

WHEN THE STARS ALIGN

Celebrity endorsements have long proved lucrative for brands. *Olivia Surguy* looks at the most successful

HEY JUDE ...

“It’s fair to assume I know a bit about law. After all, my name is Jude.” That’s the line delivered by movie star **Jude Law** — famous for his roles in *The Holiday*, *The Talented Mr. Ripley* and *Sherlock Holmes* — as he stares down the camera in the most recent advert from AI firm Legora. “The face is up here,” Law chides, as the camera pans to the firm’s website in the cheeky advert, where he swans around in a suit repeating legal jargon.

The Swedish start-up with a \$5.6 billion (€4.2 billion) value provides AI software to speed up due diligence and review documents, among other tasks. Legora had nine times more unprompted website visits in the 30 days after Law appeared in the ad with the line “Law just got more attractive”. This is its most successful site driver since the firm was founded in 2023. The amount of cash paid by Legora to Law is undisclosed, but given that it is backed by private equity giant Bain Capital and Nvidia’s venture capital arm, it won’t be a small sum. Legora is not the only firm banking on celeb appeal to drive sales ...

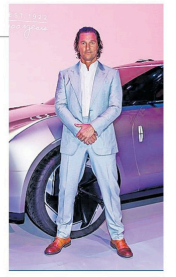


MCCONAUGHEY HAS DRIVE

● In 2014, Hollywood star **Matthew McConaughey** appeared in a series of ads for the Lincoln Motor Company. The campaign played on his previous role in a film called *The Lincoln Lawyer*, where he played Mickey Haller, a cocky defence lawyer. In one of the 30-second ads, McConaughey is in a restaurant staring out of the window at a Lincoln MKZ, a mid-size car, waiting for the rain to stop. When it does, he goes to the car, opens its sunroof and drives away quietly, saying: “There we go.”

The ads were promptly mocked in parodies by *Saturday Night Live* and *South Park* — but Lincoln had the last laugh. The Michigan-based firm announced that its sales had risen by 25 per cent a few months after the ads went viral.

McConaughey’s partnership with the brand lasted for about five years.



The EU’s Entry/Exit System has resulted in ‘mega queues’ and business leaders say it’s ‘not fit for purpose’. *Oliver Gill* reveals the firms behind the botched rollout

How Europe’s border tech was allowed to launch

UNTESTED

Friday evening’s 8.15pm KLM flight from London City to Amsterdam landed at about 10pm local time. But this was just the beginning of a very different journey for those on board. Having been held on the plane for an hour because of a lightning storm, British passport holders entered the airport terminal to face chaos at the border.

All the self-service kiosks to register passport details were turned off and only one of the four passport counters was open.

Exasperated, some of the British travellers tried their luck queuing up for one of three counters open for EU citizens instead. When they were turned back, tensions mounted as they tried to push back into an hour-long line for those with non-Eurobloc passports.

Such scenes, ever more commonplace despite claims to the contrary from Brussels, are a product of a bungled rollout of the European Union’s new border control technology. The Entry/Exit System (EES) was implemented to track when non-EU citizens enter or leave the Schengen free-movement area, while negating the need to stamp passports.

While there were warnings aplenty that EES registration could be a bureaucratic nightmare, Brussels officials continue to promise that clearing immigration on trips to EU countries will become faster. Yet the reality is altogether different — and this weekend, we reveal why.

Unwittingly, holidaymakers not from the EU — the largest proportion of whom are British — have become guinea pigs for a system that was not “end-to-end” tested

before it went live. Failures in the “plumbing” of the technology mean that travellers are being asked to redo their registration every time they enter and leave an EU country. The shortcomings are so acute that in some parts of the Schengen area, fingerprints and facial images are being collected despite officials knowing that the information cannot be remitted to a central portal.

Airports and ports, not set up for the additional bureaucratic burden, are quickly overwhelmed even during the quieter weeks outside school holidays. British families are now being warned to brace for waits of up to six hours to clear immigration during this summer.

Despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary, a European Commission spokesperson this weekend insisted that EES “works well at almost all border crossing points”.

All of which begs the question: how did we end up in this mess? And who is to blame? Plans to implement a digital border can be traced back to 2008. The Schengen area, within which full free movement is allowed, required strengthening so that officials could ensure non-EU residents were not overstaying their allowance of 90 days in the zone in a 180-day period. It would not be until 2016 that the EES was proposed, with the European parliament and European Commission agreeing a legal framework for its implementation the following year.

Delays ensued as rows erupted over civil liberties, the mass collection of biometrics and the finer details of the legislation. Meanwhile, the UK’s vote in favour of leaving the EU was a further complication as it added millions of visitors who would need to be captured by the system.

A launch date of 2020 was pushed back to 2022 because of Covid, before being delayed again until May 2023 and then the autumn of 2024 following fierce lobbying by the French over fears that potential system failings could overshadow that summer’s Paris Olympics.

The EES was launched in October 2025, but even then on a staged basis. The plan was to ramp up the system so it would be fully in force by April this year. And yet the EES had not been tested.

A senior source said: “Everything that was being tested at [EU member state] level was not being fully tested end to end. This plumbing was not being tested end to end because the central system was not ready.”

Broadly, the EES comes in two parts. First, biometric passport data is collected when non-EU travellers arrive in the bloc for the first time. The information is

scanned in and uploaded to eu-LISA, a 400-person EU agency, based in Tallinn, Estonia, which manages large-scale IT systems that support the implementation of asylum, border management, migration and justice policies across the bloc.

Officials at eu-LISA then use the passport information to create a dedicated file for the traveller in question.

The second element is the collection of biometric information — fingerprints and facial images — at an airport or port. This information is sent separately to eu-LISA, and matched with passport data to complete the creation of a traveller file, which is retained for three years.

The next time the traveller enters the EU, they scan their passport at a kiosk and provide one piece of biometric information, checked against the file. If they

have overstayed in the Schengen zone, or they are flagged for criminal convictions, the kiosk alerts a border force officer to take over the process. Otherwise, it is a largely automated system that allows people to clear immigration in seconds.

That’s how the system should work ... in theory. The problem is that the “plumbing”, a complex web of interconnected technology, is not working correctly. As a result, it is common for non-EU travellers to be asked to repeat the registration — a process that is measured in minutes rather than seconds.

The problem is the 29 countries in the Schengen area don’t operate the EES in the same way; responsibility lies with different departments in different countries. Added to this, the technology was designed and rolled out by different pro-

viders in different countries. Defence giant Thales, for example, is responsible in France and Spain, but in Germany, Austria and Switzerland, it is deployed by a company called Secumet, which in turn has formed partnerships with local firms in Slovenia, Hungary, Bulgaria and the Czech Republic. The technology can vary from location to location in the same country. For example, French firm IN Groupe provides the technology for the Channel Tunnel.

Another senior source gave two examples of failures. At some ports and airports, border officials found that they did not have access to the traveller files retained on the eu-LISA portal. The other example relates to the collection of fingerprints and facial images. The source said in some countries, this system is una-



“I have travelled to Europe five times since EES — and I’ve registered every single time”

BP has to start again in quest to find replacement for Manifold

Jill Treanor

BP has appointed a fresh firm of headhunters to find a new chairman after the sudden departure of Albert Manifold last month.

The move is seen as the clearest sign yet that the FTSE 100 oil giant is going back to the drawing board in its quest to find a candidate for one of the most prestigious roles in corporate Britain.

Egon Zehnder, which led the search for Manifold, has been replaced by Russell Reynolds, the global recruitment firm based in Chicago. The hunt is being overseen by Aviva chief executive Dame Amanda

Blanc, who is senior independent director at BP.

The City was stunned when BP’s board said Manifold had been “removed” after it was alerted to “serious concerns” over governance standards oversight and conduct. This led to accusations of “bullying” by Manifold, which he has denied and described as “lies”.

He suggested that his drive to cut costs and push through changes at the company had not been well received. He was in his first role as a FTSE 100 chair after a respected career as chief executive of building materials group CRH, which under his tenure

shifted its primary stock market listing from London to New York.

Manifold had been chair for only eight months when he left BP, and was credited with hiring Meg O’Neill as chief executive. Formerly boss of Australian energy company Woodside, he replaced Murray Auchincloss, who had been promoted from finance director in 2023 when Bernard Looney left after misleading the board about personal relationships with colleagues.

The board has named existing non-executive Ian Tyler as interim chairman. BP and Russell Reynolds would not comment.

Dame Amanda Blanc is overseeing the search



Junk food clampdown will cause us chaos, warn industry chiefs

Daniel Woolson

Food and drink industry bosses have lashed out at a planned shake-up of junk food rules, arguing that it will hit them with huge costs and could result in swathes of products disappearing from supermarket shelves.

Ministers are planning to overhaul the nutritional model used to classify which food and drinks products are considered high in fat, sugar or salt and so subject to restrictions on how they are advertised, as well as where they are placed in stores.

A survey commissioned by trade organisation the Food & Drink Federation, and carried

out by advisory firm Oxford Economics, said the average one-off cost of changing the model per product would be £2.812, instead of the £53 estimated by ministers. Manufacturers said they would expect to discontinue about one in ten products.

Ministers began a consultation on plans to change the “nutrient profiling model” this year, with an eye to bringing the changes into force by the end of this parliament. Wes Streeting, the former health secretary, had pitched the latest move as having the potential to address obesity and save the NHS billions of pounds a year. The new model will

differentiate between “free sugars” and total sugars, meaning some products that would previously have escaped restrictions, including bran flakes and yogurt drinks, will now be considered “less healthy”.

Free sugars are considered to be more harmful, and include sugars added to products as well as some natural sugars, such as honey and syrups. The update was intended to reflect how our understanding of nutrition and diets has evolved. Companies say they have already spent millions reformulating products to meet the demands of the current model, which was

designed by the Food Standards Agency in 2004.

Richard Hall, the vice-president of Danone North Europe, said the changes “risk undermining years of industry effort to make everyday products healthier”.

At the same time, the drinks industry has rallied against plans to remove fruit juices from school menus. A government spokesman said: “Early estimates suggest by applying the updated Nutrient Profiling Model to the current junk food advertising and promotion restrictions, we can reduce childhood obesity by up to another 110,000 cases.”

ON YOUR MARKS...

● In 2004, Marks & Spencer was on the ropes and fending off a takeover bid from retail mogul Sir Philip Green. Two years later, thanks to an ad campaign including British supermodel Twiggy, it received an industry award for a clear example of an "advertising-led recovery". Having first appeared in an ad for M&S in 1967, Twiggy was chosen as one of the faces of the brand's women's wear revival almost four decades later. In the ad, she wore a blouse that sold more in one week than any other product in M&S's history at that time. The campaign cost about £62 million but it paid off by encouraging an estimated 1.4 million extra people to buy clothes in the chain, with a sales increase of about £28 million and a revival of the brand's image. Twiggy went on to star in many more campaigns for M&S.



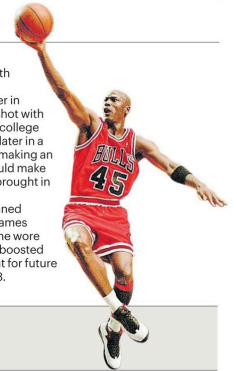
RED AMBITION

● Before Madonna sported the now-iconic red shade of Mac Lipstick on her world tour in the early 1990s, the brand was mainly spotted only in make-up artists' kit bags. The Canadian cosmetics company, initially called Make-Up Art Cosmetics, launched in 1984 and one of its main drivers was unsolicited endorsements from stars introduced to it by their make-up artists. Madonna was photographed in 1990 wearing a T-shirt with the brand's name scrawled across it. The megastar later turned to the company to create a red lipstick that would last the entire length of her demanding two-year tour for her 57 tour dates on the Blond Ambition world tour. Mac released the lipstick shade dubbed "Russian Red" in 1994, prompting long queues in shops. The brand went on to launch six further red lipstick shades on the back of the success.

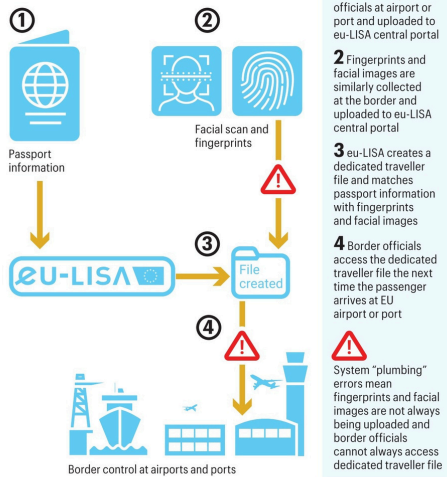


SLAM DUNK DEAL

● Perhaps the godfather of all celebrity endorsements, Michael Jordan's tie-up with Nike went far beyond advertising. The basketball star's life changed for ever in 1982 when, aged 19, he made a 16ft jump-shot with 15 seconds left in a game to win a national college championship. Nike signed him two years later in a \$2.5 million five-year deal with the idea of making an "Air Jordan" shoe. It predicted that this would make about \$3 million in sales, but the product brought in \$126 million in the first year alone. The National Basketball Association banned players from wearing the trainers during games and Jordan was fined \$5,000 every game he wore the Air Jordan 1s, but the controversy only boosted demand. The partnership was the blueprint for future Nike deals including LeBron James in 2003.



EES - WHAT IS GOING WRONG



ble to upload data to the eu-LISA. So when this biometric data is collected, it has nowhere to go and is deleted. "I have now travelled to Europe five times since the Entry/Exit System launched – mainland Spain three times, Croatia, now Tenerife," said Clive Wratton, of the Business Travel Association. "And I have registered every single time." Wendy Head, a project manager at Wilton Park, a Foreign Office agency, responded to Wratton when he posted about his experience: "I have had to register three times myself in three months – Sweden, France and Italy."

The fiasco will pile pressure on eu-LISA, an agency that is allocated more than €300 million (£260 million) of EU funding a year. Last year, the agency spent an average of €4,000 a month on "team building, cultural activities and other projects to promote social contacts among staff". While this has been cut to €1,000 a month this year, about €1.8 million was spent to "cover costs related to schooling at the European School".

Research for travel website Booking.com found that 59 per cent of UK holidaymakers expect delays linked to EES. Half worry they could miss their flights as a result, as happened to 50 British tourists on a Ryanair flight from Athens a week ago. And passengers are unlikely to be able to claim compensation, because airlines will be able to argue that the circumstances are outside their control. For Wratton, the EU derogations, even if utilised, don't go far enough. "The growing chaos surrounding the EES isn't a case of initial hiccups; it is a fundamental failure of infrastructure. The core promise of the system – register biometrics once for a three-year window – is simply not working. Travellers are being forced into a continuous re-registration loop," he said. "The only logical route for EU border authorities is to suspend EES operations until the technology is actually fit for purpose."

I built my firm from nothing. Now we're set to list in London



PAUL RUDDICK, FOUNDER OF REDS10

Jess Jones
When Paul Ruddick was passed over for a promotion after spending years working for a building firm on £50 million school projects with top architects, he decided to do it alone. In 2006, he started doing basic manual labour and small jobs to get his business off the ground.

"I basically took chairs off the back of a lorry and put them into a school, or put up pinboards," said Ruddick. "It was really low and menial work. My mates thought I was mad. I had stepped back out of my career to just start from scratch." The entrepreneur, now 52, is back to building work on multimillion-pound projects. The company he founded, Reds10, has grown into one of Britain's largest modular construction businesses. It designs schools, hospitals, military accommodation and other public sector buildings, before manufacturing them in sections at six factories in East Yorkshire and assembling them on site.

The Department for Education recently appointed the company to deliver a £20 million special educational needs and disabilities school in Sutton, south London, which it will finish by next year. Reds10 employs more than 900 people directly – rather than using subcontractors, as is more typical in construction – and turned over £44.7 million in the year to March 2025, with a pre-tax profit of £7 million. It expects revenue of about £160 million this year, supported by a pipeline of projects worth more than £350 million. Ruddick, who owns the majority of the company alongside his siblings, said it is preparing for a London Stock Exchange listing next year.

He was born in Portsmouth but grew up in



Paul Ruddick's firm Reds10, has grown into one of Britain's largest modular construction businesses

Gibraltar, then Kent and eventually Wick in the far north of Scotland, as his father served in the Royal Navy before moving into the pub trade. As a boy he cleaned vehicles in pub car parks, sold holly at Christmas and took on other odd jobs. He studied quantity surveying at Heriot-Watt University in Edinburgh and then completed a master's degree in project management, but only after failing to secure a place on a graduate scheme that many of his friends joined. He also didn't make it into the navy when applying to become an officer.

"I had a lot of rejection in my life when I was growing up," said Ruddick. "I realised that you can't rely on anyone else." After university, he spent eight years as a quantity surveyor. But when a colleague received the promotion that he had hoped for, it was the final straw. He decided to leave.

Ruddick worked from a spare bedroom, juggling work as an independent construction consultant with small jobs worth £10,000 to £30,000. He won his first clients largely through personal relationships. "I was convincing people to use me," he said. "When you go out and work, people buy you; they buy the person."

The early years were very

hard work, he recalled. "It's a cliché, isn't it? You've just got to put the hours in. I was working 16 [hours] out of the day." But by the end of the first year, he had £50,000 in the bank – more than he'd ever had before. Ruddick has reinvested the profits into the business.

His brothers joined him after a couple of years and, in 2011, Reds10 won its first direct government contract for a temporary school, worth about £350,000. "It seems like a tiny scheme now," Ruddick said, "but at the time, it was a big job."

He added that Reds10 has just secured a £100 million military accommodation project. The size of it doesn't scare him. "You find a way, whatever it takes. We keep getting bigger jobs, and it just becomes normal."

However, a spur-of-the-moment deal nearly brought things crashing down. Twelve years ago, Reds10 had won a big school contract, and at that time it relied on a manufacturer in Hull to supply the modular buildings. During a meeting, the supplier revealed that he wanted to leave this business partnership and open his own factory.

"Will you take your work and give it to me in the new factory?" he asked Ruddick, who agreed – provided he received a 20 per cent stake in the new venture. To the

Ours is the only industry that missed the Industrial Revolution

surprise of Reds10's founder, the supplier said yes. "I remember walking away and going, 'I'm not sure what I've just done there,'" Ruddick recalled. His brothers were equally confused; the deal consumed virtually all the working capital that the company had accumulated. "My brothers were looking at me going, 'What have you done? This is going to break us!'" Ruddick eventually bought out the factory owner and expanded the site into Reds10's manufacturing base, which is now core to the company's business model. Instead of building everything on site, Reds10 makes large sections of buildings in factories – which are all on long leases – the assembles them at their final location. The Reds10 group comprises nine businesses in

total, ranging from interior design and furniture manufacturing to crane and installation specialists.

"Construction is the only industry that missed the Industrial Revolution," Ruddick said. "We still construct buildings the way we did 100 years ago." "The frustrating thing about construction is that everyone knows what's wrong with it, [but] no one does anything about it. Basically, I'm doing something about it."

The model allows the company to invest heavily in apprenticeships and training. Its factories also employ people who have changed career and prisoners on day release. Most staff live locally rather than spending weeks away from home on construction sites. However, the trade-off is that the factories must stay busy for Reds10 to continue operating.

Reds10's next target is social housing. The company is developing two affordable housing schemes in London, which Ruddick reckons can help address Britain's property shortage. "I'm not interested in private housing," he said. "I want to sort out social housing, affordable housing, key-worker housing, because we have a massive housing issue in our country."

Reds10 remains a family business. Ruddick's sister and brothers work within the group, with his wife in its furniture operation. His mother is a former languages teacher who now supports apprentices in the group. After nearly two decades, Ruddick believes the business is finally in a position to achieve what he set out to do. "Only now do I think I can really start to effect change in the industry," he said.

ASK ME ANYTHING

Best advice for entrepreneurs... get up every morning, come to work and run toward the

sound of gunfire. My day is about finding the problems, having the confrontation and pushing through. **Someone I admire...** [Car pioneer] Henry Ford. There's his classic line: 'If I'd asked them [his customers] what they wanted, they would have said faster horses.' **Best decision...** doing the

deal on the factory. At the time, it was one of the worst decisions I've made, because it caused five years of hell. But it's our biggest asset now. **My money philosophy...** make sure the business is always well capitalised. You don't need loads of money in life to do what you want.

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