WHERE WE WERE

The Debate

In September 2012, the Institute of Directors debate asked the question, "Could the digital sector be the catalyst for a new pillar of the economy?", driving significant growth and new employment, while diversifying the economy away from its reliance on the finance industry.

The debate highlighted serious challenges to this, including Jersey's late entry to a digital strategy, major competition from other jurisdictions and the significant incentives provided elsewhere, the lack of critical skills available in Jersey and long-term challenges in IT education, not least the lack of a university. Low levels of local innovation and a small, though excellent, IT sector focused on services rather than IP creation were similarly highlighted.

The debate also considered many of the advantages that Jersey has and could develop, including the Island's traditional strength as a well-governed and regulated jurisdiction, a strong, service-based workforce, access to the UK and to Europe, and a growing presence in emerging markets. Added to this is the bold 'Gigabit' investment, taking fibre connectivity to all homes, helping to drive business development in exciting new areas, including e-health, e-government and data management. The overwhelming conclusion was not whether Jersey should adopt this strategy, but how, and how quickly.

Launching Digital Jersey

At the time of the debate, Digital Jersey was still a concept, covering a broad range of ideas and possibilities that had been developed by a working group and supported by start-up funding from The States of Jersey. In September 2012, Paul Masterton was appointed Non-Executive Chairman, with the first objective of creating the Digital Jersey organisation and establishing a direction for the new venture. By December, a high-calibre Board had been appointed, combining outstanding off-island talent with on-island expertise and knowledge. An initial roadmap was presented on 11 December 2012, followed by the appointment of Ted Ridgway Watt as CEO at the end of January 2013, with the company then becoming operational.

The Role of Digital Jersey

The purpose of Digital Jersey is to act as an accelerator for the digital economy **and** as an accelerator for a digitally enabled society. The digital economy includes the digital sector itself and the application of technology across all sectors.
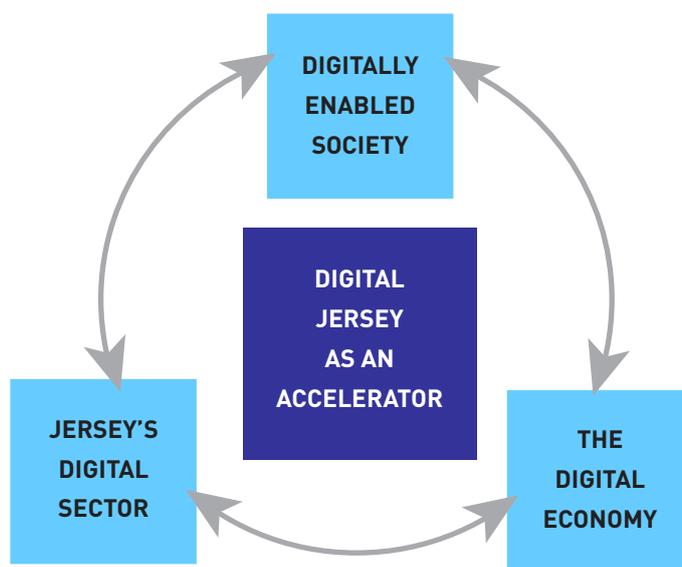
The Objectives

Digital Jersey has three primary objectives:

1. To support sustainable economic growth in Jersey's digital industry as measured by sector contribution to GVA, job creation and the number and 'health' of digital businesses.

2. To enable a connected, digital society as measured by an increased provision of online services by government, changes in the education curriculum, improved skills and awareness in the general population and the development of infrastructure.

3. To establish Jersey as an internationally well-regarded 'digital centre' as measured by ranking in key indices, recognition in target media and online statistics, the results of industry surveys and sector-specific inward investment.

WHAT HAVE WE DONE SO FAR?

Since the last IoD debate

Sept 2012	• Chairman appointed
Nov	• Secured additional funding through the Medium-Term Financial Plan
Dec	• Board appointed • Roadmap for implementation developed • Education & Skills Technical Action Group formed and Chair appointed
Jan 2013	• CEO appointed
Feb	• Digital Jersey operational

Since Formation

Since Digital Jersey became operational, we have been focused on putting the structure, resources and plans in place to meet our aims. Key activities have included:

Feb	• Remaining four Technical Action Group Chairs appointed • DJL funding to September secured
Mar	• TAG workshops held and TAGs populated • Awareness programme commenced: IoD, JADO, China Britain Business Council, UK Israel Business
Apr	• First TAG meetings held
May	• Professor Stephen Heppell presents vision for digital education in the third millennium
Jun	• UK awareness visits; large corporations, Technology Strategy Board, Connected Digital Economy Catapult
Jul	• Project inSTIGate engages with students to develop Digital Learning Hub
Aug	• DJL plans expanded footprint including Digital Learning Hub and co-working space • Channel Islands Information Security Forum formed • Off-island data cost proposal review
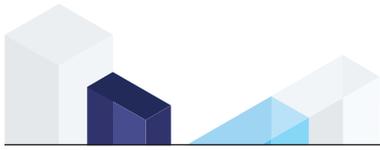
WHAT COMES NEXT?

The remainder of 2013 and early 2014 will focus on:

Short-Term

- Delivering a digital strategy for Jersey
- Resolving the off-island data transmission cost challenge
- Rolling out our digital education initiatives, including:
    - The Digital Learning Hub
    - 'Be Very Afraid'
    - Jersey Space Programme
    - 3D Printing Roadshow
- Monthly thought leadership seminars for local industry
- Evaluating target sectors for inward investment and business development, including:
    - e-health
    - e-gov
    - Data Security
- Qualifying and endorsing applications to the Innovation Fund
- Business Development visit to Israel, including meetings with Google, eBay, Microsoft and Apple
- Business Development visits to the UK, US and Hong Kong
- Working with the States of Jersey to offer incentive packages for new business in or to Jersey
- Establishing a co-working space for start-ups
- Developing a Jersey Tech Growth Fund
- Launch of a new website
- 'Island Innovators' conference, April 2014

Long-Term

The long-term objectives will be published in September, including a digital strategy for Jersey and the Digital Jersey Business Plan.

An Executive Summary has been published and a series of working sessions are being scheduled with all stakeholders for in-depth discussion and review of these plans.