



Employee Engagement & the Deskless Workforce

Why engaging hard-to-reach employees is critical to business success, and how digital signage can help.

An eBook for HR & Internal Communications Leaders



At the heart of engagement is communication. And at the heart of that, content. So optimizing that content for maximum impact is essential.

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Mark McDermott
CEO - ScreenCloud

Internal communications is still dominated by email, in-person meetings and word of mouth. Yet most deskless workers do not have a company email address or device. No wonder so many report that they are missing out on critical information at work and feel taken for granted.

Less than 1% of enterprise software spend is on those working on the front lines of businesses worldwide. But we are seeing this trend shift fast. The biggest growth area of digital signage for ScreenCloud has been improving internal comms to deskless workers. The screens they see in break rooms and on the factory or warehouse floor are swiftly becoming the single source of truth for reliable, up-to-date information.

We've worked closely with customers with large deskless workforces, like BASF, Coca-Cola Consolidated and Old Dominion Freight Line. Our team has helped IT roll out screens securely on their networks, automate data dashboard displays and people information feeds – like birthdays and work anniversaries – and collaborate with their comms, marketing, compliance and human resources teams on the best content strategy to meet their objectives.

By getting this right, companies can see a huge uptick in productivity, engagement and ultimately: sales and profit. We've seen team turnover drop as people begin to feel more recognized, informed and connected to the company mission. The bar is very low so it doesn't take much to get started.

We would love to be there to support you on your journey – because the passion for getting this right comes from the very top at ScreenCloud.

Executive summary

Finding effective ways to communicate with employees has always been difficult.

However, throughout the COVID pandemic there has been huge investment in bettering communications for employees working from home; this is continuing with the increased adoption of the hybrid working model.

But what of the deskless worker?

Over 80% of the global workforce are considered deskless. A majority of these work in essential industries such as healthcare, manufacturing, logistics, construction, retail and transport. **Yet many organizations are still struggling to find an effective way to communicate with their deskless workforce.**

From the neuroscience of communication to customer testimonials, ScreenCloud's powerful digital signage software is being proven to be an effective solution to communicating with the deskless workforce.

This eBook will address the challenges of communicating with these hard-to-reach employees, and present digital signage as an effective solution to combat the issues associated with a disengaged workforce.

Introduction

As of 2018, nearly 2.7 billion employees were considered 'deskless'. That is a majority of the global workforce.

We define the 'deskless worker' as one who does not need – or have access to – an office environment to fulfil their responsibilities. This also includes not having ready access to a computer or company email to receive communications throughout the working day.

It is because of this that internal communications for deskless workers is often overlooked and considered too difficult to invest in.

This is causing an unequal balance between desk-based and deskless workers; engaged employees outperform those who feel detached from their company by 202%.¹ Yet only 22% of the global workforce feel engaged at work.²

This eBook will discuss the importance of engagement and the role internal communications has to play in achieving this.

We will also discover how and why digital signage is an appropriate and effective strategy for:

- Helping employees feel connected and motivated
- Supporting on-the-job learning
- Empowering deskless employees for success
- Enhancing safety and compliance protocols
- Creating an equal work environment

¹ Dale Carnegie, 2020, Are your employees motivated?

² Gallup, 2021, State of the Global Workplace Report

Background

Deskless workers can often feel overlooked, with organizations not paying enough attention to their employee experience.

Yet figuring out effective ways to communicate with non-office based workers is difficult when – according to the Tribe report on deskless workers – 83% of non-desk employees don't have a corporate email address and 45% have no access to a company intranet.³

This inability to communicate important company information can lead to a number of issues – the most prevalent being a disengaged workforce.

A disengaged workforce is also associated with high turnover rates and decreased productivity due to unhappiness with their working environment: a by-product of disengagement. This can have a catastrophic effect on profit, sales and overall company health.

However, desk-based workers must not be forgotten in the importance of both engagement and internal communications; it is often the case that there are too many ways to interact. From email to instant messaging, the opposite issue arises – how to cut through the noise. The digital signage solution we will present is therefore beneficial for them too.

And so, if even those desk-based employees feel that they are missing out on effective internal communications, this further emphasises the problem with their deskless colleagues – and the need for a **scalable, affordable and effective solution**.

³ The Tribe Report, Winter 2013, Issue 1, Why is nobody talking to non-desk workers?

Why internal communication matters

Clear, detailed and relevant communication is often cited as one of the main drivers for employee engagement. And employee engagement is a critical element of building a modern, connected workplace.

In Gallup's monumental 2021 'State of the Global Workforce' report, they define **engaged workers** as:

- Highly involved and enthusiastic about their work and workplace. They are psychological "owners", drive performance and innovation, and move the organization forward.

On the other hand, **disengaged workers** are:

- Psychologically unattached to their work and company. Because their engagement needs are not fully met, they're putting time – but not energy or passion – into their work.

There's also a third type of worker – **actively disengaged workers**:

- [They] aren't just unhappy at work – they are resentful that their needs aren't being met and are acting out their unhappiness. Every day, these workers potentially undermine what their engaged coworkers accomplish.

A further report⁴ by Gallup states that strong employee engagement helps fuel a positive, ambitious and inclusive company culture. It also states that a business with an engaged workforce can benefit from a 10% increase in both customer ratings and a 20% increase in sales. However, only 22% of employees feel engaged at work (Gallup's report suggests that this is as low as 11% in western Europe).

If that 20% increase in sales is being achieved by only 22% of your workforce, then **investing in employee engagement is an obvious financial win.**

Much of creating that company culture falls to the internal communications teams, but the impact of those efforts are not being felt; 74% of office-based employees feel they are missing out on important company information,

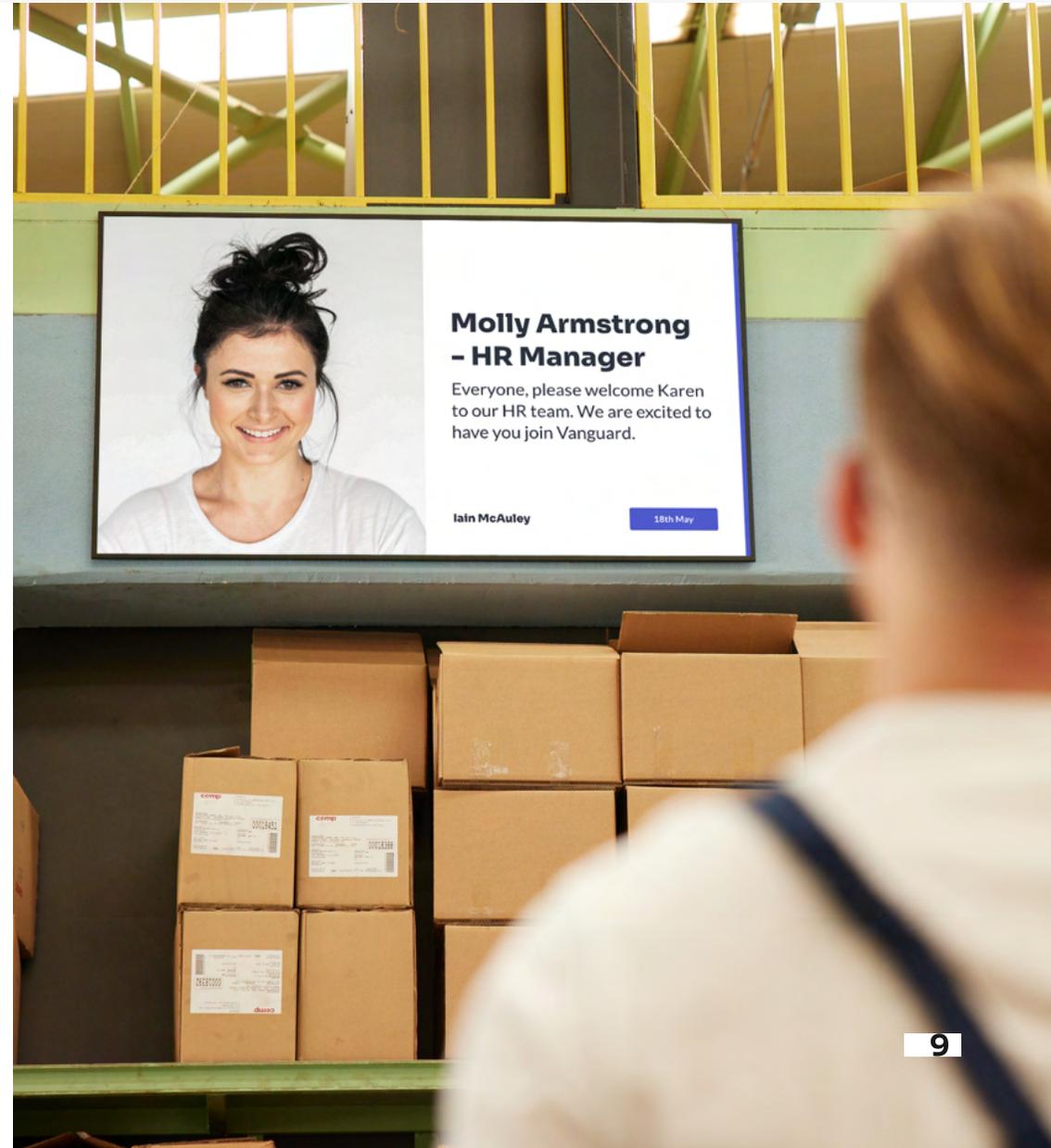
⁴ Gallup, 2021, Employee engagement

Why internal communication matters

yet only 46% will open and read an internal comms email. That may be because 56% feel that they suffer from email overload.

This is contrasted by 84% of deskless workers feeling that they do not get enough direct communication from management, according to research by employee experience platform SocialChorus.⁵

When you consider what information is being shared – company news and values, safety protocols, employee celebrations, events – then missing out on this valuable communication may be a contributing factor to the low retention rates of deskless workers: **they simply don't feel part of the company.** This can be catastrophic.



⁵ Firstup, 2021, Embracing hybrid working: DEX for deskless success

Engaged employees outperform those who feel detached from their company by:

202%

Engaged Employees

Detached Employees

Sales

+20%

Increase in sales from businesses with an engaged workforce

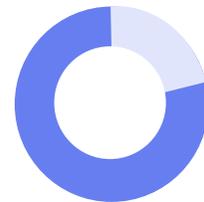
Customer Ratings

+10%

Increase in customer ratings from businesses with an engaged workforce



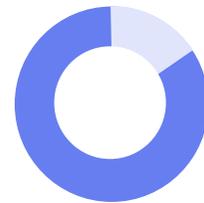
80% of the global workforce do not feel engaged at work



84% of deskless workers feel that they **do not get enough direct communication from management**



83% of non-deskless employees **don't have a corporate email address** and 45% have **no access to a company intranet**



74% of office-based employees feel that they are **missing out on important company information**

Yet only 46% will open and read any internal comms email. That may be because 56% feel that they suffer from email overload

The power of retention

Nearly 10% of the US GDP is lost in productivity each year from a lack of engagement. That's an annual loss of \$8.1 trillion.⁶

And not only is a lack of productivity financially ruinous, but so too are the costs associated with replacing disengaged workers.

A little-considered ROI for employee engagement are the costs saved when retaining great staff; employees are more likely to leave their roles if they don't feel engaged – with 69% of disengaged workers leaving for just a 5% salary increase.⁷ This has obvious financial implications.

In a study conducted by The Centre for American Progress,⁸ they found that the cost of replacing workers was around 16% of an annual salary <\$20,000. That's \$3,200 per individual earning \$20,000 a year. This increases to 20% for those earning a salary between \$30,000-\$50,000.

In a further study by Gallup,⁹ they calculate that it costs a company around 18% per disengaged worker's annual salary due to a loss of productivity. For a company of 10,000 employees with an average salary of \$50,000 each, disengagement could cost them a staggering \$70,200,000 a year (assuming that 78% of their workforce feels disengaged.)

If transparent, timely and relevant communication is to be considered a founding principle of employee engagement, then understanding how to communicate effectively is invaluable.

⁶ Gallup, 2021, State of the Global Workplace Report ⁷ Dale Carnegie, 2020, Are your employees motivated? ⁸ Carleton, Cheryl, 2020, The Conversation - Replacing workers has many costs

⁹ Gallup, 2021, The 'Great Resignation' is really the 'Great Discontent'

The neuroscience of communication

There is growing evidence to show that the way information is perceived when presented on a screen is more effective than when presented via other media.

And there is also evidence to suggest that varying sizes of displays have different consequences for learning, memory and engagement. These are the three founding principles of effective communication.

Achieving effective communication could therefore boil down to the understanding of two things: the physiology of the eye, and how this affects the way that the brain processes, stores and understands visual information.

It's all about the fovea, located at the back of the eye. This is where there is the highest concentration of photoreceptors, where light is converted into electrical impulses that are then sent to the brain – much like the lens of a camera when transferring the image you're looking at to something you see on screen. You could say, effective communication is quite literally in the eye of the beholder.

When you focus on any object, your brain is getting as much information about that object as the rest of your entire visual field put together. Even when you focus on one object, the eye moves 3-4 times a second in rapid ballistic movements known as saccades. This gives our brain the illusion of rich visual information because we are continually pointing our fovea at areas that catch our eye. The richer the information, the more likely we are to engage, understand and remember it.

Where we choose to look is therefore critical. Which is why digital signage is the ideal communications medium for engaging deskless workers and fighting retention.

Why digital signage

Digital signage is a 'glance medium': you look at a screen, and move on.



The conscious mind can process about 40 bits of information per second; whereas the subconscious can process 20,000,000.¹⁰ This is why digital signage is an ideal medium to communicate with deskless workers.

The ability to have highly visual and targeted content running throughout the day (and night) can almost guarantee a certain level of recall; it's said that up to 83% of people can recall at least one piece of content shown on a digital signage screen.¹¹

And every benefit one digital signage screen brings can be felt simultaneously across every location and every team, with easy multi-location and multi-screen management; a change in information only needs to be updated in one place for it to be visible everywhere.

¹⁰ Quividi, 2014, 4.6 seconds: The average attention time in digital signage

¹¹ Arbitron, 2008, Arbitron Digital Billboard Report: Cleveland Case Study

The benefits of digital signage for deskless workers

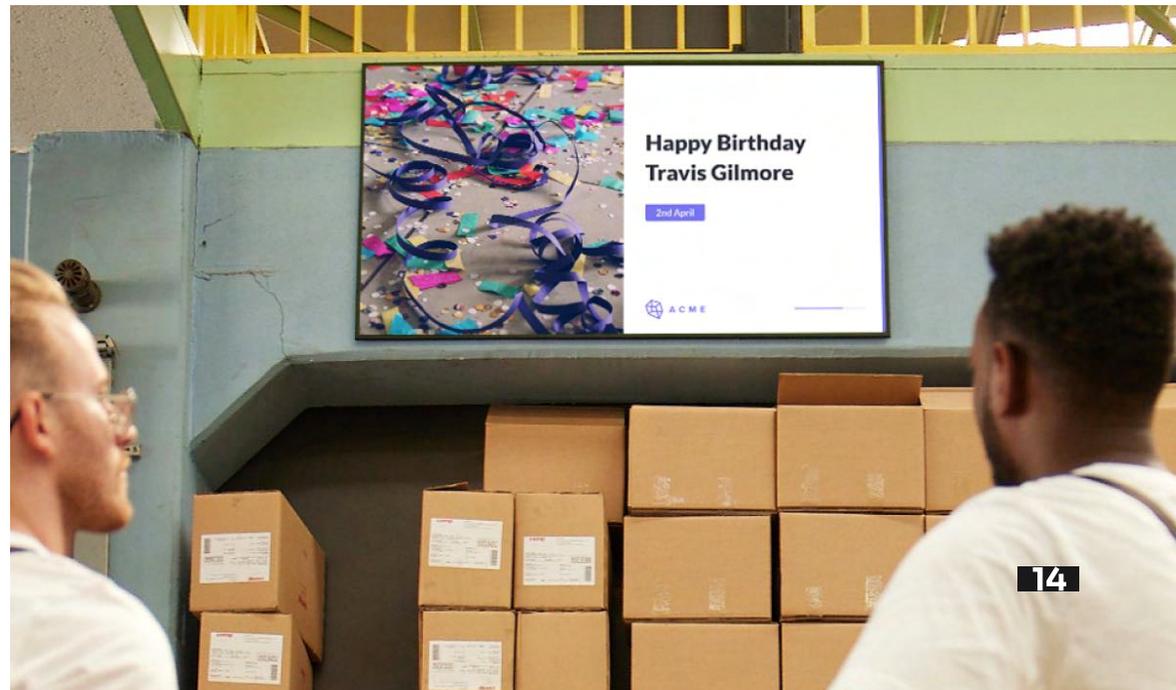
At the heart of engagement is communication. And at the heart of that, content. So optimizing that content for maximum impact is essential.

Digital signage can fill the communication gap between deskless workers and their company. From showing birthday announcements to safety protocols and company news, digital signage can be a hugely effective tool for engaging deskless workers with dynamic and relevant internal communications.

Top 5 benefits of digital signage for deskless workers:

1. Help employees feel connected and motivated
2. Support on-the-job learning
3. Empower deskless employees for success
4. Enhance safety and compliance protocols
5. Create an equal working environment

For a science-backed business case for including digital signage as part of your internal comms channel mix, see [The Neuroscience of Visual Media eBook](#) →



The benefits of digital signage for internal comms specialists

Strong employee engagement helps fuel a positive, ambitious and inclusive company culture. And this can give you a competitive advantage.



Having a strong company culture filled with data-driven and engaged teams not only sets you apart in the eyes of employees, candidates and customers, but it can also have a massive impact on business results.

Top 5 benefits of digital signage for internal comms specialists:

1. Reach your least-connected employee
2. Create inclusive communications at global and local levels
3. Full brand governance and customization with shared content creation
4. Display business-critical data securely
5. Build the apps you need to show the information you want

Types of effective content for deskless workers

Communicating with deskless workers is a major exercise in proving your brand values and amplifying key business messages. Creating that content doesn't have to be hard or time-consuming.

ScreenCloud App Store has over 60 apps to choose from to dynamically display whatever content you want. We've created this guide to help you choose.

Can't see what you need? Contact our Support team to discover more about our GraphQL API. support@screencloud.com

Celebrate People

- Meet the team
- Birthdays / Anniversaries
- Promotions
- Wins
- Peer recognition

Deliver important information

- Announcements / Notice boards
- Upcoming events
- Emergency messaging
- Dashboards
- Operational info
- Industry news
- All-Hands

Build culture

- Deliver news
- Social media
- Entertain
- Competitions
- Event / company photos

Case Study

RICOH
imagine. change.

Who?

RICOH

[See Success Video](#)

What?

A global digital services and printing solutions company

Why?

A need to meet production targets in a safe manner

Where?

Coventry-based digital operations site

Background

Prior to approaching ScreenCloud, RICOH had a digital signage system in place primarily for internal communications for their deskless staff. However, it was difficult for IT to manage and scale – especially across multiple sites. It also didn't have the capability to securely display real-time data; operations managers would have to manually collect data from every machine, print and laminate the results to show their teams. This would take upwards of an hour, and by the time this data was seen by those teams, it was obsolete.

Case Study

RICOH
imagine. change.

Using the ScreenCloud Dashboards feature, the operations managers at RICOH can now display real-time data to monitor and support their teams' processes. What used to take over an hour can now be produced in seconds, enabling instant data-driven decisions to be made. RICOH's digital signage screens also aid communication between operations and senior operators as they can monitor their performance against the targets that they're being set.

RICOH also developed solutions alongside ScreenCloud using our GraphQL API, allowing them to completely personalize their digital signage to their specific needs. They can now connect all their necessary systems together to provide different visualizations across their different locations – bringing everything together onto one screen.

With ScreenCloud, RICOH can now streamline reports and improve visualisations, and also demonstrate the ROI directly back to the business:

“My role is to identify efficiency improvements, and to eliminate tedious tasks. ScreenCloud saves us nearly 65 weeks per year of manual paper-based reporting work; data can now be shown live from the machinery. There is live production value within that environment as all the operators, team leaders and assistant managers know exactly what's going on, instantly. ScreenCloud is now part of our toolkit for continuous improvement that we've been able to easily deploy across multiple areas.”



Sharon Winning
Continuous
Improvement Engineer



Nick Peasant
VP Product - ScreenCloud

Communication is key to better performance and higher Employee Engagement. That's no secret.

People need to know why they are doing something, if they are doing a good job and people want to feel included and valued. Making sure you are connecting and engaging with all of the workforce, not just the people sitting behind a desk is more important than ever.

The trouble is it's hard, like we've already discussed, despite being the main communication channel - emails won't work, asking people to sign up for another platform will be hard and expensive, paper won't work, relying on all managers communicating the messaging consistently won't work.

We believe there is simply no other channel that can communicate to all employees as effectively as screens can - and that's where ScreenCloud comes in.

We provide the channel that enables customers to

connect to content already inside of the organisation and communicate it with their hard to reach employees easily and quickly in a visually engaging and consistent manner across an organisation.

We make it easy to deliver the right information to enable workers to perform well and reinforce that what they do matters and deliver information that instills a sense of belonging.

ScreenCloud has been designed to be lightweight enough to deploy across an organisation simply and easily so you can make a big difference in a short space of time. It all can be managed from one central location and team enabling consistent, realtime messaging to all employees.

We would love to work with you and show you what you can do with ScreenCloud.

About ScreenCloud

ScreenCloud is a cloud-based digital signage software, offering a seamless, secure and flexible solution for businesses looking to unlock connections with hard-to-reach employees and customers at scale.

Control one screen – or thousands – from anywhere in the world. Use the content already in your systems or create something new with ScreenCloud’s built-in tools and apps.

ScreenCloud works with any screen or device, and is now also offered with ScreenCloud OS, our first purpose-built digital signage operating system and device. It’s the flexibility you need to build and scale your screen network.

Enable greater engagement with your deskless workforce by surfacing important information when and where they need it most. Drive productivity and increase sales across your multi-location teams. And build on top of ScreenCloud with the integrations you need most with our GraphQL API.

Getting content up onto a screen has never been easier or more secure with ScreenCloud’s enterprise-grade security. Utilizing market-leading authentication service Auth0, connect employees through the SSO or SAML provider of your choice.

Amplify your key messages and maximize your screen power with ScreenCloud.



ScreenCloud

About ScreenCloud

ScreenCloud is a Software as a Service (SaaS) company that powers digital signage for over 8,500 organizations.

By using the screens on their walls & the content in their systems, ScreenCloud enables the sales, productivity & engagement that keeps businesses thriving.

Contact Us: hello@screencloud.com

Harness the power of digital signage across your workplace and create a more connected workforce.

 **Global Agents**

Coca-Cola

RICOH
imagine. change.

Capgemini 

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