Founder Josh Davies said: "We're really shocked. Although we're so pleased to have won two awards tonight, this one is



really special because everything we do is about our customers, and it's great that that comes through."

The judges said FXhome was an innovative and forward-thinking company

led by chief executive Josh Davies, who has clearly been able to embed a customer service excellence culture into this organisation.

The passion and enthusiasm for its product, and the ability to connect with a growing community in a genuine and authentic way, was evident throughout their entry.

ONE TRAVELLER

Judges' comments

One Traveller is an independent tour operator, catering exclusively for the mature single traveller. This Norfolk-based family-run business, has grown from its original kitchen table set up to the successful business it is today, employing over 20 members of staff

in its Swaffham headquarters and a further 30 members of staff internationally.

The entire business is built around the unique needs of the customer. Every tour is meticulously curated by its in-house team, it is constantly reviewing and improving its offering

and services to ensure that the company continually delivers the full four and five star experience, while ensuring that it maintains the all-important personal touch. There is no doubt One Traveller is fulfilling its goal of empowering guests to continue, or begin to travel alone.



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Director of the Year

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Panel Graphic's Steve Earl celebrates with his family after winning the Director of the Year award. Steve is pictured centre with (from left) son Daryl Earl, wife Tracey Earl, daughter Carly Earl and son Ryan Earl. Picture: I DO PHOTOGRAPHY.



JOHN DYE, JD COOLING GROUP

Judges' comments
As managing director of JD Cooling Group, John has built the business to become one of the largest independently owned refrigeration contractors in the UK. With his engineering background John has an unrivalled skills and knowledge base that means a Norfolk company is taking on - and frequently out-competing - major international businesses.



WINNER - STEVE EARL, PANEL GRAPHIC

Steve Earl, of Panel Graphic, was named Director of the Year at the Norfolk Business Awards.

Panel Graphic manufactures and supplies enhancement plastics, which aid the readability of information across a wide variety of products and industries, and works with the likes of Porsche and McLaren.

Steve founded the business in 1998 and now employs 42 people out of a purpose-built unit in Loddon.

He said his style of management was to



lead his team by example. "I think to be a good director you need to employ good people. You need to direct the people and let them do a good job, and I've got a superb team.

"It's not me, it's the team that has won this. I'm really, really, really proud."

In a category brimfull of inspiring

people making a huge difference to the region's business success, the judges said Steve Earl was a worthy winner.

His leadership, vision and drive had enabled a family company to make a big impact in a competitive sector where product quality of the highest order, skills and innovation were crucial.

In driving Panel Graphic's expanding and close-knit team to ever bigger achievements, Steve was a director Norfolk could be proud of, added the category judges.

ROSIE KEFFORD, ROSIE'S HAIR, BEAUTY & MAKE-UP STUDIOS

Judges' comments
A former young entrepreneur of the year award winner, Rosie is overseeing a successfully expanding small business with a passion and drive which is producing rapidly growing turnover and profits. Starting her high street beauty and make-up studios with a £50 overdraft, her careful selection and continuous training and development of the team have seen the company pick up a number of industry awards in the past two years.



JAN HYËTCH, ARNOLDS KEYS

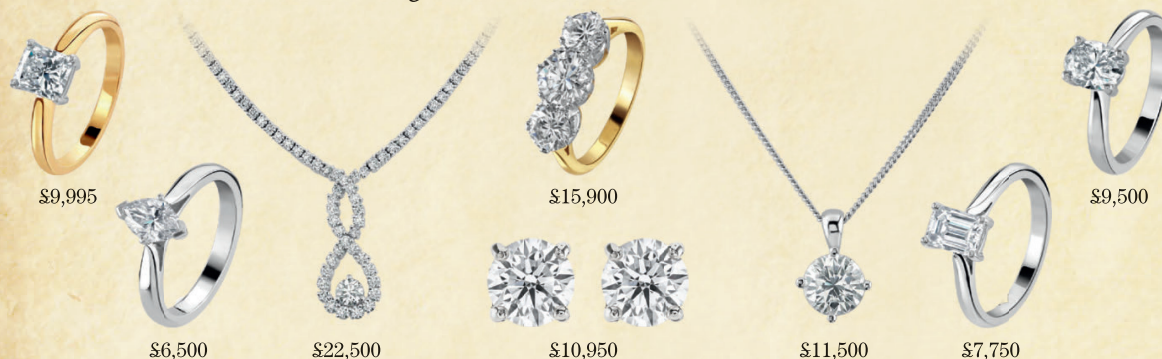


Judges' comments

As a director of Arnolds Keys, Jan Hytch not only helps to lead one of Norfolk's most successful estate agencies, she is also seeing a career-long commitment to training and industry regulation bear fruit. As well as spearheading the UK's first college courses in property services and

developing a degree course in estate agency she has been invited to join the board of the Property Ombudsman Industry Forum. Her stature in the industry is reflected in the fact that, after meetings with then housing minister Sajid Javid, she was instrumental in seeing the law changed to ensure estate agency becomes regulated.

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BUSINESS AWARDS 2018

Environment and Sustainability

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BARNWELL PRINT

Judges' comments

Barnwell Print's receipt of a Norfolk Gold Level Carbon Charter last year is testament to the strides brothers Julian and Lincoln Barnwell have made to apply green principles to the family business. The company's commitment to sustainability has seen it invest more than £1m in new technology that uses less ink and enhances the quality of print on recycled paper, while a



partnership with the World Land Trust has seen Barnwell Print offset more than 1,660 tonnes of CO².

CORNERSTONE (EAST ANGLIA)

Judges' comments

A specialist provider of energy-efficient measures, Cornerstone has gone beyond its day-to-day activities and applied its expertise to its own business. This has led to an annual reduction of 45% in energy costs, and a significant reduction in the use of fossil fuels. Cornerstone's adherence to an ISO 14001:2015 environmental management system means it is always looking for improvements, while the company is also switching its vehicle fleet to hybrid and electric vehicles.



The team from Rosedale Funeral Home, winner of the Environment and Sustainability award, (from left) Simon Beckett-Allen and Anne Beckett-Allen with Matthew Goakes, of sponsor Lovell
Picture: I DO PHOTOGRAPHY

WINNER - ROSEDALE FUNERAL HOME

Rosedale Funeral Home has gained national acclaim thanks to its ethos and community involvement, and has homes in Attleborough, Beccles, Bungay, Diss, Halesworth and Wymondham.

Director Anne Beckett-Allen said: "Being environmentally-conscious and sustainable isn't just about ticking a box



and thinking 'that's done, we can go back to our business'. You have to do it all the time. I go around and take teabags out the bin to be recycled and put orange peel in the compost."

Simon Beckett-Allen said: "You have to take it home too, you have to live it and not just do it at work. We'd like to look into electric hearses in the future,

or a hybrid Tesla-style vehicle."

The judges were impressed with the pair's commitment to constantly looking for small environmental gains across their business – from offering a carbon-offsetting scheme and biodegradable coffins, to doing away with plastic bottles and the plastic packaging around flower tributes.

What stood out most of all was the couple's obvious passion for greening their business, and how their employees had also bought into this approach.

THE REDCAT PARTNERSHIP AT No8 THORPE ROAD

Judges' comments

Environmental sustainability is integral to The RedCat Partnership and the daily running of its No8 Thorpe Road office in Norwich. A company bike scheme, plastic-free days, a paperless policy and membership of the Refill scheme

are just a few of the initiatives instigated by the training provider. There is an open policy where staff members are free to make new suggestions, while the company has also recently invested in solar panels as part of its drive towards energy efficiency.



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Investing in Future Growth



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JDC Corporate Finance

The team from Panel Graphic, with founder Steve Earl, centre, winner of the Investing in Future Growth category, sponsored by JDC Corporate Finance. Picture: IDO PHOTOGRAPHY.



WINNER - PANEL GRAPHIC

A string of contracts with supercar manufacturers drove the team at Panel Graphic in Loddon to victory in the Investing in Future Growth category.

The judges were particularly impressed with the plastic display specialist's long-term vision of investment both in facilities, R&D and people.

It also had strong profit growth and impressive figures, thanks to the high-profile names it works with such as Bentley, McLaren and Porsche.

Founder Steve Earl said: "I think the



secret of our success is that we're a family-run business.

"I work with my children and my nephews and, because of that, I think all of our staff feel like family.

"Although we work with some of the big manufacturers, in the future we do want to work with smaller companies too,

because we feel that they're on the cutting edge and bring out new technology first."

The judges said the business clearly demonstrated to the judges how the team combined a commitment to innovation backed by product and service excellence to grow significantly over the period.

With a clear long term vision for growth and a commitment to Norfolk, Panel Graphic was a worthy winner of this year's award, they said.

DAVID UTTING ENGINEERING

Judges' comments

A Norwich family business since 1924, David Utting Engineering has transformed its business in the last five years through the launch of a worldwide patented innovation that has seen turnover increase from £1.3m to over £3m in four years. SmartShop, the world's only self contained, fully equipped and mobile spray booth and repair shop sold on a rental basis is now used in 180 sites across the UK.



GNAW CHOCOLATE

Judges' comments

The Gnow chocolate brand was launched in 2011 by ex-UEA graduate Matt Legon, who saw a gap in the market for artisan chocolate made in the UK. Since launch, the business has seen impressive growth driven by a strong investment in ongoing R&D, equipment and employment to continue the growth in sales. The business has recently enjoyed triple annual growth rates.



BLACK SWAN INTERNATIONAL

Judges' comments

The group has grown by acquiring poorly performing services with significant compliance problems and turning them into high performing homes. It owns the only "Outstanding" rated care home without nursing, among four other "Outstanding" rated homes. To deliver this the group has

significantly invested in its homes and facilities and also in its staff and training to deliver the best possible care to its residents. This has been reflected in a strong growth in both revenue and profit for the group and a clear strategy to further grow while delivering the highest possible levels of care.



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BUSINESS AWARDS 2018

Knowledge Pioneer

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DEVELOPING EXPERTS

Judges' comments

Developing Experts' innovative online learning platform aims to support teachers in their lessons, and its databank of more than 700 lessons from 100 leaders was built from scratch after extensive research. The platform has met a need in the market and the company has impressive international growth ambitions, adapting its model to suit different education systems and cultures around the world.



The team from Chadwicks, winner of the Knowledge Pioneer category (from left) Joe Carr, Daniel Harvey, James Bacon, Prof Fiona Lettice, from sponsor UEA, Richard Ross, Merve Oral, Abel Cater, Tom Thornhill, Harry Dodds, James Ross. Picture: I DO PHOTOGRAPHY

WINNER - CHADWICKS

A culture of perpetual learning was the defining characteristic of wealth management firm Chadwicks, which was praised by judges for its constant drive to acquire new knowledge.

Director Richard Ross said: "The deal at Chadwicks is that, if you're working with us, you're learning."

"We simply want to proactively nurture enquiring minds and give the team the space for serendipitous discovery."

"We are driven by a need to know how things work, to ask 'why do we do it this

Chadwicks

way?' As a result of our emphasis on knowledge, learning and training, our clients get a young, enthusiastic and engaged team of very bright people looking after them - a team with the confidence to challenge and the intellect to create elegant solutions."

The judges said Chadwicks encouraged

staff to stretch and challenge themselves whatever the stage of their career.

The company made a point of only hiring the best, but did not then allow them to rest on their achievements. Instead, the judges added, staff were encouraged to pursue further study and research, and share their findings with the rest of the team.

It had impressive links with higher education, and took a long-term view when supporting employees in their studies.

HETHEL INNOVATION

Judges' comments

Hethel Innovation operates from the former RAF Coltishall base, with incubator units for start-up and scale-up businesses. In the past three years, the latter has grown to be home to more than 100 businesses, employing 500 people. Hethel Innovation has identified three emerging sectors - smart-tech, clean-tech and bio-tech - and supports and connects companies in those spaces, encouraging them to benchmark themselves, collaborate and become stronger together. The business-led approach asks experts to become ambassadors for their sector.



PBD BIOTECH

Judges' comments

PBD Biotech has developed a technique to diagnose bovine tuberculosis using a simple, rapid and reliable test. Its technology was developed in partnership with the University of Nottingham and targets a disease which costs UK taxpayers

£100m a year - and last year led to the slaughter of 30,000 cattle. The test cuts diagnosis time to a few hours. It has trialled its technology in France and Canada, setting up a subsidiary in North America for distribution and, eventually, manufacturing.



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Large Business

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Winner of the Large Business category (from left) Matt Skipper and James Hunter, from Mills and Reeve, and Corrienne Peasgood, City College Norwich.

Picture: I DO PHOTOGRAPHY



WINNER - MILLS & REEVE

A law firm which can trace its Norfolk roots back nearly 140 years won the Large Business award, in recognition of its journey to becoming one of the top law firms in the country.

Mills & Reeve, founded in Norwich in 1880, won the accolade in the same year it was named in The Sunday Times' Best 100 Companies to Work For for a record 15th year. More than 200 people are employed by the firm in Norwich, where it has an office at St James Court.

James Hunter, head of the Norwich

MILLS & REEVE

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office, said: "We're really proud that we've grown to the scale we have and we can't wait to go back and show everybody in the office this award."

Matt Skipper of the firm added: "Our success is down to a number of reasons, the first being how we approach our clients, which is really important to us.

"The other thing is people; the staff who work there love working for us. Recently we found out that 97% of our staff would recommend working at Mills and Reeve to a friend or family member."

The judges found the final decision difficult, noting that continual growth in all shortlisted finalists was impressive.

They said Mills and Reeve had a very proactive approach to customer relationship, far beyond expected service levels in its sector and showed strong community interaction.

NATURES MENU

Judges' comments

Natures Menu is a business going places in the tough pet food sector. From small beginnings in Watton, growth over recent years can be seen with impressive purpose-built offices in Snetterton. The judges were impressed with the business's innovation, in particular home delivery of products and customer care which included a database of each customer's dogs.



NIELSEN BRANDBANK

Judges' comments

Innovation, market-leading performance and customer/staff focus were the key messages taken from Nielsen Brandbank. The organisation is the market leader in its field, working with some of the biggest retailers and brands in the country, driving forward e-commerce activity. Nielsen Brandbank is clearly a customer-focused business with many innovations ahead of the customer demand curve, ensuring that it remains relevant and adds value to every customer account. The business also has a strong commitment to the local area.



JD COOLING GROUP



Judges' comments

The group has recently won two national awards and been recognised in the London Stock Exchange's 1,000 Companies To Inspire Britain. Clearly well developed and led by John Dye, there was engagement throughout the business, giving it a solid core on which to achieve ambitious growth

and new markets into the future. JD Cooling Group has an enviable apprenticeship scheme, developing 23 of its own team, with many winning national awards and recognition as well as going on to senior management in the business. Staff at all levels are engaged in the business through an innovative incentive scheme .

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BUSINESS AWARDS 2018

Skills of Tomorrow

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KAKECO

Judges' comments

The judges were very impressed with KakeCo's offering in today's market. Its submission for this category took account of businesses' needs in filling skills gaps in digital, while also supporting children and parents to better understand the opportunities available and the hidden gems of local organisations to work for. The judges were encouraged by Kieran Miles's passion for the local area and impressed by his thoughts on how to revolutionise traditional recruitment.

KakeCo.



Winners of the Skills of Tomorrow category (from left) James and Chris Gulliver, of Netmatters, with Marie Dyer, of sponsor Lotus.
Picture: I DO PHOTOGRAPHY

THE KINETIC SCIENCE FOUNDATION

Judges' comments

The Kinetic Science Foundation recognises the importance of a good grounding in science for many roles in business, while appreciating the challenges that teachers can face in delivering classes that bring science to life. It is an example to others in the way it educates our future stars with the skills they need to succeed tomorrow. The foundation has seen great growth over its three years in existence and has exciting plans for the future.

Kinetic
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WINNER - NETMATTERS

A tech company which has pioneered a training scheme for young developers to get into the industry took home the Skills of Tomorrow award.

Netmatters was praised for the ambition of its programme, which it runs from offices in Wymondham, and is keen to spread to other locations across East Anglia.

The judges said: "Netmatters stood out

netmatters™

from the rest of the finalists as a clear winner, embodying what this category was about and proving that investment in future skills has worked for the company, which is now working with "sponsors" to develop the skills and talent needed in

the businesses.

Their results were impressive and without equal, the judges added, and their ambition to operate similar programmes in East Anglia and other locations was extremely positive for the region and local businesses.

"Netmatters had clearly pushed the skills of tomorrow with creativity and innovation," they said.

THE COLLEGE OF WEST ANGLIA

Judges' comments

The College of West Anglia helps students and prepares them for the future. Delivering a skilled workforce into jobs personifies exactly why the skills of tomorrow are so important. The judges were especially impressed with the way the college has embraced the inclusion of

local companies and employers, such as Anglian Water, to feed directly into their apprentice programmes and full-time employment, while modifying the course content to include modern and relevant skills. The college also follows leavers' progress and accepts their feedback for future students.

The College of West Anglia



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Small Business

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SOLICITORS

The team at Indigo Swan, winners of the Small Business award, with Emily Groves and James Groves, centre, and (right) Anna Farquharson from sponsor Cozens-Hardy. Picture: IDO PHOTOGRAPHY



WINNER - INDIGO SWAN

Energy specialist Indigo Swan has a "happiness first" approach, which means it aims to please its staff and customers - and it maintains that success then follows.

Commercial director James Groves explained: "Some people think that success breeds happiness - absolutely not. You need happy staff, you need happy customers, and then you will be successful."

Emily Groves, managing director of the



Norwich-based company, added: "We put happiness first in everything we do. We call our staff our swans, and we love them so much - they're fantastic."

The judges said Indigo Swan won not because of its rapid growth over the last few years, but because of its innovative, concise and clear strategy which permeates through everything the company does.

From the moment a new joiner enters as a "cygnet", through to the moment they complete their first charity event or fun run, each employee has "happiness first" in their mindset and customer success in their sights.

Judges said Indigo Swan had a real commitment to finding a better way to do things and the team were ambassadors in the energy business for innovation and creativity. How they did anything was how they did everything - exceptionally.

DEEPDALE BACKPACKERS & CAMPING

Judges' comments

Jason Borthwick and his team have created an atmosphere, culture and business on the foundation of loving the north Norfolk coast. Customer experience and staff fulfilment are intrinsically linked and this focus is felt from the moment you arrive on site. Organic expansion into events has enhanced the offering, with Christmas and spring markets, the Hygge and music events becoming key to Deepdale.



JUST FINANCIAL PLANNING

Judges' comments

From "you must be mad" to £90m of customer assets in less than 10 years... that's what Holly Heald and her team have achieved after launching a fair and "just" financial planning business designed to offer transparent, consultative, end-to-end client services. And, importantly, to start to change the less-than-glowing reputation of financial advisors.



CIM SIGNS & GRAPHICS



Judges' comments

CIM Signs and Graphics has a balanced approach to the development of culture, staff and investment, which has seen CIM nearly double in size in four years, acquiring new premises last year.

Differentiation in the market has been built on customer service, continued re-investment in both machinery and staffing plus an understanding of how each step contributes to the client success for

the company. Community and CSR is at the heart of everything CIM does, with involvement in many things from youth football to Norwich in Bloom.

The clarity of vision, understanding and appreciation of how success fits together comes from the leadership of managing director Mark Baker and, with continued reinvestment and development of sustainable growth, CIM continues to go from strength to strength.



Cozens-Hardy LLP

SOLICITORS

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BUSINESS AWARDS 2018

Tech Innovator

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LIFTSHARE

Judges' comments

Liftshare has created a highly innovative tool in mapping sustainable travel for organisations, called the Scoping Smart Mobility tool. It allows Liftshare to demonstrate sustainable transport options at scale, which helps clients understand the overall commuter challenge and highlight the alternative travel options which could be available to employees. Liftshare has big 2020 goals, one of them being to take one billion miles off our roads.



SNAP ACCOUNT

Judges' comments

SNAP Account spotted issues affecting HGV drivers, depots and service providers every day and has created a platform to manage resources, process transactions and eliminate fraud. The platform allows drivers to transact with all the services they need during a drive and record them with their employer to process expenses and keep logs automatically. SNAP Account has also expanded its modular platform.



The team from Developing Experts, winner of the Tech Innovator category (from left) Christopher Cooper, of sponsor Computer Service Centre, with Lucie Sweet, Shane Morgan, Paul Usher, Jon Badgery. Picture: I DO PHOTOGRAPHY.

WINNER - DEVELOPING EXPERTS

Developing Experts, a three-year-old ed-tech company based in Norwich, is a platform to support teachers who lack confidence in the topics they teach, having never specialised in them.

Industry experts teach video lessons from languages to science, providing students with an interactive style of learning.

"I think the secret to our success is the people we work with, we have such a diverse range of staff" said Developing Experts' Paul Usher.



"The future of Developing Experts is expansion," added CTO Shane Morgan. "We're already expanding into the US and next year into other countries. As well as improving our product for teachers we also want to make our home school products more accessible."

The judges said Developing Experts demonstrated the technical advances in platform technology it was putting into countries with a poorer network infrastructure.

Its key technical innovation was the platform technological foundation, which was then combined with a design tailored specifically for the way children learn, all backed by the volume and quality of content the company had produced to inform and educate across an increasing number of subjects.

TRAINASONE

Judges' comments

TrainAsONE's aim is to revolutionise the approach to facilitating people's mental and physical health globally, through innovative sports technology and research methods. As a Norfolk-based technology start-up, TrainAsONE has gone from strength to strength, largely due to a forward-thinking team who actively

encourage big data and artificial intelligence innovation to explore new ideas and push the boundaries. TrainAsONE is the first anticipatory health and fitness application that employs artificial intelligence machine learning and big data. Its adaptation for general health and wellness research and management has opened up a flood of opportunities.



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Simply the best!

It was generally agreed to have been the best Norfolk Business Awards evening of all – and that's saying something after more than two decades! Hosted by comedy legend Katherine Ryan, the cream of Norfolk business gathered at the county Showground last week for the annual event that they all look forward to. Here and over the page is a snapshot of how the night went. Pictures: **Simon Finlay Photography**



BUSINESS AWARDS 2018

