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Nutanix proves return on investment with Simpplr

THE RESULTS

50% increase in time and efficiency with new hire onboarding

Improved FTR (First Time Right) Metrics

Average of 590% increase in employee NPS

NUTANIX™

Industry: Technology
Founded: 2009
Headquarters: San Jose, CA

The Challenge

Navigating Hypergrowth

Nutanix was founded near the end of 2009, went public in 2016, and now has over 5,000 employees and growing. The company's hallmark has been rapid growth enabled by a self-starter company culture and fierce and passionate employee base, dedicated to fulfilling the company's vision of "Making Computing Invisible… Anywhere." A builder culture by nature, the company succeeded in the early days through building quickly, decentralizing control, and finding quick solutions to complicated problems. This created an environment where solutions were plenty, answers were everywhere and every employee had their own north star for information.

In late 2018, the company reached the point where these organic methods were no longer working as well at scale, and employees began having difficulties finding information across all of their channels. People would tribally have to find experts manually and through messaging. The knowledge owners kept repeatedly answering the same one-off requests. This was most obvious across HR, Legal, IT, and support functions. With many different knowledge bases (wikis, Google Drive, departmental drives), global policies and information were spread out and sometimes inconsistent.

They wanted a single source of truth, with an emphasis on finding reliable information provided by the correct business owners.

The Solution

A Natural Skeptic

While Wendy Pfeifer, an experienced CIO, came in and understood the need to streamline their ecosystem, the project was initially met with some skepticism. Senior leadership, having worked at some of Silicon Valley's largest tech companies, were supportive of Nutanix's more organic, real-time communication environment. And, some were concerned about introducing a more formal employee portal because they saw them as ineffective in past organizations. They were very conscious of how intranets traditionally required a lot of technical support resources across departments and were worried about the operating expense required to make the project successful on an ongoing basis.

Simpplr needed to prove itself on two fronts: (1) Show how it helps employees find information, and (2) Show it can be run more efficiently than historical intranet models.

The ROI Tests

To prove out the initiative, Wendy led a couple of quantitative tests to prove ROI.

Test 1: A scavenger hunt to show Simpplr improves new hire onboarding

With the company's growth, they typically onboard hundreds of new hires every month across multiple US and international locations. Helping improve these new hires' time-to-productivity was a major focus area.

New hire test survey

First, they devised a new hire onboarding survey. In addition to detailing critical onboarding information that new hires would need to find, the survey approach allowed the company to time how long it took for new hires to retrieve the information. They also tested the accuracy of the information retrieved. For example, a question on the survey asked for the company's "accepted timeline to submit expenses".

Test and control groups

New hires were then separated into two groups to complete the survey and retrieve various documents:

Test Control Group A:	Test Group B:
A series of new hires were asked to answer an onboarding survey without access to Simpplr.	A series of new hires were asked to answer an onboarding survey with access to Simpplr.

New hire scavenger hunt results

The scavenger hunt measured the following outcomes:

1. Time to complete tasks (as tracked by an open survey)
2. Accuracy of the information they found (as tracked by sharing where they found the information)
3. The new hire's NPS of the experience (the survey asked how likely new hires were to recommend the company's knowledge management).

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After running the same test in 4 consecutive onboarding cycles across locations, the results showed an astounding difference:

	NPS Score	Accuracy	Average Time Spent on Survey
Test Control Group A (No Intranet) 64 Surveys (45 responses – 70%)	7	83%	41 minutes
Test Group B (Simpplr Access) 65 Surveys (46 responses – 71%)	**76**	**93%**	**23 minutes**

The Simpplr intranet showed:

- Nearly a 50% increase in efficiency with new hires searching for onboarding items

- Simpplr accuracy was 10% higher

- Users noted a considerably favorable experience with a Simpplr user NPS of 76

Test 2: Show how Simpplr can be administered without heavy overhead

The second test was run to test how quickly non-technical resources from a wide variety of backgrounds (across functions and locations) could create new content within Simpplr. Recall, the organization needed to overcome skepticism rooted from traditional intranets and their need to staff multiple technical resources. Incidentally, the content created was the same content used in the survey scavenger hunt.

To get started, Nutanix created sites for some of the most frequently requested organizational content (e.g. a Legal & Compliance Site) and tested how quickly it took non-technical content creators to create and upload content. The test was purposely done with limited training. Without any previous exposure to the platform, the project team gave a quick 10-minute demo of the platform and then participants were told to dive into the test. The group spanned representatives across IT, Sales Enablement, Engineering, Internal Communications, Travel, HR, and Legal.

Test 2 content creation results

The content creation test had the following results:

Generally, it took no longer than 30 minutes for each of the functions to build out all of their content. Each team had varying amounts of content to create. The time to completion took the following amount of time:

Legal	HR	Travel	Internal Comms	Engineering	Sales Enablement	IT
35 minutes	26 minutes	21 minutes	5 minutes	5 minutes	25 minutes	28 minutes

- The content creator NPS was 86

- When asked the reason for their score, participants reporting the following: (1) It was intuitive to use, (2) creating content was easy, (3) it didn't take much time, and (4) it required no technical skills.

With the successful tests and data to back them up, Simpplr was able to show value in new hire onboarding, improve

employee productivity, align company communications, and ease the burden for knowledge experts.

Simpplr's integration with Google Drive and open approach to information architecture also eased the overall implementation. The company emphasized not wanting to migrate everything but to maintain a federated source of truth that integrated with its other systems. This way they wouldn't have to deal with more migration and maintenance pain. Plus, this fits with their cultural openness to various technologies while still enforcing a standard across the growing business.

Test 3: A scavenger hunt follow-up with existing employees

Nutanix also wanted existing employees to go through the scavenger hunt A/B test. To find a sample, they actively sought influencers, tenured employees with strong opinions and active social contributors, to test the Simpplr pilot and provide feedback. This group of 100 was also separated into a test group using Simpplr and a control group with existing resources.

Test 3 scavenger results

The test of existing employees yielded the following results:

	NPS Score	Accuracy	Average Time Spent on Survey
Test Control Group A (No Intranet) 64 Surveys (45 responses – 70%)	-43	84%	24 minutes
Test Group B (Simpplr Access) 65 Surveys (46 responses – 71%)	**43**	**98%**	**13 minutes**

The test group provided strong survey feedback demonstrating:

• The variety of sites were nicely linked together with a strong search

• It was designed effectively, answering employees main questions

• It put all Nutanix related information at a Nutanix employee's fingertips

• It offered an effective search, providing the right information quickly

The feedback from Test Control Group A (-43 NPS) was equally insightful, with most people commenting about the need for a central location, a simplified search, a coordinated architecture and a consolidated source of truth.

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The Outcome

Conclusion: A Mindset Shift

Nutanix's initial success was largely driven by its ability to position the intranet investment as a productivity tool. Many companies have historically struggled to show how intranets provide concrete business value. In addition to the metrics highlighted from the pilot, Nutanix sold the investment by tying the initiative to the following business outcomes:

The value of increased ramp time: Considering how fast Nutanix was growing they're able to rationalize a value of ramping employees. Greater early effectiveness creates a win-win for employees, managers and the company in general.

Improved FTR (First Time Right) metrics: Using a metric that is commonly used in lean programming, Nutanix both tracks and promotes the value of improving these scores across the organization. They not only improve collective productivity but also drive higher employee satisfaction and trust.

A more efficient operating model: Wendy noticed traditional intranet deployments quickly required additional headcount to help with content management and technical configuration. Nutanix was able to show subject-matter experts could easily manage their domains without training and without consuming too much time.

Improved employee satisfaction: Employee satisfaction increases by reducing the friction for employees to find the information they need to do their jobs and by having one place to stay apprised of internal communications.

Needless to say, this business-centric approach helped Nutanix make the case to their broader leadership team. The initiative was implemented across Nutanix and now sees healthy engagement and adoption rates.

About Nutanix

Nutanix is a global leader in cloud software and hyperconverged infrastructure solutions, making infrastructure invisible so that IT can focus on the applications and services that power their business. Companies around the world use the Nutanix Enterprise Cloud OS software to bring one-click application management and mobility across public, private and distributed edge clouds so they can run any application at any scale with a dramatically lower total cost of ownership. The result is organizations that can rapidly deliver a high-performance IT environment on demand, giving application owners a true cloud-like experience.

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