

CASE STUDY

Healthcare treatment center created an internal communication Center of Excellence

CLIENT INDUSTRY
Healthcare



ABOUT THE CLIENT

A non-profit healthcare treatment and research center based in the United States.

Challenges

The Communication team have two main objectives for communicating with employees:

1. Connect all faculty and staff to our mission by reinforcing our core values and our strategic goals and priorities.
2. Help create an ideal work environment by giving faculty and staff information, tools and resources to help them do their jobs better.

The organization's size (more than 9,000 staff, faculty, and affiliated and contract staff) and complexity (separate functions managing research, teaching, and patient care)

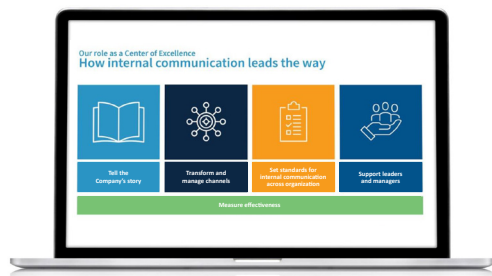
make meeting those objectives challenging. Additionally, many employees such as laboratory researchers, healthcare providers, and facilities staff do not have regular access to computers and/or digital communication channels.

While the Communication team manages a few key organization-wide channels, several functions and departments had recently developed their own—signaling that internal communication was not meeting their needs. What's more, anecdotal feedback suggested that "communication across functions and departments needed improvement."



Conducting a robust communication audit

The Communication team set out to determine the best strategy—structure, resources, and system—to enhance communication and better meet employees' needs. bswift came on board to develop a balanced view of the current state and design an improved communication system.



Before we could make informed recommendations, we needed a complete picture of internal communication. We conducted a communication audit, which included:

- Interviews with key stakeholders to understand needs and preferences
- A channel assessment to determine whether existing channels met industry standards, such as employee-centric content and easy-to-use tools

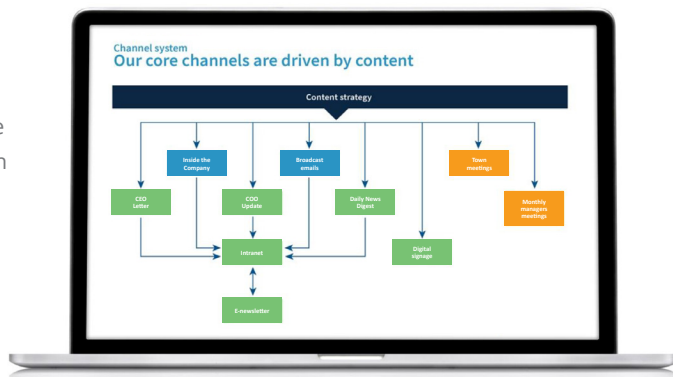
Creating a new and improved communication system

Once we understood what was working well and what needed improvement, it was time to collaborate with the Communication team to improve their system.

We started with a five-hour, on-site workshop where we presented findings from the audit report, shared leading practices, and facilitated brainstorming exercises and planning discussions.

Then, we used the output from the workshop to develop an improved communication strategy, including:

- A clear purpose and objectives for the Communication team
- Standards to position the team as a communication Center of Excellence designed to set guidelines and lead collaboration across the organization
- A content strategy founded on the organization's mission and employees' needs
- A refined channel system to eliminate email overload and leverage the intranet as an information hub
- Channel standards and guidelines to ensure consistency across the team and the organization
- A robust strategy to support leader and manager communication: training leaders about their communication role, providing communication tools and supporting key channels, such as all-staff town halls and leader blogs
- A measurement plan to continually assess effectiveness and make regular improvements as needed



The result?

Our collaborative approach helped the team achieve its objective to understand and refine its communication strategy. The team was now armed with a clear definition of its role and strategies to support stakeholders while modeling best practices in internal communication.

Armed with the new communication system, the communication team began implementing improvements across its channels, with the following outcomes:

- Standards and guidelines are creating consistency across the organization to foster collaboration and promote employees' understanding of key topics.
- Leaders and managers are receiving training and tools to support their communication efforts.
- By consolidating information from multiple departments and vehicles, the team is cutting down on email glut while helping readers discover content they wouldn't normally see.