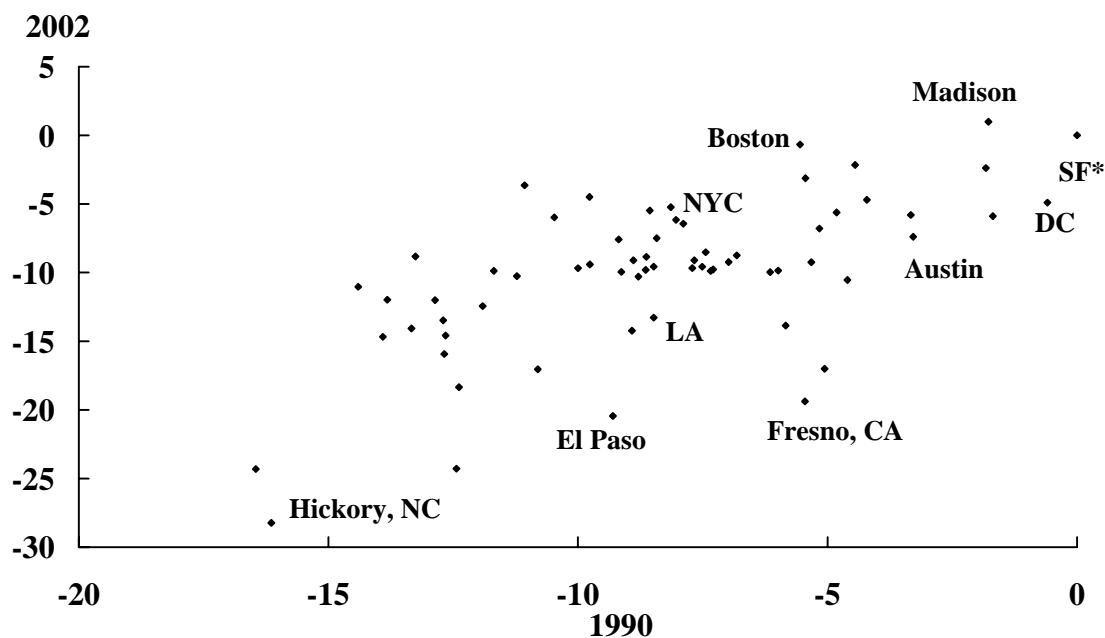


## IN SHORT

### The Diffusion of Personal Computers across the U.S.

#### Computer Use by Metropolitan Area

Number of PCs per 100 employees relative to San Francisco  
(after controlling for industry composition)



\*San Francisco, Oakland, and San Jose Metropolitan Areas

Source: Author's calculations from data by Harte-Hanks.

One way economies progress is by adopting new technologies; countries and regions that successfully adopt new technologies tend to have better economic performance than those that lag behind. Recent research by Doms and Lewis (2005) examines the diffusion of the personal computer across U.S. businesses from 1990 to 2002, the period in which information technology became an ever-important component of the economy. Their research finds that some areas adopted computers much more intensively than others. For instance, out of the 160 metropolitan areas that Doms and Lewis examine, the San Francisco Bay area is the most computer intensive. More generally, they find that metropolitan areas with highly educated work forces are those that are likely to become more computer intensive, and these also are areas that enjoy faster real wage growth. The authors also find that metropolitan areas with large IT producing centers tend to adopt computers faster, though the education of the overall workforce appears to be a more important factor.

For details, see Doms and Lewis (2005), "[The Diffusion of Personal Computers across businesses, 1990-2002.](#)"