



How to

# Get Started with your Intranet

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White Paper

## Getting Started With Your Intranet

You've taken the step to implement an intranet and now you're ready to see your internal communication success skyrocket. Great news! But now, you need to know the ins and outs of making your intranet a success.

It's important to bear in mind before your journey, it's not all about seeing instant results. In order to get what you want from your intranet, you'll need to put in the work to deliver something truly great to your audience. Luckily, we've had years of experience with getting organisations onboarded with their intranets. We know what makes people tick!



## The First Stages

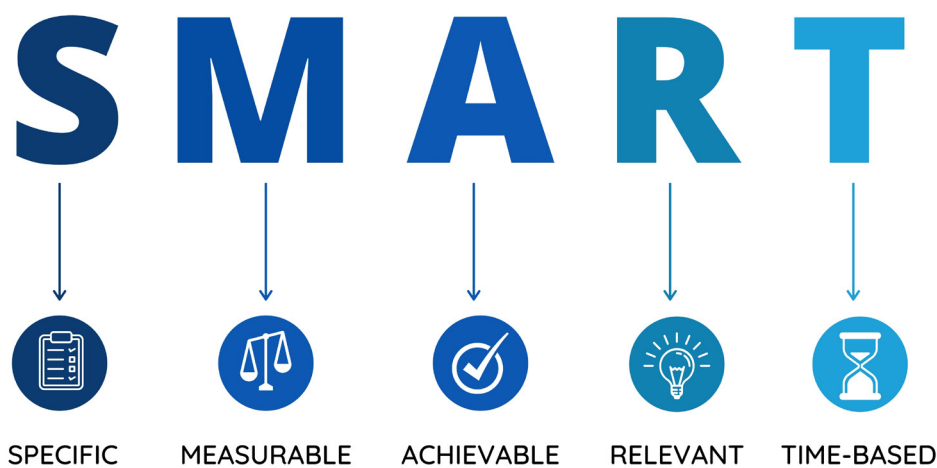
When it comes to setting up your intranet, planning is key. Before you've even started building or training your people on how to use your platform it's important to have a plan in place of what your finished platform will look like.

We've put together some of the things you should consider in the planning stages.

## Set Your Objectives

As with most big projects you would usually set goals and define any objectives you hope to achieve. In this early stage you can define what purpose you want your intranet to serve; whether this is to easily store important documentation, increase productivity, keep your employees informed with internal company news or to use as a social platform. The world is your oyster. Defining the objectives of your intranet will also give you an advantage when it comes to creating content and planning the launch.

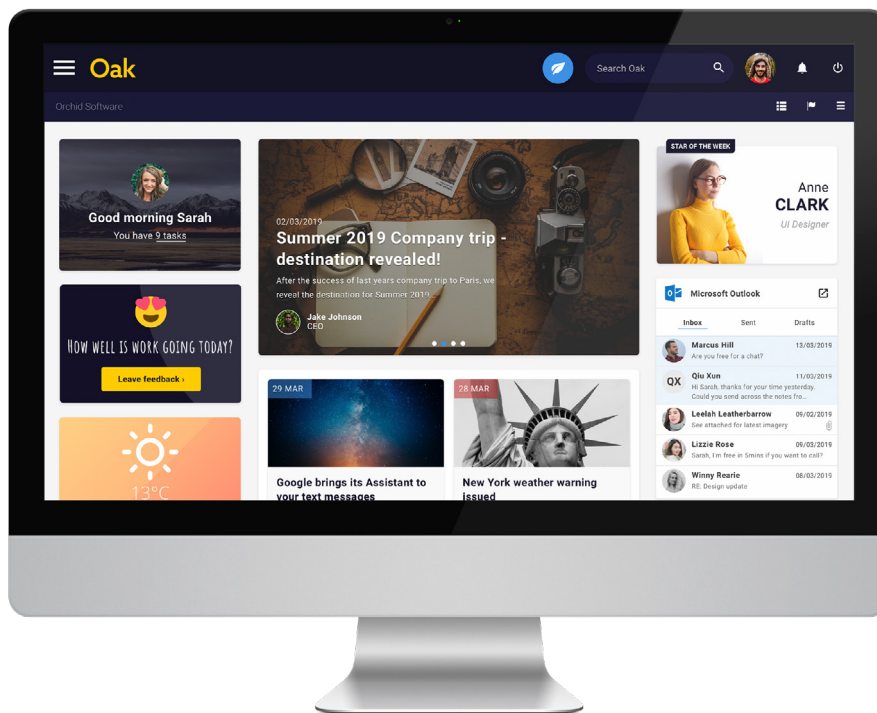
We recommend making your objectives SMART based. SMART objectives are an effective method of target setting that provides clarity, focus and motivation to achieve your goals.



## Content is Key

Make sure to have some content ideas mapped out at the beginning of your journey; this way, when the time comes to start populating your site with content, you'll have an idea of what you need. This is also a great time to get your people involved in the process. Ask them what sort of content they want to see and remember, they're the ones who'll be spending the most time using it. Any content shared on your platform should be designed with them in mind.

With Oak, the possibilities for creating engaging content is endless. Whether you want to create a TV & Film Club or send out a monthly company newsletter through a Publication, we've got you covered.



And of course, there's room for the important stuff; company policies, mandatory reads and forms. This can all be stored on your site with easy access to your audience. Having a dedicated section within your intranet to store important information is a must; this way your audience always know where to go if they need urgent information and also keeps the important stuff safe and secure.

Be sure to assign some 'Content Captains' to contribute to your intranet. Your content captains should be the ones populating your site with engaging and informative content. They should have an understanding of the content your audience love to interact with and should always be updating your site with fresh content to keep your audience up to date.

## The Benefits of Relatable Content

When creating content, make sure it's relatable to your audience. If you post an article or a blog with little or no relevance to your audience, chances are it's going to take off like a lead balloon.

Research shows that people respond positively to a story that they can relate to. Before creating or posting any content to your intranet, analyse your audience; look out for age, demographics, interests - this will be a real lifesaver when it comes to getting creative.

## Accept Feedback

Feedback plays an essential role in the internal communications journey; without it, your intranet won't be able to develop, evolve and achieve its key objectives. We all know that feedback promotes personal and professional growth, and it's no different when it comes to your intranet. When it comes to the launch, you want to gain as much feedback as possible from those using it. If they have constructive criticism, don't be offended; work on this critical feedback to create something they won't be able to live without.

You might get feedback relating to the UX of your software; for example, someone may suggest placing an applet in a different position for accessibility or someone may suggest using a different colour scheme. Remember, the internal communications journey is a marathon, not a sprint.

## Familiarity

When the time comes to get your workforce onboarded with your intranet, it's always important to take the familiarity factor into consideration. Your platform should represent your organisation from the outset, and we don't just mean the design. Making sure that your organisation's identity and core values shine through every aspect of your intranet will help your workforce feel more involved and part of the bigger picture.. Let's face it, if your platform doesn't relate to your organisation's values and identity, it's going to be difficult for your workforce to feel connected.

Here at Oak, we know that all organisations are different and when it comes to designing and piecing together your platform a 'one size fits all' approach doesn't cut it. Chances are your organisation has already put in a lot of time and effort creating a brand and developing brand assets. Fonts, colours, images, guidelines; these are all things that are specific to your organisation, so use them to set up the basis of your site. This way it will be much easier to build a platform your people will be familiar with and is consistent with the rest of your brand.

Asides from the design of your site, remember to take your company's core values into consideration. Remember, your people need to resonate with your core company values and what your organisation stands for. By keeping this consistent throughout your site your people will be able to connect with it on a personal and professional level.

## Don't Stop Learning

Once your intranet is out in the big wide world and live to your audience, it can be easy to sit back and put maintaining performance to the back of your mind but it's a platform that is constantly evolving and you're going to need to keep up. The learning phase doesn't automatically stop after the launch; you'll need to keep on top of engagement rates, get feedback from your audience and monitor what works well on your platform.

Make sure you review your site at least every 3 months. We don't just mean check your engagement levels every now and again and be done with it either! Review everything -from content and policies to user comments and interactions. It pays to be thorough. Check the analytics of different types of content so you can analyse what content works best for your audience.

[Continuous learning](#) is beneficial in many ways; it builds confidence, sparks new ideas and can help you prepare when things go wrong.



## Planning the Launch

The training is done, the planning is done, your intranet is filled to the brim with content and homepages have been built, now what? It's time for the big reveal and to really test the waters. In an ideal world, you'd launch your platform to your workforce and see results instantly, but unfortunately, it doesn't happen like this. You'll need to have an effective launch strategy in place to get your workforce onboarded with your platform.

### Roles and Setting Permissions

Once you've created the identity of your platform and it's packed with content, you'll need to establish roles and set your permissions. To give you an idea of what roles you'll think about;

- **Who will be responsible for your intranet as a whole?** Think of who will be best to turn to if any technical issues arise.
- **Who will moderate your intranet?** Think of someone good with copy and an eye for detail.
- **Who will keep your intranet up to date with relevant content?** This is where your 'Content Captains' come in.

You want your intranet to be a place where your people can go to be informed, engaged and connected to your organisation and with this, you'll need to consider what your audience can view and contribute. If your workforce is made up of over 1,000 and nobody has set permissions, it could get messy and lead to irrelevant, inappropriate and even damaging content being distributed throughout your intranet.

### Onboarding

Your onboarding strategy should make users feel 3 important things;





As with all onboarding processes the main aim is to get your workforce trained with your new platform so they can use it to its full potential. And as with many onboarding processes, it can be easy for your audience to lose interest. With a disinterested audience comes disengagement leaving your intranet doomed before it's even launched. Ensuring your workforce are engaged throughout the onboarding process is essential.

**Throughout the onboarding process, remember to include;**

- The fundamentals of your intranet i.e. how your audience can access it, their login details and how they will be expected to use it.
- Video tutorials - video is more memorable, more engaging and drives more traffic giving it a clear advantage over using just text. Your software is there to drive engagement and if you bore your teams with text-based instructions at the very beginning, it won't look promising.
- Get your workforce involved from the beginning. Like we said before, you need to make your workforce feel a part of your software and involved from day one.

Remember to assign team leaders during the onboarding process; it's more than likely your team will have a number of questions during the process and might run into some issues along the way. So, having members of your team on hand to help who were involved in the initial training process is crucial.





## After the Launch

The big reveal has been and gone and your newly engaged, motivated workforce is getting to grips with your intranet. That's great news, but what happens next?

Think of your intranet like planting something new; the launch is only the start and as time goes on your platform will expand, improve and flourish, but you must keep nurturing it for this to happen. Conduct a full review of your platform around three months after the initial launch. Here analyse the performance of your software, measure engagement levels and review your content.

To measure the success of your software, look at the objectives you set in the initial stages. Have the objectives been achieved? If so, create new objectives to achieve for your next review. If you haven't achieved all your objectives, don't worry. Sit down and think about where you've gone wrong. It could be down to the content, the design, lack of information or maybe your workforce doesn't feel fully trained up to use your intranet to its full potential. Whatever problems you're facing, make sure you set these objectives for your next review along with a full detailed, outlined plan of how you're going to achieve them.

## Summary

With the right approach and the correct methodology, your intranet has the power to achieve incredible results; from a more engaged and productive workforce to a more happy and positive workplace. The key is to think of the process like an ongoing journey and not just a process that has to be completed within a certain timeframe.

## Want to find out more?

Get in touch with one of our experts today  
and see how Oak could work for you

