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She thinks my tractor's sexy? **John Deere**, welcome to town! The major agricultural equipment manufacturer is planting its flag in the Austin tech scene, announcing the [opening of its innovation hub](#) on South Congress. Agricultural technology is certainly not a new space, but has gotten a ton of momentum in recent years, and again makes me ask the question, are there any industries out there that tech and VC haven't touched?

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KIRKLAND & ELLIS

Quick word from this issue's newsletter sponsor - [Kirkland & Ellis](#). Kirkland's presence in Texas has grown to include nearly 300 lawyers across offices in Austin, Houston and Dallas. The Texas team provides advice to clients on sophisticated transactions, intellectual property matters and litigation in the state and around the world in collaboration with colleagues across Kirkland's global platform. The lawyers in the Texas offices are especially well-positioned to advise clients in the technology and infrastructure, energy and renewables sectors, with top ranked practices across the board. We are committed to supporting Texas's business, academic, legal aid and nonprofit organizations as an active member of our communities.

Austin Financing Activity

- [SkyFi](#), a satellite imagery provider, reported a [\\$7.5M funding round](#) from investors including **Capital Factory**, **J2 Ventures**, **Moving Capital**.
- [Place Technology](#), a business analytics and financial planning platform, reported a [\\$3.25M funding round](#) led by **Geekdom Fund**. Place has raised \$10M to date with other investors including **7BC Venture Capital** and angel investors.
- [Chipper](#), a platform to help student loan borrowers pay off their debt faster, [raised \\$5.6M](#) of seed funding. Previously, the company raised an undisclosed amount of seed funding from **Cathexis Ventures**, **L'ATTITUDE Ventures** and **Plug and Play Tech Center** in 2021.
- [Tattle](#), a customer experience management platform, raised \$5.5M Series A led by **Contour Venture Partners**. The company has raised approx. \$8.5M to date.
- [Marginfi](#), a cross-margining engine on the [Solana blockchain](#), [raised \\$3M](#) of seed funding in a deal led by **Multicoon Capital** and **Pantera Capital**
- [Divvy Engagement Solutions](#), an employee engagement platform, [received](#) an undisclosed amount of development capital from **Essex Bay Capital**. The company was previously acquired by **Vilva Healthcare** for an undisclosed amount in 2020.

Austin M&A Activity

- Legal technology leader [DISCO](#) (NYSE: LAW) acquired legal workflow products **Hold360** and **Request360**, as well as related regulatory and alert solutions, from **Congruity 360, LLC**. DISCO went public in July 2021 and has a market cap of approx. \$2B. after raising approx. \$200M from investors including **LiveOak Venture Partners, Georgia, Bessemer Venture Partners, and The Stephens Group**.
- [Upland Software](#), a cloud-based tools provider, [reported](#) the acquisition of [BA-Insight](#), a Boston-based AI-driven enterprise search software, for \$33.4M in cash. Upland (NASDAQ: UPLD) went public in 2014 and has a market cap of approx. \$620M.
- [open.exchange](#), an investor matching platform, [announced](#) being acquired by [Squirro](#), a Zurich-based banking AI solutions company, with terms undisclosed. Squirro made the acquisition from Austin investment firm **BuildGroup**, which is also now an investor in Squirro.
- [SecureLink](#), an access management software company, [announced](#) being acquired by [Imprivata, Inc](#), a Boston-based health information security provider, for an undisclosed amount. SecureLink has private equity backing from firms including **Cove Hill Partners** and **Vista Equity Partners**.

Other Texas Deal Activity

- [SandLogic](#), a Plano-based platform offering Artificial Intelligence-driven software solutions to enterprises, [raised \\$4M](#) in its pre-Series A round from Texas-based **HNIs** and serial investors **Sanjay Singhania** and **Sai Kumar**
- [WorldSpark Studios](#), a Farmers Branch-TX based blockchain gaming studio raised \$3M seed funding in a deal co-led by **Animoca Brands** and **Shima Capital**
- [Repairify](#), a Plano-based automotive technologies company, [announced](#) the acquisition of **AutoMobile Technologies**, with terms undisclosed. Repairify was acquired by Kinderhook Industries in 2015.
- [VOMO](#), a volunteer management software provider, [was acquired](#) by **Virtuous** for an undisclosed amount
- [Redwood Software](#) and [Advanced Systems Concepts](#), Frisco-based enterprise software companies, [announced](#) a merger to create an automation transformation company, focused on business and IT automation.
- [Techstars](#), a national accelerator program, [announced](#) the opening of its Physical Health Accelerator based in Fort Worth. Applications are now open for their in-person 2022 program.

Austin People

- [NextCoast Ventures](#), a VC fund focused on investments outside of the US coasts, [announced](#) the promotion of **Anthony Walker** to partner at its search division, Next Coast ETA. NextCoast has exits including Cardlytics, Navegate, and Tenfold, while Walker was previously Principal at NextCoast, prior to which VP of global investment research at Goldman Sachs.
- [SailPoint](#), a user access management provider, [announced](#) the promotion of **Meredith Blanchar** as its chief customer officer. SailPoint (NYSE: SAIL) went public in 2017 and has a market cap of approx. \$3.8B. Blanchar was previously on the customer success team at SailPoint and prior to that ran the customer success team at CallidusCloud.
- [Everise](#), an outsourcing solutions company, [announced](#) the hiring of **Kevin Bottoms** as Chief Revenue Officer. Everise was acquired by Brookfield Business Partners in 2020, while Bottoms was previously Global Vice President of Business Development at TELUS International.

- **SKU**, a consumer products accelerator, [announced](#) the promotion of **Emily Kealey** to managing director and hiring of **Kathy Guzmán Galloway**, as curriculum director. SKU's alumni including Dude Wipes and Austin Eastciders, while Kealey was previously CMO at Notley Ventures and executive director of Naturally Austin, and Galloway was founder of kgalloway consulting and prior to that at PepsiCo.
- **Elsewhere Partners**, a growth-stage innovative software venture firm, [announced](#) the hiring of **Meaghan Mahoney** and **Cody Younkin** as associates. Mahoney was previously an associate at The Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce and Younkin was worked in investment banking M&A and growth transactions at D.A. Davidson.

Austin News

- **John Deere**, the major agricultural machinery and equipment manufacturer, [announced](#) the launching of an innovation center in Austin, at 1333 S. Congress. The aim is "to access and recruit from a robust and diverse technical talent pool, supplemented by the region's university ecosystem and startup community [...] to develop industry leading technology and solutions for farms and construction worksites."
- Austin ranks among [best U.S. metros for Black professionals](#)
- **Stream It Inc**, manufacturers of the Cyberlandr, a **Tesla** Cybertruck equipment accessory that turns it into a tiny home, [announced](#) the relocation of its R&D facility to Austin, just nine miles from the Tesla Gigafactory.
- **Red Sift**, a London-based email security provider, [announced](#) the opening of its US headquarters in Austin, following its \$54M Series B round.
- Why [CelLink Corp. picked Georgetown](#) for \$130M, 2,000 job facility – and what it plans to do at the site
- **UT System** [creates \\$300 million](#) financial aid endowment
- **Austin Community College IMPACT Lab** [announced](#) a partnership with **Zpryme**, an Austin research firm, to manufacture a new drone to aid in severe weather prediction.

Thank you!

[Mason Rathe](#)

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