

Intranet user adoption and engagement

How to make your new intranet a success



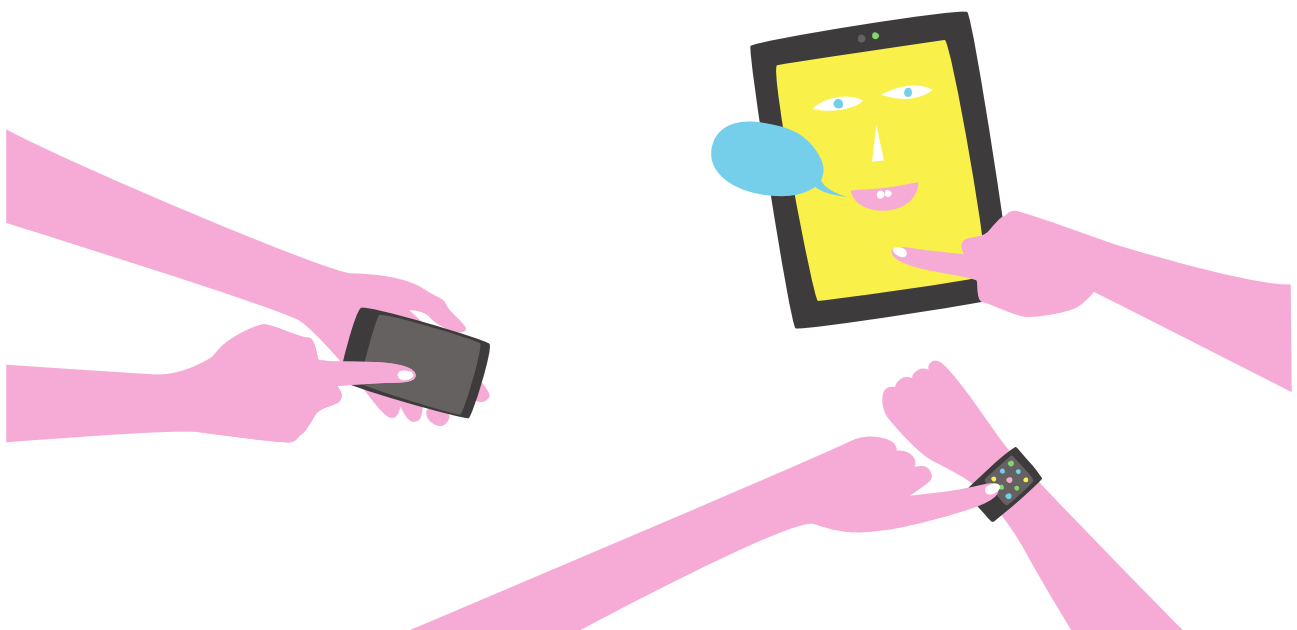
Implementing anything new within an organisation can be overwhelming.

It's a task that requires significant planning, team dedication and often a significant investment. Moreover, effecting anything that alters the way we work requires substantial business justification.

One such task is the implementation of an intranet. Intranets have become an essential element to the success and longevity of an organisation's internal communications. This is because intranets facilitate the exchange of information and communication which improve data and knowledge sharing capabilities between an organisation's employees. Additionally, an effective intranet enables the access of information wherever you are, which permits the proliferation and collaboration of documents. An intranet is what keeps your business evolving and connected.

As you get the green light on your intranet agenda, it is important to immediately begin formulating an action plan to reduce any barriers and/or difficulties that may stand in the way of user adoption and engagement: the fundamental driver towards a successful intranet implementation.

This whitepaper aims to give you advice on how to plan a successful intranet adoption strategy. From gaining your employees interest, to planning key change management tactics, this whitepaper will inform, prepare and encourage a successful intranet adoption and engagement plan to ensure your intranet is used to its full potential.



Before we dive in

To assist you on your quest for clarity, our previous whitepaper **The 5C's of a Successful Intranet**, is the essential map to navigate your way to a successful intranet.

In summary, the 5 C's comprise the fundamental purpose and experience of a good intranet:

Communicate

All about sharing

Collaborate

Working together more effectively

Community

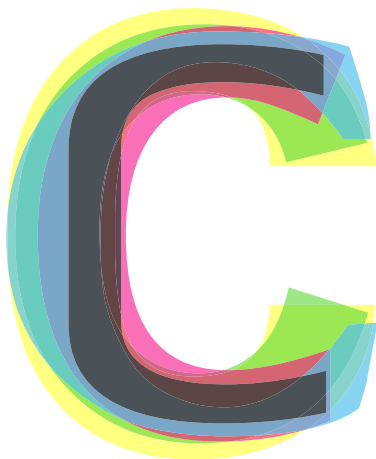
Creating a sense of belonging and establishing an informal space for information sharing and team building

Contribute

Getting your audience involved

Customise

Tailoring the intranet to provide key content to a specific audience to foster a sense of inclusion and to maximise engagement



Preparing for a new intranet

The key



Every project holds a key, as does every intranet. The key to your intranet rests within its ability to solve problems. Getting work done easier is a fundamental element of user adoption. Your intranet must simply be useful, otherwise users will bypass the intranet altogether, or at minimum, use it in unintended ways which implicates poor management and employee alignment and ineffective adoption strategies. All the tricks in the world won't make your intranet successful if it doesn't actually serve a purpose of helping employees get their jobs done. **The key to driving adoption is usefulness.**

Brace for change

Change management is crucial to avoiding any unknowns in order to get your employees prepared for adaptations made to their regular process of conducting business. By addressing likely issues and scenarios your employees may encounter when adopting a new intranet, it is vital to reduce, if not completely remove, any road blocks that may hinder the momentum of your intranet adoption.

By informing and preparing your employees to embrace your new intranet, it promotes a smoother transition resulting in higher user acceptance. Additionally, by establishing a prearranged structure to manage change, the intranet will be implemented in a more controlled environment. You don't want

your employees to have to accept the changes of your intranet, but rather you want them to embrace it.

A lack of awareness and/or concerns about how change will have an impact on an employee's current role needs to be addressed from the top-down. Upper management are responsible for the dissemination of information, the allocation of internal tasks and the strategic plans that will prepare their employees to embrace their new intranet.

Organisational readiness is a prerequisite to garner user adoption and to demonstrate business value.

Here are a few things to consider when planning your change management strategy:

1

Start by communicating what's not working within your organisation. Why are these changes needed in your current environment?

2

Transitioning into your new environment needs to be communicated in a way that will validate such change and demonstrate advantages. Communicate the benefits of moving to your new technology/ solution.

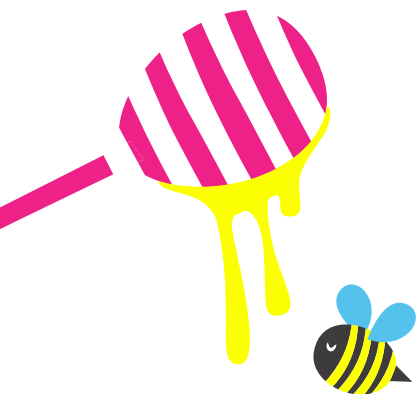
3

Address any expressed concerns (even concerns that *may* occur need to be considered and addressed). The degree in which we communicate with employees will directly impact the initial adoption undertaken by its users.

4

Assure your team that the changes will 'transform' their current situation and enhance their digital workspace, as well as what you intend to preserve, such as various elements that will continue being used or practiced.





Building interest

Gaining interest, and keeping interest, are two completely different tasks that require a lot of planning, team dedication and enthusiasm. It is at this stage that your team will move from awareness to action; from planning to delivering. Here are some tips and tricks to get your employees interested in your new intranet:

Keep it simple

- 1 Focus on providing a clear sense of direction – don't confuse or overwhelm your users

Getting people onto your intranet in the first place is a tough enough task. Your intranet should have the tools and functionality that allow a quick and painless process of conducting work.

- 2 Keep the design friendly, fresh and attractive. Your employees have to use the intranet throughout the entire working day; it should be nice to look at!

Strong information architecture (IA) and user experience needs to provide an intuitive journey whilst navigating an intranet. Your employees are more likely to engage with your intranet if the design makes their working life simpler.

- 3 Create clear guidelines for your intranet. It's impossible for employees to meet your expectations if they don't know what you're looking for.
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Rally the team

- 1 Establish a purpose and/or mandate stating what we do with the intranet and why we do it.
- 2 Try naming your intranet: many organisations drive adoption by coming up with a quirky name i.e. Sherlock.
- 3 Have intranet champions/ambassadors who will help drive user adoption and encourage others.

Encourage engagement

- 1 Incite "fear of missing out" by offering some exclusive content or gifts (such as a tablet). Create a clear guide or criteria for winning the prize like creating content or getting involved in polls or forum discussions.
- 2 Gamification and social sharing: keep people motivated by offering points or badges to keep them coming back to engage with and share items from the intranet.

If you are planning a badge system, assign specific rewards that represent the particular badges.

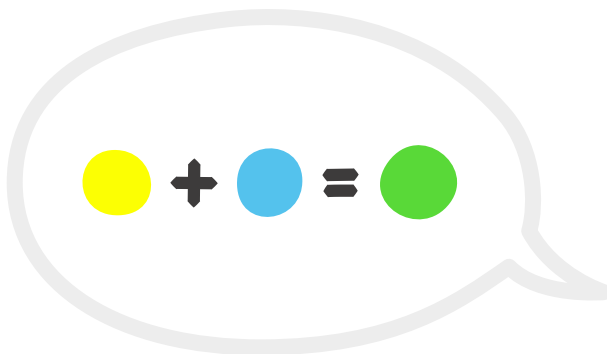
If you are developing a point system, determine how such points are added up i.e. sharing a blog post, liking a tweet or commenting on a post.
- 3 Spread the word! Make sure everyone is on the same page and staying active.
- 4 Set your intranet as the default browser homepage for all employees.
- 5 Also, don't forget traditional marketing techniques! Print out posters and spread them around the office, run social campaigns or use your intranet branding on mouse mats or screensavers.

Training

Employees are consumed by technology both in the office and at home. It is now time for internal office technology to reflect the expectations we have for technology we have at home. After all, no one receives training on how to use Facebook. For an intranet to be fully embraced organisation-wide, it must **be intuitive**, it must **be interactive** and it must **be collaborative**.

However, for something that requires buy-in from the outset, training should occur both before and after the launch of an intranet. It is critical to have your intranet champions or ambassadors equipped with the know-how to address any queries the team may have to fully drive adoption as seamlessly as possible.

And draw up a list of FAQ's (accessible from the intranet of course!) so that your users can find answers they need to common questions they may have. Self-service is key.



Content

Content is always king. It is the vehicle that drives experiences, encourages ideas (including those eureka moments) and attracts your audience. Here are some tips to consider when creating your content strategy.

Build a knowledge base, but first make sure you run a content audit

What content do you already have on your intranet? Is it relevant and up to date?

Make sure your content is correct and fits your new intranet branding format. And importantly, each piece of content should have a clearly identified owner. Giving responsibility to a person or team to keep their information up to date and making it easy for

users to contact this team should they have any queries with the content will ensure that the information remains authentic. With enhanced search functionalities and a quality knowledge base, your intranet is well on its way to becoming a one-stop-shop for information, communication, templates and more.

Keep content readable; get rid of the jargon

People do not want to stumble upon a wall of text, it is daunting and will leave them running in the other direction.

Content should be snappy and engaging. Especially when being viewed online. People don't want to scroll down through long copy. Keeping it short and sweet will encourage users to contribute and engage with new information and thought leadership.

Keep your content clean

Particular pages on an intranet tend to become cluttered. Observe the usage and addition of pages, sites and blogs to make sure the structure and layout remains clear and intuitive. However, as content will naturally build over time, make sure you use keywords to search and filter by content type.

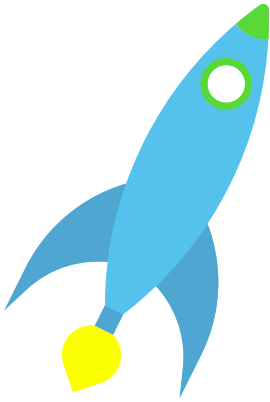


BEFORE



AFTER

After the launch



It's important to have a balance between proactive and reactive intranet management. By only being reactive to your employees' feedback signifies a challenge or some type of inhibitor resulting in poor governance, design and/or adoption strategy. By making the intranet development stage as inclusive of different disciplines within your organisation as possible maximises engagement as several teams will be aware of what is going on and can advocate it to their peers.

Post intranet launch, training and workshops should still be in full-force. Proactive initiatives to maximise user adoption and engagement should also be assessed in conjunction with any feedback (forms, surveys, questionnaires etc.) submitted by staff to also remain reactive to any subsequent needs that should arise.

A significant amount of time would have already been spent building up content on your intranet. However, maintaining and updating the intranet is equally as important to its long-term success. It's important to let the intranet evolve through strategic means as well as empowering more employees to contribute.

Monitor

Track the success of your intranet. Your Intranet Manager should become an analytics whizz! Maximise the impact and adoption of your intranet by monitoring usage patterns in order to adjust or fix any issues accordingly. For the long-term success, motivation and strategic commitment from the top-down must keep its momentum. Monitor your users to discover your top influencers. The ability to track user behaviour and view reports is as simple as ever, so there's no excuse not knowing how your users are engaging with your intranet. Locate key employees that are great contributors, adding new content to the intranet regularly, and who

continuously spread a wealth of knowledge for other team members to engage with. These particular individuals will be key in your intranet's overall success.

In order to be successful, an intranet must grow with the needs of your employees and facilitate the creation of knowledge. By monitoring the work patterns of your users, you are able to learn more about their evolving requirements and work in an agile way to iterate the way your intranet works, determining the barriers that may hinder success and adding valuable contributions to the success and longevity of your intranet.

Make your new intranet a success

Make your new intranet a success by creating a checklist across the topics mentioned throughout this whitepaper. It's time to put user adoption and engagement at the forefront of your intranet implementation strategies. Without significant planning, a new intranet will encounter a world of unknowns, hindering the productivity we wished to gain. Brace for change by developing and challenging organisational readiness: an integral part of demonstrating business value. After developing your change management strategy, begin by building the interest of your employees to encourage an enticing and smooth transition and experience onto the new platform.

Although the vanguard of any change within the Digital Workspace is senior management, change is always carried out by the employees. Change may provoke different reactions, but if it positively influences the tasks of your employees, the transition to a new and improved platform will be embraced. Pre-launch, make sure your employees and intranet ambassadors are trained and ready to drive adoption – this will minimise the roadblocks ahead for a smooth transition. Post-launch, don't forget to monitor how your intranet is performing. Remain proactive in regards to maintaining your momentum by addressing issues quickly, keeping your content strategy and intranet guide consistent, and your intranet ambassadors actively assisting the team.

Contact us

Talk to us today for a no-nonsense chat on how to deliver a successful intranet and to ensure your intranet is used to its full potential.



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