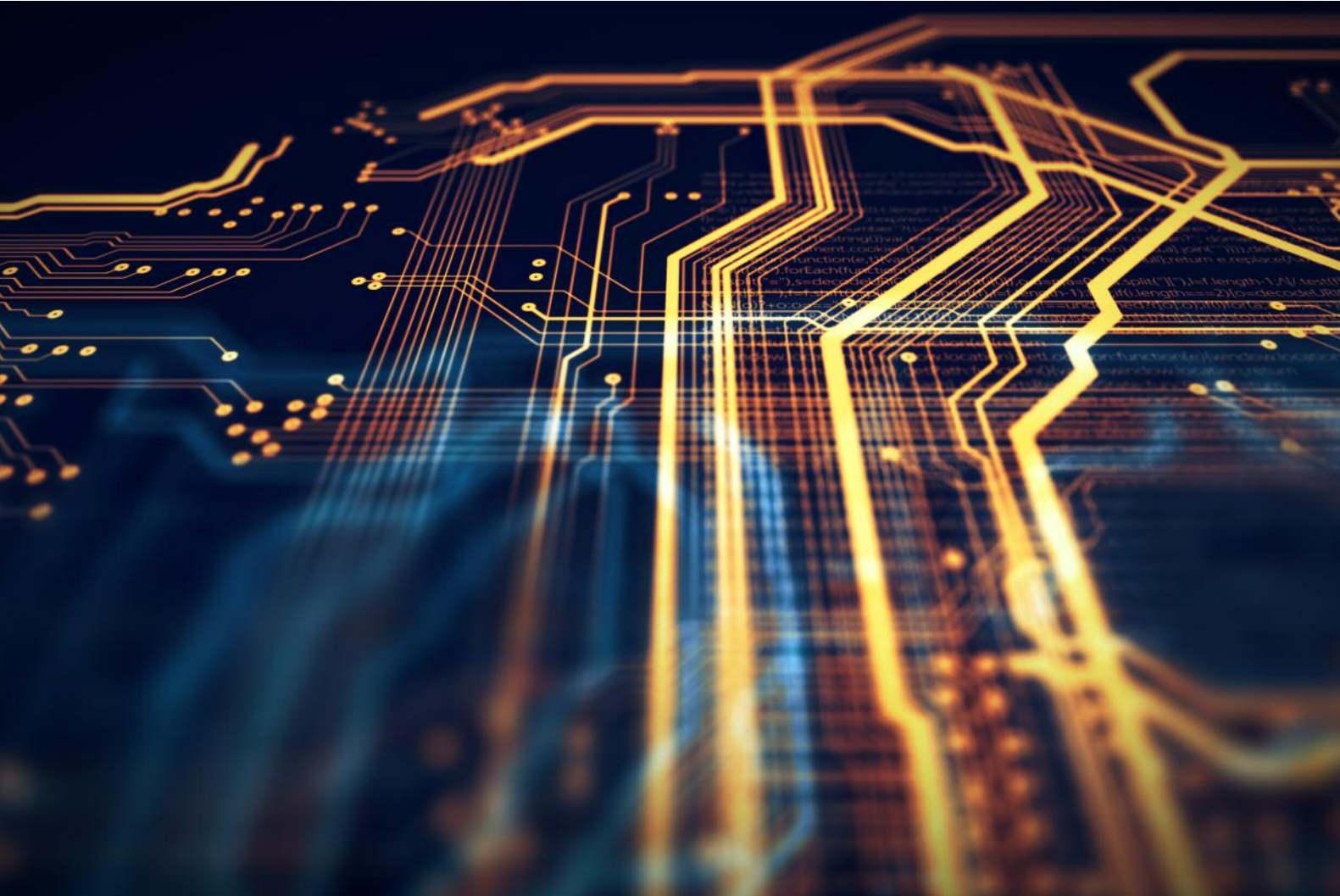# Digital
West Midlands

Labour Market Information

In the UK, like many other countries, we live in an increasingly online world. Digital and other tech skills are in high demand across all sectors - good news for those with the right skills, as these will open doors to lots of jobs. You may have heard of 'Silicon Canal', a cluster of companies in the area - but look a little further and there are many more companies in the area working across a wide range of sub-sectors.

Source: Business Birmingham

Important facts about the Digital Sector

- 1.2 million new technical and digitally skilled people needed by 2022 in the UK[1].
- 90% of all jobs will require some element of digital skills within 20 years[2].
- 94% of employers in this sector are small to medium enterprises[3].
- Young women make up 17% of the tech workforce and are in demand.
- The number of tech and digital jobs in the West Midlands is around 84,000 and is expected to increase by 14,000 jobs by 2025[1].
- 45,000 are employed in computer programming, consultancy and related activities.
- 2,500 are employed in wireless telecommunications activities.
- 1,375 are employed in data processing, hosting and related activities and web portals.

[1] UKCES Science Committee 2016 [2] Birmingham City University and the Regional Observatory [3] Tech Partnership

In the West Midlands there are 'hotspots' for digital and creative jobs. Greater Birmingham is home to over 7,500 tech firms employing over 40,000 people and 25% of the UK's gaming workforce is based here. Coventry & Warwickshire are home to some 2,500 digital businesses and there are also clusters of gaming companies around Leamington Spa and Warwick. There is also a cluster of cyber security companies based in The Malverns and often referred to as 'Cyber Valley'.

What you could earn

These are the average UK salaries for some of the jobs in digital and ICT*. Salaries are likely to be lower for new starters and higher for experienced workers.

IT technician **£24,000**
Graphic designer **£25,950**
TV, video and audio engineers **£32,650**
Web designer **£30,300**
Telecommunications engineer **£32,700**
Computer games designer **£41,250** #
Software developer **£41,350**
IT systems architect **£44,350**
Ethical hacker **£56,650**#

*Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2017 median salary rounded to nearest £50
IT Jobs Watch

Future Trends

This sector is about technology but it's about creativity too for many of the jobs. Digital communications are changing the way in which we work, particularly in sectors such as agriculture, transport and logistics. There is a growing demand in these areas:

AI (artificial intelligence) | cyber security | big data management | gaming | VFX (visual effects) | satellite technology | digital marketing | web design | computer programming | UX (user experience) | AR (augmented reality) & VR (virtual reality) | 3D animation | driverless vehicles | open data

More women in tech are desperately needed! Just 17% of people working in the tech sector are female and only one in 10 students taking A level computer science (according to the Tech Partnership).

Some aspiring women role models in the sector include: Facebook COO, Sheryl Sandberg, YouTube CEO Susan Wojcicki, HP CEO Meg Whitman, IBM CEO Virginia "Ginni" Rometty, Apple Senior VP Angela Ahrendts, Oracle co-CEO Safra Catz, Alphabet CFO Ruth Porat, Ursula Burns CEO of Xerox and Yahoo CEO Marissa Mayer.

Job Titles

3D animator • advertising executive • animator • **app developer** • **artificial intelligence expert** • audio engineer • **coding specialist** • compliance manager • consumer insight expert • copywriter • **cyber security specialist** • cyber threat intelligence analyst • cyberspace communications specialist • **data analyst** • database security administrator • digital content manager • **digital marketing assistant** • **games designer** • graphic designer • haptic programmer • infrastructure technician • IT support technician • **IT systems architect** • junior frontend developer • photo imaging expert • PPC manager • quality assurance games tester • SEO executive • social media manager • **software engineer** • telecoms engineer • UX designer • **virtual reality designer** • vlogger

Bold = jobs in demand

Skills required

Some employers report that they struggle to find candidates with the right people or personal skills. Employers in these sectors are particularly looking for specialised skills in:

SQL

JavaScript

Mircrosoft C#

Software Development

.NET

Web Development

SQL Server

Project Management

Teamwork/Collaboration

Active Server Page (ASP)

Java

ASP.NET

Hypertext Preprocessor

jQuery

Local employers

BT | Virgin Media | Purplebricks | Asos | SCC | Codemasters | BBC Guerilla Group | Arden Group | Advanced | Inspired Gaming | Talis | Superdream | Falanx | Whisk | Core Gaming | Click Travel | Just Say Please | Mortgage Brain | Packt | cloudThing | Rimilia | IO Studios | Enigma Digital | Character Shop | Yamination | The Ticket Factory | Park IT Solutions | cloudThing | BrightTarget | Playground Games | Codemasters | Python Digital | Virgin Media | HSBC | QintetiQ | Codemasters | Arden Group | JLR | SEEDTECH | Exient | SEGA | Hardlight | Hitex | IBM | Tata Technologies | DeltaXML | EPIC Games | Denfield | Talis | Falanx

Growth Areas

• Gaming • Animation • ICT services • Cyber security • Environmental technologies • FinTech

ICT services such as cloud services, software development and data support along with creative digital sub-sectors like gaming, animation, virtual reality and digital marketing are all growing areas.

As commercial districts grow, people with Digital and ICT skills will be able to take advantage of new jobs on offer in sectors such as business, finance, IT, leisure and retail. HS2 will be coming through our region and there are opportunities for people with digital skills including digital design, digital planning, data analytics and digital construction techniques.

Routes in

There are many routes into a digital or tech role but some skills are more in demand than others so it's worth doing some research, especially if you're considering a degree. Check out which courses or apprenticeships local colleges and universities offer and search for employer **apprenticeship vacancies** on **www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk.**

The government has introduced a range of new qualifications to help address skills shortages and these include digital and cyber security apprenticeships (including degree apprenticeships) and T-levels (technical level qualifications) are due to be phased in from 2020. 95% of UK games companies are small to medium businesses with the majority employing fewer than five people – rather than relying on traditional recruitment methods, building up experience and making useful contacts could go a long way.

Career Learning Pilot

The **Career Learning Pilot** can support you to grow your skills and boost your income. Speak to a Careers Adviser to discover the next steps towards your career goals.

Research shows that people qualified to Level 3 can earn 10% more than those without and advanced apprentices at Level 3 can earn £117,000 more over their career.*

*Prospects.ac.uk

Talk to **National Careers Service on 0121 296 5550 (Quote CLPWM6) or email: clpwestmids@prospects.co.uk**

Or visit **www.wmca.org.uk/what-we-do/productivity-skills**

FINDING OUT MORE

www.creativeskillset.org
www.creative-choices.co.uk
www.bubble-jobs.co.uk
www.thetechpartnership.com/tech-future-careers
www.techfuturegirls.com
www.ada.ac.uk
https://siliconcanal.co.uk
http://careers.hs2.org.uk

West Midlands Combined Authority