

five

The bulletin for marketing communications

The Internal Issue

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Internal communication and marketing automation?

Today's brands have to get it together



Hermes Creative Awards 2014
'Design/Publication: overall winner'
Gold Award Winner

Introduction by **Alan Majury** PR Account Manager, Fifth Ring Aberdeen



The perceived value of engaging with the workforce has increased markedly in recent years



Welcome

I'm delighted to introduce the Internal Communications issue of our award-winning marketing communications publication – **Five**.

Since our last issue FIVE has emerged victorious at both the Hermes Creative Awards and the Business Marketing Association's B2 Awards and great credit must go to our contributors and clients, whose requests for information guide the content of our magazine.

But enough of the thanks and backslapping for now – and onto the most recent issue of Five, in which my colleagues discuss a hot topic within the marketing communications industry – internal communications.

A critical – but sadly often ignored part of a successful marketing strategy – involves the way an organisation communicates with its own people, who ultimately form the backbone of the business. Rarely when people consider marketing does internal messaging enter the thought process, yet the inner workings of the company are the foundations upon which an external campaign can be launched.

The perceived value of engaging with the workforce has increased in recent years and within this issue my colleagues will explore the rationale and benefits for investing in your internal communications.

We've integrated input from a variety of disciplines, casting the net wide to bring you a valuable insight into the requirements of a successful employee engagement campaign.

As always, we hope you find the content beneficial to your efforts, and we welcome your feedback.

Developing a healthy organisational culture ...

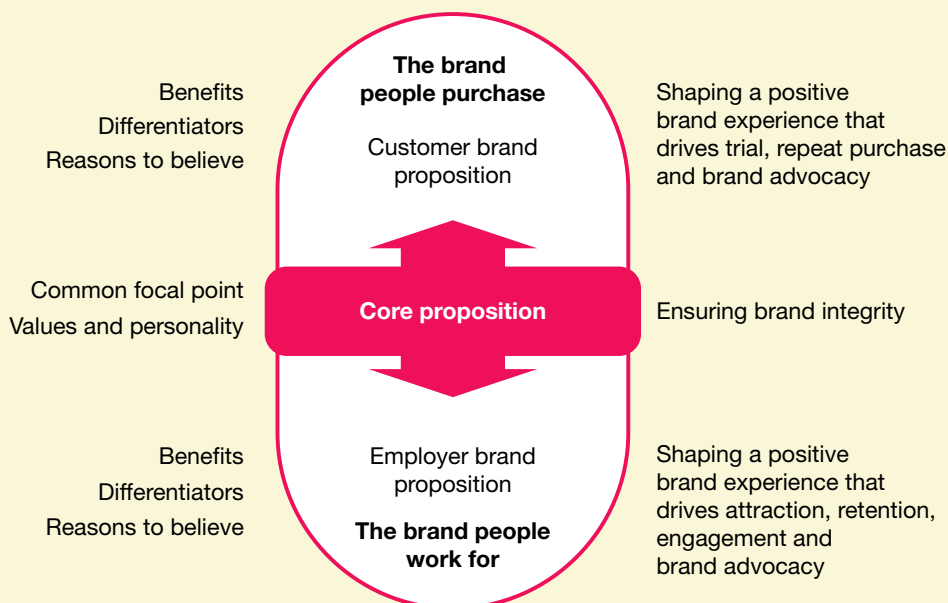
through employee engagement and internal communication

Steve Singer Head of People and Development, Fifth Ring

There is little doubt that a positive organisational culture is a vital driver of business success, with elements such as employee engagement and internal communication having a critical part to play, both in the development of a positive culture and in reinforcing the organisation's purpose, values and core proposition.

However, developing and maintaining a positive culture through effective engagement and communication is challenging, with many interrelated components and activities. That's why we've pulled together a short guide to help you along the way, drawing on our own expertise and the findings of the latest Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) research.

An integrated brand model



Top tips for maintaining a positive, healthy culture and communicating effectively with your internal stakeholders:

Look for behavioural changes. It is important you monitor the behaviour of your teams – are they becoming disengaged or do they seem less motivated? If they are, it is vital that you address the issue quickly to turn the tide back in your favour by communicating your purpose and values – and putting people at the centre of that.

Questions to consider in analysing the health of your employee culture include:

Are your recruitment costs rising?
Are you ranked as an employer of choice?
Are your people leaving after 18 months?
Are your employees uncomfortable telling people who they work for?
Do you admire competitors' recruitment advertising?
Has your recent acquisition left you with 'tribes'?
Does your workforce lack balance and diversity?
Do you have more cynics than optimists?

Be consistent. It's important your people know why – not just how – you do things. Communicating in a consistent language will help drive that culture home and carry it forward.

Continuity is key. Don't wait for staff to become disenfranchised before you communicate with them. Create an open dialogue and communicate regularly with your people whether through newsletters or offsite meetings. Whatever it is you choose to do, make sure

you create regular opportunities to remind employees what it means to be part of your team.

Keep your story alive. Tell your employees how you got your business to where it is today and ensure they understand their role in building its future. If people feel they are relied upon and are contributing to the organisation's success they will feel empowered to go the extra mile, particularly when you're up against it. Don't forget to include this as part of the induction process either – it is vital that new starts understand your business from the outset.

Engage. Find ways to keep reinforcing your organisation's values and purpose. For example, recognise positive behaviour with an award scheme, or use more exciting internal communications channels like video and radio to remind employees what the business is all about.

Identify ambassadors. It's inevitable that there will be differing levels of engagement among your people, but by seeking out those most dedicated to the vision and values of the company you'll create a network of internal ambassadors.

Evaluate against your values. Simply communicating your values won't in itself create a strong culture throughout your business. Measuring performance against your expected attitudes and behaviours during appraisals is a good way of conditioning the minds of the workforce as to what is expected of them.

Reward employee performance. But do it in a way that encourages them to reflect the culture and vision of the company.

Recruit people who share your values. It's a no-brainer really but it's easier to train for skills than it is to change a person's attitude and behaviour so it is vital that you incorporate your values into your recruitment process.

Some key components and activities of the successful employer brand:

Internal

Compensation, benefits and awards
 Leadership style
 Learning and development
 Performance management
 Recruiting to and living by the values
 Regular and consistent two-way internal communications
 Induction processes

External

Public and media relations
 Recruitment advertising
 University and school recruitment
 Website and social media
 External websites, for example, glassdoor.com
 Corporate and social responsibility
 Consistent brand management



Turning the tide

Getting your people on board

Peter Lyall Group Director Strategy, Fifth Ring

Regular readers of Five may recall the sorry tale of the demise of (fictional) technology brand CTC ('CleverTechCo'), dumped unceremoniously by new owners MBA ('MegaBuyAll'). Through poor brand management, compounding confused direction and leadership, a proud, engaged and vibrant group of people had withered to become a nondescript division of the corporate monolith. This was M&A at its worst. What a shame; what a waste.

Unfortunately, we left Jim ruminating that: "We did the hard graft at CTC and many people have been rewarded. It was probably the most stimulating time of my professional life, and I wonder if we can reach such entrepreneurial heights within MBA?"

Well, can the new team reach these heights, and if so, what role will internal communications play?

Now part of MBA's Production Optimisation division, the former leadership team of CTC had a job to do. The dynamism and excitement that only a small team of dedicated optimists can know and create had long gone, along with some great people, some unprotected IP and a reputation for technological innovation and product delivery. In the face of all of these challenges, compounded no doubt by the need to comply with MBA's corporate style and processes, why would anyone consider 'internal communications' to be important. Surely greater time and effort should now be invested in getting the right product out there, quickly, exploiting MBA's global client base to make some sales and repay the investment made?

And then, as good leaders often do, Jim stepped back, and put things into some context. Twenty years ago together with Joe Riskaverse, they had built a business with a simple vision, to make and sell the best damn CunningWidget Mk1 in the oilfield. Vision One was very nearly achieved. So what, that he now sat in a shiny Houston 30th-floor corner office? Jim was sure he could define, articulate and execute Vision Two to create new shareholder value, albeit that this time, the shareholders were an altogether much larger, diverse and more demanding group. If he could inspire a new generation of colleagues through the right mix of words and deeds, surely there was a chance to make the very most of the current situation.

Taking his cue from Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's famous quote: *"If you want to build a ship, don't drum up the men to gather wood, divide the work, and give orders. Instead, teach them to yearn for the vast and endless sea."* Jim set about building a new vision for his division. Clearly this had to be consistent with the overall direction of the corporation, but nonetheless, he wanted the new team to unite behind one sense of purpose.

Reaching out to his new senior colleagues at MBA, Jim wanted some insight into how they communicated with, and indeed motivated the diverse and dispersed workforce. The answers surprised and disappointed him. Some said that they would send out an email, or even ask their PA to do it. The occasional team meeting seemed to be the norm. Delegation (or 'avoidance' depending on your point of view) was all too common. Colleagues from HR and corporate comms were often instructed to craft and disseminate the message, and yet what weight did that carry, wondered Jim? Bizarrely, one colleague even wondered why the staff need to be informed of the direction of the company at all.

Jim was perplexed but determined. He wanted to treat the challenge like a campaign. After all, he now had far more members of staff than he did customers. If he couldn't get some alignment and understanding amongst his people, what chance did he have of getting the message out there?

So Jim set about building a fully thought-through on- and off-line multimedia campaign to inspire the next generation of Cuning Widget devotees. He noted down the things he needed to communicate:

- **Vision** – where are we going, and why?
- **Values** – what behaviours will get us there?
- **Strategy** – what makes us different?
- **Proposition** – why should anyone bother?

Suddenly this looked like a rather significant moment in his new corporate career. Once again, he felt he could make a difference, knowing that if he could package and communicate this compelling new story, he could inspire a new team to work with him. Perhaps not quite in the messianic mould of Tom Cruise's Jerry Maguire in the eponymous 1996 movie, but nonetheless, Jim had had an epiphany.

And it wasn't just emotional. Jim was all too familiar with the metrics. Better-informed staff show greater commitment, greater loyalty and better ability to transmit key messages to third parties. Cost of recruitment can be reduced, as can the cost of customer acquisition and retention. From the back of his memory he recalled a chat he'd had a few years back with his CFO. Stumbling on a significant piece of research, they had noted that if you invested \$100 in 2004 in the companies that have highly effective communication (the top 25%) in five years you would have \$130.

The heart and the head were in agreement. He had the pressure for change and the vision, and he felt confident in his ability to lead. Perhaps he needed





some additional support and resources, but he knew he had to act quickly and decisively. Above all, to ensure his change-management programme had some momentum, he wanted to show the rewards, the rewards that cohesion and unity can deliver.

So where to start?

Jim recalled a conversation with an acquaintance at BestBrand at the time of the unveiling of CuningWidget Mk1. The communications and branding specialists built and executed a campaign around the launch of the product. Jim made a call to seek some advice on what exactly BestBrand could offer in terms of support.

Following the recent acquisition MBA's regional directors were keen to tell the world about the business' new-found capabilities. Thankfully, MBA CEO Erik Villdogood, (an advocate of Jim Sanguine and his pledge to drive the communications strategy forward), was quick to halt them in their tracks.

It was evident that a clear, focused internal communications strategy was required. If MBA was to achieve its potential, its global team would have to unite behind a single vision. But how?

BestBrand worked with Jim and MBA's marketing communications manager, Frankie Mix, to map out some of the fundamentals of the strategy. The task was in articulating the story, and communicating the right messages to the right stakeholders.

In order to tell the story though, a plan had to be put in place. Frankie immersed himself in the company to create:

1. An initial post-merger communications strategy
2. An internal research into the issues that MBA was facing with its internal stakeholders
3. A workshop with senior management to identify the business' strategy, vision and stakeholders
4. A hierarchy of messages articulating the new tagline, mission and vision
5. A set of refreshed company values

The goal was to build a sense of purpose, across all employee groups and to help enthuse people about the future prospects of the business, rather than dwelling on those of the past.

Initial research findings highlighted that the workforce was largely disgruntled and demotivated. This came as little surprise to Jim, particularly in light of the firm's historic approach to communications. Some concerning (but timely) client feedback validated the need for reconsidering some of the company's most high-profile positions.



The importance of leading from the front and being willing to create dialogue with, rather than a monologue to, staff was reinforced

To some it almost seemed that MBA was in a state of disrepair, and the findings were quickly brought to the attention of the board in a two-day workshop. Shut away in the confines of an offsite hideaway, the senior management team worked with BestBrand's leading consultants to refine the company's strategic direction, and what would lead them to achieve it. A considered approach was taken as to how to best communicate with MBA's prime stakeholders – its employees. The team returned exhausted, but with a reinvigorated sense of passion and excitement for where they would guide the business.

The importance of leading from the front and being willing to create dialogue with, rather than a monologue to, staff was reinforced. Strong leadership with clear communication would be more important now, than ever before.

Change was beginning to happen, but there was a requirement for some immediate communication activity, in parallel with the longer-term strategy. BestBrand suggested a personal email from CEO Erik Villdogood be sent to all employees at the start of each week to update them of the project's progress, accompanied by a webinar presentation on the 1st of each month, encouraging employees to participate in a live Q&A session with their CEO.

Every employee received a post-acquisition handout guide, and were actively encouraged to talk to their local post-acquisition ambassador, specially appointed across the regions and various functions. What's more, after some initial reservations and frustrations over the departure of yet more key individuals, the board of executive directors at MBA had eventually agreed to clear their diaries and take to the road to host live Q&A sessions at various regional locations over the course of a week. This commitment displayed levels of responsibility and assurance that instilled a sense of belief and trust in MBA's employees. Finally, the tide was turning.

But there was much more work to be done.

Rather than having to conform to MBA's existing and somewhat woolly values, former CTC employees along with MBA staff, were also asked to be part of shaping the new culture of the combined organisations, by creating a new set of values for the evolving firm.

Little more than a month after initially engaging with BestBrand, MBA had been revitalised with a new vision, mission statement, and set of key messages for communicating to its people, as well as the new values created and endorsed internally by its global team.

Jim was proud of his efforts – particularly when he received direct feedback from the regions. A post-launch questionnaire indicated that 89% of MBA employees now fully understood the business vision, and an astounding 93% felt encouraged and positive about their future with the company. Of course, it was not before time. MBA had to deal with the loss of several key individuals before the execution of the internal communications strategy, which could have been addressed with some foresight, in a pre-deal strategy.

There may be a long road to travel, but at least now the people of MBA knew which route they would take to get there.

Postscript

This case highlights a number of key fundamentals of the Fifth Ring internal communications' toolkit, including:

- The Vision/Culture/Image model (Hatch, MJ and Schultz, M, [Feb 2001] Are the strategic stars aligned for your corporate brand?, Harvard Business Review)
- Success Factors for Change Management (Henley Management College)

Inside track

The view from within the industry



Kay Marshall Communications Manager, Expro

Writing an article on the subject of internal communications has been challenging on a number of levels, but in the main it's because I wanted to address the topic clearly, succinctly and with feeling – in exactly the same way we should be communicating with our employees.

This is an incredibly important subject – primarily because it greatly affects the relationship we have with our workforce, who are the greatest asset of any business. Despite all the arguments that you need a combination of people, products and services to succeed it is widely accepted that we need to build a strong foundation – and that begins with our people.

Communicating effectively is a critical aspect of that. To understand why, I've gone back to basics.

I am an employee. I have worked in private, public, small, large, local and international organisations. Internal Communication (IC) within those organisations has varied, so what have I learned from that – what was the benefit to me personally and how did that benefit the business? (For the cynics reading this article, I didn't always work in communications and wasn't quite so biased!)

Put simply, I believe most people want to feel valued and that their work is contributing to both organisational and individual goals. They want to communicate and be communicated with on everything from remuneration, benefits, and personal development, through to business growth and expansion.

Effective IC encompasses clear messaging, structure and is supported by a range of relevant communications tools. Importantly, they embed the company's culture within them, for example its values, behaviours and ethos. Culture is the important 'human' element that helps individuals to associate with the organisation, which in turn drives forward and supports the organisation's objectives. It's important to inject some personality into your communications too – after all, we're not robots!

Business benefits

The benefits in doing so, start with a more informed and empowered workforce.

I've always felt more involved, enthused and capable of making a valuable contribution within companies where there were clear lines of communication created between senior management and the workforce. Most importantly, this includes understanding the organisation's vision and mission, how your role fits within that, and how you can deliver the very best results for the company – this heavily dictates the level of customer service and impacts on the organisation's bottom line.



This leads to another benefit of effective IC: advocacy and brand recognition. We all know how excited we feel starting at a new company – preaching its merits and displaying the branded T-shirt/key ring/pen with pride. If people are engaged, they feel part of an organisation and can be its biggest advocate; ranging from selling the company and its products or services, through to encouraging others to work there. They are in effect, the walking brand. Rather than simply relying on initial enthusiasm, effective IC should develop and embrace it in the long term.

This all leads to the benefits around increased productivity, whether that is in performance (quality), productivity levels (quantity), staff retention rates or indeed attendance levels. Generally speaking, a more engaged workforce results in increased performance across the business, which adds to the organisation's bottom line – clinical but true. At a recent internal communications course held by the Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR) it was highlighted that fully engaging with the workforce can boost levels of productivity by as much as 43%.

No matter which perspective you view it from, there are clear benefits to effective IC. Which begs the question, why do some businesses choose not to fully engage with their staff?

Overcoming the challenge

There are a number of hurdles to be overcome to achieve success in your internal communications, and it is by no means a linear process, so it requires commitment from the outset. Effective engagement requires support from 'the top', demonstrating the importance and agreeing an approach. Increasingly organisations and their leaders do now understand and support this, but their engagement levels can vary, as can their interpretation, involvement or appreciation of it. I'm sure that gives many IC practitioners sleepless nights.

For large global organisations, particularly those with diverse cultural differences, creating a range of communications that spans these can also be difficult. Having experienced a recent visit to Latin America, strong relationships are extremely important and almost integral to running an effective business. As such, regular one-to-one communications (particularly in person) are more important than simply relying on written communication via emails or newsletters. Equally we Brits may squirm at too much personal engagement – so there is a balance to be struck.



No matter which perspective you view it from, there are clear benefits to effective IC. Which begs the question, why do some businesses choose not to fully engage with their staff?

Integrating your communications

That leads nicely to thinking about the audience – who are they, where are they and how do they prefer to engage? Workshops, building sites, office, home-workers and remote-location workers all demand different communications. Creating a range of communications that will reach everyone, regardless of their environment or location, is vitally important. This is before we consider whether or not they'd view webcasts, take part in Q&As, access publications or participate in surveys.

All of these lead me to my final point, resources. Quite honestly it doesn't matter what company/sector/role you work in – having the resource to support this is key. Recruiting the right people is part of that, but internal collaboration is vital. This includes working closely with other departments such as HR, where our paths cross frequently across a range of IC subjects. However the support of all middle and senior management is key to 'rallying the troops' and truly cascading communications across the entire organisation. For example, starting with a CEO webcast, through to local 'town hall' meetings, employee publications, department meetings and Q&A sessions.

However, that issue is an article in itself. I've only scratched the surface of what I see as an integral part of the success of any organisation. I'll leave it with you to consider and debate further the impact a successful internal communications strategy could have on your own business.

How can you capture your people's imagination?

The key to engaging internal communications

Stewart Fallowfield Creative Director, Fifth Ring

Increasingly, Fifth Ring is asked by clients how they can improve engagement with their internal audience. The answer is simple.



Communicating with your people is a critical part of modern-day business, with disengaged employees more willing to seek out alternative opportunities than in the past. Today's labour market is much more fluid, with companies regularly competing against each other to attract and retain skilled workers.

As a result I am being asked more and more frequently to help generate internal communications campaigns that go beyond the traditional methods to truly capture the imagination of the workforce and unite teams behind a common purpose. Increasingly these campaigns are becoming more integrated with social media and digital advances, revolutionising the way we communicate.

Successfully engaging with your staff in this way will leave them informed, educated and inspired.

That's why I was surprised to find that so few organisations engage successfully with their employees (Gallup puts the number at 13% worldwide) when the benefits of doing so are well known. It is ironic that employees with the least access to information tend to be those interacting with customers and delivering services at the sharp end of the business. This is the largest key audience and unless they are empowered to be brand ambassadors, companies are missing out.

So how do we make internal communications more engaging?

Interaction and interest is what separates effective, inspiring communications from those that are read by no-one and go nowhere. Any communications need to be timely, targeted and relevant.

Of course, there's more to it than that and to be truly engaging you must deliver a perceived value that goes beyond information provision, becoming a catalyst for dialogue and interaction.

So, where should you begin?

Methods of making information accessible are many and varied. You need to identify what will work for your business by considering how your employees' working days map out and then provide options that fit in with this. Think beyond posters and leaflets and consider less-obvious options that would lend themselves to becoming striking communications platforms: for example, newsletters on canteen trays or even radio broadcasts. Creativity can make a real difference. Also, try giving individuals a choice of how to access information wherever possible.

Messaging

Once you've won their attention, following this up with compelling messaging is key. Writing good content is a skill and needs to be backed up by a creative idea if it is to have the wow factor. Make the message interesting by weaving it into a story. Speak to people in their own language and try to connect with their emotions. Don't assume people will know what you want them to do. Make your call to action clear and compelling.

Layout

Layout and typography can have a profound effect on reader engagement and should take care to make it easy for people to scan the information to retrieve the bits they need quickly. People often don't read everything so the position of core messages, descriptive headings, quotes and lists can help break content down and become easier to navigate. All online and offline communications need to use a consistently branded visual language. Responsive design for digital media is also a must, so that content adapts seamlessly to suit the device being used to access it.

Getting personal

If the message is generic and corporate it's doomed to fail. Augmenting your core message with personalised content will make your content engaging, empowering and effective. You can achieve this in a number of different ways: by team, by location, by language, or by personal preference. Recast your communications based on work groups, project groups, employee-supervisor relationships or any other stakeholder sub-groups with which employees identify. A lot of executives believe

employees don't care about the issues that keep management teams up at night, but employees do care, deeply, when those issues are articulated in the context of these new stakeholder groups.

Measurement

Of course, measurement is crucial so ensure you have the mechanics in place to capture data and feedback from your people. Internal communication is a constantly evolving process and measuring how recipients interact provides valuable insight into what resonates. Understanding your audience is a vital first step.

Encouraging interaction and dialogue can be challenging but it will boost engagement and the feedback will provide key insights. Start with the basics. Ask employees for comments on articles and encourage them to start a conversation – there and then. If an employee tells you they want information on a specific topic, listen. Likes and ratings will have the same effect and are quick and easy to use. Surveys and polls will offer more detailed information but it's important to share the results and to demonstrate the outcomes.

Measurement and iterative improvement based on real data will give your communication the best chance of success. From your analysis of the engagement metrics you can learn and understand how employees are engaging with content. Who is reading what and how much is being read can define your core readership. Checking content popularity tells you what's working best at engaging readers. The metrics can also allow you to see which parts of the organisation are engaging, which devices are being used to access the information and which social elements are most relevant and work best for your organisation.

What's in it for me?

One of the biggest challenges is the sheer volume of communications flowing through an organisation. Striking a balance between too little and too much is critical. Does what you're sending add value for the recipient or the organisation? Would the information be more relevant to a targeted audience subset? What is the best way to make the information available without cluttering the inboxes of those that don't need, or want, it? 'What's in it for me?' may sound a greedy or selfish attitude but people choose what they devote their time and attention to. If you want their attention, the benefit needs to be made clear from the outset.

From our own experience many of our clients have a potential customer base of less than 100 but many have an employee number in tens of thousands. Given the latent ability of employees to be powerful brand ambassadors, having a sound internal communications strategy is good for employees, their employers and the reputation of the brand itself.

Internal communication and marketing automation?

Why today's brands have to get it together

Lisa George Business Development and Marketing Manager, Fifth Ring

Well-defined messaging to your customers has always been vital to brand success. But could we do more? The answer could lie a little closer to home.

You could fill entire libraries with the vast array of information on marketing automation and its merits in increasing marketing efficiency – and ultimately generating sales. As a result you might be surprised to see an article about it in the internal communication issue of Five, but please bear with me for a moment whilst I explain.

As we've discussed elsewhere in this issue, building and maintaining a strong employer brand is critical to the success of any organisation. In the energy industry the importance of establishing yourself as the company people aspire to work for takes on even greater significance in the face of the global skills shortage.

It is against this backdrop that a shift in stakeholder priority becomes evident. Traditionally, clients have been the most important audience, but should we now be considering employees an equivalent audience with similar communications needs?

By thinking of our employees as customers, marketing automation for internal communications begins to make sense.

Offering clarity

In terms of your internal communications, marketing automation and other analytical technologies can make it clearer which digital channels your employees are

engaging with. It allows detailed analysis of interactions with multiple online touch points. We can then answer any number of questions which can help us guide them in the right direction, such as:

- What content have they viewed on the company intranet?
- Have they completed the employee satisfaction survey?
- Have they viewed training videos?

And this is just the beginning. Techniques such as this open up a world of opportunity by allowing companies to speak directly to the workforce by providing bespoke messaging at each stage of the employee life cycle.

Content is king

For decades communications specialists have spoken in grand terms about the value of relevant and timely content, singling it out as being the key to success. And despite the revolutionary changes within the industry nothing has changed and the same old tired rhetoric about content being king is being peddled to the masses.

At a superficial level the statement holds weight, but it throws us a whole host of questions, not least what content should be used? Where? And when? And to whom are we talking?



Concentrating your efforts on producing content without fully understanding what your employees want to know is entirely counter-productive.

Essentially, internal communications is about engaging with people but to do that you need to open up a dialogue, not continually bombard staff with content distributed through a top-down, one-way communications process.

Striking gold

The lines between how you communicate with internal and external stakeholders are becoming increasingly blurred. For both audiences it is critical to ensure messages are tailored and not generic. Ensuring the content and medium grabs their attention, enables improved engagement and allows companies to develop a strong culture and identity.

Marketing automation is a tool that can help you achieve this across all of your stakeholder audiences. Internally it's the tool can help inform decisions about how to approach internal communications in a way that ignites passion and builds excitement. After all, if you can achieve this you'll increase retention rates and generate an army of advocates for your business – the holy grail of internal communications.



Building and maintaining a strong employer brand is critical to the success of any organisation

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Get involved

Five aims to provide compelling, thought-provoking and meaningful insight and commentary on all things marketing and communications. Our contributors are recognised for their expertise and fresh ways of thinking – but the more, the merrier. We want to hear your thoughts on Five and we always welcome new contributors who want to share their own thoughts on industry, tools and talent.

Get in touch with the **Five** editorial team at five@fifthring.com

Our internal network

Throughout this issue of Five we've stayed true to our mantra of making thinking visible. Yet, despite the wealth of information on techniques, strategy and delivery, you may be left pondering how we at Fifth Ring communicate with our own internal stakeholders.

In recent years we've expanded our internal communications network to support the growth of the company into new regions and ensure a consistency of approach and understanding throughout our global teams. Key aspects of the communications programme now include:

- Our internal magazine – **FRANK** – is issued twice a year to provide milestone updates and interesting editorial features from around the Fifth Ring world. FRANK's little brother, FRANK-e, is a video news bulletin that is created by the youngest members of the team following the executive committee meeting. It is distributed on a monthly basis through a measurable platform. Both of these channels have developed a personal, rather than corporate feel.
- Regular FRANK talking sessions with the company's directorate are also held to allow business updates, like large contract wins, to be celebrated in the moment.
- Recently the company unveiled its 2020 vision. The ambitious plan for the future growth of the organisation – which is centred around its key asset, its network of talent – was outlined at the company's annual all-staff day.
- Like you would expect, we also carry out a host of regular forums across the organisation (for example, regional managers' meetings and one-to-ones) to ensure knowledge-sharing and transparency across the globe.

So there you have it, our key tools to an integrated approach to internal communications.



Over 23 years Fifth Ring has delivered consistent results for clients in their key regions of business

Fifth Ring

We've integrated our five key disciplines of brand and strategy, design, digital media, public relations and advertising into one seamless offering and are uniquely positioned to support our clients.

Over 23 years Fifth Ring has delivered consistent results for clients in their key regions of business. Many businesses choose to centralise their marketing functions within their global headquarters and work closely with us to ensure consistency of service across the global footprint of their business.

That's why we've created our structure in a mirror-image of our core client base within the energy industry, having beaten a path to the world's main energy hubs in support of your global aspirations. We now have a base in Europe, North America, the Middle East and Asia Pacific.

Increased multiculturalism in modern-day life is replicated in business and with 70 experts from 12 different countries able to converse in 17 different languages, Fifth Ring is well positioned to provide cross-border support to companies operating internationally.

Our reach is extended even further through our membership of the Business to Business Network, allowing us to support you in more than 14 locations across the globe.

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