

Shining a light on the data journey

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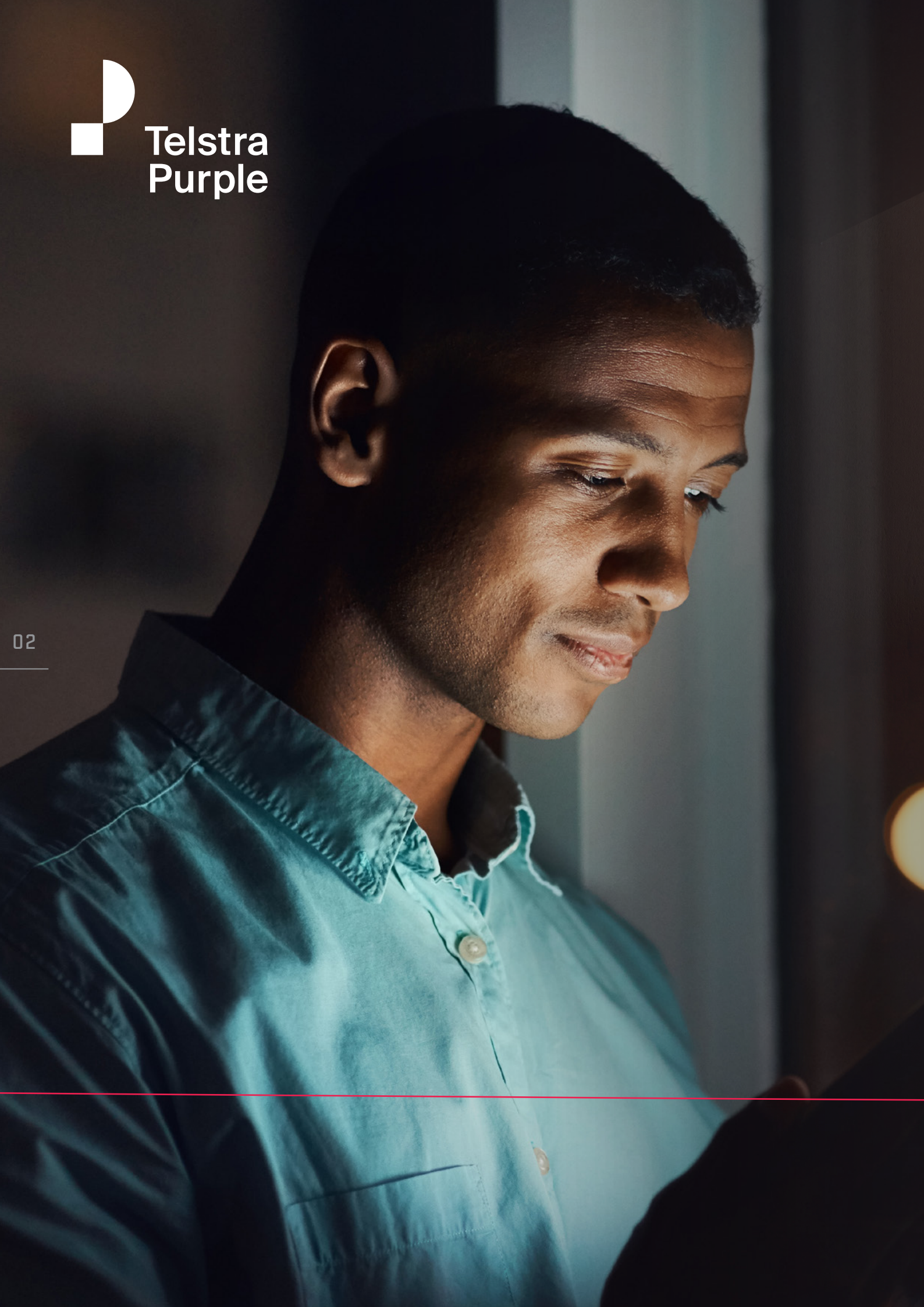
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Executives from Telstra Purple's Data and Analytics Domain explain how they support customers on data journeys through insights, advice, roadmaps, and analysis

Telstra Purple is the consulting arm of global telecommunications company Telstra. Its mission is to assist clients with IT and business challenges, covering an array of functions such as security, cloud, data and digital transformation.

04 With a global team of over 1,500 experts, including a 100 strong team of consultants in London, UK, Telstra Purple offers a breadth of skills across the world. "By putting purpose and people at the core of everything we do, we bring the experience, capacity and tools to help businesses achieve digital success" says Bradley Hopkins, Head of Data and Analytics, Telstra Purple EMEA.

Telstra Purple's offerings are spread across four complementary solution areas and skill bases. "Those four areas are strategy and transformation, cloud and modern workplace, security and networks, and data and analytics," says Hopkins. "Typically, we deliver advisory work to help clients on their journey, whilst assisting with the end-to-end implementation and delivery of those solutions."





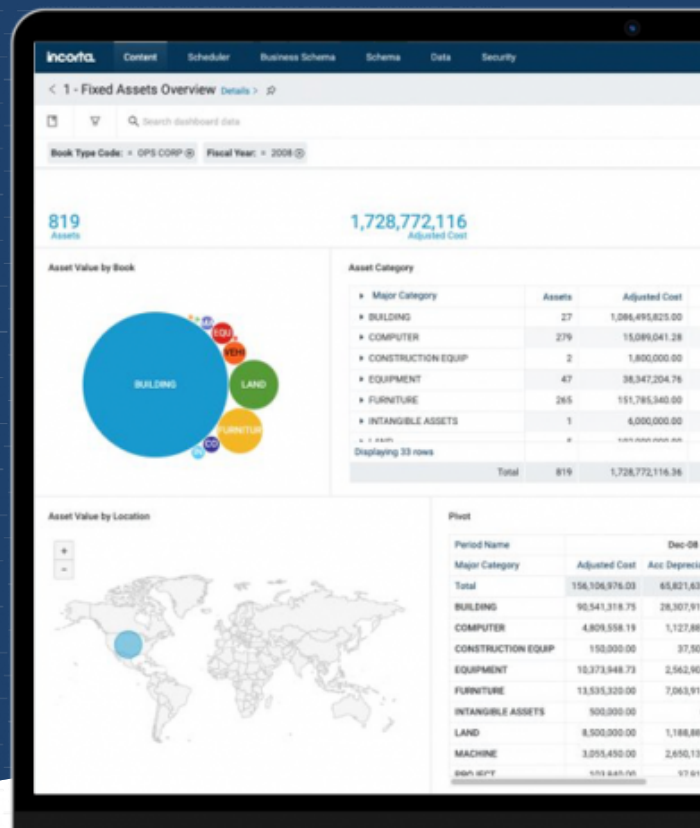


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Ed Bullen

Head of Data Engineering and
Data Science, Telstra Purple EMEA

DATA IS OMNIPRESENT

Businesses produce and process data more than ever before, and it has become increasingly important to derive value from it.

“Historically, a business’ value was measured in terms of physical items manufactured and sold or fixed assets – the buildings, premises and machinery that it has,” says Ed Bullen, Head of Data Engineering and Data Science, Telstra Purple EMEA. “In the present day, however, businesses are realising that their value actually stems from, and resides in,

the data that they have. This includes data about their customers and operations, how well and efficiently they can operate based on that data, and the interactions and transactions that they have with suppliers and clients.”

Data then represents an untapped source for many companies, which is precisely where Telstra Purple comes in. “Everything we do in terms of designing our projects and solutions is to help companies drive more revenue, reduce costs and increase their competitive advantage by

“We helped Genomics England reduce their IT costs because we were able to map projects and application activity to the cloud and IT billing costs”

Ed Bullen

Head of Data Engineering and
Data Science, Telstra Purple EMEA

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CASE STUDY:

How a single data strategy empowered Genomics England to sequence the future of British healthcare

As Matt Hancock MP, Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, noted, “The future of healthcare will be more personalised, more predictive, more preventative - using data to target those who need support to lead healthier lives.”

The 100,000 Genomes Project, run by Genomics England and funded by the UK Department of Health and Social Care, is just one example of the truth of that statement. Initially created to sequence 100,000 genomes to better understand rare diseases and cancers, the success of the project led to its expansion to sequence up to five million genomes in the next five years, bringing with it an extortionate amount of data.

Telstra Purple was tasked to provide the right data strategy in order to bring together fragmented data sets, ensure privacy and security for

sensitive and confidential information, and to provide insights into cost-efficiencies to help as many people as possible.

Genomics England ultimately needed to transform from a research organisation to a big data one. They were understandably spending a lot of money on IT technology each month and so Telstra Purple worked with them to provide enhanced visibility and access to the data to make their decisions quicker and more accurately.

As a direct result of the partnership, project coordination became much more efficient, as Bullen explains. “The people managing the projects were able to operate more efficiently when they saw that there was overlap in terms of research work. In addition to this, we helped Genomics England reduce their IT costs because we were able to map projects and application activity to the cloud and IT billing costs. We were able to cut out duplicate and redundant cloud and IT infrastructure to reduce the costs quite significantly - especially important for a mainly public-funded organisation.”

extracting more inherent value from their data sources,” Bullen emphasises.

The roadmap for data transformation must ultimately be tailored to every company and their level of data maturity. Nevertheless, there are some key tenets, which Telstra Purple cleaves closely to. “It starts with discovery,” says Bullen. “Identify what is currently in place and what is required. Then you move on to a curate phase; making sure all your data flows are catalogued and tracked in a governance framework. Third is to

provide access – putting in place a flexible, secure data service for applications and users. And finally, you can then move to insights and value, using the data to build new processes and predict new things. That’s the general pattern, but within that we see a lot of variation from company to company.”

SECURITY CONCERNS

The blockers preventing companies from fully embracing such a data transformation come chiefly in the



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People Bringing Purpose to Technology -Telstra Purple EMEA

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Bradley Hopkins

Head of Data and Analytics,
Telstra Purple EMEA

form of security concerns and legacy IT systems. “There can be data silos across business units – not just technical, but political,” says Hopkins. “Breaking down those data silos can be a significant challenge when there’s a legacy IT set-up.”

As for security, companies dealing with sensitive data are naturally cautious. “We work arm in arm with our internal security team to ensure that we can deliver secure data insights,” says Hopkins. “But certain customers, especially in sensitive industries like healthcare,

legal, and bioinformatics, have compliance risks associated with that data. The majority of all legal data held is confidential, being stamped as “confidential” by definition. The question becomes: how do you then start building data science models on private data?”

Though a challenge, this is not insurmountable, as Bullen explains. “Even with the most secure systems in the world, we still have to design

our systems to meet regulatory compliance requirements. That makes what could be a simple project more challenging and complex.”

DATA GOVERNANCE

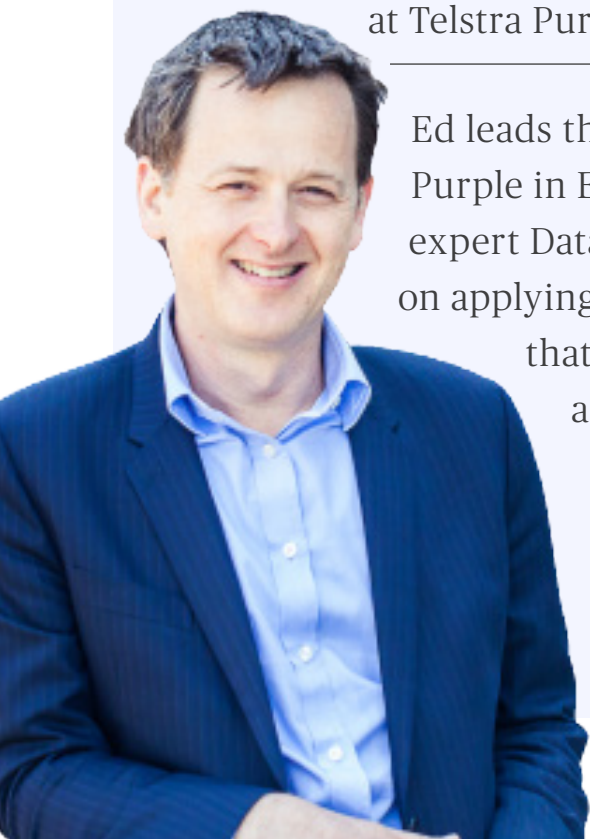
Telstra Purple’s Data Governance Assessment tool helps businesses take control of their master data and understand their data landscape to provide business benefits quickly and effectively.

EXECUTIVE PROFILE:

Ed Bullen



Title: Head of Data Engineering and Data Science
at Telstra Purple EMEA



Ed leads the Data and Analytics consulting team for Telstra Purple in EMEA. He is currently focussed on building an expert Data Science and Data Engineering team with a focus on applying data and analytics to solve real-world problems that deliver genuine value to Telstra’s clients. In addition to this, Ed has many years of hands-on experience designing and implementing data systems in the Banking, Insurance and Bioinformatics sectors as well as a period working for a major database vendor.



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EXECUTIVE PROFILE:

Bradley Hopkins



Title: Head of Data and Analytics at Telstra Purple EMEA

Bradley has developed and led a consultancy discipline within Telstra Purple to deliver pragmatic data, analytics and AI solutions. With extensive experience in customer relationship management, technology vendor management and solution design, Bradley is helping clients understand complex problems and create unique approaches to drive value from data that supports business goals. Bradley is also a founding advisory board member of Data Journeys - a community for sharing experiences and innovations in the data industry - and is proactively working to shape the relevance and application of data in the constantly evolving global market.



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“Ideally, all data should be cataloged in a central repository, but data governance is as much about a process and approach as technologies,” says Bullen. “It’s best achieved by applying first principles of best practice at the data platform level. This means all data movement, data change and storage must be achieved with a strategic toolset combined with the right processes and procedures. You can have the best tools in the world, but they’ll be useless if you haven’t got the correct procedures in place.”

“We can actually talk to companies about their solutions, leveraging all of our experience and expertise and all the great work we’ve done”

Bradley Hopkins

Head of Data and Analytics,
Telstra Purple EMEA

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Yafaa Ahres of Telstra Purple is the Founder and Head of Data Journeys, a forum launched in 2019 for leaders who want to ‘turbo charge’ their organisations by leveraging data. “My mission when I joined Telstra Purple was to build a data analytics community from scratch, for technology leaders to access a creative and collaborative environment to fast track the development of their business and people,” she says.

Ahres built an enviable following amongst the data community and CIO/IT leadership on social media, and drove a lively series of well-attended meet-ups. In the first year alone, over 330 people interacted with the community.

“It is our goal to create a membership where the collective wisdom will help each of us navigate from where we are now, to where we want to be, faster and with greater impact,” says Ahres.

The community isn’t limited to those with “data titles”, but rather is open to any senior IT/tech

practitioners who own or influence the data strategy. “Our membership is diverse, we have a mix of CXO, IT Directors, Heads of Technology - and that’s on purpose as this doesn’t tend to happen. Data and IT have different roles to play in the data journey, and as data generally sits separately to IT (with some exceptions), having both sides of the conversation is very useful to understanding how best to work cross functionally,” says Ahres.

“The idea is to have a mix of people from different industries so we can all learn from one another, and help each other accelerate our respective data journeys.”

There’s a focus on real-life examples. “The community is a massive help in fighting the guesswork on our members’ data journey. At each meetup, we have a case study where we bring a practical example, and we have clear objectives for each meetup. That’s something that our members, the community and as a whole really like about Data Journeys.”

That real-life applicability means examples can’t just be whitewashed.

“The most important reason why someone would want to be part of Data Journeys is because it’s a safe haven for sharing the good and the bad,” says Telstra Purple’s Hopkins, who also sits on the advisory board of Data Journeys. “It’s okay to talk about both. It’s not just all good news stories, because often the bad is where the real learnings are.”

That frankness engenders a real sense of community that spreads beyond the organisation. “We have people talking to each other outside

of any communications that we have,” says Hopkins. “I think that during a time of COVID-19 and such uncertainty – a very uncomfortable time for us all at the moment – you often only feel as strong as your network. If we can help just one person in the community connect to someone else and help them feel better, or secure their job or give them a new opportunity, I think we’d have done a really good thing.”

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—
Bradley Hopkins
Head of Data and Analytics,
Telstra Purple EMEA



EXECUTIVE PROFILE:



Yafaa Ahres

Title: Founder at Data Journeys and Marketing Specialist at Telstra Purple EMEA

Yafaa Ahres is the Founder of Data Journeys and Marketing Specialist at Telstra Purple EMEA and has over 10 years of experience in B2B Marketing working within IT, Technology and Telecommunications companies. Throughout her international career, Yafaa has been involved in Market Research & Analysis, Strategy, Product and Community Marketing. Yafaa has been fortunate to live and work in different continents, and experience multiple cultures around the world including China, Australia, Germany, and Jordan.

Her years of global experience has given her a pretty unique perspective on people and helped her bridge cultural differences to deliver desired results, champion accessibility, diversity and inclusion. Yafaa is a polyglot, and very much a creative thinker with an analytical mind at heart.

Working with the marketing team in the UK and in her capacity of community lead for Telstra Purple, Yafaa provides an opportunity for technology leaders to access a creative and collaborative environment to fast track the development of their business and people.

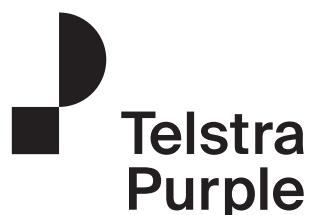




In a world of digital transformation, a company's connectivity and data will only become more crucial. "We can actually talk to companies about their solutions, leveraging all of our experience and expertise and all the great work we've done, for the likes of organisations like Genomics England," says Hopkins.

That work is only possible thanks to the talent it has attracted, as Bullen explains. "We have a hugely talented and unique team in the

industry. A blend of top experts – data scientists, data analysts and data engineers – who work in tandem to fully understand the subject matter and create tangible and logical solutions. Our strength is our people."



Telstra Ventures

Telstra Ventures is a strategic growth investor in lighthouse technology companies that are commencing scale. Telstra provides venture capital investment via a “Strategic Growth Investment” approach.

Telstra Ventures is an investor in a number of innovative data- and analytics-focused startups, as Saad Siddiqui, Principal for Telstra Ventures, explains. “The amount of data that we’ve generated in the last two years is more than what we’ve generated in the entire history of humankind. And over the last decade enterprises have collected more data on their customers and operations than they ever have and need to make decisions faster than they ever have.

“Some of the new challenges that are emerging are that new workflows need to be redefined to manage these new data sets. Secondly, all the data needs to be compliant with new privacy regulations. On the back of these trends we’re looking at interesting companies that can allow customers and enterprises to get insights faster.”



One such company is Incorta, operating the world’s first direct data warehouse. Incorta can connect directly into source data to deliver insights faster than its competitors – up to a thousand times faster in some cases. “They are behind the operations of some of the largest companies in the world,” says Siddiqui.



He also cites Trifacta, one of the world’s premier data preparation solutions: “Trifacta allows you to connect all different kinds of data - HR data, CRM data - in a single pane view with other tools and data sources. This becomes incredibly important in machine learning use cases because you need the data to be prepared.”



Another company in Telstra Ventures’ portfolio is Near, the world’s largest

ambient intelligence platform. “They have near real-time data on over one billion devices, which is used by some of the largest enterprises in the world to help with product analytics and understanding consumer behavior,” Siddiqui shares.



His final example is Corvus, which uses data analysis for cyber security insurance - an ever more important task as bad actors continually step up their attacks. “Corvus is a really interesting company, because they use their proprietary data to understand how robust an enterprise’s infrastructure is from a security perspective, and are able to price that risk in. Not only do they provide insights in terms of how well a company is handling its security position, but they also understand where some of the attacks might be coming from and see if they can help other customers protect against them.”



EXECUTIVE PROFILE:

Saad Siddiqui

Title: Principal at Telstra Ventures

Saad joined Telstra Ventures in 2016 and focuses on early to late stage venture investments in enterprise and infrastructure. He has led TV’s investments in NSI, Ripcord, Cofense, Incorta , Trifacta , Subspace and Boomtown. Saad enjoys helping enterprise technology teams tackle business challenges of creating a product that users love and scaling up their business. Prior to joining Telstra Ventures, Saad was an executive at Informatica where he led various acquisitions, venture investments, partnerships and product strategy. Earlier in his career, Saad worked at Cisco Ventures & Corporate Development and worked as an investment banker at RBC Capital Markets and Bank of America Merrill Lynch.

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