

# AMSTERDAM

an unrivalled location  
for ICT businesses



**I amsterdam.**

amsterdam economic board

amsterdam  
business

# Amsterdam: an unrivalled location for ICT businesses

“*We're moving a lot of data around, powering a lot of games, backing up a lot of servers. The Dutch people are historically innovators, with the focus of this innovation being Amsterdam. Part of innovation is creativity, and in Amsterdam there's a vibrant creative network, a vibrant financial network and a vibrant technology community.*”  
Jonathan Wistler, Managing Director – SoftLayer



When visiting Amsterdam, it's not hard to understand why the city has had a long-lasting love affair with entrepreneurial minds throughout the years. With its Canal Ring on the UNESCO World Heritage List, the historical city centre is a daily reminder that Amsterdam was once at the forefront of urban planning. The old warehouses pay testament to the fact that the Dutch have been exploring other cultures and trading with them for centuries, turning the country into the centre of a worldwide trading network.

Today, Amsterdam's central role in the next generation's dominant network is not easily seen with the naked eye. The city is a thriving tech hub and the most digitally-connected economy in the world. And when it comes to developing innovative ICT businesses, its mindset is most definitely global. Very few cities can match the cross-border collaboration between the digital, creative and marketing workforces that are thriving here.

With over 800,000 inhabitants, Amsterdam is often characterised as a 'cosmopolitan village'. In terms of population, Amsterdam is comparable with cities such as San Francisco, Frankfurt and Dublin. However, with a population of 2.3 million (and 1.2 million jobs), the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area (AMA) as a whole displays a similar demographic composition to Silicon Valley (with a population of 3 million and 1.3 million jobs).

## THE GATEWAY TO EUROPE



### AMSTERDAM LEADS THE WAY IN TOTAL SUPPLY CHAIN COSTS

Amsterdam Airport Schiphol ranks among the best airports in terms of total supply chain costs, largely due to its unique location and the large volumes of intercontinental freight that pass through it. It has also proven to be the undisputed choice for a greener supply chain and is ranked as the 3rd largest cargo hub in Europe.

Source: Ernst & Young & Buck Consultants (2011)

**The Amsterdam Metropolitan Area (AMA) is the ideal base for companies looking to enter the European market. Excellent international trade routes provide international businesses with access to Europe, the Middle East & Africa (EMEA) and beyond. The AMA is renowned for helping businesses tap into the most attractive worldwide customer markets.**

The Amsterdam Metropolitan Area enjoys a strategically sound location at the heart of one of the world's highest concentrations of multinational companies (approximately 2,200). The region also serves as an attractive launch market and stepping stone into one of the world's largest single markets, with a population of almost 500 million.

Amsterdam Airport Schiphol is located just 15 minutes away from the historical city centre. Offering 317 direct flights to destinations around the globe, from here, the rest of the world is never far away. Major European business destinations are under 2 hours away and high-speed rail services operate from Amsterdam, connecting you to Paris and Brussels within hours.

Warehousing and distribution centres are readily available at the Port of Amsterdam (4th largest in Europe) and Port of Rotterdam (the largest in Europe, located approximately 60 miles from Amsterdam), helping to strengthen Amsterdam's position as the logistics' gateway to Europe.

Thanks to its outstanding digital connections, Amsterdam is rapidly becoming the software and IT capital of Europe. The largest data transport hub in the world (the AMS-IX) is located in the city, where fibre optics transport data in real time to an increasing number of large and small networks, portals and web farms. As such, it is hardly surprising that the Netherlands is the second most densely cabled country in the world and that 33% of European data centres are located in the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area. A growing list of international companies are already benefitting from the excellent digital infrastructure here, including Google, Facebook, Trion Worlds, Netflix, Akamai, Jive Software, Microsoft, Oracle, SAP, Cisco, Blackboard, Criteo and AppNexus.

### SECOND FASTEST INTERNET SPEED

The Netherlands is home to the second fastest internet connection speed in Europe and also tops world rankings as 'the country with the largest broadband deployment', 'use of digital services' and 'connectivity and digital infrastructure'.

Source: The Economists, Akamai, 2013

**“** In the larger European countries, the individual domestic markets in question are so huge that less priority is assigned to the other regions. For us it was important to have an office in Europe that was closer to all of the local markets. Consequently, our location had to not only offer optimum connections with Taiwan and China but also with the European hinterland; with people who understand how all Europeans think and do business. That's why Amsterdam was the only candidate left on the list.  
**James Lai, General Manager, Mean Well Europe**

## Why

### Amsterdam is the gateway to Europe...

#### Import and export

The Netherlands is the world's 5th largest exporter (after China, US, Japan and Germany) and the 7th largest importer of goods (after US, China, Germany, Japan, France and the UK).

#### Amsterdam leads the way in total supply chain costs

Amsterdam Airport Schiphol ranks among the best airports in terms of total supply chain costs, largely due to its unique location and the large volumes of intercontinental freight

that pass through it. It has also proven to be the undisputed choice for a greener supply chain and is ranked as the 3rd largest cargo hub in Europe.

Source: Ernst & Young & Buck Consultants (2011)

#### Amsterdam Airport Schiphol

Amsterdam Airport Schiphol was awarded the accolade of the Best European Airport (Skytrax 2012, Passenger's Choice Award) and won the prestigious 'International Airport of the Year 2012' award at the CAPA Awards for Excellence.

#### Amsterdam - The digital gateway to Europe

The Amsterdam Internet Exchange (AMS-IX) is the largest internet hub in Europe in terms of members (over 600) and second largest in terms of traffic (with an average peak load of over 1.5 terabytes per second), while Surfnet is the most advanced research network in the world.

Source: Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation, 2012

## WELL-EQUIPPED FOR BUSINESS



**The favourable tax climate, unlimited choice of locations, stable business climate and superior quality of life will all count towards your move to the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area being a success.**

With its open economy, the Netherlands has always given priority to a transparent and stable tax system, flexible enough to anticipate the rapidly changing requirements of international economic flows. Tax agreements have been made with most of the world's trading nations (over 90 countries), guaranteeing univocal treatment. This benefits both local businesses and international investment in Amsterdam.

**“** The Netherlands is the best place in the Western world to do business'  
**Bloomberg, 2012**

## BLOOMBERG RANKINGS

Bloomberg conducted research into a total of 160 different markets. Hong Kong topped the list, scoring 49% overall while the Netherlands was close behind with a score of 48.3%. The US ranked third with 46.9%. The Bloomberg rankings are based on six factors: the cost of setting up a business, cost of logistics, degree of economic integration, cost of labour and materials, less tangible costs such as inflation and the perception of corruption and the readiness of the local consumer base.

Source: Bloomberg, 2012

Fiscal benefits include:

- No withholding tax on outgoing interest and royalty payments.
- Competitive 20% corporate income tax rate on the first €200,000 of taxable profit and 25 % on the excess over that amount.
- The Dutch ruling practice which means that certainty can be obtained in advance with regard to future transactions, investments or corporate structures.

This is merely a glimpse of the numerous fiscal advantages that setting up shop in the Netherlands can provide your business. Please don't hesitate to contact us if you would like to learn more.

The Amsterdam Metropolitan Area is also home to a range of global players in the fields of professional services covering legal affairs, media, ICT, pensions and tax consultancy. Combined with the well-developed supply chain industry, this means that businesses in the region benefit from top-quality, efficient services.

It is perhaps unsurprising that several independent studies have indicated that the Netherlands is an extremely attractive base from where to operate your business. A recent study by KPMG revealed that the Netherlands, and Amsterdam in particular, is home to one of the most attractive mature markets for international companies to do business.

## Why Amsterdam is well-equipped for business

### Amsterdam, 3rd largest destination for investment projects in Europe

After London and Paris, Amsterdam is the 3rd largest destination in Europe for foreign investment projects (covering all sectors) and on a global scale, it is the 7th largest city for foreign investments. When purely considering ICT projects, Amsterdam is also the 3rd largest destination in Europe (once again, after London and Paris).

Source: IBM, Global Location Trends, 2012 and fDi markets, 2013

### Inbound/outbound foreign direct investment

The Netherlands is the 5th largest outward foreign direct investor in the world and the 8th largest receiver of foreign direct investment.

Source: KPMG, 2012

### Amsterdam is one of the most attractive markets in which to do business

KPMG research compared the cost of doing business in more than 110 cities in 14 countries all around the world, examining each nation's major metropolitan areas. Of the mature markets, the Netherlands ranked 2nd behind the United Kingdom – scoring better than other major players including France, Germany and Italy.

Source: KPMG's Competitive Alternatives, 2012

### Forbes ranks Amsterdam as the 5th 'smartest' city in the world

Forbes has commented that today's 'smart cities' are more attractive locations in which to do business – more appealing prospects than the major metropolitan areas in Europe which suffer from 'congenital congestion', out-of-control real estate prices and

expanding income disparities.

Source: Forbes Magazine list of smart cities, 2010

### Ease of doing business (business climate), scale 1-10

1. Zürich	6.6
2. Frankfurt	5.65
3. Amsterdam	5.57
4. Paris	4.6
5. Brussels	4.14
6. London	4.05

Source: Ernst & Young, 2012

### Number of days to establish a business

1. Brussels	4
2. Paris	7
3. Amsterdam	8
4. London	13
5. Frankfurt	15
6. Zurich	20

Source: Ernst & Young, 2012



## A NATURAL HABITAT FOR ICT BUSINESSES

### The Netherlands has established itself as a global leader in the digital economy. With an estimated value of €5 billion, the ICT-related businesses comprise a significant part of the Dutch GDP.

Amsterdam can be regarded as the digital capital of Europe, providing access to a large concentration of ICT expertise (with an ICT workforce of 250,000 people) and talent. In addition to the state-of-the-art digital infrastructure, Amsterdam also boasts the strongest foundations to support knowledge intensive enterprises.

The Amsterdam Metropolitan Area has three universities, two universities of applied sciences and several research institutes. Of these, the University of Amsterdam, the VU University Amsterdam and the Centre for Mathematics and Computer Sciences (CWI) are especially active in the field of ICT research and development. The University of Amsterdam has the best Communication & Media faculty in Europe and the 8th best Computer Sciences & Information Systems faculty (source: QS World Rankings 2013).

Roughly 40 miles from Amsterdam is the Delft University of Technology (TU Delft): the Netherlands' oldest and largest technical university. Faculties at the university include Aerospace Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Mathematics and Computer Sciences, Technology, Policy and Management and Industrial Design Engineering. The Eindhoven University of Technology, with its TU/e Science Park, is less than 80 miles away and less than 30 miles away from Amsterdam is the University of Leiden, which has a strong focus on Life Sciences.

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*'Amsterdam has it all. It's all about interactivity nowadays, and Amsterdam is Europe's epicentre of all things interactive. In terms of digital accessibility and stability, the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area is one of the best places in the world and boasts a multifaceted ICT industry.'*

**Dirk Bavelaar, Country Director, ReachLocal**

### APPS

In terms of app invention and development, the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area app industry ranks 4th in the world.

Source: AppsGeysers

### INTERNET

Amsterdam born and based weblog The Next Web is one of the four most influential tech blogs in the world.

Source: Technorati

### MEDIA

The Netherlands is 3rd in the world when it comes to the development and sale of cross media entertainment formats (e.g. The Voice of Holland).

Source: FremantleMedia.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

The Netherlands is the most active country in the world on Twitter (Source: Semiocast, 2012)

In terms of LinkedIn users, the Netherlands ranks 7th in the world (the highest penetration in the world). Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter all have offices in Amsterdam. Dutch people are the most active users of social media networks in the world (Twitter, LinkedIn, Yammer)

Source: ComScore.

## GAMING

In terms of users, the Dutch online gaming market is the 3rd largest in Europe, after the UK and France.

(Source: PWC media outlook)

Two-thirds of all digital media companies (software, gaming, media, internet, advertising and communications) in the Netherlands are located in the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area. Almost half of these (48%) are located in Amsterdam.

The Leiden University Medical Center and Research Centre are both located on the Leiden Bio Science Park.

Combining a winning blend of business and research with excellent connectivity and creative, innovative, open and sustainable ways of thinking and working, the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area is emerging as a world leader in many fields.

The Dutch are frontrunners in today's digital revolution which is seeing ICT pervade every aspect of daily life and business. Nowadays, virtually all major companies are focusing on ICT developments. Large Dutch insurers and banks such as ING and the Rabobank offer highly progressive ICT-based services (for example, mobile banking).

Dutch businesses were also some of the first to outsource their ICT activities and incorporate the latest technology into their activities. Companies including Heineken, Shell, ABN Amro and Unilever have outsourced most of their ICT activities to specialised companies and work together with innovative companies in areas including digital marketing, network security and sales technologies. The Dutch are renowned as a nation eager to innovate and keep ahead of the competition.

It's no wonder that ICT businesses from all segments (e.g. cloud, data, mobile, software, IaaS, PaaS and SaaS) are well represented in the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area. Companies such as Google, Facebook, ReachLocal, ServiceNow, Palo Alto Networks, Microsoft, RedHat, Joyent, LinkedIn, Apple and Infosys already make use of the perfect conditions offered by the city.

*'When a product is successful here, it will be a success in the rest of Europe. For instance, that's why we brought the lady phone to the market here. The Dutch consumer is innovation-sensitive. It's no coincidence that the Netherlands was the first country to have a smartphone adaptation of over 50%.'*

**Menno van den Berg, Vice President Mobile and IT, Samsung BeNeLux**



*'I find Amsterdam to be a very encouraging business environment, particularly in the field of ICT. Everything here dovetails with our organisation's goal of providing consulting solutions that create better business value for everyone. And the Netherlands is a very adaptive community in terms of online banking, social media and so on.'*

**Dennis Gada, Client Partner, Infosys**

## Why

### Amsterdam is a natural habitat for ICT businesses

#### Flexible labour

Dutch employment law enables companies to work towards a flexible employment policy by making the most of a range of options including various employment contracts, flexible working hours, various types of shift work and the recruitment of temporary staff hired through employment agencies. Employers often use employment agencies in order to fill vacancies on a temporary basis. The use of temp workers has become an essential element for many companies to achieve labour flexibility.

Types of employment contracts that

can be used for flexible employment include fixed-term employment contracts, which legally expire on the agreed expiration date; on-call contracts, such as a pre-formation contract in which a new employment contract becomes valid for each separate period of work; or a contract with deferred obligation to perform work.

#### Import and export of ICT goods and services

The Netherlands is the 6th largest exporter and the 4th largest importer of ICT goods in the world. It is also the 4th largest exporter of IT services, after

the US, UK and Germany.

Source: OECD (2011)

#### Adaptation of digital technologies

Amsterdam is the best place in the world for consumer and business adoption of digital technologies. Source: Economist Intelligence Unit, Digital economy rankings - beyond e-readiness, 2010

#### Global Innovation Index

The Netherlands ranks 4th in the Global Innovation Index

Source: Insead, 2013

#### NUMBER OF PATENTS IN FORCE

1. US
2. Germany
3. The Netherlands

Source: The Netherlands Patent Office

#### GLOBAL TALENT INDEX

(European Countries) (Score /100)

1. Denmark 64.7
2. Finland 63.2
3. Norway 61.9
4. Sweden 59.5
5. Switzerland 58.5
6. The Netherlands 58.3
7. United Kingdom 58.2
8. Germany 57.9
9. Ireland 57.4
10. Belgium 55.5

Source: Heidrick & Struggles, 2011

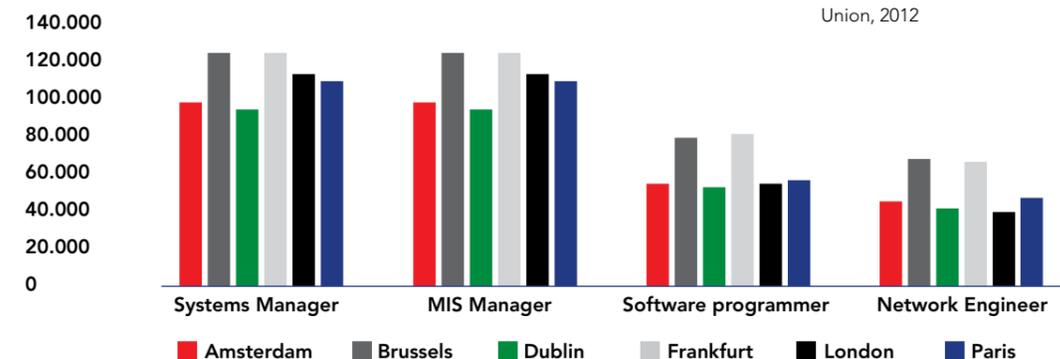
#### THE ICT DEVELOPMENT INDEX

The index ranks a total of 155 different countries (from 1 to 10) according to their level of ICT access, use and skills

1. Korea (Rep.) 8.56
2. Sweden 8.34
3. Denmark 8.29
4. Iceland 8.17
5. Finland 8.04
6. The Netherlands 7.82
7. Luxembourg 7.76
8. Japan 7.76
9. United Kingdom 7.75
10. Switzerland 7.68
11. Germany 7.39
12. Ireland 7.09

Source: International Telecommunications Union, 2012

#### COMPETITIVE COST OF LABOUR



Source: fDi Benchmark, 2012

## HOME TO A THRIVING TECHNOLOGY COMMUNITY

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*"The Netherlands is ideally suited for experiments. The average Dutch person is tolerant of change, receptive to new technologies, and willing to take a critical look at the way they work."*

**Ernst-Jan Stigter, Director Business, Marketing and Operations, Microsoft**

### DUTCH DJ DELIGHT

With 25 per cent of the DJs in the influential DJ Mag Top 100 being Dutch, Amsterdam can be considered as a Mecca of the electronic music industry. Titans in the trance music scene including Armin van Buuren, Ferry Corsten and Tiësto consistently rank in the higher echelons of the list. Dutchman Afrojack received the title "Breakthrough DJ/Producer 2012". With DJ Hardwell being crowned world's No.1 DJ in the 2013, it's clear that the Dutch are set to continue to play an important role in the global dance scene.

Numerous experts have commented on the high standard of Amsterdam's start-up scene. Thanks to a successful cocktail of great people, culture, infrastructure, market, capital and favourable regulations, Amsterdam is a booming location for (tech) start-ups.

With 1,426 people per km<sup>2</sup>, Amsterdam is one of the world's most densely populated cities. The combination of this concentration of multi-skilled labour and the world's best digital infrastructure accelerates the collaboration between creative and ICT professionals. Hundreds of cafes, restaurants and clubs are within walking distance, providing the ideal atmosphere in which to meet, mingle and rub shoulders. Amsterdam is also a leading light when it comes to dance, fashion (G-Star, Scotch & Soda, Victor and Rolf), architecture (Rem Koolhaas, Gerrit Rietveld Academy) and design (Marcel Wanders, Droog, Moooi).

Amsterdam ranked 4th in a recent Global Cities Index compiled by the Martin Prosperity Institute, which ranked cities based on the 3 Ts (Talent, Technology (Patents, Innovation, Job Growth, and High-Tech Index), and Tolerance) alongside a fourth measure of Amenities and Quality of Place. The rationale for the 3Ts lies in what Richard Florida calls 'creative capital theory'.

Amsterdam's size and compact layout enables talent from different backgrounds to mingle freely. In turn, this allows for the formation of great ideas which can result in the creation of innovative new companies.

Over the years, a wide variety of start-up accelerator and entrepreneur-oriented programmes have been established in Amsterdam, attracting talented entrepreneurs from all over the world and further stimulating innovations in all sectors of the economy. It's not without reason that Wired Magazine chose Amsterdam as one of the hottest places in Europe for tech start-ups.

## Why

### Amsterdam has a thriving technology community

#### An interactive network of application developers and start-ups

Amsterdam is home to numerous meetups such as Open Coffee, Hackers/Founders, DevOps, Amsterdam.rb, AmsterdamJS, AmsterdamPHP, Amsterdam UX, Amsterdam.scala, Android Developers Amsterdam, Dutch Python & Django usergroup, Dutch MongoDB OpenStack, Amsterdam SMC, NODC Amsterdam, and meetups organised by Appsterdam. The city also hosts a range of tech conferences such as The Next Web Conference, OpeCo, CloudStack, DevOps, ModUX, GOTO Amsterdam, Start-up

Weekend Amsterdam, EWeek and Mobile Convention Amsterdam.

#### Incubators and accelerators

Startupbootcamp, Rockstart, Venturelab (ACE), New Energy Docks, The Start-Up Network (SUN).

#### Amsterdam's hottest start-ups

WeTransfer, Ayden, Localsensor, 22tracks, Mipagar, Wercker, eBuddy, SoOcial, Twirus, Elasticsearch.

#### Liberal

Amsterdam's liberal attitudes and global ambitions sit easily alongside a hacker community that's reminiscent of San Francisco's. Add

booming creative and digital sectors, strong old-media names (De Telegraaf newspaper and TV giant Endemol) and a connection culture, and you have a hotbed of talent. Space is cheap and there's a growing number of accelerators, angel and VC networks, making it relatively easy for professionals to launch startups.

Source: Wired Magazine, August 2012. Europe's 100 hottest startups 2012: Amsterdam

#### Capital

The Netherlands ranks in the top-ten of most attractive countries for venture capital and private equity investments.

Source: Global Venture Capital and Private Equity Country Attractiveness Index, E&Y, 2011

## THE IDEAL CITY IN WHICH TO ESTABLISH EUROPEAN HEADQUARTERS...



Home to more than 271 European and 30 global headquarters, Amsterdam has solidly established itself as a leading location for headquarters. Especially when large multinationals merge, they are increasingly choosing the Netherlands as a location for their new (legal) headquarters.

The Dutch have a relatively neutral position from a political viewpoint, allowing Amsterdam-based agencies to easily work with international clients. However, the Netherlands is also attractive from a fiscal viewpoint, particularly as companies can opt for either a single or two-tier board.

It's not only Fortune 500 companies that choose to set up their European headquarters in the region: the business tax structure, extent of cross-fertilisation, innovative thinking offered by the multilingual, multi-skilled workforces, the infrastructure and quality of life in the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area all combine to make it an attractive proposition for businesses of all sizes.

Alongside benefitting from factors such as the neutrality and the fiscally advantageous climate of the region, multinationals are also drawn to the wide range of internationally-oriented business service providers in the region.

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*"The Netherlands is one of the strongest digitally-connected countries in the world. The opening of our European headquarters and service centre in Amsterdam forms an important milestone in our European growth strategy, and fits perfectly with our plans for international expansion."*

**John Mazur, CEO, ReachLocal Europe (ReachLocal's EHQ is located in Amsterdam)**

“The Netherlands [Amsterdam] offers a number of clear advantages for a growing international organisation. These include a high level of education and in-depth technical knowledge, linguistic aptitude and the multinational trade spirit of the Dutch.’  
Ulrika Carlsson, Director of Finance, Cisco Systems (Cisco’s EHQ, Shared Services Centre and EDC are all located in Amsterdam)

## Why

### Amsterdam is an ideal location for European headquarters

#### CORPORATE TAX RATES IN 2013

1. Ireland	12.50%
2. Switzerland	21.17%
3. Sweden	22.00%
4. United Kingdom	23.00%
5. Finland	24.50%
6. Netherlands	25.00%*
7. Denmark	25.00%
8. Luxembourg	28.80%
9. Germany	29.55%
10. Italy	31.40%

\* Corporate tax rate on first €200,000 profit is 20% Source: KPMG, 2013

#### HIGHER EDUCATION RANKING 2011-2012

1. US
2. UK
3. The Netherlands

Source: Times Higher Education, London

#### KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY INDEX

1. Denmark
2. Sweden
3. Finland
4. The Netherlands

Source: World Bank, 2010

#### OPERATIONAL COSTS

An aggregated cost comparison for a medium-sized headquarters (50 FTE, 20m<sup>2</sup> per employee, A-class office space) reveals that Amsterdam is the most cost competitive city:

1. London	€5.79 million
2. Frankfurt	€5.48 million
3. Brussels	€5.45 million
4. Paris	€5.42 million
5. Amsterdam	€4.35 million

Source: E&Y, 2012

## ... AND MARKETING & SALES OPERATIONS



## “

“We feel especially fortunate that our first international office and venture outside the US was to open our doors in Amsterdam. We share the Dutch mindset of a long-lasting tradition of openness to new ideas, which has served us well. We’ve built an enviable client list full of opportunity for our people to make outstanding creative contributions that work all over the world.”

Clay Mills, Managing Director of Wieden+Kennedy Amsterdam

**Catalysed by a huge pool of creative talent, proximity to clients and a cosmopolitan atmosphere, the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area is the ideal location for international companies to establish their marketing & sales offices.**

Dutch employees are renowned for their sales and business development capabilities. Many Dutch sales managers work for multinational companies and 47% of Dutch managers have worked outside of the Netherlands. The Netherlands is home to a business environment constantly on the lookout for new technologies, new applications of existing technologies, new business models and market opportunities.

Amsterdam boasts one of the most flexible labour markets in Europe: temporary employment is exceedingly common in the city. Improved hiring and firing regulations also allow companies to scale up and down quickly as required.



An office in Amsterdam affords companies the opportunity to identify and exploit opportunities in target markets in Europe, Middle East or Africa, safely extending intellectual property rights and registrations into other markets.

The Netherlands has proven to be an ideal launch market: a densely populated, multicultural country that is heavily representative of the rest of Europe. Products and services that are developed, launched and successfully sold here have a high chance of being successful throughout Europe.

Talented people from all over the world are keen to live and work in Amsterdam. 180 different nationalities can be found in the city and an impressive 80 per cent of the workforce speaks English. Amsterdam is home to a host of acclaimed advertising agencies responsible for developing global campaigns for large multinationals including Nike, Coca Cola and Adidas.

The offices of a wide range of multinationals are in close proximity, meaning that potential clients are never too far away.

#### ADVERTISING HOTSPOT

The August 2013 edition of The Drum published a 48-page supplement about Amsterdam in which it delved deeper into the reasons behind Amsterdam’s success as a creative hotspot, attracting leading, world-renowned creative agencies.

The magazine interviewed representatives of some of the biggest advertising agencies with offices in Amsterdam, such as Clay Mills of Wieden+Kennedy. Since moving to the city in 1992, their Amsterdam base has enjoyed considerable success.

## Why

### Amsterdam is an ideal location for Marketing & Sales

#### International Experience of Dutch managers

56% of Dutch managers would like to work outside of The Netherlands (again) in the future and 47% have been employed outside of The Netherlands. Dutch managers are renowned for their capabilities to adjust to the local culture, their productivity, proactivity, openness and flexibility.

Source: Management Team, 2010

#### Open to new ideas

The Netherlands ranked 7th in the world compared to Switzerland (8) UK (13), Germany (14) and France (20) in a survey measuring openness to trade, capital movements, exchange of technology and ideas, labour movements and cultural integration.

Source: Ernst & Young Globalization Index, 2011

#### High language competence

The Netherlands ranks 3rd on language skills, after Switzerland and Luxembourg.

Source: IMD World Competitiveness Yearbook, 2011

#### Open to foreign ideas

The Netherlands is a world leader with regard to the openness of the national culture to foreign ideas.

Source: IMD World Competitive Yearbook, 2010

## “

“With TED, Lego and Deloitte as our founding clients, starting the agency in Amsterdam was a no-brainer. Amsterdam is the Silicon Valley of creative advertising. The smartest minds from all over the world flock here to work at a handful of creative agencies in partnership with the world’s biggest brands. Global advertising is the ultimate platform for storytelling and it’s what Amsterdam does best.”

Alex Bennett-Grant, Co-Founder of We Are Pi

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*'The final key reason for opting for Amsterdam was simply the lifestyle. This environment allows us to combine hard work and world-class performance with a pleasant, easy-going way of life.'*

**Peter Mahrer, President & Managing Director EMEA, Under Armour**

## A liveable city

**Amsterdam offers its inhabitants an unrivalled quality of life. It's a cosmopolitan city with a perfectly compact, easy-to-navigate historical centre. It's not hard to imagine why many expats find it hard to leave.**

Expats have access to quick, efficient and transparent permit procedures and may qualify for a 30% personal tax income advantage.

## Assisted by political support

**The development of the technology sector has received continuous support from the local government and key political figures. For example, the City of Amsterdam recently put out a tender for a new technical institute (now called Amsterdam Metropolitan Solutions).**

"We are continually looking for opportunities to attract and retain talent, knowledge and businesses for the City of Amsterdam and to ensure connections to other cities," stated Amsterdam Alderperson Carolien Gehrels. "This allows for economic growth and creates valuable jobs. In this respect, we believe the technology sector can play an important role."

The city is currently reviewing five proposals submitted by consortia including renowned knowledge institutes such as MIT and Columbia University.

The City of Amsterdam is also keen to further strengthen the ICT cluster via the Amsterdam Economic Board (the Board). Under the umbrella of the Board, representatives from governmental agencies, research institutes and the business world have jointly taken responsibility to work towards strengthening the economy of the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area. The Board strives to stimulate and support sustainable collaboration, innovation and growth in the region, and strengthen international competitiveness. As the Board states: 'Developing the ICT cluster is essential to our future growth and competitive strength. It's an increasingly important location factor for new businesses and serves to stimulate new enterprise.' In addition to ICT, the Board focuses on six other clusters (Creative Industries, Life Sciences & Health, Financial & Business services, Logistics, Food & Flowers and Tourism & Conferences).

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*"Amsterdam has a really independent mindset – it's a place where for centuries people haven't been scared to innovate. Newcomers are inspired by that spirit of independent thinking. I think it's what drove me and my friends to set up Guerilla Games in the first place. We have some 26 nationalities working here in our Amsterdam office. As an employer, I find it easy to attract people from overseas because people are attracted by the quality of life. Take my commute to work: a ten-minute walk along the canals, dropping my kids off at school on the way!"*

**Herman Hulst, Managing Director and Co-Founder, Guerilla Games**



## amsterdam inbusiness in brief

**amsterdam inbusiness is the official foreign investment agency of the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area (Amsterdam, Amstelveen, Almere and Haarlemmermeer).**

amsterdam inbusiness assists foreign companies with the establishment and expansion of their activities in the Netherlands. We can help you create a convincing business case for setting up in the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area by offering practical advice and relevant information. And it's all free, strictly confidential and without any hidden agenda. Our commitment does not end once you have set up an operation in the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area. We strive to build a long-term relationship in order to be supportive in any phase of development of your company. Considering setting up your business in the Amsterdam Area? Don't hesitate to contact us. We look forward to welcoming you in Amsterdam!

### Customised solutions

**By combining your data with ours, we can provide you with relevant information for your organisation. Our services for organisations planning to set up in the Amsterdam Area include:**

- **Market Intelligence:** providing specific data on markets, industries and sectors in, for example, IT, financial services, media, advertising, life sciences, food, gaming, aerospace, logistics, etc.
- **Investment climate:** providing information about the Dutch tax climate, incentives, legal & regulatory framework and labour market. Developing independent benchmark reports on salary levels, office rent, cost of living etc. for your European location study and/or supply chain study
- **Fact-finding visits:** tailor-made fact-finding programmes to get informed about the fiscal climate, the market, and availability of talent, business climate, and quality of service providers and to visit office locations
- **Legal & tax advice:** organising free introduction meetings with internationally-oriented business service suppliers to elaborate on legal and fiscal structures that meet your current and long-term needs
- **Talent:** tapping into the labour market via introduction to recruiters and/or networks & communities of professionals
- **Business & partner networks:** introductions to strategic partners, business networks/associations, knowledge institutions, tax authorities, governmental agencies and when possible potential clients
- **Relocation support:** assistance in search and selection of temporarily, flexible and permanent office space including site visit tours
- **Support for international staff:** apartment search for expats (short stay/long stay), introductions to international schools, expat clubs and referrals to doctors, dentist, accountants, etc.

**amsterdam  
business**

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## Amsterdam Economic Board in brief

**The Amsterdam Economic Board inspires, motivates and unites parties to work together to build a stronger, more innovative economy.**

The ambition of the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area is to grow into a Global Business Hub, a focal point of international activities. As a Global Business Hub the region can sustainably invest in creating an attractive and liveable environment with increasing prosperity and more jobs. Knowledge and innovation, human capital and international connectivity are the driving forces of economic growth. Sustainability, quality of life and the removal of obstacles are essential conditions for success. By supporting economic growth, innovation and international competitiveness, and by working towards a long-term programmatic approach, the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area is dedicated to ensuring its position amongst Europe's leading group by 2020.

### What the ICT cluster can do for you

**The ICT cluster is working to achieve recognition for the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area as a World Smart & Creative Society in order to increase prosperity and well-being.**

In 2020, the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area will stand apart through innovations in ICT, and through crossovers between ICT and other clusters, in particular with themes such as ICT/Smart, Creative and eHumanities.

### What the ICT cluster is working on

- Intensified cooperation between industry, knowledge institutes and regional government, with increasing exchanges of experiences and upscaling.
- The Amsterdam Metropolitan Area must excel in knowledge, skills and technology to create a Smart & Creative Society. Given the present demographic trends, additional effort is required in order to achieve this aim. The Amsterdam Metropolitan Area must become more attractive to young entrepreneurial talents in ICT, media and the creative industry, and help this talent to develop further.
- The active participation of citizens, residents, businesses, visitors, customers and employees in developing the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area into a public location and testing ground for innovative R&D and ICT applications.
- We utilise the core values of creativity, openness, intelligence and entrepreneurship to position the region as a Smart & Creative Society and to attract more domestic and international talent. In addition, the cluster helps to connect new partners to the cluster strategy.

**amsterdam economic board**

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