

# About foursquare

## What is foursquare?

foursquare makes the real world easier to use. We build tools that help you keep up with friends, discover what's nearby, save money and unlock deals. Whether you're setting off on a trip around the world, coordinating a night out with friends, or trying to pick out the best dish at your local restaurant, foursquare is the perfect companion.

## foursquare by the numbers (last updated April, 2012)

- Community: Over 20 million people worldwide
- Over 2 billion check-ins, with millions more every day
- Businesses: Over 750,000 using the Merchant Platform (more information at [foursquare.com/business](http://foursquare.com/business))
- Employees: Over 100 between headquarters in New York, an office in San Francisco, and a lovely outpost in London.

## When was foursquare founded?

foursquare co-founders Dennis Crowley and Naveen Selvadurai met in 2007 while working in the same office space (at different companies) in New York City. Working from Dennis' kitchen table in New York's East Village, they began building the first version of foursquare in fall 2008, and launched it at South by Southwest Interactive in Austin, Texas in March 2009.

Learn more by following Dennis' [A brief history of foursquare](#) list!

## Who are foursquare's investors?

We're funded by Union Square Ventures, O'Reilly AlphaTech Ventures, Andreessen Horowitz, Spark Capital and a handful of angel investors.

## How can my business, brand or agency work with foursquare?

Whether you're a mom-and-pop shop, a national chain, or a brand, foursquare can provide you with tools to engage with your customers and fans. Please visit [foursquare.com/business](http://foursquare.com/business) for information on how you can start working with foursquare.

## I have a cool idea for a social service. Is there a way to build this onto foursquare?

Yes! Just like Twitter, foursquare has an API that allows developers to build their ideas on the foursquare platform. Developers have already used the API to build new check-in functionality, cool games, and interesting data visualizations. You can read up on the documentation [here](#).

## Is foursquare hiring?

Yes! We're always looking to hire amazing talent for our New York and San Francisco offices. For a list of open positions, check out [foursquare.com/jobs](http://foursquare.com/jobs).

## So is it 'check-in' or 'check in'?

It's both! When you use it as a verb, it's 'check in.' (For example, "Are you going to check in here? They have a free massage Special.") 'Check-in' is the noun form. (For instance, "That was my most amazing check-in ever, I can't believe I got a free massage!") And never use checkin. Every time you do, we cry on the inside.

## I'm really into technology. What's foursquare built on?

Because of our pretty insane growth, we've designed our entire software stack to be as flexible and scalable as possible. It's allowed us to go from a few thousand users to over fifteen million, and also to easily add more amazing engineers and get them contributing right away.

foursquare is currently hosted within [Amazon's EC2](#) service, using hundreds of servers running a bare bones version of [CentOS Linux](#). We use [NGINX](#) to route requests and serve static content, and [HAProxy](#) to load balance web and API requests across many machines.

Then we get to the fun part. Moving up the stack, the live site data is stored in [MongoDB](#) (though we use [Memcache](#) to cache a small set of expensive calculations). For offline data analysis we regularly snapshot our live data and import it into a [Hadoop](#) cluster. We have some custom MapReduce jobs, but mostly rely on [Hive's](#) simple query syntax and a custom built job scheduler for regular calculations. We use [Solr](#) and [Elasticsearch](#) for powering venues, tips, users, and events search. Our search geo-indexing uses [Google's s2 library](#) to store cellids within our search index. We use [PostGIS](#) and the wonderful [geonames.org dataset](#) to reverse geocode addresses into coordinates, which allows us to place venues on a map and make them available for location-based search. [Kestrel](#) is our queue for asynchronous tasks that we wish to perform out of band of users' requests. User generated photos are stored on [Amazon S3](#) with content delivery through [Akamai](#). There is a bit more complexity if you dig deeper, but that's the heart of it.

Almost all of the code for the web site, API, and batch processing is written in [Scala](#). The web and API are built on top of the [Lift web framework](#). We also use a good bit of Python and Bash scripting for automating build, deployment, and operations tasks. Finally, the dynamic content on

the web site is written in javascript with a mix of [jQuery](#), [Backbone.js](#) for object models, and [Soy](#) for templating.

We use beautiful maps by [MapBox](#) created using data provided by the wonderful © [OpenStreetMap](#) (and) contributors, [CC-BY-SA](#). The interactive maps are generated using the open-source library [Leaflet](#).

And we're constantly pushing the limits and trying new things. [Want to come join us?](#) We're looking for world-class engineers who want to do amazing things.

You can learn more about the technology we use on our [engineering blog](#) and on our [github](#).

Need more information? Please email [press@foursquare.com](mailto:press@foursquare.com). We're a very small team and we receive a high volume of requests each day, so we apologize in advance if we're not able to get back to you immediately. If you're on deadline, please include the word "URGENT" and the date and time of your deadline in the subject line of your message, and we'll get back to you as soon as possible.

If you'd like to invite a speaker from foursquare to an event, please complete [this form](#).

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