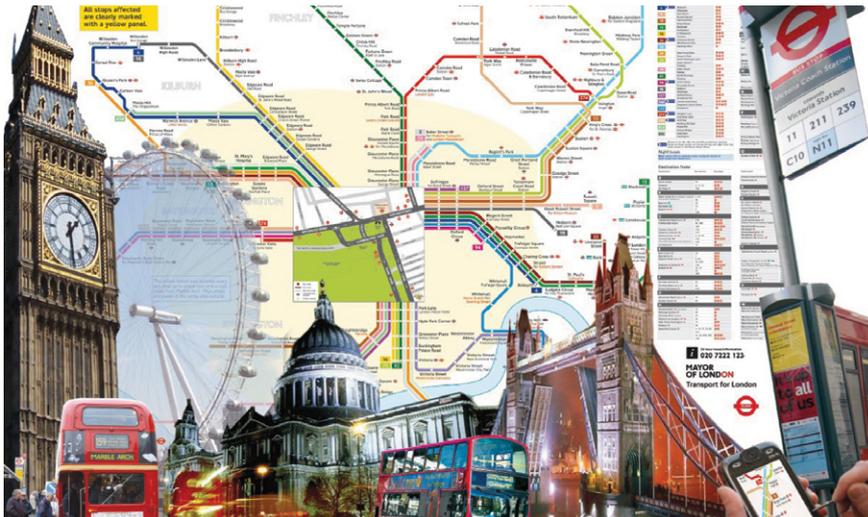


On the map

With support from UK Trade & Investment, Swedish company T-Kartor recently opened an office in London, bringing it closer to its major UK customer, Transport for London



T-KARTOR

Fast facts

Company: T-Kartor
Country: Sweden
Industry: ICT, Mapping
Website: www.t-kartor.com

T-Kartor was formed in 1985 in Kristianstad in Skåne, southern Sweden as a cartography business. After 10 years, the company moved its emphasis from static maps into geospatial mapping, which links social, economic or business data to geographical locations on interactive maps.

Around 60 per cent of T-Kartor's business comes from the UK, with 30 per cent in Norway, and the remaining ten per cent in the US, Germany, Sweden and Finland. The company's main customers are the South and West Yorkshire Public Transport Executives, the UK Hydrographic Office, Southern Railways and Transport for London (TFL). TFL is T-Kartor's biggest customer overall, and it has supplied the transport body with intuitive maps and destination finder tables since 2001. In 2009, the company began to consider moving to the UK so that it could serve its main customers better.

"Our service is unique in that we can create quality maps for companies directly from databases, and also update them incrementally, rather than having to build them from scratch, which is

expensive," says Ole Berg, key account manager at T-Kartor. "Our TFL contract involves mapping transport routes across London for the Cycle Hire project, among others. We realised it would be more efficient to have an office in London than constantly flying our people between Sweden and the UK. The UK has a long and rich tradition of map-making, so a presence there would also allow us to take advantage of the local talent pool."

Putting down routes

T-Kartor's original plan was to open a UK office in 2012, but in 2009, Managing Director Christer Kjellkvist met UK Trade & Investment (UKTI) staff at an embassy function in Stockholm. They described the help and support that UKTI offers businesses from around

the world setting up in the UK. As a result of this conversation, Christer decided to commission a high level market survey from UKTI, to pinpoint suitable office locations and potential new UK customers. UKTI also arranged for T-Kartor to join an Advantage West Midlands (AWM) Bridge to Growth delegation to the UK later in 2009.

UKTI connected T-Kartor with local accountants and legal advisors to help the company through the process of setting up and registering its UK office. Having chosen to locate its new office in Chiswick, London, the company used Bridge to Growth services that included help with handling payroll and VAT, as well as bank account management and bookkeeping.

"We see UKTI as a trusted partner that gives advice and suggestions for practical solutions. The staff members are fast, responsive and very competent"

The programme also introduced T-Kartor to Danske Bank, which was able to help the company overcome the cash-flow problems often associated with opening an overseas office. T-Kartor GB Ltd opened in November 2010, two years ahead of the company's original timetable.

"UKTI's team in Sweden provided invaluable assistance to us in establishing T-Kartor GB," says Ole. "We see UKTI as a trusted partner that gives advice and suggestions for practical solutions. The staff members are fast, responsive and very competent. Their legal and business help and advice is still forthcoming and very welcome."

Road to health

T-Kartor's UK office is performing well, and the company hopes to employ three more cartographers from the UK over the next year. Turnover from the UK business is expected to remain at 60 per cent, but the company's turnover as a whole should rise over the next two years.

The UK office will focus on cartographic production and product sales, while research, development and decision making will stay at the main office in Sweden.

The next big target for T-Kartor is the healthcare sector. The company is looking into developing interactive maps that will help doctors and paramedics perform home visits, emergency or routine, more effectively. These products will enable the call centres and drivers to plan quicker and more efficient routes to and between visits, saving time, money and hopefully more lives.

"Without UKTI, we wouldn't have our UK office yet," says Ole. "They moved us along to the right people to help us through the process. UKTI introduced us to companies and people they know are trustworthy, and, through our association with UKTI, these people in turn trusted us and knew we were serious about business. Having the benefit of UKTI's help and advice has helped us to successfully advance our UK business, ahead of schedule."

"UKTI introduced us to companies and people they know are trustworthy, and, through our association with UKTI, these people in turn trusted us and knew we were serious about business"



The UK - Europe's leading investment destination

Many companies relocating and developing their global business choose to do so in the UK. Operating in English gives them a natural advantage when communicating globally, and, being located on the doorstep of Europe, the UK gives easy access to the 27 member states of the European Union. The UK is also the easiest place in Europe to set up and run a business. For example, it only takes approximately 13 days to set

up a business in the UK, compared to the European average of 32 days and the world average of 35 days.

And the UK's corporate tax rate is one of the lowest in the industrialised world, at only 26 per cent. By 2014 the UK's Corporation Tax will fall to 23 per cent. The UK Government is committed to having the lowest Corporation Tax in the G20.

Setting up your company in the UK

Deciding where to locate your international business is one of the biggest decisions you'll make and can be daunting. UK Trade & Investment helps businesses coming to the UK with every aspect of setting up their new operations.

As the UK Government's inward investment agency, it's our job to know the UK's strengths and where investment opportunities exist.

This means we can help your company to do all the research you need to make an informed decision, and then get up and running as quickly as possible.

UK Trade & Investment can help you to:

- Do your research
- Build key contacts
- Choose your location
- Set up your new office
- Grow your business internationally

For more information visit: www.ukti.gov.uk



UK Trade & Investment is the Government department that helps UK based companies succeed in international markets. We assist overseas companies to bring high quality investment to the UK's dynamic economy. We provide companies with the tools they require to be competitive on the world stage.

Hit the world running ^{UK}