



From Fragmentation to Alignment

High-Impact Corporate Communications in the Age of the Distributed Workforce

Corp Comms' Biggest Challenge: Lack of Alignment

In a perfect world, strategic alignment would be a given. All employees would know what your company is doing, where it wants to go, how it plans to get there, and how to play their part. Not only would people understand the mission, but they'd feel invested in it and committed to it.

The reality, unfortunately, falls far short:

Only **14%** of employees understand their company's strategy and direction.¹

Keeping employees in the know and in sync is an uphill battle these days, and as statistics like the one above make painfully clear, it's a fight many organizations are losing. The biggest reason is the fragmentation that's endemic to modern businesses. Employees are working in so many different places, in so many different ways, with so many different tools, it's gotten extremely difficult to reach and engage them all. When you look at all the pieces – the larger and more geographically distributed a company is, the more mobile and remote workers it employs, and the more diversified its business operations – the more complicated the communication puzzle becomes.

Corporate communications professionals are doing their best to bring their companies together, but they're hamstrung by aging, inadequate tools. Email blasts get lost in overflowing inboxes, ignored or soon forgotten. Conventional static intranets suffer from low adoption and usage. Both email and intranets are top-down, one-way channels, making it difficult for employees to ask questions, chip in ideas and become real participants in the company conversation. Traditional tools don't even allow corp comms teams to accurately measure the reach and impact of their communications, so they have no feedback on what's getting through and what's falling on deaf ears.

Holding face-to-face gatherings, like all-hands meetings or company off-sites, can provide a sense of connection and unanimity. But how often can companies get all their employees together in one place? That's simply impractical for many large organizations, and even when it is possible, the effects soon dissipate as people return to their silos and routines.

Disconnection has become commonplace at every level of business: within and between teams, across locations and across different layers of the management hierarchy.

<p>90% of employees said leadership teams are out of touch—and they don't even know it <i>- American Management Association²</i></p>	<p>More than 50% of corp comms professionals say they don't have the right tools for their job <i>- Poppulo⁵</i></p>
<p>31% of employees never use their company intranet <i>- Prescient Digital Media³</i></p>	<p>Only 20% of corp comms departments have mobile-friendly intranets or mobile apps for communicating with employees <i>- Poppulo⁶</i></p>
<p>29% of global knowledge workers feel overwhelmed by email <i>- Harris Poll⁴</i></p>	<p>60% of internal communicators are not measuring communications <i>- Communication World Magazine⁷</i></p>

It gets worse when workers are remote or deskless

Getting employees' undivided attention is hard enough even when they're all working under one roof. It's that much more difficult when they're dispersed and working off-site. That's a growing headache for corporate communicators as the proportion of remote workers rises steadily. Gallup reports that **nearly half of American employees now spend at least some of their time working remotely,⁸ and it's projected that nearly a third of U.S. workers will be predominantly remote by 2028.⁹**

"Deskless" workers present an even greater challenge. It's estimated that 75% of all employees fall into this category.¹⁰ They range from nurses and retail clerks to factory workers and truckers. Most have little or no access to computers – in fact, **83% don't even have a corporate email address.¹¹** Without a reliable digital channel for communicating company news and directives, alignment becomes nearly impossible.

The high price of misalignment

A lack of transparency, effective communications and alignment can take a heavy toll on productivity, innovation and agility. All too often, people are working at cross purposes or are duplicating each other's efforts. When teams aren't aligned, great ideas aren't captured and shared, errors multiply and priorities get scrambled. Large-scale company-wide initiatives like restructurings, mergers, rebrandings and product launches are especially hard to execute. The pain of misalignment is felt by everyone: **"86% of employees and executives cite lack of collaboration or ineffective communication for workplace failures."¹²**

Disconnection leads to disaffection. Without a clear sense of purpose and understanding of the company vision, employees get frustrated, lose interest and leave. Low morale and disengagement exact a high price in company performance and ultimately the bottom line. According to a 2017 Gallup report, **67% of American workers are not engaged. Even worse, 16% are "actively disengaged: they are miserable in the workplace and destroy what the most engaged employees build."¹³ What's more, 33% of employees said a lack of open, honest communication has the most negative impact on employee morale.¹⁴**

Conversely, **highly engaged employees are 17% more productive.¹⁵** Businesses that score in the top half on employee engagement nearly double their odds of success compared with those in the bottom half. **Engaged companies experience 59% lower turnover (for low-turnover companies) and 24% lower turnover (for high-turnover companies).¹⁶**

Knowledge loss and corporate amnesia

Disconnection also impairs companies' ability to harness collective intelligence. Instead of circulating and growing, vital knowledge is siloed. It's trapped in the heads of individual employees, on hard drives and in separate apps and conversation strings. It's invisible to all but a few, and often lost forever (especially when employees leave the company or change roles).

The situation is worsening as companies get more dispersed, and as the number of apps and communication channels proliferate, creating ever more places for information to hide and disappear. That's led to an epidemic of "corporate amnesia," leaving many companies at a distinct disadvantage in today's knowledge-driven economy.

A better way

Corp comms needs a high-visibility channel for delivering communications that employees actually want to and will consume. That means ensuring that people get information that's relevant to them and is presented in a fashion that's appealing and easy to digest.

It's not just corp comms professionals who need more effective communication tools. Executives across the company need an easier way to stay in touch with their teams and employees. Execs should have the ability to quickly create and publish compelling blogs and videos with little effort and immediate impact, presenting their latest thinking, describing new initiatives, offering thought leadership and recognizing employee accomplishments.

Communications need to be easy for audiences to consume as well. Company news shouldn't require extra effort to keep track of and follow.

Employees are too busy to constantly check their inboxes or make special visits to an otherwise irrelevant or stale intranet to catch up. Instead, communications – news articles, announcements, exec blog posts, etc. – need to reach employees where they actually live. Or rather, where they actually work. Staying current on the latest news and

announcements should be a natural and seamless part of their daily activities. That goes for everyone in the organization: It should be just as quick and easy to reach remote and deskless employees using mobile devices as it is to communicate with computer-equipped office workers.

In addition, building authentic relationships and real engagement requires conversation, not a megaphone. Traditional, one-way communication tools that corp comms teams have been forced to rely on just don't cut it anymore. Employees don't want to be passive listeners – they need a way to respond, ask questions, get answers and contribute their own thoughts. That's the only way to build real understanding and consensus. And it's the only way leadership can learn from employees, which is a must for any smart organization. Not only do engaged employees listen more intently, but they amplify your message by spreading the word.

Finally, communication tools need to provide real-time data and analytics on the effectiveness of your corporate communications: who's reading and who's not, how widely news is circulating, whether your message is being shared and how it's resonating. That's the kind of insight you need to keep improving your communication strategies.

Why Jive for Corp Comms?

Jive is a true interactive intranet and digital hub. (See “What is an Interactive Intranet?” below.) Like traditional intranets, Jive enables corp comms teams to push communications to employees, but that’s where the similarities end. Not only is that process simpler and faster with an interactive intranet, but the penetration and impact of those communications is much greater, because they’re woven seamlessly into the flow of work itself. With Jive you can:

- **Quickly create compelling communications:** Create news articles or announcements with attention-getting layouts and rich media (graphics and video), easily collaborating with any stakeholders in your organization without the hassles of meetings, email and out-of-sync drafts.
- **Publish or schedule targeted, relevant communications with a click:** Send to the entire company, specific groups or individuals; auto-subscribe users based on role or geography.
- **Empower executive communications:** Jive makes it just as easy for execs (and anyone else in the organization) to create their own media-rich blogs, communicating with their departments, teams or the company at large.
- **Reach everyone instantly:** Jive aggregates the latest team, departmental and company news, announcements, blog posts and streams – personalized for each user and displayed in an eye-catching, must-read layout. With Jive’s elegant, consumer-style mobile app, even deskless and email-less employees get all the news, along with all the other capabilities of an interactive intranet, on their smartphones. And for extremely high-priority communications and emergencies, Jive’s Urgent Notifications feature can be used to immediately alert employees via real-time channels such as mobile text and voice messages.
- **Drive company-wide engagement:** Users can comment and ask questions, and authors can reply, igniting real dialogue that gets everyone involved and gives employees a voice. Employees can amplify the message through social features such as sharing and liking. You can also use built-in quests and rewards to encourage readership and participation.
- **Measure your impact:** Real-time metrics let you see who’s reading and who’s not, how they’re responding and audience sentiment, providing the feedback you need to gauge and improve your effectiveness.

With all of these capabilities working together, company alignment is no longer something that happens sporadically as the result of special efforts (like all-hands meetings). It’s an ongoing, continuous and almost automatic process. No coaxing is needed to drive employees to the intranet and view company news. Jive is where they connect with each other, stay in touch and work with colleagues. It’s their home base, central to their jobs – and the news is right there on their home page and key landing pages, front-and-center 24x7.

Consider a real-life example: a corporate communications team announcing a cost-saving initiative for their North American operations.

A traditional scenario might look like this:

1. A communications professional meets with executive stakeholders to craft the announcement.
2. They trade Word drafts via email attachments, with all the headaches of out-of-sync copies and clashing edits.
3. They enlist a graphic designer to add visual elements (again collaborating via email).
4. They pull in web development help from IT to post the final version on their static intranet.
5. They issue an e-mail blast alerting employees and providing a link to the post.
6. A quarter of the recipients miss or ignore the email, and only a fraction of those who read it bother to visit the intranet and take in the news.
7. There's no way for corp comms to track who's reading (beyond email receipts), what the overall sentiment is, and how far the message has traveled across the company.

Compare that with what happens in Jive:

1. A communications professional plans the announcement via a discussion in the intranet itself. She pulls in executives and, if needed, stakeholders in the finance team with a few @mentions.
2. The group jointly crafts a news article with an eye-catching layout and rich media, using Jive's document collaboration capabilities. No email is needed, and no designer.
3. When done, the team simply schedules publication with a click.
4. The post appears in every North American employee's mobile and browser news feed, requiring no email notification or special visit to the intranet, because employees are already there: It's where they do their jobs and spend most of their working hours.
5. Corp comms can easily track and measure the message's sentiment, reach and engagement.

In Jive, everything takes place in the intranet itself, eliminating disconnects, streamlining the process and ensuring far greater (and measurable) impact:

- **More engagement:** Not only do more people read the announcement, but now they can respond to it. They comment, ask questions, contribute new thoughts and ideas. Executives reply with their own comments and answers, sparking a discussion that builds engagement and consensus.
- **Longer tail:** The news spreads, and people who initially missed it get drawn in as colleagues @ mention them and as word of the announcement resurfaces in personalized activity streams and "top and trending" lists. Various departments start their own "idea jams" to solicit and vote on employees' cost-cutting suggestions.
- **Broader impact:** Recipients in North America share the announcement (again with a simple @mention) with their counterparts in Europe, who start their own cost-saving programs.

Instead of fizzling out, the initiative gathers steam and takes on a life of its own. That's the power of an interactive intranet.

Companies Using a Jive Intranet:

Improve employee connectivity
and alignment by **61%**

Reduce email load by **21%**

Improve employee satisfaction by **38%**

Actual results from hundreds of Jive's customer organizations, confirmed by independent researchers.



“Jive connects our team members to everything that they need. It’s become our hub for communicating, finding information, getting help and working together”

- VP Technology, Cox Automotive



“We’ve been able to align our organization with our new strategy. It’s a complicated strategy and people have been able to grasp it really quickly through the use of the Jive platform.”

- Head of Internal Communications, Pearson



“Jive is the place everybody goes to find each other and work with each other, and the place that we communicate to all of our 60,000 employees.”

- VP of Communications Platforms, Thomson-Reuters

What is an Interactive Intranet?

Traditional intranets began as static HTML pages and content management systems (CMSs), and they've never really outgrown those origins. Most are still static repositories at heart, designed for one-way broadcasting and passive consumption of company content. They're often hard to update and visually unappealing, with little to attract and engage users. No wonder so many employees ignore them.

If old-school intranets are part of the problem, interactive intranets are the antidote.

While the former have their foundations in static content-centric platforms, the latter have their roots in newer collaboration technologies, with interactivity and connectivity built in from the ground up.

With interactive intranets, users don't just consume content, they come together to create it, share best practices, answer each other's questions, have discussions, make decisions and complete tasks collectively. They can do practically everything they need to do to get their jobs done, in one central environment. Even people outside the firewall – partners, contractors and customers – can participate, with full security and privacy controls.

The interactive intranet serves as a digital hub (What Gartner Research calls an "activity hub") that unites not only people but also existing systems via deep, bidirectional integrations. Information from those systems can be pulled into the intranet, where it's much easier to find, share and collaborate on. Conversely, people working in external systems can access content, colleagues and conversations in the intranet without leaving those systems. With the right integrations, information and actions are automatically synchronized across all environments.

The result is a cohesive collaboration experience spanning myriad tools and applications. From productivity and document collaboration apps (e.g., Microsoft O365 and Google Docs) to file-sharing (Google Drive, Box, Dropbox), CMSs (SharePoint), email and more – it's all tied together. That cohesion includes devices and locations, too. Whether people are in the office or on the go, whether they're using computers, tablets or smartphones, they can fully participate, collaborate and contribute, without the hassles of switching between multiple apps.

Powerful capabilities, profound effects

The interactive intranet is the foundation of a true digital workplace, merging formerly separate capabilities, functions and ways of working in one seamless environment (and for once, “seamless” is not an overstatement). With that fusion, transformative things happen. On the most basic level, work just gets a lot easier and more pleasant for users, since they now have ready access to all their colleagues, information and projects in one place. More profoundly, a whole new set of scale-dependent and network-enabled effects kick in, laying the basis for some powerful, long-sought capabilities:

- **Institutional memory and knowledge discovery:** By making work visible, shareable and searchable, interactive intranets let companies capture and harness their collective wisdom as never before.
- **Enterprise search:** Users can quickly search across the expanse of the intranet and many of the systems it's connected to, providing the closest thing yet to unified enterprise search, driven by the enterprise social graph.
- **Enterprise social graph:** The motherlode of behavioral and social data collected by interactive intranets can be used by machine learning algorithms to continuously improve the user experience, providing more relevant search results, personalizing a wide variety of processes, and proactively suggesting people and information of interest, helping employees discover new knowledge critical to their jobs.
- **Big analytics:** With so much activity now occurring in a single connected environment, companies have much broader visibility into the processes, interactions and sentiments that drive productivity and engagement in every corner of the organization.
- **Self-organizing networks:** With people no longer constrained by arbitrary boundaries between job functions, information types and tools, they can quickly form ad-hoc teams and marshal the resources needed to complete any project. Inside the company, employees are much better connected, building bonds and fostering a common culture and shared sense of mission. Beyond the firewall, new networks spring up that bring together employees, partners, contractors and customers for better business outcomes.

There are countless other examples of the way interactive intranets save labor, speed time to completion and magnify the impact of all sorts of processes in every corporate department, including:



IT: communicating new rollouts and initiatives, supporting users



HR: onboarding new hires, training and motivating employees, communicating benefits and policy information



Marketing: collaborating on collateral and campaigns with team members and outside contractors



Sales: enabling sales representatives, collaborating with diverse stakeholders to create RFPs and close deals

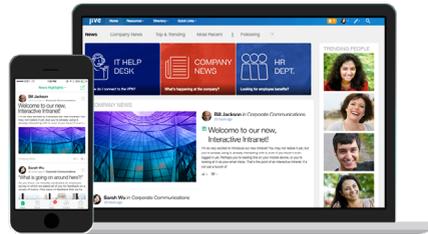


Customer support: enabling and training support representatives

Next Steps

You can set up and launch an interactive intranet and start engaging, aligning and empowering your employees now. Jive's Interactive Intranet is surprisingly simple to configure and deploy out of the box and out of the cloud in just days or weeks. You can tailor it, manage and grow it with little or no burden on IT, reaping rapid value and ROI. In short, you can say goodbye to fragmentation starting today.

Interested in learning more? Here's how:



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