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## Uh-Oh: Unions Score First Victory Against Big Tech

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With their [numbers dwindling](#), unions have been working for years on new organizing strategies and targets to expand their ranks. These efforts have included [attempts to unionize big tech](#) companies that account for an ever-increasing part of the economy and countless jobs. Unions, however, had come up empty at big name tech companies – until now. According to various news outlets, including [Bloomberg](#) and [Business Insider](#), the Office and Professional Employees International Union has successfully organized engineers and other employees at the crowdfunding tech company Kickstarter following a union election on Tuesday, Feb. 18.

Business Insider reports: “Kickstarter employees have officially unionized after a vote was tallied Tuesday, marking the first full-time workers at a tech company to do so as more across the industry look to organize. The historic 46-37 vote in favor of unionizing comes after a contentious process, which involved the firing of two Kickstarter employees who were leading the efforts. The employees then filed a complaint with the National Labor Relations Board, which has yet to resolve, according to Vice.”

The significance of this outcome cannot be overstated. Unions historically have been prevalent in industries such as construction, warehousing, utilities, and manufacturing, but this continues the trend of unions encroaching into [new sectors](#) as some of the occupations in which labor had a stronghold have seen the number of available and new jobs fall off in recent decades.

This also serves as a reminder that companies that desire to remain union free – regardless of industry – need to be ready to tackle union organizing attempts lawfully and immediately if they emerge. Companies have many legal rights under American labor law to communicate with their workers about unionization (with some limitations – for example, it is unlawful to threaten employees with an adverse employment action if they try to organize). Employers should know, generally, how and what they want to communicate to employees about these issues before they ever get hit with a union election petition. Many companies in sectors traditionally targeted by unions already have robust union campaign contingency plans in place. It may be time for tech companies to follow suit.