2025

ClearBoxCONSULTING

V4.4

INTRANET AND EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE PLATFORMS

Reviews of the best products on the market

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Information for vendors www.clearbox.co.uk/vendors

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V4.4 issued October 2025

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Need help choosing a new intranet?
We can help - please get in touch and one of the team will get back to you.

UPDATED

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Base systems FULLY STANDALONE | REQUIRES SHAREPOINT | OTHER | FRONTLINE FOCUS

UPDATED | NEW REVIEW ADDED | CLEARBOX CHOICES AWARDS

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Base systems FULLY STANDALONE | REQUIRES SHAREPOINT | OTHER | FRONTLINE FOCUS

UPDATED | NEW REVIEW ADDED | CLEARBOX CHOICES AWARDS

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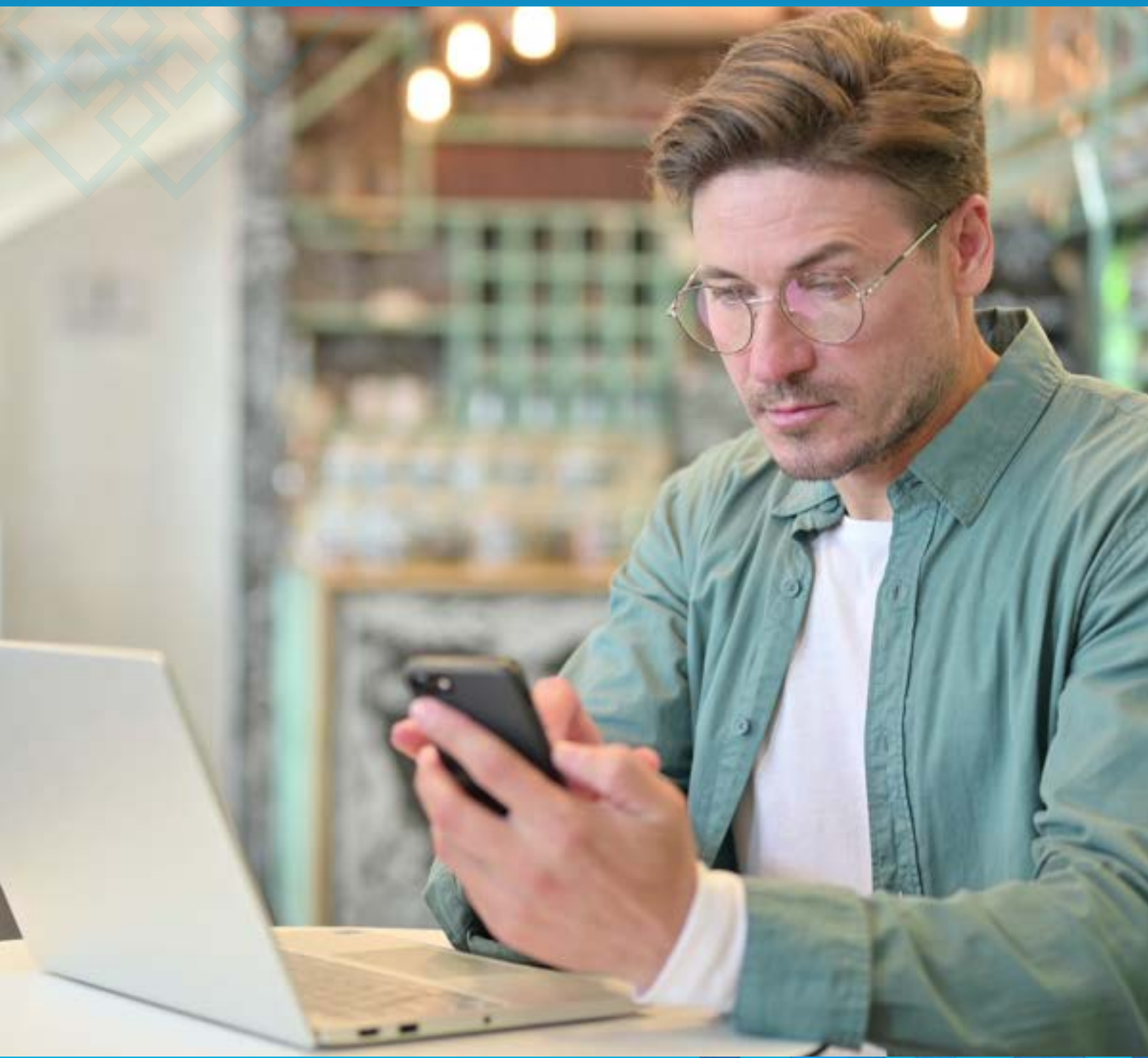
UPDATED | NEW REVIEW ADDED



SECTION ONE

INTRODUCTION

What you need to know before you read the reviews

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SCORE COMPARISON CHART

PRODUCT	1. USER EXPERIENCE AND VISUAL APPEAL	2. PUBLISHING AND COMMS MANAGEMENT	3. COMMUNITY AND ENGAGEMENT	4. INTEGRATIONS AND SERVICES	5. INFORMATION FINDING AND SEARCH	6. ADMINISTRATOR EXPERIENCE	7. ANALYTICS	8. MOBILE AND FRONTLINE SUPPORT
Akumina								
Appspace								
Blink								
Colibo								
Fresh								
Haiilo								
Interact								
Involv Intranet								
Jalios								
Lightspeed 365								
MangoApps								
Mozzaik365								
Oak Engage								
Omnia								
Powell Intranet								
SharePoint and Viva								
Sociabble								
Staffbase								
ThoughtFarmer								
Unily								

Please see the reviews for detailed scores, including the 'optional extra' scores where products will perform better if extra time / money is spent in a particular area.

= product score = optional extra score

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PRODUCT	LOCATION	BASE SYSTEMS				PRICE BAND			
		Fully Standalone	Requires SharePoint	Other	Frontline focus	1,000 users	5,000 users	20,000 users	50,000 users
Accelerator 365*		✗	✓	✗		$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$
Akumina		✗	✓	✗		$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$
Appspace		✓	✗	✗		$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$
Beacon*		✗	✓	✗		$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$
Blink		✓	✗	✗	✓	$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$
Colibo		✓	✗	✗		$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$
ContactMonkey*		✗	✗	✗	✓	$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$
Diggspace*		✓	✗	✗		$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$
Fellow Intranet*		✓	✗	✗	✓	$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$
Flip*		✓	✗	✗	✓	$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$
Fresh		✗	✓	✗		$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$
Haiilo		✓	✗	✗		$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$
Interact		✓	✗	✗		$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$
intranet.ai*		✗	✓	✗		$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$
Involv Intranet		✗	✓	✗		$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$
Jalios		✓	✗	✗		$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$
JungleMail 365*		✗	✗	✓**		$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$
Lightspeed365		✗	✓	✗		$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$
MangoApps		✓	✗	✗		$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$
Mozzaik365		✗	✓	✗		$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$
Oak Engage		✓	✗	✗		$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$
Omnia		✗	✓	✗		$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$
OneSource*	****	✗	✓	✗		$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$
Poppulo*		✓	✗	✗		$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$
Powell Intranet		✗	✓	✗		$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$
Sharepoint and Viva		✗	✓	✗		$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$
Sociabble		✓	✗	✗	✓	$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$
Sprocket365*		✗	✓	✗		$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$
Staffbase		✓	✗	✗	✓	$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$
Steegle*		✗	✗	✓**		$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$
Syntphony*		✗	✓	✗		$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$
ThoughtFarmer		✓	✗	✗		$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$
UKG Talk*		✗	✗	✓**	✓	$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$
Unily		✓	✗	✗		$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$
Workai*		✓	✗	✗		$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$
Workgrid*		✓	✗	✗		$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$
Workshop*		✗	✗	✓**		$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$
Workspace365*		✓	✗	✗		$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$	$$$ $$

*See 'Product Overviews' section

** See the review for details

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WELCOME TO THE 2025 EDITION

This edition of our report marks 10 years since we started reviewing intranet and digital workplace products. In that time, we've seen technologies and their associated labels emerge, evolve, reinvent themselves and disappear. Ultimately, this technology is still very much here and making a difference.

Whether you call it an intranet, a digital workplace, an employee engagement platform, a comms platform, employee mobile app, or something else entirely – there are common organisational challenges the technology is trying to solve.

These platforms help people get things done, stay informed about what's going on, and help find that expert, that application or that little piece of data they need. They contribute to the way an employee feels about the place they work, encourage and reflect organisational culture, and can even improve levels of customer service. They are strategic investments that drive organisational benefits and support employees through their working day.

We put ourselves in the shoes of organisations looking to implement these platforms, as we understand the common challenges that lead up to the point where new technology is needed. It's from this perspective that we create this report – to save intranet teams' and tech buyers' time and help them make the right decisions. We hope the report helps you with your product and market research – please drop me a line to let me know how you get on.

If you're choosing new software

This report's purpose is to help you choose the correct software for your business and employee needs. This introductory section provides an explanation of what you'll find in our reviews, including the different types of products, scores, pricing, and 'Company and Product' tables.

Our reviews in Sections 2 and 3 are detailed, pointing out both strengths and weaknesses, and include dozens of screenshots so that you can see different elements of the platforms. Vendors have distinct views on customer needs and you can read their perspectives in the 'voice of the vendor' sections, while the 'voice of the customer' sections give you an insight into real customer experiences.

The 'how to choose a product' guidance in Section 4 includes an overview of arguments about build or buy, SharePoint, add-on, or independent – which will be relevant for many of you. The product comparisons include charts, tables, and written summaries that will allow you to compare products and identify which reviews to read. We would advise you to **read reviews of those products that perform best in the scenarios that matter most to you.**

If you're interested in market trends

We've provided an overview of what we looked for in our scenarios as usual, but you can also read about how we see common use cases evolving too. Of particular note:

- Many organisations are exploring how **Artificial Intelligence** can support business objectives and we've seen even more AI capabilities added to products in the past year. If this is an area of interest for you, we've written an overview of our findings on AI features in Section 4. We've not included a dedicated AI scenario in our reviews, however, as we think AI offers a way to address business needs (such as search or content creation) rather than a use-case in its own right.
- In early 2024 Meta announced they would be sunsetting their Workplace platform. This has led to an expansion of **social and other engagement features** within many platforms, particularly social feeds and 'praise' capabilities. We've also seen the introduction of more functionality many people would recognise from social media platforms, such as 'stories' and multiple reaction types. These approaches won't suit every organisation, but will be familiar to employees so may help with adoption. Read more in our Community and Engagement overview.
- While we've seen gradual improvement in the **experience for administrators**, we feel management features remain weak in certain areas. Governance and search management tools in particular are basic in some platforms, yet are vital for providing employees with a strong overall experience (for example, where irrelevant content is removed, and must-know content is very easy to find). Read more in the Search and Administrator Experience overviews.
- For the past couple of years, vendors have been turning their focus towards **internal communicators' needs** and the features on offer this year will certainly appeal to comms folk. Newsletters and digests have proven popular and communicators will appreciate being able to easily create attractive emails in many tools. We're particularly impressed by the variety of channels comms can manage from within these platforms, reducing the number of tools and simplifying the publishing process too. Read more in the Publishing and Communications Management overview.
- We're pleased to see **accessibility** features becoming more obvious within these products and actively showcased to us by vendors. There are still many vendors that aren't WCAG conformant and we think more could be done to support organisations with accessibility standards, particularly given that AI is so prevalent now. Read more in our User Experience overview.

A final thought

Although there's always room for improvement, what this report illustrates more than anything is just how many excellent options are available to organisations looking for a new intranet, employee digital platform, or mobile-first tool. The technology is mature; you no longer need to rely on in-house IT experts just to get the basics underway, and there are some genuinely innovative features coming through.

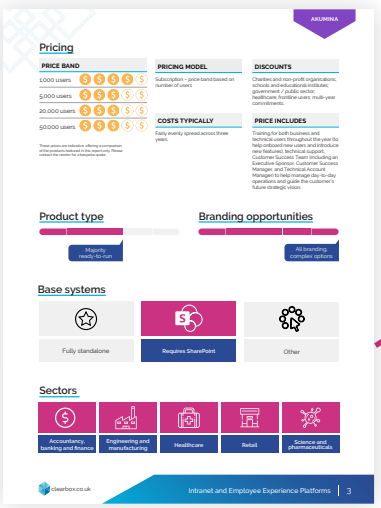
It's a great time to update your intranet or introduce an employee experience platform. We have a variety of consulting services to support you, so please get in touch if you need a hand to choose the right product, clarify your strategy or execute a first-class rollout.

Suzie Robinson
ClearBox Consulting
January 2025

PRODUCT REVIEW FORMAT

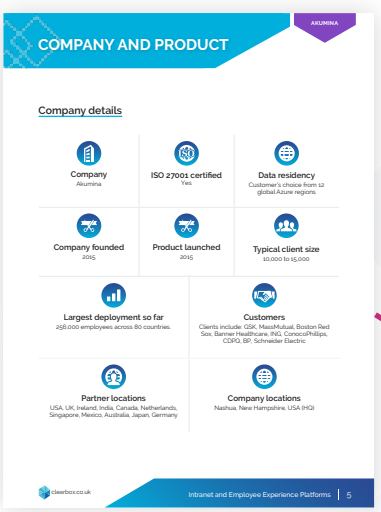
Each full review contains the following sections (and more):

- A 'splash page' for quick reference information about the product



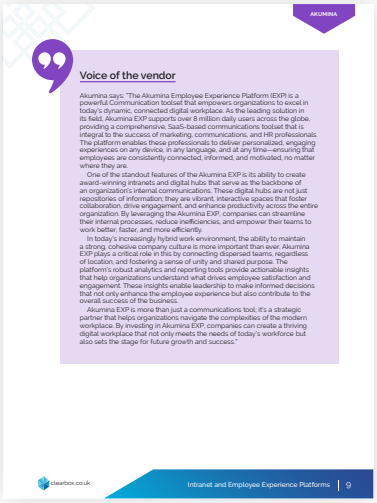
- Overview of pricing
- Product type and branding opportunities
- What system (if any) forms the foundation of the product
- The sectors they target

- A summary of the product's strengths and weaknesses

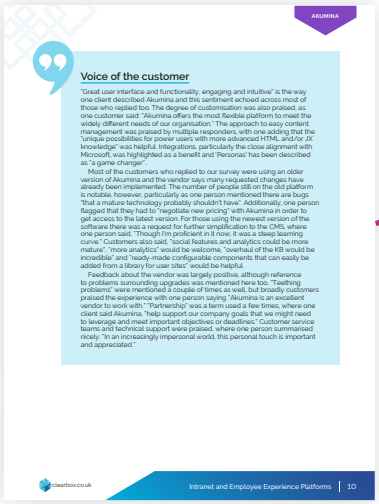


- Details of the company
- Technical specifications and support

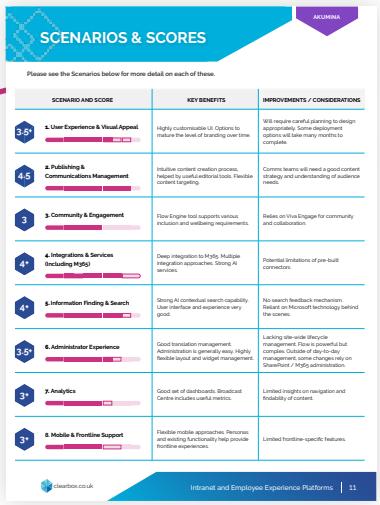
- 'Voice of the vendor' – a statement from the vendor



- 'Voice of the customer' – feedback from customers

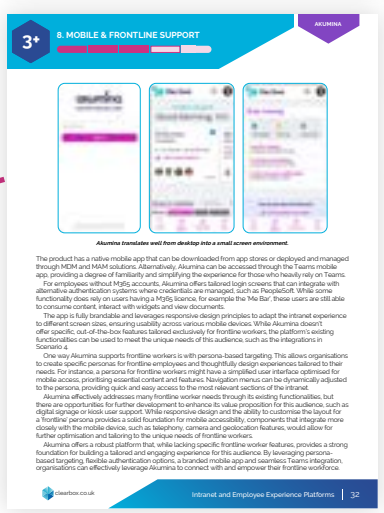


- Summary of scores
- Key strengths, improvements, and considerations

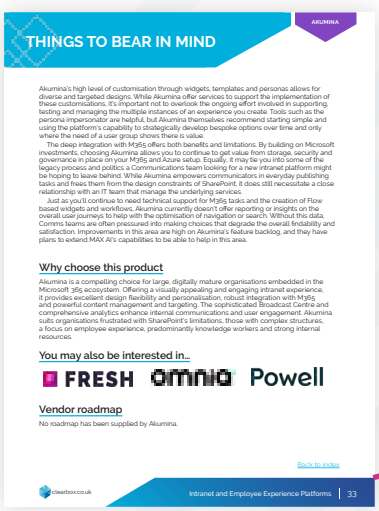


- Scores for each scenario
- A write up of our findings for each scenario

- Up to four scenarios include highlights of some of the most interesting or well-done features

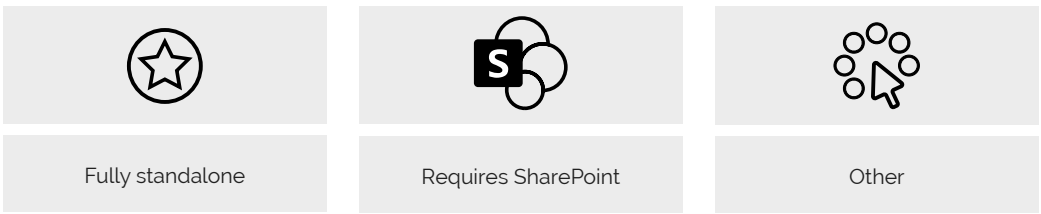


- Some things to keep in mind when considering the product
- Summary of why you should choose the product
- The vendor's development roadmap (where provided)
- If you like this product, you may like these others

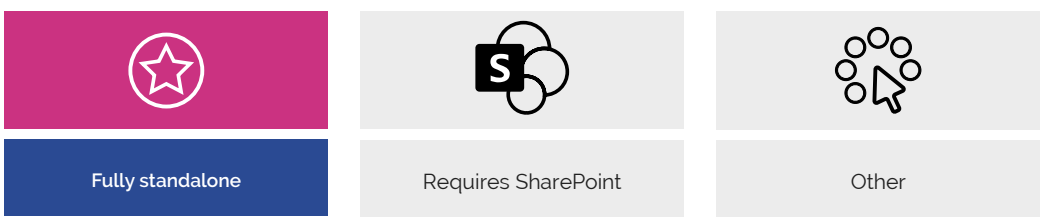


TELLING THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PRODUCTS

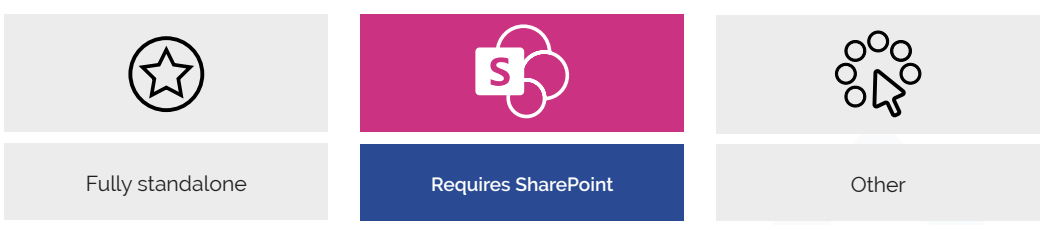
Each review includes three icons labelled 'base systems':



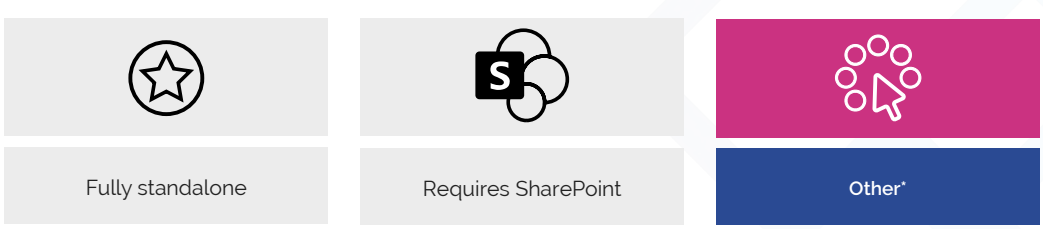
You'll also find these icons on the first page of a product review, in the index, plus in the 'technical table' for comparison purposes.



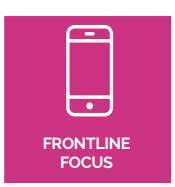
This icon reflects that the product is an independent intranet, or similar product, that doesn't require SharePoint, Google Workspace, or anything similar in order to function. Often these will work well with SharePoint or similar systems, but see each review for details in the 'Integrations' scenario.



SharePoint intranet in-a-box products and those that work on top of SharePoint are included here. These products must have SharePoint in the background in order to work.



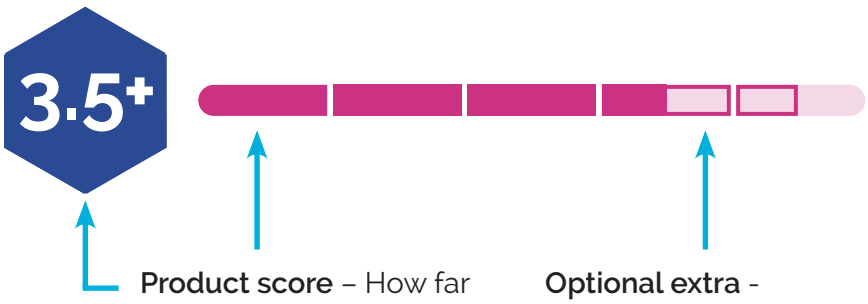
This icon is for those products that might rely on Google Workspace, Drupal, or something else in order to work. We've explained what it means in each case where it's used.



This icon identifies those products we believe have been built with a focus on frontline workers. Although this icon is associated with the performance in Scenario 8 (Mobile and Frontline Support), it doesn't mean products without this icon have a poor mobile experience. We would therefore recommend you refer to the scores for Scenario 8 as well as this icon when deciding which reviews to read.

SCORING EXPLANATION

Our scoring aims to be accurate and simple, to provide a point of comparison between products, but there are some aspects to explain:

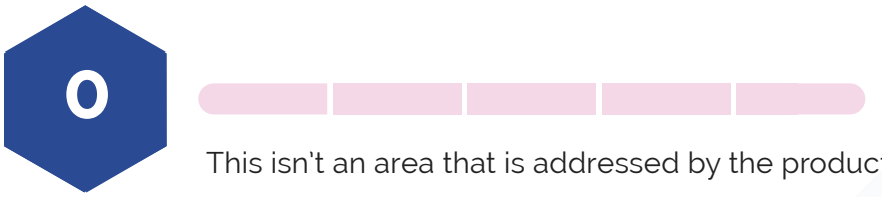


Product score – How far the product addresses the scenario out of a potential five points. Indicated in the hexagon and solid pink colour.

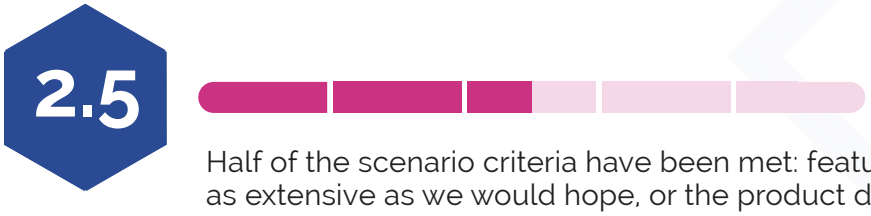
Optional extra - Features that may be added at extra cost and / or effort. Indicated by outlined blocks

Maximum score - All scores are out of five; empty spaces indicate where the product did not score full marks, which may be because the product includes features for only part of the scenario, where the features just don't meet the criteria set in the scenario, or where the product doesn't include the feature.

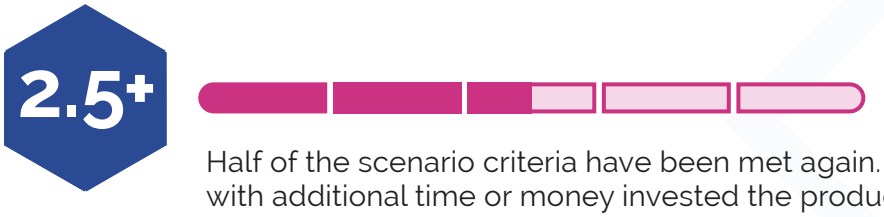
Examples



This isn't an area that is addressed by the product.



Half of the scenario criteria have been met: features aren't as extensive as we would hope, or the product doesn't address part of a scenario.



Half of the scenario criteria have been met again. However, with additional time or money invested the product would be improved and score the maximum of five points.

PRICING EXPLANATION

Very few vendors are willing to publicly show pricing, as there are many configuration dependencies or potential discounts to consider. To give you an indication of a product's cost:

PRICE BAND	
1,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
5,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
20,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
50,000 users	$ $ $ $ $

- We asked vendors to quote a list price for different organisation sizes over three years (in USD$), with only the basic services needed to install the system.
- We created price bands ($ to $$$$$) to gather similar priced products together – like restaurant reviews.
- Where vendors had multiple price options, we have matched the pricing to the version we reviewed.
- We used 'optional extra' scores to show what could be achieved at a higher price point (see above).

Note that prices are indicative, offering a comparison of the products featured in this report only. Please contact the vendor for a bespoke quote.

We have also provided information on:

- Pricing model – for example, whether it's based on a subscription model.
- Spread of costs – we let you know how evenly costs are spread across three years; for example, whether there is a higher cost at the start of a project.
- Discounts – sometimes vendors award discounts to certain business types and / or sizes, such as charities, those with frontline workers, or very large organisations.
- 'Price includes' – we ask vendors to supply pricing so that it includes installation, configuration, licensing, and any paid-for optional features they demonstrate to us for the review. Some vendors automatically include other services, however, and we present that information here.

Please see Pricing Findings in Section Four for our observations on pricing across the market, including where there might be additional costs you will need to factor in.

'COMPANY AND PRODUCT' TABLES EXPLANATION

Each review includes a 'Company and Product' section, which covers details of the most common non-functional requirements. This section will speed up the RFP or tender process, as quite often these 'non-functional requirements' can be a showstopper for an otherwise promising product. Here's an overview of what these sections cover.

Company details

Company	The vendor company name, this can often be the same as the product, but not always.
ISO 27001 certified	ISO 27001 is an international standard on how to manage information security. We have highlighted where vendors have been awarded this certification, and / or what else they have in place.
Data residency	It's important to know where your data will reside if the vendor is the host (as covered in a question below). Some companies may not want to have data held outside of their continent, for example.
Company founded	How well-established a vendor is may be a factor in deciding to partner with them.
Product launched	This gives a sense of how established the product is.
Typical client size	We ask this to give you an indication whether the vendor is used to working with businesses of your size – vendors choose from a set list to provide better points of comparison. Whether you are very large or very small, each comes with its own challenges and ideally your vendor will be familiar with these.
Largest deployment so far	This will be important to enterprise-scale businesses as it gives a sense that the vendor has a track record with large deployments.
Customers	Vendors tell us up to five sectors that their clients typically fall into, and this is presented earlier in the review. However, we also include this section so that they can name up to ten of their clients, so you can see who they have worked with in the past. Note this list is unlikely to be exhaustive.
Partner locations	Some vendors work with partners across different regions who will help with the set-up and support of a product. Even if the vendor isn't local, they may have a partner who is.
Company locations	Some vendors have offices in a variety of locations and finding a vendor that's local might be important to you.

Product details

Name of product	The specific product we reviewed.
Deployment	There are a variety of factors that will influence where your company is happy for your intranet to be deployed and hosted, such as within your country, or the sensitivity of the information you handle. We have asked the vendors to indicate where they can support the intranet being deployed onto your private cloud or on-premises server. Alternatively, they may use web servers, such as Microsoft Azure, Amazon Web Services, or your Microsoft 365 tenant. Finally, some vendors may host themselves or have another solution available.
Authentication supported	The digital workplace is vast and so reducing the number of times and places users have to sign in is a big bonus. We have asked vendors to tell us the different methods that their product supports. We expected them to support a mix of Entra ID (formerly Azure Active Directory), ADFS, Okta, Open ID, Oauth, and Google Workspace, although we do provide space for them to tell us about any others they support.
Mobile app deployment	There are three common methods for apps to be downloaded onto a mobile device. The first relies on users downloading themselves via public stores, i.e. Google Play or Apple. Despite in-built security measures to manage ex-employees, organisations can feel nervous about allowing users to download 'company apps' via public stores. The second method is therefore via mobile device management where an IT team takes responsibility for device content. Similar is the third method, mobile application management, where IT takes responsibility for individual apps on a device.
Accessibility	Accessibility is about designing intranets to assist those with a disability, impairment, or other difficulty. For example, high contrast text / backgrounds, and scalable font sizes can help with visual impairments; keyboard shortcuts assist people that have difficulty using a mouse. This is an important area as many countries have legislation to protect against discrimination. We have highlighted where products conform to WCAG 2.1 standards.
Document library sources integrated	Many of the products we have reviewed have their own approach to document libraries. However, you're likely to have other cloud repositories in your business and here is where we have asked vendors to share which they will support. The detail of how Box, Dropbox, Google Drive, SharePoint, OneDrive and others are integrated is covered in the scenarios.
Optional integrated enterprise search engines	Most of the products we've reviewed include a native search engine, but in this question we want to know what others the product will easily (optionally) integrate with. We're particularly interested in Coveo, Elastic, IBM, Lucidworks, Microsoft, Mindbreeze and Sinequa, but vendors are welcome to tell us about others.
User interface and menus multi-language	Approaches to multi-language can vary, so we asked vendors to tell us how multiple interface and menu languages are supported. For example, languages might be pre-configured, editable by admins, and right to left script might be among the approaches supported.
Content multi-language	Linked to the previous question, we also asked vendors to tell us how they support multiple language approaches for content. This could include machine translation for authors (that might then be editable to complete the content) and employees, manual creation options for publishers, and again right to left script might be supported.

Set-up and support

Set-up process for new clients	An overview of what a set-up process involves, including typical timescales for deployment.
Version numbers	This highlights the version number we have reviewed and the version at the time of publication, so you will know whether there have been updates since the demonstration we saw. It also gives you an idea of how active a vendor is in enhancing their product.
Product updates	The frequency of product updates varies and can range from every two weeks, to every few months. While that may not be too much of a concern for you, the resulting impact on users when a new feature is launched will be.
Product update process	We asked vendors to explain how product updates are rolled out to customers. For example, they may choose to update everyone at once, or you might be able to influence the timing, or if something goes wrong then what are the options for rolling back an update.
Reverse-out options	We know that not all relationships work out. Where this is the case with your intranet vendor, you need to know that your data is your own and that you can easily extract what's yours (to move into a new platform). Vendors have summarised that information for us here.
Technical support	This covers channels for technical support such as phone / email / chat. Support hours can be particularly important for multi-national companies as many vendors only offer support during their own office hours – although critical issues, such as a platform outage, is usually supported 24/7. The customer feedback in the 'voice of the customer' sections will give a sense of service levels.
User community	Learning from others in a similar situation is a great way to develop how you use an intranet in your business. Vendors have provided an overview of what community spaces or activities they have on offer.

HOW WE EVALUATED

The initial selection

There are more intranet products on the market than we've been able to cover in our report; you can see all the ones we're aware of in the directory on our website. We selected the products to feature based on prior knowledge of the best candidates. We also considered their presence in the market, which included our experience with client projects, and their installed user base.

We're able to offer this report for free because vendors have contributed to its production costs. The independence of our reviews is critical. In order to ensure that reviews are unbiased and independent, all vendors included have signed an agreement committing to these principles. We have also ensured that our review and editorial processes remain rigorous, with reviews and checks in place to preserve consistency and reduce any individual bias. If the scores seem generally good, it is because we didn't invite any vendors where we thought their product would perform poorly and not because we were lenient. Please also see the section on our 'vendor neutral' policy, below.

Live demonstrations and sandbox

Each vendor was required to give a live demonstration of their product and show how it would fulfil the criteria in the evaluation scenarios. We made sure that what was demonstrated was available to buy (not a pre-release beta). We asked whether what we were looking at were ready-made features or examples of customisation so that these could be reflected in the scoring.

Where possible, we also asked each vendor to give us access to a sandbox environment (including on mobile), so we could get a hands-on feel of how it works.

By using scenarios, we can make cross-product comparisons and not be led into focusing only on the things the vendors want to show us. The scenarios reflect real needs we have seen with our clients and are focused on business scenarios rather than technical specifications.

Scenario evaluations

Each scenario could score a total of five points. If a better result could be achieved with additional product options or services, then we show this as an 'optional extra score' using one or more 'outline' score segments. To ensure consistency, each score was checked by three other reviewers and then all scores were reviewed together at the end.

If vendors have multiple tiers of product, our review is based on the features included at the price band shown in the tables. Where a module or feature is an optional extra, we've done our best to indicate this, plus say whether it was included in the pricing we had been given.

The scenarios are not intended to cover everything an intranet might do, but to be a representative sample. Our reviewers have expanded up to four of the scenarios to include more detail of the standout features, alongside screenshots to illustrate features.

The eight scenarios selected are:

1. User experience and visual appeal
2. Publishing and communications management
3. Community and engagement
4. Integrations and services (including M365)
5. Information finding and search
6. Administrator experience
7. Analytics
8. Mobile and frontline support

Each of these scenarios is covered in more detail elsewhere in this report.

Voice of the customer

The idea of the 'voice of the customer' is to get some real-world feedback about what it is like to live with the product and work with the vendor.

Vendors were asked to encourage customers to contribute to our survey; we accepted a minimum of three responses, but the average was eight customer responses. Vendors didn't supply any text or take part in conversations, and submissions were verified with the customer. Secondly, we spoke to ClearBox's own contacts, where we knew they'd been using a product we reviewed. Thirdly, we put out a public appeal for feedback via a short survey. Responses are a combination of quotes from all three sources. We then edited them down into our own commentary, but the quotes have been taken directly from the feedback we were given.

Customers were asked:

1. What is best about the product?
2. What changes would you like to see?
3. How has your experience been of working with the vendor?

Of course, this is a small sample, and like any public reviews, readers should bear in mind that responses are likely to be skewed either by happy customers, or ones motivated to speak out because of a dissatisfaction. All the same, even happy customers tend to comment on what they would like to add to a product, and this in itself is revealing.

Vendor fact-check

Vendors were given the opportunity to correct any factual inaccuracies in their review, but not to influence scores or opinions. They also answered a questionnaire about the key features of the product, technical requirements, their client support model, and details on how the product can be launched within a business. This too was given a second check before going to press.

Product overviews

Unfortunately, we aren't able to do in-depth reviews of all the products out there – the report would just become unwieldy. However, there are many good products on the market that may well be the ideal match for your particular needs, and we don't want those to be overlooked. The Product Overviews section therefore contains shorter summaries of products, including a series of screenshots too. We still give a commentary, and in all cases have seen a demo, but we don't score them in-depth. Products in this section tend to be newer, or ones that focus on a specific market, or perhaps aren't a full intranet solution but nevertheless do some components very well.

The inevitable caveat and disclaimer

At the time of our reviews all details are accurate as far as we know. We asked vendors to check the details in our reviews but ultimately, they are independent write-ups with our own opinions on a 'best effort' basis. Vendors are working hard to improve these products and it may also be that details have changed by the time you read this, so please confirm any details with them before making a final purchasing decision.

In most cases screenshots have been provided by the vendors and are subject to copyright.

The opinions and information in this report are for guidance only. Any decision around acquiring software should be considered carefully with reference to your intranet strategy, organisational needs, risks, and technology landscape. In all cases we are not liable for purchasing decisions made based on the contents of this report.

Please see the 'Using this report to choose a product' section for guidance and don't be afraid to ask us to help, we're always happy to have a no-obligation introductory chat.

Our vendor neutral policy

As a consultancy, we think it is essential that we act with our clients' interests foremost, so ClearBox has a strict vendor-neutral policy. This means that we do not enter into any agreements with vendors that would bias our recommendations to clients. We don't sell any software or licenses or take referral fees for any product we recommend.

To allow us to offer the report for free to readers, we ask vendors to cover our administrative costs. Hundreds of hours go into the production of this report, which we couldn't do without some sort of funding! However, we have only written the reviews we wanted to, and all our opinions (positive and negative) have remained in place.

ABOUT CLEARBOX CONSULTING

Who we are

Based in the UK but with clients around the world, **ClearBox Consulting Ltd.** is a specialist independent consultancy that believes in making the workplace a better and more productive experience. Our goal is to help organisations collaborate and communicate more effectively.

Since 2007, we have been helping organisations of all sizes improve their intranets and wider digital workplace. We cover digital internal communications and collaboration tools (including Microsoft 365). We understand technology, but we approach it from the people side first.

ClearBox is run by Sam Marshall, together with a specialist team and a wider network of associates that can be introduced as needed. We all have hands-on experience of the realities of introducing change in organisations.

What we do

We bring clarity to digital workplaces. Often our clients want to reinvigorate their digital communications or introduce more collaborative ways of working. We help them develop and implement a strategy that supports their business goals, but which also understands employee needs.

What makes us different is that all our consultants have first-hand experience of managing intranets and digital workplaces, so we're not just about the theory. Collectively we've worked on over 200 intranets, so we can help you plan effectively and anticipate any challenges. We like sharing our thoughts too; our blog contains articles on all sorts of topics to help intranet management teams.

We are also technology and vendor neutral: we don't implement any specific tools or get fees for recommending them. That means we help our clients make choices with their business needs in mind.

Consulting for product selection

If you need further help to choose the right product for your digital workplace, then we can apply our extensive knowledge of the marketplace to meet your specific needs. Our consulting help can range from:

- Our 'express strategy' service, which uses stakeholder-driven workshops to help your organisation converge on a vision and roadmap for your digital workplace.
- Detailed requirements discovery from stakeholders, employees, and partners and then our in-depth support to develop a strategy and requirements.
- A guided process to capture your platform requirements and our expert help to shortlist suitable vendors.

> **"ClearBox's content and materials, their approach – it was just incredible, just the level of detail and the depth of knowledge. It made you really get a sense of the product."**
>
> **LOVE'S TRAVEL STOPS**

> **"ClearBox's independence was really what made us work with them, and their models and processes were outstanding."**
>
> **UK NATIONAL SCHOOL TRUST**

> **"ClearBox didn't just follow a standard approach, instead they took the time to get to know us and our needs. They produced high-quality, tailored, practical outputs which helped inform how we can best improve our internal digital engagement."**
>
> **FINANCIAL OMBUDSMAN SERVICE**

Our other services

- Intranet and digital workplace discovery and strategy consulting to directly support organisation goals
- SharePoint and Microsoft 365 strategy, governance and adoption
- Training on 'writing for your intranet' for content creators
- Information Architecture
- Intranet design and usability
- A 'one week intranet review' to create a prioritised plan for incremental improvements.

> **"I'd definitely recommend ClearBox if you're in need of some 'no-baggage' thinking on how to boost employee engagement with your intranet."**
>
> **MULTINATIONAL BEVERAGES COMPANY**

Who we work with

We work with organisations that range from a few hundred employees to over 100,000, typically as partners to Communications, IT and HR functions. Our assignments have included projects with both profit and non-profit sectors, including Bayer, Diageo, GSK, Marie Curie, Ofgem, Skanska, Royal British Legion, Sony, Loves Travel Stops, Unilever, Vodafone, Electrolux and Scottish Government.

We are also proud to be an approved supplier on the Crown Commercial Service (CCS) framework, G-Cloud framework, and the Digital Outcomes and Specialists list, providing British government-endorsed services that meet public sector standards while ensuring compliance, quality, and value for our clients.

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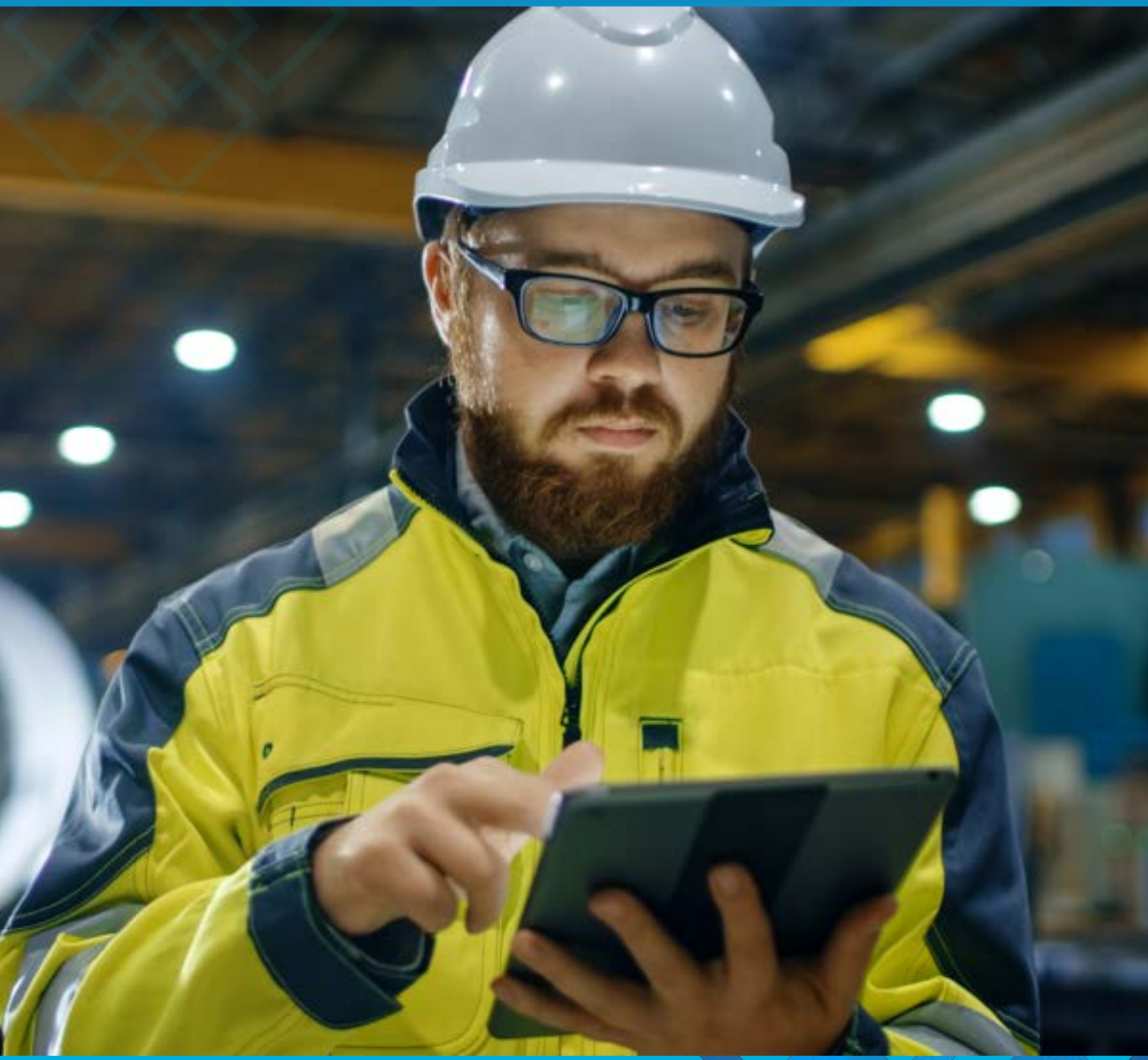
+44 1244 458746



SECTION TWO

FULL REVIEWS

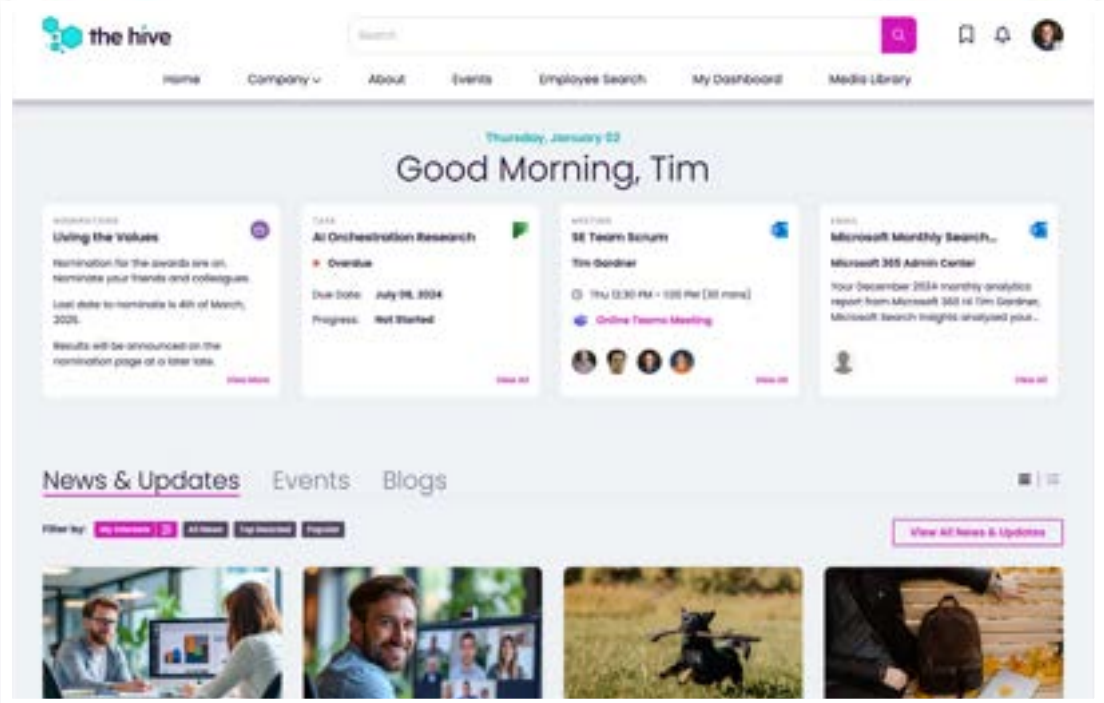
akumina®

FULLY STANDALONE

REQUIRES SHAREPOINT

FRONTLINE FOCUS

OTHER



Typical deployment:

10,000 to 15,000

Company locations:

VISIT THE WEBSITE

The product in a nutshell

Akumina's flexible platform empowers businesses to create beautiful, brand-aligned intranets with powerful personalisation and seamless Microsoft 365 integration.

SUMMARY

Akumina

Headquartered in the USA but with partners globally, Akumina have been developing their product since 2015. The platform is a highly flexible and mature product that delivers a top-tier experience for desktop and mobile users alike.

Features for content creation and information finding are excellent, and 'MAX AI' supports a number of different scenarios well. The solution builds on an organisation's existing M365 investment to create highly customised and personal experiences, unhindered by limitations of SharePoint. Everyday publishing tasks and simple intranet management can be completed without needing technical knowledge; but integrations, workflow and advanced customisations rely on either web development or M365 administration to manage.

There are gaps in the out-of-the-box features, notably around frontline workers and analytics for non-communication use cases. These are areas on Akumina's roadmap, however. Aspects of the community and social features are simpler than we've seen elsewhere too, largely due to Akumina's reliance on Viva Engage.

The overall approach has thoughtfully focused on putting communication teams in the driving seat and arming them with insightful data, AI-powered accelerators and granular persona-based content targeting. Akumina will benefit organisations with a high proportion of knowledge workers and an existing investment in M365, but who feel constrained by SharePoint and are ready to invest in a more unified and brand-representative employee experience.

Pricing

PRICE BAND	
1,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
5,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
20,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
50,000 users	$ $ $ $ $

These prices are indicative, offering a comparison of the products featured in this report only. Please contact the vendor for a bespoke quote.

PRICING MODEL

Subscription – price band based on number of users

DISCOUNTS

Charities and non-profit organisations; schools and educational institutes; government / public sector; healthcare; frontline users; multi-year commitments.

COSTS TYPICALLY

Fairly evenly spread across three years.

PRICE INCLUDES

Training for both business and technical users throughout the year (to help onboard new users and introduce new features); technical support; Customer Success Team (including an Executive Sponsor, Customer Success Manager, and Technical Account Manager) to help manage day-to-day operations and guide the customer's future strategic vision.

Product type

Majority ready-to-run

Branding opportunities

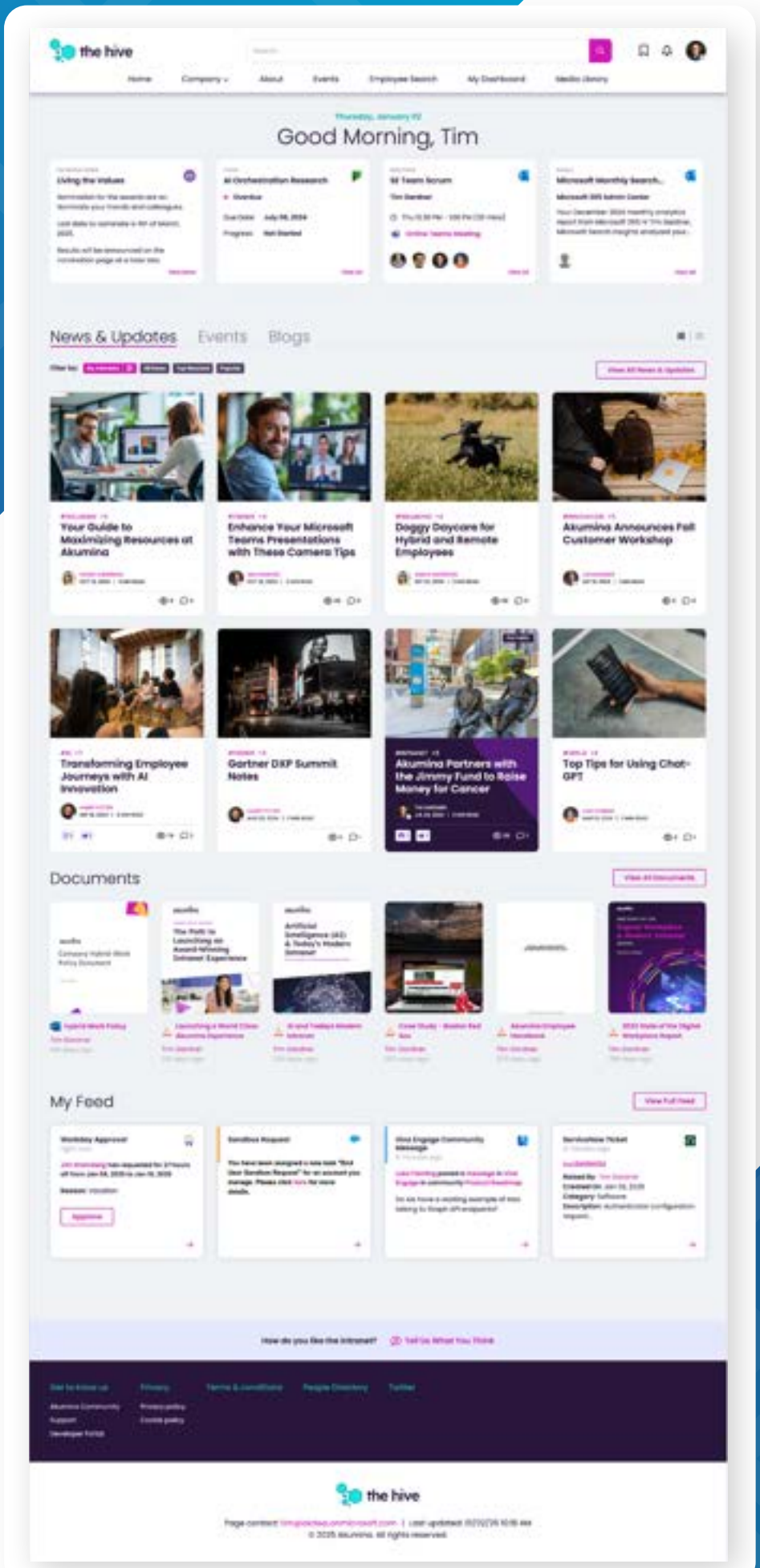
All branding, complex options

Base systems

Fully standalone	Requires SharePoint	Other

Sectors

Accountancy, banking and finance	Engineering and manufacturing	Healthcare	Retail	Science and pharmaceuticals


the hive
Home
Company
About
Events
Employee Search
My Dashboard
Media Library
Good Morning, Tim
News & Updates
Events
Blogs
Your Guide to Maximizing Resources at Akumina
Enhance Your Microsoft Teams Presentations with These Camera Tips
Doggy Daycare for Hybrid and Remote Employees
Akumina Announces Fall Customer Workshop
Transforming Employee Journeys with AI Innovation
Gartner DXP Summit Notes
Akumina Partners with the Jimmy Fund to Raise Money for Cancer
Top Tips for Using Chat-GPT
Documents
My Feed
How do you like the intranet?
the hive

COMPANY AND PRODUCT

Company details

Company
Akumina

ISO 27001 certified
Yes

Data residency
Customer's choice from 12 global Azure regions

Company founded
2015

Product launched
2015

Typical client size
10,000 to 15,000

Largest deployment so far
256,000 employees across 80 countries.

Customers
Clients include: GSK, MassMutual, Boston Red Sox, Banner Healthcare, ING, ConocoPhillips, CDPQ, BP, Schneider Electric

Partner locations
USA, UK, Ireland, India, Canada, Netherlands, Singapore, Mexico, Australia, Japan, Germany

Company locations
Nashua, New Hampshire, USA (HQ)

Product and technical details

Name of product

Akumina

Deployment

Client on-premises	Client private cloud	Microsoft Azure	Amazon Web Services	Vendor-hosted	Microsoft 365 tenant	Google Cloud	Other

Authentication supported

Entra ID	ADFS	Okta	Open ID	Oauth	G Suite	Other*

*SiteMinder, EmpowerID, Azure B-to-C

App deployment

Google Play store	Apple store	MDM	MAM	Other

Accessibility

WCAG 2.1 conformant.

Document library sources integrated

Box	Dropbox	Google Drive	SharePoint	OneDrive	Other*

*NetDocs, MFile

Optional integrated enterprise search engines

Coveo	Elastic	IBM	Lucidworks	Microsoft	Mindbreeze	Sinequa	Other*

*BA Insight, Autonomy

User interface multi-language

Machine translation	Pre-configured	Editable	Right to left script supported	Other*

*Akumina ships with its interface fully translated into English, Spanish, German and French and additional languages can be added on a per customer basis

Content multi-language

Machine translation for publishers	Machine translation for end users	Editable machine translation for publishers	Manual creation for publishers	Right to left script	Other*

*Double byte languages

Set-up and support

Set-up process for new clients

The installation of Akumina for new customers is straightforward, utilising a point-and-click setup. From there, customers decide on the type of deployment they prefer from three approaches:

1. Express: Offers a quick deployment of Akumina as a pure IPS, using out-of-the-box templates and brand. This approach is typically supported by Akumina's Client Services Team.
2. Plus: Builds upon the foundation of Express by incorporating a personalised UI and UX, developed through collaboration with an Akumina design partner.
3. Custom: A more flexible, start-from-scratch approach, where a partner (often a global Akumina SI) leads the deployment. While leveraging many of Akumina's out-of-the-box capabilities, this approach doesn't rely on predefined scaffolding.

Version numbers

Demonstrated to ClearBox: 8.16.2024

At January 2025: 6.2.24

Product updates

Minor updates weekly; major updates every six months.

Product update process

As a SaaS application, Akumina regularly provides updates, with three major feature releases annually. Akumina first rolls out updates to the non-production cloud for testing and sandboxing, and about four weeks later, those updates are deployed to the production cloud. For self-hosted customers, updates can be scheduled at their discretion on their own cloud environment. Importantly, Akumina does not impose new features on customers; instead, it makes them available for use, allowing customers to decide if and when to implement them.

Reverse-out options

If a customer chooses to end their subscription with Akumina, the migration process is straightforward due to the platform's architecture. Akumina does not store managed content, metadata, digital assets, files, search indexes, site information, permissions or security groups.

Technical support

Email support	**Phone support**	Chat support	**Online portal**	**24/7 support**	Office hours only

User community

Akumina fosters several customer communities to enhance user engagement and support. The primary hub is the Akumina Community site, which houses comprehensive documentation, user guides, how-to videos and more. This site includes a robust knowledge base that allows customers to self-serve with information and tool tips directly within the platform. Complementing the Community site is Akumina's GitHub site, which provides developer documentation, code samples and technical approaches, along with their Swagger site that offers access to all documented APIs for customer use. Additionally, Akumina hosts a Customer Advisory Board (CAB) that convenes three to four times annually. The CAB plays a key role in shaping the Akumina roadmap, reviewing product direction and showcasing customer deployments and functionality. This board contributes to approximately 50% of Akumina's ongoing product development and maturation.

Voice of the vendor

Akumina says: "The Akumina Employee Experience Platform (EXP) is a powerful Communication toolset that empowers organizations to excel in today's dynamic, connected digital workplace. As the leading solution in its field, Akumina EXP supports over 8 million daily users across the globe, providing a comprehensive, SaaS-based communications toolset that is integral to the success of marketing, communications, and HR professionals. The platform enables these professionals to deliver personalized, engaging experiences on any device, in any language, and at any time—ensuring that employees are consistently connected, informed, and motivated, no matter where they are.

One of the standout features of the Akumina EXP is its ability to create award-winning intranets and digital hubs that serve as the backbone of an organization's internal communications. These digital hubs are not just repositories of information; they are vibrant, interactive spaces that foster collaboration, drive engagement, and enhance productivity across the entire organization. By leveraging the Akumina EXP, companies can streamline their internal processes, reduce inefficiencies, and empower their teams to work better, faster, and more efficiently.

In today's increasingly hybrid work environment, the ability to maintain a strong, cohesive company culture is more important than ever. Akumina EXP plays a critical role in this by connecting dispersed teams, regardless of location, and fostering a sense of unity and shared purpose. The platform's robust analytics and reporting tools provide actionable insights that help organizations understand what drives employee satisfaction and engagement. These insights enable leadership to make informed decisions that not only enhance the employee experience but also contribute to the overall success of the business.

Akumina EXP is more than just a communications tool; it's a strategic partner that helps organizations navigate the complexities of the modern workplace. By investing in Akumina EXP, companies can create a thriving digital workplace that not only meets the needs of today's workforce but also sets the stage for future growth and success."

Voice of the customer

"Great user interface and functionality, engaging and intuitive" is the way one client described Akumina and this sentiment echoed across most of those who replied too. The degree of customisation was also praised, as one customer said: "Akumina offers the most flexible platform to meet the widely different needs of our organisation." The approach to easy content management was praised by multiple responders, with one adding that the "unique possibilities for power users with more advanced HTML and/or JX knowledge" was helpful. Integrations, particularly the close alignment with Microsoft, was highlighted as a benefit and 'Personas' has been described as "a game changer".

Most of the customers who replied to our survey were using an older version of Akumina and the vendor says many requested changes have already been implemented. The number of people still on the old platform is notable, however, particularly as one person mentioned there are bugs "that a mature technology probably shouldn't have". Additionally, one person flagged that they had to "negotiate new pricing" with Akumina in order to get access to the latest version. For those using the newest version of the software there was a request for further simplification to the CMS, where one person said, "Though I'm proficient in it now, it was a steep learning curve." Customers also said, "social features and analytics could be more mature", "more analytics" would be welcome, "overhaul of the KB would be incredible" and "ready-made configurable components that can easily be added from a library for user sites" would be helpful.

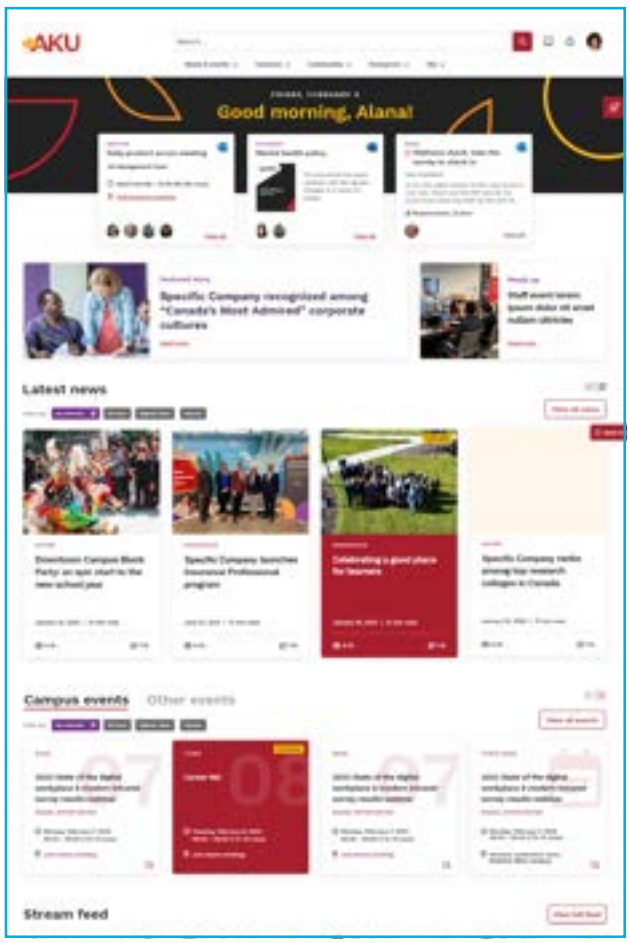
Feedback about the vendor was largely positive, although reference to problems surrounding upgrades was mentioned here too. "Teething problems" were mentioned a couple of times as well, but broadly customers praised the experience with one person saying "Akumina is an excellent vendor to work with." "Partnership" was a term used a few times, where one client said Akumina, "help support our company goals that we might need to leverage and meet important objectives or deadlines." Customer service teams and technical support were praised, where one person summarised nicely: "In an increasingly impersonal world, this personal touch is important and appreciated."

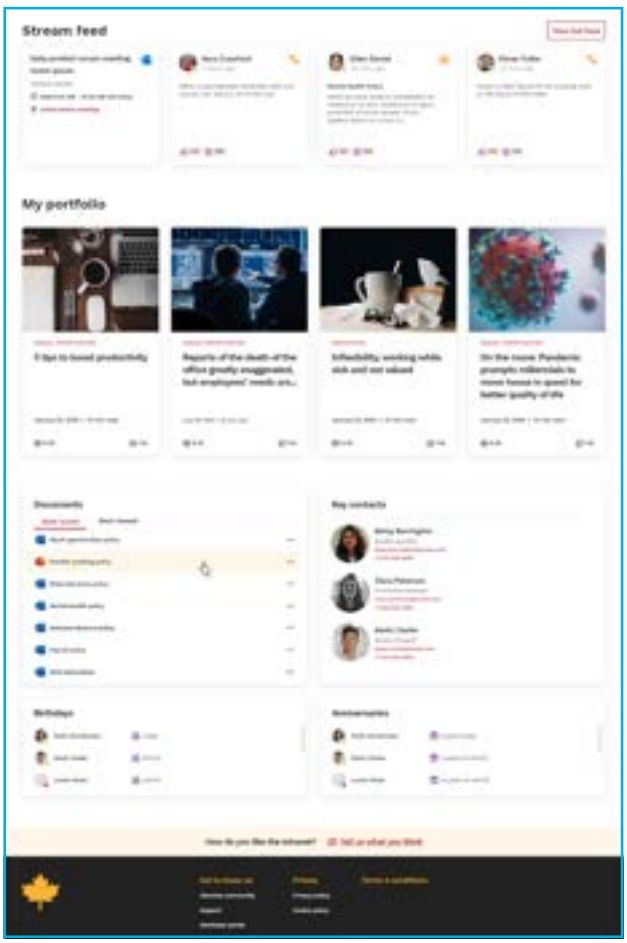
SCENARIOS & SCORES

Please see the Scenarios below for more detail on each of these.

SCENARIO AND SCORE	KEY BENEFITS	IMPROVEMENTS / CONSIDERATIONS
3.5+ **1. User Experience & Visual Appeal**	Highly customisable UI. Options to mature the level of branding over time.	Will require careful planning to design appropriately. Some deployment options will take many months to complete.
4.5 **2. Publishing & Communications Management**	Intuitive content creation process, helped by useful editorial tools. Flexible content targeting.	Comms teams will need a good content strategy and understanding of audience needs.
3 **3. Community & Engagement**	Flow Engine tool supports various inclusion and wellbeing requirements.	Relies on Viva Engage for community and collaboration.
4+ **4. Integrations & Services (Including M365)**	Deep integration to M365. Multiple integration approaches. Strong AI services.	Potential limitations of pre-built connectors.
4+ **5. Information Finding & Search**	Strong AI contextual search capability. User interface and experience very good.	No search feedback mechanism. Reliant on Microsoft technology behind the scenes.
3.5+ **6. Administrator Experience**	Good translation management. Administration is generally easy. Highly flexible layout and widget management.	Lacking site-wide lifecycle management. Flow is powerful but complex. Outside of day-to-day management, some changes rely on SharePoint / M365 administration.
3+ **7. Analytics**	Good set of dashboards. Broadcast Centre includes useful metrics.	Limited insights on navigation and findability of content.
3+ **8. Mobile & Frontline Support**	Flexible mobile approaches. Personas and existing functionality help provide frontline experiences.	Limited frontline-specific features.

3.5+ 1. USER EXPERIENCE & VISUAL APPEAL



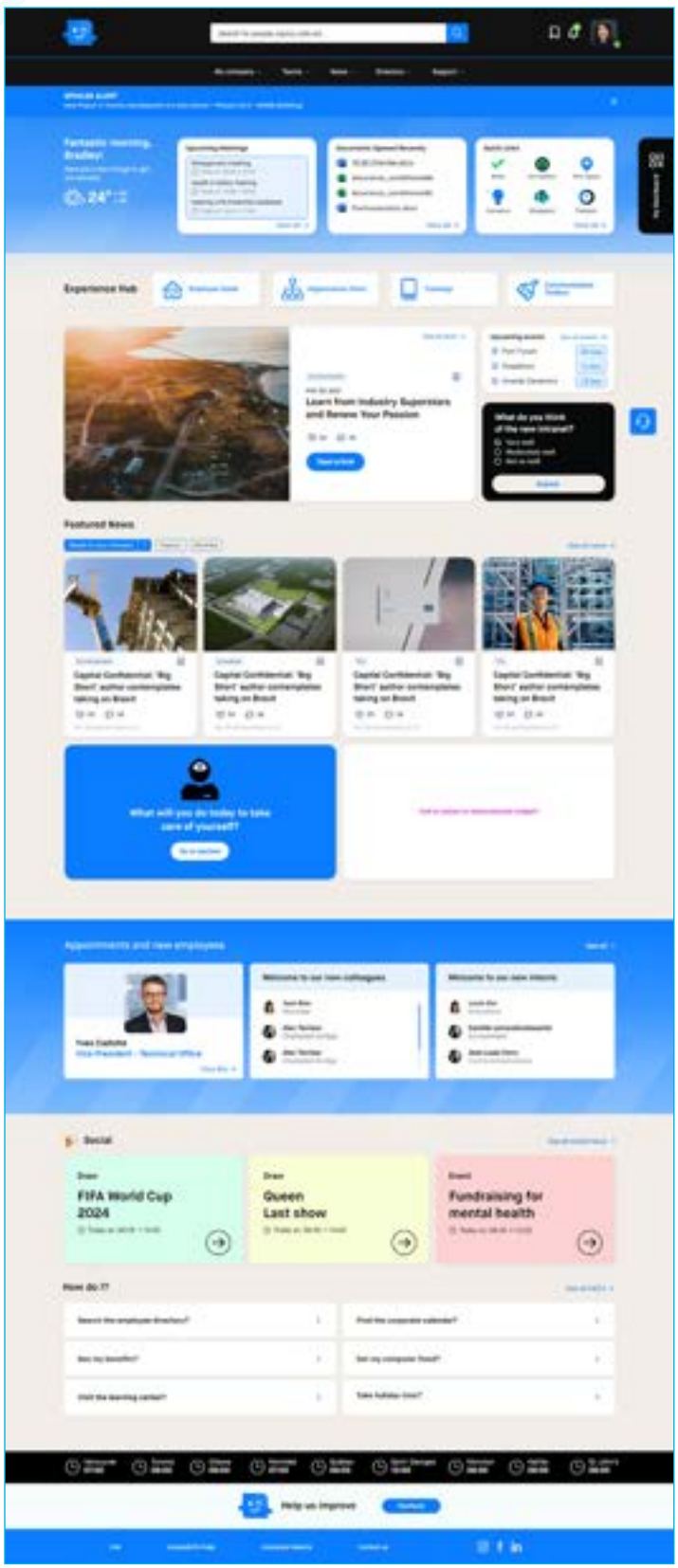


An example 'express deployment' intranet.

Akumina is an attractive and flexible platform that gives administrators many possibilities to create a highly customised look and feel. As well as being visually engaging, Akumina provides multiple UI elements to support and promote user engagement and drive action, too.

Depending on organisational needs, there are three deployment options with varying levels of customisation and implementation timescales. First, in the foundational experience, or 'express' deployment, admins utilise a theming engine to set elements such as fonts, colours and logos. Second, a 'plus' deployment involves additional user and brand research, resulting in updates to the intranet HTML and CSS plus additional custom iconography. Finally, organisations seeking a highly bespoke experience can opt for a 'custom' deployment where an experienced development team will leverage widgets and APIs to create a UI that's unique to specific requirements. Note that options two and three are at additional cost not covered by the pricing provided and require assistance from the vendor.

Akumina's flexibility in branding and design is a significant advantage for organisations looking to closely align their intranet look and feel with their corporate brand. The deployment options and dynamically applied designs cater for even the most complex organisations. Companies with multiple sub-brands will appreciate the ability to dynamically apply designs and themes based on user attributes using Akumina's 'personas' (see Scenario 2 for details).

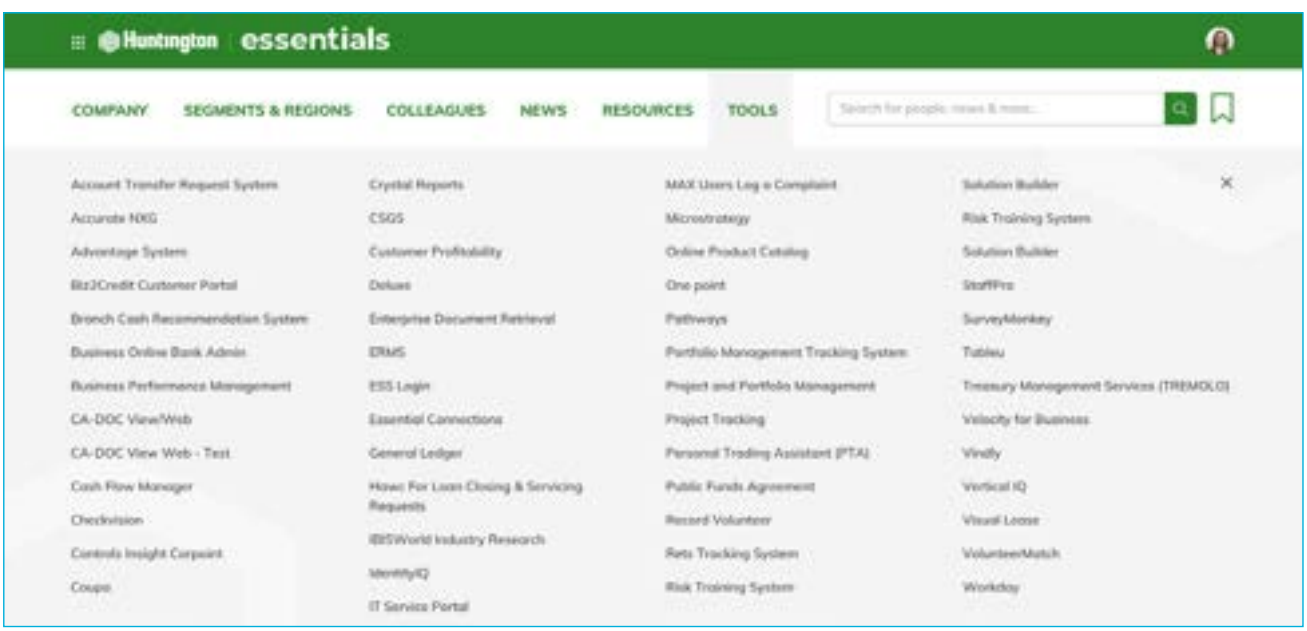


An example 'plus deployment' intranet.

An example 'custom deployment' intranet.

This flexibility extends to navigation and layout options with Akumina offering a choice of mega menus, traditional top-level navigation or the options to create custom structures. Menu items will only show where the user has access, and admins can utilise the personas feature to highlight or filter menus to better fit user needs. In turn, page layouts can be personalised to user personas to support sub-brands, optimise for specific user segments (see Scenario 8 on frontline workers) or to create unique experiences such as 'first time use' or new starter onboarding. For complex requirements where a bespoke UI or experience is required, Akumina can help create custom widgets that support deeply embedded and interactive applications within intranet pages.

Akumina takes a modular approach to design, allowing editors to select, arrange and configure a large library of widgets into a versatile and dynamic user interface that drives engagement through both visual appeal and tailored, useful functionality. The library of pre-built widgets covers common functionality such as displaying news articles, company events, team calendars and more. Each widget has its functionality and appearance separately configurable so that various instances of each widget can be tailored to look and behave differently. Some give basic adjustment options through intuitive interfaces, whereas others support power users more familiar with web development to customise the HTML or CSS.

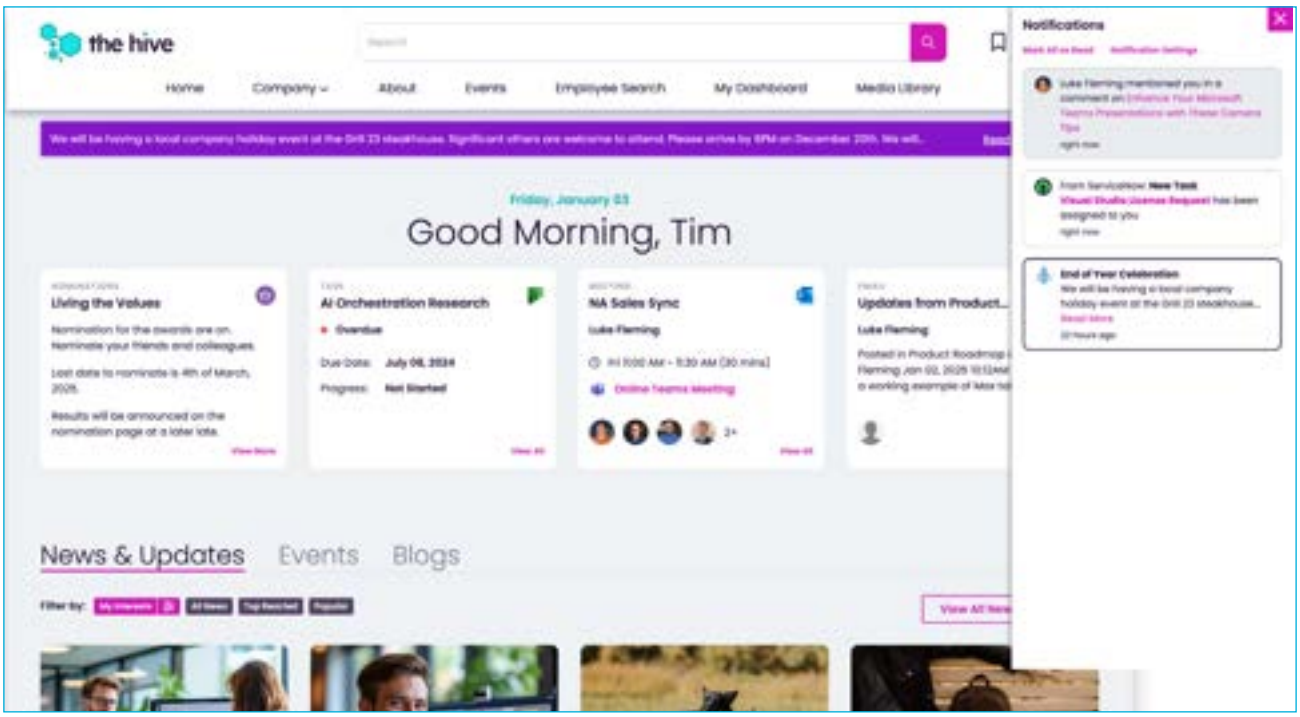


There are a variety of menu layout options, including a mega menu.

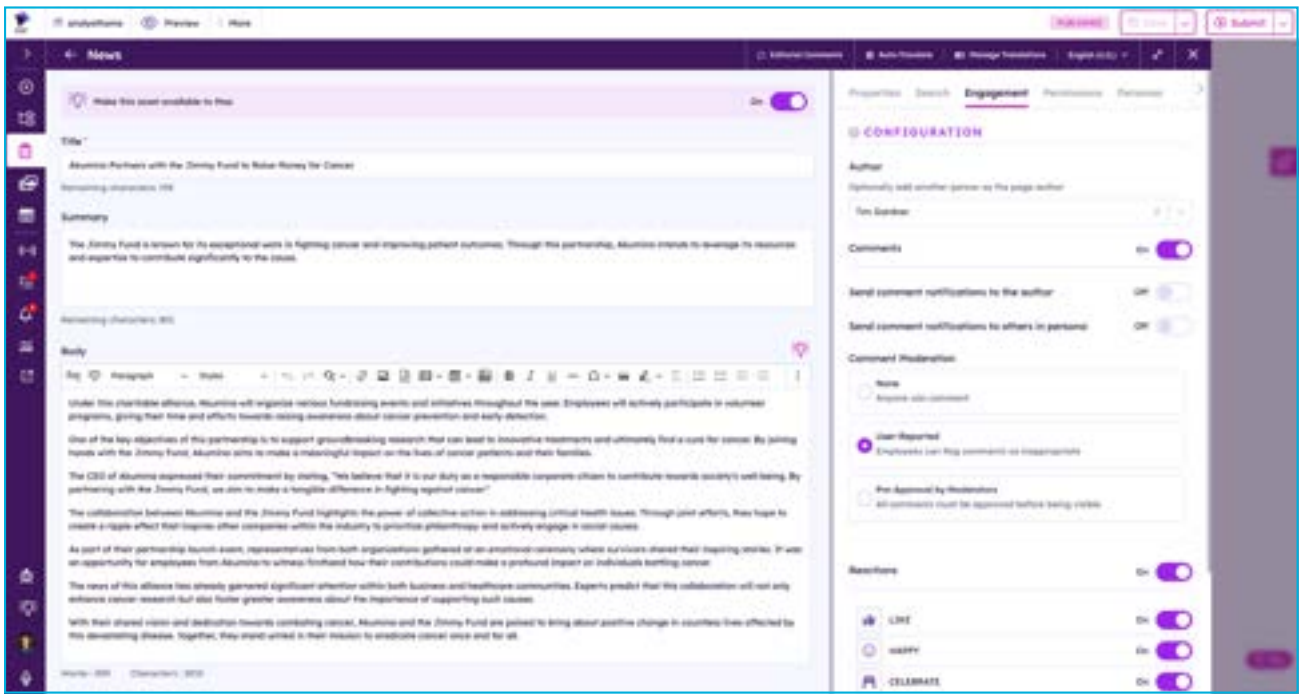
To help communicators drive action and push relevant content, Akumina's 'Me Bar' provides an 'intelligent activity stream' or 'universal inbox' bringing together a dynamic feed of important tasks, approvals, mentions and updates in a card-based format. Usually positioned prominently at the top of the home page, the information shown in the bar can be tailored to individual personas or users and configured to contain actions and alerts from a range of systems. This widget helps people stay 'on task' and highlight upcoming activity such as important meetings or overdue tasks, as well as editorially targeted communications such as the opening of award nominations, or approaching deadlines published through the 'Broadcast Centre' (see Scenario 2).

Where the Me Bar is intended to drive timely action, the persistent notification bell is used to alert the employee to actions that have taken place. It can be configured to show Akumina systems notifications, such as a pending review from a 'Flow' form (see Scenario 4), or a new comment on an article the individual is following. Notifications can also be integrated with third-party systems to display things like leave requests from Workday or approval requests from ServiceNow.

With such a wealth of options and flexibility, the key to success will be how organisations choose to implement these features. The biggest challenge is likely to be more about making the right choices rather than any limitation of the product itself. To tackle potential overwhelm, we think the introduction of a configurable tour to guide employees around parts of the intranet would be a welcome addition. Akumina also highlight that many customers choose to start simple, using the pre-built widgets and foundational branding options and then build over time to create more customised and bespoke experiences where they see the demand. Given that 'plus deployment' and 'custom deployment' options can take many months to complete, starting simpler will certainly be a quicker option, too.



A sample home page with a set of four personalised and targeted widgets in the 'me bar' highlighting talks, meetings, emails and documents the user needs to take action on. To the right, the notification panel is open, listing unread events.



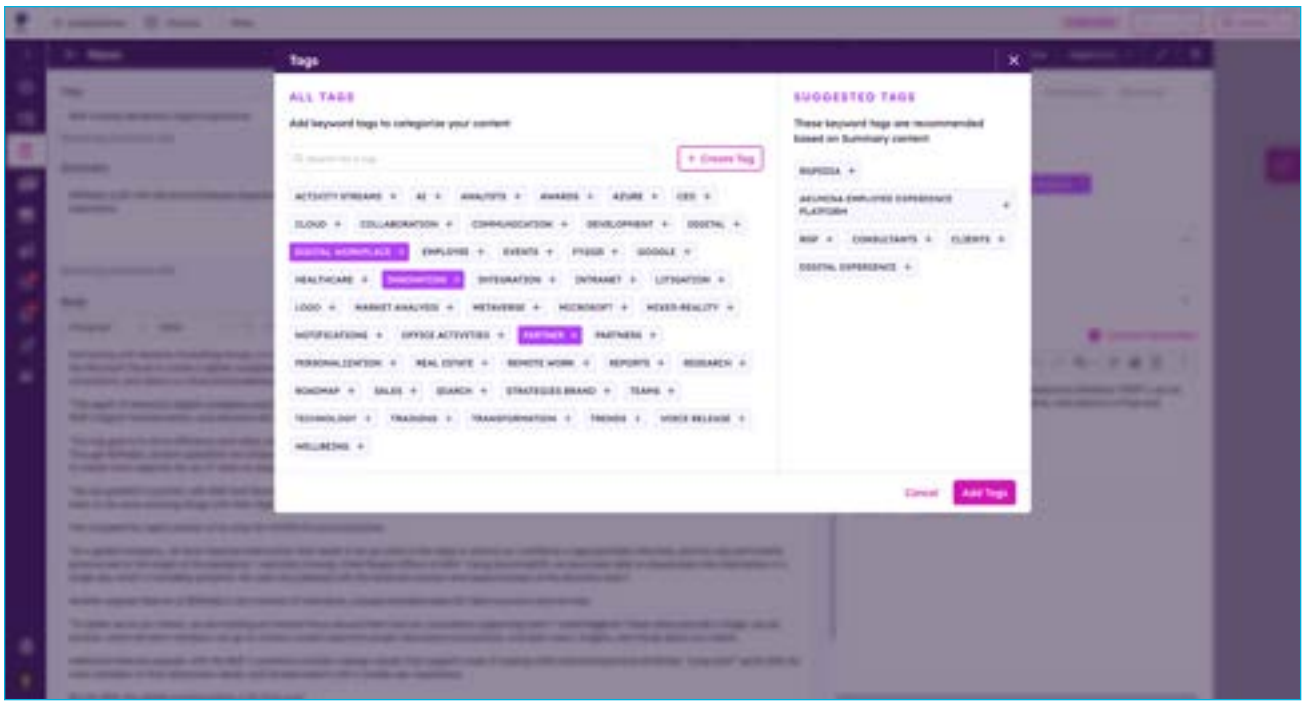
Creating a new news page and setting the page properties.

Communication teams will be able to make great use of Akumina's sophisticated features to create personalised and engaging experiences. When creating a new 'message', content authors select a message type, which determines several preconfigured options, such as the layout of widgets on the page and any approval process for publication. Experienced content authors can be given full freedom to control the article layout, while others can follow an intuitive template to create the body of the story and set appropriate metadata. News stories can be flagged as featured, publication and archive date fields are available, and tags are easily added. Creation of static reference pages follows a similar approach. Depending on permissions, authors can be confined to work within a predefined page layout or have more freedom to adapt.

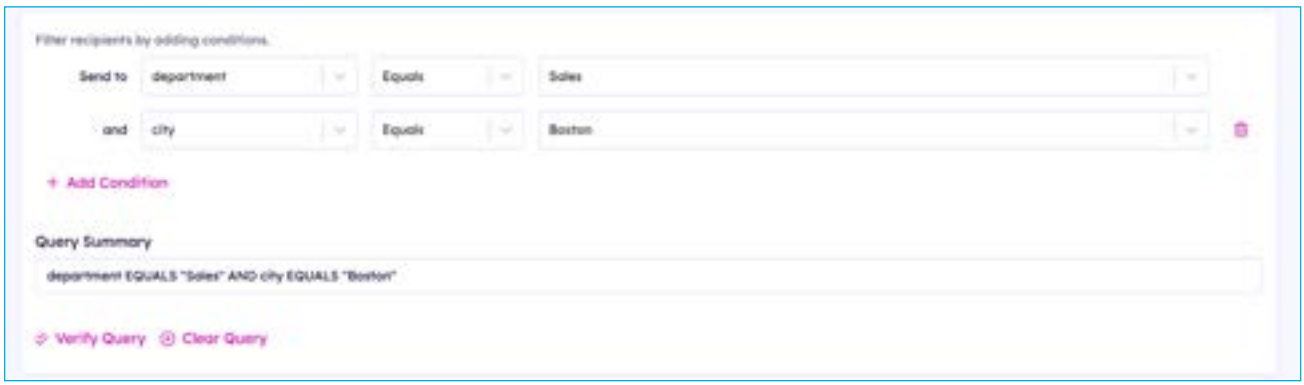
As part of the content creation process, 'MAX AI' can create outlines or full articles as well as generate imagery and document summaries. It's also able to create metadata such as keywords and descriptions and will intelligently maintain these when there are changes. Please see Scenario 4 for more on MAX AI and its capabilities.

Audience targeting and personalisation allows publishers to create tailored experiences, which is underpinned by the 'PeopleSync' tool. PeopleSync is a central repository of employee attributes that aggregates data from employee directories like Entra ID, HR systems like Workday or Peoplesoft and other enterprise systems such as an LMS or CRMs. This consolidated information fuels Akumina's personalisation capabilities by allowing publishers to build personas, employee groups or dynamic audience segments based on attributes, for example job role, department and location. We particularly like the option to reflect 'employee lifecycle', so admins can create distinct 'new hire onboarding' experiences, support new role / promotion transitions or even support leavers.

These personas or groups can be used to target content or create dynamic navigation. Personas can also be used to target custom page versions. For example, a new hire landing page might focus on onboarding information and benefits enrolment, whereas a tenured employee version of the page highlights company news. It's important to note that the personalisation options, using personas and targeting, are separate from the access control and permissions managed elsewhere in Akumina and SharePoint. Content that a user has access to is still discoverable through search, for example, even if it isn't specifically targeted to them.



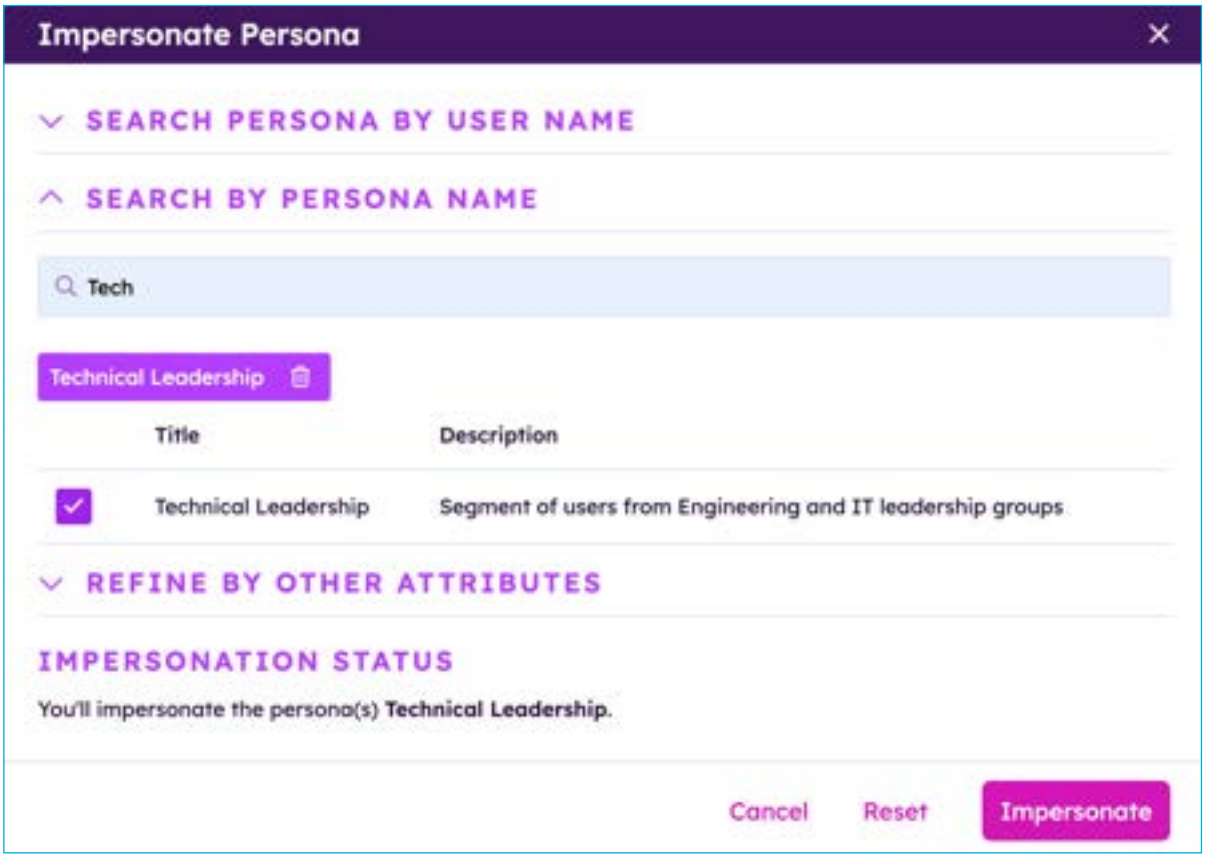
MAX AI supports the creation of new content and its metadata.



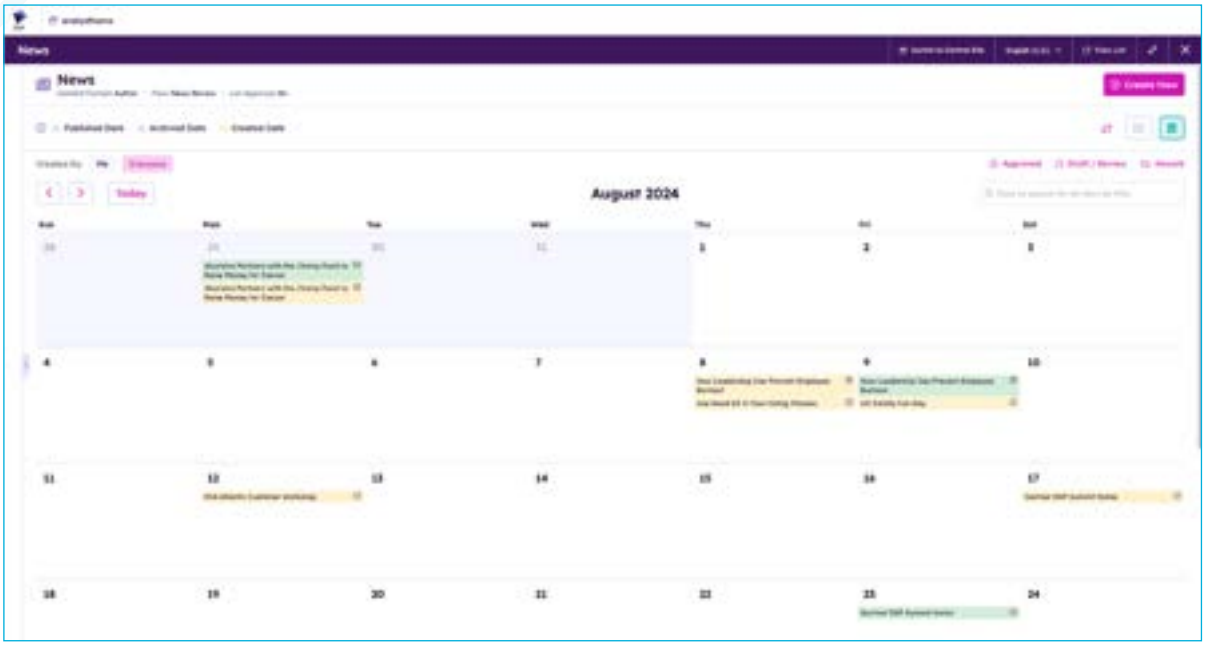
Building an audience based on various conditions.

This kind of highly customisable and personalised capability can often make it difficult for publishers to understand what their audiences will actually see; there is a risk of overwhelming with too much content or under publishing and creating stale pages. To address this, Akumina has developed an 'impersonate' tool, which allows someone to switch into another persona or users' view of the page. We see this feature playing a crucial role in testing and validating content aimed at different audiences.

An editorial calendar helps publishers manage the publication process; those with permissions to the calendar can see everything. All content types are displayed and there are helpful filters for publishers to refine what they're viewing. There is also a more traditional news centre with an overview in list form of all articles. Behind the scenes, Akumina's flow engine enables customised approval flows. This will address the common needs of a publisher, but large and complex editorial teams might want more. There's no inbuilt publishing workflow system or collaborative capabilities to coordinate the large volumes of highly targeted content that some other products in this report offer.



The 'impersonate' tool lets publishers experience content as different audience groups or personas.



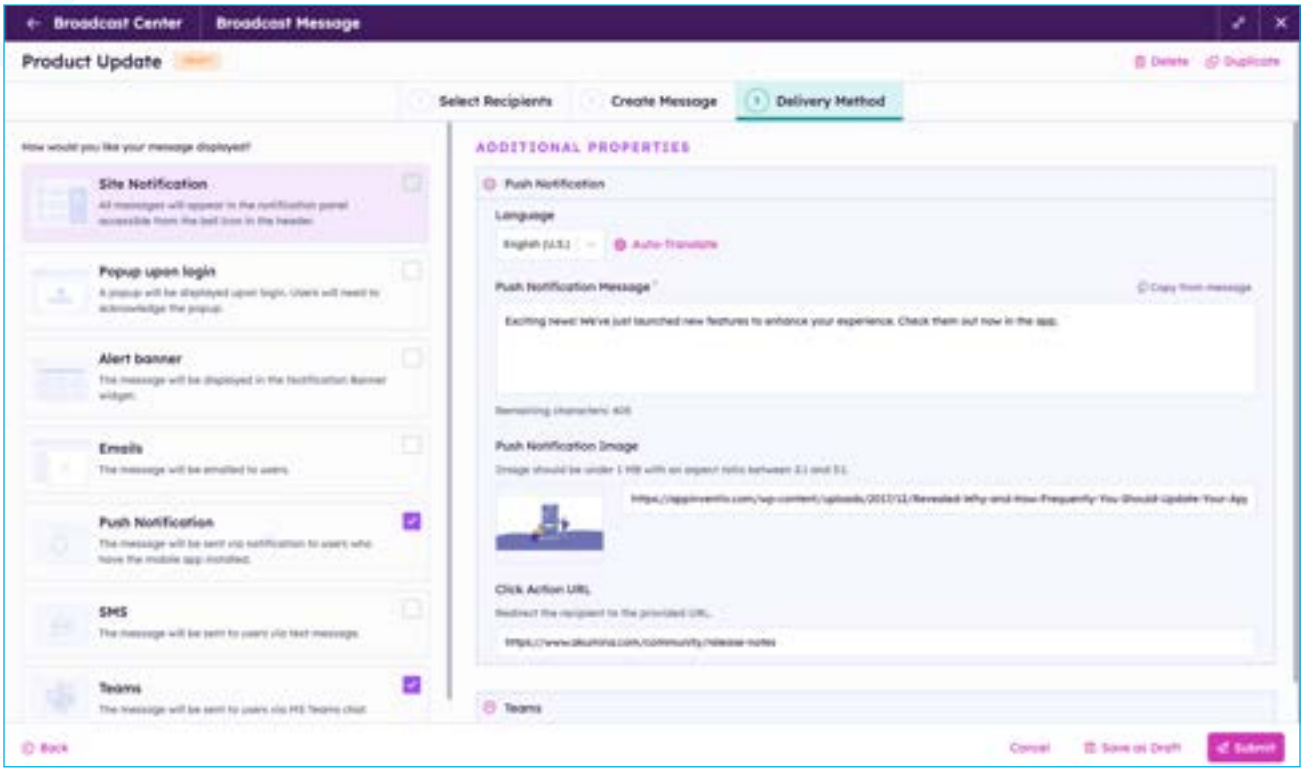
The news calendar provides a good overview of what's been published and scheduled across the platform.

Multichannel comms and crisis management requirements are catered for through the 'Broadcast Centre'. Building on the targeting opportunities created by PeopleSync, the Broadcast Centre supports scheduled or instant multichannel message distribution. Each message can be optimised and formatted for each channel, with support for banners, pop-ups and 'notification bell' within the intranet and email, SMS, mobile app push notifications and MS Teams adaptive cards. Notably Viva Engage isn't a supported channel today.

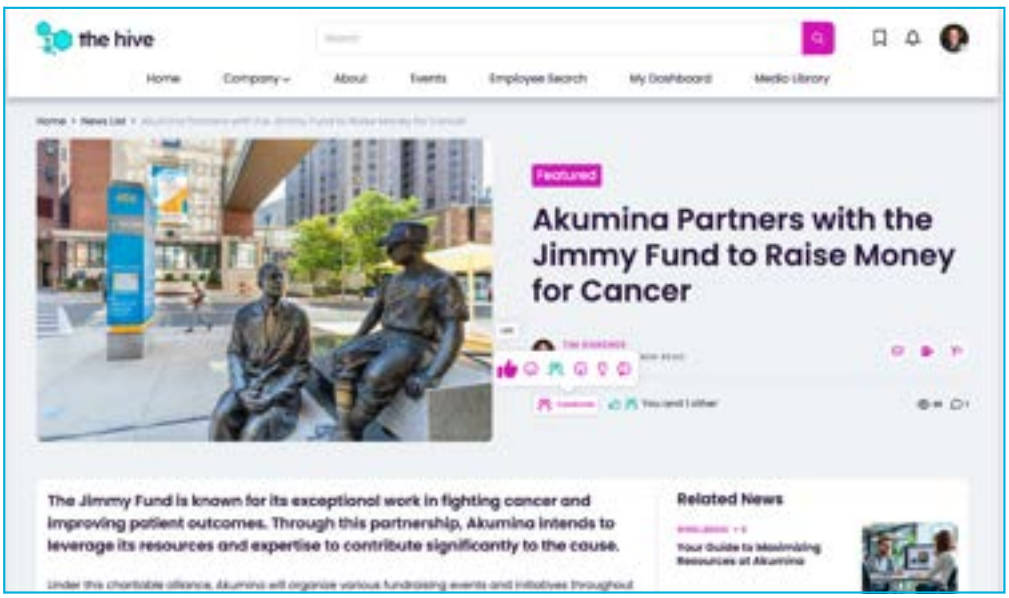
Currently end users can't opt in / out of channels for Broadcast, though that feature is coming. Publishers should consider carefully how channels best suit audiences and persona preferences. Its features make it undoubtably powerful and could particularly suit frontline worker and crisis communication scenarios. The Broadcast Centre is also supported with a strong set of analytics, see Scenario 7 for more.

Akumina also offers a comprehensive newsletter capability. Newsletters are created using configurable templates that editors can brand and fine-tune, for instance by adding a welcome header with a logo. Content items, such as last week's top news stories, are added either manually or automatically. Nice supporting features include a preview of the newsletter on different device types, and the option to send a test message.

Where users can't access the intranet on their device, digital signage and kiosks are supported via Personas. The management of the digital signage screens is not integrated into Akumina, which is more limited compared to other platforms. Finally, users may share news into personal social media channels; news articles are set up and approved for this purpose during the article creation process.



The Broadcast Centre helps publishers get urgent messages out to employees across different channels.



An example of the configurable social reactions available to encourage engagement. Also shown are the sharing options, views and comments.

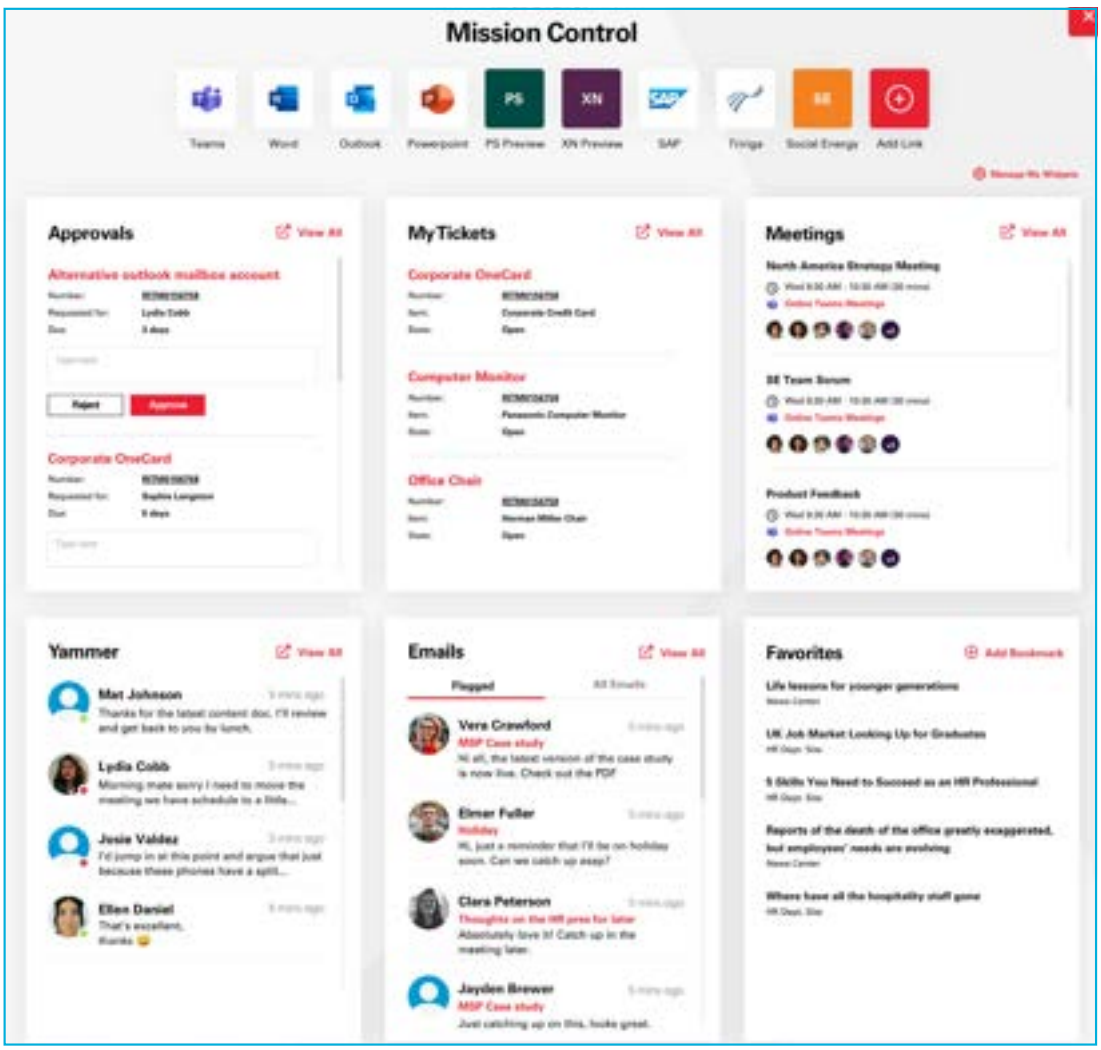
Recognising that many customers use Viva Engage, Akumina focuses on integrating with it rather than building a competing community platform. Akumina doesn't offer features like creating groups or sharing updates; instead, it seamlessly connects with Viva Engage to deliver this functionality, providing a unified intranet experience. For example, specified communities or general feeds can be added into pages with full interactivity.

While the product relies on Viva Engage for the core social experience, Akumina still offers tools for social interaction and feedback within its platform. Published stories and pages support reactions for engagement. There are solid comment management features to support constructive threaded conversations with moderation and inappropriate content reporting.

Beyond traditional social networking, Akumina's 'Flow Engine' provides sophisticated logic-driven forms that support branching and follow-up questions adapted to user responses. We were shown how this feature had been used to create a 'wellness guide' – where employees were polled on their current wellbeing and, dependant on response, were presented with helpful suggestions. For example, someone reporting they felt overwhelmed would be directed to resources and suggestions on workload management techniques and mindfulness exercises.

Feedback, surveys and polls can all be created using a drag-and-drop form builder interface in Flow Engine. There are advanced options to allow dynamic choice fields, trigger workflow and to integrate the form into a widget instance to customise its appearance on a page. We were also shown how Flow Engine could support employee recognition with configurations for peer-to-peer recognition and for more formal nomination campaigns with criteria, approval and awards. The example we saw was a 'living the values' campaign where employees could nominate someone who had demonstrated core company values. While this is a powerful tool that supports a broad range of use cases, it's one of the few areas where the complexity of setting it up requires more technical ability.

Overall Akumina's approach to community and engagement combines the power of Microsoft Viva Engage with its own features to create a well-rounded experience. While there is more the product could do to fully integrate with Engage, Akumina have done a good job of implementing a solution that adds value and support for an organisation's unique needs, while avoiding the potential user confusion of multiple platforms playing in a similar functionality space.

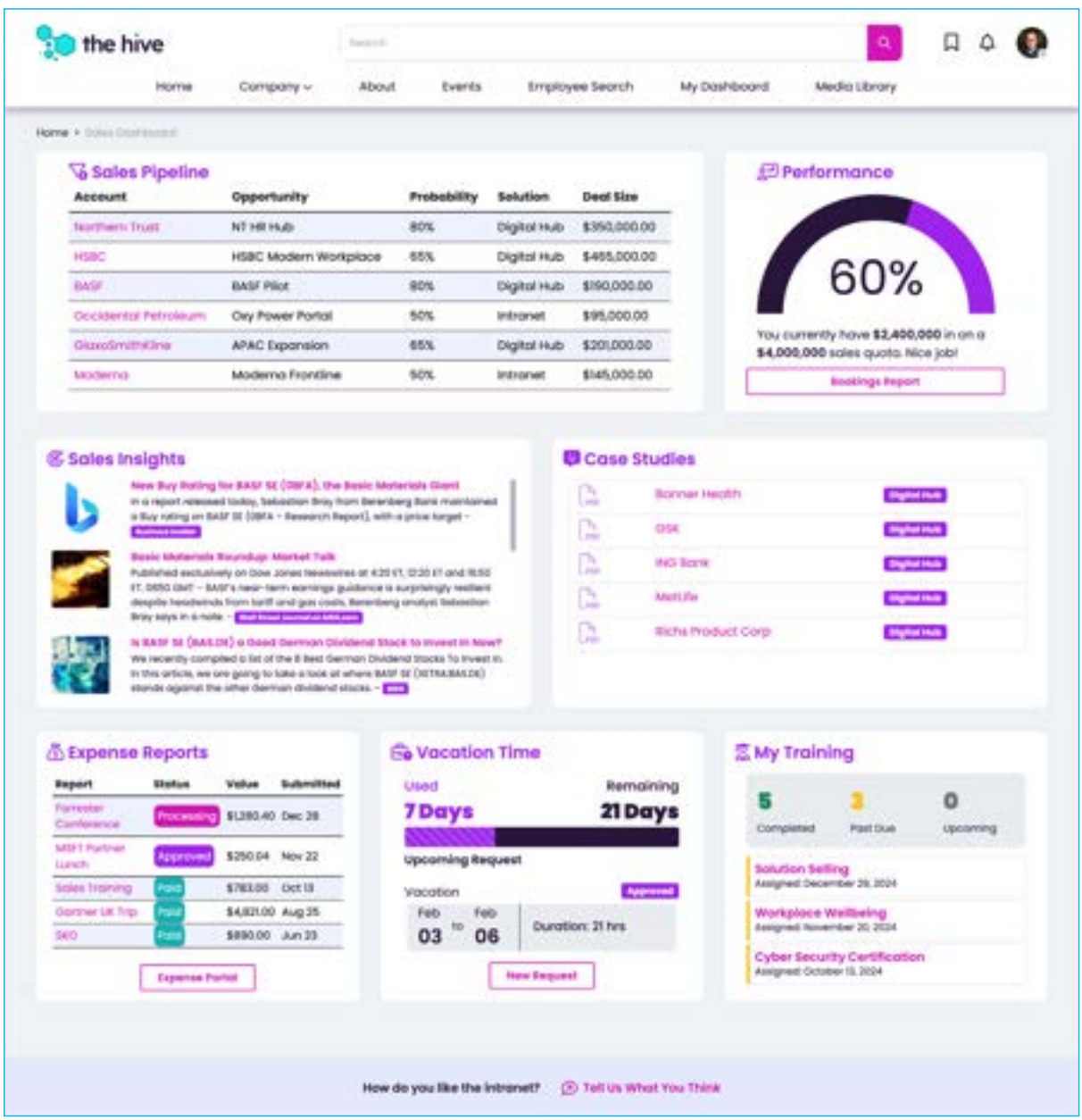


Akumina's 'mission control' is a customisable dashboard.

Akumina's ability to integrate with other applications means it can act as a single hub for employee experience, helping to boost productivity by reducing the need for context switching. The potential is impressive, but realising this vision isn't a straightforward task and will require some implementation effort and configuration of the M365 tenant to unlock the full search capabilities (see Scenario 5).

While its platform operates in Akumina's cloud, the content, such as news articles and documents, is stored and secured in the customer's SharePoint tenant. This tight integration with M365 enables various widgets to surface information, like Teams messages or flagged emails, and underpins the MAX AI functionality (see below). This architecture also allows a level of functionality to be provided to users without an M365 licence (see Scenario 8) and opens the ability for integration into other systems with a pre-built set of plug-ins. There are integration options that start simple but support growth into more complex and bespoke capabilities. For example, where Teams activity feeds are easily missed, Akumina can enhance notifications to appear as custom cards in Teams chats.

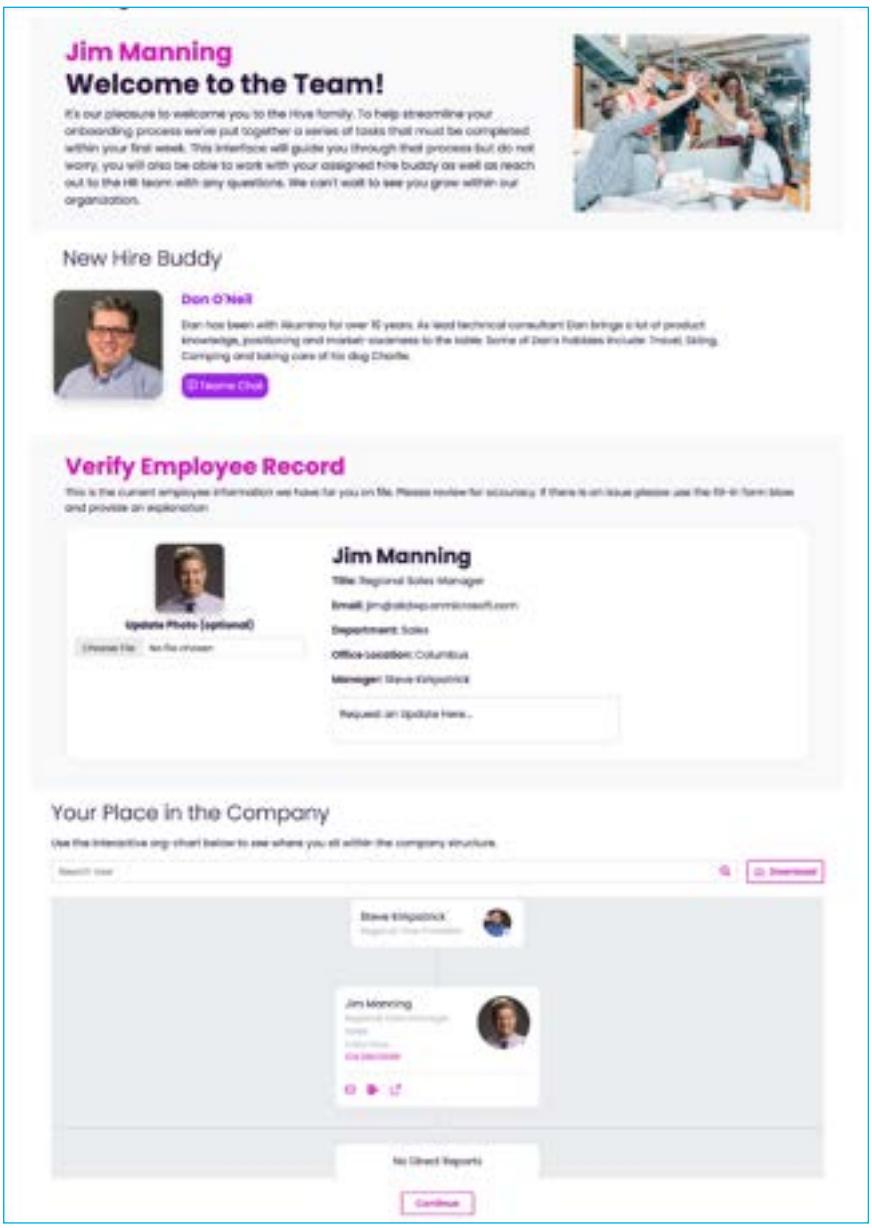
There are a variety of ways external tools and data can be added to Akumina. Firstly, links can be configured to support single sign-on and presented through a persistent 'Mission Control' menu of personalised link icons. A second approach sees business systems integrated via widgets, providing a more in-depth experience where users interact with a source system via the Akumina interface. Widgets can include activities, such as requesting time off in Workday, or surface information, such as a Salesforce sales pipeline. We particularly like that different widget types can be linked together to display different content when a user interacts with one. For example, in a sales dashboard, when an account name is clicked in one widget (e.g. from Salesforce) a real-time information feed about the selected company is shown, and case studies are populated from OneDrive. Further down the page, this user can see their expense reports in Expensify and their holiday balance in Workday.



An example of a page with multiple integrations creating a dynamic dashboard.

A third integration approach is via an intelligent 'Activity Stream', which gathers content, actions and notifications from across integrated sources that are presented in stream cards. Cards include simple messages, such as 'a new video has been added to a YouTube channel', or more in-depth capabilities, such as approving an expense request. The stream has an ever-scroll experience for each user, and a splash of most recent cards can be added to a home page. There is also an activity filter where users can activate or deactivate certain types of activities based on personal preferences.

Combining this rich integration capability with the powerful persona targeting (discussed in Scenario 2), administrators can create sophisticated personalised experiences. For example, the 'new starter' persona we've previously mentioned can be combined with HR system integration and ordering system, guiding employees through important tasks to get set up in their new role.

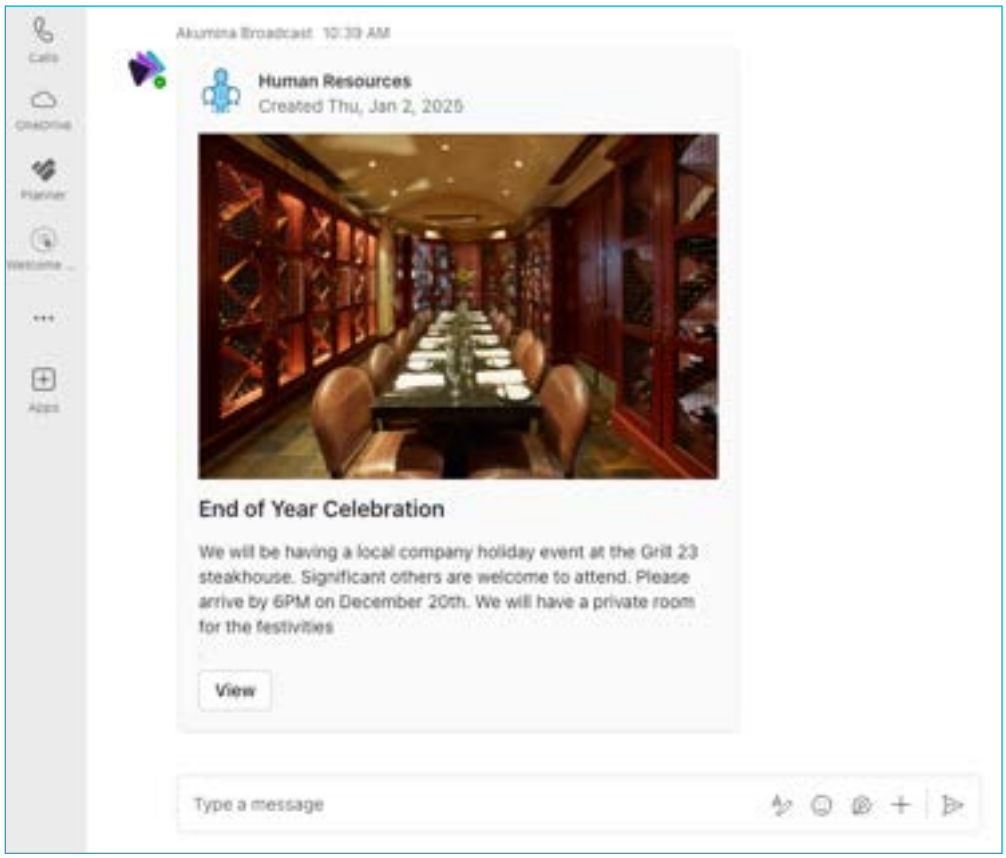


An example of a page personalised to the new starter persona, showing HR and ordering integrations.

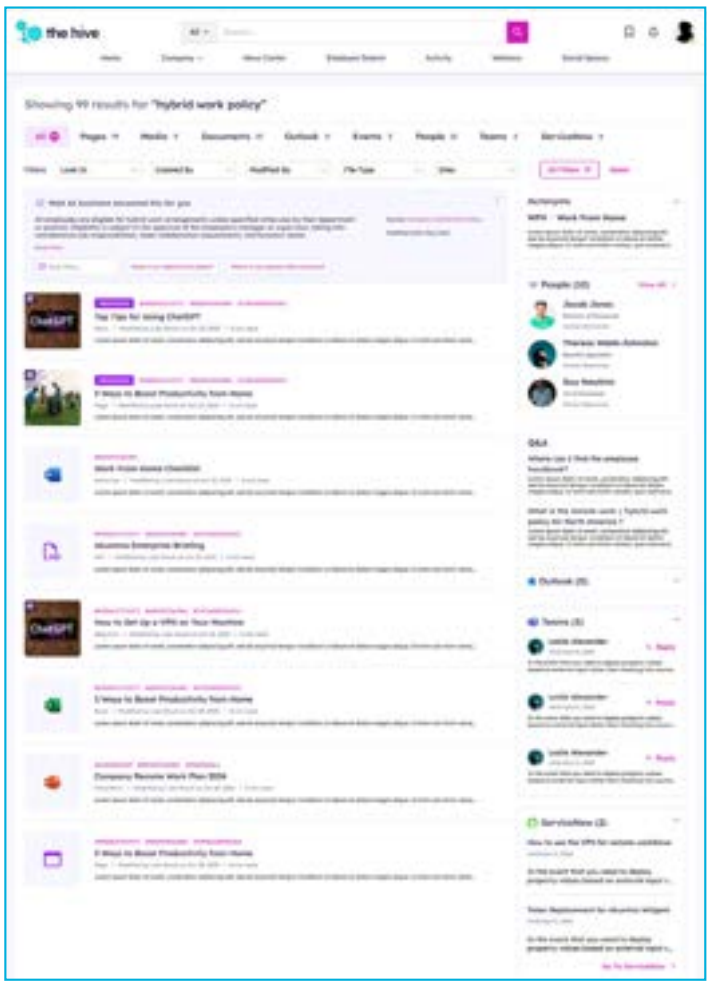
Akumina's implementation of AI into their product is one of the better examples of intentional and effective outcome-focused use of the technology we have seen. The AI assistant adds value as a writing assistant (see Scenario 2), taxonomy management tool, and intelligent search (see Scenario 5). 'MAX AI' is proprietary to Akumina but builds on Microsoft's semantic kernel – the engine that powers Microsoft's premium M365 Copilot product. MAX AI has a contextual understanding of the user and so can provide organisation-aware and individualised, highly relevant responses.

Akumina are aware of the evolving concern around GenAI and its potential impact on privacy, risk of hallucination and resulting inaccuracy. Their implementation, grounding answers in contextual information, should offer some reassurance around accuracy, and they make features optional so that they can be disabled entirely should the risk be considered too high. But we'd have liked to have seen an option for some middle ground with integrated feedback to capture inaccurate or biased responses.

The pre-built plug-ins and widgets are likely to cover most organisation's needs. Similarly, Akumina's approach to design customisation (see Scenario 1) means the development architecture, and optional Akumina development services, can support customer integrations and highly bespoke solutions. Overall, Akumina's integration options create low friction exit points where people need to leave the intranet or pull in external data and remove the need to leave at all. With a good design-led approach to these choices the intranet could become a hub for all but the most complex interactions. The MAX AI tool provides an additional service layer for employees as well, meaning this scenario is an area of strength for Akumina.



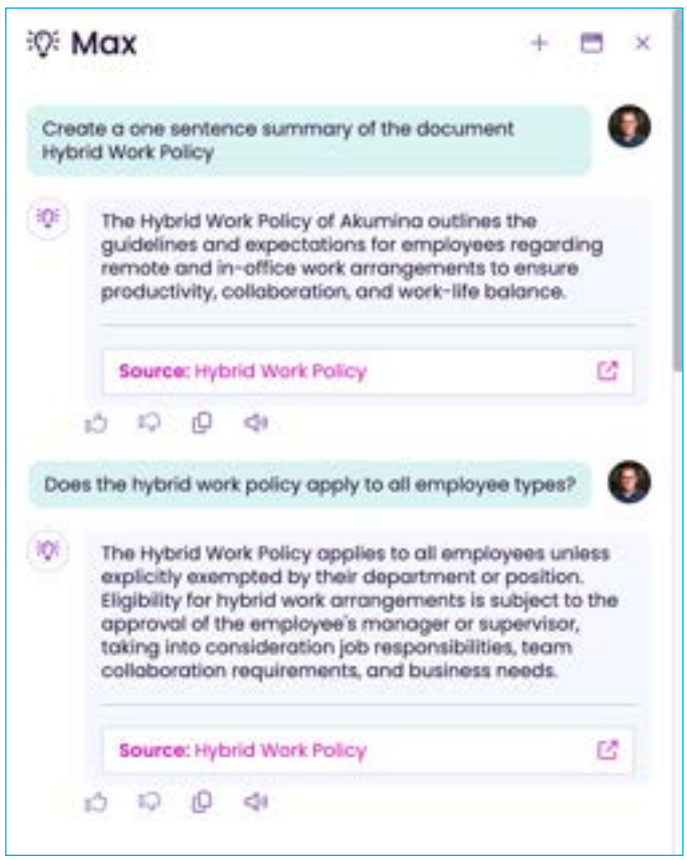
Notifications showing in a page and as active cards within MS Teams.



A search results page highlighting a range of refinement options and a MAX AI assistant answer at the top of the results.

The prominent global search box offers the easiest route into finding content. A traditional keyword query will return a well-laid-out results page highlighting 'promoted results' before listing results in order of relevance (by default) in a paginated view. The results page includes refinement options to filter by metadata such as category, content type and modified date. There are also options to show content from federated search results, a route into people search and a feature that allows users to save common searches as shortcuts. As well as the global results there are local, content-type specific search results pages. For example, 'policy search' provides optimised policy finding and 'people search' provides an optimised people directory experience.

Akumina's AI tool, 'MAX AI', excels in its ability to answer natural language questions and get accurate personal results. On a basic level, MAX will address spelling or grammatical errors, but it will also interpret natural language questions to directly answer the question, citing sources and presenting further results in the search. This feature is particularly useful at surfacing information from technical help documentation, where MAX instantly provides clear and simple instructions, allowing employees to avoid having to read often long documents. A 'summarise' option in document results opens MAX to give an introduction to the document and provide a conversational interface into information finding and question answering.



MAX AI intelligently answers natural language questions.

MAX's real power is the ability to answer with a contextual awareness of the individual. The example we saw was of an employee handbook that contained various differing policies for each grade, location and role in the business. Questioning through MAX resulted in an answer that reflected the policy that applied to that individual, saving the time and potential confusion of the employee needing to open and read the full document.

We like the ability to link to an AI prompt where, rather than embedding a simple link in a page, Akumina supports the ability to link to a query. For example, embedding the query 'what is the latest information about product X' points to dynamically created and contextually relevant results, based on the latest available information about product X. We can see this feature being great for dynamic and constantly changing content, particularly where publishers want to encourage discovery and where employees want to keep up to date in fast-moving situations.

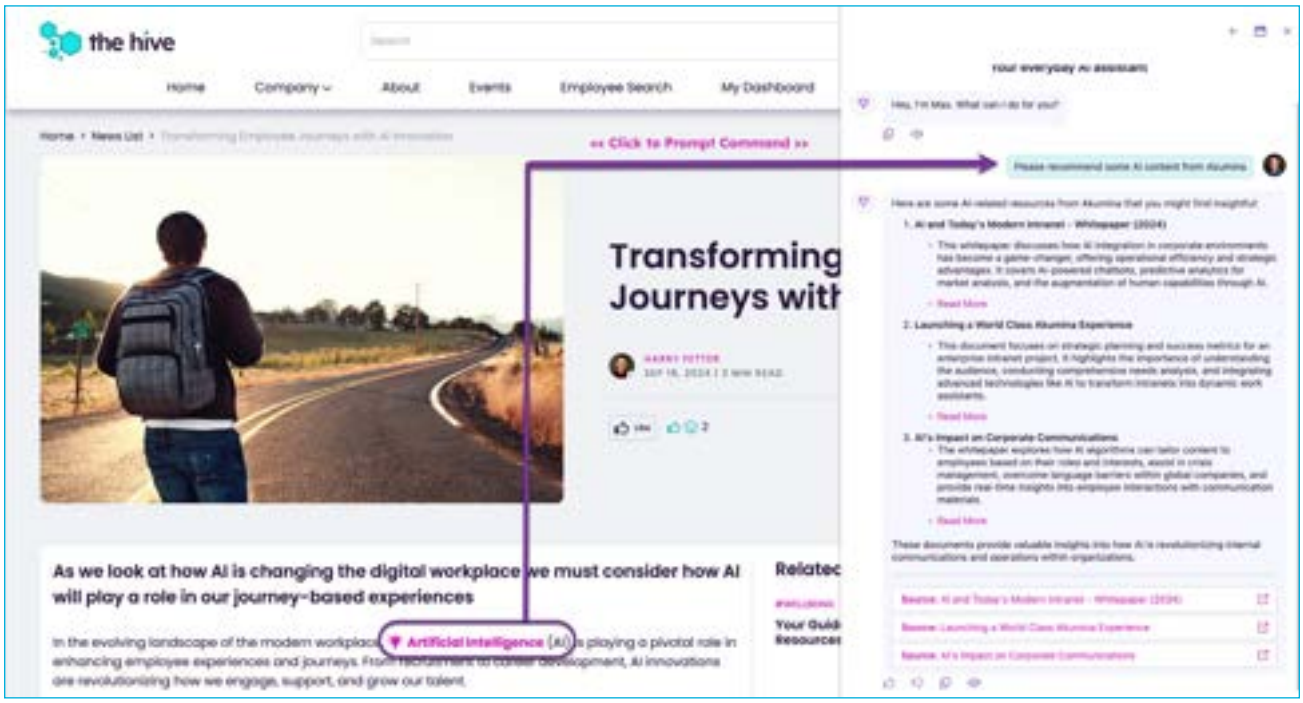
People search is also, optionally, complemented by MAX with support for expertise search, skills search or finding people by other relationships and attributes. Akumina are acutely aware of the concern some businesses might have around allowing AI to build these kind of user profiles, so offer granular configuration to control exactly what attributes and who gets included within the AI's scope. Profile pages are attractive, displaying information as tags or free text boxes, although the org chart display is limited to a simple hierarchy. People data can be fed from multiple sources, including Entra ID but also from Workday or SuccessFactors. When a user updates a field, this information can be passed back to the source where wanted.

Akumina's AI search capabilities have some limitations, as it is only aware of information that is in the Microsoft search index. By default, anything in M365, including chats, emails and SharePoint / OneDrive documents, will be part of that index, but to extend its reach to other data sources you'll need your IT teams to configure the 'Microsoft search connectors' into the

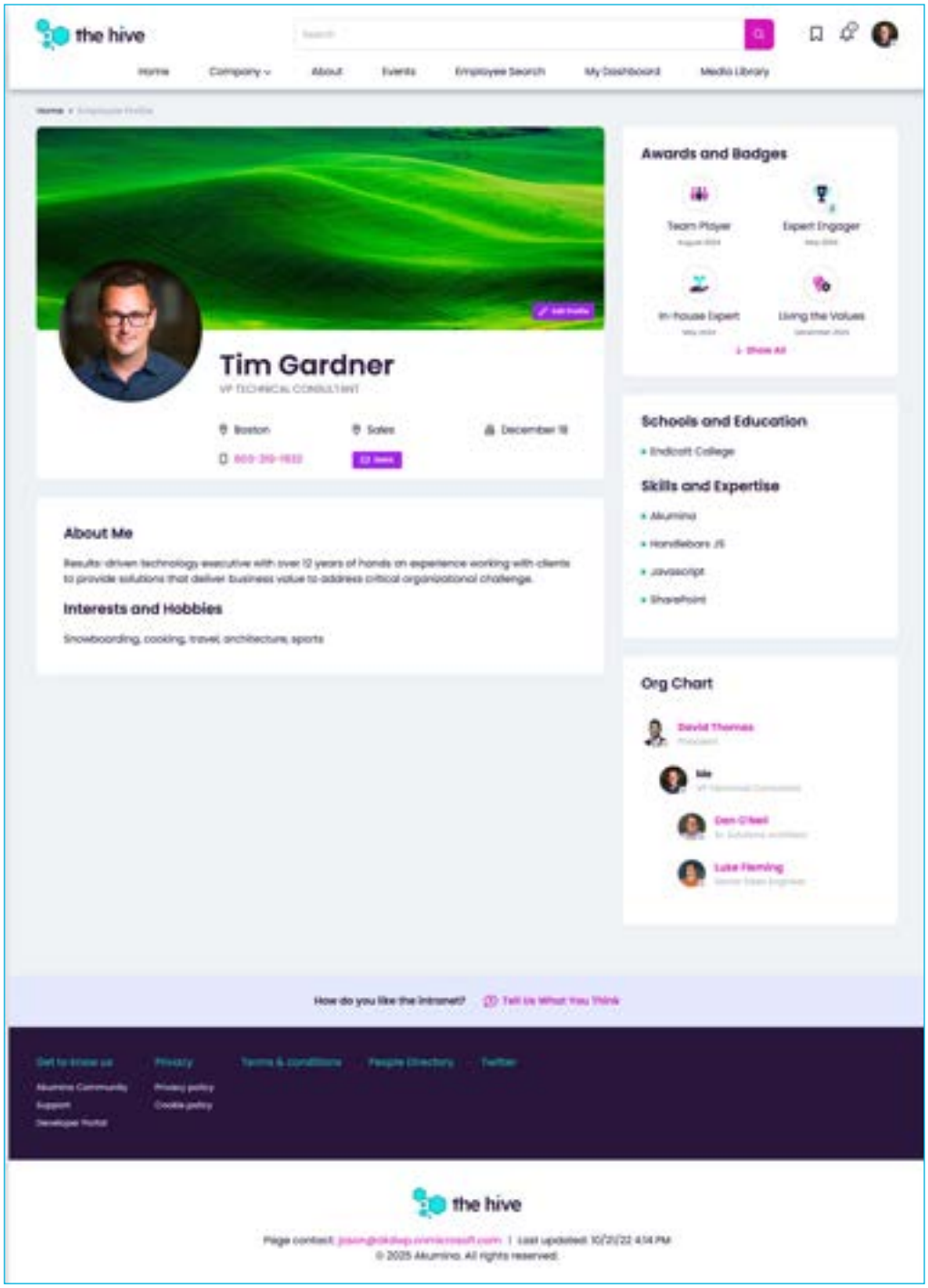
third-party data stores. This isn't always a straightforward task and buyers should be aware that Microsoft starts to charge once search connectors are indexing data volumes over its free limit.

One significant area for improvement is the lack of robust reporting and feedback mechanisms for search. While the M365 search reporting gives some insights, there's little data or option to capture end user sentiment on search effectiveness. This might make it difficult for administrators to assess the overall performance of search and identify areas for improvement.

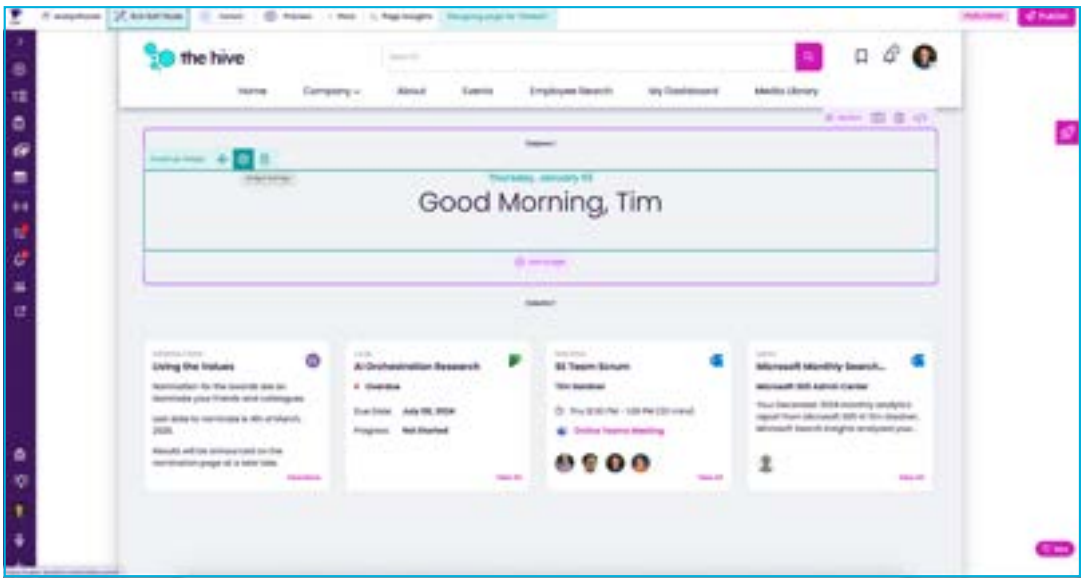
Overall, Akumina does well to signpost the various results and refinement options, offering a route into finding information and answers from anywhere on the intranet or other connected sources. MAX AI is powerful and offers one of the best AI search assistants we've seen, providing an excellent experience for employees so that they can find what they need quickly.



A MAX AI link has been added to a page which, rather than linking directly to a specific document, opens the MAX AI assistant pane and prompts the AI to find the recommended content.



Profile pages are attractive and benefit from MAX AI where organisations allow.



A page opened in edit mode; as well as the simple layout options, the top bar offers quick access to engagement metrics and visibility of the persona being designed for.

We think Akumina have done well to provide a user-friendly interface that requires little technical expertise for common tasks. There is little reason for everyday creators to have to visit the underlying SharePoint libraries to modify site permissions or update documents.

Once the initial customisation is in place, ongoing management and day-to-day activity can be largely achieved through simple drag-and-drop page builders and form-based interfaces. These are intuitive and simple enough for anyone to use and give full flexibility on how and where content is positioned and laid out on the page. Content creation is additionally supported through the AI-powered writing assistant (see Scenario 2).

During the initial setup, and when performing customisation or advanced management tasks, there is still a need to call on an M365 administrator or someone with web development skills. It's possible for non-technical admins to build Personas (see Scenario 2) where attributes are present, but more complex Personas may need the assistance of technical colleagues. Features such as the 'Flow' form builder will likely need additional configuration help, and advanced search, creating customised layouts, widgets and page templates, and new integrations will need technical skills or support from Akumina.

For lifecycle management, publishers see an overview of their content nearing expiry and renew, revise or archive via a set of personalised dashboards. Expiry warning notifications are also triggered via email, the notification bell and into the activity stream. These administrators are exposed to the back-end environment when consulting the reports; we would prefer to see them in the user-friendly front end, giving editors a consistent experience.

The product leverages Microsoft translation service to offer an automatically generated translation of content. Publishers can choose specific languages or opt for 'all' languages selected for the site. Translated content retains a relationship to the original source but can be separately updated to reflect regional variations, such as a more appropriate image or locale-specific information. Administrators can set fields to be language specific or language agnostic, choose to implement human review of translated content before publication, and allow for a flexible approach to translation that should support appropriate quality control over critical information without creating unnecessary overheads or delays on the publication of non-critical information.

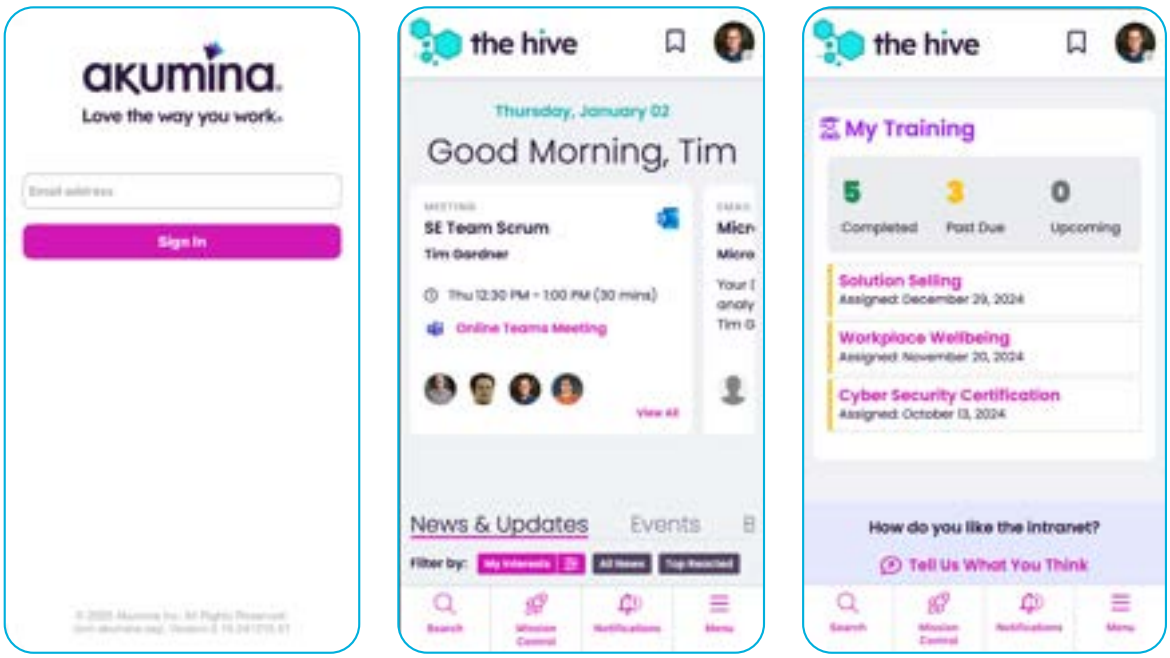
An example overview dashboard from Akumina analytics, highlighting overall engagement trends and areas of activity and inactivity.

There's a broad range of thoughtful dashboards in Akumina. These go beyond displaying trends and numbers and strive to provide a comprehensive understanding of how the intranet is being used, as well as how its effectiveness can be improved.

Reports on active users offer activity over time and provide insights into adoption, highlighting potential areas for improvement in user engagement by considering user demographics and segmentation. For example, the analytics might suggest the best time and day to publish content to maximise engagement with a key audience. The report centre also contains feature-specific metrics that help identify gaps in content for key personas or demographics. For example, form responses (see Scenario 3) can be presented by geography.

For content creators, page engagement metrics are available. By combining views, reactions, comments and shares, a creator can get a good measure of page performance. The Broadcast Centre contains its own set of analytics, focusing on tracking the delivery status and open rates of sent messages across multiple channels. This includes both 'alerts' content and newsletter effectiveness as well as metrics for 'mandatory reads'. Note mandatory reads are not available outside of the Broadcast Centre.

Currently, there is no custom report builder for admins, but there are plans for MAX AI to support this in the future. Additionally, there is currently little in the way of user journey analysis or insights to support the effectiveness of the navigation. As mentioned in Scenario 5, we also think search analytics has room for improvement. Akumina highlights that while they are working to develop these features, they currently fully support integration with third-party MI tools like PowerBI or Microsoft Clarity for heatmaps. This means that admins can extend the analytics capabilities if those are critical requirements.



Akumina translates well from desktop into a small screen environment.

The product has a native mobile app that can be downloaded from app stores or deployed and managed through MDM and MAM solutions. Alternatively, Akumina can be accessed through the Teams mobile app, providing a degree of familiarity and simplifying the experience for those who heavily rely on Teams.

For employees without M365 accounts, Akumina offers tailored login screens that can integrate with alternative authentication systems where credentials are managed, such as PeopleSoft. While some functionality does rely on users having a M365 licence, for example the 'Me Bar', these users are still able to consume content, interact with widgets and view documents.

The app is fully brandable and leverages responsive design principles to adapt the intranet experience to different screen sizes, ensuring usability across various mobile devices. While Akumina doesn't offer specific, out-of-the-box features tailored exclusively for frontline workers, the platform's existing functionalities can be used to meet the unique needs of this audience, such as the integrations in Scenario 4.

One way Akumina supports frontline workers is with persona-based targeting. This allows organisations to create specific personas for frontline employees and thoughtfully design experiences tailored to their needs. For instance, a persona for frontline workers might have a simplified user interface optimised for mobile access, prioritising essential content and features. Navigation menus can be dynamically adjusted to the persona, providing quick and easy access to the most relevant sections of the intranet.

Akumina effectively addresses many frontline worker needs through its existing functionalities, but there are opportunities for further development to enhance its value proposition for this audience, such as digital signage or kiosk user support. While responsive design and the ability to customise the layout for a 'frontline' persona provides a solid foundation for mobile accessibility, components that integrate more closely with the mobile device, such as telephony, camera and geolocation features, would allow for further optimisation and tailoring to the unique needs of frontline workers.

Akumina offers a robust platform that, while lacking specific frontline worker features, provides a strong foundation for building a tailored and engaging experience for this audience. By leveraging persona-based targeting, flexible authentication options, a branded mobile app and seamless Teams integration, organisations can effectively leverage Akumina to connect with and empower their frontline workforce.

THINGS TO BEAR IN MIND

Akumina's high level of customisation through widgets, templates and personas allows for diverse and targeted designs. While Akumina offer services to support the implementation of these customisations, it's important not to overlook the ongoing effort involved in supporting, testing and managing the multiple instances of an experience you create. Tools such as the persona impersonator are helpful, but Akumina themselves recommend starting simple and using the platform's capability to strategically develop bespoke options over time and only where the need of a user group shows there is value.

The deep integration with M365 offers both benefits and limitations. By building on Microsoft investments, choosing Akumina allows you to continue to get value from storage, security and governance in place on your M365 and Azure setup. Equally, it may tie you into some of the legacy process and politics a Communications team looking for a new intranet platform might be hoping to leave behind. While Akumina empowers communicators in everyday publishing tasks and frees them from the design constraints of SharePoint, it does still necessitate a close relationship with an IT team that manage the underlying services.

Just as you'll continue to need technical support for M365 tasks and the creation of Flow based widgets and workflows, Akumina currently doesn't offer reporting or insights on the overall user journeys to help with the optimisation of navigation or search. Without this data, Comms teams are often pressured into making choices that degrade the overall findability and satisfaction. Improvements in this area are high on Akumina's feature backlog, and they have plans to extend MAX AI's capabilities to be able to help in this area.

Why choose this product

Akumina is a compelling choice for large, digitally mature organisations embedded in the Microsoft 365 ecosystem. Offering a visually appealing and engaging intranet experience, it provides excellent design flexibility and personalisation, robust integration with M365 and powerful content management and targeting. The sophisticated Broadcast Centre and comprehensive analytics enhance internal communications and user engagement. Akumina suits organisations frustrated with SharePoint's limitations, those with complex structures, a focus on employee experience, predominantly knowledge workers and strong internal resources.

You may also be interested in...

FRESH omnia Powell

Vendor roadmap

No roadmap has been supplied by Akumina.

Back to index

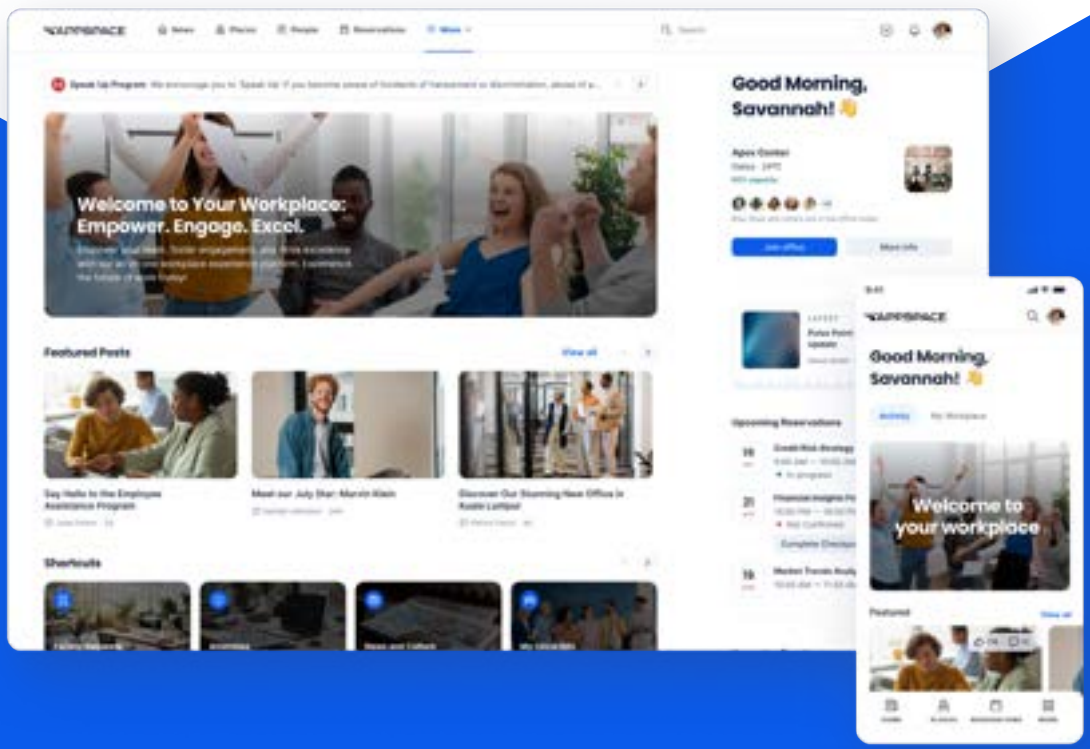
APPSPACE

FULLY STANDALONE

REQUIRES SHAREPOINT

FRONTLINE FOCUS

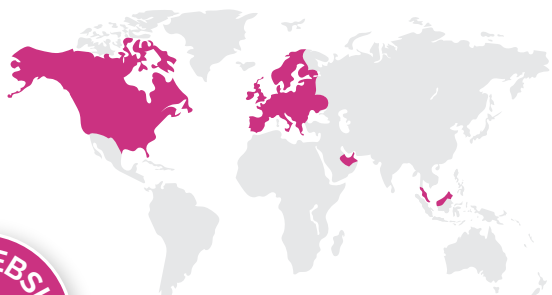
OTHER



Typical deployment:

15,000 to 20,000

Company locations:



VISIT THE WEBSITE

The product in a nutshell

Appspace enhances workplace communication and efficiency, making it ideal for businesses with large, geographically dispersed workforces.

SUMMARY

Appspace

Florida based Appspace has provided a wide range of digital communication and workplace management tools since 2002. In 2021 the vendor acquired the intranet platform Beezy, which had been a presence in the market since 2013. Over the past few years, we've seen the Appspace intranet platform draw on the experience from two mature teams, transforming it from a SharePoint intranet in-a-box solution into an independent intranet with integration potential with various aspects of the workplace.

The overall experience is strong for both end users and admins alike, with a range of simple tools to deliver a broad set of functionalities. The location-aware and mobile-ready interface makes publishing to diverse office, mobile or deskless audiences seamless. Additionally, leveraging the platform's integration with digital signage, room booking systems and other digital tools, organisations can deliver targeted communications, improve workplace efficiency and enhance employee safety and wellbeing. Novel features, such as the audio digest, support on-the-go content consumption and will create new ways for people to engage, too.

There are some gaps, although many of these areas are on the roadmap; analytics in particular has a clear development plan and will benefit from an update. Governance features are basic and this is an area customers highlighted as needing improvement, too. The search experience was an area we thought could be improved and we're pleased to see the developments here during the first half of 2025.

Businesses with large frontline workforces, geographically dispersed teams or those who rely heavily on physical spaces will significantly benefit from Appspace. The pricing for Appspace is neither high nor low when compared to other products in this report, although it's worth noting that some integrations will come at additional cost and have a significant dependency on the broader Appspace suite.

Pricing

PRICE BAND	
1,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
5,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
20,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
50,000 users	$ $ $ $ $

These prices are indicative, offering a comparison of the products featured in this report only. Please contact the vendor for a bespoke quote.

PRICING MODEL

Subscription – price per user per month.

DISCOUNTS

Schools and educational institutes; multi-year commitments; businesses over 20,000 users.

COSTS TYPICALLY

Fairly evenly spread across three years.

PRICE INCLUDES

Maintenance and support, plus an account management team.

Product type

Ready-to-run, installed in hours

Branding opportunities

All branding, complex options

Base systems

Fully standalone

Requires SharePoint

Other

Sectors

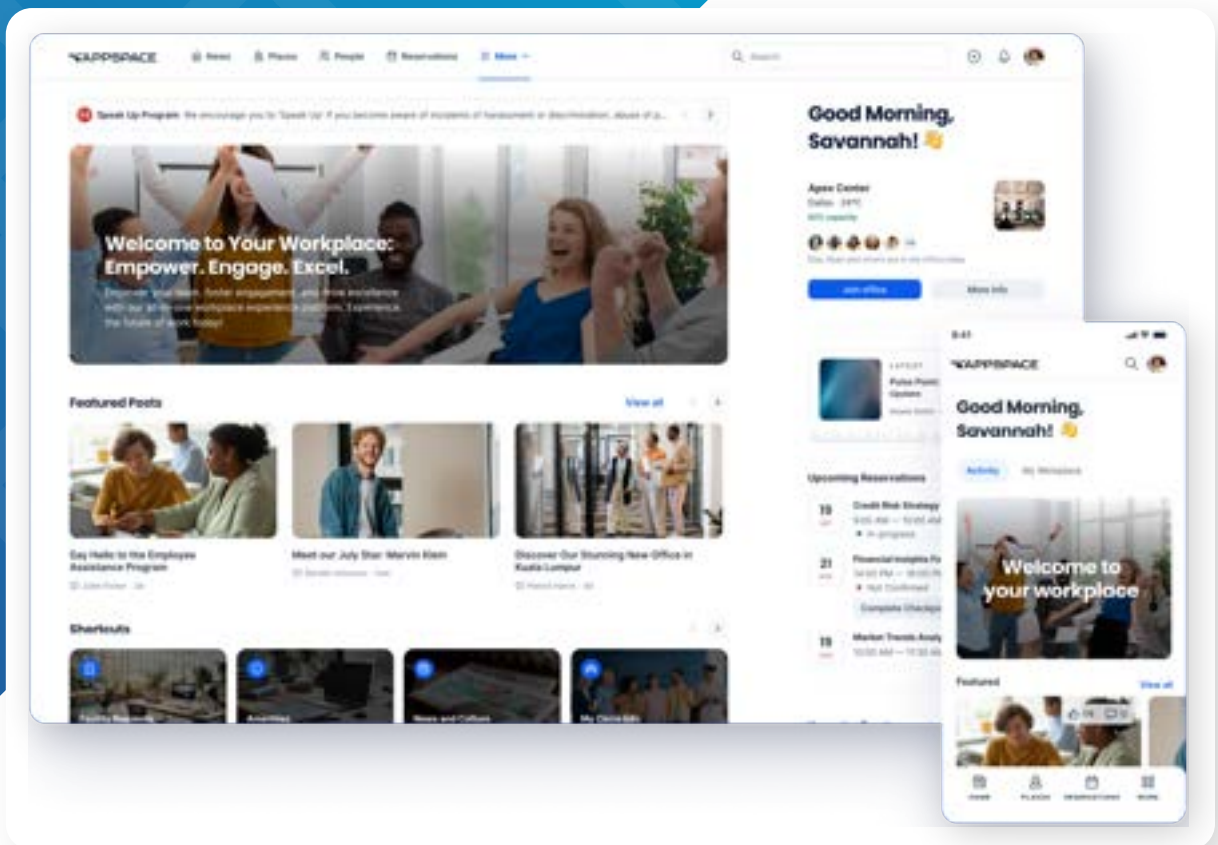
Accountancy, banking and finance

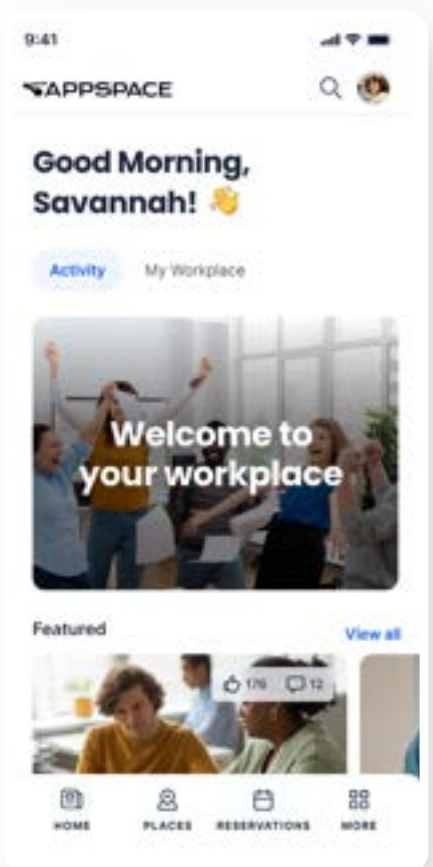
Energy and utilities

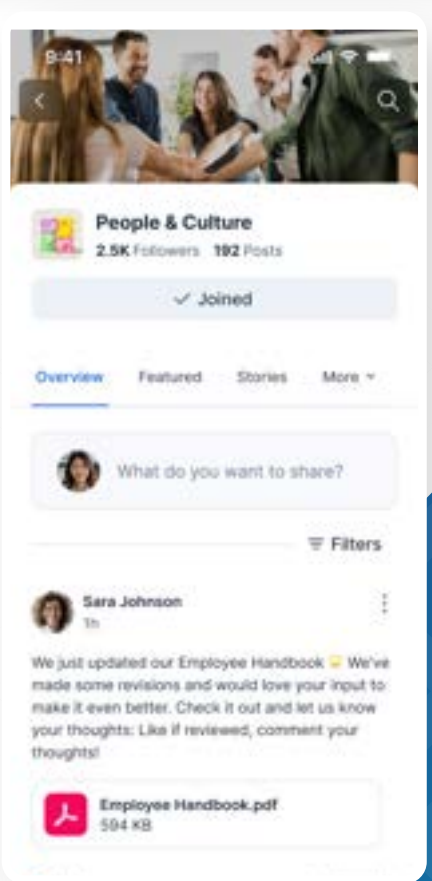
Engineering and manufacturing

Public services, government and administration

Science and pharmaceuticals


Good Morning, Savannah!
Welcome to Your Workplace: Empower. Engage. Excel.
Featured Posts
Welcome to your workplace


9:41
APPSPACE
Good Morning, Savannah!
Activity
My Workplace
Welcome to your workplace
Featured
View all
HOME
PLACES
RESERVATIONS
MORE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People & Culture
2.5K Followers 192 Posts
Joined
Overview
Featured
Stories
More
What do you want to share?
Filters
Sara Johnson
We just updated our Employee Handbook. We've made some revisions and would love your input to make it even better. Check it out and let us know your thoughts! Like if reviewed, comment your thoughts!
Employee Handbook.pdf
594 KB

COMPANY AND PRODUCT

Company details

Company
Appspace

ISO 27001 certified
Yes

Data residency
Middle East; USA

Company founded
2002

Product launched
2013

Typical client size
15,000 to 20,000

Largest deployment so far
250,000 users across 64 countries

Customers
Clients include: TT Electronics, Santander, Merchant's Bank, Norfolk Southern, Glencore, State University of New York (SUNY), Plansee, Sony Pictures Animation, GSK, Willdan

Partner locations
Global, with key partners in the United States, Canada, Australia, Singapore, South Africa and across Europe.

Company locations
Florida, USA (HQ); Malaysia, Portugal, Spain, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom

Product and technical details

Name of product

Appspace

Deployment

Client on-premises	**Client private cloud**	**Microsoft Azure**	Amazon Web Services	**Vendor-hosted**	Microsoft 365 tenant	**Google Cloud**	Other

Authentication supported

Entra ID	**ADFS**	**Okta**	Open ID	**Oauth**	**G Suite**	Other

App deployment

Google Play store	**Apple store**	**MDM**	**MAM**	Other

Accessibility

WCAG 2.1 conformant.

Document library sources integrated

Box	Dropbox	Google Drive	**SharePoint**	OneDrive	Other

Optional integrated enterprise search engines

Coveo	Elastic	IBM	Lucidworks	**Microsoft**	Mindbreeze	Sinequa	Other

User interface multi-language

Machine translation	**Pre-configured**	**Editable**	**Right to left script supported**	Other

Content multi-language

Machine translation for publishers	**Machine translation for end users**	**Editable machine translation for publishers**	**Manual creation for publishers**	**Right to left script**	Other

Set-up and support

Set-up process for new clients

As a full SaaS platform, there's no backend management to worry about. Setup is as simple as logging in and assigning access — there is no installation required. Every customer works with the Workplace Experience Team, who provide personalised guidance to ensure the intranet is tailored to customer needs. This team handles everything from information architecture to onboarding, so customers can launch quickly and effectively. This typically takes 2-6 weeks. An in-house team also offers smooth migration to Appspace, though this may add 2-4 weeks to go live.

Version numbers

Demonstrated to ClearBox: 8.8

At January 2025: 8.9

Product updates

Major updates every quarter; minor updates every two weeks.

Product update process

The vendor deploys updates to public and private cloud servers based upon a published release calendar. For the public cloud, new versions are deployed first once the product has cleared all testing. Private cloud users will receive the same update either one week or one month after the public cloud. Customers cannot opt out, but private cloud customers can decide whether to have the updates weekly or monthly.

Reverse-out options

Customers own their data. Customers are free to export their data at any point before the contract ends. Otherwise, data is securely destroyed 30 days following the end of the service unless special arrangements are made between the vendor and the customer.

Technical support

Email support	Phone support	Chat support	Online portal	24/7 support	Office hours only

User community

Appspace Customer Care provides support services via phone, chat, and an online Account Management Portal. There is no customer community, however.

Voice of the vendor

Appspace says: "Appspace understands the challenges companies face in keeping employees engaged and informed, especially in today's hybrid work landscape. We address these challenges by providing a modern intranet and employee app solution that employees can access from anywhere, whether in the office, on the frontlines, or working remotely. Our platform is the only unified solution that seamlessly combines workplace communications and management. This eliminates the need for multiple apps, which often create unnecessary friction in the employee experience.

That's why leading organisations turn to Appspace to improve productivity and create a more cohesive and connected work environment.

When employees log in to Appspace, they are greeted with a personalised company news feed that delivers relevant, targeted communications. This keeps everyone in the loop and ensures that important information is easily accessible. Employees can also connect and collaborate through various social features, communities, and stories, fostering a sense of belonging and engagement, regardless of location. This helps make the digital and physical workplace a desirable destination for employees rather than an office from which they are mandated to work.

We've ensured that our platform meets the needs of all employees, including those who are constantly on the move. Our mobile app provides frontline and remote employees the same seamless experience as their in-office counterparts, allowing them to stay connected and productive no matter where they are.

Organisations can deploy Appspace as a stand-alone employee communications solution or integrated with existing tools like SharePoint, offering flexibility to meet each organisation's unique needs. With more than 170 Fortune 500 companies trusting Appspace to keep their teams connected, we're committed to making the workplace a desirable option for all employees — digital or physical — by reducing complexity and enhancing the overall employee experience.

Appspace excels at addressing the business problems around employee engagement and productivity. We simplify workplace technology, ensuring it adds value to the employee experience rather than complicating it. We help organisations create a workplace where employees feel connected, engaged, and equipped to do their best work."

Voice of the customer

Appspace's easy-to-use interface was praised by those who responded, where one person described Appspace as "very easy to use for admins and content writers" and another added there is "a low adoption threshold for content creators." Those who responded highlighted the consistency of experience across devices as being a positive, with one person adding that "visually, it's attractive." Multiple customers highly praised the way Appspace unites different business systems and experiences, with one customer summarising nicely: "Appspace has proven to be highly effective in centralising communication, space management and resources. It allows employees to quickly find and digest essential information, which enhances overall efficiency."

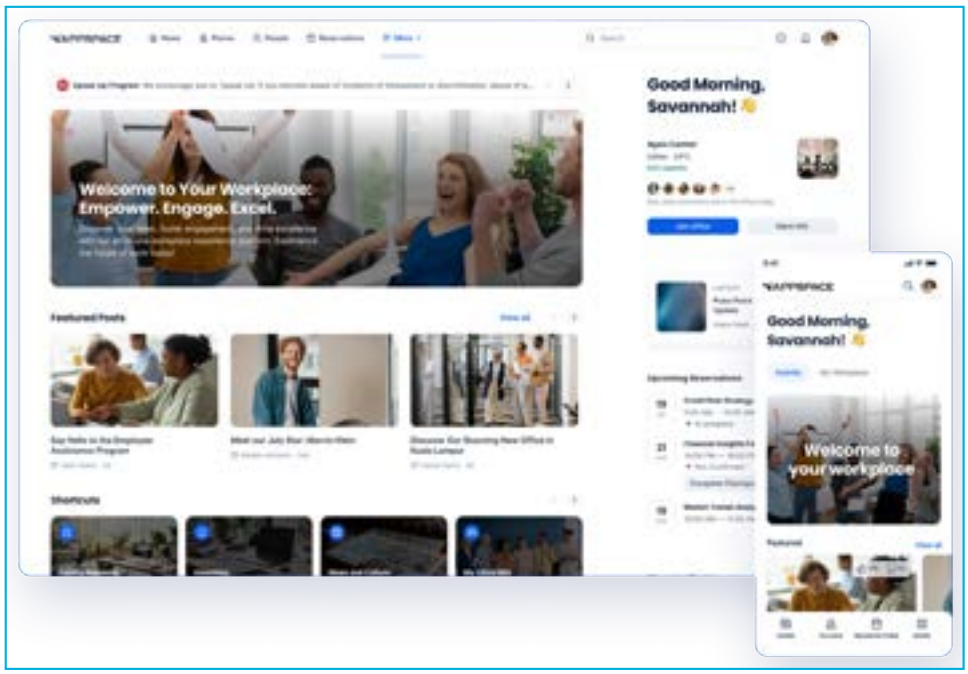
Feedback about any desired changes was mixed, although one theme that appeared was a suggestion that the "User Interface could be slightly better." One customer requested "better options for content creation," particularly with regards to picture editing and video. Another customer provided details around "significant governance and reporting gaps, including visibility of user activity, management of users and resources and, most importantly, analytics. There needs to be a more integrated approach which aligns with the admin experience and meets key use cases around governance." The 'sign-in structure' was also mentioned as an area for improvement from a 'private cloud' customer.

Some responders voiced frustration with the support and ticketing system, where one person expressed, "The support and ticketing system needs improvement," adding, "Follow-up from the Appspace team is slow." Updates were also mentioned as feeling "forced and rushed" and "can be flawed and not work as expected, taking considerable time to correct." Overall, those who responded reported a positive experience with Appspace as a vendor. One person shared, "Their Customer Success Management teams are consistently superb – responsive, knowledgeable and engaged, with a real commitment to solving issues and supporting a positive relationship." The senior leadership team was also praised, where one customer said: "Their senior leadership team have also been very positive and open to feedback, and there seems to be a real desire to move their intranet product forward, whilst integrating it further with their existing workplace management platform."

SCENARIOS & SCORES

Please see the Scenarios below for more detail on each of these.

SCENARIO AND SCORE	KEY BENEFITS	IMPROVEMENTS / CONSIDERATIONS
4 **1. User Experience & Visual Appeal**	Attractive, easy to use and responsive platform across all devices.	Branding and layout options are simple.
4.5 **2. Publishing & Communications Management**	Publish once and reach multiple channels. News creation interface is attractive and intuitive.	Infrequent publishers may need support with where to create their content.
4+ **3. Community & Engagement**	Communities work well. Broader integration with digital and physical workspaces is possible.	No native survey tool.
3+ **4. Integrations & Services (Including M365)**	Two-way integrations with SharePoint, Teams and other systems. Physical and location-based systems open the door to powerful possibilities.	Number of two-way integrations is a little limited out of the box. Integrations with the broader Appspace suite likely to incur additional cost.
3.5 **5. Information Finding & Search**	Effective search experience with optional AI capabilities. Good people-finding features.	Limited search management features.
3.5 **6. Administrator Experience**	Easy-to-use interface. Good multilingual support.	Governance features are limited, but Appspace says this was improved in mid-2025.
2.5+ **7. Analytics**	Reporting extends to physical spaces. Useful in-page insights open to everyone.	Advanced reporting requires third-party tools. No mandatory reads support. No search data out of the box.
4 **8. Mobile & Frontline Support**	Encompasses all tools – digital signage, room / space booking, utilisation / reporting.	The introduction of additional integrations for a frontline audience would be welcome.



Appspace works well on desktop and on mobile.

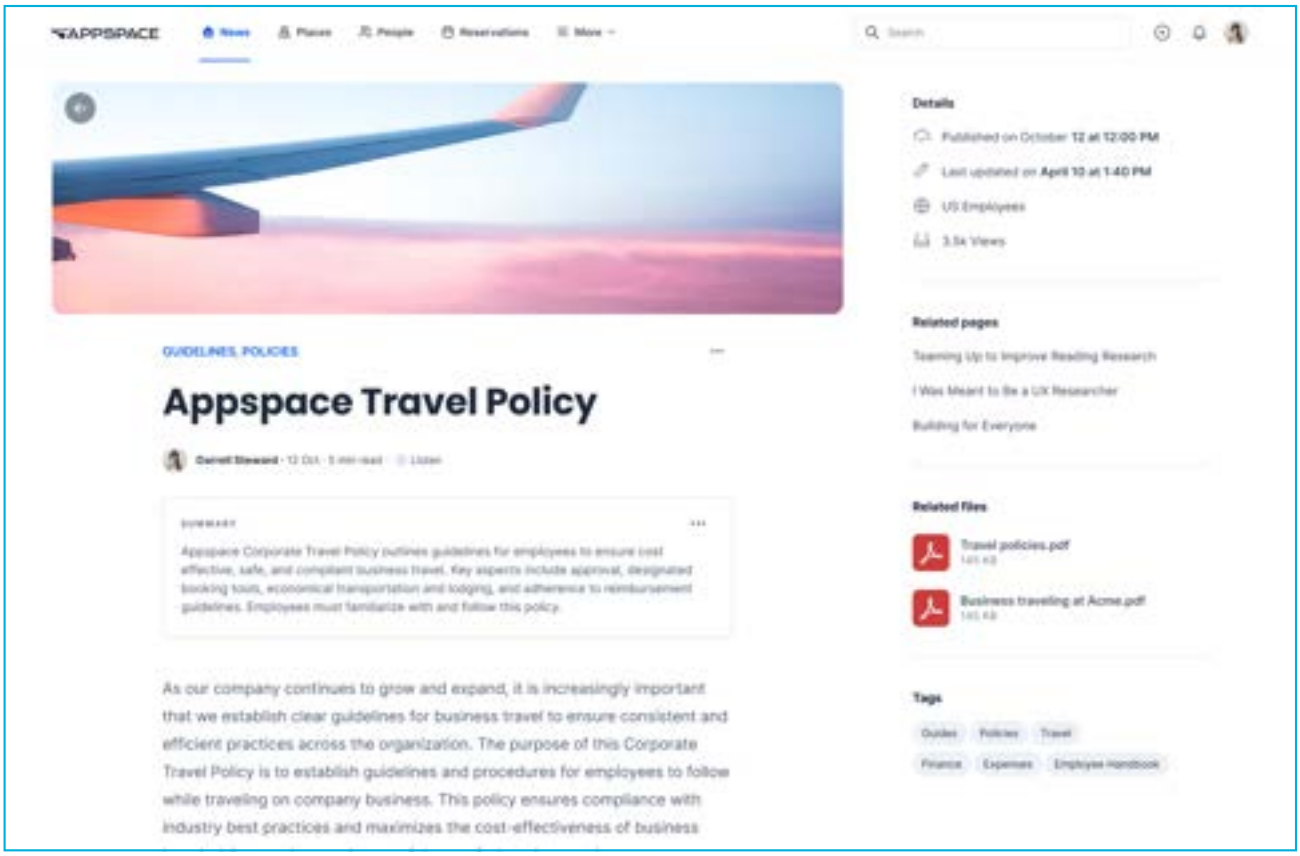
Appspace provides a strong consumer-grade user experience. It has been designed to streamline and simplify content publishing to multiple device types, notably seamlessly integrating with physical spaces, kiosks and screens. Appspace is therefore a viable choice for organisations looking to enhance their digital workplace experiences, as well as being a strong intranet solution in its own right.

The ability to apply themes, comprising of selected colours and logos, creates a visually appealing experience that will broadly reflect the organisation brand identity, although this might not meet more sophisticated branding needs. Home page design is personalised and flexible, meaning the content and configured layout goes a long way to contributing to the overall look and feel. This approach also helps anyone publishing to wide ranges of screen sizes and devices that wants to maintain fully accessible content and a professional appearance, without the need for extensive testing.

Appspace also maintains simple branded publishing across multi-devices through 'cards'. Cards are predesigned content templates that simplify the process for content creators, making it easy for them to create visually appealing content without extensive design skills. Cards follow the chosen theme(s) and allow content to be published across various channels and brands, whether on TVs, desktops or mobiles.

Navigation is easy to configure but simple, including 'mega menus' with icons, dropdowns and single-level menu items that click through to specific features or areas, such as 'Explore'. Explore is where communities, news and reference materials are found both grouped by category under their own individual sub-menus, within each other's sub-menus (news stories are found within associated communities, for example) or gathered by 'Topics'. Menu items can be audience-targeted, as can the broader user experience (including branding), and employees may subscribe to various content types or even favourite their own apps, so the experience feels personalised.

Appspace supports two types of notification: broadcasts for announcements and urgent communications, and in-app notifications for events within the platform. Employees may subscribe to topics, channels and communities, as well as choose what they see in home page widgets, allowing them to manage what they see and stay informed with relevant updates. Coming in 2025 is a presence indicator, showing who is online and virtual, or online and in an office.



News Stories look attractive and feature a helpful 'summary' at the top so that employees get the information they need, without necessarily having to read an entire article.

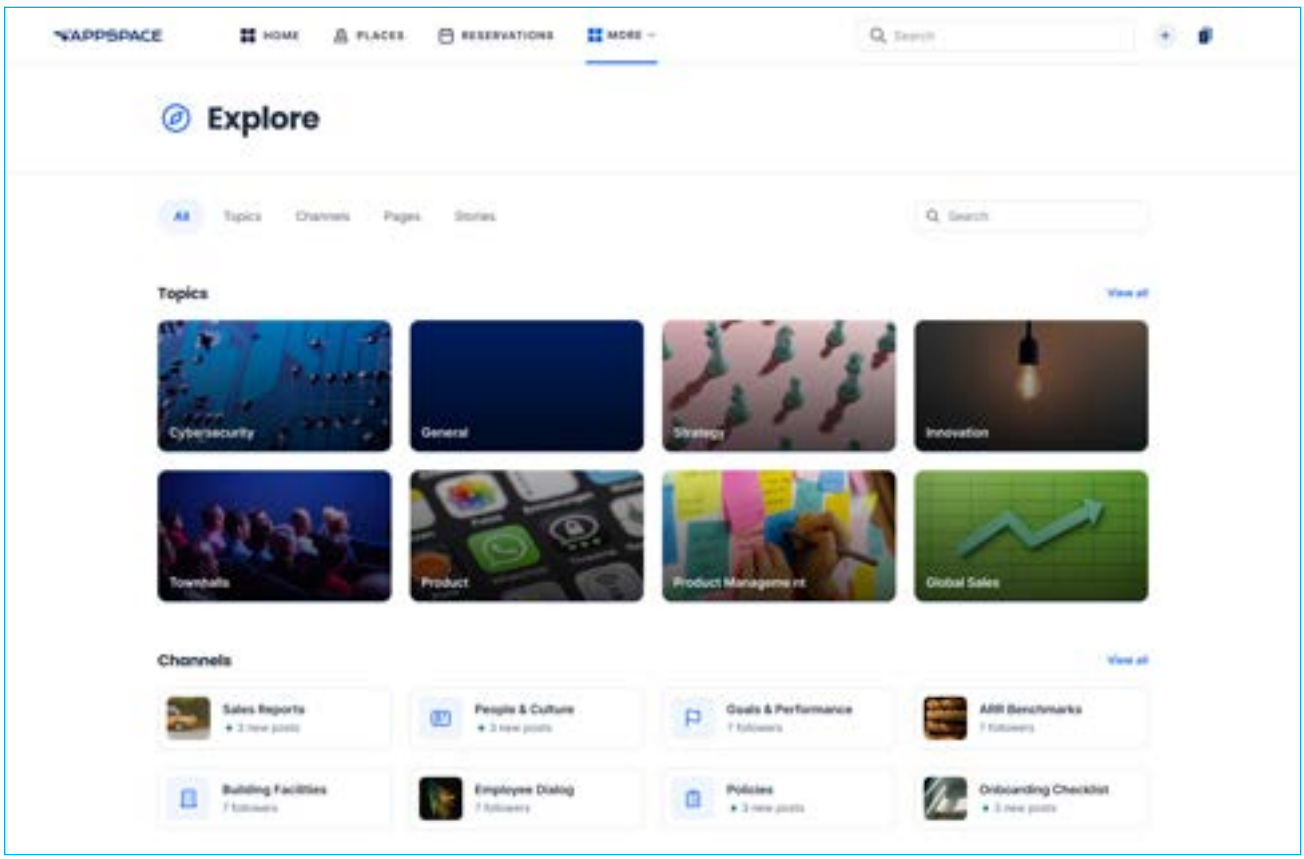
Appspace does a good job of streamlining corporate communication and content publishing across online and physical channels. Its features focus on a breadth of capabilities with a simplified set of options within each, aimed at making it easier for publishers to create, manage and distribute content across various channels.

The 'Explore' menu contains most content types and is split into several sub-sections, starting with 'Topics' that can contain any relevant content type associated with that Topic. 'Channels' is primarily where news 'Stories' are found; these are grouped by theme feeds, but may also include 'Posts' and 'Events', and each Channel is presented as a feed. There is also a separate 'Stories' menu area for newly published articles. See Scenario 3 for information about 'Communities' but note these can include Stories too. 'Pages' are also grouped by theme and are intended for more reference-type material, but can also include Stories and other related content. Content can be created or stored within any of these relevant spaces and helps people keep on top of the latest content via their preferred browsing route. However, this approach will require training for infrequent publishers so they understand where their content will end up and how best to create it.

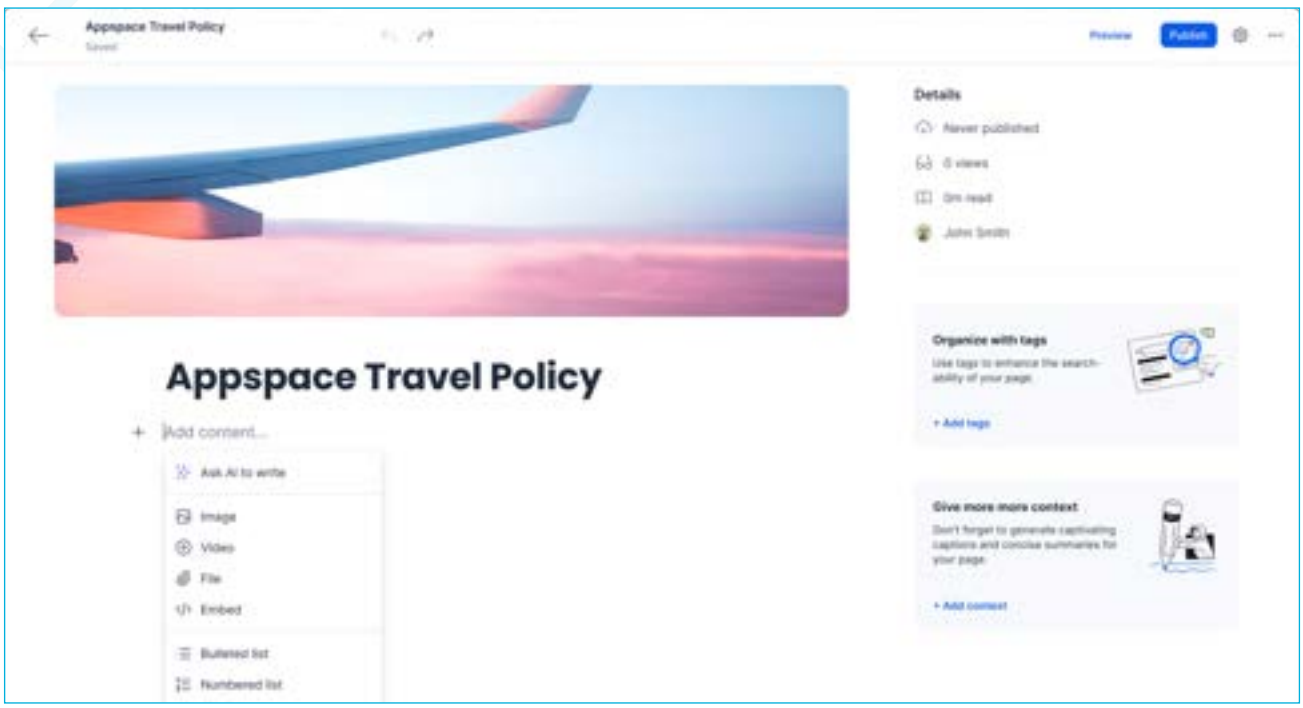
Creating Pages and Stories is simple and intuitive. The look and feel of the editing environment is very similar to modern web publishing environments and comes with features to embed and style different types of content to add interest to articles. The editing controls appear when content is highlighted, enabling the author to apply heading styles, bullets or quotations, along with a recently added table layout. This interface significantly lowers the

barrier to entry for content creators and requires only the most minimal technical skills to create professional looking content. The editor supports adding a variety of media types, including images and video, embedded from websites or from a central library. The platform also offers pre-designed card templates that are responsive and ensure that content looks good on any device, allowing publishers to focus on the message rather than the design.

Publishers may use an AI assistant throughout the content creation process. The AI can generate entire articles from simple prompts, adjust the tone and length and generate images, which if used well can speed up the process and ensure consistency. It will also generate metadata descriptions and add tags to support discoverability and maintain a managed taxonomy. We particularly like the AI generated 'summary' that will let readers see a shorter version of the content before reading the whole thing.



'Explore' is where content is stored, including news Stories.



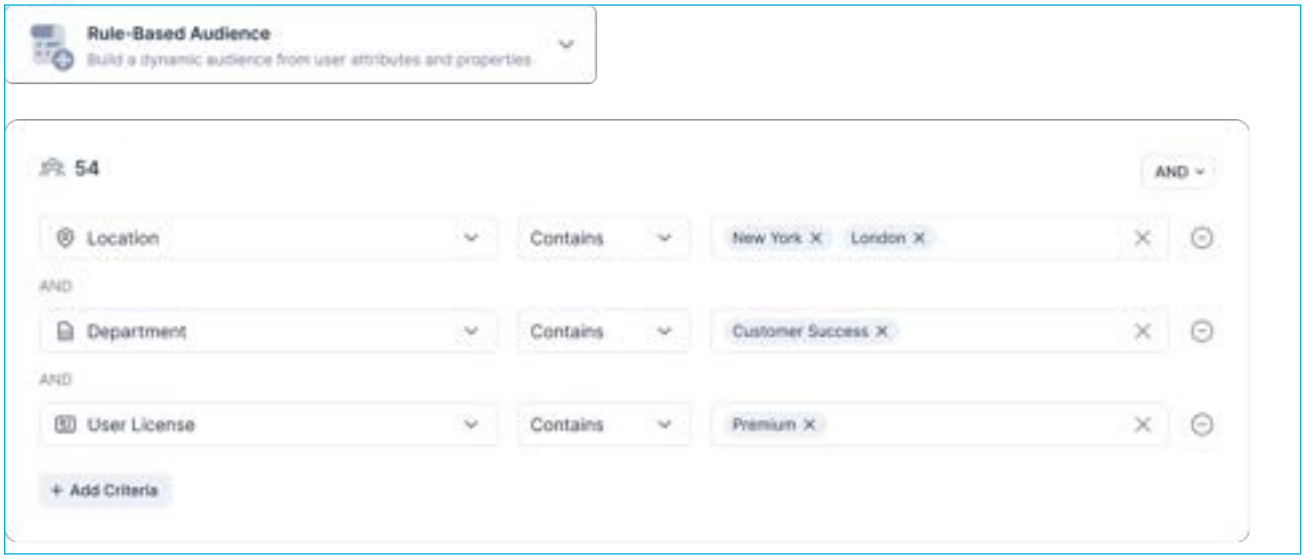
Content creation is easy, with a helpful AI assistant where desired.

Content and design can each be targeted to specific audiences. Publishers can define audiences based on various criteria such as role, department, location or start date, with data fed from relevant source systems. Audiences are built using a variety of criteria and logic, so can be as broad or granular as wanted. Appspace also provides subscription options, allowing users to opt into or out of the content that interests them.

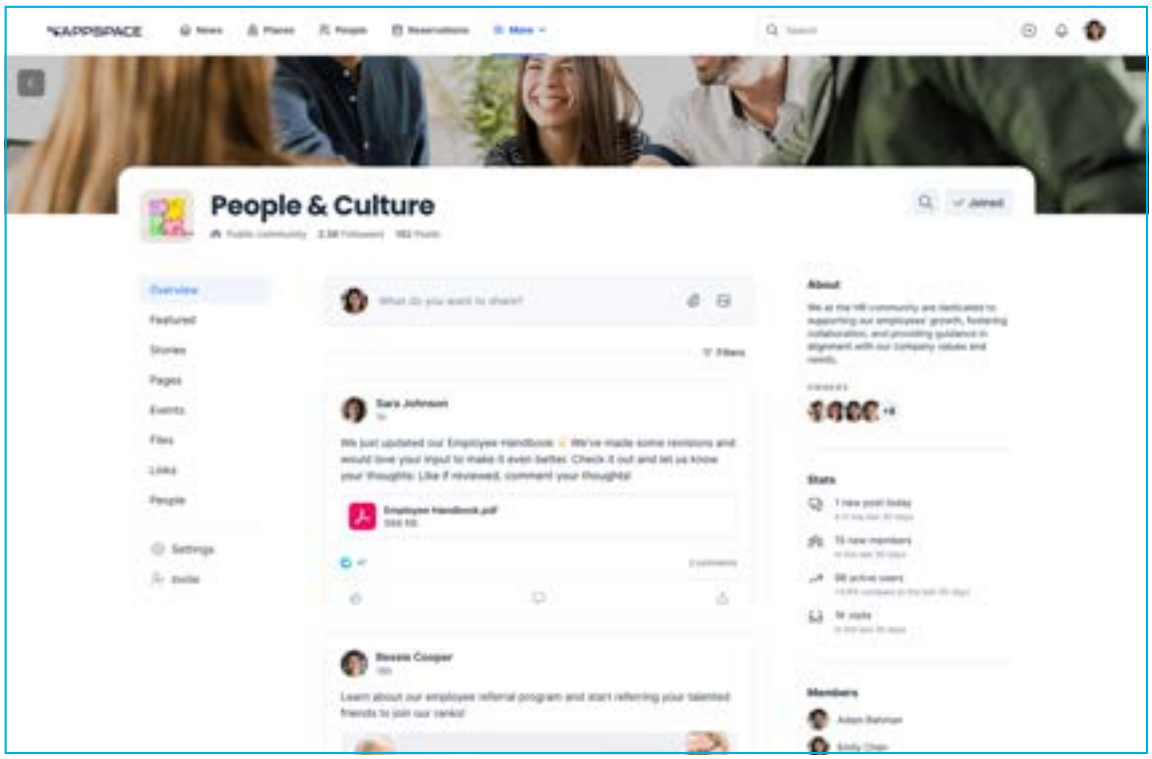
Content creators have the choice of publishing immediately or scheduling for later, and there are publishing workflows to ensure quality standards. All Posts, Stories, Pages and Events can be found within 'Post Management' via the admin menu (found through the user's profile image). A 'Calendar' menu displays upcoming and previously published content; it's simple but will help publishers make scheduling decisions. Released in mid-2025 is a 'Campaigns' feature, but we've not seen it in action.

Urgent Stories can be 'featured' on the home page and dedicated messages can be pushed out through 'Broadcasts'. Broadcasts are delivered across multiple channels, including in-app notifications, email and messaging platforms like Slack and Teams. The design ensures they grab attention and prompt acknowledgement, appearing prominently across the top of screen and pushing notifications to mobile devices. This integration enables the platform to play a critical role in emergency response plans by displaying and delivering critical alerts and safety information to specific locations and devices.

One of Appspace's powerful features is its ability to connect content between multiple channels, including its own digital signage solution (although this requires additional licensing). Newsletters and third-party systems such as Slack, Teams or Webex are among the other channels that are supported. Helpfully, admins may set up an automatic feed from Appspace into Microsoft Viva Engage, Teams, Slack etc. so publishers don't have to manually share each page. Appspace also offers channel-specific tailoring, allowing publishers to adjust the tone or presentation of messages to better suit each channel, audience and medium. Introduced in 2025 is a simple yet effective way for employees to share approved posts into their personal social media feeds via an Appspace home page widget. This 'create once, publish everywhere' approach streamlines content management and ensures consistent messages across channels.



Audiences can be built from a variety of profile attributes and use Boolean logic.



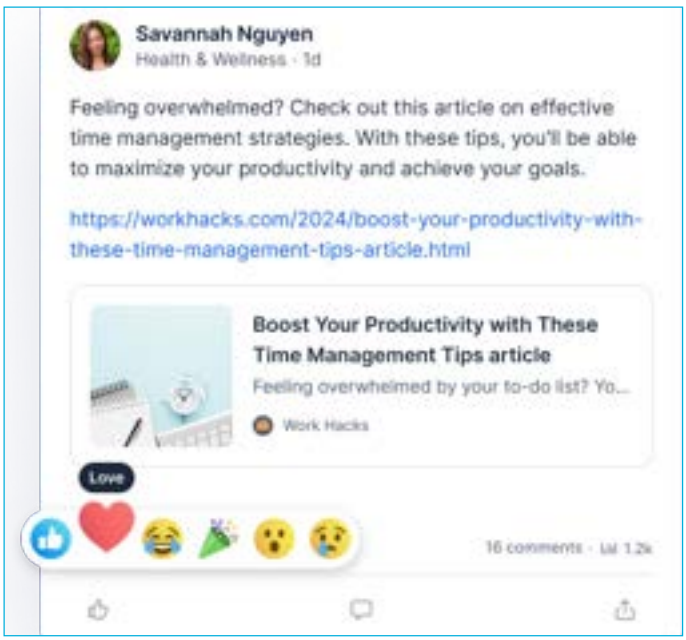
An example community home page with the central activity feed.

Where corporate communications are primarily published through Stories, community and engagement content is delivered through 'Communities'. Communities work well as spaces where groups of people can come together for both formalised knowledge sharing and informal social purposes. Community owners choose what's included, such as associated Pages, Stories for community-based news and 'Events'. Each Community can be public or private and support mandatory opt-in, or opt-out, membership models. For example, a mandatory Community that uses an audience based on 'employee start date' could target new starters with specific information and resources to support the onboarding process. We like that Communities may include an AI widget for a localised search experience.

Communities revolve around a feed; feed content is collated on the home page as well as via notifications, as mentioned in Scenario 1. Employees can control what they see in the activity feed of a community, with options for 'mute,' 'highlights' or 'all' (and if enabled, 'leave'). People often need a volume control for communities and these options give more than a binary in / out, ensuring audiences are not unnecessarily lost in noisy groups. There are simple polls via the feed, with the option to use third-party products like MS Forms or SurveyMonkey for more complex forms and surveys.

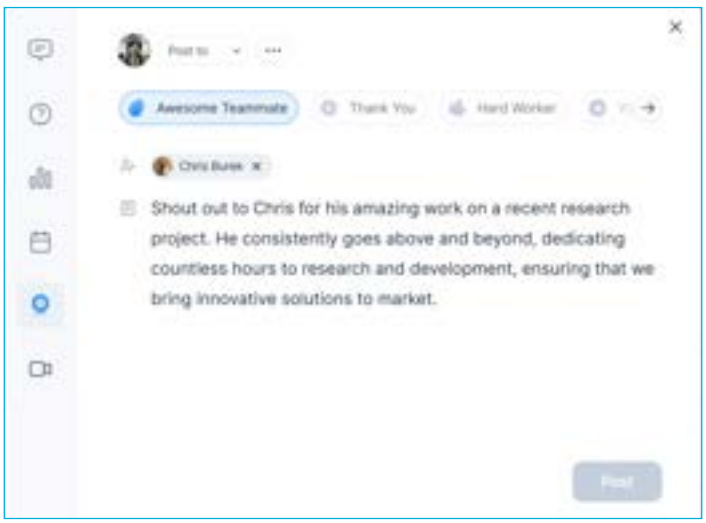
Those employees with permissions can create 'Quick' feed content from within the Community, or via the universal '+' button on the top bar (where they would also see Stories, Pages etc. if they have permission). Quick Posts are simple social-media-type messages that can include an image / video and attachments but include no formatting or social elements like emojis or GIFs, which we think is a shame. It's possible to add tags for findability, change the author, schedule and feature on the home page feed – all of which are helpful for reaching employees effectively.

Employees may comment on, share or react to content as defined per Community, Channel etc. and per content item, although comments cannot be reported. Community moderation options give good control over membership and address reported content. Admins see reported content within their Community, as well as in a dedicated 'Reporting' area, and receive a notification, so they can take appropriate action. There are also auto-remove options for content that's reported over a configurable number of times.



Comments, reactions and sharing are possible across different content types.

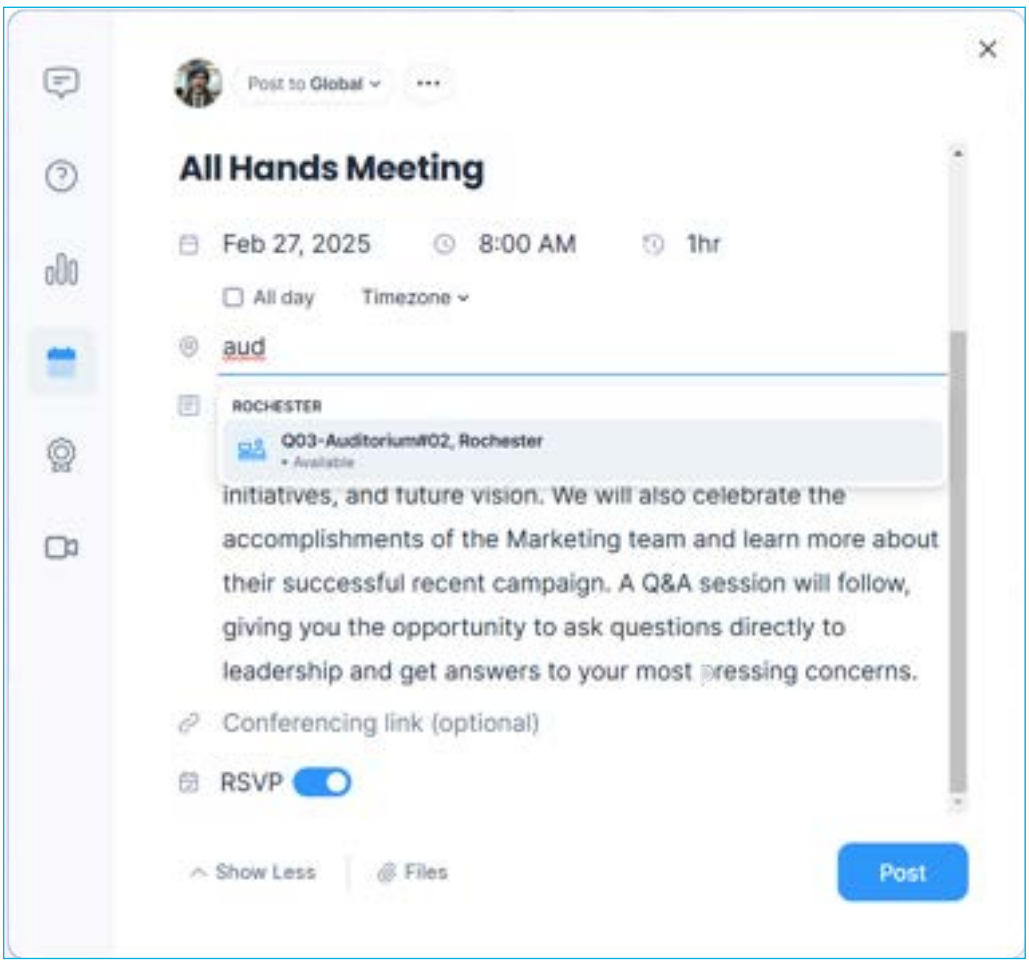
Rewarding colleagues with 'praise' is fully configurable by admins and works well. Employees create Praise via the feed pop-up where the nominator searches for appropriate colleagues and adds details. The person posting also chooses the relevant category, such as 'Awesome Teammate', which automatically applies an associated image.



Employees can easily send praise to a colleague or colleagues via a Community.

Events can also be created here, where an associated image and details about the event are easy to add. What works particularly well is the integration with Appspace's room management functionality (where an organisation has it), as any room that's assigned to the event will inherit the space reservation details. This includes applying the room's maximum capacity to the event and will also automatically reserve the room for the event, without having to leave the post. For an online meeting, Appspace will automatically suggest times and create a link with Zoom, Teams, or Google Meet as appropriate. Coming later in 2025 are live events, which work very well from the early demo we've seen.

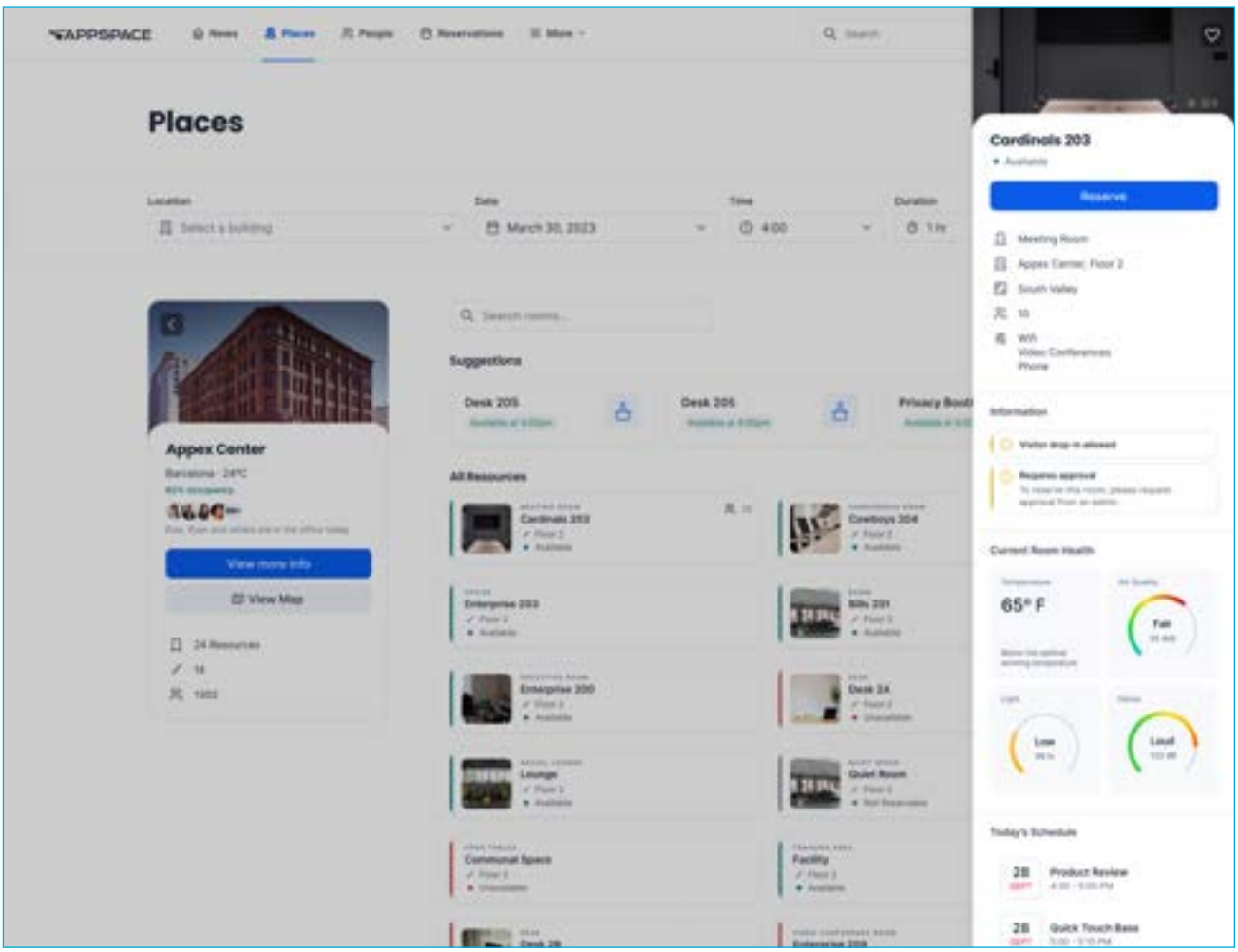
Events is one example that shows how Appspace goes beyond traditional communication tools and intranets by offering the capability to closely integrate with physical workspace via Internet of Things (IoT) systems. This opens interesting and innovative possibilities for communication teams to directly contribute to enhanced wellness, engagement, inclusion and energy conservation. It also allows organisations to create safer, greener and healthier work environments though real-time data and automated responses. This does require licenses for the broader Appspace suite that haven't been factored into the pricing here, however.



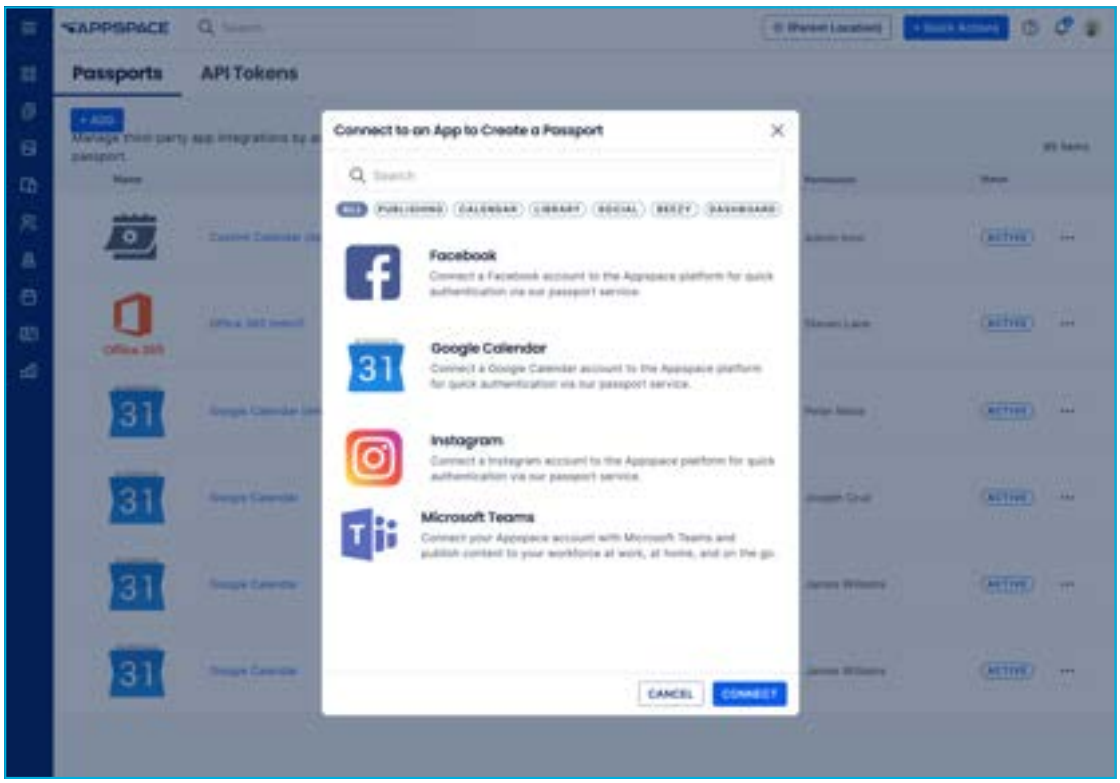
Publishers can easily create an event, which can be integrated with the broader Appspace suite if wanted.

A notable example of how this can work is through integration with IoT sensor systems. These sensors monitor various environmental factors, such as air quality, temperature and CO2 levels. Local metrics can be displayed on local signage through Appspace and if, for example, CO2 levels become too high, the system can push a message suggesting a window is opened or could automatically adjust ventilation. The data can also be displayed on the intranet via a widget. The vendor shared a case study where they say integrating data on building occupancy, air quality and other metrics meant the organisation was able to optimise their HQ for both safety and efficiency. Additionally, by connecting with lighting sensors, the platform disables signage in empty spaces and redirects arriving staff from empty floors to occupied ones, optimising energy use and reducing costs. While requiring significant investment to set up, this comes with wellbeing and sustainability benefits.

Overall, Communities is a simple but flexible setup that will cater for most organisations' needs. Those with highly social, open cultures will like the flexibility and capacity for collaboration, while organisations with moderate cultures will appreciate being able to more closely manage community contributions. Where clients have invested in the broader Appspace suite, there is capacity to extend into the wider digital and physical workplace.



There are some innovative workspace features where organisations have the broader Appspace suite.



There are a variety of two-way integration Passports out of the box.

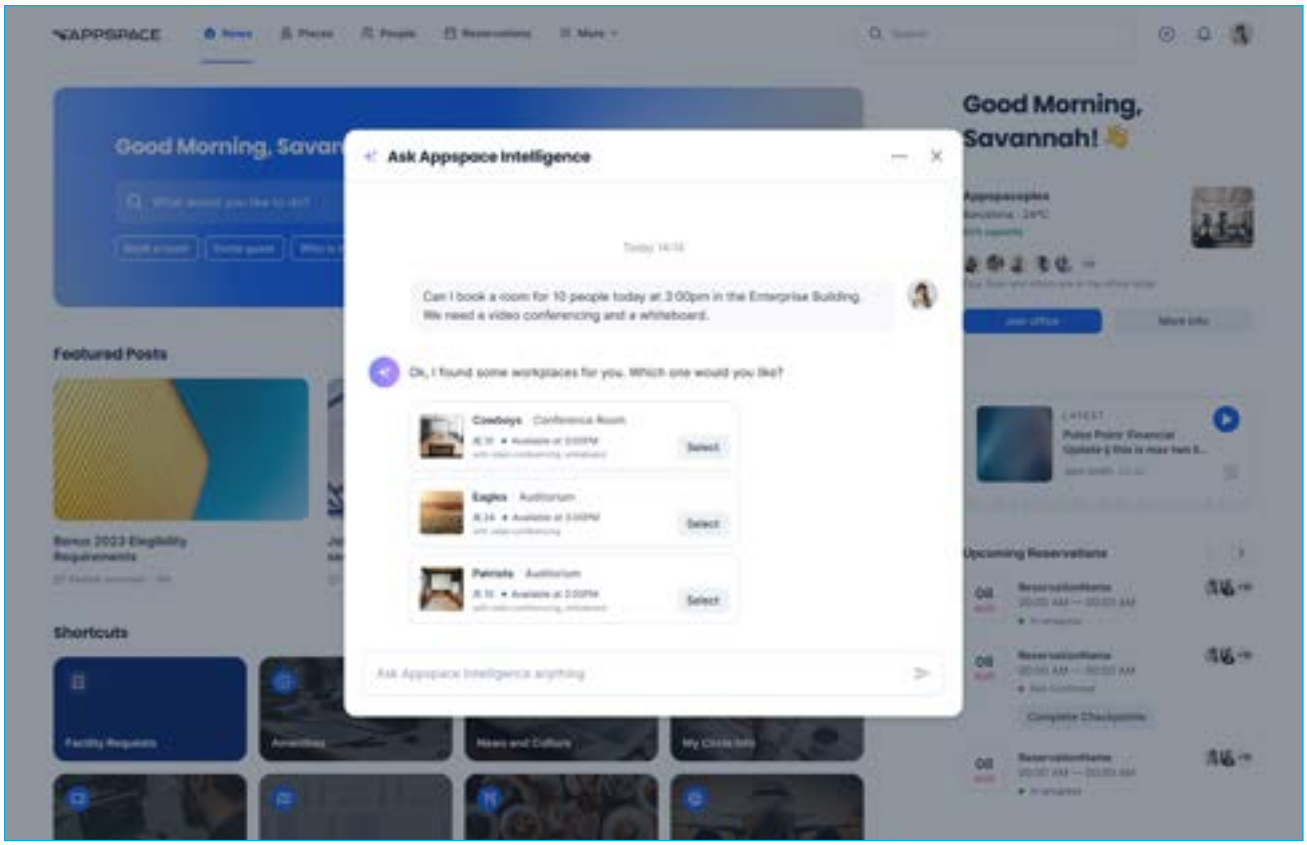
Appspace offers a centralised, user-friendly platform that offers various ways to seamlessly synchronise with existing tools and services. The list of out-of-the-box integrations is a little limited, but those available make it an attractive option for organisations looking to simplify their digital workplace and improve employee experience. Integrations with physical location services, such as desk booking or digital signage, from the broader Appspace suite make this particularly powerful.

Appspace's pre-built integrations are called 'Passports' and have been configured to ensure secure and compliant data exchange. Passports manage the secure connection between applications and properties between the systems, allowing for real-time updates and synchronisation. Passports will display content in widgets and allow for multiple systems to be connected; for example, a Teams meeting link is automatically added to an online event, which the individual says they are attending, so it's saved to their Outlook. These connections are sophisticated at times, see Scenarios 2 and 3 for examples, although note those that interact with the broader Appspace suite may come at additional cost.

Appspace can be configured to integrate into other systems, connecting with external business platforms like ServiceNow, ADP (payroll) and DocuSign. Many of these are links, rather than two-way interactions, but support single sign-on (SSO) that injects specific user parameters, or profile fields, from Appspace into the linked system for a smooth experience. Integrations extend to displaying content as well, allowing Appspace to pull data from third-party tools and display it directly within widgets. For instance, the status of open IT support tickets from ServiceNow displayed on the home page, or a leaderboard from Strava could be displayed in an exercise Community.

Two-way integration is evident in Appspace's calendar synchronisation with Microsoft 365, and its focus on 'closed loop' communication through content sharing and reactions across various channels. With these integrations Appspace and the third-party application are in continuous synchronisation, ensuring that what happens in one is instantly reflected in the other. An effective example of this in action is through two-way synchronisation with Microsoft 365 calendars and the Appspace suite of tools, such as Events covered in Scenario 3. This synchronisation also includes non-Microsoft resources like hot desks, which can be booked through an Outlook calendar integration which will, in turn, reserve the space in Appspace.

Introduced during 2025, an AI agent gives people the opportunity to use natural language prompts to search for information or complete tasks. For example, asking what the company ethos is, will return a summary of information from across the platform. Appspace says this will display associated reference sources, but we didn't see this in action. Alternatively, employees could set up a meeting via the agent that will handle booking associated spaces and issuing invites. This works well and we like that organisations may use Copilot rather than Appspace's own AI, with integrations with other AI solutions on the roadmap. Similarly, organisations using Copilot may interrogate Appspace content from their preferred Copilot environment.



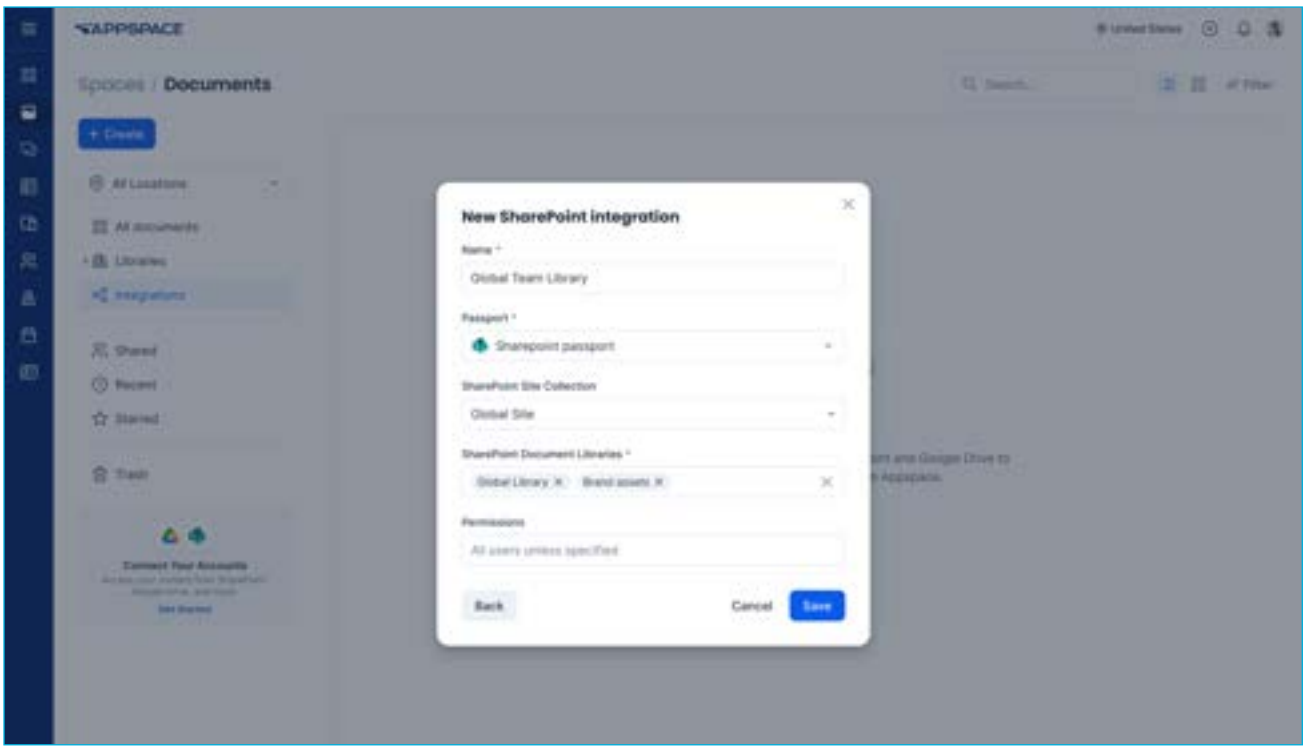
The AI agent lets people complete a variety of tasks.

When it comes to SharePoint, Appspace acts as an amplifier, pulling content from SharePoint sites and displaying it on digital signage, within Appspace widgets, or easily sharing it to other channels like Slack or Microsoft Teams. This includes document libraries and, unusually, SharePoint news. SharePoint pages will be 'enriched' using AI by automatically applying Appspace-specific formatting, relevant language translations, and metadata. We like that admins have controls to map Appspace and SharePoint properties, while also being able to adjust elements such as the author. This approach allows organisations to leverage their existing SharePoint investments while extending their reach and engagement capabilities.

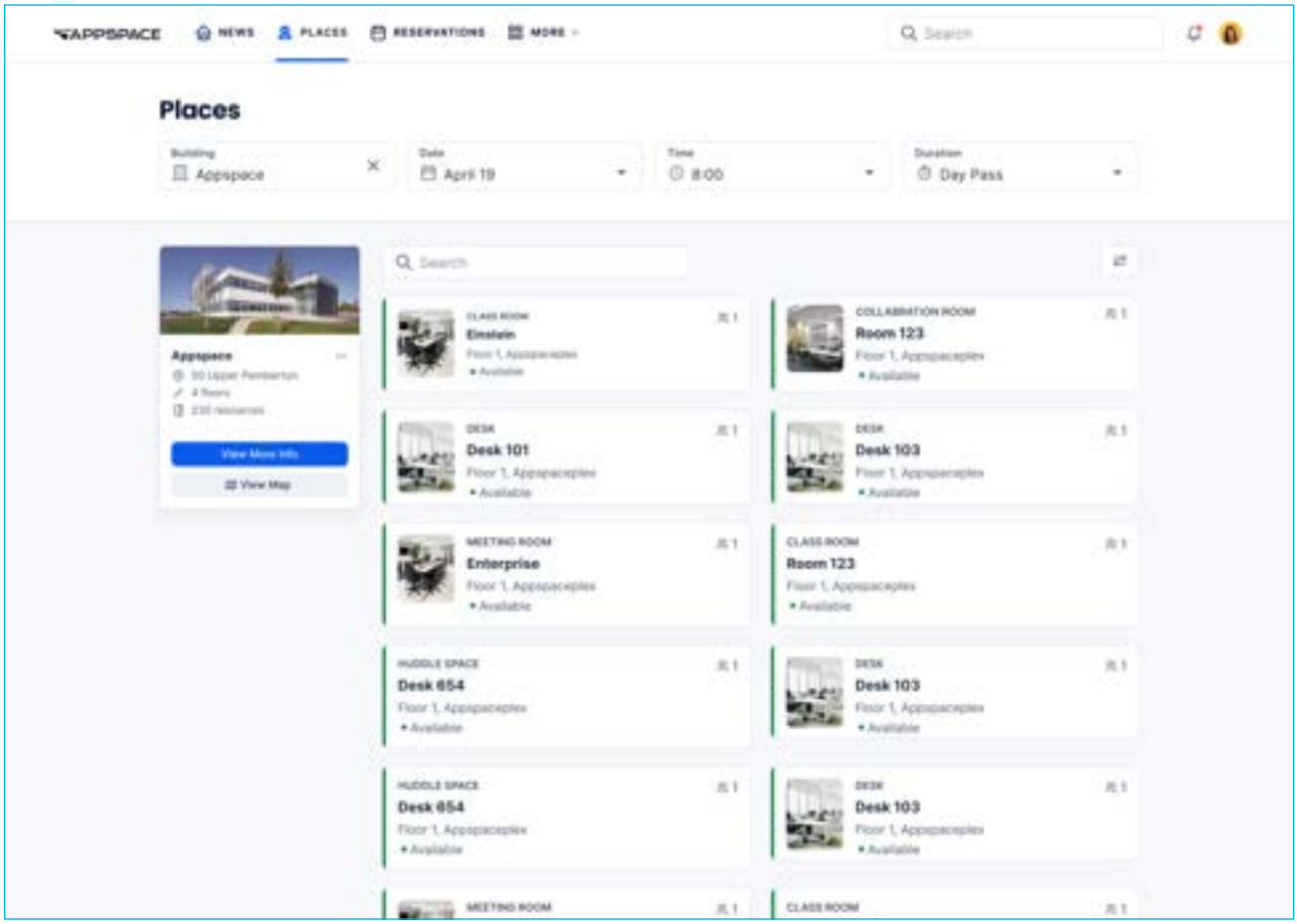
An Appspace app can be embedded directly within the Microsoft Teams environments, allowing for content sharing, notifications and triggering actions within Appspace directly from Teams using Microsoft adaptive cards. Content can also be shared into Teams from Appspace, helping to meet employees where they're working.

While the number of pre-configured connectors and integrations are relatively limited, where organisations invest the technical effort to establish the connection, the supported integration methods allow content from a broad set of tools to be brought in or pushed out. Additionally, in some places the platform allows admins to manage connections with different systems without requiring deep coding expertise, as much is managed via field pickers and simple screens.

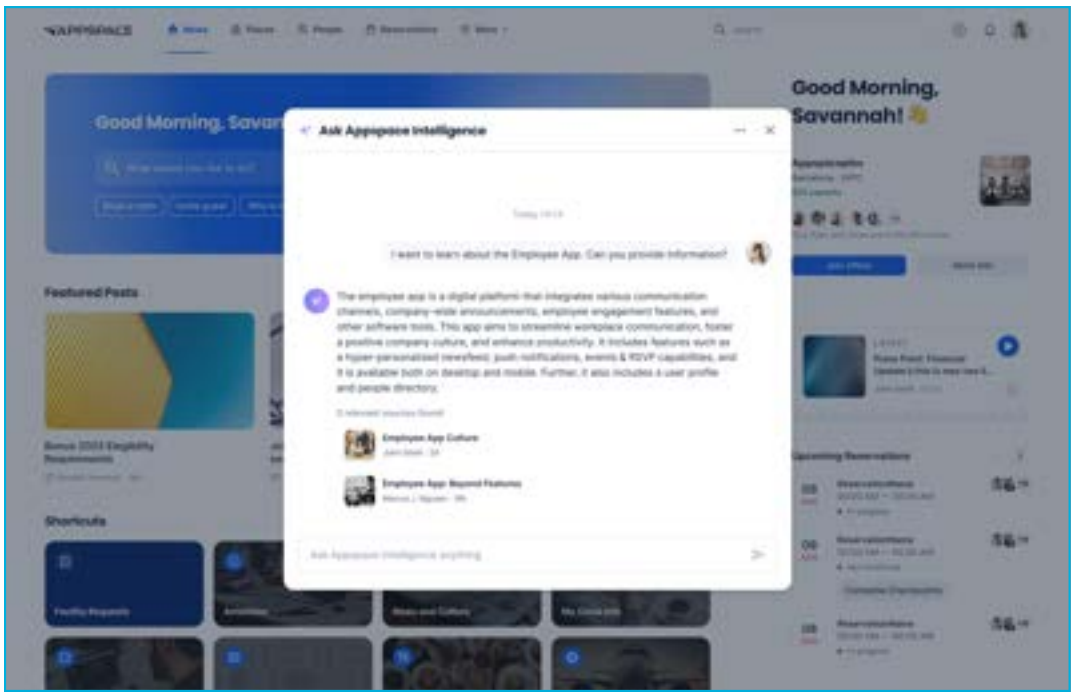
Given the range of services within the broader Appspace suite, it's unsurprising that the Appspace intranet, in turn, is well connected to different business systems. We would like to see further two-way integrations added to the available Passports, however. Appspace does a good job of connecting digital and physical workspaces too, where additional Appspace services are in place (or will come at additional cost if not); for example, from accessing a badge pass from an intranet notification to access the building in the morning, to booking a shuttle bus to the train station in the evening. Overall, there might be a few gaps in this scenario, but it is an area of strength for Appspace. It will appeal to organisations who are looking to enhance employee experiences in the digital and physical worlds.



Integrating with SharePoint works very well on Appspace.



Workspaces let employees book hot desks, a shuttle bus spot, meeting rooms and more, via the intranet but using the broader Appspace suite.



'Appspace Intelligence' uses AI to return summarised information as part of the search experience.

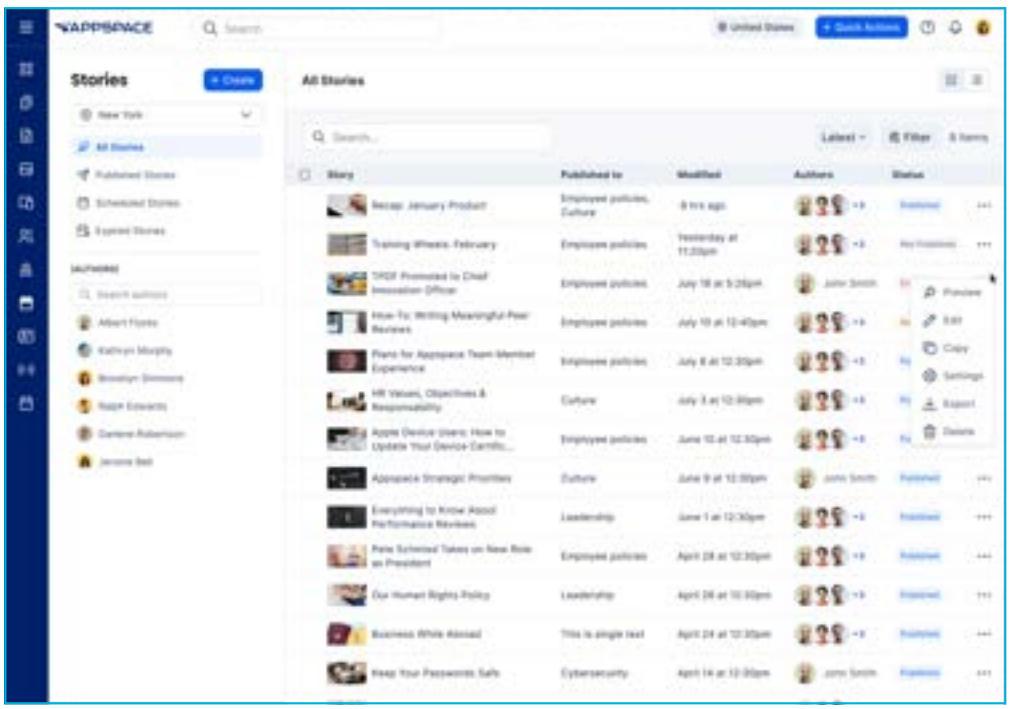
Appspace's search functionality is simple and does well to include the breadth of Appspace content in a single unified set of results; we're pleased to see there have been significant improvements during 2025 too.

The search interface is clean, accessed via a persistent top-right icon. A pop-up of 'Best Results' opens once a term has been entered, with a helpful preview when you hover over a result. Users have the option of opening results full-screen and / or opening filter options, including content type and date range. All content within Appspace is indexed, including titles, content, tags, files, profiles and even meeting rooms. Typing 'create' will return shortcuts directly to Appspace admin functionality, which is a nice touch. There aren't many search management tools, but content can be tagged as 'Featured' to promote it in search results.

Added during 2025 is federated search for Google, ServiceNow and SharePoint content, which will either respect or bypass permissions in the source system as decided by admins. We were particularly impressed by the option to federate multiple SharePoint tenants. Also introduced in 2025 is 'Appspace Intelligence', which users have the option to click during the search process. This uses AI to return summarised information, rather than merely results, and we like that users may choose to use it or not. Overall, it works well - please see Scenario 4 for more.

People search supports profile attribute-based searches, returning results based on language spoken or skillset. Searching for a name will also return their posts, upcoming events, reservations and community affiliations, giving a complete picture of the person and their activity. Favouriting a colleague means receiving notifications and updates on their activities, which supports networking and collaboration.

For Appspace repositories, the structure of the Explore menu (see Scenario 1) helps guide people through reference materials, either by browsing for individual Pages, or a group of Pages, within a Topic, or potentially Files stored within a Community. A local search and tag cloud in Explore helps people find what they need, too. This provides a pleasant employee experience but may lack the sophistication that some organisations desire. See Scenario 6 for the Library.



The Appspace admin screens are relatively easy to use.

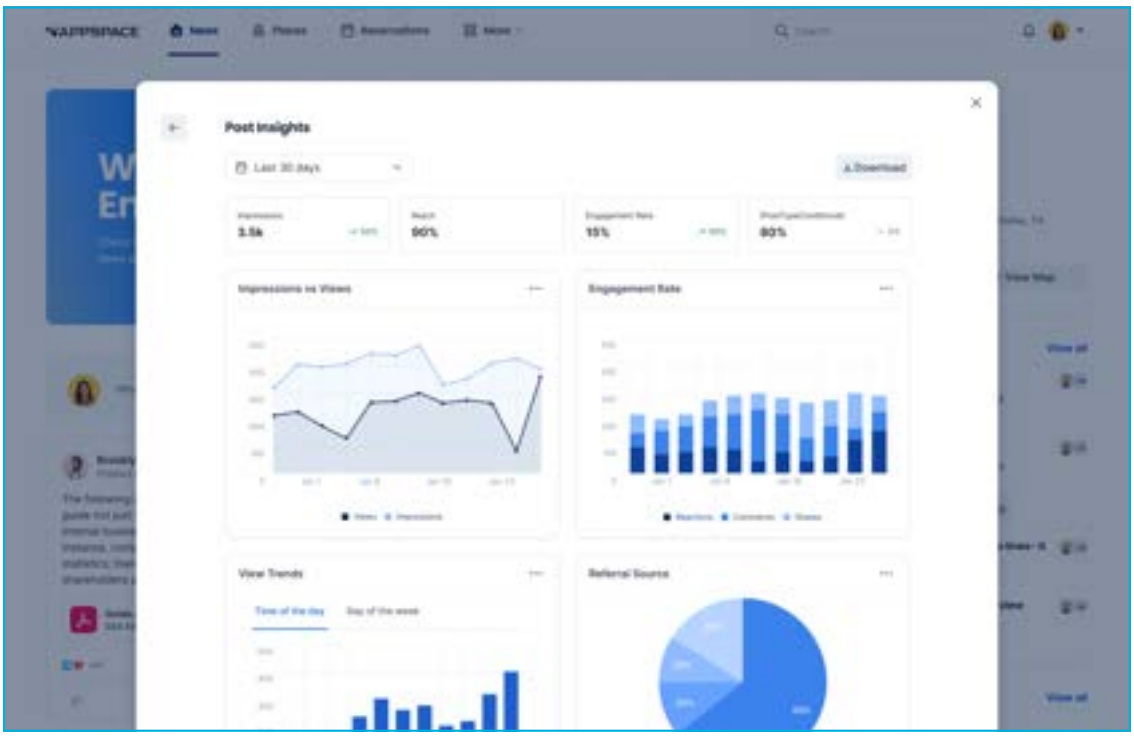
Appspace provides an admin interface that's largely easy to use, although the features are broad, and new users may take some time to become familiar with the options. For example, knowing the trick to apply various filters to see scheduled Stories or expired Pages is less intuitive than other approaches we've seen. Technical knowledge isn't needed in most places, for example building home pages is easy using a library of layouts and configurable widgets. However, there are areas like integrations or more complex design options (where code is exposed) that will need that additional experience. One noteworthy feature is the configurable admin settings that apply a 'company background' and 'tone of voice' filter to all AI-generated content.

Appspace offers granular control over user roles and permissions and supports multiple admin roles. Each role comes with distinct capabilities, allowing for tailored access and control; for example, access to and use of AI features can be limited.

As covered in Scenario 2, Appspace includes approval workflows for content publishing, adding a layer of control to manage content quality. While it's possible to see expired content as a list in the back end and update as needed, we'd like to see more robust governance and life cycle features introduced. Appspace says there have been changes introduced in mid-2025, but we've not seen this.

There is multi-language support for both the user interface and content. The platform automatically detects and adapts to the device's language settings, but users can also manually select their preferred language. Content authors can translate content into multiple languages using AI-powered translation or a moderated translation workflow. We like the language tick-list that generates the translations, which includes the caption and summary, making this an easy process for publishers.

Appspace caters to diverse content formats, providing a rich content editor that supports text, images, videos, files and embedded widgets. Users can upload videos directly to Appspace or embed them from external platforms like Vimeo or YouTube. See Scenario 8 for AI audio generation. We like the Library, which allows videos, images and files to be stored centrally for use across the intranet by publishers with permissions, helping to keep content and design consistent.



Available at the foot of every page, anyone can open the post insights to see how content is performing.

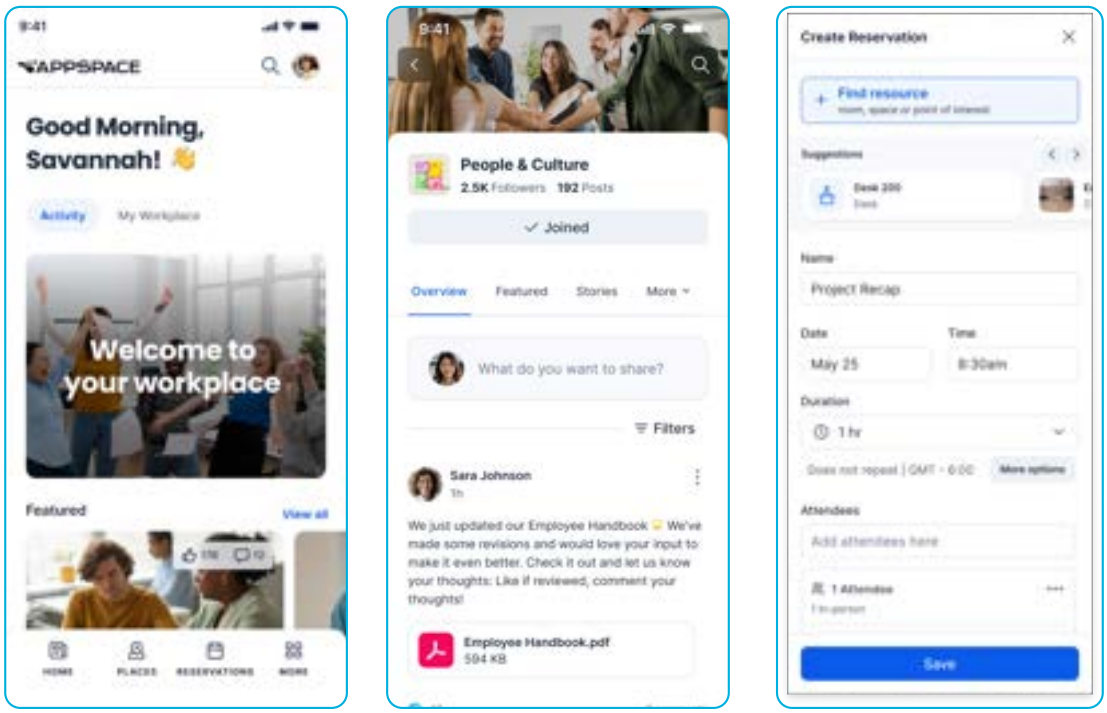
The platform offers good analytics at the Post, Story, Community and Topic level, allowing publishers to monitor impressions, reach and engagement metrics from the front end. We particularly like that the referral source is captured in all metrics; for example, allowing communicators can see how effective their digital signage approach has been for driving up views on an associated Post.

For tracking user activity, admins have detailed insights into who is visiting the platform and how often. This includes data on content views, app link clicks and engagement with enterprise messaging chat groups. Additionally, tracking app link clicks provides valuable insights into which resources or external tools are most popular among users. At the site level, admins can also see a high-level view of content, channel and app performance. These give a general view of engagement trends and content creation or publisher activities, but lack site-wide insights that would help teams make operational decisions on improving the overall effectiveness of their strategy or setup.

Topics and Channels might have mandatory subscriptions, however there are no settings for mandatory read content. It is possible to see which individuals have accessed content, but this may not be robust enough for organisations that want to track compliance. Similarly, there is no search reporting either.

Appspace offers more insightful reporting in its integration with reservations and check-in data from the broader Appspace suite. These reports can support insights where engagement is related to attendance, reviews of 'return to office' effectiveness as well as IoT use cases to optimise office use and energy consumption.

Overall, Appspace's analytics provide a good foundation for tracking content consumption and user engagement across channels, notably including location-based breakdowns to cut data into audiences. However, providing more actionable insights or deeper analysis will require integration with third-party products such as PowerBI or Tableau. There is room for improvement, as customers have also flagged; however, the upcoming 'Appspace Intelligence' feature, which focuses on AI-driven insights, promises to introduce more actionable recommendations for publishers.



The Appspace experience translates well to a small screen environment.

Appspace is a versatile platform designed to enhance user engagement and streamline communication across various devices, including mobiles, tablets and shared screens. Organisations that invest in all Appspace's capabilities will find it a unified, modern and simple approach to reaching these audiences in complete and engaging ways.

There are various ways to enrol users to the mobile platform. As well as being available as an Appstore application and pushed using MDM solutions, QR-code-based enrolment campaigns can be employed to reach otherwise disconnected user groups. Typically promoted through digital signage in common areas, they guide users through a simple registration process using attributes such as badge number or unique HR ID to authenticate them. One-time passwords enable access for frontline workers who may not have company email addresses, ensuring crucial communications can reach them and they have access to key platform features. For those who don't want to download an app, they are given the option to add the web app to their mobile home screen for quick access in future.

Appspace dynamically resizes to provide a consistent experience across devices. Features like the floating navigation bar in the Teams-embedded app show an attention to detail when adapting to mobile environments. The widget-based architecture allows flexibility and adaptability. Configured to appear within set columns and optionally show in the mobile interface, designers can tailor the experience for specific audiences while avoiding the layout issues that can arise from highly complex designs.

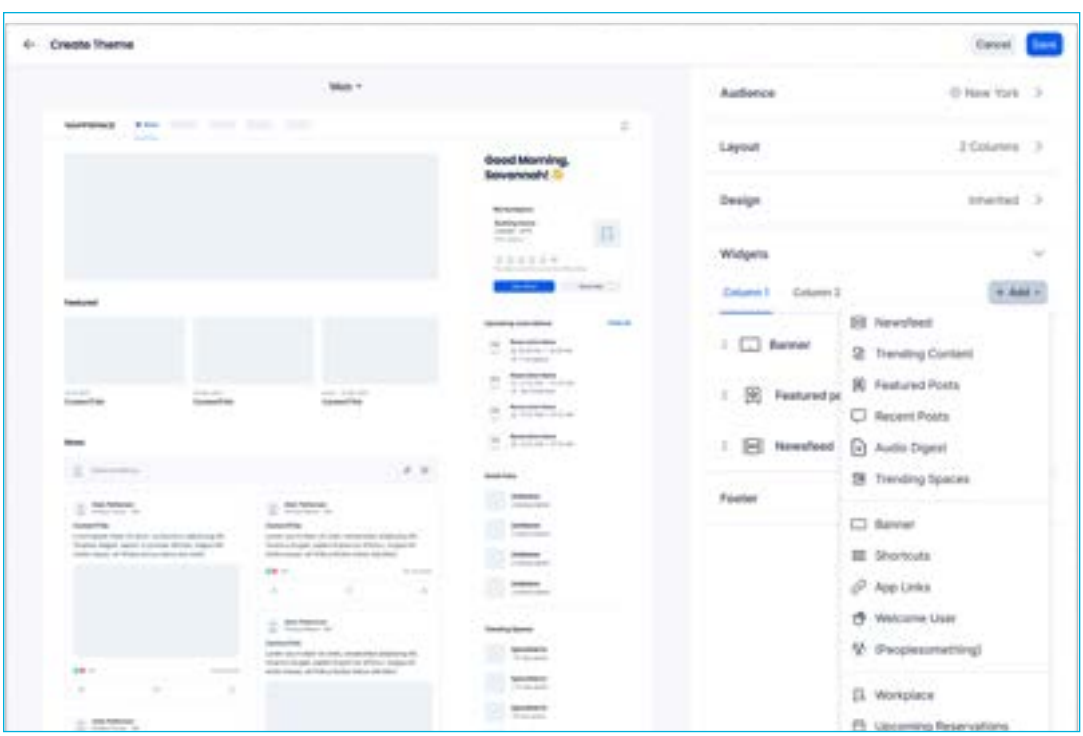
Themes targeted to frontline worker segments can highlight essential information and streamline the interface to reduce information overload. Appspace shared examples where organisations had chosen to prioritise Broadcast messages, key shortcuts such as 'booking shuttle transport' and essential news Channels, while removing less relevant features like post creation and social interactions. Admins can easily enable or disable specific features at the user, user group or location level for even more granular control, ensuring that mobile users receive only content and features that are relevant and appropriate to their current role and location. This is configurable, however, so organisations have a great deal of flexibility to build an app experience that's appropriate for the frontline.

Many of Appspace's features that we've covered in other scenarios work well for frontline workers, such as easily awarding Praise via a Quick Post. Broadcast messages are prominent notifications that can be targeted to the frontline worker audience. These can be used for critical communications, but can also guide users through specific actions, such as providing building passes or what to do during emergency procedures. We'd like to see further Passports introduced (see Scenario 4) where information such as payslips is displayed, or where shift swapping activities can take place within the Appspace app. Organisations do have the option of integrating with Everbridge to provide SMS support, although this will be at additional cost.

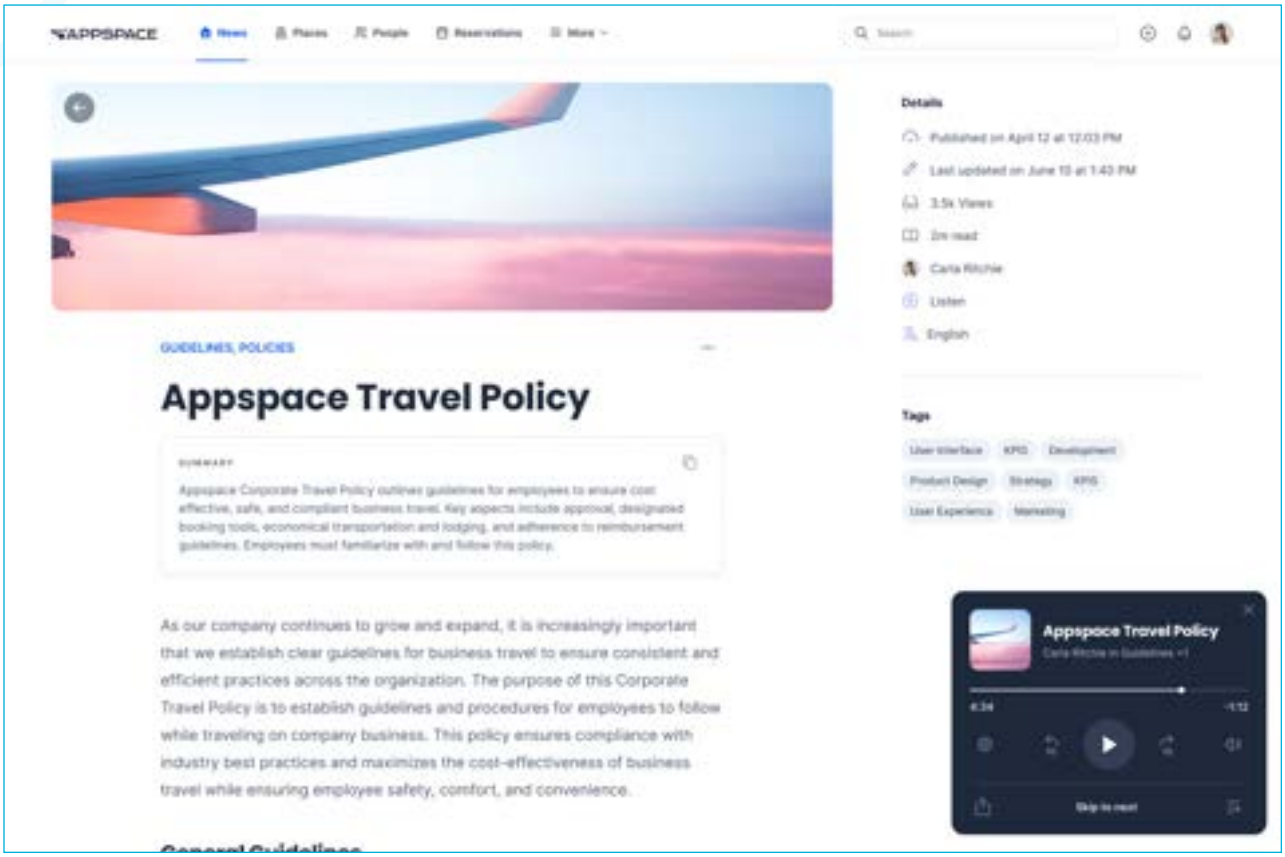
We were particularly impressed by Appspace's 'audio digest' feature. This uses AI-powered narration to convert written articles and stories into audio format. This not only caters to different content consumption preferences, but this feature is particularly beneficial for frontline workers who might have limited access to screens for reading during the workday. The fact the audio will detect and play in users' preferred languages is particularly impressive and useful.

As well as being able to listen to any article, users can add an article to their playlist or let Appspace curate a playlist based on the content they have subscribed to, even adapting the content to the user's preferred language. This personalised approach allows users to stay informed by listening to an 'audio homepage' of relevant content and news while commuting or performing other work activities away from a desk or where reading is impractical. By offering this simple option to transform content into a consumable audio format, Appspace is promoting inclusivity and extending communication reach to those that would otherwise be unable to access it.

Overall, frontline workers will find a lot to like from Appspace's features. The AI-powered audio digest ensures they receive important updates and information hands-free, while the mobile-first design ethos allows them to access critical data and communications on the go. The Channels, Topics and Communities approach will particularly appeal to this audience too, as it's very easy to use and requires little browsing in order to find what matters.



Appspace's admin page shows layouts for the mobile view of a page. The dropdown at the top of each editing screen allows admins to quicky view desktop, mobile and tablet versions of the page and adjust how each version appears, and which widgets show.



The AI powered 'listen' option on each article opens the audio digest and player to begin reading the article aloud.

THINGS TO BEAR IN MIND

The vendor's product strategy has recently focused on enhancing the content creator experience, leveraging generative AI to assist with content creation, and honing analytics on employee reach and page-level engagement. The product has made significant strides in these areas, and the development team is now shifting their attention to more insight-driven, site-wide capabilities, such as intelligent identification of disengaged audiences, more advanced reporting and expanding the reach of features into third-party data repositories. Organisations seeking these features will need to be patient as they are rolled out over 2025, but given the gaps in analytics at present, we look forward to seeing these developments.

Given the vendor's experience with larger organisations, we are surprised by the lack of governance features, which customers have also flagged would benefit from improvements. Appspace has said they have introduced governance-related functionality in the first half of 2025, but we have not reviewed this new functionality yet.

The search experience has improved in the first half of 2025, although we would like to see more management capabilities in this area particularly around search metrics. For organisations that are more complex or suffer from content sprawl, it might be difficult admins to understand where or when information finding difficulties occur.

Appspace does impress with its ability to draw together physical and digital workplaces. While integrations with physical and location-based tools are powerful, they will require significant investment, careful planning and a degree of technical skills to implement.

Why choose this product

Appspace provides a strong set of features that support employees wherever they are. Through careful integrations, communicators can reach people whatever their role. News, community content and more is delivered in an attractive and effective manner for employees. While offices are particularly well catered for, frontline workers will find a lot to like, too. Appspace will suit multi-site or large organisations looking to enhance both the digital and physical workspaces.

You may also be interested in...

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Vendor roadmap

Roadmap link provided by Appspace.

Back to index

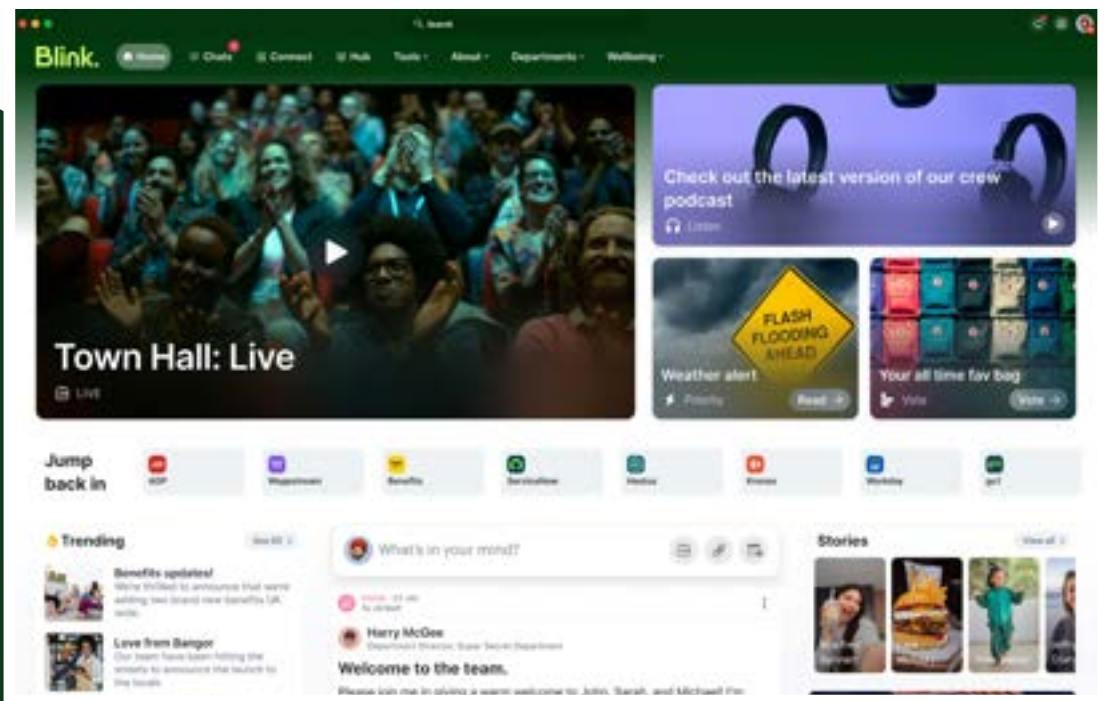
Blink.

FULLY STANDALONE

REQUIRES SHAREPOINT

FRONTLINE FOCUS

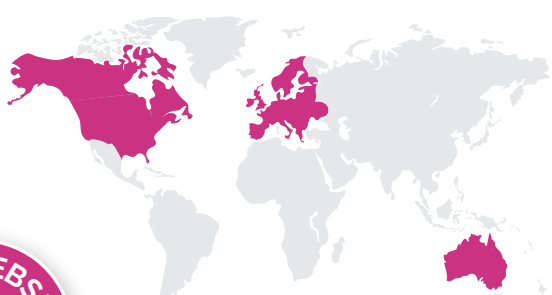
OTHER



Typical deployment:

20,000 - 50,000 employees

Company locations:



VISIT THE WEBSITE

The product in a nutshell

Blink is a mobile-first solution that offers an easy-to-use interface on all device types. There is a good range of practical tools that complement the excellent social and communication features too.

SUMMARY

BLINK

Blink was launched in 2018 as a frontline-first employee mobile app solution and it has effectively retained these roots, while also developing in a variety of useful ways. For example, Blink has cleverly adopted social media approaches such as with carousels and stories that employees are likely to already be familiar with, meaning it's likely they will get to grips with it more quickly.

The focus Blink places on the deskless audience is among the best we've seen in this report and makes a compelling choice for organisations with a frontline-heavy workforce. The user experience across all device types is excellent and works particularly well for the community, social and communication focus of the platform. While the features for internal communicators may not offer depth that some would desire, it serves as an excellent addition to more traditional channels and helps improve the reach of communications as a result.

Integration options are simple, and generally work well for interactions such as approvals but may not meet the needs of those with sophisticated requirements. Additionally, some platform management features are a little basic, such as the approach to reference 'Pages', content life cycle and search management, so those looking for a comprehensive or replacement intranet solution may be disappointed.

However, Blink provides an excellent companion to systems more frequently needed by desk-based employees – such as knowledge management solutions. Additionally, the developments we've seen in recent years suggest that the vendor will continue to expand Blink in sensible directions, with the plans for AI capabilities particularly intriguing for both the frontline and desk-based users. Overall, Blink would suit any size organisation that has a significant frontline workforce, although the price options should be explored as it's among the more expensive products in this report.

Pricing

PRICE BAND	
1,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
5,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
20,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
50,000 users	$ $ $ $ $

These prices are indicative, offering a comparison of the products featured in this report only. Please contact the vendor for a bespoke quote.

PRICING MODEL

Subscription – price band based on number of users.

DISCOUNTS

Charities and non-profit organisations, schools and educational institutes, multi-year commitments.

COSTS TYPICALLY

Fairly evenly spread across three years.

PRICE INCLUDES

Some expert services to help build out bespoke microapps or workflows. Blink will help with the launch of the app, including sites and supporting end users.

Product type

Majority ready-to-run

Branding opportunities

Good branding, complex options

Base systems

Fully standalone

Requires SharePoint

Other

Sectors

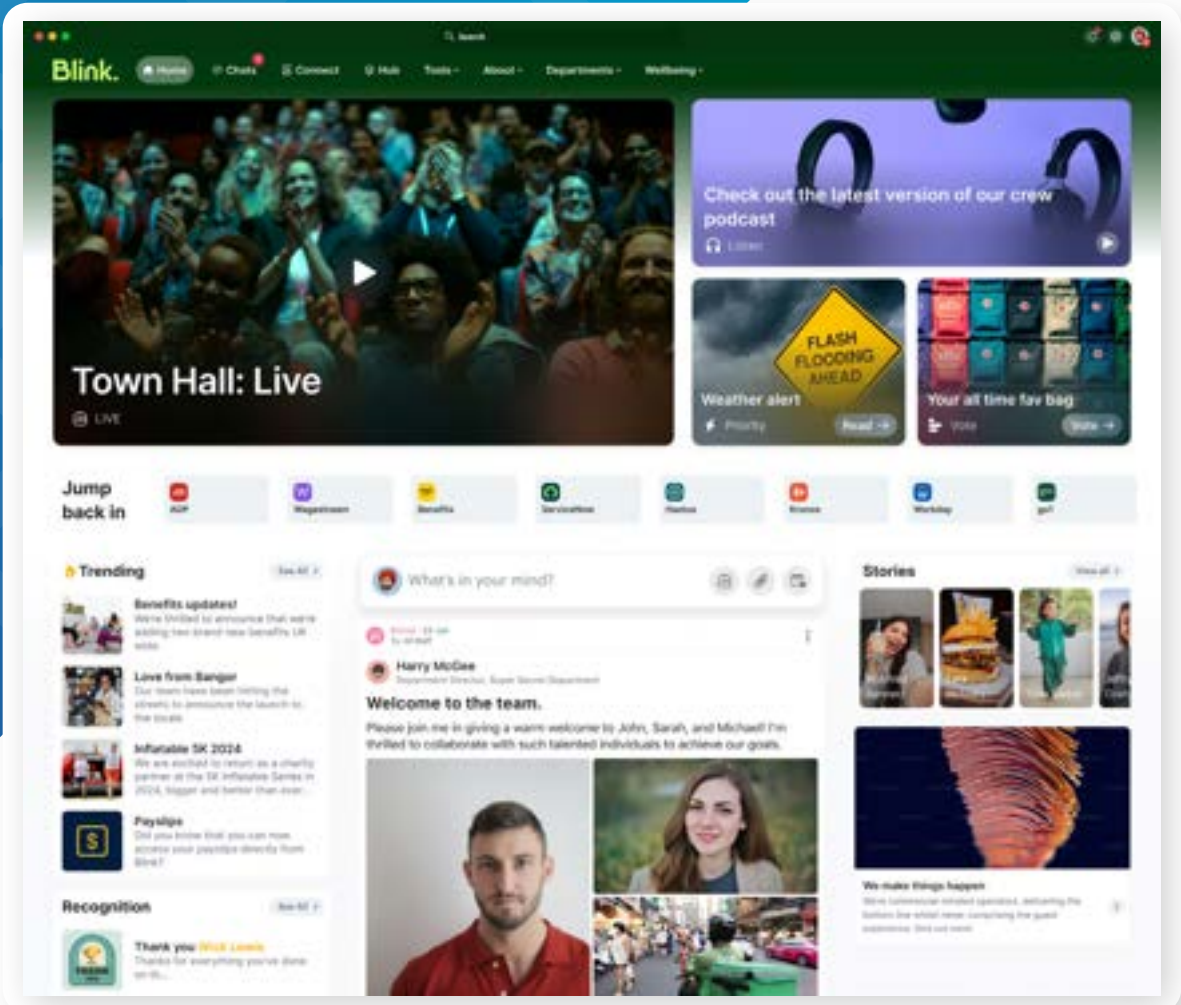
Retail

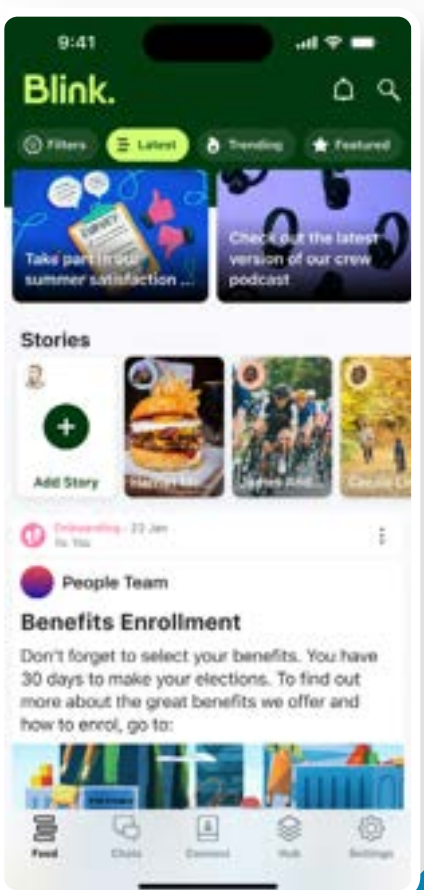
Hospitality and events management

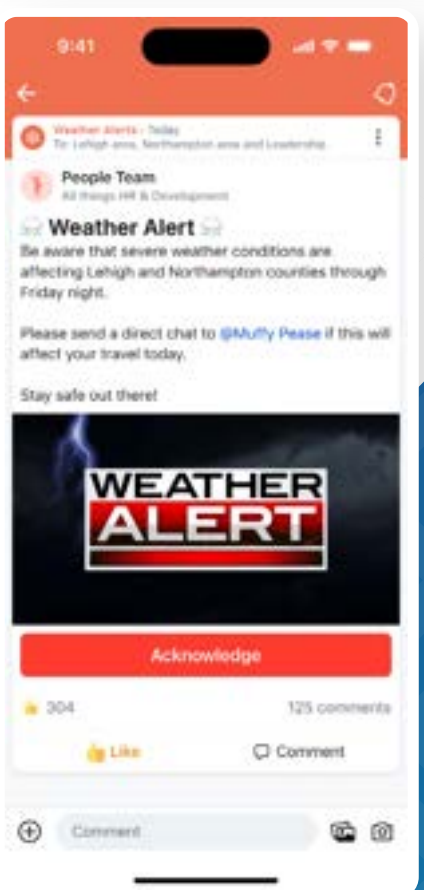
Engineering and manufacturing

Transport & Logistics

Healthcare


Blink.
Town Hall: Live
Check out the latest version of our crew podcast
FLASH FLOODING AHEAD
Weather alert
Your all time fav bag
Jump back in
Trending
Benefits updates!
Love from Bangor
Inflatable 5K 2024
Payslips
Recognition
What's in your mind?
Harry McGee
Welcome to the team.
Stories
We make things happen


9:41
Blink.
Filters
Latest
Trending
Featured
Take part in our summer satisfaction ...
Check out the latest version of our crew podcast
Stories
Add Story
People Team
Benefits Enrollment
Don't forget to select your benefits. You have 30 days to make your elections. To find out more about the great benefits we offer and how to enrol, go to:
Feed
Chats
Connect
Hub
Settings


9:41
People Team
Weather Alert
Be aware that severe weather conditions are affecting Lehigh and Northampton counties through Friday night.
Please send a direct chat to @Muffy Pease if this will affect your travel today.
Stay safe out there!
WEATHER ALERT
Acknowledge
304
125 comments
Like
Comment
Comment

COMPANY AND PRODUCT

Company details

Company
Blink

ISO 27001 certified
Yes

Data residency
N/A

Company founded
2013

Product launched
2018

Typical client size
20,000 to 50,000

Largest deployment so far
The vendor says they are in the process of a deployment to 100,000 users across 5 countries.

Customers
Clients include: McDonalds, JD Sports, Nokia, Elara Caring, Stagecoach, The Learning Experience, Poundland, Dominos Pizza, NHS Fife, RATPDev

Partner locations
Most implementations are done in-house; however, Blink has implementation partners in the US, EU, UK and Ireland.

Company locations
London, UK (HQ), Australia, USA

Product and technical details

Name of product

Blink

Deployment

Client on-premises	Client private cloud	Microsoft Azure	**Amazon Web Services**	Vendor-hosted	Microsoft 365 tenant	Google Cloud	Other*

Authentication supported

Entra ID	**ADFS**	**Okta**	Open ID	Oauth	**G Suite**	**Other***

*Any other SAML 2.0 compliant identity provider

App deployment

Google Play store	**Apple store**	**MDM**	**MAM**	Other

Accessibility

WCAG 2.1 conformant

Document library sources integrated

Box	**Dropbox**	**Google Drive**	**SharePoint**	**OneDrive**	Other

Optional integrated enterprise search engines

Coveo	Elastic	IBM	Lucidworks	**Microsoft**	Mindbreeze	Sinequa	**Other***

*Blink leverages Elastic Search natively within the application. Additional search engine integrations can be reviewed on request.

User interface multi-language

Machine translation	**Pre-configured**	Editable	**Right to left script supported**	**Other***

*Blink will work with clients to configure multi-language options for interface text. Editable translations are coming during 2025.

Content multi-language

Machine translation for publishers	**Machine translation for end users**	Editable machine translation for publishers	**Manual creation for publishers**	**Right to left script**	Other

Set-up and support

Set-up process for new clients

Blink have an in-house implementation team specialising in the delivery of their product. Depending on customer size and complexity, their rollout process averages between 4 to 12 weeks. Each customer is assigned an Implementation Manager to coordinate the delivery and provide best practices and tailored support along the way.

Version numbers

Demonstrated to ClearBox: Android 2.134.1, iOS 3.171.0, Desktop app 3.1

At January 2025: Android 2.143.2, iOS 3.181.0, Desktop app 1.478.1.

Product updates

Major updates every six weeks.

Product update process

Customers are notified of upcoming releases prior to launch; then, typically, all updates are automatically released to every customer. A production and test tenant can be provided upon request. Test tenants are hosted within the Blink production environment but allow customers to test Blink features, functionality and integrations without affecting their primary tenant. Customers can also be invited into their testing program for new features prior to go live.

Reverse-out options

At the customer's request, data will be deleted within 30 days of contract termination, although data will remain within backups for a further 7 days. Access logs are maintained for at least 90 days for security purposes. Upon request customer data will be returned in an open file format.

Technical support

Email support	Phone support	Chat support	Online portal	24/7 support	Office hours only*

*Monday to Friday, 08:00 to 23:00 UK time.

User community

Blink run regular Industry / Technology / Trends / Product webinars for customers (as well as the broader public) and publish a monthly thought leadership newsletter called 'The Shift'. They also host weekly product sessions with clients to brainstorm product development and offer a Customer Advisory Board, which brings customers together to share learnings, insights and impact.

Voice of the vendor

Blink says: "Blink is a mobile-first employee experience platform designed to give all team members — no matter who they are or where they work — equal access to the resources they need to succeed, while feeling connected. Blink's comprehensive digital employee experience is delivered through both a mobile app and desktop solution and is designed to provide communications, collaboration, and access to information that connects all employees while driving alignment to company culture and purpose.

Blink's mobile app is designed to keep offline, frontline, and non-desk workers engaged regardless of their location. Our mobile-first strategy ensures that employees can stay connected to their organisation even when they're not in a traditional office setting and may not have access to traditional communication tools like email.

Blink desktop and web-based interface is designed for the more traditional, desk-based worker. This multi-platform approach allows for seamless integration across various devices and employee constituencies, catering to different work environments and preferences. Blink's in-app news Feed, Chats, Resource Hub, Survey, and Recognition features help build a positive company culture that's reinforced and supported by highly engaged employees.

Blink is at the forefront of two significant workplace evolutions: 1) transforming the intranet from a static document repository to a dynamic digital workplace, and 2) recognizing the importance of including the entire workforce when prioritizing a connected employee experience. As an innovator in this space, Blink provides a personalised and intuitive user interface, social and collaboration capabilities, and integration with other workplace tools and systems to drive a simple, holistic user experience aligned to an employee's role, location, language, tenure, etc. And, because we capture deep user interaction data across all areas of the platform, Blink is able to provide unprecedented insights into employee sentiment and behaviour that allow organisations to be proactive in managing attrition, driving best practices, and have a better understanding of how/when/where communications and engagement are having an impact.

Blink's unique onboarding approach delivers industry-leading activation and adoption. We have a wide variety of activation options available out-of-the-box to suit any organisation or worker, while ensuring secure and low-friction activation.

Blink has transformed frontline life at 300+ organisations across the world, reducing attrition by 26%, boosting software adoption by 5x, and achieving 3x survey response rates. Blink helps create work environments where all employees are engaged, empowered, and can excel in their roles — and organisations get real ROI."

Voice of the customer

Those who replied were unanimous in saying Blink is "easy to use" with one person adding it is "intuitive for new users" in particular. Another customer said that "Admin functions are straightforward", calling out how easy it is to manage the Hub. Blink's role as a key communications tool was mentioned multiple times, where one person said, "It really connects the workforce and helps you bring creative content to your frontline", and many customers said it "has improved engagement hugely". One customer summarised well: "Blink has provided a reliable and dynamic communications platform with a diverse range of useful functionality backed up with outstanding customer support."

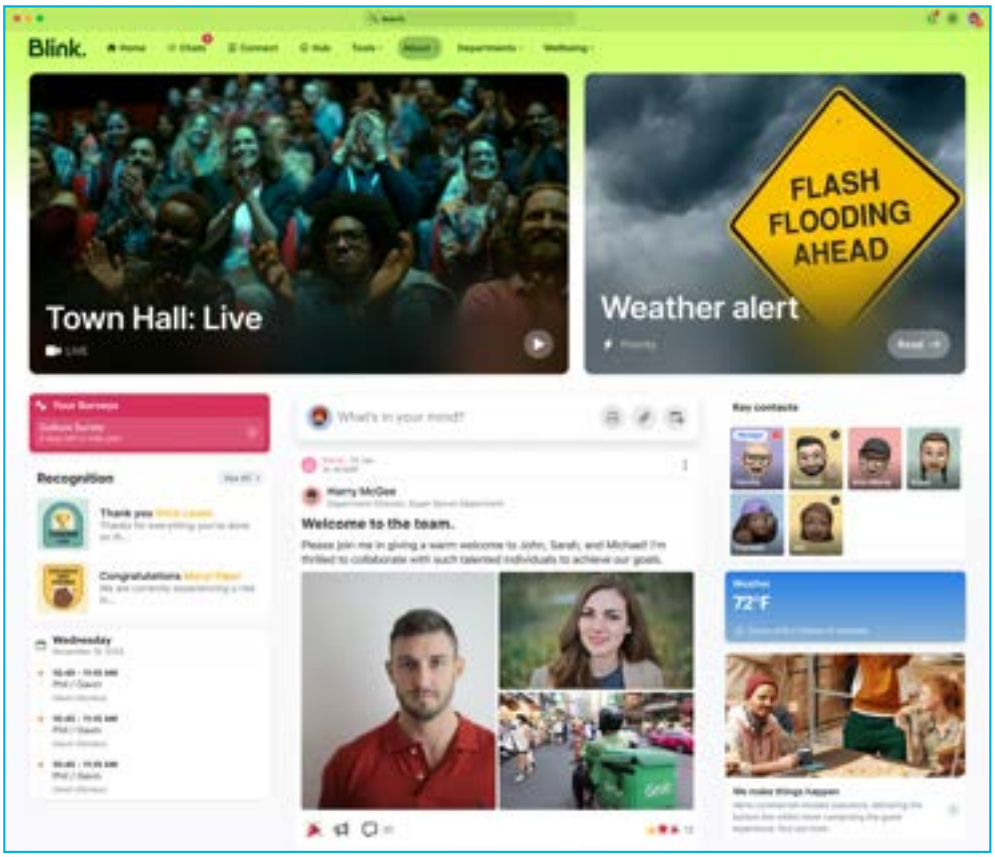
Most requests for developments were mixed, but more requests revolved around wanting to see Blink "improve its page experience so it matches the equivalent experience" of intranets, adding suggestions such as "tables, accordions and a better page editor experience". One customer asked for "More local control over features / functions editing" while another requested, "An interface which allows onboarding processes before joining the full content of the platform." Blink says they have introduced functionality to address pre-boarding. One customer praised Blink for achieving WCAG conformance and asked they "help customers host WCAG compliant content."

Feedback about working with the vendor was entirely positive, where they were consistently described as "supportive and receptive to feedback" by those who replied. One customer complimented them by acknowledging "they are experts in what they do" and another person said they, "appreciate our regular check-ins and quick responses / adjustments." One customer said, "Our Blink partners have been fantastic and very supportive" while another summarised nicely: "Top notch customer service".

SCENARIOS & SCORES

Please see the Scenarios below for more detail on each of these.

SCENARIO AND SCORE	KEY BENEFITS	IMPROVEMENTS / CONSIDERATIONS
4.5 **1. User Experience & Visual Appeal**	Familiar and easy to use interface. Good approach to notifications.	Navigation options are simple. Branding may not address sophisticated requirements.
3.5 **2. Publishing & Communications Management**	Simple but effective approach to communications. Urgent communications particularly well-served.	Lacking depth of features found in other products.
4 **3. Community & Engagement**	People-focused with a good range of features available. Surveying tool is fully featured.	Some features have room for expansion but are still strong, such as Journeys.
2.5+ **4. Integrations & Services (Including M365)**	Good range of integrations available via a marketplace.	Most integrations will take effort to set up. May not meet sophisticated needs.
2.5+ **5. Information Finding & Search**	People finding and federated search works well.	Search experience and knowledge management is basic. There aren't any search management tools.
3+ **6. Administrator Experience**	Administration is generally easy. Flexible home page design capability.	Pages capability could be improved. Life cycle features could be more robust.
3 **7. Analytics**	Adoption analytics are helpful. Data on reach is useful. Mandatory reads are well handled.	No search analytics. More data to show communicators how their content is performing would be beneficial.
5 **8. Mobile & Frontline Support**	Very strong app, particularly for the frontline.	More audience-tailored home page experiences would be a welcome addition.



The desktop environment is simple but effective and reminiscent of social media platforms.

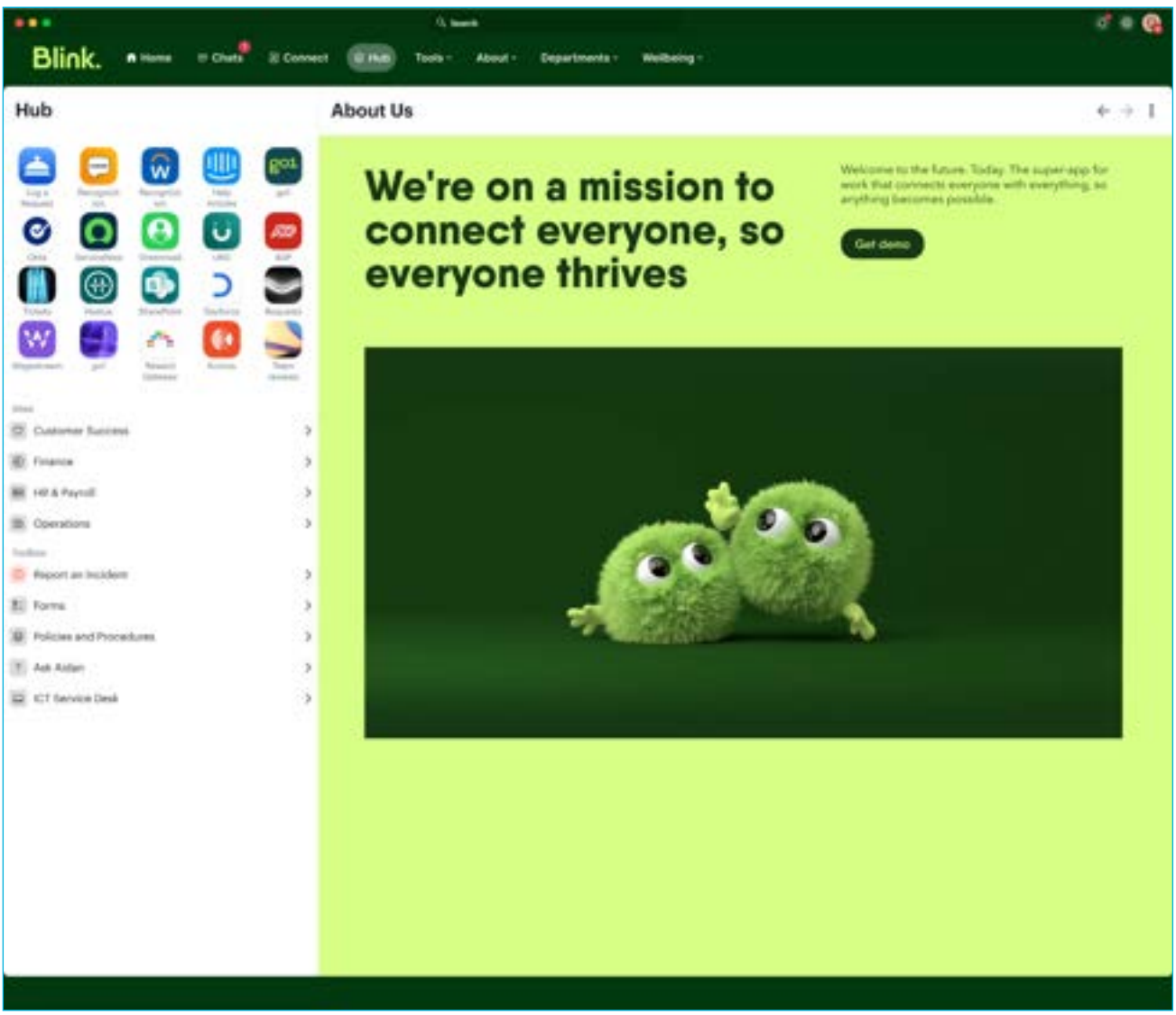
Blink is designed from a mobile- and frontline-first perspective (please see Scenario 8 for specifics), which means the resulting user experience is simple but highly effective. The desktop environment is consistent with that of the mobile, providing a lightweight but valuable platform. There is a desktop app too, which helpfully means employees don't have to remember to load the browser environment.

The desktop interface feels immediately familiar and intuitive, meaning it is likely to be easy to understand by first-time users. The standard layout is reminiscent of social media, with user settings and profile access on the top ribbon alongside search. A primary navigation bar appears either at the top or along the left side of the screen, which is easy to configure via a simple toggle in admin settings. The home page follows a three-column layout with a central content feed, flanked by configurable widgets either side, and topped with a 'hero' widget. The Blink home page focuses on a 'Feed', which is the home for posts for selected audiences, integrated notifications and for content shared from elsewhere in Blink – including from within Chats. We like the 'jump back in' widget for recently accessed apps and content, which helps smooth the browsing experience.

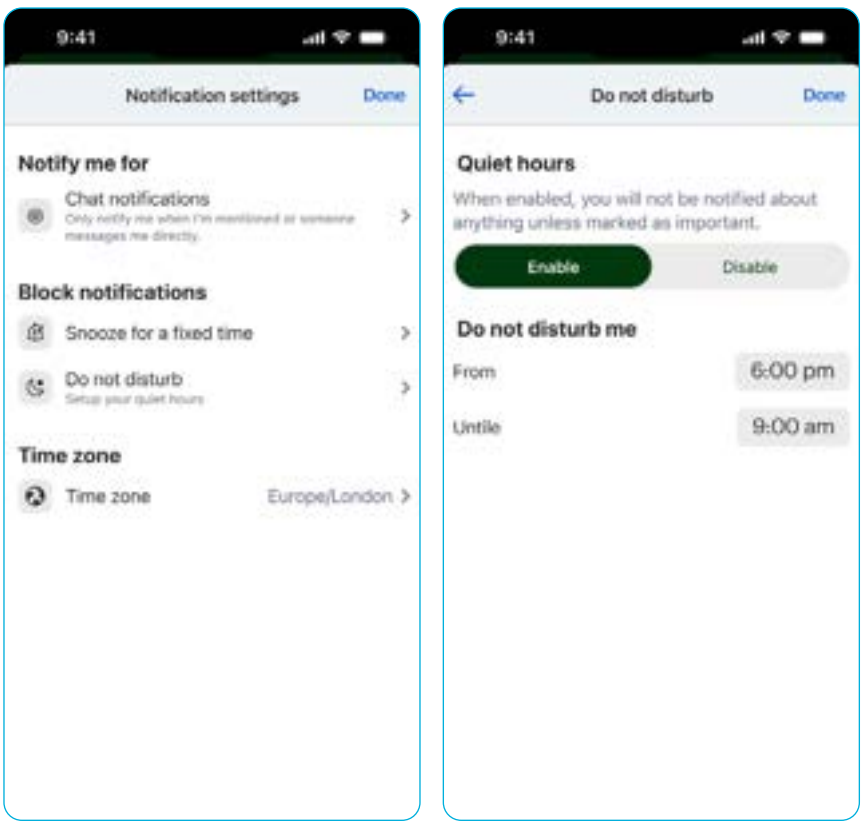
Navigation in both environments is straightforward, although there are a few different places to visit for communications that employees will get used to over time. Out of the box, there are five fixed primary menu items: 'Feed' (which serves as the homepage), 'Chats', 'Connect' (employee and group directory), 'Hub', and 'Settings'. 'Chats' is where conversations take place (see Scenario 3) and the Hub is where links, tools and reference materials are stored in configurable 'sections' and / or folders. Icons are used beside the text labels in the primary menu, helping with navigation. The user menu at the very top uses icons only, albeit commonly used ones for notifications (a bell icon), help (a question mark) and the user's profile photo or initials (profile settings), and these are accompanied by hover-over tool tips.

Admins may expand the navigation bar by adding items to the top level or by creating a simple drop-down menu. Elsewhere Blink has a predominantly flat navigation structure, with only the Hub offering to organise content and sub-level folders in a more traditional manner. Due to the flat navigation structure, links to other areas of the platform or specific content are either handled in a modal popup (such as news posts) or surfaced through widgets on the home page. The navigation might be comparatively simple but supports Blink's approach as a social, collaboration and communications-focused app rather than a full-blown intranet platform.

Blink does an excellent job of helping people keep on top of tasks. Notifications are managed through the bell icon that display notifications associated with Blink itself, such as someone liking a post you've created. Dots highlight new notifications in the bell and are also used elsewhere in the navigation when there's new content to see. We like the option to mark all as read, which will clear a build-up of notifications. It isn't possible to mark a notification as unread after interacting with it, but they do remain in a persistent history. Helpfully, employees can snooze notifications between 20 minutes to 24 hours and set 'do not disturb' times. We would like the option here to snooze them until a specific date and time, to support holiday periods.



The hub landing page includes additional navigation options for storing content.

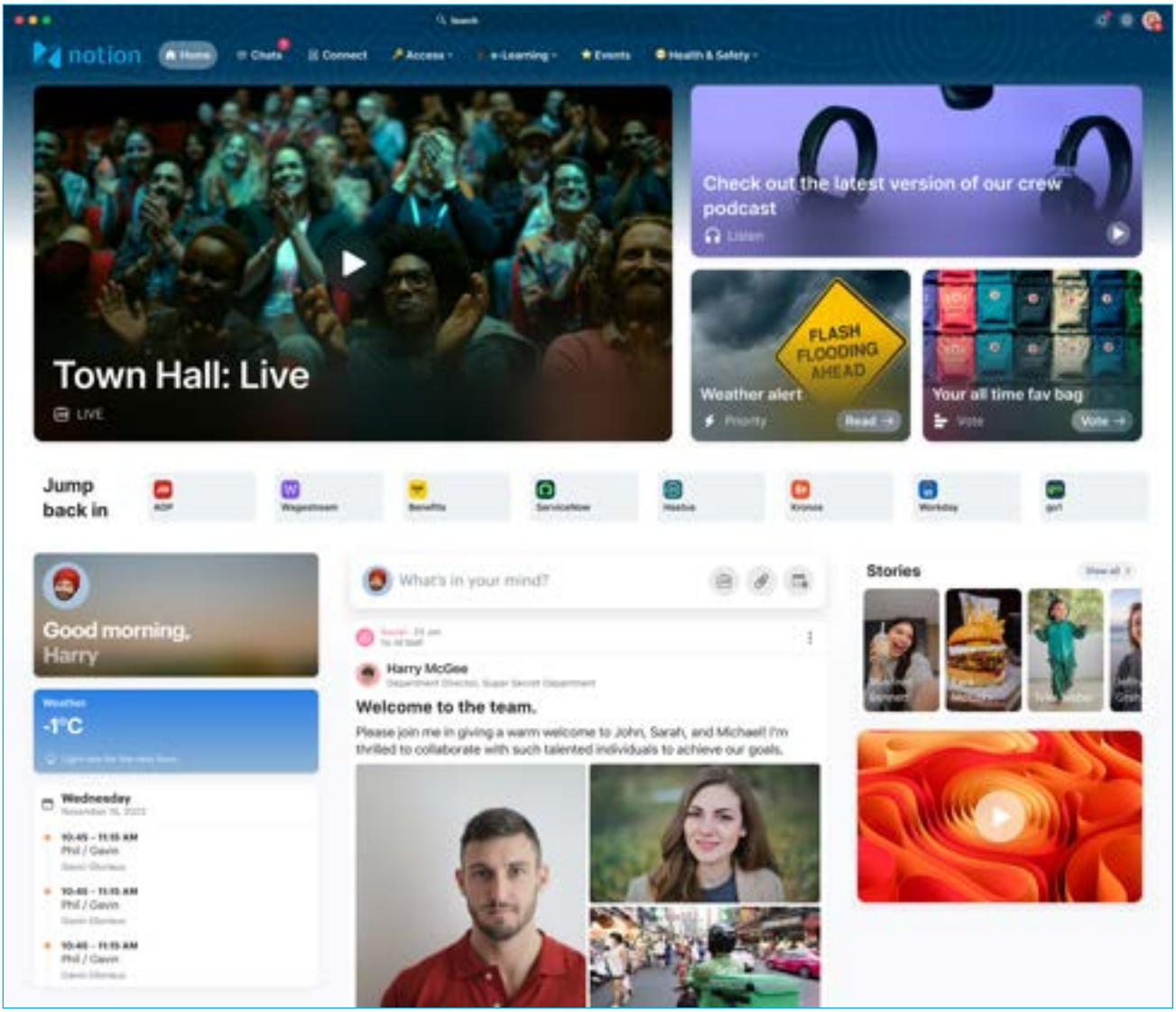


Notification settings include a configurable 'do not disturb' period.

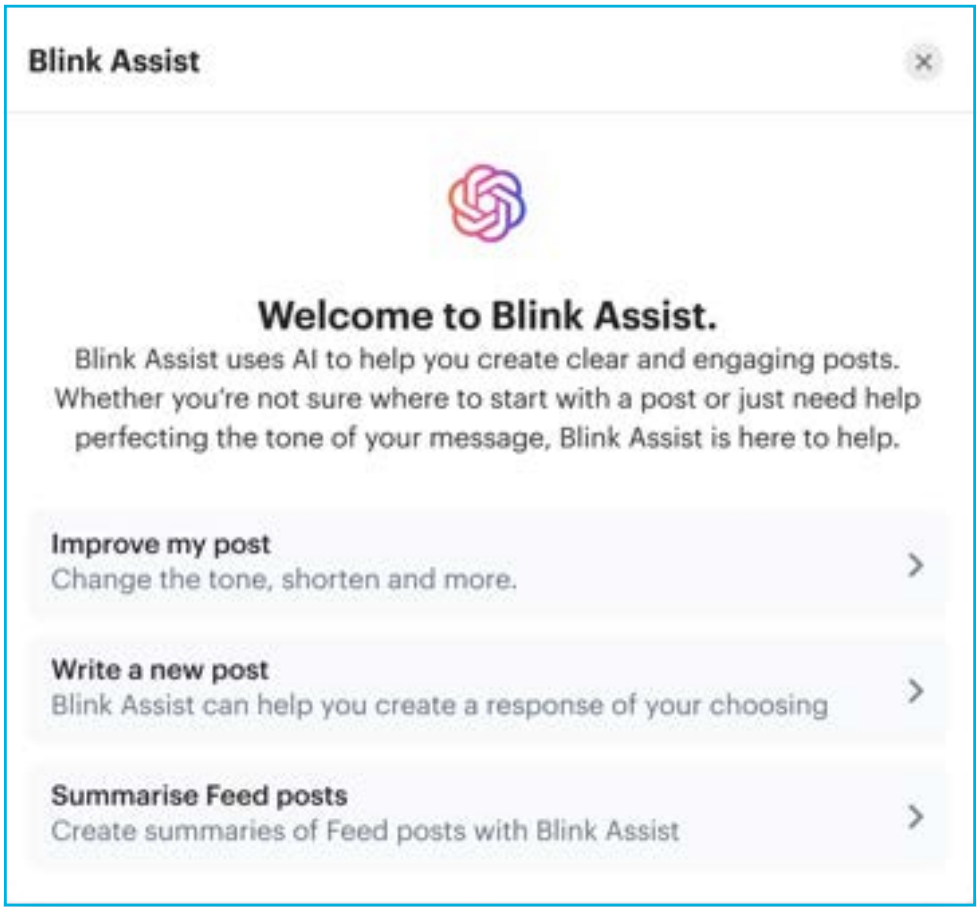
Notifications and activities can be managed in other ways too. On the mobile home page, a 'tasks' bar highlights activities, such as completing a survey or reading something that's mandatory. On desktop, surveys have their own widget, with an associated 'mandatory reads' banner. Please see Scenario 4 for details of integrated notifications.

There is a surprising range of branding and design options available to admins, including those needing complex approaches to reflect multi-brand organisations, for example. The design options are particularly effective on mobile, although we like features such as being able to add background images on desktop too. Blink may not meet the needs of those organisations looking for sophisticated desktop designs, but we think it works better than some intranets we've seen and it will clearly reflect an organisation's brand. Blink also offers a design and branding service if organisations would like assistance.

Overall, the simple navigation and branding, combined with the feed approach to the home page, reflect the lighter-weight approach Blink takes when compared to other products in this report. The result is a user-friendly interface that offers a familiar and appealing experience.



There are some simple options for configuring the look and feel.

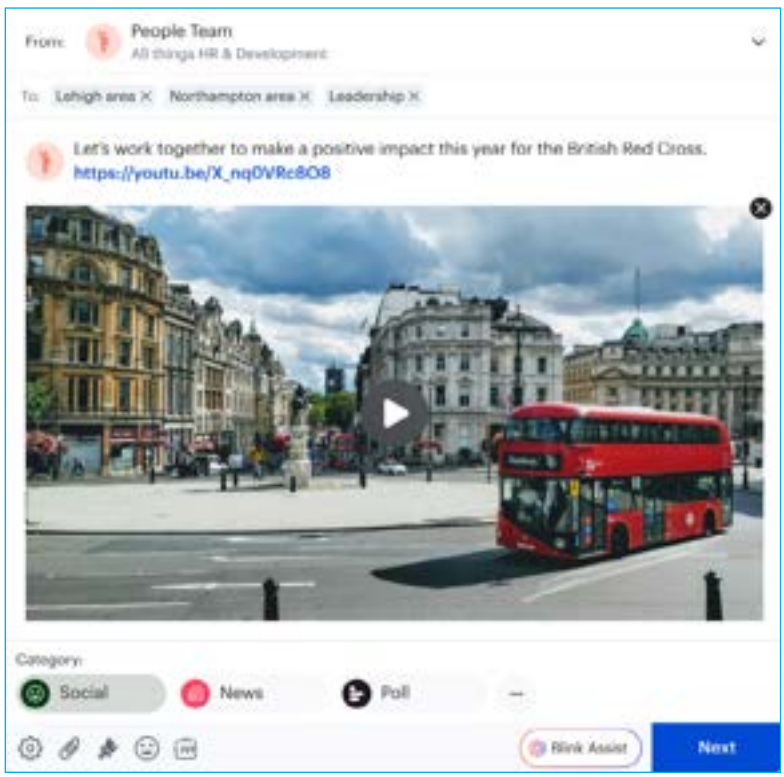


Blink Assist is a simple generative AI tool that will help with post creation and editing.

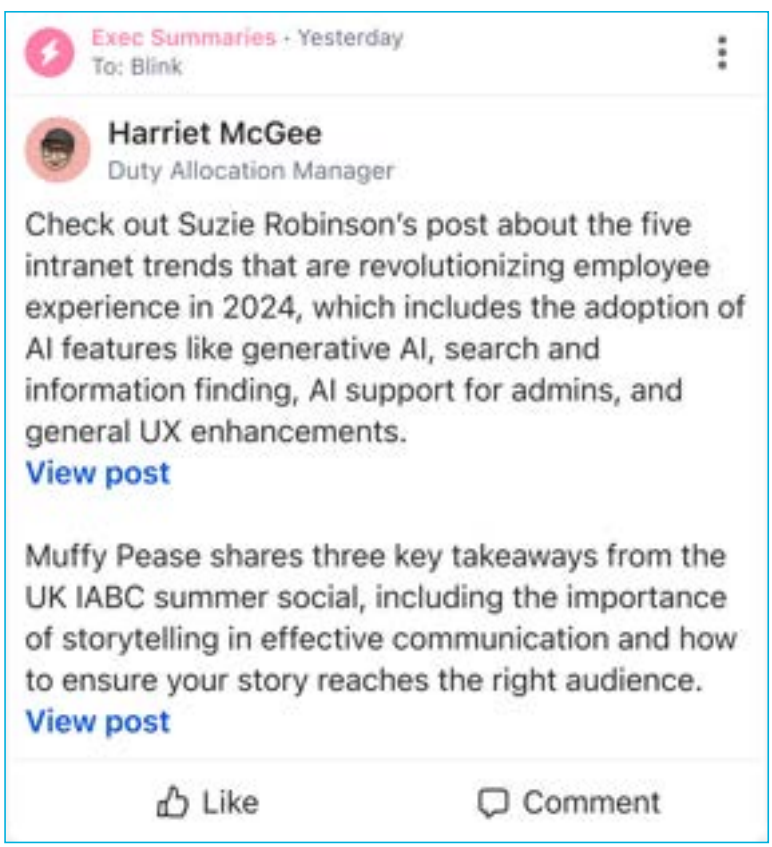
Blink's approach to publishing and communications management is simple but effective. While it doesn't have the depth of features offered by some other products in this report, it works very well given its purpose to reach frontline employees effectively. For example, it's possible to set up an integration with digital signage and there is a Feed API for sharing posts outside of Blink.

Posts created directly in the Feed are likely to be the most common starting point for communicators. Feed posts look and feel a lot like posts in familiar social media channels, although surprisingly have more advanced formatting options, such as header types and dividers for more complex posts. Pasted links will embed content in the post where supported, such as videos from Vimeo, making the experience more interactive than a simple link.

A 'Blink Assist' button opens an AI that supports creating or editing a post as desired. Content is created using natural language prompts, such as "Write a post thanking my team for all their hard work"; publishers then choose from a 'post type' list to complete the action, such as "turn my post into a thank you message". The editing options will change the tone and refine elements such as length or complexity. The resulting post is provided in quotation marks for the publisher to edit and add optional elements such as attachments. Another helpful AI feature is the ability to select multiple posts to summarise into a single separate post; this provides a 'too long didn't read' summary and makes sure employees don't miss anything vital.



The interface for creating news posts is familiar yet offers a good range of features for communicators.

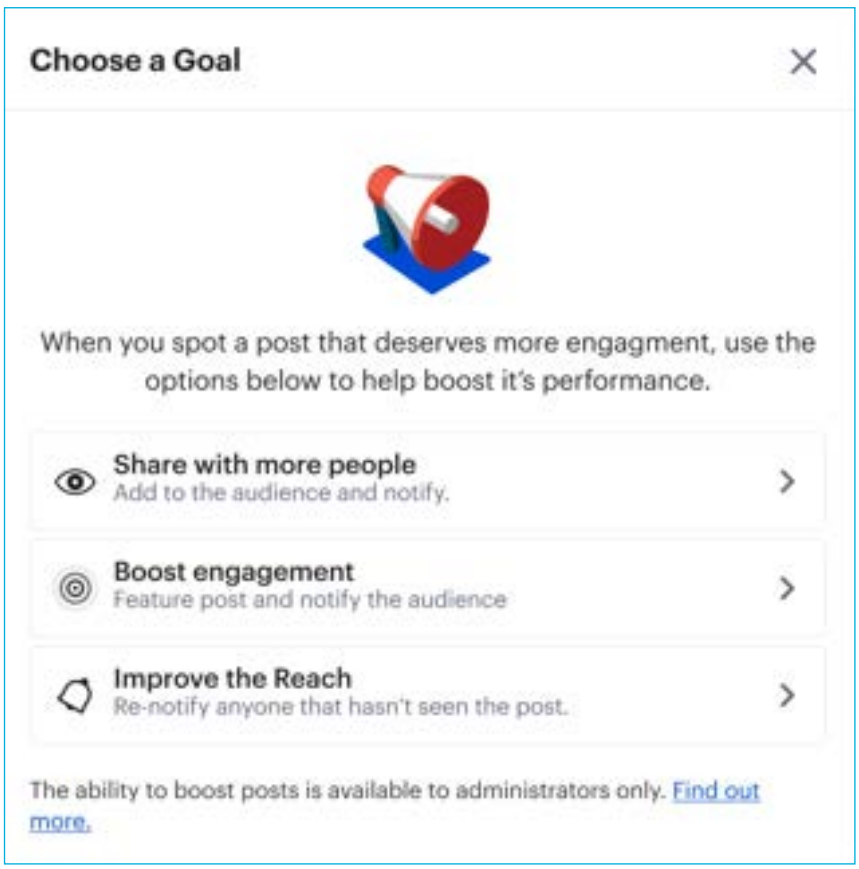


There is a helpful AI feature that will summarise multiple posts into a single, new, post. This helps ensure people see key information in a busy feed.

Publishers apply a category to a post, which helps readers filter their feed, although automatic tagging using the AI would be a helpful development. It's a shame that multiple categories can't be applied, as this can be appropriate for some messages. It's also a shame people can't opt into categories to watch a topic and receive relevant posts, although they can opt into 'Groups' via community membership. Helpfully, admins can control who may post into categories to reduce the risk of over-using certain categories for everything.

Audiences are applied in a simple 'to' field, where publishers select the 'Groups' or individuals to receive the post. 'Groups' are used for two categories of collections of employees: 'Teams' or 'Communities'. Communities are open groups that individuals can opt into or out of based on their own personal or professional interests, such as 'LGBTQ+'. Employees are assigned to 'Teams' based on profile information, which can be as simple as 'location' or built from multiple profile fields. 'Direct report' Teams are helpful for line managers to communicate with their colleagues, and we like that 'nested teams' are possible for easily creating audiences.

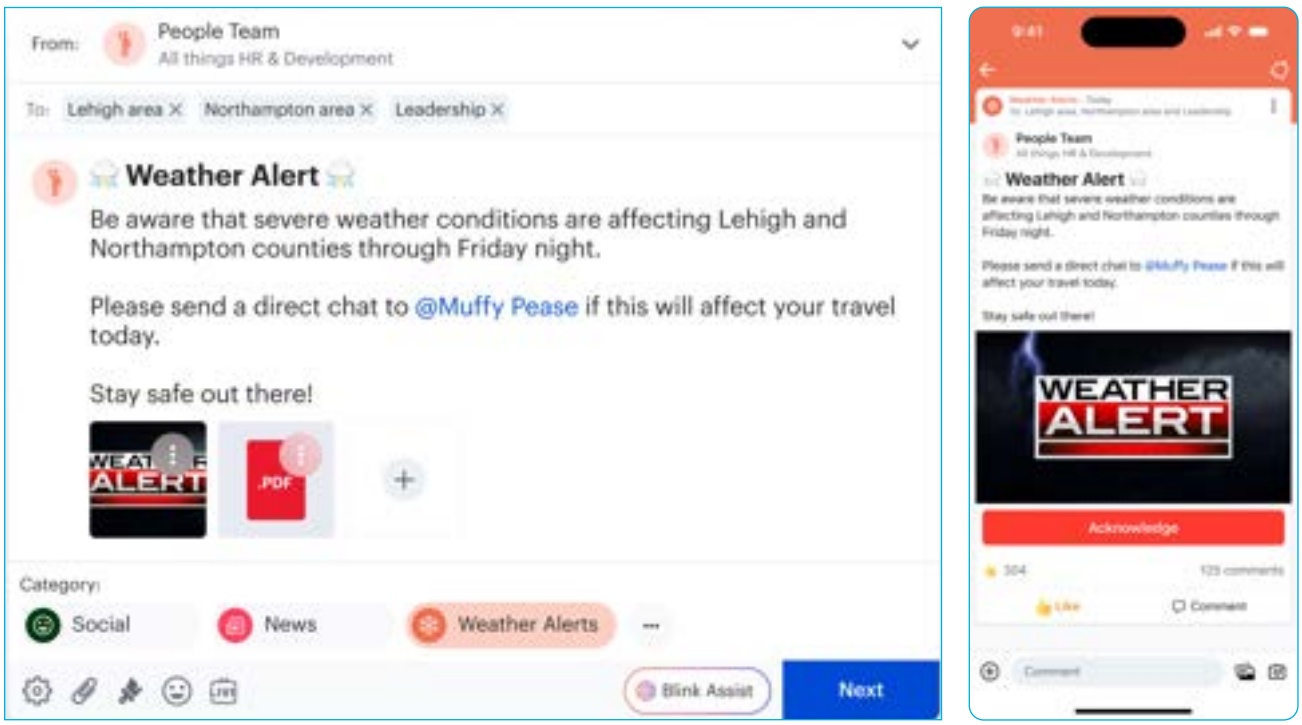
News scheduling is handled via delivery date and time, and publishers can see their own scheduled posts but no one else's. People may 'dismiss' a post from their Feed to remove anything they don't feel is relevant, or an automatic 'dismiss' date and time can be set. Alternatively, a 'Journeys' feature can help with sharing communications at defined moments (see Scenario 3 for more). Where communicators feel a post needs more 'engagement' (visibility), there is a 'boost' option. This is effective at reaching additional people by completing actions, such as sending notifications to those who haven't read it or adding new audience members to the post. This is similar to boosting social media posts, so may feel familiar to communicators.



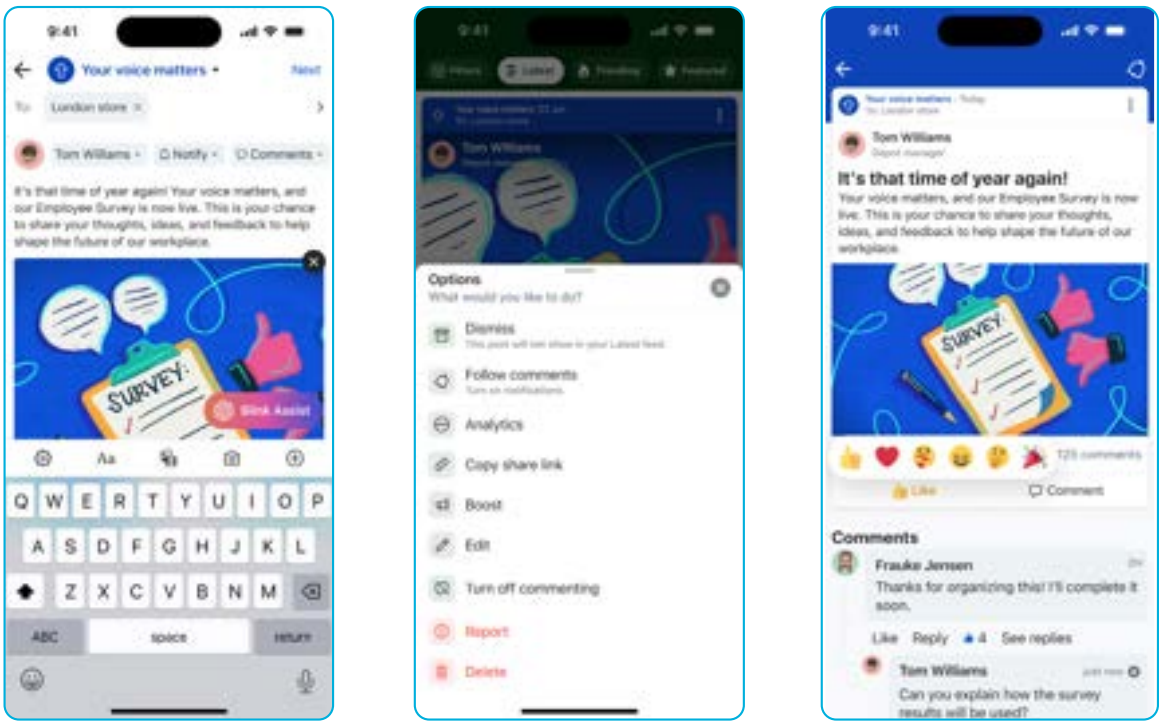
The boost option provides tangible tools to help publishers reach more people.

An alternative to feed posts is 'Pages' that are stored in the Hub but can be shared into the feed on creation. These can be used for longer communications, or those that are helpful to store in the context of folders or sections, although Blink Assist is currently missing from Page creation. See Scenario 6 for more on Pages and Scenario 3 for information about chats and channels, which can also be used for communication.

Crisis and urgent communications are handled very well in Blink. Firstly, priority posts are pinned to the feed so that they aren't pushed down the page by newer and less important posts. A home page carousel, which automatically scrolls on desktop and can be manually browsed on mobile, displays 'featured' posts that are chosen by publishers. We like the 'Hero' home page widget that allows admins to highlight posts or pages. Push notifications will reach people even if the app isn't open on their phone and there's the option of an integrated RSS feed, for example from a weather alert website, that will add Feed posts when relevant. Finally, the orange 'your tasks' bar on the home page will display mandatory read content, making it hard to miss.



It's quick and easy for communicators to create and issue urgent messages to appropriate audiences.



Posting to a feed works well for employee-generated content, with a good range of features to help them engage, too.

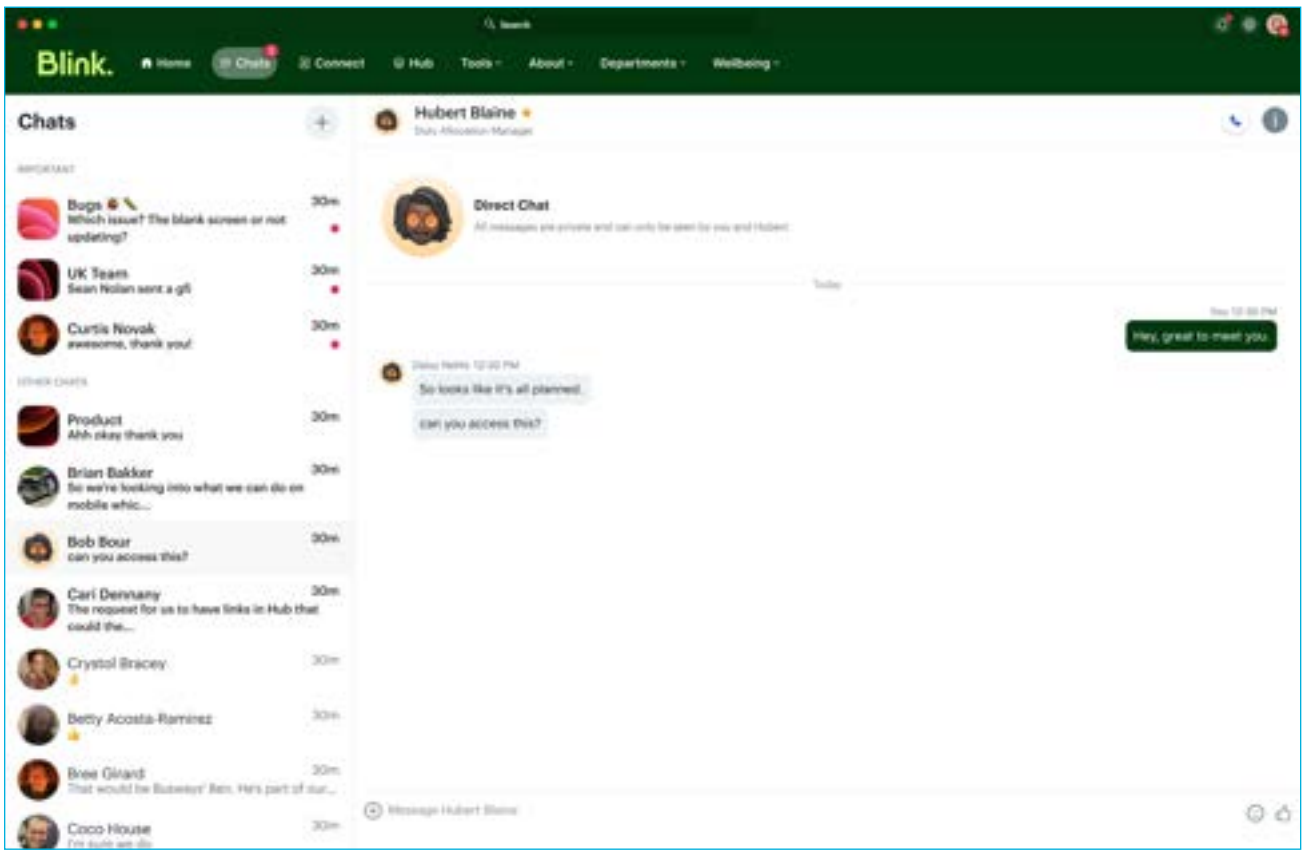
Blink has a clear focus on community and on people, although organisations can choose how open it is for employee contribution. For example, the Feed could be open to anyone to post to or restricted to communicators. Even if the Feed is open, there is the option for people to 'report' so that admins may review the appropriateness of a post or comment. Further moderation enhancements are on the roadmap. We like the 'dynamic feedpost' feature, which allows publishers to easily add snippets of code that will be populated with data unique to the individual reading – first name, for example.

Commenting can be turned off at the post level, which is helpful, plus comments can be reported for moderation by admins. Emojis and GIFs can be shared into threaded comments, and we like the range of available reactions on posts. We'd like to see multiple reaction types associated with comments too. Automatic translation (see Scenario 6) of comments is possible, which is great for multi-lingual organisations. A simple gamification feature tracks posting, commenting and posting rates; Blink says an automated approach to celebrate the top three people in each category has been introduced but we've not see it in action. See Scenario 8 for mobile-oriented 'Stories', which we hope to see added to this leaderboard too.

Blink includes several effective methods to gather employee feedback. Polls in the Feed work like social media platforms, but we like the option to share an image as options instead of words. Within the admin portal it's possible to create pulse surveys that are built with a single question, or longer surveys of multiple questions. You can choose questions from a bank of options or create your own. Answer types fall into four categories – degree of agreement, opinion number scale, yes / no and free text – which should serve most needs. Targeting is possible to user groups or individuals and the survey displays as attractive visual cards that flick through as questions are answered. The results include a good range of data, including sentiment analysis and the ability to tie questions to a category (e.g. 'teamwork').

For conversation and collaboration, there are 'Chats' where people can send one-to-one or group messages, which might be to their 'Team' (user group) or to their broader contacts. Alongside these 'organisation-agnostic' chats are 'Channels', which are associated with a team. For example, in a retail organisation, the 'Oxford Street' and 'Piccadilly' stores would therefore have their own all-store Channels, but there may also be an 'Oxford Street Christmas' Channel for planning a busy time of year. Optionally there are restrictions on who can start chats with whom, which is a useful admin control.

Chat members can post messages to each other, which includes familiar 'reply' and 'forward' options. Individual messages can be liked but there aren't other reaction types, which is a shame, and something people are likely to expect. However, there is a range of 'Chat Super Powers' available that make up for the lack of reactions: file, photo and video attachments are familiar, but there is a 'tea round' power that decides who should brew the next round, 'confetti' to celebrate an event and 'share address' for those looking to meet a colleague in a new location. Chats are well thought through and would make a suitable replacement to unauthorised technology, such as WhatsApp.

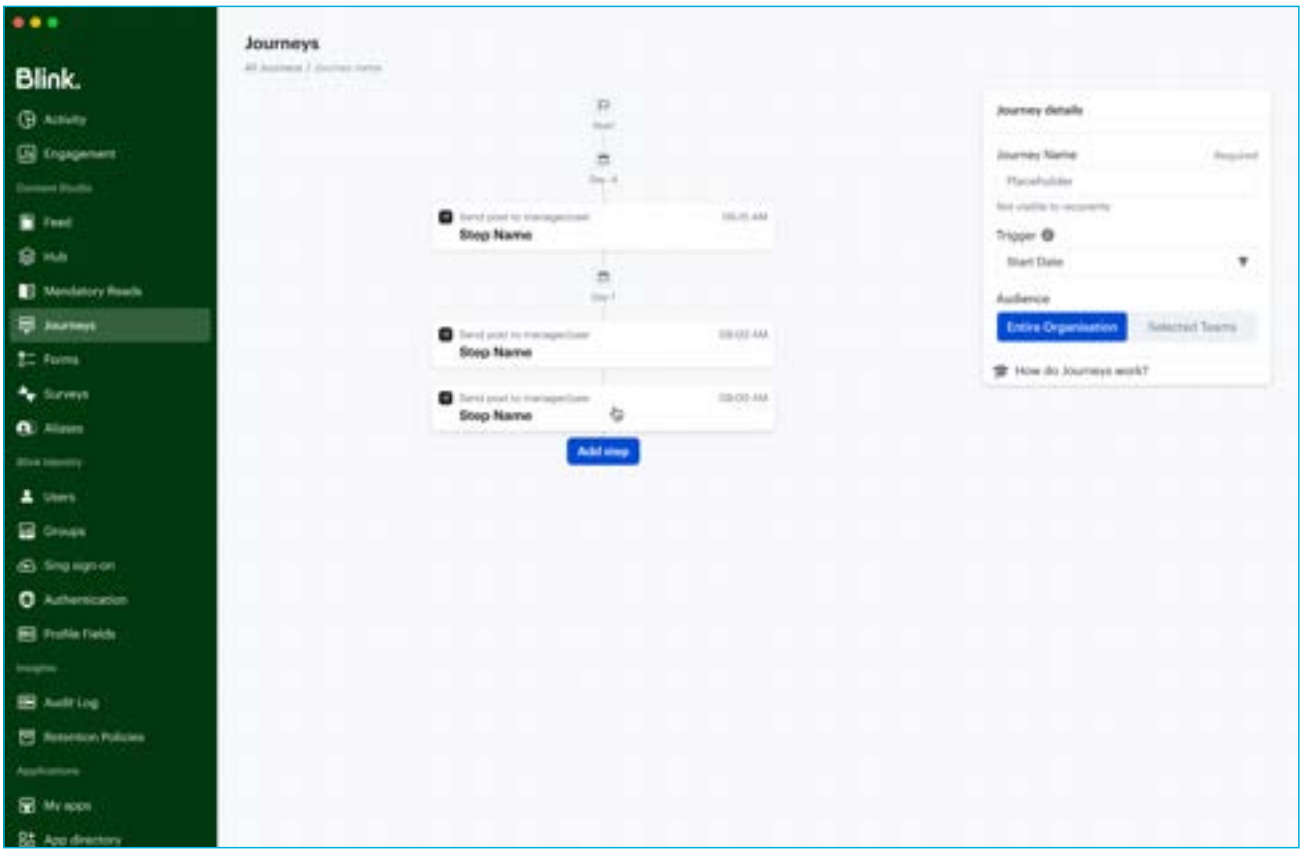


Individual and group chat is available, each of which includes a good range of 'super powers' covered in Scenario 8.

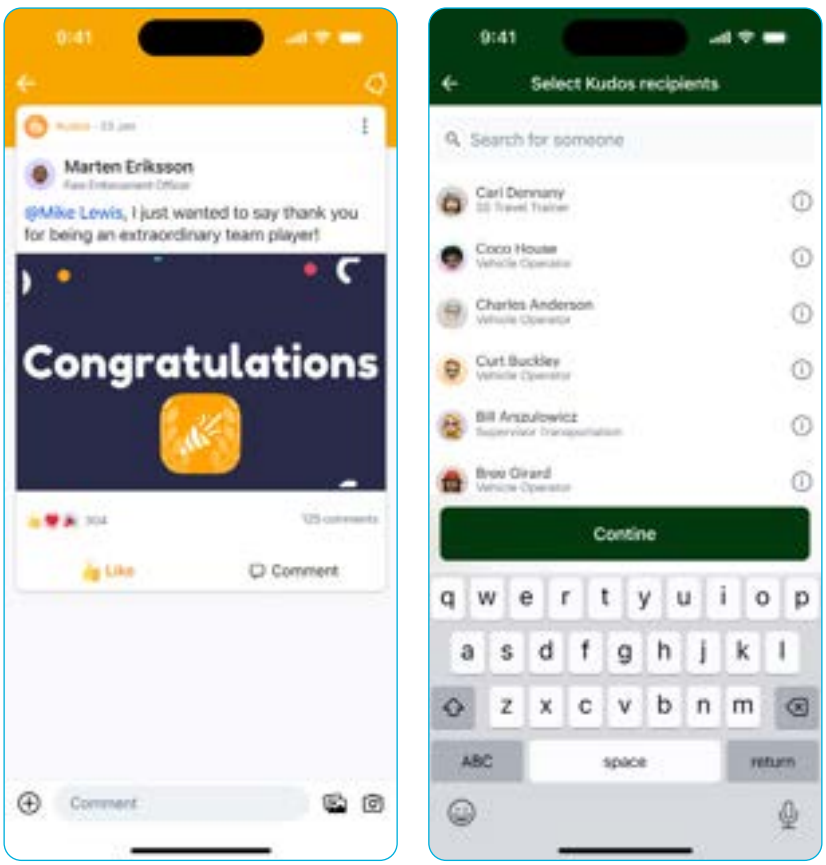
Blink's range of features can be extended via 'microapps' in the Hub (see Scenario 4 for more); a particularly effective microapp allows people to award 'Kudos' to colleagues in their feed. A simple form begins with type of award being given, followed by recipients and a message field. There's a choice of who to share the Kudos with; for example, a 'happy birthday' message may be best shared with an appropriate team, whereas 'thank you' could be a message that's shared with the whole organisation. Helpfully, the award name, description and icons are all configurable. Gamification could enhance Kudos, but we really like the simplicity and think this is an excellent feature that many organisations would appreciate.

Blink includes 'Journeys' to support employees at various stages of their working year or broader career stages. Journeys rely on trigger dates, such as a birthday or employment start date, which will send a prepared post to the individual's Feed, to ask them to order uniform for example. Triggered posts are built in the same way as covered in Scenario 2 and the 'dynamic feedpost' feature mentioned above works well here. We'd like to see other content types available in a Journey, such as a survey or Page rather than a post with links inside. The Journey may contain several steps triggered at different times, automating aspects of an onboarding process or annual review, for example.

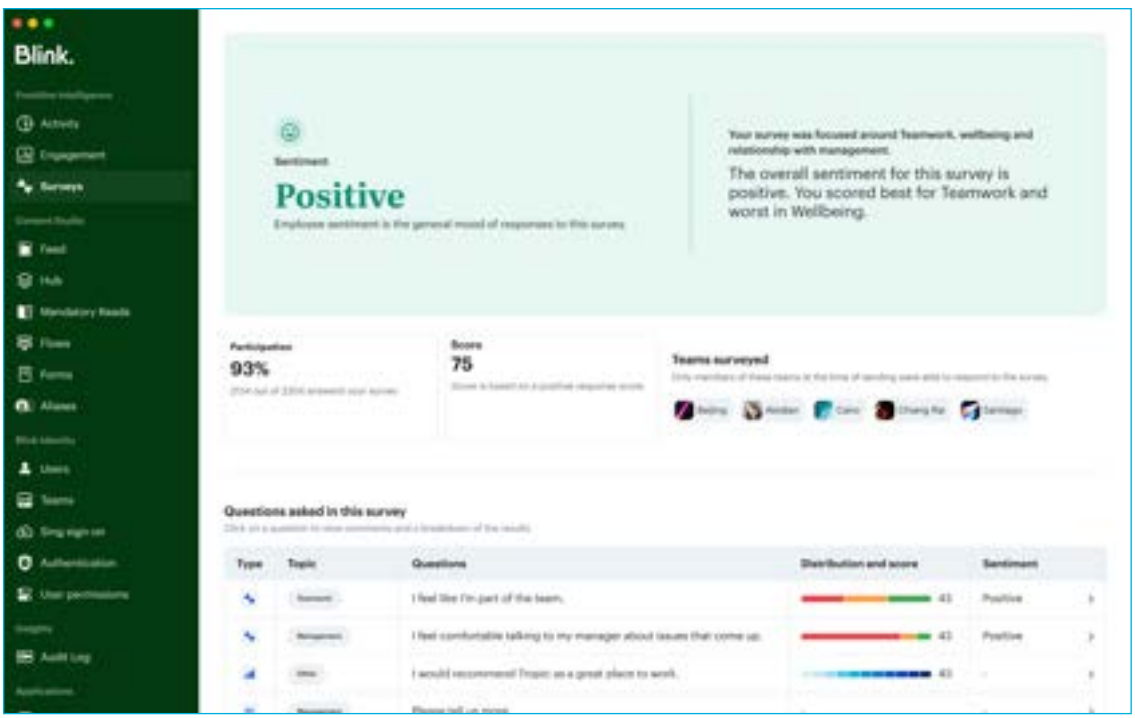
Overall, Blink offers an excellent range of simple community and engagement tools. While some could benefit from being more comprehensive, they still serve organisations well. Events are handled via integrations at present, but a dedicated tool is on the roadmap, as is tasks management, which will expand the functionality in this scenario further.



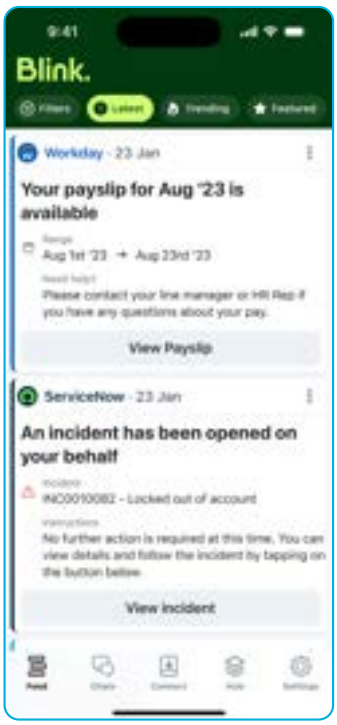
Creating onboarding Journeys is simple and will trigger posts into the receiver's feed.

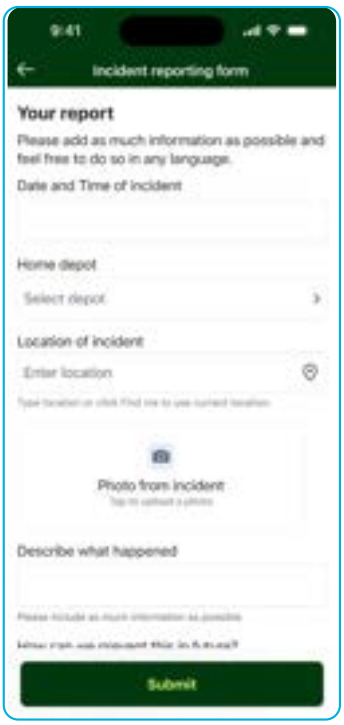


Kudos is a Blink microapp that works very well on mobile, letting employees far across an organisation celebrate each other's hard work.



Surveys are easy to create and return a good range of analytics once complete.





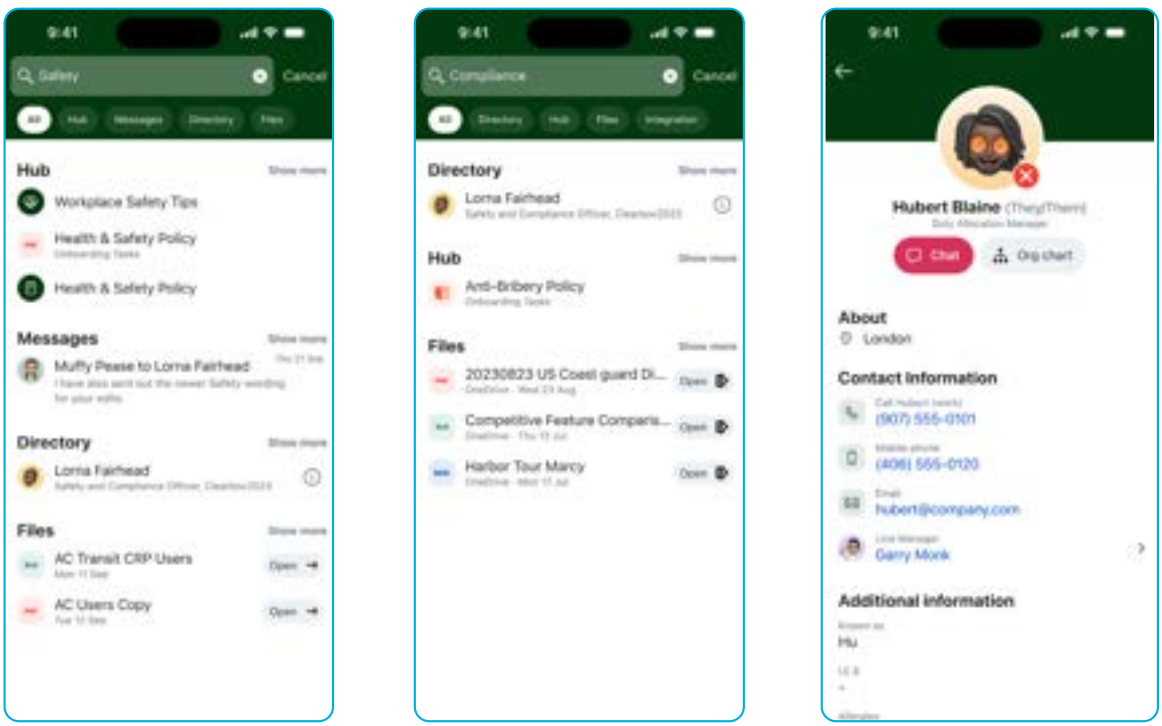
There is a good range of practical features that complement the social and communication tools well.

Blink offers a good range of integrations via a marketplace; once selected they are easy for admins to configure. Understandably, this requires technical knowledge, but the interface is friendly and the steps seem easy. Integrations can be set up with simple actions, such as 'approve', and work well overall but may not serve more complex needs. Integrations with Microsoft applications are covered by the below but overall are less in-depth than other products in this report; for example, it would be helpful to offer Blink as an application in Teams (Blink says this should be available soon).

The first approach to integrations is links behind configurable buttons that use single sign-on and mobile deep linking (where the tool opens within Blink instead of opening a new app). There are also options for authentication such as biometrics where data might be sensitive. Users can add their own links to the Hub too. Integrations can also be embedded on a page or in a widget. We particularly like that notifications from integrated systems can be posted directly into the feed, such as from a LMS to remind someone to complete training, or even from Teams.

We also like Hub 'microapps' – simple tools that help simplify tasks that can be used instead of dedicated systems, although it's possible to connect microapps to third-party systems too. Blink has a range of pre-configured microapps, such as awarding Kudos (see Scenario 3), or 'open shifts' to help locations fill shift slots (see Scenario 8). Blink say they are happy to develop others where clients don't have technical skills. Organisations can extend integration options using Power Page and Power Automate, with Blink's help where wanted; for example, to automatically create a Blink feed post using a SharePoint article or to pass Viva Engage posts into Blink. We like that the Viva Engage integration includes passing comments and replies between the two tools.

For external document repositories, such as SharePoint or Google Workspace, deep links can be added to the Hub or to a Blink Page. It's possible to embed files and folders in a Page or widget iframe for view-only access. Source system permissions are respected in these cases. It's possible to start a Teams (and Zoom) meeting from a Chat and there's a nice calendar widget, where employees optionally grant permissions to Blink so they can see upcoming events and associated details. Organisations may choose to use embedded Microsoft Forms instead of Blink Microapps too.



The search is simple yet works well in a small screen environment.

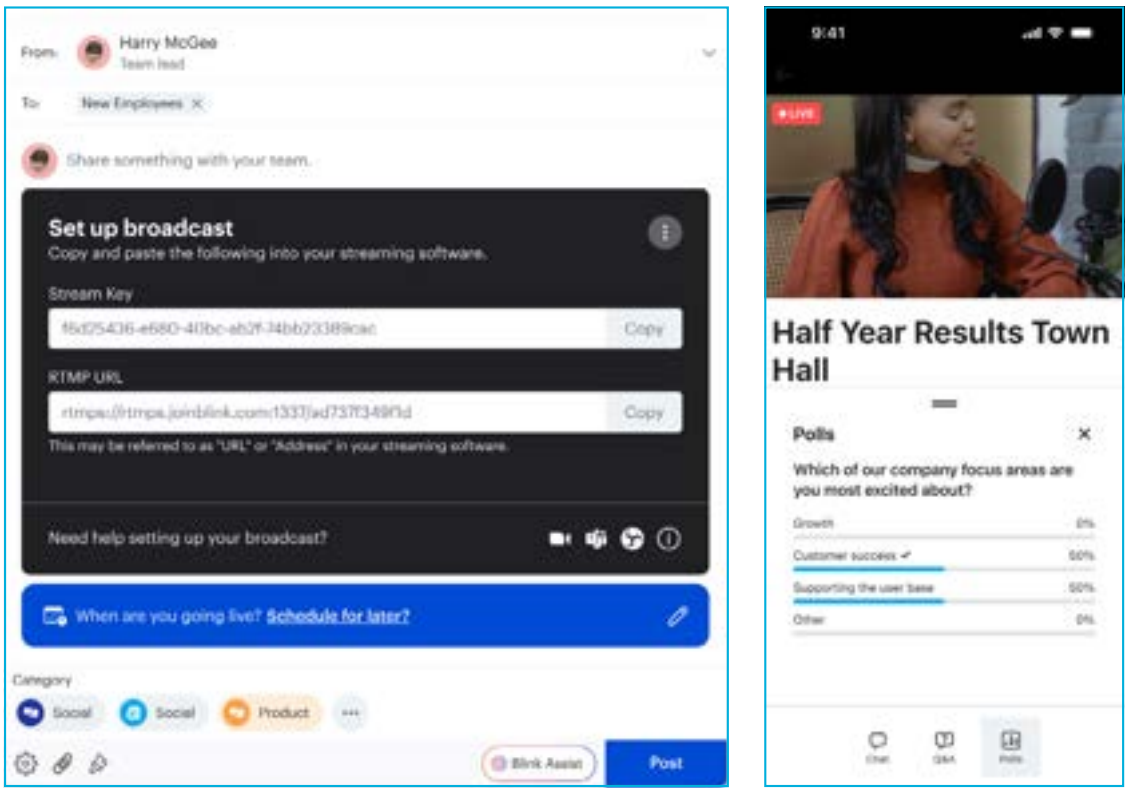
Blink's approach to search is simple; there is a persistent search bar on desktop and mobile, but suggested results are only shown on desktop. A natural language AI-driven search is on the roadmap. Results are shown in tabs grouped by content origin, such as 'Hub' or 'Directory', but there aren't any other filters or refiners. All content is indexed, including the content of attachments, but there is no support for alternative spellings or stemming. Federated search with integrated third-party systems, such as to find ServiceNow articles, is possible using APIs.

The categories at the top of the Feed refine what's displayed there, but we think it's unusual that categories aren't a search filter (or even a term that's searchable). Publishers may add hashtags to content, and this will group posts; however hashtags in comments are not returned in results. There aren't any search management features, such as the option to add topics to posts, sponsored searches or likely answers, but this is also on the roadmap.

Searching for people is generally easy, people results are returned in the search or there is a separate 'Connect' directory function. People may search for their colleagues using terms found in any public profile field, although alternative spelling suggestions here would be helpful. Profile pages are simple but useful, displaying the files the two people have shared with each other for example. Organisations may choose to let employees edit profile fields, or these can be fed from source systems, and fields can be public-facing or private. Someone's manager and direct reports display on their profile page, and we like the simple org chart that is easy to explore.

As mentioned previously, reference material is stored in the Hub; this is split into a simple folder structure that contains uploaded documents, Pages (see Scenario 6) and integrations (see Scenario 4). We like the 'protect page' toggle for sensitive content, which requires the reader to authenticate before it opens.

Overall, search and knowledge management is somewhat basic, and we'd like to see more done to improve the experience. However, given Blink's focus on the frontline and social media-esque user experience, it's worth considering that Blink's approach may actually suit their target customers.



Blink includes a useful native livestreaming feature.

Administrative tasks are completed in a separate desktop portal and overall Blink is easy to administer without the need for technical knowledge, such as the simple application of platform permissions or toggling menu items. It can be tricky to find some settings though. It took us a while to work out where to create a new Channel for example, but there is helpful guidance on Blink's website that's accessible from the portal in some places. Home pages are managed via an easy drag-and-drop interface, where widgets have a good range of options. This is pleasingly flexible and works well.

In the Hub, administrators add categories and folders that links, tools or 'Pages' are placed into; Pages are also associated with audiences, allowing them to then be shared into the Feed where wanted. Pages are built using a rich text editor, but the Blink Assist AI isn't available here. We think this is a shame as it's more likely to be helpful with these longer-form pages. We think the Pages experience could be improved, which is echoed by customer feedback.

Where someone has selected alternative language settings, they may auto-translate comments, posts and Pages with an 'allow translation' toggle set by a publisher. In each case the end user must press a button to generate the translation. Alternatively, publishers may upload Pages in different languages with separate audiences.

There aren't any inbuilt content life cycle tools, beyond publish and unpublish dates that are manually set by the publisher. There are some stats on Hub activity (see Scenario 7) and Blink says more information is now available in analytics.

Video and other media can be embedded in Posts and Pages, as well as via integrations (see Scenario 4). There is no native hosting capability, but there is a nice livestreaming capability provided via an integration with Vimeo and YouTube, or with another RTMP solution. This includes scheduling tools, automatic caption generation and an associated chat screen for questions or observations.

Blink's themed dashboards are attractive.

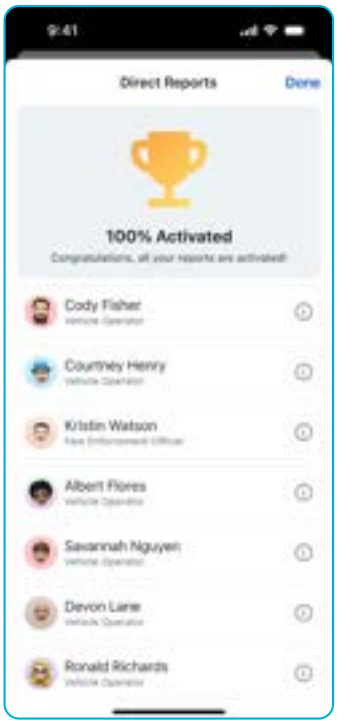
Blink includes a variety of dashboards grouped under different themes, such as 'activation' to see data on adoption by departments, location etc. This is helpful for focusing adoption efforts in the right places, and each view is attractively presented. 'Productivity' dashboards focus on Hub activity, showing what's popular and 'failing', as well as some 'clean-up' suggestions including empty folders, unopened links and unopened Microapps. 'Organisation' gives an overview of profile completion rates, although there's no subsequent step from here to make improvements.

We like the 'Reach' dashboard that provides the average reach rate by month, with the number of Posts overlaid. A 'Top posts by reach' list and 'average reach by Post time' heat map are also useful. Each Post has its own summary of analytics, but we think more could be done to provide communicators with a better understanding of how their content is performing overall, such as by offering publishers a dashboard of just their content.

Mandatory reads are handled well in Blink, where publishers may choose to make any Page mandatory. Admins see a progress percentage in the admin portal showing who has read the Page. Where people need reminding, admins can trigger this directly from within the analytics. The results are exportable to CSV, and Blink has said they will integrate with a third-party system if requested.

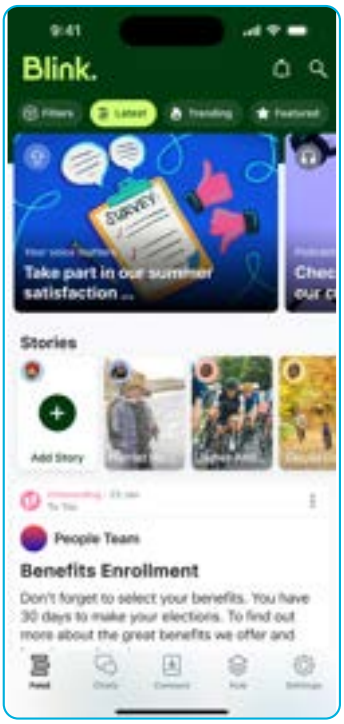
There is a good range of analytics, but we think there's an opportunity to expand yet further. For example, the addition of data comparisons would be helpful, such as comparing activity to the same time last month or year. There is no search analytics, which if combined with improved life cycle features, could be highly beneficial for admins.

Overall, there is a good range of charts with some helpful features for admins and the option to export into Tableau or similar where desired. We think there is room for improvement, but there have been developments since our demo and Blink have some exciting plans on the roadmap. Additionally, AI-powered sentiment analysis is available at additional cost, and we've not seen this in action, but this could be a significant addition to the analytics range.



Managers can easily see who from their team has downloaded the app and help them sign up if needed.

Push notifications help reach people even if they don't have the app open.



Groups of content are displayed as carousels on mobile.

Blink was designed with the frontline in mind and the focus on a mobile-first experience is clear throughout. Blink is an excellent app product and one of the best we've reviewed in this report. Most of the scenarios cover the mobile experience, so please do read the whole review to get a full sense of the product.

It's very easy for frontline workers to gain access to the app. Blink is available in public app stores, but it's Blink's commitment to visit customers on launch that stands out. They will provide branded materials, such as posters that include QR codes, then visit sites as they launch the app to help people gain access. Once adoption rates for a client hit 70% the rollout team will hand over to the customer success team. This is an unusual service from a vendor that is very helpful for admin teams and their often geographically-dispersed frontline workers.

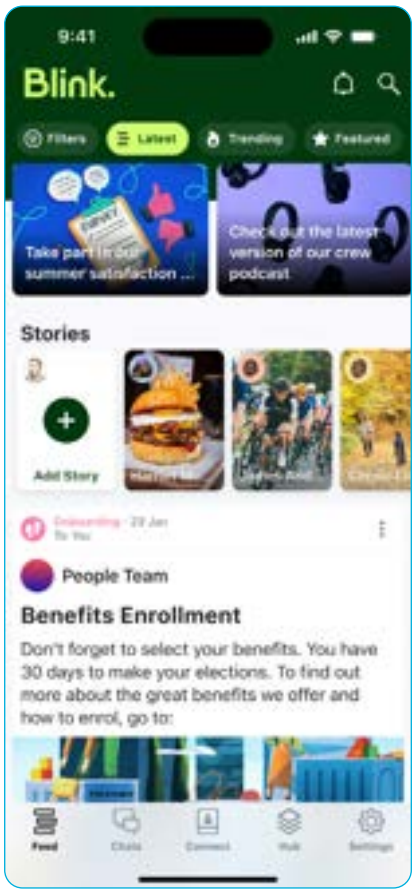
It's easy for administrators to trigger reminders to people who haven't downloaded Blink. Managers can also generate QR codes to encourage downloading the app; a nice gamification feature shows when their team is '100% activated'. These approaches help boost adoption by removing the burden of finding out about the app away from the employee. Once set up, the app will keep people logged in, or authentication can be set to be required each time. This includes multi-factor authentication, biometrics support and, unusually, challenges on old or unsupported devices if strict security measures are needed.

Blink launch teams visit client sites to help people download, log in and navigate the app (this example is from Arriva's launch day).

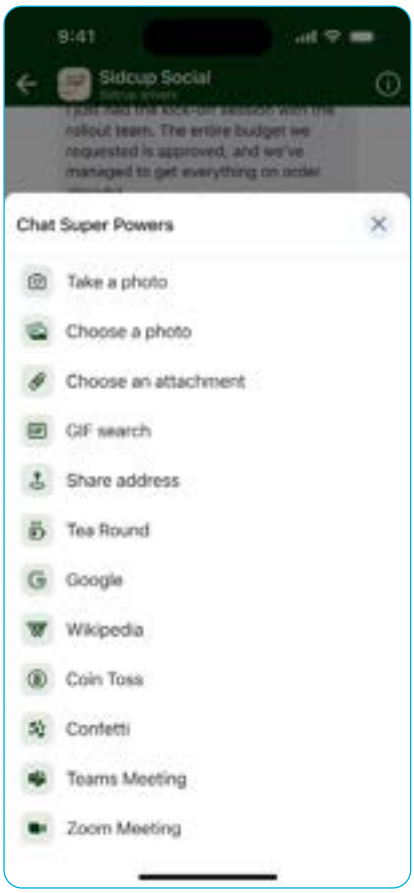
Frontline employees are well supported through the excellent mobile experience. A helpful 'do not disturb' setting allows people to enter their working hours to avoid being interrupted at home. This is beneficial for those organisations facing legal or union challenges regarding people's access to business tools in personal time. It's also useful for those who work outside of 'office hours', such as night shift workers, who want to avoid being disturbed. Additionally, for those with poor phone signal, the Feed and Chats are cached for offline reading; it would be helpful to offer people the opportunity to 'save' Hub content for offline reading too.

Blink's features have been set up with the frontline in mind. Deep links, Microapps and other integrations mentioned in Scenario 4 are simple to complete, highly relevant and effective for this audience. An 'open shifts' microapp is particularly helpful, both for managers to advertise empty shifts and for employees to volunteer for additional ones.

The communications and social features (discussed in Scenarios 2 and 3) will help get top-down news out to those who can be physically hard to reach, while also helping to create a sense of community across geographically spread-out organisations. Blink's 'Stories' feature uses familiar social media functionality for image- and video-led Posts in a dedicated space, where employees may add overlays, configurable and branded stickers and text. These appear in a dedicated carousel and provide a simple mechanism for someone to share a moment in their day. Blink Chats offers a credible alternative to replace unofficial tools, like text messaging or WhatsApp.



Stories are familiar from social media platforms and Blink has taken inspiration from this simple functionality.



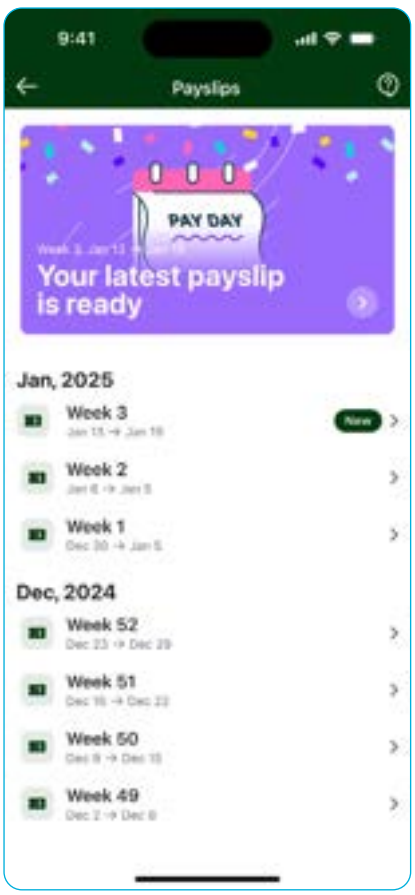
Blink's chat feature includes a range of 'super powers' that can easily replace WhatsApp or similar.

Desktop home page widgets are displayed as carousels in the app, for example events, or posts with the category 'product updates'. These can be shown or hidden for different audiences depending on the targeting settings, for example to create a stripped-back experience for frontline workers. We think a toggle in the home page designer would be simpler and would like to see different home page designs for different audiences introduced. For example, a simplified employee onboarding experience would be welcome and was requested by customers too.

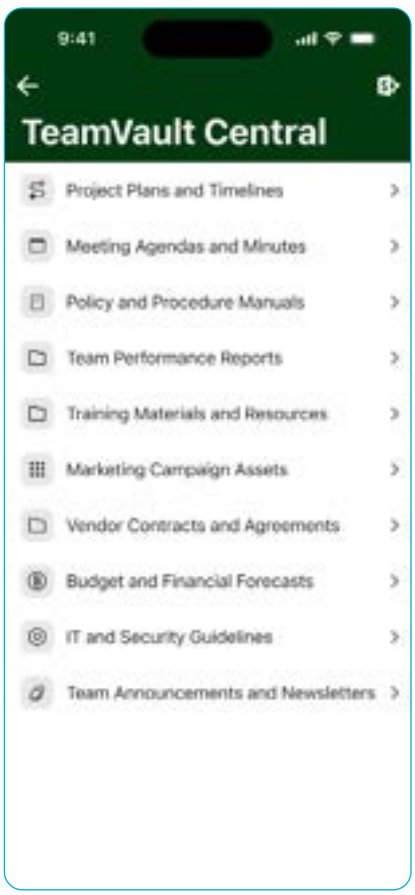
Audience segmentation is then particularly important in the Hub, where tools and Pages can be targeted as needed. This not only means a pension policy page for the UK isn't seen by those in France, but also if a business tool is only relevant for electricians, then bricklayers won't see it. The Hub includes settings to make content more secure, for example asking for biometrics, passwords or even multi-factor authentication to access a folder or Page. This is particularly helpful for displaying payslips. Accessing payslips can pose a challenge where HR system log-in details often have to be updated frequently and employees are likely to forget their credentials, so Blink offers a vital service here. Blink also provides read-only access to SharePoint content, meaning it's possible to surface SharePoint materials to those without licences and at no additional cost. This is very helpful for frontline workers.

Overall, Blink is very easy to use and allows busy frontline workers to quickly navigate to what they need and complete tasks simply. For organisations with frontline workers, we think there is a lot to like, and this would make an excellent tool for them.

Mandatory reads are easy to find and action by employees.



The presentation of payslips is a vital service for frontline workers.



Providing 'read only' views of company repositories is helpful.

THINGS TO BEAR IN MIND

There is pleasingly simple user experience as a result of the frontline- and mobile-first approach the vendor has taken. However, this may mean that for those looking for a comprehensive platform that meets desk-based workers' needs, such as a robust search or governance features, Blink may be too simple. We feel some small changes, such as improvements to the Pages experience (something also mentioned by customers) would make a big difference here. Additionally, Blink does a good job of extending the reach of communications, particularly to the frontline, but is comparatively simpler than other products reviewed in this report.

Some organisations may want to consider introducing Blink for the frontline, while offering another solution for desk-based workers. The range of Blink's integration approaches, including the read-only access to SharePoint content, makes this solution more viable than it may first appear. Additionally, the developments we've seen to date and plans the vendor has on their roadmap mean that in future it may meet further desktop needs as well as the frontline. It's worth noting, however, that Blink is in the higher pricing categories in our report. If it is acting as an alternative to something like SharePoint, then this may not be an issue, and the benefits it brings to the frontline may prove its value beyond the cost.

Overall, where there is a more equal split of worker types, where a mobile experience is high on the list of requirements or where frontline employees dominate, Blink will remain an excellent choice. The vendor's roadmap is healthy too (see below) with some intriguing AI features due in the next year that may mean Blink's value extends further beyond what's covered in this review.

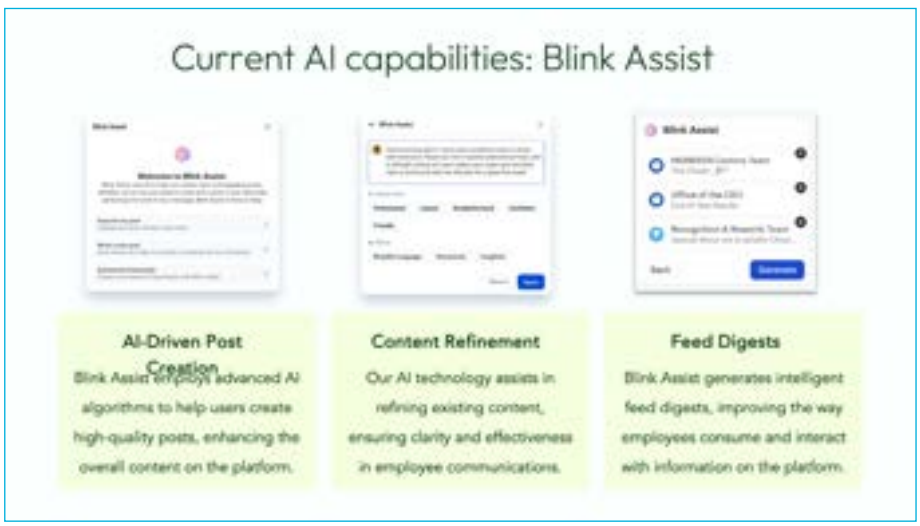
Why choose this product

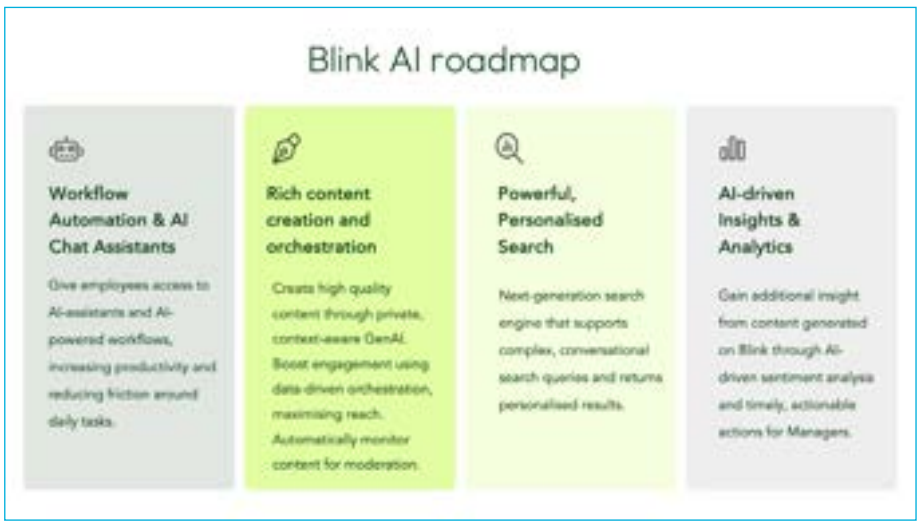
Blink is a frontline-focused, mobile-first product that understands its target audience perfectly. The interface is reminiscent of social media tools (in a good way), so it's instantly familiar and quick to adopt. Blink offers organisations alternatives to shadow technology like WhatsApp, while also offering an effective desktop experience that helps bring employees together. Organisations of any size that have frontline workers or want to address community needs will find something to like about Blink. It offers a good companion to desktop platforms too, meaning desk workers and frontline workers can be served by products that best suit their needs without clashing.

You may also be interested in...

Sociabble Staffbase UKG

Vendor roadmap





Roadmap images provided by Blink.

Back to index

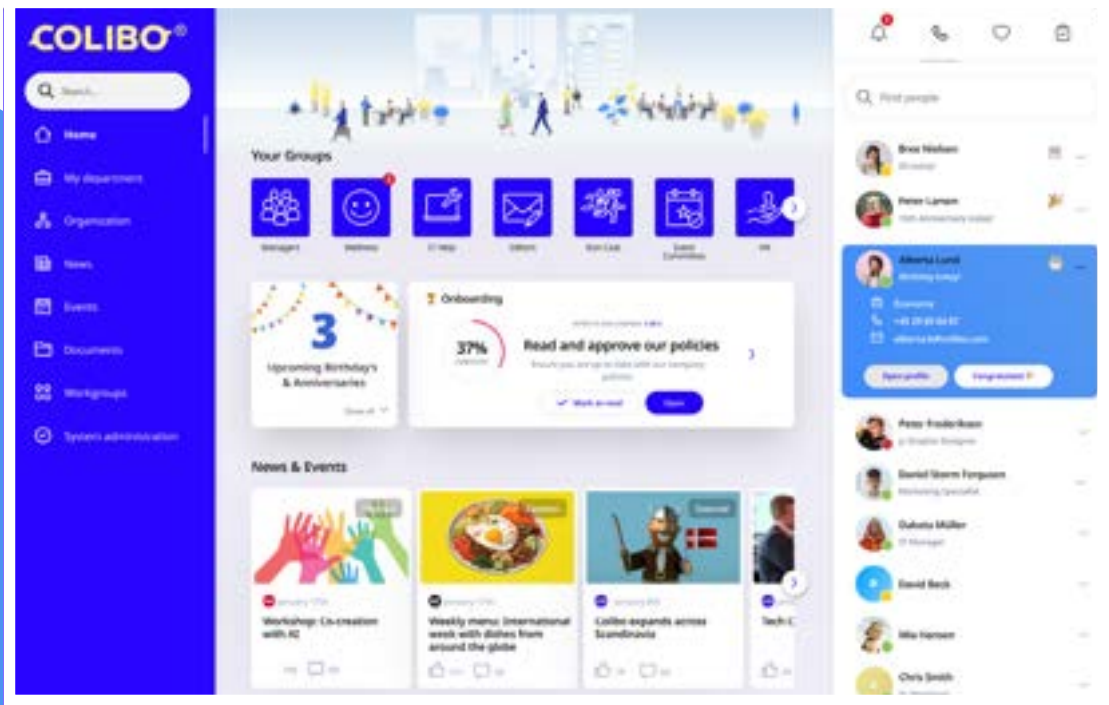
COLIBO®

FULLY STANDALONE

REQUIRES SHAREPOINT

FRONTLINE FOCUS

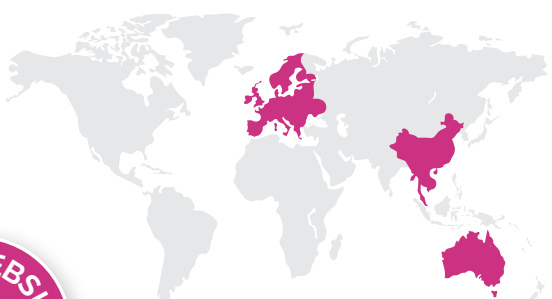
OTHER



Typical deployment:

5,000 to 10,000

Company locations:



VISIT THE WEBSITE

The product in a nutshell

Colibo is extremely easy to use and offers strong functionality for content creation and social collaboration to desktop and mobile users alike.

SUMMARY

Colibo

Colibo, owned by the Danish company Colibo A/S (Aarhus, Denmark) is an extremely easy-to-use intranet product. Its interface is clean, simple, and visually attractive for desktop and mobile users alike. Creation of engaging news stories and other content is straightforward, offering enough flexibility to target the appropriate audiences and avoid information overload. There is strong functionality for collaboration spaces, a well-designed mobile app, and the product comes with feature-rich modules for analytics and digital signage.

In some areas, such as navigation and site structure, Colibo's design choices are unusual and may not appeal to everyone. Their focus on simplicity means that the product misses some of the flexibility that especially large and complex organisations may require, while functionality is sometimes limited. For instance, there are only a few integrations with third-party business applications available out-of-the-box, and there is limited flexibility to set up complex branding.

Overall, we find that Colibo strikes a good balance between the simplicity of the user experience and flexibility in the configuration. The product will appeal to businesses of any size that favour easy governance over complex functionality. Organisations with a significant population of frontline workers will appreciate the well-designed mobile experience. User adoption and change managers will find that Colibo is easy to pick up by all categories of employees, including those that are technically less savvy.

Pricing

PRICE BAND	
1,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
5,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
20,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
50,000 users	$ $ $ $ $

These prices are indicative, offering a comparison of the products featured in this report only. Please contact the vendor for a bespoke quote.

PRICING MODEL

Subscription – price per user per month; one-off payment and ongoing maintenance fee.

DISCOUNTS

Charities and non-profit organisations; schools and educational institutes; government / public sector; multi-year commitments.

COSTS TYPICALLY

Slightly higher at the start of the term, but generally spread.

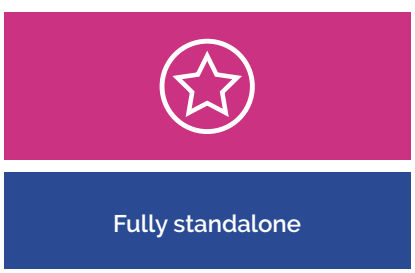
PRICE INCLUDES

Project workshops; training for admins; training for end users; customer success services; maintenance; product support; branding / theming services; editor manuals; updates and upgrades; hosting; access to a community & webinars.

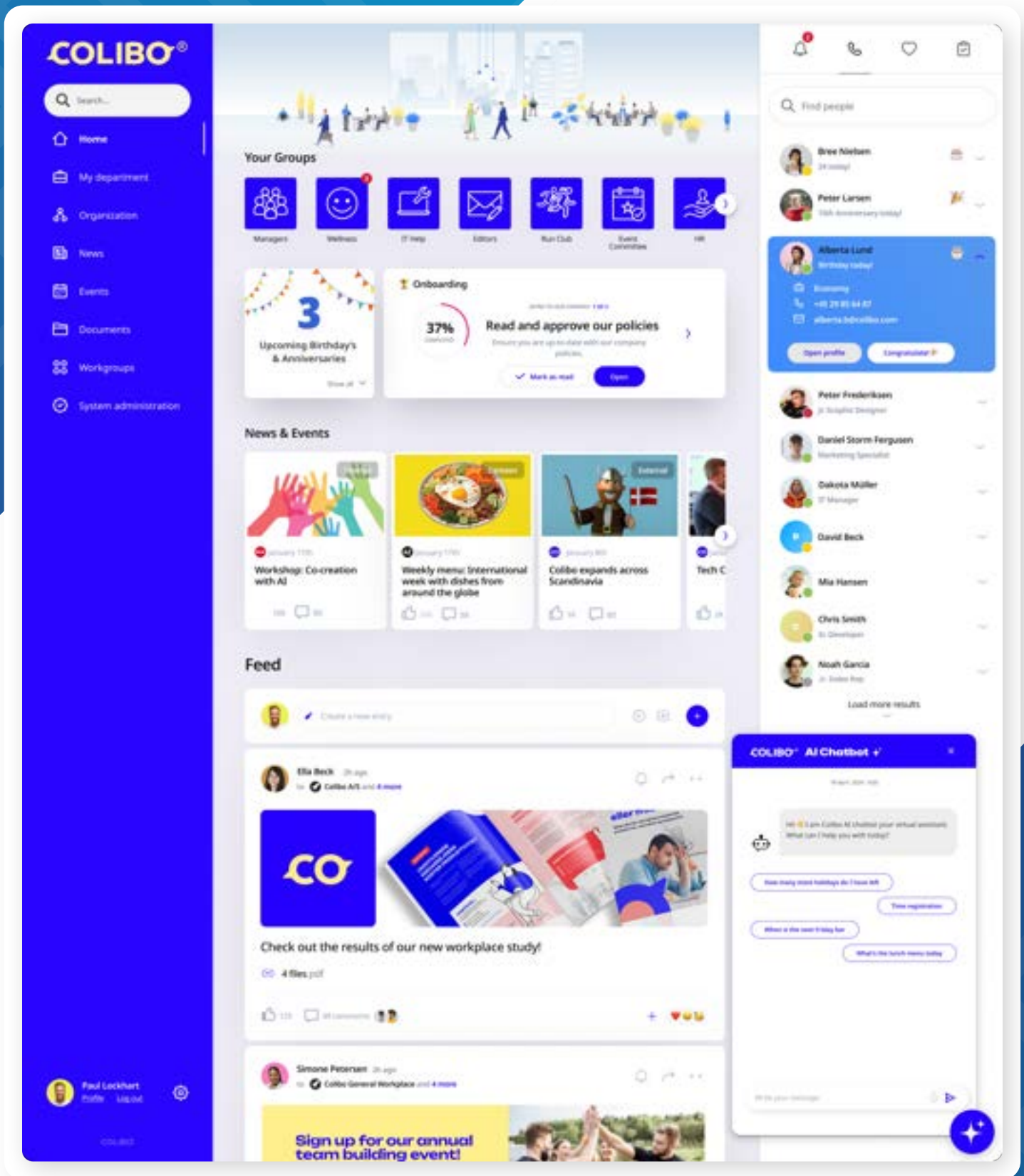
Product type

Branding opportunities

Base systems



Sectors


COLIBO
Home
My department
Organization
News
Events
Documents
Workgroups
System administration
Your Groups
3
Upcoming Birthday's & Anniversaries
Onboarding
37%
Read and approve our policies
News & Events
Workshop: Co-creation with AI
Weekly menu: International week with dishes from around the globe
Colibo expands across Scandinavia
Feed
Check out the results of our new workplace study!
Sign up for our annual team building event!
Find people
Load more results
COLIBO AI Chatbot

COMPANY AND PRODUCT

Company details

Company
Colibo A/S

ISO 27001 certified
Yes

Data residency
Europe (excluding UK)

Company founded
2016

Product launched
2014

Typical client size
5,000 to 10,000

Largest deployment so far
55,000 employees, 10 countries

Customers
Clients include: The Danish Defence, The Municipality of Aarhus, Hochsauerlandkreis, Bundesanstalt für Arbeitsschutz und Arbeitsmedizin, Kvadrat, DR (the national Danish Broadcasting Corporation), Weibel Radars, Comwell Hotels, Frode Laursen Transport & Logistics

Partner locations
None

Company locations
Aarhus, Denmark (HQ); Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong, Singapore, Germany

Product and technical details

Name of product

Colibo

Deployment

Client on-premises	Client private cloud	Microsoft Azure	Amazon Web Services	Vendor-hosted	Microsoft 365 tenant	Google Cloud	Other

Authentication supported

Entra ID	ADFS	Okta	Open ID	Oauth	G Suite	Other

App deployment

Google Play store	Apple store	MDM	MAM	Other

Accessibility

WCAG 2.1 conformant

Document library sources integrated

Box	Dropbox	Google Drive	SharePoint	OneDrive	Other

Optional integrated enterprise search engines

Coveo	**Elastic**	IBM	Lucidworks	**Microsoft**	Mindbreeze	Sinequa	Other

User interface multi-language

Machine translation	**Pre-configured**	**Editable**	Right to left script supported	Other

Content multi-language

Machine translation for publishers	**Machine translation for end users**	**Editable machine translation for publishers**	**Manual creation for publishers**	Right to left script	Other

Set-up and support

Set-up process for new clients

The Colibo solution is installed instantly, enabling the client to work with design and content in parallel to the technical configuration. Colibo comes with an out-of-the-box design and configuration in place and there is a wide range of settings for in-depth design work and configuration. These can be added anytime from the Colibo Marketplace. A typical implementation can be finished within a 3-month timeframe, depending on the amount of content and the allocated internal resources from the client.

Current version

Demonstrated to ClearBox: October 2024 release, version 1.23.16

At January 2025: At least version 1.24.10

Product updates

Minor updates weekly; major updates every quarter.

Product update process

Major releases are presented frequently for customers through online webinars, but the Colibo product is updated continuously. The customer decides on timing and can opt-out.

Reverse-out options

The client owns their own data. Upon termination of the contract, data can be exported and handed over to the client in a usable format. The customer can also export specific content from the built-in functionality in Colibo or use the APIs.

Technical support

Email support	Phone support	Chat support	Online portal	24/7 support	Office hours only

User community

Colibo hosts conferences for the public, and for private clients for knowledge sharing and networking. An online forum is available for clients, sharing best practices and guides.

Voice of the vendor

Colibo says: "Colibo is a fast deployed, extremely user-friendly and highly integrable enterprise intranet and Workplace Integration Hub. It delivers efficient communication between co-workers, with easy access to company information and built-in tools as well as external 3rd party tools. Colibo is designed for complex organisations where security is paramount. The solution can be configured for even the most complex setups and can be used freely as a stand-alone system or integrated with both Microsoft 365 and Google Workspace. Additionally, many customers operate the solution on-premises, which, along with the option for stand-alone operation, ensures full isolation from external security threats."

Voice of the customer

When asked about their favourite aspect or feature of the product, customers most often mention simplicity and ease of use, particularly for new hires but also for experienced staff and administrators. "The best about Colibo is its simplicity, functionality and intuitiveness" says one customer, and another one adds "The system is clear, intuitive and easy to use for both end users and administrators." Specific product areas are praised; according to one customer, "Colibo allows every user in the organisation to create events, post news, write posts, and find specific information with ease." Another customer praises the Workgroups in Colibo: "We are very happy with the working groups, which help us to ensure collaboration across the organisation. Because it is so easy to create working groups, they are used for both large and small topics and tasks."

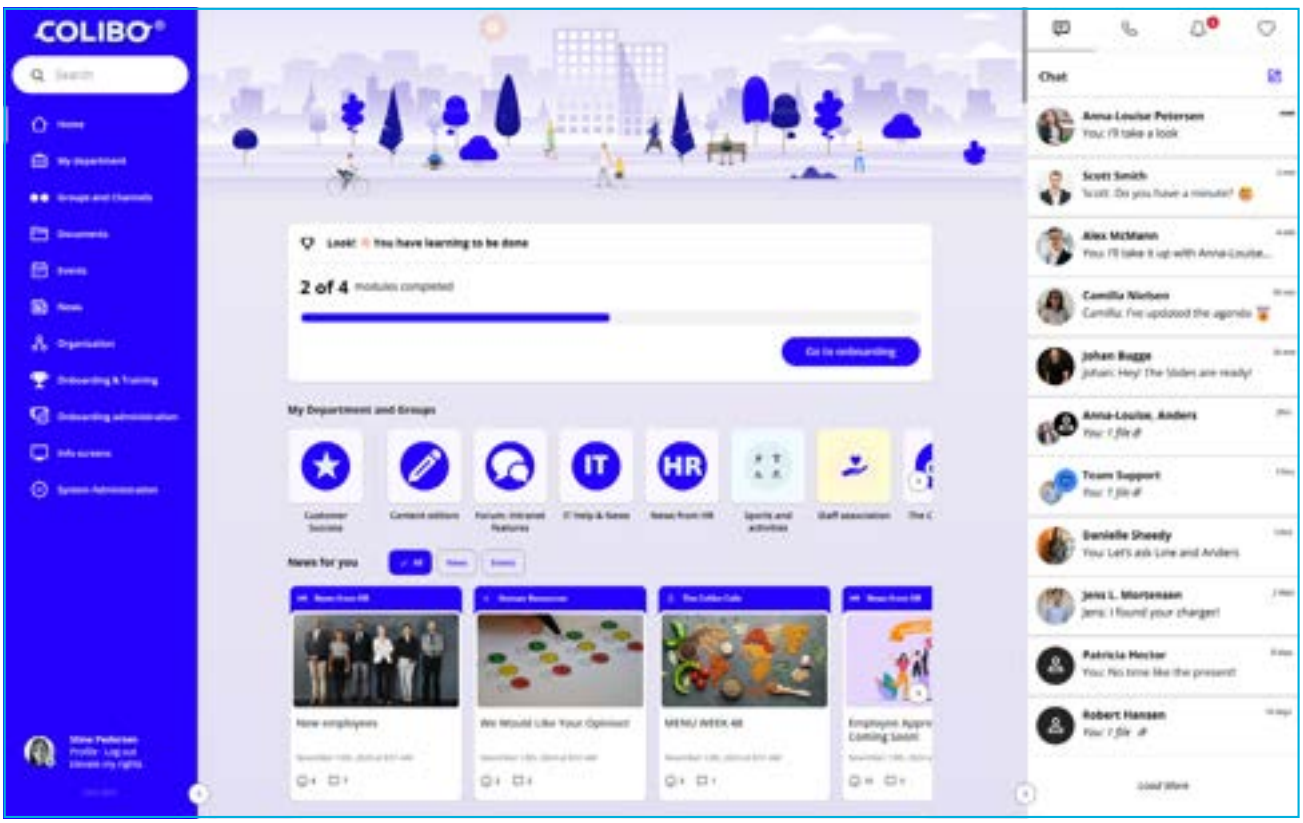
Requested improvements are mainly about more flexibility in certain product areas. "I would like to give my editors more rights, i.e. multiple levels of rights" is what one customer is asking for, and another wants to see "some small adjustments behind the scenes in the engine room" to make their life as an administrator easier. Some customers also want "more flexibility in site building" and "more options for adapting the solution in terms of design." A similar comment was made by another customer: "I would like to see some small adjustments in the system setup so that it opens up for larger and more complex organisations."

The experience of working together with Colibo is positive across the board. "We had a great experience working with the vendor. They adhered to the time schedule and budget, and we received good support during the startup phase" is the feedback from one customer, while another one told us: "Overall, the vendor has been responsive and helpful. They provided tailored support for specific customisations." The people aspects of the collaboration also received praise: "Colibo people are very easy to work with and are listening to the customer's needs" said one customer, and another added: "They are always helpful with both big and small things, such as support."

SCENARIOS & SCORES

Please see the Scenarios below for more detail on each of these.

SCENARIO AND SCORE	KEY BENEFITS	IMPROVEMENTS / CONSIDERATIONS
4 **1. User Experience & Visual Appeal**	Intuitive and easy to use, both on desktop and mobile.	Limited flexibility to set up complex navigation and branding.
3.5 **2. Publishing & Communications Management**	Strong features for content creation and multichannel publishing, including digital signage.	No editorial calendar to manage the publication process.
3.5+ **3. Community & Engagement**	Good support for employee collaboration. Well-designed onboarding and training module.	No gamification functionality such as badges and leaderboards.
2+ **4. Integrations & Services (Including M365)**	Strong integration with Microsoft Teams.	Limited off-the-shelf integration with business software platforms.
3.5 **5. Information Finding & Search**	Search is integrated out-of-the-box with SharePoint and Google Drive.	No features to set up promoted results or likely answers.
4 **6. Administrator Experience**	Strong functionality for content life cycle management.	Layout of content pages is constrained by product-wide design choices.
3.5+ **7. Analytics**	Extensive reporting capabilities based on comprehensive data collection.	Analytics module is based on a complex third party tool that will take time and effort to fully master.
3.5 **8. Mobile & Frontline Support**	Many options to onboard frontline workers.	User experience for admins to configure the app is more technical and less user-friendly.

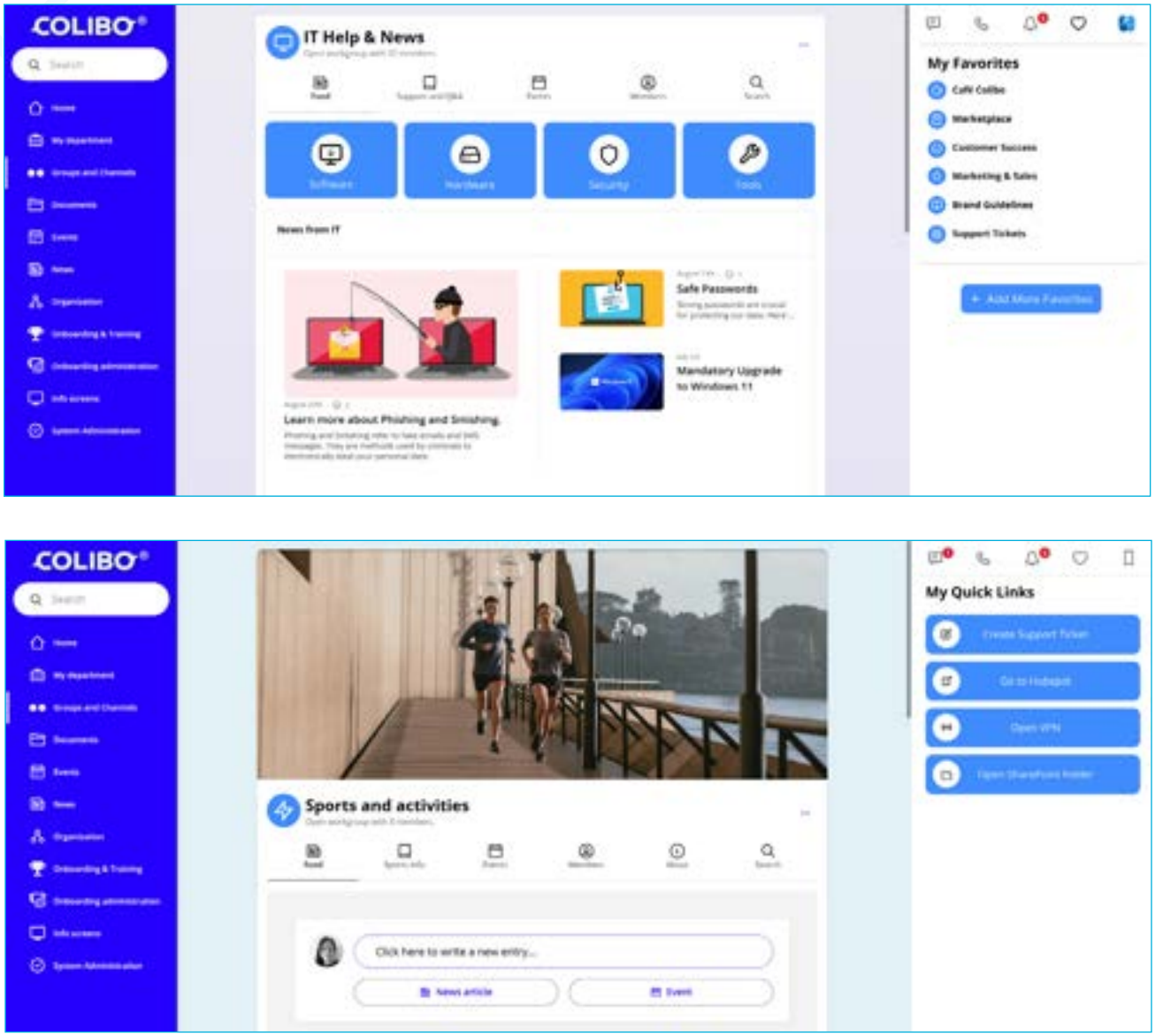


Colibo's home page illustrating the left-hand navigation, the right-hand sidebar, and the central content area.

The user interface is clean, attractive, and extremely easy to learn and use. Central to Colibo are the activity feeds where users interact with colleagues, collaborate on projects and share knowledge. These are complemented by a range of visually appealing widgets that are easy to customise and target. On the home page, for example, there is a personalised onboarding widget that sits at the top, followed by an overview of departments and groups, news stories, and an aggregated activity feed. See Scenario 6 for more on designing the home page and choosing widgets.

The central part of each page is complemented with a navigation menu on the left and a sidebar widget on the right, where elements such as notifications and access to the people directory are grouped. The navigation menu and the sidebar widget are both configurable by an administrator and will appear persistently across all pages. There is also a helpful and configurable guided tour of the platform, which newcomers will appreciate.

The approach to navigation, via the left-hand menu, is simple and visually sober. Menu items can be added and the order rearranged, and some menu items will expand when clicked to show a second level of navigation items, but the location of the menu is fixed, and mega menus are not available. It is possible, however, to complement the menu with additional navigational elements elsewhere on the page, as illustrated in the screenshots below. For instance, buttons can be added to a departmental page or to the bookmarks area in the right-hand sidebar.



Two examples of how buttons that provide additional navigation can be added to the central area or in the right-hand sidebar.

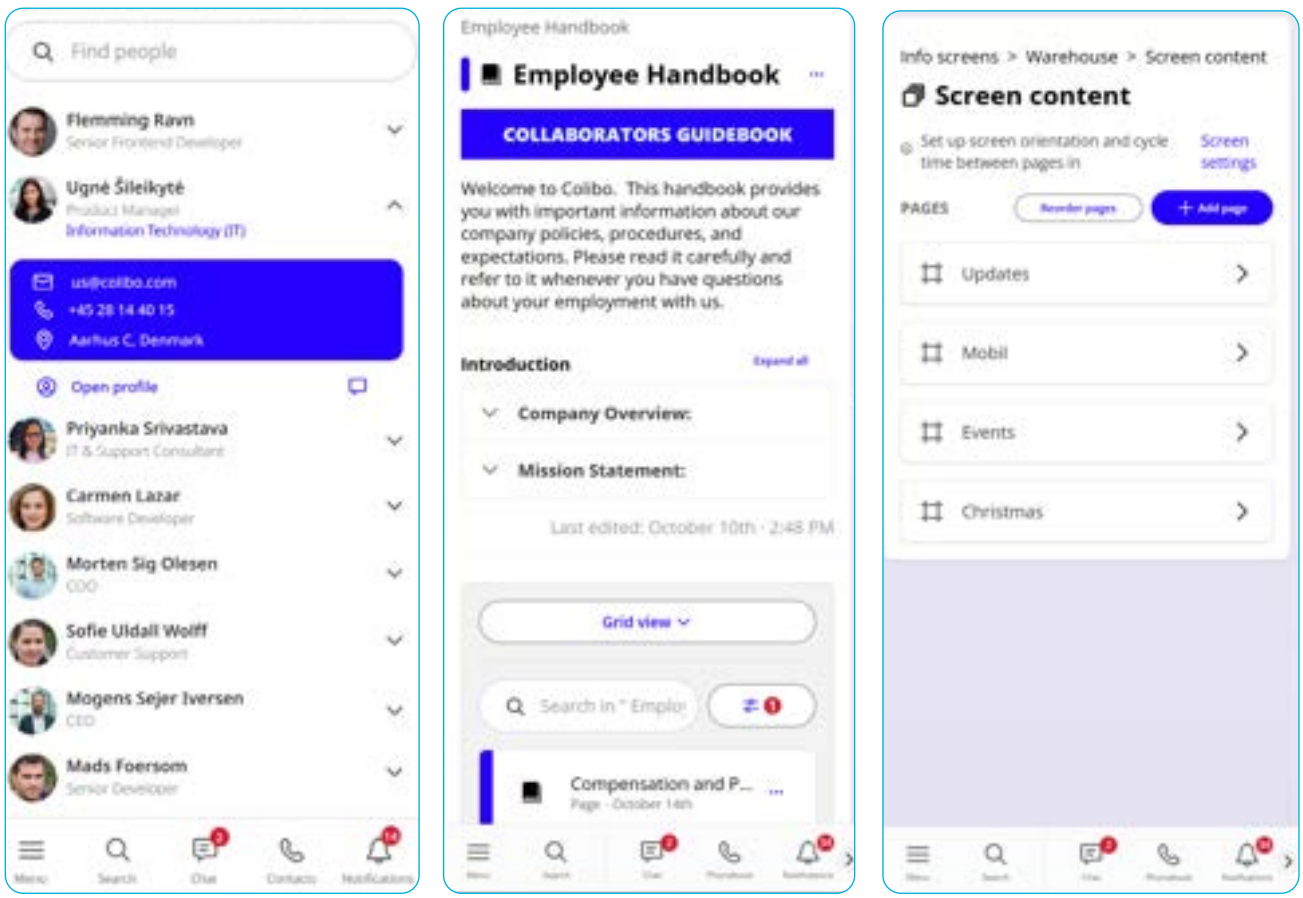
Notifications are handled sensibly and grouped under a bell icon in the right-hand sidebar. Time-critical notifications will be sent as push notifications to the Colibo mobile app (see Scenario 8) and will also appear as such in the desktop version if the user has subscribed to notifications within the browser. Global and local admins decide what type of content will generate notifications. End users keep control over the number of notifications they receive, by switching them off where they are not useful.

Branding elements, such as colour scheme and design for the top banner, can be changed at a product-wide level but also in different areas of the product, for instance at the level of a department or a Workgroup. This makes it possible to give different entities, such as a regional office, a different look and feel. Large international organisations with distinct sub-brands may need more flexibility than this, but for many organisations the features on offer will be a good compromise. We were shown some examples of how Colibo customers have put the available branding possibilities to good use. We also like how Colibo has brought some playful elements to their design, such as the option to apply a dynamic (moving) background to the top banner with a weather theme and with stylised buildings that Colibo customise as part of their branding and theming services (included in the pricing provided).

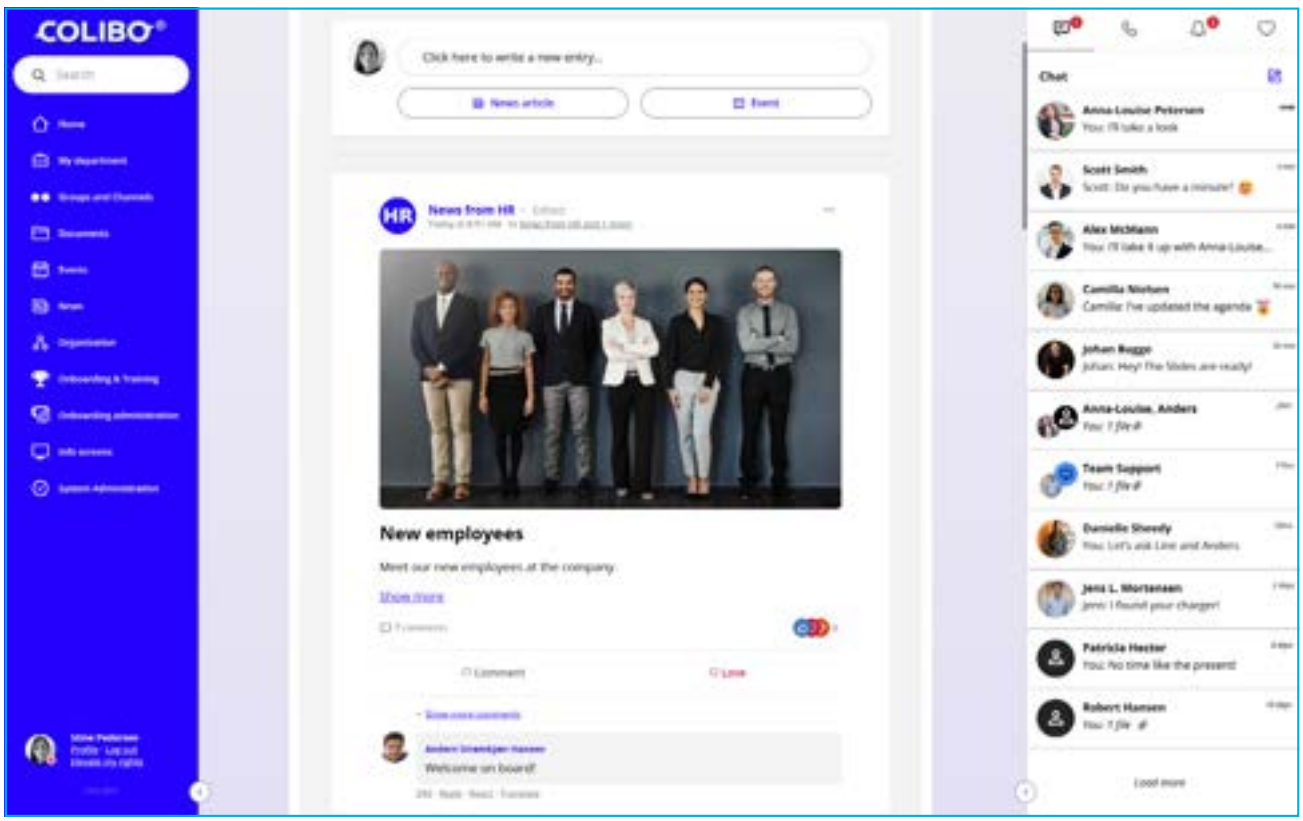
Three examples of how the top banner background can be customised, and the configuration dialog box to set the various weather options.

The design elements that work well in the desktop version are transposed thoughtfully into the mobile experience. The right-hand sidebar widget now appears as a set of icons at the bottom of the screen, and the menu is accessible from the hamburger icon. Functionality such as updating content and accessing the people directory work intuitively, and even more complex information such as an Employee Handbook is rendered well on mobile. See Scenario 8 for more on the mobile experience.

Overall, we find that Colibo strikes a good balance between simplicity of the user experience and flexibility in the configuration. Other products in this report may offer more flexibility and very granular configuration options, but we believe that many organisations will appreciate Colibo's conscious effort to focus on ease of use.



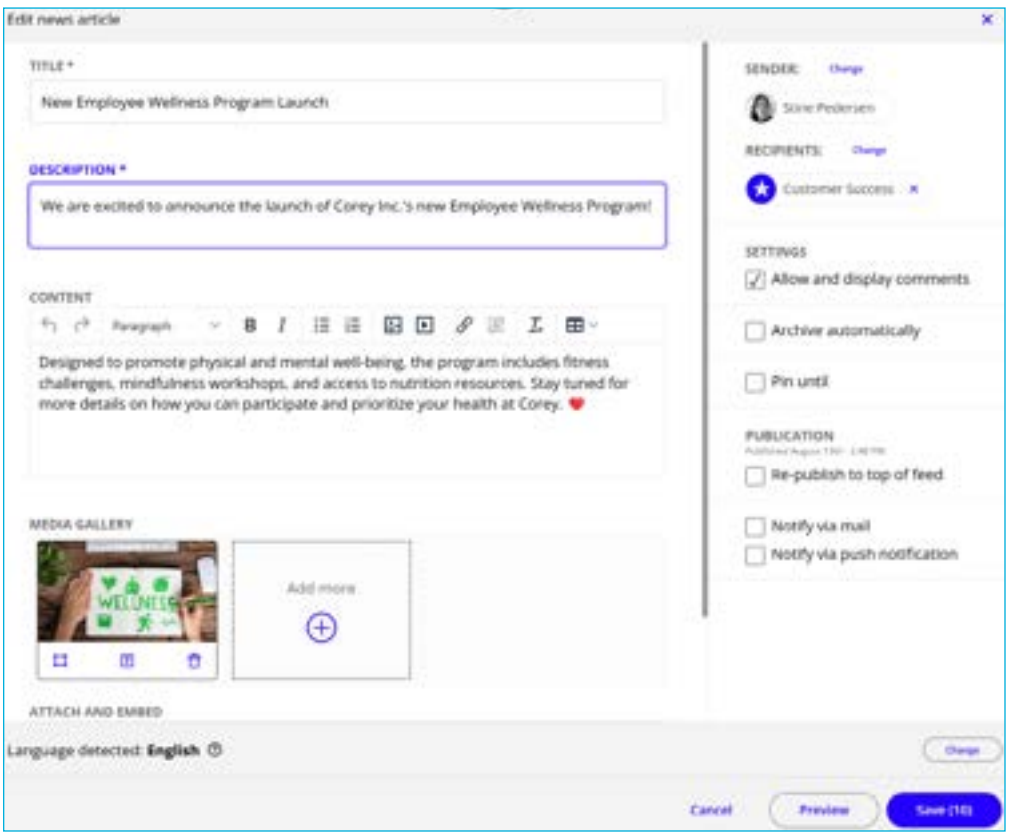
The intuitive user interface works equally well in the mobile app.



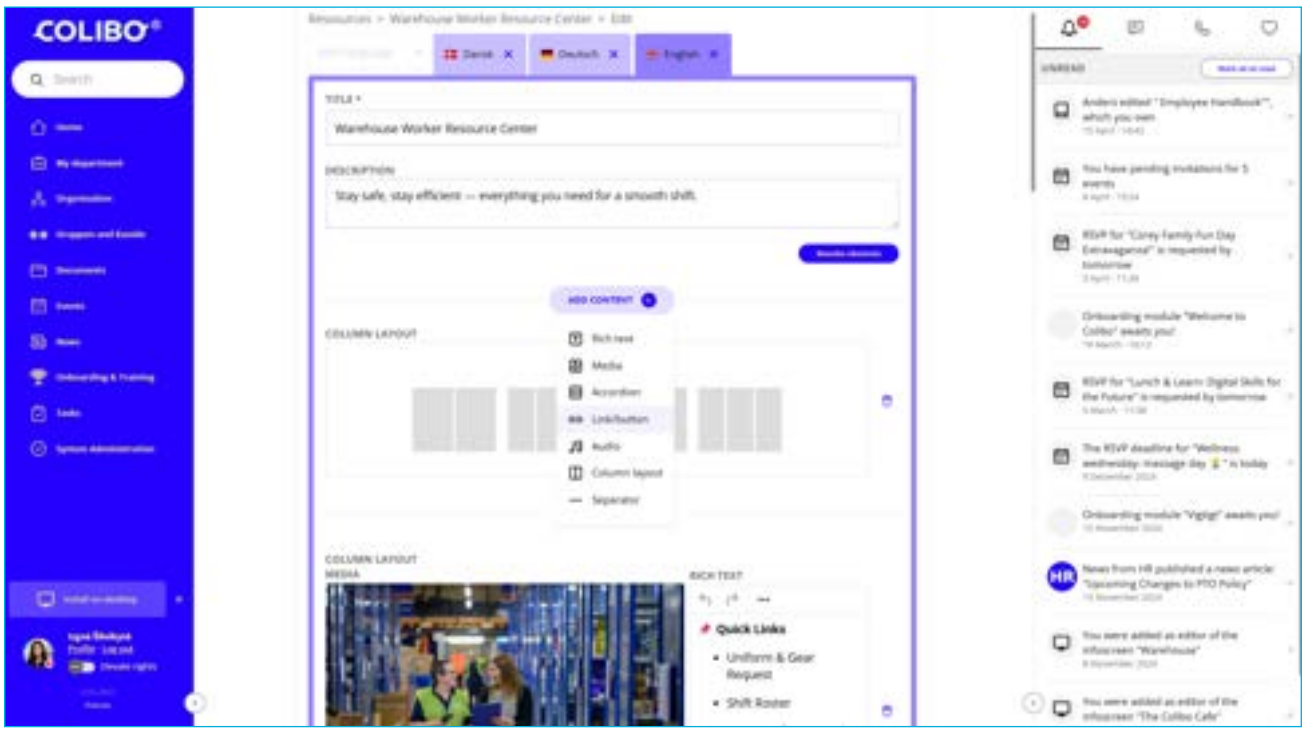
Example of a news article that appears in the activity feed on the home page.

Colibo offers a consistent approach to content creation and is particularly strong in reaching employees across multiple channels, including newsletters and digital signage. Various types of content are defined within the product: posts, news articles, events, and static content pages. Creation and editing are consistent across these content types and are handled within the user-friendly front-end, without the need to switch to a separate editing environment. News articles can include image galleries and external videos, and there is also a possibility to embed additional elements such as a survey built with Microsoft Forms.

Static content pages are typically created under the 'Documents' area within the navigation menu. Templates are available to guide infrequent users and to ensure consistency across pages in the same category (for example, product overviews or HR policies). We like the accordion widget which allows readers to gradually discover the content without being overwhelmed. Other widgets, such as a media gallery or an audio widget, are also available to create attractive pages, although the choice of widgets is more limited than in other products in this report. This is a conscious decision by Colibo to find the right balance between ease of use and fullness of functionality, which we believe most customers will appreciate. There is also the possibility to create a multi-column layout, which works well within the boundaries of the available space.



Creating a news article is done in a simple intuitive user interface.

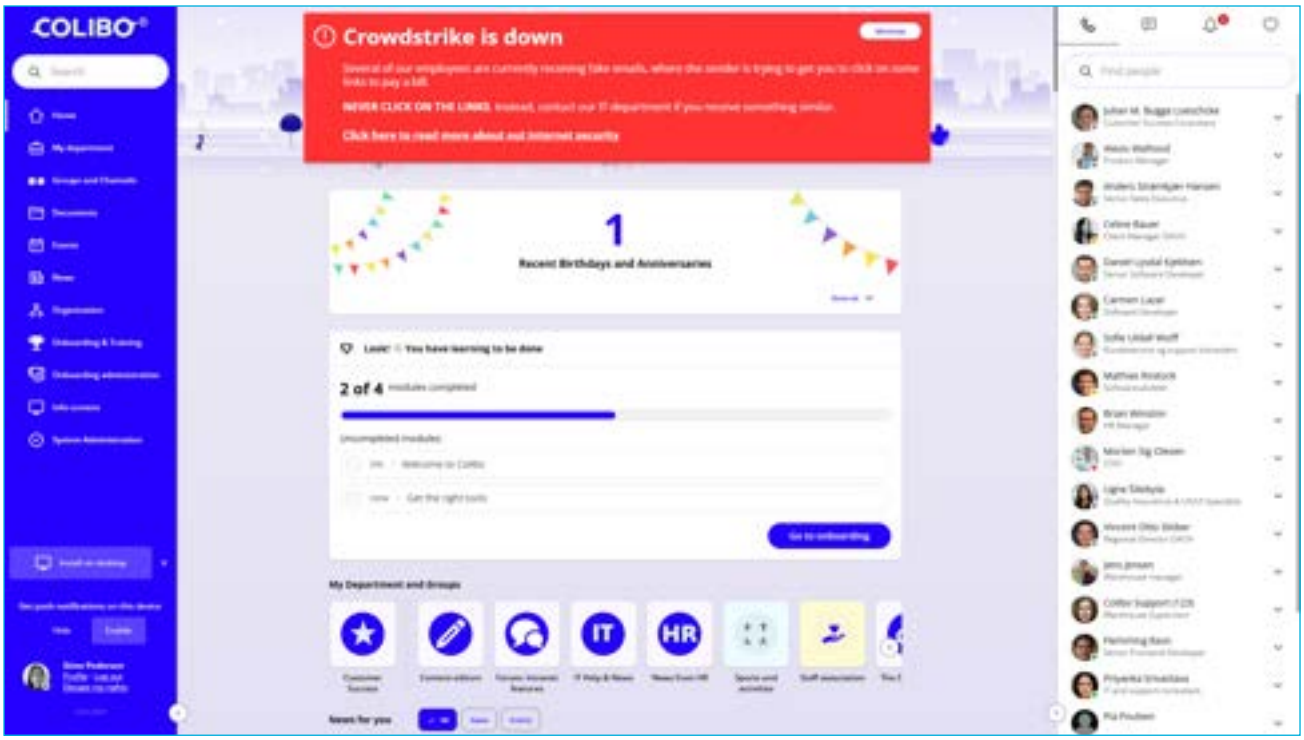


Static content pages are created using a variety of widgets available from a user-friendly dropdown menu.

Targeting of news articles is achieved by selecting the recipients when creating a new message. Recipients can be a combination of individual users, departments, and members of collaboration spaces called 'Workgroups' in Colibo. Workgroups are used to group news articles on a particular topic together, and employees can opt in or out of group membership depending on their interest (see Scenario 3 for more on Workgroups). Important or mandatory news stories, such as corporate news, can be published in a dedicated and mandatory Workgroup. These targeting mechanisms provide a good deal of flexibility to fit most business scenarios, although more flexibility to target audiences dynamically based on rules would be a nice addition.

The product includes a number of features to manage the news publication process. News authors and editors can add a publication date to their news stories, and an approval workflow is available. Editors will be able to see an overview of news stories that are pending publication, but there is no editorial calendar or similar feature included in the product to help them manage the process. Once published, news articles will appear in dedicated and targeted news widgets that can be placed on the home page. Important news stories can be pinned to the top of the activity feed for maximum visibility.

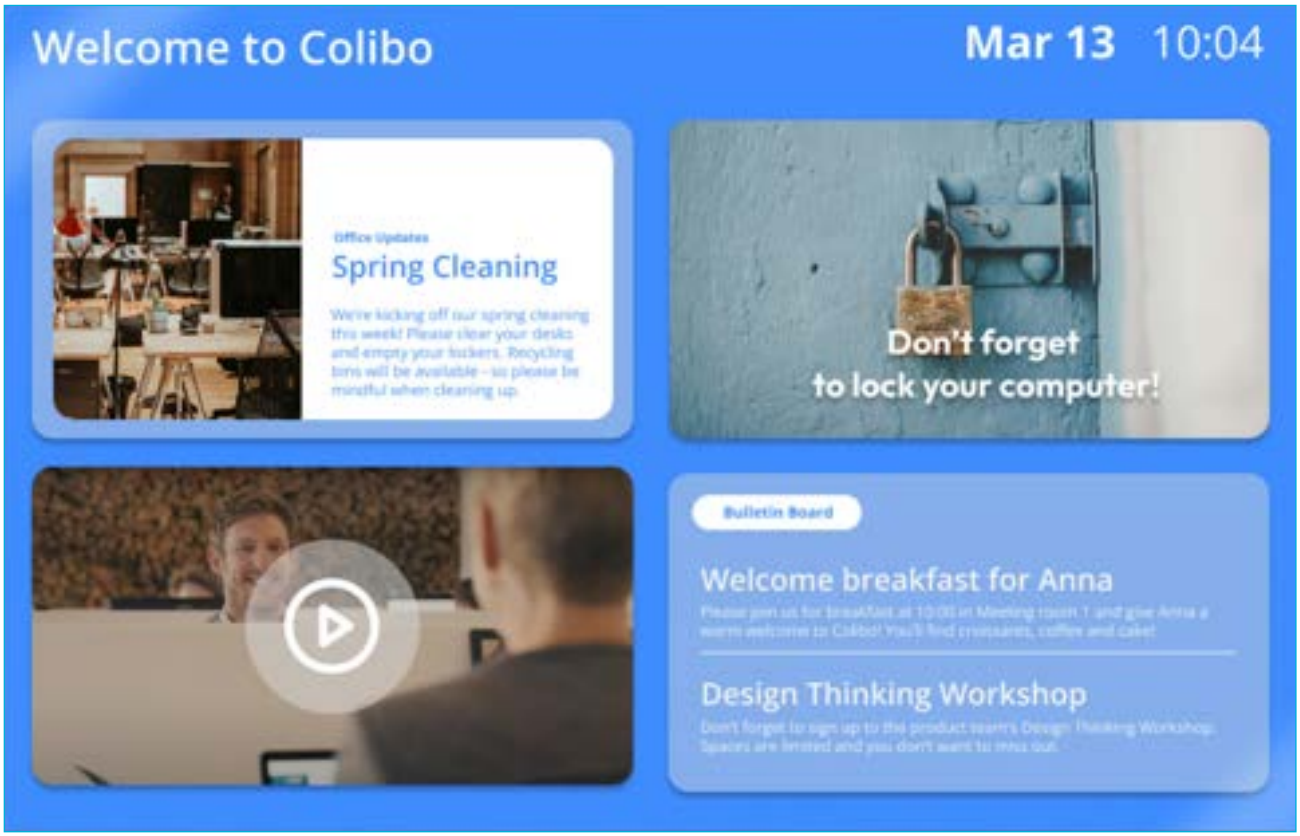
For crisis communication, a banner widget can be scheduled to appear on every page, with different colours indicating the level of severity of the incident. There is an option to include a link to a page with more details, and the message can be targeted to a part of the organisation only. End users can minimise the banner but cannot make it go away completely, even after reading the additional information.



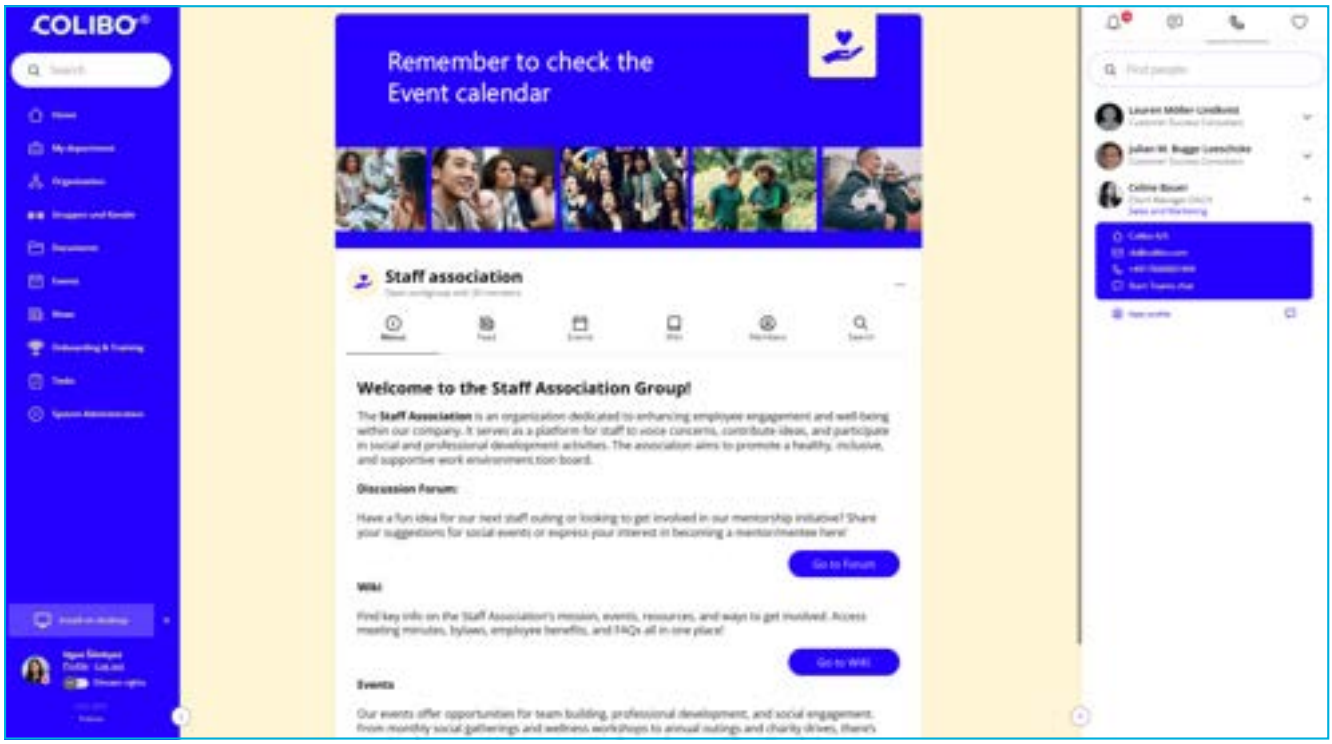
A banner widget can be scheduled to appear on every page, with different colours indicating the level of severity of the incident.

Colibo includes an extensive set of possibilities to communicate across channels. News articles can be sent via email or as a push notification to the mobile app. News editors can use this mechanism when an important or time-critical article is published. News can also be shared in a Slack or MS Teams channel. The product also includes a well-designed newsletter feature. An authorised newsletter creator will be able to manage the distribution list and will decide which news stories to include in the newsletter. A nice feature is that employees can suggest news articles to be included, and these will be flagged to newsletter creators for their consideration. A further improvement would be to give the newsletter creator more freedom to add extra text blocks or other types of content, rather than just picking existing news articles.

Digital signage screens are managed within InfoScreen, a separate module but fully integrated within Colibo and included in the pricing for this report. An InfoScreen admin, for instance a warehouse manager, will be able to set up content to be displayed on the various screens across the facility. We were impressed by the rich functionality available to set up the screens by choosing from an extensive library of dedicated widgets, positioning them on the screen, and configuring the content. Examples of widgets include a news story with QR code for details, an event, a YouTube video or a simple countdown. The screenshot below illustrates some of the possibilities.



Different types of content can be configured to appear on the digital screens.



The Workgroup in this example includes a discussion forum, a wiki area, and a section for events.

Spaces where people can collaborate are called 'Workgroups' in Colibo and are a key element of the product offering. Groups are either open (anyone can join), closed (joining requires approval) or hidden (for confidential topics). They can be used for a variety of purposes by adding the appropriate widgets to the Workgroup's central work area. Available widgets include an events section, a tasks area, a feed for member discussion, a wiki and a forum. There is no specific functionality for idea management, but the basic features of Workgroups can be used to collect ideas into a common area. We like the feature whereby a closed Workgroup can have a guest section, with content visible to employees who are not yet members. This is a nice way to promote the group and encourage other employees to join.

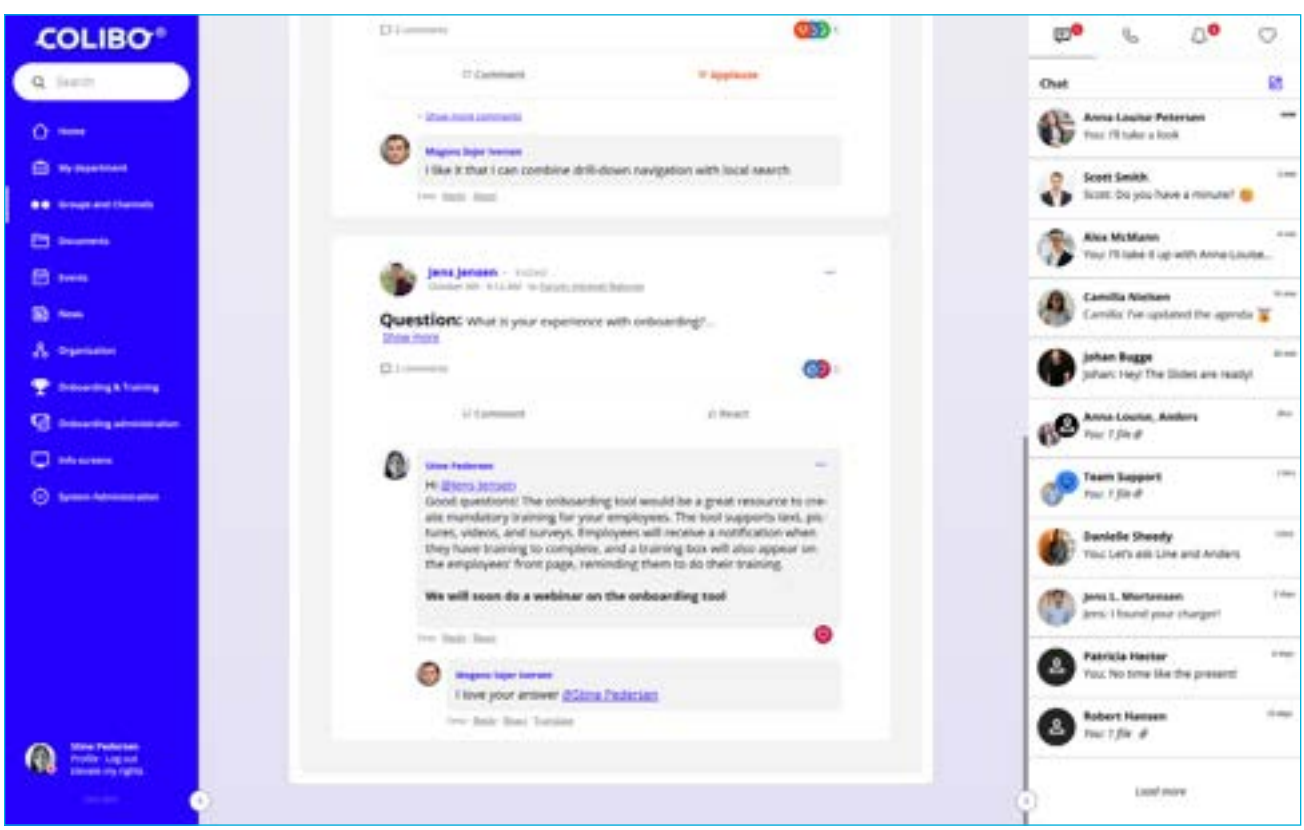
Social features within Colibo centre around activity feeds that can be placed on the home page, on a departmental page or in a Workgroup. The content of each feed is restricted based on where it is placed, while the feed on the home page consolidates all the user's interactions in a single place. The product supports all the traditional features of commenting, liking and other reactions, and using @mentions. For each interaction, notifications are generated that will be visible for the content owner in the persistent sidebar widget. Admins can remove inappropriate comments if required, but there is no simple mechanism for users to flag offensive content; they will have to inform admins by @mentioning them or through another channel. There is also no overview page for admins to see all reported content; we believe this would be a useful addition.

Colibo includes a well-executed chat feature that is available both on the desktop version and in the mobile app. From the people directory in the right-hand sidebar, employees can start a chat with a colleague or set up a group chat. We found the functionality very intuitive and a valid alternative to well-known consumer products such as WhatsApp.

The product comes with a built-in tool to create simple surveys and questionnaires. This can be used for many purposes, for instance to add an employee engagement survey into a wellbeing Workgroup. For more complex polls and surveys, Microsoft Forms can be used. The form is then embedded into Colibo, so employees can fill it out without leaving the Colibo environment. Other functionality, such as gamification elements or badges, are not part of the offering.

The functionality to create events is particularly strong. An organiser of a town hall meeting or a staff party will be able to create an invitation for an event and manage a built-in attendee list to follow up on registrations. Like in news articles or posts, a quick survey can be included, and an integration with Outlook and Google Calendar is also available. Reminder notifications (if activated) will be sent to employees who have not yet reacted to the invitation.

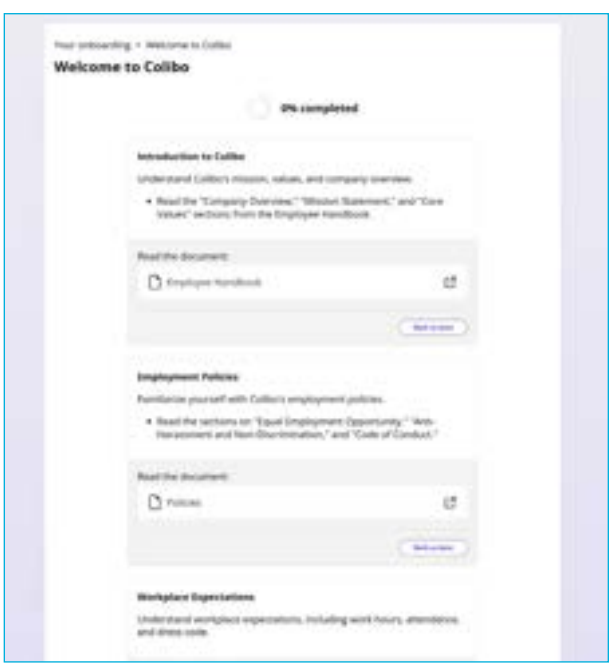
We particularly like Colibo's flexible onboarding and training module. New employees will be guided through a number of steps, with associated actions to be taken and documents to be read. After each step, employees can mark the section as done, and the final step will be a quiz to confirm what has been learned. The administrator of the module, typically an HR manager, will configure the different steps with reading material and actions to be completed such as filling out profile information or reading a mandatory document. Unusually, reports and statistics about progress made by the employees are available to line managers, so they can follow up for their team. The same functionality can also be used to set up training modules for different target audiences.



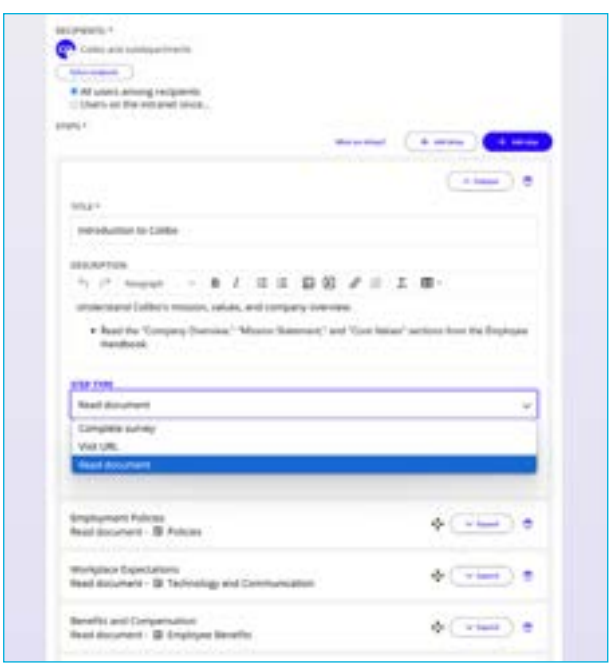
The activity feed within this Workgroup allows members to post questions, reply, comment, like, and @mention colleagues.

Overall, Colibo offers a good level of functionality across the board for this scenario. In some areas, such as idea management and gamification, there is room for improvement, but support for communities is strong and the activity feed works well. Combined with a well-designed chat feature and a useful onboarding module, there is plenty of functionality to like for all types of organisations.

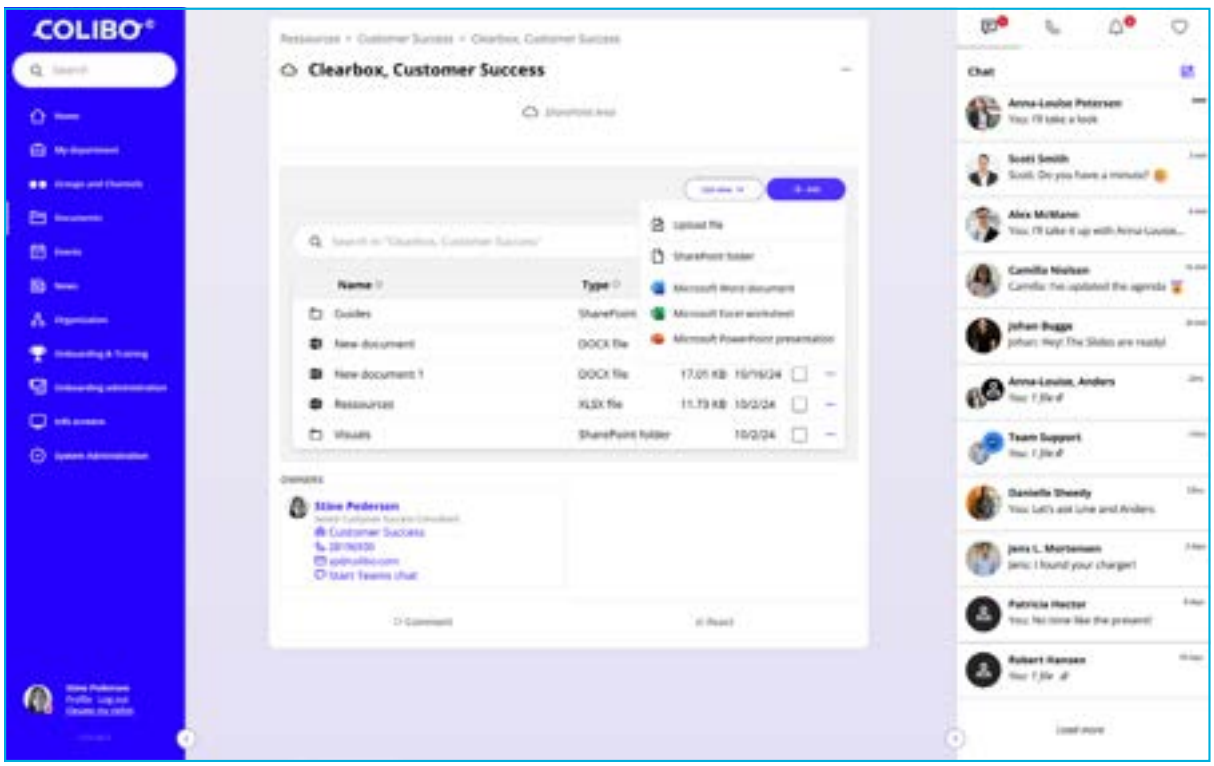
Events in Colibo have useful settings to manage the invitation process, including deadlines, reminders, and management of available spots.



Employees get a step-by-step action list that guides them through the onboarding material, with a button 'Mark as done' when a section is completed.



Admins set up the onboarding steps and decide which actions need to be taken, for example reading a document, visiting an external link or completing a survey.

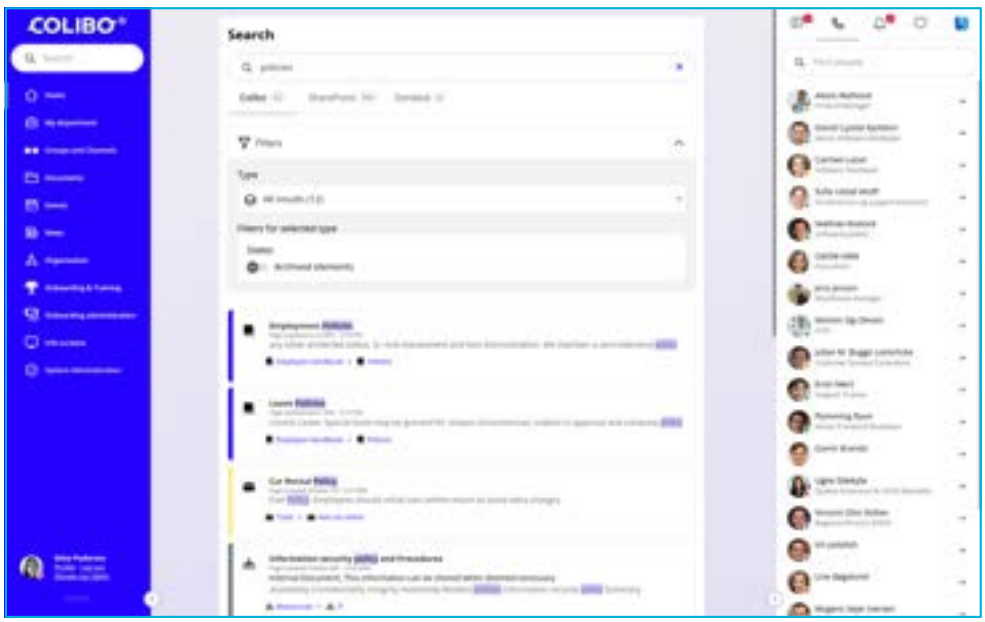


An intuitive widget is available to access content stored in one or more SharePoint libraries.

Colibo's approach to third-party integration is twofold. The product includes a number of ready-made integrations that are explained and documented in an online marketplace. Next to this, there is also a fully documented API that allows customers or integration partners to develop additional integrations where needed. Examples of out-of-the-box integrations include a set of modules for the Danish product Aula used by schools and municipalities, and a widget to display content stored in Acadre (a document management system). There is also an integration with Cisco Jabber, allowing users to start Jabber chats and calls directly from within Colibo. Note that some of these integrations are free of charge, while others are payable and not included in the pricing provided for this report. We found the available integrations limited compared to other products in this report, and mainly focused on Colibo's Scandinavian home market.

Colibo offers a good level of integration with the Microsoft 365 ecosystem, and to a lesser extent with Google Workspace. Integration with document libraries in SharePoint is handled well; a simple, intuitive widget is available for end users to interact with the content, in the same way as with content stored in Colibo. A similar widget is available for Google Drive. Other aspects of SharePoint are not integrated though; for example, there is no integration with SharePoint news.

Teams has been integrated within the Workgroup functionality (see Scenario 3). It is possible to link a Workgroup to a corresponding Teams group, and then post and receive messages from Teams channels while staying within Colibo. Employees can also push news content into a Teams channel or start a Teams chat from the people profile card. The full Colibo product can also be added as an app into Teams, so that heavy users of Teams can have everything in one place. Viva Engage is neatly integrated into the right-hand sidebar widget, but other products from the Viva family are not linked. Other simple but useful integrations are included, such as embedding a Microsoft Form into a news article and displaying an employee's Outlook calendar on their profile.



The search results page within Colibo will show results from additional sources, such as SharePoint and Zendesk, on a separate tab.

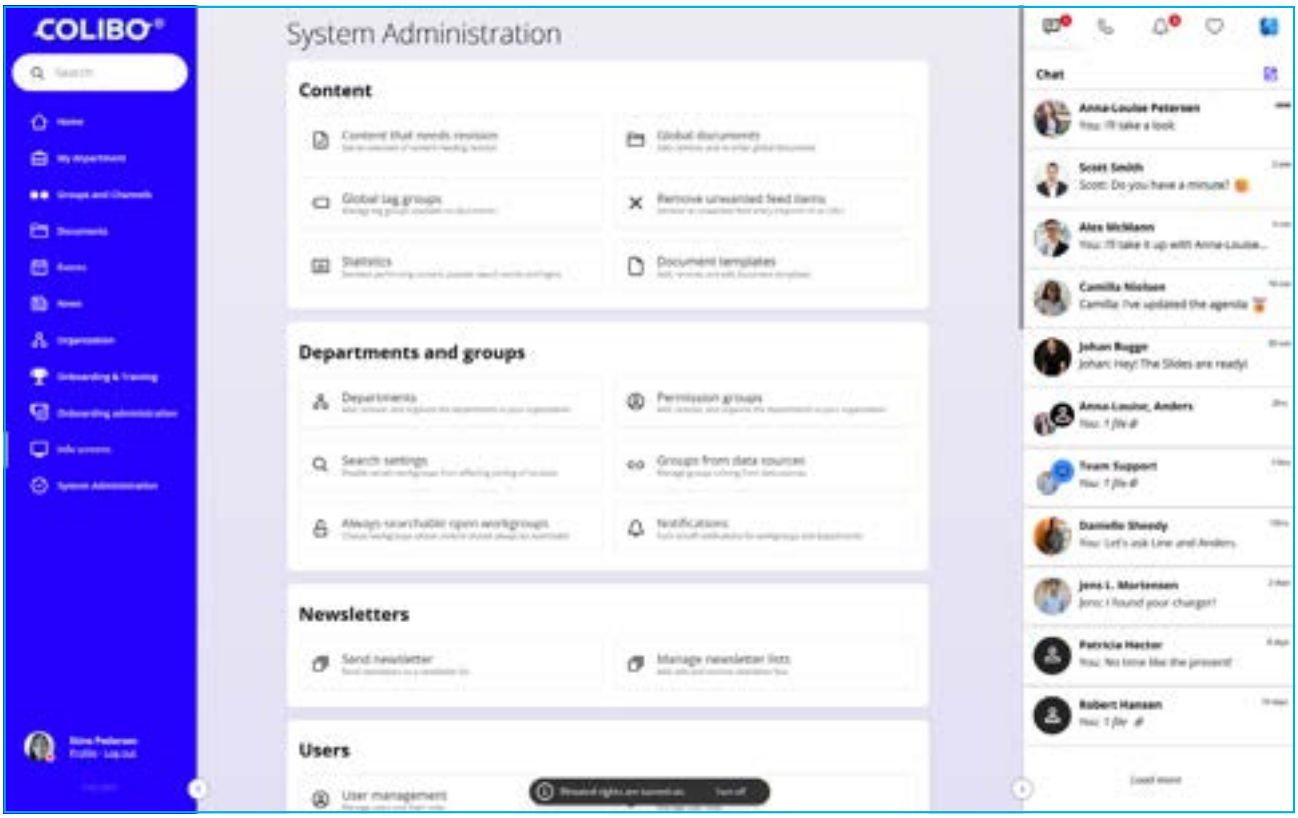
Search is based on the Elasticsearch engine and brings useful functionality with an intuitive user interface. The main search window is part of the left-hand side menu, and additional search boxes can be placed in other areas of the product, with their scope limited to that local content. From the search results page users can drill down into specific content areas by using the available filtering options, although applying filters pushes the results 'below the fold' which can be somewhat frustrating.

There is no feature to configure promoted results or likely answers, but there are several other ways in which search administrators can influence the relevance of the search results. A system of global (product-wide) and local (within a department or Workgroup) tags helps to categorise content. Synonyms can be defined, and a thoughtful use of icons and colour schemes gives visual clues to guide employees. We also like the option to include archived content into the search results.

Out of the box, the search engine integrates with SharePoint, Google Drive and Zendesk, while other external repositories can be included upon request. Results are presented under separate tabs on the search results page.

People search is easy, using the generic search window or the separate search box in the people directory area of the sidebar widget. The widget presents a list of colleagues based on their relevance to you. Clicking on a colleague opens a card with configurable content, for instance a link to start a MS Teams chat. The people profile page has a pleasant layout and includes expected features, such as skills in the form of searchable tags. A basic organisation chart is also included.

Colibo includes predefined areas such as an Employee Handbook or a Reports section to facilitate information finding. Within these areas, an overview of all relevant content is presented on a single page in a visually attractive way. A smart combination of browsing and tagging is used to guide employees to the right content. We believe that these predefined sections will be of value particularly for smaller organisations, but may not be flexible enough to meet the needs of larger companies (see Scenario 6 for more).

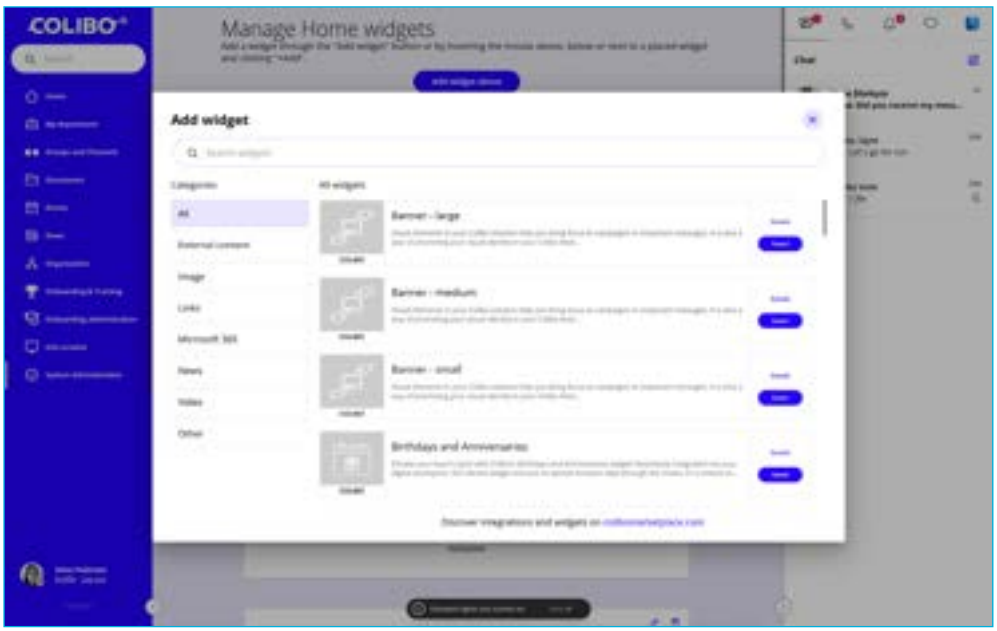


The system administration area is logically structured and easy to use.

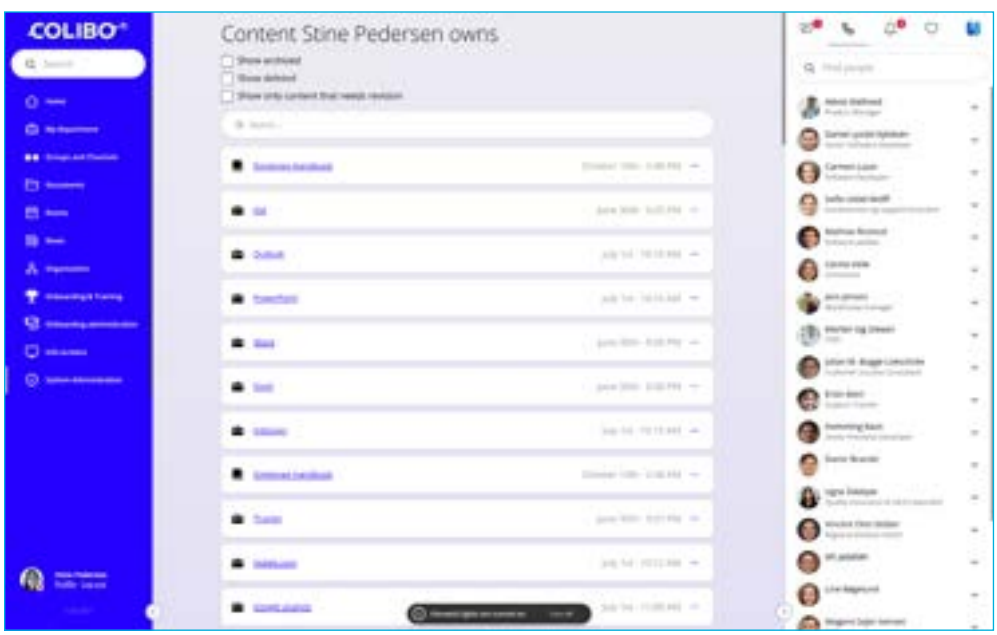
The user interface for admins is simple and easy to use. There is no need for admins to go into a back-end system to configure Colibo; all functionality can be accessed from the 'system administration' icon in the left-hand side menu. There is a straightforward interface to set up an organisational structure with departments and map these to existing groups coming from an external identity management solution, if applicable. It's also easy to delegate responsibilities within Colibo, for instance to set up multiple departmental admins who are responsible for a specific part of the site, while keeping full control over the site limited to a few global admins. Permissions are managed at the content level, for each content item or area it is possible to set up owners, readers and editors. Tooltips are available across the admin user interface to explain the various concepts and features.

Landing pages for departmental sites as well as individual content pages are easy to set up using a thoughtful system of configurable widgets. A drag-and-drop interface makes it straightforward to rearrange content pages using the full range of available widgets. Templates are available (see Scenario 5) to guide content creators and restrict the number of options. We like the overall approach, although the broader product design choices made by Colibo somewhat restrict the flexibility to design pages. The available space to work with is limited to the area between the left-hand menu and the right-hand sidebar, so multi-column layouts, although available, will need to present content in a relatively narrow space. As a consequence, more scrolling will be required compared to other products that make full use of the available screen width. Organisations that are happy to accept these constraints will find that Colibo offers a thoughtful set of features to build engaging pages.

Content governance is an area where Colibo offers many useful features. Each content item has a revision period and a clearly defined owner, who receives a notification when a page is coming up for review. Content owners have access to an overview that lists all their content, with filtering capabilities to zoom in on those items that are to be reviewed. There is also a global area, visible to admins, called 'Content that needs revision.' This is a central overview of expired content, where corrective actions can be assigned to content owners. There is also a handy mechanism to reassign ownership in bulk from one person to another.



Colibo comes with a rich library of widgets that departmental admins can choose from to build engaging pages.

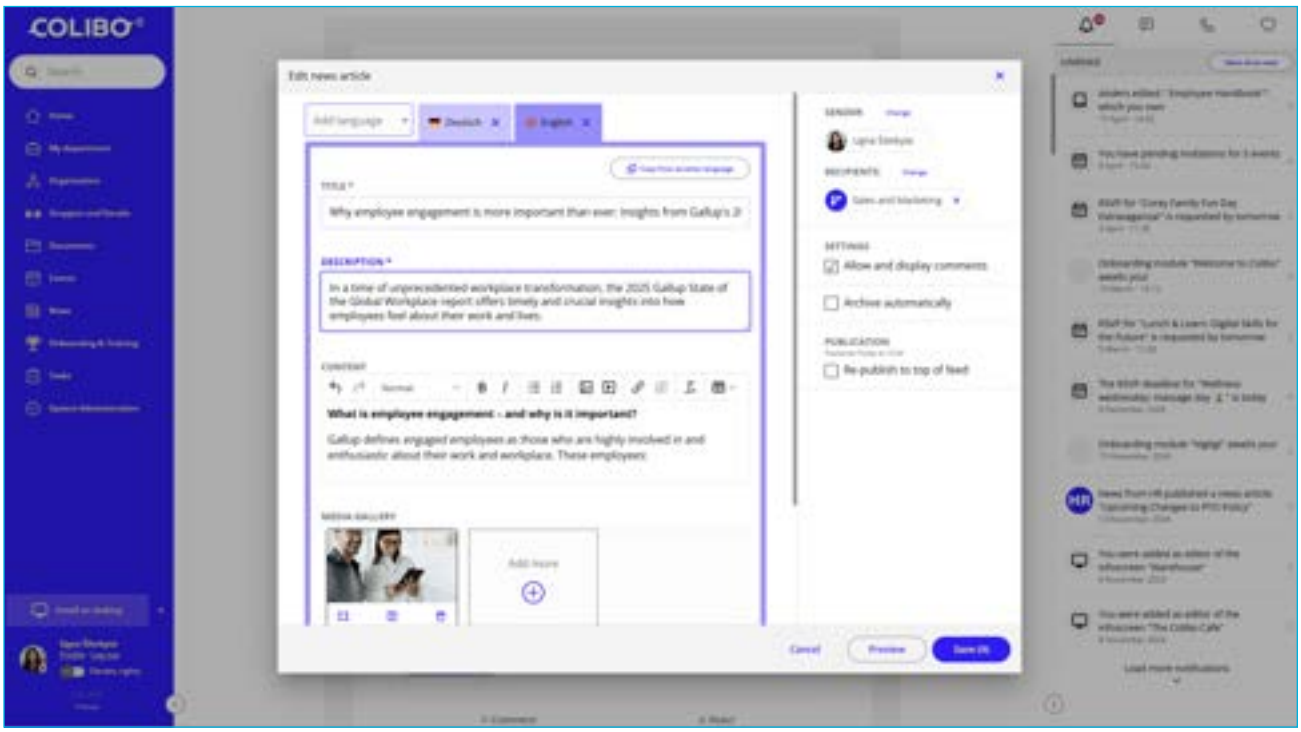


Each content owner has access to an overview of all content they own, and can filter to see only content that needs revision.

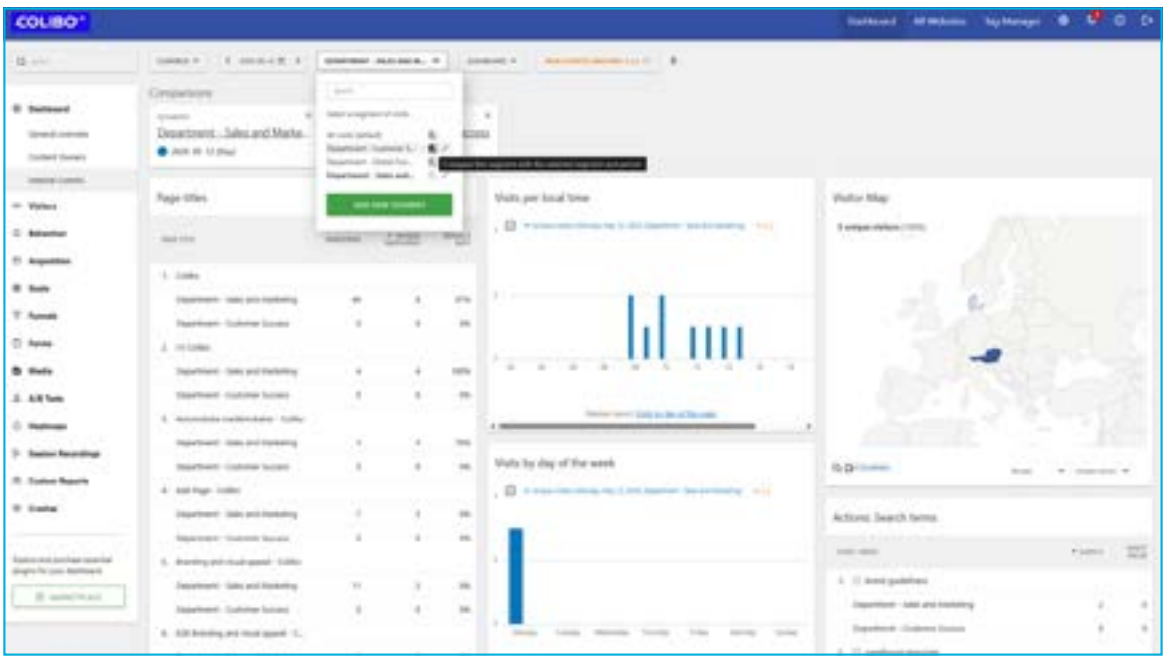
Multilingual capabilities were enhanced in early 2025 and will meet the needs of most international organisations. Static content pages, news articles, posts and events can be created and stored in multiple languages. By default, end users will get the right language version if available, based on their preferred language settings, and there is a dropdown to switch to other languages. There is also an option to translate content on the fly, using the automated translation service within Microsoft Azure. This cloud-based feature can be switched off, or companies can swap in their own auto-translate functionality, which may be of interest to organisations dealing with highly sensitive information. There are currently no workflows with notifications to update and approve multilingual content. Instead, Colibo includes a simple alternative using a 'content editors' Workgroup where the various language owners collaborate and keep each other up to date.

Images and video are easy to embed in news articles and content pages. There is a built-in media gallery to store multimedia content, and an integration with external stock photo site Pixabay is available; this can be swapped for another provider upon customer request. There is also an option to stream Colibo content using an external live streaming platform such as YouTube, but there is no hosting functionality within the product itself.

Overall, the admin experience is user-friendly and offers enough flexibility for most organisations, although the broader product design choices made by Colibo somewhat restrict the options for page designs. Features for content life cycle management are especially strong, which will help content owners to keep the intranet fresh and up to date.



Colibo has an intuitive tabbed interface to create and manage content in multiple languages.



Analytics in Colibo is based on an integrated third-party tool and provides a range of useful dashboards.

During 2024 Colibo changed their approach to analytics and have integrated Matomo, a third-party open-source analytics tool, into their product. Matomo collects comprehensive data about platform usage and interaction with content, and delivers information through dashboards, graphical visualisations, and detailed lists. This comes as a cloud-based service by default, but Colibo can also install a version of Matomo on-premises.

Platform statistics include the number of visits over time, duration of the visits and actions performed. This can be viewed over definable time periods and drilled down by department or geography. Internal communicators can see reports on employee engagement with their content (likes, comments, time spent, call to action button clicked). We like the reports that give insight into employee journeys across the platform, showing from where a particular page was reached, and where employees went afterwards.

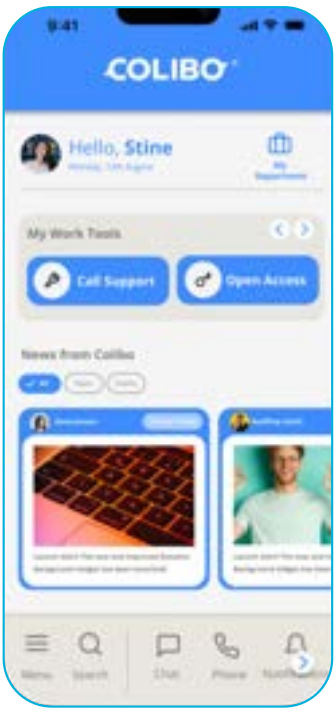
Matomo is a powerful tool with many standard reports available, but it may be overwhelming for first-time users. To address this, Colibo includes a number of simplified dashboards geared towards typical audiences such as content owners, internal communications, and system admins. We also like the possibility to setup regular custom reports that can be sent by email to specific users within the company, without the need to give them access to the full analytics platform. Some reports and statistics are also available in other areas of the product. For example, the creator of a piece of content such as a news article or a post can see how many times their content has been viewed. This is quite basic information but may still be useful for contributors that don't have access to the analytics reports within Matomo.

Colibo comes with an elegant solution that can be used for mandatory reads and compliance. It includes an overview of completion rates, a possibility to drill down by department to see who is not yet compliant and send reminders.

Search-related analytics are also available and include reports about the most used search terms and those search terms that don't yield any results.

The native app offers the full functionality of the desktop version.

Content creation works equally well on mobile and has access to the camera of the device.



A 'work tools' widget is prominently displayed, with large buttons targeted at frontline workers.

For mobile users, Colibo offers a choice between a responsive site and native apps for iOS and Android. To access the app, different possibilities are offered. Colibo integrates with Microsoft Entra ID and other identity providers but can also work with a locally created list of users, based on email addresses and an activation code for first-time usage. As part of the onboarding process, mandatory fields can be set up to collect information, for instance their work location. This information is then used to automatically add them to relevant Workgroups, which is useful for frontline employees. Once logged in, it's easy to stay connected, biometric authentication is supported, and full re-authentication is needed by default after 30 days but is configurable. The app can be branded and deployed either through the public app stores or using Mobile Device Management (MDM) software.

The end user experience within the app is well thought out. The full functionality of the desktop version is available, but in several areas the presentation has been adapted to make it more mobile-friendly. For instance, a different home page layout can be set up by the admin, with large, actionable tiles in prominent places. These can be targeted to customise the experience. The sidebar widget from the desktop version transforms into icons at the bottom of the mobile screen. Layout and targeting of the mobile app are managed by admins in the web version of the product. The user experience for admins when setting up the mobile app is more technical and less user-friendly than for other product areas.

Colibo does not contain any specific functionality targeted exclusively at frontline workers, but many of its features will be relevant for typical use cases. For instance, when creating a post or news article on mobile, the camera of the mobile device can be used to take a picture or record a video. Another example is the tasks feature that can be used by frontline workers to create a list of tasks at the end of a shift, to be handed over to the next person on duty. The chat (see Scenario 3) is also a useful feature for frontline employees.

THINGS TO BEAR IN MIND

Colibo is an intuitive product that focuses strongly on ease of use, and customers confirm that simplicity is what they like most about the product (see the 'Voice of the customer' section). To achieve this result, Colibo have made a number of design choices that may not appeal to all organisations and that some will find restrictive. In the desktop version, the available space for designing content pages is limited by the persistent presence of the left-hand navigation menu and the right-hand sidebar. Other features of the product, such as branding and moderation of user-generated content, are also simpler than in other products in this report.

Integration with external business systems is an area where Colibo offers few solutions out-of-the-box. This can be addressed by using the fully documented API that Colibo offers and allows customers or integration partners to develop integrations where needed. This will require time and effort to build, so organisations that want to go beyond simple links to external systems should take this into consideration.

Overall, we find that Colibo strikes a good balance between simplicity of the user experience and flexibility in the configuration. Complex businesses with specific requirements will have to consider if the functionality on offer meets their needs. Organisations that favour easy governance over complex functionality will find Colibo an interesting product, worthy to be explored further.

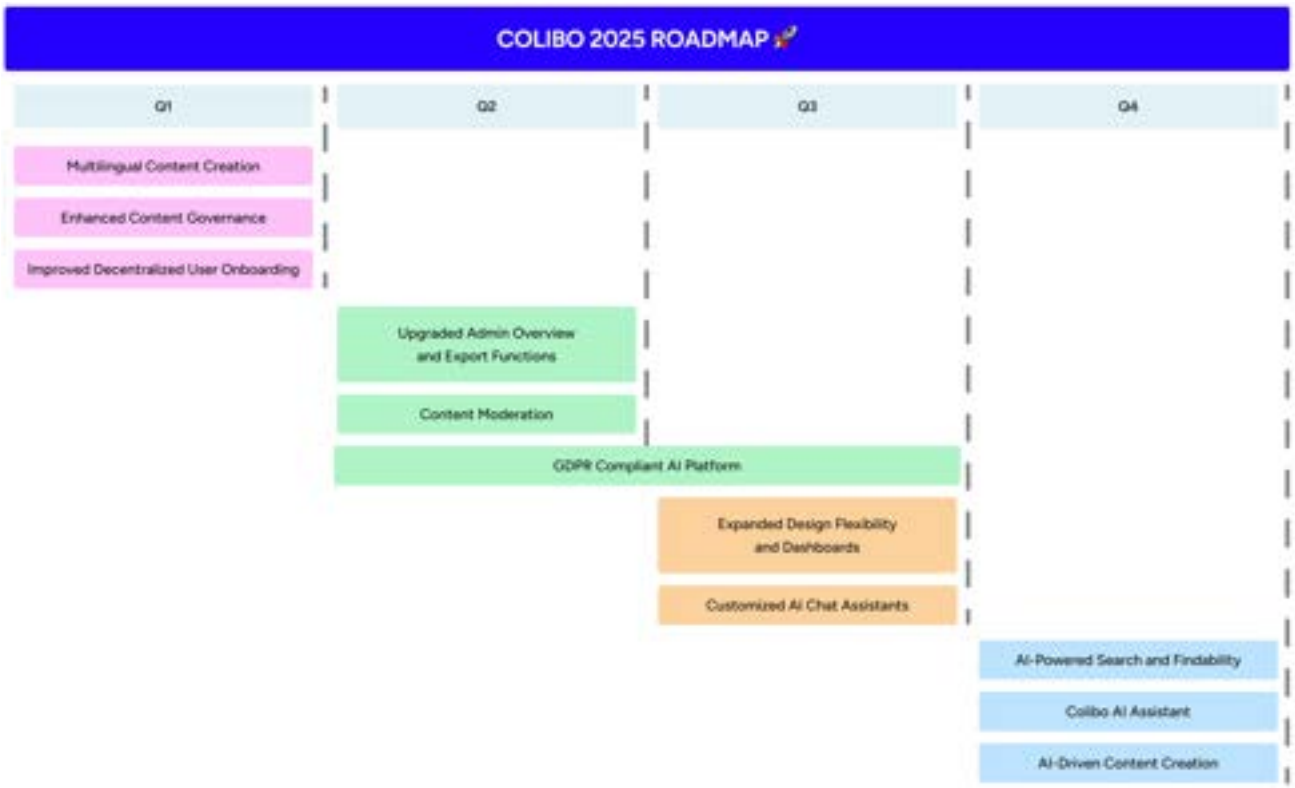
Why choose this product

Colibo is an extremely easy to use intranet product that offers solid functionality across the board. Its clean, simple, and visually attractive user interface, for desktop and mobile users alike, makes it stand out. We especially like the functionality for creating and targeting attractive-looking content, the collaboration spaces, and the thoughtfully designed mobile app. Colibo will appeal to all organisations that are looking for a highly usable intranet solution that both their office-based employees and frontline workers will be happy to adopt and use.

You may also be interested in...

oak engage ThoughtFarmer workai.

Vendor roadmap



Roadmap image provided by Colibo.

Back to index

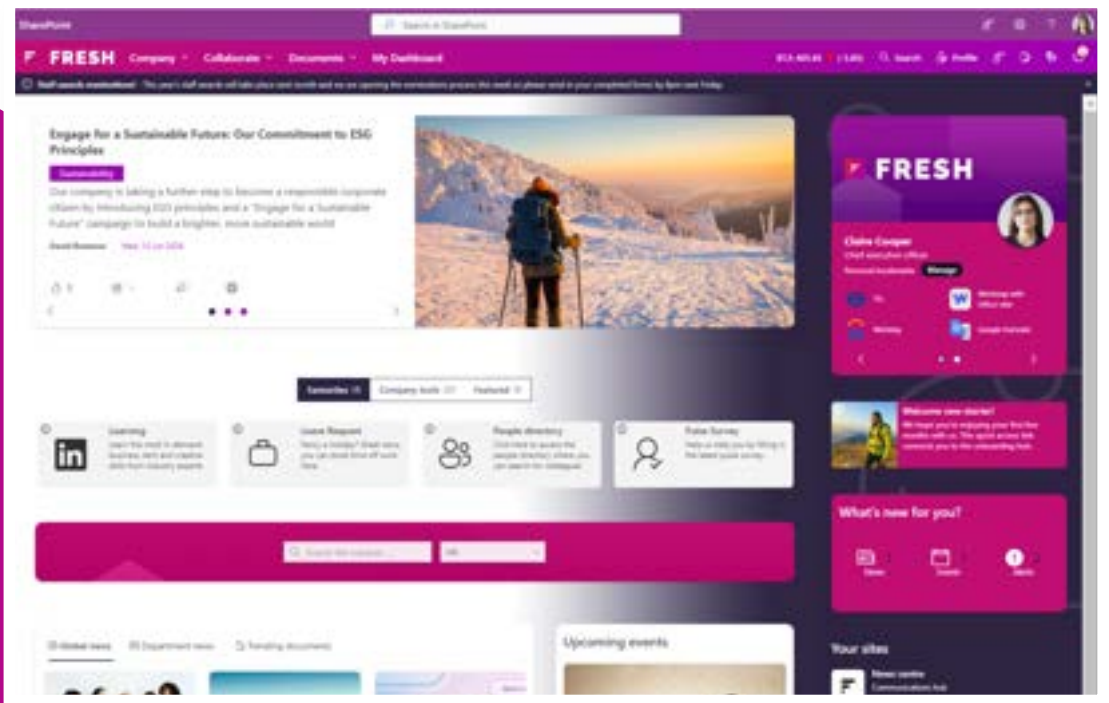
FRESH

FULLY STANDALONE

REQUIRES SHAREPOINT

OPTIONALLY WORKS WITH SHAREPOINT

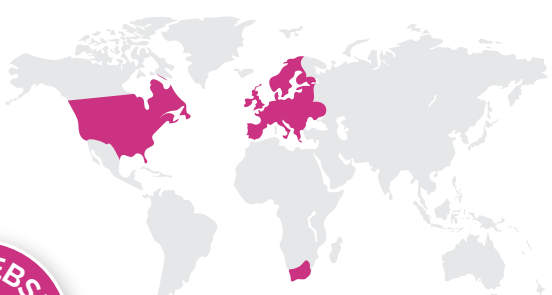
FRONTLINE FOCUS



Typical deployment:

5,000 to 10,000

Company locations:



VISIT THE WEBSITE

The product in a nutshell

Fresh is an attractive SharePoint intranet in-a-box product, which will appeal to medium to large organisations looking to maximise their Microsoft investment.

SUMMARY

Fresh

Fresh is a SharePoint intranet in-a-box product from Advania. Launched in 2015, it is one of the more mature SharePoint-based products in our report. It makes the most of what Microsoft provides, while adding value and functionality to the experience for employees and administrators alike.

Fresh comes with a set of capabilities that make branding and design easier to manage across complex organisations, putting simple controls into the hands of administrators and communicators. Communications teams benefit from intuitive content creation and publishing scheduling tools, while owners of reference content will appreciate the ability to keep track of when content needs review. Community and engagement needs are well supported with processes for new community set-up and kudos recognition for colleagues.

The vendor's approach to the product has always been to work in harmony with Microsoft services and to not conflict with the underlying SharePoint platform. This delivers benefits in a stable platform but does mean that some gaps are harder to fill. There is no Fresh mobile app, for example, so organisations wanting to deliver a mobile experience will need to rely on the responsive web experience, Teams app and Viva Connections. Analytics are present but fairly basic, so organisations needing detailed insights here will want to look at specialist tools such as Google Analytics, which can be integrated easily.

Overall, Fresh is an appealing product, particularly for organisations that are Microsoft-centric and want to make use of the 365 platform and its varied capabilities. The price is also reasonably attractive for medium to large organisations.

Pricing

PRICE BAND	
1,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
5,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
20,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
50,000 users	$ $ $ $ $

These prices are indicative, offering a comparison of the products featured in this report only. Please contact the vendor for a bespoke quote.

PRICING MODEL

Subscription – price band based on number of users.

DISCOUNTS

Multi-year commitments; frontline users; healthcare; government / public sector; schools and educational institutes; charities and non-profit organisations; businesses over 1,000 users.

COSTS TYPICALLY

Slightly higher at the start of the term, but generally spread.

PRICE INCLUDES

All available modules. Additional services from implementation partners are available if required.

Product type

Ready-to-run, installed in days

Branding opportunities

All branding, complex options

Base systems

Fully standalone	Requires SharePoint	Other

Sectors

Accountancy, banking and finance	Property and construction	Public services, government and administration	Transport & Logistics	Retail

SharePoint
FRESH
Company
Collaborate
Documents
My Dashboard
Engage for a Sustainable Future: Our Commitment to ESG Principles
Sustainability
FRESH
Claire Cooper
Learning
Leave Request
People directory
Pulse Survey
What's new for you?
Upcoming events
Townhall
Your sites
Notices for you
Compliance
Helpdesk
Resources
Useful links

COMPANY AND PRODUCT

Company details

Company
Fresh, an Advania brand

ISO 27001 certified
Yes

Data residency
Depends on the Microsoft 365 tenant location.

Company founded
1939

Product launched
2015

Typical client size
5,000 to 10,000

Largest deployment so far
140,000 employees, 15 countries

Customers
Clients include: Brown & Brown, Metropolitan Police, TD Bank, Wawa, Hays, KPMG, Bristol Airport, McCann WorldGroup, M&G, and DLA Piper.

Partner locations
Sweden, UK, Norway, Finland, Denmark, Iceland, Netherlands, Austria, USA. Please see their website for more information.

Company locations
Advania UK: London and Manchester, UK (HQ); South Africa; Advania Group: Sweden, Norway, Iceland, Finland, Denmark, USA. Please see their website for more information.

Product and technical details

Name of product

Fresh

Deployment

Client on-premises	Client private cloud	**Microsoft Azure**	Amazon Web Services	Vendor-hosted	**Microsoft 365 tenant**	Google Cloud	Other

Authentication supported

Entra ID	**ADFS**	Okta	Open ID	Oauth	G Suite	Other

App deployment

Google Play store	Apple store	MDM	MAM	Other

Accessibility

WCAG2.1 conformant

Document library sources integrated

Box	Dropbox	Google Drive	**SharePoint**	**OneDrive**	Other

Optional integrated enterprise search engines

Coveo	Elastic	IBM	Lucidworks	**Microsoft**	Mindbreeze	Sinequa	Other

User interface multi-language

Machine translation	Pre-configured	Editable	Right to left script supported	**Other***

*Any supported by Microsoft

Content multi-language

Machine translation for publishers	**Machine translation for end users**	Editable machine translation for publishers	**Manual creation for publishers**	**Right to left script**	**Other***

*Any supported by Microsoft (and on-demand translation via Azure AI Translator and page translation powered by Azure OpenAI).

Set-up and support

Set-up process for new clients

There are three approaches for Fresh implementations, varying by implementation partner and customer size:

1. Installation of pre-set configuration and training for the client's core team. These projects typically last 1–4 weeks.
2. Fixed scope implementation which provides customers with core workshops and activities typically required to set up an intranet in Microsoft 365. Following a deployment into the client's tenant these projects typically last 2–8 weeks.
3. Short discovery phase focused on stakeholder and end-user engagement to tweak and adjust a standard implementation model. These projects can include business change and adoption, customisations, content migration or Microsoft 365 service enablement. Typically, these projects are upwards from 8 weeks.

Version numbers

Demonstrated to ClearBox: V2024-R4

At January 2025: V2024-R4

Product updates

Major updates every quarter.

Product update process

Customers decide timing and can opt out. Along with supporting documentation (release notes, build guide), updates are made available for clients to download and either install themselves, or supported by a delivery partner.

Reverse-out options

Nothing, all data resides in SharePoint lists and libraries.

Technical support

Email support	Phone support	Chat support	**Online portal**	24/7 support	Office hours only

User community

Fresh Perspectives event series – please see their website for more.

Voice of the vendor

Fresh says: "Fresh is an enterprise class, AI-powered intranet designed to bring SharePoint to life. Our software platform makes it easy for high-growth companies to build beautiful, personalised employee intranets in Microsoft 365. Our vision is to be the most accessible, efficient and inclusive intranet there is.

Everything we do is about building an intranet that's more useful, more beautiful and more efficient each day. Working as an extension of our clients' team, our mission is to help clients build personalised intranets that empower their people to do their best work. We create one-stop-shops for company info, comms and Microsoft 365 channels where our clients' end users can personalise content to their goals and interests. Comms teams can publish targeted comms with on-brand content that's always up to date. HR teams can connect people and skills and share events that make everyone feel included.

FreshMind, our intranet AI features, enhance SharePoint search by leveraging generative AI for a superior user experience. 'People Search' allows users to quickly find and connect with colleagues using natural language queries based on skills, projects or location. 'Document Chat' saves time by delivering relevant document information through intuitive queries. FreshMind also streamlines metadata updates with AI-driven suggestions ensuring consistent quality and improving search efficiency; additionally, it acts as content editor assistant for translation, summarising, image generation and more.

Our product roadmap aligns with Microsoft and connects to the Microsoft 365 ecosystem, benefitting from all the security Microsoft brings, with an added layer of Fresh innovation, giving IT teams peace of mind. Fresh transforms SharePoint, providing clients with an intranet fit for the new world of work."

Voice of the customer

Fresh customers praised the product for being easy to use, modern and flexible. One customer explained that, "Fresh web parts are easily configurable" and make it easy to, "deliver a modern, simple, self-serve product". Another commented on how it enhances SharePoint, "without Fresh conflicting or overwhelming it". They further added that there are flexible ways of aggregating and presenting information, "without feeling like you've shoehorned a page layout based on the limitation of the tools at hand".

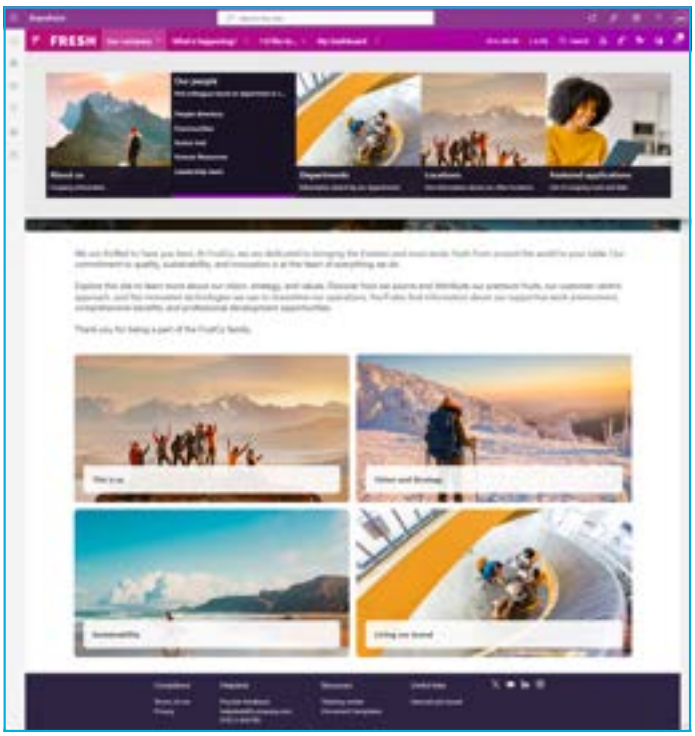
When it comes to changes customers would like to see, a surprisingly popular theme was further innovation and differentiation from the underlying Microsoft platform. One customer opined that "SharePoint is already outdated", and that they would like to see, "Fresh pushing the boundaries further than Microsoft". Another added they would like, "less focus on Viva Connections" while another recommended, "heavy investment into research and development to ensure product offerings remain relevant and effective". Other changes customers would like to see include, "more options for brief announcements" when a full page is not required. Another customer is looking forward to the forthcoming Fresh Connect product update process that will remove some burden from their small IT team.

Customers are unanimous in having a positive experience working with the vendor with many describing them as responsive, collaborative and their relationship as being a true partnership. One customer enthused, "You get a real sense that they are part of your wider team" going on to say they "would not hesitate to recommend them". Other customers cited their "subject matter expertise" along with commitment, saying they have, "gone beyond their remit to help me with projects".

SCENARIOS & SCORES

Please see the Scenarios below for more detail on each of these.

SCENARIO AND SCORE	KEY BENEFITS	IMPROVEMENTS / CONSIDERATIONS
4 **1. User Experience & Visual Appeal**	Builds on the core SharePoint experience to improve branding and visual appeal.	Works within the constraints of the underlying Microsoft platform.
4 **2. Publishing & Communications Management**	Useful additional web parts and screens to help present and manage the flow of news.	Some audience targeting aspects rely on Microsoft Entra configuration.
3.5 **3. Community & Engagement**	Does well to bring together community content from Viva Engage with the intranet and add employee engagement.	Underlying community features are provided by Viva Engage. Surveys supported via Forms.
3+ **4. Integrations & Services (Including M365)**	Good integrations with Microsoft 365 services including Teams, Planner and Viva Connections.	Limited integration with third-party enterprise services.
4+ **5. Information Finding & Search**	Improves filtering options for Microsoft search results. AI simplifies access to knowledge, and people finding is particularly strong.	Presentation of results could be more visually diverse for different content types.
4 **6. Administrator Experience**	Core SharePoint and Fresh features benefit from an easy-to-use interface.	Some underlying features still need SharePoint admin skills.
3+ **7. Analytics**	Good basic analytics for usage, content and search.	Organisations needing deeper insights will need a dedicated tool.
2.5+ **8. Mobile & Frontline Support**	Leverages core Microsoft platforms and apps.	Little flexibility of access options for frontline workers.



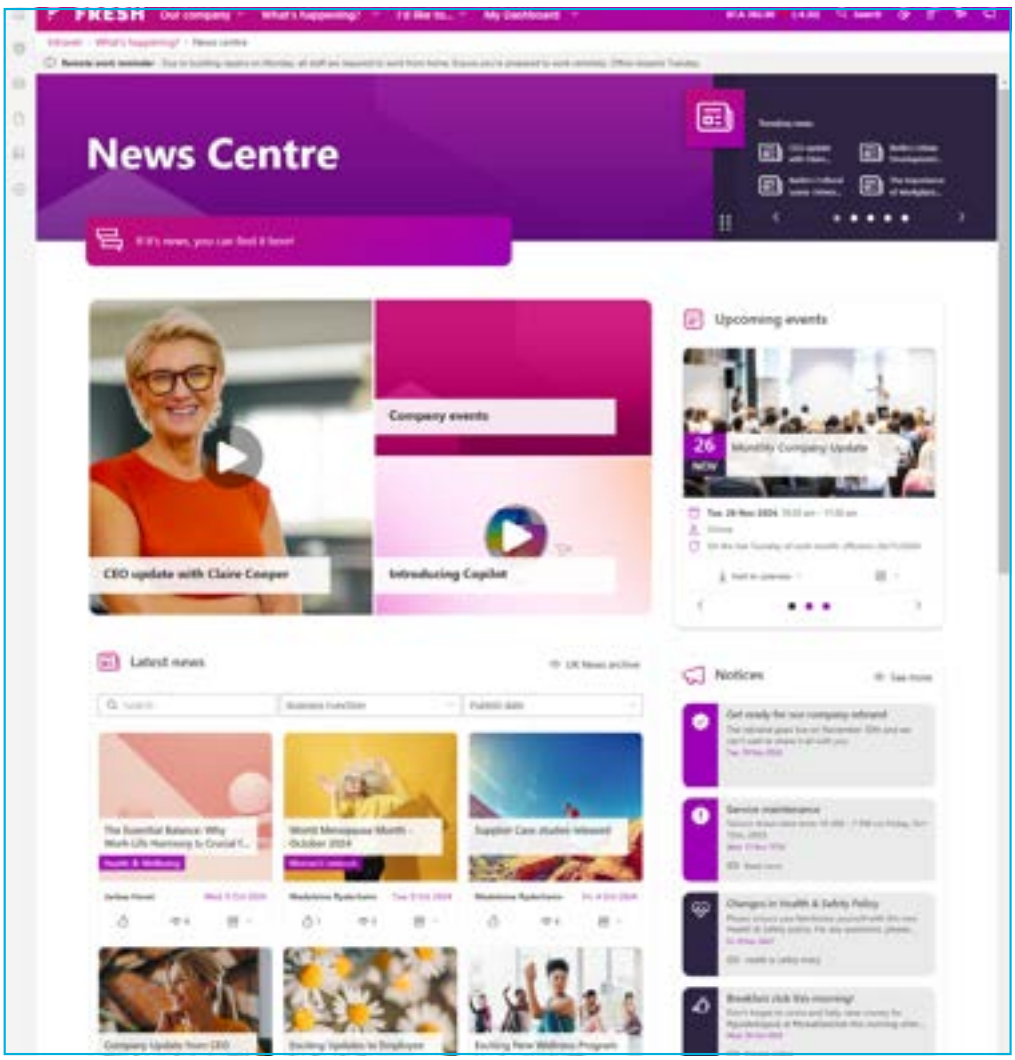
Fresh builds on the user experience of SharePoint with additional navigation and easy to configure design options.

The overall user experience in Fresh will feel familiar to anyone who has used SharePoint, but the product makes a number of improvements that will be appreciated by employees and administrators alike. Customers describe the product as feeling "modern" and we would agree that the visual elements of Fresh do give it a contemporary, consumer website-like experience. It would be nice if the product provided a configurable welcome tour to help support adoption and make sure employees make the most of the capabilities available.

Navigation options are impressive, providing global, audience-targeted and employee-personalised links menus that can be presented in a number of visually appealing ways. We particularly like the tile-based mega menu that uses imagery to provide quick visual cues that reveal further links when hovered over. There are icon-based and plain text options too, along with a breadcrumb that reflects the menu structure. Menu items can be built dynamically from a query, so employees get a personalised list of links to colleagues, favourite pages and followed sites. Employees can manage their own bookmarks and company app launcher links as well.

Notifications are only available for the 'Announcements' feature described in Scenario 2. One of the options for announcements shows employees a message awaits their attention via the 'megaphone' icon in the navigation bar. There's an option to send notifications via Microsoft Teams as well, which will trigger a push notification for those using the Teams mobile app.

Fresh offers flexible branding support, albeit within the constraints of what Microsoft allows on SharePoint. The main benefit Fresh brings is easy-to-use tools for configuring web part design and visual behaviour; it's simple to control branding site-wide and for individual web parts, such as to change visual elements including rounded corners, drop shadows, spacing, colour gradients etc. These tools make it straightforward for clients to make choices that reflect their brand guidelines, colours and fonts most closely. Branding can be defined globally but Fresh also supports multiple brands within the same tenant.



Fresh's news centre pulls together communications from across the intranet.

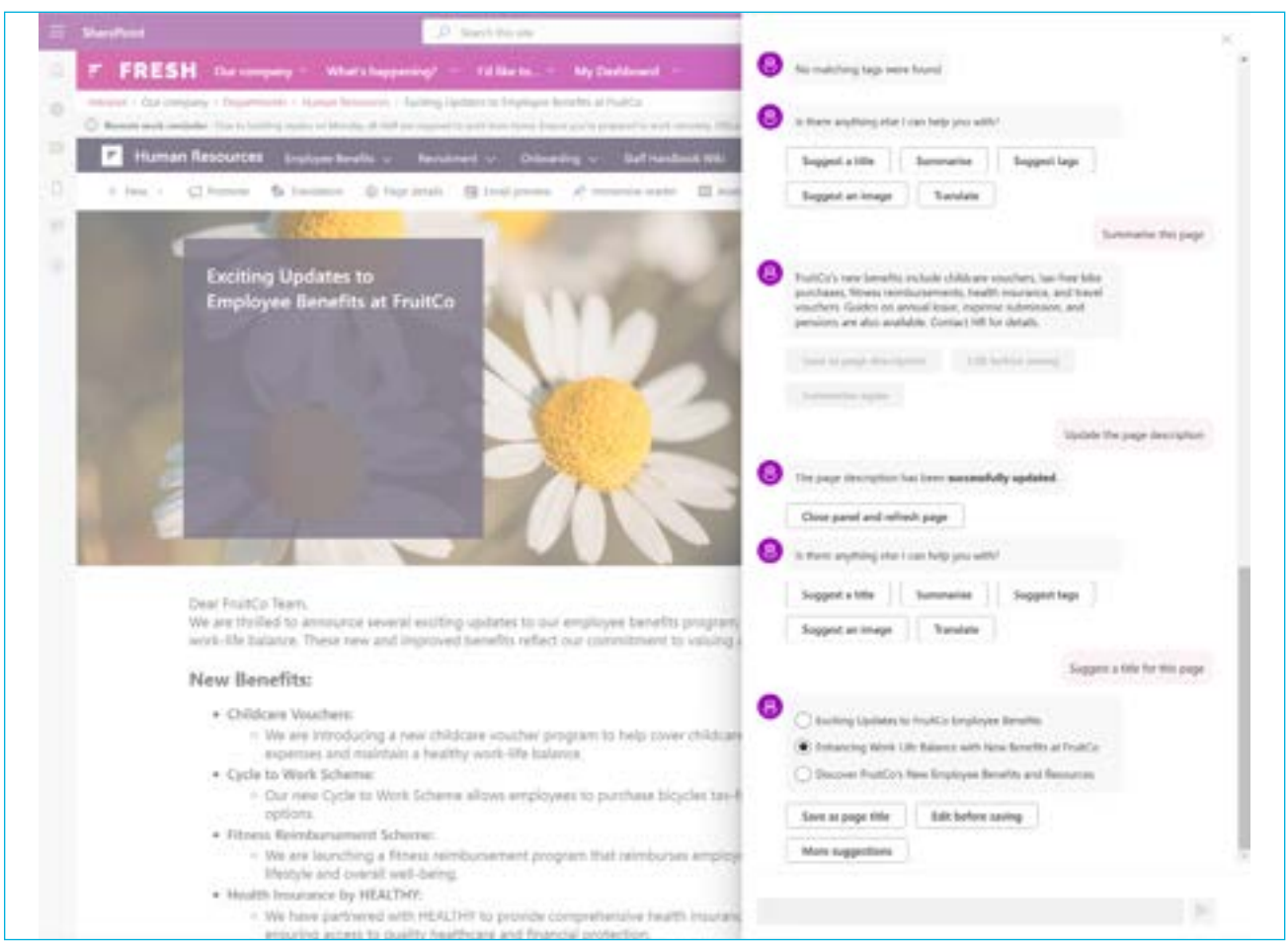
Creating news articles is straightforward for publishers with content edited via the standard SharePoint environment, which is fairly intuitive. Fresh comes with a 'news centre' approach but it also works for individual departments with their own sites. Articles are template-based and Fresh will configure these to client needs as part of the implementation. Fresh has plans to introduce central template management and we look forward to this; a common SharePoint shortcoming being templates are site specific, so hard to keep consistent when multiple sites are in use. Once the article is written, a nice addition to the content creation process is the 'editor assistant'. This is an Azure OpenAI-powered chat-style interface that content creators can use to suggest snappy titles, article summaries, translations, images and perhaps most usefully, appropriate metadata (see Scenario 6 for more on this).

Further properties (e.g. content owner) and publishing metadata such as publish / review / expiry date for the page are edited via the standard 'page details' side panel. This is also where targeting information is set. Fresh provides several ways to target content that goes beyond SharePoint's fairly limited capabilities. Information can be targeted to employees based on Entra

groups, employee profile properties and device type. Employees can also choose and remove topics of interest which are stored in their profile. Fresh does not include dynamic audiences based on rules, however, so this would need to be managed via Entra groups by associated admins. Pages and web parts then make use of the targeting information to show appropriate content.

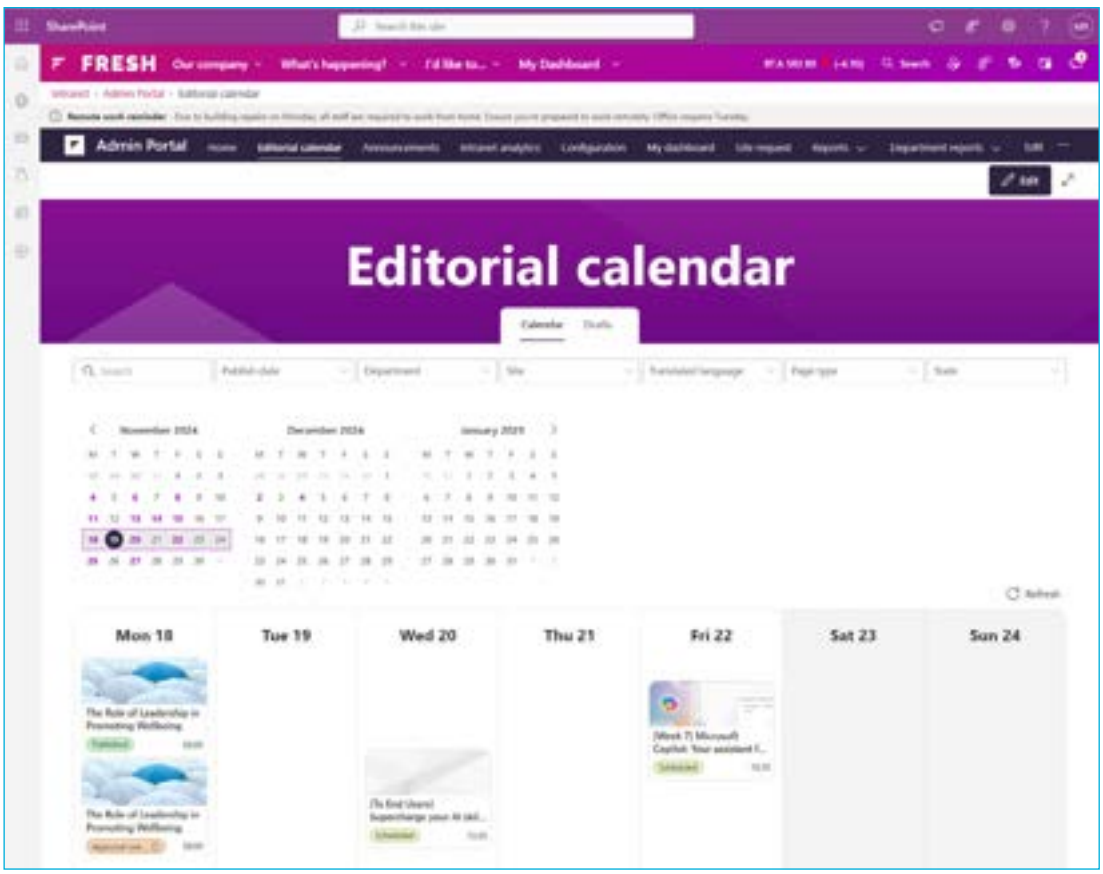
Fresh uses standard SharePoint functionality for scheduling and approving individual news articles, if these are needed. However, an editorial calendar introduced during 2024 provides an attractive and useful visual overview of content and whether it's draft, pending approval, overdue approval, scheduled or published. It's worth noting this includes all scheduled content, not just news, but a comprehensive set of filters make it easy to differentiate between content types.

The calendar includes content scheduled via Viva Amplify if it's being used. We particularly like the article thumbnail and there are filters for site, owner and page type that help to simplify things if there's a lot of content on display. Clicking on the thumbnail reveals more information about the piece and there's a button to edit the page properties (metadata) which is a nice touch. There's a simple list view of content in draft as well.

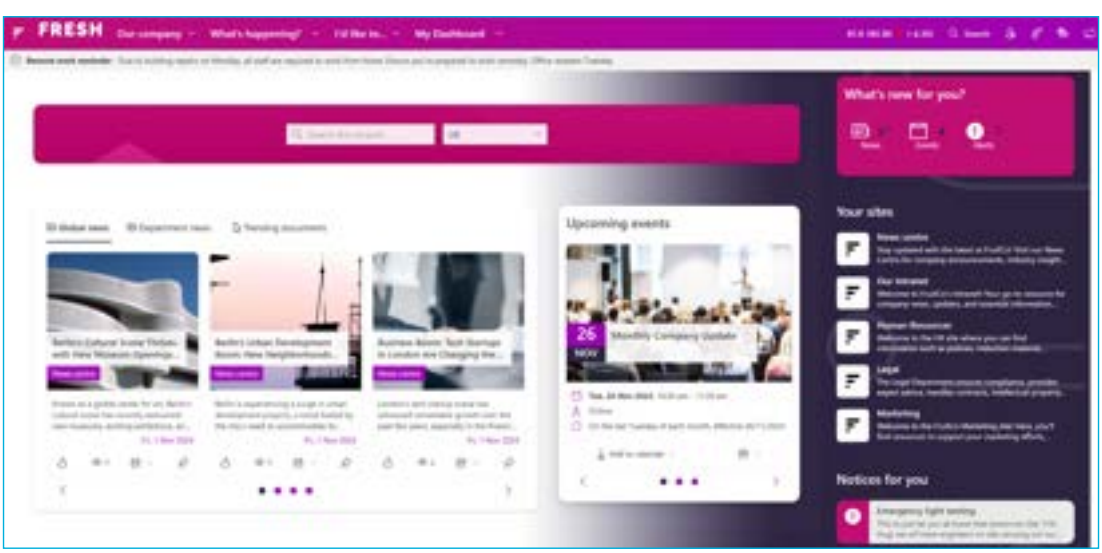


The editor assistant can suggest article summary, title, content translation, metadata and images.

Once published, content can be 'rolled up' and presented automatically in news web parts based on a query (e.g. to show the most recent 10 articles from across the intranet) or can be curated from a list of news. Rollups can feature tabs for global and local news, with the latter targeted, to maximise use of space.



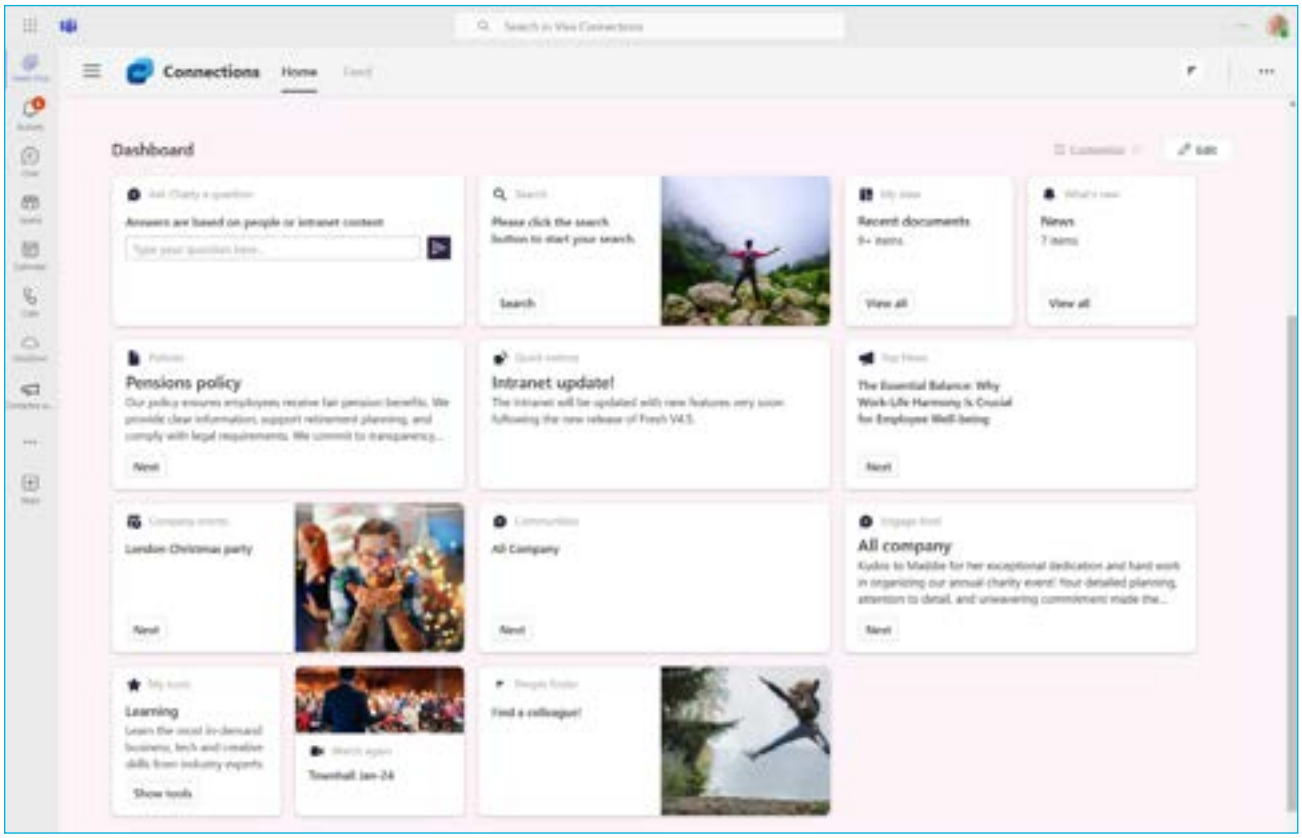
The editorial calendar helps manage the flow of communications across the intranet.



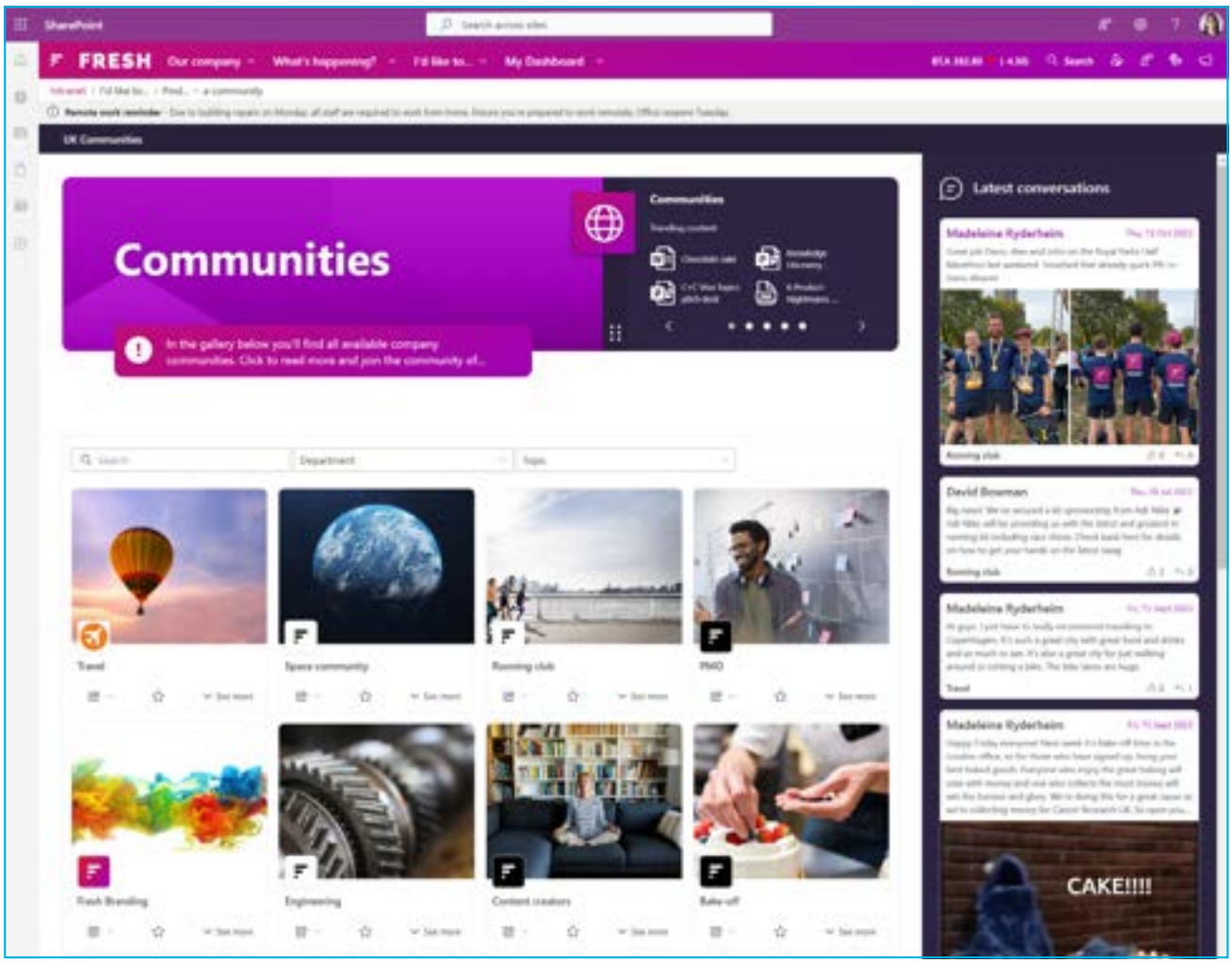
Fresh news rollup web part showing articles from across the intranet with tabs for global, departmental (targeted) and trending documents.

Crisis communications are well supported, allowing important information to be displayed in an attention-grabbing pop-up, via a banner below the navigation, or, least intrusively, via the 'megaphone' notification icon mentioned in Scenario 1. Announcements can be audience targeted and show a title, description, start and end dates, as well as a link button to point to further information. Announcements created in Viva Connections can also be shown within Fresh.

Multichannel publishing with Fresh is mixed. Fresh can send notifications to Teams when important stories are published, and content from the intranet can be shared to Viva Engage. Fresh also has fourteen adaptive card components that can surface content including news, Viva Engage conversations, policy documents, videos, events etc. in the Viva Connections dashboard. An email newsletter and content digest are roadmap items, as is a digital signage solution.



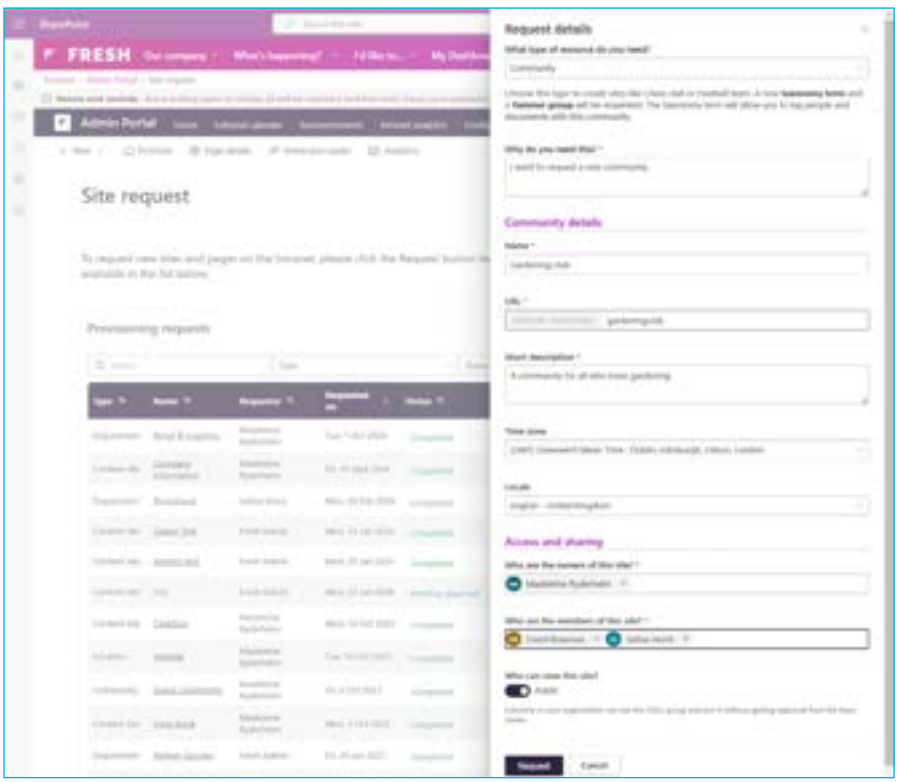
Fresh content and components can be included in the Viva Connections dashboard.



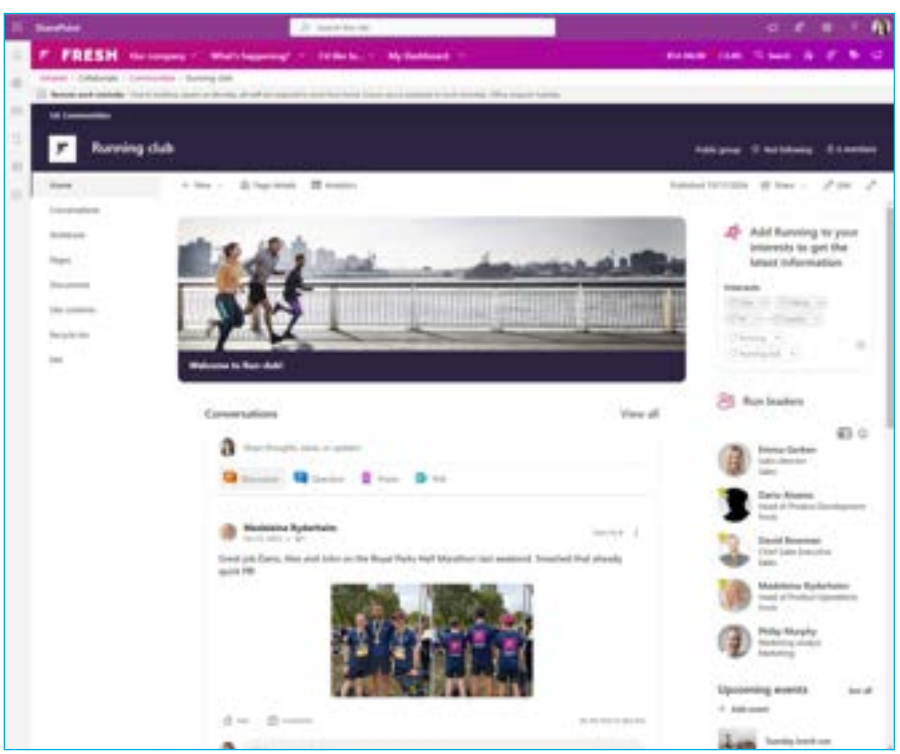
The Communities Hub enables employees to find communities to join, or request their own via a form and automated provisioning process.

Fresh works with Microsoft 365 tools such as Viva Engage and Forms to provide much of the core community and engagement capabilities, but with some improvements. Fresh provides a community 'home page' and directory that can be filtered and searched to help employees find what they are looking for. From here they can also request a new community via a form that helps manage the provisioning process. The form asks for some basic details including who the owners and members will be and if the community is to be public or not. The request goes through automatic or manual approval and then the site is provisioned automatically. People can see the status of their request (pending approval, completed etc.) via a list.

A nice touch is that the process sets up a SharePoint-based 'home' for the community and connects it to Viva Engage. This provides extra context and functionality for the community such as showing community leaders, documents and events. Fresh also provides a web part that can surface relevant Viva Engage discussions in SharePoint.



Employees can request new community sites (and other site types) via a simple form that helps with governance and automatic provisioning.

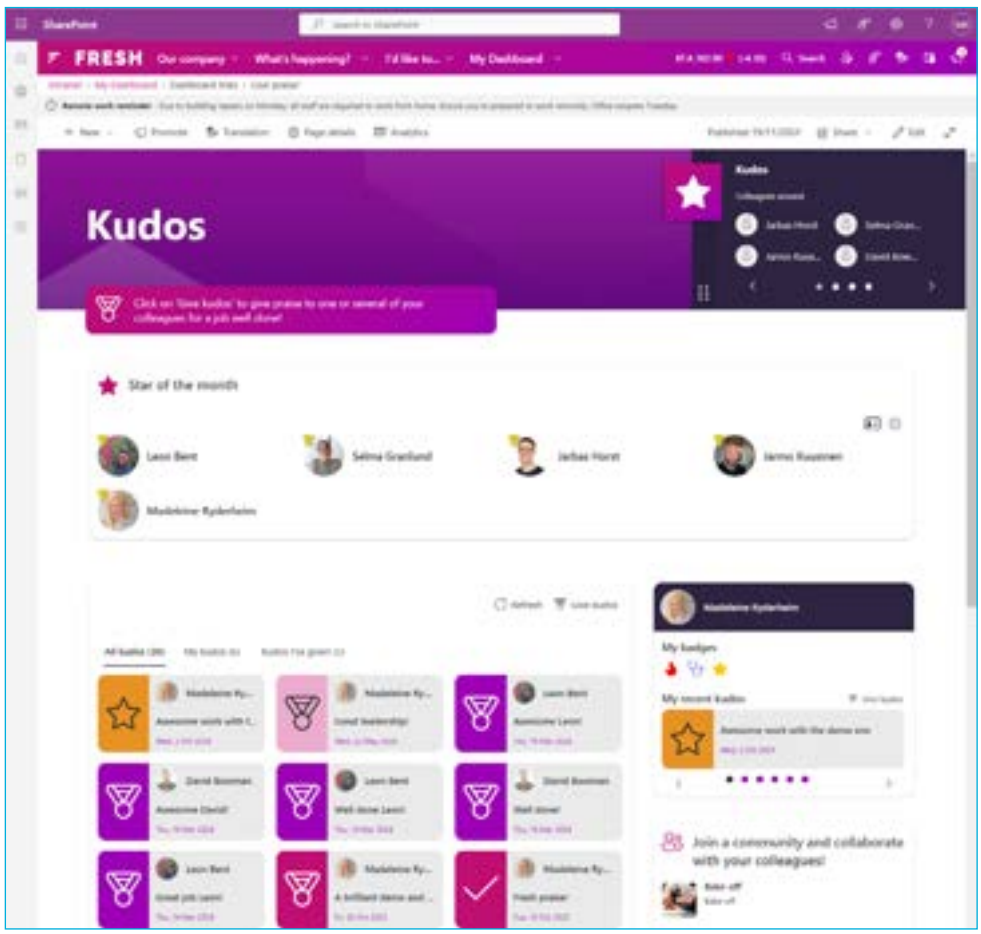


Communities set up by Fresh get a SharePoint home page for additional information and documents relating to the community, as well as embedding Viva Engage discussions.

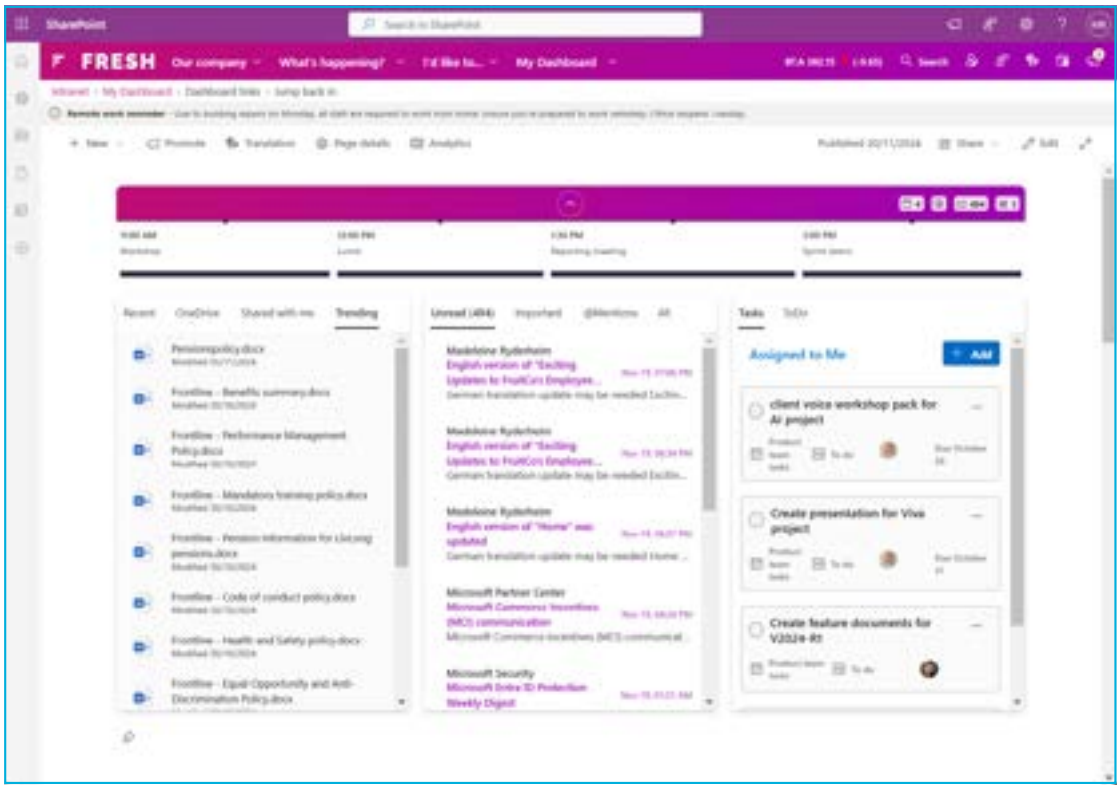
Reactions and comments on published content use standard SharePoint functionality and there are no additional features to report or moderate comments. Content owners can see how many likes and comments their pages have in the Admin Portal, which is a useful addition. There is a simple page-level feedback form where employees can suggest improvements or flag issues with a page. The feedback goes into a list and clients can decide what happens to it from there. Polls and surveys are supported via embedding Microsoft Forms which can be configured to show results as well.

Fresh includes an attractive feature for recognition and praise. Employees can give 'Kudos' to colleagues, adding text describing their achievement and choosing an icon which can be linked to things like company values. Kudos given and received is shown on employee profiles. Managers can assign 'badges' to employees as well and these can cover a range of achievements or special roles such as 'star of the month' or 'first aider'. These are shown on employee profiles, on the employee directory, as well as the Kudos home page.

There's no specific functionality around wellbeing, but the community support features are a good start. Employees can also maintain a list of topics they are interested in, such as pensions or benefits, so they can be updated if things change in this area. 'Events' functionality is useful for company and community events, as well as webinars employees can join. It's easy for people to add an event to their personal calendar. New hire onboarding can be supported through a 'checklist' web part, offering employees a list of actions they need to take, and managers the option to check progress. An administrator sets up the list and monitors overall progress, and there's an exportable report available.



Employees give colleagues Kudos while badges can be assigned by managers.



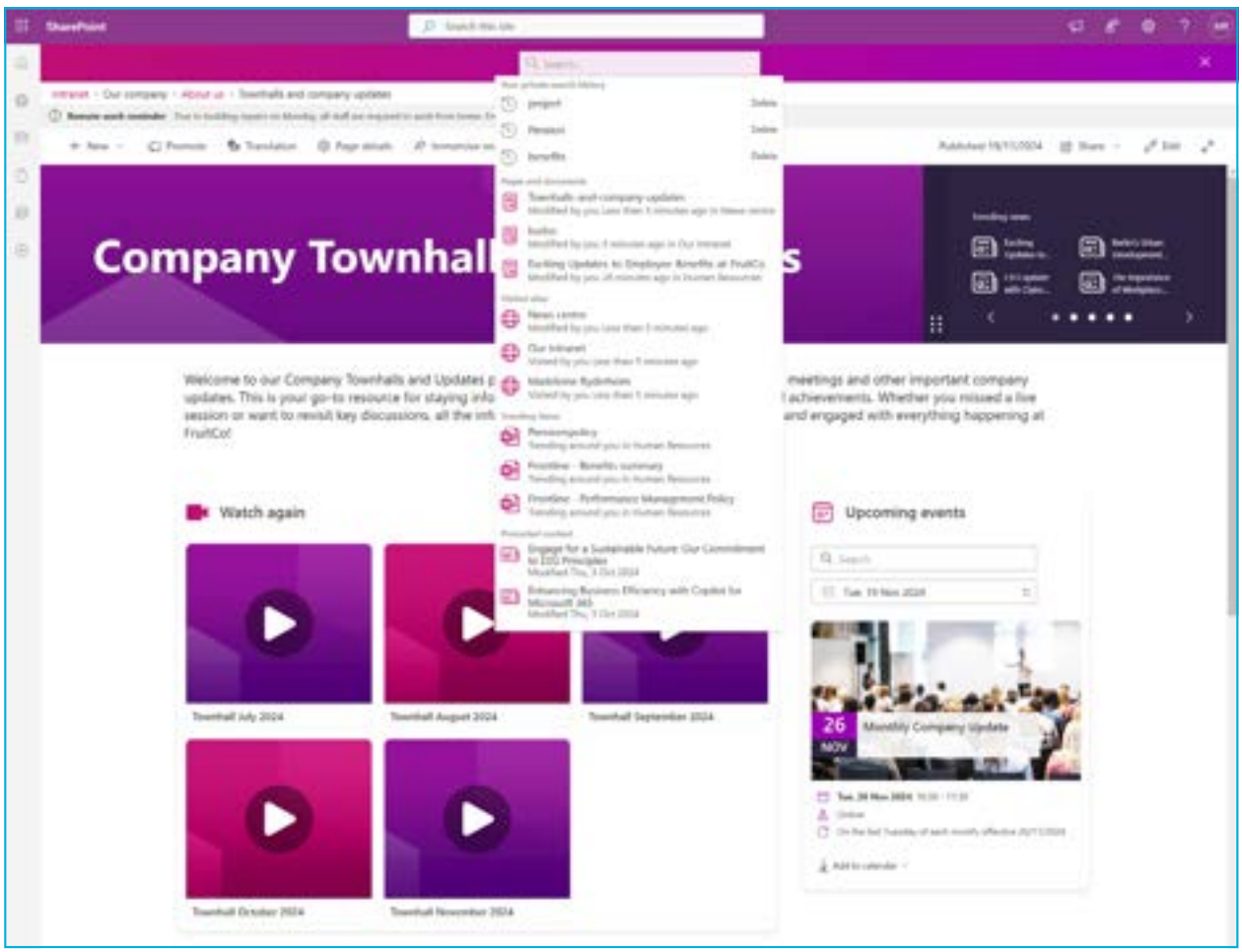
Launchpad provides a personalised listing of files, emails and tasks from Microsoft 365 applications.

Integrations in Fresh are well featured, focusing on Microsoft 365 and associated services. Integrations with Viva Engage are covered in Scenario 3, while Teams and Viva Connections are described in Scenario 2. Integrations with third-party cloud services such as Workday and ServiceNow are not included with Fresh out of the box. The vendor has a roadmap item for an integration with Microsoft Graph Connector that would allow and accelerate deeper integrations with a wider range of third-party services.

Fresh's 'generic cards' web part can be used to show relevant information from external information sources as well as those from Microsoft. During the demo, we saw the use of this web part to show information such as public transport disruptions from Transport for London, US holidays and external news feeds from The Guardian, with the content coming via RSS. There is also a simple share price component that can be part of the global header and will appeal to publicly listed companies. Videos from YouTube and Vimeo can be shown via dedicated web parts, as well as from Microsoft Stream. There is a simple maps web part that integrates Bing Maps, for example to show office locations.

Fresh has had a 'My Tiles' component for a while now but we really like how it aggregates a range of information from Microsoft 365 services relating to the employee. For example, the component can show how many Teams notifications they have, unread emails, pending tasks etc. Clicking on these enables the employee to see more information via a side panel and then go to the source application to take action as needed.

For the next level of information from M365 services, Fresh has 'Launchpad'. This acts as a personalised dashboard for the employee and shows information such as emails from Outlook, recent files in OneDrive and tasks from Planner or To Do. Fresh can also show the employee's followed sites and frequent sites.



Fresh quick search is ready populated with useful suggestions that refine as you type.

Fresh has some well-executed enhancements to the SharePoint experience for finding content, people and accessing knowledge. Fresh provides three different routes into a dedicated search experience: the global navigation bar, a web part that can be used on any page, and a search card for Viva Connections.

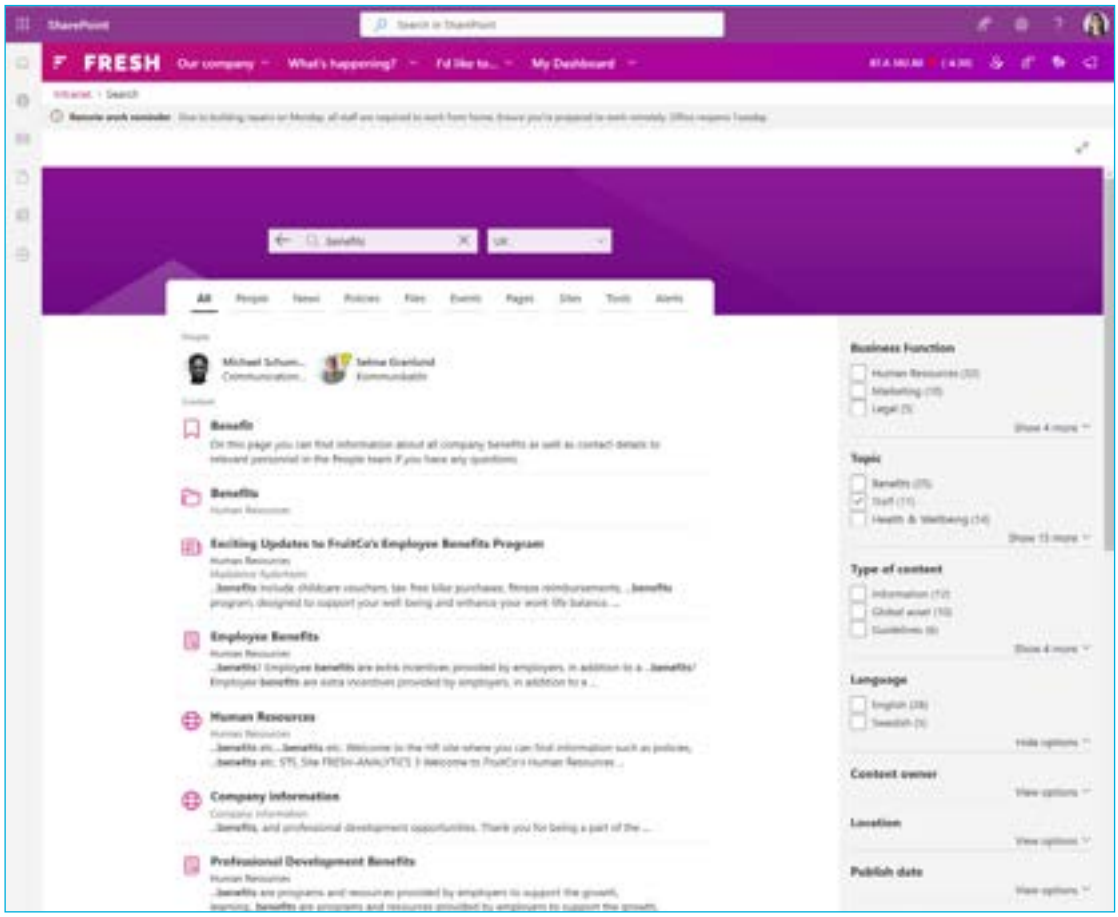
Clicking search in the global navigation bar produces a drop-down that is already populated with personalised and categorised suggestions. First are your three most recent searches, but these are easy to delete for privacy. After this are pages and documents, visited sites and promoted content.

Hitting 'enter' takes you to the full results page and Fresh has made some valuable improvements to the experience. A search scope control shows results from the whole intranet or a specific site as needed. Results are then separated into the familiar vertical tabs for different content types such as people, news, files etc. Each content type has its own set of metadata-based filters to further refine results. In the 'All' content view, promoted results are shown first, followed by people and then content with the result types differentiated by icons. Icons can confuse, but generally the results are well presented, and the verticals and filters are easy to use.

Search management includes configuration for the results verticals and filters handled via the admin system. Promoted results can be managed in Fresh but we like that it can also work with the Microsoft Search settings for Bookmarks, Q&As and Acronyms. Locations (which show maps) are not supported but Fresh has an integration with Bing Maps for this. Search feedback is via a generic feedback form, which can be configured to do something different with the information from normal page feedback.

Fresh currently does not come with support for federated search but it is on the roadmap. Microsoft Search underpins search in Fresh and this does have some connectors for third-party data sources including Confluence, ServiceNow and Salesforce. However, Fresh is not configured to display results from these systems without additional development.

People search is well supported and has some useful AI-enhanced approaches. All employee profile information is indexed, and people results are shown in the main search. There is a well-featured people directory that has additional employee-specific search features, including filters on profile information such as location, department, skills etc. Results are well laid out and can be configured to show more, or less, information.

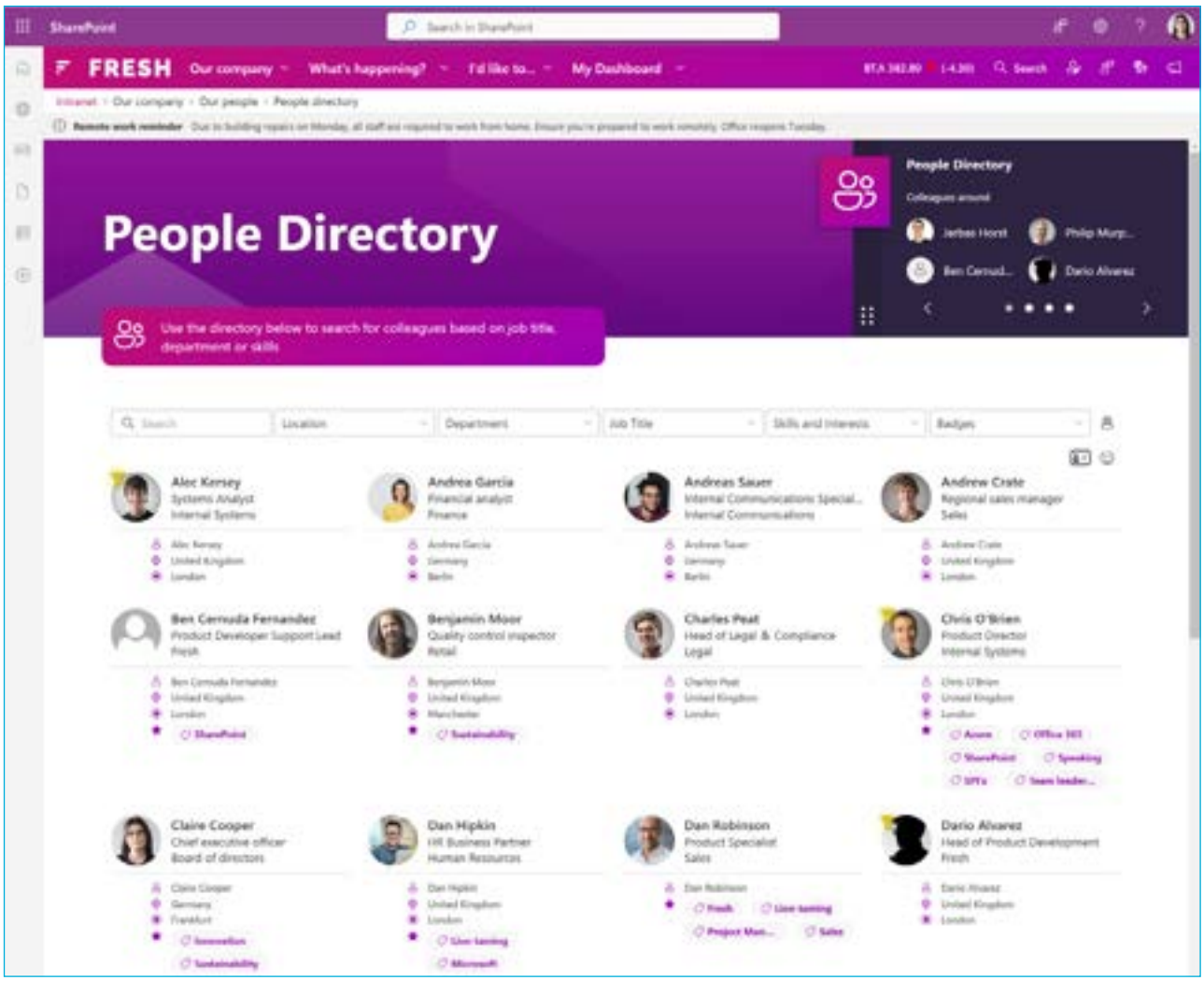


Search results in Fresh are well laid out and different content types have appropriate filters to further refine results.

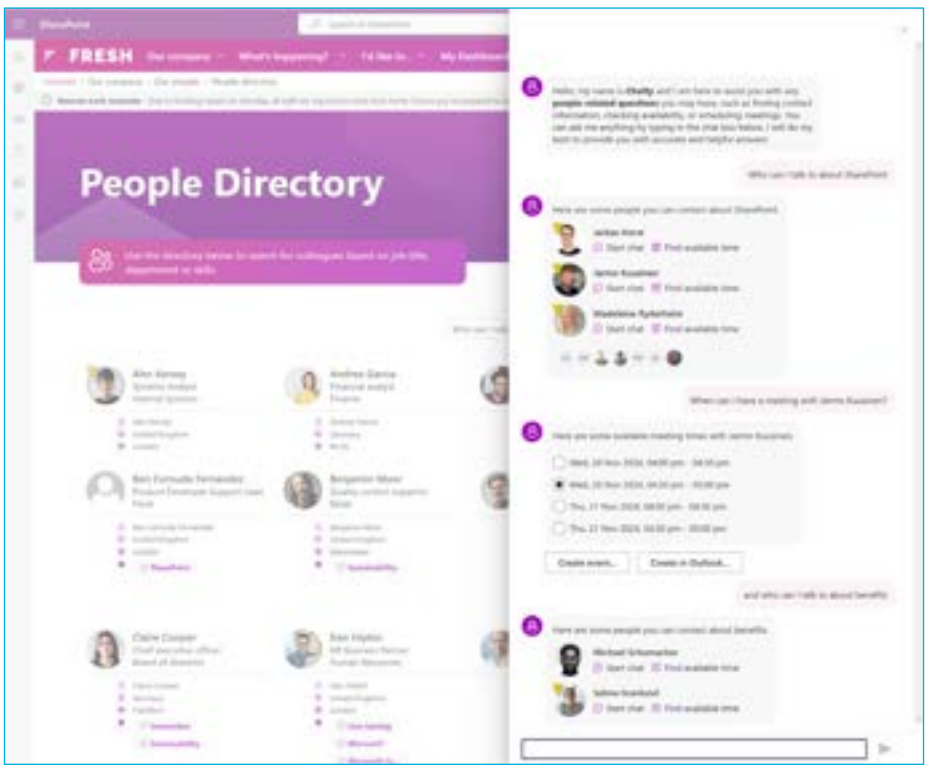
Clicking on a person shows a more detailed profile card with additional information and organisation chart. Alternatively, this can be displayed as a side panel. From here there are icons to send an email, start chat or call in Teams.

Fresh also has an AI-powered search to find coworkers using a chat-style interface. A prompt such as "who is a SharePoint expert" returns a list of relevant people. We really like the integration with Teams and Outlook so you can start a chat or find an available time to meet, looking across both calendars to find free time and book the meeting there and then.

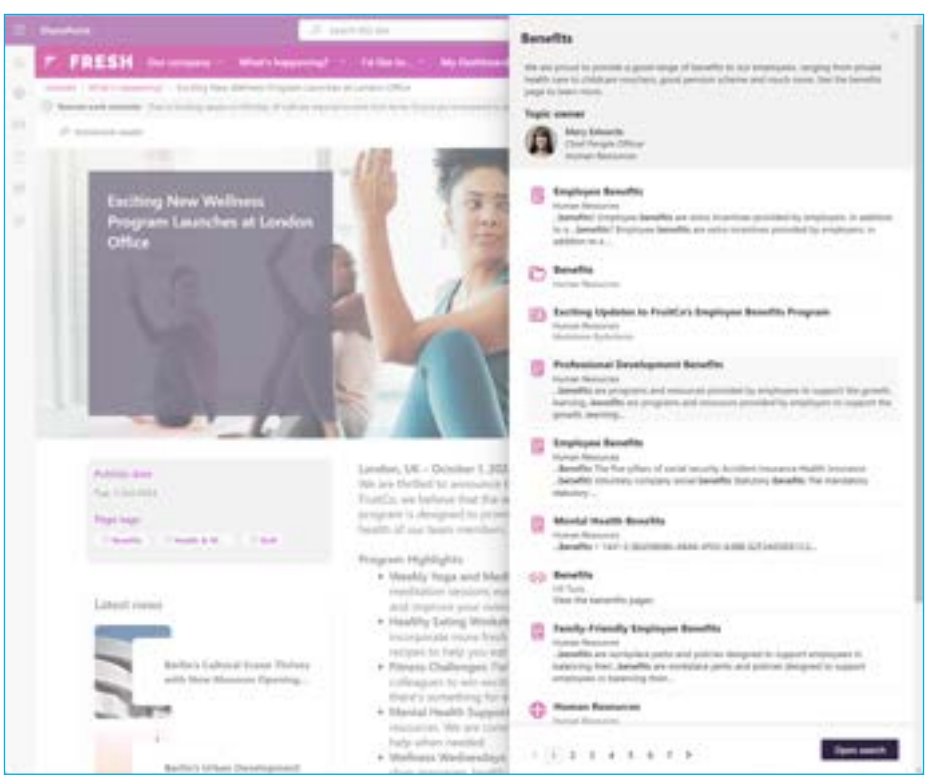
Fresh has several features that help organise and find knowledge in a structured way. The 'Topic explorer' leverages metadata tags to make them more powerful and interactive. Tags can have additional information associated with them including a topic owner and description. Tags relating to content are shown in a web part on the page. Clicking on a tag shows a side panel with the owner and description as well as other content and people tagged with that term. Topics and associated information are maintained manually in the admin centre; this makes it more straightforward and visible than via the term store. Information for each topic includes an owner, a brief description and a link to a more detailed topic page.



The people directory has powerful profile search and filter capabilities.



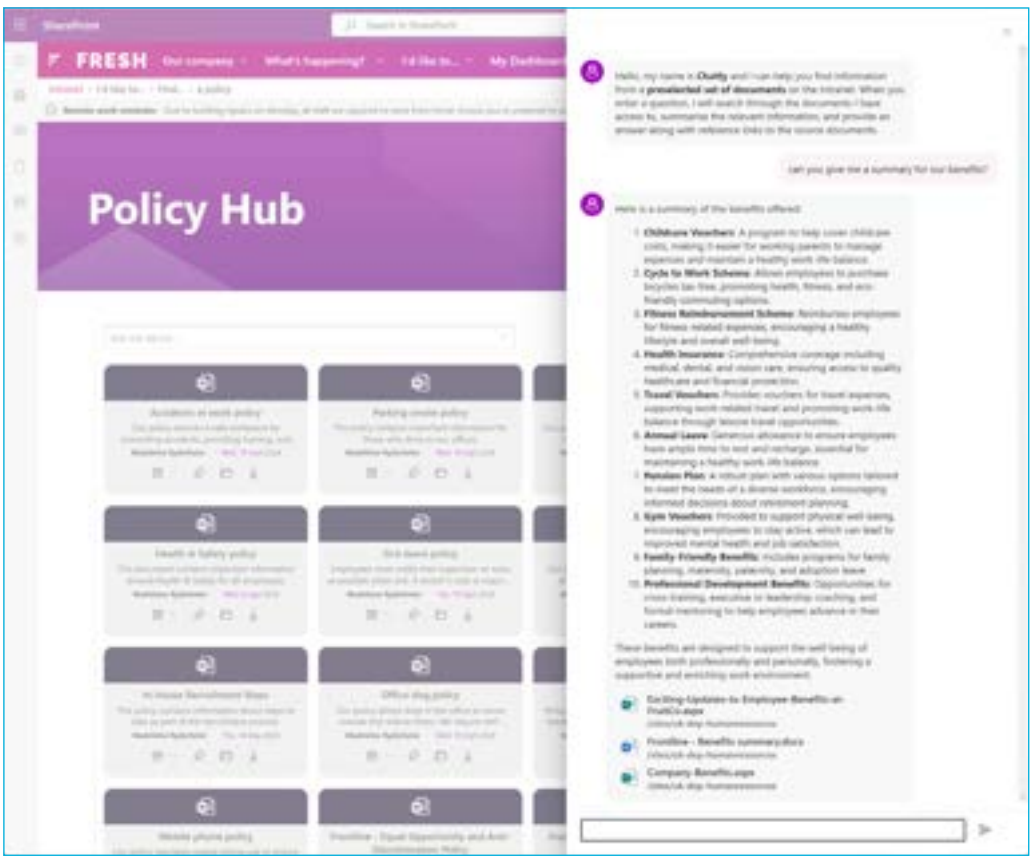
Fresh enables employees to find coworkers via natural language search and find a mutually convenient time to meet.



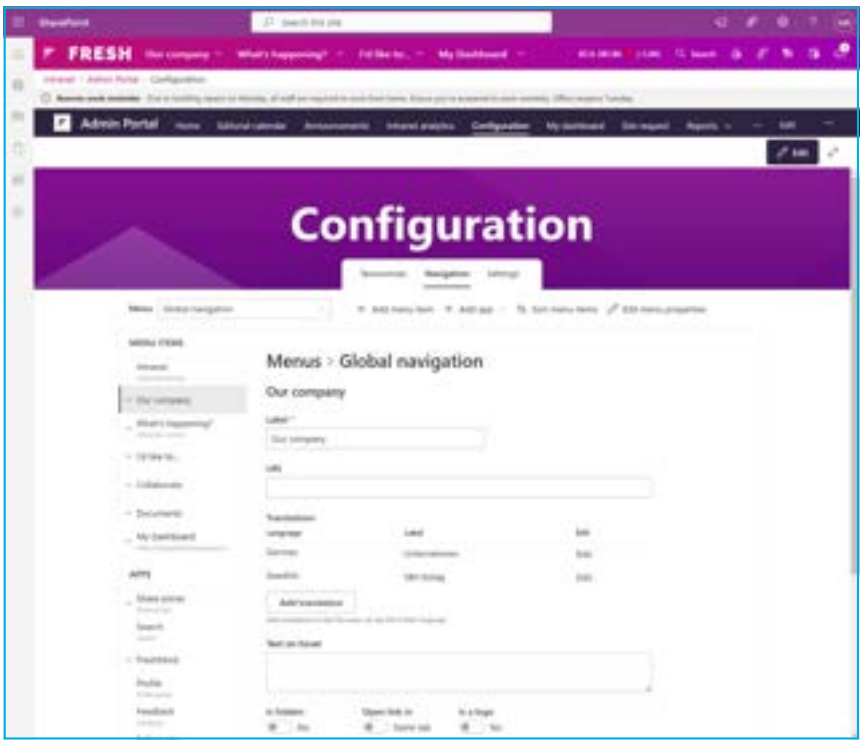
Tags defined as topics are assigned an owner and description, and provide a rich method of navigation around related information.

Fresh also has some search and AI-based approaches to help manage knowledge. There are dedicated web parts to create a roll-up of content in documents and pages that relate to specific subjects (metadata) or are of a specific type, such as policies. The information can be located anywhere across the intranet in multiple sites and the web part will aggregate this information. Filters can also be set up to further narrow results by business function, topic etc.

The AI chat-style interface can also be configured to work with a specific set of authoritative documents relating to a knowledge topic (e.g. employee benefits) or information type such as policies. Employees can then ask questions relating to the subject, and the AI will summarise information from the corpus and provide links to the source documents for further information. A nice feature is that it is easy for admins to configure suggested prompts to get employees started using this tool with some practical examples.



Fresh uses AI to answer questions relating to specific topics, with links to the authoritative documents.



The Admin Portal provides an improved interface for many back-end tasks as well as configuring Fresh features.

Fresh makes use of standard SharePoint permissions and adheres to Microsoft best practices to avoid conflicts. However, it adds several improvements to the management experience, such as the user-friendly interface on the SharePoint term store (see Scenario 5). Fresh also provides easy-to-use tools to manage the branding centrally and configure how this is applied. The global navigation is maintained via a simple hierarchical tree view but each menu item has a selection of attributes (including translations, imagery, targeting etc.) providing a richness of experience. The community site provisioning tool (see Scenario 3) can be used to request other sites too, which is useful.

SharePoint page templates are reasonably straightforward to work with and the vendor will set these up according to client needs. Re-use of page templates across sites is not well supported in SharePoint but templates are on Fresh's roadmap. Fresh comes with around 70 web parts which can be used interchangeably and alongside standard Microsoft web parts on the same page.

For content life cycle, the editorial calendar works for all site pages, not just news content, so can be used to monitor the status of content that needs to be published. The 'intranet governance' page provides a listing of all reference content along with ownership and review dates. Out of the box there are no automated content review alerts, but this can be added with PowerAutomate. One particularly useful feature is the ability to bulk change content ownership, tags and review dates. The bulk change feature can use AI suggestions for metadata (tags) and descriptions, but we would recommend using this with care. Fresh's 'site audit centre' also helps with site-level life cycle management, displaying helpful information such as basic usage data.

Multilingual support has its foundation in standard SharePoint but has a couple of enhancements. A machine translation button can be added to the global header so any content page can be translated on the fly, while the editorial assistant can translate content prior to publication.

Multimedia content can be provided by Microsoft Stream, Vimeo and YouTube; Fresh has web parts for displaying content from these sources, including a Viva Connections card. Fresh also has an image directory web part that could provide a simple brand-approved image library.

Fresh analytics provide basic insight into content and search usage.

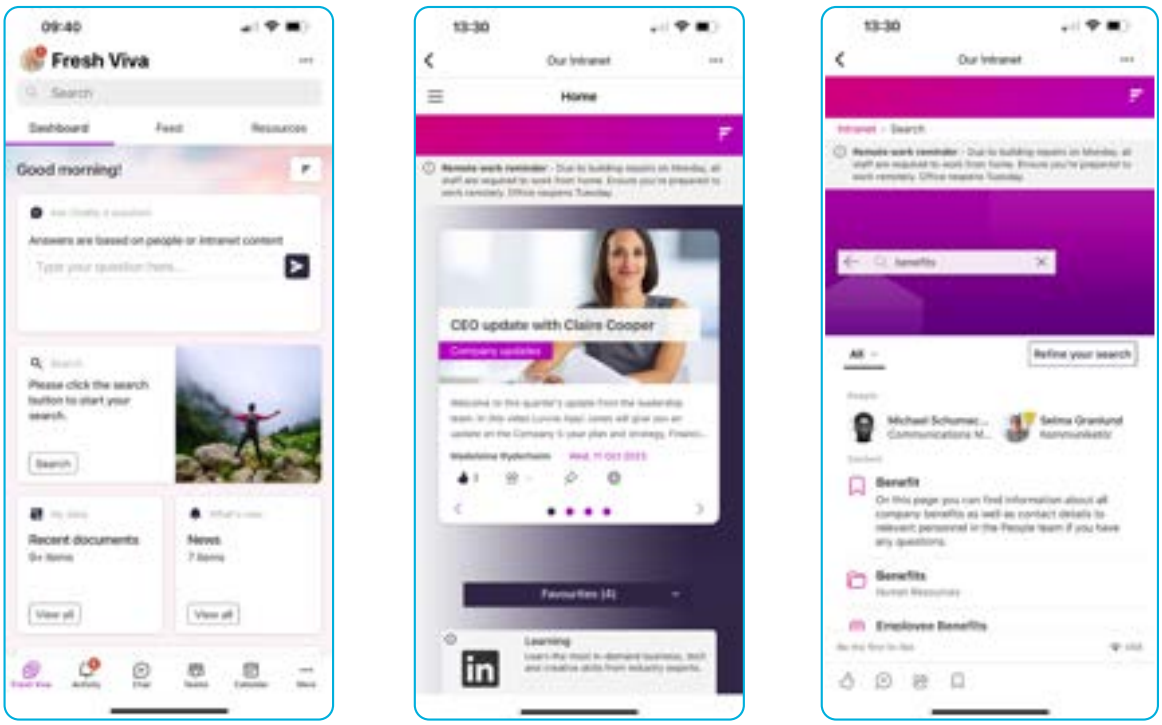
Fresh comes with some simple analytics reports that will provide a baseline for intranet managers and content owners to get some insight into usage. The product also has support for integration with Google Analytics, Google Tag manager, Microsoft Clarity and Azure Application Insights for organisations that need deeper insights or already use those tools. Analytics are provided as part of the admin portal so anyone with access to that can see the available reports.

The 'all page views' and 'peak time views' reports give an overview of intranet usage over predetermined periods - it would be useful to include a date picker here. Views can be filtered by a mix of content and user profiles so it's possible to just see news pages viewed by people in a specific department, for example. 'Peak time views' breaks down traffic by the hour to see what time of day gets the most traffic. Intranet managers will also appreciate the ability to identify specific content as 'tools' which are then shown in a 'top tools' report.

The 'engagement' report shows the most popular pages ranked by views, hovering over the bar for a page shows the number of likes and comments. There is a separate content engagement report that charts these metrics as well. Again, this information can be filtered by page type and user profile information, but it would be harder here for individual site owners to see what's happening with just their content. The governance reports described in Scenario 6 also provide usage information on individual content pages.

There is no 'mandatory reads' capability, but the 'action checklist' web part goes some way towards supporting this need. This provides a checklist of tasks that can be assigned to one person or a group of people. As employees go through and complete the tasks, they can check them off; a downloadable report shows who has completed which tasks.

The analytics for search usage also provide some basic insights, including top search terms and top search terms with no results. Admins can drill into this further to see which search result verticals are being clicked on and what the search start point was. This last measure would be helpful in identifying usage for specific search configurations.



Fresh works with Viva Connections in the Teams Mobile app to deliver a mobile experience.

Mobile access to Fresh is supported via responsive components that work in a mobile device browser or SharePoint mobile app. Customers that are using Viva Connections can also provide access via the Microsoft Teams mobile app with the added benefit of support for push notifications. Fresh does not provide its own mobile app and employees log in via their Microsoft 365 credentials. There's no support for alternative log-in methods and all employees need a minimum of Microsoft F1 licenses to access intranet content.

The mobile experience is consistent with the desktop, albeit adapted for the smaller screen. Branding and design elements are translated as you would expect. The navigation adapts to work better on the smaller screen with a simplified view. Fresh's targeting system allows for different content and components to be shown on mobile devices versus desktop if there is a need to make specific changes. For example, the page header can be removed to leave more space for content. Otherwise, the full intranet experience is available on the mobile device. Alternatively, the 14 adaptive card components for Viva Connections work perfectly on mobile.

Fresh does not include specific features for frontline workers, but the targeting system can be used to deliver content and capabilities that are configured for their needs. For example, if there are specific policies that apply to frontline workers, these can be shown rather than those for office-based staff. The AI chat interface can also be configured to provide an easy way for frontline workers to get answers relating to topics relevant to them.

THINGS TO BEAR IN MIND

Fresh adds valuable functionality to SharePoint and Microsoft 365 that will particularly appeal to Microsoft-centric organisations. Integrations with the M365 suite are strong and Fresh components can be used to display content from external information sources. When it comes to transactional integrations with popular enterprise cloud services such as Workday and ServiceNow, options are more limited; Fresh recommends that clients use the options available in Microsoft 365 and its related services.

Analytics in Fresh has improved over the last couple of years, and it's good to see a baseline of reporting for usage of the platform and most popular content. Search analytics provide some useful insights as well. Fresh does include integration options for Google Analytics and Clarity, which are likely to be needed by any organisation looking for detailed insights into content usage and employee behaviour.

Advania's approach with Fresh is to leverage Microsoft capabilities where possible and this extends to the mobile experience. We fully understand this approach and it's not unique to this product, however organisations that are looking for a fully branded mobile experience, or who want to extend access to frontline workers that do not have Microsoft licenses, may need to consider other approaches.

Overall, Fresh extends standard SharePoint functionality in many places while respecting the helpful features behind the scenes. This does mean there are occasional gaps however, and you can read more about this in our SharePoint review.

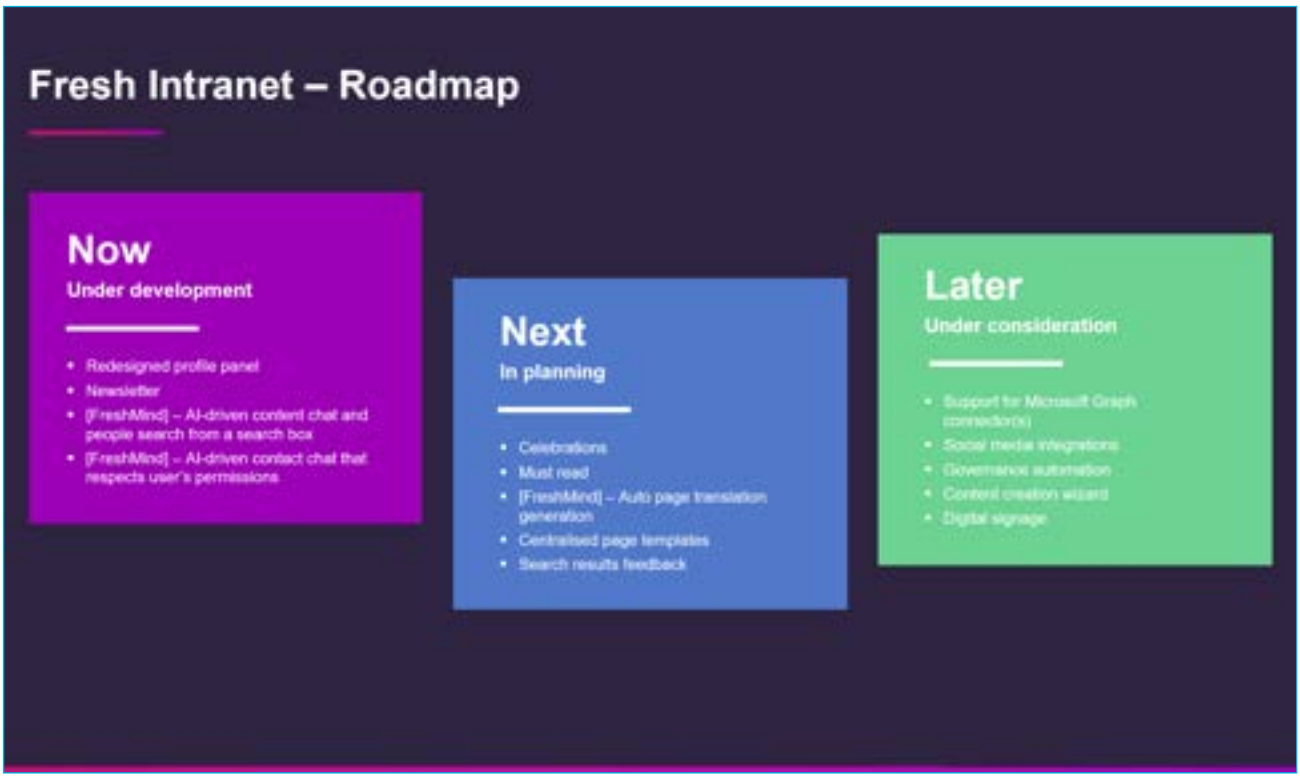
Why choose this product

Fresh adds valuable functionality and an improved experience to employees and administrators alike. It is particularly strong in news and content management and provides good support for communities as well. Fresh has made good use of AI capabilities to add value to specific use cases such as editorial support and answering questions on controlled topics. Fresh will appeal to medium to large organisations that have a significant investment in Microsoft 365 and want to further gain advantage from the platform.

You may also be interested in...

involv BUILT ON MICROSOFT 365 mozzaik Powell

Vendor roadmap



Roadmap image provided by Fresh, an Advania brand.

Back to index

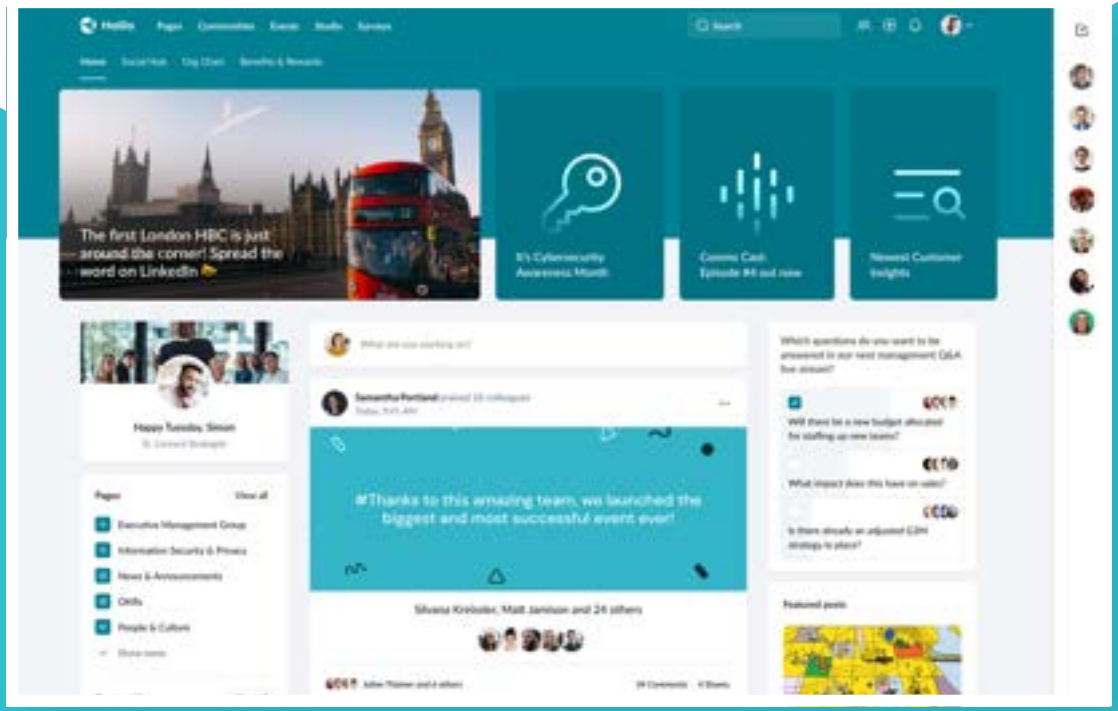
Haiilo

FULLY STANDALONE

REQUIRES SHAREPOINT

FRONTLINE FOCUS

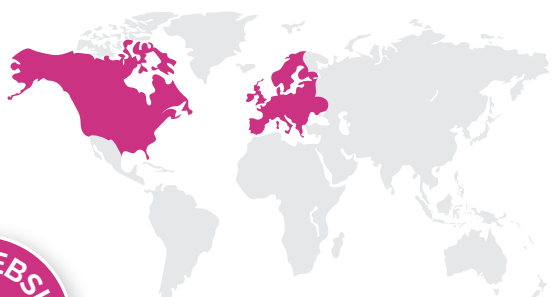
OTHER



Typical deployment:

1,000 to 5,000

Company locations:



VISIT THE WEBSITE

The product in a nutshell

Haiilo is a user-friendly social intranet platform with intuitive collaboration and communication tools, making it a great choice for organisations of all sizes looking to encourage employee engagement.

SUMMARY

Haiilo Employee Experience Platform

Haiilo, owned by Germany-based Haiilo, was initially launched in 2012 under the name "COYO". Rebranded and relaunched in 2022, the platform has seen steady development ever since.

The platform focuses on community engagement, collaboration and communication. There is simplicity in content creation and engaging social features such as liking, sharing and contributing. The simple and intuitive design is one of Haiilo's strongest points, offering an easy onboarding process for both users and admins. Dedicated spaces such as Pages and Communities enable effective audience targeting, helping to streamline internal communication. The mobile app is well-optimised and functions smoothly, enabling frontline workers to stay up to date.

Third-party integrations have improved significantly in the past year, although Haiilo still has room to grow by offering more out-of-the-box options (as planned for future releases). Many integrations also come at additional cost, not included in the pricing supplied. Some other advanced features, like analytics and surveys, require additional modules at an extra cost, but Haiilo's relatively low base price makes this manageable for most organisations.

Haiilo serves a wide range of clients, including large companies with hundreds of thousands of employees. It's well suited for organisations looking to encourage employee participation and implement a social intranet focused on inclusion and collaboration. It is also worth pointing out that Haiilo's customers frequently praise their support team for their quick responsiveness and efficiency.

Pricing

PRICE BAND	
1,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
5,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
20,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
50,000 users	$ $ $ $ $

These prices are indicative, offering a comparison of the products featured in this report only. Please contact the vendor for a bespoke quote.

PRICING MODEL

Subscription – price band based on number of users.

DISCOUNTS

Multi-year commitments.

COSTS TYPICALLY

Fairly evenly spread across three years.

PRICE INCLUDES

Access to Haiilo Support, Global Haiilo Client Community and frequent Business Reviews with dedicated Customer Success Managers.

Product type

Ready-to-run, installed in days

Branding opportunities

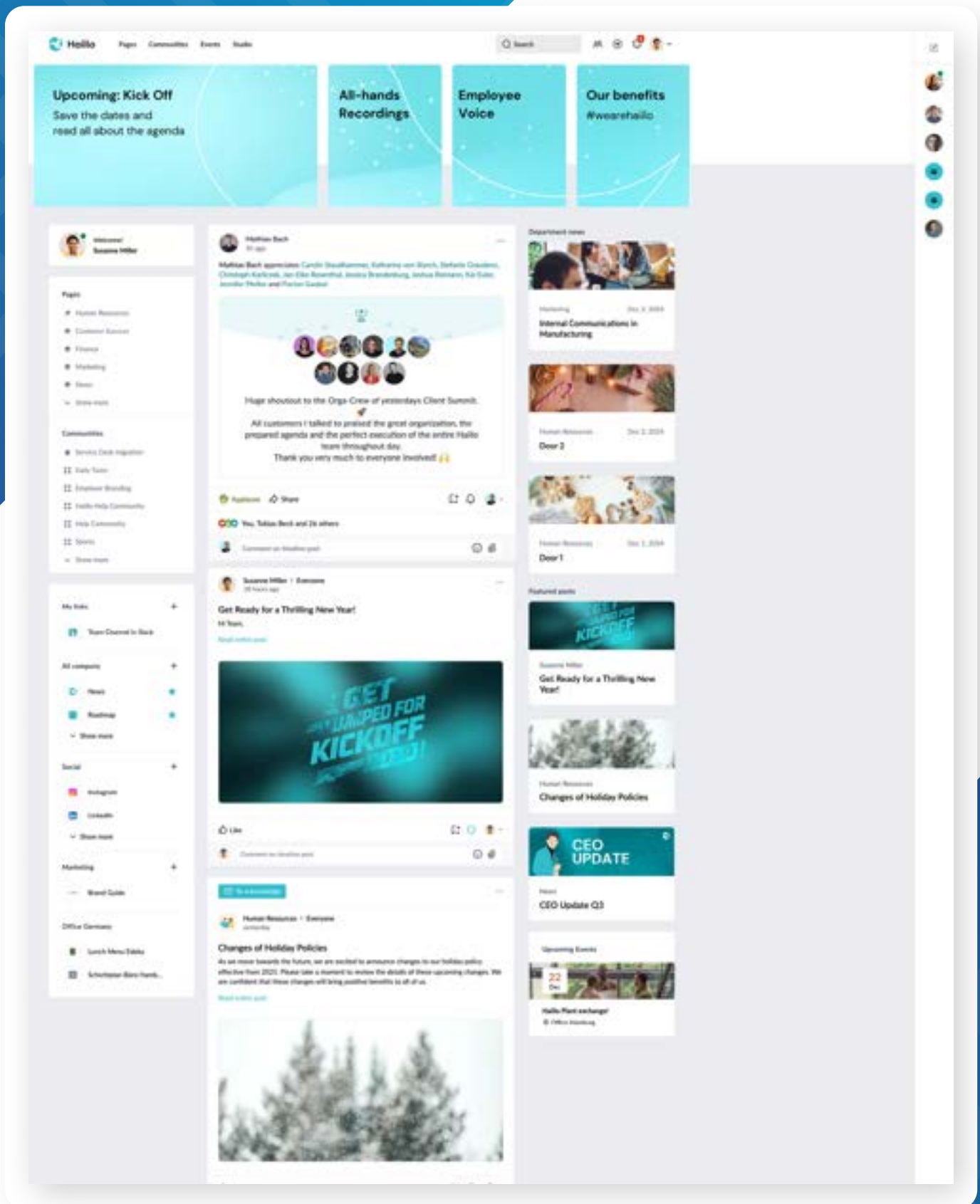
All branding, complex options

Base systems

- Fully standalone
- Requires SharePoint
- Other

Sectors

- Accountancy, banking and finance
- Engineering and manufacturing
- Healthcare
- Media and internet
- Retail


Upcoming: Kick Off
Save the dates and read all about the agenda
All-hands Recordings
Employee Voice
Our benefits
#wearehallo
Huge shoutout to the Orga-Crew of yesterdays Client Summit.
All customers I talked to praised the great organization, the prepared agenda and the perfect execution of the entire Hallo team throughout day.
Thank you very much to everyone involved!
Get Ready for a Thrilling New Year!
Changes of Holiday Policies
Internal Communications in Manufacturing
Door 2
Door 1
Get Ready for a Thrilling New Year!
Changes of Holiday Policies
CEO UPDATE
CEO Update Q3

COMPANY AND PRODUCT

Company details

Company
Haiilo

ISO 27001 certified
Yes

Data residency
USA and Europe (excluding UK), further locations could be added on request

Company founded
2022

Product launched
2010

Typical client size
1,000 to 5,000

Largest deployment so far
Deutsche Bahn with 340,000 employees

Customers
Please see their website for details.

Partner locations
Germany, US, UK

Company locations
Hamburg, Germany (HQ); United States; United Kingdom; Finland; France

Product and technical details

Name of product

Haiilo

Deployment

Client on-premises	Client private cloud	Microsoft Azure	Amazon Web Services	Vendor-hosted	Microsoft 365 tenant	Google Cloud	Other
	✓					✓	

Authentication supported

Entra ID	ADFS	Okta	Open ID	Oauth	G Suite	Other
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

App deployment

Google Play store	Apple store	MDM	MAM	Other
✓	✓	✓		

Accessibility

WCAG 2.1 conformant

Document library sources integrated

Box	Dropbox	Google Drive	SharePoint	OneDrive	Other
		✓	✓		

Optional integrated enterprise search engines

Coveo	Elastic	IBM	Lucidworks	**Microsoft**	Mindbreeze	Sinequa	Other

User interface multi-language

Machine translation	Pre-configured	**Editable**	Right to left script supported	Other

Content multi-language

Machine translation for publishers	**Machine translation for end users**	**Editable machine translation for publishers**	**Manual creation for publishers**	Right to left script	Other

Set-up and support

Set-up process for new clients

Haiilo has a robust implementation methodology that has been tested with global organisations. Each Haiilo client is assigned a dedicated Customer Success Director, who manages the relationship with the customer and coordinates with internal support teams within Haiilo. These teams include strategic, development, creative and integration specialists. Haiilo has an extensive network of solution and implementation partners across Western Europe and the United States, ensuring support and expertise tailored to client needs.

Version numbers

Demonstrated to ClearBox: Version:45.0.539-RELEASE

At January 2025: Version:45.0.539-RELEASE

Product updates

Minor updates daily; major updates every six weeks.

Product update process

Haiilo releases major updates as they are ready, which is done overnight (European hours). Releases cannot be skipped, but Haiilo does offer a delay to clients' production environments where they are on private cloud. The rollout schedule for private clouds can either follow the same schedule as the public cloud or be completely manual upon customer request. Manual rollouts for emergencies are supported.

Reverse-out options

Haiilo provides customer data as an export at the end of the term upon request. The export will be in the form of a .json file with an additional folder containing all uploaded files accessible via a download link.

Technical support

Email support	Phone support	Chat support	Online portal	24/7 support	Office hours only*

*24/7 support for Gold Support customers

User community

Haiilo offers clients exclusive access to the global Haiilo Customer Community where customers connect, share insights and influence the evolution of the product. The Community includes Haiilo Breakfast Club (global in-person and virtual meet-ups) and online portal with best practices and for knowledge sharing. This is where customers can influence the roadmap, preview new features and speak directly with experts.

Voice of the vendor

Haiilo says: "Having completed the integration work on our combined Intranet, advocacy and surveys offerings, we have now defined our forward-looking vision. Ensuring we can deliver the best-in-class solution today and into the future. Our Vision is broken down into the following key areas:

- Why: Haiilo enables every employee to thrive - wherever they are
- How: We believe that in the dynamic world of work, we make things easy – you need an employee experience platform that evolves with you. Haiilo connects employees with organisations through the content, community and communication that enables them to thrive in their role.
- What: Haiilo combines social intranet, communications, employee listening and actionable insights in one seamless experience–your digital home.

Our vision is to build the most intuitive employee experience platform–easy to use, integrate and maintain. Our forward-looking view sees IPS as the 'digital glue' that ties the organisation together, delivering AI-curated personalised and employee-centric experiences (content, communication, community, multi-channel comms and employee listening/insight), based on the employee's role, language, location and communication preferences, "in the flow of work." Employees should not need to go on a "digital safari" to find information and experiences, they need to be present wherever they are.

We are building a two-way employee experience platform that allows for "top-down communication" but crucially goes beyond this and unifies the employee with the organisation and vice versa.

Our goal is to build the most intuitive platform in the space, the IPS should be simple to use, integrate and maintain. Crucially not requiring heavy maintenance and technical understanding, put simply; it should just work.

As part of our work last year, we have built the most extensible integration platform in the IPS space, thus helping to become the "digital glue" and allowing organisations to achieve greater ROI and productivity on their existing tech investments."

Voice of the customer

Customers consistently highlight Haiilo's intuitive, user-friendly design, praising its flexibility and ease of use for both administrators and users. Clients note that Haiilo's straightforward approach and familiar tools make it easy for employees to adopt quickly, without much training needed. One person said there is "no laborious searching, no thinking about which function is there for what. After a very short time, daily interaction became second nature." According to customers, Haiilo provides essential tools for internal communication, with features like mobile access and targeted messaging enabling company-wide communication. One customer notes, "Haiilo enables us to communicate mobile and targeted in all directions (top-down, bottom-up and cross-networked)." Many customers also appreciate Haiilo's tools for employee engagement, which encourage active participation of employees.

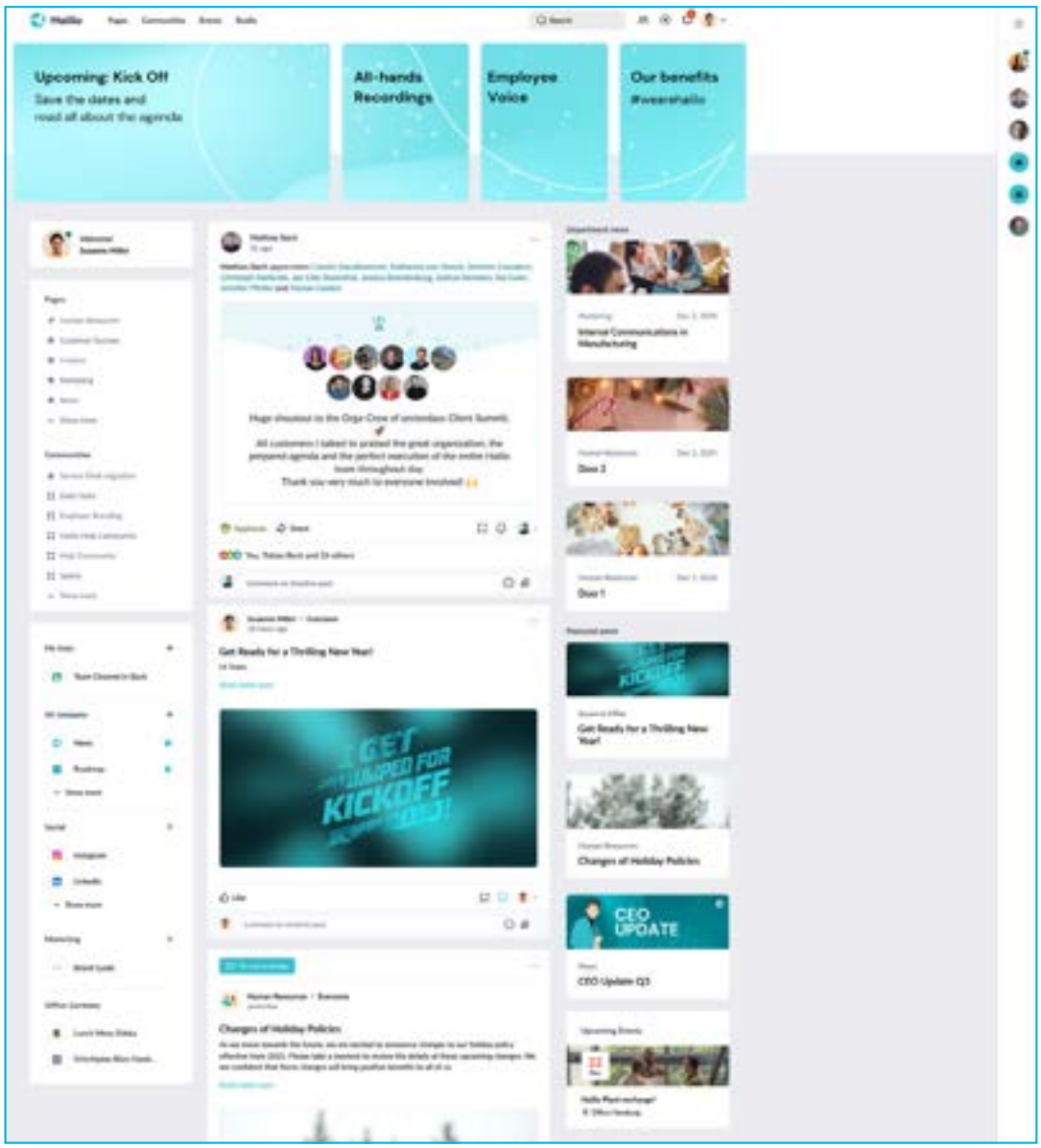
Changes customers would like to see are mostly focused on search capabilities and timeline improvements. One customer points out that the current timeline setup leads to "information overflow", as "there is no visual distinction between official content and content created by users in community". In terms of search capabilities, customers would like to see improvements in global search, where one customer points out that "global search does not show exact matches across all content types", as well as mentioning that there is "no filter for subcompanies of enterprises, as the system is not built in a multi-company way". Regarding the mobile app, one customer mentioned that they would like to see "individual design options for the homepage in the app". Another customer pointed out that the translation feature could also be improved as "static content on pages is not translated".

All customers agree that Haiilo excels in the customer support department, with their quick responsiveness and solution-oriented approach. One customer points out that "all teams are very responsive, concerns are dealt with quickly and competently", while another says that Haiilo's support is "always easy to reach and thinks and acts in a solution-oriented manner". One customer highlights that their relationship with Haiilo is based on "collaborative partnership", while another says that at Haiilo they are "a customer and at the same time a member of the community".

SCENARIOS & SCORES

Please see the Scenarios below for more detail on each of these.

SCENARIO AND SCORE	KEY BENEFITS	IMPROVEMENTS / CONSIDERATIONS
4.5 **1. User Experience & Visual Appeal**	Simple and intuitive design; ease of use for both users and admins.	Navigation bar is fixed and does not offer many customisation options.
4 **2. Publishing & Communications Management**	Helpful Studio feature for scheduling and management; content creation workflow works well. AI assistance simplifies the content creation process.	At a Page level, AI assistance is not available and news scheduling is limited. Audience targeting is somewhat restricted.
4+ **3. Community & Engagement**	Community engagement features such as polls, surveys and events work well and allow employees to contribute.	Engagement surveys feature comes at an additional cost. Content moderation is limited to timeline posts only.
1.5+ **4. Integrations & Services (Including M365)**	Simple set up for M365, Google and Slack integration.	Most integrations come at additional cost and must be established via APIs, through Haiilo's partner Merge.dev.
3.5 **5. Information Finding & Search**	Natural language questions are supported with the AI assistant AVA.	Search is not supported on Page level. Org chart is missing.
3.5 **6. Administrator Experience**	Role permission setup is simple and detailed. Dashboard set up is flexible and easy. Translation options available both for content and user interface.	There are no dashboard templates that include widgets. Each dashboard needs to be configured from scratch.
3 **7. Analytics**	Analytics add-on provides good detail on platform adoption and content performance metrics.	Basic 'Reports' feature is quite limited. Analytics add-on comes at an additional cost.
4 **8. Mobile & Frontline Support**	Mobile app is optimised well and content fits seamlessly on the mobile screen. Login process is simple and efficient.	White label branding option comes at an additional cost. Few frontline features.

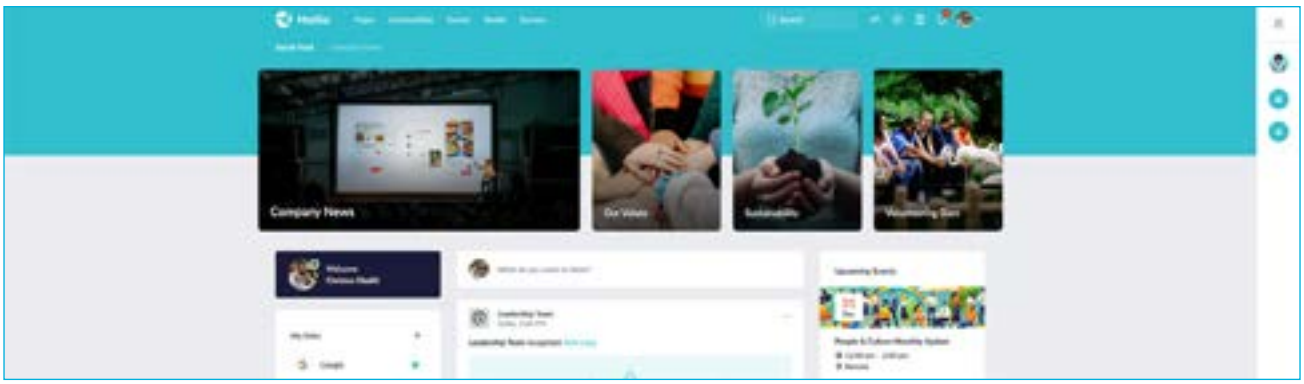


The home page displays a timeline, news articles and widgets.

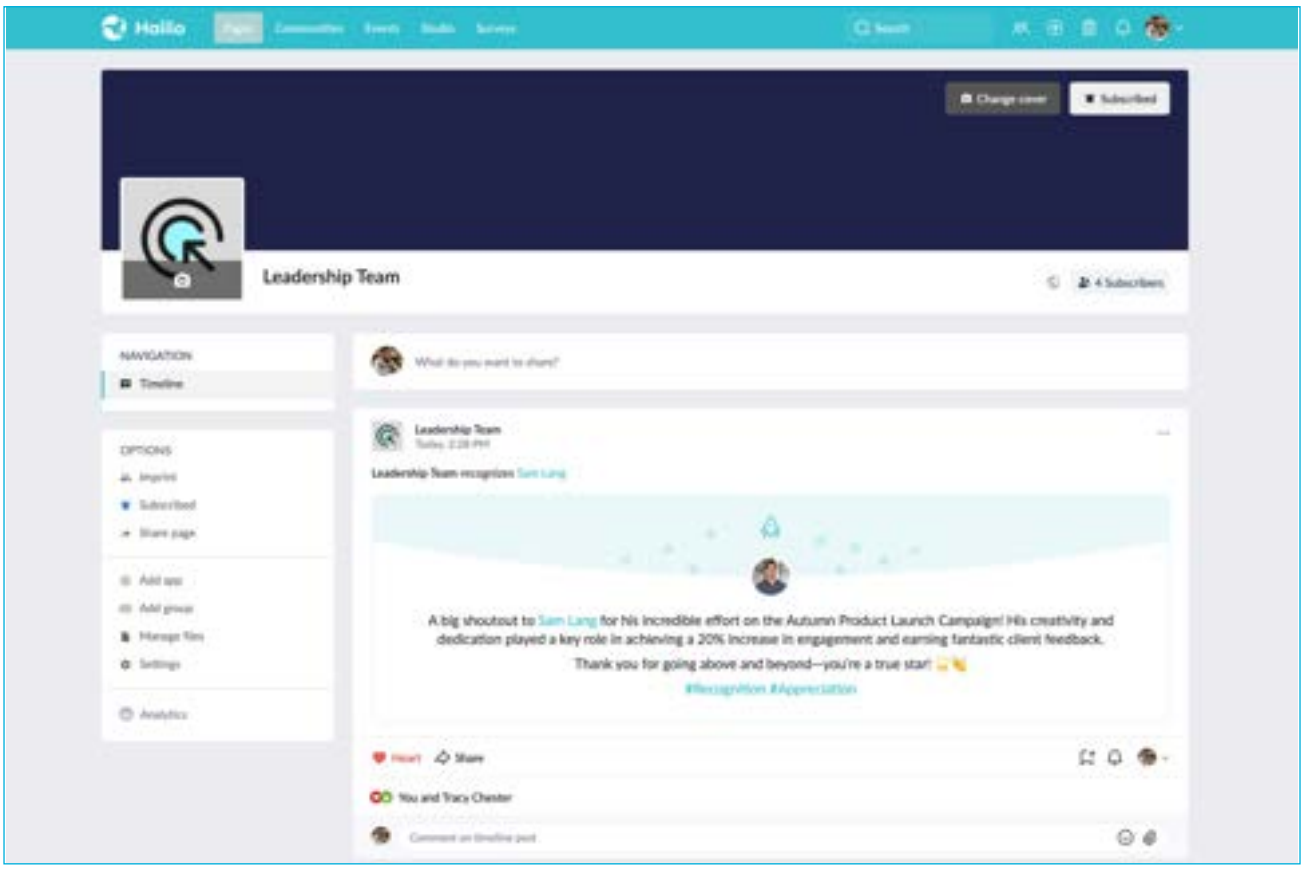
Haiilo's user interface is designed to be simple and intuitive, helping people quickly access the most relevant information without extensive searching. For example, we like that first-time visitors are guided through a tour after their initial login, helping them become familiar with the platform.

The home page typically features a timeline and various configurable widgets, which may include shortcuts to specific intranet spaces, highlighted content, upcoming events and birthdays, documents, videos and more. We find this approach effective, as it allows organisations to present the most relevant information from different areas of the intranet on the home page for increased visibility.

Haiilo offers an option for admins to configure multiple dashboards for the homepage if needed, which can be beneficial for larger organisations looking to display different information to groups of employees. This is where content from deeper navigation areas, such as a policies Page, could also be displayed. Configured dashboards will appear beneath the main navigation bar, and users can easily switch between them by clicking. While dashboards are a great way to highlight important content, we believe that creating too many could clutter the navigation and potentially confuse new employees. Additionally, configuring dashboards can be time-consuming, as admins must build them from scratch due to the lack of pre-built templates or ability to copy existing pages.



Multiple dashboards can be configured for the home page, allowing admins to display different information to groups of employees.



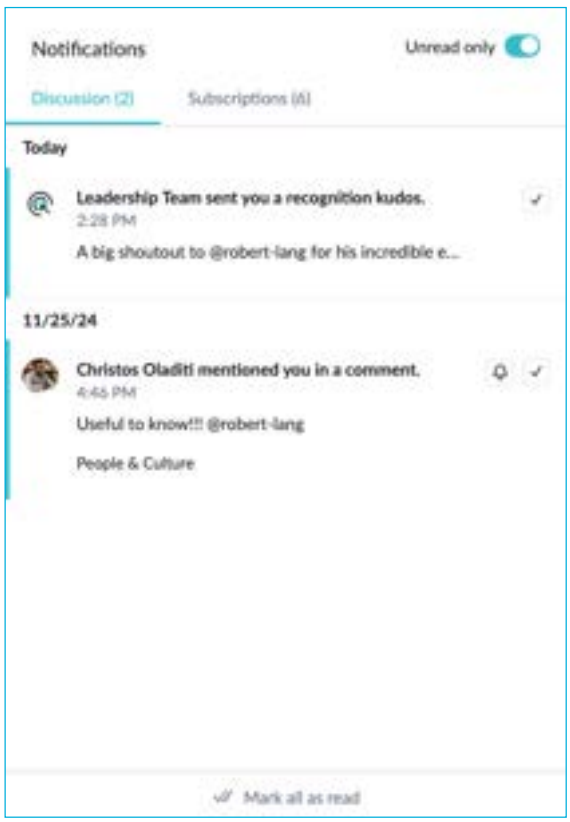
Pages, typically used for reference materials, are primary spaces for content publication.

The top navigation bar provides quick access to Pages, Communities, Events, as well as a search bar, People Directory and notifications. The icons in the navigation bar are clear and intuitive, and users can hover over them to see descriptions if they're unsure. Pages (typically for reference materials) and Communities (typically for social or other groups) serve as primary spaces for content publication, with a simple design that places navigation items on the left and widgets, like the timeline, on the right. What appears on each person's home page is then personalised based on their subscriptions.

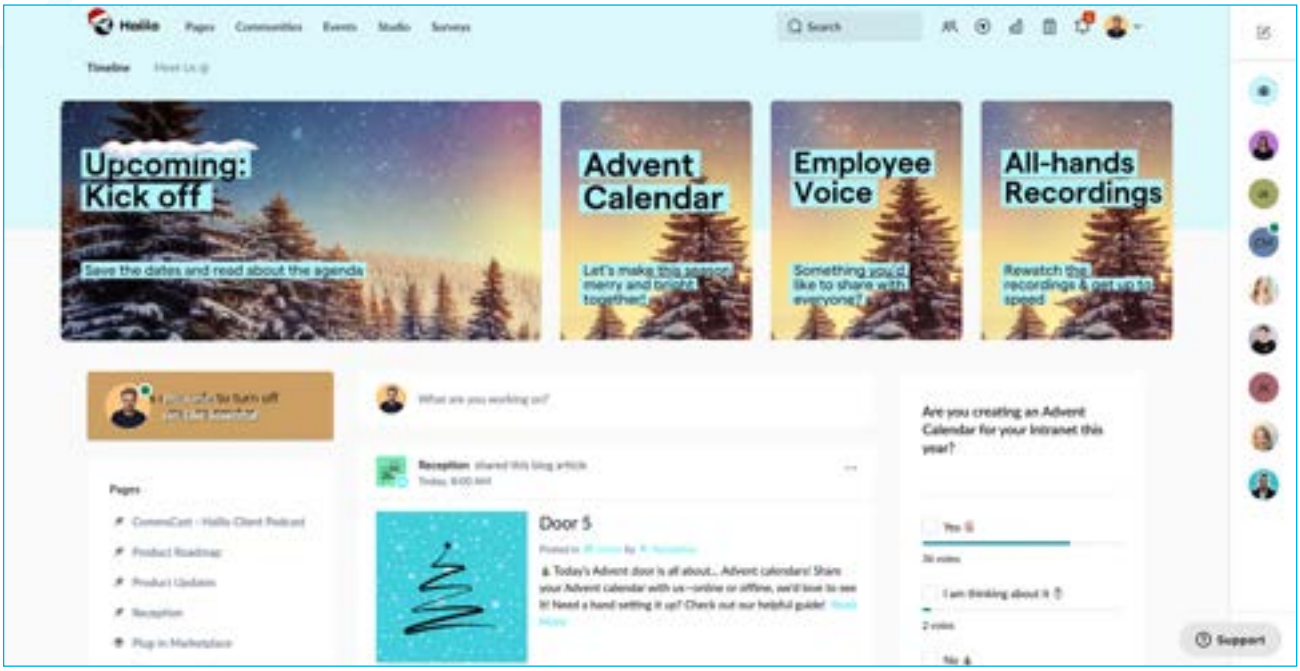
The Pages and Communities approach to content works well, as it's simple for end users to understand, plus delineates the content types. However, some organisations may find this approach to navigation too restrictive, even with the option to add links to content from the home page.

The notification bell icon allows users to view notifications related to discussions and their subscriptions, with an option to filter for "unread" notifications only. In addition to the navigation bar, users can receive notifications via email and mobile app. They have the option to opt in or out of most notifications through the main settings menu in the top right corner, where they can manage their notification preferences, including subscriptions, discussions, messages and post notifications. We feel that this could be further improved by allowing users to unsubscribe from more specific notifications, such as replies to posts or mentions. However, we do like the 'what you have missed' email digest that will trigger at a cadence set by the user.

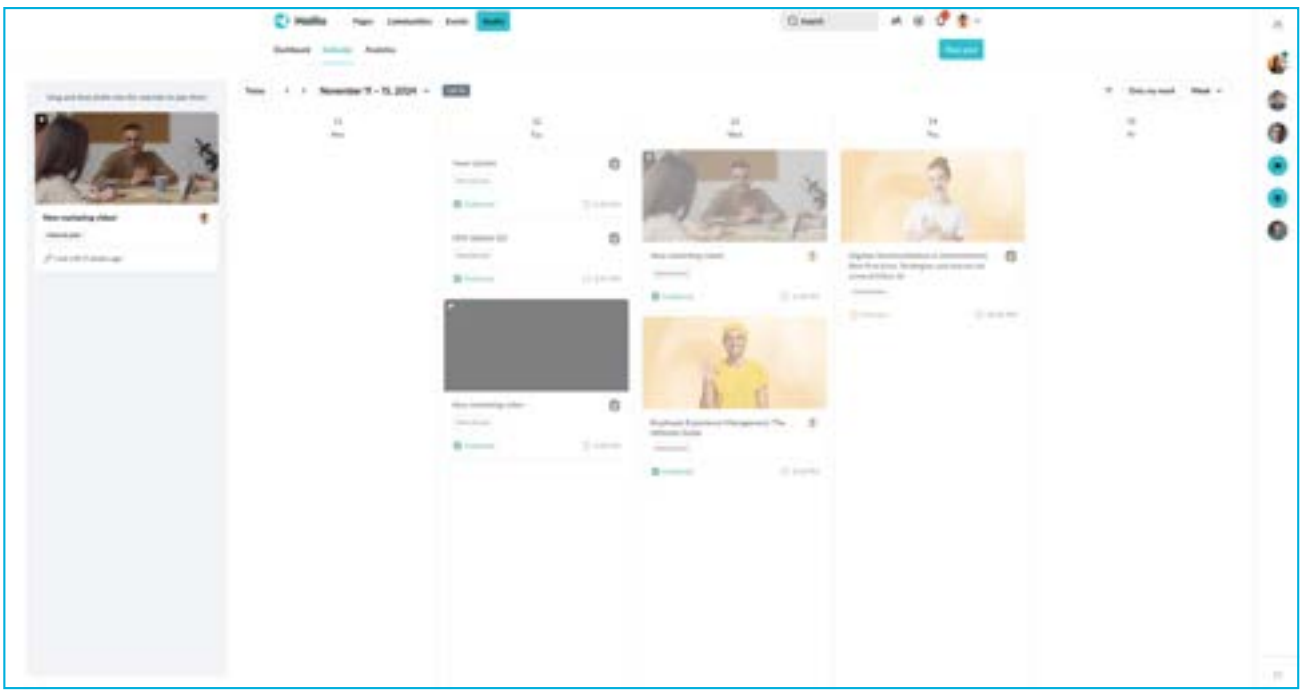
Haiilo provides extensive branding options, allowing companies to easily and effectively apply their brand colours and logo. Different themes and branding can be established for various parts of the organisation; for example, US employees could have a different branding style compared to EU employees. We like the easy controls to add seasonal branding, such as a moving background of coloured eggs for Easter or fireworks for Diwali. CSS editing is also accessible from the global settings, where more advanced controls are required.



The notification bell icon displays notifications related to user discussions and subscriptions.



Branding options allow companies to easily apply their brand colours and logo, or even seasonal themes.



Studio offers content editing, publishing and scheduling capabilities.

Haiilo does a good job of allowing content creators to publish content in different sections of the intranet and target specific audiences. We particularly like the 'Studio', which is a simple and intuitive content creation space for approved publishers. The Studio includes a dashboard view and a content calendar, making it easy for content creators to track published content and schedule future posts. The calendar works very well, although we think being able to add events outside of Haiilo, such as indicating when quarterly financial results are announced, would be a helpful addition so that publishers don't release news on days people are unlikely to be looking.

When creating an article via the Studio, there is a classic text editor with standard formatting options, as well as options for inserting images or videos, translation options and inserting @mentions within the content itself. Helpfully, content can be published either as a user or on behalf of a specific Page (e.g. Marketing). We particularly like the AI-powered feature called 'AVA', which significantly simplifies the content creation process. AVA can adjust the tone of the text and make it longer or shorter within seconds via a simple right click over content.

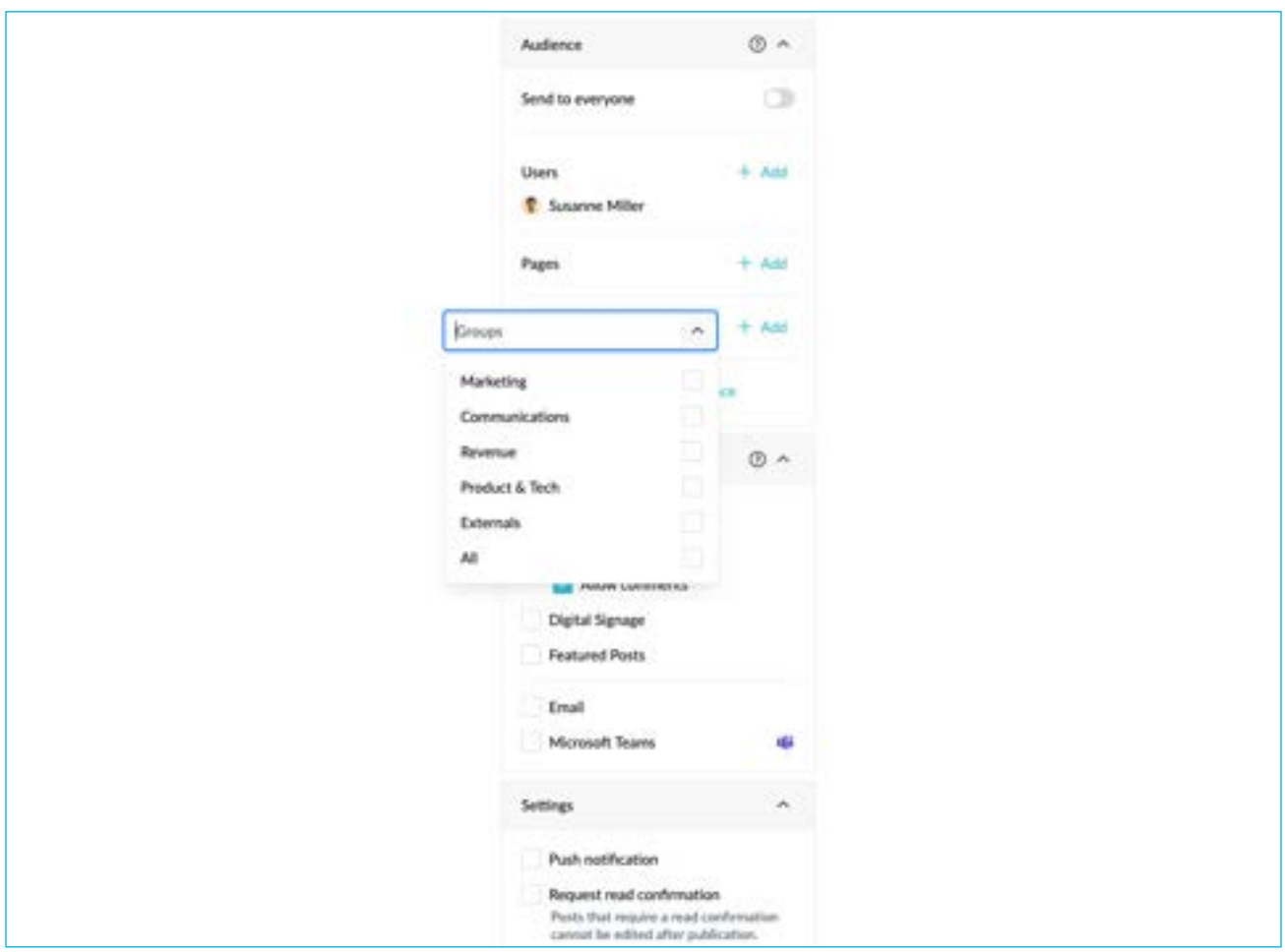
Through Studio publishing, Haiilo offers several options for audience targeting. Content can be published for everyone in the organisation or targeted to specific users, groups of users, Pages or Community members. While this setup covers most targeting needs for content publishing, it's worth noting that the targeting options are based on pre-defined audiences, meaning a specific audience must first be created in Entra or in the admin section before it can be targeted. Additional targeting options from the Studio, such as adding exceptions for the pre-defined groups or targeting based on user interests, would be a valuable enhancement.

The Studio also presents options for various communication channels, allowing content creators to push content to the timeline, digital signage, featured posts or Slack / MS Teams (see Scenario 4 for more on Slack / Teams). Comments, reactions, and the 'read confirmation'

setting can be enabled or disabled. A digital signage feature enables Studio content to be displayed on company screens. Each post includes a teaser title, teaser text, an image and a QR code that users can scan to access the full post on Haiilo. The default digital signage screen displays four posts, but configuration options are available for number of posts shown, display duration, targeting, language preferences and transition effects. Haiilo has also announced the release of a newsletter builder, which will further improve multi-channel publishing capabilities.

Publishing 'approval' is optional and can be set up for users without content creation permissions, with associated workflows to approve articles visible via the Studio dashboard. This feature can be valuable, as it encourages more users to participate in content creation while still maintaining publishing controls. Approvers can review content within the Studio and leave comments for the content creator if edits are needed.

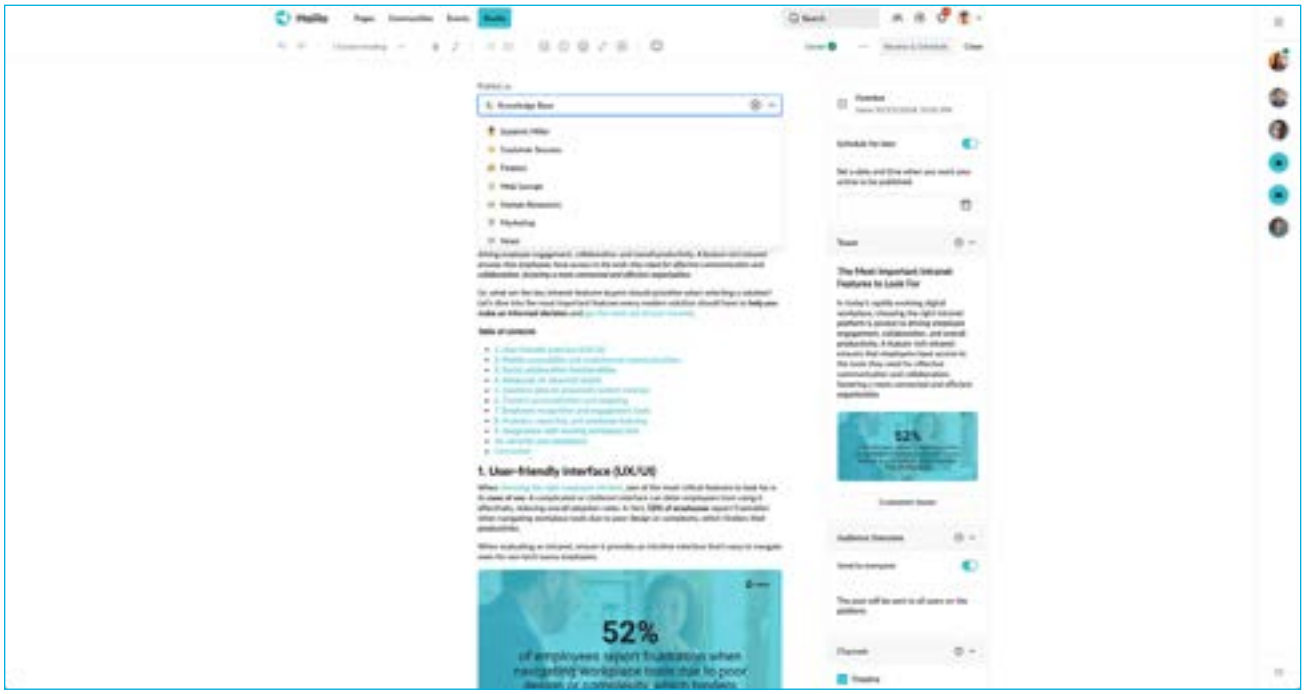
Users with content creation permissions can publish articles directly in a 'Page' space where they have these rights. They can do so using a 'Blog' app, which allows users to publish content with editing options and scheduling features. Saving a blog post as a 'draft' serves as a way to create templates, as drafts can be duplicated for future use. While Studio permissions can be granted to any user as required, it's not available at Page level; we think this is a shame, as users who don't need access to the Studio could really benefit from features such as AVA AI assistance in content creation.



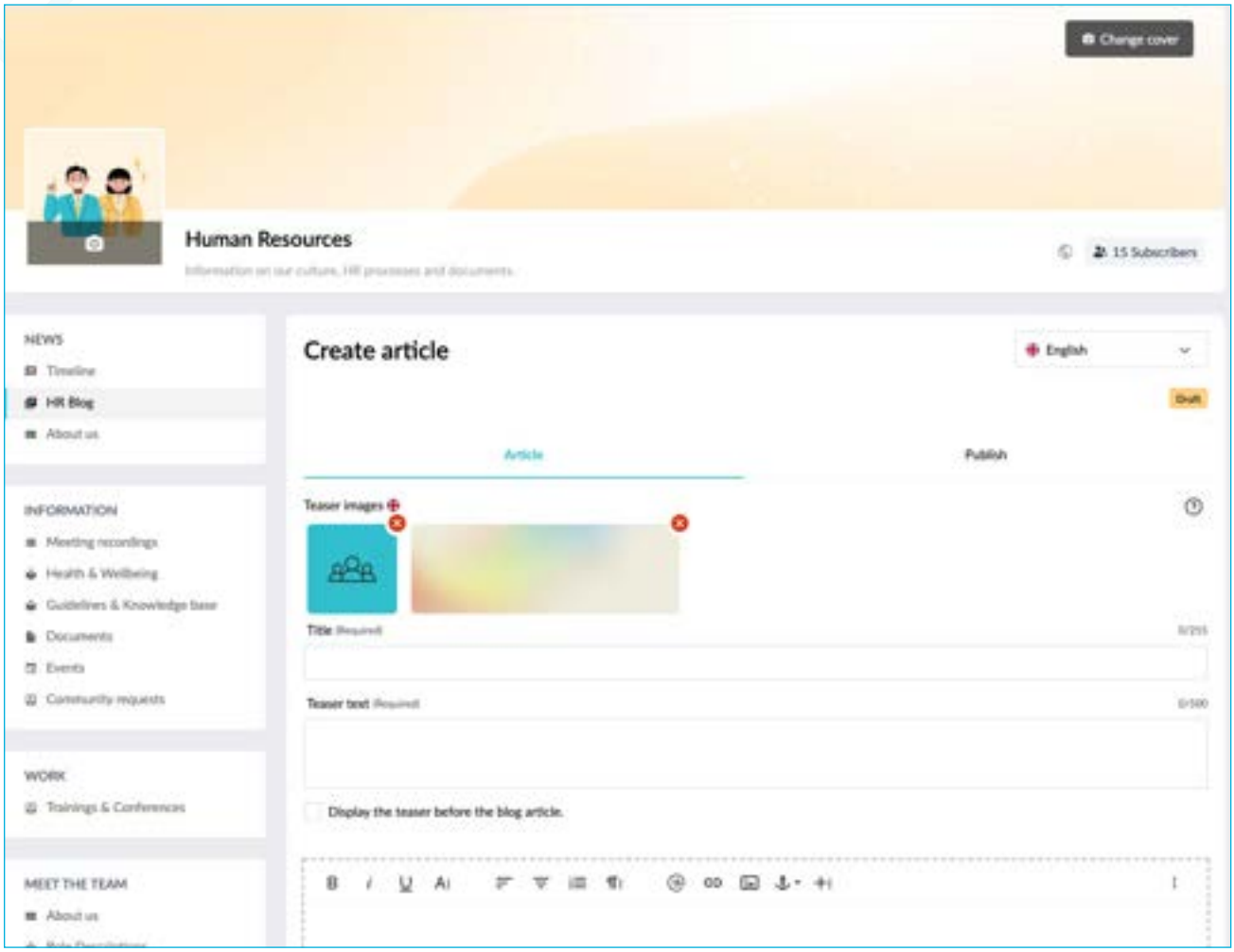
Audience targeting options in Studio allow content creators to display content to specific groups of users.

For crisis and urgent communications, Haiilo emphasises using multiple channels to ensure critical messages reach all users. Important news can be pushed to email or third-party integrated apps, such as Slack and MS Teams. Additionally, crisis communication articles or timeline posts can be pushed to the home page dashboard for increased visibility. For the timeline, a 'sticky' option is available, which keeps a post at the top for a specific period. Moreover, when publishing from the Studio, a 'read confirmation' feature can be activated, requiring users to confirm they have read a specific piece of content. Admins can then track confirmations to ensure the message has been received. While Haiilo does support crisis communications, we hope for a more refined approach in the future that enhances analytics and tracking capabilities.

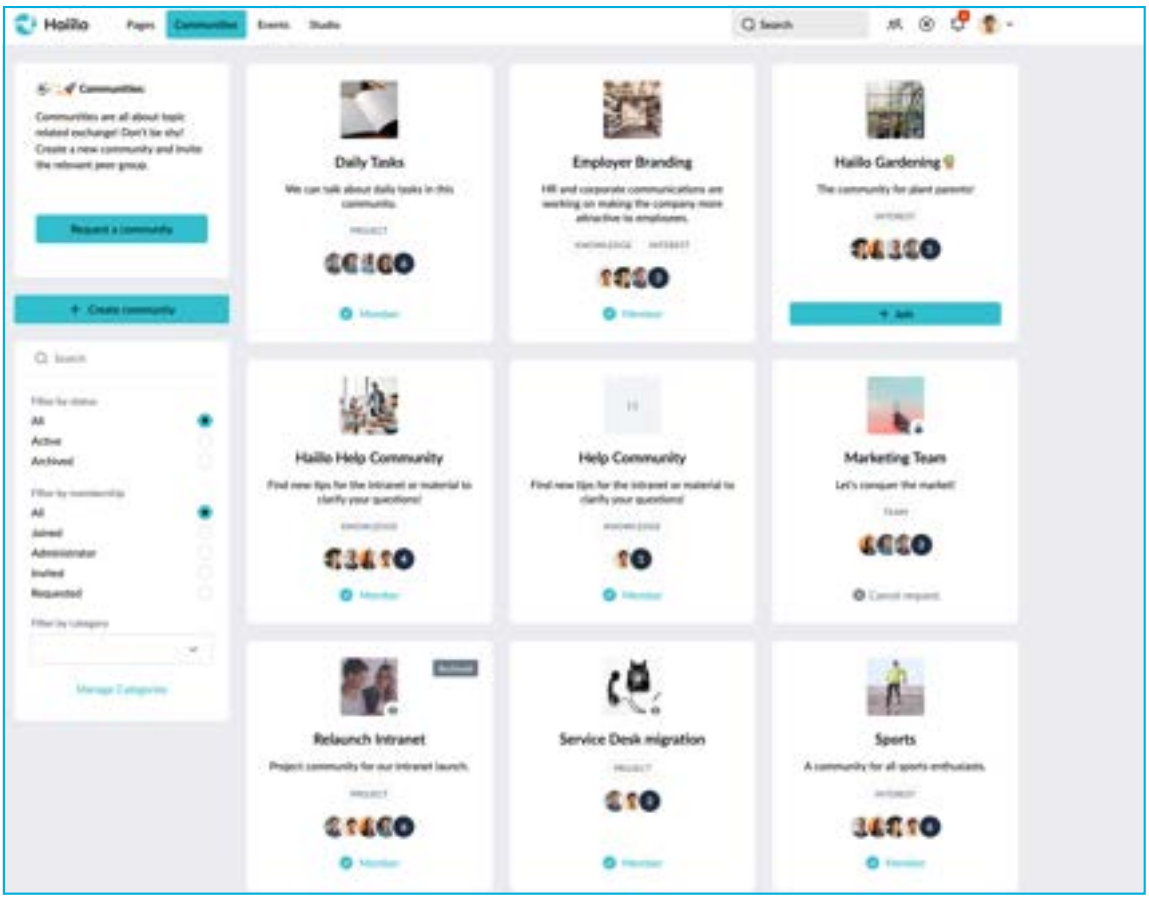
Overall, we feel that Haiilo's approach to publishing and communication management is well-executed with some room for improvement. Audience targeting is good but could offer more granular options. Scheduling options are straightforward and easy to use for those with access to the Studio. However, these features are not available for users without Studio access or for those publishing content directly on Pages, which is a shame.



Studio provides content creators an easy-to-use text editor, allowing them to post either as themselves or on behalf of a 'Page'.



The 'Blog' app allows users to publish content directly in a "page" space.



Communities are usually focused on specific topics or interests, enabling social interaction and collaboration.

Haiilo provides multiple ways to encourage community participation and engagement. Pages and Communities, and their respective timelines, serve as the primary spaces for social interaction within the Haiilo platform. While Pages are typically centred around departments or other reference materials, Communities are usually dedicated to specific interests or hobbies (e.g., Sports, Wellness, Diversity & Inclusion).

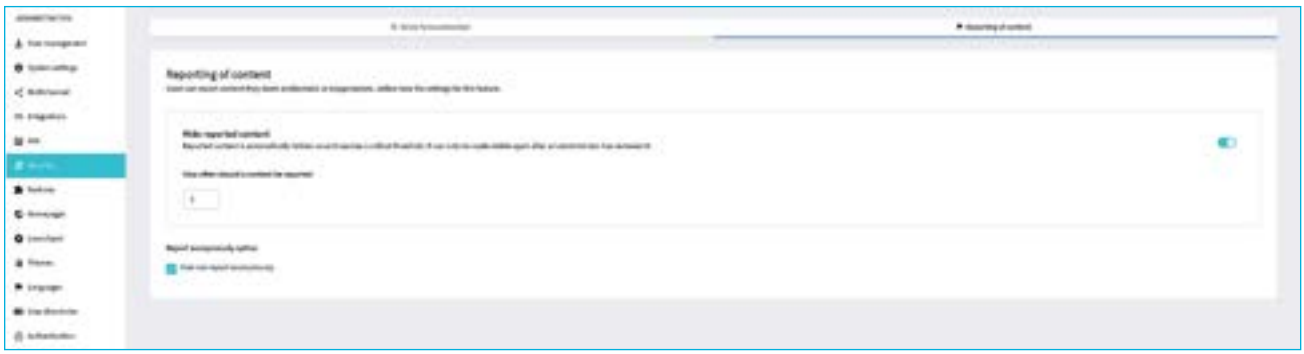
Communities can be set as public, protected or private. Depending on global settings, anyone may be able to create a new Community, or this function can be restricted to specific users only. Those who own a Page or Community space may choose to add a variety of community content types, including forums and wikis. Collaboration activities can be further encouraged by adding customisable lists and tasks. Within a Community, employees can contribute with timeline posts and engage in discussions. Employee timeline posts are easy to add, mirroring experiences on social media. If enabled, users can comment on and react to individual articles and blog posts across all spaces. Haiilo is therefore well suited to facilitate social activities and communities of practice.

For post moderation, Haiilo enables users to report any timeline post. Once reported, a moderator is notified and can review the comment to decide whether it should remain posted or

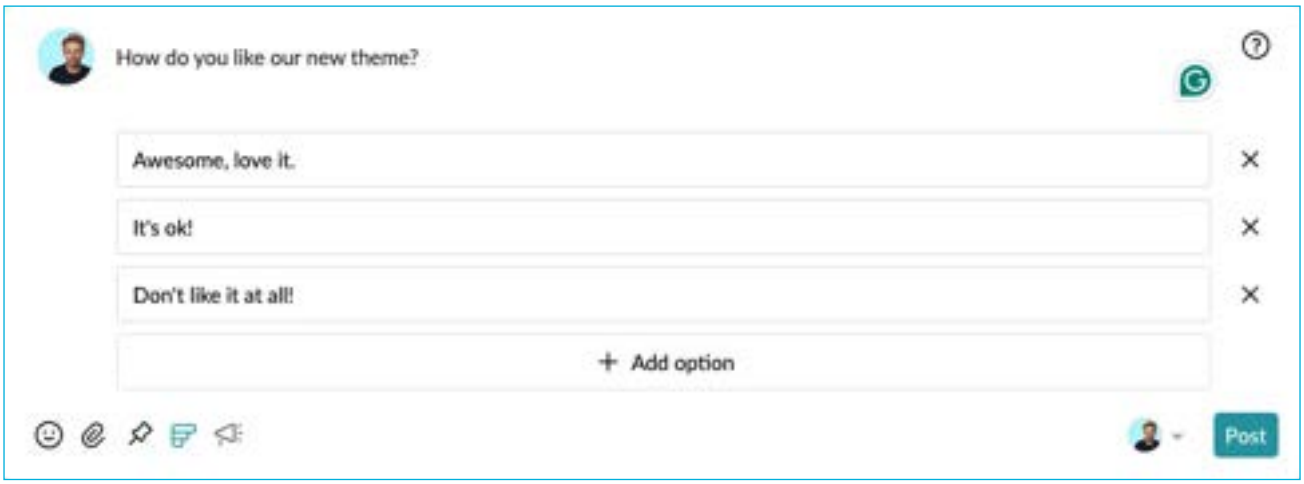
be removed. Helpfully Haiilo offers the option to automatically hide a comment once it receives a certain number of reports (by default, this is set to three), and there is also an option to enable anonymous reporting.

'Moderator Mode' allows admins to access and manage the entire intranet including all Pages and Communities but excluding private chats. We can see where this could be useful for those organisations that are concerned about employee interactions. Overall, Haiilo handles the moderation aspect quite well, though there is still some room for improvement. Currently, users can only report timeline posts, but extending this functionality to include comments and blog posts would be a valuable addition.

Surveys and polls provide another way for Haiilo to facilitate community collaboration by gathering employee feedback. Polls are simple widgets, ideal for conducting quick employee pulse checks. They are easy to set up and managed by admins with editing permissions for the specific dashboard. Admins can create a question, provide answer options and include additional descriptions as needed. Options like enabling anonymous voting and showing poll answers to users are also available and easy to configure.



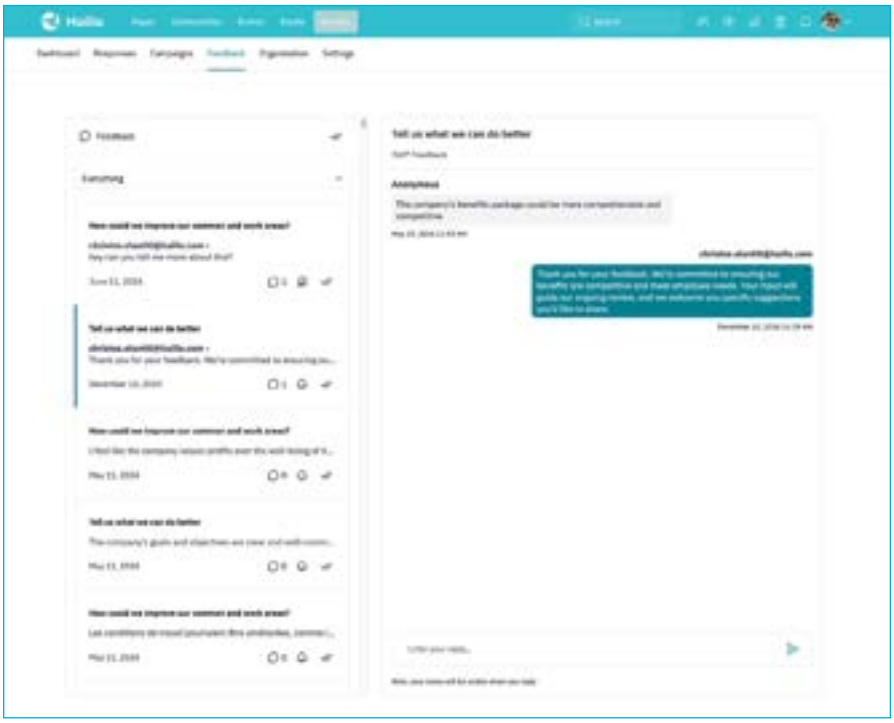
Timeline comments can be automatically hidden after receiving a certain number of reports from users.



Polls are simple widgets, ideal for conducting quick employee pulse checks.

Haiilo's 'Engagement Surveys' is an add-on feature available at an additional cost (and not included in the pricing provided for this review) and designed for more in-depth employee feedback. One unique aspect of the survey feature is the ability to communicate directly with users after they've responded. This allows leadership members to engage anonymously with employees to gain more insight into responses, better understand concerns and create an open forum where employees can speak freely without revealing their identity. Survey creators also have access to detailed analytics, which is a valuable tool for deeper analysis of responses and generating analytics reports, and among the strongest we've seen in this report.

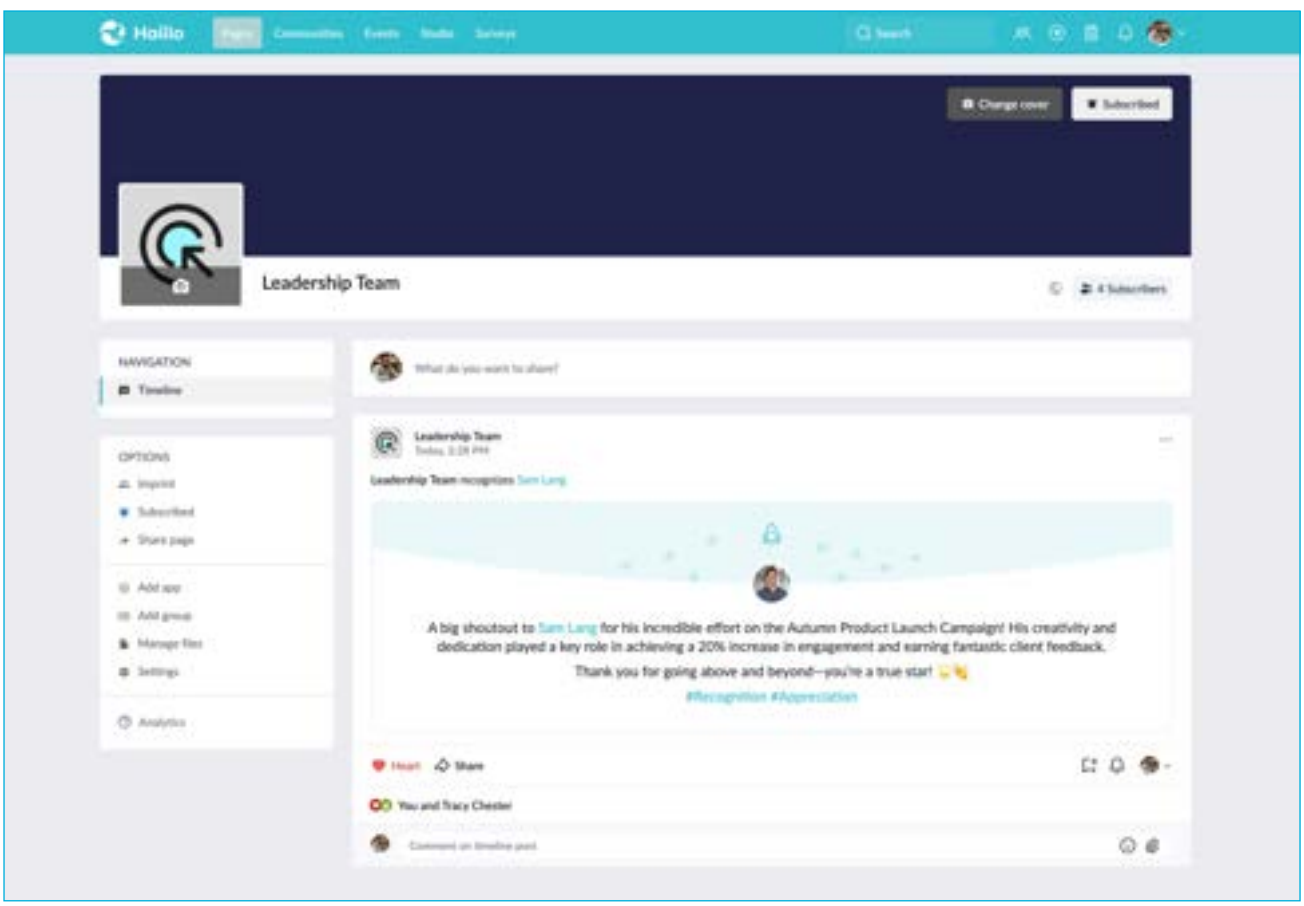
Events are another feature Haiilo offers to enhance inclusion and engagement. Events can be created and targeted to all employees or specific groups, encouraging participation and community spirit. We like that when creating an event, admins have the choice to force a definite answer rather than receiving dozens of "maybe" replies; limiting the number of places is helpful too. There's a simple participants list, and events automatically include their own timeline to help with communications to those who are coming, or yet to be tempted to sign up.



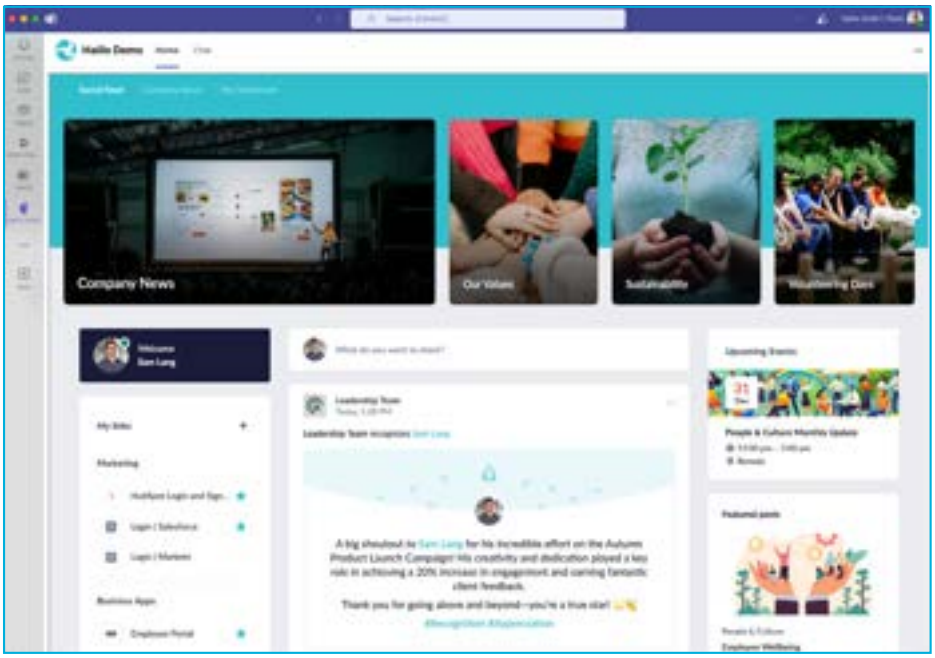
Engagement Surveys allow leadership to anonymously communicate with users after they responded to a survey.

A Kudos option on the timeline was added to the product in 2024. This is a great way for employees to publicly recognise and appreciate their colleagues' contributions. Employees can 'appreciate', 'celebrate' or 'recognise' one or multiple colleagues, with all the usual post features for adding more information or an associated photo. Another engagement feature we particularly like is the Quiz widget, which introduces a gamified approach for companies to share new knowledge with employees, making learning fun and simple. This is a plug-in feature available through Haiilo's marketplace for an additional cost.

Overall, we feel that Haiilo offers a lot in terms of community and engagement tools. Some features are not included out-of-the-box and come at an additional cost; but for organisations that need a strong employee surveying tool or the quiz widget, these could be valuable additions. With its emphasis on building community and enhancing engagement, Haiilo is an appealing choice for businesses looking to create a more interactive and connected workplace.



The Kudos feature allows employees to publicly recognise and appreciate their colleagues' contributions.



A Teams integration allows users to access Haiilo's home page and chat directly from Teams.

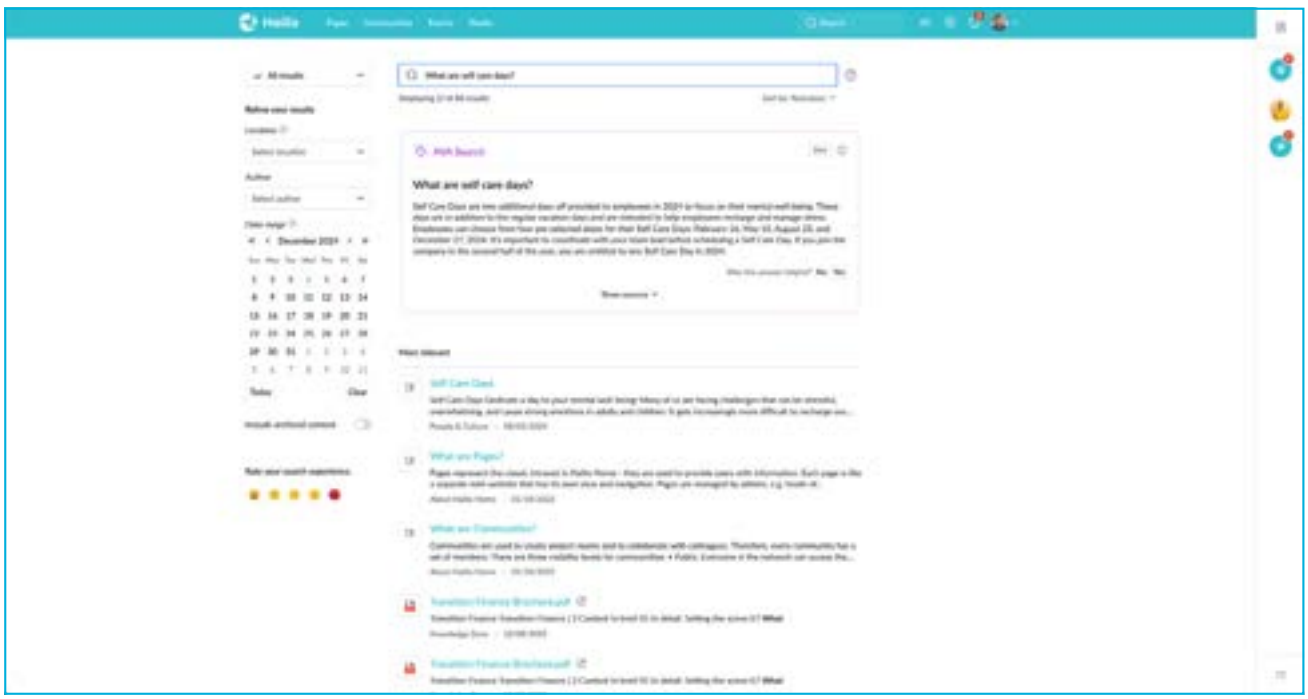
Haiilo offers integrations with some M365 apps, Google Workspace and Slack, although note others may come at additional cost. Other third-party integrations are possible through APIs, which are well documented on Haiilo's online support centre, but we have seen few in action.

To activate Google Workspace or M365 integrations, admins first need to set up API permissions in M365 or Google, and then enable the integration from Haiilo's general settings. Haiilo's integration with Outlook and Google Calendar allows users to add Haiilo events to their personal calendars with just a few clicks, which is handy.

Slack and Teams integrations can be easily configured through the admin settings. When publishing content, creators can select Teams or Slack as a distribution channel, where content notifications sent to those channels appear as direct messages with a link. Users can see a preview of the post in Teams / Slack and then be redirected to Haiilo upon clicking the link. Moreover, the Teams integration allows users to view the Haiilo home dashboard and Haiilo chats within MS Teams. However, navigating to individual Pages or beyond the home page is not supported within Teams and takes the user into the browser, which can be a bit jarring.

SharePoint and Google Drive documents are seamlessly integrated into Haiilo's search results (see Scenario 5). Additionally, these files can be attached to timeline posts and comments, or used within chat messages. When users access these documents directly from Haiilo, they get redirected to SharePoint / Google Drive, with permissions inherited from those platforms. This ensures that users only see documents they are allowed to, but it could also be an issue for frontline workers where they do not have licenses assigned to them for Microsoft or Google. Currently, integrations are limited to Google Drive and SharePoint. Other document management systems integrations like Dropbox or Box are not supported now, but these are on the roadmap.

Additional integrations, such as project management tools, HRIS and ticketing systems, can be established through APIs via Haiilo's partner, Merge.dev. Merge.dev serves as a bridge between Haiilo and third-party apps being integrated by offering a marketplace of available integrations. While it opens many possibilities for users, the setup can be complex, requiring additional configuration of API calls and support from Haiilo.



Haiilo's search feature offers users filtering options to refine their search and organises results into categories for easier navigation.

Haiilo say they place a strong emphasis on displaying the most important and recent content on the home page, Page / Community dashboards, and at the top of the timeline for feed posts, meaning employees are presented with what they need. While this works for communication, we feel employees are likely to still need to search for reference and other materials.

The search, accessible via the top navigation bar, allows users to quickly find specific information. By entering a keyword in the search bar, users can see quick results across multiple categories, including Pages, Communities, blog posts, wiki articles, timeline posts, documents and people. After pressing enter, users are taken through to the full results page. Results are grouped by type, helping users navigate through them more efficiently. The search filtering options are particularly useful, allowing users to filter results by content type, location, author or publishing date. There's even an option to include archived content in the search, which could be useful when looking for information about past projects or policies.

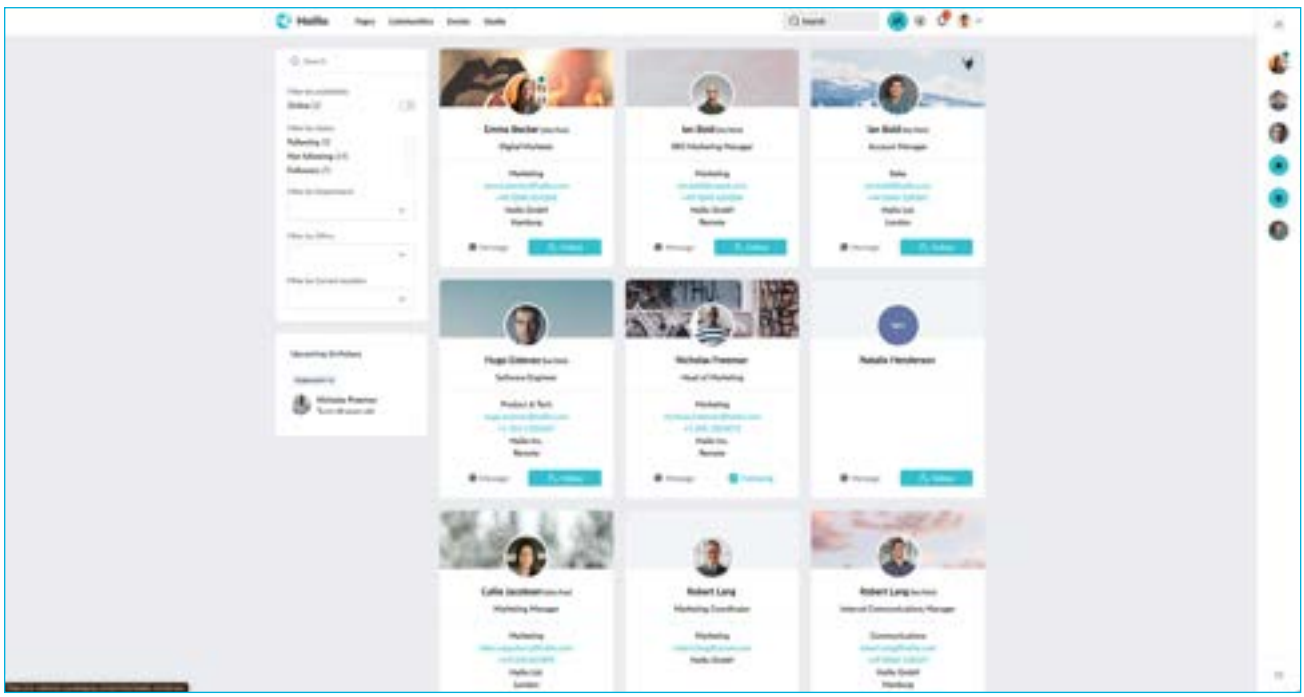
Haiilo's search focuses on the global search bar accessible from the main navigation. Haiilo makes good use of hashtags for topic tagging, which might be associated with a Page. Clicking on a hashtag within an article takes users to the search results page, displaying all content tagged with that hashtag. Haiilo's search also scans the body of long, detailed content, making it easier to find relevant articles that contain the information the user is looking for. It also supports searching for exact matches, allowing users to narrow down results even further.

One standout feature is the AI-assisted search, allowing users to ask natural language questions in the search. AVA responds with a concise answer, often summarising specific articles and providing links to the full content for more information. AVA can also pull information from user profiles. For example, if a user asks, "Who in the company speaks French?", AVA can search through profiles and present users who have listed French as one of

their languages. According to Haiilo, if AVA doesn't know the answer, it won't generate incorrect information. Instead, it will inform the user that no answer was found on Haiilo.

Haiilo utilises enterprise search functionality through integrations with SharePoint and Google Drive, enabling documents from these sources to appear in a separate category within the search results. With future integrations, Haiilo aims to incorporate search results from additional third-party sources. Note that federating content outside of Haiilo comes at additional cost and hasn't been included in the pricing provided.

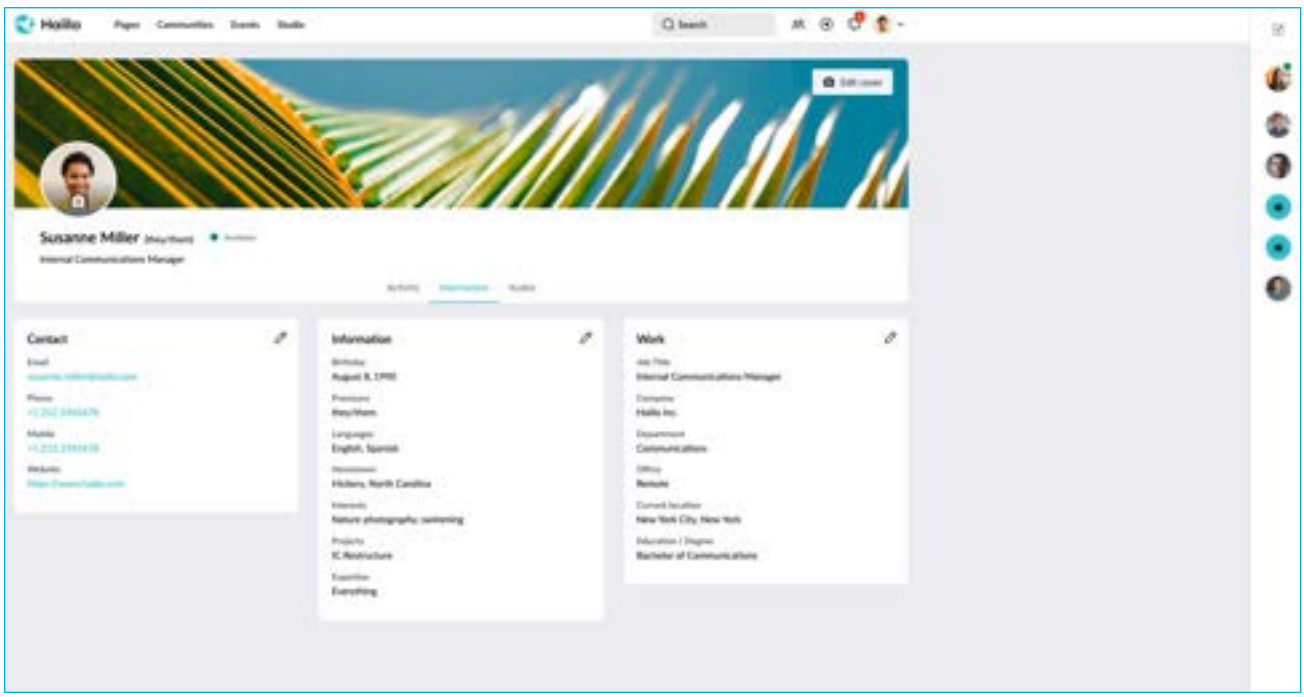
Finding colleagues in Haiilo is intuitive and can be achieved through the 'User Directory' in the top navigation bar or through the search bar. Colleagues can be found by searching for their name or other profile information, such as position, department or location. In this case, misspellings are usually managed well, showing users with names similar to what was typed. User profile pages are clean and rich, allowing employees to easily update their profile information at any time, while their colleagues can see any recognition they've received. While we believe Haiilo handles people information well, an org chart in the People Directory section would further enhance this experience. Unfortunately, this feature is not currently available, but users can see who a person reports to within their profile.



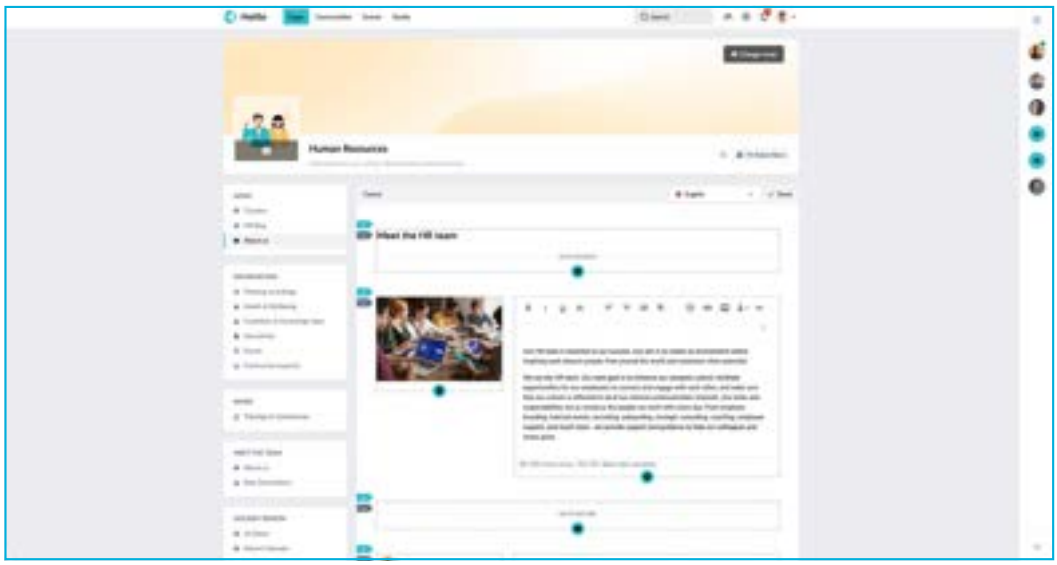
People Directory allows employees to search for their colleagues by name, department or location.

Haiilo offers plenty of features to help users easily find knowledge resources, which are primarily stored in Pages but also, informally, in Communities. It's possible to enforce who subscribes to Pages and Communities, which could be the entire organisation or targeted audiences (as covered in Scenario 2). When building, administrators may choose to add a documents app to display listings of associated files, such as a formal policy library, while a wiki app allows Page members to contribute to a knowledge space. There are no local searches, which we think would be a valuable addition; however, users can still use filters to display information from a specific Page through the global search.

While Haiilo offers a solid and reliable search functionality, there are some areas that could be further improved. One area to enhance is handling misspelled search terms, as they currently don't always generate results. Similarly, promoted results and other search management features are missing. Additionally, it would be great to see AVA's natural language capabilities extended to the mobile app, as mobile users would likely find it very valuable.



User profile pages display relevant personal and work information such as birthday, languages, department and job title.



Admins can manage dashboard layouts by adding various widgets and rearranging them through drag-and-drop functionality.

Haiilo admins can manage global settings, assign roles, configure landing pages and oversee any page or community using 'Moderator Mode'. Permissions are set in administration settings and assignable to individuals or groups. Haiilo has detailed permission control, allowing admins to, for example, enable Page editing while restricting Community editing. The setup is straightforward, involving checkboxes next to each permission, with pre-built roles available for companies needing fewer customisations.

While the main navigation bar is fixed, admins can personalise the launchpad with custom categories visible to specific groups or all users. Additional home page dashboards can be set to private or public. Dashboard setup is intuitive: admins select a layout, add widgets and rearrange them via drag-and-drop. Though widget dimensions aren't adjustable, pre-built layouts with two, three or four columns help. If users lack permission to view a widget's content, it will still display but remain empty. We feel this could be improved if widgets automatically rearranged instead. Pages have a fixed two-column layout for adding widgets, and navigation items can be added through the 'options' section on each page. Haiilo's dashboard setup is well-executed and flexible; however, pre-built templates with commonly used widgets could simplify the setup for new admins.

When a user leaves, their profile can be deleted, but content remains published, with other administrators able to edit or remove it. Uploaded documents include version history and basic document management data. An 'Auto Archive' option lets admins unpublish blog posts after specified periods, but not other content. News articles can include review dates with automatic reminders sent, which works well and we'd like to see this expand elsewhere.

When creating an article, publishers can indicate the languages it should be available in, creating an auto-translated copy for editing. If the original is updated, a new copy will need to be made. End users can see an auto-translate button for everything not already translated. Although the navigation is flat and translation of the architecture therefore modest, there are fine-grained controls to replace alternative language navigation titles where required.

Haiilo's multimedia features include video embedding, gallery creation and uploads through the rich text editor. Plug-in widgets like MMS Live or Hypecast add further customisation through API integration. While these features meet most needs, adding built-in options for live streaming or recording would be valuable, reducing reliance on third-party apps.

Haiilo's analytics add-on provides a dashboard view for both platform adoption metrics and content performance analytics.

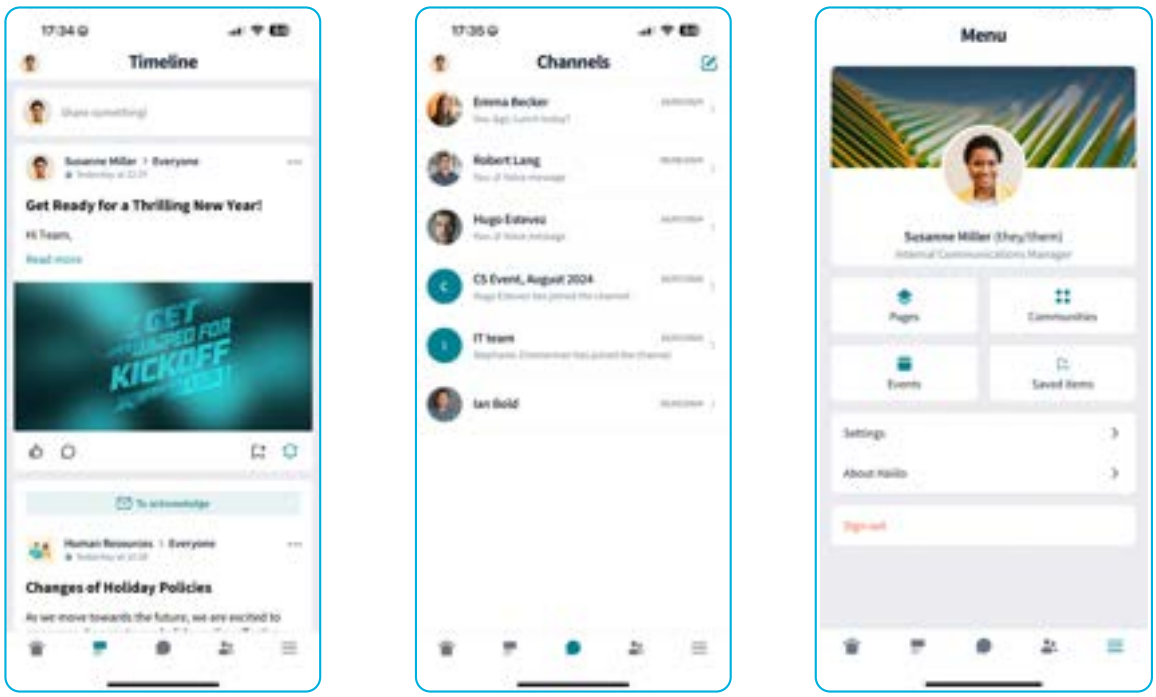
Haiilo's built-in 'Reports' provide basic analytics, offering insights into user account status, activity levels, the total number of content items created by type (Pages, blogs, posts, comments) and popular search terms.

For more advanced data, Haiilo's 'Analytics Add-On' offers a more comprehensive dashboard view with various widgets that display adoption rates, active Communities and Pages, average session length, sent messages and other stats. It also features filtering options that allow companies to sort data, such as by location, department or company. Additionally, user activity graphs show consumption vs. interaction, and reports can be generated and downloaded as needed. The addition of comparing data over time would be helpful.

Content statistics provide insights into the types of content published over time, showing user preferences and helping guide future content strategies. Content performance analytics also track reach and engagement rates for timeline posts or blog articles, including views, comments, reactions and shares. This can be highly valuable for content creators to make informed decisions about future publications. Some of these metrics are also available in the Studio. Additionally, it would be valuable to have an option to track the source of viewership — whether users accessed the page from Slack, Teams, digital signage, newsletters etc. Unfortunately, this isn't currently available, but Haiilo plans to explore this as a potential feature next year.

The 'Audiences' section reveals which user groups have accessed the platform during specific timeframes, categorised by department, location or company. Search analytics are supported with a 'Top Searches' widget, which shows frequently searched terms and phrases. However, adding a widget for terms that return no results would provide even more value to content creators.

Overall, Haiilo's Analytics Add-On offers a good understanding of platform usage and user behaviour. However, as it is not a built-in feature (but is included in the pricing supplied), companies that do not purchase the module will have to rely on the limited Reports feature, which offers less actionable data for decision-making.



Haiilo's mobile app enables frontline workers to stay informed with the latest news and updates.

Haiilo's mobile support is solid, with useful features tailored for smaller devices. The product is mobile-responsive, but most users prefer the native mobile app, accessible through public app stores or distributed via the client's MDM. According to Haiilo, most clients opt for the MDM route as it allows them to custom-brand the app (for an additional cost).

Employees can log in using company SSO credentials like Active Directory, Google Workspace or Okta. For frontline workers without company credentials, Haiilo supports native authentication via QR codes or links, using personal emails or mobile numbers as unique identifiers. Biometric login is available on the custom-branded app, and clients can control whether employees are logged out when closing the app.

Haiilo has done a great job ensuring the app's responsiveness, arranging the intranet content to fit on mobile screens. Haiilo's social features translate seamlessly to mobile, particularly the newsfeed timeline on the home page. The familiar navigation and interaction methods common to consumer apps make it easy to use and find information. Additionally, the bottom navigation bar offers quick access to home, chat, people directory and a 'more' menu leading to Pages, Communities and settings. Admins can determine which home dashboards will be available for the mobile app. Users can switch between different home dashboards, and access content types such as documents, wikis, blog articles, images and videos.

It's worth mentioning that some admin features are limited on the mobile app. General settings are reduced to basic options, and the Moderator Mode, which allows dashboard editing, is unavailable. Instead, these features can be managed through the desktop version. However, this shouldn't impact frontline workers, as they can still access all relevant content through the mobile app.

Although there are no features designed exclusively for frontline workers, some mobile functions are especially beneficial. Cross-device chat includes voice messaging, providing an effective alternative to WhatsApp. The employee directory is also well-optimised, allowing for easy colleague lookup and contact. Lastly, posting updates to the timeline — including pictures, videos and files — is simple, and users can even add news stories to Haiilo directly from the app.

THINGS TO BEAR IN MIND

Even though Haiilo provides many valuable features, there are a few key considerations to keep in mind before implementing it.

Firstly, integrations with third-party apps might require additional setup. Haiilo currently offers limited out-of-the-box integrations, relying more heavily on API configurations that can be complex and require additional support from Haiilo or a partner. These may well come at a cost, too. Haiilo is working on adding additional integration options via a simpler route, so we might see this change in the future.

There is still room for enhancements across the platform, particularly around administrative aids and controls for features. For example, governance and search management could benefit from development. Additionally, although Haiilo's global search is effective, it lacks advanced capabilities like localised Page search, which may be beneficial. The flat structure, primarily through Pages and Communities, is not only impacted by the search experience but may not meet all organisations' needs.

It's also important to note that certain features, such as 'Analytics Add-On' and surveys are separate modules with additional costs (although we have indicated where this has been included in the pricing provided to us). Haiilo's relatively low base price may still make it cost effective for many customers, even with these add-ons, and could be reduced in price further where modules aren't needed. Lastly, since most of Haiilo's team is based in Germany, their location is worth keeping in mind if your organisation is based outside Europe. Consider this when evaluating Haiilo as a potential intranet solution for your organisation, as this could impact technical and other support.

Why choose this product

Haiilo is a social intranet platform that offers a strong suite of social and collaboration features in a simple, intuitive format. The platform focuses on easy content creation and management, available both on desktop and a well-optimised mobile app that supports frontline workers. Haiilo can be a good fit for a wide range of organisations, from small businesses to large enterprises, and is particularly well-suited for those aiming to boost employee participation and encourage social interaction.

You may also be interested in...

MangoApps oak engage ThoughtFarmer

Vendor roadmap

No roadmap has been supplied by Haiilo.

Back to index

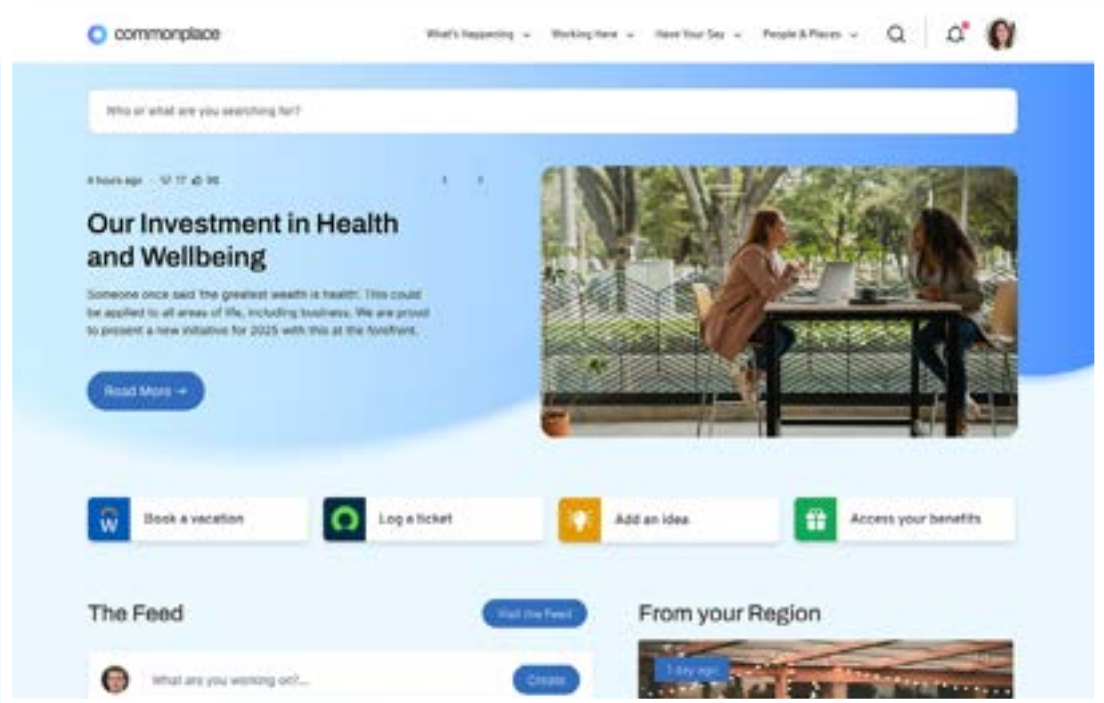
interact

FULLY STANDALONE

REQUIRES SHAREPOINT

FRONTLINE FOCUS

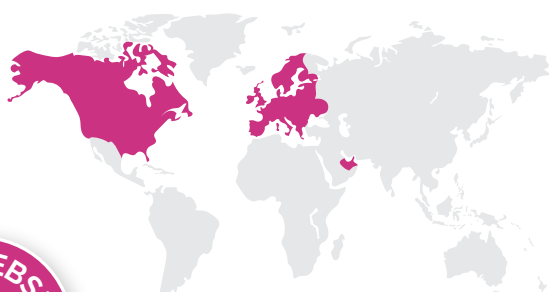
OTHER



Typical deployment:

5,000 to 10,000

Company locations:



VISIT THE WEBSITE

The product in a nutshell

Interact is an attractive, well-established product, packed with powerful features to meet the needs of many organisations with a diverse workforce, including frontline workers.

SUMMARY

Interact

Interact is owned by UK-based Interact Software, founded in 1996, and their experience in the intranet market is clear to see in this feature-rich, user-friendly platform. Interact is an attractive standalone intranet product that offers strong functionality across the board.

There are powerful news and content creation tools, including a user-friendly 'Block Editor' that will appeal to content authors and internal communicators. There is an attractive activity feed and strong multichannel publishing options, including a newsletter builder, employee advocacy tools and a digital signage module. The product comes with a fully featured mobile app and multiple approaches to enrol frontline workers. These features, combined with flexible design and branding options to build engaging intranet pages, provide a solution that will appeal to many organisations.

While there are no glaring gaps in functionality, there are a couple of areas where improvements can be made. Integrations with business systems are basic out of the box, but there is a developer framework available to extend the product further. Analytics is strong but can still be improved, for instance by adding sentiment analysis. There is significant innovation in the product though, which shows that Interact is committed to evolving it further. We particularly like the thoughtful usage of generative AI which we found among the stronger offerings in this report.

Overall, Interact is a mature product with excellent and varied features that will meet the needs of most businesses. Large and complex organisations with a diverse workforce will be attracted by the advanced features for content creation and audience targeting, including frontline workers. While the product is in the higher price bracket, there are a number of optional modules included in the pricing provided to us. Where features aren't needed, businesses will see a drop in cost.

Pricing

PRICE BAND	
1,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
5,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
20,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
50,000 users	$ $ $ $ $

These prices are indicative, offering a comparison of the products featured in this report only. Please contact the vendor for a bespoke quote.

PRICING MODEL

Subscription – price per user per month

DISCOUNTS

Charities and non-profit organisations; schools and educational institutes; frontline users; multi-year commitments. Where clients choose to add a lot of optional modules, Interact says they will offer "competitive pricing".

COSTS TYPICALLY

Weighted towards the start (during the 'project phase'), then much lower for the remaining term.

PRICE INCLUDES

Support (customers can uplift from standard to Gold or Platinum); hosting / backup; marketplace integrations; developer portal / API access; Customer Success Management; all available add-ons.

Product type

Ready-to-run, installed in hours

Branding opportunities

All branding, complex options

Base systems

Fully standalone

Requires SharePoint

Other

Sectors

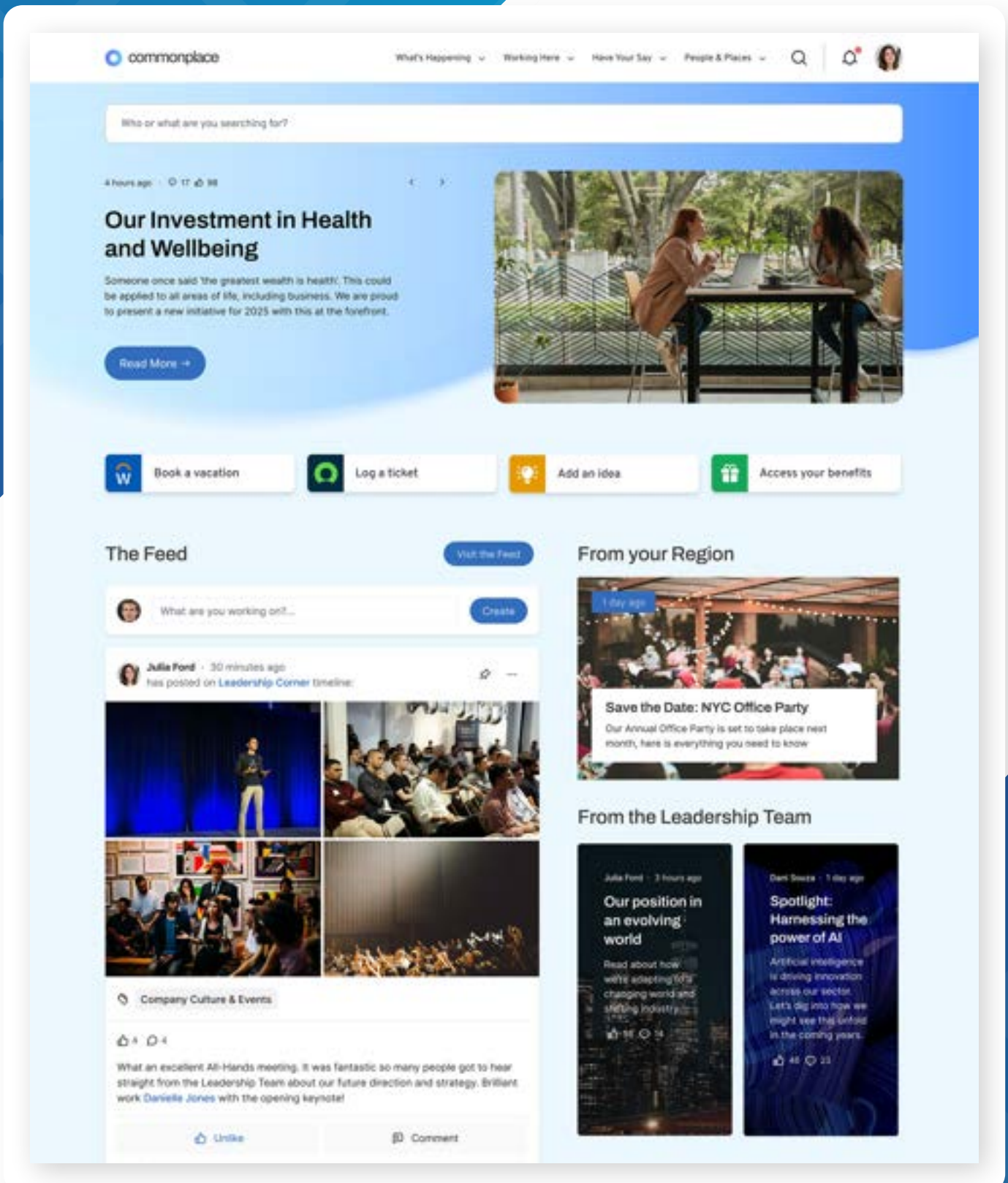
Healthcare

Retail

Accountancy, banking and finance

Engineering and manufacturing

Business, consulting and management


commonplace
What's Happening
Working Here
Have Your Say
People & Places
Who or what are you searching for?
Our Investment in Health and Wellbeing
Someone once said 'the greatest wealth is health'. This could be applied to all areas of life, including business. We are proud to present a new initiative for 2025 with this at the forefront.
Read More
Book a vacation
Log a ticket
Add an idea
Access your benefits
The Feed
Visit the Feed
What are you working on?...
Create
Julia Ford · 30 minutes ago
has posted on Leadership Corner timeline:
Company Culture & Events
What an excellent All-Hands meeting. It was fantastic so many people got to hear straight from the Leadership Team about our future direction and strategy. Brilliant work Danielle Jones with the opening keynote!
Unlike
Comment
From your Region
1 day ago
Save the Date: NYC Office Party
Our Annual Office Party is set to take place next month, here is everything you need to know
From the Leadership Team
Our position in an evolving world
Spotlight: Harnessing the power of AI

COMPANY AND PRODUCT

Company details

Company
Interact

ISO 27001 certified
Yes

Data residency
Europe (excluding UK); Middle East; USA; Canada

Company founded
1996

Product launched
2014

Typical client size
5,000 to 10,000

Largest deployment so far
333,000 users, 100 countries.

Customers
Clients include: Subway, New York Life, Domino's, Levi Strauss & Co., Teva Pharmaceuticals, Savills, Burlington Stores, Kohl's, Piedmont Healthcare, Love's Travel Stops. Please see their website for more.

Partner locations
Australia, Germany, United States

Company locations
Manchester, UK (HQ); US, Poland, UAE

Product and technical details

Name of product

Interact

Deployment

Client on-premises	Client private cloud	Microsoft Azure	Amazon Web Services	Vendor-hosted	Microsoft 365 tenant	Google Cloud	Other

Authentication supported

Entra ID	ADFS	Okta	Open ID	Oauth	G Suite	Other

App deployment

Google Play store	Apple store	MDM	MAM	Other

Accessibility

WCAG 2.1 conformant

Document library sources integrated

Box	Dropbox	Google Drive	SharePoint	OneDrive	Other*

*ServiceNow, Confluence

Optional integrated enterprise search engines

Coveo	Elastic	IBM	Lucidworks	Microsoft	Mindbreeze	Sinequa	Other

User interface multi-language

Machine translation	Pre-configured	Editable	Right to left script supported	Other

Content multi-language

Machine translation for publishers	Machine translation for end users	Editable machine translation for publishers	Manual creation for publishers	Right to left script	Other

Set-up and support

Set-up process for new clients

Interact follows a phased implementation for rapid time-to-value for all customers, handled in-house by the Onboarding Team. At a minimum, this process is 2 months but can run for much longer depending on customer complexity.

Version numbers

Demonstrated to ClearBox: Release 115

At January 2025: Release 118

Product updates

Major updates every month to six weeks.

Product update process

Updates are applied automatically with no downtime. All documentation is provided ahead of each release within the Customer Community and communicated to the Customer Success Team.

Reverse-out options

Interact will provide all data in a human-readable format. All uploaded content, including PDFs and images, will be returned in a simple folder structure along with a CSV export of data contained with the service (including profiles, HTML pages, and category structures). In addition, Interact will provide an unencrypted SQL backup of the customer database. Customer data will be returned by secure transfer.

Technical support

Email support	Phone support	Chat support	Online portal	24/7 support	Office hours only

User community

Interact offers an online community with 1,000+ active customers and more than 8,000 individual members. It provides information on product updates, forums, idea sharing, feature enhancement discussions and voting, events, engagement / adoption ideas, launch ideas, training documentation, guides, videos and more. Interact hosts regular online and in-person events that highlight product features and customer use cases, plus provide in-person networking opportunities.

Voice of the vendor

Interact says: "Interact is a UK-based intranet packaged service provider with a strong presence in the United States, United Kingdom and EMEA. Interact offers robust, enterprise-grade intranet functionality to meet a variety of customer needs.

The nature of work, the places where work is done, and the technologies used to connect people are changing fast. With more dispersed workers spread across global locations, enterprises are experiencing two main problems: a hindered ability to share the right information with the right audience to foster greater independence and productivity, and a difficulty in connecting staff with internal culture and community. These trends lead to declining levels of employee engagement and an increased rate of staff turnover, which is problematic across many business sectors.

One way to fix the weakening of the relationships between employers, managers and staff – and one which Interact has recognised and incorporated in the past 12 months – is to create a frictionless employee experience (EX) across the entire lifecycle, from recruitment to offboarding.

Among all the platforms available within the digital workplace, an intranet is uniquely positioned to create a smooth and enjoyable EX because it is the platform where organisational knowledge, resources and contacts live. If new starters need to know how to book a vacation or who to contact about their 401k, it will be on the intranet. Removing the barriers to knowledge makes it easier to get things done quickly and reduces frustration.

Interact's best-of-breed technology primarily serves the needs of internal communications, employee experience, DE&I, human resources, marketing and IT teams. While Interact has a broad customer base across company sizes and verticals, the sectors with the most benefit are financial services, business services, healthcare, retail and technology companies with more than 500 employees.

Interact can be customised to help organisations meet their own unique challenges, ultimately driving a better employee experience for both frontline and desk-based workers. An Interact intranet includes personalised experiences (tailoring for different cohorts of employees), supports employee wellbeing and work-life balance programs, provides data-driven insights (e.g., Pulse survey sentiment), streamlines communications (targeting), increases productivity (e.g., making content find the right people - policies, etc), amplifies employee voice (social intranet features), increases employee value (idea management) and enables business critical, out-of-the-box integrations with existing systems for productivity gains."

Voice of the customer

What customers appreciate the most about Interact are its ease of use and richness of features in areas such as content creation and multichannel publishing. "The product is easy to use and flexible around homepage design, audience targeting and permissions" is the opinion of one customer, while another adds "Pretty easy to build sites and navigation. The block editor for pages is easy to use." Other customers also praise the block editor tool explicitly: "The block editor, with templates and a variety of customisable widgets, simplifies content creation." The recently enhanced activity feed is well received: "The new social functionality will replace Workplace by Meta for us." Customers also appreciate how Interact handles multichannel publishing: "The product is really close to an all-in-one channel distribution tool. You have your intranet, mobile engagement, digital signage and email newsletter."

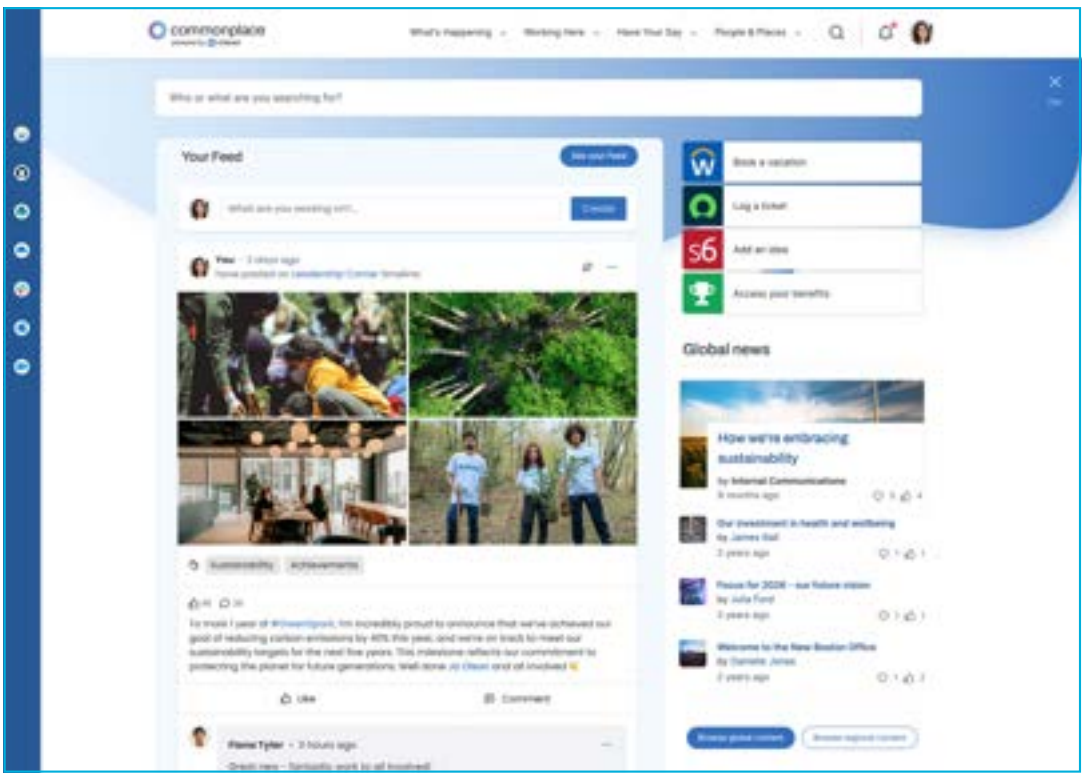
A few improvement suggestions were made, covering different areas of the product. One customer finds that "metrics around the email newsletter feature are limited" and wants to see improvements; Interact says that richer metrics were included in the latest release at the end of 2024. Another customer requests better blogging functionality: "More flexibility to moderate blog posts. And the editor tool for blogs is not great." In other areas, more flexibility is requested, for instance in the digital signage module: "The layouts are limited, and screen controls don't allow for all of the display functions that we would like to see." Some customers want Interact to focus more on using AI within the search experience: "Stay on top of intranet trends like AI and chat search capabilities" and "incorporate AI to improve search results."

Feedback about working together with Interact is largely positive. "My experience working with Interact has been great" says one customer, and they continue: "We have a really great customer success manager who listens and helps implement our strategy." A few customers raised some concerns about the communication with Interact: "I would like to see a quicker response to raised IT tickets" says one, and another observes that "while communication has improved significantly over the years, there is still room for improvement." Most customers are satisfied though, and many praise their customer success manager for being "wonderful to work with" and also "very responsive, super helpful and making fabulous suggestions to improve our site."

SCENARIOS & SCORES

Please see the Scenarios below for more detail on each of these.

SCENARIO AND SCORE	KEY BENEFITS	IMPROVEMENTS / CONSIDERATIONS
4.5 **1. User Experience & Visual Appeal**	Many visually appealing widgets to build attractive pages. Flexible design and branding options.	Mega menu can be improved to include bolder imagery.
4.5+ **2. Publishing & Communications Management**	'Block Editor' offers powerful features to create content. Strong support for multichannel delivery.	Editorial calendar could be further improved.
4 **3. Community & Engagement**	Various options for collaboration in communities. Attractive activity feed.	No specific functionality targeted at employee wellbeing.
3+ **4. Integrations & Services (Including M365)**	Marketplace of widgets that bring content from integrated systems onto any page.	Limited out-of-the-box integration with external business applications.
4.5 **5. Information Finding & Search**	Well-designed search results page with rich filtering options. Strong people search and profile page.	No spelling suggestions in people search. Some federated search sources will take effort to set up.
4.5 **6. Administrator Experience**	User-friendly design tools to build home page and landing pages. Comprehensive content life cycle management.	Wide range of tools and settings, meaning a considerable learning curve for admins.
4+ **7. Analytics**	Rich set of site-level and page-level analytics. Search analytics reports are strong.	No reports on broader communication campaigns; no sentiment analysis except on pulse surveys.
4 **8. Mobile & Frontline Support**	Multiple options to enrol frontline workers. Content can be targeted to different mobile audiences through personas.	Limited built-in services in the app specifically targeted at frontline workers, apart from the chat function.



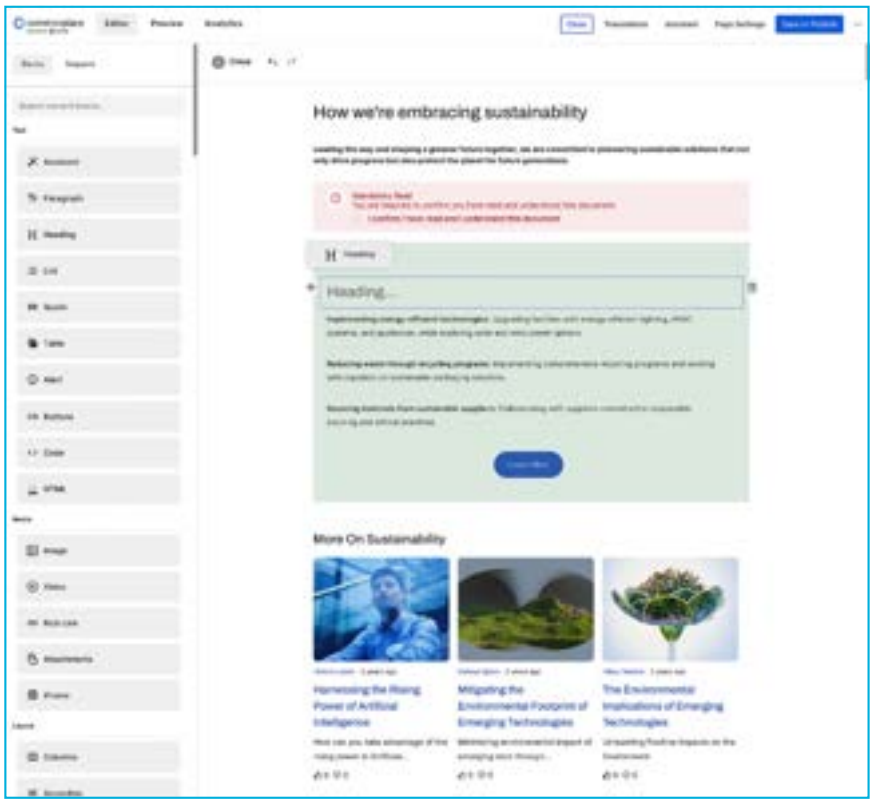
Interact includes an extensive range of attractive widgets, including an activity feed that can be placed prominently on the home page.

Interact is a visually appealing product with an excellent end-user experience that is highly configurable. An extensive range of widgets, including an activity feed, are available to build attractive pages with targeted and personalised content. The user interface has a few subtle touches that we particularly like, such as a progress indicator icon that shows the reader how far they have scrolled down a particular article or page. Some areas of the product, such as the Block Editor for content creation (see Scenario 2), come with a guided tour feature; it would be useful to extend this guided tour to other parts of the product.

Site navigation is provided by a top-level menu bar, which consists of simple menus or mega menus. Menu items can be preceded by a small icon, giving a subtle visual clue to the meaning of the link, but bolder images to promote content directly in the menu are not included. Also within the top menu bar is a user profile icon, which displays a summary of the user's activities and settings. A persistent app bar on the left-hand side of the screen gives access to practical tools and integrated applications; employees have the flexibility to customise this area by adding, removing and rearranging apps.

Notifications are particularly well handled within Interact. Users will find all notifications under a bell icon in the top menu, including those coming from integrated third-party systems such as Workday and SAP Concur. New notifications are coloured, with mandatory reads highlighted in red, and they show a thumbnail image relating to the activity. Employees have full control over the type of notifications they want to receive through a detailed configuration screen.

Branding options are flexible and varied, making it possible to create attractive sites. There are some useful features to meet the needs of organisations that consist of multiple sub-brands. Within a single instance of Interact it's possible to set up multiple sub-companies and assign a different branding theme to each. Separate home pages for each brand can be created, or audience targeting used within a single home page to display different content for each business.



Interact's 'Block Editor' makes it easy to build attractive layouts by dragging and dropping blocks and snippets from the left-hand column into the page.

A range of powerful features are available to internal communicators and other content creators, making this scenario an area of strength for Interact. Publishers create news and other content using a rich 'Block Editor' tool where publishers drop blocks of content onto a page, then drag to reorder. Templates are available to start from, and there is a simple tour for new publishers so they can familiarise themselves with the extensive features. Overall, we found the Block Editor publishing experience rich in functionality and yet intuitive to use, with several powerful features that deserve to be highlighted.

There is a lightweight but useful digital asset manager, allowing images and video to be categorised, searched and manipulated. Blocks on a page can be grouped together in 'snippets' and then saved; future articles can reuse snippets, which will save content creators time and effort. There is an extensive preview, allowing authors to check how the content will look on various devices and channels. There is also an option to generate a temporary link to the draft content, so that people with no authoring role in Interact can view the page and provide comments or approve.

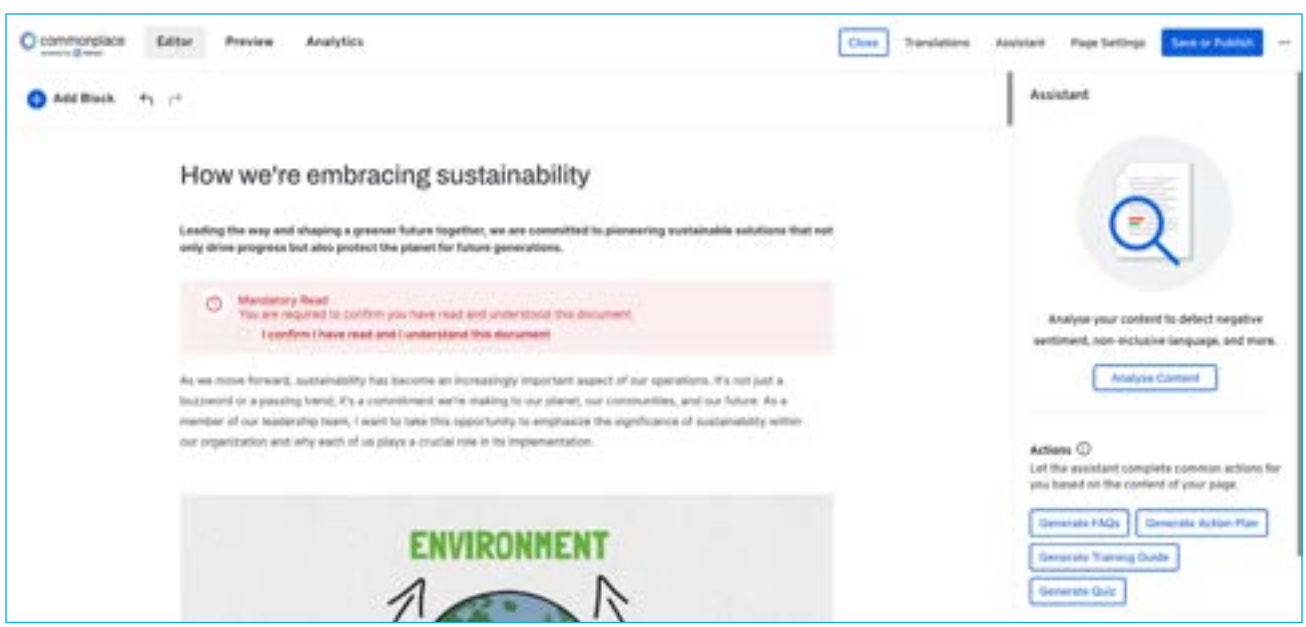
Several advanced features powered by generative AI are part of the product. Interact uses Microsoft's Azure OpenAI Service to embed a range of helpful assistants into the content creation process. A text assistant is available to review and improve existing text or to create new content, such as a summary of a news article. The digital asset manager integrates with an image generation assistant to create images according to a predefined style.

We particularly like the powerful features to automatically create an FAQ, a training guide or a quiz based on the content on a page. We can see how this will be a big time-saver for content

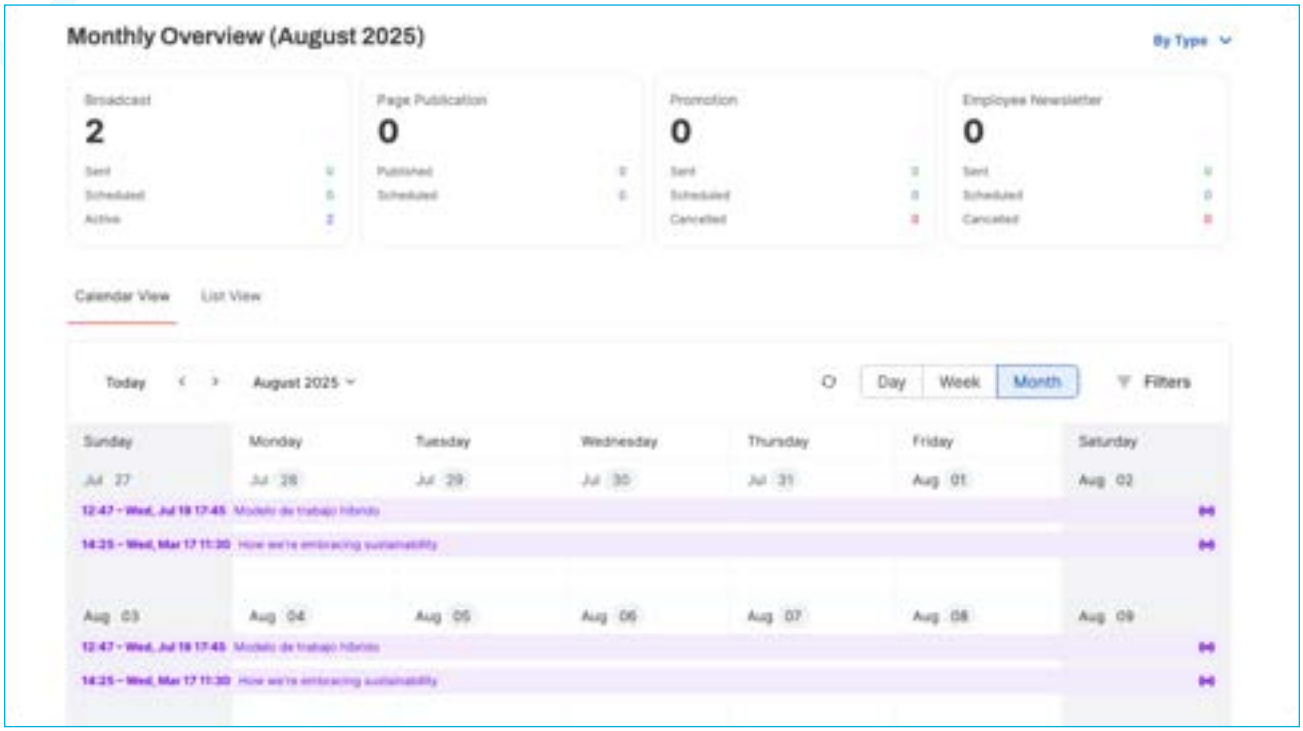
owners, especially if the features were extended to cover multiple pages and documents within a library. There are also features to auto-suggest keywords and other metadata for a page, and to detect negative sentiment or non-inclusive language.

Target audiences can be brought across from integrated systems, such as Entra ID, and / or are created through a model of dynamic 'personas'. These are built by applying Boolean logic to rules based on employee profile information such as department, location and hire date. Targeting based on geofencing is also supported, making it possible to restrict access to people physically present on a particular site. Personas will determine to whom content is delivered; the mechanism is fine-grained and can be applied at the level of blocks within an article too. Additionally, employees can subscribe to 'topics', which are keywords associated with the content, so it's possible for them to personalise the content that they receive, for instance in their activity feed.

As part of the content creation process, publication dates and times are set, along with expiry and review dates. Approval workflows are available, including for the approval of translated versions of an article (see Scenario 6). The product includes a well-designed editorial calendar, which was updated in mid-2025. It allows editors to see all scheduled, live, and expired content, with filters available to drill down such as to show Broadcasts only. Behind the scenes, AI is used to detect days that look particularly busy, as well as days that show high engagement rates. This will be a useful feature for internal communicators planning their next news story. A further improvement would be a feature to manually block out certain dates for news publication, for instance when there is an important company event.



Generative AI is used to generate an FAQ, a training guide or a quiz from the content of the page.

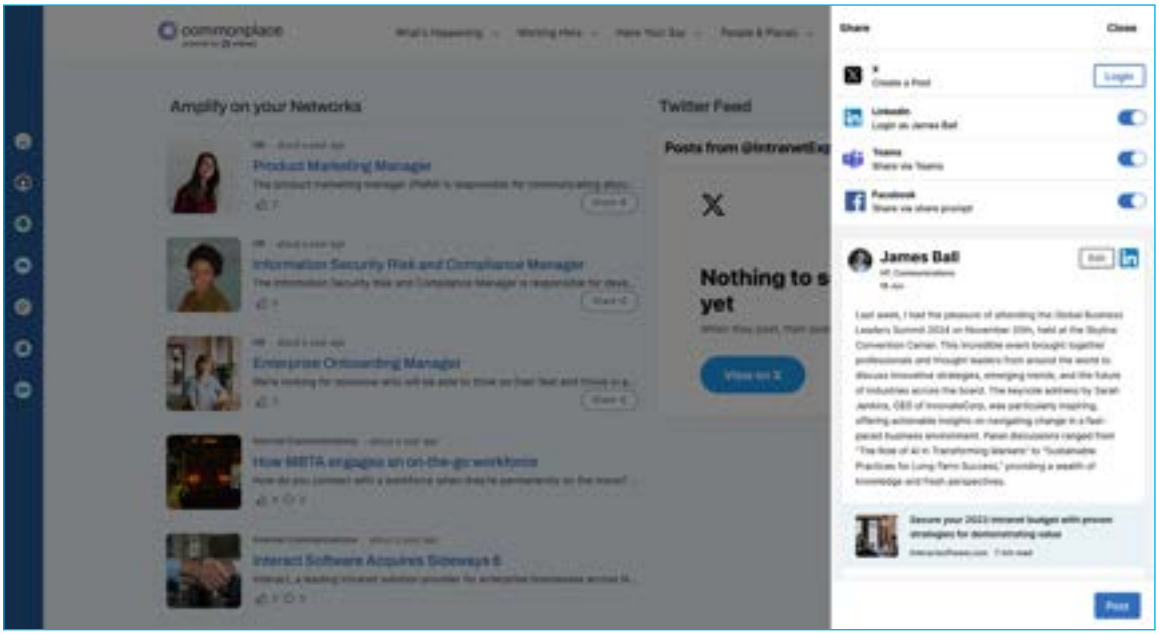


The Editorial Calendar gives an overview of all publication activity, plus an AI-generated indication of busy and high engagement days.

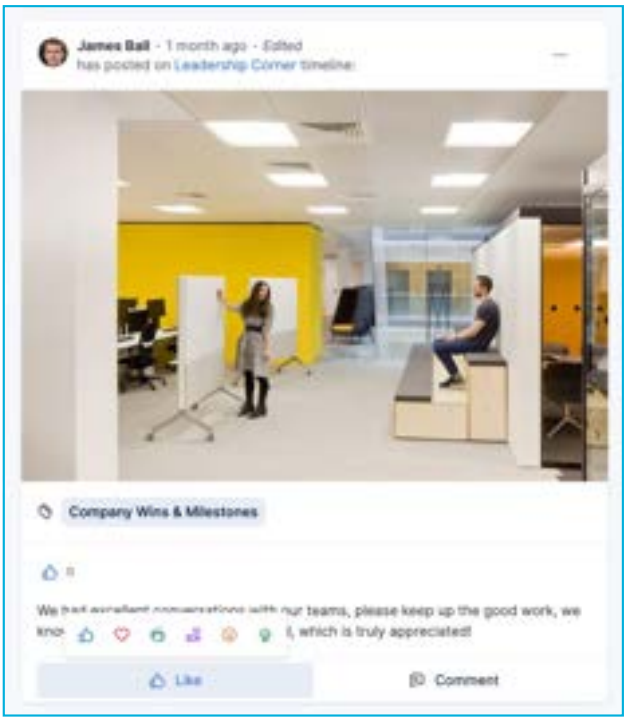
Crisis and urgent communications are handled well through broadcast messages. These are short, simple messages created outside of the Block Editor, but which can be targeted at the same audiences. Broadcasts are pushed out as a banner or a blocking notification window within the intranet, via email, push notification or via SMS. They can include a link to a page with more information, and there is a tracking feature to ask employees to acknowledge the message.

Interact includes a powerful module for creating email newsletters, based on the same Block Editor that content creators use elsewhere in the product. There is extensive functionality to build the layout, either from scratch or from a choice of templates, and set up target audiences using the same mechanisms as described earlier. We like the AI feature that will recommend an improved email subject line, particularly where it doesn't appear to reflect the email content. Analytics are available for open rates and click-through rates, and these can be drilled down by department or location. Publishers have the choice of creating an intranet page using the email they've sent. Overall, we found the functionality comprehensive and similar to dedicated email tools such as Intuit Mailchimp.

Other options for multichannel publishing are available, for instance into MS Teams or Slack channels, or via SMS. A digital signage module enables admins to set up different 'channels', for instance 'UK warehouse', and allows content creators to push appropriately curated and formatted content to these channels (see Scenario 6 for more). The module works well but some customers are asking for more flexible layouts and screen controls, as reflected in the Voice of the Customer section. Finally, an employee advocacy feature is also part of the product, with extensive reports to track most shared articles, shares and click-throughs by channel, and strongest advocates by department and location.



Employees can easily share approved content onto their social media channels.



Activity feeds feature in community spaces and allow people to react to content to express how they feel.

Interact offers a strong set of built-in community and engagement features. Collaboration takes place in 'Communities' which are either open, private (approval needed) or hidden (invitation only). These contain documents, calendars and a feed specific for the community. Discussions are also supported through forums, while blogs are another way to share opinions and best practices.

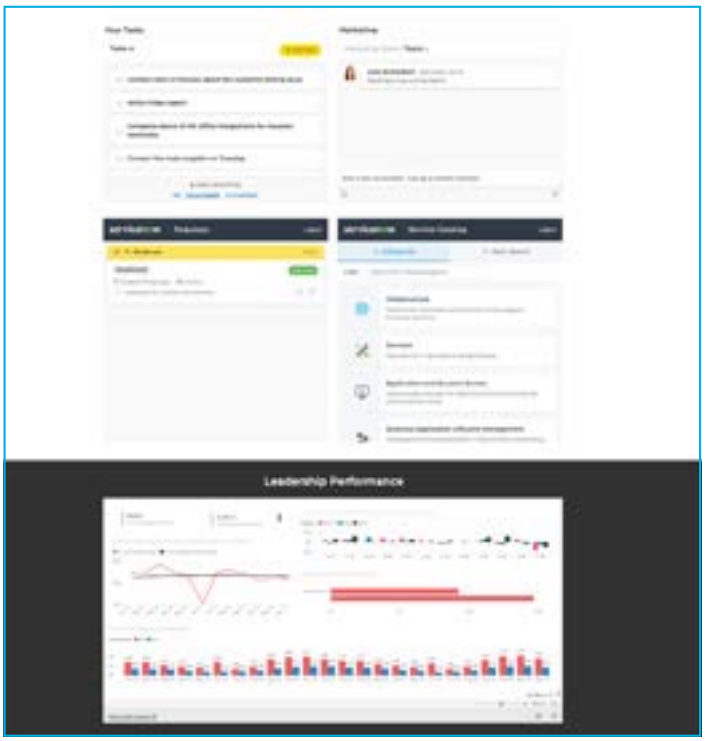
Structured idea management is offered through an integration with Sideways 6, which was acquired by Interact in 2023. The functionality is spread over both products, which is not ideal: ideation campaigns are set up by admins in Sideways 6 and then surfaced to employees within Interact. Employees can contribute their ideas and like, comment and upvote others. The best ideas are progressed through the tool for senior leaders to select for implementation.

Social reactions are available throughout the product, and work especially well within the attractive activity feed. Employees can like, comment (including emojis) and share content. There is a range of reactions available in the feed, but this is limited to 'likes' on other content at present. Interactions are managed via a comprehensive moderation dashboard. Admins configure automatic classifications which the Interact AI applies to posts for ease of assessment and action. This helps 'technical issues' stand out for IT colleagues, for example.

There are several options for requesting and giving feedback. Quick polls are easily added to widgets or pages, and more in-depth pulse surveys can be created. The product includes a rich survey building tool to set up the questions, manage the target audience and analyse the results.

We like the gamification features within Interact: users have a configurable number of points to give colleagues as recognition, and these points can be set up to match real value for employees to redeem against prizes. Badges visualise the type of recognition people have received and are shown on profile pages.

Overall, there is significant breadth and depth in the features on offer. There is no dedicated functionality targeted at onboarding or wellbeing, but the product's features can be combined to support various use cases. For instance, a pulse survey, in combination with a customised home page, can be used to welcome new starters and ask them about their onboarding experience.



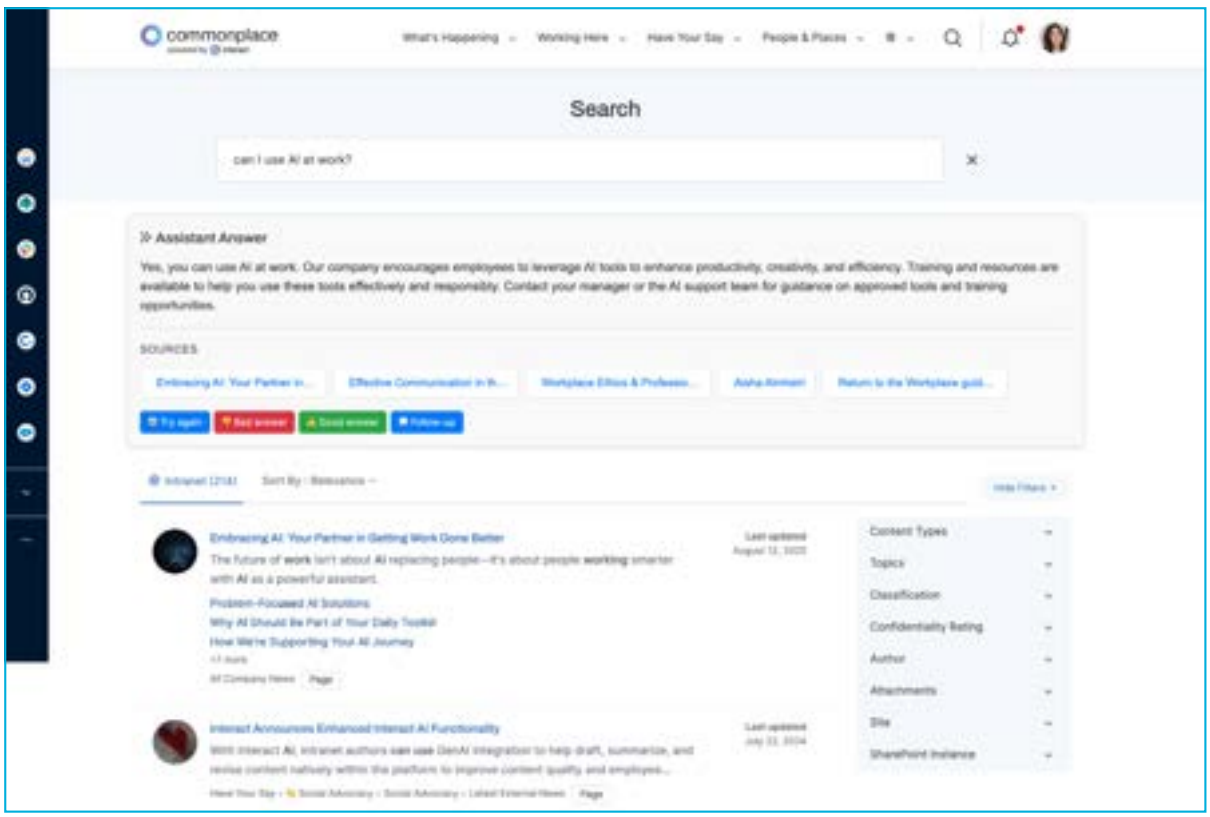
Example of an Interact widget that displays content coming from an external business application.

Interact's primary approach to integration is to pull content from various applications into widgets, where users interact with the content. These widgets are grouped into a marketplace and are easily accessible for publishers to add to any page. Simple examples include a Google Calendar or a task list from Outlook, but there are also integrations available with business applications such as ServiceNow or Salesforce. In the ServiceNow widget, users can create tickets and view the latest status of any that have been submitted, although clicking on the case will take a user out of the intranet. The Salesforce widget allows a view-only access to leads, accounts and campaigns. Note that these widgets are primarily designed for a web interface. They are also available within the mobile app but are more cumbersome to use than on desktop.

Links to key systems can be added to the persistent left-hand side app bar, and notifications from systems, such as Concur and Workday, feed into intranet notifications too. Interact also offers the opportunity for developers to create custom integrations through a documented API and a developer support site, which looks comprehensive although we haven't tested it.

Interact offers a good range of Microsoft 365 integrations. SharePoint libraries and OneDrive folders can be synchronised with Interact, making their content available for rendering within an Interact page. SharePoint news, however, cannot be brought across into Interact, but SharePoint and OneDrive content can be integrated into the search results (see Scenario 5).

Integration with MS Teams is handled well. There is a widget to display a feed of latest activities in a Teams channel. A Teams chat can be started from the people profile, and links to intranet content posted into channels, with reporting on click-throughs available (see Scenario 7). Also, a complete Interact intranet can be added as an app into Teams. Notifications, however, are not passed from Teams to Interact or vice versa, so in this setup employees will have to check two sets of notifications. There is also a useful Viva Engage widget to bring an activity stream into Interact; this can replace Interact's native feed for organisations that are heavy Viva Engage users. Other products in the Viva suite are not integrated.



Search results include relevant people and best bets, and are enhanced by adding images, video or a document to the search results.

Interact's search engine, branded as Workplace Search, is packed with features and works well overall. There is a single type-ahead search box across the whole site. All content within the site is indexed, and results are displayed with thumbnails on an attractive search results page. Added in mid-2025 is an AI search experience, which will provide an AI-generated answer, along with associated sources. Interact says the AI search understands the user's context, such as location and preferred language, and will tailor results accordingly. However, there's no way to follow up and ask further questions. Employees can give feedback on the results via a useful thumbs up / down and this is being stored but not provided to admins for action yet. Interact says follow up questions and feedback are on the roadmap.

Filters are available on the right-hand side and will only appear where there are relevant results. They cover a range of metadata such as author, topic and classification, and also include people profile fields to show first aiders, fire marshals or any other field that captures a specific qualification. We particularly like the feature whereby content creators can mark images, video or a document on their page to be highlighted within the search results. They appear just under the main title on the search results page, and when clicked, bring the user directly to the image or video within the page.

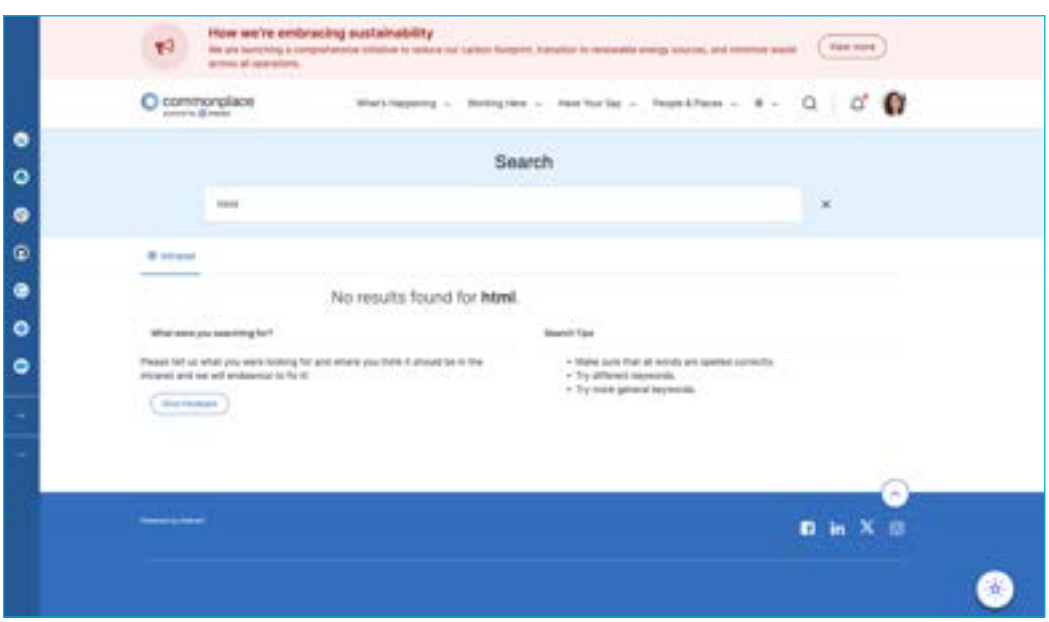
'Best bets' are Interact's version of promoted results, which highlight preselected content when a search is performed. These are simple to maintain, even across multiple languages. There are no 'likely answers', which we think is a gap that Interact should address (possibly by extending its AI capabilities) to make the search experience top-notch.

A nice feature is the option to include page summaries that help people tell the difference between similarly titled content in search results. We like that the Block Editor (see Scenario 2) automatically generates these page summaries for publishers who are unsure what to write. Users can provide feedback when they don't find what they are looking for, and there is also a useful possibility for users to suggest keywords for a particular page; this will help their colleagues find the page more easily in the future.

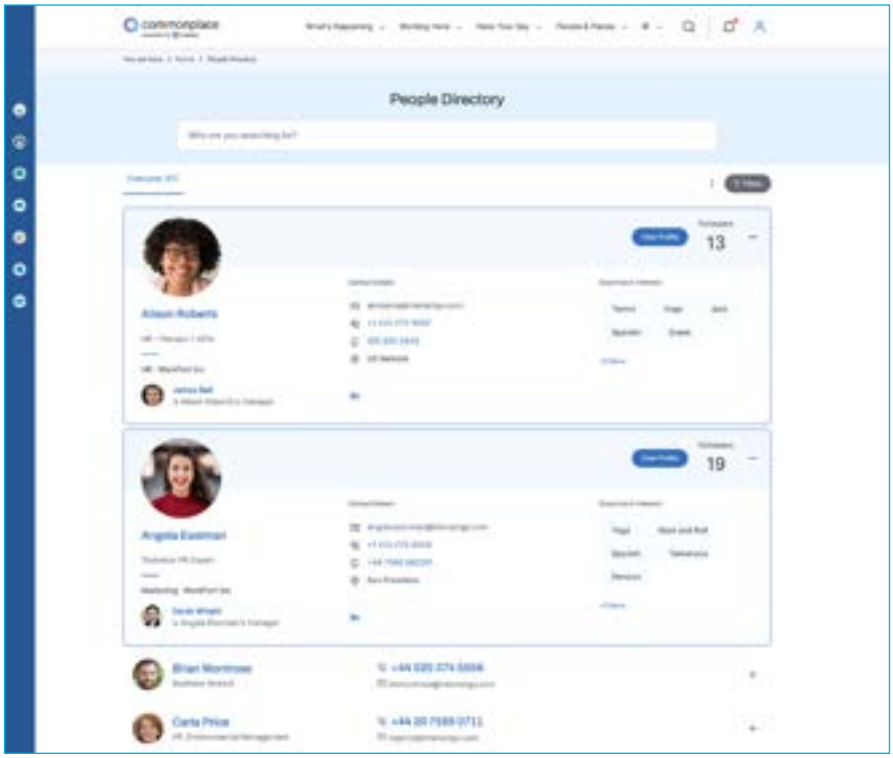
Workplace Search offers federated search results by integrating with a range of different content repositories. SharePoint, Google Drive and ServiceNow are supported out of the box, while Confluence is on the roadmap, and other sources can be added using the documented search API. Search results from these different sources are mingled and presented in a single list, rather than under separate tabs. The source of each search result is clearly indicated though, and filters on the right-hand side let employees narrow down based on metadata or on content source.

The people directory offers rich profiles and extensive search capabilities. Employees can find colleagues either through the main search, or via a dedicated search within the people directory. Search results are presented in an attractive layout, with the option to expand a person's profile into a card. There aren't any variant suggestions (Jon / John), although Interact says this will be available soon and users can be searched by and filtered based on information provided in their profile. Profiles are extensive and they can be fed with information coming from various systems of record such as an LMS system to include training and certificates. Profile pages are presented in an attractive layout and show someone's personal pronouns and badges among other information. There is also a basic org chart that expands to show managers and direct reports, but a full view across multiple levels is not included.

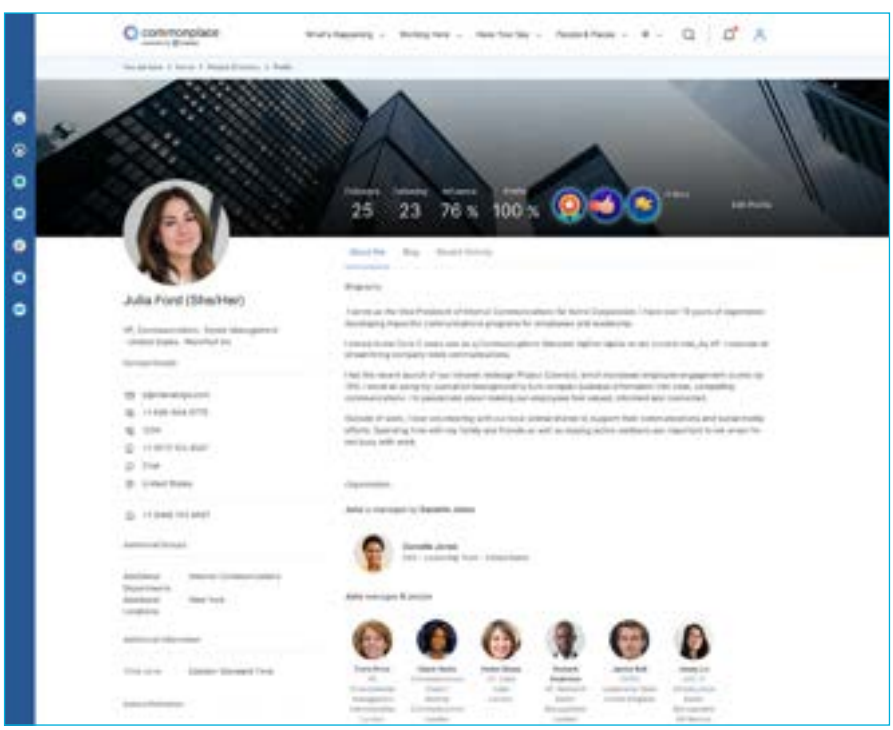
There are several ways in which information finding is facilitated within Interact. Scoped searches are available in many areas of the product, and templates for setting up an employee handbook area or an A-Z list of procedures are included to structure content logically. There is also a rich system of tagging and classification of content, with good control by admins over their usage. Some tags can be forced automatically, for instance in a template for an HR policy, while others are suggested by an AI algorithm during the content creation process. We find that these features offer a lot of flexibility to bring structure to the content; some upfront analysis will be needed to make the most out of the many possibilities.



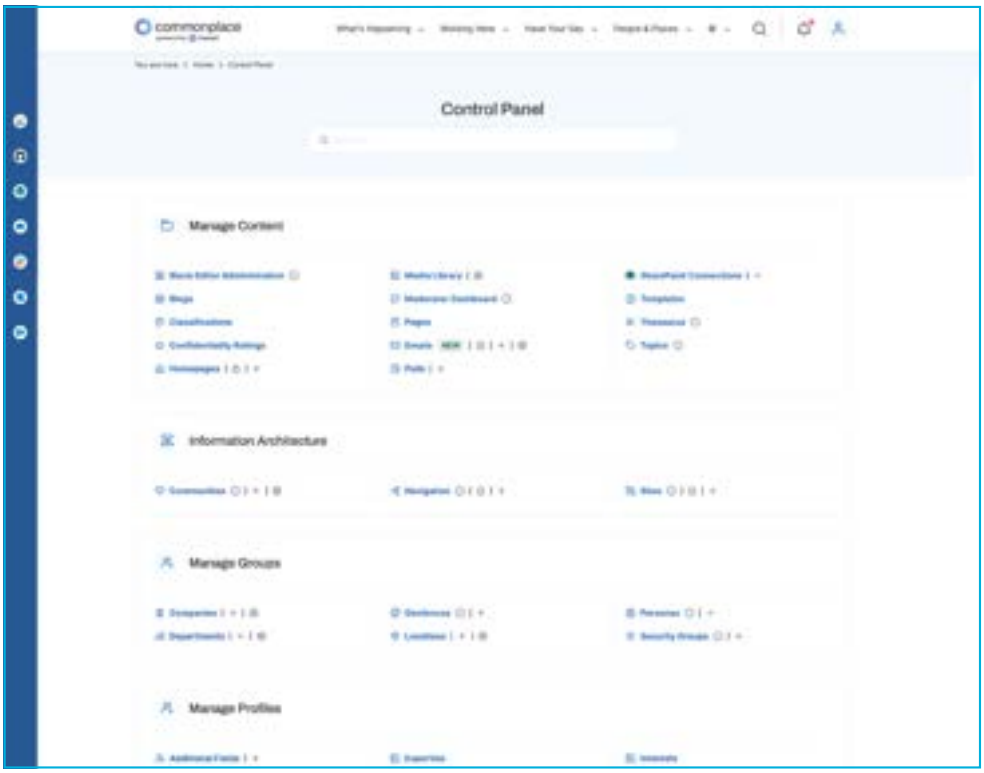
Employees can provide feedback if the search returns no results.



The dedicated people search presents results in an attractive layout, with an option to open a card view.



Example of a detailed profile page, including badges and personal pronouns.



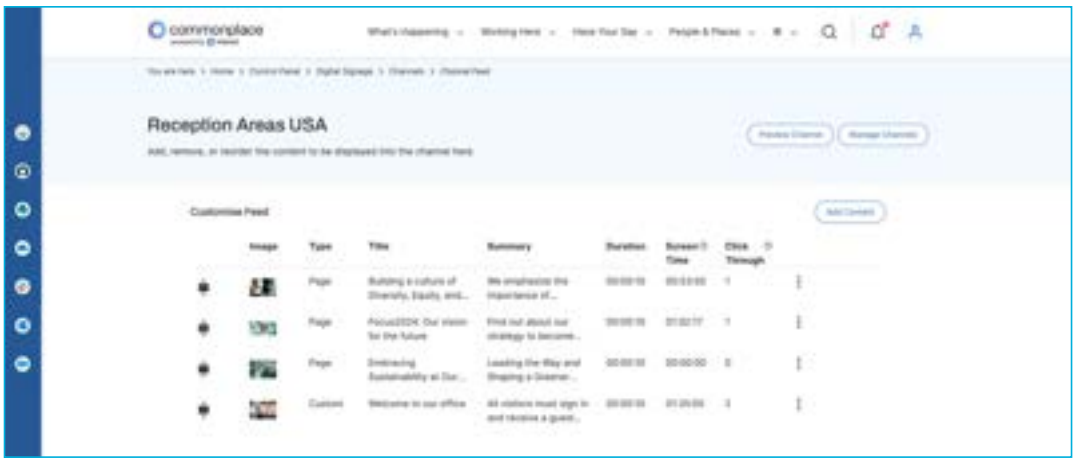
The Control Panel presents global admins with a well-structured list of functions, and a contextual search box at the top of the page.

Site-wide management in Interact is built around a model of roles and permissions that is flexible enough to meet the needs of large and complex organisations. At the top level, one or more global admins have full control over the back-end, where they will manage a wide range of platform settings from the 'Control Panel' page (overhauled during 2024). Configuration options are logically grouped together, and we like the contextual search box that sits on top of the page, helping admins to find a particular function. Tooltips are also available to explain some of the less obvious controls.

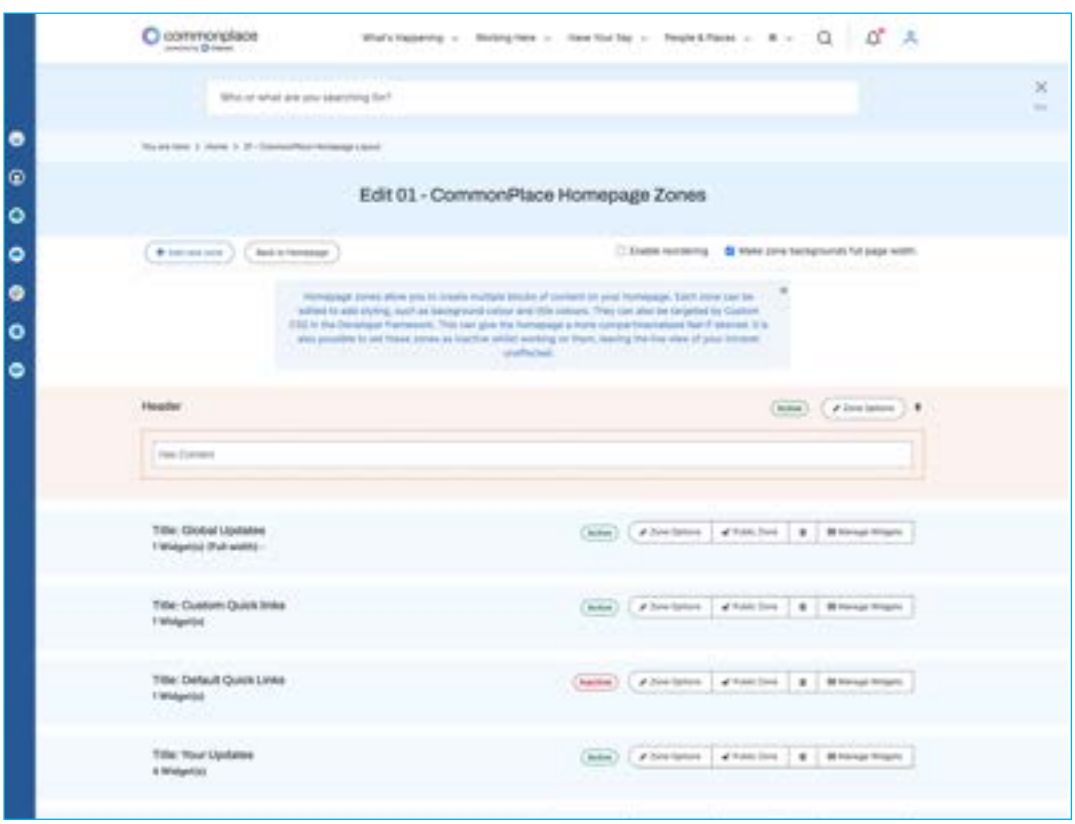
Interact has a decentralised management and publishing model; global admins can delegate responsibility for sites and communities to local admins, who will manage the permissions for editing and publishing in their areas. Local admins decide who will have standard user access, who will be an author and who will be an 'approved author', the latter able to create and publish content themselves and approve content created by regular authors.

An example of what can be managed by a local admin is the setup for digital signage. Physical devices such as TV screens must be assigned to a 'channel' in Interact, such as 'UK warehouse' or 'Reception Areas USA' as in the screenshot below. A local admin, for instance a warehouse manager, will then configure which content will be fed into the respective channels. Channels can surface content that's already on the intranet, or publishers may create new content specifically for the digital signage channel. A useful feature is that channels are cached, so if a TV screen loses internet connectivity it still displays something rather than just a blank screen.

Designing the home page and landing pages is straightforward and intuitive. Pages are divided into horizontal zones, and each zone contains one or more widgets that can easily be dragged and dropped. Some zones can be 'restricted', meaning that they are audience targeted and only visible by a particular group or persona. This makes it possible to place country-specific content on a common page, or to add a content block with information only for managers. Alternatively, Interact also supports different home pages for different sub-companies, each with their own branding applied (see also Scenario 1). A wide range of highly configurable widgets are available to create engaging pages.



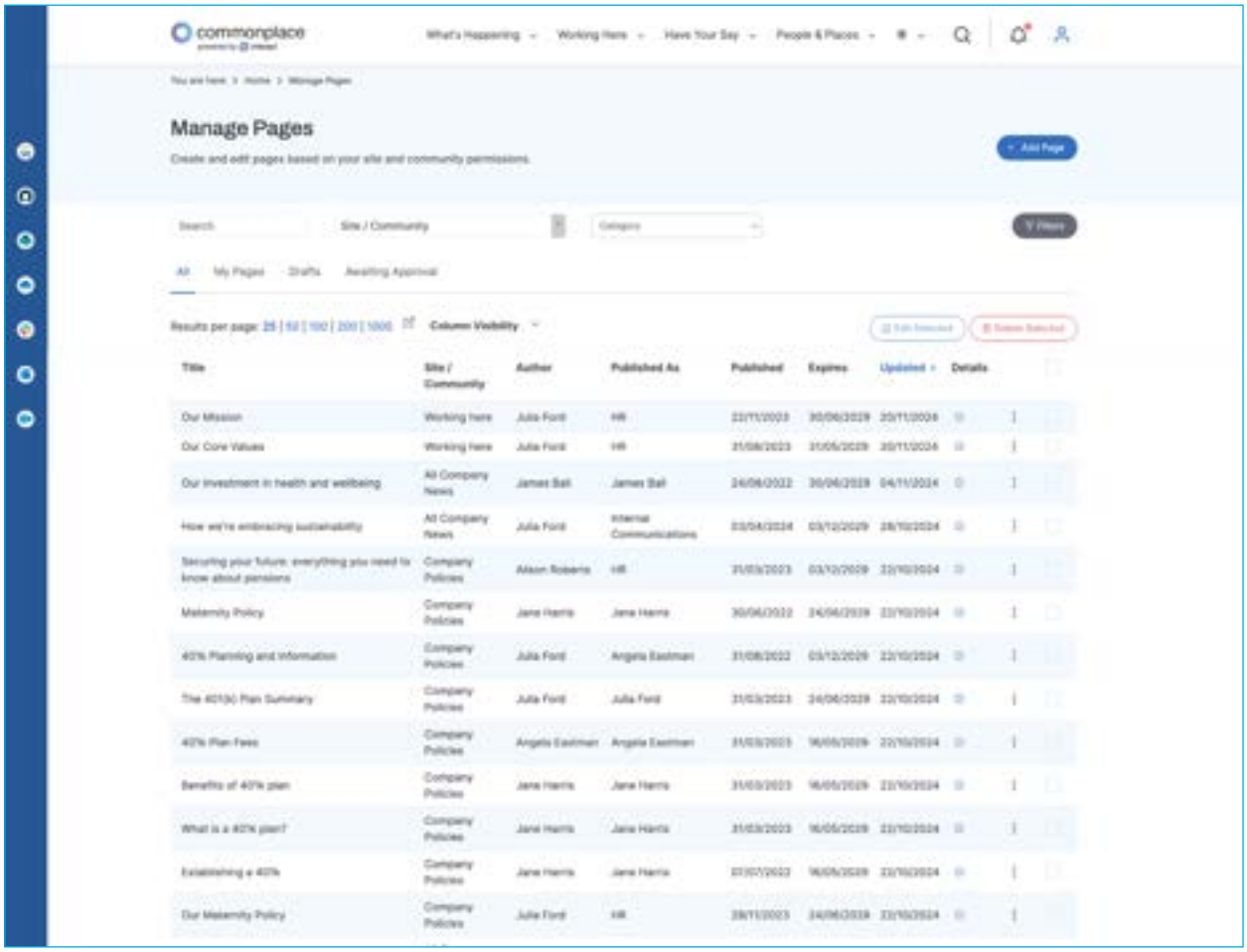
For a given channel such as 'Reception Areas USA', a local admin will configure what gets displayed on the assigned devices.



The home page consists of multiple configurable zones, each containing one or more widgets.

The content life cycle is managed through publication, expiry and review dates. Publishers find all content they have permissions for via their profile button in the top navigation bar, which brings them to a comprehensive 'Manage Pages' overview. Content pages are shown as a list, and for each item there is information available such as author, publication date and status. The small blue 'Details' icon (see below screenshot) gives access to further information, such as when the page was last edited and the version number. There is a filter to show inactive content, and anything due to expire also generates notifications to authors and displays a warning on the associated page. Helpfully, editors can bulk edit content via this table, such as substituting inactive authors or changing review dates. Page level analytics are also available from this overview page; see Scenario 7 for more.

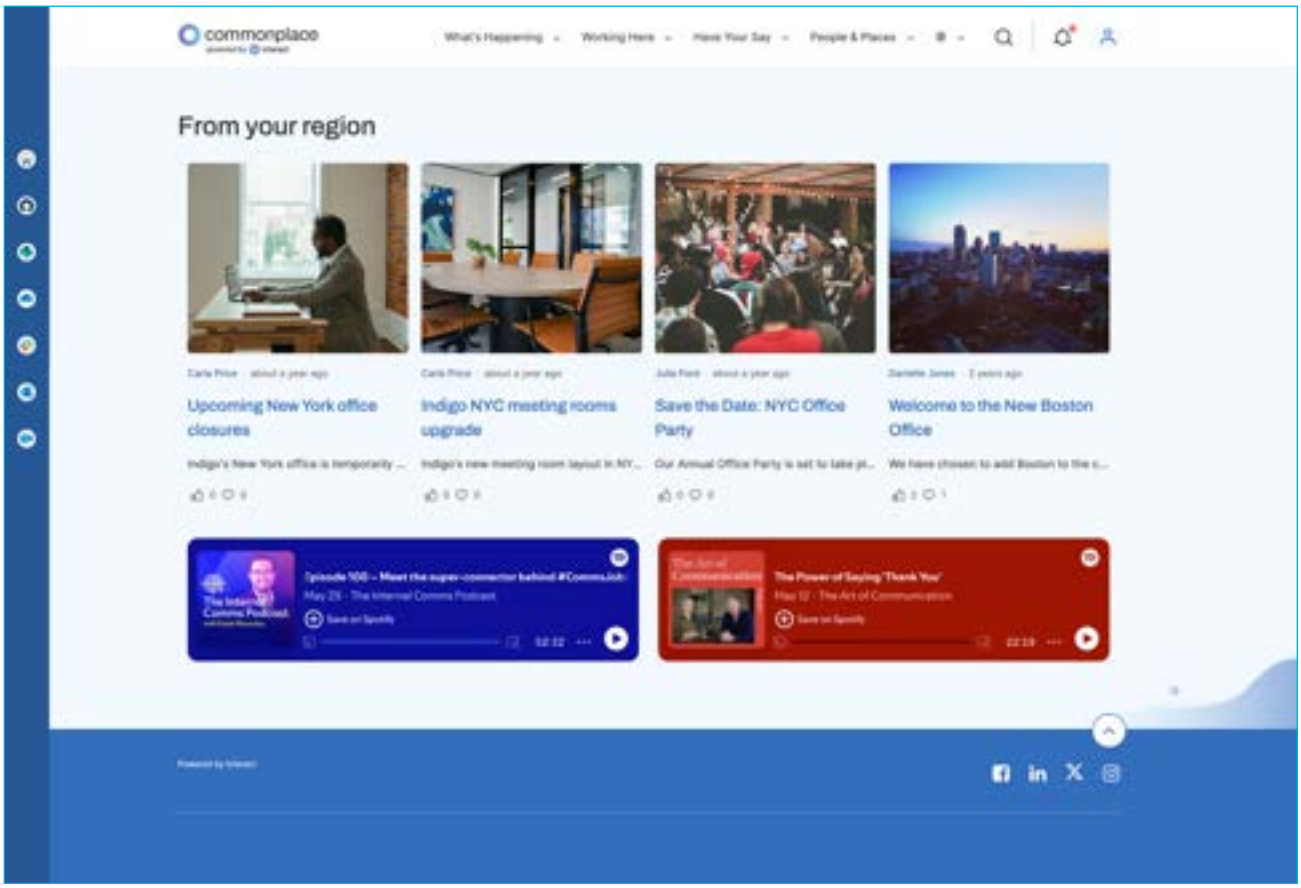
Users can manually choose their preferred language, or it will be pulled from profile data, which will update the user interface and display content appropriately. All elements of the product's user interface are available in over one hundred supported languages, and items in the top navigation menu are automatically translated using Azure translation services. During the content creation process, authors may add pages in different languages and use Azure translation services to create a draft translation, which can then be edited and approved by someone who speaks the language. There are no workflows in place however to notify translators if the original text has been updated. Forum posts and comments are machine translatable on-the-fly.



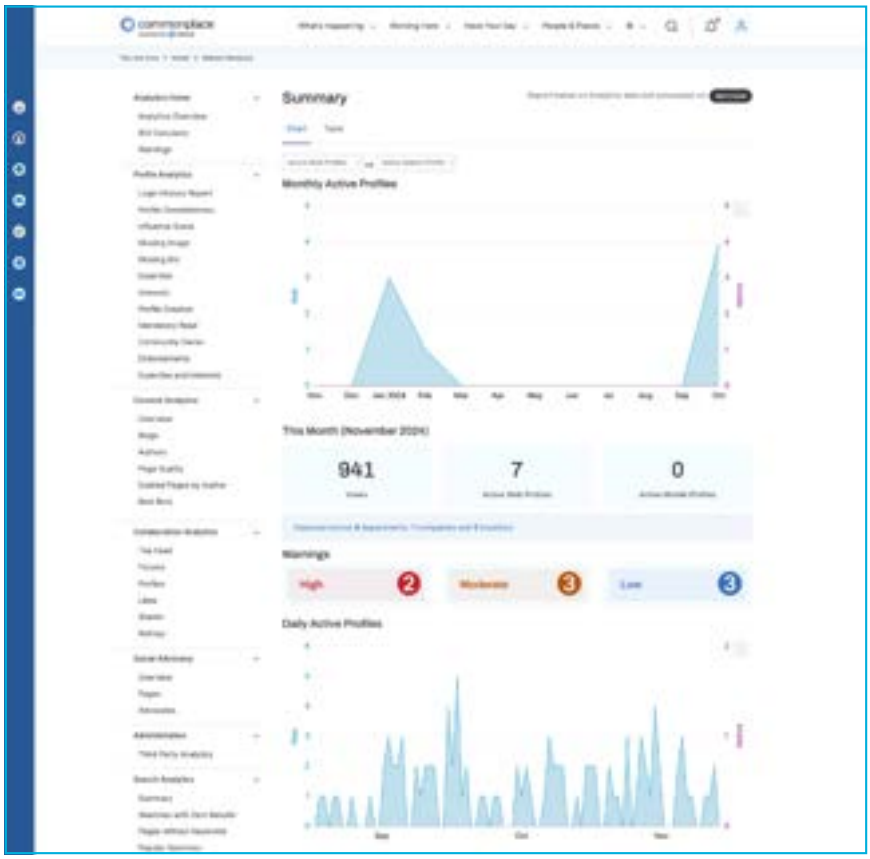
The 'Manage Pages' overview shows all content that an author has permission for and is the starting point for managing the content life cycle.

Interact has good support for multimedia content. Images and video can be stored in a digital asset management tool (see Scenario 2) and are easy to embed on any page. Podcasts are supported in a similar way; the screenshot below shows how these can be rendered attractively on a page. There is no built-in functionality for live streaming, but feeds from external platforms are straightforward to embed. Transcribing of videos and making them searchable is on the product roadmap.

Overall, Interact is a feature-rich product and the options to configure and fine-tune the platform are vast, so there will be a learning curve for admins to fully master the platform. Interact says that all settings are given sensible defaults, and that they will assist customers who have specific requirements to adapt some of the features to their needs.



Just like images and videos, podcasts are easy to store in Interact and place in an attractive layout onto any page.



The analytics summary page gives global admins an overview of active users and warnings about content quality.

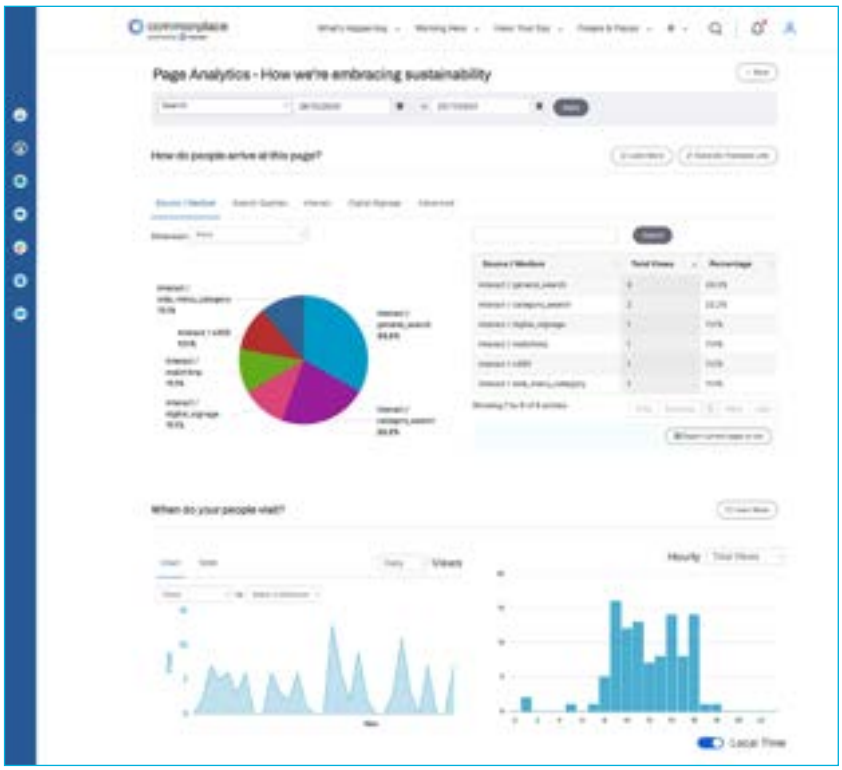
Interact comes with a range of adoption and content analytics reports that allow admins to measure the effectiveness of their site. A set of predefined reports cover information about general site usage, content performance, profile information, content quality and much more. The analytics are available as tables and charts, and all data is exportable. A nice feature is the possibility to compare dimensions on a single chart, for example a chart with daily views could be overlaid with the number of 'likes' on content across the site. A useful addition would be to have a similar feature for time ranges, for instance to directly compare this month's performance to last month.

At the global site level, the site analytics summary page is a good starting point for a global admin or intranet owner. It includes an overview of monthly and daily active users, as well as various content warnings about quality of the content and expired pages. Community managers are well served with detailed reporting, such as which employees contribute the most. We particularly like the 'peak engagement times' heatmap that collates information based on the individuals' local time zone.

Another useful report is the 'login history report', which contains rich data about users connecting to the platform, and offers handy filtering options, for instance to search for a particular user or to drill down by location. There are also a number of reports around social advocacy, showing the number of shares over time, which content has been shared most often and on which social networks, and an overview of the biggest advocates across the organisation. Note that reports showing the activities of individual employees can be turned off, to be compliant with applicable regulation on privacy and data protection.

Content owners and internal comms managers will be mostly interested in Interact's content-level analytics reports. Analytics about a single page are available to anyone who has content authoring rights on that page. There is a wealth of information available about how and when people have accessed the content. We particularly like the insights that the report brings about the path that users have followed to arrive at the page. For instance, the report will show how many people have navigated to the page from within Interact, which search terms have been used or from which external source they have arrived, such as from MS Teams, from an email or by scanning a QR code on a digital signage screen.

A report is available to show how often content has been shared by employees on external social media.



The page analytics report gives valuable insights into how employees have arrived at a particular page.

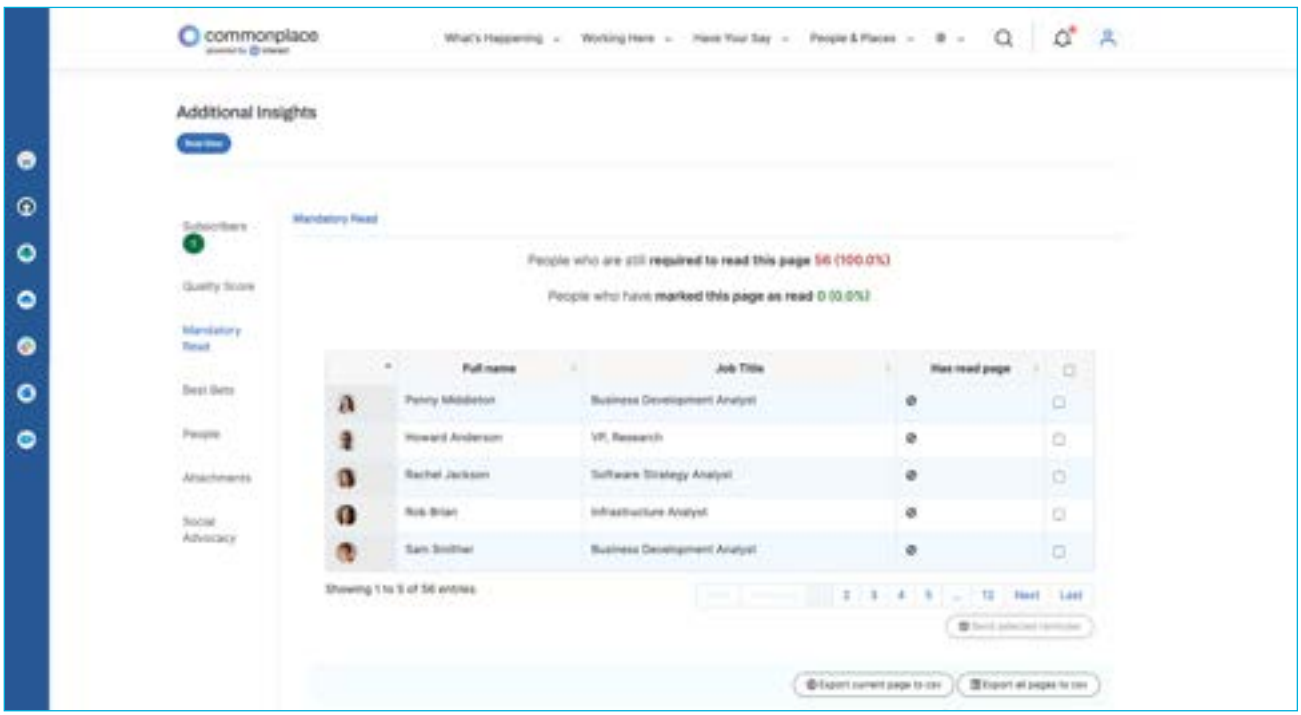
At the level of a departmental site or area such as 'all company news', content analytics are available to analyse which pages are the most popular over time, and there are filters to drill down by sub-company, department or location. This is useful for internal comms professionals to analyse the success of their news stories, but we'd like to see additional features such as analytics surrounding campaigns (topics made up of multiple news articles).

For customers who want to go beyond the predefined reports included in the base product, Interact also offers an Advanced Analytics option. Customers are given access to a database in AWS, from where they can take data into the business intelligence tool of their choice, such as Power BI or Tableau, to create custom reports. Included in the service is a library of pre-configured report options for customers to start from. This approach is useful for large organisations with in-house business intelligence experts that prefer to build dashboards themselves, rather than rely on the fixed reports built into Interact. This is a powerful option but requires a certain level of technical knowledge and the help of BI experts to put in place; we believe that most customers will be happy to use the standard Interact reports.

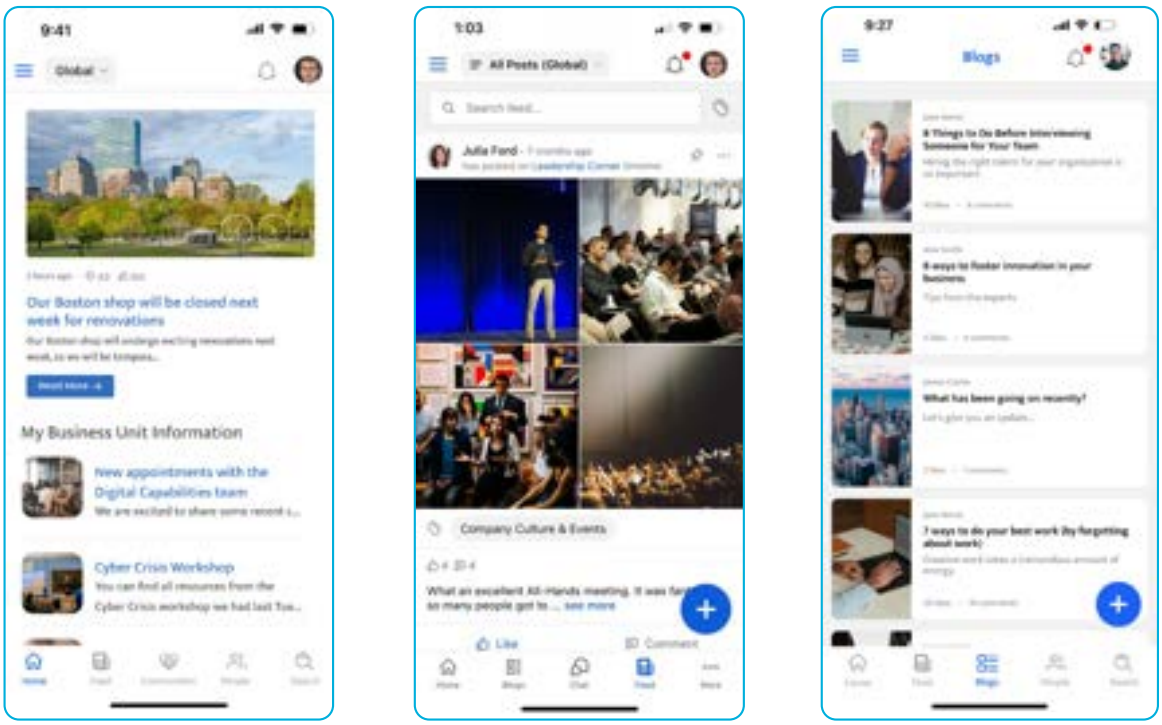
Mandatory reads can be applied to any page and reporting is available. A report shows who has read or not read a particular page, with the option to send email reminders, although triggering reminders to other channel types would be a nice addition.

Search analytics is strong; it includes data on popular search terms, pages without keywords, best bet performance and searches with zero results. User-reported 'failure to find' results (see Scenario 5) and suggested keywords for a page are also available here for an admin to review. How people arrive at a page is also tracked, which includes AI search results as a source. Presenting analytics where content has been used to generate a search summary is on the roadmap.

The presentation of analytics is mostly consistent, with site-wide reports accessible via admin screens and page-level data via the page itself. However, pulse survey results are returned separately and include analytics such as sentiment analysis which isn't available for other areas. Analytics on email newsletters (see Scenario 2) are also presented separately within the newsletter module. Overall, Interact's analytics work well but there is opportunity to evolve them yet further.



A simple report is available with an overview of who has read or not read a particular page.



The home page, the activity feed, and the blogs section in the mobile app.

Interact's standard features support mobile users and frontline workers well, and the overall experience is pleasantly contemporary. In addition to the responsive web version, a native mobile app is available for iOS and Android. A generic version of the app is available via the public app stores, while a branded app can be created at extra cost (but included in the price for this report) and then deployed through MDM. Different options exist to enrol mobile users, including those with only a personal email address. We also like the 'magic links' that can be sent out via email or SMS and contain a one-time token to get into the app without an initial password.

Once inside, the experience in the app is intuitive and consistent with the desktop. The primary navigation at the bottom has a 'home' icon that can be replaced by the company logo. Other icons give access to blogs, the people directory, the feed and search. They can be reordered or removed, for instance if blogs are not used, but they cannot be swapped for others nor audience targeted. We found that all functionality from the desktop interface works equally well in the mobile app; in particular the activity feed feels very natural on mobile, similar to a Facebook feed.

Standard mobile features such as push notifications and camera access are used thoughtfully. There is also a well-designed and fully featured chat module within the mobile app (but not in the desktop version). Some integrations are more cumbersome to use, such as the ServiceNow widget, as they have been designed primarily for a web interface (see Scenario 4 for more). Content pages and reference material display well in the app, which is useful for staff needing mobile access to manuals and procedures.

Administration of the app is straightforward, as much of the settings are inherited from the web version of the product. All relevant settings are grouped in the 'Control Panel' (see Scenario 6). Zones and widgets on a page can be audience or device targeted, so mobile users can see a simplified experience. Admins will mainly have to consider how to setup the target audiences, and decide which content is relevant for them.

THINGS TO BEAR IN MIND

Interact has been in the intranet marketplace for a long time, and this shows in the quality and range of features in the product. While there are no glaring gaps in functionality, we did come across areas where further improvements are desirable, and some of these were also suggested by clients in the 'Voice of the Customer' section.

While Interact has recently improved its activity feed, which now looks very attractive, other social and collaboration features are lagging somewhat behind and would also benefit from an upgrade. The search engine is powerful and has evolved during 2025, but could be further enhanced when compared to other platforms we've seen. Analytics reports are missing a possibility to track communication campaigns or to provide sentiment analysis. There is significant innovation in the product though, such as the strong generative AI features, and some recently added modules such as the editorial calendar.

Inevitably for a feature-rich product like Interact, there is some complexity in managing the platform in the back end. While the admin interface has recently been overhauled, with a more intuitive structure as a result, the back end of the product is vast and detailed. A significant effort from one or more global admins will be required to master the richness of the product. Interact is making efforts to help admins, for instance by providing tooltip explanations and sensible defaults, but we believe that especially for smaller organisations complexity will be an important consideration.

Finally, note that Interact is among the more expensive products in this report, for all sizes of organisations. Buyers will get a lot of functionality in return though, and there are a number of optional modules included in the pricing provided to us. Where certain features aren't needed, such as the digital signage solution or the branded mobile app, organisations will be able to reduce the cost.

Why choose this product

Interact is a fully featured product, where the years of experience from the vendor are evident. Businesses of all sizes will find plenty of functionality to meet their needs, while large and complex organisations will especially appreciate the advanced features for content creation and the flexible options for targeting a variety of audiences, including frontline workers. The product includes innovative functionality based on generative AI, and new features continue to be added, showing the vendor's commitment to keep delivering a top-tier product.

You may also be interested in...

APPSPACE Staffbase UNILY

Vendor roadmap

No roadmap has been supplied by Interact.

Back to index

involv

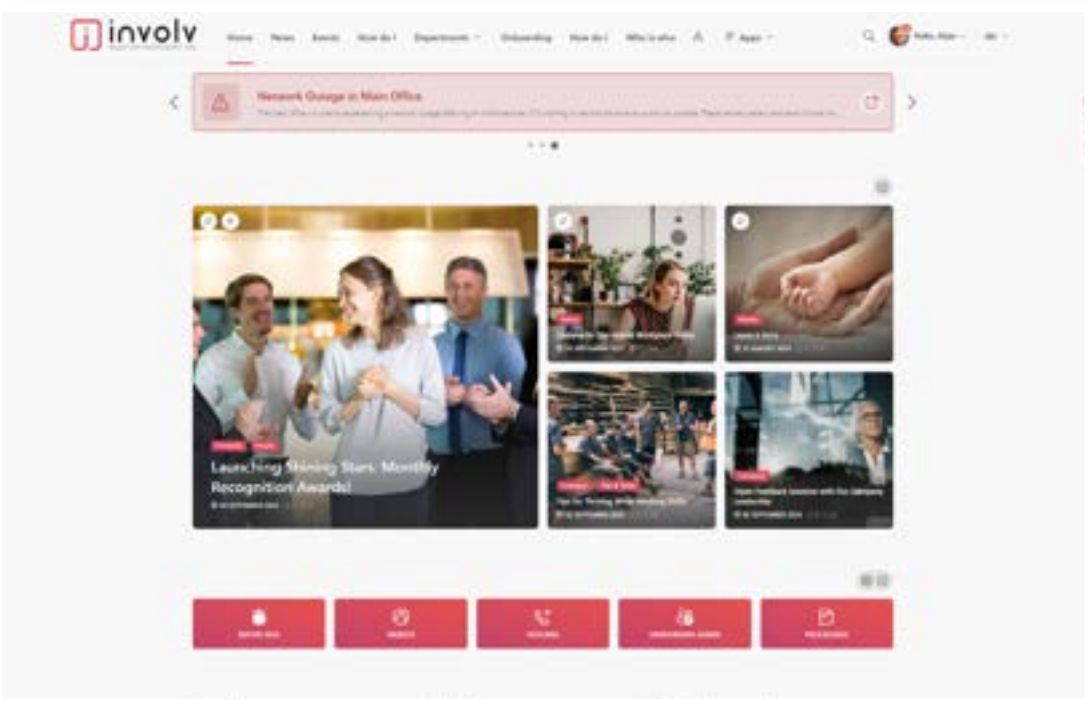
BUILT ON MICROSOFT 365

FULLY STANDALONE

REQUIRES SHAREPOINT

FRONTLINE FOCUS

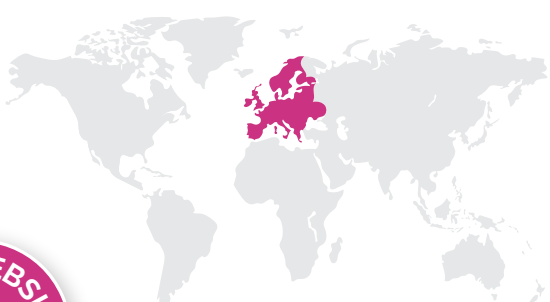
OTHER



Typical deployment:

1,000 to 5,000

Company locations:



VISIT THE WEBSITE

The product in a nutshell

Involv enhances standard SharePoint, bringing powerful publishing and communication capabilities with easy-to-use tools that will engage employees.

SUMMARY

Involv Intranet

Involv, owned by Cognit BV, is a SharePoint intranet in-a-box product, launched in 2017. Cognit is based in Brussels, but has partners across Europe and India, and has been a presence in the industry since 2007.

Involv leverages core Microsoft and SharePoint features while enhancing the end-user experience. The employee interface is easy to use as well as attractive, offering a big improvement on standard SharePoint. The admin experience is simplified too, with features including well-designed page templates, site provisioning and an intuitive admin interface providing support. Publishing, search and analytics are all strong, meaning Involv can be a valuable addition to SharePoint.

Some aspects of Involv's administration will need to be handled by Cognit, however, or by people with technical knowledge. Social and community features are relatively basic, as it uses Microsoft functionality that is integrated into Involv in places. Other M365 integrations are strong though, helping employees view their tasks or access content from Viva Engage. Few third-party integrations come as standard and deep integrations with enterprise tools like Workday and ServiceNow are not yet fully supported.

Overall, we think Involv will appeal to medium to larger organisations seeking an easy to use, modern intranet solution. As Involv comes at a competitive price, particularly for organisations over 5,000 employees, we think this will only add to the appeal.

Pricing

PRICE BAND	
1,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
5,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
20,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
50,000 users	$ $ $ $ $

These prices are indicative, offering a comparison of the products featured in this report only. Please contact the vendor for a bespoke quote.

PRICING MODEL

Subscription – price band based on number of users. One-off payment and ongoing maintenance fee.

DISCOUNTS

Charities and non-profit organisations, schools and educational institutes and multi-year commitments.

COSTS TYPICALLY

Fairly evenly spread across three years.

PRICE INCLUDES

Customer success services, maintenance, support, branding, updates & upgrades, hosting and access to community.

Product type

Ready-to-run, installed in days

Branding opportunities

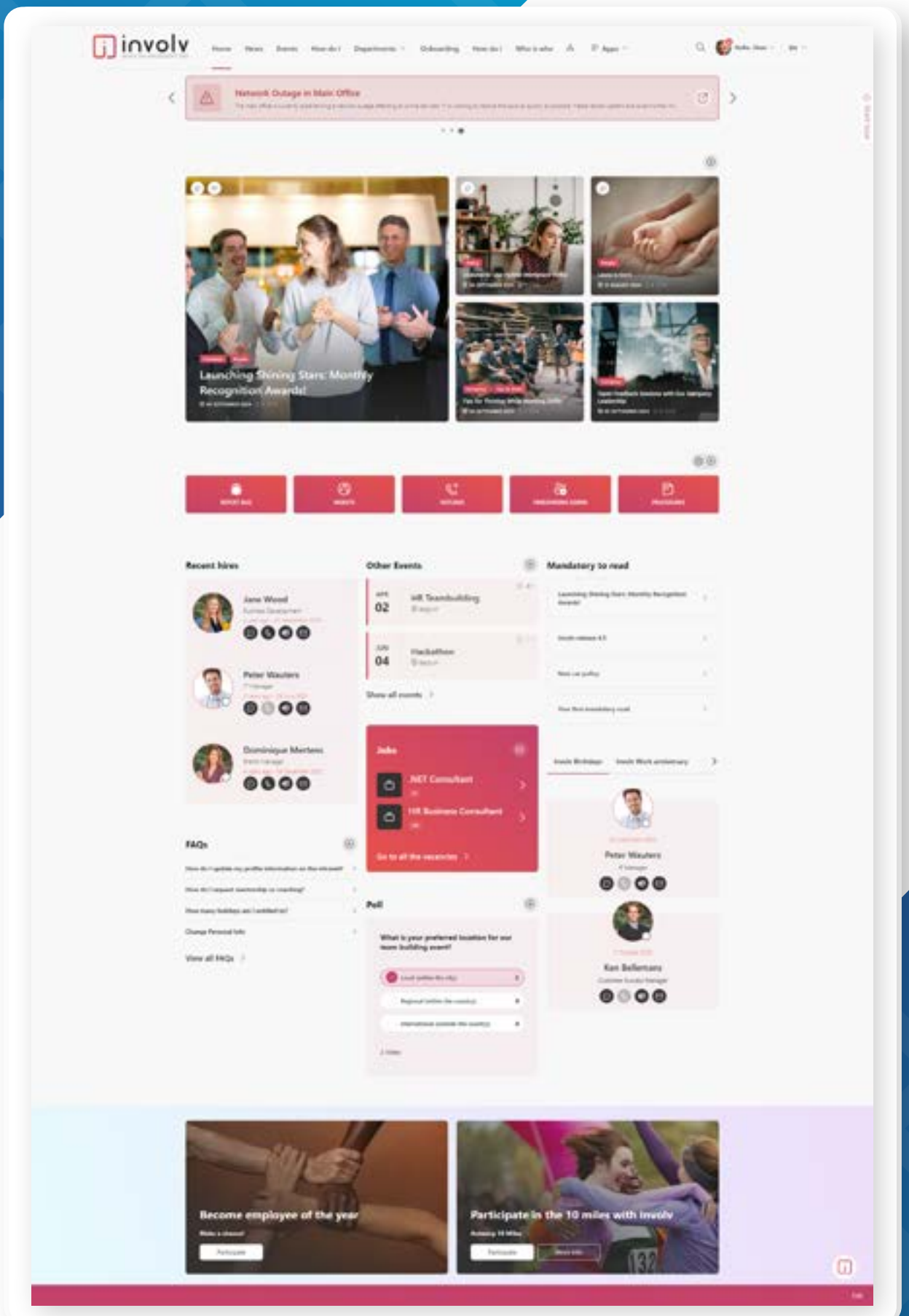
All branding, complex options

Base systems

Fully standalone	**Requires SharePoint**	Other

Sectors

Accountancy, banking and finance	Charity and voluntary work	Healthcare	Law, law enforcement and security	Public services, government and administration


involv
Network Outage in Main Office
Launching Shining Stars: Monthly Recognition Awards!
Recent hires
Jane Wood
Peter Wauters
Dominique Mertens
Other Events
Mandatory to read
Jobs
.NET Consultant
HR Business Consultant
FAQs
Poll
Become employee of the year
Participate in the 10 miles with involv

COMPANY AND PRODUCT

Company details

Company
Cognit BV

ISO 27001 certified
No

Data residency
N/A

Company founded
2007

Product launched
2017

Typical client size
1,000 to 5,000

Largest deployment so far
20,000 employees across 15 countries

Customers
Clients Include: NatureScot (they won an award), Lecot, Houthalen Helchteren, Kingswood School, Anonymous Bank, Europabank, Port of Antwerp, Samsonite

Partner locations
UK, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, USA, India, France, The Netherlands

Company locations
Brussels, Belgium (HQ), UK

Product and technical details

Name of product

Involv Intranet

Deployment

Client on-premises	Client private cloud	Microsoft Azure	Amazon Web Services	Vendor-hosted	**Microsoft 365 tenant**	Google Cloud	Other

Authentication supported

Entra ID	**ADFS**	**Okta**	**Open ID**	**Oauth**	G Suite	Other

App deployment

Google Play store	**Apple store**	**MDM**	**MAM**	Other

Accessibility

WCAG 2.1 conformant

Document library sources integrated

Box	Dropbox	Google Drive	**SharePoint**	**OneDrive**	Other

Optional integrated enterprise search engines

Coveo	Elastic	IBM	Lucidworks	**Microsoft**	Mindbreeze	Sinequa	**Other***

*Zenya

User interface multi-language

Machine translation	**Pre-configured**	Editable	Right to left script supported	Other

Content multi-language

Machine translation for publishers	**Machine translation for end users**	**Editable machine translation for publishers**	**Manual creation for publishers**	**Right to left script**	Other

Set-up and support

Set-up process for new clients

Automated remote installation for the product. Project roll-out & workshops, configuration, training and Hypercare & Go-Live services are offered through 'Success Packages'.

Version numbers

Demonstrated to ClearBox: Involv V5.0

At January 2025: Involv V5.0

Product updates

Major updates every quarter; minor / hotfix updates every 1-2 months when needed.

Product update process

Customers choose if they want to receive updates automatically or on a different timing. Customers are always notified up front on the availability of an update. Updates are done with a one-click remote installation.

Reverse-out options

Involv intranet is installed on the customer's M365 tenant. All data is stored in the customer's tenant, so remains there when the contract ends.

Technical support

Email support	Phone support	Chat support	Online portal	24/7 support	Office hours only*

*CEST

User community

There is an online community where customers can post questions, share best practices and ideas.

Voice of the vendor

Cognit says: "Welcome to Involv — not just your next intranet solution, but the heart of your vibrant, interconnected workforce, built on the robust foundation of Microsoft 365.

At Involv, we're more than a software provider; we're a team of experts in the field of internal communications and intranets, standing by to guide you from the initial hello to the celebratory launch and even beyond. We keep things simple and stress-free, promising you an intranet journey that's easy and full of nice little surprises. Imagine a place where every member of your team, whether they're in the office next door or halfway across the world, finds a virtual home. A place to collaborate and connect, where every individual feels seen and heard. Where great ideas can grow, and productivity thrives.

Involv is an accelerator; it comes ready-to-use so you can get your intranet up-and-running fast. But that does not mean you're limited; it retains the flexibility to accommodate enhancements and customisations tailored to your evolving needs, offering a dynamic tool that grows with you.

200+ organisations all over the world can't be wrong. Let's embark on this journey together, merging your vision with our expertise to create a workplace that's not just efficient but alive and truly extraordinary.

Ready to get to know Involv? We can't wait to meet you!"

Voice of the customer

Customers universally appreciate Involv's user-friendly interface and many highlighted its seamless integration with SharePoint and other Microsoft applications, meaning it doesn't just feel like "an extra tool to use". One customer praised how effortlessly it can be adapted to meet business needs, "the product is fully customisable within the Microsoft ecosystem." Involv also impressed many for its ease of setup and the simplicity it brings to everyday operations.

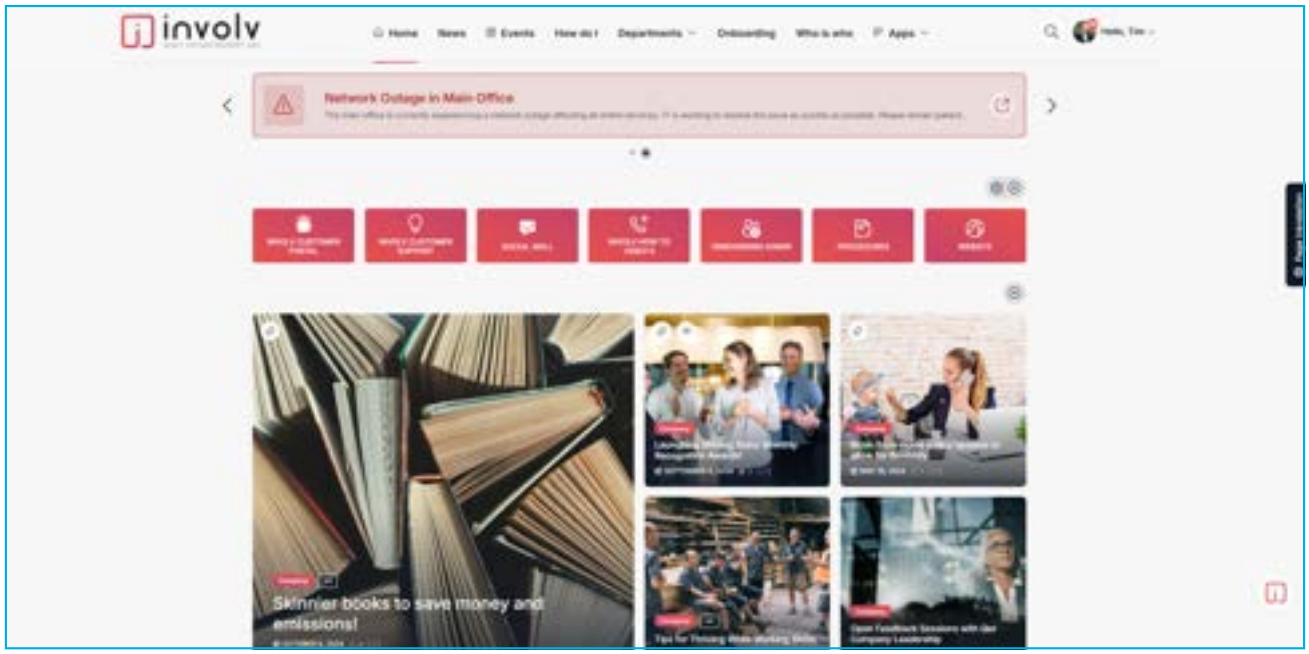
The changes customers would like to see are varied and some were satisfied, saying Involv is "a living platform where improvements are regularly made to meet the questions and concerns of their customers." One customer expressed a desire for a faster refresh rate, and another noted that "maybe the intranet is a bit faster" than the app too. The ability to easily navigate to location-specific pages from the mobile app also came up as a nice to have. Access management, especially for larger organisations, was also mentioned, with one respondent hoping for a clearer overview of page permissions: "I am just thinking of an overview page that shows who can and cannot see what."

Beyond the product's features, customers were delighted by the experience of working with Cognit, where feedback about working with the vendor was overwhelmingly positive. Customers emphasised the vendor's product expertise, clear communication and swift responses. One customer commended the partner's skill in understanding complex Microsoft configurations, while another highlighted that "the budget was clearly determined from the start, and we were not faced with any surprises." Many felt they were working with a true partner rather than just a supplier, with one customer summarising, "It is much more than just the product, it is the people behind the product. The way the implementation was done was more than sublime. We were helped perfectly from the first workshop until everything was delivered."

SCENARIOS & SCORES

Please see the Scenarios below for more detail on each of these.

SCENARIO AND SCORE	KEY BENEFITS	IMPROVEMENTS / CONSIDERATIONS
4.5 **1. User Experience & Visual Appeal**	Well-designed templates, robust navigation and an intuitive interface offer a modern intranet experience.	Automatic notifications relate to content only.
4 **2. Publishing & Communications Management**	Good news publishing tools including generative AI features. Urgent communications well supported.	Audience targeting is less flexible than other solutions. The list of scheduled news would benefit from alternative display options.
3.5 **3. Community & Engagement**	Individual tools are simple but effective such as ideation, polls, event sign-ups and training.	Relies on Microsoft products for core community features and surveys.
2+ **4. Integrations & Services (Including M365)**	Strong Microsoft 365 integration. 'My Page' is particularly useful.	Limited deep integration with major workplace systems like ServiceNow and Workday.
3.5+ **5. Information Finding & Search**	Excellent overall search experience. Strong approach to knowledge and information management.	Technical set-up is required for a few search features. Some standard SharePoint functionality is missing.
3.5+ **6. Administrator Experience**	Intuitive admin interface with easy access to configuration, permissions and multilingual support.	Workflows and auto-revision need technical setup, limiting ease of use for non-technical admins.
3.5+ **7. Analytics**	Data-rich analytics dashboard tracks site performance, engagement and content consumption.	Admins can't customise the KPIs on the dashboard, limiting flexibility.
3+ **8. Mobile & Frontline Support**	User-friendly mobile app with customisable branding.	Initial set-up requires configuration by Involv. Few features dedicated to frontline employees.

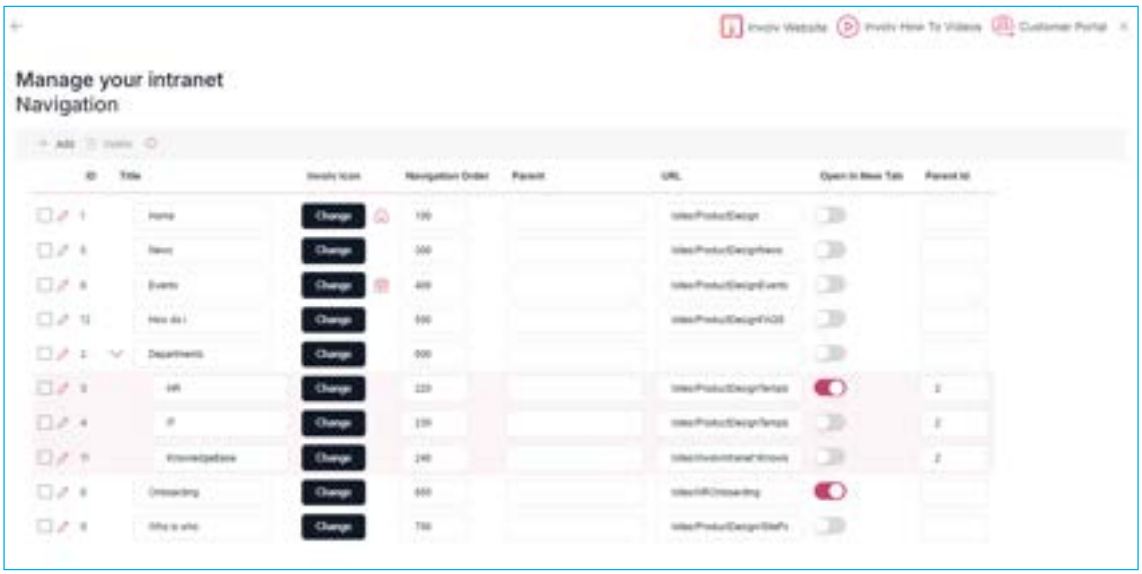


Involv provides a user-friendly and visually appealing intranet interface.

Involv provides some enhancements to the SharePoint intranet experience by delivering a platform that is user-friendly and visually appealing. The interface is pleasant and consistent across different sections, providing a cohesive experience. We like the 'dark' and 'accessibility' modes, with the latter including options to navigate pages using tabs, screen reader compatibility and adjustable font sizes for users with varying needs. It's worth noting that Involv underwent a complete makeover during 2024, which included the addition of more templates for use throughout the site for news, events etc. This makeover also added a range of new features, all of which supplement the standard SharePoint experience.

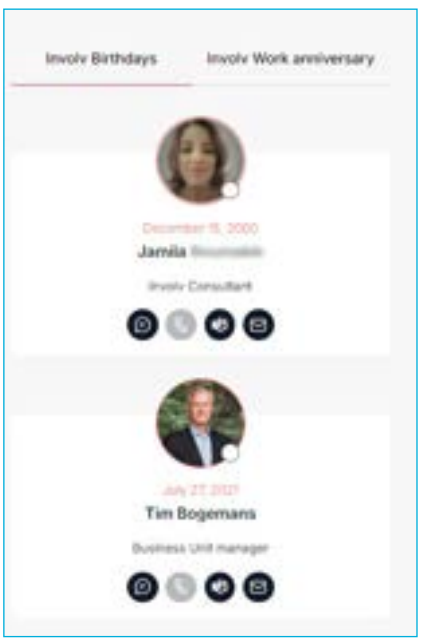
When employees first visit the site, different sections on the home page are highlighted using a page tour to help people orientate themselves. On subsequent visits, the page tour can be manually accessed from the bottom of the page. Page tours are not a common feature in the market, particularly for a SharePoint product, and it works well. Clients have complete control over the tour, allowing them to use language specific and appropriate for their employees. The interface for building tours is straightforward for admins to do this activity themselves, although Cognit are happy to help. The tour feature can be deployed on any page of the intranet, so this can be used not only for the initial launch of the intranet, but also for launching a new feature to employees.

Navigation is one of Involv's strengths, enhancing what's available via SharePoint and providing administrators with options to customise as needed. The mega menu is quite flexible, where text or icons can be added to the design, and there's an option to group related items under intuitive categories. Navigation can be personalised using role-based targeting, where specific content or menus are displayed based on user roles or departments, ensuring that employees see relevant information without being overwhelmed by unnecessary options. Breadcrumb trails further support people in finding their way through the intranet.



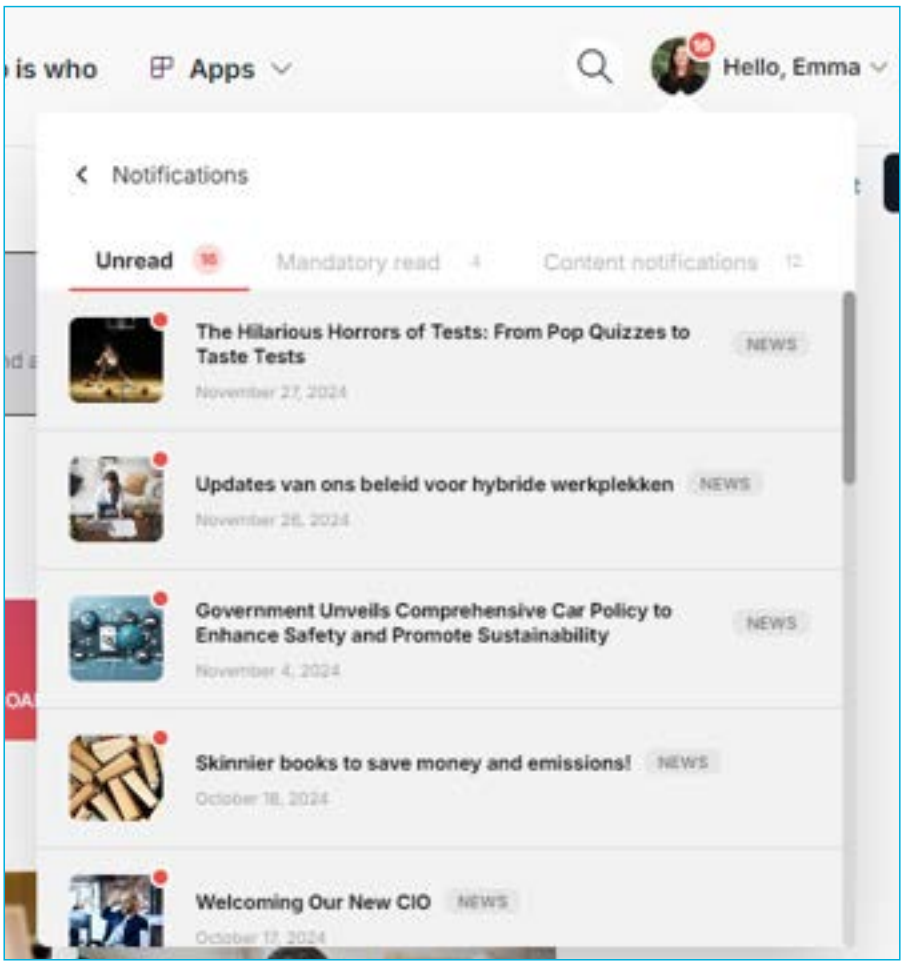
The use of mega menus allows for a broad overview of available content, while also grouping related items under intuitive categories.

At site level there is a configurable site navigation component that adds page context-sensitive links. This improves on the standard site navigation by removing irrelevant options as people drill down the hierarchy. Admins configure how many levels are shown and whether these are collapsed or expanded by default. Another navigation feature we particularly like are tabs that can be used to show different web parts grouped together on pages. These make it easy to switch between different kinds of related content, such as global and local news or different Viva Engage communities, while retaining visibility. This is helpful to reduce noise on a home page, as employees choose what to look at rather than being presented with double the number of web parts.



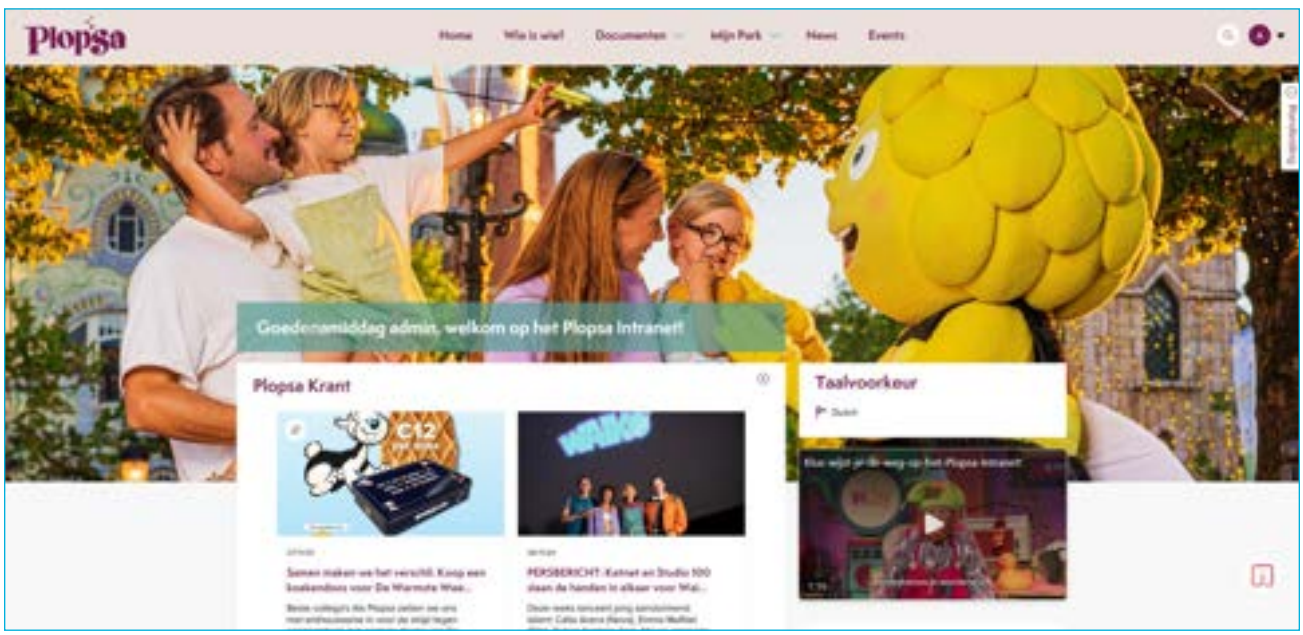
Tabs on web parts helpfully group content together and allow employees to control what they want to look at.

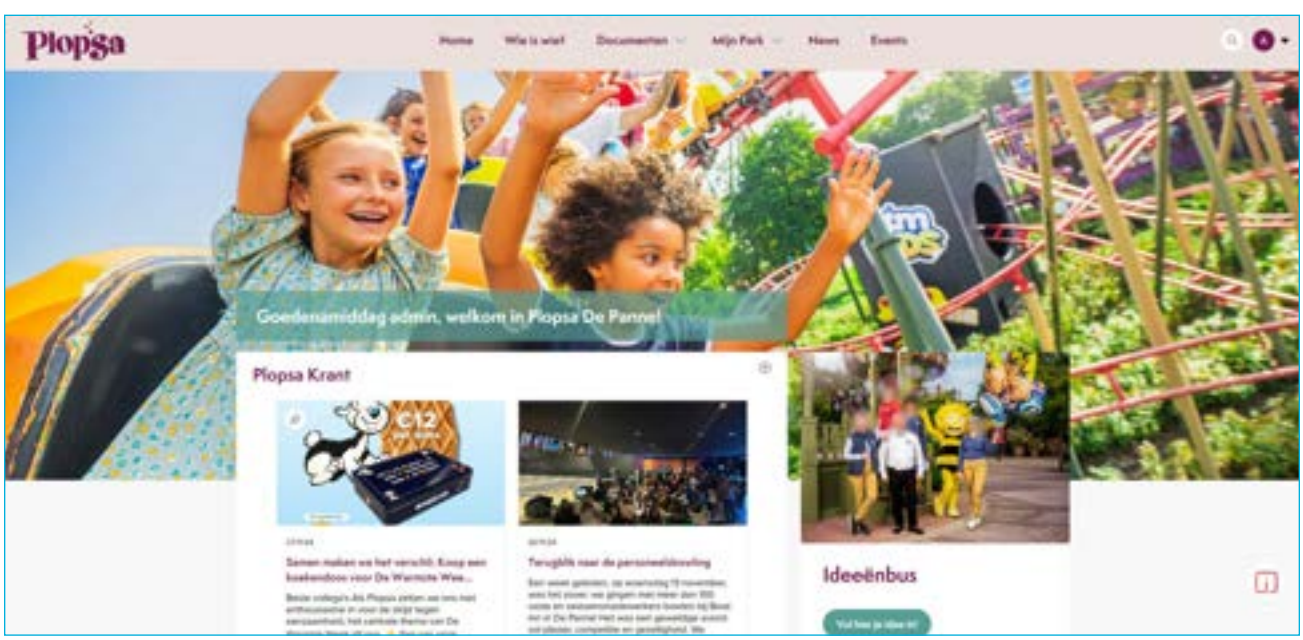
Notifications in Involv provide support for published content, where a 'notification centre' in the user menu displays 'unread', 'mandatory read' and 'content' notifications (see Scenarios 2 and 7 for more). Managing notifications is simple, with clear options for employees to filter or prioritise what they see. For example, users can choose to receive alerts on high-priority tasks or updates, while dismissing less relevant notifications. Additionally, there are flexible settings that allow users to customise how they interact with these notifications, including the ability to return to notifications after they have been dismissed or marked as read. There is no traditional 'notification bell' or similar to alert users of other activities, which we think would be a helpful addition.



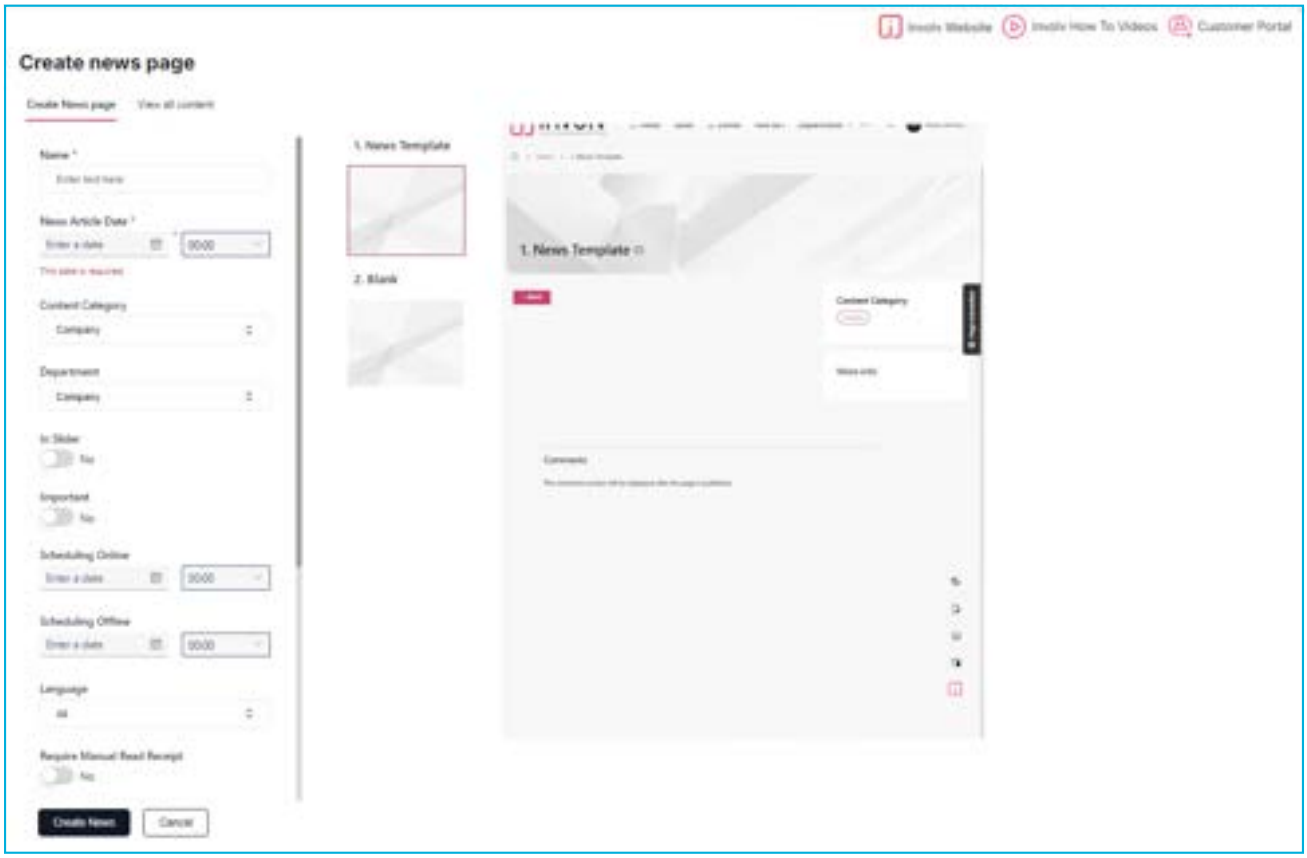
Content notifications are neatly categorised and colour coded.

Involv offers flexible branding and styling options, providing a good starting point for organisations to create a personalised look that enhances the default SharePoint options. One Involv intranet can look quite different from another as a result. Different sub-sites within the same environment can look and feel unique, accommodating complex branding requirements of multi-brand or multi-national organisations. The use of white space is sensible and well considered, contributing to a clean, modern look that enhances readability and reduces clutter.





Offices in different regions can have the same overall structure, but different content. These could also be branded differently by applying different colour schemes.



There are useful templates for creating news.

Involv builds on SharePoint's standard content creation tools by adding some useful features to help communicators. For example, news publishers can simply click a 'plus' icon next to a news web part to create a new article. Involv's overlay then prompts for relevant information (such as publishing date) as well as metadata to apply (such as company categories or department). We like that publishers can choose to promote the story and 'pin' it in the hero from here as well, rather than having to do this afterwards in a separate web part.

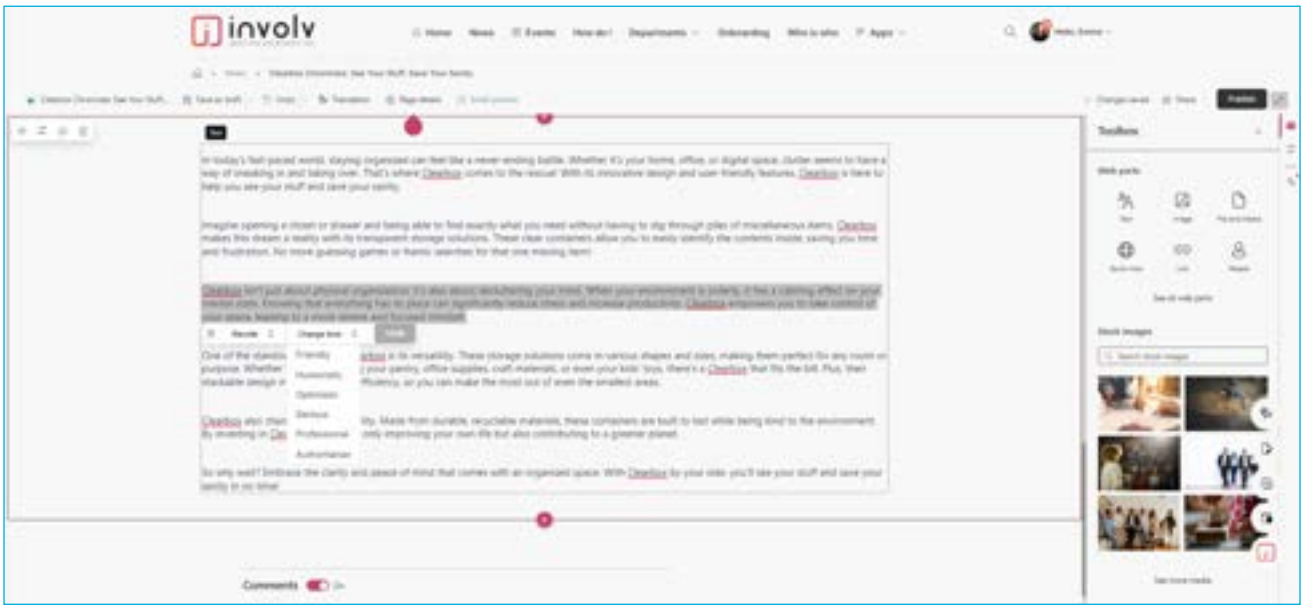
Cognit provides templates for news and other content types, which include standard SharePoint components as well as features native to Involv. It is easy to embed images, videos and interactive elements with the media integration tools available. Involv allows publishers to create content with AI assistance where desired. Publishers can choose to automate tasks such as drafting, rewriting, shortening or changing the tone of content, and can generate titles. Publishers may choose to use an uploaded photo or generate an image using AI, which draws on the article content. It's only after an article has been scheduled that publishers can edit generated content, which may cause some frustration. If needed, Cognit can configure approval workflows.

Audience targeting uses predefined criteria using Entra ID groups, which helpfully can be applied to entire pages as well as page sections, or even individual web parts. Employees can also set up their news and notification preferences to opt in or out of topics and personalise their experience, expanding the scope of audience targeting. This approach is more restrictive than other products we've seen, and it would be good to see more flexible options in future.

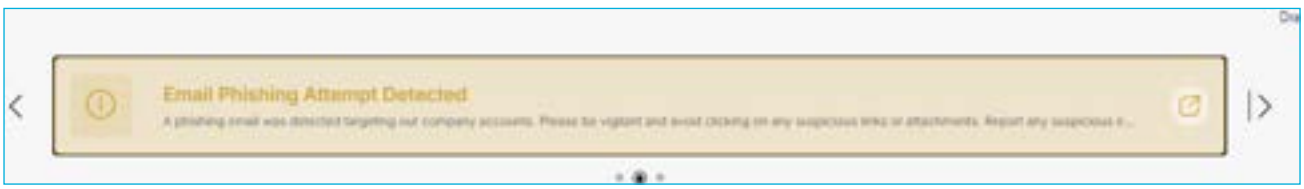
To help manage and prioritise upcoming content, there is a list view of all scheduled and published articles. This provides an overview of the content pipeline, but a calendar view would improve this experience and Cognit says this is on the roadmap. We hope to see a unified calendar that overlays all content types including news, Notifications, Incidents and newsletters, providing a holistic view of all scheduled activities for publishers.

There are a few options to help administrators highlight critical messages. Firstly, 'Incidents' are prominently displayed through site-wide banners and / or pop-ups. Admins define Incidents as 'regular', 'warning' or 'urgent' to better categorise them and apply an associated colour-code and icon. We like this approach as it helps employees easily identify them visually. Reusable templates can be created for repeatable Incidents, like a weather warning or system outage.

Important messages can also be highlighted via the 'notification centre', as mentioned in Scenario 1. Publishers easily select a piece of content, the target audience and which channels they wish to use for notification (browser, email, mobile and Teams) and when the notification will be sent. We particularly like the useful sense-check from the 'notification audience' feature that calculates how many people will be notified based on the channel and audience settings chosen. Involv also uses mandatory reads to ensure employees see and act on urgent messages as required, although we found the 'acknowledge' button could get lost among busy images.



There are helpful generative AI features available.

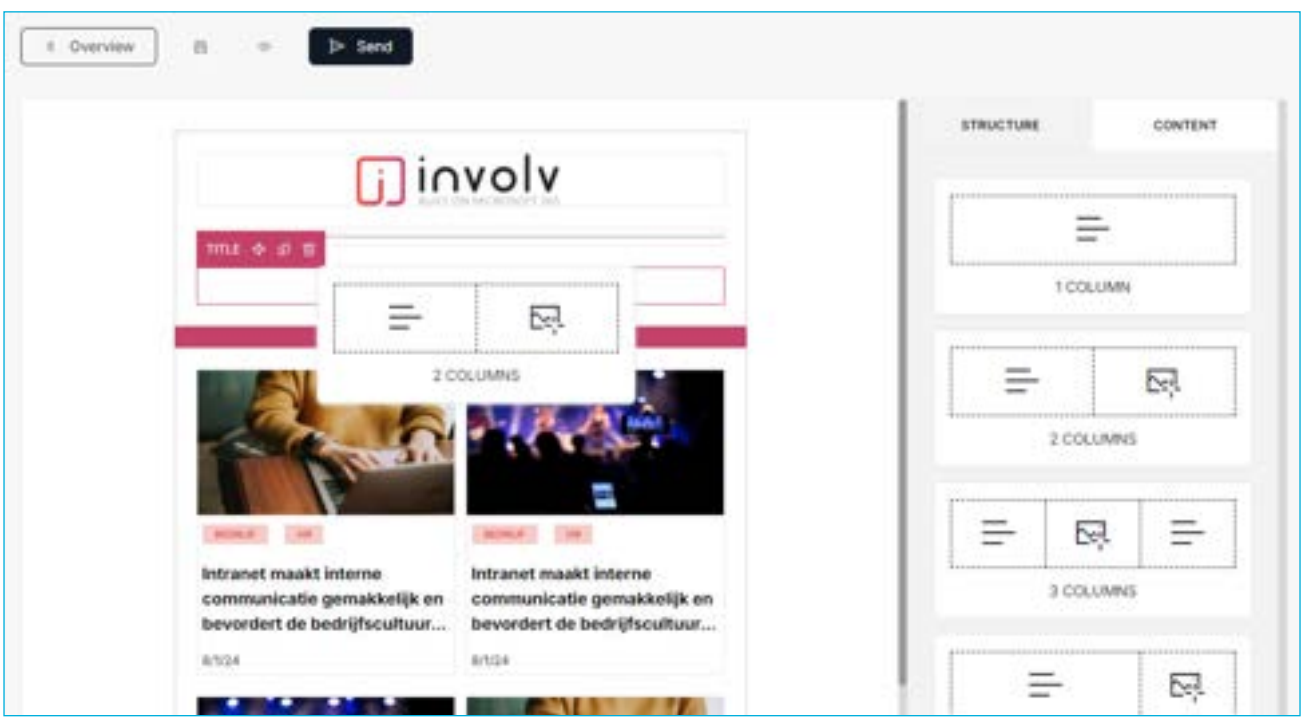


Incidents are prominently displayed on the intranet home page.

There are a good range of multichannel options, including the ability to share into Teams, Slack or social media channels like X / Twitter via an API. There is an effective newsletter builder; articles and pages can be added to the newsletter by using components that will automatically add details like the title, image and description from the links selected. There's the option to add text too, allowing publishers to craft a newsletter rather than simply creating digests. A calendar view shows all newsletters colour-coded based on whether they have been sent, are in draft or scheduled for later – we hope to see the equivalent applied to news.

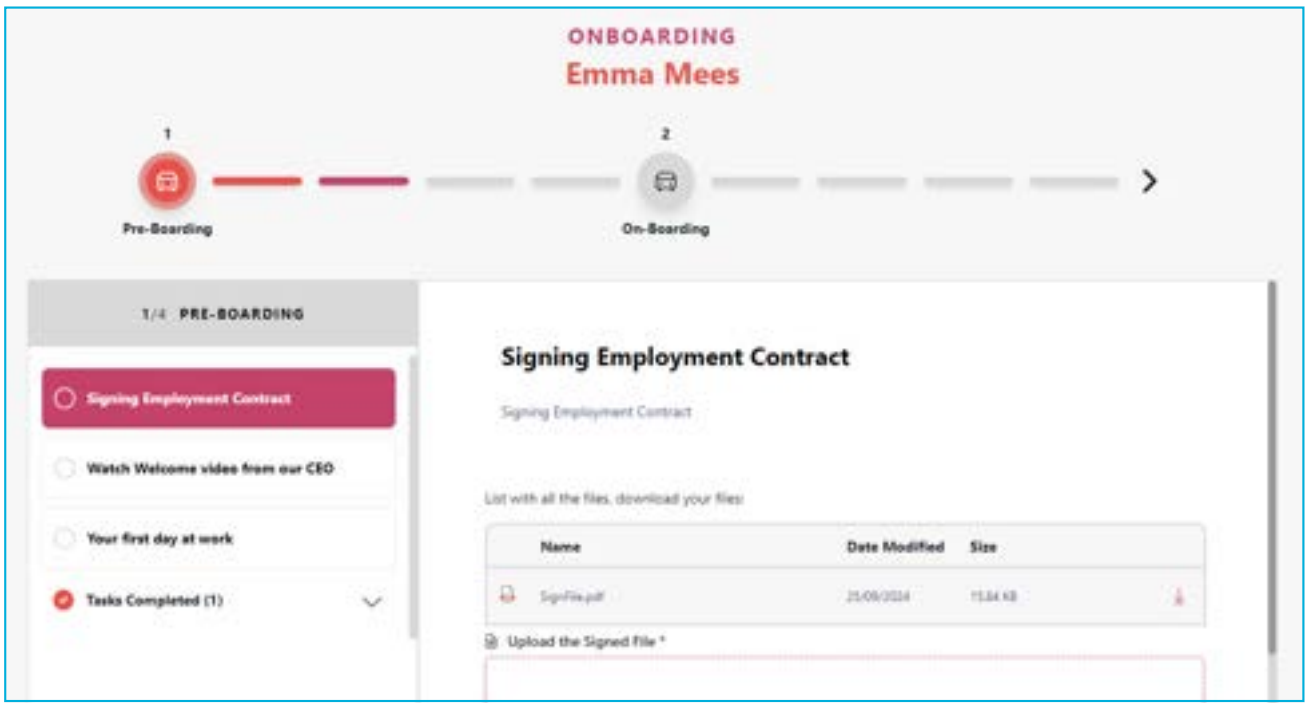
Messages can be pushed to mobile apps and digital signage screens through a 'Cast' add-on, which is an optional component but has been included in the pricing in this report. Administrators configure settings such as the number and type of elements to be displayed like Incidents, birthdays and recent hires. Publishers then choose the Cast channel during page creation for it to be added to the front of the signage carousel. This displays a snippet from the article on the signage, but we think the automatic inclusion of a QR code for more information would be helpful.

Overall, Involv provides internal communicators with an effective toolset. There is room for improvement, such as with audience targeting and news scheduling, but features like AI-driven content creation, crisis communication support and multi-channel publishing will certainly meet a lot of business needs.



The newsletter tool is fully featured.

Content pushed to digital screens through the Cast app.



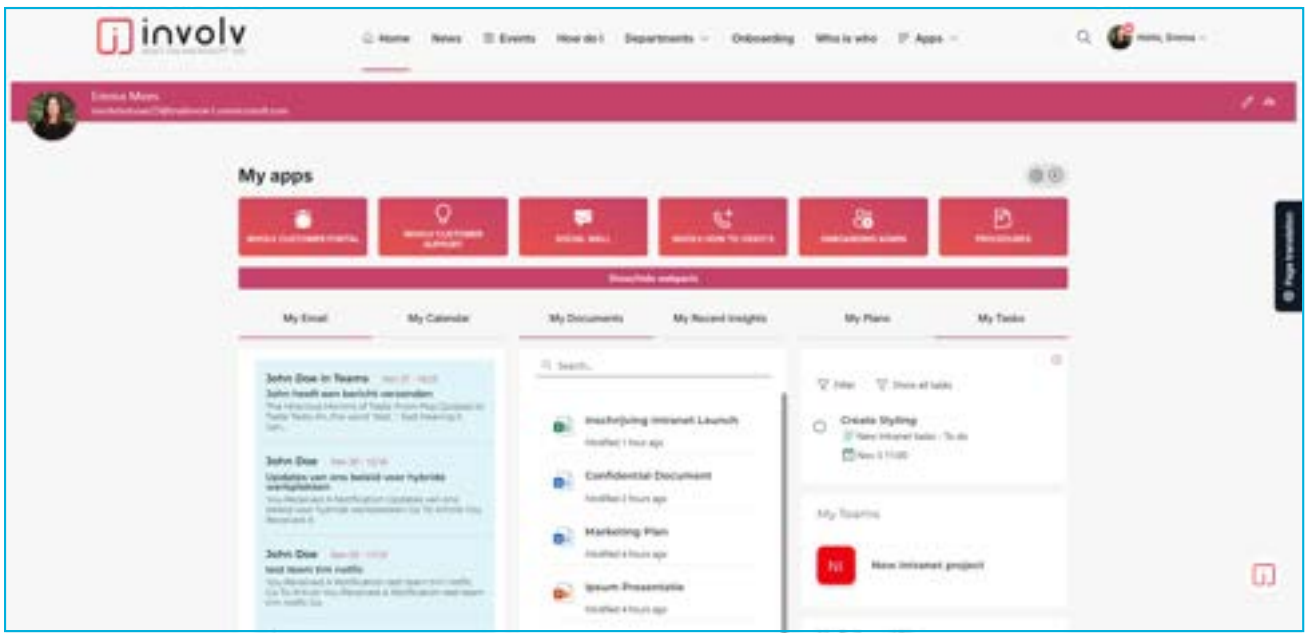
Onboarding and other simple training needs are supported.

Involv relies heavily on Microsoft features and products like Viva Engage for most community and engagement functionality, which is surfaced via integrations. There are some nice additional tools though; we like the ideation feature which is a simple but effective way for employees to create and submit ideas. Employees submit an idea using a simple form with a title and brief description, ideas are tagged with metadata such as a campaign or theme. Employees can see each other's ideas and engage by commenting or upvoting, but there is no way for admins to judge or progress ideas.

Employees can engage with content through likes, comments and shares available from the core SharePoint functionality. Comments can be reported, which is flagged to the administrators for review, and actioned via an email notification – this is an example where a traditional intranet notification would be beneficial. Optionally, Cognit use the standard Viva Engage web part to show conversations.

A 'Give feedback' link in a page makes use of a MS Form for employees to provide more structured feedback about the intranet. Polls are supported with a dedicated web part that is simple for publishers to configure. Cognit advise that Microsoft Forms is used for surveys, which would be embedded on a page.

The platform supports people-oriented features like web parts to display birthdays and new hires. Cognit says onboarding is supported via a new tool that we've not seen, but we have seen the Training Centre. Administrators create step-by-step courses and workflows, such as displaying a page or making the completion of a form a mandatory step. People have to be manually added to each course – we think expanding this into a 'Journeys' feature (associated with trigger dates and automated enrolment) would make this more powerful. However, external guest users can be granted access to courses. Finally, the flexible events feature can be used to register and sign up for events and manage waiting lists, with the option for employees to add them to their personal calendar.



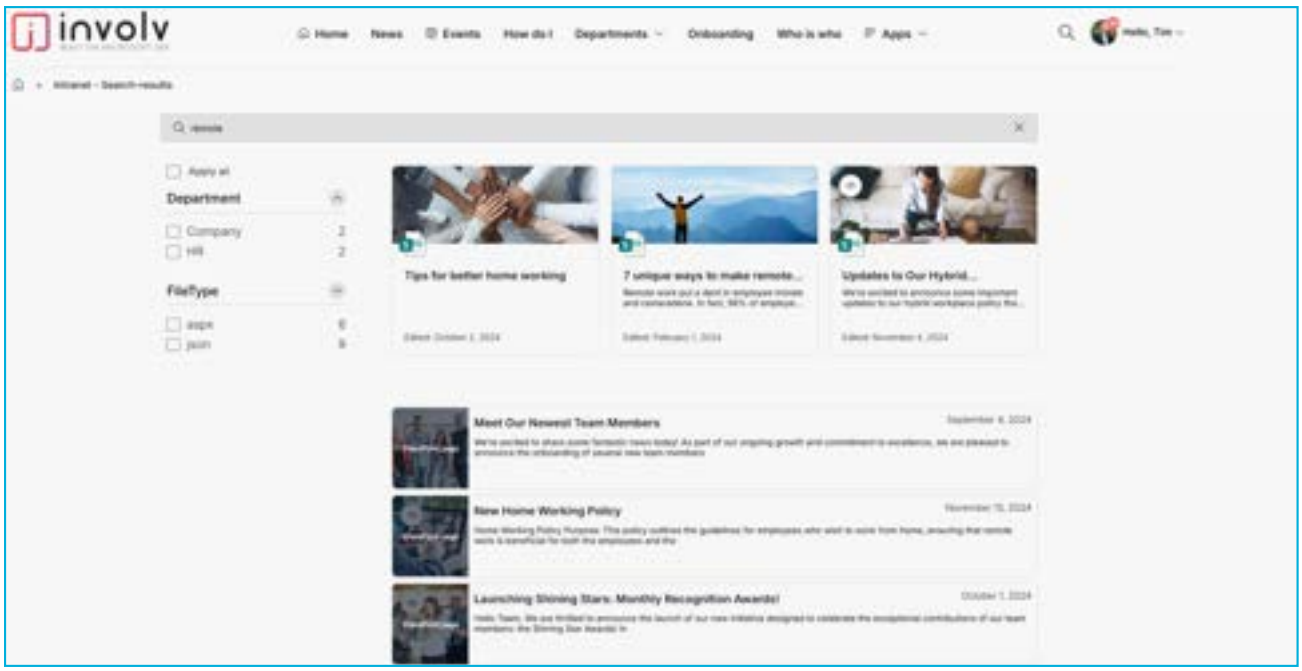
Involv can integrate easily with M365 and other third-party systems using existing APIs.

Cognit has developed various third-party application integrations based on requests from existing clients, but the product does not come with many as standard. There is a deep integration with Zenya and Bynder, offering document, image and video asset management capabilities. We also saw an example of external job website integration via APIs, allowing employees to search for and apply to jobs directly through the intranet. However, integrations with common systems, like ServiceNow or Workday, are missing. Further integrations could be added using APIs by administrators or with help from Cognit.

As a platform built on SharePoint, Involv offers good integration with M365 applications that enable employees to stay within a familiar interface while accessing a variety of content from across the M365 ecosystem. Similarly, using Viva Connections, employees can access the intranet directly from within Teams. Any content in SharePoint can be shown on Involv, whether that's a news post in a news feed component or a document library for a department. See Scenario 5 for information on a Copilot integration.

We like the 'My Page' which provides a personalised page of content including an email feed, Teams activity, Outlook calendar appointments, application links, recent documents from OneDrive and followed SharePoint sites. 'My Tasks' aggregates tasks from Planner and To Do. People filter this view to show all tasks they have access to, or only tasks allocated to themselves, then mark a task as complete directly from this panel. For organisations or individuals who make good use of these tools we can see this being a valuable and time-saving feature. Employees can easily show or hide individual components according to the apps they use most frequently, enabling them to customise the page. They can also hide elements such as SharePoint's navigation bar, the search button and the MS Office ribbon to reduce clutter and simplify navigation.

Involv has a good range of integration with Microsoft 365 products, and the ability to use APIs for other systems is possible via Cognit. However, it would be nice to see some readily available deep integration capabilities with some of the more commonly used platforms within the workplace.



The search results page is user-friendly and includes a range of helpful filters.

Involv has its own search interface and experience that is different from standard SharePoint, although the results are provided by Microsoft Search in the back end. There are some trade-offs by using Involv's search experience, SharePoint's Q&A tool is missing for example, and there is a need for Cognit to configure many elements. For example, every web part on the intranet can display content by using search configuration; Cognit will configure most of these during the initial set-up, but admins will need technical knowledge to amend any in future. Overall Involv performs well in this scenario, with a search experience that is user-friendly and robust, helping employees find the information they need efficiently.

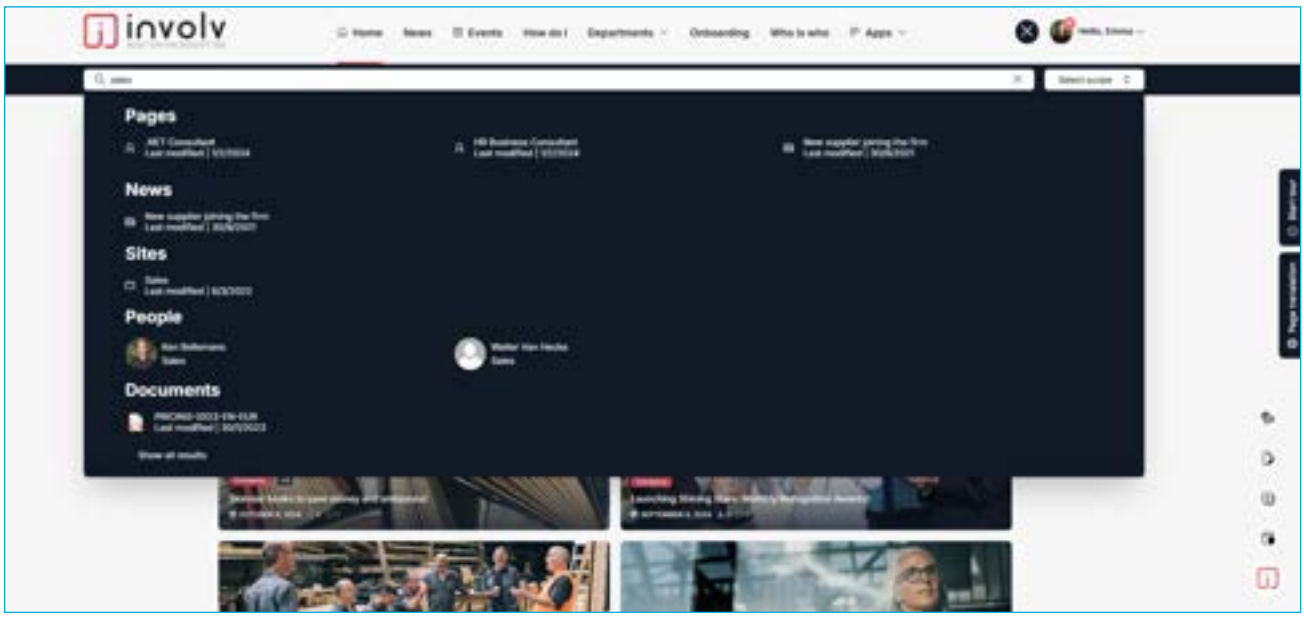
The main search in the top right-hand corner of the screen has a simple 'scope' dropdown next to it that makes it easier to understand which repositories you are searching (for example – current site, global, intranet only). Cognit will configure these to client needs. Type-ahead functionality helps refine queries as you type, providing real-time suggestions that are split into content types for ease of browsing. Pressing 'enter' takes users through to the full results page. Search refiners allow people to narrow down results by categories such as file type, date, content source or other metadata fields. The results are displayed with short snippets that provide a summary of the content, including thumbnails for image or media-based results. We like the way search term misspellings are picked up with the 'did you mean' suggestion as well.

Involv offers administrators a few methods to influence results. The first is 'search boost' page meta data that allows authors to add keywords that will raise the result ranking in search. The second is a centralised synonym list in the admin centre that the search engine refers to when returning results. Whether these synonyms are used or not is easily configured via a switch in the search web part, so one search could include synonyms, while another one does not. Administrators can give weightage to search terms to make them appear

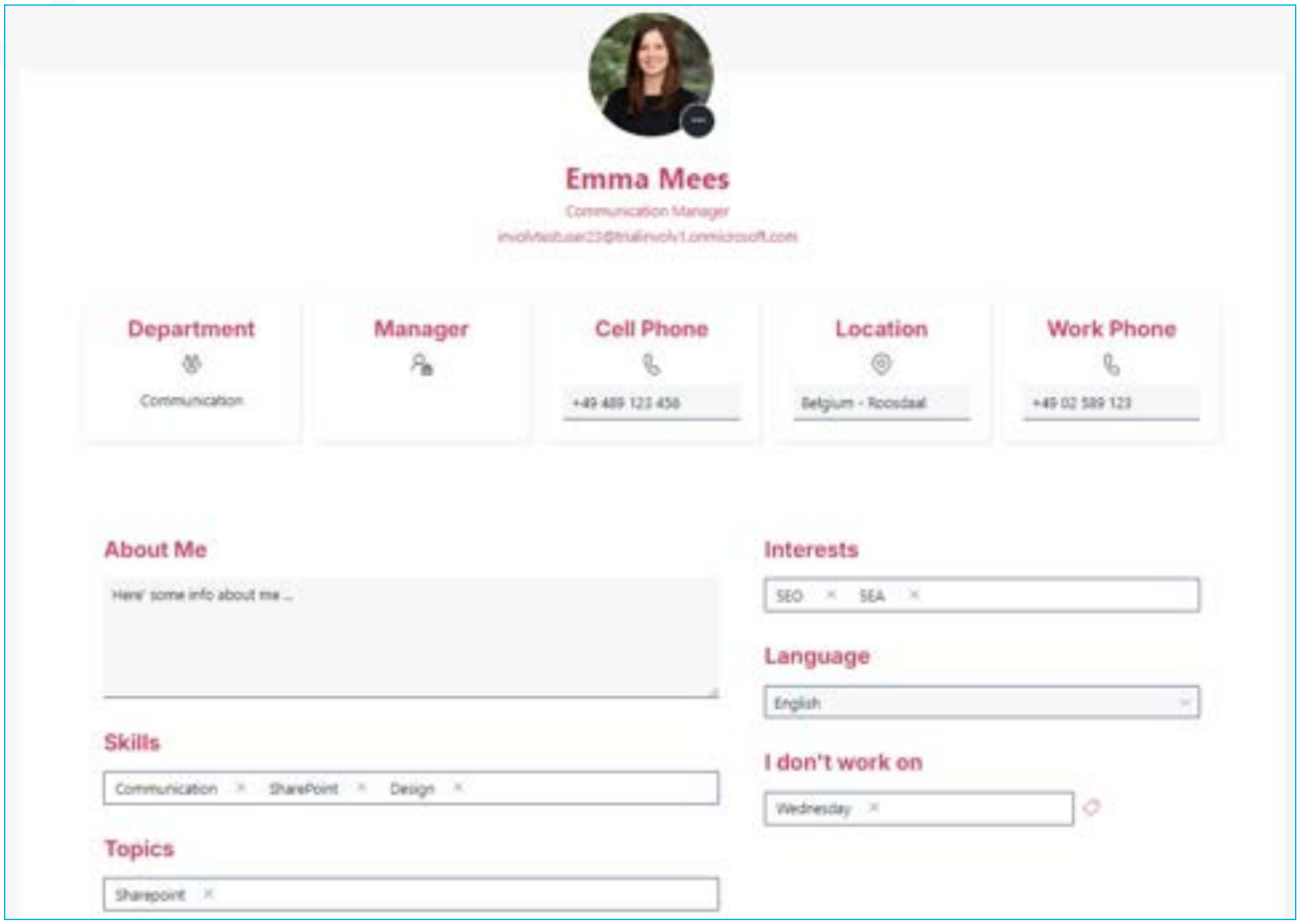
higher in search results, but there's no traditional 'promoted results' feature and Bookmarks in SharePoint aren't supported within Involv.

Like SharePoint, federated search is supported via Microsoft Graph connectors. As mentioned in Scenario 4, Cognit has also developed some custom connectors for clients, such as with a Zenya policy library. Additionally, where an organisation is using Copilot, it's possible for the AI to use Involv content as a source to generate associated outputs.

People-finding is well supported; in addition to colleagues being shown in the search results, 'Who is who' is a browsable search-powered people directory. What people information is shown is configurable to client needs but typically results show a photo, name, role and contact details, with this information taken from Entra ID. The Teams presence indicator can also be shown if available. Filters enable people to show results from a particular department or location. Clicking on a person brings up their detailed profile page that includes skills and an organisation chart. Where wanted, employees can update their own profiles, and all profile fields are indexed during search.



The drop-down menu suggests results as someone types, splitting suggestions into helpful categories for ease of browsing.

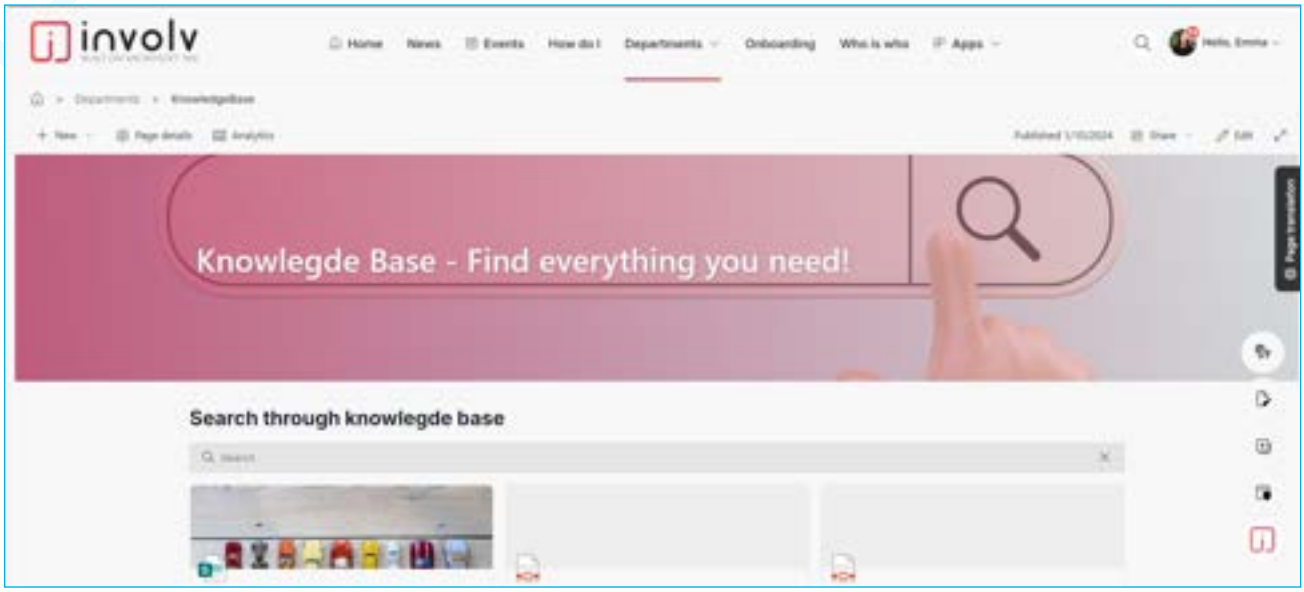


Profile pages display information from Entra ID, other integrated systems and from the individual's own edits.

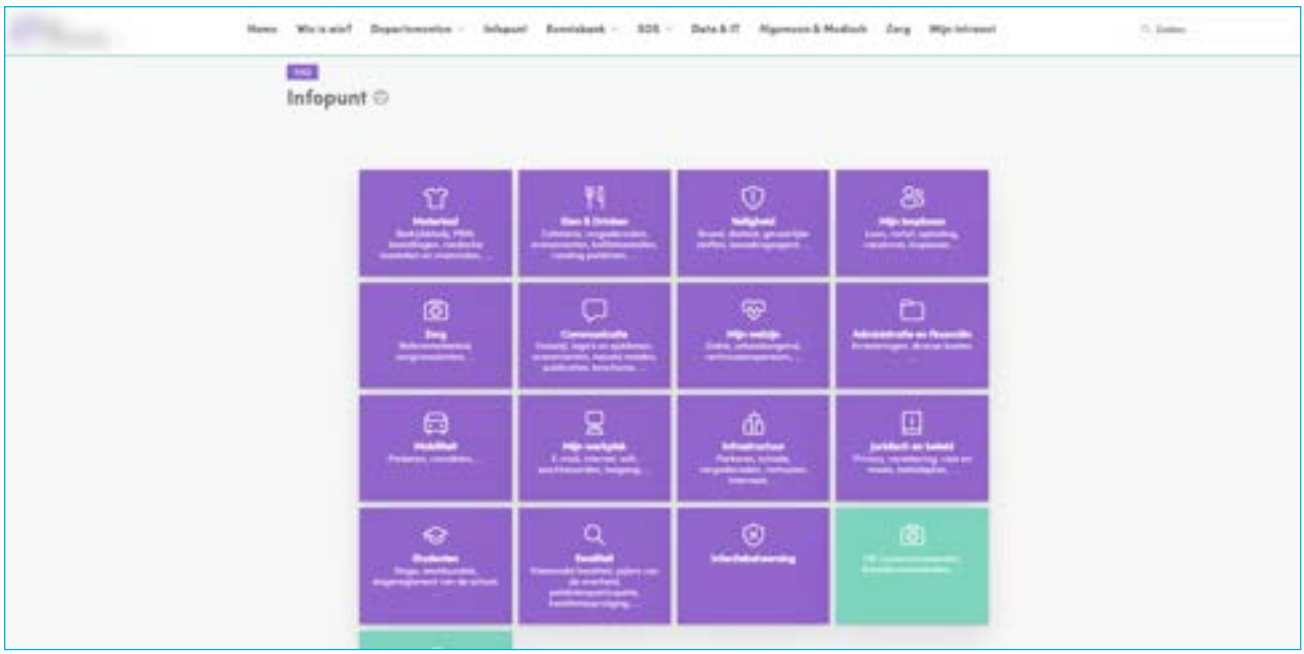
Contextual search can be added to content areas and various components use search to present grouped content to users. For example, it's easy to create a supplier directory with relevant metadata applied to listings. A 'Knowledge Base' features a local search and tick-list refiners for specific document types and topics. These work particularly well for structured information like product specifications, procedural information or client data. We like that these can have their own branding applied where wanted, which can also be audience targeted.

An 'Infopoint' feature presents tiled topics, with associated pages behind each that are formatted as questions and answers on the relevant topic. Each also has a localised search, where people can enter natural language questions to find answers. Pages with further information can include automatically generated tables of content, tabs and accordions to break complex information into manageable chunks. We like the option to include a feedback button to help publishers maintain their pages.

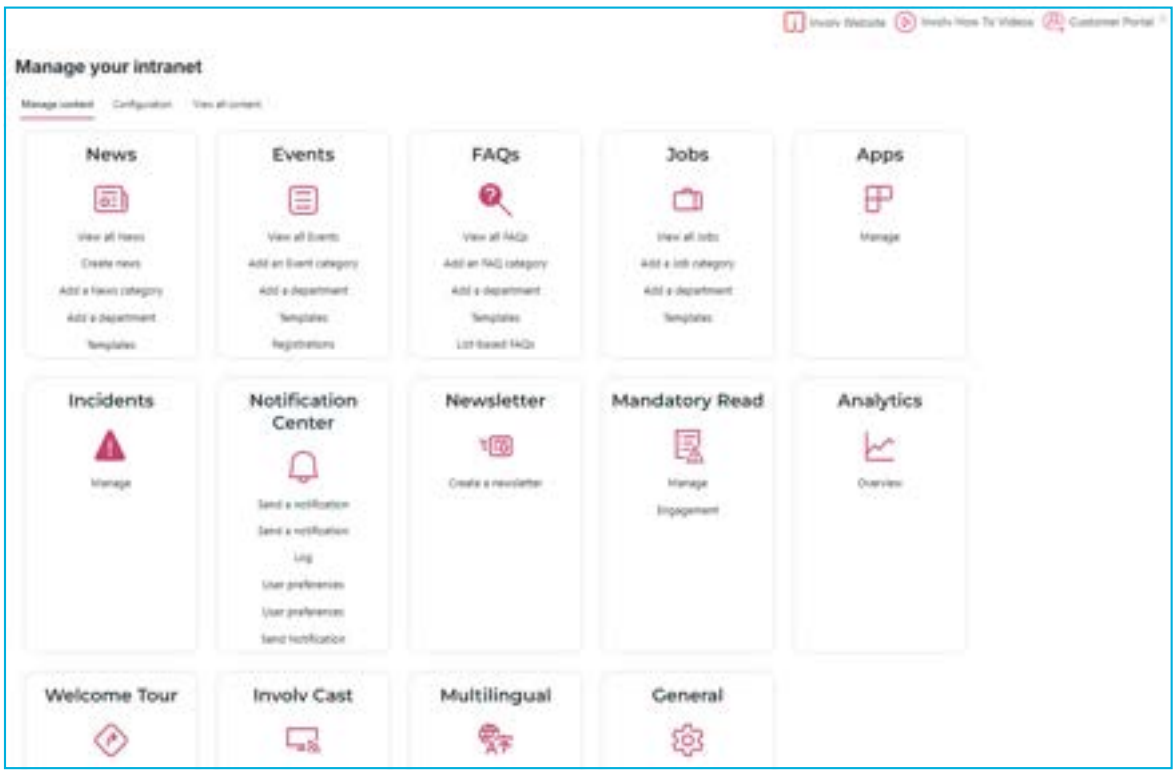
We also really like Involv's glossary feature. This is an easily maintained centralised list of key terms that can be associated with a link or description. When the term is shown in a page it is automatically highlighted and the term explained when hovered over.



Knowledge Bases present structured information in an engaging manner.



'Infopoint' presents topics behind tiles, allowing employees to drill down into relevant information.



Involv provides a simple yet comprehensive interface for administrators to get a high-level view and manage the platform.

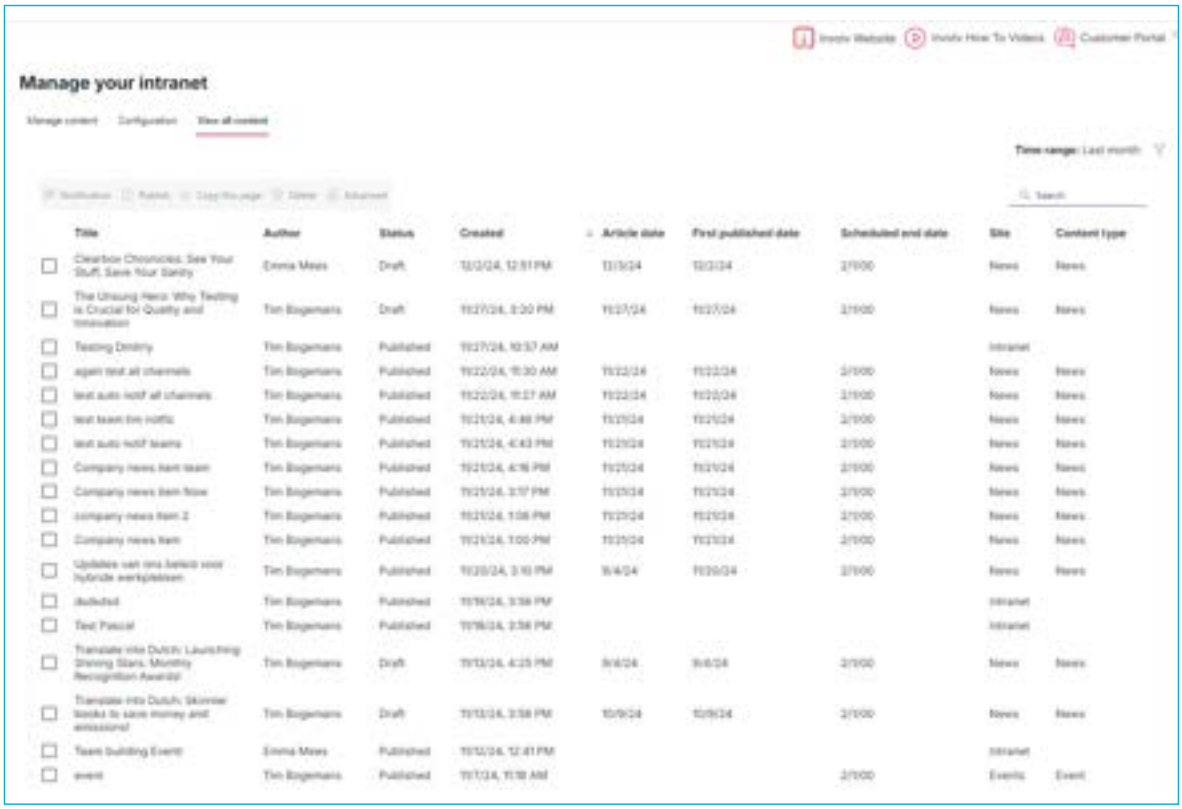
Admin interfaces are simple and intuitive, especially when compared to similar controls in standard SharePoint. We really like the contextual support video tutorials that are embedded in admin screens across the product. Administrators have access to a dedicated menu via a floating 'i' icon, from where they can access site administration and content admin options in a clearly laid out panel. Administrators access different functions based on their permissions, which are straightforward to configure. The 'manage site content' screen is configurable, so people get quick access to the tools in use rather than a generic set of features.

A 'Configuration' option within the admin menu allows editing the overall layout and design of the site, like the mega menu, site-wide permissions, site themes and skins, mobile app configuration and setting up on-the-fly translation. Admins can easily set up permissions at a granular level using Entra or SharePoint groups, allowing them to control access to different parts of the intranet. New sites and templates can be created using a site deployer tool, but we've not seen this in action. These forms take non-technical admins through a step-by-step process to request a new site, which will apply an associated template. Administrators with technical knowledge will likely need to complete this process, however.

Home page design is flexible, making use of Microsoft and Involv components. The layout and display are configurable for user groups, and you can store and use different designs for different audiences. Many of the content features use Cognit's powerful search-based component that aggregates and styles content in numerous ways (see Scenario 5). Helpfully, admins can copy a page to a new location before deleting the original, which gets round SharePoint's lack of 'move page' feature.

The option to 'View all content' via the 'i' menu allows administrators and publishers to view the status of all content on the platform. This includes when content was last accessed or edited and its expiry date, allowing them to track outdated content. It's possible to create content from here or even complete bulk actions, like mass deletion. This is currently in list view, with calendar view set to be available soon. Involv relies on standard SharePoint for auto revision and archiving features.

Site provisioning is simple via a step-by-step form.



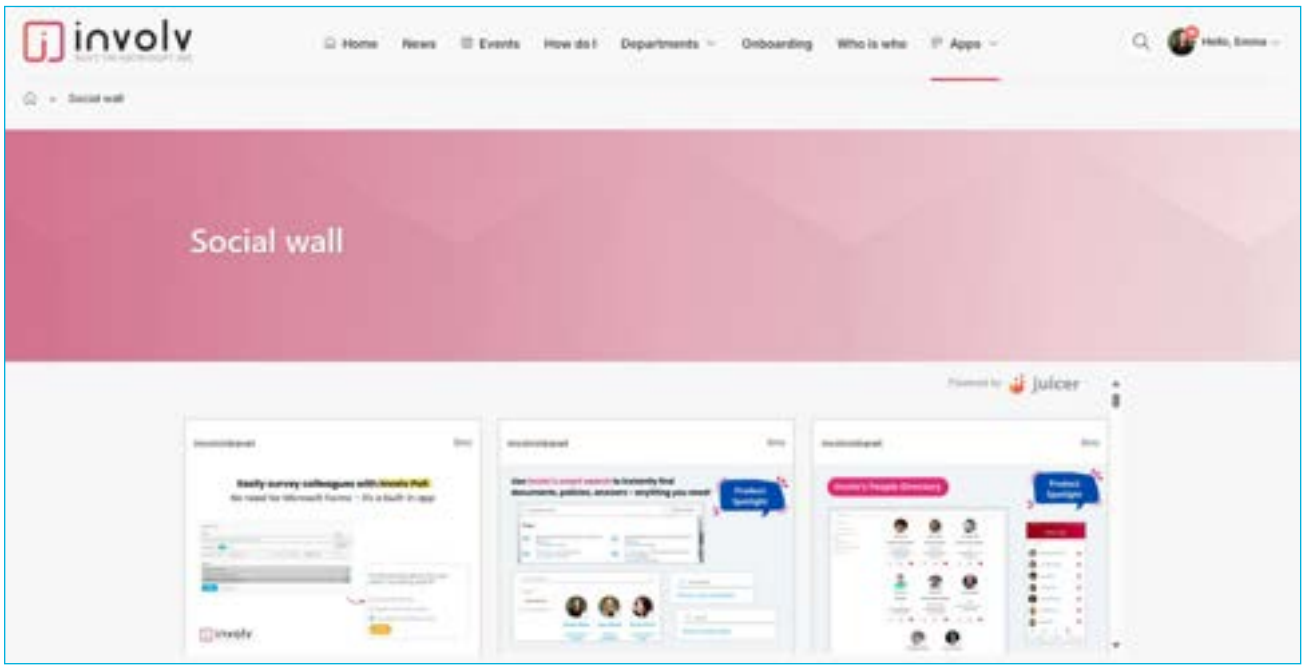
Publishers can see a list of all their content in a single menu area.

Multi-language options are well handled; publishers select the language of an article at the point of creation then automatically create a copy that is translated into selected site languages using Azure Cognitive Services. Organisations may choose to use a DeepL integration for translations instead. Involv will prompt publishers to create translations where additional organisational languages have been set. These language versions are then editable before publishing. If changes are made to the original, the publisher is prompted to edit the translation. Employees select their preferred language in their settings, which will apply auto translation via Azure if no 'official' translation of content or the interface has been provided.

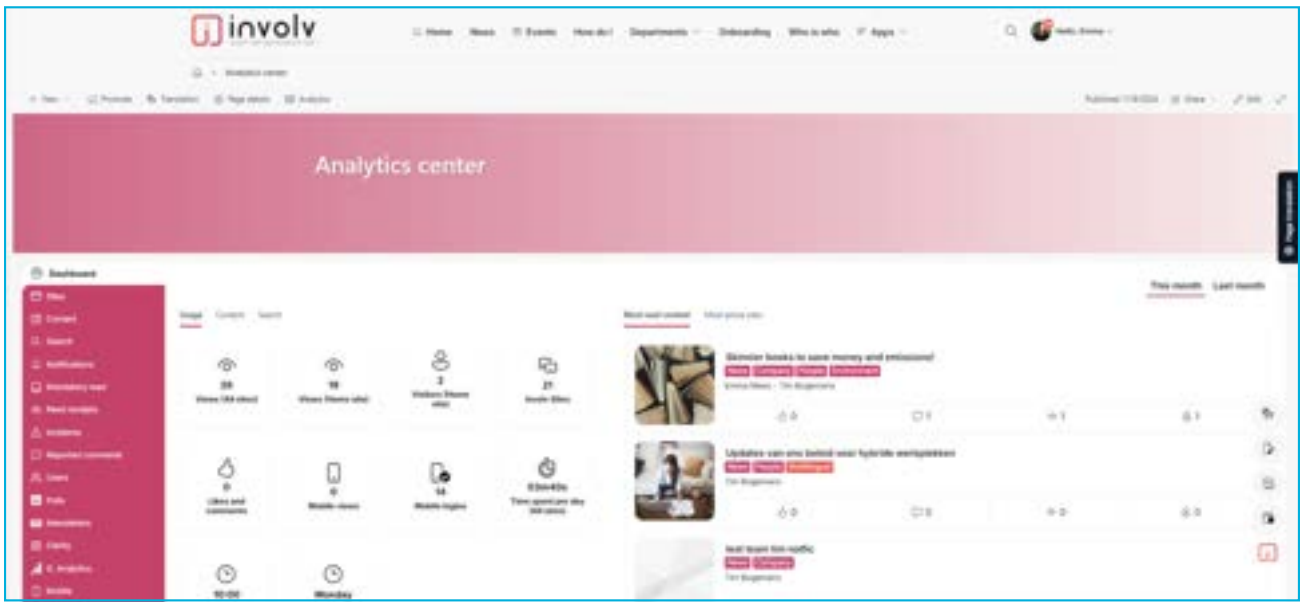
It's easy for publishers to create language variants of their content.

Multimedia can be stored in Involv, SharePoint or Stream, YouTube or other similar tools. It's possible to display content using iframes, while dedicated web parts will auto play or offer pop-out and play. The multimedia support is fully integrated with other content management tools, allowing communicators to blend different media types within a single post. Additionally, there is an option to integrate social media content using Juicer.

Involv's administration capabilities are well thought out and put a lot of power in the hands of clients. However, some of the features will likely need assistance from the vendor to set up, particularly those that use queries, such as the search-based component that powers news, and digital signage (see Scenario 2).



Social media content can be displayed in a web part.



Involv's analytics are presented as an intuitive dashboard, with clearly laid-out categories in separate tabs.

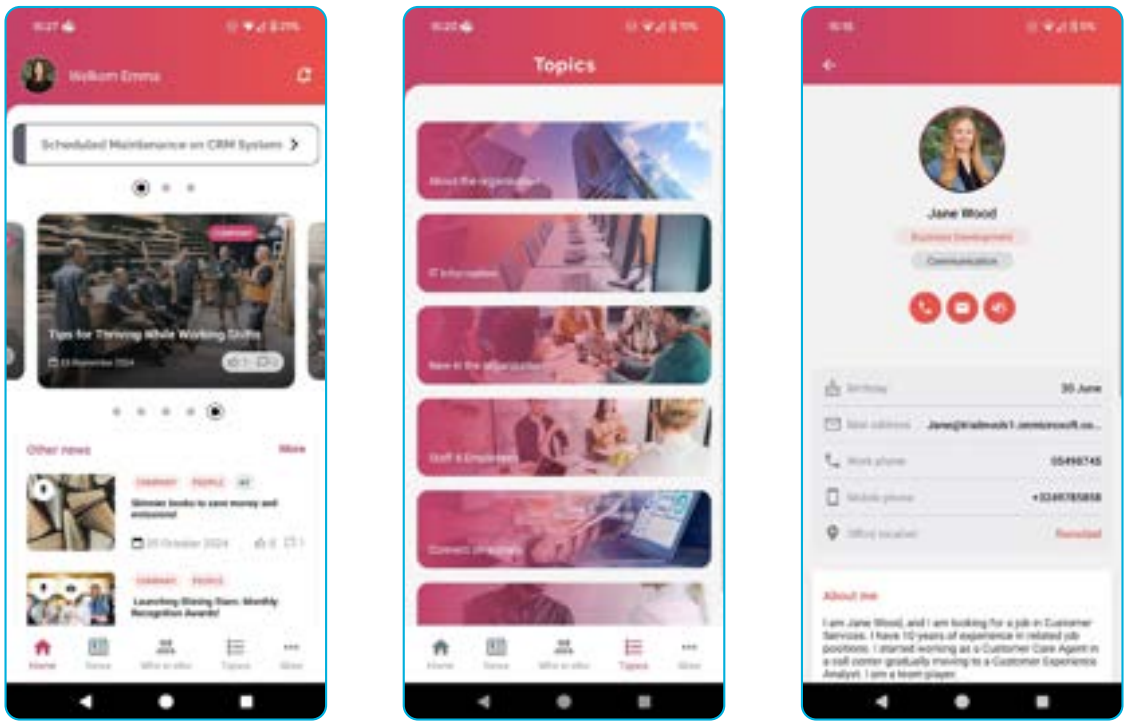
Involv offers a good range of analytics for tracking site performance and user engagement. The data is presented in an intuitive dashboard, with an overview of key site-wide metrics from the current and previous months. This provides an overview of site usage, content consumption and search trends, along with the top content and active sites. The analytics shows the peak times and days, along with standard metrics like total view and number of visitors. All the data can be exported to Excel for further analysis. The platform can also be integrated with Google Analytics and Microsoft Clarity, with additional third-party integrations possible for more in-depth tracking.

We like how the major features of the platform such as sites, content, search, Notifications, Incidents etc. are clearly laid out in separate tabs with their own analytics. Each of the tabs displays some KPIs with filters allowing for a deeper dive into the metrics. Currently the dashboard cannot be edited by administrators to configure the KPIs, which we think would be a useful development. For content, administrators can see pages / articles with most likes, comments, views, visitors etc. The 'Notifications' section shows the channels in which the notifications have been sent (see Scenario 2 for more).

The mandatory reads section shows the number created and the number of employees who have read associated content. Administrators can type an Entra group to see the number of employees within it who have or have not read the content, which we think is fiddly, and there is no way to trigger a reminder from here.

Search analytics work well, showing the total searches along with most searched terms. Successful and unsuccessful searches are also highlighted in this tab with colour-coded dots, which would be tricky to distinguish for those who are colour blind, but do also have their own area.

There are plans on the roadmap for more advanced analytics to expand the range of data displayed. For example, more detailed newsletter metrics will be available by the time this review is published and optimised analytics centre, along with a general redesign, is due later in 2025. Involv's analytics are already stronger than other SharePoint intranet-in-a-box products, so we look forward to seeing what else can be added.



The mobile app provides quick access to essential functions and resources, while also being easily customisable by both admins and employees.

Mobile access to Involv is supported via responsive web and a native mobile app for Android and iOS. To access the app, all users must have a M365 license and log in with those credentials, although single sign-on is supported from associated systems. There is no support for biometric authentication.

The mobile interface is easy to navigate, with a simplified navigation along the bottom and option to expand into a larger menu through 'more' (where admins have decided that something should display here). The branding can be kept similar to the desktop, for a consistent experience. However, the design is customisable, allowing organisations to apply different branding, including white labelling by adding JSON files on top of the basic site. We really like this feature, as it can be used to enhance the user interaction on mobile devices by providing a more personalised experience. The search experience on mobile is consistent with the desktop version, except for the Glossary feature. Buttons and features respond well to touch input, allowing employees to interact with the app seamlessly.

One frontline worker feature is included to encourage contributions from the field. A 'News Board' has been created specifically for non-desk workers to quickly add simple news stories. The creation page has a title, body and supports pictures. The template includes pre-defined metadata so it can have its own news channel on desktop and mobile. We can see this being helpful for designated 'employee journalists' to report from the frontline or to help cover company events, but it's probably not a tool with mass appeal. Admins may add other frontline-specific tools (e.g. forms) or PowerApps from the 'more apps' menu if needed.

Overall, Involv provides a pleasant mobile experience that reflects the associated desktop content well. Much of the configuration, however, will need to be done by Involv during the initial set up.

THINGS TO BEAR IN MIND

Involv offers a modern and visually appealing intranet experience that enhances many aspects of standard SharePoint. However, many elements will need to be set up by Cognit during implementation and admins with technical skills will be needed for subsequent changes as settings could be challenging for less tech-savvy teams.

Integrations with Microsoft applications are thorough, while integration with enterprise systems with more universal appeal, like ServiceNow and Workday, is limited. This could be a gap for organisations needing a more connected digital workplace experience, even though additional options are available via APIs.

For many years Involv has offered a "thinner" layer on top of SharePoint, providing smaller additional features and / or improving experiences. In recent years the range and depth of features has increased and the product we've reviewed in this year's report offers organisations a far "thicker" layer than we've seen previously. There are still some gaps, for example the mobile app is certainly an improvement on SharePoint's offering, but it is still simpler than others profiled in this report. Cognit have a lot of plans on their roadmap, including for the app, and we look forward to seeing the upcoming developments. Finally, it is worth flagging again that the product offers a huge amount of value for a relatively small price point.

Why choose this product

Involv provides a robust, ready-to-use intranet solution built on SharePoint, designed to enhance both end-user and admin experiences. With strong Microsoft 365 integration and well-designed templates, it offers an intuitive admin interface to facilitate communication, knowledge management and collaboration. Involv's competitive pricing and strong vendor support make it appealing for medium to large organisations seeking a modern, efficient and adaptable intranet solution.

You may also be interested in...

FRESH mozzaik Powell

Vendor roadmap

Roadmap image provided by Cognit BV.

Back to index

Jalios

FULLY STANDALONE

REQUIRES SHAREPOINT

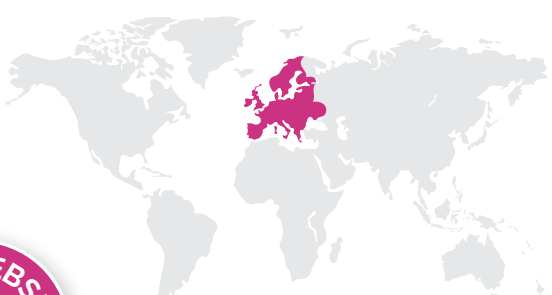
FRONTLINE FOCUS

OTHER

Typical deployment:

1,000 to 5,000

Company locations:



VISIT THE WEBSITE

The product in a nutshell

Standalone or integrated with M365, Google Workspace and other platforms, Jalios has developed some thoughtful functionality to help users get things done and enable communicators to share information in a targeted way.

SUMMARY

Jalios

Established in 2001, we can see that Jalios has invested a considerable amount of time and effort building out extensive, customisable functionality in their platform. There are also a number of partner organisations who have built add-ons and product enhancements to further extend its functionality. It's worth noting that Jalios is headquartered in France and has an office in Germany, with partners located in Europe, Africa and Australia.

Jalios offers a comprehensive platform to facilitate communication and collaboration with some complex integrations possible. It's built around the concept of workspaces, which provide a range of capabilities; we particularly like the community functionality, which offers well-thought-out ways for employees to connect and work together. The ability to share documents, chat and more has the potential to be a useful replacement for some proprietary systems, as well as integrating with other applications. However, the out-of-the-box interface seems a little overdue for a UX refresh, particularly behind the scenes for admins.

We think that Jalios would be particularly appealing for large organisations, especially those who are looking to bring dispersed employees together in one platform. With notifications and integrations available in one place, Jalios offers a premium product but one which comes at a premium cost; however, we can see it has the potential to offer significant returns on that investment.

Pricing

PRICE BAND	
1,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
5,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
20,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
50,000 users	$ $ $ $ $

These prices are indicative, offering a comparison of the products featured in this report only. Please contact the vendor for a bespoke quote.

PRICING MODEL

Subscription – price band based on number of users; one-off payment and ongoing maintenance fee.

DISCOUNTS

Charities and non-profit organisations; schools and educational institutes; frontline users; multi-year commitments; government / public sector; discounts available for Microsoft 365 or Google Workspace users who already pay for features like Visio, document collaboration, chat etc.

COSTS TYPICALLY

For SaaS, fairly evenly spread across three years. For On-Prem, weighted towards the start, then much lower for the remaining term.

PRICE INCLUDES

Three days on-boarding by a CSM.

Product type

Ready-to-run, installed in days

Branding opportunities

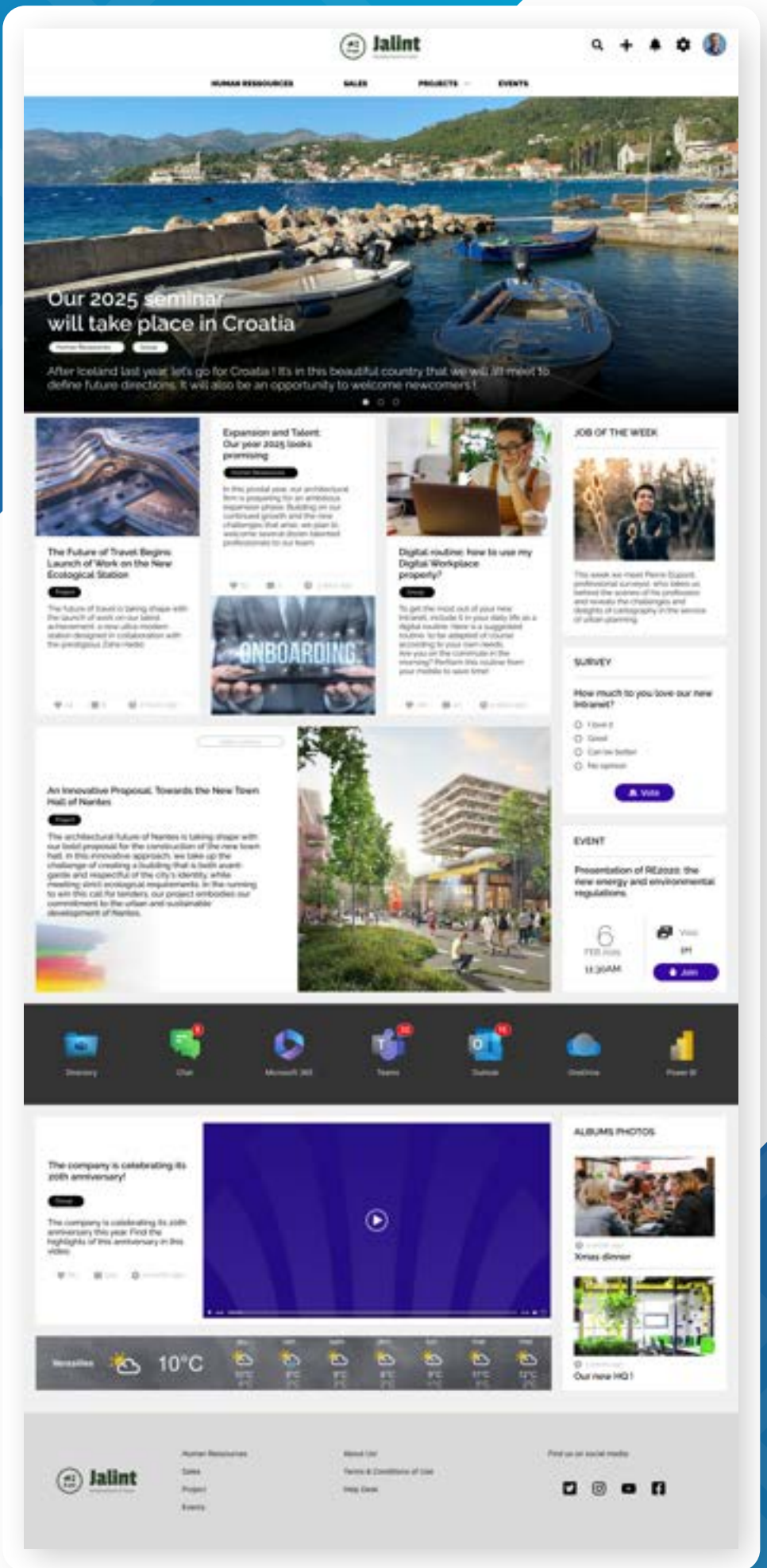
All branding, complex options

Base systems

Fully standalone	Requires SharePoint	Other

Sectors

Accountancy, banking and finance	Charity and voluntary work	Public services, government and administration	Retail	Teaching and education


Jalint
HUMAN RESSOURCES
SALES
PROJECTS
EVENTS
Our 2025 seminar will take place in Croatia
After Iceland last year, let's go for Croatia ! It's in this beautiful country that we will all meet to define future directions. It will also be an opportunity to welcome newcomers !
The Future of Travel Begins: Launch of Work on the New Ecological Station
Expansion and Talent: Our year 2025 looks promising
Digital routine: how to use my Digital Workplace properly?
ONBOARDING
JOB OF THE WEEK
SURVEY
How much to you love our new Intranet?
An Innovative Proposal Towards the New Town Hall of Nantes
EVENT
Presentation of RE2020: the new energy and environmental regulations
The company is celebrating its 20th anniversary!
ALBUMS PHOTOS
Xmas dinner
Our new HQ !
10°C

COMPANY AND PRODUCT

Company details

Company
Jalios

ISO 27001 certified
Other - ISO 270001 certification is on-going and should be achieved by end of 2025.

Data residency
Europe; Jalios offers on-premises, private, and other public cloud solutions via partners depending on customers' requirements.

Company founded
2001

Product launched
2012

Typical client size
1,000 to 5,000

Largest deployment so far
200,000 users in one country

Customers
Clients Include: La Redoute (won the Solainn Retail Cas d'Or in April 2023), Indigo, Yves Rocher, DGFIP (French Finance Ministry), Groupe Briand, UNISTRA, MGEN, CACF (won the Solainn Cas d'Or in November 2022), Groupe Mutuel, Leipzig Town

Partner locations
France, Germany, Switzerland, Belgium, Morocco, Cameroon, French Polynesia, Australia

Company locations
Le Chesnay-Rocquencourt, France (HQ), Germany

Product and technical details

Name of product

Jalios

Deployment

Client on-premises	Client private cloud	Microsoft Azure	Amazon Web Services	Vendor-hosted	Microsoft 365 tenant	Google Cloud	Other

Authentication supported

Entra ID	ADFS	Okta	Open ID	Oauth	G Suite	Other*

*FranceConnect, Facebook, X (Twitter), LinkedIn, Yahoo

App deployment

Google Play store	Apple store	MDM	MAM	Other*

*Private store

Accessibility

Not WCAG2.1 conformant but Alt text is in use for images, keyboards can be used for navigation, motion animation triggered by interaction can be disabled. Jalios says improvements are due in 2025.

Document library sources integrated

Box	Dropbox	Google Drive	SharePoint	OneDrive	Other *

*NextCloud, Alfresco, Nuxeo, Docuware

Optional integrated enterprise search engines

Coveo	Elastic	IBM	Lucidworks	Microsoft	Mindbreeze	Sinequa	Other*

*Apache Lucene, Solr

User interface multi-language

Machine translation	Pre-configured	Editable	Right to left script supported	Other

Content multi-language

Machine translation for publishers	Machine translation for end users	Editable machine translation for publishers	Manual creation for publishers	Right to left script	Other

Set-up and support

Set-up process for new clients

For standard deployment that requires no specific development, new clients have their SaaS instance ready within a few hours. Clients are assigned a personal Customer Success Manager who takes them through an on-boarding process. The Jalios team dedicates 3 full days, that can be used at the customer's own pace. If further consulting services are needed, additional services can be purchased from the Professional Service team or from one of Jalios's solution partners.

For on-premises set-up, Jalios follows the project plan that is agreed upon, depending on the customer's environment and constraints.

Version numbers

Demonstrated to ClearBox: Workplace 6.2 (Sep. 24)

At January 2025: Workplace 6.3 (Jan. 25)

Product updates

Minor updates every 3-4 months, major updates every 18 months.

Product update process

For SaaS customers, new software versions are automatically rolled out to all customers at once. Customers can exceptionally ask an update to be delayed, but the Jalios policy is to have all customers on the latest release for security reasons and to provide the best experience.

On-premises customers get to decide when to roll out the new versions, but they usually have to do so before the end of support of their current version. Jalios organises regular webinars to present new features.

Reverse-out options

In standard terms & conditions, data belongs to customers. The reversibility clause for SaaS instances provides for the destruction of customer data within 15 working days of contract termination. Customers may then choose to recover their data via a secure Jalios site or via digital storage, typically an external drive. In the absence of a request for reversibility, the data concerned will be destroyed by Jalios.

Technical support

Email support	Phone support	Chat support	Online portal	24/7 support	Office hours only*

*9am – 6pm Paris time

User community

Customers and partners have access to online communities on the Jalios extranet that gather people sharing the same industry (e.g. public sector), usage (e.g. learning) or interest (e.g. green IT). In addition, Jalios organises several 'JClub' user club events for their customers. The biggest one usually takes place in June, where company news and the roadmap are shared, while others are organised by industry.

Voice of the vendor

Jalios says: "Jalios is an independent medium-sized company of nearly 100 people. We have been developing collaboration software over the past 20 years. Our mission is to sustainably make organisations more efficient and everyone's work more fulfilling.

Having built up over the years on a unique technical stack that has proven both performant and frugal, Jalios provides a full range of efficient modular products (Intranet, Social Network, Teamwork, etc) that can be all combined into a full digital workplace.

Our customers usually choose us for the consistent end user experience that our products offer, addressing all communication and collaboration needs, but also knowledge management. They also appreciate our pragmatic approach to innovation: we only go for what is being useful, usable and used by our customers, to solve real life problems.

The main pain point that our customers solve with our solution is to have access to the right information, to the right people and to the right tools when they need it, be it on their desktop or mobile. We provide different ways to consume information and therefore adapt to the collaboration culture of our customers. Some may prefer information flows of a Social Network, others may prefer a more structured Intranet portal approach. We also integrate the time component allowing both synchronous and asynchronous collaboration to the same information. We offer collaboration at the nearest of each item of information (comments on documents, tasks, events, etc). This allows both small teams and bigger communities to work together effectively on the same platform.

Our key strength is our capacity to adapt to the environment of our clients. We have ready-to-go products offering some level of personalisation but can further extend our solutions to match more specific requirements. Thanks to our open technical architecture, our solution can be integrated within the customer's information system, offering the most fluid user experience to end-users.

Thanks to this architecture, Jalios has been continuously improving its products and resiliently integrating innovation. Most recently we've boosted our solutions with generative AI capabilities, by providing a level of abstraction for useful features such as summary, writing assistant, or chat assistant, augmented search and Retrieval-Augmented Generation (RAG), so that our customers can choose from the various LLM and providers.

Our solutions are well known from a broad network of partners who have been working with us from day one, offering proximity and industry specific support to our customers."

Voice of the customer

Customers appreciate Jalios's extensive and modular capabilities, as well as the opportunities to provide in-depth collaboration opportunities across the platform. In particular, customers like the flexibility and adaptability provided, with "relatively easy configuration." The social functionality was widely praised, with a customer saying "whatever the types of content (documents, events, forms, tasks, news etc.), you can comment on them, share them, create a task (standalone or in a kanban project). Exchanges become very natural on the platform." One customer explained how they've made use of the e-learning platform JLearn, building on the out-of-the-box guidance to create learning modules around how to use their intranet platform, too.

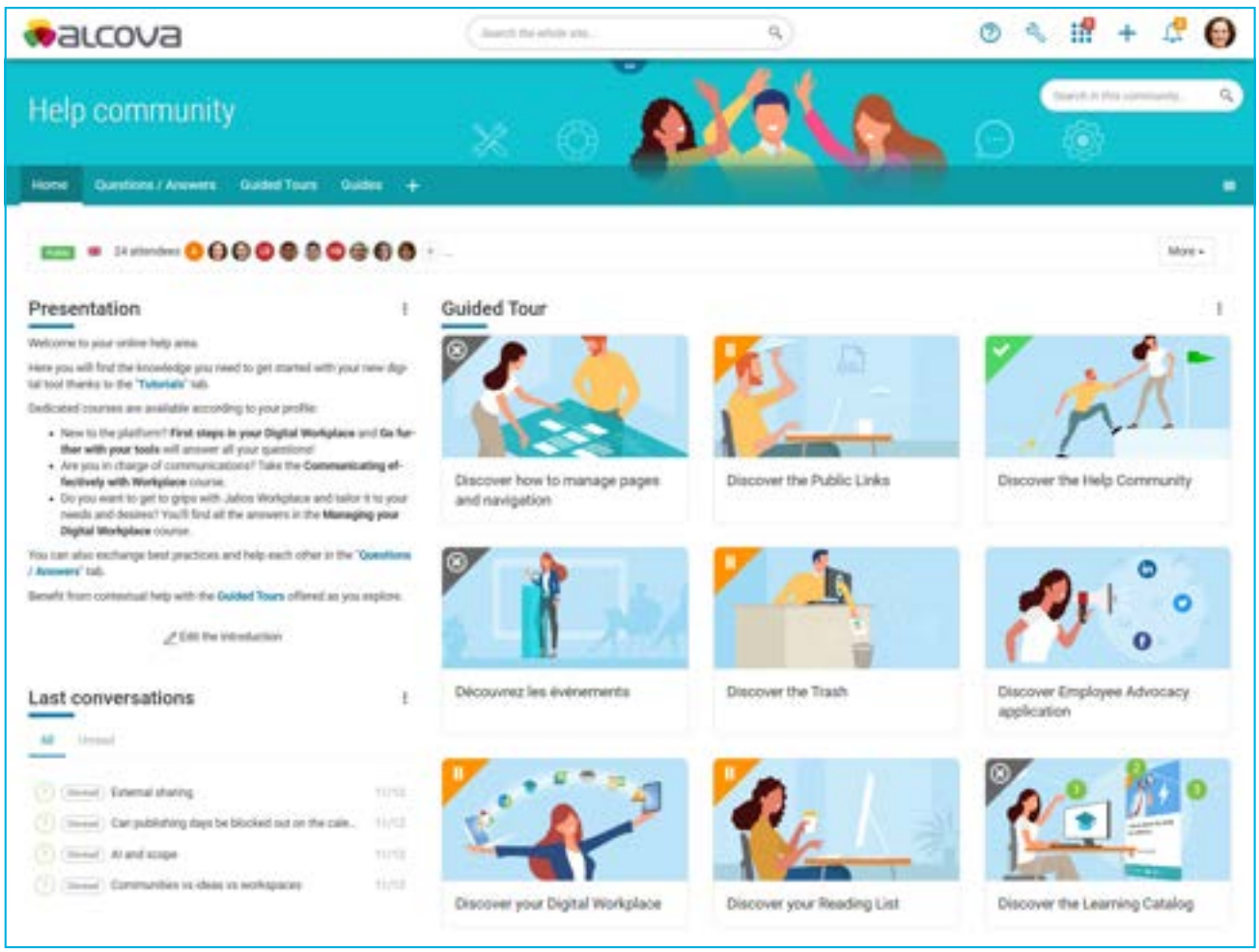
A couple of customers requested a "Refresh of the UI", something we observed in our demo too. Whilst customers generally liked the ease of use, the complexity of the admin interface was highlighted by a few, one of whom felt "the entry ticket for administrators is becoming too high." The experience for publishers was highlighted in particular, with a request for "More freedom in article layout" and "A product more designed/focused for editorial content." Competition from Teams is strong; one customer asked for Jalios to further "develop the chat tool and video to make it more attractive." Improvements to the mobile app and analytics were also requested, where one person said "A specific dashboard would be a real plus" for space administrators.

Jalios were universally praised for their service, with customers citing "good customer listening", "good responsiveness on technical problems" and that the team is "very attentive and accessible". A "love" of the product, and willingness to continually adapt and improve it, came across from multiple responses. Support documentation, as well as the feedback and customer ideas platform, was also called out for being very comprehensive. However, one customer who was working with an integrator rather than directly with Jalios highlighted a concern with the "speed and quality of technical responses", alluding to the challenge of having an additional party involved.

SCENARIOS & SCORES

Please see the Scenarios below for more detail on each of these.

SCENARIO AND SCORE	KEY BENEFITS	IMPROVEMENTS / CONSIDERATIONS
3+ **1. User Experience & Visual Appeal**	Easy-to-use platform with nice welcome tour of features. Comprehensive notification options.	In places the UI could use a little refresh. Navigation and branding options comparatively simple.
3.5+ **2. Publishing & Communications Management**	Handles communications management well. Some nice features for communicators to publish news with related content.	Audience targeting configuration screens look a little complex. Some functionality, such as generative AI and employee advocacy, comes at additional cost.
3.5 **3. Community & Engagement**	Strong communities and collaboration spaces, developed with user needs in mind.	Post and comment moderation is missing out of the box. Reactions limited to likes.
2.5+ **4. Integrations & Services (Including M365)**	Accessing third-party notifications via Jalios is valuable.	Many integrations will require additional cost and effort to set up.
3+ **5. Information Finding & Search**	Good number of filters and facets available. Helpful AI search assistant.	The search filters may take a little getting used to for less technical users. There's not a lot of search management functionality.
3+ **6. Administrator Experience**	Nice features to enable site and content management.	The administration apps and dashboards have been made with power users in mind, which may take time to get used to.
3 **7. Analytics**	Content contributors get a high-level overview of content engagement. Good mandatory reads support.	Range and breadth of reporting could be improved.
3.5 **8. Mobile & Frontline Support**	The mobile experience is best served via the dedicated app, available through the Android and Apple store.	Customers have asked for some elements to work better as a responsive design on mobile. Few frontline first features.

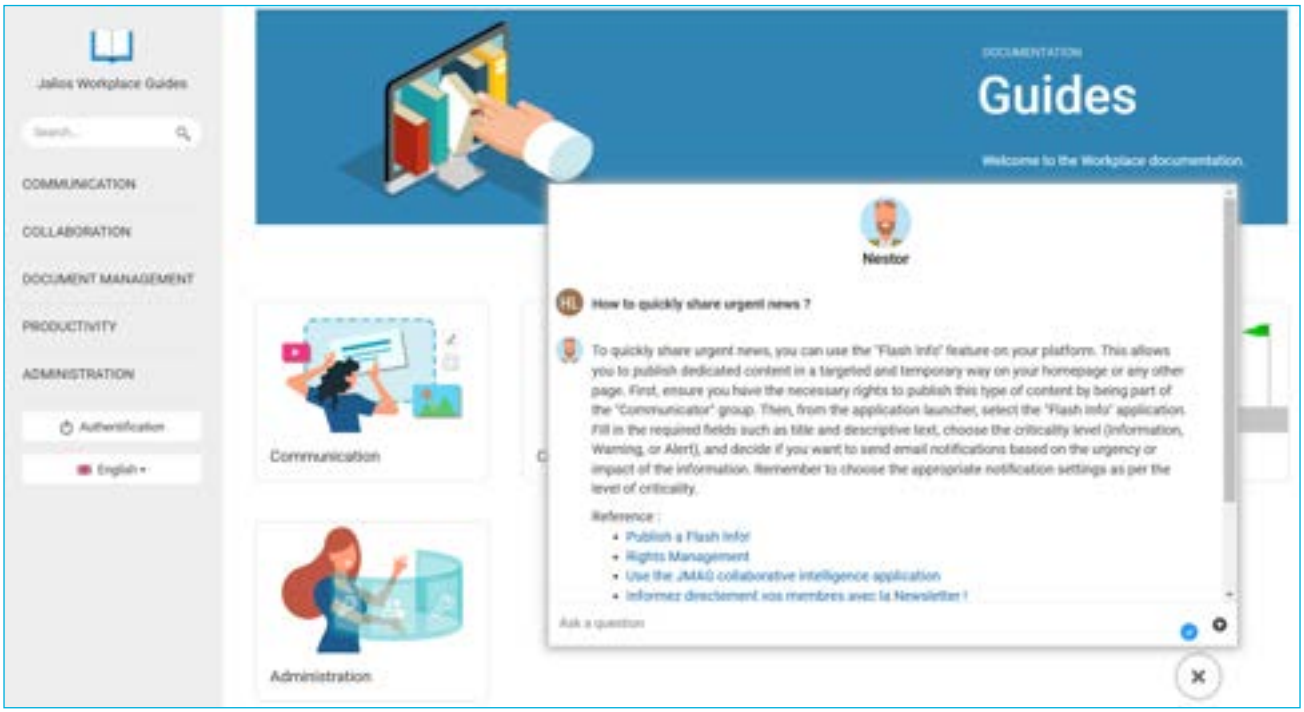


Built-in guided tours help users navigate around the Jalios platform.

Jalios provides a clean and functional interface which allows users to easily access the information they need. The platform is built as a series of permissions-based workspaces, allowing some workspaces to be available to all employees. In places, the user interface feels like it could use a little attention, something reflected in the Voice of the Customer section too; Jalios say a new design system is on the roadmap for 2025. It works, but for example, the choice and size of icons in the notifications pane could be enhanced. Some of the micro copy in the UI also feels like it could be improved, as the translations to English aren't always as clear as they could be and, in our demo environment, some of the content was still in French. Some of this is configurable by an administrator but some of it would need the Jalios team to update it.

Navigation options include a horizontal navigation bar, a customisable and targetable list of quick access applications and a waffle menu in the top right corner which allows users to access areas in the platform via the apps list, as well as links to external applications. There's an AI help interface, which offers chatbot-style functionality to help users find their way around, with the opportunity to ask questions, too. Documents, news, content and communities are available directly from the main navigation, which offers a flexible but plain text interface.

The app-based navigation and product-specific names to carry out tasks outside of core intranet and community content may take a little longer to get used to, particularly for site contributors and administrators. We expect this would easily be covered by the training offered as part of the implementation (see Scenario 6 for more). The built-in guided tours are a nice touch to help users find their way around the Jalios functionality. There are tours available for most end-user and administrator applications, and if a user dismisses them, they can be accessed via the "Help Centre".

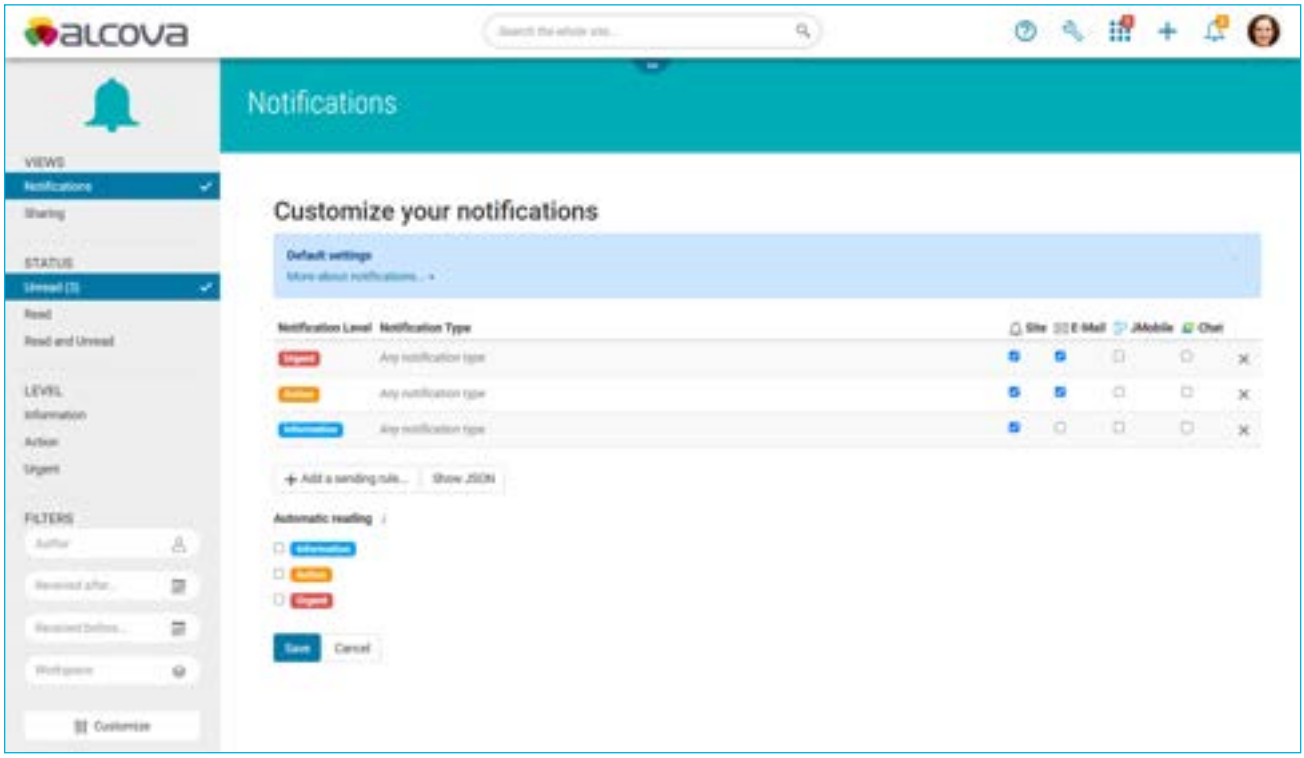


There's an AI-enabled interface which offers assistance throughout the product.

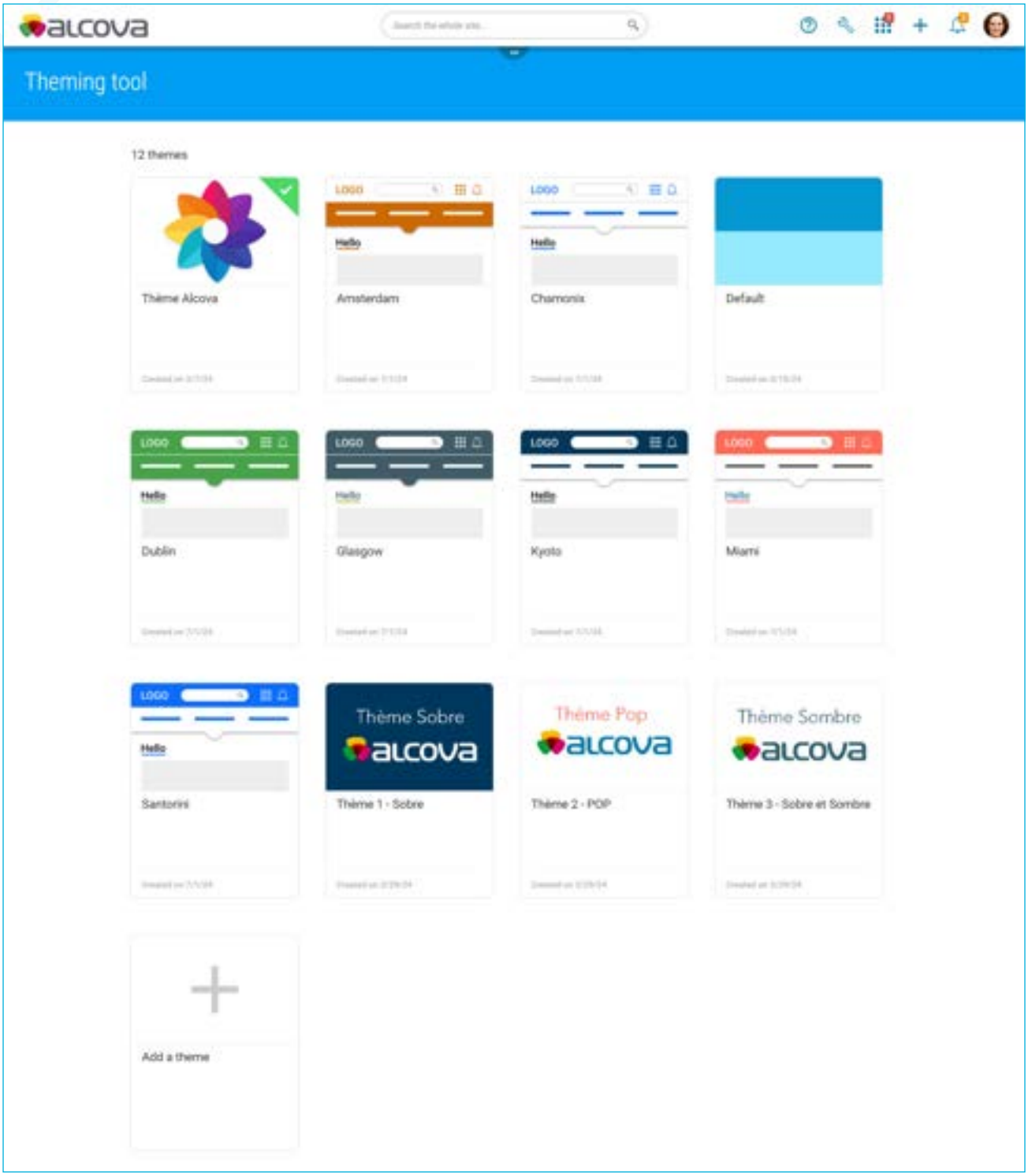
Jalios offers some of the most extensive and user-customisable notifications functionality we've seen. Users are able to get notifications via the notification bell on the site, via email, pushed via the mobile app or via Horizon (the chat feature), if it has been enabled. The style and format of email notifications can be enhanced via an add-on available in their marketplace; we'd love to see this functionality brought into the core product, as the default styling is sparse. See more about levels of importance of notification in Scenario 2, and more in Scenario 4 regarding the integrations.

There are options to customise the look and feel to bring the platform in line with a company's branding. Whilst there's only one brand / organisational identity available per installation, a 'Theming Tool' offers options for customising the look and feel of pages and communities to a granular level. Also in the Theming Tool is the option for customers and partners to update the CSS. The Theming Tool interface itself is functional and offers some thoughtful touches like the ability to select rounded corners, as well as the opportunity to update how individual components work across the site.

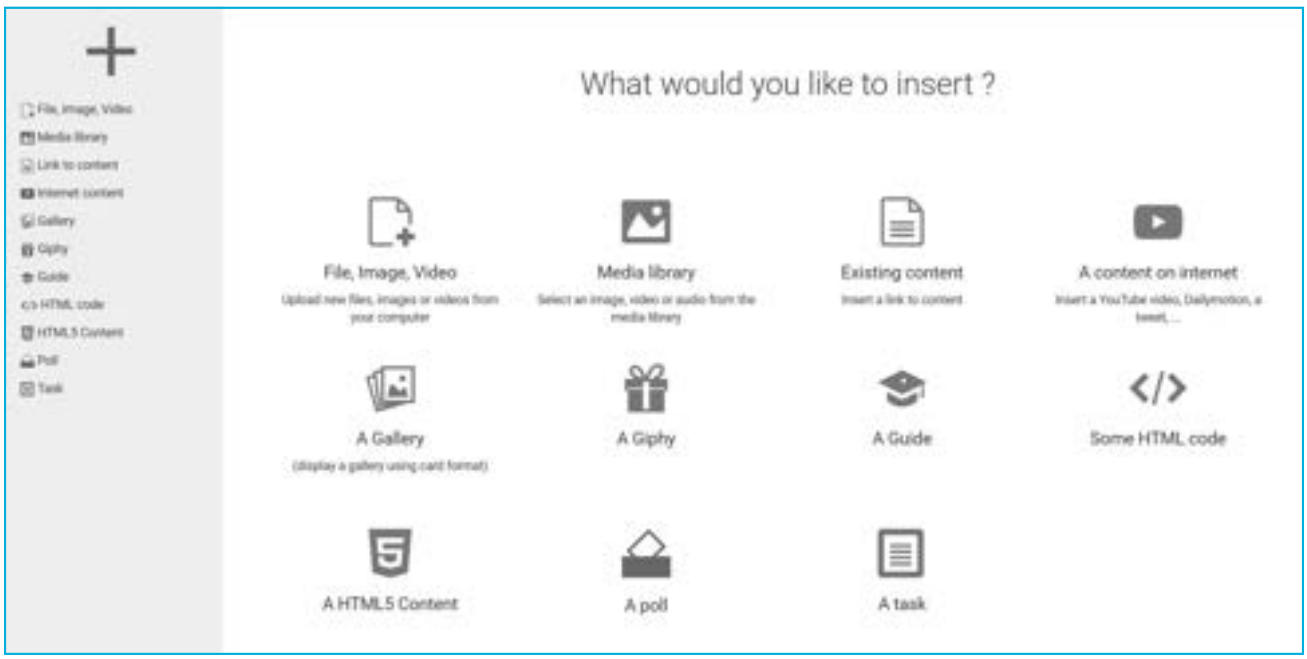
Overall, Jalios offers some simple functionality out of the box, which is extendable, to create a useful usable intranet. With the ability to extend via in-house developers, the application marketplace and via their network of partners, there is the potential to achieve even more.



Users can customise their notifications, including setting some to be automatically "read".



Jalios offers a range of simple attractive themes out of the box to style your intranet.



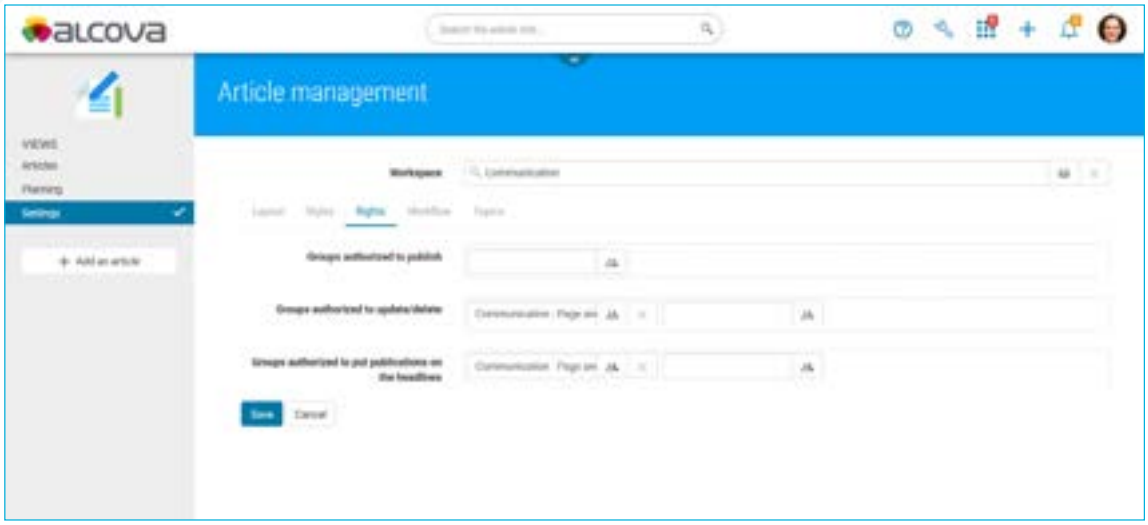
There are multiple ways to insert media into articles.

Jalios offers communicators solid functionality to create and disseminate news articles, with audience targeting, scheduling and different ways to highlight urgent communications. Creating news articles is straightforward and there are options to configure the page layout, as well as inserting various types of media. Articles and pages all benefit from a straightforward drag-and-drop interface, with several widgets available to display content.

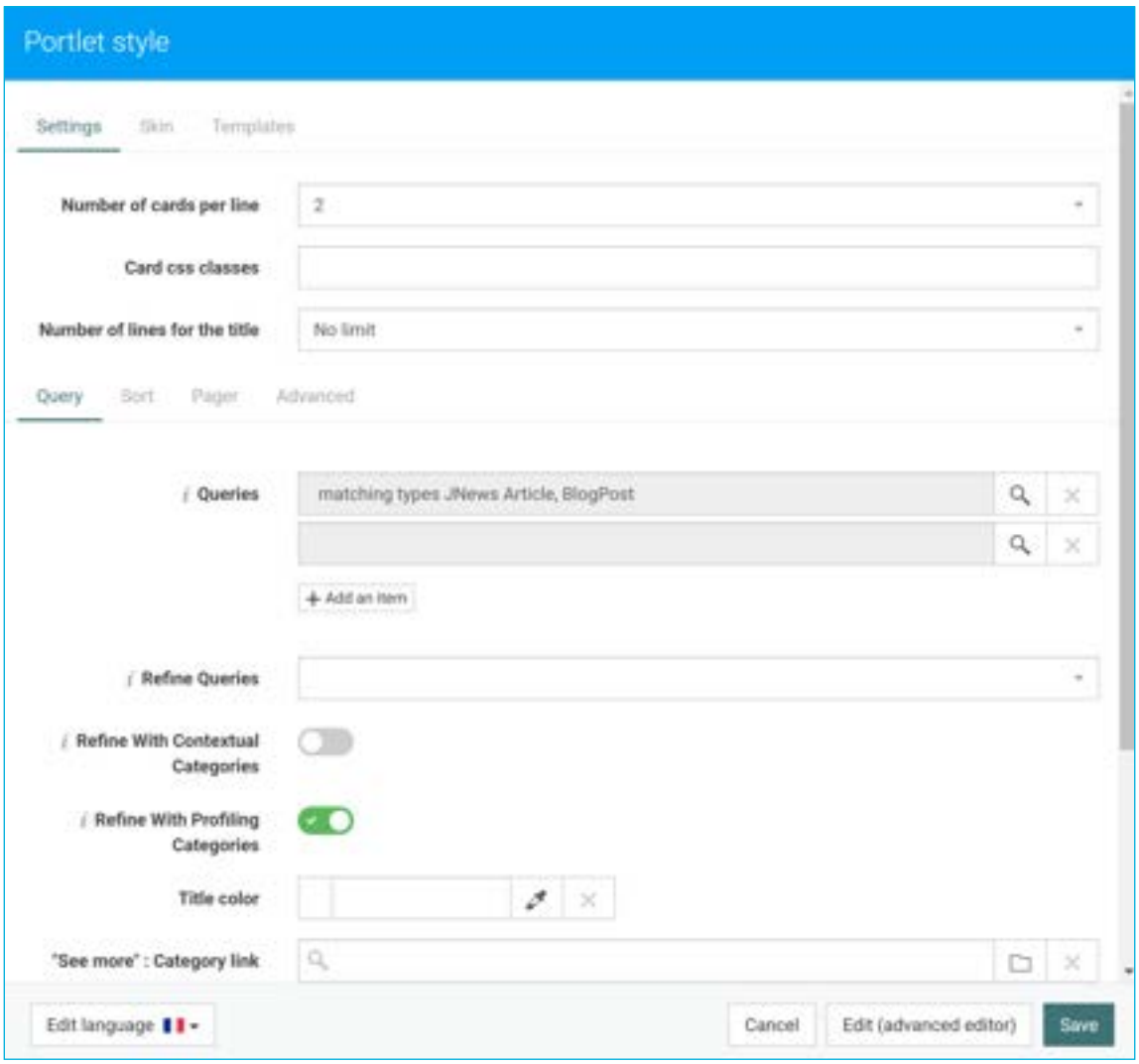
Jalios has built-in AI functionality to help busy communicators and contributors with their content; we can see the rewriting, summaries and heading / intro suggestions being particularly useful. It's possible to connect a preferred LLM if the customer has a different subscription. We tested the generative AI features and found there were inaccuracies in the content, so would like to see in-built fact-checking prompts or a flag to indicate something has been AI-generated introduced. Alternatively, it's possible to limit the scope of the Jalios AI assistant using Retrieval-Augmented Generation which will define the data the assistant will generate content about. This is optional, so admins should carefully consider which approach to take with guidance from Jalios.

Content can be shared in 'News' or within collaborative areas called 'Workspaces' (see Scenario 3). These can be set up around department, project or community, with permissions associated with those spaces (see Scenario 6). Within each Workspace, contributor permissions can be set to create and publish or update articles and update navigation in that area.

Audience targeting is managed via groups or based on people profile data within the intranet, can be linked to Entra ID or can use data from an HR system. Jalios will work with clients to help identify which profile information comes from which source – offering ways to enhance the data currently held on other systems within the intranet. Many organisations need to update their people data, and Jalios have, in their words, a "come as you are" approach where they'll work with you to define your targeting groups based on the information available. We can see this flexible approach would be particularly beneficial for clients who do not currently have clean people data. Groups can be created on the fly, and targeting can be via profile attributes or whether users have subscribed to a particular category topic. The audience creation interface may look a little technical for some users, but we think the functionality is there and can see this being a useful tool.



Permissions can be set for publishing, updating and who can post news in each workspace.



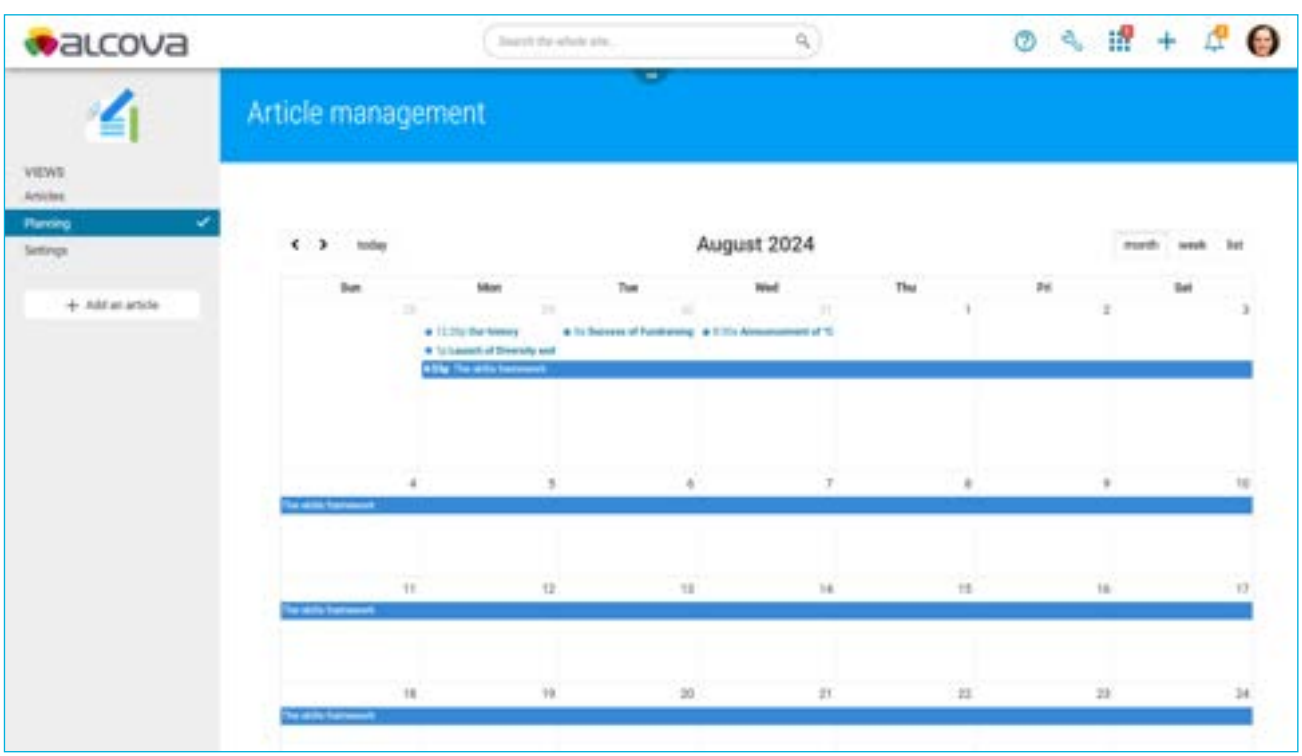
The interface for targeting options might be a little technical for some users but is flexible.

Communications professionals with a busy news desk will appreciate the content planning tools that Jalios has to offer, as well as the option to use approval workflows. A list view shows the status of scheduled and published posts, and the calendar view gives a forward-look to help schedule content around key events and dates, which also include the full time period that an article is "live" if an expiry date has been set.

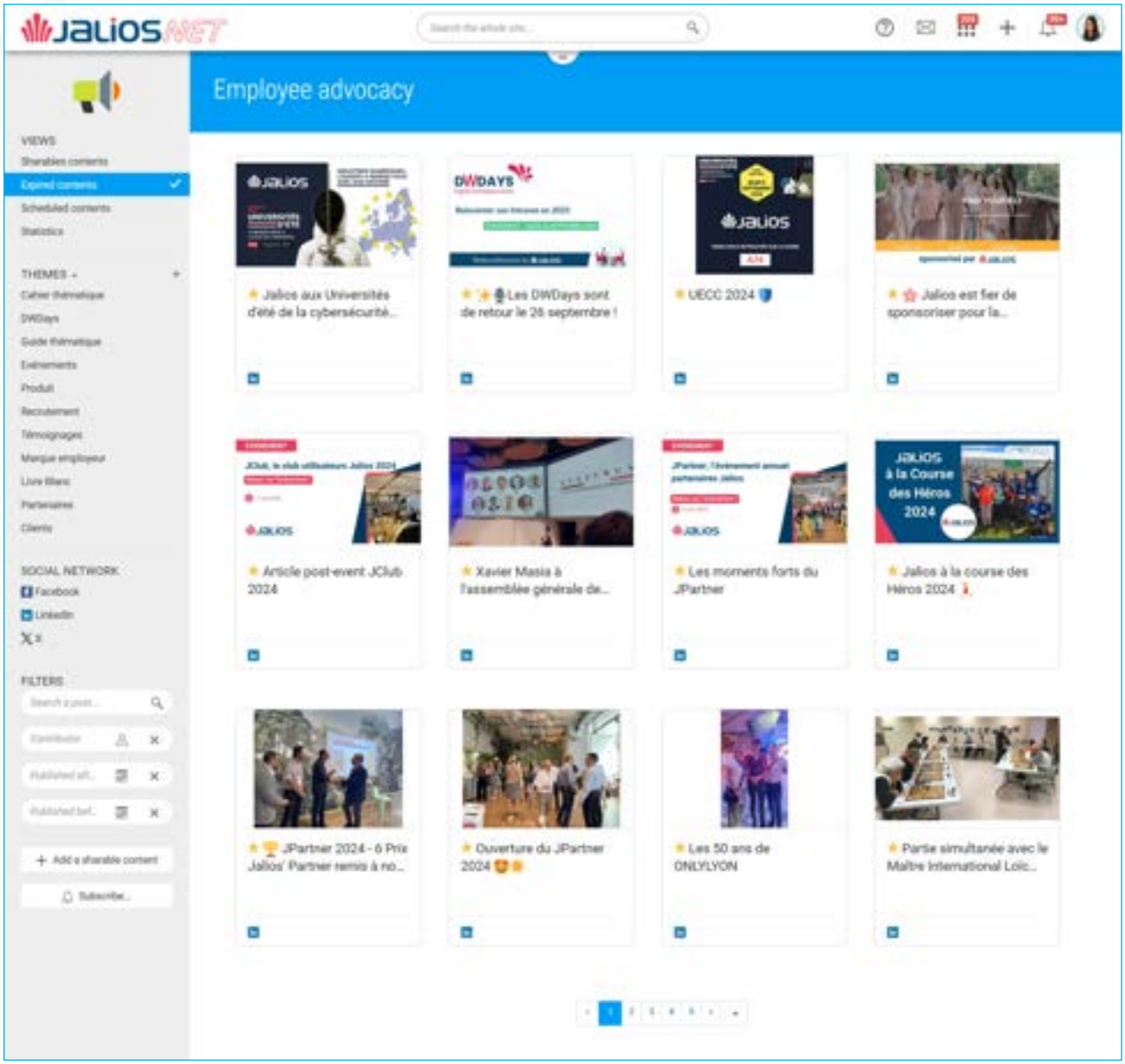
Jalios offers thoughtful ways to highlight urgent information. The 'flash info banner' offers three levels of importance: 'information', 'warning' and 'alert'. This content is presented to users in three different banner styles available on the homepage, as well as within the community workspaces. Mandatory reads can also be used to support urgent communications, as publishers can see who has read the content.

There are a few nice features for multichannel publishing. There's an integrated web chat through which content can be shared with individuals, groups and within the Jalios communities (see Scenario 3 for more). Jalios also offers the option for any document to be set to be externally shared, via an email with a link that can be set to expire, similar to Dropbox functionality. The email format is plain but is functional, and can be customised with a little work. Content can be restricted so it isn't shareable externally (and isn't available by default) – content sharing otherwise respects the permissions set at workspace level. We can see this being particularly useful for pre-boarding of employees before they start work, or for working with partners.

Jalios offers an Employee Advocacy module (at an additional cost not included in the pricing in this report), where employees can easily share content on their social media channels. Employees use suggested content uploaded by the communications team, which they're able to amend themselves.



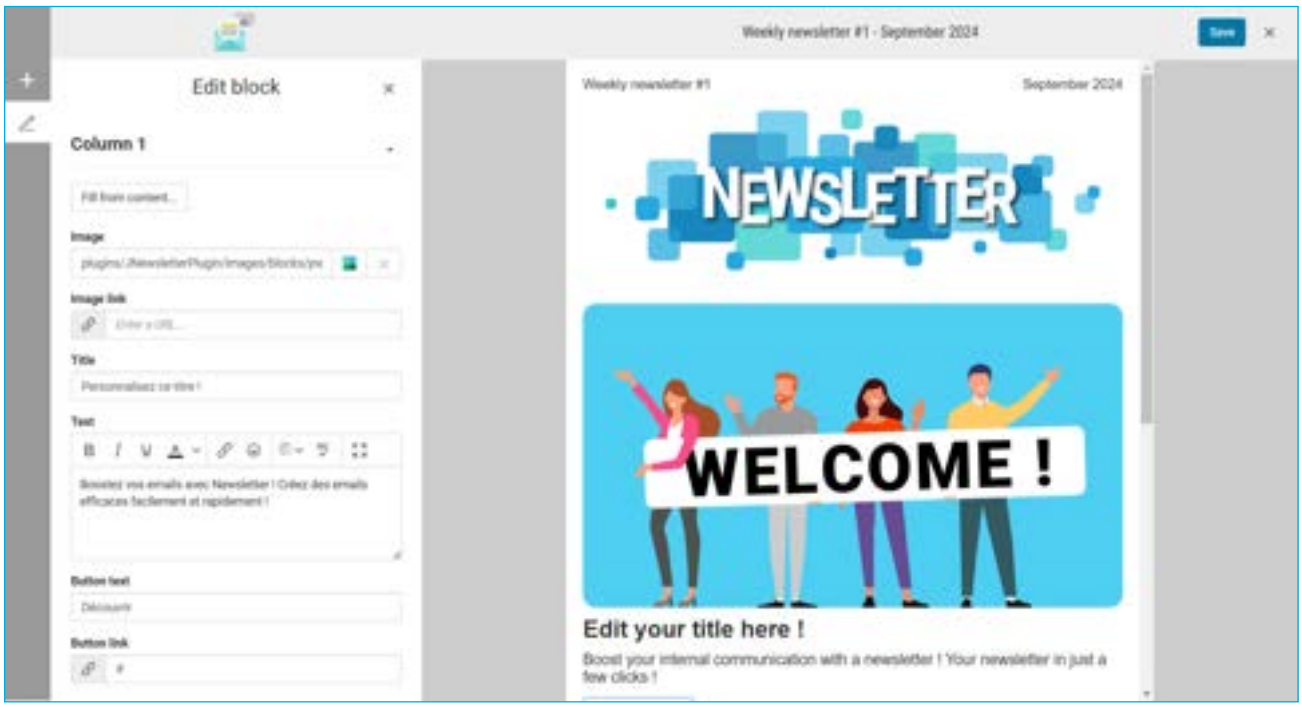
There's a calendar view to show visibility of published and upcoming articles.



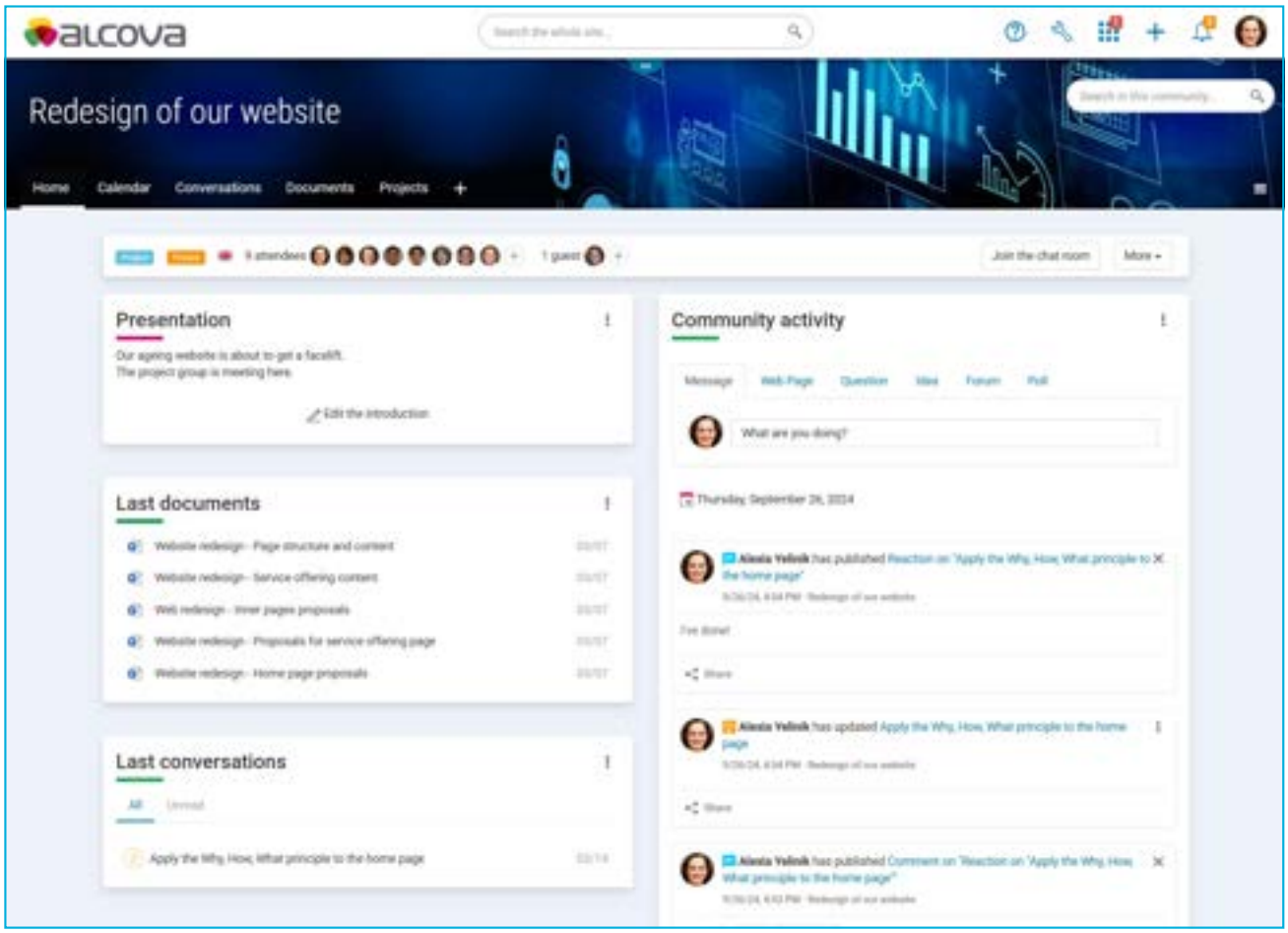
The employee advocacy functionality makes it easy for users to share content on their social media.

We like the newsletter management tool (Jnewsletter), which is optional but included within the pricing provided here. This newsletter module functionality makes it easy for communicators to send an email round-up of intranet content or even craft newsletters from scratch, using text fields alongside intranet content blocks. This is more flexible than some other newsletter tools we've seen, particularly as customers can also create their own components, but we would like to see a greater range available out of the box.

Overall, Jalios offers thoughtful functionality to provide communicators the tools they need to share information with their various audiences. There are APIs for further multichannel publishing, which could include digital signage, with extendable features that we can see being useful.



Jalios offers built-in functionality to send an editable newsletter based on intranet content.

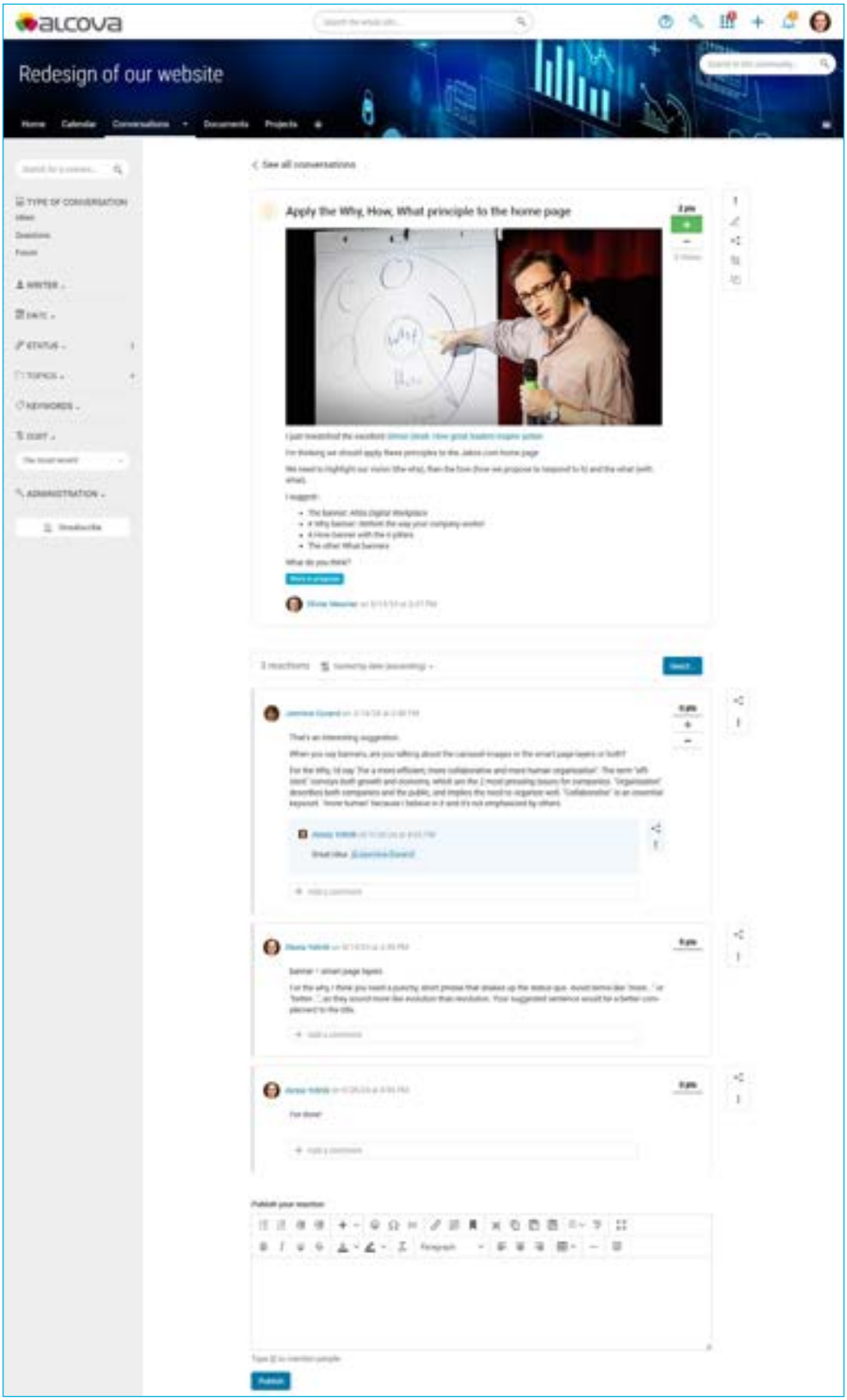


The Jalios community functionality offers an engaging way for employees to collaborate.

Jalios offers some great community and collaboration functionality that works as standalone or integrated with elements of M365 and Google Workspace. Content and documents throughout the platform can be commented on or shared, with easy functionality to convert comments to project tasks. Within the specific Communities functionality, it's possible to have discussions, post blogs, vote on ideas, store and link to documents and more. Spaces can be set up to support departments, projects or topics.

The 'Conversations' tab within Communities offers three types of conversation – ideas, questions and forum. It's possible to set up workflows on all content, including comments for moderation, as well as turning off comment functionality. There aren't any dedicated moderation or content reporting flows pre-configured on the platform.

Employees share their ideas via the Conversations tab as a post. Ideas can be voted on; they can then be moved through various configurable stages so that users can see how their ideas have progressed, and that status is displayed on the idea with a label. In addition to the up- and down-vote functionality available in Communities, it's possible to like, comment and @mention on content across Jalios. There aren't currently emoji style reactions, which is something that was also noted by a customer.

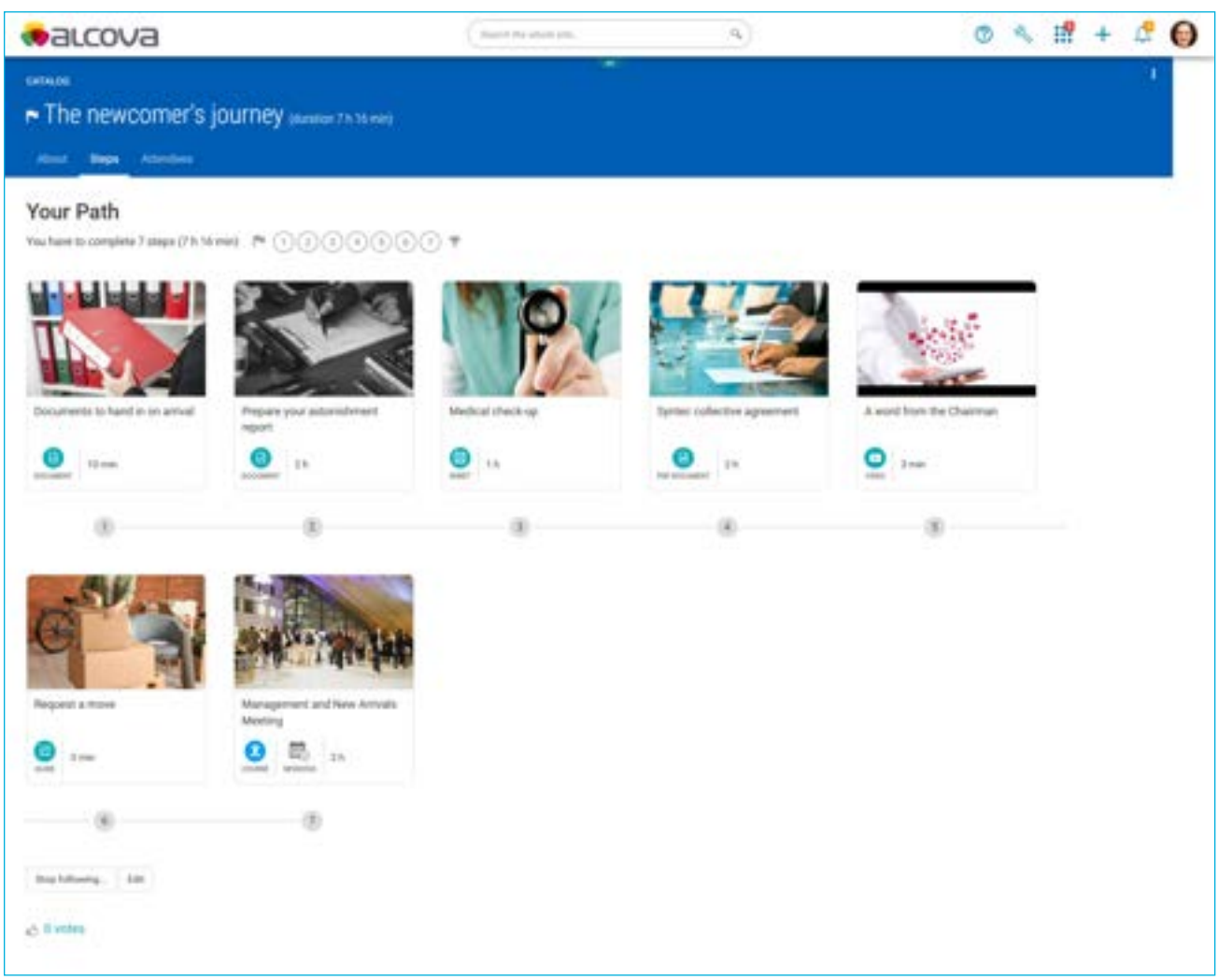


Ideas can be voted on and their status is displayed underneath

Users can easily embed media, such as video and images, into blog posts and conversations. With straightforward editing options, we can see these being useful for project and company leaders to be able to provide rich updates. We particularly like the 'question and answer' functionality, which gives users the option to select the best and correct answer to questions asked. This would be particularly useful for a knowledge base or being used to support a customer services team.

There are a number of options for feedback within Jalios, from a simple poll that can be answered in a box on the screen to more in-depth survey functionality. The user interface isn't as intuitive as dedicated survey tools, for example branching involves being able to understand 'if this - then that' sequencing, but it appears to be quite a robust tool which has a good level of functionality.

Jalios offers a Learning Management System (JLearn) as an optional module, but it is included in our pricing. This is an e-learning catalogue which supports employee learning and development. There's a configurable stepped process, which could include elements like quizzes to test knowledge. We can see this being particularly useful for onboarding new staff or for mandatory training. E-Learning is presented clearly, with downloadable certificates available for participants once it has been completed. This isn't functionality we see too often in this report and works well.

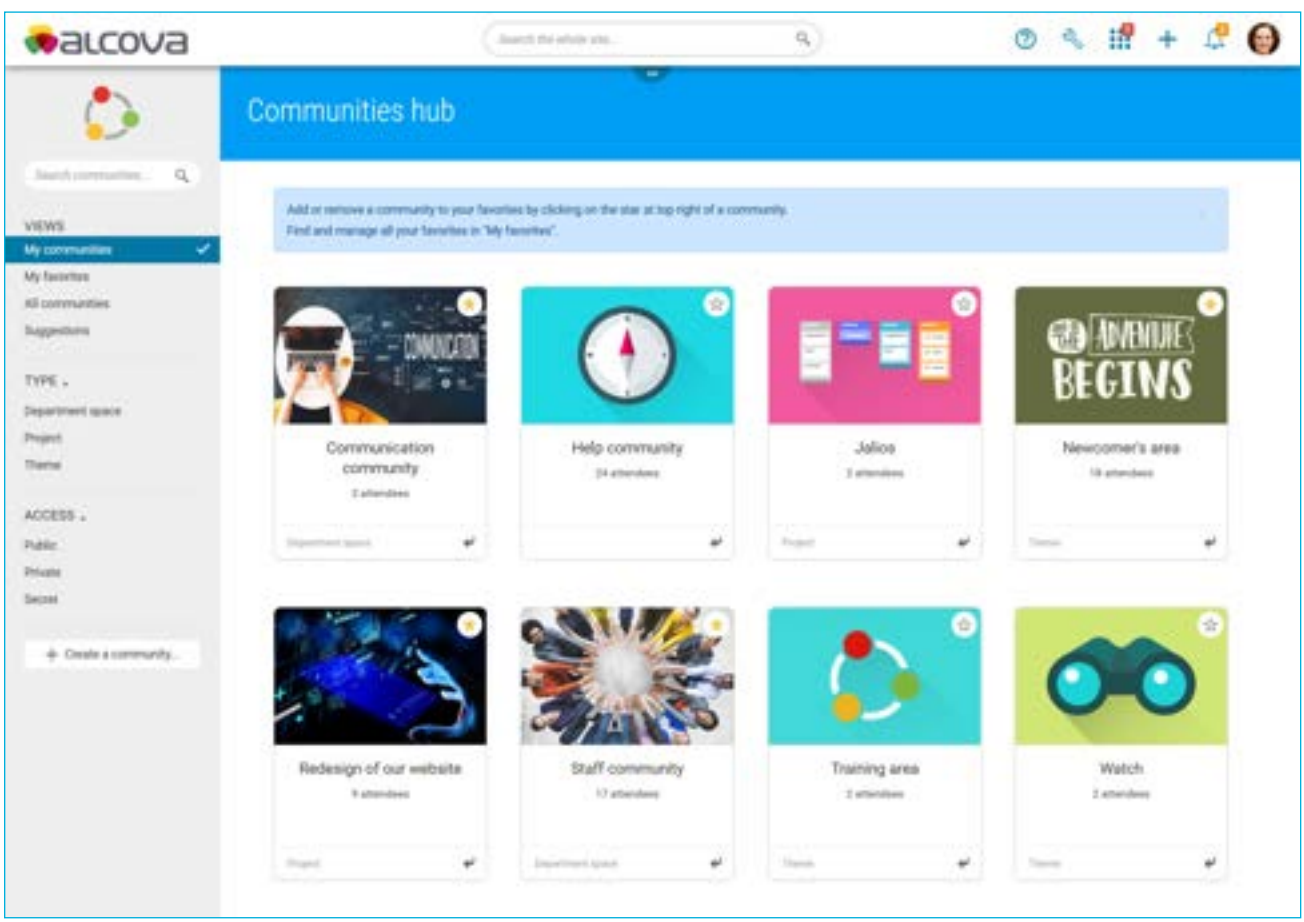


The JLearn LMS module offers ways to present training in a user-friendly manner.

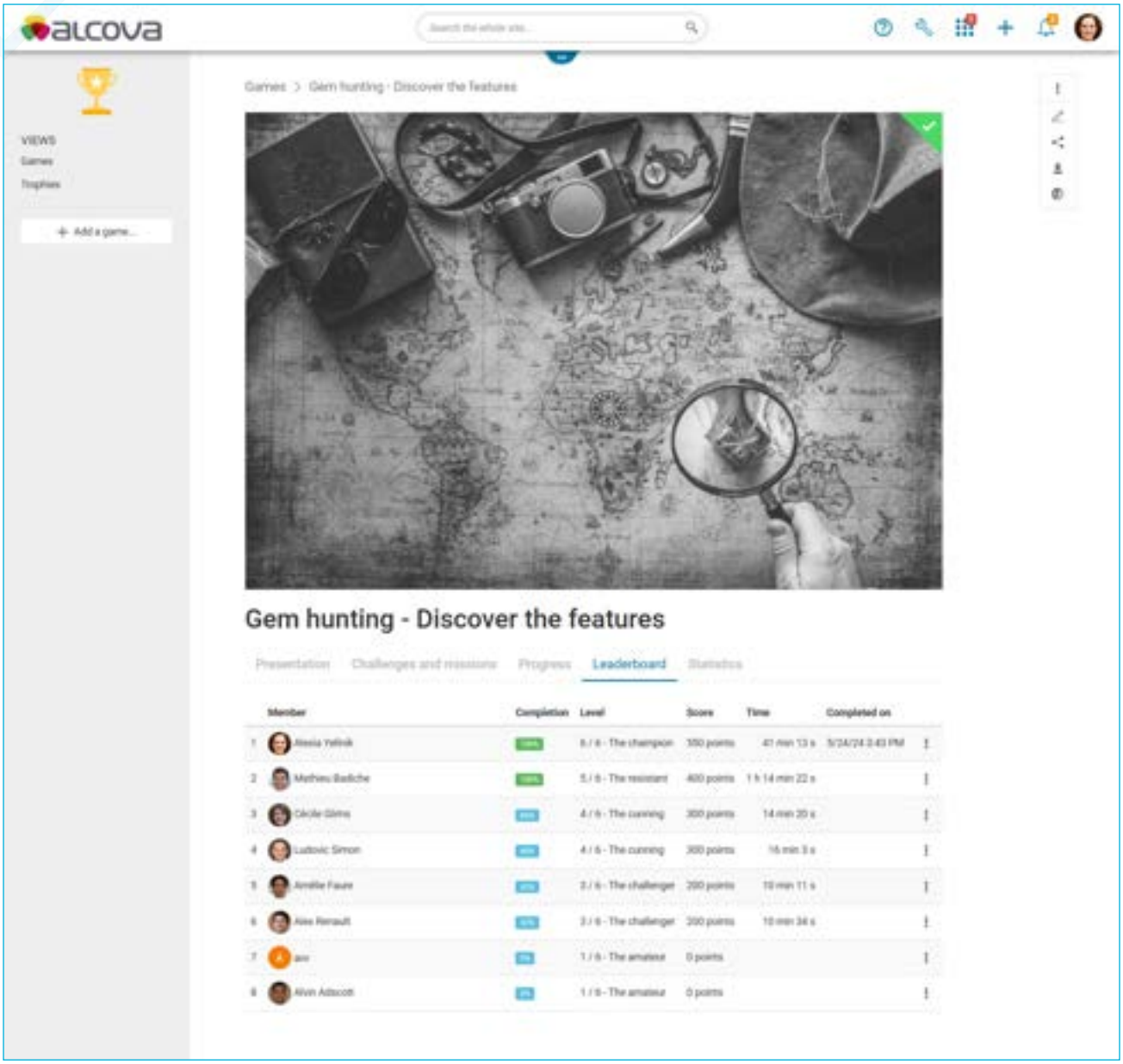
When thinking about wellbeing, gamification might not immediately spring to mind, but Jalios offers some nice gamification and leaderboard functionality as part of their optional (but included in our pricing) module, JGame. This awards points for activities like number of product sales, or could be associated with intranet activities, such as finding hidden images across the site or sharing blog posts. This would be of particular interest to competitive sales teams or for team-building exercises with a distributed workforce.

We like the 'Events' centre that includes a local search and good range of filters to narrow down what might be on offer. Events include a restriction on the number of places available, if wanted, and space to add an overview of what the event is about. If the event is online, attendees can begin the session directly from the event itself.

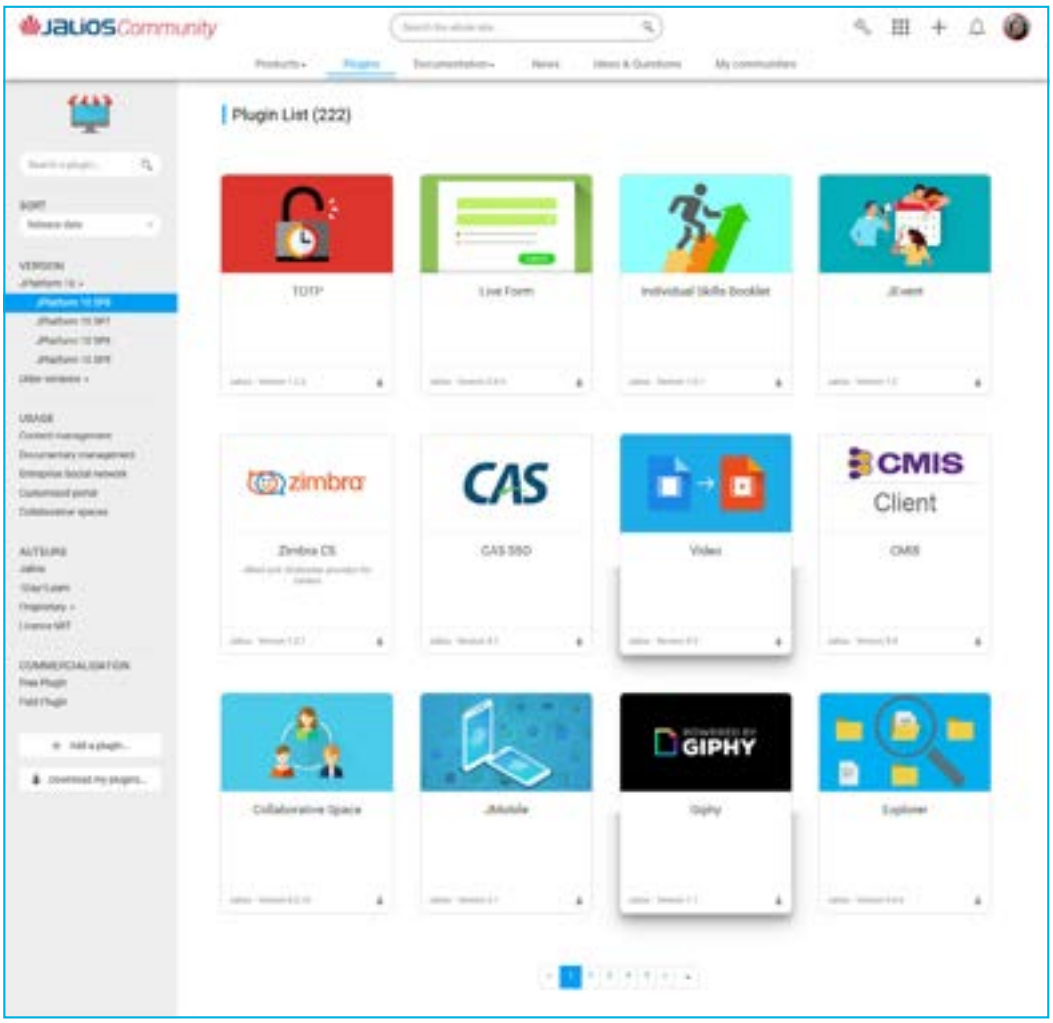
Jalios has a comprehensive community and engagement offering, with strong standalone functionality. We know customers value the integrated collaboration features of the platform, highlighting to us that "absolutely everything benefits from a collaborative overlay." We could easily see how some organisations may seek to replace other proprietary platforms offering similar features. Given the comprehensive capabilities Jalios offers, this would be particularly useful for organisations looking to replace Workplace by Meta, and / or who are not already using M365, as well as considering their e-learning capabilities.



The 'Communities Hub' offers a range of spaces which can be set up to support departments, projects or topics.



Jalios offers competitive leaderboard functionality to set challenges for people.



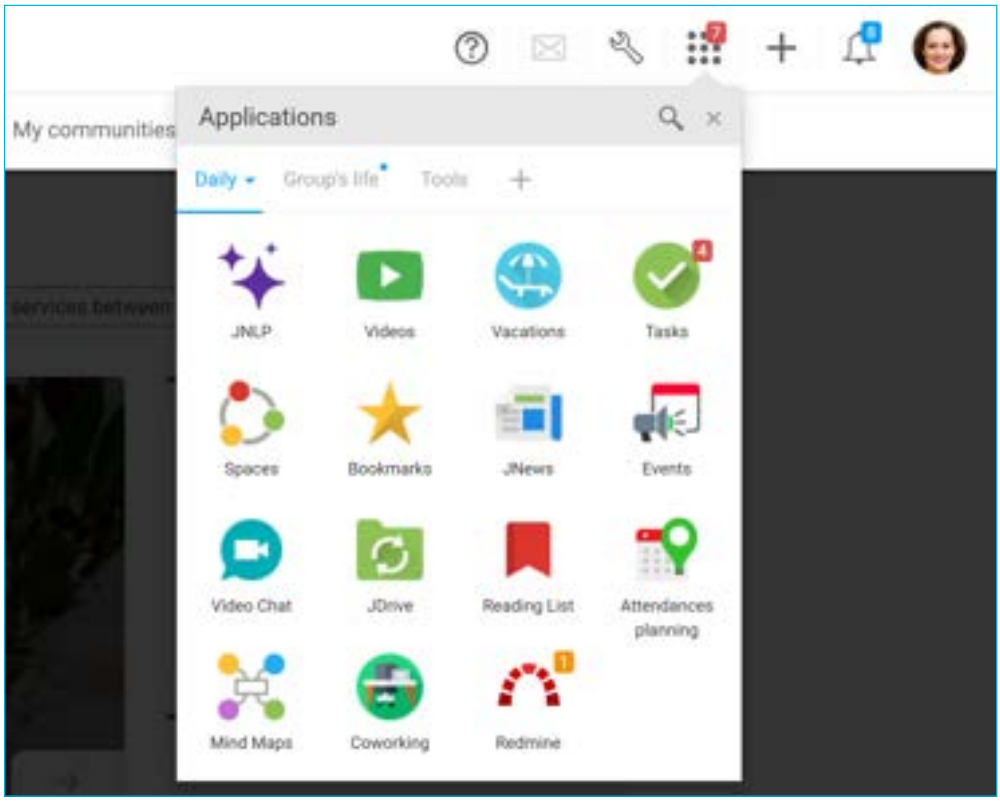
The modules catalogue hosts a number of integrations built by Jalios and their partners.

Through APIs, RSS feeds and connectors, Jalios integrates with a variety of external systems, including M365 and Google Workspace for documents. Its modular approach means that many external integrations are possible, and we particularly like the way notifications are integrated, although deeper integrations may require development with a partner. There are a number of modules available within their catalogue, but some have an extra cost. For example, Alfresco, Nuxeo, Box, NextCloud, Redmine, Eudonet, Zoom, BigBlueButton, Webex, Zimbra, Bluemind, Collabora, are available but come at an additional cost not included within our pricing.

Many integrations are display only – drawing in and presenting information from third party systems to a user. Clicking beyond the app icon or notifications pane takes people out to the source system, although Jalios says it's possible to develop deeper two-way integrations where wanted, but this is likely to be at additional cost.

We like that external application notifications can be integrated into the Jalios interface to surface updates in one place. This includes showing a notification count against an application as well as displaying a notification within the bell menu. While some of these are paid-for integrations, we can see this being an invaluable feature, as it reduces the burden on employees to have to visit multiple locations.

There are a number of touchpoints where Microsoft 365 functionality is integrated: such as initiating Teams calls and chats in people profiles, and documents accessible within workspaces and via search results (more in Scenario 5). Employees are able to access their Microsoft applications from the applications panel, which we think is a nice touch; having one start menu that has everything in can offer a decent user experience whilst keeping people within the platform.



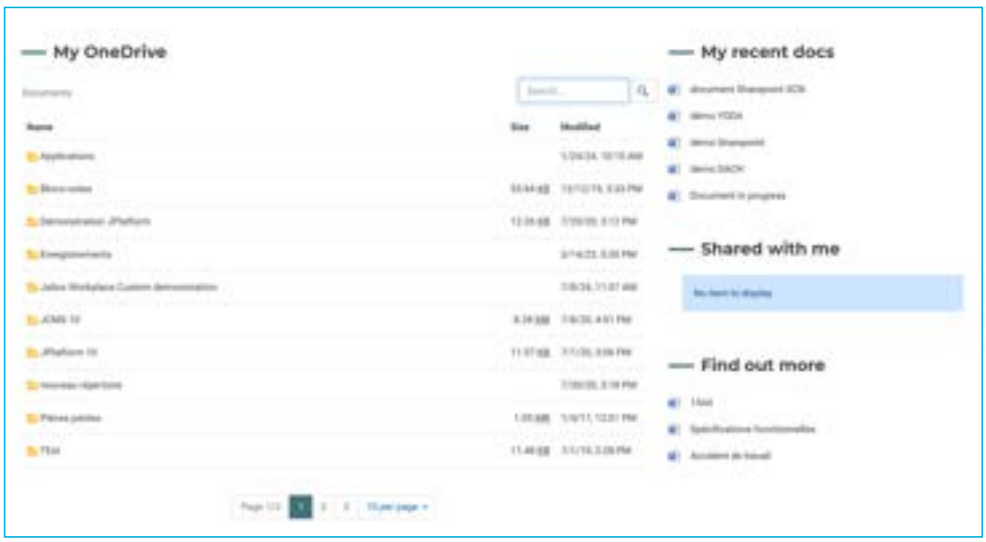
Notifications from external systems can be integrated into the Applications menu and bell icon.

The profile page offers integrations with various chat options including MS Teams.

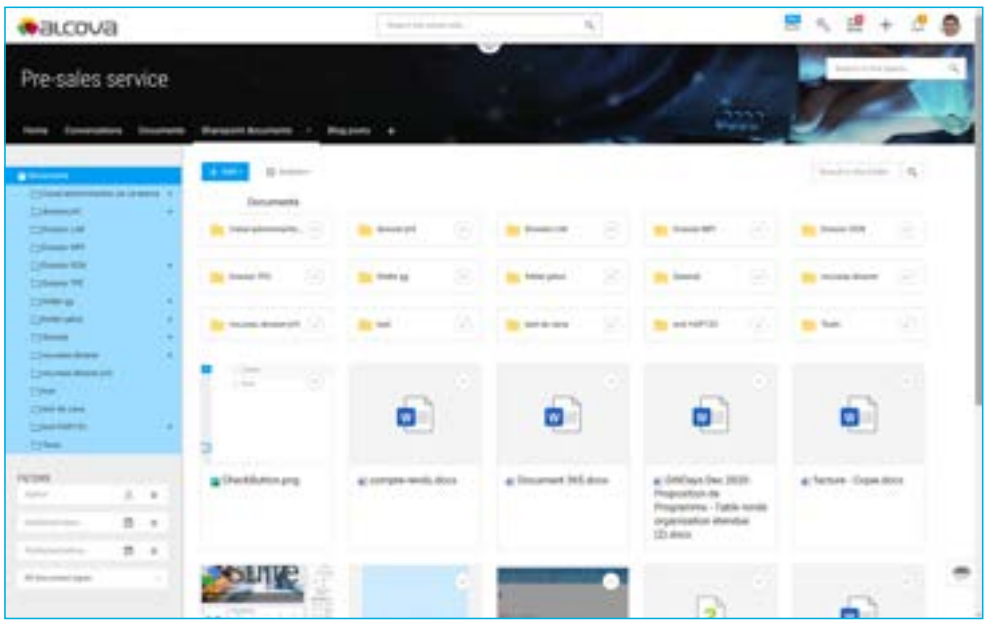
There is a 'MyOneDrive' feature that draws through the individual's recent and shared documents, as well as the folder structure. This actually feels like an improvement over the native OneDrive interface, and we like it a lot. A broader 'My 365' page draws in content from applications like Outlook and Viva Engage.

Folders and files can be displayed from SharePoint across the intranet within the native left-hand menu. Files are displayed as a preview and can be downloaded from Jalios for further use. Permissions from SharePoint are respected and we like that people can leave comments at the bottom of the Jalios preview of a file, something that isn't possible within SharePoint.

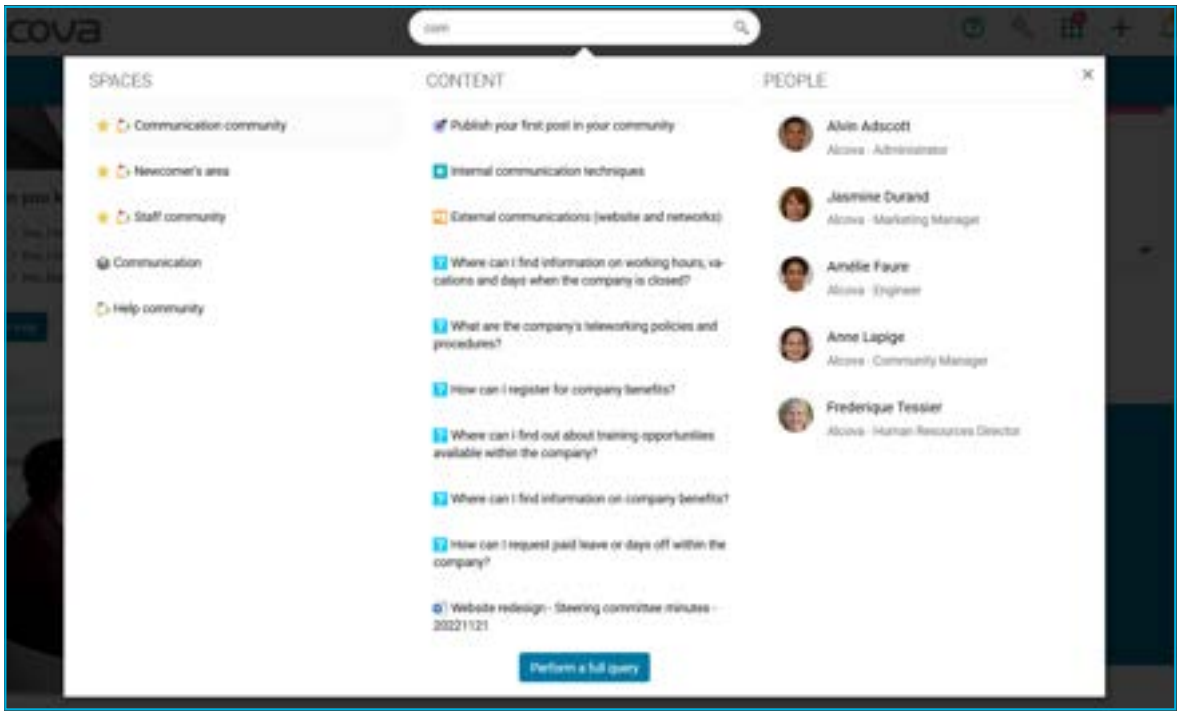
Overall Jalios offers the possibility for integrations with external systems and M365 functionality, with the integrated notifications being the most valuable. Whilst there are several integrations available out of the box, many integrations will incur an additional cost and / or time, so organisations should discuss needs in this area early on in the engagement.



The My OneDrive interface is easy to use, arguably easier than Microsoft's own.



Jalios can display documents and share documents from SharePoint.



The search pane starts to populate suggested content as you type.

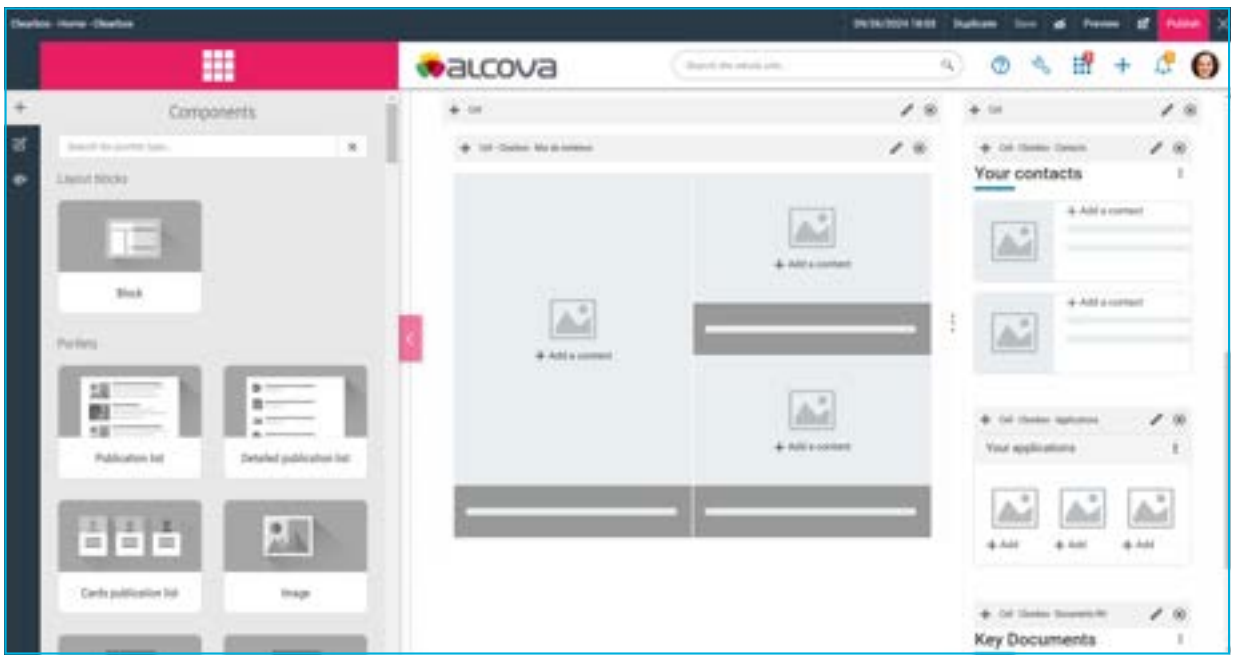
The quick search pane starts to populate suggested content in three panels – spaces, content and people. It offers a clean experience that means users may not need to get to the full search results page. The full results page offers a variety of functional filters and facets, but these may take a little getting used to for less advanced users. We like that last edited dates and content authors are shown alongside a thumbnail of the file type. However, search management is limited - we did not see any particular functionality to be able to weight or adapt search results. The search also doesn't currently return misspelled words in the quick search pane although does provide a "did you mean" suggestion on the search page.

Search can federate other internal systems, presenting results alongside those from Jalios. The search can be integrated with a good range of systems, including M365, Box, Google and Alfresco. It's possible to select which of those are considered part of the default scope, although some of these will be an additional cost to set up.

People are returned via the search or there is a dedicated directory, which includes some nice features. Firstly, there's a navigable organisation chart that opens a profile page on a click. There are also filters available based on profile data, with a field called 'competency' that allows a user to browse for others via a particular skill. The search will interrogate all profile fields, which is helpful, but there is no misspelling support. The people cards returned in search results allow direct access to the contact links, without having to navigate to a profile page (see Scenario 4).

For document and information finding, there's one main document library across the site as the intranet is one workspace open to everyone, as well as separate content available within collaborative spaces. A configurable AI assistant is available to aid findability. It's possible to set precisely which documents are to be used as reference materials. If the answer cannot be found, the assistant can be configured to say "I don't know" rather than looking at information from the wider intranet – or indeed, on the internet.

Overall, we think it's a shame there aren't many search management tools, but the employee search experience is good.



Jalios offers drag and drop functionality to build page templates.

Jalios offers detailed and granular site management and administrative options, with extensive permissions settings available. One customer highlighted that there's a lot to learn about as there's a complex array of possibilities; we can understand this and think organisations should carefully plan who will be able to administer the site appropriately.

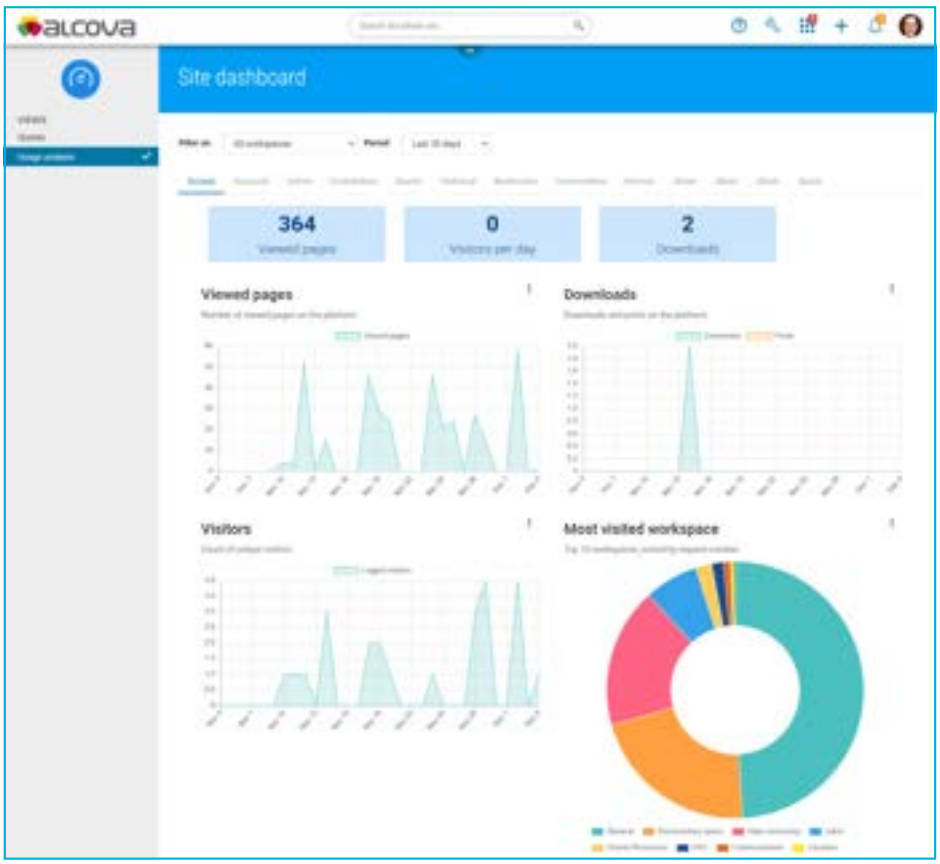
There are a variety of options available to configure both the home page and page templates. Some have quirky or technical names that administrators will need to familiarise themselves with though, like 'portlets', the equivalent of a widget or web part in Jalios. Content management rights can be set for pages, portlets, groups, communities and there are four role levels available - read, write, change, delete. Jalios said they have a number of default permissions groups set up to address common customer use cases, such as a Comms group or HR group, which users can be added to. They also highlighted to us that customers aren't alone when setting up site permissions, as there's training provided by the Jalios team or their partners, as well as a comprehensive guide available.

It's possible to set up approval and content lifecycle workflows for content across the platform. Users can also report obsolete content, and there's a module (JClean) that shows a report for contributors to be able to view reported content and update their out-dated information.

There are translation options available throughout Jalios; content can be translated, with multiple versions published. The language can also be set at portlet level; if your site is being published in multiple languages, these appear to need to be updated individually as part of the initial configuration.

There's a comprehensive range of embeddable media options available via a user-friendly interface. The platform allows embedding of various media types including columns templates, files, images, videos and media library content, internet content (like YouTube), HTML code, plus Microsoft integrations (from OneDrive, OneNote, SharePoint and Teams). It also supports productivity tools such as JDocs, maps, mind maps, polls and general task management features. The embed module also allows for a range of sites to have their content embedded within the pages and articles too, including Flickr, MeetUp, Slideshare, Spotify and more.

Jalios provides a number of modules and granular, flexible administrative options. We think this will appeal to organisations who have an in-house technical team who can manage the operations appropriately.



The analytics dashboard gives a decent overview of content engagement.

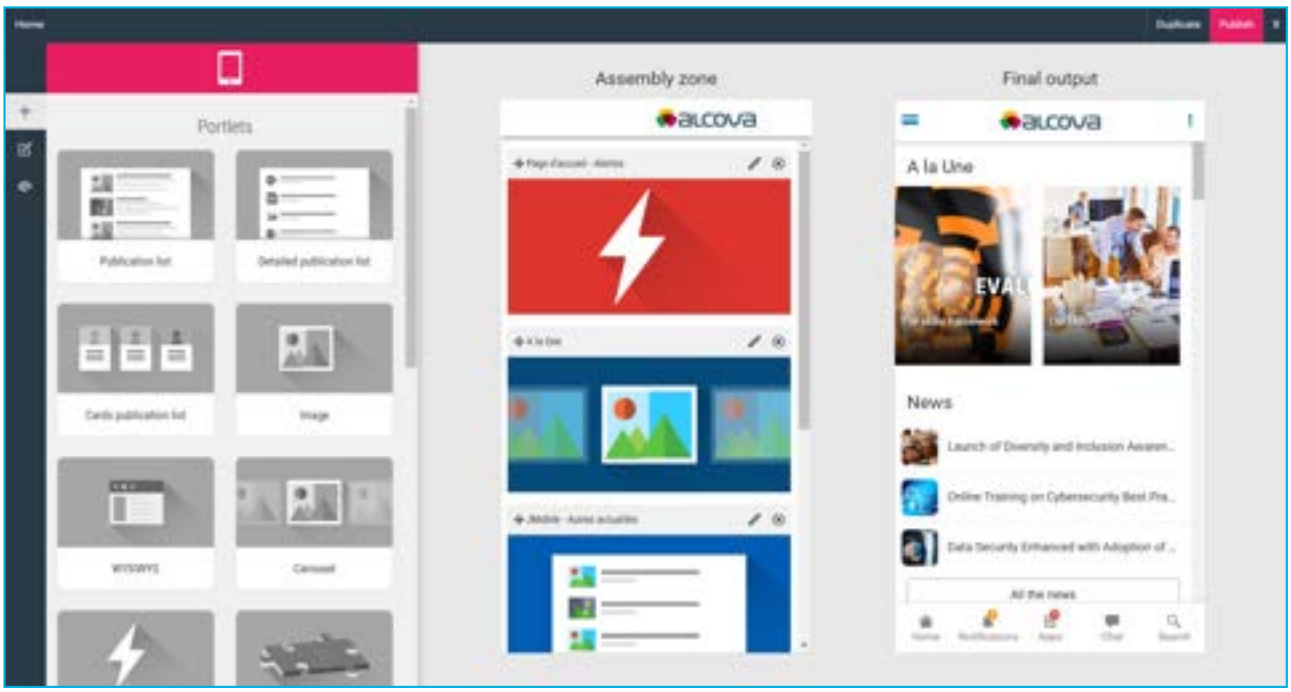
The included analytics give a good high-level overview of content and engagement, with top ten statistics available across content, search and more. There is room for improvement, however, and improved analytics is something customers requested too.

There are high-level dashboards available for access (viewed pages, downloads, visitors, most popular workspace, top members and most read content) as well as information about the technical use of the site, including storage size used and user administration (created, updated, deleted members etc). Statistics are exportable to CSV although the exported format isn't particularly useful out of the box, we expect that there are possibilities to extend the functionality with a partner.

We like that there are multiple date ranges (including custom ranges) available, although would like to be able to drill down into more depth to understand more about user behaviour beyond the top tens. If you are an administrator on a workspace, you can access analytics for that area; users can also see the number of likes on display for any content.

The mandatory read functionality is good and it can be set by communicators on every publication type. It's possible to view, filter and export who has read content, as well as who has confirmed they have read that information. It's also possible to retarget a group who has not yet read the content.

Search analytics show the top ten searched words, the number of searches run and the top used search categories. We'd like to see some more granular information about search activity included, particularly searches with no returned results, although some products don't provide even this high-level of information so it's good to see search data being presented.



The mobile publishing experience shows a preview of how content will look on mobile.

The mobile experience is best served via the native app, available through the Android and Apple store. The app can be easily rebranded as a custom app, and also deployed directly on corporate devices using mobile device management (MDM). There are a number of authentication options, including SMS authenticated links and single sign-on, such as from Entra ID. Biometrics aren't currently supported for easy subsequent access, however.

Jalios also offers a responsive mobile experience, although we heard from customers that they'd like to see some improvements to the mobile-responsive layouts for some of the plugins. The "live feed" of notifications actually works better on mobile than it does on the desktop, as it feels more intuitive to scroll through on a mobile device. In terms of overall design for the native app, the layout is clean although we thought it was perhaps a little simpler than other offerings in this report.

All content is available on mobile, including activity notifications and integrations mentioned in Scenario 4, and Jalios translates well to a smaller screen environment. However, the search experience on mobile has been adapted to be responsive but presents a long list of the filterable document types available, which may be a little complex for smaller screens.

The chat feature works particularly well on mobile. We did hear from a customer that they would like to see the chat functionality developed further as "competition from MS Teams is strong", but for frontline employees without access to Teams it's a good alternative. There aren't any further frontline or mobile-first features beyond what is available on desktop.

It's possible to create different mobile views and exclude content from the mobile experience through the 'Portal' functionality. This is also where admins can set up different experiences for different user groups. We can see this being particularly useful for organisations with large sales teams or frontline operations staff, who want to provide a more bespoke mobile experience.

THINGS TO BEAR IN MIND

Jalios has been thoughtfully developed with extensive functionality that has customer needs in mind. A lot of work has been done to facilitate collaboration, and there are many useful tools to help people work together. If customers have already embedded collaboration tools like Microsoft Teams or Viva Engage, they will need to think about how much of Jalios's functionality will be useful for them on top of what they have already.

In places, the UI feels slightly dated, something also reflected in customer feedback. For example, the platform could use a little UX attention to update some of the icons and refresh the fields, as well as the mobile experience. Jalios have a new design system as part of a UI refresh on their roadmap in 2025. Linked to this it's worth noting that some of the administration interfaces may be more technical and complex than some super-users might like. However, if an organisation expects to have a technical administrator in place we don't see that being a big barrier.

Throughout our demo there were signs that the tool has been developed with French as its first language; we saw that some of the components did not inherit the default / updated language and were displaying in French. We expect many of the fields and text are updateable as part of the implementation, although customers will need to take this into consideration if French is not their organisation's international language of choice.

From a pure functionality perspective, we're impressed with what is possible. We can see a lot of time has already been invested in the platform and we can see, as Jalios have said, that the features are usable and used. In turn, it's not a trivial investment for organisations to implement the platform and it has the potential to be quite the undertaking, but we can see it providing value if organisations can invest the time and effort in it.

Why choose this product

Jalios has had years of thoughtful development based on customer needs. It offers a strong standalone product with in-depth community and collaboration functionality, while integrating with Microsoft365, Google Workspace and other external applications. The flexibility offered means that we think Jalios would be particularly valuable for larger organisations who have in-house technical expertise, or the desire and budget to work with partner vendors to maximise the customisation and integrations opportunities available.

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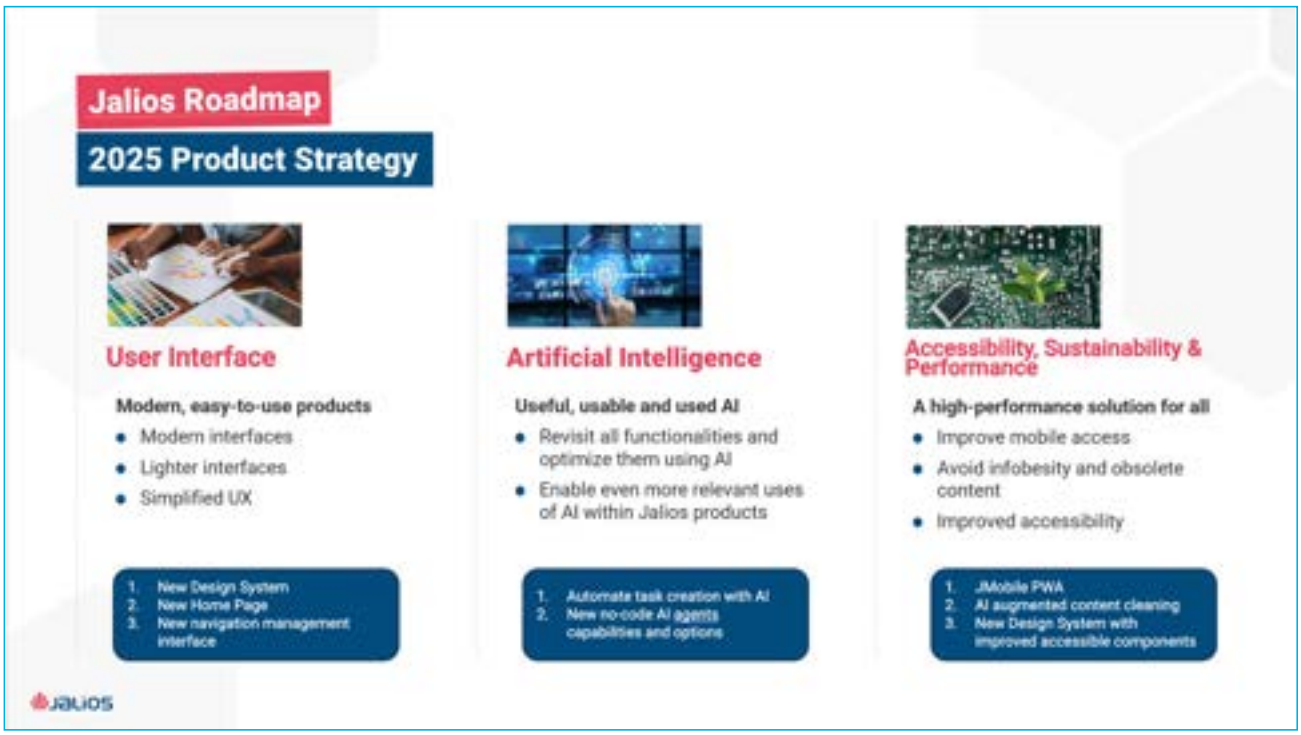
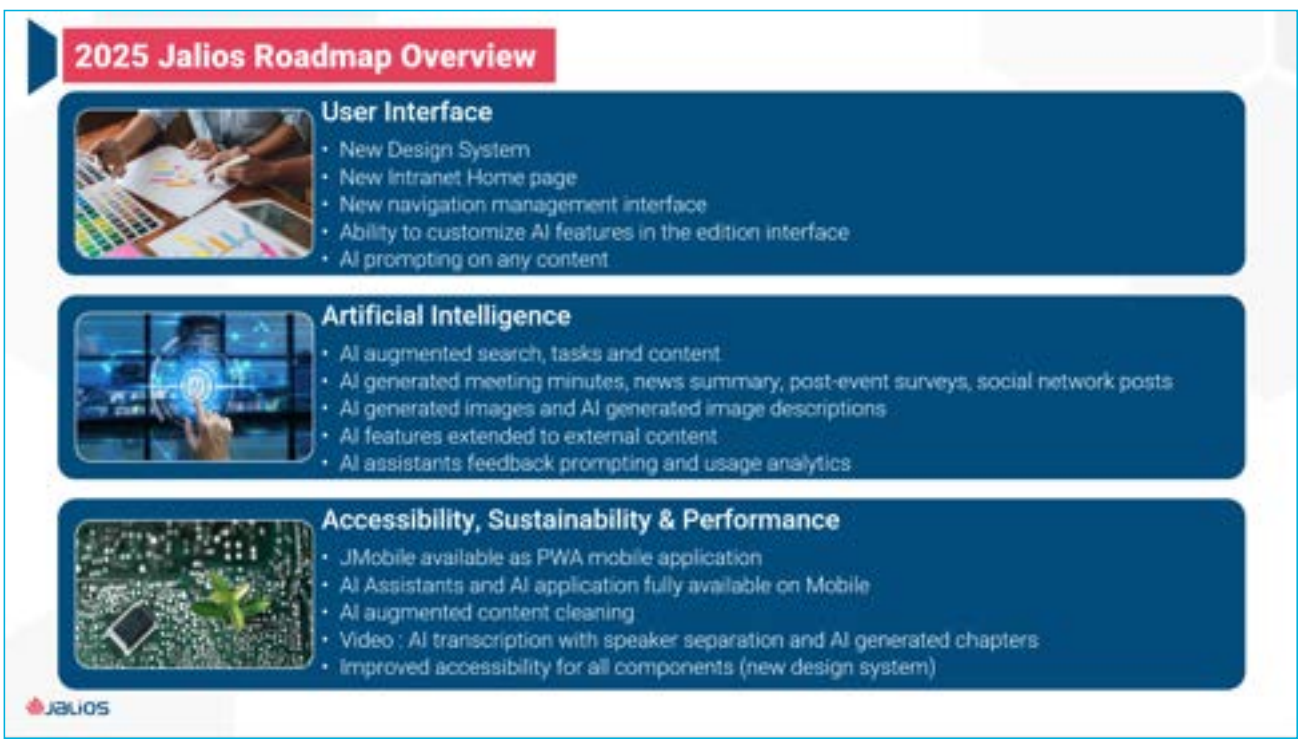
Vendor roadmap





Roadmap images provided by Jalios.

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Lightspeed365

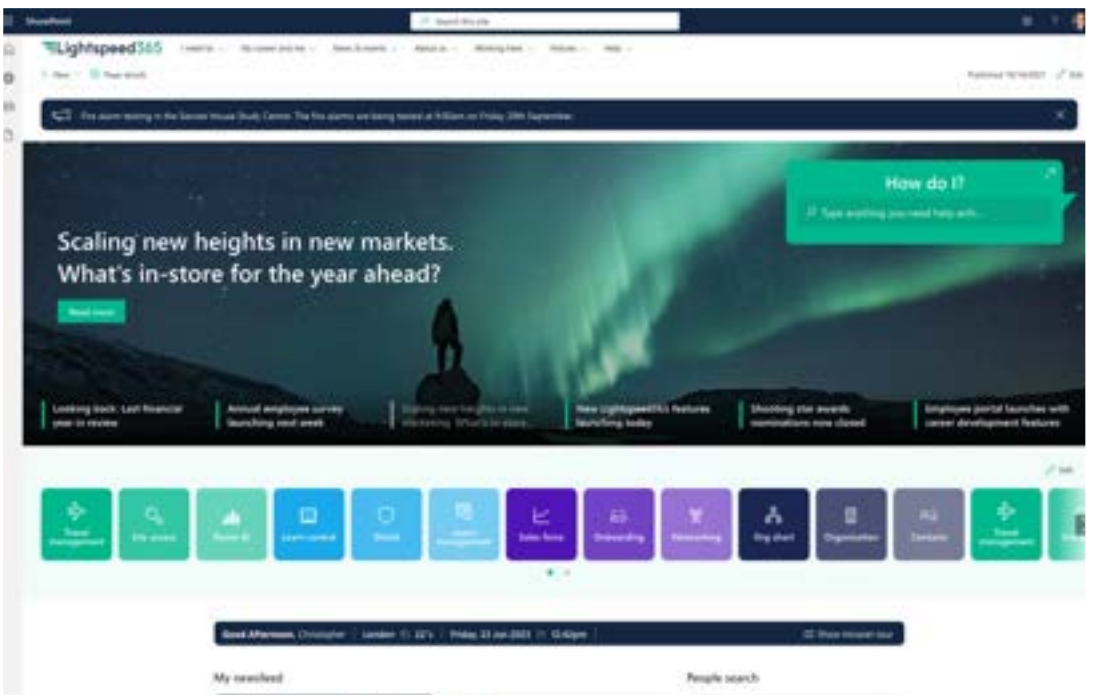
by contentformula

FULLY STANDALONE

REQUIRES SHAREPOINT

FRONTLINE FOCUS

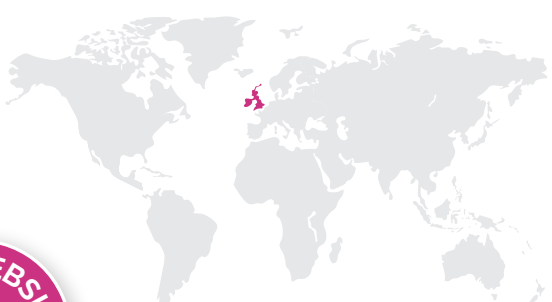
OTHER



Typical deployment:

1,000 to 5,000

Company locations:



VISIT THE WEBSITE

The product in a nutshell

Lightspeed365 is an attractive and valuable collection of SharePoint web parts neatly bundled up into a self-serve product that will appeal to medium to large companies looking to get their intranet off the ground.

SUMMARY

Lightspeed365

Lightspeed365 is a suite of useful SharePoint add-on web parts that was launched in 2020 by UK-based vendor, Content Formula. The latest version reviewed here is available as a self-serve option that includes a site blueprint to help get your SharePoint intranet off the ground. An aspect that will appeal to some customers is that the product is priced as a one-off perpetual license fee, rather than the more typical subscription-based model favoured by many other vendors. The price is reasonable, too.

For your money you get a nice collection of web parts that help manage site branding and add visual appeal to page sections, with additional features such as video background and transparency. The user experience is further enhanced by a helpful welcome tour feature to guide new employees through using the intranet. Communicators will appreciate features that include a news feed web part that aggregates content from across the intranet and displays it in a number of formats, including an attractive carousel. There's a useful alerts feature for urgent messages that can send a push notification via the Teams mobile app.

Finding information and people is also nicely supported. There are people search and people directory web parts that make it easy to find colleagues and their contact details via their profile. Search gets a contextual web part that can 'float' above the page. Full search results are provided by standard SharePoint, however. Finally, a useful handbook helps organise reference information in an A-Z list that is also searchable.

Lightspeed365 can connect employees to third-party applications and there is a helpful app launcher that the vendor says is very popular with customers. Integrations are somewhat limited as standard and rely on the Viva Connections Dashboard, which may not appeal to everyone. There's also no analytics included and no mobile app.

Overall, Lightspeed365 is a thoughtfully made product at a very competitive price. It will appeal to medium to large organisations that want a head start with their intranet and some extra features on top of standard SharePoint.

Pricing

PRICE BAND	
1,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
5,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
20,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
50,000 users	$ $ $ $ $

These prices are indicative, offering a comparison of the products featured in this report only. Please contact the vendor for a bespoke quote.

PRICING MODEL

One-off payment; or one-off payment and ongoing maintenance fee.

DISCOUNTS

Charities and non-profit organisations.

COSTS TYPICALLY

Weighted towards the start (during the 'project phase'), then much lower for the remaining term.

PRICE INCLUDES

All elements in this review (which includes premium notifications), plus helpdesk support and updates.

Product type

Ready-to-run, installed in hours

Branding opportunities

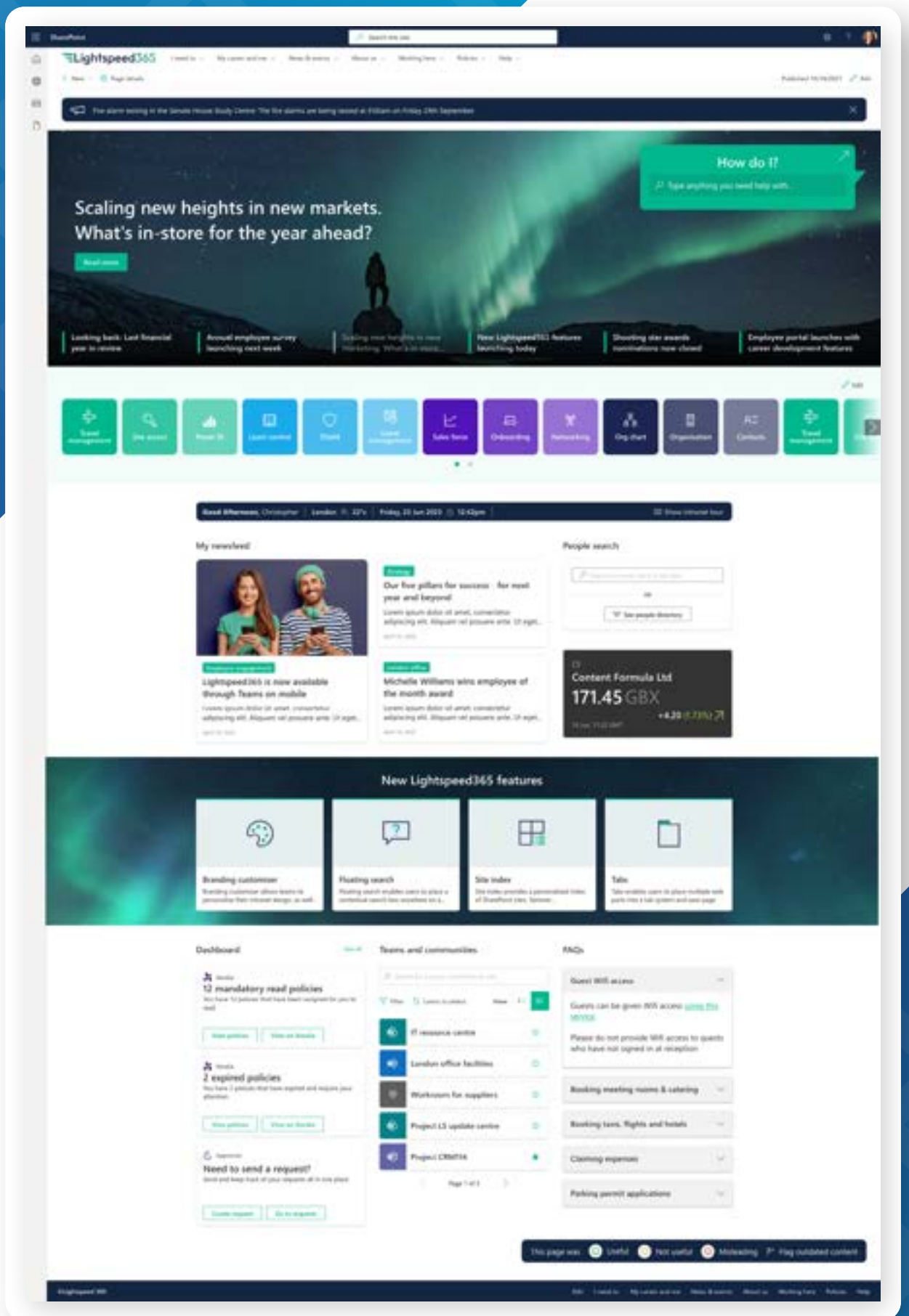
Good branding, complex options

Base systems

Fully standalone	**Requires SharePoint**	Other

Sectors

Healthcare	Accountancy, banking and finance	Science and pharmaceuticals	Teaching and education	Public services, government and administration


Lightspeed365
How do I?
Scaling new heights in new markets.
What's in-store for the year ahead?
My newsfeed
People search
Content Formula Ltd
171.45 GBX
New Lightspeed365 features
Dashboard
Teams and communities
FAQs
12 mandatory read policies
2 expired policies
Need to send a request?

COMPANY AND PRODUCT

Company details

Company
Content Formula

ISO 27001 certified
No but Cyber Essentials certified instead

Data residency
N/A

Company founded
2005

Product launched
2020

Typical client size
1,000 to 5,000

Largest deployment so far
70,000 employees, 50+ countries (all regions)

Customers
Clients include: K Hovnanian, Animal Care Group, Womble Bond Dickinson, Baringa, C&C Group, Severn Trent, Dixons Academies Trust, a Formula 1 Racing Team, a major medical devices manufacturer. See their website for more.

Partner locations
Canada

Company locations
London, UK (HQ)

Product and technical details

Name of product

Lightspeed365

Deployment

Client on-premises	**Client private cloud**	Microsoft Azure	Amazon Web Services	Vendor-hosted	**Microsoft 365 tenant**	Google Cloud	Other

Authentication supported

Entra ID	ADFS	Okta	Open ID	Oauth	G Suite	Other

App deployment

Google Play store	Apple store	MDM	MAM	Other

Accessibility

WCAG2.1 conformant

Document library sources integrated

Box	Dropbox	Google Drive	**SharePoint**	OneDrive	Other

Optional integrated enterprise search engines

Coveo	Elastic	IBM	Lucidworks	**Microsoft**	Mindbreeze	Sinequa	Other

User interface multi-language

Machine translation	Pre-configured	**Editable**	Right to left script supported	Other

Content multi-language

Machine translation for publishers	Machine translation for end users	Editable machine translation for publishers	Manual creation for publishers	Right to left script	Other

Set-up and support

Set-up process for new clients

Customers can choose to do a self-install. Content Formula provide templates and tutorials for this. However, customers can choose to have the vendor support them with implementation including consulting services. There are 3 tiers for this service. The timeline for the highest tier is typically 2-3 months, taking a customer from discovery through to intranet launch.

Version numbers

Demonstrated to ClearBox: 1.3.8

At January 2025: 1.4

Product updates

Minor updates every 1-2 months, major updates once a year (if elected).

Product update process

Minor updates are made available to customers for download. Customer decides timing and whether they even want to upgrade. If they have support with Content Formula, then the vendor can manage the upgrade.

Reverse-out options

All content is stored in SharePoint and retained by the customer.

Technical support

Email support	Phone support	Chat support	Online portal	24/7 support	Office hours only*

*09:00-17:30 UK Time, Mon-Fri

User community

Content Formula says, "We have regular contact with customers to elicit feedback and ideas about the product. Sometimes these will directly influence the road map."

Voice of the vendor

Content Formula says: "Lightspeed365 is a suite of webparts that boost the user experience, engagement and adoption of SharePoint intranets. We use first-class, best-practice UX to transform the experience for content editors and employees alike.

Lightspeed365 is based on 20 years of experience in designing, building and managing intranets for companies of all sizes and industries. It is packaged and licenced in a way that makes it a quick and seamless upgrade for any new or existing intranet – including ready-to-run templates and self-service training materials. Lightspeed365's design philosophy is not to compete with Microsoft's software, but to augment it. We provide additional capabilities that work hand-in-hand with the Microsoft native applications and features.

Content Formula are digital workplace experts and have been designing and building intranets since 2005. We created Lightspeed365 to help intranet teams build better intranets – platforms that their employees find more helpful and easier to use. With a background as a full-service digital agency, we have always put user experience at the forefront of what we do. That continues to this day and is a big focus of Lightspeed365. We have experienced UX consultants who take our solutions from research & discovery through to implementation and facilitating adoption.

We help companies get the most out of Microsoft 365 from a communications, collaboration, knowledge management and policy management perspective. Our sister product, Xoralia, is a SharePoint add-in for controlled document management."

Voice of the customer

Customers all gave positive feedback about Lightspeed365. Being easy to use and intuitive were common themes, as one customer explained, "users don't have to be a SharePoint expert to get good looking pages." Another theme was the enhanced functionality the product brings to SharePoint that delivers, "a more engaging and intuitive interface for presenting content." One customer said this had led to, "improved communication and employee engagement." Customers also cited the integration with SharePoint with the product being "quick and easy to install, manage and implement."

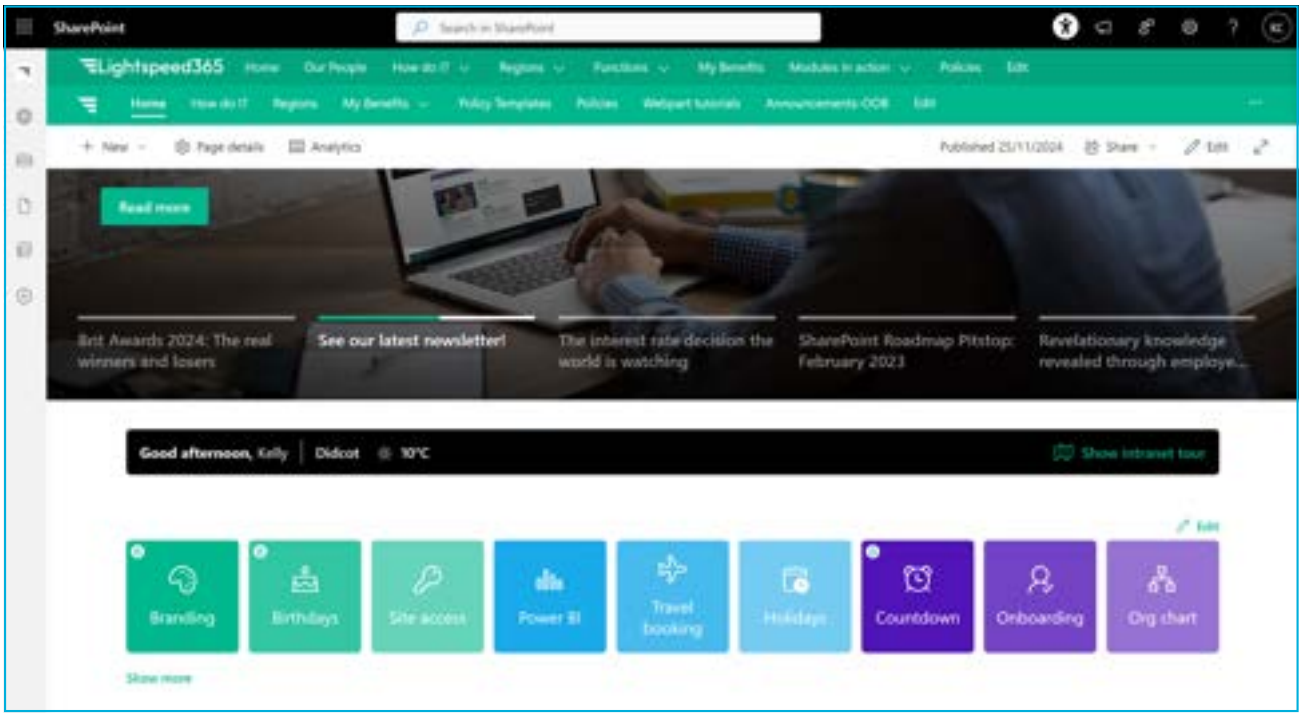
When it comes to changes, customers had less to say, giving a general impression they are happy with the current features and pace of development. One respondent explained that Content Formula has welcomed their suggestions and implemented many of them in the product as a result. Another simply said they would like to see, "more components like the ones we are using." One summed up simply saying, "we have no further requests on our change wish list."

Customers were unanimous in their praise for Content Formula. They described the experience of working with them as "excellent", "great", "perfect for our business". One customer who has worked with them for a number of years described them as "well informed, helpful and responsive." Another said they are "very professional and quick to respond and fix issues." Finally, one customer shared that Content Formula had provided "Great support while launching the new intranet."

SCENARIOS & SCORES

Please see the Scenarios below for more detail on each of these.

SCENARIO AND SCORE	KEY BENEFITS	IMPROVEMENTS / CONSIDERATIONS
4 **1. User Experience & Visual Appeal**	Welcome tour and visual enhancements, including branding management, are valuable additions to SharePoint.	No improvements to navigation. Notifications are at extra cost and are fairly limited.
3.5+ **2. Publishing & Communications Management**	A good selection of templates and news-oriented web parts. Helpful Alerts feature.	Audience targeting, news management, and multi-channel publishing are standard SharePoint.
3+ **3. Community & Engagement**	Easy-to-use feedback and poll functionality.	'Noticeboard' is at extra cost. Community, commenting and reactions are standard Microsoft.
2.5+ **4. Integrations & Services (Including M365)**	A nice 'app launcher' web part for third-party services.	Third-party integrations rely on the Viva Connections dashboard.
4+ **5. Information Finding & Search**	Good 'contextual' search box and 'Handbook' for reference content.	Full search results are still the standard SharePoint experience.
3.5 **6. Administrator Experience**	A simple admin dashboard gives a good overview of web parts in use.	Content life cycle and multilingual support are standard SharePoint.
2+ **7. Analytics**	It's extra cost, but Xoralia is a full featured mandatory reads solution.	Content and search analytics are standard Microsoft or need a third-party tool.
2.5+ **8. Mobile & Frontline Support**	Lightspeed365 web parts work well on smaller screens.	There is no dedicated mobile app or access without Microsoft licenses.



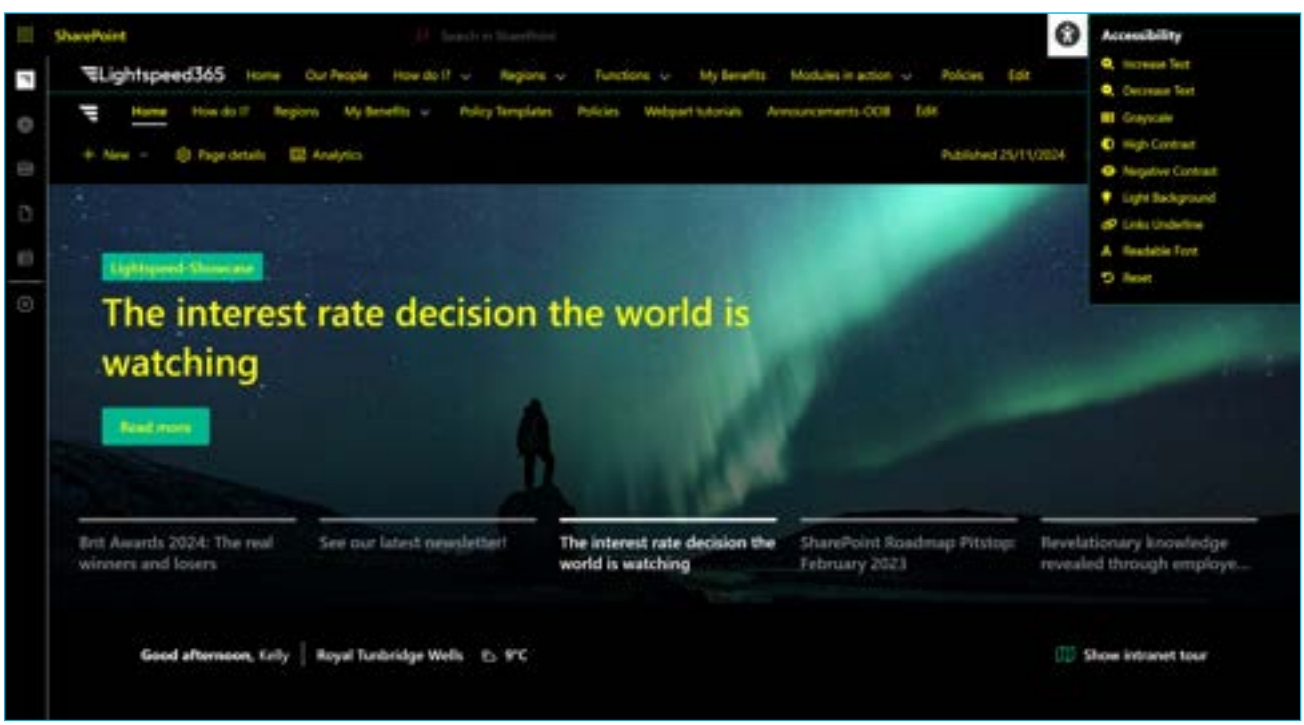
Lightspeed365 adds to the experience and visual appeal of SharePoint with colour, styling and personalisation features.

Lightspeed365's user interface has much in common with the underlying SharePoint platform. All Lightspeed365 components follow SharePoint conventions in how they display and are configured, plus all work with SharePoint's audience targeting model. It does make several improvements to the overall experience, however.

A standout is the 'welcome tour' overlay feature. This can be configured to welcome new users to the intranet and guide them through getting started, but it can also be added to any page to introduce a new or complex feature. This sort of help feature is increasingly common on consumer websites and we particularly like that clients can configure the tour's content and settings easily.

We like the accessibility menu that provides easy access to controls for changing font sizes and increasing contrast, including a negative contrast option. A setting for links to be underlined is also helpful. This feature remembers the user settings for subsequent visits as well. Another nice feature is the welcome bar web part that greets employees by name and helps to show that content is personalised for them. Combined with the welcome tour mentioned above, these features help make the intranet feel like it has been designed for the individual.

The welcome tour is valuable for welcoming new intranet users or introducing new features.



The accessibility menu gives easy access to change fonts and contrast.

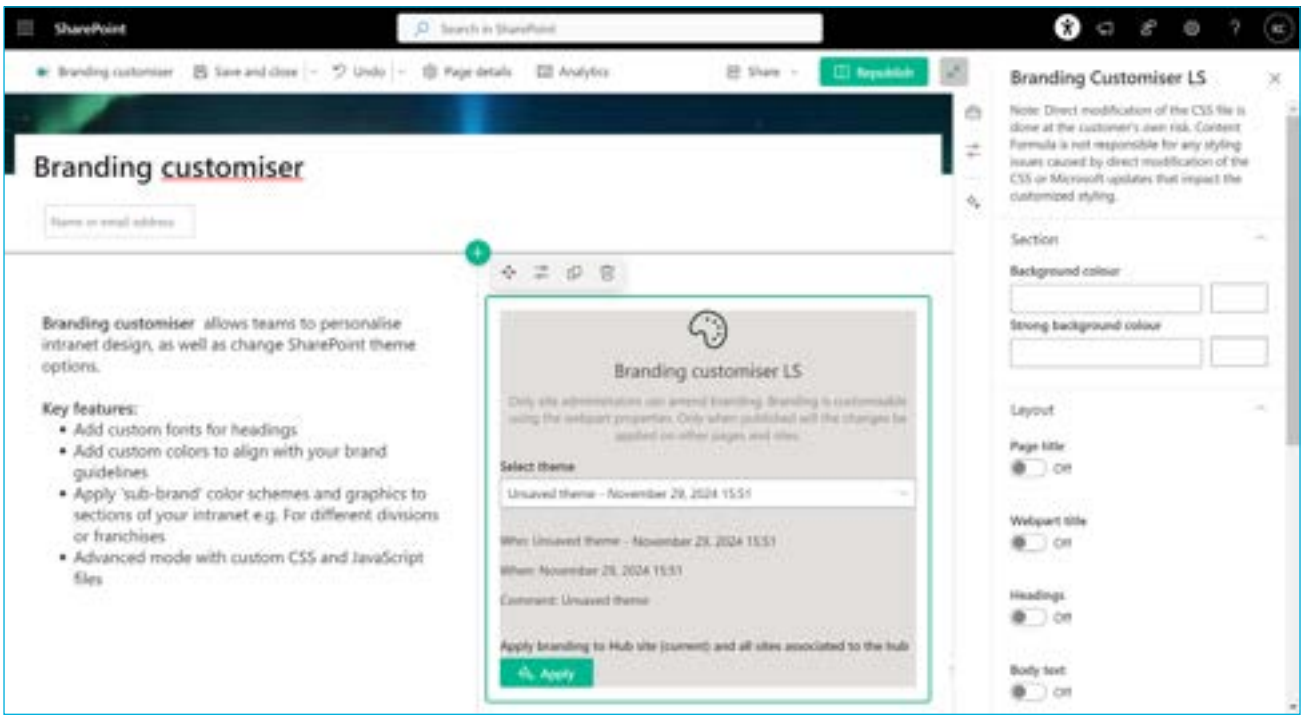
Site navigation is provided by standard SharePoint functionality, but Lightspeed365 has some web parts that can be used for on page navigation. One example is an accordion that helps to visually condense long pages under headings. Another is a table of contents generator that works with headings or web part titles to automatically generate the listing, which is also helpful for longer pages.

There's limited ability to generate notifications in standard SharePoint. Lightspeed365 adds push notifications that work in conjunction with the alerts functionality covered in Scenario 2 and require employees to be using the Microsoft Teams mobile app. Note these notifications are at additional cost but included in the pricing provided here.

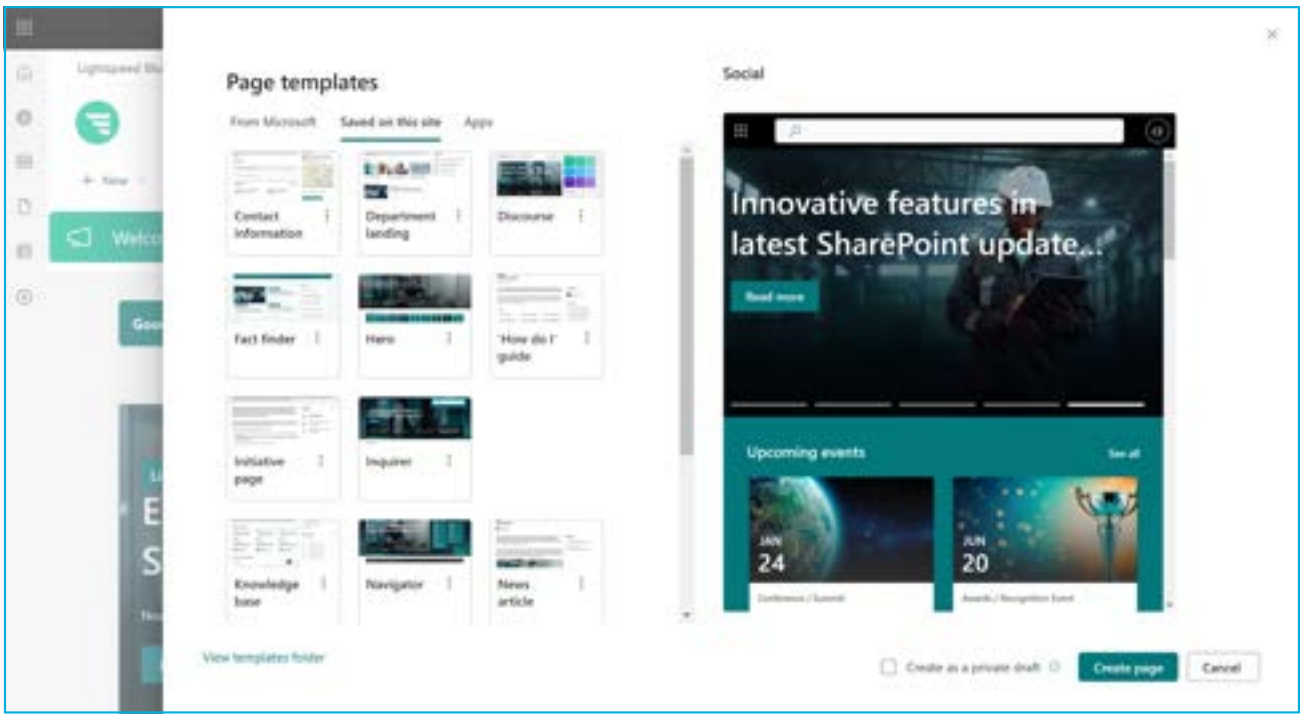
Lightspeed365 has several valuable visual appeal enhancements that make SharePoint feel more contemporary and in-keeping with modern website platforms. The 'Branding Customiser' helps manage themes for use with custom heading fonts and colours that align with brand palettes. This has the benefit of making the management of sub-brands on different intranet sites more straightforward. More dramatic visual changes can be achieved with custom CSS override, although Content Formula advises that this should be used with caution.

Lightspeed365's web parts go further than standard SharePoint, enabling the use of custom colour palettes and styling. For example, the welcome tour described above has multiple options for styling the page background, with the effects previewed in real-time, which is a nice touch.

'Section plus' gives additional styling controls over how page sections appear. Microsoft recently added background image support to sections which Lightspeed365 has had for a while, but the product goes one step further and adds support for background video. Used carefully this can add subtle visual interest to a page, while ambitious intranet managers might go for something more dramatic and impactful to support a communications campaign or event launch, for example.



The Branding Customiser gives access to custom colour palettes, fonts and CSS.



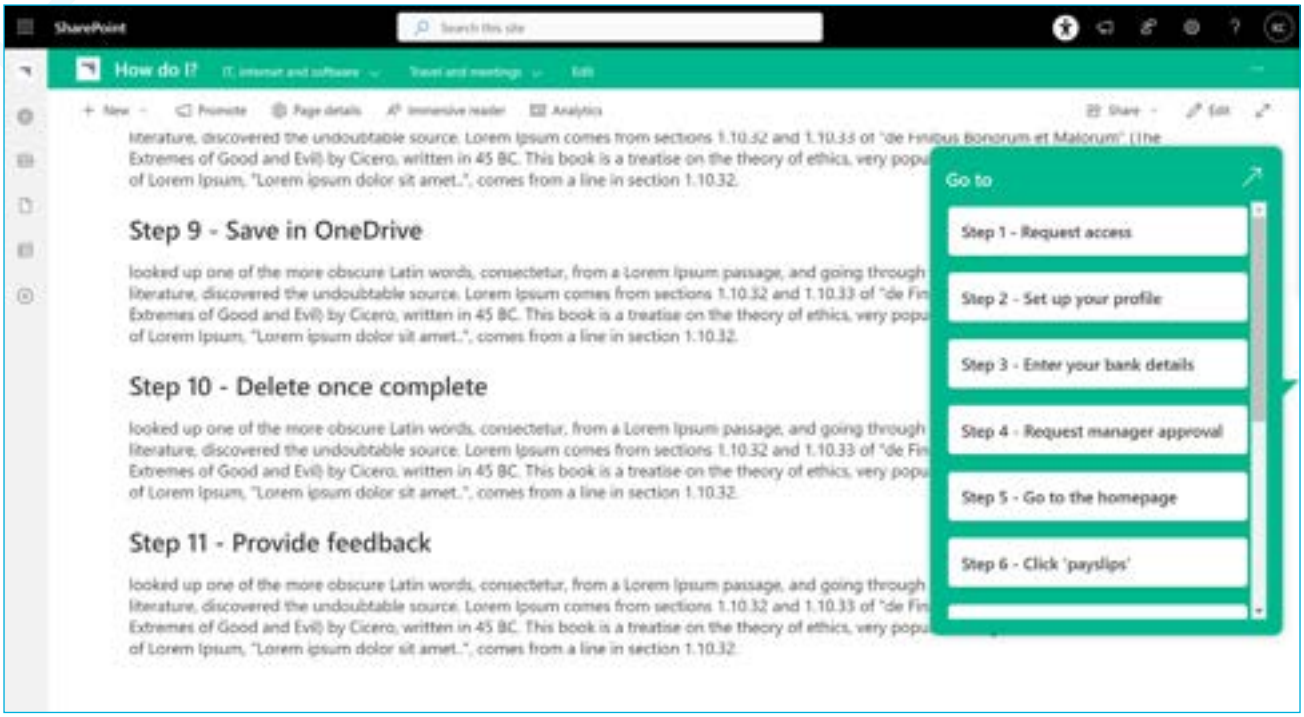
Lightspeed365 uses the standard SharePoint page editor experience but comes with nine useful page templates.

Lightspeed365 is designed to work seamlessly with SharePoint; news articles and content pages are created and managed using the standard modern page editor experience for text, sections and web parts. Lightspeed365 does expand on this in places, however.

Lightspeed365 'core' comes with 22 web parts and helpfully these are all easily identifiable with an 'LS' suffix and an accent colour in the icon, to help distinguish them from standard SharePoint web parts. Additionally, there are nine useful page templates covering things like news articles, topic pages, policies etc. Helpfully, these are designed with boilerplate text that describes how to use the template, and the Lightspeed365 web parts are already incorporated into them as appropriate. We particularly like the web part that uses headings to automatically generate a table of contents with several display options.

Lightspeed365 includes a news feed web part that displays articles from across the intranet in different ways. The most visual of these is the carousel view that builds significantly on the Microsoft equivalent. All the stories in the carousel are listed along the bottom of the web part, so the employee can see at a glance everything that is going to be featured. This is a win from a usability perspective and will help employees jump to what matters most to them. As each story headline is shown, there is accompanying metadata such as publish date, views and author. A 'fuel gauge' shows the stories cycling through the carousel as well. The news feed can display articles in tiles, a grid or list, so it can suitably match the overall design approach of the intranet.

Alerts are used for crisis and urgent communications. They appear in a banner or banners at the top of the content page and are suitably styled and coloured to be hard to miss. Alerts are audience targeted and can be deployed on one or multiple pages and sites. A page can show more than one alert as required.

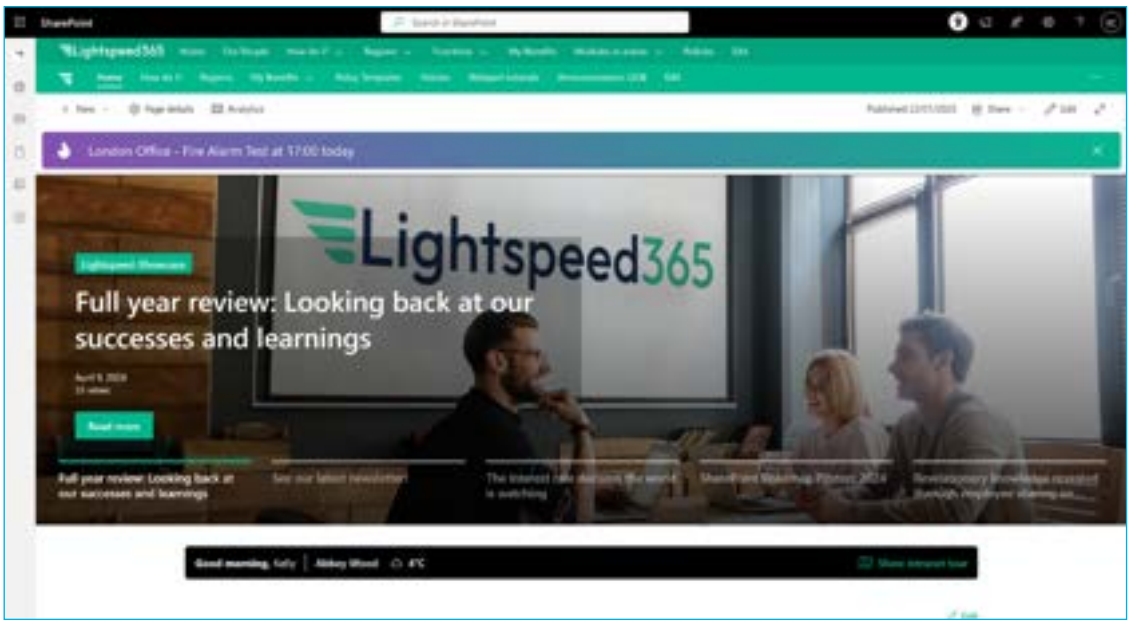


The table of contents is automatically generated from headings and can be shown in a number of ways, including the floating box pictured.

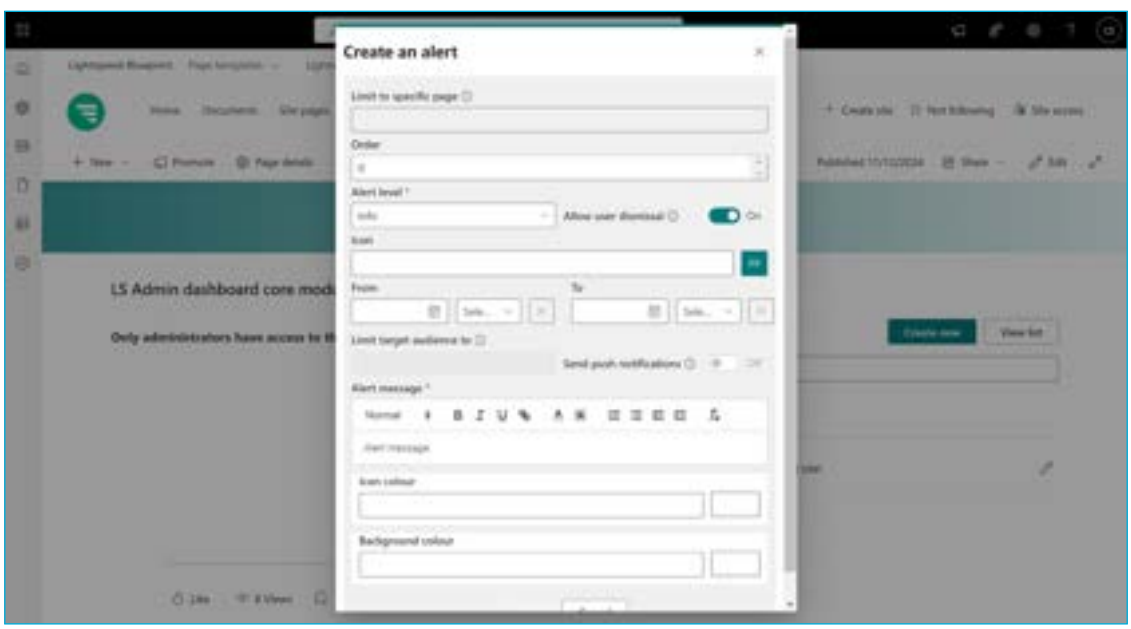
Lightspeed365's news feed carousel shows articles from across the intranet. Usability is improved by listing all the stories that are featured.

Alerts are created with a simple, well-designed form where admins choose from a number of alert levels and a custom icon. The feature supports start and end dates, and admins can choose whether employees may dismiss the alert or not. With the premium option (that is included in our pricing), clients using Teams can get notifications for alerts via chat, so employees with the Teams mobile app will get a push notification too.

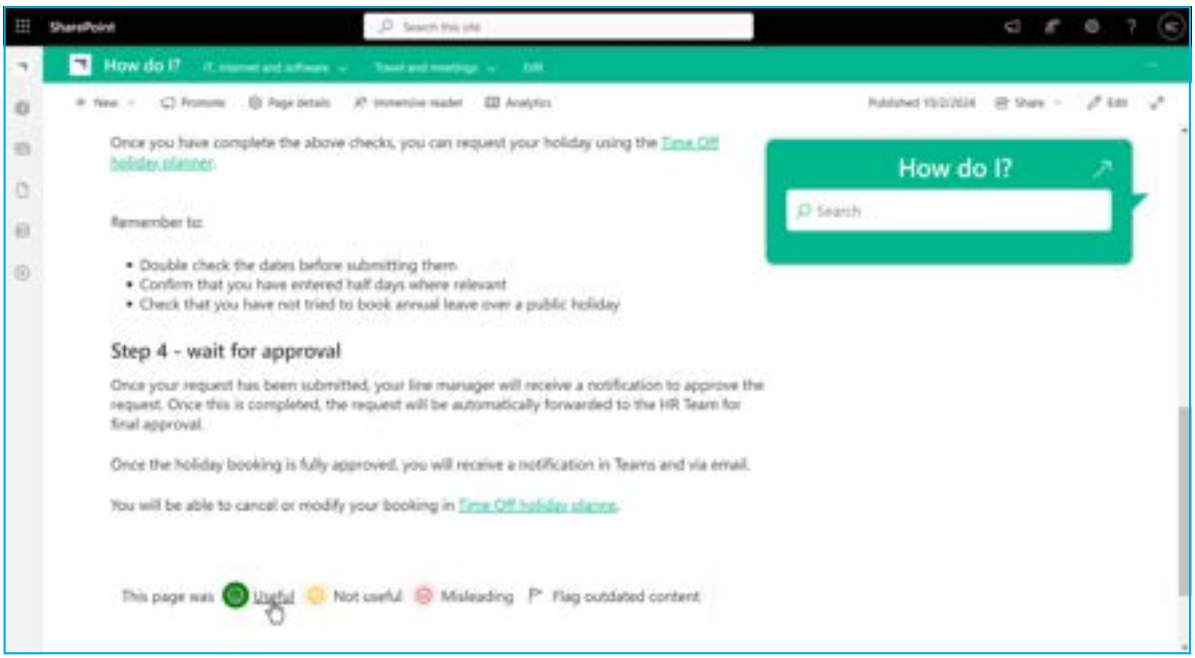
Overall, Lightspeed365 offers some useful enhancements to the SharePoint publishing experience with additional templates and carousel capabilities, while Alerts neatly plug a gap in functionality. However, audience targeting, news scheduling and multichannel publishing relies on the fairly basic capabilities of standard SharePoint.



Alerts feature prominently at the top of content pages.



Alerts are created and managed with a simple form that has some useful options such as start and end date as well as audience targeting.



Lightspeed365 provides an attractive page feedback option.

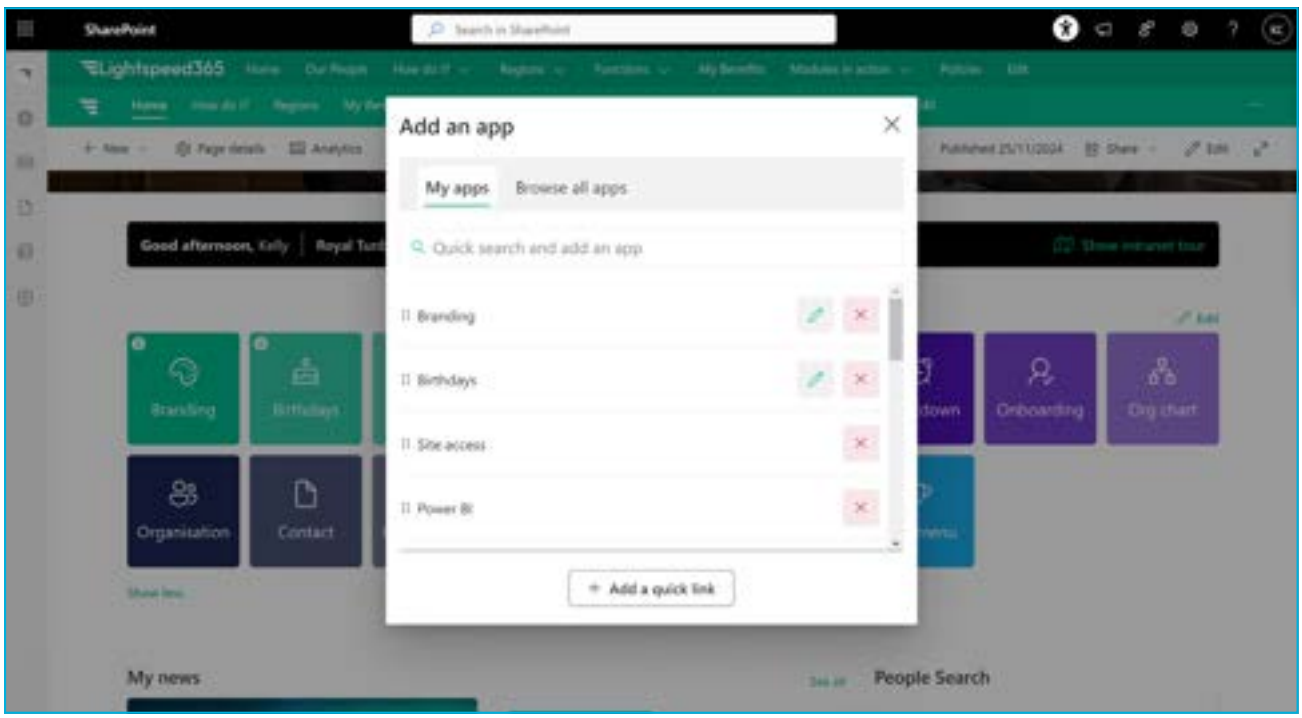
Community and engagement is not a main area of focus for Lightspeed365, but it does add a couple of useful features to enhance feedback and employee interaction. For community collaboration and responses to published content, Lightspeed365 does not add to the standard Microsoft approach of Viva Engage and SharePoint likes / comments.

However, Lightspeed365 adds an attractive page feedback web part that encourages employees to rate if the page is useful or not, and flag outdated content. As you would expect from the product, there are several alternative ways of formatting and styling this web part, and the labels can be configured to client needs. Feedback goes into a central SharePoint List that admins can see and decide what to do with from there. Clearly there is a risk of it languishing there if no process is set up, so Content Formula can configure (and recommends) email notifications for new feedback.

The product also includes a simple quick poll web part, which means you don't have to use Microsoft Forms for this. Unusually for the product, this web part is not audience targeted but this is on the roadmap. The poll has some fairly basic options, including a start and end date, which will be useful for setting up in advance. Admins can also configure whether the results are shown when an employee has voted or not and if people can change their vote.

For customers that would like employee wellbeing features, Content Formula has a partnership with Zensai, which includes features such as recognition and perks, and has built some associated connectors for the Viva Connections dashboard.

Lightspeed365's 'premium' option (not included in the price comparison) includes a 'Noticeboard' feature that allows all employees to post content such as staff events or classified ads. Employees wanting to post fill in a simple form that includes title, description and image. Posts can be categorised to help organise things. Colleagues can then reply and like using the standard SharePoint features. As standard, the content is included in search so we would recommend considering excluding these results in search settings, depending on the use case.



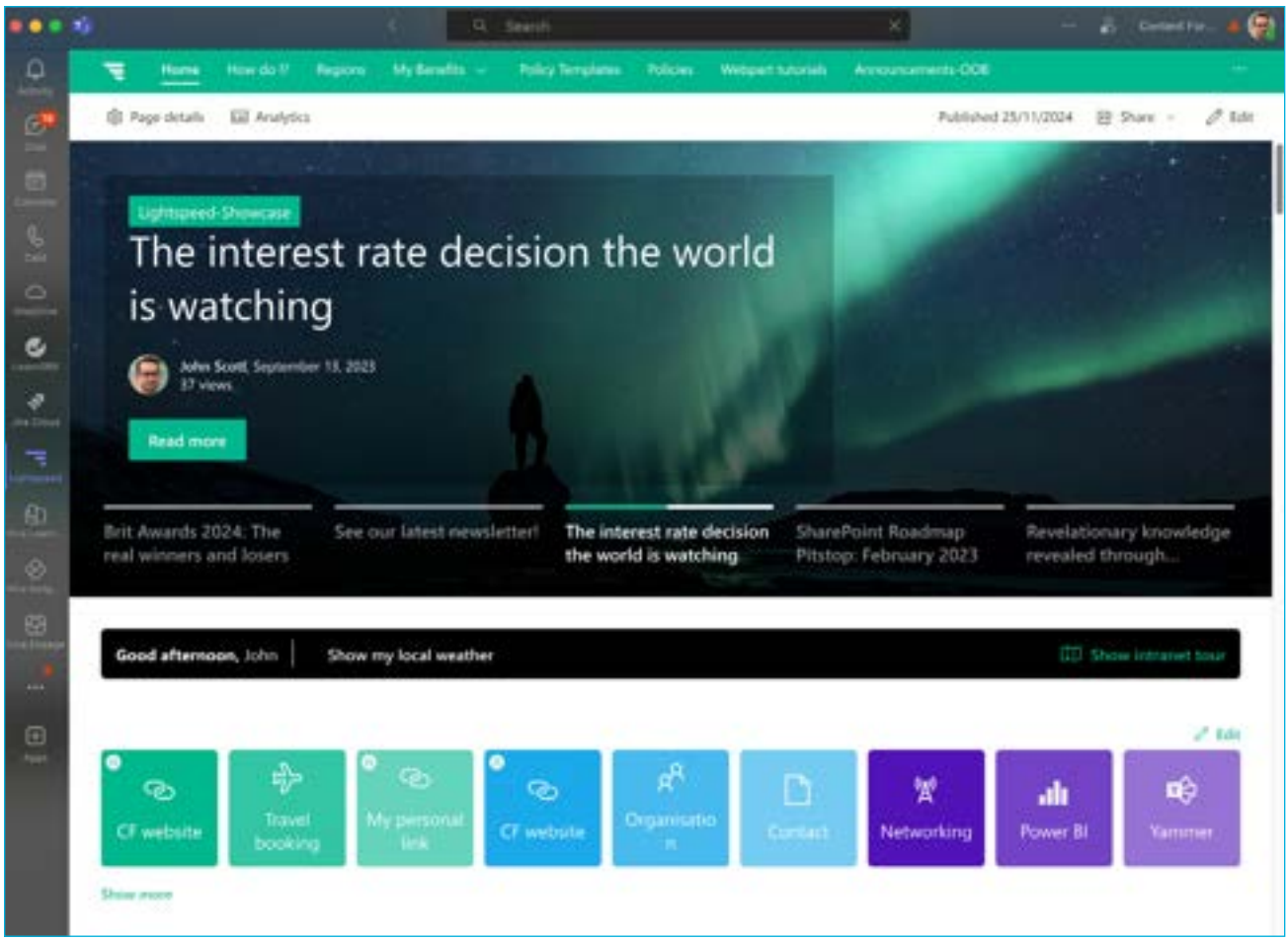
Lightspeed365's app launcher enables employees to customise what enterprise apps they see as well as the order in which they see them. Employees can also add their own apps.

Lightspeed365 comes with an 'app launcher' web part for apps and services, which are centrally controlled so if a key application such as the HR system changes, the link will be automatically updated for everyone. The web part is audience targeted but also allows employees to customise the menu items they see. People looking to add their own app links can search across a directory of company approved apps before adding their own. App tiles can be displayed in a number of different layouts - we like the simple drag-and-drop interface that allows employees to easily change the order and add / remove optional apps as needed.

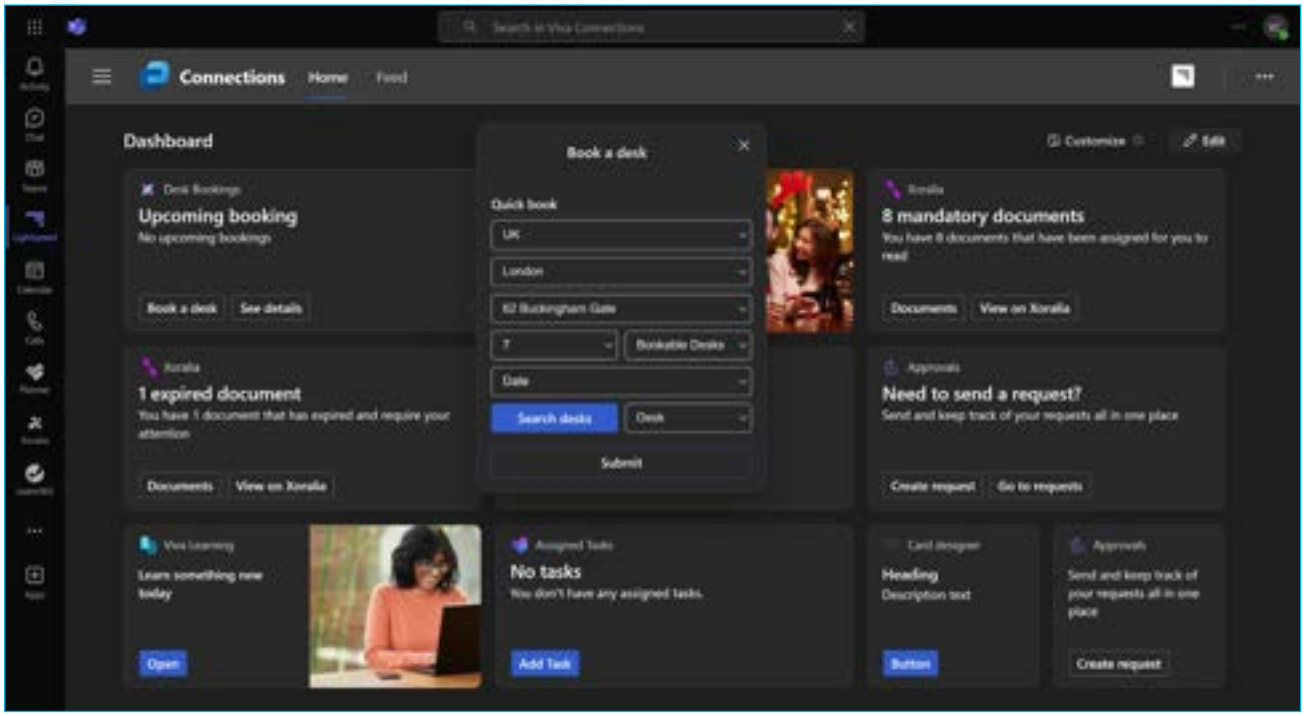
Lightspeed365's approach to most third-party service integrations is to leverage the Viva Connections dashboard and its 'adaptive cards'. Content Formula has built connectors for third-party services such as Condeco (facilities booking), partner Zensai (employee wellbeing) as well as their own controlled document management system, Xoralia (a separate SharePoint-based product available at additional cost). There is a web part that can show external social media feeds in the intranet. However, this is in partnership with subscription service Juicer so there is an additional cost for using the service.

Clients are likely to need some professional services help from Content Formula to get integrations working, and custom connections come at additional cost. But the vendor says that as they build new connectors for customers, these will become available for other clients to use as a starting point for their own projects. The connectors are typically two-way, allowing employees to initiate and / or complete actions such as booking a desk in Condeco, or reviewing expired documents in Xoralia. Coming from the same vendor, Xoralia has some additional integrations as you might expect, enabling content managed in that system to be surfaced in a number of different Lightspeed365 web parts such as a policy library, policy search as well as a mandatory read web part discussed further in Scenario 7.

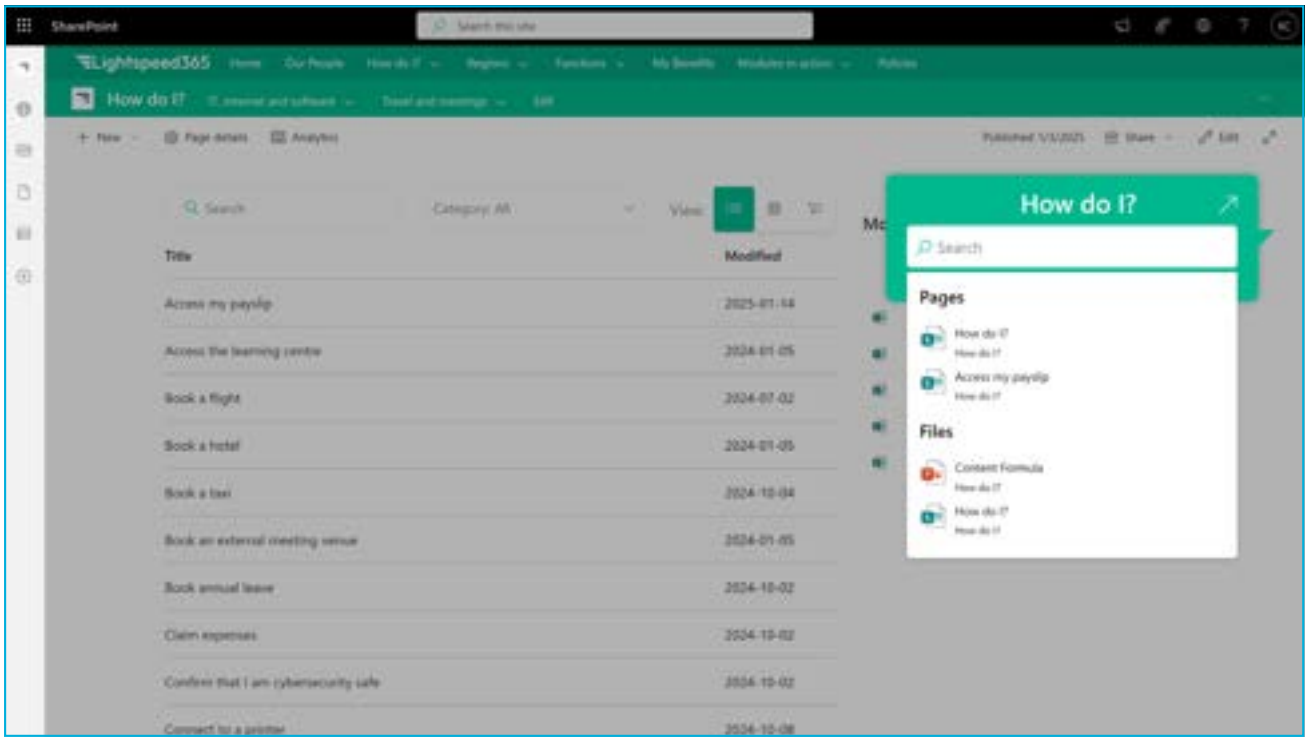
Microsoft365 integrations follow a similar Viva Connections-centred approach. Customers can use the Viva Connections app to integrate a Lightspeed365 intranet into Teams but there is also a dedicated Lightspeed365 app that shows the full intranet homepage and beyond. As discussed in other scenarios, the vendor's approach is to leverage Microsoft capabilities as much as possible, so there are no Lightspeed365-specific integrations for Viva Engage, Events Planner etc. (please see the SharePoint review for details of anything on offer there). Lightspeed365 'premium' includes the ability for Alerts to be sent via a Teams chat, triggering push notifications in that app.



Lightspeed365 has its own app for Microsoft Teams that gives access to the full intranet.



Lightspeed365 integrations leverage Viva Connections Dashboard cards to complete tasks in third-party services, such as booking a desk via Condeco.



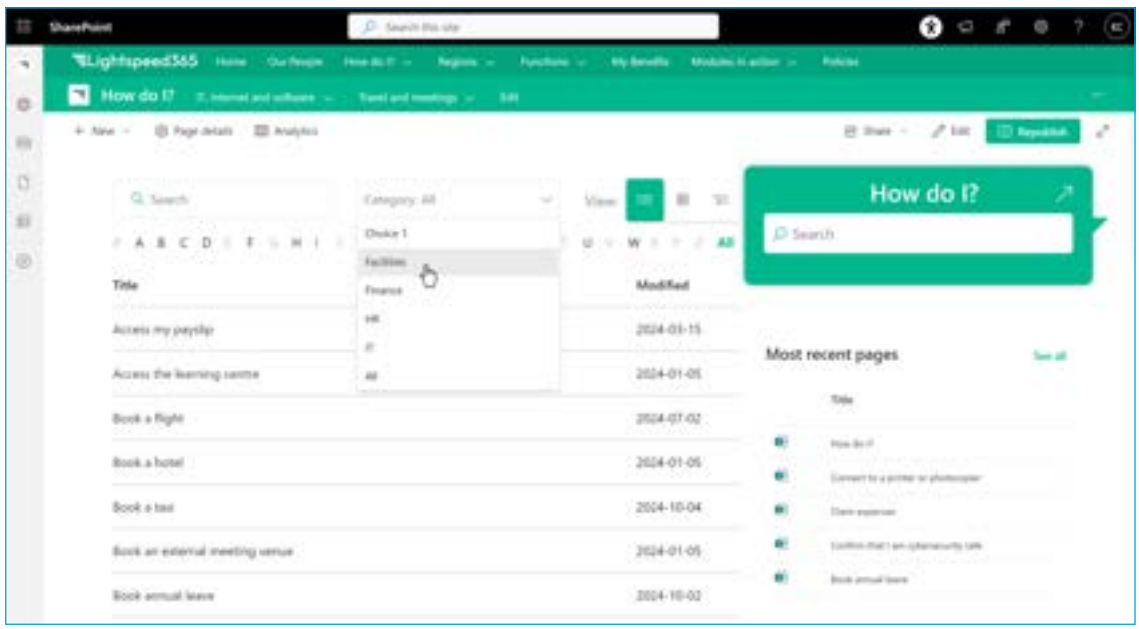
Lightspeed365's 'Floating Search' provides quick access to contextual site search and results.

The main search experience for employees and associated management tools for admins (including federated search) are the standard Microsoft / SharePoint approach. Lightspeed365 does offer some useful additional ways to find information, however. 'Floating search' is a search box that 'floats' above page content, so it stays in the same place as you scroll down a screen. Clicking in the search box immediately suggests some results in a drop-down list and these refine as you type. Admins can configure this web part so it just shows results from one 'vertical' from news, files, sites, images etc. in the site, so this could provide a useful contextual search with the right configuration.

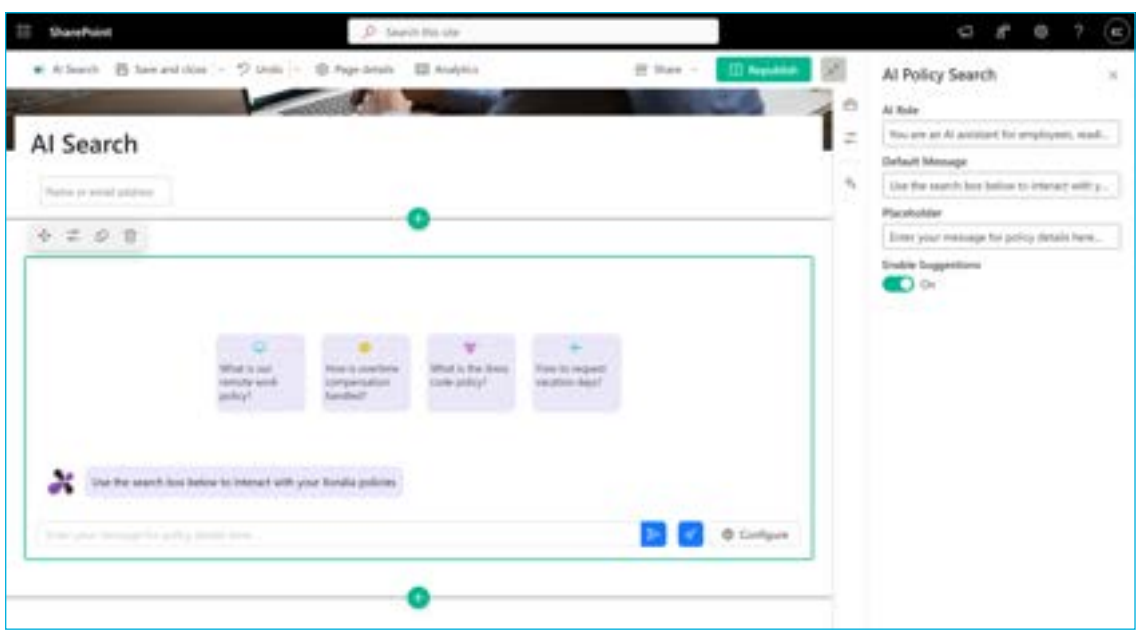
The 'Handbook' web part allows admins to group together a set of content types (such as pages) from a site and present it in an A-Z index with a search box. The content can be presented in a simple list, as cards or tiles, and grouped by additional categories. At the moment, these are all text-based and it would be good to see an option to include thumbnail documents or images to aid visual recognition. However, we particularly like the speed with which the list of documents refines as you type in the search box (which uses metadata) and can see this being helpful for an FAQ, employee handbook or 'How Do I?' type guidance. An 'advanced' version of this web part adds additional flexibility to include more sites and content types, as well as additional display options.

Lightspeed365 Premium (not included in the price provided here) includes an AI-powered search option with a chat-based interface for asking questions about content in a defined scope. This is powered by Azure OpenAI so there is additional cost for this service. Content Formula

demonstrated this connected to a policy library where an employee can ask questions such as 'what is our remote work policy?' and the search will return an answer, along with the source document. The ability to provide some example questions is helpful in encouraging employees to use this feature. We can see it being particularly helpful on mobile devices, where reading through a long policy document to find the information needed is unwieldy.



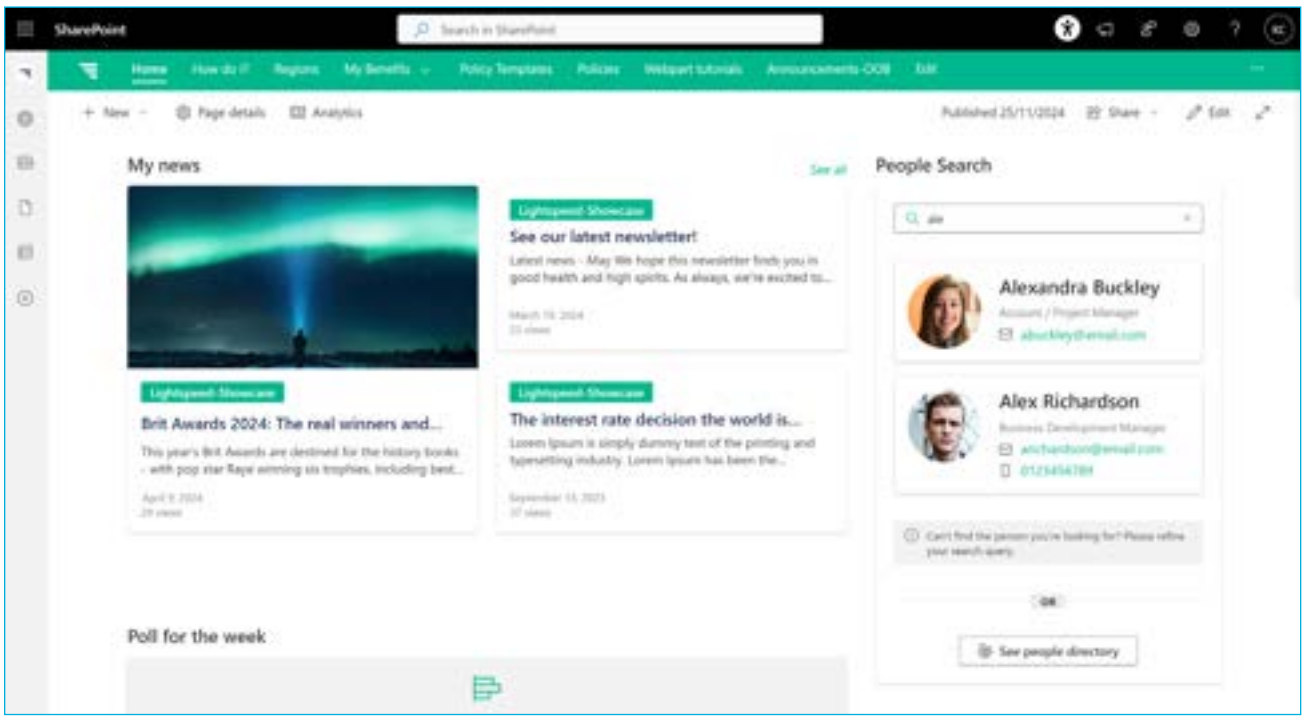
The 'Handbook' web part provides a useful A-Z index of one content type from a site while an 'advanced' version adds more flexibility in aggregating content from multiple sources.



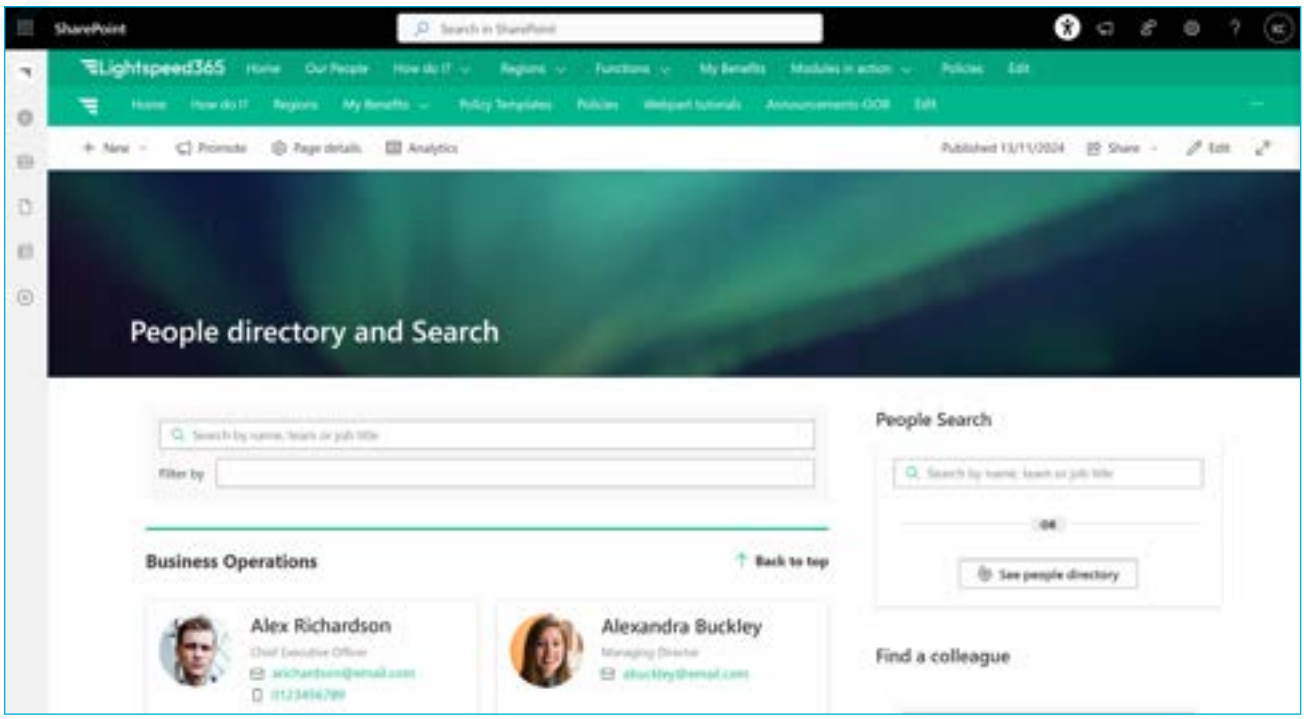
AI search enables employees to ask questions of a knowledge base using natural language. Note the configuration panel for admins.

The 'People Search' web part can be put on any page across the intranet. It starts suggesting results in a drop-down list as you type any profile information, such as name, department or job title. Results are presented as mini-cards, where what profile information is shown can be configured. The web part can be configured to show the Microsoft profile card overlay or go to the full profile if preferred when a result is clicked on. People information is sourced and maintained via standard Microsoft tools such as Entra.

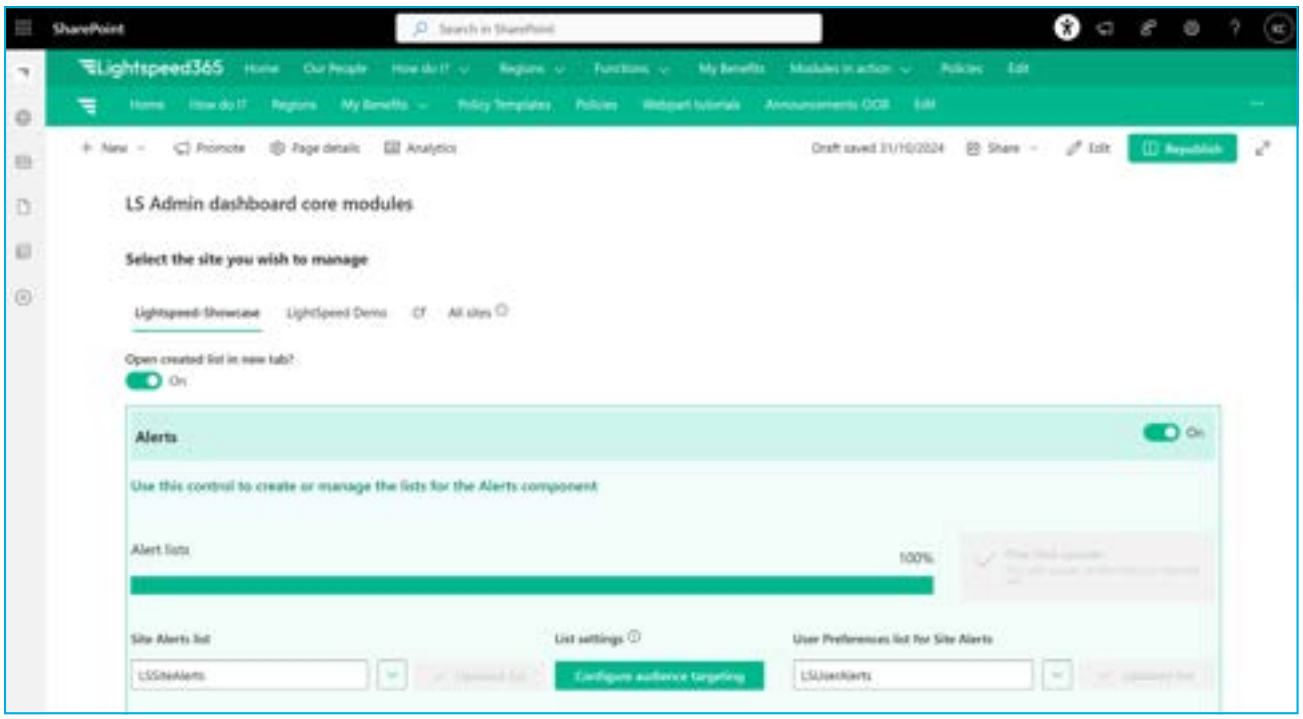
There is also a people directory web part that can be easily configured to show everyone when the page loads (good for small organisations) or show results in response to some search terms. We really like the 'filter by' option that suggests profile metadata to refine results further, as this intelligently guides employees to the person they are looking for. Again, a lot of the value in this web part is the powerful configuration options that are simple for admins to use but can have a dramatic impact on how people results are presented and refined. For example, the 'filter by' option can be easily changed so that results are presented in tabs, where each tab shows people in a specific department or location. Another use case would be to put the web part on a department landing page and configure it to provide a dynamically generated listing of the team members. A nice feature of this is the ability to 'pin' the department manager or team leader so they appear first.



The People Search web part can be put on any page and provides quick access to colleague contact information.



The people directory shows a listing of colleagues that admins can easily configure to allow different ways of searching for and presenting information.

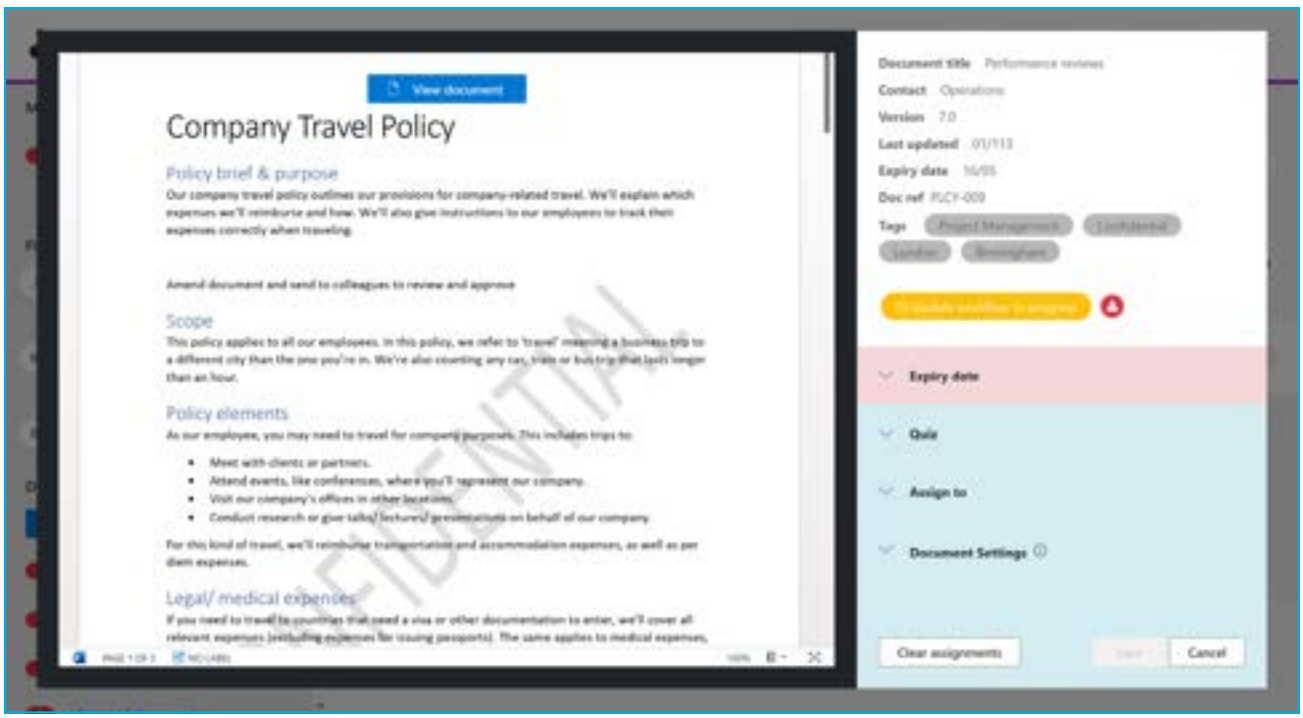


The admin dashboard provides an overview of all the behind-the-scenes lists that power Lightspeed365's web parts as well as supporting upgrades.

Lightspeed365 is built so that clients can self-serve installation and configuration themselves if they wish. To this end, Content Formula provides a deployment package that includes a 'blueprint site' which is a ready-to-customise site structure containing all the templates and pages Lightspeed365 provides. Like the page templates that include instructions described in Scenario 2, the blueprint site includes a section that is a 'user guide' for admins on how to configure the product and use every web part. A mixture of text and video tutorials are provided to suit different needs.

An administrator dashboard gives an overview of the lists all the web parts use behind the scenes. This helps admins to keep track of where the components are deployed as well as to create new lists. The dashboard also guides admins through updates and upgrades to the product and makes any necessary changes. Usefully for more complex organisations, the admin dashboard can manage an individual site or all sites to help keep things in sync across the intranet estate and support devolved administration.

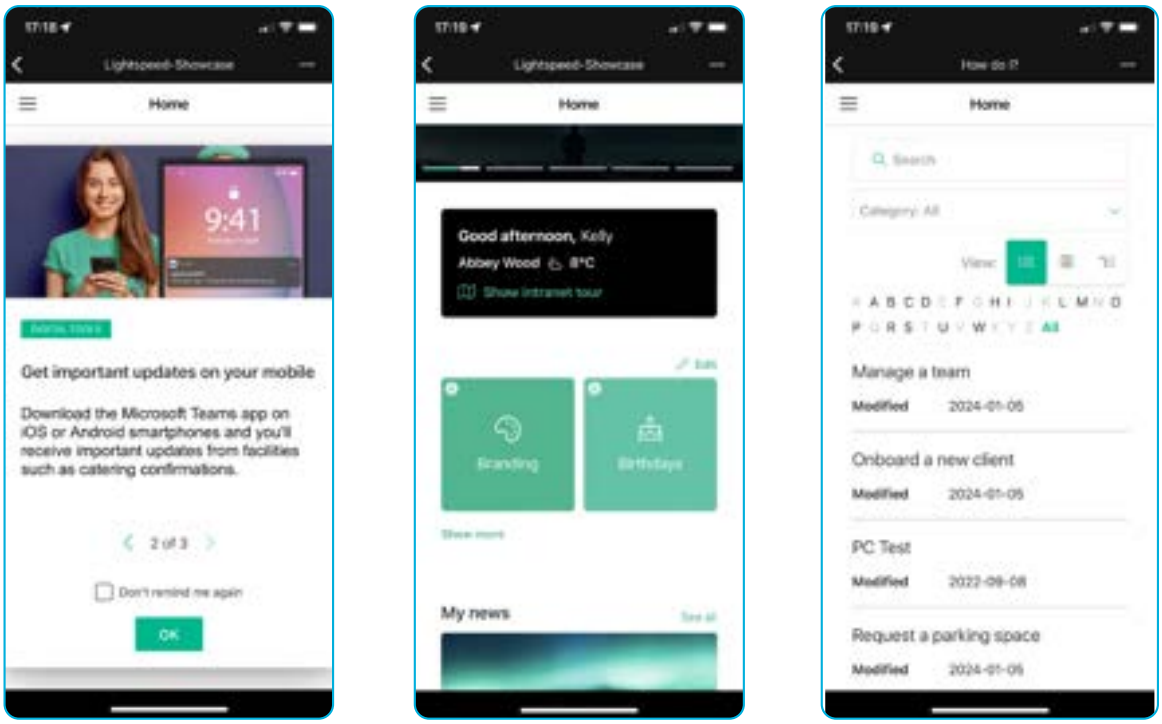
As with other scenarios, Lightspeed365 leverages SharePoint capabilities for core administration functions while adding some useful features. Building home pages for the intranet and departments uses the SharePoint editor, but Lightspeed365 comes with templates for both, featuring its enhanced web parts that can be used as a starting point. Content life cycle and multilingual features are standard SharePoint. Multimedia support is provided by standard SharePoint features as well, although Lightspeed365 does enable the use of video background in sections as described in Scenario 1.



Content Formula's separate Xoralia product provides comprehensive support for mandatory read content.

Lightspeed365 does not include an analytics capability as standard. Content Formula can implement a tracking code for a third-party analytics tool, and are planning a web part so customers can self-serve this requirement. Alternatively, the vendor can build dashboards for customers in PowerBI or implement Clarity. Search analytics is provided by Microsoft's Search and Intelligence Center.

Mandatory reads can be supported via another Content Formula product, Xoralia, which is not included in the price provided to us. This has comprehensive support for ensuring important content in documents and site pages is read by employees, which includes reporting on who has or has not read content. One interesting feature of this product is the ability to ask questions after a piece of content has been read to check it has been understood fully.



Lightspeed365 web parts are fully responsive and work well on mobile device browser as well as via the Teams App.

Employees can access Lightspeed365 on mobile devices via responsive web, SharePoint app or Teams App (if configured via Viva Connections) or the Lightspeed365 App for Teams. Login is via Microsoft credentials, so employees need a Microsoft F1 license at minimum

The mobile user experience is acceptable, using SharePoint's responsive design features to resize and re-flow content, but it's not as optimised as some other products in the report. One nice element is that the 'welcome tour' works as well on mobile as desktop so this can be used to tell people a bit more about what they can do.

There are no specific features for frontline workers, but the 'semantic search' discussed in Scenario 5 could be valuable in getting answers from a sizeable knowledge repository in a usable format on a small device.

Overall, the mobile experience is the standard provided by Microsoft, so it is functional without being exceptional.

THINGS TO BEAR IN MIND

Compared with other SharePoint add-ons, Lightspeed365 is a nicely bundled collection of web parts rather than a full-blown 'intranet-in-box', although the self-serve blueprint site option goes some way towards fulfilling that. We can imagine the vendor doing more with blueprint in the future as it's an appealing aspect of the offering for clients that are happy to populate pages, but don't know how to go about building the site structure.

The web parts add value to communications and information finding scenarios in particular, and there are some nice visual tweaks. However, community and engagement support is limited, particularly without the premium 'Noticeboard' in the core product.

Lightspeed365 does offer some support for third-party integrations although these leverage the Viva Connections dashboard rather than being directly integrated into the product. Value-add Microsoft365 integrations, such as personal documents and tasks, are not a focus of the product which feels like an opportunity.

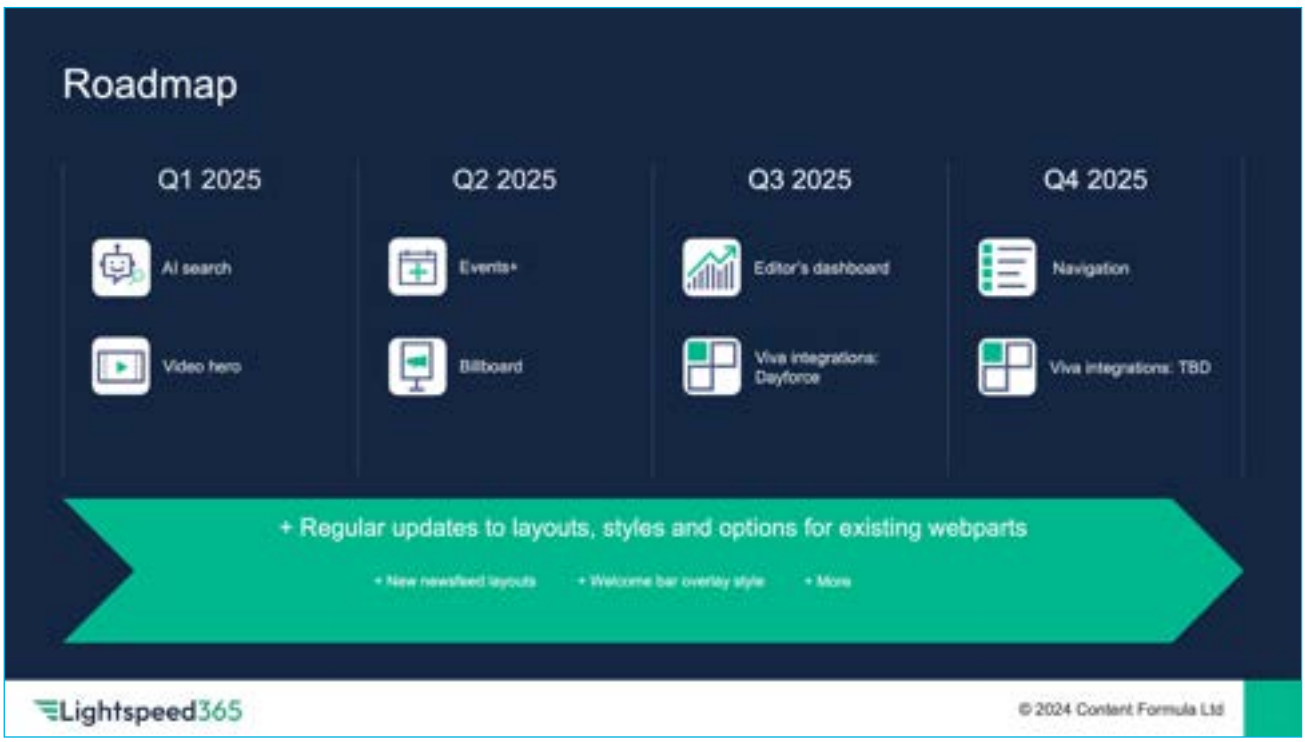
Why choose this product

Lightspeed365 is a well-made collection of web parts that add attractive features to SharePoint intranets. The vendor has developed an innovative 'self-serve' option that includes an intranet site 'blueprint' for a one-off, reasonable price. We think the product will appeal to medium to large organisations that are looking for some additional features and control over SharePoint visual design, without going for a full-blown add-on product.

You may also be interested in...

BEACON FRESH syntphony

Vendor roadmap



Roadmap image provided by Content Formula.

Back to index

MangoApps

FULLY STANDALONE

REQUIRES SHAREPOINT

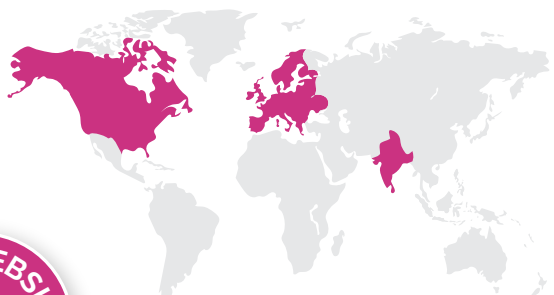
FRONTLINE FOCUS

OTHER

Typical deployment:

5,000 to 10,000

Company locations:



VISIT THE WEBSITE

The product in a nutshell

MangoApps is a feature-rich product that offers a versatile intranet and a solid mobile experience, well suited for medium to large sized organisations needing a bit of everything.

SUMMARY

MangoApps

MangoApps was founded in 2008 and is headquartered in USA, but with presences in India and the UK. With partners in Germany and Australia, the vendor is capable of working with clients across the globe and has experience with large organisations too.

MangoApps is a comprehensive platform with an impressive range of community and team-focused features. It offers extensive configuration options for admins and has an excellent mobile app, with features such as task assignment well suited for frontline workers. MangoApps also features a full LMS which is unusual for intranet products. The search experience is strong, as is the AI experience within it.

As you might expect from a product being something of an all-rounder, some of the features lack sophistication. For instance, out-of-the-box integrations are more limited than we've seen in other products. The user experience can be noisy and a little overwhelming, which requires reasonable time investment by site administrators – especially if MangoApps is to be used to its full potential.

MangoApps is likely to suit medium to large organisations looking for value for money for an extensive out-of-the-box toolset. It can effectively deliver communications, learning and engagement for both desk-based and frontline workers. For those organisations also looking to explore the potential of AI, MangoApps is worth considering as there are a lot of helpful features on offer.

Pricing

PRICE BAND	
1,000 users	$$$
5,000 users	$$$
20,000 users	$$$
50,000 users	$$$

These prices are indicative, offering a comparison of the products featured in this report only. Please contact the vendor for a bespoke quote.

PRICING MODEL

Subscription – price per user per month; subscription – price band based on number of users; store and location-based pricing.

DISCOUNTS

Charities and non-profit organisations, schools and educational institutes, multi-year commitments, customers only pay for active users and large enterprises.

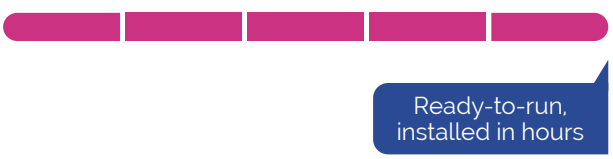
COSTS TYPICALLY

Fairly evenly spread across three years.

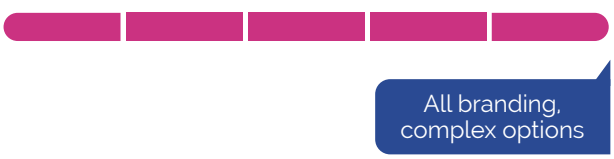
PRICE INCLUDES

Support, training and upgrade services are all included at no additional charge. Optional module included in price: Training and Learning Module (LMS).

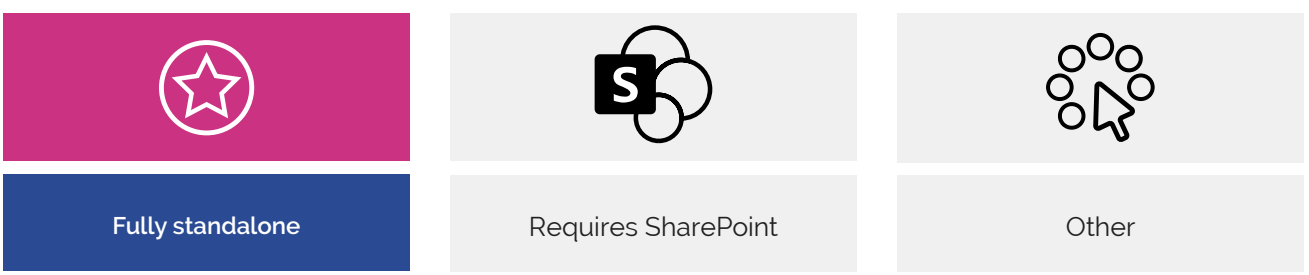
Product type



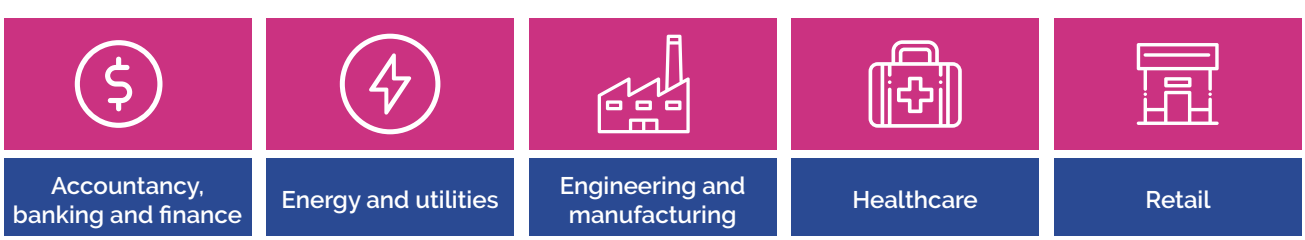
Branding opportunities

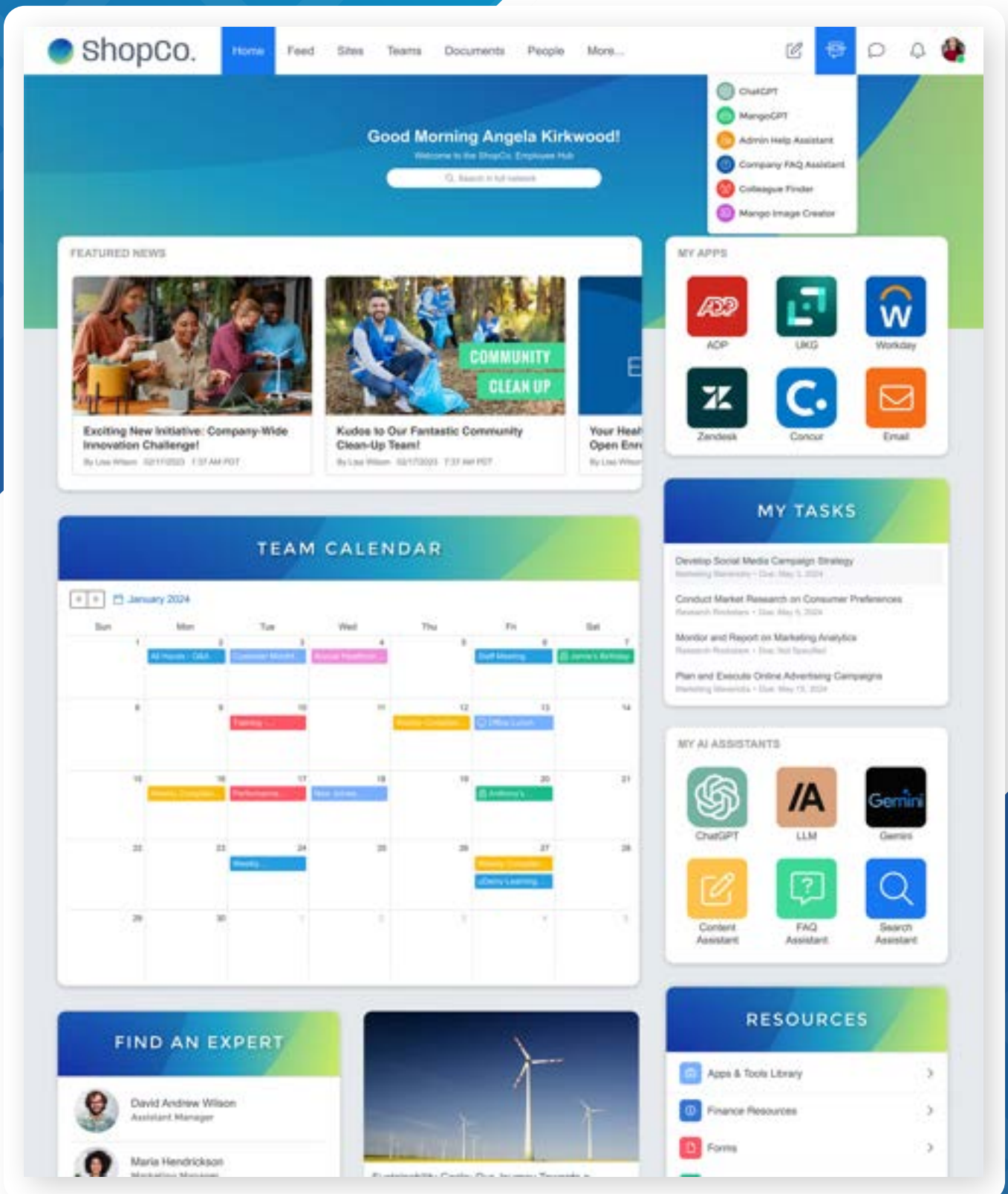


Base systems



Sectors




ShopCo.
Home
Feed
Sites
Teams
Documents
People
More...
ChatGPT
MangoGPT
Admin Help Assistant
Company FAQ Assistant
Colleague Finder
Mango Image Creator
Good Morning Angela Kirkwood!
FEATURED NEWS
COMMUNITY
CLEAN UP
Exciting New Initiative: Company-Wide Innovation Challenge!
Kudos to Our Fantastic Community Clean-Up Team!
MY APPS
ADP
UKG
Workday
Zendesk
Concur
Email
MY TASKS
Develop Social Media Campaign Strategy
Conduct Market Research on Consumer Preferences
Monitor and Report on Marketing Analytics
Plan and Execute Online Advertising Campaigns
TEAM CALENDAR
January 2024
Sun
Mon
Tue
Wed
Thu
Fri
Sat
MY AI ASSISTANTS
ChatGPT
LLM
Gemini
Content Assistant
FAQ Assistant
Search Assistant
FIND AN EXPERT
David Andrew Wilson
Assistant Manager
Maria Hendrickson
RESOURCES
Apps & Tools Library
Finance Resources
Forms

COMPANY AND PRODUCT

Company details

Company
MangoApps

ISO 27001 certified
Yes

Data residency
N/A

Company founded
2008

Product launched
2010

Typical client size
5,000 to 10,000

Largest deployment so far
Over 300,000 employees in 875 locations across 14 countries.

Customers
Clients include: AutoZone, PetSmart, Alorica, Vancouver Island Health Authority, TeamHealth, Andersen Windows & Doors (2024 Ragan Employee Communications Awards winner), A.S. Watson, Nicklaus Children's Hospital, AIDA Cruises, YMCA of USA.
Please see their website for more.

Partner locations
USA, UK, Germany, Australia

Company locations
Issaquah, USA (HQ), UK and India

Product and technical details

Name of product

MangoApps

Deployment

Client on-premises	Client private cloud	Microsoft Azure	Amazon Web Services	Vendor-hosted	Microsoft 365 tenant	Google Cloud	Other

Authentication supported

Entra ID	ADFS	Okta	Open ID	Oauth	G Suite	Other*

*All SAML Providers

App deployment

Google Play store	Apple store	MDM	MAM	Other

Accessibility

WCAG2.1 conformant.

Document library sources integrated

Box	Dropbox	Google Drive	SharePoint	OneDrive	Other

Optional integrated enterprise search engines

Coveo	Elastic	IBM	Lucidworks	Microsoft	Mindbreeze	Sinequa	Other

User interface multi-language

Machine translation	Pre-configured	Editable	Right to left script supported	Other

Content multi-language

Machine translation for publishers	Machine translation for end users	Editable machine translation for publishers	Manual creation for publishers	Right to left script	Other

Set-up and support

Set-up process for new clients

Typical setup and onboarding for a new client in MangoApps is about 6 weeks. It includes strategic consulting, content seeding, company branding of templates, configuring workflows & automation, setup of user provisioning & sync with HCM system, setting up integrations and SSO. Please see their website for more details.

Version numbers

Demonstrated to ClearBox: MangoApps Release 18.2, August 2024

At January 2025: MangoApps Release 18.3, December 2024

Product updates

Minor updates weekly; major updates every quarter.

Product update process

For the multi-tenant cloud option, all product updates are automatically applied to customer accounts as they are released. Single-tenant cloud and on premises customers have some additional control when product updates are deployed to their environment (typically 2 to 3 months).

Reverse-out options

In MangoApps the client owns 100% of their data. Clients have an option to get a full exported copy of all their data. Within 30 days of a contract ending, MangoApps permanently deletes all copies of the customer data from its data centre.

Technical support

Email support	Phone support	Chat support	Online portal	24/7 support	Office hours only

User community

MangoApps uses its community management suite to power an online customer community, which enables customer connections, personalised engagement, support at scale and more.

Voice of the vendor

MangoApps says: "MangoApps is dedicated to making work simpler, more connected, and more engaging. For more than 15 years, we've offered a platform that centralizes everything that employees of enterprise organizations need — communication, collaboration, and productivity— in one place. Our goal is to help businesses keep employees informed, connected, and motivated in today's fast-paced work environment, whether they work from home, the office, or the frontline.

What Makes Us Different?

- Customer-Centric Approach: Without outside investors dictating our direction, we are able to prioritize our customers' needs, focusing on delivering a platform that truly grows with their business and evolves based on direct customer feedback.
- Comprehensive Unified Communication Hub: We solve fragmented communication by bringing everything—instant messaging, group chats, video calls, and personalized news feeds—into one platform. Our AI capabilities enhance this hub with intelligent content recommendations, automated message routing, and predictive analytics, ensuring communication is streamlined, smarter, and more responsive.

The Challenges We Address

- Enabling Seamless Communication Across the Organization: Ensuring every employee, from office to frontline, feels connected and informed is critical. MangoApps enables leadership to effectively communicate with the entire workforce, fostering unity and engagement. Simultaneously, employees can easily connect with colleagues, share knowledge, and boost productivity.

Improving and Maintaining Employee Engagement: Our AI-driven tools, like AI-powered news feeds, automated content recommendations, and smart search, ensure the right information reaches the right people at the right time, fostering a connected and motivated workforce.

Leading on Generative AI

- MangoApps AI Hub: AI Hub transforms enterprise knowledge into AI that speaks your language, follows your rules, and scales with your business. Employees can effortlessly access information, automate repetitive tasks, and streamline workflows in real time. Assistants can be trained on custom knowledge bases built from unified enterprise information across systems, seamlessly integrating with flexible LLM options to deliver top-tier capabilities without vendor lock-in..
- AI-Driven Insights: We leverage AI to power smart search and automated content recommendations, reducing time spent searching and boosting productivity.
- Personalized Experiences: AI tailors the experience for each employee, curating relevant content and updates, making work more efficient and impactful.

MangoApps isn't just another digital workplace tool. We're a partner in our customers' journey to build a more connected, engaged, and productive workforce."

Voice of the customer

MangoApps customers find the product feature-rich, yet simple to set up, with one customer praising "How quickly you can get a base intranet built out and in production." The flexibility of MangoApps is also popular with customers, such as the ability to have a single product that can be used as an intranet, an LMS and for employee engagement; as one customer responded: "The ability to incorporate rewards & recognition and LMS elements within our intranet solution means we can be stickier as a 'single source of truth' and increase engagement on the platform." Other customers said that MangoApps "exceeded expectations" and that "The platform punches well above its weight – value and range of features for cost is superior!"

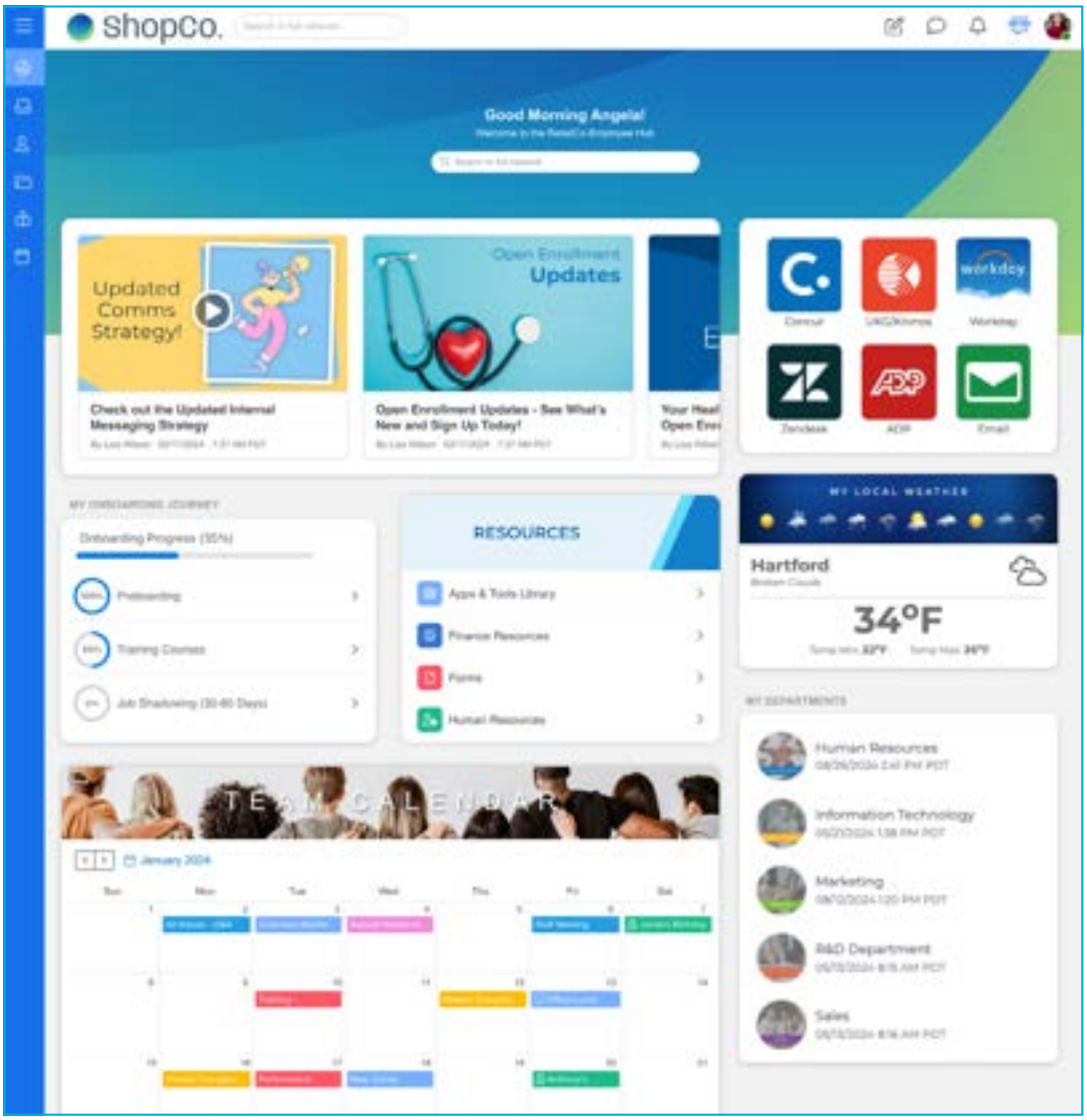
No single area emerges where customers are wanting improvement, but there were individual requests. One customer found search to be lacking, remarking that "Search continues to be less than optimal, as does the management of image libraries." Another respondent felt that group membership reporting could be improved, saying that "group membership reporting is at ad-hoc request. It would be great to have a report that I could run at any time to view group membership across all groups." A third respondent commented that the ways in which media is displayed to employees can be complicated.

MangoApps customers gave glowing reviews of the service they receive. The availability and responsiveness of their customer service people is consistently praised by MangoApps customers, along with their collaborative approach to solving problems and making changes to the product. The high level of customer service is one of the reasons MangoApps customers remain loyal, with one customer saying, "The support we receive from MangoApps is the main reason we stay. Our Customer Service Manager truly operates as an extension of our team and constantly brings us creative solutions and is an amazing listener" and another saying "I don't feel like just a number to them. They have collaborated closely with me to figure out solutions that are unique to my organisation. I have never received a response that they can't do something."

SCENARIOS & SCORES

Please see the Scenarios below for more detail on each of these.

SCENARIO AND SCORE	KEY BENEFITS	IMPROVEMENTS / CONSIDERATIONS
3.5+ **1. User Experience & Visual Appeal**	Easy to create landing pages.	Navigation can feel overwhelming. Care needed when choosing which features to include.
4 **2. Publishing & Communications Management**	Easy to create tailored content journeys. Good crisis communication support.	Audience targeting function may not meet all communicators' needs. Urgent comms could be better supported.
4 **3. Community & Engagement**	Extensive range of community tools designed for engagement, such as team spaces and an LMS.	Lots of places to create content – requires careful planning and clear guidance.
2.5+ **4. Integrations & Services (Including M365)**	Widget-driven approach makes adding third-party integrations to dashboards simple.	Two-way integrations rely on API rather than being out of the box. M365 integration is simple.
4+ **5. Information Finding & Search**	A good overall search. Strong AI-generated results experience.	People search and AI-powered Colleague Finder are not integrated.
4 **6. Administrator Experience**	Good governance, easy-to-manage site health. Wide range of administrator functions.	Administering a large site could be time-consuming. Few multimedia options.
3.5+ **7. Analytics**	Extensive analytics, including engagement and sentiment.	Some data is only provided in exports rather than in on-screen reports.
3.5+ **8. Mobile & Frontline Support**	Versatile and well-executed mobile experience, well suited for frontline workers.	Potential to overwhelm the mobile experience with notifications and too much information if not properly managed.

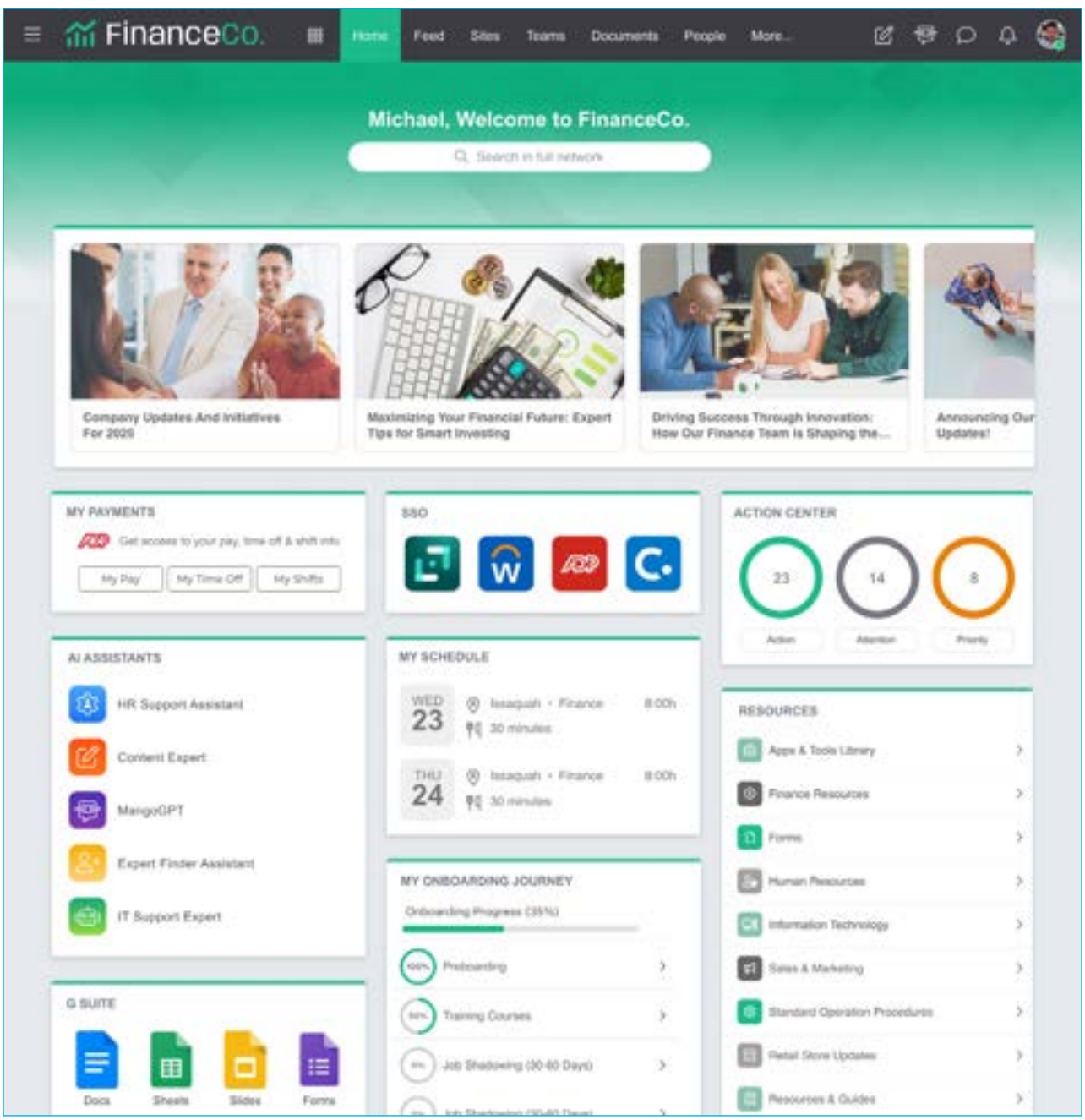


The main home page dashboard can be configured by admins as wanted.

MangoApps offers a surprising number of features and flexibility, offering communication, content management, knowledge sharing, workspaces and a full Learning Management System (LMS). In combination, these features add up to a comprehensive platform that, with careful planning and the resources to manage, can meet a variety of business needs. Although in places we feel that the interface could appear more contemporary when compared with other solutions of a similar scale.

There is a widget-driven approach to home and landing page 'dashboards'; widgets can be audience targeted, delivering content and services from within the intranet and third-party sources. It is simple to set up dashboards, with a large degree of customisation and assignable to sub-brands. There is a straightforward experience to create and manage styles – including down to the branding of any emails generated through MangoApps. From a design perspective, a lot can be achieved with colour and imagery, but the end result can be a little simpler than other products we've seen.

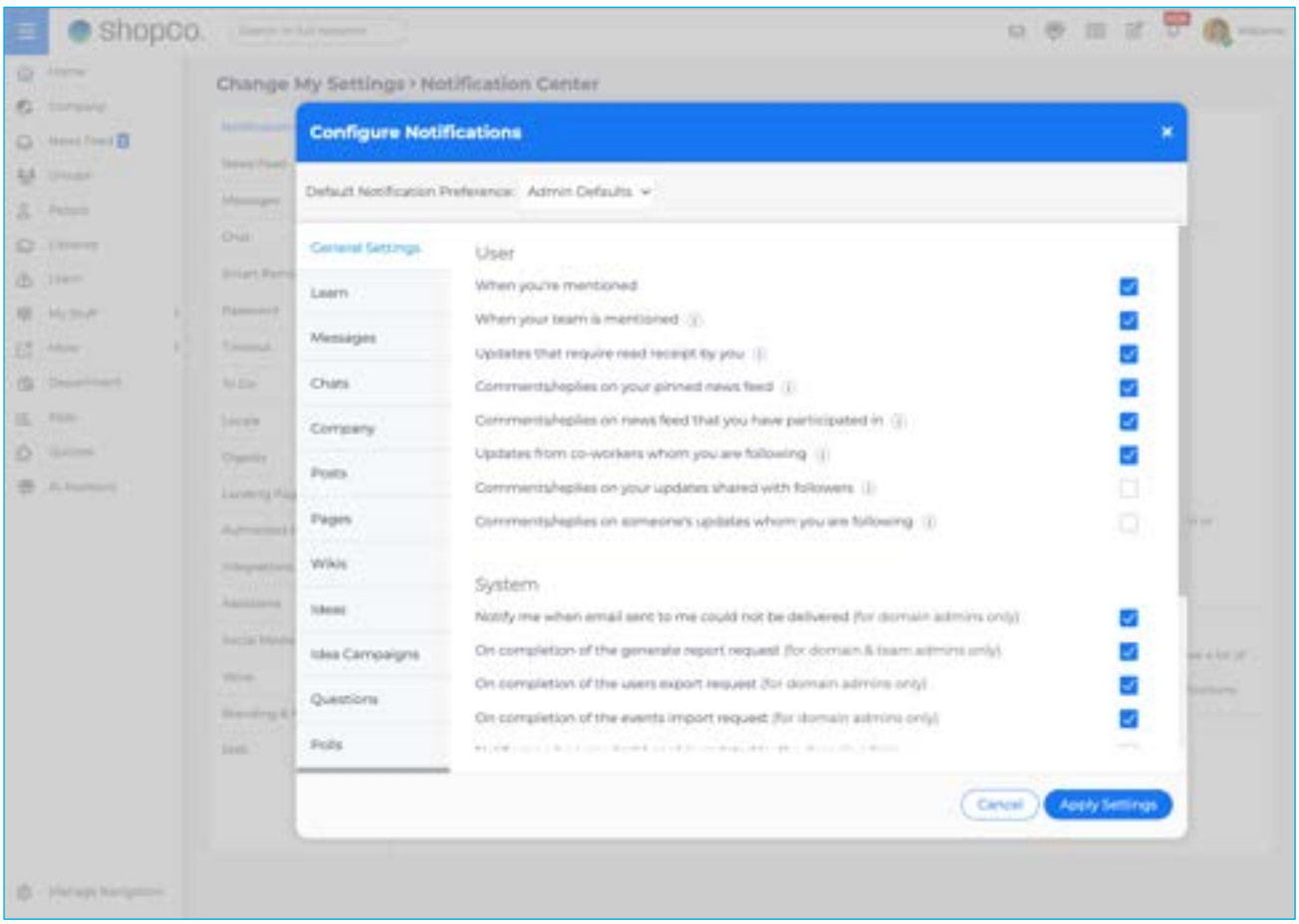
Navigation can be easily customised in terms of location and style, for example choosing a mega menu along the top of the screen, or a more traditional burger menu. Navigation can also be tailored to specific groups of users with, for example, frontline workers experiencing different options and layouts to office-based staff. Unusually, MangoApps allows 'power user' employees to tailor navigation to their personal preference; this ability can be conferred automatically or manually assigned by admins. We like the possibilities it offers for creating a personalised experience. Navigation in specific spaces, like Groups, can be a little overwhelming - with the combination of local and global navigation providing, sometimes, too many options. However, we do like the navigation displaying a page history that makes it easy to go back to recently viewed pages without having to have multiple tabs open.



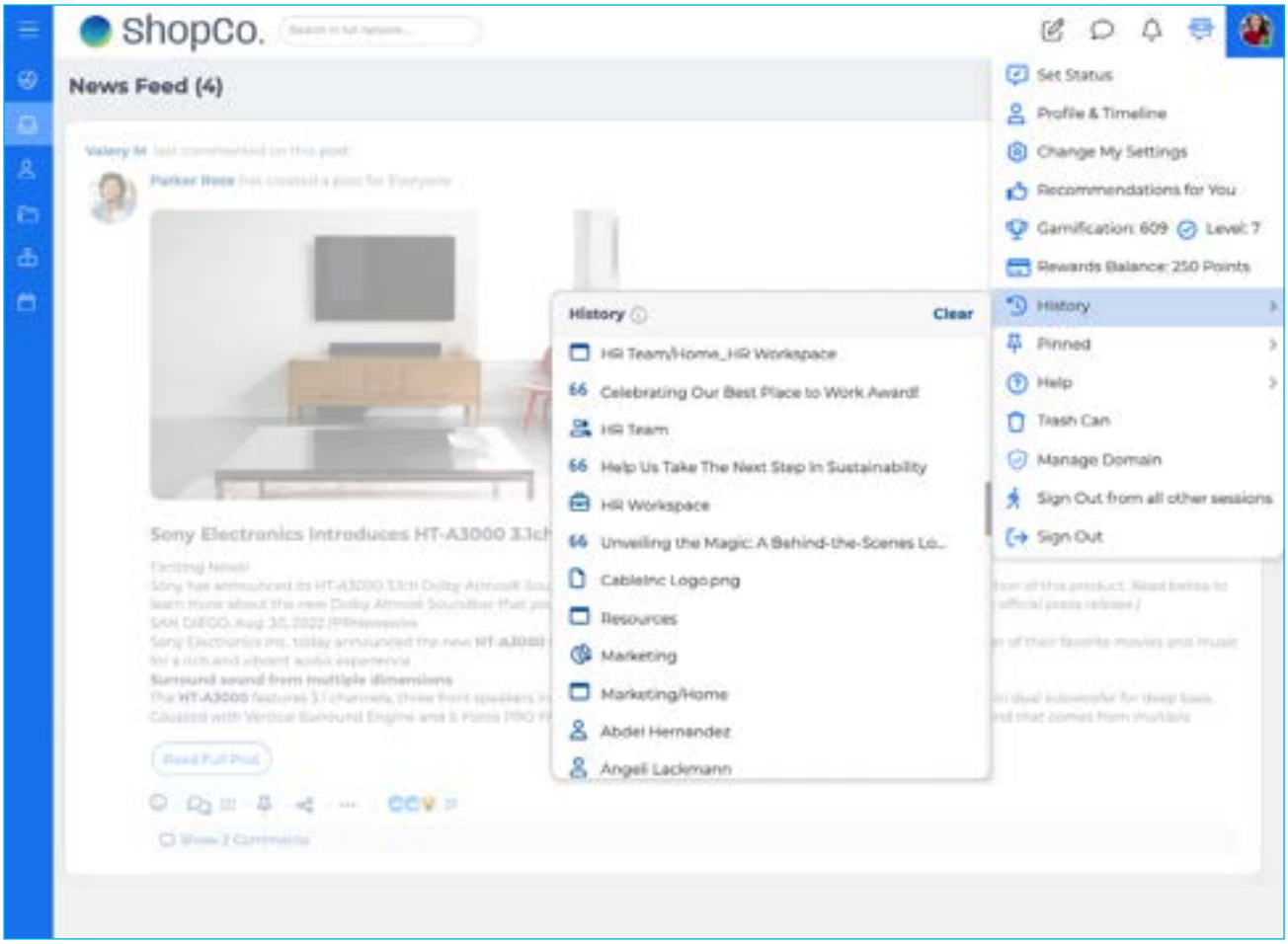
Home page dashboard design is flexible, with this example looking different from the one above.

We also like the ability to customise notifications down to which device you would like, or not like, to receive them on. For example, knowledge workers may choose to turn off mobile notifications, whereas these could be more useful for frontline workers. Employees can also make individual preferences for every single form of communication and activity. Although administrators cannot override these, there are a number of specific items that will always notify employees by default, such as emergency or priority alerts. The amount of configuration options available could, however, be time-consuming to configure for admins and users alike.

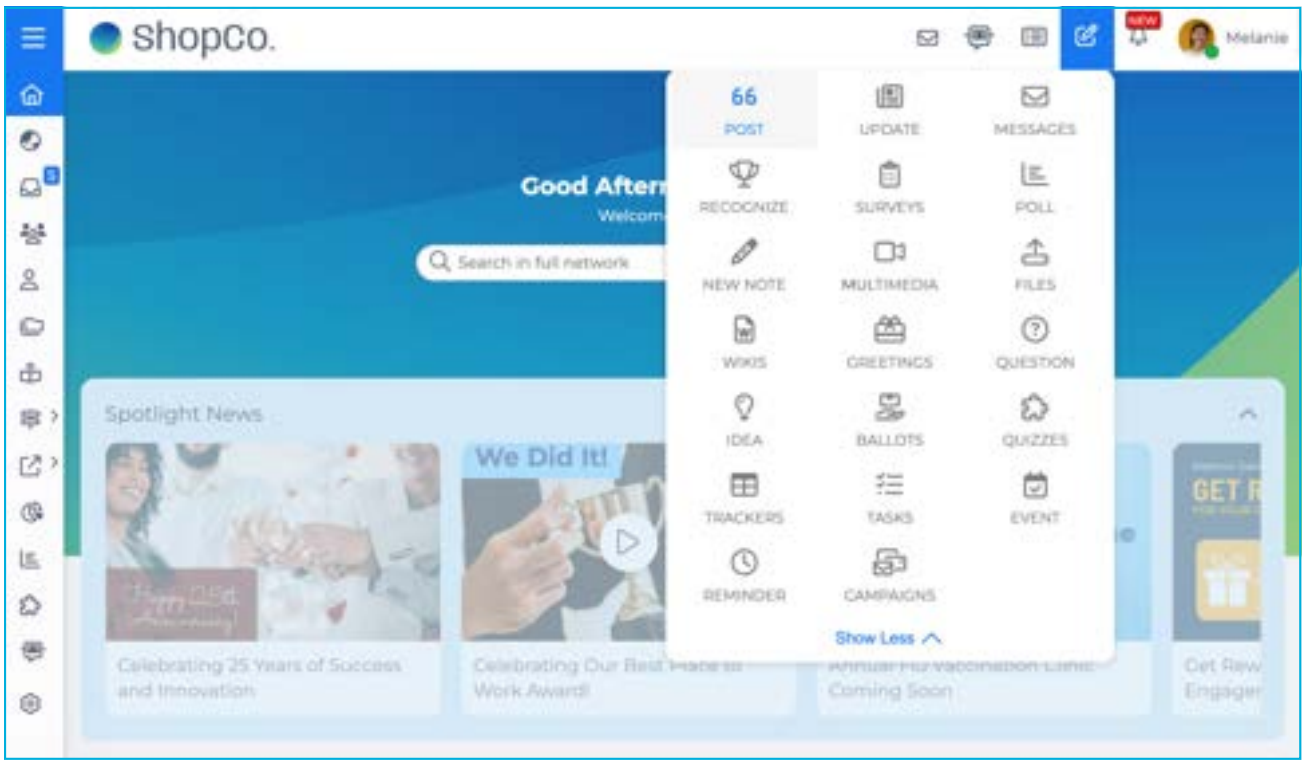
The feature-rich nature of MangoApps is both hero and villain. Whilst we were genuinely impressed by the sheer volume of features and the flexibility of MangoApps, the overall feel can be a little overwhelming. A combination of company features, individual productivity tools, learning resources and messaging functionality could, if MangoApps were used to its full potential, result in employees struggling to navigate the site and deal with notifications. It would be helpful to have a configurable welcome tour or a campaign template for new users to the platform. However, if customers assign enough resources to manage the platform appropriately, MangoApps can be an effective intranet platform that employees will enjoy using.



Some of the many notification configuration settings available.



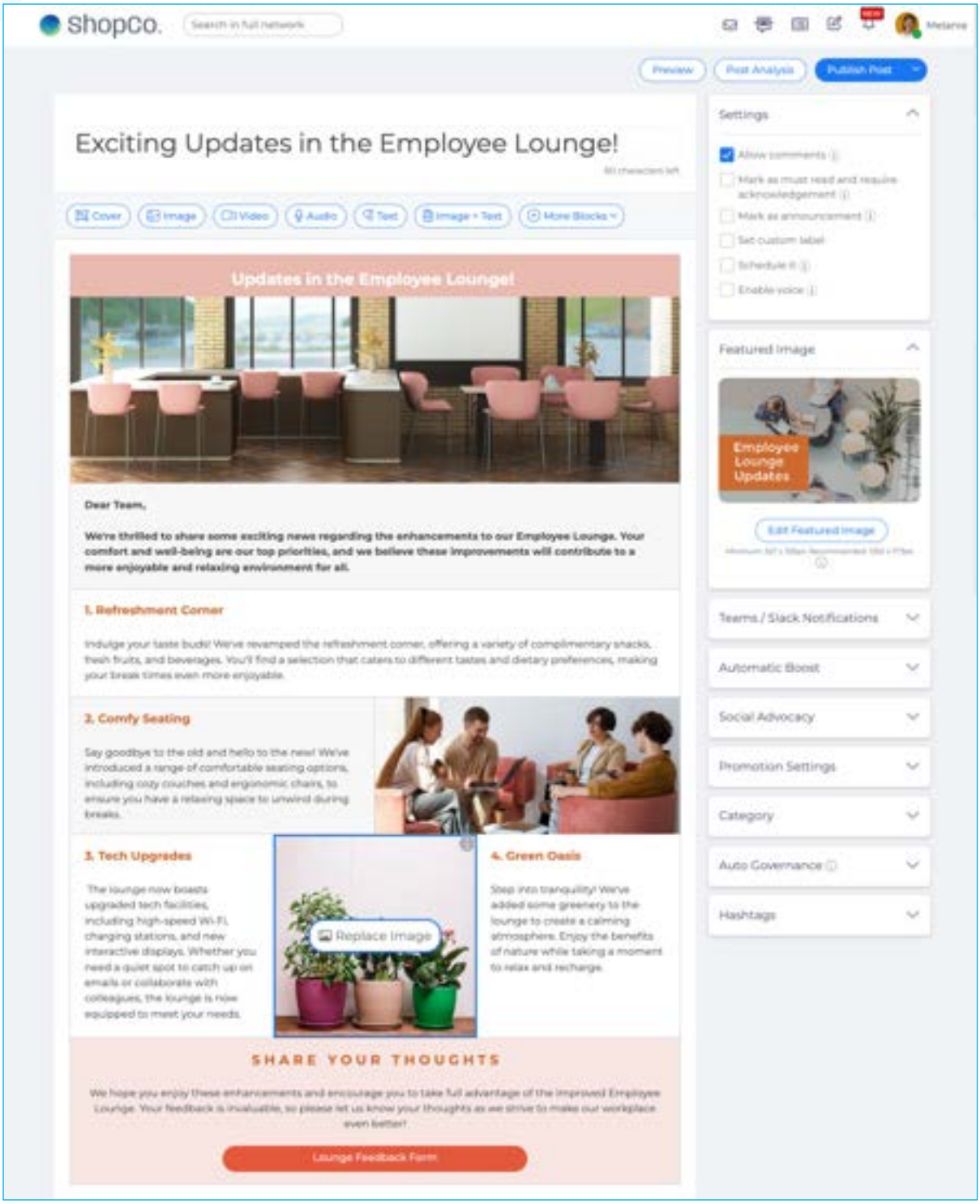
We liked the 'History' feature in the Navigation menu.



The available options from the Universal Compose Box make it easy to create content in one place.

MangoApps has content publishing at its heart. Most commonly, employees have the option to create both 'Posts' and 'Updates'. A Post goes into the newsfeed or designated 'Channels', whereas Updates are intended for team or community spaces or individual feeds. Only specifically nominated people can publish a Post, whereas anyone can share an Update to a space they are a member of. Publishing news Posts is possible from both a 'Universal Compose Box' and from within the News Feed itself. The Universal Compose Box also allows employees with appropriate access to compose team or community Updates, send messages, add reminders, recognise employees, submit ideas, upload content and launch polls to name but a few.

Composing news Posts is simple through templates that can easily be reconfigured using content blocks. Blocks are formatted elements used for adding content into a page, such as text or multimedia. This makes it easy to make visibly appealing communications, with templates extending to email to ensure a consistent experience. Note that pages created from a blank template aren't split into blocks in the same way as preformatted templates, and overall is a more difficult publishing experience. Tooltips are provided throughout the editing interface to assist editors, however.

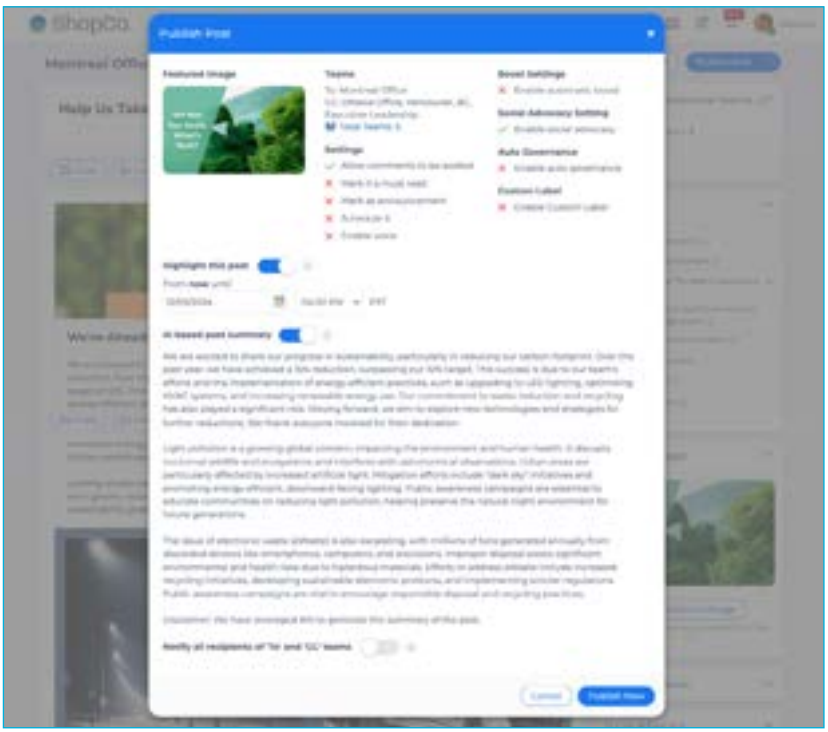


A news template in MangoApps built using content blocks.

An AI assistant (included in the pricing provided) can generate text and images, although we found that the automatically generated text was often overly long. The AI assistant is set in the context of the page editor and can generate summaries or whole articles based on natural language requests. We see the capacity for these tools to assist editors and we'd like to see an AI disclaimer whenever AI content is generated. Alternatively, the AI tool can be used to tweak the tone of a piece, aided by a helpful sentiment analysis tool, so publishers can decide whether they have achieved an appropriate tone or need assistance. Editors can also enable an auto-generated audio version of the content. We think this is a great accessibility feature and one we haven't seen in many other products.

Audience targeting draws on the email experience of selecting the primary audience in a 'to' field, with secondary audiences in a 'cc' field. This distinction determines the notification priority for different users and could generate many notifications in busy organisations. There are flexible options for creating audiences based on 'user segments' and 'team segments.' User segments are either created dynamically, based on profile attribute rules, or are manually compiled of specific users. Team segments are made up of pre-defined groups of users. Admins select which teams make up a segment by selecting from a list of all teams in the system or enabling dynamic profile-based rules. While all this is configured within MangoApps, teams can be created which correspond to groups synced from elsewhere, such as from Entra.

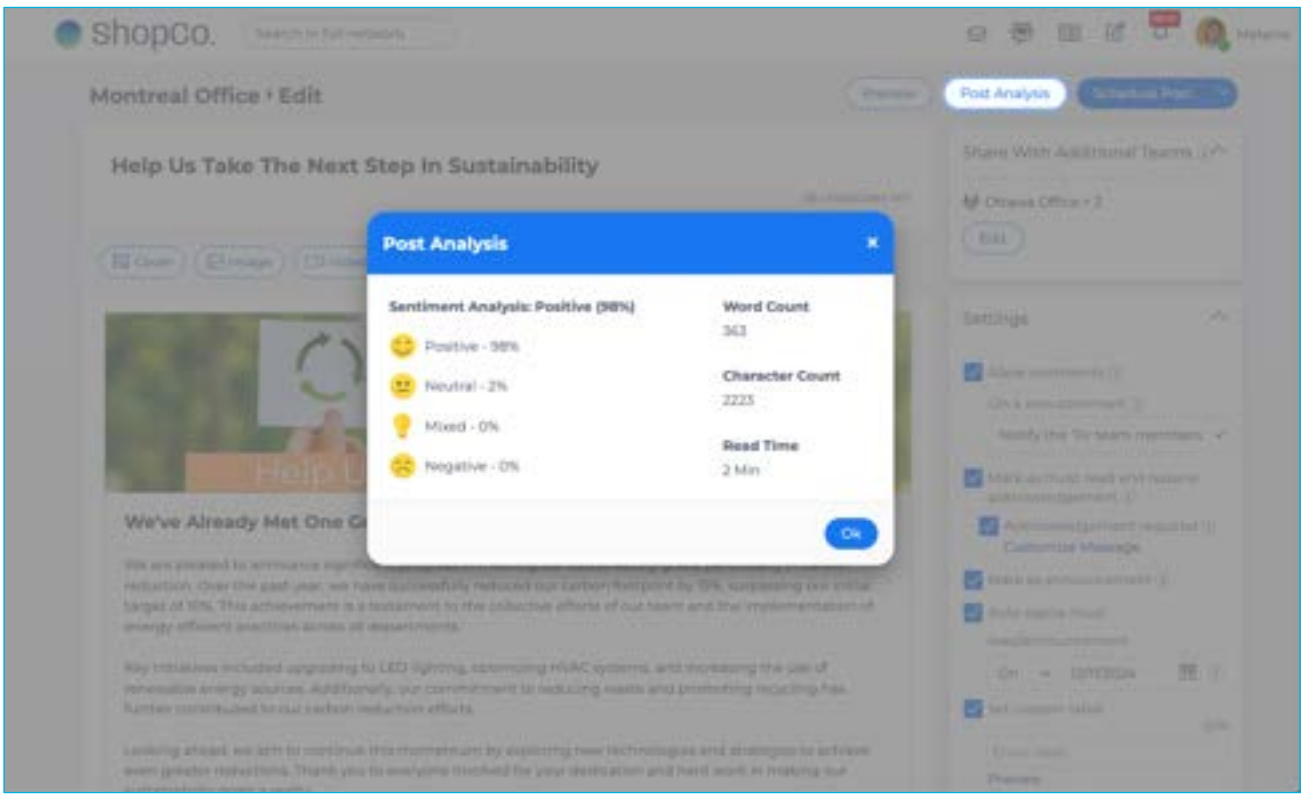
Creating a Post is further assisted by AI through 'Post Analysis' that assesses sentiment of a drafted Post, helping authors to re-write as required to change the tone before it's published. A variety of workflow options are available for news Posts – such as sending posts for review and scheduling when posts are live. A communications planner sets out a schedule of articles for publication; a tabular view lists elements such as status and audience. There's an option to view the entries in a calendar, though default filtering options are limited, and configuration would be needed to provide custom calendar views such as a departmental view. Aside from the planner, editors can view separate lists of all items in draft and scheduled, and can filter these to view their own items. See Scenario 3 for information on Campaigns that can be used for communications.



Using AI to create or edit Post content.

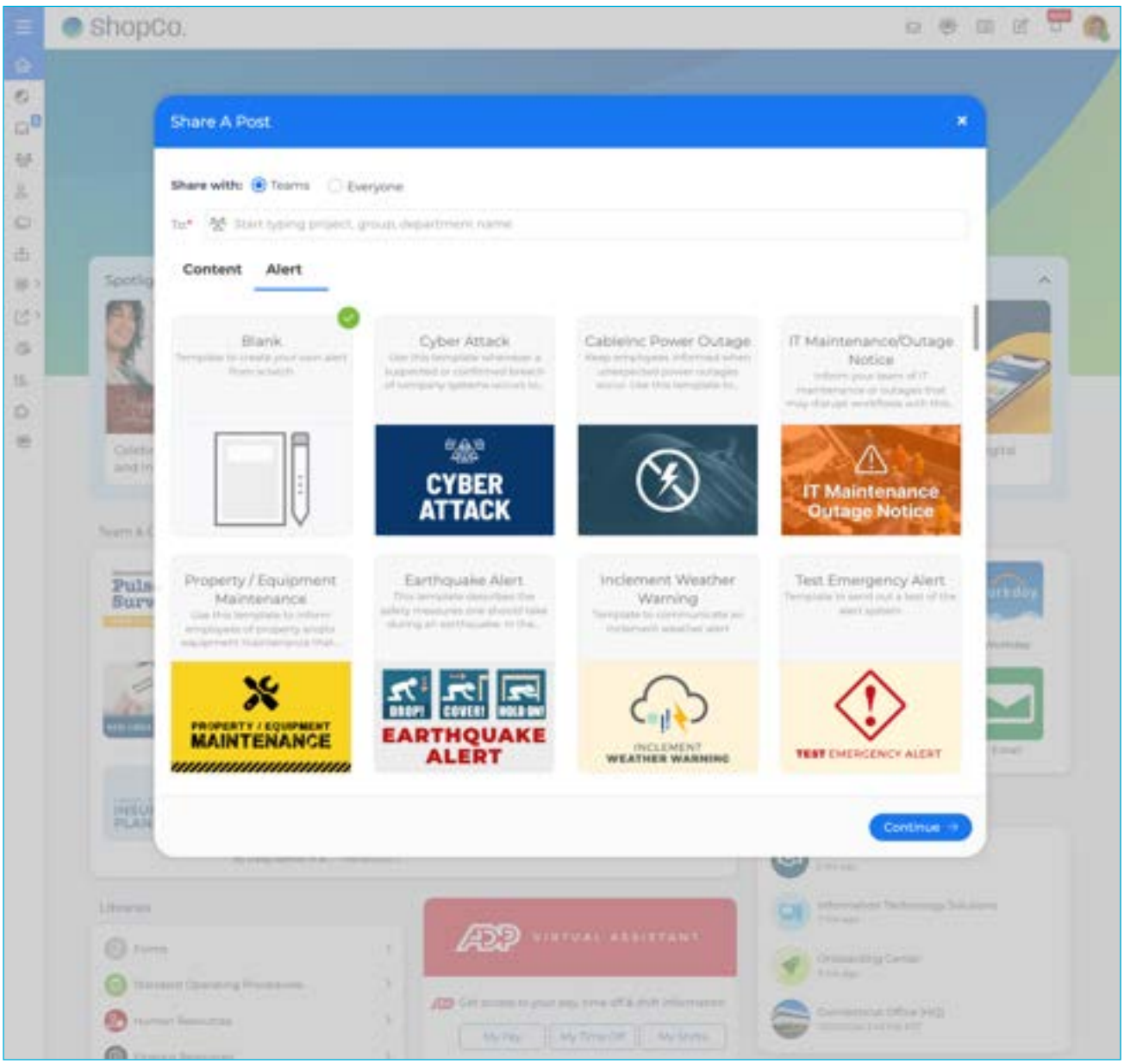
There is multi-channel functionality, which makes it easy to specify how employees will receive a post. Multi-channel options include text message, mobile push notifications and email newsletters in addition to the News Feed. Posts can also be shared with specific Microsoft Teams channels (more on sharing with Teams in Scenario 4). Those with 'advocacy' permissions have the option to publish to their personal social feeds. MangoApps also integrates with digital signage; admins can configure what information is displayed and a QR code is provided to encourage people back into MangoApps.

Internal communicators also have an impressive array of capabilities so employees don't miss important updates. Posts can be automatically boosted for the entire audience or to those specifically who haven't read it. Multi-channel boosts are also available, sending a reminder by SMS if required. MangoApps provides several alerts templates for crisis management which can be customised. Alerts have multi-channel publishing options and must be acknowledged. If relying solely on the News Feed, however, important alerts may get lost amidst a busy layout.

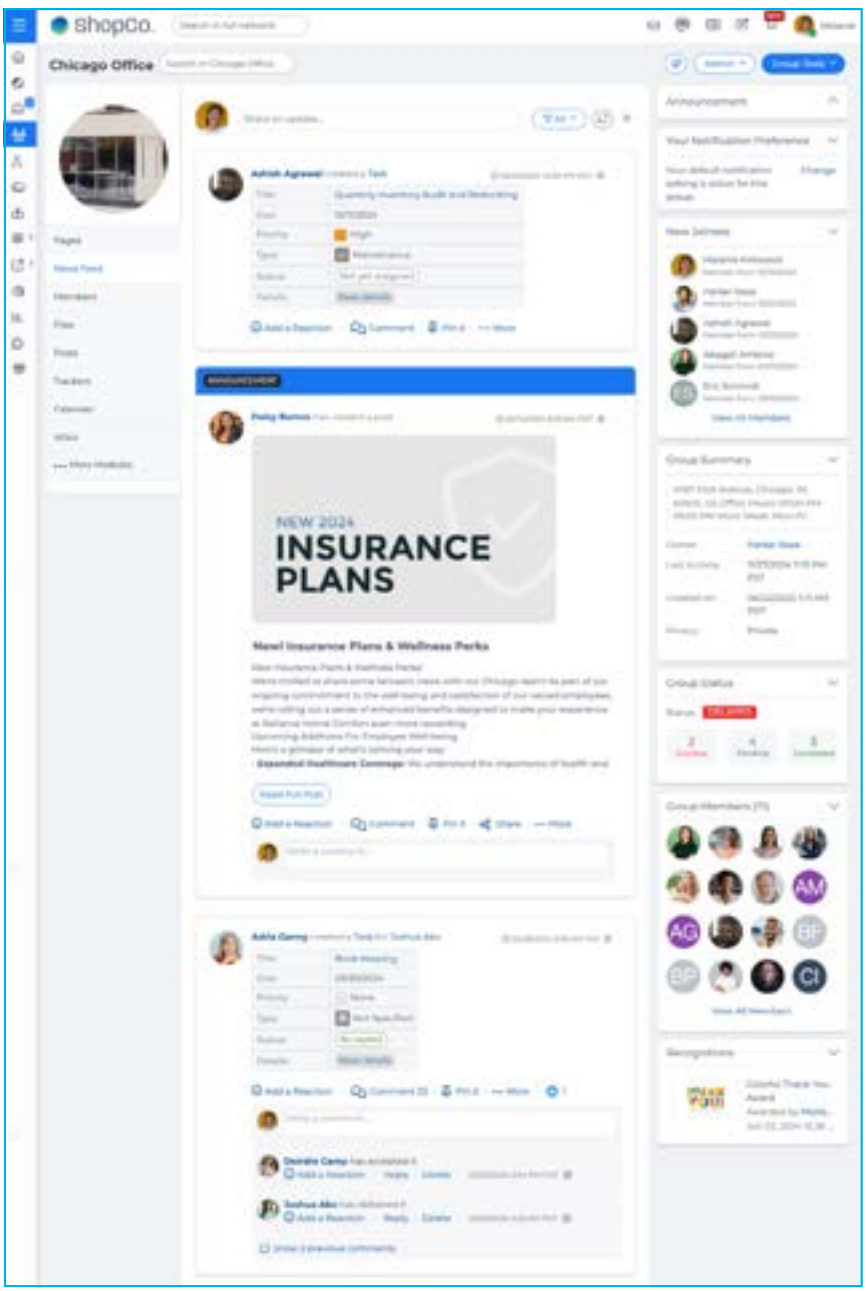


Sentiment analysis of a post before it's published.

MangoApps offers many channels and features for publishing and communication. Given the flexible and extensive nature of the types of content and ways of publishing, publishers will need careful training to understand it all. Overall, MangoApps lends itself well to this scenario, with a lot of management features that internal communicators will appreciate.



Alert templates in MangoApps.

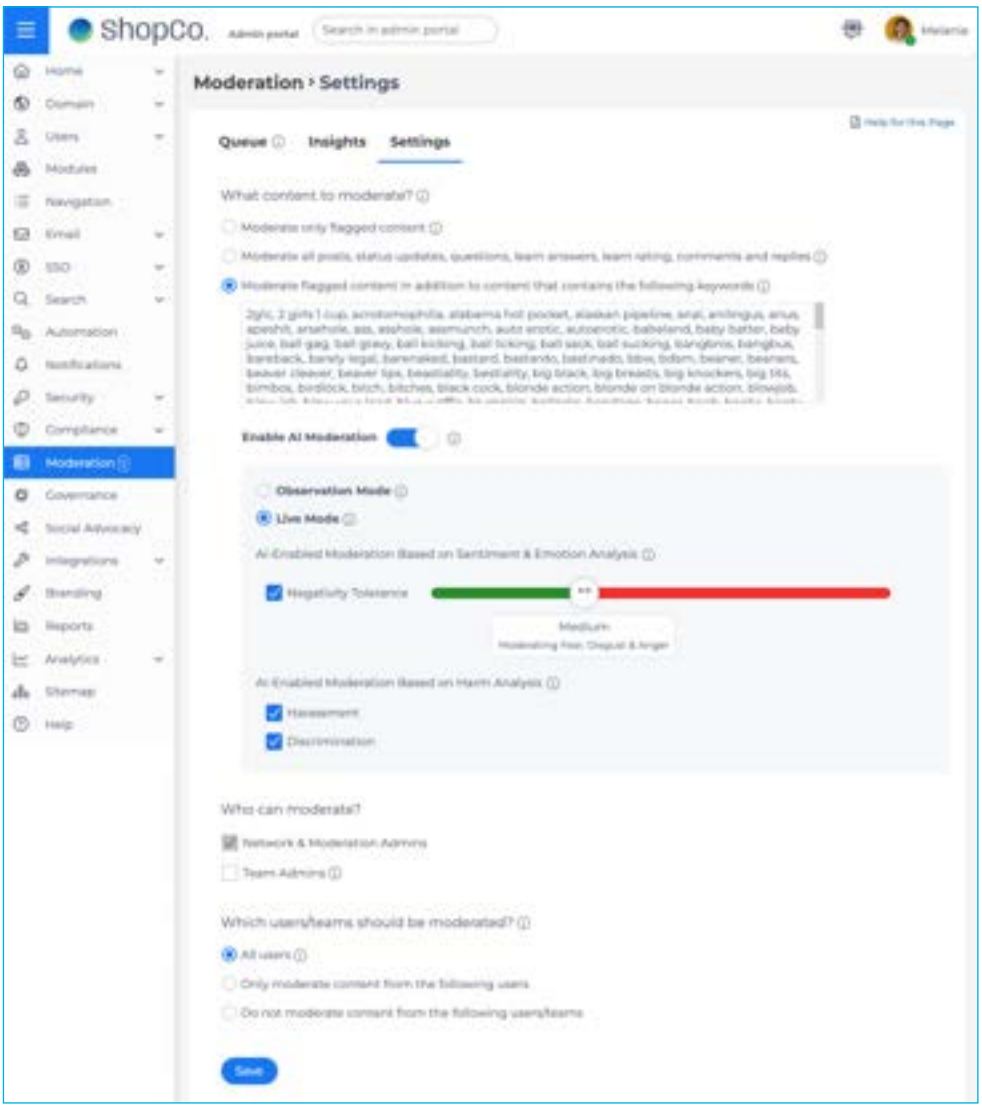


A Group in MangoApps showing the News Feed and other available widgets.

Community collaboration is well catered for in MangoApps, with the ability to create communities of practice, work hubs, team spaces and so on as 'Groups'. Groups provide configurable content types such as pages, documents, a wiki, and 'Posts' (for Group news or blogs). It's important to note that these Posts are available only in that particular Group, as opposed to 'Posts' originating from the 'Universal Compose Box' that are shared in the News Feed. Groups can be used for departmental or team spaces as well as more socially focused community sites. Community membership can be automated based on user profiles, though employees can choose to leave if they wish. Templates are provided, or are easily customisable, for different Groups allowing admins to quickly create their own space.

'Chat' and 'direct messaging' capabilities are offered, although the variety of ways to communicate between employees may prove confusing. Direct messaging is available from the 'Universal Compose Box', whereas Chat has its own dedicated space and menu item. Messaging is more akin to internal email, with a rich text editor and the ability to message any group as well as individuals, whereas Chat is for discussions between employees. The nuances of Chat, direct messaging and Group posts may be a challenge to effectively communicate to employees, as all can perform similar actions.

MangoApps offers commenting and reactions to posts and group discussions. Post authors can disable / enable comments to any post and space admins are able to disable / enable comments and reactions for an entire Group. Sophisticated content moderation is available; we were impressed with the ability to choose manual moderation using keywords or AI moderation. AI moderation can be customised based on desired levels of negative sentiment as well as harm analysis. With moderation, admins can select 'Live mode' where any flagged content gets automatically blocked and the admin notified, or 'Observation mode' where admins first get notified and can decide whether or not to block. Any content flagged by a user or by AI can be viewed in a central 'Moderation Queue'.

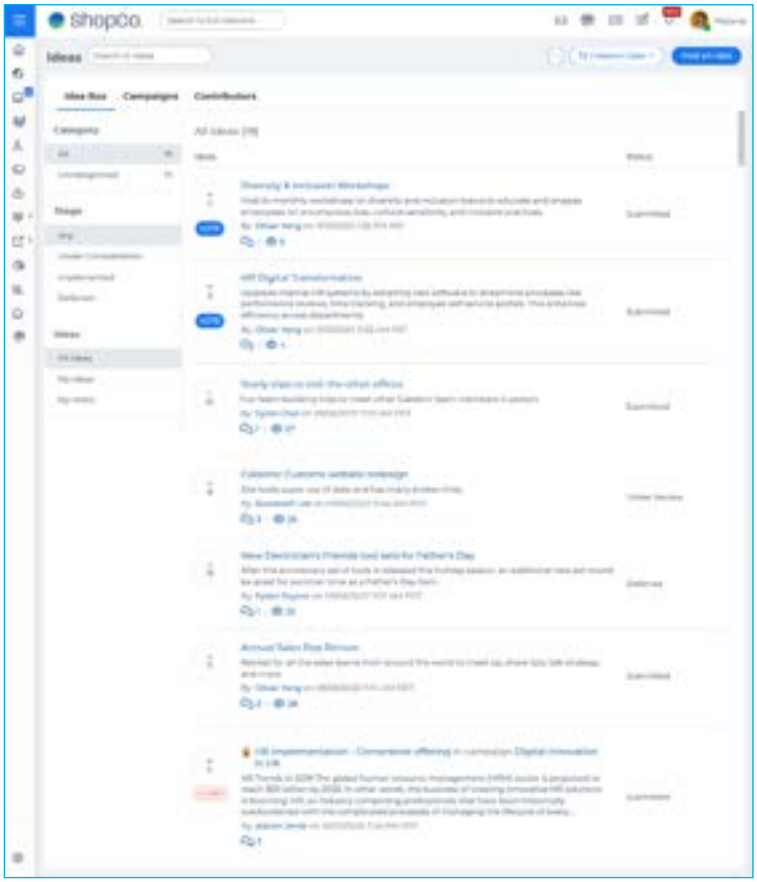


Content moderation settings are sophisticated.

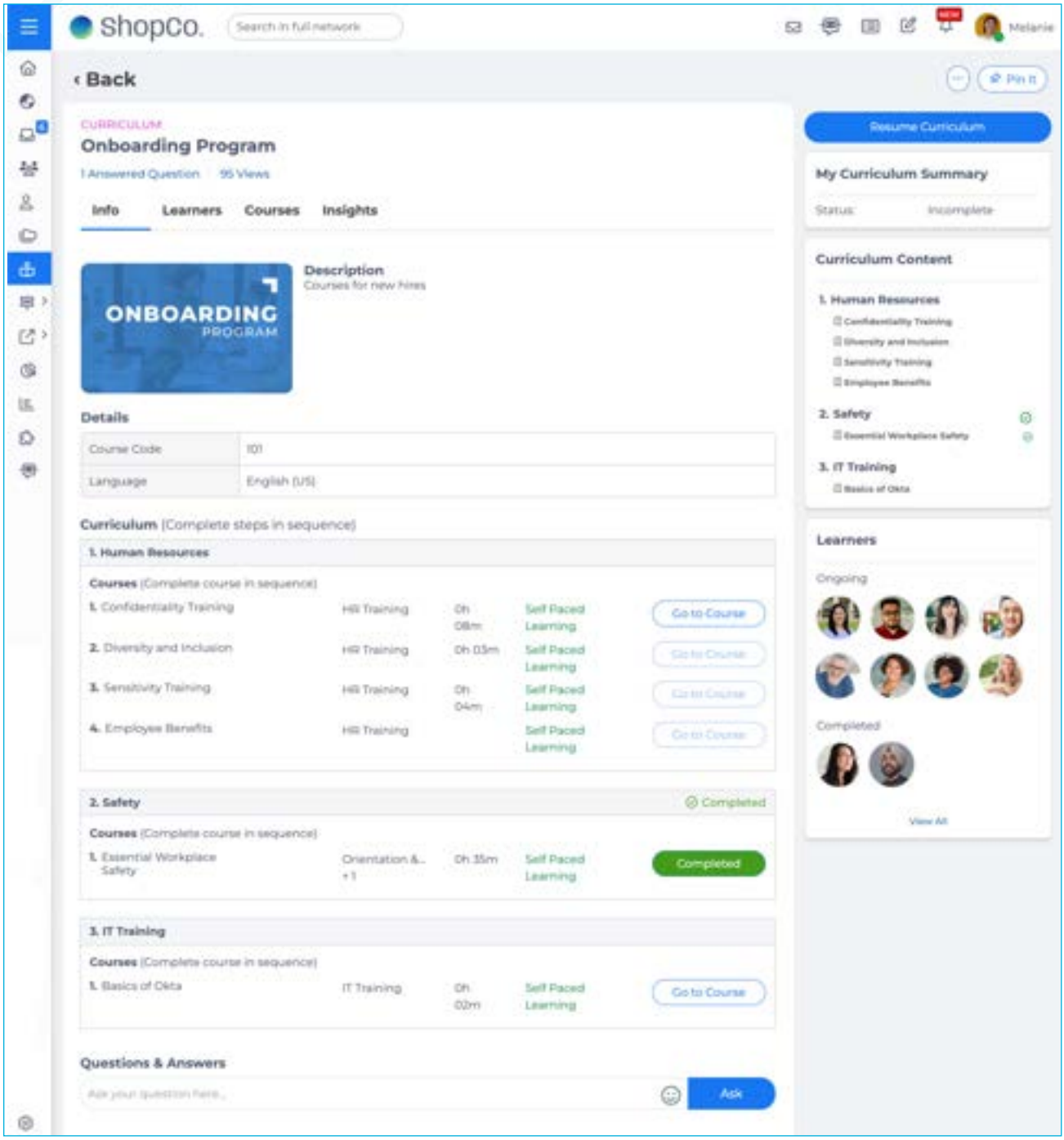
Employee feedback tools comprise Polls and Surveys. Polls can be easily created and added to any space or as a widget to the home page. Analysis is limited to displaying a chart with the ability to export to Excel. Surveys are more comprehensive with additional publication features, such as scheduling and optional mandating. New surveys can be set up from scratch, or by selecting from a broad set of templates. A 'Rule Builder' allows for conditional questions, pages and confirmation messages. Results are compiled into a detailed report which can drill down to individual responses and the reports are exportable. We think this is a great example of a built-in survey tool.

'Campaigns' make MangoApps versatile for a variety of employee engagement purposes, such as onboarding, ideation awareness and training, but can also be used for communication campaigns. We liked the ability to automate Campaigns based on entry criteria, such as when a new person joins the organisation, or even a specific team or community space. Campaigns support multi-channel publishing, including email and SMS.

A simple Ideation process is included, with idea submission straightforward via the 'Universal Compose Box' or within the Ideas space itself. An Ideas module can also be added to any Group, allowing for ideas to be submitted and processed at a team level. Ideas can be evaluated, voted upon and processed, with submitters able to see the status of their idea as it moves through the workflow. We like that the Campaigns feature can be used to solicit ideas on a specific topic and that ideas are tagged for search purposes. There's a list of top contributors and top ten ideas – we think these would benefit from recognition functionality such as badges or promotional panels to generate further engagement. Helpfully, a manually applied status indicator shows those ideas being implemented.



Idea management in MangoApps.



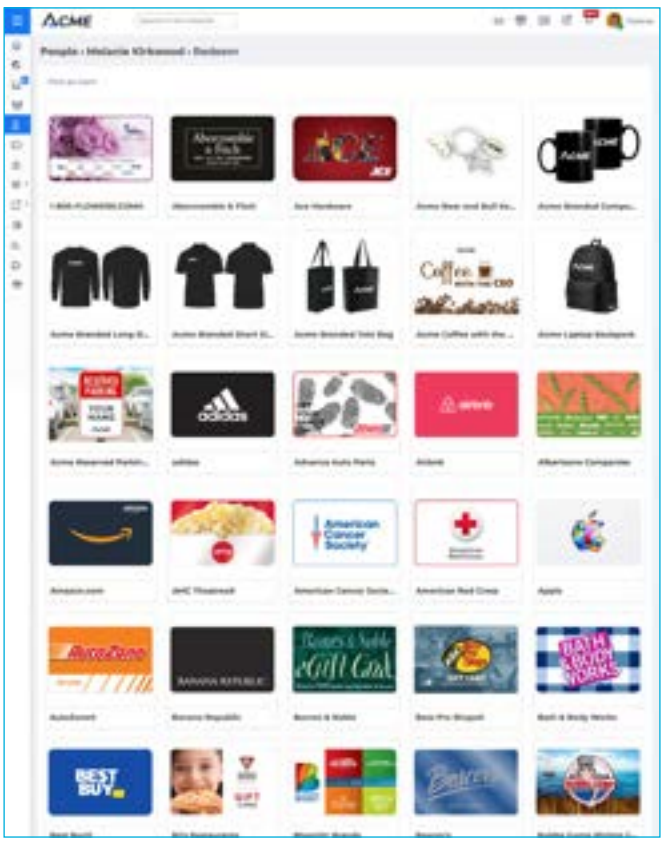
The integrated Learning Management System in MangoApps.

Leadership engagement is another key use case of MangoApps, where leaders can benefit from measures to boost their activity. Whilst not as focused on leadership communication as tools like Viva Engage, MangoApps does allow leaders to be automatically followed as well as publish in multiple locations.

Unusually MangoApps features a full Learning Management System (LMS) that supports simple quizzes through to full learning programs. Within the LMS, admins can use and create templates, import courses and run self-paced learning, courses and instructor-led programs. Multiple content types can be included and created in any learning module, including links to live events (although these aren't automatically recorded). Custom reports can be created allowing training records to be maintained. Organisations yet to procure a dedicated LMS would benefit from this feature, although we cannot comment on its comprehensiveness as an alternative solution. The LMS is a paid-for add-on, although it is included in the pricing provided for this review.

MangoApps offers comprehensive support for employee wellbeing via its rewards, greetings and recognitions features. Story collection allows colleagues to contribute to a greeting that can be used to celebrate anniversaries or significant events, and individual recognition can be offered, ranging from a simple message through to rewards. Points can be rewarded and accumulated, which can be redeemed within MangoApps for vouchers or any specified prizes or rewards. A 'Tracker' workflow allows admins full flexibility to manage the process right through to specific actions, such as lunch with the CEO or automated gifting. Note that other Trackers can be created in MangoApps, enabling admins to set up any number of approvals, such as leave applications.

The comprehensive range of community features in MangoApps is impressive, offering tools for organising team working, knowledge management, learning, engagement and connection. With excellent moderation capabilities, MangoApps is a powerful and flexible solution for informal and formal people interactions.



An example of how MangoApps can redeem rewards points for vouchers.

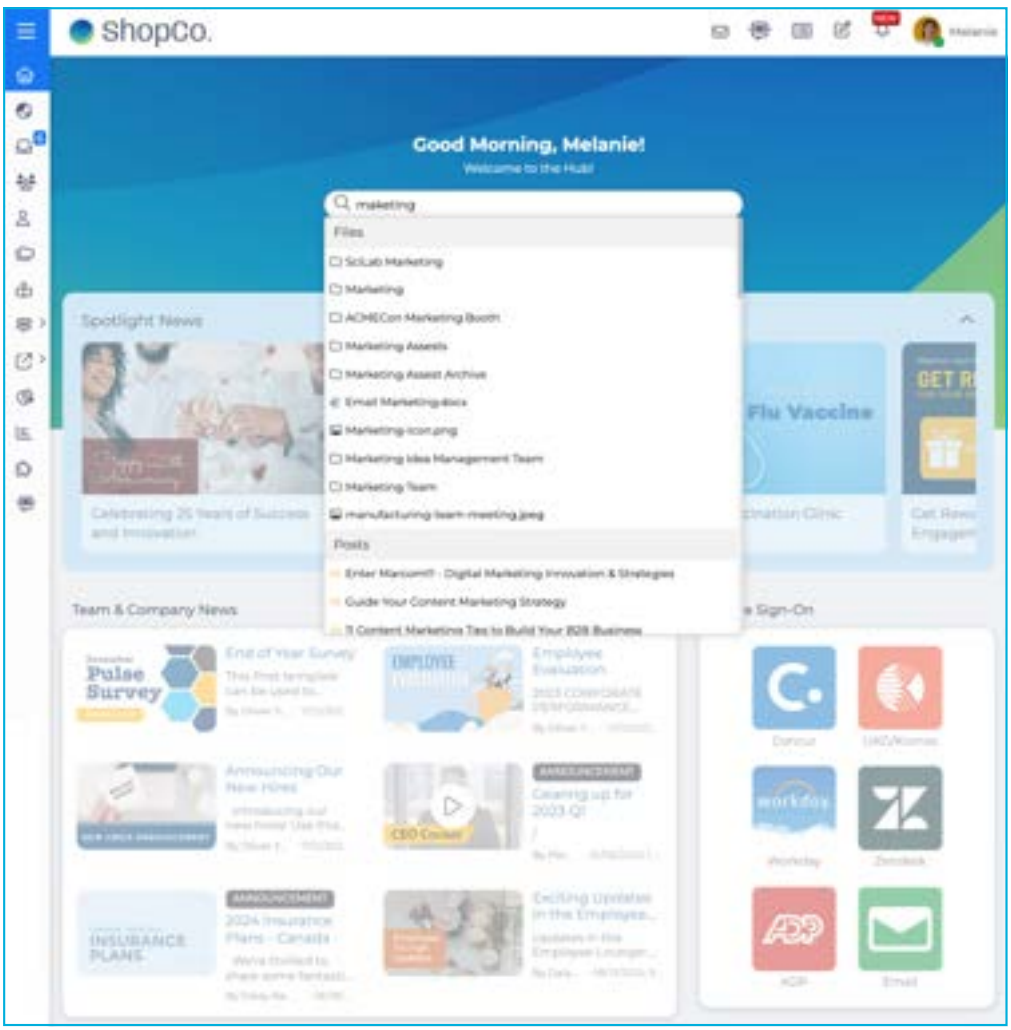
Third-party integration using widgets on a dashboard.

MangoApps offers third-party integrations via out-of-the-box widgets or using APIs. These are generally focused on pulling data into the intranet and presenting it in a dashboard layout, or for providing personalised information for employees through targeted widgets. For example, an integration with a system such as Workday or UKG could be used to display an employee's payslip, or time-off allocations. However, widget integrations are typically display-only (with only a handful of exceptions out-of-the-box), with employees having to leave MangoApps to use the relevant app if they want to actually perform an action.

There are out-of-the-box integrations with document repositories such as Box, Dropbox, Google Drive and SharePoint. Publishers and employees can browse and search libraries in these sources and select a file to use in a page or Post. Files accessed from third-party repositories can be synced and displayed alongside any files stored within Groups. Microsoft Office files that are stored inside MangoApps file storage can be viewed and edited without leaving MangoApps. Files that are synced with SharePoint can only be viewed in MangoApps, with editing of the files occurring within their original repository.

Information from M365 can be presented using the dashboard approach outlined above, with read-only views of Outlook, a list of SharePoint sites, Outlook calendar, an app launcher and Teams channels. A new browser tab opens with the relevant M365 application with single sign-on supported. If a user doesn't have a M365 licence, view-only access is available for Office files. News can be published directly to a Teams channel (as well as to Slack channels), where comments or reactions can be made and displayed back in MangoApps. As of yet, there is no Viva Engage integration.

Integrations in MangoApps are a little on the basic side, although the ease of adding widgets to dashboards does mean that viewing third-party information is easily done. See Scenario 5 for information on AI assistants that offer other intranet-based services.



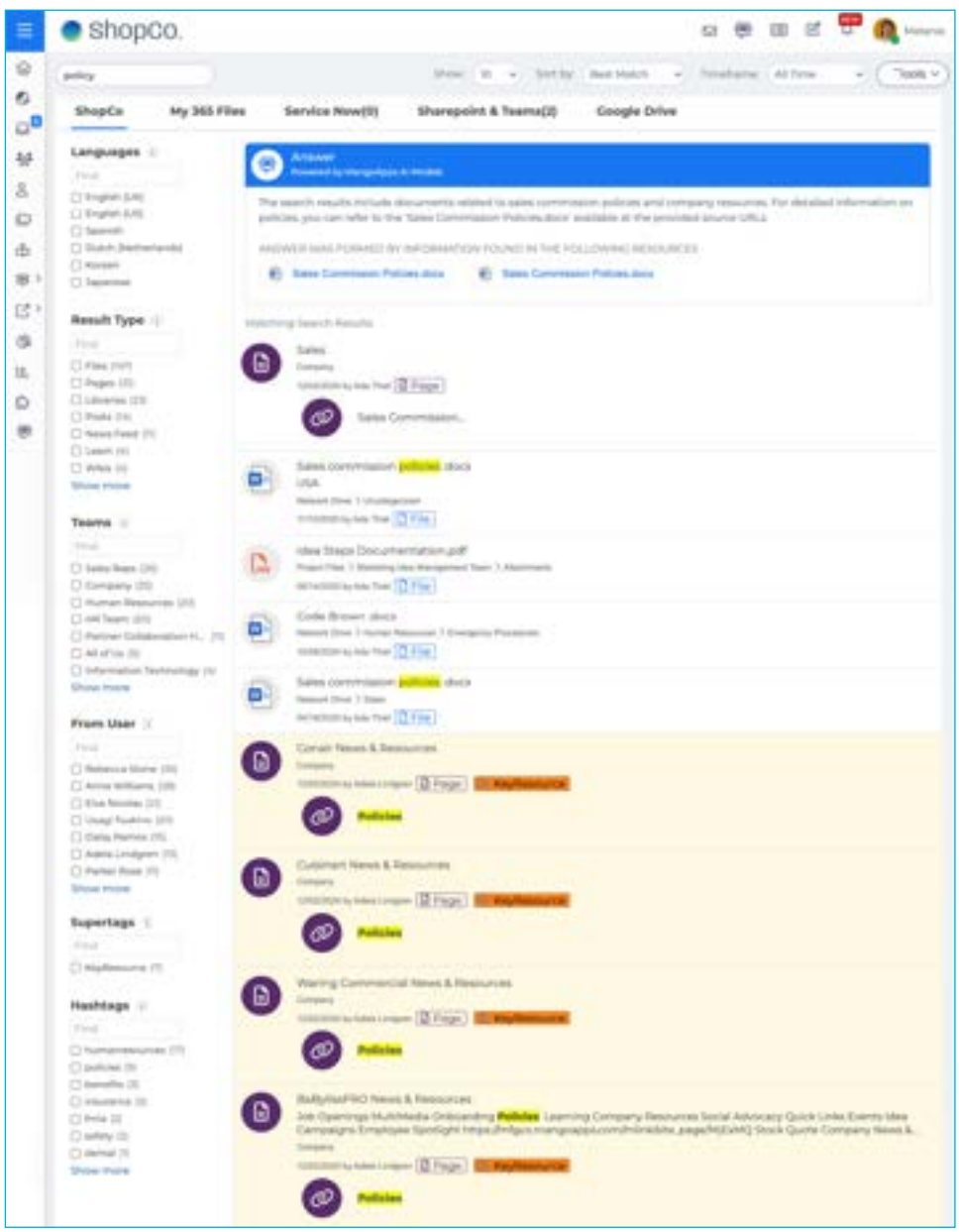
Typing a misspelled query into Search showing fuzzy search results.

Search in MangoApps works well and helpfully also integrates with third-party sources to provide an effective federated search experience. From the main search bar, 'quick search' results are presented as you type with the type of content result shown (such as file, Post, Update) including from integrated sources, such as M365 applications. Fuzzy search is available, assisting with any misspellings.

The full search results page presents the user with a range of details per item, including content tags and a publication date, with the content type shown as both text and icon. The search term is helpfully highlighted to give additional context. Results can be filtered, such as by language, type of content, people, hashtags and Groups that a user is a member of. A search timeframe can also be selected, helping users narrow down results based on when the content was created. We feel the ways of filtering and viewing search results is not as clean as it could be, with options found to the side and at the top of the page impacting the experience. Users can give feedback on their search experience, though, through a like / dislike indicator at the foot of the page. Downvotes are registered in search analytics (see Scenario 7); this is an unusual feature, and we liked the analytics connection.

Search can be configured to be 'location-aware'. For example, a policy for US employees will be lower ranked than the Canadian version for a user based in Canada. There is also multilingual provision – search will look at a term entered in one language and provide a return containing a translated version of the term from within MangoApps or a connected system. For example, searching for 'maternité' in French would return items with 'maternity' in English. This isn't a feature we've seen elsewhere and in a multilingual environment is potentially powerful. Users can also filter search returns by source language.

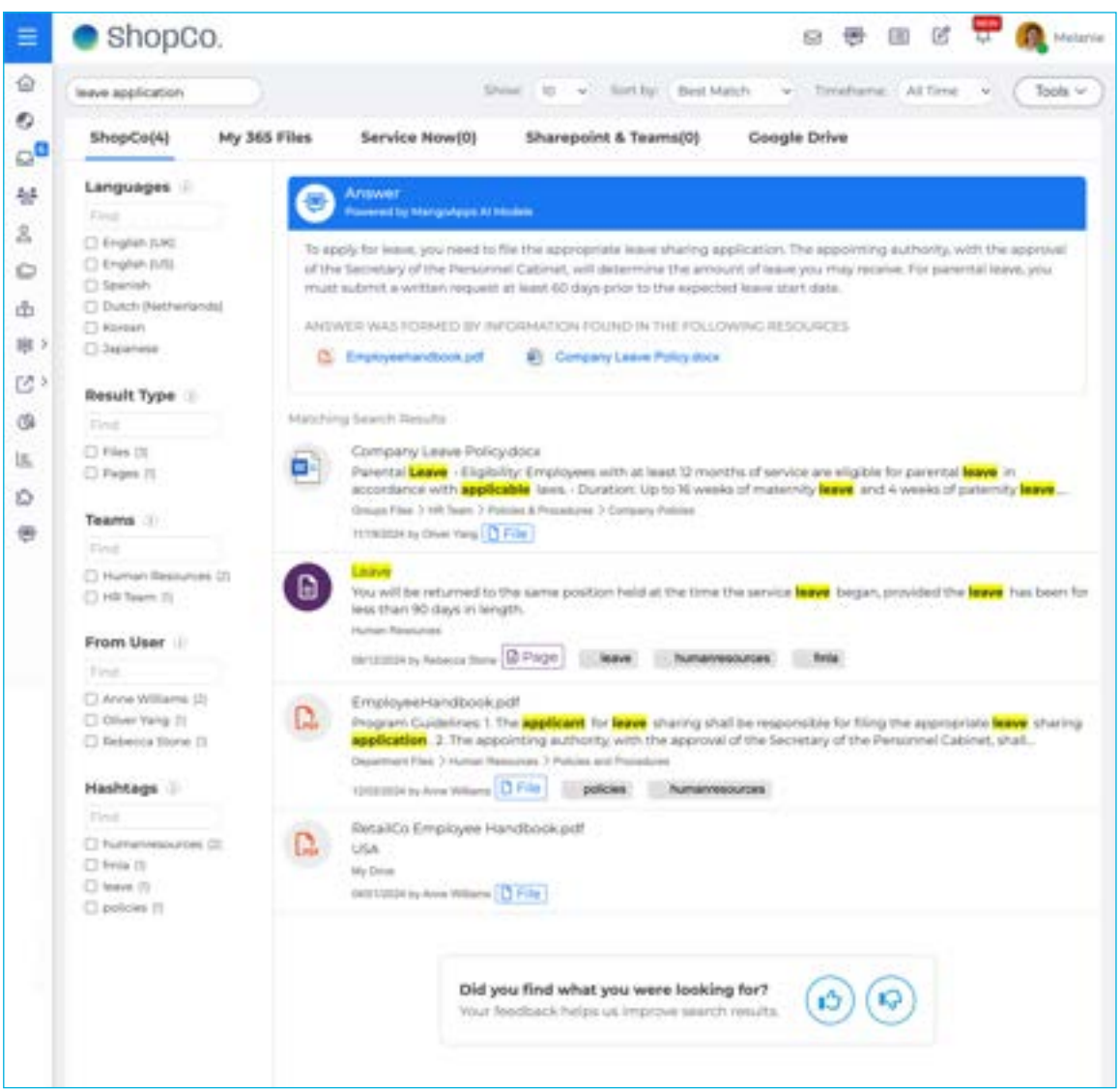
Search management allows admins to fine-tune search weightings, including parameters such as hashtags, metadata, time and content, as well as being able to give higher weightings to specific users. Assigning 'Super Hashtags' to any content type ensures that the search results are prioritised, mimicking a sponsored results approach.



The search results page is comprehensive but has filtering options shown in various locations on the page, making the experience a little messy.

An AI-driven 'Answer' feature provides users with a suggested answer based on their query, which can be a natural language question, or a word or phrase. We like that this is shown in a separate box above the search results to differentiate AI results from standard results, helping users to separate any potential hallucinations. This AI search response is one of the better ones we've seen, which unusually presents sources clearly referenced along with a summary of the results, which we found to be very helpful. Suggestions for further questions are also provided – these anticipate potential additional queries relating to the content source.

There are a variety of AI 'Assistants' to help employees with tasks. 'MangoGPT' helps people write an email or Post (in addition to the features mentioned in Scenario 2) and offers a 'quick proofread' of text, all of which is then easy to share elsewhere in MangoApps. AI assistance is also available when drafting an individual Post or Update. We like the 'summarise document' option, although felt the results could be overly long or too simplistic – so care should be taken when using this. Overall, there is room for improvement with the Assistants, particularly as the generative AI activity takes place away from where the content is typically created, but we think they are helpful and offer an excellent starting point for organisations looking to work with AI.

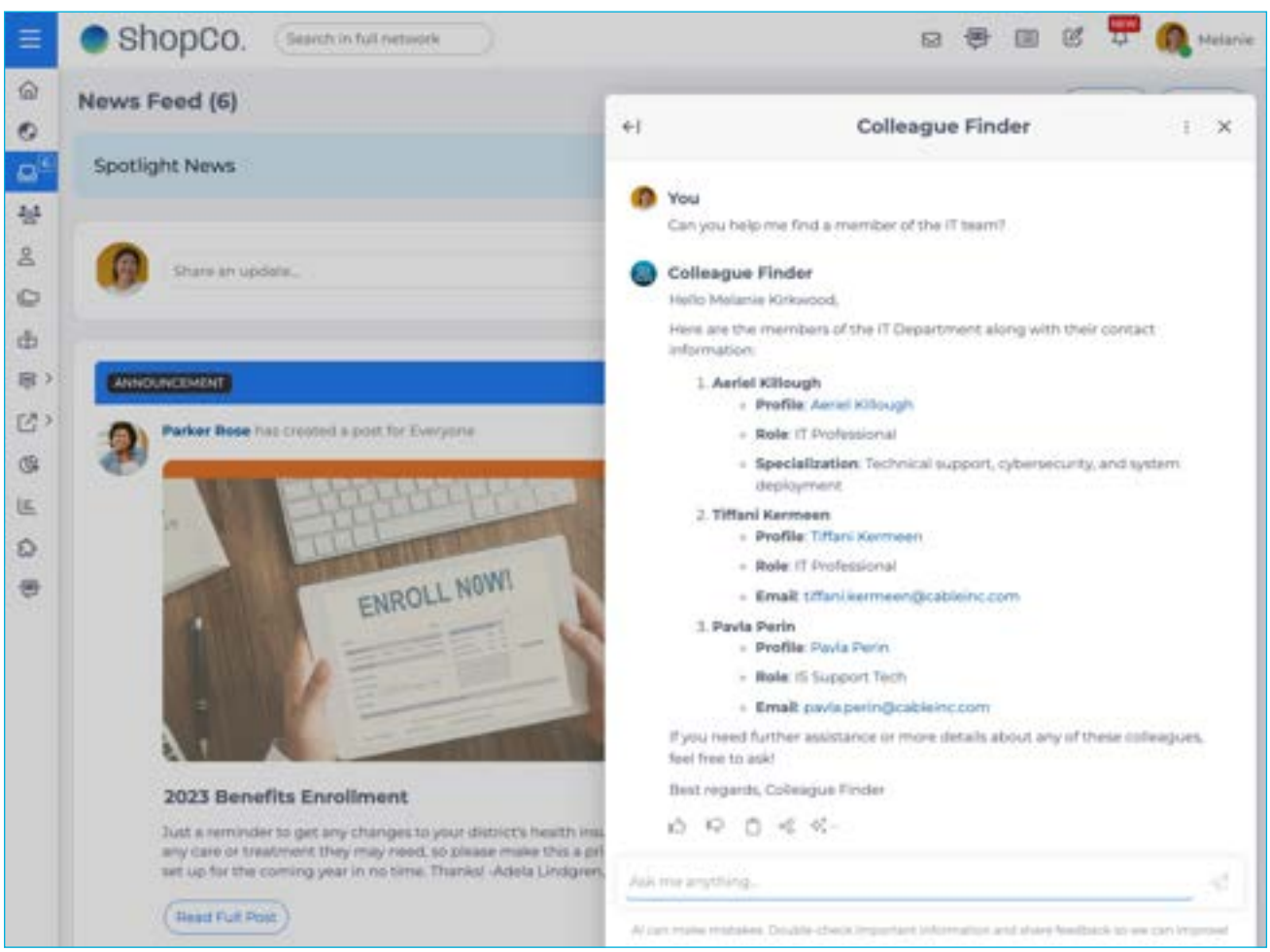


Search results in MangoApps displaying a separate AI 'likely answer' response.

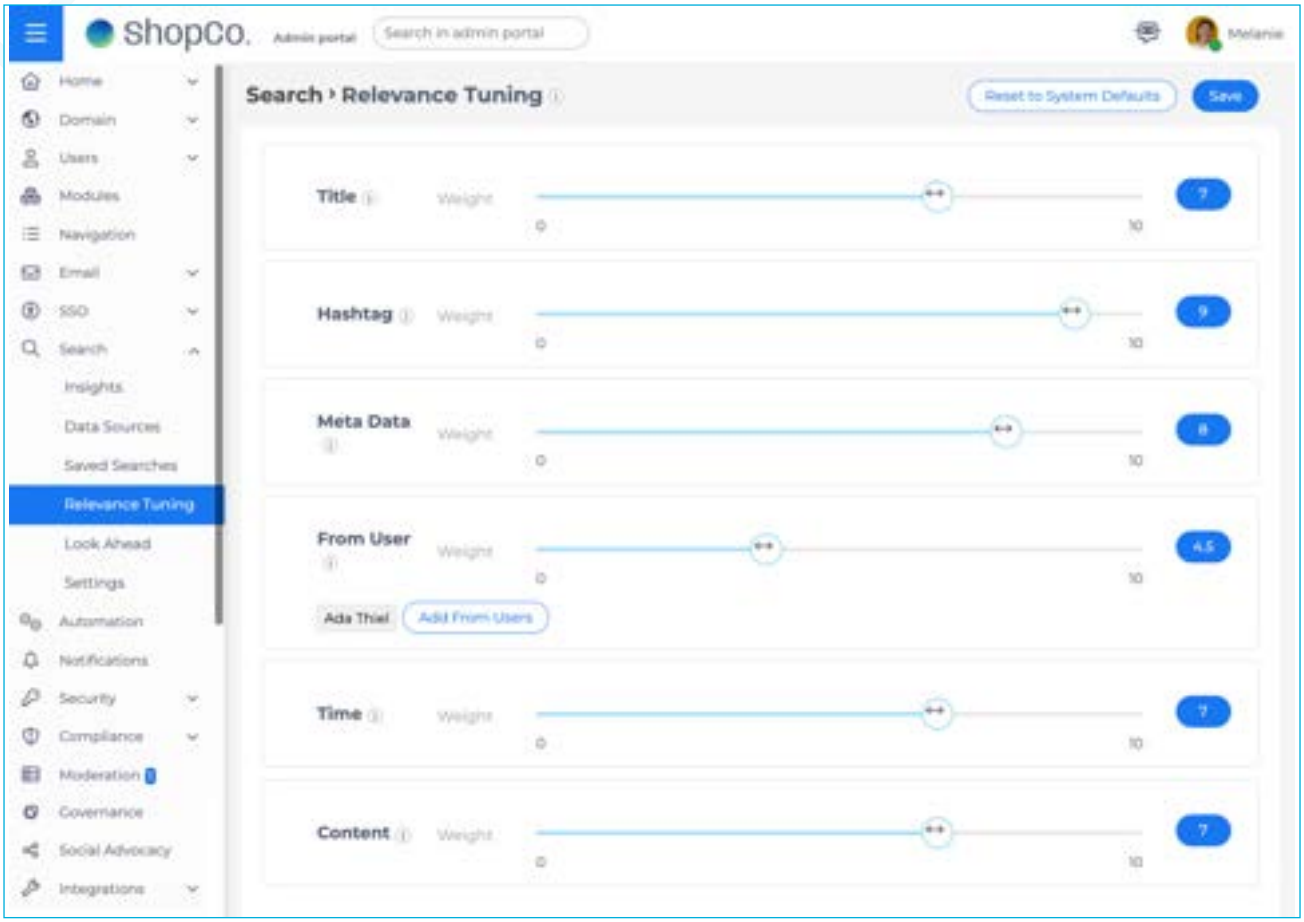
Interestingly, MangoApps offers two different people search options. Firstly, there is a 'People' tab that opens the employee directory and search function, offering a familiar people search experience albeit with rich functionality. Clicking on a profile card opens the full profile, which can hold additional details such as the employee's social activity and awards. Users can select an org chart view within the employee directory, which is laid out intelligibly in a horizontal format, with team members listed in columns.

Additionally, MangoApps provides an AI-powered 'Colleague Finder' that helps employees find people from a free text query. This would be useful in contextual people searching, such as identifying colleagues who have specific experience or expertise. This particular people search option, however, is accessed via the 'AI Studio' rather than via the People tab. We'd prefer to see both integrated as one AI assisted people search to simplify the user experience.

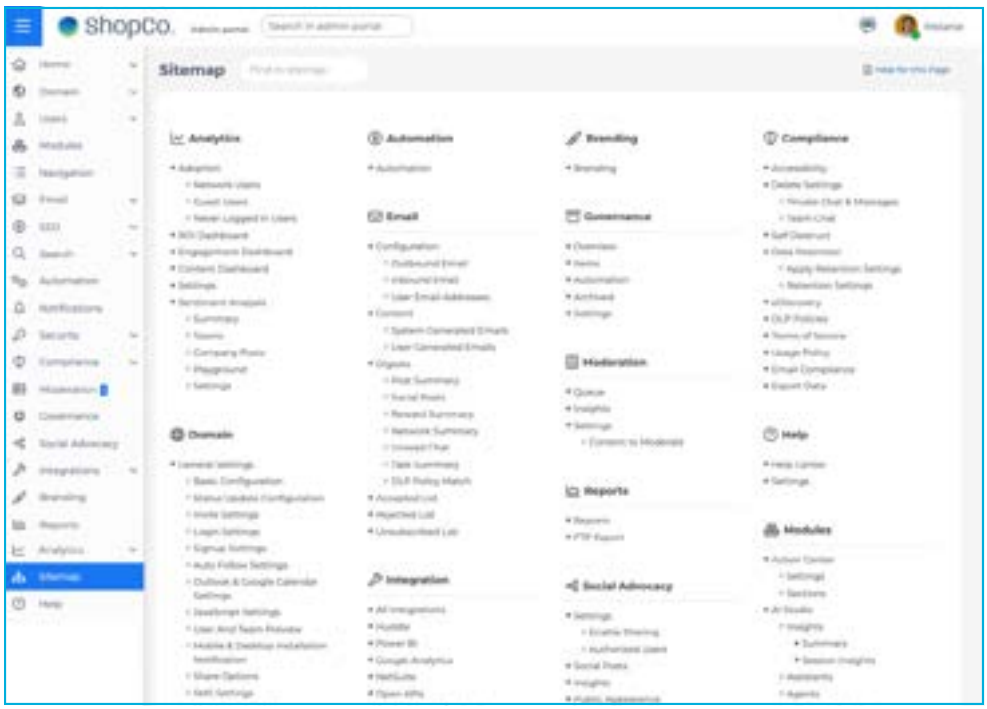
For knowledge management, admins may choose to add a 'files' section to provide a central policy library, for example. Alternatively, each Group may have its own 'files' section and all 'files' areas have local searches. MangoApps' ability to search across third-party libraries and to add integrated file spaces, into Groups for example, lends itself well to information and knowledge management too. Site governance settings ensure that key content can easily be kept up to date and verified (see Scenario 6).



AI-powered Colleague finder.



MangoApps Search Relevance Tuning allows admins to choose which search parameters get higher weightings.



There is a sizeable administrator's sitemap.

MangoApps' breadth of functionality is matched by the range of administrator tools. Admins can be assigned at all levels, for example, a dedicated moderation administrator or one solely with governance responsibilities. Site-wide management is made relatively easy through a comprehensive sitemap and search that provides an entry point to administrator options. This does mean that site admins may be kept busy and may need to delegate some responsibilities should MangoApps be used to its full potential.

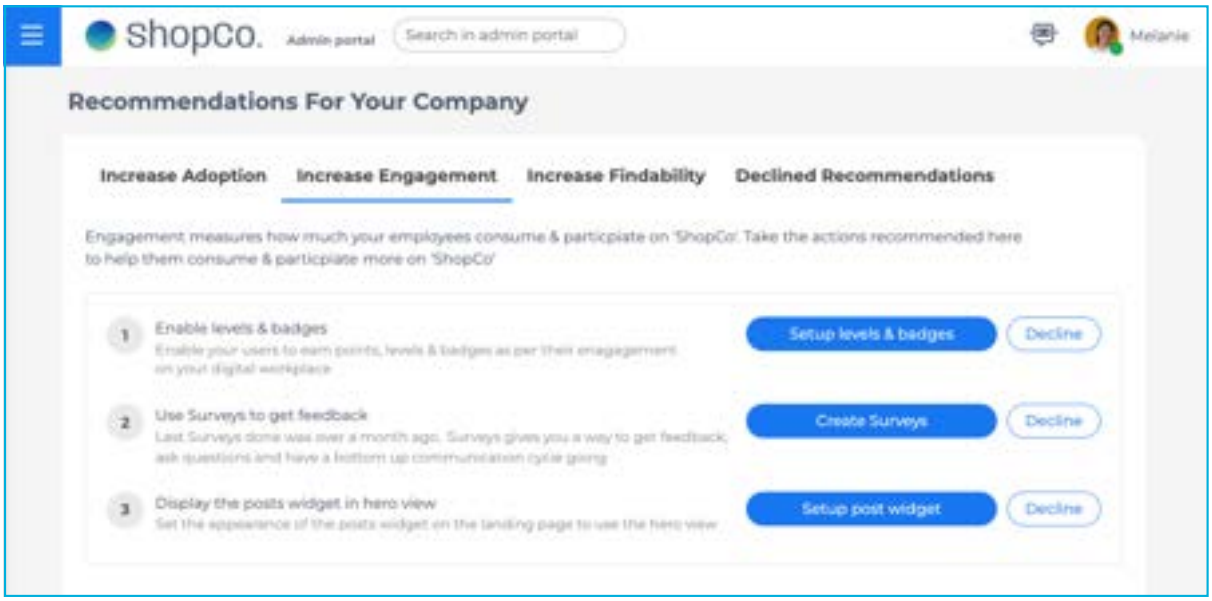
One feature we particularly like is Auto Governance. This ensures that any content created must be periodically reviewed, otherwise it becomes auto archived. Auto Governance would be useful for knowledge bases, company policies and so on ensuring that critical controlled content is always kept up to date. Auto Governance can be applied, if required, to any space at a desired review frequency set. Admins have visibility of spaces that are due for review, as well as those that have been archived, to ensure proactive management.

Administrators can manage and customise the 'verification' of content to ensure that key pages and files are kept up to date. Though relatively simple, the 'Governance' dashboard provides a visual display of the overall site health, including any unverified items. This includes courses, posts, spaces and documents. Administrators can configure notifications to remind authors and nominated admins prior to content becoming unverified. Having this level of visibility of any upcoming unverified items is a helpful feature, allowing a proactive approach to keeping up to date.

Administrators can build tailored home page 'dashboards' using over fifty widgets for creating desired layouts. Each widget can be audience targeted, and admins can allow employees to toggle widgets on or off, enabling a tailored user experience. Separate layouts can be set up for mobile, where the widget-driven approach is very effective (see Scenario 8).

Video and audio files can be embedded in Posts and Updates and are supported in live events. There isn't any native video or audio hosting, however. The product uses the location associated with an employee profile to determine the system language and what machine translated content, including user generated content, they see. We feel these multilingual options are more limited than we've seen in other products.

Overall, we were impressed by the administration tools, including the granularity of site management and customisations available.



'Recommendations for your Company' provides recommendations on how to increase adoption, engagement and findability.

Detailed analytics are available platform-wide down to module level. All dashboards include helpful tooltips and the reports are exportable.

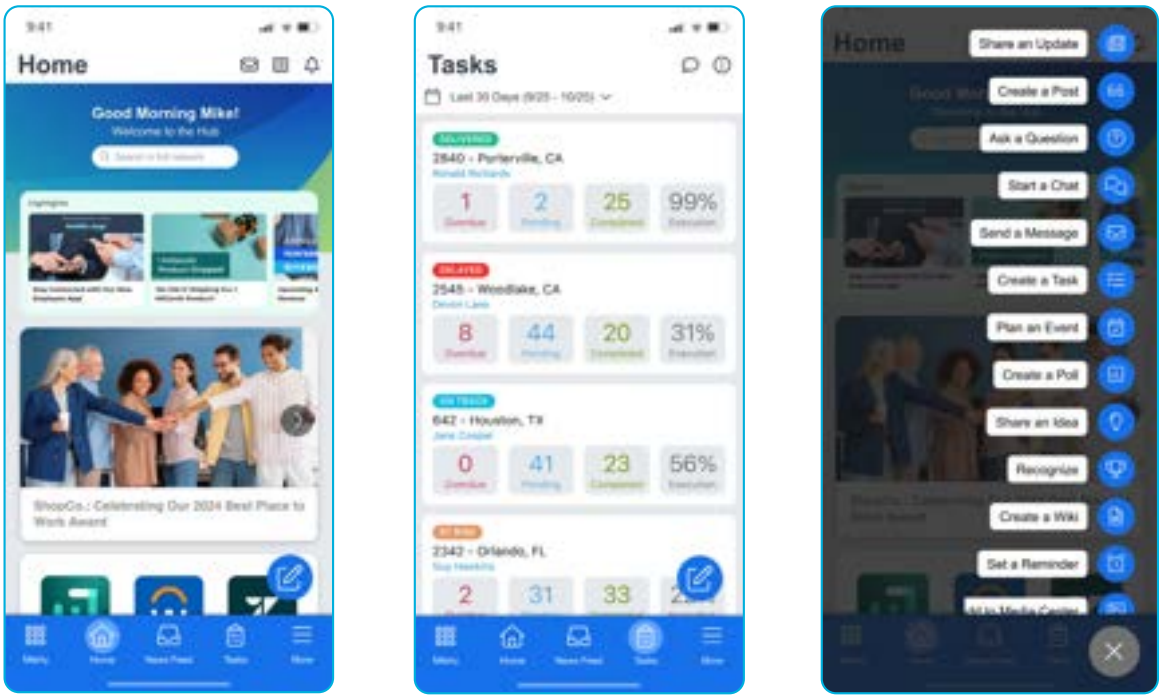
An 'Adoption Dashboard' provides a view of site activity and engagement. The insights show active users by any segment and how the site is accessed. Engagement metrics are based on how much time is spent and the amount of activity, providing a sense of which groups are more engaged and how engagement is trending over time. We liked the 'Recommendations for your Company' page that provides a curated set of actionable recommendations on how to increase adoption, engagement and findability. We hope to see AI used here in future to make it more tailored to the organisation. Additionally, the Customer Success Managers at MangoApps monitor engagement and adoption metrics and are proactive in helping, should these be lower than expected.

Sentiment analytics are available across the entire platform, for Posts and any specified segments. This would be helpful for internal communicators, who may be interested in the impact of Posts based on employee sentiment.

Post analytics provide an easy way to assess the impact of any published Post, including a timeline view that shows any changes since a Post has been boosted or edited. Admins can see who has acknowledged Posts that require such confirmation and can boost to anyone yet to do so. Automatic boosts also provide this function. Videos shared within a Post get their own analytics such as how long viewers spend on average watching a video. Analytics of other file types shared within a Post are available through the file itself. Campaign analytics allow admins to view the impact of each message in a campaign as well as activity by segment, such as department, location and job title.

'Module' analytics offer insights into specific functions of MangoApps, such as the AI Studio, search, recognition and moderation. The AI Studio analytics allow administrators to see overall adoption trends as well as to see any results generated from AI searches and the content generated. We were impressed by the Moderation analytics, offering deep insights into content types, action taken, proportion of content moderated, top detected keywords, top reporters and top flagged users.

Decentralised reports are also available for metrics on individual teams, influencers, users and files. These are produced on demand as opposed to the live dashboards of the other analytics discussed above, which we think is confusing. Overall, although the presentation could be improved in places, there's a good range of insight available.



As well as offering the same features as the desktop version, the mobile app is well catered for frontline workers.

MangoApps' native mobile app has an engaging and contemporary feel. The app is fully brandable, including the name and logo appearing on the device icon. Employees can download MangoApps from app stores by scanning a QR code and there are multiple ways to provide user access; any unique identifier could be used, such as a phone number. Alternatively, access can be managed using credentials from Entra ID, or an import from a third-party system. There is no biometric support for ease of repeat access though.

The app offers the same functionality as the desktop, with the widget-driven approach well suited to mobile devices. The layout is clear and buttons easy to use. The Newsfeed is a familiar, social media-style experience and users can share updates and post content. Search is identical to the desktop experience and straightforward to use. The mobile experience can be customised to be completely different from the desktop version or can be configured by segment. For example, administrators can configure the mobile experience for frontline workers specifically for their needs.

Frontline workers are also well catered for through the provision of Tasks. Tasks is a tool for assigning and tracking actions with dashboard views for team or location managers. This enables non-office-based tasks to be assigned to specific groups or individuals and managed entirely through mobile devices. Mobile provision also includes third-party integrations with tools such as ADP and Workday, allowing for payroll and shift scheduling to be accessible via MangoApps.

The full LMS capabilities are also available on mobile, enabling it to be a powerful resource for frontline workers, especially those that don't have an email address typically needed to access standard enterprise tools. All AI resources are also available on mobile, with the option to install an additional AI standalone app.

We were impressed by the versatility of the app, although the mobile experience can be impacted by the number of possible available features and potential notifications. Site admins need to be mindful of this and provide appropriate learning resources. Overall, the mobile app offers both the full experience for knowledge workers on the go, as well as plenty of customisation to provide value to frontline workers who may not have access to desktop resources.

THINGS TO BEAR IN MIND

MangoApps offers an impressive amount of functionality and is highly configurable, however this also can make the user experience noisy and a little overwhelming. As you would expect from something of an all-rounder, there are compromises in terms of sophistication, such as integrations, with some areas of the product feeling a little dated too, although the mobile experience does come across as fresher. MangoApps has, however, released a variety of helpful AI features. For those wishing to explore how AI could help their organisation, MangoApps is worth exploring.

We felt the range of options for infrequent publishers might be confusing. As mentioned in Scenario 2, the Universal Compose Box provides a possible starting point for multiple content types. This, however, could prove confusing to people unsure of what sort of content they are creating and where it could be seen – as opposed to creating content, such as an Update, directly within the Group for which it is intended. This presents a risk of something being seen by an unintended audience.

If using MangoApps to its full capabilities, administrators should be aware of the time commitment and potentially the need to delegate some admin roles to ensure a seamless operation of the platform. However, customer support from MangoApps is largely rated as a stand-out feature by clients, giving site admins a large degree of help to ensure successful adoption and engagement. We would recommend a phased approach to roll-out if considering using all the features of MangoApps to avoid initially overwhelming users.

Why choose this product

MangoApps is a comprehensive solution and offers good value for money, sitting at the mid-price point range. MangoApps comes with impressive customer service and would be well suited for medium and large-sized organisations with a variety of operations. The configuration options and impressive mobile app support multiple audiences and would serve frontline workers well. As well as building and managing standard intranet applications out of the box, MangoApps offers impressive community, social and learning features, making it versatile for modern work.

You may also be interested in...

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Vendor roadmap

No roadmap has been supplied by MangoApps.

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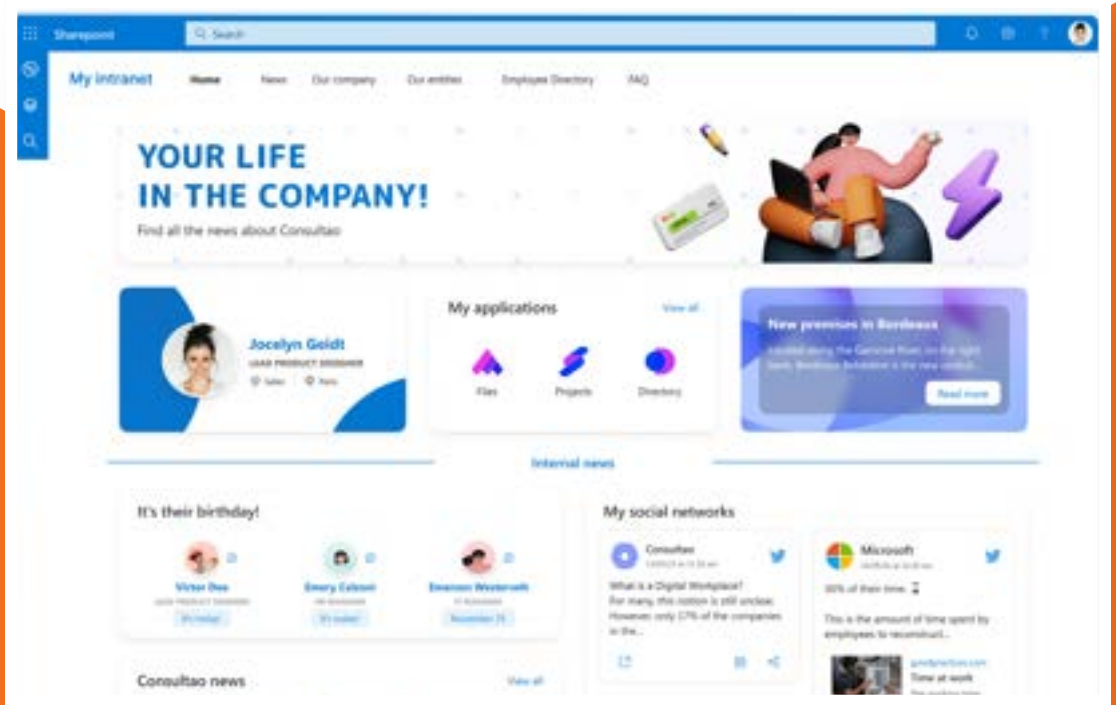
OPTIONALLY WORKS WITH SHAREPOINT

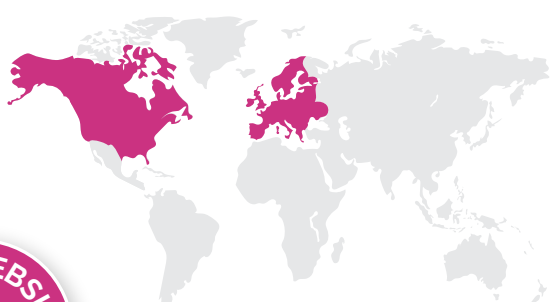
FRONTLINE FOCUS



Typical deployment:

1,000 to 5,000

Company locations:



VISIT THE WEBSITE

The product in a nutshell

Mozzaik365 is a contemporary and attractive take on a SharePoint-based intranet that will appeal to organisations looking for a high level of compatibility with their Microsoft 365 investment, all for a reasonable price.

SUMMARY

Mozzaik365

Mozzaik365, by Mozzaik, was launched in 2021, though an earlier version of the product has been around since 2015, before the current company was spun-off. As well as an intranet platform, Mozzaik offer Genius AI (included in this review) and MODA, a tool for creating dashboards in Teams (not covered here). They are based in France, with a global spread of partners.

Mozzaik365 does a commendable job of augmenting the standard SharePoint user experience, making use of the best of SharePoint's features while adding valuable functionality on top in some areas. It gives more controls to optimise the design, a wide range of extra web parts, and takes the power of Microsoft 365's multi-lingual capabilities to the next level. In all aspects, Mozzaik have been careful to ensure their product is closely integrated with SharePoint capabilities. The benefit of this shows through in things like SharePoint flexible layouts, which Mozzaik were able to incorporate into their product very rapidly following Microsoft's rollout. Other SharePoint-based intranets with their own interfaces will find this a bigger challenge.

For information finding, we particularly like the way Mozzaik365 supports 'knowledge base' pages and think the 'Genius' chatbot is also very well-conceived for this use case.

For internal communicators and administrators, the story is a little more mixed. The news creation process is well designed, and the audience targeting is solid. A capable newsletter tool has also been added in mid-2025. However, the built-in generative AI is very linear, and we felt it was more restrictive than other products we've seen.

We've observed for several years that SharePoint has multiple weakness when it comes to intranet governance and analytics. Mozzaik365 plugs some of those gaps with its own analytics console and a handy template-based 'site engine' tool, but there is room to do a fair bit more and we've seen other SharePoint intranet in-a-box products extend these areas. Mozzaik are developing the product at a decent pace however, and customers commented on the frequency of updates, so we hope to see further improvements soon.

Mozzaik365 makes many worthwhile enhancements to Microsoft's offering while striving hard to remain fully compatible. The price point will be attractive for organisations of all sizes and is particularly good value for small-to-medium deployments.

Pricing

PRICE BAND	
1,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
5,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
20,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
50,000 users	$ $ $ $ $

These prices are indicative, offering a comparison of the products featured in this report only. Please contact the vendor for a bespoke quote.

PRICING MODEL

Subscription – price band based on number of users.

DISCOUNTS

Charities and non-profit organisations; schools and educational institutes; multi-year commitments.

COSTS TYPICALLY

Fairly evenly spread across three years.

PRICE INCLUDES

Unlimited technical support during business days; access to online support; new features every month and updates every week; a newsletter of information; evolutionary maintenance of the solution; corrective maintenance; customer success follow-up.

Product type

Semi-bespoke built

Branding opportunities

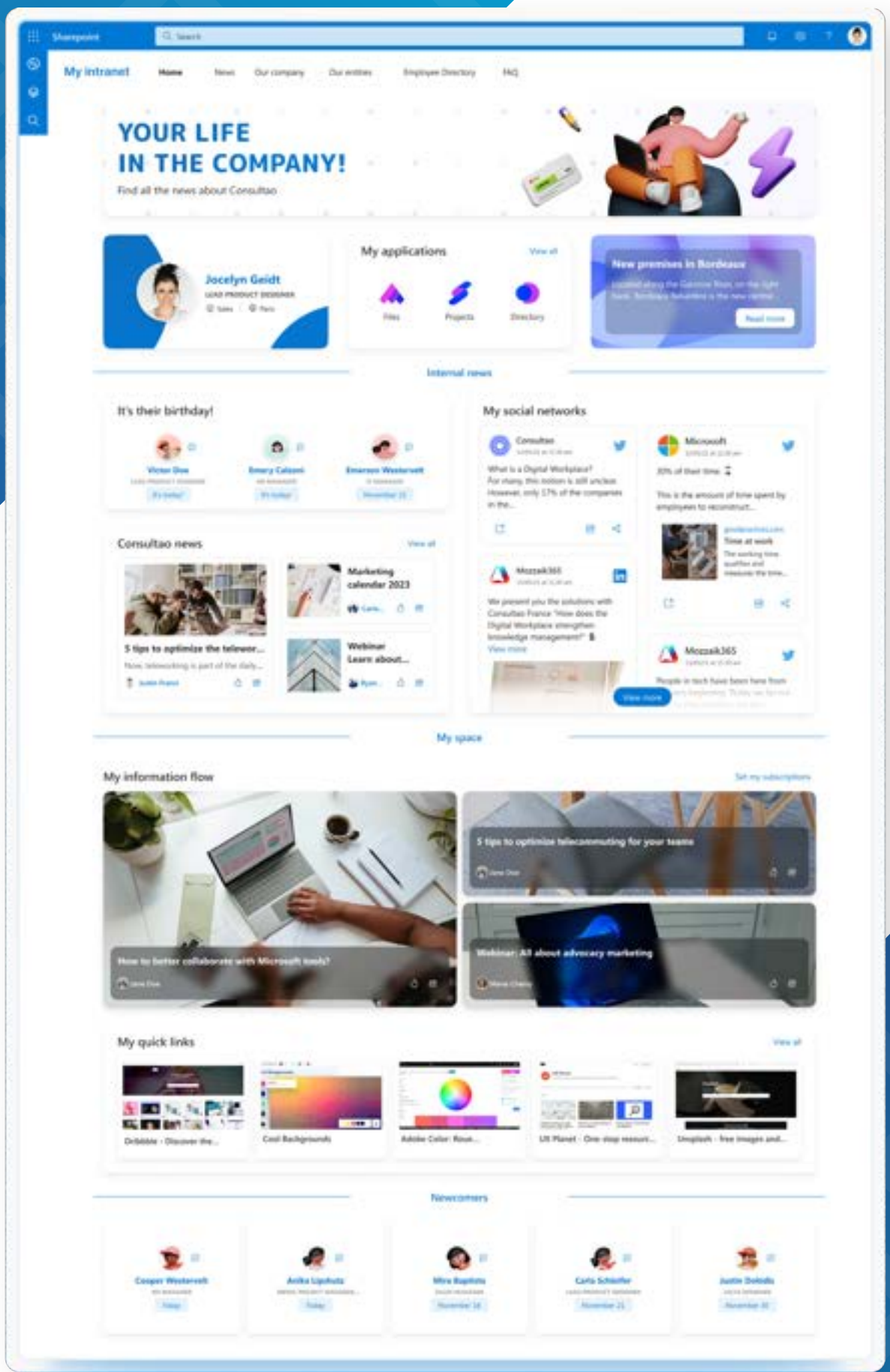
All branding, complex options

Base systems

Fully standalone	**Requires SharePoint**	Other

Sectors

Energy and utilities	Healthcare	Public services, government and administration	Information technology	Property and construction


Sharepoint
My intranet
Home
News
Our company
Our entities
Employee Directory
FAQ
YOUR LIFE
IN THE COMPANY!
Find all the news about Consultao
Jocelyn Geidt
My applications
View all
Files
Projects
Directory
New premises in Bordeaux
Read more
Internal news
It's their birthday!
Victor Dow
Emery Calzoni
Emerson Westervelt
My social networks
Consultao
Microsoft
Mozzak365
Consultao news
View all
5 tips to optimize the televor...
Marketing calendar 2023
Webinar
Learn about...
My space
My information flow
Set my subscriptions
5 tips to optimize telecommuting for your teams
How to better collaborate with Microsoft tools?
Webinar: All about advocacy marketing
My quick links
View all
Dribbble - Discover the...
Cool Backgrounds
Adobe Color: Reun...
UI8 Planet : One-stop resourc...
Unsplash - free images and...
Newcomers
Cooper Westervelt
Anika Lipshutz
Mira Baptista
Carla Schleifer
Justin Dobbs

COMPANY AND PRODUCT

Company details

Company
Mozzaik365

ISO 27001 certified
Yes

Data residency
Global - at the client's discretion

Company founded
2021

Product launched
2021

Typical client size
1,000 to 5,000

Largest deployment so far
Michelin: 114,000 users

Customers
Clients include: Groupe Bouygues, Michelin, Universal Music France, Keyrus, Ardian, Klépierre, city of Le Havre, City of Westmount, CMB Monaco and MFR

Partner locations
France, Germany, Luxembourg, Belgium, Austria, Switzerland, Norway, United Kingdom, USA, Canada, Singapore, India, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Australia, Tunisia, Morocco, Niger, Egypt, Côte d'Ivoire

Company locations
Paris, France (HQ); Canada

Product and technical details

Name of product

Mozzaik365

Deployment

Client on-premises	Client private cloud	Microsoft Azure	Amazon Web Services	Vendor-hosted	**Microsoft 365 tenant**	Google Cloud	Other

Authentication supported

Entra ID	ADFS	Okta	Open ID	Oauth	G Suite	Other

App deployment

Google Play store	Apple store	**MDM**	**MAM**	Other

Accessibility

Not WCAG 2.1 conformant, but background colours can be set by the individual user; contrast can be set by the individual user; keyboards can be used for navigation.

Document library sources integrated

Box	Dropbox	Google Drive	**SharePoint**	**OneDrive**	Other

Optional integrated enterprise search engines

Coveo	Elastic	IBM	Lucidworks	**Microsoft**	Mindbreeze	Sinequa	Other

User interface multi-language

Machine translation	**Pre-configured**	Editable	**Right to left script supported**	Other

Content multi-language

Machine translation for publishers	**Machine translation for end users**	**Editable machine translation for publishers**	**Manual creation for publishers**	**Right to left script**	Other

Set-up and support

Set-up process for new clients

The installation process requires an Entra ID and a SharePoint administrator to be completed. It takes a maximum of 20 minutes. Details and steps can be found on their website.

Version numbers

Demonstrated to ClearBox: October 2024

As of January 2025: January 2025 – note there are no version numbers

Product updates

Minor updates daily, major updates every month.

Product update process

Mozzaik365 updates are rolled out in a phased approach. The process involves scaling and deployment according to defined tactics, which can be per division or per country. Customers have the flexibility to decide the timing of their updates and can opt out if necessary. This ensures that each local team is trained and supported during the rollout, and any functional or technical issues are addressed promptly.

Reverse-out options

If the contract ends, then clients will lose the UI part of their Mozzaik365 digital workplace, but all data is already stored on the client's SharePoint and this will stay in place; no migration is required.

Technical support

Email support	Phone support	Chat support	Online portal	24/7 support	Office hours only*

*CEST Time zone

User community

Creating a user community is an ongoing project. Mozzaik say their online community will be live in 2025.

Voice of the vendor

Mozzaik says: "Mozzaik365 is a cutting-edge Microsoft 365 extension that empowers organisations to create dynamic and collaborative intranets. Mozzaik365 provides rich and functional spaces for communication, collaboration, and knowledge management, offering a transformative solution for optimising employee engagement productivity, whilst facilitating the internal communication experience thanks to AI."

Voice of the customer

Customers of Mozzaik365 praise its ease of use and the breadth of the capabilities it offers. One said that the best thing is "the dynamic, ergonomic and pleasant components set up for both users and administrators." Another praised Mozzaik's commitment to developing the product: "even if we don't necessarily think about reporting improvements, our needs are anticipated, and we have the pleasure of regularly discovering new features."

Regarding changes sought by customers, there were no stand-out themes, implying a generally happy customer base (one even said "I don't have any development proposals at the moment"). However, one asked for the "ability to manage personalised dynamic links per user," implying they want the targeting of links to go even beyond Mozzaik365's current abilities. Another asked to "improve unified navigation, making it more customisable" and also for "more details in metrics."

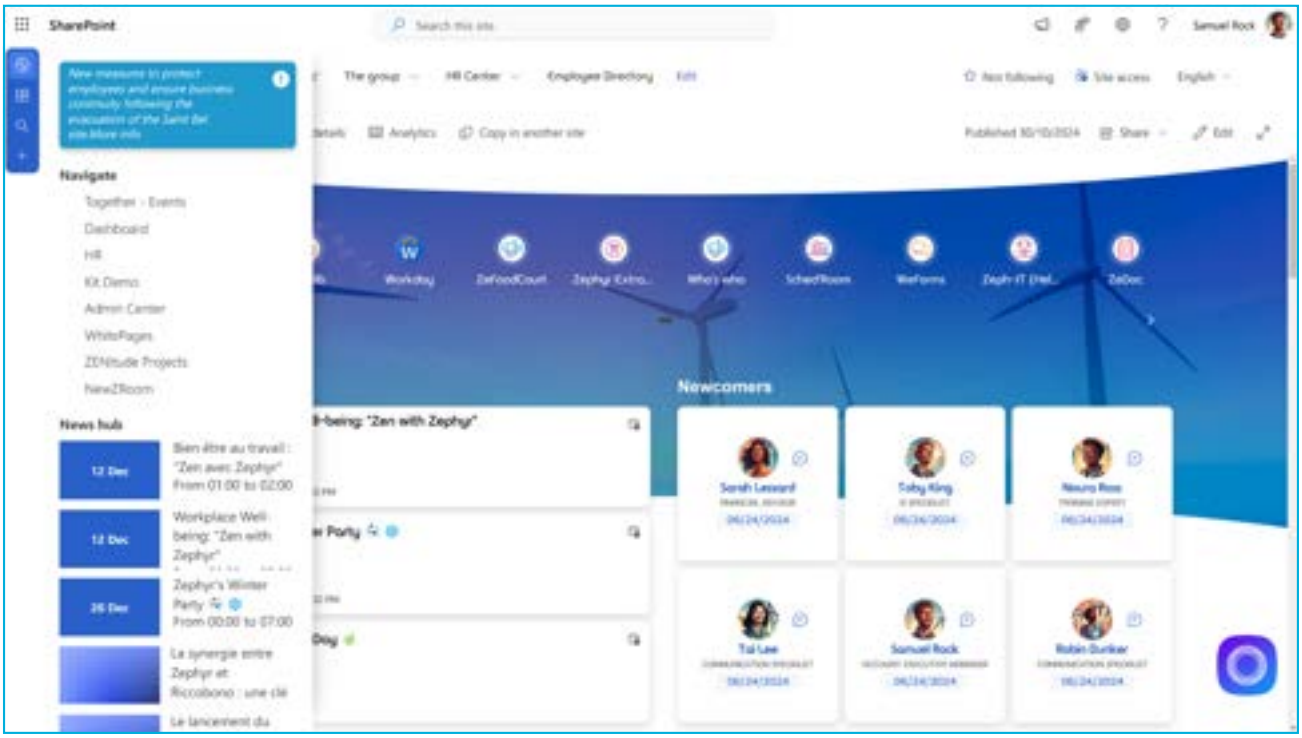
Customers spoke highly of their experience of working with Mozzaik as an organisation. "I would say that the work in supporting the implementation of the tool within our organisation has been, and continues to be, extremely appreciated!" said one. "Customer success monitoring is exceptional," said another. And a third added "a very good experience, very good advice and support for mastering Mozzaik."

Note that customers may use a partner of Mozzaik to do the implementation, with some comments being very positive and others mixed. One said that the vendor was "Very good since the implementation. Just a minor issue during the installation period where the proposed service provider did not meet the solution's standard."

SCENARIOS & SCORES

Please see the Scenarios below for more detail on each of these.

SCENARIO AND SCORE	KEY BENEFITS	IMPROVEMENTS / CONSIDERATIONS
3.5 **1. User Experience & Visual Appeal**	Interface generally modern and pleasant with options to personalise the UX. Branding usefully extends SharePoint's abilities.	Some ungainly elements in the interface, such as embedded scrollbars.
3.5+ **2. Publishing & Communications Management**	Enhanced audience targeting and a useful newsletter tool.	AI content generation less flexible than some of the competition. Doesn't address SharePoint deficits in news planning and scheduling.
3 **3. Community & Engagement**	Uses the power of Viva Engage for community scenarios.	Replacing comments with Viva Engage has both pros and cons.
4+ **4. Integrations & Services (Including M365)**	Maintains very high compatibility with Microsoft 365, so all its connectors are available. Useful landing page for projects.	Mostly relies on Microsoft connectors for third-party integrations.
4+ **5. Information Finding & Search**	Makes SharePoint search much friendlier. 'Genius' AI bot readily scoped to a data set. Nice people directory.	Search management is hidden in Microsoft 365 admin area. Org chart view is simple.
3.5+ **6. Administrator Experience**	Good tool for template-based site creation. Enhancements to navigation editing. Strong multi-language support.	The fragmentation, decentralisation and lack of content lifecycle governance issues of SharePoint administration persist.
2+ **7. Analytics**	Approachable interface to usage and some content analytics.	Few enhancements over standard Microsoft. No mandatory reads.
2.5+ **8. Mobile & Frontline Support**	An attractive app with easy admin controls. People-finding works well on mobile. Makes some Microsoft 365 features (e.g. tasks) easier to use.	Extra cost to white-label the app and use push-notifications to user devices. Range of enrolment options limited.

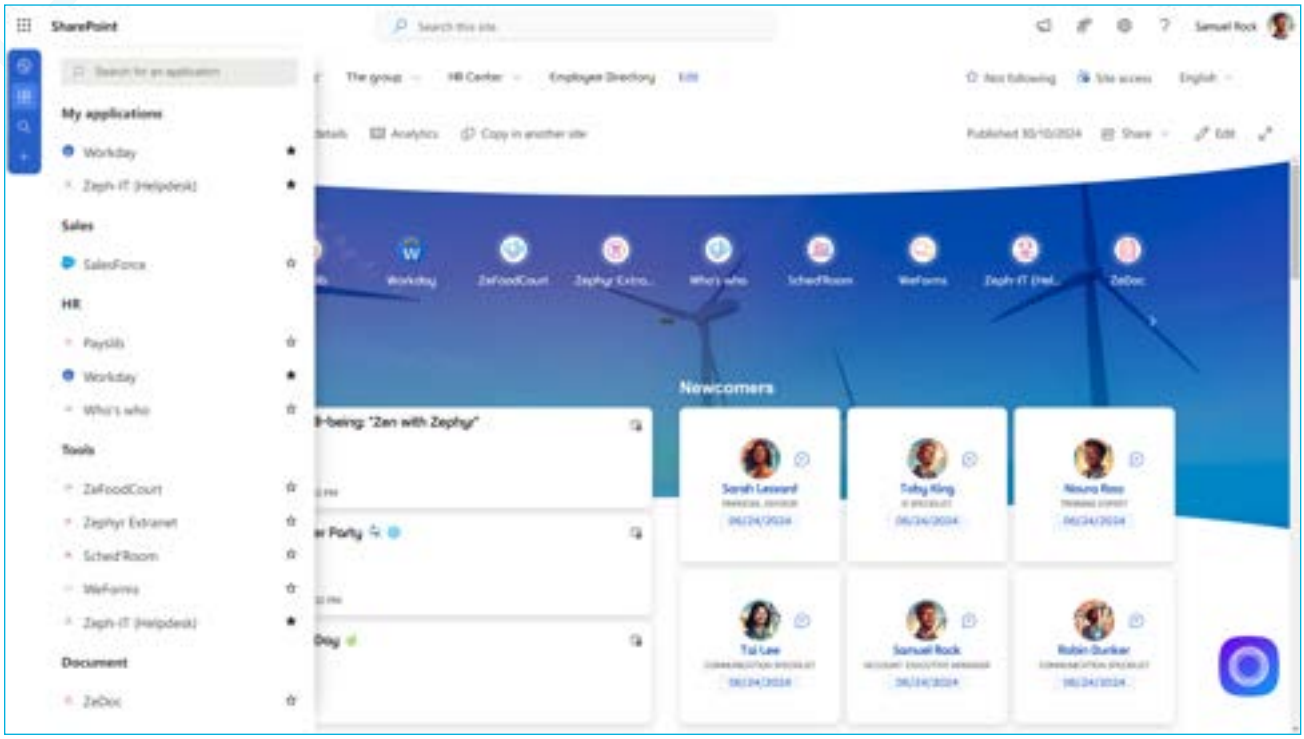


Mozzaik's 'unified experience panel' is a supplementary navigation tool that appears across the whole intranet.

Mozzaik365 offers a light and contemporary user interface, with good consistency across its implementation and attention to detail to ensure it aligns with the underlying SharePoint platform. The most noticeable addition is a 'unified experience' panel to the top left of the screen. This gives quick access to intranet sections, personalised news, apps and search, and is persistent across the intranet. As an app quick-launcher we particularly liked the inclusion of a search box to quickly search by app name (see screenshot below) and the facility of users to favourite their most-used apps.

Mozzaik365 also adds numerous other web parts to the standard SharePoint offer, including clickable maps, an app carousel, profile cards, contributor list, events and anniversaries. We think the 'newcomers' web part will be of interest to companies wanting to reflect a welcoming culture. If desired, this will automatically populate from Entra ID when new people are added.

The whole user experience is capable of being targeted to the user's profile so that each person will potentially see different page elements, branding, news stories and so on. We like the ability for employees to choose news topics to subscribe to – something notably missing from SharePoint. The unified experience also works well as a customisable app-launcher.

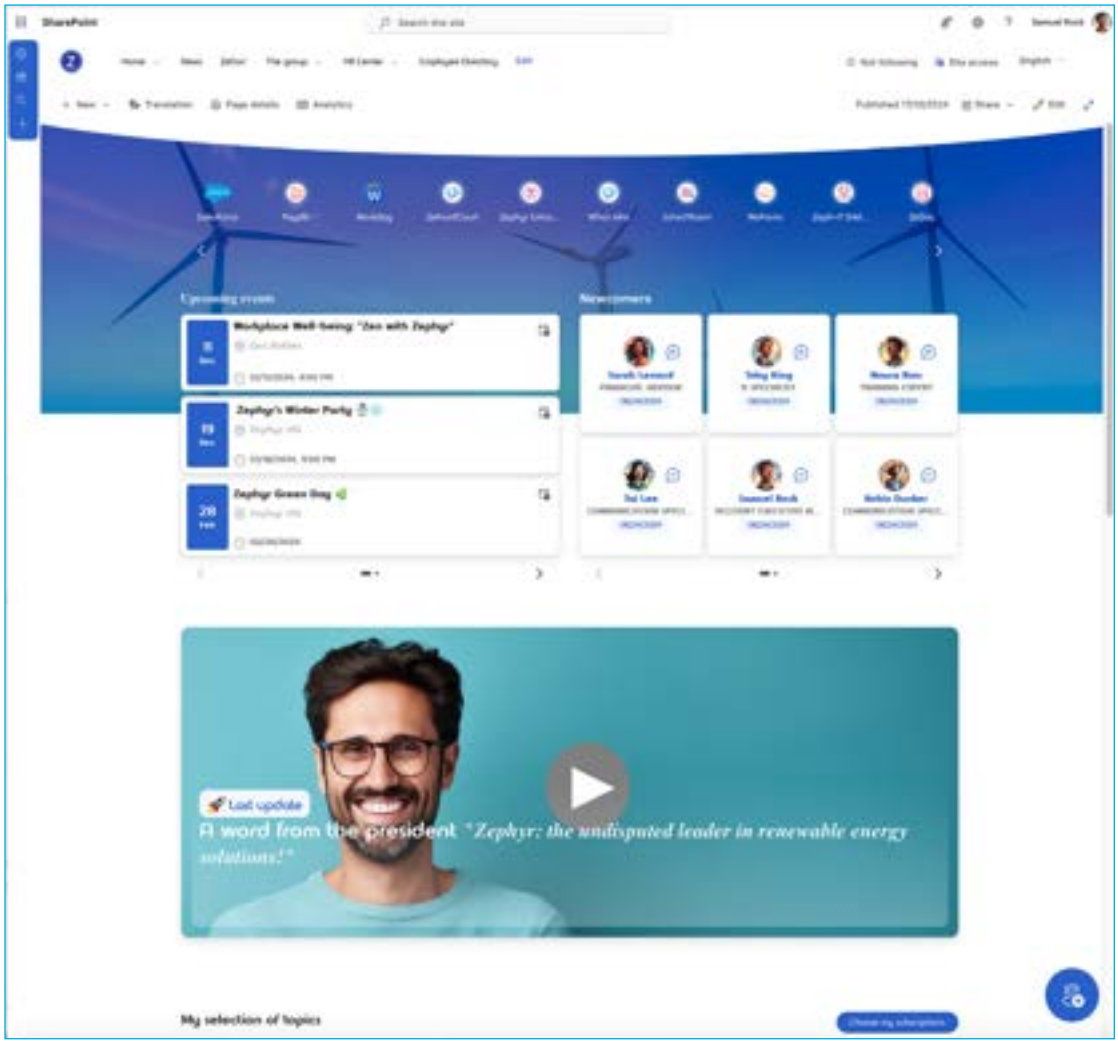


The unified experience panel also acts as a convenient app-launcher to applications. Note the search box at the top.

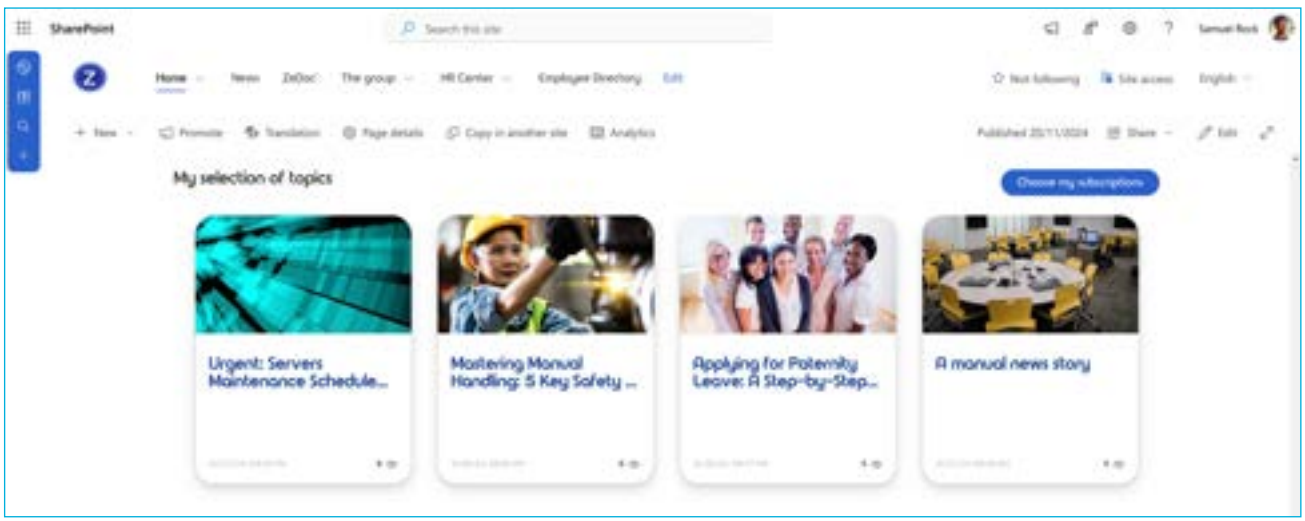
Notifications are reasonably well handled. Alerts can appear in the unified experience panel and there is a 'Message Bar' web part that can be used to highlight urgent information or warnings. Messages can also be pushed into Teams channels. However, there's no ability to show notifications for transactions such as an approval request – Mozzaik365 relies on Power Automate for this, which typically generates an email notification.

Branding is notably enhanced over standard SharePoint, even down to the ability to set brand colours for the separator bar and fonts for individual web parts. Organisations with multiple brands are well supported, with the facility to show a different brand based on user profile. This level of targeting can be taken further too – for example a frontline division can be given an entirely different start page, such as one focused on relevant tasks and resources rather than news. Mozzaik have also created intranets for clients where there is a global 'parent' company brand where published content then gets pushed out to division sites with different brands.

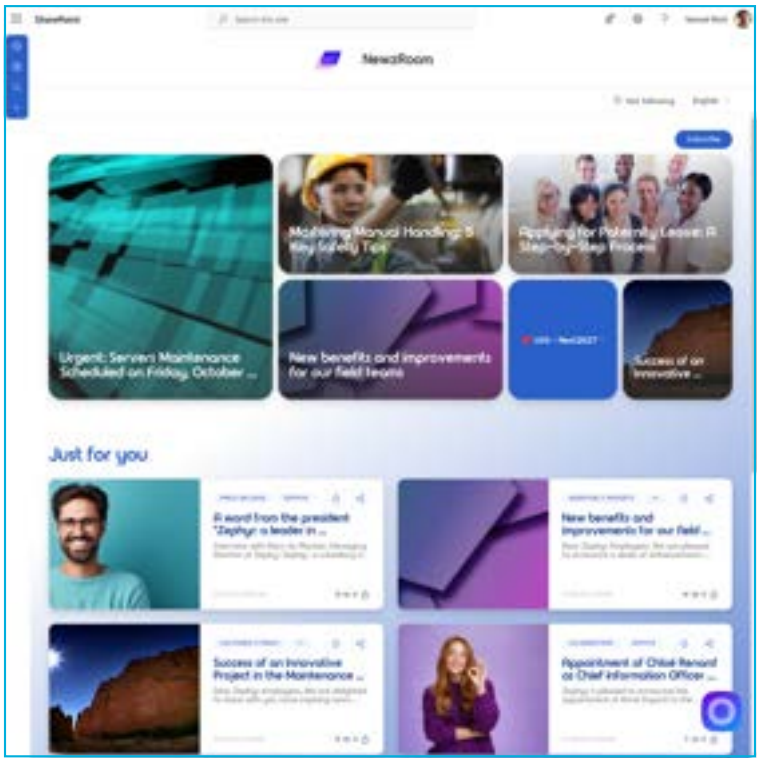
Overall Mozzaik makes some good enhancements to standard SharePoint in this scenario, though we did notice a few inelegant elements, such as the need to scroll within a web part. We also question how readily users will take to the unified experience containing navigation and content elements that seem to duplicate the on-page experience. For example, the app carousel and app button in the unified experience do largely the same thing. However, intranet managers do have the ability to remove overlapping features if they wish. For example, the app ribbon could be reserved for department pages to highlight function-specific apps.



Mozzaik365 offers a very different look to standard SharePoint, with plenty of options to fine-tune the styling. Note the blue 'unified experience' navigator in the top left.



News is personalised and users can also choose the topics they are interested in using a 'choose my subscriptions' button.



The news wall feature gives multiple options for layout, as well as personalising the news feed to the user.

Mozzaik365 enhances the options for targeting and displaying news compared to standard SharePoint, but we'd like to see more depth to supporting internal communication teams with planning and governance of articles. A quick win for publishers is that it is very easy to start a new article from the 'Contribution centre' in the unified experience widget.

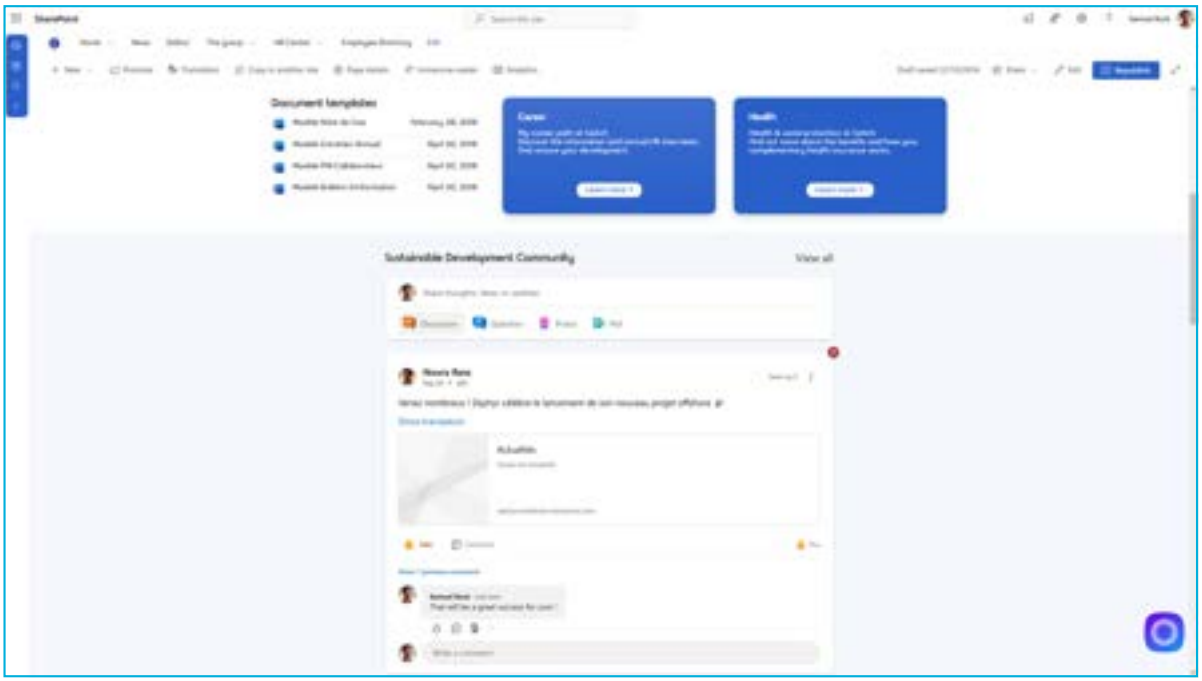
A new addition in mid-2025 was a newsletter tool. This includes an attractive templating feature with easy drag-and-drop layout manipulation and many options to fine-tune the look. Although column-based, the editor includes a helpful preview mode for mobile, and we were pleased to see a 'stack columns' toggle button for small screens. Content can be dynamic too – for example, to insert an existing SharePoint news story or an active link to a person's profile. In line with other parts of Mozzaik365, translation is also well supported. Overall, it's a strong first release and we hope to see it mature, particularly the analytics side which is currently a little basic.

Generative AI can assist with article creation, using a step-by-step approach to select a template, generate the content and then add a title. We were impressed that the AI could fill in a multi-section page, and like the options to pick a suitable tone. However, we found the linear process a little inflexible – for example, there was no obvious way to re-generate with a different tone or request more title suggestions.

As well as text and images, articles can include any available web-parts, giving the potential for stories to be very rich. The Events facility will be welcomed by communicators – it supports the creation of an event page with booking handling. Videos are supported and play in a 'lightbox' style pop out so that users don't have to navigate away from the page.

Targeting by audience is very versatile. Each component can be set to only show to a specific audience. Audiences are managed in the back end 'Configurator', though dynamic audience definition (e.g. "people who joined in the last 30 days") will require a premium Entra license.

There are very few built-in tools to support news scheduling and management – only the ability to set a publication date. Approval workflows are standard SharePoint, and there is no editorial planner tool.



Mozzaik365 embeds Viva Engage for most of its social functionality.

Mozzaik365 relies heavily on Viva Engage for its social abilities - it augments this in places, but given Engage's maturity this is perhaps understandably not an area of focus for the product. As such it's unsurprising that Mozzaik365 makes full use of Viva Engage for its community facilities. Engage is excellent for community management, supporting a wide range of user contribution styles and reactions (see the SharePoint and Viva review for details).

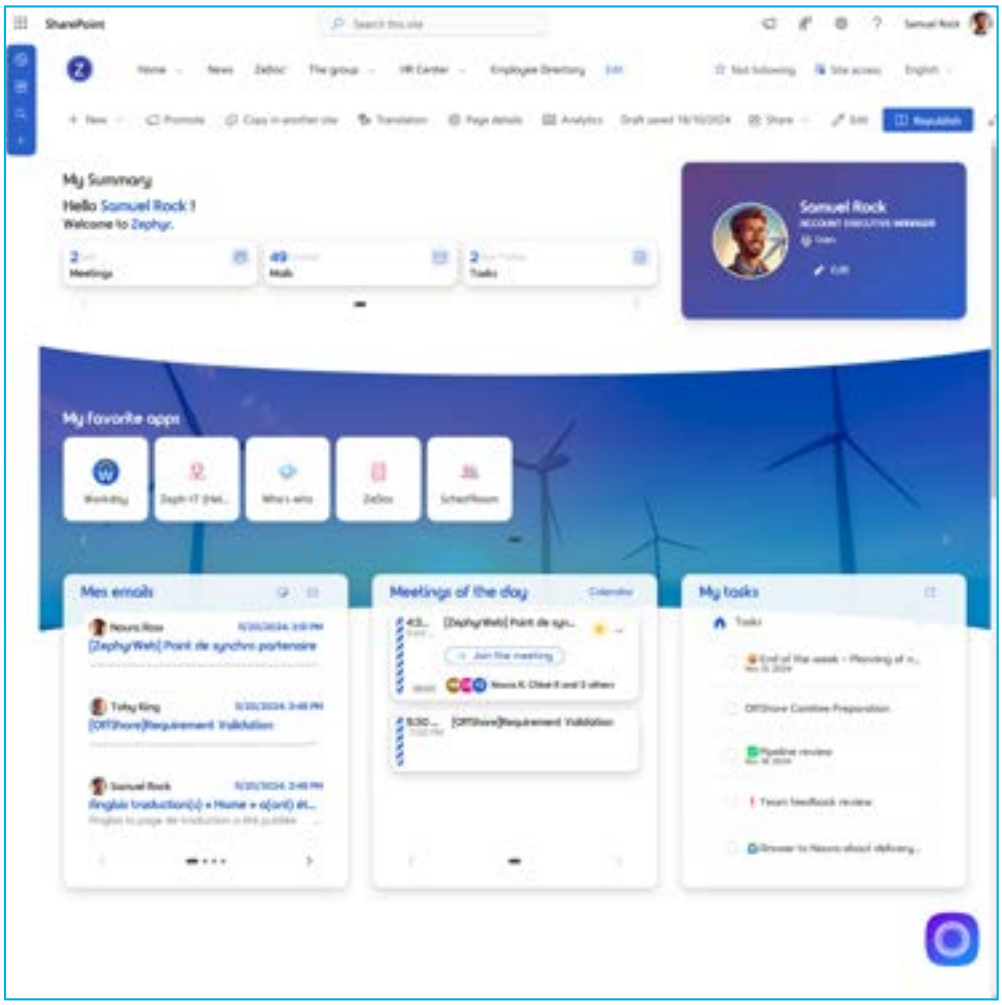
For feedback and polls, there is a handy 'survey' web part, and for more extensive questionnaires Mozzaik have done a good job of embedding Microsoft Forms.

Mozzaik365 does extend the Microsoft offer in some ways, however. Firstly, they recognise that the native comment facility in SharePoint is inadequate and have created a web part that uses Engage to create the post instead. In principle this is a great idea – the comment has much more potential for engagement there, and a wide range of reactions are supported. However, redundant space and a small typing area actually make it hard to view comments within the context of the news story. Embedding Engage as a larger 'Conversation' web part on a page is much more successful.

A second social addition is a side panel used to show a conversation within Microsoft Teams. Mozzaik showed us a use case of a Legal department section with an "Ask legal" feature. We can see the appeal of this triggering a notification for Legal to reply via Teams, though we are not sure if this formatting really lends itself to browsing past answers.

Thirdly, Mozzaik has implemented an 'Idea Box' for employee suggestions and ideation. Users can post an idea for others to vote on, and the owner of the idea can add a status label such as "In Progress". It's a simple implementation with no back-end idea management, but it saves trying to build one using Microsoft Lists.

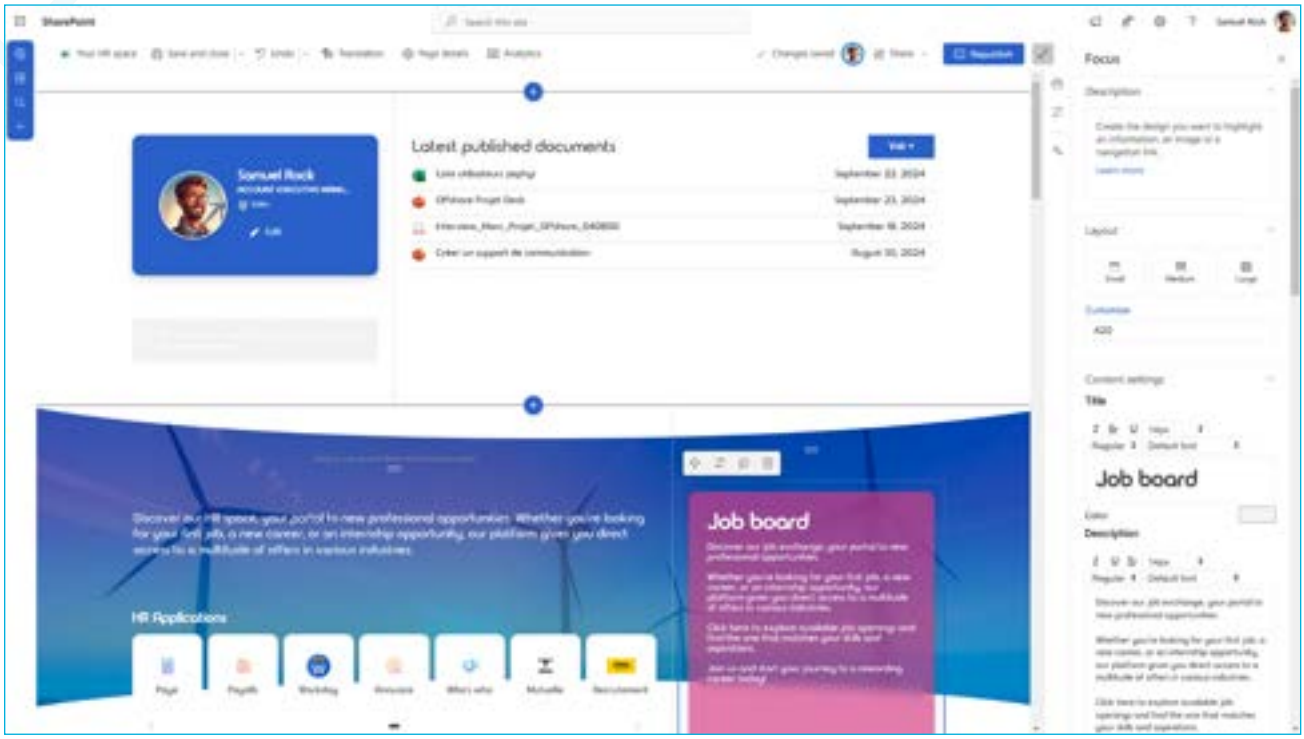
Finally, Mozzaik contains nothing specific around wellbeing. However, we were shown an example of how their product can be used for employee onboarding using tasks, a CEO message, targeted quick links etc. This use case is a good demonstration of the versatility of the platform.



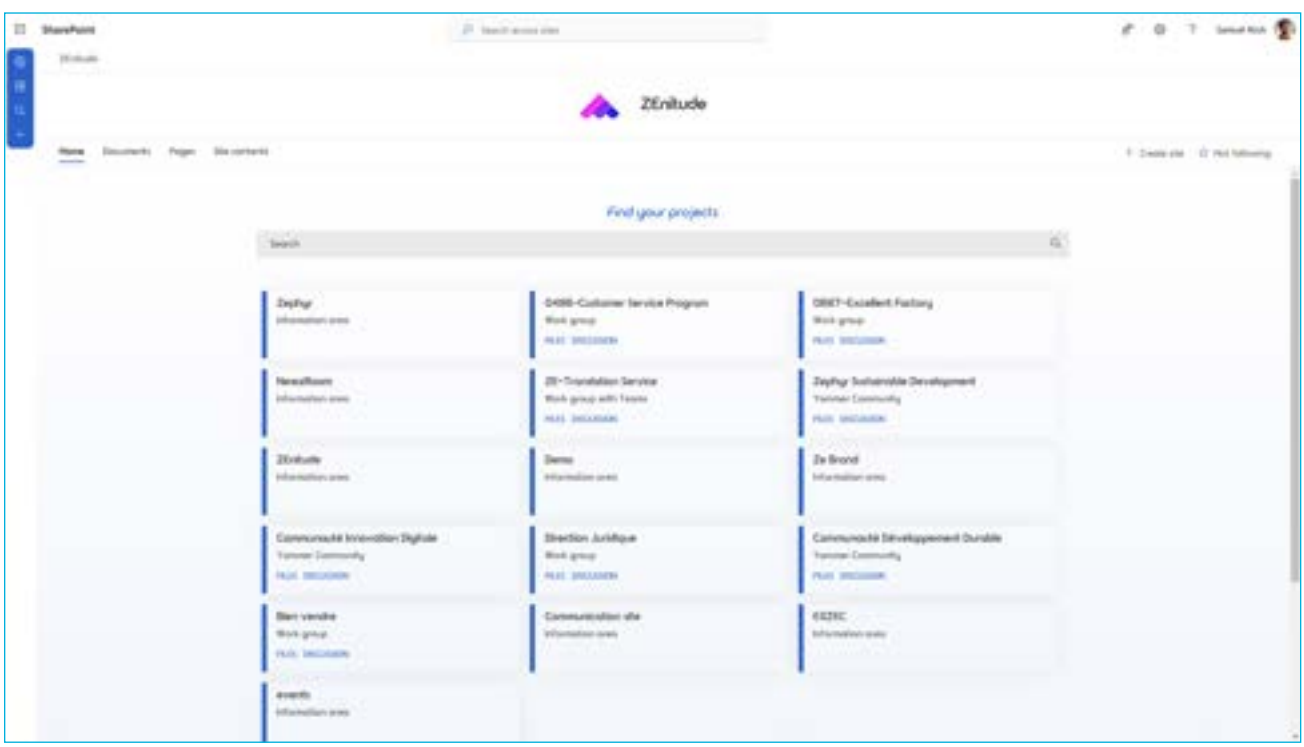
Mozzaik365 can surface mails, meetings, tasks and more from Microsoft 365 to create a personalised page.

The smooth blending of Mozzaik365 into Microsoft 365 means that it benefits from all the integrations that come with Microsoft's offering. Naturally this includes access to content on SharePoint, Exchange etc. but the platform also benefits from all the connectors in the Power Platform and for search, for example. Integrations with business systems outside of M365 are also possible using Microsoft's approach, which you can read about in the SharePoint review. In addition, Mozzaik add a few light enhancements of their own.

The primary strength in this scenario is that Mozzaik have taken great care to develop their product to integrate fully with Microsoft's offer. This is a subtle but important point – some SharePoint-based intranet products in this report sacrifice access to existing Microsoft features to create their own presentation layer. Or they add functionality which confusingly overlaps with that in SharePoint. With Mozzaik365, however, the integration is very polished – every SharePoint web part remains usable, for example, along with Mozzaik's enhancements. This extends to the control panel for each web part, where making changes will be instantly familiar to seasoned SharePoint users. As you may expect, Mozzaik365 intranets can be surfaced in Teams using Viva Connections, or Mozzaik offer a custom Teams application that will show the client's (intranet) logo in the Teams application bar.



Mozzaik365's web parts integrate seamlessly with the SharePoint approach when changing settings (panel on right).



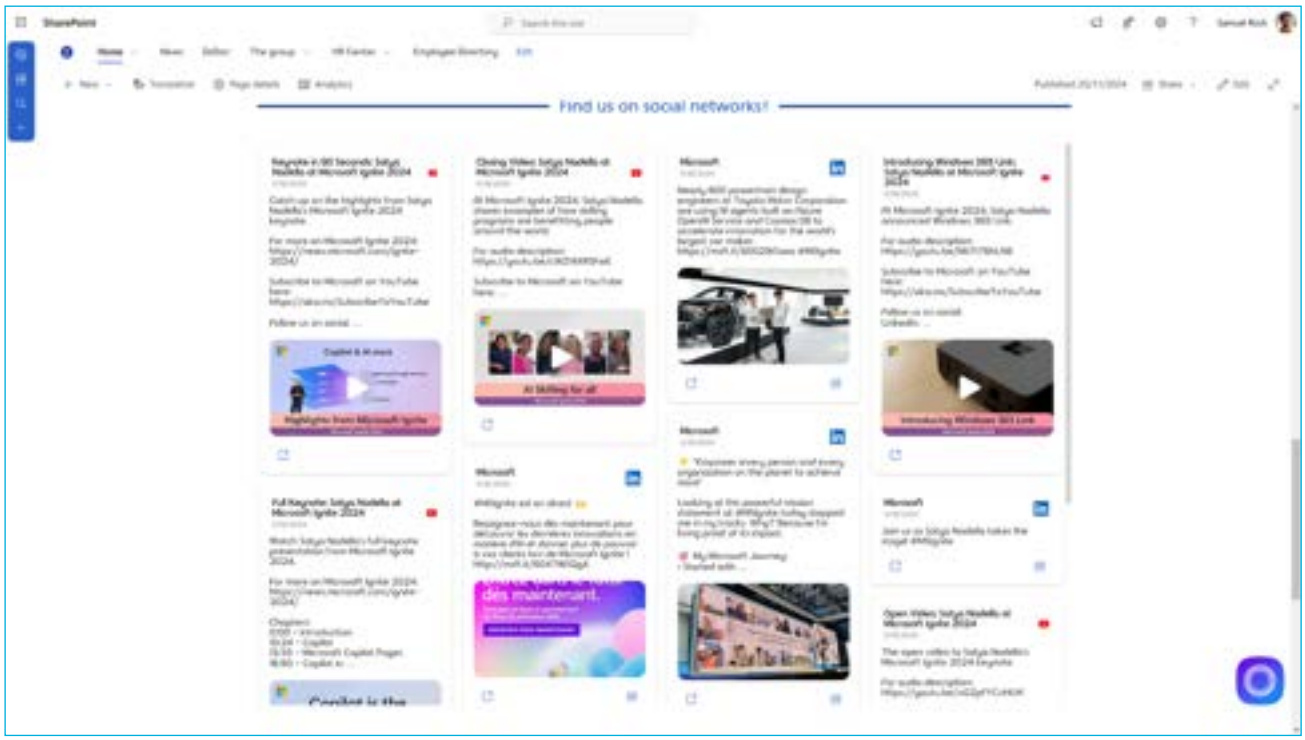
Mozzaik365 can create a searchable landing page for projects.

Mozzaik have added further functionality of their own. There are web parts to show upcoming tasks and meetings, and even emails if desired. This possibly makes more sense for frontline workers in the mobile environment who may not routinely use Outlook, but it also gives options for a "My page" approach within the desktop experience too (see the screenshot at the start of this scenario).

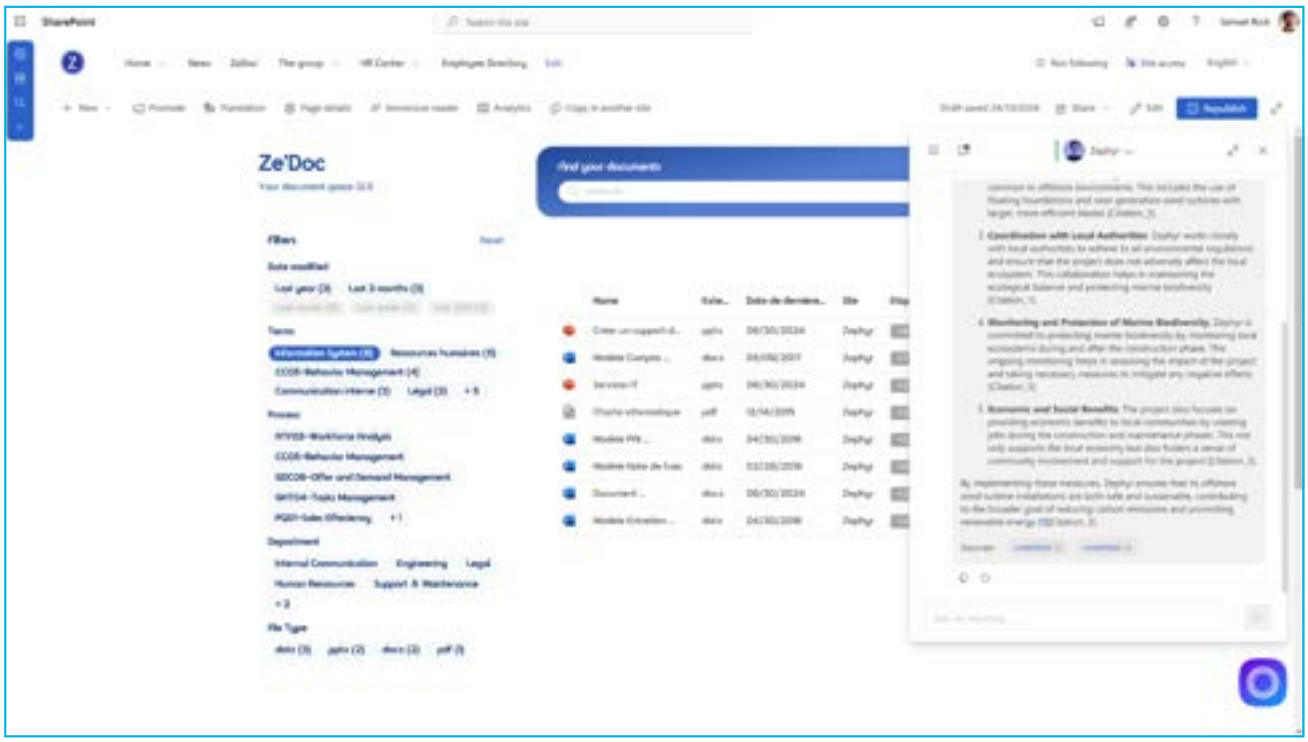
Mozzaik have put thought into the projects side of SharePoint as well. It's possible to build a searchable landing page for all projects, and to use Mozzaik365 web parts on team site pages within SharePoint – using the events list and profile cards, for example. See also Scenario 6 for more about managing SharePoint collaboration sites with Mozzaik's 'site engine' tool.

Mozzaik's final offering in this scenario is the ability to surface external sources through their web parts. Notably, a feed showing company posts from LinkedIn, YouTube, Facebook and Instagram can be included, encouraging 'employee ambassador' interactions.

Overall, Mozzaik's approach appears to carefully work alongside Microsoft's offering, capitalising on all that is built-in, rather than making large strides to enhance it. There's nothing particularly wrong with that: what Microsoft 365 already offers is a very wide set of connectors, though they are not always the easiest to get to grips with for non-technical users. The big win is that everything in Microsoft 365 remains usable, and this is probably what matters most to potential buyers.



Mozzaik365 includes a web part to highlight external social feeds, such as posts on LinkedIn and YouTube.



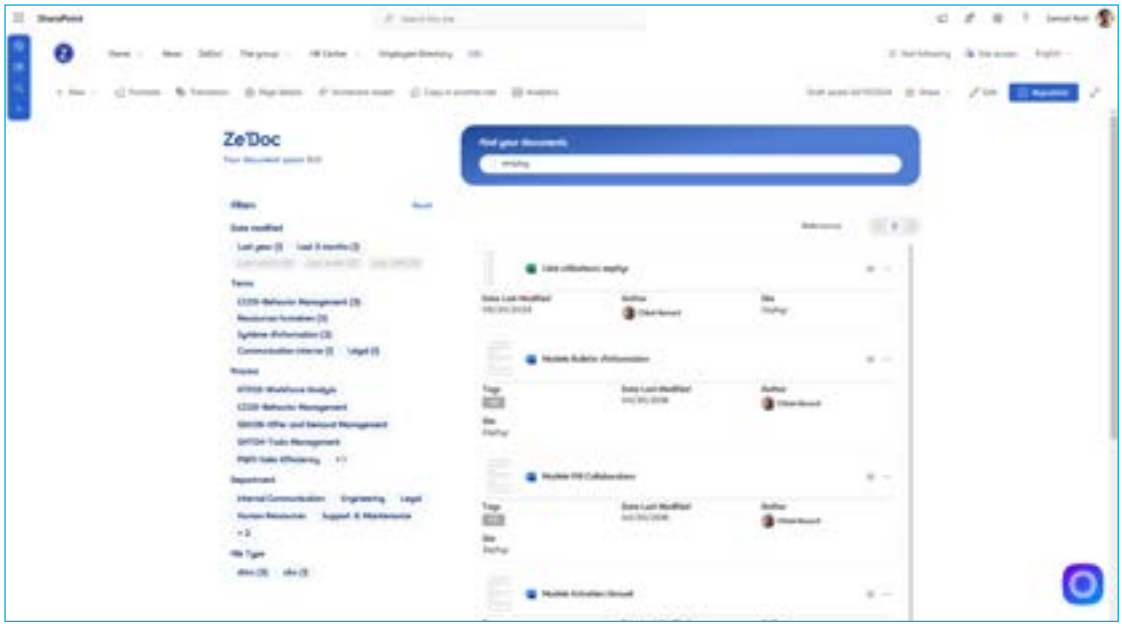
The AI bot can be scoped to certain document libraries so that it is optimised to help with a specific area of knowledge.

Mozzaik365 offers a strong set of solutions for this scenario, building well on the already powerful capabilities that come from Microsoft 365, including its search connectors to federate search to third-party systems. Mozzaik365's search interface, AI bot and people search tools are all worthwhile additions. The only slight miss is the inherent inaccessibility of Microsoft search management.

The way search works in SharePoint can often be confusing for users – it isn't that clear if the search will be for the "whole intranet", a specific site or all of Microsoft 365. Mozzaik have done a good job of addressing this by adding their own search interface from the unified experience sidebar. This also leads to an 'advanced search' interface. This adds filters as buttons on the left, including topics, content type and contributor. Our only wish is that the interface for selecting a date range was customisable rather than pre-set values (especially given that this is offered in SharePoint's own search results page).

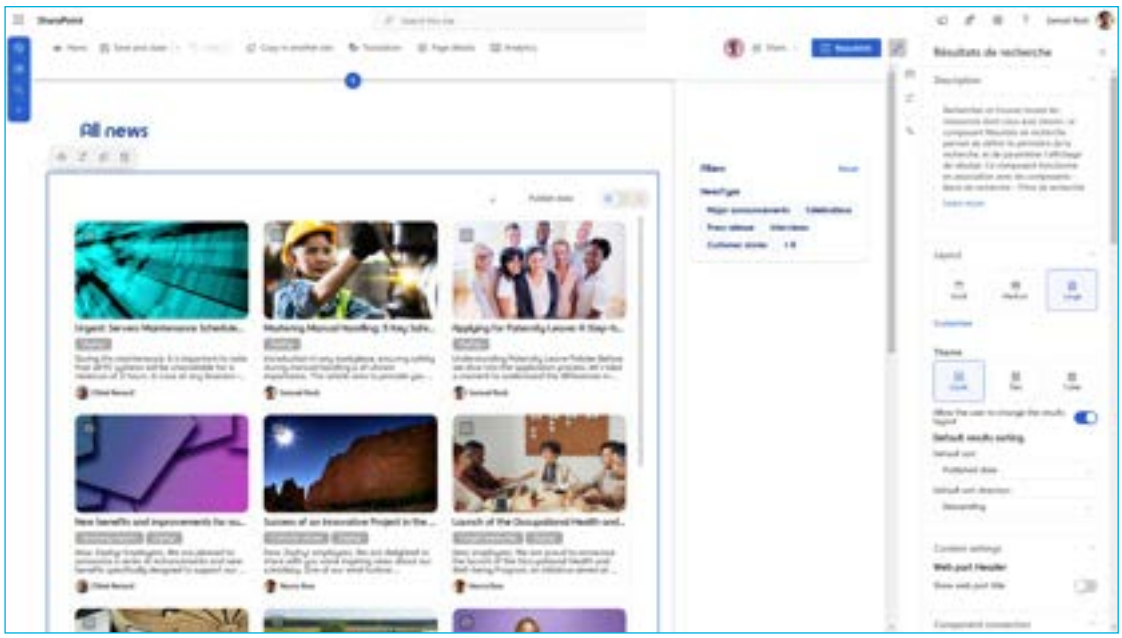
Our slight reservation here is that managing search relies on access to the standard Microsoft Search admin panel. As noted in the SharePoint and Viva review in this report, the downside of this is that it requires access rights that few intranet managers are likely to have.

We like that the same search facility can be used to create a custom search experience – for example a page showing "All News" can have filters to reflect in-house news types such as "press release" or "celebrations". We particularly like how easy it is to scope search to a specific library or content type, such as videos. This can be used to create a landing page for a knowledge base, for example on product data, sales collateral or how-to guides (an example screenshot is shown as 'Ze'Doc' above). The same approach can also be used for a page of job vacancies, an internal shop catalogue or photo library.

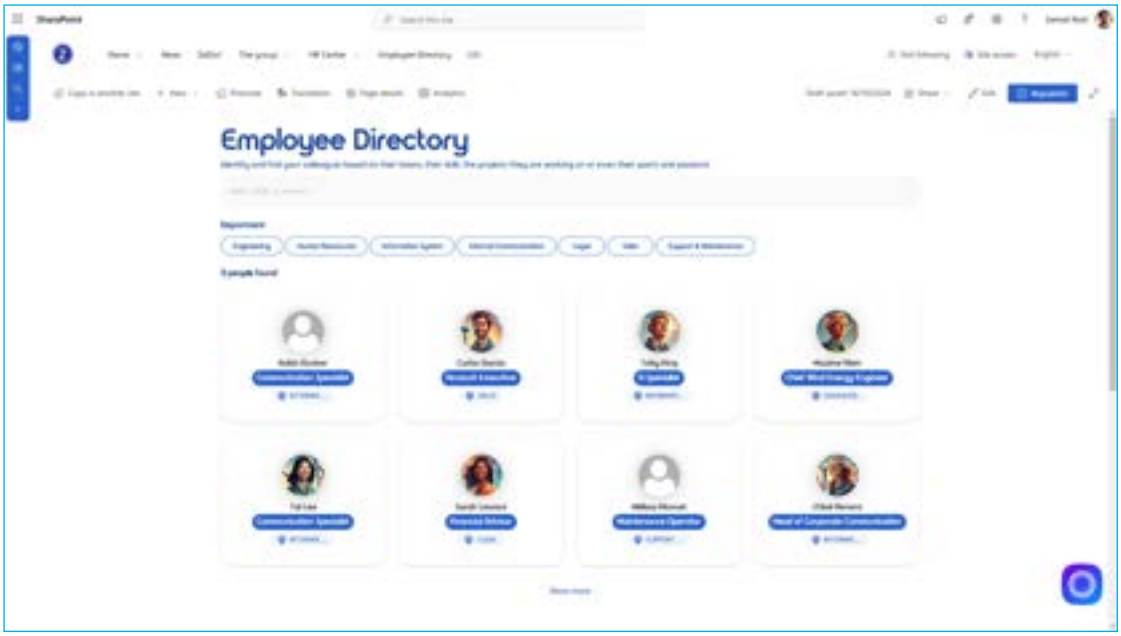


Mozzaik365's advanced search interface adds filter buttons on the left.

People-finding has also been enhanced and there is much to like here. As you may expect, it suggests word completion as you type, but it also adds departmental filter buttons that can be used to further refine results. Skills are also searchable, and these appear within the detail card for each profile. Pre-defined searches can be added to a page, for example to show the members of a department. There is an organisation chart too, which is nicely done but we would welcome an option to show more than two layers at a time. We'd also like to see contact details on the preview card and noted that at times we saw the standard SharePoint profile view within the intranet, which felt a little confusing.

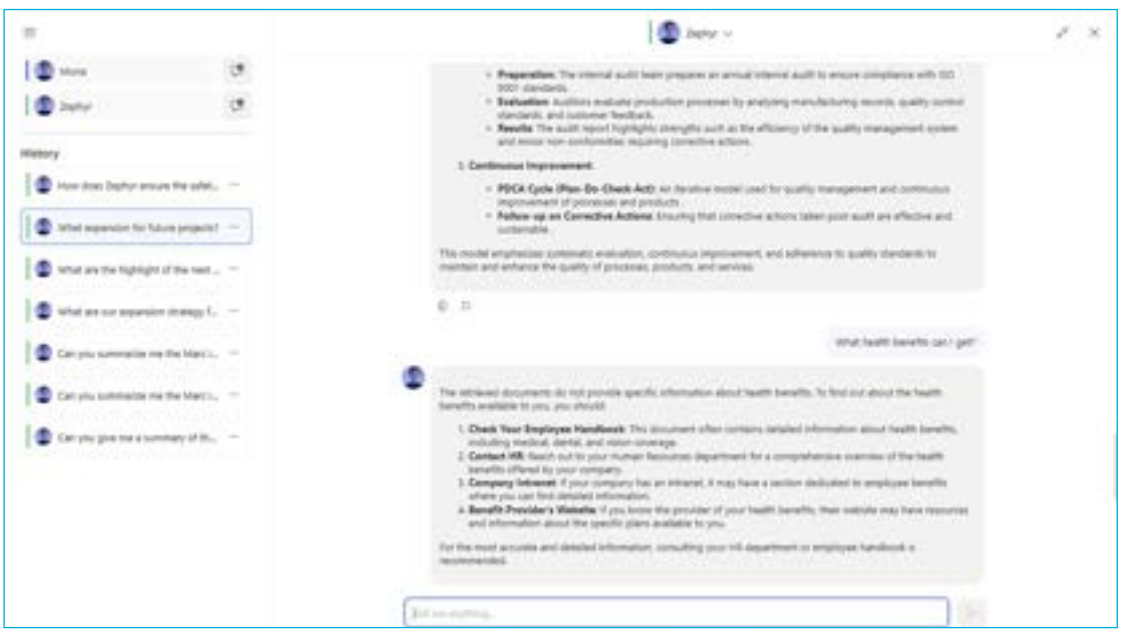


Web parts showing custom searches can be easily tailored by the page administrator.

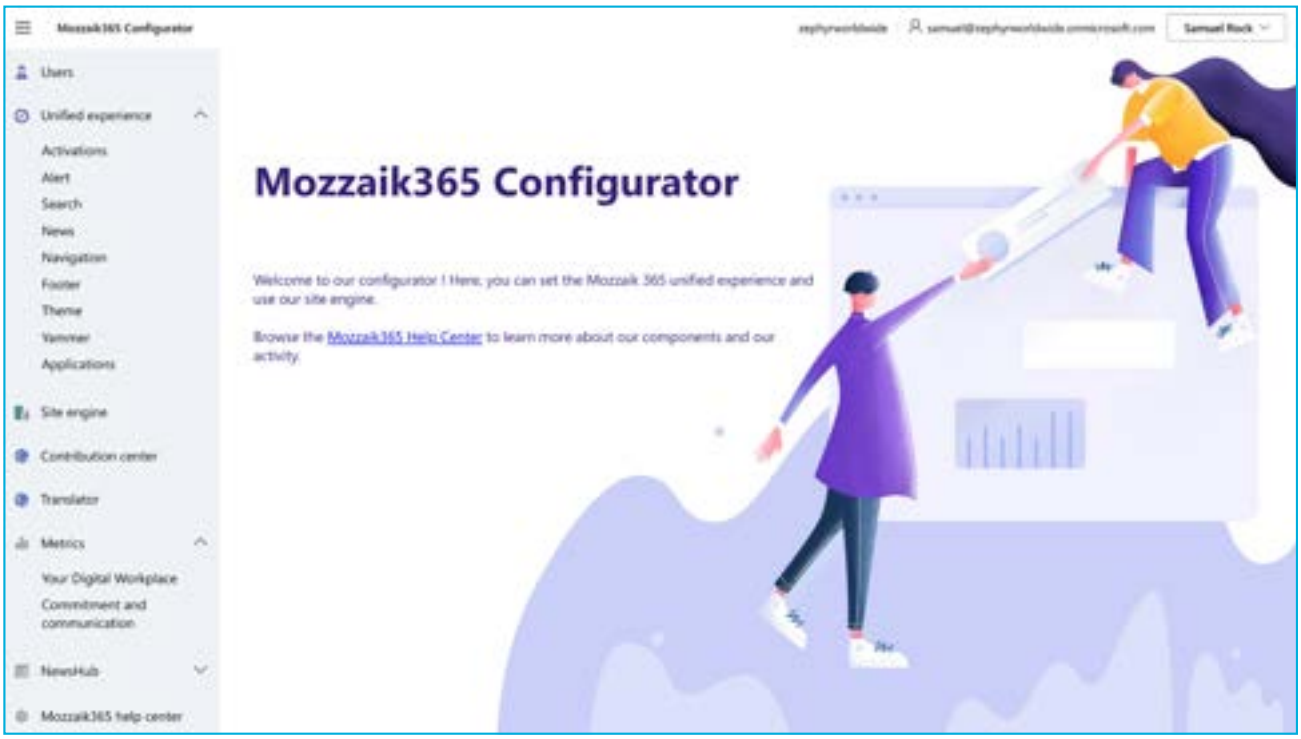


Mozzaik365 offers an attractive interface to people search, with type-ahead and friendly filters.

A recent addition to the product is 'Mozzaik Genius'. This makes large language models such as GPT-4 and Gemini available within the intranet. Interactions are secure and specific to your business environment. A very practical consideration is that you can choose the data set that Genius will work on, meaning you don't have to clean all your content to get good results, and that chatbots can be created for specific domains such as HR or IT Support. Mozzaik are firm believers in this approach because it also allows the specific bot to be "pre-prompted" with the right contextual details on top of a user's command. In our testing, Genius did a good job of answering queries within the scope of the chosen document set. Ahead of some of their competitors, it is also possible to see links to the source material in an answer.



Multiple chat bots can be created, specific to a purpose. Here one called 'Zephyr' answers questions on a recruitment document library.



Mozzaik365 Configurator is the area where adminsitrators can change how the Mozzaik365 platform works.

Although much of the intranet-wide management of Mozzaik365 relies on what is built into SharePoint, there are some valuable enhancements. For example, 'site engine' for template-based site creation and support for multi-language content creation and translation are great additions. Admins access most of the admin tools within the 'Mozzaik 365 Configurator'.

The ability to create templates for sites exists in standard SharePoint, but it is far from accessible for non-technical users. Mozzaik365 addresses this gap with their 'Site Engine' feature. This allows an administrator to nominate an existing site as a template and then use it to create new sites on demand. Templates aren't just the layout, but can also contain file templates, risk management documentation and so on. Mozzaik say it is also possible to use Microsoft Forms to guide people into selecting the right template to provision. We see this as a common requirement which Mozzaik have addressed well, though a step further would be to incorporate this into Microsoft Teams, as many SharePoint sites now get created in the background when new Teams are set up.

In a similar vein, Mozzaik have made it simple to change the main-menu navigation. We think administrators will particularly appreciate the clear way in which audiences can be applied to show / hide menu items. We liked the ability to add and manage an intranet-wide footer containing links too. Modifying the app launcher works in a similar way, with an additional ability to add a 'category' label to each app so that they can be grouped in the unified experience fly-out menu.

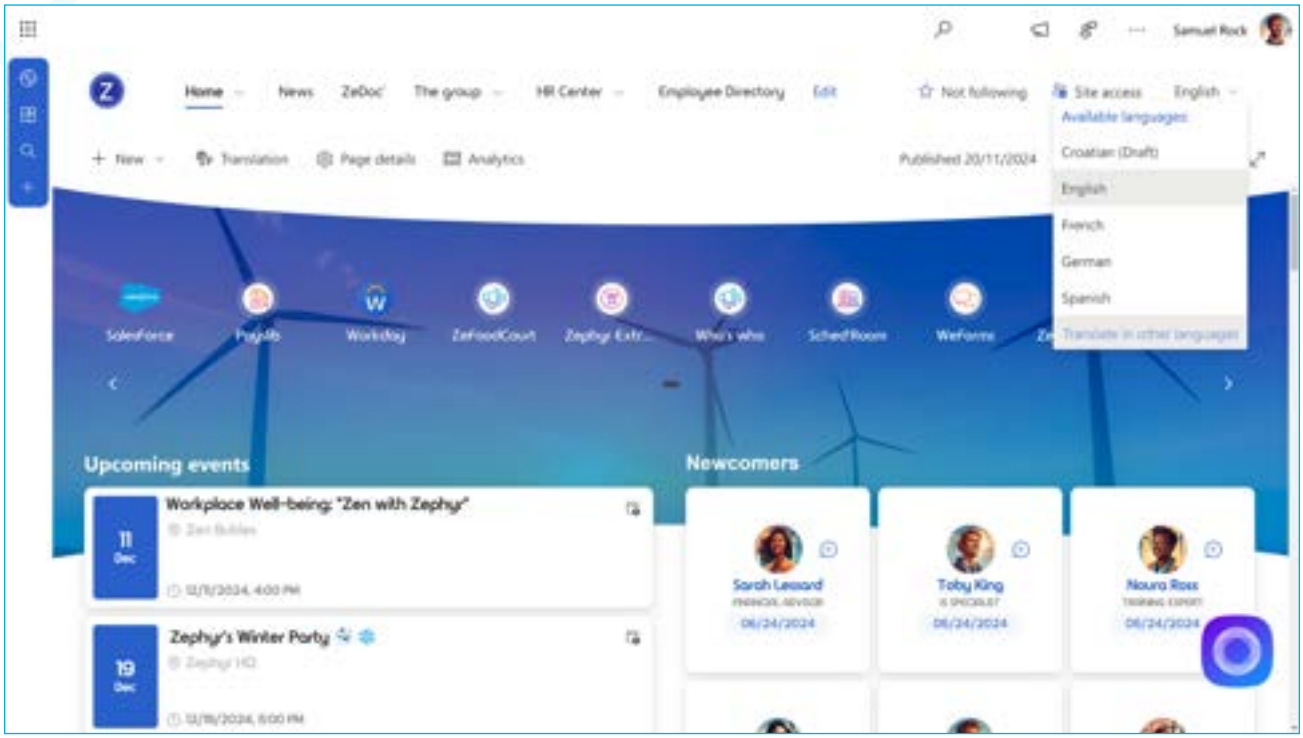
Changes to the layout of the home page use SharePoint's standard admin interface – an easy grid-based interface with the ability to drag-and-drop web parts into place. It takes a little getting used to, but once grasped the integration of Mozzaik is seamless, so all the additional web parts work in the same way. During 2025 Microsoft released a new 'flexible layout' capability in SharePoint, freeing the design from a column-based approach. Mozzaik deserve credit for very quickly ensuring this was also available to Mozzaik365 users – even adding extra flexibility to their own web-parts compared to SharePoint native ones.

Content lifecycle and management is also directly managed in SharePoint. Although this keeps things simple, we would have welcomed intervention by Mozzaik to address some of the shortcomings, such as alerts on expired content, and the ability for a contributor to see a dashboard of all 'their' pages.

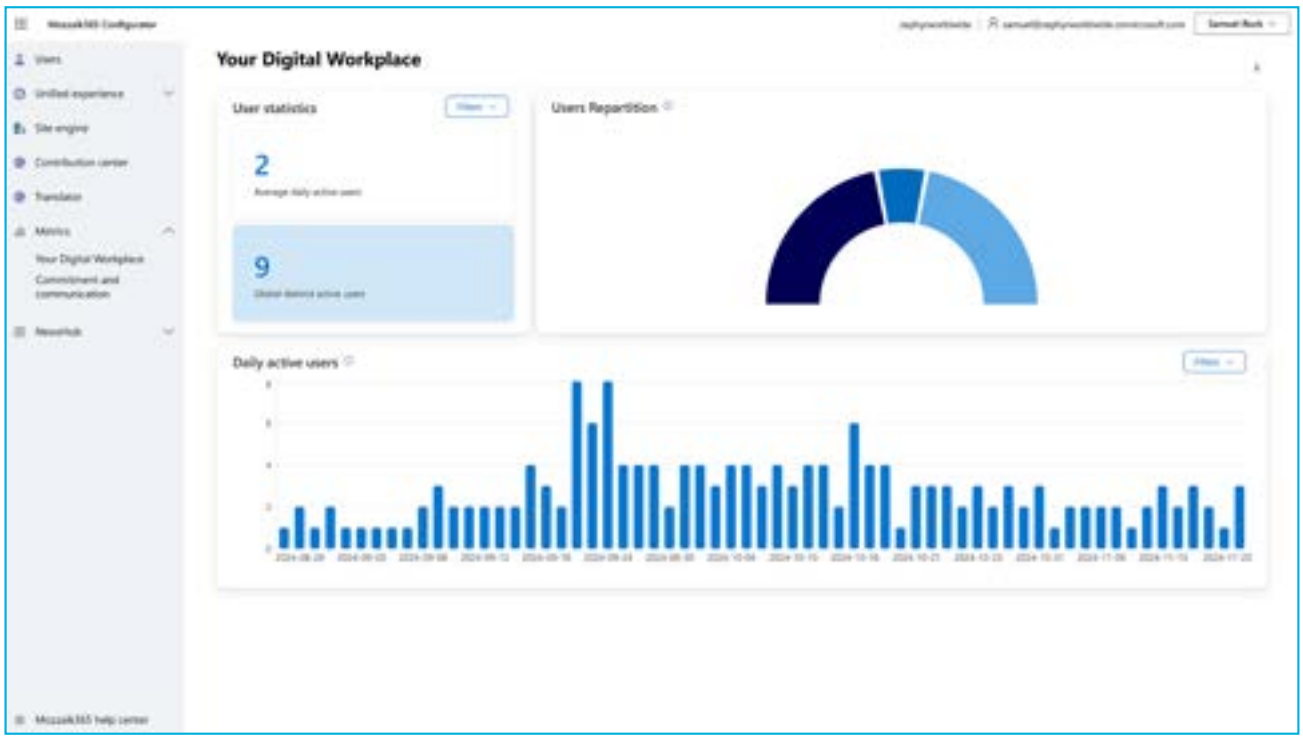
To support multiple languages, authors can create a source page in any of those supported. There is then the option to create a language variant from a very comprehensive list of automatic translation languages. The translated version appears as a draft that can be edited before publishing. If users have more diverse needs, then – thanks to Microsoft 365's extensive language support – they can ask for an on-the-fly translation into dozens of other options. We like that translations are also included for user-generated comments within Viva Engage too.

Regarding multimedia support, Mozzaik365 is adequate without being exceptional in this area. Videos can be added to a page and played in a pop-out 'lightbox'. Embedded YouTube videos will play within the page, however. Any videos in the site document library will be picked up by the Stream web part and will be similarly playable on the page. Support for audio-only formats is very limited.

Site Engine makes it easier to create new sites in SharePoint based on templates.



Mozzaik365 includes on-demand translation.

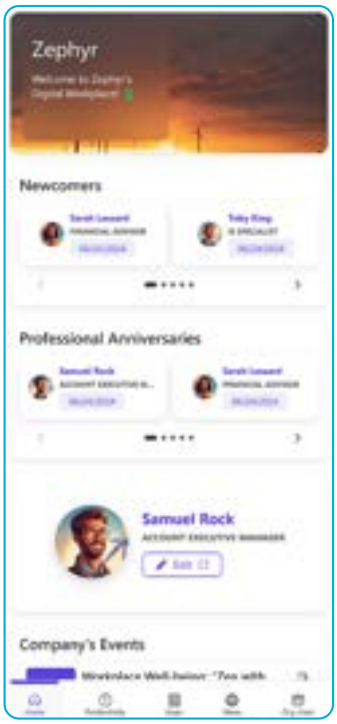


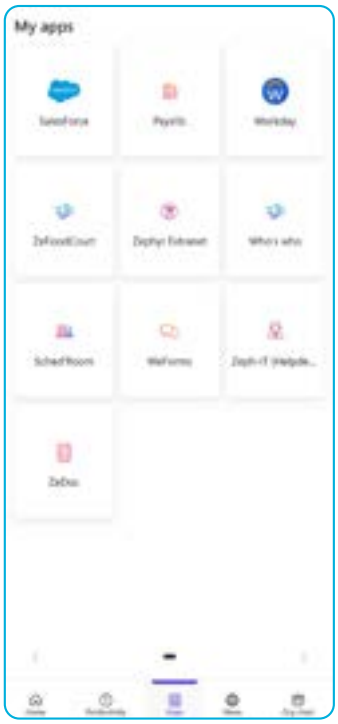
Mozzaik365 adds an approachable interface showing some simple usage analytics.

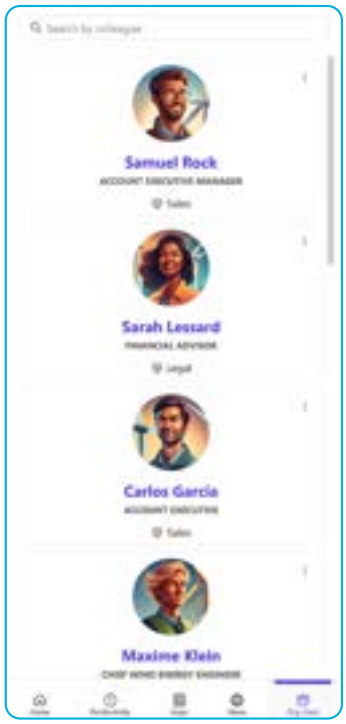
Analytics in Mozzaik365 are largely the standard set of reports offered by Microsoft, though there are some small enhancements. As can be seen the SharePoint and Viva review in this report we do have reservations about how fragmented or practical Microsoft's capabilities are in this area, so the scenario is not a strong one for Mozzaik. However, we like SharePoint's readily available page analytics and are glad that Mozzaik have preserved these.

Mozzaik's primary enhancement here is to offer a 'Metrics' dashboard within the Mozzaik365 Configurator admin tool. This has a simple set of nicely presented graphs showing user activity patterns. We like that these can be segmented by custom time periods. For content analytics, there is at least a report that is specific to news – something missing from standard SharePoint. However, we'd really like to see the ability to segment this by audience too. Mozzaik tell us this is on the roadmap, along with page dwell times.

Mandatory reads are not directly supported, which is a shame, and there are no enhancements to the standard search analytics of Microsoft 365, although these are already strong.







Mozzaik365 has a dedicated app, which can be white labelled for an additional fee.

For mobile and frontline workers, Mozzaik365 includes a dedicated app with an attractive layout and good integrations with Microsoft 365. The people finder and alert functions work well too. However, the limitations around enrolment mentioned in our SharePoint review in this report persist here.

Mozzaik's mobile app is free to use, or customers can pay extra to have a white label version that shows their company branding on the app icon. The app layout is clean and attractive, following the layout of the intranet homepage on the 'home' tab. This means that customers wanting a more news-oriented or flexible start page for their mobile intranet will find Mozzaik365 more capable than the SharePoint mobile app. Administrators have good levels of control over how the app appears, as the buttons at the bottom of the screen are all customisable.

Options within the app include the app-launcher, with all the personalisation that goes with the desktop version. The 'org chart' button works well for both browsing and searching for people.

There are useful integrations with Microsoft 365, such as upcoming meetings, tasks, and even email if desired. The idea is to have one place for updates, and we can see how this might appeal to frontline workers. Alerts appear within the app but push notifications on a user's device are only possible with the white label version.

There are a few other downsides to what is on offer, too. Enrolling users to initially access the platform will require a Microsoft 365 login, and although prices for this are now very low, it's not as flexible to administer as some of the more frontline-first products in this report. Mozzaik say this is a main objective for their roadmap in 2025. There's also no "do not disturb" option for off-shift workers, though Mozzaik argue that many clients implement such a policy through MDM instead (if the device is company-owned).

THINGS TO BEAR IN MIND

Although Mozzaik365 makes numerous worthwhile enhancements to SharePoint, there are a few times when the user experience feels clunky and you can "see the joins", though thankfully this isn't often. Additionally, potential buyers should be aware of the limitations of SharePoint and Viva regarding intranet governance and analytics, as Mozzaik only does a little to overcome these.

Mozzaik have made inroads into AI content generation, but we felt it was more restrictive and linear than the best we've seen this year. Their AI chatbot, however, is more successful.

Organisations planning to roll out their intranet to frontline workers will welcome Mozzaik's dedicated app. However, customers should be aware of the extra costs involved to brand the app icon and use it for push notifications onto mobile devices.

Why choose this product

Mozzaik365 will appeal to organisations that have outgrown standard SharePoint, but nevertheless want to continue to stay within the Microsoft 365 world for their intranet. IT departments will likely approve of Mozzaik's efforts to maintain a high level of compatibility with the Microsoft standards and roadmap. Communicators and administrators will be glad of the enhancements that make it easier to publish content and manage sites, all leading to an overall attractive and modern user experience at a good price point.

You may also be interested in...

FRESH involv BUILT ON MICROSOFT 365 syntphony

Vendor roadmap

No roadmap has been supplied by Mozzaik365.

Back to index

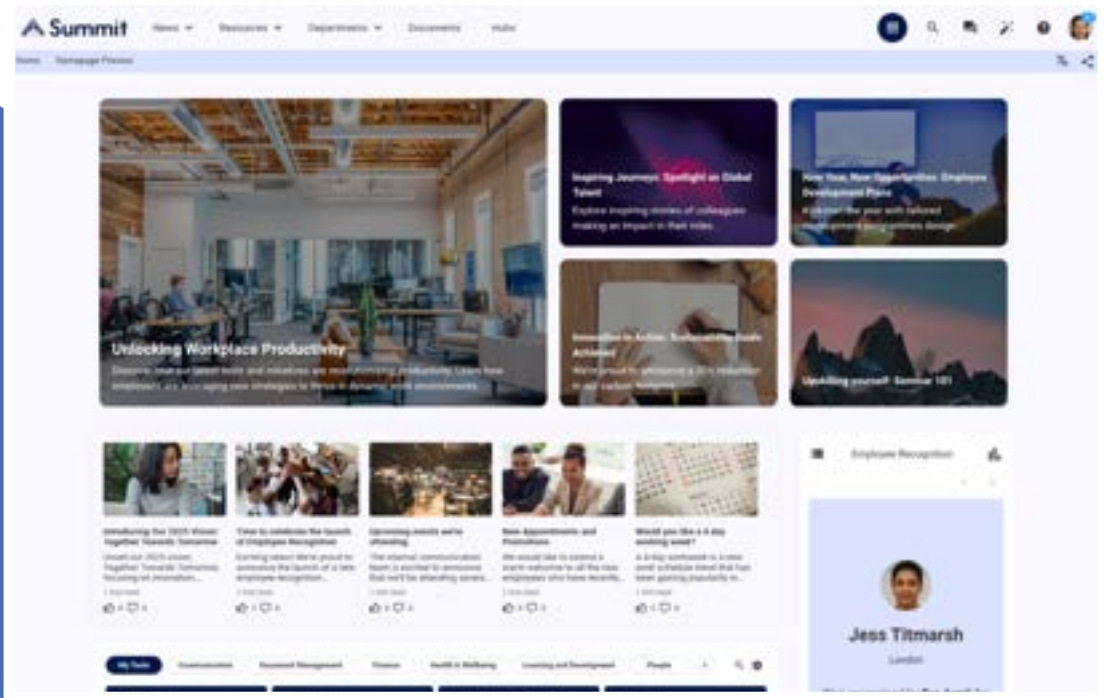
oak engage

FULLY STANDALONE

REQUIRES SHAREPOINT

FRONTLINE FOCUS

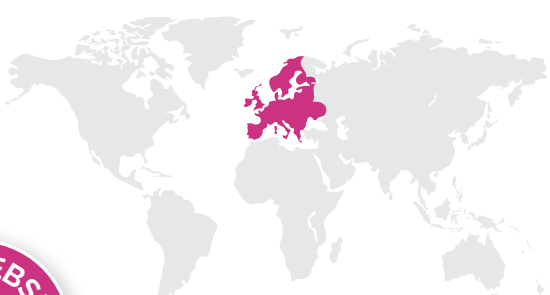
OTHER



Typical deployment:

1,000 to 5,000

Company locations:



VISIT THE WEBSITE

The product in a nutshell

Oak is a flexible intranet platform that delivers an experience employees will find easy to use, while still offering a good range of features on desktop and mobile.

SUMMARY

Oak Engage

Oak Engage (referred to as 'Oak' from here onwards) was released in 2017, although the vendor has been active in the intranet market since the late 1990s. This maturity is clear in the product, which offers a simple yet flexible platform that delivers a strong user experience. We've also seen a lot of positive developments over the past few years, where the vendor has listened to customer feedback and expanded capabilities in useful directions.

The content creation experience across the platform is good, with functionality that even infrequent publishers would find easy to use. Community features are particularly effective and, combined with flexible home page configuration, give organisations the choice to offer a highly social experience if wanted. Search works well and integration options help employees to find information wherever it's stored in the digital workplace. The broad range of features, such as Aria AI and in-built Help Desk support, provide customers with the potential to deliver significant business value.

There are areas where Oak may lack the sophistication required by organisations with complex needs, however. For admins, in particular, there are some interfaces that could benefit from restyling and reorganisation, while features such as search management would benefit from a more comprehensive approach. Even in scenarios where Oak performs well, there is room for improvement. More could be done to simplify the mobile experience or expand on the life cycle tools, for example.

Oak performs well across all our scenarios and offers a lot of functionality at a comparatively low price. Oak would suit organisations looking for a simpler intranet for employees while still seeking flexibility to create what they need. Organisations with multiple employee types, such as frontline workers or multiple locations, will appreciate the audience targeting and content tailoring options.

Pricing

PRICE BAND	
1,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
5,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
20,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
50,000 users	$ $ $ $ $

These prices are indicative, offering a comparison of the products featured in this report only. Please contact the vendor for a bespoke quote.

PRICING MODEL

Subscription – price per user per month; subscription – price band based on number of users.

DISCOUNTS

Charities and non-profit organisations; frontline users.

COSTS TYPICALLY

Fairly evenly spread across three years.

PRICE INCLUDES

A variety of services during the implementation / onboarding process (including project workshops, training for admins and end users, design, content migration); customer success, consulting and site review services; choice of modules / add-ons; technical assistance and advice.

Product type

Ready-to-run, installed in days

Branding opportunities

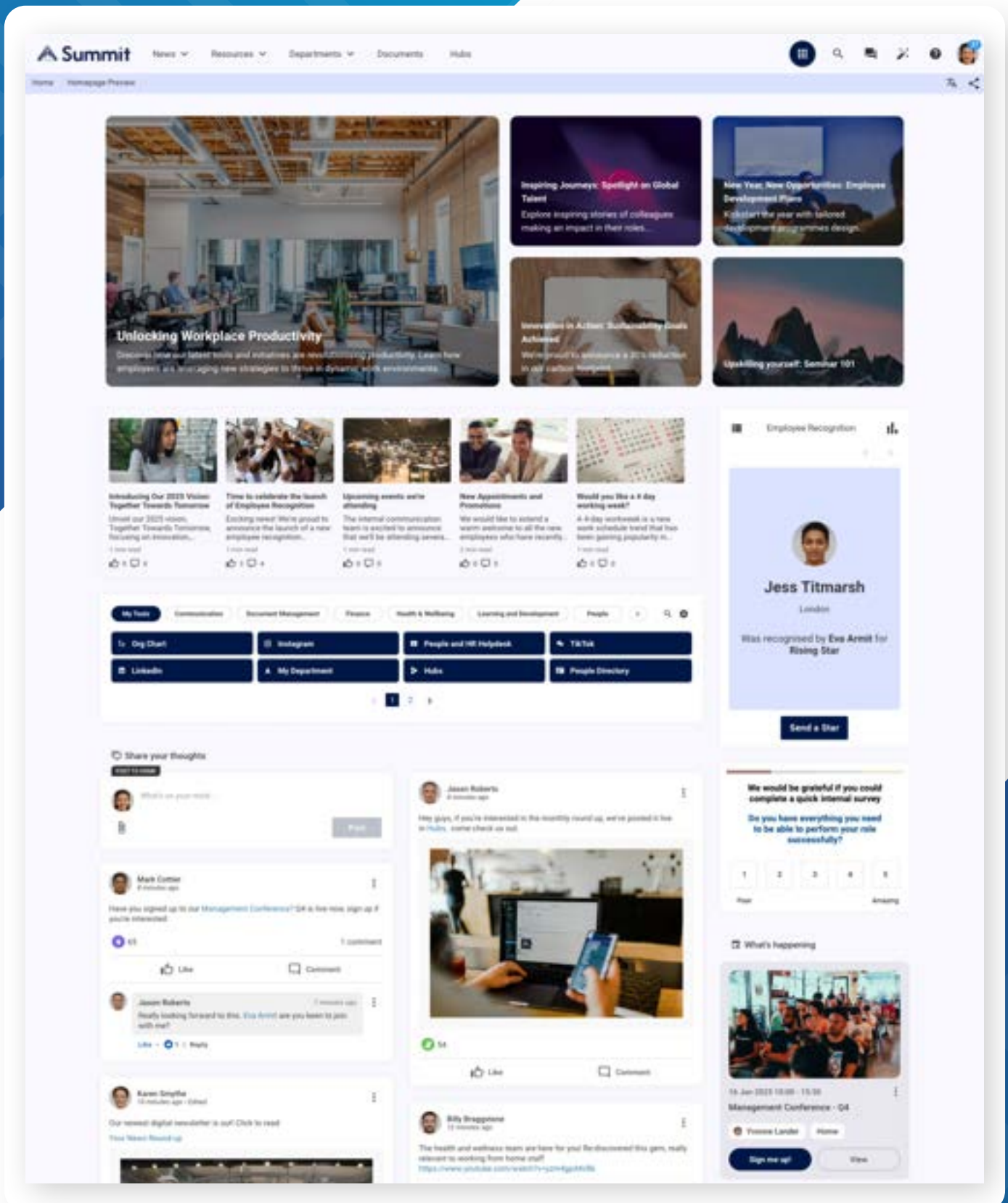
All branding, complex options

Base systems

- Fully standalone
- Requires SharePoint
- Other

Sectors

- Accountancy, banking and finance
- Engineering and manufacturing
- Hospitality and events management
- Property and construction
- Retail


Summit
News
Resources
Departments
Documents
Hubs
Unlocking Workplace Productivity
Inspiring Journeys: Spotlight on Global Talent
Explore inspiring stories of colleagues making an impact in their roles...
New Year, New Opportunities: Employee Development Plans
Kickstart the year with tailored development programmes design...
Upskilling yourself: Seminar 101
Introducing Our 2025 Vision: Together Towards Tomorrow
Time to celebrate the launch of Employee Recognition
Upcoming events we're attending
New Appointments and Promotions
Would you like a 4 day working week?
Org Chart
Instagram
People and HR Helpdesk
TikTok
LinkedIn
My Department
Hubs
People Directory
Employee Recognition
Jess Titmarsh
London
Was recognised by Eva Arnit for Rising Star
Send a Star
Share your thoughts
We would be grateful if you could complete a quick internal survey
Do you have everything you need to be able to perform your role successfully?
What's happening
Management Conference - Q4

COMPANY AND PRODUCT

Company details

Company
Oak Engage

ISO 27001 certified
Yes. Additionally Cyber Essentials Plus.

Data residency
Global - at the client's discretion

Company founded
1999

Product launched
2017

Typical client size
1,000 to 5,000

Largest deployment so far
In excess of 80,000 users based globally.

Customers
Clients include: Aldi, Burger King, Five Guys, ITV, NatWest Group, ScS, Sevita, Severfield, Pizza Express, Pluralsight

Partner locations
N/A

Company locations
Newcastle upon Tyne (HQ), UK

Product and technical details

Name of product

Oak Engage

Deployment

Client on-premises	Client private cloud	Microsoft Azure	Amazon Web Services	Vendor-hosted	Microsoft 365 tenant	Google Cloud	Other*

*MS Azure Dedicated Instance & Virtual Private Cloud

Authentication supported

Entra ID	ADFS	Okta	Open ID	Oauth	G Suite	Other*

*PING, Office 365, Any SAML 2.0 connection & Custom

App deployment

Google Play store	Apple store	MDM	MAM	Other

Accessibility

Not WCAG2.1 conformant. Individual users can change the font size of what they are seeing; Alt text is in use for images; Keyboards can be used for navigation. Oak Engage are working towards the WCAG 2.1 standard. Some legacy features are not fully compliant yet. They have a partnership with an accessibility consultant who carries out yearly audits of the product. In between these audits they carry out spot tests of certain areas of Oak. In addition, all engineers and QA staff are web accessibility trained, and they ensure all new features are tested to WCAG 2.1 AA standards before release. The product has an accessibility backlog which is ordered using the WCAG success criterion severity level. Oak Engage ensure each of their development teams tackle accessibility issues in each of their sprint cycles to ensure that accessibility quality is improving.

Document library sources integrated

Box	Dropbox	Google Drive	SharePoint	OneDrive	Other

Optional integrated enterprise search engines

Coveo	Elastic	IBM	Lucidworks	Microsoft	Mindbreeze	Sinequa	Other*

*If there was a requirement to integrate with other search engines this could be discussed on a case-by-case basis (charges may apply).

User interface multi-language

Machine translation	Pre-configured	Editable	Right to left script supported	Other*

*German, Spanish, French, Portuguese, Arabic and Dutch for the user interface

Content multi-language

Machine translation for publishers	Machine translation for end users	Editable machine translation for publishers	Manual creation for publishers	Right to left script	Other

Set-up and support

Set-up process for new clients

The set-up process is based on a consultative approach. The professional services team take an 'outcome-based approach' delivered in an agile manner focused on the customer's key outcomes. Their agile approach enables deployments to take place in as little as 48hrs. The Implementation Consultants guide customers through planning, creation and launch. Supported by a CSM and wider team they'll ensure a close productive relationship for the duration of the partnership.

Version numbers

Demonstrated to ClearBox: Version 4.3.0.0

At January 2025: Version 4.5.0.0

Product updates

Minor updates weekly; Major updates every quarter.

Product update process

As a SaaS solution, there is no technical maintenance required by customers; the platform is fully managed by Oak Engage. The specialist DevOps team perform 'out of hours' upgrades within each region. Oak is designed to run 24/7 and doesn't go offline for updates or maintenance. Customers can not opt out of updates as Oak Engage run a consistent version of Oak across their platform. Customers can have early access to and can also opt to turn off new features.

Reverse-out options

Once the contract ends, Oak will provide the customer with an export of relevant data for migration purposes (where required). All data will be deleted within 30 days of the subscription end date.

Technical support

Email support	Phone support	Chat support	Online portal	24/7 support	Office hours only

User community

Oak runs a monthly Engagement Webinar to facilitate the sharing of best practice across their user base. They regularly host customer workshops at their HQ in Newcastle, UK.

Voice of the vendor

Oak says: "We're an award-winning employee app and intranet solution and the essential go-to for your employees. Connect and engage with your people wherever they are, whilst giving them the tools to make their jobs easier. We empower your people to get the right message to the right people at the right time.

We're here to bury the traditional intranet. Cluttered, clunky and filled with forgotten files, it's where content goes to die - turning into a content graveyard no one wants to visit.

At Oak Engage we're doing things differently. We're here to make communication simple. We believe an intranet should be dynamic and engaging, built to drive real results and help you achieve your objectives.

Our platform is innovative, agile and ever-evolving. We've led the way with AI powered analytics, personalised targeting and AI-generated content, which tackles your communication challenges head on. We're more than just a tool, we're a forward-thinking partner, taking intranets in a direction no one else dares to go.

The world's biggest brands trust us for a reason. With around-the-clock, 24/7 support and a global network of customers, it's a place that delivers outcomes that matter.

We're redefining the intranet."

Voice of the customer

The user experience was consistently praised by those who responded, where a frequent comment was Oak is "simple to use". This extends into the admin experience too, where one customer summarised nicely: "The product has an attractive interface, [is] intuitive to use and functions really well with a wide range of tools." Others added that "Putting together engaging pages is very quick and easy" and praised the "multitude of options in terms of layout and use for the various applications." Customers also praised the "Search functions and document management" and "support for deskless workers". One person said, "The platform also helps us engage and communicate, which has improved overall team performance."

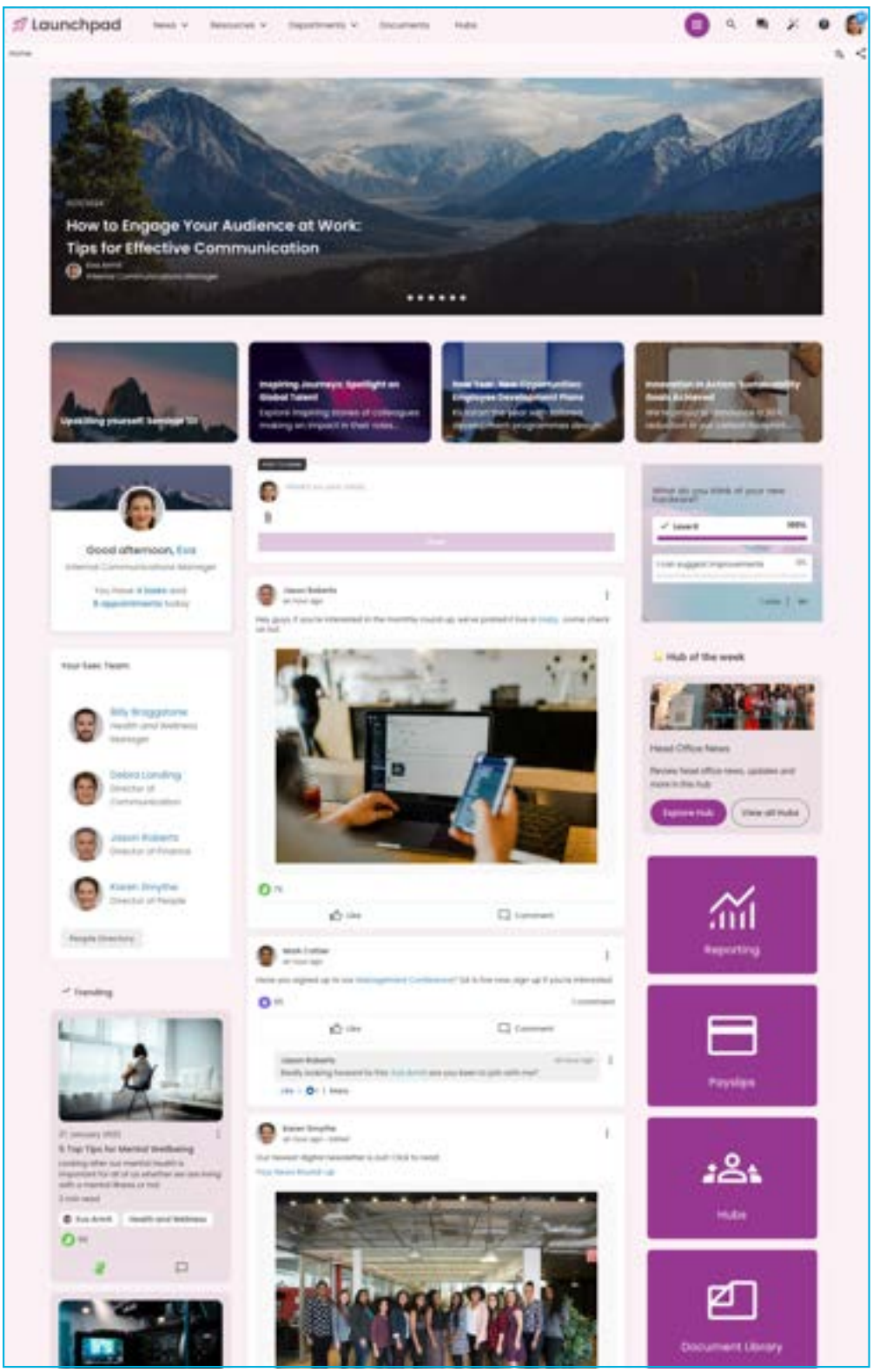
Requests for improving Oak varied. Content creation features were mentioned a couple of times, one customer asked for "Formatting of tables", another person said "Allow use of more HTML and a bit more flexibility with the layouts" and another mentioned "Embedding images feels awkward" so this is an area that could be improved too. One person asked for further "automation" of communications that are tied to employee dates (called 'Journeys' in other products). "Improved mobile functionality" and an "Offline mode" to "improve usability in areas with unreliable networks" were also requested.

Feedback about the vendor is entirely positive with words like "great", "excellent" and "fantastic" used to describe them, with one customer saying, "everyone is really helpful and proactive – joy to work with." One person described the experience as "10/10" adding they have "A great relationship with the team at Oak". Multiple customers said the vendor were good at "helping you get the most out of the product" with one customer adding that this "Ensures the platform continues to meet our needs."

SCENARIOS & SCORES

Please see the Scenarios below for more detail on each of these.

SCENARIO AND SCORE	KEY BENEFITS	IMPROVEMENTS / CONSIDERATIONS
4 **1. User Experience & Visual Appeal**	Highly flexible and provides a great user experience.	Styling of features could be improved in places.
4 **2. Publishing & Communications Management**	Pleasant publishing via 'applets'. 'AI Targeting' effectively releases news as appropriate for each individual.	Some features lack the sophistication internal communicators may want.
4.5 **3. Community & Engagement**	Communities well handled through Hubs. Excellent employee / peer recognition feature.	Survey results are simple. Styling in places could be improved.
2+ **4. Integrations & Services (Including M365)**	Good range of integration options and built-in services.	Integrations may take effort to set up as wanted. Some gaps in what's offered.
4 **5. Information Finding & Search**	Federated search and people directory strong. Novel but helpful search interface.	Few filters and search management tools.
4 **6. Administrator Experience**	Pleasant page and home page creation. Good multimedia support.	Can feel complex in places. Additional life cycle tools would be beneficial.
3.5+ **7. Analytics**	Charts are attractive. Useful monthly report with AI generated recommendations.	Greater range and depth of reporting desirable, particularly for search.
3.5+ **8. Mobile & Frontline Support**	Intelligent audience targeting works well for mobile. App experience can be tailored to the frontline. Helpful in-built tools.	Home page tabs might be confusing. Elements of the experience could be improved.



Oak is highly configurable, so one home page can look very different from another. A timeline is the focus in this design, for example.

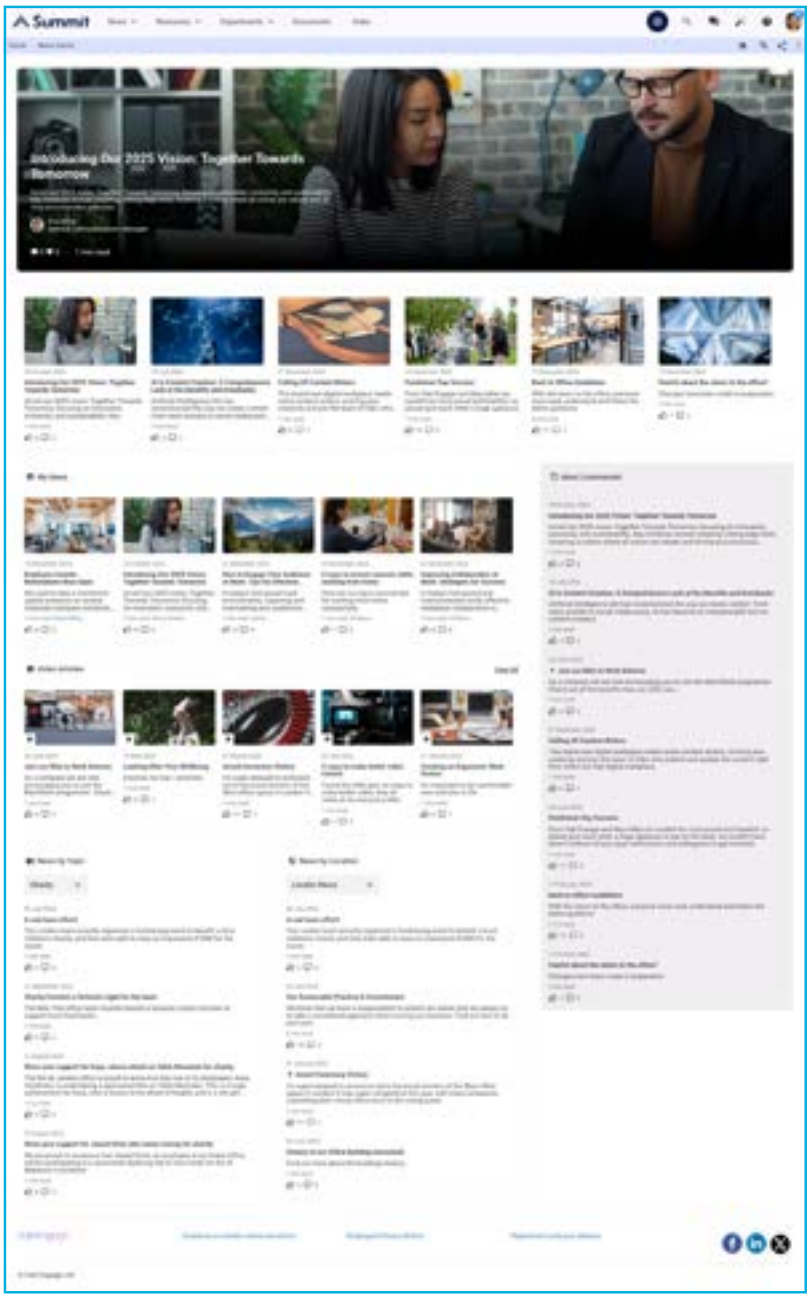
As customer feedback also echoes, Oak is very easy to use. It is highly configurable, with administrators able to control much of the user experience. For example, a 'Feed' applet combines content from across the platform into a timeline view, allowing organisations to provide an experience more like external social media if this was a priority for them. Note that applets are Oak's version of widgets / web parts that are found across the site. We particularly like the welcome tour which can be configured to reflect the organisation's intranet; this showcases the excellent experience for employees as well as the flexibility for admins.

There are a few approaches to navigation, all of which support audience targeting. The first is a site-wide mega menu, which Oak will help set up initially, but then admins manage as the site evolves over time. The menu is fairly traditionally styled and it would be nice to see an option to add images, for example. A slide-out navigation pane to the left of the screen is a nice alternative to a static layout though.

We like the breadcrumb trails that help people see their whereabouts on the intranet. Left-hand sub-menus can be automatically generated based on the section structure or are served by applets with configurable navigation buttons. A 'favourites' home page applet lets people bookmark pages for quick access.

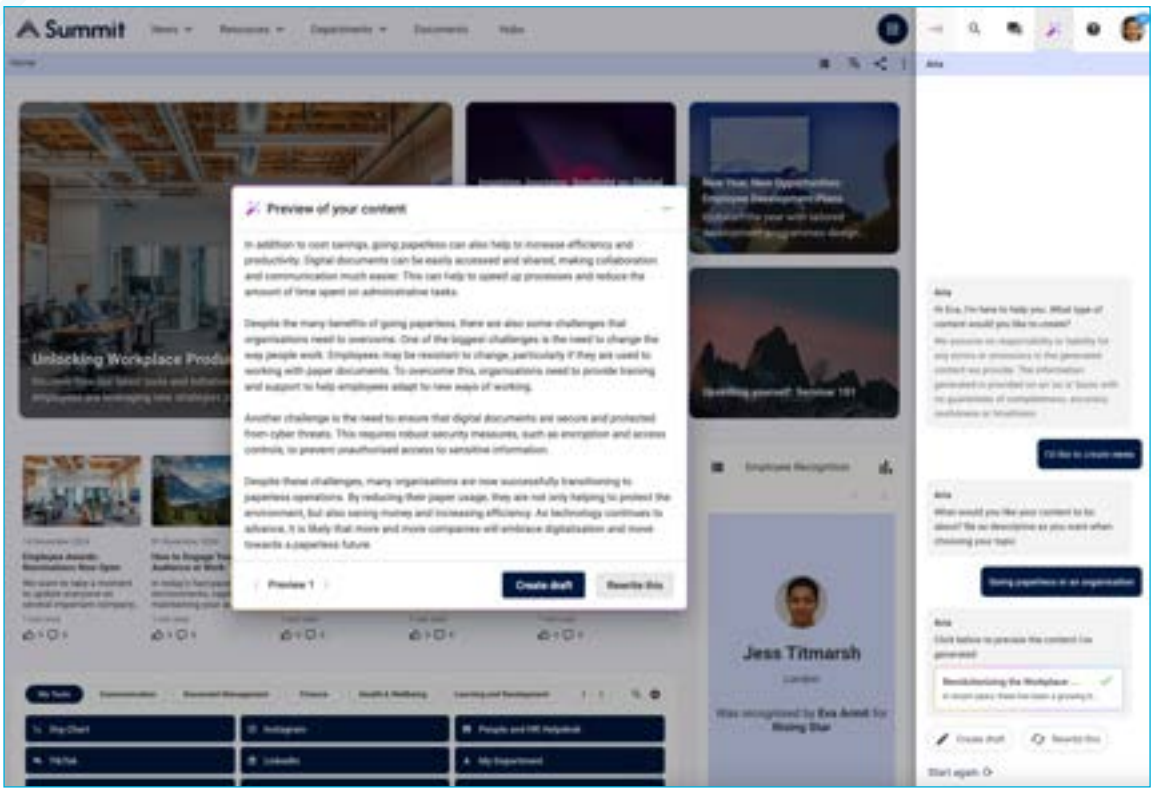
Alongside the mega menu in the top bar are 'Chats', search, 'Support' (see Scenario 6), 'Aria AI' (see Scenarios 2 and 5) and a profile button. Behind the profile button are the individual's notifications and tasks (with a helpful count to show new activities) that can be explored even after they have been marked as complete. There are also applets for notifications, tasks and broadcasts (see Scenario 2), plus mobile push notifications, and the option to integrate with desktop notifications too.

Admins will find the branding and overall design options in Oak flexible, including those who want alternative intranet branding to serve different parts of the organisation. Organisations can offer distinct home page and intranet configurations for different audiences, which could include an extranet. We like that branding choices extend even to the initial sign-in screen. The styling of some elements could look more contemporary, although in most places Oak looks and behaves like a modern platform that provides an excellent user experience.



Articles are presented in an attractive News Centre for ease of browsing.

Oak has a good range of communication capabilities. Publishers create content in three ways; firstly, via the timeline (see Scenario 3). The second is via the 'Aria' (Oak's AI) wand icon that opens a pane that asks whether a blank page, news article or policy page is to be created. Using natural language prompts, Aria presents suggested wording using material held on the intranet; this can be re-written by Aria but there are no simple controls around tone or length (publishers must enter prompts). 'Create draft' then places the wording into a blank template. Thirdly, content can be created via the Oak 'waffle', where choosing 'Create' presents the different content types available – one of which is 'News'. Creating a new article generates a blank news template.



Aria AI will generate content that's then inserted into an appropriate page template.

The vendor will create news templates during setup, although admins can then add more or adjust templates later. We like that applying a template doesn't impact any content already added, so wording drafted using Aria wouldn't be lost, but it would be helpful to apply a template as part of the Aria process. Publishers drag, drop and resize applets as desired. There is a smaller selection of applets available for pages compared to home page design (see Scenario 6), however the range works well. We like the 'latest news' applet that presents related news to the reader, although Oak plans to introduce an AI-driven feature here instead.

'Page content' includes a rich text editor and is where the body text is created / edited. We like the personalisation fields, such as inserting employee first name, which can make material sound friendlier. Images can be embedded into a dedicated applet, a banner or in line with text. Images can be saved to and used from Oak's media manager, which includes options for stock images. We like the familiar image editing options including cropping, adjusting brightness and effects. Overall, the rich text editor approach is simpler than other solutions we've seen; customer feedback indicates improvement would be welcome but when combined with applets, we think the resulting pages are attractive and effective.

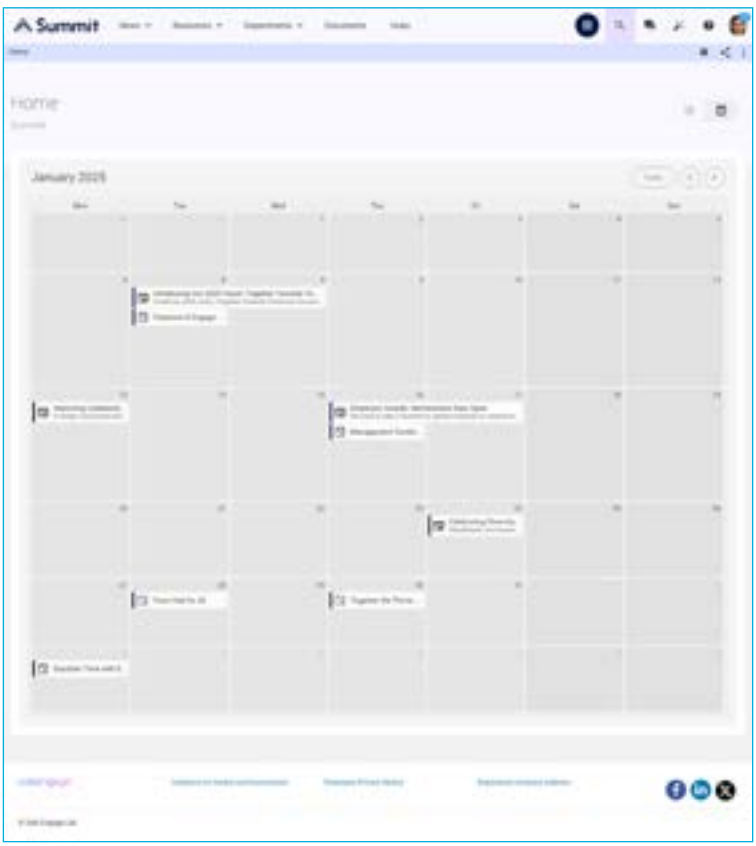
Pages are built using templates comprised of different layouts and applets.

Once an article is ready, the publisher can choose for it to inherit the target audience from the section the page is being published to or change as wanted. Audiences are synced, such as from Entra groups, or can be created within Oak. The vendor can create dynamic, rule-based audiences, such as 'people on vacation'; the ability for admins to do this is on the roadmap. Additionally, people can opt in to topics to expand what's presented to them.

On page creation, the publisher chooses which audiences 'should' or 'must' read the article and by what date. An 'AI Targeting' capability inspects the audience – such as when they're active on the site – and the communications need – for example a short promotional period will result in more tenacious activities – and releases the article appropriately. Anything that's missed is resurfaced in applets and individuals receive reminder notifications, too. Content will enter into an approval process, with helpful notifications and 'Tasks' (see Scenario 4) to prompt approvers. Articles are presented to employees in various targeted applets across the site and published into an attractive news centre for ease of browsing.

Oak's 'campaigns' feature makes good use of AI Targeting but allows for the batch management of articles in one place. Articles are set in a flow to communicate a given topic, with a promotional period based on 'must' and 'should' read rules as above. On the roadmap is a facility to measure a baseline and incremental improvements to people's understanding or changes in behaviour. While this lacks the sophistication we've seen in other products, it is a helpful tool for communicators.

Communicators have access to an editorial calendar that displays all content but only allows people to edit the content they have permissions for. Content items in a campaign or without an 'AI Targeting' end date are displayed on a single date, while other content is displayed across all the dates the AI Targeting system is promoting it for. The addition of a toggle in late 2024 to show publication dates only helps to simplify this view.

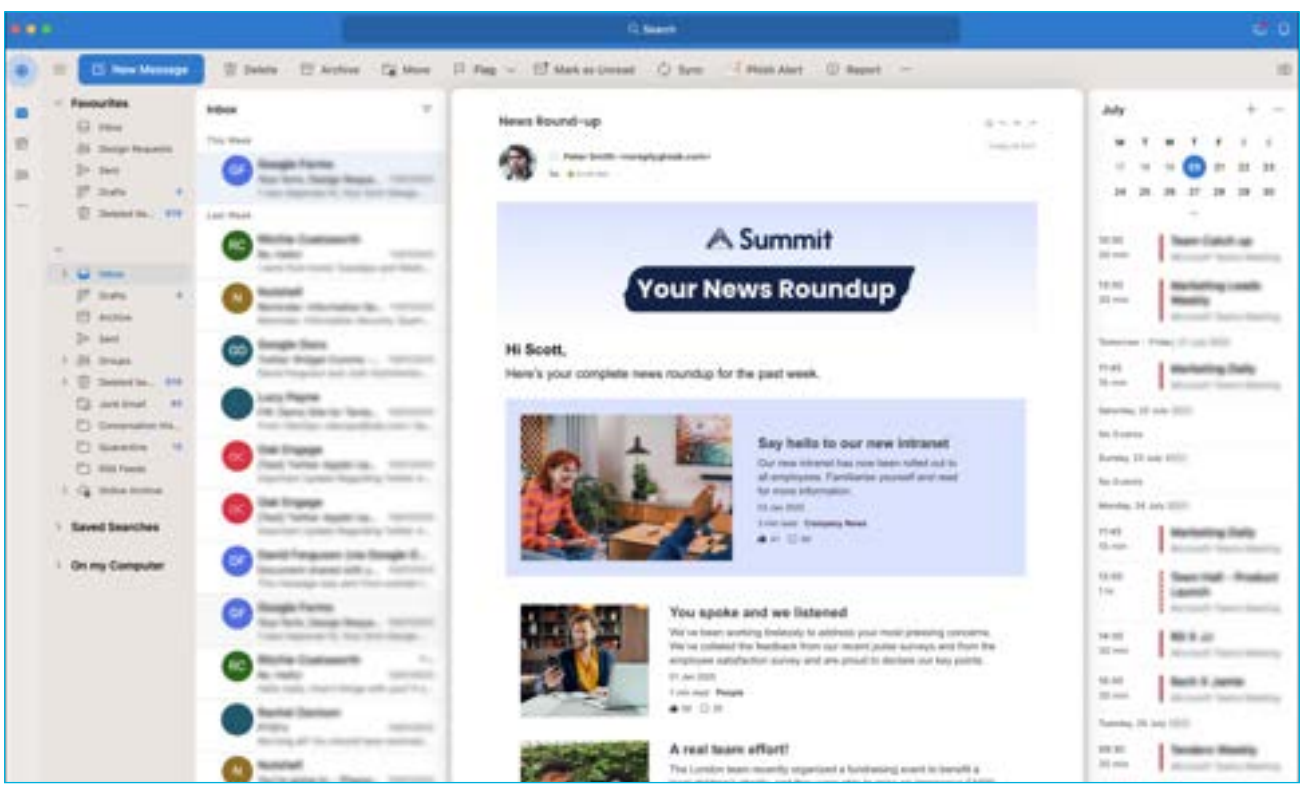


The editorial calendar shows what news has been scheduled or is running within the 'AI Targeting' system.

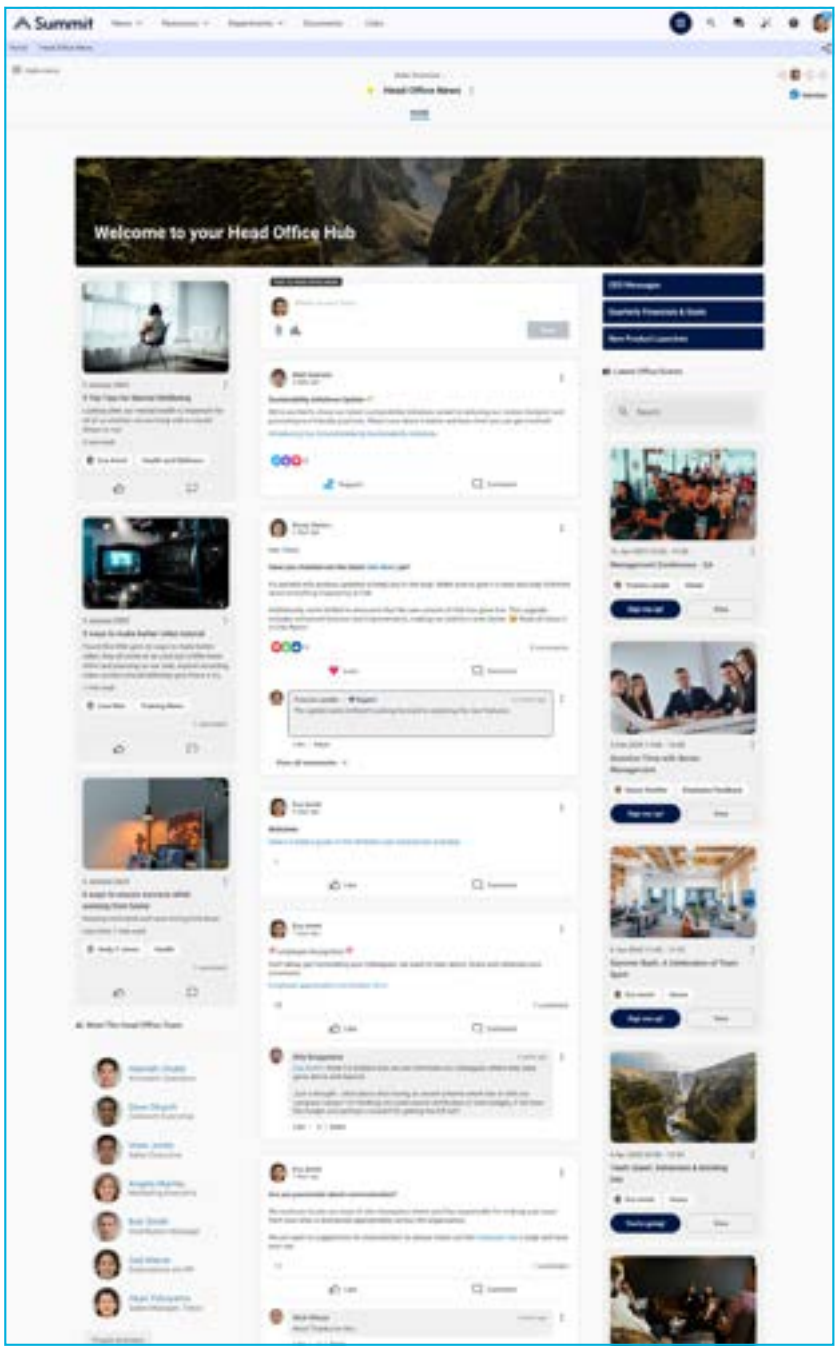
Crisis communications are handled via 'Notices' and / or push notifications. We like that when creating a push notification, publishers have a choice of adding 'Breaking News', displaying as a thin banner at the bottom of the screen. Notices are easy to build using a sophisticated form that includes when the Notice should begin and if it's recurring. Mandatory Notices are pushed via all notification routes and there is an optional applet that collates them. Articles associated with a mandatory Notice will display an acknowledgement button. Responses are recorded and it's easy to manually issue prompts to those who haven't acknowledged yet.

For reaching people beyond the intranet, there is an option to share content into Teams (see Scenario 4). There is also a digital signage capability that will display dedicated home page(s) and / or feeds of content on web-enabled devices. News cycles through on a carousel and a helpful QR code approach will take people to more information. Lastly, Oak offers highly configurable email digest newsletters which can include curated items and be automatically sent at a preferred cadence. These could include specific news feeds, or 'trending' content, or simply what a person has missed on a daily, weekly or monthly basis. Oak has deliberately chosen a digest approach, which works very well, but some communicators may want more flexibility.

Overall, Oak offers a good range of features for internal communicators. While customers have requested greater flexibility and we feel more sophistication is needed in places, communicators are likely to appreciate what's on offer.



Oak's email digests help keep employees up to date with what's going on across the organisation.



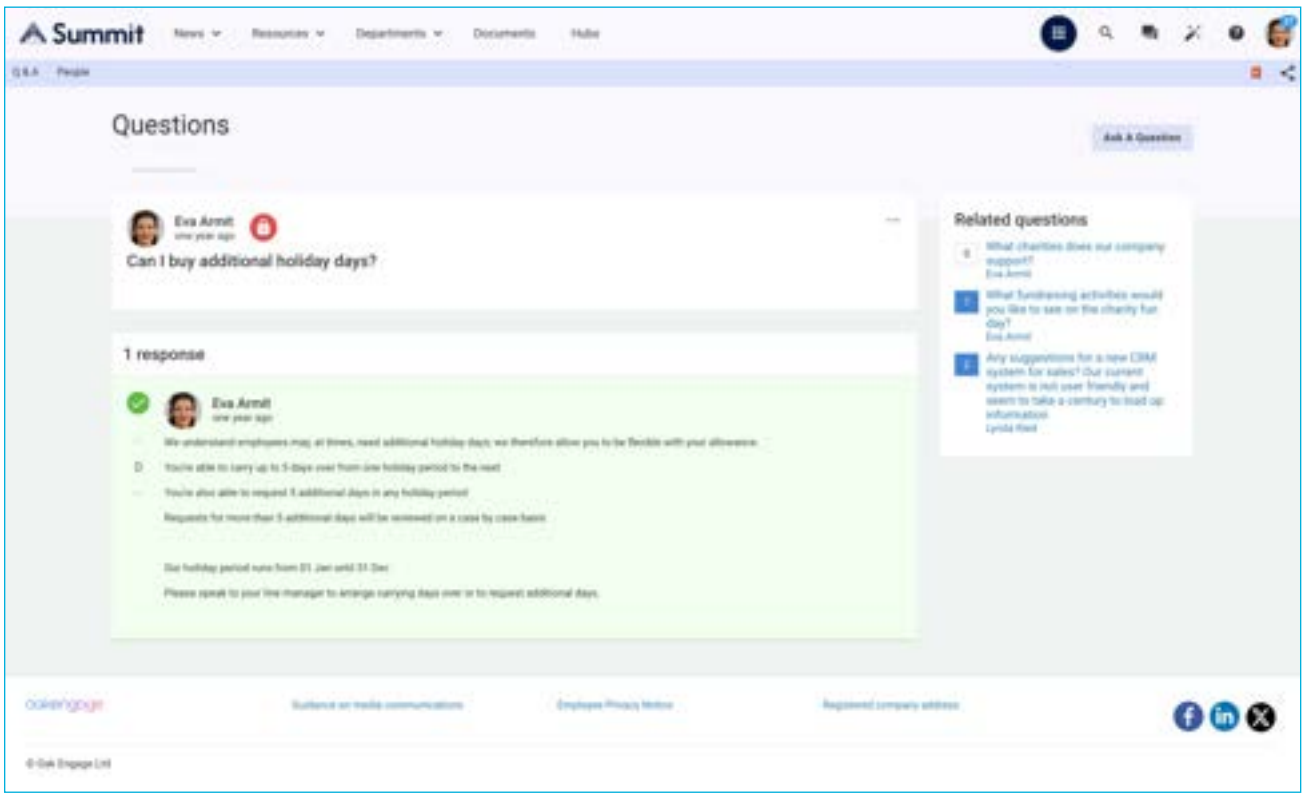
Hubs are built using applets so are flexible enough to meet different needs.

Oak has some excellent community features, starting with 'Hubs' where social and collaborative groups are found. Each Hub can be private, membership on request or completely open, and is configurable so that appropriate applets are presented to members, for example to share 'blogs'. Hubs can be used for communities of knowledge, by allowing anyone to edit or contribute to the space, such as through dedicated blogs. See Scenario 5 for more on the information management features that are also present in Hubs.

A timeline applet is always included in Hubs (although can be removed) and replicates the experience of social media sites. Hub members receive notifications when someone posts, and posts will display in a timeline on the home page if the applet has been added there. The vendor says some customers adopt the home page timeline approach and share all news in the shorter form that it encourages. Helpfully, users can choose which Hub to post to from the main timeline. Posts include simple formatting options, plus links will display a preview and emojis add an element of fun. The Feed is also where employees will find and be able to upload short-form video 'Moments' of less than a minute. These replicate Reels found on social media platforms and offer a quick and simple way for employees to share their stories.

Admins have the option of including a profanity filter, which will flag a post to moderators for action as required. Alternatively, people can report a post for moderation if they feel it is inappropriate. On the roadmap is an AI feature that will assess the context and sentiment of reported content, which we think will be helpful. Comments can also be reported, or conversely an admin can mark a comment as 'expert' to highlight it as the best answer. Comments, posts and other content supports a range of reactions.

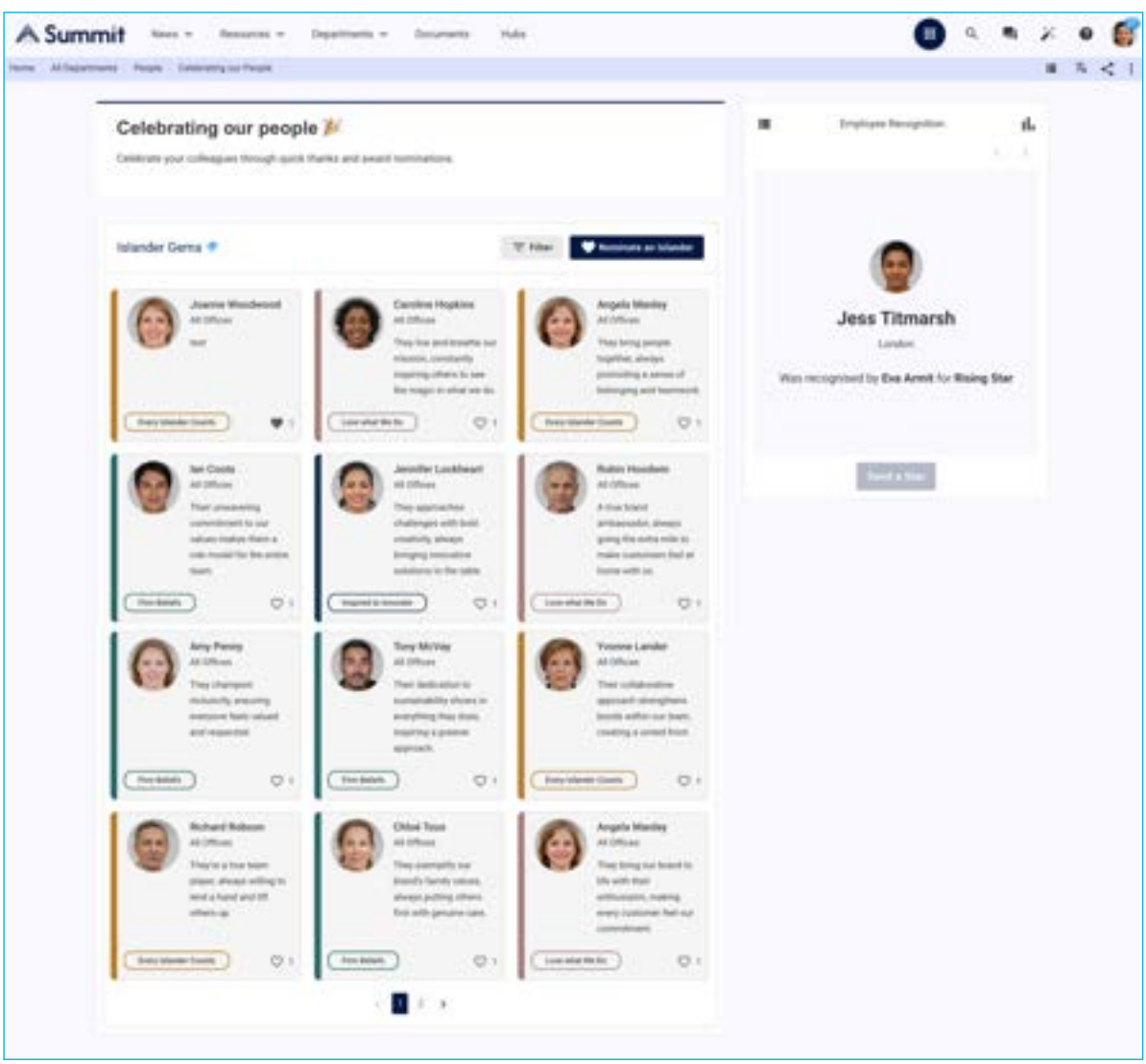
Oak includes a couple of features to help gather employee thoughts and opinions. There is a 'quick poll' applet that echoes the experience from social media. Alternatively, forms and workflows can be used for longer surveys, see Scenario 4 for more on these. Results are only presented as an exported Excel file at the end of the survey however, which isn't as dynamic as other products we've seen. A 'Questions' feature collates employees' questions and encourages up- and down-voting of answers until it's resolved. We like that related questions are displayed should someone have follow-up questions.



A 'Questions' feature brings together employee queries to encourage answers from people across the business.

We really like the 'Quick Thanks' feature that gives people 'stars' to recognise the work of their colleagues. Anyone can choose any individual or group to award a star to, with frequent contacts appearing towards the top of the search list. The star can be branded as desired, so could be associated with company values or areas associated with KPIs, and the awarder may write a message to those they're sending stars to. The stars will display as a notification to those involved but may also display in a dedicated applet and / or in a timeline. The number of sent and received stars is tracked, with the potential to integrate with a rewards platform to award physical prizes based on stars received or sent.

Additionally, an 'Awards' feature allows people to formally nominate individuals or groups for internal awards, with a STAR format form to gather relevant information. Nominees receive an associated notification and there's an Employee Awards dashboard that shows all received nominations for people to browse. The results are exportable for the HR team to work on, but we'd like to see a way for people to cast votes or for HR admins to manage the results within Oak. Overall, the Quick Thanks and Awards features are two examples where a little more styling would help make it look more contemporary. The functionality, however, is excellent.

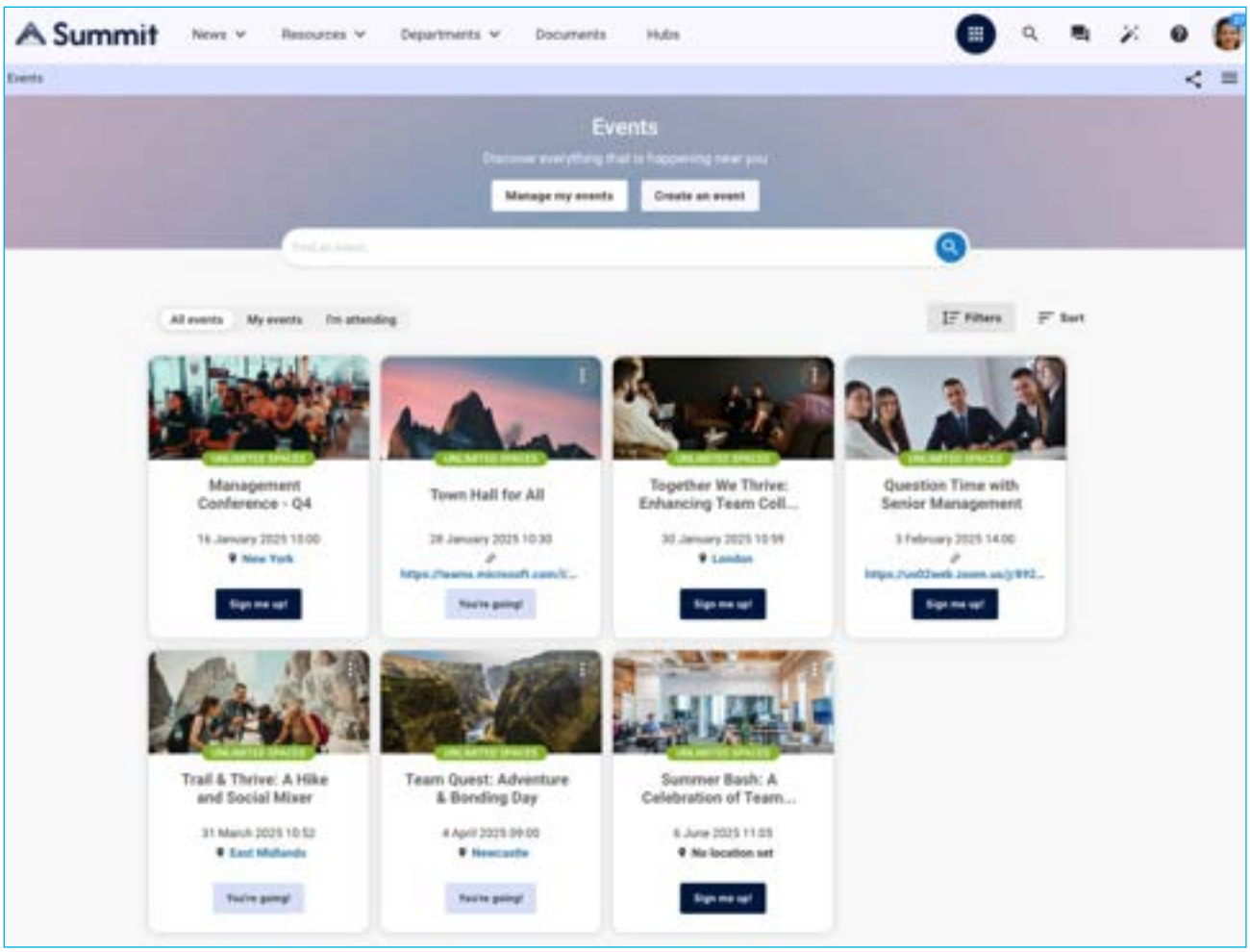


People can be celebrated through Quick Thanks stars and Award nominations.

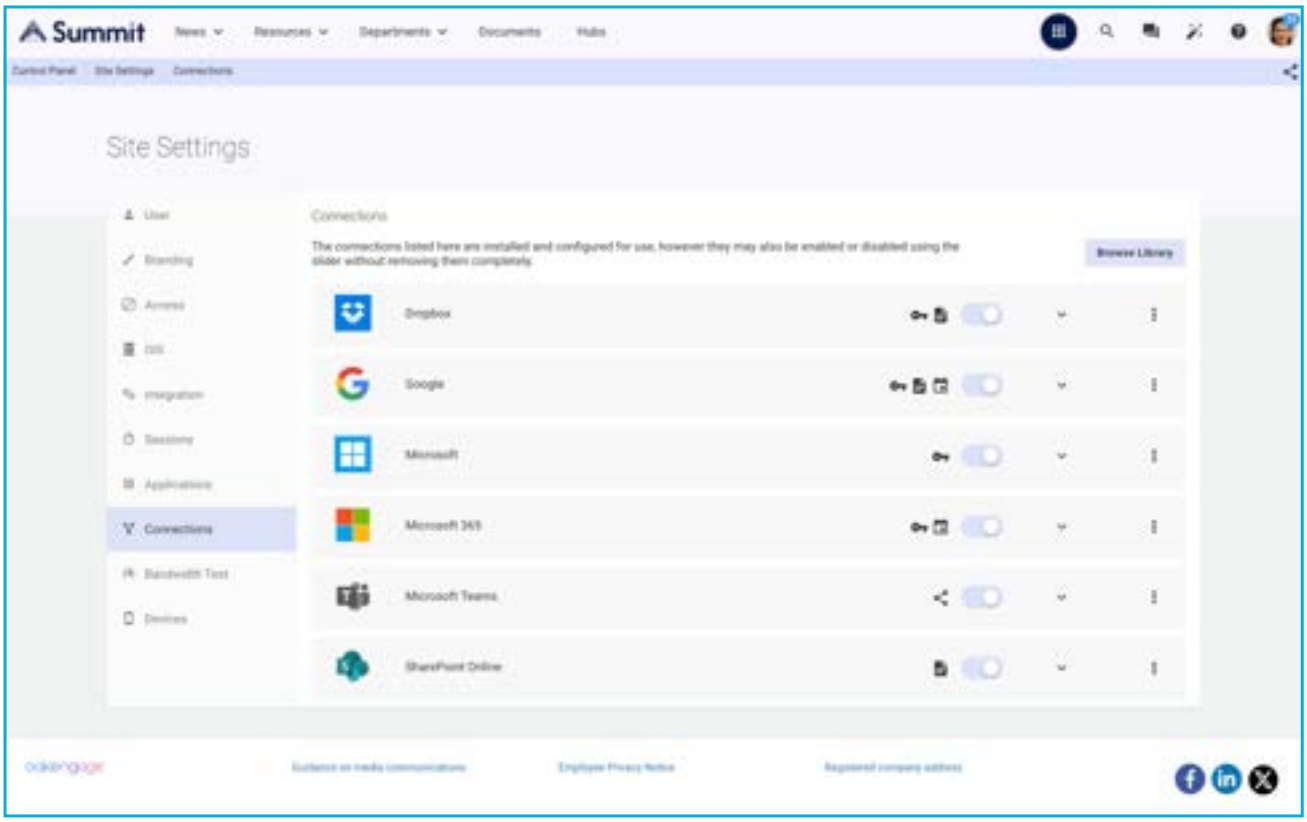
An effective 'Events' feature helps organisers promote activities and manage attendance. Each event has its own page, where organisers may choose to limit attendance numbers or ask for information around allergens. A browsable Events landing page and dedicated applets surfaces relevant events to people. Once accepted, the event will be added to an integrated calendar such as Outlook.

Finally, new employees can be supported with Oak dedicated home pages. Employees would see these home pages for a defined period post-start date, before switching automatically to another home page. Admins may build the pre-boarding and onboarding home pages as desired, to cover common tasks, questions and to reduce the chance of overwhelming new starters.

Overall, this scenario is an area of strength for Oak. In places some of the styling could be improved and features made more robust, however the range of options will certainly encourage engagement and create a sense of community.



Events are presented together on an attractive landing page.



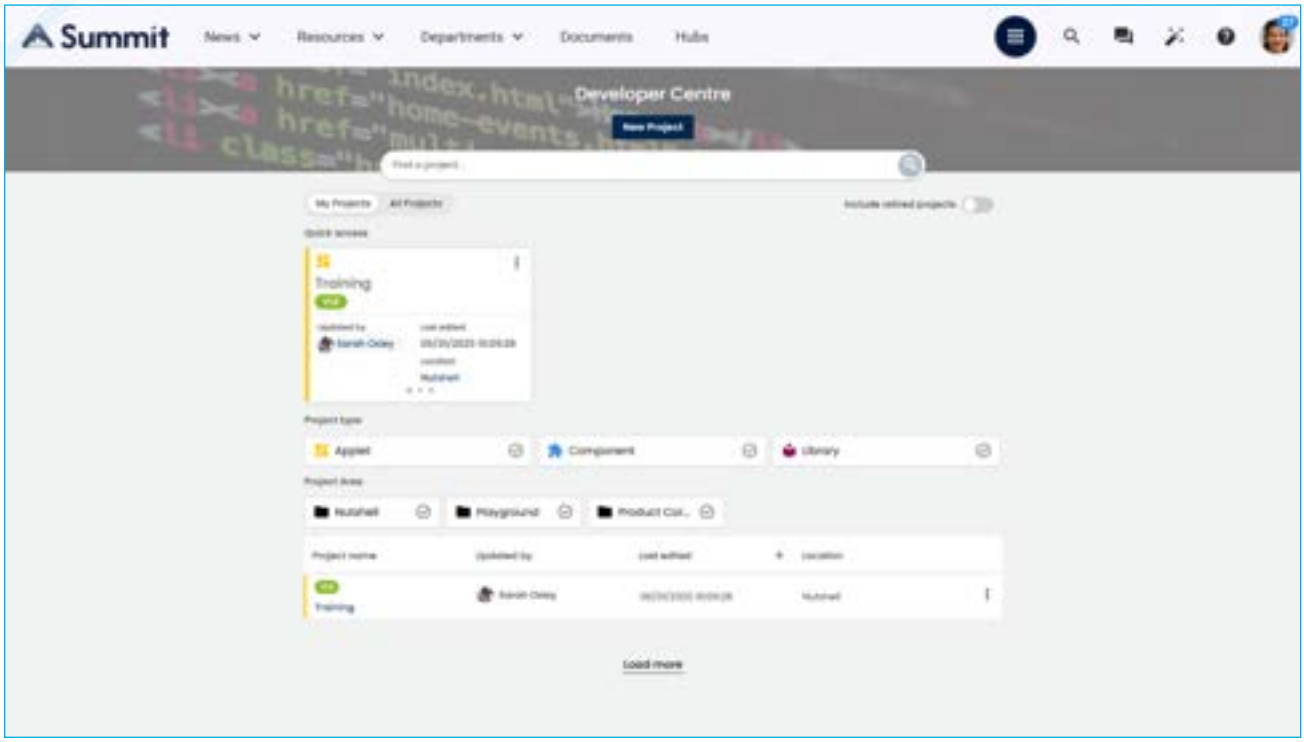
'Connections' provide a simple toggle approach for admins and employees to set up access to content sources.

Oak offers several approaches to business services and integrations. A 'Connections Library' presents many third-party systems that offer single sign-on options. There's a helpful search and each option presents a summary of what's possible; for example, the Dropbox connector allows users to sign into Oak using Dropbox credentials and then browse their own files from within Oak. When admins choose 'add' from the library, they reach a configuration screen. This requires some technical knowledge to complete, but Oak has done a good job of making this experience easier with tooltips and toggle options.

A helpful 'My Tools' applet is audience targeted, customisable by employees, and optionally provides single sign-on. It's possible to 'lock' tools so that they can't be removed, but we like that the order will change to automatically display the individual's more commonly used links first.

Other integrations take the form of applets that admins add to any appropriate page. Applets may display information from external systems or provide deeper two-way integrations. For example, organisations may choose to use Viva Engage as their intranet social feed, replacing what's on offer in Oak. An integration with a training system could display notifications to employees in a dedicated applet showing training to complete.

When Oak creates integrations for customers, they are made available to others. Integrations include Workday, Vimeo, Success Factors, IBM Watson, My Pay and more. The vendor will create additional applets on request, or in-house developers have an effective in-built 'Developer Centre'. This requires coding knowledge, but the Centre makes suggestions within the code to simplify the process.

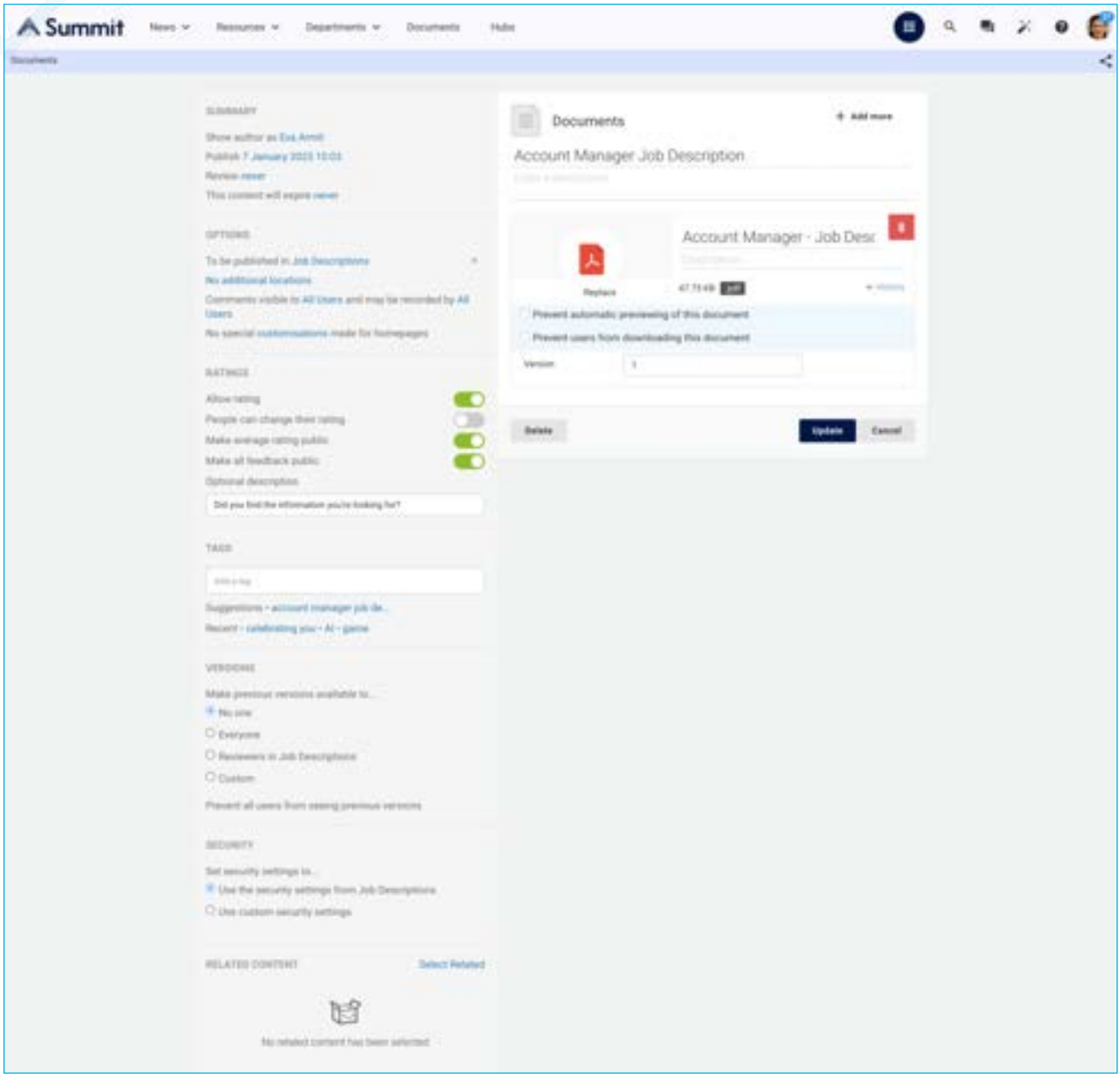


The 'Developer Centre' requires some technical knowledge but simplifies the process of setting up further integrations.

Rota and payslip integrations work well, particularly in the mobile app. Integrated payslips can be secured behind an additional password request or even biometrics on the mobile app, so actual data is blurred out until the additional authentication step is made. The rota integration displays dates and associated shifts from integrated systems, with colour coding to differentiate between holiday days vs a shift that's coming soon. Further styling to help those who cannot distinguish colours would be welcome. A shift swapping capability and clock in and out features are on the roadmap. Within 'site settings' admins can access a 'Connections' menu that contains ready-made integrations with other content systems, including SharePoint and Dropbox. These can be toggled on or off. We like the simple icons to show what sorts of activities are available within each option, such as a two-way sync with a Google calendar, and each activity has its own simple toggle approach to set up. Individual employees can also have the option to toggle on / off any Connected system.

The MS Teams Connection lets employees share content into any Teams channel they have access to. A pop-up lets the employee add a message, search for a Team or choose from a recent list to share a link into. Teams chats and calls can also be triggered from within people profiles (see Scenario 5). We think it's a shame there isn't an Oak Teams app available, although Oak says this will be available soon.

The range of SharePoint and Google Drive integrations is good. When creating a file library, publishers can upload from Google and SharePoint. Publishers are presented with a folder structure to navigate to the list of relevant files. There is a search box alongside the list, but we think additional filters would be helpful. Publishing creates an entry in Oak to a file that still "lives" in its source system, with any changes there syncing to Oak. This allows those without a SharePoint or Google license to view and search for the content, with the benefits of Oak's search experience (see Scenario 5). Security settings in the source system are not reflected but, as publishers can apply these within Oak, this isn't necessarily an issue.



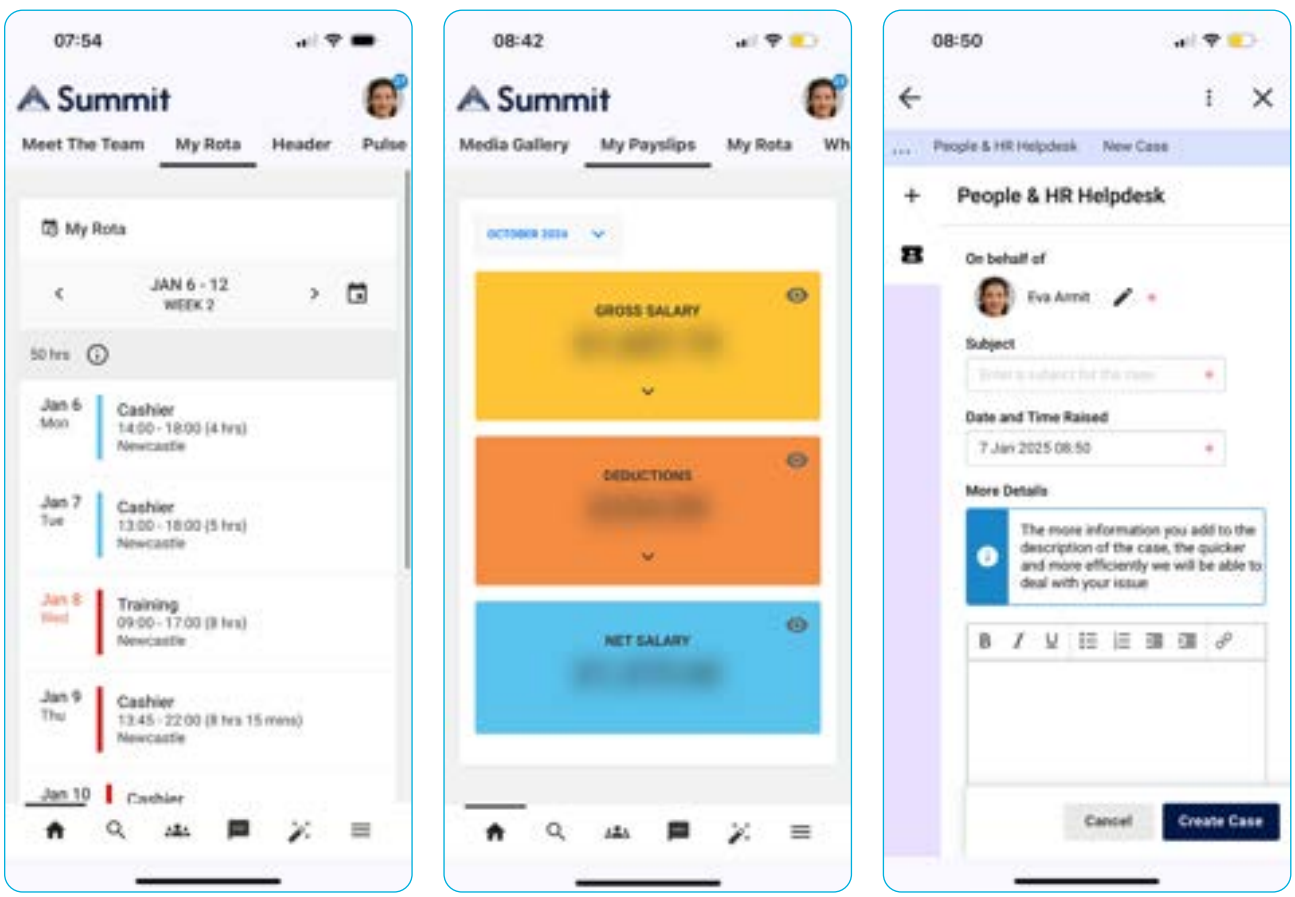
Files can be stored in SharePoint and benefit from synching with any content updates, as well as the security and other settings in Oak.

Admins may choose to present SharePoint and Google libraries within an applet, letting employees browse content and click through to the source. The layout is configurable, such as to show items as lists or cards. There is no local search for this content, although this is on the roadmap and will make a useful addition here.

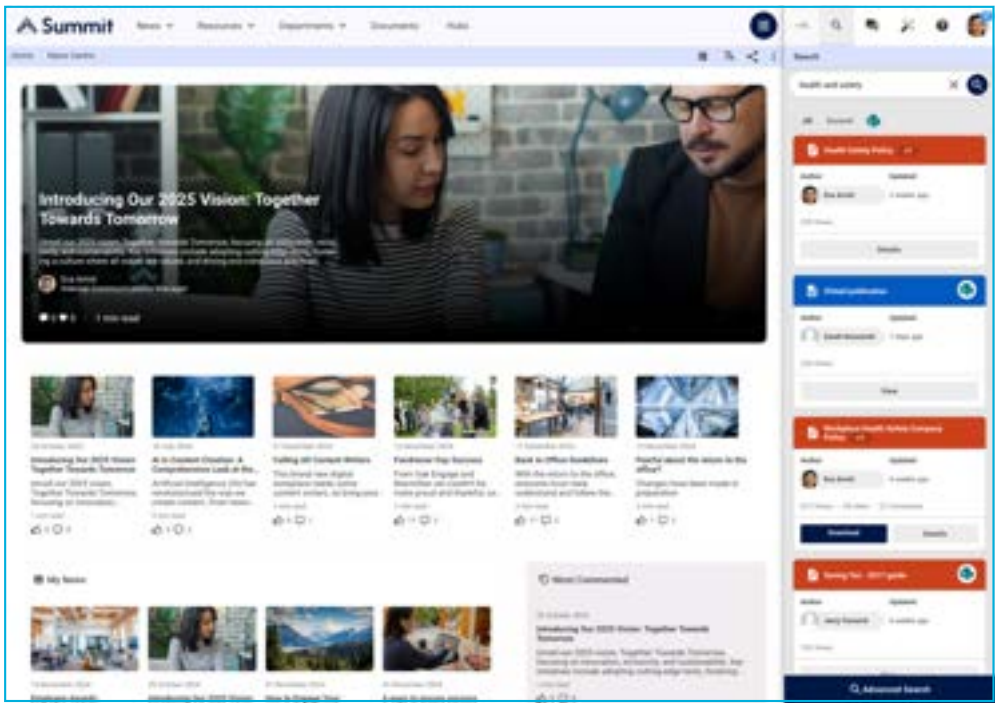
In-built forms can be used for surveys or simple processes such as ordering uniforms. These are built using drag-and-drop question types, such as a checkbox or date picker, and the form looks clean. Workflow will pass the form onto relevant colleagues or into third-party systems. A 'Tasks' applet extends this by displaying associated workflow actions, as well as any task the employee or their manager has created via their profile page. There are optional modules for organisations without an expenses system, absence tracking or vacation booking solution (at additional cost but included in the pricing here), which are simple but helpful.

Oak's 'Help Desk' capability is helpful for organisations looking for a more formal ticketing system but not ready to invest in a dedicated platform. Multiple options support scenarios such as the categorisation and status of tickets, while notifications inside Oak help to keep employees informed. Finally, it's worth noting that Aria AI is powered by Azure OpenAI and there are no limits on its usage, unlike other products that use credits or similar approaches to AI capabilities.

Overall, Oak provides a good range of integrations, a simple framework for integration development and some helpful in-built services. There's the odd gap, such as no Teams app, and integrations may take some work, whether by Oak or the customer, but what's on offer works well.



Rotas, payslips and Help Desk features work particularly well on mobile.



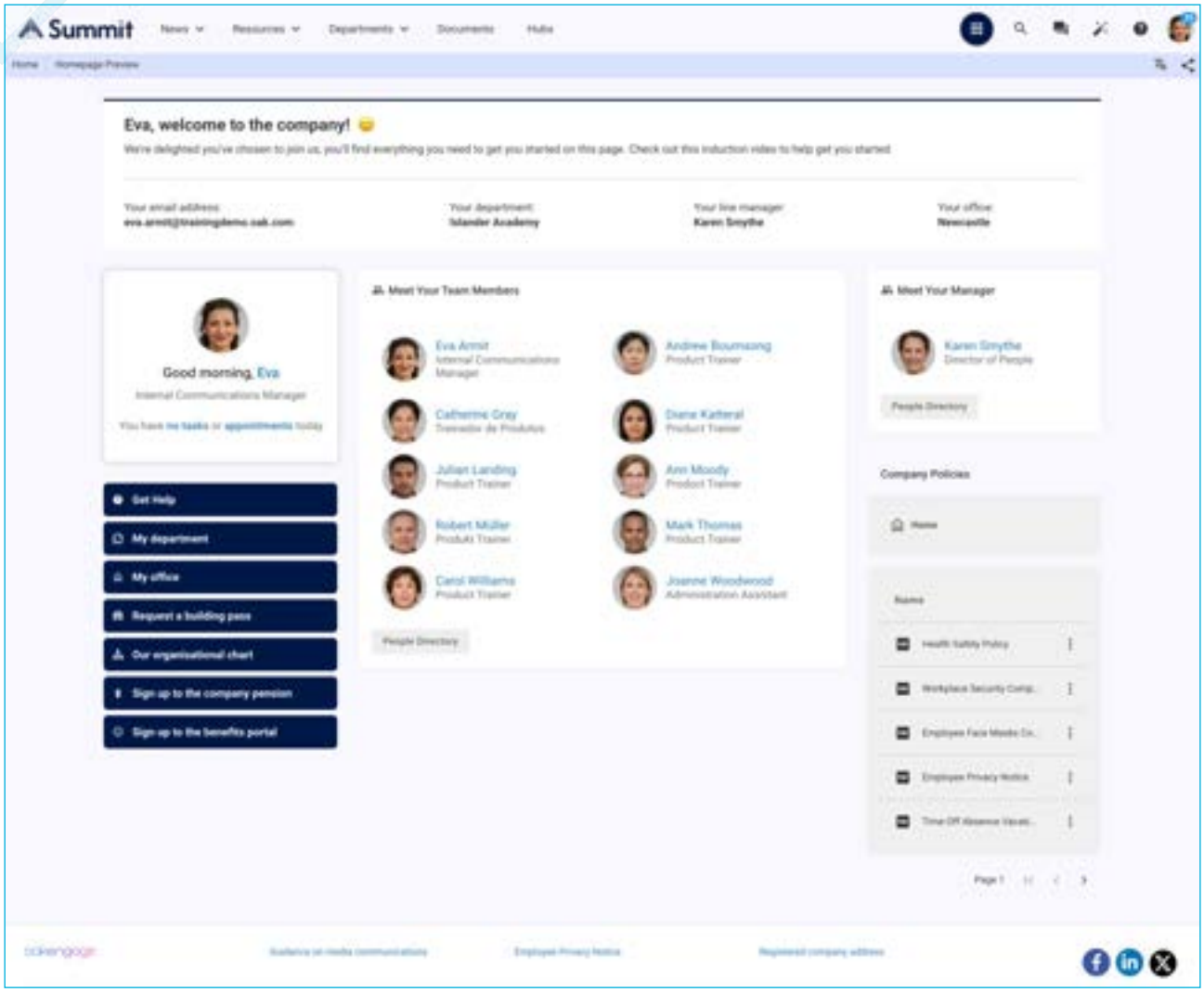
The search panel opens on the right of the screen while results can be browsed and opened on the left.

Oak takes a novel approach to search; while the search icon is familiar, results are loaded in a slide-out panel on the right of the screen with the content on the left reacting to the new space available. This approach allows users to check results by clicking on them and the screen to the left loads the content, leaving the list of results unchanged to the right. This allows people to find the right item without the frustration of having to backtrack.

Results display icons and thumbnails to help people browse for the correct answer. A results refinement list of checkboxes helps filter results, but this list is static rather than being dynamically generated based on the results. An 'advanced search' option includes a query builder for more precise searching, but this may not appeal to average users. 'Promoted results' allow admins to prioritise content associated with a search term, although unfortunately other search management features aren't available. Fuzzy matches and 'did you mean' results are supported though, which helps people locate the right content. Page 'Topics' help define the content of a page and will be returned in associated search results.

The content of integrated third-party systems will be federated as part of the search (in addition to what's mentioned in Scenario 4). For Microsoft this means any content in SharePoint and OneDrive; Google Workspace can also be federated out of the box. Other integrations are set up on request; for example, the vendor mentioned previous experience with federating document management tools, Gmail and tickets in a project management tool. Federated results are presented on separate tabs as well as part of an 'all' tab and will respect any associated permissions in the third-party tool; if someone doesn't have a licence for the business tool they will receive no search results.

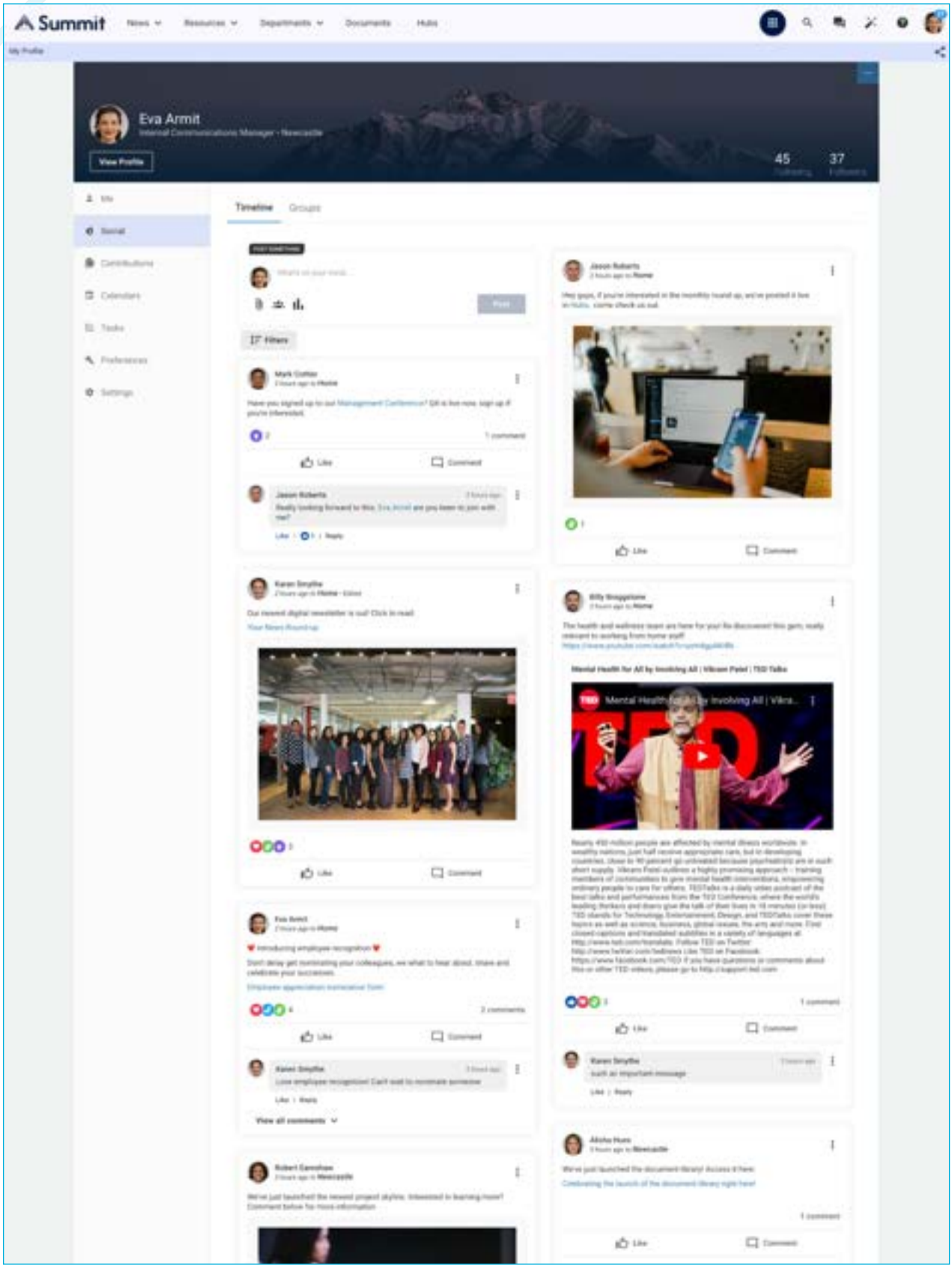
People finding is via the main search box, although a 'phone book' applet lists appropriate people on pages as well. Organisations may customise people profile fields as desired, choosing whether to integrate data from appropriate systems, allow people to add their own information, or both. We like that it's possible to control which fields are visible to others and which fields can be searched for, meaning any approved fields will be searchable.



A 'meet the team' applet is a great way to present who is responsible for intranet content and who to contact for further information.

Profile pages are simple in appearance but work well. One tab displays profile fields, alongside an applet displaying 'suggested people' (such as those in the same department), which we think is helpful. A sharable QR code can help people connect quickly and is reminiscent of what's found in LinkedIn. A second tab displays a timeline associated with the individual, so those browsing can see what they've posted, Stars they've received or any blogs shared.

On profile pages, a button opens an organisation chart, which is among the best we've seen in this report. The chart starts with the original person on the furthest left and any direct reports lead from them as tabs, with subsequent direct reports opening in a new column. A breadcrumb trail shows branches further up the tree and this is also explorable. Clicking on a person provides a summary of their information and button to their profile.

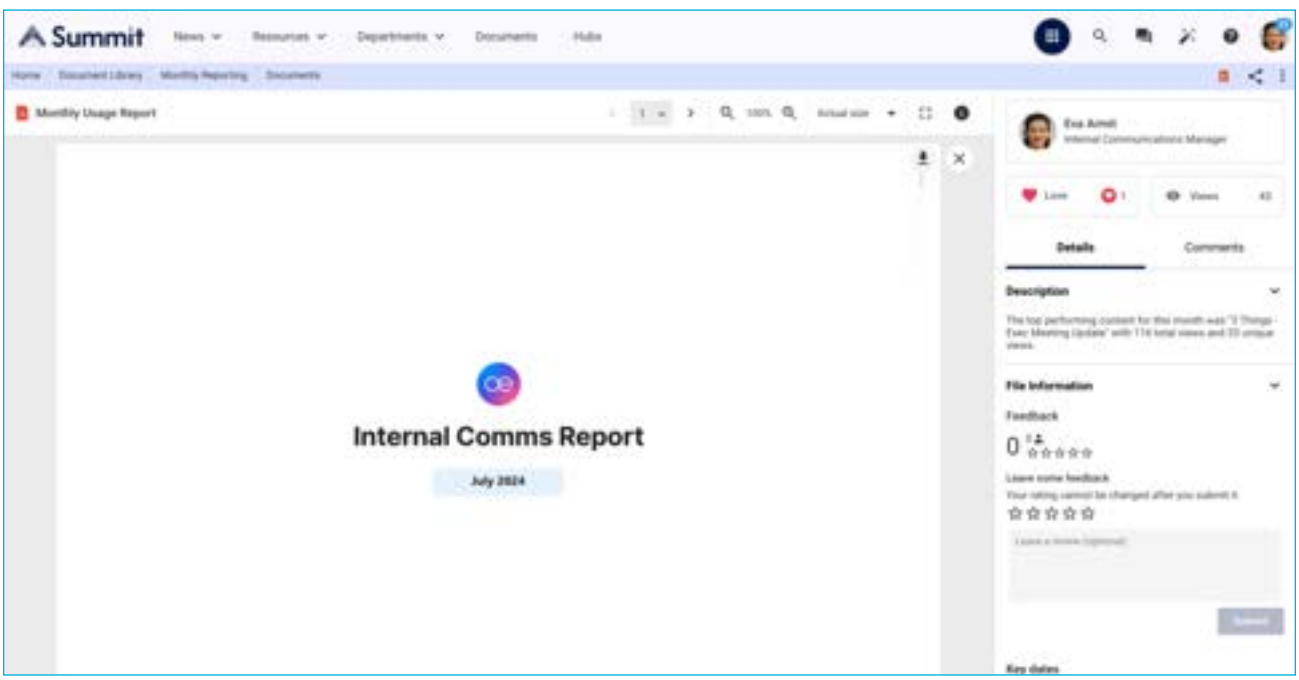


Profile pages include a timeline of activity associated with the individual.

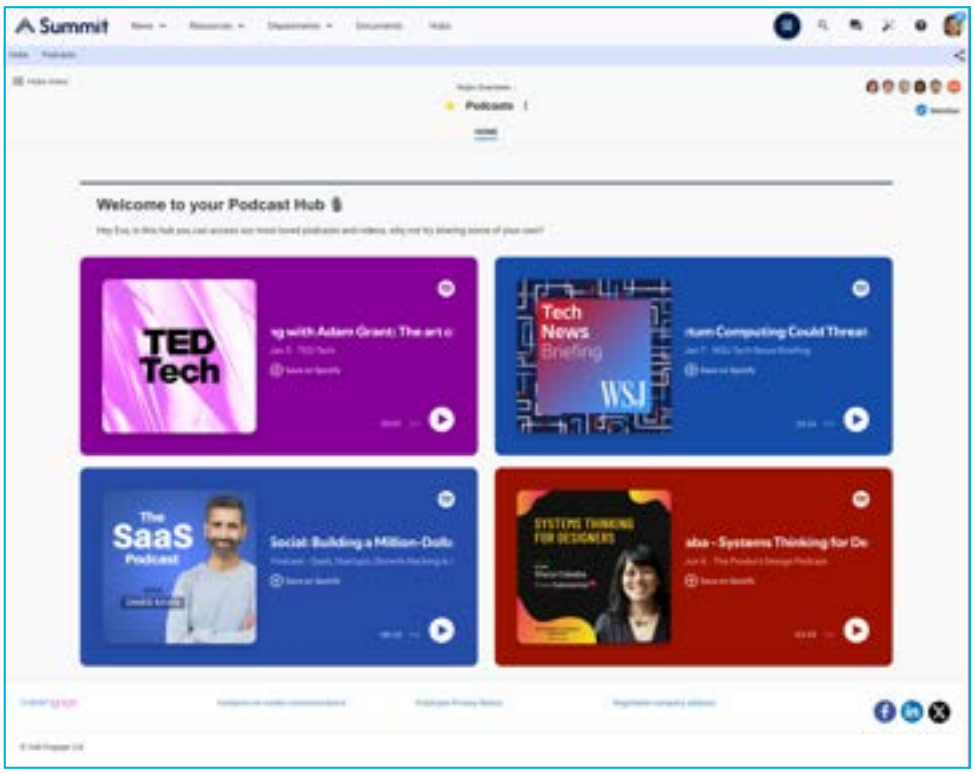
For broader information finding and management, Oak provides a flexible framework for creating sections as desired using applets and deeper navigation options for comprehensive sections. Scenario 4 covers options to integrate document sources, but publishers can create file- and page-based libraries from scratch too. Documents are previewed within Oak's search without having to download, with helpful summary version history information. For pages and documents, tags help with findability, while ratings and feedback fields let employees help content owners keep their material updated. We think the addition of classifications would be helpful.

The applet approach works well on pages, where complex information such as FAQs may be presented in an accordion applet rather than in long-form articles. The 'Aria' AI tool can help create content via natural language prompts, generating a draft page, news article or policy for the publisher to review and edit. The policy draft is written in a standard format, which is helpful for consistency, but some may feel it is overly comprehensive. On the roadmap is a facility for Aria to assist with editing, such as changing length and tone, which we feel is a better use for AI with fewer risks of content accuracy errors.

Overall, information finding in Oak is effective, but there is room for improvement. For example, the addition of localised searches across the platform (in Hubs, document libraries, the news centre etc.) would be beneficial. Additionally, the interface approach to search might not appeal to everyone, but we feel it will serve end users well. On the roadmap are plans to expand Aria AI capabilities into search and we look forward to seeing the results.



Pages and files include rating and feedback capabilities, while documents also display some simple version history and other data.



Multimedia support is strong and it's easy to create a podcast and video hub.

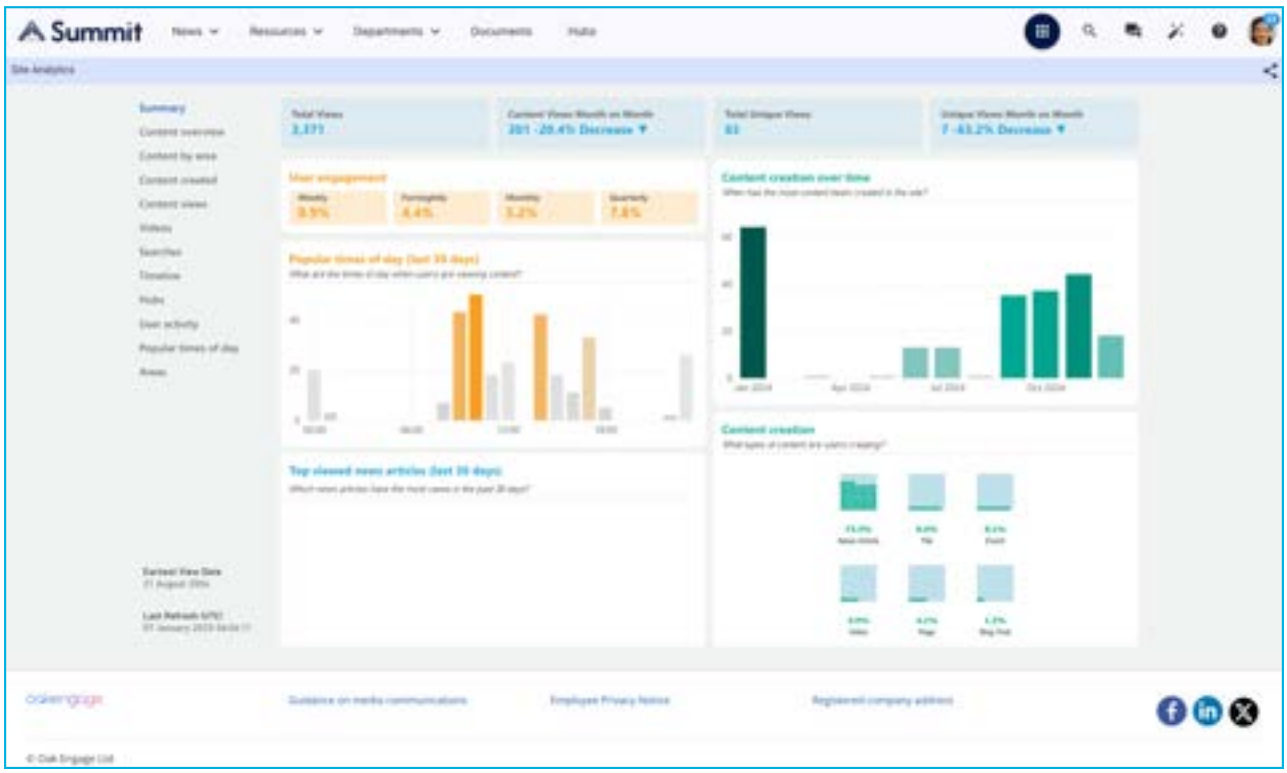
Oak is a very flexible platform with a pleasant approach to creating content pages and home pages. Other administrative menus can feel clunky by comparison, for example 'Manage Areas' feels somewhat unwieldy when compared to the front-end of Oak, but developments are on the roadmap. Access to a 'knowledge base' via the top menu that opens as a side-panel is excellent. This allows any user to explore Oak help pages, log a support ticket with Oak and submit feedback.

Home pages are audience targeted, allowing organisations to have multiple home pages to meet different employee needs. Home pages are created using applets, which admins drag and drop into appropriate places with the applets resizing as they're moved. There is a good range of applets too, including those that will display content from within Oak's features, such as employee recognition or events, and also from external sources such as news feeds. Additionally, we like the confetti, snow and bats animations that introduces an element of fun to a business tool.

Content life cycle is managed in a couple of places. The first is via Oak's legacy reporting area where admins find reporting tables split into topics such as 'expiry' and 'comments'. A 'Your Footprint' space presents information in a more user-friendly dashboard style, although it is somewhat hidden in menu options and the depth of data isn't so strong. Notifications are triggered to help people manage content expiry, which is helpful, however we think a single, detailed and attractive dashboard approach would be better.

Publishers can create pages in different languages, which includes optional machine translation and applies to home pages as well as individual pages. Alternatively, Oak compares the language on a page with the language choice an employee has made, then displays a tab for employees to choose to auto-translate content. This is an unusual approach, which may not appeal to some. We think it would be useful to highlight to the end user that it has been created using auto translation.

Video and audio content is handled well, where it's easy to replicate a Spotify or Netflix approach, which the vendor says a client has done. Videos include features such as subtitles and searchable transcripts, which can be edited and even translated.



Oak's analytics present a good range of helpful data.

Oak's 'Reporting' screens include data on a range of content and activities. By using PowerBI in the background (with licensing covered by Oak), Oak can easily extend the range of available reporting on request – they mentioned more advanced search analytics as an example. Data is presented as tables and charts, some of which are simple while others are more sophisticated. For example, some reports, such as 'Content Created' analytics, include interactive charts where clicking refines the displayed data.

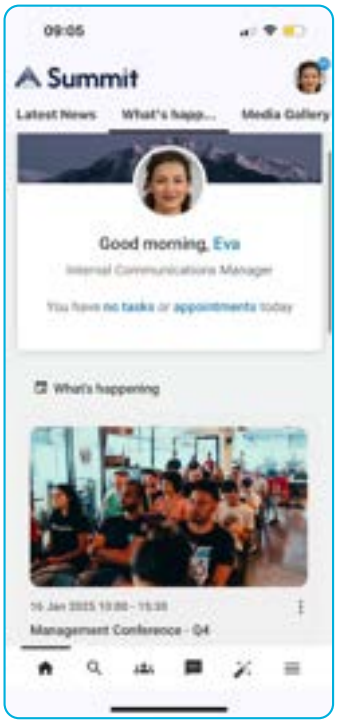
A 'Summary' screen provides an overview such as top five news articles, with helpful labels depicting the timeframe the summary is referring to. Within the different report screens there are filters for elements such as timeframe, or content type. We like the 'Popular Times of Day' analytics that includes helpful heat map charts and the simple 'Search Terms' report. 'Content Overview' lists everything the person has permissions to edit, with filters and sorting to reduce the list. Helpfully, each page includes a more detailed report showing its performance, which can be accessed from here or from the page itself.

Each Oak feature, such as an individual campaign or the expenses module, has its own analytics. These would benefit from restyling and being linked from the Reporting menu to make them easier to find. Mandatory reads are well handled through 'notices' (see Scenario 2) where it's easy to re-prompt those who haven't acknowledged a notice and export the results.

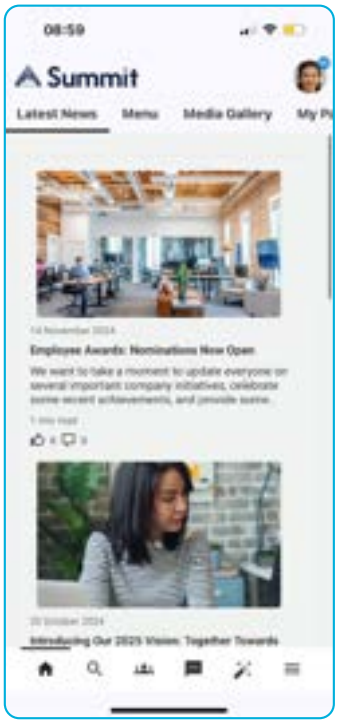
'Monthly Engagement Reports' are automatically generated and presented to relevant admins. The Monthly Report is a PDF file that collates a snapshot of the intranet's performance over the previous month. We're impressed by the use of AI here, which generates a narrative around the data and makes recommendations for improvements or to repeat success. We think the application of AI here is excellent and look forward to seeing the sophistication of recommendations increase.

Overall, Oak has made significant improvements to analytics in recent years, and it is now an effective tool for admins. There are planned developments, such as with search reporting and to offer quarterly Engagement Reports, which will bring further improvements to an already strong offering.

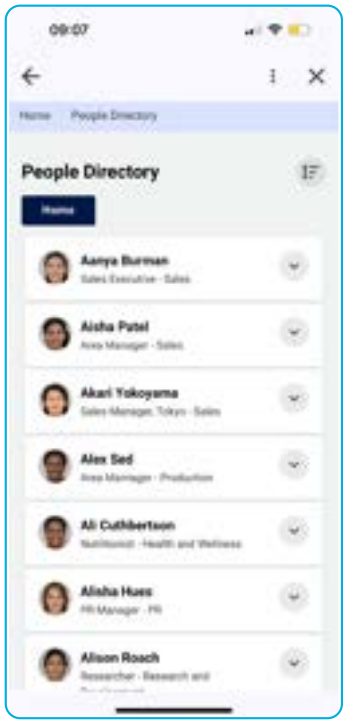
8. MOBILE & FRONTLINE SUPPORT



There's the option to present a simplified experience on mobile through dedicated home pages.



News stories work well on mobile.



Employees can call a colleague from their entry in the directory.

Oak provides a variety of methods to encourage people to download the app and to help them gain access. For example, Oak has provided clients with physical QR codes, while emails include bespoke links. Access can be associated with single sign-on accounts like Entra ID, with multi-factor authentication if wanted; or users could use unique identifiers to log in, with biometrics for ease of subsequent access.

The app home page displays 'stacks' of applets grouped into tabs, which is a different approach to the desktop and might be confusing. The desktop mega menu is found in the 'burger' menu, while the bottom app navigation includes the Aria AI tool (for relevant publishers) which feels superfluous here. Finding a way to elegantly surface appropriate third-party tools would be more helpful. A messaging feature is found in the bottom navigation though, and this is particularly useful for frontline teams.

While there are no frontline tools found solely on the app, the features covered in Scenarios 3 and 4 translate well to the small screen environment. In-built tasks, rotas, time off and Help Desk tools are particularly useful for the frontline. An integration with payslip systems is also robust, requiring biometric or similar authentication before it'll be displayed.

It's worth highlighting that the 'AI Targeting' approach to content dissemination works well for frontline workers, as it recognises working patterns. This means shift workers are less likely to be disturbed outside of their working hours. There aren't any manual controls over 'do not disturb' hours, but this is on the roadmap. Customers requested offline reading / save for later tools for content, which we think would be helpful additions here too.

Admins have a good deal of control over the design of Oak, including on mobile, with a custom branding option for the app at additional cost. Dedicated home pages mean frontline employees could be presented only with timeline and notices applets. Alternatively, everyone in the organisation could share the same home page, but with settings on individual applets to display to specified audiences or device types.

Overall, Oak's app reflects the easy-to-use experience from the desktop. There are places where the experience could be enhanced but we think it is effective and would meet most business needs well.

THINGS TO BEAR IN MIND

There is a lot of flexible functionality across Oak and it is largely easy to use. We think there are some places where admin experiences could be simplified and / or styling improved to make it look more contemporary, however. There are some unusual approaches to functionality that organisations should carefully consider, too. For example, the 'AI Targeting' approach to content delivery is innovative but may not suit all communicators, although can be switched off. Similarly, the search experience works well but is atypical and some may not like it. The options surrounding integrations are good, but it will rely on technical expertise in the organisation. Also, while they have global customers, the vendor is based in the UK only and this may be too restrictive for some.

Oak does a good job of providing foundational capabilities across our scenarios, though those organisations with advanced requirements may find some of Oak's capabilities disappointing, as they lack sophistication at times. While we wouldn't want to see the experience complicated by adding advanced features that aren't appropriate for their clients, Oak has already shown that it can offer complex features in a simple manner. The vendor has also said that they want to remove manual tasks, replacing with AI and automation, and we've seen good evidence of these plans so far, although there is room for improvement.

We have reviewed Oak for several years now and have seen the product develop in sensible directions in that time. Strong areas have become stronger, and they have listened to feedback to make real improvements to areas that needed strengthening. Oak therefore has a lot to offer, particularly at a lower price for an independent intranet solution, so it is an excellent option for organisations that want to offer employees a flexible intranet with an easy-to-use interface.

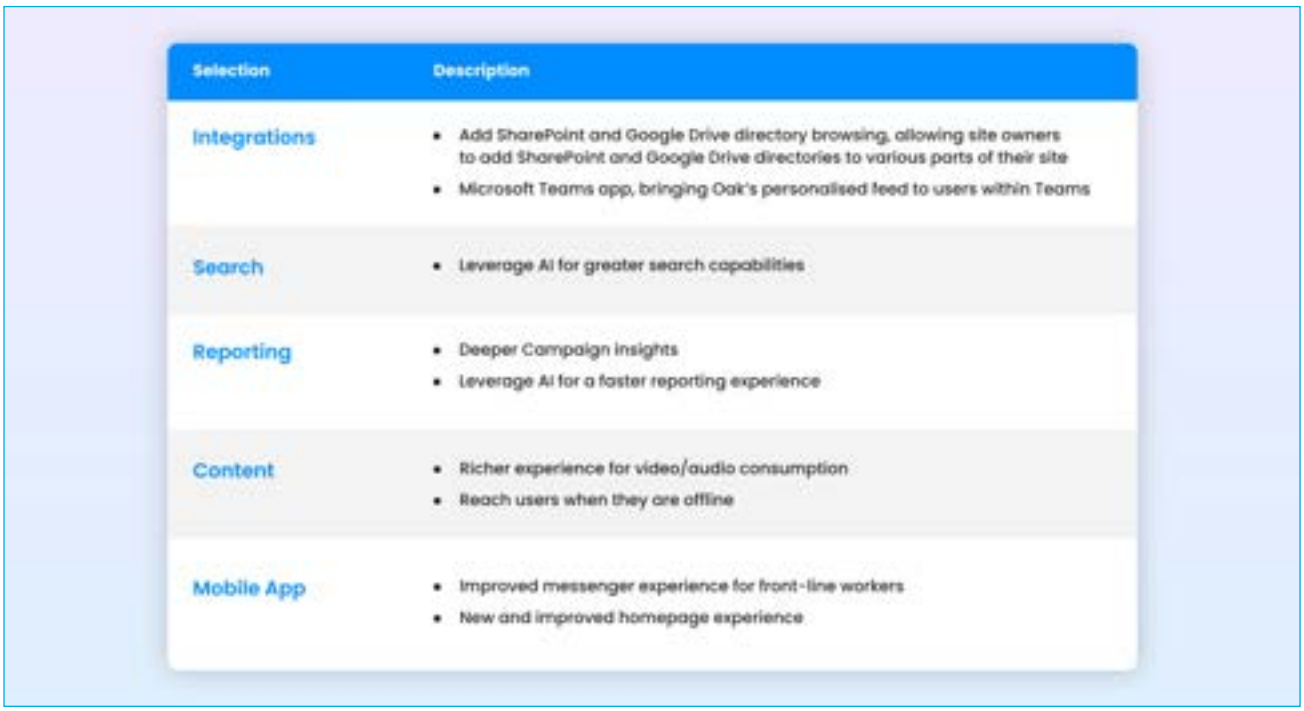
Why choose this product

Oak's high level of flexibility, content targeting capabilities and ease of use enable organisations to deliver an intranet that meets many employee needs. Deskless workers are well served with a strong mobile app, while desk-based employees will appreciate the clean user experience. There are excellent publishing and community features for employees and admins alike. Integrations with other business systems work well, with a comprehensive developer framework for those who wish to build deeper two-way integrations. Overall, Oak delivers a strong employee experience, at a competitive price point.

You may also be interested in...

Haiilo interact MangoApps

Vendor roadmap



Selection	Description
Integrations	• Add SharePoint and Google Drive directory browsing, allowing site owners to add SharePoint and Google Drive directories to various parts of their site • Microsoft Teams app, bringing Oak's personalised feed to users within Teams
Search	• Leverage AI for greater search capabilities
Reporting	• Deeper Campaign insights • Leverage AI for a faster reporting experience
Content	• Richer experience for video/audio consumption • Reach users when they are offline
Mobile App	• Improved messenger experience for front-line workers • New and improved homepage experience

Roadmap images provided by Oak Engage.

Back to index

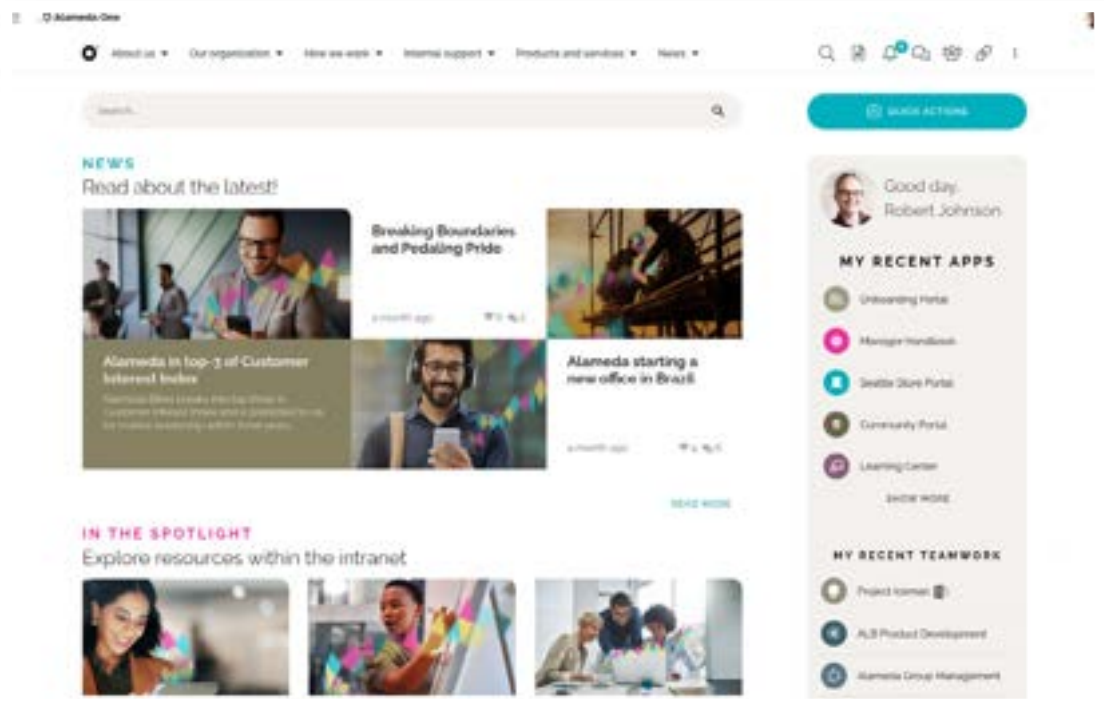
omnia

FULLY STANDALONE

REQUIRES SHAREPOINT

OPTIONALLY WORKS WITH SHAREPOINT

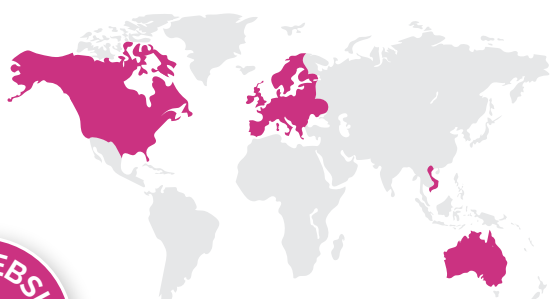
FRONTLINE FOCUS



Typical deployment:

1,000 to 5,000

Company locations:



VISIT THE WEBSITE

The product in a nutshell

Omnia's highly configurable product provides a top-tier experience for employees and publishers across a range of devices. It will appeal to medium to large organisations with sophisticated needs.

SUMMARY

LEADING PRODUCT
ClearBox
CHOICE
2025

Omnia

Omnia is a powerful intranet-in-a-box product that was launched in 2015. The vendor, Omnia Digital Workplace, has its headquarters in Sweden and a presence in several other countries including Australia, Canada and USA. Implementations are often completed with the help of a worldwide network of partners. Omnia acquired former competitor, Australian-based, LiveTiles in June 2024. This has helped extend geographical reach plus grow the customer base and is planned to deliver additional functionality to Omnia during 2025.

Omnia uses SharePoint for content and data storage but it has some unique capabilities that differentiate it from its peers. It provides its own interfaces for employees, publishers and admins that are markedly different from standard SharePoint. These deliver benefits in the form of improved speed, branding support, publishing templates and consistency of user experience across published and community content. For mobile employees, in addition to being fully responsive, Omnia has its own mobile app that provides tailored experiences, rather than relying on Viva Connections in Teams. Frontline workers can also be enrolled and authenticated in the app using a range of methods, including some that negate the need for Microsoft licenses.

Flexibility and power come at the cost of some complexity. The range of features and functionality available means that Omnia is not one of the simplest platforms to implement and live with. Customers usually need to work with skilled partners to set up and develop the intranet, while client-side admins face a fairly steep learning curve. Omnia has tight integration with Microsoft 365 applications, so organisations will need to consider how they will support the administration across Omnia and M365 tools. Third party integrations are fairly lightweight as standard. Some popular cloud services including ServiceNow and Jira have connectors in Omnia, but the functionality is limited to read-only notifications and display of activity from these platforms. Clients will need to develop their own capabilities beyond this.

License costs for Omnia are highly competitive, however, especially considering the capabilities on offer in this top-tier product. We think Omnia will appeal to medium to large organisations that want to provide a rich, targeted experience to their employees on any device, and are prepared to invest appropriate time and resources in doing so.

Pricing

PRICE BAND	
1,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
5,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
20,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
50,000 users	$ $ $ $ $

These prices are indicative, offering a comparison of the products featured in this report only. Please contact the vendor for a bespoke quote.

PRICING MODEL

Subscription – price band based on number of users; One-off payment and ongoing maintenance fee;

DISCOUNTS

Charities and non-profit organisations;

COSTS TYPICALLY

Slightly higher at the start of the term, but generally spread

PRICE INCLUDES

Introduction for admins and editors, product maintenance and support, product updates and deployment, backend hosting and monitoring, product documentation and release notes, online training, and knowledge sharing conferences and community.

Product type

Ready-to-run, installed in days

Branding opportunities

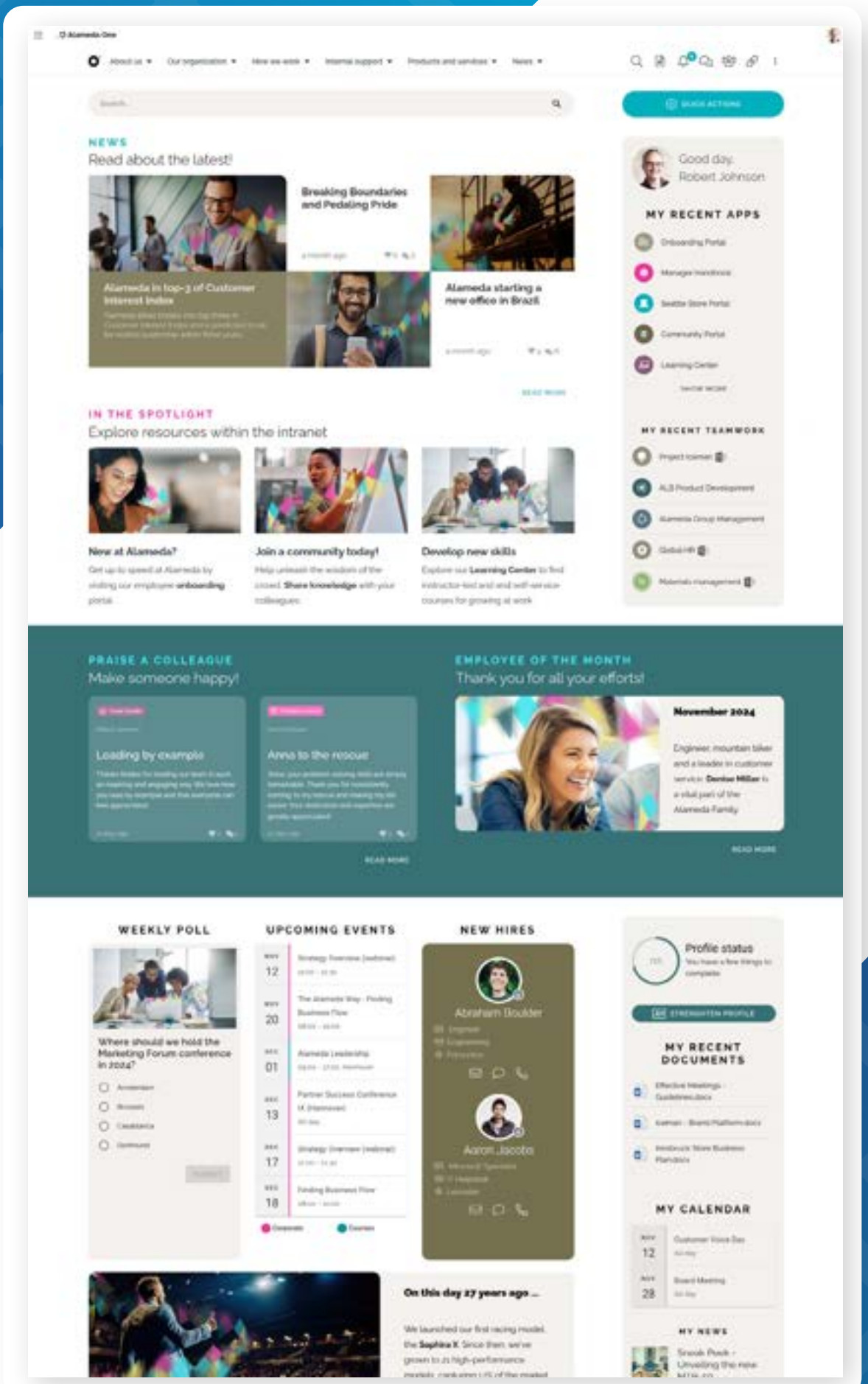
All branding, complex options

Base systems

Fully standalone	**Requires SharePoint**	Other

Sectors

Business, consulting and management	Engineering and manufacturing	Property and construction	Public services, government and administration	Retail


NEWS
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Alameda starting a new office in Brazil
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New at Alameda?
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Good day, Robert Johnson
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MY RECENT TEAMWORK
PRAISE A COLLEAGUE
Make someone happy!
Loading by example
Anna to the rescue
EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH
Thank you for all your efforts!
November 2024
WEEKLY POLL
Where should we hold the Marketing Forum conference in 2024?
UPCOMING EVENTS
NEW HIRES
Abraham Boulder
Aaron Jacobs
Profile status
MY RECENT DOCUMENTS
MY CALENDAR
On this day 27 years ago ...
MY NEWS

COMPANY AND PRODUCT

Company details

Company
Omnia Digital Workplace

ISO 27001 certified
Yes

Data residency
Global - at the client's discretion; client's data resides in the same Azure region as the customer's Microsoft 365 tenant (unless otherwise requested).

Company founded
2003

Product launched
2015

Typical client size
1,000 to 5,000

Largest deployment so far
180,000 users; 34 countries.

Customers
Clients include: Arriva Trains, City of Malmö, Electrolux, ICA, Koenigsegg, MAN Energy Solutions, Persimmon Homes, RSA Insurance, Signify, World Wildlife Fund (WWF).

Partner locations
Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, UK, Finland, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and USA.

Company locations
Stockholm, Sweden (HQ); Australia, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Portugal, USA, Vietnam.

Product and technical details

Name of product

Omnia

Deployment

Client on-premises	**Client private cloud**	**Microsoft Azure**	Amazon Web Services	**Vendor-hosted**	Microsoft 365 tenant	Google Cloud	Other

*Sovereign Cloud, Google Cloud Platform

Authentication supported

Entra ID	**ADFS**	Okta	**Open ID**	**Oauth**	**G Suite**	**Other***

*Omnia accounts

App deployment

Google Play store	**Apple store**	MDM	MAM	Other

Accessibility

WCAG 2.1 conformant

Document library sources integrated

Box	Dropbox	Google Drive	**SharePoint**	**OneDrive**	Other

Optional integrated enterprise search engines

Coveo	Elastic	IBM	Lucidworks	Microsoft	Mindbreeze	Sinequa	Other*

*Meilisearch.

User interface multi-language

Machine translation	Pre-configured	Editable	Right to left script supported	Other

Content multi-language

Machine translation for publishers	Machine translation for end users	Editable machine translation for publishers	Manual creation for publishers	Right to left script	Other

Set-up and support

Set-up process for new clients

Installation is typically done in a few hours, basic configuration in a few days, and consulting for customising the solution to business needs in a few weeks. After launch, a rich set of product capabilities, recurring product updates, online training, and knowledge sharing, events, and more will support customers in developing their solution.

Version numbers

Demonstrated to ClearBox: 7.8

At January 2025: 7.8

Product updates

Major updates every six weeks; there are 2-3 major releases per year for new and improved features and 2-3 minor releases focused on performance and platform improvements.

Product update process

Roll-out of new releases are included in subscription and customers can choose between being in the first, second, or last release cycle. Customers can also request to have a customised release cycle with possibility to schedule releases.

Reverse-out options

All master data (and content) is stored in the customer's Microsoft 365 tenant. Any data temporarily stored in Omnia will be provided to the customer on request and deleted when the Omnia environment is taken down.

Technical support

Email support	Phone support	Chat support	**Online portal**	**24/7 support**	Office hours only

User community

The Omnia Community is part of a customer success program and has over 800 members. Members are regularly invited to knowledge sharing activities such as online training, product information webinars, customer stories sessions, online community for knowledge sharing, and the annual Omnia Conference.

Voice of the vendor

Omnia Digital Workplace says: "Omnia is a versatile Intranet-as-a-Service solution designed to enhance internal communication, boost employee engagement, streamline operations, and drive productivity. With a top-rated product, extensive services, and a focus on delivering measurable outcomes, we support organisations to sustainable intranet success. Key benefits of Omnia include:

Comprehensive Intranet Solutions: Omnia excels in sophisticated content management and governance, offering advanced capabilities for managing knowledge, business processes, controlled documents, projects, tasks, and users. These features deliver impactful, tailored solutions that meet even the most complex business needs.

Engaging Employee Experience: Omnia delivers a personalised, intuitive, and task-oriented user experience across all devices. From seamless onboarding and skills development to knowledge sharing, recognition and feedback, we ensure an engaging and connected workforce at every stage of the employee journey.

Commitment to Customer Success: Our dedicated support and proactive customer success program provide strategic and tactical advice, share best practices, offer benchmarks, and focus on continuous improvements to help you achieve tangible, measurable results.

Global Reach, Local Expertise: With over 150 employees across North America, Europe, and Asia-Pacific, Omnia is uniquely positioned to support larger organisations. Our commitment to delivering quantifiable customer outcomes and long-term success makes Omnia a trusted partner for intranet excellence."

Voice of the customer

As usual, we received a large amount of feedback from Omnia customers, which we see as an encouraging sign of a healthy, engaged client base. The main thing that customers like about Omnia is its flexibility, allowing customisation across various scenarios; as one explained, "all of our divisions can have the same product but with customised functionality, design and modules." Of these modules, and alongside Microsoft 365 integration, customers cited the document and process management components as being especially beneficial. The user experience came in for praise as well with customers describing Omnia as being, "fast" and "easy to use" with one explaining, "For Editors it is very straightforward to use. You have vital functions at your fingertips."

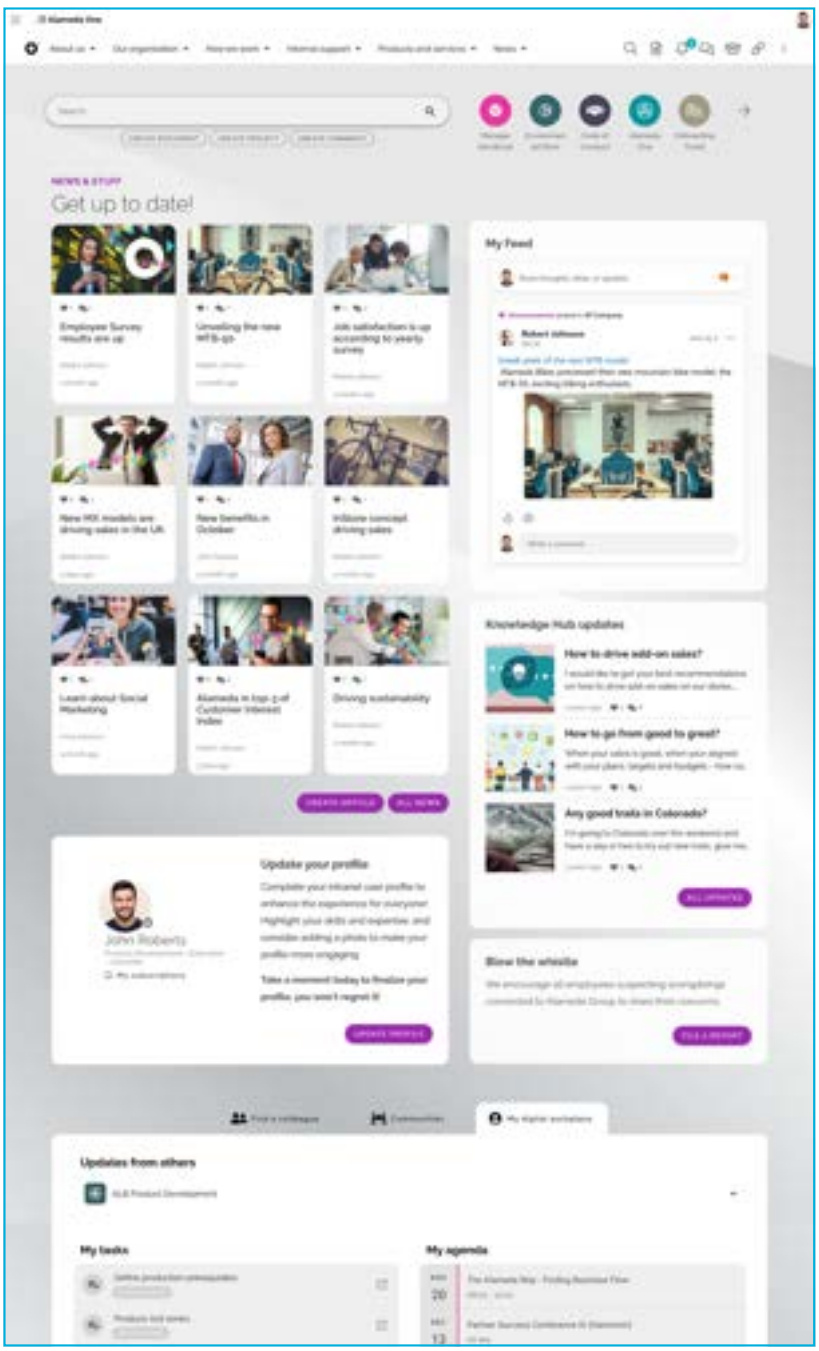
It seems the product flexibility can be a mixed blessing, however. Customers cautioned against going too far with customisations with one sharing, "The 'flexibility' is a problem. That you can do 'everything' makes every new project or change time consuming and expensive." This can be compounded by the need for appropriately skilled administrators or developers, that are often consultants. While the end user and editing experience came in for praise, customers described back-end administration as "overly complex". Omnia does have a good track record of listening to customers and some suggestions for change, such as more options for displaying "multiple images at once, perhaps like an image carousel or similar" and "better opportunities to use videos", would appear to have been addressed in the latest release. Nonetheless some customers would like more transparency of the product roadmap, combined with regular, fully tested releases and bug fixes.

Customers are unanimous in their praise when it comes to working with the vendor, although some have had mixed experiences with implementation partners, emphasising the importance of choosing carefully. One customer described working with Omnia (the vendor) as, "a pleasure", going on to explain, "they are professional, science-based, and easy to work with". Another said they are, "very service minded and customer centric", with another describing the relationship as, "A close and personal collaboration. The supplier is attentive to our needs and solution-oriented." Customers also liked the Omnia conferences, saying these, "offer inspiration from other companies' solutions".

SCENARIOS & SCORES

Please see the Scenarios below for more detail on each of these.

SCENARIO AND SCORE	KEY BENEFITS	IMPROVEMENTS / CONSIDERATIONS
4.5 **1. User Experience & Visual Appeal**	Excellent overall experience that benefits from flexible design and targeted functionality.	The welcome tour is a good start but could be refined. Notifications need careful management to avoid overwhelming employees.
4.5 **2. Publishing & Communications Management**	Simple or complex content publishing needs are well-catered for.	Multi-channel publishing is relatively limited compared with other top-tier products.
4.5 **3. Community & Engagement**	Community and engagement features are fully integrated giving a consistent experience.	Templates for more use cases such as ideation would be helpful.
3+ **4. Integrations & Services (Including M365)**	Close integration with M365 applications.	Somewhat limited range and functionality of third-party connectors as standard.
4.5 **5. Information Finding & Search**	Search is highly configurable with some useful reporting and management tools. Semantic search offers an 'intelligent' and configurable alternative.	Search management is powerful but could be simpler.
4 **6. Administrator Experience**	Comprehensive, hierarchical admin back-end providing control over all aspects of the solution.	Contextual support would help with understanding this complex interface.
4.5 **7. Analytics**	A good baseline standard of metrics is available.	Analytics a little fragmented with the need to go to separate areas for insights.
4 **8. Mobile & Frontline Support**	Highly configurable experiences mean that different groups of employees can access specialised content and information.	Out-of-the-box features for frontline workers are limited.



Omnia pages provide a clean and modern user experience.

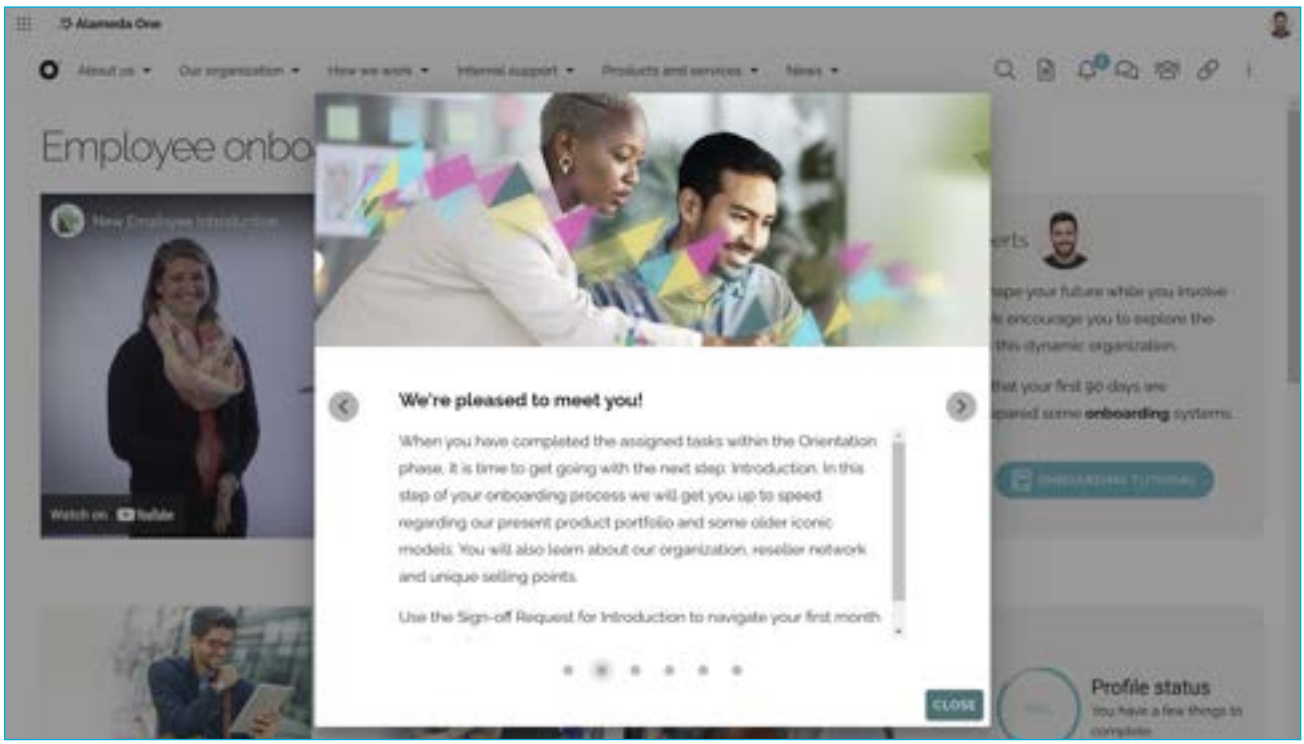
One of the standout features of Omnia is the user experience for employees and admins alike. It simply does not look like a 'typical' SharePoint-based intranet. Generally, the differences are improvements, and the overall impression is of a high quality and modern experience thanks to the use of clean design and clear layout of page widgets. Omnia has some striking options for how typical components are shown, such as news rollups and content cards, helping to differentiate various types of content and make them stand out on the page.

A 'Tutorial' feature is available to guide new employees in how to use the intranet via an overlay carousel. This can be configured to show on specific pages or sections and used to communicate the release of new features and updates. This sort of walkthrough is common on consumer sites and apps and it's good to see it available on Omnia, particularly as a SharePoint product. Other products enable specific web parts to be highlighted as part of the tour, which would be a nice addition.

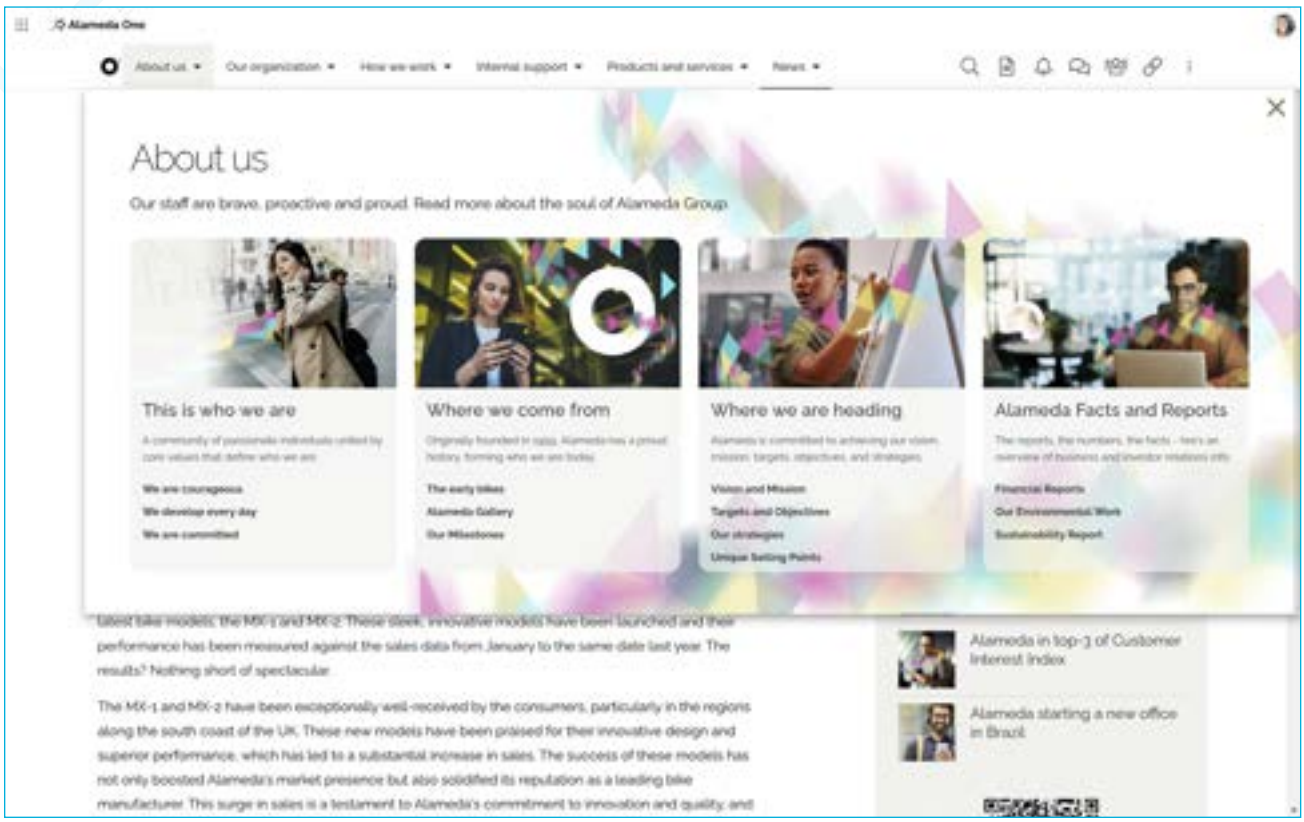
Navigation support is comprehensive; starting with the global navigation bar which is one-size-fits-all or targeted as needed, with menu items being simple text links, mega menu or image-tiles with description. We particularly like how these different styles can be combined to differentiate important or more complex structures. Alongside the typical curated navigation structure, menu items can be generated dynamically from a query, so new sections or content are included automatically as they are created. Omnia also supports footers which are intranet-wide or different for each business profile but are not currently audience targeted. There are personalised navigation elements that employees can configure such as 'my links' alongside recent documents and most used pages.

At page and site level, a breadcrumb navigation is available. This is built from the navigation structure but can be linked to business process steps instead (see Scenario 4). Sites and pages can have a navigation section on the left of the page to provide contextual links. Additionally, there are a number of on-page navigation aids, such as dynamically generated cards that link to a defined type of content page: office locations for example.

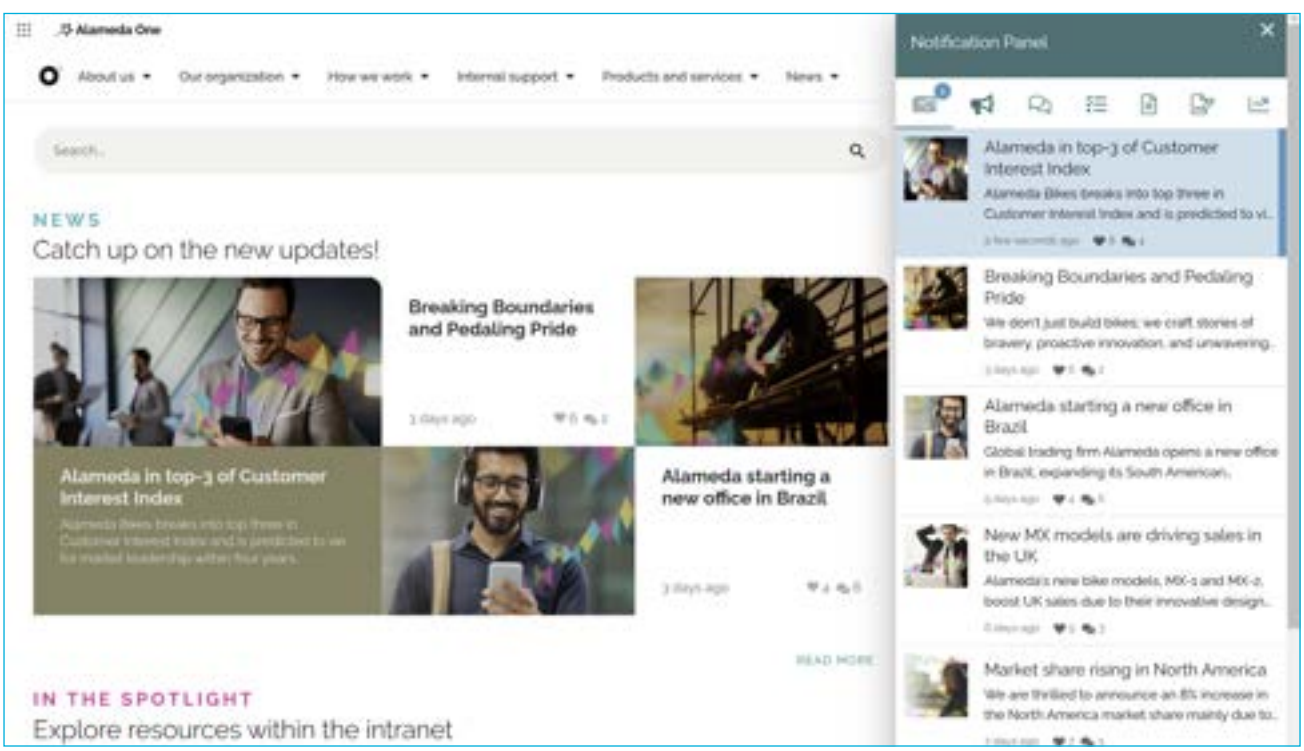
Omnia has a sophisticated notification panel, accessed via the familiar bell icon that shows how many items await attention. Notifications are divided into different types with tabs for news, alerts, community activity, tasks, sign-off requests and third-party integrations. This helps employees action the most important notifications but with so many activities potentially represented, this feature will need to be used with care to avoid overwhelming people.



The tutorial can be displayed for new employees or used to explain new features as they are released.



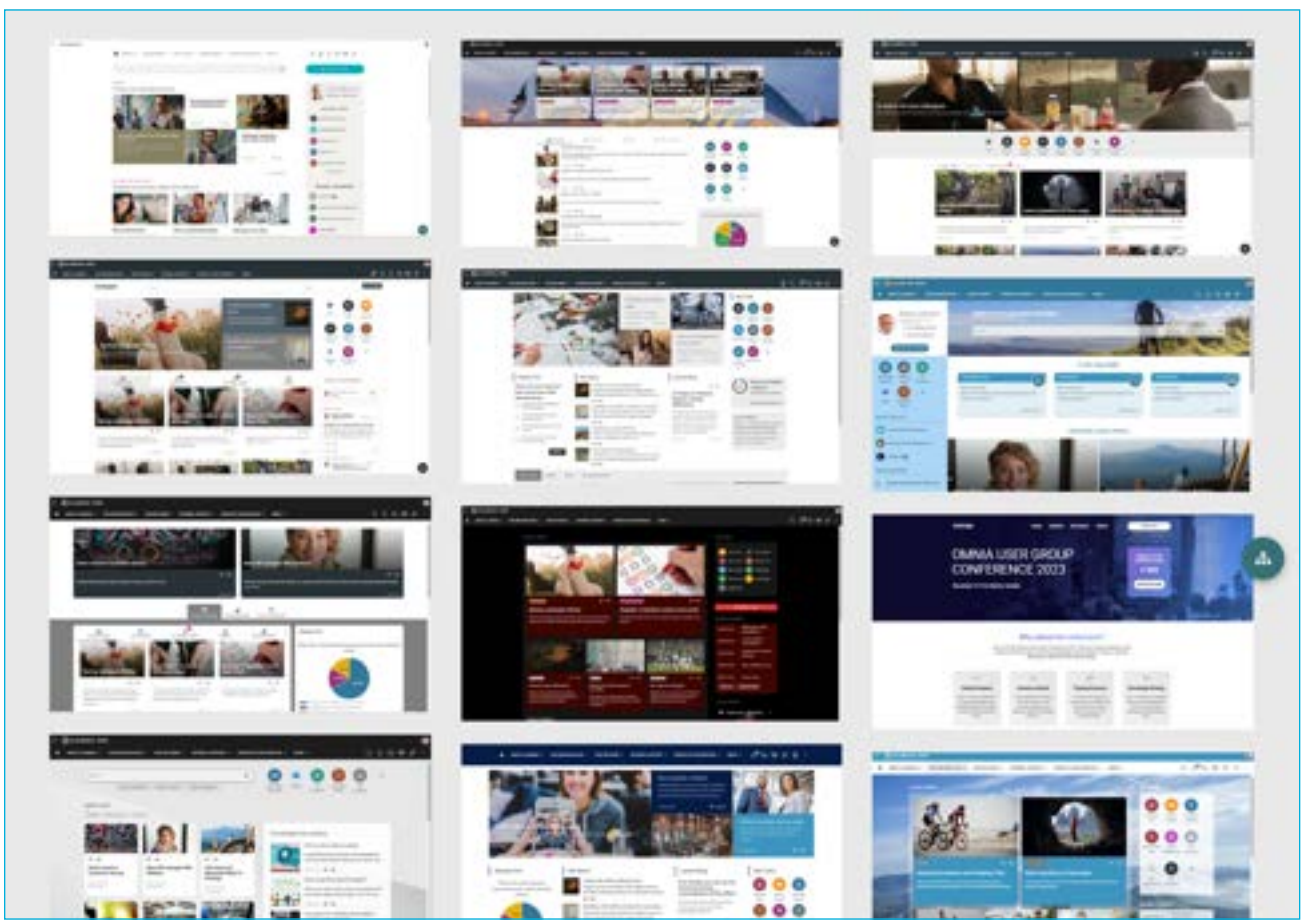
Example navigation showing an attractive image tile layout that provides additional context to the links for each section.



The notifications panel aggregates notifications relating to a broad range of Omnia and integrated applications while separate tabs help to manage clutter and priority. Note the attractive news 'hero' section as well.

Branding support in Omnia is comprehensive and a point of differentiation when compared with other SharePoint-based products. Like SharePoint, Omnia has a 'look book' of many different styles that can be copied and adapted to client needs. There is also a setup wizard that consultants can use as part of the implementation to help define brand elements. Branding can be applied to the whole intranet estate, including social communities. Multi-brand organisations are catered for with 'Business Profiles' that help divide the intranet into different sections that can have a completely different look. Branding uses the concept of Themes where colours and styles are defined centrally and then applied consistently to page elements and web parts.

Overall, Omnia provides a high quality, contemporary user experience which goes well beyond that offered by SharePoint. The quality extends across the site with flexible, widget driven layouts providing companies with a wealth of options for creating a compelling intranet.



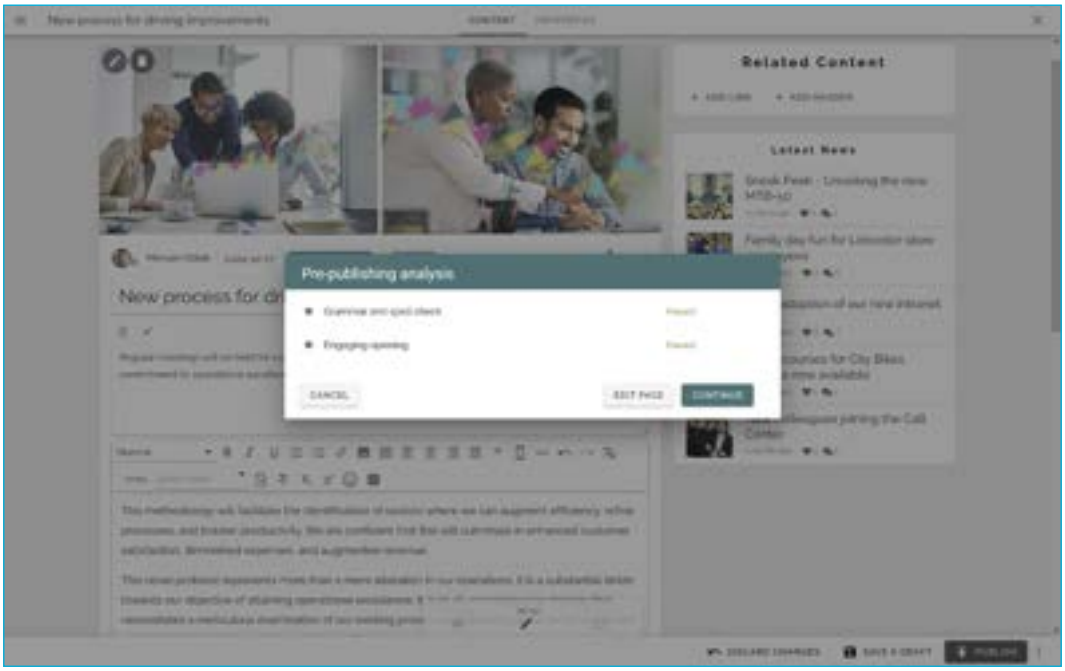
Some design examples from Omnia's look book.

An example Omnia news page. Note the automatically generated image gallery, related content, and interaction opportunities.

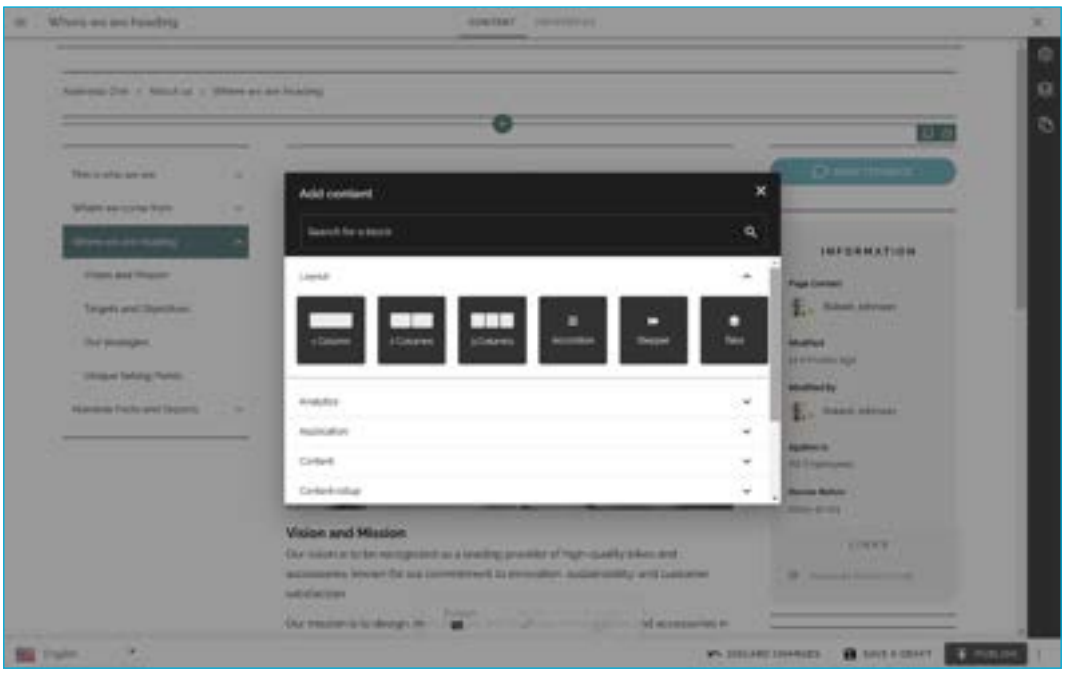
Omnia provides a mature process for content creation that supports expert-level 'editor' and occasional contributor 'author' roles equally well. Content pages are template-based with centrally managed templates used intranet-wide. Depending on the setup and permissions of the content creator, these templates can be fixed so that only text and media can be added (for the 'author' role), or they can be fully flexible so expert-level 'editor' roles can change layouts and add or remove components (called 'blocks' in Omnia). This will appeal to organisations that want to ensure consistency in the way content is displayed (see Scenario 6 for more). A recently added 'block gallery' enables admins to pre-select and preconfigure rollups consisting of multiple blocks. This makes it simpler for occasional publishers to take advantage of complex, targeted, and personalised block configurations without technical setup.

Content creators start a new page from their 'news hub' or a quick actions menu item. They are prompted to enter a title and can optionally auto-generate text and image content from a description. Using these features produced a passable article (using Azure OpenAI) and a slightly uncanny image typical of Dall-E. There is also an option for AI to automatically generate an article summary. We like the useful AI-powered publishing policy checker that can help with governance, such as GDPR compliance, and tone of voice. Omnia demonstrated how this feature also checks spelling, grammar, style, plus suggests improvements to make content better quality and more engaging for readers.

Editing page content benefits from a rich-text editor to help choose from the in-house styles for headings and body etc. Adding media is also straightforward with a picker to choose images or videos from a central 'media bank' for brand-approved content, Stream or external sources such as YouTube. Media can also be drag-and-dropped from the editor's files. The picker includes some nice touches like the ability to compress large images and image manipulation, such as cropping. Selecting multiple images automatically creates a gallery.

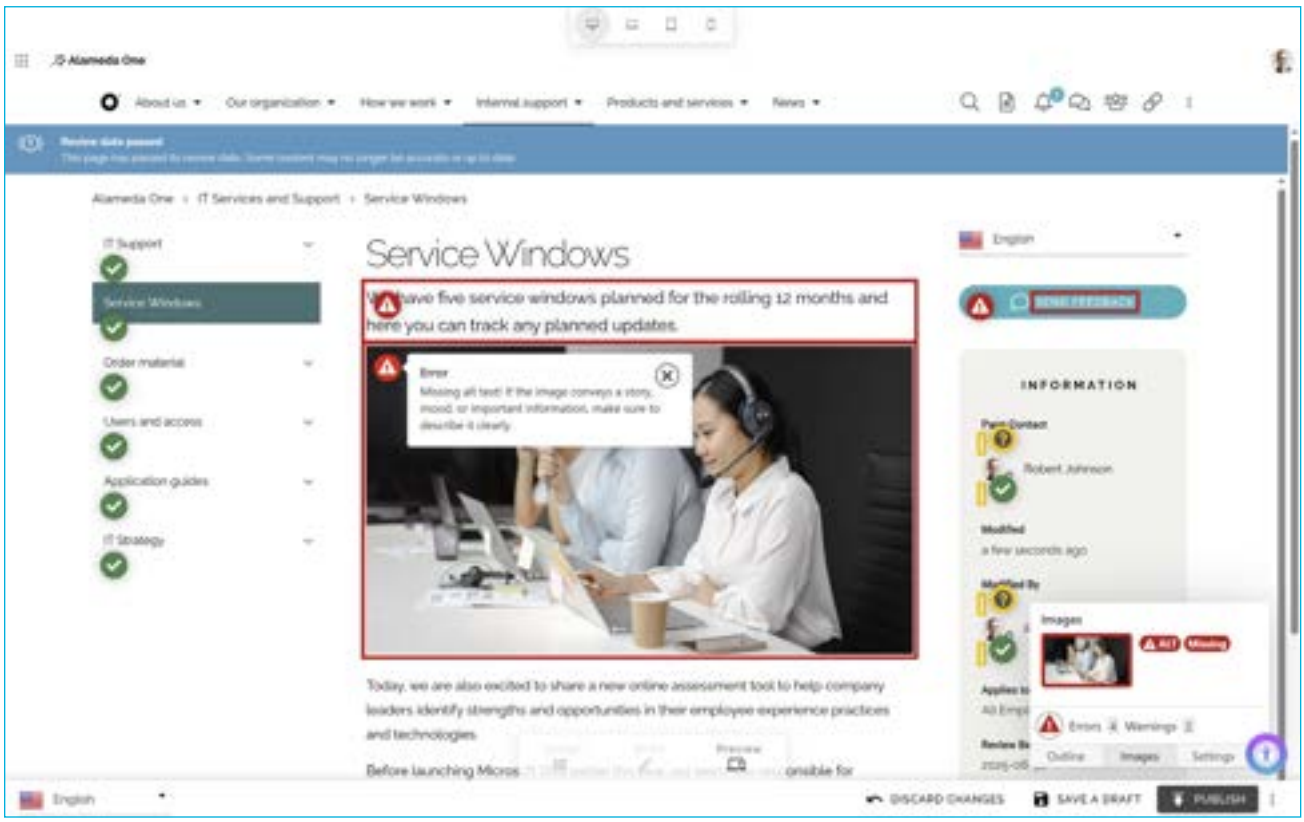


Omnia's OpenAI-powered publishing policy checking spelling and content style.



'Editors' have access to the page design view, giving them increased flexibility over content and page layout, in addition to the content authoring tools described.

The next step in the process prompts the content author to add metadata such as publishing date, content owner and audiences for targeting. This step also allows authors to select specific sites for publishing, associate an article with a campaign and choose other platforms for promotion such as Teams, Viva Engage and email. Finally, a page preview shows how the article will look on a range of devices. We really like the addition of an accessibility checker to the preview. This highlights a range of accessibility issues from incorrect heading tags through to poor contrast and missing alt-text for images. Publishing approval workflows are available and there is also the concept of channels, each of which has an owner who approves content before it is shown.

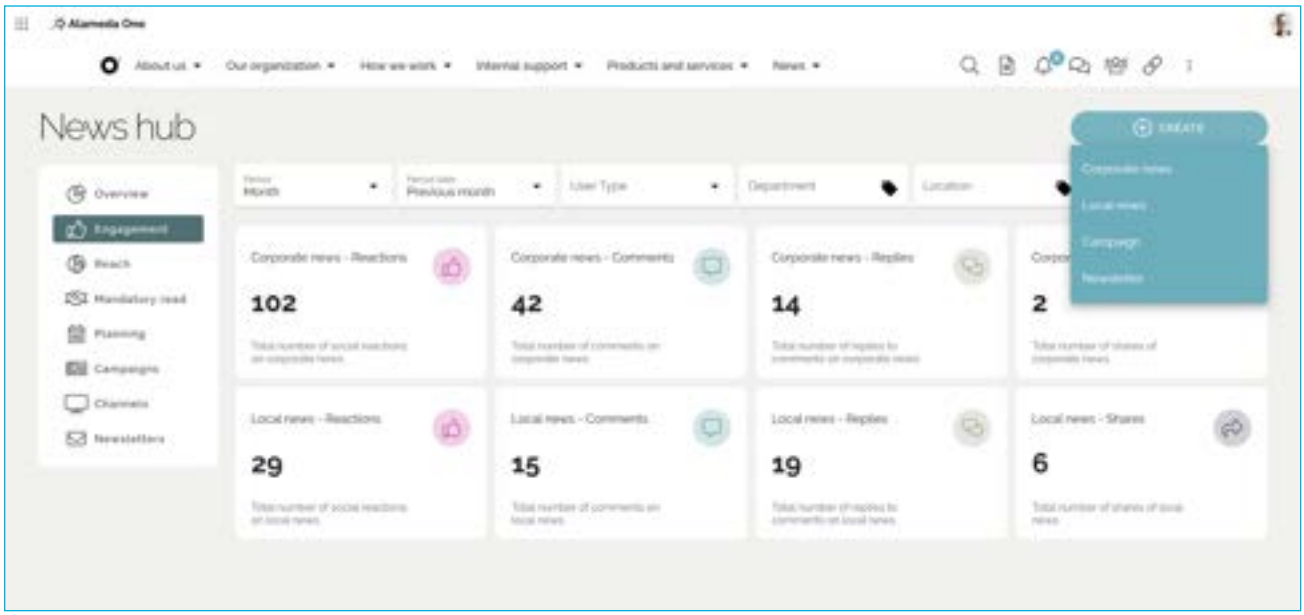


The accessibility checker highlights a range of issues including unexpected link behaviour and provides simulation of various types of colour vision deficiency.

Audience targeting is sophisticated, using any user profile properties including organisation, location, topic, role and application. These properties can be populated from Entra, SharePoint and Omnia user profiles. They can also be subscription-based, enabling employees to opt-in / out via profile settings. Targeting can then be applied to most areas including content blocks, pages, documents and navigation. Rule-based dynamic audiences, such as a 'new hires' group based on a start date, are not natively supported in Omnia, but can be achieved by using dynamic membership groups available with some Microsoft Entra licenses.

The 'News Hub' provides a dashboard of news content organised into groups such as corporate, local, draft etc. There is also a calendar view showing when articles will be published, with colour coding and icons to differentiate content types, while clicking on an article shows a preview. Clicking on a blank space in the calendar gives the opportunity to create an article to fill the gap. Omnia also supports organising content into campaigns. In practice, this is simply another piece of metadata, but it provides another useful dimension to help organise, manage and measure how content is being used.

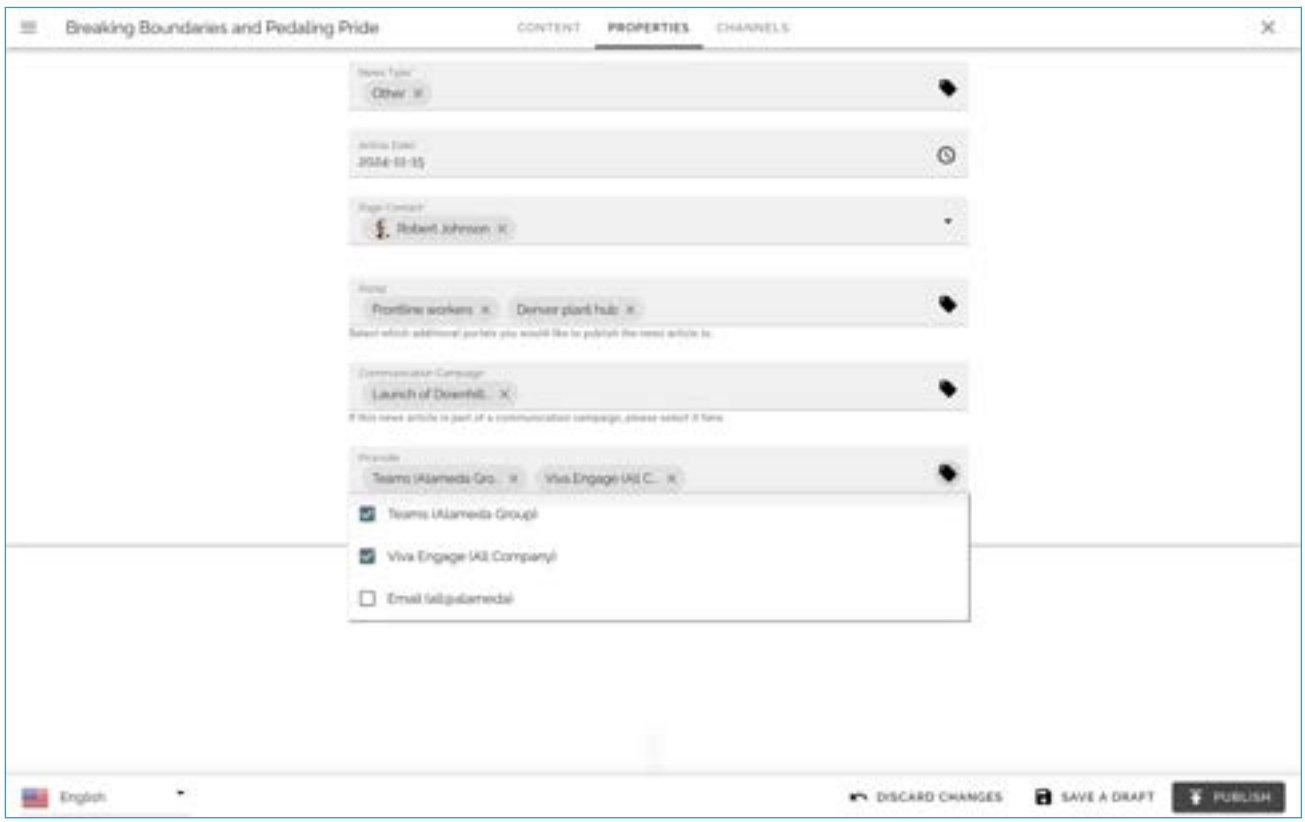
Urgent communications are handled using schedulable 'announcement' banners. These show across the whole intranet or for individual Business Profiles and in a variety of colours, depending on the type of issue. Announcements can be targeted to specific locations or organisational groups, with a push notification sent via the mobile app. Unusually, announcements have an option for comments from employees. Messages can also be dismissed once read.



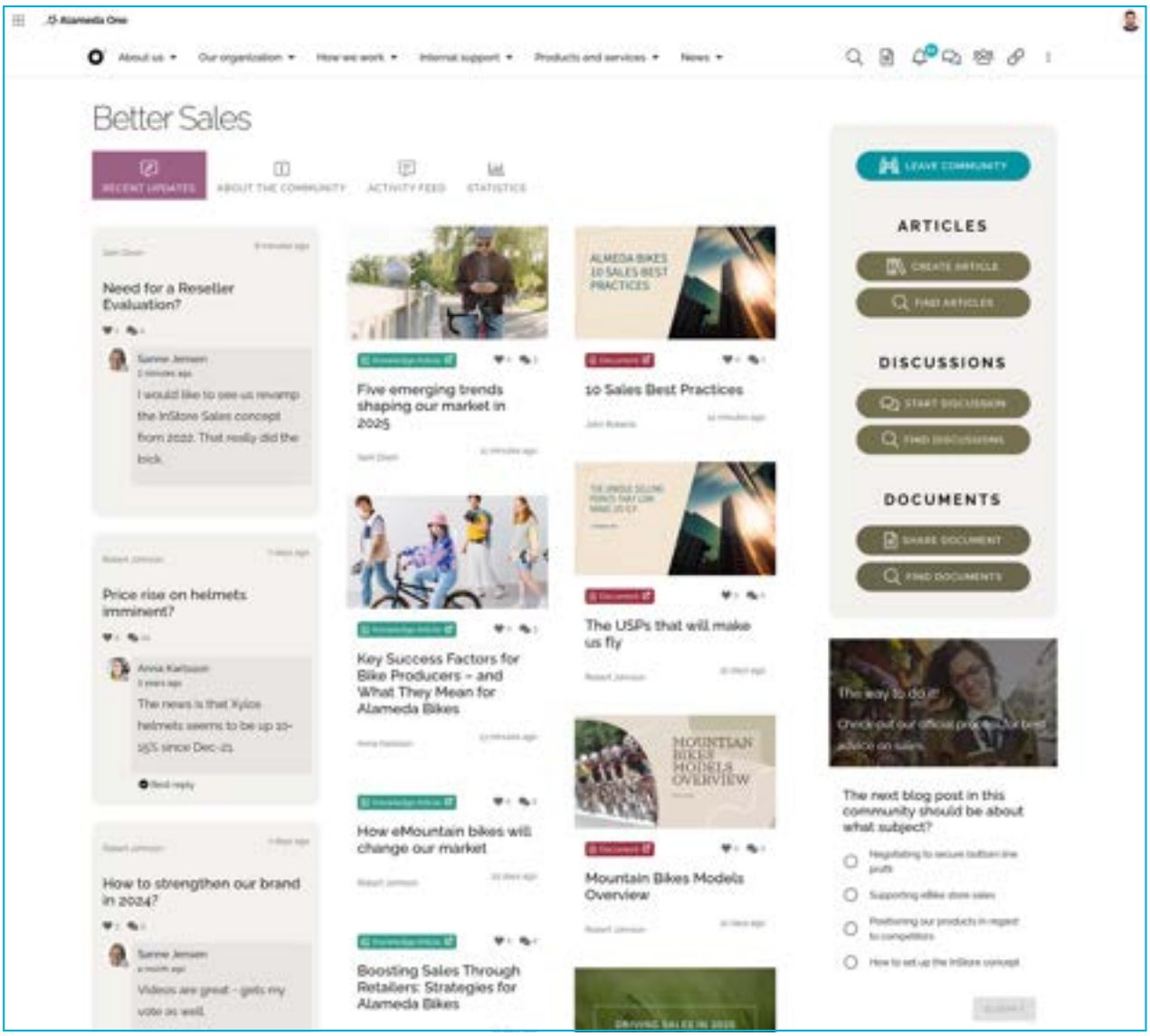
The News Hub is the central place for news and provides access to a variety of planning and management tools.

Omnia provides some support for multichannel publishing. Rules can be set up so that content meeting a set of criteria gets republished in other parts of the intranet, such as a specific site for frontline workers. Full news articles can be sent via email or to Viva Engage. Alternatively a teaser message can cross promote content via Teams, Viva Engage and email. Omnia has simple support for digital signage where screens / locations reuse intranet content based on a query, or specific page layouts can be set up. Any smart TV with a browser can then be pointed at the specific URL for that location. More sophisticated solutions can be provided via partners. Finally, Omnia includes basic email newsletter support; this is a special type of page template that gives the option to send the content by email when published. However, Omnia is working on a new version of its newsletter builder.

Overall, Omnia delivers robust content publishing tools, balancing simplicity and ease of use for occasional contributors with the flexibility needed by expert users. The core content publishing capabilities are well-featured and flexible enough to meet many large organisation needs for managing content and communications in a complex, distributed environment.



Content metadata including ownership, publishing channels and targeting audiences is added on the properties tab. Note the 'Promote' drop-down that can send teaser messages in Teams, Viva Engage and email.



A community home page showing discussions, documents and knowledge articles.

Omnia's engagement features are well-rounded overall, covering a wide range of people-oriented capabilities including communities, comments, reactions, surveys, learning and recognising colleagues. Naturally these all benefit from Omnia's integrated targeting and branding, which will appeal to organisations that want a more consistent experience across published and community aspects of their intranet.

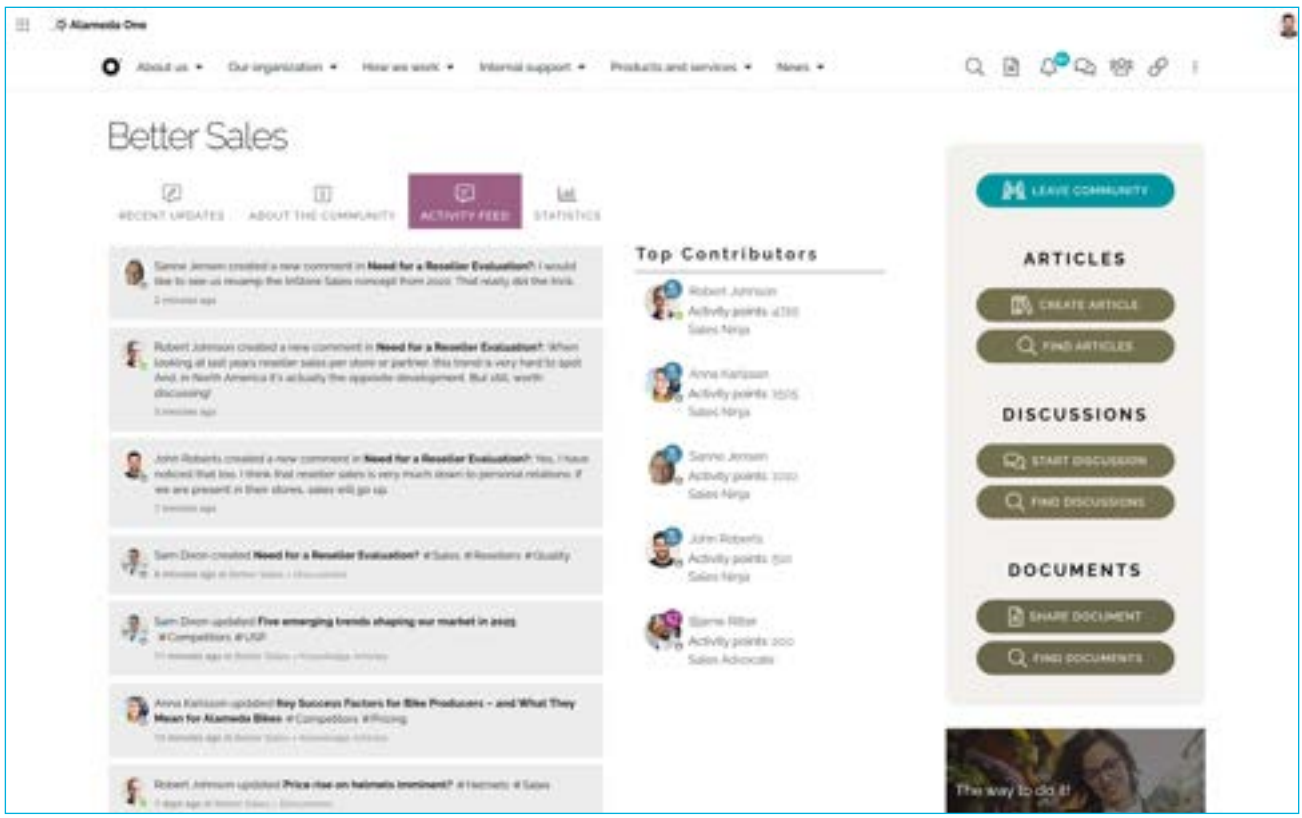
Communities are oriented around knowledge sharing and social use cases. There are templates for sharing information in groups with specific interests via knowledge articles, documents and discussions. There is no template for idea generation communities as standard. Out of the box, anyone can follow and join communities although some customers have chosen to set permissions to restrict access.

It's straightforward to contribute to a community, starting or replying to a discussion topic, sharing a document or creating a knowledge article. The latter provides a simple text editor interface that benefits from an easy-to-use 'bookmark' or anchor link feature to help navigate longer articles or break a page into sections. Discussion posts and replies offer a range of reactions such as like, love, surprised, sad.

All community content can be star-rated to help identify the most useful information, while top contributors get badges that show on their profile. Knowledge communities can be set up to show subject matter experts based on profile information. Communities have moderators to help keep the community on track and they can edit or remove content, including comments, which can be flagged for moderation. Community knowledge articles can also benefit from the automated review features described in Scenario 6. One useful feature is a statistics dashboard available to the community that gives a sense of how active and healthy it is.

Published content offers the same range of engagement options as community posts, meaning employees can comment, use a range of reactions (like, love etc.), @mention colleagues in comments, and share to Microsoft Teams, Viva Engage or over email. Employees can also give feedback on the page via a short form. Helpfully, this shows the name of the person feedback will go to, giving some reassurance that it will be noticed. The page contact then receives an email and sees feedback on the relevant page.

Omnia has its own capable forms and survey tool with fairly sophisticated options for setting up a variety of question types. The tool gives an overview of results / responses, but detailed analysis or processing would need to be done via an Excel export. Quick polls are also available, and Omnia provides an easy-to-use interface for doing this on any page. Editors simply set a question and response options, including an optional start and end date. A nice touch is that the poll automatically goes into the mobile app feed, so it's easily found there. People who submit an answer see the results so far.

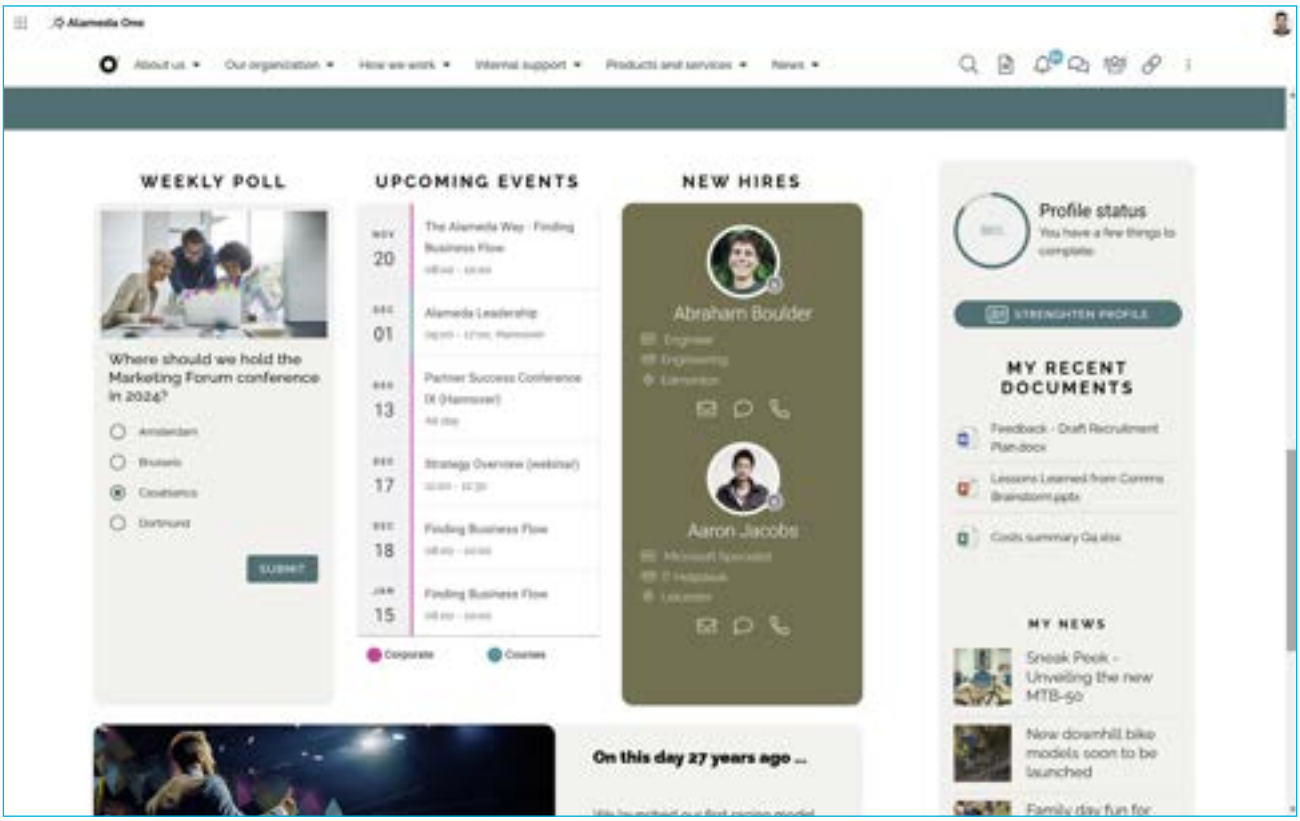


The activity feed shows latest updates across the community's content and the top contributors.

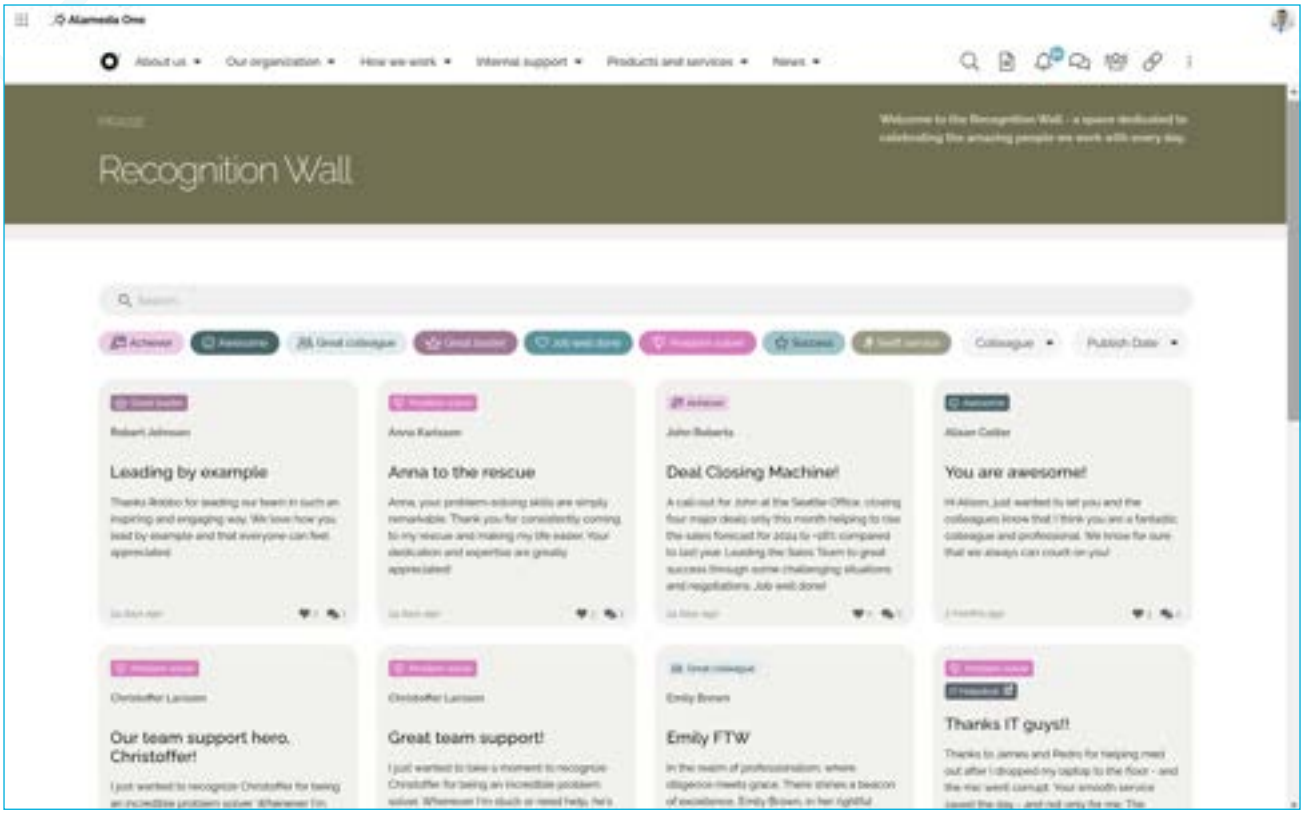
Omnia has several other people-oriented features. We particularly like the 'welcome' block that gives a named greeting and helps to highlight the personalised nature of the intranet. Another block uses profile data to show employee birthdays, new hires (see the screenshot below) or service milestones. Employees can 'Praise' a colleague or department using themes that are configured for clients to reflect company values or other campaigns. Praise is shown on a 'recognition wall' where colleagues can comment and like. Omnia is working on notifying Praise recipients via email which would be a welcome addition.

Finally in this area, Omnia provides good support for learning and employee onboarding with some useful features. The 'Learning Centre' provides self-service courses with a mix of text and video content being delivered. It also provides the option to sign up for live training events, with the event added to Outlook calendar. The forms functionality can also be used to conduct a post-course knowledge check, with the tool providing real-time feedback on whether people got the answers right or wrong. Completed courses are then added to the employee's profile as wanted. See Scenario 4 for information regarding integrations into the Learning Centre.

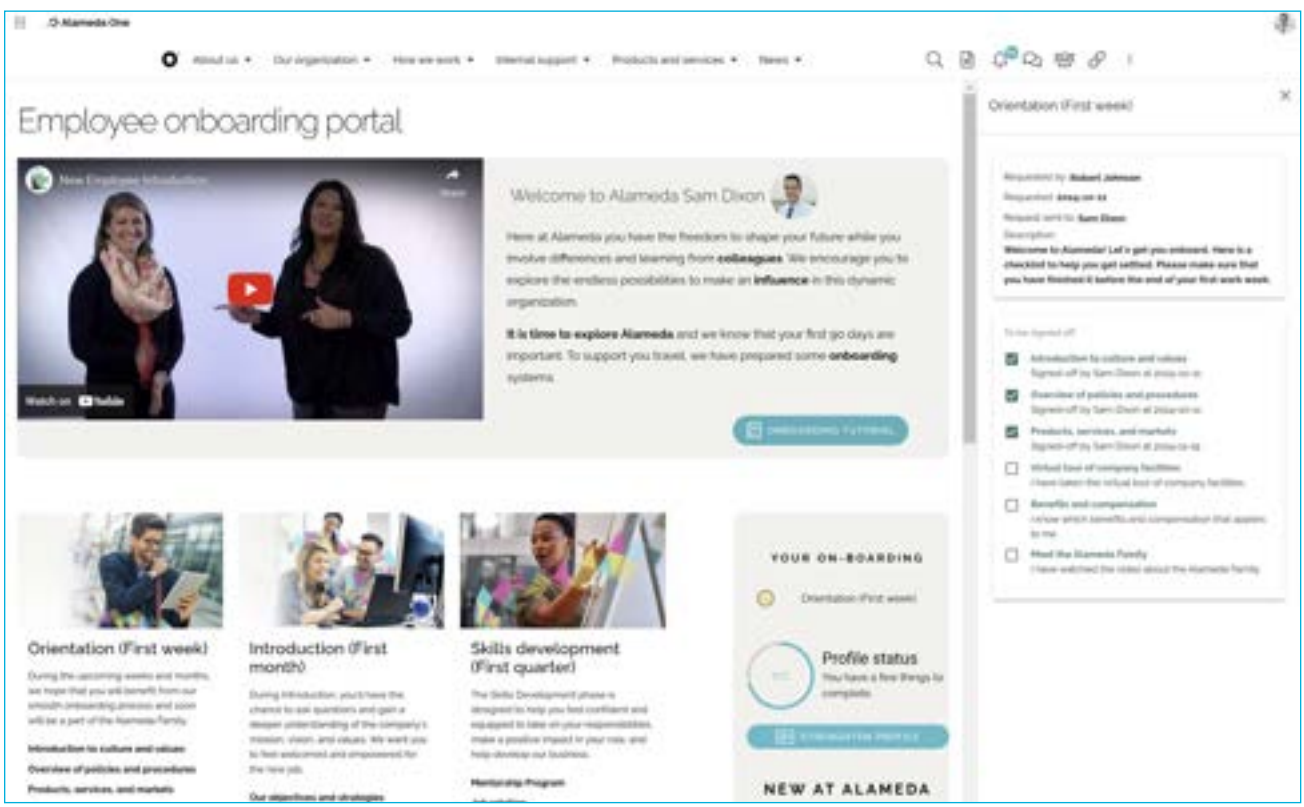
The 'Onboarding Portal' provides welcome messages and videos targeted at new employees. We particularly like that Omnia integrates the sign-off requests feature so that employees get a list of tasks they need to complete which they can tick off once done. We think combining the Portal with the Learning Centre could provide a great first impression for new employees.



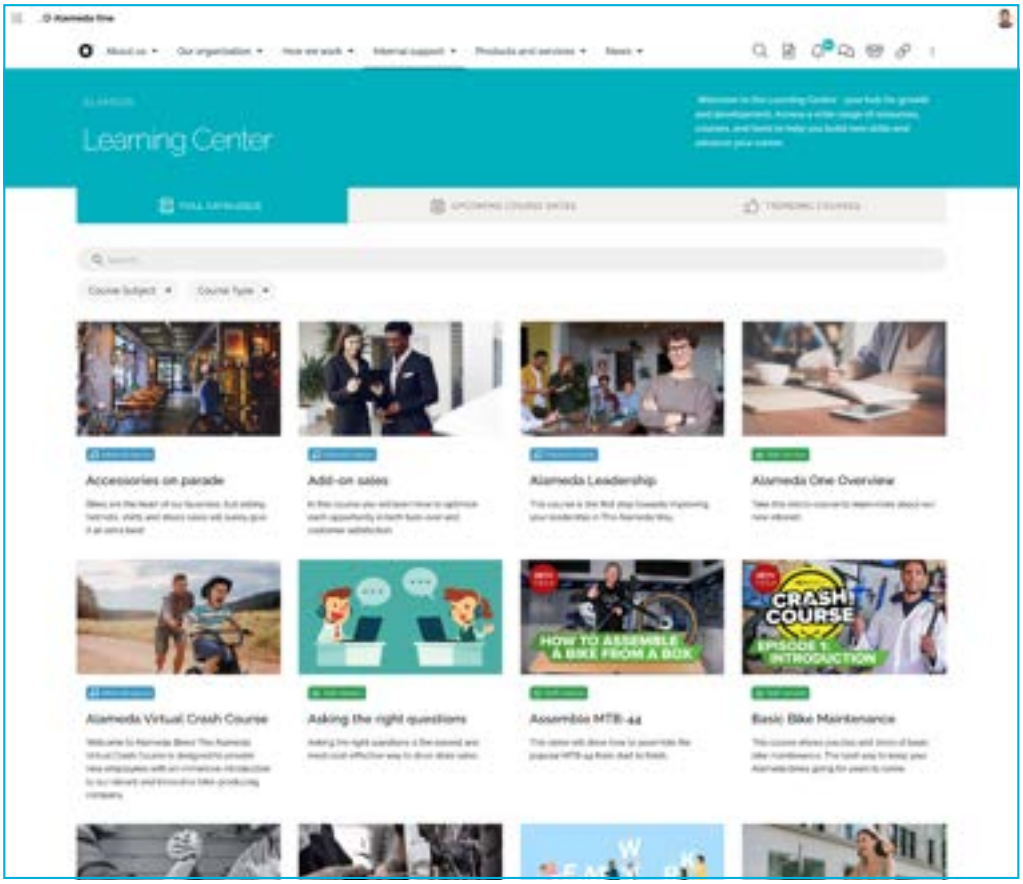
The quick poll provides a simple opportunity for engagement and feedback. Also note the dynamically generated 'New Hires' and personalised 'profile status' components.



The recognition wall shows employees that have been praised for going the extra mile, with themes reflecting company values or campaigns.



The Onboarding Portal provides essential information for new employees and a checklist of tasks to complete.



Omnia's Learning Centre featuring an integration with SAP Success Factors for self-serve training modules.

Omnia provides a good level of support for integrations with third-party applications, and Microsoft 365-connected functionality is particularly rich. The range of third-party integrations is a little limited out-of-the box, both in range and functionality, but these can be extended.

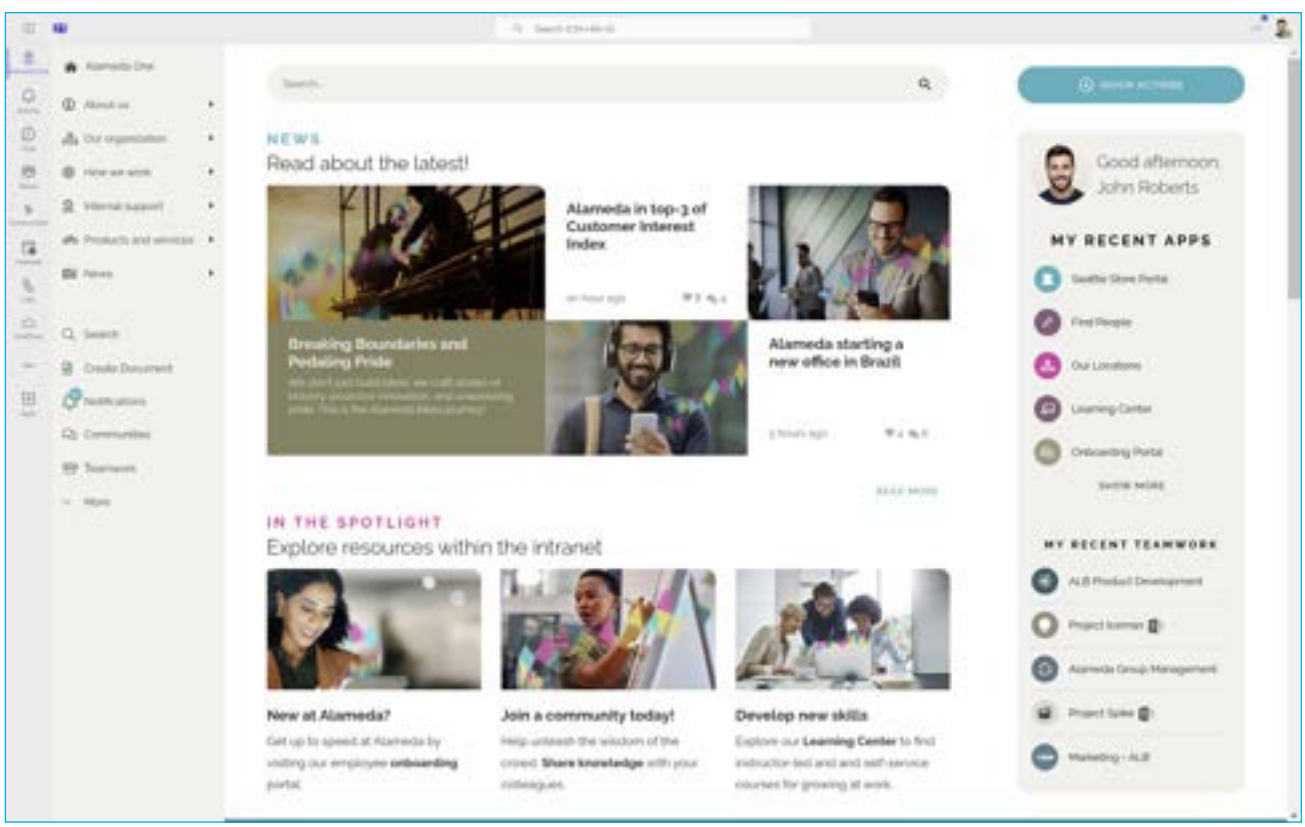
The primary way third-party applications are integrated is via the notification panel. Omnia has a dedicated notification type within the panel where activity and tasks from these applications can be surfaced. Omnia comes with out-of-the-box connectors for popular cloud services such as ServiceNow, Workday, Jira and SAP SuccessFactors. Typically, these connectors provide one-way notifications of activity that employees use to go to the source application to complete tasks, such as approving requests. Clients often extend the integration to provide two-way functionality, so that a request could be approved within Omnia itself and passed to the source system. The product is extensible with its own documented OmniaFX Framework that clients and consultants have access to.

Other integrations include one with Workday that can be used to create frontline worker accounts (see Scenario 8 for more). Another with SAP Success Factors surfaces training modules in Omnia's Learning Centre. There are some simple yet helpful integrations too. For example, alongside the external media integrations discussed in Scenario 2, employees can also add links to applications they use frequently from a curated list.

Microsoft 365 integrations are useful and numerous, with several covered in other scenarios (see Scenario 2 for cross-channel publishing and Scenario 5 for federated search). Omnia can

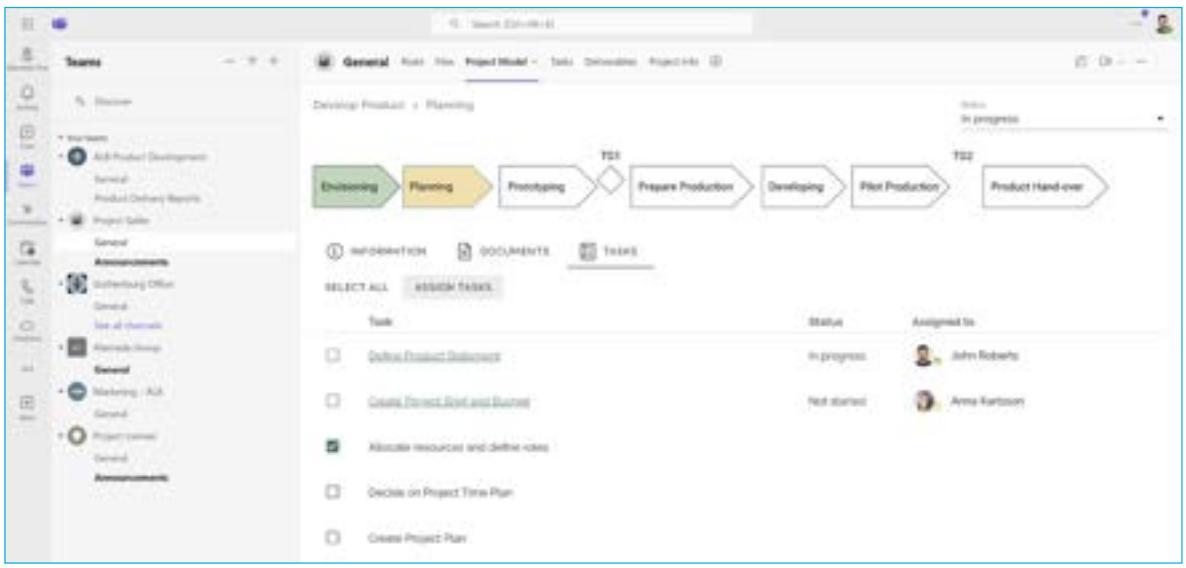
surface a range of information relating to the individual employee into web parts, such as recent documents, tasks and calendar events, so admins could create a 'My Page' approach if wanted. Another nice feature is a centrally controlled template store for PowerPoint, Word etc. documents that makes it easy for employees to use 'official' templates. PowerApps can also be included in Omnia pages via a dedicated component, easily surfacing their functionality within the context of the intranet. Omnia now has native support for Microsoft Lists as well. This enables lists to be displayed seamlessly alongside other content and benefit from the consistent Omnia user experience.

There is an especially rich integration with Microsoft Teams that includes bringing Omnia functionality into Teams, as well as helping organisations with Teams governance. The Teams app generator provides a wizard-style interface that enables admins to bring the whole intranet or specific Omnia functions into Teams. Omnia demonstrated their project process management tool in Teams as an example. This brings a templated structure to project and process management, covering information about the process, documentation and tasks relating to each step in the process. These tasks are integrated with Planner, enabling management of the process from within the Omnia app, or within Planner as needed.

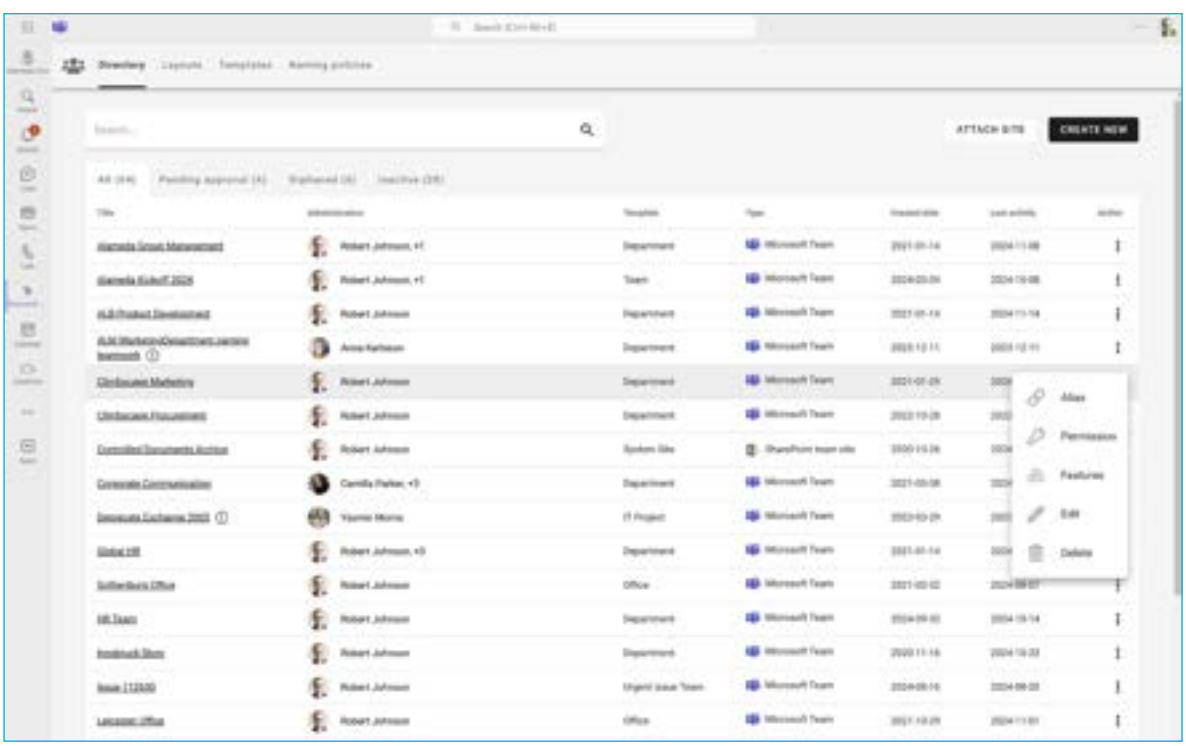


The full Omnia intranet experience in Teams. Note the global navigation is configured to display on the left in keeping with Teams conventions.

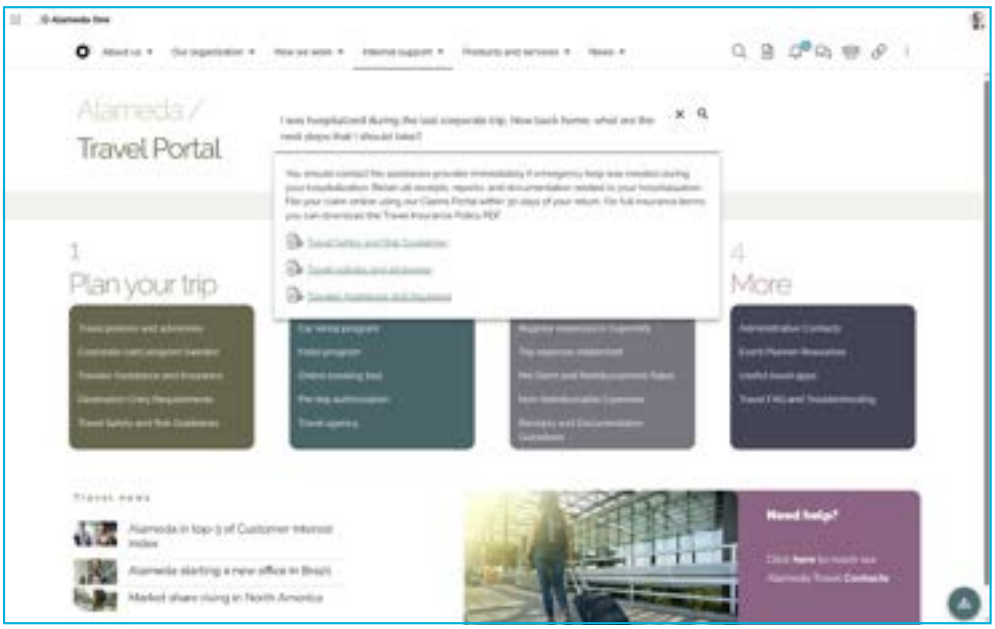
Potentially even more useful is Omnia's teamwork governance feature. This provides a templated process to support various collaboration scenarios with Teams, Viva Engage or SharePoint team sites. After choosing a template, admins are walked through the information needed to provision what they want to include in the teamwork space, such as who needs access before it is created. Importantly, this tool also helps to keep track of these collaborative sites with a directory listing that shows information covering ownership, status and activity to help with ongoing management.



Omnia components such as this project template can be deployed as applications in the context of Microsoft Teams.



Omnia's teamwork governance provides a template-based approach to setting up collaborative tools and a directory to help with ongoing management.



Omnia semantic search is client-configurable to provide answers from specific content repositories thereby maintaining quality.

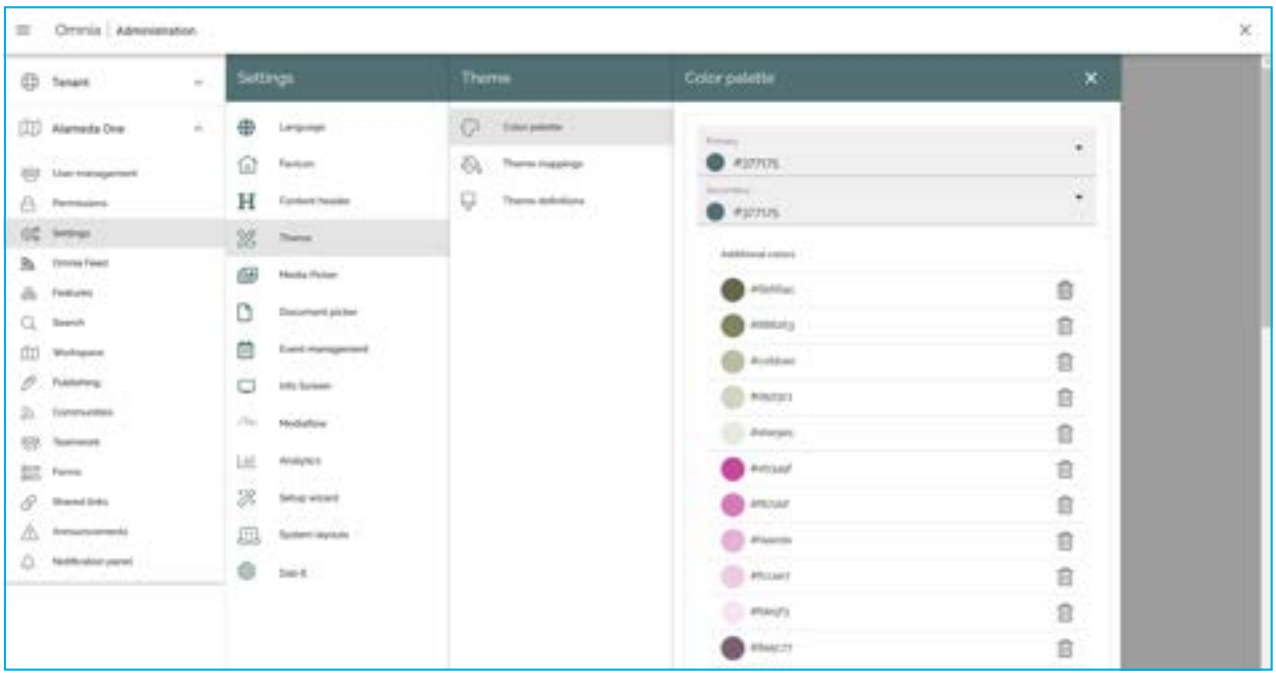
Omnia's search is comprehensive and well-featured. Using the 'quick search' bar returns results as you type, including suggested spelling corrections, with results segmented by content type. Results in an 'Advanced Search' screen are well presented, following a familiar tabbed 'verticals' layout for different content types and context-sensitive filters on the left. Usefully, there's the option to provide feedback on results.

Omnia's 'semantic search' uses AI to support natural language queries, so search 'understands' more about context and intent. Semantic search generates answers to questions along with links to reference documents. Sensibly, the use of this search is restricted to 'Official' content in Omnia, only providing answers from authoritative documents. Clients can configure multiple instances of the semantic search tool, so they can create 'agents' for specific areas such as the employee handbook. Semantic search uses Azure OpenAI services with support for other LLMs on the roadmap.

People are shown in results and benefit from the same predictive search and suggested corrections. A dedicated people directory has a variety of filters in addition to search. All profile fields are searchable and data can be populated from Entra, SharePoint and Omnia profile information. Pop-up profile cards display the person's details including contact information, an explorable org chart, courses completed, community contributions and praise received.

Search is powered by SharePoint Search and Microsoft Search, although Omnia says it's possible to integrate an alternative search provider. Omnia also benefits from the fairly comprehensive support for crawling other systems via Copilot Connectors. It's worth noting that Microsoft Search features such as Acronyms and Bookmarks are not available. However, Omnia's 'Promoted results' are an effective alternative to Bookmarks and support audience targeting. A dedicated 'search admin' role has various tools to manage the search experience, such as to configure search refiners; however, some tools are aimed at more technical roles, such as access to detailed query code.

Omnia has a structured way of handling 'official' information such as policies or work instructions. When these kinds of documents are created, approval rules are followed using templates that include review cycles. These processes can be applied to both documents and published pages and help to maintain quality information that can then be relied upon for the semantic search.



Administrators have centralised, but fine-grained, control over settings across the intranet.

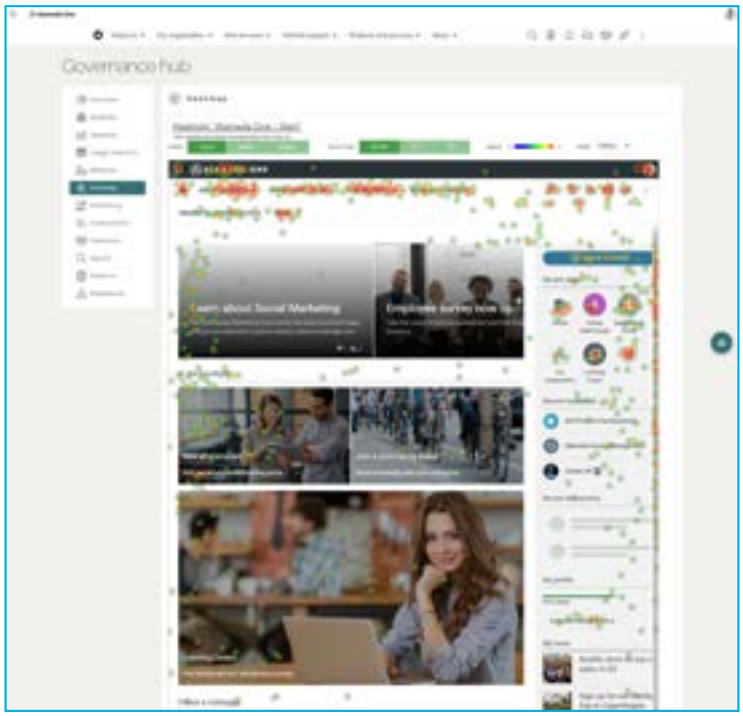
Omnia is highly configurable, with the administration settings organised into a comprehensive structure of menus and controls. Some of this is simplified by user permissions, so admins only see what they are allowed to manage. There are three main roles: Tenant Administrator, Business Profile Administrator and App Administrator (publishing, community, teamwork etc), with additional permissions for editors and authors at the app level. There is documentation for the admin interface, but we feel that some elements could benefit from contextual help in the form of written instructions or how-to videos. Omnia does a good job of simplifying many admin tasks but there are some, such as managing the term store, which still use the standard SharePoint interface.

Business Profiles help manage devolved branding, navigation, roles and access rights across the intranet. Each Profile has its own workspace for managing landing pages which, like the home page, are customisable using content blocks and widgets. Page templates are centrally managed but easily applied to different sites, which is a significant improvement over SharePoint. While the admin interface is less user-friendly than other systems, it is powerful, supporting different layouts for various devices.

Omnia provides comprehensive content management and life cycle features. Admins can make bulk changes to content, such as page owner, using a simple but powerful search-based interface. There are configurable workflows for page review, archive and deletion. Page owners are emailed before the review date and if a page passes the review date without being updated, a page-top banner can warn visitors. Alternatively, it can be replaced with a 'suspended' page that shows the description and content owner to contact. Page deletion can be set to go through an approvals process as well.

Omnia includes a dozen system languages per business profile and allows admins to customise labels. There are two translation options for published content: assigning a variation author for manual translations or using machine translation. While machine-translated pages display a disclaimer, more features for multilingual users, like auto-translation of comments and replies, would be helpful.

A 'Media Bank' feature rolls up multimedia content stored in SharePoint and makes it easy to access brand-approved media. Editors access this via the picker covered in Scenario 2, while employees can access a special page that enables them to filter by format, type and theme.



Omnia's analytics include detailed insights into user behaviour alongside content usage and engagement.

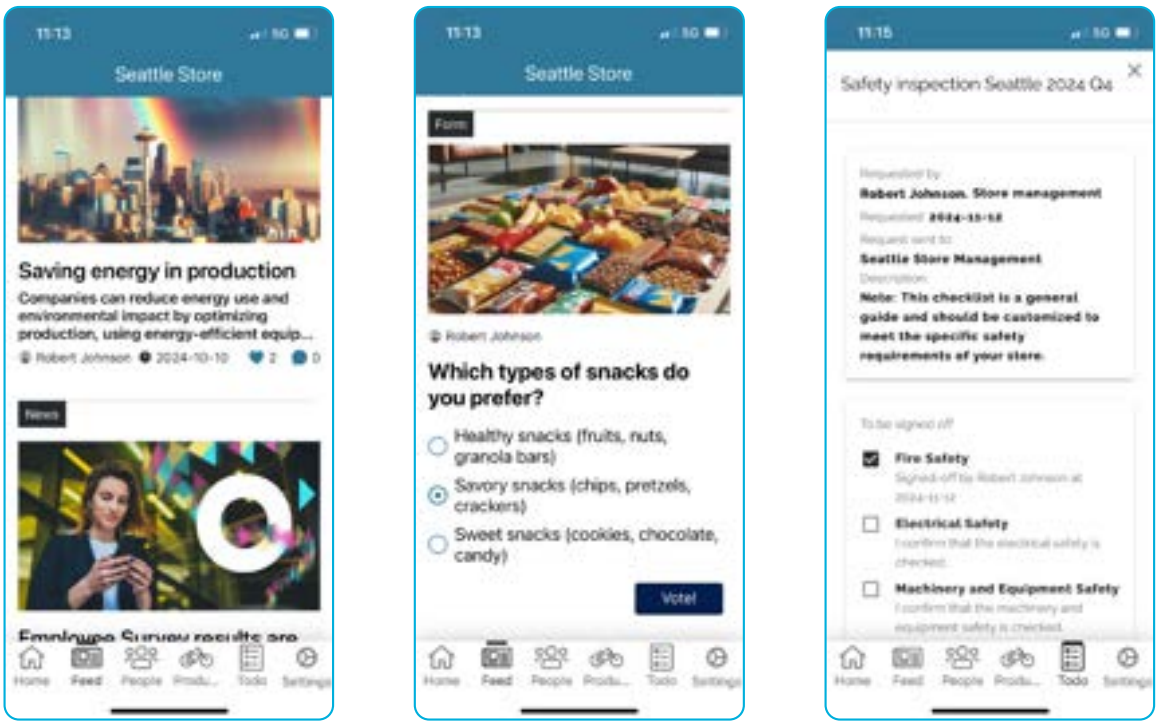
Omnia's analytics offering is good and will meet the needs of many organisations. The most recent updates in mid-2025 have added an 'engagement' dashboard showing reactions, comments and shares as well as adding tracking for the creation and completion of polls. An easy-to-use interface has been added to enable and give names to the different kinds of activities (like, react, share etc) that can be tracked. Further dashboards can be created by consultants or power users, which are edited using the same interface as the more advanced publishing toolset.

Analytics is accessed via the Governance Hub where a dashboard provides top-level measurement of intranet traffic (visits, interactions, top pages etc). It's simple to change the period and there are graphs of activity over time. A powerful feature is the ability to filter by employee profile to drill down to specific audiences based on department or location. The 'Adoption' view provides a comparison of activity across these different segments. The real-time visits 'globe' view may be of limited utility but there's a nice 'colleagues online right now' widget that would be engaging if added to the home page.

'Usage statistics' provides a table of pages that can be sorted by most views, visits, dwell time etc. but publishers will need to go to the separate News Hub to get a sense of engagement with content. This only gives a summary, rather than engagement by page, although Omnia said this could be added easily. Helpfully, 'reach' gives a sense of what percentage of the potential audience has viewed an article. Detailed employee behaviour can be analysed with a 'user journey tracker' and a 'heatmap' to show where people mouse over and click on landing pages.

Mandatory reads are fully supported via sign-off requests, where targeted messages are sent with a notification. Various actions, such as reading a document, are tracked and ticked off a list. There is central reporting of these requests to track progress, where results can be downloaded, and reminders issued.

Search analytics help search managers monitor and improve search performance. Reports cover top searches, top abandoned searches (where no result link was clicked) and top searches with no results. Usefully, top searches also tracks where the employee searched from and where they 'refined' their search, which can help with search experience optimisation.



Omnia's mobile app provides access to the whole intranet but can also be configured to provide a tailored experience for frontline workers, giving simplified access to key tools.

Omnia is a fully responsive platform but also offers native mobile apps and, at extra cost for professional services, a white-label custom-branded option. It supports various authentication methods, including Entra ID, but accounts can also be created and managed in Omnia, which is unusual for a SharePoint-based platform. Even more usefully, this management capability can be devolved to security groups. So, a local manager of a shop or warehouse can add and remove employee access as needed; time-limited accounts can remove contingent workers automatically. New employees can also self-register via a QR code and be directed to an onboarding page on their first login. Subsequent logins can be via password, one-time password (via authenticator app) or one-time email link. There is currently no biometric access, but Omnia say they are working on this.

The app provides full access to Omnia's intranet and can be set up per Business Profile to offer employees a tailored experience based on role, location or function. Features like simplified menus, alternative branding and mobile-friendly tools allow for highly tailored setups. Tabs can be used on the home page to organise features such as quick links, while the 'Feed' is customisable to include news, mandatory reads or community posts.

Omnia components can be specially packaged in the app to provide support for frontline workers. We like the product catalogue and task management via 'Sign-off requests' that are linked to checklists and further resources. However, with the unique (amongst SharePoint platforms) flexible account management, offering more features for the frontline feels like an area of opportunity for Omnia.

Admins can configure layouts, feeds, navigation and audience targeting, as well as optimise the app for different devices. The overall design is clear and functional, particularly for a product based on SharePoint, although there is some room for improvement as it doesn't look as sleek as other apps in this report. Nonetheless, Omnia does a great job of configuring a flexible blend of information and services for mobile audiences.

THINGS TO BEAR IN MIND

Omnia is a powerful, highly configurable and extensible product that can provide a simple intranet or be the foundation for a broader digital workplace. The flipside of this flexibility is the temptation to customise everything, which could be a time-consuming and costly path to follow; particularly as it is likely to need skilled consultants that must be chosen carefully to ensure competence and a good cultural fit with your organisation. This is in addition to SharePoint and M365 resources that a client is likely to have already, as some of the more technical administrative tasks must be completed there.

Out of the box, third-party integrations are fairly limited. Popular cloud platforms, including ServiceNow, Workday and Jira, have connectors available but the standard capability is generally limited to 'read-only' notifications and display of information. Customers that want more interaction or two-way integrations may need to build further functionality to meet their needs.

Omnia acquired former competitor LiveTiles in June 2024, and the benefits and impact are still emerging. In the demo we saw the first improvements in the new semantic search feature. Omnia plans to integrate more LiveTiles features, including its excellent people directory, while also using LiveTiles expertise to improve the mobile experience and chat. Hopefully Omnia will keep customers and prospects well informed regarding the roadmap and reduce surprises to a minimum.

The appealing price for all the functionality offered in this top-tier product is worth mentioning, although the costs indicated in this report exclude those associated with implementation partners. However, for organisations that want a high degree of flexibility and control with their intranet development, Omnia is certainly a solution worth considering.

Why choose this product

Omnia provides a powerful platform for developing a highly personalised and engaging intranet experience across desktop and mobile devices. It benefits from close integration with M365 but is not constrained by some of SharePoint's shortcomings when it comes to design, page templates and mobile access. Omnia will appeal to medium to large organisations that want to provide a rich, targeted experience to their employees on any device.

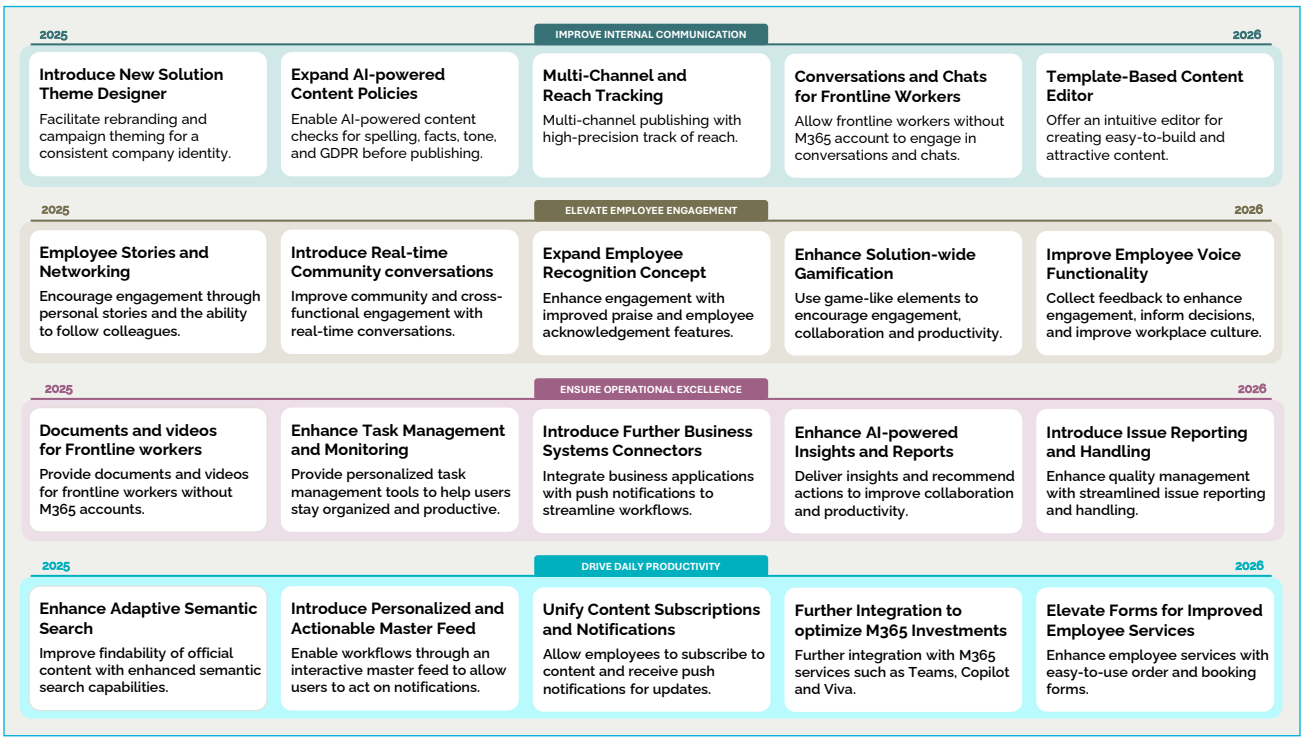
You may also be interested in...

akumina®

opentext™ OneSource Digital Communication Suite

Powell

Vendor roadmap



Roadmap image provided by Omnia Digital Workplace.

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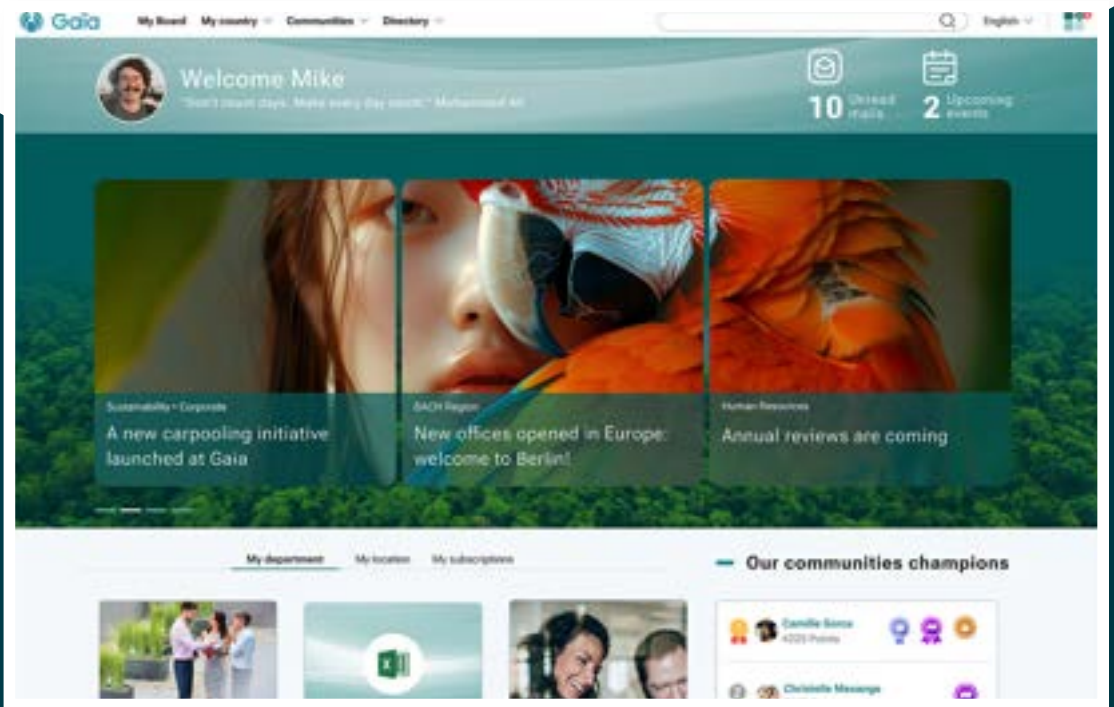
Powell

FULLY STANDALONE

REQUIRES SHAREPOINT

FRONTLINE FOCUS

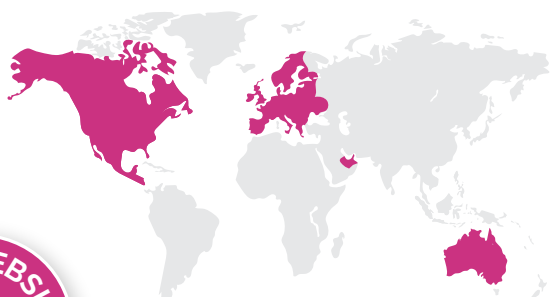
OTHER



Typical deployment:

1,000-5,000 Employees

Company locations:



VISIT THE WEBSITE

The product in a nutshell

Powell is a comprehensive intranet product, sitting on top of SharePoint, that offers a wide variety of innovative, attractive and engaging features that will appeal to organisations of all sizes.

SUMMARY

Powell Intranet

Powell Intranet from Powell Software (Paris, France) is a product that sits on top of SharePoint Online, leveraging the benefits of the core features while cleverly adding multiple components to improve the SharePoint experience. Powell Software is investing a lot in AI-powered features, such as 'Powell Buddy' (see Scenarios 2 and 5 for more). There were good examples and use cases presented to us, from enhanced content contribution to a thematic chatbot connected to an internal data set, although it's worth noting that these features will come at an extra price.

In the past year Powell Software have updated the product to reduce the need for Powell Manager, which was a dedicated administration tool. Intranet managers are now able to control a good part of their environment directly in the front-end of Powell, which we think is an improvement. The widgets gallery and configuration options are highly comprehensive and praised by clients too; this makes Powell Intranet a flexible solution, but one that still presents an extended learning curve. Organisations will need to rely on an integration partner during their implementation phase and dedicate specific resources, preferably Microsoft savvy, to manage the intranet.

As with all products that aim to address a variety of use cases, the product can present some limits compared to specialised tools. For example, the employee advocacy features, new 'Campaign' module or the email and newsletter tool might necessitate advanced configurations or even additional third-party integrations to properly address large organisations' needs. While being a "desktop first" product, the mobile experience can be extensively tailored to address frontline workers' needs.

Overall, Powell Intranet is highly versatile and will suit organisations of all sizes. Small and medium sized companies will appreciate the numerous ready-to-use templates and modules, while bigger organisations will be able to customise their environment and efficiently manage a complex intranet setup. Note, however, that the product is at the higher end of our pricing scale for most business sizes.

Pricing

PRICE BAND	
1,000 users	$$$
5,000 users	$$$
20,000 users	$$$
50,000 users	$$$

These prices are indicative, offering a comparison of the products featured in this report only. Please contact the vendor for a bespoke quote.

PRICING MODEL

Subscription – price per user per month; Subscription – price band based on number of users.

DISCOUNTS

Charities and non-profit organisations, schools and educational institutes, government / public sector and multi-year commitments.

COSTS TYPICALLY

Fairly evenly spread across three years.

PRICE INCLUDES

Customer Success, online training, updates and maintenance.

Product type

Majority ready-to-run

Branding opportunities

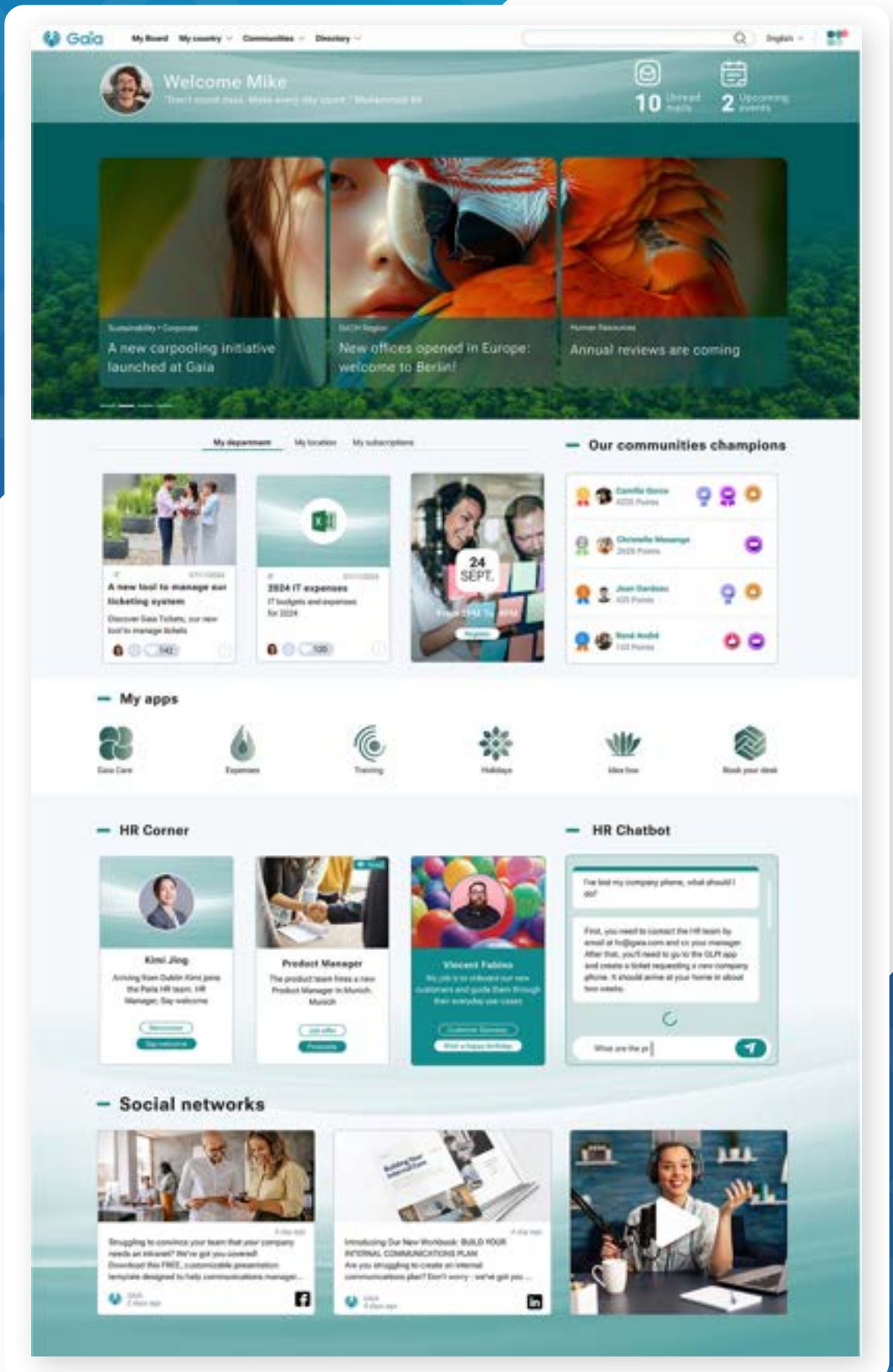
All branding, complex options

Base systems

- Fully standalone
- **Requires SharePoint**
- Other

Sectors

- Accountancy, banking and finance
- Business, consulting and management
- Engineering and manufacturing
- Healthcare
- Public services, government and administration


Gaia
Welcome Mike
10
2
A new carpooling initiative launched at Gaia
New offices opened in Europe: welcome to Berlin!
Annual reviews are coming
Our communities champions
24 SEPT.
My apps
HR Corner
HR Chatbot
Kimi Jing
Product Manager
Social networks

COMPANY AND PRODUCT

Company details

Company
Powell Software

ISO 27001 certified
Infrastructure is ISO27001 certified, but the company isn't.

Data residency
Global - at the client's discretion

Company founded
2016

Product launched
2016

Typical client size
1,000 to 5,000

Largest deployment so far
SAFRAN - a French company with 80k employees operating globally in 27 countries

Customers
Please see their website for details

Partner locations
Please see their website for details

Company locations
Paris, France (HQ), USA, Germany, Australia, UK, Dubai

Product and technical details

Name of product

Powell Intranet

Deployment

Client on-premises	Client private cloud	Microsoft Azure	Amazon Web Services	Vendor-hosted	**Microsoft 365 tenant**	Google Cloud	Other

Authentication supported

Entra ID	**ADFS**	Okta	Open ID	Oauth	G Suite	Other

App deployment

Google Play store	**Apple store**	**MDM**	MAM	Other

Accessibility

WCAG2.1 conformant

Document library sources integrated

Box	Dropbox	Google Drive	**SharePoint**	**OneDrive**	Other

Optional integrated enterprise search engines

Coveo	Elastic	IBM	Lucidworks	**Microsoft**	Mindbreeze	Sinequa	Other

User interface multi-language

Machine translation	**Pre-configured**	**Editable**	**Right to left script supported**	Other

Content multi-language

Machine translation for publishers	**Machine translation for end users**	**Editable machine translation for publishers**	**Manual creation for publishers**	**Right to left script**	Other

Set-up and support

Set-up process for new clients

The customer decides to deploy either the standard portal (with a few clicks) or decides which levels of customisation they need (can range from adapting their various site collections templates to fully customising the look and feel, and metadata structure). Full deployment can vary from 2-3 hours for a packaged site for small businesses, to 3 months for large multinational companies requiring the finest levels of customisation.

Version numbers

Demonstrated to ClearBox: V1 September 24

At January 2025: V1 January 25

Product updates

Major updates every month; minor updates weekly.

Product update process

Customers are updated at once as Powell is a SaaS solution.

Reverse-out options

The customer's data remains hosted in the customer's own Microsoft 365 tenant, so it is not impacted by reversing out of the platform. However, the customer will lose access to Powell-specific intranet features such as Search Web Parts, navigation header, etc.

Technical support

Email support	Phone support	Chat support	Online portal	24/7 support	Office hours only*

* Powell supports local office hours for three regions (Europe, North America, Asia-Pacific).

User community

Powell Software have an active user community with several channels: an online portal for day-to-day exchanges, monthly open calls, some local physical events (France, Germany, US) and an annual online user conference.

Voice of the vendor

Powell Software says: "Our mission at Powell is to align productivity objectives of organizations with the daily well-being and fulfilment of every employee. This combined approach powers better work for everyone within an inspiring and dynamic environment.

Our Intranet is built to be modular, dynamic, and adaptable, ensuring it effectively meets the underlying communication and collaboration challenges, while also addressing the challenges of tomorrow and supporting organizations in navigating the evolving future of work.

At Powell, we are deeply convinced that it is crucial and essential for every employee to derive value and immediate benefit from each of their digital interactions with their Digital Workplace environment. Thus, we have designed Powell Intranet as an environment where every employee can effortlessly grasp, seize and leverage the tools and resources at their disposal to excel in their roles.

Besides, organizations are faced with an increasingly diverse employee workforce. Therefore, an efficient Digital Workplace must be able to personalize each employee's experience while creating an appealing environment that drives collaboration, initiative-taking, sense of ownership to enable everyone to better express themselves.

To promote long-term usage and adoption, Digital Workplace must reflect an environment where employees are eager to engage and collaborate, moving away from the constraints of a restrictive environment and feeling less like a chore.

We believe that too many outdated and uninspiring approaches of Intranet overload users with a collection of modules and features. This makes it more complicated and less stimulating for employees to use them, leading to low adoption.

On the contrary, we believe the current challenges faced by organizations require delivering more than just Intranet capabilities and features. At Powell, we aim to catalyse new experiences and be the driving force behind meaningful change in how work is experienced. Therefore, we design our Digital Workplace as a coherent and employee-centric suite that fits into the employee experience, focused on pedagogy, simplicity, intuitiveness and the clear value it brings.

Usage and adoption rate is our North Star Metric. Instant and evergreen value that employee can gain from their Digital Workplace leads to seamless adoption. Every orientation Powell takes is guided by the sole objective of enhancing steady usage and adoption, driving genuine value and sustainable employee engagement for organizations."

Voice of the customer

When asked about what's best in the product, Powell customers often mention the wide range and the quality of components to build site pages. "Many components offer a clean look and feel that fits in with native Microsoft components while filling some noticeable gaps in the default SharePoint" says one customer, while others praise "the quality of widgets", and "the catalogue of web parts that allows you to create an infinite number of displays." Another commented on the capacity to develop widget templates that help "to implement custom developments based to end-user needs." This widget gallery coupled with a templatised approach leads customers to enjoy the ease of use and the user experience, one customer has said: "Powell offers useful tools to assist in managing content across multiple sites, making it easy to have consistent templates, content types and navigation." While Powell Manager is becoming less prominent, some clients who still use it like the "power of customisation and time saving" that this extra tool brings.

Suggestions for improvement from customers highlight Powell's approach as a 'layer' on top of SharePoint. One customer flagged performance concerns, especially in the page loading time: "the way Powell's webparts are structured and deployed means there's a delay when loading pages, and on some of our older hardware this can cause frustration." Another mentioned that the deep connection between Powell and M365 may present challenges to less tech savvy people: "for example, there is a prominent 'New' button for content in SharePoint - we can't use that on Powell; we have to go to a floating cog icon and then click 'Add content' - such an unintuitive way of adding content [...] you can imagine how difficult it is to get non-intranet specialists to use it, and how frustrating it is for my team to have to tell people." Other improvement suggestions mentioned the desire to see "a continuation of innovation".

On the whole, clients have said that they have good relations both with the Powell team and their integration partners. One customer said the experience overall is "very good, very human and quite responsive!" with a vendor that "listens to its customers and regularly proposes changes to the platform." Another customer has praised the development roadmap, saying "With each monthly release there's usually some new feature or enhancement that we can make use of." To be noted though, clients outside of Europe that responded to our survey are expecting a "better support for North America", more stable relations with account representatives, as well as a more qualitative English translation of the support content: "there are elements that have been mistranslated and simply don't make sense."

SCENARIOS & SCORES

Please see the Scenarios below for more detail on each of these.

SCENARIO AND SCORE	KEY BENEFITS	IMPROVEMENTS / CONSIDERATIONS
4+ **1. User Experience & Visual Appeal**	Good user interface, extensive widget gallery and setting options to build modern intranet pages. Flexible navigation system.	Page load time can be a bit long.
4 **2. Publishing & Communications Management**	Good content contribution experience enhanced by AI capabilities. Useful Contribution Board to track and access content.	Campaign, digital signage and email modules are new but still quite basic.
4 **3. Community & Engagement**	Flexible community template, powerful ideation module, extended gamification and Kudos features.	Rich social reactions are not included. In-built polls are simple.
3.5+ **4. Integrations & Services (Including M365)**	Strong integration with M365 environment and new connections to external services, especially thanks to the flexible Powell Universal Connector.	Advanced integrations will require some integration skills or the assistance of a partner.
4+ **5. Information Finding & Search**	Flexible search result pages. Helpful thematic AI chatbots. Connections to external databases to build an extended company search.	Multiple chatbot searches might be confusing. Many features are from Microsoft.
3.5+ **6. Administrator Experience**	More administration features brought to the front end to temper the burden of SharePoint complexity.	Some administration will take place in SharePoint and others in Powell Manager, which is more complex.
3+ **7. Analytics**	Extensive reports based on SharePoint analytics and PowerBI. Can be complemented by Google or Matomo connections.	Reports rely on PowerBI and Google Analytics or Matomo. Configuration will be required.
3+ **8. Mobile & Frontline Support**	Good mobile app, extensive set of features to adapt the intranet for a personalised mobile experience.	Slight lack of features dedicated to support frontline employees beyond integrations.

Powell Intranet includes many visually attractive web parts to build a highly usable intranet.

Powell Intranet is a product that sits on top of SharePoint Online, leveraging the benefits of the core features while cleverly adding multiple components to improve the SharePoint experience. Employees will be presented with a modern and responsive intranet, easily accessible on mobile devices, Teams and even interactive or static screens (via digital signage options). People with accessibility needs will be able to increase contrast or change to a font specially designed for people with dyslexia. Like other products Powell is WCAG 2.1 AA conformant, but we found accessibility settings particularly easy to apply.

It's worth noting that in the 'Voice of the Customer' section one customer expressed concerns regarding the time needed to load the pages and this has been our experience in the demo environment as well, although Powell says the support team can be called in to help with this matter. Powell have managed to package their intranet solution and mask the SharePoint foundations (such as the top navigation bar of SharePoint), even if some elements might still be visible here and there, leading to potential confusion for non-Microsoft savvy users. For example, a customer shared that the 'New' button that appears when editing pages in Powell led their contributors to regular mistakes and issues.

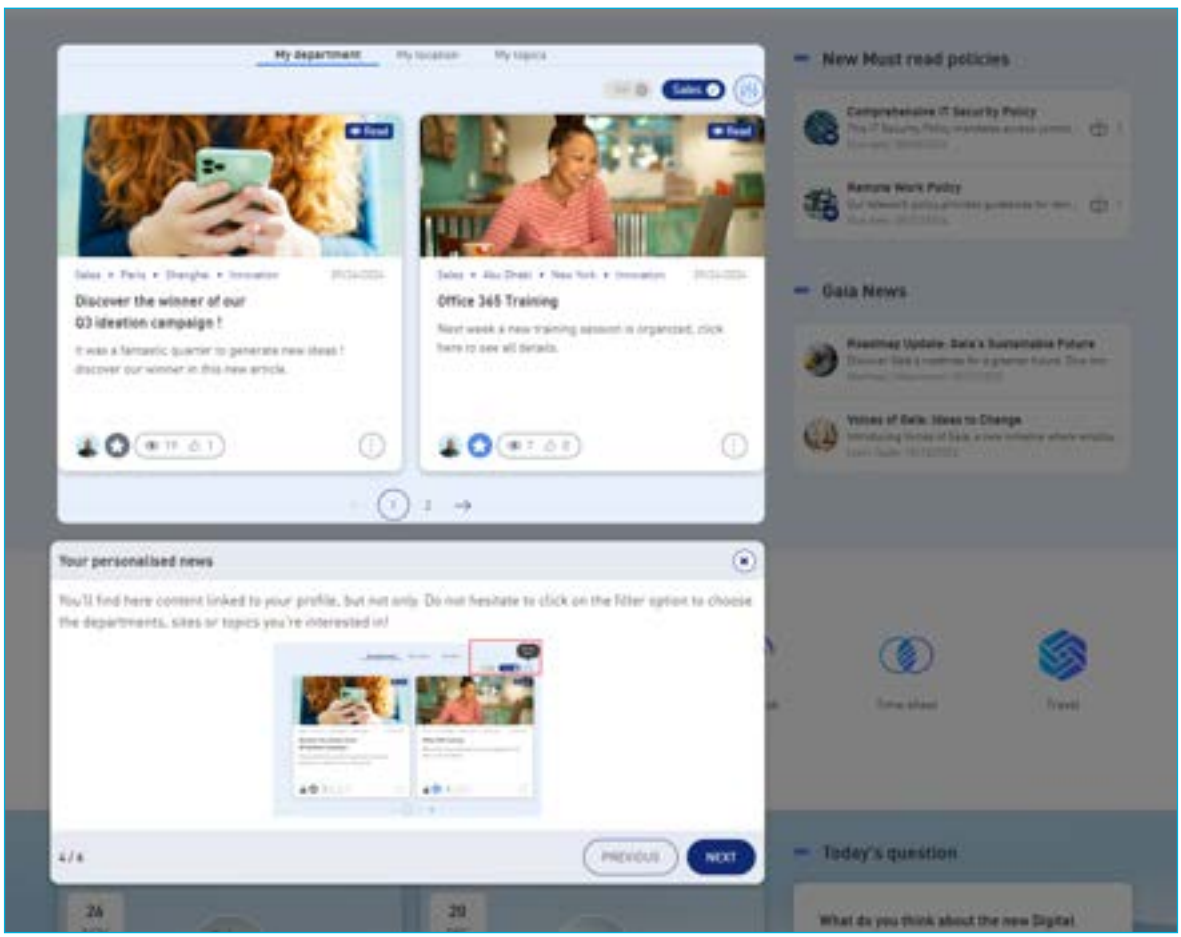
A stand-out feature is the 'Virtual Building' module that offers original and visual ways to navigate within content and interact with people. In the example we saw, users are presented with a 3D office map, each room having a dedicated purpose and set of resources. They will be able to see the complete map, click on the rooms, access the contents and even chat with other people or connect to online meetings. This is quite straightforward to set up and could be an interesting way to introduce the intranet to new users. This approach could serve online events, as well as be an interesting way to navigate within the complete intranet information architecture.

The overall intranet navigation is highly flexible, including to be presented as a dynamic mega menu, where links can be permission trimmed and easily maintained by administrators in the front-end. We particularly appreciate the 'guided tour' module that displays tooltips at the first connection to a page. These can be easily created and edited on the spot, and they can be replayed by employees if they need to.

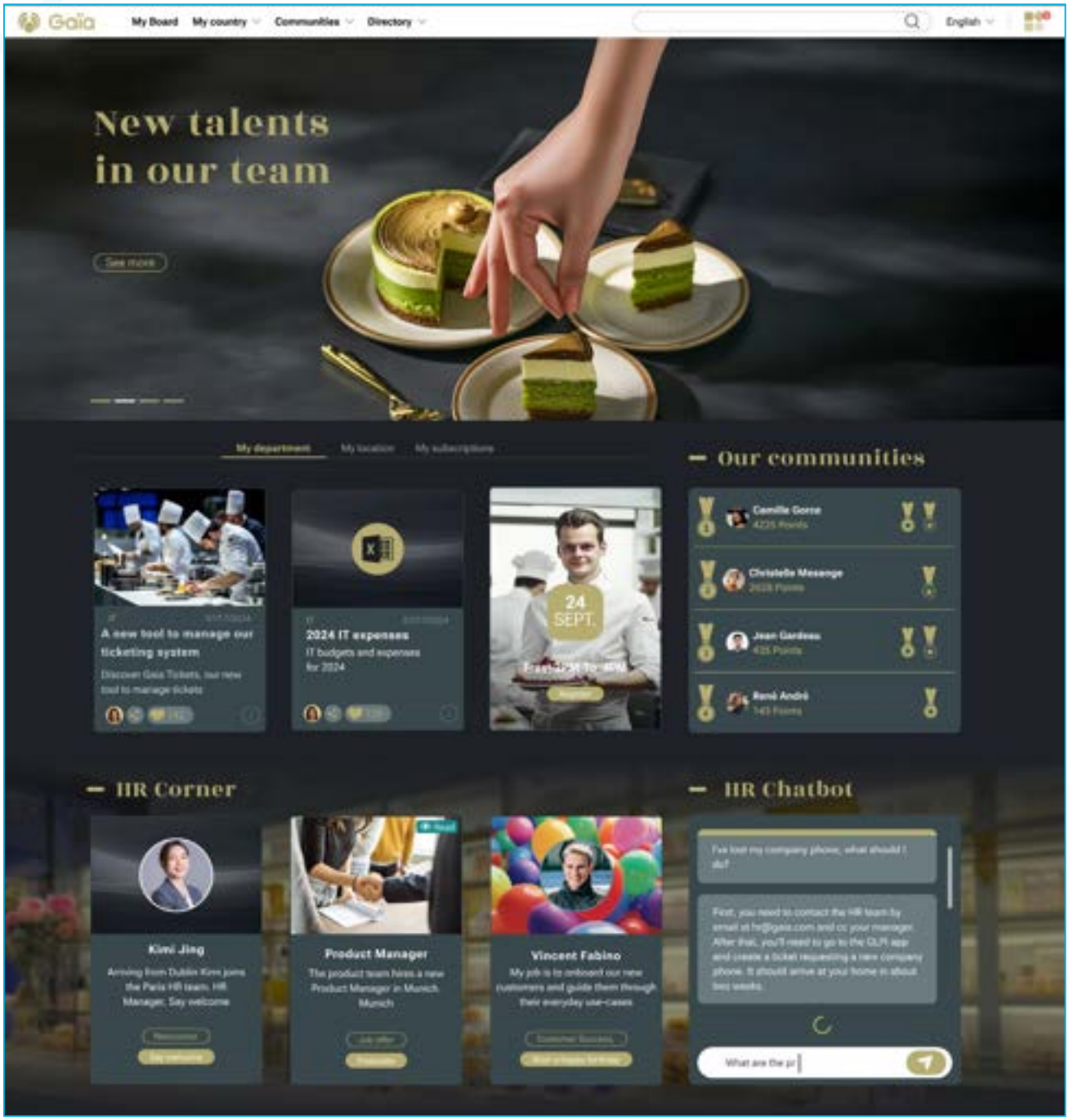
Powell 'Virtual Building' offers original and visual ways to navigate within content and interact with people.

The basis for notifications is well covered: employees can subscribe to topics organised by categories and choose if they want to receive notifications in the intranet 'tray', on mobile or by email. However, it is not possible to decide which types of notification they want to receive by email and which ones they do not, which we think could be improved. The notification area can be extended to receive notifications from integrated platforms such as ServiceNow, which is a very useful feature for employees. See Scenario 4 for more on integrations. Publishers can also trigger push notifications, to remind employees about an upcoming event or to make them aware of a modification to a policy for example.

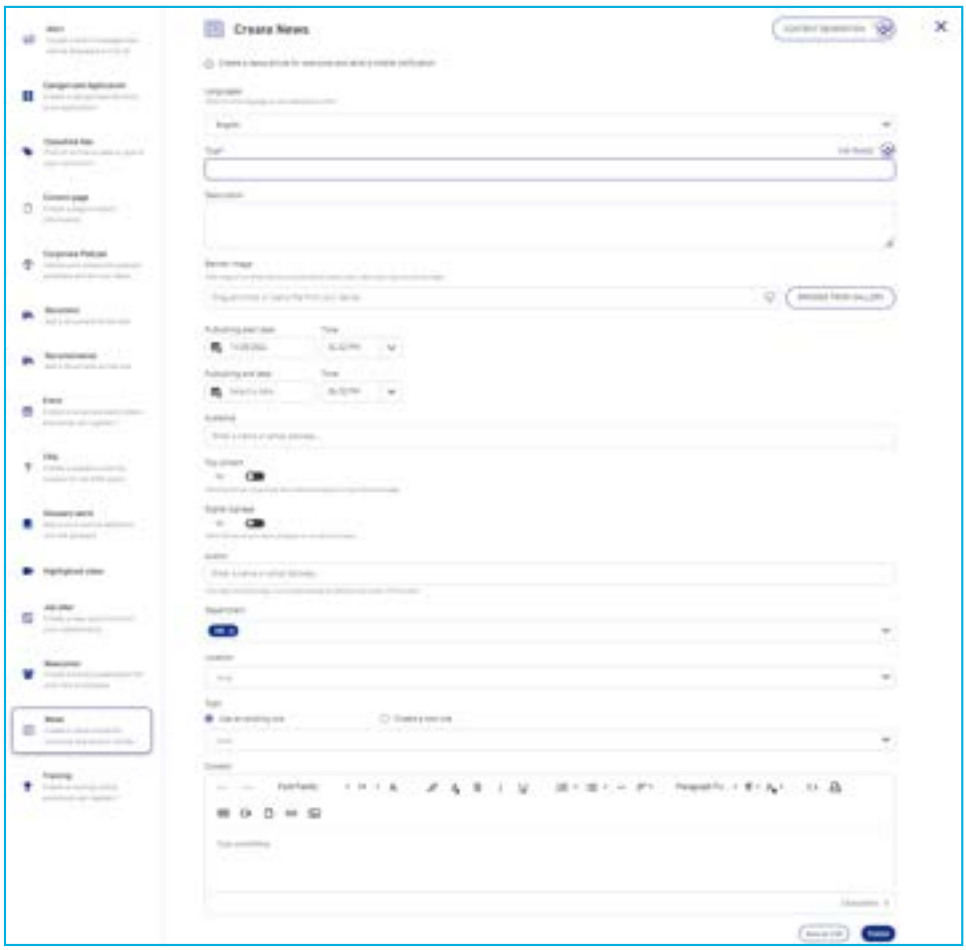
The design and branding options of widgets go way beyond standard SharePoint. All Powell web parts are highly adjustable directly in the front-end - from layout to shape and colours. However, the settings for each need to be set individually on each web part. Even if settings can be saved and reused, guidance and safeguards will be needed to avoid local administrators derailing the design to the detriment of accessibility. We think the addition of an alert when the widget design choices are not compliant with accessibility standards would be helpful. With proper guidance, detailed specifications and time, administrators will enjoy the possibility to design beautiful brand compliant pages. Multi-brand intranets are also an option, admins of each site will be able to easily adapt basic design elements (colour palette, logo, font, seasonal themes, etc.). Additional work will be required to customise advanced branding, but this is readily possible, as shown in the screenshot on the following page.



Guided tours are easy to set up in Powell Intranet and let employees know more about the different sections of each page.



Powell Intranet provides flexible theming options to deliver brand compliant intranets.



Powell Intranet offers a smooth and improved contributing experience.

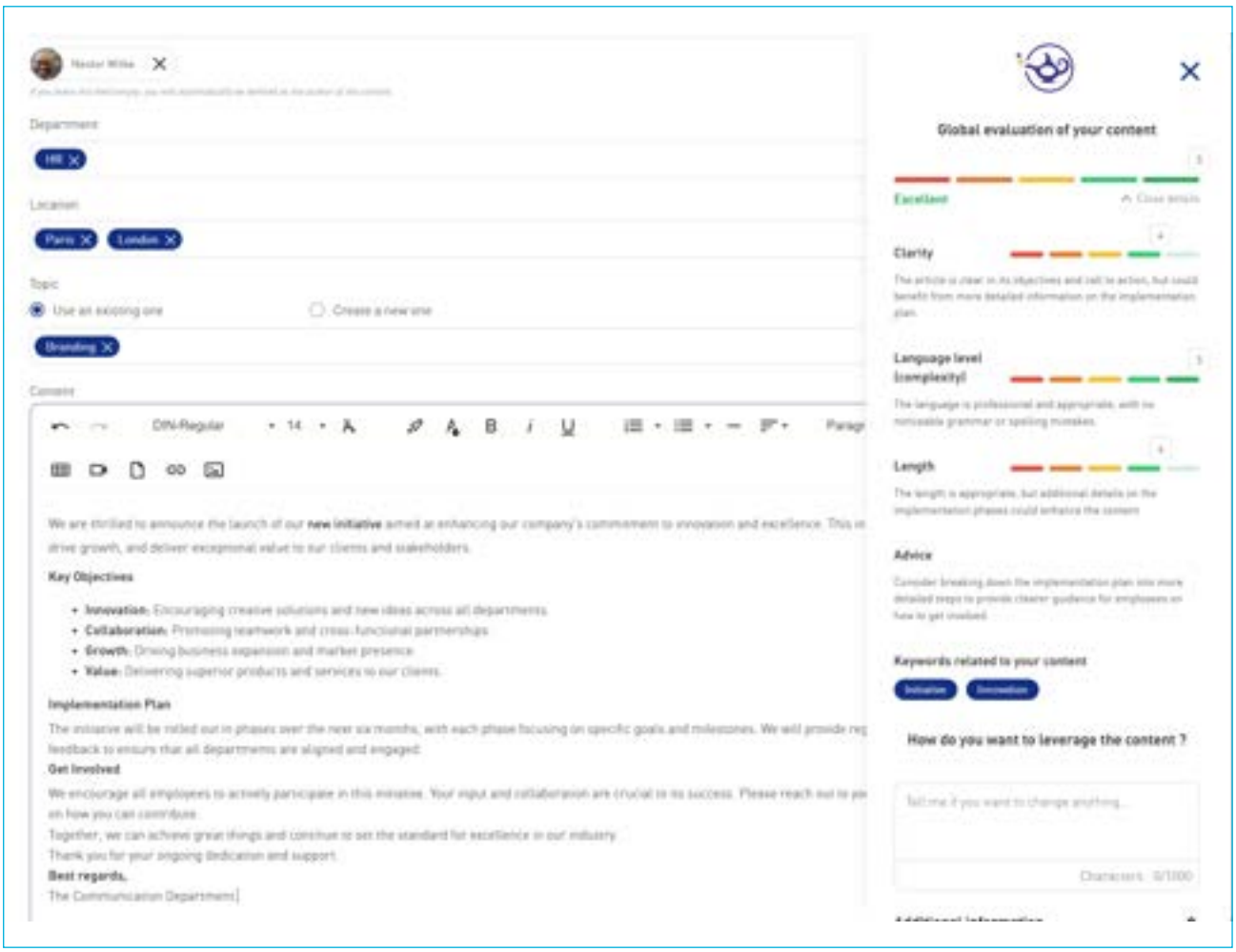
Powell Intranet includes a well-thought-through process to easily create content. Each type of content is templated and benefits from a straightforward contribution form with essential fields. These forms and templates can be customised, for example adding metadata and options to display content in the appropriate intranet spaces. For advanced needs or designs, administrators have access to the SharePoint page edit options, greatly enhanced with the Powell widgets catalogue. We think this two-step process will necessitate additional training to properly master it. Powell includes some handy features that help publishers, including options to reduce image size to, in turn, optimise the page size.

'Powell Buddy' is an AI digital assistant that supports publishers. The assistant can generate content based on an initial prompt; Powell Buddy can even be linked to sources of information stored within the intranet for internal context. Once drafted, publishers may adjust each text field using Powell Buddy with commands to shorten, lengthen, summarise or improve the proposed text. Automatic image generation is also available with a prompt based on the populated content (that can be amended) as well as image formatting options for a better presentation. This feature is currently based on Dall-E and the Powell team is exploring ways to connect this feature to additional AI models.

Powell Buddy also features automatic content evaluation that assesses the clarity, language level and length of content, providing advice to add information or better structure the content. Overall, Powell Buddy is well integrated within the content creation process, even if advanced options might speak better to seasoned communicators than inexperienced contributors. It is worth noting that Powell Buddy is part of the license cost in this report, but AI consumption is on pay-as-you-go.

All published content can be targeted to user groups with easy options to target locations, departments or people following specific topics. Advanced targeting is based on Entra ID or Teams groups, which requires M365 admin rights and is not always possible, especially for Internal Communicators. Additionally, the list of audiences for the intranet will be mixed with the list of all permission groups in Entra ID (for some companies this can be very extensive) and publishers will need to know the precise names of the audiences they want to target.

Content management is well supported by 'Contribution Boards', where customisable views help contributors track, organise and easily access their intranet content (and even within the whole M365 tenant). These views can be set up by admins directly in the front end thanks to a configuration wizard. From the Boards, outdated content can be easily spotted, updated or archived (see Scenario 6 for more detail). An additional view here to better see content publication over time, such as a calendar or dashboard, would be helpful.

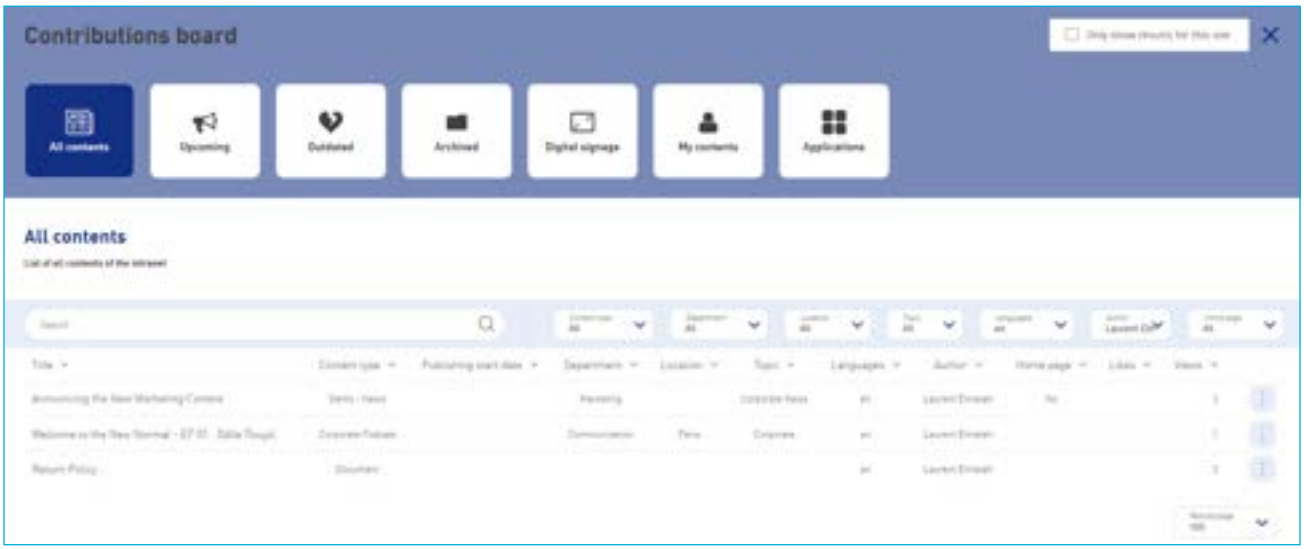


'Powell Buddy' virtual assistant can guide contributors and give them useful feedback.

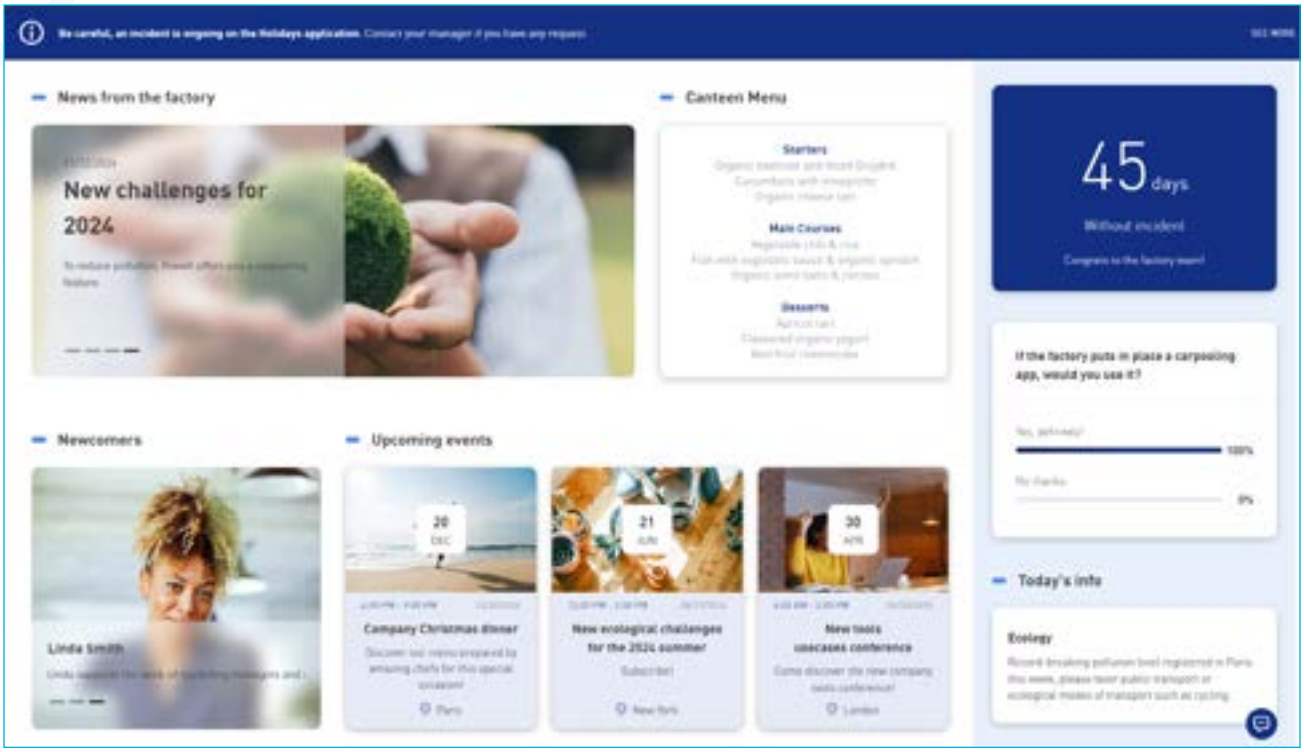
A simple 'Campaign Module' allows communicators to group together several pieces of content under a common campaign. Associated metrics are then available to track campaign success. While it is possible to automate the campaign content delivery over time using Power Automate, this is not included as part of the product. Powell says publication workflows are less requested by their customers, but administrators benefit from the workflows on SharePoint repositories. If more intricate workflows are needed beyond publishing, it is also possible to configure Power Automate scenarios; for this Powell and its partners can share packs of sample automation to reuse and adapt. We saw an interesting example where a message in Teams is promptly transformed into a knowledge article in the intranet via a custom integration.

For crisis communication, Powell Intranet offers standard but robust features such as 'Alerts' that can be displayed across the platform (desktop and mobile). There are different templates depending on the severity of the alert. People can mark alerts as read and mandatory reads are available, even though the administrator might find it difficult to track who read what (see Scenario 7). A dedicated site template for crisis management is also available with a predefined set of modules and content for quick set up.

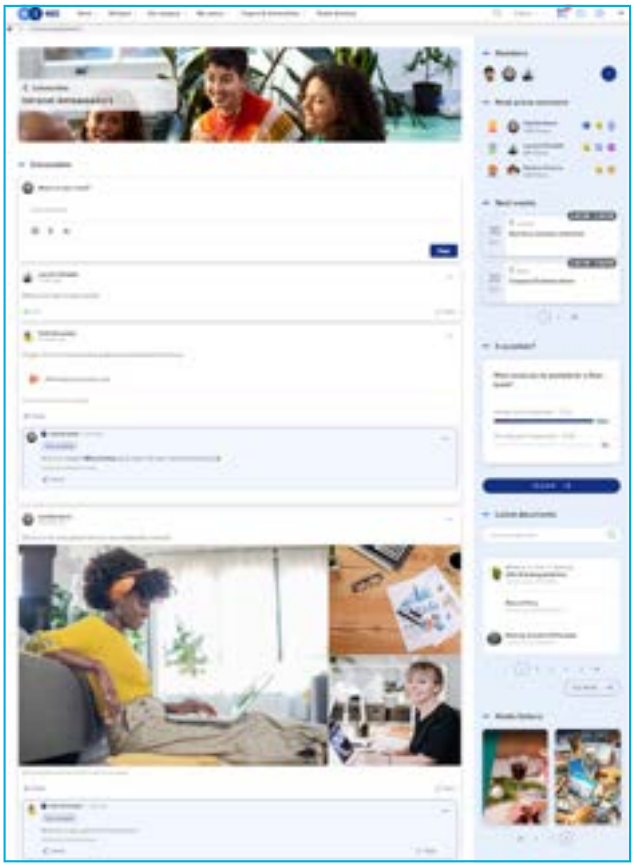
For multi-channel publishing, Powell provides two modules. The first is a dedicated 'digital signage page' that can be displayed on screens. This page is currently simple and maybe not highly adapted to be quickly viewed at a distance due to the presence of multiple widgets and small font size. We've seen other platforms with more straightforward approaches that may be more appropriate. The second is an 'Email' module, which is a good alternative to the standard SharePoint newsletter feature (or the need to work with a third-party tool). Contributors can easily set up their email or newsletter by dropping in intranet content. What we saw was quite basic, but Powell says there will be improvements by the time this report is published.



The Contribution Board helps track, organise and easily access content posted within the intranet.



Powell Digital Signage page is a simple page dedicated to being displayed on screens.



Powell Intranet's community template can be adapted to be standalone or connected to Microsoft Teams or Viva Engage.

Powell Intranet offers an attractive and robust Community page template that displays discussions, members, resources, polls and media. Administrators will appreciate the ability to connect these Community pages to existing Viva Engage groups, Microsoft Teams spaces or offer standalone features (relying on Powell discussion for the chat feed). Organisations looking to offer a single user experience for all community and project spaces within the intranet will find this template appealing.

Powell Intranet's 'Ideation Hub' is well designed and would probably fit most organisations' needs for participative innovation initiatives. Ideation campaigns can be created and customised to fit the company needs in terms of metadata and content organisation, validation workflows, timeframe etc. There are also additional engaging features like challenge animations. Each idea benefits from a dedicated template, inviting employees to like, comment and share the idea. The idea submission form is easy to use and will allow infrequent contributors to share their insights, with the potential help of Powell Buddy (see Scenario 2) for structuring their idea. We would recommend setting guidelines on the use of generative AI in the context of innovation campaigns.

There is an optional module called 'Flex Desk' for booking seats in offices that have deployed a shared desk policy. Employees will be able to see the office map and book their seats for a dedicated timeframe. This module can be extended to book meeting rooms, parking spaces or similar. The administration of Flex Desk is easy, directly in the front-end, with an optional connection with Outlook's 'Room Finder'. Additionally, a car-pooling module and a 'second-hand swap market' module can be easily deployed where wanted. These modules are good examples of Powell's capacity to address specific collaborative and social use cases, while remaining within SharePoint and M365. If an organisation has need of a similar module, such as to coordinate volunteers, an integration partner can help set these up using the existing modules as a template.

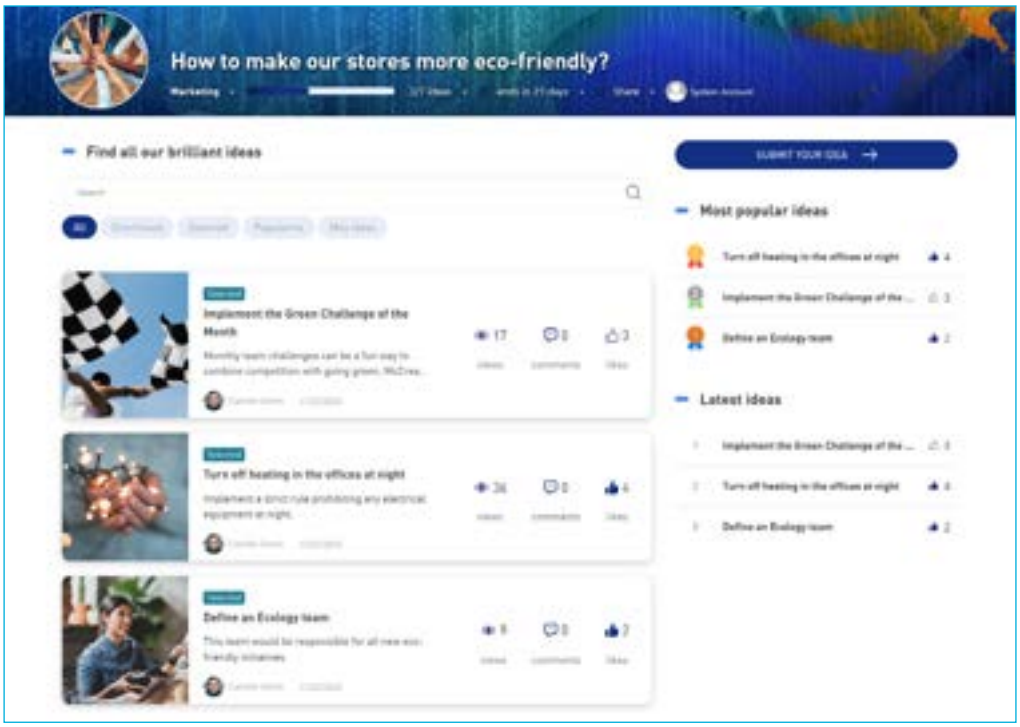
Social interactions are well integrated within the SharePoint user experience, and we found Powell's gamification approach quite extensive. All employee actions can be gamified to nudge people to be active, for example, automatic rewards are gathered by liking, commenting and sharing content by email, Teams or Viva Engage. This gamification feature can even be extended to invite people to complete their profile, contribute, read content, validate training modules, share ideas etc. If the organisation wishes to deploy Employee Advocacy features, it is also possible to gain points by resharing content on social media platforms. The global leaderboard is useful to track progress, helping to generate actual engagement and a sense of fun.

Another way to give and receive feedback in the product is through the 'Kudos' feature. Organisations can set up different Kudos categories, for instance to reflect their corporate values or strategic areas of focus. Kudos can be given by anyone, publicly or privately, and there is even an option for the receiver of the Kudos to refuse it. Kudos given and received contribute to an employee's position on a leaderboard, and there is also a Kudos wall that shows all Kudos recently given, as well as the organisation's Kudos champions.

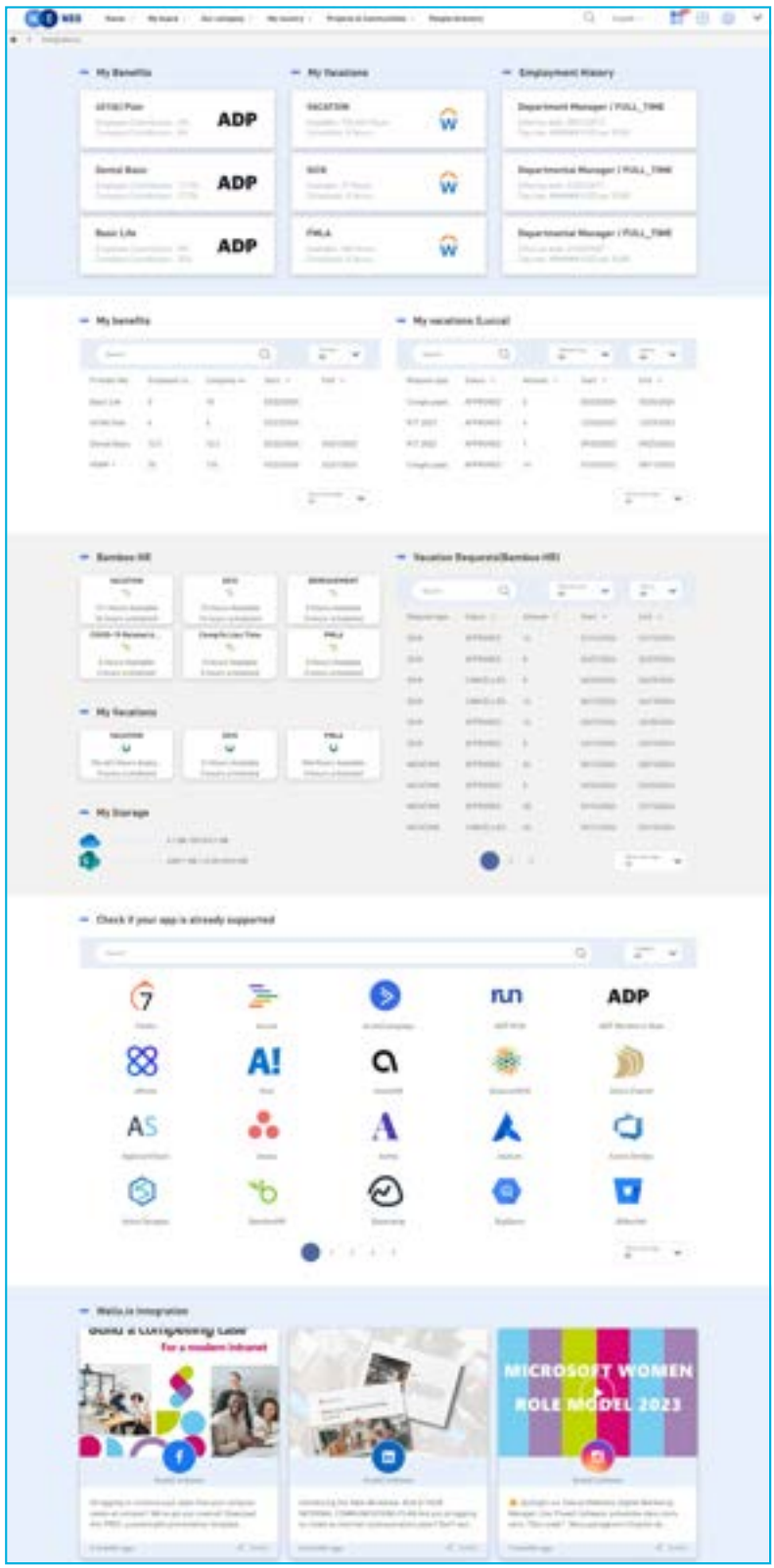
A commenting feature, called 'Powell discussion', can be deployed on all content and offers standard but robust features. Administrators moderate the posts by pinning, marking them as best answers or closing discussions. Comments can be removed by admins, but they can't be reported by end-users (with associated moderation workflows), which we think is a shame. We also miss the opportunity to react to content beyond the simple 'like' as there is no possibility to extend the range of reactions. The like button itself is also not always visible on pages.

For quick polls, there is a dedicated widget in which a simple question can be asked. Employees that answer it will be instantly presented the result. For more elaborate surveys, clients are invited to use Microsoft Forms. While it makes sense to use this existing dedicated M365 solution and not recreate a module from scratch, administrators will have to navigate between Forms and Powell for the creation, diffusion and collection of the data; then analysis of the responses only takes place in Excel.

Overall, Powell Intranet effectively enhances what's on offer in standard SharePoint. The set of features, such as the Ideation Hub, Flex Desk, gamification and Kudos, addresses various use cases, making it a comprehensive tool for improving engagement and innovation within organisations.



Powell Intranet's 'Ideation Hub' provides a comprehensive tool to share and exchange ideas.



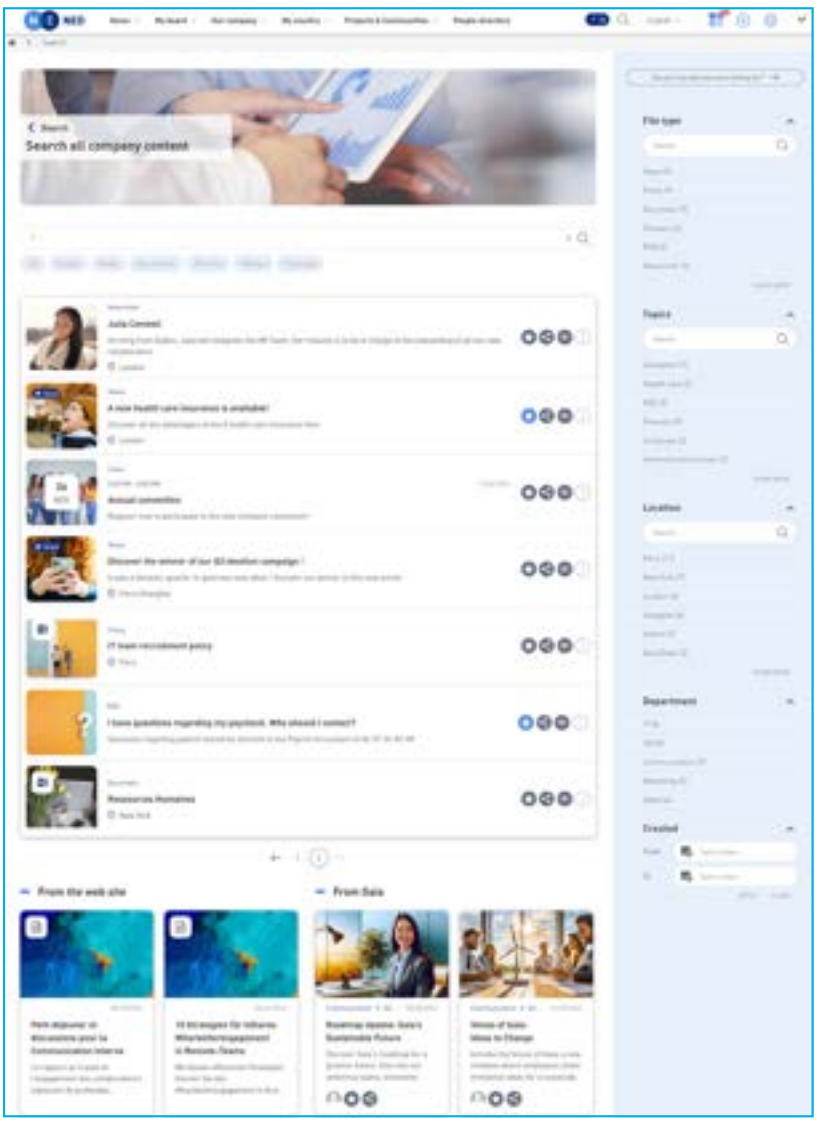
Powell Intranet offers multiple ways to integrate M365 or external applications.

Powell is tightly integrated with M365 technologies, meaning companies will appreciate being able to make good use of the features already available in their environment, while benefitting from more advanced integrations. For instance, Powell offers multiple 'Dashboard' elements, to present personalised content to employees such as their favourite M365 content, their Outlook emails and events, their To-do list or their OneDrive documents, etc. Multimedia support is provided by standard Stream functionality. Additional integrations with M365 can be set up via Power Automate, PowerBI or PowerApps as all Powell content resides in the company tenant. Companies can rely on a wide set of trained partners to help here if needed.

The integration with Viva is focused on Viva Engage and Viva Connections. The dashboard and the feed from Viva Connections can be integrated onto a Powell Intranet page or can be viewed directly in Teams on the desktop and on mobile. Powell has developed a number of specific cards for the Viva dashboard. There are cards to give Kudos, to view birthdays, to register for an event and to book a desk, which is discussed in Scenario 3. There is also a card that gives full access to the intranet, which will be useful mainly on mobile.

The range of usages within Powell can be greatly extended with additional connections to digital services. First, Powell allows integrations with third-party platforms such as Walls.io to display social feeds from Facebook, X or LinkedIn. Secondly, where Powell has already developed integrations with business systems, these can be made available. For example, a ServiceNow integration will let employees track their ongoing incidents and even change their status. These integrations need to be set up by Powell and are largely display only – there are few ways for an employee to complete an activity within Powell.

Thirdly, Powell offers a 'Universal Connector Widget'. This Connector uses REST APIs to call an external database and includes customisable templates to display content to end-users. Simple applications of the Connector can be easily plugged into modern web services (for example a job offers RSS feed). More advanced implementations with transactions and interactions will likely necessitate the assistance of an external expert partner. Powell have said they are working on other approaches here too.



Powell provides search pages with a nice user interface to explore and sort content.

Powell Intranet relies mostly on Microsoft Search to help people easily retrieve content. When an employee clicks on the search bar, some suggested results are presented to them, based on the Microsoft Graph and their recent activities. We liked that the user is prompted to add synonyms to their search query, thanks to the AI assistant 'Powell Buddy'. This can solve a common issue for content retrieval when the term searched is not the same used by a content contributor. We think this feature should be integrated directly in the search algorithm rather than relying on a user action, however.

Search results pages can be customised for each content type; administrators have the possibility to adapt the layout, the content organisation, the metadata filters etc. Search using natural language is also possible, with a clever addition that presents the interpretation of the prompt into a search query to retrieve content and documents. The search engine does not yet offer AI-powered 'likely answers', which we think is a shame. To have this experience of a simplified search, employees will have to use specific chatbots.

The thematic and intelligent chatbot is based on Azure AI platform and accessed via a persistent floating button. These bots can be trained on dedicated sets of documents and content, related to specific topics to deliver answers in natural language. In addition to free text, an initial set of questions can be preconfigured to answer FAQs and indicate which type of questions the bot will be able to answer. We think it could be frustrating for employees to have to have to choose the correct bot (connected to the corresponding source) before being able to ask their question. Administrators should carefully consider how many of these are set up. Overall, Powell Intranet bots offer a convincing experience, bringing actual value, referencing the exact resources and acknowledging when it did not have the answer (instead of hallucinating). We are curious to see how this feature fares implemented in a real client context linked to actual resources.

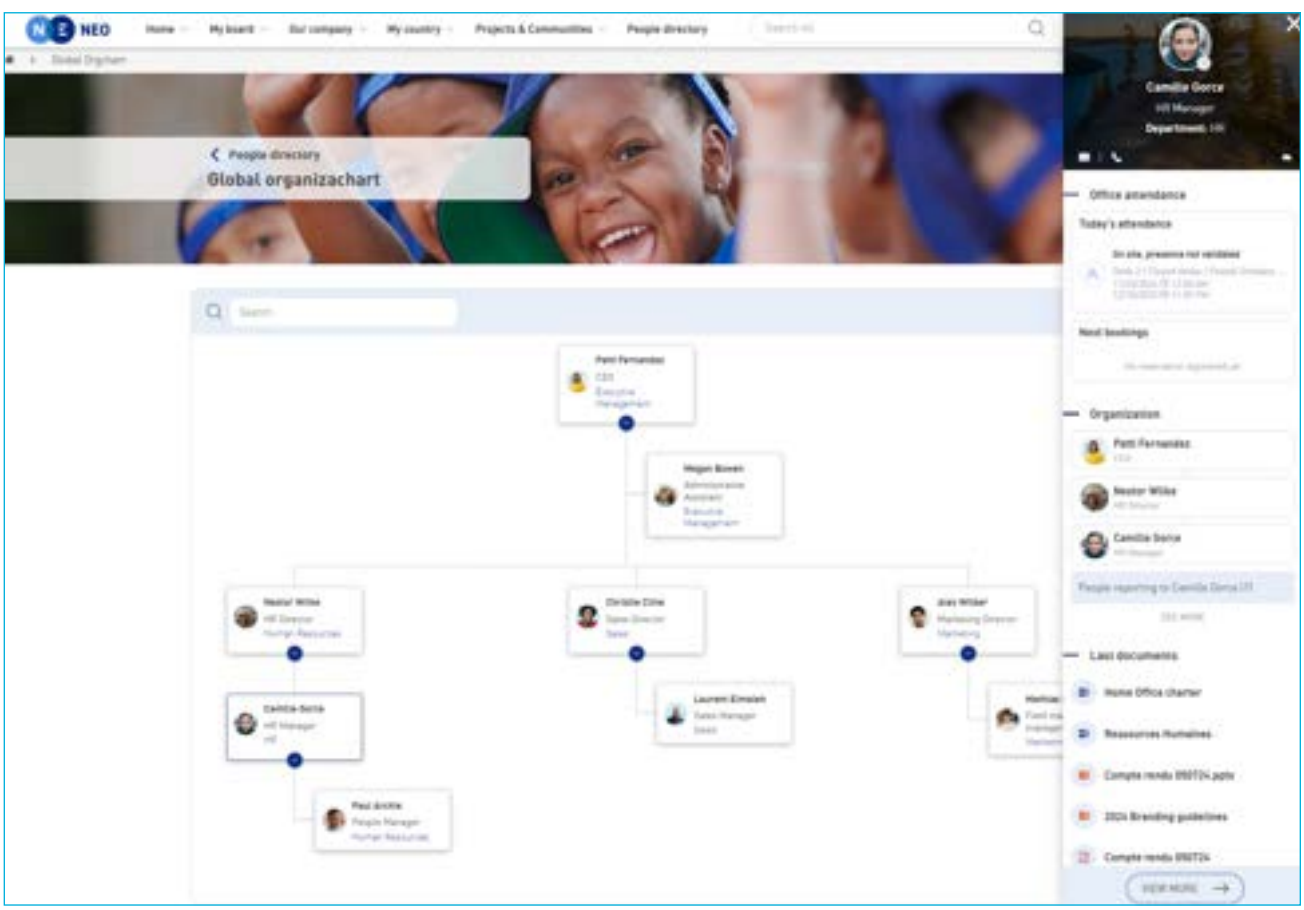
We saw an interesting application of a Powell Intranet chatbot connected to the people directory. It offers the possibility for employees to question the directory in natural language, like "Who is the head of the Marketing Department?" or "Who is the Manager of Jane Doe?". While the example demoed was based on an Excel export of the directory, we were told the bot could also be connected to a Microsoft Graph API to pull content directly from Entra ID. This original method to explore the organisation is well completed by a standard, yet powerful, people search via the main search bar (with filters on all people profile data). Powell Intranet also offers nice features to nudge people to complete their profile fields, which helps provide an exhaustive people search experience. A dynamic organisation chart completes this intensive offer of people search features.

A contextualised chatbot can be trained on an organisation's content.

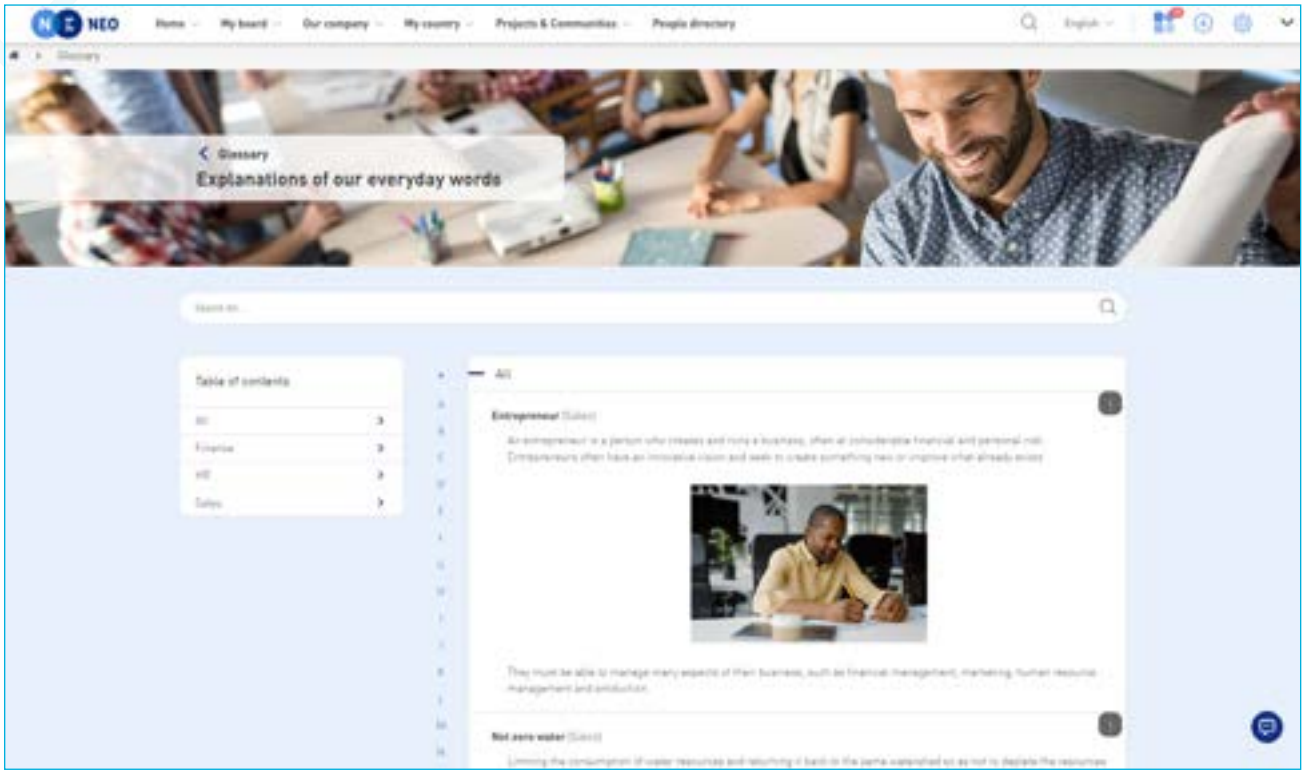
Search management mostly relies on Microsoft capabilities. Administrators will be able to manage the metadata related to Powell content within the SharePoint Term Store, with a clever integration to make the addition of new tags easier, directly within the contribution form (see Scenario 2). Powell can also surface promoted results managed in Microsoft Bookmarks to promote results based on terms, and the search algorithm also relies on Microsoft technology to rank content. Employees can leave feedback about their search experience via a Microsoft Form, but this will not be directly connected to the search query itself, making it tricky for admins to investigate.

Additional connections can be implemented to external databases to offer a federated search experience. The connection to websites is relatively simple, while more advanced connection to Microsoft Graph will necessitate the assistance of Powell or their partners.

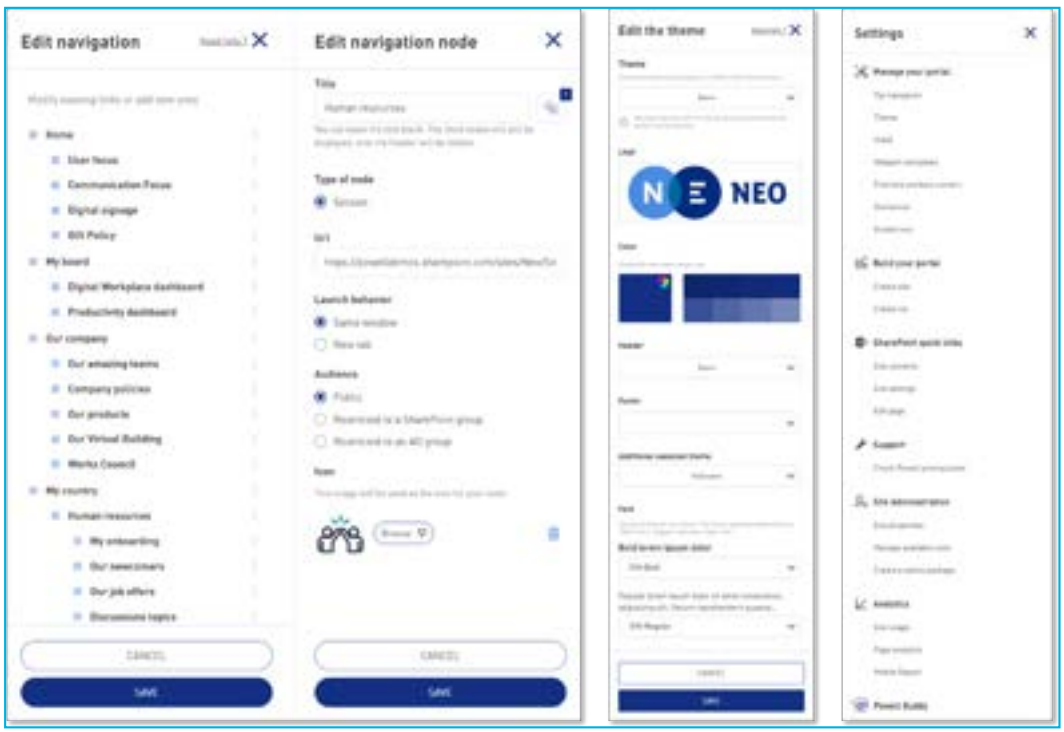
Powell delivers comprehensive knowledge management features. There are helpful content formats available to deliver information effectively to employees including FAQs, glossary and job offers. Each piece of information can be organised thanks to configurable metadata fields, such as 'point of contact' or 'department'. Powell Intranet relies on the strength of SharePoint Online to store and sort documents, content and lists items, although provides enhancement regarding the user experience and presentation.



Powell Intranet can display a dynamic organisational chart that employees can explore.



Powell Intranet provides extended features to organise and explore knowledge within organisations.



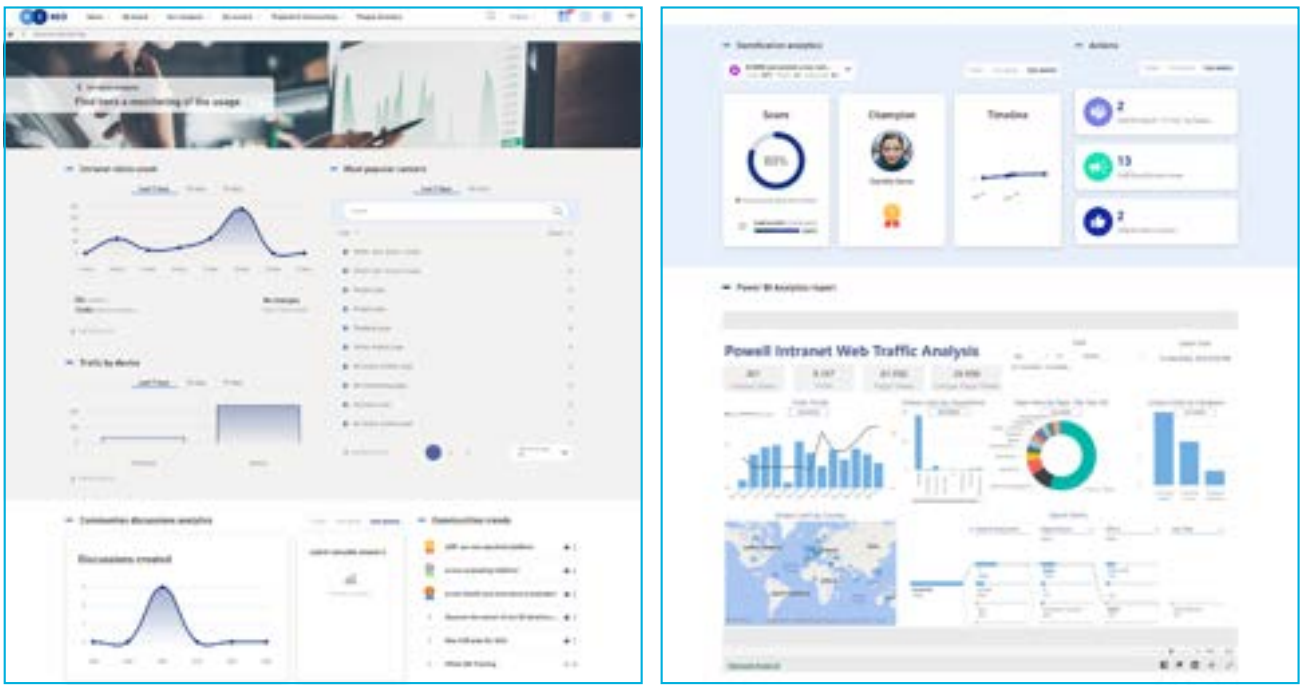
Powell provides a lot of administration features directly in the front end, as shown in these four examples.

Powell Intranet reduces the complexity of SharePoint, especially for simple changes. SharePoint admins will see the benefits of this 'top layer' toolbox. For example, we appreciate the multiple tooltips in the administrator panel as well as the useful redirections to Powell Knowledge Base for additional information, although we would like to see more standardisation in this contextual help within the CMS. SharePoint is still the basis of Powell Intranet however, so administrators won't escape the SharePoint administrator panel for advanced configurations.

Admins can control a good part of their environment directly in the front-end, bringing a lot of flexibility for non-expert-level administrators. From here they can easily manage the top-level navigation, modify the theming options, create sites and lists, manage the available tools and permissions, create new sites and repositories etc. Powell Manager, the former administration tool, is not retired - it is still needed to provision and govern site collections or to deploy and make changes to templates. Powell Manager is also where admins set up the creation forms for each type of content; although note that Powell Manager will mostly be handled by integrator partners during the implementation phase or expert teams within big organisations.

There is a 'Contributor Board' to help publishers manage content life cycles (see Scenario 2). The status and metadata of their content is easy to check, and administrators can even customise their own Contributor Boards, by adding columns such as 'last editing date', 'language', 'promoted on homepage' etc. We like that publishers can also see their outdated content directly in their 'personal dashboard'. Additional features such as automatic notifications or expiry dates can be implemented via Power Automate.

Translating content during the contribution process is quite easy, leveraging Microsoft's automatic translation engine. Workflows are available as part of the content creation process to notify assigned editors for each language. Organisations then have the choice between displaying language variants of content (proofread by the contributor) and / or automatically translating all page text fields (not managed by the contributor). Please see the 'voice of the customer' section where a few clients shared feedback that the translation of core elements was not wholly accurate.



Powell Intranet provides a broad range of reports and insights.

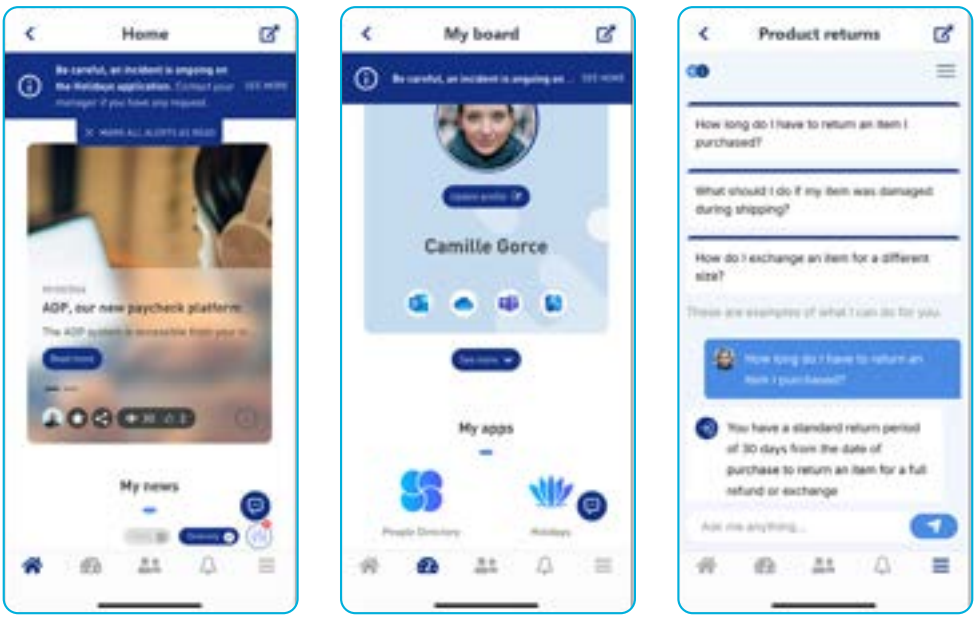
Currently there is a broad range a broad range of reports and insights, but the presentation can feel somewhat disjointed as there is no consistent look and feel across reports. Basic analytics is available on every page in Powell Intranet, very similar to what SharePoint provides out of the box. This includes a visit count for the last 7, 30 and 90 days, the most popular content and traffic by device. There is also an aggregated view available across all site collections within the intranet.

To go one step further, these intranet analytics can be merged with data from Google Analytics or from Matomo through a PowerBI 'content pack', which can be downloaded from Powell's learning centre and configured with the help of an implementation partner. This provides more useful data including unique users, visits, page views and unique page views, but also some graphs including visit trends, page views, unique users per department and unique user per campaign or per country. Administrators will appreciate this path as it makes it possible to explore historical data and we have little doubt that this PowerBI report can be customised to display additional data if needed. Some behaviours, such as 'mandatory read' acknowledgements, are logged in the platform but will require export to enable further data exploration.

A 'mobile app report' widget presents analytics related to mobile application usage, such as number of unique users, number of clicks on the pages and useful data about push notifications (e.g. read, read and deleted), as well as topics subscriptions. We appreciate the modern look and feel of this report widget but lack the ability to explore historical data past the current month.

Analytics on search are partially integrated; an overview of most popular search terms is available in the PowerBI dashboard, but other insights are only available in the standard Microsoft search admin reports.

Powell told us that delivering centralised analytics and dynamic insights is a roadmap priority. Their direction is to embed analytics directly into the product to avoid the use of external third-party tools such as Google or Matomo, so we can expect to see more improvements.



The Powell app provides parity of experience with the desktop environment, where features like 'My Board' integrations and Powell Buddy work well on a small screen.

There is a comprehensive set of features and settings to adapt the intranet for mobile usage. Even though the product is not a mobile first platform, with time, knowledge and strong governance principles, administrators will be able to offer a very good experience to their frontline workers.

The app can be downloaded from the public app stores and will recognise automatically at sign-on if a Microsoft licence is present or not and configure accordingly. Customers willing to pay extra will be able to customise their app's name and logo and deploy it to managed devices through their MDM solution. Several apps can even be created without extra fees (for specific event or to address specific population, for example). Mobile app users need to be enrolled in Entra ID and have a Microsoft licence, although Powell say they have a custom solution to give external user access to intranet content on request.

The experience of the app is very good and enhanced compared to default mobile SharePoint pages. Although we did notice that a few buttons and options were rather small to be comfortably used on mobile. All content can be accessed on mobile, but administrators can design a dedicated mobile navigation menu and adapt each page for mobile usage. This is done either by customising widgets to behave differently depending on the device, or by adding tags when creating content to display content on desktop, mobile or on both. Menus and the home pages can even be targeted to specific sub-audiences if needed. We liked the option for each employee to personalise their mobile toolbar at the bottom of the app.

To address specific frontline workers' needs, Powell offers an integration with Microsoft Shift that can be displayed on a mobile page. Dedicated use cases involving field employees to fill in business workflows (report a danger onsite, request materials etc.) can be answered by Microsoft Forms, lists or other M365 elements and then displayed on the mobile app. Push notifications from multiple external systems can also be centralised in the Powell App. Shift employees have the option to turn their notifications off so they are not disturbed during their work.

THINGS TO BEAR IN MIND

Powell is a solid and well-performing platform, scoring quite high on all the scenarios. When buying Powell Intranet, companies should bear in mind that the product relies heavily on SharePoint. This means that it will probably suit organisations that already have a good experience of M365 and are looking to extend and streamline their usage.

As Powell Intranet is a comprehensive and complete product, the learning curve can be steep and take time to fully grasp all the ins and outs of the CMS, the widgets configurations options and administration settings. Companies will need to rely on an integration partner during their implementation phase and dedicate specific resources, preferably Microsoft savvy ones, to manage the intranet. Choosing the correct partner to work with, and internal skills, will be key factors for success. Powell has made great efforts to move some administration capabilities from Powell Manager directly to the front-end, which is an improvement. Powell also offers a range of direct support options such as direct support, customer success plans or ultimate care packages.

Organisations looking for an advanced email and newsletter tool might find the one in Powell quite basic. Previously relying solely on SharePoint Newsletter, the platform now provides a dedicated module to send out email notifications. While there are plans to improve it in the upcoming months, the current version is less sophisticated than in other products. Similarly, improvements to analytic capabilities are a priority on Powell's roadmap, which we look forward to seeing. The current set of reports relies on a mixture of technologies, including PowerBI and standard M365 search analytics, and are not well integrated.

Finally, it's worth remembering that, while being a highly comprehensive solution, Powell Intranet is in the higher category of pricing for all organisation sizes. This is comparatively expensive, especially for a SharePoint intranet in-a-box product that also requires support from a partner.

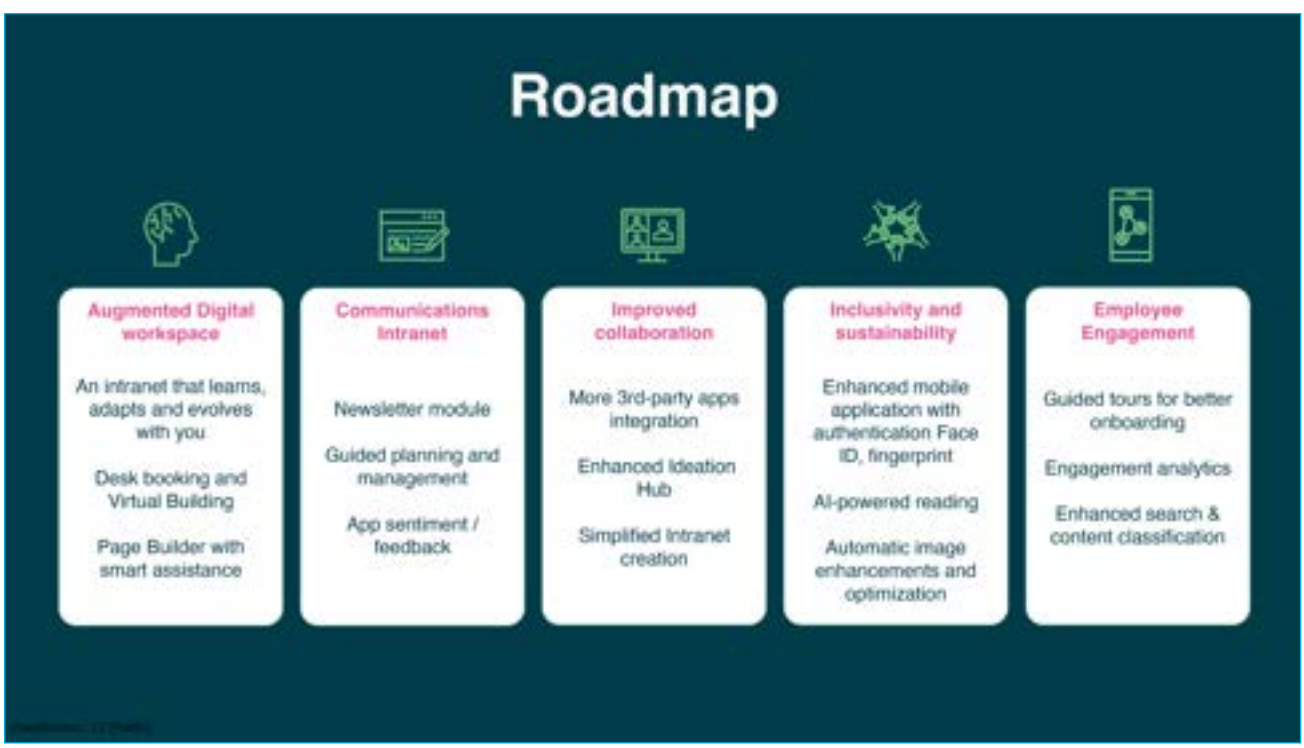
Why choose this product

Powell Intranet is an excellent top layer addition to M365 digital workplace. It provides a great deal of extra web parts, administration options and additional features to offer an enhanced experience on top of SharePoint. Small and medium sized companies will appreciate the numerous ready-to-use templates and modules (crisis communication, communities, desk booking, ideation management, car-pooling etc.), while bigger companies will be able to customise their environment and efficiently manage a complex intranet setup. The product is constantly evolving to provide innovations, such as Powell Buddy, Powell's AI assistant for contribution and search, a fun 'Virtual Building' feature and a lot of well-thought-through setting options.

You may also be interested in...

akumina FRESH omnia

Vendor roadmap



Roadmap images provided by Powell Software.

Back to index

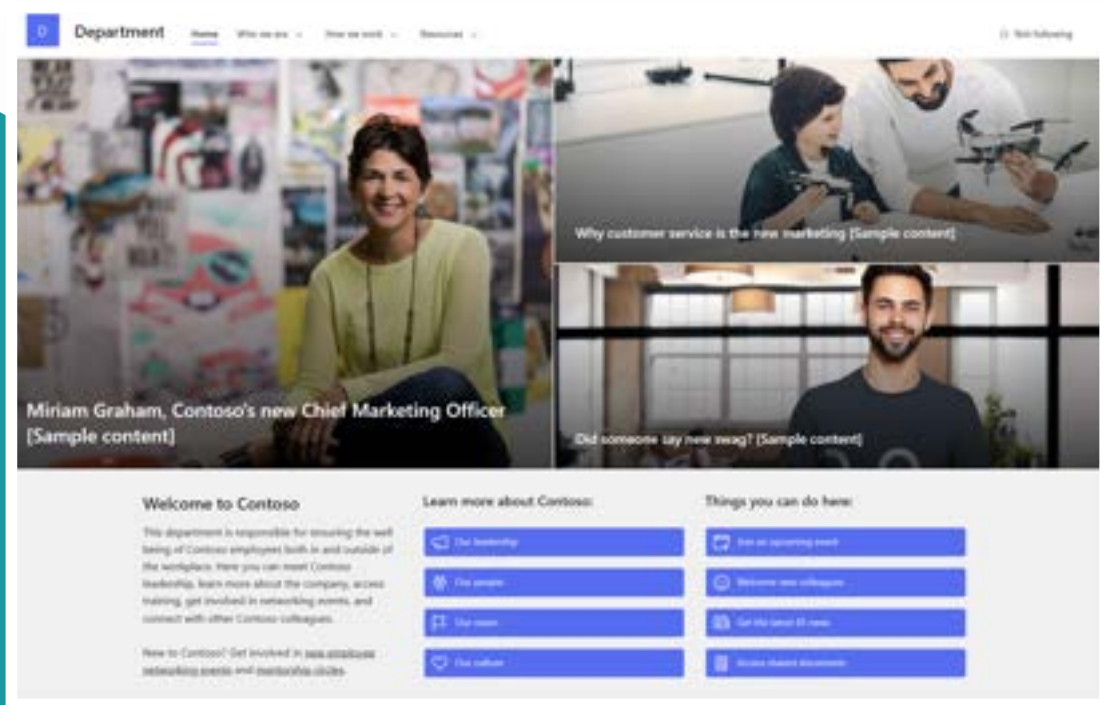
SharePoint and Viva

FULLY STANDALONE

REQUIRES SHAREPOINT

FRONTLINE FOCUS

OTHER



Typical deployment:

Not disclosed

Company locations:

VISIT THE WEBSITE

The product in a nutshell

SharePoint out of the box lets you create simple and attractive intranets quickly and easily, while Viva Connections, Amplify and Engage add extra dimensions to the employee engagement experience.

SUMMARY

SharePoint / Viva Connections in Microsoft 365

SharePoint in Microsoft 365 is positioned as 'the intelligent intranet'. It offers a modern, highly flexible approach to employee communications, as well as powering many elements of Microsoft 365 behind the scenes. Most of Microsoft's recent developments in the intranet space have been within the Viva Suite, and for many this will be an essential add-on. **Viva Connections** gives a way to surface SharePoint intranets within Teams. **Viva Engage** (formerly Yammer) embeds community features into SharePoint and Teams for social interactions. For more advanced communication needs, **Viva Amplify** is there to manage cross-channel communication campaigns. In addition, Microsoft **Copilot** is being interwoven into many of the capabilities above, offering generative AI and automated insights.

Although there are many variants of SharePoint, Viva and Microsoft 365, for the purpose of this review we have focused on the components that best meet intranet requirements, as outlined in our scenarios. We're not, for example, trying to assess Microsoft Teams as a video conferencing or team collaboration tool. What we assessed is the SharePoint plus Microsoft Viva Employee Communications and Communities package, which includes Viva Engage, Amplify and Connections for a small increment over the standard enterprise licenses, and gives access to a limited set of Copilot capabilities too. Where relevant we've also considered the role of **Teams**.

Out of the box, standard SharePoint Online is attractive and the basics are relatively easy to use for small-company set-ups, making it simple to get going. To create a basic intranet, communication and hub sites offer a friendly editing environment that makes it straightforward for site owners to change layouts. However, it is possible to end up with a complex and messy result without careful forward planning. Viva Connections extends this ability with a dashboard for tools, a personalised news feed and the ability to integrate a SharePoint intranet into Teams. It

SharePoint Online

Viva Connections

Viva Engage

Viva Amplify

Teams

meets a perceived need to 'take the intranet to where the users are', though we feel the implementation is currently a little clunky. The mobile experience in the SharePoint or Teams app is not an intranet as many would expect but does reflect the collaboration and task-centred aspects of Microsoft 365 well, and with a little configuration it can deliver a good mobile news experience too.

Internal Comms pros may find SharePoint takes a little getting used to, as its default model is to aggregate news from many diverse sources. However, there is an 'organization news site' feature that can be used as a hub to push a central 'authoritative' voice out to many end points. The Viva Amplify module also makes it easier for comms creators. The ability to create a professionally curated news experience can sometimes require careful planning, as the presentation of news is partly determined by an algorithm which tailors what is shown to the individual. In contrast, smaller companies with limited resources may welcome this level of automation, as SharePoint can do a good job of keeping the home page fresh by pulling in new content from across the intranet estate.

Despite all the feature advances, SharePoint and Viva Connections remain a complex platform to build and run an intranet on once it reaches any kind of size. Smaller companies can do much with the built-in features but may find they have to buy in expertise to fully exploit them or where more than a small set of sites are required. Medium to large organisations are likely to hit limitations around customisation and governance. However, these are not necessarily show-stoppers, and many companies decide they are happy to accept these constraints in return for something that integrates well with other parts of Microsoft 365 and is covered by their licenses.

Finally, it's worth noting that Microsoft is investing heavily in Copilot (actually 'Copilots', as there are multiple products with different capabilities). This adds powerful AI capabilities to assist information workers. For example, there are Copilots that can synthesise answers from internal content as part of a natural language dialogue ("do I get paid when I'm off sick?"); can summarise texts and answer queries about video transcripts ("What actions were assigned to Jordan in yesterday's Teams meeting?"); summarise documents; draft text; and even insert new tables and analyses into Office documents. A full Copilot license is relatively expensive, so we haven't included all elements in this review, but it is included in the price point we picked for Viva Engage and Amplify.

Notes:

1) *There are many variants and caveats to what is possible in SharePoint and Viva, depending on license used and location (for example, M365 Government Cloud has more restrictions and tends to roll out features later). Readers should take careful note of the version we have reviewed (Microsoft 365 E1 licenses plus 'Microsoft Viva Employee Communications and Communities') compared to their intended deployment. Note too that there are actually multiple Copilots, so please check your licensing carefully for any intended use.*

2) *We invited Microsoft to demonstrate their product to us using the same process as other vendors, but they were not available to participate. We've therefore independently reviewed the product based on our many years of working with SharePoint and Teams, and with support from additional reviewers' broader perspectives. Although we believe all comments to be true and accurate, these have not been validated by Microsoft.*

Pricing

PRICE BAND	
1,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
5,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
20,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
50,000 users	$ $ $ $ $

These prices are indicative, offering a comparison of the products featured in this report only. Please contact the vendor for a bespoke quote.

PRICING MODEL

Subscription - price based on number of users.

COSTS TYPICALLY

Fairly evenly spread across three years, depending on whether significant development is chosen.

DISCOUNTS

Microsoft offers special discounts and sometimes free seats to non-profit organisations.

PRICE INCLUDES

Based on E1 Office 365 license (which also covers Teams, Exchange and more) and the Microsoft Viva Employee Communications and Communities package, which adds an extra $2 per user per month. F1, a limited license for frontline workers, is much cheaper. Please see Microsoft's website for full pricing details. This review assumes other optional extras such as Microsoft Copilot are at extra cost (indicated by scores in brackets). We have not included SharePoint Premium which adds high-end AI tools for content governance and content processing via 'Syntex'.

Product type

Majority ready-to-run

Branding opportunities

Good branding, single choice

Base systems

Fully standalone

Requires SharePoint

Other

Sectors

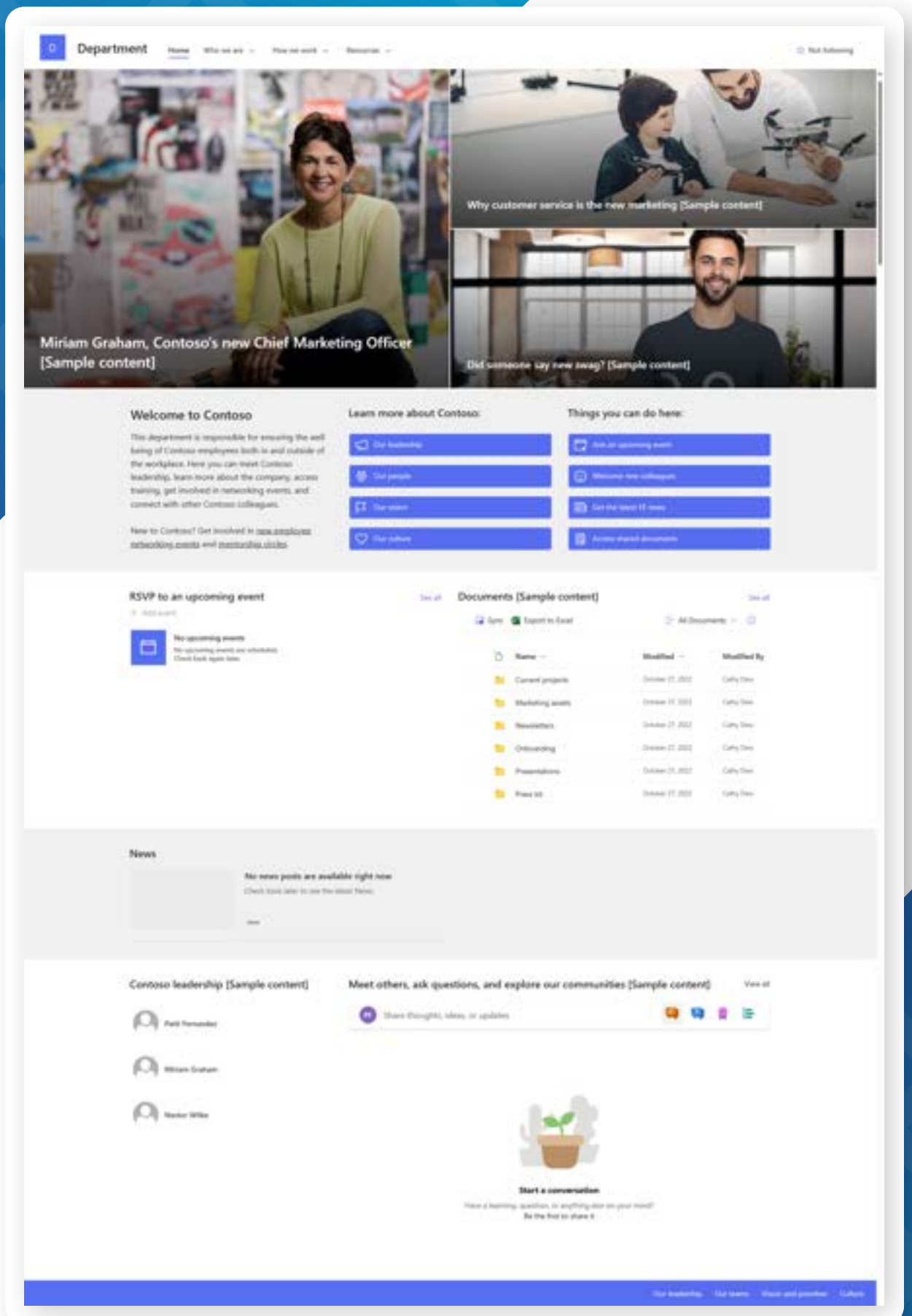
Public services, government and administration

Retail

Engineering and manufacturing

Healthcare

Accountancy, banking and finance


Department
Miriam Graham, Contoso's new Chief Marketing Officer [Sample content]
Why customer service is the new marketing [Sample content]
Did someone say new swag? [Sample content]
Welcome to Contoso
Learn more about Contoso:
Things you can do here:
RSVP to an upcoming event
Documents [Sample content]
News
No news posts are available right now
Contoso leadership [Sample content]
Meet others, ask questions, and explore our communities [Sample content]
Start a conversation

COMPANY AND PRODUCT

Company details

Company
Microsoft Corporation

ISO 27001 certified
Yes

Data residency
Many country data centres available but defaults are EMEA, APAC and Americas.

Company founded
1975

Product launched
2001

Typical client size
Not disclosed

Largest deployment so far
Not disclosed, but probably Accenture (480,000 employees). Several companies over 200,000 employees.

Customers
190 million users across 200,000+ organisations. Over 85% of Fortune 500 companies use SharePoint, including Bank of America, Wells Fargo, JP Morgan, Unilever, and ExxonMobil.

Partner locations
Global

Company locations
Global; headquartered in Redmond, USA

Product and technical details

Name of product

SharePoint Online & Viva

Deployment

Client on-premises*	Client private cloud	Microsoft Azure	Amazon Web Services	Vendor-hosted	Microsoft 365 tenant	Google Cloud	Other**

*On-premises version differs substantially from that reviewed here
**Government-specific cloud options

Authentication supported

Entra ID	ADFS	Okta	Open ID	Oauth	G Suite	Other

App deployment

Google Play store	Apple store	MDM	MAM	Other

Accessibility

Microsoft doesn't make absolute claims, but do publish detailed conformance reports and meet most criteria. Worthy of a note is that web parts and layouts all conform to WCAG 2.1 AA out of the box and work across screen reader, colour modes and even in immersive AR headsets. There is also a Disability Answer Desk which will directly address any accessibility issue found in the product.

Document library sources integrated

Box	Dropbox	Google Drive	SharePoint	OneDrive	Other*

*See Scenario 4 for details

Optional integrated enterprise search engines

Coveo	Elastic	IBM	Lucidworks	Microsoft	Mindbreeze	Sinequa	Other

User interface multi-language

Machine translation	**Pre-configured**	**Editable**	**Right to left script supported**	Other

Content multi-language

Machine translation for publishers	Machine translation for end users	Editable machine translation for publishers	**Manual creation for publishers**	**Right to left script**	Other

Set-up and support

Set-up process for new clients

For small customers, online help is available in the SharePoint help centre, but everything is self-service. Medium to large customers tend to use Microsoft Certified Partners.

Version numbers

Demonstrated to ClearBox: N/A

At January 2025: N/A

Product updates

Several per month

Product update process

Most are rolled out to Microsoft 365 tenants automatically. Microsoft gives advance warning and indicates impact level. Customers can choose to defer some high-impact changes, they can also elect individuals to get changes early if they opt in to the 'Targeted release' scheme.

Reverse-out options

Phased withdrawal of access. Manual migration to new host required.

Technical support

Email support	Phone support	Chat support	Online portal	24/7 support	Office hours only

User community

Very strong, with SharePoint User Groups in hundreds of cities around the world. There are also many online forums for technical and business users. Microsoft host the annual Ignite conference, where SharePoint features prominently, and host the online Tech Community. They also provide extensive input to the annual SharePoint Conference in Las Vegas and the European SharePoint Conference (location varies).

Voice of the vendor

Microsoft bills SharePoint as: "Your mobile, intelligent intranet. Share and manage content, knowledge, and applications to empower teamwork, quickly find information, and seamlessly collaborate across the organization."

Voice of the customer

People using SharePoint as their corporate intranet, including those new to SharePoint, praised the ease of content publishing and the versatility of hand-built page templates. One person said: "Out of the Box thankfully gives us so much more options to build a new intranet from scratch and bring it all together. Only a few short years ago, you would have needed an MS Partner company to come in and build an intranet."

Other customers using SharePoint appreciated the integration with Microsoft 365 apps, the simplicity of managing just one software license and the transparent roadmap. For example, one respondent said: "Being part of the M365 suite, it is easy for IT to implement and compatible with most office products. It doesn't have to go through several rounds of risk assessments and compliance approvals." Another respondent said, "Love what I can do with Power Automate and SharePoint. I can create an entire workflow process myself that just a few years ago would have needed an expensive developer or loads of IT people to do."

We received in-depth comments about things to improve. One person from a large organisation said they were "literally in fear" of the work necessary to check problems brought about by new releases and updates, and thought that most updates did not bring truly useful functionality. Such frustrations were echoed by others who found that ways of doing things changed constantly: "Bringing users along with the constant changes Microsoft makes. You think you've got used to a way of doing things, and then it changes. This can be frustrating." Another also felt vexed by the roadmap "It would be good to see them focus on improving one or two most used products like SharePoint or Viva Engage, instead of pushing out more half-baked products into the suite."

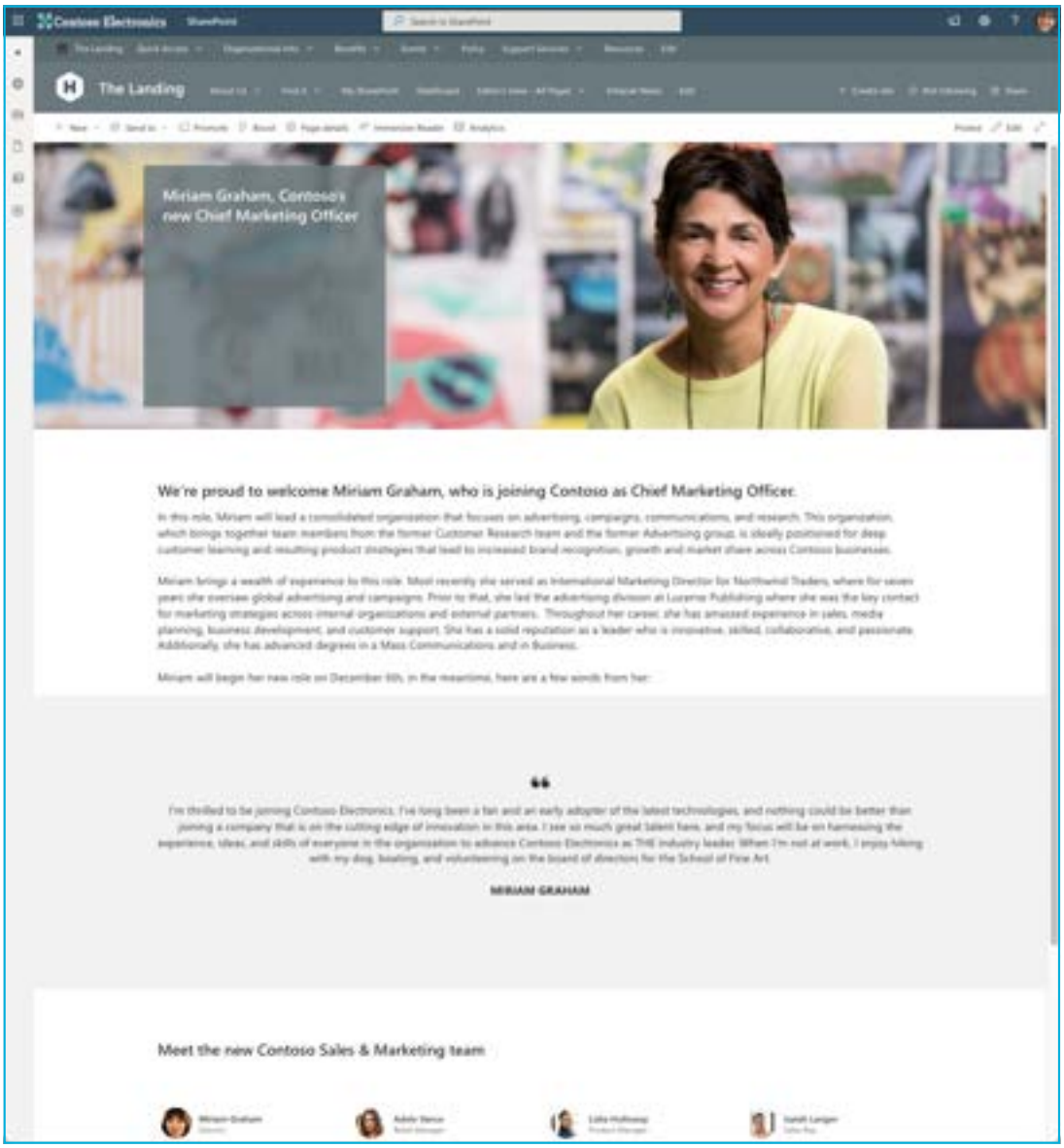
One administrator would like to see a "mini version" of SharePoint and the Viva suite for frontline workers for easier deployment and less expensive licensing. Another wished for a "better navigation menu, more logical information architecture capabilities, explicit publisher / approver roles and not only managed on site level." Analytics came up several times as an area for improvement. One person wished for "Better analytics for SharePoint pages and analytics for events."

When asked about working with Microsoft as the vendor, we note that most customers work with an implementation partner, rather than directly with Microsoft. Those that were fortunate to have "direct access" to support teams said working with Microsoft was "great", however one administrator told us they felt the support model was inadequate, and repeated that it is "exhausting trying to keep up with releases and the inevitable breakages" despite using the SharePoint feedback portal. One respondent characterised it as "Poor – while the support individuals involved try their best, the Microsoft support model is broken." Several customers said support was slow or that they felt they could have little impact on the roadmap. The overall impression is that it helps to know individuals in Microsoft, and people such as Mark Kashman were praised for being proactive.

SCENARIOS & SCORES

Please see the Scenarios below for more detail on each of these.

SCENARIO AND SCORE	KEY BENEFITS	IMPROVEMENTS / CONSIDERATIONS
3.5 **1. User Experience & Visual Appeal**	Capable of attractive page designs. Layouts work well across a range of screen sizes.	Navigation can become very confusing without careful planning and governance. Branding opportunities a little constrained but expected to get much better through 2025.
3+ **2. Publishing & Communications Management**	Creating pages and news posts is straightforward. Viva Amplify adds a campaigns and cross-channel element. Copilot assists with article writing.	Audience targeting is less flexible than others. Amplify not well integrated with rest of the news publishing experience.
3+ **3. Community & Engagement**	Viva Engage very capable communities platform. Reactions, polls and comments well supported.	Engage, SharePoint and Teams all have different 'social' features, but this is set to improve in 2025. Some employee wellbeing modules extra cost.
3+ **4. Integrations & Services (Including M365)**	Close integration with M365, particularly Teams. Very comprehensive connectors to non-Microsoft applications. App store gives extra options to improve functionality.	Viva Connections dashboard has few integrations. Alerts from other tools not well integrated.
4+ **5. Information Finding & Search**	Powerful capabilities from Microsoft Search. Useful search curation tools. Federation with other sources.	Viva Suite licenses required to bring the people search experience up to par with rivals.
3+ **6. Administrator Experience**	Simple page administration is consistent and easy to learn. Versatile page-level templates.	Governance across a multi-site intranet gets complex; numerous admin panels across M365.
2+ **7. Analytics**	Comprehensive platform adoption reporting from M365 / Azure. Viva Amplify campaign analytics are improving.	Internal Communicators will find audience engagement reporting disappointing. No 'mandatory reads'.
2.5+ **8. Mobile & Frontline Support**	Teams offers several frontline-specific tools.	The mobile apps overlap functionality and need configuration to feel more like an 'intranet in your pocket'. Enrolment for non-desk employees may feel convoluted.



Page layouts are versatile, enabling contemporary, appealing designs.

From a user point of view, modern SharePoint is capable of some very attractive page designs that use images, space and highlights effectively. Layouts generally work well across a range of screen widths, and 2025 saw the release of highly flexible layouts, giving freedom from the traditional restrictions of a 'grid' approach. Other recent additions such as the 'Editorial Card' web part work well, giving plenty of opportunity for visually striking page elements. On first use, a neat feature is that a short series of pop-ups appear to give users guidance; although it would be better still if admins could adapt this to an individual intranet.

When the intranet is embedded into the Teams desktop application via Viva Connections (see Scenario 4), the SharePoint element works in just the same way, but things become less predictable; controls appear in multiple places and some actions lead to a browser window opening rather than staying within the Teams app. Within Connections there are also multiple sub-tabs for different kinds

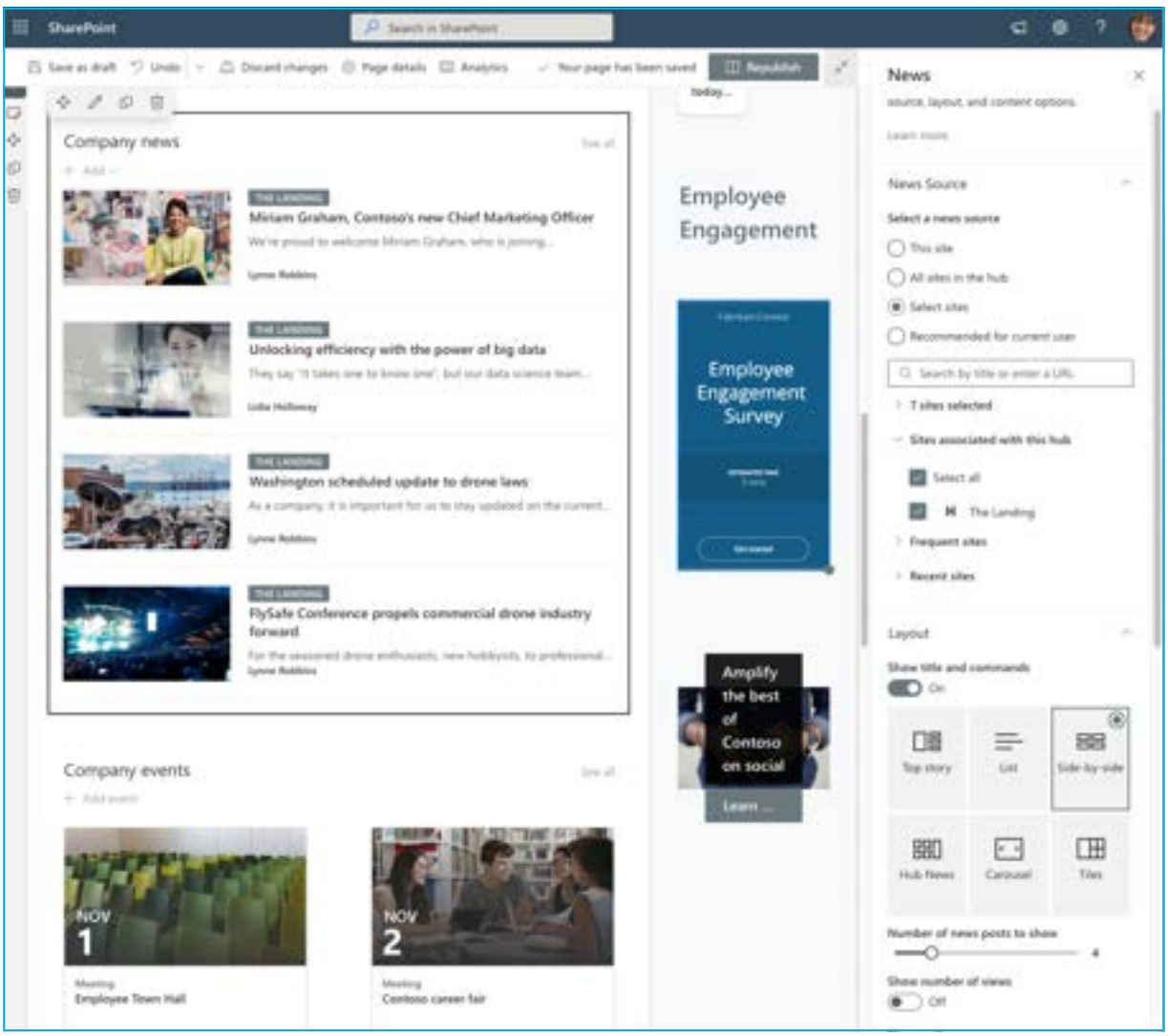
of 'Feeds' from news, meetings, social posts etc. Even for highly experienced users, this presentation feels convoluted, and we expect many users will simply ignore it.

Navigation in SharePoint can be a challenge. When starting from the intranet home page (typically set as a 'home site') there will usually be a hub site menu – which is the 'intranet-wide menu' – and there will often be a site-specific menu as well. Having two horizontal menus is rare on the web and so could cause confusion. There is a further option of 'global navigation' which appears as a vertical menu from the left hand 'App bar'. Although this packs in a lot overall, there is potential for it to be overwhelming, and judicious design choices will be needed to choose which menu structures to use. We often suggest that the intranet-wide menu should be styled as a mega menu, while site-specific menus should be styled as cascade drop-downs, to provide distinction.

Audience-based targeting for menus is possible but gets complex behind the scenes at scale (see Scenario 6). It's also possible to land on a site that looks quite different from a core intranet site, for example when clicking on a news story that appears in an aggregated feed.

There's limited ability to generate notifications in SharePoint. They do exist on the top toolbar, but SharePoint and Viva still rely heavily on email notifications and setting them up will be too fiddly for your average user. Notifications can also appear on Viva Connections' 'dashboard' and in MS Teams, but this is all very fragmented. We would rather see a more coherent approach that makes more comprehensive use of Teams, and Microsoft say this is on the roadmap. The addition of 'Announcements' in Viva Connections is an initial step in the right direction.

SharePoint makes it easy to apply simple branding – a logo, on-brand theme colours and a banner image for a site. Changes beyond this get complicated, but many customers choose to simply accept these limitations. The recently released ability to add images or textured backgrounds to sections and manage font families already gives more options for expressing a brand. Although administrators can package these brands into themes, consistency across a whole intranet cannot be readily imposed top-down without third-party governance tools to ensure the themes are used. There is, however, the SharePoint 'brand center' and this adds the ability to manage fonts, colours and images from a central location to encourage consistency.



News web parts can aggregate news from other sites, such as all those associated with a hub site.

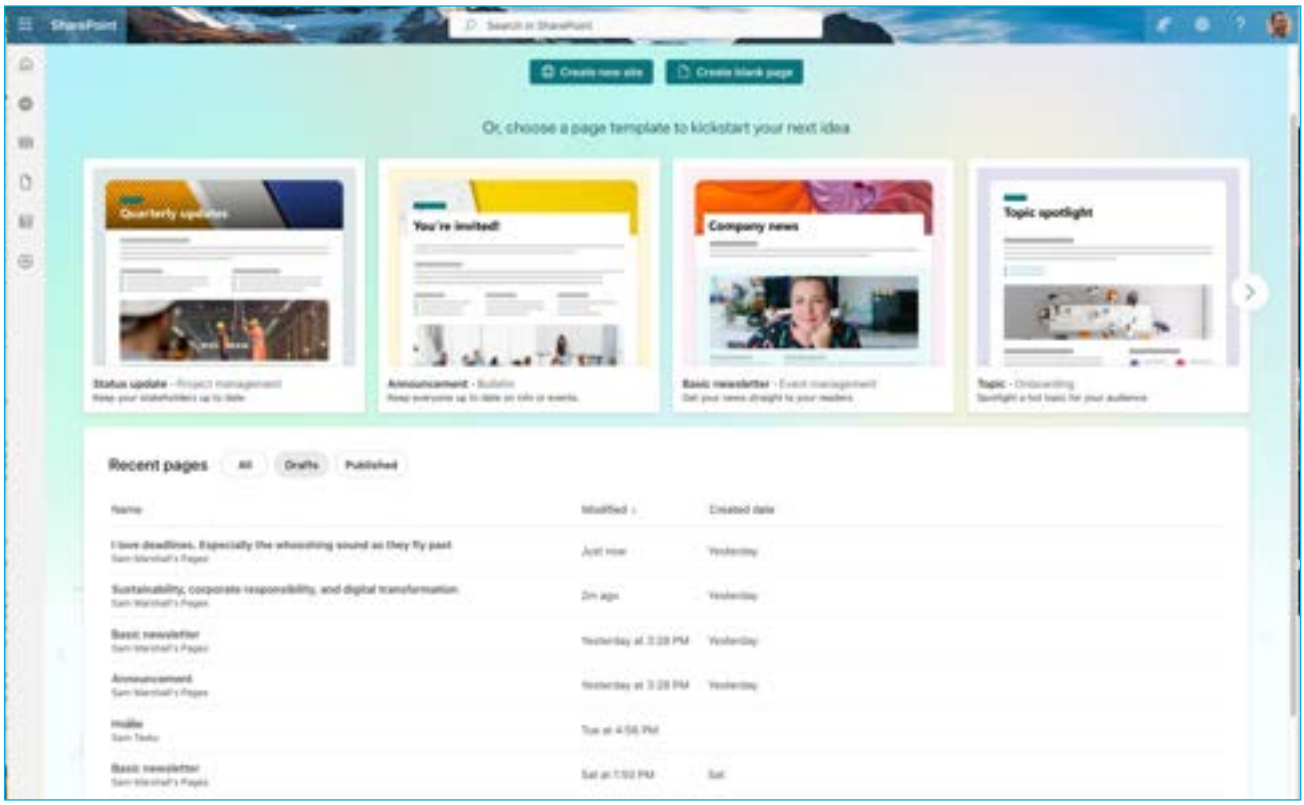
It is easy to create a news story page with SharePoint, and straightforward to add images, videos and even charts. Every news item is a fully featured SharePoint page, making it simple to add rich functionality via web parts. The image picker is particularly handy, supporting libraries or corporate image assets as well as a licensed stock image search. We like the built-in image editing tool for simple enhancements within the content editor.

News can be rolled up from other sites and targeted to show only stories tagged with metadata topics. This is straightforward once the initial configuration is done, but less powerful than matching those tags to an employee's profile. The same end effect can be achieved if news is configured to only appear for a particular audience, but these must be defined in Entra (Active Directory), meaning that some internal communicators may be more dependent on IT admins than they would wish. Similarly, users cannot easily opt-in to news topics, but they can follow sites for specific interests such as New York and Dallas offices to get news for both in their 'Viva Connections' feed.

Many larger organisations want a model where news is pushed from a central source to multiple locations. This is possible using an 'organization news site', or more flexibly using metadata to tag news stories and then picking up on those tags by configuring news web parts on a page. However, making this work in practice requires co-ordination between site owners and publishers - other platforms tackle this need more elegantly. In general Microsoft's model encourages news to be widely scattered, so internal comms teams may find it hard to deliver a well-curated news experience without well-maintained governance processes and many conversations. However, it is possible to get to a smart endpoint, where there is official central news and then automatic aggregation news from other locations on the intranet.

Currently, news can be scheduled to publish on a pre-set date, but there is no intranet-wide way to plan or monitor this. A simple approvals process is built in though, and this works well. To promote a story the 'boost news' feature also pushes it to prime position on the hero web part, and it is smart enough to de-promote a story for a user once it has been read. However, the story must 'live' in a designated 'organization news site' for this to be an option. Boosted news appears in Viva Connections as an 'Activity' alert in Teams. There's no other 'alert' feature or ability to push out a notification, although many companies get around this with a suitably styled web part or by sending out emails from SharePoint.

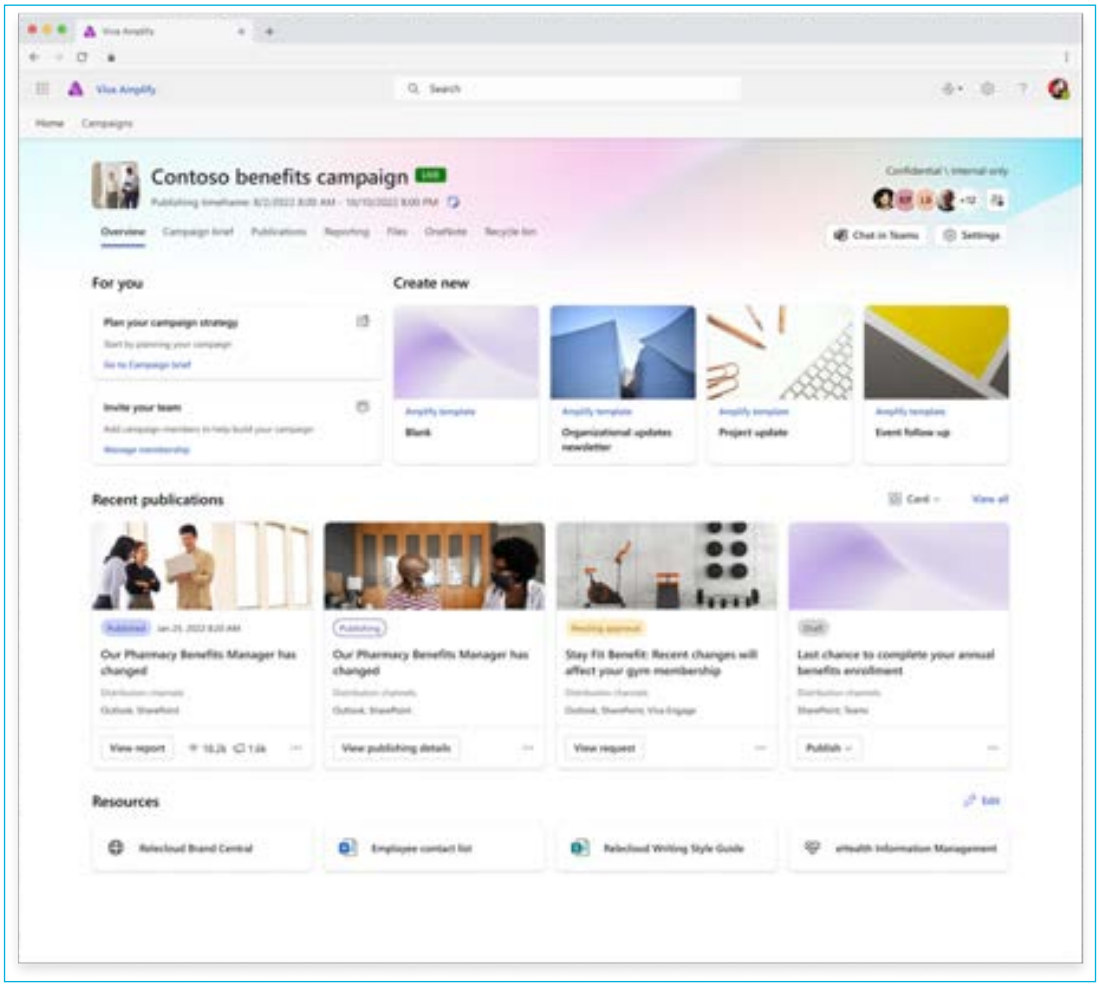
Released in 2024, a new 'start experience' gives authors a central place to see their pages. We welcome this dashboard view as it encourages authors to keep track of all their contributions. However, we have strong reservations from a governance perspective – please see Scenario 6.



The new SharePoint 'start experience' gives each user a dashboard of their recent publications.

For cross-channel publishing, the Viva Amplify module includes a campaigns capability. News can be created as a series of 'broadcasts' around a campaign and then pushed out to specific channels such as SharePoint, Outlook and Teams (Engage is due mid-2025). The process for Amplify is clearly designed, but Microsoft see it more as a tool for central IC teams rather than something for routine news creators across an organisation. As such, it feels a little disconnected from the overall news publishing experience. We would welcome the addition of a shared publishing calendar or some other way to allow larger IC teams to co-ordinate planning too.

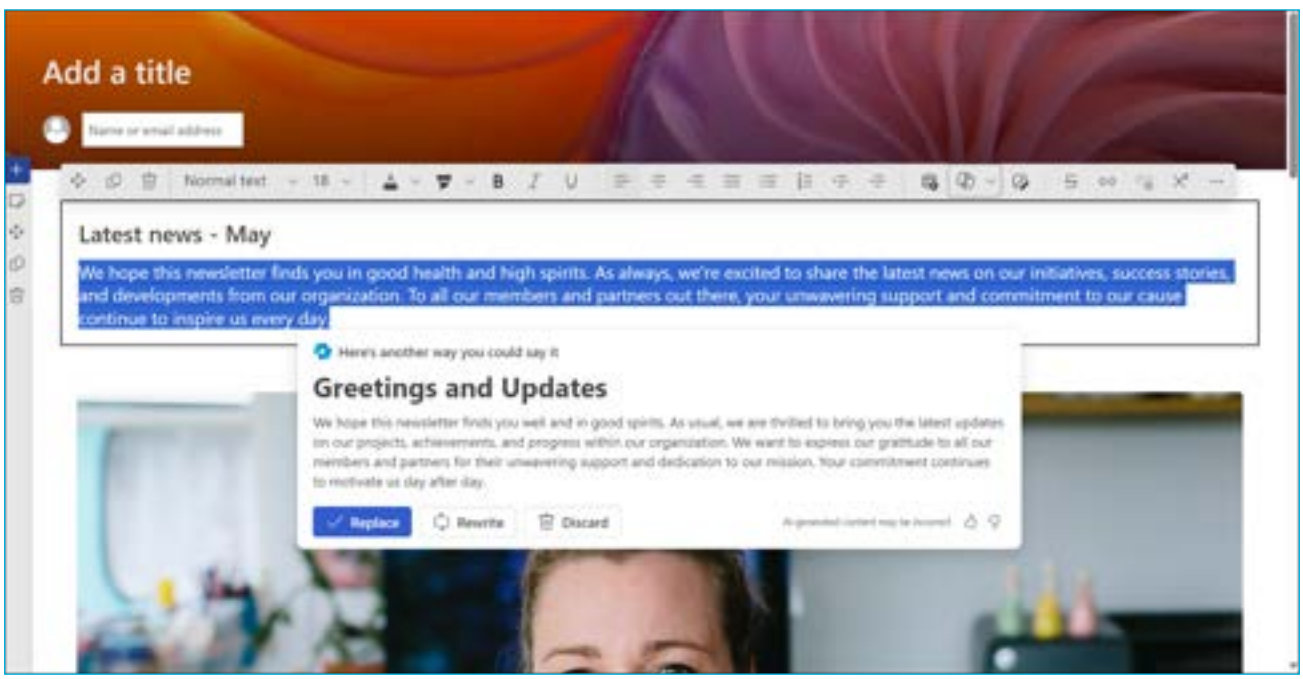
News can also be promoted via email. There is an AI-driven weekly digest of stories that may have been missed, and this is individualised to each person – if the user clicked on the story in SharePoint, it won't be repeated in the digest. Microsoft claim that the algorithm understands which content will be of most interest to the user, removing the burden of trying to specifically target audiences or users having to manually subscribe. Site managers can send out manually curated digests for their content too. It's also possible to send full news posts in Outlook. There are six 'email ready' templates with a cut-down range of web parts so publishers can use SharePoint as the design tool, and recipients can see the full-fidelity article without leaving their inbox. This has received a mixed reaction: some prefer digest 'teasers' that require users to still visit the intranet.



Viva Amplify brings a centralised campaign capability for internal communicators wanting to broadcast to multiple channels. (Image credit: Microsoft)

Microsoft has been promoting Copilot heavily over the last year, and as you may expect Copilot has been integrated into the content creation tools for intranets. For example, in Viva Amplify 'Rewrite with Copilot' can offer revised drafts of selected text to make it more concise, casual, formal or enthusiastic to reflect campaign goals and objectives. We welcome this addition, though the options available are not as comprehensive as some of the non-SharePoint intranet platforms in this report. Copilot for Amplify is included in the license, but the additional cost to use Copilot to do the same things for SharePoint pages will seem high to many.

New for 2025 is the ability to use Copilot to create pages and sites based on a text prompt (at additional cost). We were initially impressed at the sophistication of the page layouts supported, and the use of prompt templates to help guide usage. However, the results were underwhelming, and we miss the ability to go back and adjust the initial prompt.



Copilot can assist with the drafting of articles by suggesting ways to re-write them. (Image credit: Microsoft)

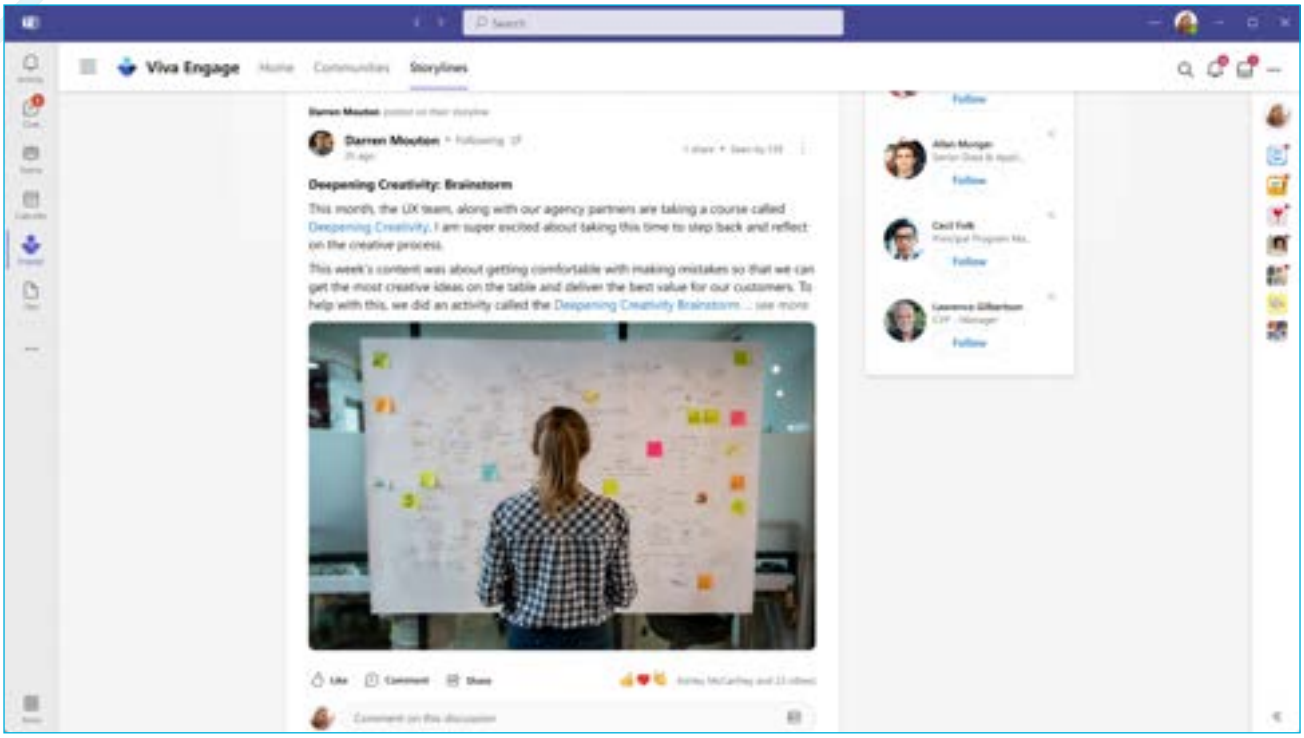
3. COMMUNITY & ENGAGEMENT

Communities are supported through Viva Engage, and these can scale from small to enterprise-wide groups. (Image credit: Microsoft)

Microsoft's primary tool for community and social engagement is Viva Engage (formerly Yammer). It provides a good option for communities of practice and more recently for individual creators via the 'Storyline' feature. Engage is well set up for online communities, expert forums, employee resource groups (ERGs), hobby and interest forums. It supports modern social features such as giving praise, ad-hoc polls, and a range of possible reactions rather than just 'likes'. We like the ability to mark some communities as 'official' company channels – indicated by a 'verified' icon. Another welcome addition recently is a feature to nominate 'experts' for a community. Experts can mark a post as a 'best answer' to a question and show as a listing on the community page.

Engage activity can be made more visible with SharePoint web parts that allow flexible embedding of groups, topics or even one person's posts into a page. Viva Engage's integration into Teams also makes it feel less like 'one more place to go' than it used to be. However, Engage still has the air of a bolt-on rather than something fully interwoven into an intranet, and many companies struggle to differentiate it from Teams as the place for social collaboration.

The Storyline element of Viva Engage adds a contemporary blog-style capability, similar to Instagram (if images or video) or an article on LinkedIn (if textual). Previously, users could only post into a specific community, but a Storyline post is shared directly into the feed of people who follow you, as well as anyone you @mention in the post. In addition, there is a Storylines landing page, where users see a personalised feed combining people they follow with trending content from across the organisation and posts by their leaders. It is also possible for a Storyline to be a branded channel, owned by a team or ERG. Unlike a community, other users can respond and comment on posts, but not publish new ones.

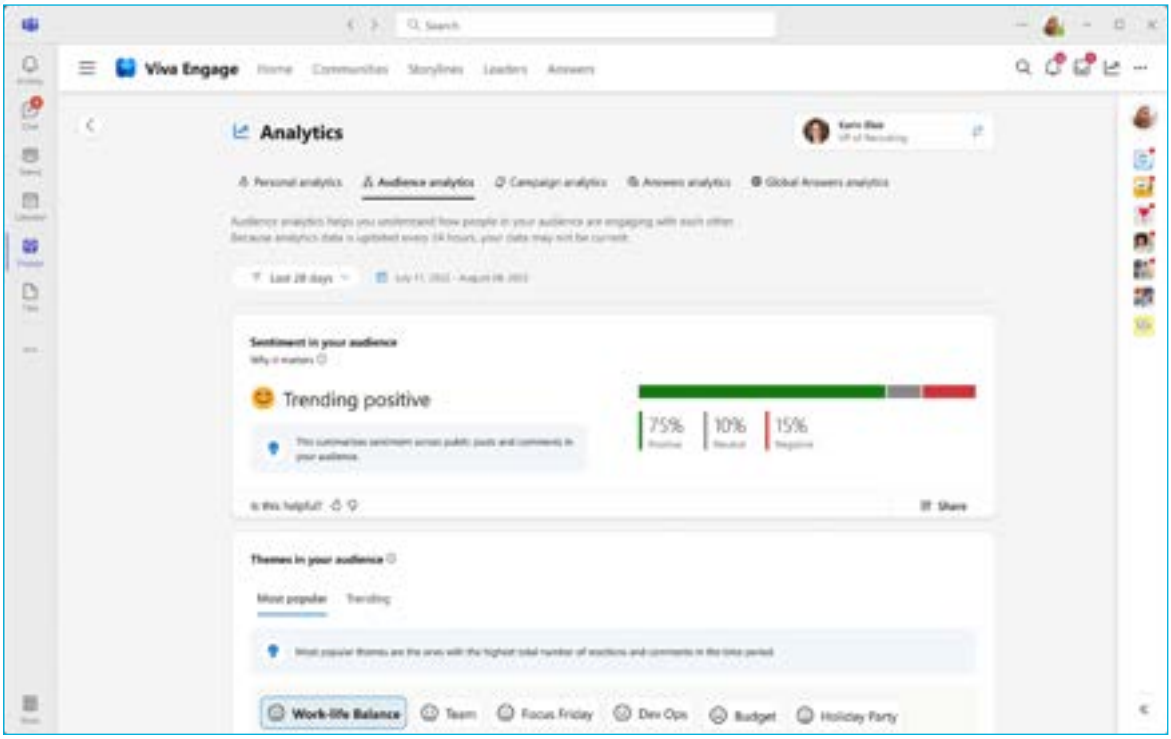


Storyline allows people to create individual posts, sharing their personal perspectives, ideas and experiences. (Image credit: Microsoft)

With a Viva Employee Communications and Communities license (included in the license pricing we're reviewing here), admins can also identify select users as 'leaders' (which could be by position or expertise, for example). Leaders are then set up with a target audience, and a useful dashboard of analytics shows audience sentiment and engagement with posts. This also adds a 'Leadership Corner' destination, making it easy for employees to follow their thoughts and opinions. Also included is AMA – an 'ask me anything' capability.

AI-assistance through Copilot is included in the licensing. We think this is an excellent example of AI collaboration: Copilot will prompt the author to consider audience reaction as the article is drafted and make suggestions for content. It will also predict the employee sentiment response it is likely to receive. More Copilot elements are planned, such as AI-driven moderation to flag problem posts, and if this works well, we're sure it will be seen as a very welcome addition.

Engage 'campaigns' are also worth a mention. These can be used when an organisation wants to create a buzz around a topic, such as employee ideas, a fundraiser or a company values celebration. 'Official' campaigns centre on the use of a certified hashtag to label them. Once set up admins see summary analytics across the campaign, and users can access a page showing an aggregated feed. Campaigns can also be 'unofficial' and within a single community.



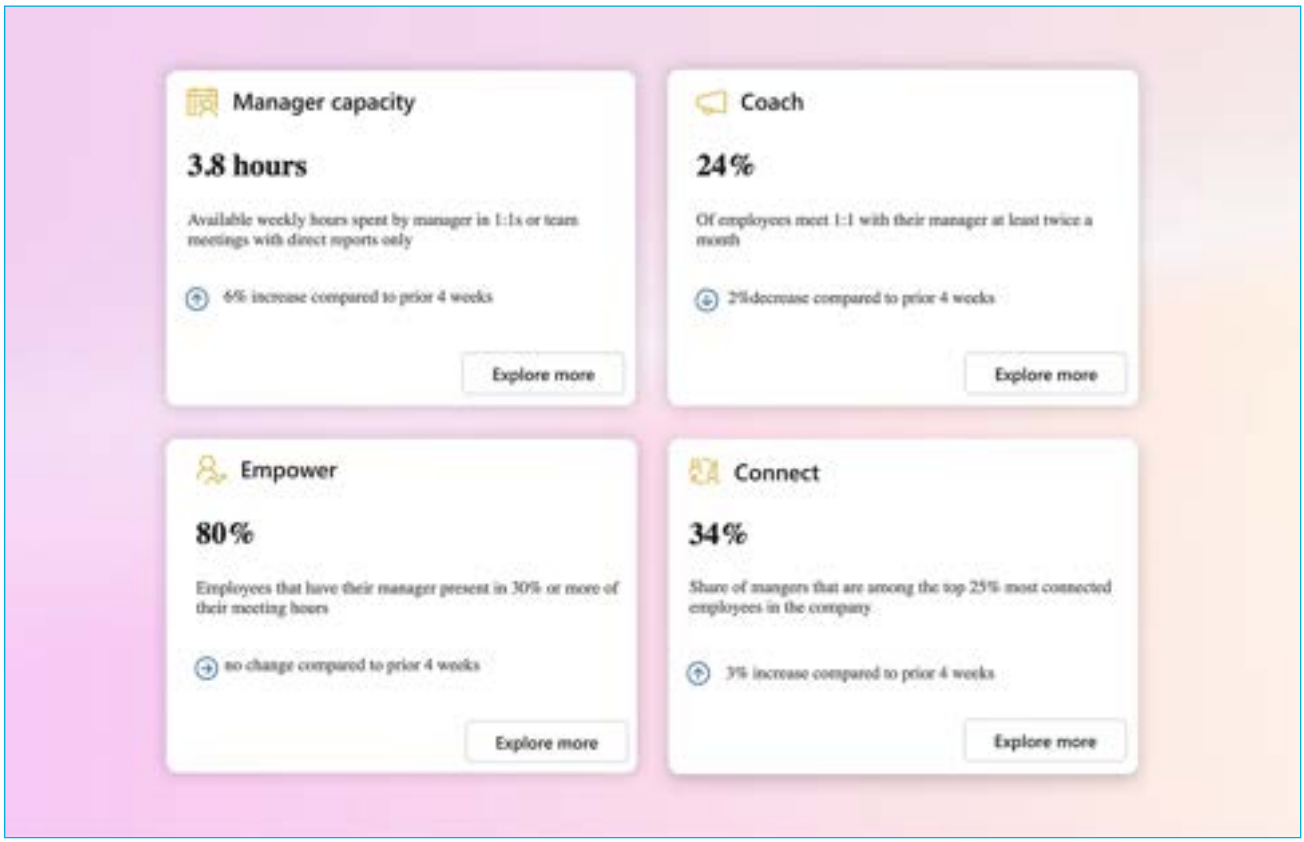
With a Viva Engage premium license, leader's Storylines will show rich analytics on feedback and sentiment to recent posts. (image credit: Microsoft)

The social side of SharePoint is weaker than some rival platforms. SharePoint features comments and reactions on pages, and this works pleasantly enough but the overall experience is fragmented. For example, comments on news, Stream and Engage all work separately. Governance for SharePoint comments also falls short – there is no ability to report a comment and no central analytics for comments. You can, however, add a 'highlighted news' web part that filters by 'most commented' stories, and we like that the card for a news story headline shows the number of comments clearly.

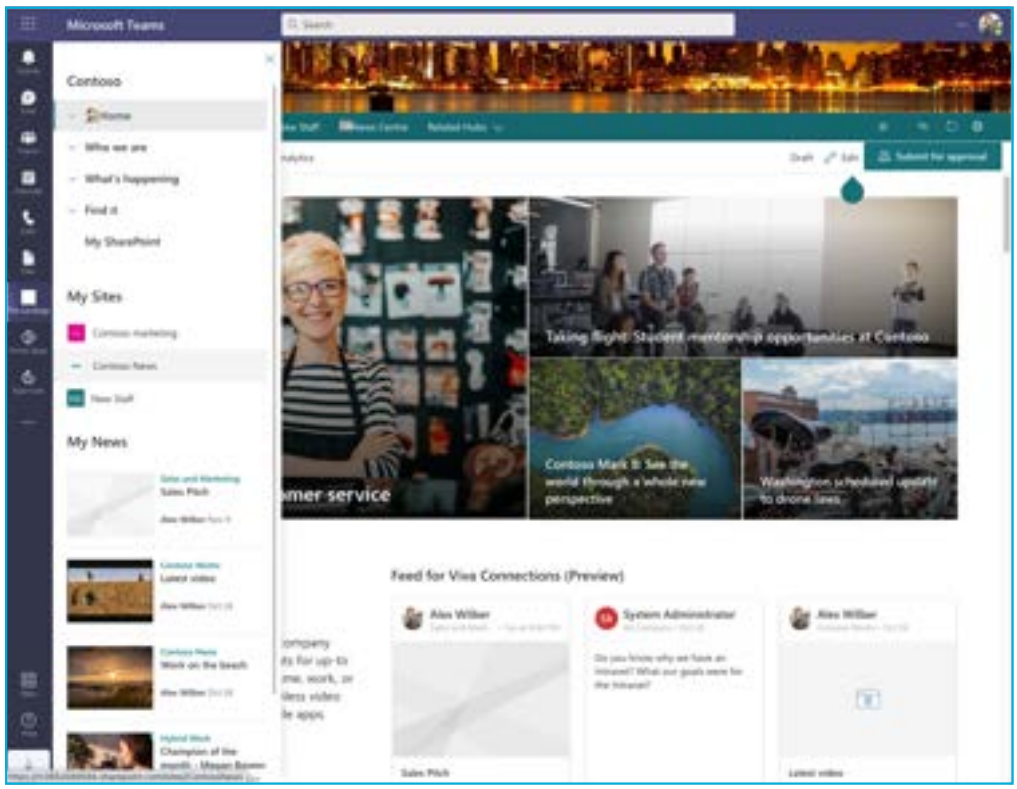
In addition to polls in Viva Engage, surveys can be created using Microsoft Forms. These embed well within a SharePoint page or Teams channel and can include a range of response types as well as images and video. A simple results overview is included, and it is easy to export them into Excel. The main limitation of this approach is that there's no way to segment the data on screen, for example to show data from one office, and manipulation in Excel can be time consuming. There also isn't an easy way to see trends over time without manually stitching the results of each survey together.

Microsoft's play for the 'Wellbeing' dimension is Viva Insights. For individuals this comes included with Microsoft 365 and encourages employees to book focus time, stay connected with colleagues and reflect. It even includes meditation and mindfulness exercises and integrates well with Outlook and your calendar. For an additional fee there's also Viva Insights (premium). This gives managers an aggregate report on things like email overload, employee wellbeing self-reports and team meeting habits. This seems more valuable than the individual version if used with care and consent.

Overall, we find Microsoft's approach fairly uneven in this scenario. There's a lack of cohesion across features, and this disjointedness can be challenging given the intent of this scenario to build a sense of community. There are certainly applications that will meet business needs well, such as Viva Engage for social or informal collaboration spaces, but other products in this report are more cohesive. We also note that with recent additions such as 'Leadership corner' and campaigns, the purpose of Viva Engage seems to be edging away from communities and more towards it being another internal communications channel. In 2025 the Engage 'Storyline' will be surfaced in Teams and Engage announcements will show in a banner on Viva Connections. We very much welcome integrations like this.



In Viva Insights, managers can measure trends across key themes such as capacity, connection and coaching.



An intranet in Microsoft Teams using Viva Connections. The intranet name ('The Landings' in this example) appears on the Teams toolbar.

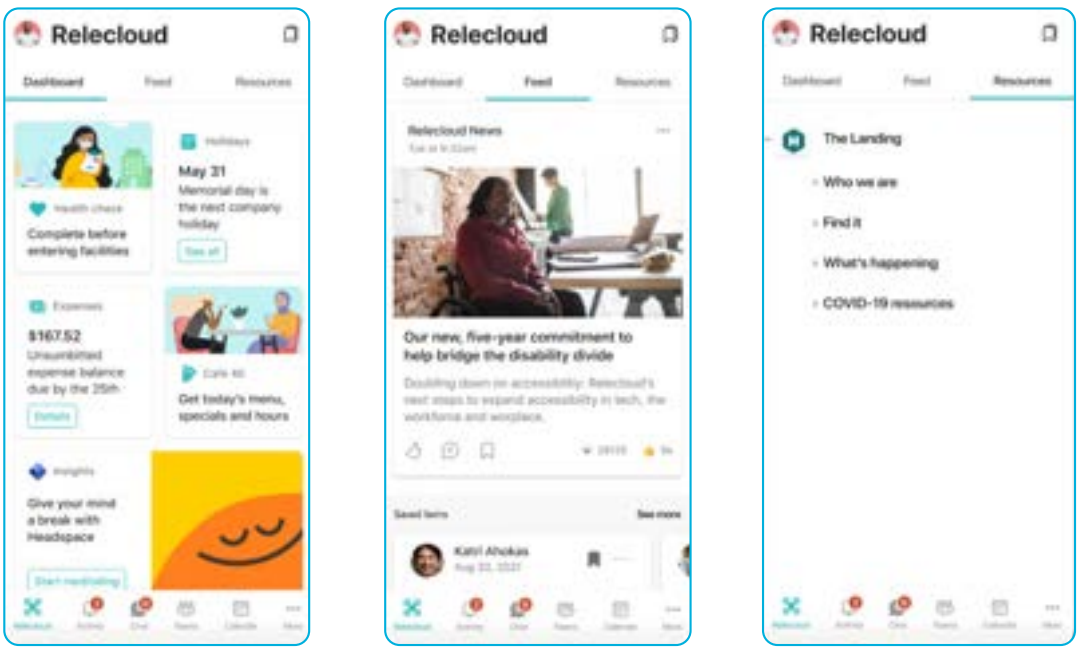
For many companies, integration with other parts of Microsoft 365 is a compelling reason to use SharePoint for an intranet, so you'd expect this scenario to be a straight flush. However, the story is not so straightforward.

The continuity between collaborative content and the published intranet is where the Microsoft route excels. It is a very versatile tool at the level of departments and team use of an intranet (rather than the corporate level). For example, it is very easy to combine collaborative elements such as inserting a document library, highlighting documents based on metadata, showing recent and popular documents or adding a Power BI chart (extra cost) to a page. However, there are multiple points in the user experience where SharePoint and Teams are not as tightly integrated as may be expected.

We'd like to see more curation of "my collaboration spaces", as found in other intranets that work well with M365. SharePoint will show you a list of traditional 'team sites' but that doesn't help a user who can't remember if "Task force X" was in MS Teams, a SharePoint team site or an Engage community.

The OneDrive application gives a very versatile entry point that combines personal files, ad-hoc sharing and more structured collaboration storage within Teams and SharePoint sites. All of these are useful ways to help make information more findable and highlight connections between types of content.

Viva Connections adds the ability to turn a SharePoint intranet into an app for Teams. If the intranet has its own name and logo then this appears on the app. There's also a list of 'My Sites' (based on user favourites) and 'My News' (an automatically curated list of news from the sites the user has access to as well as Engage posts and Stream videos).



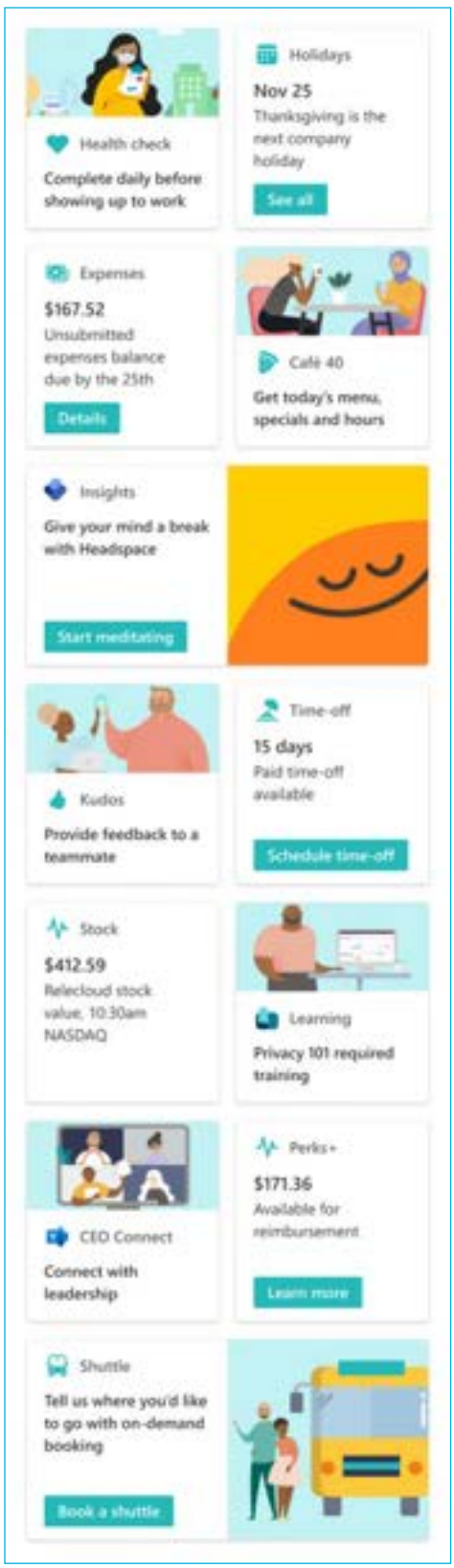
Your intranet appears on the MS Teams app with its own icon and name. The default screen is the dashboard view, with 'Feed' showing news stories. (Image credit: Microsoft)

Multiple vendors such as Salesforce, ServiceNow, Workday, UKG (Kronos) and Talentsoft have connectors that will work with the Viva Connections dashboard feature, and this offers the most direct integration with SharePoint. Some of these are presented as fairly simple read-outs on a tile, such as an approaching holiday, while others support a full transaction process within a card, effectively meaning that the employee doesn't need to leave the intranet. This is a concept we have been advocating for many years and a very welcome development, though we are yet to be convinced that the dashboard feature is the best way to deliver it.

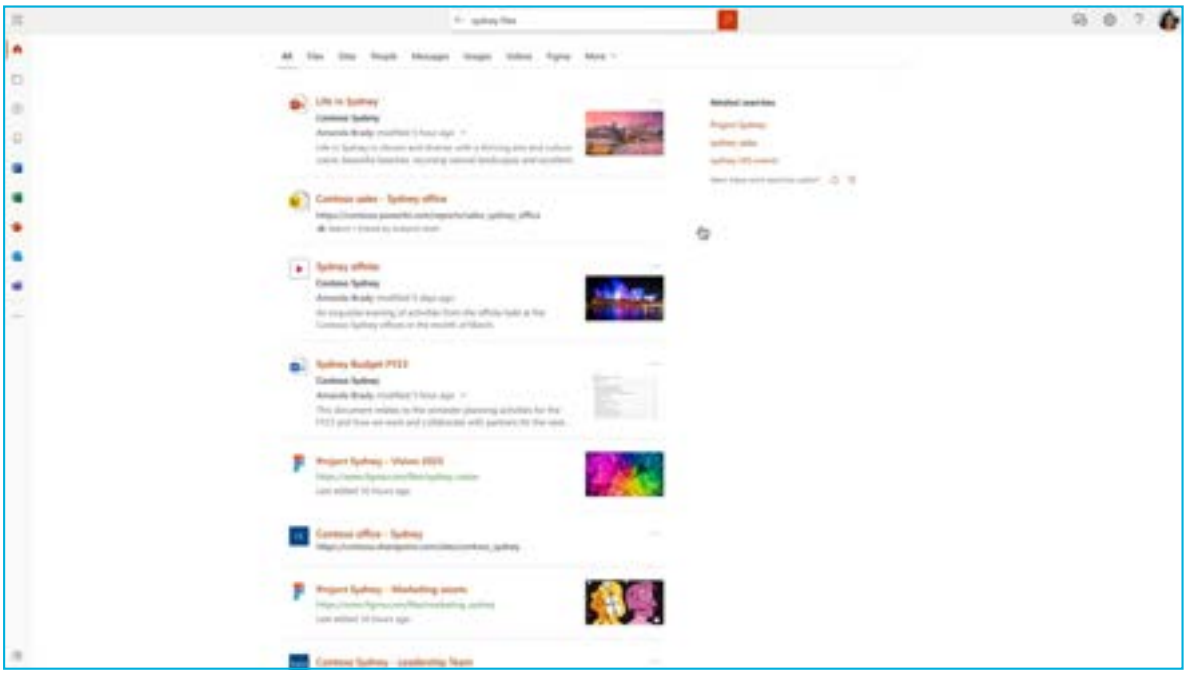
A second route is to use Power Apps, which can be embedded on a SharePoint page and made to work well on mobile too. This is an enormously versatile facility, giving a high level of functionality without requiring significant coding skill. Power Apps can be delivered on SharePoint pages, in Teams, as Viva Connections dashboard cards and on mobile. There are several thousand connectors that support data exchange with other services, such as Box, Google Drive, Oracle, Stripe and Zendesk. However, some common enterprise-grade tools such as ADP are missing.

The third possibility is the Microsoft app store. This is certainly extensive, and for SMEs may usefully plug a gap. However, Teams is a challenging way to navigate across many apps so this route risks exacerbating a common problem that intranets try to solve: "what tools do we have and where are they?". Apps for SharePoint allow a more structured approach as they can be more purposefully added to a specific page within the intranet information architecture.

Finally, there is the full-development route using APIs and SharePoint Framework (SPFx). This is a mature and flexible option that overcomes many problems of the past, where customisations were often at the mercy of Microsoft's changes, but of course there is little out of the box to start you off. Due to the widespread availability of APIs for most major platforms, companies committing to SharePoint as an intranet will rarely find themselves at a dead-end for integration options. However, it may take more work than it first appears, and organisations may need to develop governance around integration to ensure consistency.



The Dashboard web part in the desktop version of Viva Connections. (Image credit: Microsoft)



Search results are clearly presented with thumbnails for each file and page.

Microsoft Search powers the search experience across M365. The ability to search across documents in collaboration spaces on Teams, as well as published content in a SharePoint intranet, automatic video transcripts, and even content in Viva Learning and Power BI, is one of the primary reasons why some companies choose SharePoint over other intranet platforms. The reality nearly delivers on this promise, though there are some disconnects.

In SharePoint, the search interface is pleasant and helpful, it makes suggestions as you type and suggests spelling corrections in the results. Videos, images and Office files all have a preview thumbnail, which is very useful for PowerPoint, for example. There are multiple ways to filter by search type and date, though we wish these would stand out more.

Management of search has moved out of SharePoint and into a separate Microsoft Search console, which makes sense given its range, although the downside is that it gives intranet managers less scope to make hands-on improvements. However, there are specific search categories that can be centrally managed under the 'Answers' tab:

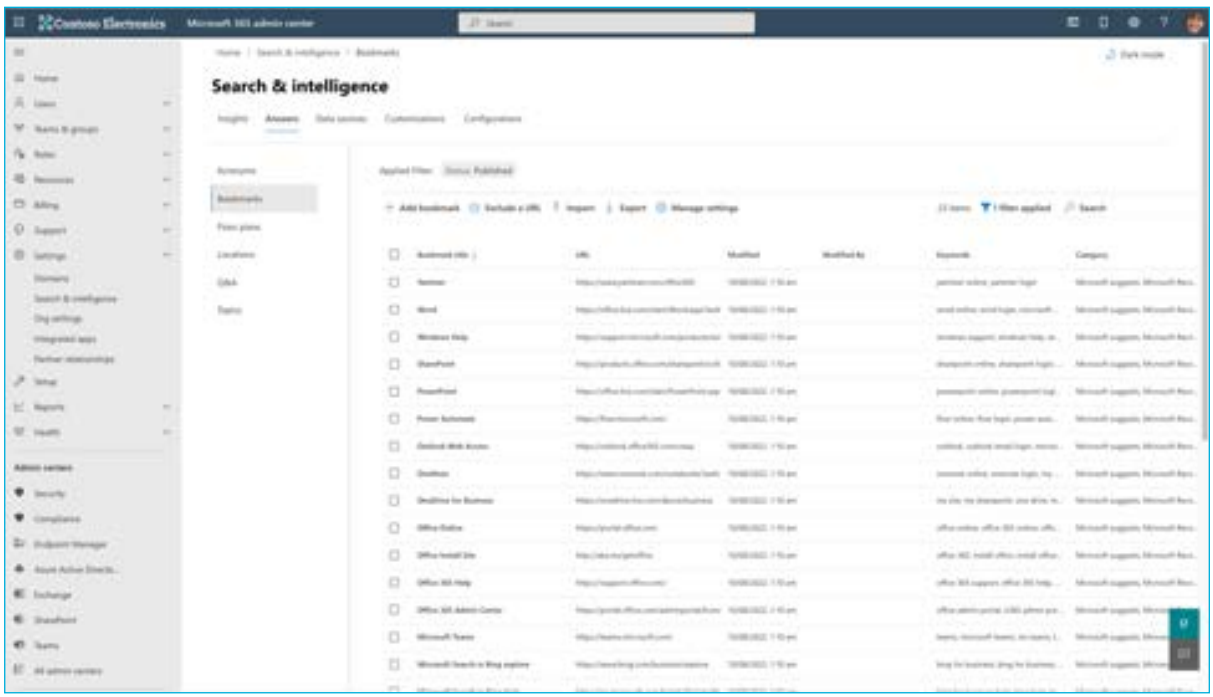
- Acronyms – common abbreviations in your organisation.
- Bookmarks – detect keywords and put the 'best bet' location as the first result, for example a link to the HR application when people search for "Leave".
- Floor plans – upload AutoCAD DWG plans with room labels; these can then be assigned to people profiles, rooms, and equipment to be part of the search result.
- Location – like floor plans, these show building locations on profiles.
- Q&A – show a short textual answer directly in the results rather than making the user click on a link.

The Q&A is a particularly handy feature that we don't see used widely yet. It could be applied when you detect search terms that just need a quick, simple answer such as "shuttle bus timetable" or "Wi-Fi guest password". Answers can be specific for groups or locations and even tailored per device (for example to give a different answer for setting up email if the user is on iOS or Android). Even better, answers can be PowerApps, allowing the user to start the transaction immediately from search results.

Bookmarks and 'answers' only work when the search scope is global – the scope concept is subtle but has a big impact on results. For example, if you search within a hub then the results are scoped to only sites associated with this hub. This can be a good way to help users avoid being deluged with hits, but we worry that it's not always obvious what search scope is in use. The home page of an intranet is likely to be designated as part of the SharePoint 'home' site however, and this has a global search scope which may feel more intuitive for some. It's also possible to scope the search to the 'core intranet' sites with a little PowerShell know-how.

We've always liked the ability to manage metadata and synonyms via the Term Store. This provides a very capable set of tools to create consistent metadata across an intranet, defining multiple languages and synonyms for each metadata entry. Those paying extra for SharePoint Premium also benefit from AI-driven automated metadata tagging. Overall, the administration tools are very powerful indeed when used with sufficient knowledge and resources to manage search proactively.

Federated search is supported via Microsoft Graph connectors. These usually enable Microsoft Search to index a third-party source and present the results within a SharePoint search or within their own refiner tab. Microsoft options include Salesforce, ServiceNow, Oracle SQL and MediaWiki, but there are numerous other connectors from BA Insight, Accenture and Raytion available at extra cost, as well as the option to develop your own connectors.

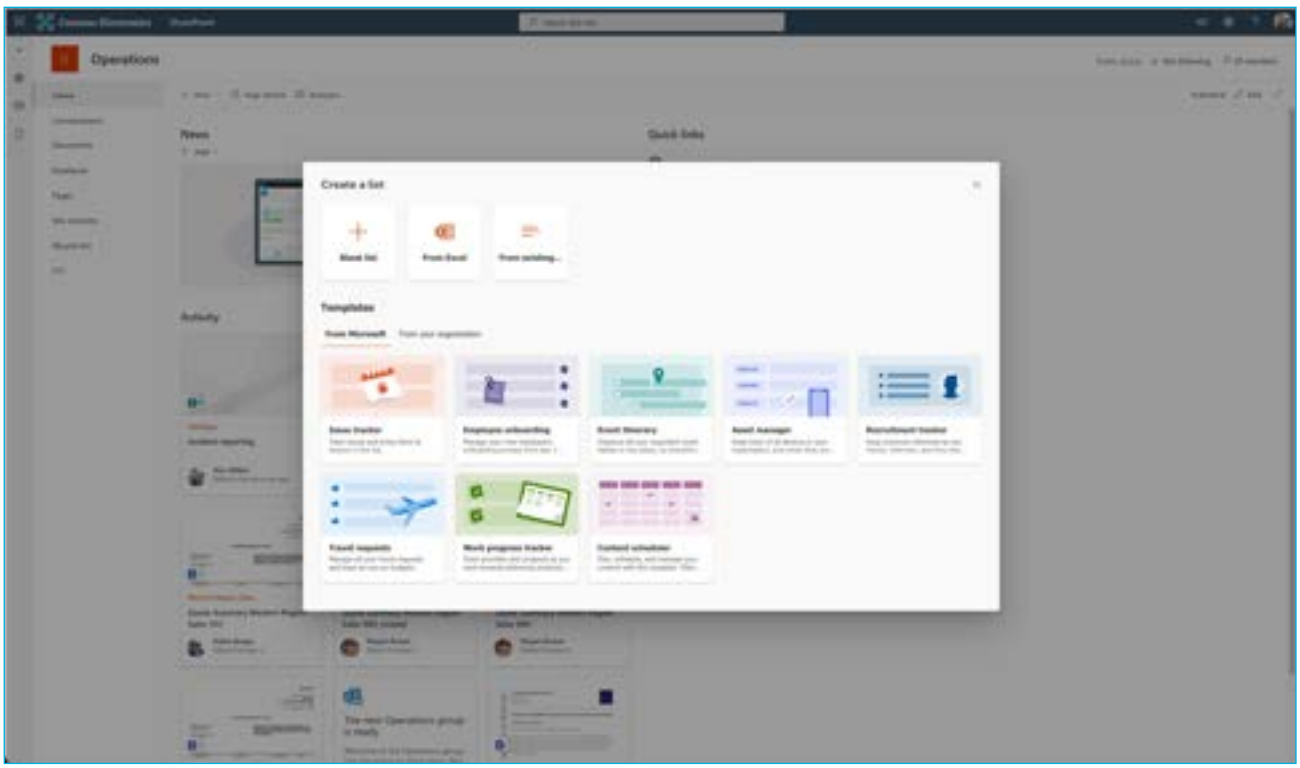


Search admins can assist some search types by defining acronyms, bookmarks, floor plans and Q&A.

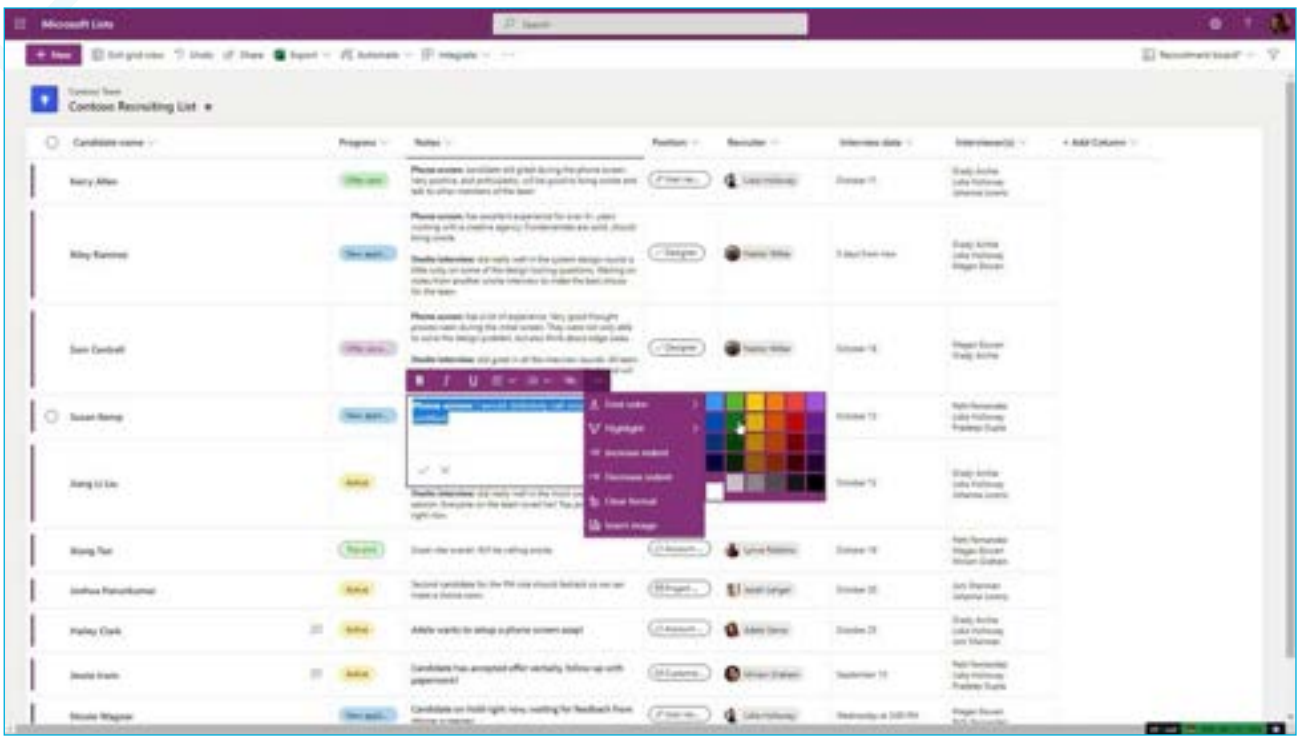
People search is good for individual results, including smart spelling correction, and leads to a nice contact card. For those with the optional Viva premium licenses, there is a new extended search facility which includes an enhanced org-chart view called 'Org Explorer' in Outlook. However, we're disappointed that the planned filters for skills, function location etc. require extra configuration work. We'd also like to see the same functionality surfaced within SharePoint. Alternatively, 'Skills in Viva' is a very capable optional extra which leverages LinkedIn to map skill categories (currently only in preview).

For knowledge and information management, SharePoint has always been a go-to solution thanks to its extensive support for document libraries. We like the ability to add a search box scoped just to one library, and that this can be embedded on a page with more contextual information. A very valuable recent addition is 'Copilot agents' (additional cost). These are no-code chatbots that can be set up to answer questions on a specific site, folder or document library. We can see many potential use cases for these as a way to interrogate curated document collections, such as policy libraries, product specification knowledge bases or training archives. Example queries might be "Create a custom pitch script to compare Product A and Product B", "How do I repair the T-1000?", or "Have any webinars covered our Environmental policies?".

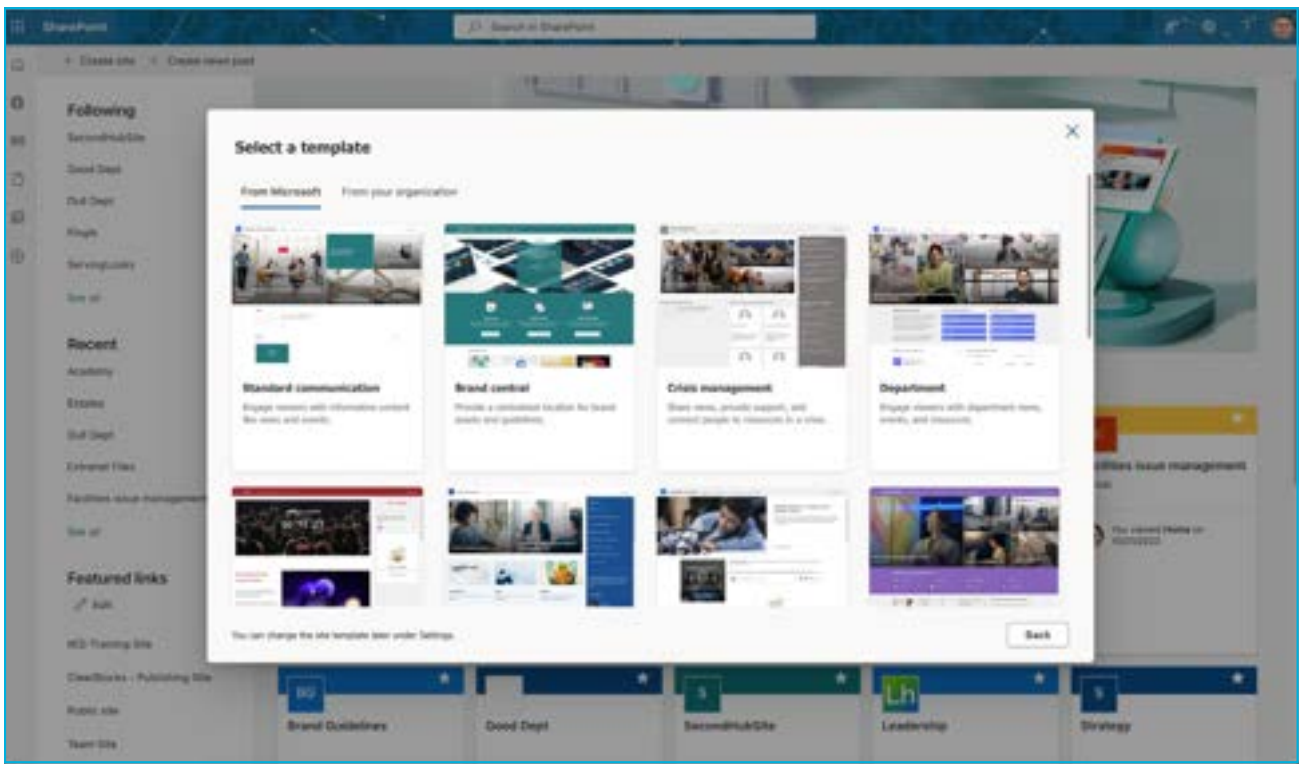
Also worth a mention here are Microsoft Lists. This is a highly versatile tool that fills a gap for ad-hoc data collation when it's not worth building a full app, but something is needed with more structure than the usual Office tools. What elevates Lists from a simple 'to do' or table is that columns can be styled in very versatile ways, for example tags can appear as colour-coded labels, people names include photos and a link to profiles, images appear as useful thumbnails etc. It's possible to build some quite sophisticated layouts for information presentation without any coding skills.



Lists can be readily created in SharePoint or Teams, and a number of templates are suggested.



It is easy to edit Lists as a table, including styling of text (image credit: Microsoft).



To create a new site, admins are encouraged to select from a set of templates – either Microsoft's or the organisation's own.

Administration for sites, and particularly for a whole intranet, can soon feel very complex. Part of the challenge with SharePoint is that settings can be spread across multiple locations. Some can only be seen in 'classic' admin pages, others only in 'modern'. Many things that affect a SharePoint intranet are not in the SharePoint admin area at all, but in other elements of Microsoft 365. In mitigation, the experience can be simplified by allocating clear admin roles to individuals, so that irrelevant tools are hidden. All the same, we typically find that intranet managers working with SharePoint rely more heavily on a good relationship with IT colleagues than those using alternative platforms.

For administrators of SharePoint pages, the experience is consistent and accessible; pages can be built using a wide range of drag-and-drop widgets, and dialogues for configuring each are clear and consistent. The interface for the text editor is now very rich, giving a good range of layout and formatting options. It is also easier to directly insert an image into text, crop and re-size it and so on.

Templates can be set up to encourage (but not enforce) page consistency and you can define templates for section layouts, such as "one-third left image and text". Templates for a whole site are much harder to create as they require programming skills; most companies rely on third-party tools to make it more manageable. Once templates are defined though, SharePoint offers a nice step-by-step wizard to apply a suitable template to a new site. Microsoft also supply some ready-made templates for scenarios such as help-desk and crisis comms. Any subsequent changes to the template do not get applied to existing sites though.

For governance, reporting will show usage against storage quotas, but it is much harder to find unused sites because they don't generate usage data (though there are alternatives, such as looking at the underlying 'group' or Purview as an optional extra). One feature we do like though, is

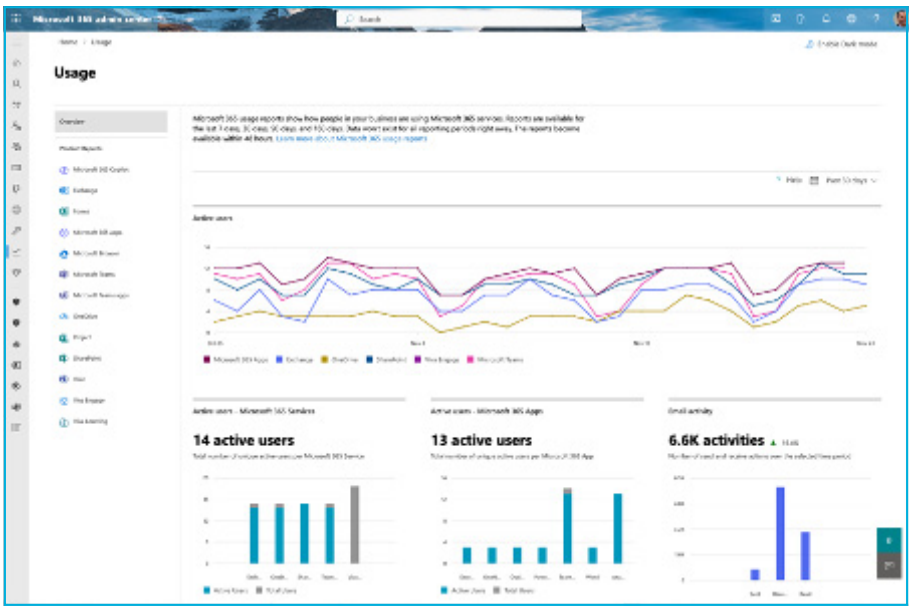
a 'site performance' report, which clearly shows where elements on pages may be slowing things down. SharePoint Advanced Management ("SAM") offers additional tools such as inactive site detection and content oversharing reports (additional cost but included in Copilot licenses).

By design, SharePoint reflects a low-governance philosophy by Microsoft, where anyone can create a site. This can be blocked, and a request process put in place for new sites, but there is no nuanced middle-ground. This can prove problematic for intranet managers; most organisations want to make it easy to create sites for MS Teams, but this creates a loophole where it is equally easy to create 'shadow intranets' away from the corporate one. It is, however, possible to enforce a site expiry policy by requiring owners of the associated M365 group to confirm it is still needed and compliant via an emailed 'attestation' process.

Updated since the last edition of our report is the SharePoint 'start experience'. This gives content creators a single page where they can see all of their past content, as well as working drafts and analytics on published pages (see Scenario 2). However, it also encourages any user to create single pages, publish and share them. Although a draft page can be published into an existing site, they don't have to be – they can remain 'homeless' in the user's OneDrive. We've yet to see clarification from Microsoft about the intended use case, and we predict that in many organisations this risks considerable governance headaches.

SharePoint makes it easy to create a multilingual experience, supporting around fifty languages for both the interface and for content. Where sites have language alternatives, users will see a drop-down menu of choices. Microsoft has implemented some good tools for managing this. For example, translators can be set up for each site and are notified when the source language version changes. However, there is no machine-translation option, it's a wholly manual process. As translations happen at the page-level, monitoring untranslated sections in a site will be tricky. On the front end, machine translation exists for posts on Engage, but not for comments on SharePoint pages (a work-around is to use the 'Reader' button).

Multimedia support is extensive – with web parts for video, audio, images etc. (though no specific support for podcasts), as well as native viewing for hundreds of other file types. Videos are powered by Microsoft Stream, and can be readily edited by the friendly 'Clipchamp' tool included in most Microsoft 365 licenses. They adapt well to the device and bandwidth in use, and automatic captioning is invaluable. Videos can be played back within a SharePoint page, Teams or Viva Engage. However, we feel that Stream is less than it used to be – no longer a 'video central' tool, it is much harder to create curated collections of related videos (for example, a set of training modules) than it was a few years ago, for example, though Microsoft Lists offer a partial solution.



Microsoft 365 provides detailed usage analytics.

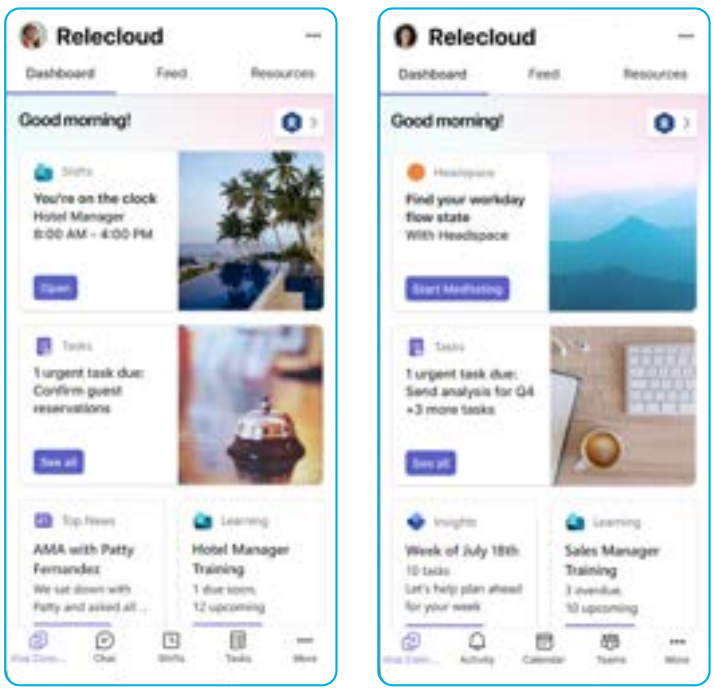
Every page on a SharePoint intranet has its own simple analytics panel visible to the site admin, showing views, time spent and most active times. We applaud the ease of access for this information. Similarly, there are informative analytics within Engage that show audience sentiment trends and emerging themes for leaders using the platform for two-way comms. Unfortunately, things do get a bit more complicated after this.

SharePoint will generate usage reports for individual sites, showing unique viewers, site visits, popular posts and documents. If your intranet is a single site or hub, then these reports are also nicely aggregated for an overall view. To see more, admins must look into Microsoft 365 and Azure reports. These are OK as far as it goes, but most of what is shown is about license usage. Intranet owners, particularly Internal Comms people, often are more interested to learn "did my article engage people?", and there are no views to address this. Nor is it possible to create audits of article views for a 'mandatory read' facility, though Forms and PowerBI reports could be used as an ad-hoc workaround (or Viva Learning has a 'required training' feature).

Moreover, building up a picture of what is happening becomes very fragmented, especially if you consider your intranet to be a combination of SharePoint, Viva Engage, Stream, Teams and possibly more. It is possible to extract all the data into Power BI and there is a 'Microsoft 365 usage analytics' report to start you off. Sharing this requires Power BI Pro licensing at additional cost, and we expect most organisations would need to substantially customise the report to give insights on content performance.

The good news is that the Viva Amplify module also benefits from a campaigns-oriented dashboard with more of the audience and performance details that communicators would expect to see. For example, it shows the number of unique viewers combined across all distribution channels, and reports can be filtered by audience, function, seniority etc. It also includes a 'sentiment' analysis, and we are pleased to see that has recently been updated to be more visually engaging with emoji icons and less of a stark table. As with our comments in Scenario 2, we wish that these analytics were more closely integrated with analytics for other internal communications activity such as regular news stories.

Search analytics cover the essentials well – there are reports on top searches, failure to find and abandons. A helpful addition is the inclusion of a feedback form on the search results page, and responses are aggregated into the Microsoft Search admin panel.



Viva Connections provides a mobile experience for SharePoint integrated with the Teams app.

SharePoint intranets can be accessed on mobile devices either through a browser, the SharePoint mobile app or the Teams mobile app when Viva Connections is enabled. In all three options, we found navigating via menus just OK – it works well within a site but moving between sites or hubs is fiddly. Clicking on a news article can take a user to a site where all global navigation is lost.

The browser-based experience for SharePoint generally works well: modern pages are responsive out of the box and web parts re-arrange to fit available columns. However, they are not adaptive – you can't hide web parts when a small screen is detected, and some large web parts such as calendar views can be problematic.

The SharePoint and Teams mobile apps are clean and snappy to use, but neither feels like an 'intranet in your pocket'. SharePoint's app opens with a 'Find' tab and shows documents and a list of sites. A separate News icon shows a machine-curated list of news stories. Recently, Microsoft also added a 'Home' icon, that will take users to their SharePoint intranet home site, and if properly configured this becomes the default page for the app. In most cases this will look similar to, but not the same, as the News tab, which we fear will create confusion.

The Teams app, when Viva Connections is enabled, does show an icon for your intranet, but it opens onto a dashboard view (see Scenario 4) rather than news. With a little work, however, the dashboard can be configured to be an effective news feed tool.

Teams is marketed as a frontline solution, particularly as a mobile app, and it includes a small set of relevant tools such as Shifts (roster scheduling) and Planner (task management). Customers deploying it in this way may want to disable the document and collaboration-focused features to simplify the experience.

Power Apps and lists (see Scenario 4) provide plenty of potential for frontline-friendly tools. Microsoft also emphasise the frontline use-cases for standard features such as two-way dialogue with leaders, kudos and the targeted mobile dashboard experience (Viva Connections) for employee services.

Every frontline user will need a Microsoft 365 license and be enrolled with that account before being allowed into the app. This is flexible but may feel more indirect to non-technical users than the mobile-first products we cover in this report.

THINGS TO BEAR IN MIND

Although SharePoint, Viva Connections, Viva Amplify and Viva Engage have many strengths, there are also some gaps from an intranet point of view. Often the starting assumption is that if you already have Microsoft 365, then SharePoint is 'free'. However, SharePoint is not a ready-to-run intranet, it is a platform on which an intranet can be configured and there will be costs involved. For this review, we included the Microsoft Viva Employee Communications and Communities package (a small extra cost) because we felt it necessary for most modern intranet scenarios.

Additionally, we have mentioned other Microsoft applications (such as Viva Suite, SharePoint Advanced Management and Power BI Pro) that are at additional cost to those we've included in this review, so you may find you need further Microsoft products to achieve your goals. Before defaulting to using SharePoint, companies need to carefully consider their objectives and the costs, not just of setting up but of running the intranet well over many years. In some cases, other products in this report will be easier to live with in the long term.

Even medium-size enterprises can get into trouble because the first steps are easy, but the scaling up is not. A single intranet with a few sites is simple enough but creating a manageable navigation over more than one hub site remains problematic, even with the home site and global 'app bar' or Viva Connections. The global menu approach is unintuitive, and the combination of site-level and hub-level menus is confusing.

Analytics are found in several places in SharePoint and other parts of Microsoft 365, but they will appeal more to IT than intranet managers. Many companies end up buying a dedicated tool or must create custom Power BI dashboards to compensate for this. Governance analytics, to detect old content and dead sites, may need yet another third-party tool for a complete picture. Additionally, social features are good if Viva Engage is deployed, but still fall short of some non-Microsoft products, where user activity across comments, likes, discussions and profiles are well integrated and not just part of a social networking component.

The most powerful appeal of a SharePoint plus Viva Connections intranet is everything being integrated into Microsoft 365. In the past when intranets had a strong collaboration role to fulfil, this was indeed very important. Now that Teams is the de-facto entry point for collaboration however, the significance of this for an intranet platform is less than it used to be. Just about any intranet in this report will surface documents from SharePoint for things like a policy library. Nor do we consider Viva Connections or Viva Amplify game-changers. Having an intranet in Teams is handy, but it is really just using Teams as a browser. There is little to make the user click on the intranet icon when they are focused on activity in meetings, channels and chats. Other products even do a better job of this aspect.

The ubiquity of SharePoint means that there are many web parts available on GitHub or AppSource which address some of the shortfalls identified in this review. These are often free but may be unsupported. Many small or medium enterprises may feel they do not wish to go down this route, but larger customers with in-house IT skills may well find this a viable route to getting a SharePoint intranet to deliver the desired functionality.

When it comes down to it, the main advantage of staying within the Microsoft 365 world is the integration of search and profiles, plus the range of features and ease of use of SharePoint if your site needs are straightforward. These are important concerns, but not the only things to consider, and SharePoint isn't the only way to address them, particularly if you're willing to look at some of the other products in this report that sit directly on top of Microsoft 365.

Why choose this product

Modern SharePoint with Viva is capable of some attractive and very versatile intranets. It works best when an organisation has a very federated mindset to intranet governance, preferring there to be a very large number of loosely coupled sites rather than a top-down and highly structured architecture.

Ultimately, SharePoint is best considered an intranet and content platform within a much wider digital workplace or employee experience (EX) strategy and part of a technology stack that includes Teams, Lists, Copilot, Power Apps and the whole Viva Suite. When viewed from this perspective, the comprehensiveness of what is on offer can often override reservations about SharePoint from a pure intranet point of view. In addition, Microsoft's roadmap is ambitious and fast-moving, so many companies make a legitimate decision to deploy on Microsoft 365 and put faith in any gaps being filled over time. In 2025 this is likely to be particularly true for buyers with firm AI ambitions, attracted by the potential of Microsoft's Copilot offerings and the potential of generative AI for boosting employee productivity.

Vendor roadmap

Please see Microsoft 365 Roadmap.

Back to index

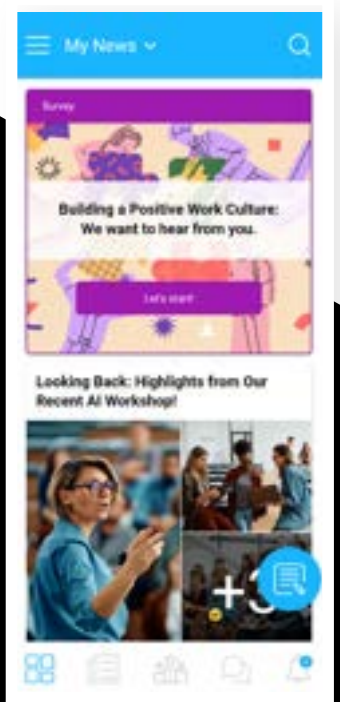
Sociabble

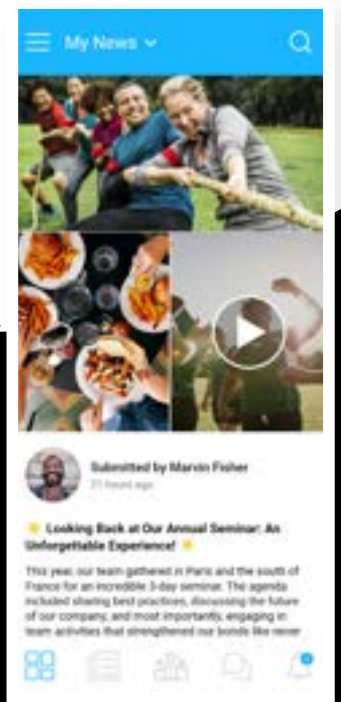
FULLY STANDALONE

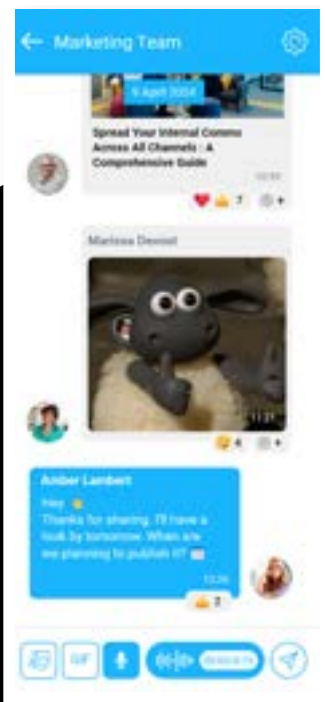
REQUIRES SHAREPOINT

FRONTLINE FOCUS

OTHER



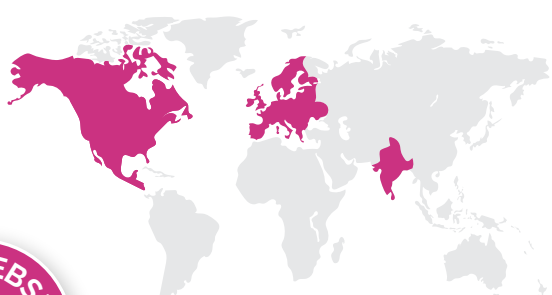




Typical deployment:

20,000 to 50,000

Company locations:



VISIT THE WEBSITE

The product in a nutshell

Sociabble is a powerful employee communication and engagement platform that will appeal to large international businesses with a significant population of frontline workers.

SUMMARY

SOCIABBLE

Sociabble are headquartered in Paris, France, with offices in the UK, USA and Asia. Their product of the same name was launched in 2014 and is a powerful employee communication and engagement platform, especially for large companies with a mix of desktop and frontline workers. It delivers excellent features for content creation, audience targeting, and multichannel publishing, including employee advocacy. We were impressed by the thoughtful use of AI, the focus on high-quality audio and video-based content, and the rich multilanguage features. The user interface is intuitive and contemporary, often comparable to commercial social media products, and is consistent across devices.

In order to deliver these strong features, Sociabble have made some design choices that are different compared to more traditional intranet products in this report. Content is aggregated into a scrollable content wall, rather than being organised into static pages. Intranet managers looking for a way to include reference material, such as HR policies or departmental information, can either use Sociabble's Media Drive for document storage, or combine the product with a separate platform such as a SharePoint site. The search engine does not offer traditional search functionality such as promoted results, but includes AI features and supports natural language queries, which is a different approach. The high price point of the product is also an element to consider. However, pricing does include a number of optional modules, such as employee advocacy, so organisations that don't need these modules will be able to reduce their cost.

Overall, Sociabble is a strong product that scores well across most of our scenarios. It will appeal to internal communicators in large international businesses that are keen to improve the reach and the engagement levels of their employee communications. Organisations with a large population of frontline workers will especially appreciate Sociabble's focus on mobile delivery to a diverse workforce.

Pricing

PRICE BAND	
1,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
5,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
20,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
50,000 users	$ $ $ $ $

These prices are indicative, offering a comparison of the products featured in this report only. Please contact the vendor for a bespoke quote.

PRICING MODEL

Subscription – price per user per month; Subscription – price band based on number of users.

DISCOUNTS

Charities and non-profit organisations; multi-year commitments.

COSTS TYPICALLY

Weighted towards the start (during the 'project phase'), then much lower for the remaining term

PRICE INCLUDES

In addition to installation and configuration, pricing includes the following value-added services: project workshops, training for admins, training for end users, user rollout services, 'Customer Success' services, maintenance, product support, and monthly updates and upgrades.

Product type

Ready-to-run, installed in days

Branding opportunities

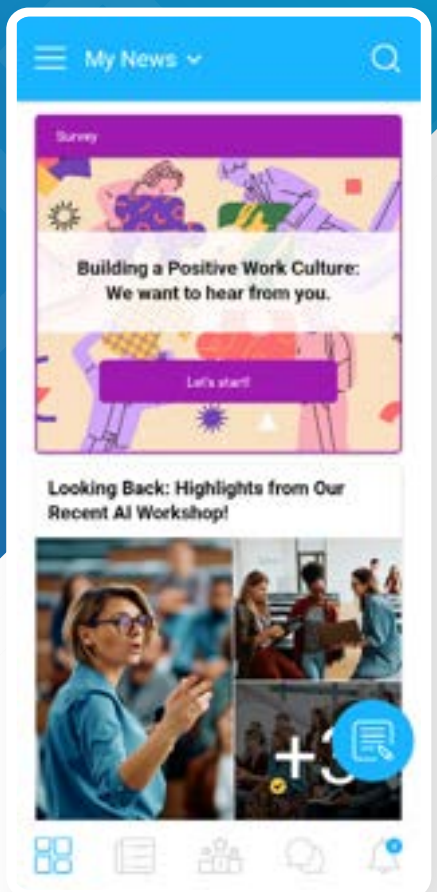
Good branding, single choice

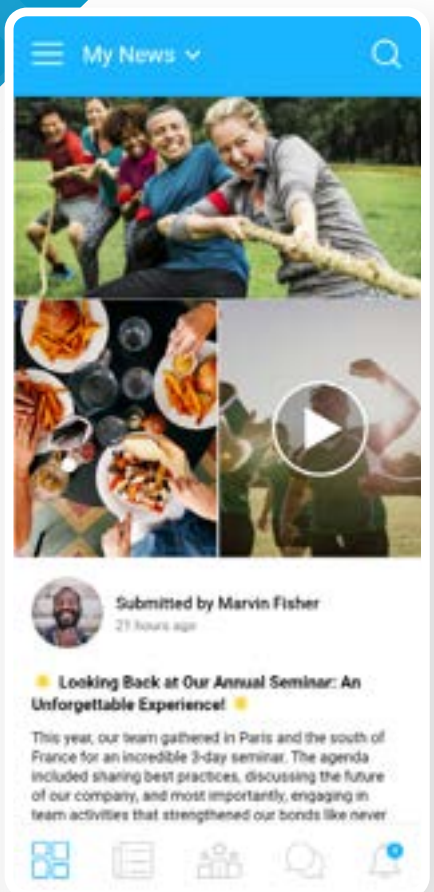
Base systems

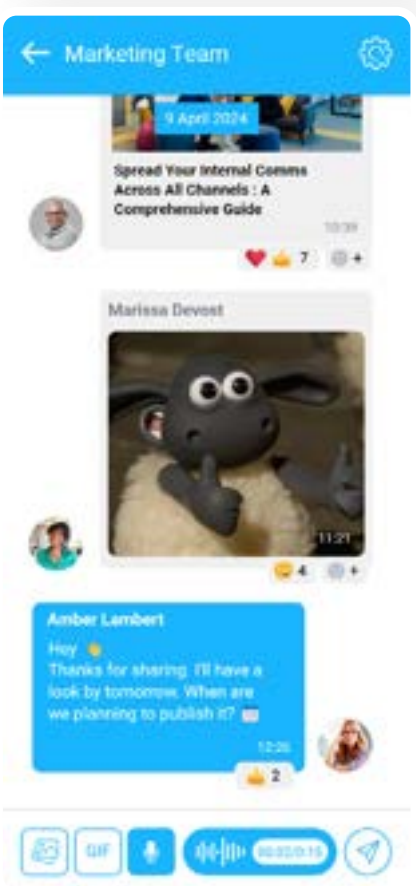
Fully standalone	Requires SharePoint	Other

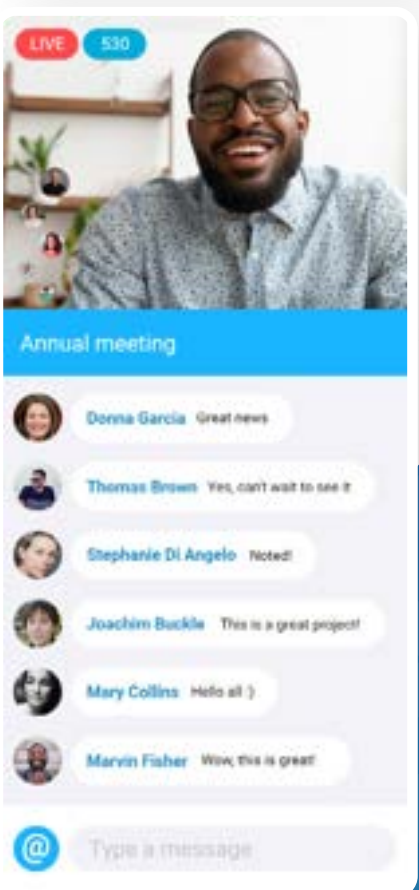
Sectors

Accountancy, banking and finance	Business, consulting and management	Engineering and manufacturing	Retail	Transport & Logistics


My News
Survey
Building a Positive Work Culture:
We want to hear from you.
Let's start!
Looking Back: Highlights from Our Recent AI Workshop!


My News
Submitted by Marvin Fisher
Looking Back at Our Annual Seminar: An Unforgettable Experience!
This year, our team gathered in Paris and the south of France for an incredible 3-day seminar. The agenda included sharing best practices, discussing the future of our company, and most importantly, engaging in team activities that strengthened our bonds like never


Marketing Team
9 April 2024
Spread Your Internal Comms Across All Channels : A Comprehensive Guide
Marissa Devost
Amber Lambert
Hey
Thanks for sharing. I'll have a look by tomorrow. When are we planning to publish it?
GIF


LIVE
530
Annual meeting
Donna Garcia Great news
Thomas Brown Yes, can't wait to see it
Stephanie Di Angelo Noted!
Joachim Buckle This is a great project!
Mary Collins Hello all :)
Marvin Fisher Wow, this is great!
Type a message

COMPANY AND PRODUCT

Company details

Company
Sociabble

ISO 27001 certified
Yes

Data residency
Europe (excluding UK)

Company founded
2014

Product launched
2014

Typical client size
20,000 to 50,000

Largest deployment so far
110,000 employees, 51 countries

Customers
Clients include: AXA , Primark, Coca Cola Europacific Partners, Capgemini, CMA CGM, L'Occitane en Provence, Renault Group, Deloitte, Generali, Tata Consultancy Services

Partner locations
N/A

Company locations
Paris, France (HQ), USA, UK, India

Product and technical details

Name of product

Sociabble

Deployment

Client on-premises	Client private cloud	**Microsoft Azure**	Amazon Web Services	**Vendor-hosted**	Microsoft 365 tenant	Google Cloud	Other

Authentication supported

Entra ID	**ADFS**	**Okta**	**Open ID**	**Oauth**	**G Suite**	**Other***

*Sociabble supports SAML2.0 and OIDC, so any authentication based on these protocols is compatible with Sociabble.

App deployment

Google Play store	**Apple store**	**MDM**	**MAM**	**Other***

*Huawei AppGallery

Accessibility

Not fully conformant to WCAG 2.1 AA, but the vendor says they do conform to a majority of the requirements and are in the process of upgrading to WCAG 2.2 AA.

Document library sources integrated

Box	Dropbox	**Google Drive**	**SharePoint**	**OneDrive**	**Other***

*Sociabble can be integrated with other document services using their public API.

Optional integrated enterprise search engines

Coveo	Elastic	IBM	Lucidworks	**Microsoft**	Mindbreeze	Sinequa	**Other***

*Sociabble provides an API endpoint for search integration.

User interface multi-language

Machine translation	Pre-configured	**Editable**	**Right to left script supported**	Other

Content multi-language

Machine translation for publishers	**Machine translation for end users**	**Editable machine translation for publishers**	**Manual creation for publishers**	**Right to left script**	Other

Set-up and support

Set-up process for new clients

Sociabble offers a streamlined process for setting up and configuring a new platform, which can be accomplished within a single day. For more advanced configuration, customisation, and implementation needs, Sociabble provides a comprehensive range of services throughout the entire platform launch journey.

The platform's onboarding methodology consists of five distinct phases: Engagement, Organisation, Validation, Launch, Run Mode. This comprehensive onboarding methodology guarantees scalability, allowing projects to expand as needed while ensuring a holistic approach.

The entire journey from initial engagement to successful platform launch typically takes around 4 to 6 weeks.

Version numbers

Demonstrated to ClearBox: September 2024

At January 2025: January 2025.

Product updates

Major updates every month.

Product update process

Clients automatically have access to all the updates on the platform. Sociabble provide uninterrupted service during these updates, communicating these updates via webinars, their consultants, weekly announcements, and notifications. Clients can test the feature in a sandbox environment for large modules before rolling it out to their entire workforce.

Reverse-out options

When a contract is over or terminated, the client has 30 days within which to request a copy of their personal data. After this period, all data is completely deleted, with the exception of anonymised traces used for analytics purposes only.

Technical support

Email support	Phone support	Chat support	**Online portal**	24/7 support	**Office hours only***

*Time zones supported: CET, EST, IST, BST, PST

User community

The Sociabble Heroes platform is a community of more than 2,000 customers who share daily their projects, challenges, successes, and best practices. All Sociabble client administrators have access to the Sociabble Heroes platform, where they can access best practices, ready-to-use content, market insights, new feature announcements, and offline and online events (webinars) to meet and exchange ideas with other users.

All end users have access to Sociabble's Knowledge Base and FAQs, which is a self-service database of information designed to answer pressing questions in a timely manner.

Voice of the vendor

Sociabble says: "Sociabble is a cutting-edge SaaS platform specialising in Employee Communication, Engagement, and Advocacy, tailored to meet the needs of large enterprises. With over 10 years of experience in large-scale deployments, Sociabble has empowered globally recognised companies, including AXA, Primark, and Coca-Cola Europacific Partners, to harness the full potential of their workforce.

Sociabble is designed to enhance and streamline internal communications by serving as a centralised content hub. Employees can easily discover, share, and interact with relevant information across their preferred channels — whether via a web app, branded mobile app, email, chat, intranet, or Microsoft Teams. The platform's intuitive, user-friendly interface ensures that both frontline and office workers can stay informed, engaged, and act as effective brand ambassadors.

One of Sociabble's core strengths lies in its Engagement Framework, a versatile ecosystem designed to foster active employee participation and a culture of continuous engagement. Utilising both top-down and peer-to-peer activation techniques such as points, leaderboards, badges, praises, and challenges, Sociabble encourages healthy competition and recognition among employees. These activities are complemented by meaningful rewards, often tied to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives, reinforcing company values and motivating the workforce to contribute their best.

Sociabble's advanced AI functionalities enhance content management and communication by ensuring efficiency, consistency, and compliance. It can provide automatic translations, score user-generated content for compliance, and automatically generate subtitles, summaries, and dubbed audio for videos in multiple languages. Customisable AI settings allow clients to align all communications with their corporate identity and standards, ensuring consistent and compliant messaging across global operations.

With its ISO 27001-certified security management, Sociabble meets the most stringent data privacy standards. This provides a robust shield for sensitive information, including all the artificial intelligence features specifically designed to protect data security.

Sociabble is more than just a platform; it's a comprehensive solution backed by our dedicated Customer Success Team. With a global presence in Europe, North America, and APAC, this experienced team plays a pivotal role in the success of our clients' projects. They provide a strong methodology for deployment and adoption and share industry best practices to ensure optimal outcomes."

Voice of the customer

What customers like the most about Sociabble is the rich set of features to engage employees. As one customer puts it: "The platform offers many features that make it possible to engage our communities. It's not just a platform that hosts content." According to another customer, "The platform helps to support our company engagement initiatives, it has significantly improved how we communicate, collaborate and it has built a sense of community within our markets." The ease of use of the various features is repeatedly praised: "Ease of use, particularly in the creation of posts" says one customer, and another sums it up well: "Straightforward, easy to use and engaging".

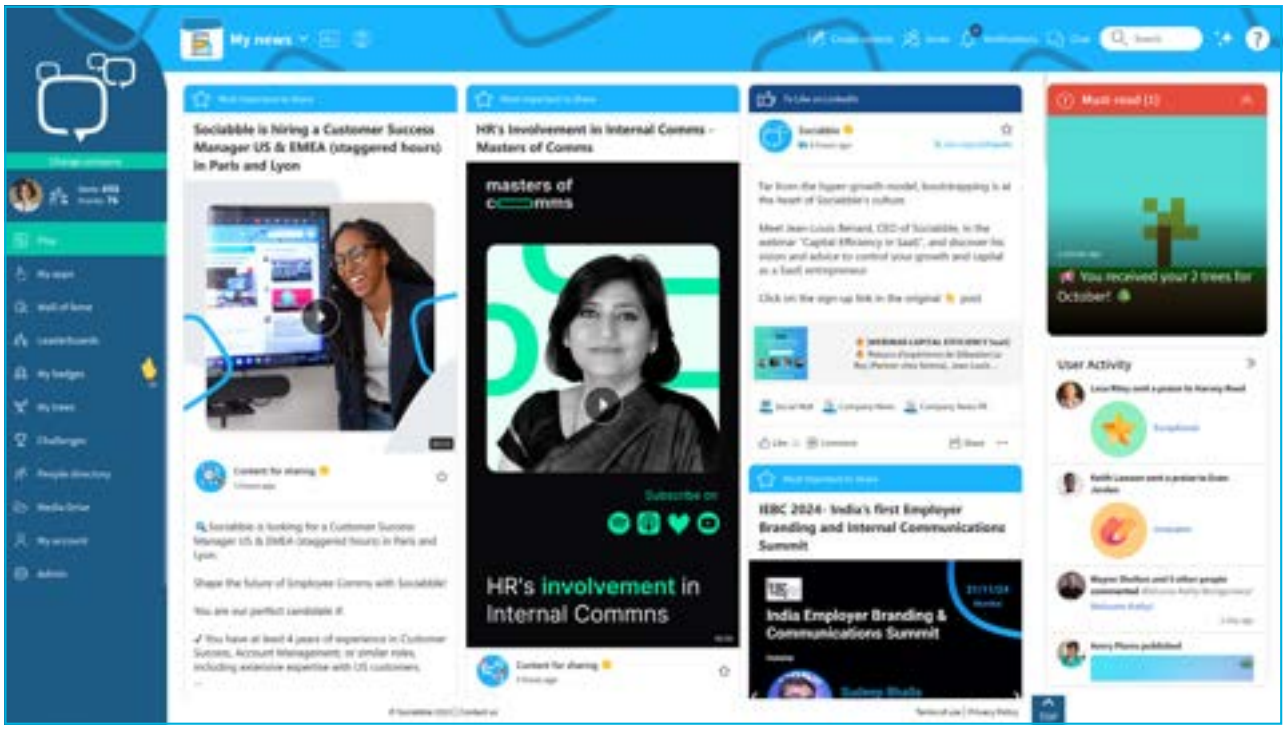
A few improvement suggestions were made about different areas of the product. One customer would like to see more flexibility in applying branding: "a possibility to change skin easily", while another wants an improved dictionary for translation: "Translation reliability on proper nouns should be improved. There is a customisable dictionary, but it's not efficient." Customers appreciate the richness of data available in the Analytics module, but some customers requested sensible, standardised dashboards: "Ready-made or suggested templates for dashboards would really make it easier to showcase how powerful the product is to leadership." Finally, we heard some demand for being able to add static content: "The option to add more static pages and channels for content that suits a more traditional intranet format, such as forms, policies, etc."

Customers unanimously praise the experience of working together with Sociabble, during all stages of the relationship. "My experience working with Sociabble for the last three years has been extremely rewarding and collaborative" says one customer, and another one adds: "Very good work experience, whether before signing the contract or after." The people of Sociabble are praised for their pro-activeness and passion: "The team are extremely innovative and their passion for their product is truly inspiring to work with" is how one customer phrases it, while another says that "Sociabble is responsive, the Customer Success Manager I work with is always available and gives good advice!"

SCENARIOS & SCORES

Please see the Scenarios below for more detail on each of these.

SCENARIO AND SCORE	KEY BENEFITS	IMPROVEMENTS / CONSIDERATIONS
4 **1. User Experience & Visual Appeal**	Contemporary and intuitive user interface, consistent across desktop and mobile.	No interface for admins to make branding changes.
4.5 **2. Publishing & Communications Management**	Great flexibility to create and target engaging content. Strong multichannel publishing.	No option for authors to publish static content pages with reference information.
3+ **3. Community & Engagement**	Strong features for structured idea generation campaigns and for gamification.	Only basic features to support collaboration in communities.
2+ **4. Integrations & Services (Including M365)**	Powerful bot framework to automate integration with Teams, Google and Slack. Useful feature for managing service tickets.	Limited off-the-shelf integration with major business software platforms.
2.5+ **5. Information Finding & Search**	Intuitive people directory with a personal 'My AI' section used by the AI assistant.	Search management is limited.
4 **6. Administrator Experience**	Extensive and granular settings for roles and permissions. Strong multilanguage and multimedia features.	Admins have little control over the layout of the home page, which is built dynamically.
4 **7. Analytics**	Many detailed and useful reports. Powerful capabilities to build custom dashboards.	Search analytics are not as strong as the rest of the other reports.
4.5 **8. Mobile & Frontline Support**	Contemporary and attractive app user experience. Strong support for audio and video content.	No built-in tools for shift swapping or task management.



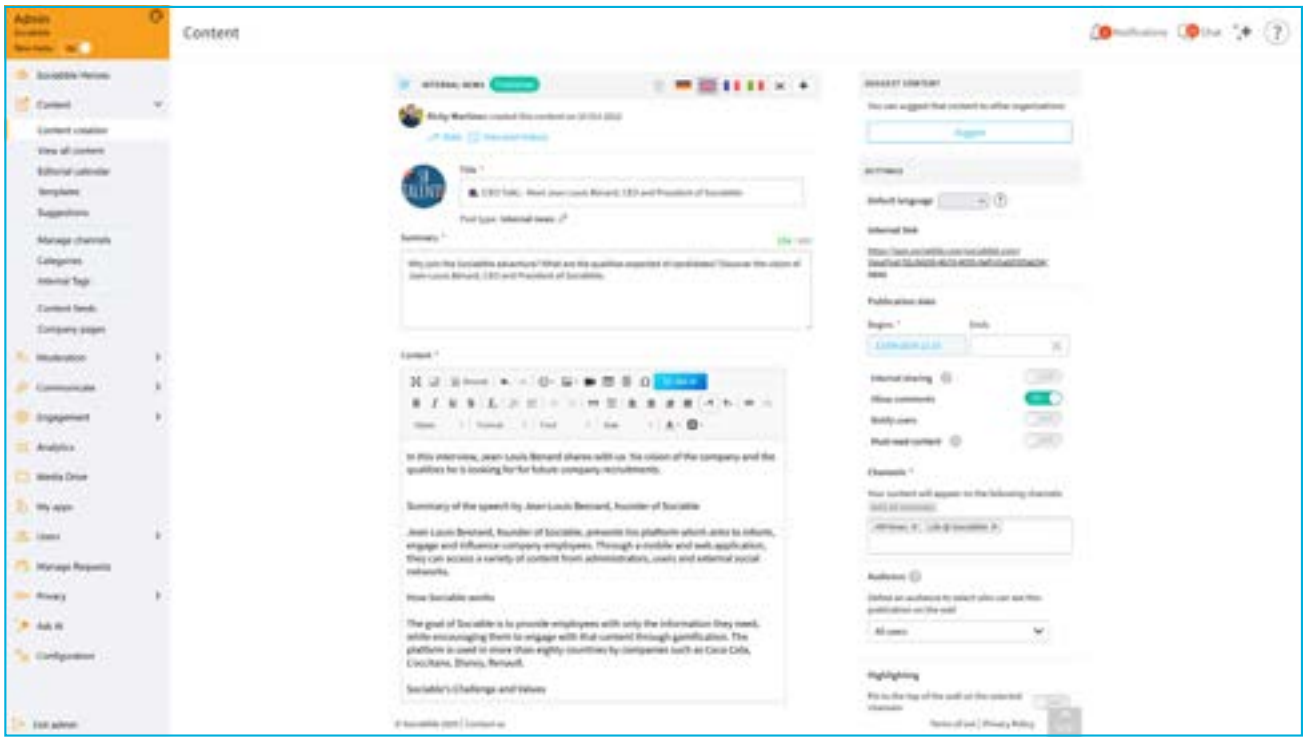
The desktop environment features a left-hand side navigation menu and a content area that makes full use of the available space.

Sociabble has an intuitive user interface similar to modern consumer-oriented products, and works consistently across desktop and mobile. The product focuses on delivering engaging content to employees, and this is reflected in their design choices. In the web version, a wall of content items is prominently featured, taking full advantage of the available screen space. Important stories can be pinned to the top, so they are always easy to find. End users can choose between different pre-defined layouts for displaying content. We like the feature whereby content items that have been viewed appear greyed out, so employees will see at a glance which stories remain to be read.

Navigation to other areas within the product, such as the people directory, is handled through a traditional left-hand side menu (and its equivalent on mobile). This is a simple approach, in line with the product's philosophy to focus on content delivery and engagement via a central feed rather than through traditional intranet pages. Some additional navigational elements are included in the top-level bar, for example to access notifications, a chat feature, and the search window.

Notifications are handled well within the product. A comprehensive range of possible notifications are available, and employees decide which ones are relevant for them. In addition, in the mobile app, it is possible to configure daily quiet hours and quiet days where no push notifications will be generated. We also like the option to integrate with the notifications in Microsoft Teams; see Scenario 4 for details.

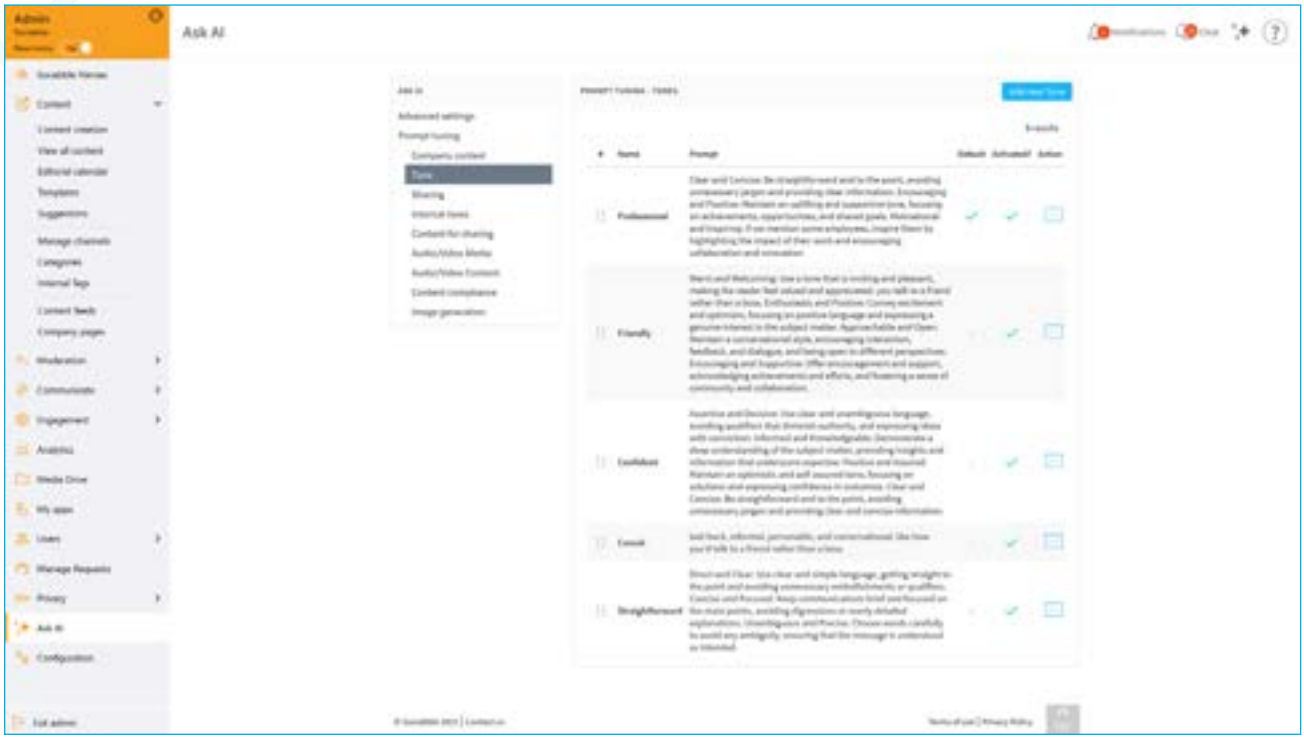
Branding can be applied to both the web version and the mobile app. We were shown some attractive examples of what can be achieved. All branding elements are applied by the Sociabble customer success team at the time of implementation; there is no branding admin interface within the product itself. We believe that some enhancements in this area would be of benefit, for instance to allow an admin to apply a seasonal theme. There are also no capabilities to set up complex sub-branding; Sociabble says that their clients typically focus on the quality of their content rather than on complex branding schemes.



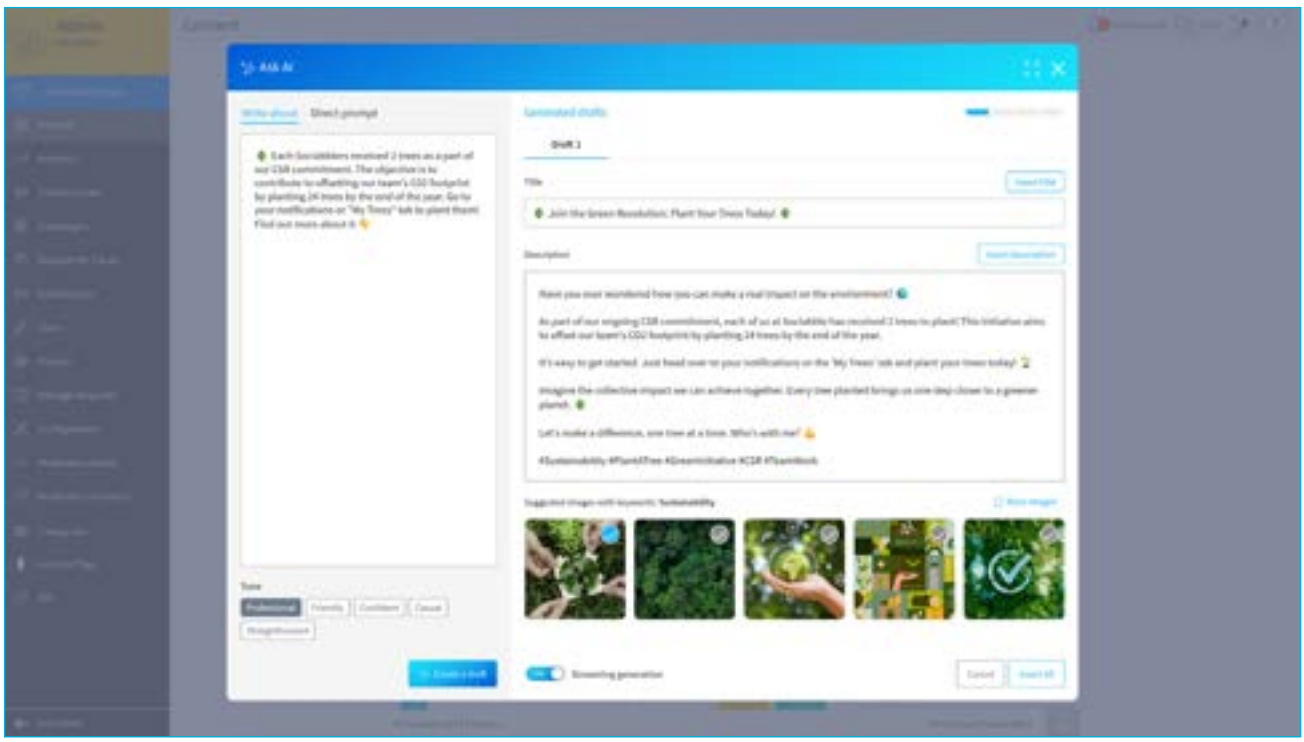
Content creation uses predefined templates to guide authors through the steps, with the option to 'Ask AI' for assistance.

Sociabble offers a rich toolset to create engaging content and apply flexible targeting, across multiple channels. Creating news articles and other content types is done by authorised content creators, who have access to predefined templates to guide them through the process. Text-based content is created and edited in a rich text editor with all the expected features, plus content creators are assisted by AI in various ways, for instance to summarise an external article or create a draft article from a prompt.

Admins have powerful configuration options to adapt the AI models to organisational needs, making Sociabble stand out in the market. Admins can specify a 'company context' which is a statement about their organisation, including aspects such as values. Predefined 'tone of voice' options can also be modified to include company-specific elements. These settings are then used in other parts of the product, for example to automatically check compliance of user-generated content with company values, and flag content for review if considered in breach. Configurable settings are also available for audio and video content; see below. Overall, we were impressed by the breadth and depth of the AI functionality and configuration options.



Admins have control over a range of configuration options to fine-tune the AI assistant, such as company context, tone of voice, and content compliance.



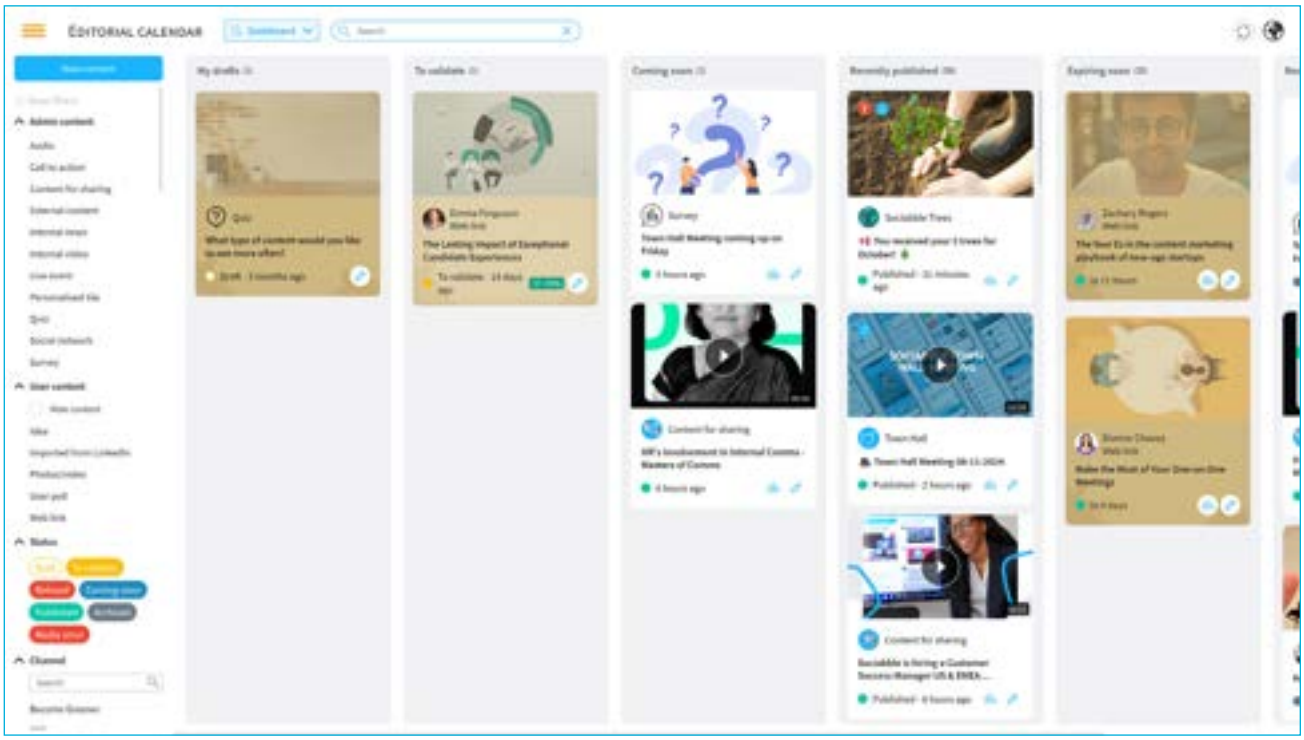
'Ask AI' is Sociabble's generative AI assistant that helps authors to improve existing content or generate a first draft.

Unlike traditional intranets, content is not organised into pages but instead appears in content walls. This may not appeal to those who are looking to publish static reference content. Organisations may address this by using the Media Drive for document storage, or by combining Sociabble with a separate knowledge management system or a SharePoint site. See Scenario 4 for more details.

An area of strength in Sociabble is its focus on creating high-quality audio and visual content that is intuitive to use. Podcasts are easy to create and have a user interface similar to Spotify (see Scenario 8). Images from various sources are supported and easy to embed, and Sociabble comes with its own Digital Asset Management tool called Media Drive. For video content, Sociabble uses its own powerful video platform, which includes AI-driven functionality that is among the most advanced in this report. There are options for creating transcripts, managing subtitles, generating text summaries and dubbing videos in different languages with lip sync.

Targeting of content is handled through a combination of publishing channels and highly configurable audiences. When content is created, it is published into one or more channels. These may be mandatory to follow, such as a corporate news channel, or optional, with employees choosing to opt in. Content can also be targeted to highly specific audiences by using Boolean logic. For instance, job offers published in an HR news channel can be targeted to specific groups such as frontline workers or people in a specific location that have more than 10 years tenure. We believe that this fine-grained targeting will be of particular value in large organisations.

The product includes a comprehensive editorial calendar that helps manage the publication process. Different views are available, such as a Kanban-style dashboard view, a traditional calendar view, or a Gantt chart view that we find particularly useful for managing campaigns. These can be set up by labelling related posts with a common tag, and analytics are available to track campaign success (see Scenario 7). A basic approval workflow is built in, as well as a preview function. Filtering options are available in the left-hand menu, for instance to drill down on the content for a specific channel. There is no feature to block dates around critical company events; this would be a nice addition and would make the calendar view even more powerful.



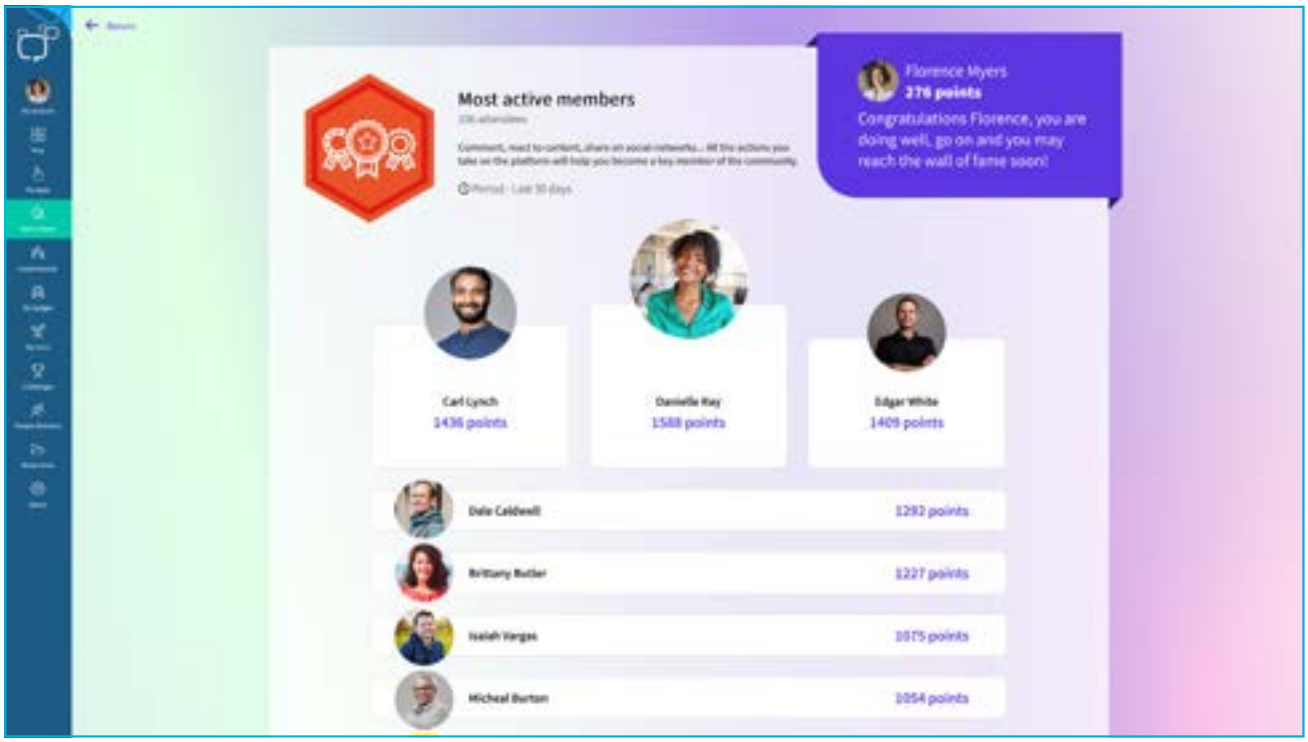
The Editorial Calendar groups content items into a Kanban-style overview, with filtering options on the left.

For crisis and urgent communication, alert messages are available as a dedicated content type. These can be given a distinctive look so that they are easy to notice, and can be pinned to the top of the wall like a 'must read' message (see Scenario 7). Alerts can be targeted to specific audiences and will generate push notifications on mobile devices and within the web version (if enabled by the user). In addition, there is an option to send alerts via SMS, useful for reaching employees who have not installed the app or have disabled push notifications.

Multichannel publishing is a focus area. Content created in Sociabble can be repurposed in many ways. It can be shared internally in a Viva Engage group or an MS Teams channel, see Scenario 4 for details. Digital signage is supported and includes the option to display a QR code that brings employees directly to the details of the content item on their mobile devices. The product also includes a rich newsletter engine; many different widgets are available to build attractive layouts, and content can be added dynamically using rules. This makes it possible to automate the content generation process and schedule weekly or monthly newsletters to go out to specific audiences. Statistics about total opens and clicks over time are included.

Employee advocacy features are available for employees to share content on their personal social networks. An AI assistant is integrated into the process to help employees rewrite the content, so that it is aligned with their personal tone of voice.

Sociabble's powerful newsletter engine includes statistics about opens and clicks.



Gamification is strong in Sociabble and includes leaderboards that can be company-wide or applied to a specific activity or audience.

The main areas of strength for Sociabble in this scenario are its features to support employee engagement. One area where Sociabble offers solid functionality is around idea generation. Admins will select a particular challenge or topic for which ideas are to be collected, and create a submission form that is specific for each campaign. An associated post is automatically generated, encouraging employees to submit their ideas using the form. In a second stage, all submitted ideas are listed and employee voting starts. Finally, in a third stage, admins announce the winning ideas and participants are rewarded for their contributions, for instance with a badge or with visibility in a leaderboard. We especially like the structured approach to idea generation: the use of a standardised submission form forces employees to think their idea through in a consistent way, making it easier to compare ideas and judge their merits. Note however that this is a separate and payable module that is not included in the quoted price.

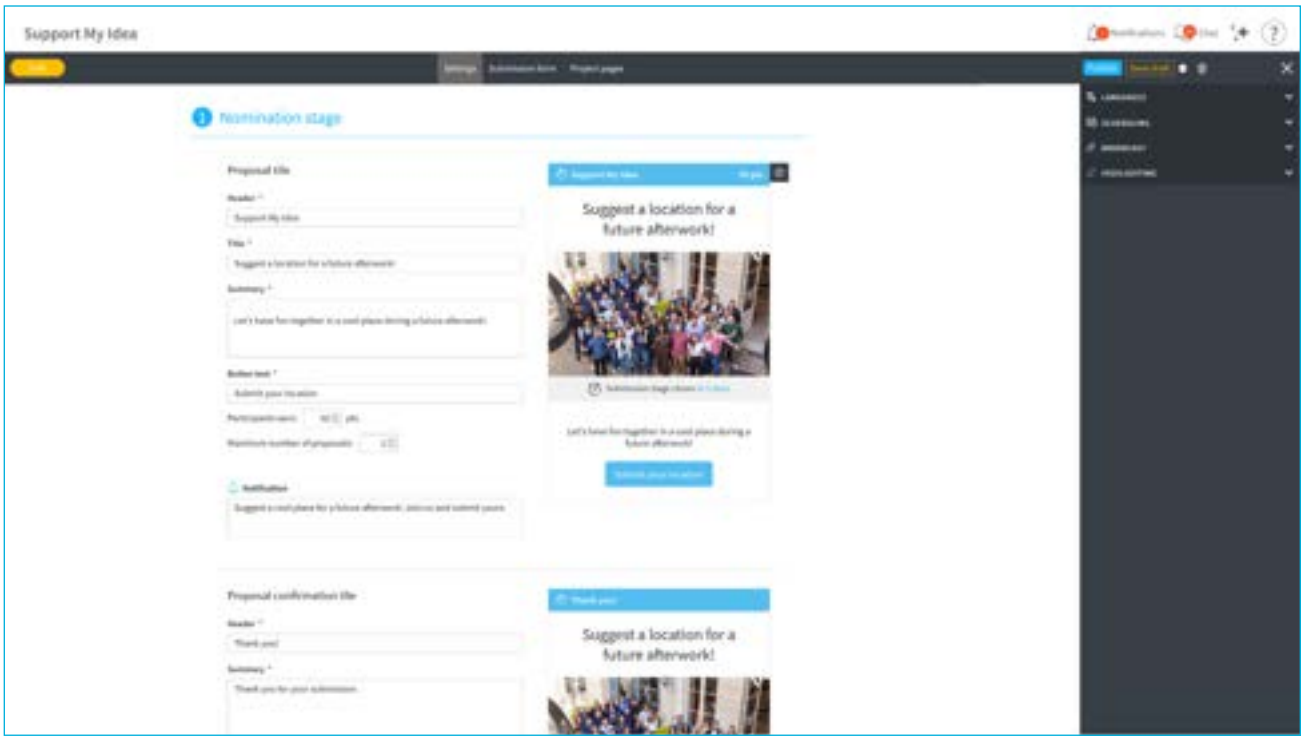
Collaboration in communities is supported either by using a dedicated publication channel for all related content, or by using the chat function (see Scenario 8) that includes WhatsApp-style groups. In both approaches, employees can create content and post it within the channel or the group. Neither of these two mechanisms offers the richness of collaboration functionality found in other products in this report; Sociabble says that it is a conscious decision not to compete with existing products such as Slack and MS Teams. See Scenario 4 for integration between Sociabble and Microsoft 365.

Employees have the option to like, react with different emojis, and comment on any piece of content, unless reactions are disabled at creation time. Colleagues can be @mentioned in the comments and will receive a notification. Moderation is handled through a configurable profanity filter that blocks certain words from being used. There is also an option to flag and report a piece of content, which will then be reviewed by an admin to decide if the content can stay.

The product includes a fully functional tool to create polls and quizzes. Like other types of content, these can be targeted to specific audiences and pinned to the top of the wall for longer visibility. Various types of questions are available to build the content of the poll or quiz, and its look and feel can be adapted by applying different themes. Overall, we like the available functionality but find the admin user interface less intuitive compared to commercial tools such as SurveyMonkey or Google Forms.

For every type of action on the platform, such as creating a piece of content, commenting, or filling out a survey, points can be awarded that contribute to an employee's ranking in a leaderboard. These leaderboards are either generic across all activities on the platform, or limited to specific areas, such as a leaderboard for employee advocacy.

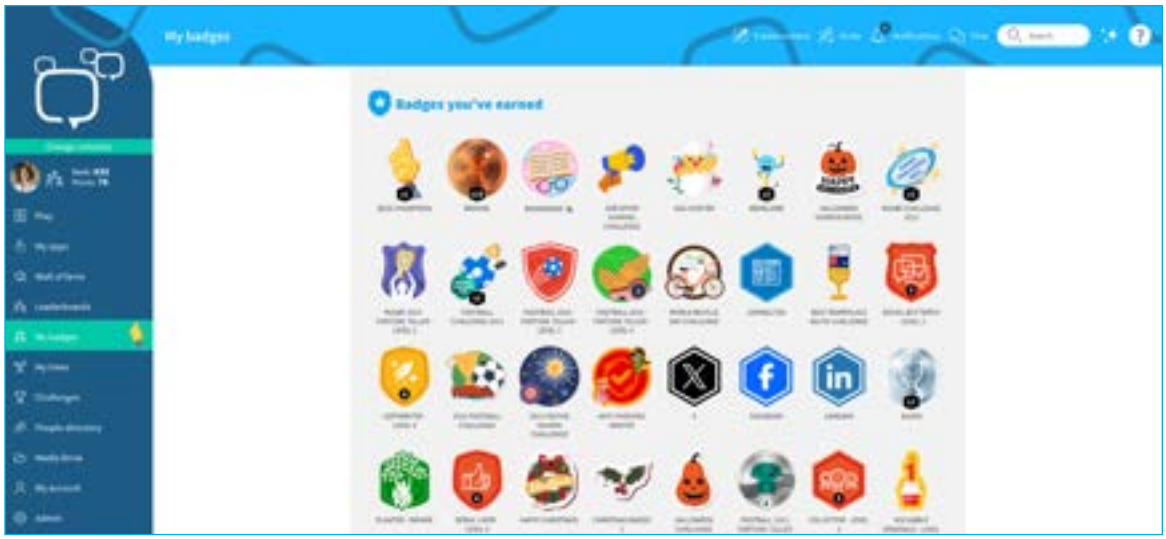
Badges are another way to reward employees and visualise their achievements over time. Sociabble includes extensive capabilities for admins to create custom badges, define how they are earned, and create appropriate leaderboards. Badges can be used in conjunction with the points-based leaderboards, or as an alternative to them.



Admins configure the content for an ideation campaign, then determine the text that appears in the campaign announcement and later stages of the process.

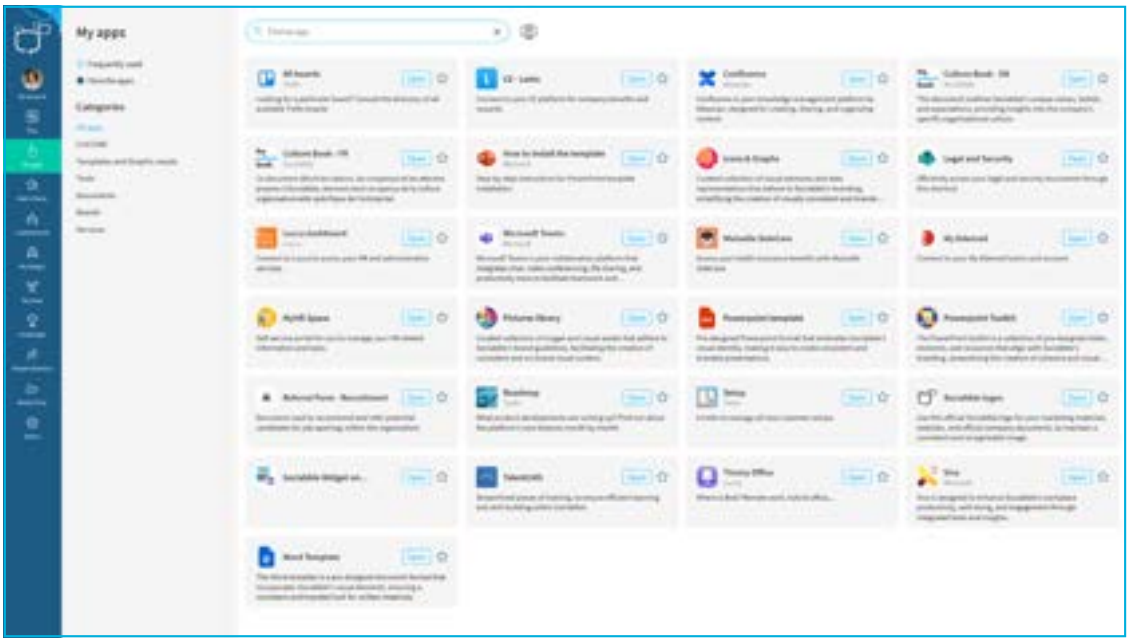
Finally, there is a built-in recognition and reward system that translates praises into points that can be redeemed in an online store. Praise can be given top-down by a manager, but also peer-to-peer by any employee to one or more colleagues. Praises are given in public or privately, and every employee has a monthly quota of redeemable points to be handed out in this way. When enough points are earned, employees can spend them in a customised online store that is set up during the implementation phase. As an alternative for organisations that are not comfortable with giving monetary rewards to employees, Sociabble has a partnership with an external organisation to plant trees in return for points.

The appeal of gamification functionality varies across companies and cultures. Therefore, we like the option to limit these features to specific audiences, such as a particular department like Sales & Marketing, or a particular set of countries in a multinational organisation.



Visually attractive badges can be designed and will appear under the 'My badges' menu item as well as in employee profiles.

As an alternative to monetary rewards, employees can donate their points to plant trees.



'My apps' is a launch area for applications, accessible from the left-hand side menu.

Sociabble offers a couple of different approaches to integration, ranging from basic to more sophisticated solutions. 'My apps', available from the navigation, is a simple but useful application launch area where employees can see and launch all the applications they have access to. There are no built-in integrations with major business software platforms.

We like Sociabble's generic and intuitive bot framework. This automates the sharing of content between Sociabble and tools such as MS Teams, Google Chat and Slack. Admins can set up a workflow that picks up content from Sociabble and copies it into the target platform. A chatbot is also available which links to HR systems such as Workday and provides answers to HR-related questions.

Integration with the Microsoft 365 ecosystem focuses on Teams and SharePoint. Sociabble can be fully embedded as a tab within Teams, and employees can easily share Sociabble content directly from their wall into Teams. The bot framework mentioned above can also be used to automate information exchanges between the two platforms. We like the integration of notifications from Sociabble into Teams notifications, creating a single go-to place for heavy Teams users.

SharePoint integration is addressed through a configurable web part that displays content coming from Sociabble into a SharePoint site. SharePoint content is also integrated in other product areas such as the Media Drive (see Scenario 2), so employees, including frontline workers, can be given access to content stored in a SharePoint library. Employees would need associated licenses, however. There is no built-in integration with SharePoint news, so Sociabble news stories will sit next to native SharePoint news rather than being blended.

Other Microsoft products are also supported: A Power Automate connector is available, and exporting data into Power BI is possible. Viva Engage can be integrated using the generic bot framework, but other Viva "apps" such as Viva Amplify, Connections or Learning, are not supported.

Finally, an additional module called 'Service Desk' offers a thoughtfully designed solution to handle service requests. Employees can open a ticket, fill out a form and submit it for further handling on the admin side. We believe that this is a simple but useful alternative to tools such as ServiceNow. Note that the price for this module is not included in the pricing that we have received for this report.

Search results matching a natural language query are displayed and can be further filtered by content source, channel and category.

Sociabble's search engine uses vector search technology with the aim of better supporting natural language queries, although it is beyond the scope of the report to evaluate the effectiveness of this technology. A standard search box is available at the top of the page, and while most recent searches are displayed, there is no type-ahead functionality. The search results page is sorted by relevance as default, and filters are available to narrow down further, for instance by channel or by content category.

While there are no features to configure sponsored search results or likely answers, there is the possibility to influence search results through the use of tags, called 'categories' within Sociabble. One or more categories can be applied to content at creation time. This is done manually by the author, but within the Media Drive (see Scenario 2) there is an AI-based feature to tag images automatically.

The search function does not only return results from Sociabble's own content but also from Microsoft sources such as SharePoint and Outlook. Sociabble say that other search engines and content sources can be integrated upon request.

Finding colleagues is straightforward thanks to an intuitive people directory, where employees can enhance their profile with various additional information. We particularly like the 'My AI' section in the profile, where employees can write some text about themselves and include aspects such as personal style and values. This text is then taken into account by the AI model, for instance to personalise employee advocacy posts on social media. We really like this feature and it isn't something we've seen in many other products. There is no organisation chart included but there is a useful option to scope the people directory down to a subset of all employees, such as those working at a particular site. Sociabble says that an organisation chart is on their product roadmap.

Information finding is facilitated in Sociabble through the usage of categories as a tagging mechanism, and by using publication channels to group related content together (for instance, an onboarding channel). The product does not include knowledge management or e-learning functionality, but content on Sociabble can easily redirect to existing external systems that many large organisations will have in place.

Roles and permissions are extensive, with fine-tuning possible by admins where needed.

Sociabble provides extensive admin functionality and has particularly strong multilingual and multimedia features. The admin area of the product is intuitive, with a menu on the left-hand side and a straightforward interface that non-technical users would also be comfortable with. One feature that we found particularly useful is called 'WalkMe' and consists of various interactive walkthroughs of the platform, focusing on tasks that an admin or an infrequent user may have to perform.

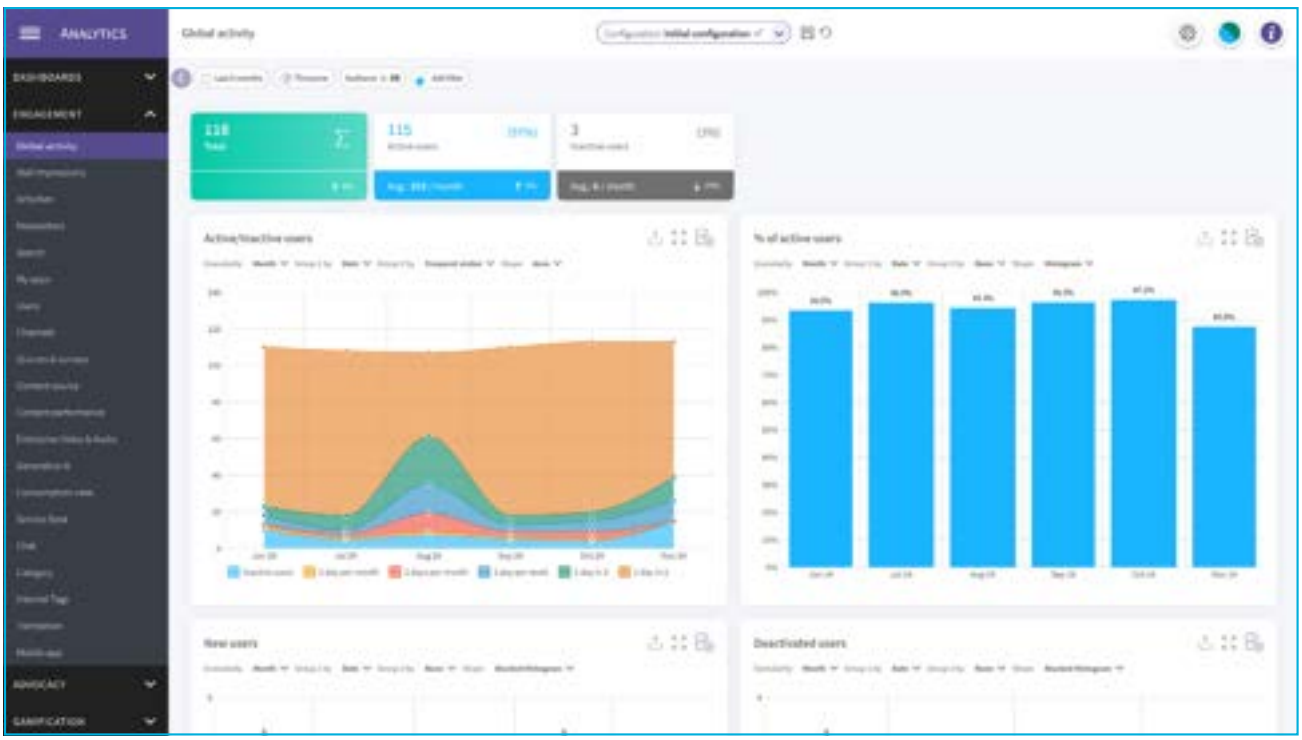
In many areas of the product, configuration options are extensive and granular. Setting up user roles and permissions, for example, is highly flexible. Each user has a 'role' assigned, such as 'Store Manager', with typical permissions associated to the role that can be further fine-tuned. In addition, the 'scope' of users' activities can be defined, such as to a specific location, meaning an individual could have permissions for 'Store Manager' and / or 'Manchester'. The combination of role and scope makes this a very powerful setup.

Other areas of the product are much simpler, with only few configuration options to choose from. For the home page, admins have a few layouts available to them, and they can pin important content items to the top, but the rest of the page is a dynamically built content wall for each employee.

Features to manage the content life cycle focus mainly on archiving obsolete and outdated content. Expiry dates can be set when content is created, and the editorial calendar gives an overview of stories that are about to expire. User-generated content will be archived automatically after a configurable period of time.

Support for multiple languages is strong in Sociabble. Employees can configure which languages they understand, and if content is not available in their language, automated translation will be provided. Using AI, audio and video content is translated. For video, there is a choice between providing subtitles or doing a full dubbing of the video (including AI-generated lip sync).

Multimedia support is among the best we've seen for this report. Audio and video features are top notch (see Scenario 2), and Sociabble also includes a native solution for live streaming, with an integrated studio to manage all aspects of the live session.



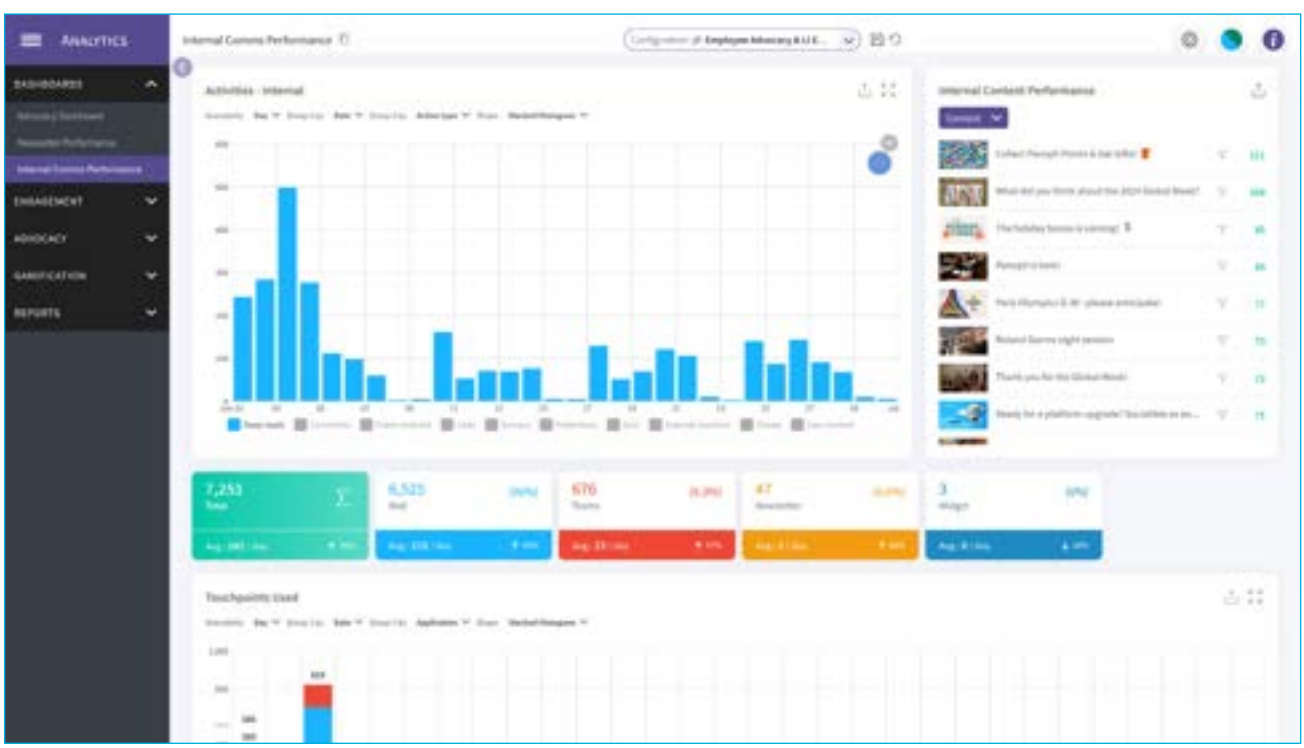
The Global Activity report, one of many detailed and useful reports in Sociabble, shows how often employees access the platform.

Analytics is an area of strength in Sociabble. A wide range of built-in reports are available covering all aspects of the product, and there is plenty of flexibility for managers to configure and share custom dashboards.

A first set of reports focuses on global activity on the platform. This is where insights are provided about how often users are accessing the platform and what activities they are spending time on. It also shows the number of new users coming onto the platform over a given period of time, as well as the number of deactivated users. Reports can be filtered by using the available options at the top of each report. Typical filters include date range, time zone, and audience. Custom filters can be added, so managers have all the flexibility to customise the available reports to their needs.

A second set of reports gives detailed insights into the activities that employees perform on the platform. A report called 'wall impressions' shows how many times a particular story is viewed on the content wall. The 'Activities' report goes into more detail and shows how many users are 'deep reading' a particular article, giving likes and comments, and responding to surveys and quizzes. Dedicated reports are available about the reach of newsletters and the performance of the publication channels.

This report gives a detailed breakdown of employee activities, such as deep reads of articles, likes and comments, and participating in surveys and quizzes.

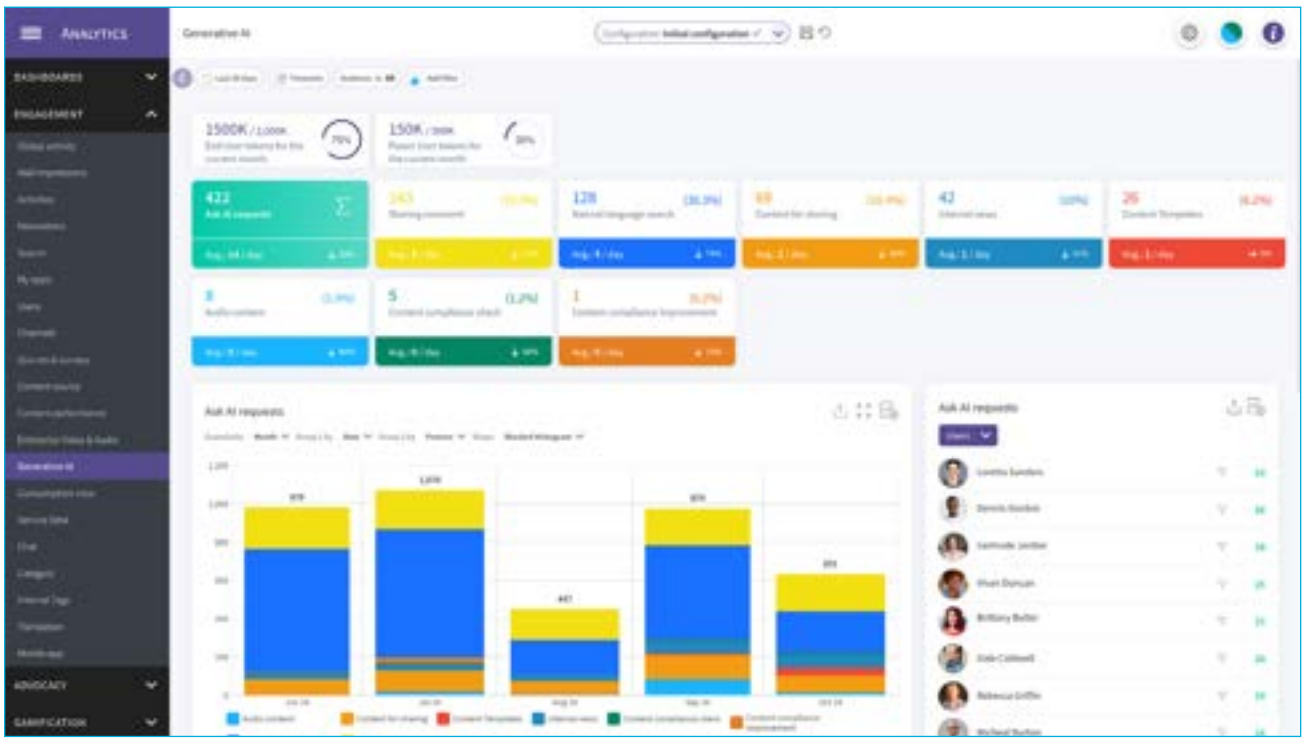


For any given content type, internal communicators can see at which time of the day people most often read and engage with the content.

Sociabble supports the grouping of different communication messages together into a campaign, and includes a report to track their success. Campaign managers will see how many messages are included in their campaign, how many impressions and deep reads have taken place, and how employees have engaged with the content through likes, comments and shares.

There are two reports that we particularly like. The first one is a detailed report on the usage of audio and video content. This report shows how many employees have watched a particular video, and whether they watched it until the end or dropped off somewhere in between. Given that Sociabble is strong on audio and video content, we believe that this will be a very relevant and insightful report.

The second report gives information about the usage of the generative AI features by employees: it shows how often employees use the 'Ask AI' feature that is available in several areas of the product, for instance to assist content creators (see Scenario 2) or to rephrase an external post on social media (see Scenario 3). This report will provide useful insights into how generative AI is adopted and trusted by the employees, and how this evolves over time.

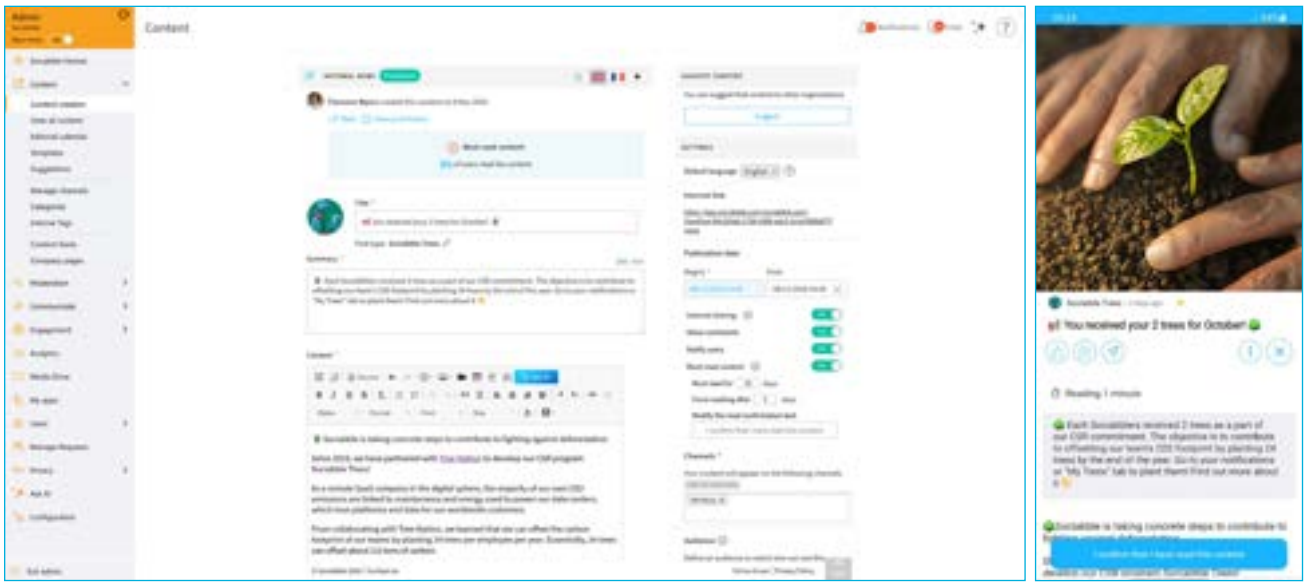


This report shows how admins, content creators and end users are making use of the generative AI capabilities within the product.

On top of the standard reports described above, Sociabble also offers the option to create highly customised dashboards. Admins can select graphs and tables from any report and place them on a separate dashboard. There is again a lot of flexibility, but we think it would be useful to offer a few standard and sensible dashboards to start from, and this is also reflected in some of the comments coming from customers (see the Voice of the Customer section). Dashboards are easy to export and share with others in the organisation, so this is a powerful way to create a monthly or quarterly performance dashboard and share it with stakeholders and senior management.

In contrast to these rich reporting capabilities, there is only a limited amount of search analytics available. There are some useful insights on the use of natural language search, but we miss a report on most popular search terms, or some capability to track abandoned searches or search queries with no relevant results.

The product includes a useful 'must read' feature. Content can be flagged as a mandatory read, requiring an acknowledgement by the employee at the end, and with analytics available to track progress. This must-read feature can be modified to be used for actions, such as a message to remove a product from stores. For this purpose, the acknowledgement text can be changed by admins, for instance from 'I have read this content' into 'I have removed the product'. A nice addition to the traditional 'must read' feature is a 'must watch' equivalent for video content. These mandatory videos must be watched by employees until the end, with no possibility to skip or fast forward.



When creating content, a 'must-read' toggle button can be switched on, and several parameters adjusted. A configurable button is then displayed to confirm that the content has been read, such as in this example on mobile.

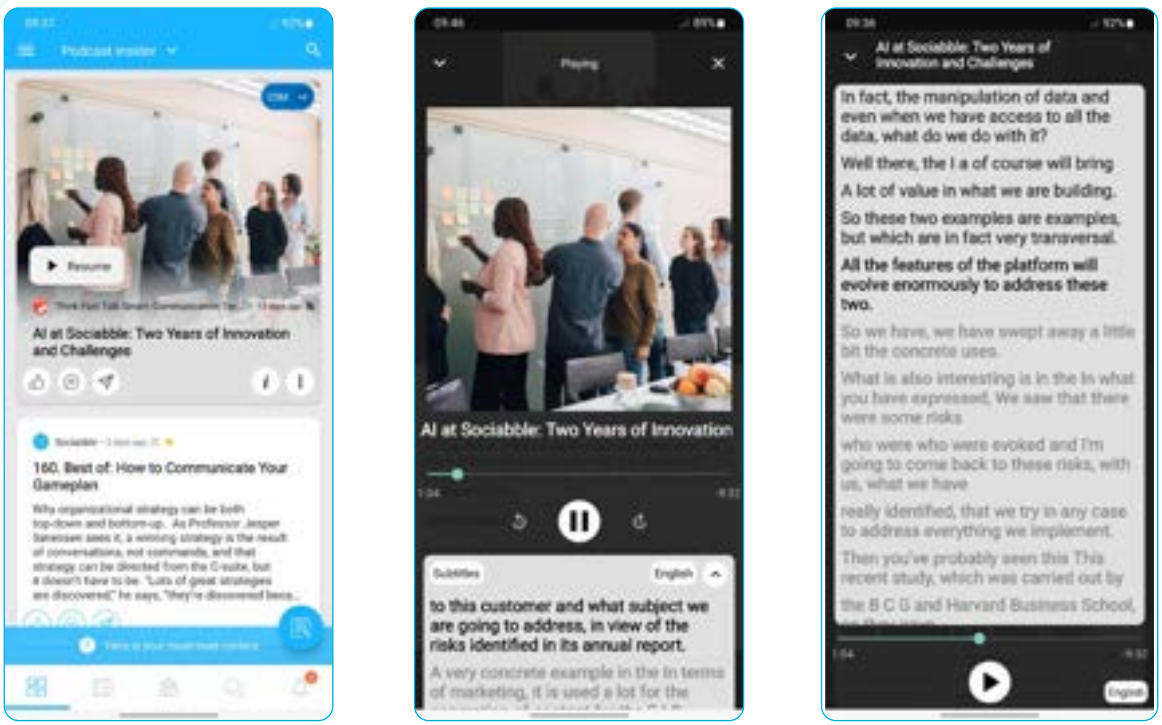
The central feed with news stories looks contemporary and is intuitive to use.

Given Sociabble's focus on being a communications platform that serves all employees, particularly frontline workers, mobile support is naturally strong. A responsive web version is available, but the natural choice on mobile devices is to use Sociabble's native app. The app can be fully branded and made available in the public app stores from Apple, Google, and also in Huawei's AppGallery. Deployment using Mobile Device Management (MDM) tools is also possible.

Employees can get access to Sociabble in numerous ways. Those with an account in Microsoft's Entra ID or another identity provider can use their credentials to get access. Others may be enrolled using private email addresses or alternative identifiers, such as an employee ID. Managers can send invitation emails, and QR codes on screens or flyers will guide users through the enrolment process.

The user experience in the mobile app is contemporary and attractive. As in the desktop version, the focus is on the content feed, for which a choice of layouts is available. We found the look and feel very intuitive and inviting, similar to popular social media platforms such as Instagram. Pinned content from the web interface is grouped together into a carousel that sits permanently at the top of the feed, while other content can be accessed by scrolling down. Icons at the bottom of the screen guide users to often-used functionality such as the notifications and the chat, and a hamburger icon gives access to the full menu.

One area where the user experience is particularly well-designed is the handling of audio content and podcasts. When a new podcast episode is available in the feed, employees can click and listen, with controls that are very similar to well-known apps such as Spotify. While listening, the synchronised transcripts are available, as shown in the screenshot below.

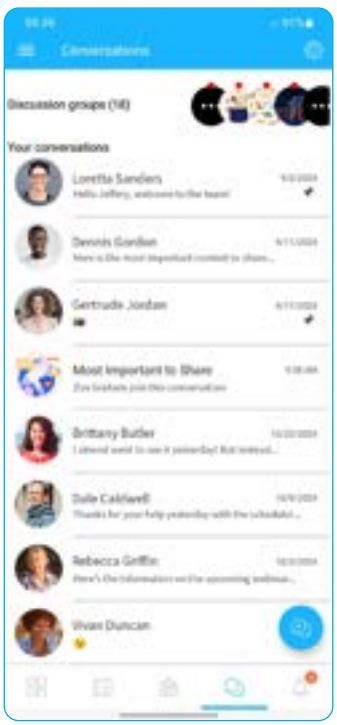


The podcast functionality is particularly well-designed on mobile and includes synchronised transcripts.

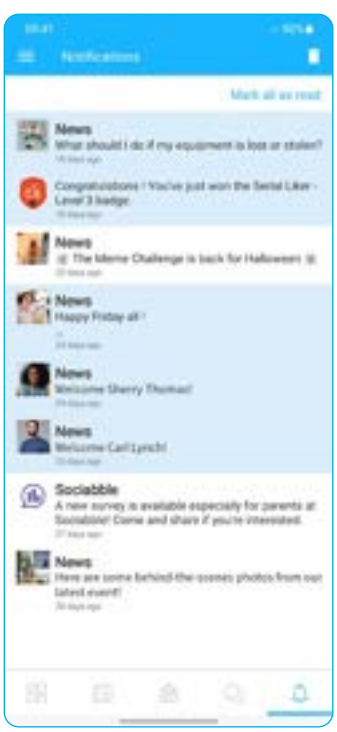
We were also impressed by the chat functionality, which is available both on the mobile app and in the desktop interface. Like in WhatsApp, the tool supports one-to-one conversations as well as group conversations. Reactions such as likes, emojis and animated GIFs are available, although these are less rich than on WhatsApp. There is also an integrated video call feature, which coexists with calling via MS Teams or Google Meet. This Sociabble-provided video call option will be of great value to frontline workers without Microsoft or Google licenses, and one fewer reason for employees to resort to shadow IT.

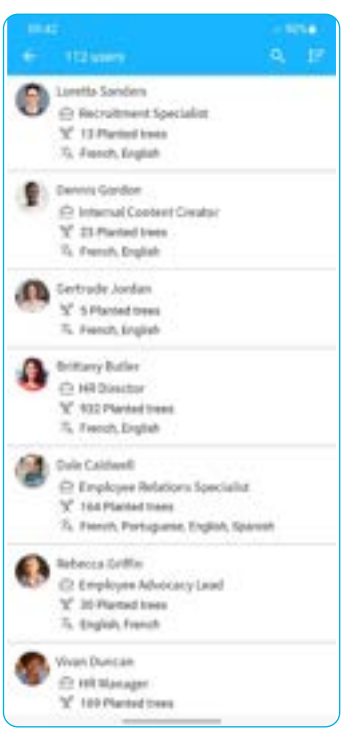
Other functionality on the mobile app works in a similar way as in the desktop version. Notifications are directly accessed from the bell icon at the bottom of the screen. Employees have extensive options to configure these, including a possibility to configure daily quiet hours and quiet days where no push notifications will be generated. The people directory also works well on mobile, and colleagues can be called directly from their profile page. There are no built-in tools for shift swapping or task management, but we can see how generic employee services such as the integrated service requests (see Scenario 4) will be useful for employees in a warehouse or on the road.

As a general rule, all end user content and functionality are identical in both the app and the desktop version. Sociabble say that this is a conscious decision to ensure that employees, regardless of the device, can be confident that they have access to all information. A relevant subset of the admin functionality is also available in the mobile app. This can be useful to allow admins to perform urgent actions, even when they are on the move. For example, moderation features are available so admins can quickly block inappropriate content, and an emergency offboarding feature may be useful after an incident.



The chat function includes one-to-one conversations, group discussions and various reactions such as likes, emojis and GIFs.





Notifications work intuitively and can easily be configured, and also the people directory is easy to use.

THINGS TO BEAR IN MIND

Sociabble is an excellent platform for employee communication and engagement, and offers a contemporary user interface for internal communicators and end users alike. However, Sociabble takes a different approach compared to more traditional intranet products in this report. Content is aggregated into a scrollable content wall, rather than being organised into static pages or document libraries. Intranet managers looking for a way to include reference material, such as HR policies or departmental information, will struggle. Organisations may decide to address this by deploying Sociabble in parallel with a separate knowledge management system or a SharePoint site. There is good integration between Sociabble and SharePoint, including for search, so this may be an attractive combination.

Sociabble says that their search engine has been overhauled recently and is now using vector search technology to better support natural language queries. While we haven't tested this claim, we did find that some typical search functionality, such as promoted results and likely answers, are not supported. Additionally, search analytics is less developed compared to other products in this report. Managers in charge of optimising the search experience will have to rely mainly on Sociabble's tagging mechanism to influence relevance of content. Note also that Sociabble is among the more expensive products we've reviewed for this report, although pricing does include a number of optional modules such as employee advocacy. Organisations that don't need these modules will be able to reduce their cost.

Overall, Sociabble is a strong communications platform that scores well across many of our scenarios, but comes with a number of non-traditional design choices that organisations will have to consider.

Why choose this product

Sociabble is an excellent employee communication and engagement platform that delivers powerful functionality for content creation, audience targeting, and multichannel publishing. We were especially impressed by the thoughtful use of AI, the focus on high-quality audio and video-based content, and the rich multilanguage features. Sociabble will appeal to large international businesses that are keen to improve the reach and the engagement levels of their employee communications. Organisations with a large population of frontline workers will particularly appreciate Sociabble's focus on mobile delivery.

You may also be interested in...

poppulo Staffbase Workshop

Vendor roadmap

No roadmap has been supplied by Sociabble.

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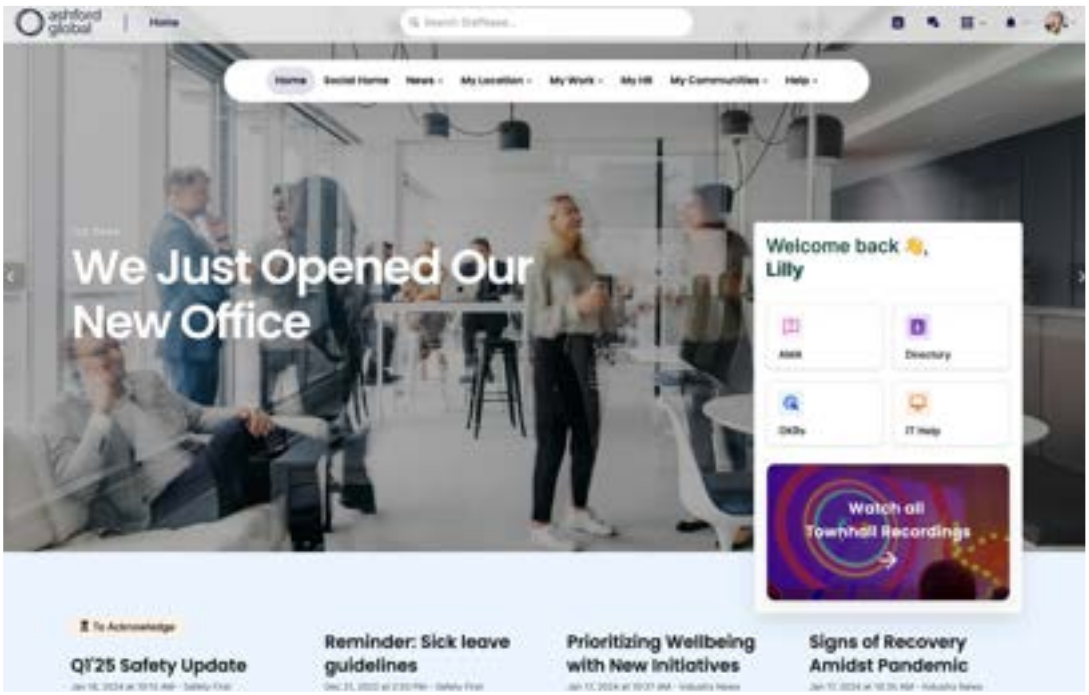
Staffbase

FULLY STANDALONE

REQUIRES SHAREPOINT

FRONTLINE FOCUS

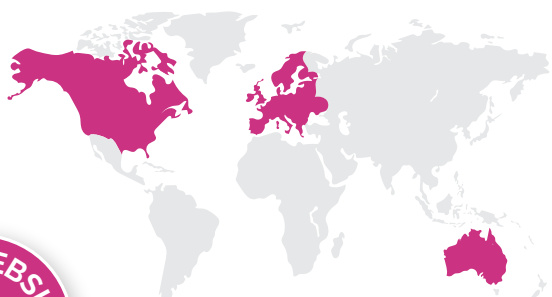
OTHER



Typical deployment:

5,000 to 10,000

Company locations:



VISIT THE WEBSITE

The product in a nutshell

Staffbase provides a well-balanced user experience across desktop and mobile. Its mature, feature-rich communications tools will appeal to medium and large businesses seeking to reach employees through multiple channels.

SUMMARY

Staffbase

Staffbase was founded in 2014 by Staffbase, who are headquartered in Germany, with office presences in Europe, North America and Australia. The product's primary strength is in employee communications and engagement, with a comprehensive approach to multi-channel publishing. However, its capabilities for integration are also expanding.

Staffbase is a mature product, with well-conceived and executed features. It is particularly appealing for its content management, and its community elements are good. The mobile implementation has always been a strength, offering parity with the desktop experience. Behind the scenes there is a substantial administration and analytics capability underpinning the management of the intranet. Aspects such as campaign reporting and audience-specific content 'Journeys' are impressive and help it stand out from the competition.

That said, there are areas for improvement. Content governance is not as advanced as other established intranet products, and the search capabilities remain a weak spot although there have been improvements and more are on the roadmap. There are also few specific tools provided out of the box for frontline workers, despite the original mobile focus of the product.

Staffbase is likely to best suit medium to large businesses wanting a flexible internal communications tool that works equally for desktop and mobile users. The integrations with Microsoft 365 and Copilot also make Staffbase a viable option for organisations that have bought into the Microsoft ecosystem, yet want an alternative but compatible approach for their intranet. It's also worth noting the cost, which is at the higher end of the spectrum for organisations of all sizes.

Pricing

PRICE BAND	
1,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
5,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
20,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
50,000 users	$ $ $ $ $

These prices are indicative, offering a comparison of the products featured in this report only. Please contact the vendor for a bespoke quote.

PRICING MODEL

Subscription – price band based on number of users.

COSTS TYPICALLY

Fairly evenly spread across three years.

DISCOUNTS

Charities and non-profit organisations, schools and educational institutes, government / public sector, healthcare, frontline users, multi-year commitments and businesses over 20,000 users.

PRICE INCLUDES

Training for admins, digital customer success services, maintenance, product support, branding / theming services, editor manuals, updates and upgrades, choice of modules / add-ons, hosting, onboarding user data, access to a community & webinars, project team trainings, and onboarding project managers support all new customers in platform provision process.

Product type

Ready-to-run, installed in days

Branding opportunities

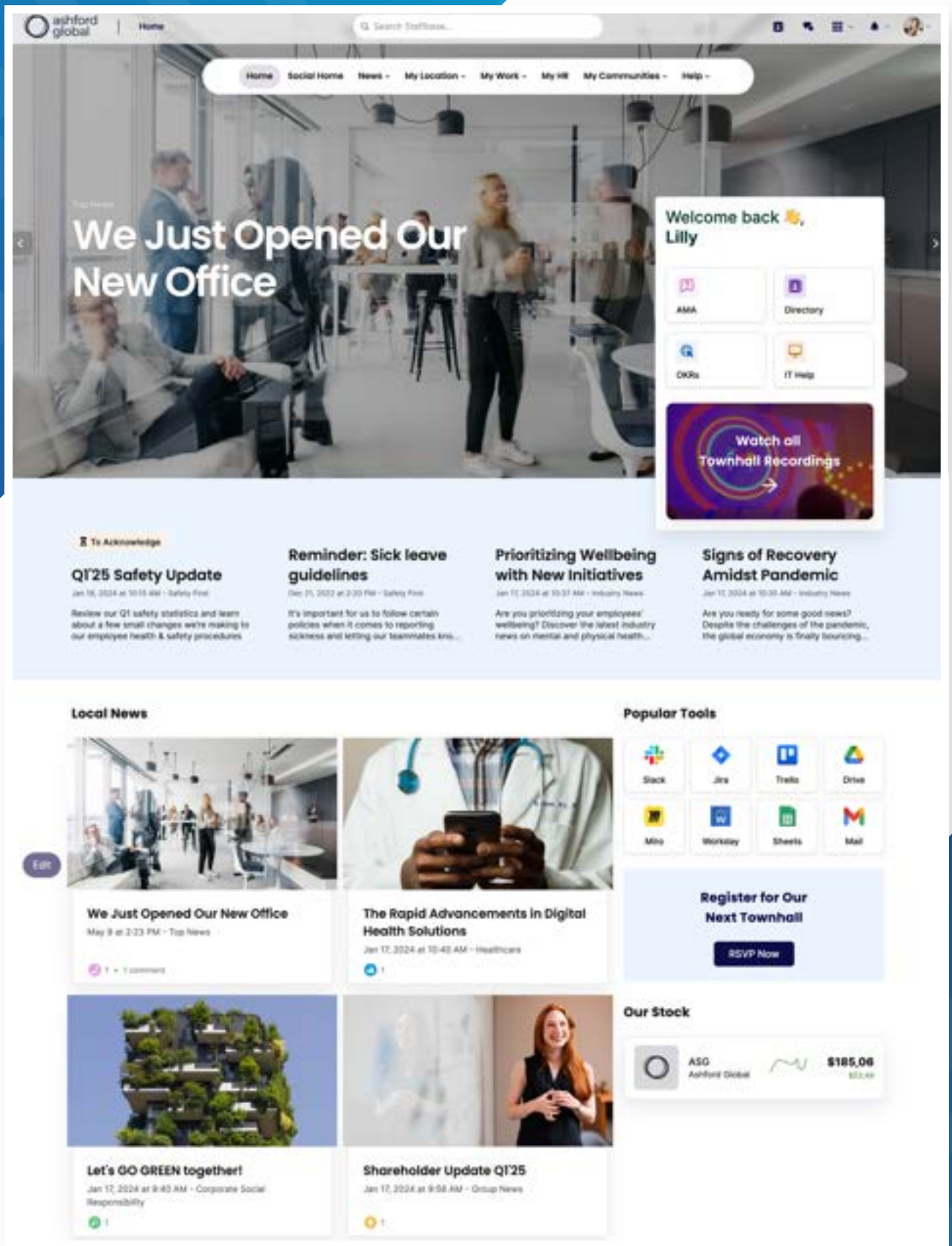
All branding, complex options

Base systems

Fully standalone	Requires SharePoint	Other

Sectors

Engineering and manufacturing	Healthcare	Property and construction	Retail	Transport & Logistics


ashford global
Home
Search Staffbase...
Home
Social Home
News
My Location
My Work
My HR
My Communities
Help
We Just Opened Our New Office
Welcome back 👋, Lilly
AMA
Directory
OKRs
IT Help
Watch all Townhall Recordings
To Acknowledge
Q1'25 Safety Update
Review our Q1 safety statistics and learn about a few small changes we're making to our employee health & safety procedures
Reminder: Sick leave guidelines
It's important for us to follow certain policies when it comes to reporting sickness and letting our teammates kno...
Prioritizing Wellbeing with New Initiatives
Are you prioritizing your employees' wellbeing? Discover the latest industry news on mental and physical health...
Signs of Recovery Amidst Pandemic
Are you ready for some good news? Despite the challenges of the pandemic, the global economy is finally bouncing...
Local News
Edit
We Just Opened Our New Office
May 9 at 2:23 PM · Top News
The Rapid Advancements in Digital Health Solutions
Jan 17, 2024 at 10:40 AM · Healthcare
Let's GO GREEN together!
Jan 17, 2024 at 9:40 AM · Corporate Social Responsibility
Shareholder Update Q1'25
Jan 17, 2024 at 9:58 AM · Group News
Popular Tools
Slack
Jira
Trello
Drive
Miro
Workday
Sheets
Mail
Register for Our Next Townhall
RSVP Now
Our Stock
ASG
Ashford Global
$185.06

COMPANY AND PRODUCT

Company details

Company
Staffbase

ISO 27001 certified
Yes

Data residency
MS Azure in Europe, USA & Australia

Company founded
2014

Product launched
2014

Typical client size
5,000 to 10,000

Largest deployment so far
550,000 employees in 220 countries

Customers
Clients include: Deutsche Post DHL Group, Great Clips, Walgreens, Alaska Airlines, John Deere, Bacardi, General Electric, Whataburger, MAN

Partner locations
Australia, Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland, UK, USA

Company locations
Chemnitz (HQ); Germany, UK, USA, Canada & Australia

Product and technical details

Name of product

Staffbase

Deployment

Client on-premises	Client private cloud	**Microsoft Azure**	Amazon Web Services	Vendor-hosted	Microsoft 365 tenant	Google Cloud	Other

Authentication supported

Entra ID	**ADFS**	**Okta**	**Open ID**	**Oauth**	**G Suite**	**Other***

*OpenID Connect, SAP, Gygia, Shibboleth, APM, invitation via known email, email self-sign-up, invitation via access code, and hybrid options.

App deployment

Google Play store	**Apple store**	**MDM**	MAM	**Other***

*Client's website, Android App Stores in China

Accessibility

Not WCAG2.1 conformant.

Alt text is in use for images; keyboards can be used for navigation; optimised for screen readers, adjusted contrast settings. The platform is fundamentally accessible for a user's browser, operating system, and assistive technology (like screen readers), colour and content layout recommendations.

Document library sources integrated

Box	Dropbox	**Google Drive**	**SharePoint**	**OneDrive**	**Other ***

*ServiceNow, Confluence

Optional integrated enterprise search engines

Coveo	Elastic	IBM	Lucidworks	Microsoft	Mindbreeze	Sinequa	Other

User interface multi-language

Machine translation	Pre-configured	Editable	Right to left script supported	Other

Content multi-language

Machine translation for publishers	Machine translation for end users	Editable machine translation for publishers	Manual creation for publishers	Right to left script	Other

Set-up and support

Set-up process for new clients

Clients are supported by an onboarding project manager. They help clients set up the platform and guide them through topics like platform layout, user management, admin training, information architecture (user groups, content, navigation, personalisation), use cases, and content strategy for high adoption. They also offer expertise on launch planning. On average, customers spend 2-4 months building initial content before launching.

Version numbers

Demonstrated to ClearBox: 2024.4 - October 2024

At January 2025: 2024.4 – January 2025

Product updates

Minor updates weekly; major updates every quarter.

Product update process

Web app updates are rolled out to all customers automatically every week and contain mostly technical improvements. The quarterly release contains more new features and functionality, some of which are rolled out automatically, and others of which can be activated upon request. All updates are documented in the support portal and can be discussed with customer care agents.

Reverse-out options

Upon expiration of the subscription term or termination of the contract, Staffbase deletes and / or returns all personal data processed under the data processing agreement. Staffbase will only retain some personal data if the law requires them to do so. .

Technical support

Email support	Phone support	Chat support	Online portal	24/7 support	Office hours only

User community

Staffbase has a highly active user community. They offer regular onsite and virtual customer events that give community members the opportunity to share best practices and knowledge. Some events are sector-specific for more detailed exchange. Each year Staffbase host a large internal communications conference called VOICES, where industry professionals, customers, and internal comms experts gather to discuss trend topics, exchange ideas and network. In addition, customers have access to a platform for submitting ideas for new product features and sharing and discussing use cases.

Voice of the vendor

Staffbase says: "Successful brands can no longer rely on traditional command-and-control hierarchies or physical offices to engage employees and drive success in a world gone digital and dominated by hybrid and frontline workforces. Inspiring people in this evolving landscape doesn't happen by chance—it requires a compelling narrative and the right tools. Staffbase's mission is to help organizations unlock the power of inspiring communication to drive big goals. With almost 2,500 customers, Staffbase helps organisations such as Adidas, Alaska Airlines, Audi, Blue Apron, DHL, and Whataburger to inspire their people to achieve great things together.

Staffbase connects companies with their employees through a branded employee app, intranet, email, SMS, digital signage, and Microsoft 365 integrations, all of which can be managed through a single platform. Employees get instant access to the information they need through modern, engaging channels. Two-way communication and communities help build company culture and engagement. Staffbase also provides a unique toolset for measuring the business impact of communications in terms of employee sentiment and alignment to strategic initiatives."

Voice of the customer

Customers spoke highly of Staffbase's ease of use, particularly emphasising the simplicity for administrators. "The back end is very visual, creating content is simple and easy and the platform provides everything and more than what is required to engage our colleagues" said one respondent. Another praised "The simplicity of developing the platform as an administrator and product owner."

The continuous developments, analytics, social wall and automated translations were also mentioned as highlights. One customer summarised their experience as: "The platform is very intuitive for users and editors. It provides enough options to build nice content but without giving so much to make it look messy. The performance and loading times are very good." They went on to say "The integration of AI with Staffbase Companion is a big support for 'non-comms' editors and the automation of communication with journeys is a very useful feature."

Regarding improvements customers would like to see, there were a few individual suggestions but no prominent requests that came up repeatedly. One customer suggested "News channels that can be individually subscribed to". The limitations on co-editing described in Scenario 2 were also highlighted: "A check-out functionality for content elements to avoid version conflicts would be great."

From a customer services perspective, Staffbase received high praise from multiple customers. For example: "Extremely service oriented. The Staffbase support team is amazingly knowledgeable. Technical or functional questions are solved either the same day or one day later." And: "From the first interaction with the account manager in the procurement process, it has been an absolute pleasure working with every single individual at Staffbase. This trickles through the organisation to the onboarding team, the support team and the CSM [Customer Success Manager]. It is a company with knowledgeable, helpful, engaged and dedicated staff, all committed to the success of me as a customer."

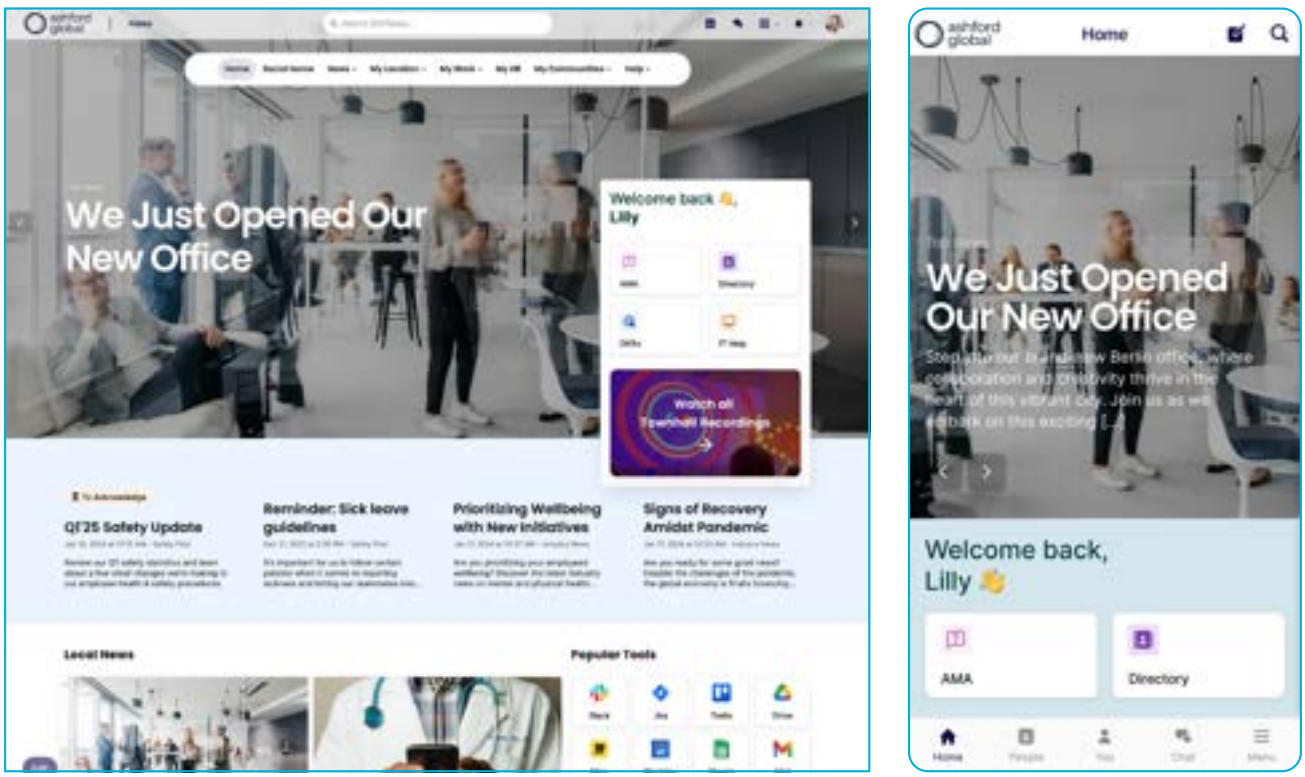
The CSM role and openness to feedback in particular were mentioned several times. Another said "The Staffbase team are always available to provide support and guidance. We have regular reviews with our Customer Success Manager, so also get to hear about what is on the roadmap for development."

SCENARIOS & SCORES

Please see the Scenarios below for more detail on each of these.

SCENARIO AND SCORE	KEY BENEFITS	IMPROVEMENTS / CONSIDERATIONS
4 **1. User Experience & Visual Appeal**	Attractive, clean interface with feel of a consumer social media app. Multiple brand support and well-implemented alerts.	Brand styling options are not extensive. Multi-layer menus feels a little clunky.
4.5 **2. Publishing & Communications Management**	Easy to use publishing tools. Strong support for multiple channel publishing, campaigns and urgent comms.	Limited templates for news article layouts. Users cannot opt out of topics.
4+ **3. Community & Engagement**	Communities and commenting well supported. 'Journeys' works well for individual employee experiences. Surveys and polls good.	Rival products have a broader range of social engagement features.
3.5+ **4. Integrations & Services (Including M365)**	Wide range of third-party integrations supported. M365 integration is extensive and includes Copilot.	Having two integration frameworks may become confusing.
2.5+ **5. Information Finding & Search**	Clear results with good filters for content types. Federated search to other file stores. Chatbot for AI-supported search.	Search is not an overall strength, though it is improving. No specific support for knowledgebase use cases.
4.5 **6. Administrator Experience**	'Studio' centre brings all admin into one place and is easy to use. Strong support for multi-language.	Content governance controls are limited.
4 **7. Analytics**	Well-presented usage stats across devices, content and user activity. Sentiment and 'reach' indicators nicely implemented.	Search analytics very basic. Video analytics not in the analytics centre.
4.5 **8. Mobile & Frontline Support**	Strong mobile capabilities, giving parity with the desktop. Strong publisher controls for tailoring to mobile devices.	Few frontline-specific features built in, though scope to configure from the tools included.

1. USER EXPERIENCE & VISUAL APPEAL



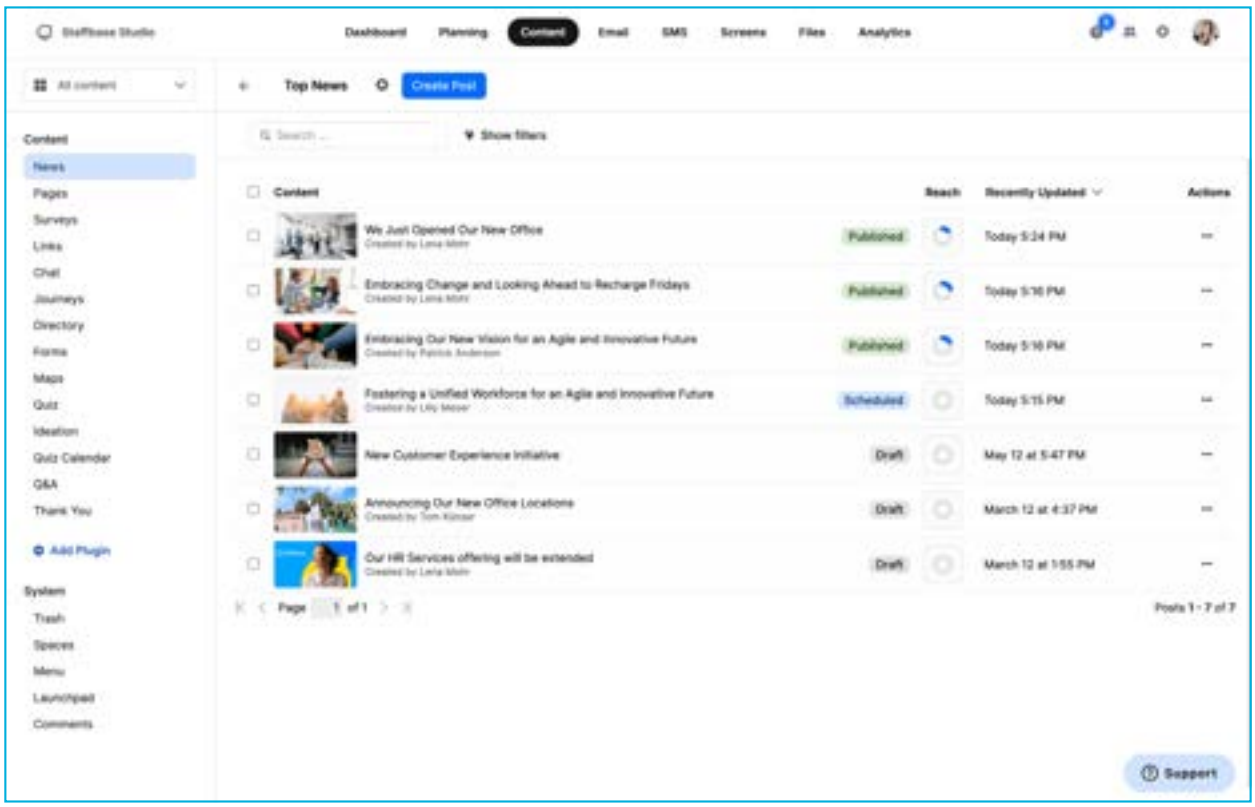
Colours, layout and logos allow flexibility over styling, even for different entities within the same corporation.

Staffbase offers a simple but attractive experience for both desktop and mobile users that can be configured to show different information and menus for different groups of people. Desktop navigation is via a floating horizontal menu that disappears as you scroll down. The mobile app adopts the typical set of buttons at the bottom of the screen plus a 'hamburger' that provides access to more links via a full screen menu. Desktop menus follow a cascade approach, which will be familiar and can handle complex information architectures well. The home page can show a mix of published news and social content, with an infinite scroll of posts from the 'social wall', or focus on published or social content only. Either way the overall impression is of a consumer-grade experience. Staffbase's latest homepage design allows for a footer to provide secondary navigation. Currently the footer is only available on the homepage but a new page designer experience coming during 2025 will make this component available site-wide.

Personalisation is extensive – menus and widgets can both be targeted at specific user groups or for desktop vs. mobile. We can see this being particularly useful for simplifying the frontline worker experience, for example. Another handy feature is the ability to have a consistent menu entry such as "My location", but different destinations depending on the user profile.

Notifications are well handled and can be marked as read by the user to help keep track. In the desktop a small bell icon shows a red circle and counter. Important messages can be set to require an acknowledgement. On the mobile app, notifications can also appear on the lockscreen, as banners etc. Notifications can also be pulled in from other systems – see Scenario 4.

Scope to express a company's brand is sufficient rather than extensive. Colours, backdrop and layout can all be changed centrally in the 'Studio' back-end, and a company logo added, but we didn't see a large variety in the styling of intranets that result from this. Staffbase's most powerful ability here is support for sub-entities which they call 'Spaces'. Different user groups can be allocated a unique Space with its own layout and branding, all within the same platform. The vendor says clients that are a conglomerate of several brands use this feature, as well as smaller entities where each franchise has its own Space.

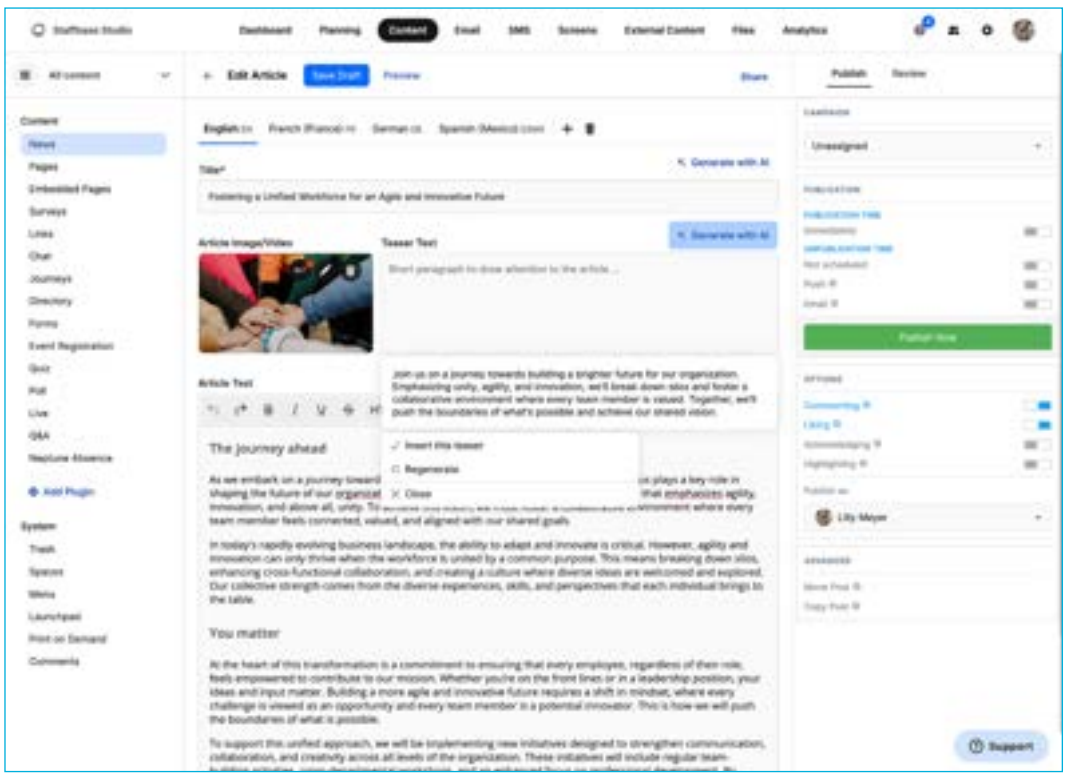


Staffbase's 'Studio' tool provides a central place for creating and managing news and pages.

Staffbase's toolset for creating and managing communications is comprehensive, with a well-developed experience covering news and content pages, email newsletters, digital signage and direct publishing to LinkedIn. Staffbase's content management environment is called 'Studio'. This is permission-based, so those with publishing rights for only one section of the intranet will see a simplified view compared to site-wide admins. Access to the admin Studio is also available through mobile, handy for small amendments or quick posts.

News articles are straightforward to create by filling in a form comprised of title, teaser and article. Each channel is locked to a specific template from a choice of three when it is created. This keeps things simple – especially for mobile reading – but some publishers may find it rather limiting. More positively, each news article can have widgets embedded in the body for media, buttons, polls, file lists etc. These are easy to add, though there are no options to control layout, so multiple widgets may well start to look cluttered for end users. Building static reference pages is more flexible, with the ability to drag-and-drop widgets on a grid to create much more dynamic and varied page layouts. On the roadmap for 2025 is an improved news publishing and page designer experience.

'Companion Editor', an AI writing assistant will help with article creation if desired. Authors can click a "generate with AI" button for each section of the article template, and we expect that the ability to auto-generate a headline and teaser text from the article body will be particularly welcome. However, there is no integrated AI image generation. Our impression from testing is that the generated content is a very usable first pass, and we liked the flexibility to keep re-generating text, as well as the ready-made prompts for tone, length and bullet lists.



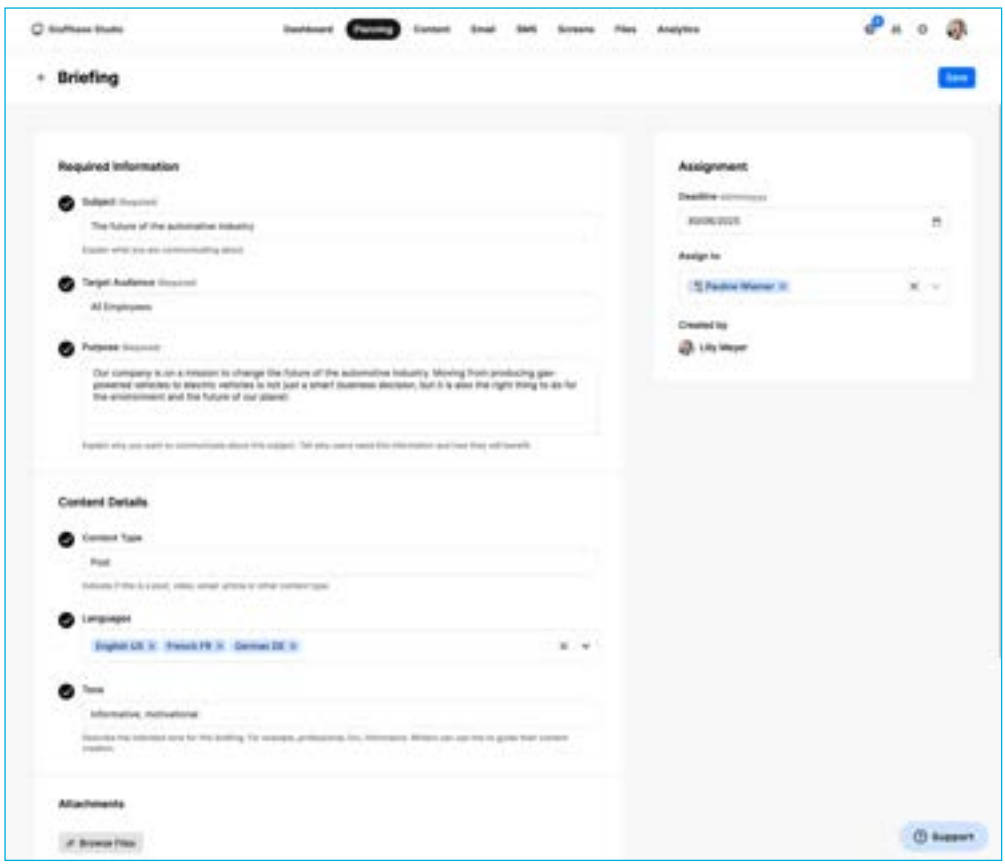
News stories follow a fixed template with publishing controls to the right. Here the AI assistant is shown, suggesting 'teaser text' based on the article body.

To the right of the news story are controls for publishing, such as publication dates, toggles for liking and commenting, and the ability to publish on behalf of another user. We particularly like the ability to preview how a story will look across desktop, android, tablets etc. before publishing.

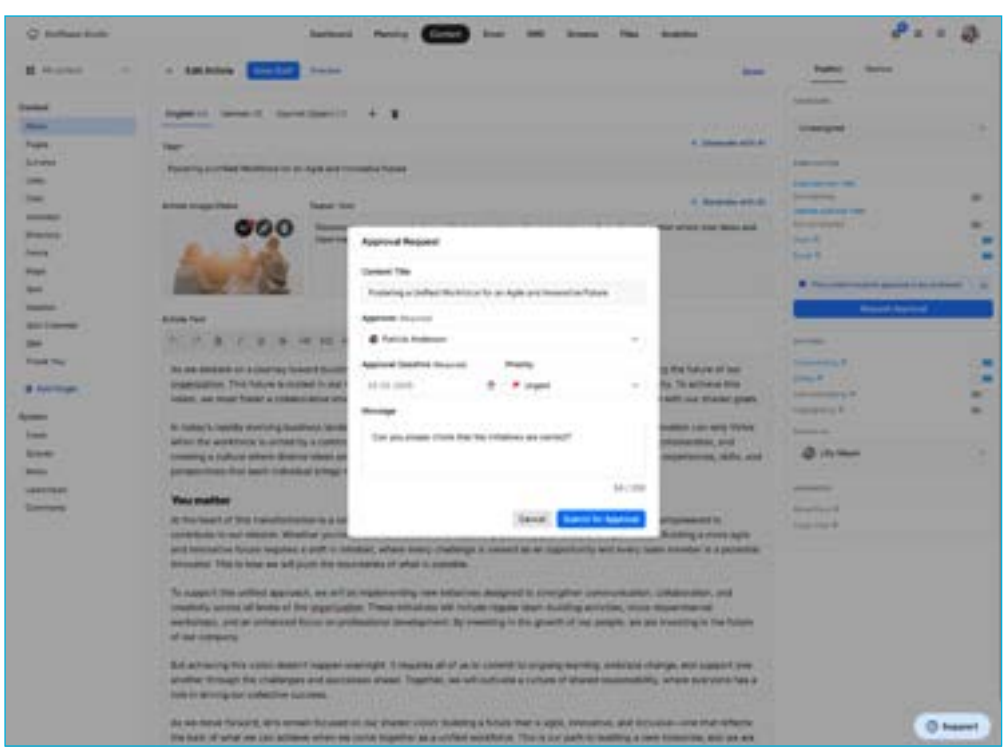
Unfortunately, there are no built-in approval workflows. We also noted that there's no ability to check-out an article or do the kind of live co-editing we now see in some rival products. However, it is possible to add comments and tag colleagues to solicit input or approval, and Staffbase say check-out is on their 2025 roadmap.

'Briefings' were introduced in early 2025 and are an unusual feature that aim to help devolved communications teams empower decentralised editors with a more flexible approach to creating news stories. Instead of simply cascading or republishing 'corporate' stories, Briefings can be used to commission local communicators (or an external agency) to create a story based on a brief, including the target audience, key messages, purpose and so on. The central comms team can create a Briefing and then assign it to one or more editors who get notified by email. Once the draft has been created this can be reviewed by the commissioning editor before publishing.

News channels can be configured to require approval before publishing with one or more people designated as an approver. There's a nicely thought-out form-based process where the editor can set a deadline and priority along with a message for the approver. The designated approver gets an email notification linking to the article where they can approve or reject, along with a reason why. We'd like to see 'pending approval' added to the status alongside the current 'draft' and 'published' options (see 'Studio' screenshot above), but approvals are a new feature and a welcome addition. We noted that there's no ability to check-out an article or do the kind of live co-editing we now see in some rival products. However, it is possible to add comments and tag colleagues to solicit input, and Staffbase say check-out is on their 2025 roadmap.



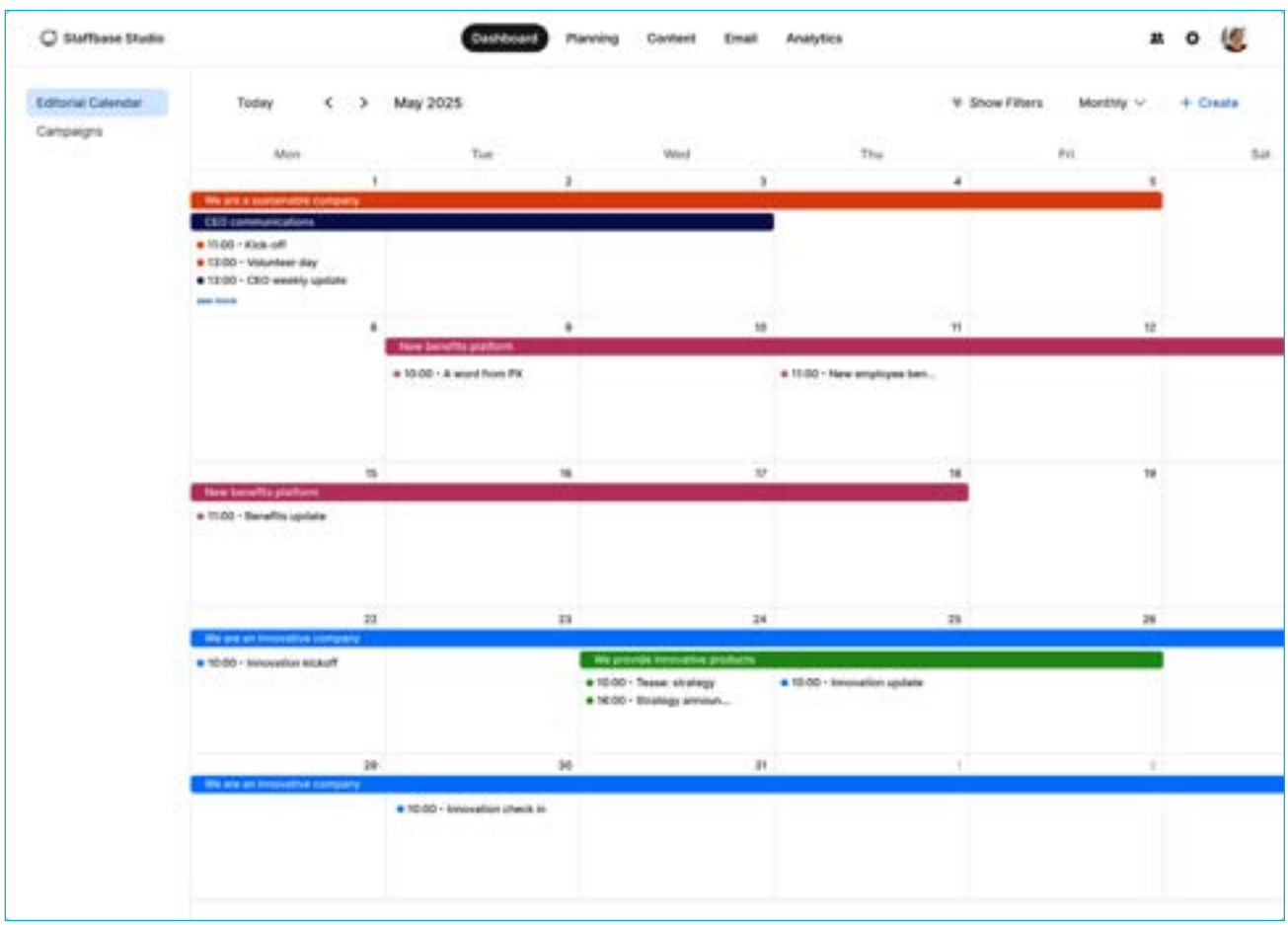
Briefings support a devolved communications model by enabling teams to commission articles from local communicators or external agencies.



The new approvals feature ensures that content is reviewed by the appropriate people before publishing.

Audience targeting is comprehensive. Audiences can be imported from HR systems, or dynamically defined within the platform using a range of user attributes. Targeting can be defined for content, menus, widgets and links. Users can opt in and out of communities to engage with topics of interest, but otherwise cannot control what is targeted to them.

Editorial support comes in the form of a shared news calendar. This covers both individual news stories and campaigns so that activity across news channels can be managed. Publishers will only see calendar entries for areas where they have permissions. One useful but unusual feature is the ability to have communication 'blocker' days, for example when a major company announcement is planned. Optionally, this can be a full "publishing freeze", so any editor trying to schedule on a blocked day will receive an alert asking them to reschedule.



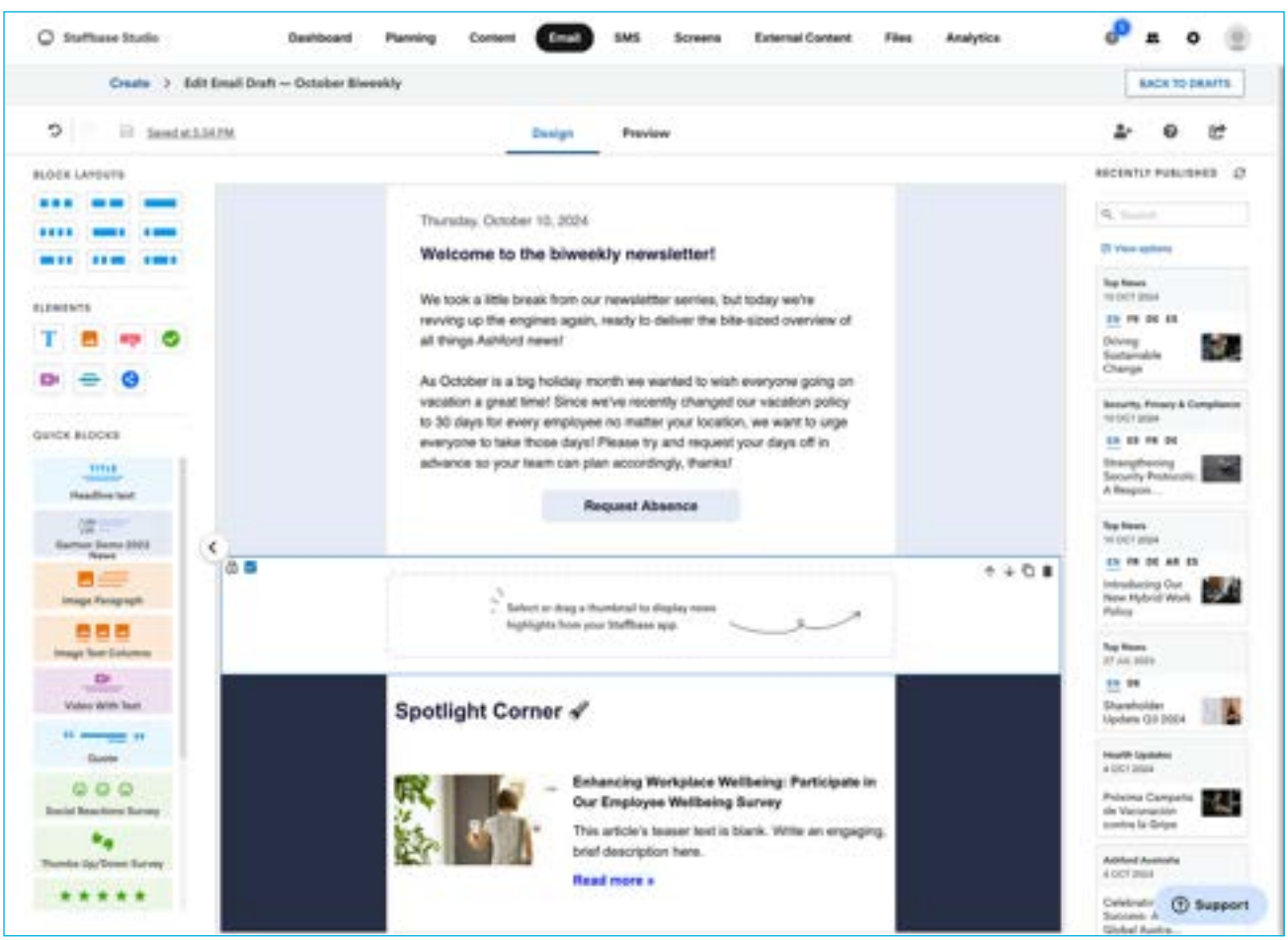
The Planning section of Studio includes a shared calendar showing publication dates for news stories as well as longer-running campaigns.

The campaigns feature is powerful – it allows publishers to cluster a series of content around a longer-running theme. Existing pages and news stories can be associated with a campaign, as well as new content. Staffbase's analytics will illustrate how the campaign is landing, and its visibility across different audiences. If editors add a single pulse survey 'smart check' question, it will also track sentiment. We think this is a very valuable feature for internal communications teams who often struggle to interpret the impact of a campaign over an extended period.

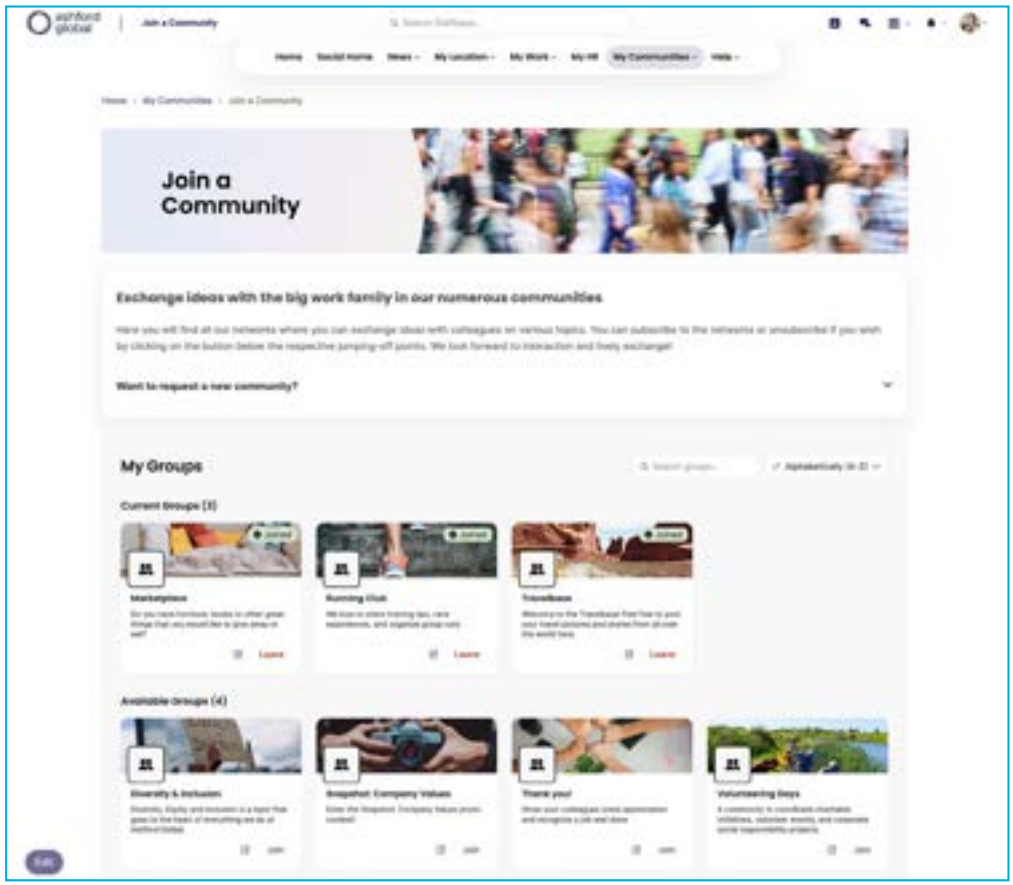
Crisis communications are well supported. Important messages can be highlighted and pushed out to phones and the desktop notification area. Staffbase tell us that clients also often configure widgets using audience targeting so that they are prominent for specific user groups when alerts are needed. We particularly like the option to also send SMS alerts when required.

Staffbase's comprehensive newsletter tool is another stand-out feature. It has the same drag-and drop page-builder experience as the intranet publishing tool and makes it easy to do email digests of recent news or build a departmental newsletter from scratch. There's a preview option, and some smart features such as the ability to truncate the email size for Gmail restrictions. The newsletter interface is simple and smooth to use, and communicators will appreciate the availability of this within a single publishing platform.

Digital signage is also supported, with a useful ability to include a QR code on the slide that will take readers to the associated intranet article. A final worthwhile option is the ability for those with relevant permissions to publish an article externally on LinkedIn.



Email digests and similar newsletters are well supported with a dedicated tool.

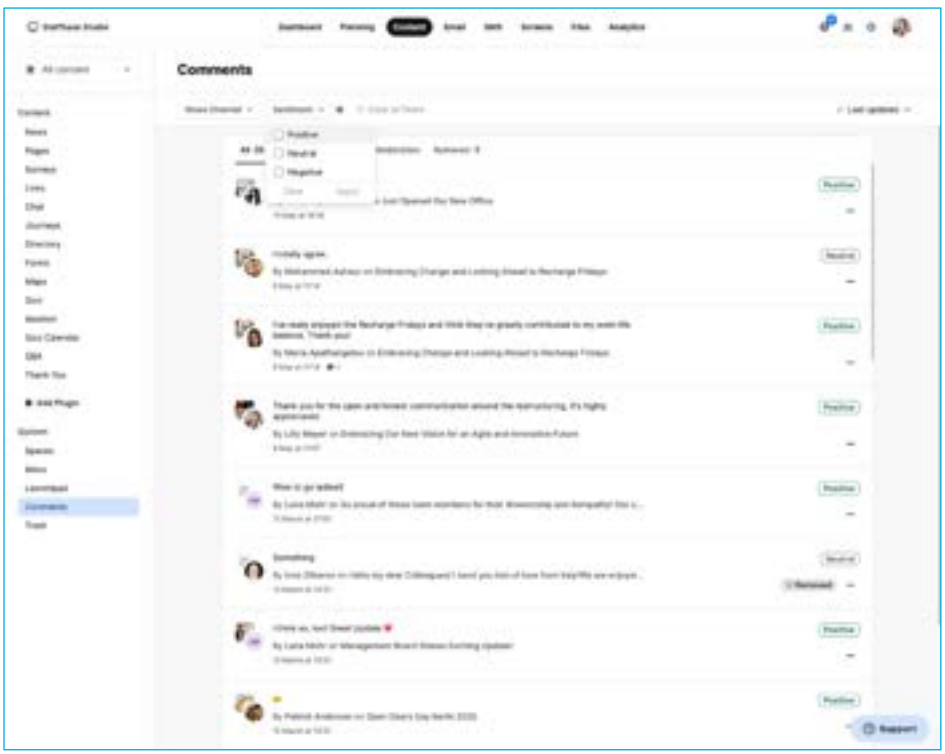


Communities in Staffbase are generally open access and provide a means for employees to engage with each other through topics of shared interest.

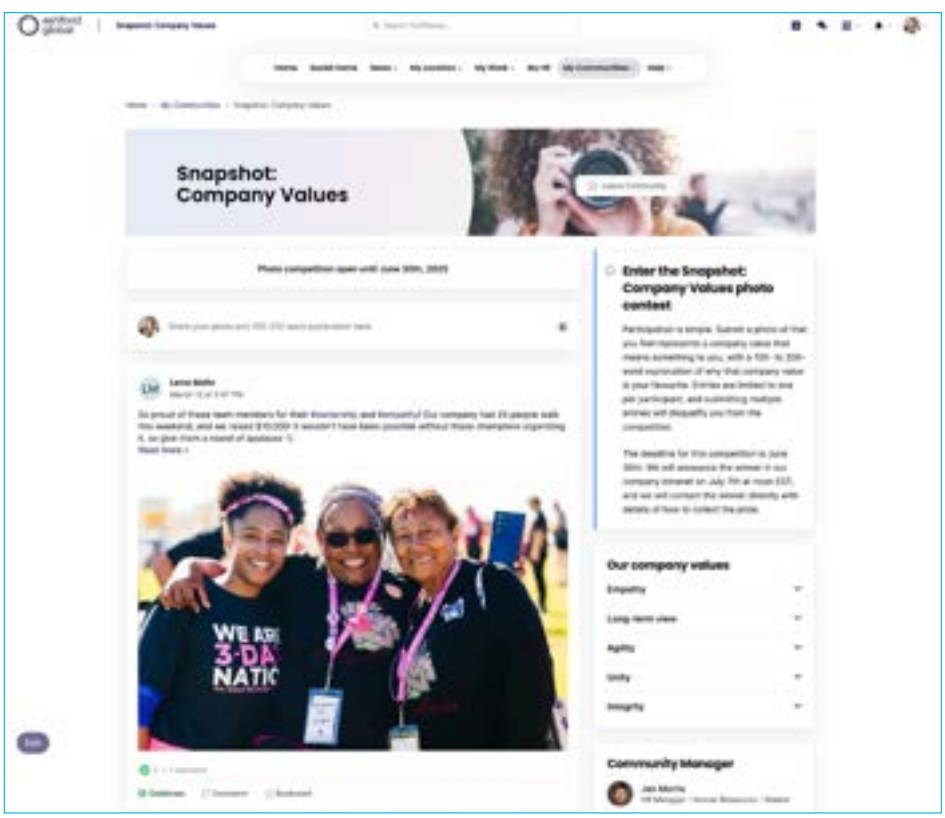
The main social features in Staffbase are 'Communities' and the 'social wall', which support comments and reactions. Sentiment analysis has been a feature of the platform for some time (see Scenario 7) but Staffbase has recently added this capability to comments on news posts. Admins get an overview of comments by news channel in 'Studio' with each comment automatically tagged with 'positive', 'neutral', or 'negative'. Filters enable admins to focus on one sentiment if needed. Polls and surveys are both comprehensive and can be embedded. The 'Journeys' tool is a stand-out feature for all kinds of processes, but lends itself readily to scenarios such as employee onboarding. Overall, Staffbase's community and engagement tools are capable, but some imagination is needed to configure them to specific use cases. Staffbase say the will work with customers to help with this.

Communities in Staffbase cover use cases such as technical discussions, employee resource groups, "for sale and wanted", and hobbies. Although communities are open for anybody to join, Staffbase advocate 'passive personalisation' so that users are auto-enrolled into those that are appropriate for their profile and this avoids a "blank page" start point. Joining additional groups gives a user a means of personalising their social feed based on topics of interest too, so a good balance is struck overall.

The 'social wall' is a feed of all posts, appearing under its own menu or (if desired) as an infinite-scroll on the home page. Social posts can include images, links and embedded videos from websites such as YouTube. The overall effect is on par with consumer social media sites and we think users will appreciate the sense of instant familiarity. Reactions include like, celebrate, support, insightful and thanks. Moderation includes the ability to report a comment, but – oddly – not the ability to report the initial social post, though there is a feedback form that could be used.



Admins get an overview of sentiment on news article comments.



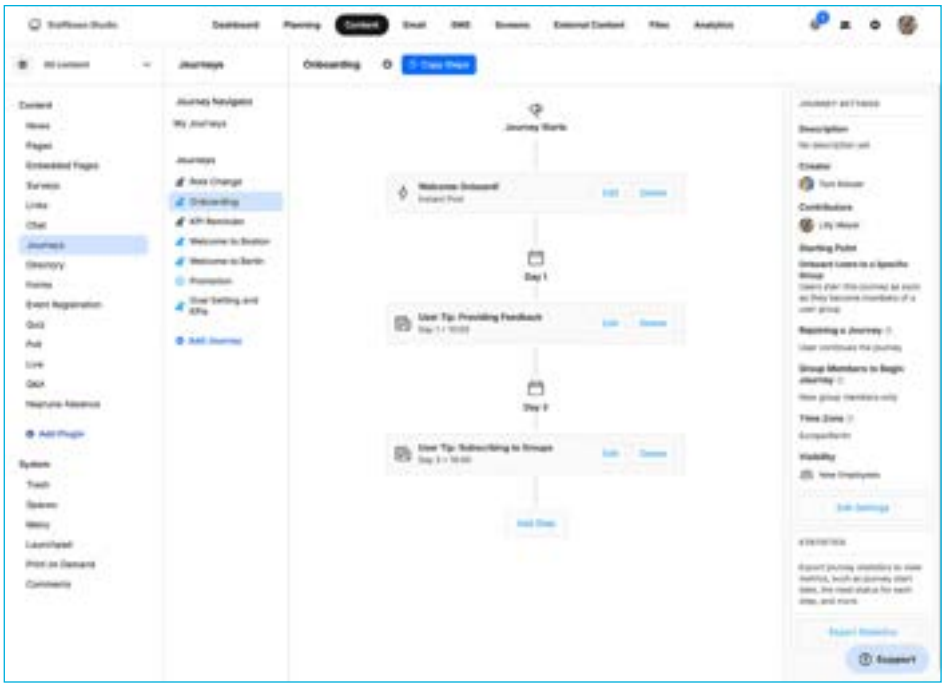
Community pages can combine social posts with static content such as an "about the community" box and information on community owners.

Staffbase doesn't include blogging tools, kudos features or idea management capabilities, which we think is a shame (a partner ideation plugin is available at extra cost). The pages for a community can be configured to show manager profiles, add file widgets and so on, giving some flexibility to create more varied social experiences, but we think some intranet owners would welcome tools that felt more ready-to-use for specific use cases.

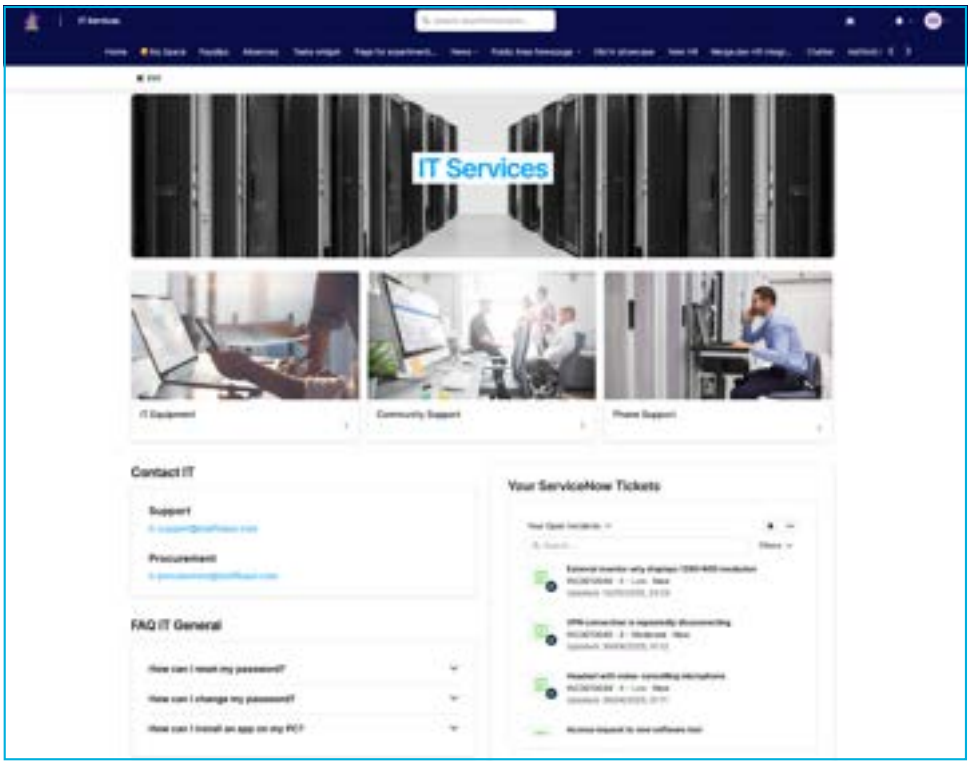
A strength of Staffbase is its support for forms, polls and surveys. This ranges from a simple sentiment check that can be embedded into a news campaign, through to forms and workflow that could be applied to many of our scenarios, such as leave requests. It is even possible to integrate these, for example with Microsoft's Power Automate or ServiceNow, to give greater flexibility. We like that surveys can be targeted to different user groups too. Results are also well-presented in the analytics section.

Staffbase also includes a powerful Journey feature that gives the ability to create an individualised process-based timeline. It could be used for employee onboarding or offboarding in this scenario, but is also a very capable tool in its own right for anything that requires an individual, sequenced experience. For example, it could also be used to provide a series of training modules. Admins construct a new Journey by selecting content items to be targeted to users once a condition is reached, such as 'two days after the start date'. Users receive a notification at each stage of the Journey to inform them that new content is available, or a new action is to be completed, until their Journey is finished. The good range of Journey statistics, including start dates and read rates, are exportable. We think this is a well-executed feature, and a potentially powerful tool with scope to be applied in a wide variety of scenarios but particularly with supporting new employees in remote or frontline roles.

A final fun feature to note is the ability to have animations when first visiting a page – such as falling confetti or floating balloons.



Journeys provide a way to set up a targeted schedule of content to users and can be used for a variety of purposes.



ServiceNow tickets can be viewed and filtered within Staffbase. Further actions and creating new tickets is handed off to ServiceNow.

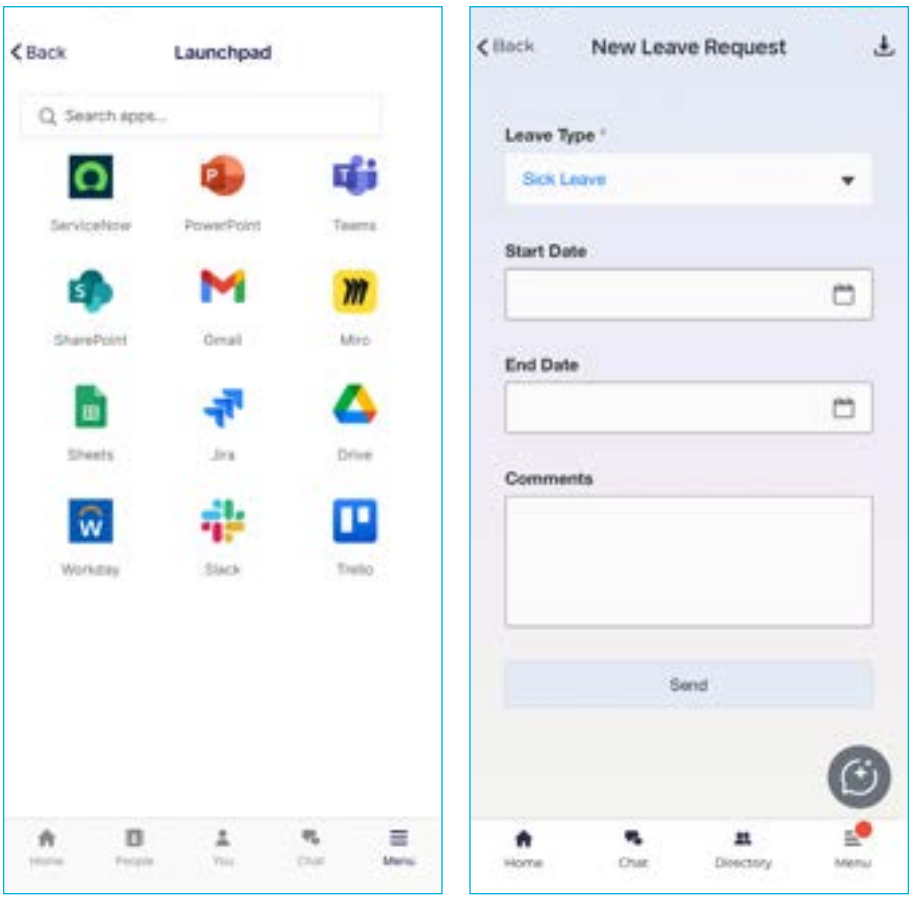
Integrations in Staffbase range from simple 'launchpad' links through to two-way data exchange with platforms such as Workday and embedding of PowerBI dashboards. Well-documented APIs give more options still. Microsoft 365 is comprehensively supported via dedicated widgets and the ability to surface a Staffbase intranet within Microsoft Teams.

The most basic – but widely used – feature is 'Launchpad'. This gives quick access links to commonly used applications. This works particularly well within the experience as a directory of company apps. We like that there is a dedicated search box for this too.

Staffbase now includes a 'ServiceNow Ticket Widget' that can be targeted and used on any page. The widget provides a window into ServiceNow, allowing people to view, search and filter their tickets without leaving Staffbase. Notifications in Staffbase for ServiceNow ticket status changes is on the roadmap for 2025. Employees are redirected to ServiceNow for more detailed actions and to create new tickets, however.

For customers wanting further integration capabilities there are two options – Merge.dev and Neptune. Both are low code / no code frameworks that provide connections to third-party tools, allowing users to transact with the tool directly without having to leave the platform. For example, via an HR tool connected in this way, users could book leave directly from the intranet rather than having to visit the HR application. Staffbase highlight that potentially any employee-facing self-service tool could be integrated using this route if permitted by the third-party provider. Neptune comes at additional cost, and is best suited to highly complex needs. Merge is included in the license cost and provides ready-made APIs to hundreds of common platforms including HRIS, CRM and accounting systems.

Out-of-the-box integrations are provided for Google and Microsoft services. There are two Google widgets, one for Calendar and one for Drive, which can be provided together on a 'hub' page, or used flexibly throughout the site.



Launchpad in the mobile app gives a handy directory to other corporate systems. Also shown is forms integration for requests which can be routed into ServiceNow or Power Automate.

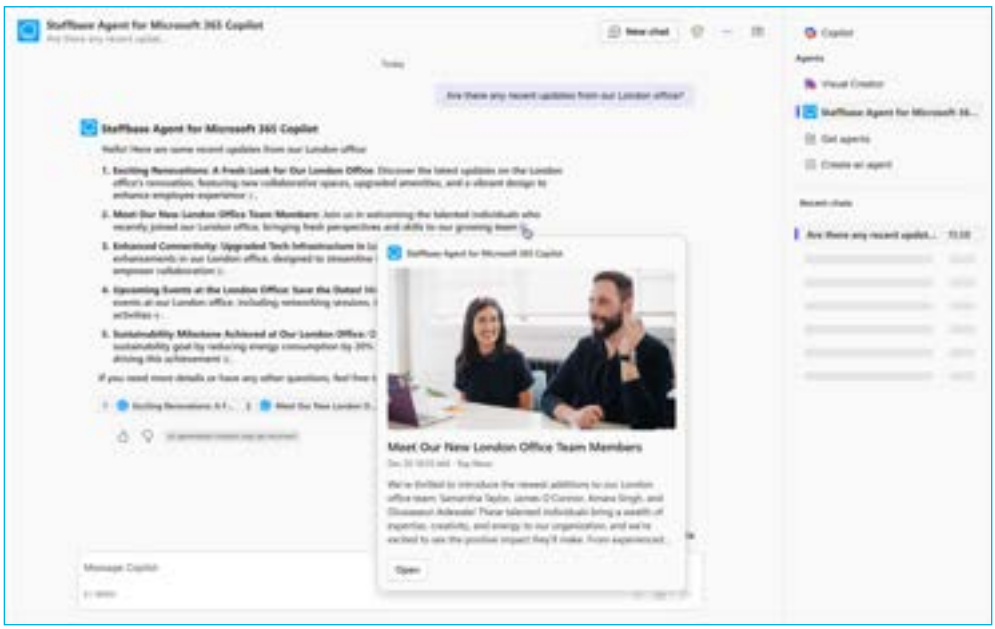
There is a variety of Microsoft widgets that could be used to create a dashboard including tasks, calendar items, latest files, SharePoint sites, Viva Engage communities, a Teams overview and feed, trending and latest used documents. A document viewer provides a preview of files directly in the intranet, while opening a file takes people into the relevant Microsoft app. In addition, calls to action on employee profiles let users start a Teams call or chat directly from the profile page. All visible content is based on permissions set in Microsoft rather than Staffbase.

Added in early 2025 is a Staffbase agent for Microsoft Copilot. This enables Copilot to search through Staffbase content and provide relevant answers to questions. As you would expect, roles and permissions are respected so employees will only be provided with information they have access to. However, it's worth noting that the current implementation searches all Staffbase content and is not configurable to look at one content type, such as policies, for example.

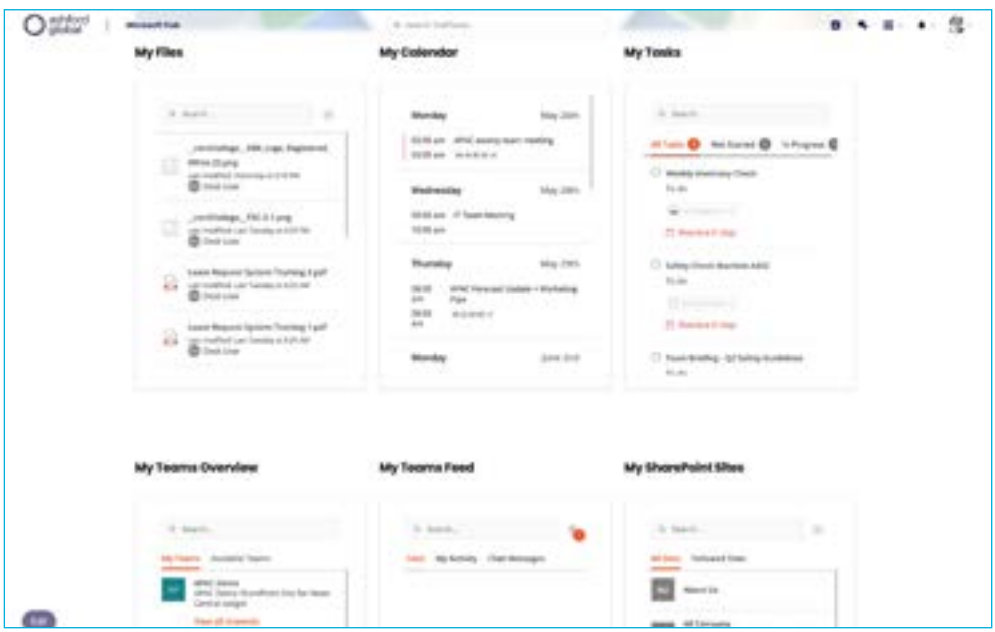
An area where Staffbase goes notably further than many vendors is its ability to surface content in SharePoint (given Staffbase is not a SharePoint-based product). Readers access articles via the web part within SharePoint and may interact using likes and comments. Users may also access their Staffbase notifications, bookmarks, or search Staffbase content directly from SharePoint without having to return to the intranet. All content pulled into the web part is created and maintained within Staffbase, as are permissions. The vendor highlights that for mobile or frontline staff who might not have Microsoft licences, this connection allows all Staffbase users to consume the same content while it only needs to be created and managed from one place. We think this is a well-thought-out integration approach, helping reduce context switching, especially for heavy SharePoint users.

Staffbase also provide an app for Microsoft Teams that allows users to access a Staffbase intranet from the left-hand toolbar. The end result is very similar to using Viva Connections to embed a SharePoint-based intranet, but for news-based content the mobile experience is much better (see screenshot at the start of this scenario). The ability to push a Staffbase news story into Microsoft Teams was released during 2024.

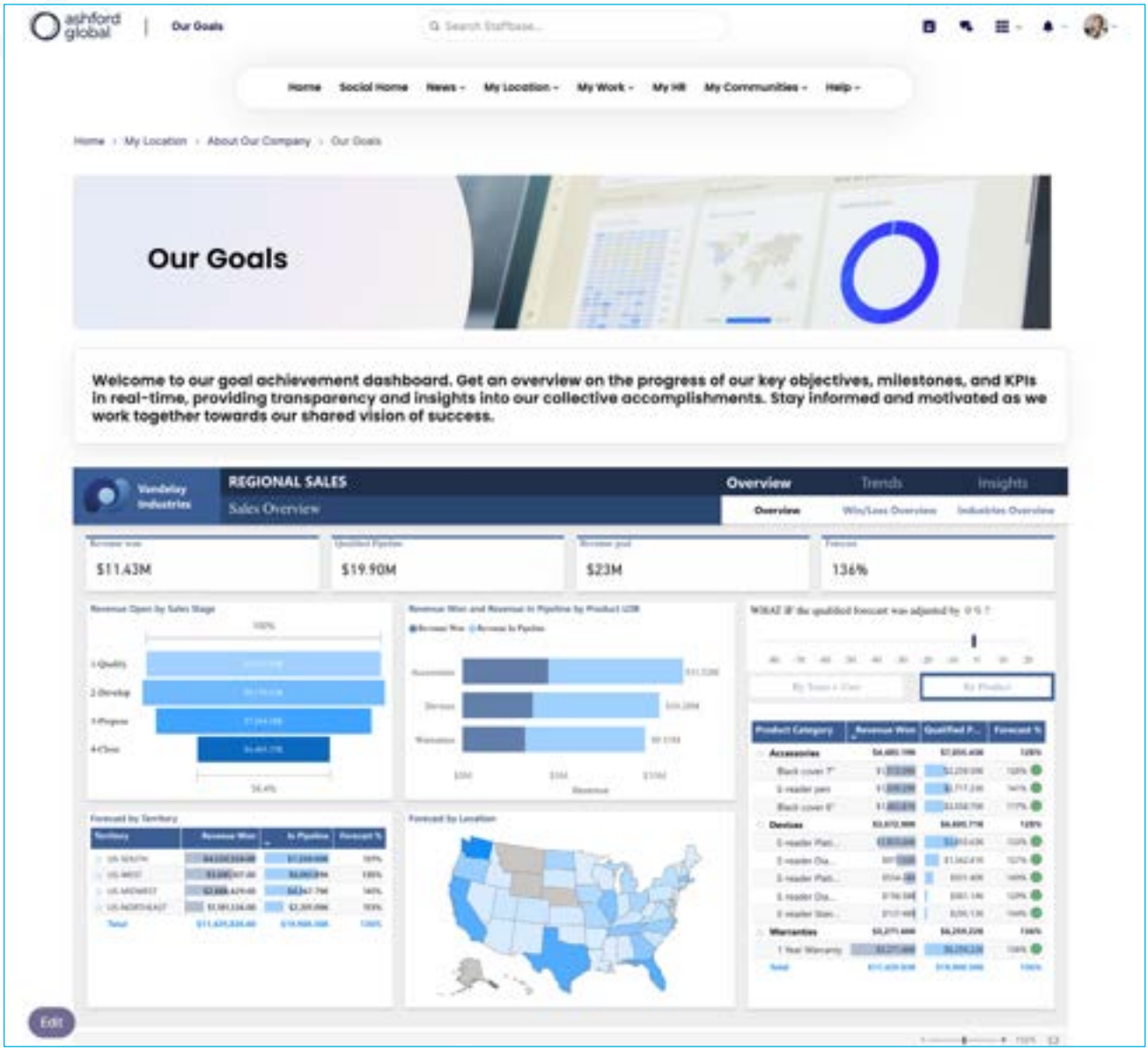
We liked the opportunities available with PowerBI, where dashboards embedded within the Staffbase context can be consumed and used in situ. Staffbase will act as an identity provider, so users don't have to log in separately. Conversely, Staffbase analytics may be pulled into PowerBI for custom reporting.



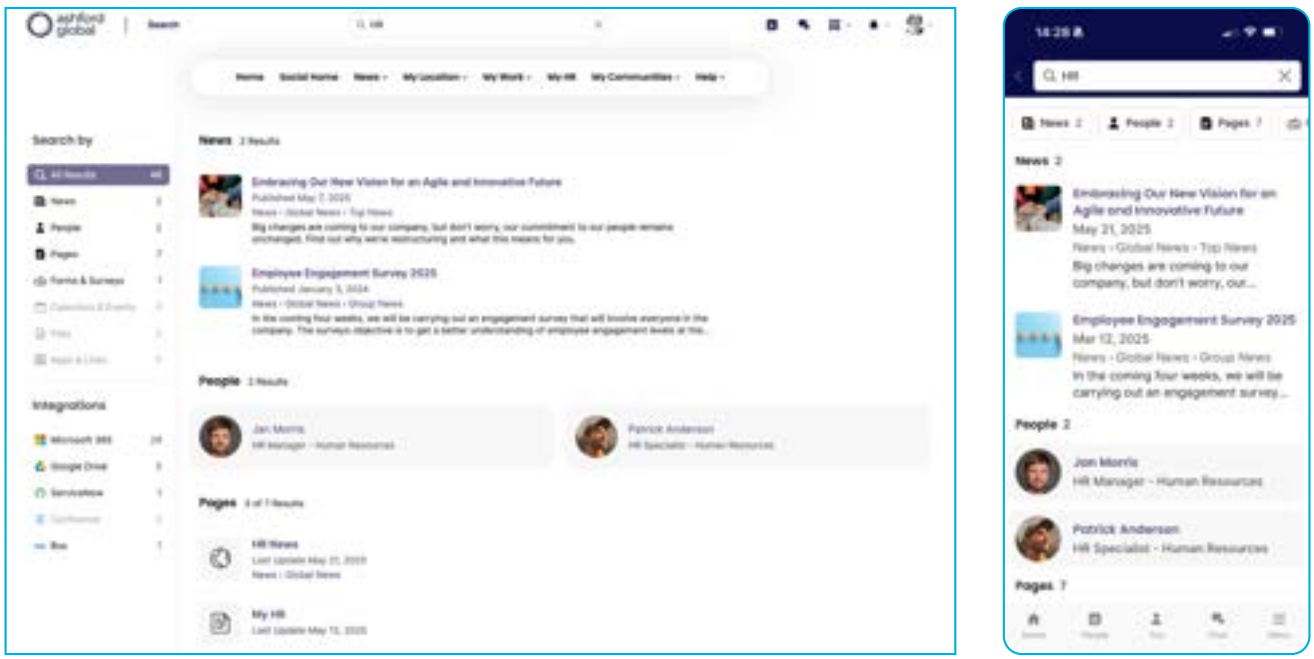
Staffbase content can be used by Copilot to provide relevant answers to employees.



Content from M365 can be compiled into a dashboard view within Staffbase, allowing employees to consume key information from M365 sources in the intranet context.



PowerBI dashboards can be integrated directly into Staffbase, where employees can use them in the intranet context rather than having to switch to the native application.



The search results page has a range of filters on the left for content types which can be configured to client needs.

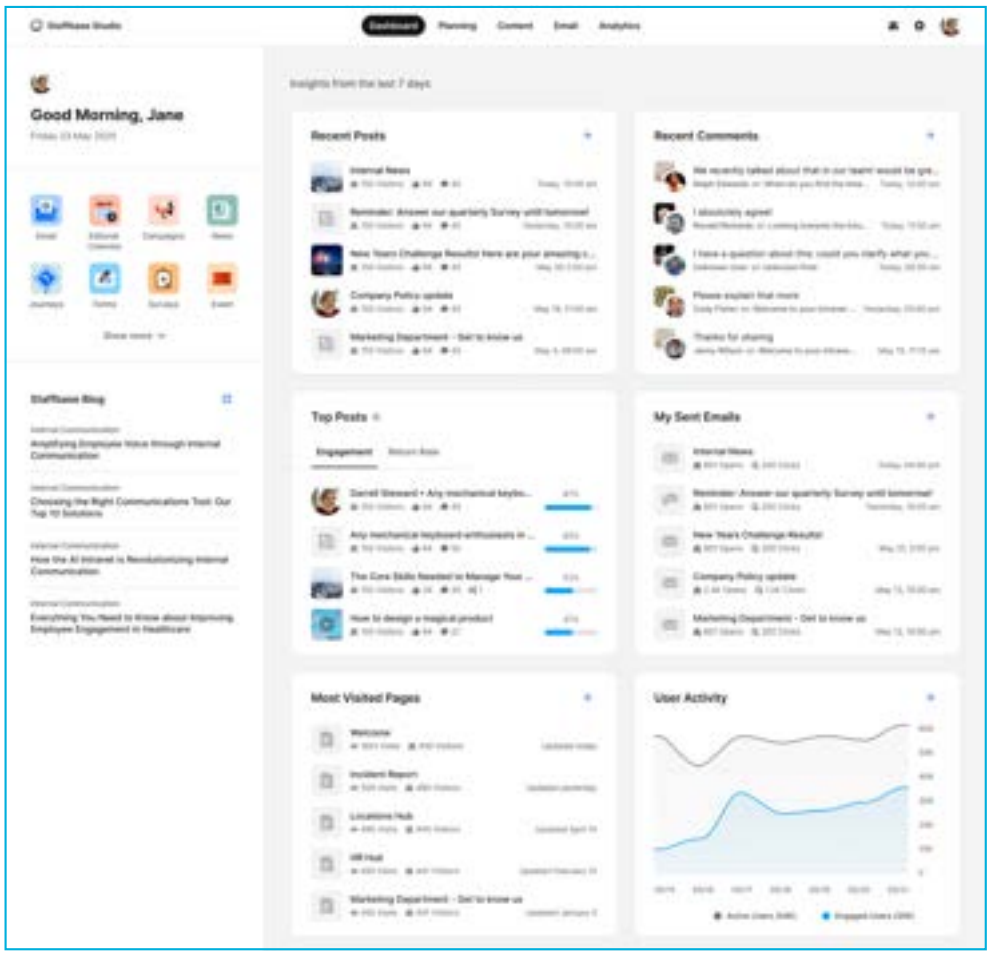
Search in Staffbase is improving and more is on the roadmap, including semantic search, but we don't see this scenario as an area of strength just yet. The search bar is persistent and there is parity between desktop and mobile experiences, with clear results presented. However, there's no correction of typos or fuzzy matching, and search management tools are broadly missing. We appreciate the ability to include federated search results from other sources, such as Microsoft 365 and ServiceNow, and the support for search endpoints on other platforms is good, enabling customers to include Staffbase content in their enterprise search results.

Initial search results are aggregated under 'all results' and include filter options for content, news, files and users, along with M365, Google Drive, ServiceNow, Confluence and Box (if set up). Result presentation, filters and metadata can be configured to client needs using the documented search settings API. Results are permission-based and clicking on an item from a third-party system opens the content in the source application. We miss the ability to preview files from the results page and would welcome other search filters such as flexible date ranges.

Search has recently been supplemented by an AI Chatbot called 'Companion Search'. We found this handles dialogue well, and particularly liked that it gave a summarised response plus links to the sources for validation. We expect that it will work best for queries where there is a definitive answer, rather than broader research (e.g. "what is the wellbeing survey" vs. "show me recent news stories on wellbeing"). However, it is more limited than bots we have seen in other products as it doesn't support transactions.

The employee directory is easily accessible via the top banner and uses predictive search to suggest contacts. The results page shows cards with image, job title and location, and other profile fields which can be customised. The detailed profile view also includes a navigable org chart. Hovering over a colleague shows more profile details and provides the ability to send a message via Microsoft 365 or within Staffbase's own chat feature. Admins can configure search to look at additional profile fields, such as language and skills. Profile information is drawn from preferred data sources, with an option for employees to complete optional fields and upload a personal image.

Support for information resources and knowledge bases is very limited – Staffbase generally advise clients to use another tool such as SharePoint for this use case. However, it is possible to create libraries of files in a 'file store' within Staffbase and define target audiences.

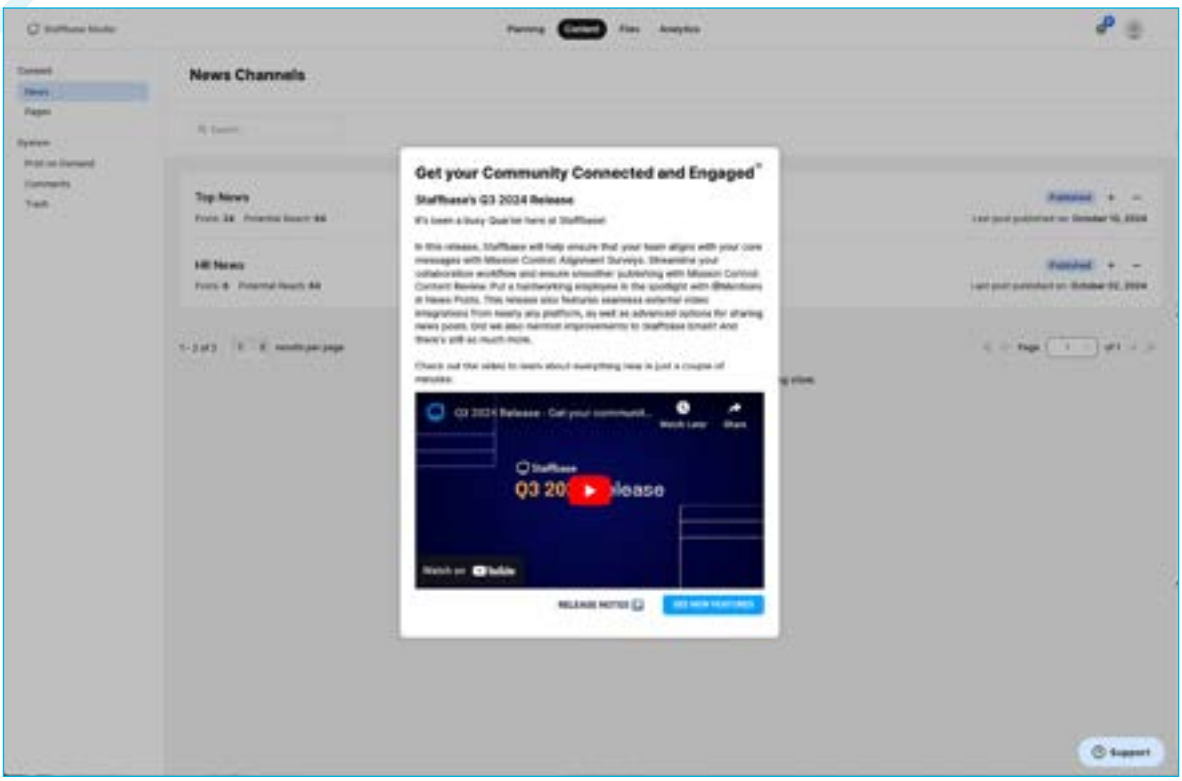


The dashboard for super users provides a helpful at-a-glance view of key activity within the site over the preceding seven days.

Staffbase combines a broad toolset with a high-quality user experience for site management. Administration in Staffbase Studio is persona-based, and this gives lots of flexibility to decentralise content management without overwhelming infrequent admin users. In effect, users only see those things they have permission to manage. Content life cycle management is not so strong, but multiple languages and multimedia are well supported. Overall, the experience is pleasantly straightforward given the breadth of the underlying capabilities.

There are generally three levels of administrator roles: channel editor, system editor and super user; the admin experience is different for each, with more advanced options hidden from those without permissions. Controls are also very granular for each element – for example in each news channel individuals or groups can be specified, or only certain people may be given permission to add polls.

Administrators with super user rights see a dashboard displaying insights from the previous seven days, such as recent posts, recent comments, top posts, sent newsletters and more. We liked this approach as it gives a sense of what is happening across the site without having to dip into analytics. Admin sections are split into the dashboard, planning, content, email, SMS, screens, external content, files, and analytics, with sub-menus for content. System settings and the plug-in section are accessed from the left-hand menu.



The latest release notes are presented to admins when they log in, making it easy for users to keep track of improvements and upgrades.

To help administrators get the most from the platform, Staffbase have created pop-up guides and tours within the studio, providing a step-by-step guide to using specific features. We think this is particularly useful for keeping admin knowledge up to date in a decentralised publishing scenario and for general knowledge transfer to administrators. Similarly, release notes for admins are provided via a short (and engaging) video summary of latest features, provided when accessing the Studio or under 'Product news' as an alert within the Studio console.

Pages are easy to create, with a grid-and-widgets approach to building content containers. Unlike news stories, admins can also set up company-specific templates, though publishers are free to override these. The range of widgets is fairly comprehensive, covering the usual options for media, polls, accordions, portfolios and integrations with external systems (see Scenario 4).

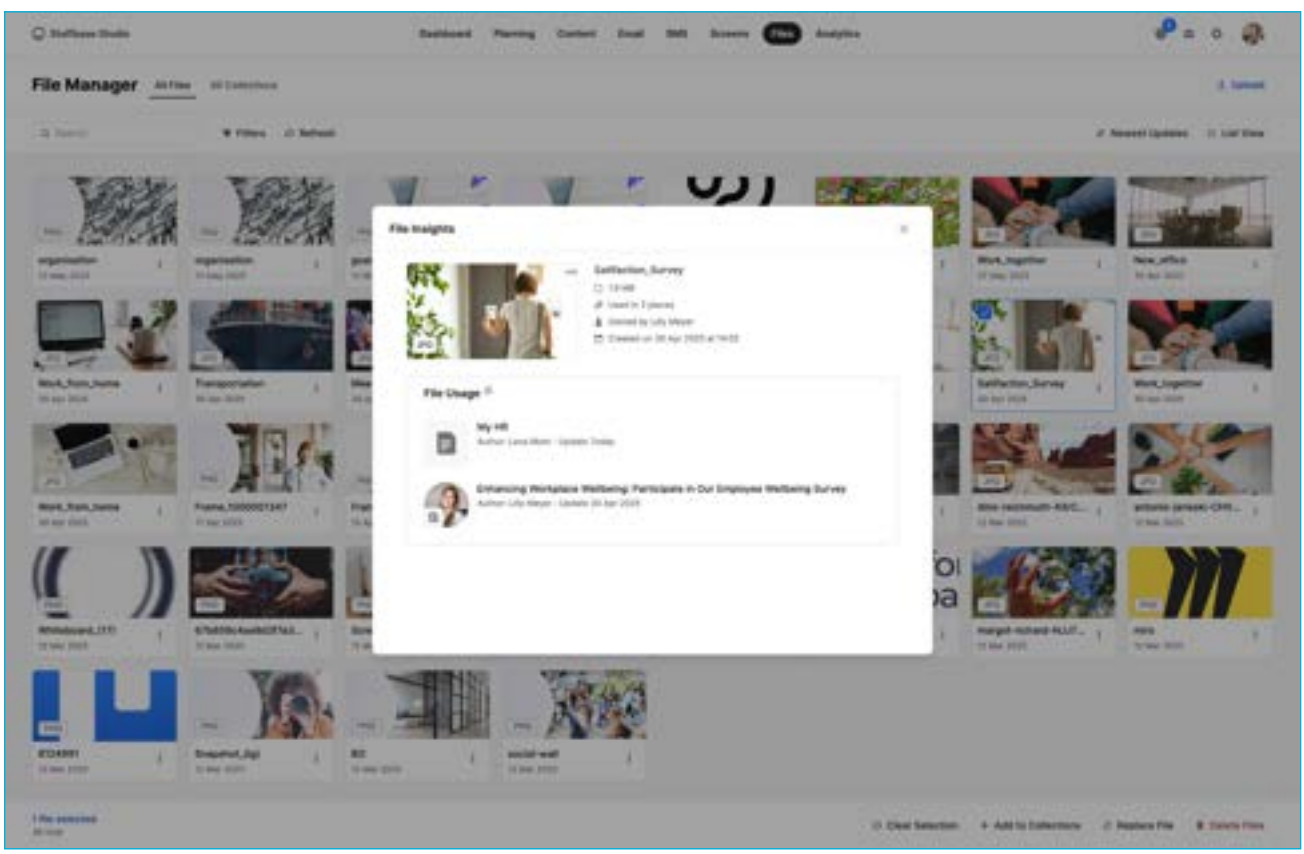
Beyond templates, there aren't many tools specifically aimed at governance. Intranet admins will need to rely on analytics and observance of policies rather than baked-in guardrails. We do at least like that version histories are preserved, giving an audit trail and the ability to roll-back changes. There's also an 'update reminder' feature for pages. After a preset duration a bell appears in the list of pages indicating that the page is up for review. We would like to see this developed further, as at present, editors need to be working in the admin system to see when content needs to be updated. An aggregate view for superusers showing all pages that have passed the review date would be very welcome, for example.

Multi-language support is a strength of Staffbase. When creating an article, additional languages appear as tabs along the top. When opting to add an additional language, editors can use machine translation or create their own. Once generated, the pages can be modified independently.

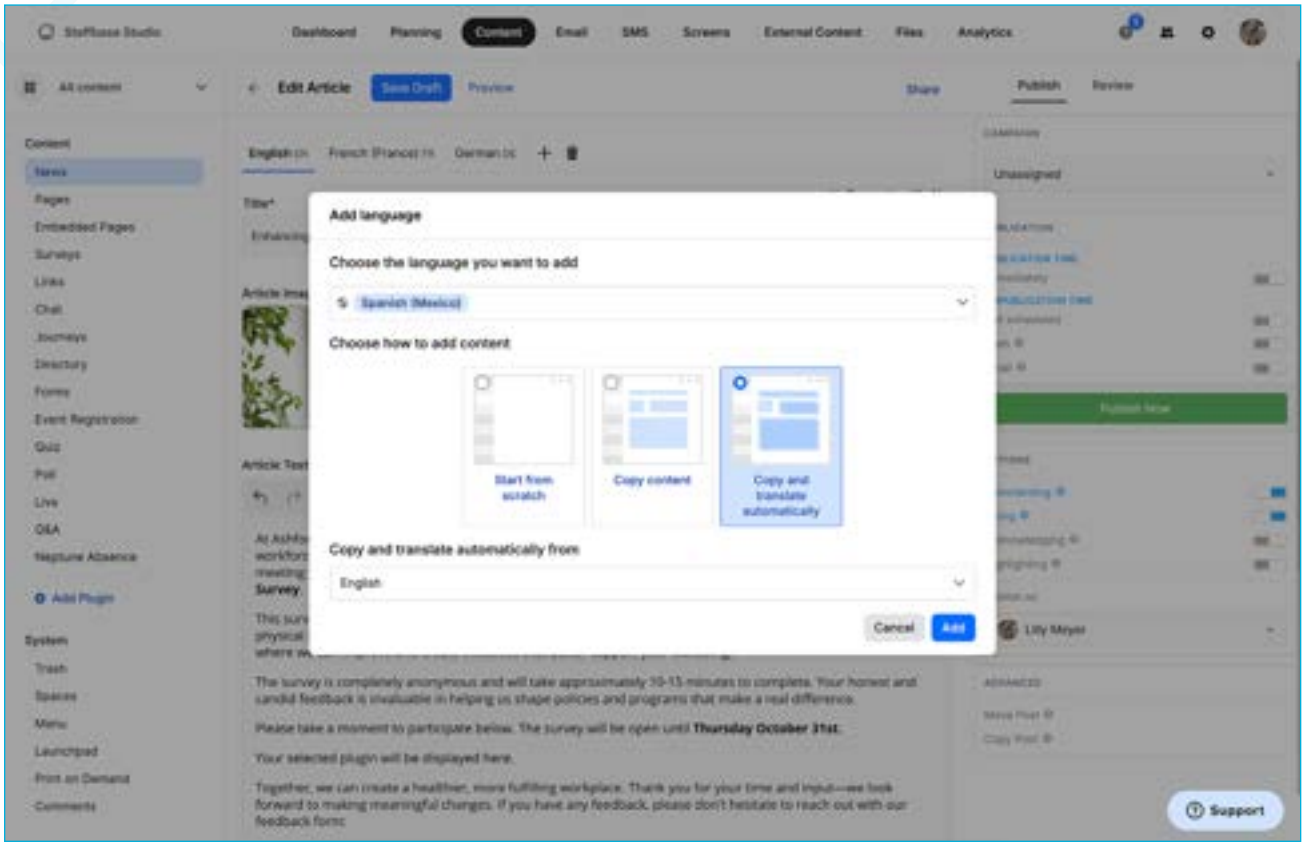
In addition to this, users also see a 'translate' button on each article for an on-the-fly machine translation. We appreciate that this is done automatically for comments in the social feed, with the ability to see the source language too. Out of the box, Staffbase supports around eighty languages for front-end use and the administration system is available in twelve languages. Importantly, the system supports right to left script and all these options can be used on both mobile and desktop. Users can switch the content language in their personal settings.

We really like the new 'Insights' feature in the Studio File Manager. This enables admins to browse a gallery of images that are used across the site and see which pages each asset is used on. This will be incredibly useful for identifying pages that would be affected by changes to brand imagery, for example.

Video and podcasts can be embedded into a page and played in-place. It's also possible to create a page to host livestreaming, used for example to create a destination with reference content and branding to accompany a livecast event. Although other sources could be integrated using third-party widgets, we felt that rival products offer more options out of the box.



File Insights shows where assets are used as well as technical information.



Articles can have multiple language variants. Editors have the option to create machine translations or add their own.

Analytics are attractively presented within the Studio console of Staffbase.

The product offers comprehensive analytics on content performance and user behaviour, attractively presented within the Studio console. Communicators will particularly appreciate reporting on campaign results and employee sentiment. Mandatory reads are well supported by the 'acknowledge' feature, but search analytics are rudimentary.

Adoption statistics are clearly set out in a modern, approachable way that will be familiar to users of other analytics packages. Reports include user funnels and activity by time as well as the usual metrics on devices and browsers.

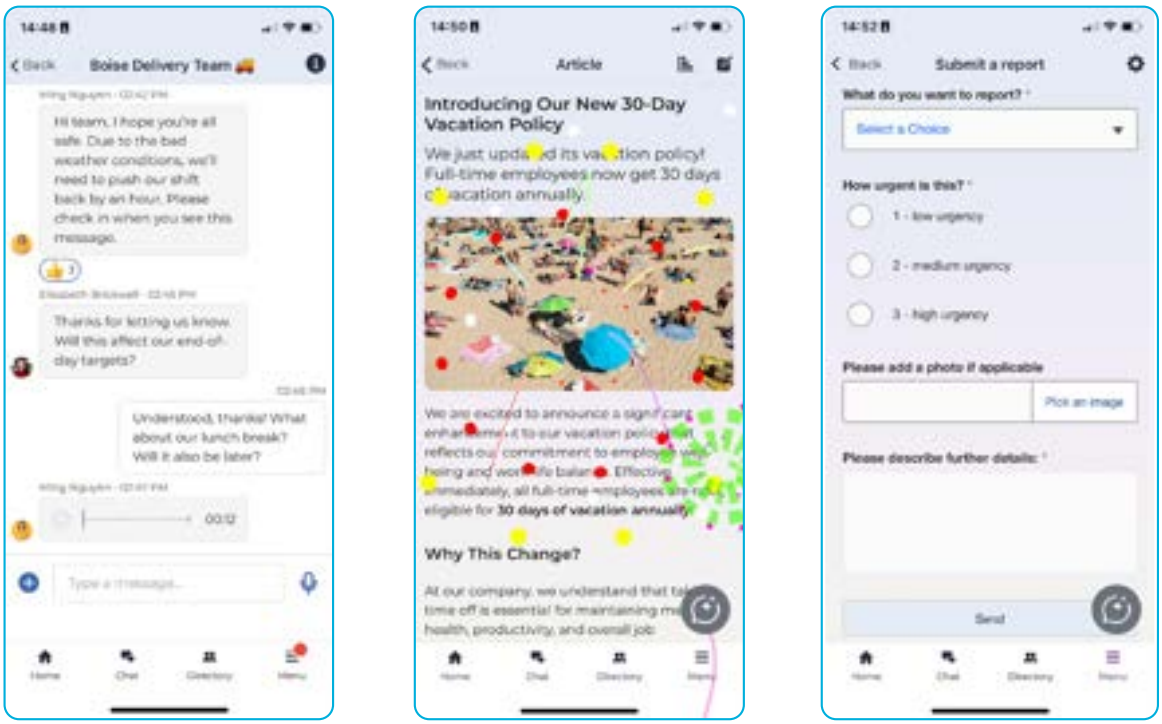
Content analytics are similarly comprehensive, with charts for visits, likes, comments, shares and so on. As with permissions, Staffbase's granular approach to defining audiences is reflected in the ability to dissect results by audience group. Results can also be exported for further analysis in a tool such as PowerBI.

One strength of Staffbase is that publishers responsible for a sub-section of the intranet will see reports scoped just for their area. The same can be done for 'Spaces' to give analytics for a single division within a company, for example (see Scenario 1 for more on Spaces). We also liked that in news channel dashboards, each story has a small chart next to it indicating reach, and that traffic sources are shown too.

Communicators will also appreciate the campaign-level reporting (see Scenario 2 for more on this). This shows visibility by user group and visibility over time as the campaign progressed. Reports automatically roll up net sentiment across the campaign based on comments. With alignment surveys integrated into campaigns, admins can also get an alignment score. Disappointingly though, it doesn't show which channels within the campaign were most effective.

Search analytics are much weaker. There is a simple report of popular search terms and trends, but nothing else. Staffbase say that more features are being developed.

Video analytics are attached to individual files stored in the file manager. Along with file metadata – where the video is used and where / when uploaded – total views, unique views and an average viewing time are all provided. We'd like video reports to be accessed via the main analytics section and see viewer drop-off points added.



The experience for frontline and mobile workers is excellent, with parity between the desktop and app environments.

Staffbase began as a mobile-first app, and as you might expect that's reflected in a strong performance in this scenario. Most notable is the degree of parity between the mobile and desktop experiences, and the fine-grained ability for admins to tweak each one. That said, there are few frontline-specific features that we see in other apps.

Overall, the experience is attractive and easy to use on both phones and tablets. Enrolment is usually via username and password, but any unique ID can be used. Unlike some vendors, Staffbase believe in making the customer-branded app available via public app stores, though other methods such as MDM are supported. We liked that mobile apps appear with the company logo on the device; employees may never know they are using the Staffbase product. Native Staffbase authentication now supports two-factor authentication via a code sent to the employee's email account; there are plans to add an SMS option in future. Phone biometrics can now be used for sign in via passkeys as well.

Staffbase's full range of functions is available in the app, for example search works smoothly, with results clearly segmented. On mobile, if the user has the relevant application the file will open there – alternatively it will use a browser version if the user is logged into the service. The design is attractive and the main feed, titles and text are clearly and legibly laid out, making for enjoyable and easy scrolling.

There are no built-in tools such as shift management specific to frontline workers, but there is plenty of scope to configure tools that are frontline focused using forms and the Journeys tool. For instance, HR services could be integrated to enable employees to view a payslip or make an absence request. Notably, Staffbase's integrations mean that requests can be submitted to systems such as ServiceNow without the need for frontline workers to have an individual license. Staffbase also highlight that providing tools such as chat on mobile helps reduce the use of shadow IT, providing a secure and licence-free means of communication across the business.

Administrators have the same range of functions as on desktop, which means that changes can be published on the move. Additionally, the on-page insight reports are available to view on mobile.

THINGS TO BEAR IN MIND

Staffbase is excellent for versatile communications that embrace the mobile experience. However, in a desktop-only environment, potential buyers may find the branding and layout options a little limited.

That said, potential buyers should note that Staffbase is not designed as a knowledge and information tool. Its search and navigation functions are adequate for news and reference pages but fall short for large repositories, such as knowledge bases or for extensive sales materials. Governance could also be an issue with larger volumes of content.

Finally, the price point of Staffbase is relatively high, though we feel it reasonable considering the quality of implementation. Note that the pricing used in this report includes all options, so there may well be lower price tiers available if not all functionality is needed. Customers also commend the high level of support they receive, which may offset costs too.

Why choose this product

Businesses looking to provide first class, multi-channel communications to employees will likely find Staffbase meets their needs well. This is a mature product with a wide variety of well-conceived features for users and admins alike. There's a comprehensive analytics section and a strong selection of community and engagement tools too. It's best suited to medium to large businesses with a workforce geographically spread and where parity for office and frontline workers is very important. For those who have invested in Microsoft 365, it complements that platform well as an alternative news interface, while keeping the intranet connected with content in Teams and SharePoint.

You may also be interested in...

poppulo Sociabble UNILY

Vendor roadmap

No roadmap has been supplied by Staffbase.

Back to index

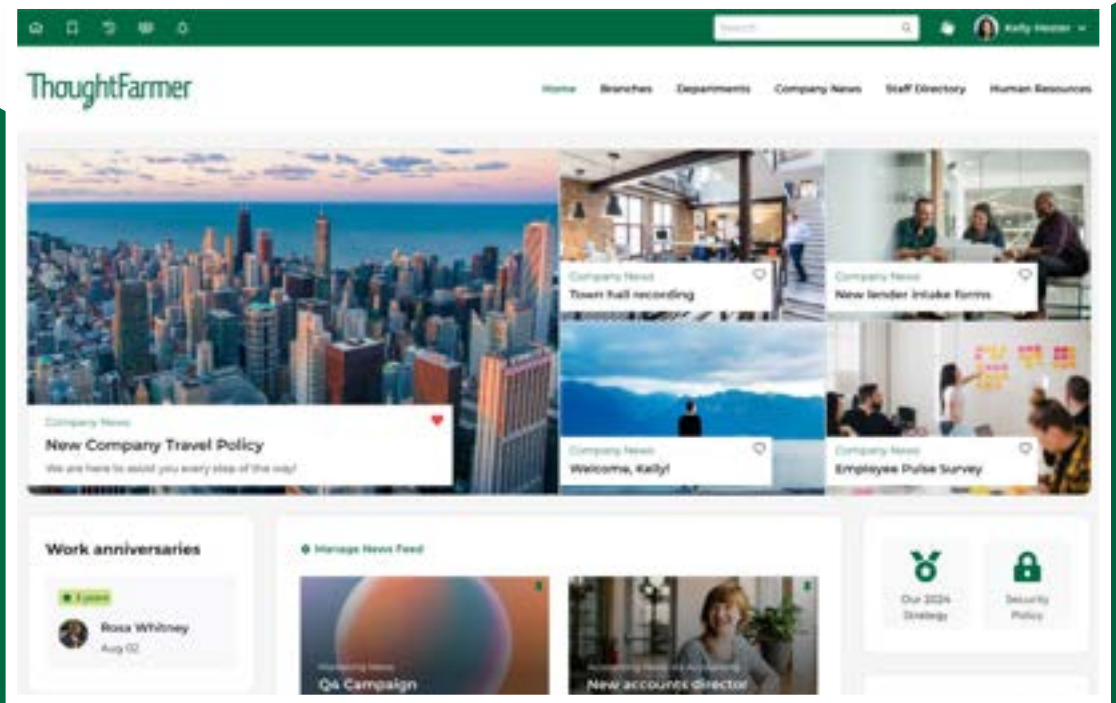
ThoughtFarmer

FULLY STANDALONE

REQUIRES SHAREPOINT

FRONTLINE FOCUS

OTHER



Typical deployment:

Less than 1,000

Company locations:

VISIT THE WEBSITE

The product in a nutshell

ThoughtFarmer is an easy-to-use standalone intranet for organisations looking to balance internal communications, company culture and knowledge sharing in one platform.

SUMMARY

ThoughtFarmer

ThoughtFarmer was founded in 2006 and is headquartered in Vancouver, Canada. There are no offices or partners outside of Canada, but ThoughtFarmer has clients in North America and the UK so has experience beyond its borders.

ThoughtFarmer has several strengths including simple and intuitive page layouts, alongside flexibility and ease of use for quickly building out new pages and areas within the platform. There is a powerful search capability that works equally well in the desktop browser and mobile app. Governance and life cycle features are also among the strongest we've seen, helping publishers keep on top of their content to improve the experience for employees. There are some nice engagement features too, such as Shout Outs and Awards for employee recognition.

More advanced features are missing from across many of our Scenarios, however. Branding and communications management tools are relatively simple, for example. The mobile experience is good, but those with frontline workers may find it somewhat lacking. Additionally, it's possible to create integrations (and we really like what they've done with Teams and Slack) but there isn't much available out–of–the box and it requires set-up by admins.

Overall, we think ThoughtFarmer is a simple yet effective intranet solution. It is well suited for smaller and mid-size companies across a variety of industries. Organisations considering ThoughtFarmer should note the higher price point, however.

Pricing

PRICE BAND	
1,000 users	$$$$$
5,000 users	$$$$$
20,000 users	$$$$$
50,000 users	$$$$$

These prices are indicative, offering a comparison of the products featured in this report only. Please contact the vendor for a bespoke quote.

PRICING MODEL

Subscription – price band based on number of users.

COSTS TYPICALLY

Slightly higher at the start of the term, but generally spread.

DISCOUNTS

Charities and non-profit organisations; multi-year commitments.

PRICE INCLUDES

Customer support (every customer is assigned a dedicated Customer Success Manager to work with their team throughout planning, implementation, launch and post-launch); access to the ThoughtFarmer help desk and support site; access to the ThoughtFarmer community site; training videos library; technical implementation support; design services for custom-branded theming; product feature and educational webinars; 24 x 7 emergency support.

Product type

Ready-to-run, installed in days

Branding opportunities

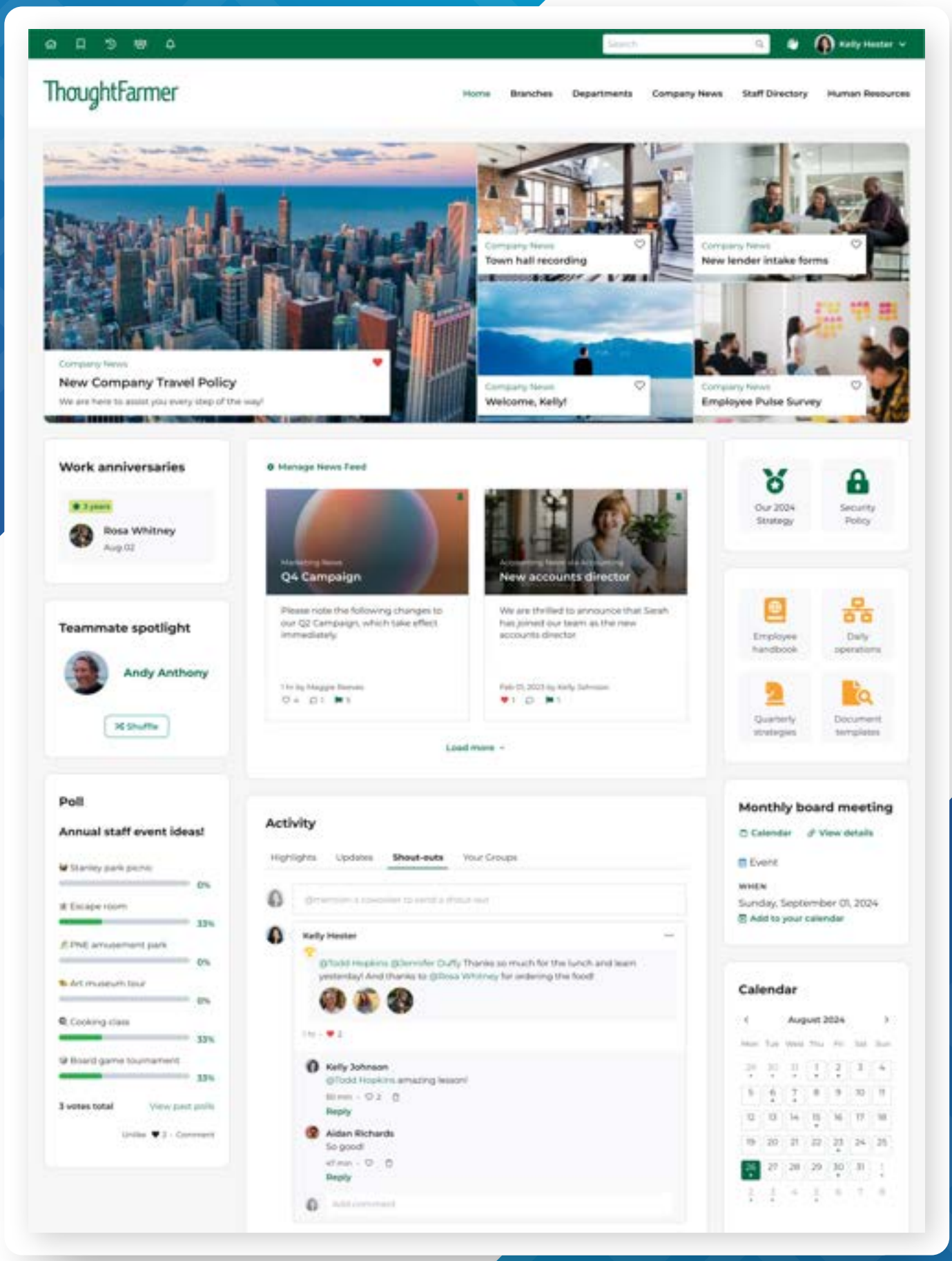
Good branding, complex options

Base systems

Fully standalone	Requires SharePoint	Other

Sectors

Accountancy, banking and finance	Healthcare	Law, law enforcement and security	Public services, government and administration	Engineering and manufacturing


ThoughtFarmer
Home
Branches
Departments
Company News
Staff Directory
Human Resources
Company News
New Company Travel Policy
We are here to assist you every step of the way!
Company News
Town hall recording
Company News
New lender intake forms
Company News
Welcome, Kelly!
Company News
Employee Pulse Survey
Work anniversaries
Rosa Whitney
Aug 02
Teammate spotlight
Andy Anthony
Shuffle
Poll
Annual staff event ideas!
Stanley park picnic
0%
Escape room
33%
PNE amusement park
0%
Art museum tour
0%
Cooking class
33%
Board game tournament
33%
3 votes total
View past polls
Manage News Feed
Q4 Campaign
Please note the following changes to our Q2 Campaign, which take effect immediately.
New accounts director
We are thrilled to announce that Sarah has joined our team as the new accounts director.
Load more
Our 2024 Strategy
Security Policy
Employee handbook
Daily operations
Quarterly strategies
Document templates
Activity
Highlights
Updates
Shout-outs
Your Groups
Kelly Hester
@Todd Hopkins @Jennifer Duffy Thanks so much for the lunch and learn yesterday! And thanks to @Rosa Whitney for ordering the food!
Kelly Johnson
@Todd Hopkins amazing lesson!
Reply
Aidan Richards
So good!
Reply
Monthly board meeting
Calendar
View details
Event
WHEN
Sunday, September 01, 2024
Add to your calendar
Calendar
August 2024

COMPANY AND PRODUCT

Company details

Company
ThoughtFarmer

ISO 27001 certified
Yes

Data residency
Canada; Europe (excluding UK); USA

Company founded
2006

Product launched
2006

Typical client size
Less than 1,000

Largest deployment so far
4,500 employees based in North America

Customers
Customers include: Care Hospice, RICK, New York State Department of Labor, Marigold, Chaffetz Lindsey, STO Building Group, Cambrian Credit Union, and Corus Orthodontists.

Partner locations
N/A

Company locations
Vancouver, Canada (HQ)

Product and technical details

Name of product

ThoughtFarmer

Deployment

Client on-premises	Client private cloud	Microsoft Azure	Amazon Web Services	**Vendor-hosted**	Microsoft 365 tenant	Google Cloud	Other

Authentication supported

Entra ID	**ADFS**	**Okta**	Open ID	**Oauth**	**G Suite**	Other

App deployment

Google Play store	**Apple store**	**MDM**	MAM	Other

Accessibility

WCAG 2.1 conformant

Document library sources integrated

Box	Dropbox	**Google Drive**	**SharePoint**	**OneDrive**	Other

Optional integrated enterprise search engines

Coveo	Elastic	IBM	Lucidworks	Microsoft	Mindbreeze	Sinequa	Other

User interface multi-language

Machine translation	Pre-configured	Editable	Right to left script supported	Other

Content multi-language

Machine translation for publishers	Machine translation for end users	Editable machine translation for publishers	Manual creation for publishers	Right to left script	Other

Set-up and support

Set-up process for new clients

A new intranet is installed within days and typically launches in 6 to 12 weeks. A dedicated Customer Success Manager and support team guide customers through the steps including importing users, branding the site, designing and bringing over content, coming up with a navigation structure and planning the intranet launch. ThoughtFarmer also provides implementation consulting services, where they will work closely with clients in planning, designing and building the intranet.

Version numbers

Demonstrated to ClearBox: 11.8

At January 2025: 11.9

Product updates

Minor updates weekly; major updates every two months.

Product update process

Product updates are rolled out to all customers at once, unless they have specific preferred arrangements.

Reverse-out options

When a contract ends, ThoughtFarmer provides the client with a copy of their data, and after 60 days data is deleted from their servers.

Technical support

Email support	Phone support	Chat support	Online portal	24/7 support	Office hours only

User community

The ThoughtFarmer Community site is an exclusive customer portal that enables customers to share success stories, ask questions and learn about product updates.

Voice of the vendor

ThoughtFarmer says: "At ThoughtFarmer, we believe work should be a place where ideas thrive and people feel truly connected. That's why we've crafted an intranet platform that empowers employees to share knowledge, stay informed and build a sense of community, no matter where they work.

With our award-winning software, creating a dynamic and engaging digital workplace is easy. We've made it simple for organisations to customise, deploy and maintain an intranet that people actually want to use. Whether your team is remote, hybrid or on-site, ThoughtFarmer provides the tools and support to boost collaboration, spark productivity and reinforce a strong corporate culture.

Backed by years of experience across diverse industries, we offer a proven blueprint for success. Our dedication to customer success is unmatched, with a team of Professional Services experts and a top-tier Customer Success Team ensuring your intranet journey is smooth and successful from start to finish.

ThoughtFarmer's platform is powerful yet remarkably user-friendly, offering maximum flexibility without overwhelming users. Our intuitive interface makes it easy for anyone to build and manage an intranet — no tech knowledge required.

From FormFlow's seamless online forms and workflows to AI-powered tools like AI Create and Enhance, and a fully customizable mobile experience, we address the core challenges of building an intranet that employees love. With ThoughtFarmer, your IT team can take a breather while everyone in the organisation contributes to a vibrant, engaging digital community. Our federated universal search, intuitive menus and quick links help employees find exactly what they need—fast. And with features like Content Reviews, your intranet remains a reliable, up-to-date source of truth.

By breaking down silos and improving interaction with features like shout-outs, polls and forums, ThoughtFarmer transforms your intranet into a dynamic hub where engagement and productivity soar. Let's make work better, together."

Voice of the customer

Unanimous consensus among clients is that ThoughtFarmer is very user friendly, with one client declaring "it is incredibly easy to use, even for individuals that are not design or tech savvy." Clients also enjoy the admin experience, with one person expressing, "It's a very intuitive and straightforward system to use. There's lots of flexibility in the administrative side of content creation." One customer summarised nicely by saying "There are many incredible things about this intranet platform" and going on to add "I have used other intranet platforms in the past, and ThoughtFarmer is far superior."

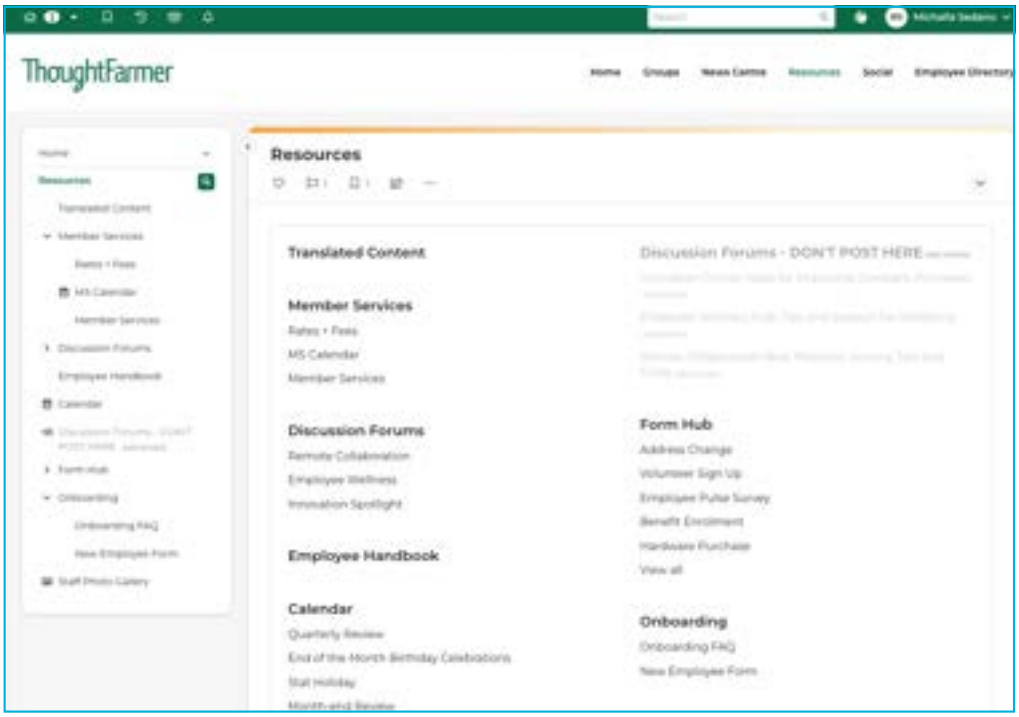
While overall sentiment followed one customer's observation that "ThoughtFarmer deliver a really good platform and service", there were some requests. One person shared, "Since the integrations are so helpful, we'd love to see more of those." Another person requested "Even more granular admin access or 1 main administrator having overall unique privileges over others" but ThoughtFarmer have said that this is available already. Another area for increased functionality was with the newsfeed feature, where one client requested "for users to be able to set newsfeeds to pull through to their homepage and not just newsfeeds attached to a group."

"Superb" and "brilliant" have been used to describe how it is working with ThoughtFarmer, with one person sharing,"Their customer success staff members go out of their way to be helpful and to assist in the overwhelming success of our company's intranet." Clients touted the ThoughtFarmer team's responsiveness, customer service and support from implementation to collecting feedback for future improvements and development. One customer summarised by saying "ThoughtFarmer provides more than a product. They represent 'making work better' in every interaction, truly support their customers' quest to improve internal communication and employee engagement and offer the kind of support and guidance that is impactful."

SCENARIOS & SCORES

Please see the Scenarios below for more detail on each of these.

SCENARIO AND SCORE	KEY BENEFITS	IMPROVEMENTS / CONSIDERATIONS
3.5+ **1. User Experience & Visual Appeal**	Straightforward and well-designed layouts make for engaging pages.	Sub-page and sub-section navigation can be clunky. Branding options are rather limited.
3.5 **2. Publishing & Communications Management**	Plenty of template and layout options provide variety for different communication and news publishing needs.	Content planning features could be more robust. Audience targeting features are comparatively simple.
3 **3. Community & Engagement**	Discussion forums work well for social activities. 'Shout Outs' and 'Awards' are good recognition and engagement features.	Groups may lack variety for those with distinct communities. Lack of reaction types.
2+ **4. Integrations & Services (Including M365)**	Some file drive integrations. Activity messaging in Teams and Slack works well.	Current integration options are rather limited.
4 **5. Information Finding & Search**	Easy-to-use search experience that is both effective and reliable. Good range of management controls.	Left-hand navigation menu becomes less effective as one drills deeper into the site and sub-pages.
3.5 **6. Administrator Experience**	Site administration features are easy for non-technical users. Good life cycle tools.	Lack of automated workflows such as new site or forum request.
3.5 **7. Analytics**	Good range of data covered.	More drill-downs would give site managers further insight into behaviour. Restrictions on exporting raw data hinder its ease of use in other systems for further analysis.
3 **8. Mobile & Frontline Support**	Provides parity of experience with desktop, including features like Shout Outs.	Navigation in mobile app can be a bit confusing. Lack of frontline-first features.



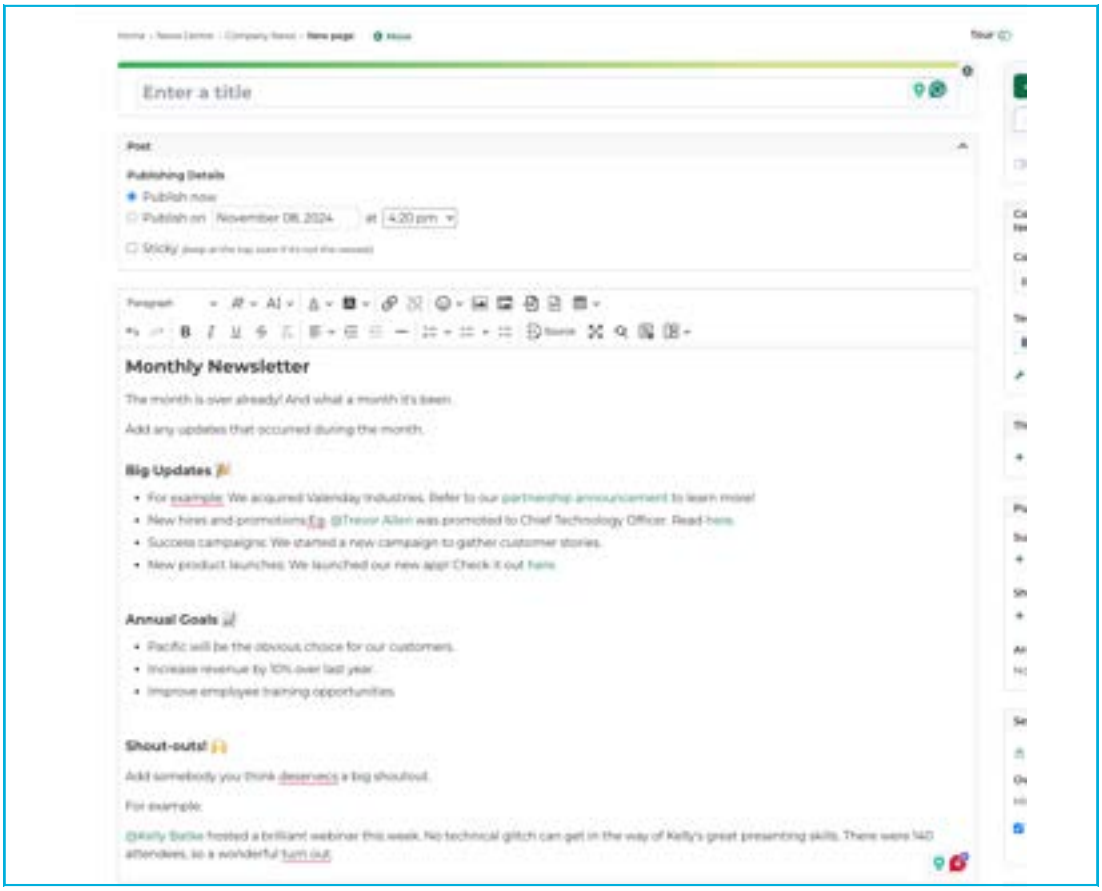
The top menu is configurable but persistent, while the left-hand SuperNav provides deeper navigation through a site.

ThoughtFarmer offers a visually appealing, streamlined user experience that remains consistent throughout the site. Home pages are easily created through drag-and-drop cards for elements such as activity feeds and news carousels. Home page managers can tap into pre-built page templates or create new ones to further customise layouts, as well as set different home pages for desktop and mobile devices.

The top menu ribbon is where a user's profile, notifications, group membership and bookmarked content can all be accessed; we particularly like that site history can also be accessed here for recently visited content. The second-level menu bar is configurable and is where employees will find persistent links, such as to the home page, news centre, employee directory, resource and social pages, and 'Groups' (see Scenario 3 for details). When accessing Groups and sub-sections in different locations of the site, a left-hand menu, branded as 'SuperNav', is the primary way for visitors to drill down. While the SuperNav allows for accessing deeper levels of site content and pages, it can feel a bit clunky and overwhelming, and at times it's unclear where one is in relation to the overall site.

Notifications are found in the top ribbon, with a badge over the notification bell to signify new notifications, social and content mentions, and form alerts. A helpful notification history page is accessible through the notification bell. Notifications, by default, are sent when there is activity on followed content, and helpfully users can set whether they receive in-system and / or email notifications, as well as set notification rules.

Customisation and branding are applied via site themes, with the ability to apply brand colours, fonts and images. Custom HTML, CSS, and JavaScript can be applied to elements such as headers and footers, although organisations should note that this must be done by administrators with coding knowledge. While different logos can be added to different areas of the intranet, the site colour theme is consistent across the entire site. This limitation of a single colour theme may challenge organisations with brands or office locations that have distinct identities. The vendor has indicated that supporting different sub-themes is on the roadmap.



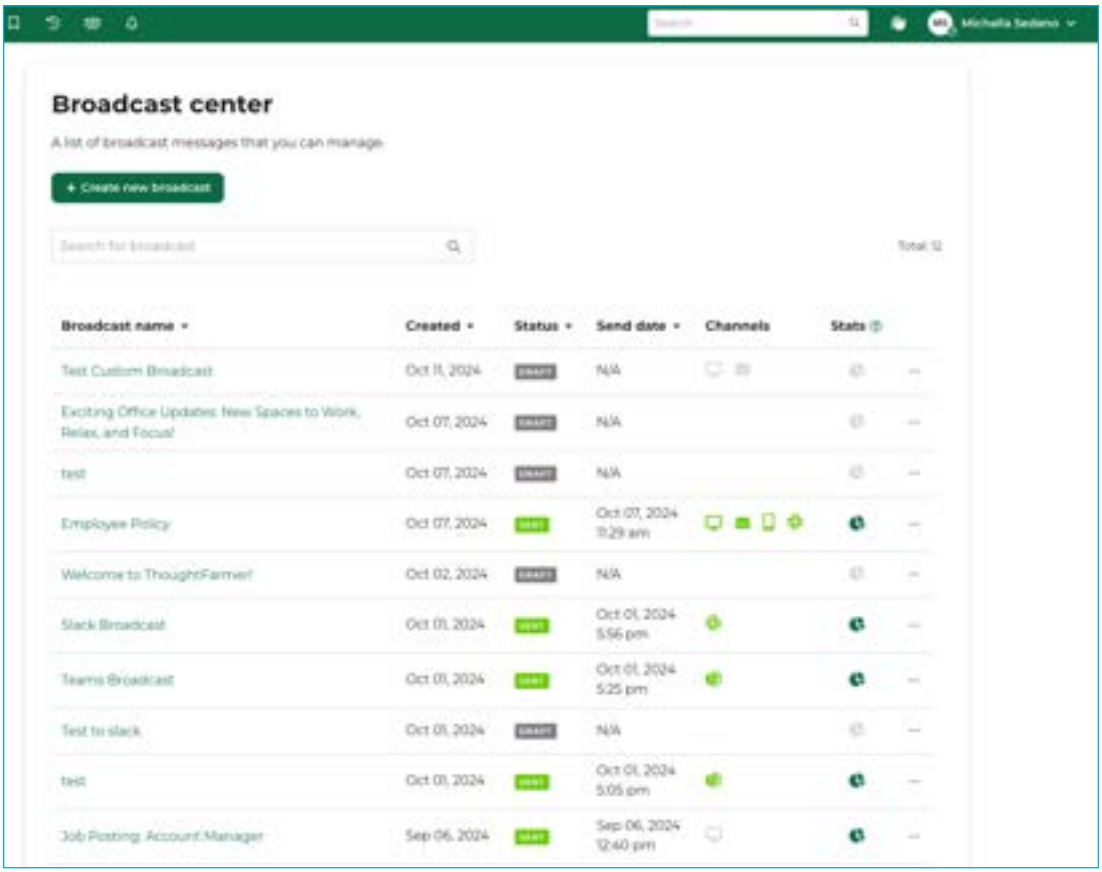
Creating news articles quickly is easy to do using the Rich Text Editor for adding and editing text and images, as well as linking to intranet content and @mentioning employees.

ThoughtFarmer provides a straightforward, simplified approach when it comes to intranet publishing and communications. News and communications content is created primarily through the 'News Centre' for news articles and through 'broadcast messaging' to push out time-sensitive content and announcements.

Content templates help publishers to apply a consistent look and feel to relevant pages, such as news articles. Pages are built using drag-and-drop cards of content such as forms, staff shout-outs and a rich text editor. The rich text editor card is where the bulk of content is added and includes simple generative AI to assist with writing or editing content, although ThoughtFarmer says more is on the roadmap. The rich text editor card also includes 'content blocks' of pre-set wording, such as a mission statement, or standard formatting, for policy pages for example. Configuring content blocks could take a bit of upfront administrative effort and training, but we think these could be useful for ensuring consistency in instances where communications authoring and publishing is distributed across the organisation.

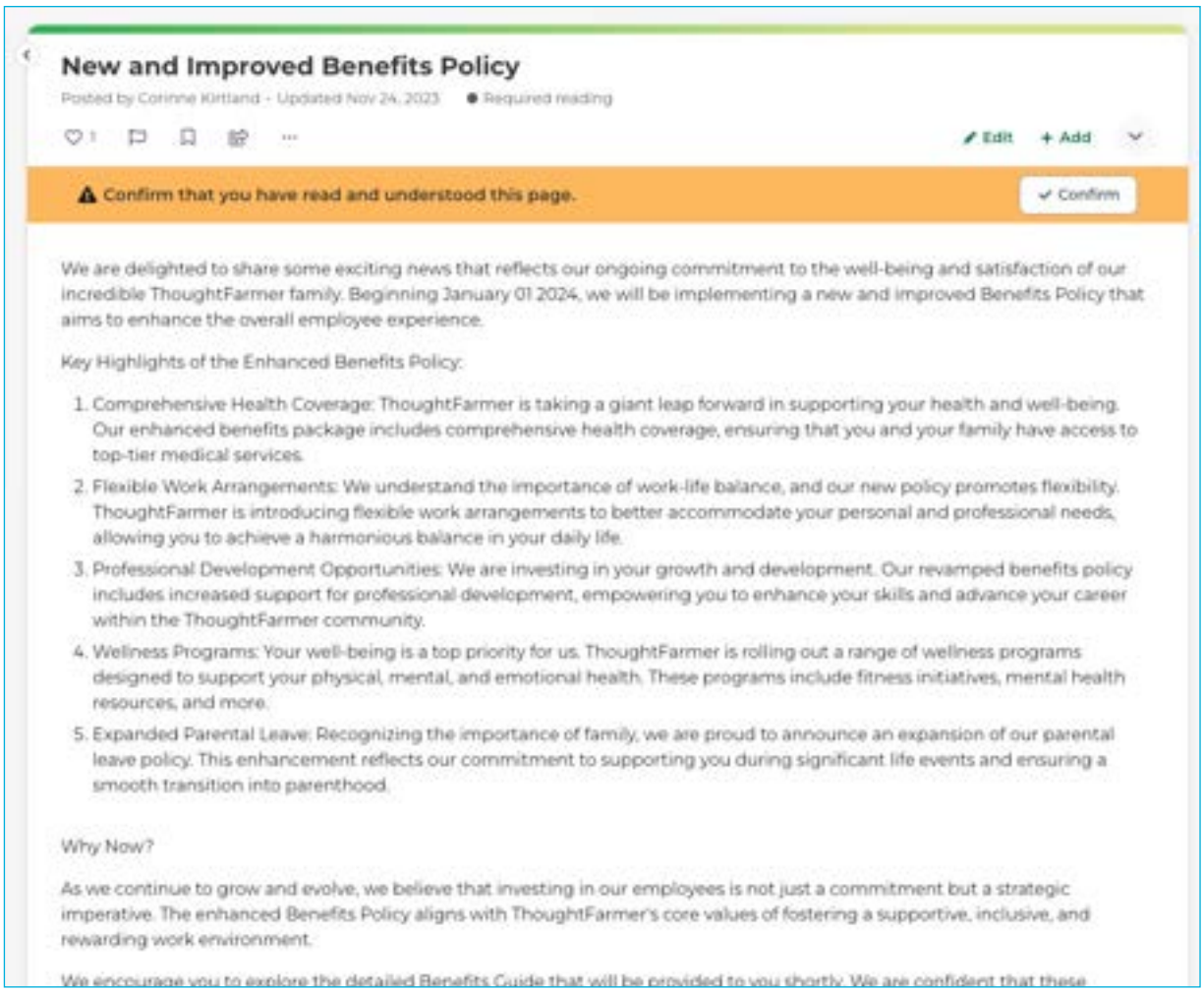
When publishers create news with future publishing dates, the drafts are listed in a 'staging area'. We like the 'draft mode' approach that uses publishing and reviewing workflows, where content owners can determine if collaborators can edit or publish content. While drafting and publishing news posts and communications is possible, there is a lack of built-in content planning features such as kanban boards and comms calendars. Clients with dedicated internal communications teams may have to find other systems outside of the intranet for more robust planning.

Urgent news can be communicated via the 'broadcast centre'; broadcasts appear as simple intranet-wide banners, as well as pushed out via email, mobile app notifications and cross-published in other tools such as Slack. Employees cannot opt out of receiving broadcasts, so caution should be applied when using these, primarily by setting restrictions on who can generate broadcasts. Broadcasts provide a flexible approach to urgent communications that we think works well.



The Broadcast Centre lists urgent messages.

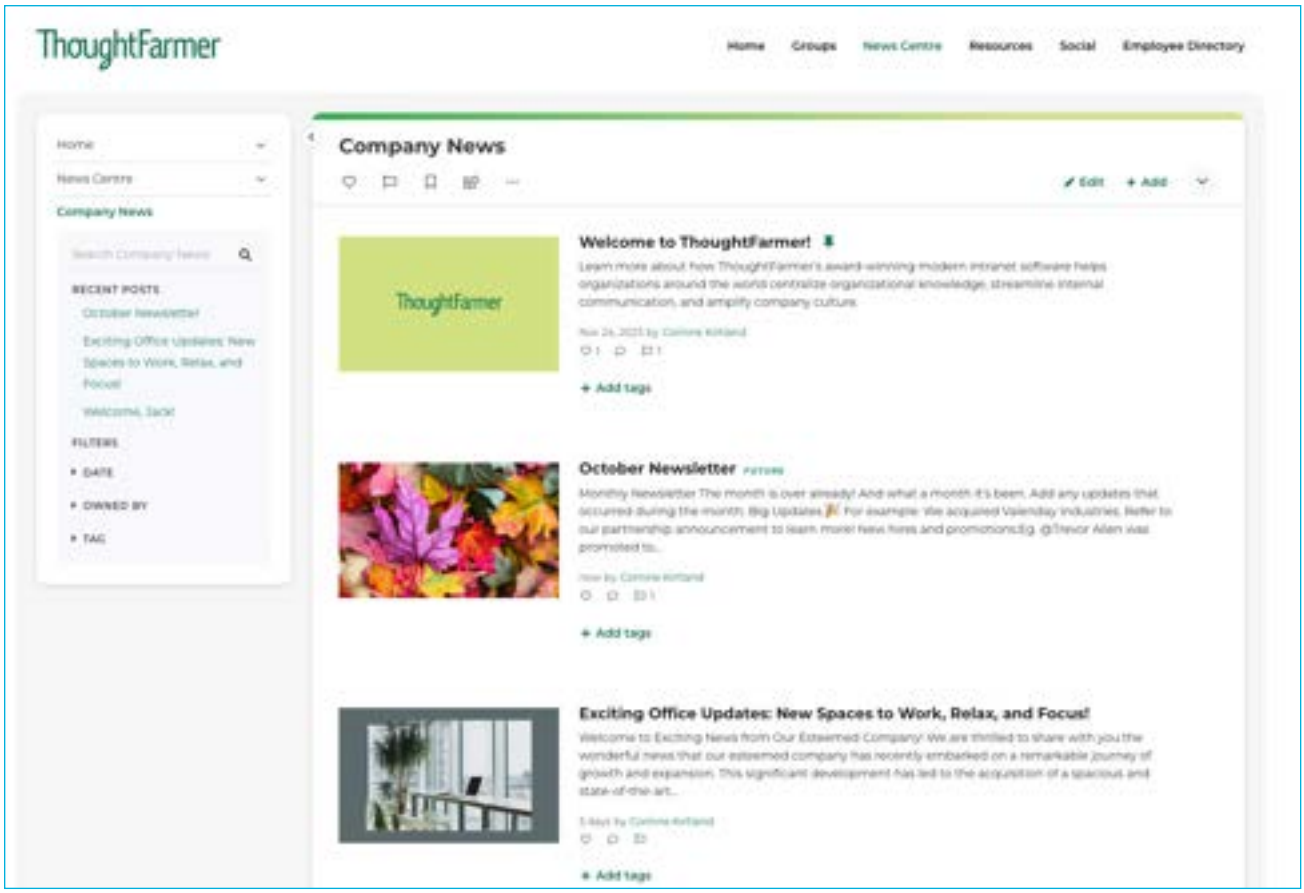
For less urgent but no less important messages, news publishers can 'sticky' news posts, which keeps them at the top of the news centre and in associated widgets. Important content can also be set to required reading, with the content displaying a banner that prompts readers to confirm that they have read and acknowledge the content. A required reading list can be accessed by staff in the drop-down menu that appears when they click on their profile photo. We particularly like this feature, as it adds an effective layer of visibility and tracking for important content. Additionally, intranet managers can choose to display a required reading content card on the homepage for more visibility. Followed content and Group subscriptions are other ways to notify staff of important communications and updates; for instance, if retail teams follow dedicated product news channels, new release updates can be posted here and teams can receive alerts.



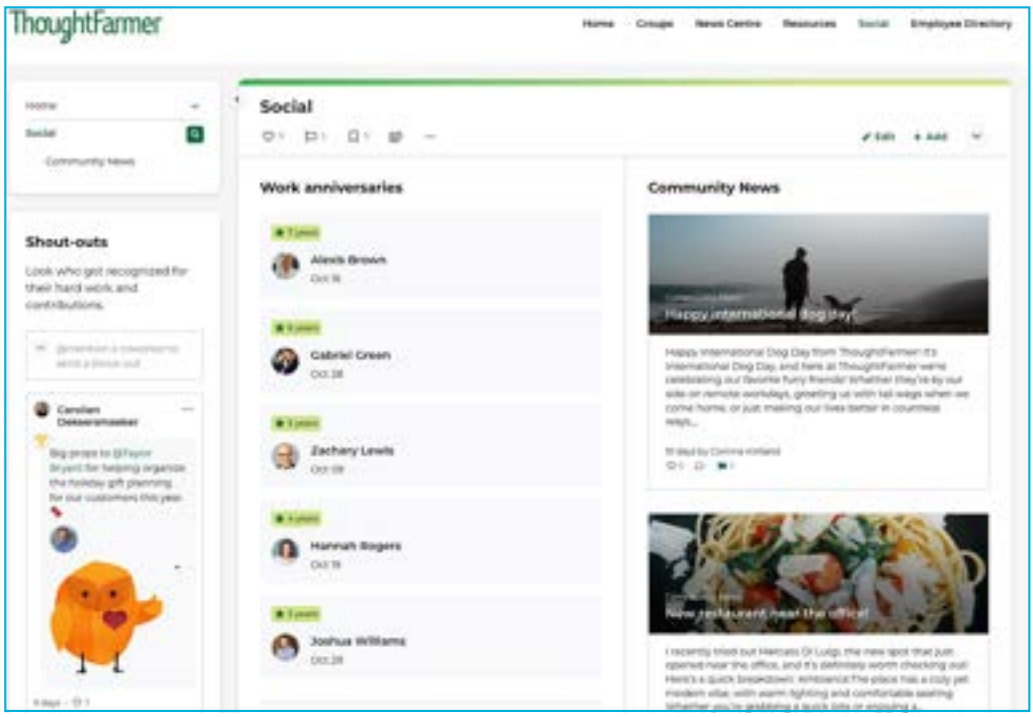
Content set as 'required reading' will display a banner along the top of the page, prompting readers to confirm that they have read it.

Reaching people through audience targeting is carried out in a few ways. Broadcasts can be sent to the entire organisation, specific individuals and Groups. By default, company-wide news is accessible to all employees through the 'News Centre' but articles can be shared out to a Group for improved visibility. Similarly, individual staff and Groups can be @mentioned in an article and in the comments to call further attention to specific content. It's possible to publish news into individual Groups, with the option of automatically including Group news in the News Centre. The approach to audience targeting is less flexible than other products we've seen and communicators with complex needs may find it somewhat restrictive.

Pushing out intranet content through multiple distribution channels is accomplished in a variety of ways. Individual news posts can be exported to PDF, emailed and reposted to Group newsfeeds. In addition to email, mobile app and banner pushes, Broadcasts can also be pushed to Slack and MS Teams channels. Email newsletters can be enabled, but the options here are rather limited. A 'daily catch up' newsletter will provide a daily summary of a person's followed content, and a weekly newsletter will provide a summary of popular content, which is determined by number of views, comments, likes and follows. The product does not offer dedicated digital signage features, but the vendor mentions that customers can leverage the RSS feed feature and import into a separate digital signage platform.



Easily accessed from a persistent site navigation tab, the News Centre provides a one-stop shop for employees to access their news.



A dedicated social page serves as a one-stop shop and content roll-up for engagement features, such as work anniversaries, birthdays, shout-out celebrations and a community news feed.

ThoughtFarmer offers a handful of simple features for fostering communities and employee engagement. A primary way that ThoughtFarmer offers this is in 'Groups', which are sub-sites where teams and colleagues can collaborate and engage. Groups can be configured by a site administrator for communities of practice and employee interest groups. Members can be added at the individual level or by security groups pulling in from Entra ID, Okta, Google Workspace, or Active Directory. Groups can also be open membership for people to join on their own. Dedicated news feeds (see Scenario 2) and discussion forums can be added to Groups, providing a way for members to collaborate and be social. ThoughtFarmer ships with a single Group template, which can lack variety. Multiple Group templates can be created, however, and individual Group pages can be customised with different layouts, features, and unique page headers.

When Group owners create discussion forums, they can assign forum type, such as Q&A, and add tags for findability in site search. Forum participants can post, comment, like and reshare posts. A Rich Text Editor allows employees to include multimedia, links and attachments to their posts and replies. Forum posts cannot be upvoted or otherwise marked as trending or popular aside from likes; organisations with an emphasis on innovation and ideation may find the functionality limiting in this regard if they rely heavily on staff ideas and input, but most will be satisfied with what ThoughtFarmer offers.

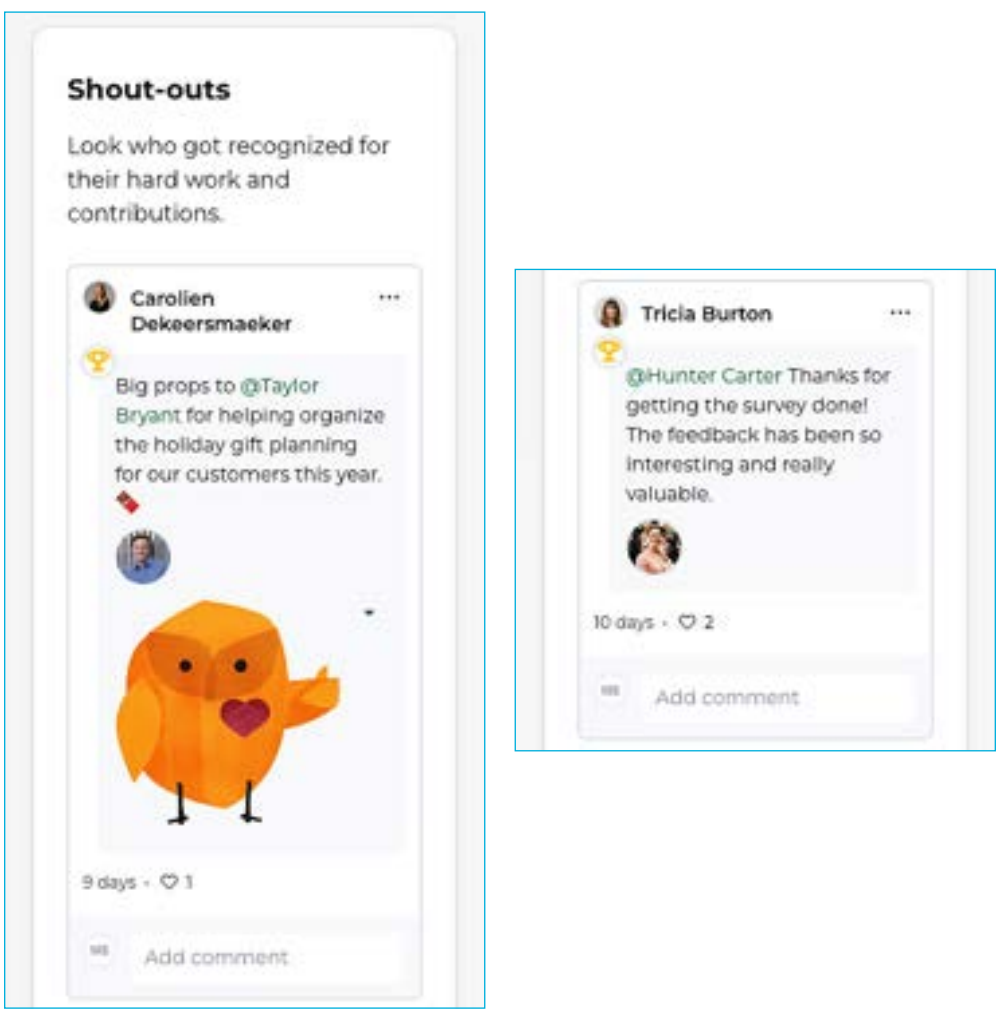
There are no moderation features or approval workflows for discussion forums, which could be a concern for some organisations. Even where there are people nominated to oversee posts and replies, there are no notifications or similar tools to assist, meaning strong governance

standards will be needed. We feel this could all be improved to relieve the manual work organisations might otherwise have to consider for monitoring and managing employee activity.

For an element of gamification, awards can be earned. ThoughtFarmer has two main award categories, 'Activity' and 'Actions'. Activity Awards include following content and liking pages, while Action Awards can be earned for posting in forums and joining Groups. When awards are won, badges will be added to a person's 'Awards Collection' on their profile page, which also displays a progress bar for earning medals based on the number of awards received. For organisations wanting to reward employees for active engagement with the intranet, the Awards are a nice approach.

ThoughtFarmer supports a photo gallery feature that allows people to upload, tag, comment and like images. We particularly like that this feature can be used for fostering participation and contributions, whether at the organisation-level for all staff events and celebrations, or at a smaller level, such as by office location, special interest or for affinity groups.

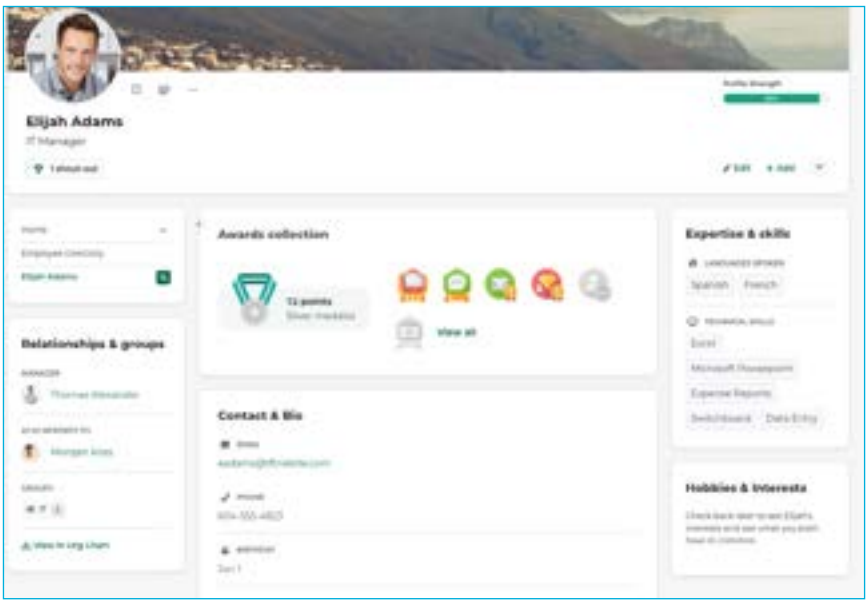
A 'Shout-outs' feature allows for peer-to-peer recognition in a casual, authentic way. When the 'Shout-outs' feature is enabled, staff can @mention a colleague and add a short message. Those who receive shout-outs will get their shout-out displayed on their profile page for increased recognition and visibility. Employee anniversaries and shout-outs can be prominently displayed across different areas of the site, including the home page and Group pages, via widgets.



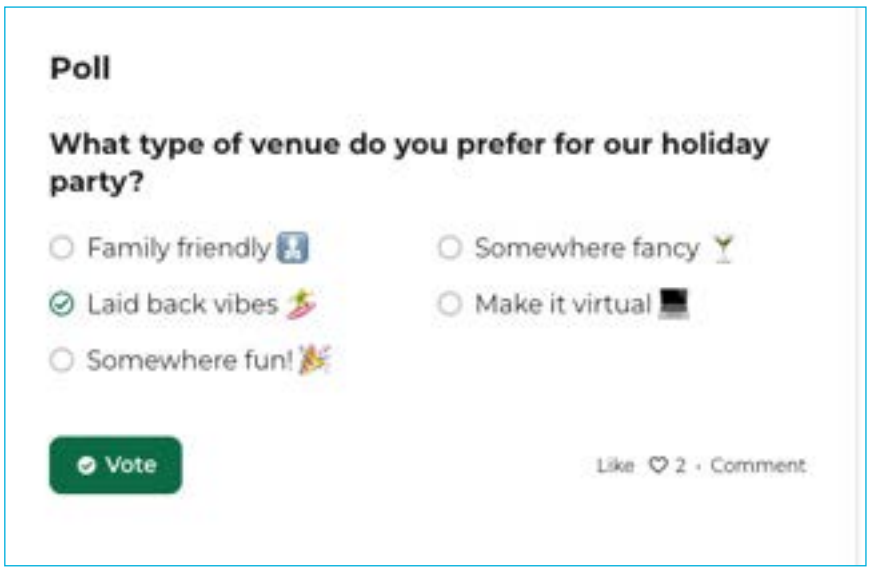
While shout-outs will appear on staff profiles, shout-out cards can be added to the homepage and other intranet pages to increase staff recognition.

Employees can show off their expertise, skills and certifications by adding tags to their profiles. This includes adding hobbies and interests profile tags for a more personal touch to profiles and to share common interests. Tags are searchable, and when clicked from a profile will link to the directory pre-filtered, making it easy for employees to find other experts across the organisation.

Polls and forms provide a way to survey and collect feedback from employees. Polls can be quickly set up by those with permissions and can be featured on the home page and other pages throughout the site. A single poll can be featured on a page where the live voting results will display, or a 'Polls' page can be set up to list all past and current polls plus the voting results. Poll results are anonymous, but for increased engagement, can be liked and commented on.

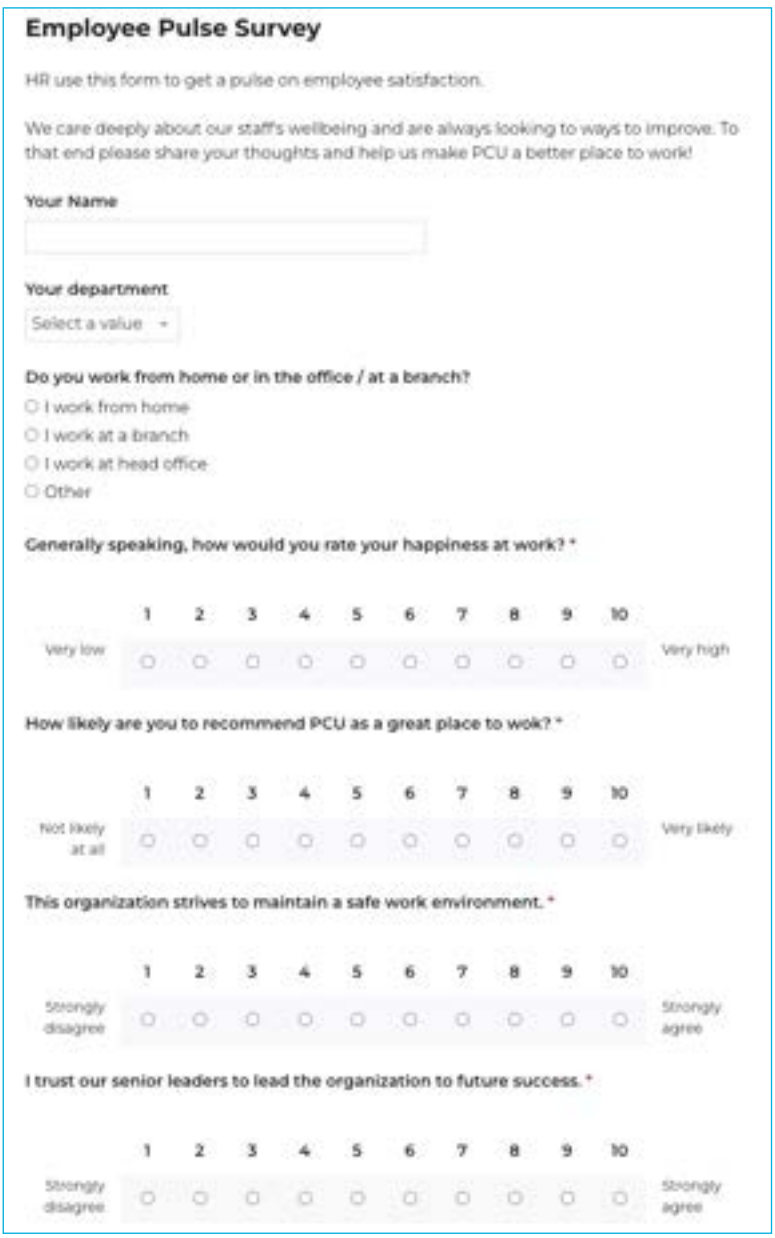


Shout-outs and awards for recognition will display on a staff's profile page, as well as any skills, hobbies and interests tags.



Employees can respond to a question by selecting from a pre-defined set of answers and add comments after they have submitted their response.

Forms can be used for longer-form surveying, such as for employee pulse surveys, and include more formatting options. Forms can be created with ease using drag and drop to add elements, such as text, images and links. Form questions can be in a variety of formats, including text fields, drop-down selections and rating scales. 'FormFlow' is the vendor's way to support form workflows, including submission status, approvals and notifications for submitters and reviewers. We think the ability to create well-designed forms with administrative features, such as status and reviewer assignments, all done natively from the platform, works well. However, it should be noted that analysis of the survey results may require additional effort or tools to get meaningful insights. Survey responses can be viewed within the platform and exported, but filtering is limited to fields that are included in the form.



Forms can be created and hosted within the platform for longer-form based surveys, such as employee pulse surveys.

Search results and intranet content posted in Teams or Slack will display a link preview, providing helpful context.

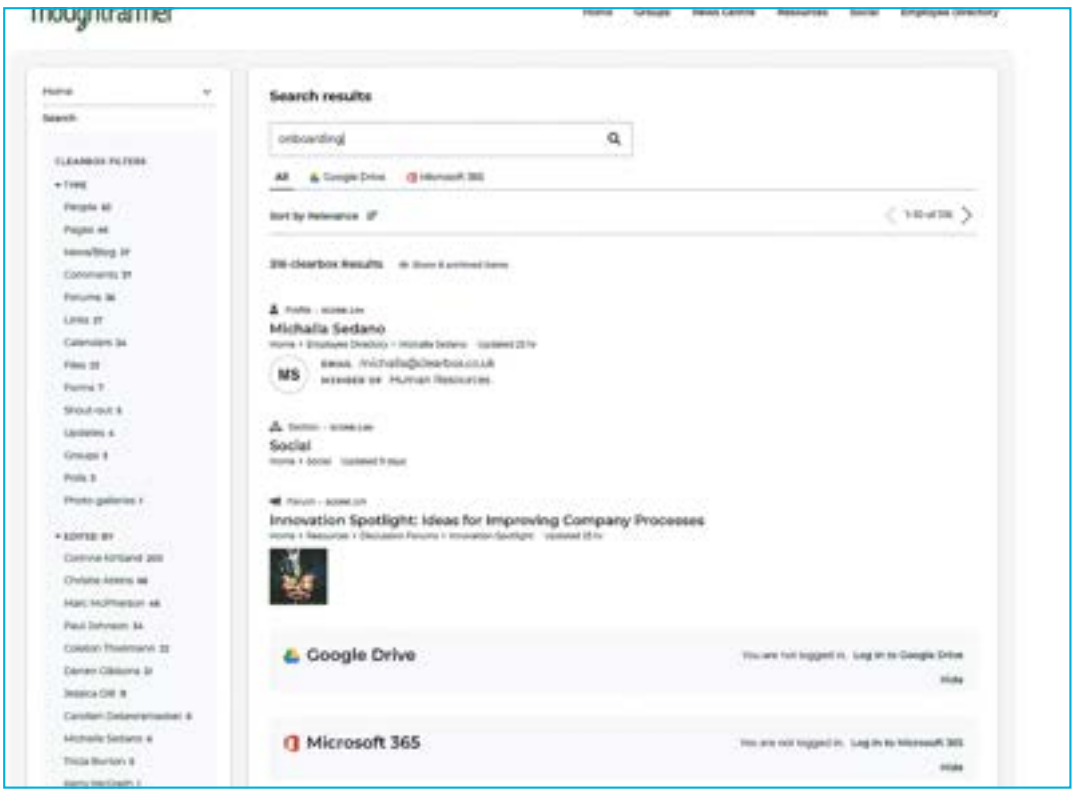
ThoughtFarmer's integration options offer a convenient experience for employees, and intranet managers will appreciate that setup is not overly cumbersome. However, what is available as out-of-the-box integrations is fairly limited when compared to other products in this report.

One stand-out feature is the Slack and Teams integration for pulling in and accessing intranet content, such as Broadcast messages mentioned in Scenario 2. When ThoughtFarmer is added as an app to Slack / Teams, link previews will appear for intranet content posted in a channel or direct message. 'Activity messaging' means new intranet page activity will trigger automatic notifications into a Slack / Teams channel. Activity notifications pushed to Slack / Teams will display the intranet page title, creator, thumbnail image and a summary. Employees can also search the intranet from within Slack / Teams and post search results into a conversation. Search results will helpfully display the page title, thumbnail and an excerpt of the content.

Microsoft 365 integration provides organisations access to SharePoint and OneDrive content directly from the intranet. Files and folders can be embedded and linked from intranet pages and content, such as news posts and discussion forum posts, and is also searchable (see Scenario 5). In order to access SharePoint and OneDrive content from the intranet, people must be logged in to their Microsoft accounts and have permission to access.

ThoughtFarmer integrates with Google Drive and Box in the same way as SharePoint above, via embedded and federated search. Other out-of-the-box integrations available include Unsplash for royalty free images and photos, and 'Achievers' to bring employee rewards into the ThoughtFarmer platform – although note we didn't see this in action.

The vendor says they support custom integrations via webhooks, embed codes and iframes. For more specific integration needs, developer teams can leverage ThoughtFarmer's API features. For additional cost, custom development may also be leveraged. Note we've not seen any of this in action and not seen evidence of two-way integrations, so for those organisations where integrations are important, we would recommend discussing your needs with ThoughtFarmer in advance.



The Advanced Search results page is clear and user friendly.

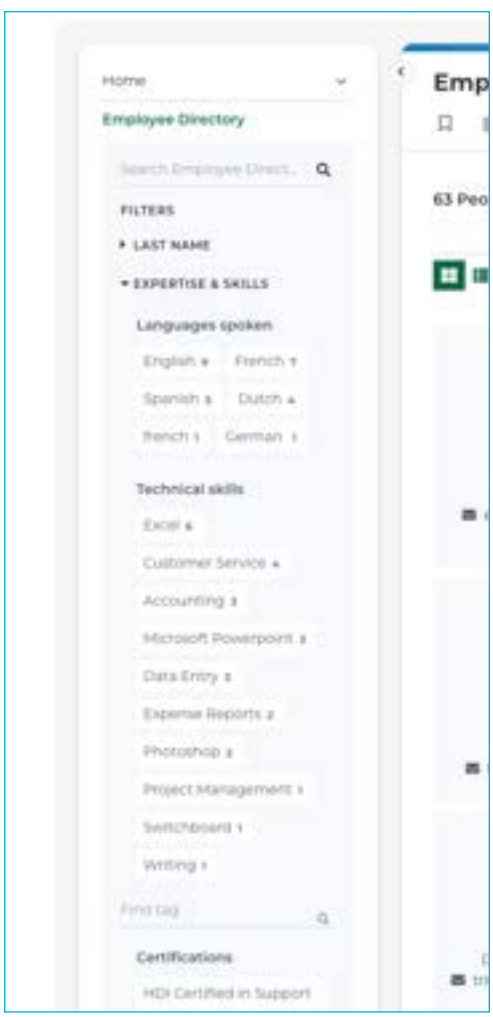
ThoughtFarmer's search experience is intuitive and surprisingly comprehensive. A global search box is available at the top of the site, with a quick filter option to search by content type, including site pages, people and Groups. Suggested results appear as a dropdown when a term is typed in the search box, with results linked for quick access.

An advanced search page displays more results, with facets appearing along the left side of the page for filtering, including by topic and people tags. Results are also sortable. A 'Did you mean' suggestion helps address any misspellings and term variations. To help employees assess results, key metadata, including the content type, title, date last updated and a summary or excerpt of the content, are all displayed. Linked site breadcrumbs also indicate where the content lives in the intranet.

ThoughtFarmer's 'best bets' approach to help elevate important content in results is simple and effective. Best bets are easy to configure by adding search phrases to match against a desired result. To increase visibility and access to similar content, multiple results can be added to a best bet phrase, and in search settings, managers can decide the number of best bets to display for each search term. On the search results page, best bets are clearly identified for employees and appear at the top of the results list.

Tagging intranet content helps content organisation and search, as tags are searchable and can be used as search filters. Tagging can be restricted to the intranet team, or open to allow employees to generate and contribute to the tagging schema. Tag bundles can further organise content by grouping tags into categories or topics and can then be used when filtering through search results. For example, an organisation with multiple offices can create a tag bundle for 'office location' with a tag to represent each office.

The top search bar completes a quick search for intranet content and results from other systems.



Tag bundles can be created to create groups of tags related to a specific topic, such as office location or language spoken.

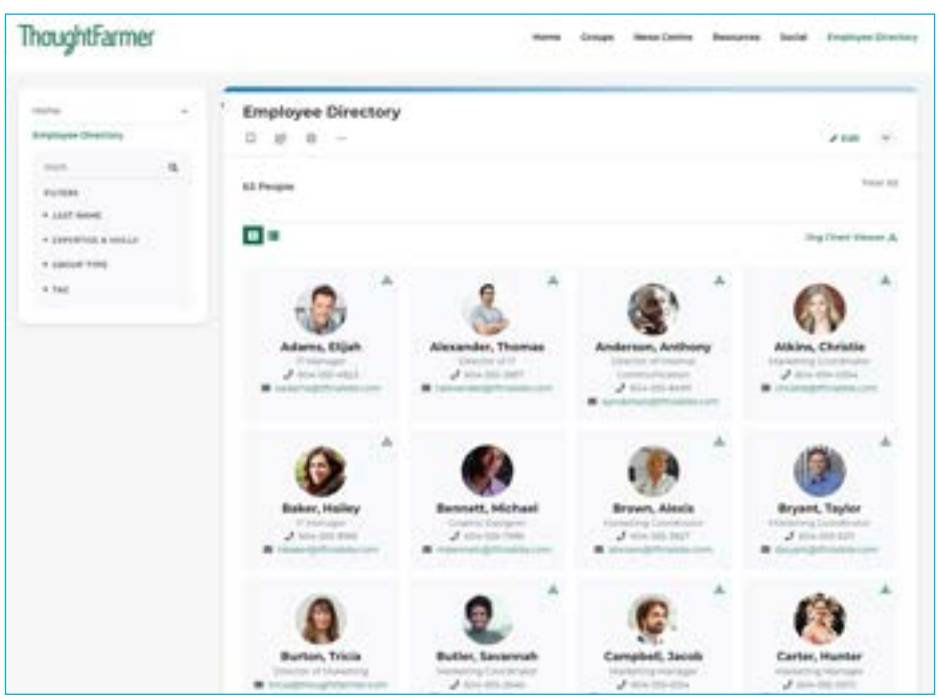
ThoughtFarmer will complete the initial search setup but for those with appropriate experience, result scores can be configured by search administrators for elements such as content age, site location and popularity to tailor search results. With such strong search management capabilities, savvy administrators could address some of the challenges detailed around cumbersome navigation. Caution is advised, however, and there are warnings within the system to help avoid breakages.

OneDrive, Box, Google Drive, and SharePoint files and folders can be indexed, searched for and accessed within ThoughtFarmer. Results from external drives will appear in both the quick search bar and the main search page. Changes made to content in the original system are reflected in real time, helping to ensure that updated content is immediately searchable. As mentioned in Scenario 4, ThoughtFarmer's limited integration options mean that staff will have to leave the intranet to search across other business systems.

Searching for people via the main search is easy, and organisations can leverage Entra and HRIS systems to populate intranet profiles. The 'did you mean?' search feature can help with name misspellings and variations in order to boost the accuracy of people searching. There are filters for expertise, skills and interests, and people results display summary information such as profile photo and phone number.

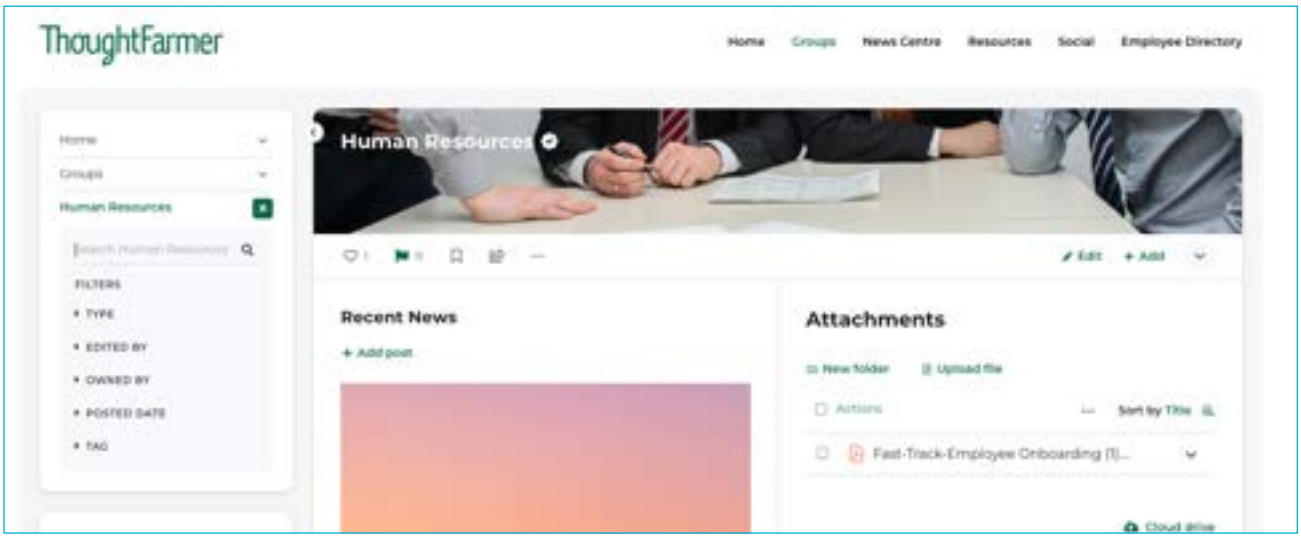
The employee directory is a more direct way to search for colleagues, where staff can search by name or use tags for filtering. It should be noted that the directory does not include misspelling corrections, which we think is a shame given its presence in the main search. An 'Org Chart Viewer' button on the employee directory page will display an interactive organisation chart with reporting structures, which can also be exported and downloaded as an XML or image file.

Profile pages are laid out cleanly with drag-and-drop profile cards. Employees can easily edit their profile information, and site administrators can lock down certain profile fields as needed. A search can be performed from a profile page to see the content that staff member has interacted with - useful to ascertain ownership and activity related to content and resources.

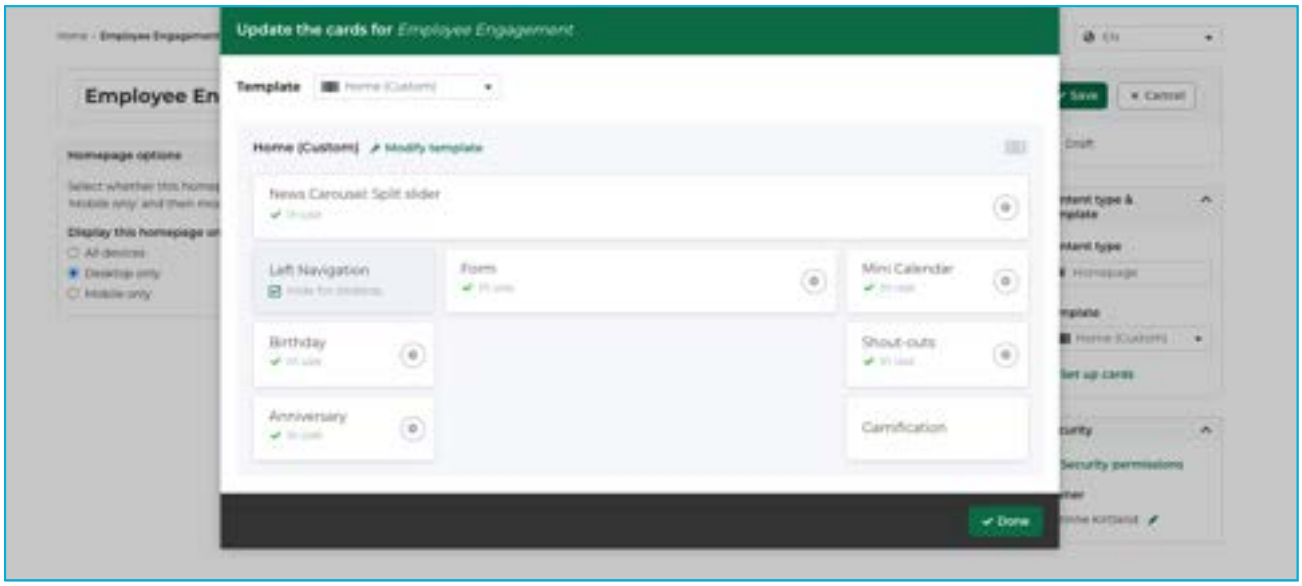


The Employee Directory is searchable for more targeted people finding, where staff can search by name or use filters to narrow by skills or location.

More targeted searching can be done within specific areas of the intranet, including Groups, news feeds and 'sub-sections'. Sub-sections feature a dedicated search box and filters in the left-hand navigation for more targeted searching, as opposed to the main site search. Customers may find that sub-sections are the best option for creating dedicated site areas for specific topics. For example, a human resources team could create an 'onboarding' sub-page with a discussion forum and add links to other intranet content, such as the employee directory and a company calendar. The left-hand navigation menu, which ThoughtFarmer calls the SuperNav, serves as a page directory and is the main way for staff to navigate sub-section pages. As previously noted, this could get unwieldly so organisations with dense content areas should think critically about how to minimise sub-page sprawl.



More targeted searching within a specific location, such as in Groups or sub-sections, can be carried out with greater relevancy compared to the main site search.



Home pages can be configured using drag-and-drop cards to pull in dynamic content from across the intranet, such as news, celebrations, surveys and polls.

ThoughtFarmer makes site administration approachable for both power users and infrequent contributors. The platform is flexible for creating different administrator roles with granular permissions. Access to edit content and pages is managed through security groups linked to 'Group' pages, as well as for individuals. There are no workflows or other mechanisms to make new page or sub-section requests, which we think would be helpful.

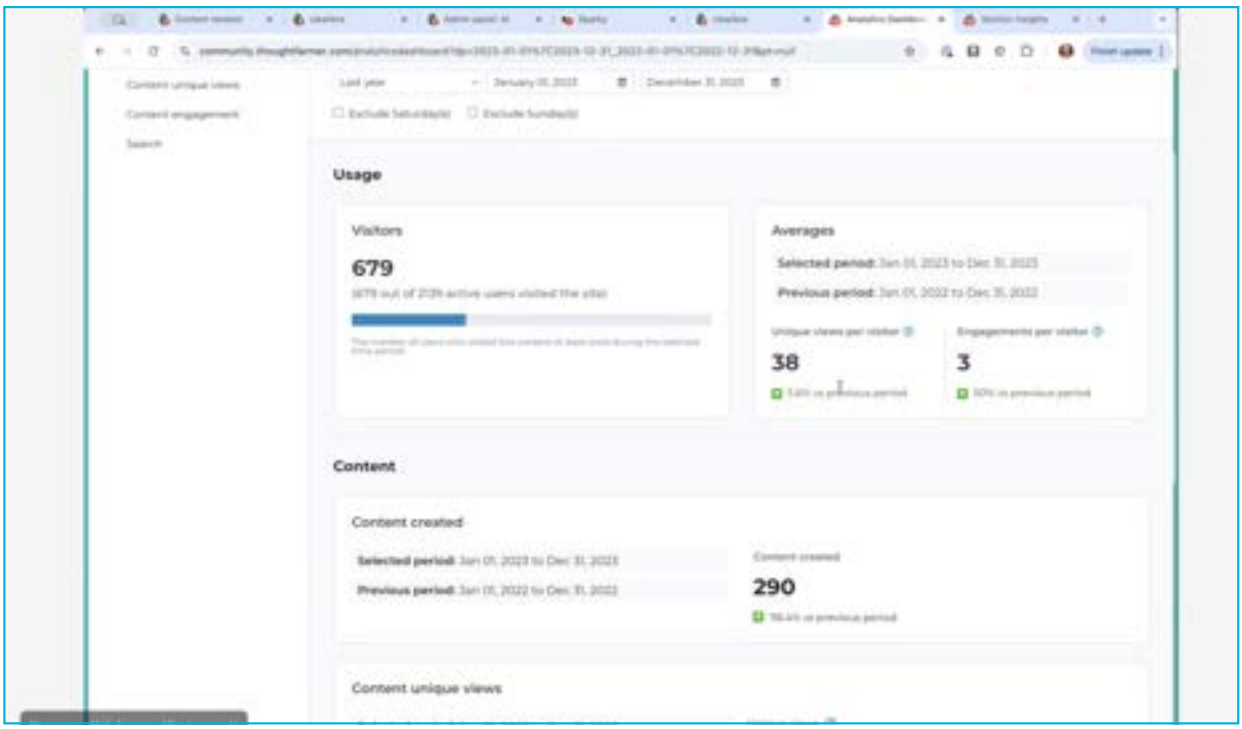
Site navigation, including the SuperNav, and menu bars are edited via the front-end. Navigation menu editing options are serviceable, but the page edit mode route feels a touch more intuitive. Page edit mode displays the current page location and a page hierarchy tree, helpful in determining the relationships and order of pages within the entire section.

Home page management is completed through the front-end and the home page can be updated without technical knowledge. We like the 'tour toggle' in 'page edit mode' which displays information on the different parts of the page that can be edited. When editing any page, the drag-and-drop card display shows tiles labelled with the card type rather than the page content itself. This could be improved; it would be easier for page editors to make layout design decisions if they could see the content as it appears on the page.

ThoughtFarmer's life cycle management features are very strong and among the best examples we've seen. A 'content review' dashboard includes configurable workflows to help keep intranet content up to date. Admins can set a review schedule, assign reviewers, track review status and send notifications when content needs reviewing. Publishers can visit the content review dashboard to quickly see their assigned reviews and track progress. Helpful visual indicators allow employees to easily ascertain the status of content, as 'new' and 'updated' labels are displayed on page navigation menus and page thumbnails.

When multiple languages are enabled, employees select a default language from the available options. Pages visited will be displayed in their preferred language, provided the page was created in the relevant language. Note there is no auto translation for creating content, however employees can click a 'Translate' card to auto translate a page.

Multimedia can be embedded on pages, including video, audio recordings and files. It should be noted for organisations with corporate podcasts or live stream events, ThoughtFarmer does not have a mechanism within the platform to record or stream.



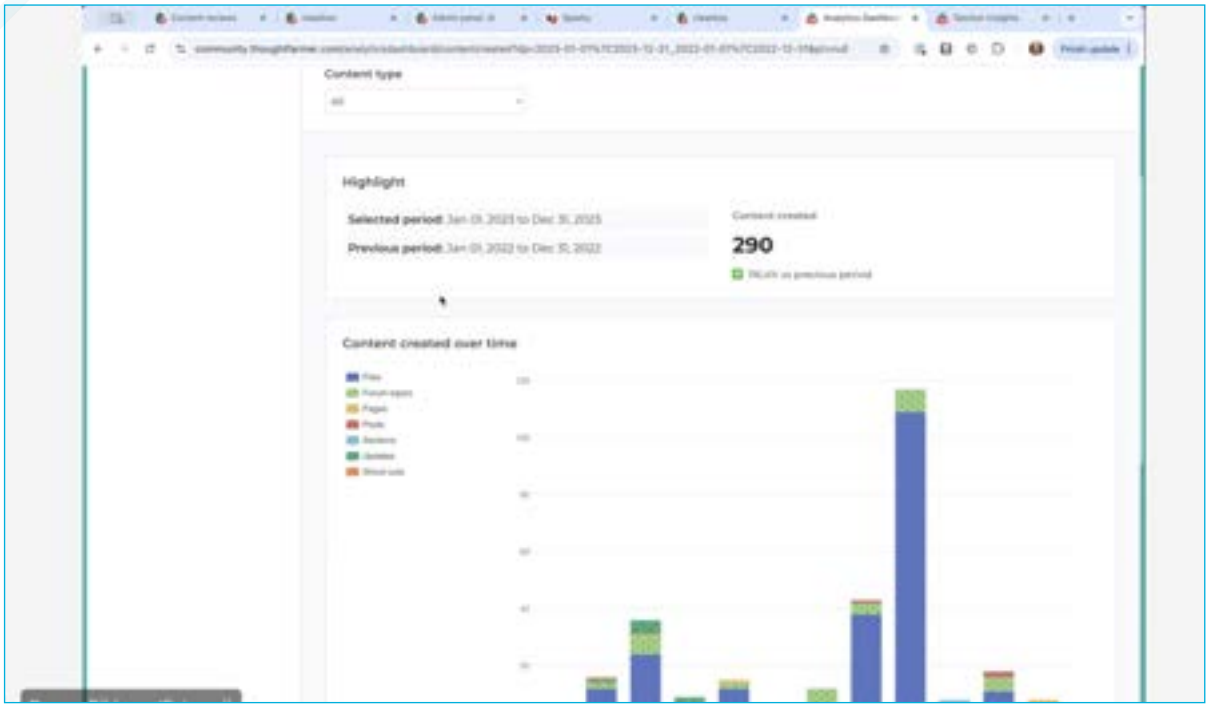
The analytics feature brings site analytics into the ThoughtFarmer admin panel and provides insights into key site metrics across content, staff engagement and search.

In late 2024 ThoughtFarmer released its own in-platform analytics, which had previously been supported through third-party analytics software. The new analytics experience can be accessed through the admin interface, with a dashboard of widgets displaying high-level data and averages for stats such as unique visitors and views, total content created and unique views for content. Date ranges can be applied to see trends over time, and drill-downs for data are available for more in-depth analysis.

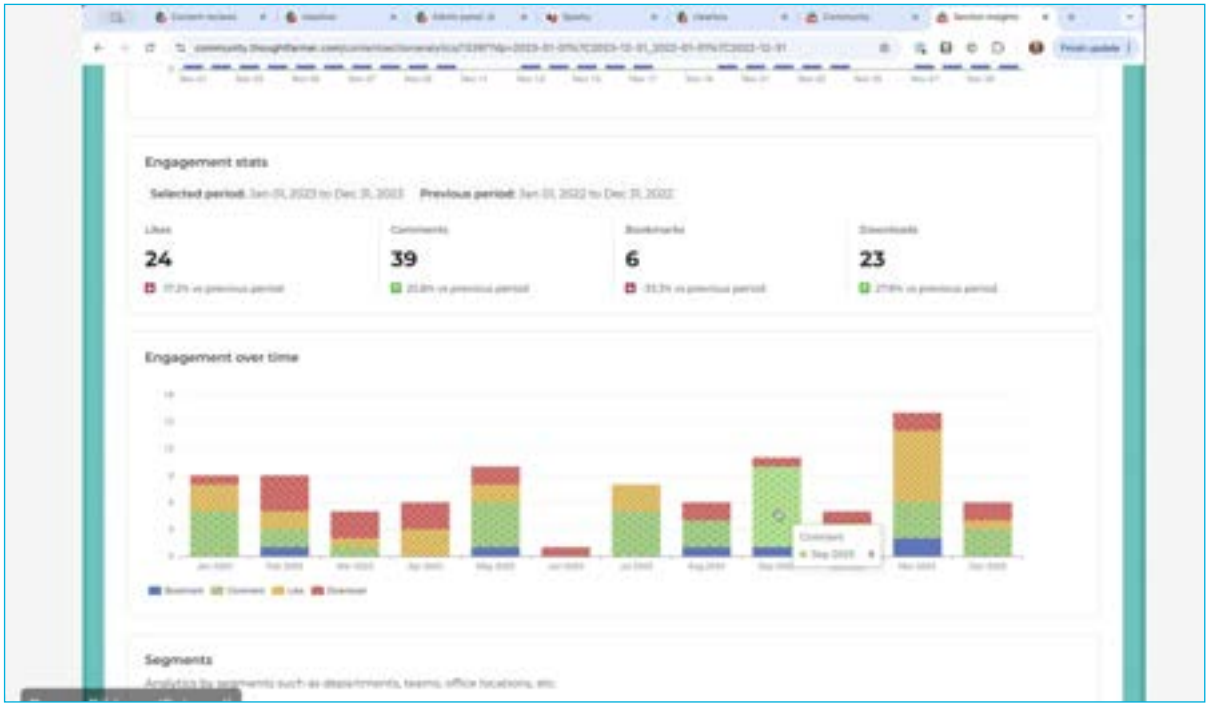
Reports can be run and exported as PDFs (Excel is on the roadmap). We like the daily summary of site-wide activity, including number of intranet content items added including number of pages, blog posts, people and groups. Top 10 lists are included in the daily leaderboard for top content owners, pages by views and popular search terms.

For insight on engagement with content, analytics managers can view and run reports on likes, comments, number of bookmarks and downloads. Date ranges and comparisons over time can be applied for content type reports. The segments widget will be of interest to organisations who are looking to track engagement by employee groupings such as departments, teams and office locations to better understand which populations are interacting with the intranet.

From the front-end, content and Group owners can see 'section insights' for sub-section analytics and 'page insights' for specific pages. This is a thoughtful feature, making it easy for owners to quickly launch analytics for their specific content. High-level metrics for broadcast messages can be reviewed from the broadcast centre dashboard to glean the reach of urgent or important messages. Each broadcast message will have stats for banner views and click-throughs, email and Slack click-throughs, and mobile push tap-throughs. There is no way to follow up with people who have missed broadcasts, which is a missed opportunity considering further notifications can be sent for required reading.

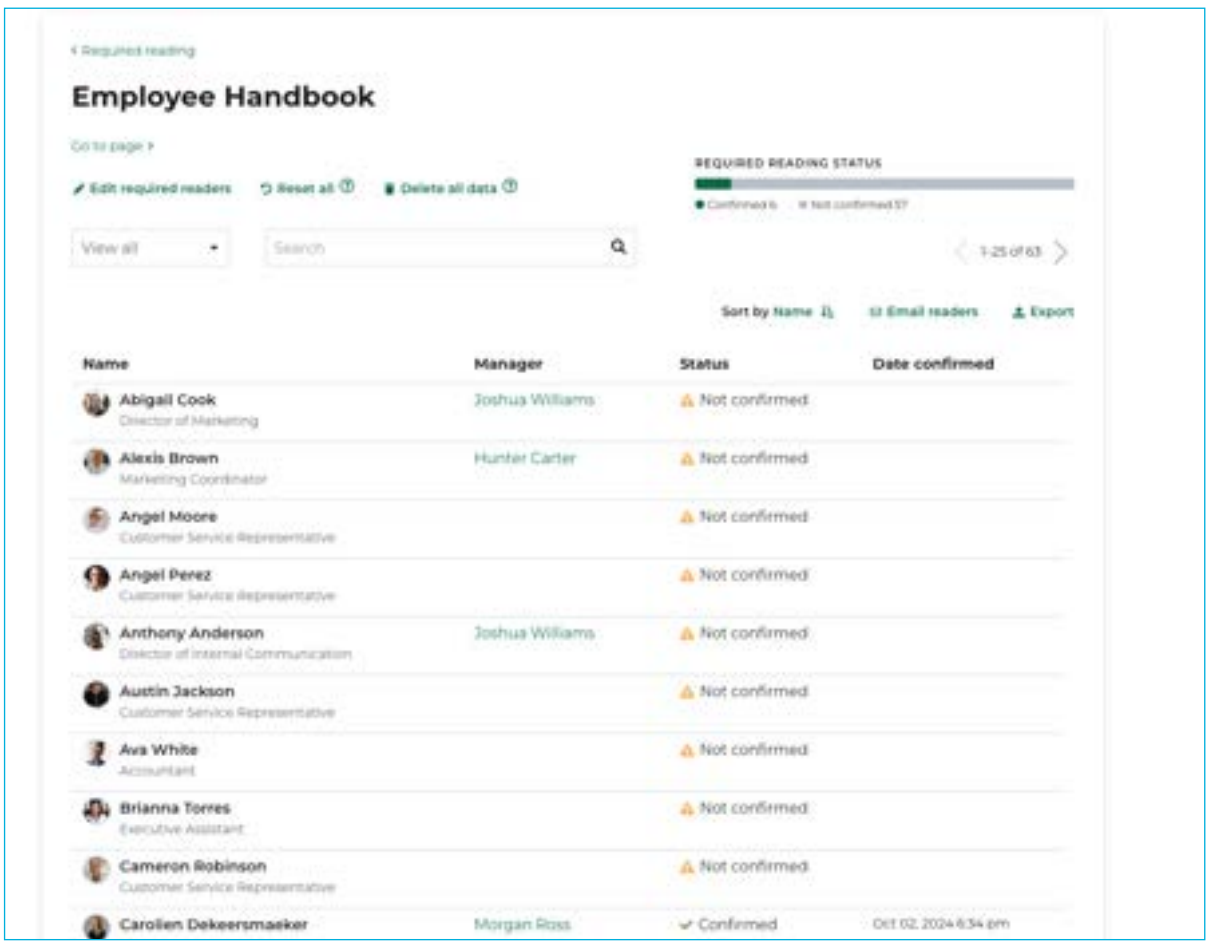


Analytics for different site content types, including forum topics, posts and site sections, can be pulled.



Site managers can view engagement rates over time for activity such as likes, comments, bookmarks and downloads.

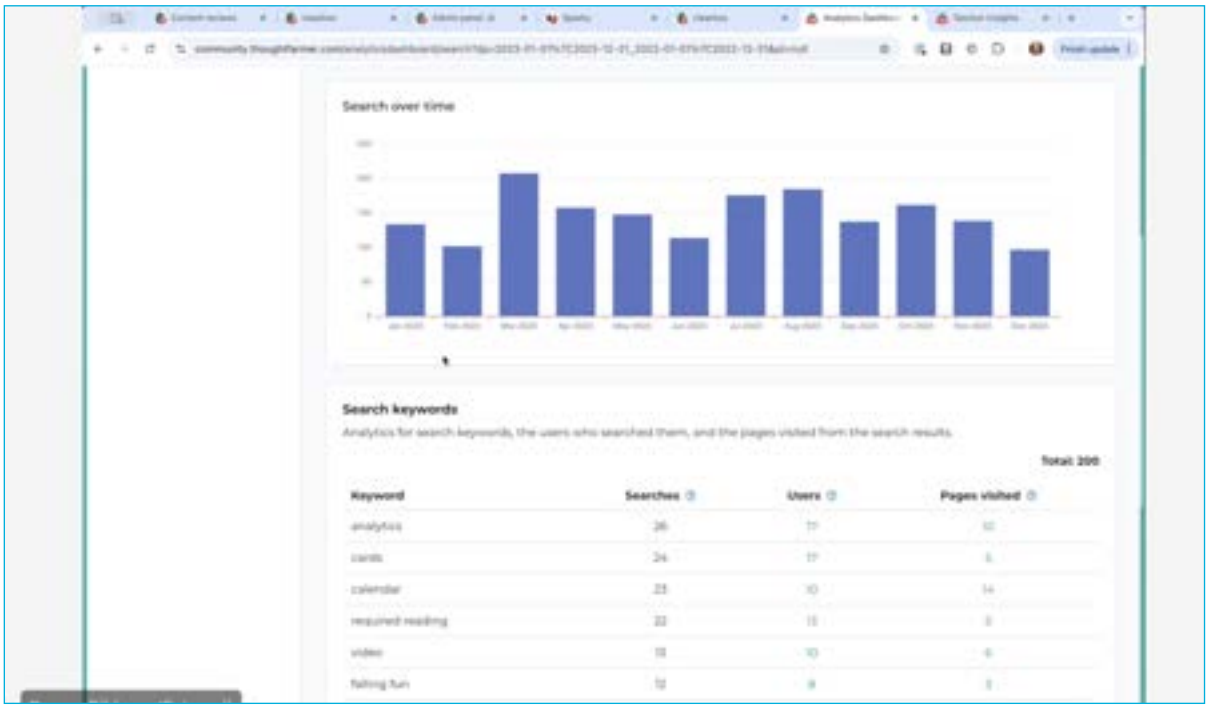
All users have a 'required reading' page, accessible from the top menu ribbon. From this page, employees can toggle between a list of mandatory-read content they have been assigned to and a list of any required reading that they own or can edit. Owners and editors of required reading can view a status report, including number of people who have confirmed versus not confirmed reading. Each employee who has been assigned required reading will appear listed on the page, with their status indicated if they confirmed and date when, or if they have not confirmed. From this page, an 'email readers' option is available to either email all assigned readers, or just those who have not yet confirmed. While this is useful, email may not be ideal for organisations who need to reach frontline workers. Mobile alerts and notifications are typically more effective communication methods, and we hope to see these added.



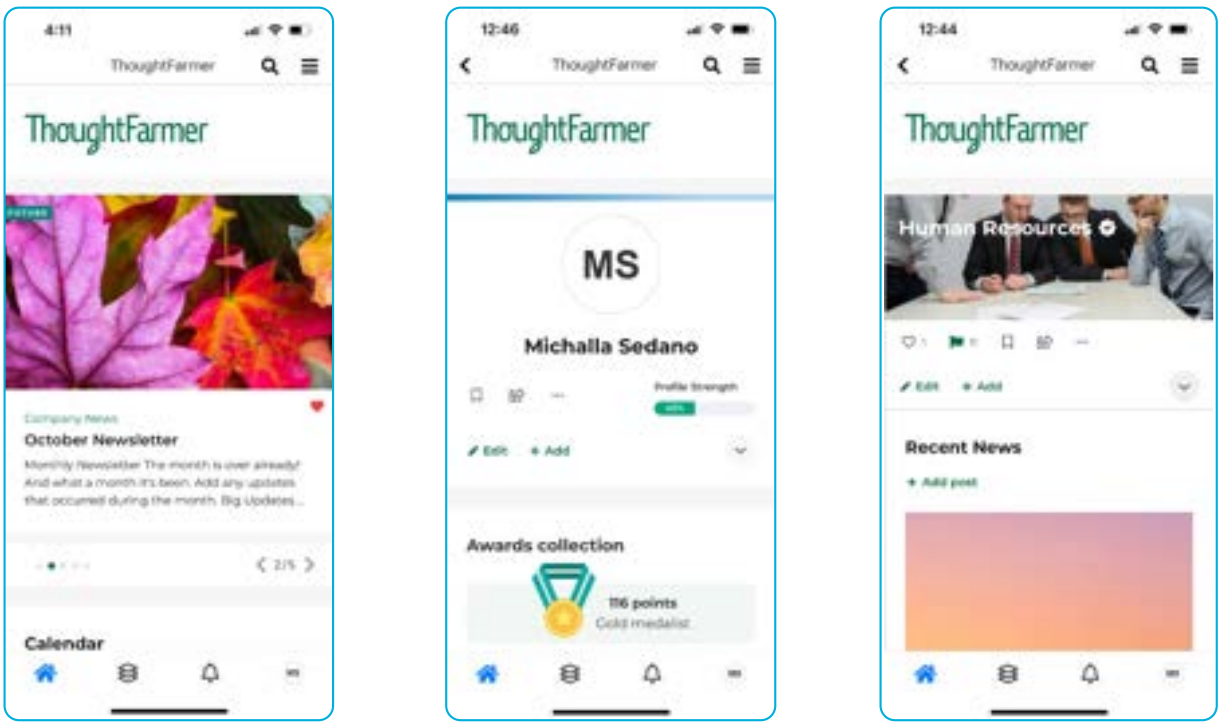
Owners of content marked as required reading can track on status, manage required readers and send notifications to readers.

A 'search over time' graph displays number of searches across a time comparison. Also included in the search analytics are total number of searches, search terms, number of searches, number of users who performed the search and the top pages viewed after searching the term. Another handy piece of information is page breadcrumbs for the visited pages. This helps provide insight into how deep pages are in the site architecture and inform decisions to help elevate pages and content containing key information. Reporting on search terms with zero results would be a good addition though, equipping admins to gain a more meaningful understanding of where improvements to the site search could be made.

Overall, ThoughtFarmer offers a serviceable analytics package that will work for most organisations interested in metrics such as site activity and user engagement with content. The ability to filter by site content type and date is a plus, but it would be nice to see more offerings for report exporting and prompting people to complete activities. More drill-downs and search analytics would give site managers further insight into behaviour too.



From the search analytics, intranet managers can gain key insight into top search keywords and pages visited from the search results.



The mobile app displays a pared down page layout design that does not feel cluttered yet offers features such as responsive carousels, embedded video and a persistent main menu.

ThoughtFarmer provides a mobile app experience that is as engaging as the desktop browser version, but comes with some considerations that might be hurdles against its adoption and use. User management options include Entra ID, Okta, Google Workspace, and Active Directory syncing, manual account creation in the admin panel or bulk import via Microsoft Excel. A native app is available for Android and iPhone devices, but tablets are not supported. Access options for frontline workers, such as QR codes or biometrics, are not available.

Admins can set a home page layout specific for mobile devices and, paired with the ability to set alternate home pages (see Scenario 1), different groups of employees and roles can be catered for. For instance, frontline technicians could have a different home page experience than those in a support office.

The mobile app is pared down in places and offers a pleasant mobile experience, with helpful features like rotating page carousels. The bottom navigation bar has icons for home, Groups, alerts and the user's profile page. At the top of the app is a burger menu that expands to open the top-level navigation. The navigation menu will follow the same page structure and hierarchy as the desktop browser and allow employees to click down into the levels. We found this a little confusing at times.

In the app the search bar appears in top right corner as a magnifying glass and provides an experience that performs very similarly to the desktop browser. An important difference is that PDFs, images and other attachments aren't viewable in the app, so employees will have to download files to make best use of them. This risks multiple versions of content across devices and isn't an ideal experience for frontline workers.

Features mentioned in other scenarios, such as Shout-outs and people profiles, work well in the smaller screen environment. There aren't any dedicated frontline features and see Scenario 4 for our thoughts on integrated solutions. Overall, the ThoughtFarmer app provides a very similar experience across device types and is pleasant to use.

THINGS TO BEAR IN MIND

Clients that desire an intranet with ample branding features, such as custom theming and colour palettes across different areas of the site, may find ThoughtFarmer a bit limiting, as currently only one colour theme can be applied to the entire site. The ability to set different logos and apply custom HTML and CSS may be enough for organisations, but those who wish to accommodate for complex branding needs with relatively low effort may be left wanting more.

Integrations, both in terms of depth and breadth, may be another sticking point for organisations with a large suite of business-critical tools that they'd like to integrate with their intranet. While ThoughtFarmer offers custom development services at an additional cost, organisations who heavily use ticketing systems, third-party knowledge bases and CRMs may find ThoughtFarmer's approach basic when compared to other intranet products that offer deep integrations out of the box.

We think ThoughtFarmer would best suit clients with dedicated intranet management teams. For example, while the page layout and template options are plentiful and easy to use, site architecture and page hierarchy isn't immediately apparent by either page creators or page visitors, particularly when navigating deeper levels of sub-pages and sub-sites. A dedicated resource to help dispersed group page and section owners think through the architecture and page design for their specific areas of the intranet may help provide for more consistency and organisation across the entire site. However, ThoughtFarmer's typical client size is 1,000 employees, suggesting an experience with smaller organisations that may not have these functions fully in place.

Why choose this product

ThoughtFarmer's main strengths lie in simple and intuitive page layouts, a powerful search capability that works equally well in the desktop browser and mobile app, and flexibility and ease of use for quickly building out new pages and areas within the platform. The social features and ability to create news driven pages, particularly the home page, enable the creation of a dynamic intranet. The easy-to-use news publishing features and discussion forums work well for engaging employees.

You may also be interested in...

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Vendor roadmap

No roadmap has been supplied by ThoughtFarmer.

Back to index

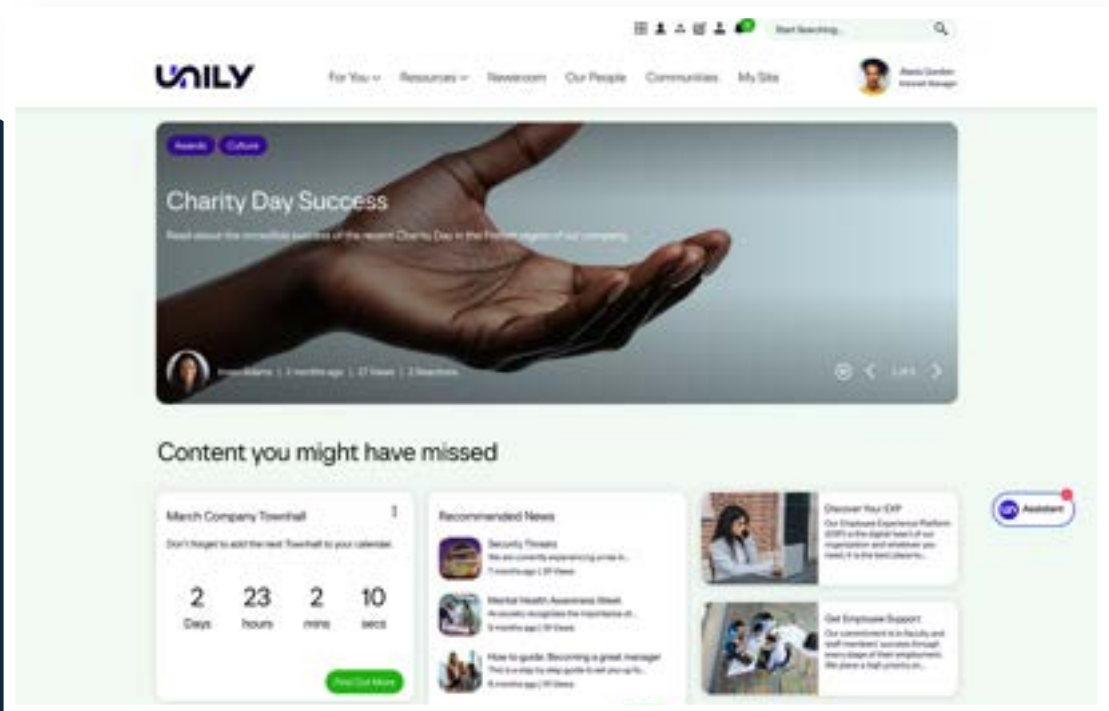
UNILY

FULLY STANDALONE

REQUIRES SHAREPOINT

FRONTLINE FOCUS

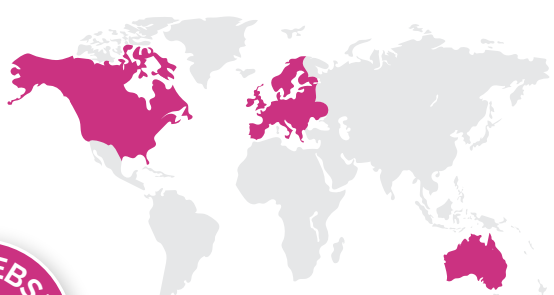
OTHER



Typical deployment:

20,000 to 50,000

Company locations:



VISIT THE WEBSITE

The product in a nutshell

Unily is a flexible and comprehensive solution that will particularly appeal to large or complex organisations yet would meet the needs of most sizes of business well.

SUMMARY

Unily

Unily has been a presence in the industry since 2006, with the current iteration of the product launched in 2014. The vendor's experience is evident in Unily, which is sophisticated, and the platform has evolved significantly over the years. For example, added at the end of 2024 is an AI-driven digital assistant that improves employee experience across the digital workplace (see Scenario 4). With plans to continue to iterate over the coming years, it looks like Unily's innovative approach is set to continue.

The end user experience is overall very strong, providing a flexible platform for administrators to build intranets that meet employee needs while effectively reflecting organisational branding. Internal communicators will find a lot to like among its functionality, and the community and engagement features are some of the best we've seen. Search and information finding is also excellent, providing fine-grained controls for administrators to hone the experience as well as a highly effective approach to knowledge-based communities.

Integrations are largely well thought through, but more could be done with Microsoft applications. The digital assistant mentioned above does improve the integrations experience, but it's also worth noting this comes at additional cost. In recent years the analytics have improved, but there is potential to add a greater range and depth of data as well as present the information in a more engaging manner. We think the presentation of the back end would benefit from an update, particularly when compared to the sleek front end, and Unily says this is on their roadmap.

Overall, Unily is an excellent platform that would easily meet the needs of most organisations. Enterprise scale organisations or businesses with complex needs will be particularly well served. It's worth noting that Unily is in the higher price brackets for all business sizes, but we think it still offers value for the right customer.

Pricing

PRICE BAND	
1,000 users	$$$$$
5,000 users	$$$$$
20,000 users	$$$$$
50,000 users	$$$$$

These prices are indicative, offering a comparison of the products featured in this report only. Please contact the vendor for a bespoke quote.

PRICING MODEL

Subscription - price band based on number of users.

DISCOUNTS

Charities and non-profit organisations, frontline users.

COSTS TYPICALLY

Fairly evenly spread across three years.

PRICE INCLUDES

Customer success services throughout the contract; professional services to help with the initial implementation; support services (level selected by the customer); access to the customer community.

Product type

Ready-to-run, installed in days

Branding opportunities

All branding, complex options

Base systems

Fully standalone

Requires SharePoint

Other

Sectors

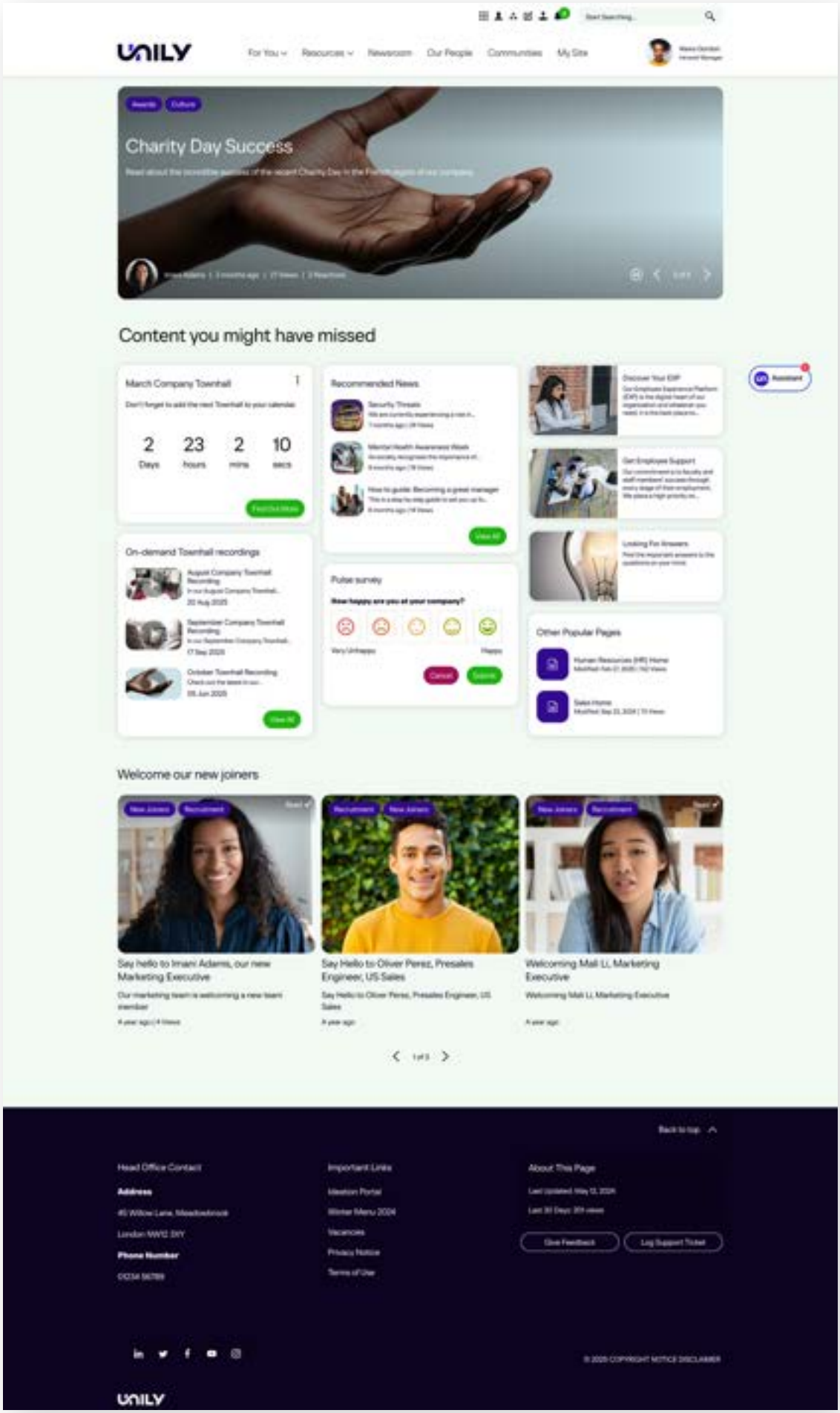
Accountancy, banking and finance

Energy and utilities

Media and internet

Retail

Transport & Logistics


UNILY
For You
Resources
Newsroom
Our People
Communities
My Site
Charity Day Success
Content you might have missed
March Company Townhall
2 Days
23 hours
2 mins
10 secs
Recommended News
On-demand Townhall recordings
Pulse survey
How happy are you at your company?
Other Popular Pages
Welcome our new joiners
Say hello to Imani Adams, our new Marketing Executive
Say Hello to Oliver Perez, Presales Engineer, US Sales
Welcoming Mali Li, Marketing Executive
Back to top
Head Office Contact
Address
Important Links
About This Page
Ideation Portal
Winter Menu 2024
Vacancies
Privacy Notice
Terms of Use
Give Feedback
Log Support Ticket
UNILY

COMPANY AND PRODUCT

Company details

Company
Unily

ISO 27001 certified
Yes

Data residency
Global - at the client's discretion

Company founded
2006

Product launched
2014

Typical client size
20,000 to 50,000

Largest deployment so far
440,000

Customers
Clients include: Shell, Mars, American Airlines, EY, Caterpillar, CVS Health, Estée Lauder, British Airways, American Express, Johnson & Johnson.

Partner locations
Wipro (a Unily customer and an implementation partner), headquartered in India.

Company locations
Surrey, UK (HQ), USA, Canada, Australia

Product and technical details

Name of product

Unily

Deployment

Client on-premises	Client private cloud	**Microsoft Azure**	Amazon Web Services	**Vendor-hosted**	Microsoft 365 tenant	Google Cloud	Other

Authentication supported

Entra ID	ADFS	**Okta**	**Open ID**	Oauth	**G Suite**	**Other***

*Unily also supports identity providers that align with SAML, Okta, Facebook, LinkedIn, OneLogin and Ping Federate.

App deployment

Google Play store	**Apple store**	**MDM**	**MAM**	**Other***

*Via private store (client)

Accessibility

WCAG 2.1 conformant

Document library sources integrated

Box	**Dropbox**	**Google Drive**	**SharePoint**	**OneDrive**	Other

Optional integrated enterprise search engines

Coveo	**Elastic**	IBM	Lucidworks	**Microsoft**	Mindbreeze	**Sinequa**	Other

User interface multi-language

Machine translation	**Pre-configured**	**Editable**	Right to left script supported	Other

Content multi-language

Machine translation for publishers	**Machine translation for end users**	**Editable machine translation for publishers**	**Manual creation for publishers**	Right to left script	Other

Set-up and support

Set-up process for new clients

Unily has a five-step approach:

1. Initiate - Focused on technical readiness, completed in 9-12 weeks.
2. Define - Focused on basic training; personas; site, content and platform governance; taxonomy; discoverability; launch plans.
3. Design - A client starts to overlay their strategic principles to create the platform.
4. Configure - Unily facilitates working sessions for clients and their site owners whilst configuring their platform, providing just-in-time support.
5. Launch – All users gain access to the platform. The aim is to start thinking about continuous improvement.

Version numbers

Demonstrated to ClearBox: 18

At January 2025: 18

Product updates

Monthly release cadence with opt-in for new features.

Product update process

Feature Store features can be installed on-demand by customers themselves. Unily's monthly release cadence can be configured to be automated or scheduled depending on customer requirements.

Reverse-out options

Clients can request an end-of-contract export as part of their site decommission deployment. The Service Engineering Team will review it and then it will be actioned prior to the scheduling of the decommission. The exported data will be shared with the client via a secure, time-limited OneDrive link. The client must provide confirmation of receipt of data, which will be attached to the deployment request.

Technical support

Email support	Phone support	Chat support	Online portal	24/7 support	Office hours only

User community

Unily offers a thriving customer community called Universe, which also serves as its official accreditation program. Customers receive invitations to release launch webinars, regular webinars by topic and receive on-demand content. Unily also produce the Unily podcast. By hosting an annual Unite conference, a global workshop series and customer-exclusive dinners, Unily say they create a thriving and constantly evolving environment for sharing and learning.

Voice of the vendor

Unily says: "Unily maximises 'Organisational Velocity' for the world's most demanding organisations, enabling them to operate at new speed and achieve execution excellence across a modern distributed workforce.

In an era of uncertainty and volatility, most large companies struggle to shape-shift their global workforce to meet what's next. Functional silos impact the speed of decision-making, causing organisational lethargy and languishing employee engagement. We call this the Velocity Drain that holds companies back, with lasting negative business consequences. Unily eliminates the Velocity Drain with its True Enterprise EX Platform so enterprises can execute sharper pivots, increase decision-making speed, and reduce operational friction to stay one step ahead. The Unily platform was born to handle complexity with unmatched enterprise strength and scale.

With Unily, you can now supercharge connection and culture, enjoying performance gains through deeper alignment, engagement, and empowerment of hyper-distributed employees and teams. Highly extensible, interoperable, and infused with governed AI, Unily's platform elevates the performance of all your people while simplifying your IT landscape so that you can do more with less.

More than an intranet, Unily is the digital fabric for the modern world of work and today drives Organisational Velocity for the most demanding companies across 140 countries, transforming work life for 6+ million users worldwide."

Voice of the customer

Unusually for an intranet product, a couple of customers described Unily as "cool" in reference to the UI and design features that "make the intranet look cutting edge". The CMS was praised by several customers as being "easy to use" and one customer said, "As our intranet manager, I am not a developer, but I was able to build the site, train a team of 100 others in the company how to manage their own pages and continue to manage content and updates to the platform." The range of communications features, search and range of "plug-and-play" integrations were also praised. The continued development of the platform by Unily was also flagged by a few customers, with one saying, "the team is consistently searching for ways to ensure value can be achieved through the product."

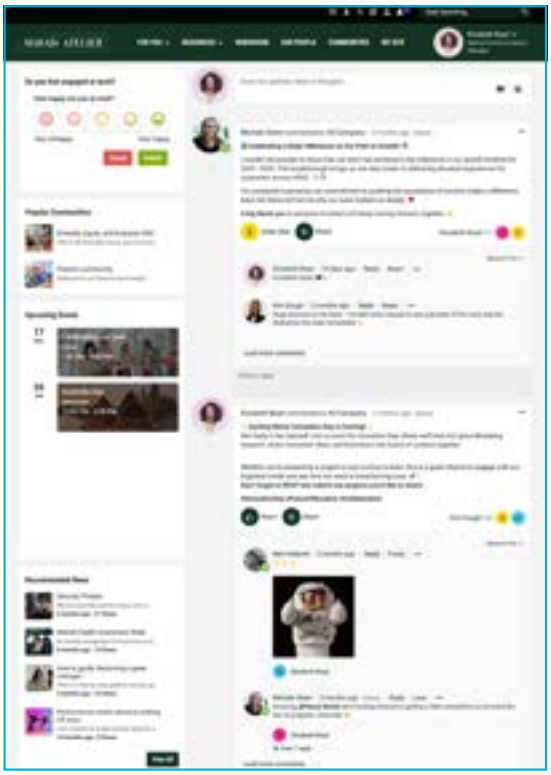
Suggested areas for development were largely mixed but there were a few themes. "Better (more seamless) alignment with SharePoint and Microsoft tools" was raised a few times. Customers also requested improvements to the Broadcast Centre, "in terms of ease of use to build newsletters and analytics available." Translations were also flagged as an area that would benefit from improvement across the platform, where one customer said, "the process to add and update translations is very manual."

Feedback about working with the vendor was largely positive, where customers described them as "excellent" and "proactive". Customer Success Managers were frequently mentioned as providing good support with one customer describing their CSM as "solution-oriented, creative and helpful at all times" and another said their CSM had "far exceeded our expectations." Feedback about technical support was somewhat mixed, with some saying it's "fantastic" and "top-notch" while others said initial investigation of issues could be improved and "you can often get stuck in a never-ending loop with them." One longer-term Unily customer summarised their experience nicely: "We have definitely seen the vendor mature over the years – incorporating new processes, updating stale processes, leading technology innovation to provide a scalable, high-performing platform."

SCENARIOS & SCORES

Please see the Scenarios below for more detail on each of these.

SCENARIO AND SCORE	KEY BENEFITS	IMPROVEMENTS / CONSIDERATIONS
4.5 **1. User Experience & Visual Appeal**	Excellent overall employee experience.	Admins should be cautious to avoid overwhelm through careful planning.
4.5 **2. Publishing & Communications Management**	Flexible audience targeting options. Good approach to crisis and multi-channel communications.	Filterable calendar shows all scheduled content, not just news.
4.5 **3. Community & Engagement**	Very strong overall with the addition of Communities. Journeys is a standout feature.	Survey results could be more sophisticated.
3+ **4. Integrations & Services (Including M365)**	Good range of micro-transaction integrations to choose from.	Integrations require technical knowledge to set up. AI agents will be on top of Unily licenses.
4.5+ **5. Information Finding & Search**	Excellent end user experience. Knowledge spaces are well catered for.	Advanced search administration is comprehensive, requiring technical knowledge.
4 **6. Administrator Experience**	Comprehensive and flexible. Life cycle features work well.	Requires dedicated resources to manage the platform. Back end feels a little dated when compared to front end.
3.5 **7. Analytics**	Good range and depth of data.	Presentation of data could be improved. Would welcome more actionable insights.
3.5+ **8. Mobile & Frontline Support**	All features translate well to mobile. Useful tools for the frontline, including chat.	A comprehensive desktop experience gives admins a greater challenge to simplify for the mobile environment.



Unily offers flexible design options to create attractive intranets that offer a strong user experience.

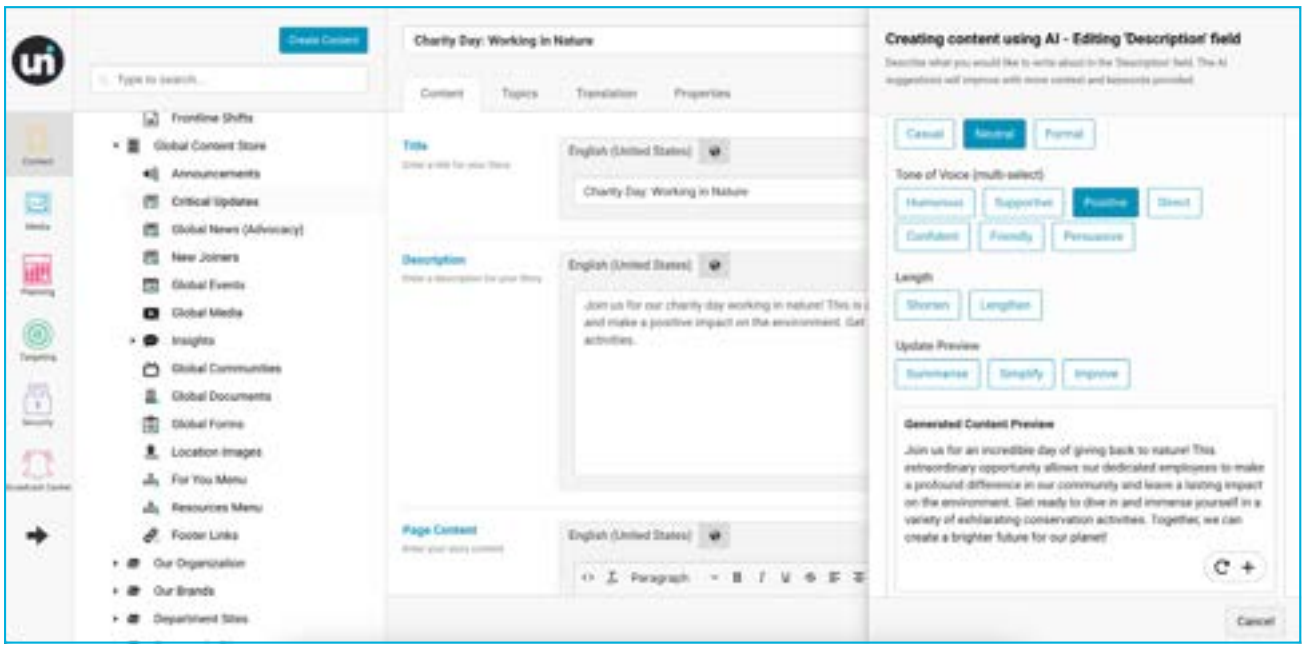
Unily is a comprehensive platform with a focus on enterprise-scale clients, which is clear through the sophisticated audience targeting and tailoring possible across all aspects of the site. This comprehensiveness could bring complexity for employees if admins aren't careful; we think a configurable welcome tour would be a helpful addition, to avoid initial overwhelm.

Navigation is handled in a few ways. First, the header ribbon provides access to system level features, like a 'mandatory content' drop down, and a waffle menu of links. The global navigation includes 'single link' items (like to a dashboard, an individual page or a link to a system), or 'Workspaces' of content gathered in dropdowns. Within Workspaces are local navigation panes of single or dropdown options. Finally, admins may configure the footer to be consistent across the intranet or different in chosen places.

The bell in the header ribbon contains notifications; employees can dismiss notifications but there's no 'save for later' type flag, which would be helpful given the potential for there to be a large number. We like the degree of control admins and end users have over what notifications are received and how – including on the desktop, via email and as mobile push. SMS notifications are on the roadmap. There is the potential for employees to receive a lot of notifications, so admins will want to spend time getting the initial configuration set up to remove that administrative burden from colleagues.

Unily impresses with the design options that are available, which are flexible and create attractive results. Unily will help with designing the intranet and there are tools for admins to make subsequent changes; we like that campaigns (see Scenario 2) can change the home page design for a defined period. Complex branding is possible, such as for multi-business organisations, and we appreciate the end user controls that would allow them to select 'dark mode' branding.

Overall, Unily provides an excellent employee experience with a high degree of flexibility for admins to influence this. Caution is advised, however, to deliver suitable experiences for employees rather than introducing all features that are covered in this review – as there are a lot.



The generative AI Assistant will help with creating or editing content, or associated settings such as an article summary.

Unily's publishing and communication management features are very strong, and Internal Communicators will find plenty to like here. Publishing is completed via Unily's back end where there's a simple option to create content without needing to think about where the article, page, event etc. will need to 'live'. This is helpful as the back end of Unily can be vast, although Unily offers different levels of training and accreditation to support even infrequent publishers.

There are configurable templates available, such as for dynamic pages to aggregate content or present complex information simply, or for frequent messages, such as monthly CEO updates. News articles are created via a form-based approach, with fields for a title, summary, page content and image. Page content is created using a rich text editor (RTE) that allows for video or other media embedding, which is simple but creates effective articles. A small number of templated content blocks can be added via the RTE too, such as to add a left-aligned image with text alongside. We can see is helpful but think other platforms approach this in a more intuitive way.

AI tools are available behind consistent 'stars' icons for help with specific parts of an article, while an 'AI assistant' chatbot provides assistance with the whole article. Publishers type a natural language prompt, select a level of formality of the final piece and a tone of voice. Behind the scenes, Unily sends the request to Microsoft Azure OpenAI with a prompt for internally facing intranet context already applied. If a publisher only needs help to simplify or summarise content, then the AI assistant can help with that too. Publishers preview and edit the text as wanted.

We like that the AI assistant will recommend an appropriate image for an article by searching the composition of images in the media library based on the article content. There are some exciting developments on the roadmap, such as the ability to apply intranet /

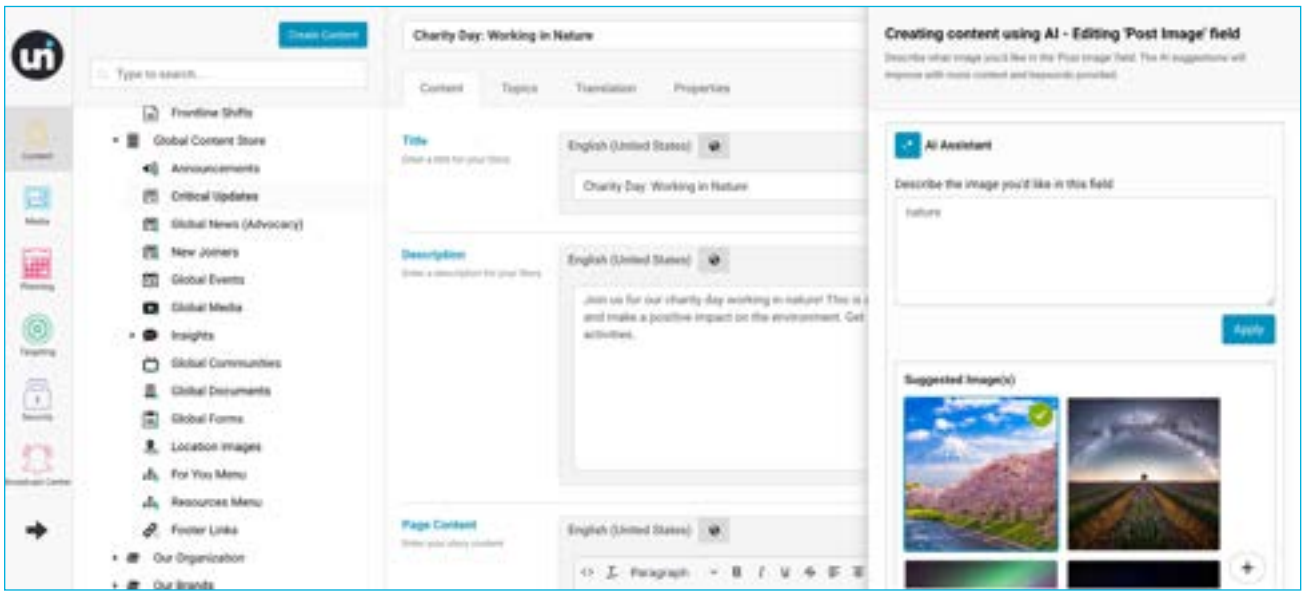
organisation content and context to generated content. We're looking forward to seeing how this develops to support writers and end-users alike.

Audience groups are inherited, such as from Entra ID, or are created in Unily's admin screens. Audiences can only be created by authorised users and cannot be built on-the-fly; Unily says this is so that managers can carefully control who may communicate with which audience(s). Audience groups are very fine-grained, using any profile field(s) to build a group. This includes static audiences, such as those in a particular department, and dynamic groups based on rules, which is useful for Journeys (see Scenario 3). Alternatively, employees may subscribe to topics to see additional news they have permissions to see.

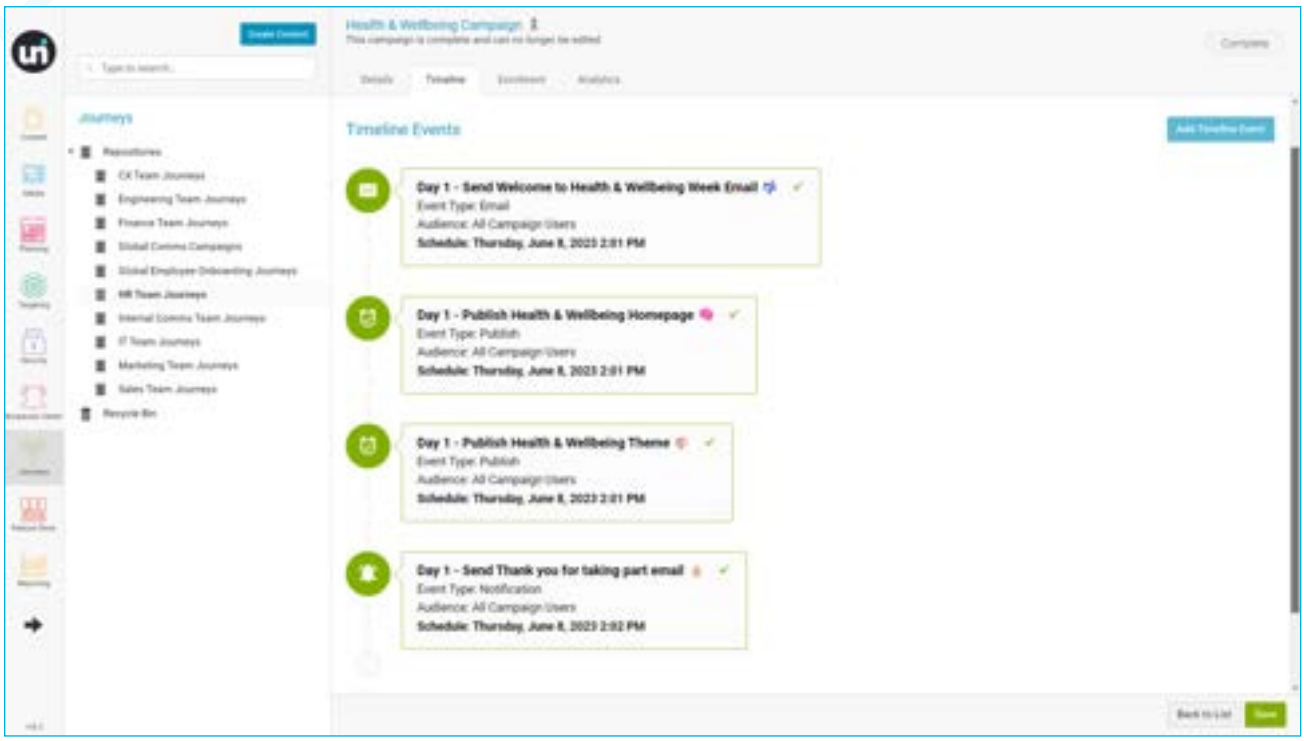
Scheduling is handled via publication date and time, with approval workflows available if required. To help with managing the flow of news, Unily includes a content calendar that shows all scheduled content (not just news) with filters to refine what's displayed. We think a facility to create news from here would be helpful, as would the ability to add non-intranet events like an all-company conference plus a way to gauge audience(s) fatigue.

To aid scheduling and offer a more dynamic approach to releasing communications, Unily offers a 'Campaigns' feature. Campaigns are intended for the promotion of a particular topic such as a product launch. Campaigns are built using a defined goal / title, with a timeline of events that includes articles, emails or posting to social channels. Conditional triggers are possible, such as to send a reminder if someone hasn't read an article. There is a good set of analytics to accompany each campaign, which includes where employees have used defined hashtags for their own content, which we particularly like.

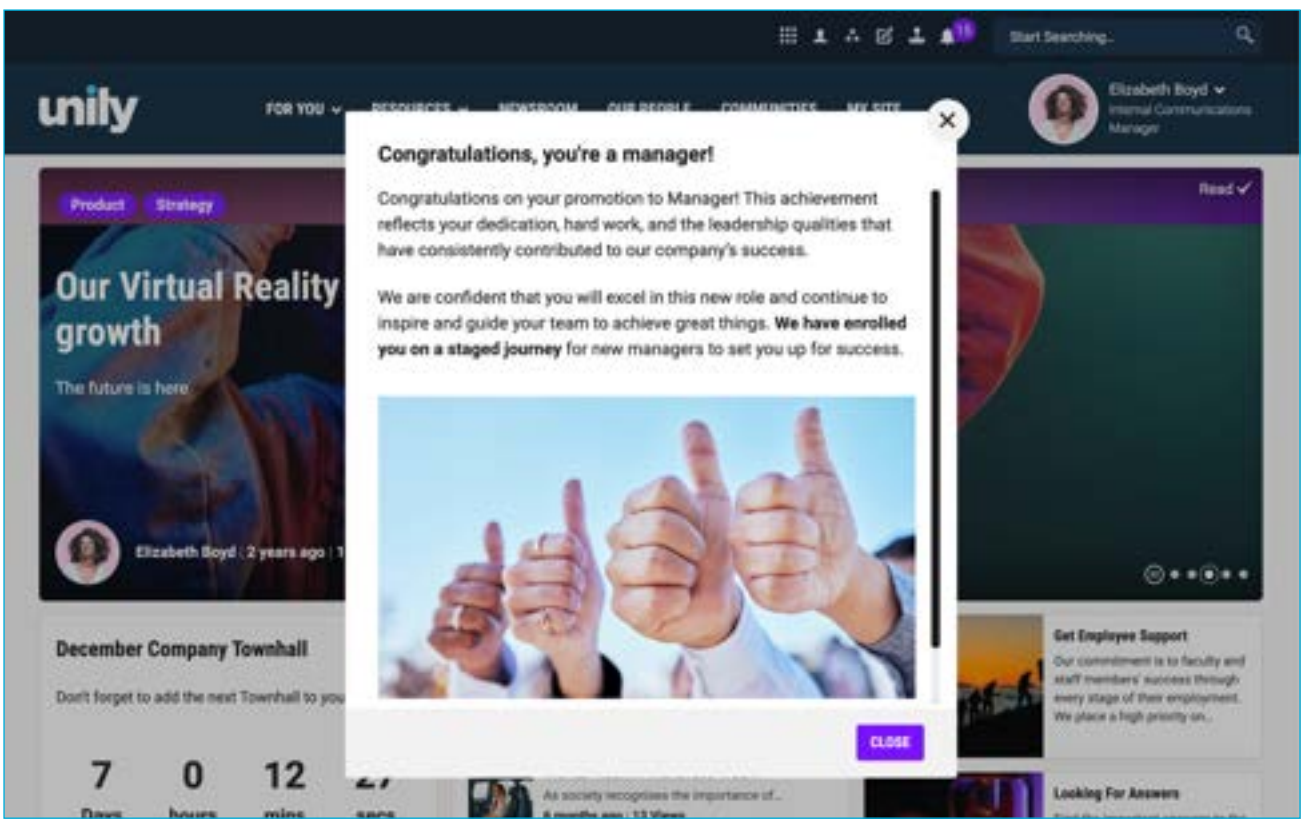
Unily offers a variety of methods for urgent or crisis communications, with the range of notifications mentioned in Scenario 1 a good start. 'Popups' will take over the screen, while an 'announcements' banner is subtler but persists at the top of the home page. We like the 'crisis management dashboard' template that will help organisations collate information from integrated sources.



The AI assistant will recommend images to the publisher based on the content of a page.



Campaigns help promote a topic with an internal audience.

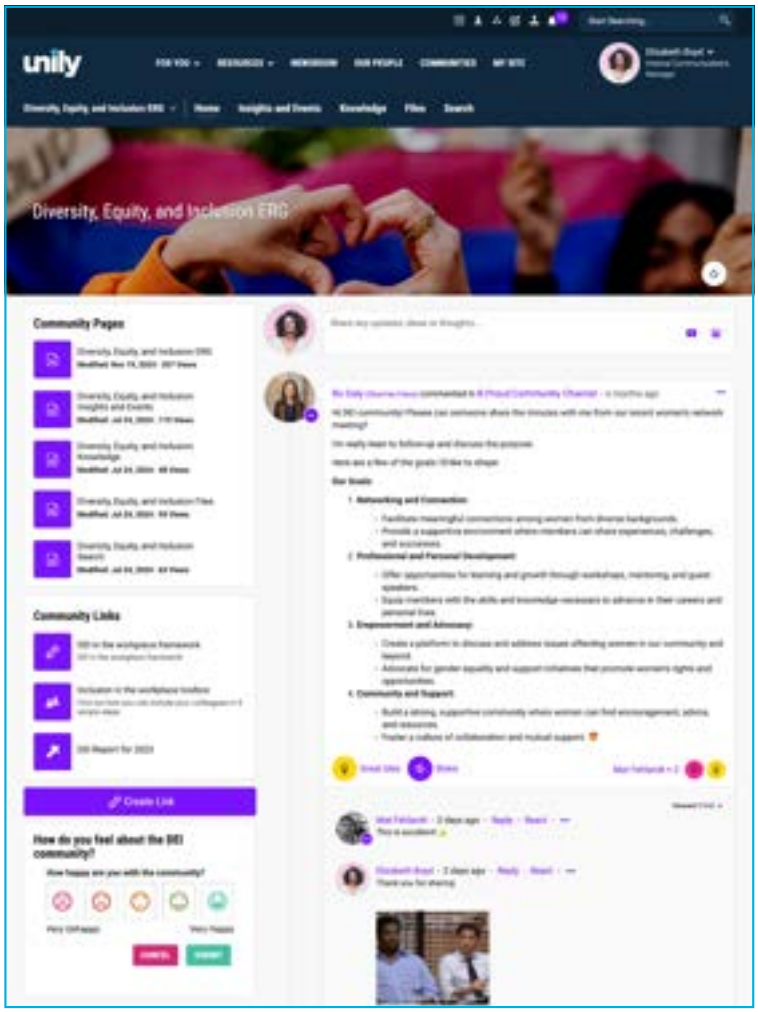


Popups will take over the screen, helping to get urgent messages out to employees.

There is a good range of options available for communicators to reach beyond the intranet. Integrations with MS Teams, Viva Engage and Slack allow links to articles to be posted into either a pre-specified channel or into a Unily chatbot. Similarly, employees can share defined articles via their personal social media, including LinkedIn and Facebook. There is a native digital signage solution as well as a partnership with ScreenCloud.

Finally, there is an excellent newsletter builder. This can provide simple digest newsletters that are sent at a defined cadence and include personalised content for each recipient. Alternatively, publishers can build attractive newsletters using a variety of layouts and include personalised fields. Articles, events, page widgets and other content can be dropped into the newsletter builder and additional text added manually. We like the newsletter tool and believe the creation process is in some ways better than the main news article form builder.

Unily's newsletter builder is flexible and helps communicators reach beyond the intranet.

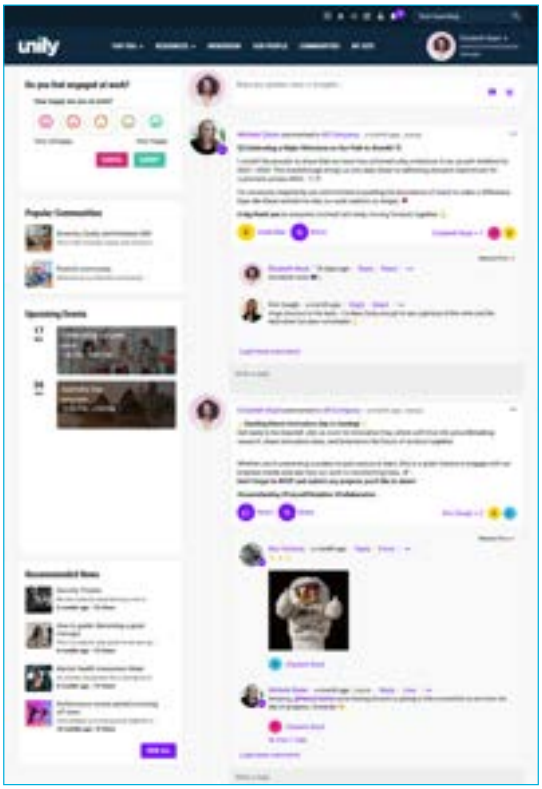


A Unily Community gathers together familiar social and informal collaboration features.

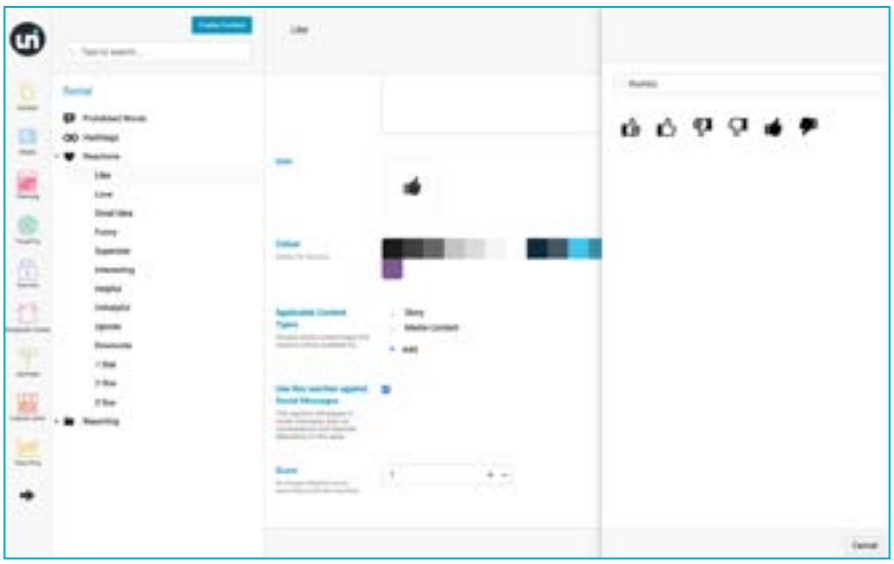
Unily has a variety of approaches to community and engagement that will serve most organisations' needs. Added in late 2024 were 'Communities': digital spaces that draw together familiar social and collaboration features, for example to create employee interest groups. Membership of communities can be forced, or by invitation only depending on the nature of the group. Admins configure Community spaces as desired from a simple frontend interface, adding familiar features including dedicated pages and files, blogs, links, local search and a timeline for member posts. Communities are an excellent addition and work very well as a complement to Knowledge Bases (see Scenario 5).

Timelines, or Channels, can also be embedded as a widget on other pages – including a 'master' timeline on the home page that presents an individual with all Channel content relevant to them. Posts may include titles, images and GIFs, and can be pinned or shared into other timelines as appropriate. Alternatively, people may express their thoughts within threaded page comments, which have the same functionality as Channel posts. Both inappropriate comments and Channel posts can be reported; this action will snapshot the post when it's reported, in case of edits before an admin has time to review. This works very well alongside configurable 'banned words' and should reassure organisations anxious about deploying internal social features.

Employees can react to content, which goes beyond simple 'likes'. Admins have complete control over reactions, beginning with the selection or upload of appropriate icons and labels. It's also possible to restrict where certain reactions are used on the intranet, for example a 'love' reaction type only in blogs. Reactions are defined with sentiment scores, which is captured and reported on in the analytics. This is one of the best examples of reactions we've seen in this report and while it may seem minor, it is something people expect to see in social tools.



Timeline Channels is where employees may post updates, and these can be embedded across the site including on the home page.

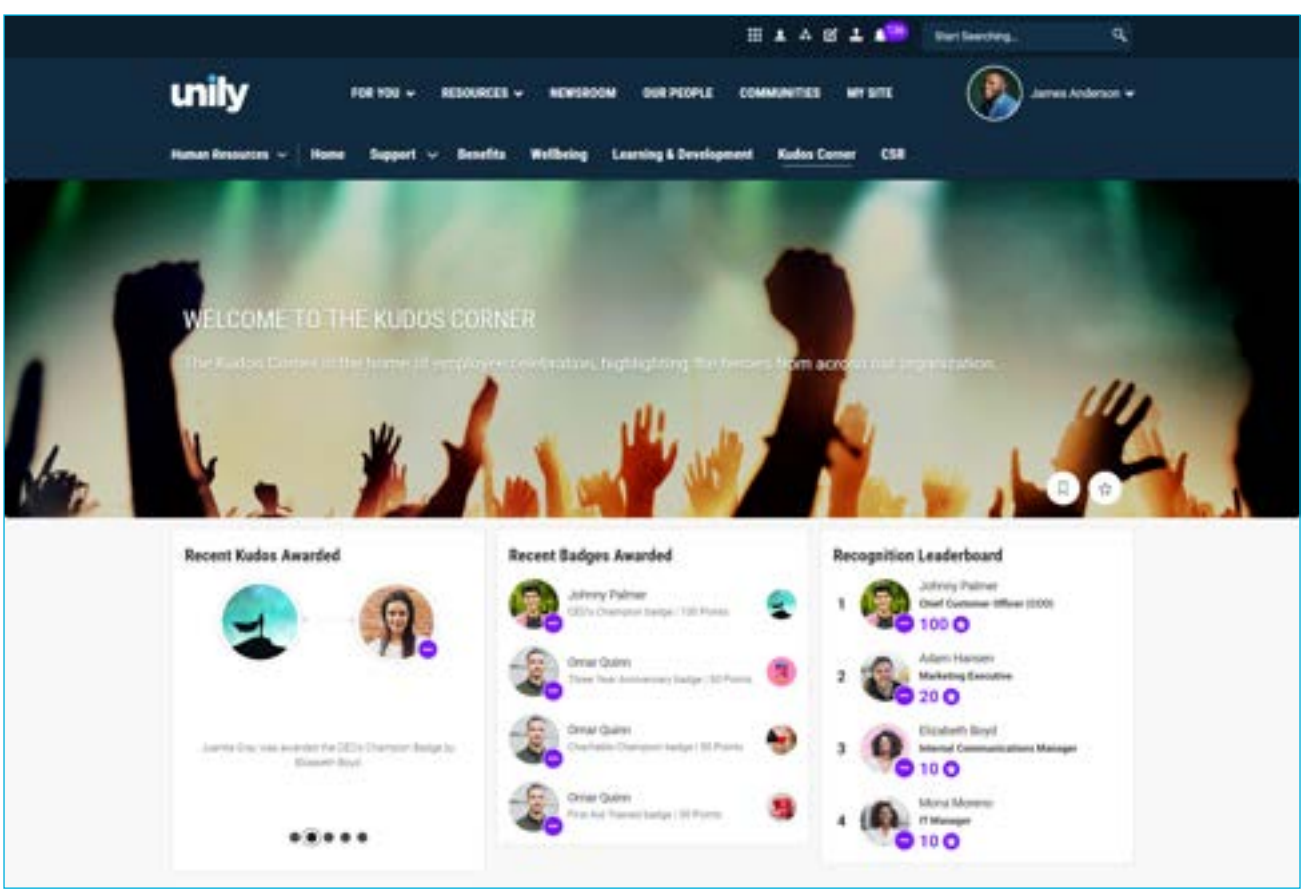


Reactions are very flexible and allow people to express themselves without having to write anything.

There is a simple but effective ideation tool, with an attractive landing page that can be filtered by author, category or status to reduce the thread of suggestions. The thread could potentially be quite long, so we think more could be done to show the status of an idea more clearly. To enter an idea, employees submit a form for others to comment and up / down vote. The top ideas are highlighted on the landing page and related ideas are displayed on the idea page. This is less sophisticated than dedicated ideation tools but is more comprehensive than many other intranet solutions.

To gauge opinion, there are simple polls in timelines and page widgets that will show cumulative results. Alternatively, a forms tool is available for simple surveys. These are built using drag and drop, where conditional branching of answers is possible, and workflows are available to pass results to relevant people. Results are available for interrogation but don't offer the same insights we've seen in other tools. The forms functionality is carried across into 'quizzes' that are typically short and embedded in a page to test someone's understanding.

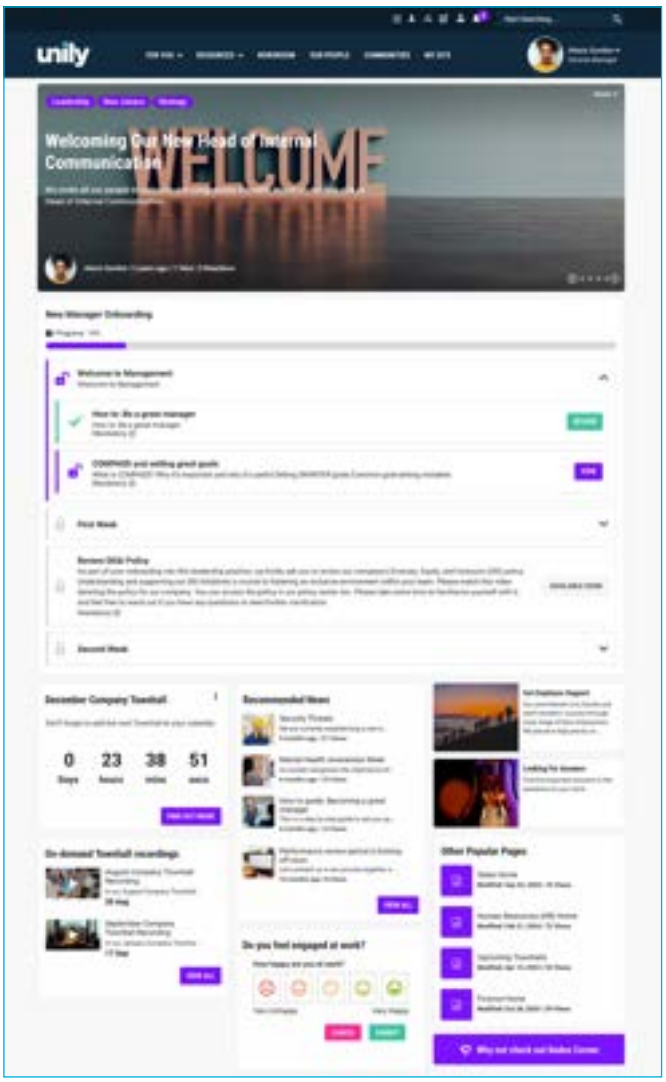
Unily's strong engagement features include 'Townhalls' in events that will help organisers gather questions in advance and includes native uploading of recorded video, with a helpful AI speech-to-text translation feature. The 'Kudos Corner' is where people acknowledge the hard work of individuals or groups of colleagues. Each Kudos awarded includes points values for gamification. We like that those people someone is in touch with more often are prioritised and that Kudos topics can be configured to be related to company values. 'Badges' are awarded by admins for site or organisational labels and, helpfully, can be applied in bulk. This could be for 'mentor' or 'first aider' for example and is a helpful feature, particularly as it's indexed during search.



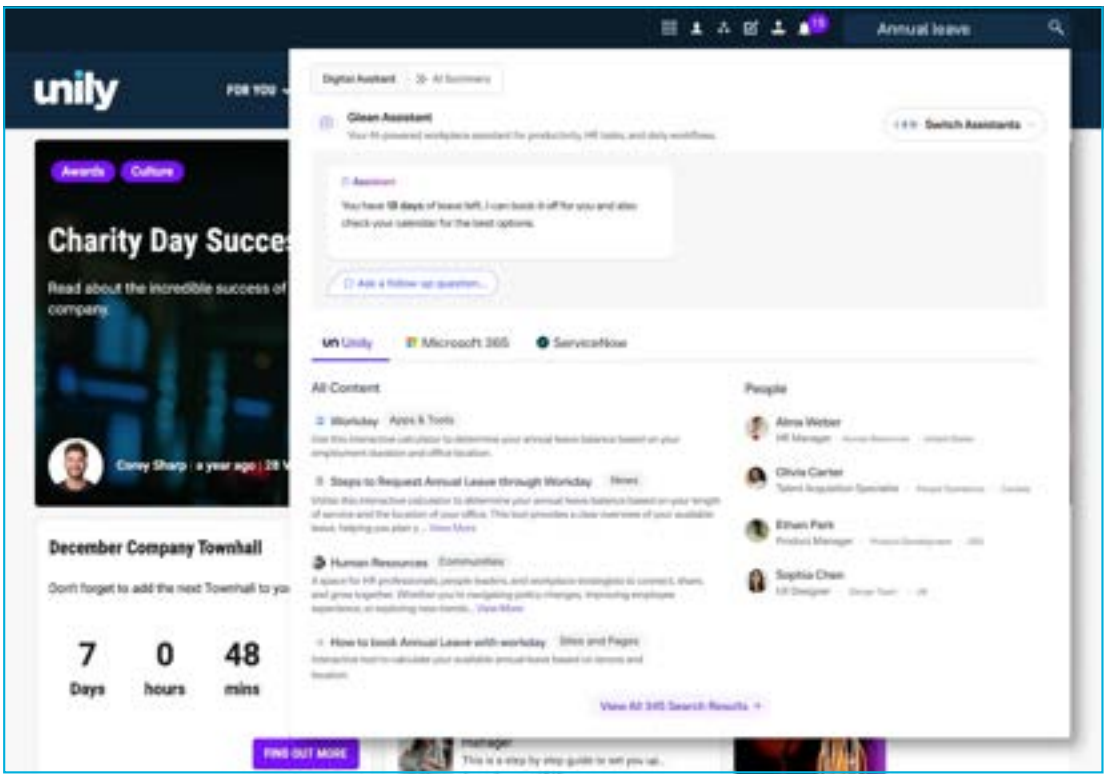
Kudos is awarded between colleagues and includes a friendly gamification element to encourage sharing.

'Journeys' draws on the functionality found within Campaigns (discussed in Scenario 2) to support people at vital stages of their employment. A common example is onboarding a new employee, but Journeys has the potential for broader employee life cycle applications. Enrolment on a Journey is subject to rules associated with a trigger date. Trigger dates are added to (but hidden on) an employee's profile and could come from another system, such as 'parental leave start date' from an HRIS. Messages are triggered in relation to that date and can be time-boxed to stop people rushing though, for example to stop someone trying to watch ten introductory videos in one sitting. Messages take the form of configurable popups, emails and notifications, timed as appropriate by admins.

Admins choose whether Journey events require a 'condition' to be met, for example the individual has read the parental leave policy before receiving a follow-up about 'staying in touch' days. Those events have associated reminder notifications, where the recurrence, message and channels (including email, push notifications and Teams) are all configurable. An associated widget displays progress along a timeline for the employee's reference. Helpfully, people can be re-enrolled on Journeys as appropriate, such as for an annual performance review. Journeys is a stand-out feature that is likely to appeal to a lot of organisations.



A helpful widget shows someone how far they've progressed through a Journey. Helpfully this can be restricted to stop people ploughing ahead too soon.



A Unily digital assistant is available, via a floating button or via search, which can be powered by Workgrid or another AI tool an organisation has already invested in.

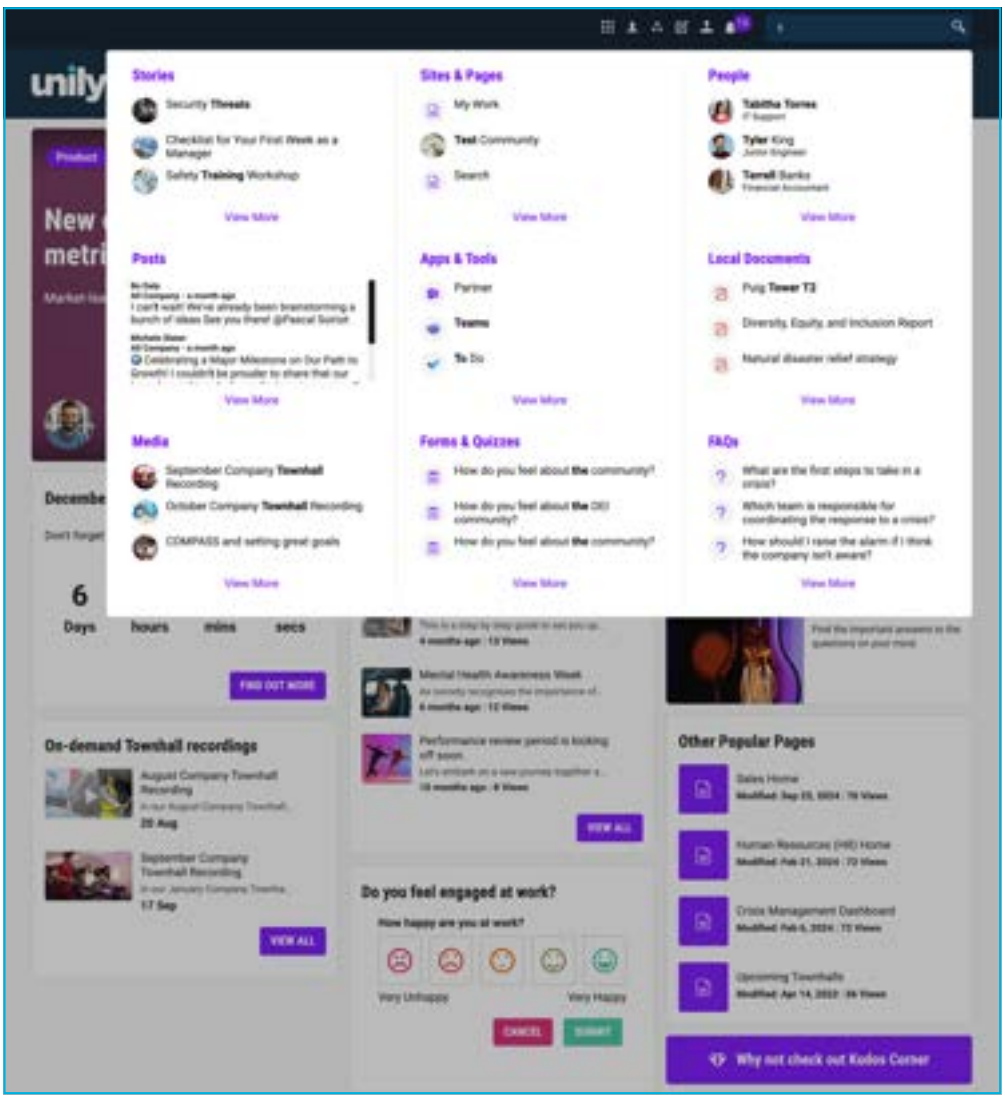
In early 2025 Unily introduced an AI agent into the search experience that integrates with any AI tool a business already has, such as Copilot. This gives employees an easy way to complete tasks; for example, typing 'annual leave' will begin a flow that displays remaining days, and asks for dates plus a reason for the leave request. Helpfully, where there are multiple AIs in an organisation, employees have the choice of switching between agents. The overall user experience is smooth but it does rely on an existing AI being available, with associated workflows managed within those rather inside Unily.

For other approaches, there is a feature store in the back end with a series of cards displaying a large number of available integration options. Unily says they have focused on micro-transactions, which is evident from the choices, such as content roll-ups, from external systems (including SharePoint), chatbot widgets and 'share' buttons into specific systems. However, deeper integrations are also available out of the box, such as viewing and actioning Concur expenses or ServiceNow tickets.

The nature of the roll-up widgets means that content of sites and recently opened documents can be displayed within Unily from both Microsoft and Google environments. The employee's available MS Teams spaces and content from specific Teams channels can also be displayed and interacted with. We also like that when employees choose to share content into Teams or Slack, they decide where it's shared. Unily says that accessing the intranet via a Teams app is on the roadmap, which will be a helpful addition.

Other helpful integrations include Gmail and Outlook calendars and email roll-ups – all of which can be interacted with inside the widget. Unily says that Viva Engage channels could be used instead of the native commenting function, although this may take effort or additional cost to configure.

Overall, Unily offers a good range of helpful integrations out of the box and also provides an API for custom development, plus the optional AI approach. Configuring the existing integrations or creating new ones will take effort and requires technical knowledge, although there are guides to help in their customer community portal and Unily says they can assist.



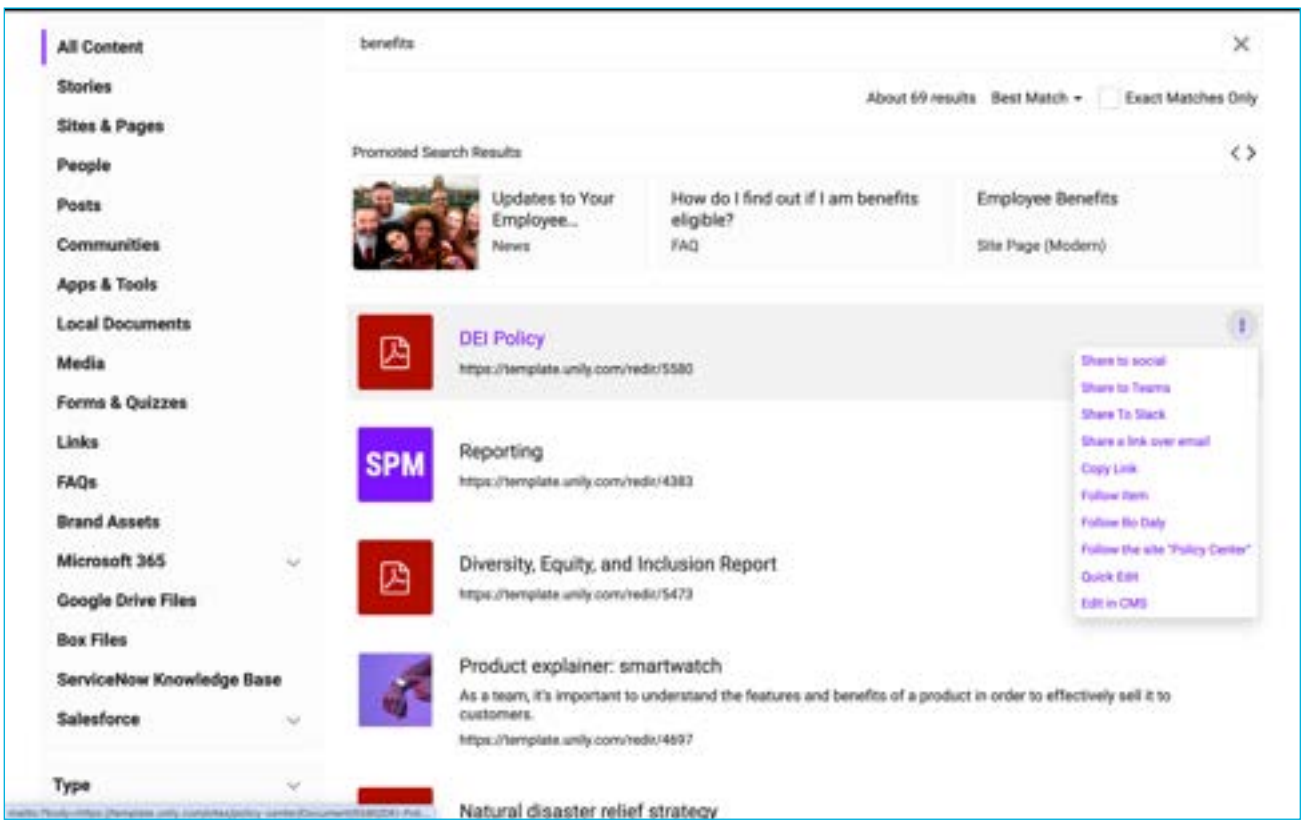
The Global Search presents comprehensive results as someone types.

Unily provides a very comprehensive search experience with a good degree of control for admins. As someone types into the persistent 'Global Search' at the top of the screen, a dropdown opens to present potential results or optional activities with the 'Digital Assistant' aspect of the AI. This is an attractive pane that's helpfully split into content types for ease of browsing, where partial and fuzzy matches are supported to try and pinpoint a result immediately. What's included in the dropdown is configurable by admins, including audience targeting of columns to give employees relevant quick results. People can click results from this dropdown or press enter to be taken into the 'Search Centre'.

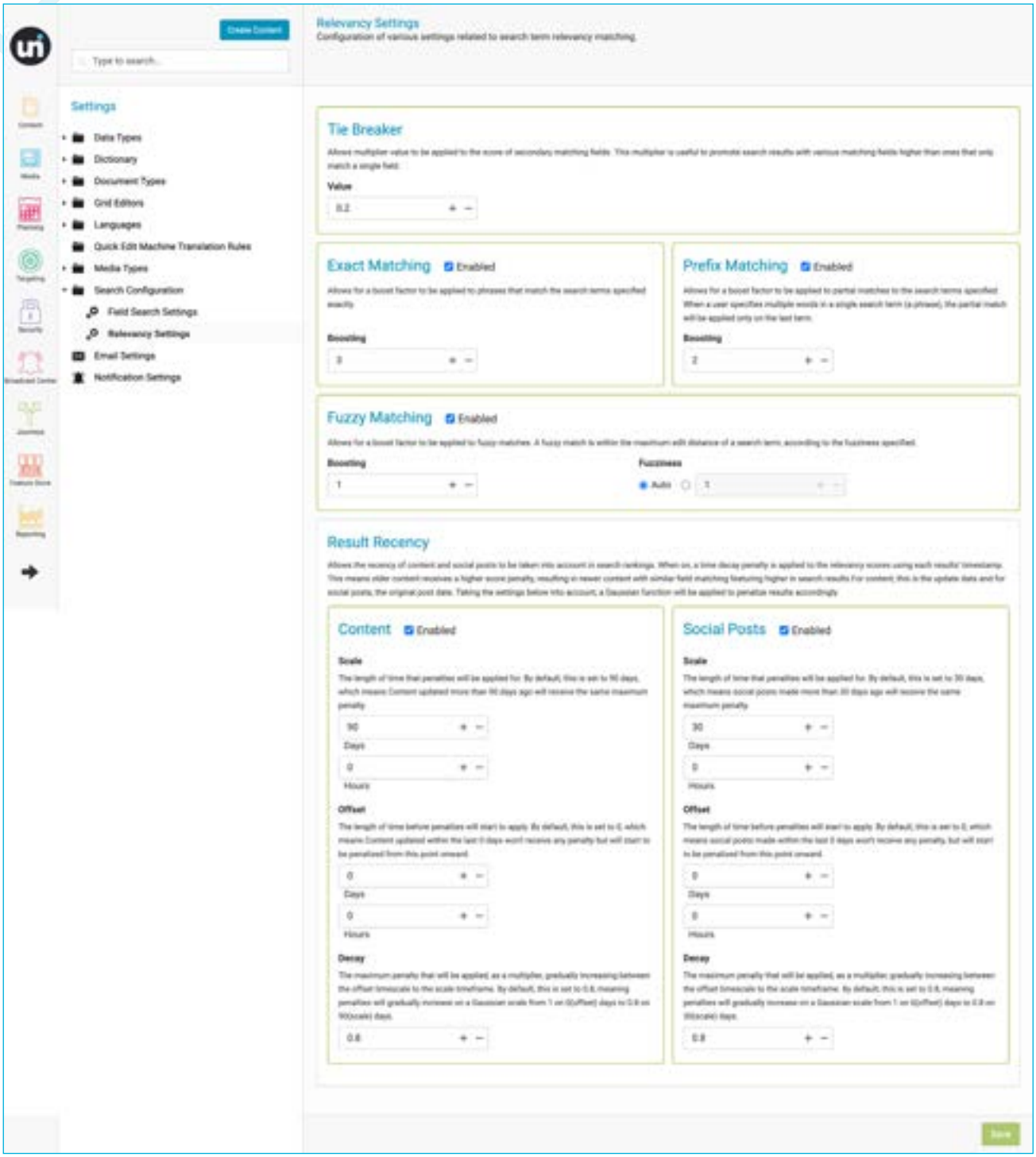
The Search Centre presents a greater number of results as a list or in tiles, depending on the employee's choice. Results are presented with helpful summaries, plus images or defined icons, depending on the content type. The different content types with associated filters are presented, and these are dynamic, responding to the available results to dictate what options are displayed. We like that quick actions can be taken from within the results, for example to share something into Teams, or complete a quick edit on a page. On the roadmap is generative

AI summaries, although the Digital Assistant experience (see Scenario 4) is available already. Search Centres can also be set up in defined intranet areas to provide scoped searching on specific content.

Unily includes very fine-grained controls for admins to influence how search behaves. Promoted results are supported in both the Global Search and Search Centre, results are audience targeted from the content and in the search configuration options, plus there is good metadata throughout, such as topics. Advanced settings then allow technical admins to configure all aspects of the search, such as reducing the likelihood of older posts from appearing in results or boosting the degree of fuzzy match that's acceptable. This is sophisticated and Unily advise that they configure search during set up, but it does mean that organisations with complex search needs will be well served. We would like to see a simple feedback mechanism introduced for results accuracy, to help admins configure the search appropriately, although Unily says this could be built using forms. More detailed search reporting (see Scenario 7) would also be welcome.



The Search Centre presents comprehensive results with associated filters, and we like that quick actions can be taken directly from the results.



There are fine-grained controls for admins to influence what's displayed in search results, such as whether content is in need of review or not.

Data from a variety of integrated sources is indexed and displayed in search results, including from SharePoint and Google Workspace. Permissions from the source system are respected. The digital assistant mentioned in Scenario 4 will interrogate content in Unily and other data sources, providing answers to natural language questions as well as information sources. We look forward to seeing this evolve, as it helps reduce potential search overwhelm from across the whole digital workplace.

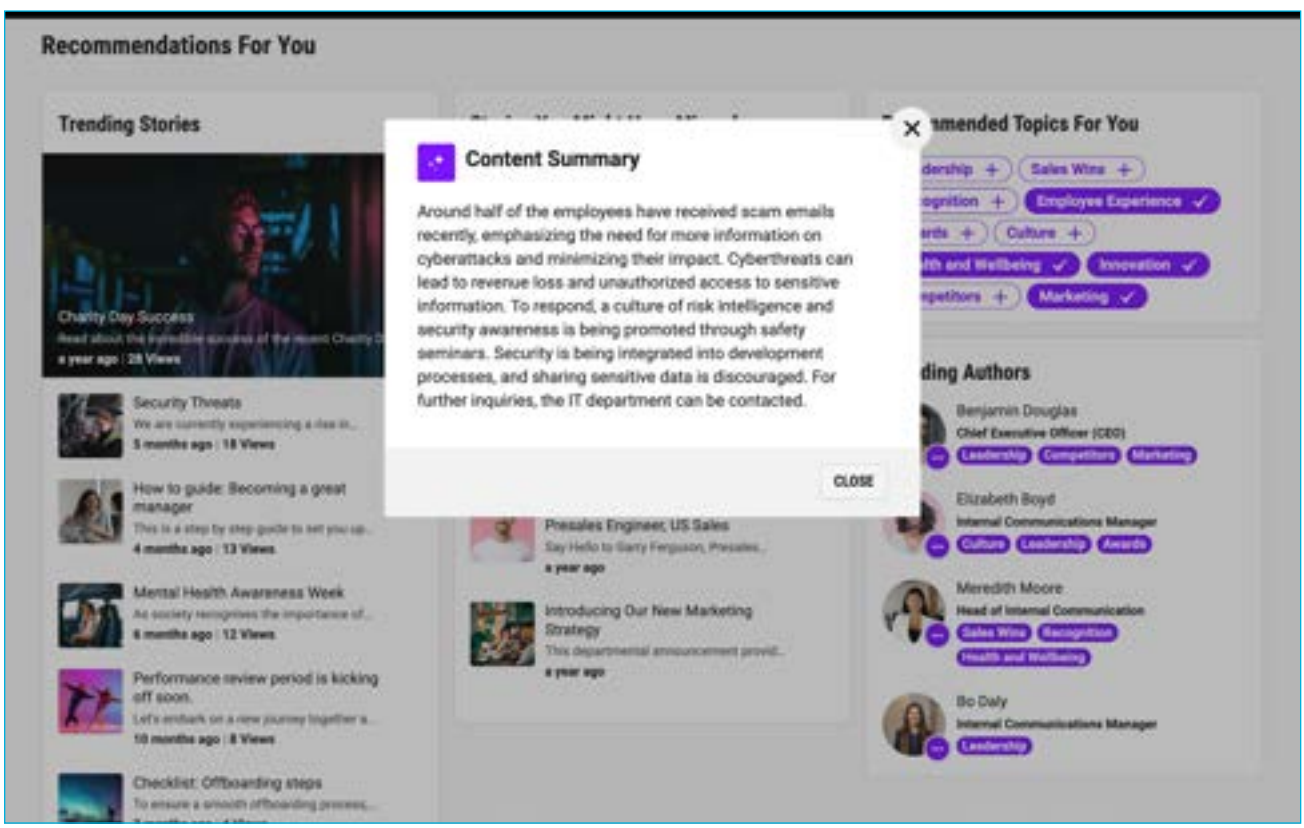
For further knowledge management needs, 'Knowledge Portals' are themed spaces, such as 'intranet publishing community' for those who are responsible for intranet content, which contain 'knowledge articles' on different topics. Helpfully, a widget of Knowledge Portal articles can be positioned on other pages where relevant. A 'related articles' widget, 'featuring' articles to promote them and a localised search help employees find relevant content. The 'owner' of the Portal can be prominently displayed too, to help with governance and further questions.

Portals will support a wiki requirement when open for anyone to edit, alternatively authors may be specified. We like the option to generate a table of contents at the start of an article that uses the headers defined in the content. There is a 'ratings' feature that allows readers to indicate how helpful an article is, as well as a feedback form for overt comments. We particularly like the 'content summary' option that uses generative AI to summarise what's on a page for a reader. Once this has been generated once, it's saved for quicker access for the next person.

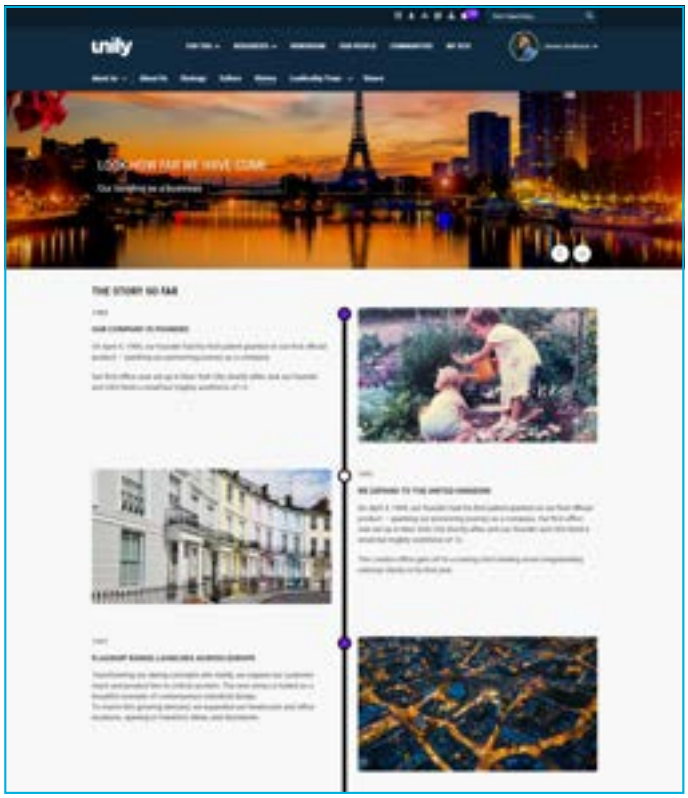
Knowledge articles present complex information simply and allow employees to provide feedback on the quality or usefulness of content.

People are included in search results, or a directory could be added to the site navigation if wanted. It's possible to start calls and award Kudos (see Scenario 3) from the people search results, without having to open a profile page. Search indexes all visible profile fields as well as badges awarded by admins for site or organisational labels. This could be for 'mentor' or 'first aider' for example and is a helpful feature.

Profile pages are attractive, with a simple organisation chart that can be opened and explored further. Organisations may choose to let employees edit profile fields, or it can be populated from relevant sources such as an HR system. Behind the scenes, the number of profile fields can be greater than those on display or indexed during the search. This allows for fields such as 'annual review date' or 'parental leave start date' to be fed from an appropriate system, which will add people into relevant Journeys (see Scenario 3) without colleagues being able to see personal information.



We like the 'content summary' button that gives a TLDR (too long didn't read) overview of what a page says, as generated by AI.



Templated pages, such as this timeline, look attractive and are easy for publishers to populate with appropriate content.

As Unily is so flexible, the separate CMS environment for administering the site is understandably vast. For those used to managing websites, the CMS experience will be familiar but is more complex than some of the other SaaS solutions we've seen. Helpfully there are fine-grained permissions, so infrequent publishers and developers would see different sets of options. To help admins navigate there is a full search experience, which we wish other products would introduce too, but we think additional tool tips would be beneficial.

The sophistication of the CMS means there are thoughtful elements too, such as the organisation's branding being reflected in the back end and across menu icons. We like the 'create content' button accessible via the top ribbon, which allows publishers to create content centrally and then apply its location later. Also worth highlighting is the 'accessibility checker' button in all areas of the intranet that supports publishers with making decisions.

It's surprising there aren't any inbuilt provisioning request processes or workflows; Unily says the fine-grained permissions should mean that requests aren't needed, as those with relevant settings have the permission to create new pages or spaces. However, there are always edge cases and we find that admin needs change frequently. Given the potential for there to be a lot of site admins, organisations would have to carefully train people so they know who to talk to about such requests, which we feel is somewhat clunky.

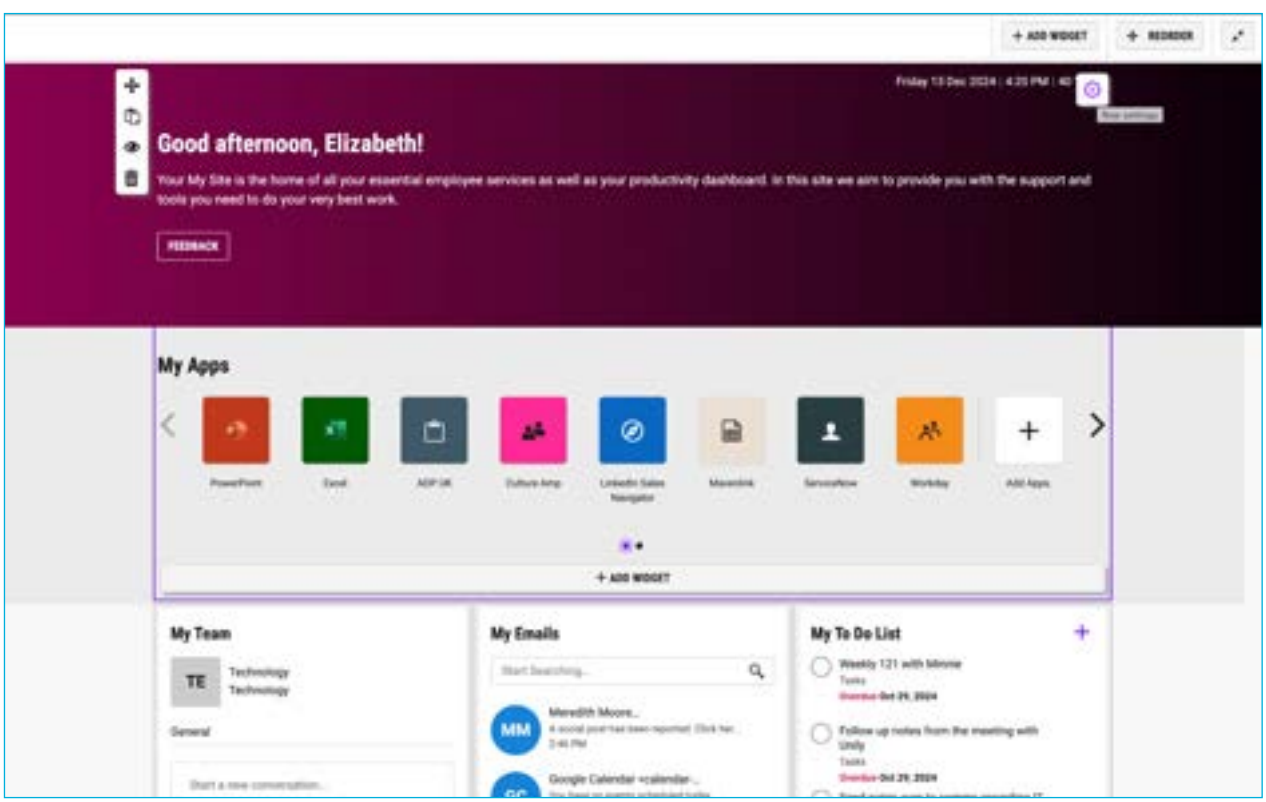
In the 'Content' menu, 'Global Pages' is where admins configure home and other landing pages. Admins drop widgets, installed from the feature store, into a grid layout and configure as wanted. We like that rows or individual widgets can be copied or temporarily hidden, and that entire pages can be scheduled. This means a Halloween home page, complete with associated branding, could be scheduled to publish on 1st October then drop off on 1st November.

A 'live page editor' shows the publisher what a page looks like without having to enter a preview screen. Optionally, editors can still preview a page to check what different audiences will see, which we think is helpful. Where content isn't targeted to an audience, most associated widgets will not show, but a few will remain as 'empty' such as the Journeys widget explored in Scenario 3. We appreciate the simplicity of creating a Page, applying audiences and choosing whether it is automatically shown in the navigation or not.

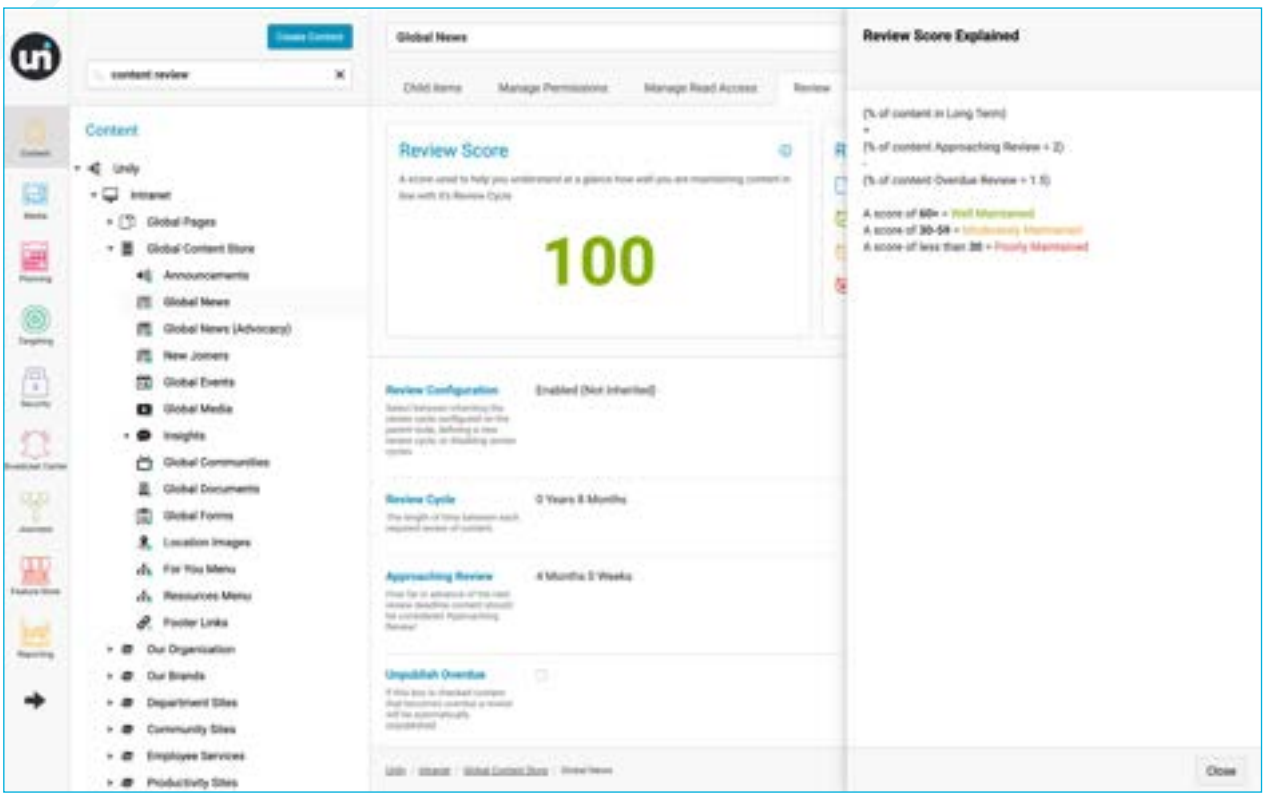
There are some helpful pre-configured pages for creating information related to the organisation's vision, history or stance on external topics, like climate change. These pages look very attractive and require no design skills from the publisher, as everything is ready for them to just add content into, but more widgets can be added where wanted. We particularly like the timeline widget, which could be used to explain the history of the organisation in an attractive way.

Content has publish, review and expiry dates, where content passing expiry is automatically unpublished but not deleted; this can apply to whole content spaces, not just individual articles or pages, which is helpful. Content owners are notified when their content is due for review – where they have multiple upcoming notifications, these are automatically aggregated to reduce noise. The timing of review and expiry dates, plus associated notifications, are all configurable by admins.

Content owners see the status of all their content in a helpful 'My Content' dashboard in the CMS, with icons that are easy to assess at a glance. Each menu area also includes a helpful dashboard showing an overview of how well content inside is being maintained, displaying an associated score that can be directly improved by publishers as they update their content. Organisations looking for sophisticated management features will appreciate the detailed audit logs, option for those editing to add associated comments and the ability to rollback to an earlier version. Unily's approach to governance is strong already, but we're looking forward to seeing the AI-powered governance dashboard that's on the roadmap.



The 'live editor' makes it easier for publishers to create a page, test for different audiences and configure widgets as wanted.

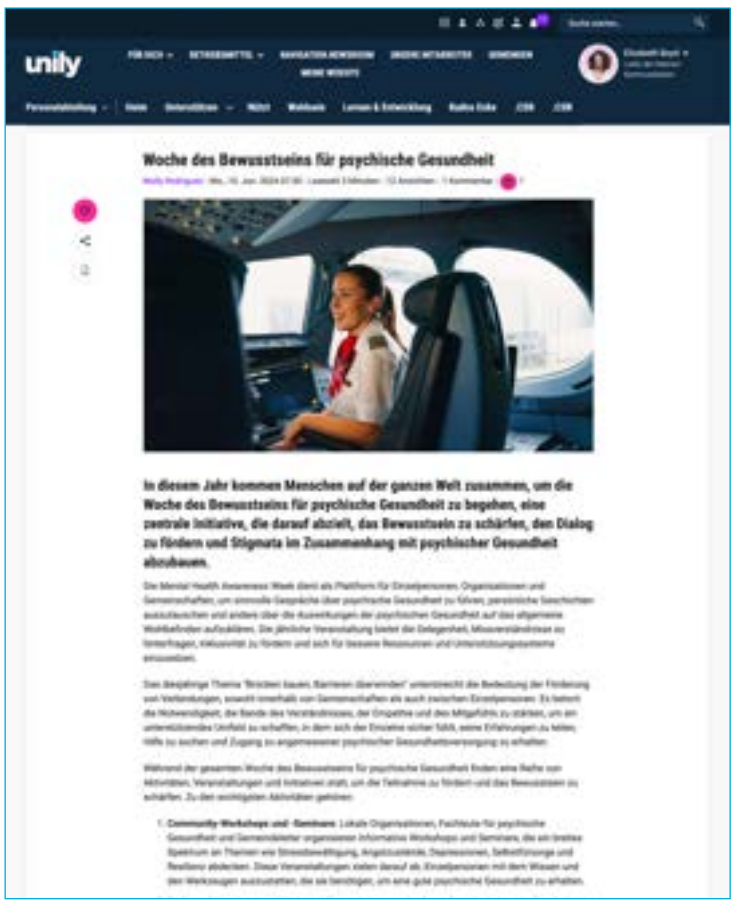


Each menu area includes a 'review' dashboard which helps administrators quickly see the quality of their content based on how well maintained it is.

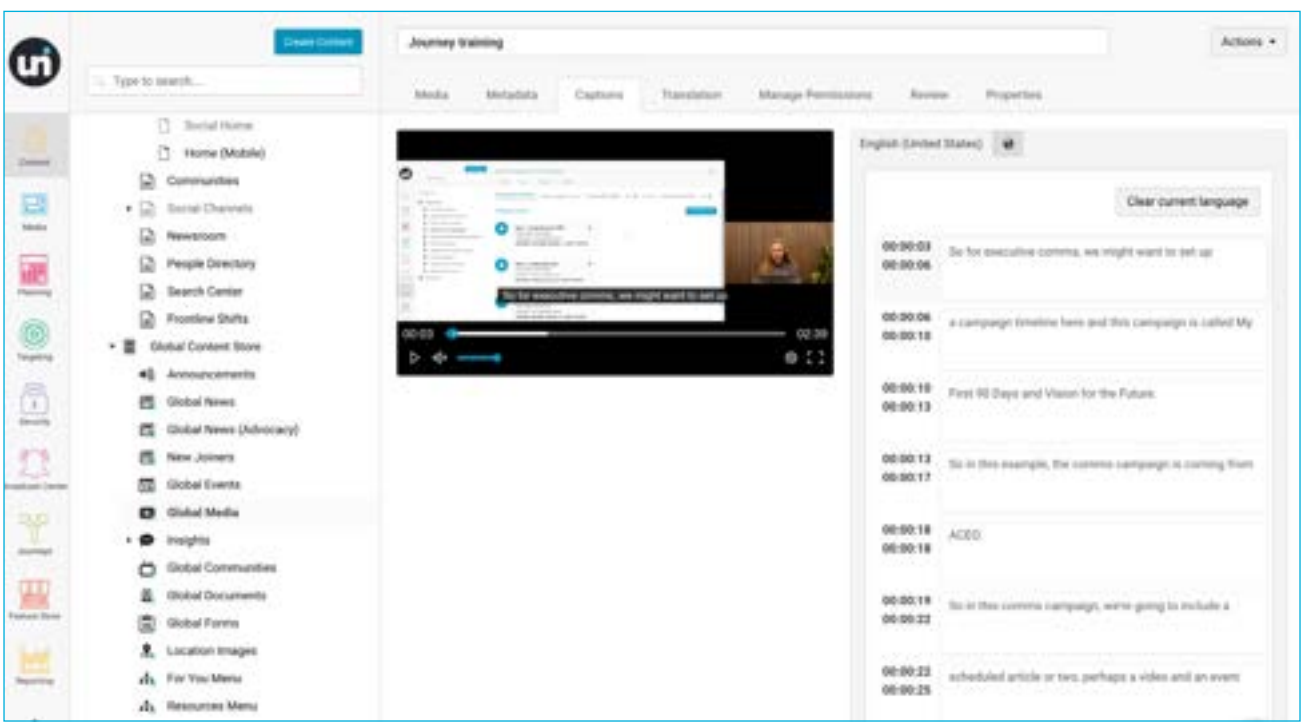
Unily handles multi-language needs well, with settings that control which content employees may choose to auto-translate. Unusually, this includes newsletters as well as content pages. Publishers may also select the starting language and create additional language versions using Microsoft Azure. These are displayed as tabs that publishers may then edit. There is no workflow to keep translations in sync if things change later, but the translation process can be re-run if needed. Admins may also choose to set rules that auto-translate content of Workspaces into pre-determined languages on page publication, which is unusual and helpful for publishers who forget translations are needed. We also like a preserved 'glossary' of organisational terms that are protected from translation or have an alternative translated term set. Users set their preferred language in their profile and can switch languages while viewing content as well.

Both audio and video content are well supported natively within Unily, with the option to display content in page widgets or embedded into articles. When the file is uploaded, an inbuilt AI will recommend metadata tags and an associated thumbnail image. Audio transcriptions are automatically generated and can be manually edited where inaccurate, which is particularly helpful where providing captions in a different language.

Overall, Unily's administration options are very comprehensive and flexible, which will likely meet the needs of large or complex organisations where employees have defined intranet management responsibilities. We feel that Unily's back end is beginning to feel a little dated in places, particularly when compared to the sleek front end – the analytics in Scenario 7 are a good example of this. However, it is worth noting that the CMS was praised by customers in the 'voice of the customer' section.



It's easy to create content in multiple languages.



Video and audio files are hosted natively in Unily and include helpful editable captions.

There are some useful graphs in Unily's analytics, including this one that shows the sentiment of user-generated content from across the site.

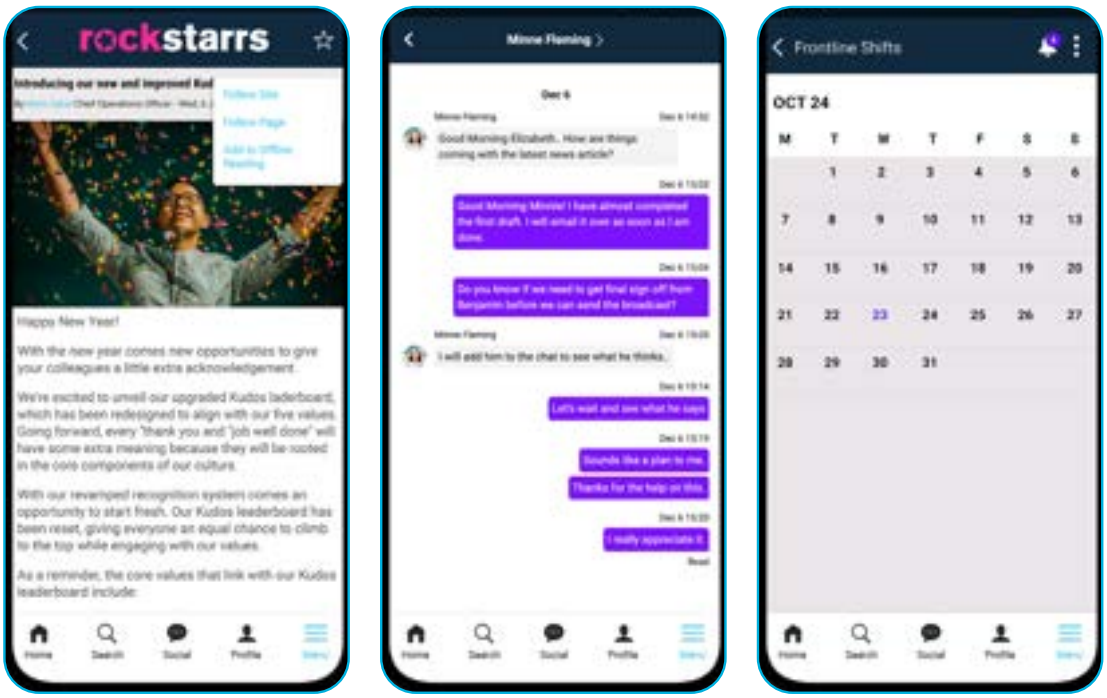
Reporting is available via the analytics suite, where admins select from available dashboards in the feature store to build the reporting as desired. By then applying appropriate permissions, people will only see the data that's relevant, which is a nice approach, and we like that client-specific profile filter labels are automatically applied (such as 'franchise'). More data has been introduced during 2024 and Unily says they can add most other information quickly, when requested by a customer.

Dates are configurable and applying content filters by clicking data in tables works well. We'd like to see comparisons of periods added, such as last week vs the previous week, but the month-on-month benchmarking data report is helpful for site owners. There are helpful tooltips to explain what some data means, and the presentation can be configured to display a chart or table, for example.

Campaigns, Journeys, Workspaces and pages each have their own data, which allows owners to assess the success of their content. Helpful analytics were introduced to the newsletter builder in 2025. We like the user journey information too, showing where people started and ended up. Content includes useful information such as unique views and dwell time; an overall sentiment analysis report is helpful for assessing how employees feel. There is also a search dashboard that shows overall numbers, for example total searches and the search terms used. Each would benefit from being developed so that admins can take appropriate actions; for example, there's no way to see which search terms returned zero results.

Mandatory reads are managed via admin screens within their own menu, meaning they are created as their own content item rather than applied to a news article or reference page. They can be linked to existing content, however, using a simple content picker. Results are viewable and exportable as a CSV, but there's no easy way for publishers to trigger reminders.

Overall, we think the analytics dashboards have a few gaps but show a lot of promise. We'd like to see the presentation of some data made more engaging, for example. Customer feedback also suggests that more data - particularly for communications - would be welcomed. We also hope to see AI introduced here in time so that admins can easily see what actions they could take to make improvements.



Unily translates well to a small-screen environment, retaining its comprehensiveness and attractive experience.

Employees can find the native Unily app in app stores; a custom-branded option is available at extra cost for clients with MDM platforms or via Apple Business Manager. Employees log in using existing credentials, with single sign-on supported from systems like Microsoft or even LinkedIn. Employees may stay logged in to the app until they log out, making subsequent access easy. However, Unily customers may want tighter security controls, and adding biometric authentication, which is not included, would be a welcome addition.

The mobile experience is engaging and the suite of features from other scenarios work well for frontline audiences, such as Kudos. Additional options, such as reading the newsfeed offline, show that Unily have considered the frontline well. Individual and group messaging is available with familiar features such as showing when a message has been read, although it is simpler than other solutions we've seen. A built-in calendar that integrates with third-party shift management systems, such as Workforce.com, is also helpful. People can see allocated shifts, request changes and check in or check out from within the Unily app.

Search in the app gives a comparable experience to the desktop version, with results appearing and refining as someone enters text. The optimisation controls covered in Scenario 5 mean that a mobile audience could have a simpler search experience if wanted.

Main navigation items, like home and social, are at the bottom of the screen, with a hamburger menu reflecting the desktop navigation. This works well, but deep desktop navigation may feel like a lot to click through where the experience isn't simplified by admins. Unily's grid and widget design system supports variants, however, so different navigation options, features and content can be shown on mobile versus desktop. It's therefore in the hands of admins to optimise the desktop environment so that it's appropriate on mobile.

Overall, Unily works well on desktop and mobile, with features like the Channels timeline feeds arguably working better on the small screen. The range of controls means it's flexible for admins and can be simplified for mobile users, although may take some effort to set up appropriately.

THINGS TO BEAR IN MIND

Unily has been at the forefront of the intranet market for many years and it's noteworthy that there continue to be exciting developments, particularly when products of a similar age seem to have stalled. For example, Unily has taken a measured approach to AI, and truly useful end-user functionality has been introduced via the digital assistant. There are more AI-related plans on the roadmap and the initial concepts we've seen look excellent. Additionally, customer opinions about working with the vendor have improved when compared to last year's review, suggesting they have taken onboard feedback to make positive changes. Customers are largely satisfied, which is a fantastic achievement given the complexity of many of the organisations they work with.

There are areas where we'd like to see improvement however, including the back end that looks somewhat dated when compared to the sleek front end. Unily has said that an admin dashboard overhaul is on the roadmap, however, and we look forward to seeing this in action. The admin experience is flexible and comprehensive, providing fine-grained controls that many other platforms shield from clients, and has been praised by customers. However, this means Unily can feel complex in places, particularly for those who aren't used to website CMS approaches or who may not be technically minded. Given the scale of most of Unily's clients, this may not be an issue as many will have multiple people responsible for different aspects of managing the intranet. For organisations without clear roles and responsibilities already, this is something you should consider in advance of a Unily implementation.

Unily is at the upper end of our pricing brackets for all but the largest company sizes, although Unily is modular to a degree and so there are opportunities to save in some places. Organisations should also note the associated cost where additional development is needed and discuss with Unily in advance. Similarly, AI assistants and agents will be on top of Unily license costs – as it relies on AI technology already being in place – so these additional costs should be factored in (where they aren't already). However, it is a flexible, contemporary and effective platform, so we would advise people to weigh up the pricing against the overall value the product offers.

Why choose this product

Unily is a sophisticated platform that delivers comprehensive desktop and mobile environments, with good audience targeting and tailoring. Employees will appreciate the ease of use and variety of community features, while admins will like the range of flexible tools to maintain their site as desired. Internal Communicators, and HR colleagues in particular, will find a lot to like, as will those looking to explore the potential of AI. Large or complex organisations will find Unily meets their needs effectively, while also delivering an attractive end result that will represent their brand well.

You may also be interested in...

APPSPACE interact Staffbase

Vendor roadmap

No roadmap has been supplied by Unily.

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SECTION THREE

PRODUCT OVERVIEWS

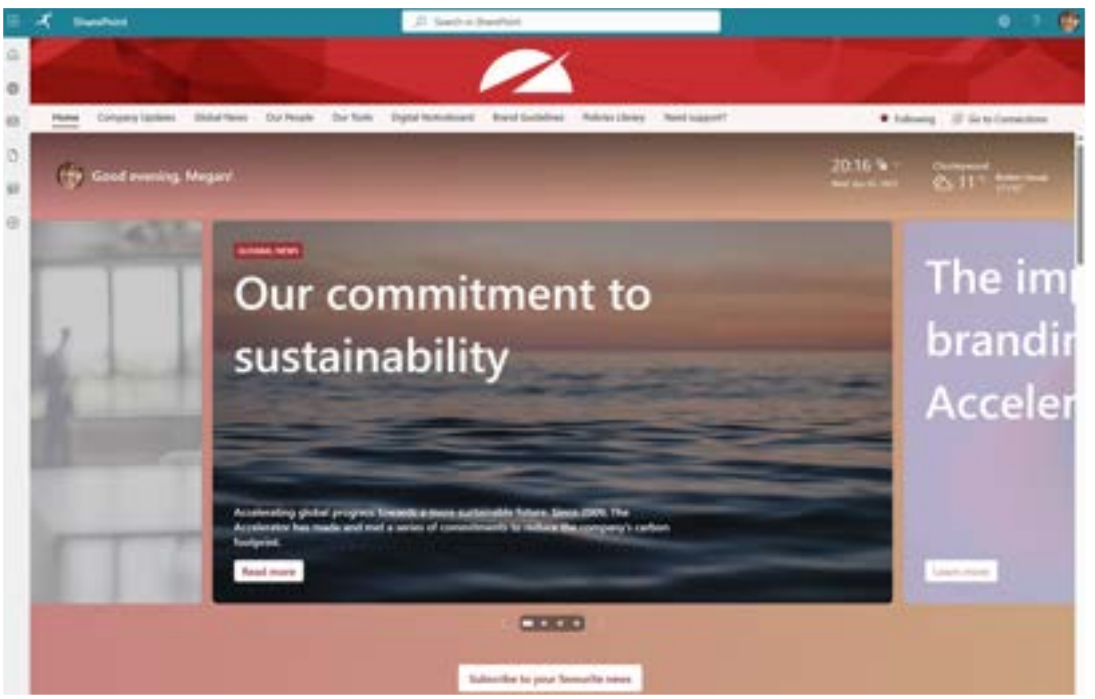
ACCELERATOR 365

FULLY STANDALONE

REQUIRES SHAREPOINT

FRONTLINE FOCUS

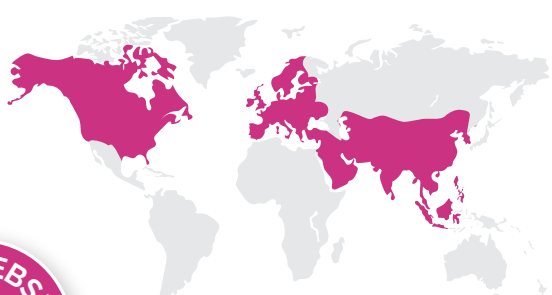
OTHER



Typical deployment:

5,000 to 10,000

Company locations:



VISIT THE WEBSITE

The product in a nutshell

Accelerator 365 offers a suite of well-designed web parts and modules dedicated to filling the gaps within SharePoint.

CLEARBOX VIEW

Accelerator 365, a product from the consultancy Reply, offers over thirty 'Apps' (web parts) and two 'Solutions' to improve the SharePoint experience. Their philosophy is to fill some of SharePoint's gaps and improve the user and contribution experience, without duplicating what Microsoft already offers. We think they address this philosophy well overall.

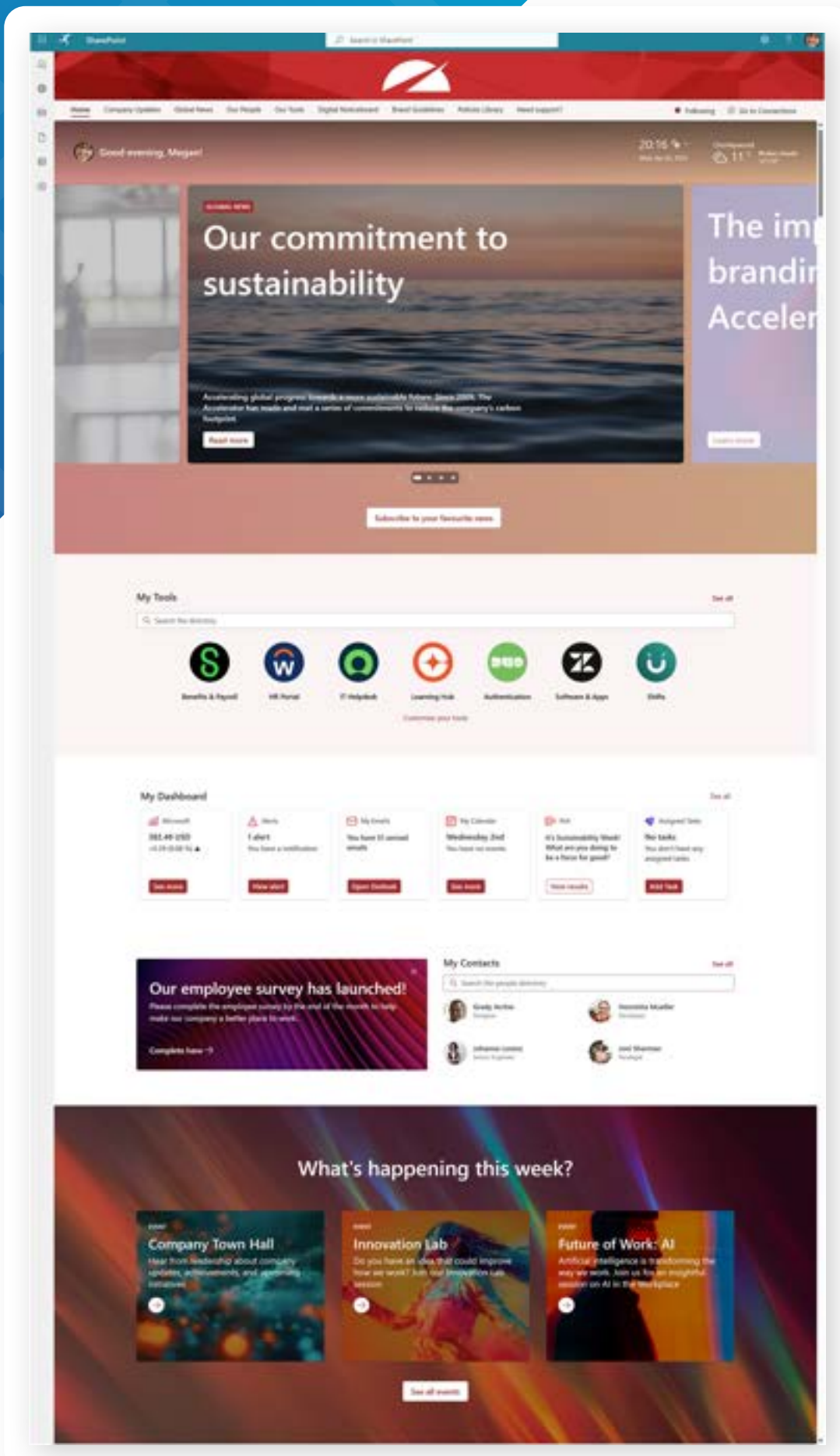
The Accelerator 365 Apps seamlessly integrate with the SharePoint editor and are easy to use, including on mobile. Some of these Apps contribute to a richer user experience and visual appeal of SharePoint pages. For example, the 'Page Tour' guides employees, introducing the different elements on a page, and 'Welcome' adds a personal greeting message. Other Apps address communications needs, such as 'Audience Subscription' that grants employees control over some audience groups they are part of, or 'Spotlight' that displays a visual call to action to give a message a boost. We like that a Spotlight can be dismissed when read and that it's targetable, which is helpful to direct new starters to a dedicated site, for example. Overall, the user experience of the Apps and Solutions is strong, even if we think more could be done to address accessibility concerns more comprehensively.

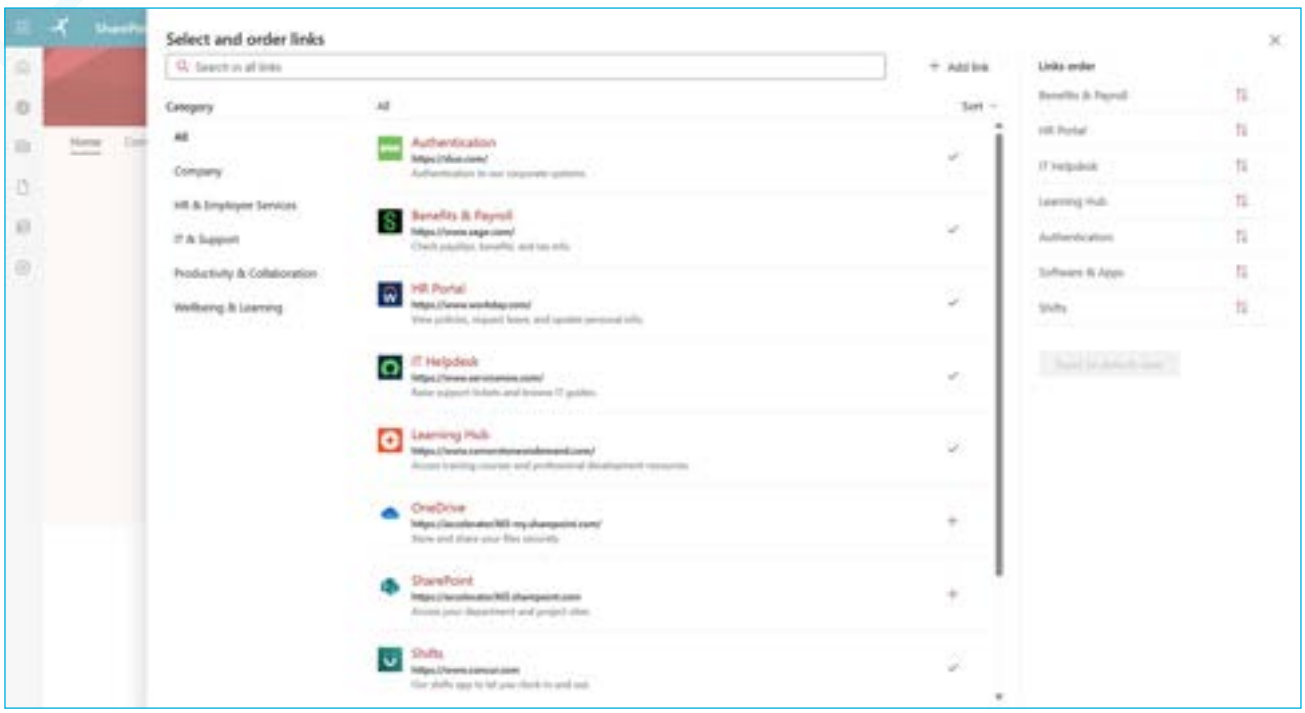
Some Apps helpfully supplement information-finding needs, such as 'Accordion' that displays substantial content into collapsible sections, or 'Image Map' for an interactive image with tooltips and links. Others like 'Table of Contents' and 'Page Tags' help people navigate lengthy articles and explore intranet pages. We found the 'Launchpad' App more sophisticated than others we've seen, providing quick access to targeted and personalised links, as well as an easy-to-browse link directory that's simple for admins to maintain. While Accelerator 365 provides additional contextual search (e.g. in the 'Launchpad', 'Section Search', and 'People Directory' Apps), it relies entirely on the SharePoint search – in line with their Microsoft-first philosophy - and does not offer other significant enhancements in this area.

Accelerator 365 offers two 'Solutions' that help contributors better manage their content. We like the 'Content Management Dashboard' which offers a centralised place to track the status and key analytics of pages, gathering the content from multiple SharePoint sites into a single view. This would particularly help organisations with complex intranets to have a clearer view of their content and focus on areas that need attention. 'Content by status' shows what content is in draft mode or checked out, which can be difficult to spot otherwise - especially when contents are disseminated in multiple repositories. The Dashboard also displays standard but useful metrics, such as view counts or unique users. While organisations can go beyond the SharePoint 90 days threshold for data, at least one contributor in the organisation needs to regularly connect to the Dashboard in order for this data to be collected. While we think this could be simplified, it's a result of the one-click installation approach from the SharePoint store which organisations are likely to find more valuable than data collection.

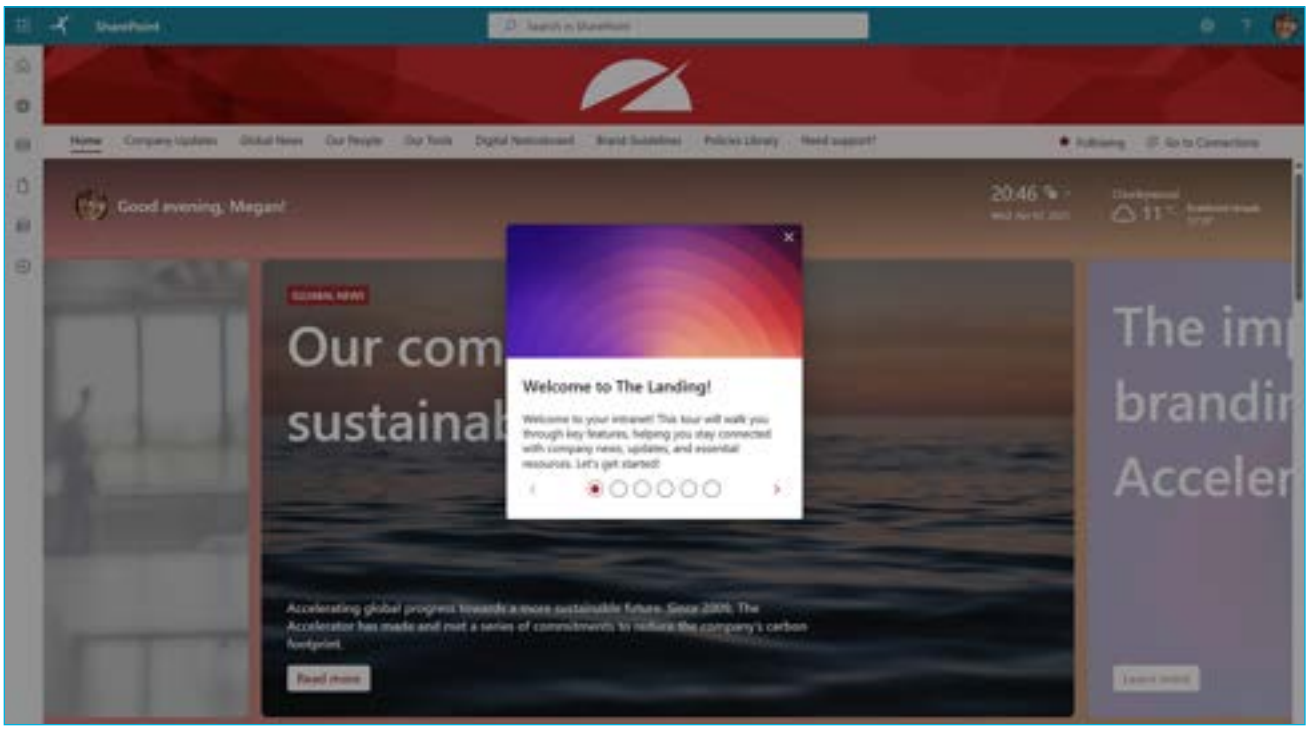
The 'Translator for SharePoint' Solution helps international organisations accelerate the content translation process by auto-translating an existing page to multiple languages at the same time. This process is faster than standard manual translation in SharePoint and provides a custom organisation dictionary for specific words and phrases. Publishers can easily see language variants, edit them, and see when they were last edited. Employees can easily jump between language versions, and we like the message that flags where auto-translate has been used but not edited.

We like the vendor's transparent pricing, offering Apps separately or as a package, and overall, the cost is very competitive (see 'Pricing' below for more). The installation process is also very straightforward; each App and Solution is available in the Microsoft SharePoint Store, so any tenant administrator will be able to install them without the need for vendor assistance. We like the easily accessible online documentation with text and video tutorials on how to make best use of the Apps and Solutions. Overall, Accelerator 365 will appeal to organisations of any size looking to address gaps in SharePoint functionality without detracting from the power of the Microsoft platform.

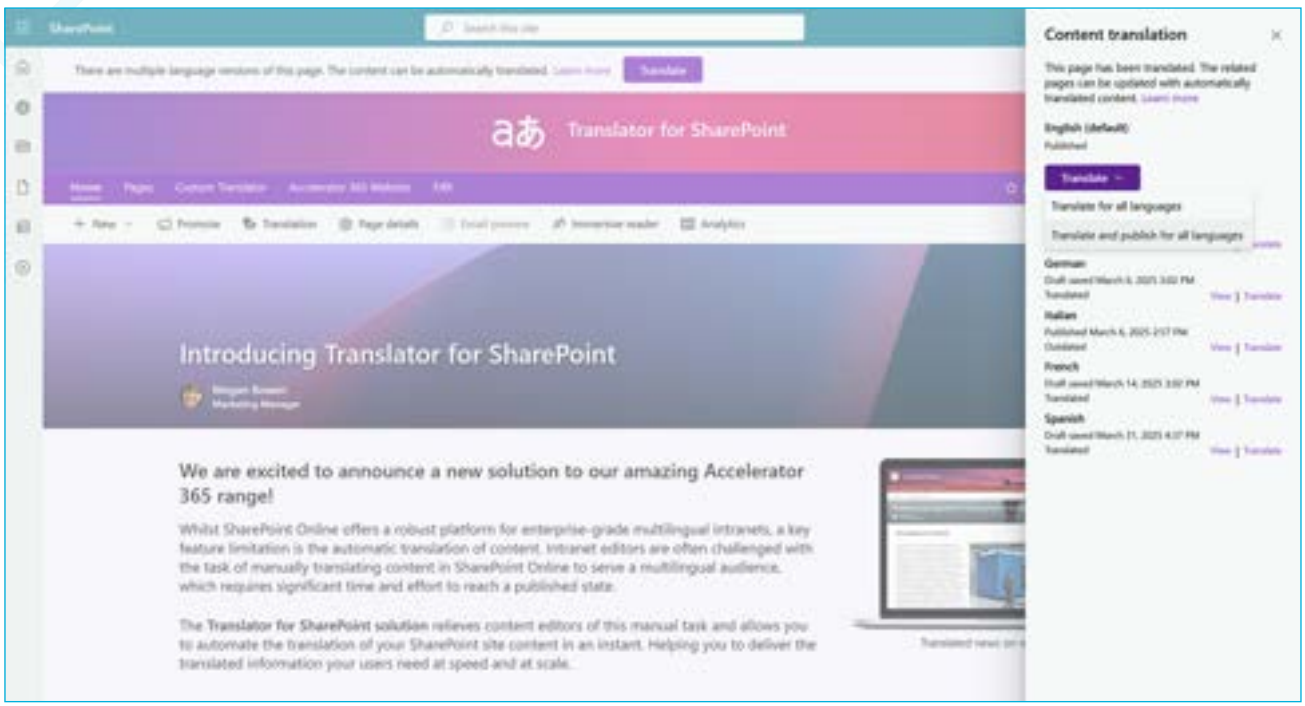

Good evening, Megan!
Our commitment to sustainability
My Tools
My Dashboard
Our employee survey has launched!
My Contacts
What's happening this week?
Company Town Hall
Innovation Lab
Future of Work: AI



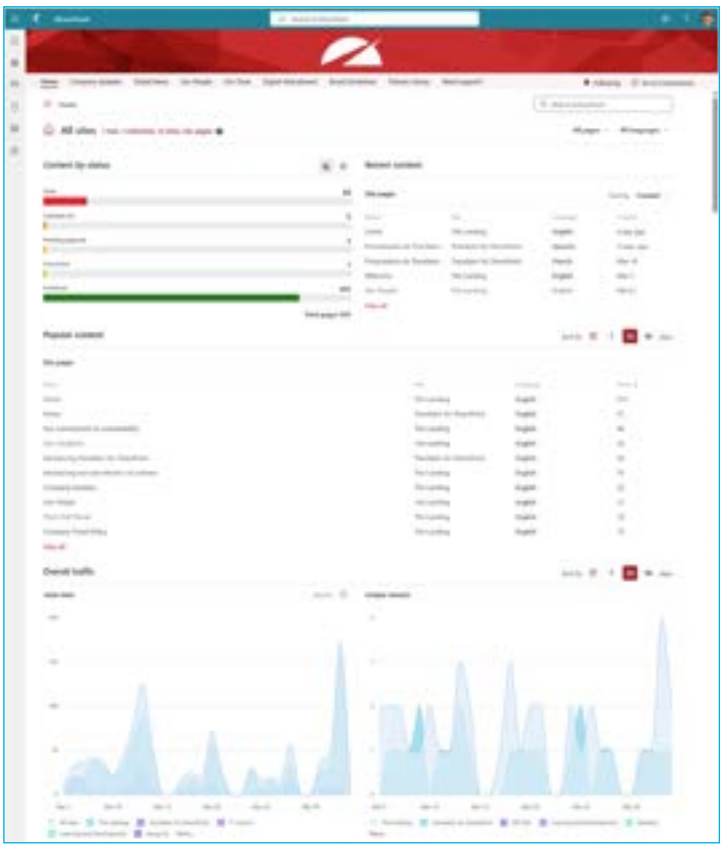
Accelerator 365 Launchpad can be positioned on a SharePoint page as well as in an exploration panel to browse the large application catalogue.



The 'Page Tour' web part offers a sequenced guided visit for any page of the intranet, such as the home page or a newly introduced section.



The 'Translator for SharePoint' Solution helps with auto-translating existing pages to multiple languages at the same time, facilitating the management of multilingual intranets.



The 'Content Manager Dashboard' Solution offers a centralised and visual place to track the status and key analytics of pages. We particularly like that administrators can see the content from multiple SharePoint sites in a single view.

Pricing

PRICE BAND	
1,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
5,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
20,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
50,000 users	$ $ $ $ $

These prices are indicative, offering a comparison of the products featured in this report. Please contact the vendor for a bespoke quote.

PRICING MODEL

Subscription – price band based on number of users or one-off payment.

DISCOUNTS

Charities and non-profit organisations; multi-year commitments.

COSTS TYPICALLY

Fairly evenly spread across three years.

PRICE INCLUDES

Product updates, such as feature enhancements, fixes and maintenance releases, are delivered to customers at no extra cost provided customers have an active license. All pricing options are visible on the vendor's website.

Product type

Ready-to-run, installed in hours

Branding opportunities

Good branding, single choice

Base systems

Fully standalone	**Requires SharePoint**	Other

Sectors

Accountancy, banking and finance	Energy and utilities	Engineering and manufacturing	Media and internet	Retail

COMPANY AND PRODUCT

Company details

Company
Reply

ISO 27001 certified
Other – ISO 9001 certified

Data residency
N/A

Company founded
1996

Product launched
2019

Typical client size
5,000 to 10,000

Largest deployment so far
Global company with 80,000+ employees and operating in 180 markets

Customers
Clients include: Transport for London, Computacenter, Sky, AECOM, Sage, Specsavers, Christie's, Foot Locker, Nationwide, Southern Company

Partner locations
UK, USA, Italy, Germany, Poland, Australia, New Zealand, Sweden

Company locations
Turin, Italy (HQ); UK, USA, Germany, Poland, France, Benelux, India

Product and technical details

Name of product

Accelerator 365 by Reply

Deployment

Client on-premises	Client private cloud	Microsoft Azure	Amazon Web Services	Vendor-hosted	**Microsoft 365 tenant**	Google Cloud	Other

Authentication supported

Entra ID	ADFS	Okta	Open ID	Oauth	G Suite	Other

App deployment

Google Play store	Apple store	MDM	MAM	Other

Accessibility

WCAG 2.1 compliant

Document library sources integrated

Box	Dropbox	Google Drive	**SharePoint**	**OneDrive**	Other

Optional integrated enterprise search engines

Coveo	Elastic	IBM	Lucidworks	**Microsoft**	Mindbreeze	Sinequa	Other

User interface multi-language

Machine translation	**Pre-configured**	Editable	Right to left script supported	Other

Content multi-language

Machine translation for publishers	Machine translation for end users	**Editable machine translation for publishers**	Manual creation for publishers	Right to left script	Other

Set-up and support

Set-up process for new clients

All web parts and Solutions can be deployed in a matter of minutes via the Microsoft SharePoint Store - no additional setup or configuration outside of the SharePoint environment is required. Organisations may choose to run a free trial, then enter a paid license key to activate the product(s). Timeboxed installation support is provided at no additional cost.

Version numbers

Demonstrated to ClearBox: March 2025

At May 2025: May 2025

Product updates

Minor updates weekly; major updates every six months.

Product update process

All product updates are distributed via the Microsoft SharePoint Store. This provides customers the control over their environment, with a self-serve approach enabling them to schedule the updates at a convenient time for their organisation. Customers are notified of any relevant updates via email at the close of each month, detailing which Accelerator 365 apps have had a release. This includes links to release notes and detailed upgrade instructions.

Reverse-out options

Content and data remain entirely within the customer's environment. Since Accelerator 365 products are individually architected, an expired license only affects the specific product, ensuring the rest of the intranet remains unaffected. Customers are notified in advance of license expiration for the renewal process. If renewal is not desired, enough time is therefore given for content to be transferred out of the Accelerator 365 products. Products can then be uninstalled from the SharePoint environment as per Microsoft best practice, which is also documented on the Accelerator 365 knowledge base.

Technical support

Email support	Phone support	Chat support	Online portal	24/7 support	Office hours only*

*Monday to Friday 09:00 – 17:00 UK time

User community

The vendor has an active feedback loop with customers, ensuring real world insights shape their products. Additionally, the vendor involves customers in new product development - validating functionality, user experience, and design via real-world testing.

Voice of the vendor

Reply says: "Accelerator 365 by Reply is a powerful suite of products built to enhance Microsoft SharePoint, seamlessly integrating with its native functionality to help organisations create a world-class intranet experience.

Rooted in the consultancy expertise of our parent company, Reply, our "Microsoft-first" approach to SharePoint intranets is driven by the belief that enterprise intranet functionality is readily available out of the box. Accelerator 365 apps are designed to enhance and extend SharePoint, seamlessly filling the gaps to help businesses build dynamic, user-friendly, and engaging intranets.

With a suite of over 30 apps and Solutions, Accelerator 365 tackles the most common intranet challenges, from personalisation and content discovery to user engagement. Designed to empower communicators, our products provide full control over one of the most essential aspects of the digital workplace - the intranet - without the need for complex custom development or advanced technical expertise.

Accelerator 365 products can be installed in minutes directly from the Microsoft SharePoint Store, where we are proud to be recognised as the leading vendor. Every download includes a free, full-featured 60-day trial, allowing customers to experience our products with no commitment. Installation via the SharePoint Store ensures seamless access to continuous improvements and updates at no extra cost, so customers always have the latest and most advanced version of our products.

Our transparent and flexible pricing model gives customers the freedom to purchase products individually or choose our comprehensive Intranet Apps Package, which includes both current and future app additions. With options for either an annual subscription or a lifetime license, our pricing adapts to every budget, ensuring Accelerator 365 remains the most accessible and scalable solution for organisations seeking to enhance their SharePoint intranet."

You may also be interested in...

BEACON

Lightspeed365 by contentformula

SPROCKET 365

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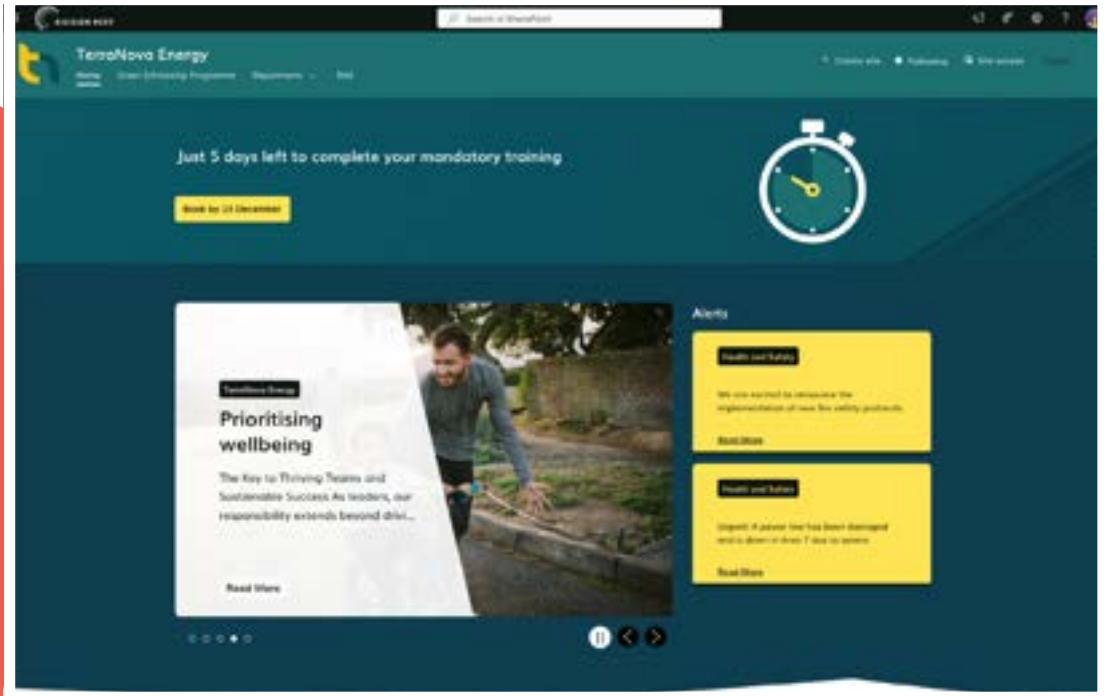
BEACON

FULLY STANDALONE

REQUIRES SHAREPOINT

FRONTLINE FOCUS

OTHER



Typical deployment:

5,000 to 10,000

Company locations:

VISIT THE WEBSITE

The product in a nutshell

Beacon offers a suite of features for intranet managers to enhance SharePoint page creation, content broadcasting and accessibility compliance.

CLEARBOX VIEW

Beacon, owned by Silicon Reef based in London, UK, offers a set of features designed to enhance SharePoint intranet creation and content broadcasting. Silicon Reef's strategy relies on three principles: one, provide additional value to SharePoint, two, step back where SharePoint does a good job, and three, focus on and improve accessibility. This approach means that their product is evolutive and adapts constantly as SharePoint advances.

Beacon's first key feature is a set of additional web parts for pages as well as advanced branding options, aiming to push the boundaries of what SharePoint can do in terms of visual appeal. Administrators can create colour palettes (including gradients) and upload their fonts in a dedicated 'Brand Customiser'. We particularly like the accessibility check-up in the Brand Customiser that nudges administrators to choose fonts and colours that are accessible for all employees. This will help page owners make enlightened choices, improving the experience for all employees. These branding elements will then be deployed on all pages in a SharePoint site hub, available for page owners to use in web parts. Beacon provides layout flexibility, such as "fix on scroll" background images and cut-off background colours, that helps organisations create a "website" experience on their intranet.

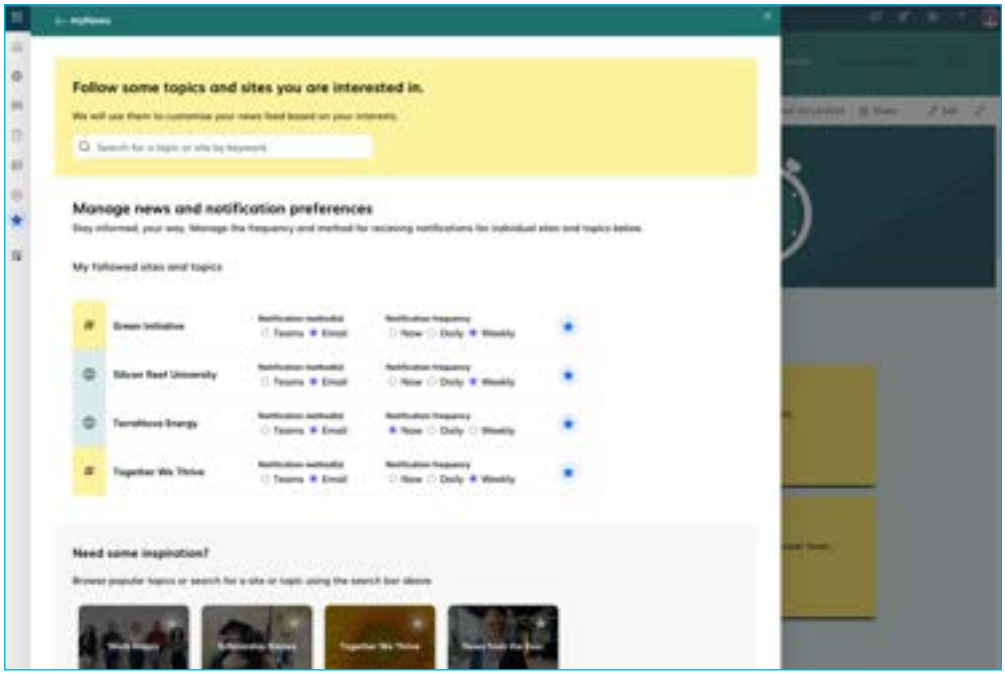
There are additional web parts to display content within pages to make them more engaging. This includes a showcase banner (to highlight news or call to actions), a media experience (to display Spotify playlists, Tiktok feeds or SharePoint files, etc.), an image hotspot (to display images with clickable pins), a flexible Rich Content webpart (to easily display text within accordions, cards or steps), and a content highlight (to dynamically retrieve and display content in a carousel layout). These web parts provide extra options to standard SharePoint for page owners to design advanced intranet pages. As such, Beacon will necessitate some training and will probably appeal more to page owners that are already familiar with SharePoint.

Beacon also offers a module that will help communicators publish and manage their news across the intranet and employees to access content easier. The 'news feed' is accessible on the left side bar, or as a page web part, that displays all the news an employee might be interested in. To personalise and navigate in their news feeds, employees will be able to follow sites and topics as well as use options such as a dedicated search engine, a 'new only' filter and notification configurations. The 'Content Planner' helps communicators schedule, manage and promote their news content. We like the calendar view that provides the ability to adjust the news and events schedule. A news header sits on top of SharePoint posts and provides useful options to directly see content tags and save content for later.

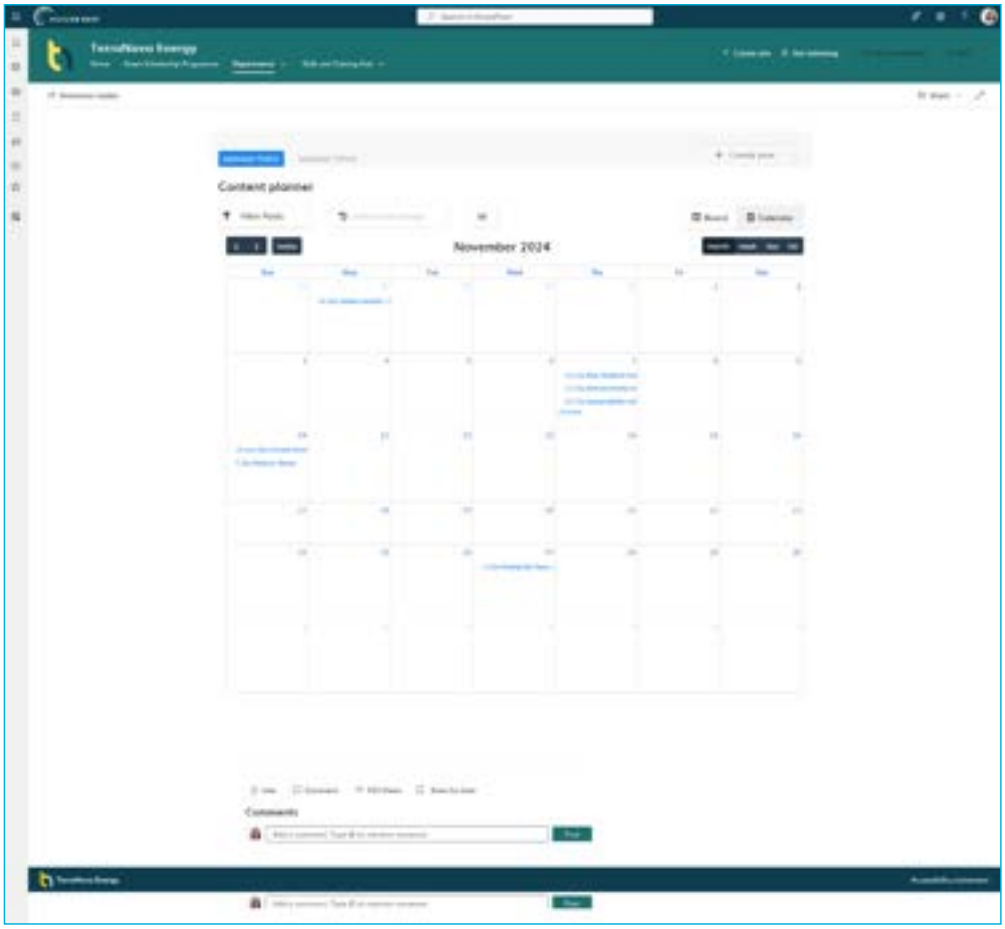
Finally, the MyTools module offers a simple but efficient applications launcher. Also accessible in the left navigation menu, it helps employees explore the company applications and tools catalogue. Employees can reorganise this menu, although administrators can pin applications for all users. A dedicated search engine and filters complete this module.

Beacon will speak to organisations that are already used to SharePoint and feel limited by the standard design or the default set of widgets and options. Beacon provides a good set of additional options to improve both how employees can personalise their intranet experience and how administrators can ensure the delivery of important content to the appropriate audiences.

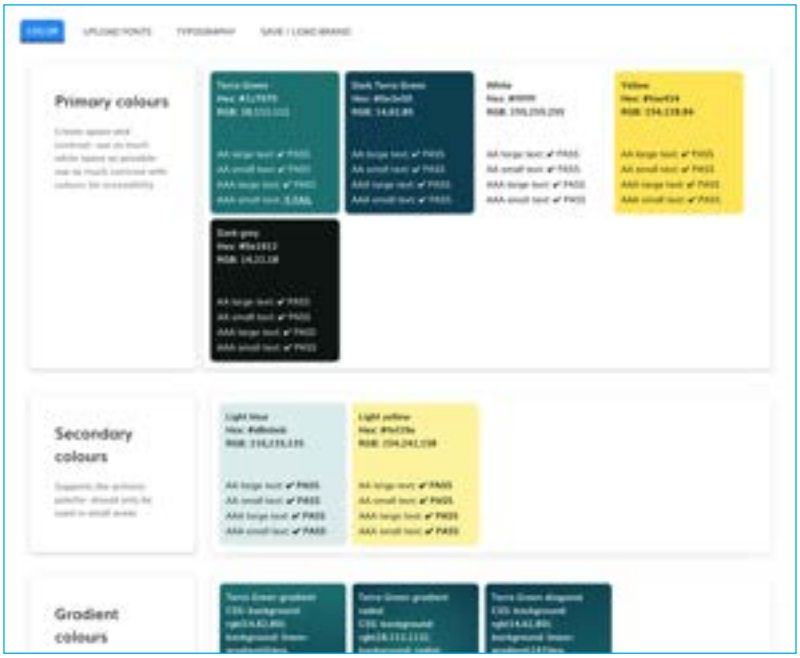
Prioritising wellbeing
Our impact on a glance
"We're not just harnessing the power of the elements to energize the world; we are embodying the forces of integrity, innovation, and inclusivity to empower every community we touch."
Building a brighter future through renewable energy scholarships
Green Scholarships



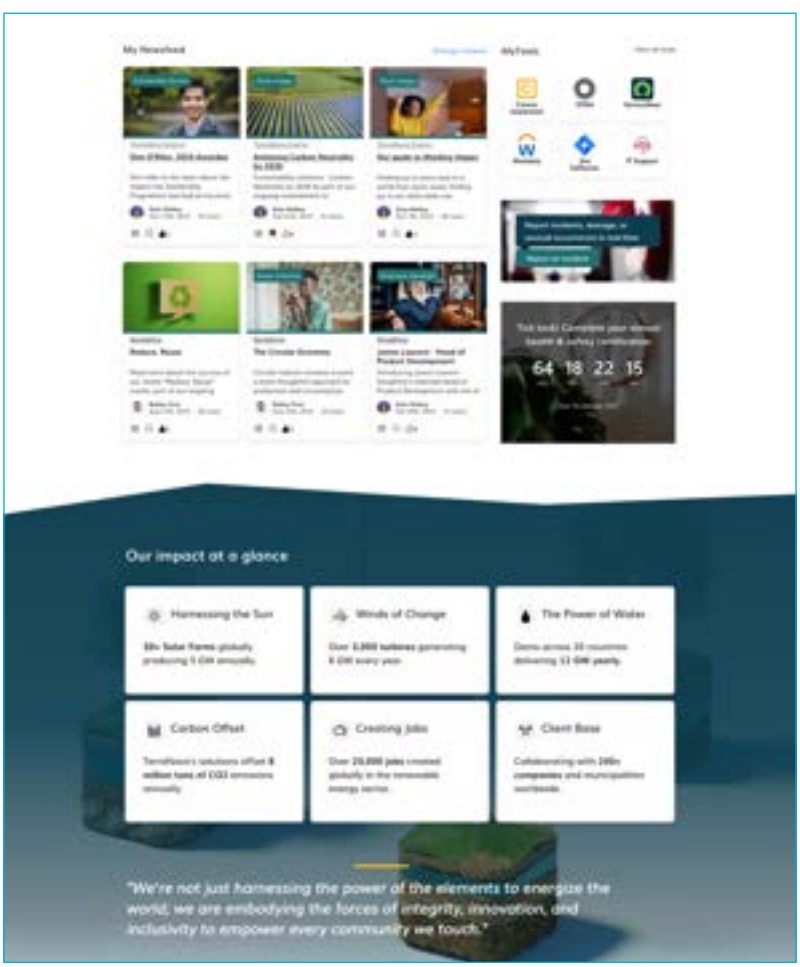
The news feed provides a flexible way for employees to personalise what content they want to see and invest their time in.



The content planner includes a useful calendar view to organise and schedule content.



The Beacon 'brand customiser' allows admins to easily create colour palettes and upload their font, that will then be deployed across the site.



Beacon includes additional web parts such as a flexible Rich Content webpart to easily display text within accordions, cards or steps.

Pricing

PRICE BAND	
1,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
5,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
20,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
50,000 users	$ $ $ $ $

These prices are indicative, offering a comparison of the products featured in this report. Please contact the vendor for a bespoke quote.

PRICING MODEL

Subscription – price band based on number of users.

COSTS TYPICALLY

Fairly evenly spread across three years.

DISCOUNTS

Charities and non-profit organisations, schools and educational institutes, Government / public sector, multi-year commitments.

PRICE INCLUDES

Training for administrators is a standard part of Onboarding. Maintenance, support, updates and upgrades of Code are included within the Subscription fees. Customer success services are included as part of Silicon Reef's ongoing account management for clients too.

Product type

Ready-to-run, installed in days

Branding opportunities

All branding, complex options

Base systems

Fully standalone	Requires SharePoint	Other

Sectors

Engineering and manufacturing	Media and internet	Property and construction	Public services, government and administration	Retail

COMPANY AND PRODUCT

Company details

Company
Silicon Reef

ISO 27001 certified
Yes

Data residency
N/A

Company founded
2016

Product launched
2021

Typical client size
5,000 to 10,000

Largest deployment so far
90,000 users across 56 sites in 15 countries

Customers
Clients include: University of Leeds, TP ICAP, Met Office (won award at ICE Awards), Willmott Dixon, Santen, Argent, SOAS University of London, Warner Brothers, Anglo American

Partner locations
UK

Company locations
London, UK (HQ)

Product and technical details

Name of product

Beacon

Deployment

Client on-premises	Client private cloud	Microsoft Azure	Amazon Web Services	Vendor-hosted	**Microsoft 365 tenant**	Google Cloud	Other

Authentication supported

Entra ID	ADFS	Okta	Open ID	Oauth	G Suite	Other

App deployment

Google Play store	Apple store	MDM	MAM	Other

Accessibility

WCAG2.1 conformant

Document library sources integrated

Box	Dropbox	Google Drive	**SharePoint**	**OneDrive**	**Other***

*Silicon Reef can use any integrations that exist within the customer's M365 tenant.

Optional integrated enterprise search engines

Coveo	Elastic	IBM	Lucidworks	**Microsoft**	Mindbreeze	Sinequa	Other

User interface multi-language

Machine translation	Pre-configured	Editable	Right to left script supported	**Other***

*Browser translations handle most (if not all) areas of the tools for admins in their chosen browser language.

Content multi-language

Machine translation for publishers	Machine translation for end users	Editable machine translation for publishers	Manual creation for publishers	Right to left script	**Other***

*Use of the SharePoint translations pages with the Ripple AI helper to provide natural language translations.

Set-up and support

Set-up process for new clients

The deployment and configuration are done through a largely automated process into the client's tenant. Setup of initial pages and layout designs to support the onboarding to the new intranet can be provided as a separate consulting engagement if needed, including comms support for launch.

Current version

Demonstrated to ClearBox: V3.1

At January 2025: V4

Product updates

Major updates every six months.

Product update process

Customers are invited to update and may then schedule the update when they are ready. It is always advised that the update is taken. Silicon Reef's Support and Product teams and Customer Success or Account Managers will work with customers to make sure they are happy, ready and supported during and after the update.

Reverse-out options

All data is held in the client environment. If the contract ends users will have a transition period to move the data into a new system before access to the web parts is removed.

Technical support

Email support	Phone support	Chat support	**Online portal**	24/7 support	Office hours only

User community

Currently Silicon Reef's customers are the community that inform their roadmap, but they do not have an official user community. They are considering setting one up as they serve nearly 1,000,000 end users across all their services.

Voice of the vendor

Silicon Reef says: "We elevate employee experience by delivering best-in-class, user led Microsoft 365 services. We create digital environments from which organisations and employees can thrive. Specifically, SharePoint is our sweet spot. Our people-first approach combined with our experience of delivering complex SharePoint portals, and comms enables us to distil knowledge into solutions – answering, what we think are, the obvious easy answers for all customers.

Beacon offers a comprehensive suite of features designed to enhance the employee experience and increase engagement within an organisation. It serves as the core tool, integrating various functionalities to address multiple challenges. The best part, it's all delivered within Teams and SharePoint. No need to go to yet another platform or App outside of M365. Keeping collaboration and communication where your employees already work.

Those key challenges Beacon answers for all internal communicators, digital channel managers and SharePoint engineers are to:

- Design standout SharePoint sites that look better than normal SharePoint
- Simplify news management across global organisations
- Offer news personalisation tailored for the individual
- Manage business mandated tools while customising favourite links and apps for employees."

You may also be interested in...

involv BUILT ON MICROSOFT 365

Lightspeed365 by contentformula

SPROCKET 365

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Contact Monkey

FULLY STANDALONE

REQUIRES SHAREPOINT

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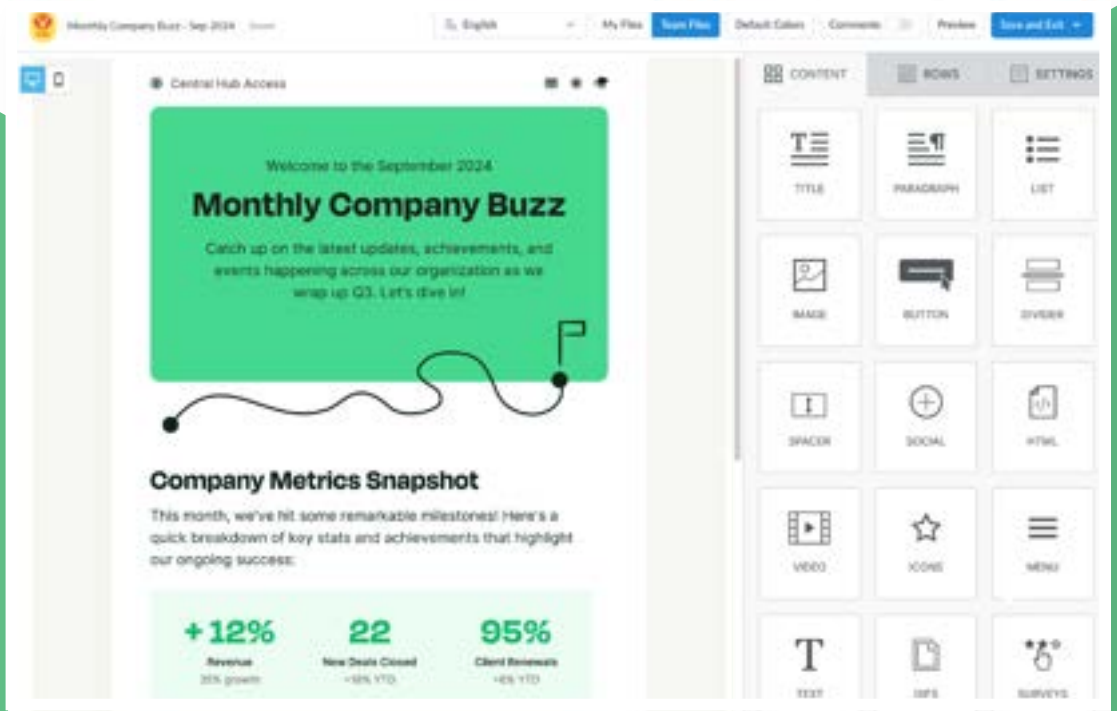
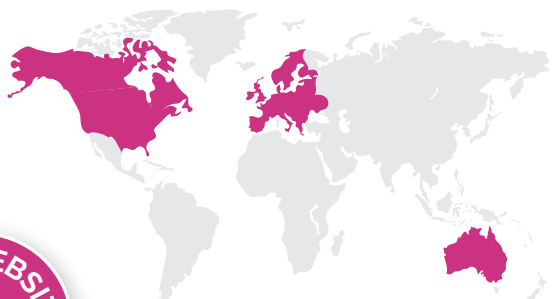


Typical deployment:

1,000 to 5,000

Company locations:



VISIT THE WEBSITE

The product in a nutshell

ContactMonkey is an excellent option for organisations looking to improve email and SMS communications.

CLEARBOX VIEW

ContactMonkey was launched in 2018 by a Canadian vendor and provides organisations with an effective emailing tool. ContactMonkey works well for both Microsoft and Google environments, so it's a viable tool regardless of underlying tech stack. A simple SMS feature for urgent comms is included; we can see the benefit for organisations with a frontline workforce, but this review focuses on the email software.

Admin settings are easy to find and apply, with occasional tooltips for those elements that need further explanation. There is a good deal of control surrounding publishing permissions, which will present associated templates, analytics and other controls. There is a broad range of branding and design options to meet organisational needs; we particularly like that newsletters' tracking URLs can be configured to look like they come from the organisation while retaining full functionality.

Administrators set up templates for organisational 'teams' and there are additional 'sample' templates available that give publishers a quick start but need branding applied. The vendor offers custom graphic design services for creating further templates. Once the template is loaded, publishers drag and drop row layouts and content blocks, then edit content inside each; generative AI is available for content. Buttons, embedded videos and GIFs are among the available blocks, and we like that it's possible to audience target the blocks. Up to five publishers can collaborate at the same time; to prevent clashes, no two people can work on the same block at the same time and it's possible to lock blocks from being edited. Publishers can leave comments for each other, where @mentions will generate an email – we think an additional in-platform notification would be helpful.

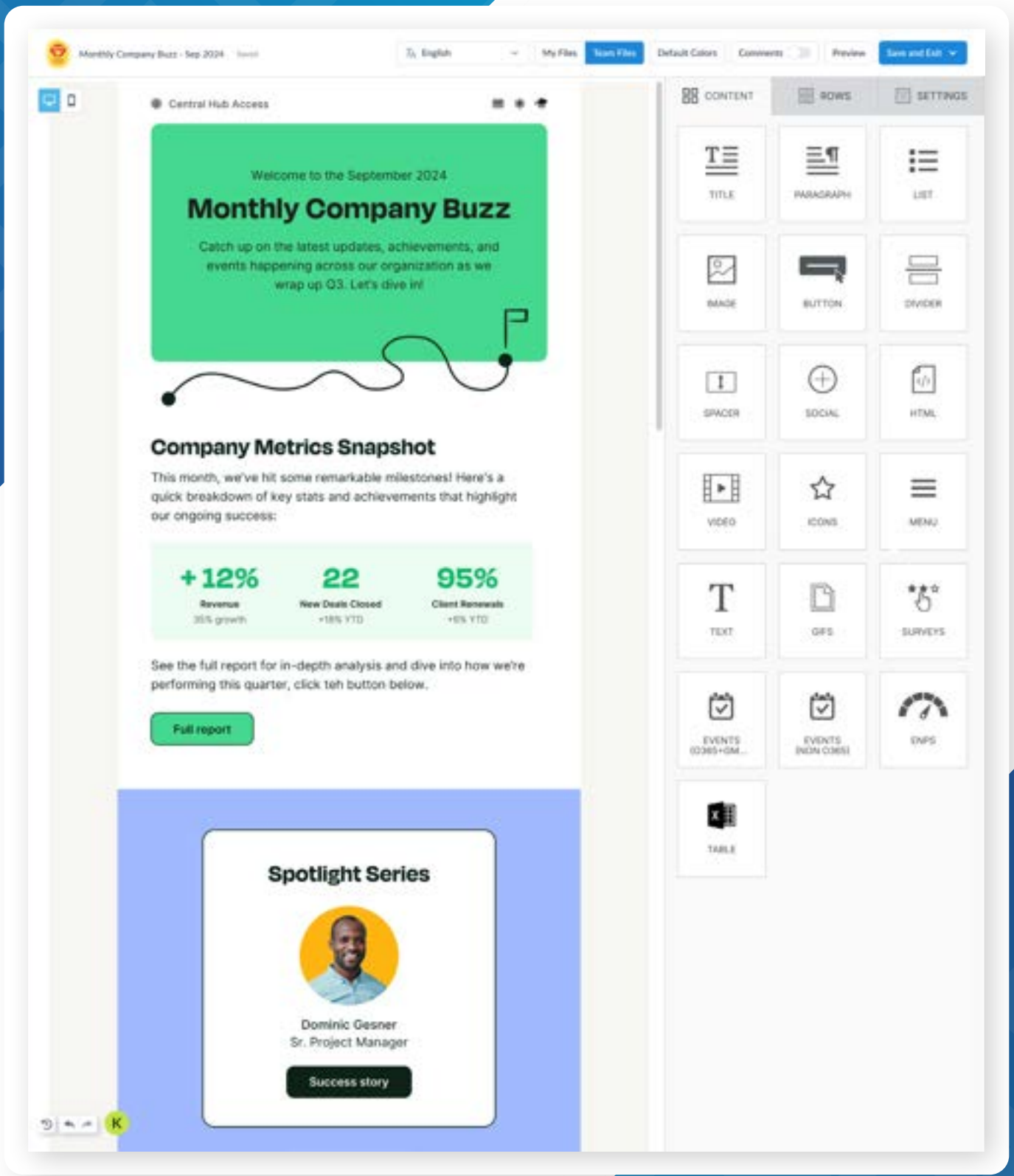
'Surveys' is a content block with simple response options, such as star rating. We like that surveys can be repeated to track trends over time, for example asking how employees are feeling after each company townhall. Employees can expand their responses by leaving comments in an automatically created 'landing page' when the email is sent. 'Event' is another content block that's first created in the back end via a form and includes information such as available spaces. For images, publishers may choose from those curated in the file manager, from free stock photos provided by ContactMonkey or upload their own. There are some simple but helpful image editing tools. It's good that the mobile view can be edited separately so that the content is optimised for each environment.

Once an email is ready, publishers may choose up to three additional language variations, which will auto-translate content and create toggles for each language. The design remains the same, but publishers can amend the wording. When sent, multiple language emails are 'stacked', meaning analytics for all language variants are combined. Each language and audience segment variation can be previewed, including in dark mode, before being sent.

Organisations typically use either Outlook distribution lists or Google groups, but a CSV upload, HRIS integration (such as Workday) and other integrations via API are available. Any relevant profile field can be used to build an audience using Boolean logic. Publishers then send via the ContactMonkey dashboard, or optionally from within Outlook via an email add-in. On the roadmap is time zone sending, which will schedule comms to arrive with audiences during their working hours. Content can be shared into SharePoint, which will create an associated page, or into Teams, which will take employees to a browser version of the email.

The analytics are extensive, providing insights such as the best time to send an email and to what degree content has been glanced at, skimmed or read properly. Data can be anonymised, but this means one person's activities could be counted multiple times. There are also useful click maps that show the breakdown of activity and the most-clicked locations.

ContactMonkey is available at a good price, particularly for larger organisations, and provides an excellent emailing tool with other helpful communication features alongside. It's easy for publishers to use, works effectively in Microsoft and Google environments and delivers attractive results to employees. Overall, ContactMonkey is a compelling choice for any organisation looking to improve communications with a stand-alone email and SMS tool.


Monthly Company Buzz - Sep 2024
English
My Files
Team Files
Default Colors
Comments
Preview
Save and Exit
Central Hub Access
CONTENT
ROWS
SETTINGS
Welcome to the September 2024
Monthly Company Buzz
Catch up on the latest updates, achievements, and events happening across our organization as we wrap up Q3. Let's dive in!
Company Metrics Snapshot
This month, we've hit some remarkable milestones! Here's a quick breakdown of key stats and achievements that highlight our ongoing success:
+12%
Revenue
35% growth
22
New Deals Closed
+18% YTD
95%
Client Renewals
+6% YTD
See the full report for in-depth analysis and dive into how we're performing this quarter, click teh button below.
Full report
Spotlight Series
Dominic Gesner
Sr. Project Manager
Success story
TITLE
PARAGRAPH
LIST
IMAGE
BUTTON
DIVIDER
SPACER
SOCIAL
HTML
VIDEO
ICONS
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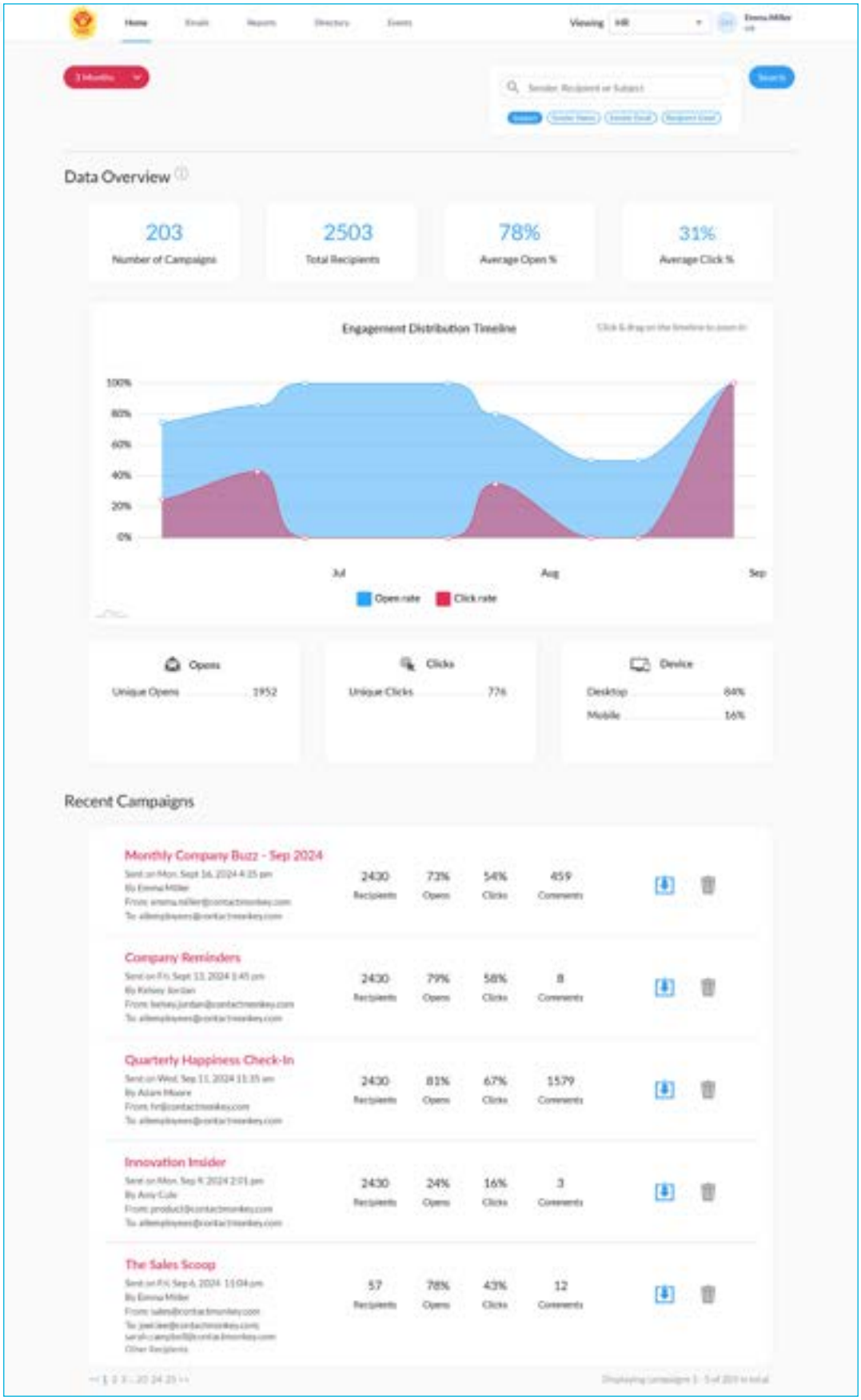
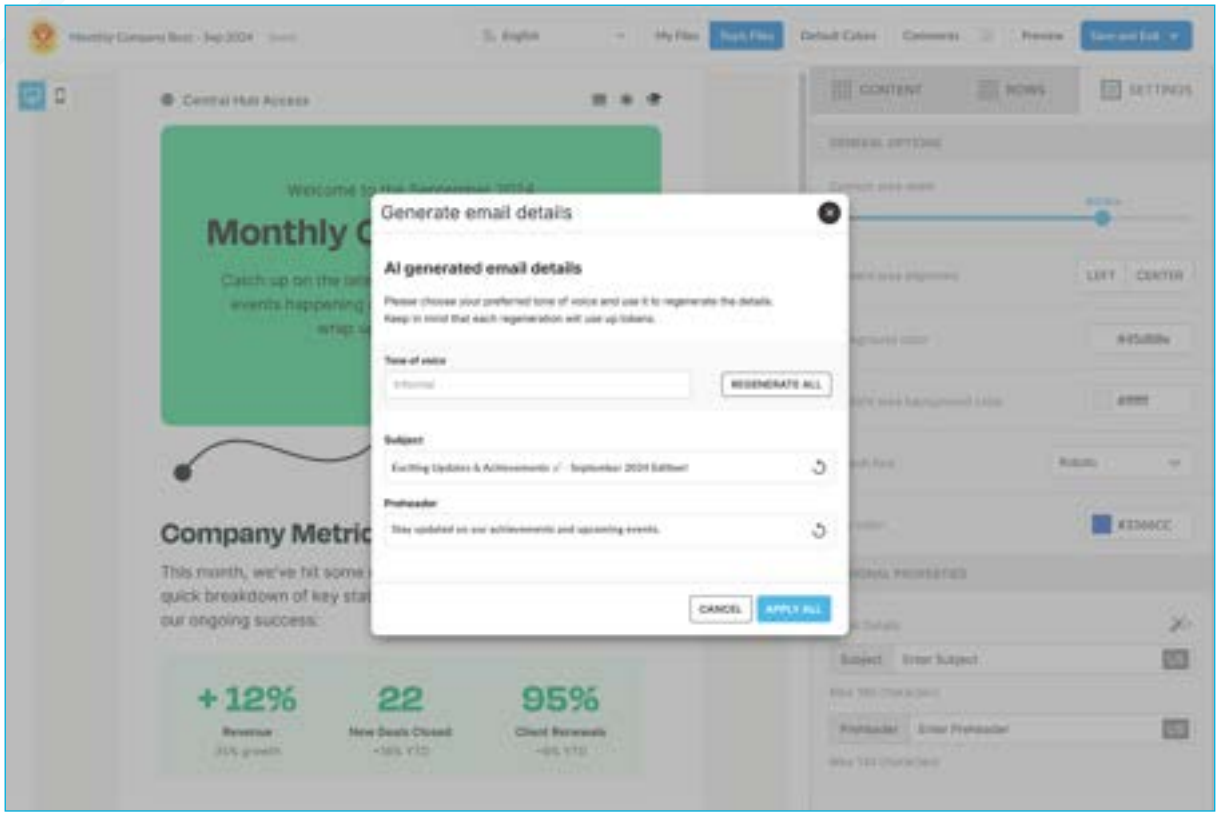
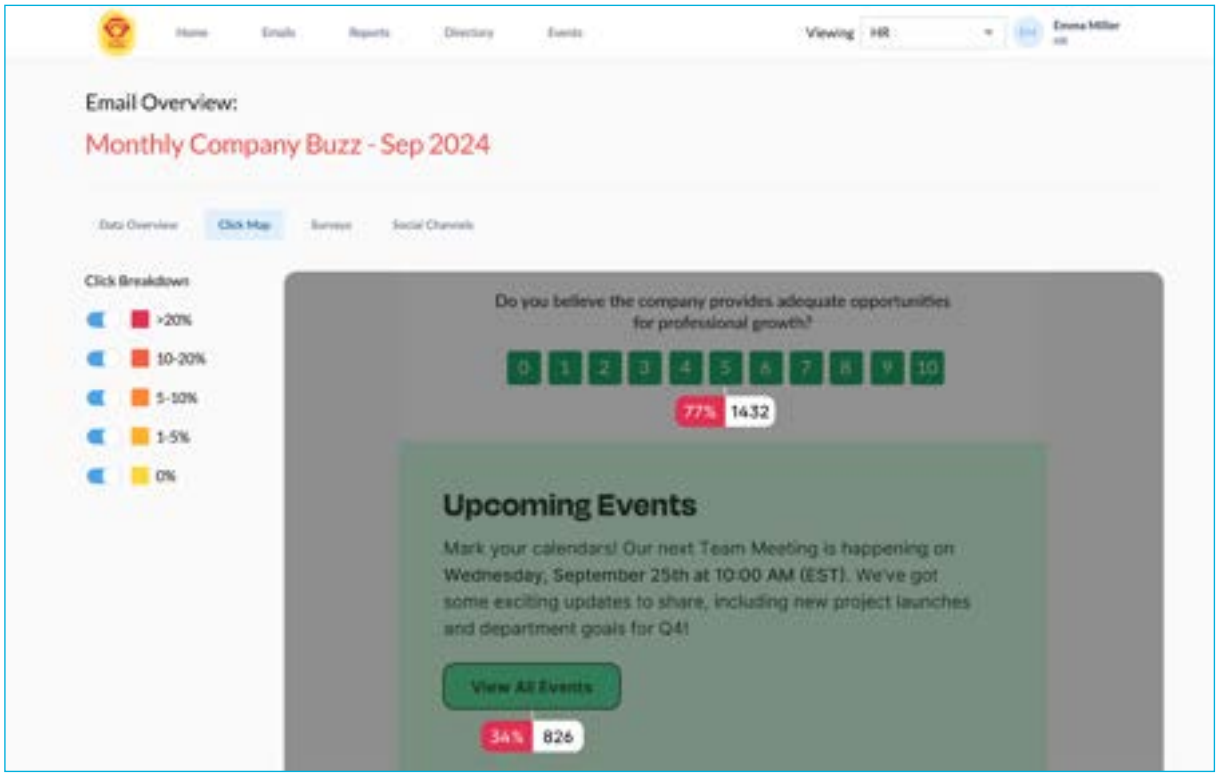
EVENTS (O365+GM...
EVENTS (NON O365)
ENPS
TABLE



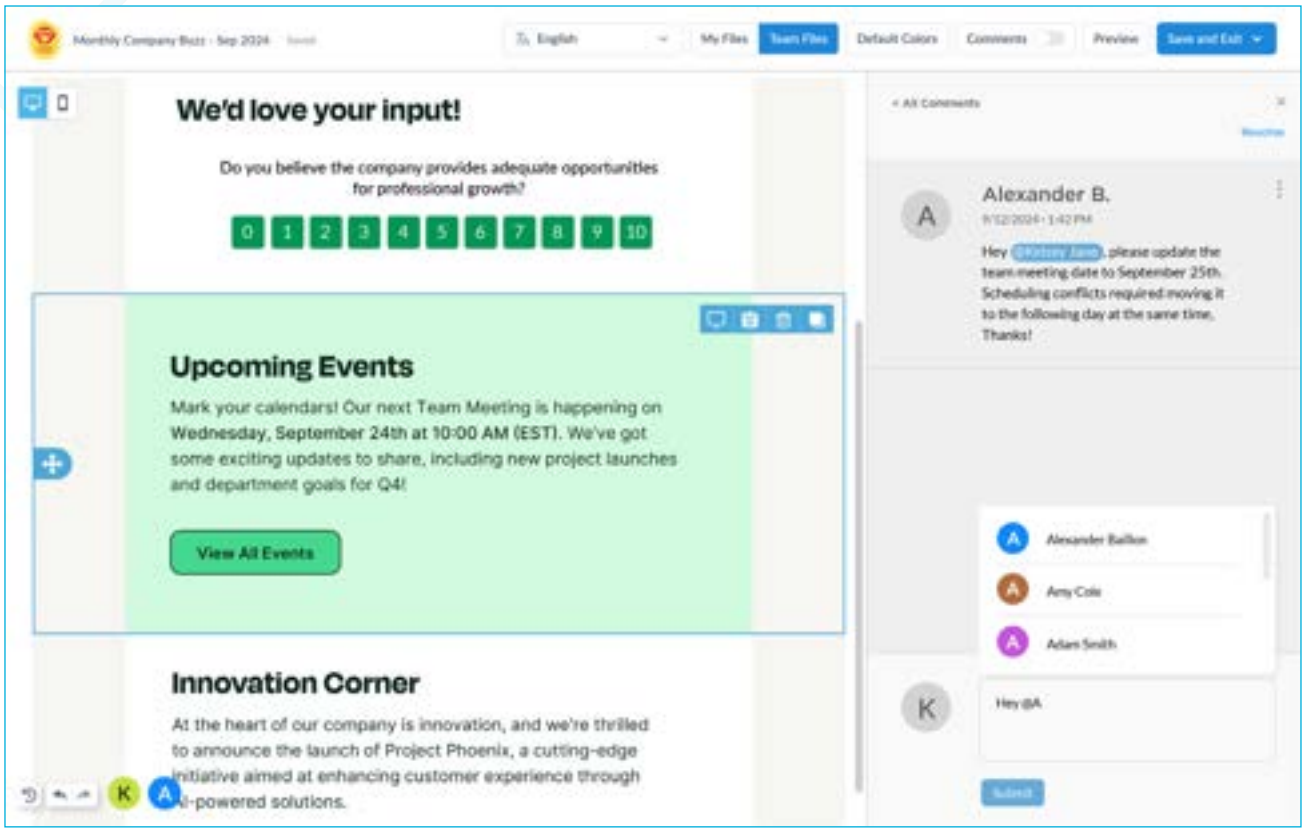
The admin 'Home' dashboard displays an overview of recently sent emails and a summary of analytics.



Generative AI is available to help with the email subject.



Analytics are strong in ContactMonkey – we like the 'Click Map' view that helps publishers see what's popular in their content.



Up to five people can work on a newsletter at any one time and there are a range of features to support collaborative working.

Pricing

PRICE BAND	
1,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
5,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
20,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
50,000 users	$ $ $ $ $

These prices are indicative, offering a comparison of the products featured in this report only. Please contact the vendor for a bespoke quote.

PRICING MODEL

Subscription - price band based on number of users. Based on number of licenses needed for sending plus number of recipients you're sending to. Onboarding fee in year one.

DISCOUNTS

Charities and non-profit organisations, multi-year commitments.

COSTS TYPICALLY

Weighted towards the start (during the 'project phase'), then much lower for the remaining term.

PRICE INCLUDES

Every ContactMonkey customer is assigned a Customer Success Manager, dedicated to helping deliver successful internal communications programs. This includes monthly check-ins and quarterly reviews to help customers understand what's working and how to improve.

Product type

Ready-to-run, installed in days

Branding opportunities

All branding, complex options

Base systems

Fully standalone

Requires SharePoint

Other*

*Works with Gmail and Outlook

Sectors

Energy and utilities

Healthcare

Information technology

Science and pharmaceuticals

Teaching and education

COMPANY AND PRODUCT

Company details

Company
ContactMonkey

ISO 27001 certified
No

Data residency
Australia; Europe (excluding UK); USA

Company founded
2012

Product launched
2018

Typical client size
1,000 to 5,000

Largest deployment so far
Global IT Consulting and Services firm with 1,083 active global sending users. They have unlimited licenses included with their contract and are sending to over 50,000 employees.

Customers
Please see their website for details.

Partner locations
None

Company locations
Toronto, Canada (HQ), UK, Australia

Product and technical details

Name of product

ContactMonkey

Deployment

Client on-premises	Client private cloud	Microsoft Azure	Amazon Web Services	Vendor-hosted	**Microsoft 365 tenant**	Google Cloud	Other

Authentication supported

Entra ID	ADFS	**Okta**	Open ID	**Oauth**	**G Suite**	Other

App deployment

Google Play store	Apple store	MDM	MAM	Other

Accessibility

Not WCAG 2.1 conformant. Keyboards can be used for navigation; motion animation triggered by interaction can be disabled; alt text is in use for images; individual users can change the font size of what they are seeing; contrast can be set by the individual user; background colours can be set by the individual user.

Document library sources integrated

Box	Dropbox	Google Drive	SharePoint	OneDrive	Other

Optional integrated enterprise search engines

Coveo	Elastic	IBM	Lucidworks	Microsoft	Mindbreeze	Sinequa	Other

User interface multi-language

Machine translation	Pre-configured	Editable	Right to left script supported	Other

Content multi-language

Machine translation for publishers	Machine translation for end users	**Editable machine translation for publishers**	Manual creation for publishers	**Right to left script**	Other

Set-up and support

Set-up process for new clients

Typically can be deployed within 30 minutes.

Current version

Demonstrated to ClearBox: O365 is 4.2.2.8

At January 2025: O365 is 4.2.2.8

Product updates

Minor updates weekly; major updates every month.

Product update process

Depending on the scope of the release, releases may or may not be feature flagged for a gradual roll out. Customers cannot influence timing or opt out.

Reverse-out options

Customer data is deleted within 60 days after contract end as per the data policy.

Technical support

Email support	Phone support	Chat support	Online portal	24/7 support	Office hours only

User community

Nothing specifically for customers, but ContactMonkey does run an annual conference for internal communicators.

Voice of the vendor

ContactMonkey says: "ContactMonkey is an internal email software that integrates seamlessly with Outlook or Gmail. Our mission is to empower organizations to deliver engaging employee emails effortlessly, bridging the gap between internal communicators and their audiences in mere minutes.

With an intuitive email builder, communicators can craft visually compelling messages, ensuring effective communication without the usual time-intensive content creation process. The software's seamless integration with Outlook or Gmail facilitates an uninterrupted workflow, eliminating the need for server migrations, manual list updates, and the challenges associated with a steep learning curve.

Whether your workforce operates remotely, embraces a hybrid model, or thrives in desk-less roles, ContactMonkey is a versatile solution that caters to diverse communication needs. Communicators can effortlessly deliver captivating company announcements, urgent updates, and essential alerts to every team member, all without requiring design expertise or rigorous involvement from IT teams.

Beyond its efficiency in content creation, ContactMonkey provides a rich array of insights into employee engagement. Through features like click maps, real-time surveys, feedback mechanisms and comprehensive email metrics (open rates, click-through rates, locations, and more), it equips companies with the strategic information for informed decision-making and targeted improvements in internal communications strategies.

In a world where effective internal communications are crucial to business success, ContactMonkey emerges as a powerful tool, empowering organizations to streamline communication processes, elevate employee engagement, and boost productivity. By strengthening interactions within the workforce, ContactMonkey becomes an indispensable asset for sustained success in the dynamic and competitive business landscape."

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diggspace

FULLY STANDALONE

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FRONTLINE FOCUS

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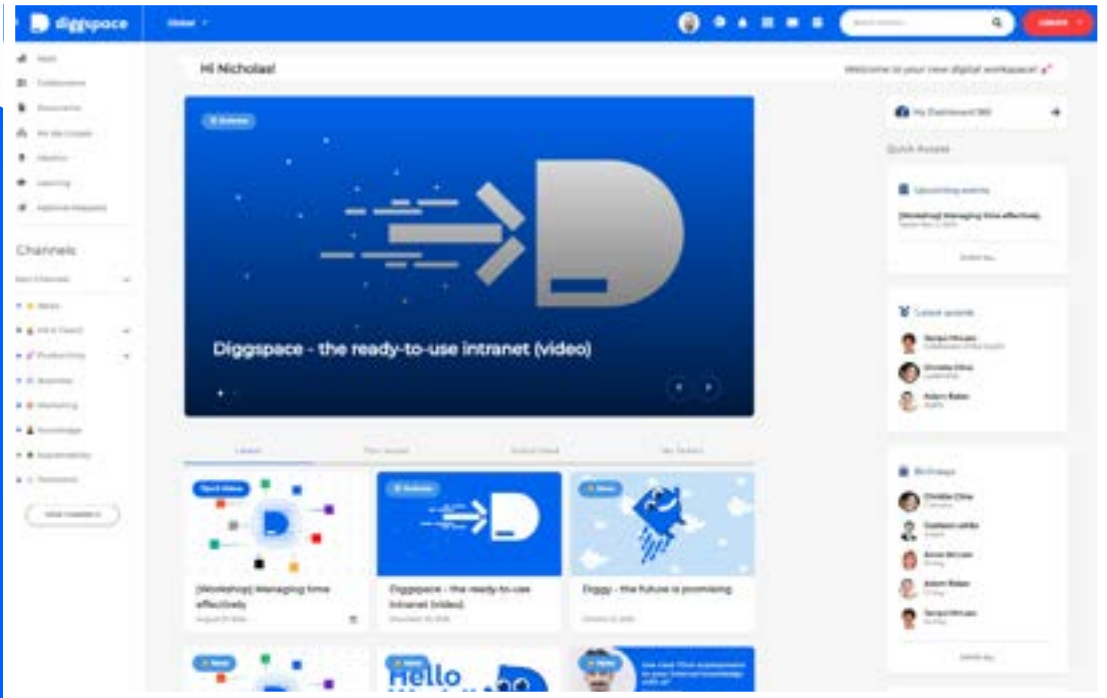
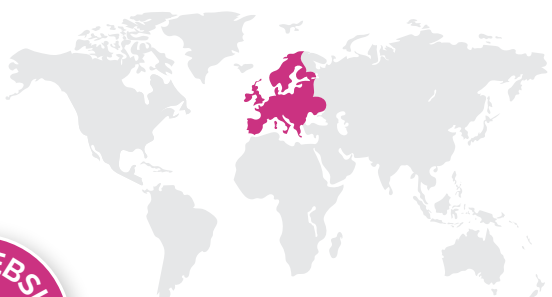


Typical deployment:

1,000 to 5,000

Company locations:



VISIT THE WEBSITE

The product in a nutshell

Diggspace is a simple yet attractive intranet product with enough features on offer to be of interest to small and medium-sized organisations.

CLEARBOX VIEW

Diggspace is an attractive intranet product from the Portuguese company Create IT. The product runs as an independent intranet but also integrates well with Microsoft 365. The user interface is intuitive, with a simple navigation on the left, a central content area and additional widgets in a right-hand column. Overall, the look and feel is pleasant, and branding options will meet most organisations' needs. Mobile and frontline users are supported with a progressive web app; a native app is not part of the offering. The product also includes an AI-powered chatbot called Diggy that will help employees find information stored in Diggspace through natural language questions.

All content in Diggspace is structured into channels; these are flexible groups that can match with a company's departments or locations, but also be used for communities. Company-wide news is typically grouped into a channel that is mandatory for all employees, while other channels can be subscription-based. There are no traditional intranet pages within Diggspace, which is an unusual design choice that makes it difficult to present reference content. To some extent, channels can be used as an alternative to pages, but it's not a natural fit. It is possible to store files in a channel and display them in an associated widget, however.

Creation of news articles is intuitive. A rich text editor with all the expected functions allows authors to create engaging stories. A tagging system is in place, creation and expiry dates can be set and an optional approval workflow is available. There is an overview page that shows a list of all news content, but there is no editorial calendar or other support for internal communicators. There are limited features for multichannel publishing, mainly sharing a news article into MS Teams.

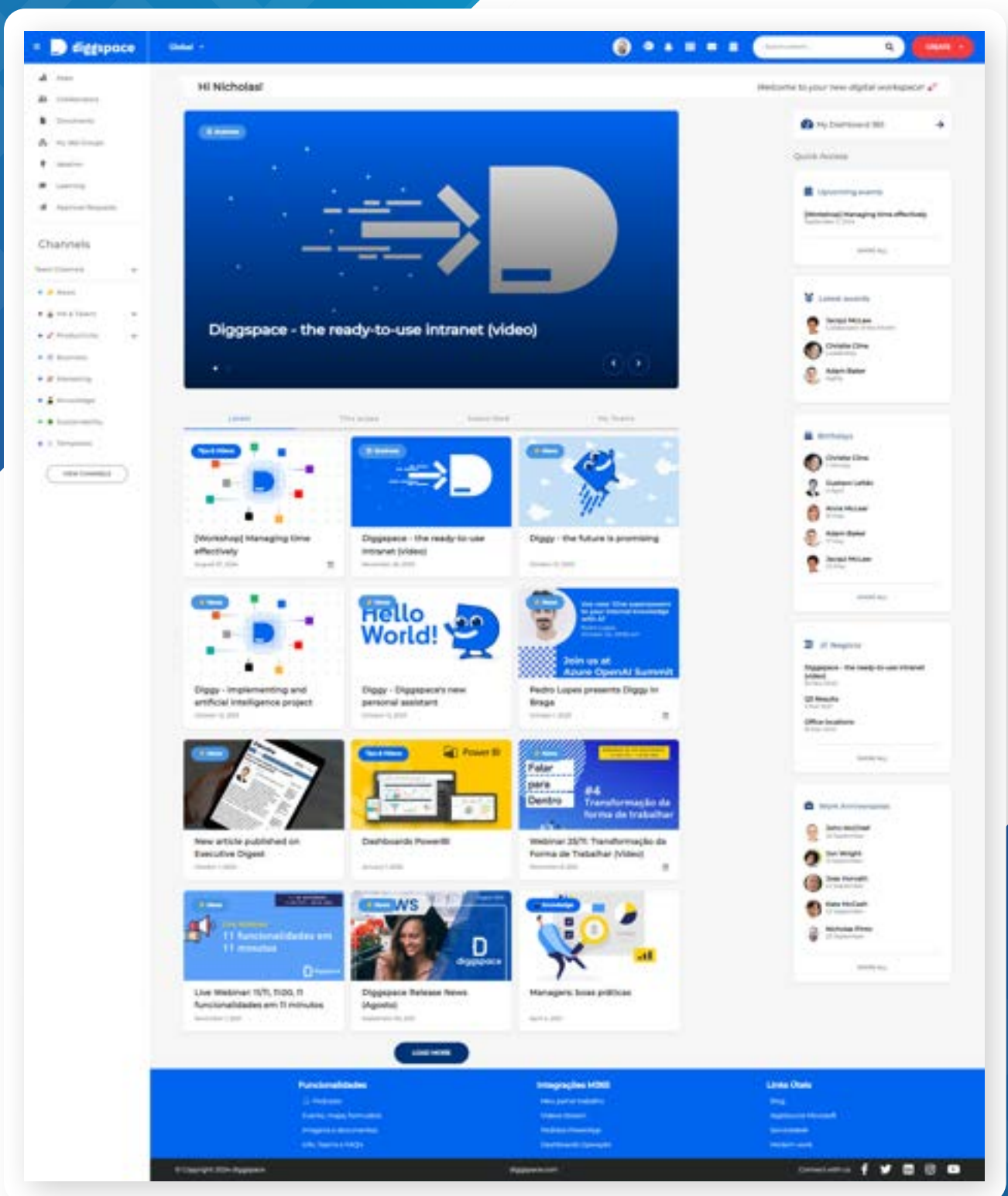
One area where Diggspace stands out is ideation. The product includes a well-designed module for setting up challenges to allow employees to submit ideas and vote on their colleagues' ideas. Ideas are submitted through a structured and configurable form, that optionally includes fields such as 'potential benefits' and 'necessary investments'. This encourages employees to think their ideas through in a structured way and ensures consistency across all submissions. At the end of a campaign, admins pick the winning idea for implementation. A badge can be awarded to employees with winning ideas, although this is currently a manual step. Other types of badges are also available within Diggspace, both for top-down and peer-to-peer recognition.

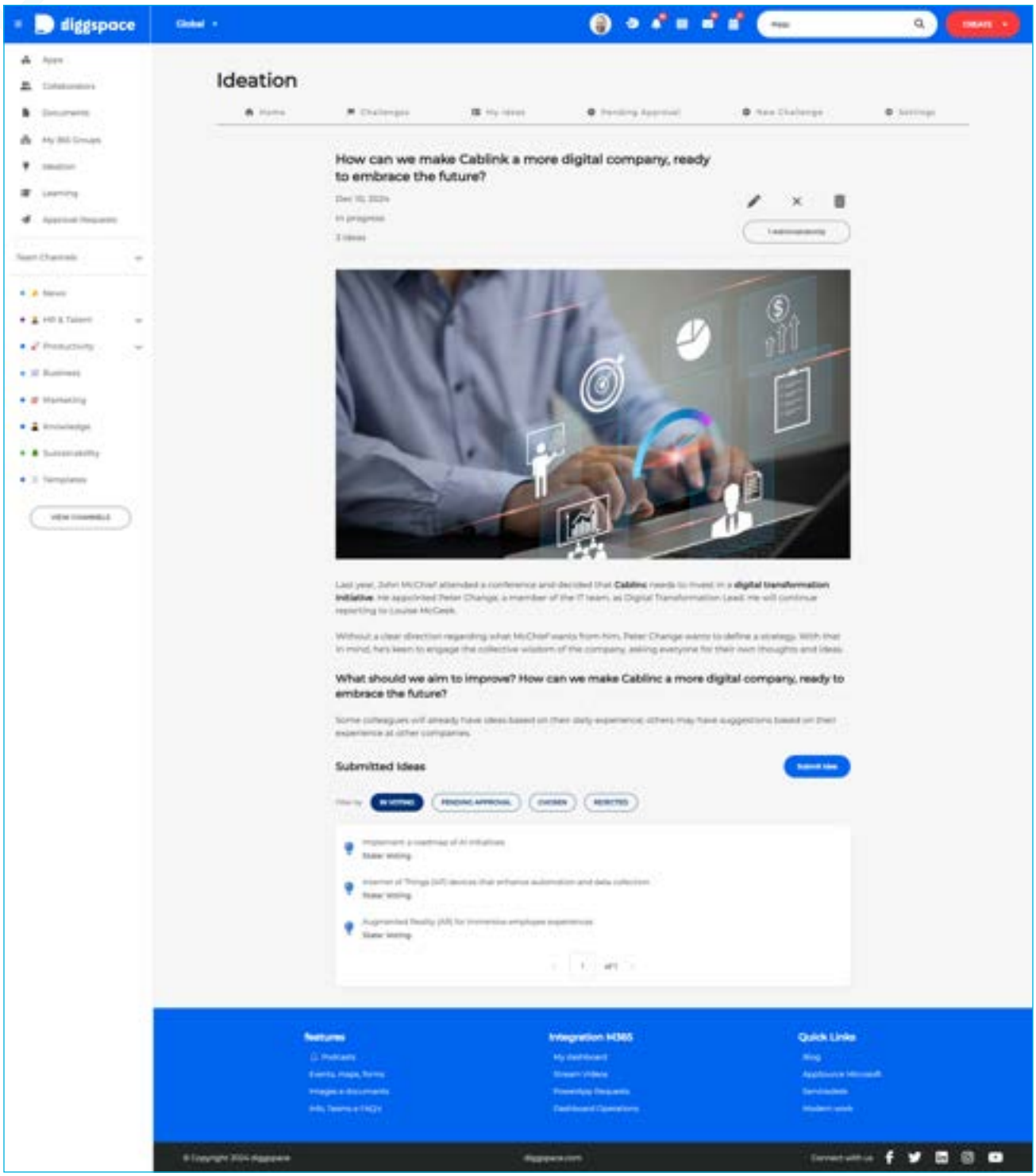
Another feature that we really like is the integrated learning module. Admins can set up courses consisting of different chapters, each with the option to include instruction videos and a quiz at the end. Progress made by employees is tracked and can be exported into an Excel sheet. We believe that small and medium-sized organisations will find this a useful, lightweight alternative to a fully featured LMS.

Integrations with external platforms focus on Microsoft 365 and include an attractive M365 dashboard (see the screenshots for an example), as well as various integrations with Teams. Search results from Microsoft 365 can be displayed alongside the platform search results, which is useful. For business applications, there is a simple launchpad area where links to external platforms can be configured.

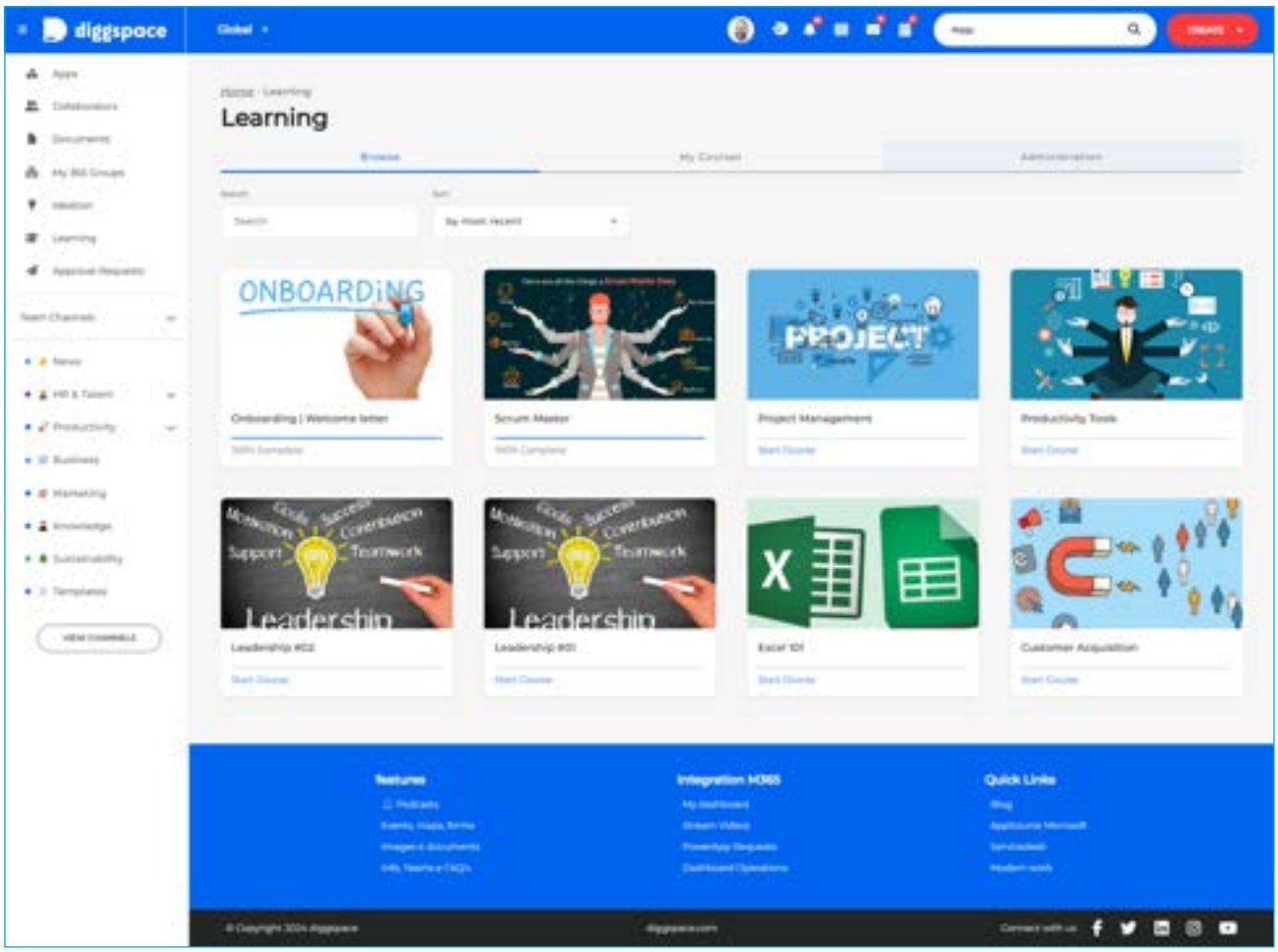
The experience for administrators is straightforward and offers a good degree of flexibility and control. There is a useful overview page for managing the content life cycle, and another overview to moderate comments on articles. Support for a multilingual setup is limited though, and analytics reports are basic.

Overall, we found Diggspace a pleasant intranet product with a couple of well-designed features that make it stand out. While the product does not have the breadth and depth of functionality as other products in this report, we believe it has enough to offer to be of interest to small and medium-sized organisations looking for a simple intranet product that's easy to use by employees and straightforward to manage by admins.

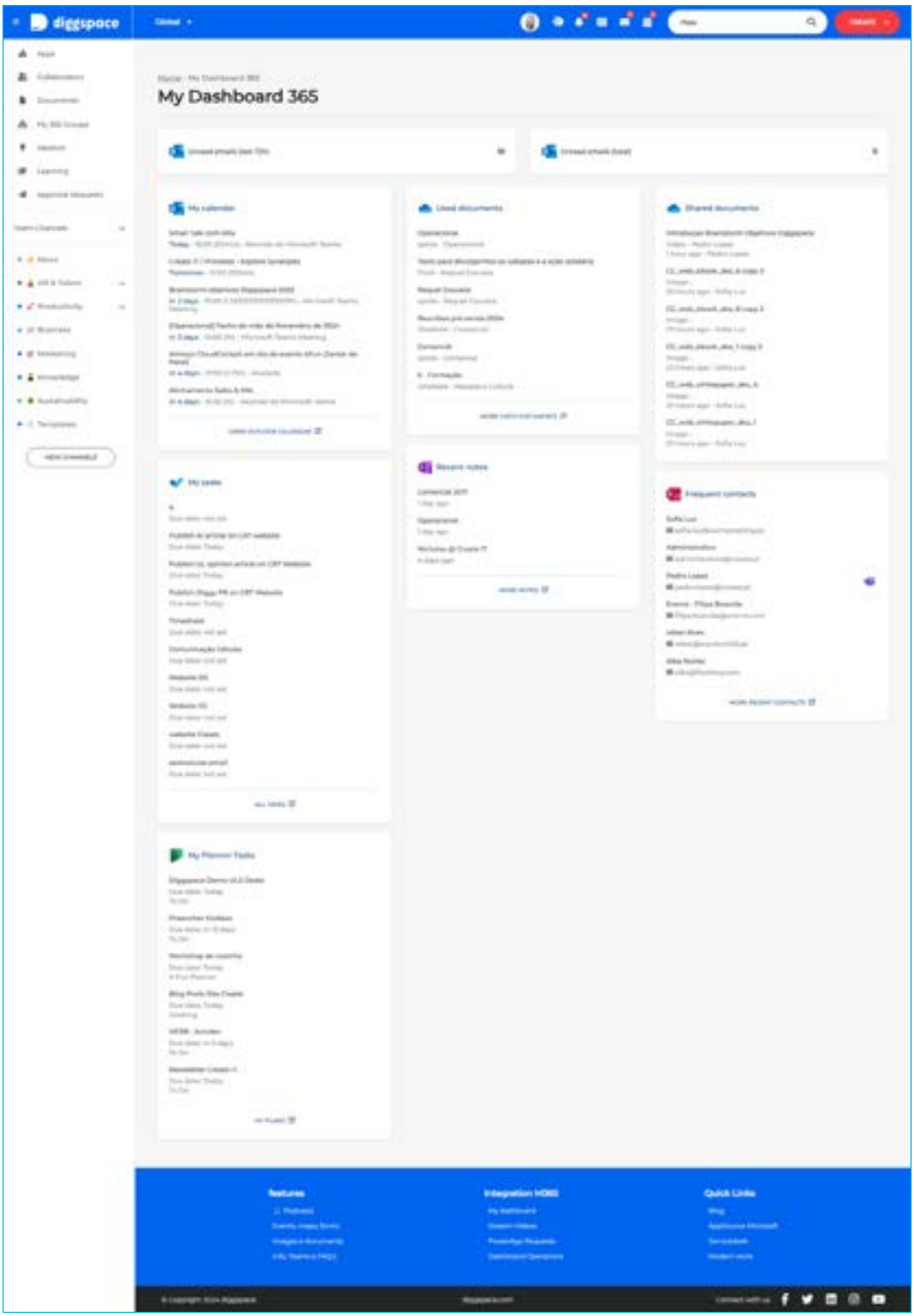

diggspace
Hi Nicholas!
Diggspace - the ready-to-use intranet (video)
Channels
[Workshop] Managing time effectively
Diggspace - the ready-to-use intranet (video)
Diggy - the future is promising
Diggy - Implementing and artificial intelligence project
Hello World!
Diggy - Diggspace's new personal assistant
Join us at Azure OpenAI Summit
Pedro Lopes presents Diggy in Braga
New article published on Executive Digest
Dashboards PowerBI
Webinar 25/11: Transformação da Forma de Trabalhar (Vídeo)
Live Webinar 15/11, 11:00, 11 funcionalidades em 11 minutos
Diggspace Release News (Agosto)
Managers: boas práticas
Funcionalidades
Integrações M365
Links Úteis



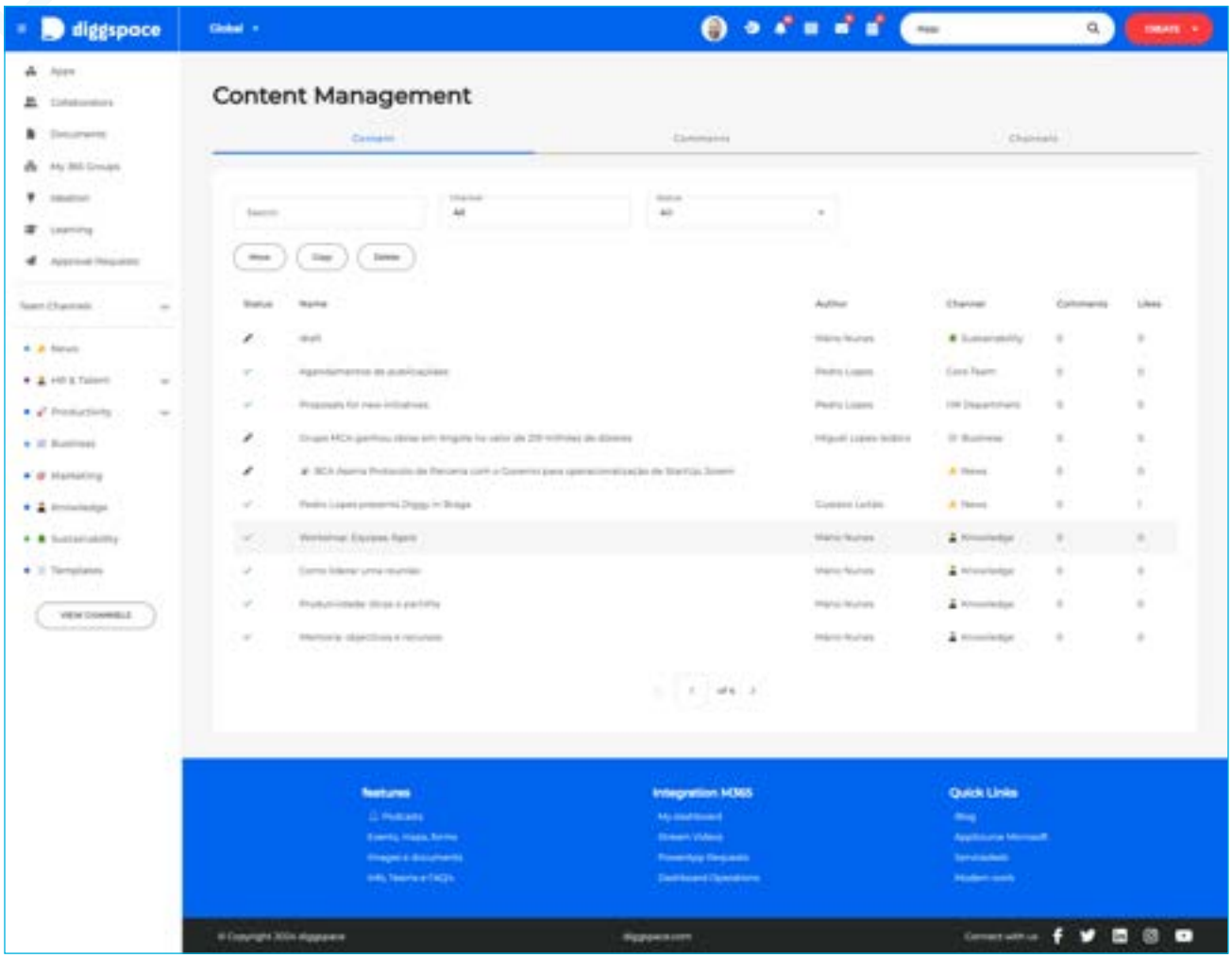
Diggspace includes an ideation module where authorised administrators set up campaigns. Employees submit their ideas and vote on those of their colleagues.



An integrated learning module allows admins to set up a variety of courses, including an onboarding program.



Diggspace integrates well with Microsoft 365. It includes a comprehensive dashboard with personalised information from various M365 applications.



From this overview page, editors and content owners can get a quick overview of the engagement with their content, as well as access to content life cycle controls.

Pricing

PRICE BAND	
1,000 users	$ $
5,000 users	$ $
20,000 users	$ $ $
50,000 users	$ $ $

These prices are indicative, offering a comparison of the products featured in this report. Please contact the vendor for a bespoke quote.

PRICING MODEL

Subscription – price band based on number of users; adoption workshops are one-off payments.

DISCOUNTS

Multi-year commitments; charities and non-profit organisations.

COSTS TYPICALLY

Fairly evenly spread across three years.

PRICE INCLUDES

Nothing additional.

Product type

Ready-to-run, installed in hours

Branding opportunities

Good branding, complex options

Base systems

Fully standalone

Requires SharePoint

Other

Sectors

Accountancy, banking and finance

Healthcare

Leisure, sport and tourism

Retail

Transport & Logistics

COMPANY AND PRODUCT

Company details

Company
Create IT

ISO 27001 certified
In progress

Data residency
Europe (excluding UK); Create IT say that they can store client's data in different regions as needed.

Company founded
2001

Product launched
2017

Typical client size
1,000 to 5,000

Largest deployment so far
10,000 users

Customers
Clients include: ULS Coimbra, Victoria Seguros, Medway/MSC, Banco Comercial do Atlântico

Partner locations
N/A

Company locations
Lisbon, Portugal (HQ)

Product and technical details

Name of product

Diggspace

Deployment

Client on-premises	Client private cloud	Microsoft Azure	Amazon Web Services	**Vendor-hosted**	Microsoft 365 tenant	Google Cloud	Other

Authentication supported

Entra ID	ADFS	**Okta**	Open ID	**Oauth**	G Suite	Other

App deployment

Google Play store	Apple store	MDM	MAM	**Other***

*Diggspace can be installed as a PWA (progressive web app).

Accessibility

Not WCAG2.1 conformant. Individual users can change the font size of what they are seeing; alt text is in use for images; keyboards can be used for navigation.

Document library sources integrated

Box	Dropbox	Google Drive	**SharePoint**	**OneDrive**	Other

Optional integrated enterprise search engines

Coveo	Elastic	IBM	Lucidworks	Microsoft	Mindbreeze	Sinequa	Other

User interface multi-language

Machine translation	**Pre-configured**	Editable	Right to left script supported	Other

Content multi-language

Machine translation for publishers	Machine translation for end users	Editable machine translation for publishers	**Manual creation for publishers**	Right to left script	Other

Set-up and support

Set-up process for new clients

The process for creating a new client portal is handled by Diggspace and generally takes a few hours. Diggspace will configure the portal with some basic branding and information structure and can provide consulting to help clients set up their portal as they desire.

Version numbers

Demonstrated to ClearBox: October 2024

At January 2025: January 2025

Product updates

Minor updates weekly; major updates every two months.

Product update process

Updates are rolled out to all customers at once. Bigger feature releases can usually be enabled or disabled as requested by the customer, but the feature is always updated.

Reverse-out options

Diggspace currently do not have a process for exporting data but will make an effort to fulfil if it is requested by the client.

Technical support

Email support	Phone support	Chat support	**Online portal**	24/7 support	**Office hours only***

*Portuguese office hours

User community

None

Voice of the vendor

Create IT says: "Diggspace is a digital platform designed to improve team communication and engagement within hybrid workplaces. It excels at providing a customisable communication portal with seamless integrations for Microsoft 365 and an AI assistant called Diggy. The product addresses business challenges such as improving internal communication, enhancing productivity and centralising company resources, while offering tools for employee development."

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fellow digitals

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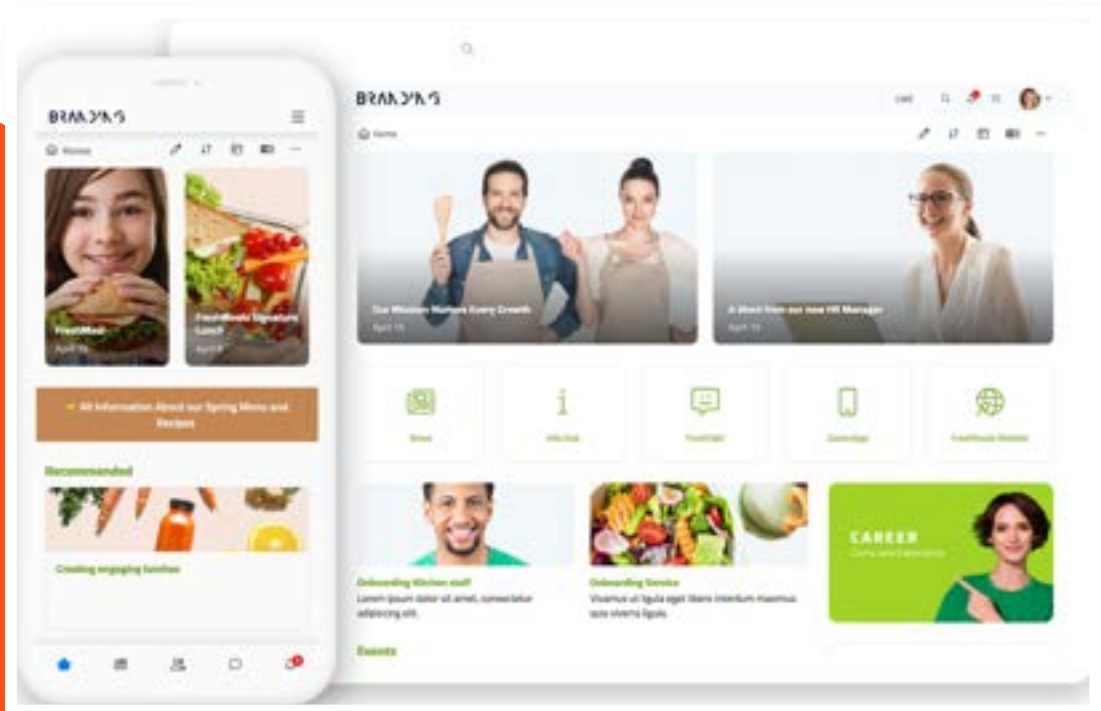
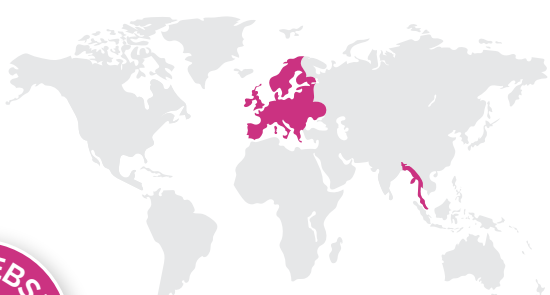


Typical deployment:

1,000 to 5,000

Company locations:



VISIT THE WEBSITE

The product in a nutshell

Fellow Intranet is a good option for organisations with a largely frontline workforce that effectively balances communications, task management, and training delivery.

CLEARBOX VIEW

Fellow Intranet is a mobile-first, lightweight intranet platform designed to support dispersed frontline employees. Employees can access Fellow Intranet via email and password, access code, or through Microsoft Teams - making it a flexible option for part-time, seasonal, or pre-boarding employees who may not have network credentials. Its strength lies in delivering timely information, training, and tasks to non-desk workers in their preferred language. For example, employees can message each other directly in the app, offering an effective communication alternative for those without company email accounts and alternatives to shadow tech like WhatsApp.

The interface is clean and easy to navigate, with a design that works best on mobile devices but will adapt to a basic desktop view. For companies looking for a desktop and mobile experience for their intranet, you may find the desktop is not comprehensive enough.

One of the standout features is the built-in learning management system. It presents training modules in a card-style layout optimised for mobile devices, allowing employees to engage with micro-learning content and complete assessments. We like that completion certificates are generated and displayed on user profiles. A particularly innovative feature allows admins to upload a document which the platform converts into a mobile-friendly learning module using generative AI. The feature can also turn card contents into a video, using a chosen avatar to 'speak' the material.

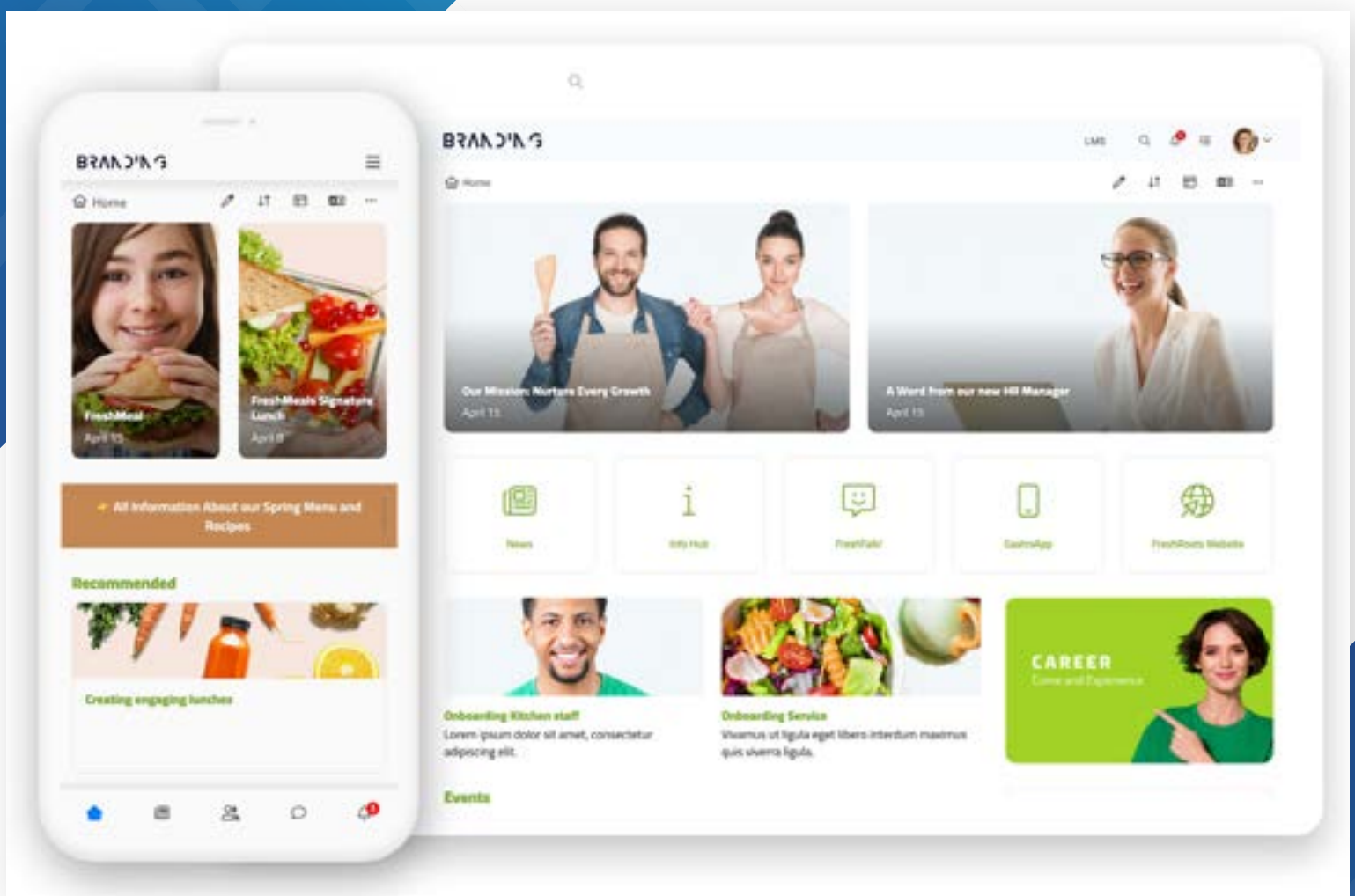
The platform supports publishing of news articles onto the main landing page or to individual Spaces (for example, a Space for regional news). Several basic news templates are available for content publishers and include options for embedding images and other types of media like PowerPoint files. Publishers have the option to notify members of the Space when a new article has been posted.

Content administrators can schedule forms or checklists at specific times, which is especially useful for frontline roles that follow daily routines; for example, a daily health and safety inspection at a restaurant. Submissions can be emailed to a recipient, exported to Excel, or integrated into relevant systems. Another useful frontline feature is the in-built recruitment module, which helps employees see available vacancies and apply alongside external candidates.

Search functionality is available across the entire platform or within individual Spaces. Results are presented in a list with limited refiners and no sorting. To enhance discoverability, admins can create and apply tags to content, files, and Spaces. However, this feature will likely require some form of governance to prevent tag sprawl and maintain consistency. AI-assisted search is on the roadmap and we look forward to seeing how this might enhance the platform's search experience.

Admins have a good range of functionality available to them, and while the platform is designed to be intuitive, guidance during the implementation phase is needed to tailor the platform to their specific needs. For an additional yearly cost, administrators can integrate content from other platforms like SharePoint using APIs and custom widgets built by the vendor. The platform's analytics are basic, focusing on Space usage, but here too there is the option to integrate with external analytics tools for more in-depth insights. Audience 'Groups' can be customised within the admin functionality or imported from a company's existing identity and access management platform. These Groups can then be used for setting up roles within the platform and for managing access to Spaces and content. Administrators also have the option to allow employees to self-join or request access to Spaces, which will add them to Groups.

Overall, Fellow Intranet is a good option for organisations with a largely frontline workforce and limited capacity to manage a complex intranet, while still offering a solid range of features. To ensure long-term success, organisations will need to invest in admin training and establish governance to avoid issues like outdated content and sprawl. However, we think it strikes an effective balance between communication, task management, and training delivery.


BRANDING
Home
FreshMeal
April 15
FreshMeals Signature Lunch
All Information About our Spring Menu and Recipes
Recommended
Creating engaging lunches
BRANDING
LMS
Home
Our Mission: Nurture Every Growth
April 15
A Word from our new HR Manager
April 15
News
Info Hub
FreshTalk!
GastroApp
FreshRooms Website
CAREER
Onboarding Kitchen staff
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Onboarding Service
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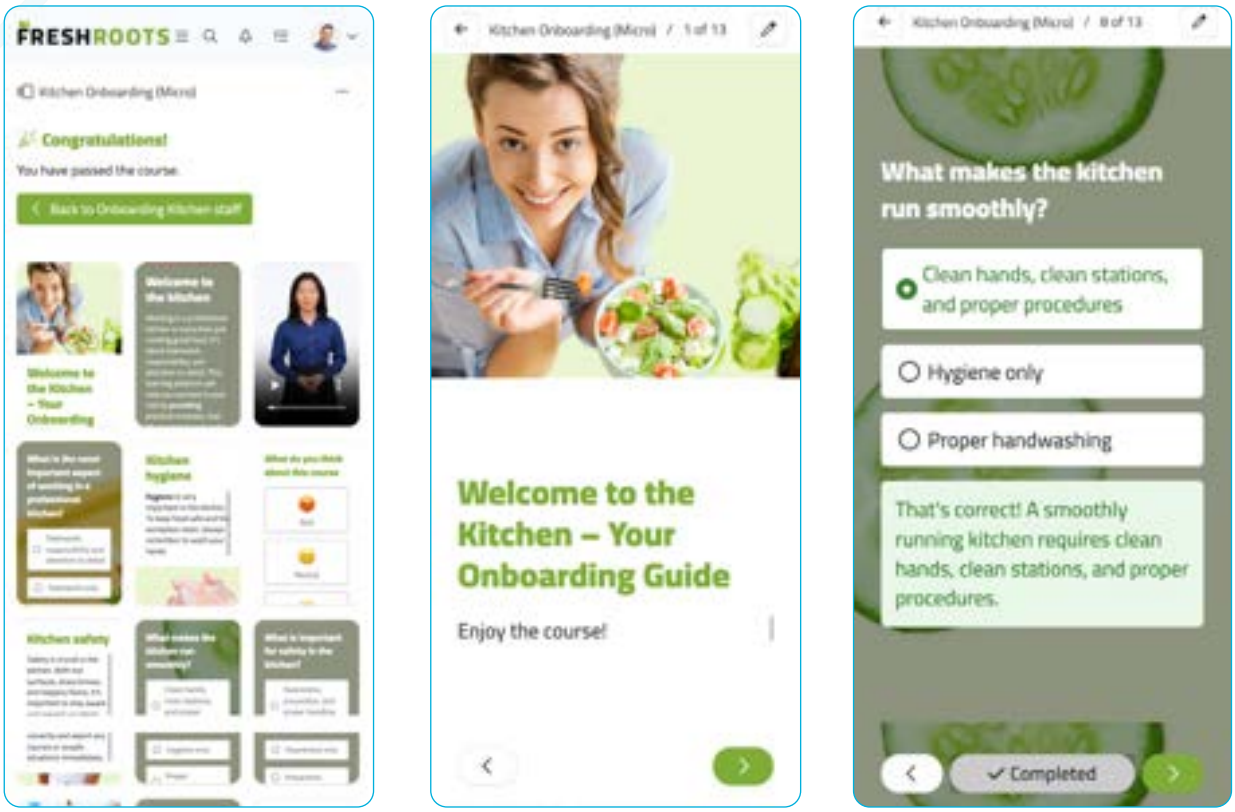
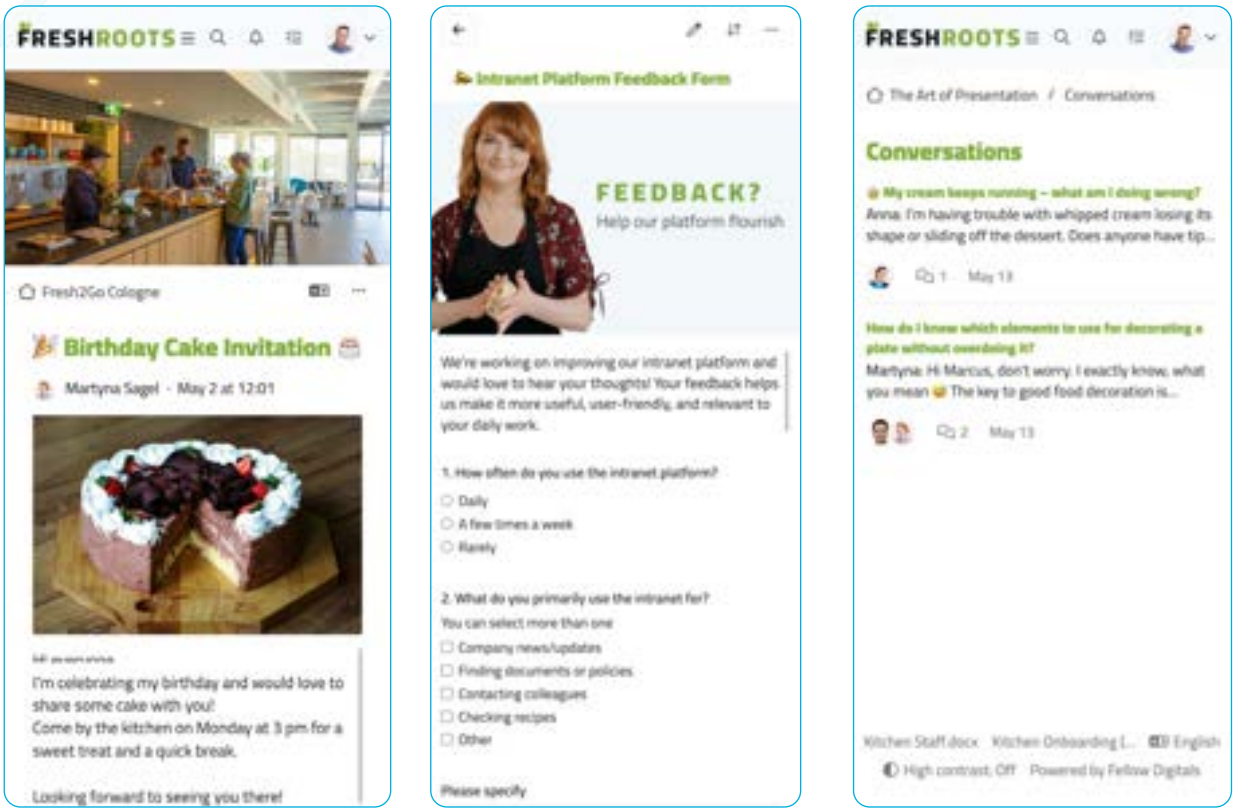
Events

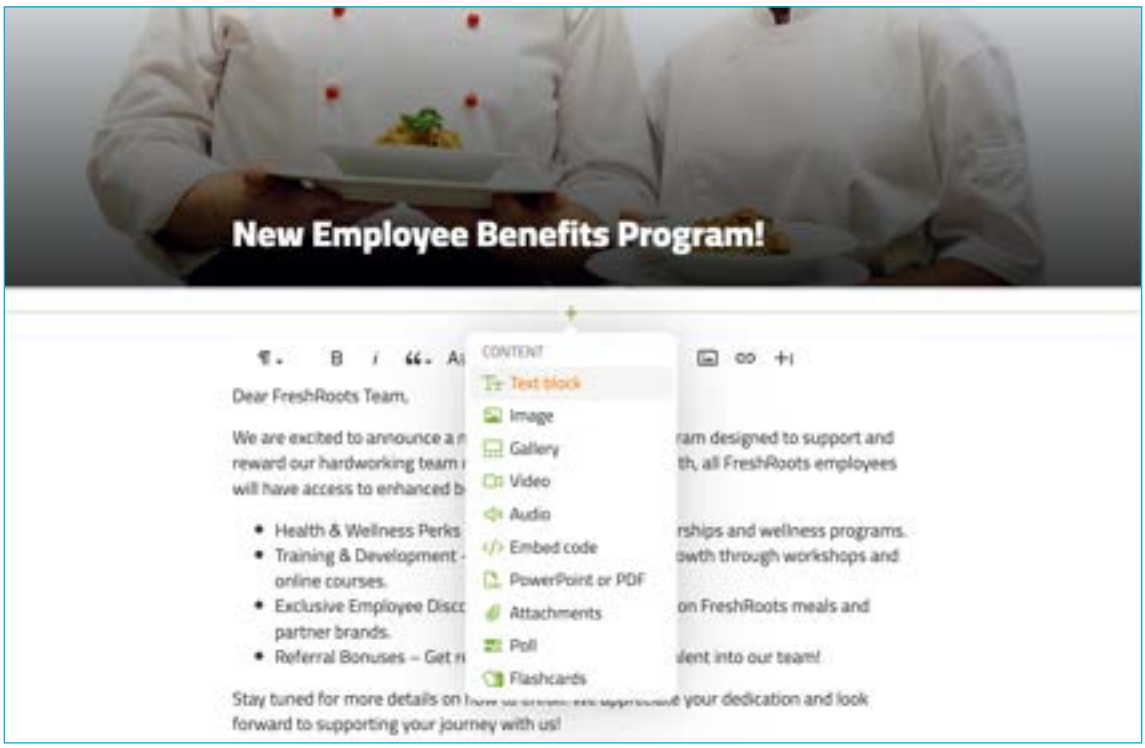


Training modules display in a card-based format that makes it easy to scroll and view available training on a mobile device.

Spaces have the option to be published for external audiences. This image shows an example of a recruiting space for potential hires to learn more about and apply for open roles.



Employees have multiple options for intranet engagement – including commenting on shared content, responding to feedback forms, or joining in asynchronous chat conversations.



When creating a news story, the content editor surfaces in a template view with standard text editing capabilities and provides the ability to embed various types of content into the article.

Pricing

PRICE BAND	
1,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
5,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
20,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
50,000 users	$ $ $ $ $

These prices are indicative, offering a comparison of the products featured in this report only. Please contact the vendor for a bespoke quote.

PRICING MODEL

Subscription – price per user per month.

DISCOUNTS

Charities and non-profit organisations; schools and educational institutes; multi-year commitments.

COSTS TYPICALLY

Fairly evenly spread across three years.

PRICE INCLUDES

Hosting and maintenance (SaaS), ISO certified, including app, SLA.

Product type

Ready-to-run, installed in hours

Branding opportunities

All branding, complex options

Base systems

Fully standalone	Requires SharePoint	Other

Sectors

Engineering and manufacturing	Healthcare	Hospitality and events management	Public services, government and administration	Teaching and education

COMPANY AND PRODUCT

Company details

Company
Fellow Digitals

ISO 27001 certified
Yes

Data residency
Europe (excluding UK)

Company founded
1997

Product launched
2000

Typical client size
1,000 to 5,000

Largest deployment so far
Diocese of Würzburg, Germany: >30,000 users

Customers
Marché International, AkzoNobel, City of Amsterdam, please see their website for more.

Partner locations
N/A

Company locations
Amsterdam, The Netherlands (HQ); Germany, Switzerland, Singapore, Bangladesh

Product and technical details

Name of product

Fellow Intranet

Deployment

Client on-premises	Client private cloud	Microsoft Azure	Amazon Web Services	**Vendor-hosted**	Microsoft 365 tenant	Google Cloud	Other

Authentication supported

Entra ID	**ADFS**	**Okta**	**Open ID**	**Oauth**	**G Suite**	Other

App deployment

Google Play store	**Apple store**	MDM	MAM	Other

Accessibility

WCAG2.2 conformant

Document library sources integrated

Box	**Dropbox**	**Google Drive**	**SharePoint**	**OneDrive**	Other

Optional integrated enterprise search engines

Coveo	Elastic	IBM	Lucidworks	Microsoft	Mindbreeze	Sinequa	Other*

*Any through our REST-AP

User interface multi-language

Machine translation	Pre-configured	Editable	Right to left script supported	Other

Content multi-language

Machine translation for publishers	Machine translation for end users	Editable machine translation for publishers	Manual creation for publishers	Right to left script	Other

Set-up and support

Set-up process for new clients

One-click installation with a care-package to help tailor the platform to the organisation's needs from 1 week to 3 months.

Current version

Demonstrated to ClearBox: 21

At January 2025: 21

Product updates

Minor updates daily; major updates every two months.

Product update process

All customers at once.

Reverse-out options

We make an export for the client so they can import in another system.

Technical support

Email support	Phone support	Chat support	Online portal	24/7 support	Office hours only*

*Europe and Asia

User community

Live customer event in Amsterdam every 5 years.

Voice of the vendor

Fellow Digitals says: "In today's digital workplace, organisations often struggle to keep their people informed, connected, and continuously learning. That's where Fellow Digitals steps in.

Our platform helps employees share knowledge, stay up to date with company news, and collaborate—anytime, anywhere. By bringing communication and learning together in one intuitive environment, we help businesses unlock their full potential through their people.

Since 1997, we've been developing smart digital solutions to support modern ways of working. Our core product, Fellow Intranet, is a proven, user-friendly communication platform used by over 500,000 people across various industries and countries. It connects employees across departments and locations, making information accessible and collaboration easy.

A powerful addition to our intranet is the e-learning add-on—a welcome enhancement that supports onboarding, training, and ongoing employee development. With this extension, companies can create a dynamic and competitive learning community. New hires get up to speed faster, teams grow stronger, and everyone has the opportunity to learn and contribute within the same digital space.

The result is a hassle-free platform that covers the full employee experience—from internal news and knowledge sharing to training and team building. No switching between tools, no barriers to learning—just one seamless platform where people connect and grow.

What sets us apart is our people-first approach. At Fellow Digitals, we believe technology should feel human. Our motto, "succeeding together", reflects our commitment to building inclusive digital experiences that empower everyone—regardless of time, location, or ability—to participate and thrive.

By the way, we're proud to have been honoured with the Dutch Interactive Award 2025 for outstanding usability and accessibility with this platform —an exciting milestone that confirms the impact we make together with our customers."

You may also be interested in...

Blink. Flip MangoApps

Back to index

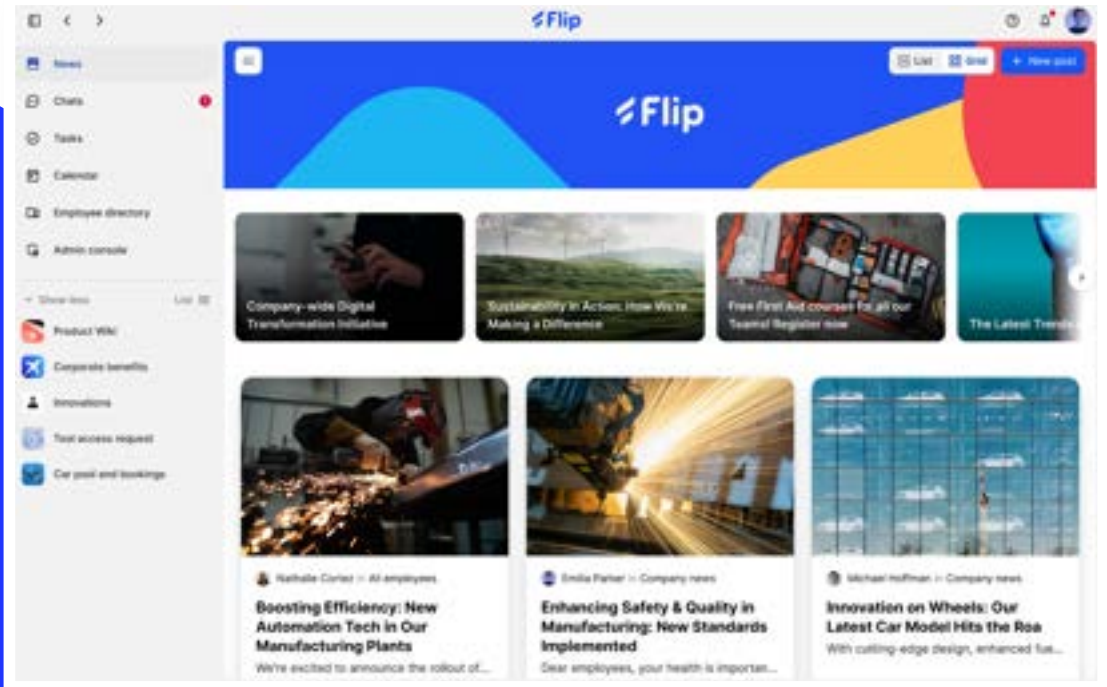
Flip

FULLY STANDALONE

REQUIRES SHAREPOINT

FRONTLINE FOCUS

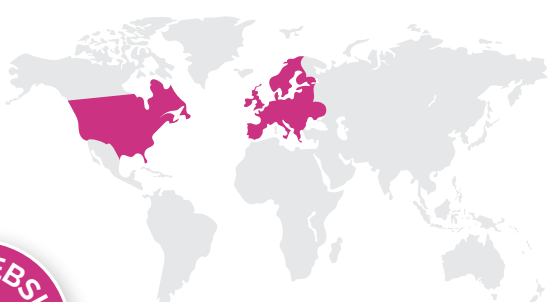
OTHER



Typical deployment:

5,000 to 10,000

Company locations:



VISIT THE WEBSITE

The product in a nutshell

Flip is a richly featured mobile-first platform that also has a very capable desktop experience. It will appeal to organisations with a large frontline workforce who need to get things done via a mobile app.

CLEARBOX VIEW

Flip is a mobile-first employee experience platform that the vendor describes as a "frontline employee super app". It aims to be the starting point for employees to read news, chat with colleagues and complete other tasks, such as swapping shifts, while minimising the need to switch apps. From what we've seen it does this job well.

Flip provides flexible options for enrolment to support frontline workers (who have no company email or mobile number) alongside those who are desk-based. Employees can be enrolled by using a QR code and unique information (such as employee ID) for passwordless authentication. Subsequent access can be via biometrics.

The experience feels contemporary and familiar on both mobile and desktop. The desktop navigation is via a left-hand column while the mobile app has buttons along the bottom. Navigation menu items can be targeted based on employee groups, for example, chat can be enabled for frontline employees only. User groups provide detailed control over who can see and interact with content. This is particularly useful for organisations with franchises or multiple brands, ensuring employees only see content and branding relevant to them.

News and content publishing is organised and managed using 'Channels'. Employees are a member of Channels (e.g. Global News, Manufacturing News, etc.) based on their role, location, interests etc. which may mandate membership or be opt-in. Each employee gets a collated feed from the Channels they are members of on their home page.

Communicators use a WYSIWYG editor to create 'Posts' that are easy to format, including adding images and video, and preview before publishing. Posts are surprisingly flexible, supporting approval workflows and important Posts can be highlighted at the top of the news feed for a specified duration. Multi-lingual support is provided by machine translation from DeepL, with multiple language publishing on the roadmap. Also on the roadmap is a calendar view of scheduled Posts and AI support for Post creation.

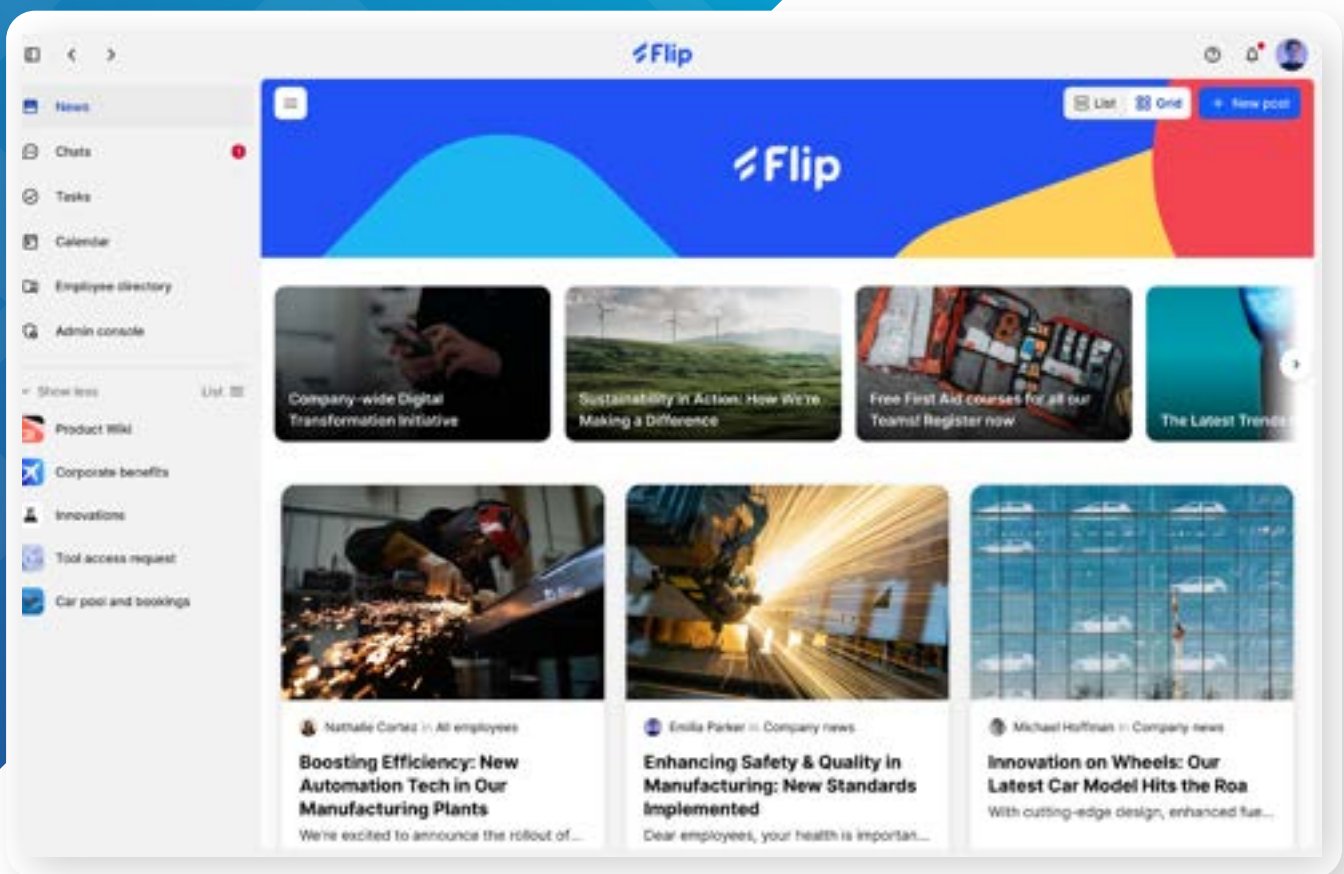
Flip's live streaming is particularly powerful, natively supporting voice and video from multiple 'hosts' who can stream to thousands of employees simultaneously. Recordings of the livestream are available immediately afterwards for those who missed it. Currently hosts must use a desktop to broadcast, with mobile support planned for Q2 2025.

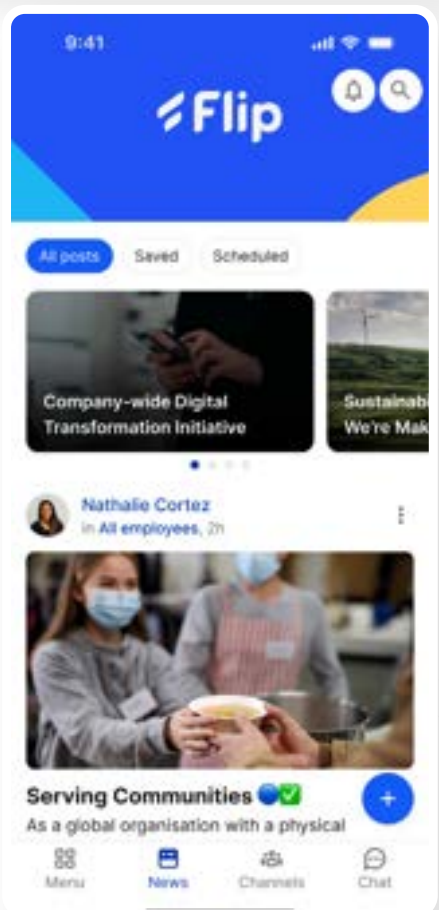
Peer-to-peer collaboration is well supported. Channels can be used for employee communities as well as news, with settings in each Channel to control who can post or comment. Organisations looking to replace messaging apps such as WhatsApp will appreciate the 'Chat' feature which provides a credible alternative, including one-to-one and group chats, voice and video calling, and valuable 'mute conversation' options.

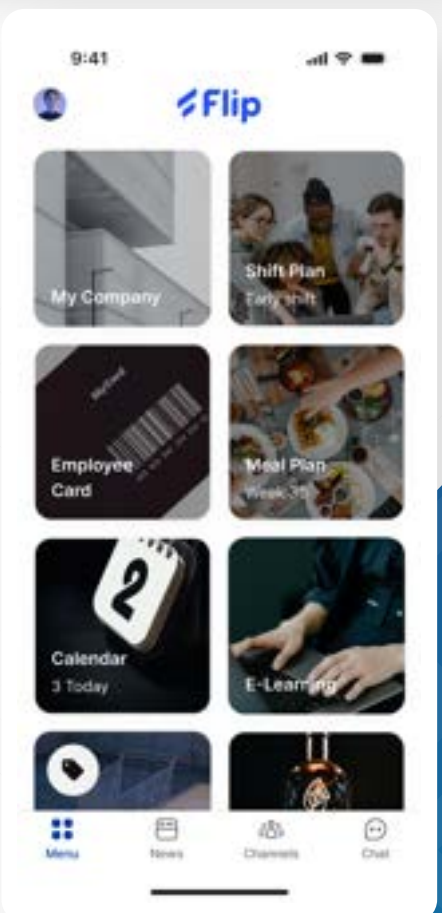
Flip has some useful analytics, such as reporting on how many employees are using the app. We like the analysis of the types of posts and if they include interactivity, such as surveys, tasks or events, and think it will help organisations optimise their communications.

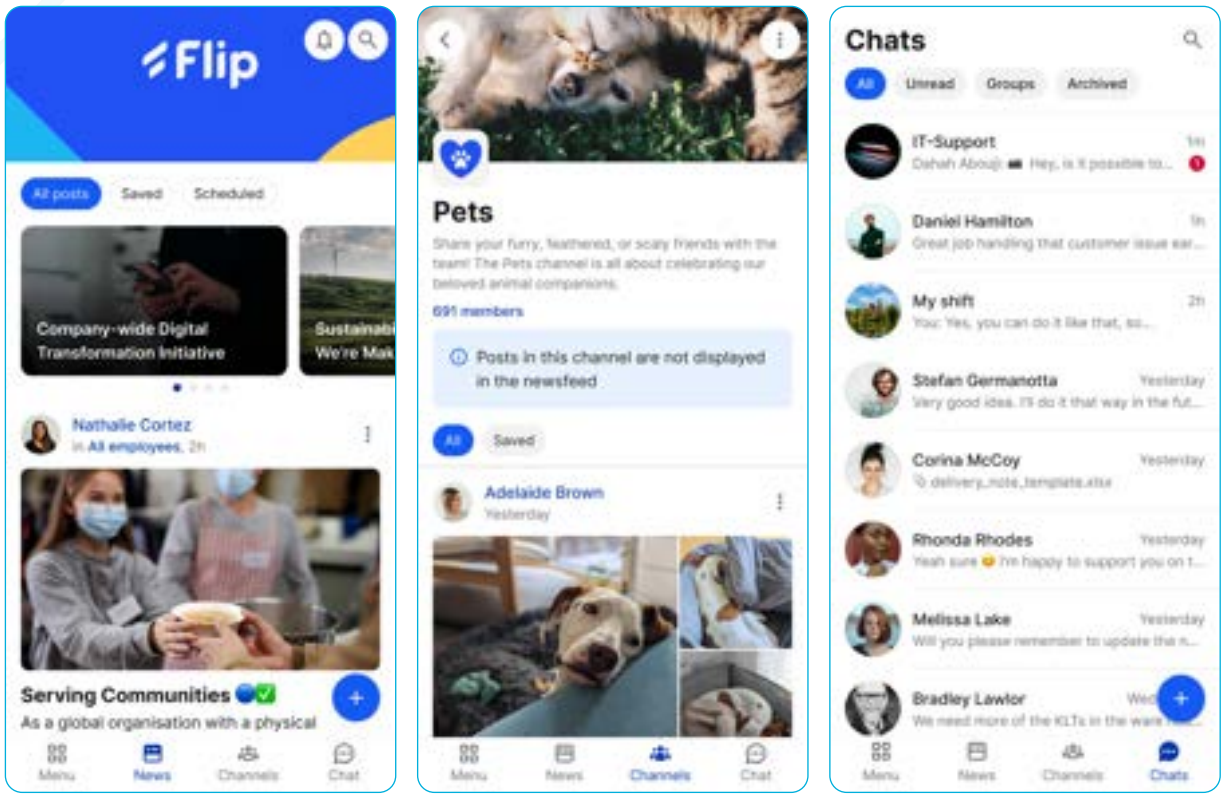
Integrations are not included in the provided pricing but are worth considering. Flip can integrate with business systems for tasks such as checking booked leave or shift swapping. There are connectors for platforms such as Workday, SAP SuccessFactors, and UKG, while a documented API means other services could be integrated with additional effort. Microsoft 365 integrations include an app for Teams and a valuable SharePoint content syndication that doesn't need Microsoft licenses.

Overall, Flip is a comprehensive platform that will appeal to medium to large organisations with a large contingent of frontline employees. The desktop browser experience is very good as well and we hope to have a full review of the product in future editions of this report. It's worth noting that even without the integrations it's in our second highest pricing tier but should still represent good value for organisations that can take advantage of its rich feature set.

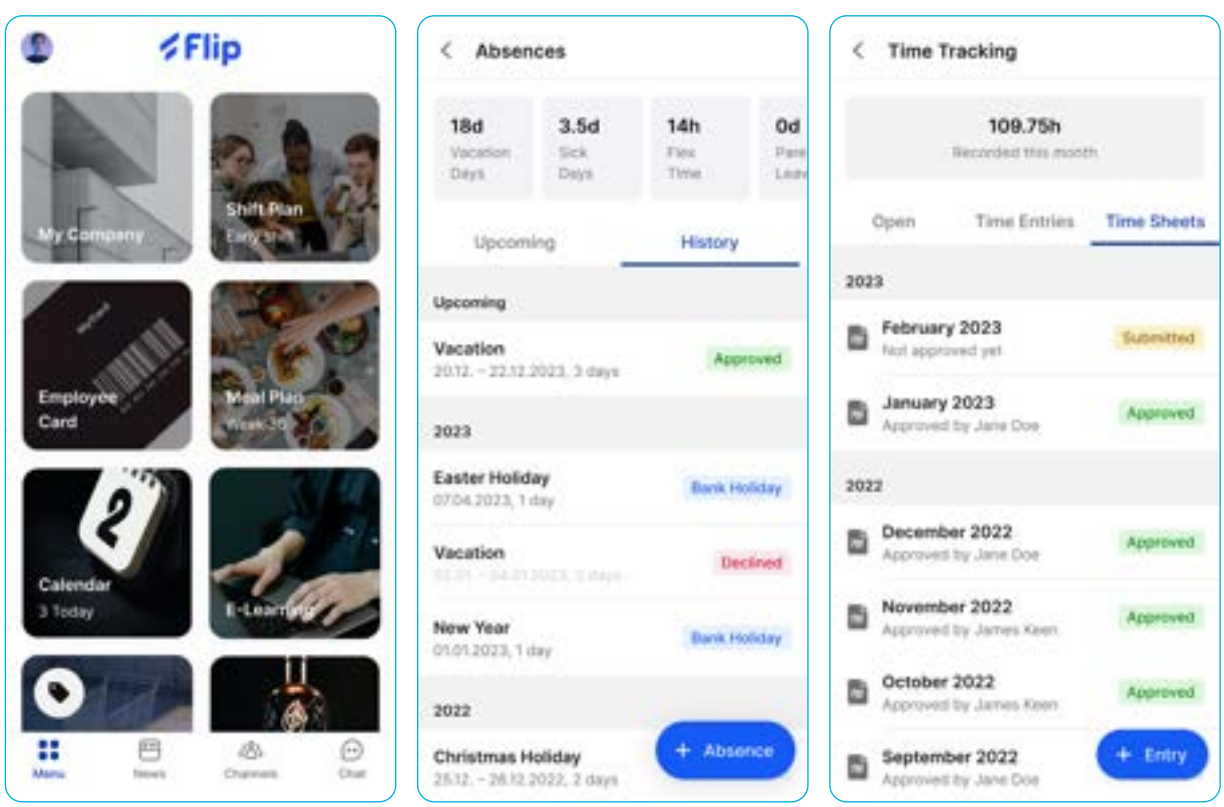

Flip
News
Chats
Tasks
Calendar
Employee directory
Admin console
Product Wiki
Corporate benefits
Innovations
Tool access request
Car pool and bookings
List
Grid
New post
Company-wide Digital Transformation Initiative
Sustainability in Action: How We're Making a Difference
Free First Aid courses for all our Teams! Register now
Boosting Efficiency: New Automation Tech in Our Manufacturing Plants
We're excited to announce the rollout of...
Enhancing Safety & Quality in Manufacturing: New Standards Implemented
Dear employees, your health is importan...
Innovation on Wheels: Our Latest Car Model Hits the Roa
With cutting-edge design, enhanced fue...


9:41
Flip
All posts
Saved
Scheduled
Company-wide Digital Transformation Initiative
Nathalie Cortez
in All employees, 2h
Serving Communities
As a global organisation with a physical
Menu
News
Channels
Chat

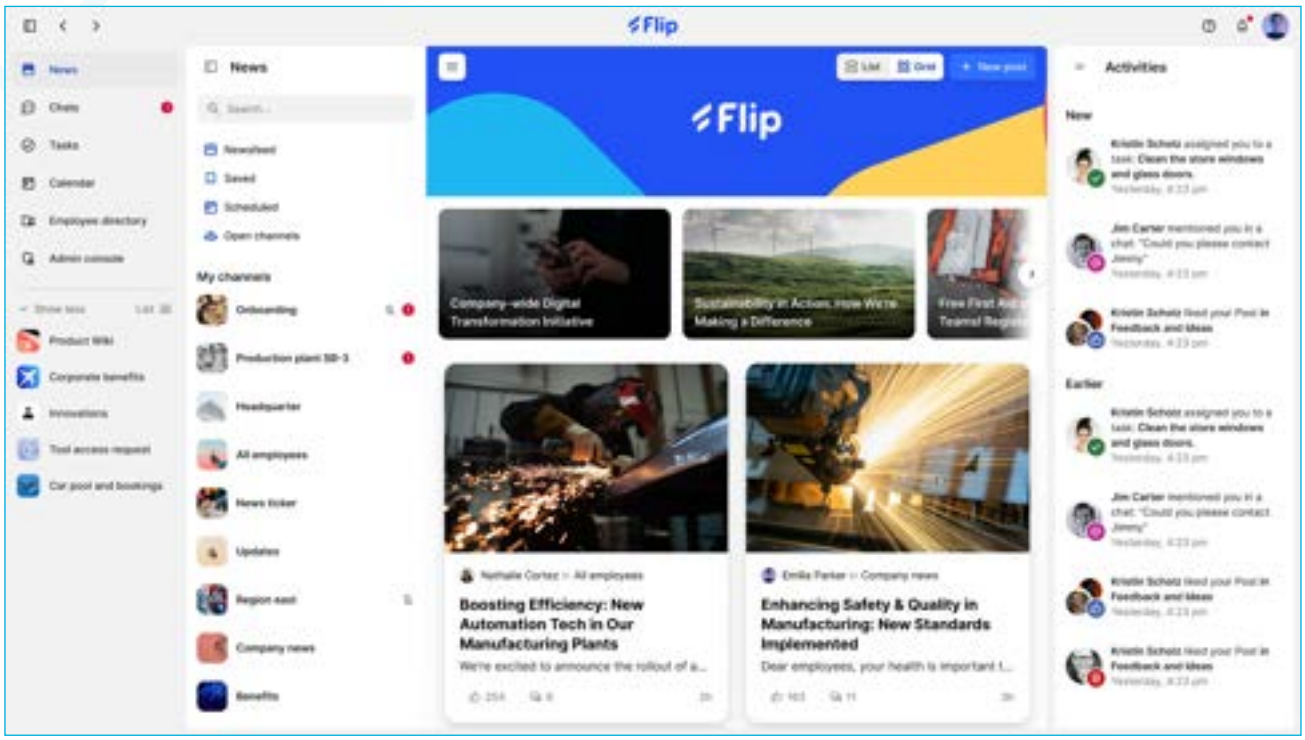

9:41
Flip
My Company
Shift Plan
Employee Card
Meal Plan
Calendar
3 Today
E-Learning
Menu
News
Channels
Chat



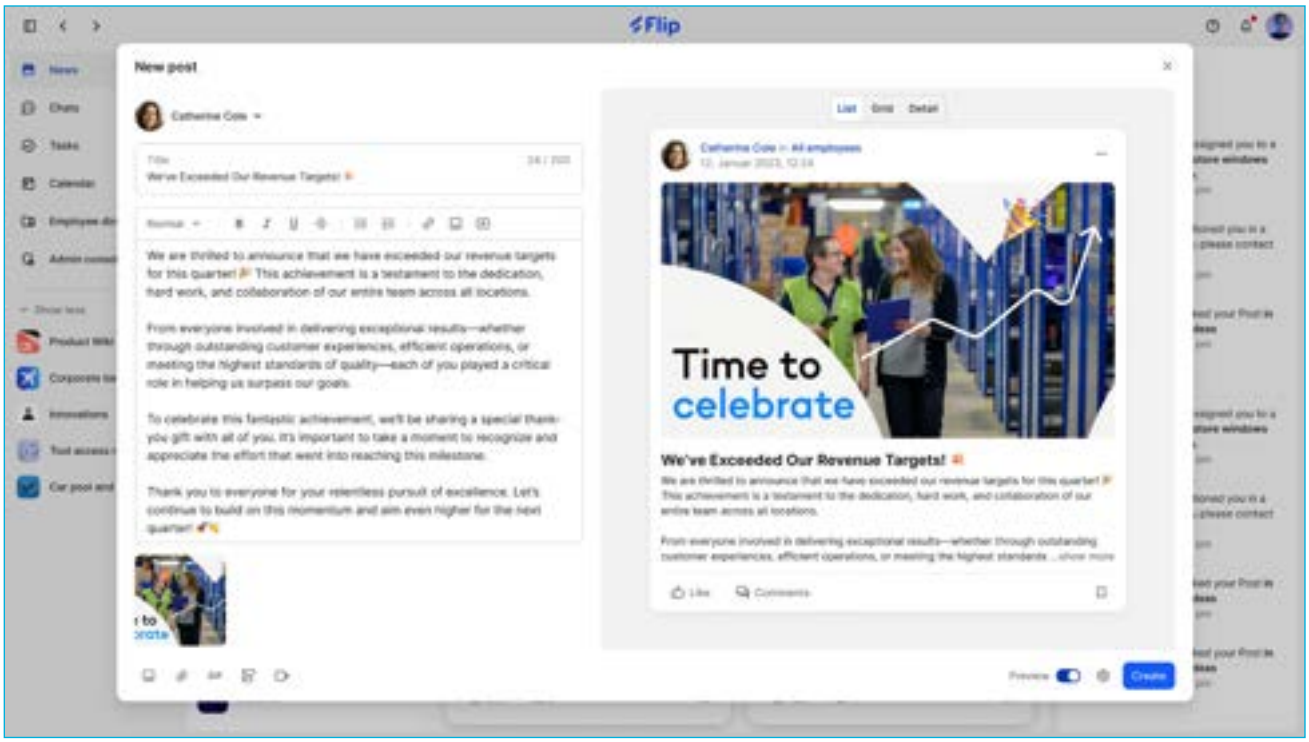
Flip has comprehensive support for corporate and peer-to-peer communications with news, communities, and chat.



Although at additional cost, integrations are a strength of the platform with the ability to connect to popular enterprise services such as Workday and UKG.



Employees see a news stream of targeted stories based on the Channels they are a member of.



Posting news to a Channel is a simple and intuitive experience.

Pricing

PRICE BAND	
1,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
5,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
20,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
50,000 users	$ $ $ $ $

These prices are indicative, offering a comparison of the products featured in this report only. Please contact the vendor for a bespoke quote.

PRICING MODEL

Subscription – price per user per month; Subscription – price band based on number of users.

DISCOUNTS

Charities and non-profit organisations; schools and educational institutes; multi-year commitments.

COSTS TYPICALLY

Fairly evenly spread across three years.

PRICE INCLUDES

Support packages include an individual Customer Success Manager person and customer support.

Product type

Ready-to-run, installed in days

Branding opportunities

All branding, complex options

Base systems

Fully standalone

Requires SharePoint

Other

Sectors

Engineering and manufacturing

Hospitality and events management

Retail

Transport & Logistics

Leisure, sport and tourism

COMPANY AND PRODUCT

Company details

Company
Flip

ISO 27001 certified
Yes

Data residency
Australia; Europe (excluding UK); USA

Company founded
2018

Product launched
2018

Typical client size
5,000 to 10,000

Largest deployment so far
400,000 employees, global (Germany, Portugal, Romania, Spain, USA, Brazil, Costa Rica, Chile, Philippines, India, Vietnam)

Customers
Ben & Jerrys, Bosch, EDEKA, GLS, Magna, McDonald's Germany, REWE, Rossman, Porsche, Sixt

Partner locations
Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, UK, Ireland, Canada, USA, Peru, Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Chile

Company locations
Stuttgart, Germany (HQ); UK, USA

Product and technical details

Name of product

Flip

Deployment

Client on-premises	Client private cloud	Microsoft Azure	Amazon Web Services	Vendor-hosted	Microsoft 365 tenant	Google Cloud	Other*

*On your own cluster

Authentication supported

Entra ID	ADFS	Okta	Open ID	Oauth	G Suite	Other*

*Any SAML or OIDC Identity Provider, FIDO2 based authentication

App deployment

Google Play store	Apple store	MDM	MAM	Other*

*Via a special link

Accessibility

WCAG2.1 conformant

Document library sources integrated

Box	Dropbox	Google Drive	SharePoint	OneDrive	Other

Optional integrated enterprise search engines

Coveo	Elastic	IBM	Lucidworks	Microsoft	Mindbreeze	Sinequa	Other*

*Opensearch

User interface multi-language

Machine translation	Pre-configured	Editable	Right to left script supported	Other

Content multi-language

Machine translation for publishers	Machine translation for end users	Editable machine translation for publishers	Manual creation for publishers	Right to left script	Other

Set-up and support

Set-up process for new clients

The set-up process for a new client involves a streamlined approach to ensure quick and efficient deployment. Flip supports one-click installation for initial setup, followed by a comprehensive consulting phase that typically spans up to 3 months. This phase includes detailed integration, customisation, and onboarding to align the platform with the client's specific requirements.

Current version

Demonstrated to ClearBox: March 2025

At May 2025: May 2025

Product updates

Minor updates weekly; major updates every month.

Product update process

Product updates are rolled out to customer environments 1-2 weeks after deployment to Flip's staging environment. Customers are informed monthly about upcoming new features and releases. They can view major updates on roadmap.getflip.com and subscribe to specific functions for regular updates. Customers can activate features and functions for test user groups and independently test them. If needed, a second test environment can be provided. Updates are applied in a 2-week cycle, but bug fixes can be deployed asynchronously in case of significant issues. Customers cannot opt-out of updates but can test them before full deployment.

Reverse-out options

Upon contract termination, Flip's default data deletion policy ensures all client data is deleted within 2 weeks, unless otherwise agreed. This applies to both Flip and any subprocessors, who are contractually required to comply with this data deletion policy. In addition, data return and data transfer options can be offered to the client before deletion, if specified in the contract. This ensures that client data is handled securely, either by deletion, return, or transfer, as agreed upon during the contract's exit process.

Technical support

Email support	**Phone support**	Chat support	**Online portal**	24/7 support	Office hours only

User community

Flip has an active user community. An annual in-person customer conference, Flip Forward, brings users together to connect, learn, and share insights. Flip also has a Customer Advisory Board, ensuring direct feedback influences the roadmap. Additionally, Flip hosts regular webinars and sessions showcasing customer success stories and best practices, helping users maximise value from the platform.

Voice of the vendor

Flip says: "At Flip, we believe that every employee deserves to feel truly connected to their work—especially those who don't sit at a desk. As the leading employee experience platform (a true employee super-app), Flip is built for enterprises with hard-to-reach workforces, ensuring that frontline employees are never left out of the conversation.

Bridging the Gap Between Deskless Teams and Leadership

Today, frontline workers are more disconnected than ever from the companies they power. Flip was born out of a deep understanding of this challenge—our founders saw firsthand how traditional workplace tools fail to meet the needs of non-desk teams. We set out to bridge the gap between leadership and the frontline, transforming workplace communication, collaboration, and operations.

One Platform. Every Tool. Total Connection.

Our vision is simple: "Connect everyone with everything they need—in one touch." Flip seamlessly brings together Communications, HR, IT, and Operations, empowering employees with instant access to critical information, essential tools, and company services—anytime, anywhere.

From onboarding and talent development to shift planning and leave requests, Flip doesn't just facilitate work—it enhances company culture, strengthens collaboration, and drives productivity. It puts your entire company in the pocket of every frontline worker, ensuring security, compliance, and GDPR alignment.

Purpose-Built for the Frontline

Unlike traditional workplace apps designed for desk-based teams, Flip is built specifically for deskless employees—bridging the gap between frontline and corporate offices.

Key features include:

- Newsfeed, Channels, and Chat for real-time communication
- Voice & Video Calling + Livestreaming to engage and connect teams
- Knowledge Base & Native Translation to break down language barriers
- Task Management & Customisable Workflows to streamline operations
- BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) Compatibility for secure, flexible access
- Third-Party Integrations (APIs & Enterprise Apps) for seamless workflow connectivity

Turning Connection into Action

Flip is more than just a platform—it's a catalyst for engagement, efficiency, and belonging. Whether it's recognising achievements, automating processes, or giving employees a voice, Flip ensures that frontline workers are no longer an afterthought, but a driving force behind business success.

It's time to empower, engage, and elevate the workforce that keeps the world running. Welcome to Flip."

You may also be interested in...

Blink. Staffbase UKG®

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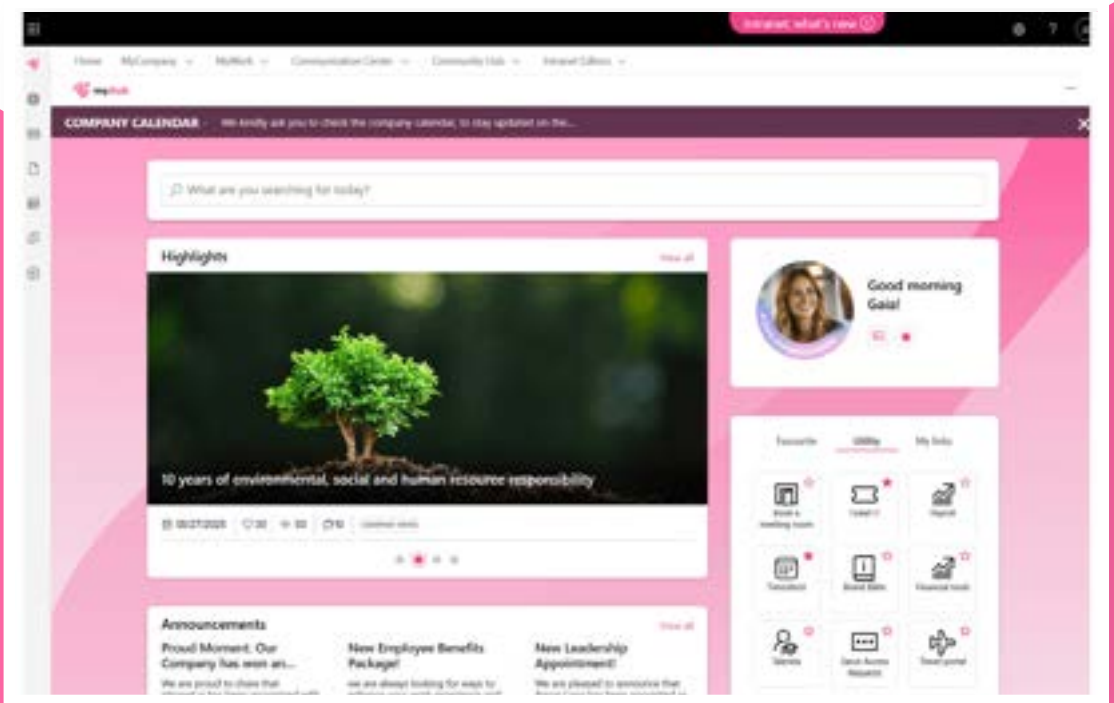
intranet.ai

FULLY STANDALONE

REQUIRES SHAREPOINT

OPTIONALLY WORKS WITH SHAREPOINT

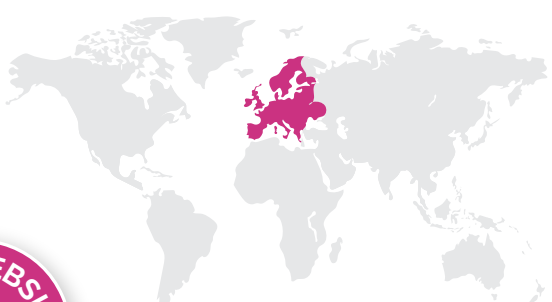
FRONTLINE FOCUS



Typical deployment:

5,000 to 10,000 employees

Company locations:



VISIT THE WEBSITE

The product in a nutshell

intranet.ai is an attractive and innovative intranet product that adds many ready-to-use features to standard SharePoint. It will appeal to companies looking to leverage their investment in Microsoft 365 and Copilot.

CLEARBOX VIEW

intranet.ai, owned by the Italian company of the same name, is a SharePoint-based intranet product that offers a wide range of components and features – 60+ according to the vendor – to improve the standard SharePoint experience. The user interface looks contemporary and comes with rich functionality for admins to customise layout and branding well beyond standard SharePoint. The user experience can also be personalised, for instance by bringing an employee's most useful content together in a widget called 'My Favourites'. The product includes a mobile app with the same content as the desktop version, plus the ability to receive push notifications.

Creation of news articles and content pages relies on the standard SharePoint functionality. There are additional components to present news though, such as a 'Highlights' widget with a carrousel of stories, and there are other widgets with a more sober layout for announcements and additional news articles. We like the video gallery, and a similar audio gallery for podcasts, where content from across the intranet is brought together in an attractive layout. There is no editorial calendar or similar functionality to help internal communications manage the flow of news, which would be a nice addition.

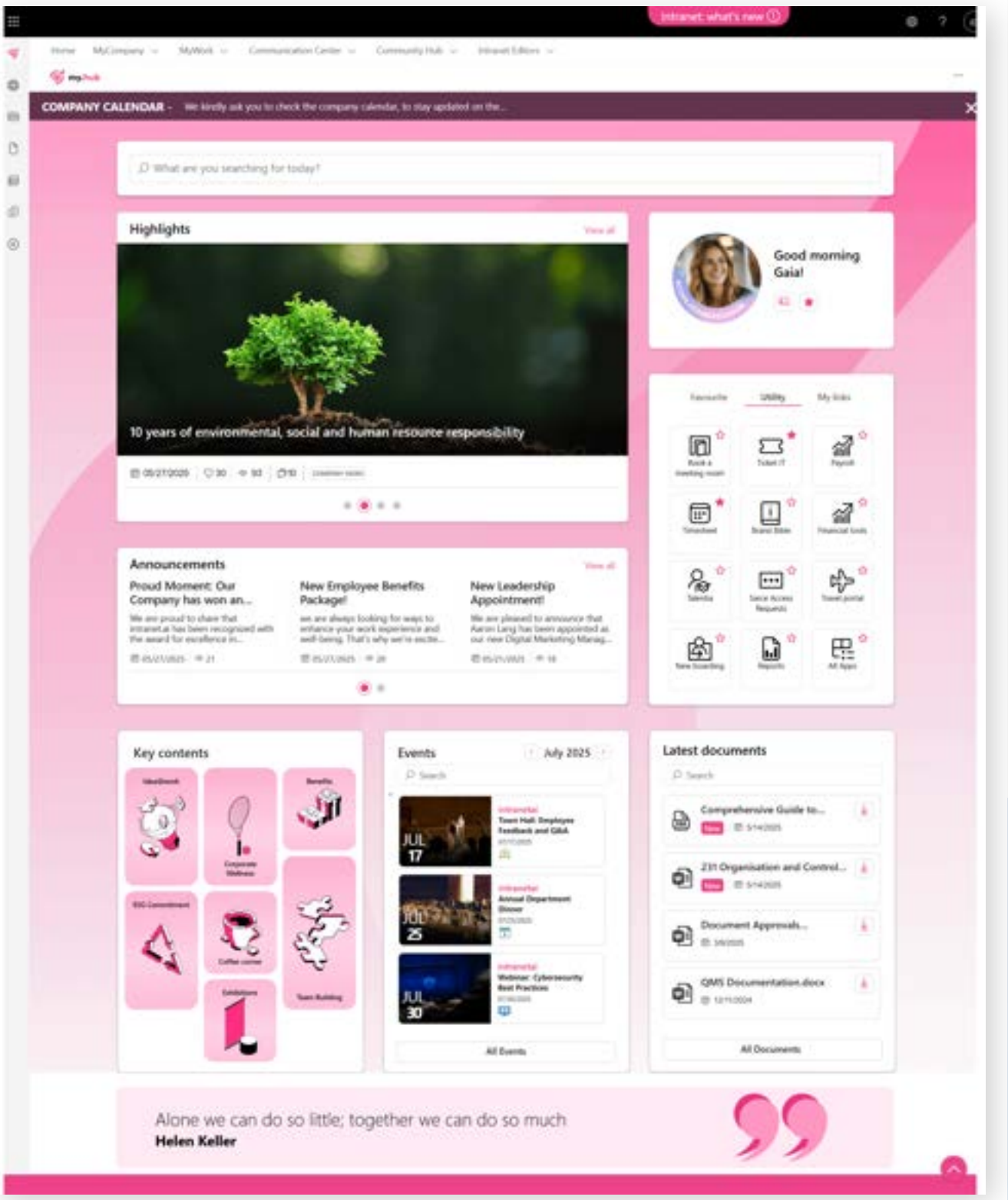
Communities and collaboration groups are supported through the 'Digital Board', an area where employees can post content and reply to each other. The functionality is very simple and intuitive, and will serve use cases such as a bulletin board well. We believe it can be an appealing lightweight alternative to Viva Engage. Features around employee engagement are strong: there are useful components for managing events, creating a quick survey or capturing the mood of all employees. The most comprehensive feature in this area is an idea generation tool where employees can submit ideas around a specific topic or as part of a broader campaign. Their colleagues can review all approved ideas and vote for the best ones, plus there is a leaderboard showing the people that submitted the most popular ideas.

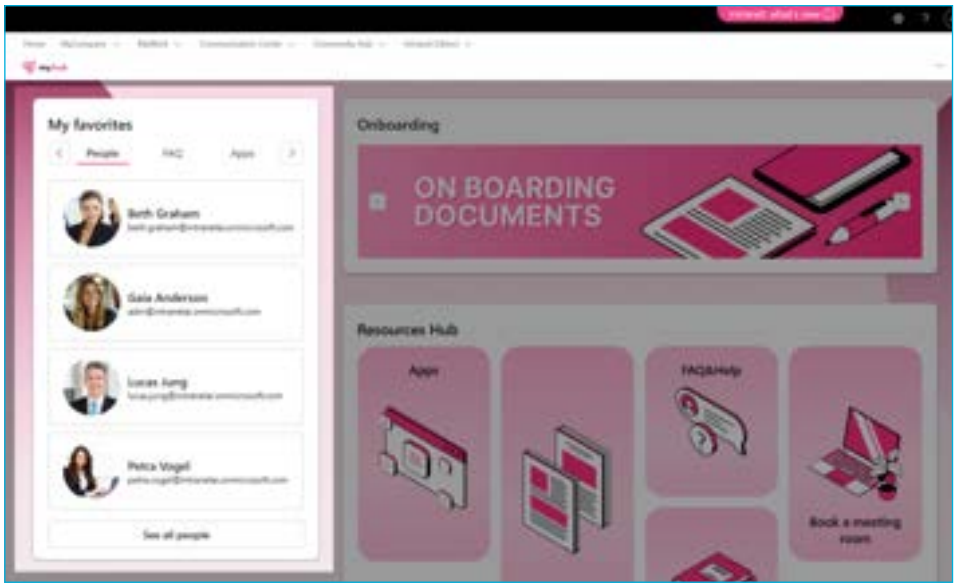
Searching within intranet.ai is based on the SharePoint search engine, but the search results are presented in a custom-built and somewhat unusual layout, with results grouped by category into tabs and presented in a lightbox. Alternatively, admins can configure an 'Intelligent' search that uses Microsoft Azure OpenAI to generate answers to employees' natural language questions. We think that the Intelligent search works especially well when applied to a knowledge area or document centre, where it combines input from multiple sources, even across multiple languages.

The people directory is another area that offers comprehensive functionality. Information coming from Microsoft 365 or from a separate HR system can easily be imported, while employees have control over a range of additional fields such as language skills, project experience and education. There is also a well-designed interactive organisation chart, with the option to zoom in and out.

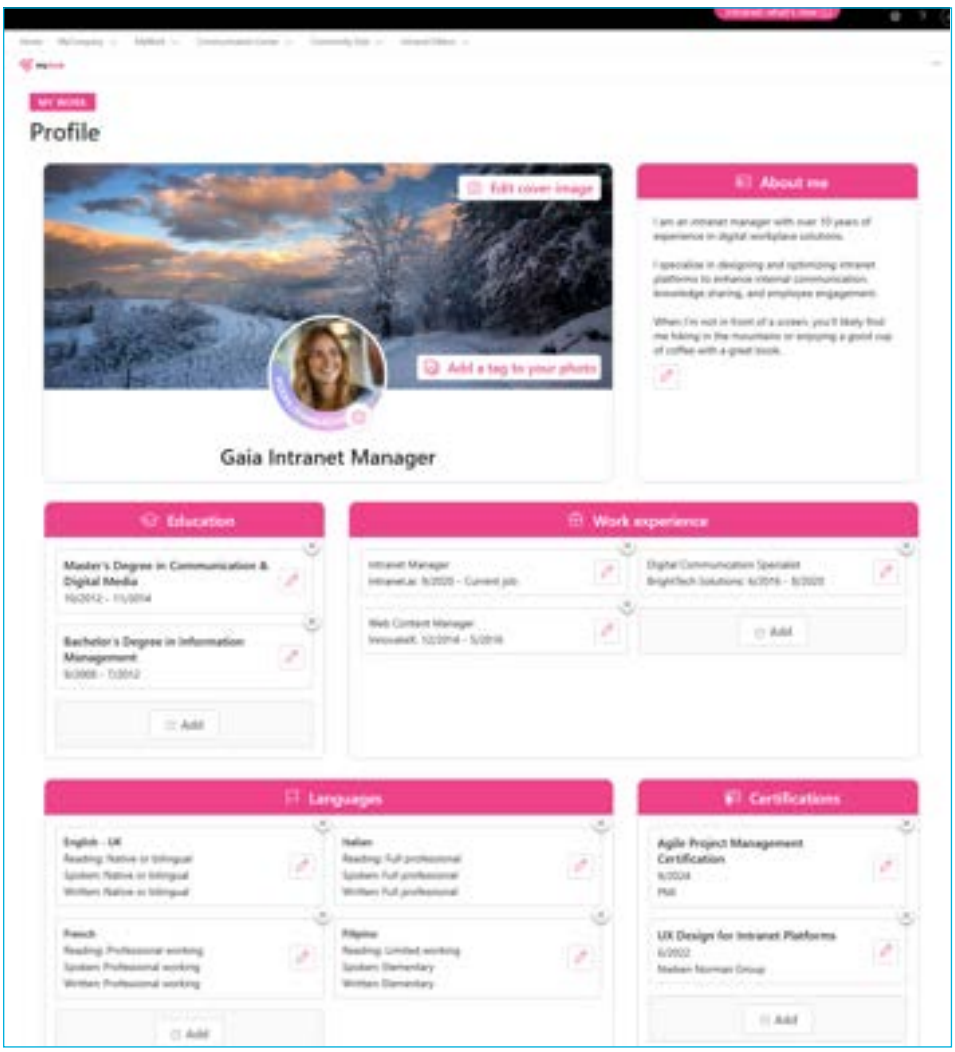
Analytics is often an afterthought in intranet products, but not so for intranet.ai. We were impressed by the breadth and depth of the data collected and the various analytics reports built in PowerBI. Every action that employees can take across intranet.ai features, such as clicking a 'call to action' button, is logged and reported. The same data can also be accessed through a Copilot-based AI agent, which comes with a set of predefined prompts, but also allows chat-style interaction to generate and fine-tune custom reports. We think this is an exciting innovation that has the potential to expand into other areas of governance and content management.

Overall, intranet.ai is a solid SharePoint-based intranet product that covers many use cases well and is very attractively priced. It may may not yet offer some of the sophisticated features that more mature products in this report include, but it makes up with strong analytics and an innovative use of AI. Partner locations are limited to Italy and neighbouring countries, so that will be a consideration, although intranet.ai say that their multicultural team is capable of conducting projects in many languages and geographies. We believe that intranet.ai will appeal to many companies wanting to enhance their existing Microsoft 365 environment with an attractive and innovative add-on product.


COMPANY CALENDAR -
What are you searching for today?
Highlights
10 years of environmental, social and human resource responsibility
Good morning Gaia!
Announcements
Proud Moment: Our Company has won an...
New Employee Benefits Package!
New Leadership Appointment!
Key contents
Events
July 2025
JUL 17
JUL 25
JUL 30
All Events
Latest documents
Comprehensive Guide to...
231 Organisation and Control...
Document Approvals...
QMS Documentation.docx
All Documents
Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much
Helen Keller

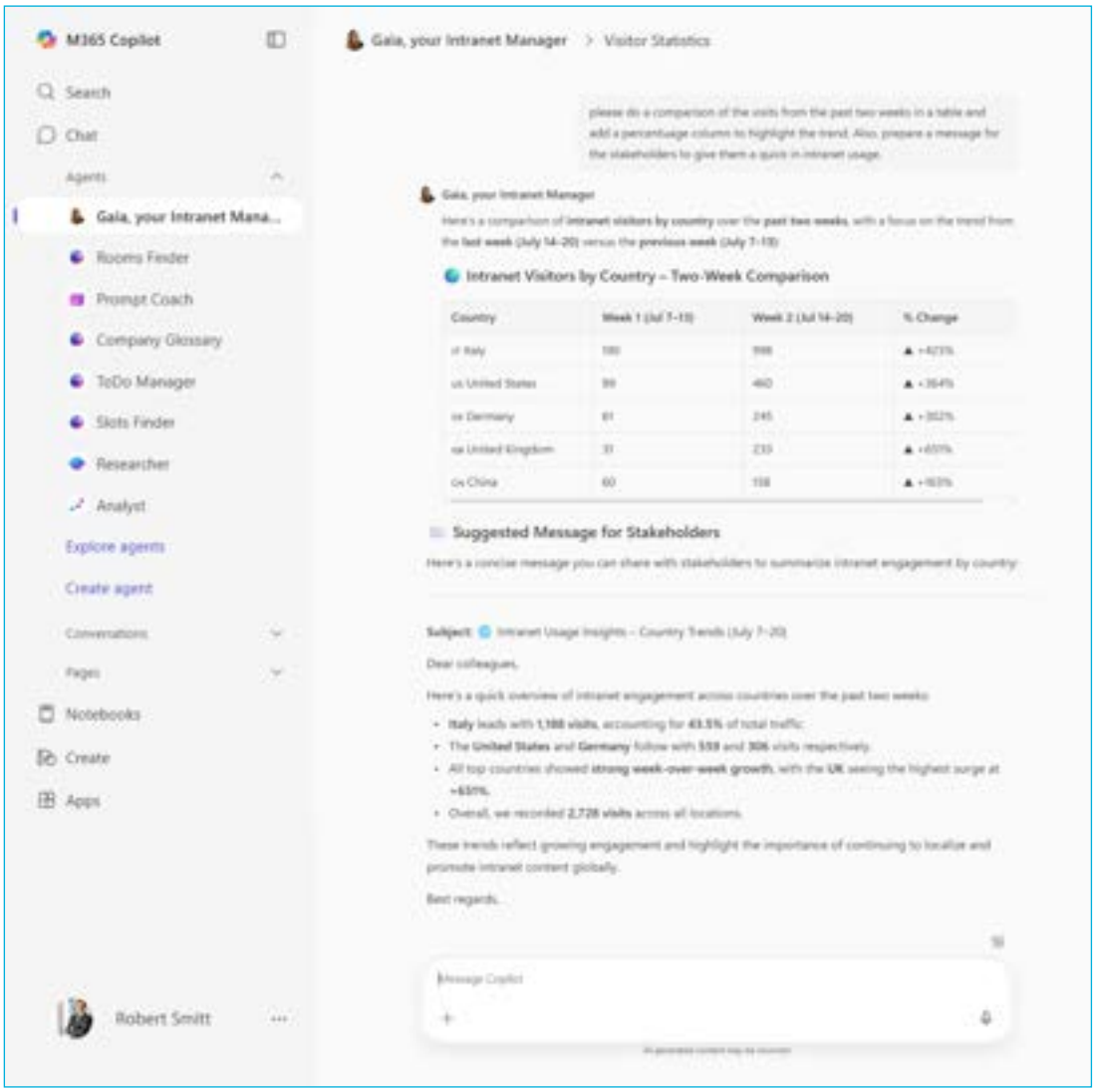


The "My favourites" widget offers employees a convenient overview of all intranet content they have marked as favourites. The overview is presented in an intuitive tabbed interface, divided into contacts, news, documents, applications, and FAQs.



People profiles are attractive and offer plenty of built-in flexibility. Employees can write an 'About me' section and choose which fields, such as projects or skills, will be visible to colleagues.

Analytics reports are comprehensive and offer detailed insights into the usage of every component within intranet.ai.



The product includes an innovative AI agent built with Microsoft Copilot. Through a conversational interface, the agent can generate custom reports from the analytics data.

Pricing

PRICE BAND	
1,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
5,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
20,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
50,000 users	$ $ $ $ $

These prices are indicative, offering a comparison of the products featured in this report only. Please contact the vendor for a bespoke quote.

PRICING MODEL

Subscription – price band based on number of users.

DISCOUNTS

Charities and non-profit organisations, schools and educational institutes.

COSTS TYPICALLY

Weighted towards the start (during the 'project phase'), then much lower for the remaining term.

PRICE INCLUDES

Subscriptions cover corrective maintenance (bug fixes or upgrades needed after SharePoint changes) and evolutive maintenance (new components).

Product type

Ready-to-run, installed in hours

Branding opportunities

All branding, complex options

Base systems

Fully standalone

Requires SharePoint

Other

Sectors

Retail

Science and pharmaceuticals

Engineering and manufacturing

Energy and utilities

Transport & Logistics

COMPANY AND PRODUCT

Company details

Company
intranet.ai

ISO 27001 certified
No

Data residency
N/A

Company founded
2020

Product launched
2020

Typical client size
5,000 - 10,000 employees

Largest deployment so far
25,000 employees, with employees all over the world.

Customers
Clients include: Bracco, Recordati, MSC Cruises, Bulgari, D&G, Europ Assistance, Scavolini, Ariston, Expert, KDC/One

Partner locations
Italy, Switzerland, France

Company locations
Milan, Italy (HQ)

Product and technical details

Name of product

intranet.ai

Deployment

Client on-premises	Client private cloud	**Microsoft Azure**	Amazon Web Services	Vendor-hosted	**Microsoft 365 tenant**	Google Cloud	Other

Authentication supported

Entra ID	ADFS	Okta	Open ID	Oauth	G Suite	Other

App deployment

Google Play store	**Apple store**	**MDM**	**MAM**	Other

Accessibility

Alt text is in use for images; keyboards can be used for navigation; individual users can change the font size of what they are seeing.

Document library sources integrated

Box	Dropbox	Google Drive	**SharePoint**	OneDrive	Other

Optional integrated enterprise search engines

Coveo	Elastic	IBM	Lucidworks	**Microsoft**	Mindbreeze	Sinequa	Other

User interface multi-language

Machine translation	Pre-configured	**Editable**	Right to left script supported	Other

Content multi-language

Machine translation for publishers	Machine translation for end users	**Editable machine translation for publishers**	**Manual creation for publishers**	Right to left script	Other

Set-up and support

Set-up process for new clients

Explained via a vendor-hosted document.

Current version

Demonstrated to ClearBox: 1.10

January 2025: 1.10

Product updates

Major updates every quarter; minor updates weekly.

Product update process

intranet.ai will inform clients about new features every 3 months, and customers can choose the timing for installation or can opt out.

Reverse-out options

If the contract ends, intranet.ai will remove its custom solutions from the customer's SharePoint Online instance and leave all data to the customer.

Technical support

Email support	Phone support	Chat support	**Online portal**	24/7 support	Office hours only

User community

intranet.ai delivers one webinar every month to all their customers, about best practices of the digital workplace. The CEO of intranet.ai is a Microsoft MVP for 15 years, and he creates content on YouTube for Italian, French, Spanish, and English-speaking audiences about Microsoft collaboration and productivity platforms.

Voice of the vendor

intranet.ai says: "intranet.ai has been created to change the way organizations think about their digital workplace and to insert the use of AI in daily work to increase overall productivity.

Our solution includes more than 60 ready-to-use features to be added to SharePoint's built-in web parts as well as 8 vertical add-ons, with the goal of enriching Microsoft 365 for internal communication, analytics, people engagement, document management and e-learning, utilizing AI-ready capabilities.

Always listening to our customers, we are offering a comprehensive and user-friendly SharePoint intranet, operational within 24 hours after purchase, with minimal investment in costs, time, and resources. From implementation to support, our team have delivered internal communication portals worldwide, meeting the needs of over 300 companies of different sizes and industries.

To help intranet governance needs, we implemented "Gaia - Your intranet manager": an AI agent that helps the company to monitor and enhance the intranet in an intuitive way. With the use of just your words, Gaia is able to retrieve intranet usage data, evaluate them and suggest improvements for the portal. We ourselves are impressed by her answers and reasoning capabilities for intranet management.

Next to the intranet, we added:

- content packs and engagement initiatives, to enrich intranet content and people engagement/awareness on topics like cyber security, well-being and work-related stress prevention, AI at work and many others;
- an intelligent search engine, to find information from internal documentation in a conversational way;
- a document management system that implements the full life cycle of a document in the company from the creation using templates, protocolling, reviews, approvals, distribution and acknowledgements;
- a learning management system, capable of creating e-learning content in a very easy way and delivering to people using micro-learning formats.

So, intranet.ai is not "yet another intranet solution". It is an innovative set of technologies that can help companies worldwide to create the perfect and intelligent digital workplace, with 10% of the time and budget."

You may also be interested in...

fellow digitals

involv BUILT ON MICROSOFT 365

opentext™

Back to index

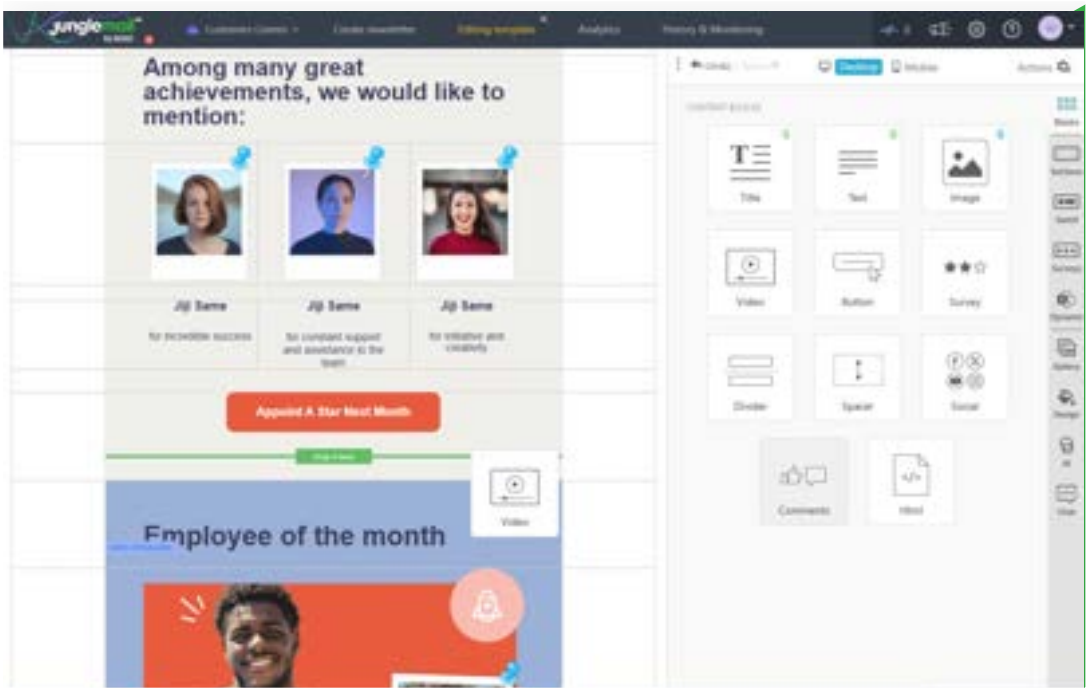
junglemail™

FULLY STANDALONE

REQUIRES SHAREPOINT

FRONTLINE FOCUS

OTHER



Typical deployment:

1,000 to 5,000

Company locations:

VISIT THE WEBSITE

The product in a nutshell

JungleMail offers flexible enterprise newsletter management, with an intuitive drag-and-drop interface, customisable templates and built-in analytics that give communicators control over their email campaigns.

CLEARBOX VIEW

JungleMail is an enterprise email management tool offering communication professionals a comprehensive drag-and-drop email builder, a range of flexible pre-configured templates, along with analytics to measure communication efficacy. Fully integrated with Microsoft 365 including SharePoint, and recently approved for Google Workspace, this tool is built with enterprise needs in mind.

Each communications team or group of users can have their own level of access, via JungleMail's site-based, multi-team architecture. Teams can collaborate on the same template, in real-time. With one hundred templates available out of the box, and the opportunity to limit access at both email template and template section level, the platform offers a nice mix of flexibility and control. Branding can be controlled by limiting access to certain templates or sections, and it's possible to disable custom colour selection and hide built-in fonts within the Branding Settings. Permissions extend to controlling who can send from particular mailboxes or email addresses, such as sending on behalf of the CEO. Approval workflows can be set up via Power Automate.

Email creation is via a straightforward five-step process: recipients, template, content, preview and settings. JungleMail can be used for internal and external email; recipients do not need to have an M365 account and contact information isn't stored on JungleMail. Groups can be created from Entra ID groups, a SharePoint list, Exchange groups, by email addresses, a list provided in a CSV file or by Google Directory. A web part can be added to SharePoint for employees to pick newsletter options, including frequency and email topic subscriptions.

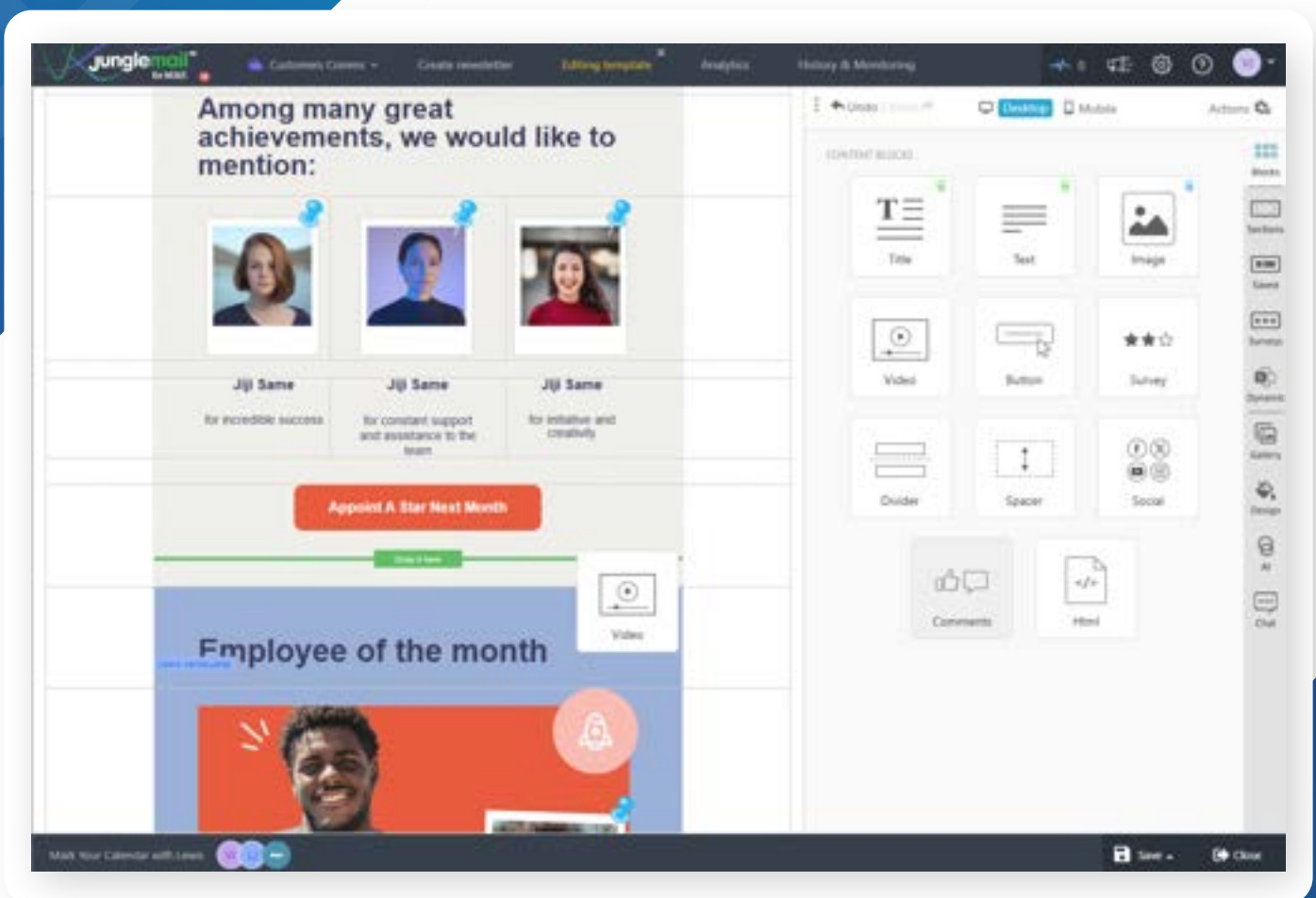
When creating a new email, there's an option to automatically fill text based on previous newsletters, as well as ChatGPT-generated suggestions for improvement. The interface offers simple drag and drop functionality; we particularly like the option to change the width of content blocks on the fly. Email content can be set dynamically based on recipient info – e.g. grade level or department - with the ability for only certain sections of the email to be targeted, too. A stock image library is on the roadmap for early 2025 although JungleMail does offer an AI image-generation feature, based on Dall-E. The outputs may not be to everyone's taste; both the AI text suggestions and image generation can be turned off for some users at site, or for all at global level. Some of the template images lack adequate colour contrast; communicators will need to make sure appropriate alternative text is added too.

JungleMail can pull in articles from SharePoint sites, easily accessible by a file-explorer style picklist, or selected via a dynamic query, like 'created within the last 7 days'. Emails can also be automatically created and scheduled using the dynamic queries; if there was nothing created within the last week, it would not be triggered.

Analytics reports are clean and attractive, designed with communicators in mind. It's got the standard measurements you'd expect like open rate, click rate, bounces and unsubscribes and it's easy to see a breakdown of whether users are accessing from desktop or phone. 'Click Map' visualises what has been clicked, and we particularly like the 'Clickstream' which shows a path of which links have been clicked, and in which order.

There's a nice feature for image-based surveys with some built-in templates for users to vote on and provide a comment, see the screenshots below for an example. Results can be seen with some high-level 'survey votes' statistics as well as comments received. We can see this being used for some light team engagement-type feedback; they've deliberately not replicated Microsoft's Forms-based survey functionality.

With an easy-to-use drag and drop interface and flexible range of templates, as well as the ability to send emails to any email address, JungleMail is a valuable tool where email is an important communications channel. We can see JungleMail being particularly useful for businesses where recipients don't have an organisation email account, such as universities. JungleMail comes at an attractive price point too, so is worth exploring by any company that wants to extend its email capabilities.


Among many great achievements, we would like to mention:
Jiji Same
for incredible success
Jiji Same
for constant support and assistance to the team
Jiji Same
for initiative and creativity
Appoint A Star Next Month
Employee of the month
Title
Text
Image
Video
Button
Survey
Divider
Spacer
Social
Comments
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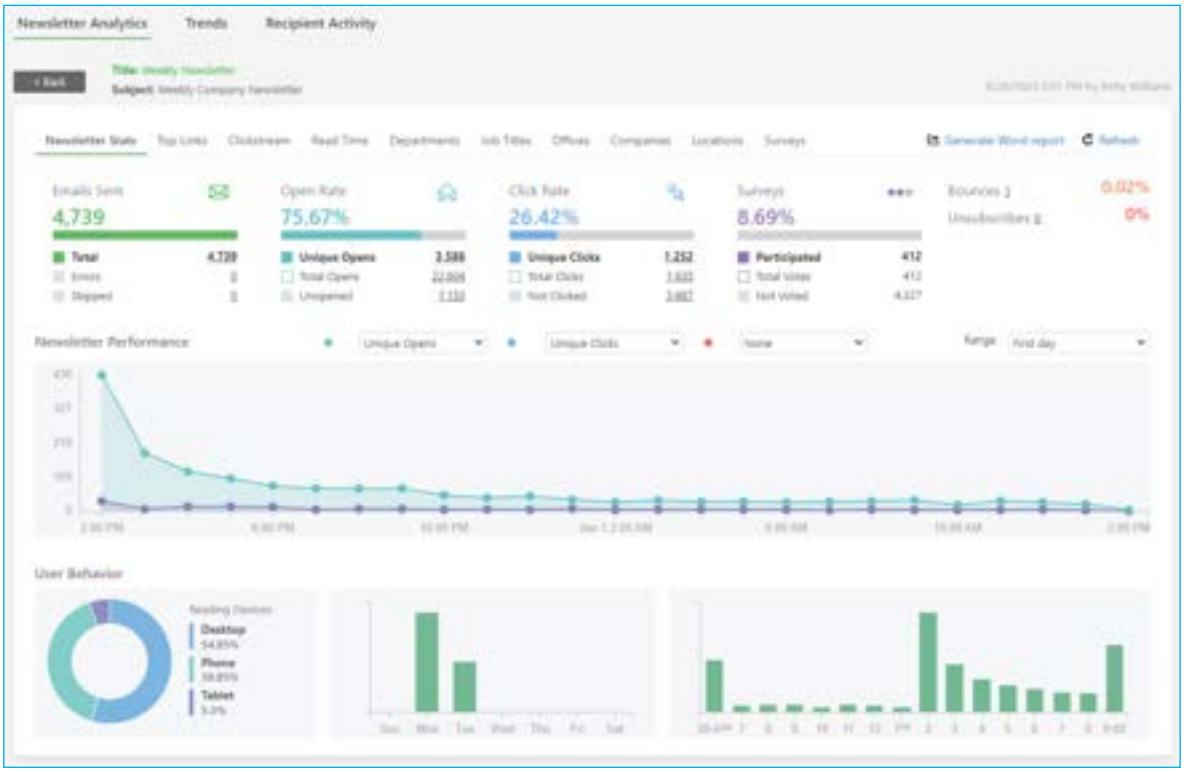


Analytics are nicely designed with a clear campaigns view for newsletters.

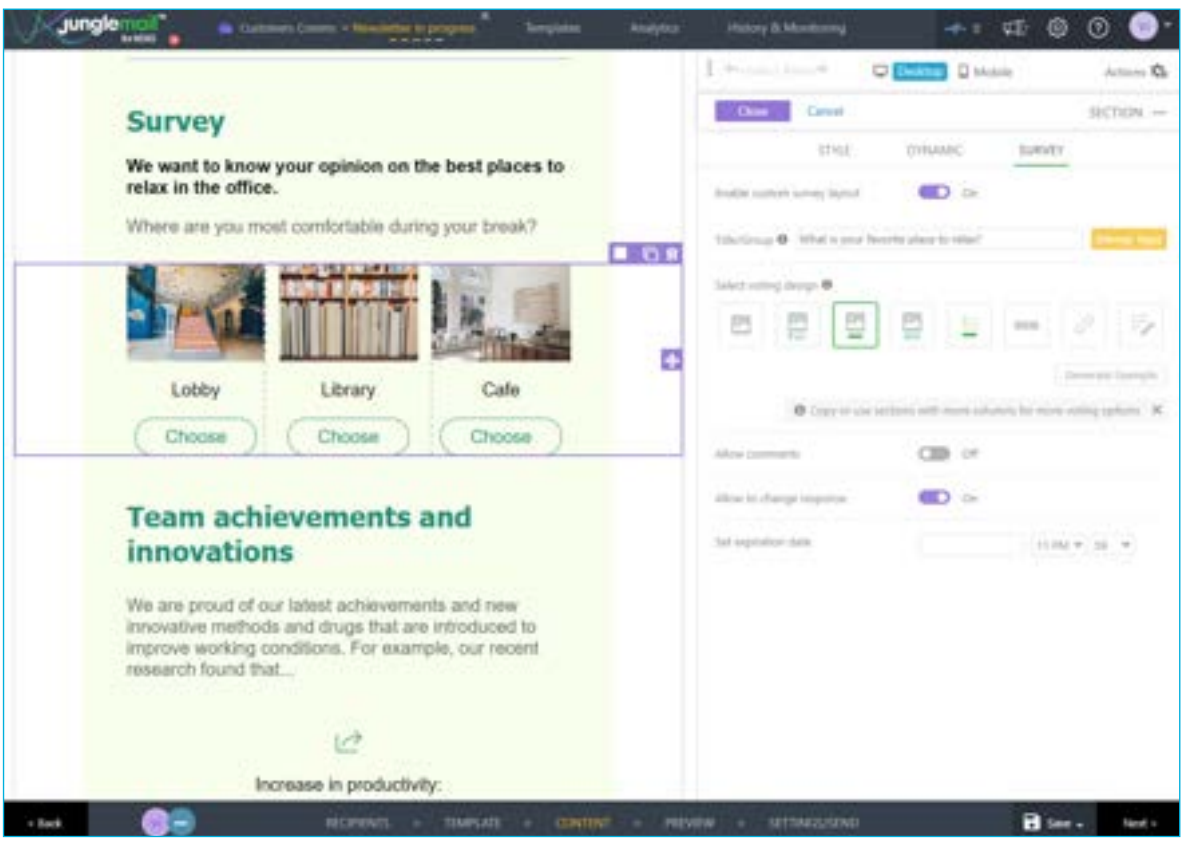
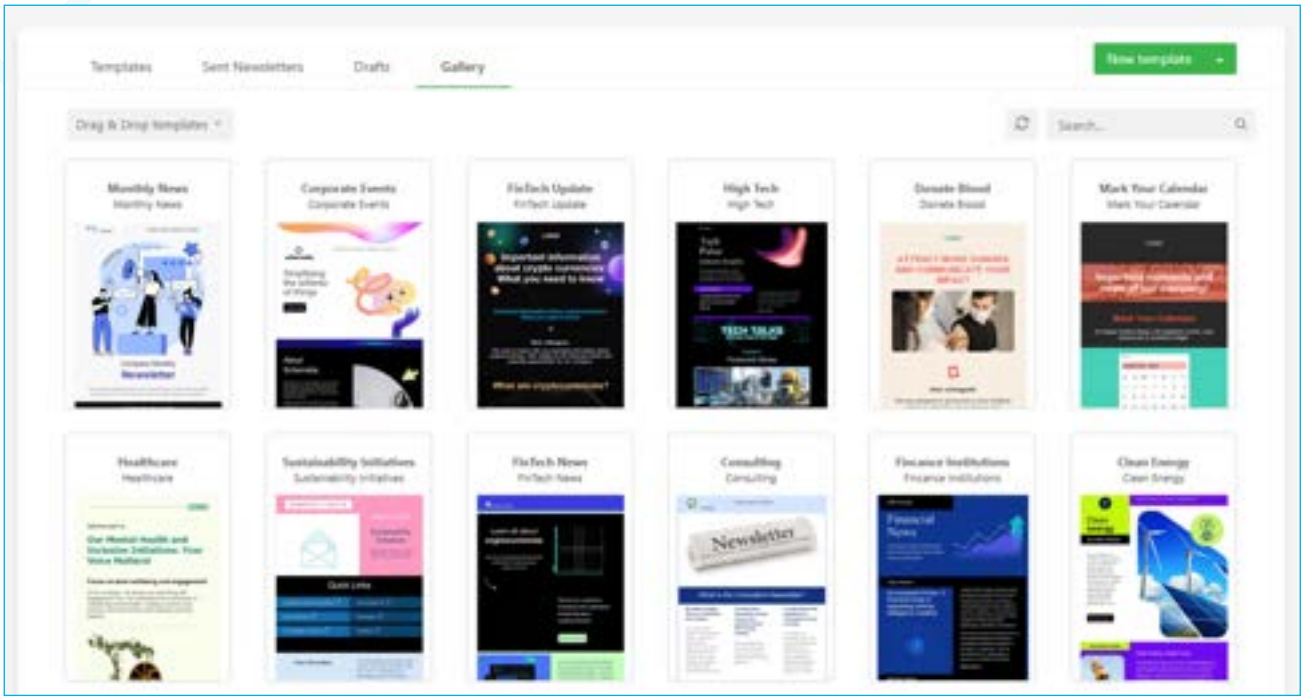
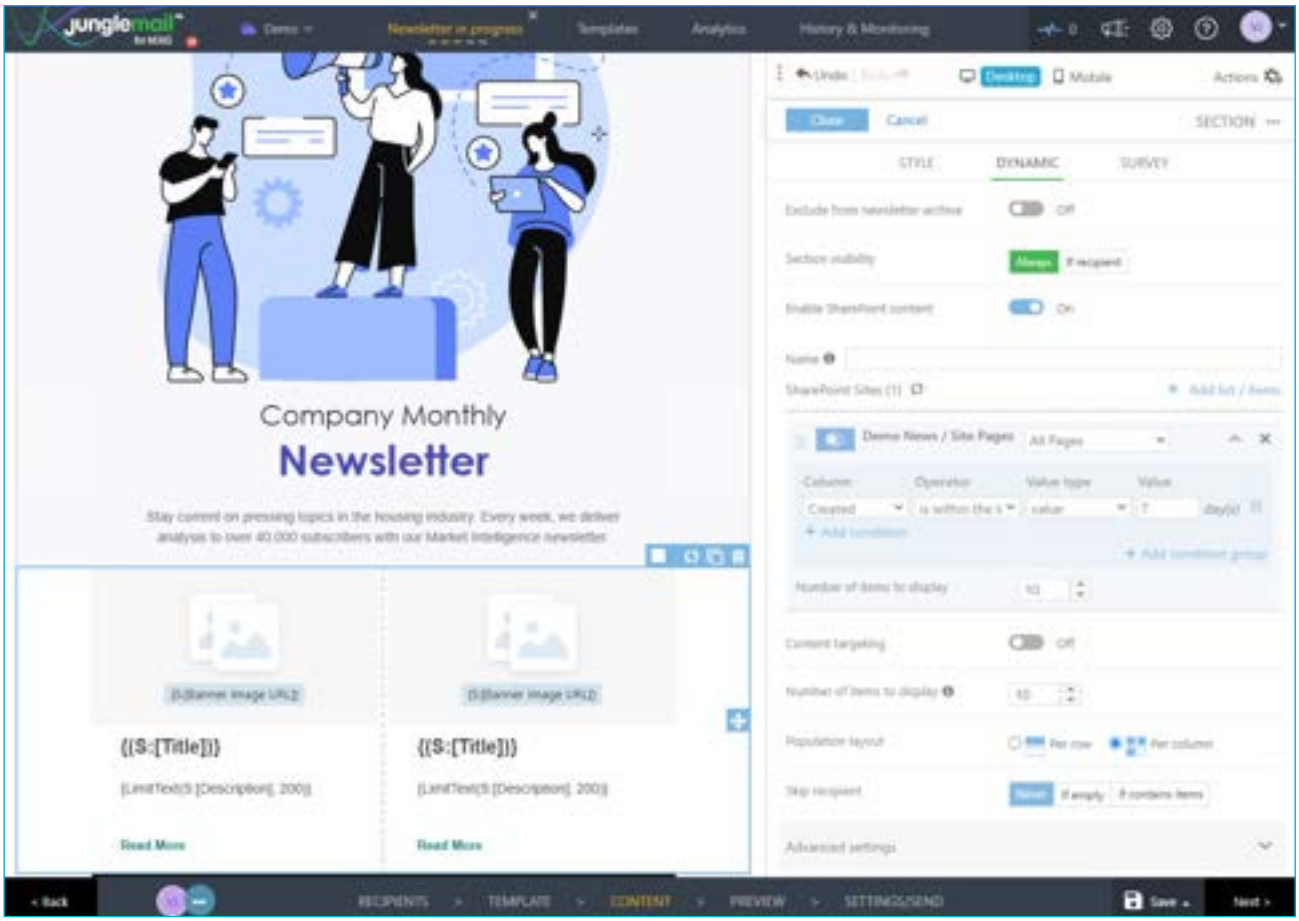


Image-based surveys can provide quick employee engagement.



JungleMail offers a wide range of flexible templates.



Dynamic sections can be used to target content to the appropriate audience.

Pricing

PRICE BAND	
1,000 users	$$$$$
5,000 users	$$$$$
20,000 users	$$$$$
50,000 users	$$$$$

These prices are indicative, offering a comparison of the products featured in this report only. Please contact the vendor for a bespoke quote.

PRICING MODEL

Subscription - price band based on number of unique recipients (employees, partners or students) and feature set (Basic, Pro, Enterprise).

DISCOUNTS

Charities and non-profit organisations, schools and educational institutes, multi-year commitments.

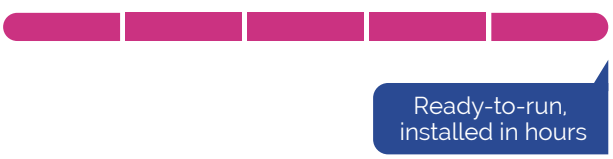
COSTS TYPICALLY

Fairly evenly spread across three years.

PRICE INCLUDES

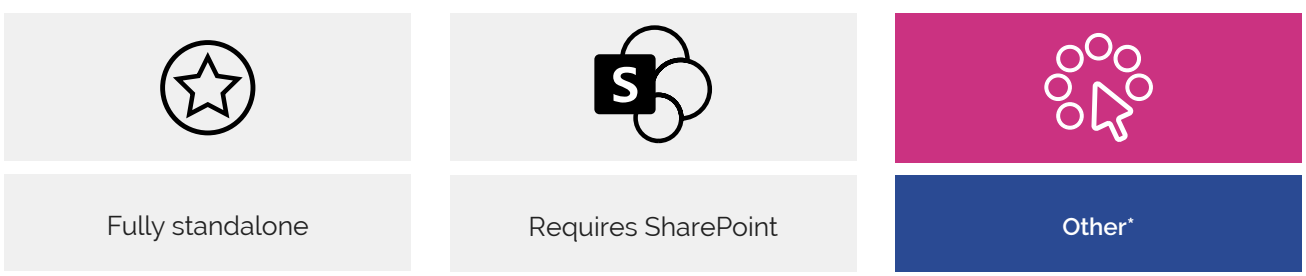
Training for end users, customer success services, maintenance, product support, updates and upgrades, webinars, consulting services, template design.

Product type



Branding opportunities

Base systems



*Requires M365, Google Workspace or Local Active Directory; SharePoint is an optional integration

Sectors

COMPANY AND PRODUCT

Company details

Company
Enovapoint

ISO 27001 certified
Yes

Data residency
Europe (including UK); Middle East; USA; Canada; Australia

Company founded
2011

Product launched
2015

Typical client size
1,000 to 5,000

Largest deployment so far
100,000 employees / 400 JungleMail users

Customers
Clients include: Spar, Milwaukee, Systa, Marriott, NYU Langone Health, IU International University, SYNLAB, Julius Baer, Korn Ferry, and Deakin University.

Partner locations
France, USA, UK, Canada, Australia, Belgium, Hungary, UAE.

Company locations
Vilnius, Lithuania (HQ)

Product and technical details

Name of product

JungleMail 365

Deployment

Client on-premises	Client private cloud	Microsoft Azure	Amazon Web Services	Vendor-hosted	Microsoft 365 tenant	Google Cloud	Other

Authentication supported

Entra ID	ADFS	Okta	Open ID	Oauth	G Suite	Other

App deployment

Google Play store	Apple store	MDM	MAM	Other

Accessibility

Not WCAG 2.1 conformant. Individual users can change the font size of what they are seeing; alt text is in use for images; keyboards can be used for navigation.

Document library sources integrated

Box	Dropbox	Google Drive	SharePoint	OneDrive	Other

Optional integrated enterprise search engines

Coveo	Elastic	IBM	Lucidworks	**Microsoft**	Mindbreeze	Sinequa	**Other***

*Search is used for sourcing content and finding previously sent newsletters

User interface multi-language

Machine translation	**Pre-configured**	Editable	**Right to left script supported**	Other

Content multi-language

Machine translation for publishers	Machine translation for end users	**Editable machine translation for publishers**	**Manual creation for publishers**	**Right to left script**	Other

Set-up and support

Set-up process for new clients

The customer's tenant administrator signs into the JungleMail 365 app and chooses the data hosting location. After customer account approval, admins will activate the connections that will be utilised by JungleMail users (Entra ID groups, SharePoint, Exchange), configure the features in JungleMail settings (sending accounts, archive, analytics segmentation, etc.), and set up permissions for their users. Typically, Enovapoint offers online assistance and guidance (up to 90 minutes) with the connection activation and JungleMail configuration according to the customer's needs.

Current version

Demonstrated to ClearBox: October 2024 (4.1.24.09111)

At January 2025: January 2025

Product updates

Minor updates weekly; major updates every quarter.

Product update process

All SaaS customers are updated at once on a particular hosting location during out-of-office hours.

Reverse-out options

A customer account is flagged for deletion if there's no activity for six months, specifically if the subscription isn't renewed within 6 months following the end date of the last active subscription period. Subsequently, all data will be purged within the next 14 days. Although customer data persists in backups for another three months, it is eventually erased in line with the Backup Retention Policy. Upon request, a customer's account can be flagged for earlier deletion. Importantly, no customer data is stored in non-electronic formats.

Technical support

Email support	Phone support	Chat support	Online portal	24/7 support	Office hours only*

*1am - 4pm EST, Monday to Friday.

User community

None.

Voice of the vendor

Enovapoint says: "JungleMail 365, an internal communication platform, enables you to easily create solely or simultaneously with a team in real time, manage, and distribute personalised email newsletters, polls, announcements, and updates within your company's Microsoft 365 or G Suite environment. JungleMail seamlessly integrates with these ecosystems, enabling the utilisation of existing tools and data sources like SharePoint, Microsoft Entra ID, Graph API, or Google Directory.

JungleMail promotes a strong sense of community within your organisation by keeping employees informed and connected. By fostering open communication and collaboration, JungleMail helps build a more engaged, productive, and cohesive workforce.

JungleMail's built-in analytics provide valuable insights into the performance of your newsletters, allowing you to measure and improve your internal communications. Track key metrics such as open rates, click-through rates, click map feature and engagement patterns to identify trends and optimise your messaging. Armed with this data, you can make informed decisions to ensure your content resonates with your audience, leading to increased engagement and a more connected organisation.

JungleMail 365 is a SaaS solution. However, for organisations that prioritise enhanced privacy and security, JungleMail can be provided as a dedicated platform hosted within your own cloud or local network. This choice grants you full control over your data and infrastructure, ensuring compliance with the strictest security requirements and data protection standards."

You may also be interested in...

Contact Monkey

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Workshop

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opentext™ OneSource

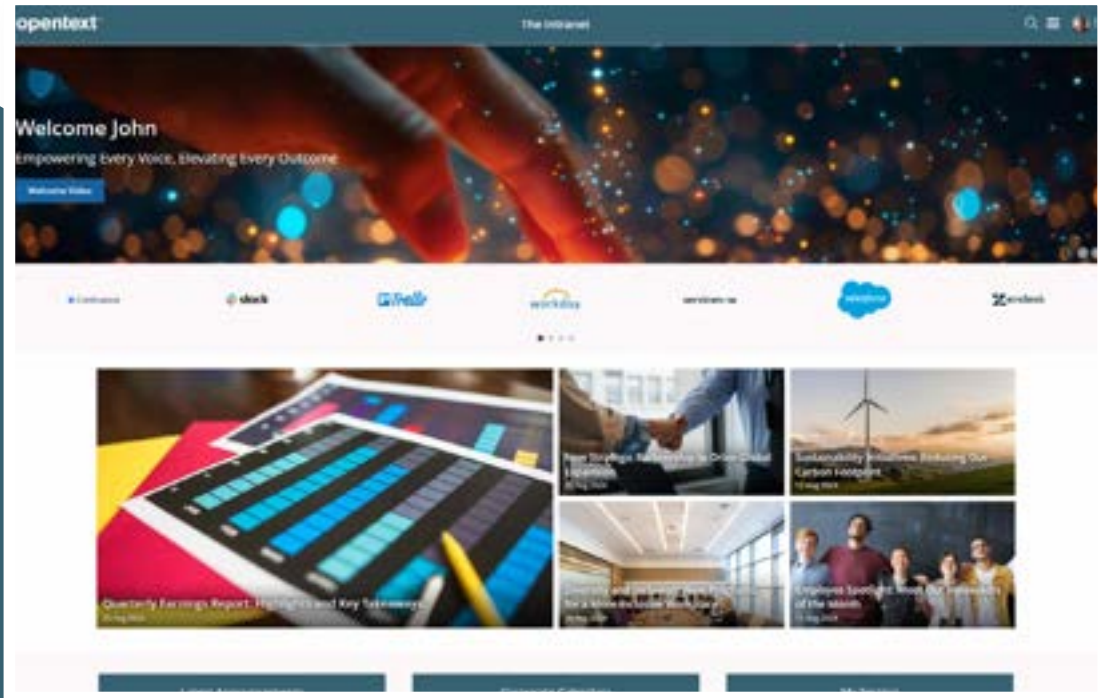
Digital Communication Suite

FULLY STANDALONE

REQUIRES SHAREPOINT

OPTIONALLY WORKS WITH SHAREPOINT

FRONTLINE FOCUS



Typical deployment:

20,000 to 50,000

Company locations:

VISIT THE WEBSITE

The product in a nutshell

OneSource is a well-rounded intranet product that runs on SharePoint and provides a clean and user-friendly experience for employees and administrators alike.

CLEARBOX VIEW

OneSource Digital Communication Suite (referred to as OneSource from here) is a user-friendly SharePoint-based intranet product from the Canadian company OpenText. OneSource is built on SharePoint, but it completely replaces the user interface with its own solution, which we found to be intuitive and easy to manage. This approach, although unusual, will appeal to organisations looking for a user-friendly experience, while sticking to SharePoint and Microsoft 365 as the underlying technology. A native app is not available; mobile users are served by the responsive website.

The look and feel of OneSource is clean, appealing and straightforward to manage. Themes are used to set the visual design and branding options, including sub-brands. Pages are built using a variety of building blocks, called 'components', that are dragged and dropped into place. Predefined page designs and templates are available to start from. A dashboard gives an overview of all the pages in the intranet and comes with a handy guided tour. Also worth mentioning is OneSource's focus on accessibility; we particularly like the built-in accessibility scan to check a page's compliance with WCAG 2.1 and Section 508 standards.

News publishing is intuitive. News articles are easy to create and target to employees based on their profile. Employees can also subscribe to or unsubscribe from certain news channels. There are features for crisis communication and mandatory reads, and also multilingual content is supported. Editors will use the dashboard to manage the flow of news, along with a simple calendar of upcoming articles.

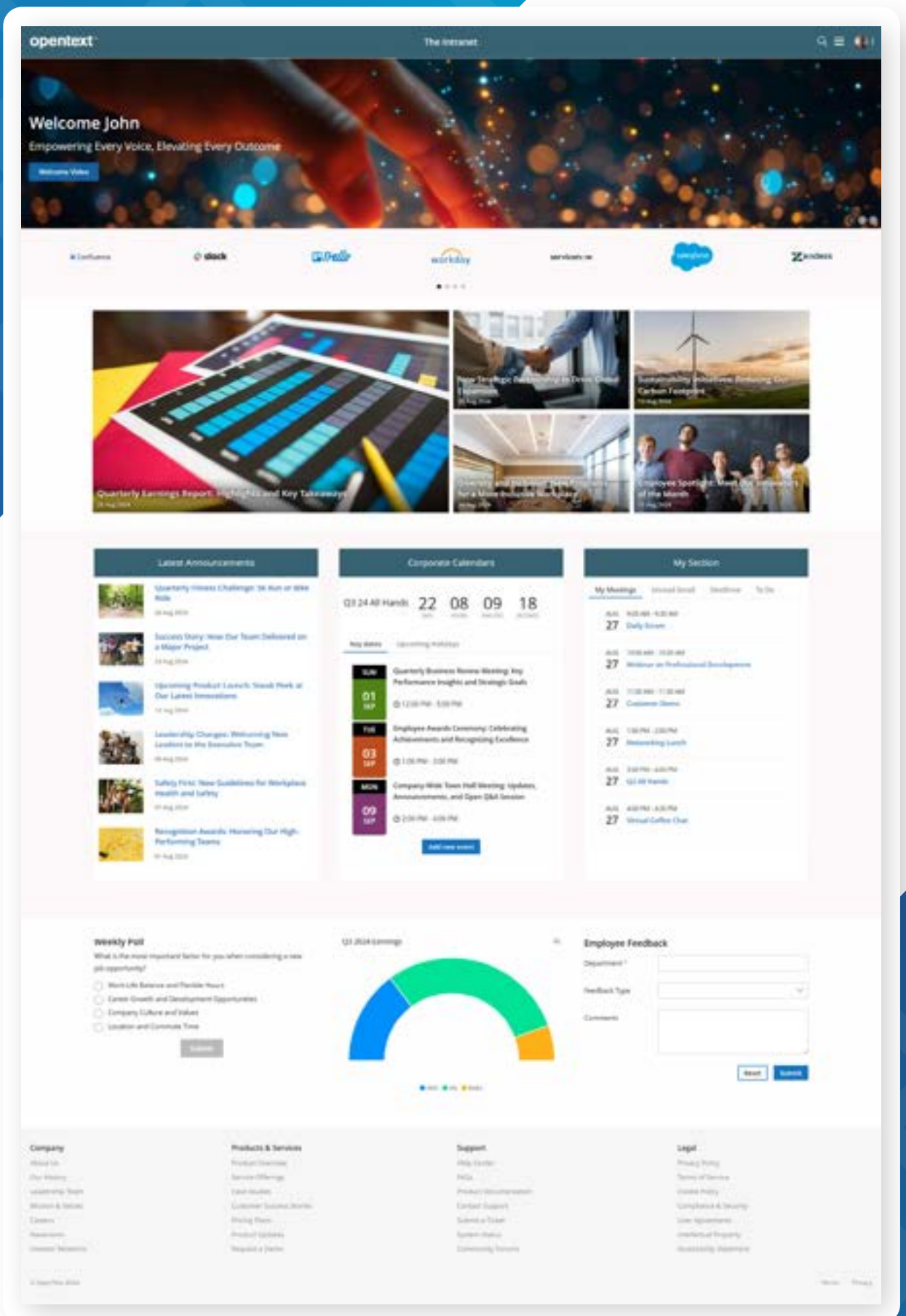
Community and engagement features in OneSource are simple yet practical. Employees can like, rate and comment on news articles, and @mentions are supported. There is a bulletin board that can support a community of practice or social discussion groups, but functionality is limited. Organisations looking for richer community discussions are encouraged to integrate Viva Engage using a OneSource component.

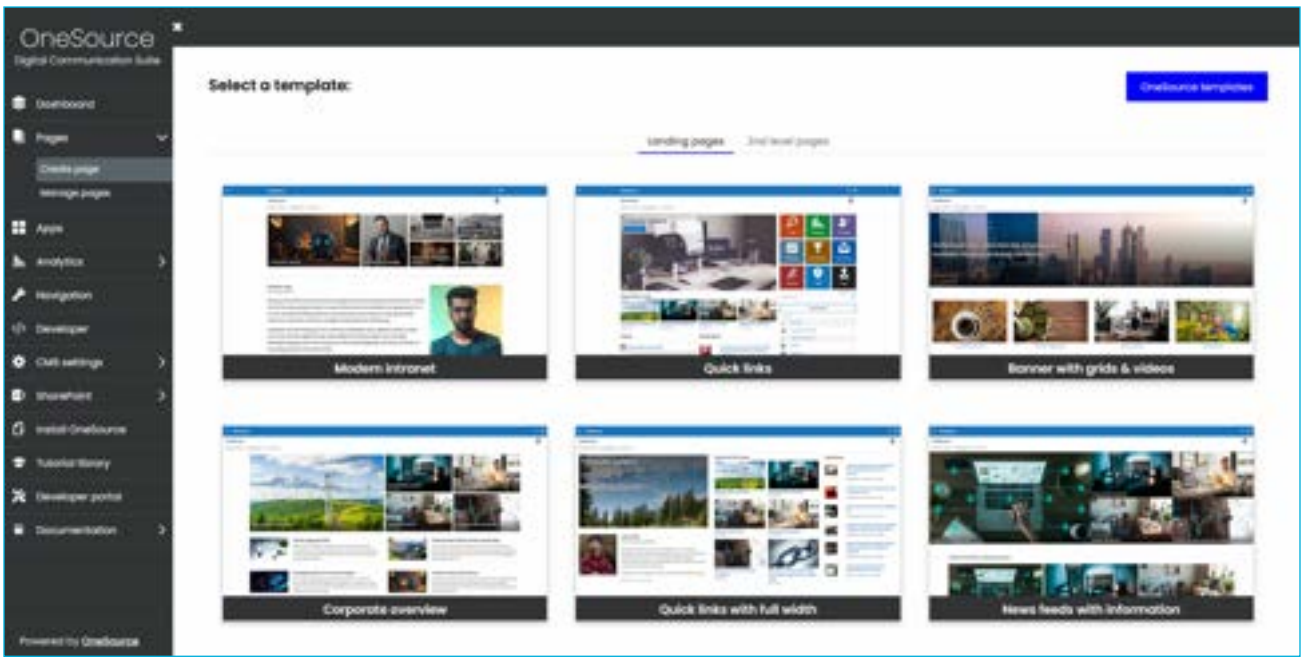
Integrations mainly focus on the Microsoft 365 suite, with components available for Outlook, OneDrive, Forms, To Do and PowerBI alongside Viva Engage. SharePoint news articles can optionally be displayed within a OneSource article feed. There are no out-of-the-box connectors to popular business platforms such as Workday or ServiceNow, but OneSource includes a developer portal with access to an API, tutorials and reusable code snippets. Admin tools are logically grouped together in a Management Hub, with a menu and a contextual search window to guide admins to the right area.

By default, OneSource will use SharePoint search, but other search engines can be configured upon request. The presentation of search results is simple but user-friendly, and we like the support for 'best bets' and the possibility for employees to give feedback. The people directory has its own search interface with filters for location, department, job title, etc. People search results are shown as cards with contact details that can be used to send an email or start a Teams chat. Clicking on a card opens a basic organisation chart.

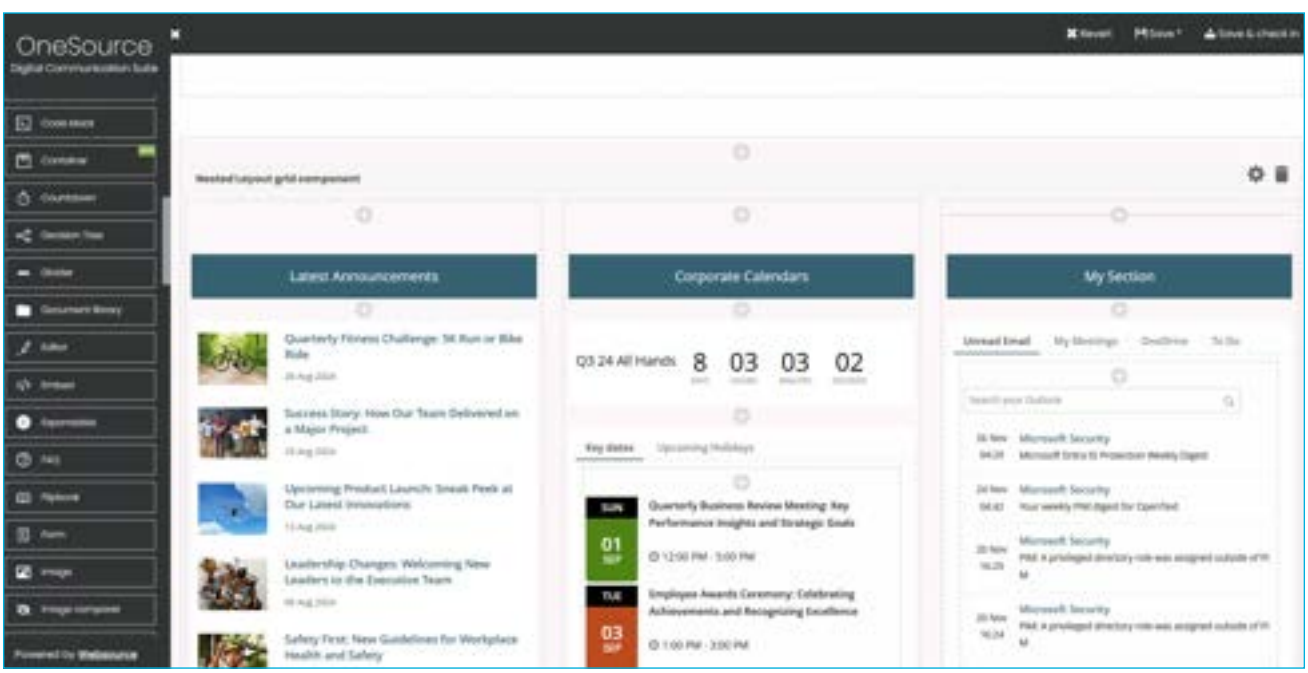
OneSource comes with a full suite of analytics based on the open-source product Matomo which has been fully integrated. Well laid-out dashboards show top-level traffic overview down to detailed reporting for individual pages. One of the standout features is an engagement dashboard that includes sentiment analysis for comments, while also tracking engagement through likes and ratings. We also like the tooltips and the analytics glossary that explains what all the metrics mean.

Overall, OneSource is a well-designed all-round intranet product with a few features that make it stand out, such as the focus on accessibility. In some areas, functionality is less rich than in other products in this report. It will appeal mainly to organisations that wish to leverage their M365 investment but don't want the full complexity of SharePoint's approach to page building.

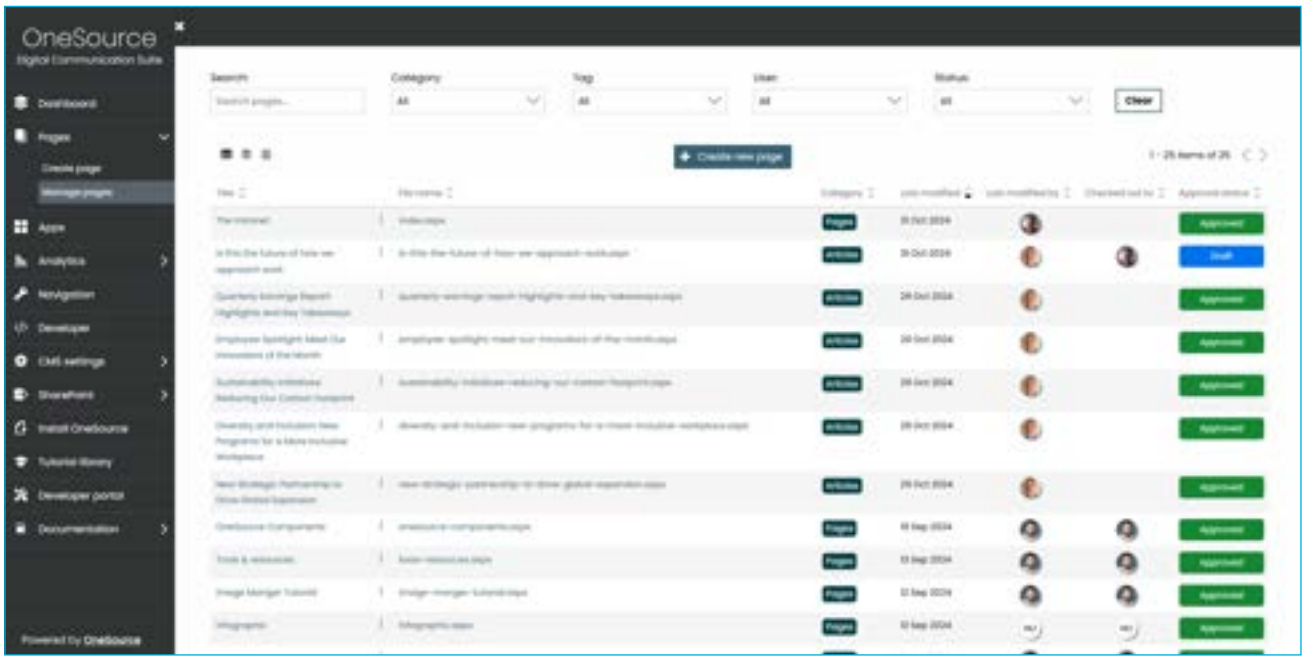

opentext
The Intranet
Welcome John
Empowering Every Voice, Elevating Every Outcome
Latest Announcements
Corporate Calendars
My Section
Weekly Poll
Employee Feedback



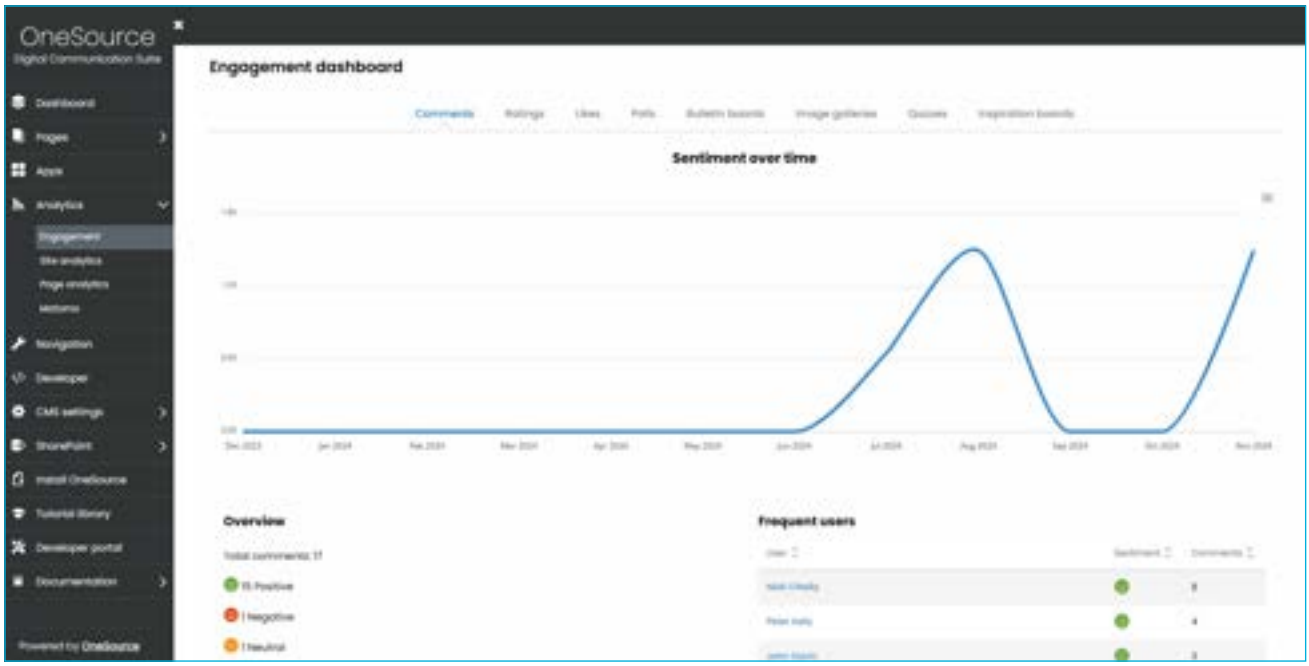
Page templates have a nice visual preview and are conveniently separated into 'landing pages' and 'second level' pages.



OneSource comes with a range of predefined components that are easy to drag and drop into the main content area of the page.



From a central overview page, content owners and news editors will manage their content. Filters at the top will help them drill down.



An interesting analytics dashboard shows employee engagement with content and includes sentiment analysis on comments.

Pricing

PRICE BAND	
1,000 users	$$$$$
5,000 users	$$$$$
20,000 users	$$$$$
50,000 users	$$$$$

These prices are indicative, offering a comparison of the products featured in this report. Please contact the vendor for a bespoke quote.

PRICING MODEL

Subscription – price band based on number of users.

DISCOUNTS

Charities and non-profit organisations; schools and educational institutes; multi-year commitments.

COSTS TYPICALLY

Fairly evenly spread across three years.

PRICE INCLUDES

The analytics module. OpenText offers additional support hours each quarter, tailored to the size of their clients, throughout the duration of the contract. Support includes email and phone assistance, ongoing training, guidance on advanced site development, review of new functionality requests and facilitation of four quarterly releases each year.

Product type

Ready-to-run, installed in hours

Branding opportunities

Good branding, complex options

Base systems

Fully standalone	Requires SharePoint	Other

Sectors

Business, consulting and management	Engineering and manufacturing	Healthcare	Information technology	Science and pharmaceuticals

COMPANY AND PRODUCT

Company details

Company
OpenText

ISO 27001 certified
Yes

Data residency
N/A

Company founded
1991

Product launched
2016

Typical client size
20,000 to 50,000

Largest deployment so far
65,000 – multinational with a global presence

Customers
Not provided

Partner locations
Please see their website for details.

Company locations
Waterloo, Canada (HQ); Offices located in the following countries: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, China, Costa Rica, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Korea, Mexico, Netherlands, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Turkey, UK, United Arab Emirates, USA

Product and technical details

Name of product

OneSource Digital Communication Suite

Deployment

Client on-premises	**Client private cloud**	**Microsoft Azure**	Amazon Web Services	Vendor-hosted	**Microsoft 365 tenant**	Google Cloud	Other

Authentication supported

Entra ID	**ADFS**	**Okta**	**Open ID**	**Oauth**	G Suite	Other

App deployment

Google Play store	Apple store	MDM	MAM	Other

Accessibility

WCAG 2.1 conformant

Document library sources integrated

Box	Dropbox	Google Drive	**SharePoint**	**OneDrive**	Other

Optional integrated enterprise search engines

Coveo	Elastic	IBM	Lucidworks	**Microsoft**	Mindbreeze	Sinequa	Other

User interface multi-language

Machine translation	**Pre-configured**	Editable	Right to left script supported	Other

Content multi-language

Machine translation for publishers	Machine translation for end users	**Editable machine translation for publishers**	**Manual creation for publishers**	Right to left script	Other

Set-up and support

Set-up process for new clients

OpenText begins by gathering the client's requirements and objectives to create a tailored solution. Then, they provision a SharePoint site collection, configure permissions and deploy the OneSource Digital Communication Suite, implementing the necessary libraries, lists and templates for effective content management. OpenText customises the site's appearance and functionality to align with corporate branding, trains the client's team on CMS usage and offers ongoing support. Finally, OpenText conducts testing and user acceptance to ensure a smooth transition, delivering an efficient and user-friendly intranet solution.

Version numbers

Demonstrated to ClearBox: Q3 FY24

At January 2025: Q4 FY24

Product updates

Major updates every quarter.

Product update process

OneSource product updates are released every 90 days to all customers simultaneously, with no disruption to their service. The release date is coordinated with the customer ahead of each rollout.

Reverse-out options

The customer retains ownership of the content and can continue using the CMS; however, they will no longer receive updates, enhancements or fixes included in the quarterly releases.

Technical support

Email support	Phone support	Chat support	Online portal	24/7 support	Office hours only*

* GMT

User community

None.

Voice of the vendor

OpenText says: "At OpenText, we offer the world's most comprehensive and integrated Information Management platform, enabling our customers to effectively organize, integrate, and protect their data and content as it moves through business processes both within and beyond their organization.

As a global leader in Information Management, OpenText empowers companies to securely capture, manage, and exchange information worldwide. We address the digital business needs of customers, from small and mid-sized enterprises to the largest and most complex organizations. With 23,000 employees across 120 offices and a portfolio of over 300 products, OpenText unifies content management, digital experiences, trading partner connectivity, and security to transform businesses of all sizes into connected and intelligent organizations.

The OneSource Digital Communication Suite is delivered as a service, unlocking the full potential of Microsoft SharePoint®, one of the most popular corporate intranet platforms. With over a decade of experience, OneSource Digital Communication Suite helps organizations overcome the cost and lead time challenges associated with intranet site management.

Its capabilities are continually enhanced through quarterly content releases. Easy to deploy and requiring no technical skills, it empowers business users to quickly create and maintain rich, engaging pages with a comprehensive set of features. This platform includes features for effortless creation of multilingual intranet pages.

The OneSource Digital Communication Suite provides a range of powerful features, including:

- An intuitive, user-friendly interface with drag-and-drop functionality tailored for business users.
- Real-time control and management of structured content updates.
- Full compliance with corporate branding across all content.
- Responsive design for a seamless experience on both mobile and desktop devices.
- A rich set of built-in components, such as "Meet the Team", Weather, Quiz, Stock Quote, Media, Calendar, and more.
- Adherence to accessibility standards, including WCAG 2.1 AA and Section 508.
- Advanced integrated web analytics for comprehensive insights.
- Multiple customizable corporate page templates to meet diverse requirements."

You may also be interested in...

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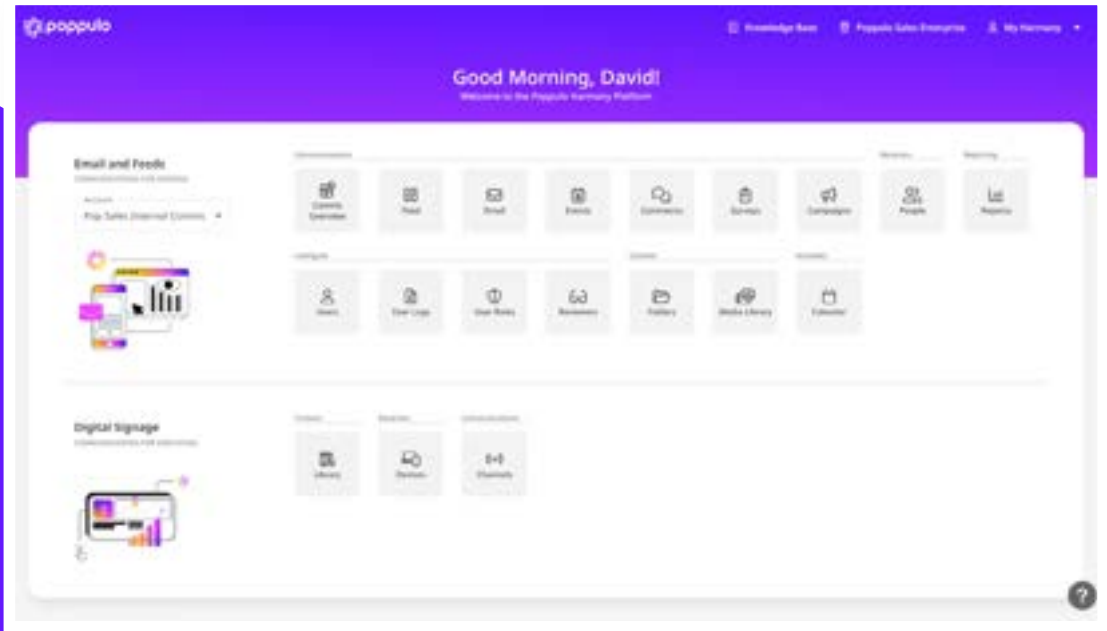
poppulo

FULLY STANDALONE

REQUIRES SHAREPOINT

FRONTLINE FOCUS

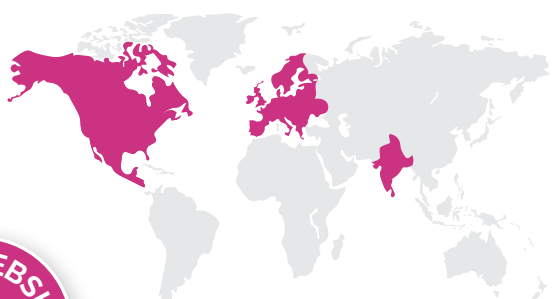
OTHER



Typical deployment:

20,000 to 50,000

Company locations:



VISIT THE WEBSITE

The product in a nutshell

With particularly strong newsletter and digital signage capabilities, Poppulo offers communicators the facility to effectively reach employees wherever they already are in the digital workplace.

CLEARBOX VIEW

Poppulo is a familiar brand in the communications industry and has a reach of over 50 million employees across its global customer base. The current iteration of the Poppulo platform was released in 2017 and helps communicators effectively reach employees wherever they already are in the digital workplace. From one dashboard, communicators can form and distribute messages across multiple channels and in different formats.

For communicators, there is a clean dashboard split into channels and associated actions within each. Permissions are granular - communicators will only see the menu options for the activities they can perform. In turn, permissions for audience communication are also granular, allowing for a detailed split between local and global communicators, for example. Audiences are built from any relevant profile field(s), drawn from any people data source(s); we like that profile fields could also be behavioural, such as "those who don't open emails".

Content is built by choosing an appropriate channel from digital signage, email, app, feed (such as an app within MS Teams or positioned on a SharePoint page), events and web-based articles. The email builder works particularly well. During implementation Poppulo's design team will help set up a range of templates, with the option for communicators to draw on hundreds of others and apply the organisation's branding. The newsletter is built using a drag-and-drop interface, which is easy to use and highly configurable, and the content blocks can be further audience targeted. Where wanted, APIs draw through content from business platforms (e.g. SharePoint news), or links added to take people through to the source. Employees can like, comment on and share into other channels (including Viva Engage and LinkedIn) from within the newsletter.

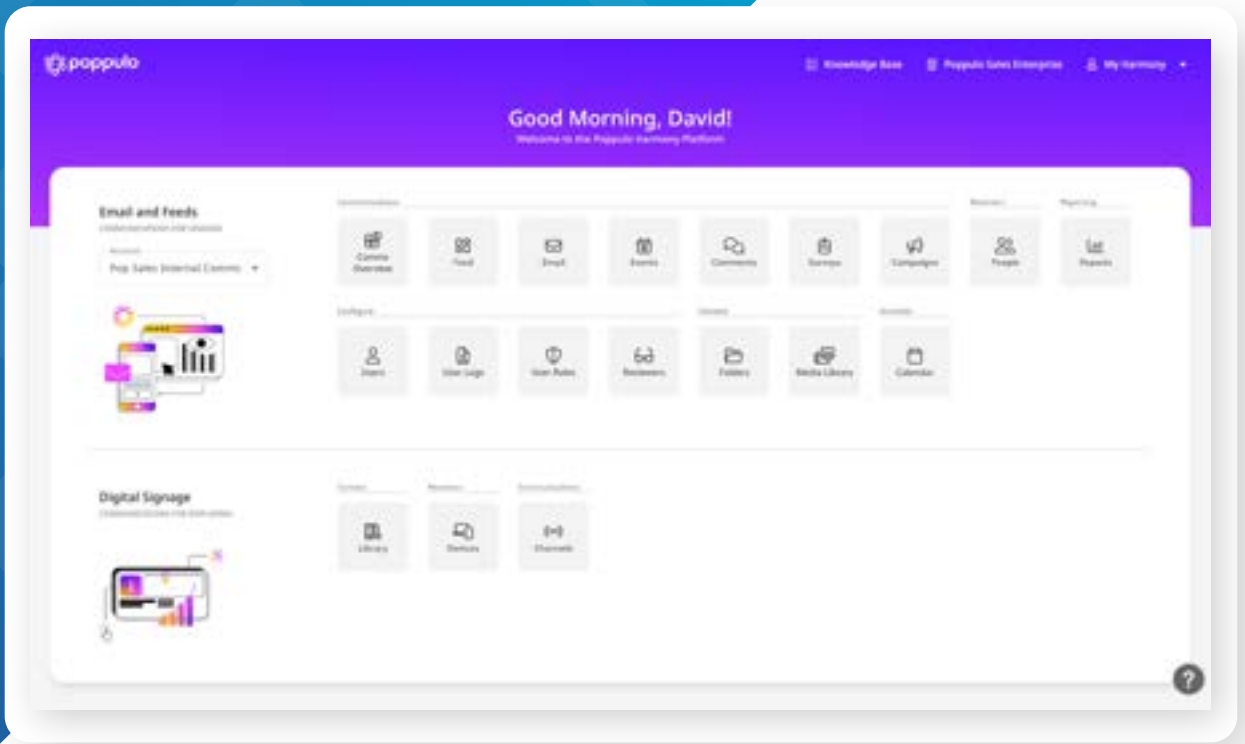
Web articles (and feed posts) are created using a simpler rich text editor interface, but this includes a helpful generative AI tool to adjust the tone and length for further editing. On publication a 'microsite' is automatically created, with an email, text notification or QR code in digital signage for people to find it. Digital signage can be configured to display stats and data, such as a sales dashboard or map of a location, and / or communications. Once content is created it can be converted to share into other channels, for example a web article could be simplified to share into a Teams channel.

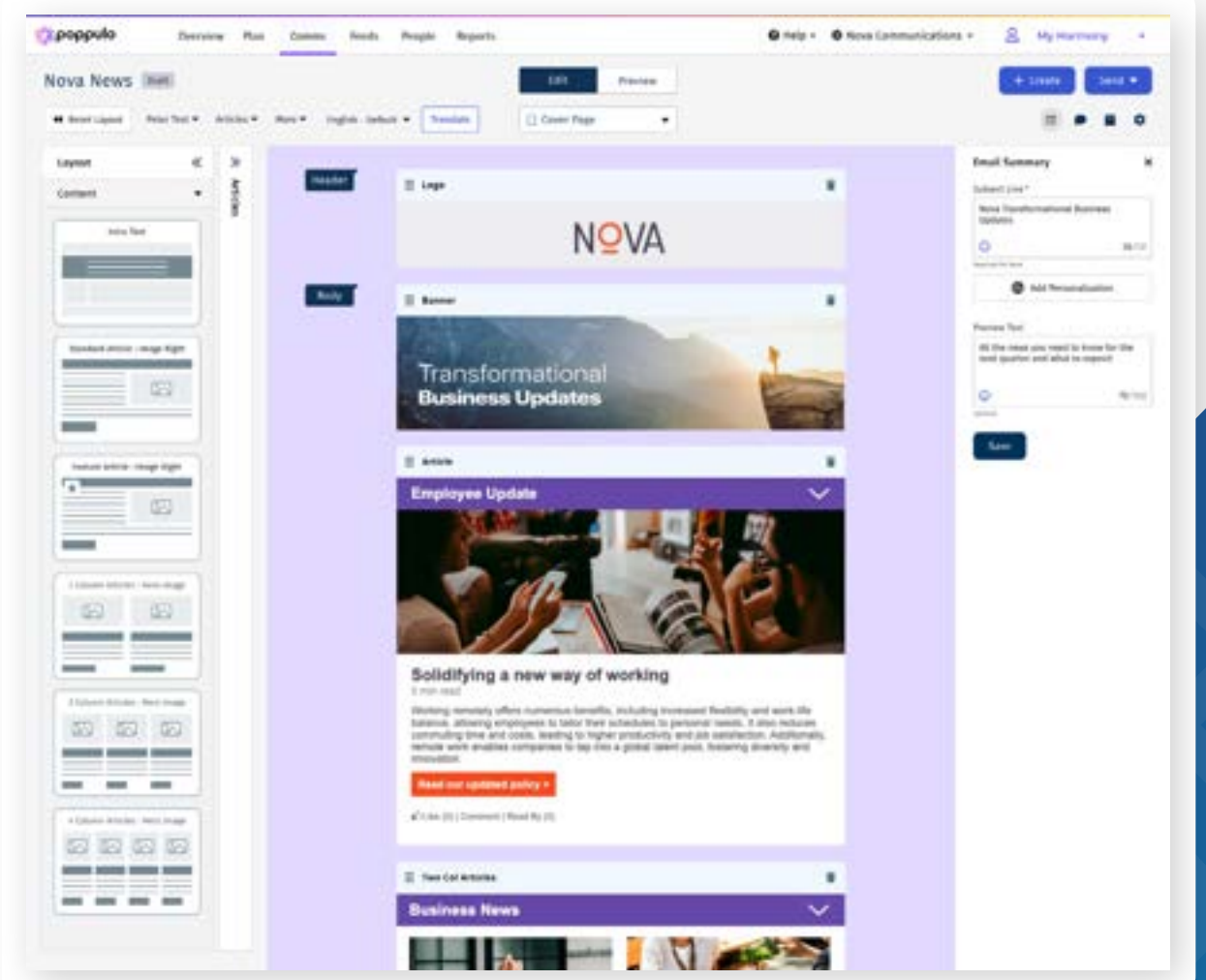
Employees can use single sign on or unique identifiers, such as employee number, to log into the app. This is where people may find older content and subscribe to additional topics. There is no search in the app or microsite, but each email could include an 'archive' content block that takes people through to a search screen that indexes the title and content of emails. We think findability could be improved, as while the initial distribution of news will reach many people, the experience of referring back to older communications could be smoother. Poppulo says they are exploring AI search experiences as part of their 2025 roadmap.

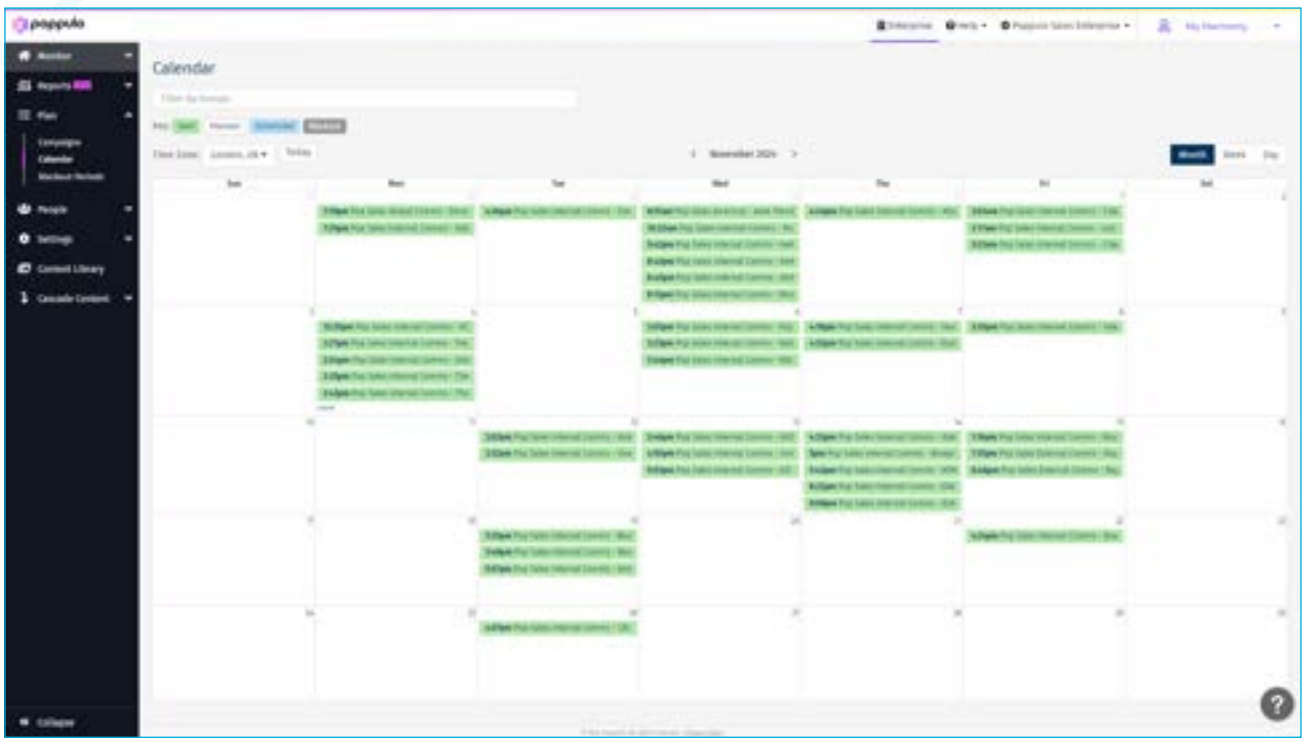
There is a useful calendar to help communicators manage the flow of messages, including a helpful 'blackout' feature for those days where communicating would be ineffective. We like the support for local communicators, who can choose to 'cascade' optional messages from global teams to local audiences. Similarly, content can be grouped under campaigns as appropriate. For example, a campaign could include event invites, live event updates and a post-event survey.

We like the AI chatbot accessible via a persistent question mark icon, which provides information from the 'Resource Centre'. The chatbot will answer natural language questions where someone needs help or would like some guidance (for example "how to structure a CEO's email update"), using the organisation's own reference material to generate answers. Other effective tools include auto translation options and a good range of analytics.

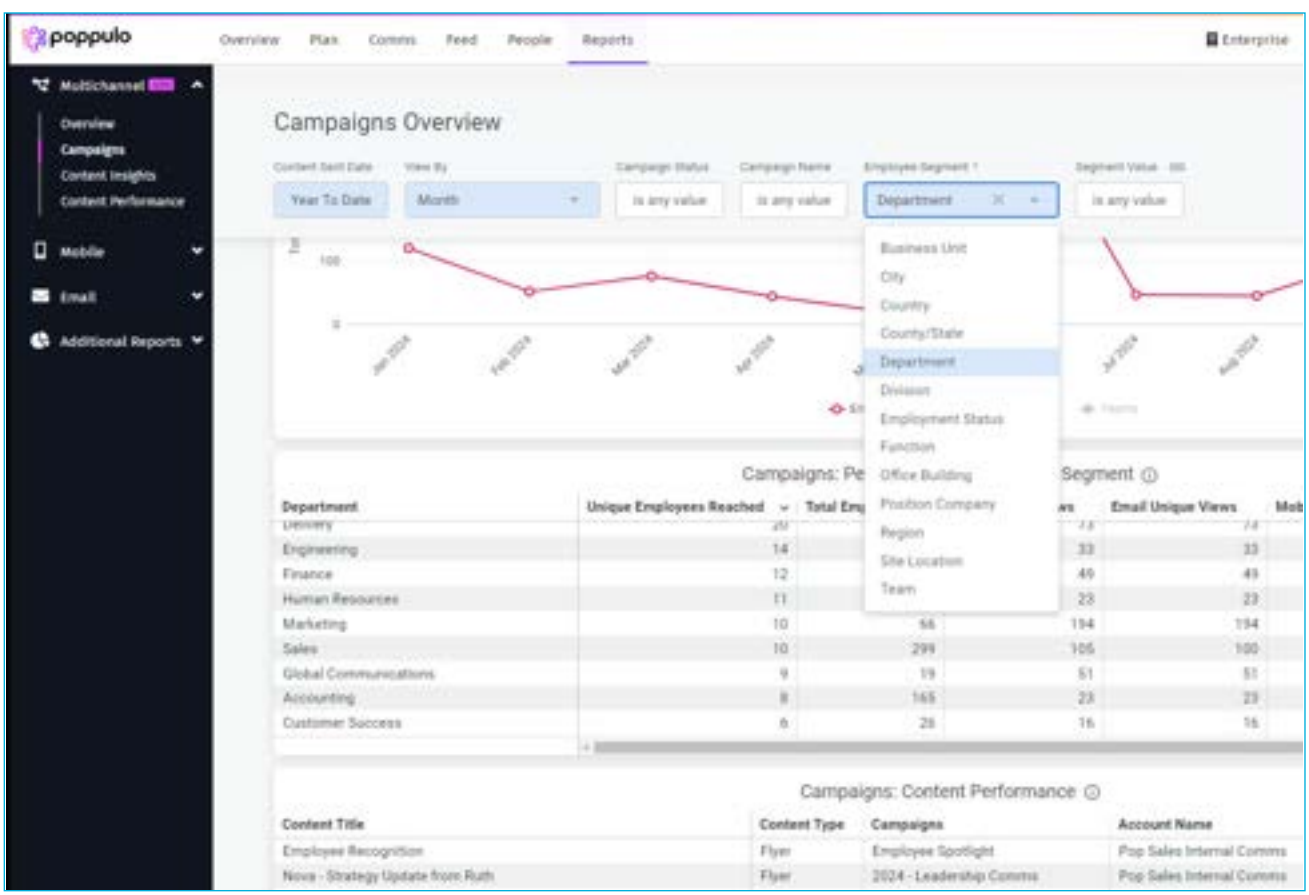
Overall, Poppulo is an effective communications platform that meets employees wherever they are in the digital workplace. It would support change and transformation projects well, where messaging is organisation-wide and not necessarily associated with an individual department, for example. It comes at an attractive price point too, although the digital signage solution is at additional cost.


poppulo
Good Morning, David!
Email and Feeds
Digital Signage

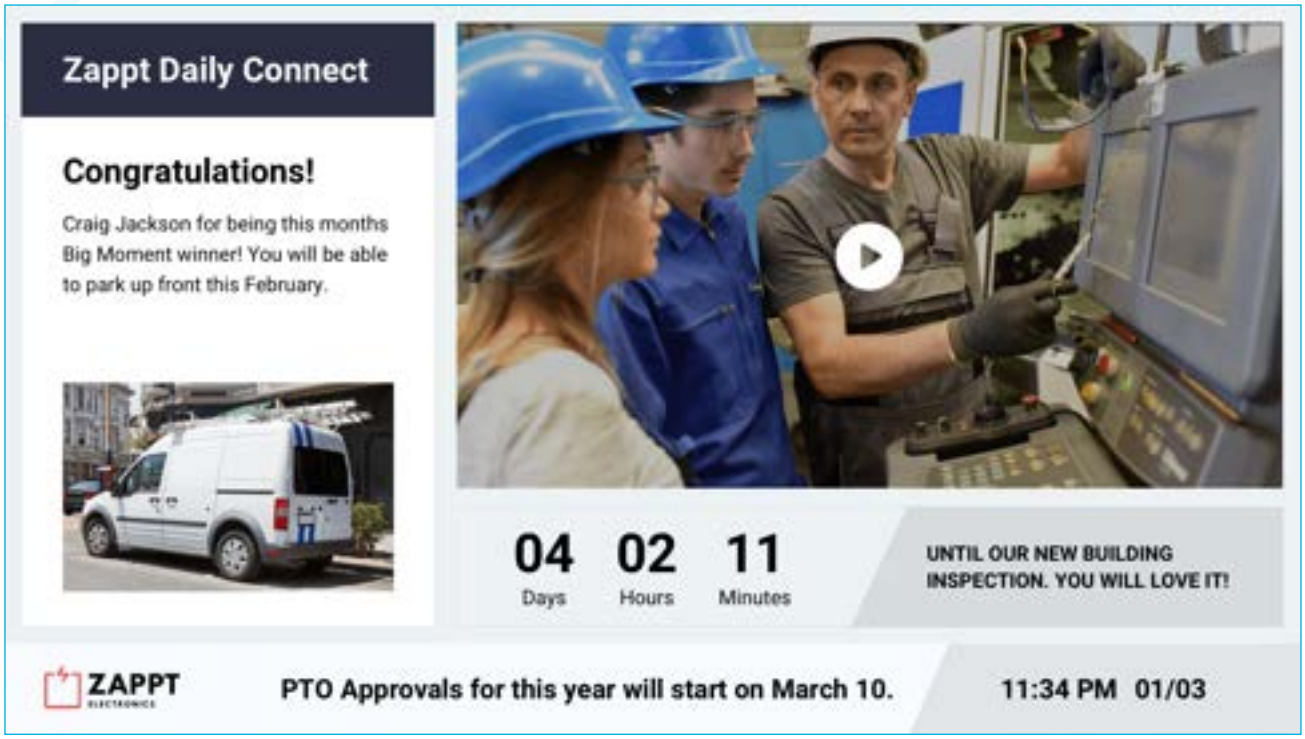

poppulo
Nova News
Layout
Content
Header
Logo
NOVA
Body
Banner
Transformational
Business Updates
Article
Employee Update
Solidifying a new way of working
Business News
Email Summary



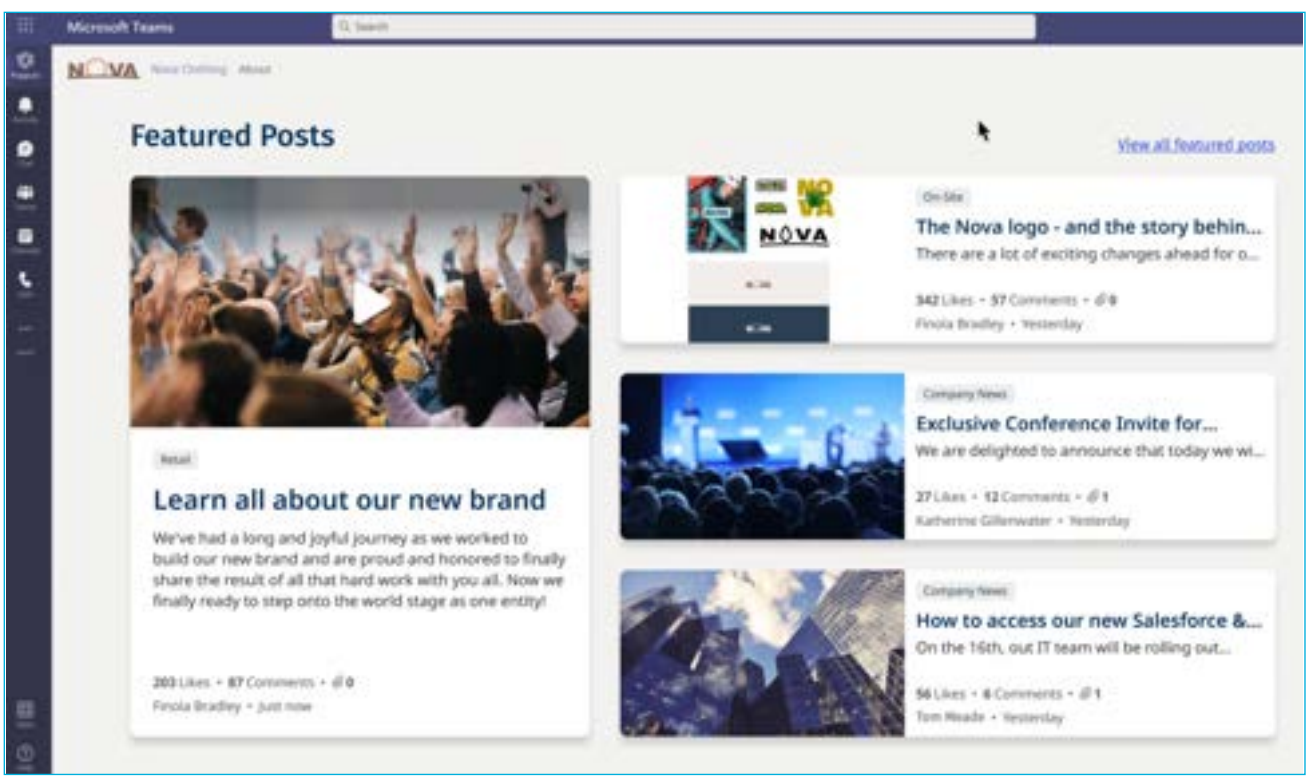
Communicators can see all scheduled and published items via a clear calendar.



Communications can be drawn together under a campaign umbrella.



Digital signage can display stats, maps or other reference material and / or communications.



Poppulo content will find employees wherever they are in the digital workplace, such as within SharePoint or Microsoft Teams.

Pricing

PRICE BAND	
1,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
5,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
20,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
50,000 users	$ $ $ $ $

These prices are indicative, offering a comparison of the products featured in this report. Please contact the vendor for a bespoke quote.

PRICING MODEL

Subscription – price band based on number of users;

DISCOUNTS

Multi-year commitments; charities and non-profit organisations; schools and educational institutes; government / public sector.

COSTS TYPICALLY

Fairly evenly spread across three years.

PRICE INCLUDES

24/7 support, dedicated CSM, custom branded email templates, on-demand training and e-learning, virtual events, in-person SME events.

Product type

Ready-to-run, installed in days

Branding opportunities

Good branding, complex options

Base systems

- Fully standalone
- Requires SharePoint
- Other

Sectors

- Accountancy, banking and finance
- Information technology
- Business, consulting and management
- Engineering and manufacturing
- Retail

COMPANY AND PRODUCT

Company details

Company
Poppulo

ISO 27001 certified
Yes, plus SOC II

Data residency
N/A

Company founded
1996

Product launched
2017

Typical client size
20,000 to 50,000

Largest deployment so far
FMCG company reaching over 270,000 employees across 186 countries

Customers
Clients include: Wipro, National Grid, Aer Lingus, Maximus, CDK Global, BDO, Booz Allen Hamilton, Nuance, Lincoln Financial Group, Rolls Royce

Partner locations
United States, UK

Company locations
Denver, Colorado, United States (HQ); Ireland; India

Product and technical details

Name of product

Poppulo

Deployment

Client on-premises	Client private cloud	Microsoft Azure	**Amazon Web Services**	Vendor-hosted	Microsoft 365 tenant	Google Cloud	Other

Authentication supported

Entra ID	**ADFS**	**Okta**	Open ID	**Oauth**	G Suite	Other

App deployment

Google Play store	**Apple store**	MDM	MAM	Other

Accessibility

Not conformant but Poppulo says they "partially support" WCAG 2.1, having conducted an external accessibility audit and are working toward compliance. Poppulo also advises customers on best practices to ensure their communications to employees follow WCAG guidelines.

Document library sources integrated

Box	Dropbox	Google Drive	SharePoint	OneDrive	Other

Optional integrated enterprise search engines

Coveo	Elastic	IBM	Lucidworks	Microsoft	Mindbreeze	Sinequa	Other

User interface multi-language

Machine translation	Pre-configured	Editable	Right to left script supported	Other

Content multi-language

Machine translation for publishers	Machine translation for end users	Editable machine translation for publishers	Manual creation for publishers	Right to left script	Other

Set-up and support

Set-up process for new clients

New clients work with a dedicated Poppulo onboarding project manager who supports the entire implementation process alongside additional technical implementation, training and design experts. The standard process includes requirements review and consultation, account setup and configuration, people data integration, template design, technical onboarding and user enablement - including live training sessions for admins and communicators plus access to a suite of on-demand learning resources. Typical deployments take 8-10 weeks.

Current version

Demonstrated to ClearBox: Oct '24

At January 2025: Oct '24

Product updates

Minor updates weekly; major updates every two months.

Product update process

Most updates are applied automatically, and customers are notified with in-app guides, via email, CSM outreach and knowledgebase updates. Poppulo's generative AI features are not turned on automatically—customers are given the choice to opt-in.

Reverse-out options

Poppulo's standard deletion processes (as it relates to termination of contract) includes disabling a customer account that puts the customer's data beyond use for 180 days, allowing customers time to request their data as needed. Data deletion is done using a cryptographic erasure that is GDPR compliant.

Technical support

Email support	Phone support	Chat support	Online portal	24/7 support	Office hours only

User community

Poppulo says they have a "vibrant customer community" with opportunities to engage at the strategic level as well as gain user expertise. Activities include monthly interactive training webinars on best practices and communicator guidance, customer and user advisory boards and attending Poppulo's employee communications conference, Engage.

Voice of the vendor

Poppulo says: "In a world where organizational change is constant, Poppulo enables companies to communicate what matters most—clearly, efficiently, and at scale. Our leading employee communications platform helps enterprises build more meaningful connections with their employees through personalized content delivered across digital touchpoints—including email, digital signage, mobile, and Microsoft 365. With Poppulo, businesses can reach all employees efficiently with engaging messages and drive their communications strategy forward with centralized planning, creation, publishing, and measurement tools. Poppulo's 4,500+ customer base is representative of the world's most successful companies, including 40+ of the Fortune 100."

You may also be interested in...

Contact Monkey Sociabble Workshop

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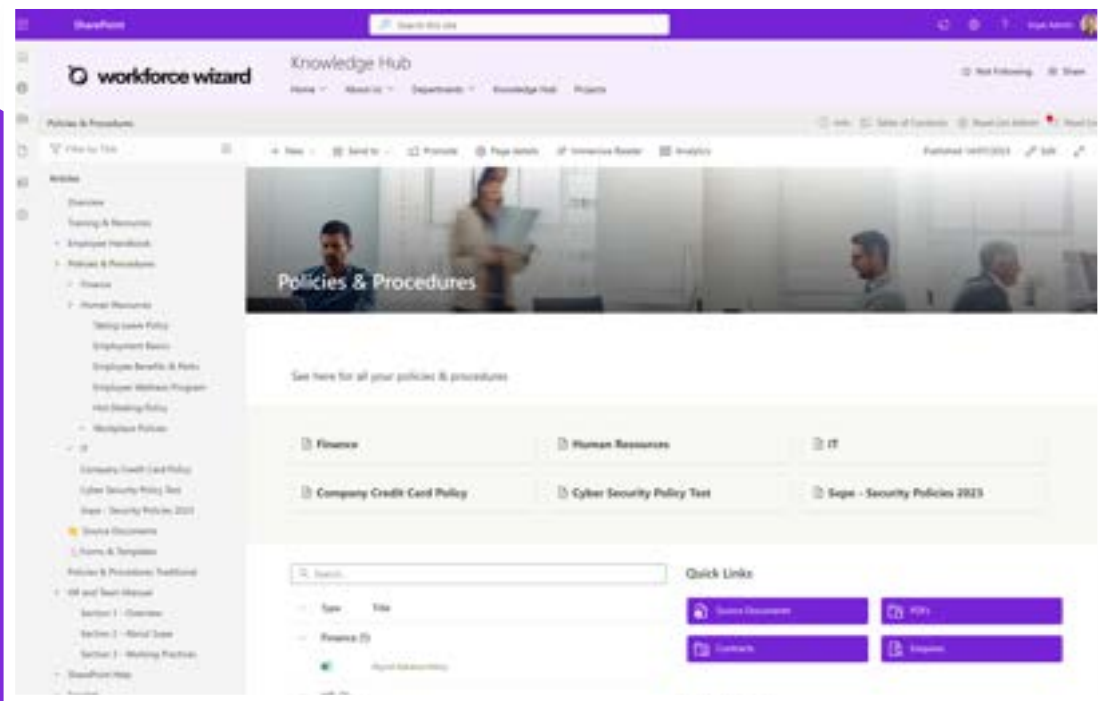
SPROCKET 365

FULLY STANDALONE

REQUIRES SHAREPOINT

OPTIONALLY WORKS WITH SHAREPOINT

FRONTLINE FOCUS



Typical deployment:

Less than 1,000

Company locations:

VISIT THE WEBSITE

The product in a nutshell

Sprocket 365 gives users the ability to fill gaps in SharePoint with functionality including easy to create knowledge bases, wiki-style menus, and document compliance tracking features.

CLEARBOX VIEW

Sprocket 365 (referred to as 'Sprocket' from here) is an extension for SharePoint from a vendor based in Australia. Sprocket uses a series of easy to install web parts that can change the look and feel of SharePoint pages, plus adds further functionality. The primary use case for Sprocket is turning existing SharePoint pages into knowledge bases, rather than installing third-party applications such as Confluence and Notion.

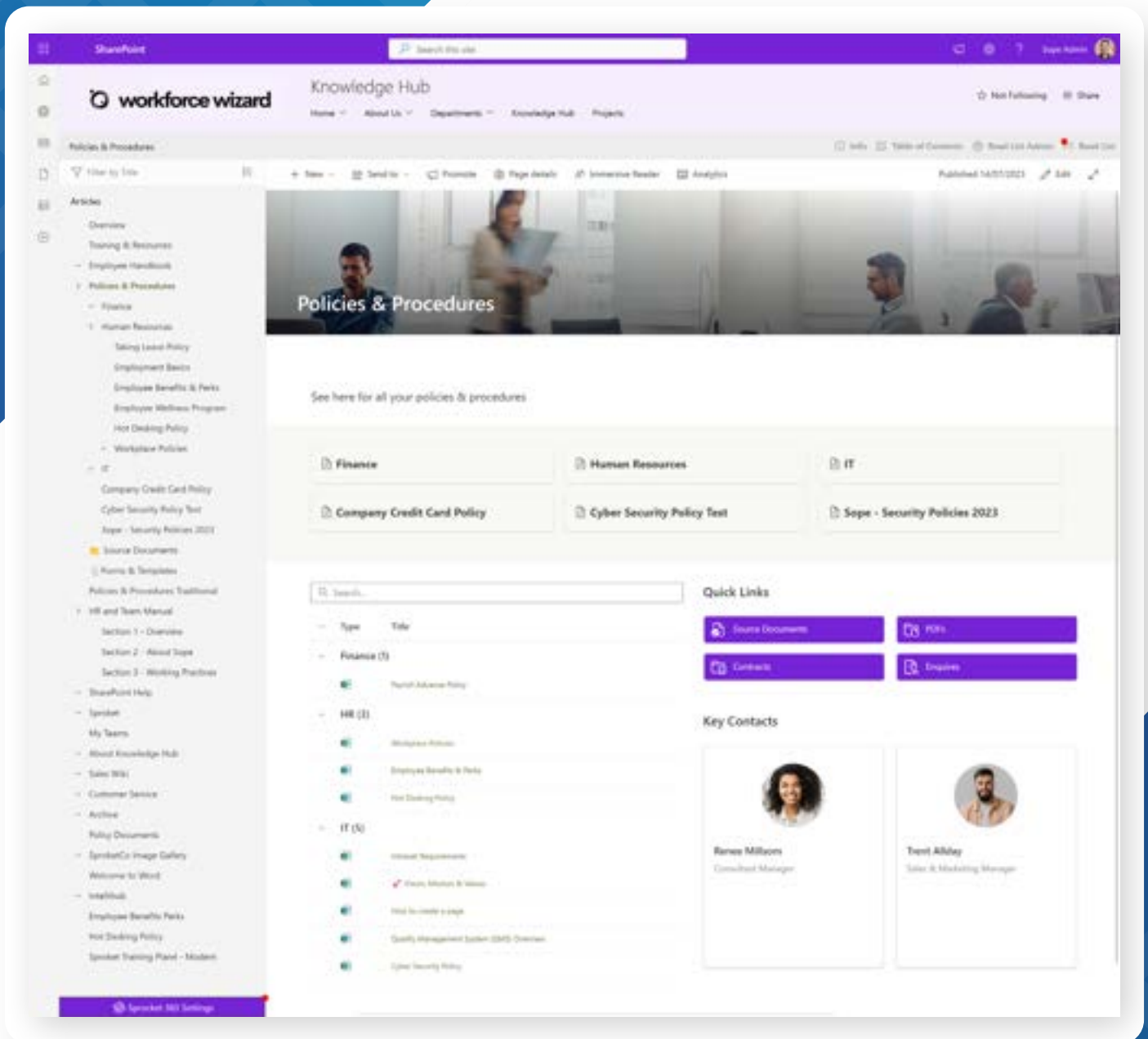
We liked the simplicity of Sprocket, which allows admins to add approximately 30 web parts to any page. Sprocket uses Fabric UI, which is the same as SharePoint, to keep the look and feel familiar. The web parts are designed to be deployed without any additional technical support, although additional customisation is possible using JavaScript or CSS. These web parts are designed to turn pages into knowledge hubs with features that mimic wiki-like platforms, offering similar navigation and editing experiences. Adding to the knowledge base capability, Sprocket can convert Word documents into a SharePoint page – which we see as very helpful when wanting to move policy documents into an interactive knowledge hub. Any changes to the Word document will automatically update the page.

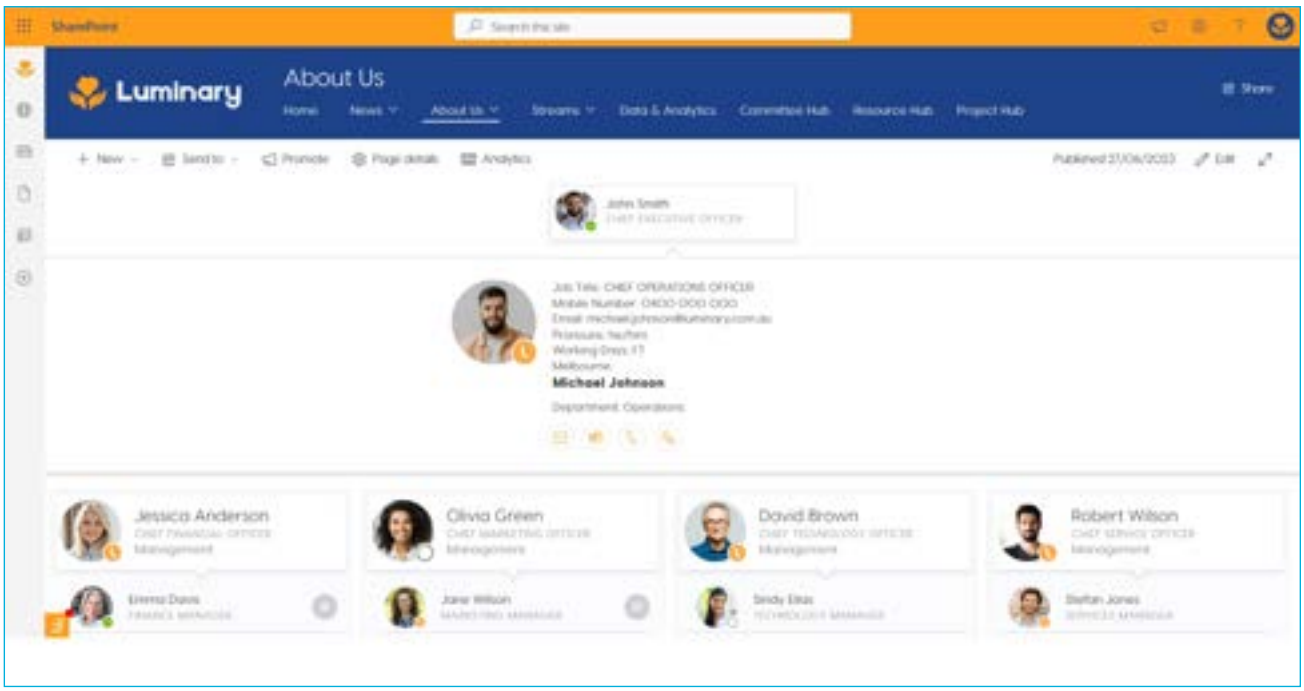
There are a number of web parts specifically designed to encourage people to interact with page content, or to improve findability. A 'Table of Contents' web part allows page content to be organised by the hierarchy of headings, much like we see in wikis. An 'Accordion' web part allows content to be expanded, which is useful for publishing lists like FAQs; this web part can be manually created, or content can be pulled from a SharePoint list. A Sprocket search web part can be configured to crawl the whole intranet or just a specific department site. We like this as it helps provide a more focused user experience for localised knowledge hubs or specific intranet pages. There is also a 'Read List' web part that allows any mandatory reads and their status to be clearly displayed. This allows admins to assign any pages to be read and offers tracking to ensure compliance.

Sprocket offers other page web parts for use outside of knowledge bases. These include a 'News Hub' that collates feeds from across SharePoint communication sites with configurable filters, a 'Location Finder' that offers a map view of locations and people, a multi-level organisation chart and a Calendar that pulls content from multiple sources. Audience targeting is available in all web parts and they are all easily configurable. These web parts can be used by admins to customise branding and headings beyond standard SharePoint, as well as adding navigation features to modify SharePoint pages as intranet landing pages.

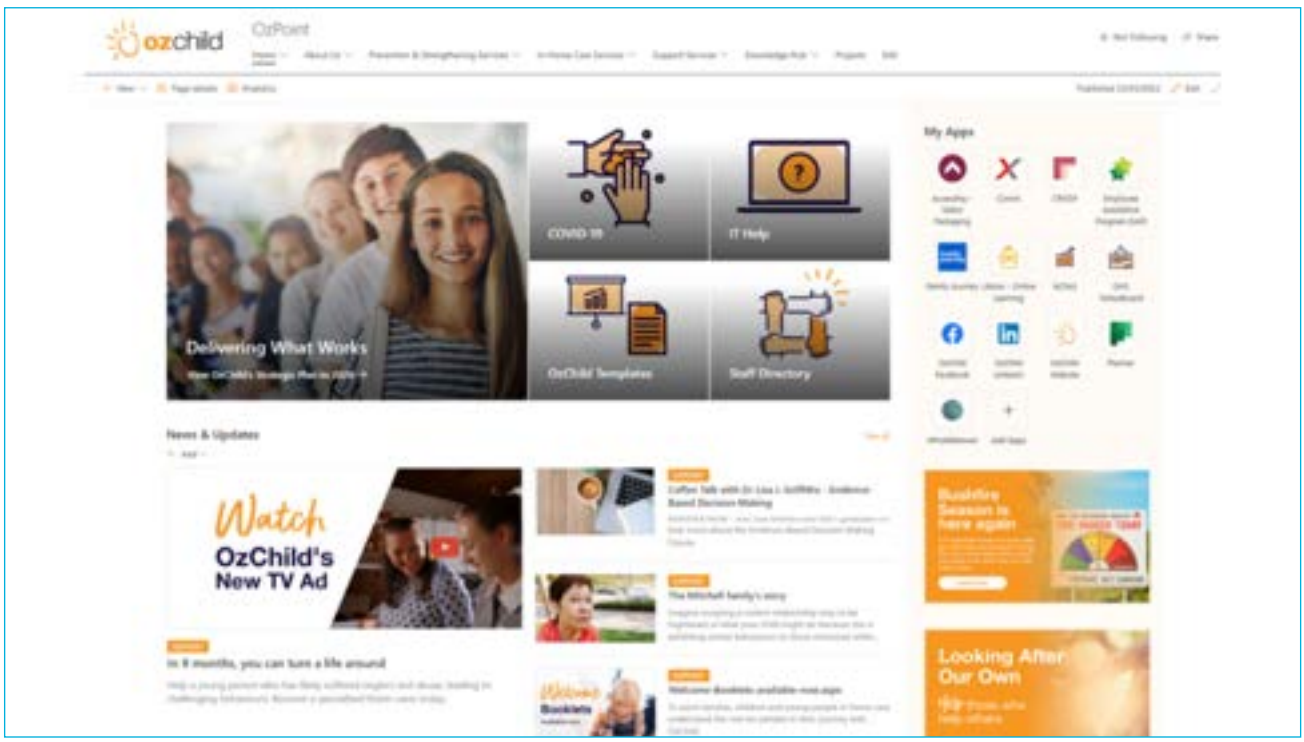
An AI assistant that is trained specifically on chosen content within SharePoint was added in late 2024. The assistant uses generative AI to help provide answers contextual to any given knowledge base or intranet content. However, this assistant was not available at the time of the product demonstration and therefore we are unable to remark on its performance.

Sprocket would be a useful tool for organisations wanting to create and manage knowledge bases or simple, local intranet pages in SharePoint. The lack of technical expertise required makes it easy for administrators to maintain and customise their own spaces or intranet pages, although design customisation without web design skills is limited. At a low price point, we think Sprocket 365 is worth exploring for organisations of any size that have specific requirements that would be met by the flexible and easy to manage web parts.

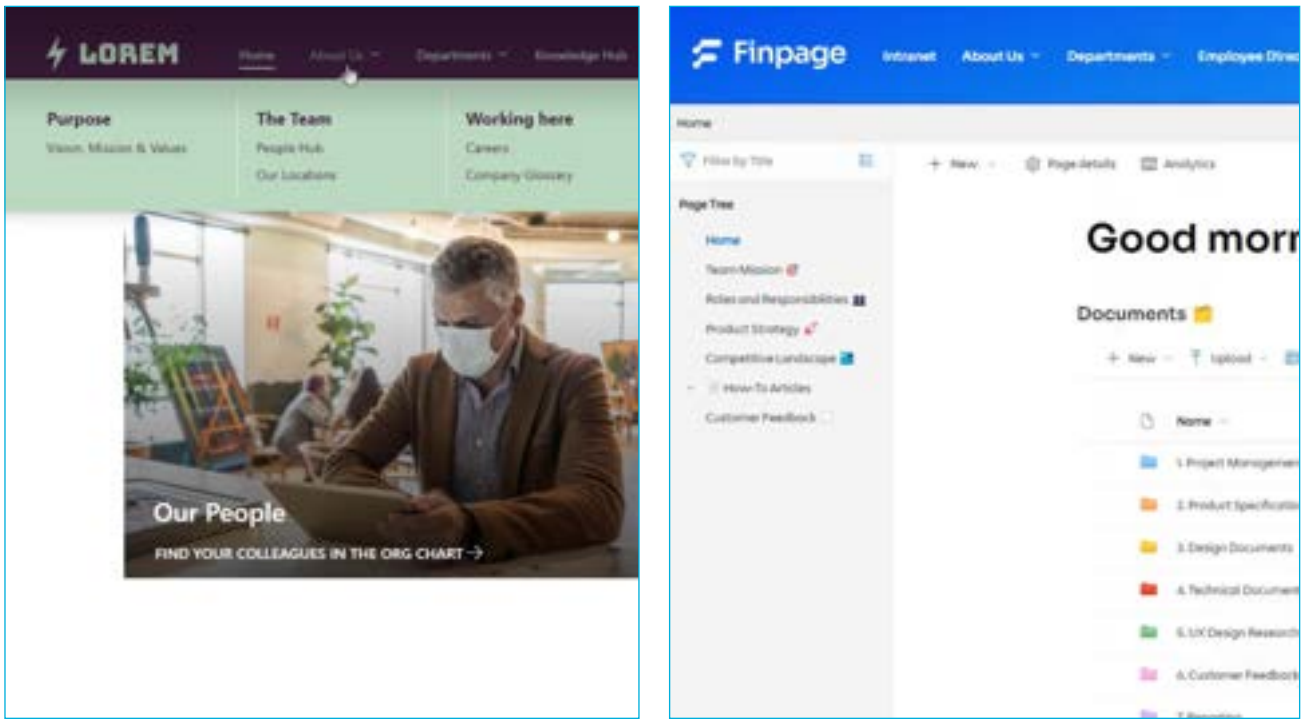

SharePoint
workforce wizard
Knowledge Hub
Home
About Us
Departments
Knowledge Hub
Projects
Not Following
Share
Policies & Procedures
Articles
Overview
Training & Resources
Employee Handbook
Policies & Procedures
Finance
Human Resources
IT
Company Credit Card Policy
Cyber Security Policy Test
Sope - Security Policies 2023
Source Documents
Forms & Templates
Policies & Procedures Traditional
HR and Team Manual
SharePoint Help
Sprocket
My Teams
About Knowledge Hub
Sales Wiki
Customer Service
Archive
Policy Documents
SprocketCo Image Gallery
Welcome to Word
IntelliHub
Employee Benefits Perks
Hot Desking Policy
Sprocket Training Plan! - Modern
Sprocket SEO Settings
New
Send to
Promote
Page details
Immersive Reader
Analytics
Edit
Policies & Procedures
See here for all your policies & procedures
Finance
Human Resources
IT
Company Credit Card Policy
Cyber Security Policy Test
Sope - Security Policies 2023
Type
Title
Finance (3)
HR (3)
IT (5)
Quick Links
Source Documents
PDFs
Contracts
Enquiries
Key Contacts
Renee Milburn
Trent Allday



People Hub web part, providing a staff directory and org chart.



A landing page showing the My Apps web part, which displays frequently-used applications or websites.



Custom headers allowing additional navigation customisation in SharePoint.

Pricing

PRICE BAND	
1,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
5,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
20,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
50,000 users	$ $ $ $ $

These prices are indicative, offering a comparison of the products featured in this report. Please contact the vendor for a bespoke quote.

PRICING MODEL

Subscription – price per user per month.

DISCOUNTS

None.

COSTS TYPICALLY

Fairly evenly spread across three years.

PRICE INCLUDES

Licensing, support, and a customer community.

Product type

Ready-to-run, installed in hours

Branding opportunities

Good branding, complex options

Base systems

Fully standalone

Requires SharePoint

Other

Sectors

Public services, government and administration

Property and construction

Social care

Business, consulting and management

Charity and voluntary work

COMPANY AND PRODUCT

Company details

Company
Sprocket 365

ISO 27001 certified
Yes

Data residency
N/A

Company founded
2017

Product launched
2017

Typical client size
Less than 1,000

Largest deployment so far
6,000

Customers
No example clients were provided.

Partner locations
N/A

Company locations
Melbourne, Australia (HQ)

Product and technical details

Name of product

Sprocket 365

Deployment

Client on-premises	Client private cloud	Microsoft Azure	Amazon Web Services	Vendor-hosted	**Microsoft 365 tenant**	Google Cloud	Other

Authentication supported

Entra ID	ADFS	Okta	Open ID	Oauth	G Suite	Other

App deployment

Google Play store	Apple store	MDM	MAM	Other

Accessibility

WCAG 2.1 compliant

Document library sources integrated

Box	Dropbox	Google Drive	**SharePoint**	OneDrive	Other

Optional integrated enterprise search engines

Coveo	Elastic	IBM	Lucidworks	Microsoft	Mindbreeze	Sinequa	Other

User interface multi-language

Machine translation	Pre-configured	Editable	Right to left script supported	Other

Content multi-language

Machine translation for publishers	Machine translation for end users	Editable machine translation for publishers	Manual creation for publishers	Right to left script	Other

Set-up and support

Set-up process for new clients

One-click installation.

Version numbers

Demonstrated to ClearBox: v6.3

At January 2025: v6.4

Product updates

Major updates every quarter.

Product update process

Customers can choose when they wish to upgrade, or they can choose to skip and update later. Deployment via a package file uploaded into the SharePoint App Catalogue.

Reverse-out options

All data is stored within the client's tenant. If the client chooses to unsubscribe from their Sprocket subscription, all Sprocket web parts will display an invalid subscription message. The client can just remove the relevant web parts as required.

Technical support

Email support	**Phone support**	Chat support	**Online portal**	24/7 support	Office hours only

User community

A social community is available.

Voice of the vendor

Sprocket 365 says: "Sprocket 365 is a SharePoint Framework (SPFx) solution that offers Microsoft Power-Users with advanced tools to enhance SharePoint Online. Unlike traditional intranets-in-a-box, Sprocket 365 does not alter SharePoint's core functionality. Instead, it overlays SharePoint, offering a collection of Web Parts, customisable features and ready-to-use tools in a single packaged solution.

Sprocket 365 overcomes SharePoint's existing feature limitations, offering immediate, cost-effective customisation built on real-world requirements.

- Sprocket 365 gives you all this extra functionality within SharePoint:
- Wiki style menus
- Document compliance tracking
- Page customisation and unique web parts
- Sprocket AI Chatbot - 'Astro'

Sprocket 365 is the premium plug-in application for SharePoint that empowers Microsoft Power-Users, SharePoint Administrators and Developers to build dynamic digital workplaces. With our powerful set of smart features and enhanced web parts, we unlock the full potential of SharePoint, giving you the tools to build digital workplaces quickly and efficiently - at a fraction of the cost.

Sprocket 365 is the go-to product for professionals seeking bespoke functionality, filling in the gaps that Microsoft 365 and SharePoint don't specifically deliver for the end user."

You may also be interested in...

BEACON

Junglemail™ for Office 365

Lightspeed365 by contentformula

Back to index

Steegle.One

FULLY STANDALONE

REQUIRES SHAREPOINT

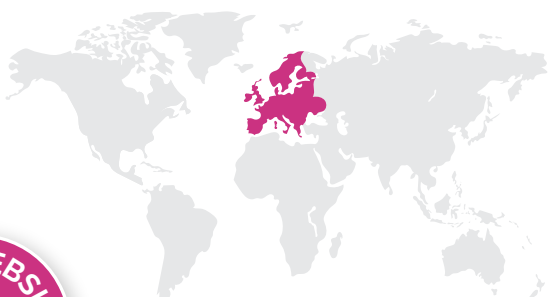
FRONTLINE FOCUS

OTHER (REQUIRES GOOGLE)

Typical deployment:

Under 1,000

Company locations:



VISIT THE WEBSITE

The product in a nutshell

Steegle.One expands on standard Google Workspace capabilities and should be explored by any Google-oriented organisations seeking more comprehensive intranet options.

CLEARBOX VIEW

The UK-based vendor, Steegle.Com was founded back in 2008 as a consultancy and launched **Steegle.One** in 2018. Steegle.One is one of the few products that works only with Google Workspace, making it incredibly valuable for Google-oriented organisations that want to expand its capabilities. Like its cousins among SharePoint intranet-in-a-box products, Steegle.One works within the confines of the Google product while adding some helpful functionality on top. Note that this review will touch on standard Google functionality but will focus on what the product adds.

A Steegle.One intranet is comprised of a site or sites, each containing pages. There is a configurable menu across the top of the screen with a simple drop-down showing more options. For organisations with sophisticated navigation needs, the product offers a longer left-menu option. Menu items link to any web page, which could be an intranet page or a Google Drive file.

Configuring the menu, and other aspects of the site, is easy as it all takes place in a righthand pop-out menu. Further controls are via familiar three-dot icons. For example, we like the 'version history' pop-out menu that shows when someone made a change to a page or widget, with controls to roll back to earlier versions via the three-dot menu. There is a good range of theming and design options which the vendor will configure during set-up, allowing them to improve on the standard design of widgets too. The vendor also offers a service to provide visual representations of data stored in a Google Sheet – see the screenshots for a nice example.

Pages are built using content blocks and widgets, which is a fairly flexible approach and delivers attractive results. Widgets, such as accordions, automatically generate tables of contents, and buttons are well executed and further styling available from Steegle.One too. We like that content such as individual documents and Google maps can be seamlessly embedded, with the latter providing for an effective location directory. Note there are no page-level permissions, another site would need to be created to address this requirement, or the version controls mentioned above will help too.

The 'news centre' page looks attractive, as Steegle.One provides a mosaic widget that displays tiles of news story headlines and images. There is a good range of controls to support who can create what sort of news content. The vendor gave the example of a healthcare client wanting a 'prayer request' area with pared-down settings around images, comments and reactions. News centres can easily be added to multiple locations by using content hashtags to pre-filter what's displayed; hashtags are also indexed in Steegle.One's local search.

In the demo we saw news created via a simple form interface, which the vendor says they have since improved but we've not seen the new functionality. There are basic formatting options, but no image or multimedia embeds (although this is on their roadmap), so organisations should consider carefully the maximum length they'd like to set for news posts. We like the email digests that support news publication, which have a good range of controls around frequency etc. There aren't any viewership rates on individual posts, but this is on the vendor's roadmap.

Steegle.One provides additional ways to celebrate employees, such as shout-outs using the 'Give Thanks' feature, which allows individuals or groups to be recognised through a simple form, with acknowledgments aggregated in a widget. Employees can also be spotlighted, such as showcasing an 'Employee of the Month'. Furthermore, celebratory content from social media channels can be seamlessly integrated, ensuring employees see stories of recognition and achievements shared externally.

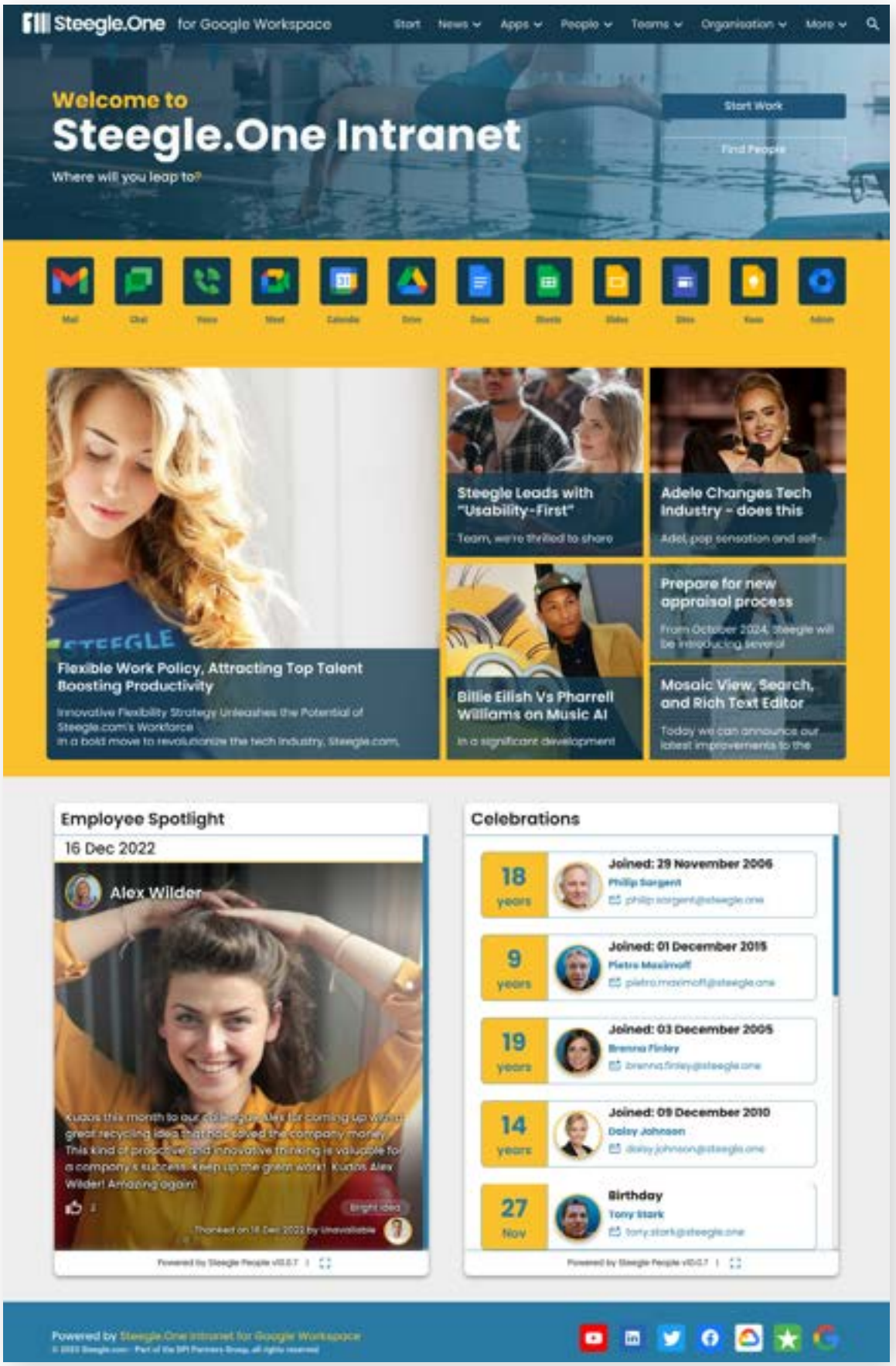
Corporate Google Calendars can be embedded to display events like staff training or end-of-quarter activities. There are real-time updates to calendar content and support for multiple calendars in one widget. The platform provides consistent theming options that make the display more attractive than standard Google, too. This could include an image, such as to celebrate employee birthdays or an overview of content from within a meeting invite.

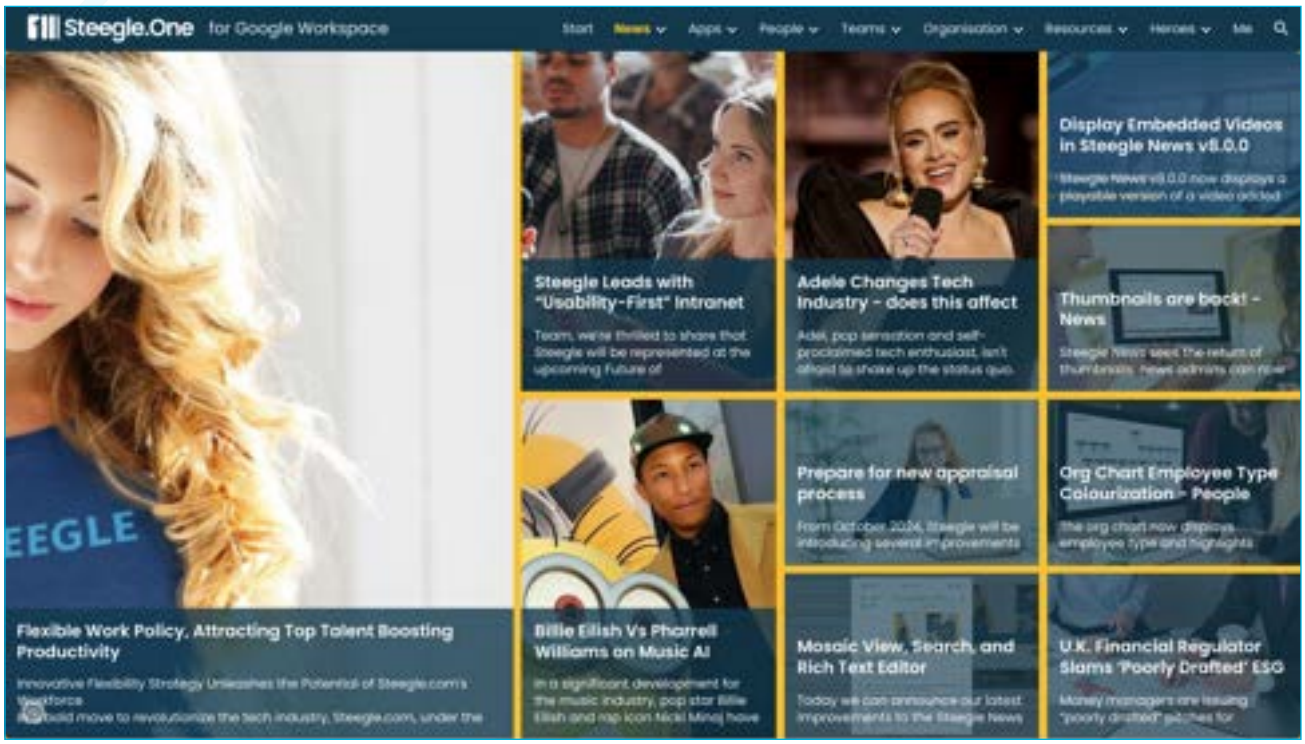
Searching within Google's standard offering is surprisingly limited. The default search box in the top-right corner only retrieves pages, requiring users to navigate separately to Google Drive for documents. Steegle.One enhances this with its 'Steegle Power Search' widget, enabling users to search across all accessible Google Sites or perform broader queries that include documents, emails, and calendar entries. There are no filters, but a tooltip shows how results can be refined by changing the search query and adding simple code. This is an atypical experience in an intranet and one we think could be improved. Additionally, the Steegle.One Google Drive widget allows content managers to display and manage shared drives and files directly, ensuring resources stay updated without the need to redesign web pages. Search results include file previews and fully respect associated permissions.

There is a people directory search, which the vendor has enhanced by adding multiple profile fields for greater findability. Profile pages are attractive and include useful information such as their time zone (from their calendar), editable roles (like 'fire marshal') and skills (like 'CISCO'), a search for content associated with them, and a Google Meet option. We like that someone's weekly location is populated by their calendar, and that editing a profile will update the associated Google account in the back end. There's also a nice org chart that employees can click through and explore, which is more sophisticated than many other org charts in this report. These can be displayed on department pages by setting individuals as the 'head.'

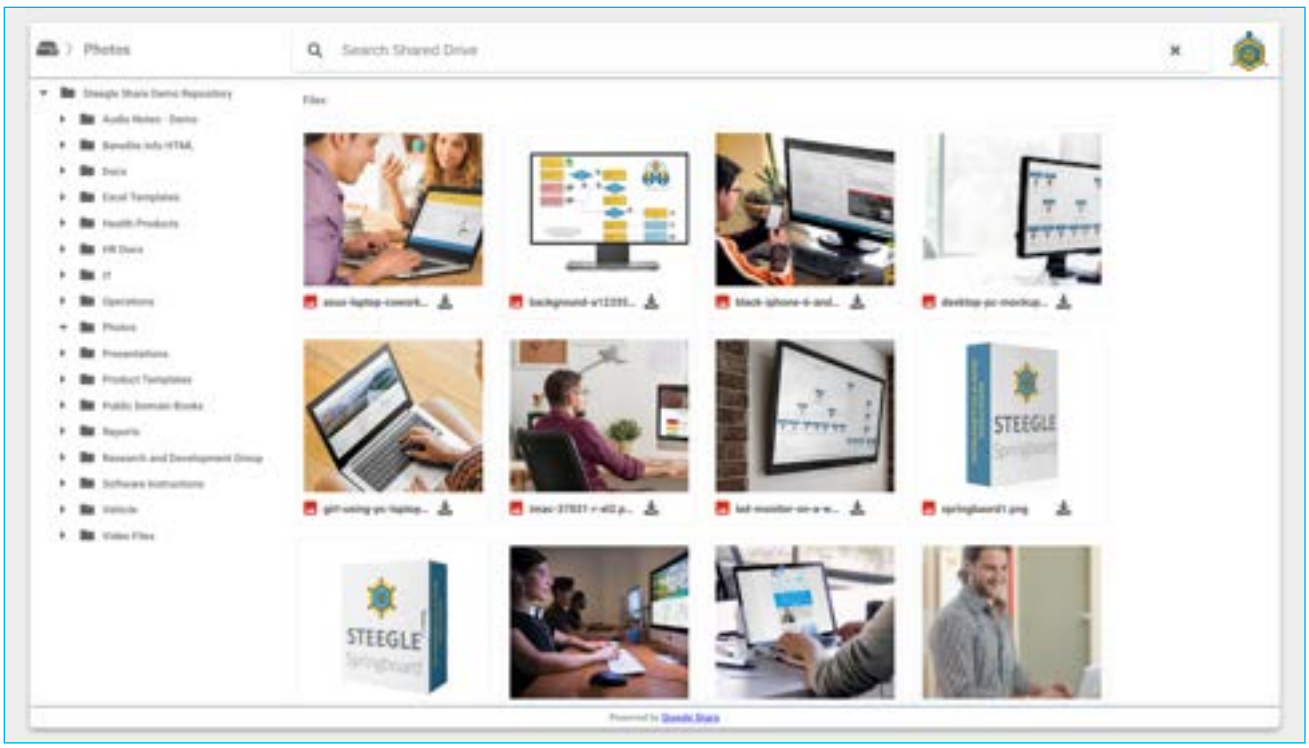
While a Google intranet is more limited in its functionality than some other platforms featured in this report, Steegle.One does a good job of expanding what's on offer to meet client needs. Additional functionality is sensible and well-implemented, with a good number of useful features on the roadmap too. For example, at the time of the demo there was no native app but the vendor says this has subsequently been released. At a low price point, Steegle.One is absolutely worth exploring for any Google-oriented organisations.

Steegle.Com illustrates the areas it expands on standard Google functionality.

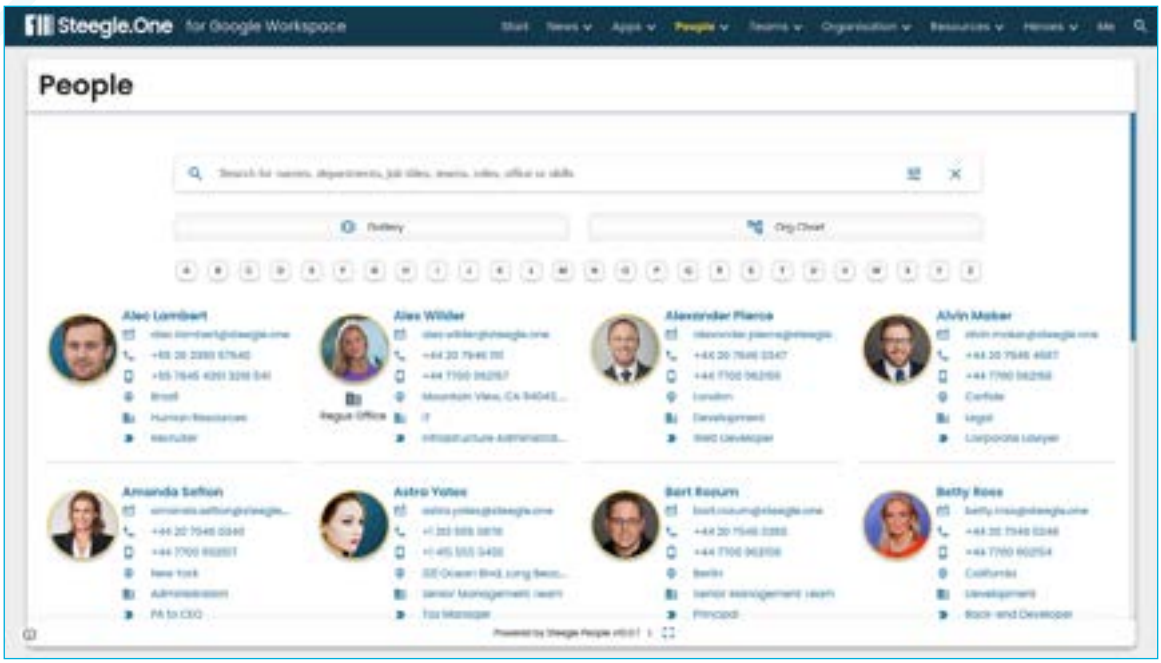

Steegle.One for Google Workspace
Start
News
Apps
People
Teams
Organisation
More
Welcome to
Steegle.One Intranet
Where will you leap to?
Start Work
Find People
Flexible Work Policy, Attracting Top Talent Boosting Productivity
Innovative Flexibility Strategy Unleashes the Potential of Steegle.com's Workforce
In a bold move to revolutionize the tech industry, Steegle.com,
Steegle Leads with "Usability-First"
Team, we're thrilled to share
Adele Changes Tech Industry - does this
Adel, pop sensation and self-
Billie Eilish Vs Pharrell Williams on Music AI
In a significant development
Prepare for new appraisal process
From October 2024, Steegle will be introducing several
Mosaic View, Search, and Rich Text Editor
Today we can announce our latest improvements to the
Employee Spotlight
16 Dec 2022
Alex Wilder
Kudos this month to our colleagues Alex for coming up with a great recycling idea that has saved the company money. This kind of proactive and innovative thinking is valuable for a company's success. Keep up the great work! Kudos Alex Wilder! Amazing again!
Bright idea
Celebrations
18 years
Joined: 29 November 2006
Philip Sargent
9 years
Joined: 01 December 2015
Pietro Maximoff
19 years
Joined: 03 December 2005
Brenna Finley
14 years
Joined: 09 December 2010
Daisy Johnson
27 Nov
Birthday
Tony Stark
Powered by Steegle.One Intranet for Google Workspace



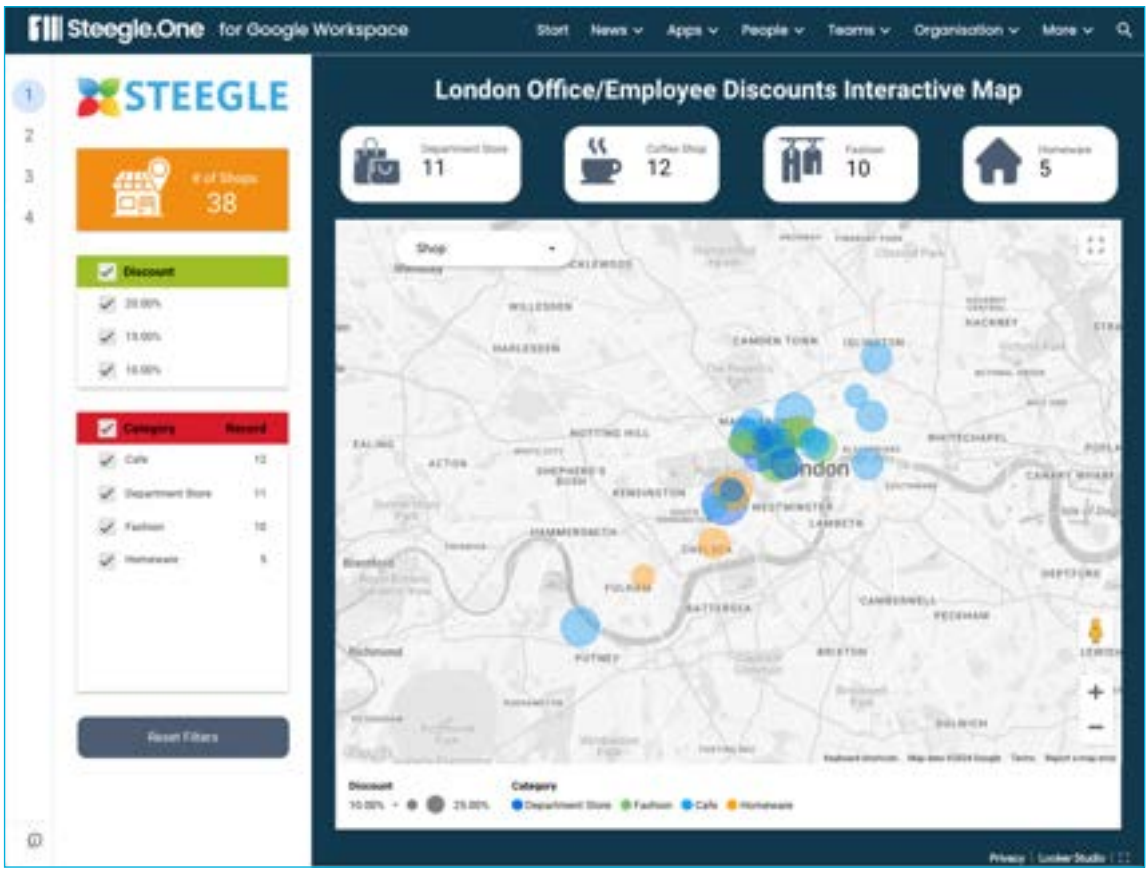
There is a 'mosaic' widget for displaying multiple news articles attractively.



Steegle.One expands on the standard Google searches, including a helpful widget where employees search for and browse Drive contents.



The people search includes a good range of data and is presented well, with helpful filtering options.



The vendor will create visual displays of data held in a Google Sheet on behalf of clients.

Pricing

PRICE BAND	
1,000 users	$ $
5,000 users	$ $
20,000 users	$ $ $
50,000 users	$ $ $

These prices are indicative, offering a comparison of the products featured in this report. Please contact the vendor for a bespoke quote.

PRICING MODEL

Subscription – price band based on number of users.

DISCOUNTS

Charities and non-profit organisations; schools and educational institutes; government / public sector; healthcare; frontline users; multi-year commitments.

COSTS TYPICALLY

Weighted towards the start (during the 'project phase'), then much lower for the remaining term.

PRICE INCLUDES

Prices given are for 'enterprise' version, which means there are savings to be made where organisations don't want all modules.

Product type

Majority ready-to-run

Branding opportunities

Good branding, single choice

Base systems

Fully standalone

Requires SharePoint

Other*

*Requires Google Workspace

Sectors

Charity and voluntary work

Energy and utilities

Healthcare

Hospitality and events management

Teaching and education

COMPANY AND PRODUCT

Company details

Company
Steegle.Com

ISO 27001 certified
No

Data residency
N/A

Company founded
2008

Product launched
2018

Typical client size
Fewer than 1,000

Largest deployment so far
6,000 employees in around 20 countries

Customers
Please see their website for details.

Partner locations
Ireland, Belgium, Netherlands, US, Colombia

Company locations
London, UK (HQ)

Product and technical details

Name of product

Steegle.One

Deployment

Client on-premises	Client private cloud	Microsoft Azure	Amazon Web Services	Vendor-hosted	Microsoft 365 tenant	Google Cloud	Other*

*Client's own Google Workspace environment

Authentication supported

Entra ID	ADFS	Okta	Open ID	Oauth	G Suite	Other

App deployment

Google Play store	Apple store	MDM	MAM	Other

Accessibility

Not WCAG 2.1 conformant. Alt text is in use for images; keyboards can be used for navigation; motion animation triggered by interaction can be disabled. Steegle.One is built on Google Sites, which adheres to Google's own accessibility standards, incorporating many of the features aligned with WCAG 2.1 guidelines. The vendor says they "follow best practices in design to ensure content is perceivable, operable and understandable to as wide a range of users as possible."

Document library sources integrated

Box	Dropbox	Google Drive	SharePoint	OneDrive	Other

Optional integrated enterprise search engines

Coveo	Elastic	IBM	Lucidworks	Microsoft	Mindbreeze	Sinequa	Other*

*Steegle.One natively integrates with Google Workspace Search

User interface multi-language

Machine translation	Pre-configured	Editable	Right to left script supported	Other*

*Chrome translate

Content multi-language

Machine translation for publishers	Machine translation for end users	Editable machine translation for publishers	Manual creation for publishers	Right to left script	Other

Set-up and support

Set-up process for new clients

After initial consultation, deployment typically begins within 7-12 days of project approval. The vendor creates a customised intranet using Google Sites, integrated with Google Workspace tools. The setup includes branding, configuration of employee directories, news feeds and document management. Admin training and user support are provided. Most clients are fully operational within 4-6 weeks, depending on feedback loops and customisation needs. Additional features, like workflow automation, can be tailored during the setup process to meet specific requirements. Larger and more complex clients can take much longer, for example a recent hospital implementation took three months.

Version numbers

Demonstrated to ClearBox: October 2024

At January 2025: January 2025

Product updates

Major update once a year.

Product update process

Customers are updated on a case by case basis, either if they're going through a rolling update program or annually at renewal.

Reverse-out options

The client loses no data, it all remains within Google Workspace.

Technical support

Email support	Phone support	Chat support	**Online portal**	24/7 support	Office hours only

User community

N/A

Voice of the vendor

Steegle.com says: "Steegle.One is a powerful, intelligent intranet solution designed specifically for organisations using Google Workspace. Seamlessly integrating with Google Sites, Drive, Sheets, Calendar, and other Workspace tools, Steegle.One delivers a dynamic, highly functional platform that keeps your intranet automated, up-to-date, and fully customisable, allowing it to authentically reflect your brand and meet your organisation's unique needs.

A key strength of Steegle.One lies in its powerful automation features. For example, the employee directory and organisational charts are directly synchronised with Google Workspace, so any changes in staffing—whether new hires, role adjustments, or departures—are instantly reflected on the intranet without the need for manual updates. This allows HR teams to operate more efficiently and ensures that all staff have access to accurate, real-time information on team structures and contact details.

Steegle.One also excels in automating internal communications through its Steegle News feature, which automatically publishes important announcements and updates across the intranet. This ensures employees stay informed without the need for constant manual effort. Additionally, with embedded Google Drive integration, employees can easily access files, policies, and documents in a secure, searchable manner, enhancing workflow efficiency.

Beyond essential intranet functions, Steegle.One can enable advanced workflow automation for clients through tools like Google Apps Script and AppSheet. These customisable workflows—such as ticketing systems, approval processes, and other business-critical tasks—help streamline operations and improve overall productivity. Steegle.One's deep integration with Google Drive also ensures secure document management, facilitating collaboration while maintaining strict adherence to organisational policies.

Scalability is another hallmark of Steegle.One. With deployments typically supporting hundreds to 6,000 users, it's ideal for mid-sized organisations looking for a solution that grows with them. Whether you're an educational institution, a mid-sized business, or a government entity, Steegle.One adapts to your specific needs, keeping your intranet flexible and responsive as your organisation evolves.

Security is a top priority. Steegle.One is fully GDPR-compliant and leverages the robust security features of Google Workspace, ensuring that your data remains protected at all times. This gives your teams the confidence to manage their intranet independently and securely, reducing reliance on IT support.

In addition, Steegle.One is quick to deploy, requiring minimal setup time. This allows organisations to launch their intranet rapidly and start benefiting from a future-proof, customisable platform that evolves alongside their business."

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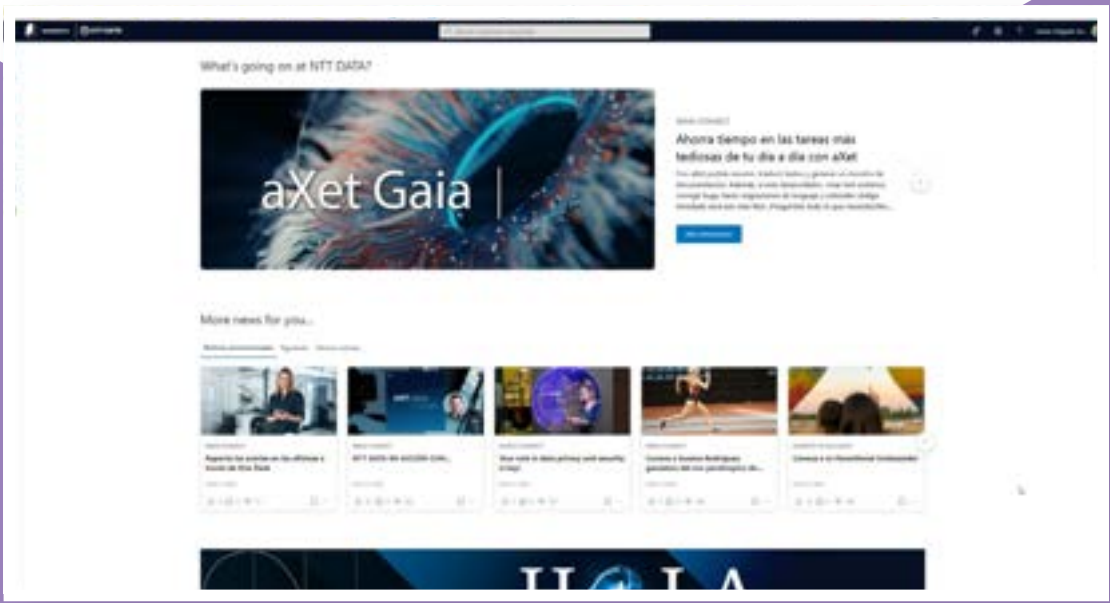
syntphony

FULLY STANDALONE

REQUIRES SHAREPOINT

FRONTLINE FOCUS

OTHER



Typical deployment:

15,000 to 20,000

Company locations:

VISIT THE WEBSITE

The product in a nutshell

Syntphony enhances SharePoint functionality with some thoughtful touches that improve navigation, help findability, extend content targeting capabilities and connect employees.

CLEARBOX VIEW

Syntphony Employee Intranet (Syntphony for the purposes of this review) is a platform built on top of SharePoint and Microsoft 365 that offers a streamlined user experience. Its parent company is NTT Data, a multinational organisation headquartered in Japan, and implementation is handled through NTT Data's global integration network.

Syntphony is built around permissions-based 'Community' sites which operate as parent and child hub-style sites. Communities can include documents, blogs and pages alongside social discussions, supporting communities of interest and more social use cases. There are custom content type templates (such as corporate news or project articles), and Communities can be configured to specify which content types are available. This is a flexible approach, and we can see this being particularly useful for organisations with sophisticated content requirements.

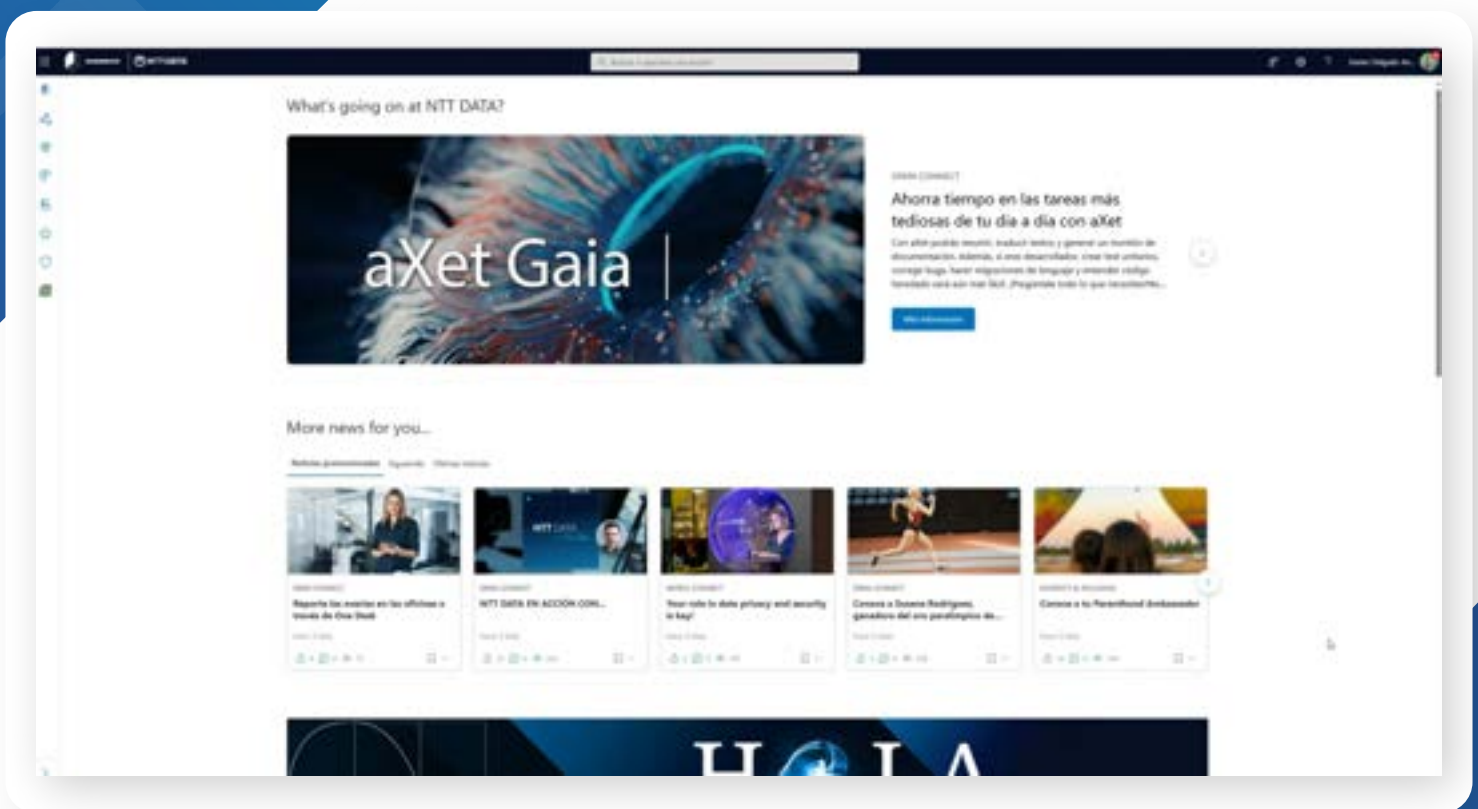
A 'Dashboard' web part offers some nice extensions to SharePoint and can be used to showcase selected content such as news feeds, community information and policy libraries. The dashboard also offers additional navigation links and action buttons, plus adds multi-language capability – content can be published once and automatically translated without creating duplicate copies. Style, colour and layout can be changed across Syntphony web parts although this needs JSON knowledge; this is something that is usually picked up as part of the implementation.

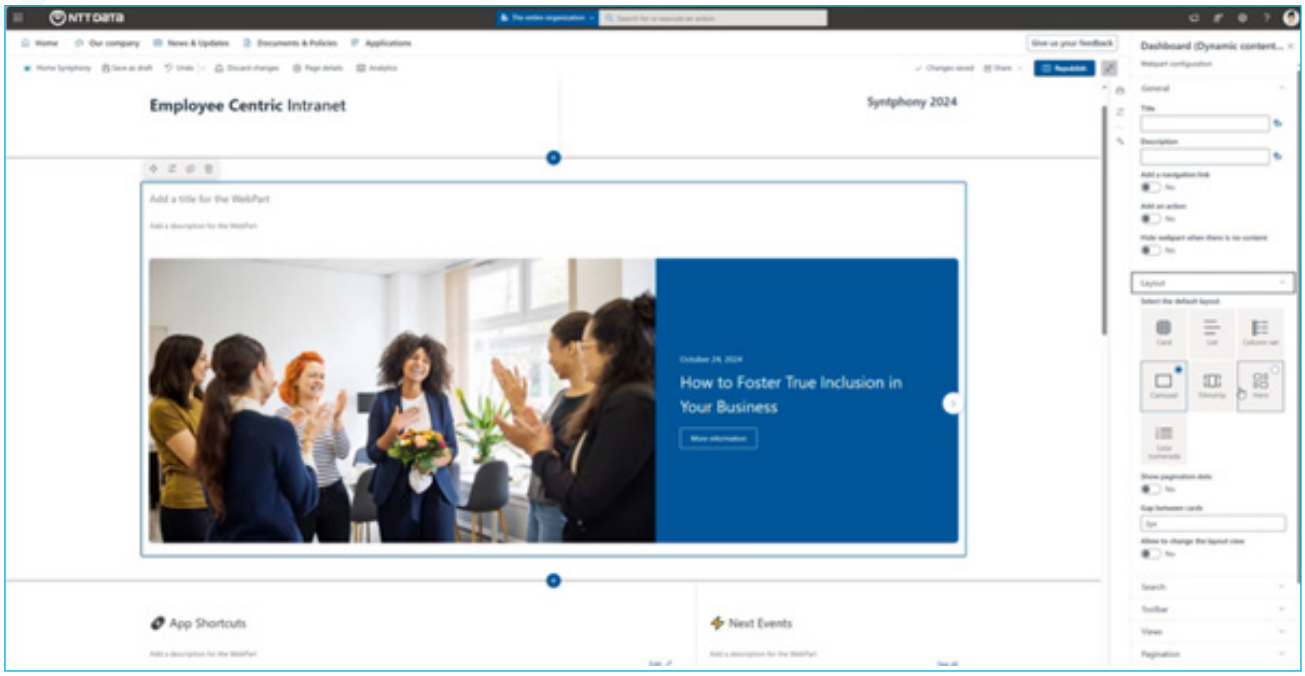
The platform replaces SharePoint's horizontal menu with its own streamlined navigation bar, which represents the structure of the intranet with some attractive icons. We like the prominent search-scope drop-down which is used to show results from the entire organisation or a single Community and its child sites, making it easier for users to see only relevant results. Initial results are displayed in an attractive drop-down panel grouped by content type. Search result cards can be customised to display specific information – such as employee numbers on 'people cards'. Administrators can configure the search vertical groups and can promote specific content through a 'Featured results' function that appears in both the search panel and results page. While the document search results page is a little sparse in appearance, it includes standard filtering options; although the elegant search pane and comprehensive "all" results page may mean users rarely need to access the full document search view.

Content editing and management is largely in line with SharePoint, with the additional functionality offered by the Dashboard and Community hierarchy. Although there are a few improvements to the SharePoint publishing interface, for example there are forms that prompt for all relevant metadata for the chosen content type. There are flexible audience targeting capabilities, based on information in user profiles, for example location or time in company, which may be stored in a connected HR system. All content types can be commented on, liked, added to bookmarks, as well as fed back on via a simple feedback form that goes to either the community or page owner. We like the included analytics which are based on Power BI and centre around two KPIs: user interest and activity. Communicators can see frequency of visit, page depth, top communities and top content. Google and Matomo can also be integrated.

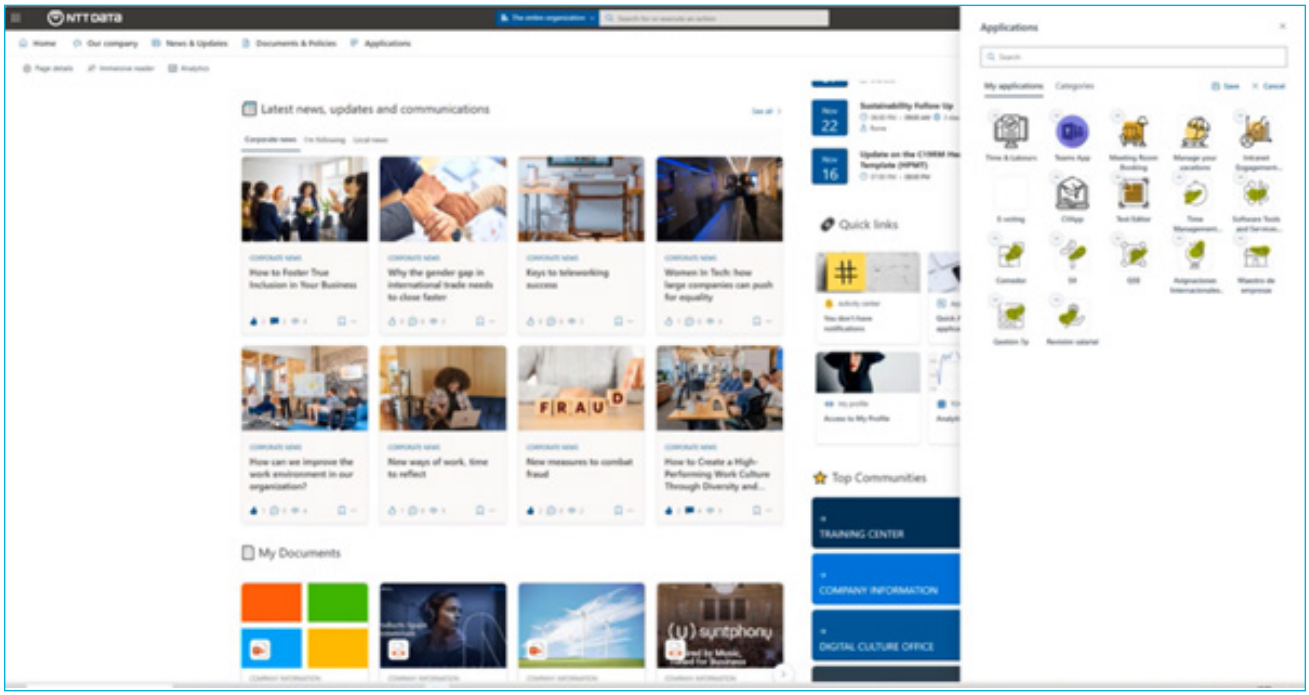
An application launcher presents employees with customisable app links from an internal marketplace-style selection of icons. There's a notifications panel for users to view and dismiss notifications. There's a Viva Engage dashboard that can bring Viva content into the intranet, and Syntphony can integrate with MS Teams via their 'Doorways' app to display content, which can also be commented on from within Teams. While all web parts are responsive, there's no native mobile app and Teams is how customers access Syntphony from mobile. There's an open API which means organisations could use Syntphony content in their own app.

Overall, Syntphony offers large and complex organisations thoughtful functionality. We especially like the unusual Communities structure, extended hero web part and content targeting capabilities. Syntphony comes at a higher price point, particularly for a SharePoint intranet in-a-box product, but by working with NTT Data, organisations are likely to be able to configure it to meet a diverse range of needs.

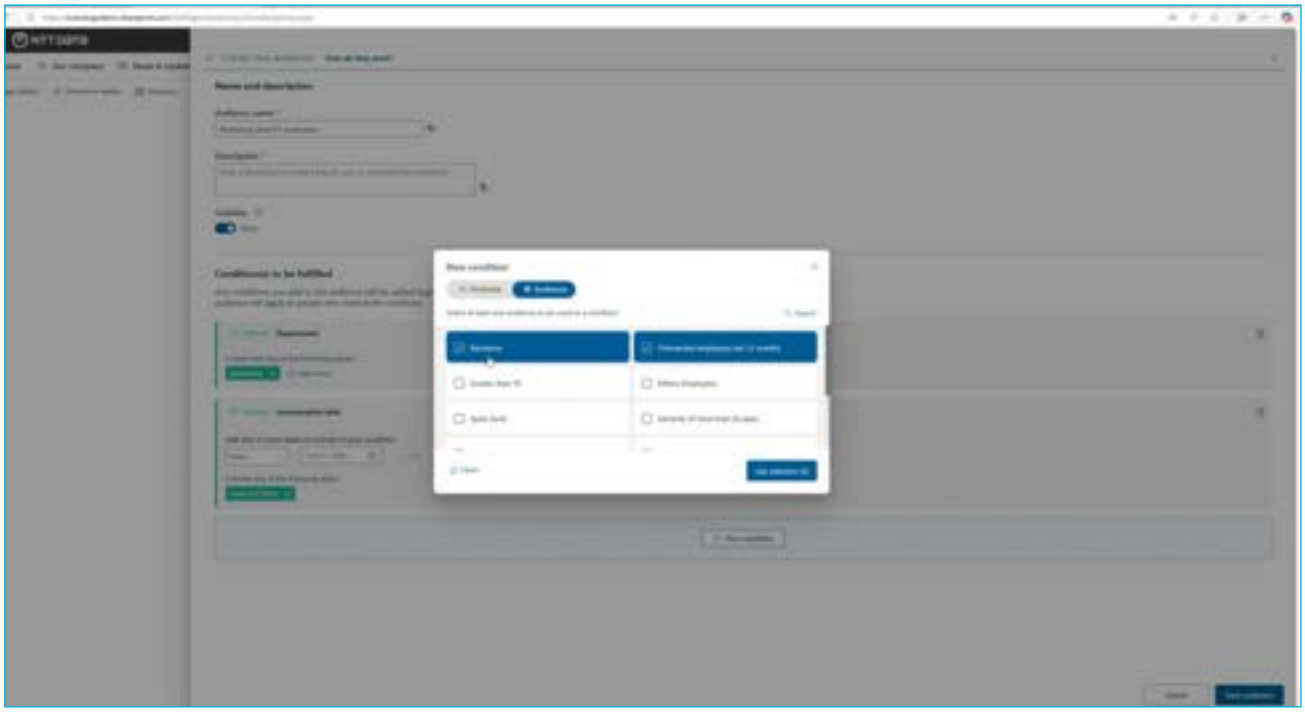

What's going on at NTT DATA?
aXet Gaia
Ahorra tiempo en las tareas más tediosas de tu día a día con aXet
More news for you...



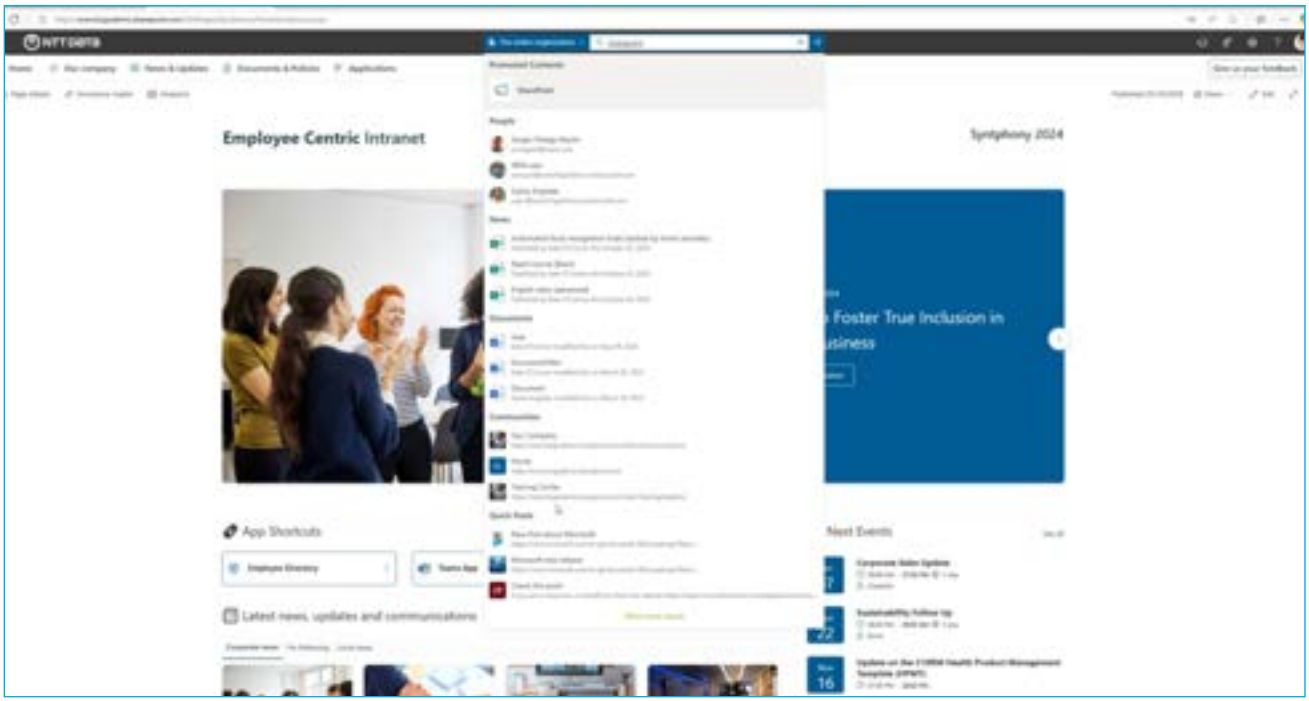
The 'Dashboard' web part is a content aggregation and display tool that offers a range of presentation layouts.



The 'Applications' menu offers an internal marketplace-style selection of apps users can customise.



Communicators can create dynamic rule-based audiences based on user profile information like location or time in the company.



The search pane is nicely styled, offers promoted content and can be customised.

Pricing

PRICE BAND	
1,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
5,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
20,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
50,000 users	$ $ $ $ $

These prices are indicative, offering a comparison of the products featured in this report only. Please contact the vendor for a bespoke quote.

PRICING MODEL

Subscription – price band based on number of users.

DISCOUNTS

Multi-year commitments.

COSTS TYPICALLY

Fairly evenly spread across three years.

PRICE INCLUDES

Access to new versions of Syntphony including new features and improvements, corrective maintenance of product features, adaptive maintenance derived from changes in Office 365 platform, access to the Syntphony support centre, quarterly roadmap presentation with clients / partners to introduce new release

Product type

Majority ready-to-run

Branding opportunities

Simple branding by admins

Base systems

Fully standalone	**Requires SharePoint**	Other

Sectors

Accountancy, banking and finance	**Energy and utilities**	**Business, consulting and management**	**Information technology**	**Engineering and manufacturing**

COMPANY AND PRODUCT

Company details

Company
NTT Data

ISO 27001 certified
Yes

Data residency
N/A

Company founded
1988

Product launched
2018

Typical client size
15,000 to 20,000

Largest deployment so far
60,000 employees in over 100 countries.

Customers
Clients include: Amadeus, HDI, Iberia, ITA Airways, Naturgy, NTT DATA EMEAL, Redeia, The Global Fund

Partner locations
The implementation partner is NTT DATA itself, so they can deploy in any country with NTT DATA presence.

Company locations
Tokyo, Japan (HQ); Global

Product and technical details

Name of product

Syntphony Employee Intranet

Deployment

Client on-premises	Client private cloud	**Microsoft Azure**	Amazon Web Services	Vendor-hosted	**Microsoft 365 tenant**	Google Cloud	Other

Authentication supported

Entra ID	ADFS	Okta	Open ID	Oauth	G Suite	Other

App deployment

Google Play store	Apple store	MDM	MAM	Other

Accessibility

WCAG 2.1 conformant

Document library sources integrated

Box	Dropbox	Google Drive	**SharePoint**	**OneDrive**	Other

Optional integrated enterprise search engines

Coveo	Elastic	IBM	Lucidworks	**Microsoft**	Mindbreeze	Sinequa	Other

User interface multi-language

Machine translation	Pre-configured	**Editable**	Right to left script supported	Other

Content multi-language

Machine translation for publishers	Machine translation for end users	Editable machine translation for publishers	**Manual creation for publishers**	Right to left script	Other

Set-up and support

Set-up process for new clients

Syntphony starts with a FastTrack implementation, adaptable to client needs through custom developments and migrations. This process begins with a thorough assessment, covering both technical and functional aspects. In the technical phase, they align with the client's IT team, detailing the architecture, security and deployment procedures. Simultaneously, the functional assessment involves multiple sessions with the client's business teams, allowing them to tailor their product to fulfil the customer's specific needs. This typically takes 3 months.

Current version

Demonstrated to ClearBox: 1.9.4 / November 2024

At January 2025: 1.9.6

Product updates

Major updates every two months; Minor updates weekly.

Product update process

NTT DATA first deploy internally on their production company intranet. After weeks of testing, clients are informed about the update through a release note and newsletter with a demo showcase at their Syntphony Quarterlies. For clients with service contracts, they collaboratively plan and execute the installation, adapting new features according to their needs. Clients without service contracts interested in the update receive the installation package and associated manual for self-installation.

Reverse-out options

If a customer decides to terminate their contract and uninstall Syntphony, NTT DATA conduct a session to clarify the implications of the uninstallation. Since the data is stored in the client's Azure tenant, there is no loss of data, but loss of capabilities. NTT DATA help the client in the transition by recommending out-of-the-box SharePoint Online capabilities as workarounds to the existing Syntphony features.

Technical support

Email support	Phone support	Chat support	Online portal	24/7 support	Office hours only*

*Madrid, España · UTC+2

User community

Syntphony´s Customer Success Unit (CSU) forms the core of their active user engagement plan, ensuring continuous support and development throughout the product journey. NTT DATA foster user interaction with clients through regular quarterly meetings, offering a space for feedback that shapes their roadmap and new feature development. Clients also benefit from release notes, visibility actions, market trends and best practices newsletters, events, webinars and masterclasses conducted by the CSU team.

Voice of the vendor

NTT Data says: "Syntphony Employee Intranet transforms the way employees communicate, collaborate and share information by giving them a unique and personalised experience. This end-to-end solution elevates traditional intranets and maximises the value of Microsoft 365 by offering an intuitive interface that adjusts to the needs and preferences of every employee.

Enriches individual contribution and continuous professional development, maximising employee value. Every employee feels more connected, empowered and equipped for unlimited personal and professional growth."

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Lightspeed365 by contentformula

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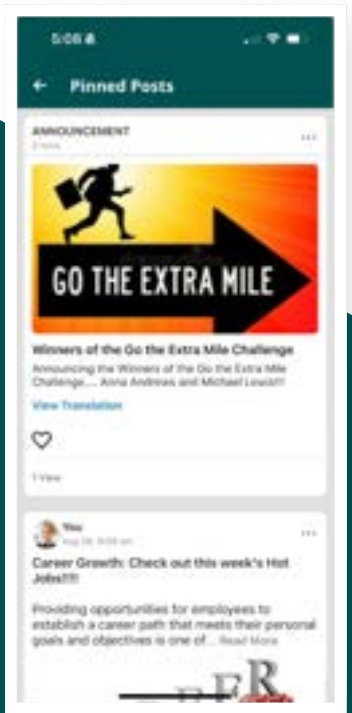
UKG®

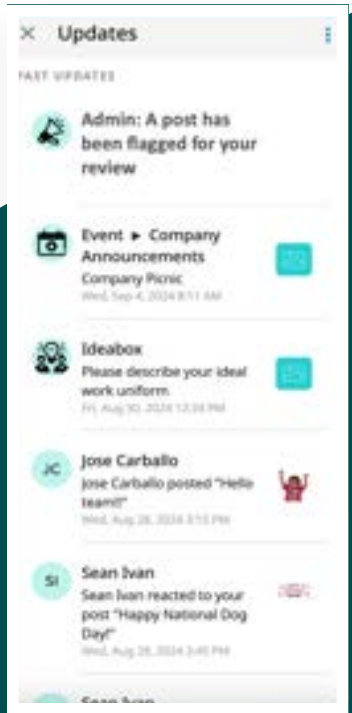
FULLY STANDALONE

REQUIRES SHAREPOINT

FRONTLINE FIRST

OTHER

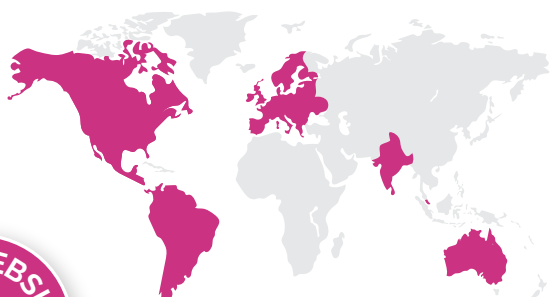




Typical deployment:

5,000 to 10,000

Company locations:



VISIT THE WEBSITE

The product in a nutshell

UKG Talk complements the wider UKG workforce management solutions, meeting the communications and engagement needs of a distributed, deskless workforce.

CLEARBOX VIEW

UKG Talk is a communications and tasks tool from the broader UKG HR suite. As such, licensing relies on having UKG already in place. UKG Talk is available on both desktop and mobile, but its simple interface is best suited as a mobile-first tool for frontline employees.

The home screen is dominated by an activity feed, which displays posts, polls and other content collated from all 'Groups' an employee is a member of. Groups can be manually created, or there are sophisticated automated workflows for admins to assign users based on criteria such as location. Groups are open to anyone to post, or are restricted. Posts include labels to show which Group it is from, helping people distinguish between nice- and need-to know. Engagement with posts is through emoji reactions and comments. We like the AI-driven sentiment analysis that flags potentially concerning content for admins to review. Alternatively, individuals may report posts or comments they feel are inappropriate.

Publishers create posts and 'Announcements' in the feed or in individual Groups too. Videos and images can be embedded into posts, while text is created via a simple rich text editor. Documents can be linked to or attached, and where a SharePoint document is attached it will be viewable even by those without licenses. To highlight key information, posts and Announcements can be pinned to a carousel above the feed.

There's the potential for the feed to be a very busy place, so it could be tricky to keep on top of all the posts and news updates. There are good notifications to help keep up to date, with settings for individuals to control some of what they see, but notifications themselves could also overwhelm. For offline activities, there is a 'Tasks' feature that includes task assignment, checklists, reminders and a dashboard that displays the status, including overdue and upcoming items. The task management feature is surprisingly sophisticated and will be useful for those working on / with the frontline, although allowing managers to see what tasks have been assigned to their employees would be a helpful addition.

'Apps' is where features like employee recognition, events and idea submission activities take place. 'Calendar' displays shifts from UKG's source system, integrations with other calendars is on the roadmap and we hope to see events (signed up to via UKG Talk) added in future too. Apps is also where files and folders can be stored.

The search experience is a little fragmented, with localised searches in each area of UKG Talk and the overall search only indexing Group content. There's no people search, beyond starting a chat.

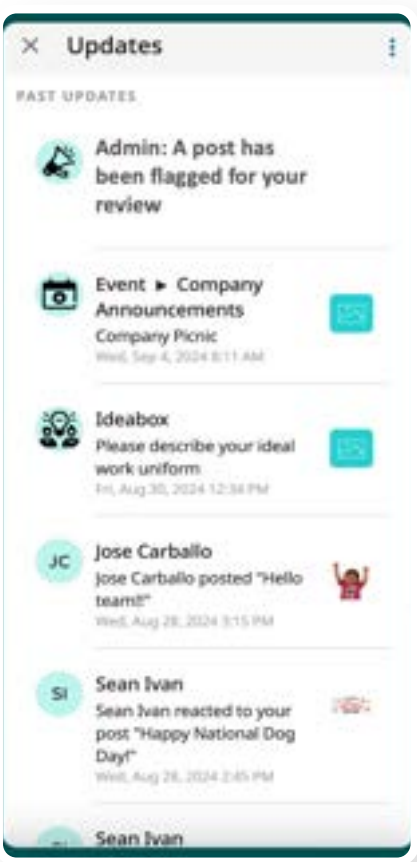
The chat feature offers a good alternative to tools like WhatsApp. We like that chat can be turned off for certain employees, those under 18 for example. We would like to see more robust reporting and moderation features here, beyond being able to block users and mute chats.

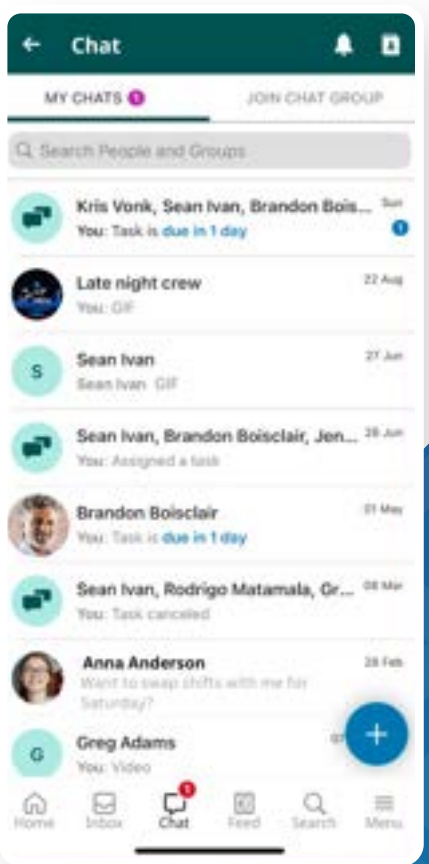
The admin environment is only available on desktop and is very simple, for example branding is restricted to colours and a logo. Analytics are basic but an 'engagement index' is helpful as it shows when content performs the best. Most content can be translated using auto translate, but the structural elements, such as headings, require manual translation via display settings. We like the content calendar that provides an overview of all content scheduled by admins, with colour coding to distinguish content types.

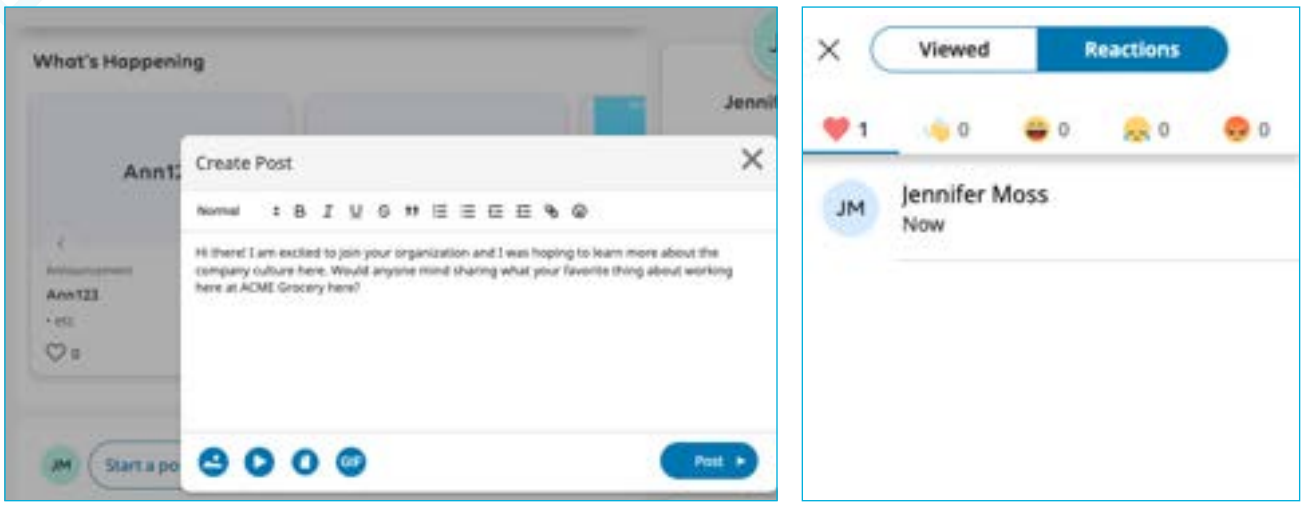
On the roadmap is a 'clocking in' feature alongside settings to define what is compensable, so what is shown will change depending on whether employees are in working hours or not. Surprisingly, there are no plans to display payslips. Overall, UKG Talk offers a good range of features to meet practical and communication needs for the frontline, although its styling could feel more contemporary in places. Organisations need to have other parts of the UKG suite in place, but for those who do, UKG Talk is certainly worth exploring.

5:08
Pinned Posts
ANNOUNCEMENT
GO THE EXTRA MILE
Winners of the Go the Extra Mile Challenge
Announcing the Winners of the Go the Extra Mile Challenge..... Anna Andrews and Michael Lewis!!!
View Translation
1 View
You
Career Growth: Check out this week's Hot Jobs!!!!
Providing opportunities for employees to establish a career path that meets their personal goals and objectives is one of... Read More

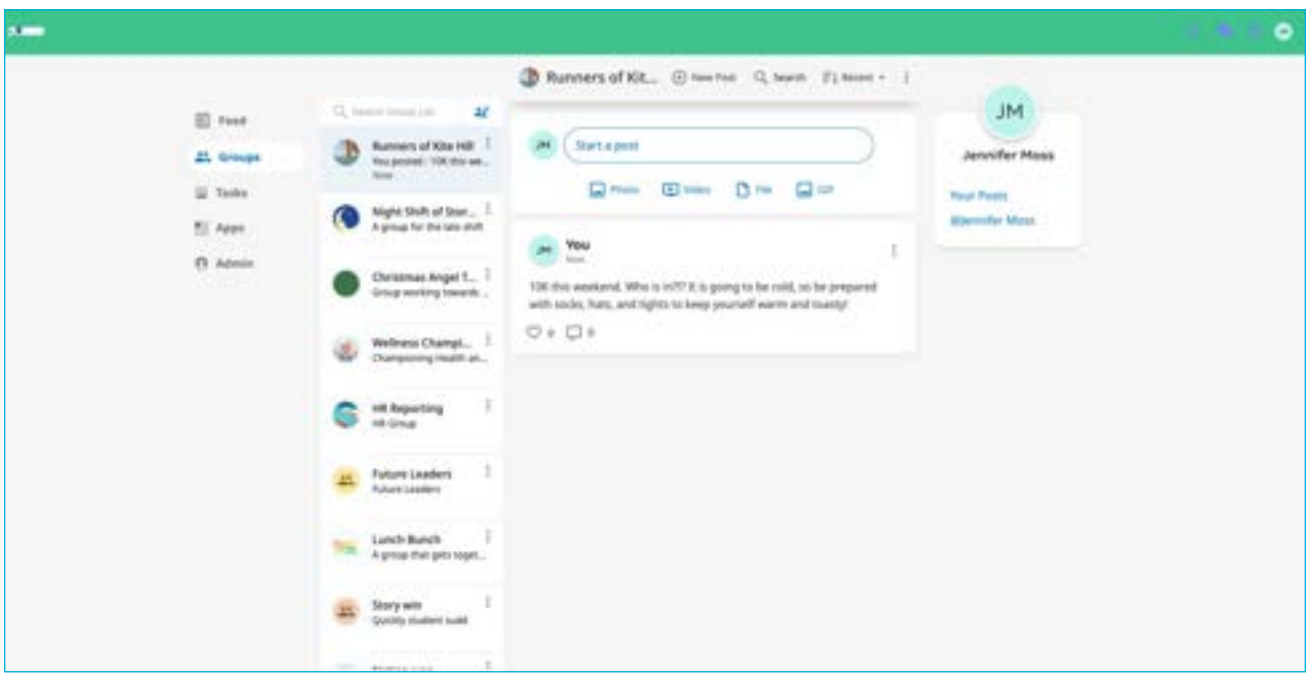
Details
TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES!
Upcoming CPR courses in October!
Has your CPR training lapsed? Do you need a refresher? We have the perfect opportunity for you! Join us on the 2nd Saturday of the month in October to learn how to save a life! Snacks will be provided as well as a certificate of completion.
View Translation
1 View
Type your reply


Updates
PAST UPDATES
Admin: A post has been flagged for your review
Event ▸ Company Announcements
Company Picnic
Ideabox
Please describe your ideal work uniform
JC
Jose Carballo
Jose Carballo posted "Hello team!!"
SI
Sean Ivan
Sean Ivan reacted to your post "Happy National Dog Day!"
Sean Ivan

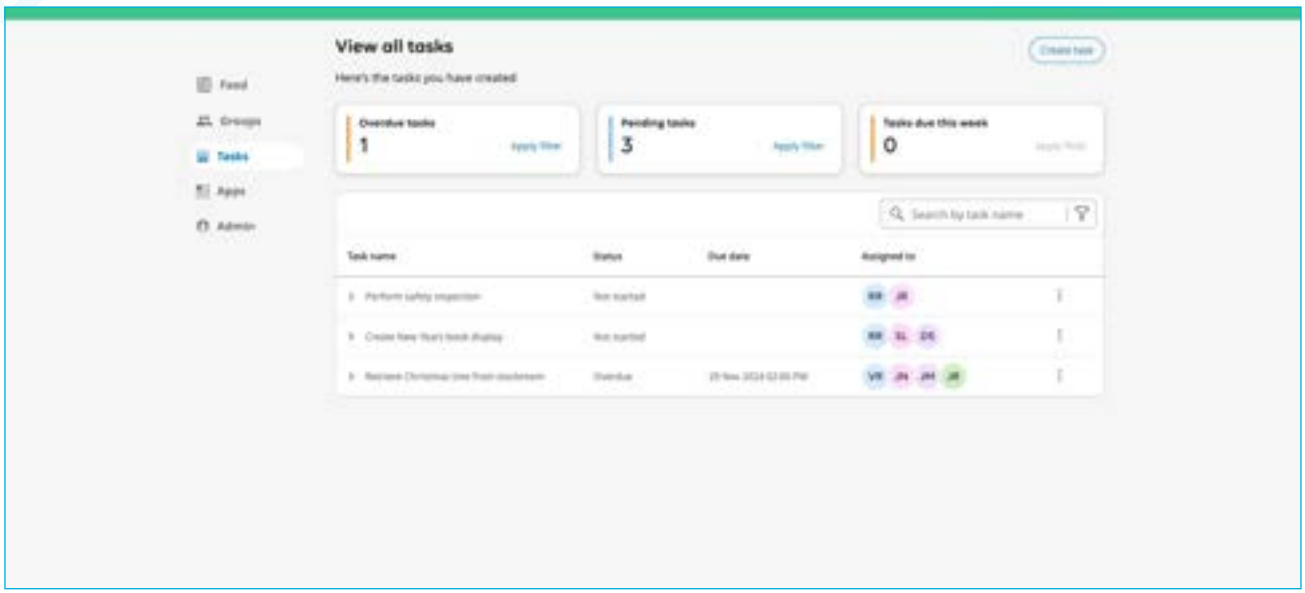

Chat
MY CHATS
JOIN CHAT GROUP
Search People and Groups
Kris Vonk, Sean Ivan, Brandon Bois...
You: Task is due in 1 day
Late night crew
You: GIF
S
Sean Ivan
Sean Ivan: GIF
Sean Ivan, Brandon Boisclair, Jen...
You: Assigned a task
Brandon Boisclair
You: Task is due in 1 day
Sean Ivan, Rodrigo Matamala, Gr...
You: Task canceled
Anna Anderson
G
Greg Adams
You: Video
Home
Inbox
Chat
Feed
Search
Menu



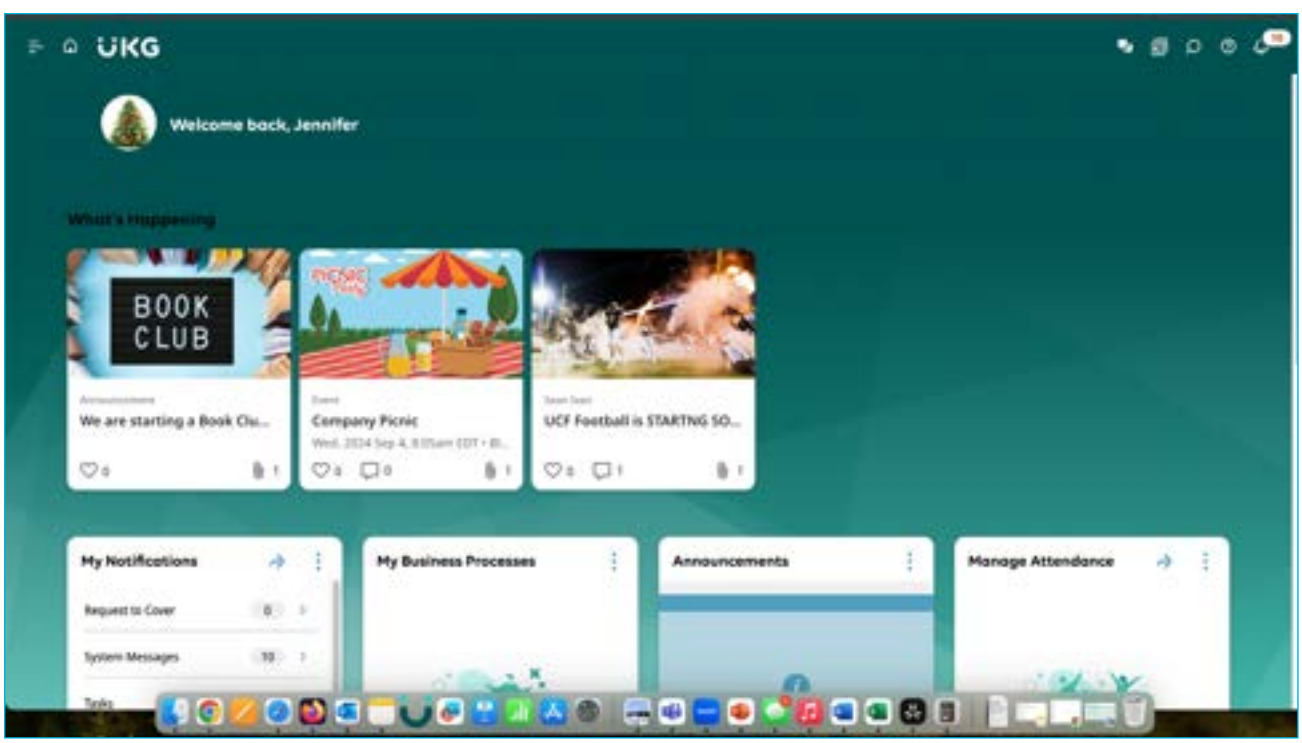
Creating posts is easy and includes a good range of options. Once published, employees may engage by choosing from a range of emoji reactions.



Groups shown on desktop to demonstrate the 'recent activity' markers and post labels to indicate which Group the post is from.



'Tasks' is a helpful feature offering a good range of detailed tools.



The 'Apps' menu shows the range of useful features that are available, such as employee recognition and simple event listing.

Pricing

PRICE BAND	
1,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
5,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
20,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
50,000 users	$ $ $ $ $

These prices are indicative, offering a comparison of the products featured in this report. Please contact the vendor for a bespoke quote.

PRICING MODEL

Subscription – price per user per month.

DISCOUNTS

Customers only pay for active users.

COSTS TYPICALLY

Fairly evenly spread across three years.

PRICE INCLUDES

Standard configuration; 'Pro WFM Users' will be assigned appropriate profiles to leverage Talk; standard reports; design, configure and deploy required integration.

Product type

Ready-to-run, installed in days

Branding opportunities

Simple branding by admins

Base systems

Fully standalone	Requires SharePoint	Other*

*Requires UKG Pro Platform.

Sectors

Engineering and manufacturing	Hospitality and events management	Recruitment and HR	Retail	Transport & Logistics

COMPANY AND PRODUCT

Company details

Company
UKG

ISO 27001 certified
Yes

Data residency
N/A

Company founded
2020

Product launched
2022

Typical client size
5,000 to 10,000

Largest deployment so far
45,000 U.S. employees

Customers
Please see their website for details.

Partner locations
Global

Company locations
Massachusetts and Florida, USA (HQ); Canada, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Uruguay, UK, France, Spain, Germany, Ireland, Bulgaria, Belgium, Netherlands, India, Singapore, Australia

Product and technical details

Name of product

UKG Talk

Deployment

Client on-premises	**Client private cloud**	Microsoft Azure	Amazon Web Services	Vendor-hosted	Microsoft 365 tenant	**Google Cloud**	Other

Authentication supported

Entra ID	**ADFS**	Okta	Open ID	**Oauth**	G Suite	Other

App deployment

Google Play store	**Apple store**	MDM	MAM	Other

Accessibility

WCAG 2.1 conformant

Document library sources integrated

Box	Dropbox	Google Drive	SharePoint	OneDrive	Other

Optional integrated enterprise search engines

Coveo	Elastic	IBM	Lucidworks	Microsoft	Mindbreeze	Sinequa	Other

User interface multi-language

Machine translation	Pre-configured	Editable	Right to left script supported	Other

Content multi-language

Machine translation for publishers	**Machine translation for end users**	Editable machine translation for publishers	Manual creation for publishers	Right to left script	Other

Set-up and support

Set-up process for new clients

12 hours of implementation via UKG or a partner, centred around configuration based on client preferences.

Current version

Demonstrated to ClearBox: September 2024

At January 2025: September 2024

Product updates

Minor updates weekly; major updates every month.

Product update process

All at once, unless there is an early adopter release where clients volunteer to test.

Reverse-out options

Tenant is terminated and data is deleted.

Technical support

Email support	**Phone support**	**Chat support**	Online portal	**24/7 support**	Office hours only

User community

Customer Advisory Board, UKG Community.

Voice of the vendor

UKG says: "At UKG, our purpose is people. We are on a mission to inspire every organization to become a great place to work through HCM technology built for all. Powered by AI and the world's largest collection of people, workforce and culture data, our HR, payroll, workforce management and culture solutions drive great workplace experiences and better business outcomes for more than 80,000 organizations across all sizes, industries, and geographies.

UKG Talk helps solve the challenging business problem of connecting and collaborating with increasingly remote teams and a frontline workforce. As many organizations shift to a long-term hybrid workforce model, the importance of collaboration tools and employee communications is paramount. UKG Talk is a mobile-first solution that seamlessly fits into the flow of work, helping organizations reach all their employees, boost productivity and create a more inclusive sense of community."

You may also be interested in...

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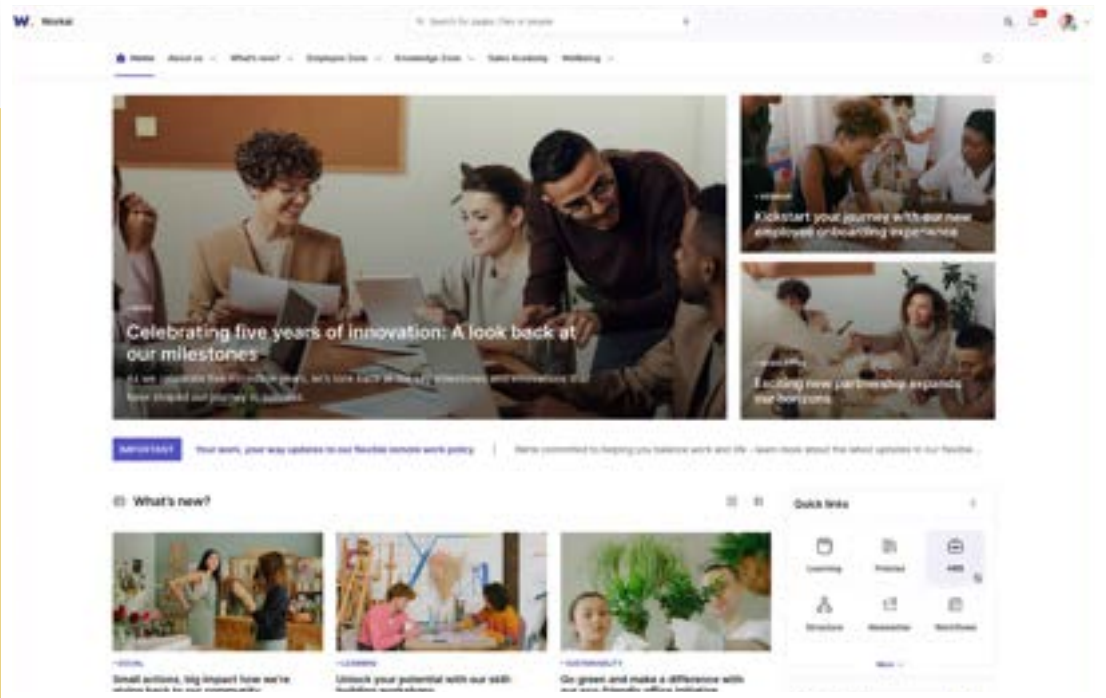
workai.

FULLY STANDALONE

REQUIRES SHAREPOINT

FRONTLINE FOCUS

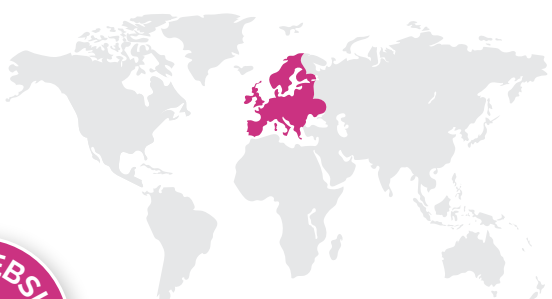
OTHER



Typical deployment:

1,000 to 5,000

Company locations:



VISIT THE WEBSITE

The product in a nutshell

Workai is a very complete product with many attractive features and additional modules that will appeal to a wide range of organisations.

CLEARBOX VIEW

Workai, owned by the Polish company of the same name, is a fully fledged standalone intranet product with many attractive features across the board. The user interface is intuitive, it includes a range of widgets and navigation elements to build attractive pages and guide employees to relevant content. The experience can be personalised, for instance by bringing relevant news stories together in a 'suggested for you' news zone. Branding options are flexible and include the possibility to create sub-brands with a different look and feel.

One area that we found particularly strong is the functionality for page and content creation. Workai includes its own content management system where admins have a vast range of content block types at their disposal. When creating a page, these predefined blocks are easily dragged and dropped into place from a left-hand overview area. Blocks are configured in a detailed right-hand side panel, where various aspects of the block are fine-tuned and audience targeting can be applied. We found the overall experience intuitive and very powerful, making it easy to create rich and engaging pages, even by non-technical content publishers.

When creating content, editors are assisted by a number of AI-powered features based on Microsoft's Azure OpenAI service. There are options to simplify or shorten text, or to change the tone of voice. There is an assistant to generate images according to a chosen style, and we also like the integration with Canva, where content creators can access company templates to design their visuals, without leaving the Workai context. A publication date for news articles can be set and an approval workflow is available. There is also a simple editorial calendar to help internal communicators manage the publication process. We like the powerful newsletter module, where editors can either hand-pick relevant news articles or set up a fully automated weekly / monthly newsletter.

Collaboration is supported through communities, which can be closed (members are predefined) or open (employees can choose to become members). Each community has its activity feed with familiar social interaction features, such as likes with emojis and GIFs, comments and @mentions. There is a nice 'kudos' feature for giving praise to colleagues, but no broader gamification functionality.

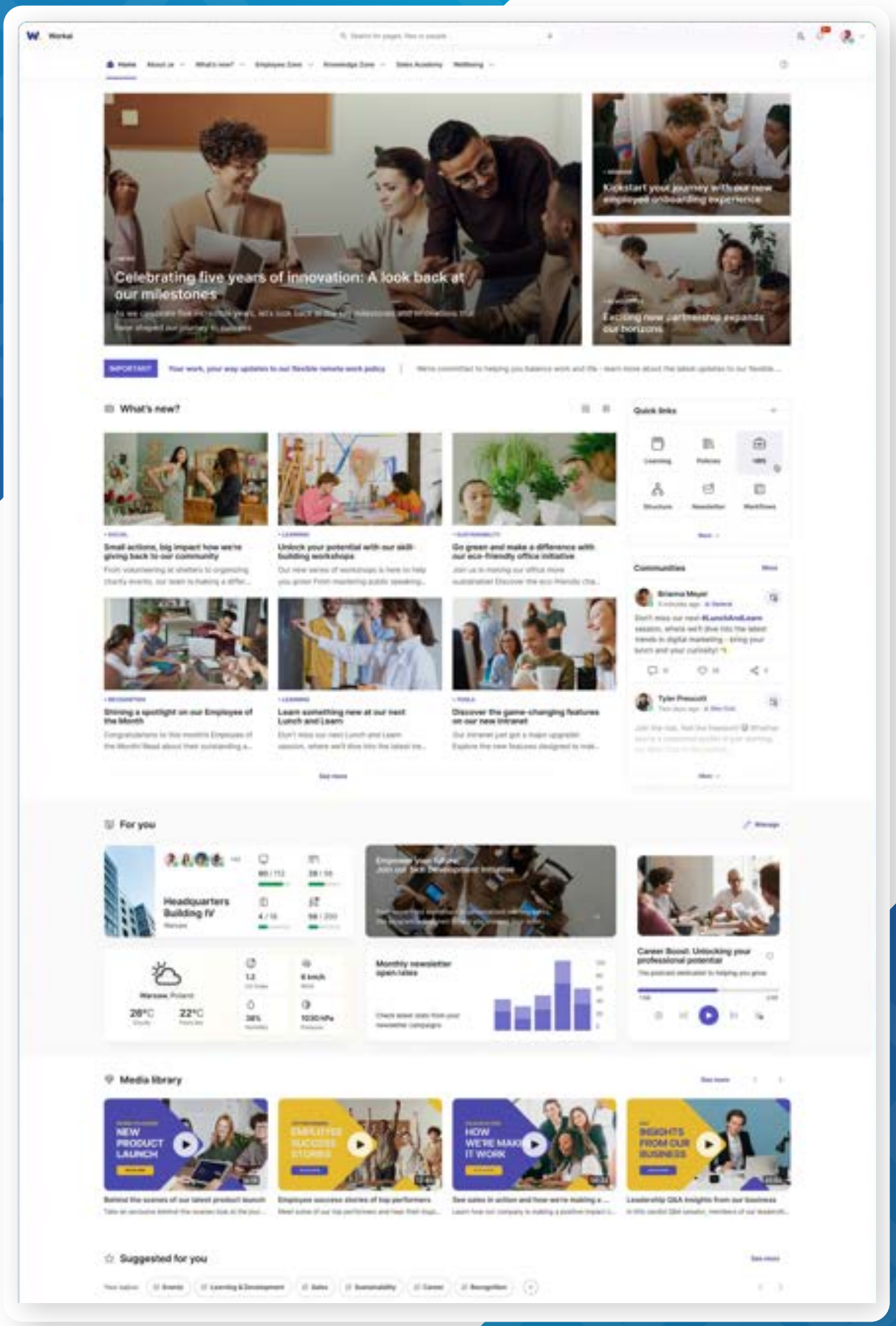
Integrations are mainly focused on Microsoft 365, where Teams integrations work particularly well. For integrations with business software, Workai includes a development framework with APIs, which looks comprehensive although we haven't tested it.

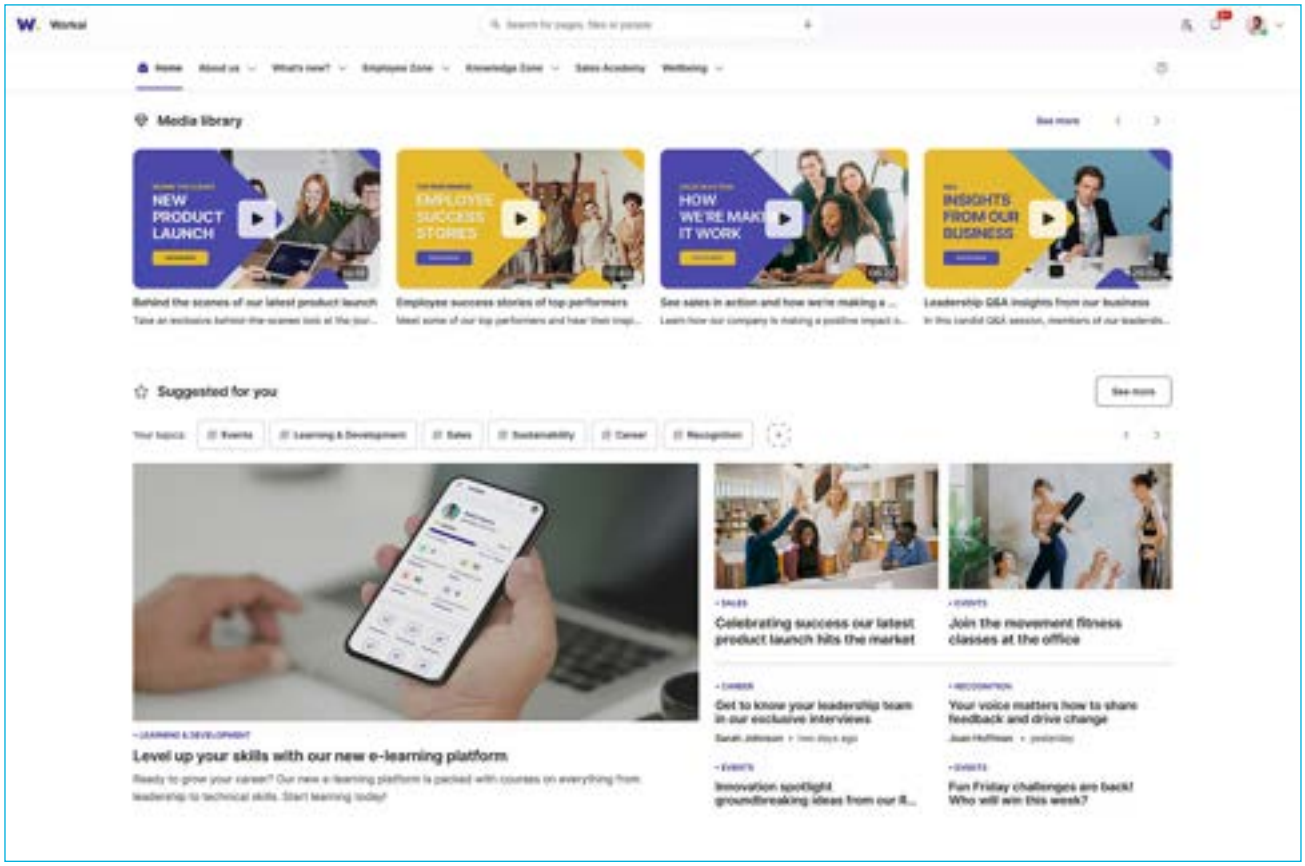
The search engine allows employees to enter natural language queries and uses AI to generate summary answers. As an alternative, employees can find information using the AI-powered 'Workai Buddy', which also functions as a broader conversational AI tool. Additionally, there is a rich Knowledge Base module where content such as tutorials and FAQs are stored and managed.

Analytics is based on Matomo, which is a comprehensive product that Workai has integrated well. A number of dashboards have been embedded into Workai, while the full Matomo user interface is available to power users who want to dig deeper.

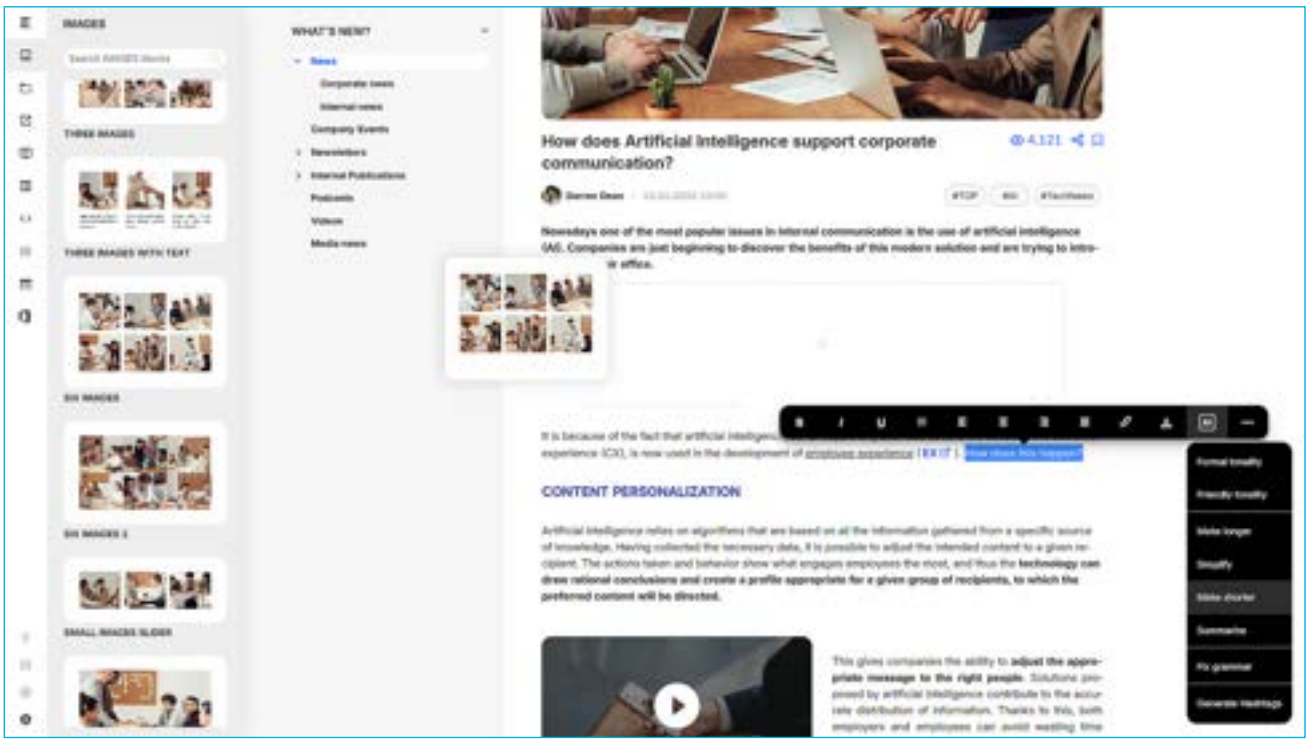
Workai comes with a fully featured mobile app for iOS and Android. All desktop functionality is available within the app, but admins can decide to hide certain parts or create specific layouts, such as an area with large-size buttons as shortcuts. There are a couple of modules that work particularly well on mobile, such as a custom forms builder and a tasks module, for instance for frontline workers to assign tasks to a colleague on the next shift.

Overall, we found Workai to be a very complete product across many use cases, and believe it will appeal to many companies of all sizes and industries. While the pricing is on the high side, especially for larger organisations, the product is also very modular. Businesses that don't need all the modules will be able to reduce their cost.

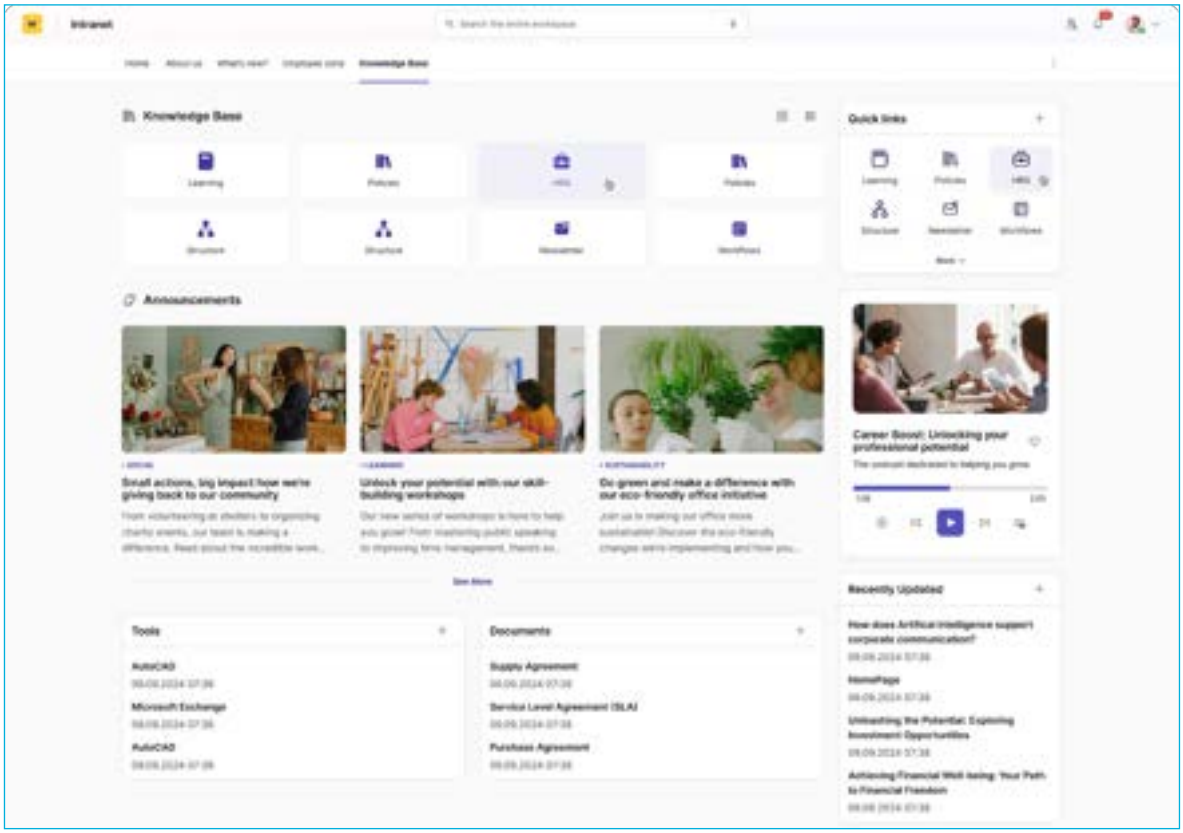

Celebrating five years of innovation: A look back at our milestones
Kickstart your journey with our new employee onboarding experience
Exciting new partnership expands our horizons
What's new?
Quick links
Communities
For you
Headquarters Building IV
Career Boost: Unlocking your professional potential
Media library
NEW PRODUCT LAUNCH
Suggested for you



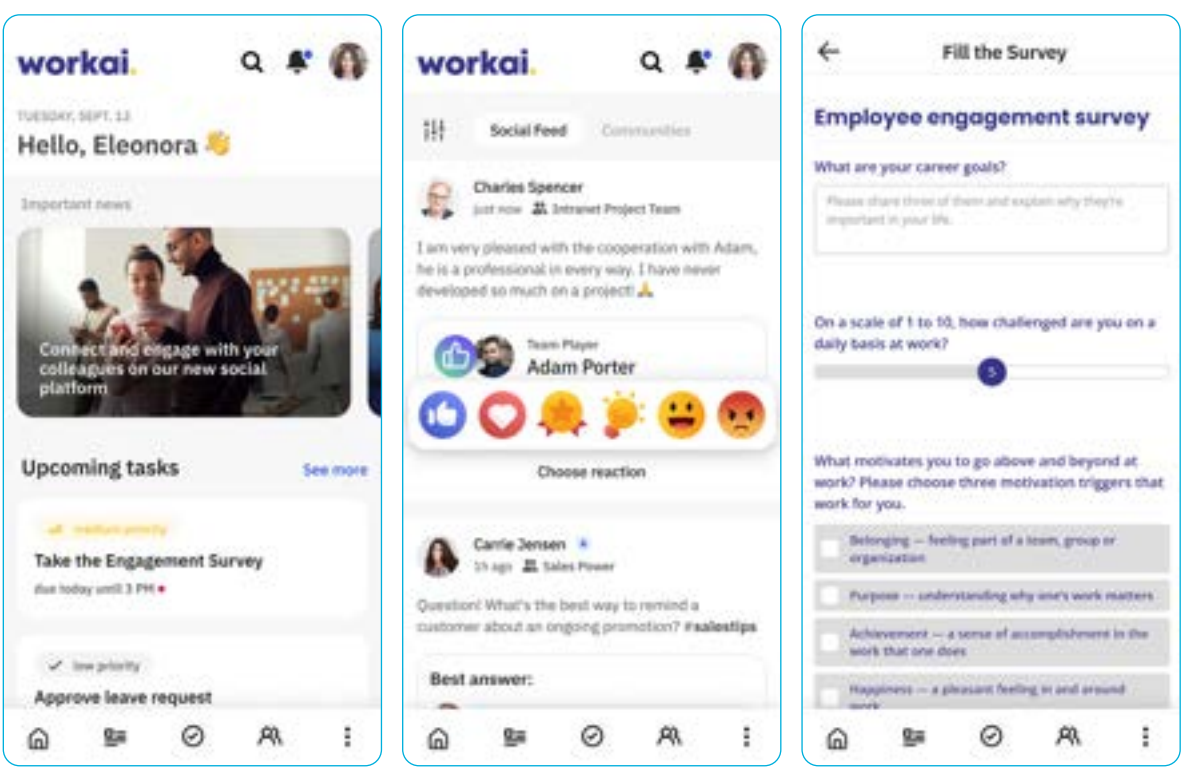
One way to deliver personalised news to employees is through a widget on the home page called 'suggested for you'.



Workai's powerful 'block editor' allows content creators to drag and drop preconfigured blocks from the left column into the main content area.



The Knowledge Base module is a central preconfigured area where content such as tutorials and FAQs can be stored and managed.



The mobile app supports various use cases for frontline workers. The tasks module will save time, the social interactions work particularly well on mobile, and forms are easy to fill out.

Pricing

PRICE BAND	
1,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
5,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
20,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
50,000 users	$ $ $ $ $

These prices are indicative, offering a comparison of the products featured in this report. Please contact the vendor for a bespoke quote.

PRICING MODEL

Subscription – price per user per month; subscription – price band based on number of users; one-off payment and ongoing maintenance fee.

DISCOUNTS

Charities and non-profit organisations; multi-year commitments; frontline users; customers only pay for active users; volume discounts.

COSTS TYPICALLY

Slightly higher at the start of the term, but generally spread.

PRICE INCLUDES

Price includes: Project workshops, training for admins, training for end users, customer success services, maintenance, product support, branding / theming services, editor manuals, updates and upgrades, choice of modules / add-ons, hosting, onboarding user data, consulting services.

Product type

Ready-to-run, installed in hours

Branding opportunities

All branding, complex options

Base systems

Fully standalone

Requires SharePoint

Other

Sectors

Accountancy, banking and finance

Energy and utilities

Retail

Transport & Logistics

Public services, government and administration

COMPANY AND PRODUCT

Company details

Company
Workai

ISO 27001 certified
Yes

Data residency
Global - at the client's discretion

Company founded
2016

Product launched
2016

Typical client size
1,000 to 5,000

Largest deployment so far
40,000 employees across Germany and Austria

Customers
Clients include: T-Mobile, CANAL+, Decathlon, Ringier Axel Springer, Ewals Cargo Care, Sustana Solutions, Żabka, PKO Bank Polski, Deutsche Vermögensberatung (DVAG), Ministry of Infrastructure. Please see their website for more.

Partner locations
Please see their website for details.

Company locations
Białystok, Poland (HQ)

Product and technical details

Name of product

Workai

Deployment

Client on-premises	**Client private cloud**	**Microsoft Azure**	Amazon Web Services	**Vendor-hosted**	Microsoft 365 tenant	Google Cloud	Other

Authentication supported

Entra ID	**ADFS**	**Okta**	**Open ID**	**Oauth**	**G Suite**	Other

App deployment

Google Play store	**Apple store**	**MDM**	**MAM**	Other

Accessibility

WCAG 2.1 conformant.

Document library sources integrated

Box	Dropbox	**Google Drive**	**SharePoint**	OneDrive	Other

Optional integrated enterprise search engines

Coveo	**Elastic**	IBM	Lucidworks	**Microsoft**	Mindbreeze	Sinequa	Other

User interface multi-language

Machine translation	**Pre-configured**	**Editable**	Right to left script supported	Other

Content multi-language

Machine translation for publishers	**Machine translation for end users**	**Editable machine translation for publishers**	**Manual creation for publishers**	Right to left script	Other

Set-up and support

Set-up process for new clients

New clients can have Workai installed and configured within hours, supported by a setup wizard that connects to company resources. The Enterprise process typically includes a one-month onboarding project, based on a proven process with ready-to-use templates (pages, messages, campaigns). Workai's dedicated Customer Success Team helps smooth implementation, from operational kick-off to content migration and training. Support is provided throughout the rollout to ensure successful adoption.

Current version

Demonstrated to ClearBox: 1.24Q4.0

At January 2025: 1.25Q1.0

Product updates

Minor updates weekly; major updates every quarter.

Product update process

Workai provides automatic monthly updates for SaaS customers, ensuring all clients benefit from the latest features and improvements simultaneously. For dedicated deployments, customers can decide the timing and specific features of updates, allowing them to control when changes are applied to their environment. Customers cannot fully opt out of critical updates but have flexibility in scheduling and managing non-essential updates. This ensures that clients stay current while maintaining control over their operational needs.

Reverse-out options

If a Workai contract ends, clients can download all their data before the service is discontinued. For subscribed clients, all data remains accessible for export, ensuring no loss of important information. In bespoke contracts, the system continues to operate in an unsupported state, allowing clients to maintain access to their data.

Technical support

Email support	Phone support	Chat support	Online portal	24/7 support	Office hours only

User community

Currently, Workai does not have an official active user community such as a user conference or online forum. Workai does provides webinars, user manuals and access to a knowledge base to ensure ongoing user support and education.

Voice of the vendor

Workai says: "Workai is a unified Employee Experience Platform designed to improve internal communications, enhance employee engagement and streamline knowledge management. Founded in 2016 in Poland, Workai has quickly become a recognised name in the industry, awarded multiple times by Nielsen Norman Group as one of the top intranet solutions globally (2018, 2021, 2023). The platform offers a suite of flexible products, including Workai Intranet, Workai Mobile, Workai Connections, Workai Knowledge, Workai Forms & Tasks, Workai Learning and Workai Spaces, all designed to cater to diverse organisational needs.

Workai stands out for its user-friendly CMS, which allows non-technical users to create and manage content easily. The platform supports advanced personalisation, ensuring that employees receive relevant and timely information tailored to their roles and locations. It also integrates seamlessly with Microsoft 365, making it a perfect fit for organisations already leveraging Microsoft's ecosystem. Additionally, Workai's AI-powered search and analytics tools provide deep insights into employee engagement and content performance, helping organisations continuously optimise their internal communications strategies.

Trusted by enterprises across various sectors, including finance, energy and government, Workai is committed to driving digital transformation and improving the employee experience at scale. With over 500,000 active users worldwide, Workai is dedicated to creating a connected and engaged workforce through innovative and secure solutions."

You may also be interested in...

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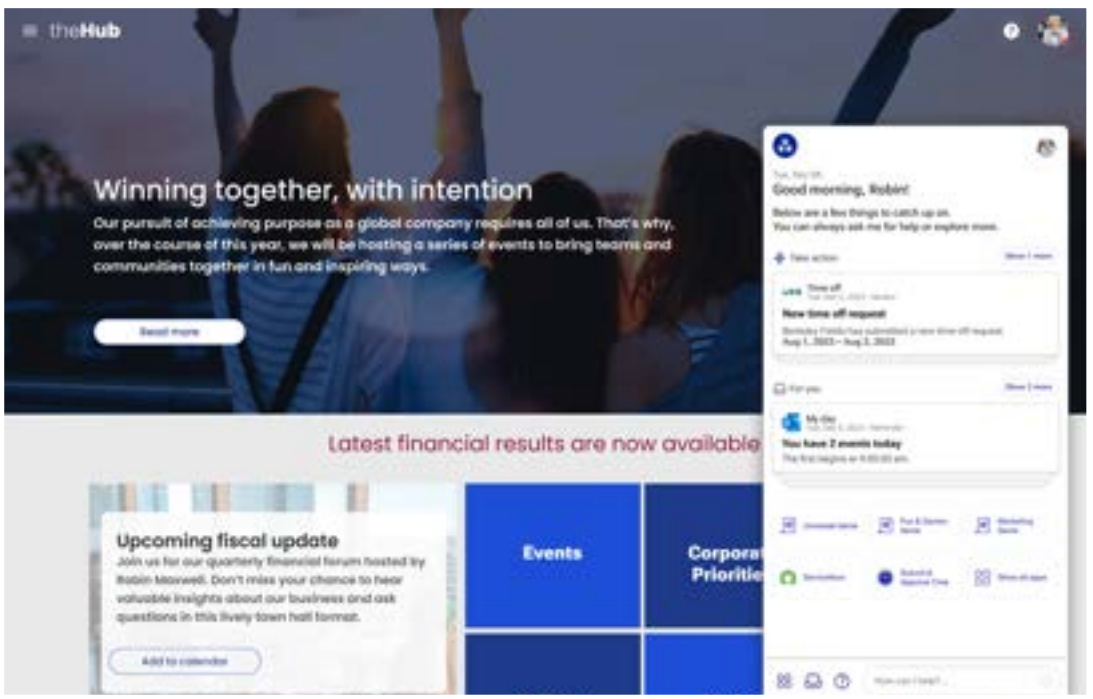
Workgrid

FULLY STANDALONE

REQUIRES SHAREPOINT

FRONTLINE FOCUS

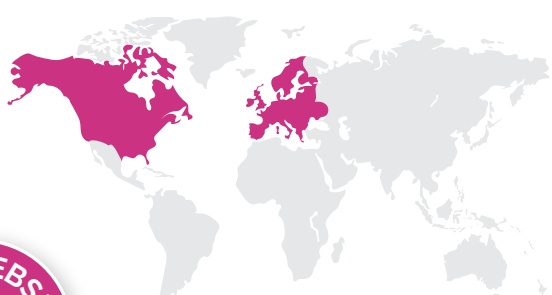
OTHER



Typical deployment:

5,000 to 10,000

Company locations:



VISIT THE WEBSITE

The product in a nutshell

Workgrid is a powerful AI assistant that simplifies communication and task management by integrating with multiple business apps, which reduces information overload and enhances productivity.

CLEARBOX VIEW

Workgrid, headquartered in Boston, USA, is an AI assistant designed for seamless integration with nearly any business app a company utilises. Available as a button within company portals, a browser extension or within MS Teams, its primary goal is to reduce information overload and digital friction in modern workplaces. Through an intuitive chat interface, Workgrid consolidates notifications from various company applications, such as intranets, HR systems and ticketing systems, into a personalised assistant. Within the chat layout each notification clearly displays its source so users can see where the information is coming from. The notifications respect permissions from the source systems and are personalised for each individual. Workgrid takes a proactive approach to notifications, designed to help employees effectively prioritise their tasks by providing timely, relevant nudges throughout the digital workplace. By anticipating user needs, Workgrid's AI assistant directs attention to areas that require immediate action.

The landing screen called 'Briefing' aggregates information and activities from integrated systems. This is an excellent feature as it allows users to take actions immediately within Workgrid, reducing the time spent navigating multiple systems. This can be particularly beneficial for management needing quick summaries when they receive many requests from employees.

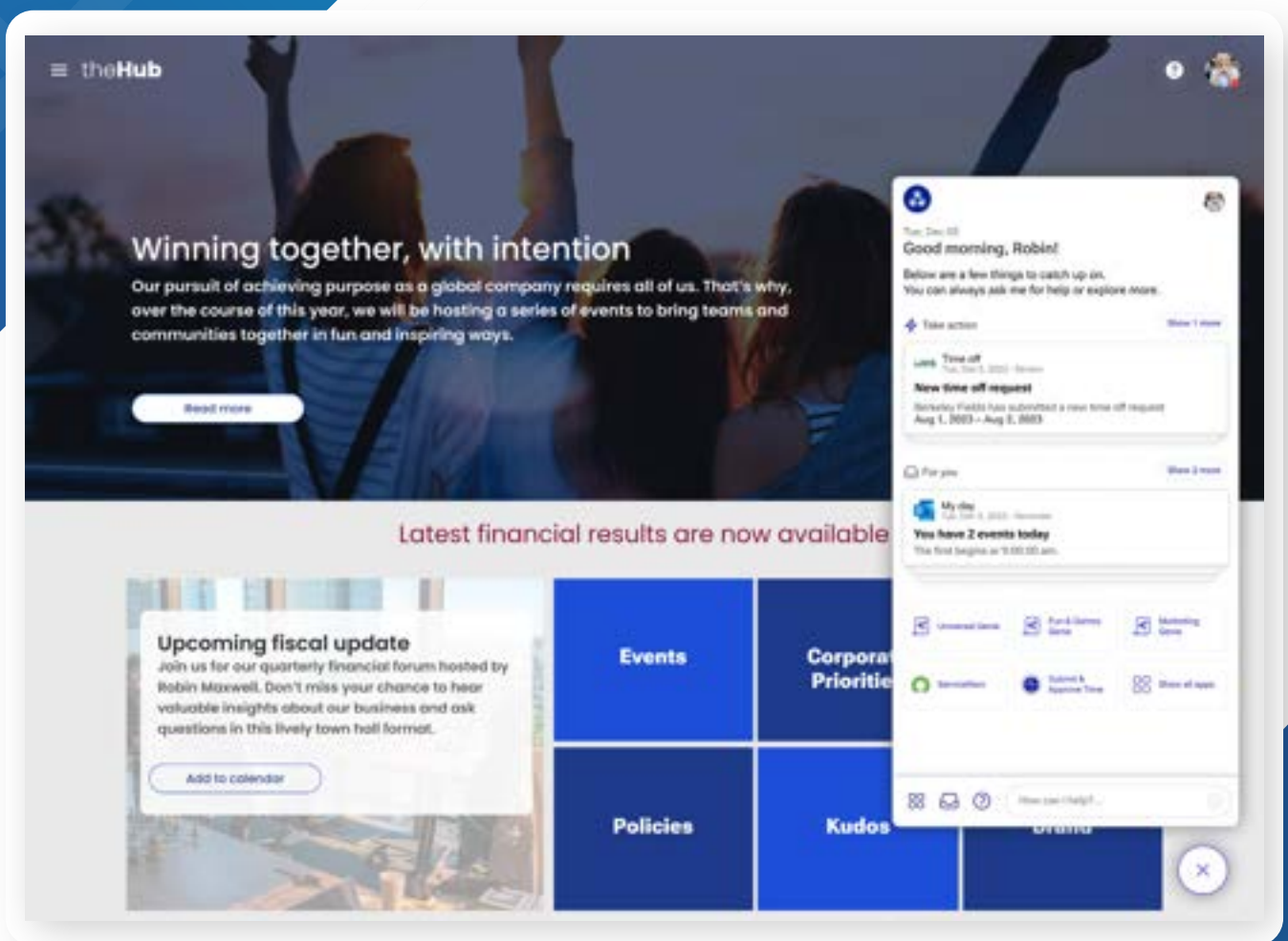
A 'Publisher' feature includes scheduling and targeting options based on pre-defined groups from systems like Okta or HR platforms. Announcements are managed from the Workgrid dashboard by those with appropriate permissions. Announcements can be prioritised at different levels to control their visibility within the Workgrid chat interface alongside integrated news. Announcements live within Workgrid and are not visible in any other applications it integrates with, risking duplication of workload for publishers.

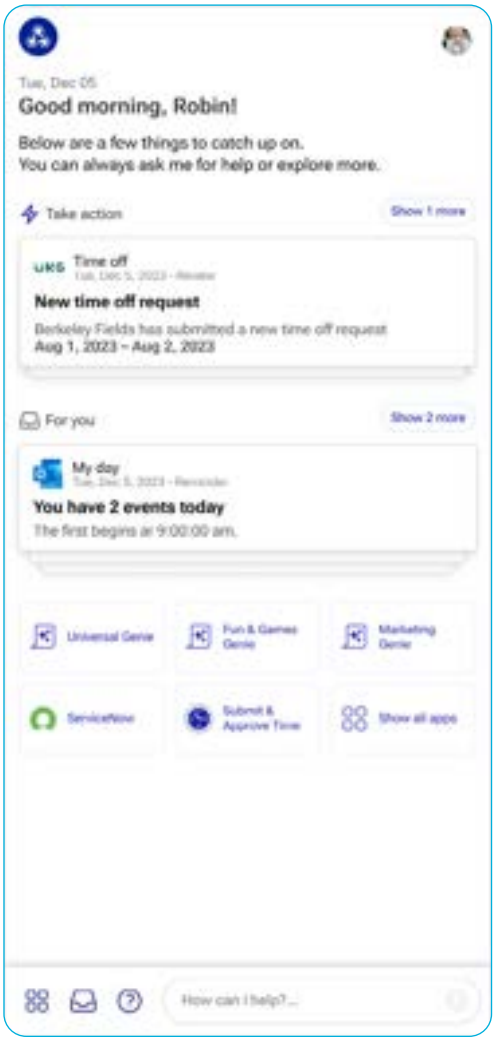
Workgrid's strength lies in its ability to simplify information retrieval and support natural language questions by leveraging advanced Retrieval-Augmented Generation. Answers to user questions are delivered in the chat interface through AI generation or pre-defined responses by admins. For example, if a user asks, "How much vacation do I have left?" Workgrid retrieves information from the company's HR system and displays it. Workgrid then intelligently asks whether the employee wants to request time off and perform other actions directly within the chat, which then updates the HR system accordingly. We like that answers given by the AI include links to source materials for further information or cross checking.

Workgrid offers an extensive range of out-of-the-box integrations that can be easily configured within the dashboard. Initial integration support for up to 5-10 apps is provided by Workgrid, after which clients can manage additional setups independently or seek further assistance that might come at an additional cost. There are a huge number of integrations waiting to be configured by admins, with Workgrid frequently adding more. The 'Workgrid Builder' allows for customisation of integrations and the addition of new apps through a user-friendly drag-and-drop interface. There are over 50 integration templates (i.e. 'AI Agents') which are used to define specific functionalities, such as displaying notifications or enabling actions like approving, commenting, or submitting. Analytics tracks user activity, highlights unanswered questions and reports on announcement engagement, helping admins identify informational gaps.

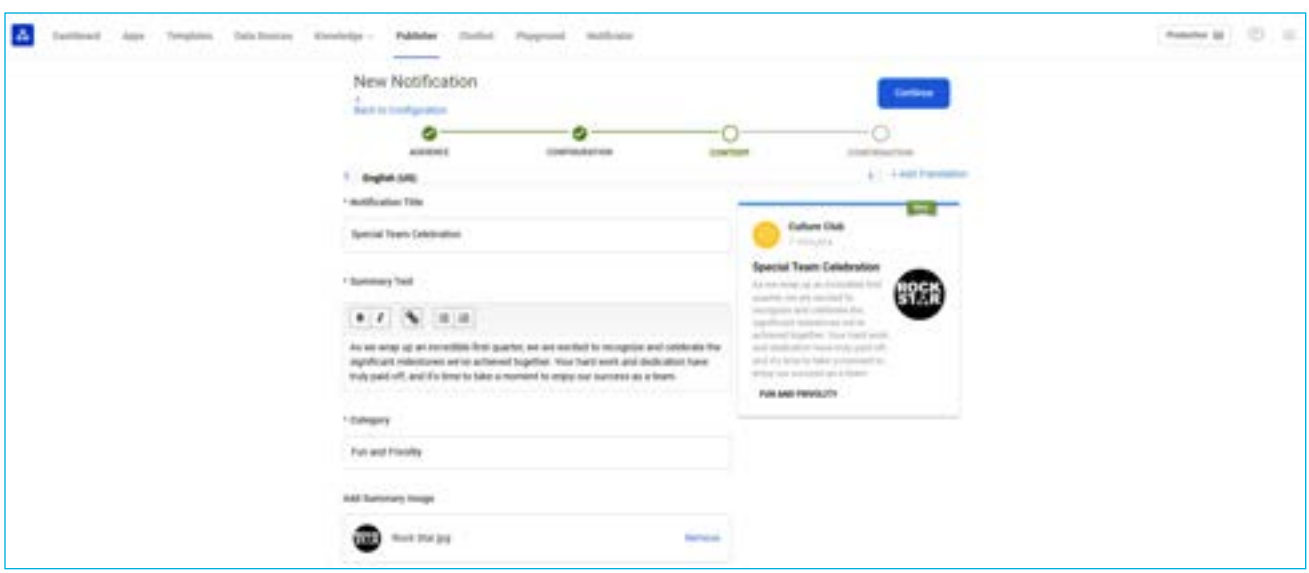
An interesting aspect of Workgrid's integrations is its partnership with intranet providers Unily and Igloo. Through these partnerships, Workgrid functions as an add-on to the intranet platform, appearing as an 'Assistant' button in the bottom of the interface. This feature makes Workgrid especially appealing to companies already using one of these vendors as their intranet solution.

Overall, Workgrid is an excellent solution for organisations of any size, particularly those with large or complex digital workplaces, as it significantly reduces decision-making time and addresses information overload. While setup may require technical knowledge for non-standard integrations or customisation, Workgrid offers comprehensive support throughout the process.

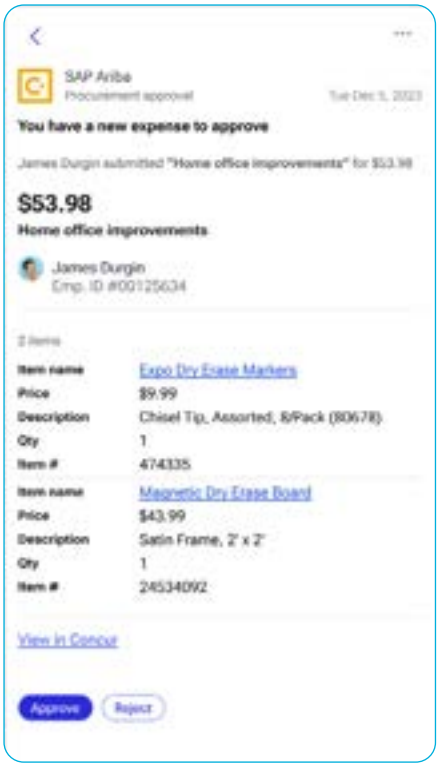

theHub
Winning together, with intention
Our pursuit of achieving purpose as a global company requires all of us. That's why, over the course of this year, we will be hosting a series of events to bring teams and communities together in fun and inspiring ways.
Read more
Latest financial results are now available
Upcoming fiscal update
Join us for our quarterly financial forum hosted by Robin Maxwell. Don't miss your chance to hear valuable insights about our business and ask questions in this lively town hall format.
Add to calendar
Events
Policies
Kudos
Good morning, Robin!
Below are a few things to catch up on.
You can always ask me for help or explore more.
Take action
New time off request
You have 2 events today



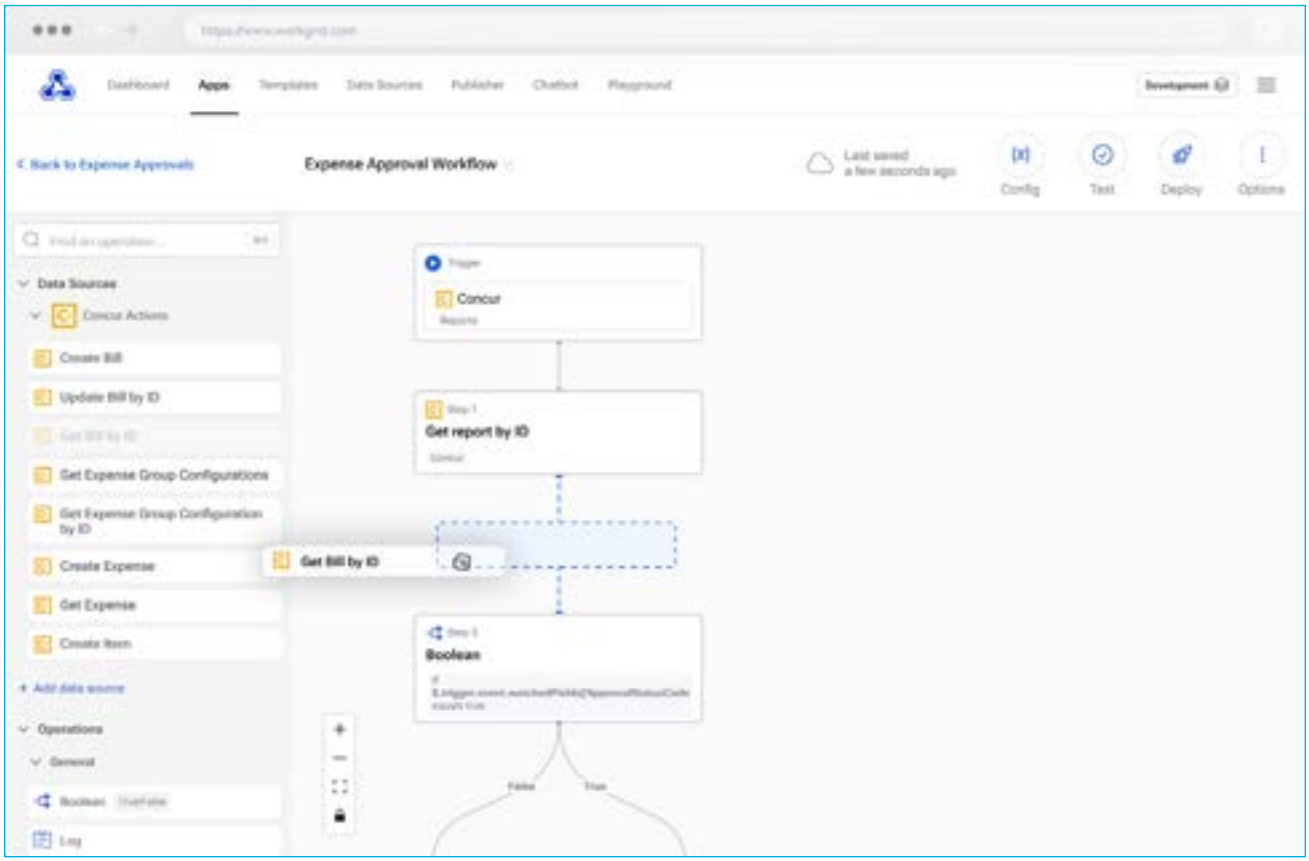
'Briefing' summarises notifications from integrated apps within Workgrid's interface.



Workgrid supports AI assisted announcement publishing.



Users can take actions such as approve, reject, submit or comment directly from the Workgrid interface.



'Workgrid Builder' allows integration customisation through a drag-and-drop interface.

Pricing

PRICE BAND	
1,000 users	$$$$$
5,000 users	$$$$$
20,000 users	$$$$$
50,000 users	$$$$$

These prices are indicative, offering a comparison of the products featured in this report. Please contact the vendor for a bespoke quote.

PRICING MODEL

Workgrid's pricing model is based on a platform fee which is calculated based on the total number of users and is paid annually.

DISCOUNTS

Multi-year commitments.

COSTS TYPICALLY

Fairly evenly spread across three years.

PRICE INCLUDES

Pricing includes training, product support and maintenance, hosting, branding, customer success, updates and upgrades, resource portal.

Product type

Ready-to-run, installed in days

Branding opportunities

Simple branding by admins

Base systems

Fully standalone	Requires SharePoint	Other

Sectors

Accountancy, banking and finance	Engineering and manufacturing	Healthcare	Information technology	Media and internet

COMPANY AND PRODUCT

Company details

Company
Workgrid

ISO 27001 certified
Other - SOC2, GDPR, CCPA

Data residency
N/A

Company founded
2017

Product launched
2018

Typical client size
5,000 to 10,000

Largest deployment so far
90K - Fortune 500, US-based Insurance Company

Customers
Clients include: Liberty Mutual Insurance, Aroma Joes, Integrity Operations, Riverstone Group.

Partner locations
USA, EU

Company locations
Boston, MA, USA (HQ); Northern Ireland

Product and technical details

Name of product

Workgrid

Deployment

Client on-premises	Client private cloud	Microsoft Azure	Amazon Web Services	**Vendor-hosted**	Microsoft 365 tenant	Google Cloud	Other

Authentication supported

Entra ID	ADFS	Okta	Open ID	**Oauth**	G Suite	**Other***

*Workgrid can be configured to use SAML 2.0 authentication for single-sign-on (SSO)

App deployment

Google Play store	**Apple store**	**MDM**	**MAM**	Other

Accessibility

WCAG 2.1 conformant. Workgrid Software's AI Work Assistant is compliant. For their legacy toolbar front end, all colours are controlled at the space level, Workgrid Software encourages teams that want to have their own custom theme to stay compliant with WCAG colour rules.

Document library sources integrated

Box	**Dropbox**	**Google Drive**	**SharePoint**	**OneDrive**	**Other***

*These integrations are achieved through Workgrid's no-code platform, which connects to these services as data sources as well as many others.

Optional integrated enterprise search engines

Coveo	**Elastic**	IBM	Lucidworks	**Microsoft**	Mindbreeze	Sinequa	**Other***

*The Workgrid no-code platform can connect to hundreds of data sources to aid in content discovery across engines or applications.

User interface multi-language

Machine translation	**Pre-configured**	Editable	Right to left script supported	Other

Content multi-language

Machine translation for publishers	**Machine translation for end users**	Editable machine translation for publishers	Manual creation for publishers	Right to left script	Other

Set-up and support

Set-up process for new clients

Workgrid provisions new accounts on the customers' behalf. This process is quick and is set up based on a few factors pertaining to the contract. Once the account is provisioned, the organisation's admins can customise the Workgrid experience, including installing pre-loaded catalogue apps, publishing content, generating content for the chatbot, connecting data sources, and custom building their own apps leveraging Workgrid's no code platform 'Builder'.

Version numbers

Demonstrated to ClearBox: GA

At January 2025: GA

Product updates

Minor updates weekly.

Product update process

When new features are turned on, release notes are published to the Workgrid Help Centre to ensure all customers are kept up to date in real time. Additionally, each Workgrid customer is assigned a customer success manager who will communicate feature enhancements and updates, and can assist with training and answering any questions customers may have.

Reverse-out options

Workgrid is not considered a source of truth of customer data. Customers can export select categories of data during the life of the contract. Upon contract termination, customer data is deleted.

Technical support

Email support	Phone support	Chat support	Online portal	24/7 support	Office hours only

User community

Workgrid offers a community in conjunction with the Help Centre where clients can share ideas, ask questions and find answers based on the available topics. Additionally, any client of the community can follow and subscribe to any thread or topic to receive the latest updates over an email notification.

Voice of the vendor

Workgrid says: "Workgrid is an AI Work Assistant that frees employees from the chaos of the workday. With Workgrid organizations can build conversational AI experiences that streamline processes, automate tasks, and help guide employees to the right resources, content, and information, wherever they happen to work. Workgrid achieves this by abstracting notifications, communications, data, and tasks from critical backend business systems, minimizing the need of constant app hopping and context switching.

- Chat across systems and documents: leverage conversational AI to chat across business applications and knowledge bases to find the right answer.
- Receive information and tasks at the right time: from personalized recommendations to task notifications, the Workgrid AI Assistant guides employees to what matters most.
- Say goodbye to app hopping: obtain quick access to your most frequented apps, reducing incessant context switching.
- Build AI integrations in hours, not months: Workgrid's no-code, low-code builder reduces the time, effort, and overall cost to build modern user experiences that help employees perform tasks and find information across your digital workplace, all through a single, natural language interface.
- Deploy 'Ready to Install App Templates': The Workgrid platform boasts over 50+ pre-built app templates ready for immediate use. Pre-built templates include all the steps of a workflow (e.g., expense approval) and can be easily customized via our no-code app builder.

Whether you're looking to get up and running quickly with our AI Assistant or leverage our platform to customize and build your own conversational AI experiences, Workgrid is focused on helping you deliver engaging experiences to enhance productivity and eliminate digital friction."

You may also be interested in...

APPSPACE MangoApps UNILY

Back to index

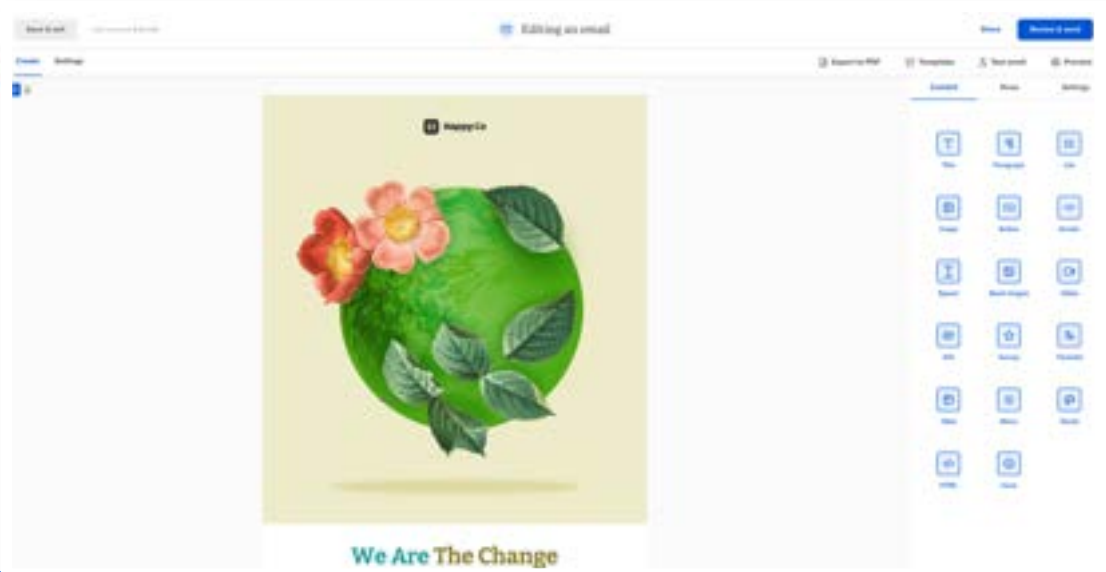
Workshop

FULLY STANDALONE

REQUIRES SHAREPOINT

FRONTLINE FOCUS

OTHER



Typical deployment:

5,000 to 10,000

Company locations:

VISIT THE WEBSITE

The product in a nutshell

Workshop offers communicators a platform to build and track attractive newsletters with multi-channel delivery, which would be particularly appealing to design-led organisations with frontline employees.

CLEARBOX VIEW

Workshop, from a US-based vendor of the same name, helps communicators design, build and track attractive communications. A range of templates are available to build campaigns and associated newsletters, which generate accompanying web pages. Content can then be shared via multiple internal platforms, including Teams, SharePoint, Workvivo and SMS (although note SMS support is in North America only at present). An option to generate a QR code to use on posters and digital signage is particularly useful for frontline workers.

Access control to create communications is at individual user level, which is ok for organisations with a handful of users but will need Workshop's help to set up larger groups; we'd like to see more team-based permissions available out of the box. There are a range of flexible and simple templates for creating emails, with a drag and drop interface that makes it easy to adapt designs. There aren't any particular restrictions available on who can change a template, or sections of it, but it's possible to change who has access to particular designs. We can see the direct integration with Canva being valuable to communications teams who want their emails to align with other designed content.

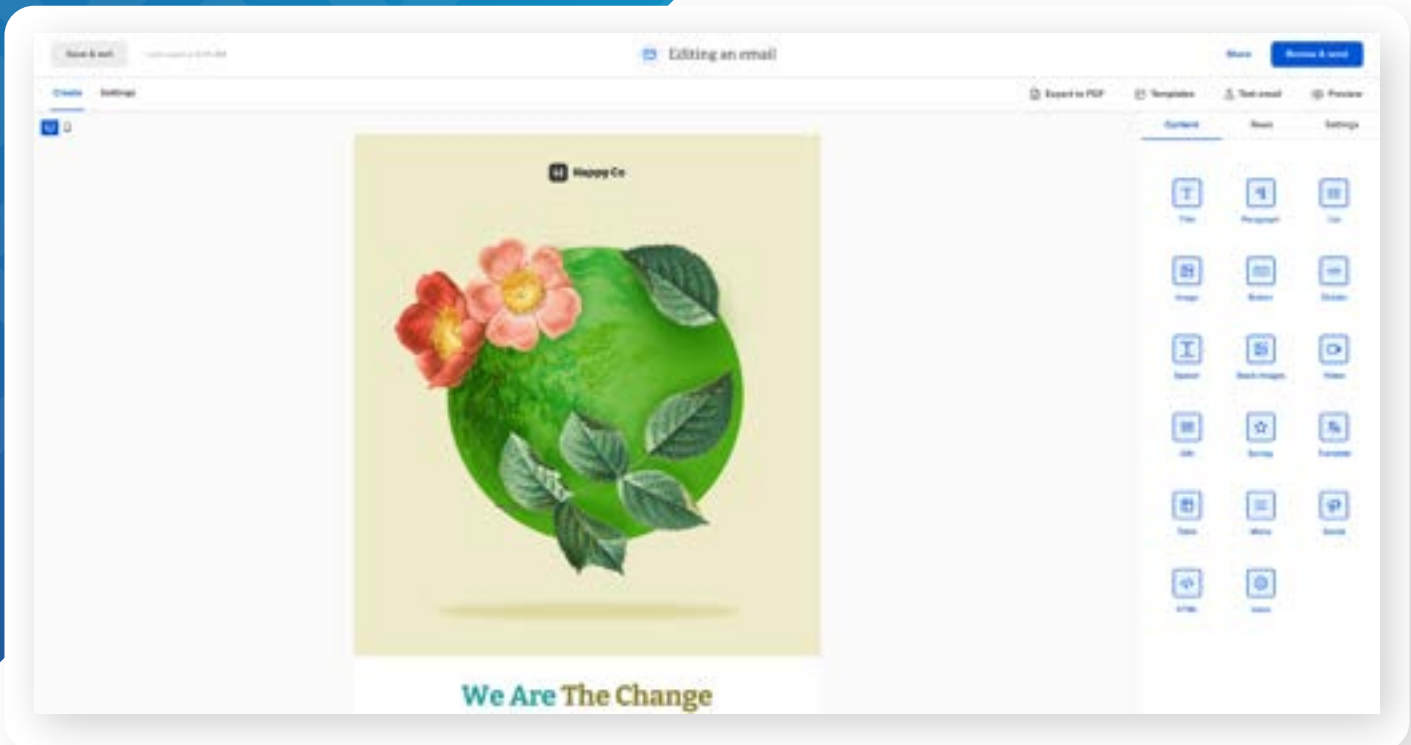
Mail merging and merge tags are available for personalisation (to display someone's first name for example) as well as dynamic content segmentation, such as for manager-specific sections. Testing options help ensure the content is behaving as expected for those employees. Workshop offers simple and attractive embedded pulse surveys, with ratings, emoji and yes / no options. Responses can be set to be anonymous or it's possible to see who answered.

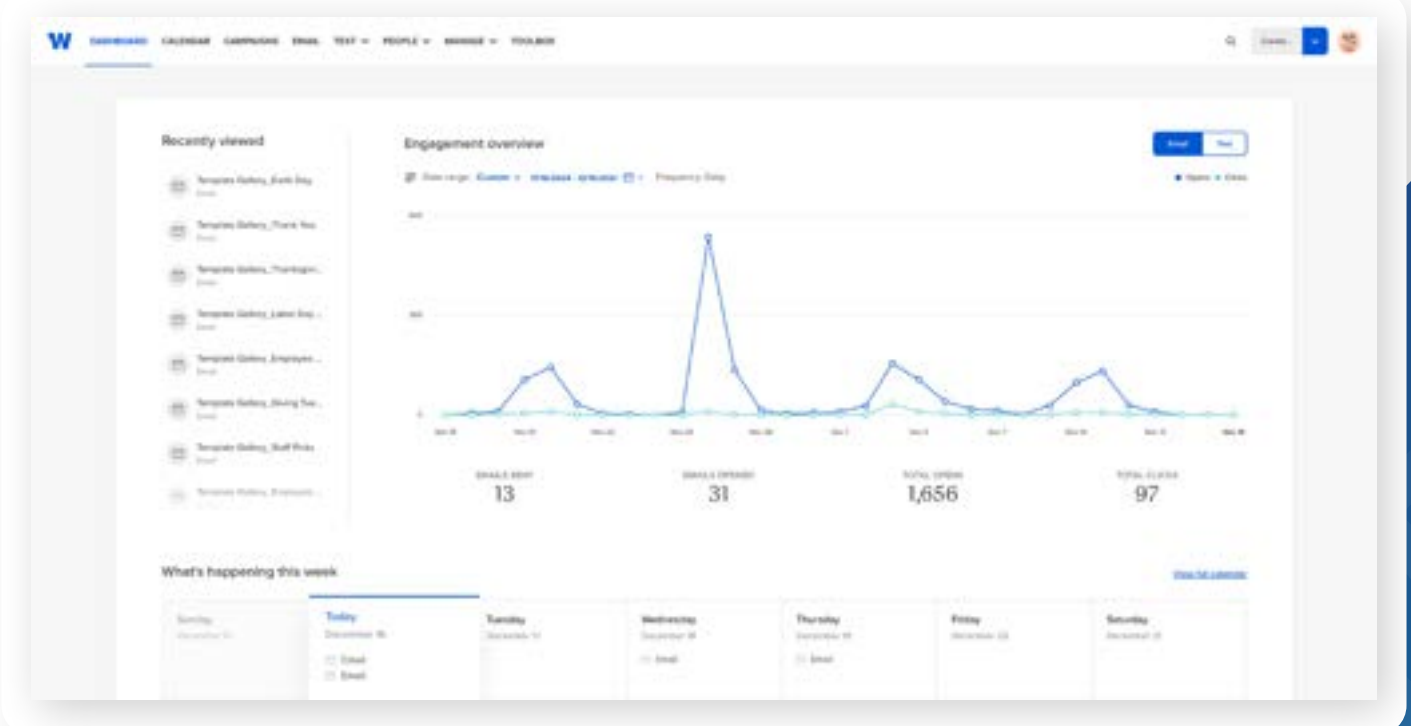
There's a built-in media library with lightweight image editing available, including the ability to add text onto images. Media support extends to GIFs (with Giphy integration), embedded files and videos, though Stream content is limited to hyperlinked access. Workshop offers AI suggestions for stock photos and graphics based on content – a great example of using AI to help without relying on generated images. There are also some nice AI touches around changing the tone and suggestions to update the subject lines and preview text. Another nice feature for communicators is the ability to edit a link even after the email has been sent, which we can see being a lifesaver if a mistake is spotted.

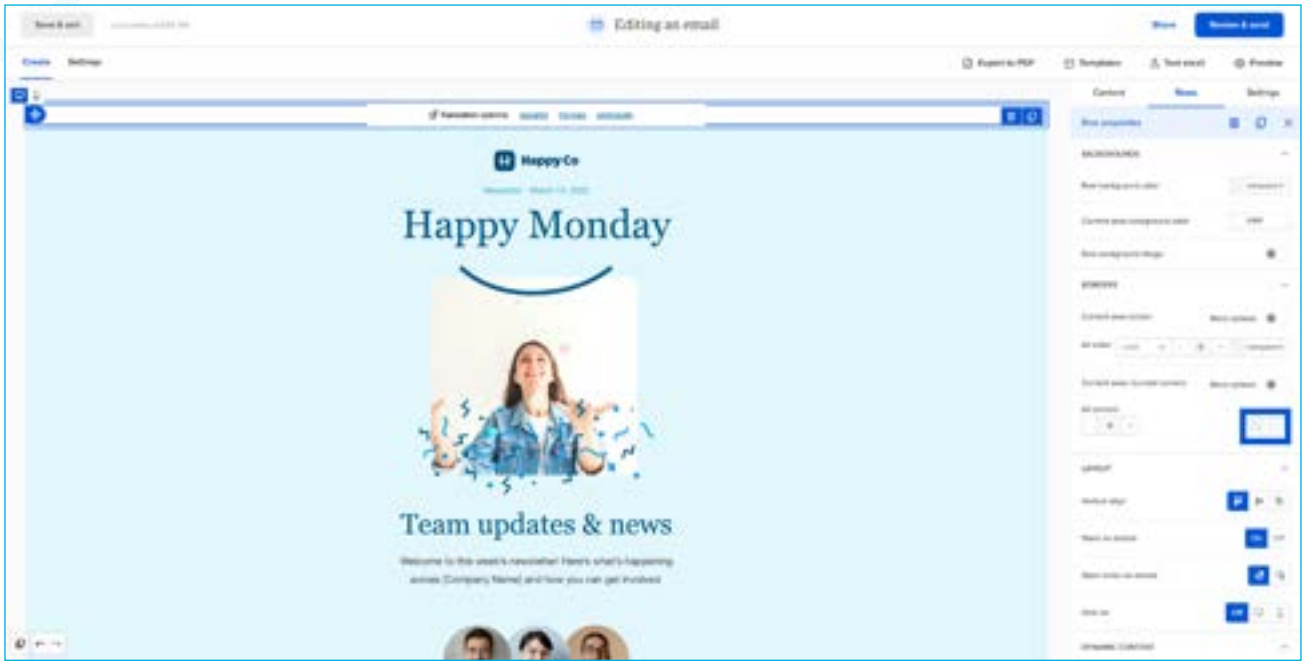
Workshop can create automated distribution lists based on employee data in Entra ID or HR systems like Workday, as well as creating lists via CSV or by groups on the fly. If recipient time zone data is available, the send can be scheduled for within their working hours. It's possible for users to send emails on behalf of others and assign users who can do so, as well as restricting who can send to various distribution groups. We like the built-in "Read in your preferred language" language translation option, where employees can set and save their preferences from the email itself.

Once sent, a web-view version of the email is generated and links to this can be shared with a short message into Slack, Teams, SharePoint and Workvivo, directly from the Workshop interface. This is also where a QR code can be created for digital signage or physical posters. It should be noted that for future findability of content, the audience will rely on the end channel, such as Outlook or Teams search. We like the built-in comms calendar, which shows what's been sent and scheduled, and via which channel. The analytics suite provides detailed insights with custom date range, time of day, visits, clicks (from all channels) and devices. Individual user tracking is available, although privacy mode can be enabled to prevent this. An API allows for external data visualisation.

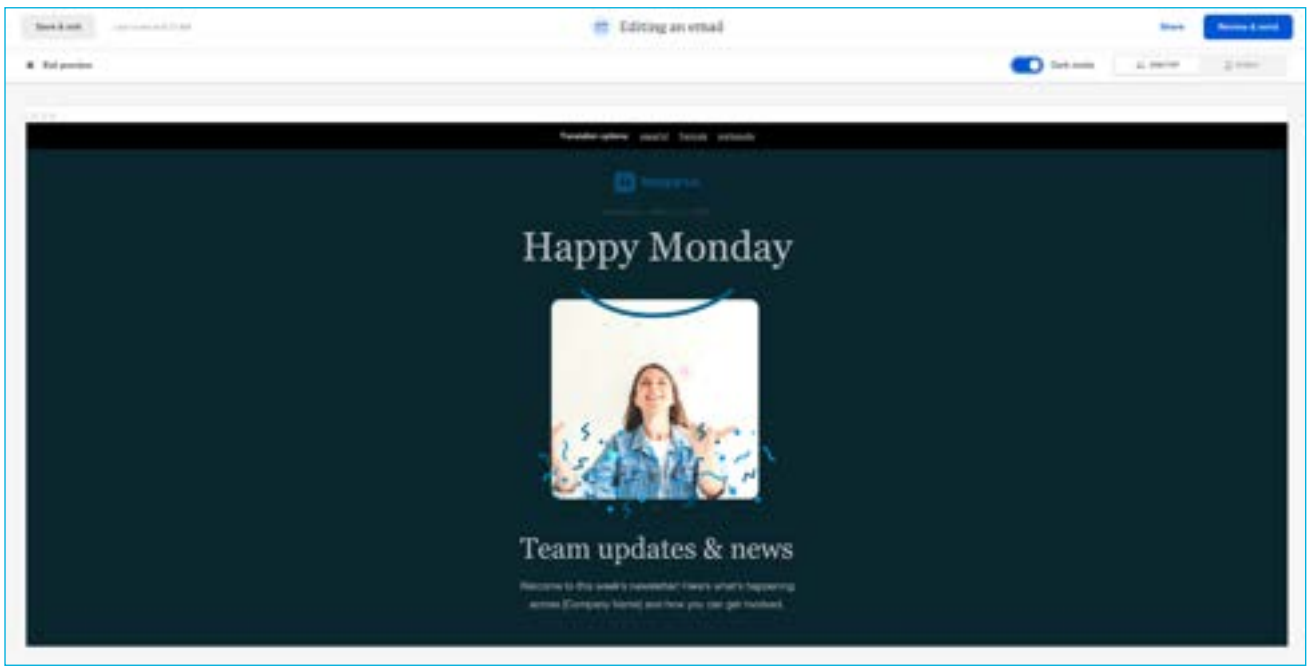
Workshop comes at an appealing price point for those organisations wanting to develop their approach to communications. We see the platform's combination of design flexibility, multi-channel delivery and analytics capabilities being particularly of interest to those organisations who have an emphasis on visual design and brand consistency.


Editing an email
Happy Co
We Are The Change

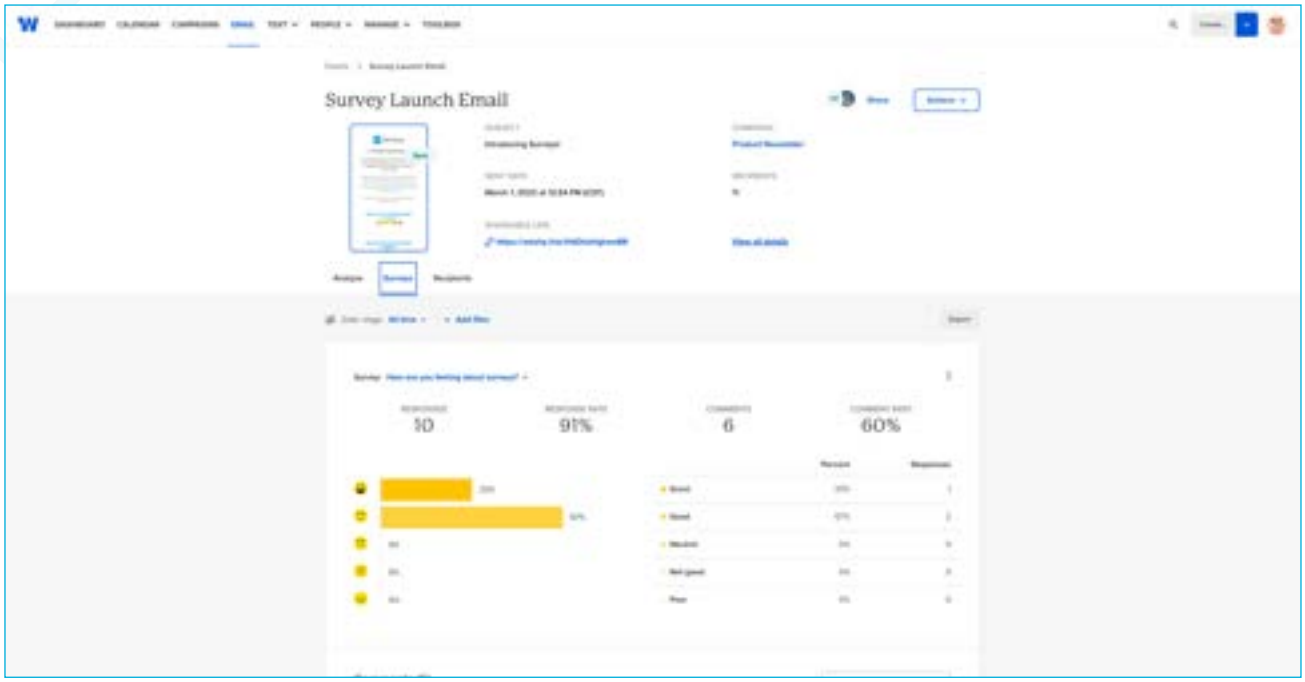

Recently viewed
Engagement overview
13
31
1,656
97
What's happening this week



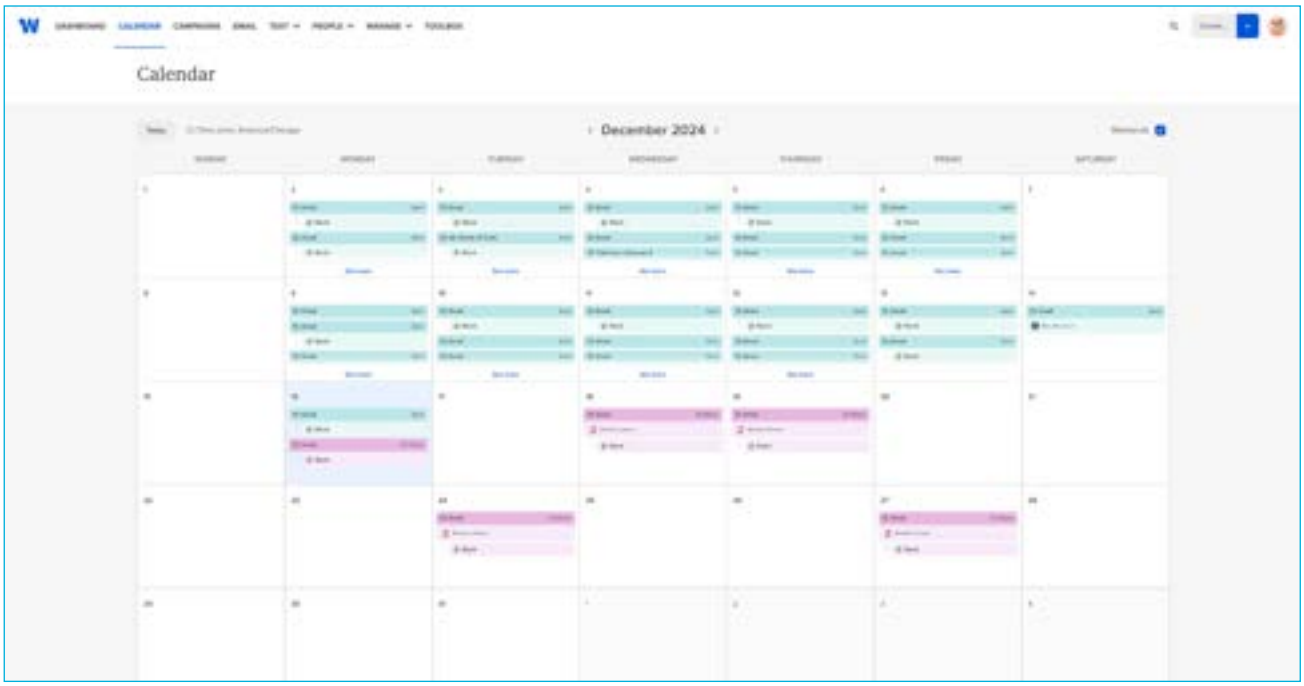
There's a simple editing interface with option for readers to select their preferred language.



We particularly like the "preview in dark mode" option.



Workshop offers clean and simple survey analytics, including survey responses.



The Calendar View helps publishers plan their communications.

Pricing

PRICE BAND	
1,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
5,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
20,000 users	$ $ $ $ $
50,000 users	$ $ $ $ $

These prices are indicative, offering a comparison of the products featured in this report only. Please contact the vendor for a bespoke quote.

PRICING MODEL

Subscription – price band based on number of employees.

DISCOUNTS

Charities and non-profit organisations; multi-year commitments; customers only pay for active users.

COSTS TYPICALLY

Fairly evenly spread across three years.

PRICE INCLUDES

Implementation and training.

Product type

Ready-to-run, installed in days

Branding opportunities

Good branding, complex options

Base systems

Fully standalone

Requires SharePoint

Other*

*Requires a web browser and access to existing email account

Sectors

Information technology

Healthcare

Accountancy, banking and finance

Public services, government and administration

Transport & Logistics

COMPANY AND PRODUCT

Company details

Company
Workshop

ISO 27001 certified
Other - SOC 2 Type II

Data residency
Europe (excluding UK); USA

Company founded
2021

Product launched
2021

Typical client size
5,000 to 10,000

Largest deployment so far
Approximately 200,000 employees

Customers
Clients include: Aston Martin, Papa Johns, HarperCollins, 1 800 Contacts, Steve Madden. Please see their website for more.

Partner locations
N/A

Company locations
Omaha, Nebraska, USA (HQ)

Product and technical details

Name of product

Workshop

Deployment

Client on-premises	Client private cloud	Microsoft Azure	**Amazon Web Services**	**Vendor-hosted**	Microsoft 365 tenant	Google Cloud	Other

Authentication supported

Entra ID	ADFS	**Okta**	Open ID	Oauth	**G Suite**	Other

App deployment

Google Play store	Apple store	MDM	MAM	Other

Accessibility

WCAG 2.1 conformant

Document library sources integrated

Box	Dropbox	Google Drive	**SharePoint**	OneDrive	Other

Optional integrated enterprise search engines

Coveo	Elastic	IBM	Lucidworks	Microsoft	Mindbreeze	Sinequa	Other

User interface multi-language

Machine translation	**Pre-configured**	Editable	Right to left script supported	**Other***

*Azure translation and DeepL for automated translation.

Content multi-language

Machine translation for publishers	**Machine translation for end users**	Editable machine translation for publishers	Manual creation for publishers	Right to left script	Other

Set-up and support

Set-up process for new clients

A 1-2 week implementation that usually includes one 30-minute call with IT to allow list IP addresses and point DNS; then another 1 hour training call for users with the account management team.

Current version

Demonstrated to ClearBox: N/A

At January 2025: N/A

Product updates

Minor updates daily; major updates every month.

Product update process

Most new features are rolled out to all customers immediately. Occasionally the vendor will beta test new features with a small number of customers for a few weeks before a broader public release. The vendor says they do also allow customers to opt out of some releases (like AI related features) if they choose.

Reverse-out options

Customer data will be removed from the vendor's system within 90 days after a contract ends (or earlier if they request).

Technical support

Email support	Phone support	Chat support	Online portal	24/7 support	Office hours only

User community

The vendor runs the CommsChat community on LinkedIn.

Voice of the vendor

Workshop says: "Workshop is an email-first internal communications platform that empowers teams to engage with employees, streamline their workflow, and measure their success. Unlike generic email tools or big, drawn-out intranet deployments, Workshop is easy to use, scalable, and works with your existing channels—helping you make a huge impact without overhauling your entire internal communications system. Workshop is designed specifically for internal communication professionals, with unique features that make it easy to engage employees and prove your value to leadership:

- Drag-and-drop email builder: Create polished, on-brand emails in minutes—no coding or designers required. With an intuitive editor, even the busiest teams can quickly deliver better, more engaging communications.
- Automatic distribution lists: We sync with your best source of employee data so your distribution lists are always up-to-date.
- Advanced analytics: Go far beyond open rates to track engagement across different departments, roles, locations, and more.
- Streamlined workflows: Use a shared communications calendar, campaign analytics, and set up roles and permissions to help your team scale beyond single sends or patchwork processes.
- Flexible integrations: Workshop works alongside your existing tools, so you can meet employees where they already work—whether it's in Sharepoint, Teams, Slack, or on their mobile devices.
- Personalisation: Segment rows of your emails for different audiences, translate your content, and add merge tags to make sure your internal comms are always relevant and impactful.
- Fun and engaging features: Add pulse surveys, connect with Canva, rewrite your subject lines with AI...we're always adding new ways you can elevate your communications and create comms that employees will be excited to read.

Hundreds of internal communication teams trust Workshop to modernise their strategy and simplify their workflows, from local bank branches to Fortune 100 companies. As one communications manager shared: "Workshop is really easy to use and intuitive. I use it multiple times a day—it's one of my always open tabs! I was very quickly able to get up to speed on how to use Workshop and was building emails within minutes. The analytics are incredibly useful and we're able to prove the success of what we're doing back to the business."

You may also be interested in...

Contact Monkey poppulo Sociabble

Back to index

Workspace365

FULLY STANDALONE

REQUIRES SHAREPOINT

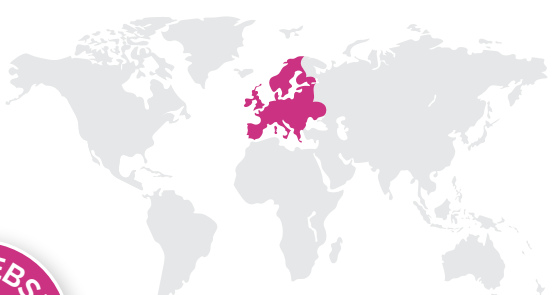
FRONTLINE FOCUS

OTHER

Typical deployment:

Less than 1,000

Company locations:



VISIT THE WEBSITE

The product in a nutshell

Workspace 365 provides a simple dashboard experience that brings together information from across the digital workplace.

CLEARBOX VIEW

Workspace 365 was launched in 2010 by a Netherlands-based vendor. At its core is a focus on simplification, aiming to reduce the task-switching cost of employees moving between different applications by integrating common services. The interface is clean and there is a good range of functionality that's easy to use.

Navigation is provided via a persistent left bar with icons for each intranet area, including 'Spaces', 'The Hub', 'Documents', 'email' and 'Calendar'. Clicking on an icon opens another navigation pane displaying the structure within each area. For example, opening The Hub reveals 'Announcements' for news, 'Events' and a 'Knowledge Base' with another level of navigation underneath each of those three. These icons and the overall navigation aren't configurable, so the structure is less flexible than other products we've seen. There is a degree of crossover between Spaces, The Hub and Documents that we think could be confusing, too.

'Spaces' provide dashboard style pages which are useful for collating resources, such as those used by departments like Sales. Spaces pages are built by using tiles to create organised layouts; tiles present information held within Workspace 365 or from integrations with many systems. For example, we like the simple tile that shows people's upcoming birthdays within a team, while a PowerBI tile pulls through dynamic dashboards. Tile integrations are largely 'read-only' or provide single sign-on access to systems, with a helpful 'outage' setting to pause links where the source system is closed for maintenance. Spaces and individual tiles can be restricted to specific audiences and, with the ability to include guest users, Spaces can provide onboarding portals.

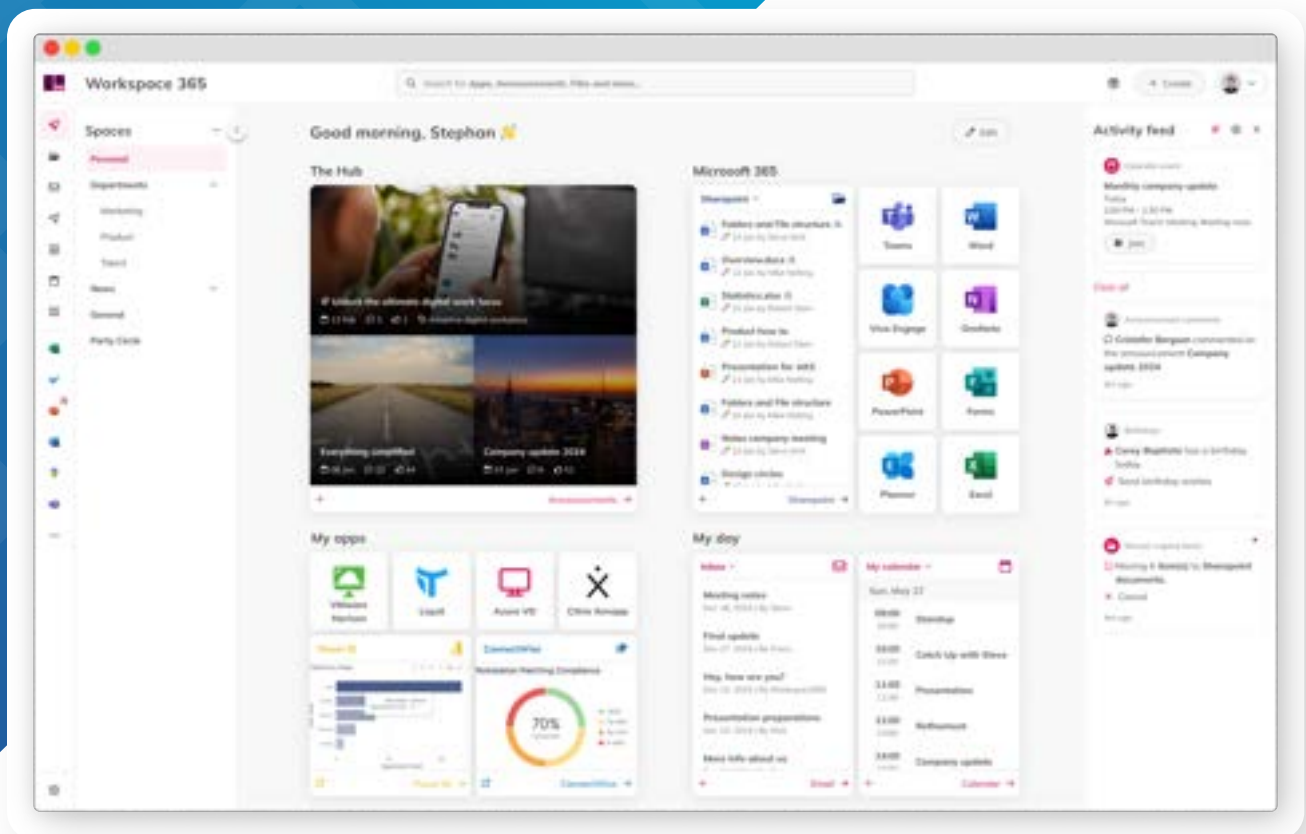
In The Hub, 'Announcements' can be created very quickly using pre-configured templates, or the publisher may set up a grid with associated 'elements' (text, image, video embed etc.). Audiences are built by adding individuals to 'categories', which are then applied to the Announcement. Currently there's no approval workflow or ghost authoring functionality. There is an API available to push content onto digital screens and an integration to feed SharePoint news into Workspace 365 if desired. There is also an integration to present Viva Engage within Workspace 365.

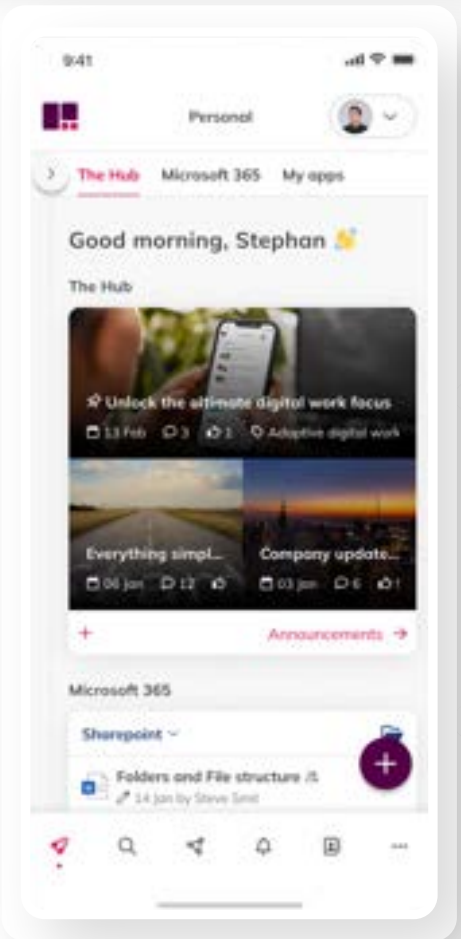
'Events' and 'Knowledge Bases' are built using the same approach as Announcements. 'Documents' is where locally uploaded files and integrated document libraries are found in a folder structure. OneDrive and SharePoint are currently supported, along with a file server integration feature, which incorporates Microsoft Office Editors (and may require Microsoft licenses).

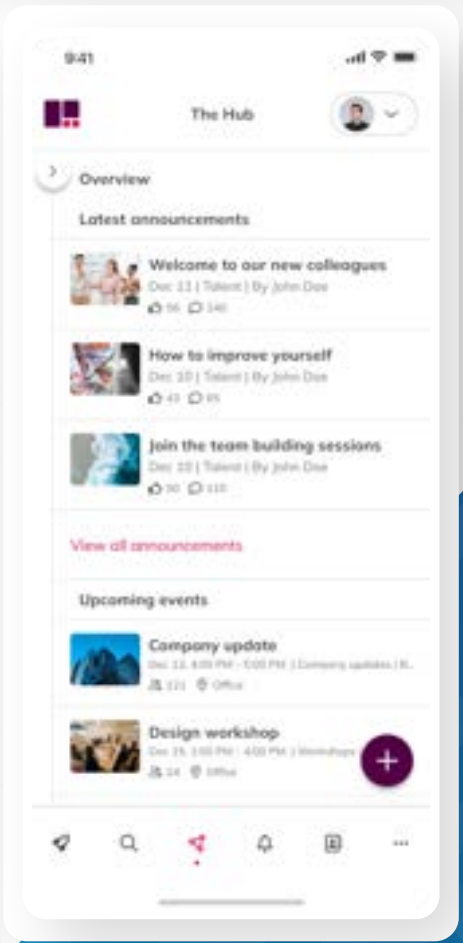
The global search is persistent and federates external sources such as Google Drive alongside Workspace 365 content. Suggestions are presented as someone types, and results are split by content area, although there aren't any other refiners. Local searches within tiles and other areas are particularly valuable. This is complemented with an 'Activity Feed' on the right-hand side, providing access to notifications and actionable content, aiding findability.

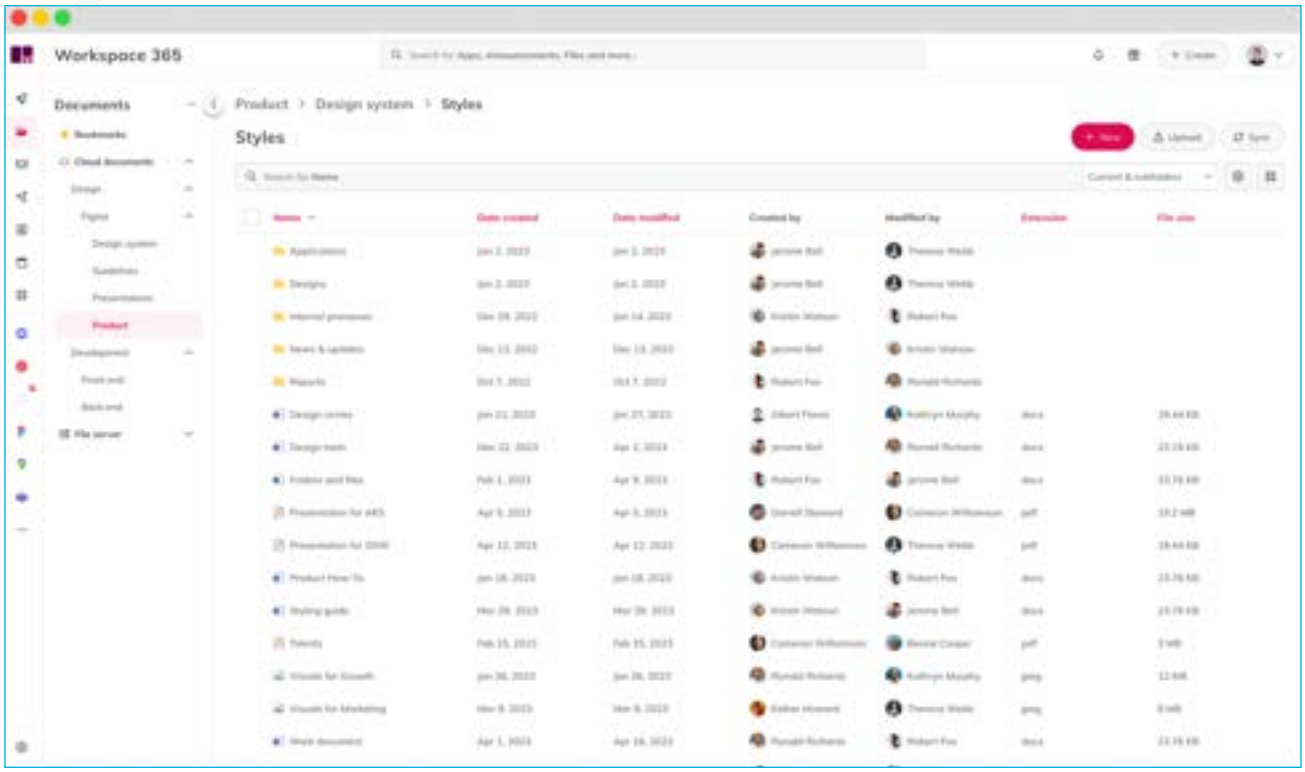
The mobile app is a wrapper for the browser site and does a good job of creating a responsive mobile experience. There is a useful QR code approach to help users access the mobile app initially. For frontline workers, 'email' is useful as it displays an integrated Outlook email experience. 'Calendar' displays different Outlook calendar sources, which also allows employees to join online events. These tools may not be readily available for the frontline otherwise and so are helpful here. When the calendar integrates with rota systems (which is on the roadmap), it'll be even more valuable.

Some elements that organisations are likely to expect are missing, such as automatic translations, or are limited, such as communications support and analytics. Workspace 365 is therefore easy to use but quite simple, providing value in its focus as a starting point or shortcut for many business systems. It is at the higher end of our pricing, yet we believe it has enough to offer to be of interest to small and medium-sized organisations looking for a simple intranet product. There is a lot on the roadmap, and we think it has the potential to be a more well-rounded solution in future.

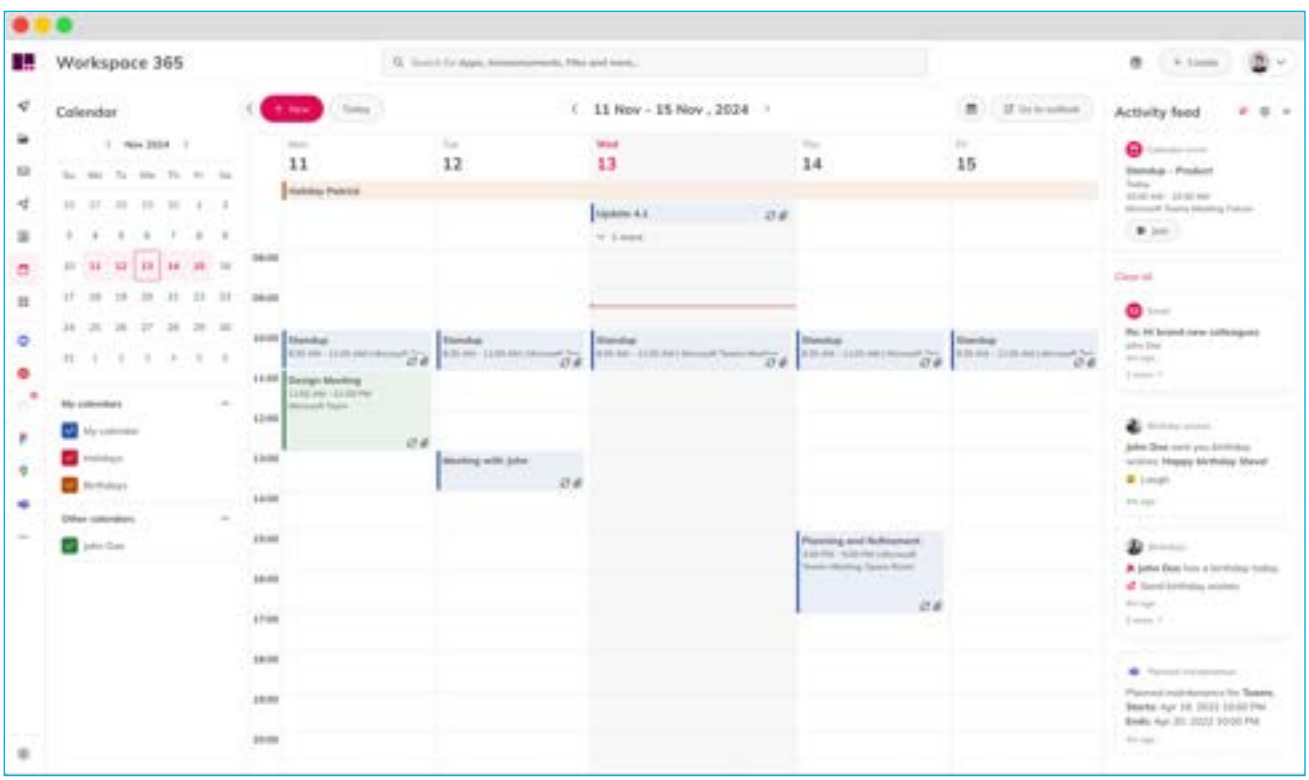

Workspace 365
Spaces
Good morning, Stephan
The Hub
Microsoft 365
Activity feed
My apps
My day


9:41
Personal
The Hub
Microsoft 365
My apps
Good morning, Stephan
The Hub
Unlock the ultimate digital work focus
Everything simpl...
Company update...
Announcements
Microsoft 365
Sharepoint
Folders and File structure

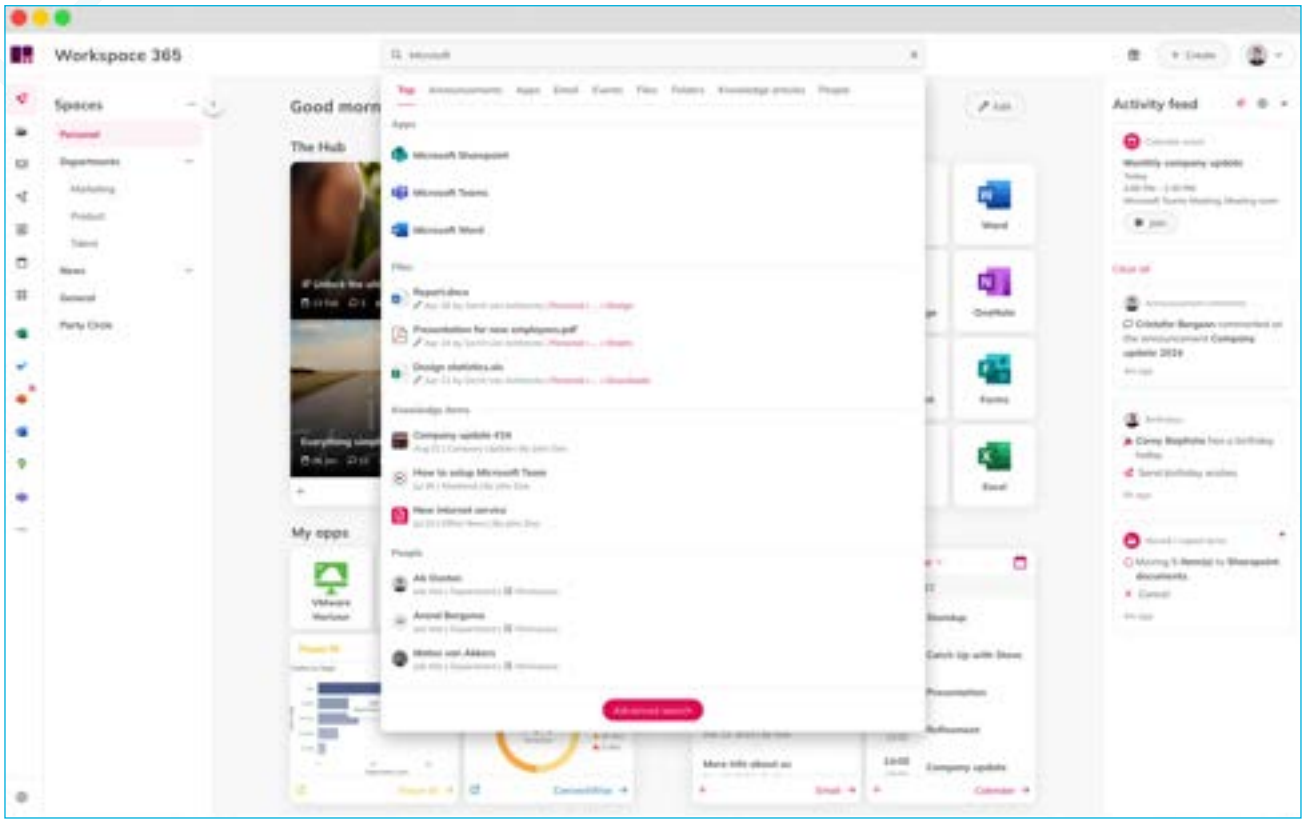

9:41
The Hub
Overview
Latest announcements
Welcome to our new colleagues
How to improve yourself
Join the team building sessions
View all announcements
Upcoming events
Company update
Design workshop



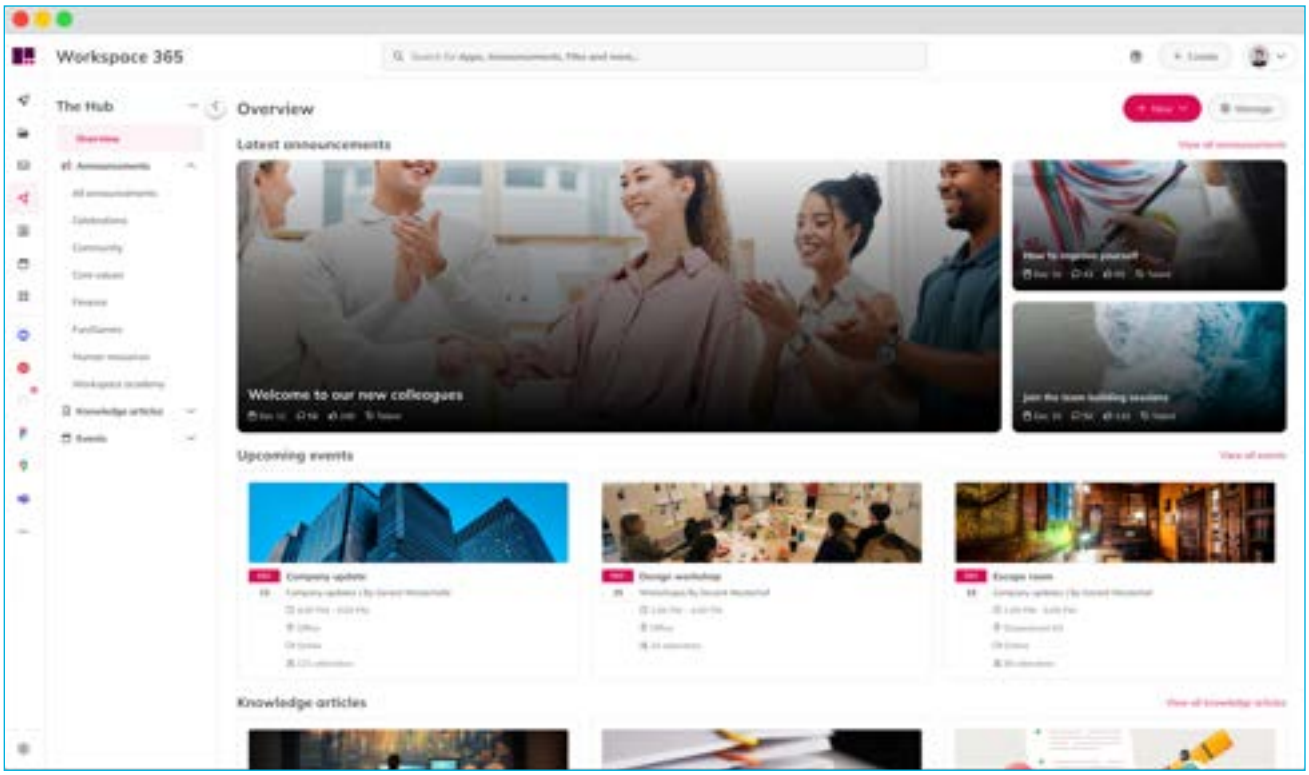
Documents are presented in folders with search features and preview images.



'Calendar' integrates with one or many Outlook calendars.



The search federates content from external sources as well as within Workspace 365.



The Hub is where people will find Announcements, Events and the Knowledge Base.

Pricing

PRICE BAND	
1,000 users	$$$$$
5,000 users	$$$$$
20,000 users	$$$$$
50,000 users	$$$$$

These prices are indicative, offering a comparison of the products featured in this report only. Please contact the vendor for a bespoke quote.

PRICING MODEL

Subscription – price per user per month.

DISCOUNTS

Charities and non-profit organisations; schools and educational institutes; government / public sector; multi-year commitments; customers only pay for active users.

COSTS TYPICALLY

Slightly higher at the start of the term, but generally spread.

PRICE INCLUDES

Updates and support are included in the licenses.

Product type

Ready-to-run, installed in hours

Branding opportunities

All branding, complex options

Base systems

Fully standalone

Requires SharePoint

Other

Sectors

Charity and voluntary work

Healthcare

Information technology

Public services, government and administration

Teaching and education

COMPANY AND PRODUCT

Company details

Company
Workspace 365

ISO 27001 certified
Yes

Data residency
Australia; Europe (including UK); USA. Other regions are possible but not yet deployed.

Company founded
2010

Product launched
2010

Typical client size
Less than 1,000

Largest deployment so far
10,000

Customers
Clients include: AllerDale, Cedergroep, Faber Group, Groevenbeek, Larkmead, Vivantes, Waardeburgh. Please see their website for more.

Partner locations
Please visit their website for details.

Company locations
Nijkerk, Netherlands (HQ); UK

Product and technical details

Name of product

Workspace 365

Deployment

Client on-premises	Client private cloud	Microsoft Azure	Amazon Web Services	Vendor-hosted	Microsoft 365 tenant	Google Cloud	Other

Authentication supported

Entra ID	ADFS	Okta	Open ID	Oauth	G Suite	Other

App deployment

Google Play store	Apple store	MDM	MAM	Other

Accessibility

Not WCAG 2.1 conformant. Keyboards can be used for navigation; light / dark theme and contrast colours are automatically calculated by the WCAG AA; font sizes and letter spacings according to WCAG. The vendor says they are working on WCAG 2.1 AA implementation now.

Document library sources integrated

Box	Dropbox	Google Drive	SharePoint	OneDrive	Other*

*Any other can be linked to the search where an API is available.

Optional integrated enterprise search engines

Coveo	**Elastic**	IBM	Lucidworks	**Microsoft**	Mindbreeze	Sinequa	Other

User interface multi-language

Machine translation	**Pre-configured**	Editable	Right to left script supported	Other

Content multi-language

Machine translation for publishers	Machine translation for end users	Editable machine translation for publishers	**Manual creation for publishers**	Right to left script	Other

Set-up and support

Set-up process for new clients

The Workspace 365 setup process begins with a consultation to assess client needs, followed by a one-click configuration (as a fully SaaS-based product, no installation process is required). After setup there is a consulting period to customise the workspace and integrations. Training and support are provided throughout, along with regular updates and maintenance.

Current version

Demonstrated to ClearBox: 4.16

At January 2025: 4.20

Product updates

Major updates every month.

Product update process

Product releases are rolled out every 3 weeks for all hosted customers. Self-hosted customers may install the update when they wish.

Reverse-out options

When the subscription ends, all personal data is deleted by or on behalf of the vendor within 30 days of the last day of the subscription term. This may be different only for personal data which is retained for legal purposes.

Technical support

Email support	Phone support	Chat support	Online portal	24/7 support	Office hours only

User community

The vendor is in regular contact for observations, user testing, A/B testing and workshops.

Voice of the vendor

Workspace 365 says: "At Workspace 365, our goal is to be the central hub for employees, simplifying their digital environment so they can focus on the high-value tasks that truly make an impact. Our solution unifies all aspects of the digital workplace—applications, social intranet, and document management—into a single, customisable interface. By tailoring the digital workspace to individual needs, we provide a personalised experience that delivers everything employees need, whenever, wherever, and however they choose to work.

- In business to simplify work-life - At Workspace 365, we envision a simpler work life where technology empowers rather than overwhelms. Born out of a need to reduce IT complexity, our founders, Erik and Hans, recognised the frustration many people face juggling numerous apps, documents, devices, and passwords. Since 2010, we have grown from our Dutch roots in Spakenburg to bustling offices in Nijkerk and Manchester (UK), evolving our adaptive digital workplace to embrace the latest technology and AI.
- Everything in one place - We love IT but we firmly believe that it is people who truly make the difference. While IT plays a significant role in our daily work lives, it should not be a source of complexity and frustration. That's why we're dedicated to redefining the digital workplace by simplifying access, communication, and workflows— making daily tasks simpler, and creating a more fulfilling work experience for everyone.
- Simplified access - We centralise access to all apps, documents, and information in one place. We make it easy to connect legacy systems with the cloud, boosting user productivity anytime, anywhere. With tools like Citrix, ClientlessRDP, Azure Virtual Desktop, Fileserver, VMware, and Liquit, we offer flexibility and efficiency without compromising security.
- Simplified communication - We enhance communication by providing features like The Hub, SharePoint, Viva Engage integrations, an Address Book Centre, and other intranet functionalities. These tools help strengthen the connection between employees, and promote effective information sharing and collaboration.
- Simplified workflows - We streamline processes by offering approvals and updates in a single overview. Our Smart Global Search feature enables efficient searches, and we leverage Open APIs to connect all apps to a unified interface. With integrations like TOPdesk, OpenIMS, Egnyte, and more, we simplify information flows and increase employee efficiency."

You may also be interested in...

diggspace Haiilo JALIOS

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SECTION FOUR

INDUSTRY TRENDS AND HOW TO CHOOSE A PRODUCT

Section Four:
Industry Trends And How To Choose A Product

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Need help choosing a new intranet?
We can help - please get in touch and one of the team will get back to you.

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CLEARBOX CHOICES AWARDS

Each year we select a small number of platforms we feel are likely to be present on many peoples' shortlists. This isn't because of hype, trends, or well-spent marketing – but because we believe they stand out in an already strong market. We consider a number of factors – including scores, pricing, innovative features, having a progressive roadmap, customer feedback – and the choice is always difficult.

Congratulations to the winners and thank you again to all vendors that participate in this report. Every single one stands out in its own way and we still maintain there are no "best" platforms, only those that best suit an individual organisation's needs the best.

Blink.

Blink impresses us with their dedication to frontline workers. The vendor not only offers a mobile experience that clearly understands this audience's needs, but they deliver boots-on-the-ground service that's rare in this industry. Yes, parts of the desktop experience are simpler than other solutions we've reviewed, but for organisations with clear mobile requirements, Blink stands out.

FRESH

Fresh does a great job of sticking closely to SharePoint and Microsoft features, yet provides excellent capabilities that enhance the experience. It is particularly strong in news and content management and provides good support for communities as well. We also felt the use of AI for search and information management was among the stronger examples we saw, and we look forward to seeing what comes next.

interact

Interact is the highest scoring independent intranet solution this year and performs well in all scenarios, making it an excellent all-rounder. It delivers a strong user experience and internal communicators will particularly appreciate the features on offer, which we felt could deliver almost everything a communicator may want.

oak engage

Oak Engage offers an impressive range of features, and it stands out with its overall ease of use which delivers a superb employee experience. The community features are particularly strong, delivering capabilities that prove how valuable communities of knowledge can still be for organisations. We also like the AI-driven content delivery system, helping communicators reach people in the most appropriate ways and at the best time.

Omnia is the highest scoring SharePoint intranet-in-a-box platform this year, replacing the SharePoint front-end while preserving the power of Microsoft behind the scenes. The experience for all users is excellent, while practical features such as the search and integrations with business systems are particularly noteworthy.

Unily was among the highest scoring products this year, with numerous stand-out features. Community capabilities and information finding is among the best we've seen across all platforms. We appreciate the thought that has gone into integrations with business systems and think the 'bring your own AI' approach offers some really exciting possibilities in the near future.

Honourable mentions

The Choices decision was so difficult this year that we decided to award some 'honourable mentions'. These three were close behind the winners, with only small reasons as to why they didn't quite make it into the full Choices list. We felt they were worth flagging, as they may well form part of many peoples' shortlist too.

Involv is a platform we've celebrated for a number of years and we still think it's a solid choice for organisations looking to expand the SharePoint offering and at a competitive price point. The number of features has grown, but competition is fierce and it was just beaten to the finish line by other SharePoint-based products. We must commend the user experience however, which makes Involv a delight to interact with.

MangoApps offers a huge range of features and is doing some quite exciting things with AI. In fact, we think the automatically generated answers in search provides among the best experiences we've seen. We'd really like to see the interface and design options evolve, then it would be a real powerhouse in this market. It's still an excellent shortlist choice even now.

Staffbase offers an incredible range of internal communications features and excellent analytics to back it up. It's also among the best scoring products in our entire report, with search and information management being its only real area of weakness. It's an excellent platform and we think it will grace many organisations' shortlists.

SCENARIO DEFINITIONS AND FINDINGS

We evaluated each product in our full reviews against the eight scenarios detailed below. We don't dictate a long list of specific features, but instead outline common employee needs. We then ask the vendors to demonstrate how they would address the scenarios in whatever way they see as the best approach. In a lot of cases, we know that not all organisations will want everything we expect to see in a scenario. We believe in giving people choices though, so we highlight missing and poorly implemented features where products don't fulfil scenario expectations.

Additionally, our reviewers have expanded four scenarios in each review, adding detail around the standout features and including images to illustrate the functionality.

Scenario 1: User experience and visual appeal

What we explored

We wanted to see the overall experience of using the product from an end-user's perspective. This not only included the branding / look-and-feel that can be achieved with the site, but how people may choose to consume the content. This scenario explored:

- The overall quality of the user experience, such as whether notifications are easy to find and whether the interface is contemporary in its approach.
- How easily users can navigate through the site using well-structured menus, targeted menu options, and visual cues.
- Whether the branding options are flexible, without any platform constraints or issues with upgrades applied at a later point. The overall visual impact of the product was also considered here.
- What support was offered for businesses that may want sub-brands, such as where part of the organisation has a distinct identity (for example PlayStation within Sony) or where a business may want to reflect multiple locations (such as Hilton in Las Vegas vs Hilton in Paris).

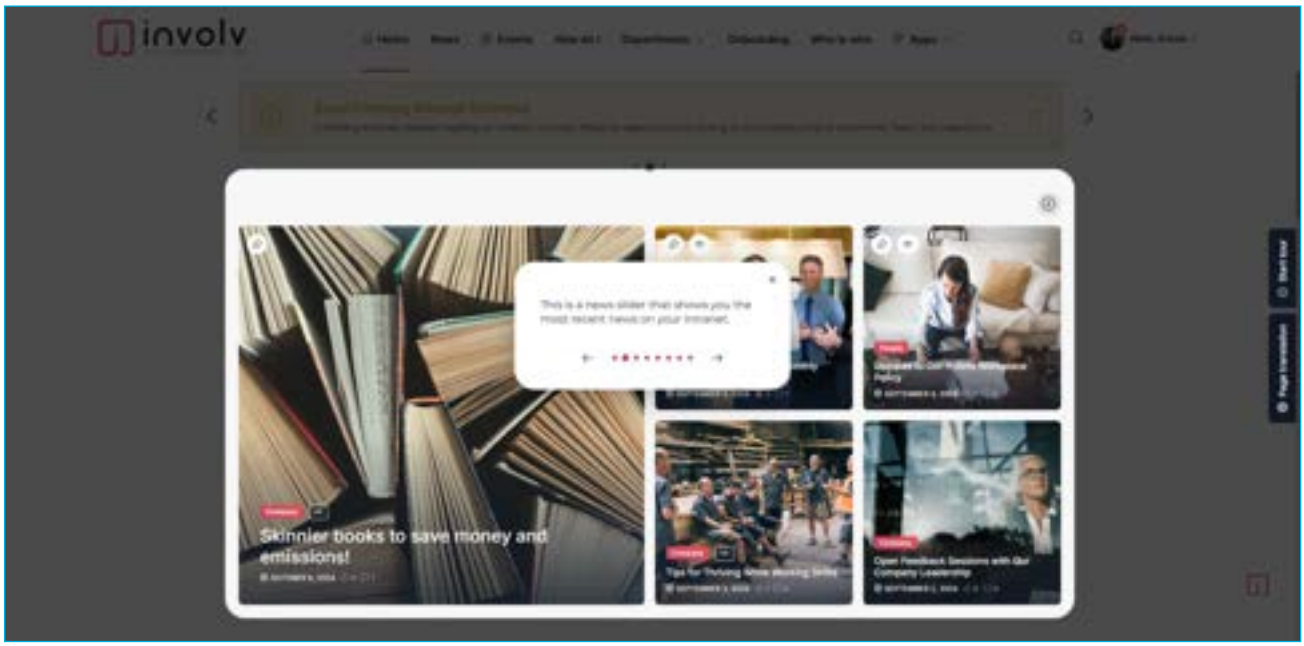
What we found

It's very unusual for the platforms we review to deliver a poor user experience. If we find a product delivers a particularly poor experience, we typically don't invite them to participate in subsequent reports, which means the average score for this scenario is high at 3.9 out of 5. We will highlight where something is clunky or doesn't behave as we'd expect though. Likewise, most products are easy to use but the comprehensiveness of the platforms varies and has an impact on the user experience – we have commented on this where it is evident.

It's then in the nuances of this scenario where we see real differences. For example, most products support multi-brand organisations, however to what extent branding or other design choices are offered does vary. Many products offer simple logos and colours, while a few offer highly flexible design choices that result in tailored and very attractive sites, such as Akumina. Most fall somewhere in between, giving some semblance of design options while not being fully flexible.

Navigation is another area where product approaches vary. Most offer some form of multi-level navigation, such as a mega menu, while a few have simpler single-level navigation. A handful have navigation that's not configurable, in that they reflect pre-defined spaces such as 'pages' or 'communities' that display lists of what sub-spaces people can access. While this approach

works well it may not meet the needs of those who want greater control. Since last year we've seen a greater number of products with 'welcome tour' features, which help employees orientate themselves with the platform. In some cases, this only shows off the platform's capabilities, but the best are configurable and help employees get to grips with the way the organisation is using the software, not just what button does what.



Involv includes a configurable welcome tour for the main home page and subsequent department sites.

Everyone's user experience is important, and we're pleased to see more vendors addressing accessibility standards to meet more peoples' needs. This year, 23 of those products reviewed are WCAG 2.1 AA conformant, which is an increase from last year but there is still work to be done. Powell Intranet, Involv, Interact, OneSource and Lightspeed365 offer particularly good accessibility features. Many of those who aren't conformant have processes in place to address accessibility, so we recommend you contact vendors to discuss these needs.

The final area of nuance in this scenario surrounds notifications. This sounds minor, but when you consider even Outlook has its own notification bell now, there is a great risk of overwhelming employees if these aren't carefully thought through. Most products do an OK job with notifications, but we'd like to see more capabilities like 'save for later' added so that people can manage their activities more effectively.

How SharePoint and Viva fared in this scenario

From a user point of view, modern SharePoint is capable of some very attractive page designs that use images, space and highlights effectively and generally the experience is good. However, navigation in SharePoint can be a challenge overall, as can navigation when one application is embedded within another (such as SharePoint within Teams via Viva Connections). Notifications are either missing, email-based, or spread in different applications and we'd like to see a more coherent approach. It's easy to apply simple branding and more is on Microsoft's roadmap, but it's tricky to apply consistency throughout the intranet without a third-party tool.

Scenario 2: Publishing and communications management

What we explored

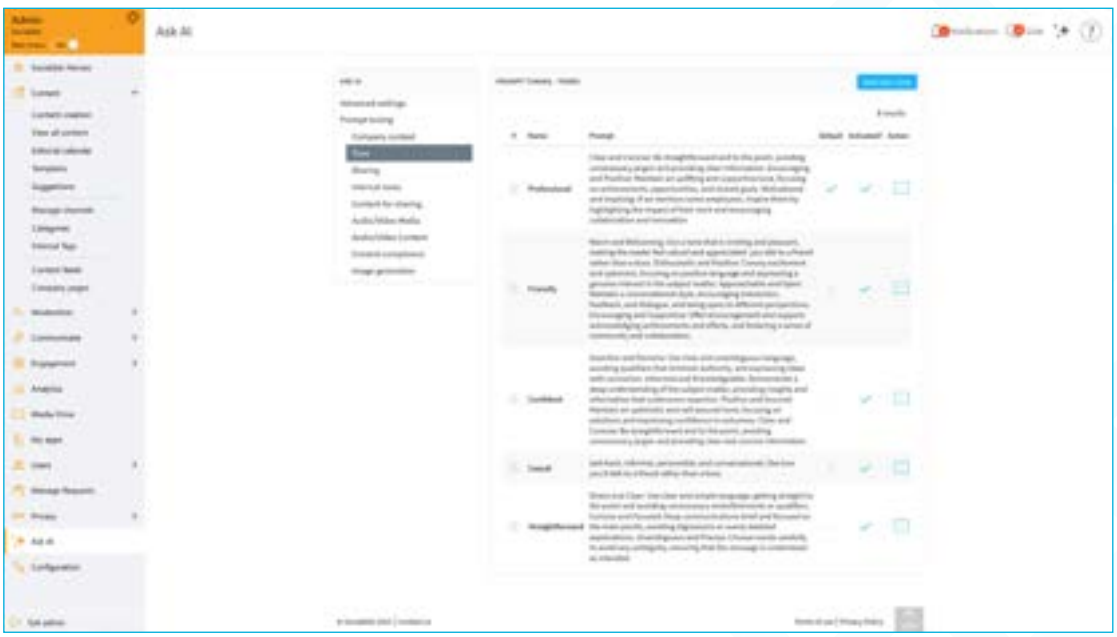
Internal communicators will often rely on these platforms to reach their audiences, so we wanted to see what tools were available to help them create and manage the flow of news to appropriate audiences. This included different news types, crisis communications, and ways of reaching people beyond the given platform. We tested:

- What tools were available to build appealing and effective content using a range of media, as well as how easy this experience was.
- How content could be dynamically and flexibly targeted to individuals or groups, and whether individuals could also opt in or out of channels.
- What tools were available to manage the quality of content, such as publication workflow settings, as well as the flow of articles, for example a news calendar.
- Ways messages could be published in one place but reach audiences wherever they may be, such as through digital signage.

What we found

We've seen an evolution of these platforms over the past couple of years, where many vendors have focused on internal communications teams as core product owners or stakeholders. While internal comms has been important for a long time, we've seen a shift in the functionality on offer so that these platforms are addressing internal comms needs and challenges head-on. Given the importance of these platforms in organisations, we think this is sensible and have developed this scenario with these changes in mind.

For example, every product has some form of news creation process. We pay attention to the overall experience of creating articles and will highlight where something is comparatively weaker than other products. Ultimately, it's unusual for any product to do badly with this aspect. We've also seen the number of generative AI features increase in the past year, please see the AI Trends section for more on AI.



Sociabble includes configurable company context settings that allow organisations to define how generative AI is applied for their content, such as defining what 'Friendly' means.

Another area of this scenario that stands out is news flow management, such as through a calendar or Kanban board or something similar. This is still an area that's hit-and-miss; a few offer AI-driven news delivery, like Oak Engage, and the number that offer calendars etc. has increased in the past year. However, many products still rely on simple publication dates which we think is a shame. We expect that internal communicators will increasingly want news management features as additional channels are added (see below) and we hope to see this area expand across products.

Finally, there have been improvements to the range of external communication channels these products support, but this too is still inconsistent. Internal comms folk will likely have to manage multiple comms channels and having a tool that will allow them to 'create once' then share in many places is incredibly valuable. The number of products offering digital signage support and email digests or configurable newsletters has increased, but it's not unusual for platforms to only work with one or two additional channels rather than providing a good range of options. Staffbase and Unily both offer a number of capabilities, including an inbuilt newsletter tool, digital signage facilitation, and the ability to share into SharePoint, Slack and MS Teams. For vendors to truly serve the needs of internal comms teams, they will need to address multi-channel needs.

Unily's newsletter builder is flexible and helps communicators reach beyond the intranet.

How SharePoint and Viva fared in this scenario

It is easy with SharePoint to create a news story page, and straightforward to add images, videos and even charts. Viva Amplify offers 'Rewrite with Copilot' to support some generative AI needs, but it's simpler than other approaches we've seen and doesn't work on other SharePoint pages. News can be rolled up from other sites and targeted to show only stories tagged with metadata topics, but this is less powerful than matching those tags to an employee's profile. Audience targeting is completed via Entra ID (formerly Active Directory), which is likely to need the support from IT. Currently, news can be scheduled to publish on a pre-set date, but there is no site-wide way to plan or monitor this.

There's no 'alert' feature or ability to push out a notification, although many companies get around this with a suitably styled web part or by sending out emails from SharePoint. 'Boosting' news means it appears as an 'Activity' alert in Teams though. For cross-channel publishing, the Viva Amplify module includes a campaigns capability; news can be created as a series of 'broadcasts' around a campaign and then pushed out to specific M365 channels such as SharePoint, Outlook and Teams (Engage is on the roadmap). There is also an AI-generated email digest that will be automatically sent to employees' inboxes.

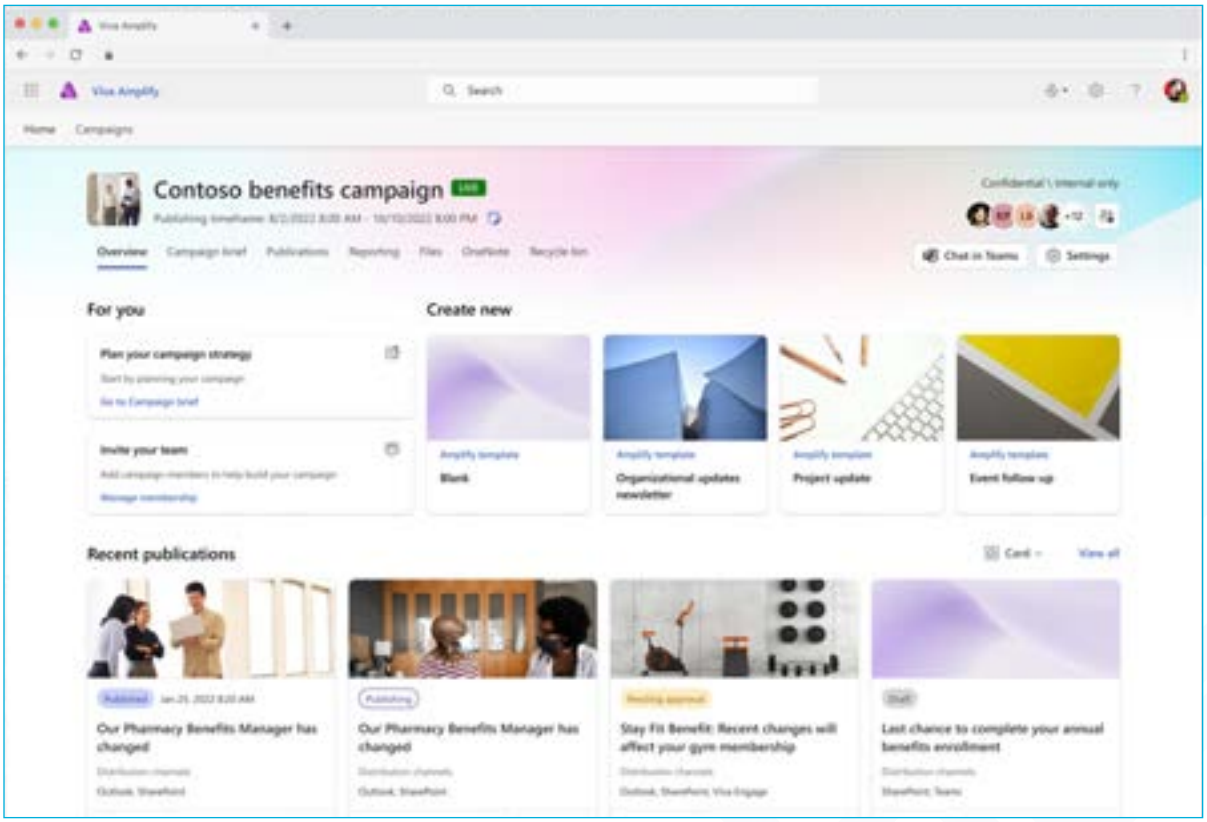


Image credit: Microsoft

Viva Amplify brings a centralised campaign capability for internal communicators wanting to broadcast to multiple channels.

Scenario 3: Community and engagement

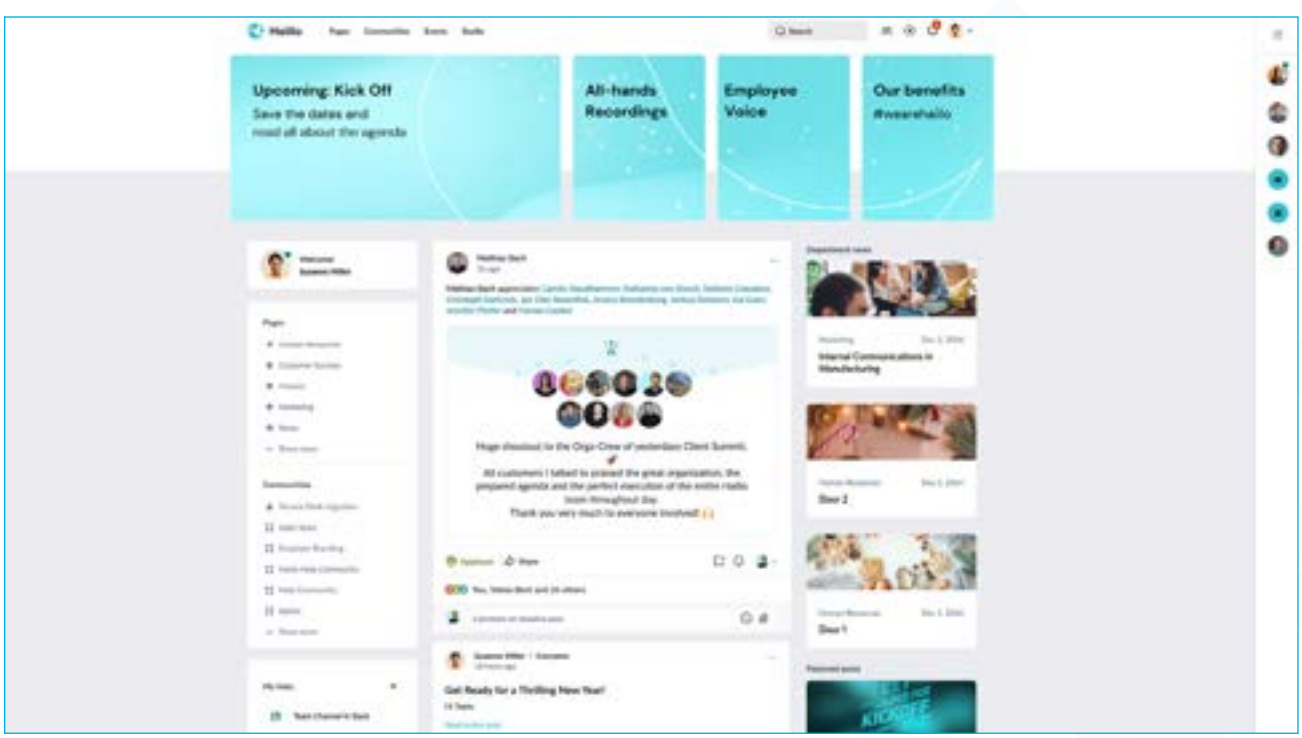
What we explored

To really engage employees, we need to give them a voice. We wanted to see how platforms facilitated dialogue with employees, the gathering of feedback, and the ability to take a 'temperature check'. Some of the best internal content can come from people sharing thoughts and generating ideas together, so we also looked at how internal communities were cultivated. We explored:

- How users could react or interact with content, such as through liking and commenting (including what moderation features were available).
- What social collaboration or communities of practice features were available, such as themed discussion boards, wikis, blogs, or activity feeds (similar to those that could be found on a social media site).
- How HR or internal communicators could gather thoughts and opinions, for example using surveys, polls, or ideation tools.
- What other 'people' oriented features were included to help encourage themes of wellbeing, engagement, and inclusion. This could include recognition schemes, mindfulness features, or onboarding processes.

What we found

In early-2024 Meta announced that it would be sunsetting its Workplace tool. As a result, vendors turned their attention to their social features and we've seen a bubble of new functionality here. A home page social feed was a big part of these introduced or refocused features. There's a risk that desktop environments can become very busy where there's a feed and multiple widgets, but the best solutions offer admins a choice of layout; Colibo and Haiilo are a couple of examples of products with good timeline approaches.



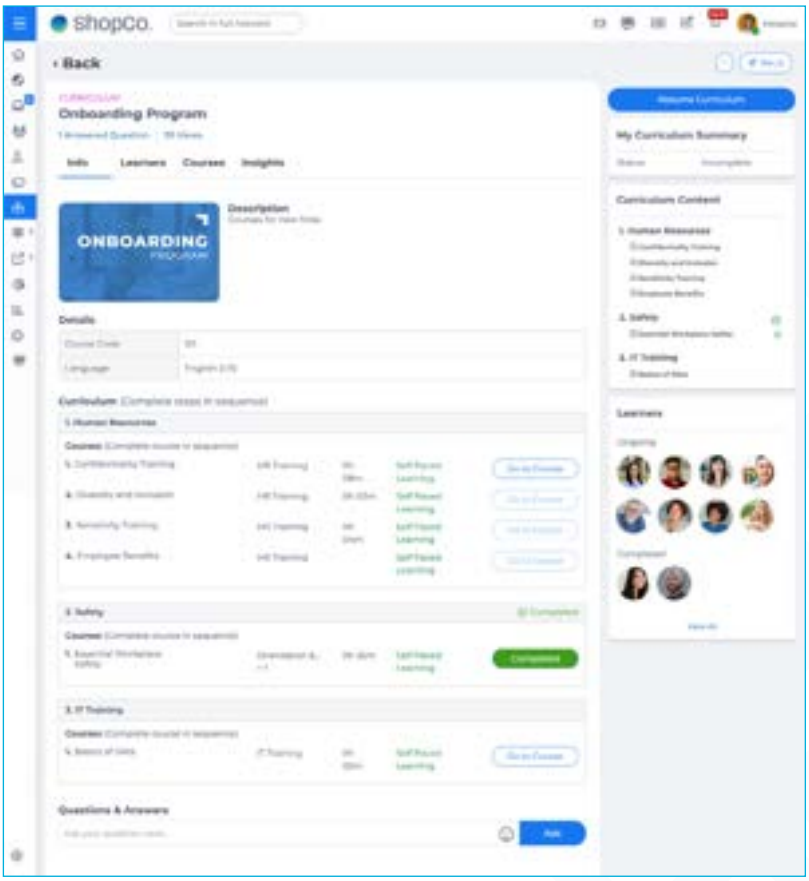
Haiilo includes a timeline-driven home page design that's supported by optional and configurable widgets.

Due to the prevalence in our personal lives, employees often look for social media inspired features in business tools. For example, gone are the days where a simple 'like' was enough, people now want to express their opinions but without having to add comments. More vendors have added multiple reaction types in the past year, but this is an area that could be improved. Another social media feature we've started to see is 'Stories' – short-form and highly visual posts that are often only live for a few days. Blink has a good example of these in place, with configurable / brandable stickers employees can add to their video or images.

A small number of vendors choose to rely on Microsoft applications to deliver community features, such as Viva Engage for social spaces or Forms for surveys. The summary of how SharePoint and Viva fared in this scenario is below, which helps add context. Understandably, the vendors that typically choose this approach are SharePoint intranet in-a-box products, although others will also optionally integrate with Microsoft applications.

Most independent products offer some form of native community or social features; this might be dedicated spaces such as 'Groups' in ThoughtFarmer or social elements that can be added where relevant across the intranet, such as Unily's 'Channels'. Overall, we were generally impressed with the community features that were on offer.

There are some good surveying tools across the products too, although the comprehensiveness of these does vary. This means some products, such as Haiilo, offer alternatives that are strong enough to replace dedicated tools like SurveyMonkey, while others provide simple approaches that would be helpful for quick surveying rather than an annual employee survey; for example. Microsoft Forms arguably falls into this latter category, as the way it presents results is quite restrictive.



MangoApps includes an in-built LMS that would be useful for organisations without a dedicated tool.

For organisations looking for 'people-focused' capabilities (e.g. mindfulness features, rewards and recognition, onboarding tools), there's a real mixed picture in the industry, where some vendors claim to have tools but in fact merely offer content approaches. These may include templates, but often are no different from any other departmental or community space. For example, providing a space for 'onboarding' new employees is common but tools to progress people through these early days (to do lists, workflows associated with activities etc.) is unusual.

Some vendors do offer excellent features that will improve employee engagement, however. For example, 'Journeys' step employees through processes such as annual reviews, parental leave, and onboarding, and these are slowly appearing in more tools. Staffbase, Unily, and Blink offer particularly good Journey features. Peer-to-peer recognition is becoming a more common tool too, appearing in nearly all products where we did a full review. Events (including livestreaming), micro-learning or even a full LMS, gamification and badges, wellbeing features, and company awards support are all examples we've seen in different products.

Overall, this scenario offers vendors an opportunity to expand their product's usefulness within an organisation, potentially removing the need (and associated complexity and expense) for additional engagement products. The areas we explore also bring heart and personality into these platforms, helping to present company culture to employees and making them tools people want to use. While social features won't be suitable for all organisations, the familiarity of the features will likely help with employee adoption.

How SharePoint and Viva fared in this scenario

Microsoft's primary tool for community and social engagement is Viva Engage (formerly Yammer), although the social side of SharePoint is weaker than rival platforms and Engage's evolution increasingly seems to be more about corporate comms. Engage provides a good option for communities of practice and more recently for individual creators via the 'Storyline' feature. Engage activity can be made more visible with SharePoint web parts that allow flexible embedding of groups, topics or even one person's posts into a page. 'Leaders' are particularly well supported and there are some interesting AI developments coming soon using Copilot. There is a polling function and surveys are supported via Forms, although interrogating results can be time consuming and lacks sophistication found in dedicated tools like SurveyMonkey.

Microsoft's play for the 'Wellbeing' dimension is Viva Insights, which includes a free element for employees while organisations may have to pay for additional features. Overall, we found Microsoft's approach fairly uneven in this scenario. There's a lack of cohesion across features, and this disjointedness can be challenging given the intent of this scenario to build a sense of community.

Scenario 4: Integrations and services (including M365)

What we explored

Digital workplaces are often a fragmented set of tools, so we wanted to see how the products helped simplify an employee's experience. For example, integrations with systems to reduce the number of sites, apps, or platforms someone must visit, which could be through links, iframes, or fuller integrations, and where an 'external' activity is brought through into the intranet. Additionally, the Microsoft suite is pervasive, and many companies want their intranet to work well alongside their M365 investment, even if they have chosen not to use SharePoint as a publishing platform. We explored:

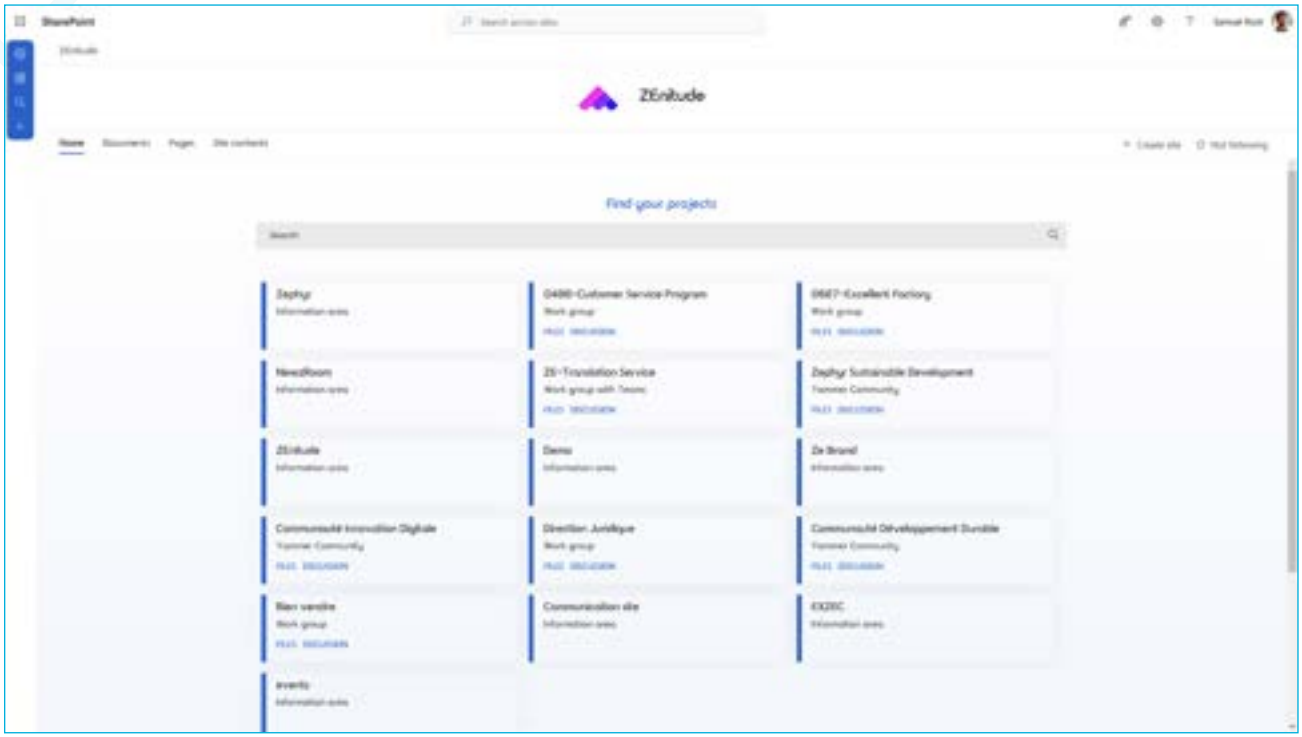
- How integrations with common enterprise systems, such as Salesforce, Workday, or Zendesk, were presented on the intranet. This could include dashboards, iframes, or actionable notifications, and we wanted to see the end user and administrator experience.
- How the products supported sources such as SharePoint, Google Drive, Dropbox and Box as cloud file sources to collaborate and share.
- What kinds of content could be integrated into the intranet product from SharePoint. For example, could users post into SharePoint news or show SharePoint news stories, or was there an overview of sites?
- How an integration worked with MS Teams, covering conversations, documents, and calls. MS Teams can generate a lot of notifications, so we wanted to see how these were handled too.
- How far Viva applications have been integrated, particularly Viva Engage and Viva Connections.

What we found

We're often told by vendors that this is a scenario where requirements can vary greatly from client to client. While we agree, we want to reflect how flexible or not products are when it comes to addressing these requirements. The average score here is 2.7 out of 5, which is low due to the prevalence of 'optional extra scores' that reflect the additional time and / or cost effort required here for organisations to achieve what they desire. The majority of products we've reviewed include open APIs for integrations, with some vendors providing pre-built integrations and others leaving it entirely open to clients to request bespoke developments. Some vendors, such as Oak Engage, offer developer portals or other support for admins to set up integrations from a suite of options.

The way these integrations are presented to the end-user also varies with many vendors choosing a view-only presentation of information, which we think is helpful if a little limited. In contrast, Akumina offers a good range of presentation options: links to source systems, dynamic dashboards that present data, notifications integrated alongside those from the intranet, timeline posts, and view-only or two-way integration widgets. Similarly, Appspace shows how far an intranet can be connected to the broader digital and physical workplace by displaying meeting room air quality and pushing messages to digital screens from within the same platform.

As you may expect, SharePoint intranet-in-a-box products typically integrate very well with M365 applications. As an example, Mozzaik have taken great care to develop their product to integrate fully with Microsoft's offer but added further functionality of their own; a searchable landing page for all projects works particularly well.



Mozzaik365 can create a searchable landing page for projects.

Across all products we generally saw good integrations with Teams, but integrations with other M365 applications varied in quality between products. Surprisingly, SharePoint integrations were missing or very basic in some products – given its strengths as a document management solution, we feel the quality of integrations here should be improved.

Overall, vendors tend to take a variety of approaches when it comes to integrations. As a result, this is an area where we'd urge you to identify exactly what your expectations are of the platform (do you want two-way integrations with key business systems for example) and of the vendor (do you want them to support with integration development?).

How SharePoint and Viva fared in this scenario

Integration between M365 applications is generally strong, but there are areas where SharePoint and Teams aren't integrated as tightly as you might expect. Multiple business systems have connectors that will work with the Viva Connections dashboard feature, and this offers the most direct integration with SharePoint. A second route is to use Power Apps, which can be embedded on a SharePoint page and made to work well on mobile too. The third possibility is the Office app store. Finally, there is the full-development route using APIs and SharePoint Framework (SPFx). These approaches offer simple or sophisticated integration options, and vary in terms of complexity to implement, so the support of IT or a technical partner will be needed.

Scenario 5: Information finding and search

What we explored

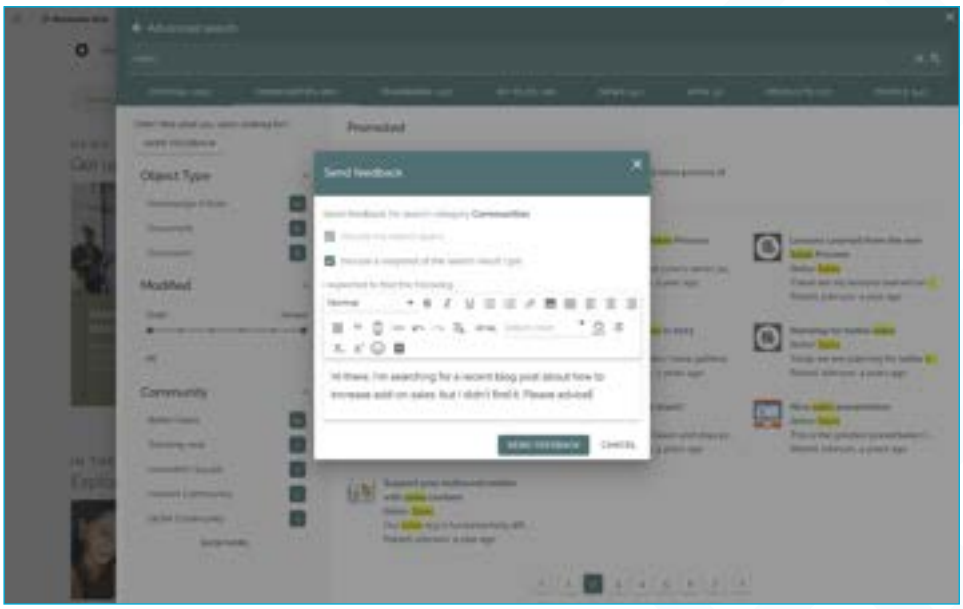
Finding information can be a challenge for users, not only within intranets but across the broader digital workplace. We wanted to see how the products approached findability and ease of information seeking. Some platforms support enterprise-wide search and we welcomed any demonstrations that went beyond the intranet. We wanted to see:

- What the search service and experience was like on the platform. This included clear and accurate results being returned, the potential to refine results dynamically, the indexing of content (documents in particular), and an attractive interface.
- How admins could influence results, such as through promoted results or topic tagging.
- Whether the search would federate content from some or all integrated systems.
- What the people search experience was like, again through clear and attractive results, plus a detailed organisation chart, and useful suggestions such as type-ahead or alternate spellings (Suzie – Susie – Susy – Suzy etc).

What we found

Whenever we speak with clients' employees, the search always comes up as an area needing improvement. Often this isn't associated with the technology behind the search, but sometimes platform decisions do make an impact – such as those products that are still missing simple features like search refiners. These vendors tend to argue that their search technology will automatically present the right result to people, but given search issues are usually associated with content problems we are sceptical of this response.

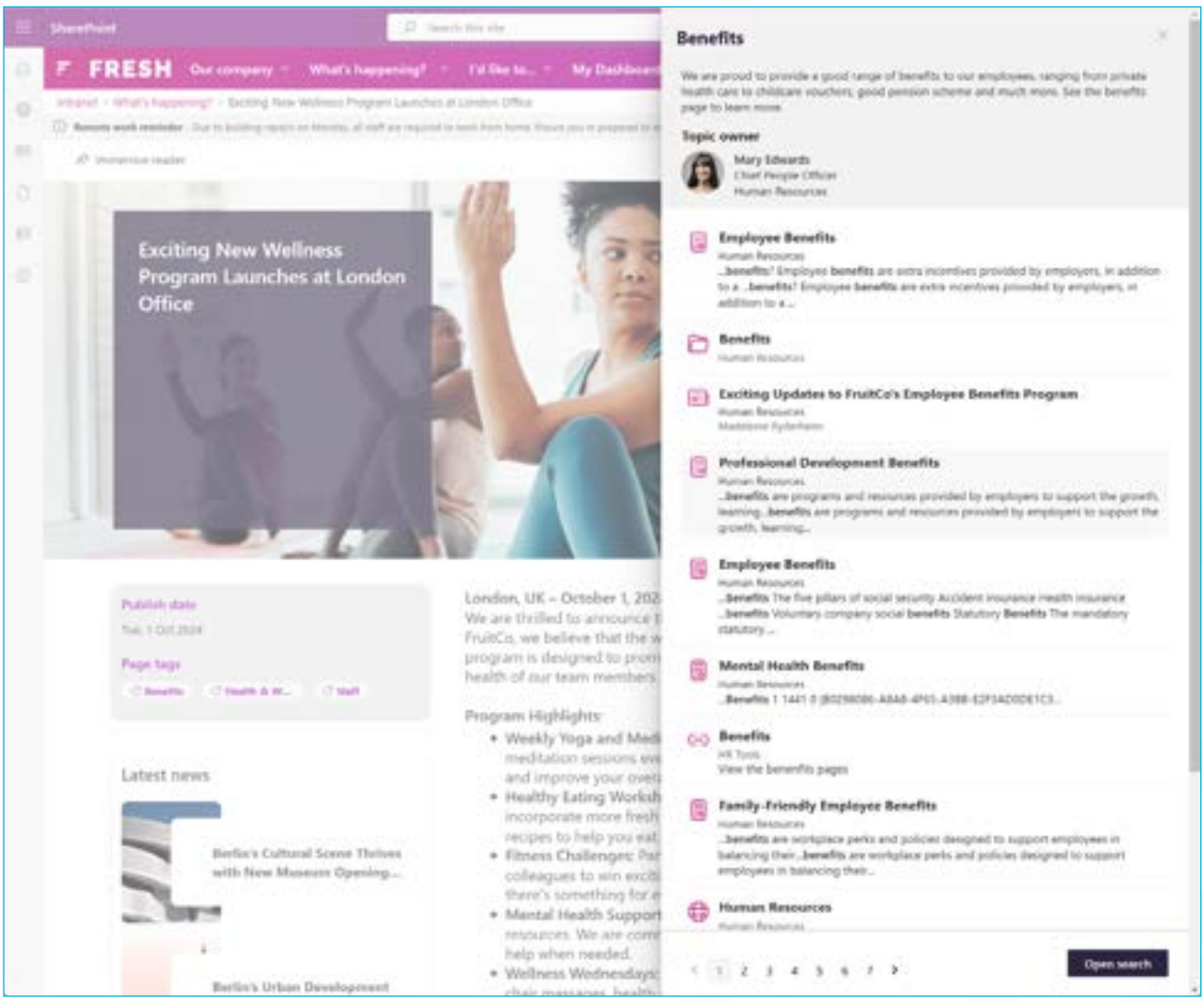
Search management tools, like promoted results / best bets, can give administrators greater control over search results to help present the right things to employees. However, the extent and / or effectiveness of these tools vary or are missing altogether from products we've seen. Conversely, Omnia, ThoughtFarmer and Unily provide an excellent range of search management features.



There is a dedicated Search Administrator role in Omnia, who will receive feedback from employees so they can improve the experience.

The people search experience is generally good across the products we've seen, with most allowing for any profile field to be searched. Some profile pages are more attractive than others though, with equally hit-and-miss org charts (with some products missing org charts altogether). Some products will allow employees to update their own profile fields, but we'd like to see more in-built features to encourage people to fill in their profile data.

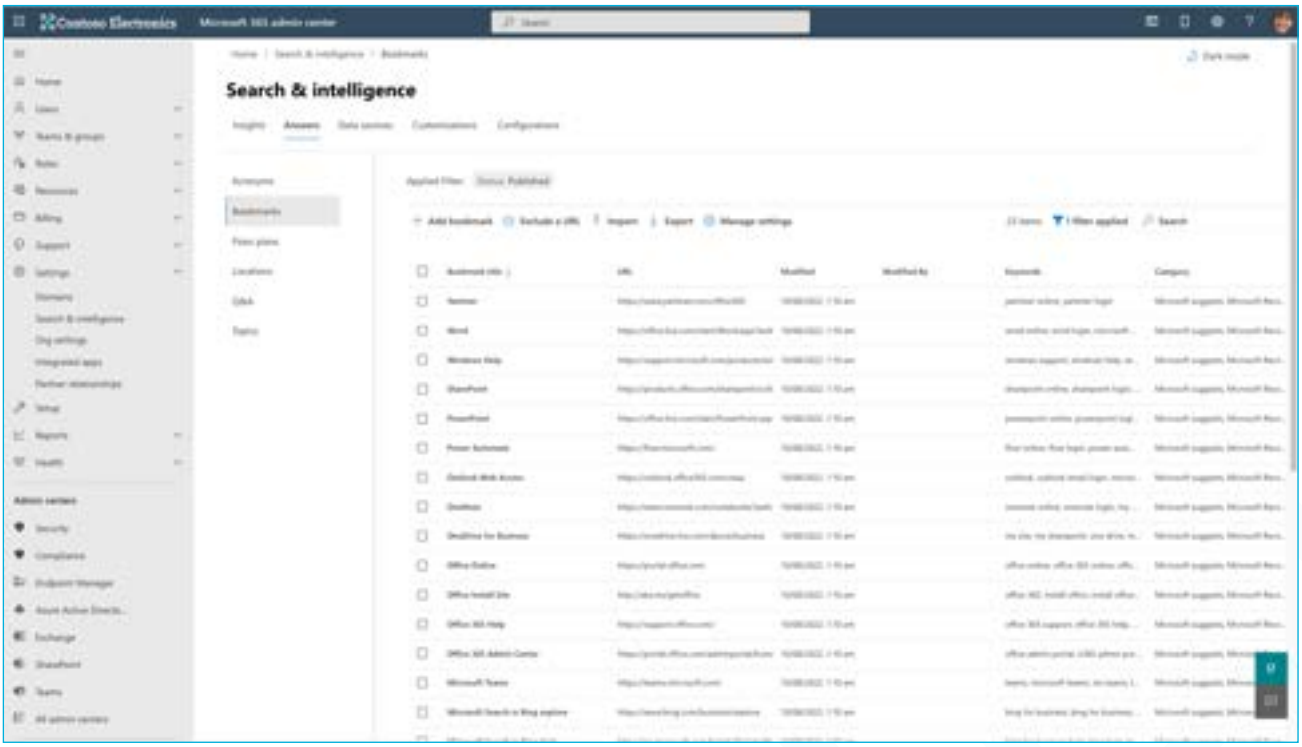
We've seen a lot of AI functionality developed over the past year in this area, which helps platforms expand their knowledge-finding offerings. This includes capabilities such as the auto generation of answers based on specified sources, chat interfaces for asking / answering questions, or the collation of information. As an example, Fresh has dedicated web parts to create a roll-up of content that relate to specific subjects (metadata) or are of a specific type, such as policies. The information can be located anywhere across the intranet in multiple sites and the web part will aggregate this information. Sophisticated 'assistants' such as Workgrid are less common but their approach of consolidating answers from multiple systems provides an excellent employee experience. Please see the AI Trends section for more on AI.



Tags defined as topics in Fresh are assigned an owner and description, and provide a rich method of navigation around related information.

How SharePoint and Viva fared in this scenario

Microsoft Search provides the search experience across M365 applications and is very powerful. Content across the Microsoft ecosystem is indexed and federating into other business systems is possible with some development work. There are sophisticated search management tools, including metadata and 'bookmarks' (promoted results), which are likely to need IT to administer. A 'Q&A' feature intelligently presents likely answers to people. People search is good for individual results (a nice contact card and smart spelling correction). We expect to see this area progress significantly as Microsoft's Copilot product evolves, and Copilot agents are a very exciting development here.



SharePoint search admins can assist some search types by defining acronyms, bookmarks, floor plans and Q&A.

Scenario 6: Administrator experience

What we explored

It's important for all users to have a good experience when working with an intranet, particularly where there is a decentralised model to intranet management. We therefore wanted to see how easy it was for administrators and publishers to manage the site as a separate experience from end-users. This scenario explored:

- The different menus and options that were open to admins and how complex tasks were made easier..
- What tools were available to build or configure the home page(s) and / or other landing pages. We wanted to see features such as templates, a variety of web parts / widgets, and elements to help such as info buttons.
- Mechanisms for managing content life cycles with easy ways for people (including devolved content owners and publishers) to update content and / or associated dates.
- How multiple languages were supported from a user and publisher point of view. For example, the ability to change languages for both the interface and content or helping publishers with translation workflow.
- How well multimedia was stored and presented to employees.

What we found

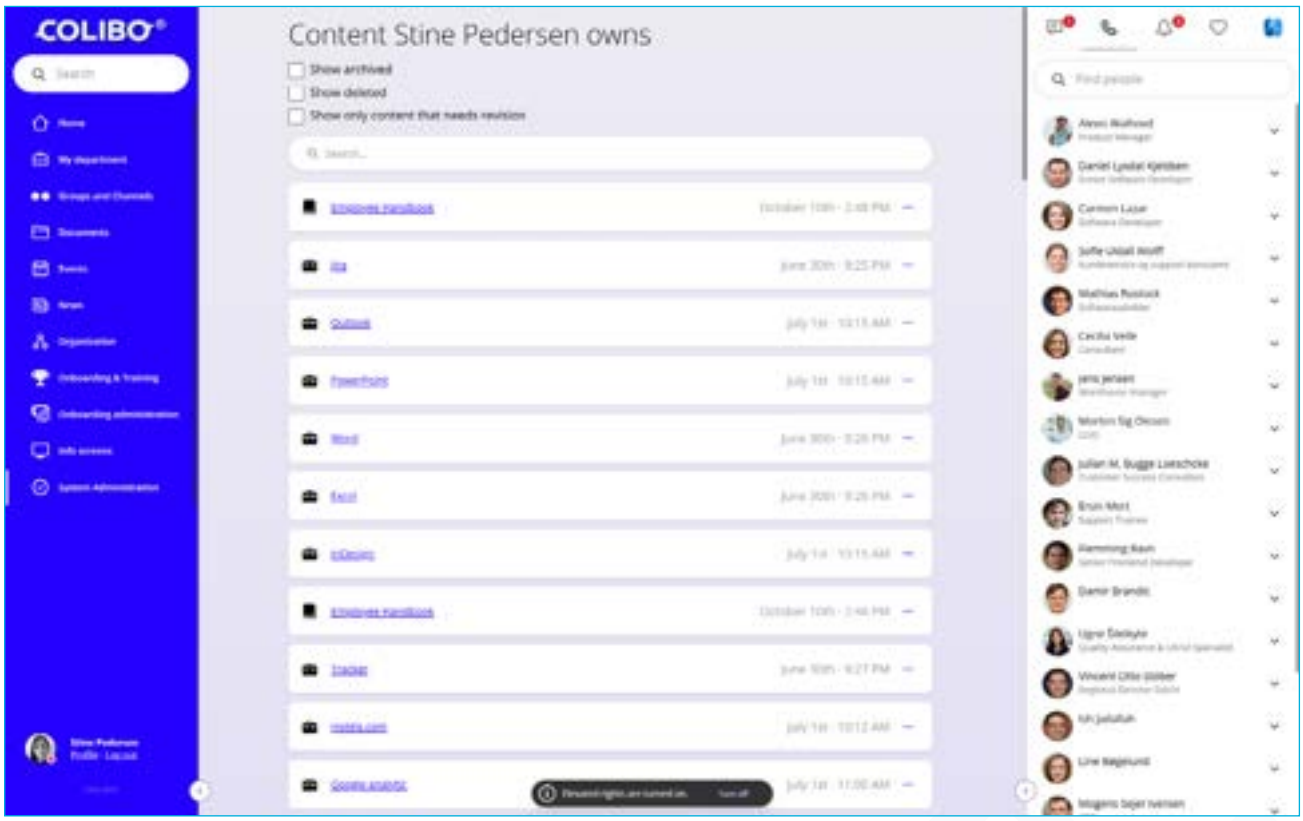
There have been improvements in this scenario in the past year, but admins are still overlooked in favour of end users and the experience here can be quite different. The average score here, for example, is 3.6 vs 3.9 out of 5 for Scenario 1 – which, while small, does illustrate a difference. Overall, we would like vendors to bring parity in experience between the front and back end (and across admin screens more generally in some places), although there are products that do better than others.

Additionally, the admin experience isn't always something vendors voluntarily demo to potential purchasers during product selection, so we would advise you ask to see how this works. In advance, you should also think about how your platform is going to be run and who by. A decentralised publishing approach may mean page creation and governance needs to be simple. Perhaps IT colleagues will be actively managing aspects of the site, so access to technical tools might be desirable. You'll find simple and comprehensive approaches among the products we've reviewed, so be prepared to consider what your colleagues will work best with.

Easy to administer	Comprehensive solution
Haiilo MangoApps oak engage	akumina omnia UNILY

A simple or comprehensive approach isn't right or wrong in itself, but one approach will be better for your admins than others.

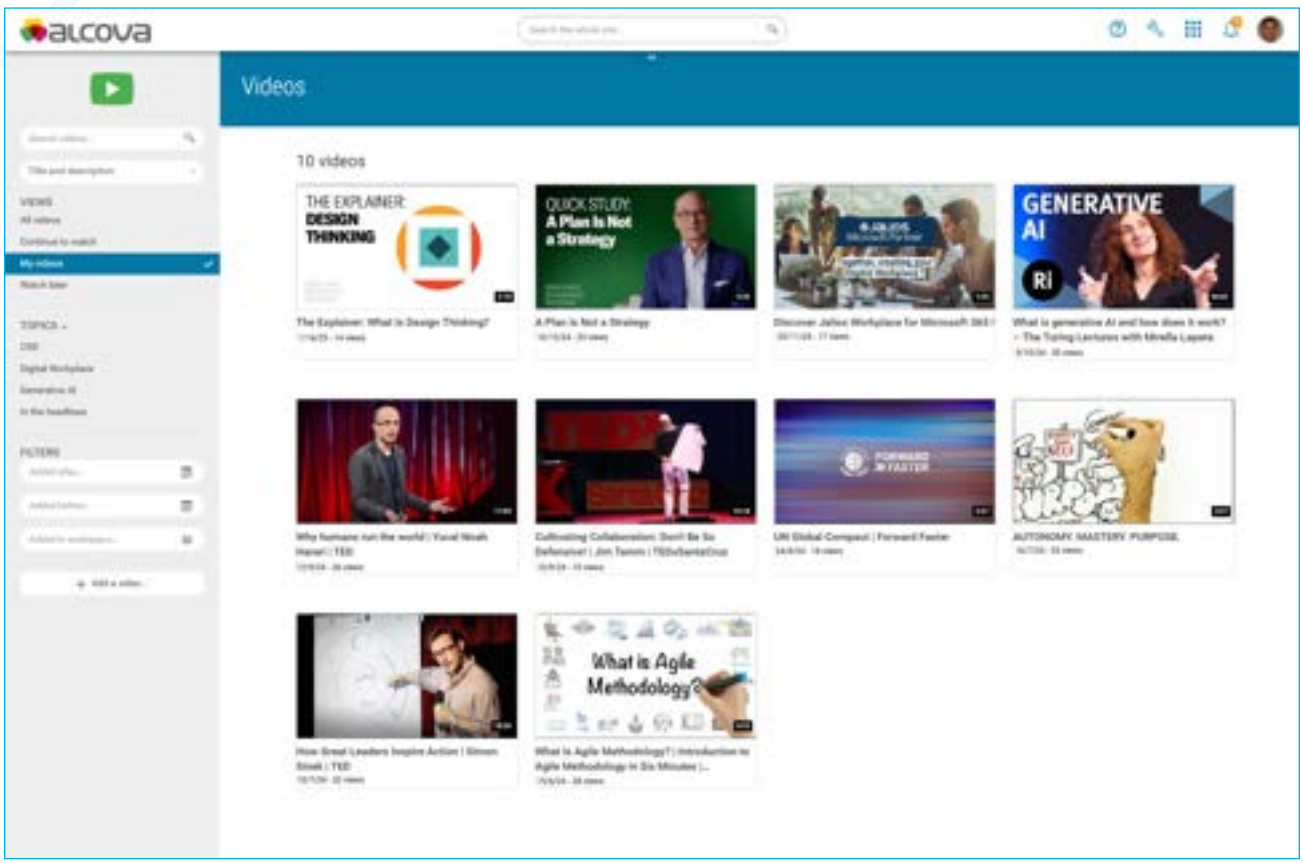
Regardless of the overall admin approach, governance and content life cycle tools should be easy enough for publishers to use so they keep on top of associated actions, while also be comprehensive enough to effectively manage the site. We've found this is still an area of inconsistency, despite poor governance often being behind poor employee experiences (especially for search). We've noticed that our clients are now requesting more sophisticated tools here too, so we hope to see improvements in this area.



In Colibo, everyone sees an overview of the content they own and can filter to find what needs to be revised.

There are generally good auto-translation options across the products we've seen, both for publishers to then edit but also for end users to translate on-the-fly. Those organisations that have publishers that work in different languages may find options too simplistic overall, but some products such as Omnia do include excellent tools that allow for side-by-side comparisons and tracked changes.

Finally, multimedia needs are largely met by embedding files or links into pages and by uploading for interaction within sites or feeds. Some products offer greater support, such as Appspace's central library of different media types and Blink's livestreaming capabilities, whereas a handful of platforms, such as Jalios, provide a video gallery capability where an organisation doesn't have something like Stream or Vimeo already in place.



Jalios provides a simple video gallery functionality.

How SharePoint and Viva fared in this scenario

Administration for sites, and particularly for a whole intranet, can soon feel very complex. Part of the challenge with SharePoint is that settings can be spread across multiple locations. However, for administrators of SharePoint pages, the experience is consistent and accessible. By design, SharePoint reflects a low-governance philosophy by Microsoft, where anyone can create a site. This can be blocked, but there is no nuanced middle-ground.

A 'start experience' gives content creators a single page to view all past content and create stand-alone pages too. However, there is a risk that pages created here can remain 'homeless' in the user's OneDrive. SharePoint makes it easy to create a multilingual experience, supporting around fifty languages for both the interface and for content, and there are comprehensive machine-translation options too. Multimedia support is extensive – with web parts for video, audio, images etc. (though no specific support for podcasts), as well as native viewing for hundreds of other file types.

Scenario 7: Analytics

What we explored

Intranet managers and content owners need to be able to measure the effectiveness of their intranet, which not only shows the performance but will lend guidance to ways to improve the site too. We have tested:

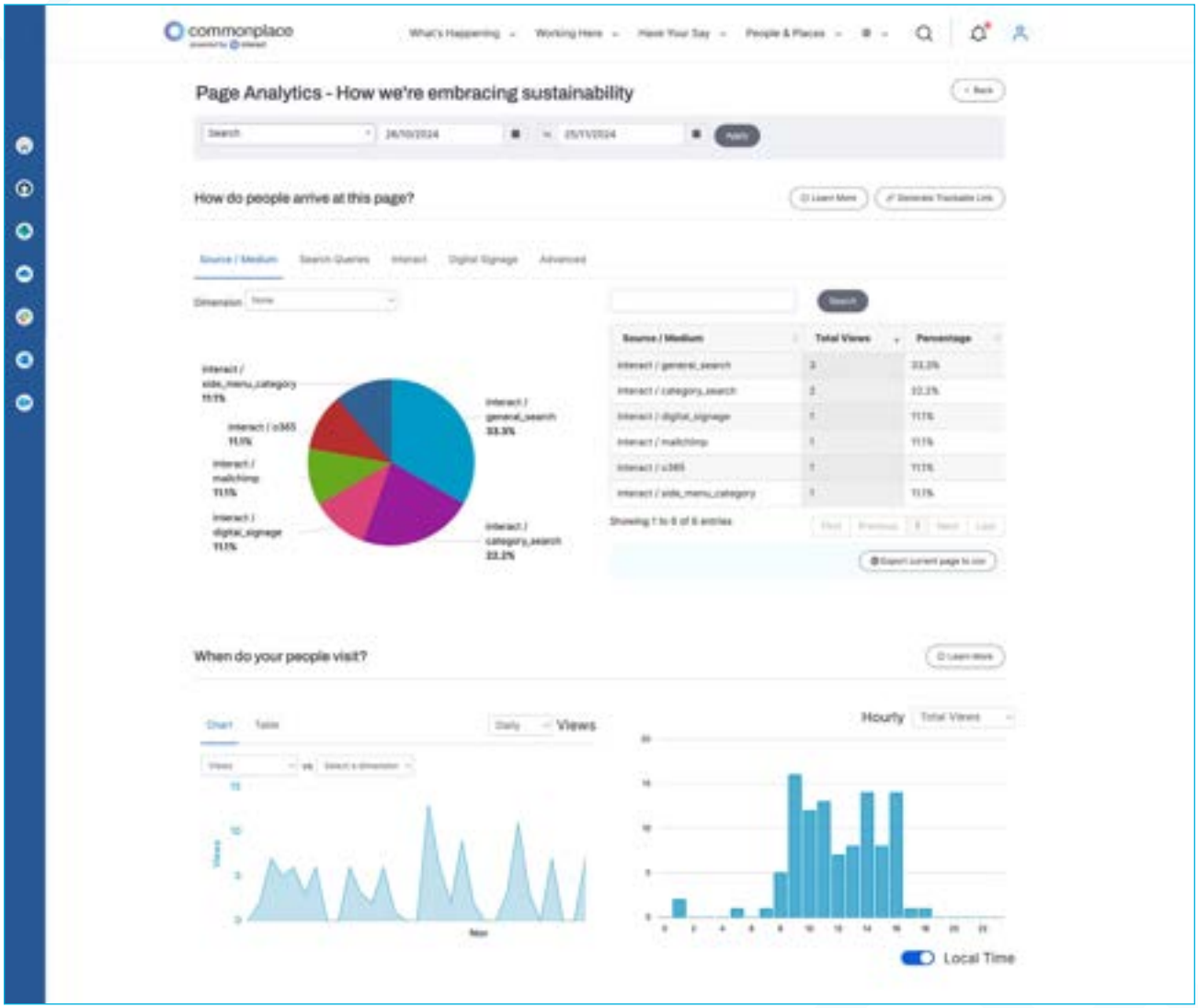
- What information was available to admins so that they can get an idea for site-wide and individual section content usage and adoption.
- How the analytics deliver actionable insights that help improve the way the intranet is managed, not just generating numbers because they can; and how the data could be adapted to suit a business' specific goals.
- Analytics and tools for communicators, such as ways to measure individual article and overall communication campaign performance.
- Support of mandatory reads and search analytics, such as to help admins identify when users give up on search terms or where there are gaps in results.

What we found

Performance in this scenario has improved in the past year, but there are definitely some vendors that understand needs here better than others. Ultimately, intranet managers need actionable insights – data that helps them make decisions rather than just showing them graphs and numbers for the sake of it. Although some vendors have loads of charts and reports, this doesn't mean they address this scenario fully. Not everything that is easy for vendors to surface is useful for deciding how to improve your intranet. Overall, we feel the quality and quantity of reporting needs to be largely improved across the board.

Analytics for search too is often a low-scoring area. Given the introduction of AI features in search and prevalence of poor search experiences among employees, this area in particular needs greater focus. We expect concerns about AI governance to be a significant issue in 2025, and good metrics will be vital to reassure take-up. With the addition of more internal comms tools too, we'd expect to see more supporting analytics in this area as well.

A handful of vendors stand out, however. Staffbase, for example, has an excellent analytics suite that would be made even better by the addition of search data. Interact has an impressive range of adoption and content analytics reports that allow admins to measure the effectiveness of their site. We're also pleased to see Oak make the first use we've seen of AI in analytics, although there is room for improvement here too.



Interact's page analytics report gives valuable insights into how employees have arrived at a particular page.

How SharePoint and Viva fared in this scenario

Every page on a SharePoint intranet has its own simple analytics panel showing views, time spent and most active times. SharePoint will generate usage reports for individual sites and hubs, showing unique viewers, site visits, popular posts and documents. To see more, admins must look into Microsoft 365 and Azure reports. There is data and reporting across Microsoft applications, but this can feel fragmented, especially if you consider your intranet to be a combination of SharePoint, Viva Engage, Amplify and Teams. It is possible to extract all the data into Power BI and there is a 'Microsoft 365 usage analytics' report to start you off, but this requires configuration and Power BI Pro licensing. Viva Amplify includes helpful reporting on campaigns and an overview of communications performance. Search analytics are good but 'mandatory reads' would need to be supported via Forms and PowerBI.

Scenario 8: Mobile and frontline support

What we explored

People often need to access information or check updates away from their desk (or have a role that is entirely deskless). We asked vendors to show us how their product made it easy to deliver an engaging experience on devices such as mobiles, tablets and on shared screens. We wanted to see:

- What solutions were offered to help businesses enrol users onto the mobile version of the site, particularly where users may not be on central databases or where centrally held contact information may be incomplete.
- The ease of use and whether the experience mirrors a consumer app.
- What features were present on the mobile experience to support the needs of frontline workers.
- How easily admins could control the content and layout of the app, ensuring that anything presented was suitable and relevant to mobile users.

What we found

All vendors offer responsive web versions of their products. Some of these are adaptive browser experiences (so will add / remove elements) whereas others just adjust to a smaller screen size, which impacts the overall experience. Some platforms don't include a native app, instead they make use of Teams / Viva Connections features (see below for more) which can work pretty well but we find this less flexible than a native app approach. The majority of vendors do offer native apps however, and this forms the basis for the analysis in this scenario for all reviews.

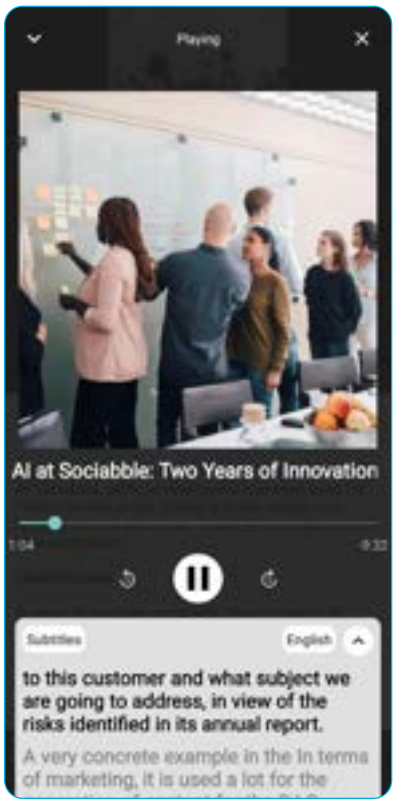
The initial download and access experience can impact the broader adoption of these tools by frontline workers; this is one area that vendors address differently and where there is scope for improvement. The best will use a combination of unique identifiers, like a phone number or payroll number, to grant people access or allow line managers to facilitate this process (e.g. Omnia). Others rely too heavily on centrally held and managed profiles, where usernames and passwords are prescribed and may not mean much to the employee. Additionally, if these log in details aren't something the frontline need on a daily basis and they aren't easy to reset, then this is a huge barrier to access.

Blink not only provides easy access to their app, the vendor will send people to client locations to help during launch to employees.

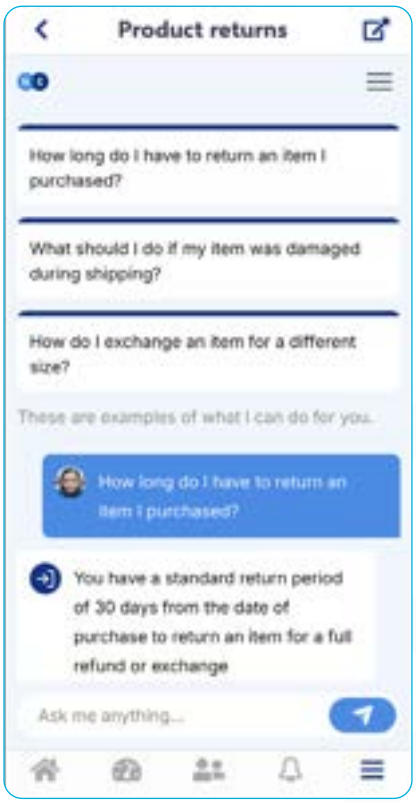
Unlike in Scenario 1 and on desktop, we've found that not all products deliver a strong user experience on mobile. This is typically because features like search have been overly simplified on mobile and are less effective, or are very comprehensive yet overwhelm a small screen environment. In some cases, product features are masked or poorly laid out on mobile vs the desktop and this impacts the experience. It's worth noting that despite SharePoint intranet-in-a-box products having more barriers to deliver an effective mobile experience, many do a good job, such as Omnia.

Where platforms do deliver an effective mobile experience, they may not consider the specific needs of frontline workers. We expect to see settings like 'do not disturb' periods for shift workers, or built in tools / integrations that are designed with these employees in mind – such as viewing payslips. Even some approaches to content can reflect how well products understand the frontline, such as Sociabble's podcast feature that is comparable to public-facing approaches.

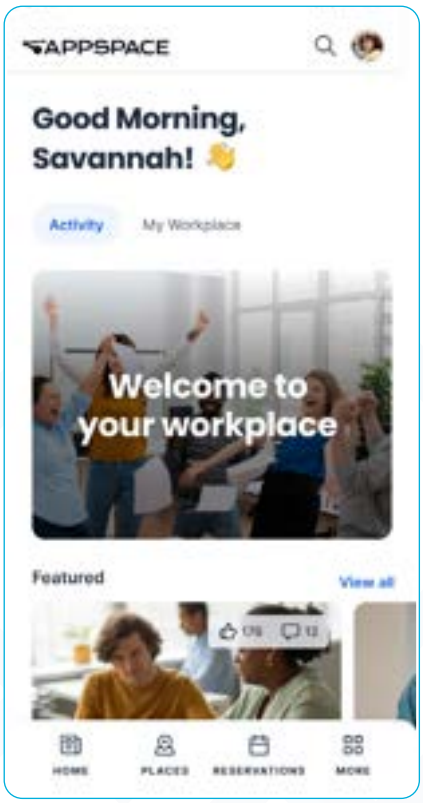
Overall, most vendors do a good job of creating a mobile environment that gives a parity of features with the desktop. This usually translates to a positive mobile user experience too, but there are nuances that make a difference depending on the audience and the approach the vendor takes (see Four Product Approaches for details). Employee mobile apps, such as Blink, understandably tend to offer the best mobile experiences, particularly for the frontline. Organisations should therefore consider what experience they want to provide for employees across device types before making any buying decisions.



Sociabble



Powell Intranet

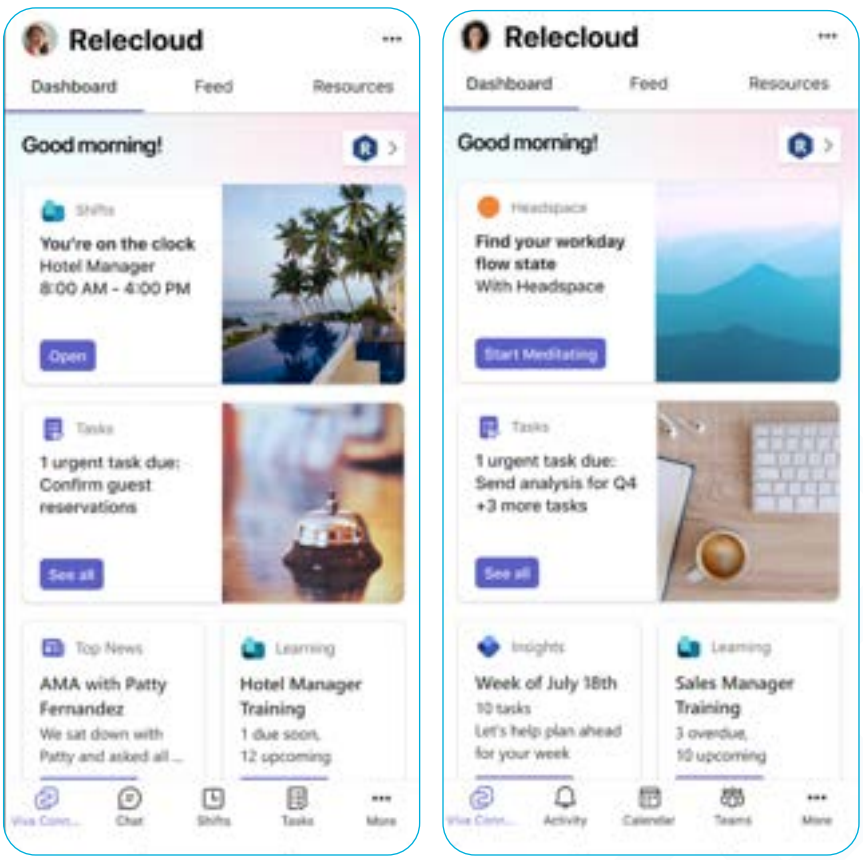


Appspace

Products take a variety of approaches to this scenario and you should carefully consider what's appropriate for your employees.

How SharePoint and Viva fared in this scenario

The browser-based experience for SharePoint generally works well; web parts re-arrange to fit available columns but they are not adaptive. The SharePoint and Teams mobile apps are clean and snappy to use, but neither feels like an 'intranet in your pocket' without further configuration work. The Teams app, when Viva Connections is enabled, does show an icon for your intranet, and with a little effort can be an effective news feed tool. Teams is marketed as a frontline solution, particularly as a mobile app, although we would recommend disabling the document and collaboration features to simplify the experience. Power Apps and Viva Connections provide employee services. Finally, every user will need a Microsoft license to gain access to applications and the associated costs are worth considering.



Viva Connections provides a mobile experience for SharePoint integrated with the Teams app.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TRENDS

Where 2023 saw the slow introduction of AI features (many of which were similar or focussed only on generative AI), this past year we've seen many vendors develop their AI capabilities in innovative ways. We've still chosen not to have a dedicated AI scenario however, as we believe AI features offer a way to address and meet our scenarios, rather than AI being a meaningful use-case in its own right. There were four points our reviewers kept in mind when seeing AI feature demos, which we think apply for software customers too:

Supportive

AI features should be supportive or helpful, with the goal of improving an end-user and / or admin's experience.

What task is it improving?

Purposeful

There should be a clear purpose behind an AI-driven feature, it shouldn't be in a platform just for the sake of having AI.

What benefit is it bringing?

Usable

As with all things, the AI features should be simple for end-users and admins to use. There should be no need for specific AI training to do something, and it should behave logically.

Could an infrequent user work with it?

Governable

Many organisations are hesitant with AI because they are concerned about hard-to-anticipate risks. AI features should therefore have appropriate controls in place, such as how data is accessed and gets used to generate content.

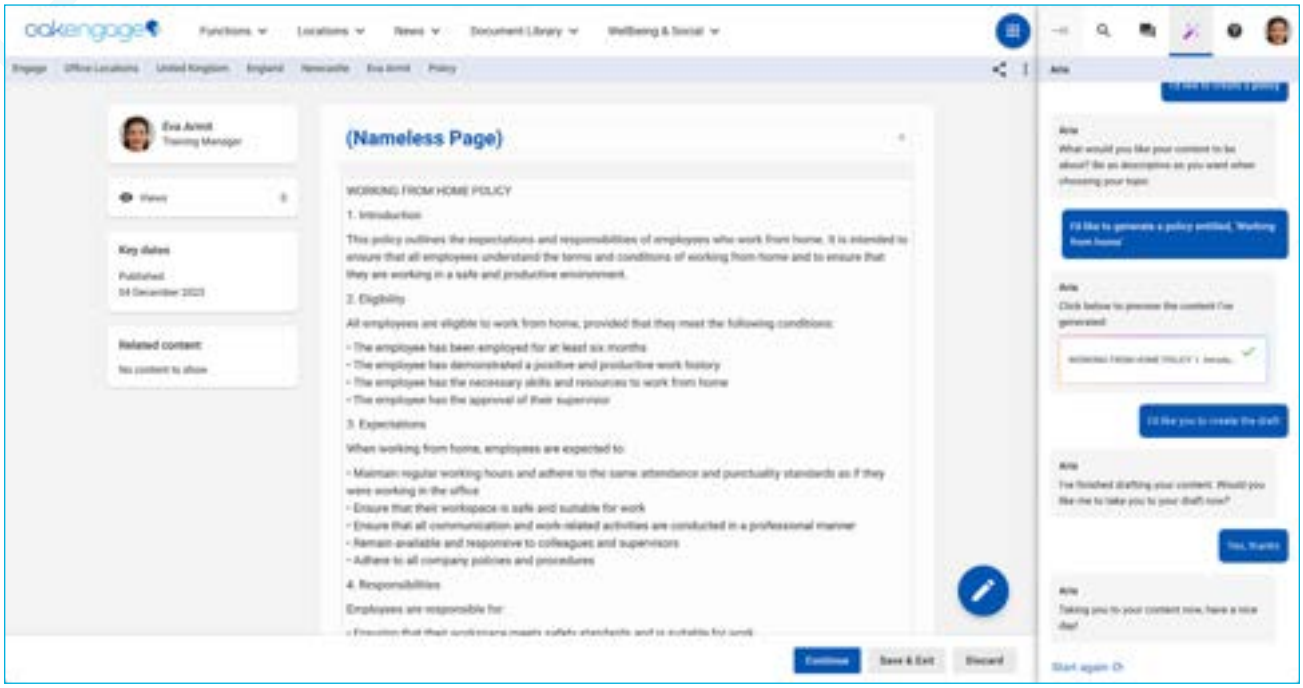
Does the AI feature allow appropriate controls?

AI features still broadly fit into four themes that we've explored in more detail below. Many vendors have a lot more AI functionality on their roadmaps too, so we're going to see more capabilities introduced for some time to come. We would urge you to consider what's appropriate for your organisation at this stage and in the near future, then speak with vendors about what can be switched off for a gradual introduction. We've noted where AI features come at additional cost and where organisations can "bring your own" AI tool (e.g. a specific LLM), but would advise you speak to vendors about both of these elements.

Generative AI for content creation

Around two-thirds of the products we saw included generative AI features for creating copy, which is an increase on last year. Some take a form-like approach where publishers enter prompts and settings to generate content they can then edit, such as Involv. Others include in-context editing for tone or length when text is highlighted, as in Haiilo.

A few of the features we were shown particularly stood out as being innovative. The first example is from Oak Engage, which has an inbuilt policy template that is applied when a publisher wishes to create a new policy page. The AI then completes the template, generating a draft policy for review and editing. This is a helpful approach, although the template might feel too restrictive (and overly comprehensive) for some. Interact stands out with an 'inclusivity' language checker and page sentiment / tone assessment, allowing publishers to consider how their piece might be perceived before it's published. This is a small yet supportive feature that we think will help publishers finesse their pages.



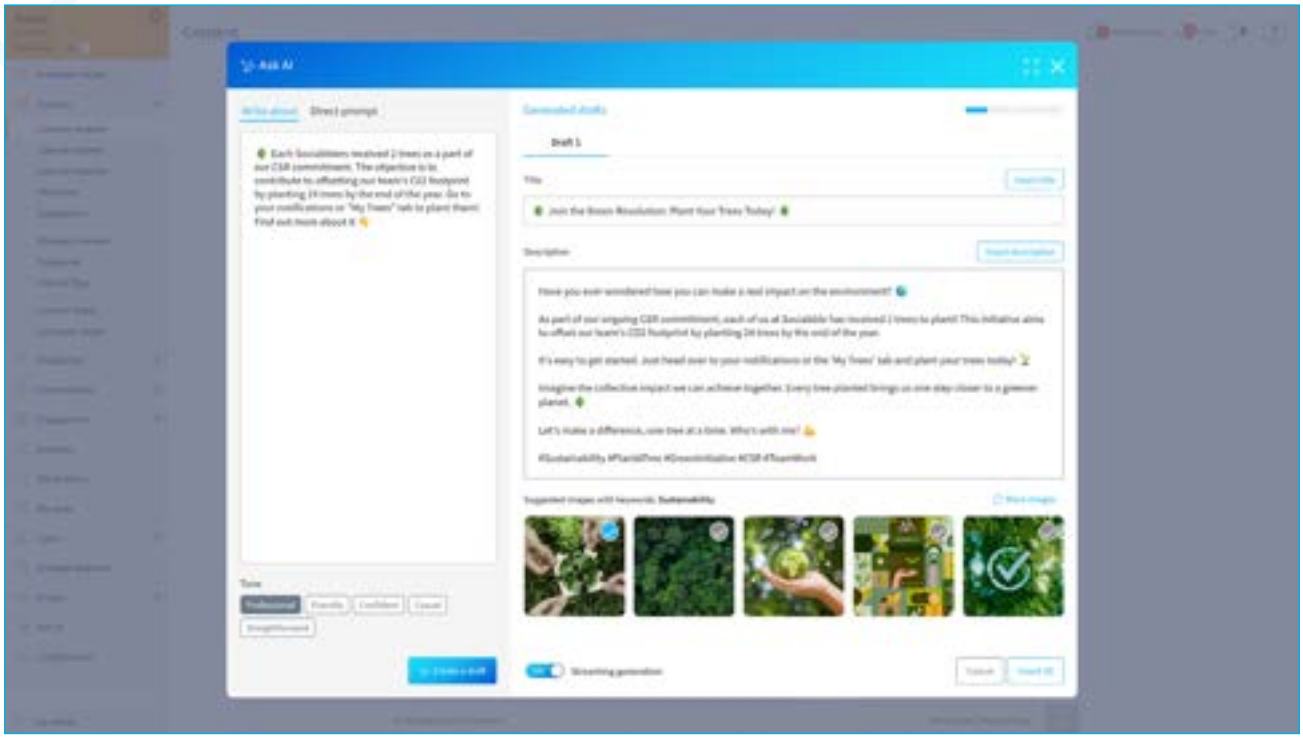
Oak Engage includes a templates generative AI feature for creating policies.

The effectiveness of these generative AI approaches is largely down to personal preference, but the accuracy is worth exploring. We've made observations where generated content looked inaccurate, unclear, or badly written, but would recommend you speak to vendors about how the content is generated. Additionally, you should also discuss what the AI will do when it "doesn't know what it's talking about" – where there's no material for it to draw on, or where there's contradictory materials, is there a risk of hallucinations?

Of those with generative AI features, around half included generative AI for images which is an increase compared to last year. AI here can take the form of image suggestions, such as in Workshop, or full creation using tools like Dall-E like in Omnia. As with text, AI generated images should be checked closely and for those with tight brand controls these features can usually be switched off.

Sociabble offers some of the most sophisticated AI features we've seen for creating content. The settings for organisations and individuals to write context statements that any generated content is passed through is particularly noteworthy. The 'tone' that's typically defined by vendors is also configurable, so admins can define exactly what "warm" or "humorous" means within their organisation.

Overall, generative AI features in these tools are now fairly common. We would advise you to decide whether you want to use generative AI features and how, before exploring what's available. We'd also advise you to focus on the accuracy of outputs and whether it meets organisational standards during any demos you receive.



Sociabble has excellent generative AI features.

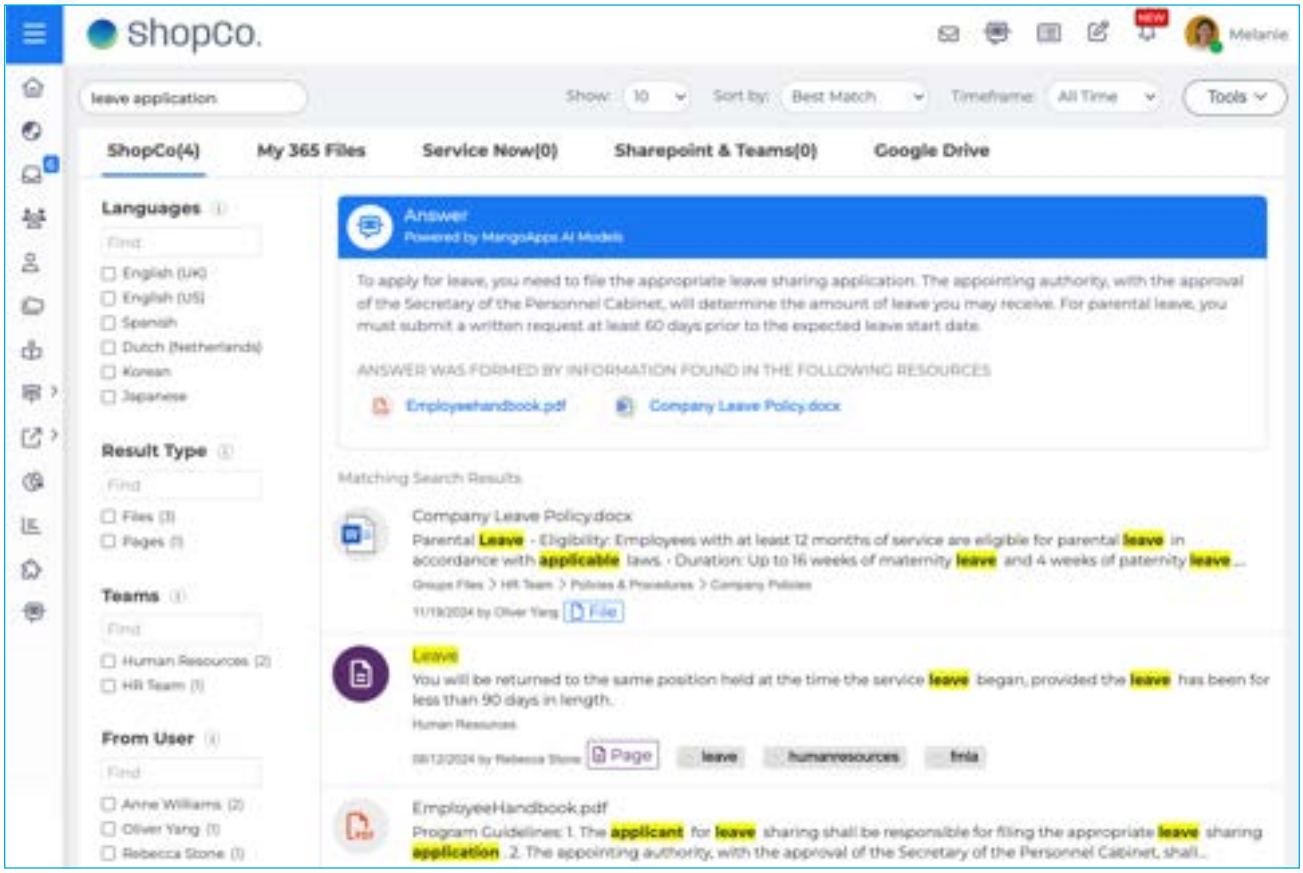
Search and information finding

This is one area that vendors have spent time developing in the past year. Previously only a handful had search or digital assistant type functionality, but this year around half include something. It's worth noting that products do sometimes include AI to help match results with search queries; however, this is difficult for us to test and is mentioned in the reviews where we're aware of it.

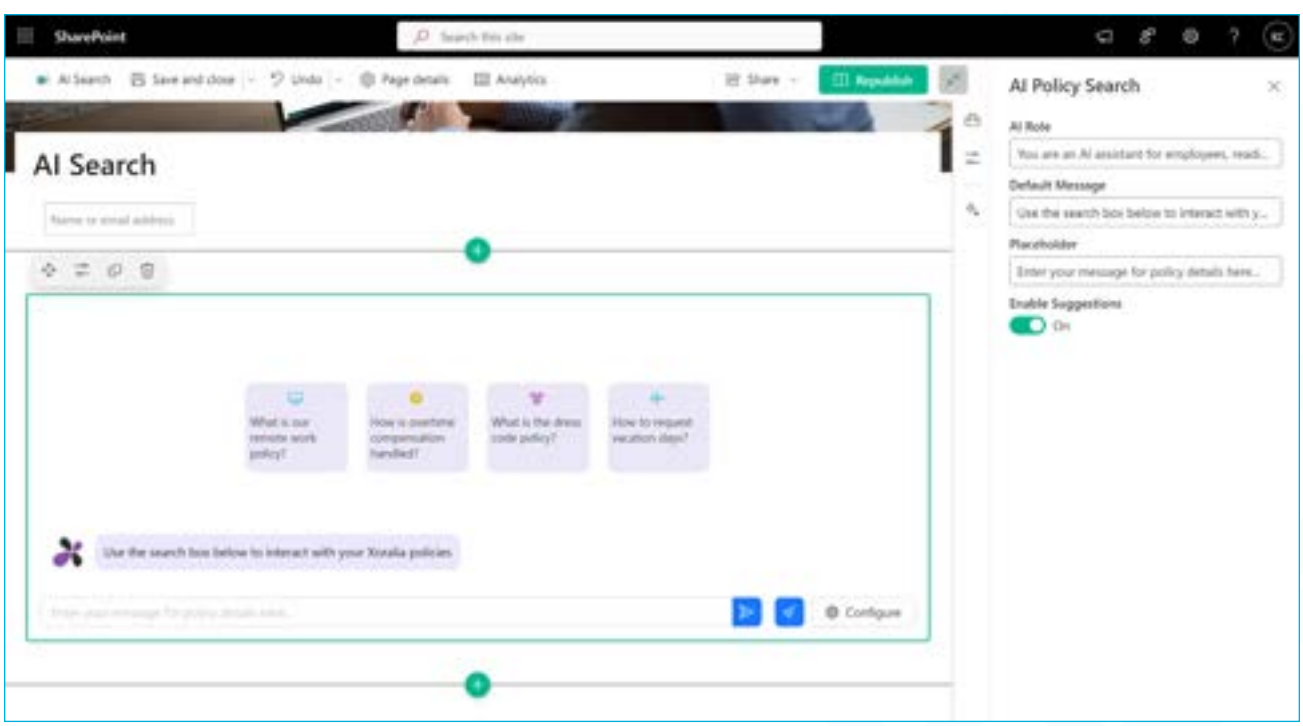
Many products have introduced 'likely answers' into search results that are generated by AI. This replicates a Google-like experience, where the search presents the answer to a question rather than merely lists of results of pages where the individual would have to continue their hunt for information. We feel it is particularly important that links to verifiable sources are included when this is done.

A handful of products have introduced search assistants via a chat interface. Whereas chatbots of old needed to be manually "programmed" by admins, AI will now draw on data from across repositories to generate answers (aka Retrieval Augmented Generation). Lightspeed365 Premium includes a chat-based interface for asking questions about content in a defined scope: for example, when connected to a policy library an employee can ask questions such as 'what is our remote work policy?' and the search will return an answer, along with the source document. We can see it being particularly helpful on mobile devices where reading through a long policy document to find the information needed is unwieldy.

Some vendors that have introduced an AI chat assistant have given the option to have multiple chatbots across the intranet. For example, the HR section could have a dedicated chatbot with health and safety having a second, separate instance. Where employees don't understand there are distinct interfaces for specific tasks this could cause confusion and impact adoption. Caution is advised where you're considering this approach and we advise you carefully consider the user experience.



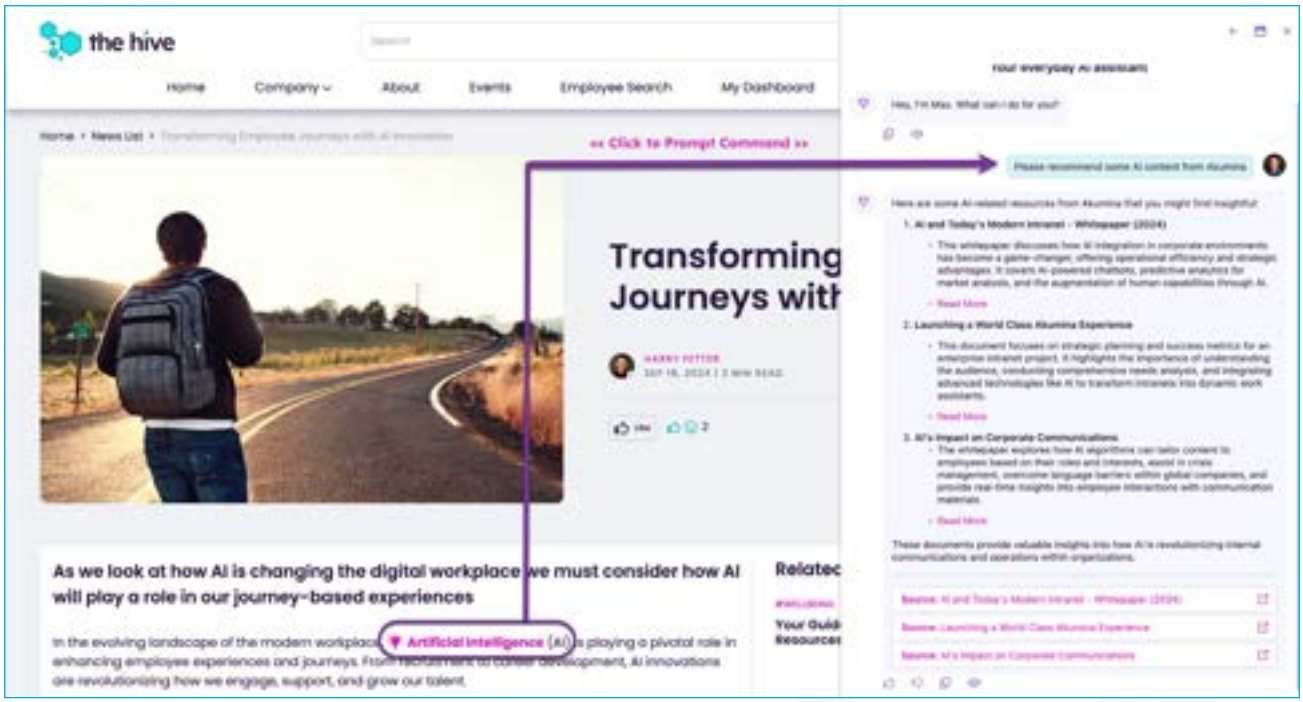
MangoApps clearly shows an answer is AI generated and includes the sources should the employee want to verify information or check further details.



Lightspeed365's AI search enables employees to ask questions of a knowledge base using natural language. Note the configuration panel for admins.

Other notable information-finding capabilities include automatic or recommended content summaries, such as in Appspace, which help people understand whether the correct item is present in search results. This isn't as common as we'd like to see, as we feel it's a really helpful feature. Fresh includes dedicated web parts to create a roll-up of content in documents and pages that relate to specific subjects (metadata) or are of a specific type, such as policies. The information can be located anywhere across the intranet in multiple sites and the web part will aggregate this information.

Akumina has a capability to link to an AI prompt / query rather than embedding a simple link in a page. For example, embedding the query 'what is the latest information about product X' points to dynamically created and contextually relevant results, based on the latest available information about product X. We can see this feature being great for frequently changing content, particularly where publishers want to encourage discovery and where employees want to keep up to date in fast-moving situations.



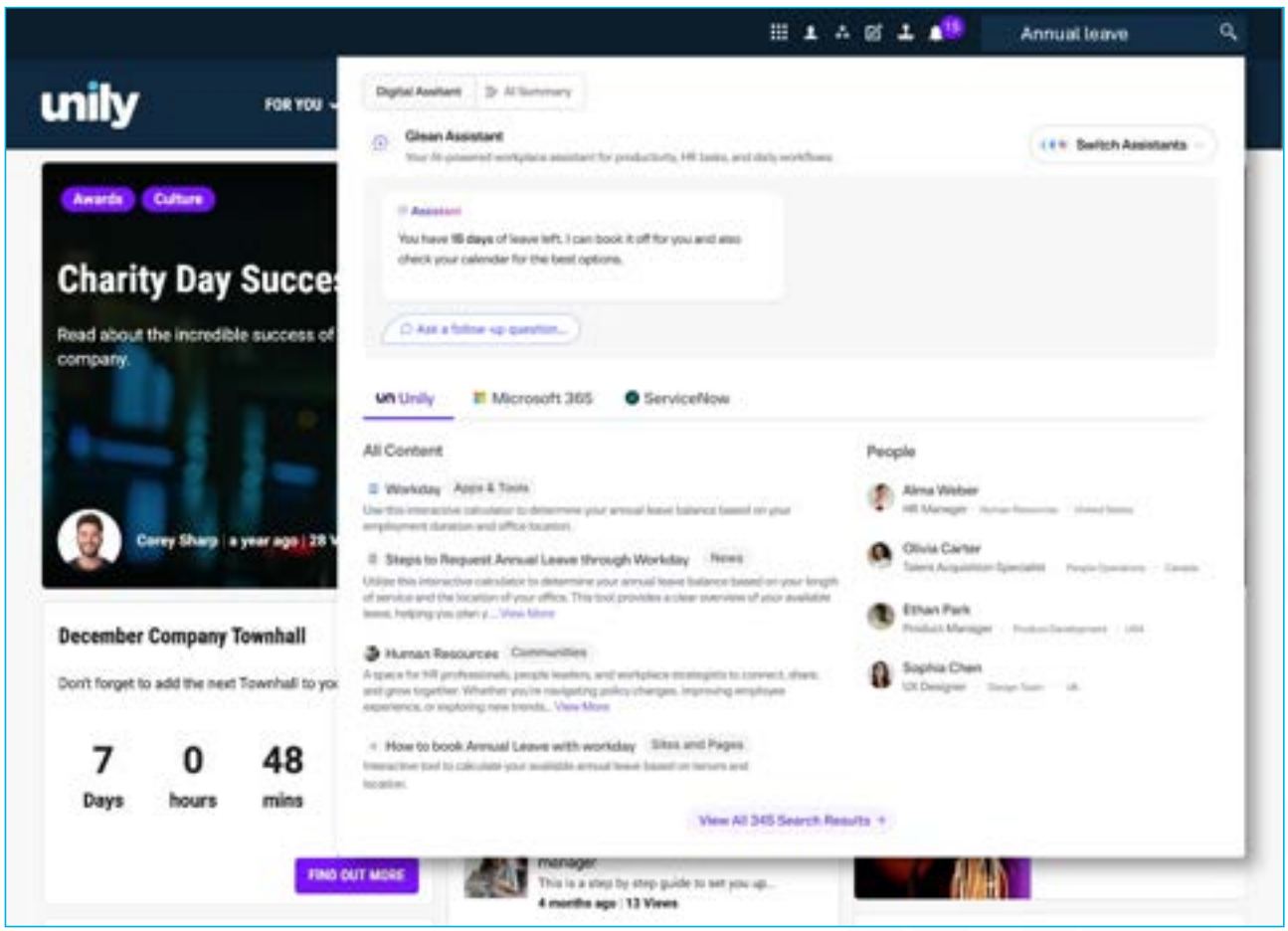
An AI link has been added to a page which, rather than linking directly to a specific document, opens the Akumina AI assistant pane and prompts it to find the recommended content.

Products vary in the way they provide AI search support however, typically only offering some of the following (we think it would be beneficial for all these features to be present):

- 'Teaching' the AI when it has provided an inaccurate answer
- Integrations with third-party tools, such as Salesforce or Workday
- Presenting additional resources, such as an associated file, within the answer or providing a link to it
- Feedback mechanisms, such as thumbs up / down or simple forms to gauge user satisfaction
- Analytics to help admins see what is or isn't working within search
- A chatbot-style interface and / or making this part of the standard search experience
- Contact information for subject experts if someone wants more information.

A handful of products have also been exploring 'digital assistant' or AI agent functionality, which expands search capabilities beyond the intranet into the broader digital workplace. Digital assistants will interrogate any connected system or database, presenting information and subsequent activities to employees so they don't have to worry about accessing multiple locations. Unily is a good example here, providing the answer to "how much holiday am I entitled to" as well as subsequent steps and the information the system needs to complete them. The 'bring your own AI' approach is also interesting, allowing organisations to make use of existing investment.

We think there is a lot of potential to dramatically improve employee experiences of products if AI is effectively applied to search. Debate has continued for years as to whether intranets and associated tools can be 'front doors' into organisations' digital workplaces, particularly as other digital workplace solutions have developed additional functionality. If AI-driven search and digital assistants are developed, then these products are in a very good position to offer that way in – potentially more so than other digital workplace tools as intranets are so flexible.



Unily's AI-powered search shows how easily an employee can complete activities across the digital workplace but from one place.

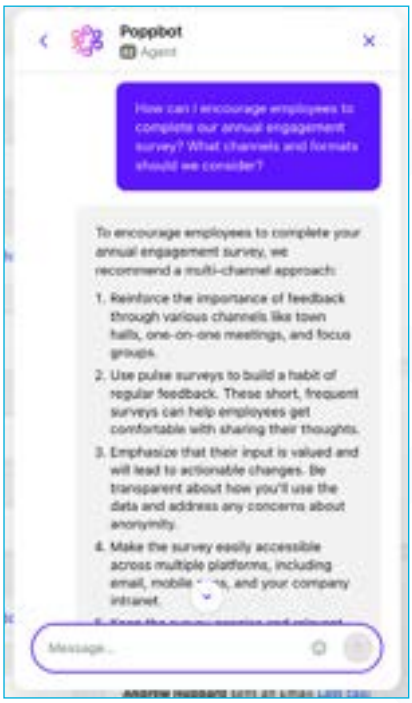
AI support for admins

Over the past year there have been new features introduced that support admins, but the range and number of products is still a lot smaller than the generative AI and search capabilities. We still think this area would bring huge benefits to intranet management teams, both for frequent and infrequent admins, which would likely have a positive impact on the overall employee experience.

Effective governance is essential to the success of an intranet, giving vendors a huge opportunity to develop useful AI features here. For example, SharePoint Advanced Management ("SAM") offers tools such as inactive site detection and content oversharing reports when combined with Copilot licenses. As another example, Akumina's 'MAX AI' can create metadata such as keywords and descriptions as part of content creation and will intelligently maintain these when there are changes.

We like the concept of AI-driven analysis to give greater depth to analytics. For example, with Viva Engage storylines, leaders can see a summary of popular and trending themes in employees' posts. In mid-2024 Oak released the first AI-assisted analytics report that we've seen among products, which you can read more about in the review. Another new development is MangoApps' AI Studio analytics that show trends from results generated from AI searches and the content generated, helping admins see the effectiveness of their AI search. Given the rich potential for development in this scenario (which is historically the worst performing area), we feel more vendors should be considering AI for analytics.

Finally, while generative AI supports admins, there is more to forming content than just creating words and images. We like Poppulo's AI chatbot - accessible via a persistent question mark icon - which provides information from the 'Resource Centre'. The chatbot will answer natural language questions where someone needs help or would like some guidance (for example "how to structure a CEO's email update"), using the organisation's own reference material to generate answers. Other effective tools include auto translation options and a good range of analytics.



Poppulo provides content creators with guidance on forming their messages, not just providing the words.

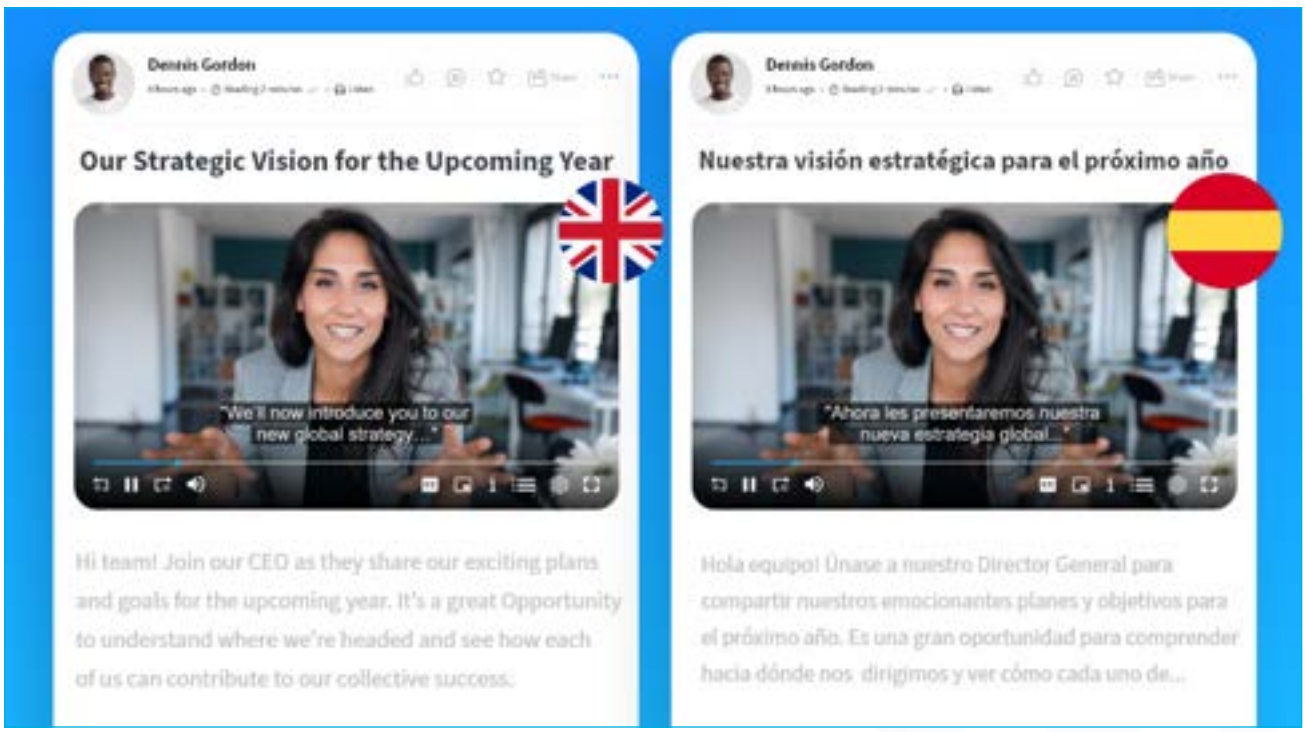
General UX enhancements

The final area is a catch-all for other AI features, which are smaller tools that still contribute towards improving the overall user experience. Auto translation is the most common of these features yet is still not common across the products we've seen, which we think is a shame. There are some vendors taking steps in the right directions here, however.

Sociabble stands out; it uses its own powerful video platform and includes AI-driven functionality that is among the most advanced in this report. There are options for creating transcripts, managing subtitles, generating text summaries and dubbing videos in different languages with AI-generated lip sync. It's a strange feeling seeing yourself speak a language you don't know, but for employees it can make a real difference to their engagement with leaders.

Similarly, Appspace, MangoApps and others have an exciting AI audio generation tool that renders an audio version of a page without the need for publishers to record anything. This is a great accessibility feature and it gives a pseudo-podcast feel that will allow people to keep up to date with news without having to read something. We hope that the next step is audio translations.

Overall, there are a lot of opportunities to provide experience enhancements using AI. Now the rush to add initial generative AI features is largely over and search is being addressed, we hope to see beneficial AI capabilities added to other suitable areas.



Sociabble includes AI-generated captions and dubbing, including lip sync.

PRICING FINDINGS

According to our report (and generally speaking), independent intranet products are more expensive than those that rely on SharePoint. Independents must develop all aspects of their product, as they cannot rely on SharePoint's framework, so arguably there is more development cost associated with them.

However, it's worth noting that the SharePoint-dependent products have quoted for the cost of their product licensing only. While you may have Microsoft 365 (M365) licenses anyway, some plans are very expensive for all features (such as the full Viva experience). Including SharePoint / M365 licenses would make add-on products significantly more expensive than their independent cousins, particularly for larger businesses. Additionally, if you have frontline or other employees without M365 licenses then you should consider this additional cost, as it could be significant. We're pleased to see some SharePoint-based products offering options for frontline worker access that get around this requirement though.

A final consideration is that some intranet products (particularly SharePoint-based platforms) require significant implementation activities and associated costs. We've flagged in the pricing notes in each review where these services are included but, where they aren't included, these costs can have a significant impact on your budgeting. In some cases, making a seemingly "cheaper" product ends up being a lot more expensive. We've mentioned where this is something to factor in as part of the 'Things to bear in mind' section, but urge you to explore all cost implications with vendors and take our pricing as a starting point only.

For example:

	PRODUCT A – SOFTWARE ONLY	PRODUCT B – SOFTWARE AND SERVICES
CLEARBOX PRICING ICON	$ $ $ $ $	$ $ $ $ $
TYPICALLY INCLUDED IN THE CLEARBOX PRICING	Licenses Support services Hosting, maintenance and updates Access to a community (where available) Customer success services (basic)	Licenses Support services Hosting, maintenance and updates Access to a community (where available) Customer success services (advanced) Training Implementation Developer portal (where available)
POTENTIAL ADDITIONAL COSTS	Configuration of sophisticated requests Training Implementation (potentially including costs of a partner) Customer success services (sophisticated)	Configuration of sophisticated requests
POTENTIAL TOTAL PRICING ICON	$ $ $ $ $	$ $ $ $ $

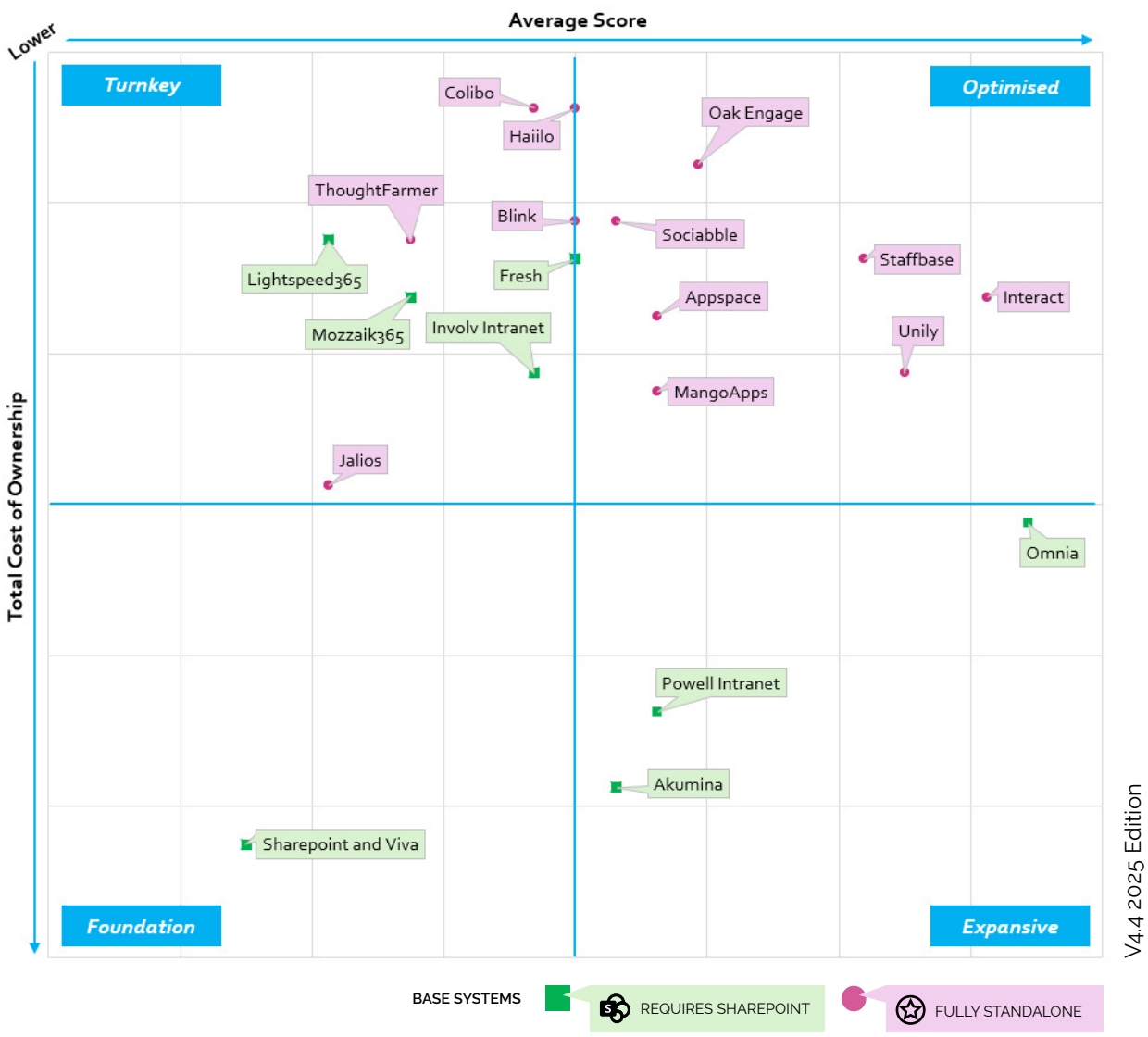
Total Cost of Ownership (TCO)

This year we have identified an indicative 'Total Cost of Ownership' (TCO) score for each product, which represents the upfront and ongoing costs, plus the effort involved in operating these platforms. We have drawn on a variety of research sources to form this scale, which includes factors such as:

- The average price point across all business sizes
- The effort required across our scenarios to achieve and sustain good results
- Where implementation partners are needed
- Where other technology platforms are required, such as SharePoint, Google, third party analytics etc.

The TCO score is not included in the reviews, but we have reflected it in the above chart. The idea of the TCO is to reflect costs beyond bare licenses, to help you get a feel for what the overall impact may be on your long-term budget and planning.

Score vs TCO chart



This chart shows average product scores in our scenarios against the TCO. It gives some idea of price-performance ratio, but the positions do vary according to the number of licenses required, and to what extent the elements in the TCO are needed by your organisation. For example, the features that come out-of-the-box might be exactly what you're looking for from a particular platform – so the 'effort' (mentioned above) wouldn't be relevant. Or, if you already have the additional technology in place for all employees (such as SharePoint), then you may discount this element from overall costs.

What each quadrant indicates

Turnkey

- Generally good value, straightforward and easy-to-live-with platforms
- Less administrative burden to set up (either in-house or by the vendor)
- Ongoing administration is easier and by in-house teams

Optimised

- More comprehensive range and depth of capabilities out-of-the-box
- Less administrative burden to set up (likely handled in-house or by the vendor, but not always)
- Ongoing administration is simpler, likely by in-house teams

Foundation

- Good range and depth of features, but they all require effort to fully exploit
- Considerable flexibility, but will often require specialist skills to achieve this
- Ongoing administration likely to need expert support, plus activities completed by IT

Expansive

- Comprehensive range and depth of features, but may require effort to set up
- Greatest potential to do exactly what you want, but may require specialist skills to achieve this
- Ongoing administration likely to need expert support, plus activities completed by IT

Each quadrant can be summarised as above, however there are always exceptions to these rules.

In general, we maintain that there's no 'best' intranet platform and instead encourage buyers to consider what is the best match for them. You should apply your own organisational context to identify which quadrant(s), which scenarios, and ultimately which platforms are most suitable for you.

A note on SharePoint and product fluidity

SharePoint could easily move up or down the TCO axis, depending on what you want to achieve with it. For organisations looking for a simple SharePoint intranet, it could move up to (and even into) the XXXX quadrant – although certain activities will need to be completed by technical admins regardless. For those looking for a sophisticated SharePoint intranet, there could be an even higher TCO where significant customisation is needed.

SharePoint is a good example of the fluidity and flexibility of these platforms, both from a features perspective but also from a TCO perspective. One organisation may therefore find the TCO is lower than we've indicated, while another may find it's higher. We therefore recommend you discuss all cost implications with your vendor (short and longer-term) before making purchasing decisions.

FOUR PRODUCT APPROACHES

Over the past few years we've noticed vendors taking one of four approaches with their products. Understanding these categories and what approach is right for your organisation will help you choose the right solution – there is no best overall approach or best overall platform, but there is what's best for you.

Modern intranets and Employee Experience Platforms

These platforms typically serve the needs of a 'classic' intranet – document / policy storage and presentation, top-down communications, a good search, engagement tools, and a variety of other familiar features but can also go beyond the basics to integrate with other systems and channels. These platforms tend to be configurable, allowing organisations to make them as comprehensive or simple as desired.

Tools around search, content storage and navigation are usually sophisticated, to help people find what they're looking for in a large platform. However, it's important to note that within the 'modern intranet' approach, vendors may focus on a particular set of features. So, while they may offer a broad range of capabilities, there might be certain use cases the product and vendor is attempting to solve over others. Some of these will be more important to you and you can get a feel for the product's focus by seeing its performance in our scenarios. For example:

- Communications centre – likely to perform well in Scenario 2 (such as Interact)
- Social / community focus – likely to perform well in Scenario 3 (such as Haiilo)
- Digital workplace hub – likely to perform well in Scenario 4 (such as Appspace)
- Information facilitation – likely to perform well in Scenarios 5 and 6 (such as SharePoint).

This category of products is where you're more likely to see labels such as 'employee experience platform' or 'digital workplace' being applied by vendors, as 'intranet' is sometimes deemed outdated. However, 'intranet' is a familiar term (that's still the predominant way people search for these systems too) and the included features are still valued by organisations. Just as expectations for modern website continuously evolve, we see expectations for modern intranets constantly progressing too.

Akumina performs well in Scenario 4 showing that 'digital workplace hub' is one of the use cases it's trying to address.

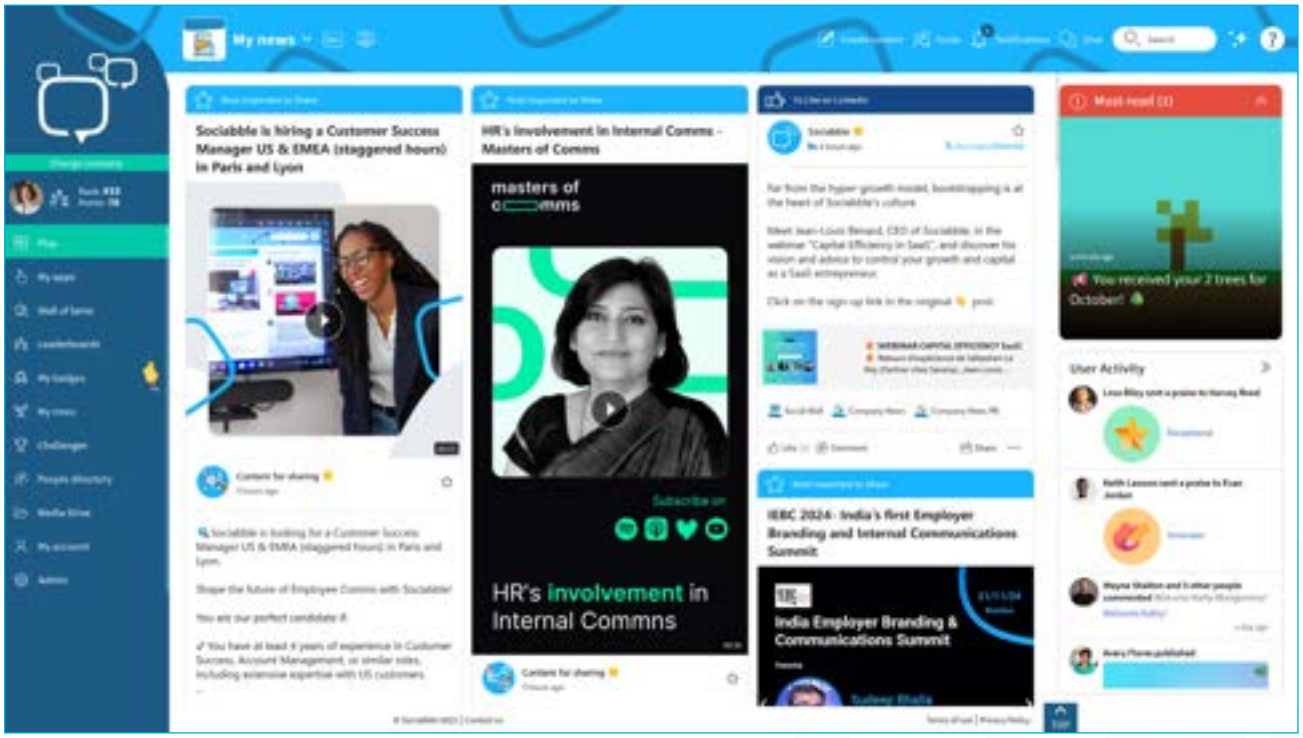
Communication platforms

Some platforms choose to address the needs of communicators, focusing on effectively reaching employees (and beyond) with news. Communication platforms therefore don't tend to tackle static reference materials, enterprise-wide search, activity-related integrations, and similar; this is where comms platforms and modern intranets with a communications focus differ. Comms platforms tend to make good use of other channels to reach employees with news, such as email, digital signage, employee advocacy, or even feeding into other business systems. These platforms tend to translate well to mobile, too.

For those tools that draw employees to the platform itself, communications content is either top-down or user generated, with multiple news feeds presented on desktop or as filters on mobile. Other platforms push content out to where employees are working and this is typically top-down.

The following are communications platforms in this report:

- ContactMonkey – newsletter and SMS tool.
- JungleMail 365 – newsletter tool.
- Poppulo – communications distribution, reaching multiple channels across the digital workplace.
- Sociabble – a central news platform that also reaches other channels well.
- Workshop – communications distribution, reaching multiple channels across the digital workplace.



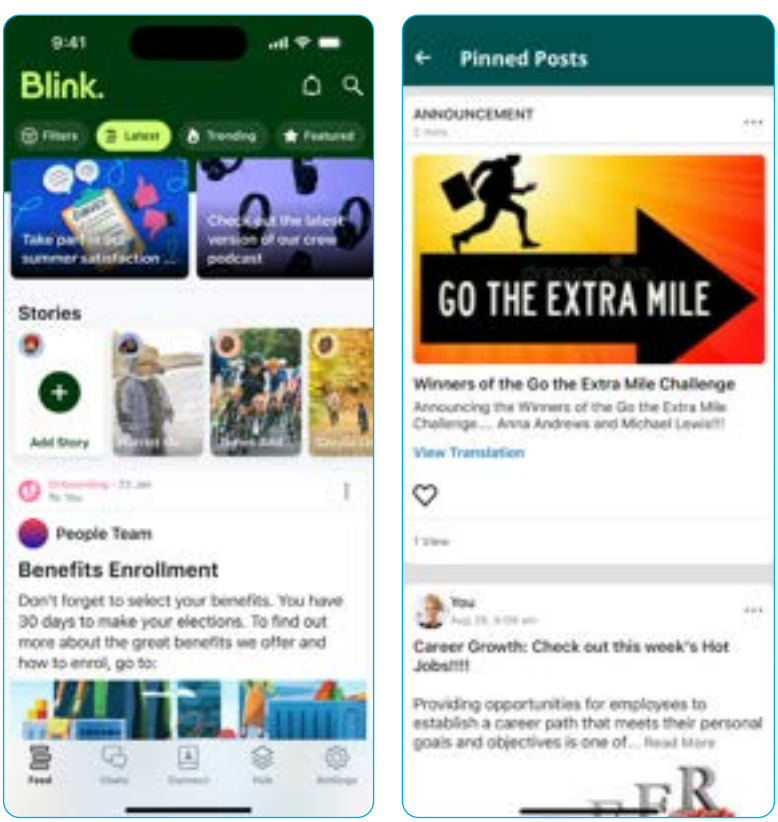
Sociabble presents employees with news from across the organisation, whether via the platform itself or another digital workplace channel.

Employee mobile apps

Employee apps enable frontline workers to do what they really need to from one place on mobile or tablet. These vendors typically understand frontline and other mobile audiences very well. The products tend to offer simple desktop experiences, but this translates into an excellent mobile experience. Employee mobile apps are often feature rich, addressing specific business needs through the mobile interface. For example, providing a method for communications but also practical features (like reporting an incident or viewing a payslip) that are valuable for frontline workers.

These products also typically focus on one or more business needs that their functionality attempts to address:

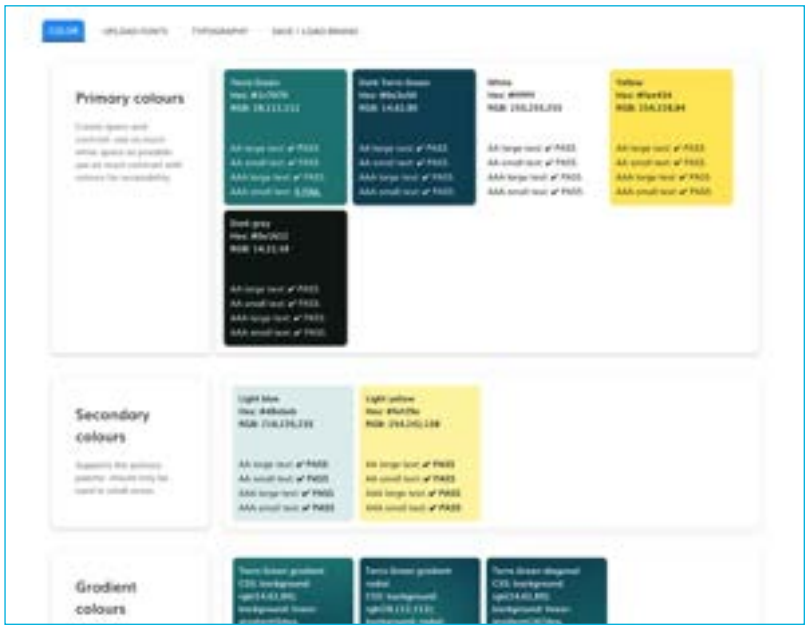
- **Communications** –This primarily covers internal news or messages from the business out to users, plus the way(s) that users can engage with those messages.
- **Operational** – Including practical activities (such as shift swapping, employee services, or integrations with business tools), essentially giving users the things they need to get their jobs done. Those 'things' are then provided by the app itself.
- **HR & People** – Putting people at the heart of the app, through employee engagement, wellbeing, and / or people-related tasks (such as training, onboarding, or performance management).
- **Digital Workplace Hub** – The app collates together a series of tools and / or is the gateway into the digital side of the business. It might be trying to replace an intranet or similar tool. This may include operational features, but the app acts as a facilitator for other systems and to keep the user in one place.



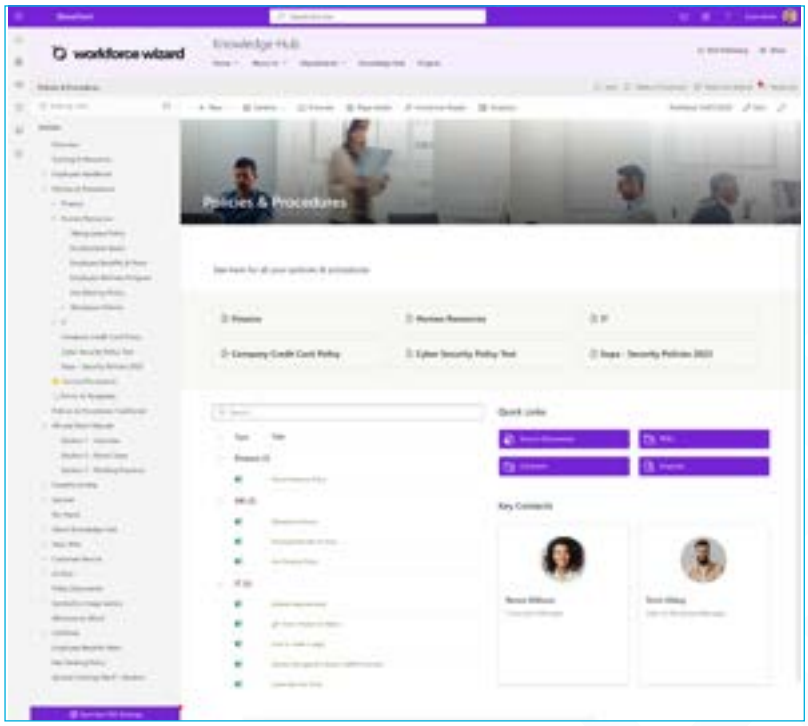
Blink and UKG are two employee app products in this report. Both are fully featured yet focus on the needs of frontline workers to deliver an excellent mobile experience.

Complementary solutions

The final category of products complement modern intranet solutions. This could be through offering SharePoint web parts, design solutions, extended analytics, or consolidation of digital workplace services. These tools will need another platform in order to operate effectively, yet provide vital services that improve admin and / or employee experiences.



One example is Beacon, which primarily provides branding support for SharePoint intranets.



Sprocket365 provides web parts that support SharePoint's knowledge base capabilities.

USING THIS REPORT TO CHOOSE A PRODUCT

The target audience for this report is intranet managers, internal communicators, and IT teams who are looking to implement a new intranet or other employee experience platform. This report's aim therefore is to help you understand the options and draw up a shortlist of potential vendors.

Four phases of product selection

There are four phases associated with choosing the right product for your organisation:

1. Strategy
2. Requirements
3. Product and vendor research
4. RfP and product selection.

We cover each phase in depth on our website, including a helpful flow chart to guide you through the whole process (and it's all free). This process will help you research and document your business needs, including how to discover what your employees want, before conducting detailed research and making a decision. This report will support you throughout all four phases.

Additionally, ClearBox often helps organisations define strategies and requirements, before making appropriate product recommendations based on those findings and using the experience from the hundreds of hours we spend researching this report.

The product selection flowchart is available, free, on our website.

Strategy and requirements

Use this report to identify features you feel are appropriate for your employees and would meet business needs. This will give you a starting point for exploring, researching, and documenting your strategy, which in turn will generate the functional requirements a product must have in order to meet business needs.

It's also important to form your non-functional requirements, usually with the aid of IT, so that you know what technical or support needs your organisation has. For example, you may need to work with a vendor headquartered in your continent or country, data may have to reside on your own in-house server, or you may already have a good idea of budget. Refer to the 'Company and Product' tables explanation in this introduction, then in each of the reviews, to get an idea of the sorts of things you should be exploring.

You can then return to the report, strategy and requirements in hand, to have a more detailed read through of the scenarios that matter most to you. Refer to the comparison information in this introduction, then at the individual reviews, to form a longlist of vendors to explore.

Product and vendor research

This report will save you a lot of time, as you won't need to thoroughly scour vendor websites, read case studies, or watch as many webinars to get a sense of what the product does. We still recommend completing these activities but use this report to form a longlist to investigate, rather than trying to explore all of them. The scenarios and scores are particularly helpful for identifying your longlist, but have a look at the 'Voice of the Customer' in each review too, as these are quotes from real customers that will start to give you an idea of how people feel about using the product and working with the vendor.

You will then gradually form a shortlist of vendors to take through the product selection phase.

RfP and product selection

We recommend building a dialogue with vendors rather than going straight in with a formal procurement process. An informal demonstration will help you to get to know the company as well as the product and help to narrow your shortlist down to a final three or four. You'll get a much better response if you are open about the process along the way.

As a minimum, you should ask for a demonstration linked to your requirement scenarios. A demo site that can be tested with your intranet users would be much better. Your final choice may not be one that scores highest overall in our report. The best value may be achieved by matching those who scored well on your priority scenarios and offer the right pricing, flexibility, and support too.

Ultimately, you should have a discussion where you share all the evidence you've gathered to help you make the best, most informed decision.

ClearBox can help you at any and all stages of this process, so please get in touch if you need any assistance.

Gather all information together and discuss with your colleagues. Where the positive experience overlaps, that's where you'll decide on a product.

A NEW INTRANET – BUILD OR BUY, SHAREPOINT, ADD-ON OR INDEPENDENT?

Given the prevalence of SharePoint licenses, we typically see four possible routes to creating a new intranet:

1. Use standard SharePoint, lightly adapted with branding and configuration
2. Use SharePoint with an add-on product (see the ones listed in the contents)
3. Buy an independent intranet platform and configure / extend it (see the ones listed in the contents)
4. Build your own using a CMS or SharePoint as the basis, requiring extensive specification and development

When clients engage ClearBox services to help choose an intranet platform, or do discovery work, there can be a presumption that the solution will be SharePoint-based because Microsoft 365 is already in place. Some feel there's no decision to be made as modern SharePoint (alongside the broader M365 suite) is more than capable of whatever the requirements reveal.

However, this decision is not as clear-cut as it first appears, and we often encourage clients to think more broadly about what matters most to them. Virtually all the products we list in this report will integrate SharePoint document libraries with the intranet experience, for example. The ability to work across an intranet and collaborative content can be over-weighted too; employees can sometimes be worried if they search the 'open' intranet and see results including 'their' documents, for example. It's easy to conflate 'SharePoint' with 'everything Microsoft' too – if you choose not to use SharePoint, it doesn't mean you can't keep using Teams, Outlook, Entra ID or anything else Microsoft provides.

Whichever route you take, the advice in the 'Using this report to choose a product' section still applies, as creating a strategy, identifying requirements, and exploring your options are sensible no matter what your starting preference.

The case for basing your intranet on SharePoint

1. **You already have it.** We're going to assume that many reading this already have Microsoft 365 as a start point, and that this has been chosen for many reasons beyond the intranet such as Exchange, Teams, Entra ID and so on. So long as all users are already licensed, there's a big win in not having to make the case for more budget.

2. **SharePoint is a strong contender for straightforward intranets.** If you just want one simple site, or many similar sites with a central hub, then it is easy to get going with SharePoint. The interface for site building and publishing is attractive and learnable.

3. **Integrated search.** This is often seen as a core argument for SharePoint or a SharePoint add-on: all your content stays within Microsoft 365, so there's no overhead of search integrations across intranet and collaborative content in a document or in Teams conversations.

4

Integration across other parts of Microsoft 365. If you buy into Microsoft's vision, then a modern digital workplace spans SharePoint, Teams, Viva, the Power Platform and more. The 'intranet' is secondary and having these work well together is more than the sum of the parts.

5

A single supplier to deal with. IT teams can be reluctant to set up more supplier relationships. Even if you choose a SharePoint add-on product, the vendor may still be a Microsoft Partner and within the same ecosystem. For similar reasons, there's a large marketplace of skilled contractors too.

6

Add-on products expand capabilities while keeping the benefits. If you need more power, then the SharePoint add-on products we list will greatly enhance the functionality whilst keeping the appeal of single search, integration with Teams, OneDrive, Viva Engage etc.

The case for choosing an independent (non-SharePoint) platform

1

Flexibility. It's hard to deviate from the SharePoint look even with an add-on product (though some do a commendable job). However, independent products can provide broader options and the flexibility to get it looking exactly as you want.

2

Cost of ownership. Although the licenses might be 'free', configuring SharePoint requires specialist knowledge that is in-demand. Some of the add-on products do a good job of simplifying the interface for admin tasks but add complexity elsewhere. You may even need the support of partners to deliver the intranet you want, which adds further cost. In the long run, it can be cheaper to buy an independent intranet product closer to your needs than adapt SharePoint to do it.

3

Easier to live with. Independent intranets tend to have a more straightforward admin interface and coherent set of options. Done well, an independent intranet can evolve more readily as non-technical users are able to manage it themselves and find it easier to add content.

4

Integrations. SharePoint in-a-box products tend to offer better integrations with M365 tools. However, independents are better at integrating with non-SharePoint cloud storage and tend to be better at offering open APIs or marketplaces for further development (which could of course include Microsoft applications).

5

Quicker deployment. It can be much quicker to go from project start to launch with an independent intranet product, though some of the add-on tools do a good job of shortening this phase for SharePoint too.

6

Frontline and Mobile experience. We're not too keen on the current SharePoint / Viva / Teams mobile experience, particularly for frontline workers, and SharePoint intranet in-a-box products generally fare worse in this scenario. You'll find more options, and a more mature approach with independent vendors, some of which began as mobile-first platforms.

The case for building your own

For many years now we have seen fewer organisations opting to build their own intranet. The technical maintenance burden can be significant (or maintenance doesn't happen because the developers are no longer available). Specifying requirements from a blank page is much more complex than choosing a product off-the-shelf, and the time between project start and go-live can easily fill 18 months or more. However, there are still some points to consider:

1

Flexibility and ambition. Building your own means that you can have just what you want. If you have a vision for something really innovative, or specific to how your business works, then there may be nothing off the shelf that fits. Quite a few intranet products began as in-house projects that were so good they spun off into companies.

2

Cost. For very large organisations, the cost of intranet products can be off-putting, especially on a per user / per month model when there may be 20,000 or more frontline workers to pay for. Build-your-own costs scale very well, and you may already have a license for the base CMS if it is used for your website.

3

Iteration. Some of the best intranets we've seen have a team behind them that constantly improve both the functionality and the content. Although you can do this with independent or SharePoint-based intranets too, there are more constraints on the modifications that will be supported, or you may have to wait a year or more for the feature to get on the vendor's roadmap.

Refer to the 'Using this report to choose a product' section to identify which option(s) is best for your organisation. If you would like some help, then please do get in touch with us.

REVIEWS SUMMARY

We've reviewed 34 products in this report and appreciate it can be a challenge to know which to read. Below you'll find a summary of them all and an overview of which scenarios they've performed best in – either as a list or in chart form.

As a reminder:

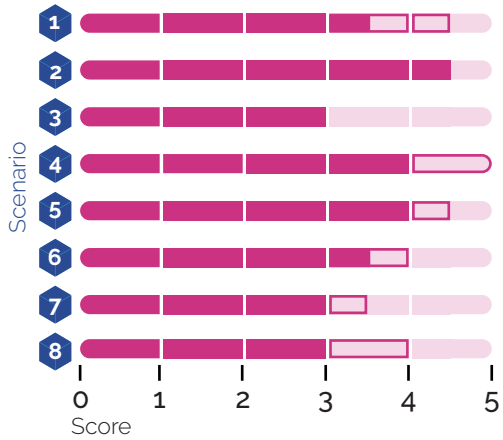
The eight scenarios selected are:

1. USER EXPERIENCE AND VISUAL APPEAL
2. PUBLISHING AND COMMUNICATIONS MANAGEMENT
3. COMMUNITY AND ENGAGEMENT
4. INTEGRATIONS AND SERVICES (INCLUDING M365)
5. INFORMATION FINDING AND SEARCH
6. ADMINISTRATOR EXPERIENCE
7. ANALYTICS
8. MOBILE AND FRONTLINE SUPPORT

Full Review Products

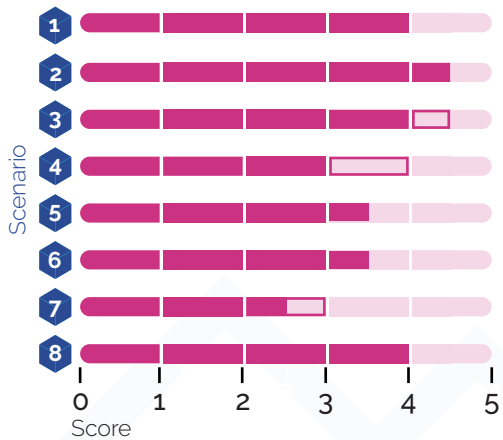
Akumina

Akumina is a compelling choice for large, digitally mature organisations embedded in the Microsoft 365 ecosystem. Offering a visually appealing and engaging intranet experience, it provides excellent design flexibility and personalisation, robust integration with M365 and powerful content management and targeting. The sophisticated Broadcast Centre and comprehensive analytics enhance internal communications and user engagement. Akumina suits organisations frustrated with SharePoint's limitations, those with complex structures, a focus on employee experience, predominantly knowledge workers and strong internal resources.



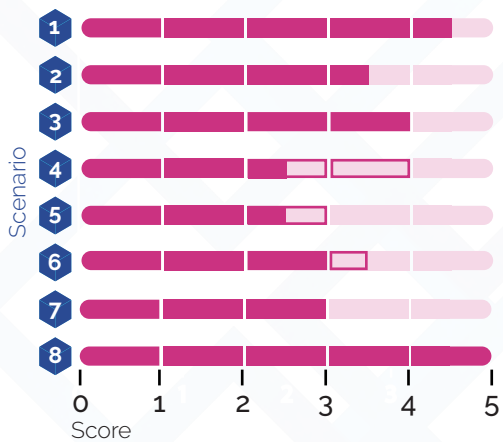
Appspace

Appspace provides a strong set of features that support employees wherever they are. Through careful integrations, communicators can reach people wherever they are working. News, community content and more is delivered in an attractive and effective manner for employees. While offices are particularly well catered for, frontline workers will find a lot to like, too. Appspace will suit multi-site or large organisations looking to enhance both the digital and physical workspaces.



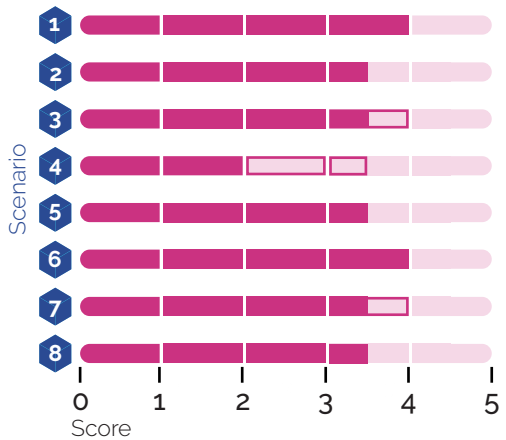
Blink

Blink is a frontline-focused, mobile-first product that understands its target audience perfectly. The interface is reminiscent of social media tools (in a good way), so it's instantly familiar and quick to adopt. Blink offers organisations alternatives to shadow technology like WhatsApp, while also offering an effective desktop experience that helps bring employees together. Organisations of any size that have frontline workers or want to address community needs will find something to like about Blink. It offers a good companion to desktop platforms too, meaning desk workers and frontline workers can be served by products that best suit their needs without clashing.



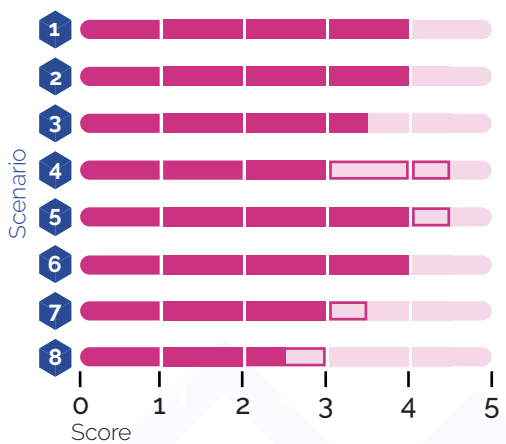
Colibo

Colibo is an extremely easy to use intranet product that offers solid functionality across the board. Its clean, simple, and visually attractive user interface, for desktop and mobile users alike, makes it stand out. We especially like the functionality for creating and targeting attractive-looking content, the collaboration spaces, and the thoughtfully designed mobile app. Colibo will appeal to all organisations that are looking for a highly usable intranet solution that both their office-based employees and frontline workers will be happy to adopt and use.



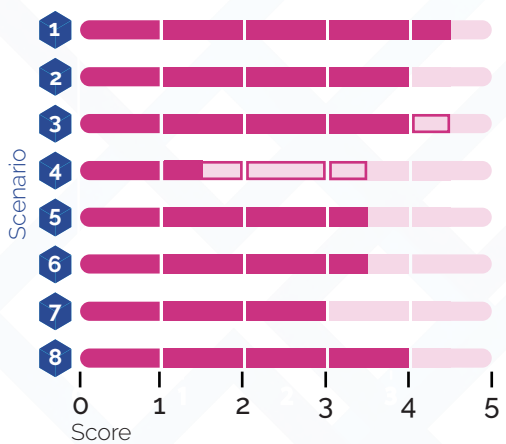
Fresh

Fresh adds valuable functionality and an improved experience to employees and administrators alike. It is particularly strong in news and content management and provides good support for communities as well. Fresh has made good use of AI capabilities to add value to specific use cases such as editorial support and answering questions on controlled topics. Fresh will appeal to medium to large organisations that have a significant investment in Microsoft 365 and want to further gain advantage from the platform.



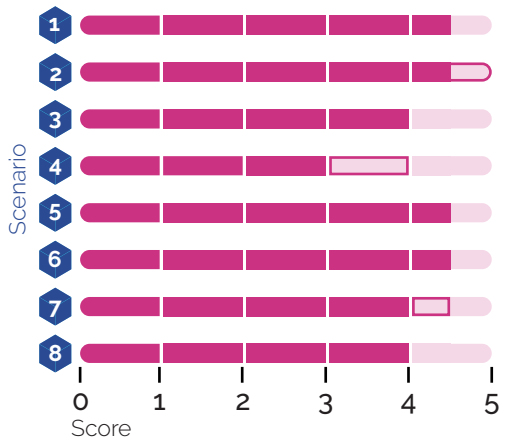
Haiilo

Haiilo is a social intranet platform that offers a strong suite of social and collaboration features in a simple, intuitive format. The platform focuses on easy content creation and management, available both on desktop and a well-optimised mobile app that supports frontline workers. Haiilo can be a good fit for a wide range of organisations, from small businesses to large enterprises, and is particularly well-suited for those aiming to boost employee participation and encourage social interaction.



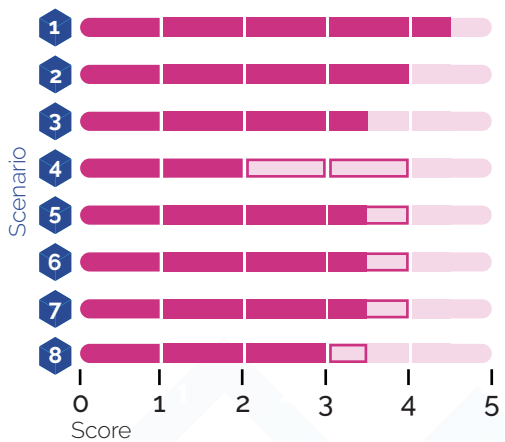
Interact

Interact is a fully featured product, where the years of experience from the vendor are evident. Businesses of all sizes will find plenty of functionality to meet their needs, while large and complex organisations will especially appreciate the advanced features for content creation and the flexible options for targeting a variety of audiences, including frontline workers. The product includes innovative functionality based on generative AI, and new features continue to be added, showing the vendor's commitment to keep delivering a top-tier product.



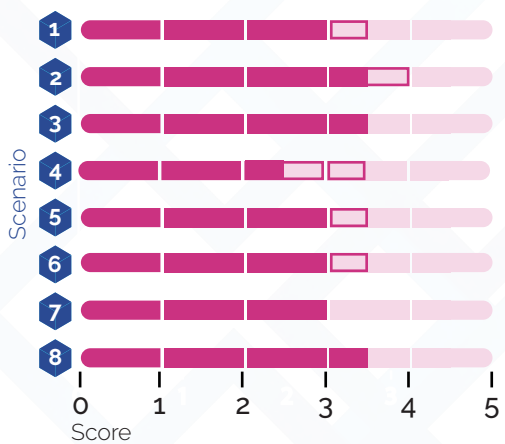
Involv

Involv provides a robust, ready-to-use intranet solution built on SharePoint, designed to enhance both end-user and admin experiences. With strong Microsoft 365 integration and well-designed templates, it offers an intuitive admin interface to facilitate communication, knowledge management and collaboration. Involv's competitive pricing and strong vendor support make it appealing for medium to large organisations seeking a modern, efficient and adaptable intranet solution.



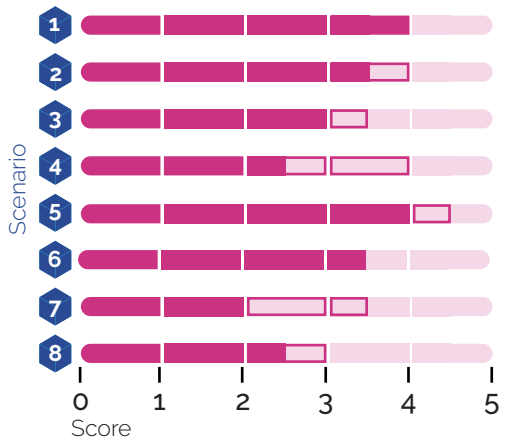
Jalios

Jalios has had years of thoughtful development based on customer needs. It offers a strong standalone product with in-depth community and collaboration functionality, while integrating with Microsoft365, Google Workspace and other external applications. The flexibility offered means we think Jalios would be particularly valuable for larger organisations who have in-house technical expertise or the desire and budget to work with partner vendors to maximise the customisation and integrations opportunities available.



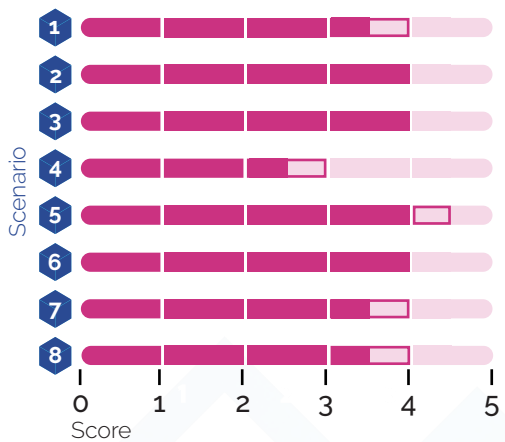
Lightspeed365

Lightspeed365 is a well-made collection of web parts that add attractive features to SharePoint intranets. The vendor has developed an innovative 'self-serve' option that includes an intranet site 'blueprint' for a one-off, reasonable price. We think the product will appeal to medium to large organisations that are looking for some additional features and control over SharePoint visual design, without going for a full-blown add-on product.



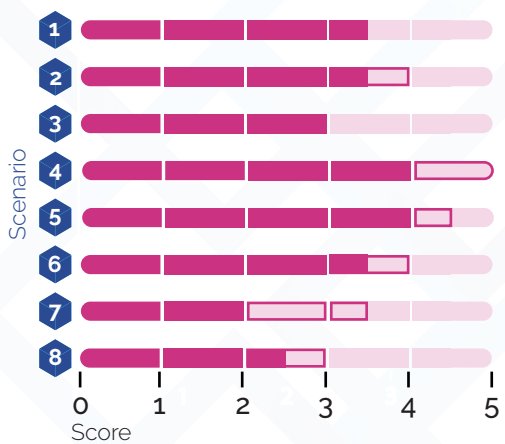
MangoApps

MangoApps is a comprehensive solution and offers good value for money, sitting at the mid-price point range. MangoApps comes with impressive customer service and would be well suited for medium and large-sized organisations with a variety of operations. The configuration options and impressive mobile app support multiple audiences and would serve frontline workers well. As well as building and managing standard intranet applications out of the box, MangoApps offers impressive community, social and learning features, making it versatile for modern work.



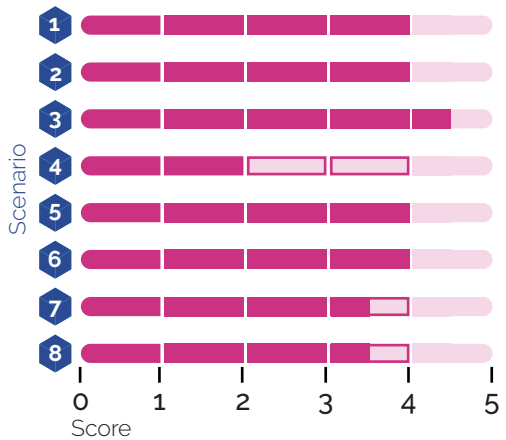
Mozzaik365

Mozzaik365 will appeal to organisations that have outgrown standard SharePoint, but nevertheless want to continue to stay within the Microsoft 365 world for their intranet. IT departments will likely approve of Mozzaik's efforts to maintain a high level of compatibility with the Microsoft standards and roadmap. Communicators and administrators will be glad of the enhancements that make it easier to publish content and manage sites, all leading to an overall attractive and modern user experience at a good price point.



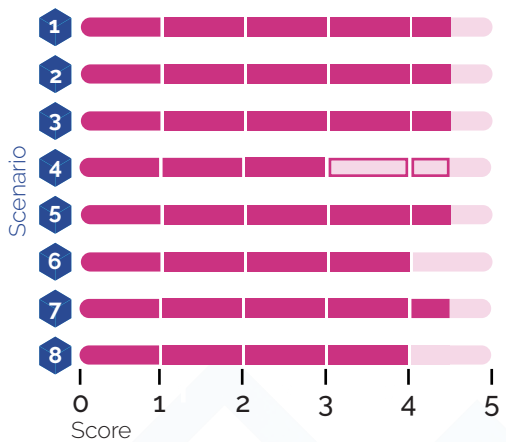
Oak

Oak's high level of flexibility, content targeting capabilities and ease of use enable organisations to deliver an intranet that meets many employee needs. Deskless workers are well served with a strong mobile app, while desk-based employees will appreciate the clean user experience. There are excellent publishing and community features for employees and admins alike. Integrations with other business systems work well, with a comprehensive developer framework for those who wish to build deeper two-way integrations. Overall, Oak delivers a strong employee experience, at a competitive price point.



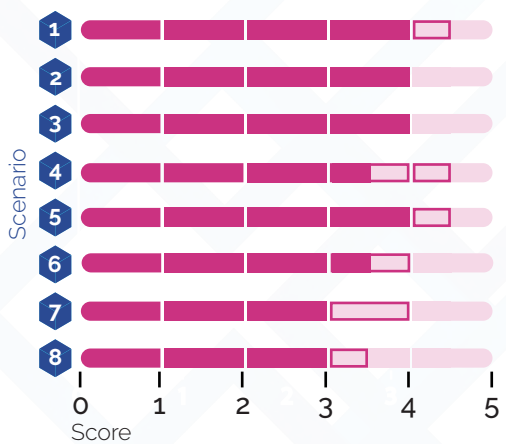
Omnia

Omnia provides a powerful platform for developing a highly personalised and engaging intranet experience across desktop and mobile devices. It benefits from close integration with M365 but is not constrained by some of SharePoint's shortcomings when it comes to design, page templates and mobile access. Omnia will appeal to medium to large organisations that want to provide a rich, targeted experience to their employees on any device.



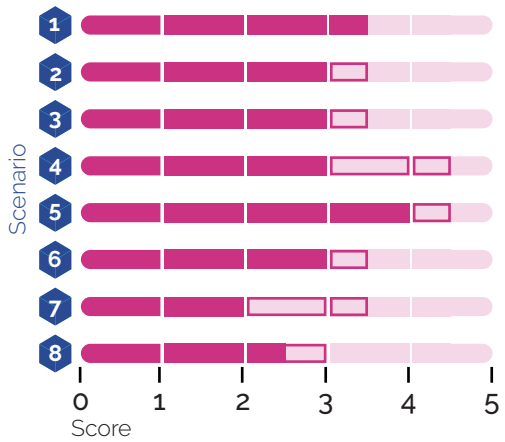
Powell

Powell Intranet is an excellent top layer addition to M365 digital workplace. It provides a great deal of extra web parts, administration options and additional features to offer an enhanced experience on top of SharePoint. Small and medium sized companies will appreciate the numerous ready-to-use templates and modules (crisis communication, communities, desk booking, ideation management, car-pooling etc.), while bigger companies will be able to customise their environment and efficiently manage a complex intranet setup. The product is constantly evolving to provide innovations, such as Powell Buddy, Powell's AI assistant for contribution and search, a fun 'Virtual Building' feature and a lot of well-thought-through setting options.



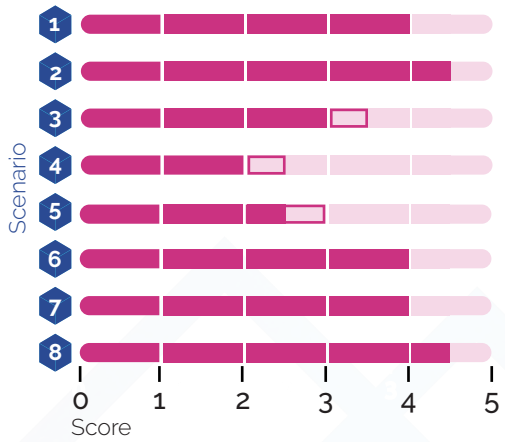
SharePoint & Viva

Modern SharePoint with Viva is capable of some attractive and very versatile intranets. It works best when an organisation has a very federated mindset to intranet governance, preferring there to be a very large number of loosely coupled sites rather than a top-down and highly structured architecture. Ultimately, SharePoint is best considered an intranet and content platform within a much wider digital workplace or employee experience (EX) strategy and part of a technology stack that includes Teams, Lists, Copilot, Power Apps and the whole Viva Suite. When viewed from this perspective, the comprehensiveness of what is on offer can often override reservations about SharePoint from a pure intranet point of view. In addition, Microsoft's roadmap is ambitious and fast-moving, so many companies make a legitimate decision to deploy on Microsoft 365 and put faith in any gaps being filled over time. In 2025 this is likely to be particularly true for buyers with firm AI ambitions, attracted by the potential of Microsoft's Copilot offerings and the potential of generative AI for boosting employee productivity.



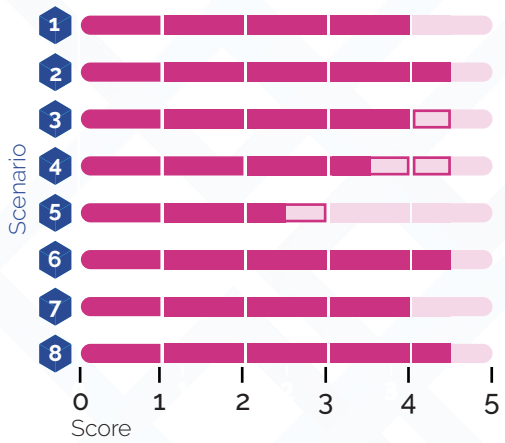
Sociabble

Sociabble is an excellent employee communication and engagement platform that delivers powerful functionality for content creation, audience targeting, and multichannel publishing. We were especially impressed by the thoughtful use of AI, the focus on high-quality audio and video-based content, and the rich multilanguage features. Sociabble will appeal to large international businesses that are keen to improve the reach and the engagement levels of their employee communications. Organisations with a large population of frontline workers will particularly appreciate Sociabble's focus on mobile delivery.



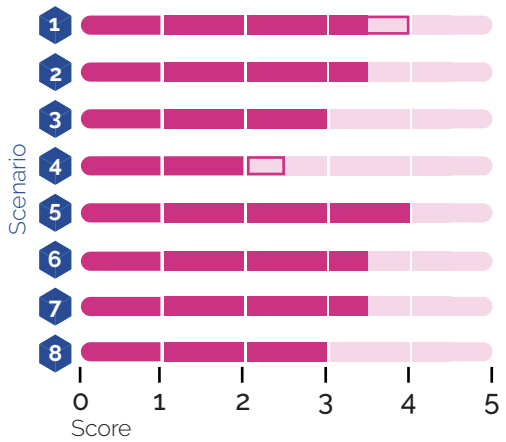
Staffbase

Businesses looking to provide first class, multi-channel communications to employees will likely find Staffbase meets their needs well. This is a mature product with a wide variety of well-conceived features for users and admins alike. There's a comprehensive analytics section and a strong selection of community and engagement tools too. It's best suited to medium to large businesses with a workforce geographically spread and where parity for office and frontline workers is very important. For those who have invested in Microsoft 365, it complements that platform well as an alternative news interface, while keeping the intranet connected with content in Teams and SharePoint.



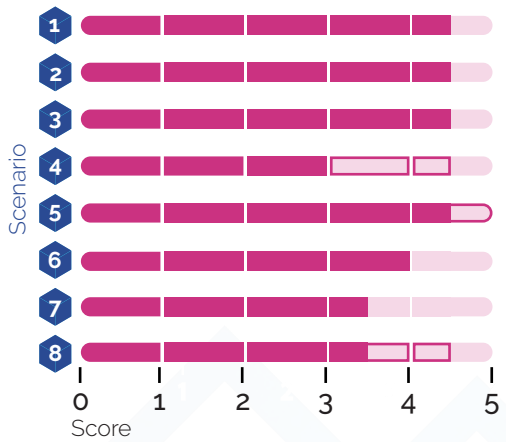
ThoughtFarmer

ThoughtFarmer's main strengths lie in simple and intuitive page layouts, a powerful search capability that works equally well in the desktop browser and mobile app and flexibility and ease of use for quickly building out new pages and areas within the platform. The social features and ability to create news driven pages, particularly the home page, enable the creation of a dynamic intranet. The easy-to-use news publishing features and discussion forums work well for engaging employees.



Unily

Unily is a sophisticated platform that delivers comprehensive desktop and mobile environments, with good audience targeting and tailoring. Employees will appreciate the ease of use and variety of community features, while admins will like the range of flexible tools to maintain their site as desired. Internal Communicators, and HR colleagues in particular, will find a lot to like, as will those looking to explore the potential of AI. Large or complex organisations will find Unily meets their needs effectively, while also delivering an attractive end result that will represent their brand well.



Product Overviews

Alongside our 'Full Reviews' are shorter format, yet still insightful, Product Overviews. These reviews cover additional intranet platforms, as well as email tools, communication products, and other digital workplace technology.

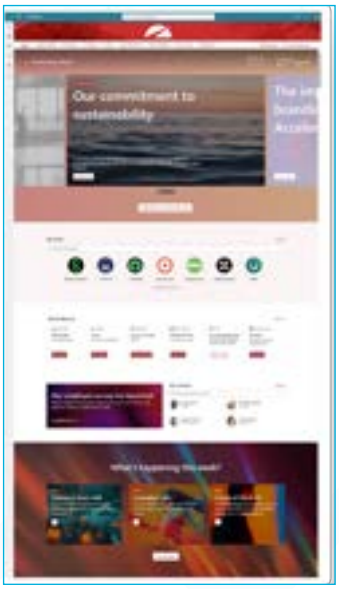
As a reminder:

FULLY STANDALONE | REQUIRES SHAREPOINT | OTHER | FRONTLINE FOCUS

Accelerator365

Accelerator 365, a product from the consultancy Reply, offers over thirty 'Apps' (web parts) and two 'Solutions' ('Content Management Dashboard' and 'Translator') to improve the SharePoint experience. Apps include a page tour, accordion, table of contents, audience subscription and many more. The vendor's philosophy is to fill some of SharePoint's gaps and improve the user and contribution experience, without duplicating what Microsoft already offers. We think they address this philosophy well.

Worth reading by those exploring Scenario 1, Scenario 2 and Scenario 6.



Beacon

Beacon offers a set of features designed to enhance SharePoint intranet creation and content broadcasting. Beacon will speak to organisations that are already used to SharePoint and feel limited by the standard design or the default set of widgets and options. Beacon provides a good set of additional options to improve both how employees can personalise their intranet experience and how administrators can ensure the delivery of important content to the appropriate audiences.

Worth reading by those exploring Scenario 1, Scenario 4 and Scenario 6.

ContactMonkey

ContactMonkey is available at a good price, particularly for larger organisations, and provides an excellent emailing tool with other helpful communication features alongside. It's easy for publishers to use, works effectively in Microsoft and Google environments and delivers attractive results to employees. Overall, ContactMonkey is a compelling choice for any organisation looking to improve communications with a stand-alone email and SMS tool.

Worth reading by those exploring Scenario 2, Scenario 4 and Scenario 8.

Diggspace

Diggspace is an attractive intranet product that runs as an independent intranet but also integrates well with Microsoft 365. The user interface is intuitive, with a simple navigation on the left, a central content area and additional widgets in a right-hand column. Overall, the look and feel is pleasant, and branding options will meet most organisations' needs. The product also includes an AI-powered chatbot called Diggy that will help employees find information stored in Diggspace through natural language questions.

Worth reading by those exploring Scenario 2, Scenario 3, and Scenario 5.

Fellow Intranet

Fellow Intranet is a mobile-first, lightweight intranet platform designed to support dispersed frontline employees. Its strength lies in delivering timely information, training, and tasks to non-desk workers in their preferred language. Stand-out features include its in-built learning management system, recruitment tool, and repeatable checklists for tasks such as daily health and safety checks.

Worth reading by those exploring Scenario 3, Scenario 4 and Scenario 8.

Flip

Flip is a mobile-first employee experience platform that aims to be the starting point for employees to read news, chat with colleagues and complete other tasks, such as swapping shifts, while minimising the need to switch apps. From what we've seen it does this job well. Overall, Flip is a comprehensive platform that will appeal to medium to large organisations with a large contingent of frontline employees.

Worth reading by those exploring Scenario 2, Scenario 4 and Scenario 8.

intranet.ai

intranet.ai is a SharePoint-based intranet product that offers a wide range of components and features to improve the standard SharePoint experience. The user interface looks contemporary and comes with rich functionality for admins to customise layout and branding well beyond standard SharePoint. The user experience can be personalised and, notably, there is a good mobile app.

Worth reading by those exploring Scenario 4, Scenario 5, and Scenario 8.

JungleMail

JungleMail is an enterprise email management tool offering communication professionals a comprehensive drag-and-drop email builder, a range of flexible pre-configured templates, along with analytics to measure communication efficacy. Fully integrated with Microsoft 365 including SharePoint, and recently approved for Google Workspace, this tool is built with enterprise needs in mind.

Worth reading by those exploring Scenario 2.

OneSource

OneSource is a user-friendly SharePoint-based intranet product that completely replaces the user interface with its own solution, which we found to be intuitive and easy to manage. This approach, although unusual, will appeal to organisations looking for a user-friendly experience, while sticking to SharePoint and Microsoft 365 as the underlying technology.

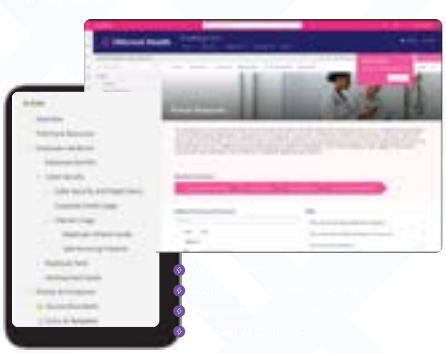
Worth reading by those exploring Scenario 1, Scenario 2, and Scenario 5.

Poppulo

Poppulo is a familiar brand in the communications industry and has a reach of over 50 million employees across its global customer base. Poppulo helps communicators effectively reach employees wherever they already are in the digital workplace. From one dashboard, communicators can form and distribute messages across multiple channels and in different formats. It would support change and transformation projects well, where messaging is organisation-wide and not necessarily associated with an individual department, for example.

Worth reading by those exploring Scenario 2 and Scenario 8.

Sprocket 365



Sprocket 365 is an extension for SharePoint from a vendor based in Australia. Sprocket 365 uses a series of easy to install web parts that can change the look and feel of SharePoint pages, plus adds further functionality. The primary use case for Sprocket is turning existing SharePoint pages into knowledge bases, rather than installing third-party applications such as Confluence and Notion.

Worth reading by those exploring Scenario 2 and Scenario 5.

Steegle

Steegle.One is one of the few products that works only with Google Sites, making it incredibly valuable for Google-oriented organisations that want to expand its capabilities. Like its cousins among SharePoint intranet-in-a-box products, Steegle.One works within the confines of the Google product while adding some helpful functionality on top. At a lower price point, Steegle.One is absolutely worth exploring for any Google-oriented organisations.

Worth reading by those exploring Scenario 2, Scenario 4, and Scenario 5.

Syntphony

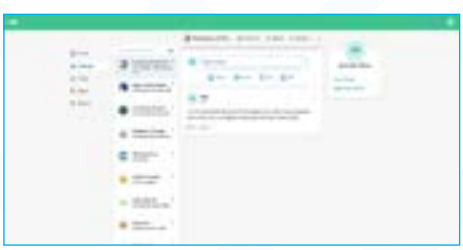
Syntphony Employee Intranet is a platform built on top of SharePoint and Microsoft 365 that offers a streamlined user experience. Overall, Syntphony offers large and complex organisations thoughtful functionality. We especially like the unusual Communities structure, extended hero web part and content targeting capabilities. Syntphony comes at a higher price point, particularly for a SharePoint intranet in-a-box product, but by working with NTT Data, organisations are likely to be able to configure it to meet a diverse range of needs.

Worth reading by those exploring Scenario 3, Scenario 5, and Scenario 6.

UKG Talk

UKG Talk is a communications and tasks tool from the broader UKG HR suite. As such, licensing relies on having UKG already in place. UKG Talk is available on both desktop and mobile, but its simple interface is best suited as a mobile-first tool for frontline employees. Overall, UKG Talk offers a good range of features to meet practical and communication needs for the frontline, although its styling could feel more contemporary in places. Organisations need to have other parts of the UKG suite in place, but for those who do, UKG Talk is certainly worth exploring.

Worth reading by those exploring Scenario 4 and Scenario 8.



Workai

Workai is a fully fledged standalone intranet product with many attractive features across the board. The user interface is intuitive, it includes a range of widgets and navigation elements to build attractive pages and guide employees to relevant content. The experience can be personalised, for instance by bringing relevant news stories together in a 'suggested for you' news zone. Branding options are flexible and include the possibility to create sub-brands with a different look and feel.

Worth reading by those exploring Scenario 2, Scenario 3 and Scenario 5.

Workgrid

Workgrid is an AI assistant designed for seamless integration with nearly any business app a company utilises. Available as a button within company portals, a browser extension or within MS Teams, its primary goal is to reduce information overload and digital friction in modern workplaces. Through an intuitive chat interface, Workgrid consolidates notifications from various company applications, such as intranets, HR systems and ticketing systems, into a personalised assistant. Workgrid takes a proactive approach to notifications, designed to help employees effectively prioritise their tasks by providing timely, relevant nudges throughout the digital workplace.

Worth reading by those exploring Scenario 2, Scenario 4 and Scenario 5.

Workshop

Workshop helps communicators design, build and track attractive communications. A range of templates are available to build campaigns and associated newsletters, which generate accompanying web pages. Content can then be shared via multiple internal platforms, including Teams, SharePoint, Workvivo and SMS (although note SMS support is in North America only at present). An option to generate a QR code to use on posters and digital signage is particularly useful for frontline workers.

Worth reading by those exploring Scenario 2, Scenario 4, and Scenario 8.

Workspace365

Workspace 365 aims to reduce the task-switching cost of employees moving between different applications by integrating common services. The interface is clean and there is a good range of functionality. Workspace 365 is easy to use but quite simple, providing value in its focus as a starting point or shortcut for many business systems. There is a lot on the roadmap, and we think it has the potential to be a more well-rounded solution in future.

Worth reading by those exploring Scenario 3, Scenario 4 and Scenario 5.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Report Manager and Lead Reviewer

Suzie Robinson is an intranet and digital employee experience consultant at ClearBox and has responsibility for this report.

Suzie has worked with intranets since 2008 and has practical experience with all aspects of an intranet lifecycle, from research, to implementation, to ongoing governance, and overall strategy. Suzie's intranet experience has grown out of the roots of internal communication, so she has a focus on employee experience and engagement, plus strong content. Remote and difficult to reach users were often the core user-base for the intranets Suzie managed, so she has extensive experience at finding ways to engage and connect a broad audience range.

Suzie is a skilled writer (not just of reviews, she's also a published author) and editor, and she is active in the internal communications community, both writing and getting up to speak at conferences. Suzie is always happy to have a chat, so please feel free to follow her on LinkedIn.

Report Executive Director

Sam Marshall is the owner of ClearBox Consulting and has specialised in intranets and the digital workplace for over 20 years, working with companies such as Bayer, Vodafone, Diageo, UK Government, Sony, FIFA and GSK.

His current activities focus on intranet and digital workplace strategy, and the business side of Microsoft 365.

He is a regular keynote speaker at international conferences and has been named a 'Contributor of the year' for his CMSWire column seven years in a row. In 2015 Sam was given the Intranet Now award for 'remarkable contribution to the intranet community'. Connect with Sam on LinkedIn.

Reviewers

Andrew Marr is an intranet and digital workplace consultant at ClearBox, having over 15 years' experience in digital business strategy and management practice. He has completed a wide range of digital workplace strategy, intranet management and technology vendor selection assignments for world-leading brands and government organisations. Coming from a practitioner background, Andrew was responsible for intranet strategy and development at international healthcare group Bupa and implemented pioneering social and collaboration applications during his time there.

Andrew Pope builds modern and collaborative working practices in Microsoft 365. He coaches leaders and teams, enhancing their practical skills and developing behaviours to build healthy, productive and connected ways of working. He also designs human-centric strategies to optimise workplace technology to meet goals and needs, or solve problems. This includes hybrid and modern working frameworks. Andrew has advised and coached UK and Australian government departments as well as large multinationals on how to better leverage Microsoft 365 and to empower today's teams.

Christy Punch has focused on the intersection of innovation and the employee experience across her career. She's passionate about connecting people, process, and technology to solve business problems, empower collaboration, and drive forward new ways of working and being productive. For more than 20 years, Christy has led award winning, large-scale digital transformation efforts and digital employee experience strategy for Fortune 500 companies. She enjoys sharing her insights and learning from others in the digital employee experience space - connect with her on LinkedIn. Christy lives in Charleston, South Carolina with her husband and her rescue dog, August.

Guy Van Leemput is an independent intranet and digital workplace consultant based in Brussels, and the founder of ValueIntranet. He has more than 10 years of consulting experience and has worked with many large and mid-sized organisations across the Benelux countries. Previously he was a corporate intranet manager at financial services provider Swift. Guy frequently advises organisations about intranet strategy and governance, product and technology selection, and user adoption of digital tools in an increasingly complex hybrid workplace.

Lisa Riemers is an independent communications, content, and digital workplace consultant, with over 15 years of experience helping organisations tell their stories. She's worked as an in-house intranet manager, product owner and marketer, and bridges the gap between comms, digital and technology teams. She works with large organisations like the UK government (Department for International Trade), G4S, Veolia, FirstGroup, British Red Cross and Direct Line Group. Lisa loves connecting people. She builds communities online and offline and co-runs the Intranet Now conference. She's also an artist, who brings her creative flair to the workplace. Connect with Lisa on LinkedIn.

Luke Mepham is a passionate intranet and Microsoft 365 professional. He has been involved in the IT side of intranet development and management since 2000, leading and delivering several projects to create, migrate and redesign intranets for large international financial service organisations. Luke enjoys speaking at conferences on the topic of intranets and sharing his insights and best practices on how to leverage the power of M365 to create modern and effective digital workplaces. He is currently the M365 Product Owner for a large UK insurer, where he oversees the strategy, governance and adoption of the suite.

Marko Cincar is an independent intranet consultant and the founder of Invento Consulting. Specialising in intranet selection and implementation, he has collaborated with numerous SMB organisations across the United States, Canada, UK, and Australia. Marko focuses on helping businesses enhance internal communication and collaboration through modern intranet solutions. With a proven track record, he has successfully led implementation projects, trained teams, and provided strategic guidance on adoption to create more effective and engaging digital workplaces.

Michalla Sedano is a knowledge management practitioner and digital workplace strategist. Michalla currently works at the Massachusetts-based nonprofit VentureWell, where she focuses on process improvement and requirement analysis and discovery for technology and strategic enterprise projects. Prior to VentureWell, Michalla worked at Ideal State, a digital transformation consulting firm for clients in the social sector. In her role as a consultant, Michalla led clients through digital workplace transformation projects and knowledge management strategy. Michalla also has experience working in nonprofit organisations, launching Microsoft Teams and implementing enterprise social intranets. Connect with Michalla on LinkedIn.

Reshmy Nair is a digital workplace professional with over 15 years of experience. Reshmy currently works at Fidelity International Limited as the Product Owner of digital communication channels, overseeing the day-to-day service delivery and overall roadmap. Working closely with technical and business teams, she has experience in leading and implementing digital communication and collaboration projects with a focus on strategy and governance across global, matrix organisations.

Sébastien Chatel is a French consultant at Arctus, specialising in internal communication projects. For 12 years Sébastien has been working across digital workplace projects including intranets, collaborative solutions, enterprise social networks, and other similar solutions. He is equally passionate about the strategy, the contents, as well as the human and the technical aspects of internal communication.

Simon Scullion is an independent digital workplace consultant based in Spain. He has more than ten years of experience as a facilitator and strategist to organisations implementing modern intranet platforms and evolving their digital workplaces. Previously he was the social intranet business analyst for a large global IT consulting company. Simon's focus is in supporting companies with their digital workplace programs translating between the languages of business and technology and bridging the gap between strategy and execution.

Report Editing

Courtney O'Grady is a freelance virtual assistant who works alongside the team at ClearBox, providing administrative assistance in a variety of areas. With a varied background covering everything from freelance writing to professional accounting, she primarily offered her expertise to this year's report by way of proofreading, editing and spreadsheet maintenance.

Report Editing

Steve Bynghall is an independent digital workplace and intranet consultant and writer. Steve works independently as well as through consultancies such as the Digital Workplace Group and Step Two. Steve co-founded Spark Trajectory, an intranet and digital workplace consultancy. Steve also writes extensively, focusing on B2B technology themes, mainly for vendors, agencies and consultancies.

Following an MSc in Information Science from City University, Steve worked at accounting firm BDO LLP for over thirteen years, working in various knowledge roles including managing the firm's global extranet programme. He has been freelance since 2010. Connect with Steve on LinkedIn.

Report Design

Debbie Brown is a seasoned freelance designer holding a Bachelor of Arts Degree. Debbie has 20 years of experience working on a diverse range of design disciplines including: publication design, print and online advertising, logo creation, branding design, homepage concept / UI design. To see a selection of her work view her portfolio and connect with her on LinkedIn.

Vendors

We are grateful to each vendor for their co-operation in demonstrating their products to us. The products we feature are a combination of companies we approached and ones that asked to be involved in this edition. If you're the vendor of a product and would like to be included in the next version of this report, please visit our website for details.

BECOME A CLEARBOX REVIEWER

We're always looking for more people to join our team of reviewers for our reports. ClearBox is only a small consultancy firm, and we need support from critically minded, passionate people to help us cover the breadth of products we feature in our reports.

What being a reviewer involves

Each of our reviews takes about a week in total to complete, but spread over a couple of months. This includes writing, responding to editing recommendations, and sharing with your vendors. During a demo we expect you to be able to identify the great (and less great) features of the products you see. Afterwards you need to be able to express your thoughts cohesively and coherently – while we want to know what something does, it's more important to express how well it does it.

We fact-check everything with vendors, so managing that relationship and related conversations is also important. Of course, we also need people who can meet deadlines so that we can keep pushing towards launch.

"I've been a ClearBox reviewer for several years now and I find the experience enriching and rewarding. It's a great way to learn about new products and new trends in a rapidly evolving market. I also enjoy being part of an international team of experts that produces one of the industry's most significant reports."

Guy Van Leemput, Intranet and Digital Workplace Consultant

How we support you

We assign each product to a reviewer, so you and the vendor have a consistent experience. We template everything, provide guidance, offer training, and will mentor you through your first review. We're always on hand to answer questions too, and we welcome queries as they may help the wider reviewing team.

We pay for your time, of course, and you gain the benefit of experience of a variety of platforms during the process.

What to do

Have a read through of this report; if you find the type of content interesting and think, "Yeah, I could write that," then please get in touch with me. You're welcome to DM me via LinkedIn or email me instead (suzie@clearbox.co.uk).

I'm really proud of the reviews we produce, particularly as we've been able to release them for free. The vendors who take part appreciate the level of detail we go into, and our reviewers get a huge amount of insight into the industry. It's a lot of work, but it's extremely rewarding and benefits the digital workplace industry as a whole. So come and get involved!

Suzie Robinson, Report Manager

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