



Australia's #1 Fashion Retailer Increases Employee Engagement with Jostle



Date
2013

Customer
brandsExclusive

Size of deployment
200+ Users

Challenge
Fast growing company with dispersed employees among multiple locations

Solution
Jostle's **People Engagement**® Platform

Benefits
- Real-time engagement
- Integration with Google Apps

About brandsExclusive

Based in Sydney, Australia, brandsExclusive (BEX) is Australia's leading online shopping destination for fashion and accessories. Their customers enjoy their favourite Australian and international labels at discounts of up to 70% off retail. brandsExclusive was founded in 2009 and has recently expanded to include livingExclusive, a dedicated site for homewares and lifestyle products that provide inspiration for the home. They have over 200 employees, dispersed among different floors and a separate warehouse facility. Their culture is young, hip, and social, with a strong emphasis on transparency.

Background

Like most rapidly growing companies, brandsExclusive faced these challenges:

- How to ensure prompt and transparent employee communications?
- How to scale employee engagement?
- How to maintain and grow your corporate culture?
- How to prevent organizational silos from forming?

They originally tried to solve these problems using a homebuilt intranet, which their strong IT team cobbled together using several Google Apps tools. However the result was disjointed; they were disappointed by the usability and concerned about the sustainability of this approach. Susan Burns, HR Manager for brandsExclusive, began investigating integrated platforms that might solve their problems.

Susan then discovered Jostle and immediately realized it was a platform that could quickly enable their vibrant and people-centric culture.

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Susan Burns
HR Manager
brandsExclusive

Jostle’s **People Engagement**® platform is a cloud-based intranet that engages employees, surfaces content, and aligns teams in ways traditional intranets never could.

Susan immediately noticed Jostle’s elegant interface, which was in sharp contrast to their existing intranet. She also loved the transparency of a flexible portal that allowed everyone within an organization to see everything, and most importantly allowed everyone to easily contribute.

Deployment

Rollout of the Jostle platform was initially restricted to a select group of tech-savvy employees. Susan and her team helped these ‘early adopters’ understand what Jostle was and how it could help improve collaboration and communication across their organization. Thanks to the superior usability and simplicity of the Jostle platform, the select group quickly transformed into Jostle champions. To further gauge employee interest, Susan used Jostle’s poll feature and asked the users if they enjoyed using the platform. 100% were in favour of it.

The Jostle platform was soon rolled out to the rest of the company.

Real-Time Engagement

Like a lot of Jostle customers, it’s the real-time interaction of the NEWS view that really drives employee engagement. Jostle’s NEWS view allows brandsExclusive to interact and share company news as it happens.

When the brandsExclusive warehouse (a 20-minute drive from the main office) organized a recent BBQ, they shared it as a photo album in Jostle NEWS. Susan was amazed when she heard people around her responding to what was happening to a team in another location in real time – something that had never happened before.

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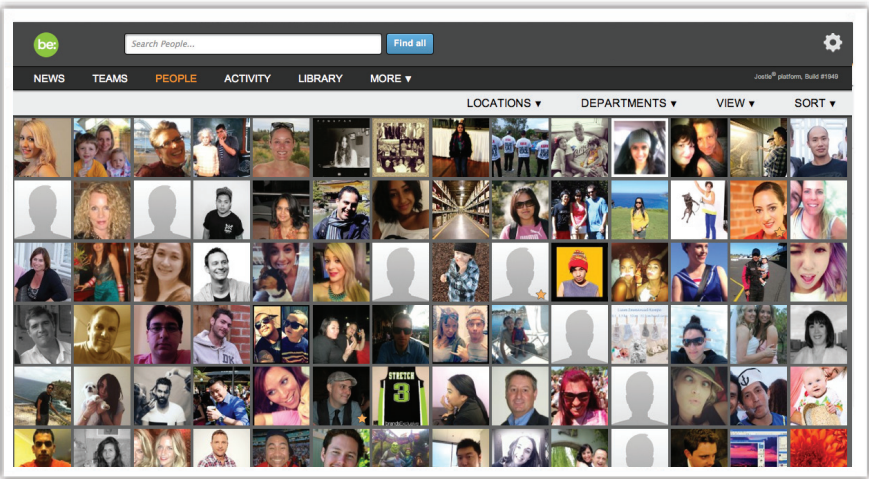
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was between all different employees. It was effortless and it happened instantaneously,” added Susan. “Jostle helps create connections and build relationships.”

Putting a Name to a Face

Jostle’s PEOPLE view allows employees to see photos and profiles of each other—which is critical in companies when employees are dispersed and have difficulty recognizing each other. brandsExclusive employees are spread out among three different floors and across two different locations. Before Jostle their staff felt disconnected, even to those on different floors of the same building. Jostle helps clarify who is doing what on their rapidly growing team. Jostle’s PEOPLE view includes patent-pending people search technology that makes it easy to search people visually by name, roles, locations, skills and interests.

“Putting a face to the name has been such a big win. People now feel confident to approach each other and say hello,” said Susan. “Jostle encourages people to interact in a productive way by forming connections between people. It provides a platform through which people can put a face to a name or share an online laugh with a colleague they may not have met before. It establishes a more open-minded context within which people can connect, therefore minimizing the risks of negative preconceptions based on faceless emails. It makes my job easier.”



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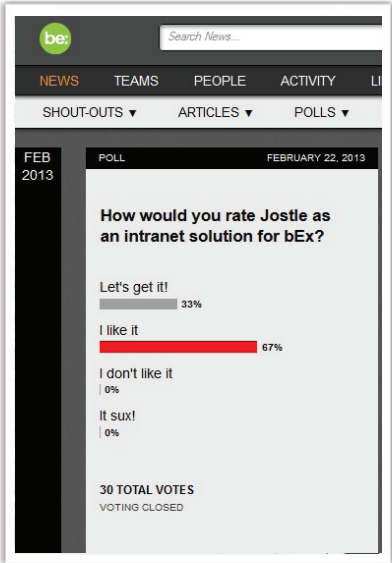
Integration with Google Apps

brandsExclusive operates in a Google environment, so it was an added bonus that Jostle integrates completely with Google Apps. Users not only benefitted from universal navigation on Google Apps, but also enjoyed the simplicity of a single sign on.

The integration allowed brandsExclusive to sync their employee data easily with no ongoing support or maintenance required from IT. Jostle is also able to automatically sync employee profiles directly to Google Contact profiles, letting organizations do things like automate Gmail signatures.

Because so many of Jostle’s customers are Google users, feedback from customers like brandsExclusive has helped drive the ‘Google direction’ of Jostle. brandsExclusive was concerned with reloading unwanted users from Google into Jostle. This led to the evolution of blacklist capabilities that now allows users to edit excluded users on the Google import page.

Seamless Rollout with High Adoption



Jostle is also completely turnkey, so the rollout was a breeze with no burden on any of the employees. “From putting teams together to communicating who is who, Jostle is the easiest tool I have EVER implemented,” said Susan.

Approximately 85% of employees are logging regularly. Because the warehouse employees don’t have always have intranet access, Susan has managed to keep them in the loop by printing off Jostle NEWS views and posting in lunchroom. She is looking forward to the arrival of Jostle’s mobile client so that more employees can access the platform on their own devices.

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Standing Apart from other Enterprise Social Tools

For anyone who has rolled out an Enterprise Social platform, usability is crucial for adoption — if users don't immediately see benefits prior to investing effort, user engagement will be very low. Sadly too many intranets neglect the user in their design. Not Jostle. From its inception, great care went into designing the platform to be intuitive to use and well matched to enabling employees in busy workplaces.

“Usability is critical for any application, but for Jostle's platform, usability spells success or failure more clearly than any other feature. Working with our users from the beginning of a product cycle ensures that our product is being designed so that users will be satisfied,” commented Dave Humphrey, Director of User Experience + Design.

“Jostle looks substantially better than any competing product,” said Susan. “Our previous intranet required a lot of my time as I was constantly helping employees on how to use it. Jostle has been a completely different experience. Because it is so visual, people want to have a look.”

Employee Appreciation

One of the magical elements of Jostle is its ability to provide employee recognition. With the use of Jostle's Shout-Out feature, employees are able to 'shout out' and recognize achievements of team mates and peers. It's no surprise that this is a favourite feature of Susan's.

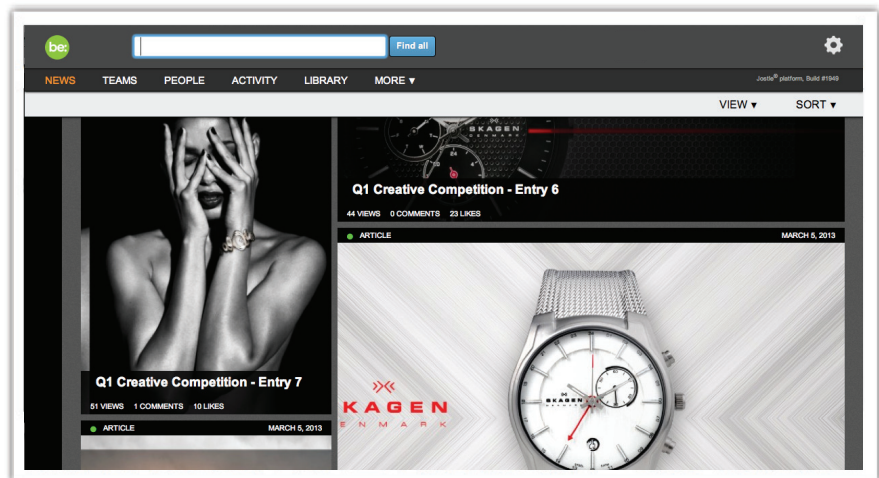
“Shout-Outs have been a quick win with a huge impact. It takes someone seconds to add a shout-out to Jostle NEWS, a public recognition, and put a smile on the dial of one of their colleagues, someone which they may have never met,” said Susan. “It's an amazing feature that really delivers. As an HR manager, what more can you ask for?”

brandsExclusive has used Jostle to take employee appreciation to an even higher level. When their creative design team was feeling overwhelmed by projects to the point that their creativity was lagging, they used the Jostle platform to stimulate their

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creativity and show off their skills. Design team members created banners and posted on the Jostle platform where employees voted on which banner they liked the best. The result was a marvelous display of work and, thanks to the embedded commenting capabilities of the platform, provided meaningful appreciation for the employees who did the work. created banners and posted on the Jostle platform where employees voted on which banner they liked the best. The result was a marvelous display of work and, thanks to the embedded commenting capabilities of the platform, provided meaningful appreciation for the employees who did the work.



Maintaining Transparency

Jostle has also helped brandsExclusive maintain a level of transparency during good and challenging times. Because news is posted in real-time, Susan can keep staff alerted of important events and announcements as they happen. “During a recent time of uncertainty Jostle has helped us keep our positivity and to recover more quickly than we might have in the past,” added Susan.

While Jostle can be configured to restrict news and document publishing to designated users, brandsExclusive kept their access open for all employees to contribute. This allowed complete transparency into what was posted and empowered employees to communicate openly.

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Keeping their Culture

Unlike some enterprise social platforms that strive to “change the way people work”, Jostle has allowed brandsExclusive to keep their vibrant workplace culture. For brandsExclusive this sometimes means using humour and getting a little silly. One example was aimed at getting people into the platform and learning about each other. It involved putting a face to a name:

“We created a competition where employees all added a celebrity doppelganger of themselves. Everyone enjoyed looking up which celebrity different employees represented. “We’ve had a lot of fun in such a short period of time.”

“It’s hard to define, but Jostle is helping us to remove feelings of isolation and build connectedness throughout brandsExclusive. It has never felt to the team like a mandate of a tool that people had to use, rather it has been a platform that people truly want to use,” added Susan. “When we look at Jostle, we see and feel our culture, it’s a representation of our community and the things that are important to us.”

Jostle Corporation

Jostle’s cloud-based **People Engagement**[®] platform is a new kind of intranet that helps organizations 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. Based in Vancouver, Canada, Jostle’s enterprise platform does what intranets always dreamed of doing, but never could.