WORK THAT WORKS®

IOIC Awards 2026
Class Winner.
Best Medium Agency

INSTITUTE OF INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

surgery

Internal Communications Credentials

surgery

The Surgery is an Internal Comms + Creative Agency

Two disciplines that don’t just sit side by side, they elevate one another. Our design thinking mindset shapes how we uncover and translate insight, while our internal comms expertise ensures every creative choice has purpose, clarity and impact.

It all comes together in our mission to create work that works - strategic, insight led, creatively crafted solutions that move people and organisations forward.

It’s work that sharpens understanding, exceeds objectives and shifts behaviours.

Work that helps your people and your organisation move forward with confidence.

WORK THAT WORKS®

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WORK THAT WORKS®

We focus on solutions

By interrogating the brief, defining the real challenge and crafting creative and strategic responses that deliver tangible, measurable impact.

We make the complex simple

By cutting through noise, bringing clarity to clutter and turning complexity into communication and design that's actionable, aligned and impossible to ignore, we make sure your messages have impact.

We work with your team

By becoming an extension of your business. We're collaborative partners who care as deeply as you do - pushing thinking, elevating ideas and helping you reach the outcomes that matter.

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Our areas of expertise



Internal Comms & Change

We help you communicate with clarity and confidence - from insight to narrative to activation. We shape strategies and transformation programmes that inform, energise and unite.



EVP & Employer Brands

We build EVPs rooted in truth and shaped by employee insight. The result? Employer brands with purpose - attracting talent and building pride from the inside out.



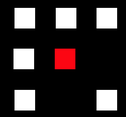
Design & Brands

We create external and internal brands, campaigns and visual identities that elevate messages and perform across channels - digital, print, exhibition and events. Design thinking with purpose, crafted for impact.



Animation & Film

We turn stories into standout moments through sharp scripting, bold visual direction and beautifully executed production. Our films and animations simplify, inspire and shift perception.



Digital Solutions

We design digital solutions that enhance campaigns, engage employees and solve challenges traditional media can’t. Built for clarity, speed and usability - online platforms that help people connect, understand and act.

Meet the some of the team



Carly Murray

Internal Communications Director

Our Internal Comms Director, Carly spent many years delivering corporate internal communications excellence across telecoms, utilities and aviation. Her experience with fast-moving and complex businesses has helped her decipher our clients' challenges and focus on enhancing the employee experience.



Simon Andrew

Behaviour Change & Employer Brand Consultant

For years, our Employer Brand and Behavioural Comms expert, Simon, worked in the reward and benefits industry, specialising in comms which shape and deliver benefit-related projects across well-known brands. As well as winning awards for his campaigns, our Simon is often invited to judge at the prestigious UK Employee Experience Awards.



James Blake

Senior Copywriter

James is an award-winning writer and editor with 25 years' experience in copywriting, journalism, corporate and charity comms, publishing, editing, proofreading, and social media. His skills lie in creating design-ready and mould-breaking copy and concepts and telling stories through corporate narratives.



Nick Cordell

Creative Director

Founder and Creative Director Nick has a proven track record in developing award-winning creative for clients' design, digital and internal communications businesses, collaborating with some of the world's most recognisable brands.



Lucy Tippett

IC Account Executive

Lucy is passionate about the human side of internal comms. With a decade of experience across charities, education, luxury hospitality and rural businesses, she loves uncovering the human stories that drive winning campaigns. She also really enjoys meeting people and building brilliant relationships with clients and colleagues.

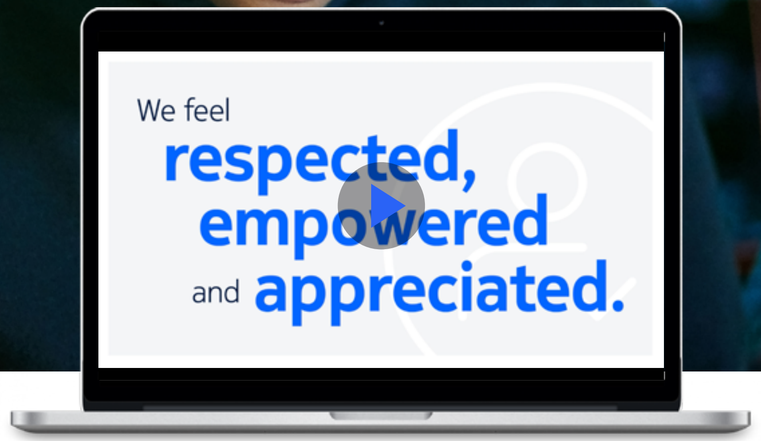
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Our work

NOKIA

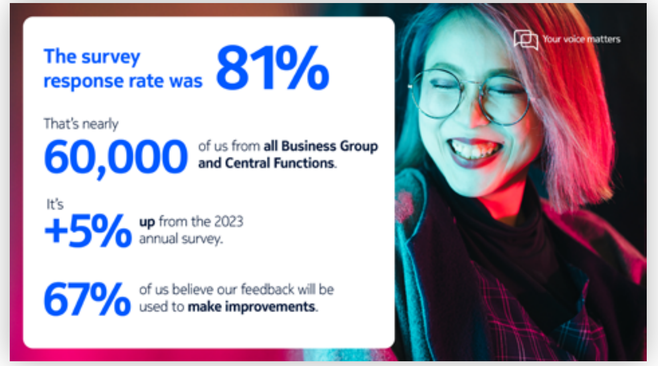
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Your voice matters









Building trust in a new approach to listening and taking action

Insight

Nokia's people didn't feel consistently heard. Feedback was scattered across more than eleven listening tools, annual surveys felt outdated, and employees weren't confident their input led to meaningful change. Leaders lacked real-time insight, and survey fatigue meant engagement was declining. With a diverse global workforce and an ambition to strengthen its Open, Fearless and Empowered culture, Nokia needed a unified, trusted approach that made listening continuous, human and connected to action.

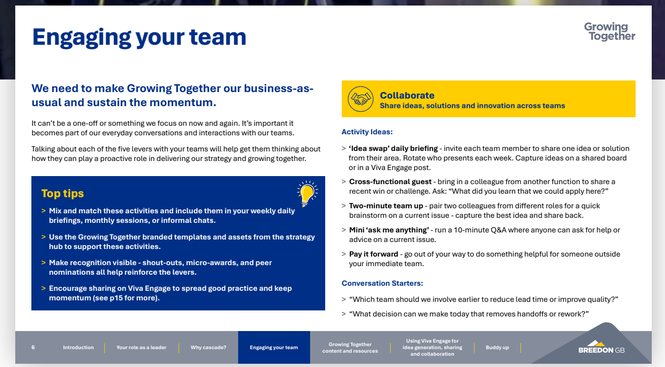
Idea

We created Your Voice Matters — a global, long-term employee listening campaign designed to build trust in Nokia's new continuous listening approach. Grounded in a clear narrative, representative photography and a flexible creative system, the campaign gave employees clarity on how listening works and why it matters. A comprehensive playbook empowered local comms teams, while tailored messaging for leaders and managers helped reinforce accountability, close feedback loops and bring listening to life across every team.

Impact

The campaign helped reset expectations around listening at Nokia and built confidence in the new approach. 81% of employees responded to the survey, demonstrating strong engagement. 67% of employees believed feedback from the survey would be used to make improvements, showing increased trust in action. The global comms network valued the campaign playbook, which gave them everything needed to deliver a consistent yet tailored experience, ensuring the message resonated across regions, functions and business groups.





Creating connection through a strategic comms campaign

Insight

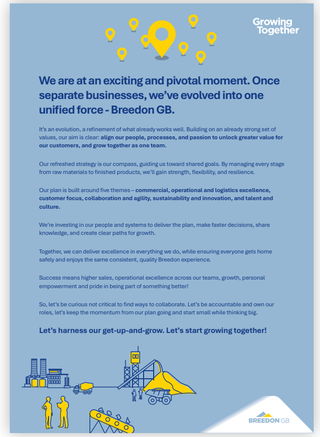
As Breedon brought three parts of its business together, their people faced uncertainty about the future direction. Research and conversations showed they wanted clearer communication, more dialogue and more visible leadership. Comms channels, limited tools, and challenges in collaboration were challenges. We needed to help them translate the strategy into everyday conversations through a simple strategic narrative, delivered by confident leaders who could consistently convey it.

Idea

We created a strategic story that felt authentically Breedon - clear, human and repeatable. It served as the creative foundation for the campaign. A "Make it real" workshop equipped ExComm to communicate confidently, while the GB Leaders Conference brought the narrative to life through interactive sessions focused on collaboration and practical application. Toolkits, cascade packs and channels enabled leaders to embed the story.

Impact

Post conference surveys showed great improvements. Strategic clarity rose from 14% to 66% strongly agreeing; role alignment from 19% to 59%; and confidence to cascade from 22% to 54%. Cross-business connection increased from 11% to 39%, with no negative responses. The conference was highly rated and received useful feedback for future events. Leader visibility increased, working groups stayed active, and regular Strategy Hub updates, newsletters and pulses are sustaining momentum.



DIAGEO



Employee-generated recognition campaign

Insight

Diageo launched their #JustSayThanks a year before which proved to be a great success, but they wanted to continue the momentum and refresh the approach to enhance the employee-generated feel with a new activation.

View video ▶

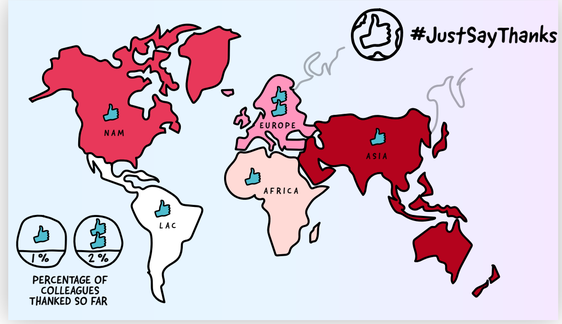
Idea

We created the look and feel, and came up with the idea for the employees to share a picture of themselves doing a positive hand signal, e.g. a heart, thumbs up or clapping, and tag an employee that they want to thank. We wanted to keep track of engagement so created an animated map which showed where the thanks popped up around the world. To promote. it, we created a video, Viva Engage posts, Teams backgrounds and more.

Impact

The client loved all that we produced, and said "The #JustSayThanks campaign has been well received and is getting some good traction. We've got 120 comments in a week which is good going during a busy time."

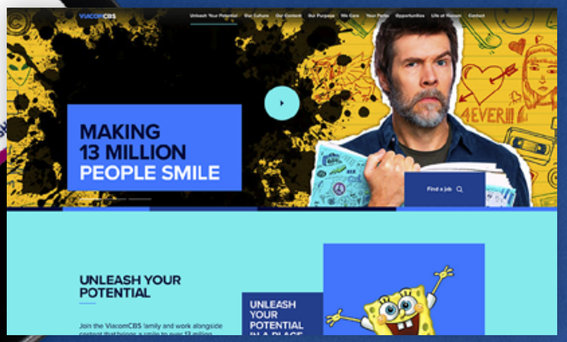




Paramount

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Unleashing Paramount's potential with a new EVP and employer brand

Insight

Paramount needed our help to create a new EVP and employer brand so they could recruit and retain the best possible talent. Our employer brand expert got to work researching who Paramount thought they were, from a leadership and employee point of view. Through a series of workshops, interviews, focus groups and steering group sessions, we uncovered what makes them appealing and why people stay.

Idea

It was all about making Paramount a place where recruits could truly unleash their potential. We created a new Paramount EVP story, bringing it to life with new branding and online creative assets. We identified the proof points and made it simple for people to talk about why they felt proud to be at Paramount.

Impact

100% of employees felt the new employer brand was a strong showcase for Paramount. **84%** said they loved the look and feel. **86%** have a better understanding of what the business offers them. **96%** of HR are clear on the brand and when and how to use it. It was shortlisted for an Employer Branding award.



easyJet

A LATTE A DAY = CONVERTIBLE WHEN GREY

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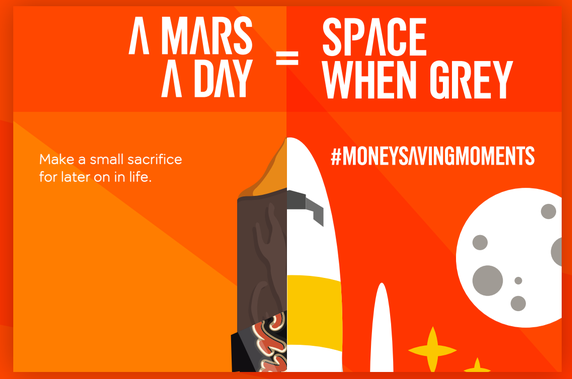
Make a small sacrifice
for later on in life.

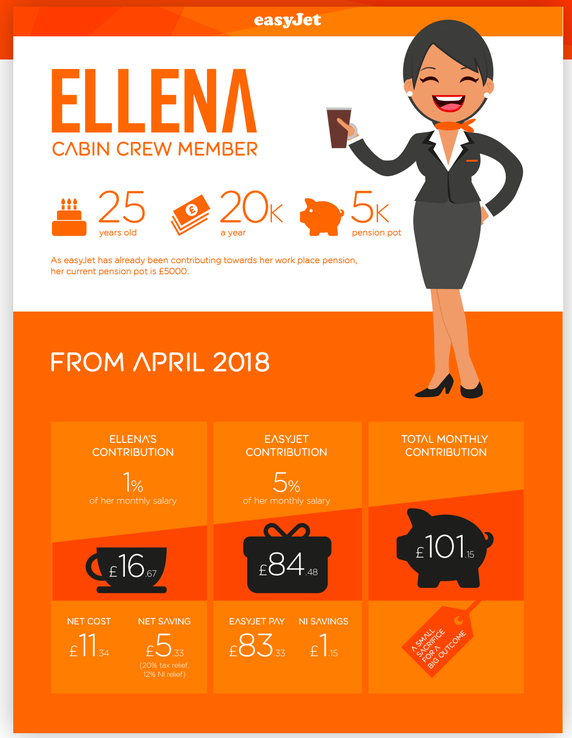
£11 less a month in your bank





#MONEYSAVINGMOMENTS





Engaging the hard-to-reach crew at easyJet with a financial wellbeing campaign

Insight

easyJet's cabin crew are a younger, happy-go-lucky bunch. They don't have time to think about their pension. That was a worry for easyJet and they needed help to find a comms campaign solution.

Idea

Pensions can be a bit boring, right? So, we captured our audience's imagination with a fun, engaging campaign making them easy to understand and encouraging people to start thinking about their financial future.

Impact

A huge rise in pension contributions – in fact, **27%** of employees chose to add more to their pension pot every month.

surgery

“

We love working with the Surgery because they’re bright, creative, strategic, and they’re so collaborative in their approach. Even when something isn’t quite right, we work really closely together to get the best outcome for the business.

Laura Campbell Head of Internal Communications

easyJet

NATS

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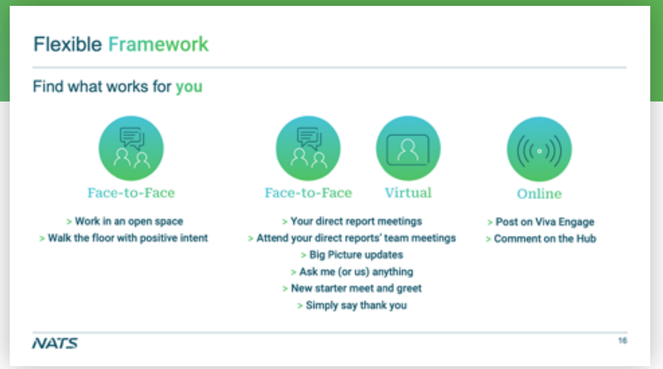
Leadership Communication
It Starts With **You**

> “What would make this a better place to work is **leadership listening** to what the people at the coal face have to say. The message so often gets diluted the higher up the management chain it gets.”

When we **don’t** get it right

> “Department meetings forge the **team together**. I think they’re great, we all learn something and connect the dots and see where we need to collaborate.”

When we **do** get it right





Insight

When NATS measured engagement around leadership communication, they continuously returned okay, middle-of-the-road results. The IC team wanted leadership communication to have a better impact as part of their strategy to become a Top 25 Company to Work for. They needed a programme supporting leaders to deliver more engaging and impactful communications while enabling them to share best practice among themselves.

Idea

Data from employee focus groups we ran helped us understand what great leadership communication looked and felt like to NATS’ people. It gave us five principles for leaders to focus on. We created a Flexible Framework—a pick ‘n’ mix of things leaders can do to create more impact and be more visible. We then created a template and workshop to help them capture best practices and actions to achieve the five principles consistently.

Impact

These two-hour workshops encouraged leaders to buddy up to understand why leadership communications are essential. We also made the workshop deliverable by the NATS’ IC Team after some train-the-trainer sessions. Leaders’ knowledge around how they can create more impact with their comms increased by 34%, knowing how to maintain a consistent focus on it by 30% and feeling like, as leaders, they support each other to communicate better increased by 64%.

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Don’t wing it.

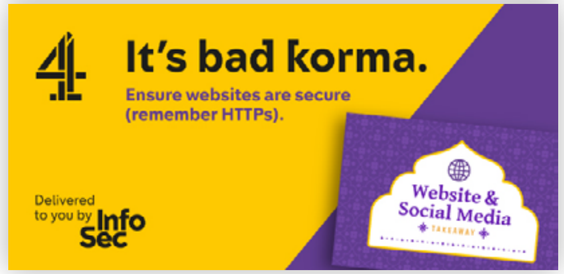
Don’t use the same password twice.











Getting Channel 4 employees to use their noodle and get excited about cyber security

Insight

Channel 4 needed to make online security fun and engaging. They wanted to bring some life to a serious, dry message by grabbing attention and making it easy for their audience to get the information they needed. It had to be simple and stand out from a host of other internal comms messaging by being creative, innovative and visually powerful.

Idea

We got really creative with this one to ‘deliver’ a brilliant campaign! By turning the key Channel 4 safety actions into a takeaway menu of options, we produced a delicious, fun-copy rich and visually stunning campaign which really stood out. It’s bad ‘korma’ not to look after your digital safety after all!

Impact

The campaign went down like a lovely Friday night chicken tikka. It was unique and, with big, bold and bright visuals became an instant Channel 4 comms classic. It got people intrigued and talking, driving internal discussion and action uptake. It’s still making a progressive change to daily working practices thanks to its colourful and highly visual artwork.

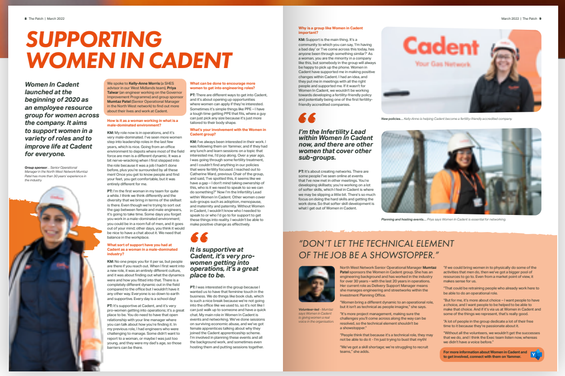
Cadent

surgery



THE Patch







Read all about it - new print channel for Cadent's Field Force

Insight

Cadent were struggling to engage with their Field Force teams, who traditionally don't 'do' digital internal comms. The existing flagship printed publication, The Patch, had died on the vine during COVID. They needed a new publication which could speak directly to their field teams.

Idea

The existing publication didn't represent the modern, forward-thinking and inclusive organisation Cadent now is. The mag had to balance getting important business-led information across in an easy-to-access and highly visual way. We created a new style and format in print and as a digital PDF. With fewer but more practical stories it now reflects the lives and work of the Cadent community.

Impact

Working closely with Cadent's internal comms partners, the new incarnation of the publication has given them a way to reach people in the field. Competition entries and feedback suggest the magazine is well read and with more digital enhancements planned, it's set to be a great vehicle for creating more interaction with the field about what's happening in Cadent.

surgery

“

You’re all super helpful, super smiley and super-efficient, nothing ever seems too much to ask and you clearly have a wealth of experience and knowledge in what you do. I can tell you’re a cool bunch and you give me confidence in delivering what I need to for my colleagues!

Claire Shaw Internal Communications

Cadent

HBK HOTTINGER BRÜEL & KJÆR

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SAFETY FIRST









STOP for safety!

Insight

HBK wanted to improve its safety culture and raise awareness. It had recently held a global ‘Stop for Safety’ day to create a buzz around the topic. The team wanted to develop a calendar of topics to cycle through and have a mix of shop floor, production, office, and remote worker themes.

Idea

We created a fresh look and feel for all the safety messages and communications output and developed a suite of assets supporting the campaign, including news bulletins and a new set of ‘golden rules’, to be used globally by all HBK group brands.

Impact

The project’s steering committee and colleagues' feedback was positive, and the buzz around the new look and feel went global, with the whole Spectris group adopting the change in their brand colours. In total, we created five different colourways that all businesses in the group can adapt and use.

Nestlé

surgery

IGNITE BIG HACK

EMPLOYEE ee ENGAGEMENT AWARDS — TOP ENGAGED WORKPLACES — UK & EUROPE — 2019 HIGHLY COMMENDED





Transforming how Nestlé's leaders work and think with an immersive experience

Insight

Nestlé were facing a huge challenge – they wanted to be more agile, and instill a more collaborative and innovative mindset in their teams so they could outpace smaller start-up competitors.

Idea

Thanks to our insight gathering elves, we identified the three main blockers to the transformation they needed, allowing us to create immersive events and a stand-out visual campaign.

Impact

A sharp increase in campaign-based workplace activity and engagement with major improvements in every leadership programme target measure.

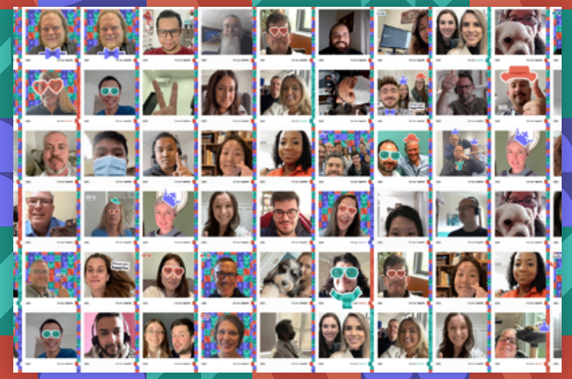


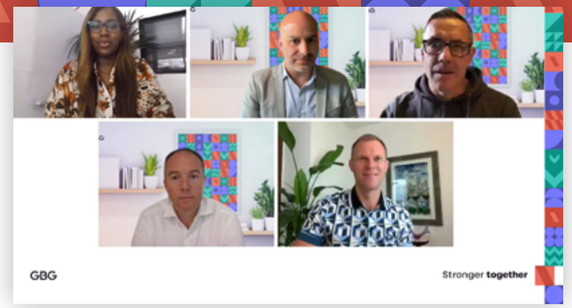
GBG

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IoIC Awards 2023
Award of Excellence

Stronger **together**







A dynamic TV-show style virtual event to inspire GBG's people to feel stronger together

Insight

GBG wanted to bring their employees together globally to celebrate the year, thank everyone for their part in their success and to excite them about their future plans.

Idea

A live virtual TV-show experience with no speaker talking for more than nine minutes to keep it dynamic and interesting. We maxed out on the interactivity and created a bespoke virtual photobooth to capture the moment when everyone was 'stronger together'.

Impact

92% agreed that they enjoyed the event,
83% felt inspired to smash the year ahead,
91% felt proud about what GBG do,
87% felt clear on where they're heading and
95% believed they were stronger together.

View video ▶



CULTIVATING COFFEE AS AN ART, TO GROW THE BEST IN EACH OF US

Creating art to create a stronger connection to business purpose

Insight

Nespresso asked us to help their people focus in on their brand purpose. A leadership session was the ideal time to start embedding the message, so we created and facilitated a fun session to zero in on their purpose, explore what it means to them and engage them in it, so they could cascade it to their teams.

Idea

We kicked things off by demonstrating the importance of purpose and how businesses that have one and use it are more successful. Then we brought the Nespresso purpose to life through an art activity inviting participants to depict the consumer journey and their own ‘moments of growth’ in art. We followed up by delivering a leaders’ toolkit.

Impact

We received fantastic feedback from the fun session “… a huge thank you for your work on the leadership day. We have had a wealth of positive feedback; one person said it was the best leadership day they have had. Thank you so much for bringing our purpose to life in such a creative way.”





Insight to shape your IC strategy

What sort of comms approach do your people prefer? What gaps have you got in your comms? What do your people like, what don't they like? That sort of insight is a great foundation to building successful IC strategies.

That's why we'll often recommend an IC audit. We start with an all-employee survey giving everyone in your business the chance to have their say about how well your company communicates.

We'll also interview your senior leadership team, your employee groups and other stakeholders to gain their perspective on communication within your business.

We'll review and analyse all this insight and share it back with a set of recommendations to help shape your future IC strategy.









BARN TO BOARDROOM



Bringing our friends, colleagues and clients together to talk all things IC. Our Barn to Boardroom (B2B) networking event was established way back in 2015 and is a chance for IC and engagement professionals to come together and share their challenges, experiences, ideas and frustrations.

We're very lucky to work in a beautiful bit of the West Sussex countryside. Our location (in an old converted barn) gives everyone the time and space, and the freedom they need to think creatively.

At B2B we unearth new thought-provoking and down-to-earth real life stories from our speakers (the sort you won't typically find on the speaker-circuit). We get five-star rave reviews every year, so don't be shy, just ask for an invite.

"

It's so easy to neglect your own personal development, but events like this, with like-minded IC professionals are a great opportunity to learn, grow and focus on the things that really matter.

Claire Widd Head of EMEA Internal Communications

rackspace technology

Kick-Arse Employer Brands, the podcast

Our employer branding and EVP passion doesn't stop with our clients. We like to speak to in-house experts about their journeys and experiences which we share with our peers via our podcast.

We cover a range of topics, including:

- Using a global framework
- Authenticity vs aspiration
- Becoming an internal journalist
- Connecting EX and the EB

Find us on Spotify, Apple Podcasts or check out all episodes:

Listen here →



About us

The Surgery was founded in 2013 by Paul Cohen and Nick Cordell, built on a heritage of graphic design, brand thinking and digital craft. From brand development, print and sponsorship activations to retail environments and digital experiences, our roots have always been in creating work with clarity, intelligence and unmistakable creative polish.

As our relationships with clients deepened, one discipline consistently drew us in: internal communications. With the insight and encouragement of client and internal comms specialist Sarah Meurer, who later joined our leadership team, we made a deliberate decision to specialise. Carly Murray soon followed, strengthening our strategic capability and helping us shape a rare blend: design thinking and internal communications working seamlessly together.

Today, Sarah has returned client side, but her influence runs deep. As part of her legacy, we continue to run Barn to Boardroom – the internal comms event she and Carly launched over a decade ago. Now in its eleventh year, it remains one of the sector's most valued forums for insight, challenge and connection.

This integration of disciplines has become our hallmark. Insight sharpened by creativity. Creativity grounded in human understanding. A combined practice designed to create communication which resonates and transforms.

We've grown intentionally, not exponentially. A 20 strong team, proudly independent and purposefully boutique. Strategists. Designers. Brand thinkers. Internal Comms specialists. All working side by side to deliver clarity, confidence and meaningful change for some of the world's most respected organisations.

Our studio sits in a converted barn on a working West Sussex farm, a place with room to think, challenge, create and breathe. It shapes how we work: focused, thoughtful and always curious. A setting that invites fresh thinking and fosters great ideas.

We're proud of our blue chip client list. Proud of the awards we've earned. But most of all, proud of the impact we create – work that helps people understand, connect and move forward with confidence.

This is The Surgery.
Independent.
Insight driven.
Creatively led.
WORK THAT WORKS®

surgery

A few of our clients

































































Our awards



Best
Medium Agency
2026



Best Evaluation Process
of Internal Communications
Domino UK Ltd.
and The Surgery
2025



The Surgery IC Director Carly Murray
Internal Communicator
of the Year Finalist
2024



Best
Medium Agency
2023



Award of Excellence
GBG All Employee
Virtual Kick Off
2023



Best New Event
CANSO
Airspace World
2023



IC Consultancy
of the Year
2022



Best Interactive Content
Cadent Gas'
Challenge Campaign
2021



Best Use of Storytelling
Cadent Gas'
Challenge Campaign
2021



Nestlé's Ignite
Leadership Programme
2019



Consultancy
of the Year
2019



easyJet
Employee Pension Campaign
2019



HS1
'What Good Looks Like' App
2019



CAA Dronesafe Brand,
Website & Drone Code
2018



CAA
The Skyway Code
2018



E.ON
Heartbeat CRM Video
2018



Southern Co-op
Annual Report
2018



easyJet
Employee Pension Campaign
2018



National Grid Bring Energy
To Life App & Web Platform
2018



NATS Your Space Employee
Engagement Programme
2017

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