SAVVY©

COLLECTIVE

PRESS PACK 2026

Confident Action, Built For Momentum

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About SAVVY Collective

SAVVY Collective is the intelligent partner for owner-led hotels, leisure and lifestyle ventures, combining real ownership experience with specialist expertise to strengthen performance, people and profitability.

Built from hands-on operator experience, SAVVY works with independent hospitality businesses to solve problems quickly, improve performance and build long-term value. Its support spans management, consultancy, education, events and investment, bringing practical expertise to every stage of the business lifecycle.

At a Glance

- SAVVY works with owner-led hotels and hospitality ventures of up to 100 keys, units or equivalent scale
- SAVVY is built on first-hand experience of owning and operating hospitality businesses
- SAVVY is structured around five core areas: SAVVY Management, SAVVY Consultancy, SAVVY Education, SAVVY Events and SAVVY Investment.
- The team brings experience across hotels, food and beverage, social hubs, attractions and lifestyle-led experiences
- Support ranges from operational resets and repositioning to people development, revenue growth and short-term investment
- SAVVY works flexibly, from short-term interventions to longer-term operating and strategic partnerships



OUR EXPERTISE

Management

Flexible hotel management combining operational leadership, people development, commercial performance and financial discipline.

Consultancy

Focused operational and strategic support, from health checks and performance reviews to pre-opening, rebranding and repositioning.

Education

Industry-led learning, professional development and initiatives designed to attract, retain and develop hospitality talent.

Events

Hospitality-led event strategy and delivery, covering concept, programming, partnerships, sponsorship, marketing and operations.

Investment

Financial and strategic support including cash-flow solutions, asset optimisation, operational resets and refinancing guidance.

Q&A With
Steven Hesketh

Award-winning hotelier, hospitality operator and entrepreneur, and founder of SAVVY Collective.

Steven Hesketh on SAVVY Collective and the future of hospitality:

Hospitality group SAVVY Collective recently rebranded following a series of senior appointments as founder Steven Hesketh sets out plans to grow the business.

Here, Steven answers questions on the relaunch, the company's specialism in management contracts and consultancy, and why he believes the sector needs a dedicated Government ministry.



Q&A With
Steven Hesketh

Q **For anyone who doesn't know SAVVY Collective, what does the business do?**

A

"SAVVY Collective is the intelligent partner for owner-led hotels, hospitality, leisure, events and lifestyle businesses.

We were built from ownership and operational experience, not consultancy theory, so we understand the challenges our clients face because we have lived them ourselves.

We combine strategic thinking with practical expertise to help businesses perform better, develop their people, enhance guest experiences and deliver sustainable profitability.

We work with hotels, food and beverage venues, social hubs, attractions, events and lifestyle-led destinations, typically up to around 100 keys, units or equivalent scale.

We want SAVVY Collective to become the trusted choice for owners who need serious support without sacrificing what makes their business unique.

We have seen first-hand what happens when independent operators are left without the right support: good businesses struggle, great teams leave, and the character that made those places special gets lost. That is exactly what SAVVY exists to prevent."

Q&A With
Steven Hesketh

Q **What makes SAVVY different from a typical management company?**

A

“The business has been shaped by the realities of running family hotels, the financial pressures, the staffing challenges, the community relationships that no management manual fully captures. That ethos runs through the company itself.

My wife and our three children each play an active role in delivering SAVVY’s services, which is a deliberate reflection of the values we bring to clients.

We are built around sharp thinking, people power, family-grown experience, local connections, collaborative partnerships, agility and value-driven decisions.

Everything we do is rooted in the belief that success happens when people, product, place and profit work together.”

Q&A With
Steven Hesketh

Q **SAVVY operates across four core pillars. What are they?**

A

“People, Experiences, Performance and Resilience. People means building engaged teams and developing leadership capability.

Experiences means delivering memorable guest journeys that drive advocacy and reputation. Performance means improving commercial outcomes through operational excellence, revenue growth and profitability.

Resilience means creating sustainable businesses with strong foundations.

Those four pillars sit behind everything we deliver, whatever service line a client comes to us through.”

Q&A With
Steven Hesketh

Q **Why does SAVVY Collective specialise in management contracts and consultancy specifically, rather than a broader hospitality offering?**

A

"Those are two of our five service lines, and together they cover the range of what an operator might need.

SAVVY Management provides independent hotels with full operating platform support, hotel representation, commercial performance, people-first leadership and financial discipline, while keeping owners firmly in control.

SAVVY Consultancy delivers focused expertise ranging from three-day operational health checks to long-term strategic partnerships, repositioning projects and pre-opening support.

A lot of hospitality businesses don't need another agency telling them what to do from the outside. They need people who understand what it's actually like to run a venue, because we've done it ourselves.

That's the difference: operational experience being applied directly, not theory being handed over in a report."

Q&A With Steven Hesketh

Q **You mentioned five service lines. What are the other three?**

A

"SAVVY Education, SAVVY Events and SAVVY Investment. SAVVY Education develops hospitality talent at every career stage through industry-led programmes, our Bee Our Guest initiative and The Art of Hospitality conference series.

SAVVY Investment provides agile capital solutions, from cash flow support and bridge funding to refinancing guidance and asset protection; our recent investments include Chance Clean Cider, an award-winning low-alcohol brand.

SAVVY Events oversees hospitality-led experiences built for commercial impact and community connection, including DevaFest, a family music festival at Cholmondeley Castle that attracts 30,000 visitors each August, and the Cheshire and North Wales Food & Drink Festival."

Q&A With
Steven Hesketh

Q **What does SAVVY's portfolio look like in practice?**

A

"It already demonstrates the model in action.

We work with venues including The Chester Townhouse, The Annex, The Old Registry, Hotel Wrexham, The Savvy Fox and Queens Square Social, alongside events such as Deva Fest and the Cheshire and North Wales Food and Drink Festival."

Q **What are the biggest challenges you're seeing operators face right now?**

A

"It's the combination of pressures landing together rather than any one of them in isolation.

Wage increases, energy bills, food inflation, business rates and National Insurance aren't new problems individually, but when they all hit at once, that's when businesses that would otherwise survive start to struggle."

Q&A With Steven Hesketh

Q **What's next for SAVVY Collective?**

A "Our aim is simple, but bold: to support hospitality businesses in building strong teams, service excellence, operational resilience and sustainable profitability.

That means growing all five service lines and continuing to work with operators who want a genuinely hands-on partner rather than an advisory-only relationship."

Q **Finally, what would you say to owners considering working with SAVVY Collective?**

A "Come and talk to us. Whether you need full operating platform support, focused consultancy, help developing your team, investment support or a partner for an event, we've built the business around actually understanding what it takes to run hospitality venues day to day, because that's exactly what we've done ourselves."



PARTNERSHIP IN ACTION

How SAVVY Collective helped Deva Fest reach new heights

10K

visitors welcomed daily.

£3.5 Million

estimated economic contribution to the Cheshire region.

50+

independent traders and local suppliers supported.

Deva Fest has grown from an independent family festival into one of the North West's best-known summer events, and 2026 marked its biggest year yet.

Around 10,000 people attended each day, more than 50 traders were involved and the festival welcomed major artists including Ronan Keating, Jessie J and James Morrison. It also generated an estimated £3.5 million economic impact for Cheshire and the surrounding region.

But behind those numbers is another story. It is the story of what can happen when an ambitious founder brings the right partner into the business.

At the heart of Deva Fest is founder Phil Marston, whose vision has always extended beyond putting on a successful music festival.

He wanted to create an event that families and friends would actively choose to return to, while attracting major artists and commercial partners, supporting local businesses and delivering a meaningful benefit to the wider community.



Jessie J



Ronan Keating



James Morrison

As Deva Fest has grown, protecting that identity has remained central. The family-friendly experience, independent spirit, strong sense of community and the feeling that the festival is about much more than watching artists perform are all part of what makes it distinctive.

That vision has been strengthened through Phil's partnership with Steven Hesketh, CEO of SAVVY Collective and co-owner of Deva Fest.

Steven brings a complementary mix of entrepreneurial experience, commercial thinking, creativity and operational expertise. Crucially, this is not simply an external consultancy relationship. As a co-owner, Steven has a direct stake in the festival's success and is involved in helping shape its future.
The result is a partnership built around complementary strengths.

Phil brings his passion, vision and deep understanding of Deva Fest and its audience. Steven brings another perspective, challenging ideas, identifying opportunities, considering investment and helping translate ambition into practical action.

Together, they have created additional capability around the business without taking the founder away from the vision that made Deva Fest successful in the first place.





What the partnership looks like in practice: Turning vision into growth: SAVVY has worked alongside Phil to develop the festival as a larger and more commercially ambitious proposition while keeping its original identity at the centre.

Bringing entrepreneurial experience into the business: Steven's position as co-owner means his involvement goes beyond traditional consultancy. He brings first-hand experience of building businesses and a direct focus on creating sustainable growth.

Challenging and strengthening ideas: The partnership provides Phil with another experienced voice around the table, bringing fresh thinking, constructive challenge and alternative perspectives to important decisions.

Identifying commercial opportunities: SAVVY brings commercial expertise to partnerships, investment and growth opportunities, helping Deva Fest make the most of its increasing audience, profile and reach.

Supporting operational growth: A larger festival brings greater complexity. More people, suppliers, partners, investment and operational considerations all require additional capability and experience.

Scaling without losing the DNA: Growth is only valuable if the original proposition remains intact. The partnership is helping Deva Fest increase its scale while protecting the family-friendly, independent and community-focused experience that audiences value.

Strengthening the commercial proposition: The 2026 festival featured major artists including Jessie J, Ronan Keating, James Morrison, Ash and Vengaboys, alongside brand experiences involving organisations including Nintendo, Jaguar Land Rover and Harrods Beauty.

Creating impact beyond the festival: With around 10,000 visitors each day and an estimated £3.5 million economic contribution, Deva Fest is increasingly important to the wider Cheshire visitor economy, supporting local accommodation, hospitality, suppliers, traders, transport and other businesses.

Combining investment with expertise: The relationship demonstrates the wider SAVVY model of combining investment, specialist expertise and practical operational support with genuine entrepreneurial involvement.

Building for the future: The partnership is not simply about delivering one successful festival. The foundations created in 2026 are already being used to consider the next stage of Deva Fest's development, with planning for 2027 underway.

For SAVVY Collective, Deva Fest demonstrates a simple principle. Owner-led businesses are often at their strongest when the person who created the vision remains close to it, but has the right partner alongside them to help turn ambition into sustainable growth.

Deva Fest remains Phil Marston's vision. Its success is the result of an extraordinary team of artists, suppliers, traders, commercial partners and the Cholmondeley Estate.

But the SAVVY partnership has added something significant: entrepreneurial experience, investment, commercial thinking and operational capability around the founder.

The result is a festival that has grown considerably in scale while remaining recognisably Deva Fest. And with the 2027 chapter already beginning, the partnership is now focused on what comes next.





GROWTH IN FOCUS

How SAVVY Collective transformed an independent hotel into a £3m hospitality destination

SAVVY©
COLLECTIVE
•
HOTEL WREXHAM

Reimagining an independent hotel into a **thriving hospitality destination.**

★★★★☆

Visit Wales

BEFORE







AFTER







+25% Occupancy	**+113%** Total revenue	**13›43** Team members	**£3M** Potential Value Today



SAVVY Collective has grown revenue at Hotel Wrexham by 113% in four years, transforming an independent hotel into a diversified hospitality business which now spans food, events, weddings and community life.

The group acquired the property, formerly known as Holt Lodge, for £1.6 million in May 2024 and has since invested a further £1 million. It's now estimated the asset could command a value approaching £3 million.

The numbers:

- Total revenue: up from £923,387 in 2022 to a forecast £1.97 million in 2026 (+113%)
- Food and beverage revenue: up from £454,979 in 2022 to £938,175 in 2025, forecast to reach £1.12 million in 2026
- Hotel occupancy: up from 53.2% in 2022 to a forecast 77.75% in 2026 (+24.55 %)
- Headcount: up from 13 to 43 employees

Rethinking the business, not just the building:
The opportunity at Hotel Wrexham was never simply to refurbish bedrooms and sell more rooms. SAVVY Collective reimagined the whole business, investing across every bedroom, upgrading conference and event spaces, and transforming the outdoor areas with new decking, patios, seating, children's play equipment and dedicated spaces for music and entertainment.

The most significant change was commercial rather than physical. The traditional hotel restaurant was repositioned and relaunched as The Savvy Fox, a gastro pub with its own identity and customer base, built to draw in local residents as well as hotel guests. That single decision sits at the centre of the entire transformation.

The Savvy Fox, a destination in its own right:
The Savvy Fox was designed to be more than a restaurant attached to a hotel. People can visit to eat, meet friends, have a drink, bring the family or attend an event, whether or not they have booked a room.

The concept blends traditional country-pub character with contemporary surroundings and puts families at the heart of the offer. Breakfast, lunch and dinner drive visits through the week, while weekends bring outdoor entertainment, inflatables and activities for younger guests.

Savvy Fox Festivals, firework nights and other large-scale events have further established Hotel Wrexham as a destination people actively choose to visit, rather than somewhere they might simply stay. The hotel is no longer dependent on a single reason for people to walk through its doors, and that diversification now sits at the core of the commercial model.









Family-focused, community-rooted:
Families are central to the new identity. Family-friendly offer, outdoor activities and dedicated children's entertainment have made the property somewhere families spend time, not just somewhere they eat. A summer Kids Eat Free offer and school-holiday activity programme reinforce the same strategy and gives families an easy reason to visit, and a reason to come back.

SAVVY Collective has also worked to embed Hotel Wrexham within the wider Wrexham community, partnering with local organisations and supporting charities and causes. Weddings, from intimate ceremonies to larger celebrations, and a growing public events calendar now sit alongside private events, giving the venue multiple, recurring reasons for people to return.

Building the value of the asset:
Following the physical transformation, improved trading performance and the creation of multiple revenue streams, SAVVY is seeing the asset value increase from £1.6 million acquisition price toward approximately £3 million, subject to an independent professional valuation.
More customers. More reasons to visit. More revenue streams. Higher occupancy. A stronger food-and-beverage business. A larger team. And a property with a broader role in its local community.

Part of a wider ambition for Wrexham:
The Hotel Wrexham transformation is one part of a larger investment programme in the city. SAVVY has also converted Wrexham's former Old Library into Queen's Square Social, and work continues on The Old Registry, billed as Wrexham's first aparthotel.

Hotel Wrexham remains the clearest example of the group's philosophy in action: what looked like an underdeveloped hospitality asset in 2024 is, roughly £1 million of investment later, becoming a genuine destination. Hotel Wrexham isn't just somewhere to stay anymore. It's somewhere to go.



SAVVY COLLECTIVE FOUNDER

BACKS CALL FOR DEDICATED HOSPITALITY MINISTRY

Steven Hesketh, founder of hospitality group SAVVY Collective, has backed chef Tom Kerridge's call for the Government to create a dedicated Ministry for Hospitality, warning that policy affecting the sector remains too fragmented across departments.

Steven, who has worked in hospitality for more than 30 years, pointed out that the industry supports around 3.5 million jobs in the UK, roughly one in ten of all jobs, contributes approximately £93 billion directly to the economy and generates around £54 billion in tax.

Figures show 1,839 licensed venues closed during the second quarter of 2026, with a similar number opening over the same period.

Steven said: "The data shows there is still plenty of confidence and ambition in the industry. But I don't think we should look at that and say everything is fine."

"The biggest problem is that decisions affecting hospitality businesses are made across different Government departments, with business rates, employment costs, licensing, planning, VAT, National Insurance, apprenticeships, skills and energy costs all considered separately despite landing on the same business at the same time.

"When you actually run a hospitality business, none of these things are separate. They all affect the same P&L. And sometimes it feels like policies are being made without anyone looking at the full picture."

Steven added that hospitality businesses are not asking for special treatment, but for the Government to properly understand how the sector works before introducing new costs.
"Adding another cost might sound manageable in isolation, but when it lands on top of wage increases, energy bills, food inflation, business rates and National Insurance, it can be the thing that pushes a business too far," he said.

He continued that a dedicated Ministry for Hospitality would mean there are people in Government whose job is to understand the sector properly before decisions are made, rather than the current situation where responsibility for the industry is split between wages, tax, planning and skills policy with no single department considering the combined impact.

"Nobody seems to sit in the middle and say: what does all of this actually mean for the operator? That is the question that matters," he said.

He said hospitality businesses are resilient and have continually adapted by cutting costs, changing menus and opening hours, restructuring teams and renegotiating with suppliers, but warned there is a limit to how much a business can absorb.

"A dedicated Ministry for Hospitality would not solve every problem," Steven said. "But at least there would be somebody whose job it is to understand the problems properly. Someone to connect the dots, someone to challenge decisions where necessary, and someone sitting at the table speaking for an industry that employs millions of people."

RECENT COVERAGE & MEDIA CONTACTS



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Deva Fest 2026 was its biggest and best year yet. But behind the headline numbers is a story about owner visio...

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HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY CONVERSATION - THE FUTURE OF INDEPENDENT HOSPITALITY HOSTED BY SAVVY COLLECTIVE

As SAVVY Collective enters its next stage of growth, we believe there is real value in creating more opportunities for hospitality leaders to share experience, challenge thinking and explore what comes next for the sector.This September,...

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SAVVY COLLECTIVE STRENGTHENS LEADERSHIP TEAM WITH APPOINTMENT OF MARCUS MAGEE AND STEPHEN MILES

SAVVY Collective has strengthened its senior leadership team with the appointment of two experienced hospitality leaders, naming Marcus Magee as Operations Director and Stephen Miles as Development Director.The appointments come as...

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SAVVY COLLECTIVE BRINGS OPERATOR EXPERIENCE, STRATEGIC EXPERTISE, AND INVESTMENT CAPABILITY UNDER...

SAVVY Collective has revealed a new brand identity and expanded vision - cementing itsposition as the trusted partner for small to medium-sized owner-led hotels, leisure andlifestyle ventures, who need serious expertise without losing the...

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NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONNECT WITH SAVVY COLLECTIVE

SAVVY Collective on LinkedIn

Steven Hesketh on LinkedIn

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Latest News & Announcements

For interviews, further information, photography, brand assets or comments from Steven Hesketh and the SAVVY Collective leadership team, please contact the relevant contact below.

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