



**BRITISH  
CHAMBERS  
OF COMMERCE**  
BUSINESS AWARDS

**UK Chamber of the Year**

# East Midlands Accelerator

## North Nottinghamshire Case Studies 2022

Delivered in partnership with:



## A lasting legacy for accelerated business growth



The East Midlands Accelerator provided businesses in North Nottinghamshire with the funding, training and advice needed to grow, create and safeguard jobs, and recover from the Covid pandemic.

The project received £1.7 million from the UK Government through the UK Community Renewal Fund (UKCRF), and was led by East Midlands Chamber (Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire) in partnership with B-Global, NBV Enterprise Solutions Ltd and the Food & Drink Forum.

The project supported 571 businesses and delivered 1,356 business support interactions. Some 136 grants were awarded – valued at £1.1 million – and 152 specialist Consultancy projects brokered. A total of 29 unemployed people were supported into work.

Matching businesses with the support they need, when they need it and how they need it – through the region's most comprehensive business ecosystem yet – is surely the most important legacy of the project, and will act as a springboard for growth in our region for many years to come.



**Diane Beresford**  
**Deputy Chief Executive**  
East Midlands Chamber  
(Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire)

## Achievements and Successes



66

People into employment/  
self-employment



185

Jobs safeguarded



71

Businesses using  
new products



117

Employment increase  
in businesses



44

New businesses created



86

Decarbonisation plans





*More secure software means a more secure public*

## Halo Solutions Ltd

<b>Sector</b>	Public safety technology
<b>Location</b>	Newark
<b>Number of employees</b>	11
<b>Support received</b>	Grant funding Business Adviser support Help to Grow: Management training subsidy Zellar sustainability support

### The Business

Halo Solutions was set up as a consultancy and training business in 2014 by serving police officer, Lloyd Major. The launch of its Halo system in 2018 allowed Lloyd to pursue the business full-time.

The Halo system is a risk and incident management platform that provides safety critical systems to stadiums, events and businesses. Since its launch, it has protected over 40 million people, saved twelve lives and won thirteen international awards. It is used in over sixteen countries. Locally, its clients include the Motorpoint Arena, Nottinghamshire Police and Mansfield Town FC.

### Challenges

The business recently uncovered that its version of Python – a platform which sits at the heart of the Halo system – would shortly cease to be supported; a situation that had not been flagged by its external developers.

It was critically important to the running of the business and its clients – and indeed, the security of the public – that an immediate software upgrade be applied.

### Acceleration

An East Midlands Accelerator grant has enabled the business to engage specialist consultants to make this fix, also acting as the springboard to bring its entire systems inhouse.

The Help to Grow: Management Course – fully subsidised thanks to East Midlands Chamber – has also provided invaluable learning on how to create a value proposition for a product that transcends typical product values, as well as identify USPs and language that attracts evangelicals.

The business has long shown a commitment to the environment by offsetting its emissions each year. Signing up to one of the Chamber’s free one-year Zellar licences will help the business further this sustainability journey.

### Impact

Having a higher degree of control in a more robust platform gives the business confidence in its cashflow to employ a full-time marketing and insights executive. In turn, this will support this Chamber member business’s plans to sell Halo directly over the web, in multiple languages and with four new staff members supporting in major time zones.

Support from the Chamber’s Head of Scale-Up Services, Paul Humphreys, and Innovate UK, has also allowed Halo to raise significant investment and join Innovate UK’s Scale up programme. What started as a kitchen-table business has transitioned to a scaling enterprise with national and global reach.

Learn more about the business: [halosolutions.com](https://halosolutions.com)



“Without stabilising our core product, we would have been unable to service our existing clients. It would have created catastrophic reputational damage and impacted our clients’ capacity to respond to and manage incidents. Funding from East Midlands Accelerator has safeguarded against this and gives us a platform on which we can build with confidence.”

**Lloyd Major**  
CEO & Founder

An all-round winning performance



## Kurio 3D Compression

<b>Sector</b>	Sportswear manufacturing
<b>Location</b>	Mansfield
<b>Number of employees</b>	2
<b>Support received</b>	Grant Business Adviser support Zellar sustainability support

### The Business

Kurio 3D is a manufacturer of performance compression wear, based in Mansfield and Alfreton. It was established in 2012 by owner Paul Bromley.

Its revolutionary approach to scanning an athlete's body in order to create the perfect fit and compression level has led to contracts with a number of top-flight football clubs including Aston Villa and Everton, as well as The Lionesses and their Australian equivalents.



### Challenges

The business has spent considerable effort researching the science of its products, from the original scan to material quality and performance. Support from some of the UK's leading universities including, locally, Loughborough University and Nottingham Trent University have helped test its approach.

Whilst the initial technique to create the required patterns was highly effective – with an athlete's legs scanned within a matter of seconds – it required Paul to scan by hand in close proximity to athletes. It was a process at odds with the two-metre social distancing rule introduced during the Covid pandemic. The business went from a period of strong growth to virtual decimation.

### Acceleration

Necessity is, of course, the mother of invention. Covid restrictions proved to be the catalyst for the business to introduce state-of-the-art scanning booths which removed the need for close contact.

Since the booths can be situated in static locations, they have opened up a sizeable new audience, not only at sporting events but for anyone looking for a more tailored fit to their clothes. Better still, the booth can be operated remotely which frees up Paul's time to work on more strategic activity.



### Impact

This new way of engaging with the consumer market needs a fresh approach to digital marketing.

An East Midlands Accelerator grant has enabled the business to bring in vital digital consultancy. It is expected that raising awareness through social media – as and when needed when the booth is in a new location – will bring significant revenue growth and, in turn, support a long-term role for Paul's postgraduate sports science apprentice.

The business has also taken advantage of one of the Chamber's free annual Zellar licences, helping it to further its commitment to sustainability.

Learn more about the business: [kurio3d.com](http://kurio3d.com)



"Covid nearly broke my business. Through further investment in technology, we now have an additional route to market that is both robust and scalable. Support from East Midlands Accelerator will allow us to reach that new market at pace."

**Paul Bromley**  
Director



## A wrap on sweet success



## White Rose Aromatics

<b>Sector</b>	Fragrant gift products manufacture and supply
<b>Location</b>	Newark
<b>Number of employees</b>	2
<b>Support received</b>	Growth voucher Business Adviser support

### The Business

White Rose Aromatics is a long-established manufacturer and supplier of fragrant gift products. For nearly 30 years, it has built a highly-respected brand as a trade supplier to the retail industry, ranging from household names and independents on the high street to stately homes and other visitor destinations. It specialises in floral fragrances such as Lily of the Valley which was a personal favourite of the late Queen Elizabeth II.

Victoria Cartlidge bought the business in 2021, having worked alongside the previous business owner for some years. Victoria moved the business from its original location in West Yorkshire to its new home in Newark where she now runs it together with her husband, Adrian.

### Challenges

The biggest challenge faced by the husband-and-wife team is the need to be agile – not only in terms of keeping up with changing consumer tastes and legislation on ingredients, but in responding to the needs of trade customers. Many are independent retailers in the giftware/tourism sectors facing the pressures of post-Covid recovery, inflation and rising energy costs. The company is responding by careful design of new products, manufactured in the UK to keep prices competitive whilst being on trend.

With trade customers as far away as North America, the business also needs to deal with the complexities of post-Brexit exporting, especially as Brexit has shut it out of the EU cosmetic products market.

### Impact

This injection of expertise into new designs means the business can position itself in the best way to extend its product range; in turn, capturing the interest of many more customers, both at home and abroad.

Learn more about the business: [whiterosearomatics.co.uk](http://whiterosearomatics.co.uk)



### Acceleration

The business prides itself on its ongoing commitment to research and development. It regularly liaises with UK Fragrance Houses to keep up with the latest trends, and is committed to continually adding to its product range (having recently expanded into diffusers) as well as updating its packaging.

An East Midlands Accelerator growth voucher has enabled the business to employ the services of design consultants to work on its packaging. This will support the business's drive to launch new products. It is anticipated that a fresh approach will also appeal to a new audience beyond its existing customer demographic.



“We are attending a high-profile trade show in a matter of months so work on our packaging project needed to be immediate. Applying for East Midlands Accelerator support was a very straightforward and quick process, and came at the perfect time to support our efforts in developing our brand.”

**Victoria Cartlidge**  
Managing Director

*A website to reflect a multi-million-pound business*

## Whistler Technology

<b>Sector</b>	Electronic component distribution
<b>Location</b>	Mansfield
<b>Number of employees</b>	28
<b>Support received</b>	Grant funding Business Adviser support Zellar sustainability support

### Challenges

The business operates in a highly competitive market where trust in quality is undermined by counterfeiting (where old parts are cleaned, re-marked and sold as new). With its strong reputation for quality of product and service – as exemplified by its ISO9001 quality and AS9120 aerospace accreditations – the business has long been known as a supplier of choice.

The challenge is to find time to continually enhance the customer experience at the same time that the number of customers grows.

### The Business

Whistler Technology Ltd has grown from a two-person business in 2001 to a £30 million turnover business employing 28 members of staff. It sells to many OEMs (original equipment manufacturers) and CEMs (construction engineering management companies), and holds contracts with some of the biggest manufacturers in the world.

### Acceleration

For the business to improve its engagement with customers, it knew it needed to work on its website, and develop an online presence that better reflected its status as a multi-million-pound business. Including a customer portal would allow for a seamless customer journey from the first point of enquiry to long-term relationship.

A grant from East Midlands Accelerator has funded the development of a new website and customer portal. The portal not only ensures that customers have the information they need at the touch of a button but introduces automated processes at every stage of the customer journey; thereby reducing the need for the busy commercial team to undertake these activities.

### Impact

The new customer portal means the business can retain a closer working relationship with its customers which is vital for a long-term growth trajectory.

Support from East Midlands Accelerator is also helping this Chamber member deliver on its social and environmental commitments. The business already owns two electric cars and is committed to improving its sustainability wherever it can. Signing up to one of the Chamber's free one-year licences to the Zellar sustainability platform has allowed the business to calculate the annual emissions from its building – 10 tonnes of CO2 per year. It has used Zellar's energy checklist to try and reduce this (plus lower costs), and will offset its current footprint by investing in a local Nottinghamshire woodland project.

Learn more about the business:  
[whistler.technology](http://whistler.technology)



“

“In order to tap into the funding, we needed to work at lightening pace over a two-day period. It has certainly been a worthwhile activity and we now have a website reflective of our multi-million-pound business.”

**Shaun Flowers**  
Sales Director



*A musically-gifted business*



## Antony Scott Ltd

<b>Sector</b>	Sales of own-brand musical instrument accessories
<b>Location</b>	Retford
<b>Number of employees</b>	4
<b>Support received</b>	Grant funding Business Adviser support Zellar sustainability support

### The Business

The idea for Antony Scott Ltd was borne of musician Mark Scott’s appreciation that tapping into people’s love of music makes for successful instrument accessories. From an initial idea in 2015, he launched a branded range of guitar picks within six months, later adding other unique guitar-related gifts and accessories.

The business quickly moved from a ‘kitchen table’ business to a storage unit, a small warehouse and, more recently, a larger warehouse. The business now employs four people.

### Challenges

The business’s revenue is predominantly achieved via online retail but the complexities of exporting to the EU after Brexit had created somewhat of a roadblock. Mark knew the business needed to be fleetfooted – expanding its wholesale operation and the US market as two notable examples – but only with additional capacity.

A marketer/ content creator would certainly build the brand in markets beyond the EU but taking on this individual proved problematic with the current warehouse and office space already at capacity when it came to workstations.

Ever mindful of cashflow and outgoings, the business also identified that it was spending far too much on photography. Since a member of the team was skilled in this area, it made perfect sense to service this requirement inhouse. Interest from others in the industry looking for product photography and videography has led the business to offer this as a commercial service.



### Acceleration

Funding from East Midlands Accelerator has allowed the business to invest in an office pod. It is the perfect solution for many reasons. It allows for team expansion from one location. It provides an excellent soundproofed environment for the business to create videos for its own marketing and that of its clients. Better still, should the business outgrow its current premises, the pod can move with it.

The project has also funded a one-year subscription to the Zellar platform which will support the business on its sustainability journey.

### Impact

East Midlands Accelerator support is allowing the business to accelerate its ambitions in recruiting a dedicated marketer, targeting new markets, and launching its photography and videography arm.

Learn more about the business: [antonymusic.com](http://antonymusic.com)



“I’d never applied for a grant before but found the process incredibly straightforward. With the support of East Midlands Accelerator, the idea for an office pod became a reality in a matter of only three months. I am hugely grateful for the support from the Chamber and my business adviser. It means we can bring on a marketer much more quickly and affordably, allowing us to expand into new markets at pace.”

**Mark Scott**  
Director

## Opening doors to a new market



## Integra Window Systems

<b>Sector</b>	Doors and windows supplier
<b>Location</b>	Mansfield
<b>Number of employees</b>	3
<b>Support received</b>	Grant funding Business Adviser support

## Challenges

The last few years have been challenging and unsettling, particularly as far as predicting consumer behaviour is concerned.

Michael's vision is to take his business beyond the traditional doors and windows market, and supply the wider construction sector. This would help to safeguard the future of the business against any changes in market demand, and spread the risk across a wider range of products.

It would also allow the business to build a base for continued growth.

## The Business

Michael Irwin established Integra Window Systems in 2016 following his own ten-year career in the window & uPVC industry. His business offers high quality but reasonably priced uPVC windows and aluminium bi-folding and sliding doors.

Michael moved his business base from home to the Mansfield Innovation Centre in September 2021, quickly taking on two new members of staff.

## Acceleration

The business knew exactly which markets it wanted to target – building contractors – but knew it needed support in order to build a presence quickly in that market place and beyond the resources available through its own telesales activity.

A grant from East Midlands Accelerator provided the perfect opportunity to bring in Yell's expertise on digital marketing. The project involved optimising the business's website for SEO, as well as social advertising and email marketing campaigns.

This targeted, accelerated approach to lead generation has already led to securing ten repeat trade customers.



## Impact

The additional revenue secured from these new, repeat trade customers means the business is again in a position to take its growth up a gear. It expects to take on a further employee in the next six months and is firmly on its way to achieving its five-year plan to employ a team of eight.

Learn more about the business: [integrawindows.co.uk](http://integrawindows.co.uk)



"The support we've received from the Chamber has been so valuable in helping our business grow – first through the Kickstart subsidy which has led to us offering a highly valued member of staff a full-time position once his placement ended, and now as a result of the funding we've received to develop our marketing strategy. Our turnover is already 40% up on last year. We wouldn't have achieved this without the Chamber's support."

### Michael Irwin

Integra Window Services



## A fresh approach to marketing



## Deli and Dine

<b>Sector</b>	Hospitality
<b>Location</b>	Retford
<b>Number of employees</b>	10
<b>Support received</b>	Grant funding Business Adviser support



## The Business

Deli and Dine is a restaurant, coffee shop and deli based on Carolgate in Retford.

Everything is freshly made and baked on the premises, including a wide range of cakes, scones, casseroles, soups and stews. Its deli counter – which also supplies the restaurant – offers local and continental charcuterie, olives and salads.

## Challenges

The coffee shop/restaurant in particular has a very loyal customer base. As well as local residents, it attracts local business networks. Like any hospitality business, however, Deli and Dine is constantly looking to appeal to new audiences.

Whilst the business has a prominent position on Carolgate, its lack of prominent signage meant that it has struggled to get footfall from one of the main streets in Retford.

It identified two key opportunities to increase promotion and attract new customers. Firstly, by increasing its external signage. Secondly, through more activity on social media.



## Acceleration

The business has been supported on both counts.

Funding initially came from the Bassetlaw High Street Business Support Programme which was set up to help high street businesses in the Bassetlaw District Council area to review marketing activity and their in-store and online presence. The programme was funded by Bassetlaw District Council through HM Government's Welcome Back Fund, supported by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and delivered in partnership with East Midlands Chamber.

It awarded Deli and Dine a grant to improve its signage along the frontage to Carolgate so as not to miss out on passing trade.

The business was later successful in receiving an East Midlands Accelerator grant which funded the purchase of a laptop and other equipment, allowing the staff to become more efficient and regular in their posting on Facebook and Instagram.

## Impact

As a result, the business has seen an uptake in footfall which in turn has led to an increase in revenue and has allowed the business to extend its opening hours into the early evening. This means it can now cater for a new night-time clientele.

Learn more about the business: [delianddine.co.uk](http://delianddine.co.uk)



"Funding has come at the perfect time for us. We know that budgets will be pinched over the coming months so it's really important that as many people in the town get to know about us. The additional signage has proved really valuable in promoting our presence, particularly at night when it's lit up, and support for our social media means we are now attracting a new demographic to add to our loyal customer base."

**Zoe Roberts**  
Manager

Creating time and space to grow



## Design Living Space

<b>Sector</b>	Provider of professional architectural drawings
<b>Location</b>	Mansfield
<b>Number of employees</b>	2
<b>Support received</b>	Grant funding Business Adviser support Zellar sustainability support



### The Business

Design Living Space was established in 2019 and offers professional architectural drawings for planning and building regulations applications. Its services are particularly popular with homeowners seeking to create additional living space.

The business offers two levels of service: a full site visit; and an online submission for simpler projects which require only permitted development approval.

### Challenges

As the business reaches capacity, it recognises the need to extend its team. It is important, however, that the activities of any new staff member support the growth of the company rather than deal with administrative tasks associated with an increased number of customers.

There are elements of the online submission process that are not yet automated and which may require email communication with the client, or that are duplicated. Enabling customers to submit their measurements and payment details into an online portal would significantly reduce the amount of customer interaction needed, thereby freeing up time to grow in other areas.

### Acceleration

Funding from East Midlands Accelerator has enabled the business to invest in a new website and PC system to handle its new design processes.

Rather than creating a planning drawing by hand at the customer's property, returning to the office and replicating the design on the PC, the new technology allows Lee Bakalarczyk to create the drawing on a tablet whilst with the client, which then automatically saves on his desktop. In turn, the time saved means he has more to invest in business development activities.

The new interactive online customer portal offers a much more interactive experience. Customers are able to track their application from first design through each approval stage. It means the business can provide reassurance, at the touch of a button, that progress is being made and removes the need for it to deploy resources to provide piecemeal information over email.

The business has also signed up for one of the Chamber's free annual Zellar licences which will allow it to monitor its carbon footprint and take corrective action where possible.

### Impact

There are two key benefits from the support received. Firstly, a more efficient business has the headroom to take on new customers. Secondly, it has confidence that it has the appropriate model in place to scale up its team accordingly.

Learn more about the business: [designlivingspace.co.uk](https://designlivingspace.co.uk)



"East Midlands Accelerator has enabled us to invest in new IT systems that we simply wouldn't have been able to afford at this early stage of the business. The investment makes our operation so more scalable, allowing us to invest in new channels to reach a national market."

**Lee Bakalarczyk**  
Owner



## Bringing beauty to Bridge Street



## Sash Beauty

<b>Sector</b>	Beauty Salon	<b>Support received</b>
<b>Location</b>	Worksop	Growth voucher Business Adviser support
<b>Number of employees</b>	4	

### The Business

Sash Beauty Retreat is a beauty salon specialising in beauty treatments including lashes, micro-needling and aesthetics. It is owned and run by Sarah Evans and is now in its tenth year. The business attracts customers from Worksop and the surrounding areas, as well as from Retford and Sheffield.

### Challenges

The business built up a loyal client base over its first nine years at its Central Avenue premises in Worksop.

When the building was hit by repeated issues with flooding, Sarah took the decision to re-locate to premises in Bridge Street. So soon after lockdown, however, the bigger premises presented an increased cost in rent and bills and, therefore, an increased risk.

### Acceleration

Moving to new premises opened up the opportunity to bring in new clients.

Support was initially on hand from the Bassetlaw High Street Business Support Programme which was set up to help high street businesses in the Bassetlaw District Council area to review marketing activity and their in-store and online presence. It offered tailored advice and guidance, including on the implementation of a business improvement action plan.

Grant support under the programme funded the cost of the salon's new exterior signage and boards, as well as a new interior display.

Recognising the potential of Sarah's business for growth, Chamber business adviser Steve Phillips recommended that she also consider applying for a growth voucher under the East Midlands Accelerator project.

With the beauty team now settled in the new premises and with the opportunity to extend the salon's breadth of services, Sarah knew immediately that spending the money on training in a new area gaining rapid popularity in the UK – that of fat dissolving injections – would be a sound investment for the future.

### Impact

Funding towards the new signage has had an immediate impact on bringing in new clients to Sarah's business. That number is only set to grow as word spreads across North Nottinghamshire about the salon's new fat dissolving treatment.



"The new signage really opened up the front of the shop and meant that I could acquire new clients without the need to pay for advertising. I'd never applied for funding before but my Chamber business adviser, Steve Phillips, supported me through the process from start to finish. He was absolutely brilliant and got me to where I needed to be – and it's already made a difference to my order book!"

**Sarah Evans**

Owner



**East Midlands Chamber (Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire)**

☎ 0333 320 0333

🌐 [www.emc-dnl.co.uk](http://www.emc-dnl.co.uk)

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