

xoxoday

Redefining the Intranet for Your Organization

GANESH RAM
For XOXODAY



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Introduction

Gone are the days when the idea of offices meant to be sitting in a cubicle, between the four walls, in stipulated work hours (like 8 AM to 5 PM). With today's hyper-connected, remote workforce, the lines between the physical office space and where work actually happens have blurred.

Organizations of today have become more distributed and fragmented, with more and more people working remotely with diverse tools and technologies. Working has increasingly become unstructured and non-routine, with minimal to no boundaries between personal and professional lives. Employees of today are constantly connected, trying to rapidly solve a changing mix of challenges.

In times like these, no matter how big or small the organization is, having a technology platform that helps build a strong internal communication network plays a huge role in keeping the workforce connected and engaged.

So much that, [Forrester's Employee Experience Index](#) establishes a direct connection between employee engagement and technology satisfaction. It states that the employees who are highly satisfied with their collaboration tools – the ones that enable them to access information easily and helps the do their jobs better – are usually the most engaged in their workplace.

Think about it: internal communication has a direct impact on a number of factors like employees collaborating with each other, the overall experience, engagement, motivation and hence, the productivity. And having an internal communication platform / intranet platform that is clunky, old-school and not-so-fluid can have a direct impact on the overall business health.



Here are some interesting facts on how internal communication can impact an organization

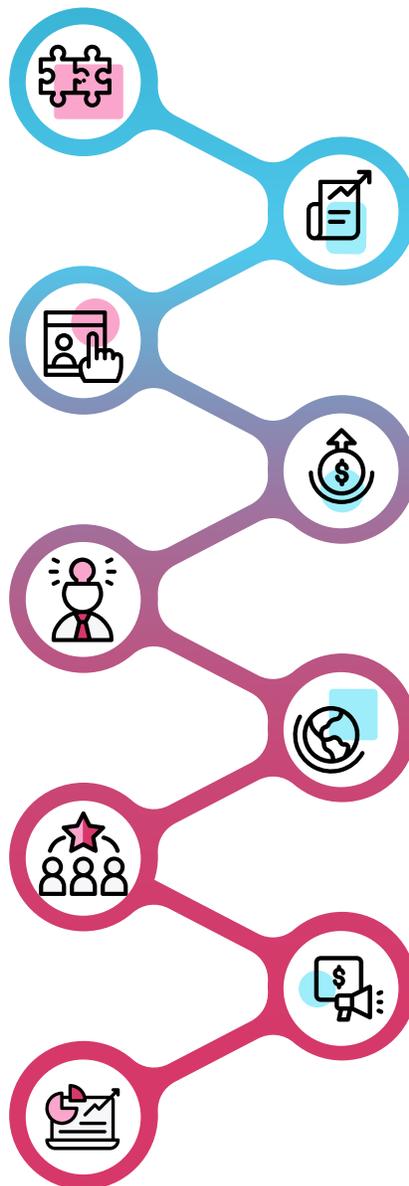
Organizations with effective change and communication programs are **3.5 times** more likely to outperform their peers. (ThinkTalent)

74% of employees feel that they are missing out on company information and news. (Gallup)

Only **13% of employees** strongly agree that their leaders are effectively communicating with the organisation. (Gallup)

39% of surveyed employees believe that people in their own organization don't collaborate enough. (Queens University)

Productivity improves by 20-25% in organizations with connected employees, with potential for increased revenues amounting to \$1.3 trillion per year. (McKinsey Global Institute)



86% of employees agree that ineffective communication is one of the leading reasons for workplace failure. (Salesforce)

91% of employees think that their managers lack communication skill. (Inc.)

69% of managers feel uncomfortable communicating with employees in general. (Ragan)

60% of companies don't have a long-term strategy for their internal communications. (Gallagher)

While there are numerous challenges that organizations face with respect to internal communication, the potential solution is right at their fingertips:

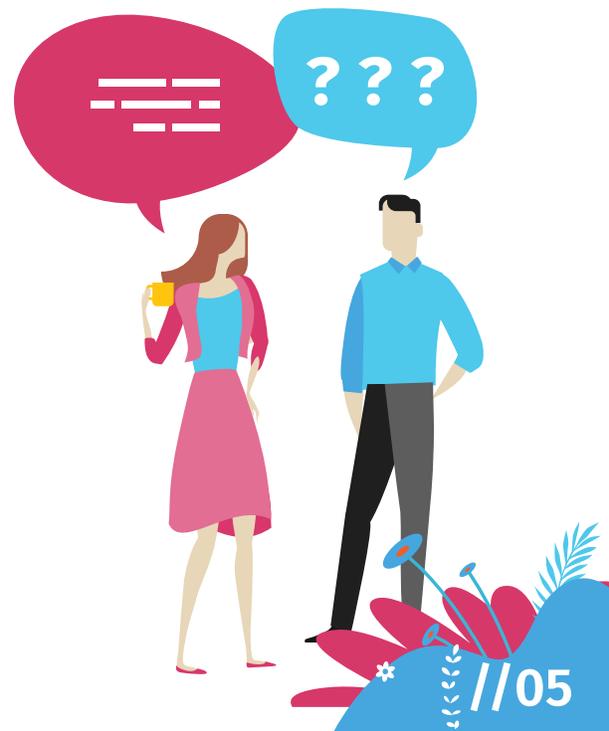
The Workplace Intranet.

A workplace intranet that helps employees seamlessly communicate, collaborate, share and innovate, can be a game-changer and help building a workplace that fosters productivity, efficiency and growth, while driving improved employee experience and culture.

What is a workplace intranet?

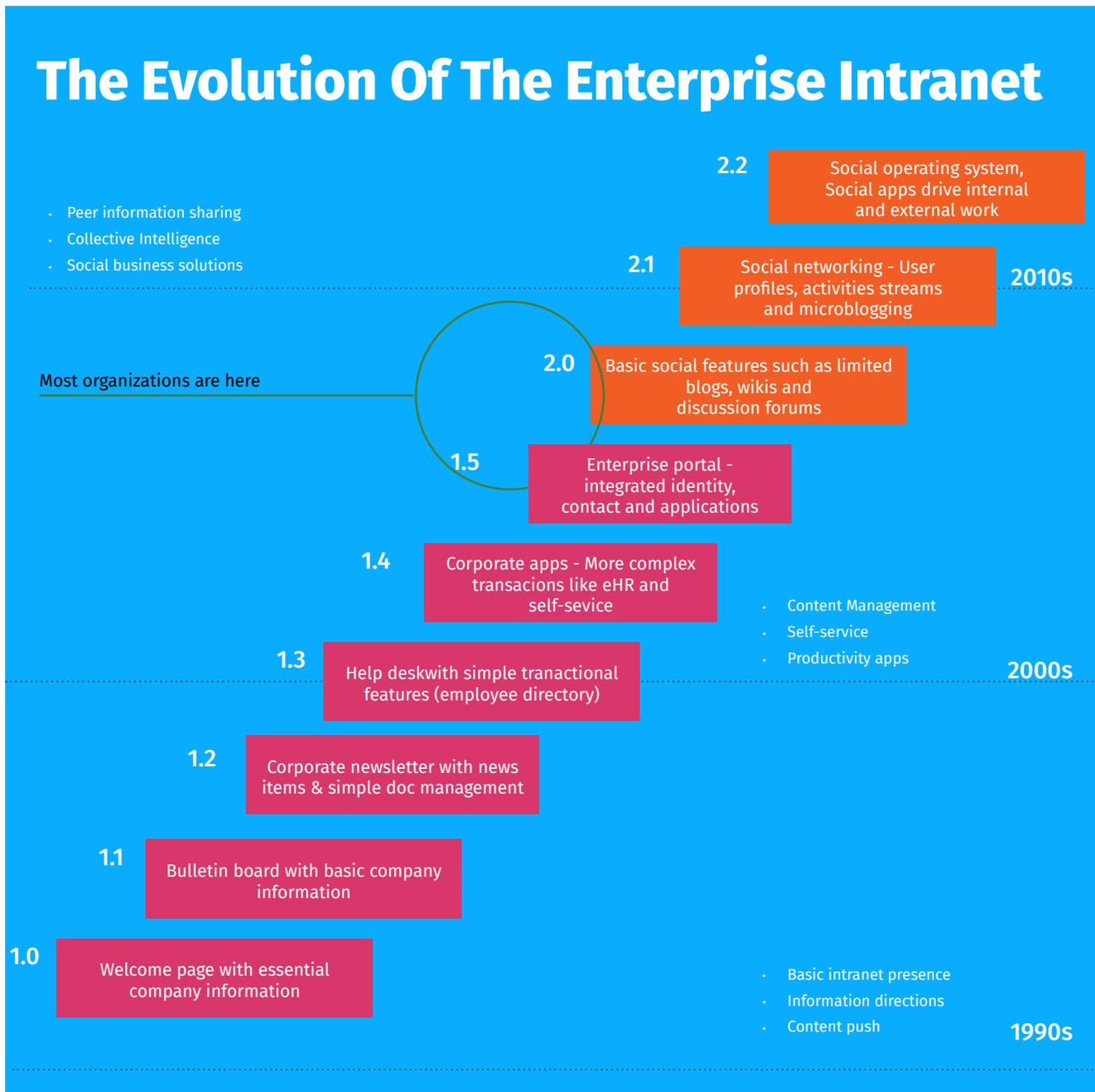
When asked about what a workplace intranet is, every person can have a different perspective and answer – ranging from –

- *Oh, it's a fun place to hang out with our colleagues. Just like Facebook, but for employees within the company*
 - *Intranet portals are the one-stop-shop for all our payroll-leave and personal information access*
 - *It's just like an internal Wikipedia for the company's intellectual property*
 - *It's like a digital bulletin board, where we get all the latest news and announcements*
- ...and so on.*



A workplace intranet is nothing but a private network that is set up by the organization for its employees to drive better collaboration, communication, employee engagement and culture.

However, intranets have not always been the ‘cool place for employees to hang-out’ like what they are today. Workplace intranets have come a long way since the time it first came into existence in the mid-nineties. From being clunky, old-school and not-so-fluid to being modern, sleek, sophisticated and collaborative, intranet platforms these days have the potential to transform the way an organizations function.



Does your Organization need a Corporate Intranet?

Almost every large organization we come across has an intranet of some form or the other to establish communication and documents exchange amongst the employees. Whereas, when it comes to mid-sized or smaller organizations, one of the most commonly asked questions about intranet is that - ***“Our organization is not as big in terms of numbers. Do we really need a corporate intranet?”***. This has been one of the biggest misconceptions about corporate intranets.

While the number of employees in an organization is one of the factors that contributes in choosing the right intranet platform, it definitely doesn't mean that businesses with fewer employees don't need an intranet platform.

So, yes! In short, every organization -even with as few as 20 employees - need an intranet platform to improve business processes, productivity and efficiency. ***You can definitely benefit from a corporate intranet if your organization has:***

- Office across multiple locations
- A substantial percentage of employees working on-field or remotely
- Employee morale that is generally low
- High employee turnover
- Been a part of some kind of mergers and acquisitions
- Poor internal communication
- Email heavy communication culture
- Uncertainty on where to locate legal & policy documents, customer information, company announcements & news and so on.

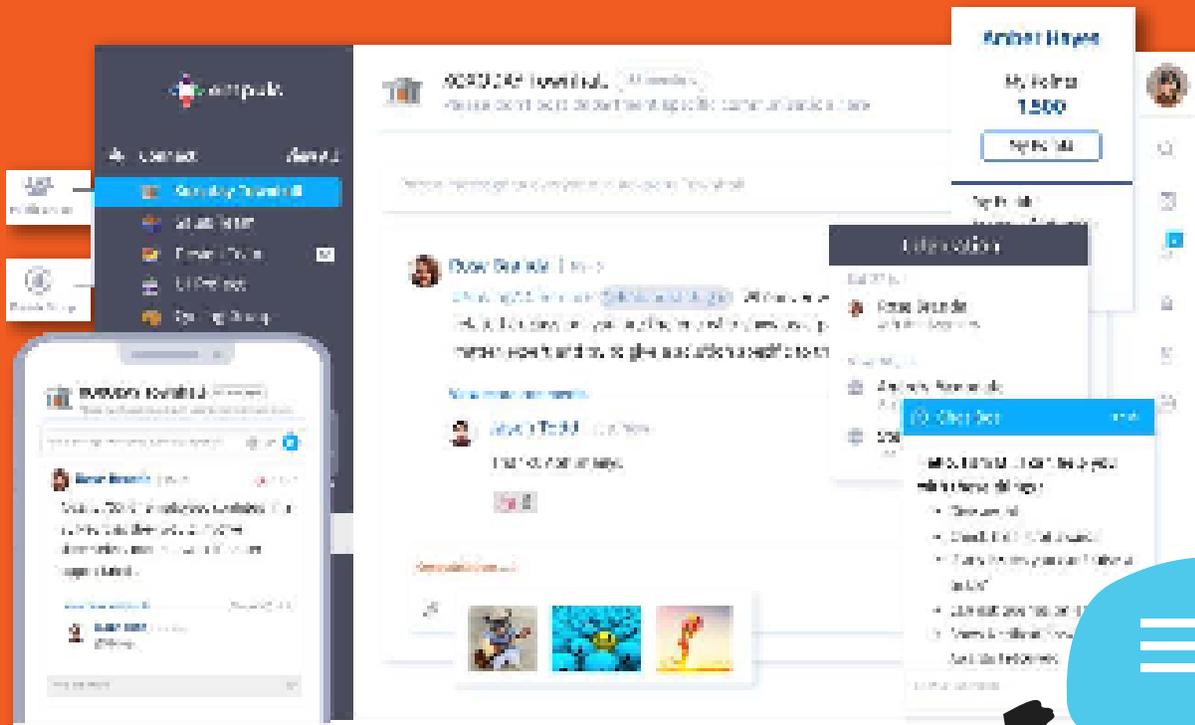
So, What Makes a Corporate Intranet Truly Modern?

What truly distinguishes a modern intranet platform from a traditional one is the robust technology, combined with its people-first strategy. The modern intranet platforms help organizations to truly flourish by bringing their most important asset – People – to the centre of everything.

The modern corporate intranet platform is all about two-way communication. Unlike the older intranets, the modern intranet platform drives employee engagement, improves employee experiences, optimizes business operation and enhances productivity while ensuring a nuances like:

- No expertise or time is wasted duplicating or recreating the information that already exists in the organization
- Personalised and targeted communication is delivered to every employee in the organization
- Organization culture is consistently reiterated in every possible action and communication
- Easy collaboration is enabled along with social networking-like capabilities
- A two-sided communication channel is established for the leadership to build trust and accountability
- Integration and aggregation with other applications that exist in the system is made simple so as to build a harmonious technology stack

...and so on.



Snapshot of a truly modern Employee Experience Intranet, Empuls from Xoxoday. The platform interface is built with a mobile-first approach while being optimized for both mobile and desktop individually.

Traditional intranets have failed to deliver what it promised in most organizations. According to a survey by Prescient Digital Media, amongst the organizations that are using the traditional intranet platforms, only **13% of employees** use their intranets on a daily basis and **31% of the employees** said they never do.

In the table below, we can see some startling differences between the traditional and modern intranet platforms:

	Modern Intranet	Traditional Intranet
Implementation	Time consuming and laborious	Quick and simple implementation owing to cloud set-up
UI/UX	IT-centric, text heavy and complex UI which leads to a not so pleasant UX	Highly interactive, consumer grade interface that is built with employee experience in mind
Delivery Approach	Generally follows portal approach that lacks multi-channel delivery	Highly flexible delivery approach with mobile-first philosophy to help organizations meet employees where they are
Scalability	Any change or upgrade to the platform is heavily dependent on the IT team and draws huge IT budgets	On-going development and regular update releases makes it “Evergreen” and up-to-date
CMS	Poor CMS mainly focused on document storage and delivery	Exceptional CMS with proven practical use-cases, mainly focused on people and culture building
Social Capabilities	No social-media like features	Encourages employees to engage in social interactions with an interface that mimics social media platforms
Rewards & Recognition	Cannot disseminate rewards or recognize employees’ achievements through the portal	Comes with powerful rewards and recognition engines that brings the entire organization together in celebratory note
Surveys & Feedbacks	No means to collect feedback or surveys on the platform	Makes it simple to gauge the pulse of the organization with powerful and timely feedback engines

What Features to look for in a Modern Corporate Intranet?

“Intranet renewal is an ideal opportunity to re-equip and modernize an organization’s architecture for the digital workplace.” [Gartner](#)

If you are one of the organizations that are looking at shelving your outdated intranet platform to reinvent your intranet strategy, or investing in a brand-new intranet platform for your organization, choosing from a host options available in the market can be tricky. However, we have curated a list of must-have features and characteristics to look for in your intranet platform to make your business processes **faster, smarter and better**.

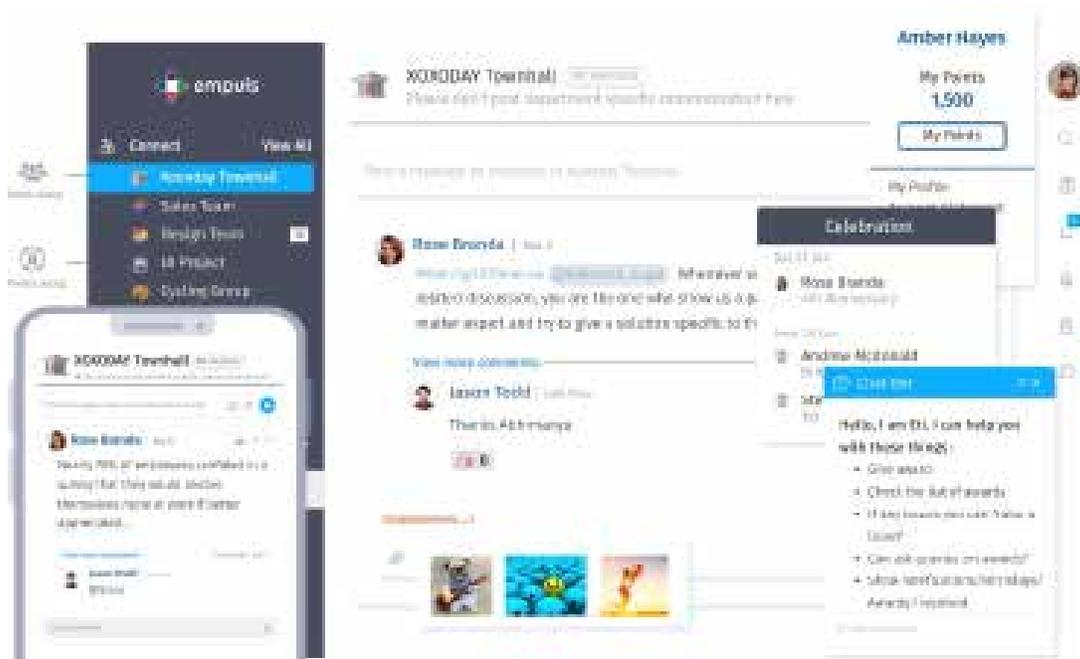
1. All-round Communication

“Company intranets should be built by stout internal communication programs. The achievement of an intranet is about 60 percent communication, 40 percent technology.” Bob Cohen

Communication is the life blood of any organization. It is extremely important for organizations to **establish efficient ways through which teams can interact with each other**. Not just that, there needs to be ways in which organizations can overcome the age-old means of top-down heavy communication – be it through emails, bulletin boards, or memos – which can psychologically and physically break the sync of employee relationship with the management.

A modern intranet platform can help overcome all these challenges and more. One of the main purposes of the modern intranet is to connect employees with one another – no matter where they are. Recreating watercooler conversations, fun activities, games, townhalls, etc. on a digital platform can bring all your teams together and make communication effortless.

Intranet platforms also ensure that the right content – be it news, special announcements, projects, milestones etc. - **is delivered to the right people at the right time, thus making communication more meaningful.** What's more is that the modern intranet platforms come with the power of all-round communication – which means it's not just peer-to-peer or top-down, but also a platform for employees to share their thoughts and opinions with the management.

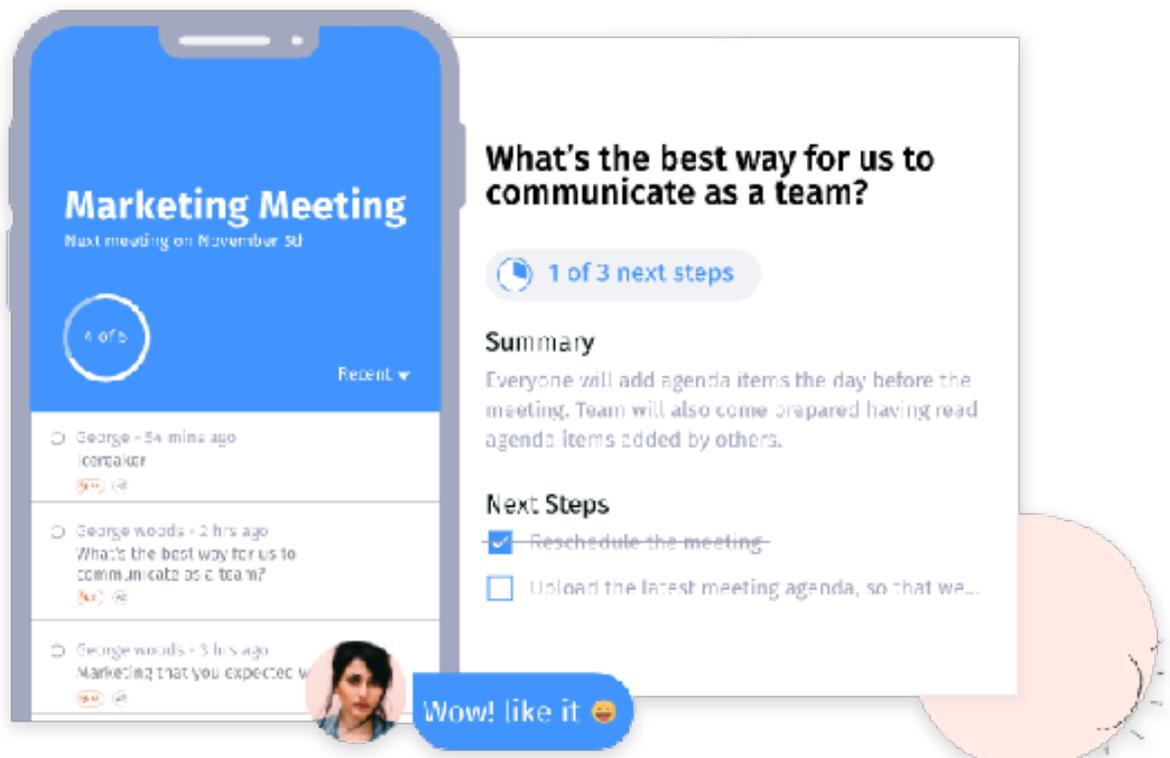


2. Collaboration

A study by the McKinsey Global Institute found that productivity levels rose by as much as 20-25% among workers who use online social tools to collaborate.

We all live in a world that is significantly globalised and where employees are spread across multiple locations and time zones. Even domestically, given the current market scenario (and even otherwise) remote working has become extremely popular among organizations and it is quite normal to see **employees enjoying the flexibility of working from home quite often.** This often poses a huge challenge for employees to collaborate meaningfully with one another.

A powerful intranet platform, like **Xoxoday Empuls** can help organizations to overcome this hurdle by **enabling easy collaboration amongst employees – from anywhere, anytime**. Intranet platforms allow employees to dynamically collaborate cross-functionally or with their teammates and enables integration of assets/content, campaigns, deadlines, milestones, group tasks etc. without the hassles of clumsy emails, thus exponentially improving employee efficiency.



3. Groups and Communities

With everyone in the organization present on the intranet, it is very easy to lose track of information. Many a times, important discussion threads are missed in an ocean of organization-wide content. That is why, in order to keep the intranet platform well-organized, it is extremely crucial for the intranet platforms to be able to **create dedicated groups and communities across different teams and function which can make communication more meaningful and targeted.**

When different teams, functions and interest groups have a dedicated, isolated digital place to communicate, collaborate and share documents, images, information etc. it only **makes it easy for employees** to find relevant information while elevating the overall experience.

4. Surveys and Feedbacks

Wondering how to go about the Christmas celebrations? Or do you just want to know what your employees are feeling off late? **Measuring the employee pulse and 'Moments that Matter'** in each employee's lifecycle be it while onboarding, change in role, celebrating a work anniversary, or while exiting the organization through surveys and feedbacks can be extremely powerful.

Modern intranet platforms, like **Xoxoday Empuls**, are capable of sending automated timely reminders to employees to participate in surveys and share feedbacks. This not only makes it easy to capture the employee sentiments precisely and help organizations to make better decisions but also makes it for employees to participate by making it all available on the intranet platform.



5. Rewards and Recognition

Organizations with the most sophisticated recognition practice are 12 times more likely to have strong business outcomes.
 - **Bersin & Associates**

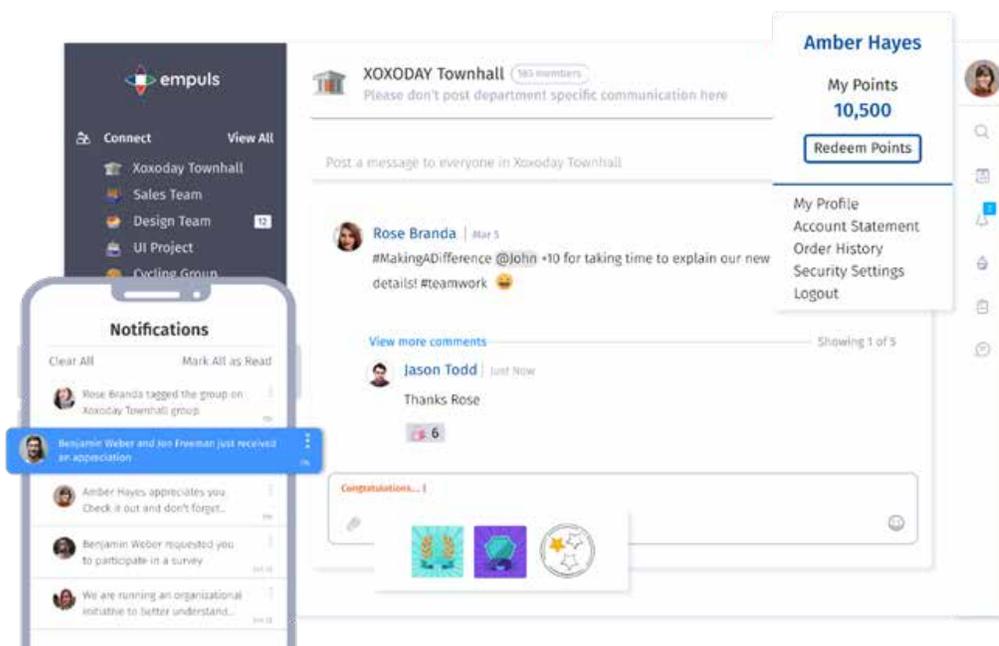
Most organizations these days offer a variety of perks like flexible work hours, generous leave policies, lifestyle & healthcare memberships and so on to woo the best talent in the market. Yet, they tend to overlook one of the most powerful yet simple means to keep the workforce engaged and motivated – **on-time recognition**.

Employee rewards and recognition plays a huge role in engagement, retention, and driving the employee morale.



Let's face it, who doesn't like to be told that they are doing a good job, or being recognised for going that extra mile to complete a critical task on time?

The modern intranet platforms are the perfect tools to build a culture of recognition in organizations – both large and small. Whether it's a simple "Thank you" for a job well done or announcement of outstanding achievement, birthday wishes or anniversary celebratory notes, employee success stories or new skills donned, using the intranet platform to instantly recognise employees while also making it possible for the entire organization to see and be a part of it can go a long way in boosting the morale.



6. Employee Directory

Connecting employees within an organization is extremely crucial for successful working. However, it is easier said than done especially when there is a large percentage of employees that are working across different locations, or on the field, or remotely. What's more, employees often won't necessarily know whom they are looking for. For example, they need to find a person who has been in the sales function for at least 5 years in order to understand more about a particular customer.

It is extremely crucial therefore to have an extensive employee directory, that is well populated and up-to-date with all necessary employee information like function, team, role, designation, contact number, experience, interests, hobbies etc. – of anyone in the organization.

A powerful intranet platform, like Empuls, can help bringing an organization together by helping employees who are looking up for each other's contact information, making it easy for the new joiners trying to figure out the organization structure and understand who is who in the organization without any dependency and so on.

7. Ideation and Innovation Enablement

In order to continuously reinvent as an organization, keep improving the processes, and policies, and keep achieving newer heights, it's extremely important to tap into the collective wisdom of the people who know you the best inside-out – **your employees!**

Employees who directly face customers, partners or processes are sometimes the most valuable source of ideas and innovation. In fact, **80% of an organization's performance improvement lies in front-line ideas** say Alan Robinson and Dean M. Schroeder in their book The Idea-Driven Organization. However, even with the advancement in technology, the method of tapping into employee ideas hasn't evolved much in most organizations.

The modern intranet platforms come as a rescue! These platforms help organizations to create an unbiased, open forum for anyone to come and share their innovative thoughts and ideas. By having such open forums, not only does the organization benefit from the ideas, but also boosts employee morale and engagement. and the employees also feel extremely valued and engaged for being heard.

For instance, in the year 2009 PricewaterhouseCoopers launched an idea management site called the “iPlace”. How the platform works is very simple, any employee can post and vote on ideas, and senior managers review all ideas within 30 days of submission and notify the employee of the idea status. **As of October 2011, nearly 60% of the firm’s 32,000 U.S. employees had submitted, commented or voted on ideas. 140 of 3,300 new ideas have been implemented.** The firm reported that one of the ideas actually helped the company save “hundreds of thousands” of dollars.

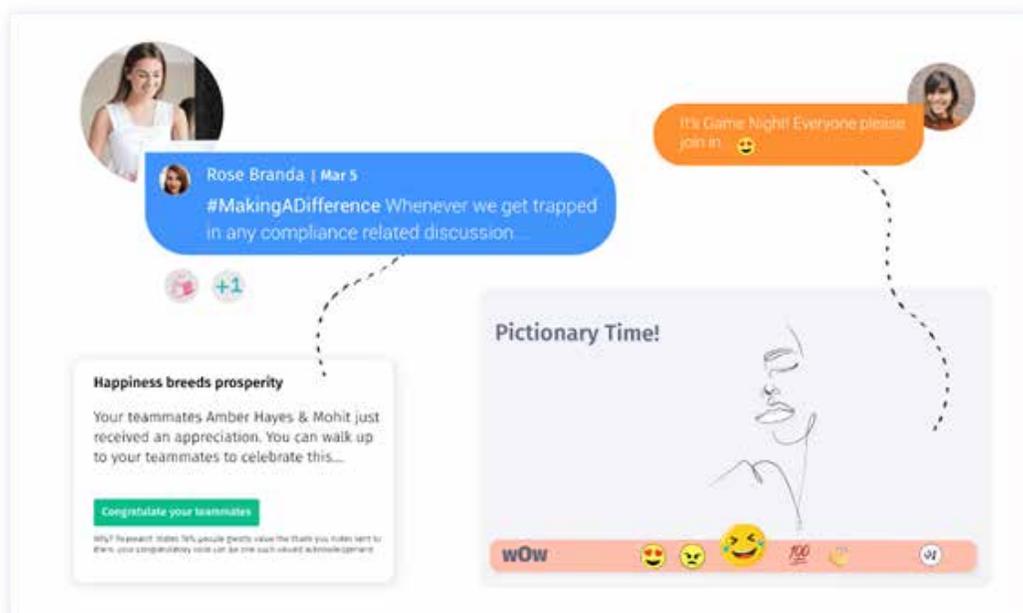
8. Social-Media Like Interactions

Social Media platforms like Facebook are popular for a reason.

They are **powerful and intuitive ways of connecting with one another.**

Many organizations are now trying to leverage the power of social media in their organizations by turning towards what is called the **“social” intranet platform.**

Like Facebook or any other social media platform, intranets of today empower employees to share images, videos, documents or any kind of information with anyone, any group or the entire organization – in just a few clicks. These platforms build a conducive environment for employees across the globe to bond and engage with each other by offering intuitive features like liking, sharing, commenting and so on.



9. Multilingual Capabilities

For an organization that is spread across different continents or countries, one of the biggest challenges is breaking the language barriers and keeping the communication consistent.

A multilingual intranet platform can help you overcome this challenge by **dynamically translating the content on each page to deliver localised content to everyone across the globe.**

10. Content Management

IDC data shows that “the knowledge worker spends about 2.5 hours per day, or roughly 30% of the workday, searching for information.

Intranets are specifically designed to be the central hub for all business operations and information – including storage and access of all necessary information.

So, it goes without saying that easy **content storage, management and security is one of the most important features of any powerful intranet.**

Be it company history or the latest organizational statistics, legal documents or HR policies, presentations or product updates, intranets can be a one-stop shop to find all the documents that you need. Intranet platforms also enable employees to securely upload documents into repository or share them with specific people in the organization making data management simple and easy.

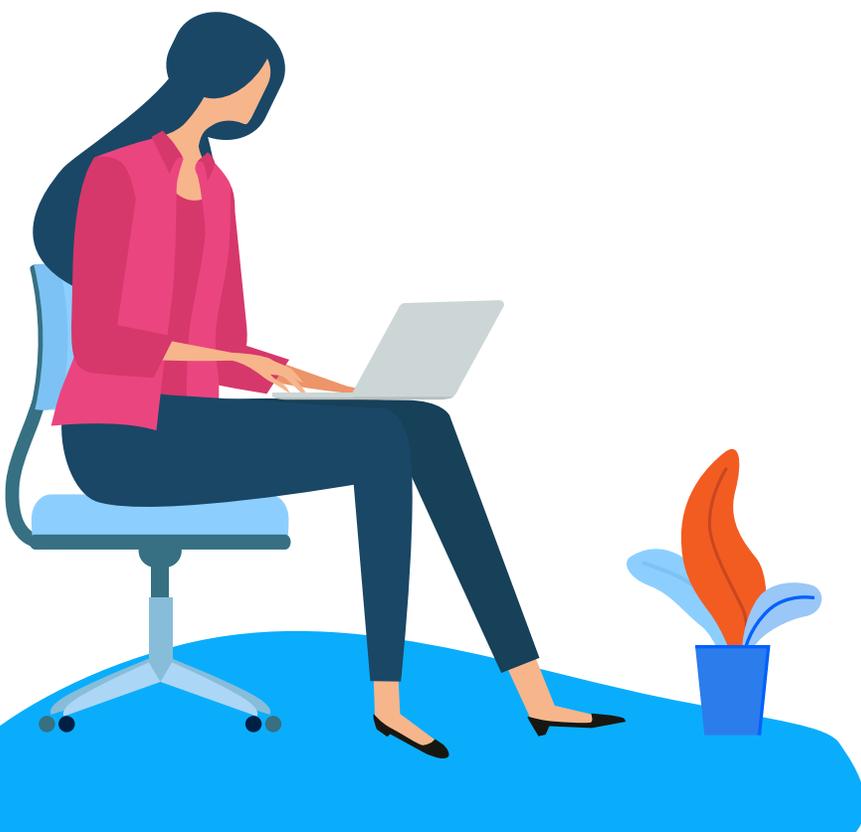


11. Powerful Search Capabilities

IDC data shows that “the knowledge worker spends about 2.5 hours per day, or roughly 30% of the workday, searching for information.

While storing numerous documents solves one part of the challenge, searching the repository to find what one is looking for is whole different challenge. Inaccurate search happens to be one of the biggest criticisms that traditional intranet platforms face. People are accustomed to just typing the keyword on the searcher and finding an ocean of results these days, and that is exactly what is expected from an intranet platform as well.

Powerful search capabilities are hence the foundation of any powerful intranet platform. An intranet platform should be capable of conducting a thorough search across the global internal network and fetch only relevant results to deliver the best possible user experiences. The search capabilities not only reduces employee efforts but also helps improve productivity drastically.

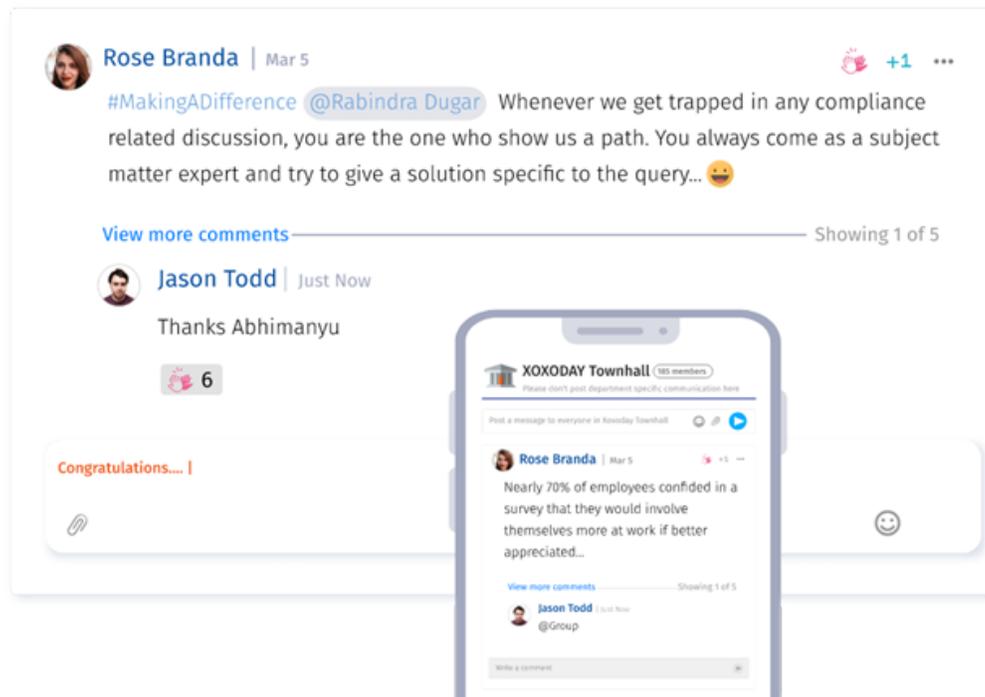


12. Omni-Channel Approach

Research shows, 85 percent of employees use more than one device to communicate at work.

When it comes to communication, every person has a preference as to how they want to receive it. While some people always want their workplace communication to reach their mailboxes, some find mobile apps, push notifications and alerts more convenient.

For an intranet platform to have an omni-channel approach that includes mobile, to **reach employees wherever they are is the best way to make communication effective.**



Conclusion

The meaning of work has undergone a 360° change since the last few years. It's no more about the place or being available between 9AM to 5PM, but it's all about what you do. Employees of today are truly global – working together from different geographies and time zones. That is why, it is imperative for every organization to reinvent their intranet platform and help them connect, collaborate and engage – from wherever they are.

A sophisticated, modern intranet platform, like Xoxoday Empuls helps remove any kind of roadblocks that prevent employees from being productive, engaged, and happy at work. A modern intranet platform makes communication relevant and more meaningful and drives innovation from the ground up – ultimately creating a healthy and positive work culture. After all, the richer the conversations, the richer the company.



At Xoxoday, we deeply understand the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and engagement drivers of people, be it an employee, supplier, contract staff, gig or consumer. We bring simplicity and continuity to a complex, everyday problem.



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