

1. The oldest business in the world



Image: St. Peter Stiftskeller, founded 803. Credit: [Pakeha](#).

An important part of business is planning for the future and ensuring that the company survives changing market conditions. Some businesses do this really well and last for hundreds of years.

BusinessFinancing.co.uk [researched](#) the oldest company that is still in business in (almost) every country and compiled the results into a dataset. In this project, you'll explore that dataset to see what they found.

The database contains three tables.

categories

column	type	meaning
category_code	varchar	Code for the category of the business.
category	varchar	Description of the business category.

countries

column	type	meaning
country_code	varchar	ISO 3166-1 3-letter country code.
country	varchar	Name of the country.
continent	varchar	Name of the continent that the country exists in.

businesses

column	type	meaning
business	varchar	Name of the business.
year_founded	int	Year the business was founded.
category_code	varchar	Code for the category of the business.
country_code	char	ISO 3166-1 3-letter country code.

Let's begin by looking at the range of the founding years throughout the world.

In [40]:

```
%%sql
postgres://oldestbusinesses
-- Select the oldest and newest founding years from the businesses table
select min(year_founded), max(year_founded)
from businesses
```

1 row affected.

Out[40]:

min	max
578	1999

2. How many businesses were founded before 1000?

Wow! That's a lot of variation between countries. In one country, the oldest business was only founded in 1999. By contrast, the oldest business in the world was founded back in 578. That's pretty incredible that a business has survived for more than a millennium.

I wonder how many other businesses there are like that.

In [42]:

```
%%sql

-- count of rows in businesses where the founding year was before 1000
select count(business)
from businesses
where year_founded<1000
```

```
* postgresql:///oldestbusinesses
```

1 row affected.

Out[42]:

count
6

3. Which businesses were founded before 1000?

Having a count is all very well, but I'd like more detail. Which businesses have been around for more than a millennium?

In [44]:

```
%%sql

select *          -- Select all columns from businesses where the founding year
was before 1000
from businesses
where year_founded<1000  -- -- Arrange the results from oldest to newest
order by year_founded
```

```
* postgresql:///oldestbusinesses
```

6 rows affected.

Out[44]:

business	year_founded	category_code	country_code
Kongō Gumi	578	CAT6	JPN
St. Peter Stifts Kulinarium	803	CAT4	AUT
Staffelter Hof Winery	862	CAT9	DEU
Monnaie de Paris	864	CAT12	FRA
The Royal Mint	886	CAT12	GBR
Sean's Bar	900	CAT4	IRL

4. Exploring the categories

Now we know that the oldest, continuously operating company in the world is called Kongō Gumi. But what does that company do? The category codes in the businesses table aren't very helpful: the descriptions of the categories are stored in the categories table.

This is a common problem: for data storage, it's better to keep different types of data in different tables, but for analysis, you want all the data in one place. To solve this, you'll have to join the two tables together.

In [46]:

```
%%sql

-- Select business name, founding year, and country code from businesses; and
category from categories

select business,year_founded,country_code,c.category
from businesses
left join categories as c
on businesses.category_code=c.category_code
where year_founded<1000 -- where the founding year was before 1000
order by year_founded --arranged from oldest to newest
```

```
* postgresql:///oldestbusinesses
```

6 rows affected.

Out[46]:

business	year_founded	country_code	category
----------	--------------	--------------	----------

Kongō Gumi	578	JPN	Construction
St. Peter Stifts Kulinarium	803	AUT	Cafés, Restaurants & Bars
Staffelter Hof Winery	862	DEU	Distillers, Vintners, & Breweries
Monnaie de Paris	864	FRA	Manufacturing & Production
The Royal Mint	886	GBR	Manufacturing & Production
Sean's Bar	900	IRL	Cafés, Restaurants & Bars

5. Counting the categories

With that extra detail about the oldest businesses, we can see that Kongō Gumi is a construction company. In that list of six businesses, we also see a café, a winery, and a bar. The two companies recorded as "Manufacturing and Production" are both mints. That is, they produce currency.

I'm curious as to what other industries constitute the oldest companies around the world, and which industries are most common.

In [48]:

```
%%sql

-- Select the category and count of category (as "n")

select category, count(b.category_code) as n
from categories
left join businesses as b
on categories.category_code=b.category_code
group by category
order by n desc -- arranged by descending count
limit 10 --limited to 10 most common categories
```

```
* postgresql:///oldestbusinesses
```

10 rows affected.

Out[48]:

category	n
Banking & Finance	3
	7
Distillers, Vintners, & Breweries	2
	2

Aviation & Transport	19
Postal Service	16
Manufacturing & Production	15
Media	7
Agriculture	6
Cafés, Restaurants & Bars	6
Food & Beverages	6
Tourism & Hotels	4

6. Oldest business by continent

It looks like "Banking & Finance" is the most popular category. Maybe that's where you should aim if you want to start a thousand-year business.

One thing we haven't looked at yet is where in the world these really old businesses are. To answer these questions, we'll need to join the businesses table to the countries table. Let's start by asking how old the oldest business is on each continent.

In [50]:

```
%%sql
```

```
select min(s.year_founded) as oldest,s.continent
from
    (select continent,year_founded
     from countries
     left join businesses
     on countries.country_code=businesses.country_code
     order by year_founded) as s
group by s.continent
order by oldest
```

```
* postgresql:///oldestbusinesses
```

```
6 rows affected.
```

Out[50]:

```
oldest    continent
```

578	Asia
803	Europe
1534	North America
1565	South America
1772	Africa
1809	Oceania

7. Joining everything for further analysis

Interesting. There's a jump in time from the older businesses in Asia and Europe to the 16th Century oldest businesses in North and South America, then to the 18th and 19th Century oldest businesses in Africa and Oceania.

As mentioned earlier, when analyzing data it's often really helpful to have all the tables you want access to joined together into a single set of results that can be analyzed further. Here, that means we need to join all three tables.

In [52]:

```
%%sql
```

```
select business,year_founded,category,country,continent
from businesses
left join categories
on businesses.category_code=categories.category_code
left join countries
on businesses.country_code=countries.country_code
```

```
* postgresql:///oldestbusinesses
```

163 rows affected.

Out[52]:

business	year_founded	category	country	continent
Spinzar Cotton Company	1930	Agriculture	Afghanistan	Asia
ALBtelecom	1912	Telecommunications	Albania	Europe
Andbank	1930	Banking & Finance	Andorra	Europe

Liwa Chemicals	1939	Manufacturing & Production	United Arab Emirates	Asia
Bank of the Province of Buenos Aires	1822	Banking & Finance	Argentina	South America
Yerevan Ararat Brandy-Wine-Vodka Factory	1877	Distillers, Vintners, & Breweries	Armenia	Asia
Australia Post	1809	Postal Service	Australia	Oceania
St. Peter Stifts Kulinarium	803	Cafés, Restaurants & Bars	Austria	Europe
Azerbaijan Caspian Shipping Company	1858	Aviation & Transport	Azerbaijan	Asia
Brarudi	1955	Distillers, Vintners, & Breweries	Burundi	Africa
Affligem Brewery	1074	Distillers, Vintners, & Breweries	Belgium	Europe
Communauté Électrique du Bénin	1968	Energy	Benin	Africa
Air Burkina	1967	Aviation & Transport	Burkina Faso	Africa
M. M. Ispahani Limited	1820	Food & Beverages	Bangladesh	Asia
Arsenal AD	1878	Defense	Bulgaria	Europe
BMMI	1883	Retail	Bahrain	Asia
Sarajevska Pivara	1864	Distillers, Vintners, & Breweries	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Europe
Olivaria Brewery	1864	Distillers, Vintners, & Breweries	Belarus	Europe
Belize Bank	1902	Banking & Finance	Belize	North America
Banco Nacional de Bolivia	1871	Banking & Finance	Bolivia, Plurinational State of	South America

Casa da Moeda do Brasil	1694	Manufacturing & Production	Brazil	South America
Mount Gay Rum	1703	Distillers, Vintners, & Breweries	Barbados	North America
Hua Ho Department Store	1947	Retail	Brunei Darussalam	Asia
Tashi Group	1959	Aviation & Transport	Bhutan	Asia
Botswana Meat Commission	1965	Agriculture	Botswana	Africa
Banque Internationale pour la Centrafrique	1946	Banking & Finance	Central African Republic	Africa
Hudson's Bay Company	1670	Retail	Canada	North America
Gasthof Sternen	1230	Tourism & Hotels	Switzerland	Europe
Famae	1811	Defense	Chile	South America
Ma Yu Ching's Bucket Chicken House	1153	Cafés, Restaurants & Bars	China	Asia
La Poste	1945	Postal Service	Côte d'Ivoire	Africa
Cameroon Development Corporation	1947	Agriculture	Cameroon	Africa
Société nationale des Chemins de fer du Congo	1889	Aviation & Transport	Congo, The Democratic Republic of the	Africa
Development Bank of the Central African States	1975	Banking & Finance	Congo	Africa
Casa de Moneda de Colombia	1621	Manufacturing & Production	Colombia	South America
Central Bank of the Comoros	1981	Banking & Finance	Comoros	Africa
Correios de Cabo Verde	1849	Postal Service	Cabo Verde	Africa
Florida Ice and Farm Company	1908	Distillers, Vintners, & Breweries	Costa Rica	North America
Cubana de Aviación	1929	Aviation & Transport	Cuba	North America

Bank of Cyprus	1899	Banking & Finance	Cyprus	Europe
Pivovar Broumov	1348	Distillers, Vintners, & Breweries	Czechia	Europe
Staffelter Hof Winery	862	Distillers, Vintners, & Breweries	Germany	Europe
Ethio-Djibouti Railways	1901	Aviation & Transport	Djibouti	Africa
The Chronicle (Dominica)	1909	Media	Dominica	North America
Munke Mølle	1135	Manufacturing & Production	Denmark	Europe
Hamoud Boualem	1878	Food & Beverages	Algeria	Africa
Egyptian National Railways	1854	Aviation & Transport	Egypt	Africa
Asmara Brewery	1939	Distillers, Vintners, & Breweries	Eritrea	Africa
Casa de Ganaderos	1218	Agriculture	Spain	Europe
Raeapteek	1422	Medical	Estonia	Europe
National Bank of Ethiopia	1906	Banking & Finance	Ethiopia	Africa
Fiskars	1649	Consumer Goods	Finland	Europe
Monnaie de Paris	864	Manufacturing & Production	France	Europe
BGFIBank Group	1971	Banking & Finance	Gabon	Africa
The Royal Mint	886	Manufacturing & Production	United Kingdom	Europe
Bank of Georgia	1903	Banking & Finance	Georgia	Asia
Halco Mining	1962	Mining	Guinea	Africa
Correios da Guiné-Bissau	1973	Postal Service	Guinea-Bissau	Africa

Guinea Ecuatorial Airlines	1996	Aviation & Transport	Equatorial Guinea	Africa
Piraeus Bank	1606	Banking & Finance	Greece	Europe
Corporación Multi Inversiones	1920	Food & Beverages	Guatemala	North America
Banks DIH	1840	Food & Beverages	Guyana	South America
National Railroad of Honduras	1870	Aviation & Transport	Honduras	North America
Kraljevica Shipyard	1729	Manufacturing & Production	Croatia	Europe
Rhum Barbancourt	1862	Distillers, Vintners, & Breweries	Haiti	North America
Zwack	1790	Distillers, Vintners, & Breweries	Hungary	Europe
Pindad	1808	Defense	Indonesia	Asia
Wadia Group	1736	Manufacturing & Production	India	Asia
Sean's Bar	900	Cafés, Restaurants & Bars	Ireland	Europe
North Oil Company	1928	Energy	Iraq	Asia
Íslandspóstur	1776	Postal Service	Iceland	Europe
Café Abu Salem	1914	Cafés, Restaurants & Bars	Israel	Asia
Marinelli Bell Foundry	1040	Manufacturing & Production	Italy	Europe
Rose Hall	1770	Tourism & Hotels	Jamaica	North America
Arab Bank	1930	Banking & Finance	Jordan	Asia
Kongō Gumi	578	Construction	Japan	Asia
Bogatyr Access Komir	1913	Mining	Kazakhstan	Asia

KCB Group Limited	1896	Banking & Finance	Kenya	Africa
National Bank of Cambodia	1954	Banking & Finance	Cambodia	Asia
KT Corporation	1885	Telecommunications	Korea, Republic of	Asia
M.H. Alshaya Co.	1890	Retail	Kuwait	Asia
Electricite du Laos	1959	Energy	Lao People's Democratic Republic	Asia
Bank Audi	1830	Banking & Finance	Lebanon	Asia
National Port Authority	1921	Aviation & Transport	Liberia	Africa
Umma Bank	1907	Banking & Finance	Libya	Africa
1st National Bank of St Lucia	1938	Banking & Finance	Saint Lucia	North America
National Bank of Liechtenstein	1861	Banking & Finance	Liechtenstein	Europe
George Steuart Group	1835	Food & Beverages	Sri Lanka	Asia
Central Bank of Lesotho	1978	Banking & Finance	Lesotho	Africa
Gubernija	1665	Distillers, Vintners, & Breweries	Lithuania	Europe
Mousel	1511	Distillers, Vintners, & Breweries	Luxembourg	Europe
Cēsu Alus	1590	Distillers, Vintners, & Breweries	Latvia	Europe
Attijariwafa Bank	1904	Banking & Finance	Morocco	Africa
Air Madagascar	1962	Aviation & Transport	Madagascar	Africa
La Casa de Moneda de México	1534	Manufacturing & Production	Mexico	North America

Tutunski kombinat Prilep	1873	Consumer Goods	North Macedonia	Europe
Office de Radiodiffusion-Télévision du Mali	1957	Media	Mali	Africa
HSBC Bank Malta	1882	Banking & Finance	Malta	Europe
Myanmar National Airlines	1948	Aviation & Transport	Myanmar	Asia
Pošta Crne Gore	1841	Postal Service	Montenegro	Europe
Mongolian National Broadcaster	1931	Media	Mongolia	Asia
Beira Railroad Corporation	1892	Aviation & Transport	Mozambique	Africa
Central Bank of Mauritania	1973	Banking & Finance	Mauritania	Africa
Mauritius Post	1772	Postal Service	Mauritius	Africa
Malawi Broadcasting Corporation	1964	Media	Malawi	Africa
Pos Malaysia	1800	Postal Service	Malaysia	Asia
NamPost	1814	Postal Service	Namibia	Africa
Office of Radio and Television of Niger	1960	Media	Niger	Africa
First Bank of Nigeria	1894	Banking & Finance	Nigeria	Africa
Flor de Caña	1890	Distillers, Vintners, & Breweries	Nicaragua	North America
The Brand Brewery	1340	Distillers, Vintners, & Breweries	Netherlands	Europe
Posten Norge	1647	Postal Service	Norway	Europe
Nepal Bank Limited	1937	Banking & Finance	Nepal	Asia
Bank of New Zealand	1861	Banking & Finance	New Zealand	Oceania

Petroleum Development Oman	1937	Energy	Oman	Asia
House of Habib	1841	Conglomerate	Pakistan	Asia
National Bank of Panama	1904	Banking & Finance	Panama	North America
Casa Nacional de Moneda	1565	Banking & Finance	Peru	South America
Destileria Limtuaco	1853	Distillers, Vintners, & Breweries	Philippines	Asia
Bochnia Salt Mine	1248	Mining	Poland	Europe
Kim Chong-t'ae Electric Locomotive Works	1945	Aviation & Transport	Korea, Democratic People's Republic of	Asia
CTT-Correios de Portugal SA	1520	Postal Service	Portugal	Europe
Salam International Investment Limited	1952	Conglomerate	Qatar	Asia
Ursus Breweries	1878	Distillers, Vintners, & Breweries	Romania	Europe
Petrodvorets Watch Factory	1721	Consumer Goods	Russian Federation	Europe
National Post Office	1922	Postal Service	Rwanda	Africa
House of Alireza	1845	Construction	Saudi Arabia	Asia
Bank of Khartoum	1913	Banking & Finance	Sudan	Africa
Dakar–Niger Railway	1924	Aviation & Transport	Senegal	Africa
Singapore Post	1819	Postal Service	Singapore	Asia
Rokel Commercial Bank	1917	Banking & Finance	Sierra Leone	Africa
HSBC El Salvador	1891	Banking & Finance	El Salvador	North America
Radio Mogadishu	1943	Media	Somalia	Africa
Apatin Brewery	1756	Distillers, Vintners, & Breweries	Serbia	Europe

Ivory Bank	1994	Banking & Finance	South Sudan	Africa
Central Bank of São Tomé and Príncipe	1975	Banking & Finance	Sao Tome and Principe	Africa
Kremnica Mint	1328	Manufacturing & Production	Slovakia	Europe
Gostilna Gastuž	1467	Tourism & Hotels	Slovenia	Europe
Skylberg's bruk	1346	Manufacturing & Production	Sweden	Europe
Swazi Rail	1963	Aviation & Transport	Eswatini	Africa
Air Seychelles	1977	Aviation & Transport	Seychelles	Asia
Bakdash	1885	Cafés, Restaurants & Bars	Syrian Arab Republic	Asia
Cotontchad	1971	Agriculture	Chad	Africa
La Poste du Togo	1883	Postal Service	Togo	Africa
B.Grimm Group	1878	Conglomerate	Thailand	Asia
House of Angostura	1830	Distillers, Vintners, & Breweries	Trinidad and Tobago	North America
La Poste Tunisienne	1847	Postal Service	Tunisia	Africa
Çemberlitaş Hamamı	1584	Tourism & Hotels	Turkey	Asia
Bank of Taiwan	1897	Banking & Finance	Taiwan, Province of China	Asia
Tanzania Breweries Limited	1933	Distillers, Vintners, & Breweries	Tanzania, United Republic of	Africa
Stanbic Bank Uganda Limited	1906	Banking & Finance	Uganda	Africa
Drohobych salt plant	1250	Manufacturing & Production	Ukraine	Europe

Cafe Brasileiro	1877	Cafés, Restaurants & Bars	Uruguay	South America
Shirley Plantation	1638	Agriculture	United States	North America
Tashkent Aviation Production Association	1932	Manufacturing & Production	Uzbekistan	Asia
Hacienda Chuao	1660	Food & Beverages	Venezuela, Bolivarian Republic of	South America
Vietnam Railways	1881	Aviation & Transport	Viet Nam	Asia
European Trust Company	1991	Banking & Finance	Vanuatu	Oceania
Yemenia Airways	1962	Aviation & Transport	Yemen	Asia
Premier FMCG	1820	Manufacturing & Production	South Africa	Africa
ZamPost	1896	Postal Service	Zambia	Africa
Standard Chartered Zimbabwe	1892	Banking & Finance	Zimbabwe	Africa
Meridian Corporation	1999	Media	Kosovo	Europe

8. Counting categories by continent

Having businesses joined to categories and countries together means we can ask questions about both these things together. For example, which are the most common categories for the oldest businesses on each continent?

In [54]:

```
%%sql
```

```
-- Count the number of businesses in each continent and category
```

```
select continent, category , count(business) as n
from      (select business,year_founded,category,country,continent
           from businesses
           left join categories
           on businesses.category_code=categories.category_code
           left join countries
           on businesses.country_code=countries.country_code) as s
group by continent,category
order by continent,n desc
```



```
* postgresql:///oldestbusinesses
```

56 rows affected.

Out[54]:

continent	category	n
Africa	Banking & Finance	17
Africa	Aviation & Transport	10
Africa	Postal Service	9
Africa	Media	4
Africa	Distillers, Vintners, & Breweries	3
Africa	Agriculture	3
Africa	Food & Beverages	1
Africa	Energy	1
Africa	Manufacturing & Production	1
Africa	Mining	1
Asia	Aviation & Transport	7
Asia	Banking & Finance	6
Asia	Cafés, Restaurants & Bars	3
Asia	Energy	3
Asia	Retail	3
Asia	Conglomerate	3
Asia	Manufacturing & Production	3
Asia	Postal Service	2
Asia	Distillers, Vintners, & Breweries	2
Asia	Construction	2
Asia	Food & Beverages	2

Asia	Defense	1
Asia	Telecommunications	1
Asia	Agriculture	1
Asia	Tourism & Hotels	1
Asia	Media	1
Asia	Mining	1
Europe	Distillers, Vintners, & Breweries	1
		2
Europe	Manufacturing & Production	8
Europe	Banking & Finance	5
Europe	Postal Service	4
Europe	Consumer Goods	3
Europe	Tourism & Hotels	2
Europe	Cafés, Restaurants & Bars	2
Europe	Media	1
Europe	Mining	1
Europe	Medical	1
Europe	Agriculture	1
Europe	Defense	1
Europe	Telecommunications	1
North America	Distillers, Vintners, & Breweries	5
North America	Banking & Finance	4
North America	Aviation & Transport	2
North America	Tourism & Hotels	1
North America	Agriculture	1
North America	Retail	1

North America	Manufacturing & Production	1
North America	Media	1
North America	Food & Beverages	1
Oceania	Banking & Finance	2
Oceania	Postal Service	1
South America	Banking & Finance	3
South America	Manufacturing & Production	2
South America	Food & Beverages	2
South America	Cafés, Restaurants & Bars	1
South America	Defense	1

9. Filtering counts by continent and category

Combining continent and business category led to a lot of results. It's difficult to see what is important. To trim this down to a manageable size, let's restrict the results to only continent/category pairs with a high count.

In [56]:

```
%%sql
```

```
with sub as (select continent, category , count(s.business) as n
              from      (select business,year_founded,category,country,continent
                          from businesses
                          left join categories
                          on businesses.category_code=categories.category_code
                          left join countries
                          on businesses.country_code=countries.country_code) as s
              group by continent,category
              order by continent,n desc)
select continent,category,n
from sub
where n > 5
order by n desc
```

```
* postgresql:///oldestbusinesses
```

7 rows affected.

Out[56]:

continent	category	n
Africa	Banking & Finance	17
Europe	Distillers, Vintners, & Breweries	12
Africa	Aviation & Transport	10
Africa	Postal Service	9
Europe	Manufacturing & Production	8
Asia	Aviation & Transport	7
Asia	Banking & Finance	6

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