



**CONNECTING
EMPLOYEES**

A FRESH WAY TO IMPROVE EMPLOYEE COLLABORATION

Huber+Suhner needed a better, more efficient way for employees to communicate and collaborate globally. Its new modern intranet saves time and makes work easy.

MangoApps gave HUBER+SUHNER's 3,900 worldwide employees a platform for file storage, collaboration, and knowledge sharing, enabling renewed connections between team members who are often separated by multiple time zones.

COMPANY:

HUBER+SUHNER

HEADQUARTERS:

Herisau, Switzerland

EMPLOYEES:

Over 3,900 throughout Europe, North America, Latin America, Asia, and other parts of the world

OVERVIEW:

H+S sells cables, connectors, antennas, and other components to customers in the communication, transportation, and industrial markets.

The phrase “Excellence in connectivity solutions” governs the HUBER+SUHNER philosophy, but, ironically, H+S employees did not always feel connected to each other as they went about their daily jobs. Phil Ward, Market Manager for Data Centers, gives an example: “We’ve hired a lot of salespeople around the world, and I couldn’t really communicate with them. It was one-way communication. I didn’t know what they were doing.”

“Excellence in connectivity solutions”

Project Manager Reto Wenger adds: “We saw a need for virtual teams that could work across country borders. They could be in China, the States, and in Switzerland, and they all needed to be able to work together on the same topic.”

Since employees were spread across the world, they tended to use whatever tools were available in their countries, creating the potential for compatibility problems. Global CIO Urs Widmer further explains the situation H+S faced: “The challenge was that our employees used many different tools to collaborate. It was difficult to find the latest version of the right information and get to the right knowledge in an efficient way.”

The major pain point identified, H+S sought a way to alleviate the problem with a single, browser-based solution that included modern social and mobile collaboration tools, so employees could work together from any location, on any platform, at any time. Wenger notes that the company started with a list of 20 software vendors and began evaluating their solutions.

“Our idea was that if we couldn’t work with a tool within 40 minutes, on a certain level, then it wasn’t right for the company,” he says. However, MangoApps was different: “Within 15 minutes, everyone had their profiles set up, we were creating projects and uploading documents, we started downloading the mobile client, and we were able to really work in there.”

As Wenger and his team began to give MangoApps a more thorough examination, they kept other criteria in mind too: “It had to fit into our IT infrastructure and it had to be easy to plug other systems into MangoApps,” he explains. “We had criteria from department needs too, such as: It had to do ideation. We wanted to set up the new Intranet within this platform, so we needed a tool to share knowledge.”

He concludes: “The most important part was that it was easy to use and that it was modular, so we could start small and use additional options and functionality to grow the platform. With MangoApps, we found all those functionalities within one tool. The fact that it was intuitive and easy to use made us choose MangoApps.”

“MangoApps is facilitating us in becoming a truly global company. I see MangoApps as a good fit in our current and future architecture.”



Urs Widmer, Global CIO

LEARNING TO FLY WITH A TEST PILOT

Satisfied that MangoApps was the only solution that met its criteria, H+S embarked on a nine-month pilot test to see if it could fulfill employees' needs on a daily basis. Wenger says the company knew where to start: "We created a global market group of data center markets. There we had the market manager, Phil Ward, who was a forward-thinking visionary person, and he immediately saw the value of this program. We had 60 people in his group who immediately started sharing their knowledge and their documents from all over the world."

Wenger adds: "[Phil] was really strict about it. He said, 'This is the one tool we're going to use. I'm not going to answer emails anymore.' That really drove adoption in his group."

Ward explains that he was "well behind" the MangoApps test pilot, despite the fact that it's not always easy to change how a company the size of H+S operates. He says: "MangoApps has the potential to change the way a company thinks, and that's a difficult thing to do because a big company is like an oil tanker in the sea: Trying to shift it from one area to the next is a difficult thing. But when you have e-collaboration, you have multiple individuals working as a team, and the benefits are seen very quickly. And that's what we noticed when we deployed it."

He adds: "It's a no-brainer [to use MangoApps]. Everyone is searching for this magic tool that's going to do everything and to be honest, MangoApps is the best tool I've ever seen for allowing multiple functionality, bilateral functionality in an organization."

SOCIAL INTERACTION, FILE SHARING, AND DOCUMENT COLLABORATION

As the pilot test moved forward, Ward quickly saw how MangoApps' social interaction functions gave him keener insight into his team's daily activities around the globe. They could post and reply to status updates in real time, which not only allowed him to see what they were doing but also understand broader changes. "I'm seeing how the business is evolving," he says. "And it's allowed me to get a broader detail on how the data center market is moving."

In addition, Ward and his team relied heavily on MangoApps' file sharing and document collaboration functions. "I used to save documents in lots of different places and they were never accessible, nor well organized, either," he recalls. "MangoApps has forced us to structure our documentation much better. It makes us more efficient. We're starting to see sharing and collaboration going on, so we can see the best documents we're creating, and once we create something, we can share it with everyone, so it's great copy-and-paste functionality."

MangoApps to the Rescue

MangoApps even came to the rescue when Ward had to give a presentation during a business trip: "I have a restriction with USB download on my computer, and I had to give a presentation. I couldn't get it onto the USB stick, so MangoApps was a great way to upload the file from my hotel room and then save it onto another computer. It saved my skin."

The ability to collaborate on documents has helped save the company's entire skin, making it an invaluable part of employees' daily tasks as well as their forward thinking. Ward elaborates: "Let's say I've got a strategy idea, and I'm not sure if it's the right way to go. I'll start a document, invite people to collaborate on it, we'll share ideas, we'll see the edits and revisions, and then at the end we'll have a fantastic document because it's not just me doing it, it's a whole team with their expertise."

KNOWLEDGE SHARING IS CRUCIAL TOO

A company like H+S operates on employees' accumulated knowledge about manufacturing, pricing, materials, distribution, and many other facets of its business. However, that crucial information wasn't collected in a central place before MangoApps, so employees in different parts of the world would have to deal with the same situations without the benefit of sharing knowledge.

Project Manager Benjamin Rüegg says: "It's more transparent what's happening around the globe. You might, for example, see problems that are arising in China, and people in the US might experience the same problems and know how to deal with them."

In addition, Rüegg notes that MangoApps' powerful search functionality makes it easy for employees to find each other. For example, if they need to ask advice from someone well-versed in specific aspects of distribution, they have no trouble locating that person. "It helps us find the right people around the globe who have skills, and right now we don't know how to find them," he says.

Community Manager Chantal Elder echoes those sentiments: "You can share information very easily, with a lot of people. You can ask directions directly. It's more transparent. The key benefit is that in the end, we have more efficient collaboration between employees around the world."

She elaborates: "The most popular use cases are the projects with members from different countries, because the benefit is the biggest. You have members who aren't in the same room. They have to send emails and use the phone, and if you use email and send information to one person, but someone else needs it too, you have lots of emails with the same information. With MangoApps, you have one place with all the information."

PASSIONATE ABOUT MANGOAPPS

Now that MangoApps has been in use at H+S for a while, employees can't imagine doing their jobs without it.

"I'm passionate about the software and have tons of things I love about MangoApps,"

says Wenger. "I love the freedom that MangoApps gives to me to access it from anywhere, any time, on any device. It doesn't matter if I'm on my mobile phone, or on my tablet on the train, or on my company computer."

Wenger adds that even the platform's distinctive name is a key asset: "The name MangoApps helped a lot with implementing it, because people were wondering, 'What's this MangoApps thing everyone is talking about?'"

“It’s very intuitive,” Elder says of her first experience with MangoApps. “You know where to click and don’t need to read a manual before you use it.”

Ward echoes those thoughts: “It didn’t take long at all to understand MangoApps. It’s very intuitive and well structured. It’s one of the simplest programs I’ve ever used.”

MANGOAPPS SCALES WITH GROWTH

Looking ahead, Wenger sees MangoApps easily keeping pace with the growth of H+S: “It’s easy to customize it. It comes out of the box with many functionalities. And it’s scalable: You can start small and you can just keep it growing. The development team amazed us, how fast they’re developing the software and which direction it’s going.”

Wenger has some advice to anyone considering a MangoApps implementation at their company: “If someone in a similar position were to ask me, I would tell them to go for it and convince their management about the business value of MangoApps. The most important thing is to do a test pilot and show the proof of concept and the benefits you can immediately deliver to the company.”

Widmer sums up the company’s plans for the powerful platform: “MangoApps is facilitating us in becoming a truly global company. MangoApps has the next generation of collaboration platforms, providing the latest technology trends, as well as the newest experiences for the market. And from a technical point-of-view, I see MangoApps as a good fit in our current and future architecture.”

“MangoApps is very intuitive. You don’t need to read a manual before you use it.”

- Chantel Eder,
Community Manager

