

# why it's not B2B or B2C; it's business to everyone

**At Crown, our approach is Business to Everyone. We have adopted this approach in response to ongoing changes in the communications landscape – the old barriers are quite literally being swept away, but also because we are all sophisticated consumers, whether we are employers, employees, stakeholders, partners, contractors or volunteers.**

**Here Giles Cattle, head of planning and experience at Crown, explains why partisan and segmented content designed for single channels is no longer what any organisation really needs or wants.**

There is now an increased awareness across every industry sector that most forms of communication, regardless of their intended audience, need to be developed to the same rigorous standards. Let's take the example of employee engagement, something every organisation has to consider.

We recognise that, more often than not, there is simply a void where there should be an ongoing exchange of ideas between Internal and External Communications teams. All content should be "consumable" by all of your audiences.

Investing in your people through clear and motivating communications will reap exponential rewards in terms of productivity, engagement and brand advocacy. Brands can no longer just spend money marketing to the consumer. Their staff are consumers too. They are savvy and they look to work for an employer of choice. Selling a brand promise to employees using the same marketing techniques increases advocacy in values, and delivers more consistent behaviour that reflect those values, in turn delivering better customer service and greater brand advocacy in customers. Employees are among the most important external brand guardians, so why isn't this channel invested in by external marketing as a matter of course?

Today, organisations should respect the desires and tastes of their workforce by appealing to their interests and communicating with them on an emotional level. They need to speak to their staff in the same way they speak to their consumers. Business to Everyone means forgetting the old ways – traditional organisations spend less than 10% of their total marketing budget on internal communication. Not only is this focus on budget a barrier to engaging your employees, but understanding and engaging your audience in a sophisticated way can be cost effective; it's about the messaging and positioning.

Take recognising your employees as an example. Not only is this a powerful opportunity to make your people feel special and motivated, but it also generates content for both your internal and external channels. We've seen this recently with internal engagement work we did for a client in the airline industry – their customer service champions embodied their customer promise, and working as one team, we created a task where they used their own bodies collectively to build the icons from the customer charter. The inherent symbolism proved great communications capital: their promises are made up and out of their people. This choreographed task, documented with photographs and videos, was specifically designed to not only create a unifying challenge embedding the promises in those participants, but also to create engaging content for the organisation's internal and external channels, including its inflight magazine, seen by tens of millions of customers across 27 countries.



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Such a strong example of how internal and external communications qualify and complement each other defines and epitomises our conviction in the principle of Business to Everyone. This approach builds consistency and allows you to create something that can also engage consumers such as Transport for London's LU150 Internal Employee Engagement Campaign (see below), which formed a key focal point of their internal campaign to celebrate 150 years of the London Underground. Around this, we were able to galvanise elements of internal AND external communication, with the creation of content and platforms for the reward and recognition of employees, also engaging tens of millions of consumers on the Underground network during the campaign.

Both of these examples demonstrate the value of generating content internally, and using it to populate all channels, engaging with every audience. To help achieve this consistently, organisations need to ensure that there are clearly coordinated communications channels between their Internal and External Communication teams. From every internal communication channel emerges examples of great storytelling, which enable your customers to get to know your brand better. It is these stories that build your brand personality and provide that point of difference – and offer an opportunity to reward and recognise employees in the process.

There will come a time when these arbitrary divisions between in-house communication teams, and between internal and external channels, are recognised as counter-intuitive and actually a barrier to positive and effective communication with all your audiences. The key lesson to take from this is that no audience is more important than another; they all need to be treated with the same levels of sophistication and engaged effectively.

**Treat each campaign as if it's consumer-facing.**

**Address your employees as you would your consumers.**

**Amplify and advocate your core messages to everyone.**

**Audit every communication channel. Think of new ones. Create content that can be used on all of them.**

**Throw away the rule book – it's out of date.**

**Grow advocacy, trust and belief in consumers towards your brand by engaging the most important channel a brand has: its employees.**

Crown is a marketing communications agency and an award-winning producer of campaigns and events for global brands. If you would like to discuss any of the points raised here, or explore your forthcoming event and campaign plans, please do not hesitate to contact us on 0207 605 4500 or email us at [charlie@crowNBC.com](mailto:charlie@crowNBC.com)

