

# Intranets

Dion Lindsay

## The expanding world of intranets

This issue's column brings you up to date on current sources for inspiration and examples of intranets - two of the most frequent concerns raised at UKeIG's Intranets Forum and courses.

Gone are the days when little was publicly shared about intranets, when screen shots were few and far between. Now there's a conference season, prizes are awarded annually for innovation in intranet design, and recent books published on intranets are particularly laced with examples. There's also a small but growing range of YouTube videos showing off the proud creations of intranet managers.

## Conferences

There are three big intranet conferences in Europe between now and Christmas.

Interaction Intranet: Exclusively Intranets. 24-25 September 2013. London  
<http://www.intranetconference.com/>

Nordic Intranet Summit. 21-22 October 2013. Stockholm

<http://www.nordicintranets.com/stockholm/>

J Boye's Web and Intranet Conference: Turn experience into advantage. 5-7 November 2013. Aarhus <http://aarhus13.jboye.com/>

Whether or not you are able to go to these conferences, you can still of course get inspiration from them. Their websites give a good indication of what were hot topics when the programmes were put together (presumably in early 2013), and mostly still are: mobile, collaboration, SharePoint 2013, content management, social media, and search. Two particularly new topics – in terms of formal sessions are: return on investment for intranets (Nordic Intranet Summit), and user experience design (J Boye's Web and Intranet Conference).

The lead-up to and comments on the conferences can all be followed on twitter (#iic13, #norintra, #jboye13 respectively) and intranet commenta-

tors will of course be tweeting (#dionl for Dion Lindsay).

All told then, an interesting conference season, which all of us should be able to get some benefit from, whether we get to attend or not. Published proceedings are sometimes available, though not as often as pre-digital-workplace days: I will tweet details as I find them and report back on any in this column in the December issue of *eLucidate*.

## Prizes

Although it's too late to enter for this year's intranet prizes, there's bound to be a lot to learn and be inspired by in the 2013 awards.

James Robertson of Step Two Designs is in London, facilitating a session on this year's winners of his company's prestigious Intranet Innovation awards on 19 September. The afternoon is being hosted by Intranetters, at 8 Fitzroy St <https://intranetters-sep13.eventbrite.com.au>. Focus will be justly on three UK winners (Barclays Bank (platinum), Coca-Cola Enterprises (gold) and Arup (commended); the 4<sup>th</sup> UK winner is Shepperd and Wetterburn (commended)), and all 19 winners are featured in detail in Step Two Designs' report <http://store.steptwo.com.au/product/intranet-innovations/>

Interact Intranet also holds annual awards <http://www.interact-intranet.com/intranet-excellence-awards-2013/>. You have to be an existing Interact customer to take part, and awards are presented at their Interaction Intranet Conference at the end of September (see above). If previous years are to go by, the results of

Interact Intranet's competition will be on their blog in October: while they will be Interact Intranet customers, there are likely to be enough details to furnish our professional imaginations.

Awards reports are great sources for examples and screen shots as well as inspiration, so here are a few links to more of this year's awards

Thoughtfarmer's Best Intranets Awards 2013. <http://www.thoughtfarmer.com/blog/best-intranet-collaboration/>. Awarded at the end of July

Nielsen Norman Group's 2013 Intranet Design Annual Awards

<http://www.nngroup.com/news/item/2013-intranet-design-awards/> Announced in January 2013

Quadriga University Berlin's Digital Communication Awards 2013 <http://www.digital-awards.eu/categories/> Announced on Sept 20 2013.

## Books

Of course there are many useful surveys on intranet design and use (a topic for a column early in 2014), but published case studies are still a little harder to come by. A recent book by James Robertson, [Essential intranets: inspiring sites that deliver business value](#), contains 150 screenshots illustrating how to establish the fundamentals and how to deliver business value.

From the same author (James Robertson really does publish a lot of good material on intranets!) is the full report of this year's Intranet Innovation Awards, and (significantly for sheer numbers of high quality case studies) a bundle of all winners

over the seven years' existence of the awards <http://store.steptwo.com.au/product/intranet-innovations-bundle/>. At Australian AUD\$89.00 and \$189 respectively, and a current exchange rate of AUD\$1.72 to £1.00, these may be affordable for your employer if they are keen to proceed with intranet design on a strong evidence base.

## Videos

Increasingly organisations are using YouTube to publish introductions to their intranets for their employees. One such, very well produced, video, is by Marie Curie for its intranet at [http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_embedded&v=SNAslShWOR4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=SNAslShWOR4).

As well as providing us with as live an example of an intranet as we are likely to find in the public

domain, this is a good example of how to use video as a training and induction tool for intranet users.

## Round-up

All told then, the current source base for examples of intranets is lively and innovative. I hope to bring you more examples in future columns. Meantime, if you have instances you would like me to link to, please email me at [dion@dionlindsayconsulting.com](mailto:dion@dionlindsayconsulting.com), and mark the email *ELucidate*. Reactions to anything published in the column, and suggestions for future topics, will be very welcome at the same address.

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