



Annual Analytics Summit Summary

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This year's Analytics Summit, in conjunction with the Royal Statistical Society (RSS) was held on a beautiful sunny day at the IET London in Savoy Place. Around one hundred delegates attended and, according to the latest information available, 96% rated it positively.

The five main speakers were Claire Thompson, RBS, Jonathon Roberts, Ministry of Justice, Dominic Stubbs, [ESRI UK](#), Luciano Floridi, Oxford Internet Institute and Peter Wells, Open Data Institute. The panel session was chaired, at the last minute, by Tony O'Connor, GORS and the four panellists were Luciano Floridi, Jessica Montgomery, Royal Society, Sue Daley, Tech UK and Sarah Giles, Government Digital Service and its theme was "Ethics". All five talks along with the panel session were filmed and these are available to view on the OR Society web.

President Ruth Kaufman, OBE opened the day with a welcome on behalf of the OR Society and the RSS to the delegates and a big "thank you" to the sponsors and to all those who had helped organise the event.

"The [RBS] is built on data", according to Claire Thompson, Head of Customer Analytics. The team has grown from eight to 50 and their main tasks are to correct the data, connect it to the business and create value from it. For example, the bank needs to be able to access and act on every complaint it receives. It also uses this data to improve and personalise customer interactions. When asked what skills were needed in her team, she responded, "A passion for the work".

Jonathon Roberts talked about the role of data science within the Ministry of Justice. The MoJ employs some 20 or more data scientists, one data engineer and one software developer and their aim is to become a data-driven department putting analysis, data and evidence at the heart of decision making. As an example, the MoJ had around 6,000 Parliamentary Questions raised during the last parliament – these were, of course, all in natural language, but many were on very similar themes so there is a need to be able to interpret these and identify similar questions using some form of machine learning.

Dominic Stubbs is the Chief Architect at [ESRI UK](#). The world is all about data. He talked about one's

digital twin – building a model of your world through your data. He explained, for example, how it was possible to use satellite views of the world to identify where oil is being stored and to estimate how much is in storage at any given time. It is possible to estimate, fairly accurately, how many people are in a shopping mall by counting the number of cars in the car park but the technology is developing to the point where it will soon be possible to also read the registrations of those cars and hence identify individuals who are in the mall but would this be ethical?

Luciano Floridi from the Oxford Internet Institute and Oxford Digital Ethics Hub closed the morning session with a talk about the General Data Protection Regulations – human dignity and the right to an explanation. The GDPR is aimed at privacy and human dignity – what we do with personal data. Unfortunately, it does not include the right to an explanation.

This is a first step and was signed by the European Parliament last year. There is still much to be done, for example, the creation of an AI watchdog in case of complaints; a regulatory body auditing algorithms and; a certification process.

The final talk at the end of the afternoon was given by Peter Wells, Open Data Institute who is keen to promote open access to data. He wants to build a strong, fair and sustainable data economy by helping businesses get data to the people who need it. He said, "Roads help us navigate to a location. Data helps us navigate to a decision." He did admit, however, that there needs to be a number of safeguards put in place before we can achieve this goal.

There followed a drinks reception sponsored by Taylor and Francis, or, in my case, a brisk walk back to Paddington Station. (Please go to the OR Society website to see the videos of this event. I hope to write an article about the panel discussion on Ethics next month.) 