

[UPSCALE
PARTNERS]

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YASA 

A team built for success



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A TEAM BUILT FOR SUCCESS

YASA is a true scaleup success story. Spun out of Oxford University, the business was founded to develop and commercialise its pioneering axial flux technology, creating highly innovative powertrain solutions for the electric vehicle market.

We have been proud to partner with YASA in building out the company's leadership team both ahead of – and beyond – its acquisition by Mercedes-Benz in 2021.



Scaleup Timeline

- ⇒ 2017 – YASA raises £15m in new funding to support expansion of the team and manufacturing facilities
- ⇒ 2018 – YASA opens a 100,000-unit-per-annum e-motor serial production facility near Oxford
- ⇒ 2019 – YASA secures a further £18m in funding from investors including Parkwalk Advisors, Oxford Sciences Innovation (OSI), Universal Partners, and Inovia Capital
- ⇒ 2019 – YASA announces Ferrari as its first OEM customer
- ⇒ 2020 – YASA continues to scale and begins working with Upscale Partners in the build-out of its senior team alongside ramping up to volume production
- ⇒ 2021 – YASA becomes a wholly-owned subsidiary of Mercedes-Benz

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Our collaboration with YASA began at an exciting time in the company's trajectory.

By 2020, the business had secured two long-term development and supply agreements with customers in the premium automotive sector and had closed a European OEM deal that would see YASA transition to volume production.

As such, it was vital for the company to put in place the right structure and people to facilitate rapid expansion. Furthermore, YASA needed the strength and depth of talent for a robust succession plan that would ensure continued growth following the Mercedes acquisition.

Approach + Strategy

To date, we have worked with YASA on six key hires.

For each appointment, we have operated as an extension of the organisation, deploying a meticulous and methodical search strategy, underpinned by our in-depth knowledge of both the client and the market, to take the YASA opportunity to the widest possible pool of talent.

After researching, engaging with, and interviewing all individuals, we have then presented YASA with a shortlist of high-calibre candidates who possess the skills and experience to take the business to the next level. **This process has resulted in a successful hire every time.**



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- 6 searches
- 6 shortlists
- 6 appointments
- 100% success rate**

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Position	Purpose	Appointment
Marketing Director	To enable YASA to engage effectively across its main stakeholder groups.	Ben Neville joined from Prodrive, where he led brand and digital transformation, bringing a wealth of experience from global, market-leading companies including HP, GM, + Castrol BP.
Managing Director	To direct and lead the business growth from low-volume to high-volume production for Mercedes. To establish YASA as a wholly-owned subsidiary of Mercedes.	Graeme Cook joined from cleantech engineering firm, AVID Technology. Graeme is highly experienced in leading manufacturing companies across the Automotive and Aerospace Industries.
Engineering Director	To strengthen thought leadership on electric motors and power technology. To lead engineering activities across all products.	Chris Woolley joined from Jaguar Land Rover, where he led Electrification, Transmission and Driveline Test Operations. He has a wealth of Automotive experience gained at Ricardo and SAIC, as well as JLR.

Position	Purpose	Appointment
Operations Director	To facilitate the scale-up from low-volume batch manufacture to high-volume production for Mercedes, and YASA's Automotive customers.	Richard Firmstone joined with an extensive track record in automotive manufacturing. He came from Jaguar Land Rover where he had been responsible for manufacturing excellence.
Head of Programmes	To ensure YASA's continued success in the effective delivery of programmes to customer requirements.	Scott Barnes joined from Ricardo and is highly experienced in leading technical and commercial programmes for Automotive customers, as well as playing a key role in driving growth.
HR Director	To provide succession to the outgoing HR Director, following the acquisition. Oversee growth in people as the company matures into a medium-sized business.	Lucy Townsend joined from Animal Dynamics where she had built the HR function from scratch, and came with a track record of working in high-growth, VC-backed engineering companies as well as large multinationals.

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Testimonials

“Our relationship with Upscale Partners has continued through the scale-up of YASA, its acquisition by Mercedes, and the spin-out and growth of Evolito. To date, **they have helped us find and appoint 15 members of our leadership team** across both companies. Upscale were quick to understand our business and culture and have been outstanding at identifying high calibre candidates for critical roles within the organisation.”

Chris Harris, CEO, YASA / Evolito

“Upscale Partners have been intrinsic to YASA’s scale-up journey. Through Upscale Partners, we have built a world-class team at pace, **bringing in impactful hires that continue to drive and facilitate our growth**, now under the ownership of Mercedes. I have worked with Upscale both as a candidate and a client and, in both capacities, I have been impressed by their service level, expertise, and ability to find and attract the very best.”

Graeme Cook, Managing Director, YASA



Mercedes-Benz



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GET IN TOUCH

If you'd like to learn more about the work we've done for our clients, or if there's something we can help you with, we'd love to hear from you!

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