

James Williams, head of marketing at Wonga

 By [Emily Stander](#)

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We catch up with James Williams, head of marketing at short term lender, Wonga.



Image supplied: James Williams, head of marketing at Wonga

■ **Tell us a bit more about what you do?**

I head up the marketing team at Wonga – This role entails management of a streamlined internal marketing team as well as partner and agency management. I am accountable for marketing strategy, brand as well as tactical marketing implementation across all platforms and channels.

■ **What's really behind your selfie?**

I'm a massive sports fan and having played and watched a lot of team sports, I really value the lift I get from being around energetic people and the comradery that comes with that. This applies to my personal and professional life – I think people are the most important ingredient of success!

■ **Growing up, what did you want to do?**

When I was four or five, I wanted to “drive” a lawn mower as this seemed like the coolest thing in the world – in my teens I wanted to be a civil engineer or a Premier League footballer, but sadly my aspirations far outstripped my skill.

■ **How did you end up doing what you do now?**

I was a front-end developer/ webmaster at an agency in Johannesburg around 15 years ago and was asked to do some SEO optimisation for a client. From there, I added more digital marketing channels to my skillset, and then that eventually led to me working in the entire marketing ecosystem.

■ **Tell us a bit about some highlights of your career.**

I think one of the biggest highlights of my career is that I was fortunate to transition from head of digital marketing to head of marketing at Wonga. This opened up a whole new world to me and I am grateful that the performance marketing ethos I learned in the digital arena, which has been a benefit in the way I think about problems in the broader marketing space

overall.

■ When you're not busy working, what do you do? How do you socialise these days?

I spend a lot of time with my family, visiting new places, eating out and generally having a great time. Although, having bought a new house fairly recently, I have spent most weekends on DIY recently. If you ever need a garden pond built, I know a guy!

■ What are you watching/reading/listening to right now?

I honestly don't have much time for reading these days but do listen to audiobooks and podcasts on my commute.

Most recently, I listened to an audiobook by Donald Miller called *Building a Story Brand* which gives insight into brand positioning. For podcasts, I listen to *Fintech Insider* frequently – this is a fintech podcast covering all aspects of digital payments, integration, legislation, lending and pretty much anything else to do with the digital finance space.

■ What's your favourite gif?



■ What are you hoping to achieve for the rest of the year?

On the professional front, I'm hoping to get the Wonga brand back into consumers' minds as their short-term cash flow solution (Watch this space!) – and on a personal level, I think I'd like to get a better grip on data and commercial analytics.

ABOUT EMILY STANDER

Freelancer specialising in games and entertainment | My first loves are writing, music and video games
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