

# Transatlantic Tech Boom

Meet the Americans shaping the British tech ecosystem



 **LONDON  
IS  
GREAT**

BRITAIN & NORTHERN IRELAND

# INTRODUCTION

Exhilarating. Inspirational. Vibrant. Colourful. Quirky. Welcoming. That's the British tech scene, as described by those Americans who are deeply engaged in it.

Earlier this year, we talked with more than 30 American tech entrepreneurs, executives and investors who are currently residing here in the UK.



They had moved for many reasons. Some came to start a new job in a new company; others were drawn by love. Some started new businesses here; others have built successful international operations for their corporation. Some brought their young families; others arrived footloose.

We asked them to describe their experiences of living and working here. We asked them about the business decisions and their personal motivations for their move: what had brought them here and why had they stayed? We asked them about the benefits and challenges that they had experienced - as tech professionals, as individuals, as partners and parents. They told us their unique stories in their own words.

They were hugely well-traveled. They had lived or studied in various locations across the US, Europe and beyond. With that knowledge, all of them spoke about the huge advantages of living and working in the UK.

What stands out is their sheer relish and energy. They are making the most out of the many things that the UK has to offer - and the scope that this country is giving them to create their own opportunities.

These are remarkable Americans. All of them are generous, adventurous, curious, open-minded and confident. They are making an extraordinary contribution to the British tech scene. You can join them.

# The Great British Tech Explosion

Welcome to Great Britain and to London - the largest tech ecosystem in Europe and the most diverse in the world.

In the past five years, the number of digital technology businesses in London has increased by nearly 50 per cent. Today, there are approximately 40,000 businesses in the capital and it is forecast that a further 12,500 will have been created by 2025.<sup>1</sup>

The emergence of London as a global centre for tech has been a major development for the British economy. The UK government has recognised this, and is very supportive of the sector. "At a national level, technology is in a big growth phase," says Herb Kim, who runs Thinking Digital, a series of conferences and events across the north of England and in London, and who is Acting Head of Tech North.



**"It's a great moment for London and tech right now"**

Bob Burke, Director,  
EMEA at Okta

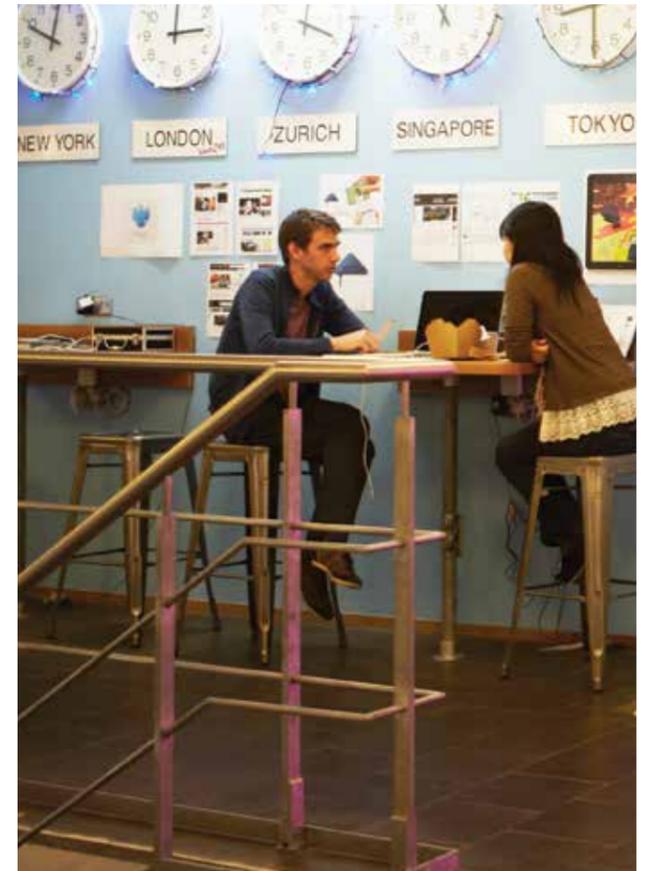
<sup>1</sup> Oxford Economics London Forecast 2015.

Going forward, the UK is set to play an even bigger role in the world's digital economy. London is at the fore as a global centre for startups and innovation.

That's because this growth is happening in one of the world's true global cities. Many of the people that we interviewed were struck by the density and geographic proximity of professional expertise, government, finance, culture and science in London. And, they add, there are two global academic powerhouses Oxford and Cambridge close at hand. "They're global, futuristic cities within one hour of the capital," observes Scott Sage, Expert in Residence at Seedcamp.

**"It is a city unlike any other," says Seedcamp's Co-founder and Partner Reshma Sohoni. "You have got the financial service industry of New York, the political base of DC, the tech of Silicon Valley and the entertainment world of LA. That's four pretty powerful cities - and they are all in London."**

One good example is the growth of the fintech sector. American entrepreneurs are seizing opportunities in London because of its unique alignment of strengths in finance and technology. "California has 'tech' and New York has 'fin'," notes DueDil Co-founder and CEO Damian Kimmelman, "but in London you have 'fin' and 'tech' with a ton of banking talent that wants to be a part of fintech."



American tech giants are establishing their European HQ presence in London, as predecessor corporations have done. Companies such as Facebook, Yammer, Google, Skype, Salesforce and Amazon have established significant development centres in the city. Fast-growing, newer companies such as Los Angeles-based fintech innovator InvestCloud are using London as the hub of their expansion into Europe and beyond.



"Being in London is not an option, it's an imperative," says Melissa Di Donato, Area Vice President, Wave Analytics at Salesforce. "It's a fundamental part of our growth."

The ecosystem is maturing. With an estimated ecosystem value of \$44bn, London is the fourth largest tech ecosystem in the world, and the largest in Europe. It is also the world's most diverse ecosystem, with 53% of foreign employees and 18% of female founders<sup>2</sup>.

"I see more and more entrepreneurs here in the UK who are saying, 'Yes, we can be the best in the world at this' or 'We've got something that other people don't have,' and I think that's really exciting," says Justin Fitzpatrick, who co-founded DueDil with Damian Kimmelman (left) and is currently COO.



## "Being in London is not an option, it's an imperative"

Melissa Di Donato, Area Vice President, Wave Analytics Cloud, Salesforce

<sup>2</sup> Compass' The Global Startup Ecosystem Ranking 2015.



According to a new YouGov survey commissioned by London & Partners of more than 800 international technology professionals, the majority of American tech workers who were considering a move abroad would prefer to relocate to London than to tech hubs in cities such as Paris, Berlin and Singapore. The survey also revealed that London is viewed alongside New York and San Francisco as one of the world's top three technology hubs.

London is, in effect, becoming the Sand Hill Road of Europe. "If you look back on the history of Silicon Valley, all the capital came from people who made money in its very early days and then reinvested it," says Rob Kniaz, Co-founder and Partner of VC firm Hoxton Ventures. "There's a virtuous cycle as founders become investors. London is the de facto place for that to happen in Europe. We are seeing it already and it is only going to accelerate."

## "London is a mashup between San Francisco and New York"

Reshma Sohoni,  
Co-founder  
and Partner,  
Seedcamp





**“You can operate globally out of anywhere in the north of England”**

Herb Kim, Founder and CEO, Thinking Digital, and Acting Head, Tech North





The scale of tech investment is increasing. Venture capital investment into Britain's technology sector has reached a record high; \$3.6bn was raised by British firms in 2015<sup>3</sup>. More international investors are looking at companies based in the UK.

And more US entrepreneurs are making an impact. Separate research commissioned by London & Partners from DueDil, the London-based fintech company, has revealed the impact of US entrepreneurs on the UK tech sector. The research finds that 1,403 US entrepreneurs are directors of UK tech SMEs founded between 2010-2014, more than almost any other non-UK nationality (except Ireland and India). The findings also showed that the number of UK tech startups with US directors has more than doubled since 2010.



Talent is being drawn to London from across the world. Recent analysis from online developer community Stack Overflow shows that London is home to 71,000 professional software developers, more than the metropolitan area of San Francisco and New York City, or any European city. London has more developers than Stockholm, Berlin and Dublin combined<sup>4</sup>.

"The quality of coders in the UK is very high," says Frank Kelcz, Partner at marketing and advertising accelerator Collider and a Venture Partner at DN Capital. "You can find resources to get stuff done to a high level at a reasonable cost."

There is amazing raw engineering talent across Europe," adds Rob Kniaz, who co-founded Hoxton Ventures with Hussein Kanji (left).

<sup>3</sup> Source CB Insights/London & Partners Jan 2016. <sup>4</sup> Stack Overflow September 2015.



"If you want to bring in world class talent, you will find it in London," adds Russ Shaw, Founder of the influential Tech London Advocates network.

"From a technical perspective, the best engineers here are just as good as the best in California," says Rob Kniaz. "London is also a huge attraction for Europeans in general. We see a lot of founders coming from across Europe to set up here."

"A lot of new tech is being created here," says Todd O'Brien, Co-Founder of Dell for Entrepreneurs and Head of Sales, EMEA at Dell Statistica. "There are many hidden gems. The UK is a rich soil; put something in it and it will grow."

To some, this great British potential has been apparent for years. For example, says Herb Kim, the north-eastern city of Newcastle is the birthplace and HQ of global software giant Sage. "You can operate globally out of anywhere in the north of England," he says.

What these figures don't show is just how this dynamic growth is throwing up commercial and personal opportunities like no other city in the world. While an incredible momentum of talent, ideas and investment has been gathering pace, the British tech scene remains comparatively young. That means there are many opportunities to have a meaningful, direct, personal impact. Many great things are being built in the UK right now, and American talent is playing a valuable part in developing and shaping them.



# Eight great reasons to join the Brit Tech Boom

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## #1 The UK is already top of your list

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If you are going to move, make it as easy as you can. The combination of business, language and cultural factors make the UK an obvious choice as a destination. It is a business environment that you can trust. The similarities between the US and the UK far outweigh their differences. For many, it was the only choice.

The English language is a pretty useful thing to have in common, and it helps that English is considered the international language of business. "London feels like home, both culturally and as a place to do business," says Seedcamp's Reshma Sohoni. "It is the easiest international city to come and live in, because of the language," says Scott Sage, Expert in Residence at Seedcamp.

"We had a very smooth transition from the US. It feels like a very familiar place to live, especially being from San Francisco," recalls Bob Burke of Okta.

## #2 Great access to global markets

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Being on the doorstep of the EU market of 503 million people is super-important. And that geography is not going to change. The UK is the gateway to global markets. You can get on a plane for that face-to-face meeting in another country, and be back within the day. And vice-versa: staff from across Europe can quickly and easily reach you.

"As a base for Europe, the UK is the easiest and most convenient in a lot of respects," says Jerome Tillotson, Director, EMEA Client Services at Domo. "We invest across Europe, so London is our launchpad. If you are trying to expand globally, London's a very sensible place to do that from," says Rob Kniaz of Hoxton Ventures.

"London is the perfect place from which to begin your internationalisation," adds Collider's Frank Kelcz.



"We evaluate over 700 applicants to our London Fintech Acceleration programme each year," explains Chris Adelsbach, Managing Director of Techstars. "What is striking is both the quality of companies attracted to working with us in London and the global interest we receive. Entrepreneurs from 77 countries applied and they cite a number of reasons why they want to accelerate and often 'flip' their business to the UK, but 'being at the centre of it all' is a general theme."

## #3 The UK is at the centre of the global working day

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Three letters say it all: GMT. "It's the daily time zone for anywhere in the world," says Russ Shaw.

"The UK is between the two largest economies of the world," says Damian Kimmelman, Co-founder and CEO of DueDil. "That means that there's a tremendous influx and liveliness that you don't get anywhere else. It's a hub."

"We have investments in Hong Kong, Singapore and California - and we can access them all during our working day," says Reshma Sohoni of Seedcamp.

## #4 The travel opportunities are amazing

The opportunity to travel to so many diverse countries and cities is a major asset of living in the UK. It's the platform for the wider markets of Europe, the Middle East and Africa. Catch a cheap flight on a Friday night and in a couple of hours you will be spending your weekend exploring new places.

"We've been to every European city and then some," says Mike Xenakis, Managing Director of OpenTable International. "The travel we have done as a family, which has been enabled by being here in London and the number of airports and cheap flights, has been just phenomenal."

"It's never claustrophobic," notes DueDil's Damian Kimmelman. "You can be in Paris, Morocco or Italy within three hours. That's unbelievable!"

"The UK is a great jumping-off point," enthuses Dave Hendricks, Managing Director, International, of LiveIntent, "with links to other cultures that we don't have in the US."

"The travel has been amazing," agrees Rob Kniaz. "You're stumped to get that living in the US. You can be in 30 countries in less than three hours."



## #5 Fantastic culture and history

What hits people is the proximity and density of Britain's culture and history. From walking London streets to walking Roman walls to walking coastal pathways, there's an immediate richness and variety.

The melting pot of London is a real draw. "It's on a completely different scale in the sheer number of people and how multicultural it is," says Bob Burke.

"Silicon Valley is a wonderful place but there are very few museums," says Rob Kniaz. "You can barely see shows and you don't have the theatre, dance and art. And you can't just hop on the train to Paris for the weekend."

"You can sense London's age," adds Scott Sage. "It's not a grid. It's quirky - and that's what you love."



"There is so much to this country," says Dell's Todd O'Brien. "Everything is accessible. I live 25 miles west of the centre of London, close to Windsor Castle. It's 40 minutes from Stonehenge, Salisbury Cathedral, and Bath."

"Any American interested in expanding their horizons and being part of an international community should absolutely consider moving to London. I love living in London," explains Diane Perlman, CMO of MassChallenge. "Where I live has a real village feel, but it's only 20 minutes from Soho. London is so vibrant - you feel energised by it. I also enjoy travelling often throughout the UK. I'll go down to visit friends in Cornwall or Devon for the weekend."

"Hadrian's Wall is on my doorstep," says Sarah Cox of Agile Pixel who is based in Newcastle. "As a Latin major, that's incredible. Yet we're just three hours away from London and two hours from Edinburgh."



## #6 The business environment is supportive and collaborative



Governments like to say that they are supportive of entrepreneurs. All our respondents agreed that the UK Government really is. The regulatory and policy environment is highly competitive. "The government is truly supportive of tech businesses, even when it hurts," says Damian Kimmelman. "The future of tech is that it will disrupt areas of life that are connected to government and regulated - from transport to education. Tech innovators need to be able to interact freely with government to look at alternative futures. Novel ideas require regulators to be receptive and in touch. That's what you get in the UK and why it is the best place to test things out - it's a great petri-dish."

"The UK has the infrastructure required for starting and growing a business," says Scott Sage. "In terms of regulations, it's easy to get a business off the ground and you don't get killed by taxes and employment law."

"There has been a specific effort of the government to lower the barriers for startups," says Collider's Frank Kelcz.

Our respondents love the ease and proximity to politicians and regulators and the support that they receive - from the Monarchy to the Prime Minister to the Mayor of London to regional government.

"I admire the openness and collaboration," says Russ Shaw. "There is a real passion and enthusiasm for helping each other."

"There's more of a 'pay it back' mentality, with people training and educating others," says Scott Sage. "I think now we're starting to see in London that people who are very successful are scaling their own learnings, which helps companies accelerate a lot faster," notes Hoxton Ventures' Rob Kniaz. "It's an open and supportive environment," asserts Justin Fitzpatrick, Co-founder and COO at DueDil.

There are more co-working spaces, incubators and accelerators in the UK than in any other country. Take WeWork in Moorgate; based in the heart of the City of London, it is one of the biggest shared spaces in the world. "There are lots of companies in here and always lots happening," says LiveIntent's Dave Hendricks.



## #7 A move to the UK opens a door to a global career - and enhances your personal value



For a tech executive, a UK posting gives you a professional edge and usually accelerates career prospects. "I think there has been that competitive advantage," says Dan Kendall, CEO of the SanGen Group. "Living and working here differentiates me." All of them reported gaining greater job responsibilities.

When Russ Shaw first moved to the UK from California, he was struck by how the responsibilities of his job were broader in scope and impact. "You can do something end-to-end. I hadn't expected this."

It rounds you out, gives you different experiences. You have the opportunity to position yourself as a global leader who really understands how to get things done anywhere - not just in the USA.

As Bill Crowley, SVP International of Tech Target, puts it: "There's no doubt that being able to say 'hey, I moved to a different country and helped to build a business out of locals and expats, and we got into these markets and proved our products and have become a leader in those foreign markets' - well, that's a great achievement."

This development of a global view has put executives in higher demand on their return. Many take on roles that would not have been possible without moving. If you don't try, you will never know.

Whether you are a startup entrepreneur or a seasoned tech executive, you'll find that you have greater opportunities to stand out in the UK.

## #8 It's easy to develop your network

London may be a global city but it is still a tech village. Work feels more social to our respondents - most also think that it is more collaborative and less aggressively competitive.

"It's a warm, tight-knit community," says Jess Williamson, Global Program Director of Techstars, "and it's very easy to wrap your arms around things as a newcomer. It doesn't take a year to get to know who's who. As a transplant, if you are sociable and have a positive attitude, it is very easy to get known and make a name for yourself - because you are not one of 200 other people trying to do the same."

Take a look at the success of Tech London Advocates, created by Russ Shaw. Within a couple of years, more than 2,500 advocates voluntarily give their time to build London's tech sector.

The twin attributes of being American and in tech does confer status. "There's a lot of credibility attached to coming from the Bay Area," observes Mike Xenakis, "so you can find yourself in a stronger position here in London."

"I was really in demand as a speaker which gave me a lot of exposure," says Dan Kendall.

If it is true in London, then it's perhaps even more so in other parts of the UK.





**"Any American interested in expanding their horizons and being part of an international community should absolutely consider moving to London"**

Diane Perlman, CMO, MassChallenge

**"Tech is happening everywhere. We're at a really pivotal point in London's history"**

Russ Shaw, Founder, Tech London Advocates



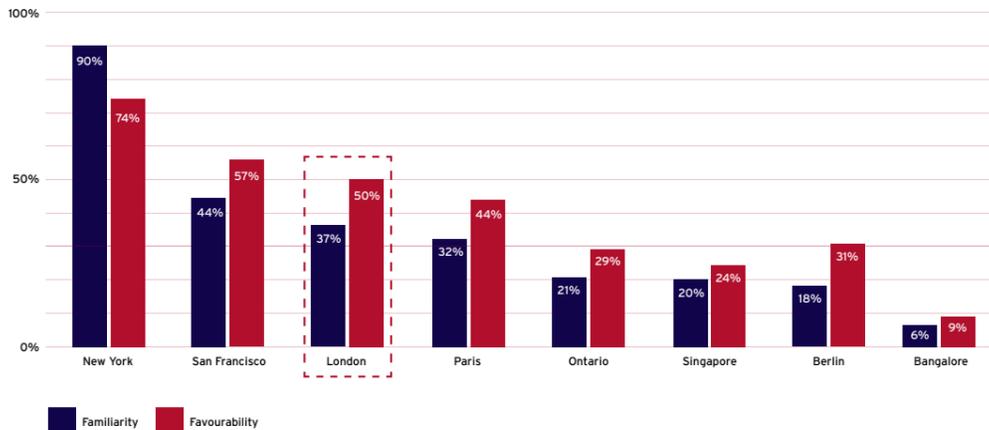
# US tech professionals' views of London

YouGov was commissioned by London & Partners to conduct a survey of tech professionals in eight international locations. The international locations surveyed in the report include: London, New York, San Francisco, Bangalore, Ontario, Paris, Berlin and Singapore.

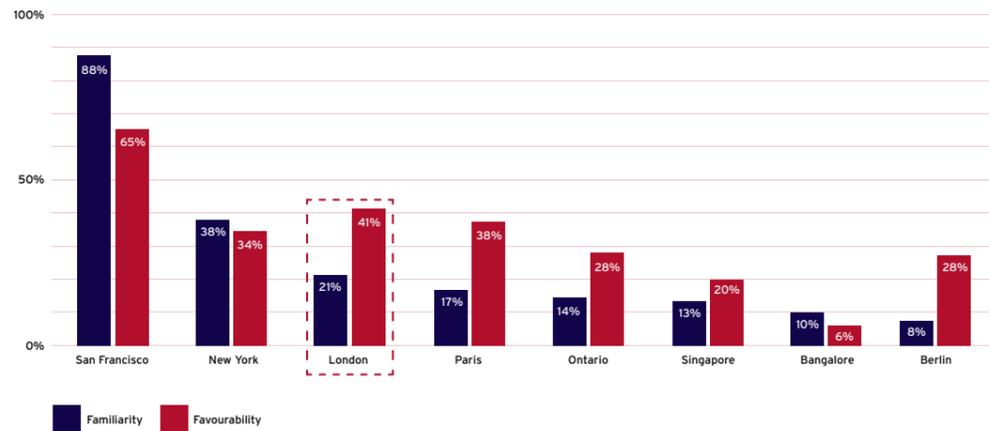
In total, 829 tech professionals were interviewed (a minimum of 100 per location). All interviews were conducted online using the same questionnaire in each location to facilitate comparisons. Fieldwork was conducted between 29 January and 7 February 2016.

Of all the cities outside the US included in the survey, tech professionals in New York and San Francisco are most familiar with and favourable towards London.

## NEW YORK



## SAN FRANCISCO

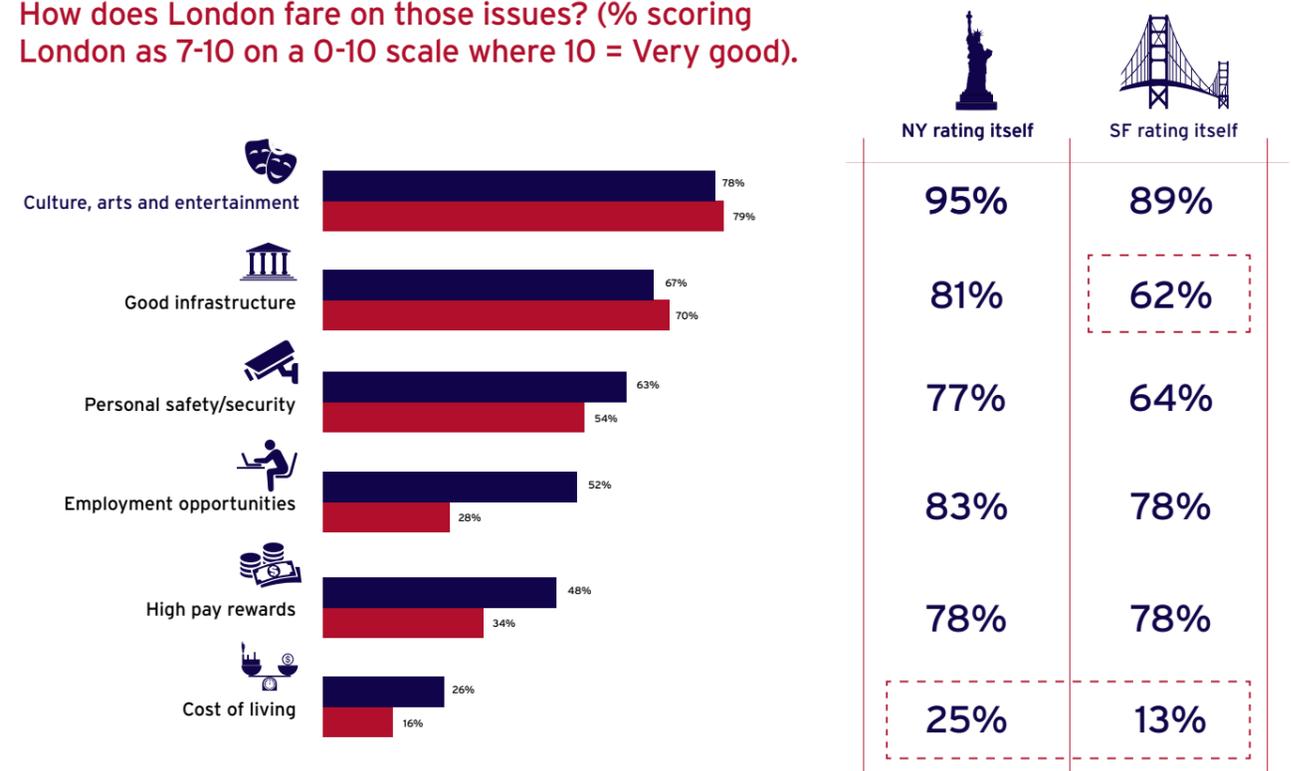


Amongst those who either have plans to move abroad or would consider doing so a quarter (24%) spontaneously mention London/the UK as a place they would consider moving to. Paris/France was mentioned by 19% and Berlin/Germany by 12%.

Most important considerations when thinking about moving to another city:

	 NEW YORK	 SAN FRANCISCO
1	Employment opportunities (89%)	Employment opportunities (91%)
2	Good infrastructure (89%)	Personal safety/security (88%)
3	Personal safety/security (85%)	Good infrastructure (88%)
4	Cost of living (84%)	Good remuneration package (86%)
5	Culture, arts and entertainment (76%)	Cost of living (85%)

How does London fare on those issues? (% scoring London as 7-10 on a 0-10 scale where 10 = Very good).



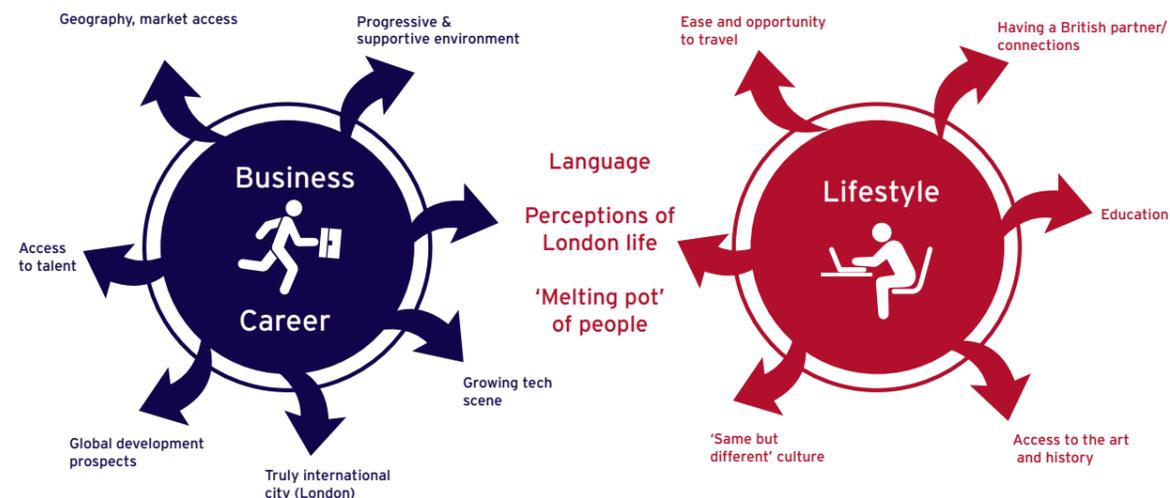
Q15. How familiar are you with each of these places?  
 Q16. Do you have a favourable or unfavourable impression of each of the following as a place to live and work?  
 Q11. Are there any countries, or cities, in particular that you would consider moving to?  
 Q17. How important would each of the following be to you if you were considering moving to another city?  
 Q21. Thinking about \*\*London\*\*, how do you rate it on the following factors?  
 Q20. Thinking about \*\*New York/San Francisco\*\*, how do you rate it on the following factors?

# Qualitative survey of American tech professionals in the UK

London & Partners and UK Trade & Investment commissioned the Quadrangle Research Group to interview 30 US nationals who are currently residing in the UK and working in the technology sector. Each interview was 45 minutes long and respondents were asked about their personal stories - including their motivations and attitudes to move to and live in the UK from a business and lifestyle perspective.



Our survey revealed that career, business and lifestyle factors all act as strong motivators



Here are some of the stories of the Americans we interviewed.

## Our stories

**CHRIS ADELSBACH**  
MANAGING DIRECTOR,  
TECHSTARS



Originally from Detroit, Chris is a corporate executive (GE) turned entrepreneur and now mentors, invests and accelerates some of the highest-profile early-stage companies in London's dynamic fintech sector. "London is the epicentre of financial services," he says. "You have great line of sight of everything is happening."

**SARAH COX**  
PROJECT MANAGER,  
AGILE PIXEL



Sarah grew up in Phoenix but had been living in Austin for eight years before relocating to the UK with her British husband. She is excited and hopeful about her career progression and can see plenty of opportunities in the UK tech scene. And she loves the proximity of everything: "Hadrian's Wall is on my doorstep. As a Latin major, that's incredible. Yet we're just three hours away from London and two hours from Edinburgh."

**BILL CROWLEY**  
SVP INTERNATIONAL,  
TECH TARGET



A Bostonian, Bill moved to London in 2008 with two other Tech Target employees to run the company's nascent international operation. Today it accounts for 30 per cent of Tech Target's business and has offices in Paris, Munich, Singapore, Sydney and Beijing. But it's in London where Bill and his family have built their lives. "Socially, the community around the school has been really big for us," he says. "The fact that we have school-age kids has got us a whole set of friends."

**MELISSA DI DONATO**  
AREA VICE PRESIDENT,  
WAVE ANALYTICS CLOUD,  
SALESFORCE



New Yorker Melissa chose to locate in London ten years ago, believing that the city would become the hub of a tech surge in UK. Her career has taken her from the Bronx to Buckingham Palace. "I'm in the centre of the world here. I live in the centre of a city that trades more currency than New York and Tokyo combined. Yet it feels peaceful and homey. I could live anywhere in the world and I choose to live in London. It has the best lifestyle for an entrepreneur, a tech executive or a technologist. It's a 1 + 1 = 3 place."



## HEKLA GOODMAN

CMO, FIT GURUS



Half-Icelandic and originally from California, Hekla studied in the US and Sweden. After graduating with a Masters in digital media, she decided to look for jobs in the UK. She first worked in London but is currently based in Newcastle, the north-eastern city that she describes as **“down to earth and very happy-go-lucky.”** She finds the UK a great place to build social capital: **“you can and do meet a lot of people. I have gone to lots of gigs and had loads of great nights out. I get asked to speak at conferences, which has opened up a lot of opportunities for me.”**

## JUSTIN FITZPATRICK

CO-FOUNDER AND COO, DUE DIL



Born and raised in Boston, Justin comes from a family of entrepreneurs and started his first business in New York. After a few years in Asia, he came to the UK to study at Oxford and then London Business School. **“I saw it as a two-year extended lay-over and that I would start a business back in the US but I discovered London was a great place as well.”** Oh, yes, and he met his wife here. Justin admires the willingness of British regulators to engage with firms such as DueDil that are trying to break new ground: **“they are pragmatic and don't try to write big rulebooks on something they don't understand.”**

## DAVE HENDRICKS

CO-FOUNDER AND MANAGING DIRECTOR, INTERNATIONAL, LIVEINTENT



Dave co-founded LiveIntent in New York and set up its London base in 2013 with one other employee. By the end of 2015, the operation had grown to 15 members of staff. It will double again this year. **“It made complete sense to take what we were doing and do the same in the UK,”** says Dave. And now he's a convert. **“I would stay here for a long time if regulations and the company allowed it,”** he says.

## FRANK KELCZ

PARTNER, COLLIDER AND VENTURE PARTNER, DN CAPITAL



After a career in international magazine publishing working across Europe, Frank is a Partner at Collider, a specialist marketing and advertising accelerator in London, and a Venture Partner at venture capital group DN Capital. He's passionate about the quality of life beyond work that London affords. **“Outside of work, people want to have fun - and few cities in the world have the diversity of entertainment that London has. It excels in every kind of the performing arts,”** he says. **“It's possibly the best place in the world - and I'm from New York, which is outstanding.”**



## DAN KENDALL

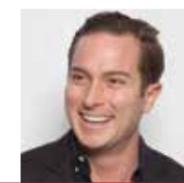
FOUNDER AND CEO, SANGEN GROUP



Originally from Virginia, Dan has lived and worked in several major US markets including Washington DC, New York, San Francisco and San Diego before moving to London in 2003. He is excited about the growth in technology and the rapidly growing opportunities for digital solutions in the healthcare market. **“London is on the world stage for the application of innovative technology in the areas of population health and personalised medicine,”** he says. **“As the world's markets continue to embrace these solutions, London is a natural home for companies with European and global aspirations.”**

## DAMIAN KIMMELMAN

CO-FOUNDER AND CEO, DUE DIL



New Yorker Damian studied at St Andrew's University in Scotland before moving to London, where he started DueDil, a fintech business whose vision is to organise the world's private company information. **“We could never have started DueDil other than in the UK because of the wealth of publicly available information,”** he says. **“The UK is leading the charge in open data.”**

## HERB KIM

FOUNDER AND CEO, THINKING DIGITAL, AND ACTING HEAD, TECH NORTH



Originally from New York, Herb has worked in Oxford and London but it is in the tech scene in the north of England where he has made a big impact. His own **“Thinking Digital”** and TEDx series of conferences play to packed venues across the big northern cities of Newcastle, Manchester, Sheffield and Liverpool. **“It's testament to the health and growth of the digital economy throughout the UK,”** he says.

## ROB KNIAZ

CO-FOUNDER AND PARTNER, HOXTON VENTURES



Rob came to London via home state Maryland and Silicon Valley, where he worked at both Intel and Google. A desire to experience Europe brought him to London in 2007 - and he set up his own VC fund in 2009. **“My mindset was to stay a couple of years but this is too exciting an opportunity to leave,”** he says. **“I go back to California quite a lot but it now feels smaller than when I left - having seen the energy and variety of things on offer here.”**



## TODD O'BRIEN

HEAD OF SALES EMEA,  
DELL STATISTICA



Todd is a great American traveler - he's been to 47 of the 50 states - and he wanted, as he puts it, **"to look outside the white picket fence"** and put international work onto his CV. After an initial two-year posting and subsequent return to Texas, he and his family made the unanimous decision to return to the UK. **"I run into a lot of things that I would never have run into in the US,"** he says. Just as importantly, his family has flourished. **"The best gift you can ever give your kids is to move them to a new culture,"** he believes.

## HEATHER RUSSELL

RINKYA AND  
CO-FOUNDER, BISCUIT.IO



Born and raised in New York, Heather had built a successful business in Japan but she felt that she had hit the ceiling in that country. **"I wanted to be challenged professionally,"** she says. When she looked at Europe and saw that **"there was more money running through London than Wall Street"** she knew this was where the opportunity lay. Now in her fifth year in London, she loves the network of like-minded people that she has built up. Her existing business has continued to grow and improve - **"that wouldn't have happened unless I moved to the UK"** - and she has also co-founded Biscuit.io, which produces AI-powered construction grade electrical outlets for property developers.

## DIANE PERLMAN

CMO, MASSCHALLENGE



London always held a big allure for Diane ever since she came here as a student. And over the past 15 years, the native of Maryland has made the most of the city; she has started and run her own business, founded the Microsoft Ventures accelerator programme, and is now at the heart of London's startup community as global CMO of MassChallenge. **"The density of innovation and tech makes for a really vibrant economy here,"** she says. **"And the lifestyle is second to none."**

## SCOTT SAGE

EXPERT IN RESIDENCE,  
SEEDCAMP



Originally from Texas, Scott moved to London when he was 22. **"Every year I thought 'one more year, then I'll move back,'"** he says. **"Now I don't see myself leaving".** His career in London has included spells at an investment bank, a trade association, a startup and a VC house. Now he is launching a new VC firm. **"I'm staking my career on the fact that London has a position as a global leader."**



## RUSS SHAW

FOUNDER, TECH  
LONDON ADVOCATES



Having lived in many places across the US, Russ is now a true London advocate. After a career in financial services and telecoms (including Skype), Russ set up Tech London Advocates as a free-to-join network and community which now has thousands of members. **"London is the world's only truly global city,"** he says. **"It's far easier to get exposure to international opportunities and diversity of experience here than it is in the US."**

## JEROME TILLOTSON

DIRECTOR, EMEA CLIENT  
SERVICES, DOMO



Texan Jerome initially came over to London to set up the European office of his then-employer Vignette. He was 28. **"It was like getting an expenses-paid semi-vacation,"** he laughs. **"I worked hard and got to hang out in Europe - there wasn't a lot of downside associated with that."** He also met his British wife in London and has become a father. **"It's fair to say that progression for me was faster than if I had stayed where I was,"** he says.

## RESHMA SOHONI

CO-FOUNDER AND  
PARTNER, SEEDCAMP



After gaining her MBA at INSEAD, Reshma moved to the UK to work for telecoms giant Vodafone. In 2007, she co-founded Seedcamp as a pan-European accelerator programme to energize the next generation of European entrepreneurs to think big and take risks. Over eight years, Seedcamp has established itself as a leading pre-seed and seed stage fund and, she adds, **"London has blossomed. There's no other place like it for the infrastructure, capital and talent to build world-class tech businesses."**

## JESS WILLIAMSON

GLOBAL PROGRAM  
DIRECTOR, TECHSTARS



Jess, originally from California, studied at Edinburgh University for the third year of her Northwestern University economics degree. She returned to Edinburgh to complete an MSc, acquired a post-study visa and has worked in the UK ever since. **"As a transplant, if you are sociable and have a positive attitude, it is very easy to get known and make a name for yourself - because you are not one of 200 other people trying to do the same"**



## MIKE XENAKIS

MANAGING DIRECTOR,  
OPENTABLE  
INTERNATIONAL



A childhood spent traveling around the US and an early career in the USAF prepared Mike well for overseas assignments. He joined OpenTable in 2000 and was asked to move to London to run its European business in 2012 - in time for the London Olympic Games. **"The atmosphere and energy in London around that was amazing and it feels like it's just never let up. My wife fell in love with London,"** he says. **"My kids have been at the American school the entire time and they've thrived. The city is amazing and the access to the rest of Europe on short flights is just incredible."**



**"People are globally aware in the UK, in that they're connected to places. If we're doing a deal that has Africa connectivity, you pop down for the weekend to Africa"**

Rob Kniaz, Co-founder and Partner, Hoxton Ventures



Find out more about the Transatlantic Tech Boom.  
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