



## Sweet taste of success

John Noel Nichols set up a family business to sell Vimto fruit cordial in 1908. A century later, it's a multi million pound international soft drinks and drink dispensing business.

AIM-listed Nichols plc retains the family touch and a special culture. Non-executive chairman John Nichols is the founder's grandson, and John's two sons work in the UK and international operations.

Vimto began as a health drink, made from grape, raspberry and blackcurrant juices flavoured with herbs and spices. In 2008, Nichols' Vimto Soft Drinks, Vimto International and Cabana drink dispensing divisions made pre-tax profits of £10m on revenues of £56.2m.

"The Vimto brand, worth £36.4 million, is growing at a rate of 6.2%," said John.

"We're supporting this with the £5 million 'Seriously Mixed Up Fruit' TV, radio, press and online media campaign. The last thing companies should do in a recession is cut back brand promotion."

Nichols also has a presence in 65 countries worldwide, with recent launches in South Africa and China. Work is ongoing to stretch the brand, in terms of product variations and geography.

Recruiting people with the right cultural fit to the executive team has underpinned the company's success, alongside looking after its 150 employees. An ambitious growth strategy, strong management team and committed workforce have helped Nichols to continue enjoying the fruits of success.

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE OF THE VIMTO STORY](#)

## Getting the best from the Board

In challenging times, effective non-executive directors (NEDs) make a major contribution to the success, even survival, of a business.

Businesswoman Vanda Murray OBE, Chair at Business Link North West, Deputy Chair at the North West Development Agency, NED at Carillion plc and SIG plc and Chair at Eazyfone Group Ltd, reflects on the value of NEDs.

"NEDs bring an independent perspective on company strategy and direction, leadership, performance and risk management. A rounded board with complementary skills is key to excellent shareholder value.

"Potential NEDs must do their due diligence on a business, ensuring they share its values and vision. Get under the skin of the company after joining the board, and keep your knowledge and professional development up to date.

"I love what I do and feel privileged to work with a wide variety of people and companies. Maintain independence of outlook and decision-making, focus on key issues, bring passion and commitment to the business and enjoy it – for me that's at the heart of being a good NED."



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## Warren Partners Ahoy!

The entire Warren Partners team went overboard for a day in May to help with the construction of a pirate galleon at the Children's Adventure Farm Trust (CAFT) at Millington in Cheshire.

The charity offers adventure breaks and activities to children from all over the North West who are disadvantaged by illness, disability and poverty.

This was the third annual visit by Warren Partners to lend a hand.

The 22-strong mixed concrete, fixed ramps and even walked the occasional plank!

After a BBQ lunch, they came ashore to give the garden areas a makeover, cutting grass and tidying flower beds.



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