

Burdette Beckmann Inc. Intranet Marketing Research Report

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Executive Summary

Burdette Beckmann Inc. (BBI) is current using SharePoint as its corporate intranet. The company believes that the current site is being underutilized by employees and does not fit the needs of the business due to poor design and functionalities. Due to the significant investment cost they are facing with a re-development of the site, a research project was undertaken to determine the directions of future intranet.

A quantitative research study was conducted using BBI employees who had access to SharePoint. The respondents stemmed from a variety of functional area but the majorities were in Sales and Administration. The results of the survey found that the key areas of importance for management to focus on during the re-development process are the Document sharing tools, such as libraries and lists. Collaborate tools, such as discussion boards, were not found to be as enticing a factor for use on the current site. However, this low engagement rate could be due to the lack of current intranet adoption by the majority of users, a lack of content updates and poor site design. Recommendations for future development should focus other key areas of interest for employees included ease of access to the intranet, particularly through the website, and building a professional and user-friendly site.

Research Objectives

The research objective of the BBI's intranet study is to understand the way employees interact with the current site, in order to determine what tools and areas need future improvement to increase employee productivity. Research to understand the current usages patterns, the desired tools and the motivations for adoptions was undertaken to help guide management's priorities during the upcoming re-development process. Additionally, BBI wished to determine

the importance of collaboration through the intranet. A series of questions were developed to guide the researchers in the data gathering process.

- How thoroughly is the current intranet program adopted into employee's work?
- How important do employees consider the intranet to be to their work?
- What functionalities/tools are currently working in the intranet?
- How important is the look and feel of the site?
- What functionalities would be a motivating factor for adoption?
- Would the integration with the corporate website affect usage?

Research Methodology

A quantitative study with descriptive research questions was the best format for gathering data about the changes required. Descriptive survey questions probed employees on their feelings towards various aspects of SharePoint tools, adoption practices and sentiments towards the intranet. Due to the specific nature of the study and the business needs, no secondary research was found to be useful to this research project.

Data was gathered using a ten questions survey conducted through the Internet service provider, Survey Monkey. This study deployed a nonprobability sampling of respondents, selecting them based on multiple factors including their role within the company, their previous contributions to the business and their knowledge of needs. While every respondent has access to SharePoint, half of the sample was selected based on their current usage of the intranet and the other half was chosen based on their lack of use. Respondents were given one week to complete the survey.

Summary of Key Findings

The first set of findings in Table 1.1 provides a deeper understanding of the sampled employee's roles within the company. The majority of survey respondents work in either Administrative or Sales roles, both of which are representative of the majority of functional roles found within the enterprise. These findings provide the believability to the survey's results as most employees use similar functions in their daily work. The current intranet frequency adoption is low within the survey sample, with the majority of survey respondents not currently active, as depicted in Table 1.2. When they do use the site, the results show in Table 1.3 that Client and Customer interactions are weak while interaction with other employees is highest. However, this is not due to a discomfort with adoption the technology as confirmed in Table 5.3. When prompted to discuss their comfort with technology, most respondents were comfortable or very comfortable with existing and unfamiliar technology.

The second major area of research deals with the tools available on SharePoint and their importance to the employee's work. The information in Table 2.1 provides an understanding of the current items being used on SharePoint while Table 2.2 depicts the employee's feelings towards the importance of those items to their work. Nearly a third of participants are not currently active users on SharePoint, however, those that are most often utilized the Price Lists, Document Libraries, and Pictures at this current time. Areas currently underutilized are Memos, Discussions Boards, Calendars, Tasks, Contacts, and Links. Most of these low valued tools are collaborative functions. Similarly, respondents felt that Price List and Document Libraries were the most important for their work. Interestingly, Contacts was highly ranked when asked about its importance, but rated low for current usage in Table 2.1. Other tools that ranked high on the list of importance were Company Announcement, Pictures, and Links.

A key element of this research was to determine the motivation for adoption. What elements on SharePoint, if developed fully, would be most appealing to employees. Once again, Table 3.2 demonstrates the importance of functional Price Lists and Documents Libraries. Also highly ranked was Integration with Website, which shows the employee's desire for ease of access when utilizing the intranet. The lowest factors of motivation were Discussions, Memos, Tasks and Customer pages—once again related to collaboration.

Several other motivational factors were presented to the group of respondents, and they were probed on their desires regarding the intranet in areas such as document types and design. In Table 4.1 the results demonstrate that access to the Sales Documents is the number one priority for employees. Closely followed by ease of access/login ability from website, access to HR and Branding files; in addition to having an aesthetically pleasing site design. While branding and IT were determined to be of little importance, the deviations of all the attributes on the spectrum are not significant.

There were several clear winners when it came to the way employees described the design of the new intranet. Results in Table 5.1 demonstrate that 'Professional' was the number one keyword used to describe the intranet's 'look and feel'; with usability coming in a close second. Falling far behind those two descriptors, 'Modern' received six respondent's attention and Classic only three. Social collaboration was deemed a relatively unimportant aspect of the BBI Intranet. When asked how the integration of a social platform, like Yammer, would influence their use, nearly two-thirds of respondents said it would stay the same, as depicted in Table 5.2.

Conclusions

We can draw several conclusions based on the various data gathered from employee respondents. It was clear though the multiple questions that the critical areas for development in the new corporate intranet are Document Sharing tools. Over and again these tools were ranked in the highest margins and should be the top priority.

While collaborative tools, such as discussion boards and task lists did not appeal to employees these tools should not be ignored during the redevelopment process, but neither should they be the top priority. The low importance rate placed on collaborative tools could be due to the poor performance of the current tools on the site. There are potential benefits of these collaborative tools if management builds them correctly on the new site and if makes the utilizations a priority for the team collaboration. Additionally, if employees are properly introduced to the manner in which these tools function and the reasoning for use in relations to workflow is communicated in a clear fashion, there is a higher likelihood of adoption.

The data gathered demonstrates that the current lack of intranet adoption is not due to lack of technical capabilities on the employee's part, but rather a weak structure and understanding of the employee's needs from the development standpoint. A professional and user-friendly site design is essential when developing the new intranet, but it is also important to have secure and convenient access to the site itself.

Additionally, there are areas currently being underutilized, like Contacts, that employees have expressed interest in for improving their work performance. We can conclude that the current underutilization the Contacts tool is due to either a lack of user friendliness, lack of content or it is unknown to most employees. These additional areas need to not only be developed from a site design perspective, but a management perspective as well. There must be

measures put in place to manage the information on the site continuously in order to maintain the user-friendly aspect desired by employees.

Overall, employee motivation for using the corporate intranet stems from a well-designed site with tools that work for the employee's needs. If BBI management takes into consideration all the respondent's desires while developing the site's capabilities and collaboration tools, and can get a management team on board, so that information stays current, and the tools remain usable, then there will be a successful adoption.

Reference

Hair, J. F., Celsi, M. W., Ortinau, D. J., & Bush, R. P. (2013). Essentials of marketing research (3rd ed., pp. 260-263). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill/Irwin.

Appendix A

Survey Questions:

Page 1: Demographic

What is your role in the company?	<input type="checkbox"/> Administrative <input type="checkbox"/> Customer Service <input type="checkbox"/> Sales <input type="checkbox"/> Management <input type="checkbox"/> Executive <input type="checkbox"/> Other, Please explain:
How often do you currently use Sharepoint?	<input type="checkbox"/> Never <input type="checkbox"/> 1-2 times a month <input type="checkbox"/> Once a week <input type="checkbox"/> 2-3 times a week <input type="checkbox"/> 4-6 times a week <input type="checkbox"/> 6 + times a week
Whom do you interact with on Sharepoint? (select all that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Clients <input type="checkbox"/> Customers <input type="checkbox"/> Other Employees <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable

Page 2: Current Adoption

What functionalities do you currently use on Sharepoint? (select all that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Company Announcements <input type="checkbox"/> Discussions <input type="checkbox"/> Calendar <input type="checkbox"/> Document Library <input type="checkbox"/> Links <input type="checkbox"/> Pictures <input type="checkbox"/> Tasks <input type="checkbox"/> Contacts <input type="checkbox"/> Memos <input type="checkbox"/> Price Lists <input type="checkbox"/> Sales Tracker <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable
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Using a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being “not at all important” and 3 being “very important”, Rate each of the following in regards to their importance when it comes to perform your work:

Company Announcements	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
Discussions	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3

Calendar	() 1 () 2 () 3
Document Library	() 1 () 2 () 3
Links	() 1 () 2 () 3
Pictures	() 1 () 2 () 3
Tasks	() 1 () 2 () 3
Contacts	() 1 () 2 () 3
Memos	() 1 () 2 () 3
Price Lists	() 1 () 2 () 3
Sales Tracker	() 1 () 2 () 3
Client Pages	() 1 () 2 () 3
Customer Pages	() 1 () 2 () 3

Page 3: Motivation

Imagine that these tool are operating efficiently on new Sharepoint. How motivated are you to use that tool?	
Company Announcements	() 1 () 2 () 3
Discussions	() 1 () 2 () 3
Calendar	() 1 () 2 () 3
Document Library	() 1 () 2 () 3
Links	() 1 () 2 () 3
Pictures	() 1 () 2 () 3
Tasks	() 1 () 2 () 3
Contacts	() 1 () 2 () 3
Memos	() 1 () 2 () 3
Price Lists	() 1 () 2 () 3
Sales Tracker	() 1 () 2 () 3
Client Pages	() 1 () 2 () 3
Customer Pages	() 1 () 2 () 3

Page 4: Site Design and Integration

Using a Scale of 1 to 3 with 1 being “Not Important” and 3 being “Very Important”, rate the following intranet attributes:	
Importance of Branding	() 1 () 2 () 3
Aesthetically Pleasing Site Design	() 1 () 2 () 3
Access to HR documents	() 1 () 2 () 3
Access to IT documents	() 1 () 2 () 3
Access to Branding files (logos etc.)	() 1 () 2 () 3
Access to Sales Documents (Powerpoints etc.)	() 1 () 2 () 3
Easy of Accessing Intranet	() 1 () 2 () 3
Accessibility from Website	() 1 () 2 () 3

Page 5: Other Factors

Which descriptors would describe the ideal design of BBI's intranet.(select two)	(<input type="checkbox"/>) Fun (<input type="checkbox"/>) Serious (<input type="checkbox"/>) Colorful (<input type="checkbox"/>) Monotone (<input type="checkbox"/>) Professional (<input type="checkbox"/>) Modern (<input type="checkbox"/>) Classic (<input type="checkbox"/>) User Friendly
How would the integration of a collaborative platform (i.e. Yammer) that allows communication with other employees/clients influence your use of Sharepoint?	(<input type="checkbox"/>) Increase Usage (<input type="checkbox"/>) Stay the Same (<input type="checkbox"/>) Decrease Usage

Using a scale of 1 to 3 with 1 being “not comfortable” and 3 being “very comfortable”, rank the following question. How comfortable would you consider yourself when it comes to:

Existing/Familiar Technology	(<input type="checkbox"/>) 1 (<input type="checkbox"/>) 2 (<input type="checkbox"/>) 3
New/Unfamiliar Technology	(<input type="checkbox"/>) 1 (<input type="checkbox"/>) 2 (<input type="checkbox"/>) 3

Appendix B

Table 1.1: Respondents Roles

■ Administrative ■ Customer Service ■ Executive ■ Finance ■ Management ■ Sales

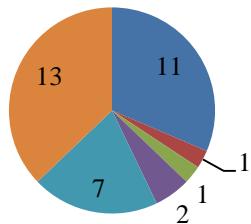


Table 1.2: Respondents Current Usage

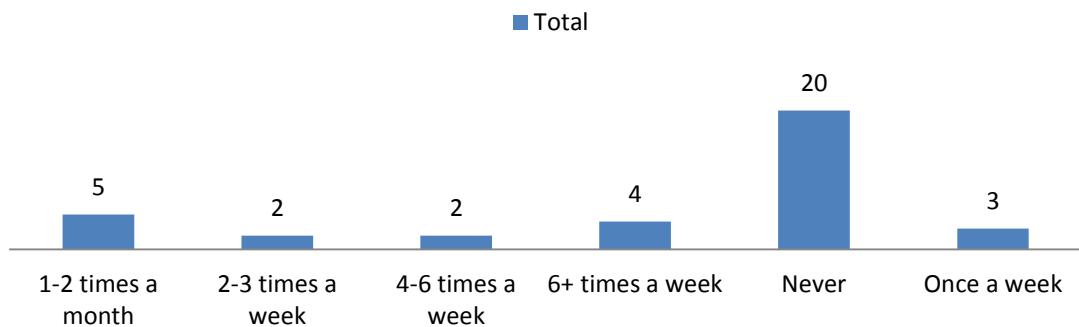


Table 1.3: Respondents Interactions

■ Clients ■ Customers ■ Other (please specify) ■ Other Employees

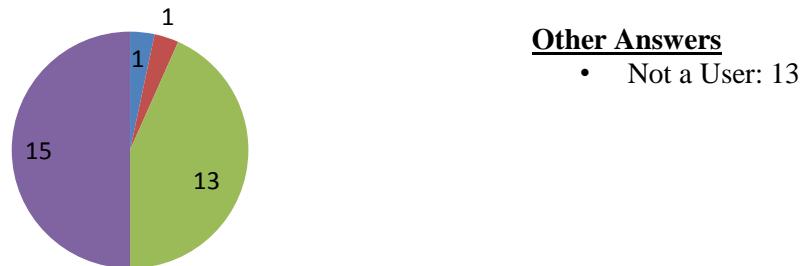


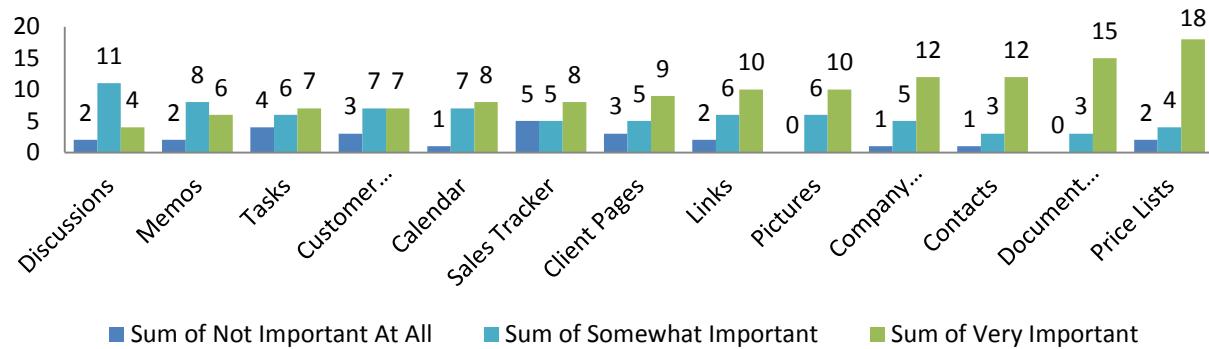
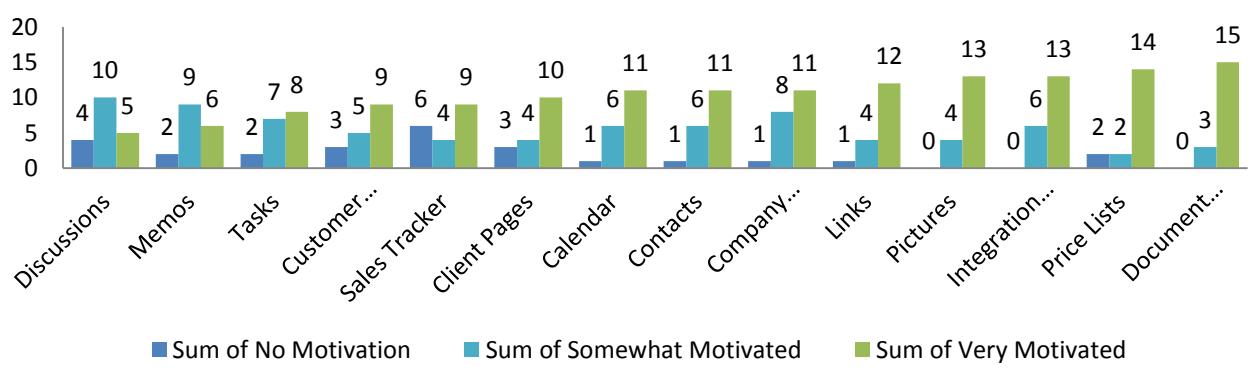
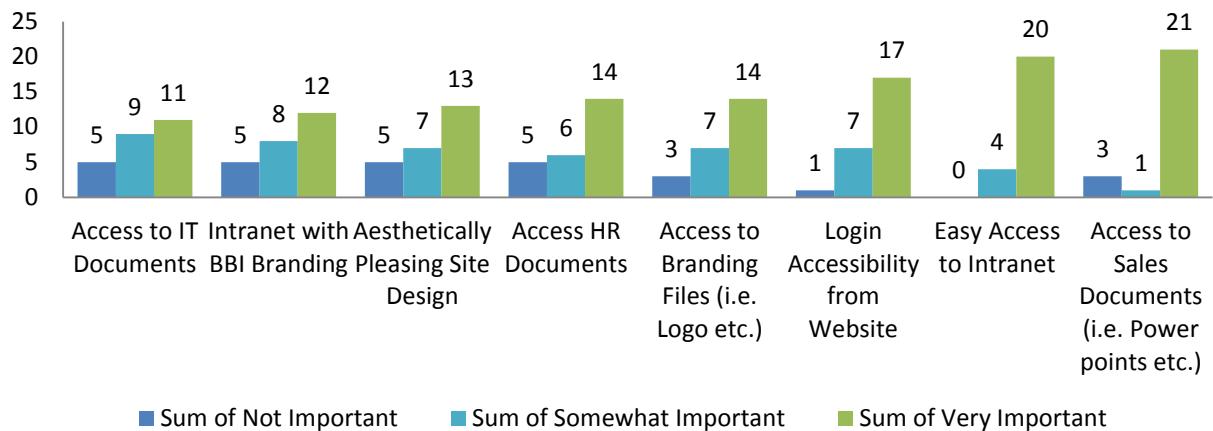
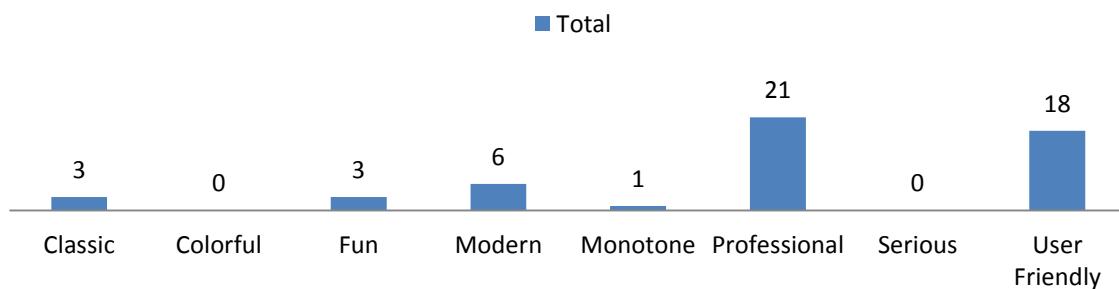
Table 2.1: Respondents Current Usage of Tools**Table 2.2: Respondents Tool Importance in Relation to Work****Table 3.1: Respondents Motivation for Adoption**

Table 4.1: Respondents Additional Attributes Desired**Table 5.1: Respondents Desires for Look and Feel****Table 5.2: Respondents Usage with Social Integration**

■ Decrease Usage ■ Increase Usage ■ Stay the Same

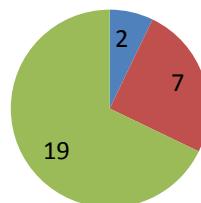


Table 5.3: Respondents Comfort with Technology