



Aligning your External and Internal Communications

Most organisations spend a great deal of effort managing and implementing their external communications but fail to replicate this very same effort internally. How well organisations manage their communications, both internally and externally, is vital to long-term success.

In the absence of an internal communication strategy that's aligned with your external communications, employees are often working towards differing goals as there isn't a clear vision.

What's the difference between External and Internal Communications?

In general terms, external communication is used by an organisation to communicate with the general public. This communication often consists of product updates and information relating to their services. On the other hand, internal communication takes place within an organisation and is basically defined as the process of exchanging information among employees.

Release Sequence

An important aspect of managing your external and internal communications holistically involves creating the correct sequence in which information should be released. As previously mentioned both types of communication are interlinked and don't exist as opposing forces. Organisational communication that starts its life as a news article on an intranet often ends up being shared externally - likewise, external communication has an impact on employees.

A basic principle of internal communication outlines that organisational news shouldn't be released externally until employees have been made aware. Therefore the communication release sequence should place employees at the beginning.

Coordinate your Internal and External Communication Plans

This is particularly important for organisations that have an internal communications team or individual, in addition to a separate marketing/PR team. Coordinating your communication plans will eliminate employee confusion and help to effectively manage your communication efforts overall. This also supports the principle of sharing information with employees before announcing it publicly.

Live your Brand Internally and Externally

Employees will lose trust in their company if it doesn't internally live up to the brand in which it is externally communicating. Similarly, emphasising that your employees are key to your success but yet ignoring their feedback and not putting in place opportunities for employees to express their opinions will also negatively affect employees.

Message Relevancy and Consistency

If your organisation is planning to release financial information or expand its operations, it's important to remember that message consistency and relevancy are key, as you'll be communicating to different audiences. Alter your message to include employee related information and the possible benefits or drawbacks they're likely to experience. In comparison, it may not be relevant to include employee specific information in your external communications.

Social Media

It isn't just your customers and partners using social media, your employees are too! Employees can therefore assist with your brand building efforts on social media channels and help to spread your message.

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