

Our Top 5 Tips on Content Creation for Employee Apps

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eGuide
Employee Communications

Introduction

Creating consistently engaging content for an employee app can be challenging. It's a different way of working than writing email comms or for an employee magazine.

We've therefore teamed up with Jenni Field, Director of Redefining Communications and current CIPR President, to come up with some top tips for content creation and making the most of your employee app.



Tip 1 – Craft the Perfect Headline





Your headline is the employee's first interaction with your content, so it needs to grab their attention if you want them to tap-in and read the whole story. Don't make your headline too long – no more than seven words. Even the largest mobile phones these days don't have a lot of horizontal space, so if your headline is too long it's likely to get cut off anyway.

A great app headline follows these seven standards:

- **Instant** - It can be read in a single breath
- **Clear** - The meaning is obvious. No clickbait!
- **Snappy** – Your message is concise and appealing.
- **Relevant** – It connects to the reader.
- **Direct** – It's straightforward and tells the reader what they need to know.
- **Accurate** – Don't misrepresent the content for the sake of clicks
- **Interesting** - It makes the employee want to know more

Tip 2 – Use Your Tone of Voice



Be friendly, be direct and align with your organisation's guidelines if you have them.

You're not writing a press release or an end of year report for the board. Relax a little! Of course, if you work in a larger company you might have to follow a particular set of guidelines, but think about how you'd talk to a colleague to tell them about something that's going on. Writing in a friendly and relaxed tone of voice has lots of benefits, particularly in encouraging user retention in your app, and making employees feel more at ease about engaging with your content via the comments.

Tip!



**Be friendly, be direct
and align with your
organisation's guidelines...**

Tip 3 – Focus on the Readers: Your Employees



Ask yourself some questions...



i. What do employees want to know?

This isn't something that you can assume. You need to gather information from the various feedback mechanisms that you have in place for employees. Things like regular pulse surveys, feedback forms, etc. If your business doesn't have these in place, there's a danger of simply throwing content out there to see how it lands. A good content strategy takes account of all of the feedback and insights that you've got from employees, to address their needs. If they've already told you what they want to know, listen to them!

Don't forget to also use analytics to your advantage. For example, Thrive's Insights Dashboard can tell you which content has been most read by

specific groups of employees, and which content has got the most social interaction through likes and comments. Your analytics aren't there just for reporting to management. You can use them to inform your content strategy too!



ii. What do we want our employees to know?

Of course, if a specific event happens or piece of news needs to be shared, then it's something that you want employees to know about, but this question is less about "There was a charity bun sale in the foyer yesterday", and more about how you want employees to feel about the company and how you make employees aware of the values that your business wants to instil.

So, if there was a charity bun sale in the foyer yesterday why are you telling people about it? Maybe it aligns with your business objective of promoting corporate social responsibility. Or one of your core values is about putting others first. Include that kind of information in your article so that you're clear about how the event you're reporting on fits in with the wider strategy of the business.

Tip 4 – Target the Right Audience



In our experience, employees are usually most interested in content that's directly relevant to them. Think about how you'd feel opening any app and having to keep scrolling to find anything relevant to your job or interests. You probably wouldn't keep scrolling for very long, and might just give up and close the app. If that's what happens every time you open the app, you'd probably just delete it.

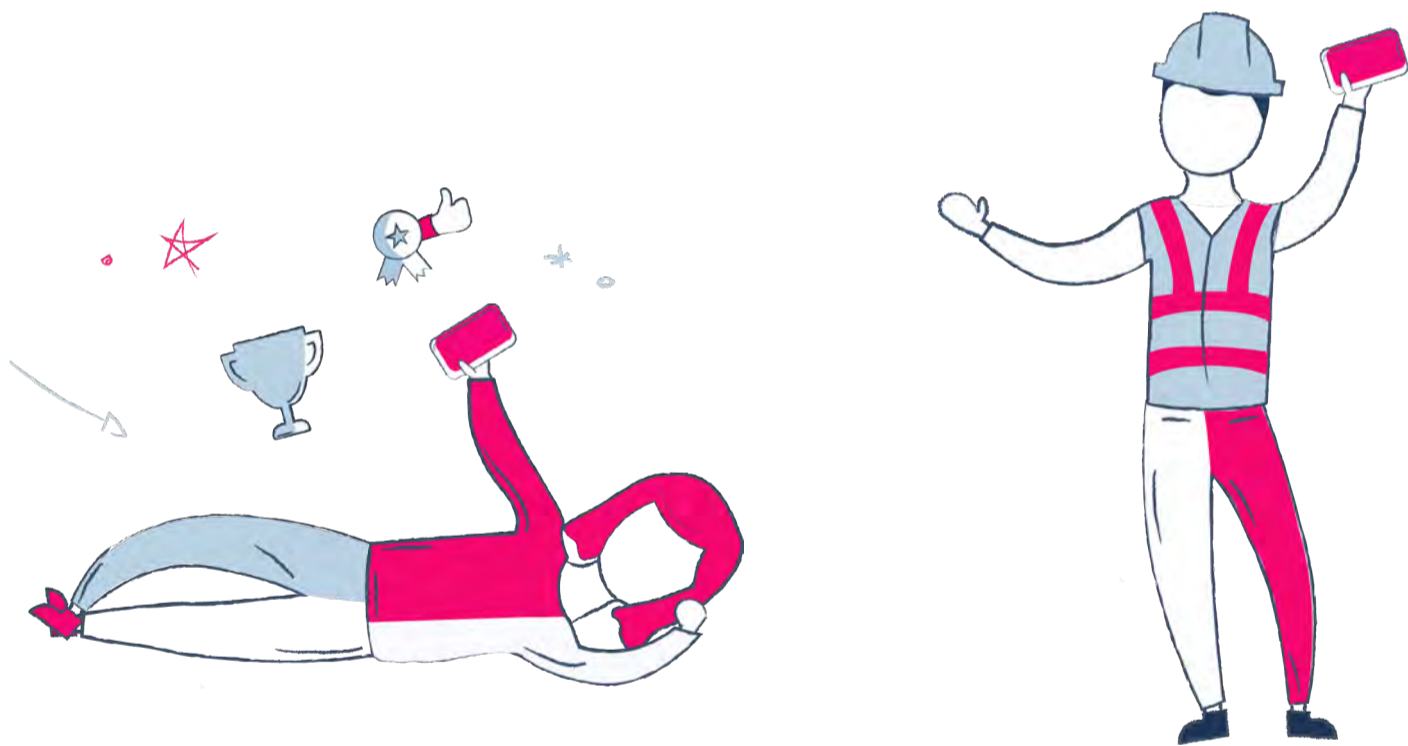
Ideally, you'd love to be able to communicate with people individually. In the absence of that, one of the great things about your app is its ability to at least dive a little bit deeper than more traditional comms channels, so you can communicate directly with the groups of employees that a piece of information relates to, rather than scatter-gunning and hoping that the relevant people see it.

Employees are often overloaded with emails, meetings, targets, and if they perceive your app as another thing that's overloading

them with information, they simply won't use it. You can easily solve this problem with Thrive by creating user groups, and setting the audience of each piece of content, thus ensuring that your employees aren't spending time scrolling to find something that's relevant to them.



Tip 5 – Take Some Time to Re-purpose Content from Other Sources



If someone sends you a press release, or an article that's being published in this month's employee magazine, it's tempting just to copy and paste the text to your app and call it a day. But because we're all so used to reading information in more bite-sized chunks in mobile apps, it's well worth it to spend some time editing your content to be more app friendly. Here are some ways to instantly improve your content from other sources:

i. Put the most newsworthy paragraph at the top. Don't rely on your employees reading the whole story. If there's a key message in the article, include it first.

ii. Remove any repetition. In longer-form writing, it's good practice to repeat key phrases to re-enforce an idea throughout. In a mobile app though, get rid of them to keep things short and snappy.

iii. Adapt the angle of the story. Consider developing a community spirit in your app by writing from the perspective of an employee reacting to this story. It's not just about what's happening. It can also be about how we're feeling about what's happening.

iv. Edit any long sentences. 15-20 words maximum. Run-on sentences are confusing and exhausting. Trim them down to size and you'll end up with a much more focused and readable story.

v. Make sure your images work. An image that works for a magazine and for an app are two different things. Crop and compress your images to not only make them look better in your app, but to reduce the file size for faster loading.

Need More?

We hope you have enjoyed reading this eBook and the information within it has been useful to start your journey to a successful employee communications app. If you are an existing Thrive customer and need assistance with your app please feel free to contact our customer success manager [here](#). If you are new to employee communications and are interested in trying out Thrive for Free contact us [here](#).



Bios



Jenni Field has over 16 years' experience in communications, specialising in helping organisations go from chaos to calm; working with organisations to help them understand how to get teams to work together better and operations to work more efficiently.

Everything Jenni does starts with insight and having set up communication functions in pharmaceutical, hospitality and advertising industries, she is an expert in ensuring alignment between the communication and business strategy.

Jenni is a fellow of the Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR), she is a Chartered practitioner, and qualified in internal communications.



Ian McCutcheon has over 7 years' experience driving excellent customer satisfaction and is the Client Success Manager at Thrive. In the past four years, Ian has developed his skillset and knowledge in the employee communications and engagement space and proactively supports Thrive clients in the successful deployment of their employee apps.

Ian provides valuable insight, best practices and advice to ensure each Thrive client is getting the very most of the Thrive platform and their employee apps.

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