



# How I Got Here Today

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**Once Upon Time...**

# ... I didn't want to be a Statistician ...

- 1986/87: **British Gas**, On-Line Inspection Centre, Northumberland
  - Prediction & Clustering algorithms to predict pipeline defect severity.
  - *“Statistics was easy but boring”*
- 1987 – 1991: **University of Bath**, BSc (Hons) Mathematics
  - Wanted to specialise in Applied Maths with ambitions to work in Aeronautics
  - Struggled with Applied Maths modules, ended up with a general Maths degree
  - Did a well taught module of statistics in my 2<sup>nd</sup> year
- 1991 – 1997: **ED&F Man Cocoa Ltd**, London
  - My stats module was essential for my role as a Cocoa Research Analyst working on crop forecasting, trading strategies, product sampling, risk modelling.
- 1995 – 1997: MSc Applied Statistics, **Birkbeck College**, London
  - Decided I needed to learn more about statistics!
  - On graduating, started to call myself a Statistician instead of Mathematician.

# ... but 9 Years on Mars made me a consultant...

- 1<sup>st</sup> Man to go to Mars!
- 1997-1999: Commodity Economist, Global Cocoa Purchasing Team
  - Market intelligence role similar to Man but this time I was directly reporting to & influencing the cocoa buyers from around the world.
- 1999-2003: Senior Market Analyst, UK Confectionery Team
  - Market intelligence again but very different environment working with UK board, Finance, Sales & Marketing teams.
  - Last 2 years started to act as internal consultant.
- 2003-2006: Senior Statistician, European R&D Team
  - Internal consulting role supporting teams in quality control, process improvement & product design teams in the R&D and Manufacturing divisions.
  - My first full time role as a true statistician and completed my exposure to the various divisions within Mars.
  - Designed & delivered many basic statistical training courses.

# ... & 7 years as a consultant has been \_\_\_\_\_?!?

- 2006: Took voluntary redundancy from Mars to become a consultant
  - I had hit the barrier in terms of career progression on the Mars pay scale.
  - By now I had demonstrable BREADTH of expertise in nearly all the functions of any business, statistical methods & services and the consultant frame of mind.
  - Decided to base myself in Bath but seek business from anywhere.
  - Had a training contract in Thailand straightaway but this was followed by 8 months of no income due to long Contact to Contract times
- 2007: Became editor of Excel Uncovered & won a few contracts.
- 2008: Excel Uncovered ended, wide range of ad-hoc projects.
- 2009: Took on my first employee (a summer student) due to growth.
- 2010: Started long term contract with Innovantage.
- 2011: Revenue share with Innovantage, 1<sup>st</sup> permanent employee.
- 2012: Innovantage into administration, employee made redundant.
- 2013: Regrouping and redirecting my efforts.

**What Am I?**

# How I started out in 2006

- Decided to pitch myself a general statistical consultant offering a full range of services:
  - Intention was to spend 2 years trying out anything and then focusing on the areas where I perceived personal & professional rewards.
  - Deliberately avoided CONTRACTOR roles! I wanted to be a consultant

## 1. Statistical Consulting

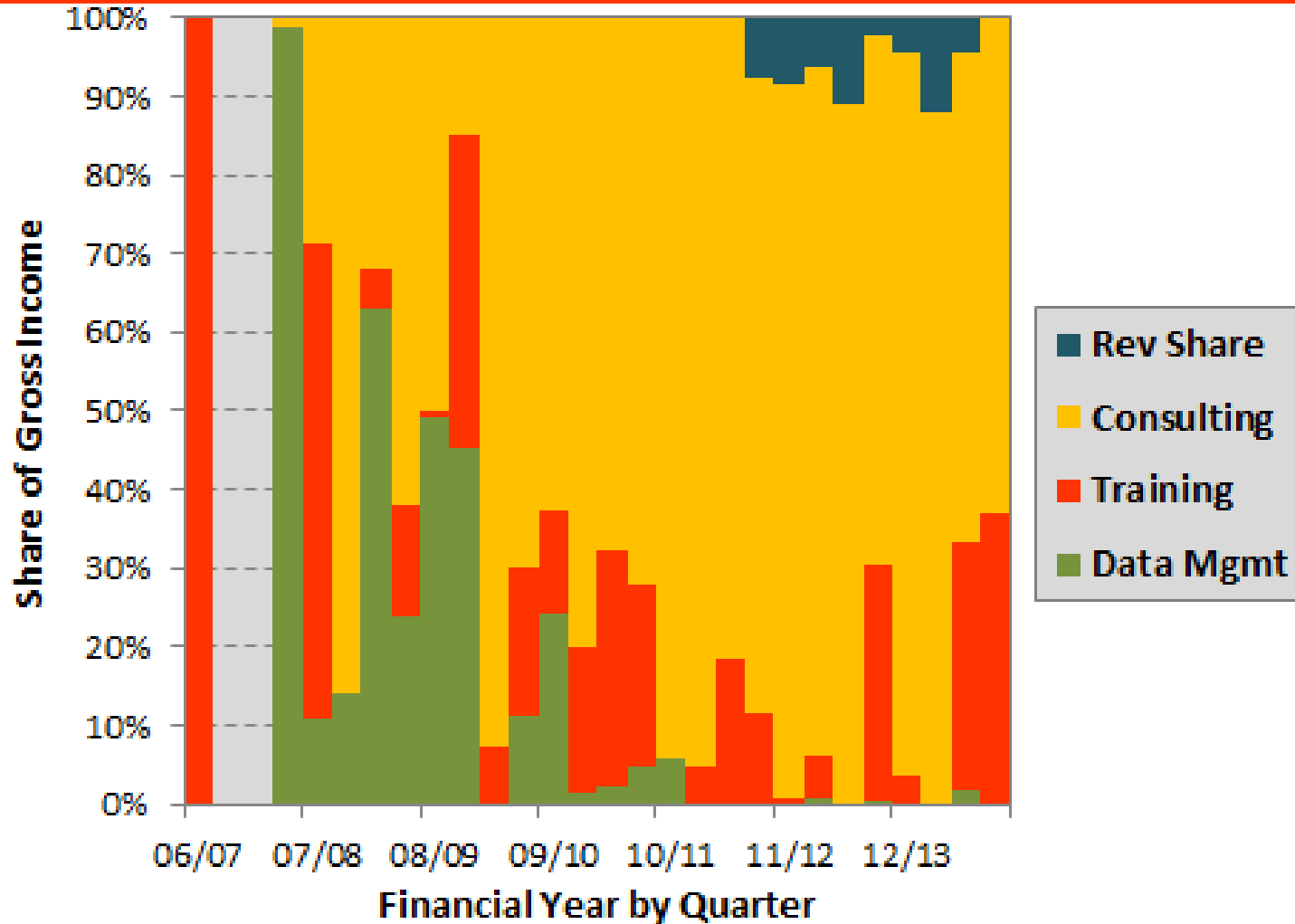
## 2. Statistical Training

## 3. Data Management

- Quickly discovered that Contact to Contract time needed to be measured in months rather than weeks!
- In practice, it took 4 to 5 years to clarify where I wanted to focus my business.

# How my business has changed over 7 years

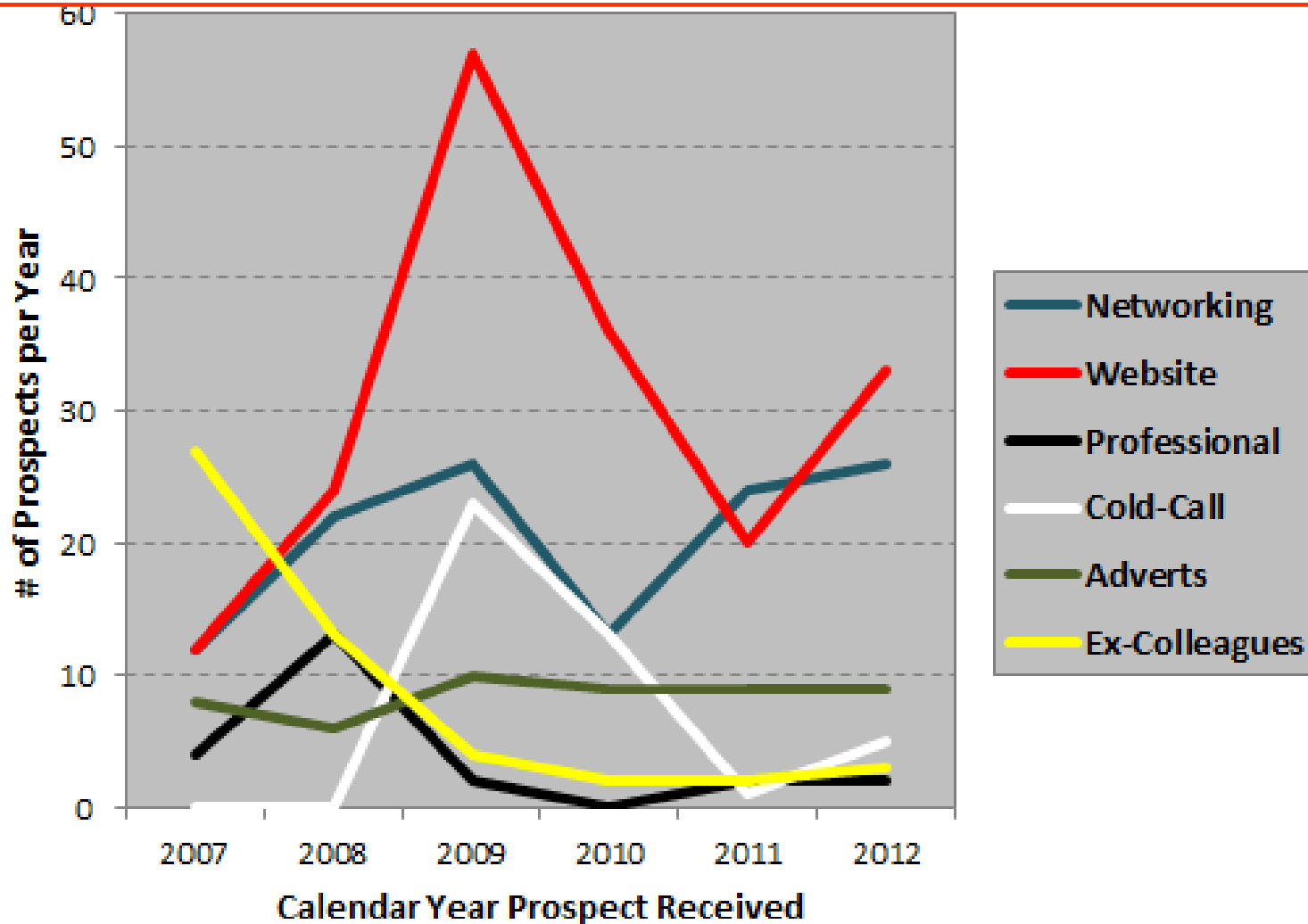
Data Management has died out (not sorry about that), Revenue Share disappeared with Innovantage going into administration (was sorry about that) and I now have a reasonable balance of consulting & training.





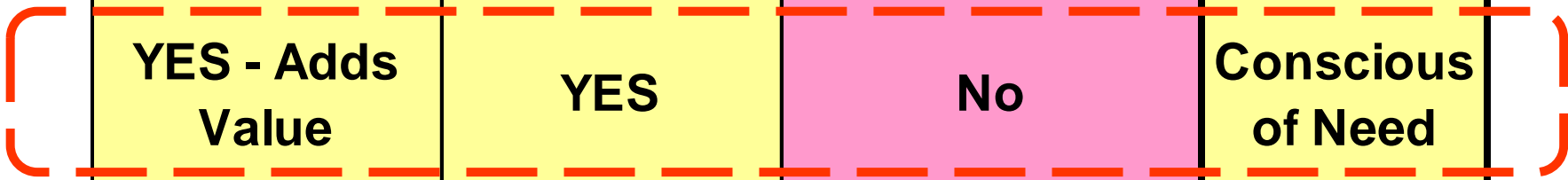
# Where I get my business from...

A prospect is recorded when I start to discuss a specific project with a client.  
Currently I convert around 40% of prospects into contracts.



# My clients tend to be of the 3<sup>rd</sup> type...

Do They Need a Statistician?	Are They Aware Of Their Need?	Is There An Existing Capability?	Type of Client
<b>YES - Mission Critical</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>Specialist Need</b>
<b>YES - Adds Value</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>Existing Capability</b>
<b>YES - Adds Value</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Conscious of Need</b>
<b>YES - Adds Value</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Ignorant of Need</b>
<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No Need</b>



# Who are my clients?

- Have worked with 91 clients to date.
  - Classic 80/20 rule applies! 80% of income from 20% of clients.
  - Client base for consulting is very different from training.
- Consulting client base is predominantly private sector
  - Of 49 clients, only 9 were not private sector (mostly charities)
  - Come from a wide variety of industries with top 10 from
    - **Recruitment, Insurance, Education, Travel, Social Care,**
    - **SEO, Cocoa, Cosmetics, Dating Site, Real Estate.**
- Training client base is predominantly public sector
  - Of 40 clients, only 9 were private sector
  - Public sector notable for having large teams of analysts with limited statistical background.
  - Recent clients include **Ministry of Defence, Health & Safety Executive, Dept of Communities & Local Government, Devon & Cornwall Police**

# Where I want to be from 2013

- I will be revamping my marketing materials to reflect the 4 areas I want to work in:

## 1. Sample & Survey Design & Analytics

- I enjoy this kind of work immensely from a professional perspective.
- Tends to be well-defined ad-hoc projects that are easy to price & deliver.

## 2. Forecasting & Classification Models

- Primarily for people in business planning.
- Predominantly time based models which require annual updates.

## 3. Statistical Training Courses

- Targeting in-house courses in basic stats for analytical personnel.

## 4. Expert Witness Services

- Short projects but professionally satisfying & good hourly rates.

## ~~5. Market Intelligence Support~~

- Tends to be on-going and requires an employee to provide full time support.

**Am I Happy?**

# Yes

- Broad range of clients & problems.
  - Fascinating to see how statistics can be applied to areas that nobody would have thought of doing so e.g. Neolithic Structure in Archaeology.
- Almost complete flexibility as to when & where I work e.g.
  - 1am on a Sunday morning!
  - Working on a problem for a UK client whilst in San Antonio/New York.
  - Few rigid client deadlines.
- Have been able to employ people and enjoy the experience.
- Have learnt how to run a business.
- Allowed me to live in Bath and travel the world.
- Most important have learnt how to be happy with & without money!

# No

- Everything is down to me, no-one will come to help.
  - Demands personal energy that I sometimes lack especially when developing marketing materials.
- Diary tends to be at mercy of your clients.
  - Need to work hard to keep dates free.
- Unpredictable income, have to adopt a bonus mentality.
  - Fortunately not had many late payment issues.
  - Innovantage was a big exception (went into administration owing me many thousands).
- Complete flexibility as to when & where to work can lead to your week losing structure.
  - Work & play time can merge into one.