

Why San Diego Attracts Startups

GlobeSt.com | Star Hughes

Recent findings by *Radius*, a San Francisco technology company that collects small business data in the US, revealed that San Diego is the No. 1 City for startup businesses in the nation. To dive further behind the reasons why, we exclusively chatted with **Star Hughes**, a director at **Hughes Marino**.

GlobeSt.com: What is it about San Diego that attracts startups? Why has this market become such a hotspot?

Star Hughes: There are a number of reasons that San Diego has become such an attractive hub for startups. First, and perhaps most obvious, is that San Diego offers entrepreneurs an incredible quality of life. There is no getting around the fact that San Diego is beautiful—and counts about 266 days of sunshine each year. San Diego office space is also significantly cheaper than other tech hubs throughout the US—and can be one-quarter to one-half of the cost of office space in San Francisco and Silicon Valley. Third, San Diego has incredible talent coming out of UCSD, San Diego State University, and University of San Diego, among others—many of which have a focus in entrepreneurship and the biotech/life science arenas. These factors can all be linked to one statistical truth about San Diego—we are the Millennial Capital of the US, ranking No. 1 in the country for percentage of the population aged 18-34.

These are the people launching startups—so it's only fitting that San Diego is also the No. 1 city for startups in the nation.

GlobeSt.com: How has the digital age influenced this result?

Hughes: The opportunities for entrepreneurship are boundless in this digital age. There is truly no idea too big or too far-fetched. Do you want an app that takes self-erasing photos? Done—and it's a hit. What about a website that lets you rent out a spare bedroom for the night? Also done. Millennials have witnessed the growth of companies like Facebook, Twitter, and Oculus Rift—and we know that they all come from one idea.

Specific to San Diego and the digital age, technology has really allowed entrepreneurs, coders, salespeople, and entire companies to work remotely. Startups are realizing that they don't need to physically be in Silicon Valley to be a part of the tech industry that is centered there—and if they do, it's just a quick one-hour flight to get there.

GlobeSt.com: What types of startup companies are most prominent in San Diego?

Hughes: There is a wide variety of startup companies in San Diego—but the most dense startup sectors are life science and biotechnology companies,



**Star Hughes, Director
Hughes Marino San Diego**

websites and apps, and creative digital marketing companies.

GlobeSt.com: Where are these startups setting up shop? What kind of space are they looking for?

Hughes: Many of the biotech and life science companies with lab requirements are setting up shop in Sorrento Valley, UTC, and Torrey Pines. They're next to Fortune 500-giant Qualcomm in



Star Hughes weighs in on why San Diego, CA is an ideal city for startups to launch and thrive.

Sorrento Valley and the incredible research departments at UCSD, Scripps, Sanford Consortium, etc. The other sectors, more specifically in the tech and creative industries, have pinpointed downtown San Diego as the place to be. It's where you live-work-play. There's an energy in downtown that allows these companies to collaborate often, communicate easily, and support each other in one centralized area.

GlobeSt.com: You refer to San Diego as the "Millennial Capital of the US"—As a Millennial yourself, what factors do you believe are drawing your generation to San Diego?

Hughes: One of the many characteristics that define the Millennial generation is a focus on quality of life and a live-work balance. San Diego is the perfect place to achieve both of those while still running a successful company. San Diego is known for its beautiful beaches and the wide

array of outdoor activities available (not to mention the ability to be outdoors 365 days a year). San Diego was even described by the US Weather Bureau as "the closest thing to perfect in America." To add to that, San Diego has incredible schools, amazing talent, and a laid-back business culture that is very appealing to startups. It is accepted to wear jeans and sneakers to meetings—and you don't even need to be the CEO of Twitter to pull it off. Furthermore, San Diego is a very nurturing and supportive community for startup companies. From incubators (offering startups free office space) to full high-rises designated as "tech-focused," to countless startup business competitions and networking functions, the people in San Diego are actively working to grow our startup scene and allow these companies to flourish.

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