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# James Harkin



James Harkin is an analyst and forecaster of new ideas and new social, political and technological trends and what they mean for companies, governments and institutions. He is the Director of Flockwatching, a company which uses the information on blogs, social networks and the internet to create understanding of social changes, new media and consumer trends in mass observation.

From 1999-2004 James worked full-time as a 'futurologist' for think-tanks and agencies in New York, London and in continental Europe. He managed projects on changing social and technological trends as an associate of the London think-tank Demos, and authored a number of Demos pamphlets, including *Mobilisation: The growing public interest in mobile technology*, and *Eternal Youths: How the baby boomers are having their time again*.

He writes regularly for several newspapers and magazines including the Financial Times. He regularly appears on the BBC, CNN, Channel 4, Sky and Al Jazeera talking about social and technological trends, and has lectured on political economy and social theory at Oxford University, and the consequences of the internet at the London School of Economics. James has also moderated live studio debates on two continents for Al-Jazeera television.

His most recent book, *'Niche: Why The Market No Longer Favours the Mainstream'* is about the changing shape of culture, politics and society and won a K Blundell award from the Society of Authors for increasing social awareness. His other books include *'Big Ideas: The Essential Guide to the Latest Thinking'* and *'Cyberburbia: How Crackpots, Inventors and Visionaries Created Our New Life Online'*.

James was the associate producer of the BBC's three-part ideas-driven series about game theory, *The Trap: Whatever happened to our dream of freedom?*. He was also associate producer of the BBC's three-part series *All Watched Over By Machines of Loving Grace*, which looked at the relationship between cybernetics, ecology and culture and aired on BBC TV in 2011.

He recently keynoted both The Economist's annual 'Big Rethink' conference and the annual conference of Liz Murdoch's TV production company Shine on strategy, the arts and institutional change.

In November 2011 James was one of the very few international journalists to make it into the city of Homs in Syria as the situation deteriorated there; his reports from Homs and Damascus was a cover story in Newsweek Magazine. His reports also appeared on the BBC, CNN and NPR and in a range of newspapers all across Europe and the US. In late February 2012 he went back to Syria, visiting Damascus, Douma, Herasta and Homs as an undercover journalist. He wrote about it in a long cover story for The New Republic in the US ("The Stalled Revolution"), in dispatches for The Atlantic Magazine, and in a commission from The New York Times, and in comment pieces for Foreign Policy.

James has been elected to a visiting fellowship at the Reuters Institute at Oxford University for the academic year 2013/2014, for a project on the Syrian conflict; and also to Senior Associate Membership of St. Anthony's College, Oxford University, for the academic year 2013/2014.