

# Front and Center for Internal Communications

Dashboards aren't just for the Business Intelligence Analyst anymore.

By Allan Wille

It's interesting that so many companies are willing to spare no expense on Business Intelligence (BI) for finance, sales, and other mission-critical areas, yet pay only lip service to sharing critical information effectively within their own organizations.

Effective internal communications are an acknowledged essential for any high-performance organization. To align an enterprise – to make sure that people at all levels, in all areas, in every location, are marching to the same beat – management has to get its messages out quickly and clearly. And those messages can't fall on deaf ears – reaching the audience is not enough; to be effective, they must be noticed, consumed, and acted on.

Too many businesses still rely on emails, intranets, or even the good old cork board to communicate with the people whose contributions they depend on for success. In a workforce already suffering from information overload, the cork board goes unnoticed. Those emails are easily deleted or buried in folders two or three levels deep. And the intranets, rich with interesting and useful information, might help communication if only the information wasn't so hard to find, and people had the time to go looking for it.

This is unfortunate for two reasons.

First, when it comes to ensuring that everyone in an organization knows what is happening, why, and how they can help achieve shared goals, what could be more important than effective internal communications?

And second, with the right approach, the significant benefits derived from effective internal communications can actually be realized relatively quickly, simply, and inexpensively.

## Peripheral Awareness – the Ideal Internal Communicator

The key to conveying information effectively and consistently within an enterprise is to put it where its audience sees it.

In today's organizations, where everyone from the loading dock to the boardroom has a computer screen in front of them, that means displaying it on the desktop – front and center, where it can't be missed.

Dashboards like Klipfolio do this. As a result, they ensure that communications get noticed in real time. With a desktop dashboard, there is no need to open an email or launch a browser. You never need to go looking for information, because it comes to you.

## Focus, not fireworks

Of course, it's not quite that simple. It's not enough to deploy applications that just alert employees. They tend to be overused and, eventually, ignored. The communications must be applied appropriately, in the right "voice" to get the message across without being a constant distraction from important work.

Alerts, such as tickers, that provide annoying peripheral fireworks all day long are not the answer. A true desktop dashboard, displayed as a sidebar that delivers only essential alerts, ensures that people pay attention to what is important and ignore what is not.

## Ready adoption ensures success

Because they are easy and fun to use, desktop dashboards tend to be adopted eagerly.

What's more, management can tailor them to fit the need – they can lock down the “must have” information they want to communicate to the workforce, while empowering tech-savvy "eager adopters" to customize to their hearts' content with data on weather, traffic, stocks, available meeting rooms, and more.

## Endless options for information delivery

The type of information you can convey with desktop dashboards is endless. The employee directory, links to HR and other often-used parts of the company intranet, Internet links, news feeds, breaking news from management, health and safety bulletins, and a whole lot more can make up the Klips in a Klipfolio desktop dashboard.

Name	Ext.	Location
Allen, Barry	x5644	Ottawa
Allen, Bart	x4864	Ottawa
Curry, Arthur	x3154	Ottawa
Danvers, Linda	x1518	Hong Kong
Dearden, Mia	x2189	New York
Drake, Tim	x1458	Ottawa
Gordon, Barbara	x3254	New York
Grayson, Dick	x6332	New York

*A well-designed desktop dashboard is the ideal way to ensure the effective internal communications essential for any high-performance organization.*

With built-in audio and visual alerts, you can separate the critical from the important or merely interesting. "Must know" information is delivered in real time and gets the attention – and the action – it demands and deserves.

Custom branding means that your dashboards carry the company colors, and have a look and feel that is consistent with all of your internal communications.

## **Where do you want the picnic?**

Desktop dashboards can also serve as information-gathering tools, and can help organizations promote social responsibility.

Employee surveys can keep management's finger on the corporate pulse at all times, no matter how widespread employees are in space or time. Contests can elicit money-saving ideas from front-line workers who have firsthand experience with how things are done, and how they can be done better.

A dashboard of this kind is also an ideal tool for organizing volunteers for charity endeavors, or implementing environmentally sound corporate habits, and then keeping participants in the loop and up to date on progress.

The chance to have their voices heard and to participate in group efforts lets people at all levels know their opinions and contributions are valued – that they are integral and important parts of a thriving enterprise.

## **"In touch" and aligned**

With an internal communications dashboard, management can communicate with thousands throughout the organization in real time. There is no central bottleneck. Very little bandwidth is needed. Employees are informed, engaged, and better able to put corporate strategies into action consistently and effectively.

When it comes to aligning an organization, there is no substitute for effective internal communications. And when it comes to internal communications, nothing works so well as an unavoidable dashboard.

*Allan Wille is CEO of Klipfolio Inc. ([www.klipfolio.com](http://www.klipfolio.com)), makers of Klipfolio Dashboard. Klipfolio has helped companies worldwide engage and communicate with their employees to improve alignment, performance and profitability.*