

ING GLOBAL CITIES
DIGITAL VISIBILITY SERIES
2019

The UK's most talked about cities

ing.

TWITTER: @INGMEDIA

ING-MEDIA.COM

INSTAGRAM: @ING.MEDIA

Digital visibility
is *key* for cities
building a
GLOBAL BRAND

Following studies of Europe and The USA's Most Talked About Cities, ING's new ranking identifies how the UK's Top 20 cities feature on social media and online news. In a context of rapid change and constantly evolving networks, curating digital visibility provides powerful opportunities for place branding and potential for urban areas to elevate their profiles.

ING

ING is the *leading*
communications
agency for the
BUILT ENVIRONMENT

At the cutting edge of PR, digital media and wider urban cultural dialogues, ING has an extensive track record of helping cities and regions as diverse as London, Lisbon, Istanbul, Helsinki, the West Midlands and the Scottish Cities Alliance to thrive in a connected world.

The UK's most talked about cities

Global surveys benchmark cities and major towns against almost every aspect of urban life. These rankings influence investment, where talent concentrates and our travel choices. However, there is little comparative research into the impact digital messaging is having on cities as brands.

Responding to this, ING has taken the UK's Top 20 cities according to global city indices, and then reordered them by their share of the online conversation. ING has also provided analysis on which cities punch above their weight and which show the most potential for increasing their digital profiles. Further analysis highlights which cities are talking the most about culture, technology, business, liveability and talent.

“UK cities are investing heavily into building brands that reflect their attractiveness as cultural, business and education centres. Measuring their digital visibility provides a clearer insight into how these cities and towns perform as brands compared to their peers. London dominates but, surprisingly, Liverpool punches well above its weight, coming second overall and topping the table when weighted for population.”

Top 20 cities by online mentions per person

- Liverpool tops the list with over 35 online mentions per person a year, more than double Edinburgh and London. Football (limited to 25 per cent of total mentions across all cities), and The Beatles and its band members feature prominently.
- Removing all football mentions related to Liverpool would position the city in third place between Cambridge and Edinburgh.
- Oxford and Cambridge, as global centres for academic debate, come in at second and third. In absolute terms, Oxford has the fourth most mentions on forums and is eighth for news. Cambridge and Sheffield, also university towns, have a similar pattern.

TOTAL MENTIONS PER CAPITA (PER YEAR)

1	LIVERPOOL	35.7
2	OXFORD	32.6
3	CAMBRIDGE	28.6
4	EDINBURGH	16.8
5	LONDON	14.2
6	CARDIFF	11.9
7	ABERDEEN	10.3
8	BRIGHTON	9.5
9	BELFAST	9.0
10	GLASGOW	8.8
11	MANCHESTER	8.5
12	BRISTOL	7.7
13	LEEDS	6.1
14	SHEFFIELD	5.3
15	NEWCASTLE	4.5
16	NOTTINGHAM	4.1
17	BIRMINGHAM	3.9
18	SOUTHAMPTON	3.4
19	COVENTRY	3.2
20	READING	3.1

Top 20 cities by total online mentions

- London is responsible for over 50 per cent of all mentions for the Top 20 cities. This may begin to change as regional cities like Manchester, Liverpool and Leeds reposition themselves and their surrounding urban areas more strategically.
- Liverpool has the second most mentions on Twitter, Facebook and forums, while Manchester, benefiting from media concentration, is second for news, blogs and Tumblr.
- Digital visibility performance on Instagram most closely correlates with city rankings, emphasising the impact of visual elements for a city's brand. However, Brighton bucks this trend with the eighth most photos overall.

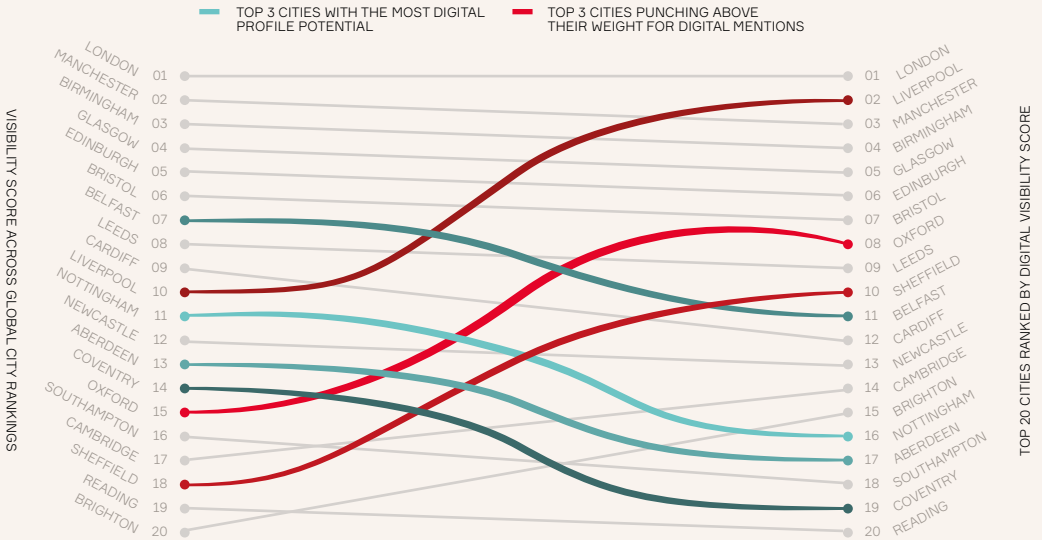
SHARE OF TOTAL MENTIONS (IN PER CENT)

1	LONDON	54.5
2	LIVERPOOL	8.7
3	MANCHESTER	8.1
4	BIRMINGHAM	3.8
5	GLASGOW	3.3
6	EDINBURGH	3.3
7	BRISTOL	2.2
8	OXFORD	1.9
9	LEEDS	1.8
10	SHEFFIELD	1.7
11	BELFAST	1.7
12	CARDIFF	1.6
13	NEWCASTLE	1.5
14	CAMBRIDGE	1.4
15	BRIGHTON	1.3
16	NOTTINGHAM	1.1
17	ABERDEEN	0.9
18	SOUTHAMPTON	0.5
19	COVENTRY	0.4
20	READING	0.4

Comparing visibility between city rankings and online mentions

This chart ranks the Top 20 UK cities by global city indices against total digital mentions. A downward slope illustrates cities that aren't necessarily making the most of their stronger rankings, while a rising gradient highlights the cities with the most opportunity to challenge global city rankings.

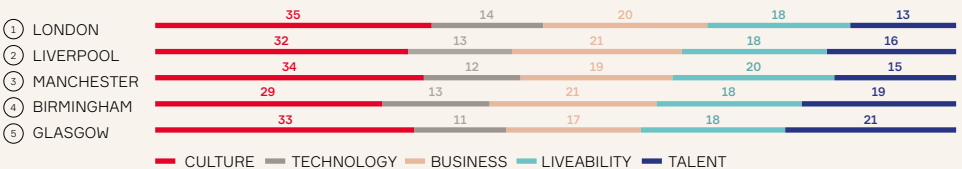
While only London has the same ranking for both city ranking and digital visibility, over half of Top 20 cities show a tight correlation between the two suggesting what people are talking about online has an impact on place branding.



Category share for Top 5 cities overall

The share of conversation topics provides a window into what people are talking about in relation to each city. While the shares for the Top 5 cities overall are substantially similar, major centres north of London

have a higher percentage of conversations around talent; Manchester has a slightly higher number for liveability; and Liverpool and Birmingham for business.



ING's investigation into *The UK's Most Talked About Cities* covered 790 cities (64 in the UK) in 168 countries included in a diverse set of 24 publicly available global city rankings. This aggregated list of Top 20 UK cities appearing on city indices were then ranked by total 2018 digital mentions on Twitter, forums, blogs, news, Tumblr, Facebook and Instagram (partial data set). Spelling variants were included for English, Chinese (simplified), Spanish, Arabic, Portuguese, Japanese, Russian, German, French, Malaysian, Indonesian, and the city's local language, representing approximately 90% of total online mentions. Mentions containing sport were limited. Conversation topic shares, generated from a set of keywords unique to each topic, represent only English language mentions.

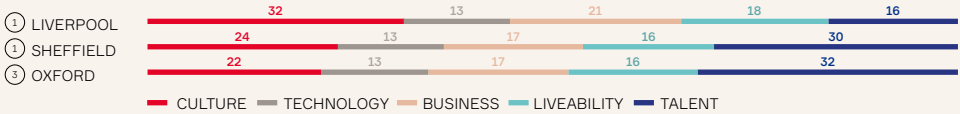
Cities punching above their weight for digital mentions

These cities generate significantly more mentions on digital media relative to their positions on city indices, presenting an opportunity to climb the rankings by consistently improving the quality and impact of the conversations about them.

- Liverpool and Sheffield's online visibility rankings are eight places higher than their city rankings.

- The Beatles partly contributes to Liverpool's high concentration of conversations around culture while Oxford's status as a university town (as with Sheffield and Cambridge) is clearly reflected in its high talent figure.

- Sheffield has the highest proportion of conversations taking place on twitter.



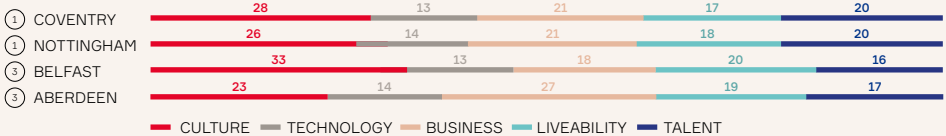
Cities with the most digital profile potential

Global city rankings highlight these as the cities we should pay attention to, but this doesn't necessarily translate to the digital world, where these cities attract fewer mentions than their peers. These cities have the most potential to grow their digital profiles by building on their strengths.

- Except for Coventry, all these cities have online news visibility corresponding with their city

rankings, but comparatively lower mentions on social media relative to their peers.

- While Coventry winning the UK City of Culture for 2021 may see greater conversation around the topic of culture in future, Belfast currently has a higher proportion of conversations around culture.



Cities with the highest shares in each topic

- Edinburgh, bolstered by having every eighth digital mention on Instagram, has the highest percentage share for culture.

CULTURE
38
EDINBURGH

TECHNOLOGY
15
READING

BUSINESS
27
ABERDEEN

- Reading has the highest concentration of conversations around technology and liveability, highlighting the area's enduring appeal as an innovation hub.

LIVEABILITY
23
READING

TALENT
33
CAMBRIDGE

- Aberdeen has the highest conversation share for business. Relative to its peers, these conversations are more likely to take place on digital news than social media.

- Cambridge, like other university towns, concentrates conversations around talent. Its digital visibility can be enhanced by leveraging this to expand coverage into other categories.

ing.

We are the leading communications agency
for the BUILT ENVIRONMENT.

We are the only agency that can navigate the
complex worlds of *property, architecture, design,*
regeneration and culture to help *brands, organisations*
and *cities* thrive in a CONNECTED WORLD.

Contact Us

LEANNE TRITTON
LEANNE.TRITTON@ING-MEDIA.COM

T: +44 (0) 20 7247 8334

ING MEDIA LTD
21 CURTAIN ROAD
LONDON EC2A 3LT, UK

TWITTER: @INGMEDIA
INSTAGRAM: @ING.MEDIA
LINKEDIN: ING MEDIA

ING-MEDIA.COM