State of the Intranet and Future of Employee Technology

Introduction

In an era of rapid technological advancement and evolving workplace dynamics, the value of employees' technology experience has never been more evident. In particular, the portal through which employees access tools and knowledge for them to do their work — intranet technology — shapes employee experiences (EX) and drives organizational outcomes. The best intranet platforms offer continuity in communication and collaboration among stakeholders and can be a key factor in elevating how people work, learn and grow. Subpar intranets have the opposite effect, contributing to employees leaving the organization and other negative outcomes.

Well-designed, feature-rich intranets — those leveraging artificial intelligence (AI) — deliver a cohesive, personalized EX regardless of where employees work.

More robust than a document repository, top intranets empower active and passive employee listening through built-in surveys and deep insights and analytics; enable targeted multichannel communications via employee newsletters, native video and more; and facilitate customized employee recognition within one unified platform. The best intranets provide multi-experience support, including coordinated delivery and interaction via various devices (e.g., mobile, kiosks, digital signage), channels (e.g., web, email, third-party messaging apps) and modalities (e.g., visual, conversational, activity feeds).

In our most recent research into the state of the intranet and the future of employee technology experience, we uncovered myriad insights that shed light on employee technology and, more importantly, drivers of intranet quality and impact. We reveal the essential characteristics of high-performing intranet platforms, the prevalence of AI as a tool and the impact of integrating AI in our work lives, and the crucial link between intranet quality and organizational outcomes.

Our data tells the story of what has happened in the intranet industry over the past year, the barriers and challenges that teams face, tools and drivers of excellent organizational impact, the KPIs that matter, and a new, benchmarkable index exploring AI tool availability, usage, perception and effect. This executive summary offers key findings from the full report.
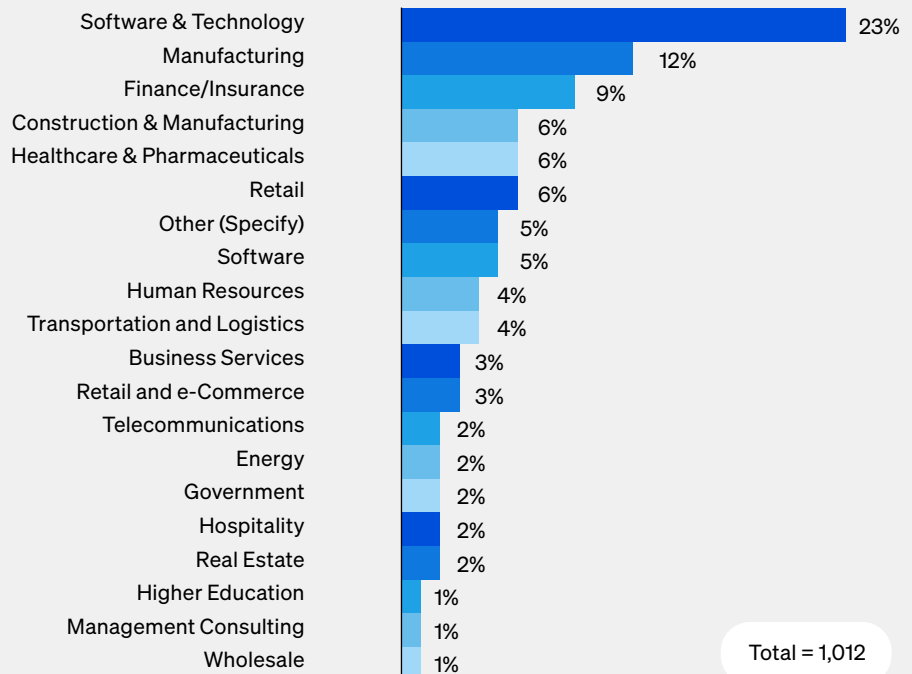
About our sample

In our newest State of the Intranet and Future of Employee Technology report, the Simpplr Research Team captured learnings to help intranet program leaders and teams continue to deliver their best work, harness new tools, and deliver the maximum impact to their organization through optimized digital EX. We surveyed more than 1,000 senior intranet program professionals and leaders spanning various industries, from manufacturing to retail and everything in between.

Our respondents represent a mix of organizations employing anywhere from 500 to over 25,000 people.

By capturing insights from this broad spectrum of businesses, our survey provides a comprehensive view of the current state of intranets and future trajectory of employee technology — enabling you to compare your current status or future intranet plans, and identify areas for growth and improvement.
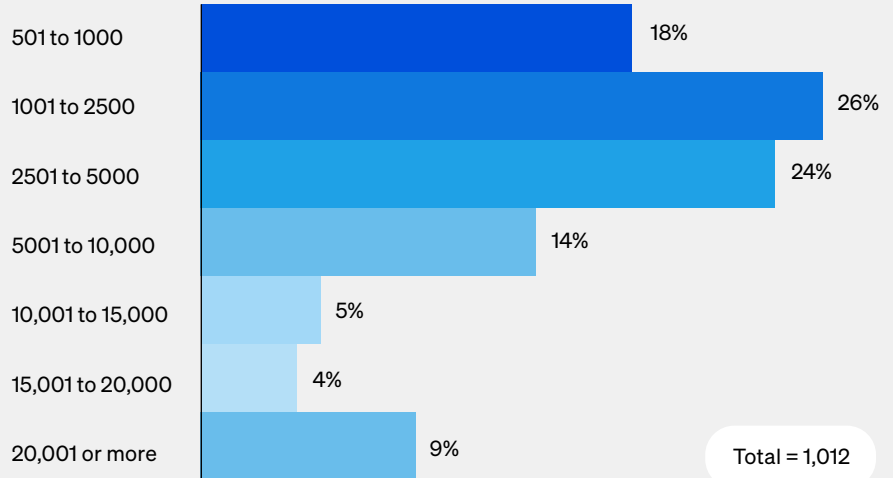
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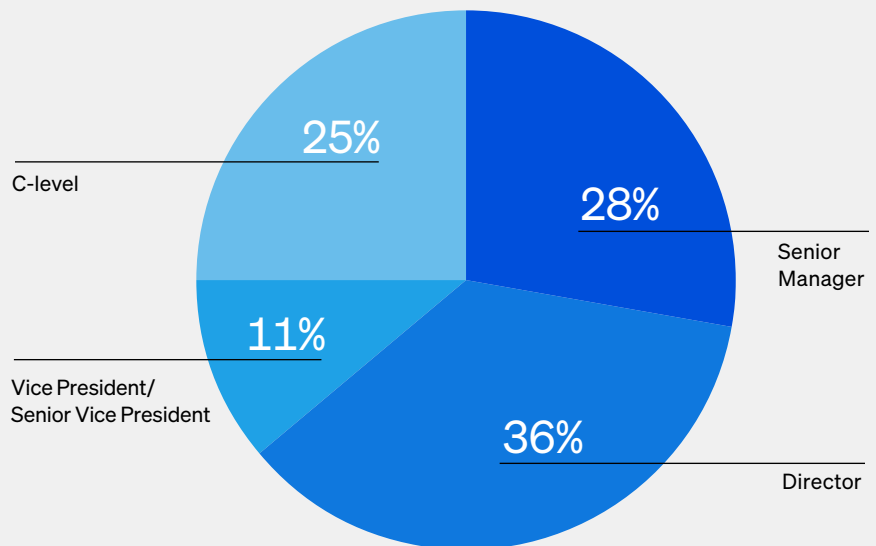In which, if any, of the following industries do you work?

Industry	%
Software & Technology	23%
Manufacturing	12%
Finance/Insurance	9%
Construction & Manufacturing	6%
Healthcare & Pharmaceuticals	6%
Retail	6%
Other (Specify)	5%
Software	5%
Human Resources	4%
Transportation and Logistics	4%
Business Services	3%
Retail and e-Commerce	3%
Telecommunications	2%
Energy	2%
Government	2%
Hospitality	2%
Real Estate	2%
Higher Education	1%
Management Consulting	1%
Wholesale	1%

Total = 1,012

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About how many employees does your company have, including all divisions and locations?

501 to 1000	18%
1001 to 2500	26%
2501 to 5000	24%
5001 to 10,000	14%
10,001 to 15,000	5%
15,001 to 20,000	4%
20,001 or more	9%

Total = 1,012

Which best describes your seniority level?

- C-level 25%
- Senior Manager 28%
- Vice President/ Senior Vice President 11%
- Director 36%

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1. Forward-looking employee technology leaders seek innovative solutions to stay ahead

35% plan to launch a new solution in the next 12 months
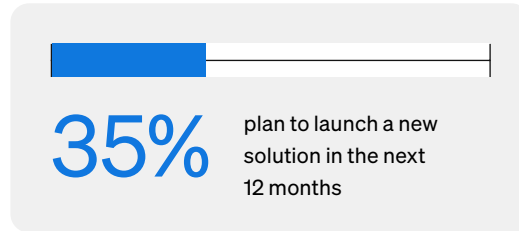
One thing is clear: intranets are not a one-and-done implementation. Employee-focused technology is evolving rapidly, and sophisticated leaders acknowledge the profound impact of delivering the right digital

EX. While 42% of companies currently have a stable intranet in place for more than a year, 35% plan to launch new solutions and 21% recently implemented new systems. This finding suggests that legacy systems aren't cutting it, providers that don't continually innovate will fail to meet organizational demands, and that leaders in intranet technology can become an effective gateway for employees to deliver optimal performance.

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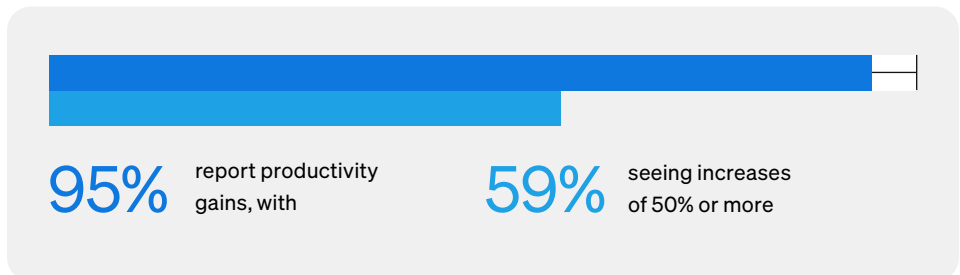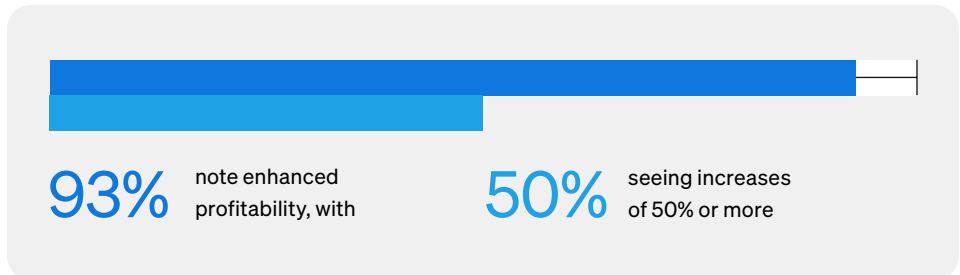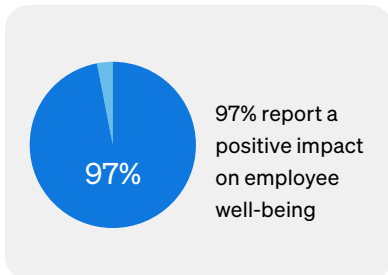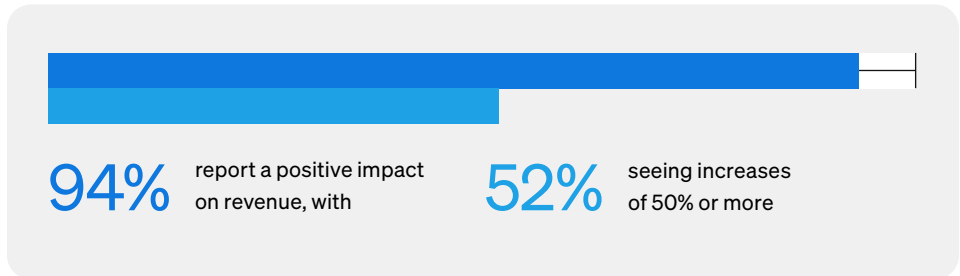Which of the following best describes your organization's intranet maturity?

42%

35%

21%

● Companies that have a stable intranet in place for > 1 year

● Plan to launch new solutions in the next 12 months

● Implemented a new solution this year
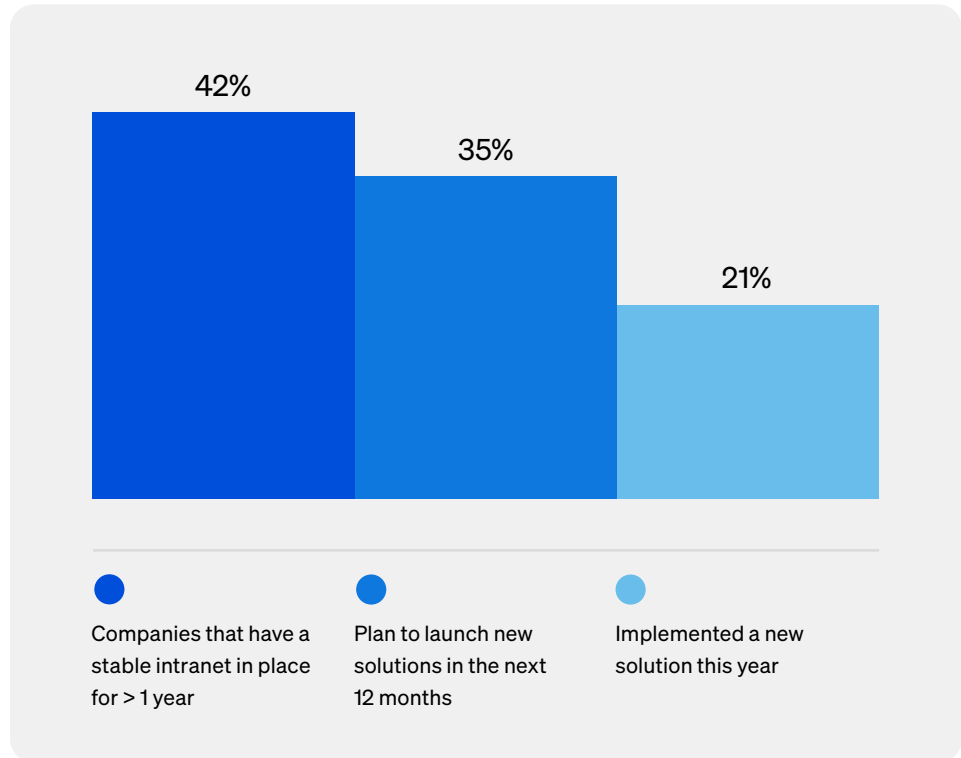
2. High-quality intranet platforms drive revenue, profitability, productivity, retention & well-being

**94%** with an intranet report positive impact on revenue
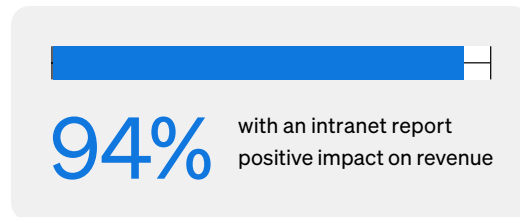
The benefits of having a high-quality intranet are significant. Organizations with well-designed, easy-to-use intranets report substantial improvements across multiple metrics:

91% 91% report a positive impact on employee retention

94% report a positive impact on revenue, with **52%** seeing increases of 50% or more

97% 97% report a positive impact on employee well-being

93% note enhanced profitability, with **50%** seeing increases of 50% or more

92% 92% report a positive impact on customer satisfaction

95% report productivity gains, with **59%** seeing increases of 50% or more

Furthermore, 97% report higher levels of employee engagement, with 65% seeing substantial improvements. These findings clearly demonstrate that deploying and maintaining an effective intranet platform is a critical factor in enhancing both organizational performance and employee experience.
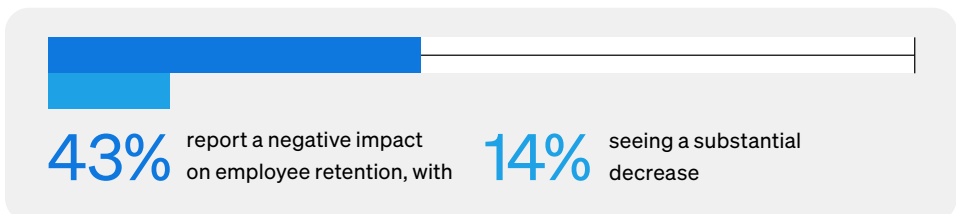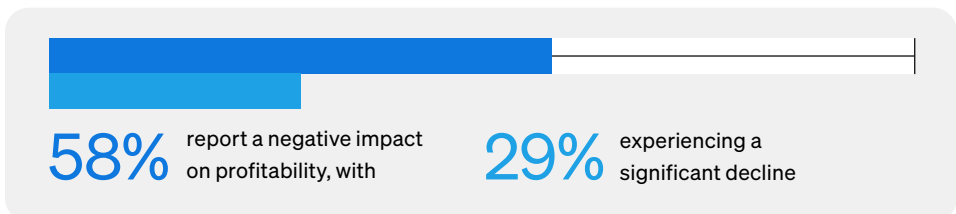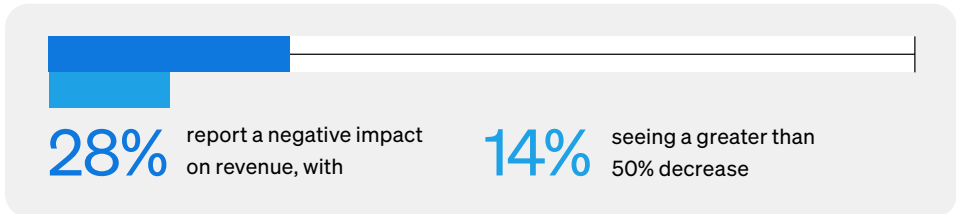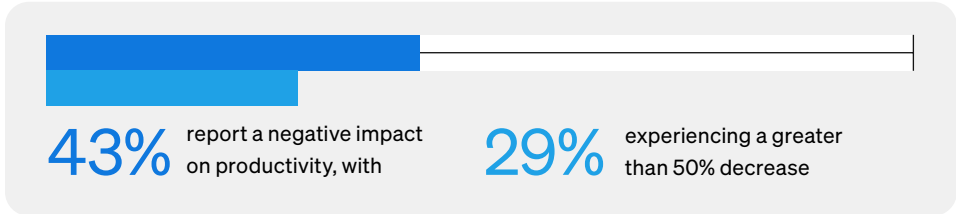
3. Implementing a sub-par intranet solution thwarts growth

58% report profitability suffers
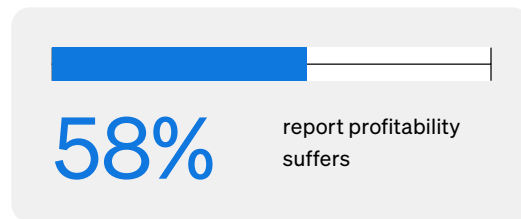
It's clear that giving employees great tools has a profound effect on the things we care about most — and the opposite is true. If you don't implement a platform with the necessary functionality and integrations, employee well-being and organizational outcomes suffer. Among the small percentage of companies that don't have an intranet, 28% of respondents say it negatively affects revenue generation, and 30% report a detrimental effect on employee well-being. For companies with average to below-average intranets, the situation seems to deteriorate.

For respondents who report having an average to below-average intranet:

43% report a negative impact on productivity, with **29%** experiencing a greater than 50% decrease

28% report a negative impact on revenue, with **14%** seeing a greater than 50% decrease

58% report a negative impact on profitability, with **29%** experiencing a significant decline

43% report a negative impact on employee retention, with **14%** seeing a substantial decrease

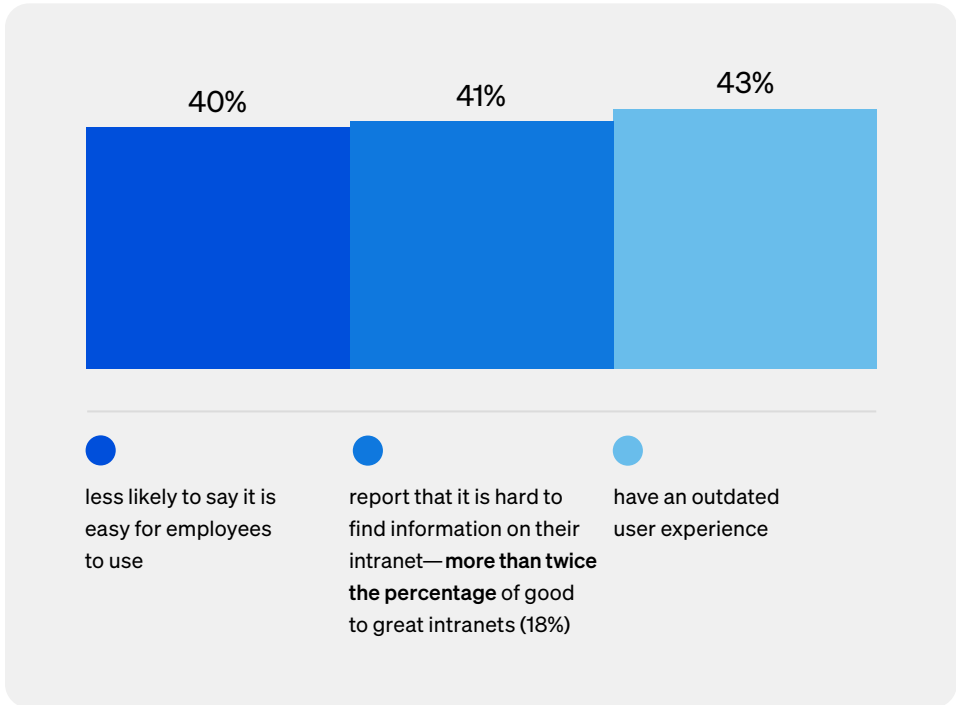# 4. A poor employee intranet experience makes everything worse

3X decreased performance with a poor intranet experience

The quality of the intranet experience is critically important to employees' overall workplace experience and their ability to perform well. Employees who have an average or below-average intranet experience are three times more likely to suffer from decreased performance to quota and three times less likely to get a technology-based productivity boost. Such poor experiences also increase the risk of negative employee engagement five-fold and double the chances of safety incidents. These findings underscore the necessity of creating a high-quality intranet that meets the needs of employees and enhances their overall experience.

For groups that indicate they have an average or below-average intranet:

3X more difficult to use and administer

40% ● less likely to say it is easy for employees to use

41% ● report that it is hard to find information on their intranet—**more than twice the percentage** of good to great intranets (18%)

43% ● have an outdated user experience

5. The most effective intranets enhance EX with AI, ease of use, built-in surveys & recognition capabilities

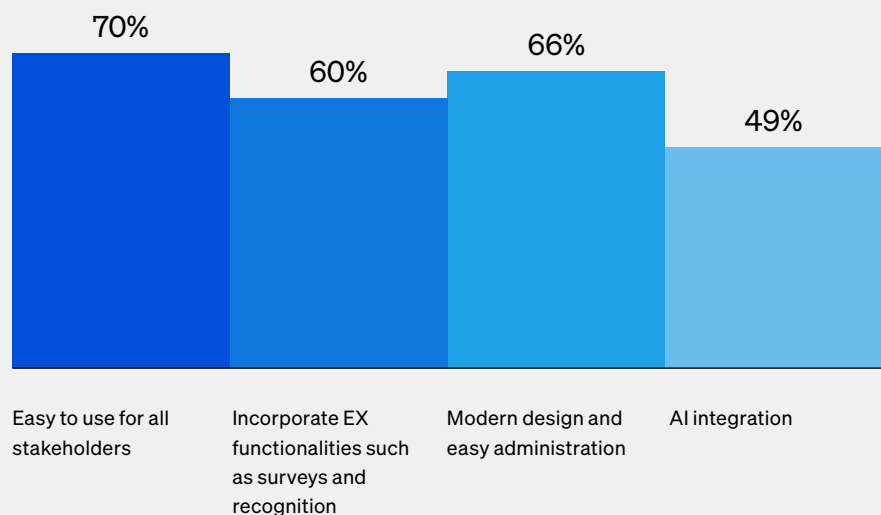**70%** cite ease of use as the most important intranet characteristic for positive EX
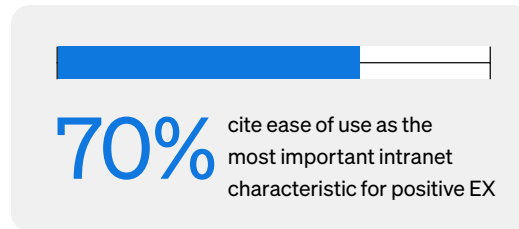
In addition to ease of use, the most effective intranets enhance EX with AI and integration of popular business apps, are easy to use and administer, boast modern design, and offer built-in employee experience capabilities such as surveys and employee recognition. Conversely, respondents with average or below-average intranets report difficulties that hinder the employee experience: 3x harder to use and administer, outdated user experiences (43%), and frustrations in finding information (41% vs. 18% with great intranets).
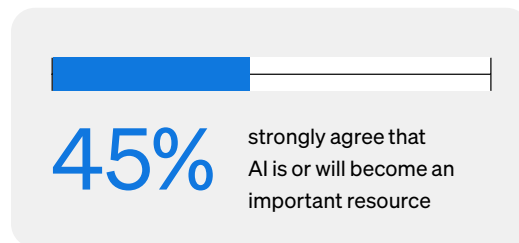
Users are accustomed to world-class digital experiences outside the workplace, so employees' interaction with the intranet should be just as engaging as their experience on a consumer social media or shopping app. AI's ability to personalize and curate experiences can provide just the hook to keep employees engaged, efficient and productive — helping to create a digital workplace experience that's as effortless as the digital consumer experience.

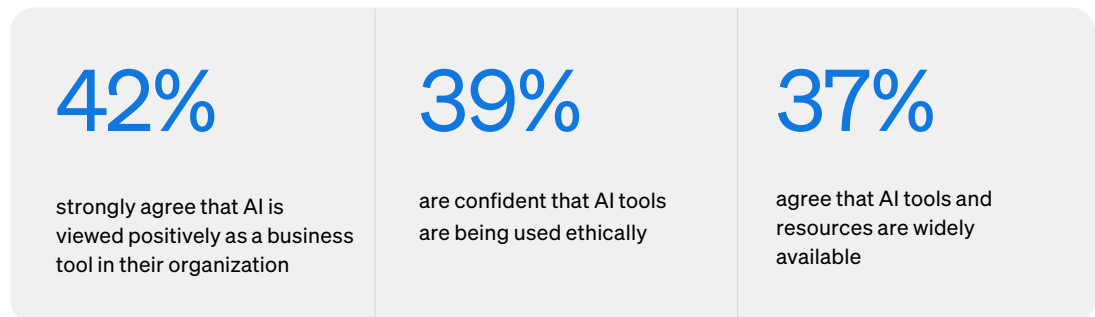The most effective intranets share several key characteristics:

Easy to use for all stakeholders	Incorporate EX functionalities such as surveys and recognition	Modern design and easy administration	AI integration
70%	60%	66%	49%

6. AI holds pivotal promise for enhanced intranet experiences

45% strongly agree that AI is or will become an important resource

Artificial intelligence is poised to reshape the future of employee-facing applications like intranets — with the incorporation of ethical AI critical for enhancing EX and business outcomes ranging from productivity to profitability. Our research uncovered that most employees view AI positively and recognize its importance:

42% strongly agree that AI is viewed positively as a business tool in their organization

39% are confident that AI tools are being used ethically

37% agree that AI tools and resources are widely available

The impact of AI on work efficiency and productivity is significant, considering how many people already use AI in its early stages in global distribution. The productivity and work quality gains that are connected with an optimized AI infrastructure are proving to be highly impactful to the organizations that have already deployed.

As you might expect, those with average or below-average intranet experiences are much less likely to leverage AI effectively or receive adequate training. Only 34% of respondents agree that AI training or information is available in the workplace and they currently have the AI functionality they need. Take a phased approach to providing the AI tools employees need to do more with less. First, focus on establishing rigorous guidelines to help ensure secure and responsible use of AI in the workplace. Work toward providing AI functionality that quickly immerses itself into your company's structure, policies, knowledge and vernacular to deeply engage employees, improve productivity, surface helpful insights, and deliver superior service more effectively.

7. An effective intranet fosters happier, healthier, more optimistic employees

84% who have a strong intranet have a very positive overall employee experience

Can an effective intranet help you feel good about your work? Yes! A deeper analysis of our survey results reveals the correlation between intranet design, ease of use, user experience and employee well-being. Compared to organizations with above-average intranets, those with average or below-average intranets are more likely to report lower levels of:

↘ Employee optimism (84% vs. 59%)

↘ Emotional well-being at work (81% vs. 52%)

↘ Work-life balance (80% vs. 50%)

Employee experience status based on intranet quality:

- ● Good or great intranet quality
- ● Average or below-average intranet quality

|	Employee optimism	Emotional well-being at work	Work-life balance
Good or great	84%	81%	80%
Average or below-average	59%	52%	50%
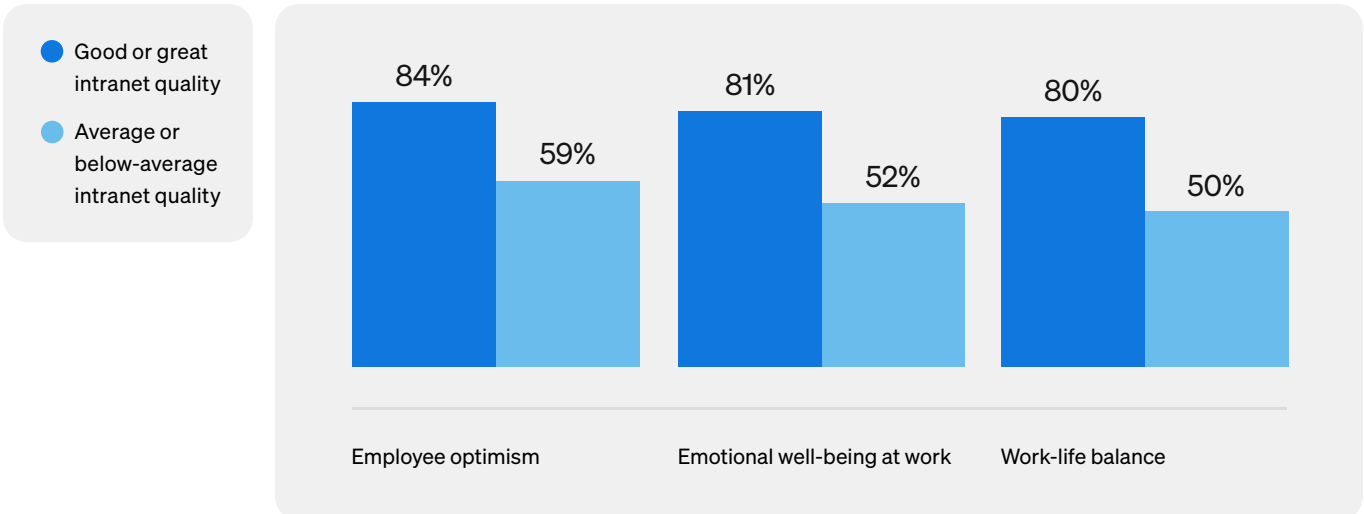
These findings suggest that poor intranet design and UX can and do negatively impact employee well-being, potentially leading to decreased job satisfaction, increased stress and higher turnover rates. Conversely, organizations that invest in well-designed, user-friendly intranets with advanced features and functionality can foster a more engaged, productive and satisfied workforce, ultimately driving better business outcomes.
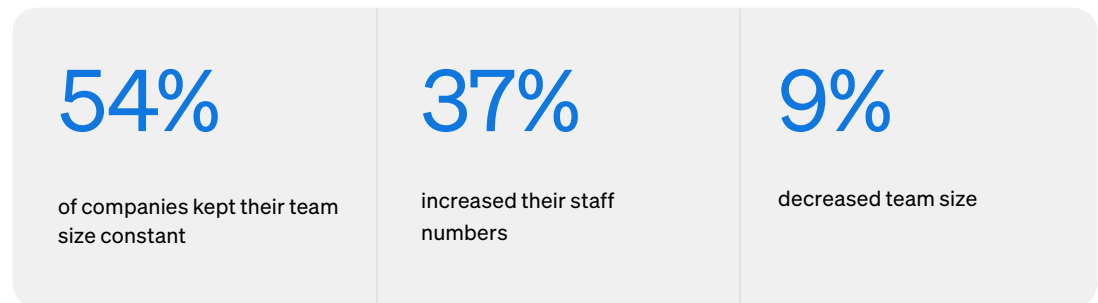
8. Effective intranet programs demand adequate staffing and budget

57% report budget increases for intranet tools, services and software
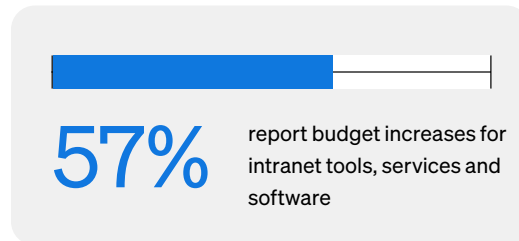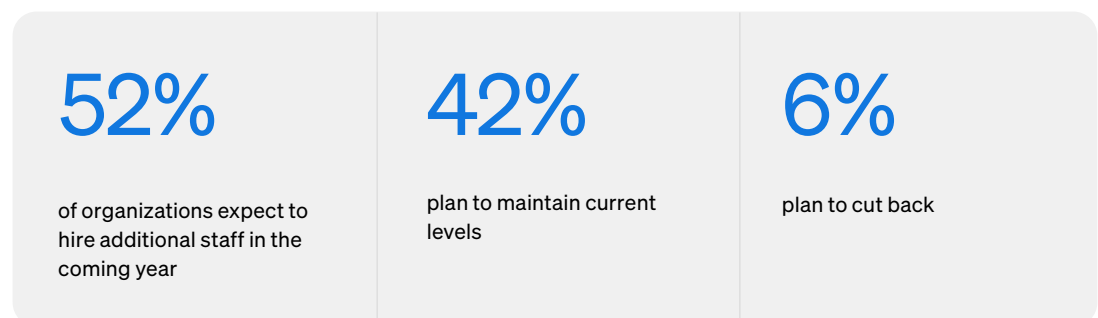
Deploying and administering an effective intranet program requires a multifaceted approach, with key factors including staffing and budget allocation. Over the past year, organizations worldwide have shown a tendency towards either maintaining or expanding their intranet teams — clearly recognizing the importance of personnel dedicated to managing and optimizing intranet systems.

54% of companies kept their team size constant

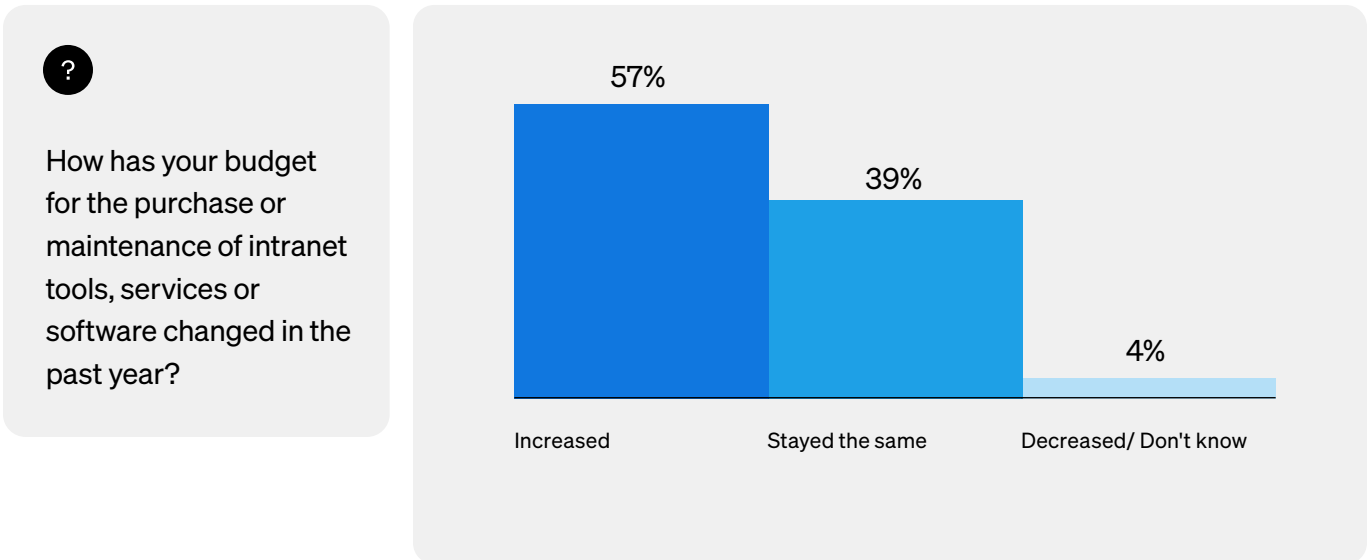**37%** increased their staff numbers

9% decreased team size

Organizations recognize the importance of personnel dedicated to managing and optimizing intranet systems.

Looking ahead, the commitment to staffing appears to grow:

52% of organizations expect to hire additional staff in the coming year

42% plan to maintain current levels

6% plan to cut back

This is good news — for an intranet program to thrive, it's critical to dedicate personnel for system management and optimization. Similarly, budget allocation is a crucial factor in the deployment and administration of effective intranet programs. The survey reveals a strong trend towards increased financial investment:

How has your budget for the purchase or maintenance of intranet tools, services or software changed in the past year?

Increased	Stayed the same	Decreased/ Don't know
57%	39%	4%

This financial commitment aligns with the staffing trends, indicating a holistic approach to strengthening intranet capabilities. The propensity for budget increases shows geographical variations, with 61% of U.S. companies increasing budgets vs. 47% of UK firms. Company size also plays a role, as 64% of organizations with 2,501 to 5,000 employees reported budget increases, suggesting a sweet spot where companies are large enough to have significant resources but still agile enough to make substantial investments in their intranet systems.

As organizations continue to recognize the value of well-managed intranet systems in fostering communication, collaboration, productivity and more, we can expect to see ongoing growth and evolution in this area.

Recommendations

Teams tasked with implementing employee technology solutions exert significant influence on organizational performance and employee well-being. Their decisions and actions impact everything from employee satisfaction and retention to increased productivity and revenue growth. So we must position them for success.

Our data can serve as that roadmap, connecting the dots between the key characteristics of excellent employee technology and stellar employee experience — and ultimately, the organizational outcomes that matter the most.

The future lies in calibrating your approach to the factors specific to your organization. Deciding what employee technology to invest in based on the unique combination of EX characteristics that drive the metrics you care about. Look beyond intranet functionality to what the right technology can do for your employees and your business.

Follow these recommendations to create an intranet experience that will elevate EX and propel your organization's overall success.

- ↘ **Prioritize user experience:** Invest in underlined modern intranets that are easy to use for employees anywhere, including frontline workers, with advanced features like AI assistance, surveys and employee recognition. Adhere to intranet best practices.

- ↘ **Integrate AI strategically:** Develop a clear roadmap for AI integration, focusing on areas where it can deliver the most significant impact on work efficiency and productivity. Be sure to take an ethical AI approach and provide adequate employee training.

- ↘ **Measure and optimize:** Regularly assess intranet performance against key metrics and use these insights to continually refine and enhance your existing platform or build a business case for a better intranet.

- ↘ **Engage leadership:** Secure executive buy-in and support for your intranet strategy, ensuring alignment with broader organizational goals and priorities.

- ↘ **Empower the workforce:** Provide employees with the training, resources and support they need to fully leverage the intranet's capabilities to drive performance and professional growth and foster a deeper sense of connection and well-being.

By embracing these recommendations and staying attuned to the evolving trends in intranet design, implementation and usage, you can give your organization a competitive edge and unlock the full potential of your workforce today and in the years to come.

About Simpplr

Who we are

Simpplr drives employee engagement and productivity through its comprehensive employee experience management platform. Leveraging AI, Simpplr delivers personalized, frictionless digital experiences, empowering employees to perform their best work from anywhere. For over a decade, Simpplr has been a trusted partner to 1,000+ leading brands, including AAA, Eurostar, Penske, Kimberly-Clark, Moderna, and Snowflake, creating transformative digital workplaces. Simpplr is headquartered in Silicon Valley, CA, with additional offices in the UK, Canada, and India. We are backed by Norwest Venture Partners, Sapphire Ventures, Salesforce Ventures, and Tola Capital. Learn more at simpplr.com

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