Better value, delivered.



## Delivering better value since 1974

40th Anniversary Annual Report 2014



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Summary

2014 marked forty years since YPO was established by public sector authorities to make taxpayers' money go further. Whilst there have been many changes to government policy, legislation and the marketplace over the years, our original purpose has remained constant.

With decades of procurement experience behind us, we're proud to have delivered over £110 million directly back to the public sector for reinvestment in public services.

As our customers face the prospect of further cuts to public spending, we are well placed to support the delivery of efficient and costeffective public services into the future.

## Better value, delivered.

Annual Report 2014 \_\_\_\_\_\_ Annual Report 2014

## Celebrating 40 years of public service











Annual Report 2014

## Vice Chairman's Statement

On behalf of the YPO Management Committee, I am delighted to introduce the YPO Annual Report and Financial Summary 2014-15.

Given the continued financial pressure on the public sector, I am delighted to report that YPO has sustained another successful year in business, where the organisation has built upon its past successes and transformed operationally to lay a solid foundation for the future.

The public sector continues to face a challenging future, where more will be expected of our local services, but with significantly reduced resources. Therefore, it is important we consider how we will operate to maintain service delivery and cope with the coming demand.

After four decades, YPO continues to be a dependable vehicle for its member authorities to work together and drive procurement efficiencies. Despite the challenging landscape, authorities are continuing to invest in collaboration.

I am delighted that further numbers of public authorities have joined us in becoming associate members of YPO, realising the undisputable benefits of shared working on the journey towards a more sustainable future.

The outcomes of this collaborative approach are proving effective; member authorities continue to receive a greater dividend for reinvestment and more schools than ever are benefitting from a share of the organisation's profits.

Having implemented some innovative changes across the business, YPO remains a competitive leader in the market and is engineering a robust operational infrastructure.

As the organisation introduces energetic and ambitious plans with its next three year strategy, YPO can look forward to building on the successes of the last forty years and serve its customers for another generation.

In closing, I would like to pay tribute to our former Chairman, Cllr Terry Sharman, who retired at the recent council elections after 40 years of dedicated public service. Terry's steady guidance and leadership have greatly contributed to the successes described above and we wish him all the best in his retirement.



### Managing Director's Statement



I am pleased to report that 2014 was vet another challenging but successful year for YPO. As we toasted the last four decades at our anniversary in April, the year also saw the conclusion of the first business strategy to be introduced by the existing Board three years ago.

Following the introduction of our new employee values last year, we looked to further embed them in the processes, practices and culture of the organisation. Aligned to our mission to be the UK's leading public sector buying organisation, the values help our staff to identify their everyday practices as contributing toward achieving our strategic goals.

Our focus areas of Growth. New Products. • The launch of our new website. Competitiveness, and Customer Service also continued to drive all aspects of the business. Responding to key government initiatives, we worked hard to help our customers meet new expectations and challenges.

Continuing our ambition to work with more customers and authorities, we have seen further growth in new areas, and have collaborated with a broad number of public organisations and strategic partners to achieve great results.

Nevertheless, the public sector continues to experience financial pressure, which means our core focus must be on delivering great value for our customers and members. Significant internal investment in our infrastructure is transforming the way in which we operate, enabling us to meet this challenge.

Key highlights of 2014 include:

- Further growth in turnover across supplies and frameworks, generating the greatest dividend ever to be returned to our customers and members.
- The increase of associate memberships to 34, maintaining the organisation's position as the largest collaborative procurement group in the public sector.
- The celebration of our 40th anniversary of delivering better value for the taxpayer.

- delivering an enhanced online experience for our customers.
- Industry recognition with the accolade of British Educational Suppliers Association (BESA) Supplier of the Year 2014 and Best Public Procurement Project at the CIPS Supply Management Awards for our collaborative insurance framework agreement.
- Development of our membership with the Institute of Customer Service (ICS), introducing business-wide customer service training and achieving worldclass rating on the UK Customer Satisfaction Index.

As we reflect on the successes of 2014, the year is a key milestone for the organisation to look back on our progress over the last four decades as a whole. In an ever-changing marketplace, we have adapted to many changes and challenges. and continued to deliver value to our customers.

With the introduction of our next three year strategy in 2015, YPO is poised to build on its strong history, reputation and successes, and continue to serve its customers for many years to come.

"Before computers, handwritten orders were the norm. They were keyed in by punch card operators in two weekly batches, and we had reams of paper to keep track of them – all stored away in several filing cabinets.

In the 70s and early 80s, there were always twice as many filing clerks as people answering the phones.

The introduction of computers totally revolutionised the way orders were processed. Electronic records were introduced gradually alongside the filing system. A great advantage was being able to see outstanding orders on-screen, without having to look through boxes and boxes of transaction records, so there was a huge saving on paperwork. More importantly, it dramatically improved response times to customers."

Christine Preston
Internal Communications
& Engagement Coordinator



## Achievements of 2014

YPO was crowned Supplier of the Year (over £10m annual turnover) at the British Educational Suppliers Association (BESA) Education Resources Awards 2014. The awards, which celebrate the achievements of suppliers and teaching professionals in the UK, provided fantastic recognition of our commitment and success in delivering best value to the education sector.

In April we officially celebrated 40 years of helping the public sector make taxpayers' money go further at our second continued to pioneer new agreements of our main headquarters in Wakefield, the supplier-sponsored day also encompassed our employee recognition awards, team building exercises, and special guest speakers.

After modernising a number of internal systems and processes we launched the new website, www.ypo.co.uk, in February 2014. Following direct customer feedback and involvement, many features were designed to meet everyday challenges for our public sector customers. Whilst delivering an enhanced online shopping experience, the website also enables us to operate more efficiently and costeffectively.

our frameworks for the first time, and

Our member authorities agreed to establish YPO Procurement Holdings Ltd in July, a new company enabling YPO to trade with private businesses and individuals for the first time. The first trading subsidiary, YPO Supplies Ltd, launched to private nurseries and childminders later in the year. Its formation is a natural progression for the organisation as more public services continue to be delivered by private sector organisations.

Radical changes to the national curriculum were announced in 2013 aimed at raising educational standards and producing creative, industrious and well-educated students. With schools under statutory obligation to deliver the new programme from September 2014, we significantly developed our range, introducing over 1,200 new products and specialist CPD courses to help teachers develop the necessary skills to deliver the new programme.

In 2013 the government announced the Universal Free School Meals initiative. It was estimated that over 2,700 schools in England would require improved kitchens, with modifications ranging from a new microwave to a full refurbishment. Alongside promoting our range of products and pre-established contracts. we continued to offer free expert advice from our team of design specialists to help schools prepare for the launch of the initiative in September 2014.

We managed over £541m spend through In September, YPO won the accolade of Best Public Procurement Project at the Chartered Institute of Purchasing all-staff event. Hosted in the warehouse in areas such as insurance and business and Supply (CIPS) Supply Management Awards 2014. The collaborative project, which saw the establishment of the first national insurance framework agreement for the public sector, was also Highly Commended earlier in the year at the Government Opportunities Awards.

> After surveying our customers through the Institute of Customer Service (ICS) in March 2014, we were delighted to be benchmarked on the UK Customer Satisfaction Index at 87%. This is much higher than the national average and comparable against satisfaction levels achieved by retail giants Amazon and John Lewis.

Our staff raised £3500 for a range of local and national charities. We also continued to support causes with events and fundraising, and ensuring any obsolete or unsaleable stock is donated for charitable use.

New curriculum products

£541m Spent through frameworks

87% UK Customer Satisfaction Index score

## YPO receives national recognition









Our collaboration with partner procurement organisations to develop a national public sector insurance framework agreement was named Best Public Procurement Project at the CIPS Supply Management Awards in November 2014. It is estimated that the agreement will deliver an estimated £40m in savings for public authorities during its lifetime.

procurement organisation has been reinforced by a series of national award wins over the last 12 months.

In March, we were crowned Supplier of the Year in the £10 million annual turnover sub-category at the British Educational Suppliers Association (BESA) Education Resources Awards. These annual awards celebrate the successes of suppliers and teaching professionals across the UK education sector. The feedback from judges highlighted our comprehensive range of services and the added value provided increase in site revenues and visitor to customers through our free advice and exceptional service.

Later in the year, we also achieved the accolade of School Procurement Service of the Year at the Education Investor Awards 2014, recognising the support and value we consistently deliver to schools, academies and colleges. In particular, the award acknowledges our work to continually assist education establishments in navigating complex procurement and purchasing processes.

Our position as a leading public sector Effective collaborative working between partners has been fundamental to the success of the insurance framework. We were therefore delighted when the project team was also Highly Commended in the Team of the Year category at the Government Opportunities Awards 2014.

> Our new website was launched early in the year and has already received plaudits from industry experts, winning the Return on Investment (ROI) category at the Sitecore Experience Awards 2014. The award recognises the significant numbers compared to the previous year. The website was also shortlisted for the People's Choice and the Government & Public Sector award categories.





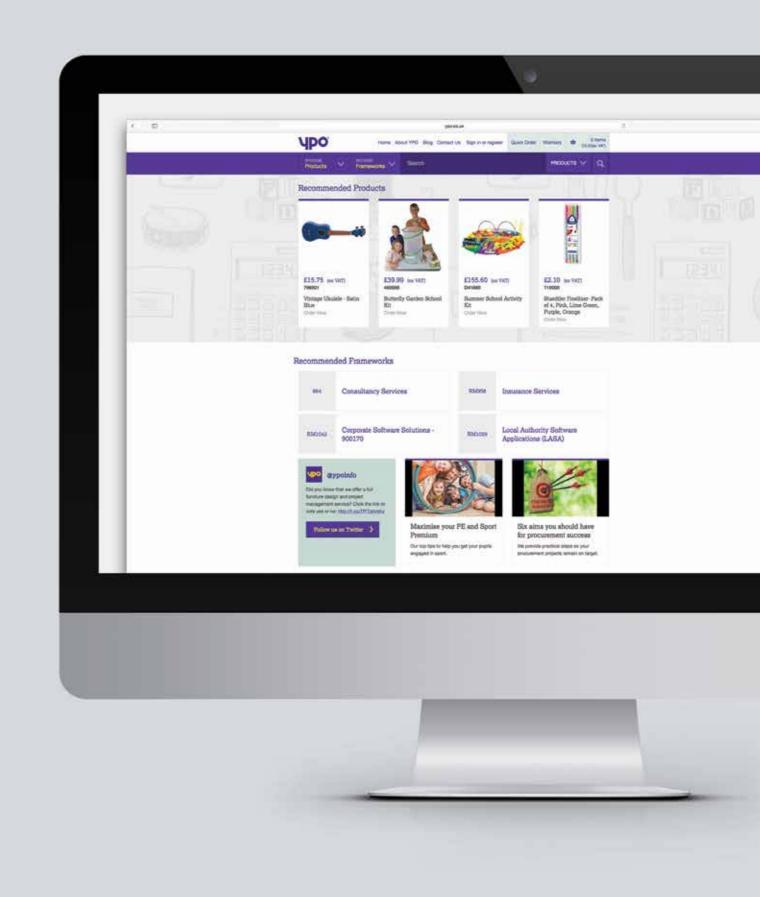
# Making it easier to do business online

Methods of buying have changed considerably over our forty years in business, but one of the most notable trends in recent years is the growth of e-commerce and online services. Within the public sector, online service delivery is key to many organisations in improving efficiency and saving money.

Our customers were keen to see improvements to our website, so over the past few years we have been laying the foundations to deliver an improved online experience. In February 2014 we launched the brand new **www.ypo.co.uk**, designed specifically with our public sector customers in mind.

Since the launch, the site had its busiest ever week, taking over £1 million in orders. By November 2014, the number of orders had increased by 12%, online registrations were up 117%, and site revenue had increased over 8.8% compared to 2013.

As we look to the future, ongoing improvement of our online presence will be critical in making it easy to do business with YPO.



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## Leading the way in customer service

Excellent customer service is at the heart of everything that we do. Our customer-focused approach spans across all areas of the business.

Our membership to the Institute of Customer Service (ICS) has supported our efforts to enhance our customer experience. As one of only a handful of public organisations to be registered with the body, we are able to measure processes and achievements to meet national best practice standards. Our commitment to delivering excellent customer service is further reinforced by Executive Director Jo Marshall's invitation to the role of a Vice President of the ICS.

During 2014 we implemented an organisational-wide ICS training programme in core customer service skills. The outcome of the programme saw the implementation of service improvements, enabling staff to discuss ideas and change current practices to improve the overall customer experience. To date, around 100 ideas have been proposed and implemented across the business.



In addition, the Customer Experience Team (which encompasses the frontline contact centre) has introduced new ways of working. This has further improved service levels and put a clear emphasis on delivering nothing less than an excellent customer experience.

Customer response has been very positive. Through our ICS membership we are able to benchmark our activity against some of the leading organisations for customer service in the UK, public and private. In 2014 we were ranked within the top quartile of organisations which have completed the UK Customer Satisfaction Index Business Benchmark.

With positive feedback and plans afoot to implement further improvements across the whole of the business, YPO is making significant steps on its path to becoming a customer-centric organisation.

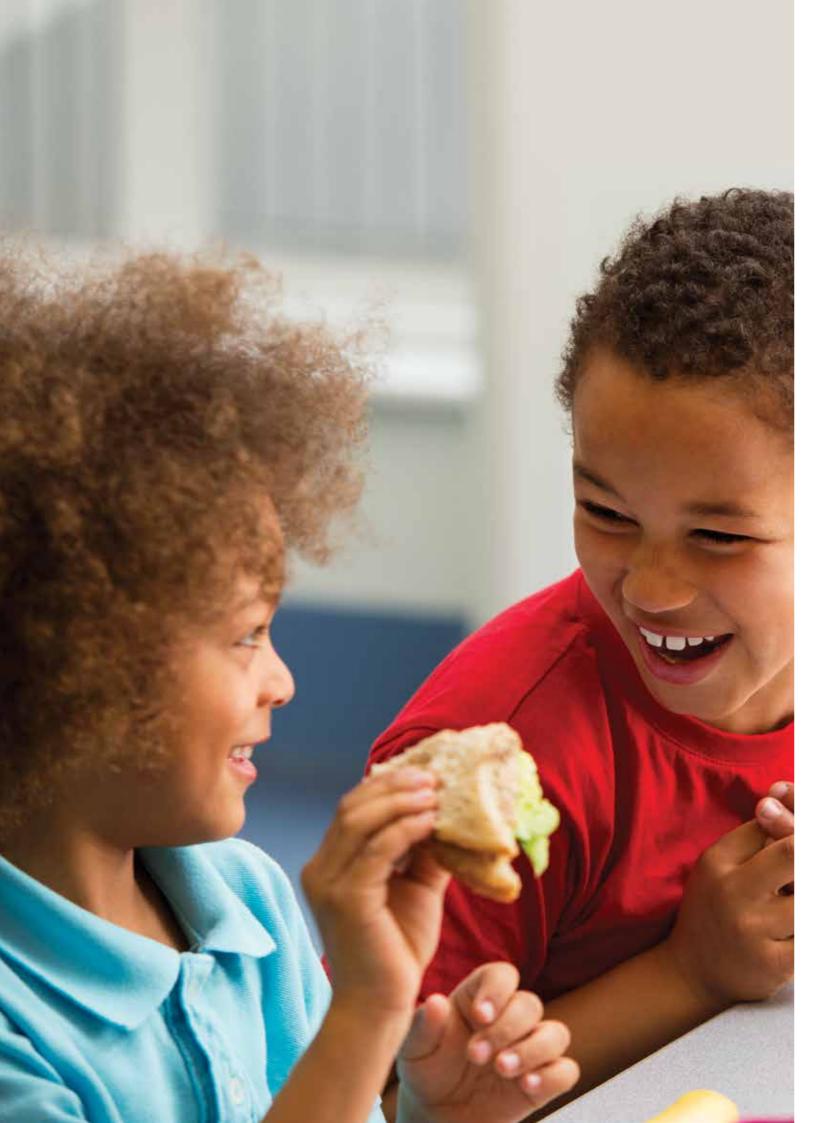




and video recorders through a contract

Teachers also utilised a wide range of

disappeared overnight with the advent one; wiping out the demand for the



# Supporting schools to rise to new challenges

The introduction of free school meals and a revitalised curriculum have undoubtedly had a considerable impact.



Schools across the country have faced a considerable amount of change in recent times. The introduction of free school meals for every child in reception classes, year 1 and year 2 state-funded infant schools, and the implementation of a new national curriculum have undoubtedly had an impact on their already stretched resources.

In response to this growing demand on schools, we have focused on creating high-quality and cost-effective solutions to help them meet the new requirements.

For example, we have introduced a new range of 1,200 educational resources, specifically to support the delivery of the new curriculum. Furthermore, we have developed our specialist range of CPD courses to help teachers develop the necessary skills for the overhauled curriculum, covering key topics such as Computing and the STEM subjects.

Furthermore, as a partner of the Lead Association for Catering in Education (LACA) we have also supported schools during the nationwide roll-out of Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM), ensuring they are able to procure quality supplies and services that are both sustainable and affordable.

It was estimated that over 2,700 schools in England would require improved kitchens in order to provide free meals for pupils. These modifications range from a new microwave or dishwasher to a full kitchen refurbishment.

We have worked hard to ensure we are able to respond to the needs of schools. Alongside our considerable range of food items, including dry goods and canned and chilled products, we also offer expert and complementary advice from design specialists who can work with schools to help them get the most out of their dining areas.

We estimate that by September 2014, we had supplied over £2.5 million of additional items into our customers' kitchens and dining rooms in over 3,200 infant and primary schools across 150 local authority areas – allowing them to successfully meet the demands of the UIFSM initiative.

"It seems quite bizarre now, but before the boom we weren't quite sure how the mobile phone would work for the organisation. I remember a cautious introduction with a single mobile device used on remote jobs, such as furniture and design projects.

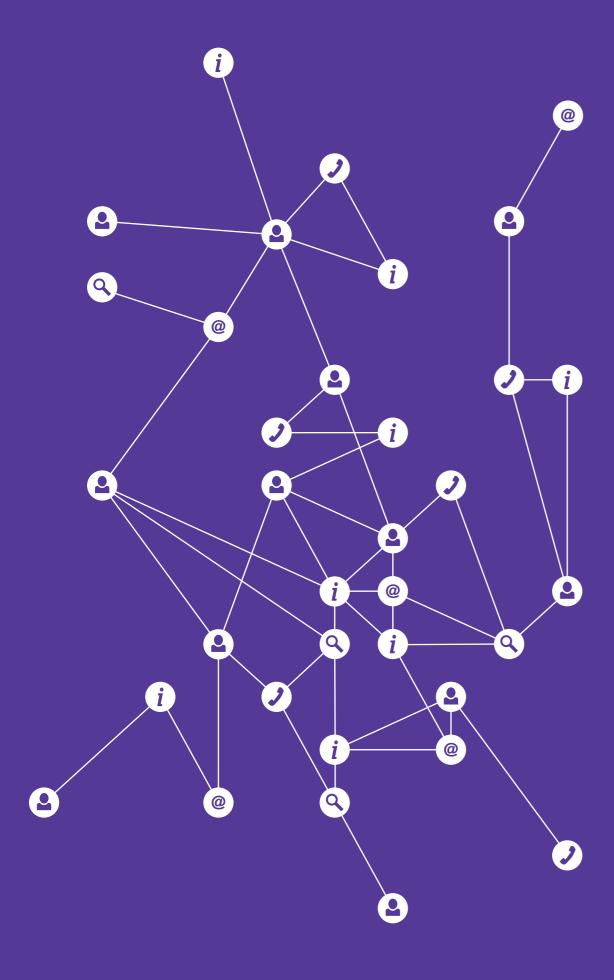
The portable battery was huge (probably equivalent to the size of car battery today) and had to be transported with the handset in a briefcase!

As technology evolved rapidly, many staff saw the benefits that mobiles could bring, especially for those working remotely. Modern smartphones are now widely adopted as part of everyday business practice; not only providing calling facilities, but also seamlessly integrating email and web.

This means we have the tools to react immediately for our customers, and address any opportunities that come our way." Martin Armytage Head of Customer Experience



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# Forging the way in creating strong customer relationships

The next step on our journey is to improve our data, and empower more of our customers to manage their own account information.

It is our ambition to improve our business practices and processes, developing a robust infrastructure to serve the organisation and develop strong connections with our customers from the outset.

The next step on our journey is to improve our data, and empower more of our customers to manage their own account information. In 2015 we will build upon the successful launch of our new e-commerce website with the introduction of a modernised customer relationship management (CRM) system.

With over 2.9 million pieces of historical data, the new system will streamline our approach to gathering and continually managing the information. It will also enable us to accurately record and monitor all activities, minimising inaccuracies and enabling staff to have a single, shared view of the customer.

In the immediate future this will help us serve our customers more quickly and efficiently. As we embed the system into everyday working practices, it will effect further improvements to our legacy systems and infrastructure.

This will evolve over the coming years, where we envisage CRM becoming our centralised hub of all customer interactions and transactions.

## Continuing to prioritise customer service

With budgets becoming tighter year on year, customers are increasingly looking for added value from the companies and organisations that serve them.

> All organisations and companies have Having already implemented an customers, whether it's an individual purchasing a product or service, or a member of the local community receiving a public service. They are all customers, with an expectation of good service.

However, research by the Institute of Customer Service (ICS) has highlighted a continued decline in customer satisfaction across all sectors in recent years, including the public sector.

With budgets becoming tighter year on year, customers are increasingly looking for added value from the companies and organisations that serve them.

Customers are the lifeblood of YPO. As just one of a handful of public bodies to be members of the ICS, we're committed to constantly improving our customer service.

organisational-wide training programme in customer service skills, we are continuing this pledge with ongoing training, coaching and mentoring, benchmarking and networking with industry experts.

In the current climate of decreasing budgets and increasing workloads, providing excellent customer service is cost-effective and the impact and value it delivers can be considerable.



"During the early years, invoices were photocopied and checked manually against paper orders. When they had been verified, the original copies of the orders and supplier invoices were batched up and sent externally to be processed and paid.

Manually typed 'charge notes' were sent out to customers detailing all the goods which required payment. In the early 80s, invoices were matched to computer-based orders which made the process much more simple and accessible!

We later introduced scanning technology which meant supplier invoices could be viewed at the touch of a button. It also made everything much more automated, with some invoices being processed without the need for human intervention.

More recently we've introduced technology that helps us deal with 70% of customer payments automatically, making our payment processes even more efficient for the organisation, our suppliers and customers." **Carrole Curtis**Purchase Ledger Manager



## Our member authorities

YPO is governed by a management committee of elected representatives from 13 public sector member authorities.

With the pressure of delivering more for less in the public sector, working together is increasingly important to help sustain future demand on public services.

Therefore, developing more partnerships with other public organisations is vital to achieve efficiencies for all through collaboration, aggregation and standardisation.



























## Working together for shared benefits

Building on the previous year, 2014 saw further growth of associate membership in line with the organisation's strategic objectives. The addition of the UK's largest local authority, Birmingham City Council, along with Kettering Borough Council, the London Boroughs of Brent and Harrow, Tameside Council and Walsall Council brought our total number of associates to 34.

With a total of 47 formal member organisations, this makes YPO the largest public sector buying organisation by representation in the UK.

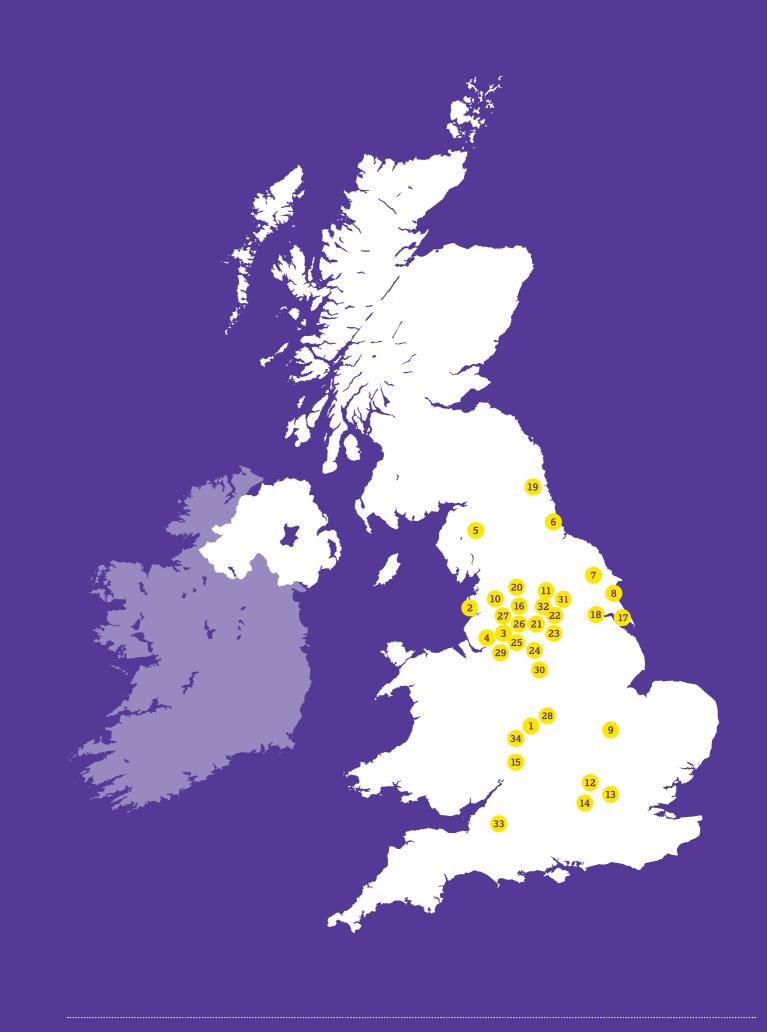
management through YPO's framework arrangements is now in excess of £540 million, and there has been significant penetration of new areas including the

We will continue this initiative, developing appropriate alliances and partnerships within key sectors. We will also strengthen our relationships with Crown Commercial Service, Crescent Purchasing Consortium, CBC, ESPO and NEPO, in addition to other collaborative groups such as the National Procurement Service for Wales and Scotland Excel.

Reflecting upon the last three years, growth in customer spend under management through YPO's framework arrangements is now in excess of £540 million, and there has been significant penetration of new areas including the West Midlands, London and the South East. As we introduce a new three year strategy in 2015, collaborative working and geographic expansion will continue to be an important part of maintaining the organisation's position as a leader in public sector procurement.

#### Our 2014 associate member authorities:





## Our Board of Directors

## **Simon Hill**Managing Director

Simon joined YPO in July 2011 from former regional development agency Yorkshire Forward, where he was an Executive Director. Previously, Simon was Managing Director for electronic automotive manufacturer Kostal UK Limited. With experience across supply chain and procurement, Simon has ten years public sector experience and 20 years commercial experience.



## **Jo Marshall** Executive Director

Jo joined YPO as Business Development Manager in September 2010 from her position as Head of Public Sector at Samsung Electronics, and was promoted to Commercial Director the following August. With a strong sales background, Jo has been working with the public sector for over 20 years. She leads the organisation's commercial and trading functions.



## **Paul Smith**Executive Director

Paul joined YPO as Procurement and Supply Chain Director in November 2010. With over 20 years' procurement experience, Paul has held roles with Aviva, Capita, RM and Ford. He leads the organisation's finance, procurement, business change and IT functions. Paul currently represents YPO on the SOPO Executive Committee and with our key procurement partners.



## Julie Wray Assistant Director

Julie joined YPO as Head of HR and People Support Services in September 2010. Julie has over 20 years' HR experience within both the public and private sector including roles at Wakefield Council and Barclays Bank. She leads the organisation's human resources, people support services and operations functions.



## **Dennis Heywood**Independent Director

Dennis was appointed in October 2014 to provide independent guidance to the organisation as a member of our Board of Directors. He has over 30 years of experience in the board room in both private and public companies, and in organisations where governance and risk management has been a priority. He is currently Vice Chairman of Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust, Independent Non-Executive Director of The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS), and Chairman of a growing chain of high street giftware stores.



**Chris Hodlin**Distribution Controller

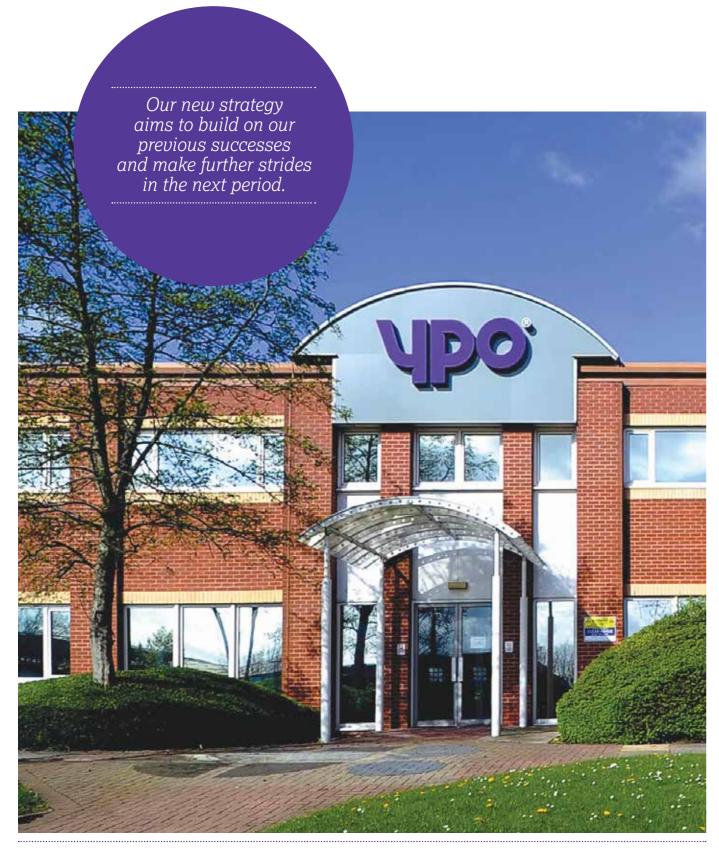


"When we first started delivering orders, map books were used to navigate around. But with over 50 drivers, books were always in short supply and often misplaced.

Aside from purchasing the replacements, we had to buy new books annually due to changes in roads and motorways. Without doubt, these factors all had an impact upon our ability to deliver goods efficiently to customers.

Over the years technology has advanced at a rapid rate and continues to do so. Satellite navigation systems have totally transformed travel; they are almost an expectation in modern vehicles and are now part of everyday life within the business.

Last year we invested in new sat-navs for all our drivers. The technology has significantly reduced the time our drivers have to spend planning journeys. Now they have the most up-to-date road information available at all times. This all means deliveries get to our customers on time and we can reach maximum potential on a daily basis."



# Forward thinking, outward looking

As the organisation enters its next strategy period, our core vision and mission remain unchanged and YPO is now well positioned to deliver on these in the coming years.

Our vision is that every single public organisation achieves the best possible value for money when procuring its goods and services. To support this goal, we aspire to be UK's number one public sector buying organisation.

We aim to be the largest purchasing organisation in terms of both turnover and membership, be the most competitive, have the best customer service reputation, and be seen as a leader in the field of public procurement.

The key theme for our 2015-17 business strategy is *Forward Thinking*, *Outward Looking*. This captures the growing confidence of YPO to build on previous successes and make further significant strides in this new period.

A number of building blocks were put in place during the previous strategy period which will now enable YPO to develop the business into the future:

- The investment in IT will help transform the organisation into a truly digital business.
- The increase in capability of the Procurement Services division will enable YPO to significantly build its offering in this area.
- The development of the organisation's customer service culture will be the engine for growth.
- The establishment of a limited trading company by member authorities gives YPO a new and exciting route to market.
- Embedding the new YPO employee values means that the culture can continue transforming to embrace the changing environment.

The creation of these building blocks was critical to ensure the organisation's structures, processes and systems were prepared to address marketplace challenges in a well-structured and controlled manner.

Having concentrated on building internal process and robust governance, the next three years will be focussed on the external environment. Through external benchmarking, customer insight research, best practice development, market trend analysis and customer input, YPO will continue to be a flexible and adaptable business, reacting quickly to unforeseen market conditions and be truly outward looking.

#### **Financial Summary**

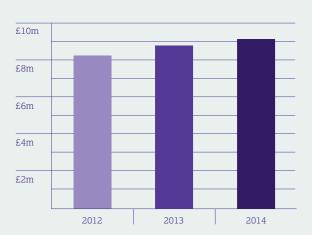
#### Dividend paid back to the public sector

Dividend paid back to the public sector	2012	2013	2014
	£8,210,000	£8,803,000	£9,139,000

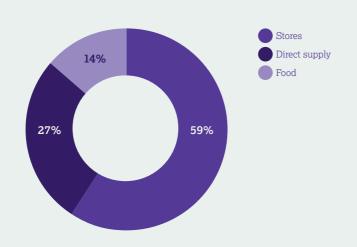
#### Turnover by category (£000s)

Turnover by category	2013	2014
Stores	£70,953	£71,827
Direct Supply	£35,296	£32,835
Food	£15,606	£16,322

#### Dividend paid back to the public sector



Turnover by category 2014



#### Income and expenditure account (£000s)

Income and expenditure account	2013	2014
Invoiced turnover	121,855	120,985
Cost of sales	(91,787)	(90,510)
Gross margin	30,068	30,475
Discounts	227	226
Rebates	4,747	5,365
Other income	2,061	2,195
Gross surplus	37,103	38,261
Operating expenses		••••••••••••
Operating expenses Employees	(13,443)	(14,279)
	(13,443) (1,597)	(14,279)
Employees		
Employees Premises	(1,597)	(1,027)
Employees Premises Supplies and services	(1,597) (5,854)	(1,027) (4,787)
Employees Premises Supplies and services Transport	(1,597) (5,854) (5,885)	(1,027) (4,787) (6,270)
Employees Premises Supplies and services Transport S.L.A Costs	(1,597) (5,854) (5,885) (154)	(1,027) (4,787) (6,270) (164)
Employees Premises Supplies and services Transport S.L.A Costs Financial and Miscellaneous	(1,597) (5,854) (5,885) (154) (122)	(1,027) (4,787) (6,270) (164) (1,064)
Employees Premises Supplies and services Transport S.L.A Costs Financial and Miscellaneous Depreciation and revaluation increase/(decrease)	(1,597) (5,854) (5,885) (154) (122) (683)	(1,027) (4,787) (6,270) (164) (1,064) (835)

This table is an extract from the YPO Audited Statement of Accounts. To view the full document visit **www.ypo.co.uk** 

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#### **Financial Summary**

#### Sales invoice production

 2012	2013	2014
849,649	786,103	795,901

#### Number of sales invoices by payment type

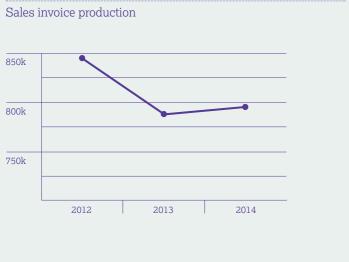
	2012	2013	2014
Invoices	738,435	690,524	716,926
Direct Debits	111,214	95,579	78,975

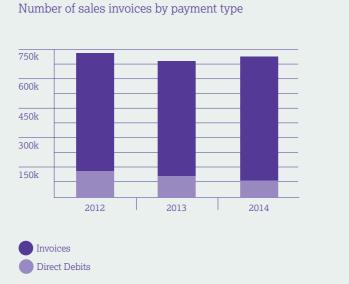
#### Overhead spend analysis (£million)

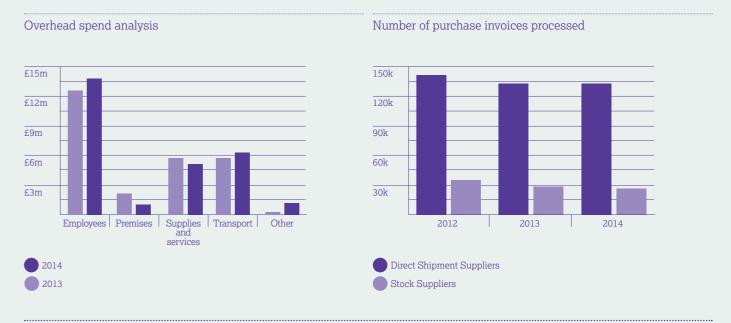
	2013	2014
Employees	13.4	14.2
Premises	1.6	1
Supplies and services	5.8	4.8
Transport	5.8	6.3
Other	0.2	1.2

#### Number of purchase invoices processed

	2012	2013	2014
Direct Shipment Suppliers	141,747	132,943	133,228
Stock Suppliers	35,105	28,636	26,573







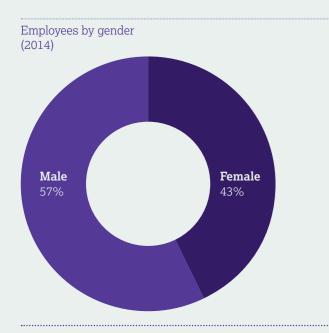
### **Employee Data**

### Employees by age

	2013	2014
< 21	22	22
21-30	84	83
31-40	84	90
41-50	150	158
51-60	142	140
>60	25	23
Total	507	516

### Employees by gender

	2013	2014
Male	300	294
Female	207	222



YPO has been providing savings to the public sector since 1974. We're 100% public sector owned, meaning every single penny saved is put back into the public purse, achieving even better value.

Design Thompson Brand Partne



