



**Remembering the work of James Smythe
from a colleague and client point of view**

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**GWR/GCAP –Driving insight into
the heart of the radio industry**



Recruited by James, I joined the GWR Group as Research Manager in October 2004.

A newly created role with a focus on programming, James had successfully persuaded the powers that be that it was not only the commercial side of the business that should be resourced.

CLASSIC *f*M

His vision to help grow the brands focused on embedding audience insights across all aspects of the business.

In May 2005 GWR merged with Capital Radio and GCap Media was born.

Working under Sean Keller, James led the newly combined and restructured research team with an ambition and dedication to deliver the business with audience insight fit for its new era.



**Breakfast and music
were the key priorities
for local radio**



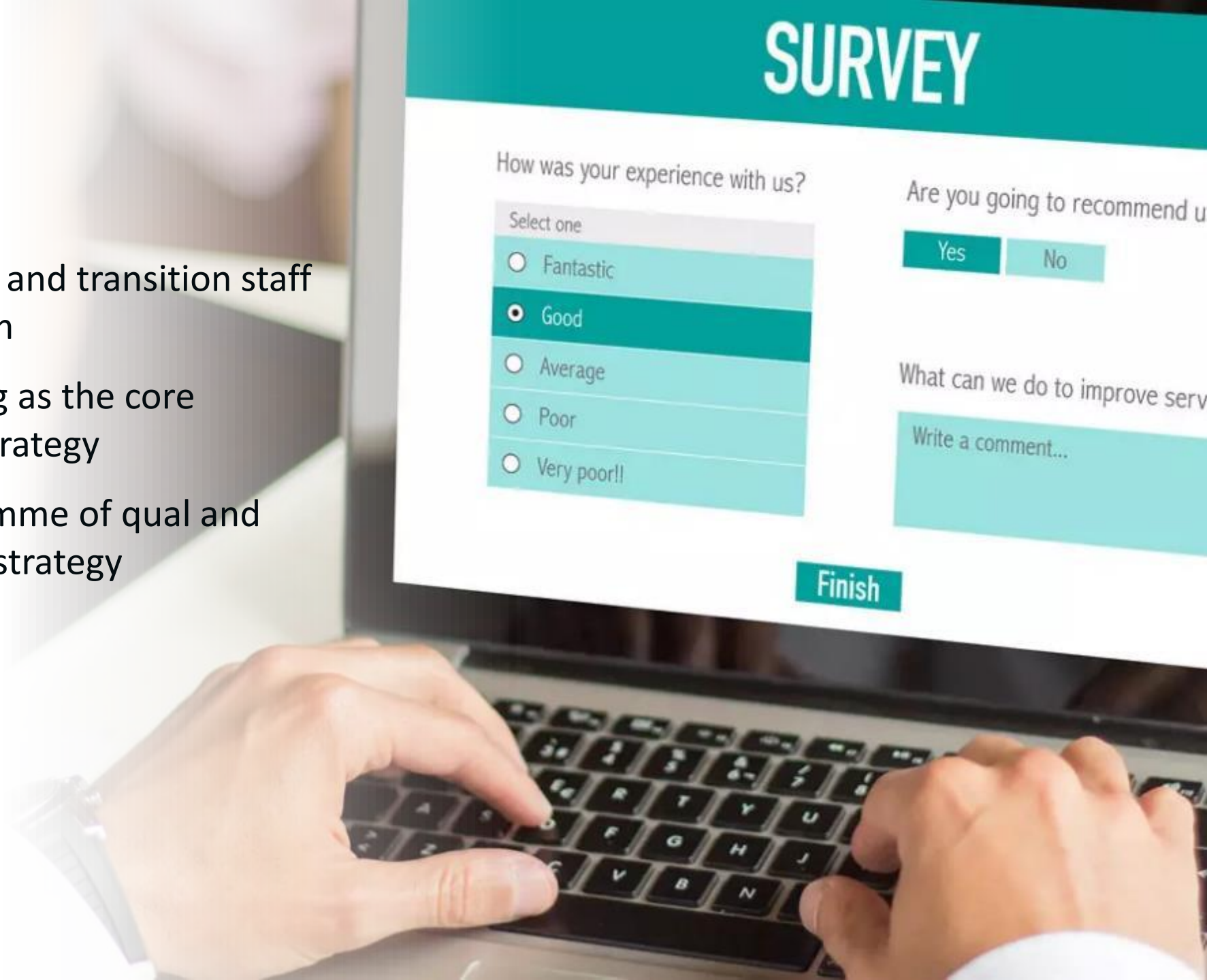
**But first he had to make
the research 'fit for
purpose'...**

The Challenge

- GCap owned their own (CATI) call centres to carry out research studies
- But this came with limitations
 - Not always the best methodology for the task at hand
 - Costly if not all research was conducted via this route
 - More people opting out of being contact via telephone
 - Becoming less effective at reaching younger audiences

The Solution

- Close down the call centres and transition staff to the central research team
- Introduce online dial testing as the core method for GCap's music strategy
- A bespoke research programme of qual and quant for GCap's breakfast strategy



A close-up photograph of a human hand with fingers spread, reaching towards the viewer. The hand is the central focus, with a soft, out-of-focus background. A large, semi-transparent white circle is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing text.

The Success!

- There was push back at the start of the process mainly due to lack of trust in online research
- But a parallel run between the two methods demonstrated its validity
- The cost savings delivered were also key to convincing stakeholders it was the way forward!

A few words from his ex-colleagues

"I learned a lot from James, first about research, but much more about following your passions. I was incredibly impressed when he struck out on his own and it gave me confidence to make my own career moves and focus on the things that I felt I could contribute to and make a difference in."

Andrew Freeman, IPSOS

"James was a pleasure to work with. Always positive, with a perfect combination of being both professional and down to earth; he was so easy to get along with and had such a good sense of fun and never took himself too seriously. As my direct boss he was both inspirational and kind. But I also considered him a great friend and enjoyed many an after work drink with him and our work social events weren't quite the same without James. I could never quite understand where he got his energy from - having often arisen at some ridiculously early hour to go canoeing before a full days work. I remember him very fondly and my heart goes out to his family - whom he often spoke so lovingly about. He was a dedicated family man, a wonderful friend and a great boss- the world has lost a bright spark without James."

Gudrun Pearcey, Consultant

The launch of Culture of Insight



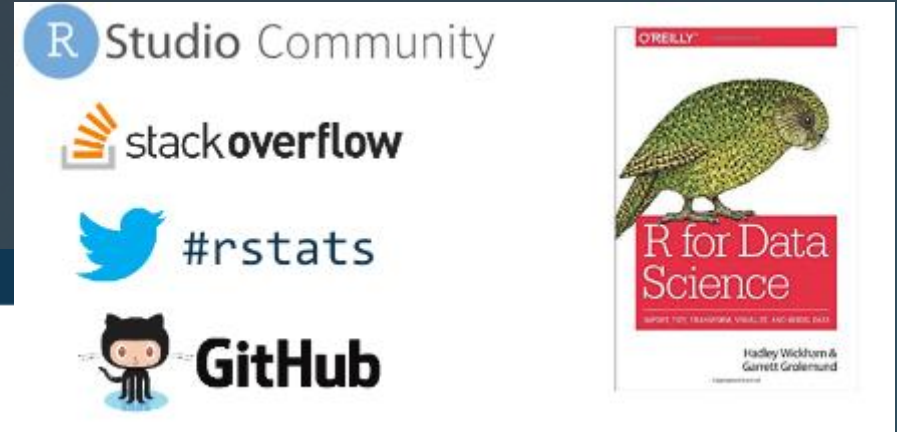
Holborn studios was the home of Culture of Insight



Following a long career in media and sport, why stop there – Holborn studios always had a buzz about it and you could park your canoe outside!



A business built on transparency



PASTE() AND PASTE0()

Like Excel's concatenate() !

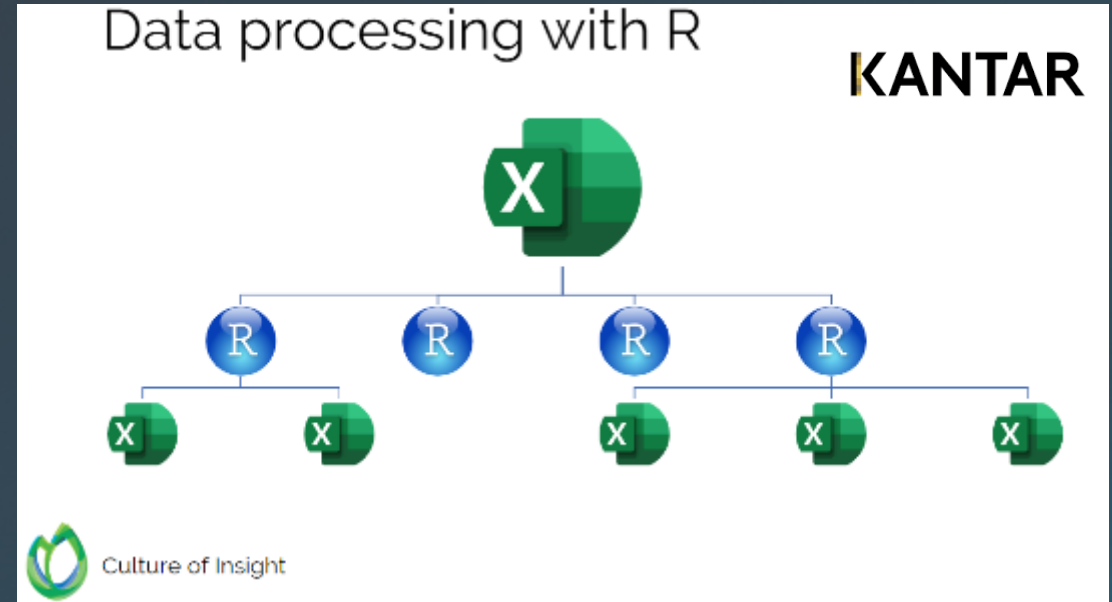
```
paste("My", "name", "is", "James") ... My name is James
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paste0("My", "name", "is", "James") ... MynameisJames
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As the business grew and scaled, James embraced the world of open-source programming, initiating the MRG R programming course in the process, a huge success



A journey to transform our industry



James knew that insight teams were under pressure to work faster, more accurately with bigger data sets, he wanted us all to go on a journey with him, Kantar included!



His valued and trusted team



Nick Philp



Roke Alvarez Masso

Some of the lovely COI team from the early and later years!



James built strong, long lasting relationships



Tonight goes to show James was more than someone you just worked with. To me and I know to many of you, he was a much-loved friend – we miss you James

A client perspective of working with Culture of Insight

Following our time together at GCap Radio, I crossed paths with James for the next 10-15 years via Culture of Insight

The logo for Eurosport, featuring a stylized star icon to the left of the word "EUROSPORT" in a bold, dark blue, sans-serif font.The logo for ESPN, featuring the word "ESPN" in a bold, red, italicized, sans-serif font.

The Typical Brief to Culture of Insight

- Provide us with dashboards/a portal which saves insight team time in terms of business requests
- Build a data and insight visualisation for less data literate members of staff which needs to:
 - Be simple to use and allow users to be able to download the data/charts/reports
 - Bring data to life to engage stakeholders
 - Comply with company's data protection/confidentiality rules
 - Be cost effective as we don't have much budget and we will be asked why we can't do this in house
 - Include permissions as not all data/research needs to be available to everybody (specifically external partners like sponsors and F1 teams)

The Solution

- Multi-section portal which housed all internal reports
- Data dashboards incorporated within portal which allowed users to run specific company data (TV data, tracker and other research data) – dashboards were simple to use with easy dropdown options for the various internal teams
- All reports and data dashboards split by client business areas
- Permissions incorporated to prevent some users from accessing confidential content
- Spin off portals (with less content) for external partners and stakeholders
- Function which allowed easily uploadable content using dropbox/one drive
- Portals embedded into company tech with bespoke individual logins (with expiry date) where this was not possible



The Solution

Research & Analytics

SUMMARY

- 2021 End of Season F1 Attitudes Survey (View)
- 2020 End of Year Spectator Research (View)
- 2020 Season Biometric Research Summary (View)

LAST REPORTS

2021 End of Season F1 Attitudes Survey

- Perception of F1 has improved over the last two years, remaining high - 72% threshold has improved over the last 2 years.
- Younger fans show higher levels of satisfaction - significantly so for under 25s.
- Fans of a specific team or driver show higher levels of satisfaction with their overall experience as an F1 Fan.

2020 End of Year Spectator Research

- Positive perception for all tracked events - key drivers of satisfaction remain event atmosphere, views of the track and on-track entertainment.
- The Sprint Race was a key motivator for attendance, with US respondents in Italy & Brazil selecting the sprint as a key reason for attending.
- The Dutch Grand Prix the best performer of the year, with great scores across the board and especially in regards to organization and transport.

2020 Season Biometric Research Summary

- Riviera's race speed raised up and might: top key moments in race, especially when the content adds to the narrative of a significant moment in the race.
- Sprint's demand a different treatment to monitor the pleasure of the race (e.g. through the use of onboard and long distance cameras).
- Picture-in-picture is an engaging feature when it impacts on-track action on the main screen, and to update views on a cellular drivers while focusing on the most interesting story.

MARKET INSIGHTS

- For China, hosting the Olympics is worth it. **NYT**
- Madrid's Old Masters Name to Postcourse. **FDS**
- The PGA Tour won't suffer as much. **FDS**
- Microsoft also cut new App store rules. **Bloomberg**

THE LAB

Welcome to the Beijing 2022 dashboard

This dashboard features awareness, interest, intention to view, favorite sports, mood levels and willingness to pay to view for all Sports at Beijing 2022.

The data was collected from nationally representative samples in: Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Norway, Poland, Romania, Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and the UK in November 2021.

Click next to get started...

AWARENESS BY SPORT

Sport	Awareness
Figure Skating	50%
Biathlon	71%
Winter Paralympic	74%
Short Track Speed Skating	63%
Ice Hockey	71%
Winter Olympic	61%
Winter Paralympic	61%
Speed Skating	64%
Ice Skating	64%
Curling	67%
Winter Paralympic	68%

Country: [List of countries]

More insights on: [Target]

SFIA

Sports & Fitness Industry Association Participation Dashboard

Define Data View

Choose which data to chart: Sports Categories

Sports Area: Baseball, Football (Soccer), Basketball, Tennis, Table Tennis, Night Football Services

Participant Type: Total

Demographic: M

Participation Trend Chart

Participation (people)

2014 2015 2016 2017 2018 2019 2020 2021

Legend: Baseball, Football (Soccer), Basketball, Tennis, Table Tennis, Night Football Services

The Impact

- 1st ever stakeholder facing insight portals at the sports businesses where I worked – helped to foster a data sharing culture whereas before very little was shared
- Saved the insight team significant amount of time – at F1 the portal had 300 visits per month from 70 users. Potentially 300 fewer monthly requests for the already stretched team
- Brought data and research to life for stakeholders who were previously less data literate
- Created goodwill amongst external partners and clients who received their own personalised portals – again previously uncommon in sports industry
- MRS Activation of Research award nominee in 2018



Secrets of Success for Culture of Insight

- James was extremely knowledgeable about data and was able to help suggest solutions and other options to support the brief
- Collaborative approach – embedding themselves into the business to understand our issues/challenges
- Great client relationship – nothing was ever a problem
- Sporting knowledge helped to build strong roster of sports clients
- Added value – offering R training for junior staff members
- Often going above and beyond – even if over budget, they would never ask for more money!

Working with James and Culture of Insight was always a great client experience...

'As I got to know James over the years, working with him became more and more of a pleasure. He always gave the impression that we were an important client, and was always ready to give us his time. More than that though, there was always time for a bit of gossip, and meetings with him were always meetings to look forward to.'

Greg Morris Nielsen Sport

'I first met James at a Culture of Insight training session in 2018. I was struck by his physical energy, passion for his work and being one of those people who just lives life differently. I'd never met anyone who kayaked to work in the morning before I met James, and I doubt I will again. We clicked very quickly and I'll remember his love for his family, good humour and bravery as he underwent his treatment. He will remain an inspiration for me as I am sure he will for many others.'

Chris Kebbell Eurosport

'James was open, honest and thoughtful. Most of all was really passionate about his job and the industry he worked in, even going on to run training courses to share his knowledge and passion for research and data. I always told people about James and the great work his company did if ever the need was there, not just for the output, but for James as a person.'

David Bailey PHD

'James was always a pleasure to work with, friendly and competent.'

Tom Lutz Optus

'James was a great partner to work with, such a smart thinker and lovely personality. We exchanged a lot about our common passions: Sport & France. He will be missed. At Eurosport, he instantly understood our business needs and with his questions, he shaped the look and feel of our dashboards to make them an essential part of our research tools. Thanks to his dashboards, our research is more visible, shareable and easy to use for stakeholders.'

Susi Thorimbert Eurosport

'James was amazing to work with. Always positive, there was not a single problem he could not find solutions for.'

Max Metral Activision



...and you always
knew that James will
be the life and soul of
the party

