

# Kjartan Slette, founder and COO of Unacast

**50 words:** Starting a company – or changing careers – is always a risk. In Oslo, everything is put in place for people to follow their ambition without putting their financial security or well-being in danger. “One of the strong suits of Norwegian society is the solid social fabric, meaning that you will never really fall down. Social programs, work programs, health benefits, the list goes on - the real risk is low to none”, explains Kjartan Slette, one of Oslo’s most successful start-up founders.

## **200 words:**

There are many things to worry about when switching careers or starting a company. In Oslo, your own well-being is not one of them. “I’ve never had to worry about the cost of failure – outside of my own pride, that is. One of the strong suits of Norwegian society is the solid social fabric, meaning that you will never really fall down. Social programs, work programs, health benefits, and the list goes, means that the real risk is low to none,” says Kjartan slette, COO and co-founder of [Unacast](#).

Slette is something of a superstar on the Norwegian startup scene. His first major venture, the music streaming service TIDAL, was sold to Jay-Z for a reported 44 million USD in 2015. And with Unacast, a company specialising in using mobility data to help businesses and government entities, he has experienced six years of near uninterrupted global growth.

In addition to a societal structure that encourages ambitious people to take risks, Slette lauds the spirit of the Oslo investment community.

“Norway has a really strong early-phase investment community, with both governmental and private capital eager to put into new ideas - and this is something Unacast benefitted from in the early days,” he says, adding:

“Oslo is the perfect laboratory. You have access to talented people with a high degree of education and curiosity for new technology. In addition, trust is a core part of society, meaning it is fairly easy to test your concept and product with established companies - and thus go to market efficiently. All this, coupled with a real work-life balance with both the sea and the mountains close by, makes us smart, ambitious - and happy.”

All this adds up to the conclusion that Oslo is far from being the only place to achieve success, it might be one of the best ones.

“I believe we would have succeeded with Unacast no matter where we came from, but we would definitely be less happy. And happiness is an important factor in completing a start-up journey that could take upwards to ten years - and beyond.”