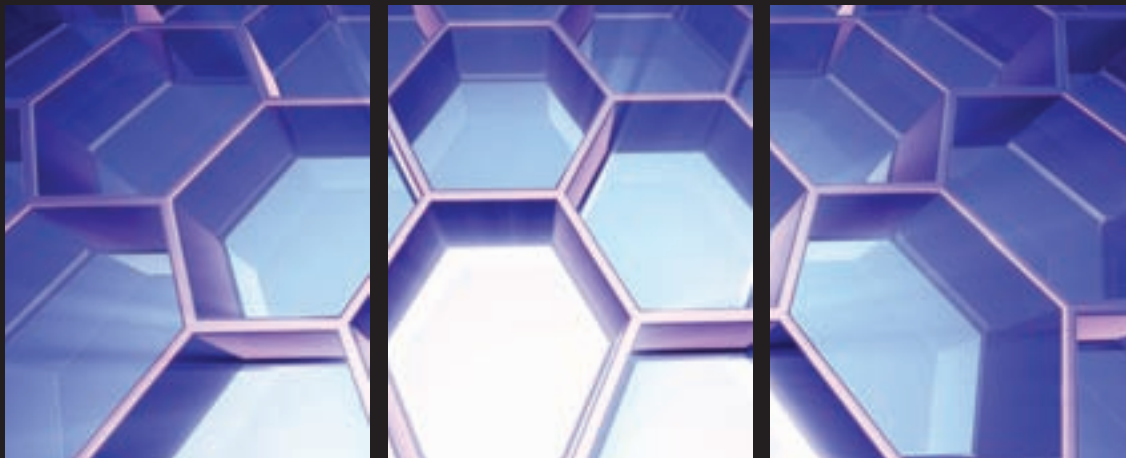


Intranet Strategy and Governance

AUDREY SCARFF



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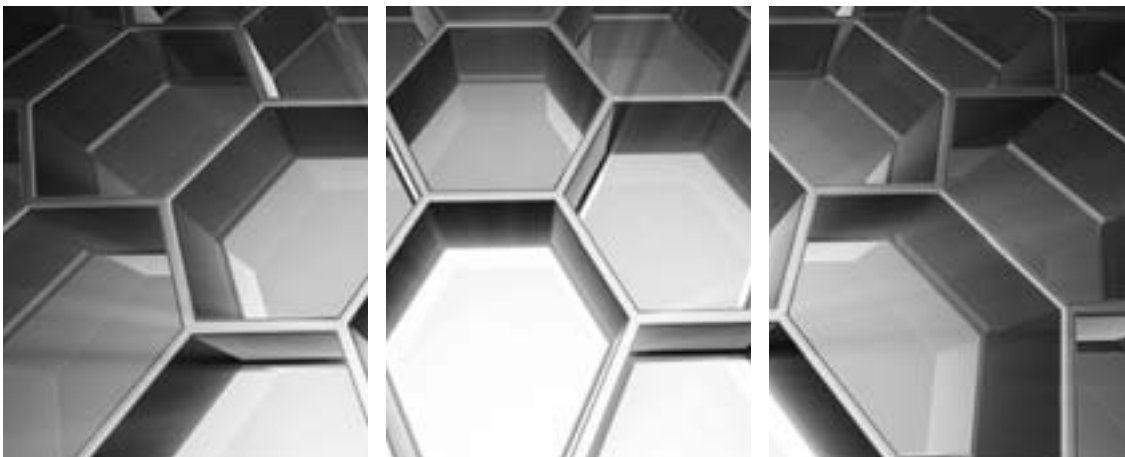
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Contents

Executive summary.....	IX
About the author.....	XI
Acknowledgements	XIII
Part One: The Intranet Strategy	
Chapter 1: Getting started	1
The aim – to make the intranet a natural extension of the way you work	2
What else should your intranet strategy deliver?	2
Making your strategy clear.....	3
The strategy format	5
The intranet project team.....	5
Twelve steps to getting started	7
Other useful resources	8
Chapter summary	8
Chapter 2: The main components of an intranet strategy	11
Audience needs	13
Identifying shortfalls in information needs.....	13
Security	16
Governance (roles and responsibilities).....	17
Information architecture (IA).....	17
Content quality control	18
Style guide and branding.....	18
Compliance	19
Going green	19
Search	19
Knowledge management.....	19
Information or management dashboards	20
Interactivity/Web 2.0	20
For and against command and control.....	22
Creating buy-in.....	22
Benchmarking	24
First-time intranet or redesign.....	24

Intranet redesign	25
Chapter summary	25
Chapter 3: The living strategy	27
Catalysts for change	27
The case for Software as a service (Saas).....	29
New competitors in your marketplace.....	30
Corporate takeover or merger	31
Consequences of change	32
Tailoring a communication plan for the recession	34
The changing role of the intranet – to deliver business objectives.....	37
Chapter summary	37
Chapter 4: The intranet – a critical business tool	39
Process management	39
eTraining.....	40
Calculating an estimate productivity saving	40
Communications.....	41
Culture building.....	41
One source of information, one voice	41
Using the intranet to reinforce desirable behaviour	42
User-generated content	42
Snapshot – using eNewsletters to drive users to the intranet at the Australian Mines and Metals Association (AMMA).....	43
Knowledge management	43
Snapshot – FAQs for customer service at Johnson & Johnson.....	44
Search	45
Harness your users.....	46
Training.....	47
Cost savings.....	48
Chapter summary	49
Chapter 5: Governance and metrics	51
Nuances in governance roles.....	52
Stakeholder mapping	53
Snapshot – the governance structure at BT.....	54
Snapshot – the governance structure at Alliance & Leicester	54
Snapshot – centralising intranet management at McDonald’s restaurants	55
Who owns the intranet?.....	55
The role of senior management	56
The importance of involving senior management.....	57
Tactics to gain senior management buy-in	57
Budget	57
Implementing a cost-effective strategy.....	58

Measurements	58
Measuring tangible and intangible benefits	59
Content management	61

Part Two: Case Studies and Expert Opinion

Case study 1: BT – Balancing business need and user experience	65
Situational analysis.....	65
Survey results of user satisfaction.....	65
Aligning with BT’s business strategy	66
Governance at BT.....	67
Senior sponsorship.....	67
Improving HR processes	68
The business benefits gained from using Web 2.0 tools	68
Remote and mobile working	69
Space management	69
Employee directory.....	69
The ideas-generation scheme	69
Employee on-boarding	70
Training.....	70
Compliance	70
Wellbeing.....	70
Online travel booking	71
Generating revenue from our intranet.....	71
Expert opinion 1: Harnessing cross-cultural intelligence through team building	73
It’s all about depth.....	74
Entry points	75
Engage communicators.....	75
A competitive advantage	75
Expert opinion 2: Why do we have the least social people in the enterprise	
choosing our social networking tools?	77
Enterprise 2.0: the declining role of IT in social networks	77
The disintermediation of IT	78
An apocryphal tale.....	78
Build a collaborative infrastructure to retain talent	79
Case study 2: McDonald’s – Achieving a valued business-support tool	
on a budget	81
McDonald’s mission statement.....	81
Situational analysis.....	81
Putting the new system in place.....	83
Managing risk	83

The solution – clear out the old	84
The launch	86
Measuring success	86
The budget.....	87
Case study 3: Jetstar – Achieving operational efficiencies through the intranet.....	89
Intranet objectives	90
Plans to measure success	90
Launching the new site	91
Results to date	91
Future plans	96
Case study 4: British American Tobacco – Creating a strategy and governance structure... 	97
Situational analysis.....	97
The problem.....	97
The solution	98
Gaining buy-in	98
The stages of the intranet strategy	98
Sustaining good governance.....	101
The results.....	102
Case study 5: Churchill Capital – Centralising information for the entire enterprise	105
Situational analysis.....	105
The challenge.....	105
The intranet strategy.....	105
The strategic process.....	106
Putting theory into practice	106
Governance of the intranet.....	108
The results.....	108
Enhancing productivity	109
Interactivity and user-generated content.....	109
Future plans	110
Case study 6: Cancer Council New South Wales – The role of the intranet for non-profit organisations	113
Our business	113
Our approach	114
The strategy.....	116
Measuring success	117
Hindsight	118
Case study 7: IBM – From content management to community management.....	119
From the editorial board to the editorial community.....	119
Our calls.....	121

Draft review.....	122
Our wiki.....	122
Our blogs	123
Our e-mails	123
From enhancement to service	123
Appendix 1: A content audit template	127
Appendix 2: A persona template	129
Appendix 3: An intranet strategy checklist	131
Index	133

Executive summary

BUSINESSES OFTEN struggle to articulate the purpose of their intranet. Some don't even try – it's usually a case of 'plug and go'. Some people even think that its function is assumed knowledge – it's obvious, so they don't need to explain it. The problem with these approaches is that if you don't know where you are going, you won't know how to get there or what you need to do to adapt to changing business conditions, and many intranets never reach their full potential because of this oversight. This report aims to discuss some of the pertinent issues organisations are facing surrounding intranet strategy and governance.

Governance refers to accountability and responsibility for the management of the intranet. It is an essential part of an intranet strategy if you want to extract its full potential as the valuable business tool you know it to be. While every organisation is different, some form of governance is necessary to guide the evolution of your intranet and avoid a 'wild west' end result.

Technology also has a part to play – it should support your governance strategy where it can. It should provide the necessary information or feedback to allow the owners to adapt the intranet strategy and tactics to help drive efficiency and effectiveness.

Chapter 1 explains the reasons for having not just any strategy, but a clear one, and what you can gain from the process of creating one. The chapter also examines how you should compose your intranet team.

In Chapter 2, we will break down the intranet strategy into its main components, including the articulation of your vision and goals. Not all of the items covered in this discussion may be relevant to all organisations, but it should get you thinking. The chapter addresses command and control *versus* bottom-up development, as well as the differences in approach for a first time intranet *versus* a redesign.

Chapter 3 examines the virtues of a living strategy. Particularly in unstable business climates, we may need to change direction or re-prioritise. Your intranet strategy is not cast in stone – it should be flexible enough to change with the times. This is especially relevant for organisations in the midst of mergers and acquisitions, downsizing and massive on-boarding of new employees.

Chapter 4 analyses in detail how the intranet can help your organisation to develop and prosper. How can you make your intranet more effective in delivering on business objectives? How can the intranet contribute to staff efficiency? What are employees' information needs and how can you bridge the gap between what you have and what you need to make employees more productive? This chapter answers these common questions, which organisations face. It also looks at why training is so important for an effective intranet strategy.

Chapter 5 discusses responsibility and governance of the intranet – who should be responsible? Common issues in intranet

governance, such as accountability and the importance of senior management buy-in will be covered in this chapter, as well as how you can use intranet metrics to monitor delivery on your strategy. If the technology behind your intranet fails to give you the right information how do you address that?

Part 2 of the report looks at real-life examples of company strategies and the governance issues that they have faced.

Featured organisations include:

- BT;
- McDonald's;
- Jetstar;
- British American Tobacco;
- Churchill Capital;
- Cancer Council New South Wales; and
- IBM.

Part 2 also includes contributions from industry experts, David Coleman at Collaborate.com and Silvia Cambié, international speaker on culture and collaboration.

A basic toolkit is also included in this report to get the strategic planning process started if this is the first time you've attempted one.

About the author

AUDREY SCARFF is director at iCite Online Strategy Consultants in London, UK.

She has an MA in virtual communication and her international experience with websites, intranets and the collaboration market includes projects with Shell International, HBOS Australia, Alliance Boots, the United Nations, Quiksilver, BT and Telstra.

Audrey has previously been a member of the management team for Intranet DASHBOARD (<http://www.intranetdashboard.com>). She is currently serving on the Board of the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) Europe/ Middle East as director of communications (see: <http://europe.iabc.com>).

iCite Online Strategy Consultants help businesses enhance corporate communications, improve business processes and make sense of the technology available to them. Expertise includes intranet planning, website design, technology selection, information architecture, governance strategy development, content planning and creation, style guide production and web project management.

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