



Ashtons Legal improves team communication between offices

[Ashtons Legal](#) (Ashtons) is a solicitors' firm with 350 employees split into specialist teams spread across five offices in the region of East Anglia in the UK. They were struggling to efficiently communicate and share knowledge between team members, let alone reinforce a consistent and united culture in their organization.

This all changed when they rolled out the **Jostle**[®] platform. It's streamlined their communication, cut down on emails, visibly improved knowledge sharing, and created a stronger company culture.

Company:	Ashtons Legal
Size & Locations:	350 employees; 5 locations
Sector:	Legal Services
Interviewees:	Maria Quirke, Head of Knowledge Krishan Gohel, Knowledge & Information Research Analyst
Engagement:	97% monthly

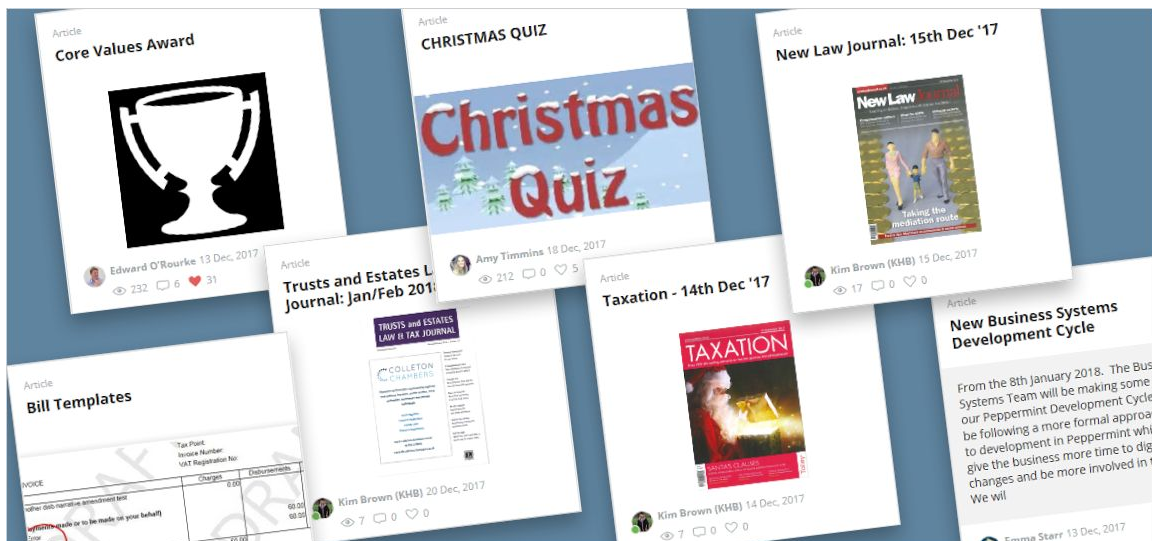
“The Jostle platform has enabled us to improve our communication at a management and social level, and has helped create a culture of open communication in the firm.”



Edward O'Rourke
CEO

Problem

The lawyers in each of Ashtons' offices are responsible for their local geography. This meant there were members on the same team (in different locations) who were not communicating as well as they could be. Ashtons wanted to change this, but their method of communicating (email and SharePoint) was a hindrance. Thus, they went searching for a new communications tool with three central goals in mind.



NEWS on Ashtons Jostle intranet

Goals

Improve connections across offices. “We wanted to encourage teamwork and prevent silo office working. If we share more knowledge with each other,” said Maria Quirke, Head of Knowledge, “it gives us a better chance of improving our client base. We could increase our client base if teams were to share information across offices.”



Streamline communication. “We needed something that would help us reduce corporate email traffic, which was a real problem,” added Krishan Gohel, Knowledge & Information Research Analyst.

Improve file sharing. “We had a SharePoint intranet but it was very basic. For example, there was no search feature, which was something that bothered a lot of our users,” said Maria, “we needed a better way of sharing information.”



Ashtons' peer-to-peer recognition on the Jostle intranet

Solution

“And so we went out to the market,” Maria told us, “SharePoint appeared to be the current trend for intranets, but we hadn’t been successful with it. So, as a team, we did some research and found the Jostle platform.”

After setting up a demonstration and chatting with our product experts, Ashtons decided to pursue the Jostle intranet:

“We chose it because it felt really bright and interesting, and we felt that our people would engage with Jostle. The platform really is about sharing knowledge and information. It’s about people, not about simply posting on a SharePoint intranet,” Maria added.

“We’re meant to put the clients first, and of course we do, but from a caring perspective, we’ve got to equally consider our people because our people are our greatest asset. The Jostle platform helps us do that.”



Maria Quirke
Head of Knowledge

How Ashtons is using the Jostle platform

Over the past three years, Ashtons has had great success with their Jostle intranet. Here’s how a few of the specific features are helping them.

1. DISCUSSIONS

“The DISCUSSIONS feature has helped teams communicate across offices,” said Maria. DISCUSSIONS is the chat feature, which Ashtons’ teams are using to connect and stay in touch. They’re sharing more knowledge than ever before.

“For example, if there’s a tricky technical legal point,” Maria said, “our teams use DISCUSSIONS to chip in their ideas. Rather than 26 emails going around on one thread, we’ve got one Discussion and everyone’s comments are easy to see. It’s been a big benefit.”

2. NEWS

Streamlining information updates. “NEWS is used a lot, for a whole variety of things. There are messages from our CEO, updates from our business development team, and community posts, such as someone hosting a coffee morning,” said Maria. She went on to share:

“And it’s so useful that we can filter these types of articles, so those who don’t like to look at the more social posts have a way of filtering those out and only see business critical information.”





Ashtons uses the Jostle platform for important updates

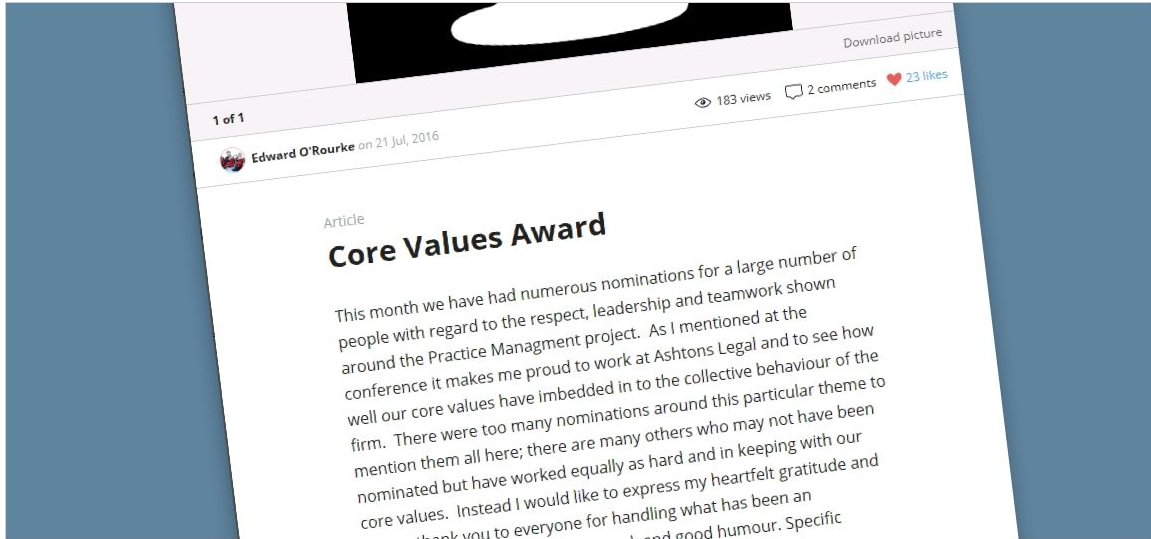
Promoting community and connections. Ashtons has a diverse group of employees contributing a range of different types of NEWS Items. This means people are aware of what's happening across the locations, teams, and roles.

"We have solicitors from each of our practice areas publishing articles. Then we have most of our Marketing, HR, and Business Systems teams. So, we do have contributors from pretty much across the board."

One of the ways Ashtons is encouraging community and recognition is with their Core Values Award.

"If you see someone living out our core values, you can nominate them for the award irrespective of their role. We get some quite weird and wonderful nominations. I remember one in particular—one member of staff in a frantic office with the phone ringing like mad. She threw herself across the desk to get to it before it stopped ringing.

"This type of behaviour would normally get lost, but it's so important to recognize. Then, our CEO hosts a monthly management meeting, in which we all vote for the winner. The CEO then ensures the result is posted on the Jostle platform."



Ashtons' core values are put front and centre

3. Search

"The Search function is really powerful. People just search from the front page and find what they need really easily. We use it to find everything—documents, people, specific skills," said Krishan.

"In fact, one specific example of when we use Search is when we need to translate documents. We never used to know if there was an employee with the necessary language skills, but then we simply asked them to add their languages to their profiles. It's saved us a lot of time—we don't have tens of emails circulating about languages—and it's self-managing, which is good for us."



It's easy to find in-house skills on the Jostle intranet

The key to Ashtons' success

Ashtons' communication and engagement results are impressive. They work in a traditional sector, with teams dispersed across five offices. Yet, they've managed to overcome "hard" challenges (such as too many emails) as well as "soft" challenges (limited employee connections, both personally and professionally).

When we asked them how they've managed to do this, three core points surfaced.

Early buy-in

Before launching the Jostle platform, Maria and her team were very intentional in the way they introduced and explained the new intranet to everyone. They got staff buy-in early on. "We went to our different offices and showed it to people. Talked to people. It was easy to demonstrate how much better it was than what we had. It's very different to what we are used to in this sector. It's about people—like the Shout-Outs—and people could really tell it was *for* them."

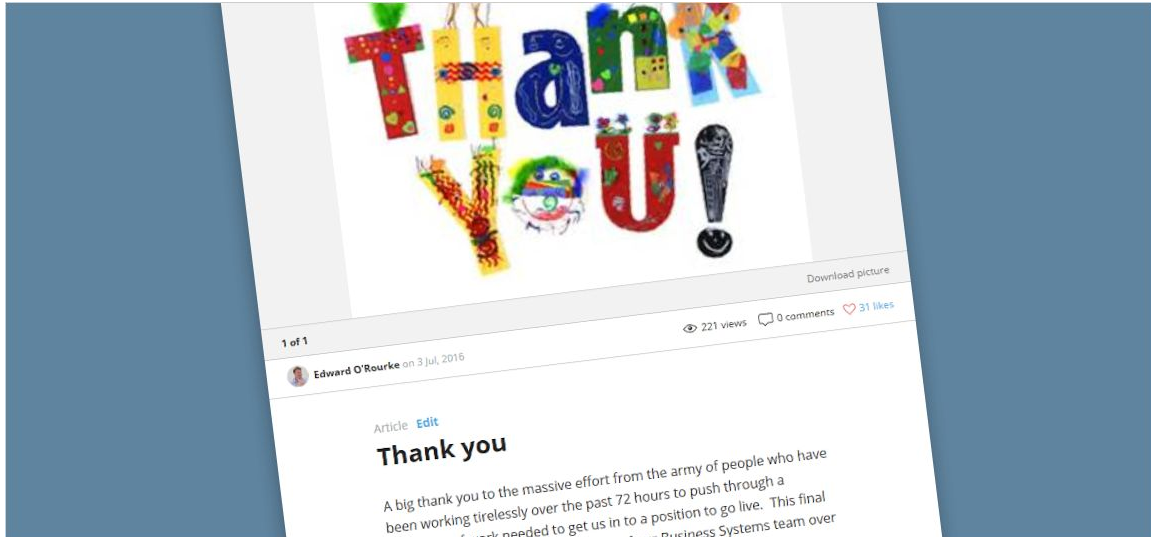
CEO support

From the start, Ashtons' CEO, Edward O'Rourke, actively supported the move to the Jostle platform and made his opinion clear. This laid the groundwork for early success.

"Edward was a big promoter of the Jostle platform; absolutely. He was actively involved. Whilst we were behind the scenes inputting our information, he was actively promoting it. In fact, we had a summer conference just after we decided to go with the Jostle platform, and he played a Jostle YouTube video for everyone to see," said Maria.

"In general, we believe that good behavior is demonstrated from those at the top. If those at the top demonstrate good behavior then that encourages junior staff to do so as well. This was the case when we were launching the Jostle platform and in the way our Management team use the platform to this day."





A NEWS Article from Ashtons' CEO, Edward

Ongoing education

Ashtons is committed to sustaining the communication improvements they've found with the Jostle platform. Each new employee is introduced to Jostle on the first day of Ashtons induction process.

In addition, the Knowledge team visits each office on a quarterly basis to run Jostle Lunch and Learn sessions. So, everyone becomes more aware of the depth of the tool and what they can use it for; especially when there are new feature updates.

Maria said "We find it really helps to show them the features in action at these events, which for very busy, senior lawyers, is a boon. They usually get something out of the Lunch & Learn that they didn't know, and that makes them more active users."

Results

When we asked Maria and Krishan if they felt they'd achieved their goal of improving communication and knowledge sharing, their response was candid:

"Definitely. Before, there were members of teams in different offices that really didn't know everyone who was part of their team, and that's definitely improved," said Maria. "We regularly see members of teams from different offices publicly recognizing each other on the

Jostle platform. It's obvious that this has helped a great deal in terms of teams working better together."

"Our internal email traffic has also reduced considerably," Krishan added. "There are very few company-wide emails that go out these days. So, yes, we think we have certainly achieved our goals."

"It's obvious that the Jostle platform has helped a great deal in terms of teams working better together."



Maria Quirke
Head of Knowledge

About Jostle Corporation

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