



Kollective

Generation Now

**THE FUTURE OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT
IN THE AGE OF NOW**












Kollective



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INTRODUCTION

Employee engagement is changing. Driven by new communication channels such as live video and instant messaging, and the changing expectations of millennial workers, today's organizations require an entirely new approach to office communication and employee engagement.

Many organizations have yet to embrace this change, however, focusing their efforts on customer, corporate and investor relations and failing to communicate with their most valuable asset – their employees.



As the rise of multinational corporations, homeworking and flexible hours have dispersed employees into different locations and time zones, many organizations have struggled to maintain the concept of a single, unified workforce. As a result, business leaders have been forced to adapt to these new working styles, using the latest technologies to accommodate the physical limitations of remote working.

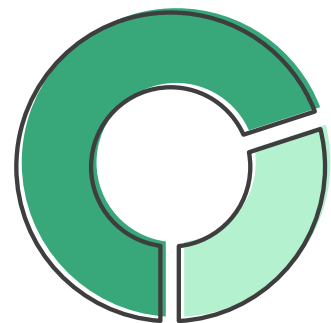
Still, given limited face-to-face time with their peers and little communication with senior members of their organizations, today's employees are struggling to feel engaged, stay motivated and remain in the loop.

Just how bad is this problem, and what are the steps that business leaders can take to engage employees and get the very best from their staff? These are the questions this report sets out to answer.

3.7

**million US workers
now work from home at least
half of the time.**

Global Workplace Analytics



**70% of UK businesses
will have adopted flexible
working by 2020.**

*Lancaster University
Work Foundation*

By drawing upon research carried out among 2,000 UK and US office workers, this report seeks to raise awareness of changing workplace expectations and examine the best modes of engagement for today's workforce. It explores worker attitudes toward video, internal communication habits and how connected today's workers feel to their wider businesses.

Using these insights, this report then provides actionable advice on how organizations can engage with "Generation Now" – those employees who have come to expect real-time communication and cannot feel motivated without being in the know.



65%

**of the world's
population
are 'visual learners' who best
engage with content through
sight and sound.**

Social Science Research Network

Unless business leaders adapt to this new generation, and address the wider issue of employee engagement, they will forever struggle to motivate employees, adopt the best talent and, ultimately, ensure maximum productivity throughout their organizations. This will not only limit the opportunities to develop new skills, but could also damage their competitive position going forward.

MIND THE GAP: THE COMMUNICATIONS DISCONNECT

As yet another new generation enters the workforce, businesses and IT departments are faced with a multitude of different expectations and communication styles to facilitate and manage.

This, combined with flexible and remote working, has led to an increasingly fragmented workforce in which business leaders struggle to ensure employee engagement and clear communication at all levels of their organization.

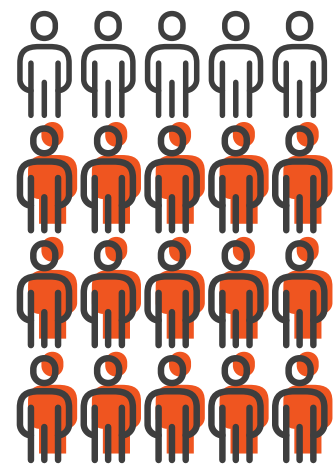
Instead, silos are rapidly forming between the different generations, with many employees feeling ‘out of the loop’ and, ultimately, underappreciated within their organization. Less than half of today’s employees feel satisfied with the communication they receive from the senior management team, while barely any receive face-to-face time with them.



45%

of US employees
are not satisfied with
the communication from
their senior management.

Only 43% of UK
employees are satisfied
with the communication
from their management team.



75% of workers
don't feel connected to
their CEOs, MD or
management team.

OUT OF THE LOOP

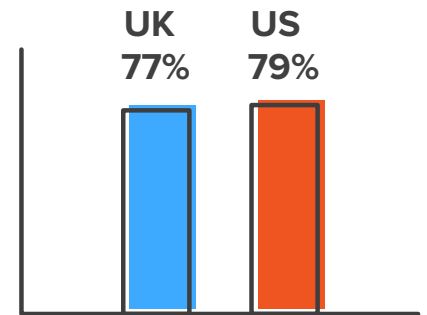
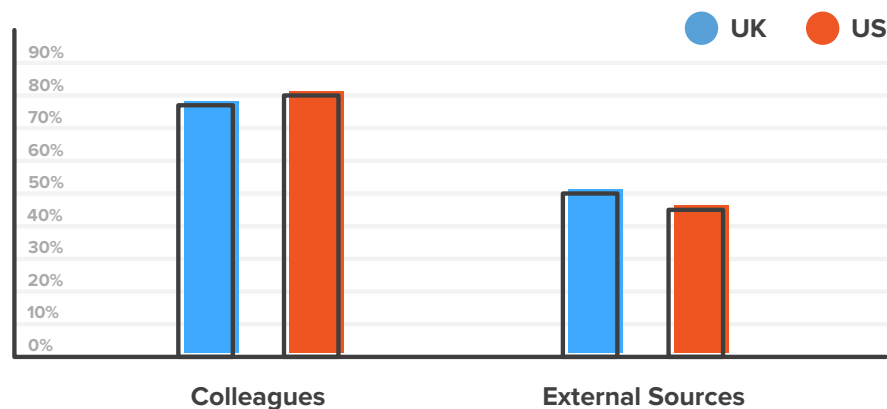
Faced with a lack of coherent communication channels, limited feedback from their managers and virtually no face-time with the senior management team, is it any wonder that today's employees are turning to the 'grapevine' as their main source of company news?

As it stands, 77% of UK workers say that they are more likely to find out company information via a colleague than they are an official communications channel. In the US, this figure is 79%. This is not helped by an overreliance on outdated communication methods, with a third of businesses still providing important announcements via office posters (despite an increasingly remote, global workforce).

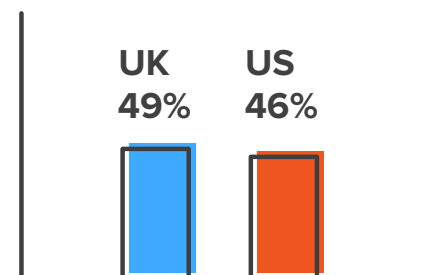
For many employees, even hearing news from colleagues is a bonus, as half of employees (49% UK, 46% US) learn about company developments from external sources such as the media, before being informed through official channels.

Clearly, when workers are forced to read about their company in the news, there has been a serious breakdown in workplace communication. Overreliance on informal and unofficial channels not only blurs the line between rumor and fact, but can also leave workers feeling demotivated, undervalued and less committed to the future of their organizations.

From what sources do today's employees receive information?



Workers forced to hear information from colleagues rather than company channels.



Workers forced to hear information from external sources rather than company channels.

Outdated office communication

76%



of companies are still relying on mass emails to communicate news to their staff.

32%



use office posters to communicate news to their staff.



31%



of companies post updates on an HR intranet or web portal.

35%



of companies are still relying on written documents to communicate news to staff.

TALKING THE TALK

More often than not, the lack of communication facing today's businesses is not due to poor management, but rather poor infrastructure and a reliance on processes that do not match the modern workforce's needs.

Today's workers are faced with an average of 121 emails a day and hundreds of instant messages. They spend roughly a third of their time sorting through irrelevant information. This leaves many businesses with a difficult dichotomy to overcome. On one hand, today's workers demand constant communication. On the other, they suffer from information overload, increasingly skimming written documents and failing to engage fully with corporate updates.

As attention spans grow shorter, employees are less likely than ever to read and digest long-form documents, newsletters and text-heavy updates.

It is for this reason that we expect real-time updates and video communication to grow increasingly popular among both employers and employees.

↘ “Live video seems to be the next frontier, even though the category has struggled to gain mass popularity over the years. ... An entirely new breed of livestreaming apps is gaining in popularity. With a perfect storm of mobile, simple user interfaces and a fixed feature set, apps such as Periscope, Meerkat, YouNow and Blab are turning everyday moments into the equivalent of live programming. Unlike YouTube (for now) and Facebook, single-purpose mobile apps simplify the experience for creators and viewers.”

Brian Solis

Principal Analyst at Altimeter Group



58% of UK employees find visual content easier to digest and understand than written documents and printed materials.

72% of UK employees believe that video calls are more effective than traditional voice calls.



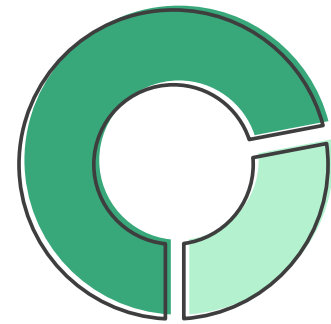
64% of office workers agree that they will trust a message more if they can see the person speaking.



66% of US employees find visual content easier to digest and understand than written documents and printed materials.

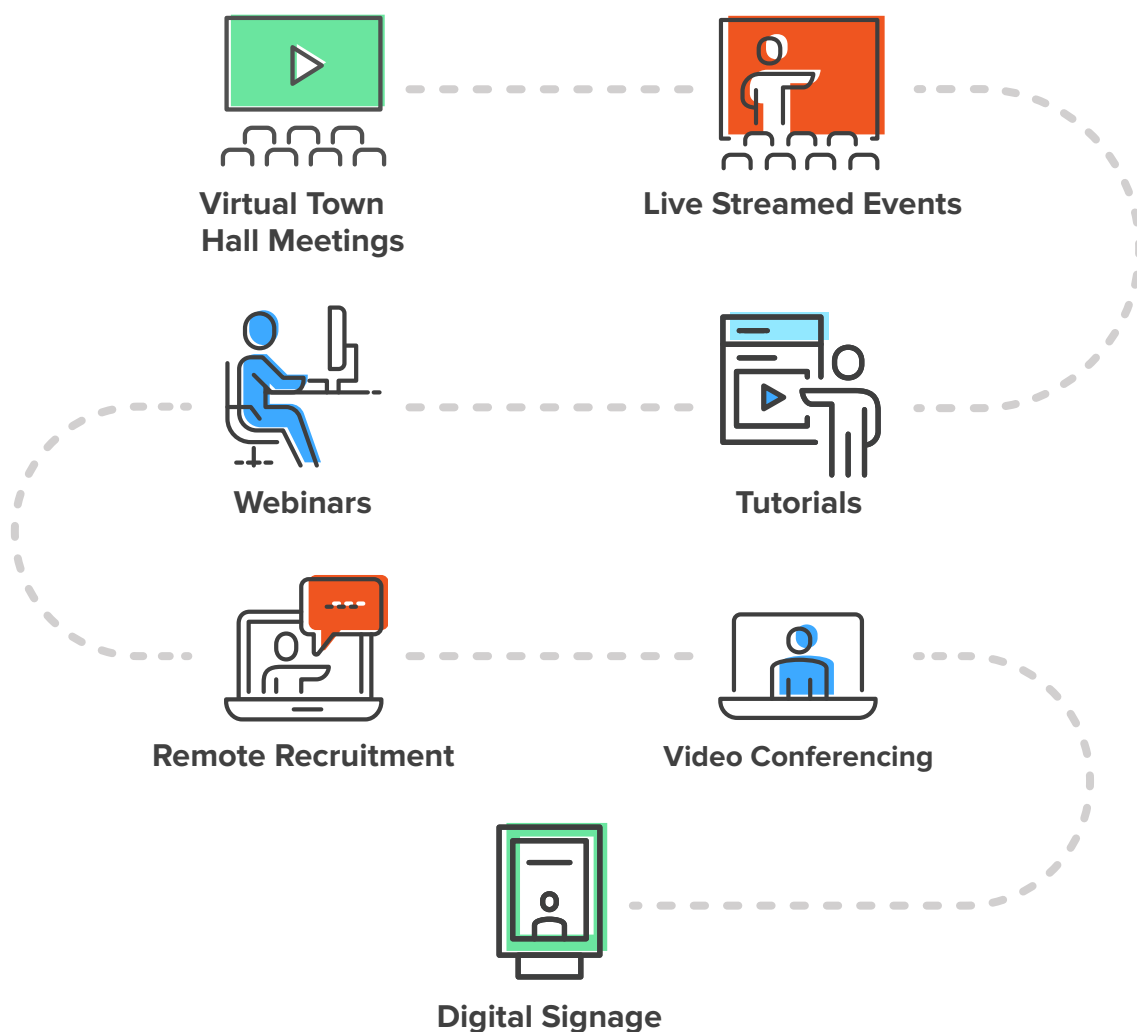
By switching from text to video communication businesses can help cut down on missed messages, improve employee engagement and reduce the need for employees to find out information through unofficial sources.

As many as 64% of office workers agree that if they can see someone speaking they are more likely to trust the message being conveyed. As such, video communication will not only ensure that information is transmitted accurately, but can also help workers to feel that they are being communicated with openly, further benefiting employer-employee relations.



77% of US employees believe that video calls are more effective than traditional voice calls.

How are today's businesses using video?



THE CONSUMER EMPLOYEE

In order to streamline their communications approach businesses need to stop seeing their employees as a faceless ‘workforce’ and instead adapt to the idea that everyone is a consumer.

Outside of work, employees have grown accustomed to using the very latest tools and technologies, communicating and receiving information over social media, instant messenger, live streaming and video chat.

Employees today are demanding the latest technology and want consumer-like experiences in the workplace. These workers are growing increasingly accustomed to communicating over video within their personal lives. As a result, their workplace expectations are also shifting toward real-time video content.

↘ “We use video a lot at Nationwide to communicate across the society with our employees. In general, videos have that better level of engagement because there’s a greater opportunity for people to understand what it is that they’re trying to learn and the messages that are going out.”

Mark Gibson

Digital Consultant at Nationwide

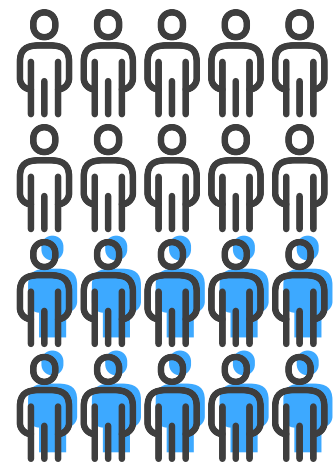
In the current workplace environment, 54% of UK employees claim that they have to work with outdated technology and 44% are frustrated by this.

Now, more than ever, businesses and IT departments need to re-think the tools they provide to their workforce and ensure they are balancing the demands of the new generation with those of the existing workforce.

Until businesses embrace these demands they will not only struggle to recruit and retain the best staff, but will also significantly damage the productivity of their own workforce.

63%

of workers
use YouTube to receive information in their personal lives (rising to 82% for 18–24 year olds).



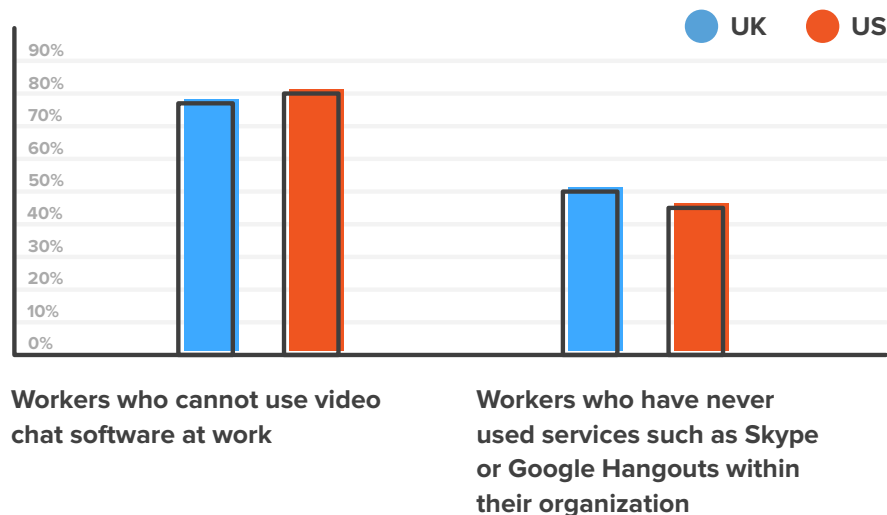
Half (49%) of US
workers use online videos to access information.

1 in 5

UK workers
use the live streaming social media site Periscope.

IT IN THE AGE OF NOW

Despite the growing expectation among employees to use tools at work that match those in their personal lives, a combination of poor infrastructure and reluctant management has meant that the “consumeration” of IT has yet to stretch to video adoption.



Today's Reality

When it comes to video, the US is leading the charge, with one in five companies having adopted live video broadcasts or providing updates via recorded videos online.

But why are businesses so far behind when it comes to the use of video within internal communications?

The demand for instant, face-to-face communication is clearly there for employees, but many businesses simply don't feel that they have the right IT infrastructure in place to support mass video adoption.

1/4

of UK workers are now using YouTube to access information at work; services such as Periscope and Facebook Live are yet to be supported by the majority of businesses.

79%

of US companies are still relying on mass emails to communicate news to their staff.

More than a quarter (27%) of UK employers are still attempting to make important announcements through printed office posters.

➤ “By moving to a digital forum, we have been able to bring the management team and our employees closer together and eliminate weeks of seemingly unproductive time spent distilling our corporate strategy and messaging across the company. We have now made video communication the default solution for large-scale communication with our employees.”

Torsten Raak

SVP of Experience Marketing at Schneider Electric

CONCLUSION

The days of the office memo, mass email or bulletin board are behind us.

Today's workers demand real-time communication and two-way access to senior staff members, placing greater trust in face-to-face interaction than ever before. They are the generation of NOW – expecting to live, work and communicate in the moment.



In order to meet these new demands, businesses must alter not only their communication technologies, but also their wider attitudes toward employees. Rather than treating the workforce as an afterthought, today's business leaders must look to engage employees at every level, keeping them informed across all stages of the decision-making process. This will not only help make employees feel valued, but will also provide greater opportunity for two-way feedback, further informing an organization's decisions in the long run.

Alongside this new approach to employee engagement, IT decision makers must also support businesses in their efforts to provide the very latest communications tools. Occasional email blasts are no longer enough. Today's employees expect to communicate in real time, using tools of a similar—or better—quality than those used in their personal lives.

37%

of UK employees say that they would use more video at work if only their business' internet connectivity was faster or more reliable.

45%

45% of US employees would use more video at work if their business' internet connectivity was faster or more reliable.

A major part of this will be the adoption of video communication, with consumer websites and applications such as Skype, Facebook Live, Periscope, Facetime and Instagram Video driving the trend. At the same time, however, adoption of these technologies is worthless without the necessary network infrastructure in place to ensure that they function effectively. Additionally, businesses preferring to introduce enterprise tools such as Skype for Business should ensure that the necessary security protocols are in place and provide employees with the right training to transition them from the consumer tools they're used to.

If businesses are going to unite their fragmented workforces and overcome the issue of employee engagement, they must work with IT departments to improve these internal networks and communication infrastructures. Without addressing these issues from the ground up, businesses will continue to fall behind their competitors, both in terms of their productivity and their ability to recruit and retain the best employees.

Community and real-time conversation are the future of business communications. The only question is, will your organization be leading the charge, or will it be left behind?

To find out how your business can lead the charge for real-time communication, visit kollektive.com

68%

of US workers find their slow internet speeds at work frustrating, with many (especially the younger generation) feeling that they are left working with out-of-date technology. This figure rises to 73% in the UK.