



## How Widener University Scales Internal Communications across Multiple Departments

### Challenge

*"We wanted a tool to create a branded newsletter that would live in the body of an email. I was hoping that it would entice people to read Widener's impactful stories more frequently and connect with the news that our department was creating in a more interactive way."*

In 2018, Widener went through a rebranding initiative that included updates to the website and the university's visual brand identity. Before the rebrand, the communications team managed the newsletter What's Up at Widener, which lived on the widener.edu website. They emailed out a link so recipients could read the issue on the website.

The team wanted to re-envision the university's internal communications with a branded newsletter that would appear in the body of an email. Jessica hoped that it would entice people to read the stories more frequently and connect with the news that they were creating in a more interactive way.

As a result, the Communications team started researching different tools. Their main criteria when searching for an internal communications email software was that they:

- Needed a service where they didn't have to manage or upload their lists to an external system. They already have internal lists that the HR and IT departments manage.
- Wanted a service that was integrated into Outlook and gave them the ability to send right from their Outlook inbox.
- Wanted a solution that was scalable and that multiple departments across the University could use.

*"We wanted a service like what you have, an add on to Outlook. We were looking to use the address lists we already have in Outlook, to send right from there."*

### Solution

*"That's when we started looking for different tools. One of my co-workers recommended ContactMonkey. We ended up really liking the tool."*



*We see ContactMonkey as a tool that a lot of departments on campus can use to ensure the newsletters they send out are branded.*



**Jessica Reyes**  
Assistant Director of  
Communications

#### ABOUT WIDENER UNIVERSITY



INDUSTRY  
Higher Education



EMPLOYEES  
1,000 - 5,000



EXISTING TOOLS  
Website & Mailchimp

Widener University is a private, metropolitan university that connects curricula to social issues through civic engagement. Widener is comprised of seven schools and colleges that offer liberal arts and sciences, professional and pre-professional curricula leading to Associate's, Baccalaureate, Master's and Doctoral degrees. The university's campuses in Chester and Harrisburg, Pa., and Wilmington, Del., serve some 6,600 students.

Jessica Reyes is an Assistant Director of Communications. Before coming to Widener, she worked as a newspaper reporter covering the court system. At the university, she oversees the internal newsletter, Widener Insider. She also provides media relations and communications support to some of the colleges and schools within Widener.



ContactMonkey is the only solution that enables you to measure individual employee email engagement and create beautiful responsive HTML employee newsletters from Outlook and Gmail.

662 King Street West, Unit 205   
support@contactmonkey.com   
[contactmonkey.com](https://contactmonkey.com)



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### Solution

The ability to have a tool that integrated into Outlook was a key requirement for the team since they're communicating with multiple audiences on a daily and weekly basis. Jessica sends the Widener Insider on a weekly basis. Fellow Assistant Director of Communications Emily Barrett also sends the Widener Daily News Briefing to faculty and staff on a daily basis.

***"We send to a couple of different lists. We have three campuses, so we send to all students, faculty and staff. We also send to the Board of Trustees."***

With ContactMonkey's internal communications software the communications team at Widener University has benefited in the following ways:

- The team doesn't have to worry about list management. They can use their existing dynamic Outlook distribution lists that IT and HR have already created.
- When the newsletter previously lived on the website, it was only publishing bi-weekly. Now the team is sending weekly newsletters.
- Their previous newsletter didn't offer flexibility (e.g. user-friendly photo galleries, videos), but ContactMonkey allows creativity with brand and internal communications design.
- The ability to track engagement with their newsletters has enabled the team to strategize what they want to share more frequently in the newsletter, or vice versa, based on what people are clicking.
- They can now scale the solution across multiple departments and schools, while ensuring different newsletters stay in brand.

***"We have opened this tool to other departments at the university that might want to publish newsletters. Some may have been doing this already through Mailchimp, or another service, but now they want to switch over to using ContactMonkey."***

Since implementing ContactMonkey, the team at Widener has scaled the solution to be used by the Human Resources department and the Library. The Communications team is creating a branded newsletter for them and the Customer Success team at ContactMonkey is training the different users.

***"I work with them on the final steps before they send out their first newsletter, and then we really give them control."***



***We see ContactMonkey as a tool that a lot of departments on campus can use to ensure the newsletters they send out are branded.***



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Learn more at [contactmonkey.com](https://contactmonkey.com)  
Contact sales [sales@contactmonkey.com](mailto:sales@contactmonkey.com)



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### Key Takeaways

*"We see ContactMonkey as a tool that a lot of departments on campus can use to ensure the newsletters they send out are branded and reflect the image we want to present for the University."*

- Ease of use with the ContactMonkey tool has increased newsletter distribution frequency by 2x.
- The need to send branded internal newsletters within Outlook has been fulfilled.
- Stronger alignment across departments, and ability to stay consistent with the look and feel of internal newsletter.

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