

GUIDE

5 retail facts to improve your internal communication

Enable your employees to have a direct impact on the average transaction value in your stores





A connected workforce to embrace your vision

Internal communication is essential in every organization, but in retail there is an extra edge. A lot of your people have a direct connection with your customers.

If you enable them to perform better, it will positively impact the interaction with your customers, resulting in a direct impact on your organization's results. We all know that happy customers spend more.

But saying that internal communication is an essential part of your organization, doesn't mean it's easy.

- Over 50% of your organization consists of people that simply don't have access to everything;
- There are a lot of different tools being used and it's hard to push out clear and consistent communication;
- The purpose of your communication varies (people need to complete tasks, consult commercial information, see product information, be aware of possible delivery delays, ...) ;
- It's very hard to measure the impact of your communication efforts and who has received the message in a proper way or not.

A good internal communication strategy with your store employees has a direct and positive impact on the results of your entire organization.



2 What to know vs what to do

Within your dispersed network of stores, a lot of different things need to be done on a daily basis. To keep each employee focussed on his day-to-day operations, you need to make sure that it's clear what the priorities of the day are, both on an individual as on store level.

To make sure that overall management of the stores is done properly, tasks are being distributed from HQ. But store managers also have their own personal agenda of things that need to be completed to run their stores. That's why it's essential to have clear channels to distribute information, directly to your frontline workers as well.

Why an intranet doesn't do the trick

Previous generations of internal communications channels – such as intranets and classic email – only offer limited capabilities for static posting of information. On those platforms, the most critical information tends to get snowed under and it becomes very hard to search for the right information as well. So it becomes impossible for your people to stay in the loop of product updates, price changes, merchandising guides, etc.

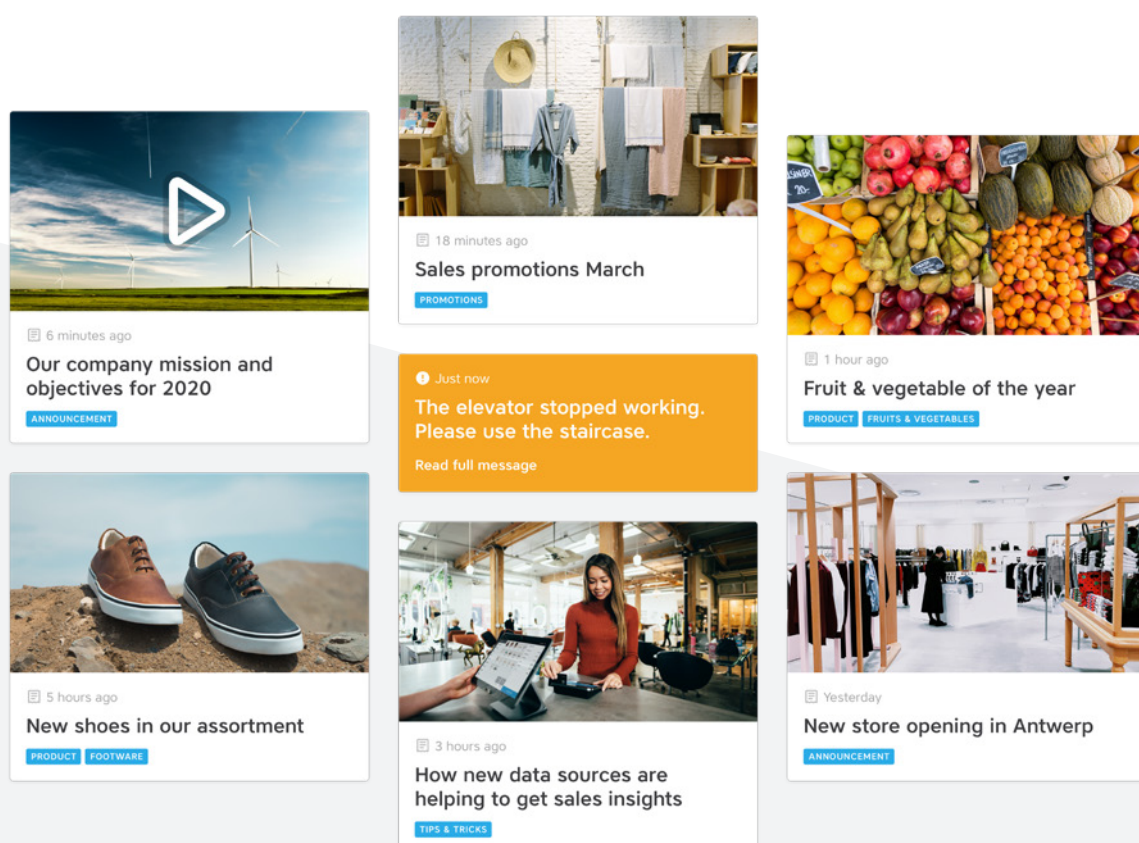
3 Clear channels to distribute information

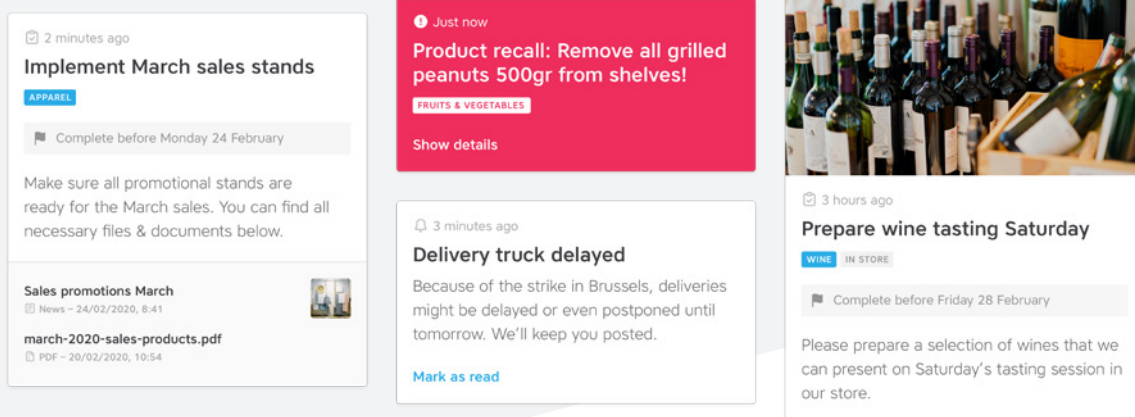
One place with everything they need to know

As stated in fact 1, your shop employees are the brand ambassadors of your company values. Next to knowing all about your company vision and mission, they also need to know everything about the upcoming promotional campaigns, regional announcements or events, new product announcements, etc.

But not all information is relevant to everyone. That's why it's important to get the right information to the right people, at the right time. Do not overwhelm them with information they don't need. Keep them focussed on their day-to-day operations and the relationship with your customers.

Categorizing your communication through topics is a good start, but then again, not all topics are relevant for everyone. In that case it's important to have a good segmentation engine behind your internal communication platform. It will help you to reach the right employee based on its location or store responsibilities.





Efficiently communicate about store operations

Now that you got all relevant information to your stores and employees, it's important for them to know exactly what to do, and when to do it. But the store visits that we did, pointed out that often times tasks are distributed from HQ to stores, ending up in an infinite list of things that (still) need to be done and eventually were never completed.

Bringing tasks to your stores and employees in a more targeted and segmented way will help your frontline workers to focus and reduce their workload. Tasks will more likely be completed by the right person. It will also help you as an organization to get better insights and reporting on how your stores are performing.

Next to that, it's only the store manager that knows his store best and probably has his own personal agenda of things that need to be completed to run their stores. So give them access to the same communication channel as you to distribute their own tasks throughout their own store, and assign the right people to the right task categories.

A personal library for all your employees

Making all this information available to your stores and frontline workers is one thing, but can they find it? Often times, all information is stored on a desk computer in a room, or printed out and pinned somewhere on a board.

You should bring the information straight to them – preferably directly to the shop floor – and make it possible for them to access all the information they need. That's why a good communication platform should be fully digital and mobile, to improve productivity and make it possible for you to reach every single employee.

Bringing it all together

Defining clear communication channels is crucial in getting your message across. But the true strength lies in bringing every single piece of information together in a transparent, consistent and personal way.

It will help you to give context to your people about what you want to achieve as a company, or about what exactly is expected from them in their operations. It will help them to understand your company's mission and values, which will be reflected on your customers.



Christopher Cooper

Sales Manager

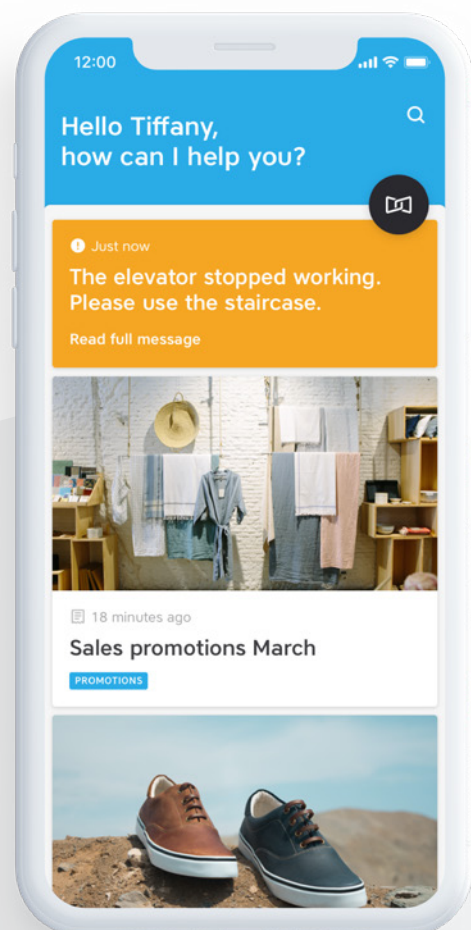
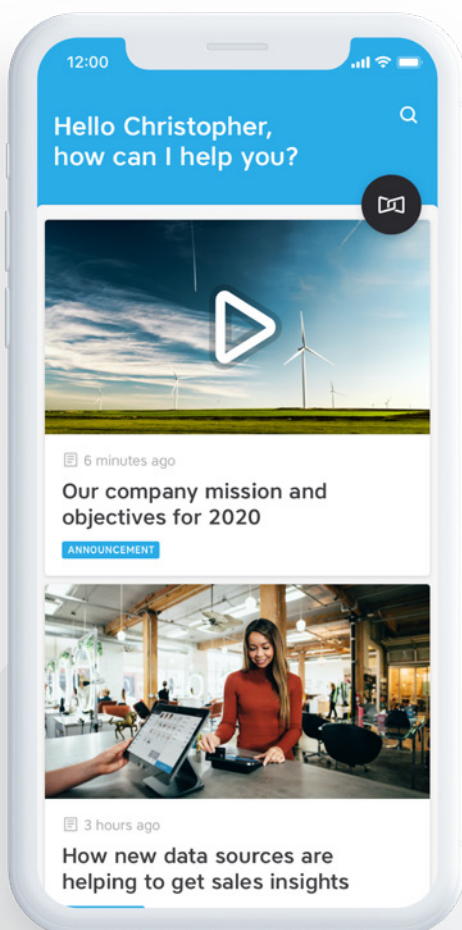
BRUSSELS HQ



Tiffany Edwards

Store Manager

SHOP ANTWERP



4 **A streamlined work method across all your stores**

Change is inevitable in retail. You continuously need to adapt to the needs and wishes of your customers, but there is also the legislation, especially in the food business. Communicating those changes can be difficult, time-consuming and hard to verify if everyone is using it properly or not.

Your organization most likely has coaches on the road to ensure your stores know and truly understand the changes that are taking place in their network, and to lower the barrier for your employees. In our opinion, this is time well spent. Investing in your people is crucial to get you the right results. But offering them a solution that supports them to follow the guidelines afterwards is something very powerful to introduce in your organisation, both for the coaches and the people that need to execute.

Besides the above you can use different tactics to help your people even more:

- Share the right content prior to the training in order for them to come in prepared;
- Create insights after the session and deliver the most important items;
- Evaluate their understanding through surveys and allow them to provide the feedback you need to properly roll out or adapt the process;
- Bringing the information to them in advance will allow them to challenge and discuss the topics they are interested in. That way there is more room for actual coaching.

A good communication platform will help you to install a single streamlined work method across all your stores simultaneously, with all the information available in a consistent and efficient way.

How Delhaize stays true to their people-first culture

The challenge at Delhaize was to reach all their employees – of a diverse nature – within the organization and to help them do their job on a daily basis and feel more connected to the companies “battles”.

The initial problem was the lack of diversification in communication channels. All information – whether it was news, tasks, or surveys – ended up in a long list of information to digest. That resulted in the information not reaching all employees and an endless list of tasks that needed to be completed.

Installing a digital and mobile communication solution helped them to solve that problem. And even more: a survey at Delhaize showed that 96% of the participants indicated they perform better through one single platform for their day-to-day operations, easy to use and consistent in communication.

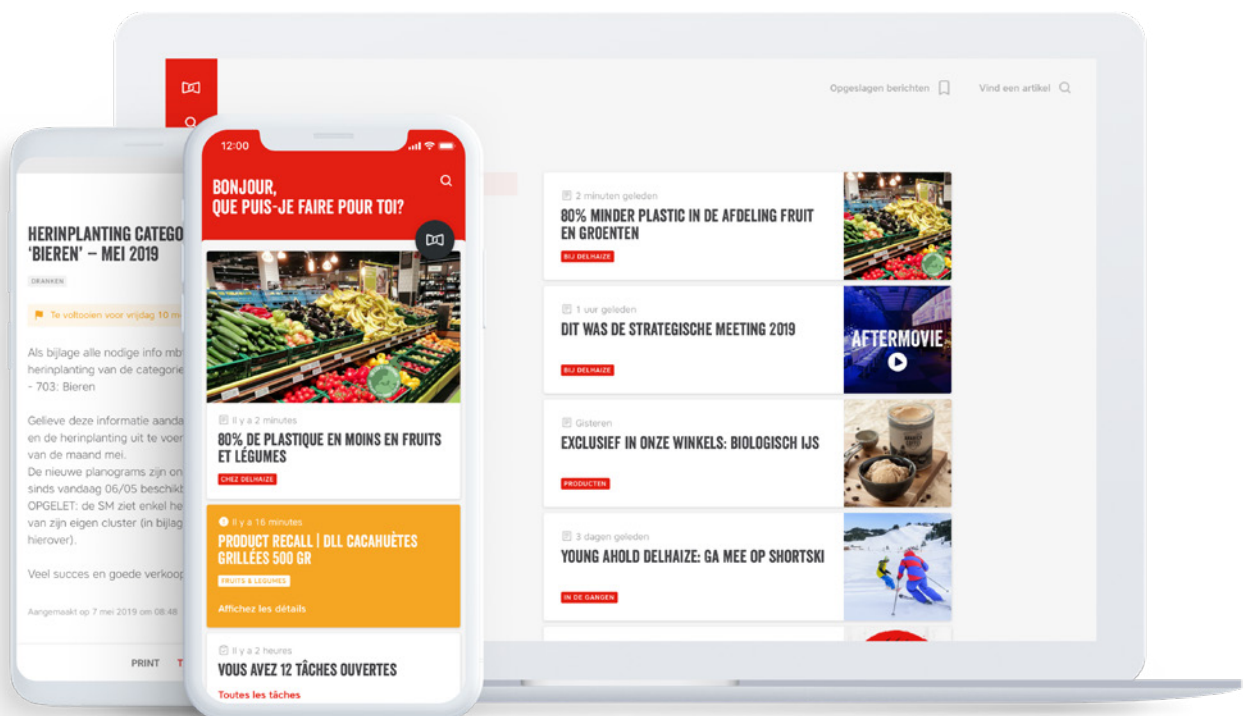
[Read the full Delhaize case](#) on our website.

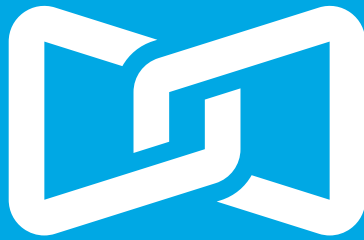
96%

indicates they perform better because of Spencer

89%

adoption, including personal devices





Spencer, a radically better internal communication platform

Spencer is designed to help you reach & engage every individual employee, with metrics & insights to create an adaptable organization ready for today's challenges.

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