

Internal Communications conference

the
cream
of the
crop

June 2016 **Synergy.**

The Internal Communications Conference in central London attracted comms professionals from industries across the board. And it wasn't hard to see why. The event was buzzing with fresh thinking, fantastic speakers and top tips aplenty. But if you missed it then fear not, the Synergy team were there to bring you back all the stories.



Conference stats:

97%

average delegate
satisfaction rating

33

speakers

30

internal
communications
innovators

4

peer-to-peer
roundtable
discussions

Challenge 1

Nicole Dempster

Internal Communications Director, ITV

Talking about: Who drives engagement? We all do

Background: ITV has a big mix of increasingly global internal audiences: in the office, in the field, behind/in front of camera. It has 90 employee ambassadors and the comms team bring the brand to life for their people by:

- 1 Keeping tone of voice consistent
- 2 Ensuring channels are relevant
- 3 Focusing on internal campaigns that drive engagement

Nicola says:

“We try to give everyone at ITV the same brand experience. Our audiences have high expectations and want immediacy.”



Case study: Launching a new channel – ITUBE

- 1** Employees (along with viewers) were invited to send in their own Idents (the short video used to identify the channel)
- 2** As well as using lots of teasers including digital posters and IPTV, the team took over the intranet and encouraged people to post on social media
- 3** On the day of the launch there was a real focus on experience. The 'Mydents' were revealed and there was a wall of donuts with an experiential stand where staff were encouraged to have their picture taken with cut-out frames from the Mydents

Results: 93% of staff said the campaign brought the brand to life with one staff member saying it was their best day at ITV.



Top tip:

Lose the management speak and don't forget that humour works (in small doses!).

Challenge 2

Jon Peet

Head of Communications, Mobile Networks, Nokia

Talking about: Driving engagement

The challenge: Having taken over a competitor two years ago, Nokia now has 110,000 employees across 27 different countries. But this means that only 2% of current employees were Nokia people in 2014. The comms team needed to help a huge number of employees through the change, so they focused on four key elements:

TIMING: Took timings and milestones directly from the change programmes

RHYTHM: Ensured there was a rhythm to comms

CONSISTENCY: During changes, ensured all stakeholders had equal access to information

OUTLOOK: Discovered people were anxious about two things: 1) That senior leaders were planning stuff they didn't know about. 2) That other colleagues knew things they didn't. To combat these anxieties, they ensured people knew when they'd receive the information

Top tip:

Get out and talk to people.

Qualitative and anecdotal comments are important for understanding employees' concerns. You need to engage with stakeholders so that when you go into the board, you can say: "This is how people feel; this is what they're talking about."

Social media

Paul Morgan

Communications Director, Premiership Rugby

Talking about: Employee social media

Paul Morgan's team looks after the 12 biggest rugby clubs in England. Here are his seven tips for getting your workforce to take part in social media campaigns:

- 1** Involve employees from day one of the campaign
- 2** Be clear about the role your employees play
- 3** Make sure leaders know they have a responsibility to be on social media
- 4** Encourage them to schedule time into their diaries
- 5** Squeeze a bit of social media time into your diary each day
- 6** Create content for your staff to share internally and externally
- 7** Give staff exclusives

Remember:

The 80/20 rule: post content that is 80% personal so that 20% of the content can push the organisations message (and land it!).



Challenge 3

Uilma Nikolaidou

Head of Organisational Development, Tate Gallery

Talking about: Tate Modern wanted to engage employees with the new extension of the gallery. However, budget was limited and technology isn't a huge area for them, so instead the comms team opted for a more 1-2-1 approach. Here are their tips:

STRATEGIC NARRATIVE

- Start with the why
- Create a story and build it for different audiences
- Invest in living the vision. For the Tate this included a series of discussions where everyone wrote letters to the CEO
- Bring the internal and external narrative together – working closely across different departments

PERFORMANCE

- Communicate through discussions, NOT intranet / corporate letters etc





The top tips:

- Work with what you've got
- Listen to the bad stories in the organisation not just the good. These will help shape your comms
- Carry out an audit of your diary – who are you meeting? Are they like you? If they are, make sure you're meeting with others who will give you different stories

Challenge 4

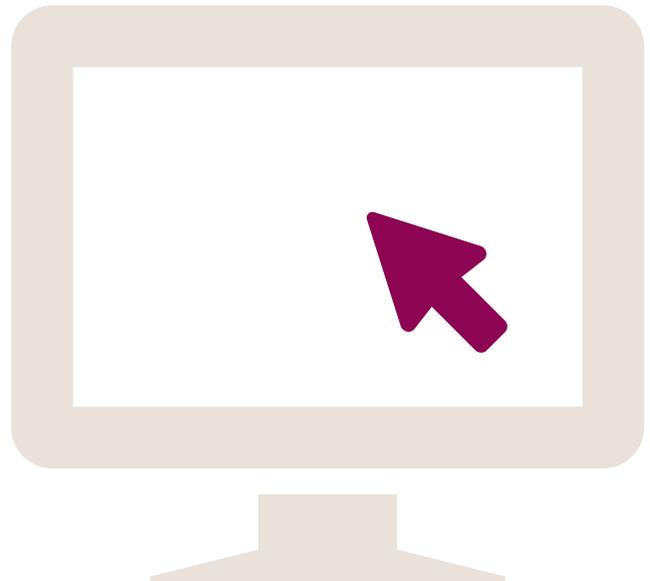
Nicola McGovern

Head of Internal Communications & Customer Experience Engagement,
Shop Direct

Talking about: Engaging remote employees

The challenge: Shop Direct's fulfilment centre in Shaw has 1,200 people turning out 700,000 items a week. Time is short, but the comms team wanted to make gains across three areas:

- 1 Workplace improvements
- 2 Talent development
- 3 Better communications



Engaging remote employees



The action:

The team created a programme called Focus@shaw. It started with an anonymous survey to find out what people wanted from their comms and achieved an **88% response rate** providing three key themes:

- Bring the messages to me – push it at me
- Use my work area more – immerse me in it
- Update me as it happens – I don't want to wait until end of shift, I want to know what it is going on

In response:

The team did four things:

- 1 Introduced a new weekly brief
- 2 Rebranded the intranet site – and had fun rebranding every other bit of space!
- 3 Made messaging mobile, with an opt-in for text messaging
- 4 Created some magic with colleague events (this included taking an empty room and turning it into a catwalk to bring products to life).



The team are still waiting for the results in the employee survey, but feedback so far is very positive.

Putting comms on the top table

Jo Bleasdale

Head of Internal Communications and CSR, BT Consumer

- 1** Earn your place at the top table by making it your business to understand your company's business strategy, objectives and targets
- 2** Understand the role of the people (leaders) delivering this
- 3** Build an IC strategy and plan that supports points 1 and 2, with clear targets and measurements
- 4** Stay close to performance and flex accordingly



Top tip: Keep on learning.

Make sure you know your stuff by staying up-to-date with the latest trends and stories from the comms industry.

The big things you can do with video

Mike Copinger

Sales Director UK & Ireland,
Kaltura

- HR and onboarding – e.g. CEO intros/talking about company culture, office tour
- Innovation and ideas with user-generated content
- Digital signage – update content dynamically
- CEO and senior people comms
- Go mobile

Camilla Rigby

Head of Internal Communications,
OVO Energy

- Bring values to life
- Capture special days
- Say thank you to employees and family
- Induction/attraction
- Showcasing talent
- Communicating with field-based teams
- Weekly update



Using tech...

Clare Clark

Head of Channels & Content, Rolls-Royce plc

What they did:

Used technology to enable the company strategy, achieving 400 video submissions in 24 hours.

On Yammer:

“The best way to control it is not to control out. Let the energy grow where it grows.”



On working with technology:

“Be an enabler. In a young, progressive workforce, keep people moving in the same direction but don't be too prescriptive.”

Measurement and ROI

Gordon Dowall-Potter

Head of Internal Communications, Kier Group

Background: Kier Group has four divisions (construction, property, residential, services). It's part of the FTSE 250 and has 24,000 employees.

Measurement examples:

TECH: When the company launched the Kier connect app, it measured everything along the way, getting plenty of quantitative data

FACE-TO-FACE: With roadshows around the country, the measurements even included the number of people who had a bacon roll

FULL MATRIX ON EVERY EMAIL: Who opens them, what devices they use, who forwards them on etc.

On surveys:

"It's not about the questions you ask; it's about what you do with the answers."

Top tip: Track email.

If you want to track email, bananatag.com offers a free trial.



Challenge 4

Sarah Mullins

Head of Change Communication, O2

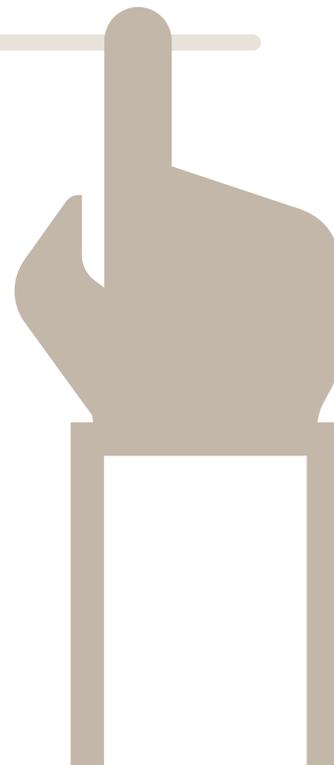
The Challenge: What do you do when a big deal doesn't happen...

Mergers and acquisitions are always difficult to communicate internally, but what do you do when decisions change last minute? O2 was due to be acquired by Hutchinson UK. But, when the European Commission blocked the decision unexpectedly, they had to change their internal comms narrative quickly in order to keep the calm.

- 1** The night before, the CEO recorded a video. In just 90 minutes, 3,500 people had opened and viewed it
- 2** They put up holding messages on the intranet and signposted where to go for information
- 3** They had a text alert service directing people to look in their inbox
- 4** They held the story back from the intranet for an hour or so
- 5** In the afternoon, the leaders had face-to-face time with employees
- 6** Leaders explained how “We don't have all the answers today, so here's what we're thinking about now and here's when we'll give you an update on where we are.”
- 7** They made a promise to keep people updated

Top tip: Line Managers.

“Let people lead and manage because if a line manager doesn’t communicate, you’re pushing water up hill! Use lots of face-to-face and role modelling from the leadership team. Don’t underestimate practical kits and tools that the managers can use and have fun with.”



That's a wrap.

For us, the big takeaway from the conference was just how important technology can be for engaging with remote workers. Social tools have already completely changed the comms landscape but it still feels like we're at the beginning.

We loved hearing so many comms people talking about really listening to their employees. Whether good or bad, you can never have too much feedback.

Ready to engage?

**Been inspired by the Internal Comms Conference case studies and tips? So were we! Get in touch with the Synergy Creative team to discuss what they could mean for your business.
Gemma@synergycreative.co.uk**

commsconference.com
synergycreative.co.uk



Brand engagement inside out

We engage people with award winning creative communications.

Our inside out approach inspires your employees to be brand ambassadors and turns your customers into brand advocates.

The result is a seamless customer experience at every contact with your brand.

Get in touch

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**Thank
you!**

**We'd like to say one last
thank you to Internal
Communications
Conference for a brilliant
day. We learned loads and
can't wait till next year!**

Be sure to check out
the **website** for all things
employer brand.

