

# O1NE

Backing Your Business

Issue 56

 **Haines  
Watts**  
*Local Matters, National Strength.*



for

# Outstanding

Growth takes  
flight at Kari Owers'  
business.

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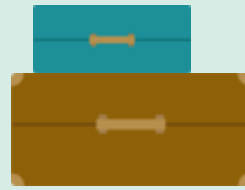
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It's all about  
people, identity  
and culture



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“We keep a  
consistent  
growth curve  
in our sights.”

Kari Owers



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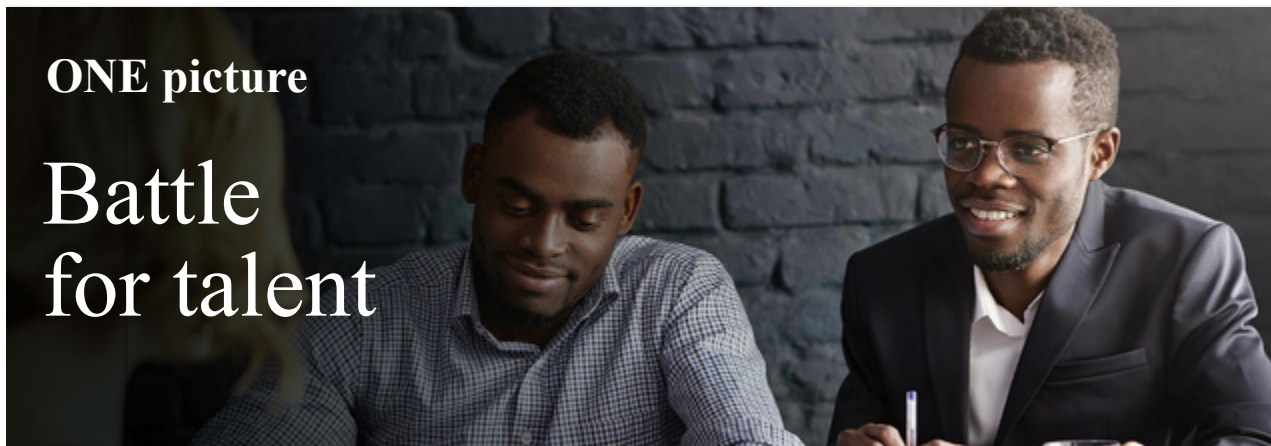
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# It's all about people, identity and culture

On reading through this edition of ONE Magazine, I quickly realised that there was a theme running through all of the articles: whatever the topic we cover, it often boils down to people-orientated identity and culture.

Haines Watts is a people business; looking after both our clients and employees is crucial for our organisation to be successful.

We recently won Accountancy Firm of the Year at the FDs' Excellence Awards, thanks to votes of confidence from business owners and financial directors. This accolade acknowledges the strong relationships we have with them as individuals.

As business leaders, we often focus on the figures, processes, technology or supply chain – when all we need to remember is that our companies rely on and revolve around people.

Every business has a culture; the challenge is to be able to articulate it externally so that you can attract both the talent and the clients that best fit your own corporate culture and values.

We are embarking on a journey to identify the values and behaviours that make up the Haines Watts DNA, and will be looking to build on those and articulate them in the future.

**“Haines Watts is a people business – looking after both our clients and employees is crucial for our organisation to be successful.”**



Michael Davidson  
Group Managing Partner

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Davidson'.

# Growing into Opportunity

Through robust planning – and by putting customer experience at the heart of what they do – O Communications has driven growth.



## factfile

Sector: **Communications**  
 Location: **Newcastle**  
 Employees in group: **15**  
 Challenges: **Building the business from the ground up**  
 Opportunities: **Great brand relationships and recognition**

“Every customer should feel like your only customer” is one of the inspirations and chief values behind Kari Owers’ business, O Communications (‘O’ for short). The Newcastle-based integrated creative communications agency client list has included brands like Flymo, Dr. Martens, Goldsmiths and the British Masters.

“One of our first clients in the early days referred us by saying ‘they will make you feel like you are their only customer!’,” says Managing Director Kari Owers. “We’ve tried to maintain that throughout the business as we’ve grown. We’ve got scores of customers now, but whether it’s a new startup or a big brand, we still make them feel like our only customer.”

### Boosting the brand

Dr. Martens is a great example. After using O to launch its Newcastle store, they gave the agency the local PR contract for its stores across the North. O eventually went on to work for the brand all across the UK.

“The only way we achieved that was by really focusing on understanding their brand, doing a great job and looking after them well,” Kari says.

A strategic communications consultant by background and a winner of North East Woman Entrepreneur of the Year, Kari set up the business from home in 2005 after having her second child. Within months, her husband Robin, a graphic designer, had joined the flourishing agency. The couple started working with Haines Watts 10 years ago, when O had four staff. It’s since more than tripled in size, with plans for further growth.

### Look before you leap

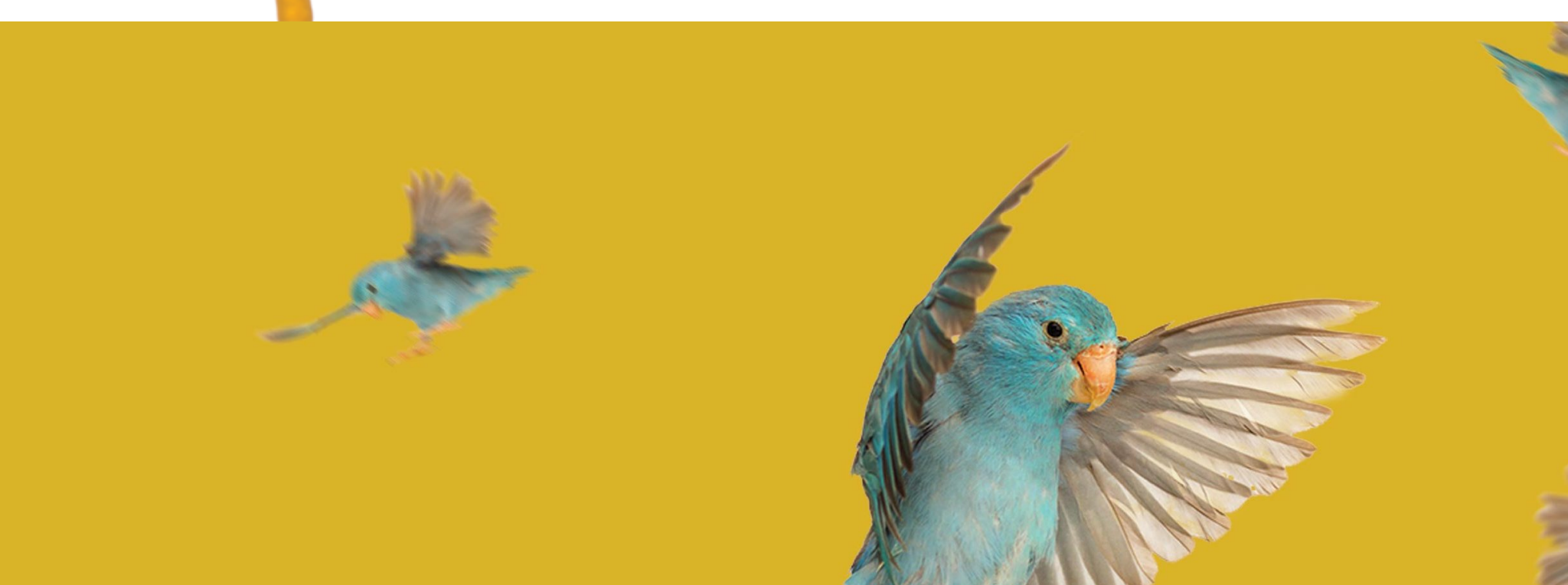
“Donna Bulmer, the managing partner at our local Haines Watts office, has effectively been our external finance director through our whole journey,” Kari explains. “She’s not just provided us with financial planning and monthly management accounts – she’s been excellent at helping us take calculated risks as entrepreneurs. From year three onwards, we’ve always had an incredibly focused business plan underpinning our approach, which has been absolutely invaluable.”

O has maintained profit growth year-on-year and has focused on sustainable organic growth as a business.

“That’s very strategic, because we do believe in reinvesting in our team and business,” Kari says. “I think what’s driven growth has been a very clear idea of who we want to work with from day one; being focused on our business development activities and on the customer experience.”

**“Whether it’s a new startup or a big brand, we still make them feel like our only customer.”**

Kari Owers,  
 Owner and Managing Director, O Communications



## Getting ready to grow

One key piece of strategic advice has involved helping Kari and Robin set up a property investment vehicle.

“We decided to buy an agency premises that was four times the size of where we were previously, so it was quite a big investment for us,” Kari explains. “Haines Watts was great in helping us plan for and complete that – very quickly, over a matter of weeks. They also helped us understand where we could gain tax relief on our total refurbishment of the property.”

Haines Watts has taken an active interest in how O can realise its ambitions – and has been able to work at the company’s pace.

“We have to adjust our forecasts quite frequently,” Kari explains. “Haines Watts has been extremely agile and able to move with the ebb and flow of working in such a fast-paced industry like ours.”

“Marketing has changed dramatically over the last decade,” Kari continues, “and we have needed to flex with that, often quickly, hiring experts in areas such as social media and SEO, video and digital content.”

“We’ve had to adapt to market conditions, as we work across many sectors and can be impacted by their growth or decline,” she concludes. “Having a solid financial forecast has really helped us make strategic decisions about the markets where we need to focus our efforts. We keep a consistent growth curve in our sights – and that keeps us moving forward.”

**“Haines Watts has been extremely agile and able to move with the ebb and flow of working in such a fast-paced industry like ours.”**

Kari Owers  
 Owner and Managing Director, O Communications



**“Every six months or so, we’ll step back to take a higher level look at the business.”**

Donna Bulmer,  
 Haines Watts

## ONE expert



**DONNA BULMER,**  
 Managing Partner,  
 Haines Watts North East

“O Communications has moved from being a traditional PR agency in the early days to a much more well-rounded communications business incorporating digital and online marketing offerings.

Growth has been steady for them over the last ten years. They’ve had periods of high growth, and then stabilised, before growing again.

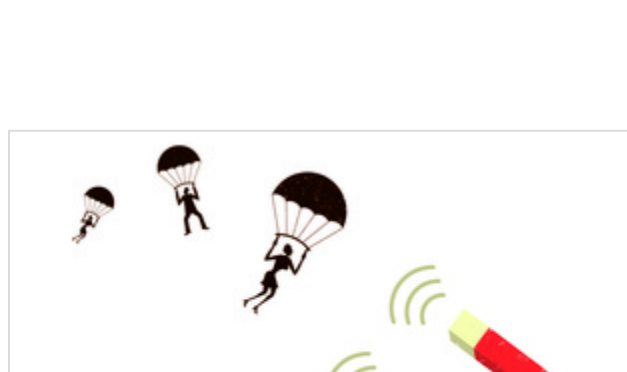
From very early on, we helped them with their financial controls and procedures and with putting key performance indicators in place. We’ve worked with them to set a

budget each year and have monthly meetings with the directors to check progress. Every six months, we’ll step back to take a higher level, more strategic look at the business.

During their time with us, they’ve bought a business premises and invested significantly back into the business and their service lines.

I think O will continue to diversify. By developing areas like brand strategy and creative design, they’ll truly become a one-stop-shop in the brand communications space. The future is very bright for them.”

## Related content



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by Donna Bulmer, Haines Watts



**Ask the expert**

How to approach your next growth phase



**Channeling business data**

by Shaun Brownsmith, Haines Watts



# Creating your culture

Wellbeing is good for business, says Yoke Consultancy's *Simon North*.

Wellbeing is becoming an increasingly important issue for organisations to address. It affects every business and the statistics can no longer be ignored, says Simon North, consultant and wellbeing guru at London-based wellbeing consultancy Yoke.

“Every leader wants to attract and then keep good people – for longer periods of time – so they can sustain strong organisational performance,” Simon says. “To achieve this, they need fit and resilient team members who turn up regularly, who are energetic and aim to do their best work.

“Without this,” Simon continues, “they’ll develop unhealthy organisations riddled with structural issues and low quality management and leadership.”

### Leading vision

The impact leaders can have on the wellbeing of individuals working with them is significant.

“We naturally want to grow and learn,” Simon adds. “We want to enjoy healthy working relationships with those around us – and we will want to stay and gain rewards for our success.”

Leaders who define and articulate a clear vision for their team members create a sense of direction. By exhibiting good behaviours in everything they do, they’re recognising the power of their own role modelling.

### Supportive culture

“Leaders can support team members by showing them what’s right and the way they want the organisation to run,” Simon says. “They should communicate often – more than they realise – to reinforce their vision and to give recognition where it is due.”

They should also understand the impact of bad management. Getting involved in learning processes is also important.

“Leaders need a flexible mindset and an understanding of what it takes to provide conditions that employees want and need,” Simon concludes.

## What is wellbeing?

Wellbeing means different things to different people, Yoke explains. For some, it’s about managing personal stress; for others, it’s about the quality of their working relationships – or finding meaning in what they do.

To help your people proactively and preventatively manage their wellbeing, start by asking what it means to them. “Without involving the people we’re trying to help, we will only create isolated strategies that are not relevant or in line with current needs,” according to Yoke.

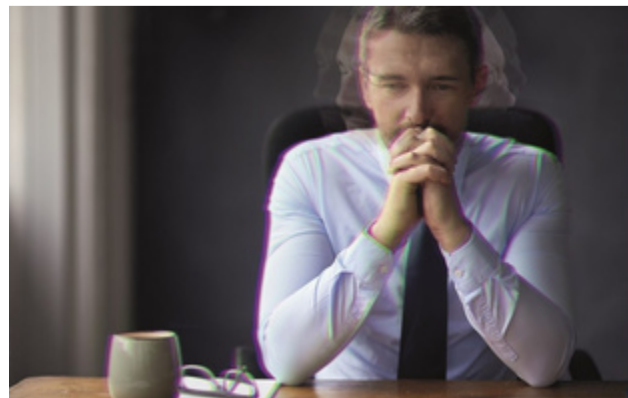
Listening to how things are going and being able to evolve is important. Your wellbeing strategy might ask: how can we best reward those who take care, now or in the future? The first step to finding out is to listen to the responses you receive.

## Related content



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by Donna Bulmer, Haines Watts



### Presenteeism in your workplace

by Karen McLellan, Haines Watts



### We need to talk about mental health

by Donna Bulmer, Haines Watts

# Battle for talent

Attracting and retaining staff is the top challenge for business owners in a tightening labour market, says **Stephanie Morris**, Recruitment Manager, Haines Watts London.

For owners of small and medium enterprises (SMEs), the recruitment quest has never been tougher.

A 'perfect storm' of factors – including record-low unemployment, Brexit and the shifting expectations of millennials (those aged roughly between 22 and 36) – means employers are having to work harder and smarter to attract staff.

"The recruitment market as a whole has changed significantly in the last year," explains Stephanie Morris, Recruitment Manager, Haines Watts London. "Forty per cent of employers say they've found it harder to fill vacancies than they did last year and 45% – the highest in 12 years – can't find the skills they need."

With job-seeker levels at their lowest in many years, roles and companies need to be attractive to tempt movers. Brexit has been blamed for a 95% decline in the number of EU-born workers moving to the UK, which has impacted the flow of the market. Candidates also increasingly want an employer who can offer progression, agile working and new technology.

#### Millennial effect

"There's a huge shift in what millennials look for in an employer," Stephanie says. "They want to see they can make an impact and feel like they're developing their skills. They also look for employers who mirror their values – often including social and environmental impacts."

All of this has a huge effect on SMEs, as many can't accommodate these factors as quickly or as easily as larger organisations.

How can small and medium business owners compete? Selling your company and the job is vital. "Many employers forget to do this, but it really is key for you to spell out everything that's great about your company and what's on offer to any potential employee," Stephanie says.

"Ensure the candidate's initial experience of your company is professional, smooth, fast and friendly throughout – and plan ahead. Try to recruit before you need to and before it hurts your business."

**“It really is key for you to spell out everything that’s great about your company.”**

Stephanie Morris,  
Recruitment Manager,  
Haines Watts London

## Talent-hunting technique

In order to dodge employer pitfalls, make sure your recruitment strategy:

- Focuses on securing the skills as well as finding them.
- Avoids a volume approach that misses the nuggets.
- Doesn't assume that candidates understand what makes you special.
- Reflects you and your business.
- Generates interest at the start rather than the end of the process.



#### Nurturing talent

Developing key employees is an essential component of any retention strategy. Offering agile working, progression, training, competitive rewards and increased benefits packages is part of this.

"Look at being a forward-thinking employer," Stephanie adds. "People want to see an employer showing modern ways of thinking and also offering new technologies."

"It's expected that, by 2030, we'll have a talent shortage of 85 million globally – so it's really important for employers to move with the changes now and ensure they don't get left behind. That will help them continue to attract and retain the best people."

## Case study: The effects of Brexit on recruitment

In high-demand sectors such as health and social care, skills shortages are worsening.

"The uncertainty created by Brexit and the falling value of the pound compared with the euro has created recruitment issues over the last couple of years," says the care manager at one Surrey-based homecare agency with around 100 staff.

"Our experience is that some of the most valuable collaborators and coworkers come primarily from Eastern Europe. They are usually qualified, with a background in nursing or medical services – but we've seen this workforce dramatically shrink. With the insecurity created by Brexit, they can't commit to moving to another country for five, seven or ten years – and they don't know if they'll be welcome."

The company is responding by reviewing its recruitment offer. "We've raised the salaries we pay and we're actively looking at our whole package of incentives in an effort to attract and retain staff," the care manager says.

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How Haines Watts helped Michele Cassandro



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by Chris Timms, Haines Watt



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by Julie Bryant, Haines Watts

# The financial implications of divorce

Advice is invaluable when making decisions in an emotionally charged environment, says Tilney's *Richard Dawes*.

Untangling finances during divorce is extremely complicated. There are many major financial decisions to make – and they can have long-lasting, far-reaching consequences. They are also often made in an emotionally charged environment where it is difficult to see the wood from the trees. When business is involved, divorce can be even more complex – both in the lead-up to the settlement and beyond.

“If finances are complex – as they tend to be for business owners – it makes sense to involve a financial planner as early as possible in the divorce proceedings,” says Richard, Regional Head of Financial Planning at Tilney.

“A financial planner can play a key role in helping secure a fair settlement that is in the best interests of the client.”

## Your financial future

There is no getting away from the fact that divorce can be hugely disruptive for businesses.

“Business owners often don’t realise that their ex – even one who has never been involved with the business – may be entitled to a share of it on divorce,” notes Richard. “The court will take into account all assets and is unlikely to make a distinction between business and other assets unless there is legal paperwork to show otherwise.”

A family court is likely to try hard not to disrupt a business, but at times it can be decided that the only way to divide assets is to break it up or sell it. This can be devastating and have profound financial implications for business owners. Divorce can also lead to one party buying out the other. A financial planner can help you understand your options and make informed decisions about your business.

An important aspect of a financial planner’s work is to create a visual illustration of what a client’s life could look like in the future. This is called cashflow modelling. It takes into account each person’s individual circumstances and can incorporate or test different scenarios. Richard adds, “It is the key to answering one of the most common questions during divorce: ‘will I have enough money?’”

## Family matters

What becomes of the former marital home is often a point of contention. At least one party will commonly want to keep it, especially if there are children to consider. But this doesn’t always make financial sense. Where one party is to keep the home, they may need financial advice over existing or new borrowing.

Maintenance for children may also be required, either for general upbringing or specifics such as school fees. “And if this maintenance is being funded from one partner’s income,” warns Richard, “it’s easy to overlook what might happen if that person dies or becomes ill. Without protection, the other parent could face unnecessary risks and could potentially compromise the children’s quality of life.”

## Once agreement is reached

A financial planner can give ongoing support as pension sharing orders, investment transfers and other processes complete. They can also give investment advice over lump sum payments arising from settlements and can help newly divorced clients plan ahead for their new life.

“There are so many moving – but often inter-related – parts during divorce,” says Richard. “Each party will have different financial requirements as well as different taxation needs to consider, and a financial advisor can help business owners and their businesses overcome these obstacles.”

“There are so many moving – but often inter-related – parts during divorce”

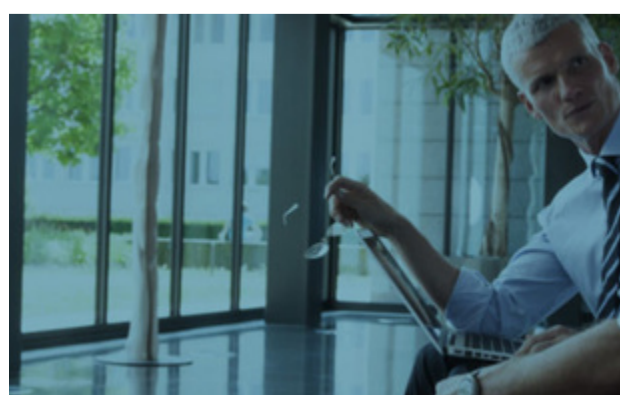
When agreeing on a divorce settlement, it’s important to consider pensions (and this is easier said than done). A common piece of financial planning is to create a pension sharing order, the purpose of which is to equalise in retirement the assets built during marriage. This can be a complex process, as a 50/50 split may not necessarily mean both parties receive the same level of income throughout their lives.

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Approaching with expertise

# How to sell your business in style

Getting a good price for your company takes planning and insight, says **Steve Brown**, Partner at Haines Watts Corporate Finance in London.

There's no one route to selling your business, but there are actionable steps that will help you set up robust financial systems to get the best deal.

"Not having good, detailed management information is a common mistake for owners who are aiming to sell up," says Steve Brown, Partner at Haines Watts Corporate Finance in London.

"If you don't have detailed accounts, a handle on your cash flow and a good overview of your marketplace, you can't be sure what's going on in the business – and many business owners find they don't understand the financial detail of their business as well as they thought."

#### Do the due diligence

"Simply put, due diligence is a test of value to validate any offer made for buying the business and to build detailed information on the business," Steve adds.

It also seeks to validate key assumptions made in any offer – or to uncover issues that would lead to a change in the offer – including valuation.

Owners can often learn a great deal about their business and finances if they go through a "dry run" of the financial, tax and legal due diligence process that any buyer will undertake.

#### The risk within your business

"What would happen if you lost key customers, suppliers or employees?" Steve asks. "If your technology failed, your markets changed, or new regulation impacted your business? If the risk in your business changes, so does your value."

Having knowledge, information and an assessment of risk readily available is crucial, he adds, as it suggests you're a well-run business. Interested parties are far more likely to pay more for a company that looks professional, manages its risks, and stays stable and well-organised.



Small-business owners usually fall into two distinct camps:

- **Driven sellers** – these owners are on a mission to sell up at a profit. They have a goal, a detailed five-year plan and are focused on the end game of selling at a good price.
- **Reactive sellers** – these owners weren't planning on selling, but may suddenly have received an offer, or been faced with an external event that means a quick sale is necessary (but minus the plan or any of the detailed preparation).

A large part of the small-business market consists of these reactive sellers – owners who have received an offer, or where financial, legal or other personal pressures mean the company needs to go on the market.

Driven sellers, on the other hand, benefit from having a longer-term outlook, where they have planned and prepared for a sale, and added value along the way.

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# The Brexit effect

Haines Watts GGI Partner firms in Europe discuss the impact of Brexit beyond the UK.

The UK's exit from the EU is also having a significant impact on businesses on the Continent. With this in mind, Haines Watts asked two of its partner firms in Geneva Group International (GGI), a global alliance of professional services firms, for their thoughts on changes to the European Union.

In Germany, Hamburg-based legal, audit and tax consultancy NBS Partners has German clients with UK subsidiaries and also looks after the German subsidiaries of UK parent companies. Partner Boris Michels says Brexit affects the firm and its clients in various ways.

#### Delays and depreciation

"A hard Brexit may depreciate the GBP by 25%, which will have far-reaching consequences," Boris says. "Imports and exports could be significantly affected; it's estimated that British companies could lose up to £30 billion in exports. Germany's exports, for example, could be up to €8 billion lower than usual. This will show up in the financial statements of our clients and in their cash."

If restrictions are placed on freedom of movement, some EU citizens may no longer be able work in the UK without any problems, which, Michels adds, puts many jobs at risk.

There are also questions over the potential impact of customs delays on just-in-time production processes, including a potential 30% fall in property valuations and whether relocation is an option.

#### Risk factors

For Anders Mortensen, a partner in Danish audit firm Dansk Revision Randers in the eastern part of Jutland, the business risks associated with Brexit include declining investment activity, border controls, customs issues and restrictions on the of free movement of employees.

"It's a great concern in Denmark because the UK is one of our biggest markets," Anders continues. "I have a lot of customers who are very concerned about how it's going to be managed practically. For example, the paperwork in the first two to three months after Brexit is going to be a nightmare if you have to export into the UK."

#### Looking ahead

"What we would like from a Danish perspective is to get to a point where all the agreements between the European Union and the UK are going to make things the way they used to be," Anders says, "and I believe to some extent that's what politicians are trying to achieve, while still maintaining British sovereignty.

"That's where the challenge is," Anders concludes, "because from a business perspective, I believe the European Union has been working really well."

**“The business risks associated with Brexit include declining investment activity, border controls, customs issues and restrictions on the free movement of workers.”**

**Anders Mortensen,**  
Dansk Revision Randers

## Braced for Brexit – five steps

NBS Partners is advising its clients on either side of the English Channel to:

1. Identify all areas and businesses affected by Brexit.
2. Set up a task force for each business area (senior management and regulatory specialists included).
3. Analyse the potential impact of different scenarios. How high will prices rise due to customs duties on EU imports? How high will the unemployment rate rise?
4. Draw up a plan of action for conducting UK-EU business in the future.
5. Create operational plans for rapid implementation.

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### Expanding internationally

How Haines Watts can help



### Geneva Group International

Haines Watts' overseas organisation



### Haines Watts: Member Firm of the Year

by Michael Davidson, Haines Watts

# Act with agility

How can businesses stay agile as they grow?



**STEPHANIE MORRIS,**  
Recruitment  
Manager, Haines  
Watts London.



“Being open to change is key – especially in today’s market. Use technology to your advantage, communicate more internally and externally, and trust your employees.”

**SIMON NORTH,**  
Consultant &  
Wellbeing Guru,  
Yoke Consultancy.



“Being fit and ready every day plus knowing that you’re getting support from the people you work with to take care of each other.”

**FIONA GRAHAM,**  
Director of External  
Affairs and Policy at  
the Institute for  
Family Business



“Practise communicating, so you can stay agile and adapt to events. Family businesses have a real advantage – a close family with a common purpose and vision.”

**BORIS MICHELS,**  
Partner,  
NBS Partners.



“Efficient decision-making processes, high degrees of digitalisation, flat hierarchies and the outsourcing of time-consuming internal tasks to external service providers where possible.”

**KARI OWERS,**  
Owner and Managing  
Director, O  
Communications.



“Be mindful of too much hierarchy and too many rules, because they suffocate decision-making. Keep it simple and encourage leadership at all levels.”

**DONNA BULMER,**  
Managing Partner,  
Haines Watts North  
East.



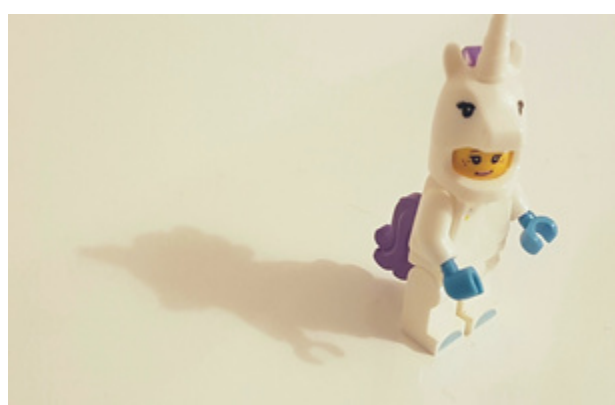
“Keep moving but continue to take stock. Where are you headed? Are you still going in the right direction? Does your plan need to be refreshed?”

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**Bracing for Brexit  
uncertainty**

by Michael Davidson, Haines Watts



**A business plan  
built for growth**

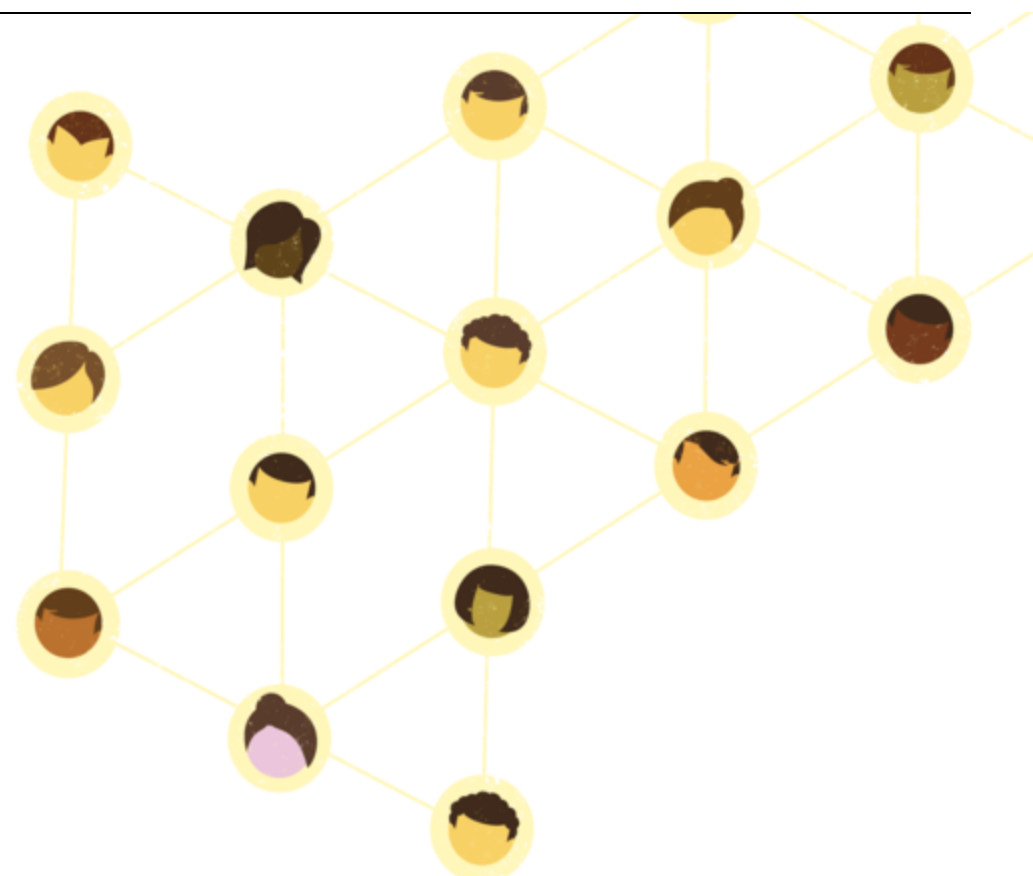
by Gary Staunton, Haines Watts



**Smart export  
strategy**

Genuine Solutions Group’s twin  
business model

# Keeping it in the family



Family businesses are prepared for the future, says **Fiona Graham, Director of External Affairs and Policy** at the Institute for Family Business.

Though it often goes unsaid, family businesses form part of the country's backbone. But how resilient are they?

"Family businesses are in a strong position to weather times of uncertainty," says Fiona Graham, Director of External Affairs and Policy at the Institute for Family Business.

"We have evidence showing that, during economic downturns, family businesses tend to be more likely to survive and are able to retain their staff better.

"Part of that is the way they fund themselves. Family businesses tend to reinvest profits back into the business. They're cautious about making sure they have enough cash on the balance sheet – so they're not taking on a lot of external debt. This means they're in a financially more secure position when the going gets tough."

A long-term outlook helps family firms think beyond immediate downturns and consider what's best for business.

## Future-proofing

"There's often a perception that the next generation doesn't want to work in the family business and they're somehow being dragged in," Fiona says. "That's not our experience at all; our research shows that the next generation really appreciate the legacy of their business and feel a strong personal connection to it.

"They want to be involved – and millennials in particular are interested in working in businesses that have a really strong sense of purpose, strong values and a strong culture."

## Honing expertise

Many families understand the importance of encouraging the next generation to work outside the business for a while. Gaining outside skills – learning about how other businesses operate – hones their expertise and brings new ideas and experiences into the family business.

"We're having more and more conversations with entrepreneurs who are thinking, at an early stage, about how to build a family business and see it succeed across three generations," Fiona adds. "People see there's a huge amount of value in the model and the benefits it brings for families, employees and the communities they operate in."

## UK Family Business

Statistics from the Institute for Family Business show that:

- There are 4.8 million family-run businesses in the UK, comprising 88% of all private sector firms.
- In total, family businesses employ 12.2 million people.
- Family businesses earned £1.4 trillion in revenue in 2016.
- They also contributed £519 billion gross value added to the economy and a quarter of total UK GDP in 2016.
- Family businesses contributed £149 billion in taxes to the Exchequer (both directly and through their employment).
- Some 63% of family-run SMEs with employees aim to grow sales over the next three years.

*The Institute for Family Business is a membership association representing the UK's family-owned business sector.*

Source: [The State of the Nation UK Family Business Sector 2017-18](#)

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### Keeping business in the family

How Cofresh has grown through generations



### Planning an elegant exit

Haines Watts' succession strategy



### The Institute for Family Business

Helping family businesses thrive

# Accountancy Firm of the Year

Haines Watts has added another accolade to its collection by winning the Accountancy Firm of the Year Award at the annual FDs' Excellence Awards 2019.

Winners of the awards, which are now in their 18th year, are decided by votes from business owners and finance directors across the UK. This is Haines Watts' fifth FDs' Excellence Award, highlighting their strong relationships with their clients.

"This makes me incredibly proud of all our partners and employees," remarks Samantha Davies, Group Head of Marketing. "Without their professionalism and dedication, we wouldn't achieve the results we do." Congratulations to all involved, and here's to next year!



## Joining the conversation at design week

This year, continuing their focus on supporting architects' practices for many decades, Haines Watts participated in Clerkenwell Design Week. This annual design festival gives a platform to pioneering creative businesses and promotes design application while showcasing architects from all over the UK. Haines Watts' submission – the 'Be, Well' Pavilion designed by their client, WR-AP Architects – provided attendees with an opportunity to reflect on and share their thoughts

on the show and the issues currently impacting the sector. Its use of galvanised steel was born of collaboration with WR-AP architects, the Galvanisers Association, Joseph Ash, Berry Systems and Lionweld Kennedy.

"It was a pleasure to have taken part in this celebrated event and to have continued our tradition of engaging with our clients in their own industries and communities," said Alex Shall, Haines Watts Partner.



## Congratulations to Cofresh

Cofresh – a Leicester-based snack food manufacturer, which has worked closely with Haines Watts over a number of years – has announced a large-scale expansion planned to take place over the next 18 months.

Building on its success and growth in recent years, the company expects to spend £20 million as it develops a second site to complement its existing factory. Once the development (including an extension to its existing site) is

complete, the company anticipates a production and warehousing footprint of almost 400,000 square feet.

"We're delighted to be taking this hugely significant step in the development of our business," Managing Director Priyesh Patel said on the announcement. Haines Watts is proud to work with Cofresh, and is enthusiastic to see what other developments the future will bring.



## Gateway to Gateshead



**Haines Watts is excited to announce that it has strengthened its presence in the North East by joining forces with Gateshead-based RHK Accountants.**

The deal has been overseen by Jonathan Scott, Donna Bulmer, and Bradley Thomas (pictured) and will push regional turnover above £7 million and team size beyond 75.

"RHK is an established practice whose culture, values and strengths complement our own," comments Donna Bulmer, Regional Managing Partner. "This merger further cements our position as leading advisors to business owners in the North East."



Backing Your Business

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## We asked 500 business owners: “If you could step back 10 years, what advice would you give your younger self about running a business?”

Haines Watts’ new two minute film is aimed at helping business owners act on their own advice. What advice would you give yourself, if you could? Haines Watts reached out to 500 business owners to learn what they wished they’d known a decade ago, and developed their diverse answers into a short film. Click below to watch:

**This is your business**

~ A Haines Watts film ~

The life of the business owner is full of lessons learned, but there’s never any need to stop learning. To find out more about the Secret Life of the Business Owner – including how you can best handle your health, your wealth, your work-life balance, and your business future – click below:

[For Love or Money >](#)