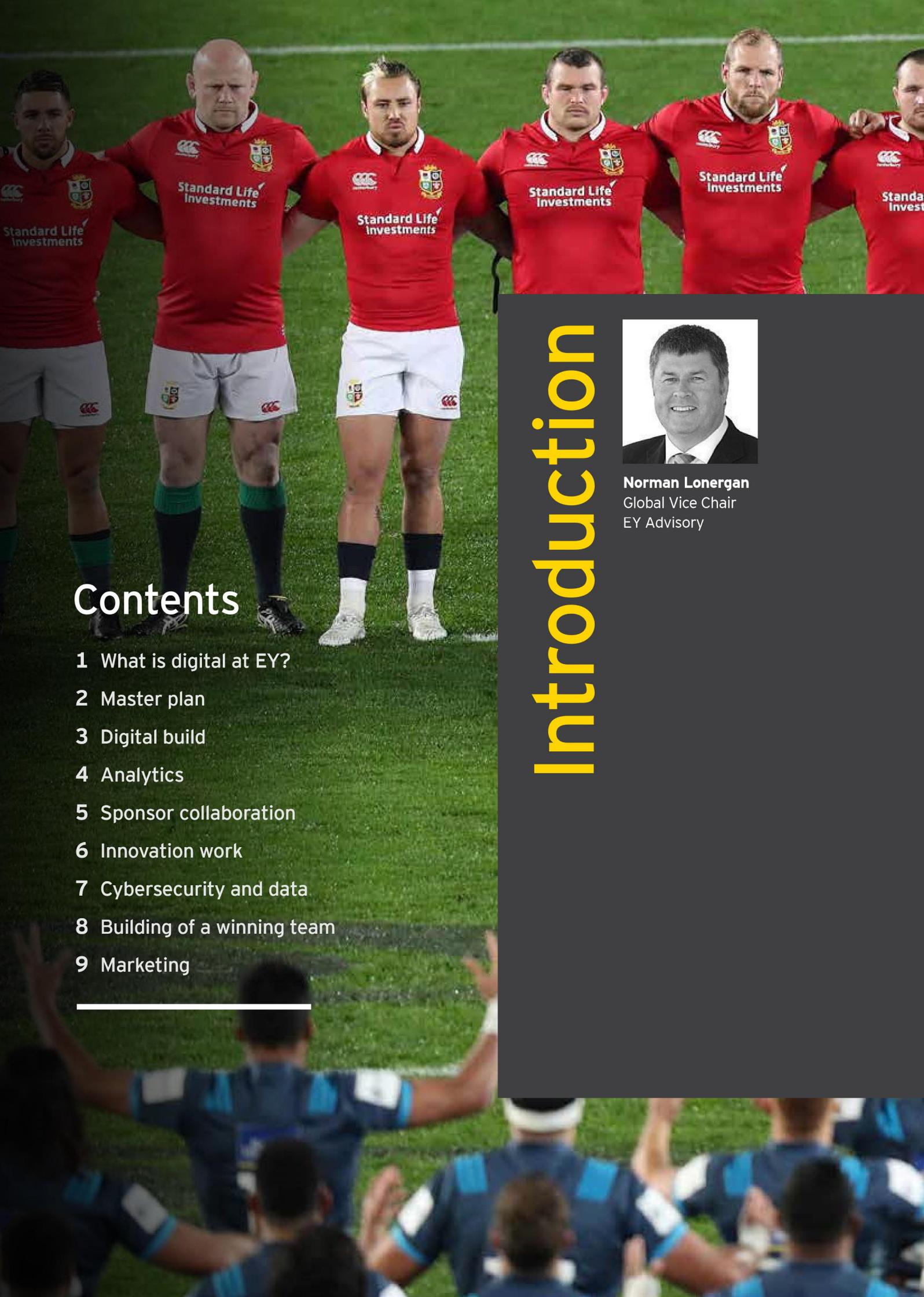


The British & Irish Lions

Tour to New Zealand 2017
EY Principal Partner
Case study





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Introduction



Norman Lonergan
Global Vice Chair
EY Advisory



We were thrilled to work with The British & Irish Lions and to enjoy the opportunity to explore digital innovations for one of the world's best-loved sporting brands, creating a powerful interactive experience for both fans and the sponsors. The Lions embody what EY brings to its clients – a broad range of diverse experience and character that, together with the right strategy and analysis, can build a better working world through high-performing teams. The Lions wanted to enhance and protect their reputation, increase their audience, proactively engage with their stakeholders and broaden their appeal.

EY helped the Lions transform their fan engagement into a truly digital brand experience, refining their digital strategy and vision while shaping the future fan and commercial partner experience so that the team is seen as a leader in this field as well as on the playing field. We became the Lions' digital teammates because we saw a real opportunity to help the Lions change the game in world rugby, to add value to their business while demonstrating EY's collaborative approach to delivering digital capabilities.

Our involvement with this much-anticipated event allowed us to demonstrate how EY employs its extensive digital capabilities and business intelligence in a way that differentiates us from our competitors – by connecting our services, people, products and alliances in new and powerful ways, to help clients thrive in this Transformative Age.

This collaboration leveraged EY's data analytics experience in business and commercial applications to impact and improve the interactive engagement between the Lions team, their fans and sponsors.

Not only are the Lions the most-loved rugby brand in the world, they're located in the UK and Ireland, organizing an event that's taking place in New Zealand, half a world away – that's 12 time zones. EY showed its capacity as a global organization by running a team based in nine countries and able to respond 24 hours a day.

Teamwork, achieving goals and targets, and the importance of leadership are all key challenges in the worlds of both sport and business. It is these values that brought EY and The British & Irish Lions together to form such a successful relationship, a story we outline here.

“When looking for our partners, the British & Irish Lions look for the best in class. The very best of the best. EY were far more than partners. They were part of the team.”

Charlie McEwen

Chief Operating Officer, British & Irish Lions



1

What is digital at EY?

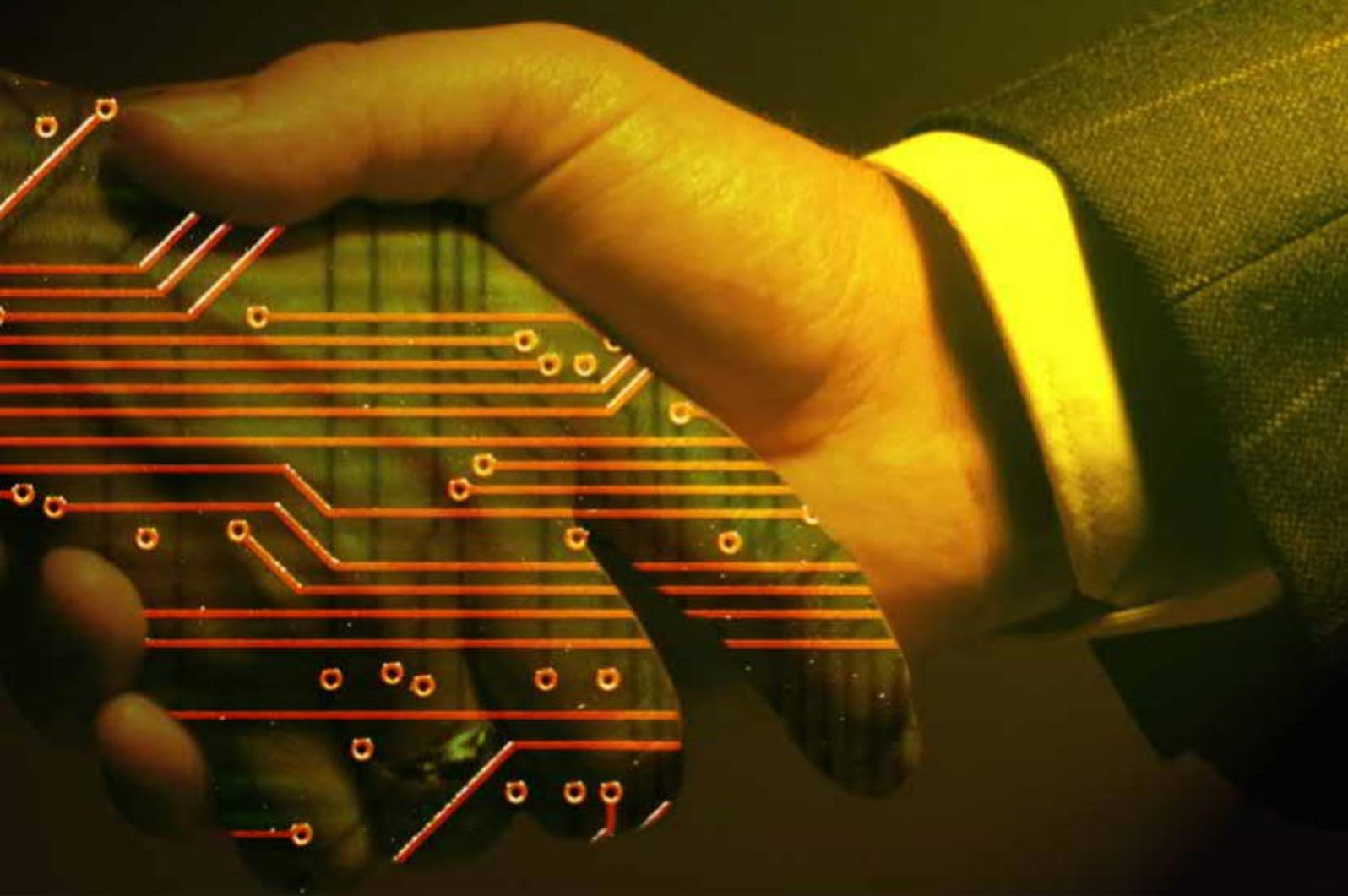
EY's digital value proposition is something we bring to clients from across the spectrum. We work with them to:

- ▶ Grow their business – by creating new business models or reimagining the customer experience
- ▶ Improve their business – by driving automation through their business functions and supply chain
- ▶ Protect their business – by predicting, preventing and responding to the broad range of risks that digital creates

Our game plan

EY became the digital partner for the 2017 Tour to New Zealand to add more value to the Lions brand through much-improved use of digital engagement, data and analytics. As the Lions do not receive any gate receipts for matches on their Tours, their principal income comes from sponsorship (merchandising provides some supplementary revenue). Increased value to the brand should, in turn, lead to increased sponsorship revenue in future Tours (starting with South Africa in 2021) as well as the potential to directly enhance future consumer income streams.

EY brought an awareness of the impact of digital on every aspect of the Lions Tour and drastically increased their knowledge and understanding of their fan base, providing much-improved insight into who the Lions fans are and how to engage with them via digital platforms.



“Digital is the defining megatrend of our time. We define digital as a continuous form of disruption to existing (or new) business models, products, services or experiences, enabled by data and disruptive technologies across the enterprise.”

Laurence Buchanan

EY EMEA Digital Lead and Delivery Lead for Lions sponsorship



2

Master plan

“The Lions is the pinnacle of world rugby. We will enhance our sporting leadership through digital excellence, unlocking value in every component of our business.”

Shane Whelan

Digital Communications Manager, British & Irish Lions

EY’s objectives with the Lions partnership were fourfold:

- 1 Build leading-class fan engagement through the Lions fan app and social media engagement
- 2 Assist and guide the Lions as an organization to learn more about their fan base
- 3 Turn that insight back into the balance sheet by increasing the value of Lions sponsorship in the future
- 4 Protect the Lions from cyber threats

Once we became a teammate of the Lions we saw a real opportunity to add value and to feature EY’s new digital offerings. In our first meeting with the Lions, they expected us to bring along a shopping list of ideas we would create for them. Instead we talked about their business model and their customer strategy and segmentation (fans and sponsors).

The Lions are a consumer brand but their revenue comes primarily from sponsors, so they are a B2B brand in that sense. We asked what did sponsors get in return for their investment and argued that the more content that sponsors contributed – the better experience it would be for the fans and therefore more return on investment for sponsors. Our aim was to create a memorable experience for fans but one that was designed in such a way that sponsors could get onboard.

Working with the Lions we created a broad catalog of the personas that represented different groups and characteristics of their audience, which gave them a crucial, deeper understanding into their customers – something they had never had before.

This helped them to understand how they could gain value and engage with the different types of fans. A 16-year-old rugby player who is watching the tour at home with friends is very different from an organization’s CEO or entrepreneur flying out to New Zealand for the Tests, who could

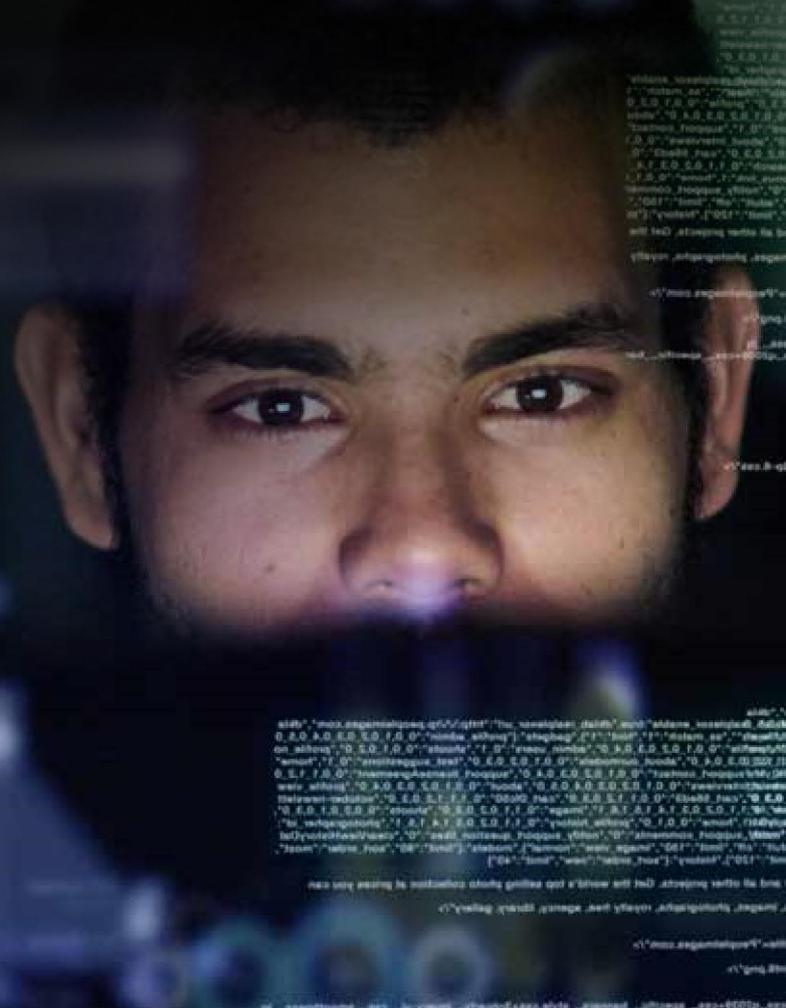
become a potential sponsor in 2021 if engaged with in the right manner.

There were lots of ideas we put to the Lions about what they could do, but the challenge was to identify what would be the most efficient in building their brand and, in turn, its value.

Our personas development revealed that – from the fans’ perspective – the pre-match build-up, speculation and debate are almost as important as the games on Tour. Fans really value getting behind the scenes and as close to the Tour as possible, even though they may be thousands of miles away. We used this insight in developing the Lions app, and it became clear that the logical “big bet” was an interactive fantasy game so “My Lions” was born and became the central tenet around which the app content would be built, along with the expected news, fixtures, past tours’ stats and much more.

3

Digital build



Our analysis of customer journeys and needs led directly to a prioritization of our development scope. One key conclusion of the insight work that we took to the Lions was that the app should not be aimed solely at the 25,000 traveling fans but also at the thousands more who would be back home, to bring them closer to the action and make them feel part of the tour. What did they want to experience? Top of the list were enhanced stats and analytics and a facility for social sharing.

We then looked back at the app, which was created for the 2013 Tour to Australia and we looked in depth at what else was out there: Major League Soccer (MLS), the Premier League, F1, PGA Tour, NASCAR etc.

Five Star Show

EY worked closely with the Lions to identify key touchpoints over their 12-month communications plan and built out a five-stage development schedule to complement it.

First phase

**(Soft launch)
January 2017**

Relaunched the previous app from four years ago with all of its features and added a longlist of players in baseball card style from which supporters would be able to select their My Lions squad when the game began.

Second phase

**(Beginning of Six Nations)
4 February**

My Lions game launched, allowing fans to pick their squad. Each squad was given a rating so fans could see how their selection rated against others. An auto-select option was provided for those whose rugby knowledge was less, while EY Ambassadors and rugby legends also picked their squads to generate further interest and debate.

“With EY’s support,
we were winners off the
pitch before a ball was kicked
or a tackle made.”

Charlie McEwen

Chief Operating Officer, British & Irish Lions

Third phase

(Squad announcement)

19 April

The game had evolved and Lions fans now picked their starting XV for the First Test. They could play fantasy rugby against the EY ambassadors and rugby legends as well as setting up private leagues. Other Lions sponsors were able to set up their own mini-leagues quickly and simply.

Fourth phase

(First Tour match)

3 June

Detailed real-time stats and analytics previously only available to coaching staff and the media were now updated directly to the app so fans could see the real story behind the match. Fans were encouraged to select their team for each Test and compare to Warren Gatland’s starting XV.

Fifth phase

(Post Tour)

Remove and strip out all the outdated content so maintenance is as light as possible for the Lions over the next three or four years before it’s reactivated ahead of South Africa 2021.



4 Analytics

The numbers game

EY's analytics teams EYC3 worked closely with colleagues on the digital teams from the outset to come up with the concepts for the app. The work focused on three distinct sections.

Part one

Professional analysis

Users chose their My Lions squad during the Six Nations as part of the build-up ahead of the Tour. The key was giving each player a rating so first, we had to quantify what makes a good player. We took a twin approach, combining data and expert opinion, taking 140 pieces of data per player per position and turning this into 20. Those were presented to EY ambassadors Sir Ian McGeechan and Tim Horan to make their assessments on which were the most relevant for player quality.

Sir Ian rated each level of game from international down through European Cup, Challenge Cup to Pro12 and Premiership so players' performances could be accurately

assessed. We worked within parameters requested by the client – they asked that tackles missed were not made public (for obvious reasons) and wanted all 700 eligible players from the four nations included. In the end, 25 out of the 41 players picked by Warren Gatland were in our top 50.

One key innovation EY's teams built in was squad cohesion. It's an accepted fact that teams who have players and units that play together do better, so fans received higher ratings for selecting groups (front row, back row, half-backs etc.,) from the same country, thanks to the algorithm our teams designed.

Part two

Fan engagement

Once the squad was announced we ramped up the engagement factor. Fans were able to pick their starting XV and play the fantasy Lions game, which EY's teams built from scratch. Considerable work was undertaken to enhance the experience. We introduced various factors – weather, referees, tactics, replacement and grounds – alongside simply matching up the two sides selected in the game.

For each game, the user had to make choices on their side's tactics, use of replacements, choice of star player, etc., to reflect those factors. EY's teams created the algorithms from two years worth of data, comprising some 1,300 matches over this period, including the 2015 Rugby World Cup. During the game, fans pitted their sides against those of our Lions ambassadors and selected supporters, with each fixture generating a final scoreline and full statistics and match data.

Part three

Enhancing fan experience

We took the fans' experience up another notch by introducing the streaming, processing and presenting of real-time data to app users during the matches. We built a run of play tracker that illustrated which team had the momentum in the game, something the scoreboard does not always reflect. With a sparse amount of training data an algorithm was constructed around position, territory and other key features to calculate the run of play score and give users more insight into the game – an approach that is reflected in one of our Better Questions, "Does the scoreline tell the whole story?".

Lions fans could vote for their Man of the Match. The voting system was set up to allow users to change their vote until 15 minutes after the game to encourage fan interactivity at multiple touchpoints during the match.

Building a platform

The Microsoft Azure Cloud service was chosen as the ideal platform to develop, store and run the app. EYC3 was able to bring its skill set together with nine comprehensive Azure tools all seamlessly linked together. This included:

- ▶ Data Factory for transformation of data and to provide schedules for activities such as updating the 200,000+ users' ranks and profile scores.
- ▶ Machine learning for the predictive analytics and the interface to execute R, which was used for the purposes of squad rankings, player statistics and generating a squad and score for each fan's fantasy team.
- ▶ Table storage utilized as a "queue" of requests, created by fans accessing the app.

The Result

Engagement time more than doubled in 2017 – average

3.30 minutes per session

16% of session on non-game days were playing fantasy games

Female usage was doubled through Tour

Average **19** screens per session

20% increase in downloads compared to 2013

More than **130,000** fantasy rugby games played

Our experienced and highly qualified teams were available to support the app around the clock and work closely with our technology collaborators (see chapter 9) to solve technical challenges as they arose.

5

Sponsor collaboration





Teaming

In the past, Lions partners had tended to act in silos and had not explored opportunities to create value by working together where possible. EY changed all that and went to each sponsor to find out what they were planning in the digital field and what their aims were. All the sponsors were very cooperative, and we were able to understand each of their aims and identify ways we could work together. All except two were also EY clients, which gave us added value.

This collaboration gave us the chance to talk to those other sponsors about their businesses and their needs as well as the Lions sponsorship, creating opportunities and generating leads for potential future client work.

We also looked at working together on the ground in New Zealand through joint hospitality and onsite activation.

“EY was delighted to provide an interactive, creative, digital experience, not just for the Lions fans but also the other sponsors.”

Norman Lonergan
Global Vice Chair – EY Advisory

6

Innovation work (Command center)



“The brilliant thing about working with EY was how they looked at things differently.”

Charlie McEwen

Chief Operating Officer, British & Irish Lions

EY wanted to deliver exceptional client service and go further than just producing the app and My Lions interactive game, which was the basic requirement of being the Lions’ digital partner, to showcase our capabilities within digital, analytics and data.

We wanted to provide great insight for our client and give them access to information they had previously lacked, which would allow the Lions to make better and more informed business and commercial decisions in the future.

We produced a scorechart of ideas, including virtual reality experiences where fans would walk out of the tunnel with the Lions ahead of kickoff or stand alongside the team to face the Haka and even a Pokémon-style game where fans chase Lions around cities.

Our GDS teams very rapidly built eight prototypes for sponsors and the Lions, but limitations such as the poor Wi-Fi available in New Zealand stadia and broadcast agreements restricted the client’s ability to implement these innovations.

So EY broke new ground by setting up an analytics command center in New Zealand (open to EY clients and sponsors) to provide real-time analytics on social media sentiment, security operations and sponsor promotions during the Tour.

The command center was a multi-page dashboard and showcases the app analytics (in similar fashion to Google analytics), bringing disparate data sources together and presenting in one easily accessible and navigable view.

Key sections included:

- ▶ My Lions – primary fantasy rugby and squad selection data such as games played, user preferred game play modes, user ladders, private league administration and competition (in this case, Qantas) statistics.
- ▶ Top Lions – visualization of player stats for key metrics, heat maps of set plays, run of play replay and analysis across games, and Man of the Match results from the app.

- ▶ App analytics – daily insights of aggregated Google/Apple app statistics including downloads, dwell time, geographic locations, demographics and unique views.
- ▶ Fan engagement – we integrated the Thunderhead Engagement One platform providing SSO capability to access the latest insights.
- ▶ Cyber – our teams integrated EY cyber’s threat analysis and security dashboards to enable us to monitor vulnerabilities and threats to the Lions infrastructure.

This was a great opportunity for EY to showcase its analytics capabilities and for the Lions to generate real insight during the Tour, which in turn could add new value to sponsors.

7

Cybersecurity and data





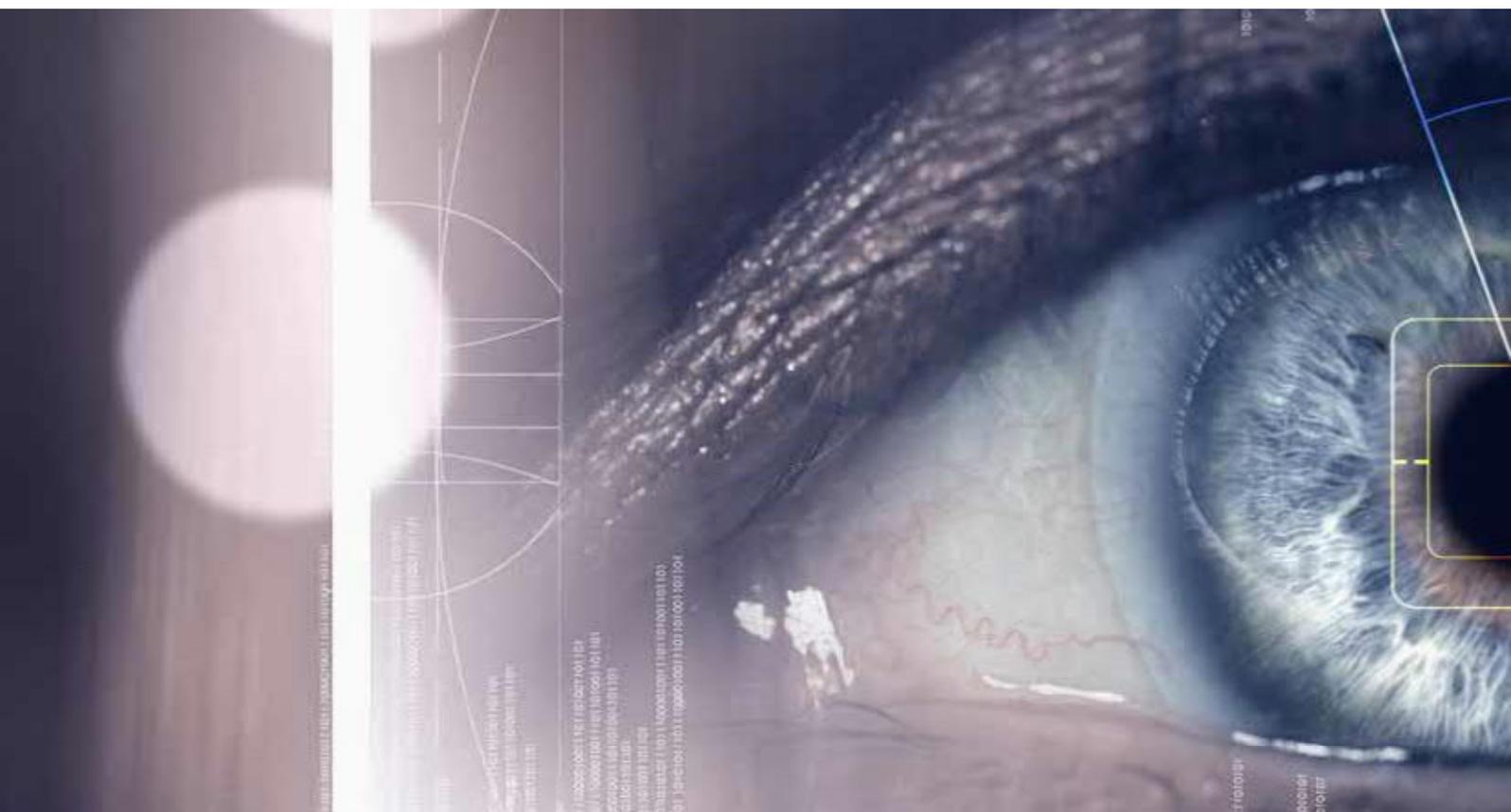
In safe hands

To deliver leading-class fan engagement, it was paramount that EY undertook a program of work to understand and help mitigate any identified cyber-related threats that could cause negative impact to the Lions, their fans, the My Lions app and any of the 2017 Tour sponsors.

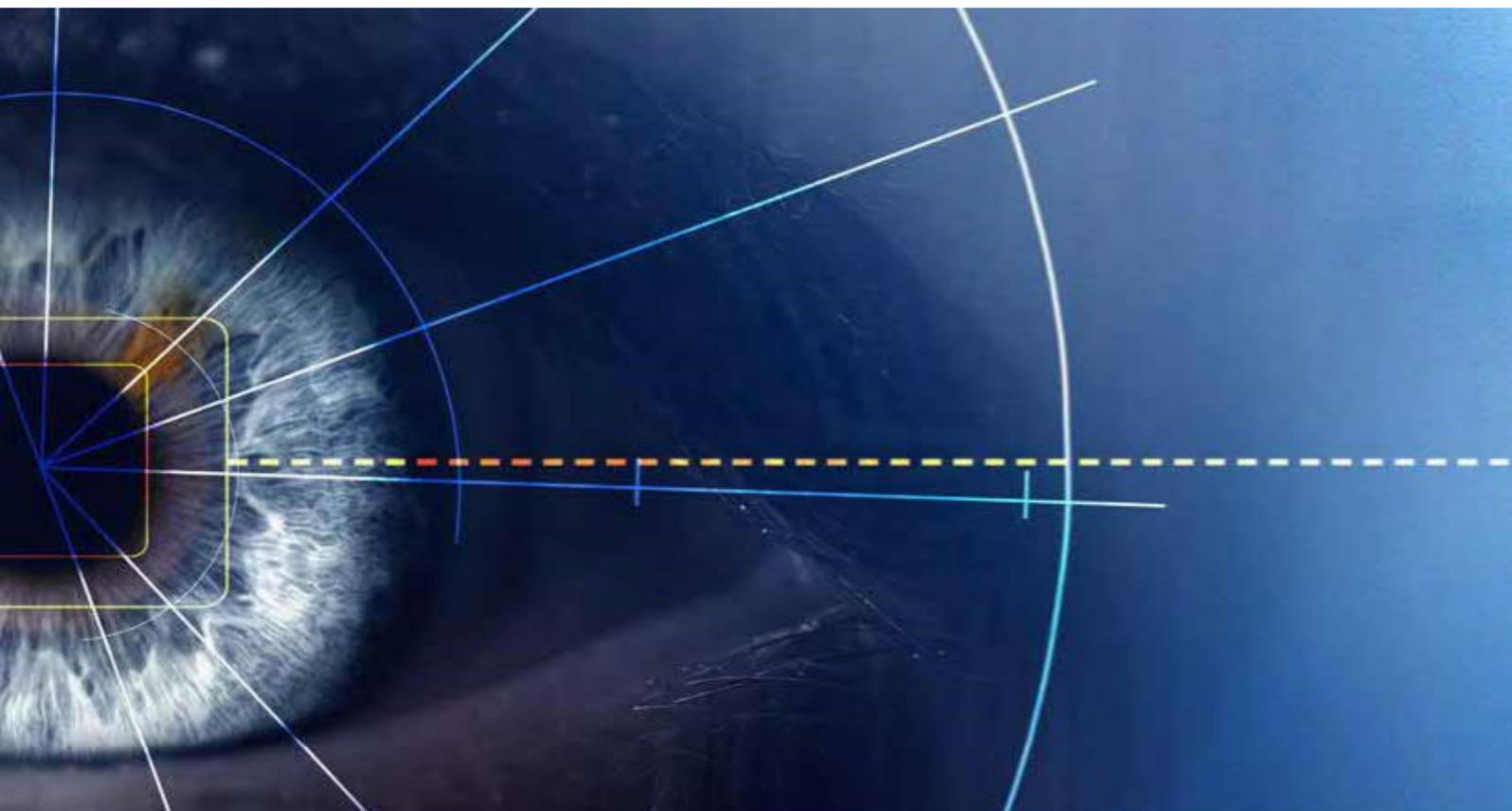
EY worked closely with the Lions throughout all stages of the journey to identify critical areas of focus before and during the Tour and built out a program of work over a six-month period. This focus facilitated leading-practice compliance and the tightest cybersecurity and data protection for all aspects of the 2017 Tour including the official website, press and media accreditation, and the Lions fans app.

EY's support over the six months consisted of:

- 1** The EY cyber teams working in close conjunction with the app development teams, facilitated leading practice by performing a number of security tests including penetration tests of the Lions Fan app. The tests were performed as part of the development and release process, resulting in a secure app delivered without any additional delays. We tested the download of the app to confirm that all fans would be securely interacting with the official site and that all data was collected and stored in accordance with data protection requirements.
- 2** EY delivered a broad assessment and review of the Lions' security, policies and processes, and used the findings to advise on actions to be taken to facilitate alignment to recommended industry practice and in the areas of cybersecurity and data protection.
- 3** During the development of the My Lions app and after the 19 April squad announcement, EY conducted more interactive testing, including development of a near real-time cyber detect-and-respond capability by designing and helped implement customized dashboards that allowed EY and the Lions to view:
 - a** Inbound connection attempts from "known high-risk addresses" to the back end Lions infrastructure.
 - b** Visual and dynamic patterns of connections to identify anomalies across the infrastructure, helping the Lions command center to respond accordingly.
- 4** EY complemented our detect-and-respond capabilities by providing daily proactive cyber threat intelligence to the Lions and the app command center. This allowed EY to focus our activities on cyber protection, as well as providing confirmation to the Lions that their architecture was protected against active threats. Examples include:
 - a** When the WannaCry ransomware attack hit the UK's NHS we immediately assessed the implications for the Lions and provided same-day advice to confirm that their sites and data were secure.
 - b** We identified rogue broadcast sites illegally streaming the matches; they were subsequently taken down.



EY has strong credentials in this field, working with numerous other sporting clients on their cyber and data security, but this was the first time we built a broad co-branded app for a sporting organization.



8

Building a winning team



APD

Digital partner APD assisted EY's design teams (including user experience and front-end/visual design) and was responsible for full-stack development and delivery of the app, across both Apple and Android platforms. APD worked closely with multiple partners (such as Sotic, Goodform and EYC3), to help integration of content delivery in a user-friendly app that aligned with the marketing calendar to engage fans and build momentum for the Tour. Fluid business and marketing objectives created challenges when contrasted with the lead time required to design and develop this technology, but APD worked closely with EY to craft a user-facing touch point that delivered on the objectives EY and the Lions had set.

Thunderhead

Thunderhead's ONE Engagement Hub (ONE) is the omnichannel engagement platform used by the Lions to leverage fan behavior and journey insight in real time to drive relevant and personalized conversations across

fan-facing channels. The Lions were looking to build stronger and more valuable relationships with their fans. Using ONE technology, they listen to real-time fan activity as they move from web, mobile, email and the app. This journey insight is used to promote app downloads and create a more personalized experience for fans by interacting consistently across channels and at key moments to create an ongoing and relevant conversation with each fan.

Glassbox

Glassbox's enterprise-level digital solutions provide customer journey mapping and analytics, digital compliance, digital channel customer support and digital channel performance capability. Glassbox automatically captures, records, easily retrieves and analyzes every customer interaction on mobile apps, providing immediate visual insight and qualitative data into what customers do and why, with no IT development or tagging. This enabled EY's teams to gain full visibility into the user experience.

Logan Sports Marketing

Logan Sports Marketing (LSM) managed the Lions' commercial program for the 2013 Tour and having worked with EY on the management of their Rugby World Cup 2015 partnership, they were the obvious partner to market and activate our Lions association. LSM was able to provide valuable insight, from the contracting of the commercial rights at the outset to the bringing together of the sponsor family and delivering memorable experiences for EY clients and prospects through the Lions global roadshows. They helped enable the EY global delivery teams to work seamlessly and collaboratively with the Lions, making for an even more powerful relationship.



9

Marketing

The sponsorship of the British & Irish Lions enabled us to demonstrate, with actions and behaviors, how EY's digital and analytics capabilities, two key drivers of growth in this Transformative Age, can create commercial uplift, user engagement and business intelligence, facilitating a truly digital experience.

Objectives

- 1 Share compelling content to demonstrate EY's digital and analytics capabilities and tell the story of how we helped the Lions' clients navigate the challenges facing them in the Transformative Age.
- 2 Build and strengthen the EY brand. Showcase that EY builds a better working world through sports (high-performing teams).
- 3 Drive consistent engagement and conversation before, during and after the Lions Tour, via discussions that are topical and timely, demonstrating EY's capability to be part of a wider discussion that subtly promotes our suite of offerings. Achieve this through engagement, consistent activity and conversation at the right time on the right topic, driving app download.

How did we achieve this? We identified a three-pronged approach ...

- 1 **Campaigning:** We developed a three-tiered brand activation approach supporting the different sponsorship stages, embracing a "Digital First"-approach around a proactive PR and social strategy, supported by a strong content marketing philosophy.

We announced our sponsorship in September 2016 and initially focused on creating awareness and support through an internal communications and engagement strategy, using narrowcasting, webcasts and regular internal communications. Around the third release of the app, we built out our sponsorship internally and kicked off external communications to rally rugby fans and engage with key influencers. We launched a sponsorship microsite including webshop (ey.com/lionstour)



“EY’s work with the British & Irish Lions may seem like an ordinary sponsorship, but there’s nothing ordinary about it.”

Yolanda van Die
EY Global Brand, Marketing & Communications
Advisory Leader

and themed releases around digital and analytics and a Telegraph media partnership (around 17 specific stories).

2 Showcasing: Post-tour, we focused on creating the credentials and case studies to strengthen the positioning of EY in the digital and analytics domain. We presented our work with the Lions to position EY as the go-to organization for projects in this space. We developed four different storylines. These included fan engagement, building a better working world through sports, and leaving a “digital” legacy. The fourth storyline was about delivering leading-class projects through high-performing teams to support the activation of our sponsorship across owned, shared, earned and paid media/channels.

3 Experiencing: We organized leading-class hospitality and events for our clients and other stakeholders, in the buildup to and during the Tour. This included 12 Global Roadshows with eight (internal) Townhalls and several related events. They included our CEO drinks and London Celebration Dinner, at which a broad range of ambassadors attended. They entertained our guests with rugby stories and promoted the EY story, showcasing the app and its insights. The program concluded with hospitality during the Tour for 200 guests.

The result

App downloads **~215k**. The app facilitated 1.6m sessions of an average 3.30 minutes per session.

Social and digital campaign curated over **4.59m** impressions, 23k clicks and over 2.7k social engagements. Click-through rates, which varied, were 1.5 to 3 times above (mobile) industry/platform standards.

Telegraph partnership gave an additional reach of almost **25k** unique users and an average time on site of more than 2 minutes.



Our Lions partnership extended into our collaboration as Official Partner of the WRWC 2017. This sponsorship again illustrated EY’s diversity efforts, positioning the Women in Leadership theme and underlining our continued efforts with the Women Athletes Business Network (WABN), our Olympic Intern Program and Talent Identification program.

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A global mindset, diversity and collaborative culture inspires EY consultants to ask better questions, create innovative answers and realize long-lasting results.

The better the question. The better the answer. The better the world works.

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