



Sony's London Studio is one of the longest-running of all the teams in the UK capital – and with offices just off of Oxford Street, is probably the most centrally-located as well. Which can't be bad for its 260 staff, working on a variety of projects from *SingStar* to *EyePet* and the recently-launched PlayStation Home.

Given the studio's age, it's been perfectly placed to see the London games scene resurge in recent years.

"We have an extraordinary group of creative contributors."

"There has definitely been a recruitment drive in London, particularly to grow the social games genre," says Mike Haigh, development director, referring to the studio's efforts in the field. "Linked to this is the unique cross-cultural nature of our creative industries – games, film, television, music, art and fashion – and with the

fast-paced London lifestyle, the capital is pulling in world-class talent, not only within the UK, but from other thriving global cities as well."

Haigh isn't phased by the issues of cost associated with running a business in a capital city, either.

"The costs to operate a studio in the capital are definitely higher, but the benefits far outweigh the negatives. You just have to look at the success of London Studio's portfolio to know that what we have in return are an extraordinary group of ambitiously creative contributors who want to work hard, play hard and 'up the benchmark' in terms of quality of the consumer experience." Plus, he adds, all employees can request extra financial support for healthcare and childcare.

"There are incredible professional opportunities and social benefits available in London which offers a wealth of diverse experiences for those starting or continuing their career. And the Sony Worldwide Studios network provides other opportunities should they want to mix in a bit of travel in with their careers with us."

SCE London Studio



FOUNDED: 1993

HEADCOUNT: 260

NOTABLE GAMES: *SingStar*, *EyePet*, PlayStation Home

KEY PERSONNEL/STAFF: Jamie Macdonald (VP VWS Europe), Mike Haigh, (development director)

CONTACT: SCE London, 15 Great Marlborough Street, London, W1F 7HR. hradmin@scee.net

Currently celebrating its tenth year, German localisation firm Partnertrans has just opened its first international office in the UK – based on the edge of London – and has its sights set on further international expansion.

So what has attracted this already-established localisation firm to the UK capital? It turns out that London's benefits don't just apply to games studios, but to the service industries as well.

"Before choosing a location we evaluated the situation in and around London," says the firm's Iris Ludolf. "We very quickly came to the conclusion that it would be best for us if we avoided the possible problems raised in those questions by choosing a location that still enjoys all the benefits of the London area without suffering from the drawbacks present with a location in central London."

And, of course, being situated near London – arguably one of the most cosmopolitan cities in the UK, if not the world – is perfect when it comes to tapping into a multi-cultural workforce, something absolutely vital to a company in the

business of not just translation. After all, if you're to have a localisation that feels natural to players across the world, it'll have to be overseen by natives who know their respective cultures in and out.

"The very nature of our business demands a highly diverse team of people."

"The very nature of our business demands a highly diverse team of people to work together, so in a demographic sense London very much stands for how our team is set up," explains Ludolf

"As it turned out for us it is not so much about the talents found in London but the willingness of people to move into or near the city. The location has certainly been an important issue for our candidates which we might not have attracted if we were located somewhere more remote."

Partnertrans



FOUNDED: 1998

HEADCOUNT: 250

NOTABLE GAMES: Localisation of *Lord of the Rings Online: Shadows of Angmar* and *Mines of Moria*, *EndWar*, *Haze*, *Splinter Cell*, *High School Musical 3* (mobile)

KEY PERSONNEL/STAFF: Markus Ludolf (CEO)

CONTACT: info_uk@partnertrans.com