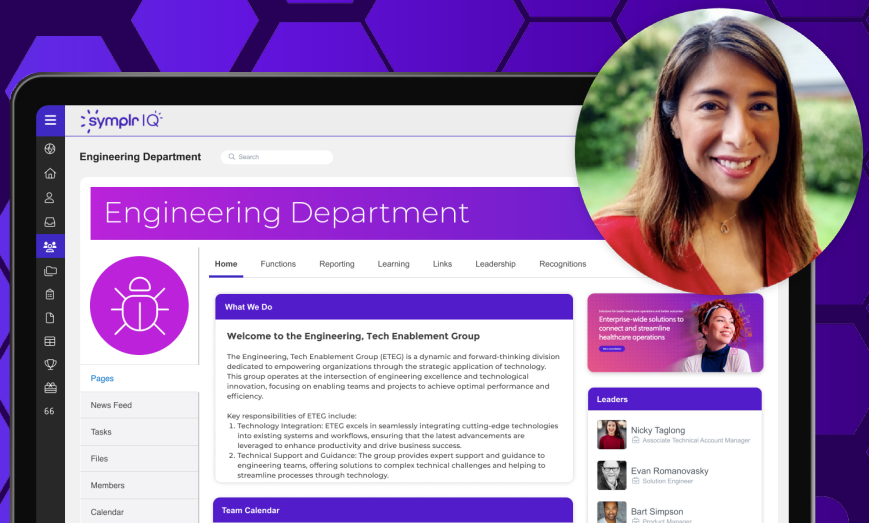




A 5-step strategy for

Successful Intranet Implementation

Melissa Hoyos of symplr lays out her approach to building a strong, useful intranet with MangoApps



Melissa Hoyos was brought on by symplr, a healthcare governance, risk and compliance software provider with 1,500 employees, in early 2021 to overhaul the way the company and its executives communicate internally. As Director of Internal Communications, Hoyos was tasked with implementing an intranet. She selected MangoApps, and drew on her experience building and deploying Microsoft SharePoint at three previous companies to ensure that the program went off quickly and without a hitch.

INTRANET SUCCESS AT SYMPLR



\$1,500 per month in **SAVINGS**



THOUSANDS of posts, likes, and comments in the first month of use



POSITIVE FEEDBACK from their employees

We have used Melissa’s expertise on the subject to put together this comprehensive guide for internal comms professionals who may be going through a similar process for the first time.

Her advice boils down to the following:

1. Start with a vision and leadership buy-in
2. Know what is most important to you, and ask the right questions in demos
3. Relinquish control and get everyone involved
4. Get executives to promote the launch at every opportunity
5. Start small, then grow and iterate

Read on for a deeper dive into each point.



1 Start With a Vision & Buy-In From Leadership

These two components, or the lack thereof, can make or break your intranet launch. At symplr, their culture of autonomy was front and center in how they approached building their intranet with MangoApps.

“That’s what symplr is all about,” says Hoyos. “We want to help ourselves. I think you really need to take leadership along on the journey and get really clear about what the intranet is for. As long as you and your leadership are aligned, then you feel empowered to be like, ‘Okay everyone, this is what it’s for. This is the philosophy.’ Then later on, leadership won’t be confused about why you’re doing something.”

An intranet can mean a lot of different things to different people and organizations, so it’s important to clarify exactly what you hope to accomplish before you start looking for the best platform for your needs.

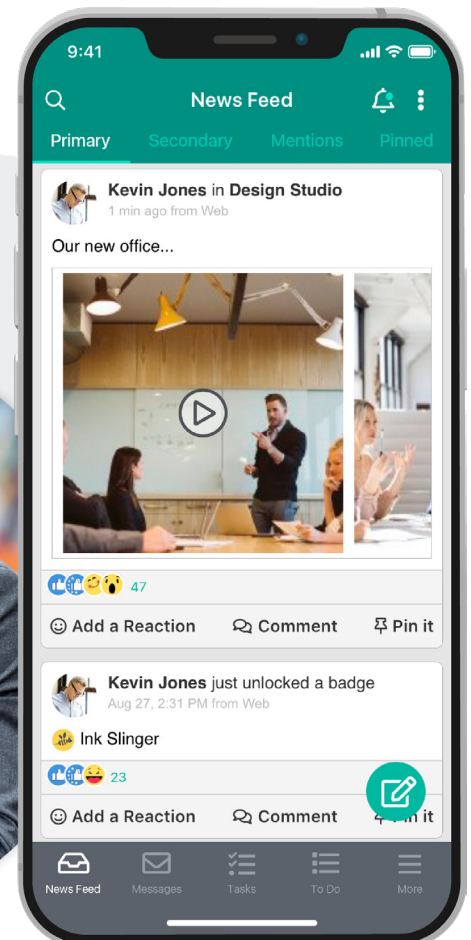
At symplr, for example, they’re using their intranet to reinforce company culture and share files and information among corporate and sales teams in a way that builds institutional knowledge. At another company, though, an intranet might be used to ensure that frontline retail workers can access their schedule and HR policies, or to keep dispersed mobile sales people in the loop about product changes.

Both of these can be addressed with MangoApps intranet, but those two deployments would look wildly different from each other.

This comes to the deeper point that deploying an intranet is only a worthwhile pursuit if it’s done with a specific goal or set of goals in mind, and you are certain that it’s something your team and leadership both want and will benefit from.

At symplr, Hoyos says, “We chose MangoApps for its ease of use. I feel like our purpose was for using it for company news. We didn’t have anything prior to that—it was just email and Microsoft Teams. We saw the functionality was spot on for sharing company news and almost like a website, in a CNN kind of way.”

With this clear sense of purpose, it was relatively easy for their team to go into demos with a unified idea of what they were looking for.



2 Ask The Right Questions During Demos

It's crucial to head into a demo with a clear understanding of what's most important to you, and then ask questions that get at those priorities. The main purpose of a demo is to test a software vendor's agility in meeting your needs. This can only be done if your team is aligned on what those needs are.

"I really wanted power to customize the home page," says Hoyos. "I had a vision and I knew what would work. Make sure that you go in with a vision of what you want to do, but be flexible on small things. We got 99% of everything that we wanted with MangoApps—I'm not even lying. I came in with a really positive attitude and I also came in pushing for what I wanted."

To realize that vision, it was crucial to find a platform that had design flexibility and strong customer support.

To really embody their culture of autonomy, they would also need flexible permission and management settings, and an admin interface that non-engineers could quickly learn to use on a deep level.

"Accessibility to the MangoApps support team has been phenomenal," says Hoyos. "This is such an easy application to use. With Microsoft SharePoint, you almost have to be an engineer to learn things. If I wanted to redesign a page on SharePoint just out of the box, I couldn't do it because I don't have that designer or engineer background. With MangoApps, if you have a concept, you can immediately implement it. It's been a lot easier than my last three experiences, because of the support team and what we've been able to do with the platform."

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3 Relinquish Control and Get Everyone Involved

This may not work for every company, but a big part of symplr's intranet success can be attributed to the fact that Hoyos didn't try to keep a tight hold on the reins. "At previous companies, I had control of everything that went on the intranet, or at least proofed and edited it," says Hoyos. "I think that approach can hurt engagement—it doesn't feel like you're owning something if somebody's constantly behind you just checking it and fixing it."

Empowering people throughout the organization to play a role in the content you put on your intranet enables you to scale, in a way that's worth the up-front time investment and learning curve. "Our strategy," says Hoyos, "was that we got teammates from each function—professional services, sales, customer support, etc.—to own their page. I own the home page and put news on there, but they own all their sub pages. We told them exactly what we're doing and why, and then let them each take ownership. I think that's why we were so successful."

A decentralized approach means more content, and content that is likely to be better targeted. It also has the side benefit of seeding teams throughout the organization with intranet champions who are likely to get the people closest to them using the platform, boosting engagement.

Hoyos is an advocate of this approach for team pages, even when it results in lower-quality content than she might put on the homepage. “There’s some things on here where you can see that the picture isn’t the highest res, or maybe the headline could be a little snazzier. I would say just kind of let go of control, because people will get better, and they’ll respect you more if you kind of let them do their thing and own their space.”

This approach has been bolstered by the MangoApps support team’s ability to record and send quick explainer videos when questions come up, enabling various symplr employees to become

intranet power users. “Without modern video technology,” says Hoyos, “it would have been a really hard change management thing to do. I didn’t hear any complaining—nobody was like, ‘Well, I can’t do this. This is way too hard.’ It was actually the opposite. They just got more curious, adding tabs or adding widgets or creating these menus. It’s really cool to watch them grow and see how they’re using their pages.”



4 Get Executives to Promote The Launch at Every Opportunity

High employee engagement around the launch of your intranet is crucial to its long-term success. The best way to accomplish this is to get leadership to use and promote it wherever possible.

“In our last town hall,” says Hoyos, “our CEO said, ‘I want to make sure everybody’s going to the intranet. This is what it’s for.’ He’s our brand ambassador, and there’s nothing better than that. There are companies where they give you the budget to launch, but then leadership doesn’t have anything to do with it. And okay, that’s nice that we have a fancy new tool, but if they don’t sign off on it, other people are not even going to look.”

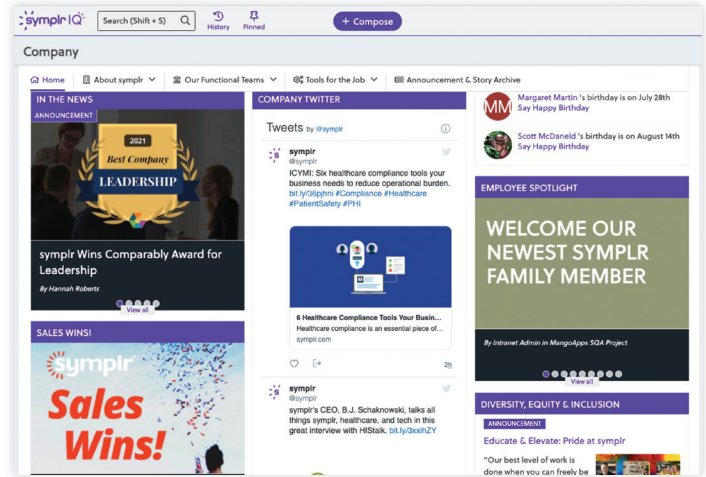
Town halls and other large meetings are great, but another important aspect of launch promotion is to get people accustomed to going to the intranet for information, since this is the habitual behavior you want to foster.

At symplr, they accomplished this by having the CEO send out important news via a snippet in an email, and then linking to the intranet for the full story. Over time, you can migrate from a workflow like this into just putting news on the intranet and expecting everyone to find it there.

This has relieved some pressure around their town hall meetings. The CEO used to have to cram a ton of information into each meeting, but now is able to approach things differently. “It’s only an hour-long meeting,” says Hoyos, “and we want to leave time for questions.” Instead of making sure the town halls are all-encompassing, they can now post some items to the intranet, and be confident that everyone will see them there. “It’s a relief that he doesn’t have to go through it all, even though it’s all important.”

Here are a few other ways symplr and other MangoApps customers have generated buzz around their intranet launches:

1. Have a contest to name the intranet, and conduct the submissions and voting as surveys within your intranet.
2. Host a webinar talking about why it's important and giving a tour of the platform, then turn the recording into a series of videos and make them into a training course hosted on your intranet.
3. Bring it up in every town hall or large meeting. "We didn't go on and on about it," says Hoyos, "we just said, 'We have an intranet coming. Make sure that you're thinking about how you'd want to contribute.'"
4. Send a series of emails before and after launch. Don't just send reminders that it's coming—get creative. You could ask for volunteers to be early test users, or do a scavenger hunt where the answers are hidden throughout the intranet, or give bite-sized ideas for how the intranet might benefit your colleagues in different ways.



The results at symplr speak for themselves.

Metrics From First Month of Launch (symplr had 1,350 employees at the time)

37,600 Views

1,128 Comments

907 Likes

1,353 Pieces of New Content



For another perspective on intranet launches, see our whitepaper on the launch of K-Coe Isom's successful intranet program.

[VIEW WHITEPAPER](#)

5 Start Small, Grow and Iterate

One of the benefits of MangoApps' modular approach to both design and pricing is that you can purchase our product for one small, specific use case, and then ramp up from there. If there are other resources you already have that you want to incorporate, you can just use links. "Our philosophy was to not recreate anything that already exists, so we link out to things," says Hoyos.

By doing this, you can keep a clean interface and let your team get accustomed to using your intranet, increasing its complexity over time in a way that feels manageable. It also makes it much easier to work out the kinks with the initial launch—the less moving parts there are, the easier it is to triage and improve.

At symplr, they've done a great job of embodying this mentality. "We're really purposeful about our menus and layout," says Hoyos. "We're trying not to overburden people, as we see it as iterative. We're taking a lot of feedback, and constantly doing little repairs—relabeling things, adding new widgets, stuff like that."

Evaluating Success

Overall, symplr's launch has been a huge success—just ask their employees.

Outside of the improvements to culture and engagement, they've been able to save over \$1,500 a month by sunsetting the platform they previously used for employee engagement, which is no longer necessary since those features are baked into MangoApps.

[symplr employees' feedback on MangoApps >](#)

I love the central location for information.

LOVE LOVE LOVE ❤️

This is, I'd have to say, one of the most complete things symplr has done in a while! Hats off! Love being part of the new symplr.

Wow, it looks amazing! Kudos to everyone involved in the design of the page.

This ROCKS! Very cool, thank you!

Going forward, they plan to incorporate MangoApps' mobile app and dashboard features, and have formed an editorial team to ensure that they're being thoughtful about the content they're adding to the platform. They're already starting to see MangoApps help them build institutional knowledge.

"Before, we were hammering people with emails all day long, and it could be hard to find things in their inbox. We weren't storing anything—there was no shared space. That's been the greatest benefit, having a shared space for the company. Otherwise, knowledge just gets lost."

About MangoApps

MangoApps helps companies modernize their employee-facing applications. It brings intranet, communications, training & work management together in one platform to provide the most adaptable, intuitive, and unified experience in the market today.

TRANSFORM HOW YOUR COMPANY COLLABORATES, COMMUNICATES, & GETS WORK DONE.

Contact us for a more detailed capabilities demo
sales@mangoapps.com | mangoapps.com

[Schedule A Demo](#)

