

K A R I E L . R E Y N O L D S

Case Study: Internal Communications

Reimagining Internal Communications During Organizational Change

A strategy and content framework for unifying culture, connection, and collaboration across a newly formed media & entertainment division

At a Glance:

Client	A global media & entertainment company (name withheld under confidentiality)
Organization	A newly consolidated entertainment division, formed via corporate restructuring
Scale	~1,800 employees across four business-unit leaders and three office locations, including one international hub
My Role	Internal CommunicationsStrategist — audit, strategy, framework, and rollout design
Deliverable	Internal communications strategy presented to senior Communications, HR, and Business leadership

The Challenge:

A global media and entertainment company recently consolidated several previously independent business units, including a streaming platform, a broadcast network, and multiple production studios, into one new division. This reorganization occurred amid significant industry disruption, including declining linear viewership, increased competition for audience attention, and production volatility.

Employees faced multiple changes simultaneously, including a new reporting structure, workforce reductions in the parent company, and a corporate divestiture, all within one year. Leadership introduced a new cultural mandate, described internally as a "culture of collectiveness," but there was no shared understanding of its daily implications, the composition of the extended organization, or how individual teams' work aligned with broader group goals.

The communications infrastructure had not adapted to the new structure. My audit identified over fifteen overlapping newsletters and distribution lists based on the previous organization, no shared editorial calendar, inconsistent messaging from leaders, and no system for employees to ask questions or provide feedback

The stakes extended beyond administrative concerns. Research on creative organizations supported the strategy's core argument: people in creative roles operate in either "survival mode" or "creative mode." Uncertainty about job security, being heard, or their place in the organization keeps employees in survival mode, which hinders strong creative work. Ensuring employees feel informed, connected, and secure was essential to the division's effectiveness.

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Strategic Approach:

The strategy was organized around three goals:

- Internal Brand Building — establish a clear, energizing identity for the newly formed division and raise its visibility within the broader company.
- Layered Connection — build employee commitment at every level: to their immediate team and brand, to the new division, and to the parent company.
- Empowered Collaboration — increase cross-team visibility and create intentional touchpoints that drive alignment and innovation.

Three tactics carried the strategy through execution:

- Curated Communication — clear, audience-first, two-way messaging rather than one-way broadcast.
- Strategic Storytelling — curated news, employee stories, and leader messaging that reinforced stated leadership priorities: innovation, collective success, and strong content.
- Raves in Real Time — a discipline of celebrating wins, large and small, as they happened rather than batching them into quarterly recaps.

Audience Mapping:

Before designing any channel or message, I mapped the division's roughly 1,800 employees by reporting line and location: four business-unit leaders, three primary office locations spanning two U.S. coasts and one international hub, and functional groups spanning brand and platform teams, PR and marketing, and corporate services such as HR, finance, and business affairs.

This map became the backbone of the distribution strategy. It clarified which messages needed to reach the entire division, which belonged to a single leader's organization, and where the audit of quarter-plus overlapping newsletters was creating redundancy, gaps, or both.

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Content Framework: The 5 C’s

To keep messaging consistent across every channel and every leader, I built a five-part content framework:

Pillar	In Practice:
Collaboration	Create opportunities for employees to meet people outside their immediate team; showcase cross-team and cross-platform initiatives; partner with other parts of the parent company on shared employee experiences.
Communication	Apply a "smart brevity" approach — audience needs first, short and clear messages, an explicit "why it matters," and the option to go deeper. Consolidate overlapping messages rather than adding new ones.
Confidence	Surface examples of innovation and creative problem-solving; connect employees with training and development that builds self-worth amid disruption.
Coordination	Publish a division-wide "field guide" — team missions, members, and offerings — so employees can see who else is in the organization and where synergies exist.
Commitment	Build pride in the parent company's legacy and milestones; spotlight long-tenured employees' stories and career paths.

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Channel Strategy

Channels were split by function: external platforms to build employer brand and audience-facing engagement, and internal channels to build awareness, transparency, and connection.

Channel	Purpose
Company LinkedIn Page	Brand spotlights, campaign launches, cross-brand collaborations, culture content, and thought leadership— the priority external channel for employer branding.
Division Intranet	A hub for longer-form stories, a leadership news feed, a shared events calendar, and employee resources —built to keep the newsletter and chat channels short.
Teams Chat Channel	Moderated channels for real-time wins, breaking news, leadership video updates, and premiere/launch announcements — built for employees who don't read long emails.
Bi-Weekly Newsletter	A consistent, branded format: a rotating leader welcome, a cross-division wins round-up, team spotlights, an employee Q&A, and key dates.

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Signature Employee Programs

Employee Advisory Board — a cross-functional group of 10–15 employees, nominated by peers and vetted by HR, meeting on a recurring basis to surface communication gaps, react to new programs, and deliver a quarterly feedback report to leadership.

Leadership AMAs — recurring "ask me anything" sessions hosted by business-unit leaders for their own teams, scheduled between larger business updates.

Mix & Mingles — quarterly informal gatherings pairing teams that don't normally interact, with a brief leadership welcome explaining why the groups were connected.

Guest Speaker Series — a mix of outside authors, internal subject-matter experts, and event-tied panels (for example, pairing casting directors with the talent they discovered, or a panel walking through a project's path from development to industry recognition).

Phased Rollout

The phased rollout was approved by senior division leadership and was on its way to corporate for final sign-off when my 5-month contract ended.

Phase	Focus
Phase 1 (Months 1–2)	Foundational infrastructure: content distribution strategy, governance and approval workflows, company LinkedIn page, branded employee assets (email signatures, social banners), division intranet, and team chat channel.
Phase 2 (Months 3–4)	Programming layer: guest speakerseries and the division-wide town hall.
Phase 3 (Months 5–6)	Engagement layer: bi-weekly newsletter launch, Employee Advisory Board formation, employee-facing Instagram presence, Mix & Mingles, and leadership AMAs.