

**BUSINESS
READY**

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK
SCIENCE PARK

Business Ready helping Hollywood Gaming expand into new markets

Warwickshire-based Hollywood Gaming has become a market leader in providing hardware, software and the effects solutions for immersive experiences in multiple sectors across the UK.



Pictured (left to right): Mark Evans (director of Hollywood Gaming), Gaynor Matthews (Business Ready), Malcolm Barnes (director of Hollywood Gaming)

Now, after being supported by the University of Warwick Science Park's Business Ready programme, the company is looking to develop a new area of the business where it will open venues of its own and provide unique visitor experiences.

The company is currently mapping out that expansion and will look to raise around £800,000 in investment to get that side of the business off the ground.

The Company

Hollywood Gaming was founded in 2005 and is led by directors Malcolm Barnes and Mark Evans. The company now employs a handful of people from its base in Meriden, creating the hardware and software required for immersive games and experiences.

The company has worked on leading brand IP from industry leaders such as Hasbro, Paramount Pictures, Sony and EA. It works closely with international distributor Sega Amusements and enjoys preferred supplier status with the entertainment giant.

Its solutions help make experiences come to life, merging the visuals with all the props the player interacts with during the game to make it feel lifelike. These include haptic feedback systems, motion, lighting and audio prompts.

The Challenge

The company now has plans to create its own experiences that it will operate from its own venues.

"It's not so much a pivot but a new opportunity for us as a business," said Malcolm.

"We believe that our experience and skills in this area give us a great platform to create our own venues and our own experiences.

"The plan would be to make them interchangeable – so you could have a horror game running for one group and then change that to be something children friendly using the same props but with a different narrative and different reality experiences."

The company has plans to expand into strategic locations in the UK before expanding to Europe and North America.

The Solution

Gaynor Matthews, a Business Ready adviser, has been working with Hollywood Gaming on how to position itself within the marketplace and better explain what it does to different groups – whether that's Business to Business or Business to Consumer for its new venues.

The company is now attempting to raise £800,000 through venture capital and grant funding – including an Innovate UK grant which is being supported by the University of Warwick.

"Gaynor has been really helpful," said Malcolm. "We approached Business Ready in around August of 2020 and as well as supporting us around the way we can market ourselves, she has been a really big support from a business mentorship point of view."

Apply now business-ready.co.uk [@bus_ready](https://twitter.com/bus_ready)
businessready@uwsp.co.uk [024 7632 3121](tel:02476323121)

This project is part funded by the European Regional Development Fund, forming part of the CW Business: Start, Grow and Scale Programme.



"I am big believer in tapping into other people's knowledge and specialist skills and Gaynor has been great at introducing us to other mentors for support, which has helped to move us onto this stage."

The Results

Hollywood Gaming has now identified potential locations for its new venues once it has raised the necessary funding to be able to invest in the project.

It is also working with a team of scriptwriters to help create the narratives for the new experiences, which Malcolm expects to cost around £30 per person for half-an-hour.

He said: "As well as extended reality, our games will be brought to life with props and also tapping into other senses such as touch and smell, which is what helps to set them apart from ordinary virtual reality experiences."

"This kind of experience is normally reserved for major cities like London but we want to bring it to the masses both through location and through our price points, which make them much more accessible for people."

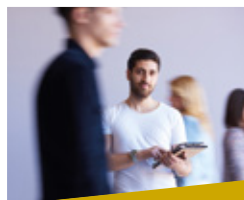
"It won't just be a 30-minute experience, the story will start before visitors have even arrived and will offer a great day out for family and friends."

"We are grateful for the help we've received from Business Ready in getting us this far and can't wait to launch our first venue."

Business support for the next level

The Business Ready programme is managed by the business support team at the University of Warwick Science Park. The experienced Business Growth Advisers team have been delivering business growth and support services to technology based businesses for over 30 years.

In addition, the team are supported by a range of specialist mentors who have run their own businesses and have expertise and experience supporting, advising, coaching and mentoring other growth businesses.



Access to skills & knowledge

Hands on help to connect companies to Universities and their resources as well as upskilling business owners.



Access to markets

Assistance in identifying routes to market and developing market readiness.



Access to finance

Assistance in identifying funding routes and developing investment readiness.



Access to incubation

An incubation service for early stage/start-up companies.

Apply now business-ready.co.uk [@bus_ready](https://twitter.com/bus_ready)
businessready@uwsp.co.uk [024 7632 3121](tel:02476323121)