

Thames Valley Berkshire LEP:

Using Competitive Advantage to Attract Inward Investment

What makes our local economy unique? Where are its strengths? Where does it have a competitive advantage over other areas? These are some of the questions that Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (TVB LEP) have recently been asking, and having identified the answers, they are releasing a series of innovative Sector Propositions, each one focusing on an area of competitive strength in the Berkshire area.



The resulting reports are essentially inward investment portfolios, demonstrating the competitive advantage the area has over other locations in a particular sector, and intended to attract companies – particularly international organisations – to invest in the sub-region.

Sector Proposition: Digital Technologies

For the first of these reports, TVB LEP chose to focus on the digital technologies sector, since it holds a dominant position in the Berkshire economy. According to the report:

- There are over 6,300 tech companies based in the TVB LEP region
- There has been a 23% increase in tech businesses over the last five years
- 14% of the local workforce work in the sector, compared to a UK average of 4%

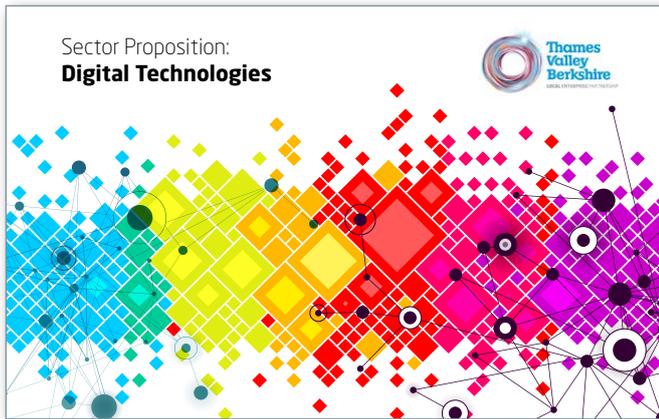
The report includes a wealth of details aimed at showcasing the sub-region as a great place for digital tech companies to invest or relocate, including:

- **Who's Here** – a snapshot of some of the digital tech companies that are currently in the area
- **Specialisms** – a look at some of the tech specialisms in the area, such as Software and IT Services, Telecommunications, Big Data, and Cyber Security
- **Relocation Support and Infrastructure Development** – information on how companies can get help to relocate to the area and what kind of new infrastructure developments are in the pipeline

According to Peter Read, Chairman for TVB LEP:

“ The document is filled with nuggets of insight about the sub region’s leadership position in the digital technologies space along with the opportunities for corporates, SMEs and start-ups choosing to locate here. We want to make sure that all our technological strengths within Berkshire are acknowledged, in order for us to continue to grow and develop our reputation. ”

Granular Detail Through Analyst



One of the greatest strengths a region has is its workforce, and an important question for any company thinking of investing in or relocating to a particular area is “What is the pool of available talent like in the area?” TVB LEP wanted to better understand their talent pool themselves, and to showcase its strengths in their Sector Proposition. To achieve this they turned to EMSI’s **Analyst** Labour Market Intelligence tool.

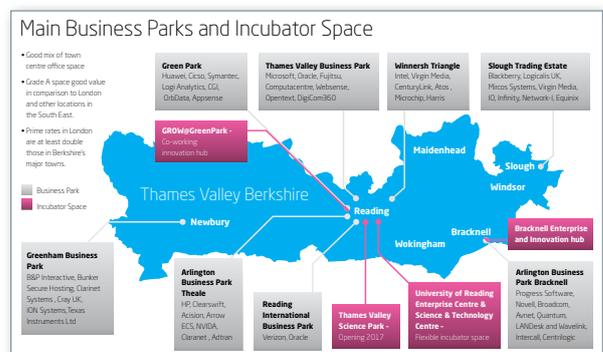
Analyst provides granular data on occupations and industries, down to the most specific industry and occupation levels (SIC and SOC-4 codes), and to the most specific sub-geographies. The tool was therefore of great value in giving the LEP a detailed breakdown of workforce numbers, and in particular a breakdown of key occupations within tech specialist areas. Amongst other things, they found that within the region there are:

- 11,700 Programmers and software development professionals
- 4,100 IT Business analysts, architects and system designers
- 51,000 people employed in roles that can be defined as tech specialists

The ability of EMSI data to drill right down to the most specific occupations, and to uncover the occupation make up of an industry, threw out some surprising results. According to Caroline Perkins, TVB LEP’s Economic Research Analyst, this is where much of the value of **Analyst** lies – in challenging assumptions about the labour market, and in uncovering strengths that they weren’t necessarily aware of:

“ We knew we had a large number of global digital technology companies located in Berkshire. The assumption was however that most of the sector’s workforce were employed in sales and marketing rather than tech specialist roles. Using EMSI data we discovered that actually the majority of the workforce are in fact working in highly skilled tech roles. We were then able to showcase this important talent pool within our Proposition. ”

Since producing the Digital Technologies report, TVB LEP have released a couple of other sector propositions on Life Sciences and Healthcare, and Energy & Environment, both of which include Emsi data. You can view these reports at <http://thamesvalleyberkshire.co.uk/international>



To find out how our data can help you showcase your area's economic strengths, contact **Andy Durman** at andyd@economicmodelling.co.uk or on **07720 641 651**