



Jostle helps Vernon bring its workplace culture alive

At A Glance

**Date**

August 31, 2012

Customer

City of Vernon

Size of deployment

500 (250 employees plus hundreds of committee members and associated service providers such as police)

Challenge

How to bring their culture alive and bridge workplace silos

Solution

Jostle's **People Engagement**[®] platform.

Benefits

Jostle's platform provided an easy way to ramp up internal communications in a way that engaged employees and brought their wonderful culture to life across multiple locations.

How does a decentralized city find a way to connect every department, every branch, AND all their volunteers? They turned to Jostle, a sophisticated **People Engagement**[®] platform.

Background

With a population of 38,000, Vernon is the commercial hub of the North Okanagan Regional District of British Columbia. The city employs about 250 people, spanning from office staff to city maintenance personnel to part-time seasonal workers, spread across 11 office locations. There are also hundreds of external contributors ranging from external members on boards and committees, to associated services like police and regional facilities.

Challenge

Vernon faced the same challenge most complex organizations face including:

- Trying to pull together employees in varying roles in multiple locations using different systems into a single, energized workplace; and
- Trying to attract and retain the very best employees.

Complicating matters further was the fact that over one third of employees (like public works crews), and all external contributors, do not have corporate email addresses or city-issued phone numbers.

The City of Vernon had a wonderful workplace culture, but most employees did not recognize its existence. They worked in silos and were unfamiliar with employees at other offices.

Previous attempts at engaging the staff included a company e-newsletter. This not only took up a lot of employee time to create the e-newsletter, but it was also outdated by the time it was issued and had to be distributed with pay stubs in order to reach all employees. Key information was

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- Patti Bridal, Manager of Corporate Services

available via SharePoint and fileshares, but both had become cluttered with outdated content and was hard to navigate.

Finding a Solution

Patti Bridal, Manager of Corporate Services set a goal to become the employer of choice in their region and began searching for a solution that would connect every employee at City of Vernon and help bring their culture to life.

Patti first learned of Jostle in the spring of 2011 at a LGMA conference (Local Government Management Association) and was immediately impressed at Jostle’s elegant interface, ease of use and people-centric approach.

Jostle’s **People Engagement**[®] platform works like an intranet, but is securely accessible from any device/location and works to engage and enable employees. It provides an effective tool for getting key communications out in real time, bridging organizational silos, and showcasing an organization’s culture.

Patti also evaluated numerous competitors. None came close to competing with Jostle. “Jostle’s unique ability to clarify our overall organization and help us with internal communication really stood out.”

Connecting Employees

Jostle has helped employees get to know staff they wouldn’t have otherwise known which has helped immensely with employee onboarding.

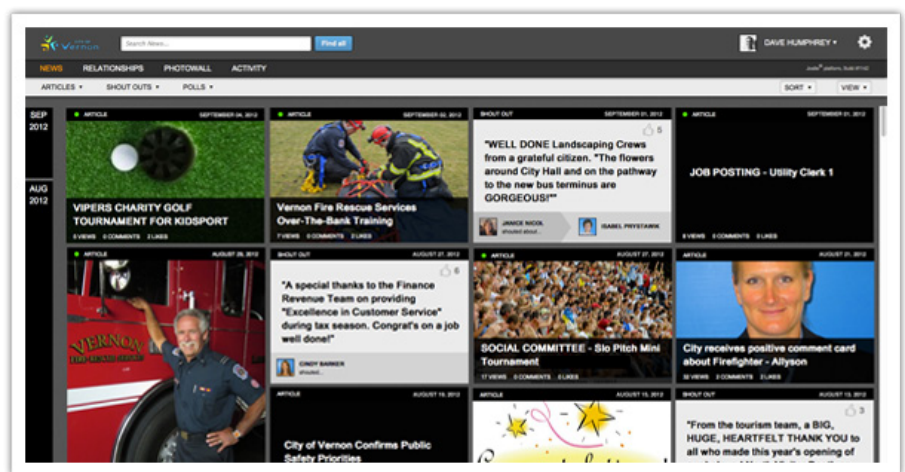
“It’s amazing how connected people are now,” said Patti. “The people-driven content is by far the most important element of Jostle. I’ve seen employees find new running partners, join new sports teams and start fishing clubs.”

“Keeping staff informed on important issues and events of the city, makes them feel more a part of the big team.”

- Courtenay Pitcher,
Communications Officer

Relaying Critical Information

Jostle played a critical role in disseminating information to employees during a recent forest fire. The City of Vernon wanted to keep staff in the loop as much as possible rather than having them rely on the local radio/newspaper, which don't always have accurate information. They used the NEWS feature in Jostle to push out important alerts. “Keeping staff informed on important issues and events of the city, makes them feel a part of the big team. We want them to feel that we value them enough to keep them informed.”



The NEWS view on the Jostle Platform captures the real-time vibe of Vernon.

Organizing Committees

Vernon has structured all their committees into the Jostle platform. Employees are able to search by committees to view council members and volunteers as well as look up Committee terms of reference. Vernon has also identified all volunteers with a star so employees know immediately who is an external contributor. Even social committees are included, allowing employees to look and see whose is organizing upcoming events and parties.

“We’ve had multiple enquiries from other cities in BC and beyond.”

- Patti Bridal, Manager of Corporate Services

Jostle has also helped move towards phasing out unnecessary paper documents, like phonelists. Unlike traditional phone lists that require constant updating and printing, Jostle is always up to date always puts a face to the person you may be calling.

High Levels of Engagement

To increase employee engagement of the Jostle platform, Patti and her team ran an internal contest. Employees were given a set of criteria including updating their own profile as well as locating other staff members.

The contest was well received with the winner receiving two lift passes for a local ski hill. However the real success of Vernon’s onboarding was evident in their high engagement numbers. In an average month the City of Vernon sees approximately 70% of users logging in, an extremely high level of engagement.

Amplifying Culture and Making a Difference

The City of Vernon is now reaping the benefits of a strong culture which they know will go a long way in their efforts in becoming a more desirable employer.

“The sociability between colleagues is leading to increased knowledge sharing that will not only help employees individually, but will also benefit our entire organization,” said Patti. “Research clearly shows a direct correlation between employee engagement and culture and overall organizational success.”

The City of Vernon is just one of many of Jostle’s municipal customers and Patti couldn’t be more proud. “We’ve had multiple enquiries from other cities in BC and beyond. They all are extremely interested to see the impact that Jostle is making here in Vernon.”

About Jostle Corporation

Based in Vancouver, British Columbia, Jostle® provides an enterprise platform that does what intranets always dreamed of doing, but never could. Our cloud-based **People Engagement**® platform is a new kind of intranet that helps companies around the globe enable their employees and drive their culture, in simple and engaging ways. Jostle’s innovative approach results from an experienced team that brings three essential ingredients together – enterprise leadership, user experience design, and web-enabled software architecture. To share in our magic please visit us online at www.jostle.me.