

# Tech Track 100 press release

Sunday 18 September



## LONDON COMPANIES DOMINATE LEAGUE TABLE OF BRITAIN'S FASTEST-GROWING TECHNOLOGY FIRMS

Published this weekend, the 11<sup>th</sup> annual **Sunday Times Microsoft Tech Track 100** league table ranks Britain's one hundred privately-owned technology, media and telecoms (TMT) companies with the fastest-growing sales over the last three years.

London-based companies continue to dominate the league table, with 55 Tech Track 100 firms headquartered in the capital (compared to 52 last year). They have made a strong contribution to the national economy over the last three years, despite the tough economic conditions. Together they employ **6,300 people** and have achieved combined sales of **£1.3bn**.

London is home to four of the top five companies on the league table. Online money lender **Wonga.com**, the No 1 company, features for the first time. It was set up by chief executive Errol Damelin in 2006 and has attracted a great deal of controversy and more than £100m from backers such as Balderton Capital, Accel Partners, the Wellcome Trust, and early-stage investor TAG. Sales soared 361% a year, from £752,000 in 2007 (annualised from three months' revenue) to £73.8m in 2010.

Another new entrant to the league table is **Toluna**, which runs online surveys for market-research companies such as Ipsos and GfK. Toluna was founded in 2000, floated on AIM five years later, and taken private in April this year by Belgian investment firm Verinvest in a deal valuing the company at more than £160m. Sales grew 81% a year from £12.5m in 2007 to £73.6m in 2010, boosted by a series of acquisitions culminating in the £24m acquisition of Microsoft's online survey business in 2009.

Solar technology developer **solarcentury** features on the Tech Track 100 for the fifth time. The company is one of the first British companies to develop and commercialise its own solar power technology. In the past few years, it has benefited from building regulations that increasingly require the incorporation of renewable energy features. Sales grew 37% a year from £19.4m in 2008 to £50.3m in 2011.

The Tech Track 100 is sponsored by **Microsoft**, **Barclays Corporate** and **BDO**. It is compiled by **Fast Track**, the Oxford-based networking events and research company.

### Fastest-growing private technology companies in London

National rank [2010 rank]	Company Activity	Location of HQ	Annual sales growth over 3 yrs	Latest sales (£000)	Staff	Latest financial year end†	Comment
1	<b>Wonga.com</b> <i>Online money lender</i>	Central London	361.29%	73,817	47	Dec 10	Made 830,000 loans in 2010, a fivefold increase on the previous year
2	<b>Asperity Employee Benefits</b> <i>Employee benefits provider</i>	Central London	266.52%	†81,374	79	Jun 11	Provides perks such as retail discounts to more than 1m employees
4	<b>Fixnetix</b> <i>Financial trading services provider</i>	Central London	191.13%	25,375	83	Mar 11	Its technology can execute a trade in less than a millionth of a second
5	<b>XConnect</b> <i>Telecoms services provider</i>	North London	171.68%	†7,135	47	Dec 10	Raised £13.5m funding from investors including Accel Partners

6	<b>I Spy</b> <i>Digital marketing agency</i>	Central London	169.63%	9,068	41	Dec 10	Advises cosmetics retailer Avon on its social networking activity
7	<b>Telemetry</b> <i>Online video delivery and analysis</i>	Central London	168.54%	†22,726	54	May 11	Founders are seeking equity finance to fund an aggressive growth strategy
12	<b>Certeco</b> <i>IT consultancy</i>	Central London	117.86%	†10,718	117	Jun 11	Plans to launch an IT testing centre in the UK to compete with overseas rivals
13	<b>Zamir Telecom</b> <i>Internet telephony provider</i>	Central London	115.36%	†11,009	36	Nov 10	Founder was once a barrister specialising in criminal defence
14 [63]	<b>Essence</b> <i>Digital marketing agency</i>	Central London	111.09%	74,185	94	Mar 11	Is helping to market a new Harry Potter website
15 [5]	<b>Adconion Media Group</b> <i>Advertising distribution platform</i>	Central London	110.41%	†148,014	459	Dec 10	Raised £40m from a private equity consortium in 2008
16 [2]	<b>Mimecast</b> <i>Email management services provider</i>	Central London	96.79%	†20,949	214	Mar 11	Helped the Salvation Army to cut spam levels from 90% to almost zero
22	<b>Ixaris</b> <i>Online payment services provider</i>	Central London	86.55%	8,476	13	Dec 10	Lets corporate clients design their own virtual credit cards
23	<b>Ukash</b> <i>Online payment provider</i>	Central London	84.86%	†12,602	39	May 11	Generates 80% of revenue overseas after going international five years ago
24	<b>Consumerchoices.co.uk</b> <i>Price comparison website</i>	Central London	84.58%	†8,233	30	Mar 11	Estimates that its sites receive 1.3m visitors a month
26	<b>Concentra Consulting</b> <i>Software developer and consultancy</i>	Central London	80.98%	5,356	76	Mar 10	Its software is used by chemotherapy units to plan allocation of resources
27	<b>Toluna</b> <i>Online market research technology</i>	West London	80.79%	73,641	787	Dec 10	Claims its online community generates more than 1m votes a day
28	<b>Just-Eat</b> <i>Takeaway website</i>	Central London	80.10%	†18,109	179	Dec 10	Completed an acquisition earlier this year to break into India
29	<b>GameAccount Network</b> <i>Gaming software developer</i>	Central London	75.57%	†*15,142	44	Dec 10	Claims it processed \$1 billion in bets last year
30	<b>Rated People</b> <i>Tradespeople recommendation website</i>	Central London	75.27%	6,853	24	Dec 10	Half a million home improvers use its website each year
31 [34]	<b>The Foundry</b> <i>Visual effects software developer</i>	Central London	74.30%	13,049	70	Dec 10	Believes Bollywood offers the most potential for sales growth
33 [32]	<b>Academia</b> <i>Educational software consultancy</i>	Enfield	72.49%	10,927	29	Jun 10	Is looking to expand across Europe after recent acquisition in Finland
35	<b>Block Solutions</b> <i>IT consultancy</i>	Central London	72.37%	10,694	32	Mar 11	Doubled its headcount in the past year and will open a new office in Cheshire
36	<b>Eviivo</b> <i>Hospitality software developer</i>	Central London	70.83%	6,033	78	Mar 10	Has 85 staff of 22 different nationalities

<b>37</b> [3]	<b>Quickstart Global</b> <i>IT services provider</i>	Central London	70.60%	†9,892	700	Dec 10	Co-founder Neal Gandhi has started up and sold three other companies
<b>39</b>	<b>eCommera</b> <i>Online retail platform developer</i>	Central London	69.84%	†11,999	148	Mar 11	Operates the online store for the London 2012 Olympics
<b>42</b> [13]	<b>Comtact</b> <i>Managed services provider</i>	Central London	65.28%	6,822	38	Dec 10	Has delivered IT projects on five continents in the past year
<b>43</b> [12]	<b>Skrill</b> <i>Online payment provider</i>	Central London	64.69%	57,017	395	Dec 10	Was first e-money issuer to obtain a licence from the Financial Services Authority
<b>44</b> [36]	<b>Shazam</b> <i>Music recognition services provider</i>	Central London	63.87%	10,588	57	Jun 10	Its logo recently appeared in a Starbucks advertisement starring Lady Gaga
<b>45</b>	<b>UK2.net</b> <i>Internet services provider</i>	Central London	62.92%	23,337	175	Dec 10	Underwent a £47m management buyout backed by LDC in April
<b>47</b> [28]	<b>QiComm</b> <i>Telecoms services provider</i>	Middlesex	61.44%	93,221	71	Sep 10	Recently formed a partnership with the Chinese telecoms firm ZTE
<b>48</b> [16]	<b>Fourth Hospitality</b> <i>Hospitality software developer</i>	Central London	61.29%	9,893	154	Aug 10	Its software is used in 16 countries, including Russia, Germany and South Africa
<b>50</b>	<b>agenda21</b> <i>Digital media agency</i>	Central London	59.14%	†9,935	36	Dec 10	Analyses links between weather and search engine activity
<b>53</b> [20]	<b>Content and Code</b> <i>Software consultancy</i>	Central London	56.16%	7,814	105	Dec 10	Demonstrates Microsoft technology to clients before they implement it
<b>56</b> [29]	<b>TouchLocal</b> <i>Online marketer</i>	Central London	54.33%	†9,333	211	Dec 10	Mark Livingstone co-founded Lovefilm.com and was its chief executive
<b>57</b>	<b>Ovation Incentives</b> <i>Reward programme software developer</i>	Central London	53.10%	†5,072	17	May 11	Its online reward and loyalty programmes are available in 47 countries
<b>58</b>	<b>Camwood</b> <i>Application migration consultancy</i>	Central London	51.76%	†13,314	65	Mar 11	Plans to open an office in New York by the end of the year
<b>60</b>	<b>GroundScope</b> <i>Transportation management provider</i>	Southwest London	50.53%	†8,244	25	Dec 10	Travellers receive text message with driver details 30 minutes before collection
<b>62</b>	<b>WorldStores</b> <i>Online retailer</i>	West London	49.80%	†22,033	80	Jan 11	Sells 175,000 products for the home and garden, from mattresses to hammocks
<b>63</b>	<b>Ballintrae</b> <i>IT consultancy</i>	Central London	49.42%	†5,774	18	Apr 11	Is planning to open offices in New York and Singapore
<b>66</b> [50]	<b>ControlCircle</b> <i>IT services provider</i>	Central London	48.11%	13,253	80	Sep 10	Secured £6m growth capital from Scottish Equity Partners last year
<b>68</b>	<b>Citihub</b> <i>IT consultancy</i>	Central London	46.96%	†10,103	90	Dec 10	Is benefitting from the release of pent-up demand in the banking sector
<b>70</b>	<b>Fluidata</b> <i>Internet services provider</i>	Central London	45.34%	5,063	28	Mar 11	Founder started his first company from his bedroom at the age of 15

72	<b>Dytecna</b> <i>Electronic designer</i>	Weybridge	45.06%	†40,243	n/a	Dec 10	Makes equipment for military vehicles and flight simulators
74 [85]	<b>Opta</b> <i>Sports information provider</i>	Central London	44.80%	9,109	133	Jun 10	Covers 30 different sports in 70 countries
75 [14]	<b>Media Ingenuity</b> <i>Online lead generator</i>	Central London	44.63%	10,954	30	Dec 10	Recently launched its own travel insurance and credit card under the Fluid brand
78	<b>Etherstack</b> <i>Wireless radio software developer</i>	Central London	44.16%	11,124	53	Dec 10	Spends 20% of its turnover on research and development
79	<b>NMQA</b> <i>Software testing consultancy</i>	Central London	43.32%	†6,226	53	Apr 11	Worked for Yahoo at its Silicon Valley office
82	<b>Powwownow</b> <i>Conferencing services provider</i>	Richmond	41.92%	6,328	52	Dec 10	Broadcasted a 24-hour three-way conference call as a publicity stunt
83	<b>Audio Network</b> <i>Online music publisher</i>	Central London	41.91%	†6,189	41	Jun 11	Has a library of 42,000 music tracks used by television and film producers
84 [60]	<b>Orange Information Systems</b> <i>IT consultancy</i>	Central London	41.80%	†16,826	80	Mar 11	Plans to open first overseas offices in Hong Kong within one year
86 [81]	<b>Thomsons Online Benefits</b> <i>Employee benefits software developer</i>	Central London	40.51%	†23,870	225	Dec 10	Has recently appointed portfolio chairman Nick Discombe to its board
90	<b>TIM Group</b> <i>Financial software developer</i>	Central London	39.14%	6,265	65	Dec 10	Its online platform sends 2,000 trading ideas a day to investors
91 [67]	<b>Xbridge</b> <i>Online insurance broker</i>	Central London	39.05%	16,109	146	Dec 10	Its chief executive previously ran the Match.com dating website
94 [64]	<b>Mobile Interactive Group</b> <i>Mobile and digital technology provider</i>	Central London	37.78%	77,846	119	Apr 10	Recently won a contract to run Skype's global mobile website
98 [95]	<b>solarcentury</b> <i>Solar technology developer</i>	Central London	37.33%	50,316	124	Mar 11	Is building large solar panels across London's Blackfriars Bridge

† Draft, audit exempt or not filed at Companies House \* Annualised figure

Scott Dodds, general manager, business strategy and marketing at Microsoft, the title sponsor of the league table, commented:

*“Privately-owned technology companies are making a great contribution to the economy despite difficult trading conditions. It is especially encouraging to see that cloud computing continues to provide such significant opportunities by helping technology firms to open up new markets and cut costs for their customers.”*

## The national picture

This year's Tech Track 100 companies achieved, on average, sales growth of 74% a year over the last three years of accounts, from a combined total of £680m in 2007/08 to **£3.1bn** in 2010/11. They almost tripled their combined workforce to **13,500** over the three years, with more than **8,800** jobs being added over that period.

Demonstrating a renewed appetite to invest among venture capital and private equity firms, **22** companies on the Tech Track 100 raised funding from these sources in the year to August 2011. A total of 45 have venture capital / private equity backing. This compares to six from last year's league table that secured funds in the 12 months to August 2010.

Companies offering **outsourced IT services**, such as cloud computing and managed hosting, made a strong showing on the league table, with 21 companies operating in this sector. Other prominent industries include telecommunications, represented by 17 companies, digital media and entertainment (15) and online consumer services (13).

The majority of companies on the league table are headquartered in London (55) and the Southeast (13). Of the remainder 12 are based in the North, 7 in the Midlands, 5 in the Southwest, 3 in the East, 3 in Scotland and 2 in Wales.

The full findings are published in a special eight-page supplement within the business section of **The Sunday Times** on 18 September and on [www.fasttrack.co.uk](http://www.fasttrack.co.uk), where you can access a searchable database of all 100 companies, as well as past league tables.

**ENDS**

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### **Notes for editors**

**Fast Track** has published league tables of top-performing private companies with **The Sunday Times** for the past 14 years, and its invitation-only events provide an opportunity for entrepreneurs to network and meet its sponsors. The company was founded and is run by Dr Hamish Stevenson, who holds an associate fellowship at Green Templeton College, Oxford University.

### **League table criteria**

Companies had to be unquoted, independent and registered in Britain. They were ranked by their compound annual growth rate (CAGR) in sales over their latest three financial years between 2007 and 2010, or 2008 and 2011.

For financial years lasting less or more than 52 trading weeks, figures were annualised on a simple pro-rata basis. Annualised sales had to exceed £250,000 in the base year (2007 or 2008) and £5m in the latest year (2010 or 2011). Companies had to also show an increase in sales in their latest year, but not necessarily be in profit.

The research was carried out by Fast Track between May and August. The majority of companies were interviewed by telephone and more than almost nine-tenths (89) were also visited by the Fast Track research team.

### **About Microsoft**

Founded in 1975, Microsoft (Nasdaq "MSFT") is the worldwide leader in software, services and solutions that help people and businesses realize their full potential.

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### **About Barclays Corporate**

The Barclays Corporate Technology, Media and Telecoms team have more than 40 sector-focused specialists located across the UK. This dedicated team works with most of the listed UK TMT companies and more than a quarter of all Tech Track 100 businesses operating in the sector.

[www.barclayscorporate.com](http://www.barclayscorporate.com)

### **About BDO**

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