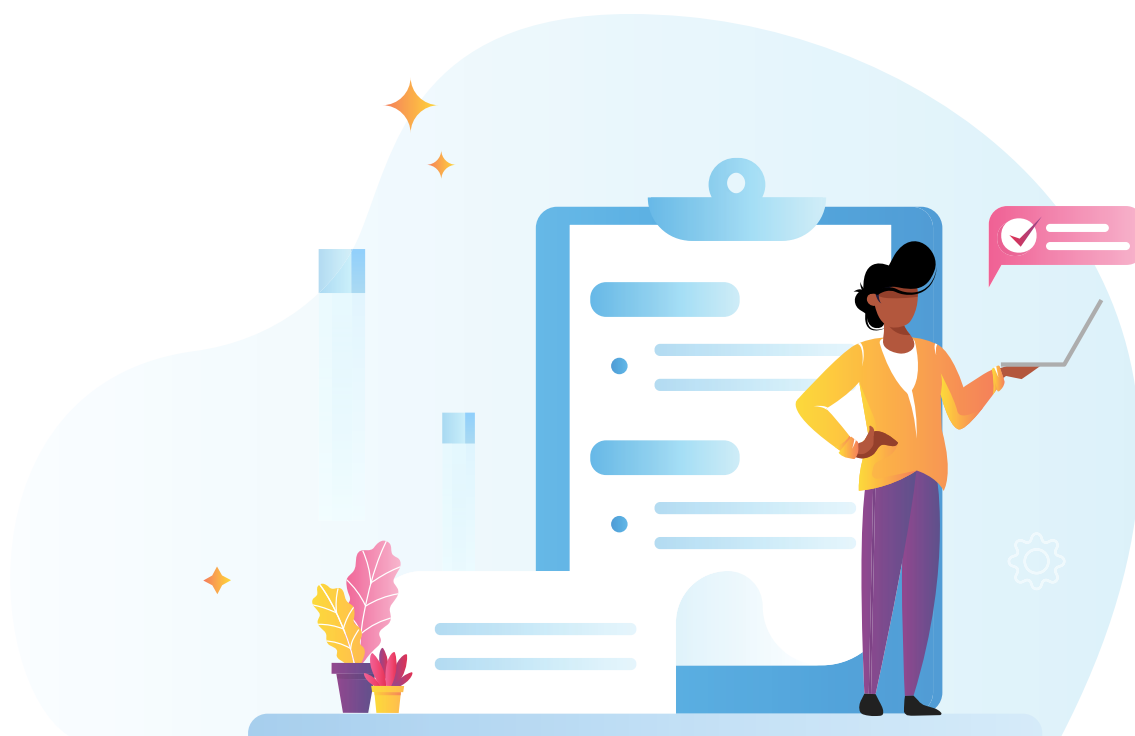




Internal Communications Software Buyer's Guide: Making the Right Choice



Introduction

With countless internal communications softwares available to businesses, it can be overwhelming to cut through the chaff to find the solution that would most benefit your organization. Software providers will position themselves as being able to solve every problem a business may face, which can make it difficult to find a solution that actually addresses the issues you wish to solve.

The goal of this guide is to help you develop formalized criteria for choosing an internal communication software solution. Using a standardized approach can help you keep your priorities in the forefront of your decision making. It can also help you better compare potential solutions side-by-side, so you can determine which software offers the most comprehensive approach for your organization.

We'll cover how you can assess your internal communications business needs, which will then inform what criteria you'll use for your decision. We'll also provide you with an easy-to-customize template for crafting your own Buyer's Guide Checklist, so you can save time and effort when choosing an internal communications software.



Assessing Your Internal Communication Needs

The aim of implementing any software solution is to make business processes more efficient, accessible, and time-effective. Choosing an internal communications software should always be informed by your internal communication needs.

Though every business approaches internal communications differently, there are some overarching principles that can help you narrow down your prospective solutions.

Internal communications channels

Before you improve your internal communications, you have to understand how your employees communicate with each other and your business. Create an inventory of the various internal communications channels your business uses to share and collect information with employees.

Some common internal communications channels include:

- Email and email newsletters
- Instant messaging
- SMS text messages
- Intranets
- Telephones
- Video and video conferencing
- Digital notice boards
- Document sharing

Knowing which channels you plan to optimize will help you narrow which software features will actually serve your business goals. If your business utilizes a remote workforce and relies on emails for the majority of your internal communications, then software oriented to optimizing email processes will be more apt for your business.

After you've narrowed which channels you use and wish to improve, get more into detail about how those channels operate at your business. This can be conducted in various ways, depending on the channel you're assessing, but one of the most effective ways to understand the performance of a given channel is to perform an internal communications audit.

Internal communications audit

An [internal communications audit](#) quantifies the performance of your channels using data collected over time. Using this data you can determine how often the channel is used, who is using it, and whether those using it find it effective.

You can also assess the production aspect of each channel during your audit. How long does it take to create and send a communication on this channel? Are those who create these communications satisfied with the process?

To best assess channel performance, we recommend using a combination of quantitative and qualitative data. If you track your emails, collect performance metrics—like email open rate or click-through rate—to determine overall popularity and the frequency with which employees access those channels. If you do not track your emails, you can perform employee surveys to determine which channels your employees use and prefer the most.

By [collecting employee feedback](#) regarding your internal communication channels, you'll learn how your employees feel about them. Not only will you get a better understanding of how these channels are actually used, but you'll likely receive useful guidance on which channels need the most attention.

IC Software Buyer's Guide Checklist

When you've properly assessed your current internal communications landscape, you're now ready to start comparing different software solutions to improve the problem areas you've identified.

Here is an example Buyer's Guide Checklist to fill in whenever you're choosing a new internal communications solution. Feel free to customize the criteria to fit your business needs.

Buyer's Guide Template:

[Your Company's] Internal Communication Software Checklist		
Criteria	Description of criteria	Fulfilled?
Business Objectives	List the channels you aim to improve and how you wish to improve them via the software solution.	Yes/No
Feature Breakdown	List the main features of the given software solution that will help you achieve the objectives listed above.	Yes/No
Stakeholders	List those at your business required to give input or sign off on a new software solution.	Yes/No
Demo Schedule	Describe the demonstration/trial process for the software solution.	Yes/No
Questions for Vendor	Record questions you need to ask during the software demonstration.	Yes/No
Price	List the relevant price considerations for the software solution. If there are multiple plans/subscriptions that your business may utilize, include them.	Yes/No
Proposal Form	State whether you've received a customized proposal form and/or quote from the software vendor.	Yes/No
Setup Schedule	Outline the setup process as described by the vendor. This section may need to be filled out after the demo has been completed.	Yes/No

Example Buyer's Guide:

[Your Company's] Internal Communication Software Checklist		
Criteria	Description of criteria	Fulfilled?
Business Objectives	<i>Improving engagement on email newsletters by reducing their creation time and collecting employee feedback to inform their content. The solution needs to offer easy-to-use email creation, employee feedback features, and email metric tracking. The software solution has to work with our existing email infrastructure and offer comprehensive data security</i>	Yes/No
Feature Breakdown	<p><i>ContactMonkey provides:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• drag-and-drop email builder that creates HTML emails.</i> <i>• employee feedback collection via our internal emails.</i> <i>• email tracking features such as open-rate, click-through rate, and read time.</i> <i>• integration with Outlook and Gmail, usable with existing distribution lists</i> <i>• event management and RSVP tracking</i> <i>• sms text message sending capabilities</i> <i>• email metric analytics tools like segmented reporting.</i> 	Yes/No
Stakeholders	<p><i>Joanne Smythe - IT Security Manager</i> <i>Julia Lee - Head of IT</i> <i>Don Simmons - Procurement Leader</i> <i>John Smith - Head of Internal Communications</i></p>	Yes/No
Demo Schedule	<i>The demo is to be conducted on July 5th. We will need Don Simmons and John Smith to attend. The demonstration is set to last 45 minutes. The software trial period is 2 weeks.</i>	Yes/No
Questions for Vendor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• How does your software handle employee feedback?</i> <i>• Will the email newsletters we send with your software work on our employees' devices?</i> <i>• Does your software solution integrate with our current internal communications infrastructure?</i> <i>• What is the timeline for the setup process?</i> <i>• Are our emails sent through external servers?</i> 	Yes/No

Price	<i>2 users sending to 1000 employees = \$14,000 per annum + \$3,000 onboarding for 1 year plus plan.</i>	Yes/No
Proposal Form	<i>Proposal Form and quote has been received.</i>	Yes/No
Setup Schedule	<i>Demo process - [Date] Trial process - [Date or duration] Setup date - [Date and relevant stakeholders] Full adoption - [Date]</i>	Yes/No



Make The Right Choice

Our Buyer's Guide checklist template is a great place to start when considering new software solutions for your business. Every business will have a different approach for deciding which solution will work best for their employees, but having a formalized process will help you keep track of details in an easily-referenceable format. It will also help you approach demos in a consistent manner to ensure you learn what you need from each vendor.

ContactMonkey's all-in-one internal communications software is used by industry leading companies to create better internal emails and newsletters and to drive and measure employee engagement. If you're looking to improve productivity and boost growth at your organization via better internal communications, you can book a [free demo](#) to see how ContactMonkey can help you achieve your goals.





About ContactMonkey

ContactMonkey is an internal communications and employee engagement tracking solution that integrates into Outlook and Gmail inboxes. We built our tool to help internal communicators transform employee newsletters into a two-way communication channel.

Use ContactMonkey to create, send, and track internal emails, collect employee feedback, measure the effectiveness of your corporate communications. Build beautiful employee newsletters with the easy-to-use template builder, manage company events from your inbox, gather honest employee feedback with various surveys and eNPS, and measure internal communications ROI with comprehensive metrics.

**Ready to Elevate Your Internal
Communication Strategy?**

[Book a Demo](#)

