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SMALL TALK



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Not everyone is feeling the pain

It looked like bad news across the board last week when the Government cut £81bn of public spending in what amounted to Britain's biggest fiscal consolidation outside wartime. But, as ever, there may be glimmers of light for some. While businesses across the country are squealing at the changes to the Government's carbon reduction scheme, which critics say turn it into a "stealth tax", the Lancashire-based smart metering company BGlobal may be a beneficiary.

BGlobal already has much to be proud of and is today named as the winner of the northern category in this year's Deloitte Technology Fast 50 competition. Thanks to a staggering 4,447 per cent growth in revenues over the past five years, BGlobal is also the highest-ranking of all AIM-listed companies. It is ranked sixth in the national top 50 - the top performer outside the London, the South-East and Cambridge regions which dominate the index.

Such booming growth may yet be helped along by the Chancellor. By adding more teeth to the CRC scheme, which forces organisations that are heavy electricity users to buy "allowances" for their carbon emissions, the financial incentive to control energy use will be even stronger. And BGlobal is its own best advertisement, shaving "12,000 off its annual electricity bill by using a smart meter.

So far the company, which was founded in 2004 and listed on AIM three years later, has focused on only the business market. But it also has plans to launch a domestic smart meter within 18 months. Given that there are more than 47 million domestic electricity meters in Britain, BGlobal's past five years of growth may be just the beginning.