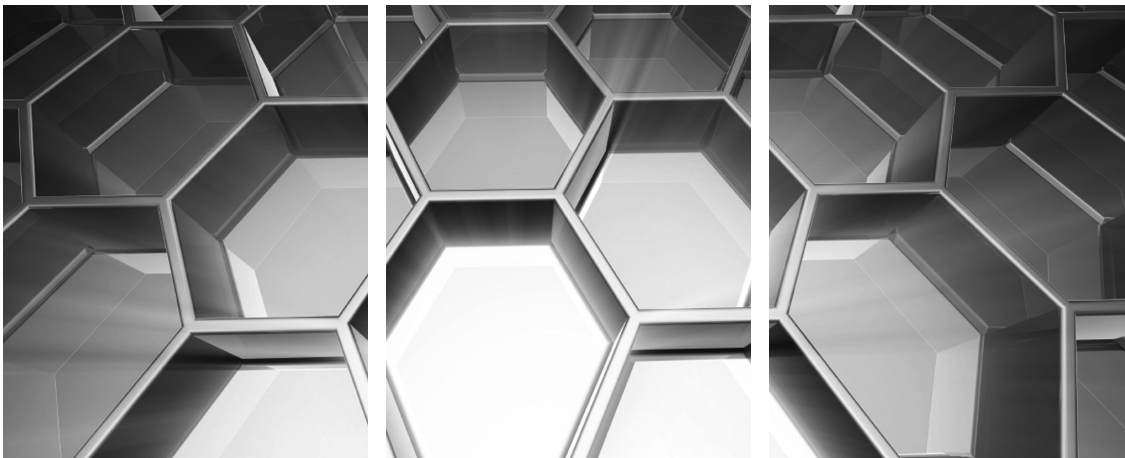


# Intranet Strategy and Governance

AUDREY SCARFF



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# Executive summary

BUSINESSES OFTEN struggle to articulate the purpose of their intranet. Some don't even try – it's usually a case of 'plug and go'. Some people even think that its function is assumed knowledge – it's obvious, so they don't need to explain it. The problem with these approaches is that if you don't know where you are going, you won't know how to get there or what you need to do to adapt to changing business conditions, and many intranets never reach their full potential because of this oversight. This report aims to discuss some of the pertinent issues organisations are facing surrounding intranet strategy and governance.

Governance refers to accountability and responsibility for the management of the intranet. It is an essential part of an intranet strategy if you want to extract its full potential as the valuable business tool you know it to be. While every organisation is different, some form of governance is necessary to guide the evolution of your intranet and avoid a 'wild west' end result.

Technology also has a part to play – it should support your governance strategy where it can. It should provide the necessary information or feedback to allow the owners to adapt the intranet strategy and tactics to help drive efficiency and effectiveness.

Chapter 1 explains the reasons for having not just any strategy, but a clear one, and what you can gain from the process of creating one. The chapter also examines how you should compose your intranet team.

In Chapter 2, we will break down the intranet strategy into its main components, including the articulation of your vision and goals. Not all of the items covered in this discussion may be relevant to all organisations, but it should get you thinking. The chapter addresses command and control versus bottom-up development, as well as the differences in approach for a first time intranet versus a redesign.

Chapter 3 examines the virtues of a living strategy. Particularly in unstable business climates, we may need to change direction or re-prioritise. Your intranet strategy is not cast in stone – it should be flexible enough to change with the times. This is especially relevant for organisations in the midst of mergers and acquisitions, downsizing and massive on-boarding of new employees.

Chapter 4 analyses in detail how the intranet can help your organisation to develop and prosper. How can you make your intranet more effective in delivering on business objectives? How can the intranet contribute to staff efficiency? What are employees' information needs and how can you bridge the gap between what you have and what you need to make employees more productive? This chapter answers these common questions, which organisations face. It also looks at why training is so important for an effective intranet strategy.

Chapter 5 discusses responsibility and governance of the intranet – who should be responsible? Common issues in intranet

governance, such as accountability and the importance of senior management buy-in will be covered in this chapter, as well as how you can use intranet metrics to monitor delivery on your strategy. If the technology behind your intranet fails to give you the right information how do you address that?

Part 2 of the report looks at real-life examples of company strategies and the governance issues that they have faced.

Featured organisations include:

- BT;
- McDonald's;
- Jetstar;
- British American Tobacco;
- Churchill Capital;
- Cancer Council New South Wales; and
- IBM.

Part 2 also includes contributions from industry experts, David Coleman at Collaborate.com and Silvia Cambié, international speaker on culture and collaboration.

A basic toolkit is also included in this report to get the strategic planning process started if this is the first time you've attempted one.

## About the author

AUDREY SCARFF is director at iCite Online Strategy Consultants in London, UK.

She has an MA in virtual communication and her international experience with websites, intranets and the collaboration market includes projects with Shell International, HBOS Australia, Alliance Boots, the United Nations, Quiksilver, BT and Telstra.

Audrey has previously been a member of the management team for Intranet DASHBOARD (<http://www.intranetdashboard.com>). She is currently serving on the Board of the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) Europe/ Middle East as director of communications (see: <http://europe.iabc.com>).

iCite Online Strategy Consultants help businesses enhance corporate communications, improve business processes and make sense of the technology available to them. Expertise includes intranet planning, website design, technology selection, information architecture, governance strategy development, content planning and creation, style guide production and web project management.

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