

Whitepaper: Internal Communications app

Increase staff communication, effectiveness and retention

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Introduction

Internal communications is an important part of any business, with Forbes citing it puts everyone on the same page, creates a more cohesive strategy and reduces confusion and inefficiencies¹. In the age of free information flow, there has never been a more crucial time to ensure that staff are given timely information about the firm, and to hear it from the firm first.

While most organizations already have an internal communications function, concerningly our research shows that less than 10% of organizations have an internal communications app. Contrast to this is that 89% of the mobile users in the US access news and information via mobile devices² (Nielson) and according to Comscore almost 90% of their time on mobile is spent in apps³. This shows a huge opportunity for organizations to embrace internal communications apps.

Fliplet's extensive experience working with enterprise organizations has found that in relation to internal communications, businesses that do not have a mobile app all fall into these 3 categories:

1. Email is the only delivery of internal communications. There is no access to an internal communications website so news isn't searchable
2. They have access to an internal communications website that is not designed for mobile devices (ie, they are not responsive and they are not legible on a small screen)
3. They have access to a mobile optimized internal communications website

Ultimately, we believe that internal communications apps for enterprises can be as good as the leading industry standard news outlets such as CNN, Fox News, The New York Times and AOL. Fliplet can help to achieve this for your business.

In the following whitepaper, we delve into the limitations that organizations face with their existing internal communications solutions and the benefits of using a solution like Fliplet. We've also included a simple 6 step guide on how you can create and deploy an internal communications app in under 2 weeks.

Why create an internal communications app?

1. Staff are already using their mobile devices for work, with 86% checking email and 67% accessing shared documents, therefore an internal communications app would enable staff to consume content in their preferred manner⁴
2. Use push notifications to quickly notify users of critical news and emergency announcements on their mobile devices. 100% coverage can be achieved by mandating users enable push notifications
3. Research by employee app specialists, Staffbase, found that organizations can save anywhere from 25 to 65% on turnover costs by driving engagement levels to above 75% with an employee app⁵
4. Studies suggest that 20% of staff work hours are spent searching for information necessary to do their jobs effectively. According to the Harvard Business Review, a staff app could decrease this by 15%, thereby increasing revenue per staff by 5%⁶
5. Enable staff to share business approved news via the internal communications app, given that 80% of social media posts are announcements about people's own experiences⁷

What are common internal communications solutions and their limitations?

If they don't have a mobile app, organizations usually have some of the following solutions for access to internal communications. This results in a number of limitations or frustrations for users leading to limited benefits for staff. We assessed the most common solutions and their limitations.

Email only delivery of internal communications, no access to an internal communications website

Limitations:

- Limited engagement and reach of company content, as messages do not allow readers to respond or enhance the news
- Not customizable to the user's preferences, everyone receives everything even if it is not relevant
- Not easily searched and filtered, it is hard to quickly find a previous article
- Not able to save articles to view at a later date, it's time consuming to find important content again
- No usage data, little to no understanding of how internal communications is being consumed
- No ability to distinguish between formal company news, internal company news, announcements and successes in the business, leading to lower engagement with emails

Access to an internal communications website (not mobile optimized)

Limitations:

- Limited access to relevant company materials out of the office, restricting specific tasks to the office or VPN connection
- Poor or intermittent mobile access, meaning that productivity is reduced to only when staff are at their desk
- Limited analytics detail, restricted information about how individual users consume or engage with internal communications
- Limited feedback or quantitative data, lack of understanding of users opinions through surveys and polls

Access to a mobile optimized internal communications website

Limitations:

- Not available offline, inefficient use of staff time waiting for content to become available when online access resumes
- Notifications not available on mobile, therefore important news delivery is delayed
- Mobile access fails to meet IT security standards, either limiting access to internal communications on mobiles or leaving information vulnerable to security breaches
- No mobile emergency notification system, therefore relying on email or other means to notify staff in the event of an emergency
- Limited volume of news content from staff/business, stunts the flow of news creation and sharing within the business

“Everyone in the business is very impressed with the internal communications app, especially with something as simple as push notifications having such a huge impact on the percentage of company news announcements actually being viewed by staff”

What are the benefits of an internal communications app?

By using a solution like Fliplet to create an internal communications app, you can expect the following benefits:

Improved usability

- Our apps **automatically cache content for reliable offline access**, therefore staff have uninterrupted access to internal communications regardless of their internet access
- **Receive relevant news** by selecting topics relevant to you. Some topics can be made mandatory based on the user’s role, department or country. Staff receive the internal communications that is pertinent to their role remit and responsibilities
- **Powerful search and filter** functionality that dynamically adjusts based on the content provided so users can easily find the information or details required. Less time is spent on searching for content
- **Save articles** and easily find them later. Staff time is not wasted on searching, therefore increasing productivity
- **Easily update the app** to reduce the chance staff will have access to out of date information. Individuals and teams can manage content updates without interrupting IT resource

Improved communication

- **Communicate urgent and important announcements** direct to users device and prompt them to find out more from the app. This ensures the least amount of delay between staff receiving announcements and taking action when required

- Users can **set preferences** for which news categories or topics to be notified about. This ensures that the right information is prioritized for staff, reducing the amount of time wasted on scrolling through content not relevant to their role
- Make it easy for staff to **advocate and share business news** to their networks. Utilizing staff to promote business news to their professional networks can provide a significant uplift in people seeing company announcements and news
- Mobile is the fastest way to reach staff in a crisis. **Control and safeguard company communications** by providing a trusted source of information. Trust in the knowledge that all messages are sent and received securely to each relevant staff device, so they are informed of a crisis immediately
- Create a **central repository for files**, documents and materials, available online and offline. Ensure staff time is used on the review of the materials, rather than the search

Improved delivery of news

- **Individuals and teams can create and share news content**, breaking down silos within organizations and share news and successes horizontally. This staff generated content can help the staff to feel valued and become more invested in the firm
- Save staff time by **pulling in news from multiple sources** to have a go-to repository of all relevant industry news. Staff can quickly access all required news source information giving valuable time back to their roles

Improved analysis

- Understand your users with **data-driven analytics** to track screen views, popular posts, active users, tasks completed and more. Improve the effectiveness of communications through optimization of popular content and ensure key information is surfaced in the app
- **Understand each individual user** to optimize the app. Ensure users get the most out of the app, streamline processes and deliver cost efficiency and time savings
- Make better-informed HR decisions, understand staff thoughts and have efficient pulse survey completion through **surveys and polls**. Gather data quickly and efficiently to turnaround quick responses and deliver results back to the business

Improved security and distribution

- Fliplet offers **Apple and Android apps for smartphone and tablet**, plus web apps to give staff access to internal communications anywhere. This results in a more efficient workforce, maximizing opportunities to stay connected with company news
- Conforms to **IT security standards, encrypts data** in transit and rest, offers SSO. IT departments don't need to make any special dispensations for using Fliplet to create an internal communications app, as it can meet already established security protocols
- **Integrates with SQL databases or APIs** via an easy to configure on-premise tool. No additional tools or systems required for IT teams to acquire, reducing the unknowns and ensuring a smooth transition to using Fliplet apps



“The usage data really helped us understand which articles and parts of the app staff were viewing, so we could update our content and to ensure everything was clear and easy to find”

How to create an internal communications app

Fliplet’s internal communications app can be integrated, secured, tested and deployed in under 2 weeks and with minimal IT resources.

1. Confirm the location of your internal communications content.
Fliplet integrates with SQL databases and offers a REST API for uploading content.
2. Integrate Single Sign On with your existing identity provider.
Fliplet supports SAML2, ADFS and oAuth2
3. Apply your brand colors and fonts to the app.
Fliplet’s app templates can be rapidly branded to ensure the app looks like it was built for you. This typically takes about 15 minutes.
4. Deploy your app.
Fliplet apps can be deployed via MDM, private app stores or public apps stores. For internal apps, we recommend MDM or private app store.
5. Analyze your app’s usage.
Using Fliplet’s built-in analytics you can confirm the app’s usage and what users find useful
6. Training and app optimization
Fliplet will train your team to modify and optimize the app.

Any questions? Get in touch hello@fliplet.com