

HOW TO ENGAGE A DISTRIBUTED WORKFORCE

Konnective helps disability support provider, We Are Vivid, adapt to create a positive employee engagement culture, especially during the Covid-19 period.

The Need

Provide 'real time' information to employees who are spread across a large geographic region.

The Approach

Communicate with staff via their preferred channel.

The Results

- Almost all 140 employees now using Konnective
- Increased employee engagement and improved culture
- Plans to roll-out to parents and carers

Background

We are Vivid, a registered NDIS provider, provides support services to adults who have an intellectual disability across Northern Victoria, with sites at Echuca, Kyabram, Swan Hill and Kerang.

The Need

Shannon Walker, Executive Manager of Resources for Vivid, explains "the nature of Vivid's work, means staff may work both on site and off site".

The question on Shannon's mind was - how could they better engage their widely distributed team?

"Everyone has a smartphone these days but not everyone has a computer at home"



Vivid's Approach

The solution to their employee communication issues came from two key observations. First, Shannon noticed that the direct SMS solution they used mainly for rostering had a higher response rate than emails.

Secondly, she considered other channels of communication used in other organisations with a large workforce.

Decision Making Process

A phone based employee notification tool seemed to be the answer to their communication problems. Shannon turned to the ever-reliable Google, from which she was able to create a shortlist of options with a list of pros and cons. The list was then forwarded to Vivid's IT consultants to assess if the apps met the criteria required by the health sector.

Konnective's customisability and onshore support made it stand out from the free alternatives. Its Australian-based servers and technical specs meant it also got the tick of approval from Vivid's IT team.



Implementation

"Julie sat down... and did an hour or so walkthrough" with Shannon and the other would-be admins. After a quick trial on a small sample size, Konnective was rolled out to Vivid's 140 staff in October 2019.

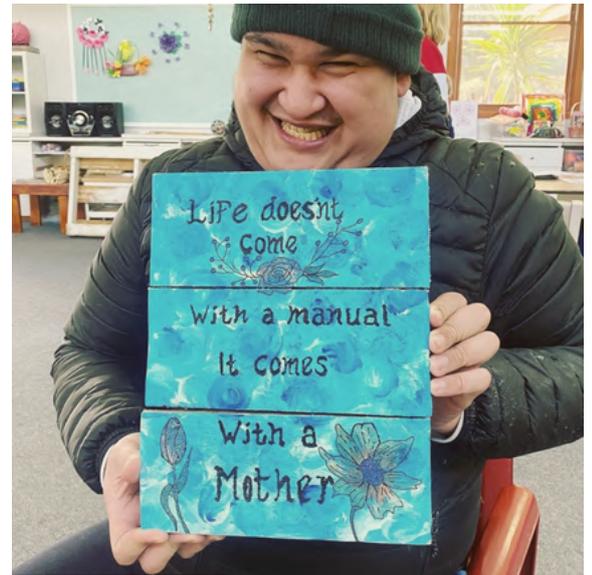
Since then any questions or issues have been responded to and resolved promptly. Shannon describes an early issue where we "needed to increase our member limit." The turnaround time was "within the day or next day" and that level of prompt support has remained constant over the last eight months.

Staff Response

"We find that we get a really good uptake because people can respond then and there"

Encouraging staff to adopt new tools can be challenging. However, an almost 90% take up rate of Konnective by Vivid's team suggests the desire for better communications was there.

Shannon now pre-enrols new staff and learning how to use Konnective is part of the onboarding process. Surprisingly, despite the broad age range within Vivid's team, there's been no negative feedback.



How Konnective Has Helped

Vivid now uses Konnective to share team updates, broadcast company announcements and to support their employee engagement program.

For Shannon, the stand out feature of Konnective has been its customizability, ensuring their messages reach the "right people and (managers) get the right responses". She's conscious that when people receive notices that are "not relevant to them..." (that's when) they tune out" and often miss the truly important updates. The ability to define clear user groups within Konnective has reduced the noise and resulted in better engagement across the board.

Overall, Konnective has been a "huge time saver". The ease of being able to "go in and download who's responded" when they've asked for staff responses has made data collection and data integrity a lot less burdensome.

Shannon also sees Konnective's use from an emergency planning perspective such as on high heat or health alert days. Previously a situation like that would have meant hours of individual phone calls. Now, with Konnective, the same effect can be achieved with a single broadcast message.





The Results

It's now been eight months since Vivid's team started using Konnective. Overall, Shannon's been "very happy with it".

"Culturally it's really shifted, staff are starting to give feedback, since we're giving them information as well"

Employee Engagement and Wellbeing

In early 2020, Vivid launched their internal health and wellbeing initiative - Project U. The onset of Covid-19 however meant the original schedule of activities had to be redesigned. "Active April" was originally meant to be an inter-site competition. Instead, Shannon and her team used Konnective to ask the team "How are you keeping fit at home? Send in your videos!"

"It was a way when staff weren't always on site to keep them connected as well." She also plans to use Konnective's survey functionality to get feedback about Project U as more initiatives are launched.

Cost Savings

The character limit of direct SMS meant messages often came across "a bit clunky" and could become quite expensive. A "bonus" of Konnective is that "it's a lot cheaper than what we were doing (SMS)" and its pricing is still "very reasonable" when compared to competitor products.

Impact during Covid-19

As our discussion turns to the more recent, Covid-19 related operating environment, Shannon observes that "timing wise, (adopting Konnective) has been fortunate.

Because our workforce is so spread, you can't always call everybody. So we will put out a notice on Konnective with a link to advise when new information or changes have been released that staff need to be aware of.

This has been really good, as staff get the information and reassurance they need during these challenging times."

What's Next?

When asked about Vivid's future plans for using Konnective, Shannon shares that "it's providing us exactly what we need at the moment in terms of communicating. It'll be great down the track once we have parents and carers on board to be able to communicate with them about what their loved one has done that day."

As familiarity with Konnective's functionality grows, Shannon notes the scope of what they are able to use it for only increases. Vivid's just added a public newsfeed, with the plan to introduce parents and carers to Konnective later in 2020.

"Being able to keep (families and carers) in the loop and send them their good news stories, that's... our ultimate aim as to where we go with (Konnective)."

