

A Seenit mini-guide

# Using video to drive inclusivity and employee engagement



Photo by Ed Stennett

# Employee engagement is more than just a passing fad

It is critical to staff retention, productivity and wellbeing. But for large, multinational companies, often rooted in legacy policies and communication strategy, creating an inclusive culture represents a big challenge. With employees located all over the world, it can be difficult to create cohesion and give everybody a voice.

Video is a great way of allowing people from all parts of an organisation to actively participate in meaningful conversations at a high level. Most companies already use it to facilitate remote conferencing and promote events, but there is real value in exploring employee-led video initiatives.

By involving more people in video content ideation and creation, companies can drive inclusivity and improve employee engagement - and tell a collaborative story that connects staff wherever they are in the world.

This guide will look at some of the ways large companies are starting to think differently about how they communicate - both internally and externally.

In particular, we will look at how they can use compelling employee-led video content to:

- Humanise the leadership team and bring them closer to employees
- Use different voices to tell collaborative stories and celebrate diversity
- Explore new topics like sustainability, gender identity and social responsibility to engage the next generation of employees
- Blur internal and external messaging to reach new audiences and build brand awareness

# From 'Top down' to 'bottom up' communication

'Top down' communication has long been the policy for large organisations looking to keep everybody informed of high-level news.

We've all read those carefully-worded corporate missives. Designed for minimum disclosure. Telling staff all over the world just what they need to know.

But times are changing.

With employee engagement firmly on the agenda, internal communication requires collaboration and two-way conversations - particularly in times of change and flux.

Business transformation can have a big impact on everyone and people understandably want to feel like their concerns are being heard. Real employee engagement is about giving a voice to staff across hierarchies, departments and borders - and developing grassroots

initiatives that promote trust and togetherness.

Video, especially when created collaboratively, provides a modern, dynamic approach where people feel instantly connected. It also cuts through the jargon and noise that is often prevalent in 'top-down' written communication.

Best of all, it lends itself well to initiating a dialogue. Some large companies are finding creative and ingenious ways of encouraging interaction between bosses and their staff. Some are going so far as inviting employees from all levels and locations to recorded 'talkshow-style' events where they can quiz the CEO on the issues that directly affect them.

This kind of transparency and inclusiveness creates a greater sense of community and narrows the gap between leadership teams and the rest of their organisations.

# Hero the human

Of course, using video doesn't guarantee improved employee engagement. But if it is done creatively, it can bring leadership teams closer to their internal audience and help promote transparency and inclusivity.

Imagine two CEOs, both delivering news of their company's annual results.

CEO 1 is behind a large desk. He has engaged a professional film crew and is using an autocue. He is calmly going through the figures and the shot occasionally cuts to positive-looking graphs and bullet-points. An email address pops up at the end and asks for feedback and questions.

CEO 2 has just come out of a board meeting. She is talking excitedly into her phone camera. She gives a brief overview of the figures, but is more interested in what it means for her people. At the end she encourages immediate video feedback.

## **How does your company communicate top- down news?**

Are your people reading  
text memos?

Are you tracking  
engagement?

Do your people have a  
platform to engage with  
this news?

Do you facilitate two-way  
conversations or is all your  
messaging one-way?

Which is more compelling? Which would you be more likely to respond to and trust?

On a human level, the rehearsed schtick of the first example is outdated. There is a lot of value to be found in trying something new.

By incorporating a variety of video types, you can bring the spirit of the event to life.

- Don't rehearse a speech. An immediate unscripted reaction creates a 'real' and unexpected energy and is more likely to grab the viewer's attention
- Be honest - nobody expects news to be perfect every time. Accentuate the positive elements, but don't be afraid to show vulnerability and openness
- Invite responses - Video is a great medium to foster 2-way communication. Consider an 'Ask me anything...' initiative where employees record themselves asking questions which the CEO can then respond to in the same format

The informal approach to high-level internal communications really drives engagement. It is spontaneous, dynamic, real and builds trust. Unscripted content cuts through the noise and makes the message that much more personal - almost as if you are granting your audience a 'behind-the-scenes' glimpse into the way your company operates.



Did you know that people are 3x more likely to trust employees than CEOs/leadership.



# Novartis's #unboss campaign

Novartis recently launched their #unboss campaign which is a great example of how large companies can drive better engagement between bosses and staff.

Click the image above to have a look behind the scenes of Novartis's Annual Results and see what a day in the life of the CEO is like.

[Follow the Novartis CEO](#) on his trip to meet his people all around the world.





Photo by Emily Forbes

# A culture of collaboration - engaging the next generation

Entering the world of work for the first time is a shock to the system. In big organisations, it can be made all the more daunting by the sheer number of people you are expected to connect with.



But companies are learning that it is never too early to drive engagement with new recruits and make them feel valued.

Remember, today's new employees are part of the so-called "Generation Z".

- They are already video experts and content creators
- They are digital natives and social media savvy
- They scroll 90m a day - the height of the Statue of Liberty!
- They are your future workforce - your future leaders, even - so you need to keep them motivated!

The best onboarding programmes are about creating content WITH these new starters, rather than FOR them.

This drives an inclusive communications culture from the get-go, and gives a voice to people who might be completely different to those in the leadership team - but who might be able to connect with colleagues in a way a CEO never could.

Generation Z are perhaps more closely connected to social issues than those that have gone before. Empowering them to drive corporate communications programmes around things like gender identity, LGBT initiatives and sustainability helps to give your company a more authentic voice.

And authenticity is a crucial attribute if you are going to meaningfully engage with the next generation - And the generation after that!

# Here are some great examples

Check out this video from Spotify 🙌



## Meet Kendra

Meet Kendra and hear her personal story about who she is and how ING supported her in her career.



## Upshift

ING also partner with Unicef innovation lab for their program called Upshift - a 3 day workshop for ING employees to find solutions and mentorship for the problems they perceive as important.



Photo by Ed Stennett

# If a story's worth telling...

Many companies make clear distinctions between their internal and external communications strategies.

But there is value in blurring the two to bring new opportunities to staff at all levels of your organisation - as well as delivering your message to fresh audiences.

They say that in a company, “everyone is a salesperson”. But it’s also true to say that “everyone’s in marketing”! All of your employees have a phone, so encouraging them to use it to promote company stories on their own channels and within their own peer groups is a great way of extending your brand reach. And it cuts both ways. Using that same employee-led content on your company social media channels gives your organisation a human face.

Consider Kendra from the ING video and you will see that people trust people more than brands. Companies can harness that positive energy and use it to drive their own campaigns and attract top talent like Kendra. Engaged employees are more productive, more innovative and your best brand ambassadors.

Clearly, there need to be well-defined guidelines about what can be shared and what can’t, but there is no reason why

some of your content that has previously been used exclusively for internal circulation could not be repackaged for public consumption.

Vlogging is something a lot of people within your organisation are no doubt already doing. From a stylistic and format point of view it is simple and effective. Crucially, it also brings large companies closer to their younger consumers.

By empowering employees to tell company stories across the platforms they use every day, you are creating new brand ambassadors AND improving company culture AND opening up new marketing opportunities.

A win-win-win scenario!



Photo by Emily Forbes

# Put video at the heart of your employee engagement strategy

Employee engagement is not about being perfect. It is about being honest, transparent and authentic in the way you communicate.

Employee-led video has changed the game for communicators. Within the last five years, it has helped companies tell more compelling stories and encouraged deeper collaboration at every level of an organisation.

With today's technology, everyone can have a meaningful voice.

Remember:

- Learn from your own people - wherever they are in your organisation
- Move quickly and stay relevant
- Think about external as well as internal video opportunities
- Make video culture initiatives fun and challenging

The time has come for companies to be braver with the content they are creating. To start to challenge the status quo and understand the value of different perspectives.

Making engaging and inclusive video content has no downside - and it's easier than you might think!



# About Seenit

We have told over 300,000 stories. Hundreds of companies are using Seenit to bring their stories and events to life through people powered video content.

[Talk To A Video Expert](#)



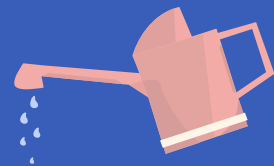
## Simplify

Simplify and diversify your video content



## Engage

Engage and involve your employees and fans



## Grow

Grow your employer and company brand