

## How Signal has helped White Star Capital with business intelligence on its companies, competitors and the market as a whole

Nicholas Stocks is a partner at White Star Capital. We spoke to Nicholas about his experience with Signal.

### The challenge

As a venture capitalist firm with a large and growing portfolio of companies, White Star Capital needed a way to monitor their brands to understand exactly what was being said about them beyond just pure news. With operations in five countries covering three continents, it's a challenge to stay on top of the most relevant news. Access to a wide range of international and foreign language news sources is required and an easy way to translate content.

Google Alerts were useful but not scalable; the search terms couldn't be finely tuned to filter out unnecessary stuff. Dice - a mobile app for gig tickets - is one of White Star's companies and Google Alerts pulled in any number of irrelevant articles about dice as oppose to Dice. Having a more robust tool for monitoring made logical sense.

*"The VC industry is defined by information advantage, knowing who is doing what, when and where. We needed a solution to help us stay on top of the relevant news."* - **Nicholas**

### The solution

White Star Capital's first interaction with Signal was back during their initial fundraising stage when the co-founders were operating out of a garage in Belsize Park in north-west London. It was evident from the outset that the platform that Signal were building, and their use of AI and machine learning would automate and replace the inefficient and sometimes ineffective Google Alerts that White Star Capital were using.

White Star Capital became an early customer of Signal. In those initial days, there was some hand-holding from Signal to quickly get them up-and-running. The team created the relevant feeds and trained the system to ensure the results were accurate, organising and tagging the relevant content from global sources while excluding anything that wasn't related.

The auto-translation of foreign language content helps Nicholas to monitor stories local to his portfolio companies and the real-time alerts ensure he's kept up-to-date with relevant business news which he can readily share this with his team members.

*“Signal is basically Google Alerts on steroids. Signal is an ideal solution to help us monitor the relevant news flow globally.” - Nicholas*

## The results

Having access to a vast range of global data sources through the Signal platform has brought about some welcome, but unexpected results for White Star Capital. For example, an alert came through about one of their investments featured in a patent journal. They didn't know the company had applied for a new patent so forwarded the alert to the CEO to find out that he also didn't know about it. As a result of this discovery, Nicholas is now using Signal to actively track patents applied for by competitors to their portfolio brands.

During a round of fundraising, White Star Capital used Signal to email out a summary of related news during a crucial 48-hour period. White Star Capital can provide their companies with full visibility on their PR on a global basis, giving them all of the articles in English regardless of origin. It also becomes extremely valuable to track what any competitors are doing in this increasingly globalised arena.

The access to unlimited content, ease of which new searches can be set-up and managed with real-time email alerts enables the team at White Star Capital to stay informed and act quickly on that information. Nicholas estimates that the team are only currently utilising about 25% of the system and there's even more value they can get out of the Signal platform.

*“Being able to search for news articles relating to any prospective investment, we get a clear understanding of the key events that have transpired in that company's life.” - Nicholas*



### About White Star Capital

[White Star Capital](#) is a venture capital firm that has been helping exceptional entrepreneurs build successful technology businesses in Europe and North America for the last ten years. White Star Capital has an impressive investment portfolio of companies including BrandProject, digg, Freshly, Gymtrack, Hole 19, KeyMe and MUBI.



### **About Nicholas Stocks**

[Nicholas Stocks](#) is a partner at White Star Capital where he's been since 2016. Nicholas started his career in banking and corporate finance before getting hooked on the tech startup life at Skyscape Cloud Services. Nicholas was a Principal at Global Founders Capital before joining White Star Capital and has worked on and co-led many global investments.