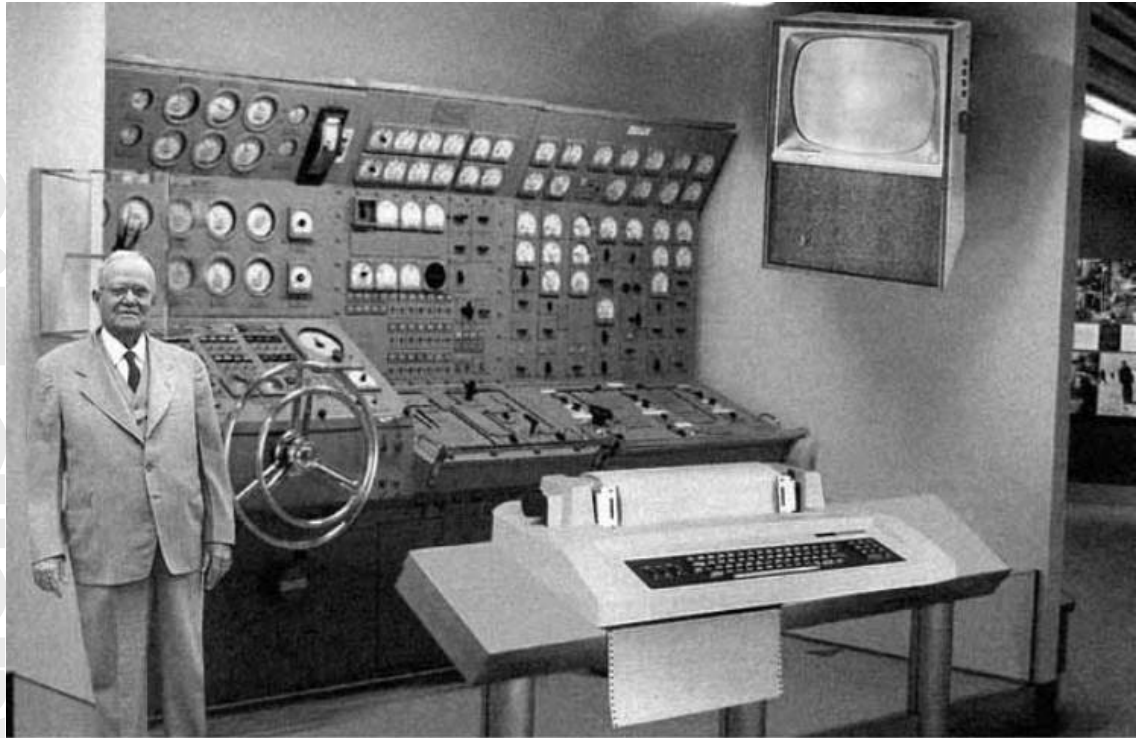


Communications 2.0

**XYZBIZ**  
**Communication**  
**Plan**

Presented by Lee Hopkins

MEMBER  
**IABC** INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION  
OF BUSINESS COMMUNICATORS



*Scientists from the RAND Corporation have created this model to illustrate how a "home computer" could look like in the year 2004. However the needed technology will not be economically feasible for the average home. Also the scientists readily admit that the computer will require not yet invented technology to actually work, but 50 years from now scientific progress is expected to solve these problems. With teletype interface and the Fortran language, the computer will be easy to use.*

# Communications 2.0

“Conversations among the members of your marketplace happen whether you like it or not. Good marketing encourages the right sort of conversations.”

*The Cluetrain Manifesto*

*(see Appendix A)*

Everything communicates, like it or not.

Even silence communicates.

You can't *not* communicate.

You might as you'll do it better, smarter, faster.

Here's how...

# Table of Contents

<b>The Ten-Step One Page Summary</b> .....	1
<b>Communication Strategy</b> .....	2
<b>Objectives</b> .....	3
<b>Strategic Objective: Pillar 1</b> .....	4
Tactic 1: Blogging, Podcasting & PDAs .....	4
Doing it better – reducing the paper clutter .....	6
<b>Strategic Objective: Pillar 2</b> .....	9
Tactic 2: A comprehensively-equipped intranet .....	9
<b>Strategic Objective: Pillar 3</b> .....	11
Tactic 3: A secure extranet .....	11
Tactic 4: Consistent, readable printed communication .....	12
<b>Strategic Objective: Pillar 4</b> .....	14
Tactic 5: Compelling, professional vehicles for communication .....	14
<b>Strategic Objective: Foundations A &amp; B</b> .....	15
Tactic 6: Knowledge Management via Blogs .....	16
Risk reduction of blogs – inappropriate messages .....	18
Tactic 7: Engagement and Knowledge Management via Podcasts .....	19
Staff engagement .....	22
Who is blogging and podcasting? .....	23
Rollout costs .....	24
Pros and Cons of each method .....	26
A further thought on Engagement .....	27
<b>Communication management</b> .....	29

**Communications 2.0**

**Communication timetable.....31**

**Existing communication vehicles and their usage .....32**

**Attitudes toward existing communications .....33**

**Measurement .....34**

**The way forward .....37**

**Appendix A: The Cluetrain Manifesto.....38**

**Appendix B: Why clipart should be banned .....39**

**Appendix C: Articles on business blogs.....43**

**Appendix D: Melcrum Research Report – Employee Engagement....44**



## The Ten-Step One Page Summary

You need to:

1. Relentlessly develop and improve your own intranet so that it becomes the first stop of choice for your employees to solve their questions (see page 9);
2. Devolve responsibility for the intranet content to team managers;
3. Introduce blogging as a way of sharing the phenomenal knowledge you are relentlessly building (see page 16);
4. Introduce podcasting as a way for Delia to powerfully engage with employees when she's not here (and this can be used for your Brisbane colleagues too) (see page 19);
5. Throw out all communications vehicles that are less than professional in design (see page 12);
6. Streamline the release of internal communications so that communication is released in a timely, managed and regular manner (see page 31);
7. Invest in designing a suite of marketing collateral to support Pillar 4 – *Growth through Alliances* (see page 14);
8. Equip those who meet with alliance and potential alliance partners with up-to-date tools, such as PDAs, that support XYZG's Pillar 3 – *Entrench your reputation and brand to reflect your leadership position* (see page 4);
9. Manage your audix messages better
10. Engage someone to manage this all (see page 29).

## Communication Strategy

The strategy of the XYZBiz is in alignment with the overall business strategy of XYZ Group:

To provide trusted solutions that protect and enhance wellbeing.

Whilst XYZBiz cannot, itself, offer any solutions direct to customers, it can offer health solutions to its existing membership base, as well as respond to the membership growth activities engaged in by its client, 1BIZ.

The Communication Strategy for XYZBIZ is able to support all four Pillars of XYZ Group's Strategic Objectives:

1. Transforming the core business
2. Deliver the most compelling customer experience and value proposition
3. Entrench XYZBiz's reputation and brand
4. Grow profitably through strategic alliances.

All four strategic objectives are underpinned by the Foundations of:

- A. A performance-based culture that recognises and rewards integrity, achievement and results
- B. Reliable and appropriate information, delivered through **right-fitting infrastructure and processes.**



## Objectives

The key objectives of the XYZBIZ Communication Plan are to inform, communicate, involve and gain staff engagement by providing consistent, effective and timely communication.

This involves using communication to:

- Drive strategic messages with each activity to create awareness and understanding of XYZBIZ's initiatives
- Embed the company direction by delivering consistent key messages
- Engage support at all organisational levels
- Foster commitment to outcomes
- Promote a consistent change culture
- Reach all stakeholders
- Encourage staff input
- Protect and enhance XYZBIZ's image through the use of appropriate communications practice

“When you give employees information, you’re actually telling them how they can make a difference and what role they play in the success of your organisation.”

Ginger Hardage, Snr VP Corporate Communications, South West Airlines (enjoying its 32<sup>nd</sup> consecutive year of profitability; ranked No. 1 in fewest customer complaints for the last 13 years; *Fortune*-ranked Top Airline in the World 1997-2003; receives over 200,000 resumes each year)

## Strategic Objective: Pillar 1

**Pillar 1:** To transform the business through:

- growing business value, and
- doing things better.

### **Growing business value**

Cost effectiveness is just as important as sales development in growing business value.

Accountants cannot yet put an ROI figure on staff engagement. It is nevertheless recognised as an important element in business and retention growth.

Any internal communication must have the intention to either reduce costs and/or grow existing business. It can achieve this only through being a vehicle for delivering changed, improved behaviours and increasing staff knowledge.

### **Doing things better**

The way that you communicate—to yourselves and to others—can benefit from advances in technology. The technology that you use is outdated and for little cost can be upgraded to allow you to present a message that is aligned with Pillar 3: innovative and leader-like.

### **Tactic 1: Blogging, Podcasting & PDAs**

New tools that meet the internal-facing needs of this Strategic Objective are available: blogs and podcasts.

These will be reported on in more depth when Strategic Foundations are discussed (see page 16).

**Doing it better**

Existing tools that meet the **external-facing** need of this objective—**to do things better**—are PDAs (Personal Digital Assistants, such as a Palm Pilot or Compaq PDA).



To turn up to client meetings with a traditional pen-and-paper diary is to communicate a conservative image. Progressive companies are increasingly embracing the data capture, data manipulation and data backup capabilities of modern PDAs.

When combined with a mobile phone, PDAs such as the Blackberry offering from Telstra can communicate your innovative and leadership positions (**Pillar 3 Objectives**).



Palm's **Treo** is another fully functional PDA+phone combination. It also enjoys a slightly less 'chucky' appearance than the Blackberry.

The Treo has proven itself very popular in the USA, but is only just becoming available in Australia.

**However...**

To be able to introduce this aspect of 'working smarter', GroupWise does need to be able to support these PDAs. As I understand it, the latest release of GroupWise, to which you have just upgraded (v6.5), does allow access from today's popular cellular phones, personal digital assistants and other handheld devices.

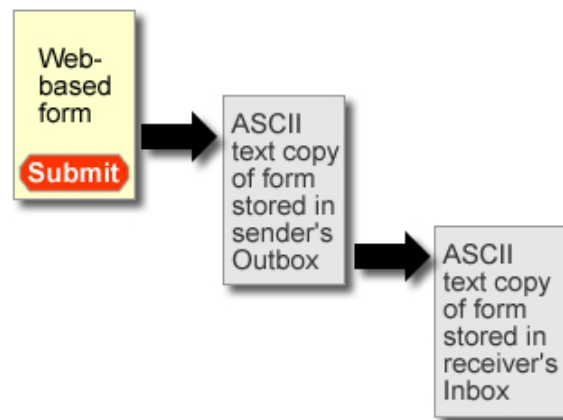
## Doing it better – reducing the paper clutter

Currently the XYZBIZ intranet uses webpages to collect data that the Customer Service staff then print off and place into various trays around the office.

Paper always has the challenge of being misfiled, misplaced, its contents mistaken.

But these webpages were originally designed with emailing in mind—the pages can be ‘submitted’ via email to designated email boxes for each team.

It would work like this:



Email inboxes for each of the various teams and functions have already been set up:

[XYZBIZ.MemberAndGroup@XYZ.com.au](mailto:XYZBIZ.MemberAndGroup@XYZ.com.au) - Membership and Groups

[XYZBIZ.Intranet@XYZ.com.au](mailto:XYZBIZ.Intranet@XYZ.com.au) - the intranet site itself

[XYZBIZ.Claims@XYZ.com.au](mailto:XYZBIZ.Claims@XYZ.com.au) - the Claims team

[XYZBIZ.LetterRequest@XYZ.com.au](mailto:XYZBIZ.LetterRequest@XYZ.com.au) - letter requests for the Admin team

[XYZBIZ.ProviderAdmin@XYZ.com.au](mailto:XYZBIZ.ProviderAdmin@XYZ.com.au) - Providers & Admin teams

Further email accounts could be created so that each form on the intranet (such as ‘New Provider’, ‘Change to Provider Details’, ‘Retrieval’, ‘Membership Change’) could be emailed to a specific email address.

Working this way provides several benefits:

1. Reduce paper usage – forms are emailed, not printed; currently over eight reams of paper are used each month
2. Increased accuracy of data entry – data is ‘cut and paste’ from email to WHICS/other software, rather than the more traditional data entry methods
3. Increased audit trail – forms are stored in both the sender’s email outbox and the recipient team inbox (IT would need to provide a way of disabling the ‘auto-archive after 90 days’ feature of current email inboxes for the team email accounts).

There is, however, a potential risk of introducing this new way of data sharing. Because of the way that intranet technology works, an easy-to-read online form becomes a harder-to-read text email, requiring greater precision in identification, cutting and pasting.

For example, a form can have the following data:

Name:

Client Number:

Request:

Details:

But this will be received thus:

```
Name=Lee Hopkins
Client_number=3871590
Request=Address change
Details=Lot 870 Stock Road,Mylor SA 5153 Home:
08 8388 5730
```

It is only by incorporating dynamic webpage technology, built around databases and dynamic scripting, that this text hurdle can be overcome.

However, such technology is beyond the scope of this document.

Therefore, support and training would be needed to 'hand hold' affected employees through the transition from paper-based to email 'cut and paste' processes.

## Strategic Objective: Pillar 2

**Pillar 2:** To deliver the most compelling customer experience and value proposition at every touch point.

Being able to deliver your customers consistent, valuable information at each interaction with them (within your sphere of influence) is vital.

Therefore your communications technology must allow us to provide this information. Individual employees cannot be expected to know everything, but they can be expected to demand easy-to-find answers on behalf of your members.

Increasing their knowledge is therefore a critical component, which fortunately communications technology can significantly assist.

Similarly, your communications with your business customer, 1BIZ, must not only reflect your professionalism and reputation (Pillar 3) but also allow for increased value, increasing their reciprocal desire to assist you in growing both businesses.

### **Tactic 2: A comprehensively-equipped intranet**

Your intranet is already a valuable tool in your toolbox. By further developing it—enhancing it with features such as ‘Frequently Asked Questions’, a search engine, and increased knowledge-sharing tools such as blogs—you are able to provide a communication vehicle that your frontline staff can use to quickly find value-adding information.

If a desired piece of information cannot be found, the intranet must be able to offer a rapid and measured enquiry facility.

Similarly, your intranet must work to enhance your relationship with 1BIZ. It can do this by providing 1BIZ and XYZBIZ a secure area wherein data can be exchanged and commented upon (see the next page for more information on a secure intranet).

Again, blogging capabilities within a secure environment can achieve this data exchange (for more information on blogging, see page 16).



## Strategic Objective: Pillar 3

**Pillar 3:** Enhance XYZBIZ's reputation and brand.

Your reputation is partly dependent upon your own activities (at your touch points with your members), and partly dependent upon the activities of 1BIZ.

### Tactic 3: A secure extranet

There are sound business reasons why you would want to be 'closer' to your business partners, and in particular to continue to show your ongoing commitment to 1BIZ.

This can be achieved through, as previously discussed, a secure intranet relationship with 1BIZ (known technically as an 'extranet').

There are many points where you and 1BIZ touch. Currently there is no simple way to share information securely, apart from via email.

However, sending files between the two companies via email creates additional storage and network load requirements.

A simpler solution would be to have a secure extranet that is accessible by both 1BIZ and yourselves. Password-protected, it would enable XYZBIZ and 1BIZ colleagues to exchange data, exchange comments, and facilitate the smooth flow of business intelligence.

By purchasing your own web server (which could be housed, or 'hosted', in Sydney) you could allow 1BIZ secure access to a shared area of your intranet, wherein document exchanges could occur and conversations take place.

Remember, conversations are taking place anyway — better that you encourage the right sort of conversations.

#### **Tactic 4: Consistent, readable printed communication**

You can continue to show your commitment and professionalism to your own employees through timely and visually attractive communication.

You can also ensure that your printed communications with your external membership base similarly show your commitment and professionalism.

All printed communication must meet the following criteria:

- Is easy to read – layout, font use and font size, colours
- Uses clear, plain language
- Modern, fresh design – layout, font use and font size, colours

You can work alongside and adapt existing internal communication vehicles (such as [colleague]’s *Harc d’Triomphe!*) to serve your needs here.

No clipart will be used in any document. Where appropriate, free or low-cost professional imagery<sup>1</sup> will be utilised to support textual content.

Further reasons why clipart should be banned from business communications can be found in Appendix B.

---

<sup>1</sup> [www.corbis.com](http://www.corbis.com)

With regard to external communication you generate—letters to your membership, for example—it is imperative that you make it as easy as possible for your readers to comprehend that communication.

Therefore, wherever possible, all communication should be easy to read, with clear language, and in a serif font.

Currently you use a sans-serif font (such as *Arial*), which places greater strain on the brain to read and process. The return to a serif font (such as *Times Roman* or *Georgia*, the font you are currently reading) would make it easier for the brain to recognise and rapidly process the words.

## Strategic Objective: Pillar 4

The requirement of Pillar 4 is the profitable growth through alliances.

For any potential alliance you require:

- Great people to interact with their people, and
- Great communications vehicles to reflect your reputation and brand (Pillar 3).

### **Tactic 5: Compelling, professional vehicles for communication**

In addition to an extranet (see Tactic 3 on page 11) that allows your alliance partners secure access to you and you to them, you need a portfolio of documentation that outlines your specific capabilities and benefits as a white label insurer.

You currently only have an outdated PowerPoint slideshow, used for in-person presentations, but no marketing collateral that can be left with a potential alliance partner.

A design house should be engaged to design a suite of collateral items that work to support both Pillar 3 (reputation and leadership) and Pillar 4 (growth).

## Strategic Objective: Foundations A & B

**Foundation A:** A performance-based culture that recognises and rewards integrity, achievement and results.

**Foundation B:** Reliable and appropriate information, delivered through right-fitting infrastructure and processes.

Performance relies, in part, on the ability to access the right information, in the right format, at the right time.

Ready access to general information, ready access to key informers, and ready access to silos of specialist information are critical enablers that can propel individual performance.

## Tactic 6: Knowledge Management via Blogs

## Communications 2.0

The McGraw-Hill Companies  
**BusinessWeek**  
 MAY 2, 2005 www.businessweek.com

**Blogs**  
**will change your business**

Look past the yakkers, hobbyists, and political mobs. **Your customers and rivals are figuring blogs out.** Our advice: **Catch up...or catch you later.**  
[MORE ON PAGE 56 >](#)

**More on blogs online only at businessweek.com**

**BLOGSPOTTING**  
 Our new blog on blogs debuts online with Stephen Baker and Heather Green

**PROFILE**  
 The young blogger king of New York real estate. Lockhart Steele

**CASE STUDY**  
 How Stonyfield Farm's yogurt culture spreads through the blogosphere

**SIX TIPS**  
 Experts weigh in on the do's and don'ts of corporate blogging

[BusinessWeek online](#)

Business Week dedicated a recent worldwide issue to the new communication phenomenon of blogging.

A blog can best be described as a web-based journal authored by one or multiple authors. Entries (called 'posts') appear in reverse chronological order, newest to oldest. The posts are created by blog software, a sort of light weight, easy-to-use content management system.

No knowledge of coding or computer script is required—if you can type a headline and some copy, you can blog.

Whilst I have attached copies of many of the articles printed within the issue as Appendix C of this plan, the overall benefits to internal and external blogging can be summed up as follows:

- **Projects:** Most companies have terrible institutional memories when it comes to projects. Anybody who needs to delve into a project's records to find how a decision was reached a year ago is probably out of luck. Blogs provide an on-going record of decisions and actions. Blogs also allow project leaders to let the rest of the company know of the project's current status and its accomplishments.
- **Teams:** Teams can maintain blogs to let the rest of the company know of current achievements or blockages.
- **News:** Employees can contribute industry or company news to a group blog.
- **Brainstorming:** Team or cross-team employees can brainstorm about projects, processes or other topics.
- **Personal blogs 1:** Even though this sounds like a time-waster, a personal blog can prove extremely valuable to XYZBIZ. Consider someone who reads a lot and attends meetings of her professional association. She updates her blog with summaries of the articles she's read (with links to the journal websites) and notes of the meetings. Employees who find value in this information will read the blog; those who don't care aren't missing anything if they don't. As Covey would say, one person can help several 'sharpen their saw'.
- **Personal blogs 2:** Gail notices claims backing up for one reason or another; she is able to let everyone know why and what the likely 'back-on-track' date is with one post, without inundating everyone's email inbox. Robert finds out that enough newsletters won't be printed off in time for delivery of vital member news; with one simple

post to his personal blog he can **update everyone who needs to know**.

- **Personal blogs 3:** Marilyn notices the same sorts of errors coming through from various teams. With one post to her personal blog she can let everyone who needs to know what the correct process or decision is. Marilyn receives some new information from the Government; with one simple post to her personal blog she can update everyone who needs to know about the ‘what’, ‘why’ and the implications for your processes and practices.
- **Personal blogs 4:** Fiona in Customer Service knows of a great way to resolve a problem or answer a tricky question a member has; she informs the internet manager so he can update the relevant intranet pages (such as ‘FAQs’), she also posts to her personal blog so that her colleagues can be updated immediately. Manny in Memberships notices that quite a few change requests from Customer Service are incorrect; she informs the internet manager so he can update the relevant intranet pages (such as ‘FAQs’), she also posts to her personal blog so that her colleagues in Membership *and* Customer Service can be updated immediately.
- **MD blog:** What a great way for Delia to get closer to employees. With her responsibilities stretched across several cities, Delia can stay in touch with her company easily, no matter where she is. She can help educate, motivate and escalate.

#### **Risk reduction of blogs – inappropriate messages**

- Blogs are defined as business communication tools. Everyone knows what they can and cannot do on your existing communication systems; the same rules apply with your blogs, the only difference being that You could use blogs rather than email to send out those “I have chocolate for sale” messages.



- Utilising the groundwork already undertaken by other companies<sup>2</sup> such as IBM, Microsoft, Sun and Groove<sup>3</sup> to create your own blogging policy; employees must read an agreement to be allowed to blog.

### Quick summary so far

An uninformed employee is a productivity risk. So how does a company balance the need to inform and educate their employees with the volume of work they expect out of them while not hampering their actual productivity?

One way is to keep the printed newsletter going, to inform, to educate, to engage (after all, some employees still like to read the printed newsletters on the bus).

Secondly, you continue to develop the intranet to be a place where employees *want* to go and *have* to go to find the information they need to do their job.

Third, you encourage knowledge sharing via blogs.

The fourth way is to podcast.

### Tactic 7: Engagement and Knowledge Management via Podcasts

Podcasting is a brilliant, low-cost way of getting mildly-urgent and non-urgent communication out to relevant interest groups. What makes podcasting so powerful a communication channel is that the files can be downloaded to an MP3 player and listened to while walking the dog, sitting on the bus or train, driving the

---

<sup>2</sup>

[http://michaelhyatt.blogs.com/workingsmart/2005/03/corporate\\_blog\\_1.html](http://michaelhyatt.blogs.com/workingsmart/2005/03/corporate_blog_1.html)

<sup>3</sup> [http://www-128.ibm.com/developerworks/blogs/dw\\_blog\\_comments.jspa?blog=351&entry=81328](http://www-128.ibm.com/developerworks/blogs/dw_blog_comments.jspa?blog=351&entry=81328)

car, sitting under a tree, enduring long and tedious flights, waiting in airport terminals, switching out taxi drivers who could run the country better than the current mob if only given a chance, and so on...

A podcast can be quickly downloaded onto a player manually, or it can be configured using some clever software (a 'podcatcher') to automatically download onto the recipient's media player of choice, ready for them to listen to on their way to work in the morning. How efficient is *that*?

So what can be podcast?

- Meetings
- Executive speeches
- Business updates
- Investor road shows (so employees can have some insight into what outside audiences are hearing)
- Customer trade show presentations (ditto above)
- Presentations by sales executives (so employees can hear *how* the company's products and services are sold to the outside world)

Podcasting can save the busy XYZBIZ employee from the tedium of countless non-productive hours. Here's how...

Let's consider the average XYZBIZ manager.

They receive 60-70 emails a day, links to spreadsheets and pages on the company intranet, links to other websites...

Then they take a trip to Brisbane or Sydney. Hop on a plane... but now what?

If they're in 'cattle class' there's not enough room to swing a cat, let alone open their laptop.

They could probably read some of the material their colleagues sent them, but there's no printer available so unless they printed off the equivalent of 'War & Peace' before they left they are stuck with the airline magazine. Interesting, but...

But if they brought their mp3 player with them they can listen to:

- A recent presentation the Delia, Bill or Eric gave to a stakeholder community
- An update on sales figures from 1BIZ
- A synopsis of your KPI performance
- News and commentary from leading online broadcasters relevant to your industry
- A few really nice tunes to help take their mind off their troubles!

But how do you get this sort of material?

Simple.

- The sound person at Delia, Bill or Eric's presentation saves the speech as a digital file.
- Steve reads the sales figures into a cheap microphone attached to his computer. A few clicks of his mouse and he's saved the file as an mp3.
- Steve also reads the performance stats into a cheap microphone attached to his computer (or he delegates this to Jeff). A few clicks of his mouse...
- The manager has some free or inexpensive software on their desktop, which with a few clicks of a mouse automatically collects relevant sound files and downloads them onto their mp3 player.

- And the manager transfers some songs from a favourite cd onto their computer, then with a few simple clicks of a mouse transfers them to their mp3 player.

### Staff engagement

Staff Engagement is a big issue.

Research suggests three categories of employee: 'engaged', 'not engaged' and 'actively disengaged'.

'Engaged' employees are the 'stars' of the company, full of passion, zeal and commitment. The 'not engaged' turn up for work, do what is required but little else. No passion, no commitment either to or against the company. The 'actively disengaged' are unhappy in their work and drag everyone else around them down too. Additionally, they undo the accomplishments of others.

The Gallup Organisation estimates the roughly 16 per cent of American workers who are actively disengaged cost the U.S. economy US\$300 billion a year in lost productivity.

A recent Melcrum report, *Employee Engagement: how to build a high-performance workforce*<sup>4</sup>, highlighted that 70% of surveyed respondents cited "communicating a clear vision of the future" as a key task of leaders. Additionally, 59% said that "creating a climate of open communication" was the most important element in engagement-building.

With Delia and other senior managers spending increasing amounts of time away from the Adelaide office due to business requirements, the use of podcasts and blogs to 'stay in touch', share knowledge and ideas, and increase engagement becomes even more necessary.

---

<sup>4</sup> An Executive Summary is provided in Appendix D

As Melcrum's research shows, engagement can be directly affected by 'communication'—both from the senior manager to the employee, and the employee having a channel of communication back up the chain. 'Communication' is now a two-way process—a dialogue—not a command-and-control monologue.

Podcasts allow Delia to stay in audible touch with her employees, letting them know what is happening in the company and the industry.

At the same time podcasts allow senior managers to keep Delia informed on what is happening in the company while she is interstate or overseas.

Blogs allow everyone to inform and update everyone else. It's not a 'blast email' tool, but a delivery channel by which those who wish to be informed 'subscribe'; don't want to know what is going on in Julie's world? Then don't subscribe to her blog.

### Who is blogging and podcasting?

The following companies are blogging and/or podcasting. Please note that these are external-facing channels of distribution; the number of companies using blogs and podcasts internally is not known, but statistics and anecdotal evidence would suggest a rapid increase daily.

Here is a list of Fortune 500 companies who are blogging and/or podcasting:

GM	Intel	MBNA
Sun	Delphi	Toys R Us
Microsystems	Merril Lynch	Nike
Microsoft	Disney (hugely, internally)	Pepsi
Google	Motorola	Texas Instruments
Yahoo!	FedEx	Oracle
Boeing	Mitsubishi	Avon
CitiGroup	Cisco	Apple Computer
IBM (hugely, internally) <sup>5</sup>	Raytheon	Shell
HP	Halliburton	McGraw-Hill
		Radio Shack

<sup>5</sup> IBM has just announced they are encouraging every one of their 320,000 employees worldwide to blog 'externally' and become evangelists for the company. Source: [siliconvalleywatcher.com](http://siliconvalleywatcher.com)

Time Warner	Kimberly-Clark	Starbucks
Dell, Inc.	UAL	New York Times
Wells Fargo	Delta	
Lockheed	Winn-Dixie	

Add to this list European and non-Fortune500 companies such as Guardian Newspapers, SAP, News International, Thomas Nelson Publishers, and [Macaw](#), a Dutch company in which every one of its 110 employees has an internal blog. It's just part of the new-hire package. The blog comes along with intranet access and a company e-mail account.

Ninety of Macaw's employees use their blogs. The blogs are mainly used to share knowledge about technical issues or solutions. But also fun stuff, politics, current events or pictures appear as blog entries. The internal blog system started because of one employee who believed in the idea and wanted to give it a try.

Also of interest is this fascinating piece of information:

[Defense Industry Daily](#), a relatively new industry blog from Watershed Publishing (publishers of [MarketingVox](#)), [reports](#) that four-star general James Cartwright, the top guy in charge of the U.S.'s nuclear arms infrastructure, is now blogging. **It is literally required reading in his reporting command.**

### Rollout costs

The introduction of blogging can be achieved in three ways:

1. Stand-alone software installed on your intranet/extranet server (using, for example, MoveableType<sup>6</sup>)
2. Use of an external, third party blogging service<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup> [sixapart.com/movabletype](http://sixapart.com/movabletype)

3. a quasi-blog system by setting up individual flat html pages within your intranet site and using content management software ('CMS') such as Macromedia Contribute<sup>8</sup> to not only update team pages but also individual quasi-blogs/pages.

The costs involved for each three options are as follows:

1. US\$350 for 10 blog authors  
US\$1300 for 50 blog authors  
US\$negotiable for 51+  
(and potentially zero if you purchase your own server and manage it yourselves)
2. US\$nil for unsecured services  
US\$149.50 *per annum* for secure service<sup>9</sup>
3. A\$1050.00 for up to 6 users  
US\$14,995 for up to 50 users (requires additional Web Publishing System<sup>10</sup> for such scalability)  
US\$29,990

Note: one *Contribute* licence may be able to be used on more than one machine – a trial would need to be organised<sup>11</sup>.

The costs for podcasting could be as follows:

- Headset microphone - \$90 approx
- Desktop recording & editing software - \$nil

---

<sup>7</sup> such as [blogger.com](http://blogger.com)

<sup>8</sup> [macromedia.com/software/contribute](http://macromedia.com/software/contribute)

<sup>9</sup> [help.typepad.com/panel/site\\_access.html](http://help.typepad.com/panel/site_access.html) -  
[setting up password protection](#)

<sup>10</sup> [macromedia.com/software/webpublishingsystem/index.html](http://macromedia.com/software/webpublishingsystem/index.html)

<sup>11</sup> This is against licence agreements, however.

- Mobile recorder - \$600 including microphone<sup>12</sup> – great for interviews and recording when away from main desktop. Not essential but useful.

## Pros and Cons of each method

### Standalone software

*Pros:* You have the software installed on your own intranet server, so there is no risk of ‘data leakage’ into the internet; able to share data securely with 1BIZ and other partners; automatic notification of updated blog pages/new entries; would make sense to add blog software if you are going to purchase your own server (which gives us the freedom to allow 1BIZ/other partners secure access to ‘screened off’ sections of your server for ‘extranet’ purposes); because it allows RSS technology (which requires a webserver for it to work), it allows for rapid ‘scanning’ of headlines via blog reader software

*Cons:* \$cost to setup software, maintenance & hosting implications for you and IT /Sydney.

### External third-party service

*Pros:* no cost for installation; minimal cost for as many users as you like; can password-protect entire blogsite so only registered users can access; automatic notification of updated blog pages/new entries; because it allows RSS technology (which requires a webserver for it to work), it allows for rapid ‘scanning’ of headlines via blog reader software

*Cons:* few XYZBIZ employees have internet access (see also ‘A further thought on engagement...’ on page 27); risk of data ‘leaking’ into open internet.

---

<sup>12</sup> Sony MZNH900 currently on special:  
[sony.com.au/articles/article.jsp?articleId=3462&categoryId=21603](http://sony.com.au/articles/article.jsp?articleId=3462&categoryId=21603)



**Quasi-blog system**

*Pros:* can be implemented directly into existing intranet pages

*Cons:* large \$cost, lack of automatic notification of updated pages means a large amount of staff time wasted on manually scanning individual webpages to see if there have been any changes; because it doesn't allow RSS technology (which requires a webserver for it to work), it does not allow for 'scanning' of headlines via blog reader software.

**A further thought on Engagement...**

It strikes me as bizarre that on the one hand you are asking employees to commit to the company, to trust in us, to engage more fully and work more productively, and yet you are also saying to them 'We don't trust you as far as we can throw you to not abuse our IT systems, so we are not going to give you internet access'.

You are asking them to trust you, but you are saying you don't trust them to not visit porn sites or other non-work related websites.

Since I would estimate that every team leader and above at XYZBIZ takes work home, the work/home membrane has not just been perforated, but well and truly broken. It makes little sense to stop employees from accessing the internet when the internet allows employees access to professional information that could assist them in their work. They take work home; why not allow them to bring some of their home to work?

For example, in the niche field of organizational communication there are over 200 websites and blogs specifically geared to information sharing and professional development.

How many sites exist on other areas relevant to your business I have not yet researched, but I would imagine

the organizational communication experience to be similarly replicated.

Allowing all XYZBIZ employees internet access would allow them to feel that they are trusted. Policies already exist for the disciplining of staff caught accessing inappropriate material; job loss is a serious enough disincentive, I would think, to limit the risk of wholesale abuse of access privilege.

Additionally, by restricting or not allowing staff *any* internet access the **new communication technologies** such as RSS feed readers (which 'read' the blogs and automatically notify the interested parties of updated entries) **will not work**.

## Communication management

Currently there is no one person dedicated to managing communication within XYZBIZ.

As many of your communications come from XYZG and your members impacted by communications from 1BIZ, there is currently not the need for a full-time manager.

However, a part-time manager, working a 0.8 week, would be able to achieve the following:

- Ensure design/usability consistency, scaled development and growth, and availability of the XYZBIZ intranet
- Ensure design/usability consistency, scaled development and growth, and availability of the XYZBIZ/1BIZ extranet
- Liaise with XYZG IT department over technical availability/functionality issues
- Liaise with XYZG and 1BIZ colleagues over communication issues—including relevancy, timing, format and content
- Oversee the introduction into and use of new communication technology within XYZBIZ
- Work with existing internal employees and other appropriate content providers to ensure the timely delivery of new material
- Edit and format content to meet the publishing requirements of different media
- Ensure publications are released in a timely manner, to a published schedule that ensures a consistent delivery of messages

# Communications 2.0

- Ensure internal publications are professionally designed and distributed via appropriate channels
- Ensure internal communications are designed to either elicit desired behavioural outcomes, or are designed to support engagement drivers
- Work with external design consultants to ensure that all external-facing communications from XYZBIZ reflect your professionalism and leadership.

## Communication timetable

Accepting that the timing requirements will always be extremely fluid and dependent upon many business influences, the following timetable of communication release is suggested.

<b>January</b> <i>Flourish</i>	<b>July</b> <i>Flourish</i>
<b>February</b> <i>Flourish</i>	<b>August</b> <i>Flourish</i>
<b>March</b> <i>Cultural</i> <i>Flourish</i>	<b>September</b> <i>Cultural</i> <i>Flourish</i>
<b>April</b> <i>Flourish</i>	<b>October</b> <i>Flourish</i>
<b>May</b> <i>Flourish</i>	<b>November</b> <i>Flourish</i>
<b>June</b> <i>Cultural</i>	<b>December</b> <i>Flourish</i> <i>Cultural</i>

Additionally, Delia's recordings can be distributed weekly, blogs will be updated daily and content pages for teams will be updated as required but certainly a minimum of weekly.

## Existing communication vehicles and their usage

In the table below the current communication vehicles are listed, along with comments regarding their suitability.

Vehicle	Current use	Comments
Email	Ubiquitous	Ban all non-work correspondence (e.g. 'chocolates/perfumes for sale').
Telephone	Frequent (not including in-bound calls in Cust. Svc)	Require all employees with a permanent phone number to update their Audix 'out of office' message whenever they are leaving/returning. Ensure that colleagues are able to update this message on their behalf in times of sickness.
Correspondence	Frequent	Ensure all correspondence uses a serif font to ensure easier cognition by readers.
GroupIntranet	Infrequent	Holds very little content of value to XYZBIZ. Useful for XYZG phone numbers and link to self-serve payroll.
XYZBIZ Intranet	Frequent	Need to comprehensively add content so that it becomes the first place employees go to for information and solutions. Adding blogs allows chocolate/perfume notices, as well as, far more importantly, knowledge sharing among peers.
One-on-One	Monthly	Research shows Supervisors are still the most credible sources of information. Used for PDP and relationship building.
Team meetings	Frequently	Frequency is dictated by manager.
'Flourish' newsletter	Monthly	Could be more professional in design. A better vehicle could be chosen for Delia's content – for example, a weekly podcast.
Reports to 1BIZ	Ad-hoc; daily; weekly; monthly	Currently sent by email, which clogs email service. Archiving is messy (lots of places to file the documents on your servers, therefore easy to misfile; personal GroupWise email client also holds copy for 3 months). Suggest place all documents in secure area for 1BIZ to access and comment on (either secure blog or secure extranet).
Cultural comms (FISH: Shine, RAI, Sparkle.)	Quarterly planned but ad-hoc delivered	All cultural communications are planned and timetabled so that delivery is consistent.

## Attitudes toward existing communications

Various focus groups were held to discuss employee attitude towards communication within XYZBIZ.

Several themes emerged:

1. Irrelevant emails from XYZG wasted their time and ranged from being a nuisance to a highly unwanted intrusion.
2. Newsletters and other cultural collateral seemed to be confusing – where was the distinction between, for example, RAI, Shine, Sparkle, and the Flourish newsletter?
3. Nothing seemed to have any regularity to it – newsletters and cultural emails appeared irregularly and unpredictably. Whilst this irregularity was not a major concern to the participants, it does reflect the seeming lack of a cohesive communication timetable.
4. Many commented on their inability to get to your intranet, despite their desire to ‘check it out’. There are no links on *GroupIntranet* to it and they either have to ask a friend how to get to it, spend ages hunting through Windows Explorer/My computer, or just not bother (their main choice).

## Measurement

All communications must serve either one or both of these two requirements:

1. Support staff engagement and encourage behavioural change;
2. Grow the business.

No formal, systematic measurement of the effectiveness or otherwise in either of these areas of your communications is taken.

Therefore the following measurement vehicles are proposed:

Vehicle	Measurement Type	Comments
Focus group	Qualitative	<p>Six-monthly 'pulse' check your internal communications for their effectiveness at driving behavioural change and staff engagement.</p> <p>Six-monthly use of third-party consultants to 'pulse' check your external collateral with alliance partners and those who chose not to partner with you.</p>
Spreadsheet tracker	Quantitative	Tracks all major communication initiatives – such as content type, author, vehicle, deadline, etc.

However, it should be noted that a large part of internal communications can be categorised as 'pre-crisis management'; that is, creating an atmosphere of trust so that when a crisis (inevitably) hits, staff are already pre-warned and less likely to panic or send the wrong message out to stakeholders.

There is no metric available for this, other than perhaps calculating what crisis management communication would cost.

An example of crisis management and how millions of dollars could have been saved comes from Kryptonite, the bike lock manufacturer.



Here's a great synopsis from Hugh Macleod over at Gaping Void<sup>13</sup>:

Here's how the drama unfolded:

DAY ONE:

KRYPTONITE: our bike locks are the best.

THE MARKET: Yes, your bike locks are the best.

DAY TWO:

KRYPTONITE: our bike locks are the best.

THE MARKET: Yes, your bike locks are still the best.

DAY THREE:

KRYPTONITE: our bike locks are the best.

THE MARKET: Ummm... yeah I'm sure they are, but what's all this about some [recent video on the net](#) that's supposed to show how you can crack your locks in 10 seconds using a simple Bic ballpoint pen?

DAY FOUR:

KRYPTONITE: our bike locks are the best.

THE MARKET: Hey, I just saw that video on a friend's website. And I'm kinda ticked off because I just paid \$60 for one of your new locks 3 weeks ago, and I'm wondering if a Bic pen can crack my lock or not... does the pen crack all Kryptonite locks or just one or two models?

DAY FIVE:

KRYPTONITE: our bike locks are the best.

THE MARKET: Hey, I just visited your website and saw no mention of the Bic pens. What the hell are you doing about it? Are you going to fix the locks? Are you going to give me a refund?

DAY SIX:

KRYPTONITE: our bike locks are the best.

THE MARKET: No, they're not. You guys are assholes.

So what was the final outcome? How did Kryptonite address the problem? Did they fix the lock in the end? I have no idea. I'm just assuming their locks continue to suck. I suppose I could go visit the company website for more info, but... Eh. I can't be bothered. I'm just assuming it'll have the usual bullshit PR when I get there. Life is short.

---

<sup>13</sup>

[http://www.gapingvoid.com/Moveable\\_Type/archives/000823.html](http://www.gapingvoid.com/Moveable_Type/archives/000823.html)

One decent, smart, young, credible part-time blogger on \$500 a month, writing from the front lines on their behalf could have saved Kryptonite millions of dollars. Not to mention decades of slowly-and-painfully built brand equity. Without warning, Kryptonite's market got smarter and faster than they did. And it only took a couple of days to unleash the full wrath. Boom!

The end result of this episode is that Kryptonite had to recall every single one of its locks worldwide and replace it with a Bic-proof version.

Total cost (as acknowledged by their CEO):  
well over US\$10M.

## The way forward

You need to:

1. Relentlessly develop and improve your own intranet so that it becomes the first stop of choice for your employees to solve their questions (see page 9);
2. Devolve responsibility for the intranet content to team managers;
3. Introduce blogging as a way of sharing the phenomenal knowledge you are relentlessly building (see page 16);
4. Introduce podcasting as a way for Delia to powerfully engage with employees when she's not here (and this can be used for your Brisbane colleagues too) (see page 19);
5. Throw out all communications vehicles that are less than professional in design (see page 12);
6. Streamline the release of internal communications so that communication is released in a timely, managed and regular manner (see page 31);
7. Invest in designing a suite of marketing collateral to support Pillar 4 – *Growth through Alliances* (see page 14);
8. Equip those who meet with alliance and potential alliance partners with up-to-date tools, such as PDAs, that support XYZG's Pillar 3 – *Entrench your reputation and brand to reflect your leadership position* (see page 4);
9. Manage your audix messages better
10. Engage someone to manage this all (see page 29).

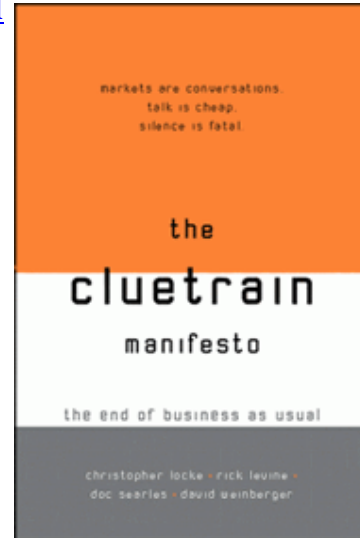
## Appendix A: The Cluetrain Manifesto

<http://cluetrain.com/book.html>

The Cluetrain Manifesto is the first book to ever be sporned from a website. The website<sup>14</sup> still exists, where you can still read the original 95 theses<sup>15</sup>. These theses contain more wisdom about understanding and communicating with the post-modern audience than has ever come out of MBA courses.

As one CEO says of the book, "when people can get faster and smarter information from one another than from the companies they do business with, it may be time to close the shop. Or, maybe, it's just time to get on the cluetrain and fully understand that your customers are living, breathing creatures who want one-to-one relationships with your company, not just one-way rhetoric."

So: read this book. It explains your audiences, both internal and external.



---

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.cluetrain.com>

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.cluetrain.com/#manifesto>

## Appendix B: Why clipart should be banned

(An article from my own website<sup>16</sup>.)

Microsoft offers its huge clipart library as a free tool for business communication. Should you take advantage of their offer? After all, it is free...

I had an interesting email from a client the other day, asking me which piece of clipart I thought 'worked' better in the internal document she was preparing for her company.

She was putting together a report on some cultural issues and was unsure of which of two colourful clipart pieces she should use.

She had attached two versions of the same document, each with a different clipart image featured very prominently.

My knee-jerk reaction was to scream in horror, rather like this chap →

I wanted to shoot back an email immediately, using (abusing) a famous quote of Sir Winston Churchill and twisting it out of context:



Arrgh! Not clipart again!

Never use it.  
Never use it.  
Never use it.

With stock photography so cheap to purchase, why would *anyone* want to 'cheapen' their message with clipart, I thought.

---

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.hopkins-business-communication-training.com/business-communication-solution-clipart.html>

Luckily for me, my 'early warning radar' rang a tiny, almost unheard alarm bell and I left the email unsent in my 'Draft' folder.

Hadn't I, at some stage, used clipart in my professional communications?

Indeed I had.

About 10 years ago I had purchased a 9cd pack of clipart, full of the most useless artwork. I'd purchased the set for the one cd of fonts the pack had (I was a big fan of fonts and loved collecting them). And that one cd has more than once saved me heartache as I found pc versions of Mac fonts various graphic artists had used on brochures and business cards that my clients wanted to re-use on reports and literature they themselves generated.

I had also used half a dozen clipart images in a self-development book I had written, based on my psychology honours research.

So I couldn't put my hand on my heart and email my client back with a '*no holds barred, don't ever do it*' type of response.

But it did bring to mind certain circumstances when you can use clipart, and when you really shouldn't.

#### **When you can use clipart:**

- when you are putting material together with a 'period' look and feel, such as a late 19th or early 20th Century look, or a mid 20th Century feel (such as the 1960s)
- when you are **extremely** confident that the clipart will **enhance** your copy, not just bring a bit of colour or imagery to the page
- when the clipart ties in very intimately with the textual content and purpose of your communication

- when you are using the clipart for a specific, attention-getting purpose. For example, with my success strategies book, I deliberately used large cartoons of people to engage both the left and right hemispheres of the reader's brain — the left with the text and the right with the image. Thus, the image here was used on a page about stress and worry.



An image from a self-help book

**Caveat:** use clipart images *sparingly!* Use too many in the one document and the word "amateur" starts to creep into the reader's mind

#### **When NOT to use clipart:**

- when the image distracts from the text
- when the image is unrelated or only mildly related to the text (and the same goes for those awful 1980s stock photos of Armani-suited men and women; You are in the 2000s now and power shoulders, like Bono's mullet haircut, have thankfully passed us by)
- when you are attempting a 'cutesy' feel. 'Cutesy' has very little place in business. Want 'cutesy'? Use a photo and compelling text instead...

## Conclusion

I accept that clipart *does* have a place in the professional communicator's bag of tools, but as a business communication solution it leaves **a lot** to be desired.

My advice? Delete your free clipart folders (how useful is *anything* you get free, usually?) and instead focus on using compelling words to drive your message home. Underpin and strengthen those words with **relevant** photos that **support** your text, not draw attention away from it.

A few extra dollars spent on a quality stock photo can be more than repaid when your communication is received, understood and **valued**, rather than discarded as another example of unprofessional managerial stupidity.



## **Appendix C: Articles on business blogs**

(copies of articles from Business Week, various industry reports, ...)

Communications 2.0

## **Appendix D: Melcrum Research Report – Employee Engagement**

**Communications 2.0**