

ONE REGION **ONE SECTOR** **ONE STATEMENT**

**ESTABLISHING THE NORTH EAST
AS A WORLD LEADER FOR CREATIVE
DIGITAL AND TECH INNOVATION**

INTRODUCTION

The North East is home to a Creative Digital and Tech sector which is truly thriving. One of the most productive and fastest-developing in the UK, the sector’s rapid rise is a source of great pride for us in the region.

For the first time, the leading organisations which represent and support the sector have partnered to create One Region, One Sector, One Statement.

Highlighting incredible businesses, showcasing both strong and emerging subsectors and recognising the extensive resources of support available to businesses, this is a joint statement to consistently promote the sector and appreciate its opportunities.

We believe the sector is made up of exciting, diverse companies which:

- Develop and sell hardware and/or software (this can include a wide range of products from business control systems to gaming)
- Implement and support hardware and/or software that others have developed
- Use technology to help others market their businesses

- Sell products yet rely substantially upon technology for their business
- Have significant technology departments.

Ultimately we hope this statement will help to inspire our next generation, attract talent and inward investment to our region and firmly put us on the map as an innovative place to live and work.

THE STATEMENT PROVES THE RICH, DIVERSE, DYNAMIC AND INNOVATIVE QUALITIES THE NORTH EAST POSSESSES WHICH ARE LEADING TO THE RAPID GROWTH OF THE CREATIVE DIGITAL AND TECH SECTOR.

Jim Mawdsley
CEO, Generator & Digital Union

We look forward to showcasing more firms and subsectors in the future but for now, here’s a few of the many excellent companies which are making us proud.

One Region, One Sector, One Statement would not be possible without the partnership consisting of:



TECHNORTHEAST



TECH

Technology startups and scaleups have the potential to transform the economic prosperity of any area. The North East is lucky to boast a collection of ambitious firms which are creating and developing their own technologies. From firms working across the globe to those just starting out, meet some of the region's innovators below:

Scaling

- Annimersion** - 3D visualisation web and app developer, Annimersion is pushing the boundaries in immersive technologies from its home at Middlesbrough's exciting creative and digital hub Boho One.
- Moltin** - Raising \$8m last year, eCommerce API specialist and Ignite Accelerator alumni Moltin has grown from the vision of three North East friends to creating a rapidly growing community of more than 17,000 developers around the world.
- Partnerize** - Valued at \$127m following its latest investment raise, the Newcastle-headquartered SaaS company works with over three hundred of the world's leading brands, including Google and Nike, to help them build partnerships from its offices across three continents.
- SaleCycle** - Now boasting offices in Paris, Singapore and New York, Durham-headquartered SaleCycle uses smart technology and data algorithms to revolutionise online customer conversions for over 500 international clients.

- SoPost** - Recently named the 13th fastest-growing UK tech company by Deloitte, Newcastle's SoPost helps brands to drive product sampling online. Did you know SoPost also has an office in New York's Empire State Building?
- Starting**
- Changing Health** - A Newcastle University spin-out, Changing Health is a digital education company which provides personalised support to patients wishing to adopt healthier lifestyles. Recently raising £3m, the startup is quickly building momentum in the healthcare sector.
- Equiwatt** - A digital energy management platform, Gateshead-based Equiwatt is rewarding homes for saving energy at peak times. The firm gained national attention recently after being named one of Tech Nation's Rising Star UK startups to watch.
- Paid** - Middlesbrough-based fintech startup Paid supports businesses by securing on time payments for services. Recently the firm won a place on the coveted Tech Stars and Barclays accelerator programme in London.
- Wordnerds** - Wordnerds uses AI and linguistics to automate text understanding. Another exciting startup to come out of Gateshead, Wordnerds already boasts clients such as Nissan, Tommee Tippee and Northumbrian Water among others.

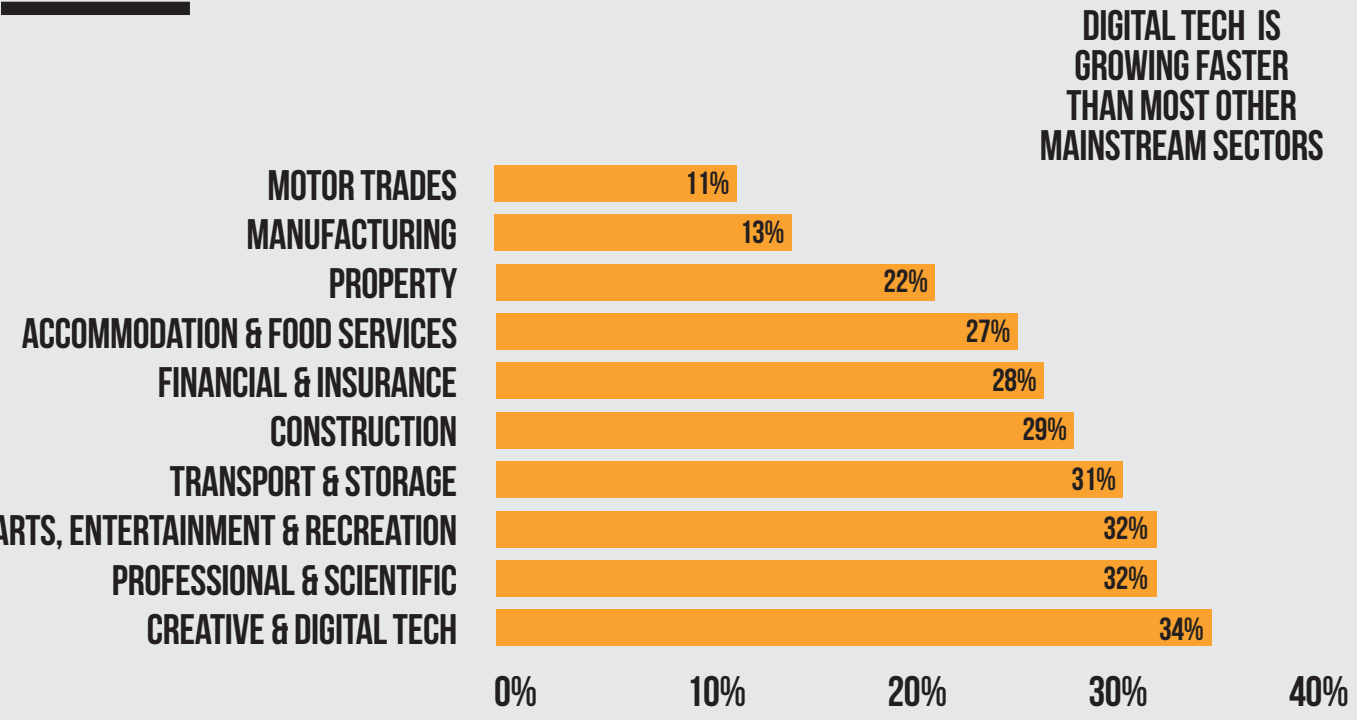
Image below: Annimersion



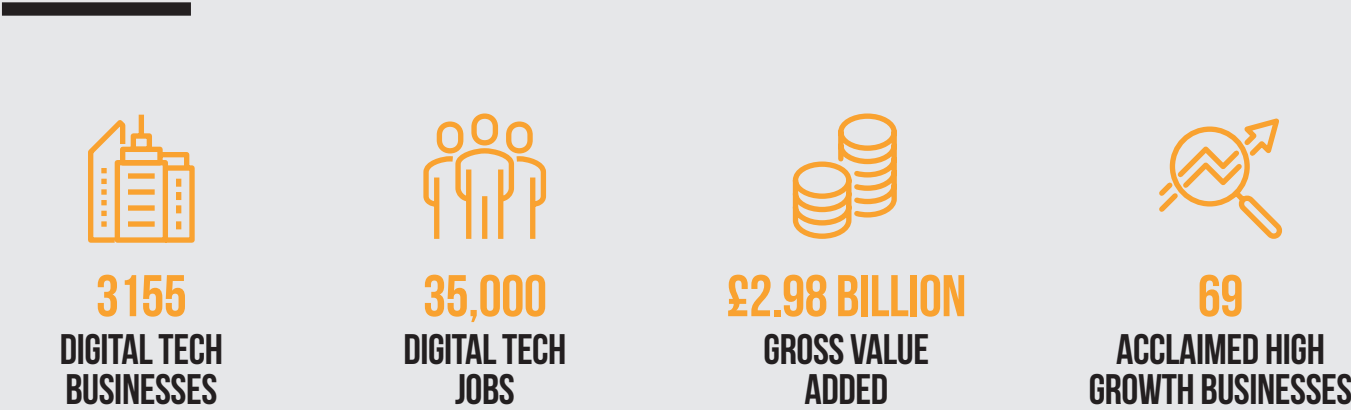
THE NORTH EAST AND TEES VALLEY IN NUMBERS

- A recent report by the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) on regional Gross Value Add (GVA) over the period 2010 to 2017 identifies that the North East has grown faster than any other region outside of London.
- The DCMS cluster group comprises all businesses across Digital, Culture, Media and Sport throughout the North East and Tees Valley region and the estimated GVA for is £4.2billion. This has grown by 41.6% since 2010 and is currently growing at 2.2x the rest of the UK outside of London.
- 71.5% of the cluster group is related to digital tech businesses which results in an estimate that the GVA for the digital tech sector is somewhere near £2.98billion.
- The sector as a whole has grown by a further 8.8% during 2018. This means the number of digital tech companies across the region has grown by approximately 245 companies to a total of 3155 companies.
- Broken down by North East postcode region growth, the Tees Valley is the highest growing at 11%, Newcastle, North Tyneside, Northumberland and South Tyneside at 8.35%, Sunderland at 7.48%, Durham at 7.22% and Darlington at 4%.
- The sector is also growing faster than all of the mainstream industry groups and is placed third behind Business Administration and Support at 67% and Public Administration and Defence at 52%. For example, at 42% growth the digital tech sector is over 3x higher than the region's manufacturing sector, which grew at 13% over the same time period.
- Employment across the North East and Tees Valley digital tech sector is also growing in line with the other growth indicators and is currently estimated at 35,000 employees.

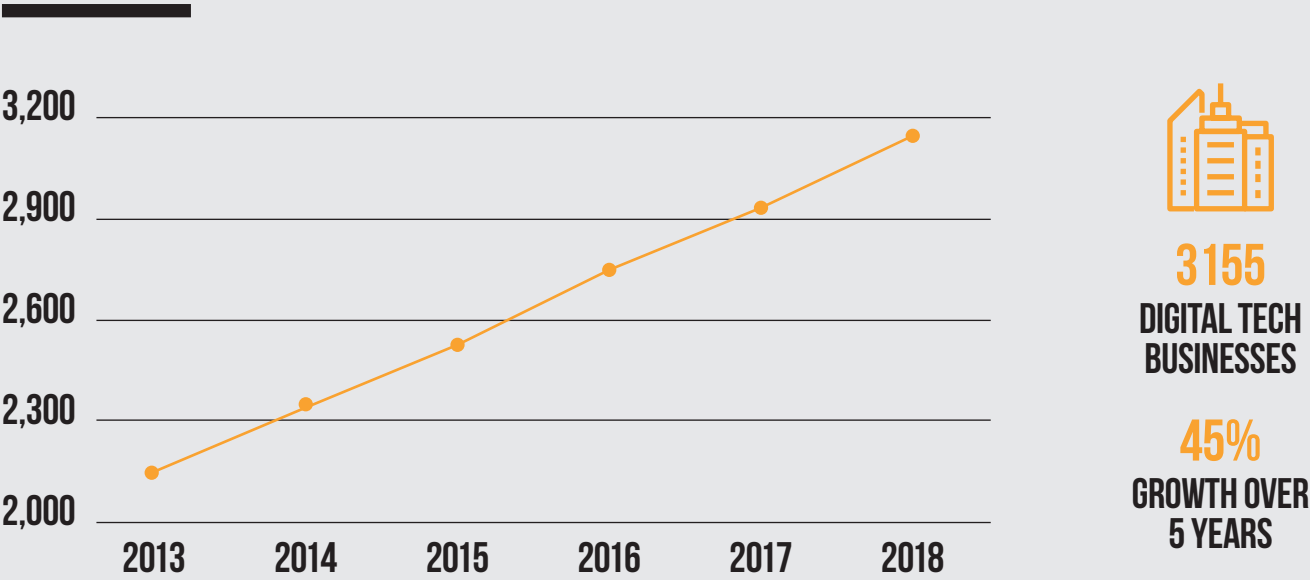
INDUSTRIAL GROUP COMPARISON % GROWTH OVER 4 YEARS NORTH EAST + TEES VALLEY



HIGHLIGHTS NORTH EAST + TEES VALLEY



CONTINUOUS DIGITAL TECH SECTOR GROWTH OVER 5 YEARS

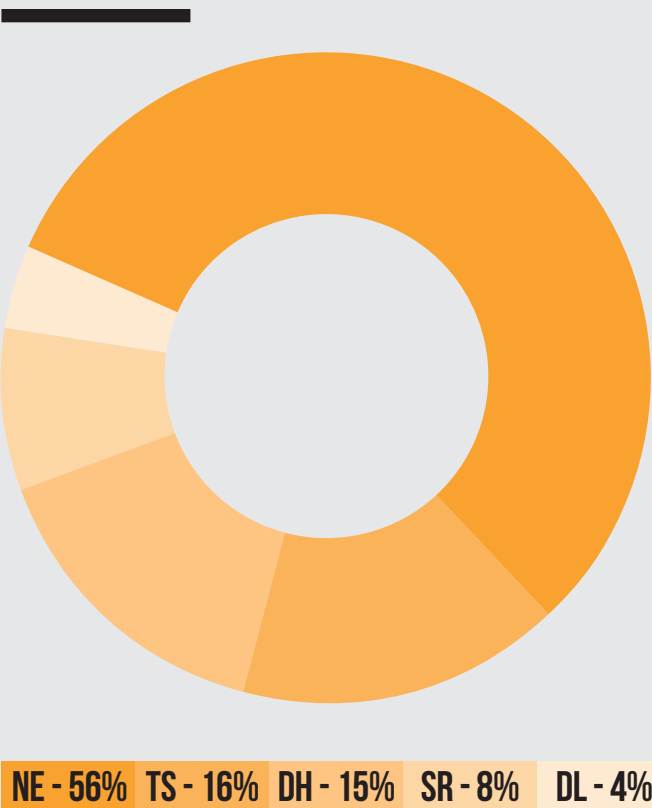


Finding a consistent data source that encapsulates the North East Creative Digital and Tech sector can be challenging and the following approach has been used for this report:

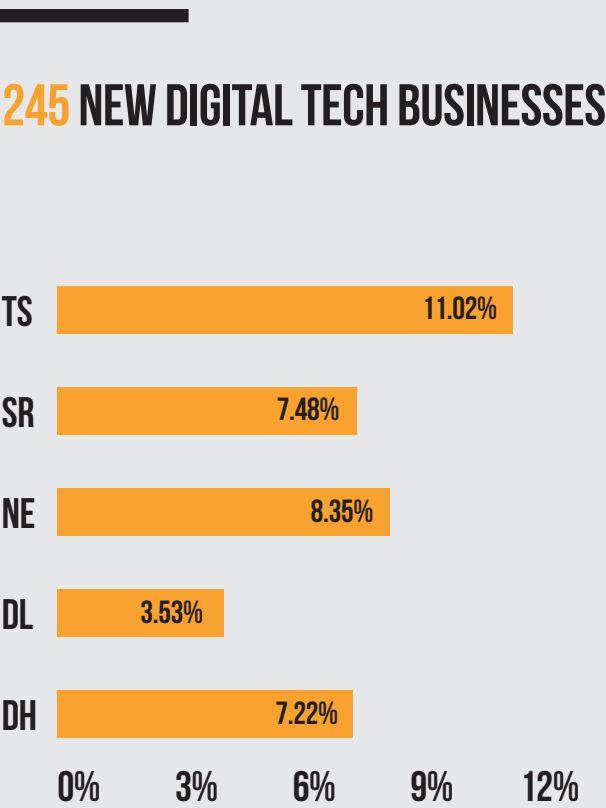
- Data has been sourced from the Office of National Statistics (ONS - Nomis), the Department of Digital Culture Media and Sport, Tech Nation, and Companies House.
- A specific Digital Tech company subgroup was comprised of 5 digit Standard Industry Classification (SIC) codes, mostly in line with primary Tech Nation definitions.
- DCMS Sector comparisons to this subgroup was achieved by removing SIC codes from DCMS data that weren't present in this subgroup.
- North East postcode areas, e.g. NE, SR, TS etc were used to provide demographic analysis.

We are grateful for the advice and guidance given by Victoria Sutherland at the NELEP and George Windsor from Tech Nation whilst compiling these data sets.

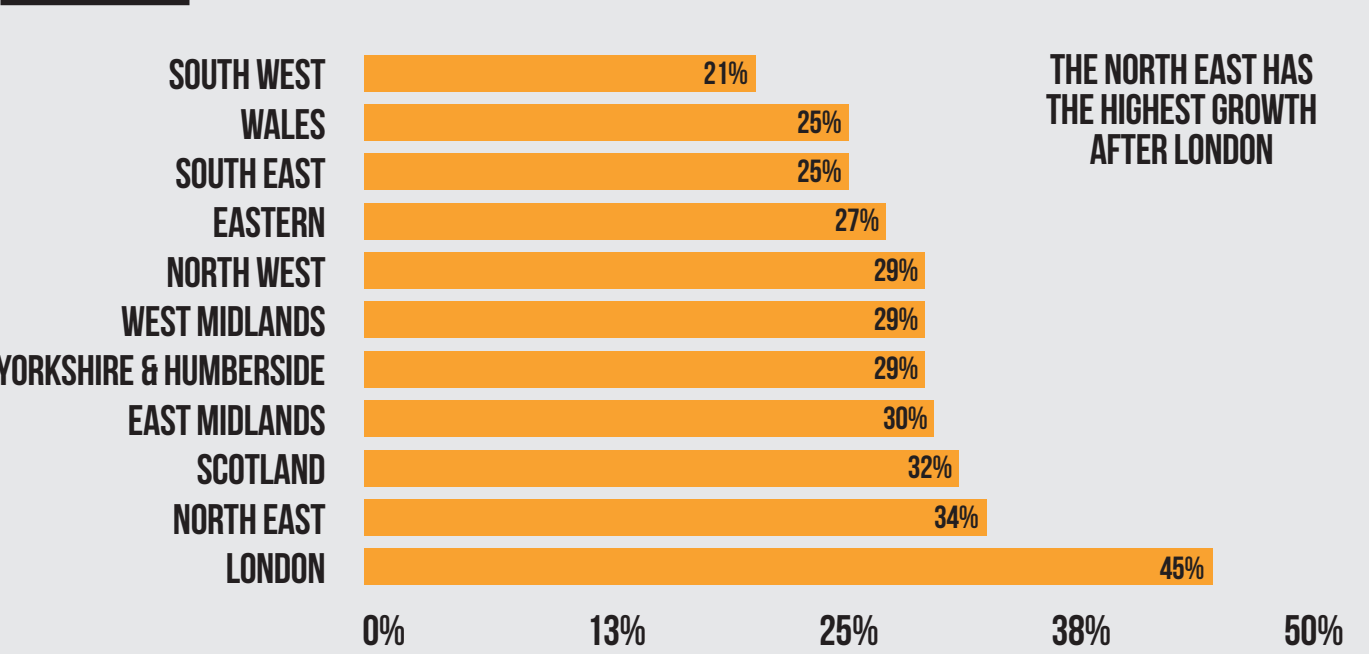
REGIONAL DEMOGRAPHIC BY POSTCODE



2018 BUSINESSES GROWTH BY POSTCODE



DIGITAL TECH % GROWTH OVER 4 YEARS NATIONALLY



HOME-GROWN BIG BUSINESS

Many big businesses, which employ thousands of people across the region, have started here and their now-global roots are indigenous to the North East. Such success stories include:

Clicksco - Established in Middlesbrough in 2009, Clicksco has grown to be a multi-million pound marketing technology company with offices across the world in 14 countries.

Cubic - Transport management firm Cubic bases its global operating centre from Stockton. As well as being the business behind contactless travel ticketing systems such as London's Oyster card, Cubic is responsible for city-wide transportation projects worldwide in areas including Chicago, San Francisco, Boston, New York and Sydney.

NBS - When it comes to the digital evolution of the construction industry, NBS is firmly at the forefront. Today its technology platform is used by organisations of all sizes from small architecture and engineering firms, to the very largest global construction companies.

Sage - Born and raised in the North East, Sage was the first technology company to appear on the FTSE 100. Today over 50% of UK businesses use Sage Payroll to pay their employees.

Tombola - Europe's biggest online bingo firm, Tombola employs more than 500 people with the majority working here in the North East. Earlier this year the business opened a new £7m HQ in Sunderland's Wylam Wharf.

Visualsoft - Established over 20 years ago, e-commerce software and digital marketing agency Visualsoft has provided solutions to some of the world's leading online retail platforms. In 2018 alone the company helped its clients grow online revenue by £750m.

THE NORTH EAST IS HOME TO A CREATIVE DIGITAL AND TECH SECTOR WHICH IS TRULY THRIVING. ONE OF THE MOST PRODUCTIVE AND FASTEST-DEVELOPING IN THE UK.

Image below: Cubic
Image right: NBS Head Office



CREATIVE DIGITAL

The region boasts a diverse Creative Digital industry, with rich opportunity existing across all fields from entertainment, gaming and design to software development, e-commerce and immersive technology.

Design

Atomhawk - Established for over 10 years, Atomhawk is a leader in visual development and design services. Working with game developers, product designers and movie studios as big as Marvel, the business is a specialist in bringing ideas to life.

Blue Kangaroo - Responsible for creating some of the most recognisable characters in TV and film, the creative agency boasts a global client list which includes The Walt Disney Company, Universal Studios, Paramount Pictures and Mattel. Another Gateshead great.

Immersive

Coatsink - A diverse and versatile development studio, the Sunderland firm's successes include the critically acclaimed VR game Augmented Empire, the Oculus Go launch title They Suspect Nothing and the online multiplayer solution for Boneloaf's massively popular Gang Beasts.

Hammerhead VR - Responsible for opening one of the world's first dedicated VR gaming studios in 2014, the firm is today pushing the boundaries in immersive cinematic content across three VR studios.

Spearhead Interactive - Working with customers including Accenture, Unilever and ASDA Walmart, the data visualisation business has become an industry leader in the conception, creation and deployment of immersive and interactive 3D solutions.

Zerolight - Creating interactive experiences which connect automotive brands with their customers, Zerolight is the partner of choice for many of the world's leading top brands including Porsche, Audi, BMW, Toyota, Lamborghini, Nissan, VW and Pagani.



E-commerce and retail

End Clothing - Starting life as recently as 2005 in a small unit on Newcastle's High Bridge Street, End has grown to become the leading retailer of globally sourced menswear. Now employing 400 people, the business reported a turnover of over £100m last year.

Enigma Interactive - Rated by The Drum as one of the UK's top 5 e-commerce agencies, Enigma works with international brands like Barbour to transform their online fortunes. On average, retail platforms created by the company have generated sales increases of 33%, far eclipsing the national average of 9.4%.

Pink Boutique - Beginning life six years ago as a £90 investment on eBay, Pink Boutique today sells over 2,000 clothing items online a day. Now boasting a following of over two million people, it's no wonder founder Alice Hall appeared on Forbes' Top 30 Under 30 List.

Digital Entertainment and gaming

Bede Gaming - Based a stone's throw from Sage, the gambling platform and software company's platforms boast 3 million registered users and a whopping 79% year on year revenue growth.

ConversionBet - Using complex technology to understand when users are about to leave a page, the Middlesbrough-based business is the world's only dedicated acquisition and engagement solution for iGaming brands.

Image above: End Clothing

Double Eleven - Based in Middlesbrough, the full-service publisher and developer of interactive digital entertainment has an enviable history of developing games for all leading consoles. Most recently the firm has worked on projects for Xbox One, PS4 and Xbox 360 Editions of the critically acclaimed Prison Architect.

Ubisoft - The Global games producer has one of its main development studios, Ubisoft Reflections, based in Newcastle. Boasting a 33-year legacy, the studio has collaborated with creative teams from other Ubisoft studios from around the world to contribute to the creation of acclaimed AAA games such as Tom Clancy's The Division, Assassin's Creed Syndicate and Watch Dogs 2.

Digital Marketing agencies

Drummond Central - Creating exciting full service campaigns for the likes of Sage, Bet 365 and Money Guru, the Newcastle-based creative agency prides itself on 'ballsy' marketing to make brands truly stand out. The firm's 'Puddle Watch' video became a social media sensation in January 2016.

Everything Different - A full service agency, Everything Different has taken many international brands through their research, strategy, brand, content creation and execution journeys. Companies they have grown market presence for include L'oreal, Sage, P&G and Autotrader.

Mabo - Named one of the UK's most forward thinking PPC agencies, the 40-strong Middlesbrough company won the European Search Awards Small Agency of the Year in 2018.

Digital Delivery & Support Centres

Delivering digital solutions and support to many of the largest companies in the world, the region hosts a number of digital delivery centres where highly skilled technology professionals create and maintain solutions for their clients.

Accenture - Currently employing over 1700 people in North Tyneside, the global management consultancy cites Cobalt Business Park as a key delivery centre, from which the company offers technology delivery and support to clients around the world.

Capgemini - The French multinational corporation, which provides consulting, technology, professional, and outsourcing services, boasts a key service delivery function across the region.

DXC Technology - One of the world's leading independent, end-to-end IT services companies, DXC Digital Transformation Centre guide the digital transformation journey of a range of customers.

Red Hat Inc. - An American multinational software company that provides open-source software products to the enterprise community, the American based company has a key research centre housed in Newcastle University. The firm was recently acquired by IBM.

Worldpay - A global leader in payments processing technology, Worldpay is a true industry pioneer processing 42% of all UK payment transactions. One of Tyneside's biggest employers, the firm employs over 1000 people at its base on Gateshead's Team Valley.

Service Centres

The North East is home to a growing group of service centres that use large scale cutting-edge technology to deliver a range of services to their customers.

EY - A global leader in assurance, tax, transaction and advisory services, EY's Advisory Service Delivery centre employs 670 people in Newcastle city centre. The centre specialises in anti-money laundering, suitability reviews, regulatory remediation, reporting solutions and cyber security across the UK and Europe.

Also in financial services Santander, Tesco Bank, Insure The Box and Home Group operate contact centres in the region. Additionally, in transport British Airways have a significant presence handling global sales and customer queries while a number of significant public sector service centres are also located in the region, including the Department for Work and Pensions, whose Tyneside based Digital Unit employ over 500 people and HMRC who employ over 6000 people in Newcastle.

AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY

New opportunities around digital are emerging for North East businesses, thanks to a growing number of world class facilities and initiatives taking shape in the region.

Poised to develop an exciting niche around data and ageing (see National Innovation Centres in the Facilities section), the North East is also harnessing the power of technology to generate improved connectivity, further access to global markets and increased specialist skills to bolster traditional industries from advanced manufacturing to finance.

Stellium DataCenters - The largest single data centre campus in the UK where groundbreaking work is being done, in partnership with AquaComms, to connect Newcastle to the USA and Europe via a pioneering subsea fibre optic network. The new North Atlantic Loop will facilitate the high-speed movement of data through transatlantic networks; creating new commercial opportunities for North East businesses on the global stage.

Digital Catapult Centre North East & Tees Valley - One of four regional Digital Catapult Centres, this government-backed initiative works with innovative start-ups to help build new sectors and new opportunities in emerging areas of technology such as the Internet of Things, 5G, AI and Immersive Technologies.

International Advanced Manufacturing Park (IAMP) - A joint venture between South Tyneside and Sunderland City Council, IAMP is a hub for automotive, advanced manufacturing and technology businesses. With superb infrastructure and transport links, it is predicted to deliver 260,000m² of developable floorspace and 5200 new jobs by 2027.

IT Professional Services (ITPS) - A leader in information and communication technologies, the North East's largest data centre has specialised in IT consultancy, implementation and support since 2000. Following a £3m finance deal, the firm has added a second data hall to its existing, industry-leading facility.

Image right: Atom Bank

INVESTMENT

Inward Investment

The North East is home to two Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) areas, the North East LEP and the Tees Valley Combined Authority.

Both LEP areas have highly experienced inward investment teams to open the door to the network of specialist organisations and individuals with the information, support and advice essential to any investment decision.

Each team co-ordinates investment enquiries on behalf of our region's local authorities to ensure businesses are able to make the best decisions based on a wide array of information. Typical support includes:

- Advice on availability of land and property and costs
- Information and statistics on the local economy, demographics, infrastructure and labour market
- Organising visits to the region and meetings with key stakeholders
- Access to finance – guidance on the availability of financial assistance and grants
- HR support, including wage comparisons, training, recruitment and local market information
- Introductions to supply chain knowledge networks and technological expertise

- A Personal Account Manager dedicated to your project with a full aftercare programme.

North East

For inward investment enquiries relating to Newcastle, Sunderland, County Durham, Gateshead, North Tyneside, South Tyneside and Northumberland, Invest North East England is the first point of contact. For further information, please visit: www.investnortheastengland.co.uk.

Tees Valley

For inward investment enquiries relating to Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland and Stockton-on-Tees, the Tees Valley Combined Authority is the first point of contact. For further information, please visit: www.teesvalley-ca.gov.uk.

Financial Investment

The region is home to a range of funds, fund managers and sources of finance, which can change regularly. For an up to date list of sources of finance, the following websites provide the latest information:

North East Growth Hub: www.northeastgrowthhub.co.uk/finance-and-funding/
Tees Business Compass: www.teesbusinesscompass.co.uk

EMERGING CLUSTER SPOTLIGHT: FINTECH

New areas of business growth and innovation are ever-emerging throughout the region, with technological advances helping to fuel growth in all areas from cybersecurity to health and life sciences. In this statement we turn our attention to Fintech following the recent success of pioneering North East businesses in the field.

Atom Bank - The UK's first app-only bank, Durham-based Atom is revolutionising approaches to banking in today's digital age. With global superstar will.i.am on board as a strategic advisor, we've got a feeling the only way is up for this \$600m rated North East firm.

Newcastle Strategic Solutions - Part of Newcastle Building Society, Newcastle Strategic Solutions has been providing innovative digital banking solutions since 2002. Today it stands as a UK leader in the provision of wrap around digital banking services to new banks and savings providers.

True Potential - Established in 2007 this award-winning financial services and technology organisation, currently works with close to 20% of all UK financial advisers. Recent reports valued it at £2Billion.



TALENT AND SKILLS

The North East is at the forefront of innovative skills solutions, creating a rich talent pipeline through partnerships between public and private bodies. The region boasts 5 universities all of which have outstanding Computer Science and Creative Design related courses, with over 9000 undergraduates registered on STEAM related degree courses in 2017_18.

University of Teesside has the most undergraduates studying computer science-related subjects in the region, producing some of the UK's finest games-related graduates and courses.

University of Northumbria recently opened a world class, dedicated Computer and Information Science Building. The centre will help to increase the supply of skilled Data Forensics and Artificial Intelligence graduates in the North East.

Newcastle University is playing a key role in supporting the National Innovation Centre for Data. Many of the university's courses are evolving to train tech students to support manufacturing, engineering and specialisms such as cyber security.

University of Sunderland provides a full range of courses focusing on niches such as systems and network engineering. The university was one of the first Institutions in the UK to offer degree apprenticeships in digital technology solutions, specialising in software engineering, data analytics and cyber.

Durham University recently announced its role within the National Institute of Coding, with a target of retraining 100 women to supply a more gender-balanced talent pool for the sector. The IOC is also being run at Northumbria, Newcastle and Sunderland Universities.

The North East's colleges also play an increasing role in the talent development and skills pipeline of the region's creative digital and tech sectors. Many lead the way with Digital Skills Academies and sub sector specific academies, with successful participants going on to degree apprenticeships. College specialisms include courses for games, animation and visual effects, as well as piloting T Levels to establish the most effective delivery models for the rest of the UK.

The North East Futures University Technical College, which opened in September 2018, specialises in the Health Sciences and Digital Technology industries. With partnerships with all five North East universities, the UTC is a fantastic environment to learn in the newly redeveloped Stephenson Quarter in Central Newcastle.

THE NORTH EAST HAD OVER
9000 UNDER GRADUATES
ON STEAM RELATED COURSES
IN 2017_2018.



BUSINESS SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS AND NETWORKS

The North East Creative Digital and Tech sector has the support networks and agencies that are the envy of the UK. From mentoring support for Start Up founders, accelerator programmes, guidance on innovation, sector specialist business support, membership organisations representing the business community and a Digital Catapult, the region boasts the lot.

Sunderland Software City is enabling the growth of the technology sector in the North East of England; providing support and creating opportunities for aspiring and established software businesses. They aim to strengthen the region's economy by helping individual companies to grow, create jobs and attract investment and, through collaboration with partners across the UK, they champion North East tech and run a number of programmes to address the fundamental skills gaps that prevail in the sector.



Generator started out in the early 90s as a music development agency. Generator built and recognised its capabilities in the Creative Digital sector following the mass disruption and digital transformation of the music industry. They identified an opportunity to apply the same level of support to other sectors and now produce a wide range of programmes that leads to growth and innovation as well as building the capability of founders, senior management and their teams. They have supported over 700 businesses in their development since 2010.

Image above: Generator
Image left: Newcastle University

DigitalCity brings together all of the digital knowledge and support in the Tees Valley. An initiative, based on a longstanding private-public partnership led by Teesside University, DigitalCity has been instrumental in providing professional support to the thriving digital cluster of Teesside, including a stream of innovative start-up and spin out companies. The programme supports digital and non-digital businesses, providing specialist advice on innovation, growth, funding, and finance.

Generator also run **Digital Union** which seeks to build, represent, and lead the North East digital SME cluster and has become the largest collective of creative digital and tech businesses in the region. The Union not only represents and champions the sector to policy makers and the media, it enables collaboration, mentoring, marketing assistance, and formulates talent development strategies finding new ways of working with education. A key aim is to ensure that national and international business leaders are engaged with the North East sector and champion and facilitate a collaborative approach to working in the North East.

Dynamo is a group set up with the core mission to 'Grow the North East IT Economy' through collaboration, innovation, skills. They are a voice for the sector and generate 'noise' to promote and grow the region as a hotspot for IT/ digital business. It is made up of IT organisations, large corporate employers in the region, education providers, local government and suppliers to the industry. Dynamo has a strong focus on developing skills and education, and supporting regional research and development.

FACILITIES

While all sub sectors included in this statement present a wide range of future opportunities, areas which present the greatest opportunity for the North East include ageing (NICA), data (NICD) and advanced manufacturing (NETV Catapult).

Middlesbrough's **Boho Zone** is the digital, creative, and business hub of the Tees Valley. Made up of 9 buildings (with NO.10 planned and ready to go) with ultra-fast broadband, between them they accommodate everything from start-ups to the multi million pound turnover stalwarts of the Tees Valley digital scene.

Located in the Baltic Quarter of Gateshead, **PROTO** is Europe's first dedicated centre for emerging technology. PROTO works with businesses to help them create exciting and meaningful digital content specialising in XR, 3D character capture and motion capture. It is also the base for some of the UK's most trailblazing businesses as Newcastle and Gateshead continue to capture the headlines for the XR ability that operates from the region.



The **National Innovation Centre for Data (NICD)** will attract major focus to the North East as one of the World's leading data centres. As part of the Government's Industrial and Digital Strategy, the National Innovation Centre for Data, due to open in early 2020 will play a key role in enabling the UK economy to compete and thrive in the new data-driven global marketplace. The focus is on specific challenges, including health, automotive and manufacturing, tackling everything from providing intelligence for apps, helping predict health issues, making household

appliances smarter, maintaining transport and machinery and empowering us all to be more energy-efficient. All NICD projects will return immediate value to participating organisations by using their own business opportunity and their own data, to upskill their own people.

The £40million **National Innovation Centre for Ageing (NICA)**, will enable Newcastle researchers to take a global approach to the multi-faceted issue of an ageing population. The Centre will bring together world-leading scientists to work with industry, the NHS and the public to develop, test and bring to market products which promote healthy ageing and in turn bring countless opportunities to digital and tech businesses.

With bespoke space for more than 60 businesses, **Sunderland Software Centre** has the connectivity and infrastructure with cutting-edge offices that are designed to offer flexible staged office moves supporting companies as they expand and grow. The centre also hosts international conferences, IBM Developer and Drupal Hub.

NETPark in Durham is one of the UK's premier science, engineering and technology parks for the commercialisation of future gazing R&D from major international organisations, universities and entrepreneurs. It is home to several high-tech companies specialising in fields such as nanotechnology, X-Ray technology, forensics and semiconductor technology. It is the only Technology park in the UK that houses 2 Catapult centres with both High Value Manufacturing and Satellite catapults having homes there.

THE NORTH EAST OF ENGLAND BOASTS BOTH CREATIVE DIGITAL AND TECH SECTOR SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS AND FACILITIES THAT ARE THE ENVY OF OTHER REGIONS ACROSS THE UK.

Image above: National Innovation Centre
Image right: PROTO



EVENTS

There are a number of premier creative digital and tech events running across the region throughout the year. With hundreds of speakers, thousands of attendees and many businesses and organisations coming together to celebrate, support and educate everyone in the field of digital across the North East and beyond.

New for 2019 is the **North East Digital Festival** which was conceived as an umbrella for 3 outstanding events – **Thinking Digital**, **Tech Talent** and **Newcastle Start Up Week** which all take place within the same fortnight in May. This looks set to build into the key focus celebration of Creative Digital and Tech for the region.

Thinking Digital is truly a jewel in the crown of the North East Digital and Tech scene. It was one of the first conferences in the UK to focus on Tech and Digital and continues to attract speakers from all over the world who consider it a privilege to take part.



Newcastle Start Up Week is a 5-day and night festival that inspires hundreds of people to start or grow their business in the North East of England. From the world's first lightbulb to business software and smart data, the North East has been inventing the future for hundreds of years.

Tech Talent is the region's biggest and best tech focused opportunities event which showcases the very best of the sector in the region and exposes countless opportunities for new talent looking to get a foot hold in the region's tech scene.



TEDxNewcastle, curated by the Thinking Digital team, firmly embraces the spirit of TED's mission: 'ideas worth spreading,' the TEDx program helps communities, organisations and individuals produce TED-style events at a local level.

XRTGO is an annual established, high quality, curated immersive tech conference and exhibition running in Gateshead. Since 2014 VRTGO has been helping its audience make decisions on their future strategy and helping businesses make those essential connections.

Animex is your chance to meet industry experts, discuss the state-of-the-art games and animation, see behind the scenes of the biggest hits, and to have a great time at one of the premier games and animation events anywhere in the world. Held in Teesside, this annual event brings together industry, students and others.

The region also boasts high quality regionally focussed conferences with **Northern Exposure** - a B2B games conference held in Gateshead. **Frontend NE: The Conference** which covers the full spectrum of frontend development.

Dynamo also run an annual conference to showcase the IT and tech sector in the North East. The organisation also runs the region's annual awards ceremony - **The Dynamites** - which recognises the hard work and achievement of the region's tech sector.

Images: Thinking Digital

This statement has been produced with the involvement of the following people and would not be a true representation of the rich, dynamic, vibrant sector that we boast in the North East of England without their valuable input.

Jim Mawdsley - Generator and Digital Union, Stuart Lynn - Tech North East, Dan Watson - Middlesbrough Digital, Laura Richards and Jill McKinney - Sunderland Software City, Laura Kemp and Phil Jackman - Dynamo, Lynsey Robinson - Digital City, Rachel Burdis - PROTO, Steve Caughey - National Innovation Centre for Data, David Pattison - Invest North East, Matt Bratton - Invest Newcastle, Jamie Hardesty - Tech Nation, Lucy Batley - JUMP, Mark South - Double Eleven, John Wilson - Stellium Data Centre, Dominic Murphy - Geek Talent, Parveer Panu and Cal Kilpatrick - Digital Union.

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