



The Modern Intranet Buyer's Guide

A step-by-step playbook for IT,
Communications and HR executives

simpplr.

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INTRODUCTION

Digital transformation has fundamentally changed how business is done. Employees are making significant adjustments to where and how they work, and are no longer accustomed to traditional 9–5 office jobs.

Companies are seeking out new ways to adapt to the needs of their workforce, including new methods of keeping dispersed workers engaged.

Historically, intranets have played a relatively minor role in the employee experience. They were primarily reserved for one-way communication from management to employees.

Advanced technology has rendered such intranets obsolete, replacing them with dynamic communication tools that can serve as a central meeting place for the entire organization.



WHAT IS AN EMPLOYEE INTRANET?

The global internet offers anyone with access the ability to connect and share information. Modern employee intranets are based on the same premise, with one significant difference: intranets are designed for internal company use with no public access. The earliest versions of employee intranets housed basic company information, but today's intranets are far more sophisticated. They can serve as a central portal for employees to access company resources and tools, and many organizations are developing intranets that aid in employee communication and collaboration.

THE EVOLUTION OF THE INTRANET

At the turn of the millennium, solutions like SharePoint were rolled out to help with content collaboration. At the time, organizations were starting to use networked drives frequently, so these solutions effectively put an interface on these repositories so organizations could put more context around stored content than a simple file name.

Since this was before SaaS applications, the first intranets ironically were not intra-connected and required a heavy IT lift to launch and maintain.

Poor user experience, costly maintenance, and struggles to keep content fresh oftentimes caused employees to abandon these portals and find manual workarounds.

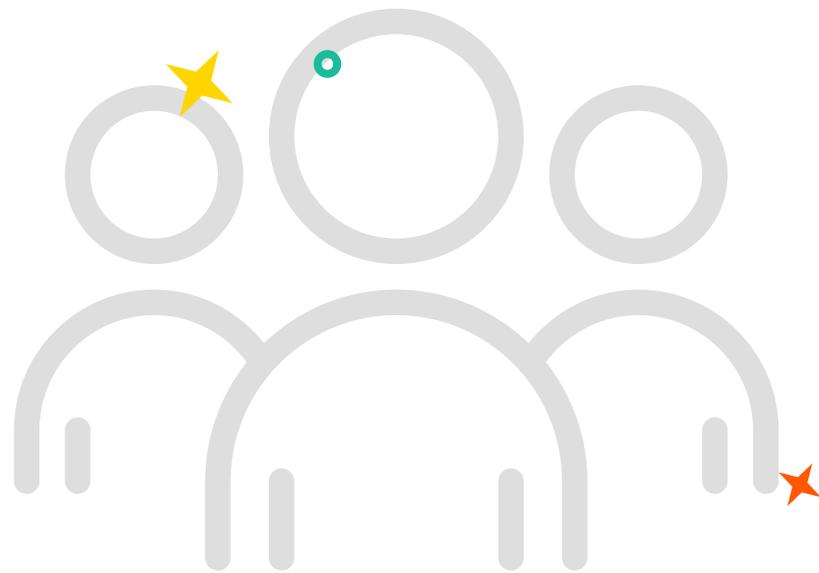
In the early 2000s, as Facebook and LinkedIn started to transform our personal lives, many social enterprise tools sprouted up to bring the same level of social collaboration into the workplace.

Many of these capabilities were legitimately game-changing in the enterprise, but as vendors struggled from being a solution in search of problems to solve, organizations in-turn suffered to find a place for the technology. Many times they simply became yet another point-tool that was used sporadically throughout the organization. Other times, organizations tried to pretzel these social collaboration tools into their corporate intranet platform only to find the user experience was off and they lacked many common-sense features.

Today, the modern intranet is experiencing a renaissance.

We recognize that nearly all organizations with more than 500 employees, where it is no longer efficient to communicate in an ad hoc manner, need a digital workplace hub where employees can go to stay informed on all mandatory communications, make sense of and integrate with all of their digital productivity tools, connect with internal experts and coworkers, find fresh up-to-date information, and socially interact across geographical and departmental lines.

The modern intranet took a purpose-built approach to all of these use cases and perfected some of the previous generations' capabilities.



WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF AN EMPLOYEE INTRANET?

As employee intranets grow more sophisticated, business leaders are seeing important benefits, including increased levels of engagement among staff members and improvement in overall productivity.

Today, innovative organizations are investing in their intranets at a rapid rate in an effort to harness the power of networking to promote long-term growth.



Increasing employee engagement that drives measurable value.



Supporting productivity by reducing the time it takes for employees to get access to the information and tools they need.

Increasing employee engagement that drives measurable value



of American workers are [fully engaged](#) in their current positions

Engaged employees are passionate about their work, and are committed to helping the organization achieve its strategic goals. These individuals do more than the basic functions of their job.

They know they don't have to take on extra responsibility, but they do it anyway because they care about the organization and its customers. Unfortunately, a [Gallup study](#) shows that only 30 percent of American workers are fully engaged in their current positions.

The business impact of a disengaged workforce is startling. When researchers consider the cost of theft, accidents, lost productivity, and turnover, they estimate that disengagement is responsible for approximately [\\$350 Billion of lost revenue per year](#).

Increasing employee engagement that drives measurable value



The connection between higher profits and engagement levels is directly related to the improved productivity of highly-engaged staff members. These employees perform **20 to 28% better** than their disengaged colleagues, and companies with engaged employees outperform competitors with high disengagement levels **by 202%.**

According to [Aberdeen](#), employee engagement programs help companies enjoy 26% greater annual increase in revenue.

An intranet can increase overall employee engagement, and organizations with high engagement levels enjoy a competitive edge. Overall, they are more productive, better able to attract and retain talented workers, and more likely to become leaders in innovation. These are all critical components of long-term success.

Supporting productivity by reducing the time it takes for employees to get access to the information and tools they need

Employee intranets eliminate the need for decentralized repositories so that staff members can locate the information they need in moments.

In addition, the communication features of advanced intranet platforms simplify collaborative work. Faster access and improved communication lead to increased productivity, which gives the business a competitive edge.

According to [IDC](#), 61% of knowledge workers regularly access four or more systems to get the information they need to do their jobs, and close to 15% access 11 or more systems. According to the same study, these workers can find the information required to do their jobs only 56% of the time.

It should therefore not come as a surprise that, according to a study by the [McKinsey Global Institute](#) (MGI), employees spend nearly 20% of their time looking for information. According to MGI, technologies which create value by improving productivity can help contribute \$900 Billion to \$1.3 Trillion in annual value.

Today's modern intranets are the secret weapon to help unlock this value, providing a centralized, intelligent hub to help employees find the information and people they need, communicate, and collaborate.



BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN CONCEPT AND SOLUTION THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

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There are a variety of solutions available in the marketplace, each offering a different combination of capabilities.

The challenge is to match the needs of the business with the specific platform that best supports employee engagement and improved productivity. Based on our experience working with many organizations across the globe, we have devised a 3-step process to help you manage the process of mapping your requirements to selecting your vendor of choice.

1: DEFINE THE PROBLEM

2: DETAIL THE TECHNOLOGY NEEDS

3: SHORT-LIST VENDORS BASED ON THEIR STRENGTHS

STEP 1: DEFINE THE PROBLEM

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Selecting the most appropriate employee intranet solution begins with defining the problem. The situations outlined below, are the most common areas where we believe an intranet can add significant value to your employee engagement and productivity.

Do you find your organization is going through one or more of these?

- I: We have outgrown our current platform (or the current platform can no longer support our business needs)
- II: Our workforce is geographically distributed and / or remote
- III: Our company is going through a hyper-growth phase and wants to maintain its unique culture

I: We have outgrown our current platform (or the current platform can no longer support our business needs)



When it comes to collaboration and communication software, transitioning from traditional favorites to an entirely new platform can seem like a no-brainer. After all, the benefits of modernization are clear to those familiar with industry developments, and new technology brings impressive new features like advanced employee communication tools and artificial intelligence. IT staff can easily spot outgrown intranet platforms. However, the need for change isn't always as obvious to business leaders. Those who are unfamiliar with technology can be anxious about moving away from familiar resources like Jive and SharePoint.

When first proposing a modern intranet, IT staff typically gets pushback, because managers are concerned about learning a new system. They envision being required to learn web design skills, and they don't feel comfortable devoting the time necessary to acclimate to complex content-management software.

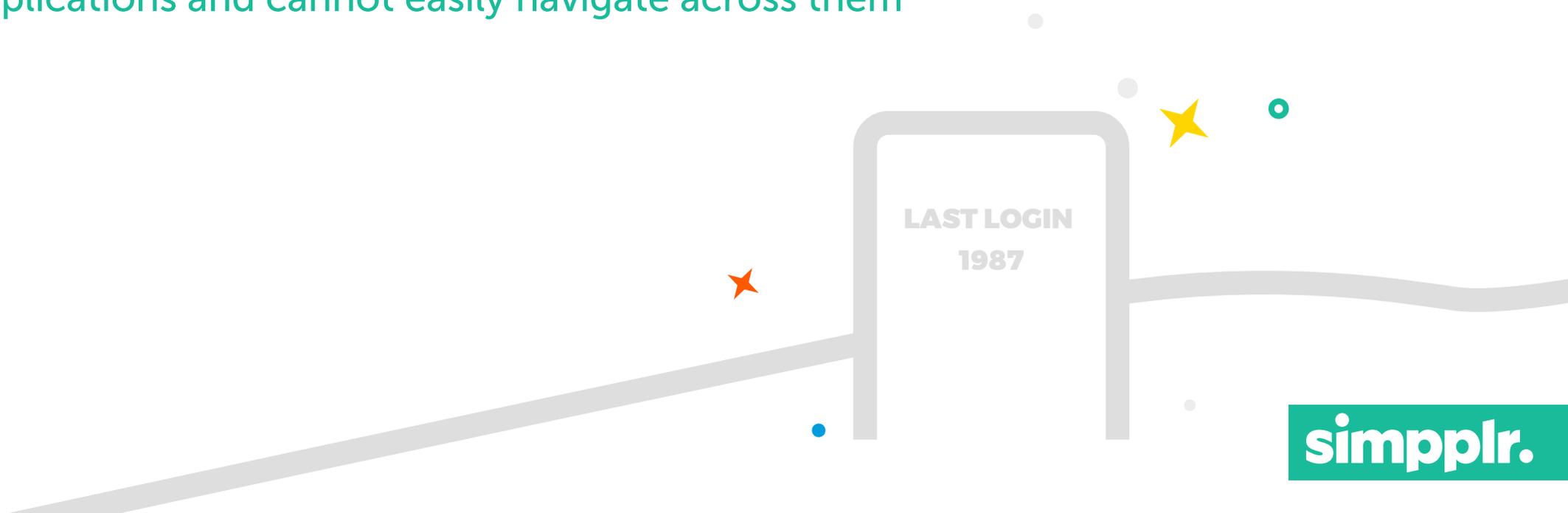
This is particularly relevant when leaders are not yet convinced that the current system is outdated.

The key to leadership buy-in is to make them understand the current total cost of ownership (TCO) for legacy technology is much more expensive than superior alternatives given the high employee maintenance costs. Modern intranets are typically user-friendly, intuitive platforms that make it easy for non-technical users to add and change content in just a few minutes. High-quality platforms also offer content management features that integrate with other employee applications being used, and they make practical requirements such as custom branding simple to incorporate. Advanced analytics, which are rarely available with traditional software, are often the biggest selling point for managers who are hesitant to move forward, because these figures quantify what is — and is not — effective in engaging employees.

I: We have outgrown our current platform (or the current platform can no longer support our business needs)

How do you know if this is your organization?

- Our intranet is like a graveyard, our employees rarely log in
- Nobody can ever find what they're looking for
- We have multiple versions of our corporate documents and cannot find what's the most up-to-date version
- Our IT team is the bottleneck, anytime we need something changed, they need to be involved
- Our employees use multiple applications and cannot easily navigate across them



LAST LOGIN
1987

I: We have outgrown our current platform (or the current platform can no longer support our business needs)

Look for these critical features if you've outgrown your current platform

- ☑ **Intuitive User Experience** — Employees and managers expect their intranet to save time, and any platform that requires complicated training is unlikely to see much use. To ensure that the intranet becomes a central communication hub, it must offer an intuitive user experience.
- ☑ **Integrations** — The goal of a comprehensive intranet is to bring all information, communication, and company systems together in one location. To achieve this goal, you must choose a platform that can integrate with your current applications.
- ☑ **Business User Administration** — Taking IT out of the intranet equation means a better experience for employees at every level. There is no need to involve technology specialists for minor changes, addition of content, and intranet structure, which maximizes adoption among users and eliminates the IT bottleneck.
- ☑ **Flexibility** — Does the intranet platform allow administrators to define the processes and workflows applicable to your organization? Examples include defining roles and permissions (e.g. who can author what type of content), branding, and approval workflows. Ideally, the intranet platform should adapt to your processes, not the other way around.

See section 4.2 for a full list of features >

II: Our workforce is geographically distributed and / or remote



Historically, intranets have been a one-way communication tool with hundreds or thousands of obsolete pages. Instead of an organized, easy-to-use system, these sites have been cobbled together over years. Changes in administration, mission, and overall goal of the platform result in content with an inconsistent look and feel, and it is difficult to sort through all of the outdated data to find useful information.

Organizations with a distributed workforce, including those with a high percentage of remote workers, feel the pain of these systems most acutely, because there is no clear method of keeping the lines of communication open between distributed team members. Instead, remote workers must make do with the incomplete and inconsistent information.

In a world where social media is a primary method of keeping in touch for 70 percent of Americans, employees have high expectations when it comes to the appearance and functionality of business communication tools. Older platforms lack rich media capabilities, making it difficult to share images and videos. This limits the experience of remote workers, who are unable to see and share even the most basic visual aids.

II: Our workforce is geographically distributed and / or remote

Fortunately, new technology has taken the trend towards a virtual workforce into consideration, and advanced tools offer functions specifically designed to improve the experience of remote employees. These engagement platforms have solved the image-sharing problem by incorporating this technology into modern intranets. Employees have a personal dashboard from which they can view and upload pictures and videos, creating endless opportunities for making personal connections with coworkers, who can then respond and comment on posts.

Some of the most popular platforms keep virtual team members connected and engaged through the use of familiar social media features. Examples include employee blogs, alerts, and notifications. In addition, leaders have an opportunity to communicate more frequently, sharing critical information through newsletters and mandatory updates. The best software is optimized for mobile devices, which means employees can stay connected anytime, anywhere.

II: Our workforce is geographically distributed and / or remote

How do you know if this is your organization?

- We lack a cohesive culture across locations and people don't feel connected to the corporate structure
- Innovation, ideas and best practices are not shared across departments
- Our employees are not up to date with all company activity
- Our employees are not familiar with colleagues outside their department and locations

II: Our workforce is geographically distributed and / or remote

Look for these critical features if your workforce is geographically distributed:

- ☑ **Mobile App** – Mobile devices are deeply embedded in modern lifestyles, and most people don't leave home without their smartphone. The ability to access the intranet through a mobile app ensures they don't miss any important communications.
- ☑ **Personalization** – A truly robust intranet offers a wide variety of tools and features – far too many to fit on a single dashboard. Giving employees an opportunity to customize their dashboards to include the features they leverage most increases the likelihood that they will use the platform.
- ☑ **Social/Collaboration Features** – Today's employees want the flexibility of working anytime, anywhere. However, they also crave collaboration and social contact. An intranet with social/collaboration features makes it possible to offer your remote workers the best of both worlds.
- ☑ **Multi-Language Support** – This feature is primarily relevant to international companies, but there are certainly benefits for businesses exclusively located in the US. Even the most skilled English speakers may consider another language their primary form of communication, and you can increase engagement with multi-language support.

See section 4.2 for a full list of features >

III: Our company is going through a hyper-growth phase and wants to maintain its unique culture

Rapid expansion, whether from massive hiring efforts or mergers and acquisitions, can wreak havoc on carefully nurtured company cultures. Cohesive groups may fragment into small cliques made up of a few individuals with an underlying common experience. Even the strongest company culture can break down under these circumstances, as a lack of communication and collaboration pits cliques against each other. High-quality engagement platforms have been shown to mitigate some of the cultural damage that hyper-growth causes by offering employees a common experience.

Company culture is determined by the presence or absence of shared values and consistent practices across the organization. Frequent, widespread communication that reaches all staff members is the most effective method of ensuring that culture is maintained during periods of change. Well-managed intranets contribute to the goal of frequent, widespread communication by making the same information available to all employees simultaneously.



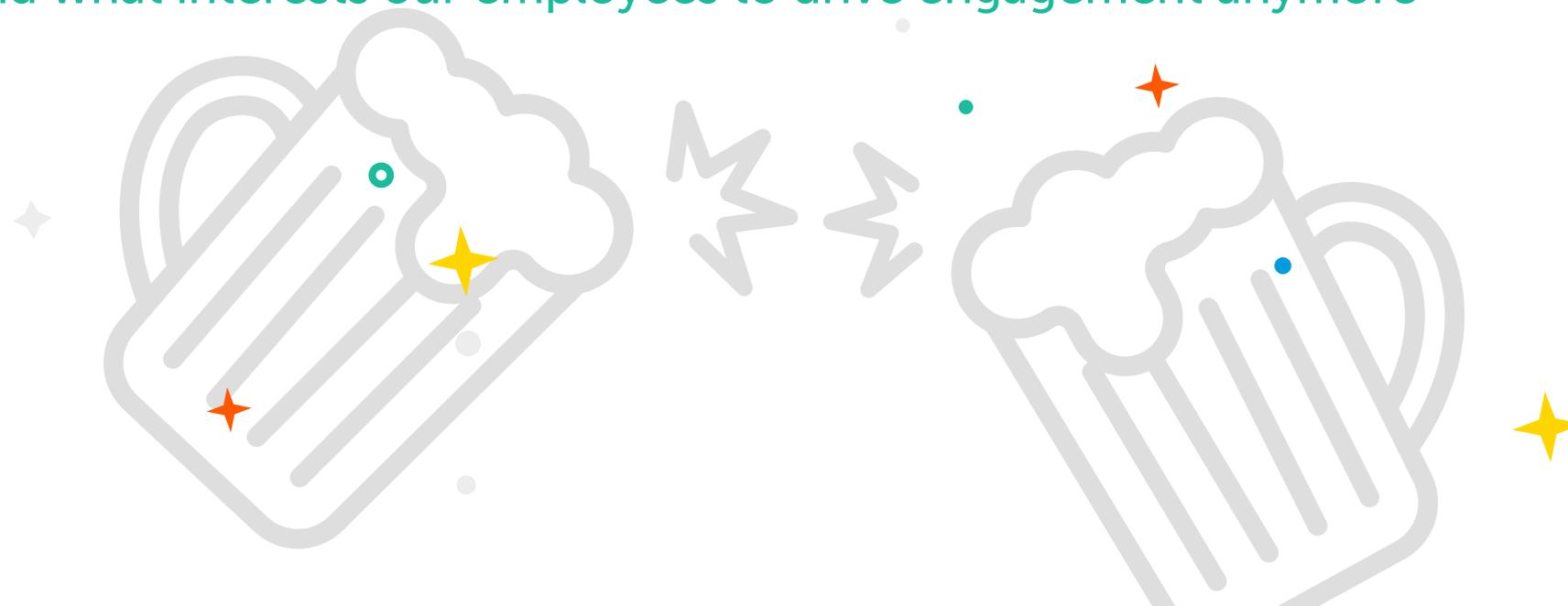
Simplr is a modern employee intranet that helps companies connect employees, improving productivity and engagement. Experience it yourself.

[Watch OnDemand Demo >](#)

III: Our company is going through a hyper-growth phase and wants to maintain its unique culture

How do you know if this is your organization?

- We are growing really fast, and without proper communication we're not able to keep everyone informed
- Our employees used to know everyone by their first name, this is not the case anymore
- Onboarding new employees easily is becoming critical, yet we're not able to keep up
- We've lost the 'startup feeling' and our employees long for the good ol' days
- We don't understand what interests our employees to drive engagement anymore



III: Our company is going through a hyper-growth phase and wants to maintain its unique culture

Look for these critical features if your company is experiencing hyper-growth:

- ☑ **Branding and Design** — The look and feel of a company's intranet instantly communicates aspects of culture to those who are new to the organization. Tools must offer an ability to customize visuals, so employees immediately have a feel for whether the company is formal or informal, elegant or casual, modern or traditional, and similar.
- ☑ **Opportunities for Participation** — Whether employees have a voice communicates volumes about the culture, and intranets are an opportunity to showcase leadership's interest in feedback. When selecting a platform, consider whether the intranet is capable of permitting comments and other user interactions.
- ☑ **Community** — Maintaining a strong, cohesive company culture requires relationship-building. Modern intranets demonstrate the company's commitment to those connections. During periods of change, the intranet can offer a centralized solution for creating a sense of community between new and tenured staff members.

See section 4.2 for a full list of features >

STEP 2: DETAIL THE TECHNOLOGY NEEDS

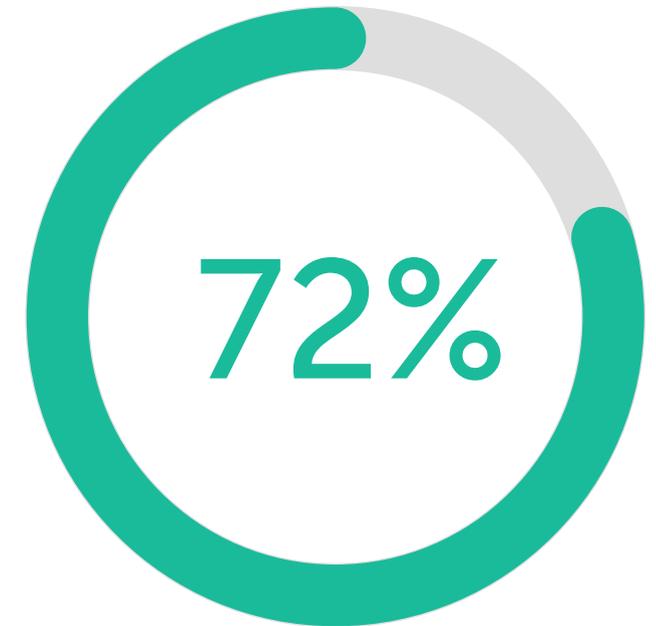
Once you have defined the specific problems your new intranet platform is intended to solve, create a comprehensive list of the features you want and the technical requirements you need to meet. This detailed wish list will make it possible to select between similar options based on a clearly defined list of must-haves.

1. Desktop & mobile accessibility
2. Important End-User Experience Features
3. Intelligent Platform Capabilities
4. Administration and Governance
5. Integrations

1. Desktop & mobile accessibility

According to IDC, [72% of the U.S. workforce will be mobile by 2020](#). In addition to web-based access that connects your entire digital workplace, ensuring your intranet provides access through a mobile device will drive adoption and minimize training needs on the part of your users.

- Seamless user experience** — Does the vendor provide a seamless experience across the web and mobile? Ensuring it does will increase adoption across your entire organization, as well as minimize additional training needs.
- Native app on most popular mobile platforms** — With Android and iOS controlling most of the market today, selecting a platform that provides a native experience enables you to leverage the innovative features Apple and Google offer to their users. This provides an intuitive experience for your employees, which minimizes the need for training requirements and increases adoption.
- Multitenancy** — While most SaaS-based platforms are multi-tenant, some older platforms still rely on an on-premise architecture migrated to the Cloud. Multi-tenancy permits cost savings and performance improvements that are greater than the basic economies of scale achievable from consolidating IT resources into a single operation. This is the standard for today's SaaS platforms.
- Responsive design** — If the platform does not provide native mobile apps, ensure that at a minimum, the application is responsive. For example, validate that it will render properly on a mobile device. Without this capability, your intranet will not be functional on mobile devices.



percentage of the U.S. workforce
that will be [mobile](#) by 2020

- 100% SaaS** — Is the platform fully deployed on the Cloud or is this an on-premise or hybrid offering? Asking the right questions will help you avoid surprises down the road.

2. Important End-User Experience Features

Your intranet's user experience is critical to driving adoption across your workforce. With multiple generations at work, from baby boomers to Generation Z, providing a user experience that can satisfy the divergent needs of several generations is critical. The widespread popularity of social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram have set the bar high. Employees increasingly expect the same intuitive user experience in their business applications.

- Intuitive User Experience** – Employees and managers expect their intranet to save time, and any platform that requires complicated training is unlikely to see much use. To ensure that the intranet becomes a central communication hub, it must offer an intuitive user experience.
- Personalization** – The ability of employees to personalize their experience is critical to adoption. For example, can your employees customize their views to highlight people and places they want to be kept updated on, and news that is relevant to their role? Advanced platforms also include alert and notification features to keep employees up to date.
- Search Functionality** – The ability to find what you need quickly is at the core of any intranet platform. However, the capabilities of each platform vary greatly, both in terms of features and performance. At a minimum, ensure the platform you select can search across all data, including text, metadata, tags, pages, media files, and other registered information. More advanced capabilities include predictive search, ranking results based on relevance, and ability for users to define sort order and relevance criteria.
- Directory** – One of the key use cases of any modern intranet is your employees' ability to find and connect with their colleagues. Does your platform provide an intuitive directory? It should go beyond the basics of name, contact information, and department, allowing users to define their skills and connect with each other. Furthermore, if your organization already uses a Human Capital Management (HCM) system, does the intranet provide integration so you do not have to duplicate this information?

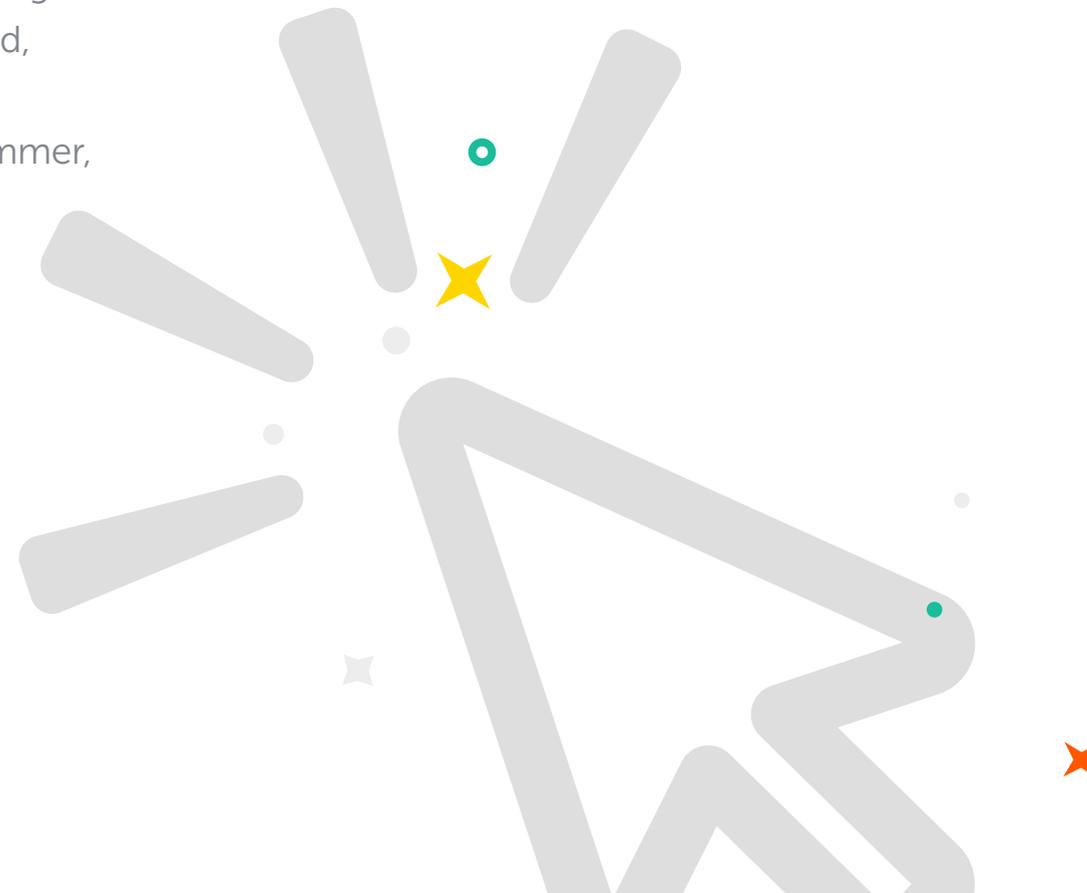
2. Important End-User Experience Features

☑ **Social/Collaboration Tools** — Organizations are increasingly evolving when it comes to the way work gets done, and enterprise social networks and collaboration capabilities are becoming a necessity. Evaluate whether features such as following people, pages, and groups; threaded commenting; likes and shares; content tagging; file sharing; collaborative authoring; cross-posting, live chat; and external sharing are available. If a platform's features are limited, explore integration options with existing collaboration platforms such as Slack, Yammer, or Salesforce Chatter.

☑ **Calendar** — Company-wide and group-specific calendars allow your employees to seamlessly create and share events that are of interest to them. From company-wide, all-hands meetings to department-specific holiday parties, your employees' ability to discover, create, and easily import these to their calendars enhances the user experience.

☑ **Newsletters/Emails** — While newsletter and email features are not common for intranet platforms, some of the leading options offer capabilities only previously available to pure-play platforms such as Poppulo/Newsweaver and PoliteMail. Having the ability to communicate to your organization through one platform, regardless of the channel, improves overall efficiency and increases your ability to measure the impact of your programs.

☑ **Multi-Language Support** — This feature is primarily relevant to international companies, but there are certainly benefits for businesses exclusively located in the US. Even the most skilled English speakers may consider another language their primary form of communication, and you can increase engagement with multi-language support.



3. Intelligent Platform Capabilities

Underlying intranet technology has come along way since SharePoint was created in the nineties and has even advanced far beyond the early enterprise social networking solutions. Today, with technical advances in artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning, and other data science approaches, the underlying intranet platform technology is smarter and shows even more promise in the coming years.



Smart Search — Even with the most well-planned user experiences, most employees default to search capabilities to navigate content. It's important for the underlying search technology to have intelligent search algorithms beyond keywords and metatags. Otherwise, the internet's credibility will quickly be tarnished and adoption will suffer.

Contextual Intelligence — Data science is paving the way for a new kind of contextual experience. Systems are beginning to get smarter at serving up appropriate content based on a variety of factors including: employee tenure, organizational structure, time of year, social connections, and previous interests. Given the infancy of AI in intranet platforms, it's equally important to align with a vendor's vision and understanding of emerging technologies.

4. Administration and Governance

Even today, many modern intranet platforms require significant IT support and training before employees are able to administer the platform. As a result, requests are delayed in an IT team bottleneck. Best-in-class platforms require minimal IT support, instead allowing your department administrators (e.g. Communications, HR, IT, Sales) to manage their sections of the intranet without IT support. Ensuring that departmental administrators can access and maintain their sections increases productivity, as well as improves employee engagement and encourages adoption of the intranet.

- ☑ **Flexibility** — Does the intranet platform allow administrators to define the processes and workflows applicable to your organization? Examples include defining roles and permissions (e.g. who can author what type of content), branding, and approval workflows. Ideally, the intranet platform should adapt to your processes, not the other way around.
- ☑ **Branding and Design** — The look and feel of a company's intranet instantly communicates aspects of culture to those who are new to the organization. Tools must offer an ability to customize visuals, so employees immediately have a feel for whether the company is formal or informal, elegant or casual, modern or traditional, and similar.

- ☑ **Content Management System (CMS)** — Advanced intranet platforms typically support both short and long-form content in addition to rich media (e.g. photos, videos and audio files) and other file formats. The capabilities of the underlying CMS will determine whether your departments can manage their own content. If you want to empower your organization's leaders to manage their own content, look for a CMS that offers "What-You-See-Is-What-You-Get" (WYSIWYG) capabilities. You may also wish to look at content expiration and archiving features that ensure your intranet does not become clogged with outdated and obsolete material. Finally, global organizations often determine that multi-language support and content history is critical.

4. Administration and Governance

- ☑ **Best Practice Templates** — The ability to leverage the collective wisdom of your vendor's existing customers can accelerate adoption and help you avoid costly mistakes. Pre-built templates may range from simple (e.g. standard dashboard layout options based on the content of a page) to advanced (e.g. new hire onboarding template with content needed during the first 30 days of employment).
- ☑ **Analytics** — Peter Drucker, one of the most influential management consultants of the 20th century is often quoted as saying that you can't manage what you can't measure. In order to understand and improve the performance of your intranet, the technology must be able to provide you with robust analytics on user adoption, content creation, and consumption. Frequency and duration of user log ins, content and search term performances, and user engagement are other critical performance metrics. Even if visualizations are not available within the platform, ensure that you can access the raw data for integration with your Business Intelligence platform of choice.

- ☑ **Business User Administration**
Common pain points that organizations see include:
 - There is no or very low employee adoption
 - The system is difficult to use and needs training
 - It's difficult to maintain and update (IT dependency)
 - Search doesn't work
 - Content & information are stale
 - Difficult to get consistent traction for other software tools across the enterprise (e.g. CRM) and the intranet does not integrate well with other systems
 - There is no mobile access
 - The intranet is a monolithic system that tries to do everything but is not good at anything
 - The intranet technology is stuck and cannot evolve
 - There are no analytics to measure and improve
- ☑ **IT Administration** — Even when the platform allows business users to administer content, it is important to understand what ongoing IT administration needs to expect. For example, do you need to build specialized skills in your organizations to manage upgrades and patches, or to perform bulk imports and exports?

5. Integrations

Depending on your own company, industry, and country requirements, your intranet may be subject to certain regulations. Employee data is sensitive, and most countries have strict laws governing access. Sharing such information with unauthorized employees, or a lack of security and privacy standards at the vendor's data center can be detrimental to your business – and even illegal in certain situations.

☑ **Access** — How will employees access the platform? Does it require a separate login or does it leverage existing Single Sign-On (SSO) technologies? While some platforms may have their own role/user permission settings, integration with your SSO platform will be a much more scalable solution. If you choose a cloud-based solution, ensure you understand the vendor's practices when it comes to who has access to your data and under what circumstances. Look for control options via user profiles, share settings, and rules.

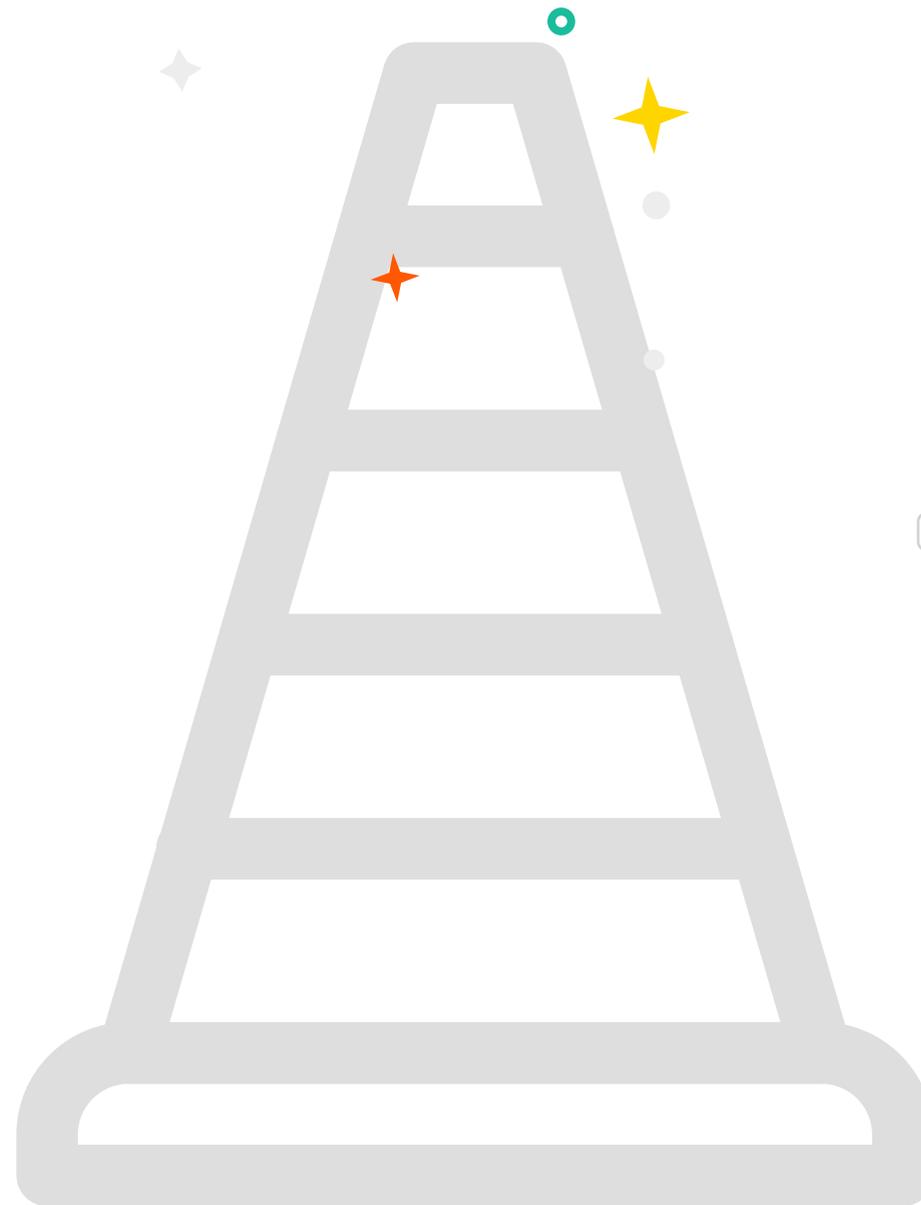
☑ **State-of-the-Art Security** – It is impossible to break down silos if leaders are concerned about data security. After all, by definition, breaking down silos allows more people to access sensitive information. Choose an intranet platform with state-of-the-art security features to ensure this issue doesn't derail the project.

☑ **Privacy** — Data privacy requirements vary by country, so understanding the countries your organization operates in and the relevant privacy laws, will ensure you are compliant. Examples of relevant legislation include the US Data Privacy Law and the EU Data Protection Directive.

☑ **Data Encryption** — Data encryption standards such as DES and AES are common practice these days. Ensure your vendor complies with an appropriate standard, and determine whether data is encrypted both at rest and in transit, according to industry best practices.

5. Integrations

- ☑ **Third-Party Certifications** — Various independent third parties provide certifications that ensure applications abide by them and that vendors comply with widely accepted norms (e.g. TRUSTe, ISO 27001, and SAS 2). Each certification has its own standards and methods, so it is important to determine which certifications are appropriate for your organization.
- ☑ **Performance scalability** — Since SaaS means it is a shared platform, make sure that performance will not degrade as more users are added. Understand how the vendor stays ahead of user demand by adding servers and resources. Most SaaS vendors will also share performance numbers that include performance metrics – for example, average time per transaction.



- ☑ **Disaster recovery** — In case of a disaster that results in lost data, every SaaS vendor should have a disaster recovery plan. A good disaster recovery program saves critical information, minimizes downtime, and prevents loss of employee productivity. Examine how often data is replicated, how quickly data can be recovered from backup, and the integrity of the data when it is recovered. Replication should be real-time and recovery should be near real-time.
- ☑ **Single Sign-On (SSO)** — Many organizations use an SSO platform to provide seamless access to all applications employees use regularly. Does the platform integrate with the SSO platforms you already have in place (e.g. Okta, OneLogin, Active Directory)?

5. Integrations

No organization relies on a single vendor for all of their business needs. Selecting a platform that seamlessly integrates with the business applications you already use ensures you maintain a single source of truth and makes it easy for employees to access the applications they use daily.

- HCM systems** — For most organizations, the HCM system is the single source of truth for all employee-related data. Does the intranet platform you are considering integrate with the most popular systems (e.g. SAP/SuccessFactors, Oracle/Taleo, Workday and NetSuite)?
- File sharing platforms** — One of the biggest shortcomings of most intranet platforms is the need to duplicate existing content. If you plan to maintain a single source of truth across your content, ensure your intranet already integrates with the file sharing platform you use (e.g., Box, Dropbox, Google Drive, SharePoint/Office365/OneDrive).
- Integrations**
The goal of a comprehensive intranet is to bring all information, communication, and company systems together in one location. To achieve this goal, you must choose a platform that can integrate with your current applications.
- Collaboration platforms** — Parts of your organization may already be using a collaboration platform such as Slack, Yammer, or Salesforce Chatter. While many intranet platforms offer some collaboration capabilities, two-way integration with some of the popular collaboration options will ensure fast adoption within your organization.
- Other business applications / Open APIs** — While these may not be a necessity, the ability to integrate with IT/HR service desk platforms (e.g., ServiceNow, Salesforce), Business Intelligence (BI) platforms (e.g., Tableau, SAP, Oracle), Learning Management Systems (LMS), Newsletter platforms (such as Poppulo / Newsweaver or PoliteMail), or Project Management Systems (e.g., Jira, Asana, Teamwork, Trello) may benefit productivity. Inquire whether the platform has open APIs or other means that allow connections to custom applications or applications for which built-in integrations are not available.

STEP 3: SHORT-LIST VENDORS BASED ON THEIR STRENGTHS

In addition to questions around specific features your selected vendor provides, it's also important to understand the general strengths of each.

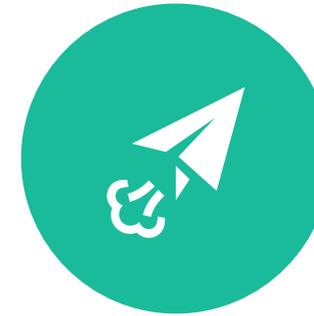
General questions to consider



Vendor strength and
long-term viability



Customer references /
user reviews /
analyst reports



Implementation
services.



Roadmap and vision
for the future

CONCLUSION

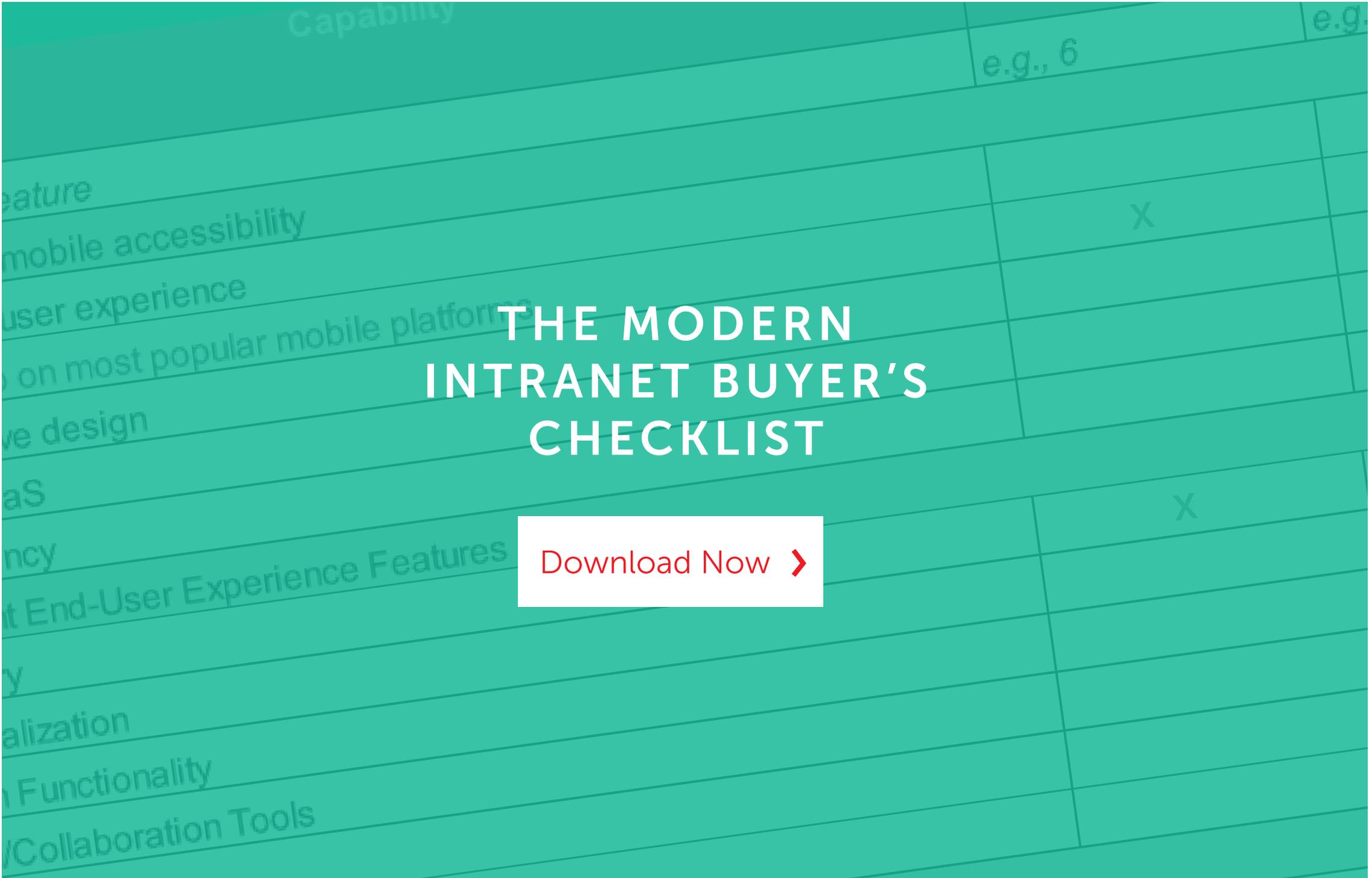


In today's increasingly fragmented workplace, employee productivity and engagement can have a significant impact on an organization's overall financial performance from increased revenue per employee, to increased employee retention and improved employee productivity.

Although intranets have been around since the nineties, they are experiencing a renaissance, and today's modern intranets are nothing like the early versions of SharePoint. Advances in technology are now making it possible for organizations to fulfill the original vision of intranets as the intelligent hub of your digital workplace.

As with most technology purchases however, it is critical to identify the business problems you're trying to solve for, rather than implement an intranet for technology's sake.

We wish you best of luck in your digital workplace journey!



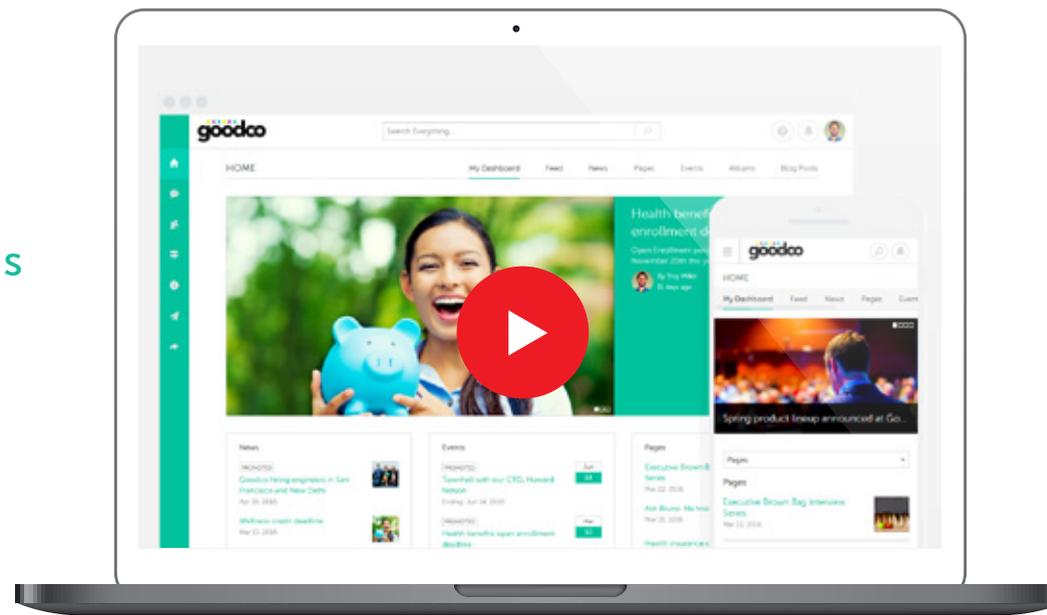
THE MODERN INTRANET BUYER'S CHECKLIST

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Want to learn more?

Simpplr is a modern employee intranet that improves employee productivity and engagement by helping dispersed teams connect across silos, share ideas, and distribute information. Simpplr is trusted by leading brands including Box, Workday, DocuSign, Eurostar, and Columbia University and is headquartered in Redwood City, CA with offices in the UK and India.

- ✔ Engaging, with a UI that employees know how to use
- ✔ Intelligent, AI-powered capabilities
- ✔ Integrated with your favorite cloud apps
- ✔ Effortless point-and-click administration
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