



BUILDERS MERCHANTS LEAGUE TABLES 2017

The biggest are still big but the smaller independents are more than holding their own in BMJ's annual look at the results of the top merchant companies

COMPANY	YR END	TURNOVER (£M)	PRE TAX PROFIT (£M)	EMPLOYEES	PREVIOUS YEAR (£M)	BRANCHES
Travis Perkins Group	31/12/2015	£5,941.6m	£223.5m	24670	£5,580m	2028
Travis Perkins (merchant operations)	31/12/2015	£4,557m	£328m		£4,298m	1457
Jewson	31/12/2015	£1,861.3m	£23.57m	9127	£1,876m	600
Wolseley UK	31/07/2016	£1,996m	£74m *(trading profit)	6065	£1,758m	737
Grafton Merchanting GB	31/12/2015	£1,102.7m	£29.63m	5015	£1,046m	615
MKM	30/09/2016	£284.31m	£16.07m ** (2015)	938	£251.91m	48
Bradford Building Supplies	30/04/2016	£169.43m	£2.1m	1166	£168m	49
Ridgeons	31/12/2015	£143.61m	£4.77m	793	£137m	26
Huws Gray	31/12/2015	£122.03m	£15.1m	561	£116.6m	62
EH Smith	30/06/2016	£118.23m	£2.8m	408	£121.38m	8
Haldane Shiells	31/12/2015	£89.06m	£3.11m	522	£88.2m	16
Builder Depot	31/12/2015	£87.65m	£2.11m	328	£73.5m	6
Lawsons	30/06/2016	£84.38m	£7.24m	408	£76.7m	16
Nicholls & Clarke	31/12/2015	£70.65m	£3.27m	567	£70.2m	18
Covers	31/12/2015	£70.21m	£4.49m	410	£68.1m	13
Elliott Brothers	31/12/2015	£61.28m	£1.64m	254	£56.m	13
Grant & Stone	31/03/2016	£67.53m	£6.1m	232	£60.47m	22
Sydenhams	31/03/2016	£60.92m	£5.08m	399	£56.7m	29
MP Moran	31/12/2015	£59.9m	£7.64m	255	£54m	7
Joseph Parr	31/12/2015	£54.53m	£2.05mm	243	£49.6m	9
RGB	31/03/2016	£54.26m	£3.06m	286	£52.6m	18
Parker Building Supplies	31/12/2015	£54.11m	£0.88m	253	£52.3m	15
James Hargreaves	31/12/2015	£53.82m	£3.91m	239	£48.5m	46
HPS	31/12/2015	£53.05m	£4.39m	167	£48.1m	33
Williams & Co	30/11/2015	£52.85m	£3.32m	204	£43.3m	30
Crossling	31/12/2015	£48.52m	£2.77m	272	£55m	5
James Burrell	31/10/2015	£47.36m	£0.7m	176	£46m	8
JT Atkinson	31/12/2015	£42.68m	£2.43m	236	£39.5m	19
JT Dove	31/12/2015	£42.61m	£1.68m	203	£39.9m	17
LBS	31/12/2015	£41.93m	£1.19m	253	£37m	16
MGM Timber (Scotland)	31/03/2016	£41.68m	£1.94m	168	£40.9m	12
C&W Berry	31/10/2015	£40.42m	£6.14m	220	£37.3m	1
Myers Group	30/09/2015	£40.36m	£1.09m	326	£38.5m	14
Walter Tipper	31/12/2015	£40.09m	£1.96m	187	£34.3m	9
Robert Price	30/09/2015	£38.46m	£2.24m	261	£34.6m	20
Alsford Timber	31/12/2015	£38.25m	£1.86m	203	£36.5m	18
Kent, Blaxill	31/12/2015	£34.63m	£1.38m	242	£32.7m	13
Rembrand Timber	30/09/2015	£33.80m	£0.99m	189	£30.9m	20
John Nicholls	31/03/2016	£40.7m	£1.2m	168	32.80m	9
Kellaway	31/08/2015	£32.73m	£1.17m	158	£29.1m	11
AW Lumb	30/06/2016	£34.19m	£1.9m	76	£31.54m	2
Carvers	31/12/2015	£30.22m	£3.24m	152	£28.32m	1
M Markovitz	31/12/2015	£30.0m	£1.04m	156	£24.5m	7
Chandlers	31/12/2015	£28.31m	£1.28m	119	£22.2m	13
AW Champion	31/12/2015	£27.03m	£1.18m	206	£25.7m	10
John A Stephens	31/12/2015	£24.91m	£1.03m	110	£24.7m	2
Beesley & Fildes	31/03/2016	£24.43m	£0.88m	211	£23.9m	9

The picture changes very little from year to year. Those merchants at the top are still the biggest in terms of turnover, branch numbers and employees. As usual, it's further down the league tables where things get more interesting.

All too often, these figures show that it's not always what you have that counts, rather what you do with it. Builder Depot and EH Smith, for example, have fewer branches than many of the companies whose turnover they have long since leapfrogged. Location too, plays its part - C&W Berry's one-site mega-branch in Lancashire has a turnover that's a third bigger than others with 10 times the branches.

Turnover is, of course, only part of the picture. Huws Gray's pre-tax profit figure looks quite astonishing given where the company sits in the tables and compares more than favourably with those above it.

Merchants aren't of course, the only channel to market. For comparison purposes, the last financial year results of the following major merchant competitors were:

Howdens	£1.22bn (31/12/15)
Screwfix	£1.057bn (31/1/16)
C Brewer	£160m (31/12/15)

Source Companies House and company reports:

Caveat: The figures reported are for the last complete financial year, as posted to Companies House. The different ways and timescales to which companies in this sector report their annual turnovers means that many of the figures refer to 2015.

*: Wolseley's 2016 headline figures for the UK business have been released as part of Wolseley plc's results and the 2016 breakdown is not yet at Companies House. This figure refers to 2016 Trading Profit, not pre-tax profit.

** :MKM's pre-tax profit figure here is for 2015, its other figures refer to 2016.