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Growing Business of the Year

High growth, high quality. This award recognises world class privately-owned UK companies.

Successful SME businesses are extraordinarily important to the UK economy, creating wealth, taxes and thousands of new jobs.

This award has been the launchpad for superstar UK businesses such as Sophos, Betfair, Greenergy, LOVEFiLM, King of Shaves and lastminute.com.

Main submission

We're asking you to show how your business is world class. We recommend you submit your 500-word citation according to these specific criteria, where relevant.

- Market leadership (in the UK and, if applicable, internationally)
- Consistent, profitable growth
- Scalability of business
- Positive or disruptive impact on industry/sector/marketplace
- Undeniable customer engagement
- Product/service innovation
- Evidence of best practice in customer service
- Excellence in people management and workforce motivation
- Commitment to sustainability and local community

Summary submission

In 100 words, please describe the unique, distinguishing characteristics that make your business a potential Company of the Year.

* Important note: Entering this category requires shortlisted candidates to attend an interview with the judging panel in London in October 2017. Date to be confirmed.

B2B Business of the Year

Celebrating innovation and excellence in growing B2B businesses.

The B2B Business of the Year award recognises exceptional market leading, high growth, and innovative B2B businesses that have significant potential to continue to scale.

Main submission

Please structure your 500-word citation with reference to the following criteria, where applicable:

- Financial track record - strong and consistent top line growth and profitability
- Customer base - growth in the number of unique customers and/or revenue per customer, strong customer retention rates, long term contracts, growing market share and high customer satisfaction (NPS scores)
- Innovation - with reference to the market in which you operate, what is it that you are you doing differently in relation to your product offering, service &/or delivery model that gives you a competitive edge (e.g. use of proprietary technology)?
- Capacity for further growth – how scalable is your business? What are the drivers of future growth for your business (e.g. international expansion, new products/service lines, new end markets, increased market penetration)? Please comment on the sustainability of your business
- People management - evidence of a high performance culture, employee engagement, strong employee retention.

Summary submission

In 100 words, please summarise the unique, distinguishing characteristics that make you/the nominee a potential B2B Business of the Year.

* Important note: Entering this category requires shortlisted candidates to attend an interview with the judging panel in London in October 2017. Date to be confirmed.

Consumer Business of the Year

Recognising outstanding growing businesses in the consumer sector.

The Consumer Business of the Year award recognises exciting high growth and innovative businesses within the Consumer sector that have the potential to continue to scale.

Main submission

Please structure your 500-word citation with reference to the following criteria, where applicable:

- Financial track record – strong and consistent top line and profit growth
- Product – with reference to the market in which you operate, what is it that you are you doing differently in relation to your product or customer proposition
- Brand – the role of branding in your business model
- Route to market – does your service &/or delivery model gives you a competitive edge
- Capacity for further growth – how scalable is your business? What are the drivers of future growth for your business (e.g. international expansion, new products/service lines, new end markets, increased market penetration)? Please comment on the sustainability of your business
- Technology – the role of technology in your business
- People management – evidence of a high performance culture, employee engagement, strong employee retention

Summary submission

In 100 words, please summarise the unique, distinguishing characteristics that make you/the nominee a potential Consumer Business of the Year.

* Important note: Entering this category requires shortlisted candidates to attend an interview with the judging panel in London in October 2017. Date to be confirmed.

Digital Business of the Year

Highlighting UK digital businesses who are changing their markets; and creating new markets through the application of digital technology.

This award recognises those challenging traditional industry and business practices; building a successful business from this disruptive activity; and acting as a champion for the new digital economy.

Main submission

To win the Digital Champion Award, try to address the following criteria in a 500-word submission:

- How have you brought a digital solution to a sector/market challenge or need?
- Indicators of success – ie, consumer uptake; improvement or change in the working of the market; your business's revenues/performance; brand awareness/influence
- A demonstrable long-term commitment to digital innovation, and to building a sustainable business
- Impact and influence of the business and its key individuals in shaping and changing attitudes towards its market and the UK economy, society.

Summary submission

In 100 words, summarise the unique, distinguishing characteristics that make you/the nominee a candidate for the Digital Business of the Year.

* Important note: Entering this category requires shortlisted candidates to attend an interview with the judging panel in London in October 2017. Date to be confirmed.

Family-Owned Business of the Year

This award recognises world class family-owned UK companies, that continue to exhibit exceptional growth.

Main submission

We're asking you to show how your business is world class. We recommend you submit your 500-word citation according to these specific criteria, where relevant.

- Market leadership (in the UK and, if applicable, internationally)
- Consistent, profitable growth
- Scalability of business
- Positive or disruptive impact on industry/sector/marketplace
- Undeniable customer engagement
- Product/service innovation
- Evidence of best practice in customer service
- Excellence in people management and workforce motivation
- Commitment to sustainability and local community

Summary submission

In 100 words, please describe the unique, distinguishing characteristics that make your business a potential Company of the Year.

* Important note: Entering this category requires shortlisted candidates to attend an interview with the judging panel in London in October 2017. Date to be confirmed.

Entrepreneur of the Year

The biggest individual accolade, presented to a very special entrepreneur.

Won in the past by inspirational entrepreneurs such as Mike Lynch (Autonomy), Alastair Lukies (Monitise), Errol Damelin (Wonga) and Glen Manchester (Thunderhead).

Candidates can be long-standing, established entrepreneurs with a track record of business success and excellence; or newer entrepreneurs who are challenging industry norms.

Main submission

Entrepreneur of the Year candidates are asked to show the following qualities. We recommend that you structure your 500-word citation according to these specific criteria, where relevant:

- Strong track record of commercial success (in current and/or previous businesses)
- Evidence that you're building a major, scalable business or brand
- Personal ambition and vision
- Positive personal leadership of your own business & workforce
- Impact on your own industry (disruptive or in setting standards over a longer period)
- How you're setting/influencing a positive wider agenda – eg, in public understanding of entrepreneurship; or by giving back to society, local community; or impact on international markets

Summary submission

In 100 words, please summarise the unique, distinguishing characteristics that make you/the nominee a potential Entrepreneur of the Year.

* Important note: Entering this category requires shortlisted candidates to attend an interview with the judging panel in London in October 2017. Date to be confirmed.

Export Champion of the Year

Celebrating UK companies succeeding in the international marketplace.

The Export Champion of the Year award honours UK companies expanding or launching operations overseas.

In particular, this award recognises firms whose recent international achievements inspire other UK companies to trade internationally.

Previous winners include: the Premier League, Patersons HR and Payroll Solutions, the global translation business, the bigword, Ella's Kitchen, Oliver Valves and Sun Mark.

Main submission

Please submit your 500-word citation according to these specific criteria:

- Target market/s for recent overseas launch/expansion; and reasons for selecting them. Please highlight any third-party research, advice and assistance used to support the expansion plans
- Recent specific international initiative undertaken and strategy/thinking behind it
- Major hurdles/barriers facing the company in international launch/expansion, and how they were overcome. Please specify, if relevant, particularly challenging markets targeted
- Evidence of innovation in export strategy – ie, use of technology; international staffing strategy; working with partners etc
- Evidence of positive sales, market share performance and positive customer feedback
- Impact of recent increase in international revenues on the company's overall performance

Summary submission

In 100 words, please summarise the unique, distinguishing characteristics that make your business a potential Export Champion of the Year.

* Important note: Entering this category requires shortlisted candidates to attend an interview with the judging panel in London in October 2017. Date to be confirmed.

Creative Industries Business of the Year

Celebrating innovation and excellence in creative industries businesses, including fashion, advertising, design, film, TV, publishing, music and art.

The Creative Industries Business of the Year award recognises exceptional market leading, high growth, and innovative creative industries businesses that have significant potential to continue to scale.

Main submission

We're asking you to show how your business is world class. We recommend you submit your 500-word citation according to these specific criteria, where relevant.

- Market leadership (in the UK and, if applicable, internationally)
- Consistent, profitable growth
- Scalability of business
- Positive or disruptive impact on industry/sector/marketplace
- Undeniable customer engagement
- Product/service innovation
- Evidence of best practice in customer service
- Excellence in people management and workforce motivation
- Commitment to sustainability and local community

Summary submission

In 100 words, please describe the unique, distinguishing characteristics that make your business a potential Company of the Year.

* Important note: Entering this category requires shortlisted candidates to attend an interview with the judging panel in London in October 2017. Date to be confirmed.

Innovator of the Year

Celebrating genuine innovation in all aspects of business.

... from unusual management strategies to disruptive business models and from ground-breaking product design to cutting-edge manufacturing techniques.

This award recognises mid-sized and smaller companies that have challenged conventional thinking in their market or industry – and seen positive commercial results as an outcome.

Main submission

Tell us how you have innovated in and disrupted your sector. Some criteria to consider in your 500-word submission:

- Explain the competitive landscape in your sector/industry that was the trigger for your innovative processes and thinking
- Outline the key steps in your innovation-led response
- Specify the positive commercial outcomes
- If possible, demonstrate how you keep innovation alive within your business
- Explain how innovation has increased your capacity for growth

Summary submission

In 100 words, please try to summarise the unique, distinguishing characteristics that make your business the Innovator of the Year.

* Important note: Entering this category requires shortlisted candidates to attend an interview with the judging panel in London in October 2017. Date to be confirmed.

Micro Business of the Year

Small but perfectly formed. Recognising outstanding companies with ten or fewer staff.

We are looking for small teams of exceptional quality who are punching above their weight.

Main submission

We're asking you to show how your business is excelling. We recommend you submit your 500-word citation according to these specific criteria, where relevant.

- Market position
- Consistent, profitable growth
- Positive or disruptive impact on industry/sector/marketplace
- Undeniable customer engagement
- Product/service innovation
- Evidence of best practice in customer service
- Excellence in people management and workforce motivation
- Commitment to sustainability and local community

Summary submission

In 100 words, please summarise the unique, distinguishing characteristics that make the nominee a potential Micro Business of the Year.

* Important note: Entering this category requires shortlisted candidates to attend an interview with the judging panel in London in October 2017. Date to be confirmed.

Rural Business of the Year

Recognising outstanding growing businesses based in rural areas.

The Rural Business of the Year award recognises exceptional and innovative growing businesses based in rural areas.

Main submission

Please submit your 500-word citation according to these specific criteria if applicable:

- Evidence of outperformance of the market
- Evidence of meeting and exceeding customer demands
- Evidence of innovation
- Evidence of growth
- Evidence of benefits to local area
- Demonstration of growth despite rural constraints
- Evidence of why rural location is better than an urban one

Summary submission

In 100 words, please summarise the unique, distinguishing characteristics that make the nominee a candidate for the Rural Business of the Year category.

* Important note: Entering this category requires shortlisted candidates to attend an interview with the judging panel in London in October 2017. Date to be confirmed.

The Triumph over Adversity Award

Recognising businesses that have overcome difficulties - and are back on the path to success.

Main submission

Please submit your 500-word citation according to these specific criteria if applicable:

- Details of difficulties faced and overcome
- Details of turnaround strategy
- Evidence of restored growth
- Evidence of keeping workforce motivated

Summary submission

In 100 words, please summarise the unique, distinguishing characteristics that make the nominee a potential candidate for the Triumph over Adversity Award.

* Important note: Entering this category requires shortlisted candidates to attend an interview with the judging panel in London in October 2017. Date to be confirmed.

Young Company of the Year

Recognising the new businesses who are rejuvenating the UK's economy.

This award recognises first-class new companies (that have been trading after April 2012) that are changing/challenging their industry – and are on track to be significant players in the future.

Previous winners include: Chemist Direct, Concert Live, Ovo Energy and Anesco.

Main submission

We recommend you structure your 500-word citation according to these criteria, where relevant:

- Scale of market opportunity identified pre-launch
- Evidence that you're already beating the original business plan
- Commercial success of the company so far – ebitda; funds raised; orders won; other key metrics used
- Market engagement, customer excellence – key metrics; testimonials; reviews
- Innovation in product/service
- How is the business disrupting its sector, challenging traditional assumptions?
- Future strategy and scale of vision for the company's development
- International potential

Summary submission

In 100 words, please summarise the unique, distinguishing characteristics that make your business a potential Young Company of the Year.

* Important note: Entering this category requires shortlisted candidates to attend an interview with the judging panel in London in October 2017. Date to be confirmed.

Young Entrepreneur of the Year

Recognising the dynamic next generation of entrepreneurs.

This award has been the launchpad for many of UK's finest young entrepreneurs, and recognises those aged 30 years old (or younger) on November 30 2017.

Main submission

You'll need to show the qualities outlined below. We recommend that you structure your 500-word citation according to these specific criteria, where relevant:

- Track record of entrepreneurial achievement (in current and/or previous businesses)
- Strong financial performance in current business
- Evidence that you're building a scalable business or brand
- Innovation in your technology, product, service or sector
- Personal ambition and vision
- Positive personal leadership of your own business & workforce

Summary submission

In 100 words, please also describe the unique, distinguishing characteristics that make you/the nominee a potential Young Entrepreneur of the Year.

* Important note: Entering this category requires shortlisted candidates to attend an interview with the judging panel in London in October 2017. Date to be confirmed.