Ten essential employee experience intranet features

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Foreword

Not all intranets have employee experience in mind—but they should. How an employee experiences your organization directly impacts customer interactions, new hire retention rates, and, ultimately, the success of your business.

An intranet based on an integrated platform has an employee experience advantage compared to one that hosts a family of disconnected products or apps. An integrated approach creates a unified, personalized, and frictionless experience for everyone. It reduces lost time and lessens employee frustration, allowing employees to *simply flourish™* and feel seen as both individuals and valued team members.

Leading organizations are evolving and transforming with this understanding. In our work with them, we see organizations:

▶▶ Elevating the employee experience with real-time communication that reaches and engages employees where they are, whether at home or across the globe.

▶▶ Continuously monitoring employee needs and using advanced AI technology to create a personalized experience.

▶▶ Creating a single source of truth and providing leaders with the tools they need to make informed decisions quickly and confidently.

Organizations are delivering more relevant and fulfilling experiences, creating hubs that employees rely on for mission-critical information. And it's a place they enjoy visiting as it helps them work smarter, not harder, and their contributions are recognized there.

It's the kind of intranet that is not only needed—but wanted. And the proof is in the intranet pudding, according to a study on employee experience technology by Forrester. They found that today's workforce feels overwhelmed by outdated technology and desires a simplified, streamlined solution.

▶▶ Employee respondents indicated that their organization offers too many separate tools, apps, and resources, and they need help navigating the various options.

▶▶ 90% of employees said an integrated employee experience platform would be valuable (50%) or extremely valuable (40%)

▶▶ 84% of employees and 71% of EX business leaders want a single, integrated EX platform that provides everything needed to complete their jobs.

But how should this look? We have ten employee experience intranet features that are non-negotiable as you consider various options.

Feature #1.
User experience

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Intranet user experience goes beyond visual design—it speaks to the quality of your employees' interactions with their intranet. Seamless access to a personalized dashboard should have everything an employee needs, including smart search capabilities to surface relevant information rapidly.

Key usability features include:

▶▶ **Ease of learning:** Your employees must learn how to use the intranet quickly. Simplicity is the name of the game with an intranet that leverages existing user patterns based on years of research.

▶▶ **Relevant content:** Personalizing content for specific locations, teams, and roles is essential. Large organizations havae content relevant for workers in India but not for those in the UK, for example.

▶▶ **Intuitive layout:** If your intranet looks cluttered or confusing, employees will not use it as intended—because they can't! An intuitively designed intranet removes irrelevant items and reduces frustration.

Employees should click away from their intranet, satisfied they've found what they were looking for, not frustrated and off to search a different information silo.
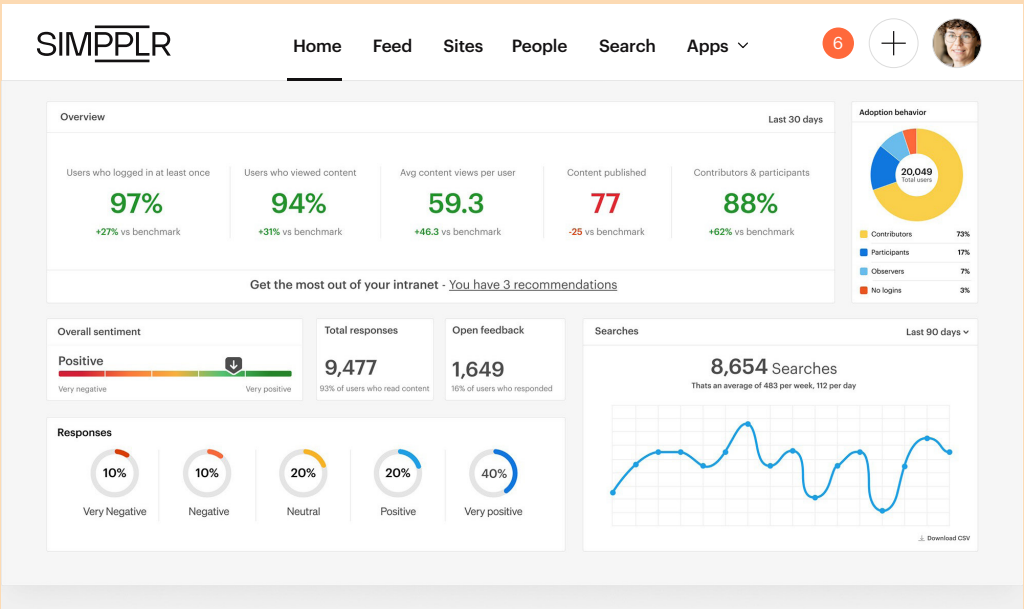
Feature #2.
Prescriptive analytics

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Prescriptive analytics takes the pulse of your employee experience efforts, transforming your analyses to explore depths beyond views and visits. For example, an employee experience-focused intranet with AI-powered intelligence reveals employee sentiment, feedback, and behavioral signals. This insight helps managers drive adoption and engagement with real-time reports that indicate content that resonates.
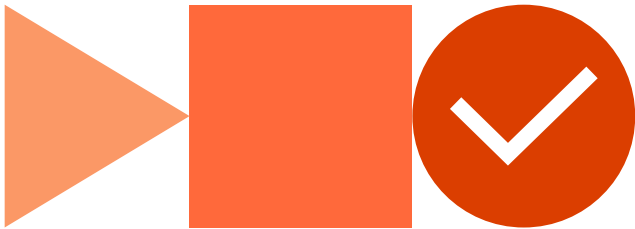
An optimal intranet dashboard experience should offer time-sensitive and knowledge-based content with feed, tile, and carousel design options to delight users. In addition, it should predict what employees need based on past behaviors and how they interact with your intranet, combined with a smart search function that queries every bit of company intel.

These EX features should adapt and evolve with your organization to quickly surface increasingly sophisticated and relevant results.

Feature #3.
AI-powered-
personalization

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A modern intranet should come complete with AI-powered adaptive personalization that tracks employees' preferences and past searches to streamline workflows.

Starting on day one, admins can subscribe new employees to sites and topics based on HRIS attributes, customizing onboarding to a granular degree.

As a result, administrators can make the process much more impactful, with rewards and recognition baked into achieving different training milestones or completing certifications.

And then, a smart feed should pick up where onboarding leaves off, surfacing only relevant information based on employee activities, roles, locations, and interests. Finally, add a layer of sentiment analysis with pulse checks, and organizations can now understand unspoken challenges to enhance processes further and create a cohesive culture.
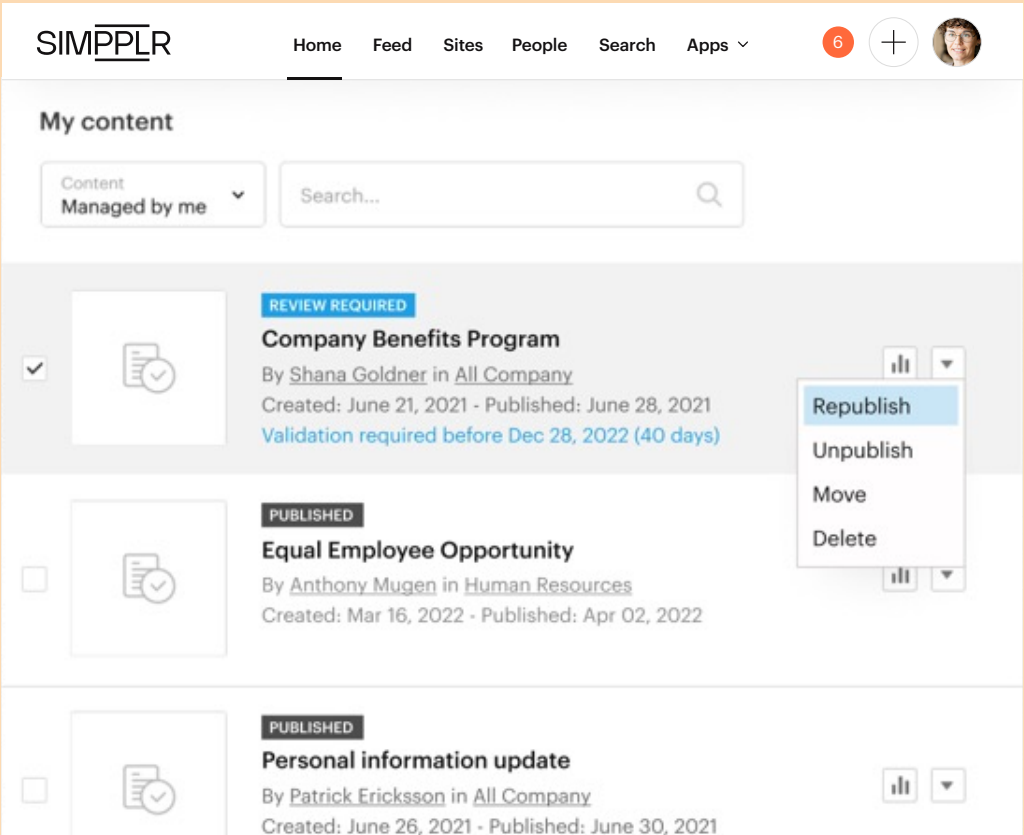
Feature #4.
Data ingestion and unification

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Your intranet should ingest and unify data for optimal EX. An operational data capture collects information from all corners of your organization for dissemination and to support the creation of a single source of truth company-wide.

And all this data needs to work together for leadership to see the forest for the trees and quickly pinpoint challenges so they can respond confidently and appropriately to pressing employee needs.

The data unified here includes onboarding materials, product and service specifications, customer care intel, and any content or critical messaging requiring enterprise-level alignment. A disconnected, disjointed organization frustrates employees and alienates customers.
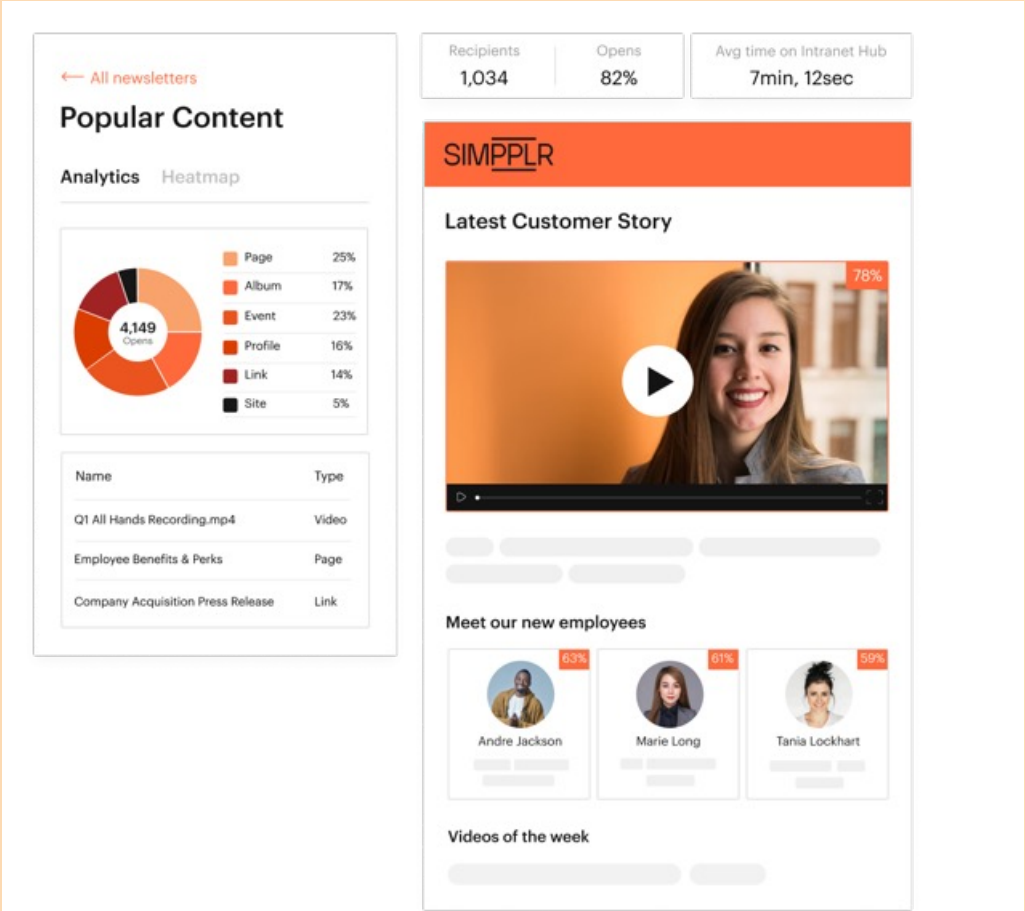
Feature #5.
Key products

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A modern intranet should improve employee culture overall. In our increasingly digital workplace, this requires integrating with the apps your employees use every day to support a mobile-responsive, multi-channel approach.

Curated content levels up newsletters, and so do targeting capabilities that reach employees wherever they are—regardless of location or preferred channel. And a Listener Suite creates a feedback loop to quickly identify gaps in awareness and alignment, with employee sentiment providing valuable context to optimize offerings by analyzing performance with comprehensive metrics.

Newsletter capabilities that are further fine-tuned allow for more storytelling and less formatting, with engagement surveys ready to dig deeper to inform the creation of more impactful messaging.

Videos are a powerful and popular option here, and with native video management integrated into your platform, viewing, publishing, distributing—and even analyzing videos—is simple. As a result, creators are empowered, and engagement skyrockets.

Feature #6.
Integrations and APIs

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Unifying your workplace stack removes the frustration of signing in and out of different apps; frustration aside, it also saves time. This time savings applies to your employee end users as well as your IT team, assuming your intranet has no-code integrations.

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These integrations take minutes to set up and connect content to every mission-critical capability, including knowledge, business intelligence, and people data management systems; a variety of productivity apps; and video and social channels.

Providing a centralized place for everyone to find people, access knowledge, and log into connected apps, creates a one-stop communication shop. It creates a natural connection with employees wherever they are, whether it's Slack, Skype, or Salesforce. And unified notifications ensure that employees get the intel they need when they need it.
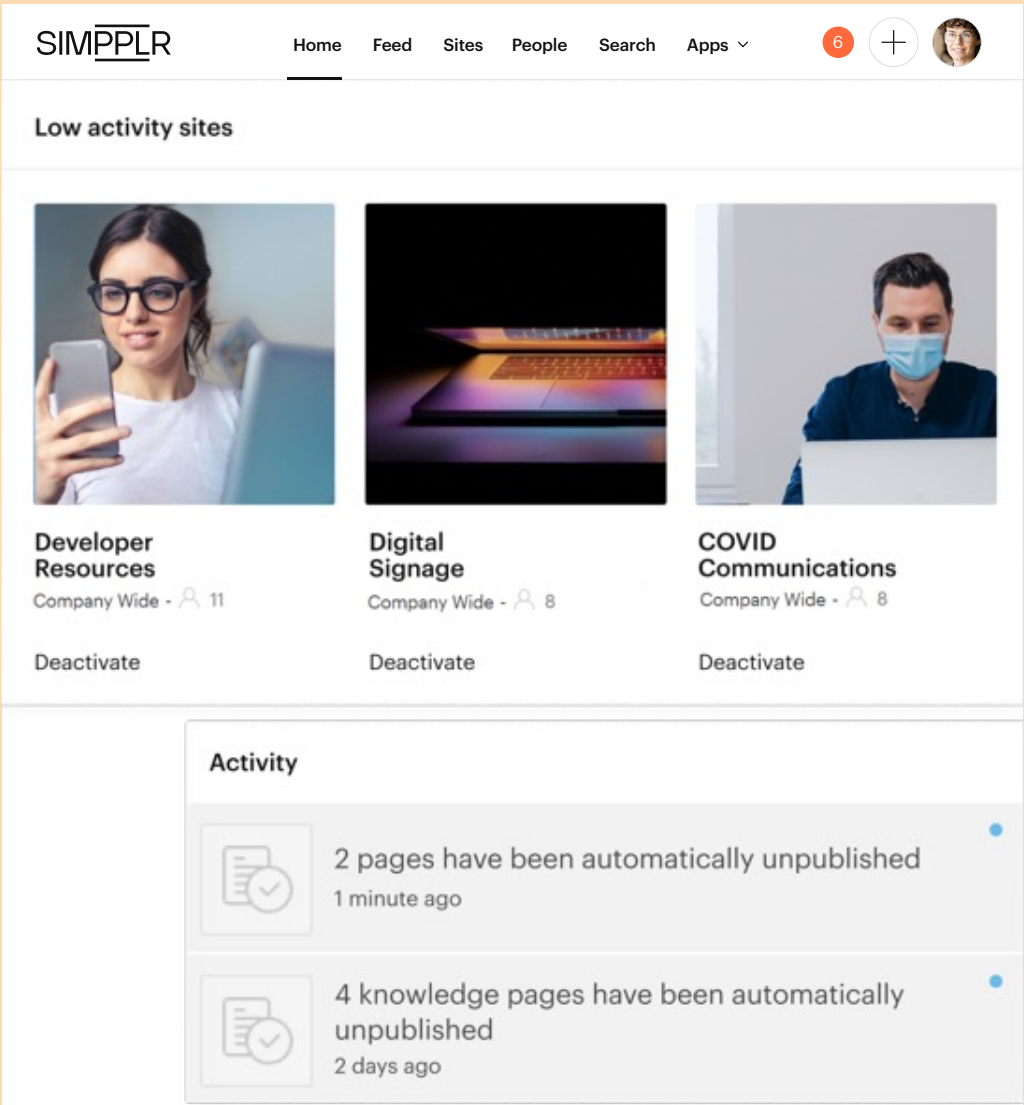
Feature #7.
Purpose-built

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A purpose-built custom intranet enhances your EX efforts. These platforms are based on decades of expertise, offer flexibility, and are automatically updated to keep pace with technological advances.

A purpose-built intranet should be a true cloud/SaaS that provides the latest innovations, exceptional UI, and security enhancements as soon as they become available.

It should allow teams to personalize their intranet experience and a powerful auto-governance engine that saves your intranet from becoming a dumping ground by removing outdated and low-activity information and content, surfacing only the most relevant and accurate information.

Feature #8.
Rapid intranet
deployment

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The faster you can deploy your intranet, the quicker it will be adopted by your employees; this makes rapid deployment an essential feature of an employee experience intranet.

On average, it typically takes 1.2 years for organizations to deploy an intranet—compare this to a purpose-built intranet available in 60 days.

A rapid intranet deployment offers many benefits, including realizing the ROI faster by:

▶▶ Enabling your employees to move at the speed of business, quickly finding relevant and accurate information they can depend on

▶▶ Facilitating cross-departmental communication

▶▶ Reducing employee turnover rates

Feature #9.
Security and scalability

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Scalability is an essential intranet feature. An intranet should be built to stand the test of time. A cloud-based platform allows limitless scalability and flexibility.
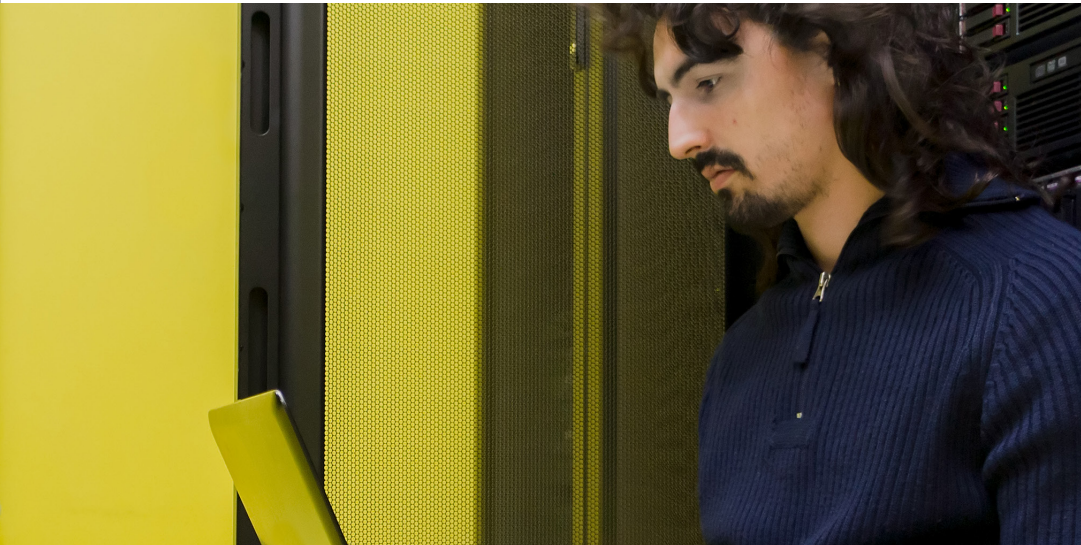
Organizations should not be forced to replace their infrastructure every few years to keep up with demand when hypergrowth hits, nor when they must consolidate resources during leaner times.

All variables should be accounted for before implementation, as downtime for regrouping is not an option at most organizations.

And regardless of the growth phase, protecting your data is essential. A unified platform is easier to defend because there are fewer points of attack. The intranet, newsletters, surveys, mobile apps, and emergency communications are also under the same roof.

Beyond that, your intranet should have cloud-based, near-real-time backups that are refreshed and stored securely with data encryption with integrations available for Azure AD, Google Workspace, Okta, OneLogin, and other identity providers via SAML and SCIM.

You'll also want security and compliance certification from places like SOC2 TYPE2. This independent auditor extensively investigates and certifies operations to verify that the intranet company has effectively implemented security controls.

Feature #10.
Mobile and multi-channel outreach

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With employees on the go and in hybrid work environments, having mobile-first, multi-channel access is a must. It expands an organization's reach substantially by making messaging omnipresent, and it keeps everyone aligned regardless of where they are in the world.
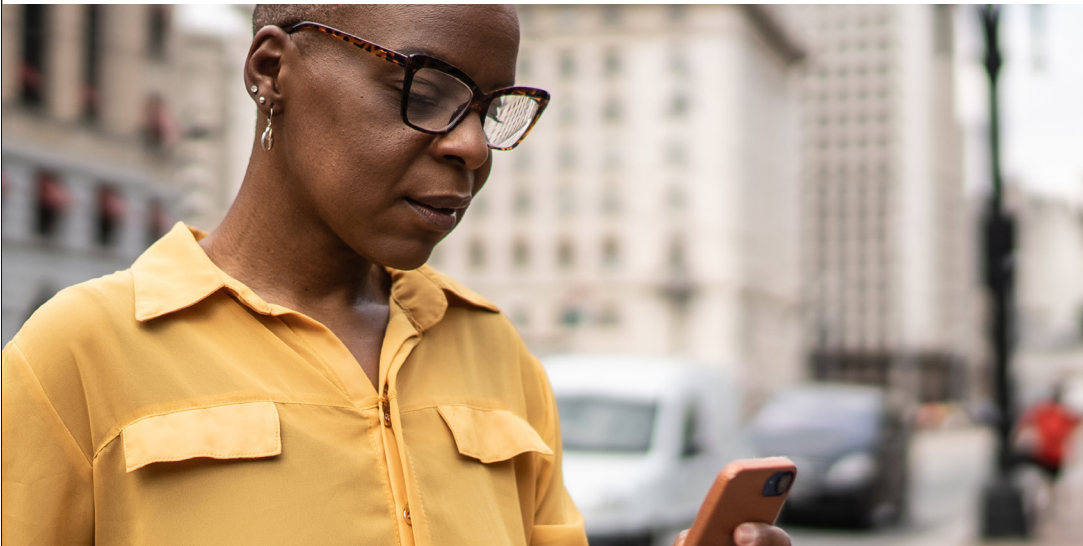
This multi-channel outreach magnifies important messaging through push, text, desktop, chat, and email notifications. There should also be a dynamic org chart to facilitate meaningful connections and targeted digital displays promoting strategic communications.

And having all of this accessible on the mobile intranet app is a game changer for deskless and frontline employees who would be left in the cold otherwise or dependent upon word of mouth. Instead, every worker should have pocket-sized, instant access to everything the desktop version has, even if they're on the go all the time.

There's a lot to consider when it comes to choosing an intranet, but no matter what intranet you choose, employee experience must be at the heart of it. Reach out for a demo when you're ready to upgrade to an employee experience intranet with an integrated, AI-powered platform!

About Simpplr

Who we are

Simpplr is the leading AI-powered employee experience platform. Organizations use our forward-looking, adaptable products to deliver personalized experiences that inspire and engage their employees. Wherever people work, Simpplr enables them to flourish.

Trusted by more than 500+ leading brands, including Zoom, Snowflake, Moderna, Eurostar, and AAA, our customers are achieving measurable productivity gains, increased employee engagement, and accelerated business performance.

Simpplr is headquartered in Silicon Valley, CA with offices in the UK, Canada, and India, and is backed by Norwest Venture Partners, Salesforce Ventures, and Tola Capital. Learn more at simpplr.com

Benefits

→ Designed for the way you work

→ Ready to use in weeks, not months

→ Built for business users

→ Unified, engaging experience across mobile and the web

→ Powerful integration

→ Secure and scalable platform

Trusted By

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