

2017 / 2018

DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA & SPORT

The Parliamentary Review

A YEAR IN PERSPECTIVE

■ FOREWORDS

The Rt Hon Theresa May MP
Julian David

■ DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT & MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES

Ingenta plc	VerriBerri
Creative Assembly	Ve Global
Fastfwd	WebBoss
Analysys Mason	A&I Group
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■ FEATURES

Review of the Year
Review of Parliament



Foreword

The Rt Hon Theresa May MP

Prime Minister

British politics provides ample material for analysis in the pages of *The Parliamentary Review*. For Her Majesty's Government, our task in the year ahead is clear: to achieve the best Brexit deal for Britain and to carry on our work to build a more prosperous and united country – one that truly works for everyone.

We have already made good progress towards our goal of leaving the EU, so that we take back control of our laws, money and borders, while negotiating a deep and special partnership with it after we have left that is good for jobs and security. The EU Withdrawal Act is now on the statute books to provide legal certainty at the point of exit. We have reached agreement on protecting the rights of EU citizens living here in the UK and British citizens living in the EU, on an implementation period to give businesses time to prepare, and on a fair financial settlement. We are now pressing ahead to reach an agreement with the EU on our future relationship that honours the result of the EU referendum and sets the UK on course for a prosperous future.

Getting the right Brexit deal is essential; but it will not be sufficient on its own to secure a more prosperous future for Britain. We also need to ensure that our economy is ready for what tomorrow will bring. Our Modern Industrial Strategy is our plan to do that. It means Government stepping up to secure the foundations of our productivity. It is all about taking action for the long-term that will pay dividends in the future.

That is why we have set an ambitious goal of lifting UK public and private research and development investment to 2.4 per cent of GDP by 2027. It is why we are developing four Grand Challenges, the big drivers of social and economic change in the world today: harnessing artificial intelligence and the data revolution;

leading in changes to the future of mobility; meeting the challenges of our ageing society; and driving ahead the revolution in clean growth. By focusing our efforts on making the most of these areas of enormous potential, we can develop new exports, grow new industries, and create more good jobs in every part of our country.

Years of hard work and sacrifice from the British people have got our deficit down by over three quarters. We are building on this success by taking a balanced approach to public spending. We are continuing to deal with our debts, so that our economy can remain strong and we can protect people's jobs, and at the same time we are investing in vital public services.

I believe that Britain can look to the future with confidence. We are leaving the EU and setting a new course for prosperity as a global trading nation. We have a Modern Industrial Strategy that is strengthening the foundations of our economy and helping us to seize the opportunities of the future. We are building on our country's great strengths – our world-class universities and researchers, our excellent services sector, our cutting-edge manufacturers, our vibrant creative industries, our dedicated public servants – we can look towards a new decade that is ripe with possibility. The government I lead is doing all it can to make that brighter future a reality for everyone in our country.

“British politics provides ample material for analysis in the pages of *The Parliamentary Review*”

WebBoss®



The development team at our Torquay office



Kevin Wilson, CEO, and Luke Wilson, CTO. Co-founders of WebBoss

Although effectively still a start-up, WebBoss® is a small UK business that has developed revolutionary proprietary website-building software that is already being used by some of the world's largest companies. Founded in 2011 by father-and-son team Kevin Wilson, chief executive officer, and Luke Wilson, chief technology officer, the company employs ten staff and is based in Torquay, Devon – admittedly a little unusual for such a high-tech business. Here Kevin Wilson describes the ambitions and values behind the foundation of this unique business, and his hopes for the future within the UK technology market.

Our vision

The vision of WebBoss was to create a proprietary website-building, e-commerce and hosting platform that had the security benefits and ease of use that proprietary systems like Wix and SquareSpace have, along with the flexibility of open-source software such as WordPress, Drupal and Joomla. Open-source software is developed openly by communities of programmers, making the code accessible to anyone. Conversely, proprietary software is developed by one company and the code is not publicly accessible, making it more secure from hacking. Moreover, proprietary software is also regularly updated by its developers. If an individual needs a new website, their choice is either one of the existing proprietary systems that will get them a low-cost, nice-looking templated website that is technically limited, or – on the other hand – a tailor-made, highly functional, albeit costly, open-source website. Unfortunately, open-source systems rely on third-party plugins – or, as we call them, “modules” – which

FACTS ABOUT WEBBOSS®

- » CEO: Kevin Wilson
- » CTO: Luke Wilson
- » Established in 2011
- » Based in Torquay, Devon
- » Services: Developers of advanced web building and hosting platform
- » No. of employees: 10
- » Used by many global companies and UK PLCs
- » ISO 9001, ISO 27001, also WebBoss® registered TM
- » www.webbosswebsites.com
www.webboss.io

» OUR PARTNERS
INCLUDE

- » Barclaycard
- » Worldpay
- » Getty Images
- » Allied Wallet (one of the fastest-growing US payment gateway providers)

“With WebBoss, truly specialised, complex, high value business websites can be quickly created by a competent designer without the expense of a web developer”

aren't always updated to the latest security protocols, along with various other third-party services such as secure hosting, domain names, email accounts and SSL security (the security technology for establishing encrypted links between web servers and browsers), all of which need separate ongoing management.

What makes WebBoss unique is that it brings all these services together into a single package. We combine the creative freedoms and high functionality of open-source software along with the benefits of proprietary packages, which means that, with WebBoss, truly specialised, complex, high-value business websites can be quickly created by a competent designer without the expense of a web developer, reducing costs by up to 60 per cent.

Given that WebBoss-built websites are secure, reliable and quickly designed and built, it's clear why – alongside numerous small and medium enterprises (SMEs) – many of the world's leading companies use, or are partnered with, a company like ours.

Online customer support and training is always a priority with WebBoss



Team

Having a great product, however, is just a very small part of having a successful business, and a fundamental principle of ours is not just to have the best product but also to run our business to the best possible standards. We strongly believe in staff development, training and transparency, and involving the team in as much of the business operation as is practical. This approach has created a very loyal team with virtually every staff member relocating to work for us. Accompanying this, we are keen to promote women in tech, and our first female apprentice now holds a responsible position working alongside our female senior executive assistant.

Location

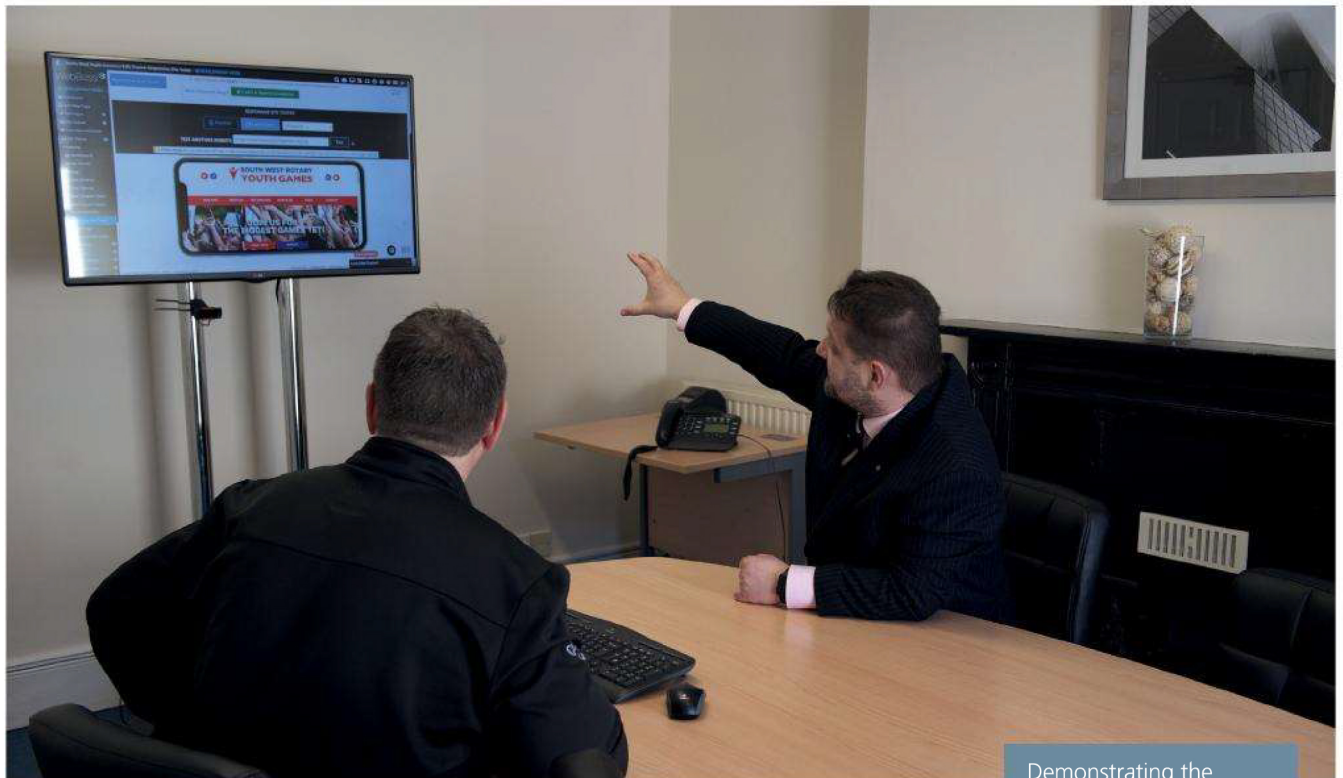
Despite a challenging local technical infrastructure, we intend to keep our business in the West Country. This is because the scenery and pace of life naturally create an inspiring working environment, and because we hope to expand the tech sector in this part of the country, which at present provides few job opportunities.

Best practice

To ensure that we maintain the standards we aspire to, we invested in the company becoming certified to ISO 9001 for business quality management, and ISO 27001 for information security management. This was no mean feat for a company of our size. To begin with, working to such a demanding level of compliance was quite daunting. However, we all take it in our stride now, and it keeps everyone performing to the highest standard.

Investment and growth

WebBoss has achieved substantial traction with a small amount of



Demonstrating the WebBoss system responsiveness website checker

seed investment, and now that we have a tried-and-tested product, our immediate plans are to scale and launch WebBoss as a global stand-alone SaaS (Software as a Service) product – a move for which we are seeking further investment to ensure that we can finance a significant marketing campaign.

Finding investment for a tech business in the UK is a very difficult task, however. I believe this is because most UK investors still haven't entered "Silicon Valley mode" and, from my experience, many investors still seem to think in a "bricks and mortar assets" mentality. Like many similar companies, we have virtually no tangible assets, but our "intangible asset" could process and deliver orders worth upwards of £1 million in under five minutes. In 2016, we displayed as a start-up in Lisbon at the world's biggest technology exhibition, Web Summit, which had 50,000 attendees. We were inundated with meetings with investors, though none were British. The majority were from the United States, along with several from

all over Europe, and although we are still in touch with many of them, their priority is to invest in businesses in their own territories.

There are funding initiatives available in the UK, but they don't really fit the software/SaaS business model, and I believe the UK is missing out on a great opportunity here. Getting seed money up to £250 thousand is relatively easy and helped by the seed enterprise investment scheme (SEIS) and enterprise investment scheme (EIS). Larger funds of upwards of £4 million from the likes of the BGF (Business Growth Fund) also seem relatively easy to acquire. However, there is a huge gap in the middle, which is where many companies need funds to grow to the next stage. I believe if financial institutions and/or government could address this, we would see substantial growth in the UK technology market, as the UK is never short of innovators, and companies like ours would grow much faster, bringing an ongoing boost to the UK economy.

» OUR PAST AND PRESENT USERS INCLUDE

- » Mattel
- » Collins
- » Hasbro
- » Trinity Mirror plc

“Most UK investors still haven't entered 'Silicon Valley mode' and, from my experience, many investors still seem to think in a 'bricks and mortar assets' mentality”

WebBoss

[A Message from Lord Pickles and Lord Blunkett, followed by WebBoss's best practice article](#)

The ability to listen and learn from one another has always been vital in parliament, in business and in most aspects of daily life. But at this particular moment in time, as national and global events continue to reiterate, it is uncommonly crucial that we forge new channels of communication and reinforce existing ones. The following article from WebBoss is an attempt to do just that. We would welcome your thoughts on this or any other Parliamentary Review article.



Rt Hon The Lord David Blunkett



Rt Hon The Lord Eric Pickles