

# Mark Ellison

Multi-disciplinarian digital strategist and passionate problem-solver with an active interest in connection technologies.

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## Education

**School of Oriental and African Studies**

2005–06, London, UK

**M.A. Politics & Society of the Middle East**

Course covered history, politics, society, religion and economy of the Middle East and Central Asia; graduated with Merit.

Dissertation explored social and political aspects of journalism and media space management in transitional democracies, with special focus on Iraq from 2003–06.

Member of Chatham House institute for debate and analysis of international issues.

**Wake Forest University**

2000–04, Winston-Salem, NC, USA

**B.A. Political Science**

Political science major coupled with minor in international studies and an area focus on the Middle East, including history, civil society, political Islam, and foreign relations.

## Experience

### Travelfusion

2006-10, London, UK

#### Product Manager

Hired as QA manager to identify functional shortcomings and guide stakeholders towards pragmatic solutions; promoted to Project / Product Manager after one year.

I was responsible for the entire lifecycle of projects; gathered information and analyzed business needs; created specifications and directed the efforts needed to deliver them.

My role brought together a hybrid of cultures, disciplines and skills – coordinating our own teams in London and Shanghai; collaborating with technical and non-technical external teams from 15 countries across Europe, Asia and South America; solving foreign-language UI issues and technical problems between legacy and new APIs.

Under my leadership we successfully grew content partners from less than 15 to over 200, expanded from flights-only to include 4 new travel verticals – hotels, car rentals, packaged holidays and last-minute deals – and grew the number of users of our website from virtually zero to over 2000 per week, improving our search engine visibility, increasing our online brand presence, and ultimately bringing in new commercial partners and revenues.

## Skills & Interests

### Communications Technology

World Film Collective is a social justice organization that teaches marginalized young people to make films on cell phones and distribute those films online to global audiences.

As Co-Founder, I developed the concept of WFC with the CEO. With operations on 4 continents, I structured the volunteer management aspect of the charity using the Basecamp collaboration platform. I continually help to fulfill the charity's technical needs and promote its online presence.

### Web Product Development

I have produced websites for a variety of small businesses, NGOs, and professional writers, using a combination of content management systems and hand-coded HTML / CSS. Have a clear understanding of presentation layer code and technologies.

### Arabic Language, 2010–11

In Syria, attended formal study (500 hours) of Arabic at the University of Damascus Higher Institute for Language; travelled to and interacted with people from 6 countries in the region.

### Competencies

Adobe Photoshop, Microsoft Office, Google Docs, Windows/Mac, Content Management Systems (CMS), Project Management software, Contact Relationship Manager (CRM) software