



where
digital
happens

Hush Digital

Established: 1997

Directors: **Jonny Overfield, Rosie Whelpton and**

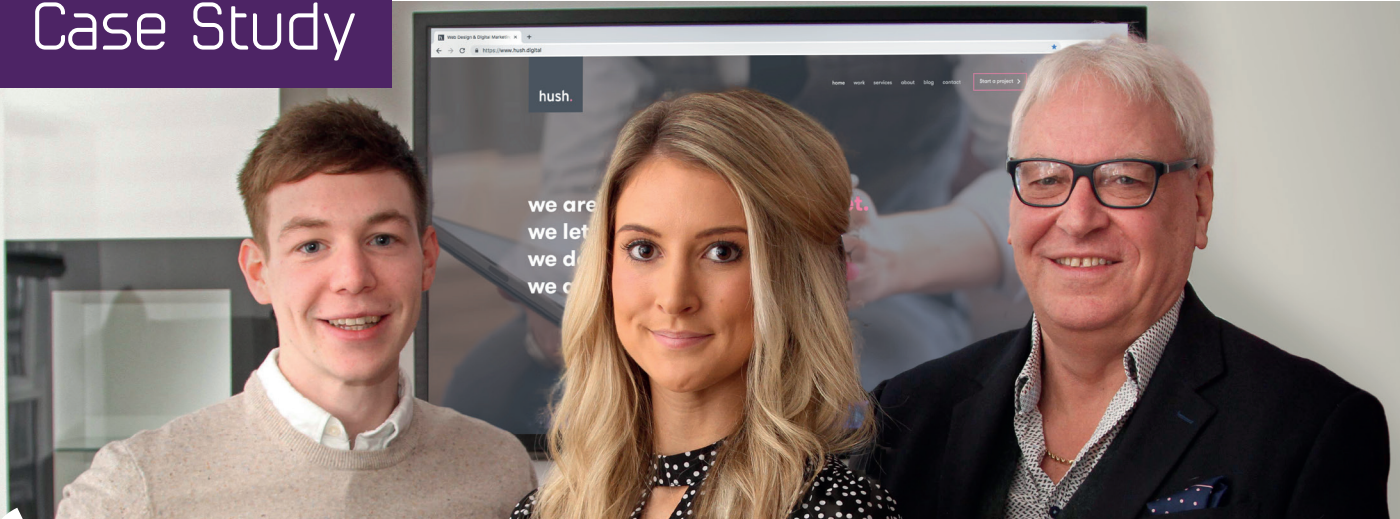
Mike Overfield

Based: **Darlington**

Staff: 11

Principal products: **Web design, software and apps development, branding and digital marketing**

Case Study



“

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Rosie Whelpton – Business Development Director, Hush

With a history dating back 20 years, Hush Digital has strong foundations of success in a highly competitive market. It operates, however, in a sector where legacy isn't enough, and businesses must remain innovative, creative and ahead of the times.

More recently, with two under-30s at the helm, it was perhaps inevitable that its new leadership team would bring the fresh ideas and updated approach inspired by being from the first generation to have grown up with computers. The business rebranded to Hush Digital in spring 2019 from its previous name Geonet Solutions, which in itself was borne out of Intermedia Solutions, a company founded in 1997.

Hush's creative director Jonny Overfield had previously worked for Geonet and when its owner decided to sell, Jonny and his father Mike, who had run his own successful engineering company, acquired the business. Rosie Whelpton joined them in 2014 and became business development director a year later.

Based in Coniscliffe Road, Darlington, Hush Digital now has a smart new home, a cool name and a stylish new look that reflects Jonny and Rosie and the future they see for their boutique agency providing high end, bespoke web design that's future-proofed to grow with its clients.

It's a transformation they have completed with the help of DigitalCity's SCALE programme.

Jonny explains: "We always wanted to rebrand as the name Geonet didn't really mean anything to us. That said, it was an established business, jointly-owned by myself and Mike, and we had worked extremely hard to build up our portfolio over the years as Geonet, before Mike began to take a step back."

Rosie adds: "We are a young team and the time was right for change. SCALE gave us the confidence and support to move forward with the things we wanted to do and the changes we wanted to make. Having 15 like-minded people, many of whom had more experience than us, telling us to do it gave us the courage and push we needed. There wasn't a single workshop where we didn't pick up something that we hadn't thought of before."

For example, their accounts software was old and not fit for purpose; post-SCALE they have invested in a new system. They were told their ideas for the rebrand were original and authentic, which encouraged them to implement their plan. They had never considered setting out their vision and values until SCALE. They found the courage to have fewer staff initially in the name of efficiency. And it confirmed that they can attract big name clients like Nifco and the Tees Valley Combined Authority and retain an ethos of fun and enjoyment.

It even gave Rosie the confidence to give something back by presenting to start-up businesses in the DigitalCity Fellowship programme.

She adds: "If we hadn't done SCALE I really don't know if we would have had the courage and conviction to do the rebrand, and certainly so quickly. We'd always wanted to, but nine years had already gone by. We definitely wouldn't have been so sure that it was the right thing to do."

David Dixon, of DigitalCity, says: "Rosie and Jonny are great examples of the new generation of business leaders, passionate, creative and determined to grow. Implementing wholesale change wasn't going to be easy in the circumstances so we were delighted that SCALE provided them with the positive feedback, knowledge and ideas to help them move forward."