

TRIBE

WHITE PAPER EXECUTIVE SUMMARY STARTING THE CONVERSATION: SOCIAL MEDIA FOR INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS



BACKGROUND

Tribe has established an Insight Panel of internal communications professionals in some of the country's leading companies to collect best practices, challenges and successes in social media. Those companies include The Coca-Cola Company, Deloitte, Chick-fil-A, Quicken Loans, Yum! Brands, Google, and Dell.



OVERVIEW

Three areas of focus for most of these companies are:

- Building employee morale
- Creating brand ambassadors
- Recruiting and retention

A primary reason cited for harnessing social media internally is to engage employees. According to a recent Gallup poll, engaged employees:

- Are 50 percent more profitable
- Have a 44 percent higher retention rate
- Are 56 percent better in customer service performance
- Have a 50 percent higher record for safety



BENEFITS

Two-Way Conversations:

Social media allows employees to feel heard, which is key to having them feel connected to the company and be invested in the big picture. From managing expectations about the economy to professional development information to changes in the organization, social media can be used to communicate a wide variety of messages in the company. And to let the employees know the company is listening.

Visibility for Leadership:

Employees report that communication from management is just as important to them when it concerns bad news. The important point for them is that leadership is keeping them in the loop. Can you think of another channel that lets your CEO walk the halls so efficiently? This is particularly powerful for companies with multiple locations.

Omni-Directional:

Social media knows no rank, allowing communications to flow from top to bottom, bottom to top and side-to-side. It also knows no physical boundaries and can be accessed around the world. This allows for sharing of culture, values and best practices that help employees contribute to the success of the company.



CONCLUSIONS

Avoiding the social media channel appears to involve several risks. One is that employees, particularly younger talent, view the adoption of social media as a reflection of the company's ability to innovate and remain viable in a shifting economy. Another is that employees, not just Millennials but Gen X and Boomers as well, are already using social media in their personal and professional lives. When a company withholds this channel, employees often create it themselves, in a grassroots fashion, which limits the company's ability to participate in the conversation. A third reason to venture down this road sooner rather than later is that successful implementation and widespread use typically takes three to five years. Waiting longer to get started can make your company look like one of those hopeless souls who never learned how to work the TV remote.

On the other hand, dipping a toe into the social media world doesn't have to be complicated. Two manageable, and effective, places to start are with a leadership blog and/or an employee network for knowledge sharing and company communications.

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Tribe is an internal communications company working with national and global brands. We develop strategic plans, employee communications and engagement programs to build internal culture.

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