

Hedgehog Lab sets out goal to become £50m business amid raft of senior hires

Prominent Newcastle tech consultancy Hedgehog Lab has outline its ambition to become a £50m business within five years.

Amid a shake-up of its leadership team, CEO and founder Sarat Pediredla says the firm has set itself lofty goals and wants to attract top talent, predominantly to its North East headquarters, which sit alongside bases in York, the US and Bulgaria. Details of the strategy follow April's acquisition of app-development firm [Netsells](#) which almost doubled the size of Hedgehog Lab overnight, growing it from a team of 60 to 110.

Mr Pediredla said the deal has helped the firm, which has delivered work for high profile clients such as Santander, Deliveroo and E-on, "turbo charge" its growth but that it is not actively looking for other acquisitions. The £6.3m transaction was supported by private equity investors BGF who joined forces with Hedgehog Lab after the departure of Maven, which had backed the firm since 2017 and during which time Mr Pediredla says the business quadrupled in size from roughly £2m turnover to £8m.

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The founder told BusinessLive: "2022 was a really good year for us in terms of growth, especially after a couple of tough years through Covid which was the same for a lot of the market. We decided we really wanted to go to the next stage

and the eventual ambition – our big, hairy, audacious goal – is to get a £50m business based in the North East.

“We needed a pathway and a strategy to do that – especially as we’re funded by private equity. We went on the journey with BGF and while we were doing that we had the opportunity to acquire Netsells, because of the founders wanting to step back and do something else.”

In tandem, over the past nine months, Mr Pediredla has brought in a number of new hires including chief technology officer Ed Marshall, who joined from cloud consultancy Infinity Works; chief growth officer Richard Meirion-Williams, who came from European consultancy Zuhlke; and a new non-executive board chaired by ex-Accenture Song managing director and Karmarama founder Ben Bilboul.

Mr Pediredla said: “The first thing we had to do was to build a radically different C-suite – a C suite that works for a £10m business or even a £5m business is not the same as the one that will work for a £50m business. So, we needed people on board who had been on those journeys, scaled out etc.”

Amid a more challenging year in the firm’s key financial services and healthcare markets, Hedgehog Lab now has its sights on public sector contracts. Until now, the 16 year-old business has only worked with the private sector and it is now hoped the firm’s technology solutions can help public sector organisations in their quests for efficiency and cost saving.