



PLAYBOOK

The Future of Internal Communications

2020 EDITION

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Before we begin...

The future of business is communication. If this is your responsibility within your organization, then you'll likely be looking for continual ways to relate to your internal audience. With varying generations, expectations, personalities, and roles, being adaptable to your audience is vital to retain attention and drive home your core messaging.

Fortunately for you, you chose the right playbook to assist you on this journey.



01

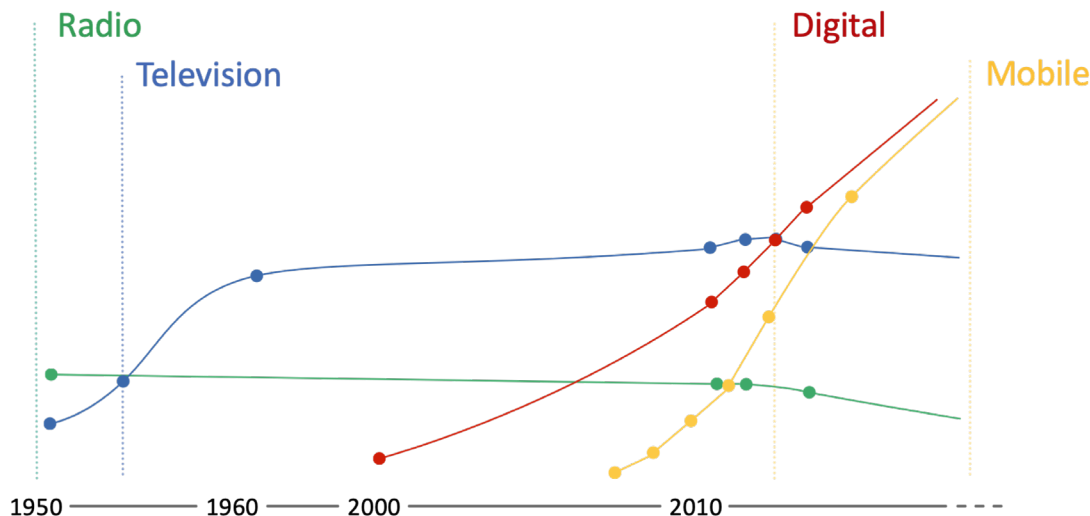
The
future

of business communications

The future of business communications

As we progress into the '20s, the progression of technology is only pacing faster, it's important to ask ourselves...

"How can we adapt communications to be in line with technological advancements?"



From 2010 onwards, digital and mobile accelerated in spectacular fashion. As user experience, social media, and automation advance, so does our ability to access information, all while clinging for dear life to the handholds on the bus to our day jobs. Access to varying devices like smartphones, tablets, e-readers, laptops, voice recognition, and household support, means we're continually engaged.

Technological Advances

Let's get digital! As mentioned above, we will continue to see digital and mobile transform our lives. From fitness to fittin' this Thai takeout in our belly, these mobile applications are also making changes to our professional lives.

TIP: If you want to empower your people to be agile and productive at work, the introduction of mobile applications is critical. If your organization is not on a platform such as Workplace, Microsoft teams, Yammer or Slack - It's time to start investigating how these tools can support your communications and engagement efforts.

Generational needs

Communication changes depending on the generation you're speaking to. Someone from Gen-Z may be talking to you in lingo, whereas someone from the silent generation may speak slower (and you may need to talk louder for them to hear you). If we apply this to our professional lives, older generations may be more familiar with a top-down approach to corporate communications as this is all they have known in their younger years of employment. However, a mixture of generations now occupy those senior leadership roles, and with that comes more versatility in the way top-down communication is delivered.

Generation type	Year start	Year end	Who are they?
Baby Boomers	1946	1964	Personal gratification; personal growth, health and wellness; optimism and positive attitude; teamwork and being involved.
Generation X	1965	1974	Diversity and global thinking; self-reliance and independence; life balance; fun and informal attitude.
Xennials	1975	1980	Global thinkers that are technologically literate, while still able to switch off.
Millennials	1981	1996	Confidence and achievement; sociability and collective action; diversity and morality; street-smart; optimistic and savvy.
Gen Z	1997	2012	Communaholics, unique, and ethical with unlimited potential to achieve. Digital natives that are optimistic and inspired by positive initiatives.
Gen Alpha	2013	2025	Will be most materially endowed and technologically literate generation. Informed, ethically responsible, and sensitive.

Fun fact: By 2022, 42.5% of the global workforce (that's approximately 1.87 billion people) will be mobile.

02

Cultural transformation
&
employee experience

Cultural transformation & employee experience

With over 33% of your time spent in the workplace every weekday, building an environment that people enjoy coming to should be your number one priority. From work perks to cultural alignment, the entire employee experience extends to new bounds with workplace flexibility and organizational tools added to the mix.

In a recent Workplace study in the UK and US, it was found only 45% of frontline workers regularly share their thoughts with senior employees, even though 90% of managers feel that their frontline workers are empowered to share ideas with them. 83% of managers felt confident that all employees have a voice in their business. However, 54% of frontline respondents said they feel “voiceless” at work.

The physical environment

Can there be better visibility through polling activations or informal coffee catchup's where your leadership team comes together with your frontline workers to actively listen to staff as opposed to a one-way conversation? How active are your leadership and comms teams in facilitating these sorts of activities?

The digital environment

With digital platforms, you can do short Pulse surveys or polls - 5 quick questions to ask what they'd like to see changed around the office. You may even need more forks in the kitchen - you'd be surprised by what people will come back with when given the chance to simply tell you what would make them happier at work.



Using digital to connect

Frontline staff who don't sit at a computer every day don't have easy access to corporate information and updates. A mobile-empowered workforce is a connected, productive and efficient one. It's not just about amazing customer experiences anymore. It's about having streamlined internal organizational structures, processes, and systems so staff can interact and engage seamlessly across divisions.

Giving your employees a voice is more than asking them to fill in a form, it's about active listening and as a leader or a communications agent, being able to read between the lines and influence meaningful change.

How do you make your staff feel comfortable in sharing their opinions?

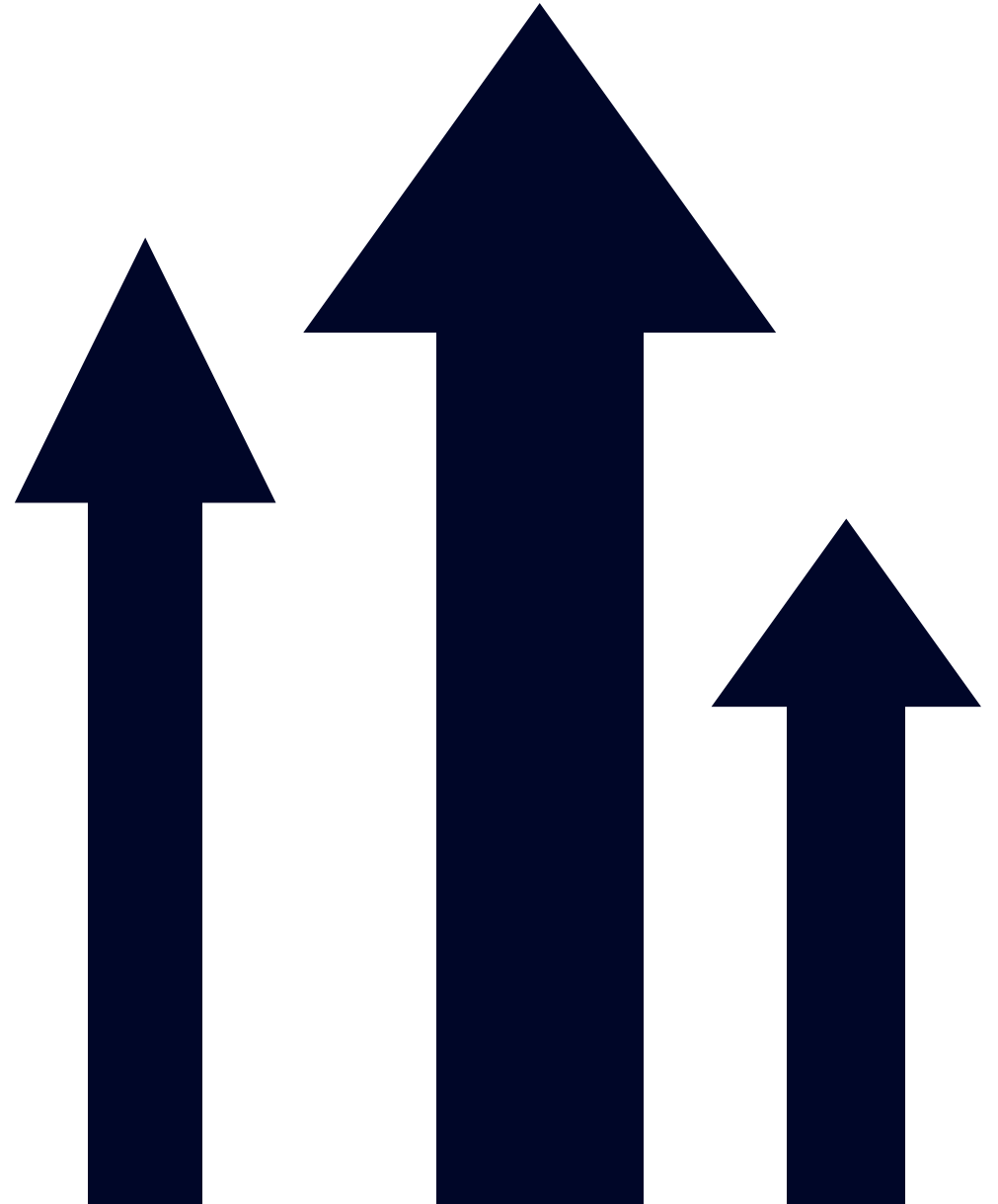
Fun fact:

Your employee experience affects your customer experience. Organizations with the best workforce experiences enjoy 12% greater customer satisfaction than other organizations.



03

Top
priorities
for 2020



Top priorities for 2020

With every year that rolls by, also comes the pre-planning, year-in-review, and key objectives. Highlighting your top priorities is only ever a good thing. We've offered a helping hand and have listed the five top priorities for internal communications heading into 2020.

1

Stop telling. Start listening

2

The mediums of communication to leverage

3

Online collaboration and engagement

4

Leading with insights

5

Driving & inspiring collaboration

Stop telling. Start listening

It's time to minimize how much we're creating and start listening for curation to begin. [Have you got a communications mega-phone projecting one-way dialogue?](#) This has been a legacy way of communications that should be converted into an interactive talk show format.

Start by...

Communicating that you're available a few times each week so that staff can contact you to chat and share stories either in person or via a messenger platform. Ensure this dialogue is honest and not just the 'good news' stories. We grow by learning from our mistakes, as does an organization.

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Solving problems through confrontation - Adopt storytelling to depict or explain organizational challenges that require resolve.

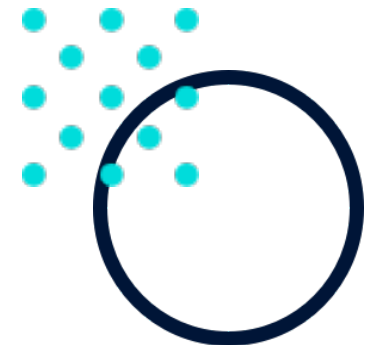
...

Converting your top-down communication to a Q&A, panel, or lunch & learn.

Remember: attention spans are the smallest they've ever been, ensure your content is formatted for those that can only handle a short spiel while still accommodating those who are attentive to detail.

...

Regardless of seniority; treat all staff members as investors or stakeholders. One of the biggest investments for organizations is employees. Switch up your communications from corporate to smart casual, make it relevant and a conversation.



A.I.M. formula

Audience, Intent, Message



Authentic, Informative, Memorable



Corporate speak is out and conversation is in

The mediums of communication to leverage

To put this one simply, if you're still using email to communicate internally, stop. Email was invented in 1971, need I say more?

In the digital world we now live in, email and long-form text are out and digital communications and collaboration tools with media-rich visuals are in. It's time to make innovative and inspiring internal communication as much of a priority as inspiring and innovative external communication. Excite your employees as you would your customers. One way to do this is by empowering your staff to hop on the content wagon!

"How can you enable and allow staff to express themselves in their own words?"

Start promoting staff to become internal communication Champions. This doesn't mean your job will no longer exist - it simply evolves. You become more of a coach, mentor, or facilitator to share the stories of others.

TIP: Start learning to harness your technology by upskilling yourself with tools like Giphy and Canva.



Online collaboration and engagement

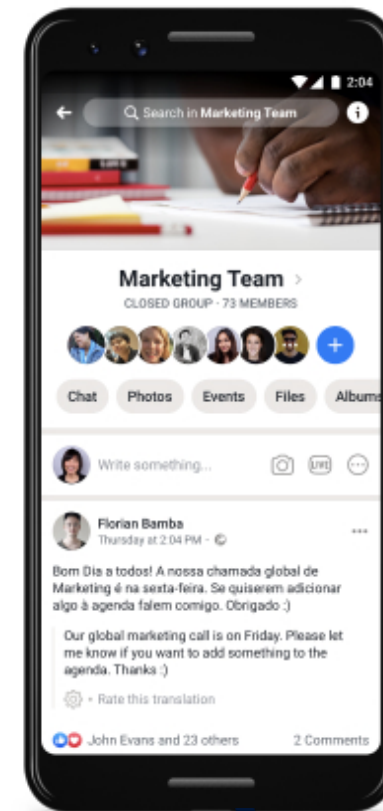
It's imperative in 2020 to begin focusing on the dispersed workforce and break down departmental silos while enabling employee voice and work flexibility. We're seeing organizations choosing collaboration software that operates just as easily as personal communication tools and we're seeking to build workplace culture through using platforms that enable open, transparent and dynamic culture.

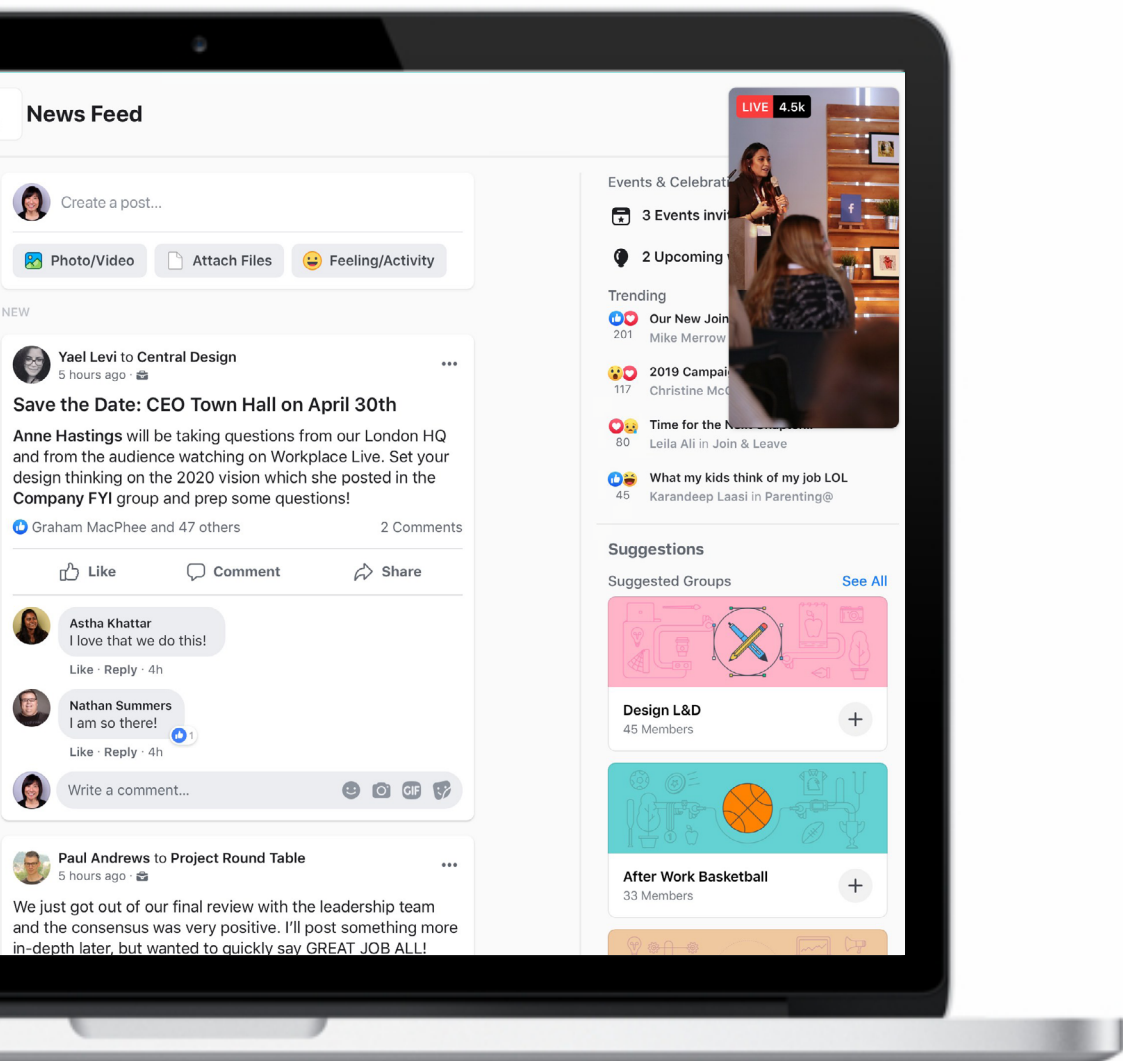
Tools to improve your organizational collaboration

Take a look at Workplace if you're looking for a platform to collaborate organization-wide. Workplace connects entire organizations to share their voice and discover new, better ways of working together. It's a dedicated and secure space for people in organizations to connect, communicate and collaborate and it's totally separate from consumer Facebook with separate profiles and logins.

It combines familiar Facebook features and enterprise integrations to get work done.

- Offers a News Feed with relevant, tailored information, Groups, Live Video, and the ability to engage and interact with content
- Turns previously one-sided communication into a dialogue
- Based from a tool that over 2bn people already know how to use, you can ensure rapid deployment and adoption





Mobile-first

- The next generation of workers will be tied to their phones, not desk
- We need to design experiences that are incredibly simple to perform on the go
- **Benefit:** reach the entire team

Integrated with other tools

- The tools we use in the workplace of the future will have integration built in from the start - it's important we enable this flexibility
- Enterprise integrations is something we're heavily invested in for Workplace e.g. integrations with Office, G Suite, Salesforce, Dropbox
- **Benefit:** Connecting you to the tools you already use in your daily working life – ensuring flexibility and that you can get up to speed quickly

Personalized and prioritized

- We're seeing a fundamental shift in the volume of information that people are dealing with at work

Leading with insights

If you're a leader in communications for your organization, it's important to have a seat at the leadership table and amplify your voice. It's just as important for junior staff to be able to influence their managers and leaders with opinions and thoughts from down the chain of command. If you're in that boat, think of it as building a relationship with your head of comms.

Communications then becomes an active conduit to leadership - if frontline won't tell the leadership team, then they might tell you. Open and authentic leadership and building and sharing corporate knowledge results in bringing people together.

The role of Internal Communications is constantly evolving. One day we'll eventually become more like Community Managers, working seamlessly between all parties to bring out and tell the stories that matter.

"Are you implementing a results-based approach to your Internal Communications objectives?"

Leadership development

It's easy to paint a picture of a perfect leadership team with flawless communication skills from the top-down, however, this is rarely the case. Getting traction with leadership but also developing a wider employee experience is how you're encouraging your leadership to be themselves. Supporting them to show their personality as individuals in the context of work. Employees really connect with leadership who are open and authentic.

TIP:

Simple 'about me' questionnaires are a great way to start sharing information from leaders to the organization. Questions about a favorite type of animal, hobbies, and general interests is easy for even the communication strugglers to grasp.

Expectations of the CEO

Remember to focus on the ability to alter employee behaviors that support cultural change or business vision and mission, and lead this back to the bottom line. A survey on Connected Leadership by Brunswick Research (April 2019) identified that the social presence of Executives is significant for both the uptake of platforms as well as the impact on culture and retainment.

The survey found:

- There are high expectations for CEOs to have a social media presence
- A majority of employees check the CEO's social media (Linkedin) accounts before joining a company
- Employees value a CEO with a strong social media presence
- A majority of employees agree that it is important for CEOs to actively communicate on social media
- Direct and transparent leadership influences employee retention
- 93% of employees consider "leadership that communicates directly and transparently with employees" to be important in deciding to stay at their company

Communications and collaboration platforms like Workplace enable Executives and senior leaders to be transparent and share information easily.

Driving and inspiring collaboration

Did you know: 80% of workers want to know more about how decisions are made in their organization and 87% want their future company to be transparent?

Seek to enable experience over expertise

This is the shift of culture by removing the 'control and command' approach to communication. It's time to provide all staff the skills and opportunities to share their stories and advocate for the business. Let them become content creators.

Be worth employee time to facilitate innovation

Imagine the cost per hour having staff taking in internal information, would it still be as cost-efficient? Apply and convey this method and you'll find it keeps staff engaged at the same time. Treat their time as if you were paying for it out of your pocket.

Bring all communications divisions to a uniting front

To adapt and grow as communicators it's crucial to know what a powerful employee experience looks like from a HR and Communications lens. If you're not friends with the HR team it's time to get acquainted.

Create an internal champions network

Encourage sharing through your champions network. Use your champions to survey their teams and support you by being eyes and ears on the ground with a little direction from you. Ask your communication champions *"What's the best way to ask questions to staff?"* and get the conversation flowing.

It's a part of our role to drive and inspire innovation

We absolutely need to seek ideas and resources in new places, constantly. Listen to your audiences, truly take note of what they respond to.

TIP:

Pretend you're an investigative journalist - be on the ground - visit the front line monthly or schedule a call with them, attend events to make networks, listen to what staff are saying, ask the right questions.

Conclusion

- Stop the corporate-speak and start real, authentic [two way conversations](#) to build community
- Tell the stories that matter, that celebrate success, but also delve into the challenges of your workplace - [it's time to listen](#)
- Create experiences in the work that you do every day - [make work fun](#) for yourself and your business' staff
- [Know your people](#): Know who they are, what they like, and what the sticking points are for them
- Get a [seat at the corporate table](#) and begin the conversation with your senior leadership team
- Do your own research on the [future of work](#), and what your colleagues value
- [Upskill](#) and have fun curating content with the latest tools
- Utilize platforms that enable data-driven internal communications. This enables you to extract and analyze how your staff and teams are engaging and their sentiment to programs or policies. Platforms like [Workplace by Facebook](#) enable real-time data on engagement. You can see what is important and relevant for staff by the level of engagement with them.

and of course... happy collaborating!



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At Enablo, we are constantly exploring new ways to apply modern, digital solutions that drive breakthroughs in organizational culture and business value. We believe that the future of work requires networking, mobility and collaboration. That's why we partnered with Workplace by Facebook. Workplace is an intuitive, mobile-friendly communications and collaboration platform powered by Facebook, with all the familiar features like groups, chat and video calls. Create your future workplace, today.

For more information, visit our website www.enablo.com