CASE STUDY

Internal Communications Team Unlocks Power of Data Science

SQA Group helps global publisher connect communications to rev-impacting potential

CHALLENGE

A global publishing firm was eying several core goals recently outlined in its 5-year strategic plan, including — align employees towards rev-impacting activities in support of fiscal goals, standardize the employee experience across a geographically distributed workforce, and identify and fast-track hidden performers within the employee population.

To support its strategic plan and growth goals, the organization stood up an Internal Communications function — responsible for crafting campaigns that would supercharge change management, global standardization, and achievement of fiscal goals. The Communications team knew it wanted to balance "art with science" and be data-driven with regards to email marketing creation and segmentation to increase the impact of messages, execution of calls to action within messages, and directly support the achievement of corporate goals.

The No. 1 priority that CEOs have for their communications teams is "to build sustainable growth and value for their brand."

While 96% of communications leaders say they are relying on data "more than ever," 43% still struggle to convert data into actionable insights and 44% struggle to align metrics to revenue or business KPIs.

Cision & PRWeek
2025 Comms Report

Lacking in-house data science expertise, and working against constrained timelines, the Internal Communications team was in search of a data partner that could translate raw employee sentiment data into actionable insights to shape a future-facing communications strategy. One that would not only outline _what_ to communicate and _to whom_ within the employee population, but that would also bake in next-gen KPIs and metrics so that success and rev-impact could continuously be understood.

SOLUTION

SQA Group deployed its Data and Innovation team — hyperspecialized in data science, advanced analytics, and innovative business strategy — to support the Internal Communications team's desire to become data driven. The engagement centered around SQA Group analyzing existing employee data (annual engagement surveys, stay interviews, pulse questionnaires, etc.), as well as creating new insights via design thinking workshops, to create a Data-Backed Communications Framework. Core components of the framework included:

- **Data stories, visualizations and narratives** — arrived at via sentiment analysis and correlations mapping — that revealed core topics and themes for the Internal Communications team to prioritize to accelerate progress toward goal achievement, mitigate risk within the employee base, and position the organization for continual growth
- Establish **next-gen approaches to segmenting communications** (e.g. emailing and grouping employees based on feelings about the organization, ability to influence others, worries, etc.)

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- to deliver more tailored powerful communication versus relying on demographic criteria for email sends (e.g. segmenting by title, department, tenure, geography, etc.)
- Unlock **prioritized actions and recommendations** for communicating to and engaging with cohorts, as well as best practices for creating segments in their email marketing tool Prose
- Stand up **custom KPIs, benchmarks, and measurement criteria** to arm the team with holistic ways to measure communication efficacy, establish Day 0 and beyond reporting, and correlate the impact of communications efforts to revenue, morale, and growth

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> *Modern day communications teams are increasingly finding disruptive ways to leverage data — from unlocking psychographic "buyer personas" to building content revenue attribution models. Intentionally bridging content to brand vitality.*
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> *- Carrie Majewski, SQA Group VP of Growth Strategy*

IMPACT

SQA Group's data analysis and discovery process unearthed critical hidden insights that were sitting within existing sources, particularly related to current employee sentiment, frustrations, and future hopes for the organization. What's more, SQA Group was able to forecast future employee priorities, concerns, and interests based on the data illuminated. For example, data analysis revealed core findings such as the fact that:

- **Hidden sub-groups** exist within the global manager population: Hidden Influencers, innovators brimming with ideas that could directly impact revenue if prioritized; Equilibrium Keepers, business as usual and peacekeeper managers; and Detractors, at-risk, disengaged managers who have a direct impact on the larger employee population
- **Confidence varies** across geography, tenure, and function when it comes to knowing how best to work, drive efficiency, follow SOPs, and access critical company information
- Certain **company values** are favored/more beloved than others, illuminating opportunity to create deeper application and integration of values holistically and org-wide

SQA Group leveraged the analysis to stand-up a data-powered segmentation approach by grouping employees based on interests and psychographic criteria to enable the team to create and deliver tailored messaging. Among the segments unearthed included three primary groupings: **Hidden Influencers; 'How We Work' Adopters; and Values Evangelists.** As part of the Data-Backed Framework that was delivered, each segment came with:

- Data stories that validated the WHY and urgency to create the segment
- Get started big rock recommendations for communicating to each group
- Next-gen KPIs to measure engagement and correlate messaging with ROI
- Tips and best practices to stand up segments within email platform

Armed with new segments, tactics to divide contacts via email marketing, and baseline KPIs to prove each message's impact on corporate fiscal and growth goals, the Internal Communications team is now positioned as a revenue-impacting, risk-reducing function.

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