Advancing Business Performance
by Engaging Internal Audiences with Emerging Communication Technologies

An eScreenz White Paper

eScreenz™

Communicate. Everywhere.

Advances in digital communication technologies enable today's corporations to be more engaged with their internal audiences than ever before. Research on business performance continues to support the premise that improved internal communications will yield increases in efficiency and productivity, thereby improving bottom line results. Yet organizations still struggle with understanding both the process of employee engagement and selecting technologies that will enable them to reap the benefits of an informed and connected workforce.

In the span of one generation, the shift in communication technologies has impacted corporate communication practices. Like newspapers, print communications in the workplace have been almost eliminated. The shift to digital has quickened the pace of and the need for immediate access to corporate news and information.

BYOD, instant messaging, and the availability of internal social media channels are now challenging traditional phone networks and email as the preferred method of communicating. Anyone with a cell phone is a potential digital reporter.

Another key factor that influences the need to effectively communicate to a corporate audience is demographics. Younger employees, Millennials, were born and raised on digital and mobile technologies. By nature they are comfortable with everything mobile and social. They text each other about events and their personal lives, including workplace activities. Baby Boomers and Generation X typically do not rely on mobile social media channels as much as their younger counterparts.
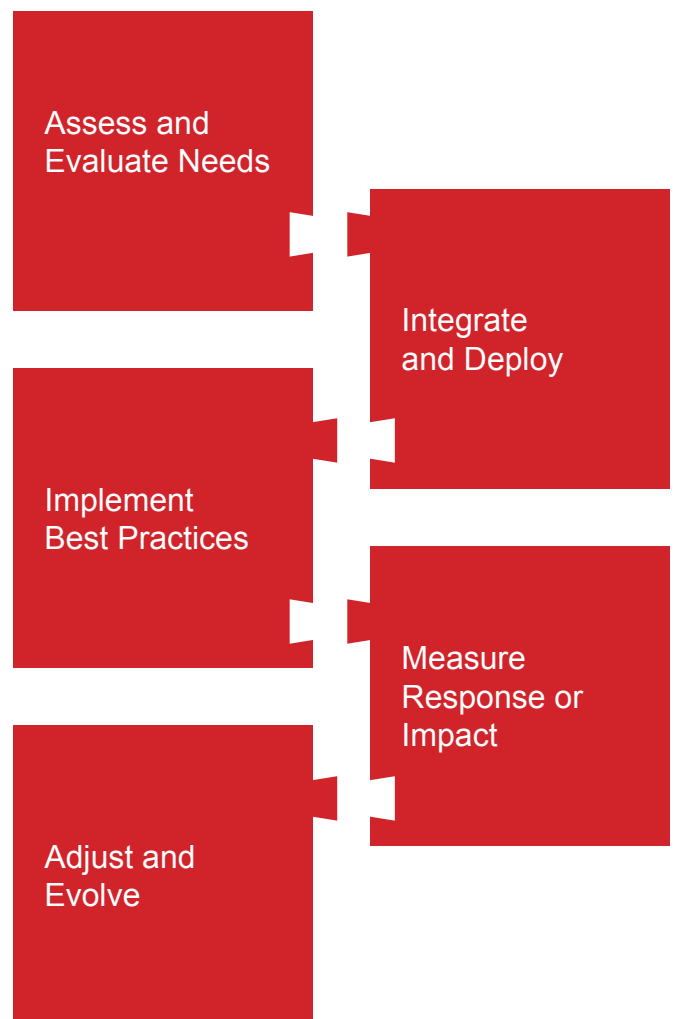
In the middle are corporate communicators. They are tasked with finding the right mix of communication technologies that will reach Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials - each with their preferred method of receiving and acquiring news.

The following is an overview of how to plan for new communication technology adoption and to introduce one of the newer and more flexible communication tools being adopted by companies: desktop messaging.

Various technologies are needed to meet the requirements that can span a variety of corporate environments and meet the demands of effectively communicating to all audiences. For instance, the corporate setting of a multi-location bank or a large software firm where each of the thousands of employees have access to a PC is vastly different from a manufacturing environment where thousands of employees have no direct access to a PC.

Starting Point – Process for Communications Planning

Best practices show that organizations should routinely examine their communication practices. Keeping current on new technologies enables them to more effectively communicate with their internal and external audiences. The tools of the trade evolve and change, but the fundamentals for designing a communication strategy remain the same:

Assess and Evaluate Needs

Integrate and Deploy

Implement Best Practices

Measure Response or Impact

Adjust and Evolve

Assess and Evaluate Needs

Creating a communications strategy for assessment and evaluation purposes need not be a complicated task. In an Excel spreadsheet, list an inventory of available technologies. Include ones in use, how they are used, how you measure impact, and the limits of each. Add a wish list of technologies you don't have. Because of your current budget cycle, you may not be able to purchase for the current year. Use your new Communications Assessment Tool to plan for the future integration of new technology. (See Figure 1 – Sample Corporate Communications Technology Assessment).

While a number of communication technologies are in place at many corporations, a new hybrid technology is emerging as an attractive solution to more effectively reach internal audiences – centralized desktop messaging.

One such solution is an enterprise technology called eScreenz. Developed by Entre Computer Services, eScreenz combines the speed of message delivery via a network connection, the high-impact visual format of digital signage but

All organizations are equipped with a number of communication technologies. What helps them become actively engaged is how they evaluate, measure and plan their communications.

on PCs, and clickable messages with hyperlinks for additional information.

The technology uses existing corporate network infrastructure to broadcast company information. Messages are published to all PCs in a slide show format that is available on-demand or as a corporate screensaver. Using this hybrid technology, message distribution to mobile devices and digital signage further enables organizations to effectively reach all employees from a single system. This meets the demographic demands of companies seek-

Figure 1: Sample Communications Technology Assessment

| Technology	Type	Objectives	In Use?	Success Measures	Notes
Email	Push	Broadcast messaging; sharing; task tracking/management	Yes	Yes, but overused	Primary tool to reach employees
Intranet	Static	File sharing; information archive	Yes	Analytics: number of visits, time spent on site, new sections added	Exponential growth, old info not removed, platform outdated, hard to find docs
Web meetings – large scale	Collaborative	Sharing company news, meeting facilitation, team building	Yes	Engages all employees at all locations at one time	Used to broadcast quarterly executive town hall meetings
Instant Messaging	Collaborative	Real-time conversations, quick way to reach someone	Yes		Not available to all employees; no record of messages
Internal Social Media Tools (i.e. Jive, Yammer, tibbr, Chatter, etc.)	Collaborative	Real-time status updates, networking, conversation	No		
Digital Signage	Push	Video slide show messaging; reach employees with no PCs	No		To be installed in manufacturing areas in 2015
eScreenz Desktop Messaging (interactive viewer & screen saver)	Push / Pull	Centralized desktop slide show messaging; engagement, immediacy	Yes	Installed on all PCs at all locations, ranks high on surveys	
Mobile devices (phones and tablets)	Collaborative	Engagement; information sharing	Yes		Company provided - Limited use to executive and management teams
Web Meetings – small group or one-to-one one technologies; i.e. MS Lync	Collaborative	Video calls and conferencing; screen sharing; status info	No		
Videos	Pull	Training, sharing of content and expertise	Yes	Available on our intranet	Training programs, new product demos, town hall meetings, etc.
Pagers	Push	Reach employees traveling or production team members	No		
Common PCs or Internal kiosks	Static	Network access for manufacturing associates	Yes	Shared PCs enable all employees to access email	
Voice Mail Emergency Notification Systems	Push	Corporate-wide voicemail alerts	No		
PA Systems	Push	Plant announcements, paging, emergency notification	No		
Standard Phones	Collaborative	Quick access to individuals	Yes		Not available to all employees

Figure 2: New hybrid enterprise-communication technologies display a traditional digital slide show across multiple platforms.
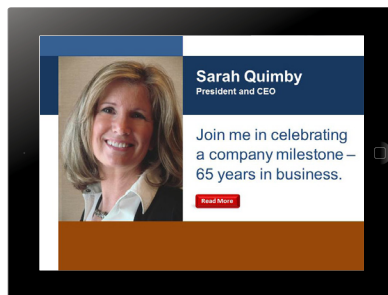

Desktops
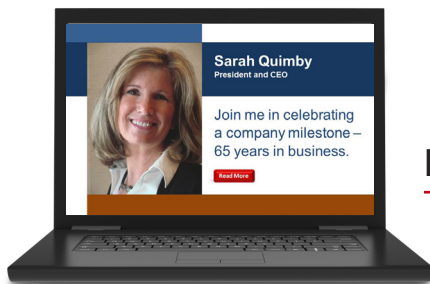
Laptops
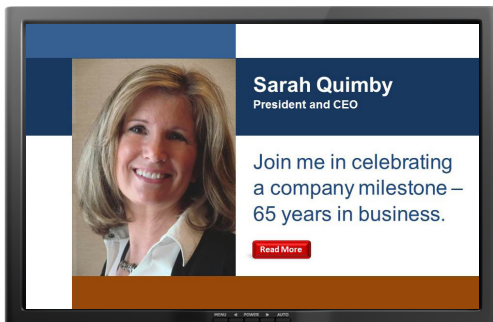
Big Screen Displays

When technology is used to reduce e-mail and help staff find information faster, it improves business efficiency.

Tablets

Smart Phones

ing to actively engage their internal audiences with the news they need in the format they prefer. (See Figure 2 and Appendix for more information.)

A few of the supported features include:

- Network deployment to PCs
- Urgent notifications
- Clickable messages
- On-demand access
- Compliance enforcement
- Expand messaging to mobile devices
- Targeted messaging
- Digital signage
- API to display data sources
- Screen saver option

...communicate executive level and departmental messages across networked PCs, digital signage, and mobile devices from a single source.

Why companies need to evaluate new technologies and their overall communications strategy

All organizations are equipped with a number of communication technologies. What helps them become actively engaged is how they evaluate, measure and plan their communications. Successful organizations keep current on trends and best practices in order to maximize technology purchases that will yield the best results.

Define the types of communication tools – are they push or pull forms of communication?

Knowing what types of communication technology exist and understanding their applications and usage will help determine the right mix of technologies for your organization. Today's technology provides a wealth of options for users to select and implement to meet their requirements.

For example, e-mail is a push communication tool. Messages are created and pushed out to individuals or groups. A pull communications tool drives the user to a particular message, such as going to a specific location on a network or external Website to view a document or attend a presentation.

Just like a carpentry project requires a variety of tools (each with its unique application), a successful communications program employs a variety of tools. They all work together to arrive at a common, unified goal.

Is it a collaborative tool, such as one-to-one or one-to-many?

Each type of communication technology has its strengths and weaknesses. Knowing how you want to reach your employees and how you can engage them will define and shape the direction you go in your technology selection process. Suc-

cessful organizations employ a mix of technologies that provide both one-to-one as well as one-to-many communications.

For example, e-mail can be both one-to-one and one-to-many. Internal social media tools provide a way for individuals and small groups to instantly communicate on a particular topic. Digital signage systems provide a one-to-many form of communication. Hybrid communication systems, such as eScreenz, provide an effective one-to-some and one-to-everyone reach throughout an organization. The system communicates executive-level and departmental messages across multiple platforms of networked PCs, digital signage, and mobile devices from a single source.

## What options are available for centralized communications?

While e-mail is the most widely used tool for centralized (top-down) correspondence, taking advantage of newer digital communications can significantly improve the vibrancy of your messages. These new tools have also been shown to increase business efficiencies and have more immediacy. These benefits are essential to organizations with over 150 employees as well as companies with multiple locations.

What is the impact of the technology on staff time - both for message creation and message display?

Learning to use a new technology and the ability to successfully manage an ongoing communications tool takes time. The more complex a system is, the steeper the learning curve, and the greater the risk of creating user reluctance. Selecting a more intuitive and easy-to-use system not only assures success of the technology platform but also generates more interest and enthusiasm to use it. Today's modern communication systems typically offer a Web-based message creation platform that is visually

Figure 3: Newer communication technologies provide Web-based access for ease of use and instant access to program management. (Image courtesy of eScreenz)
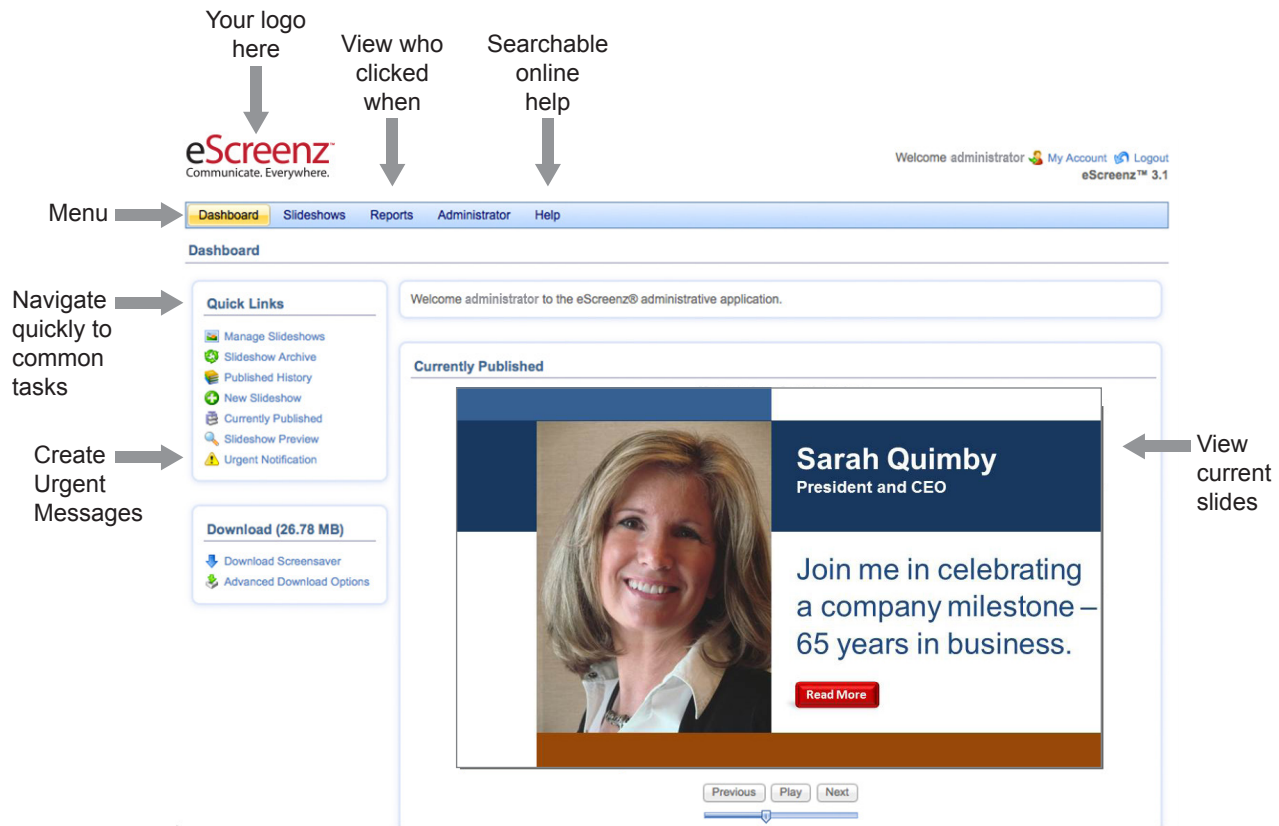
intuitive and easy to manage on a daily basis. (See Figure 3.)

Regarding the aspect of the daily electronic communications that goes on in every company and corporation, information overload is a real issue and the risk of adding any new technology to your mix of communication tools needs to be examined. Two of the more popular forms of internal communication today are e-mail and intranets. Yet for many companies, e-mail is overused and overwhelms people with the volume of daily messages. Intranets by necessity contain so much information that it's easy to spend volumes of time trying to search for a particular document.

When technology is used to reduce the amount of e-mail and help staff find information faster on an intranet, it improves business efficiency.

For example, if a company of 5,000 employees can reduce the time spent reading e-mails (fewer messages) and searching for information on their intranet by 30 seconds per day per employee, this company will net an estimated $260,000 in improved productivity (assumption is a wage and benefits package of $50K per employee). Feature-rich, desktop messaging systems have this type

of capability to advance corporate communications and employee engagement and at the same time improve business and organizational efficiencies.

Who will own/drive the content?

Progressive companies know that employee buy-in and participation will enable a new communications program and platform to succeed. In the case of the desktop messaging technology, by having multiple departments participate in the content creation, your corporate messages become more informative as multiple departments share their information across the enterprise. The result is a well-rounded and relevant corporate news source. Shared content creation also minimizes time spent by each creator and improves audience participation and engagement.

How does the new technology support the business goals?

Effective, centralized corporate communications is a strategic tool that enables CEOs and other management to communicate business direction, on-going progress, and daily updates to employees. Combining the use of new technologies enables relevant information to be delivered to all locations and employees accurately and quickly. Employees are kept up-to-date on critical information instead of relying on the rumor mill or inaccurate digital information (i.e. speculation from internal or external sources).

What other communication features would be beneficial?

Corporations have a wide range of communication needs, and defining these requirements into a communications strategy will enable businesses to better evaluate new solutions. Technologies offering a variety of features that leverage and extend the value of corporate investments are viewed more highly than single use systems. For example, feature-rich desktop messaging systems not only have multi-platform message distribution but also provide additional capabilities such as urgent alert notifications and compliance enforcement messaging - an added value.

How can other departments utilize the new technology?

Every department needs to communicate information. Getting other departments involved in the selection process assures a more successful program. It also opens up the door to potential cost-sharing per department.

It is not uncommon for one department in an organization to be evaluating new communication technologies without knowing that other departments are doing the same. This creates duplication of effort, research, and ultimately wastes valuable time and resources for the organization.

More progressive organizations seek to foster cross-departmental engagement so that time efficiencies are gained, additional requirements and uses can be determined, and ultimately, better investments occur.

Who will be viewing the messages?

As stated earlier, knowing your audience is key. Part of your strategic communications plan needs to include defining your audience and knowing how to best reach them with available technologies as well as keep within your current policies and practices. Messaging systems need to be designed to meet these requirements.

Figure 4: Understanding and pre-planning network configuration of new technology ensures successful integration into existing infrastructure. (Image courtesy of eScreenz.)
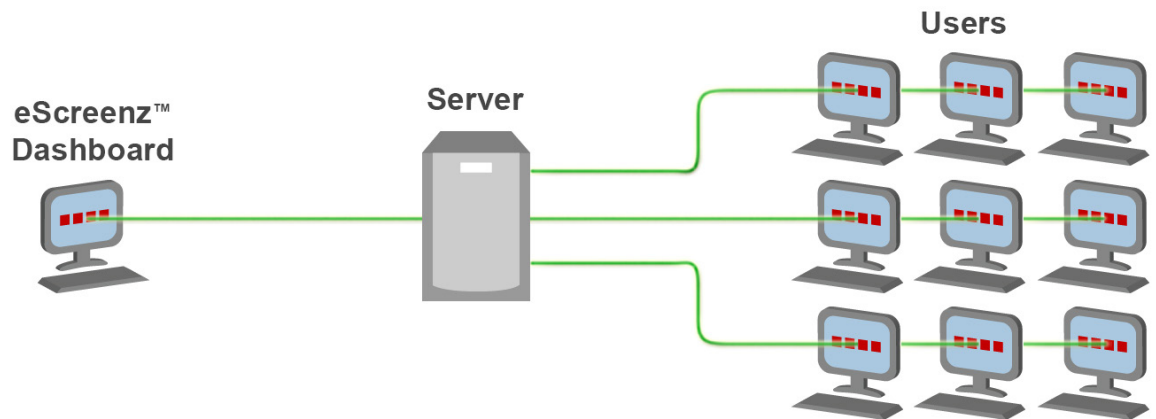
Which departments and executives need to be involved in the decision-making process?

As an experienced IT services firm, we recommend getting your IT management involved early on in the selection process. They can help your company make a more knowledgeable selection of technology, as well as understand the technical requirements needed to deploy and support a new system.

Additionally, other departments can often provide critical support and influence in the selection and success of a new communications technology. All departments have news and information they need to share within a corporation. Executive leaders in other departments such as HR, Safety, Compliance, Training, Sales, and Marketing need successful communications and can benefit from newer platforms.

Integration and Deployment

Before a new technology can be deployed, other criteria in the selection process include understanding how a new system needs to be configured, installed, integrated to your existing infrastructure, and then deployed to your internal and external communities. Mapping out the network configuration with the supplier of your technology along with the active involvement of your IT department will ensure a smooth technical deployment of your new technology. (See Figure 4)

Figure 5: Representative sample questions that can be created to measure program success.

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Our department is routinely informed of company news as it occurs	O	O	O	O	O
Current internal communication systems adequately meet our needs	O	O	O	O	O
Overall, there is good communications between staff and management	O	O	O	O	O

Defining how you use the new technology will also impact next steps and assignments. If your new communications technology is one that is going to be used on a daily basis, assigning roles and responsibilities to departmental content managers will help keep your network updated with fresh and relevant content for your audience.

Successfully launching your new system is important. Having a new technology show up on employee PCs without informing them ahead of time can impede the success of your program. People need to know what is happening and why. For example, in the case of launching a new desktop messaging system, one approach that companies can use is to have a "Name the Network Contest," to encourage employees to name and brand the new system. This creates corporate involvement, buy-in of the new technology, and helps with faster adoption and acceptance of the technology. It also builds excitement for the new platform.

Implement Best Practices

Once a particular technology has been implemented, use of best practices for that solution will yield maximum results, greater impact and success. Beyond the foundational training provided by most vendors, asking your vendor to supply an overview of best practices along with case studies will optimize your system's usage. Online communities, various industry associations, and peers from other companies can be additional resources for new ideas in communication concepts and messaging. See Appendix for best practices for desktop messaging samples and uses.

On a typical day there are numerous types of messages that can be communicated electronically. Incorporating a desktop and mobile communications technology will provide a more visual, current, and easier way to communicate many of these topics relevant to your company - keeping your employees more engaged and informed.

Measure Response or Impact

Periodically review communication programs and establish ways to measure or gauge the impact of a particular platform. One way to measure your communication program's success and/or areas to improve is to conduct an employee survey. For corporate communicators, creating surveys tailored to your audience can provide the feedback you need to measure the impact and messaging content of your systems. Online programs are available to develop a short, but informative survey. (See Figure 5.)

In addition to surveys, newer desktop communication technologies like eScreenz enable corporations to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of their electronic messages with advanced metrics reporting. These flexible reports provide extensive detail such as measuring both the number of message views across the enterprise as well as clicks on embedded hyperlinks. (See Figure 6.) This provides management with a sharper understanding of which types of messages have greater reach and impact from their corporate constituents.

Other types of communications feedback forums and review processes can include departmental meetings, suggestion forms, and Webcasts.

Adjust and Evolve

As with any initiative, continuous improvement, evaluation, and adjusting will ensure your communication program's success. As new communication concepts are acquired, incorporating them into your communications program will help your program remain vibrant, relevant, and effective.
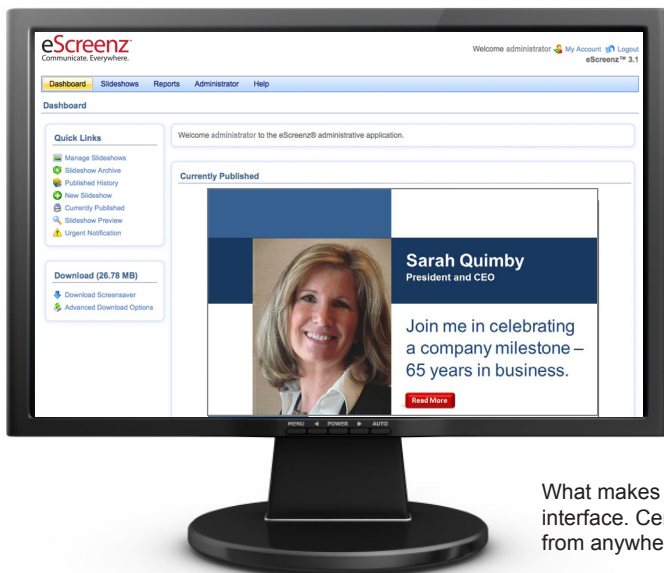
APPENDIX

Figure 6: Detail of message views and clicks report from eScreenz.

Section 1: eScreenz Technology Overview

Executive Summary

eScreenz is a communications tool that provides compelling business value to businesses seeking to strengthen internal and HR communications, employee engagement, safety messaging, compliance reporting, and emergency notification procedures.

This Web-based solution addresses many of the problems caused by the sheer volume of daily e-mail communications, difficulty in navigating and finding information buried deep within an intranet, as well as the lack of a centralized messaging platform that effectively engages employees.

eScreenz provides a powerful alternative to today's traditional corporate communications with a high-impact affordable solution to reach and engage staff at all locations.

eScreenz uses existing desktops, laptops and large format displays to distribute high-impact visual messages. In addition, the patent-pending clickable message allows users one-click access to documents or more information on intranets or Websites. eScreenz enables corporations to keep pace with today's need for faster communications.

Business Value and ROI

- Reduction of e-mail
- Improved messaging efficiencies – reach employees on existing infrastructure of PCs, laptops, tablets and mobile devices
- Maximize and leverage usage of corporate intranet
- Cross-departmental applications engage all employees
- Ease-of-use ensures limited impact on staff for content creation and distribution
- API enables display of data sources such as manufacturing updates or call-center statistics
- Advanced metrics reports enable measuring message effectiveness

What makes eScreenz so easy to use is its Web-based interface. Centrally manage all messages by logging in from anywhere with an Internet connection.

Section 2: Best Practices –
How Corporations Can Use eScreenz to Improve Communications

Many types of messages can be communicated using an integrated desktop and mobile communications system.

Extreme blizzard conditions are imminent.

Severe Weather
Click now for further instructions.

Primary Features and Benefits

- Screen Saver option for desktops/laptops
- Clickable messages take users to specific information
- Urgent Messaging displays critical information almost immediately
- Compliance with corporate policy reports
- Central Management quickly reaches everyone, even if e-mail goes down
- On-demand Quick View allows users to browse information anytime
- Digital Signage expands messages to large screen monitors
- Mobile capabilities

Do You Know How to Use It?

Remember P.A.S.S.

1. **Pull** the pin
2. **Aim** at the base of the fire
3. **Squeeze** the handle slowly to discharge fire extinguishing agent
4. **Sweep** from side to side

Training

Upcoming classes and registration

Training reminders and tips

Procedural updates

Links to training videos

Wear Jeans. Save Babies.

march of dimes
Blue Jeans for Babies Day Friday, December 10th

See Leanne Harkin to donate $5 to the March of Dimes, and you can wear blue jeans on December 10th to show your support!

Executive Communications

State of the business

New policies

Special recognition

Upcoming meetings

Investor relations updates

New acquisitions

Crisis communications response

Press releases

Manufacturing and production updates

Human Resources

Benefits communications

Upcoming meetings and special events

Employee recognition and awards

Welcome new employees
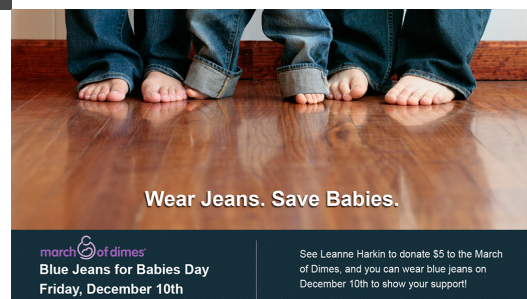
Shift cancellations

Proper social media etiquette

IT

Planned outages and network upgrades

Unplanned outage responses (network restoration efforts and time to resolution)

Software training tips

Policy and procedural reminders

IT security and e-mail safety messages

ISO updates

Marketing

New product launches

Product upgrades

Trade show and event updates

New advertising campaigns

Results from latest initiatives

Corporate Safety / Facility Management

Security policy reminders

Evacuations

Emergency preparedness

Intruder alerts

Lockdowns

Manufacturing data (API)

wellness month at ENTRE

Get Outdoors!
walking = 300 calories an hour
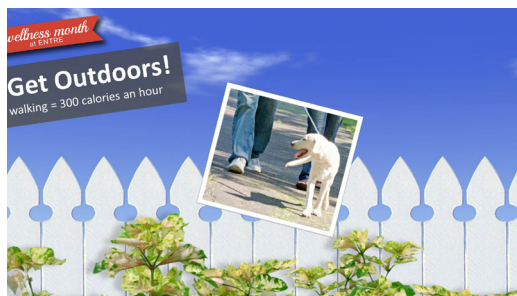
Wellness

Healthy living tips

Nutritional information

First aid reminders

Counseling and guidance programs

Congratulations
A job well done!

Sean Smith
Employee of the Month