

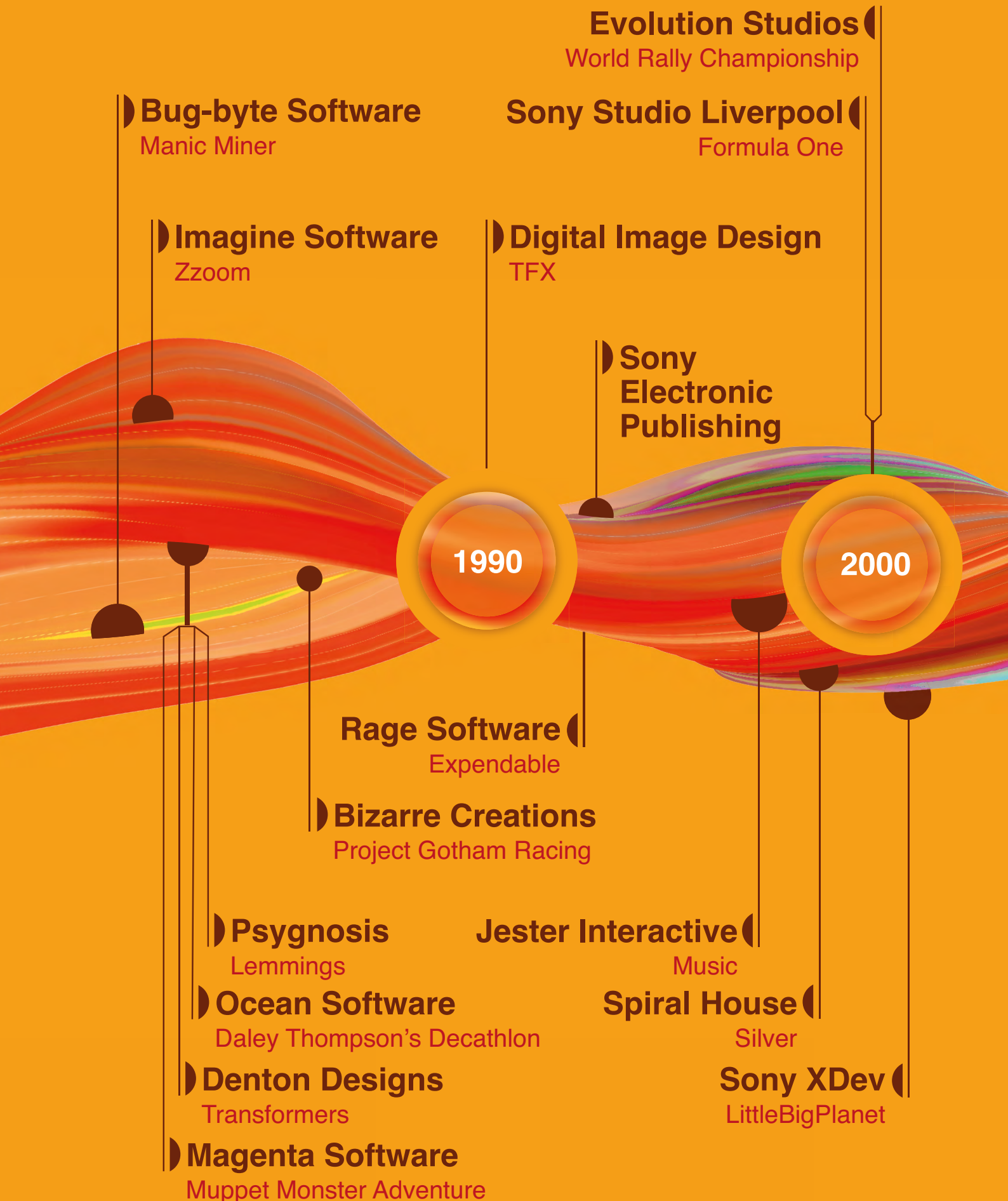


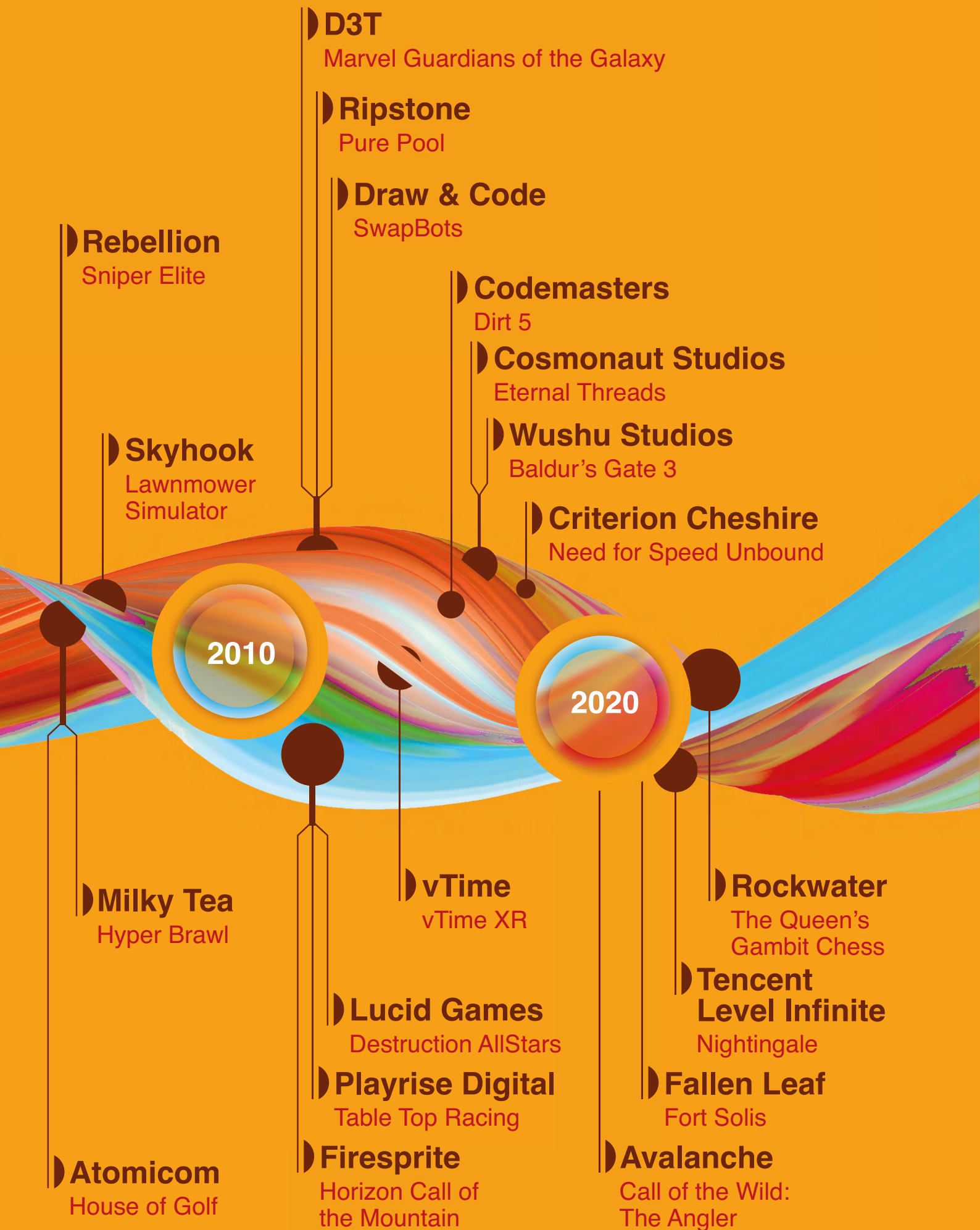
GROUNDBREAKING
GAMING & TECH
IN LIVERPOOL CITY REGION

INVEST
LIVERPOOL
CITY REGION

LIVERPOOL CITY REGION

GAMING HERITAGE





WELCOME TO LIVERPOOL CITY REGION.

Liverpool City Region has been ground-breaking and innovating in the games industry for over 40 years. In that time; we've blown minds with world leading racing games including the likes of Need for Speed: Unbound, Goat Simulator remains. Motorstorm, made dreams come true with Goat Simulator and leave you breathless with PS VR2 Horizon Call of the Mountain.

Some of the best-known console games have been conceived and produced here with our companies working with global brands such as; Sony, Tencent, Nintendo, EA Inc, Disney, Netflix, Capcom and Activision.

Going forward; our gamers are still pushing boundaries, with a growing number blurring the lines between the physical and digital and using immersive technologies across a range of applications from awesome social VR experiences to revolutionising the way children play to pioneering children's heart surgery.

We've got the skills, the talent, the networks, the facilities, the vision, the creativity and the pedigree to keep breaking new ground.

"There's always been a collaborative spirit at the heart of everything good in the Liverpool City Region. From the iconic music scene grown around Beatles-mania, to Liverpool FC's anthemic "You'll Never Walk Alone" ringing out across Europe, this spirit is the life force of the city.

It flows through all of Liverpool's creative and innovation sectors, ever since the city embraced the games industry in the early 1980s.

For the five decades since, Liverpool has created a tightly connected ecosystem of diverse talent, attracting global leaders in the sector to put down roots here, including PlayStation, Keywords, EA and more recently, Tencent.

This rich environment for world-class studios gave rise to our company, Ripstone Games, a decade ago. Founded by Liverpool veterans from PlayStation, film and music, we create incredible immersive experiences for famous partners like Meta, PlayStation and Netflix Games. We're also passionate about supporting the LCR to enhance collaboration between studios and create new talent pathways to drive continued growth.

**Jamie Brayshaw, Head of Marketing,
Ripstone Games**



WE ARE COLLABORATORS.

With an exceptional cultural heritage that brings a unique 'edge' to Liverpool City Region, disruptive technologies and challenging minds drive a collaborative and diverse creative and digital scene.

The Baltic Triangle is a thriving and cutting-edge cluster of independent, artists, makers, gamers and multi-award winning Createch companies. Innovators such as vTime (a Gartner Cool Vendor) are making 'time travel' possible through social VR, while others are harnessing the power of artificial intelligence to push the boundaries of UX design for their clients. Baltic Triangle is home to the Studio School, Baltic Creative and Cains Brewery Village and in 2017 was voted as the coolest place in the UK to live and work.

The STFC (Science & Technology Facilities Council) Hartree Centre, based at Sci-Tech Daresbury, is at the forefront of high performance computing, big data analytics and artificial intelligence, providing real-world solutions and competitive advantage to industry. The centrepiece of this, fuelled by £313M investment, is a partnership with IBM Research involving the deployment of its world-renowned "Watson" cognitive computing platform. STFC also established a partnership with Atos in 2017 with the arrival of Bull's Sequana X1000 supercomputer at Daresbury. The Hartree Centre expertise and capability is already being applied at Alder Hey Children's Hospital to positively transform patient experience whilst supporting Alder Hey's ambition to become the UK's first "cognitive hospital".

Also at Sci-Tech Daresbury is the University of Liverpool's Virtual Engineering Centre a UK leading centre for digital engineering solutions to industry. The Centre is the UK's recognised forerunner in advanced modelling and simulation, autonomous systems and robotics infrastructure and immersive visualisation. There is a growing cluster of 35 data-centric organisations at Sci-Tech Daresbury employing over 400 people on the site.

Meanwhile, Liverpool's Film Office services big name blockbusters as well as global brands with all aspects of location support.

The region is set to maximise its attraction as the UK's most filmed in city outside of London, with the Littlewoods Studio initiative. The Studio will include a purpose-built film and content production resource, complete with state-of-the-art sound stages, linked to industry training and education facilities, live venue and business campus.

One of only two cities in the UK to secure the UNESCO city of Music Status, some of the UK's biggest music and music tech brand operate out of the region including Cream, Sound City, Sentric Music and Adlib Audio.

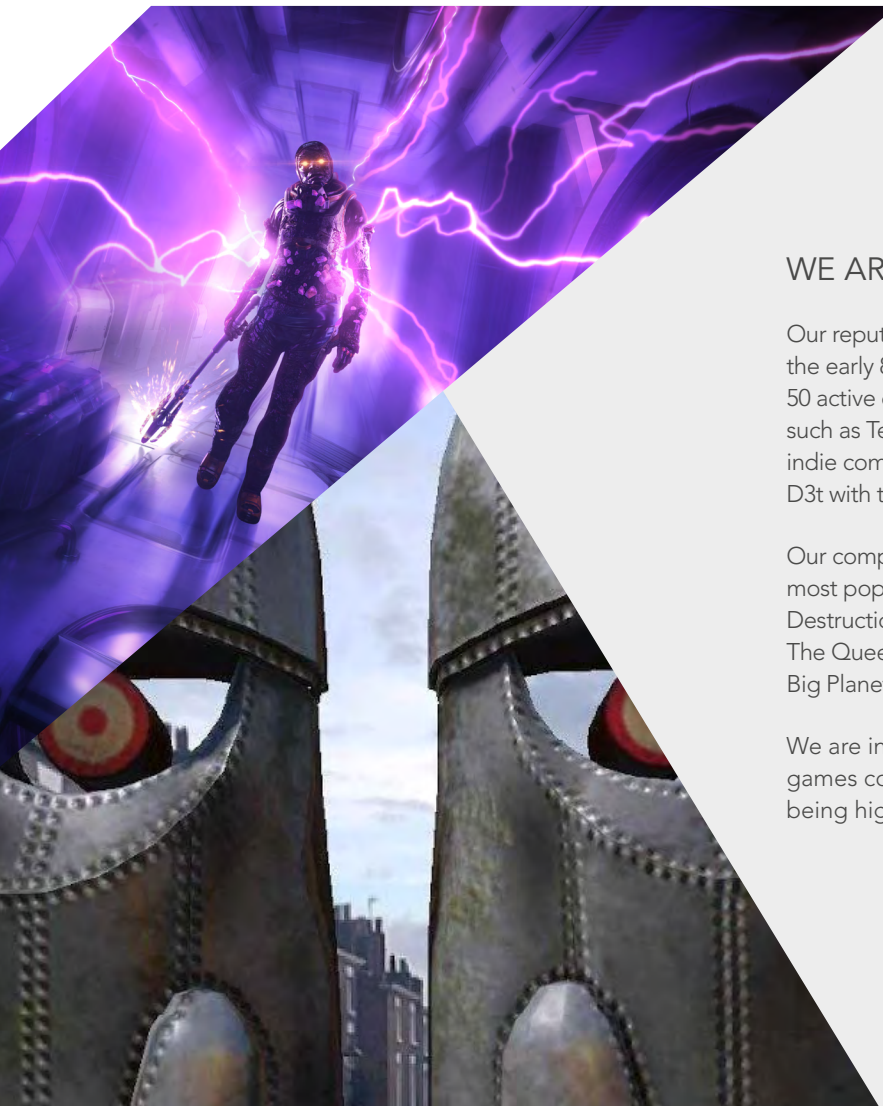
From health to engineering, from film to music, built environment to culture, everyone is utilising games, skills and technologies.

"Draw & Code is very much a product of Liverpool, blending the creativity that this part of the world is famed for with the solid technical and engineering backbone the region has built. Our philosophy is to merge the real with the virtual to make something magical; which often feels like something we have in common with the whole city.

From our Liverpool base, Draw & Code has developed into one of the world's foremost immersive design and development studios. We have spent over a decade mastering and subverting game engine technology to create immersive location-based entertainment, games and VR/XR experiences for the likes of Google, Sony, Warner Bros, Mercedes and many more. Liverpool's rich games ecosystem has allowed us to access talent, partnerships and opportunities that would be hard to find anywhere else, empowering our work on exciting new IP and patents in games and immersive technologies."

Andy Cooper, Director, Draw & Code





WE ARE CREATORS.

Our reputation as a centre for games had its beginnings in the early 80's. Today Liverpool City Region is home to over 50 active companies including everyone from larger players such as Tencent games and Keywords Studios to innovative indie companies such as Lucid Games, Ripstone, Wushu and D3t with their own international portfolios.

Our companies have been involved with some of the world's most popular titles including Project Gotham Racing, Destruction Derby, Lemmings, Troll and I, Motor Storm, The Queen's Gambit Chess, Until Dawn, Heavy Rain, Little Big Planet and The Witcher 3; Wild Hunt.

We are in the top 10 of UK employment clusters for games companies, with our creativity and expertise being highly respected and sought after.

The North-West and Liverpool in particular are steeped in a golden age of early innovators and creators, stretching back more than 30 years.

A nascent game development scene emerged in Liverpool in the early days of the 8-bit era, with talent coalescing around development and publishing businesses such as Psygnosis, Imagine Software and Denton Designs, blazing a trail for those who would come later, including the likes of PlayStation, spawning global and iconic franchises such as Wipeout, from the region.

We founded Firesprite in 2012 with the goal of always striving to bring something new to a game or genre; developing showcases for new hardware technologies is a driving

force of our passion. It was important that we had the right people and the right culture and fortunately, many of our values we hold dear are rooted in the culture and heritage of Liverpool; collaboration, inclusiveness, and entrepreneurialism but to name a few.

The past decade has seen the Liverpool game development ecosystem grow and evolve into a creative mosaic of small & medium sized independent studios, alongside larger established players from outside the region investing and building new ventures.

I'm absolutely certain that the next decade is going to be even more exciting."

Graeme Ankers, MD, Firesprite



Liverpool City Region's exceptional games credentials are also the bedrock of a community of multi-award winning creative and media content agencies and tech companies. Innovators such as vTime (a Gartner Cool Vendor) are making 'time travel' possible through social VR while others are harnessing the power of artificial intelligence to push the boundaries of UX design for their clients.

Our region also lays claim to the second largest number of specialist hospitals and health centres in the UK and the highest proportion of Global Digital Exemplars, selected to showcase best practice in digital health.

This has provided companies such as Damibu, CGA Simulation, and VizBox with opportunities to use their gaming experience to support product innovation for the health and care sectors.

"Few places in the world offer what the Liverpool City Region does. Game development is in our DNA. A hotbed of talent and expertise, it's been home to innovative development studios that have led the world in gaming for over 30 years, and it's been vTime's home since its formation a decade ago. Since then, vTime has continued to increase its team size, has raised EIS investment with Deepbridge, and keeps pushing innovation in digital consumer products with partners worldwide almost daily."

Clemens Wangerin, CEO, vTime





WE ARE CHALLENGERS.

Cited as a 'digital hotspot', disruptive technologies and challenging minds drive a collaborative and diverse creative and digital scene. Liverpool city Region's digital sector is growing and our talent pool is growing with it.

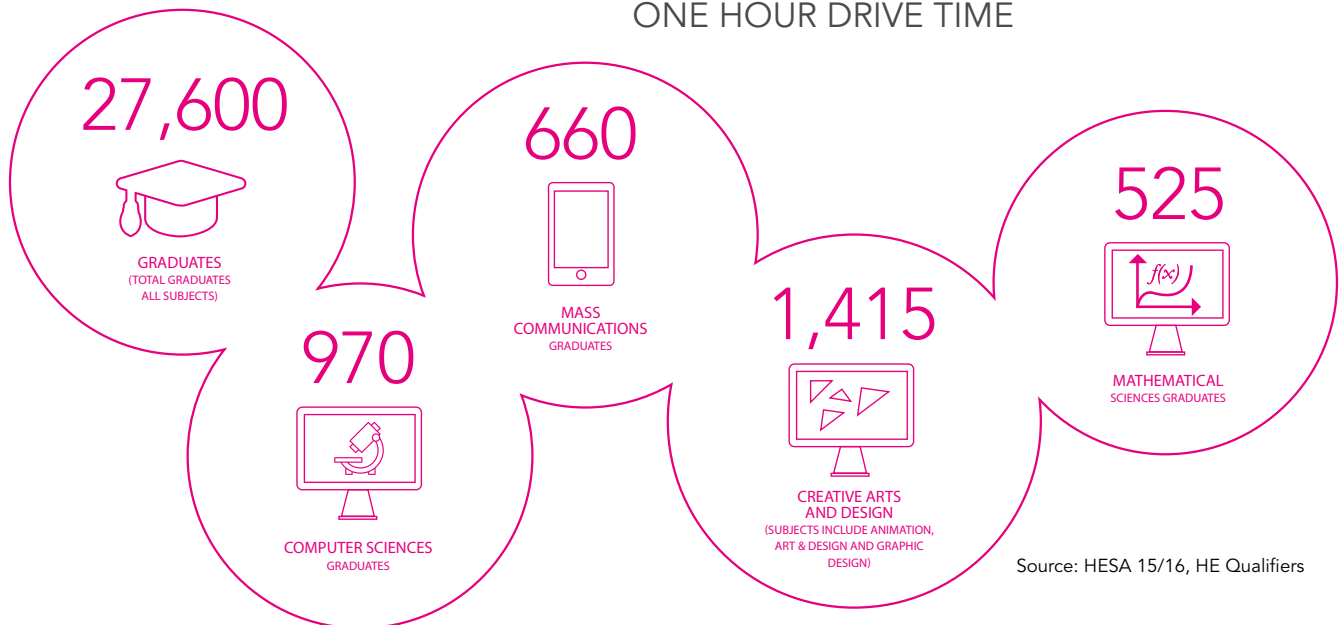
Home to over 4000 digital businesses, the sector has grown by 48% over the last decade and employs over 20,000 people forming a diverse and vibrant creative hub.

"Skyhook Games was founded in Liverpool in 2014 as an independent outsourcing studio and has since developed into a successful game development studio working on original IP. Since the launch of our own game, Lawn Mowing Simulator, in 2021, we have consistently grown our headcount by being able to access the talent and support that the Liverpool City Region has to offer.

Liverpool has a thriving games community and was the obvious choice for where to base our games company. Making use of the LCR High Growth Programme has enabled us to more than double our headcount within the last 2 years. As a result of this, we have been able to secure multiple new projects, allowing us to further drive forward Skyhook Games' growth."

David Harper, MD, Skyhook Games

TALENT POOL CATCHMENT ONE HOUR DRIVE TIME



It's not just next-gen tech we're pioneering. We have the next-gen of professionals, poised to take the industry forward and provide a steady talent pipeline for our businesses.

Liverpool's Studio School is the UK's first school for 14 to 18 year-olds specialising in creative media, gaming and digital technology and the first in the UK to join PlayStation®First, Sony Interactive Entertainment Europe's (SIEE) global academic programme.

The City of Liverpool College (CoLC) is Microsoft Associate College - a world first for a mainstream education and training provider. ICoLC's digital academy is home to a Motion Capture studio used by games developers.

Our universities are amongst the best in the world for Computer Science and allied disciplines including; VR, AR, games and serious games, haptic human computer interaction, artificial intelligence, machine learning, robotics and visualisation. They include Educate North's University of the Year, a Times Higher University of the Year and a top three UK centre for Computer Science related research.

We are also home to the first school of art and design in England outside of London producing first class, artists, designers and illustrators. Liverpool School of Art and Design's researchers, practicing staff and student body work alongside some of the world's most iconic cultural leaders actively engaged in activity across a range of disciplines.

Through the Digital Innovation Facility at the University of Liverpool a real-time rendered dimensionally accurate 3D representation of the city is being developed for metaverse applications.

"The motion capture suite at The City of Liverpool College has allowed us to engage with local games companies who can use this facility for their product development, whilst giving our students an opportunity to work on live projects.

The studio is also utilised in a range of exciting ways that inspire students to develop their skills for different course areas, such as: games design; digital media students post-producing cut scenes; developing music videos with dancers; and recently, in collaboration with Clatterbridge Cancer Centre to create a virtual tour.

The College's suite facilities also provide a perfect partnership where industry and academia have the opportunity to come together to enable students to leave college with an in-depth knowledge and understanding of how this technology is used, not only in game development but also in the wider industries."

**Rachel Upsall, Digital Academy
Head of School, City of Liverpool College**



PORTKEY GAMES

HOGWARTS LEGACIES

d3t's team of talented developers based in the North-West of England, offers work-for-hire co-development solutions to the very best video games developers from around the globe, and is fast making a name for itself within the sector, as the go-to company for its skill set and services.

But it is not just its talent and skills that d3t is renowned for within the games industry, as its culture and employability has consistently been recognised by leading games publication, GamesIndustry.biz, who have awarded d3t as a Best Place to Work for the fourth consecutive year, and fifth in total - highlighting d3t's commitment to an anti-crunch ethos, studio culture, wellbeing, and positive work environment as the key reasons.

The studio also continues to forge strong partnerships with the region's best Universities and Technical Institutions, to help nurture the next generation of game developers in Liverpool. These partnerships have seen d3t advise on shaping the educational programs and curriculum, to ensure that students have access to the latest innovations, technology and methods required for success in our fast-moving industry. At the same time, d3t also takes on numerous interns through its extensive internship programmes to further develop talent within the region, by providing practical team-based experiences and true project responsibility."

Phil Owen, d3t



WE ARE CONNECTED.

In Liverpool City Region, we have more than just great people; we're a great place for your business and we have some great incentives too.

With rents and property prices among the lowest in the UK, A public-private company LCR Connect has enabled gigabit capability across each of our six boroughs enabling access to super fast broadband for every commercial and residential property in the City Region.

Liverpool is one of the best digitally connected cities in the UK. We have built our own Internet Exchange, ensuring world-class speeds. We connect directly to London directly (LINX) and to the GTT transatlantic internet cable linking the city to North America and Europe. Liverpool is also a 5G testbed area creating a platform for the smooth roll out of 5G mobile internet connectivity over the next few years creating multi-gigabyte connectivity across the region.

With two international airports within half of an hour and a two hour rail link to London; Liverpool City Region has everything needed for success in the games industry now and in the future



"Liverpool has such a vibrant gaming community and an enormous availability of great talent. Seeing all that potential, it made perfect sense for us to set up a location here. It did not disappoint. Our Liverpool team now counts upwards of 50 Avalanchers and has played an instrumental role in the development of Call of the Wild: The Angler.

Supported by the Liverpool City Region, we're able to play an active part in the growth and development of our industry in the area. This is so important to us. Through the Growth Platform, the LCR facilitates a forum in which we can get together with other developers, discuss the collective challenges our industry faces and work together to find solutions. This is likely to have a powerful impact on our sector.

Here in Liverpool we have even more opportunities to build on Avalanche Studios Group's legacy of creating worlds beyond limits and expand our rich portfolio of innovative open-world games. "

**Alison Lacy, Location Manager,
Avalanche Studios**

We have a team of business location experts from across Liverpool City Region that can assist you with your next project.

We can provide detailed research on markets, sectors and workforce demographics. We can put you in touch with the right contacts at industry networks and partner organisations. We're happy to introduce you to potential partners at our world-class universities and our existing businesses. We can help you to identify all the available support to help your expansion and show you a wider range of sites, premises and development opportunities.

For further information contact Helen Cross, Digital and Creative Sector Lead helen.cross@growthplatform.org

We look forward to working on your plans with you.

investliverpoolcityregion.com

**INVEST
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STRATEGIC INVESTMENT FUND

METROMAYOR
LIVERPOOL CITY REGION



European Union
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