

# SDO CONNECT

Insights, opportunities and connections to accelerate SME growth.

- Discovery Report
- Outsourced BD Support
- Event Support
- Associates Services



## Recap of the Month

We've hit the ground running this January at SDO Associates, with a busy and positive start to the year! Our team has grown, and we're delighted to welcome Jenny Kavanagh as our new Aerospace Lead, her expertise will be invaluable for clients looking to explore opportunities in the aerospace sector. Our CEO, Stu Olden, was invited to join Will Stone, Swindon North MP, to discuss Swindon's growing drone ecosystem and SDO Associates' role in supporting the development of the local supply chain. Our Podcast "Advanced to Contract" is back with Episode 2: From Capability to Credibility (Preparing for Market Entry). In this episode, we explore how businesses can translate products and

services into the Defence sector, unpack key considerations, common challenges, and what it really takes to build credibility in the market. We also released our second blog, "Navigating the Roadmap: What the Defence Investment Plan Means for UK SMEs," a timely read as we await the announcement of the highly anticipated Defence Investment Plan. Finally, we were invited to attend the first DSEI Gateway event of 2026, where UKDI shared their key priorities and plans for the forthcoming year, providing valuable insight into the direction of the sector. It's been a busy start to the year and we're excited about what's ahead in 2026!

## Events

We recently attended a Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce Swindon Business Event, where it was great to reconnect with familiar faces, meet new people, and hear insights on the economic climate as we enter 2026. As the year gets underway, we're gearing up for a busy schedule of industry events. SDO Associates will be providing support at a wide range of events this year, helping clients maximise their visibility, engage with key stakeholders,

and make the most of every opportunity. Our next upcoming events include Space Comm, Sustainable Skies, and DP RTE. At these events, we'll be supporting businesses through strategic preparation, targeted introductions, and a post event follow-up report. You can find a full list of the events we can support you at on our website. If you'd like to explore how SDO Associates can help you get the most from industry events in 2026, get in touch.



## Meet the Partner: Dalton Cyber

Dalton Cyber Security is a small UK cybersecurity consultancy, established just over two years ago after I left regular Army service. I now run the business alongside continued service in the Army Reserve. The focus is on helping small organisations and consultancies understand and manage cyber risk in a practical, proportionate way, drawing on military experience around risk, assurance, and disciplined ways of working.



## An Exciting Opportunity...

An exciting opportunity has arisen! The Aerospace Technology Institute (ATI) is seeking seven SMEs to showcase their technology free of charge on its stand at Sustainable Skies. To be eligible, companies need a technology in development aligned with the ATI technology roadmaps. This is a fantastic chance for SMEs to showcase their innovations, gain exposure in the aerospace and defence sector and connect with potential partners or customers. Register here.

**David's Tip:** Cyber risk for small consultancies is usually a hygiene issue, not a sophisticated attack. If you touch client data or systems, basic controls like MFA, patching, and backups should be treated as part of professional credibility.  
**Why Partner with SDO Associates:** I enjoy working on defence-related projects with military people, where trust and direct communication are shared values. As a small company, partnering with SDO Associates makes sense and allows us to collaborate on meaningful work with people who value getting things done properly.