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Jeremy Walters
 Paragon Customer Communications
2017 rank 12
WHY As CEO of highly acquisitive Paragon's £250m Customer Communications business, Walters has one of the most exciting jobs in print. After all, this year alone his business has bought parts of the collapsed FT Solutions business, St Ives Management Services (SIMS), and Imprimus, formerly Stralfors. Walters is described by colleagues as a "great listener" who's key strength is his ability to digest a range of views, from both clients and his management team, which then help shape his decisions. "He's never frightened to have his mind changed, but, equally, he'll never shy away from difficult decisions." The unabashed Saints fan is also a great motivator, imbuing an energy and enthusiasm into the business. "Jeremy very much makes us feel like we're part of one team, with a common goal." All of which has come in very useful when it comes to merging the disparate cultures that make up the CC business, not to mention averting strike action at its Nottingham site.



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Paul Utting
 Walstead Group
2017 rank 11
WHY 10 years ago Paul Utting, then chief executive of Wyndeham Group, was staring disaster in the face after the Icelandic banking collapse resulted in the failure of the group's leading lender. What a difference a decade makes. Wyndeham was subsequently acquired by Walstead, and Utting is now group chief executive of a €730m (£650m) business that has widened its ambitions from consolidation in UK web offset to the bigger playing field of continental Europe. "The European offset and gravure is an €8bn sector, even with the reduction in publishing. It's still a massive sector," he asserts. Utting is an accomplished business leader who has "the remarkable ability to make the right decision when it counts and get the ardent buy-in from his colleagues," according to one associate. Somehow, he also managed to find the time to take up the triathlon last year and says of his current performance level: "I get round the course".



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Scott Barclay
 Williams Lea Tag
2017 rank 13
WHY In his role as the global BPO giant's head of strategic sourcing across the EMEA, Barclay is responsible for the business's procurement across the region. However, markets further afield and non-print applications have been the focus of late, with the acquisitions of Canada-headquartered digital content and social media agency THP and US-based computer-generated imagery specialist Taylor James. While the business has signalled that it plans to use its £90m war chest to strengthen the business's omni-channel and global offering, as one industry watcher notes: "It's still print and the EMEA region that brings home the group's bacon, and Scott is a pivotal part of that." The wiry Scot's personal highlight this year was taking part in a white-collar boxing bout, where he raised thousands of pounds for Cancer Research UK. And while he described the training regime as "gruelling" all the hard work paid off - he won!



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Kirk Galloway
 Buxton Press
2017 rank 1
WHY While a fall of five places from last year's well-deserved number-one slot might, under ordinary circumstances, be a signifier of challenging year, in the case of Buxton and its CEO Galloway it couldn't be further from the truth. The business continues to go from strength to strength. According to colleagues, Galloway is "scrupulously fair", but has an "insatiable desire" for Buxton to succeed and woe betide anyone or anything that gets in the way of that goal. A keen golfer, when time allows, Galloway is very much his own man, which must make board meetings with his father, chairman and mentor, an equally strong personality, lively to say the least. While a record sixth PrintWeek Company of the Year crown was just out of reach, Galloway was magnanimous and it would take a brave soul to bet against a 2019 comeback. "It's a truly incredible operation," said one rival. "It's hard to think of a better run business in print".



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Robert MacMillan
 HH Global
2017 rank 9
WHY Chief executive MacMillan has spearheaded another successful growth year at HH Global, which reached the 1,000-employee milestone in 2018 and was recognised by both the *Sunday Times* HSBC International Track 200 and Top Track 250 rankings. The company secured all of its strategic contract renewals and extensions this year while new business wins included Walmart China, JD Sports EMEA and MetLife USA. The integration of PostNL Print Management following last year's acquisition, meanwhile, "went incredibly well", with new colleagues thriving with the wider HH Global team. A born networker described as "completely open, and always on-hand for any client or employee needs", MacMillan continues to be actively involved in all regions, making clear his infectious passion and energy for the business. HH Global is not his only success story, though. He also became assistant manager of Lindfield Sharks under 12s this year, and the team is on target for promotion!



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Miles Linney
 Linney
2017 rank 6
WHY It's been a busy year of recruitment, investment and winning new accounts for Linney and managing director Miles Linney. The long-established family business won a chunk of M&S point-of-sale work at the beginning of 2018, one of a number of new business wins after the shake-up caused by events at St Ives and SP Group. The company has quietly taken on 200 new employees, and has just begun construction of a new 9,300m² fulfilment and distribution centre next to its Mansfield superstore, which will involve a £5.5m spend. Linney, together with his brother Charles, make for a highly effective duo at the top of the group, combining charm, humour and affability with a seriously detailed understanding of what's going on in their business and target markets. Outside of work, you might find him sailing along the beautiful North Norfolk coast, and perhaps enjoying the occasional pint of Woodforde's Wherry afterwards.



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Andy Blundell
 Communisis
2017 rank 5
WHY Court approval has just been granted for Communisis' acquisition by US billing services group OSG, which will open the customer communications and marketing services group up to a much wider array of technology. Prior to the takeover, Communisis had already experienced another strong period under chief executive Blundell's watch. Revenues and profits were both up in the company's 2017 results and 2018 was off to a similarly strong start, with sales up 9% for the half-year and overseas revenue growing to represent 34% of group sales. Recent major business wins have included a new five-year contract from insurer Zurich for outbound communications, and the expansion of an existing contract with a large FMCG business. Communisis staff appreciate the opportunity to engage directly with Blundell, who regularly takes the time to "walk the floor" at both UK and international company locations. Away from work he makes the most of the outdoors and enjoys both fishing and running.



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Mark Scanlon
 Walstead Group
2017 rank 3
WHY Walstead Group chairman Mark Scanlon used to work with Paragon's Paddy Crean back in the duo's Adare days, and it will be fascinating to see which of these two former colleagues hits the €1bn-turnover landmark first - they both now have that figure very much in their sights. Scanlon's approach typically involves taking over large chunks of business from corporate sellers who are exiting a market or country, with the most recent example being the addition of more than €200m in turnover through the purchase of what was RR Donnelley's Polish printing business. He's described as "extremely driven" and "relentless" in finding the right opportunities for the group to pursue. We wouldn't be surprised if the UK business adopted the Walstead moniker to bring it in line with the rest of the group, and eagerly await the outcome of the NM Rothschild review that could bring on board new investors and further fuel the M&A drive. He keeps fit by weightlifting and cycling, after which he might just enjoy the occasional glass of red.

