MangoApps™

# SharePoint is Not a Modern Employee Communications & Intranet Packaged App

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# INTRODUCTION

## How providers like MangoApps create space for innovation, while SharePoint encourages stagnation

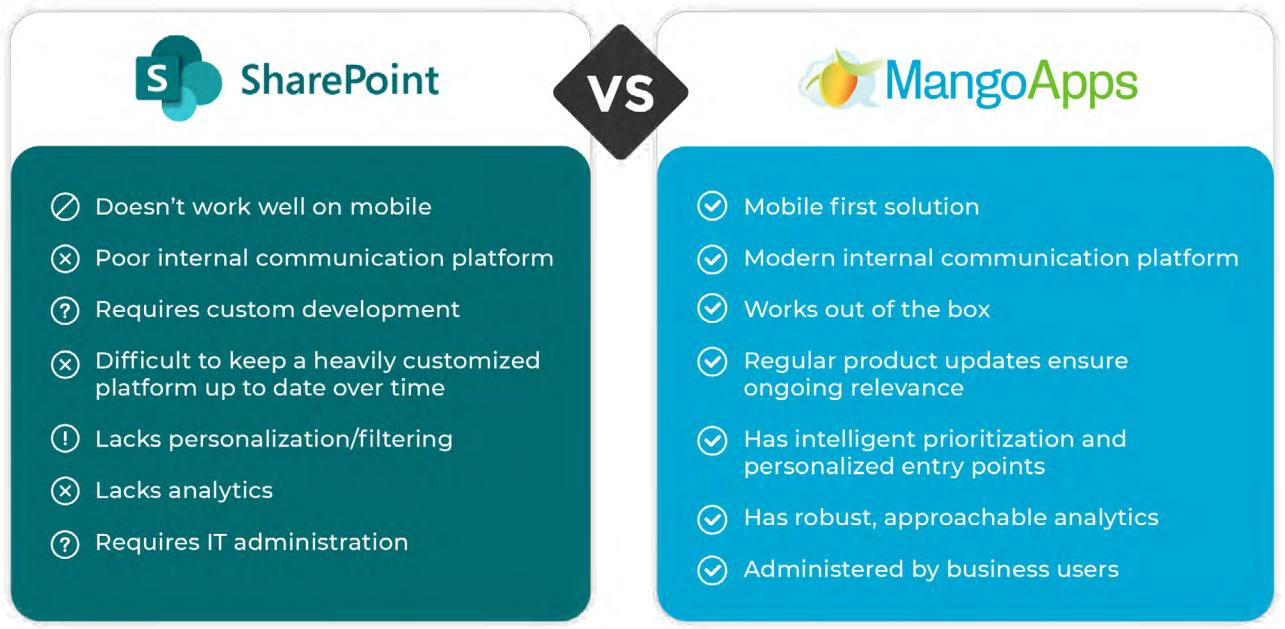
At MangoApps, we get a lot of questions about SharePoint during the sales process. It is very common for companies to come to us looking to replace an old SharePoint implementation. In other cases, companies consider us as an option alongside adopting SharePoint as they look to replace an outdated homemade intranet.

Although SharePoint has some features of a modern intranet, it is limited in many aspects that we cover in this paper. Its core purpose is enterprise file storage and management for electronic documents and records, including functionality such as archiving, searching and retrieval. Functionality beyond that requires custom development.

As such, we don't view SharePoint as a true competitor to our service, because it functions as a repository for documents, rather than as a mobile-first employee communication & engagement platform. It does not meet the needs of the various departments who are stakeholders in an internal communications & modern intranet solution. Going with SharePoint is a missed opportunity to enable employees with an experience that makes them more efficient, engaged and effective.

Usually, it is IT teams who want to go with SharePoint, while their colleagues in other departments are interested in more modern providers like MangoApps. We find this to be a recurring theme of our conversations with prospects.

Before we dig deeper into this topic, here is a bird's-eye view of SharePoint versus MangoApps.



# WHAT DO USERS & STAKEHOLDERS WANT?

When it comes to intranet and employee communications deployment, there are often differing expectations among users and stakeholders within the same company.

We have done extensive research into this disparity, and our findings show that different groups tend to have competing goals and priorities for implementing a modern intranet. Here is a generalized version of our findings.

## IT teams advocate for going with SharePoint

On its surface, SharePoint strikes many IT leaders as an obvious choice for their intranet needs.

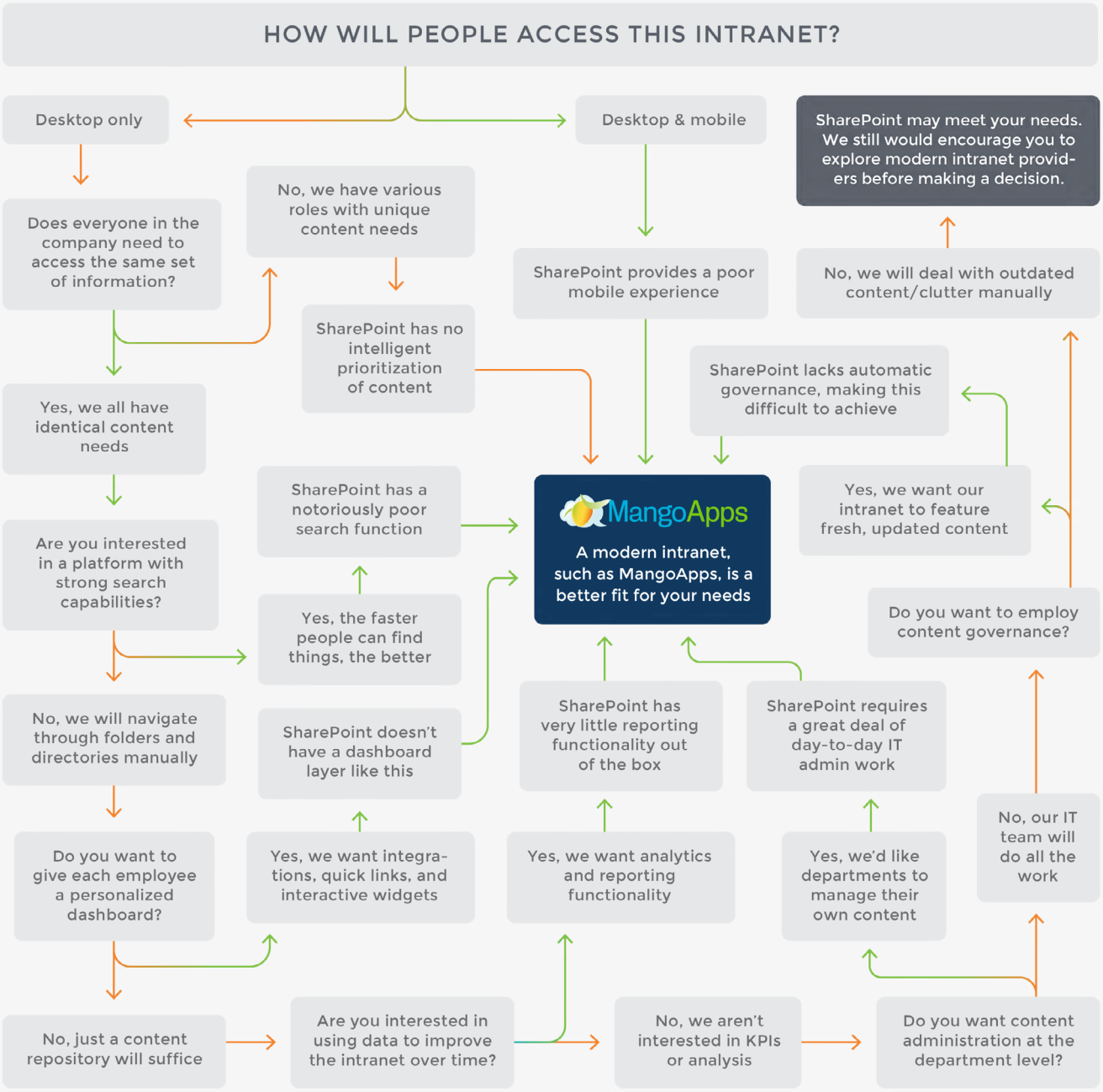
As a piece of software included with Microsoft Office 365, SharePoint will presumably fit right into the company toolkit. It should integrate directly with the other tools office workers are already using, with an interface they understand. As IT's goal is to use technology to make the company's employees more productive, this feels like a clear win. They think that adopting SharePoint will create a single source of truth, where files and information are easy to find.

However, IT teams who make these assumptions miss a few crucial points. First off, SharePoint's native interface does not offer a personalized employee experience. Employees today are accustomed to personalization. They use apps every day, both professionally and personally, that intelligently sort through information and put the most important and/or relevant items front and center. Even email clients like Gmail are beginning to function in some of these areas.

Many IT teams see SharePoint's ability to be a hub for everything as its main strength. However, this is a false premise that misses a key part of the formula for a true work hub. Business users do not need a database of every single file the company has. They need a platform that cuts through the noise, parsing through documents, resources, updates, events, and programs to put action-oriented and mission-critical items front and center.

Without intelligent content sorting, a hub for everything is overwhelming and not useful, and doesn't constitute a true digital workplace.

# CONSIDERING ADOPTING SHAREPOINT? ASK YOURSELF THESE QUESTIONS



## What does the average frontline employee want from a modern intranet?

Frontline employees are the backbone of your enterprise, but connecting them with corporate communications can be challenging. In many organizations, they either don't have access to the intranet at all, or are limited by its poor mobile functionality. By using SharePoint, you essentially exclude this group from participating in the intranet in a meaningful way.

The average frontline worker is not as tech-enabled as the average desk worker, at least from a professional perspective. This makes sense, as it isn't their job to be. Many are not given access to a computer as a part of their job, and many others only have limited access to a shared device which doesn't remember any of their information or logins. On the other hand, the majority have a smartphone in their pocket most or all of the time.

As such, frontline workers want mobile-first tools, and the simpler the setup, the better. We see our customers get a great deal of mileage out of integrations and SSO for mobile, ensuring that their frontline employees can sign in once and access all of the tools they need to do their jobs.

Generally speaking, frontline employees have more straightforward intranet needs than desk workers. There is a smaller subset of material they need to access, and they want it at their fingertips with minimal effort. That way, it only represents a minor disruption to the more important work they need to get done. With SharePoint, it is not feasible to give frontline workers access to a streamlined intranet entry point that makes sense for their roles.

Furthermore, frontline workers want to collaborate with other people, including those in similar roles to them at other locations, as well as leadership and support staff. They want updates and the context to understand how their work contributes to the big-picture company goals, without being disrupted or overloaded with irrelevant information.

It is crucial to unify your employee-facing apps, so frontline and desk workers are working from the same system by different entry points that suit their needs. This ensures that employees benefit from increased focus, while business leaders benefit from clear ownership and objectives.

Additionally, as the eyes and ears of the business, frontline workers want to have some ways to submit ideas and feedback. By empowering them with ideation features, you can boost engagement and let them play a key role in shaping the future of your organization. With SharePoint, you are instead pushing directives out to these employees, which does nothing to make them feel valued, and misses an opportunity to capture their knowledge and perspective.

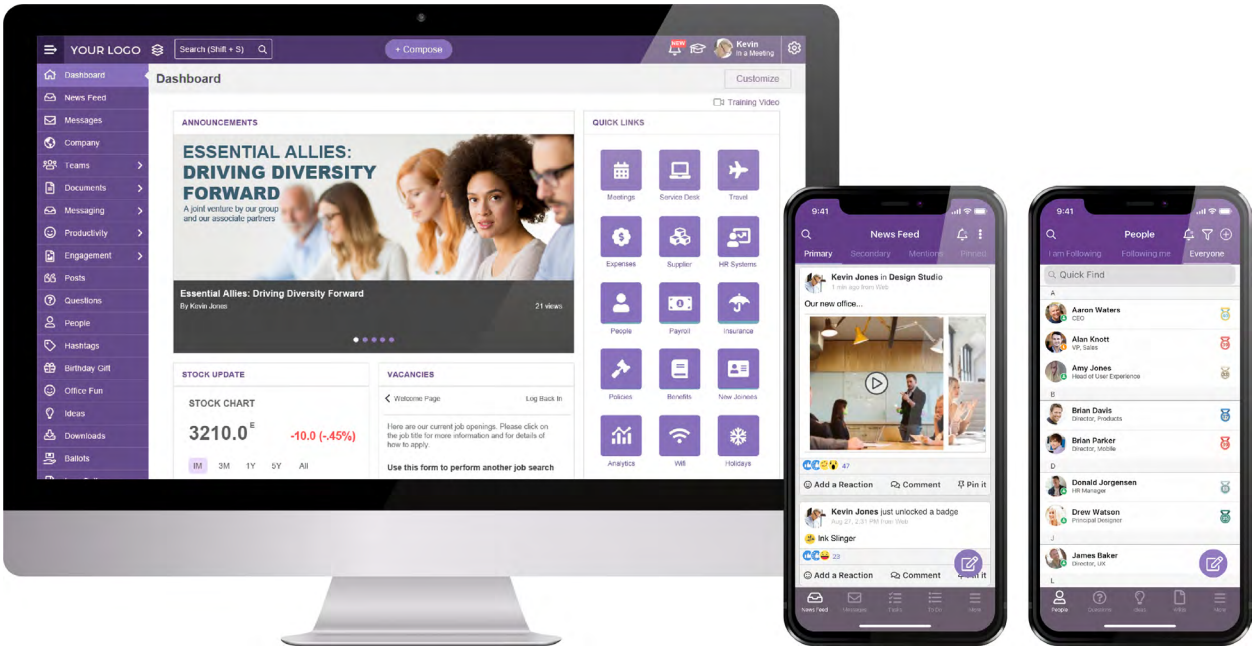
## What does the average office employee want from a modern intranet?

For a typical office user, the intranet should be a digital HQ. It should provide quick access to the information they need most in a user-friendly interface on both mobile and desktop platforms. Rather than a document repository, it should be a place for community and engagement.

It's no secret that adopting SharePoint does not provide this experience. Even as far back as 2013, Forrester survey data showed that the majority of users found SharePoint difficult to use and preferred other tools. Since then, the gap between SharePoint and modern intranet providers has only widened significantly.

Sure, some people might argue that most companies don't make the proper investments in SharePoint setup. There may be some truth behind that claim. However, in our view, a piece of software that has to be measured by your ability to add onto it is built on shaky ground.

Furthermore, when you rely on custom development, you all but guarantee that your implementation will eventually become obsolete. This is why many companies eventually wind up exploring alternatives to their old SharePoint implementation.

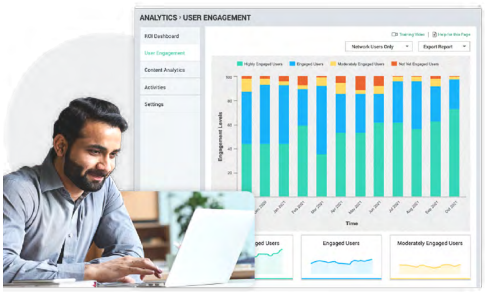



## What do managers want from a modern intranet?

Put simply, managers want to take action based on the knowledge on the intranet, and measure outcomes over time. They want to be empowered with a positive user experience with relevant and up-to-date information. SharePoint doesn't provide any of these functions.

When working with SharePoint, specialized IT staff have to handle the day-to-day upkeep of the platform. This made sense twenty years ago, but today it is costly and creates a bad experience for business users. In this day and age, departments outside of IT have employees that are tech-savvy enough to administrate portions of the intranet themselves.

With a true modern intranet platform, you can take this work off of IT's plate. Then, teams like internal communications, HR, and marketing can create and maintain their own pages and directories. This is a better, faster experience for everyone involved, and saves the company the cost of full-time specialized IT hires.




It is also important to have recommendations & robust reporting capabilities. Managers want to track KPIs around user engagement and adoption so they can optimize performance against these metrics. Without this functionality, admins must act on intuition instead of relying on hard data. Since SharePoint doesn't have this feature natively, it requires IT involvement and possibly custom development.

With a platform like MangoApps, on the other hand, you get action-driven insights and deep reporting capabilities in an intuitive interface. This lets your admins track performance over time, test new ideas, optimize their activities and be empowered to get outcomes.

## What does the leadership team want from a modern intranet?

Leadership teams want to connect and engage with their employees, using authentic, targeted communication to unite their workforce behind a compelling vision. They want to take advantage of new channels and formats to build trust and transparency with their teams, and they want to get a pulse on how the workforce at large engages with and feels about company-wide initiatives.

With SharePoint, there is very little in the way of communication or content analytics, leaving leaders in the dark as to employee sentiment and engagement. Furthermore, they have no way to solicit two-way conversation for feedback, or deploy polls or surveys.

Leadership teams using a modern intranet like MangoApps, on the other hand, can inspire a culture of inclusion and recognition. The platform enables them to set the tone for a high-performance culture where every voice is valued, and good deeds get recognized all the way up the chain. Leadership can reach employees across borders, and mobile experiences bring the most disconnected workers into the fold.

# SHAREPOINT LIMITATIONS, PROBLEMS & FAILURES

Here is a list, in brief, of some common issues that companies face after choosing to deploy SharePoint.

## Poor Personalization of the Employee Experience

If you can't personalize your employees' content experience based on criteria like job function or location, employees are forced to cut through a lot of noise. For example, a Seattle employee doesn't care that they're offering free flu shots in India, but with SharePoint, every employee will see this update with equal prioritization.

Personalized employee experience is a key value proposition of a modern intranet compared to email or other platforms. SharePoint does not provide the tools to create a curated information experience, and is thus not well-equipped to capture and hold the user's attention. All of the employee experience is lost without the ability to effectively personalize and prescribe content.

## Poor Mobile Experience

Frictionless intranet access on a mobile device is essential for frontline employees. The mobile experience should include self-service access to key information, real-time messaging, pulse surveys, and targeted news feeds with relevant and actionable information.

SharePoint's mobile experience is only about being responsive to screen sizes. It does not provide the kind of native mobile-first experience that modern employees expect their employers to deliver.

## Poor Multi-Channel Communication

SharePoint treats all employees as if they have the same communication needs, resulting in noise and low engagement. A modern intranet should give you the power to reach employees via channels like SMS messages, email, mobile push notifications, and in-office displays, with flexible notification settings. This way, employees can be reached in the manner that suits each individual best.

With SharePoint, there is no way to individualize these settings, making it difficult or impossible to implement a sophisticated communication strategy.

## Poor Content Governance Capabilities

With SharePoint, there is very little in the way of content governance capabilities. It is almost guaranteed that your intranet will turn into a dumping ground of outdated content eventually. The only way to avoid this is to manually monitor the content, and take action to keep it updated. This is no easy undertaking, and requires consistent effort over a long period of time with no lapses.

Modern providers like MangoApps, on the other hand, provide a content governance engine that intelligently auto-archives stale intranet content, and delivers notifications to content administrators when their intranet content needs a refresh.

## Poor Automation Capabilities

It is crucial to be able to engage with your employees the same way that your marketing team engages with your customers. This requires some automation capabilities, like being able to plan, schedule, and automate messaging campaigns that go out to your employees when they hit key milestones in the employee journey.

SharePoint does not make it easy to do this without custom development, whereas modern providers have this functionality built seamlessly into the communication deployment workflow.

## Poor Audience Targeting

SharePoint largely enables communication using an organization structure that is based on locations, departments and teams. This is an important component of communication strategy, but it doesn't always reflect the day-to-day reality of how companies operate. It is crucial to be able to group your employees according to multiple criteria to define your desired personas, to ensure that you capture some of the other, more dynamic categories at play in your organization.

With the deeper targeting functionality that modern providers like MangoApps offer, you can use employee profiles to deliver relevant content to your team in context via the channels they prefer. This will allow you to achieve the highest engagement and adoption, and ensure that your employees neither miss messages that would've been important to them nor waste time on irrelevant content.

## Slow Deployment & Heavy Administrative Burden

Deploying SharePoint is a heavy undertaking. To get the most out of it, you have to bring on consultants and/or full-time specialists, and rolling it out to your team can take a long, long time. Furthermore, it is very hard to keep up with the changing demands of the workforce, especially when you have a custom build that can't easily be updated.

Let's say you spend the next year working with an expensive consultant to build the perfect SharePoint setup for your company. You roll it out, and invest time in training your employees to use the platform effectively. You eat the cost of hiring a small team of SharePoint experts to handle all the upkeep the platform requires.

Now, fast forward a few years. A new version of SharePoint has come out, because the old one no longer met the modern workforce's needs. This puts you in an uncomfortable position. You can stick with your old setup, which will eventually become so obsolete that your employees stop using it (if they haven't already by this point). Otherwise, you'll have to go through the entire exercise again with the new version and a new consultant.

## Old-Fashioned Customer Support

All of the above issues with consultants and custom development dance around the problem at the root of SharePoint implementations: the lack of customer support. Microsoft's customer support is practically nonexistent. This is not a secret; it's why SharePoint consultants are able to charge as much as they do.

If you have any issues that your consultants or internal team can't resolve, you're likely out of luck. Microsoft is simply too large of a company to be able to adequately address all of their customers' needs. In fact, when a typical customer cancels their contract, Microsoft hardly feels it.

## No Customer Say into Future Roadmap

As a SharePoint customer, you are handed a half-finished product and expected to put the rest of the pieces together yourself. On top of that, as an enterprise you have little or no voice in the future roadmap of SharePoint.

Their customer base is so large that their roadmap is driven by large-scale market forces that move slowly and may or may not be in line with your specific needs. By contrast, providers like MangoApps work closely with customers. We are in conversation with our customers every single day, and our roadmap is dictated by their needs, ideas, and requests.

# WHY A MODERN EMPLOYEE COMMUNICATIONS & INTRANET PACKAGED APP?

While SharePoint is basically just an internal website, MangoApps provides a pervasive mobile-first employee experience for your frontline and desk workers.

Here is a brief snapshot of some of the key benefits of a modern provider that you don't get with SharePoint.

## Personalized Internal Communications

MangoApps can precisely target news & content based on employee persona and then intelligently surface action-oriented communication to them. This saves employees time and frustration, driving significantly higher employee engagement.

## Automation of Employee Journeys

With MangoApps, internal communication teams can plan, schedule and automate campaigns over multiple channels to improve operational efficiency and employee productivity.

For example, companies in growth mode can set up a cadence that goes out to new hires starting from their first day, and engaging them over the coming weeks and months. With sophisticated targeting, you can get really granular with your messaging for each role, and not have to manually handle this outreach with every new crop of hires.

This lets you create employee experiences with in-the-moment learning, which is the secret sauce of high employee engagement.

## Automation of Content Governance

Without content governance, your intranet will inevitably become a junk drawer filled with outdated content. It simply isn't sustainable to do this work manually forever.

MangoApps makes it easy to take care of governance by automating content lifecycles, review workflows, and auto-archival of stale content. The end result is fresh content and increased employee trust.

## Automation of Employee Self-Services & Approvals

Manual processes breed inefficiency, as work is held up unnecessarily by human delays or error. With MangoApps, business users can automate repetitive operational processes with an intuitive visual workflow editor. It's easy to create multi-step processes combining alerts, approvals, update requests and more.

Eliminating manual processes frees up your employees' time for more important, thoughtful work, improving their employee experience. For frontline employees, this functionality enables self-service items from mobile, such as schedule views, time-off requests, expense reimbursements, and submitting feedback.

## Actionable Insights & Recommendations

MangoApps uses analytics to automatically collect and provide actionable intelligence to help managers drive adoption, engagement, and governance. These insights ensure that you get the most out of the deep well of data provided by your employees' daily content consumption activities.

This allows your team to quickly identify what works and what needs attention, ensuring that you can keep your intranet as engaging on day 1000 as it is on day 1.

## Smart, Federated & Fast Search

MangoApps brings a Google-like search experience to your enterprise with global search.

Employees can find all of their content, conversations and data in one place, no matter where it lives. Having a strong, unified search function powers productivity and improves employee sentiment by ensuring that everything your team needs is easy to find.

Our large database of integrations with the repositories you already use enables you to bring all of your knowledge together in one place.

## Company-Branded Ready-to-Use Templates Library

MangoApps comes with built-in customizable templates for just about everything in the platform, so your team can jump right in and start creating. These come pre-branded to your company's standards, and its easy to add more templates to help you maintain consistency across your communication and other materials.

Our default package includes templates for corporate & crisis communications, microsites, forms, surveys, employee rewards and acknowledgements, campaign templates for employee journeys, and much more.

## Enterprise-Grade IT Security & Compliance

Trust is foundational to everything.

MangoApps includes enterprise-grade IT security & compliance capabilities out of the box. Our platform is built on secure, agile cloud infrastructure, and we participate in annual third-party security audits, on top of continuous monitoring internally.

Features like zero-trust access, encryption and key management, flexible DLP and PII policies, and legal holds ensure that you have all the tools you need to manage your company's data in a secure environment.

This is something we take very seriously, and the peace of mind that it brings to our customers is a key part of our service.

## Fast Deployment with Ongoing Product Innovations

Unlike SharePoint, we deploy in days or weeks, not months or years. Your time to value is top of mind for us as a vendor, and we are always primed to hit the ground running with new customers so they can get a return on their investment as quickly as possible.

Couple that with multiple major and minor product releases per year, and you have a platform that delivers maximum value for you, with continuous improvements and innovations.

## Delightful Customer Success & Support Included

A digital workplace solution is a lot more than installing and setting up—it's about changing the way your team communicates and collaborates, so you can get better work done faster.

We pride ourselves on the quality and enthusiasm of our white-glove onboarding and ongoing support teams, who are there to ensure that you find success with us as a partner.

# MANGOAPPS VS. SHAREPOINT

Here's a brief snapshot of the breadth of features we offer

✓ Available ✗ Not Available
~ Limited capabilities & may require custom development

| | | MangoApps | SharePoint |
|---|---|---|---|
| INTRANET | Sites & Pages | ✓ | ✓ |
| | Employee Directory | ✓ | ~ |
| | File Databases | ✓ | ✓ |
| | Effective Search | ✓ | ✗ |
| | Personalized Employee Hub | ✓ | ✗ |
| COMMUNICATION | Interactive News Feed | ✓ | ✗ |
| | Emergency Alerts | ✓ | ✗ |
| | Multimedia Posts | ✓ | ✗ |
| | Targeted Campaigns | ✓ | ✗ |
| | Employee Journey Automation | ✓ | ✗ |
| | Content Insights | ✓ | ✗ |
| OTHER FEATURE AREAS | Collaboration Spaces | ✓ | ✗ |
| | Process Automation | ✓ | ~ |
| | Employee Rewards & Recognition | ✓ | ✗ |
| | Polls & Surveys | ✓ | ~ |
| | Built-In LMS | ✓ | ✗ |
| PLATFORM | Strong Mobile Experience | ✓ | ✗ |
| | Auto-Governance | ✓ | ~ |
| | No-Code Administration | ✓ | ✗ |
| | White-Labeled Platform | ✓ | ✗ |
| | Deep Analytics & Reporting | ✓ | ~ |
| | Library of Templates | ✓ | ~ |
| CLIENT EXPERIENCE | Fast Deployment | ✓ | ✗ |
| | Great Customer Service | ✓ | ✗ |
| | Customer Say In Roadmap | ✓ | ✗ |

# THE ULTIMATE EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE

The ultimate employee experience is built on a company-branded that powers multiple use cases across your workforce.

MangoApps unifies as many employee-facing app needs as possible to create a single work hub. By eliminating efficiencies and reducing context switching, you create a positive employee experience that will contribute to every facet of your company's bottom line.