



# Adapt or stagnate: The future of internal communication

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The communications game is changing faster than many of us realise and businesses either adapt and roll the way the world wants them to roll, or stagnate, and finally regress, into irrelevance.



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This was icandi CQ's core message at a self-hosted "sharing session" held at the Radisson Blu, Sandton, on Friday 22 November 2013. Edgar Nelson, the company's MD, and Ilona Fookes, its head of strategy, have both attended a raft of global conferences in London and the US in 2013, including Yam Jam, Alitmeter workshop, IABC, Melcrum, and Social Media Strategies Summit.

"We tend to think of social networks as the sole province of private users on personal social networks like Facebook and Twitter," said Nelson, "but successful businesses are leveraging social to facilitate massive in-roads into better internal communication."

Many businesses think of social as simply hiring a community manager to engage their clients online. But genuinely social companies are integrating and ingraining social into the very fabric of all their communications, starting with effective internal messaging and positioning. "Staff are a brand's brightest brand champions," notes Fookes. "They need to feel a part of the brand they represent, part of its story."

Enterprise social networks offer a more accurate acid test of employee engagement than a more typical end-of-year staff survey. In fact, a business can carve out its own best practices by simply analysing hard data on how its employees respond to company communications. "Imagine being able to monitor internal morale and sentiment, identify natural leaders and move them into management, and segment your communications strategy according to location and division," said Nelson. "It's possible. And it works."

In the end, "shift happens one way or another," said Fookes. "Moving forward is about finding creative and intelligent ways of keeping step."

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