

Tech start-ups

UK start-up Ebury lands \$83m in funding round

One of Europe's best-funded fintech groups readies for US push



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Ebury, a start-up that works with small businesses that trade internationally, has raised new capital to take the company's total investment to more than \$110m, making it one of the best-funded financial technology groups in Europe.

The London-based start-up has raised \$83m in a round led by Vitruvian Partners, the private equity firm that has previously invested in online takeaways group [Just Eat](#) and luxury clothing website Farfetch. Ebury's existing major investor, 83 North, an Israel and UK-based venture capital group, also participated in the round.

Investors are increasingly betting that European [fintech groups](#) can disrupt the decades-old business model of banks. In contrast to Silicon Valley companies, it is hoped that continental start-ups can gain an advantage from their proximity to the financial services sectors in countries such as the UK and Germany.

The new investment makes Ebury one of the few fintech groups in Europe to raise more than \$100m. Others include London-based companies WorldRemit, a money transfer group; Funding Circle, the peer-to-peer lender; and Dutch payments processor Adyen.

Ebury operates in the UK, the Netherlands and Spain, but Juan Lobato, co-founder and co-chief executive said that the new investment would fuel its expansion into the US and further across Europe next year.

"We've tested the business model in three different countries," he said. "That gives us confidence that we can replicate it in many others . . . when we thought the model is right, did we decide to raise capital to go global aggressively."

The company offers a number of online services to small- and medium-sized businesses such as collecting money from overseas customers, moving cash between international subsidiaries and managing a company's exposure to currency fluctuations.

Ebury said that established banks had traditionally focused on large multinationals, ignoring smaller players that could not afford the more expensive bespoke services offered by financial institutions.

The company did not reveal its financial performance or valuation. Since its founding in 2009, it has amassed 10,000 corporate customers and 300 employees worldwide.

The funding is the latest sign of investor enthusiasm for fintech groups. According to figures from the consultancy Accenture, growth in investment in fintech groups tripled from \$4.1bn in 2003 to \$12.2bn in 2014.

Though the US accounts for the lion's share of global fintech investments, the fastest growing region is Europe, which saw a 215 per cent increase of funding to \$1.48bn in 2014. The UK accounted for nearly 42 per cent of the European total.

Ebury's funding round is one of the largest by a European fintech group this year. Funding Circle raised \$150m in April, WorldRemit took in \$100m of funding in February, Swedish payments group iZettle raised €60m in August, and the UK money transfer group TransferWise raised \$58m in January.

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