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## The Brand Learning Partners Limited

Report and Financial Statements

Year Ended 31 March 2011

Company Number 4033876

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# Report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2011

### **Contents**

### Page:

- 1 Report of the directors
- 4 Independent auditor's report
- 6 Profit and loss account
- 7 Balance sheet
- 8 Cash flow statement
- 9 Notes forming part of the financial statements

### **Directors**

A Bird M McEwan

### Secretary and registered office

G Viles, Burgoine Quay, 8 Lower Teddington Road, Hampton Wick, Surrey, KT1 4ER

### Company number

4033876

### **Auditors**

BDO LLP, Kings Wharf, 20-30 Kings Road, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 3EX

# Report of the directors for the year ended 31 March 2011

The directors present their report together with the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2011

### Principal activities, trading review and future developments

The principal activity of the company during the year continued to be that of marketing capability development consultancy and training, helping multinational clients to transform the marketing capabilities and commercial performance of people teams and organisations across the world

Moving into the penultimate year of our five year plan (Vision 2012), we continued to consolidate our position as leading global experts and specialists in marketing capability development, building a firm base to underpin and enable our future international expansion and delivery of innovation plans

We have built broader and deeper client relationships with our international and UK based clients and a stronger consultancy team enabling us to deliver against our target of sustainable growth. This was delivered through continued new client acquisition, excellent client retention and growth, further international expansion, continued investment in Digital, IT and in sustained business development. We remain on track to deliver our five year plan in 2012.

Our global turnover rose by 19 3% to £13 5m compared to last year's £11 3m. Business performance remained strong, underpinned by strategic client partnerships and long term contracts as well as by significant new client wins arising from our international and business development strategy. Business was sourced 53% from UK multinationals and 47% from overseas based multinationals (US 24%, Europe 15% and ROW 8%). Recent new client wins numbered 24 this year and significant wins of global clients in the US, Russia and Australia will see our international business grow further into next year.

The top 10 clients accounted for 64% of the business, with an excellent spread of 59 active clients. Almost 13% of our turnover came from new clients and business and we have been engaged to develop and deliver programmes and initiatives in over 60 countries.

The business was awarded 'Best Company 2011' and the co Founders jointly awarded 'Best Leader' in The Sunday Times 'Top 100 Best Small Companies Awards' 2011, out of more than 1000 small companies (2010 3rd, 2009 5<sup>th</sup> 2008 13<sup>th</sup>) It was also awarded the maximum 3\* Best Companies accreditation. This acknowledges the unique culture that supports our services to our clients and our growth as a global marketing capability consultancy helping clients to deliver better customer value to drive sustainable, profitable growth

Direct costs continued to be managed tightly and kept broadly in line with business growth. Overheads were just 14.7% higher than last year, below turnover growth. We continued to make strategic investments in recruitment and in offering a compelling culture and attractive benefits to attract and retain high calibre, experienced marketing and learning talent. Average headcount increased to 75 (+8.7% over 2010) and year end headcount reached 79. Charitable donations were increased by 21% in line with our support of The Fircroft Trust and Comic Relief.

Operating profit before interest and taxation (after bonus and profit share schemes) increased year on year by 40 4%, reflecting the net benefit flowing in from last year's office rental renegotiation to facilitate a new 10 year lease and the fact that last year's accounts included the one-off costs of a major office expansion and refurbishment. Net margins showed positive year on year growth from 14% to 16% driven by efficiencies enabled by The Edge Knowledge Management system and tools and despite exchange rate volatility. The market for consultancy services remains highly competitive. However, the company's client base is extensive and spans all major market sectors, meaning that the company is well diversified and not reliant on a few clients or market sectors.

# Report of the directors for the year ended 31 March 2011 (continued)

### Principal activities, trading review and future developments (continued)

Credit risk is primarily attributable to trade debtors but this is managed by credit checking all new customers, monitoring payments to agreed terms and controlling the ageing of debts. Foreign exchange, especially US \$, is managed carefully to control exchange loses.

Looking ahead to next year, market conditions remain challenging but we are confident that we are extremely well placed to deliver double digit, profitable growth through the expansion of our global programmes with existing clients, the attraction of new clients, the implementation of innovative new products and propositions as well as the continued focus on ongoing productivity and efficiency of our operations

#### Results and dividends

The profit and loss account is set out on page 6 and shows the profit for the year

An interim dividend of £556,785 (2010 £nil) and a further final dividend of £601,308 (2010 £537,976) were declared and paid to shareholders in the year in respect of the year ended 31 March 2011

### **Funding**

To support the company's cashflow during the year, the directors provided loans totalling £340,000. These are being repaid on a monthly basis and details are shown in note 10 on page 14.

### Post balance sheet events

To support the company's global expansion plans, a group holding company has been incorporated in December 2011 and from January 2012, the company will be a wholly owned subsidiary of Brand Learning Group Limited The ultimate control of the group remains with the directors, A Bird and M McEwan

### **Directors**

The directors of the company during the year were

A Bird M McEwan

#### **Donations**

Charitable

During the year the company made the following contributions,

2011 £	2010 £
8,055	6,672
	£

No political contributions were made in the current or preceding year

Report of the directors for the year ended 31 March 2011 (continued)

### **Directors' responsibilities**

The directors are responsible for preparing the directors' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations

Company law requires the directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law the directors have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law). Under company law the directors must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company and of the profit or loss of the company for that period

In preparing these financial statements, the directors are required to

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently,
- · make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent,
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business

The directors are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

### **Auditors**

All of the current directors have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any information needed by the company's auditors for the purpose of their audit and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information. The directors are not aware of any relevant audit information of which the auditors are unaware.

The auditors, BDO LLP have expressed their willingness to continue in office and a resolution to re-appoint them will be proposed at the annual general meeting in accordance with section 485 of the Companies Act 2006

By order of the Board

G Viles Secretary

14.12.11

### Independent auditor's report

#### TO THE MEMBERS OF THE BRAND LEARNING PARTNERS LIMITED

We have audited the financial statements of The Brand Learning Partners Limited for the year ended 31 March 2011 which comprise the profit and loss account, the balance sheet, the cash flow statement and the related notes. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice)

This report is made solely to the company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the company and the company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed

### Respective responsibilities of directors and auditors

As explained more fully in the statement of directors' responsibilities, the directors are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view. Our responsibility is to audit and express an opinion on the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland). Those standards require us to comply with the Auditing Practices Board's (APB's) Ethical Standards for Auditors.

### Scope of the audit of the financial statements

A description of the scope of an audit of financial statements is provided on the APB's website at www frc org uk/apb/scope/private cfm

### Opinion on financial statements

In our opinion the financial statements

- give a true and fair view of the state of the company's affairs as at 31 March 2011 and of its profit for the year then ended,
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice, and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006

#### Opinion on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion the information given in the directors' report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements

Independent auditor's report (continued)

### Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us, or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns, or
- · certain disclosures of directors' remuneration specified by law are not made, or
- · we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit

Andrea Bishop, (senior statutory auditor)

For and on behalf of BDO LLP, statutory auditor

Yea Bishof

Reading

United Kingdom

14 December 2011

Date 14 December 2011

BDO LLP is a limited liability partnership registered in England and Wales (with registered number OC305127)

# Profit and loss account for the year ended 31 March 2011

	Note	2011 £	2010 £ (restated)
Turnover		13,489,131	11,304,596
Cost of sales		8,688,708	7,467,550
Gross profit		4,800,423	3,837,046
Administrative expenses		2,617,204	2,281,643
Operating profit	2	2,183,219	1,555,403
Other interest receivable and similar income		12,532	18,169
Profit on ordinary activities before taxation		2,195,751	1,573,572
Taxation on profit from ordinary activities	5	616,962	446,745
Profit on ordinary activities after taxation	16	1,578,789	1,126,827

All amounts relate to continuing activities

The company has no recognised gains or losses other than the results for the year as set out above

# Balance sheet at 31 March 2011

Company number 4033876	Note	2011 £	2011 £	2010 £	2010 £
Fixed assets	~		007.004		02.020
Tangible assets	7		237,681		93,038
Current assets					
Debtors	8	3,160,758		3,175,611	
Cash at bank and in hand		4,190,088		3,431,990	
		7,350,846		6,607,601	
Creditors: amounts falling due					
within one year	9	3,291,419		3,112,618	
Net current assets			4,059,427		3,494,983
Total assets less current			4.007.400		2.502.004
liabilities			4,297,108		3,588,021
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	10		270,920		
Net assets			4,026,188		3,588,021
Capital and reserves					
Called up equity share capital	14		50,014		49,789
Share premium account	15		306,476		289,230
Profit and loss account	16		3,669,698		3,249,002
Shareholders' funds	17		4,026,188		3,588,021

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Directors and authorised for issue on 14 December

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A Bird Director M McEwan

# Cash flow statement for the year ended 31 March 2011

	Note	2011 £	2011 £	2010 £	2010 £
Net cash inflow from operating activities	18		2,720,080		1,058,126
Returns on investments and servicing of finance Interest received			12,532		18,169
Taxation UK corporation tax paid			(883,470)		(424,648)
Capital expenditure and financial investment Purchase of tangible fixed assets			(256,742)		(95,878)
Equity dividends paid			(1,158,093)		(537,976)
Cash inflow before financing			434,307		17,793
Financing Exercise of share options Director loans Repayment of directors loans		17,471 340,000 (33,680)		- -	
			323,791		-
Increase in cash	19		758,098		17,793

# Notes forming part of the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2011

### 1 Accounting policies

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention and are in accordance with applicable accounting standards

The following principal accounting policies have been applied

#### Turnover

Turnover represents amounts receivable for goods and services provided during the year in the normal course of business, net of trade discounts, VAT and other sales related taxes

In respect of long-term contracts and contracts for on-going services, turnover represents the value of work done in the year, including estimates of amounts not invoiced. Turnover in respect of long-term contracts and contracts for on-going services is recognised by reference to the stage of completion.

### Depreciation

Depreciation is provided to write off the cost or valuation, less estimated residual values, of all tangible fixed assets evenly over their expected useful lives. It is calculated at the following rates

Fixtures and fittings

3 year straight line basis

#### Taxation

The charge for taxation is based on the profit for the year taking into account deferred taxation

Current tax is measured at amounts expected to be paid using the tax rates and laws that have been enacted or substantively enacted by the balance sheet date

Deferred tax balances are recognised in respect of all timing differences that have originated but not reversed by the balance sheet date except the recognition of deferred tax assets is limited to the extent that the company anticipates making sufficient taxable profits in the future to absorb the reversal of the underlying timing differences. Deferred tax balances are not discounted

### Leased assets

Rentals under operating leases are charged on a straight-line basis over the term of the lease

### Pension costs

The company operates a defined contribution pension scheme for employees. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the company. The annual contributions payable are charged to the profit and loss account.

### Dividends

Dividends are recognised when they become legally payable Final dividends are recognised when approved by the shareholders at an annual general meeting

### Foreign currency

Foreign currency transactions are translated into sterling at the rates ruling when they occurred. Foreign currency monetary assets and liabilities are translated at the rates ruling at the balance sheet dates. Any differences are taken to the profit and loss account.

Notes forming part of the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2011 (continued)

### 1 Accounting policies (continued)

Prior year restatement

During the year the directors have reviewed the appropriateness of classification of certain expenses within the profit and loss account. The prior year has been restated to reflect the new allocations which the directors consider to be a more appropriate reflection of the business operations. The effect of the prior year adjustment was to decrease administrative expenses and increase cost of sales by £4,451,984. The overall profit before and after tax of the company is not affected.

2	Operating profit	2011	2010
		£	£
	This has been arrived at after charging		
	Depreciation of owned fixed assets Auditors' remuneration	112,009	68,247
	- as auditors	17,000	17,000
	- for other services	3,500	3,700
	Operating lease costs - other	335,915	362,001
	Net losses on foreign currency translation	43,896	28,574
•	Familian		
3	Employees		
	The average number of employees (including directors) during the finan	icial year amounted to	
		2011	2010
		No	No
	Fee earning staff	44	42
	Administrative staff	31	27
		75	69
	Staff costs (including directors) consist of		
	•	2011	2010
		£	£
	Wages and salaries	5,307,374	4,403,092
	Social security costs	555,605	542,173
	Other pension costs	300,289	255,257
		6,163,268	5,200,522
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Notes forming part of the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2011 *(continued)* 

	Directors' emoluments		
	The directors' aggregate emoluments in respect of qualifying services were	2011 £	2010 £
	Emoluments Company contributions to money purchase pension schemes	364,418 60,000	357,206 59,998
		424,418	417,204
	The number of directors who accrued benefits under company pension scheme	nes was as follow	
		2011 No	2010 No
	Money purchase schemes	2	2
	Emoluments of the highest paid director amounted to £182,239 (2010 - £178,	771)	
	Company contributions to the defined contribution pension scheme for the hig £30,000 (2010 - £29,999)	ghest paid directo	r amounted to
5	250,000 (2515 225,000)		
	Taxation on profit from ordinary activities		
	Taxation on profit from ordinary activities	2011 £	2010 £
	Taxation on profit from ordinary activities  Current tax  UK corporation tax based on the results for the year at 28% (2010 - 28%)		£ 438,169
	Taxation on profit from ordinary activities  Current tax  UK corporation tax based on the results for the year	£	£
	Taxation on profit from ordinary activities  Current tax  UK corporation tax based on the results for the year at 28% (2010 - 28%)	£	£ 438,169
	Current tax  UK corporation tax based on the results for the year at 28% (2010 - 28%)  Adjustment in respect of previous years	£ 606,728	438,169 (3,881)
	Current tax  UK corporation tax based on the results for the year at 28% (2010 - 28%) Adjustment in respect of previous years  Total current tax	£ 606,728	438,169 (3,881)

Notes forming part of the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2011 (continued)

# 5 Taxation on profit from ordinary activities (continued) The tax assessed for the year is higher than the standard rate of corporation tax in the LIK. The difference

The tax assessed for the year is higher than the standard rate of corpor are explained below	ation tax in the UK	The differences
	2011 £	2010 £
Profit on ordinary activities before tax	2,195,751	1,573,572
Profit on ordinary activities at the standard rate of corporation tax in the UK of 28% (2010 – 28%)	614,810	440,600
Effects of Expenses not deductible for tax purposes Capital allowances for year in excess of depreciation Other short term timing differences Adjustments in respect of prior periods Income not taxable for tax purposes	2,334 (14,291) 4,200 - (325)	10,026 (8,135) (4,322) (3,881)
Current tax charge for year	606,728	434,288
Dividends	2011 £	2010 £
Dividends on ordinary shares Interim, paid at £0 1118 per share (2010 - £nil) Final, paid at £0 1207 per share (2010 - £0 115 per share)	556,785 601,308	537,976
Total dividends paid	1,158,093	537,976

6

Notes forming part of the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2011 (continued)

7	Tangible fixed assets		Fixtures
			and fittings £
	Cost At 1 April 2010		440,420
	Additions Disposals		256,742 (32,397)
	At 31 March 2011		664,765
	Depreciation At 1 April 2010		347,382
	Charge for the year Disposals		112,099 (32,397)
	At 31 March 2011		427,084
	Net book value At 31 March 2011		237,681
	At 31 March 2010		93,038
8	Debtors	2011	2010
		£	£
	Trade debtors Prepayments and accrued income	2,732,834 403,508	2,605,440 364,850
	Deferred tax Other debtors	3,849 20,567	14,083 191,238
		3,160,758	3,175,611
	All amounts shown under debtors fall due for payment within one year		
	Deferred taxation		
		2011 £	2010 £
	Timing differences Accelerated capital allowances	4,050 (201)	14,083
		3,849	14,083

Notes forming part of the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2011 (continued)

9	Creditors: amounts falling due within one year		
		2011	2010
		£	£
	Trade creditors	746,583	730,617
	Corporation tax	161,427	438,169
	Other taxation and social security	290,203	310,596
	Accruals and deferred income	2,057,806	1,626,298
	Other creditors	-	6,938
	Directors' loans	35,400	-
		3,291,419	3,112,618
		3,231,413	3,112,010
10	Creditors. amounts falling due after more than one year		
		2011	2010
		£	£
	Directors' loans	270,920	-
	Maturity of debt	2011	2010
	mutality of door	Directors	Directors
		loan	loan
	Falling due	£	£
	Within one year	35,400	-
	In two to five years	141,600	-
	Over five years	129,320	-
		306,320	

The directors' loans are due to the two directors of the company. The terms of the loan specify that these are to be repaid at a minimum of £1,416 per month. Currently no interest is accruing on these loans, however the directors have a right to request and invoke interest at any time. If the directors exercise this right interest would become due from that date on a prospective basis.

The loans are secured by a floating charge over the company's assets

### 11 Pensions

The company operates a defined contribution scheme for employees. The assets are held separately from those of the company. The contributions payable included in the profit and loss account were £300,289 (2010 - £255,257). Contributions outstanding at the balance sheet date totalled £ Nil (2010 - £ Nil)

Notes forming part of the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2011 (continued)

### 12 Share based payments

Equity settled share based payments

The company has a share option scheme available to certain employees at the directors' discretion Options are exercisable at a price determined by directors, which is not less than the market value of the shares on the date of grant. The vesting period is three years. The options are settled in equity once exercised.

If the options remain unexercised after a period of ten years from the date of grant, the options expire Options are forfeited if the employee leaves the company before the options vest

Details of the number of share options and the weighted average exercise price (WAEP) outstanding during the year are as follows

	2011	2011 WAEP	2010	2010 WAEP
	No	£	No	£
Outstanding at the beginning of the year	949,559	0.66	798,099	0 72
Granted during the year	63,500	0.85	449,500	0 55
Lapsed during the year	(31,593)	0.82	-	-
Exercised during the year	(22,516)	0.77	(298,040)	0 66
Outstanding at the end of the year	958,950	0.66	949,559	0 66
		Exercise		
		price	2011	2010
Expiry date		£	No	No
1 December 2016		0 71	69,686	69,686
28 February 2017		0 71	312,761	345,650
1 October 2017		0 95	54,357	75,577
31 March 2019		0 95	9,146	9,146
22 January 2020		0 55	449,500	449,500
17 December 2020		0 85	63,500	-
Outstanding at the end of the year			958,950	949,559

The directors are of the opinion that the fair value of the options is not material to the accounts. Accordingly no expense has been recognised in relation to equity settled share based payment transactions during the current or prior year.

Notes forming part of the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2011 (continued)

### 13 Commitments under operating leases

At 31 March 2011 the company had annual commitments under non-cancellable operating leases as set out below

	Operating leases which expire	2011 Land and buildings £	2011 Other £	2010 Land and buildings £	2010 Other £
	Within 1 year Within 2 to 5 years	301,416 —	684 46,443	338,055	2,406 62,523
		301,416	47,127	338,055	64,929
14	Share capital	2011 Number	2010 Number	2011 £	2010 £
	Allotted and called up Ordinary shares of £0 01 each	5,001,366	4,978,850	50,014	49,789

During the year one employee exercised share options leading to 22,516 ordinary shares of £0 01 each being issued on 19 November 2010 for a consideration of £17,472

As at 31 March 2011 29,031 shares remain unpaid

15	Share	premium	account
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		2011 £	2010 £
	Balance at 1 April Premium on shares issued in the year	289,230 17,246	96,072 193,158
	Balance at 31 March	306,476	289,230
16	Profit and loss account	2011 £	2010 £
	Balance at 1 April Profit for the year Dividends	3,249,002 1,578,789 (1,158,093)	2,660,151 1,126,827 (537,976)
		3,669,698	3,249,002

Notes forming part of the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2011 (continued)

17	Reconciliation of movements in shareho	olders' funds			
		2011 £	2011 £	2010 £	2010 £
	Profit for the financial year New share capital subscribed Premium on new share capital subscribed	225 17,246	1,578,789	2,981 193,158	1,126,827
		•	17,471		196,139
	Dividends		1,596,260 (1,158,093)		1,322,966 (537,976)
	Net addition to shareholders' funds Opening shareholders' funds		438,167 3,588,021		784,990 2,803,031
	Closing shareholders' funds		4,026,188		3,588,021
18	Reconciliation of operating profit to net	cash inflow fi	rom operating act	ivities	
				2011 £	2010 £
	Operating profit Depreciation Decrease/(increase) in debtors Increase in creditors			2,183,219 112,099 4,619 420,143	1,555,403 68,247 (825,289) 259,765
	Net cash inflow from operating activities			2,720,080	1,058,126
19	Reconciliation of net cash inflow		At 1 April 2010 £	Cash flows £	At 31 March 2011 £
	Cash in hand and at bank		3,431,990	758,098	4,190,088

Notes forming part of the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2011 (continued)

20	Analysis of net debt	At 1 April 2010 £	Cash flow £	Other non-cash items £	At 31 March 2011 £
	Cash in hand and at bank	3,431,990	758,098		4,190,088
	Debt due within one year Debt due after one year	- -	(35,400) (270,920)	- -	(35,400) (270,920)
	Total	3,431,990	451,778	-	3,883,768

#### 21 Post balance sheet events

To support the company's global expansion plans, a group holding company has been incorporated in December 2011 and from January 2012, the company will be a wholly owned subsidiary of Brand Learning Group Limited The ultimate control of the group remains with the directors, A Bird and M McEwan

### 22 Related party transactions

During the year the company entered into a loan agreement with A Bird, a director of the company, for £170,000, as disclosed in note 10. As at the year end £153,385 was outstanding

During the year the company entered into a loan agreement with M McEwan, a director of the company, for £170,000, as disclosed in note 10. As at the year end £152,935 was outstanding

### 23 Control

The company was under the joint control of the directors, A Bird and M McEwan, throughout the current and previous year