

From the 'Big Quit'

2024 Trends in HR and
Internal Communications

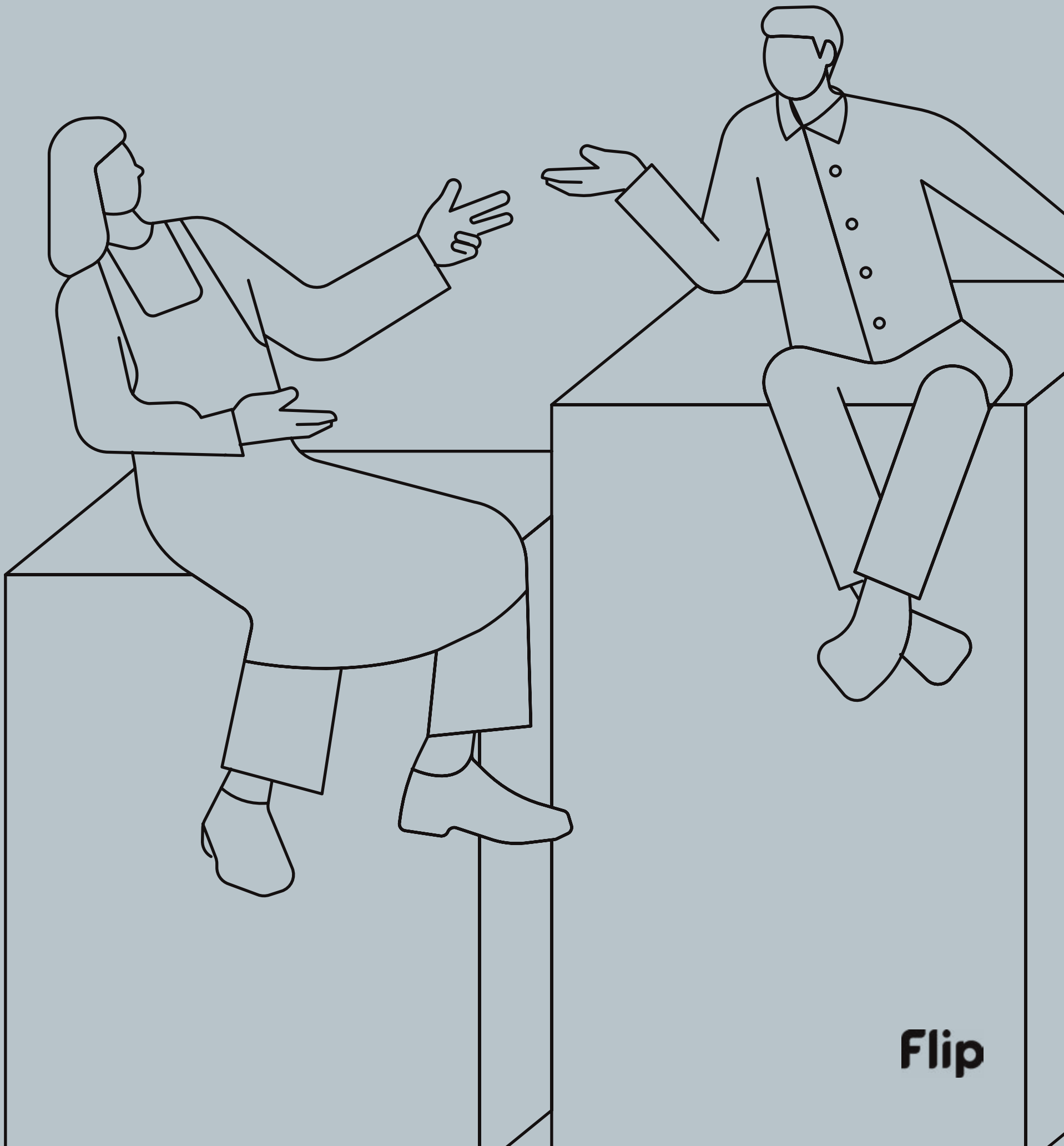
*This cover picture was generated with AI
(keep reading if you want to learn more about this megatrend)



to the 'Great Shift'

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Intro

In 2023, we saw a tidal wave of changes that rocked the world of work. The year began with massive tech layoffs and whispers of generative AI threatening to disrupt life as we know it. In May, the WHO declared an official end to the Covid-19 pandemic, and employers continued to push their return-to-office agendas. The Great Resignation petered out by summer. Add to that record-high inflation, interest rate hikes, labour union strikes, and a continued post-pandemic workers' market, and you might be feeling seasick from the journey.



Intro

In 2024, the tide will turn as we enter an employer's market. Job growth cooled down toward the end of 2023. September saw UK job vacancies* cut for the first time in more than 2.5 years as employers slowed their hiring. Meanwhile, U.S. job growth fell to 150,000 in October as unemployment rose to 3.9%, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics*.

Since the pandemic, job seekers have benefited from a red-hot labour market that was hungry for workers. But now that hiring has slowed, workers don't have the same leverage as before. More employees will hold on tightly to their roles over job-hopping.

But let's clear up one thing about the Great Resignation: Though it ebbed in America over the summer as quit rates stabilised, a labour shortage still looms in many economies and sectors. Employers are still reporting difficulties hiring skilled workers.

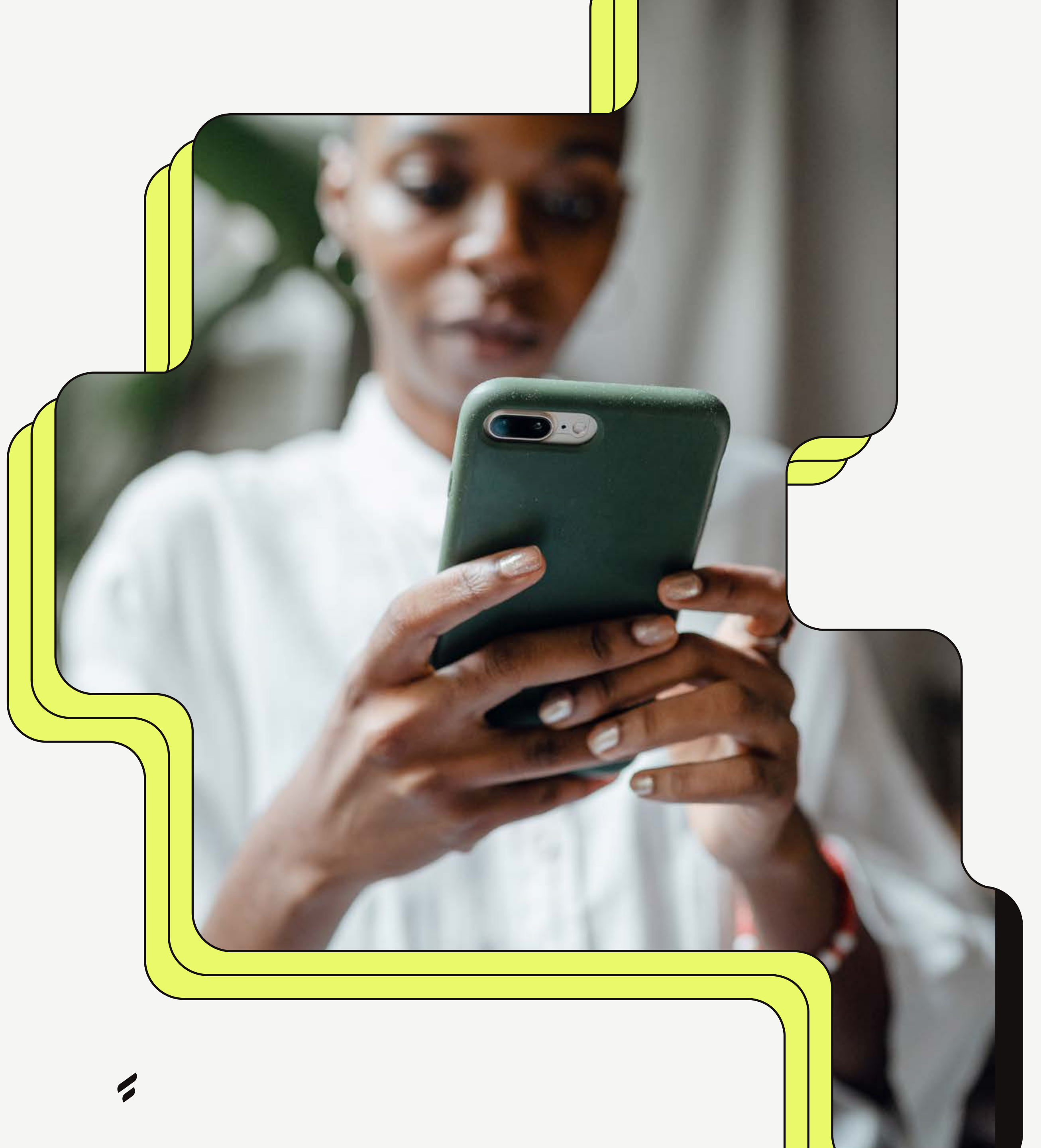
Economists predict* that labour shortages in certain sectors will persist for years, due to factors such as the workforce getting older, barriers to entry for foreign job seekers, and a skills gap. It is predicted that the UK economy could see a shortfall of 2.6 million workers by 2030*.

All of this is happening against the backdrop of employee happiness reaching an all-time low*. So, HR and internal comms professionals still have a major role to play in ensuring that workers are engaged, happy, and productive. Ultimately, these metrics impact your company's bottom line.

Additionally, 2024 will be a big year for return-to-office. An August 2023 report from Resume Builder* found that 90% of companies intend to implement RTO policies by the end of 2024, and 28% intend to threaten to fire employees who fail to comply. HR and IC will be tasked with enforcing and communicating these policies. A tall order for anyone.

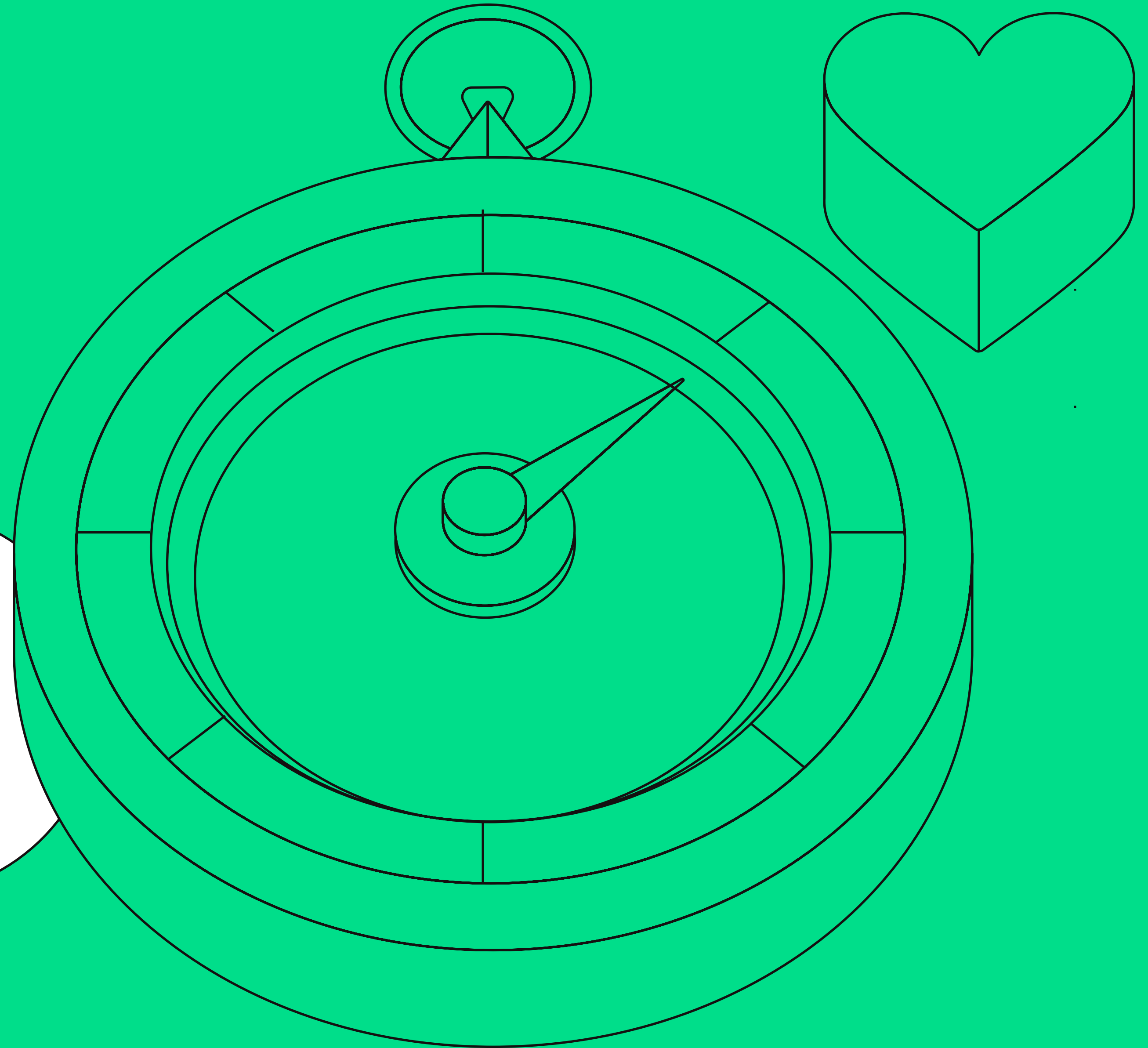
It's a turbulent time to be in Internal Communications (IC) or HR. But as with all periods of significant change, it's a time when you can have the most impact. In this whitepaper, we'll go over the top five trends shaping HR and Internal Communications in 2024 and how you can navigate the changing seas to steer your organisation to success.

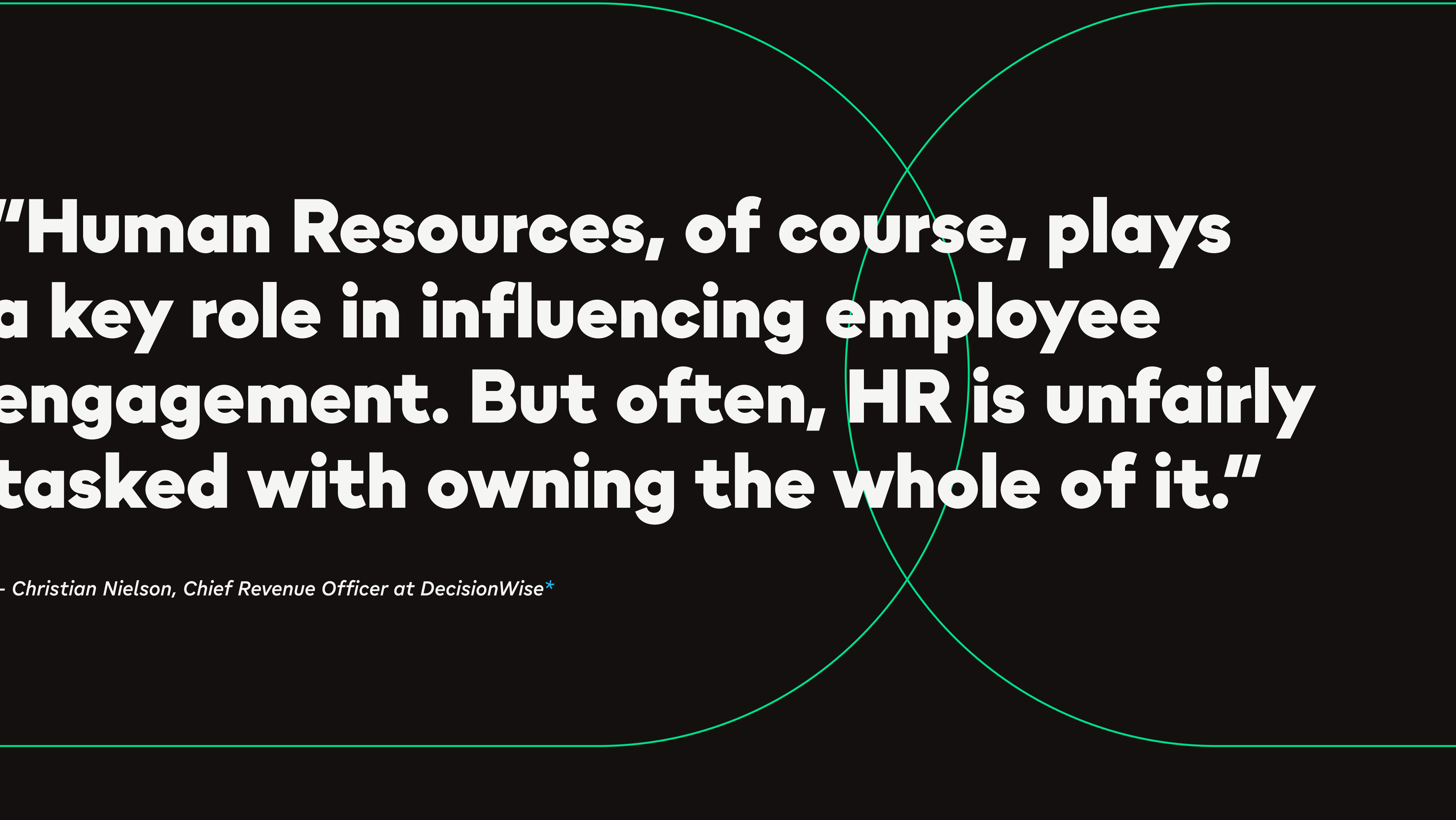
5 Internal Comms & HR trends that will shape 2024



#01

**Internal communicators
will continue to prioritise
employee engagement**





“Human Resources, of course, plays a key role in influencing employee engagement. But often, HR is unfairly tasked with owning the whole of it.”

— Christian Nielson, Chief Revenue Officer at DecisionWise*

Employee productivity plummeted* to record lows in 2022, with a small resurgence of 5% in the third quarter of 2023, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics*.

With productivity struggling to regain its footing, it's no longer enough for IC to keep employees informed – they must keep them engaged, too. Because, as Gallup* research confirms, employee engagement is positively correlated with employee productivity.

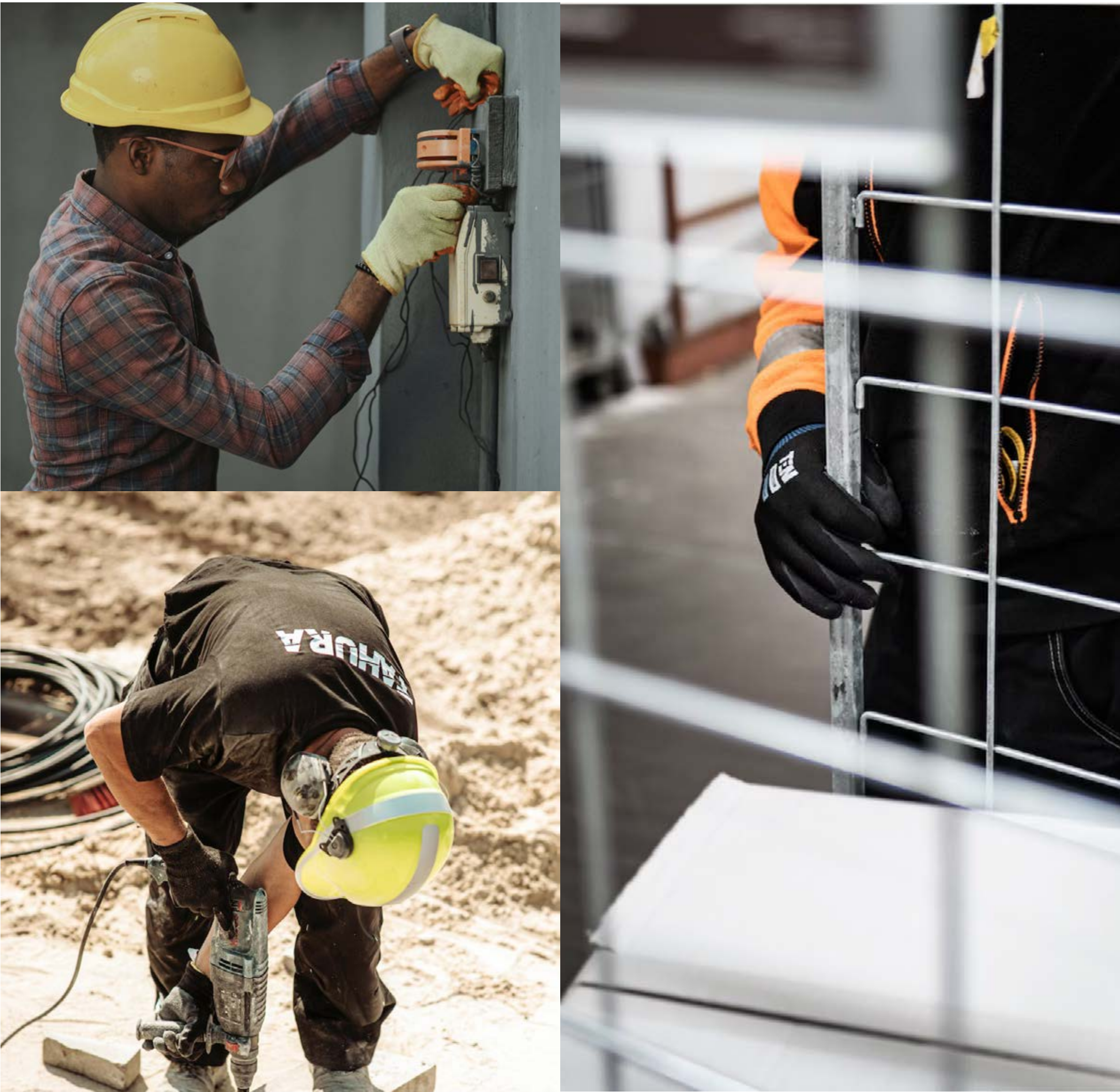
Traditionally, HR has been seen as the department that's in charge of driving employee engagement. But in recent years, internal communications has played a bigger role, and in 2024 employee engagement remains IC professionals' number one focus.

80% of internal communicators say their primary goal for 2024 is employee engagement and 'creating a better place to work.'*

As Gallup* writes, 'The greatest cause of a workplace engagement program's failure is this: Employee engagement is widely considered 'an HR thing.'

"Employee engagement is the involvement and enthusiasm of employees in both their work and workplace. Highly engaged teams outperform the rest in business outcomes critical to the success of your organization."

– Gallup*



How this trend is playing out in real life

Recently, Mercedes-Benz AG renamed its Internal Communications department to 'Employee Engagement,' and the team took on tasks that reflect its new name. In 2023, in an effort to improve employee engagement, they invited 500+ employees to IAA, an automobile trade fair, and surprised the group by having CEO Ola Källenius show them around.

This just goes to show that things like appreciation, recognition, and employee engagement programmes are not just HR's job anymore.

Imagine that your CEO himself takes the time to guide his employees around the booth of the joint company...

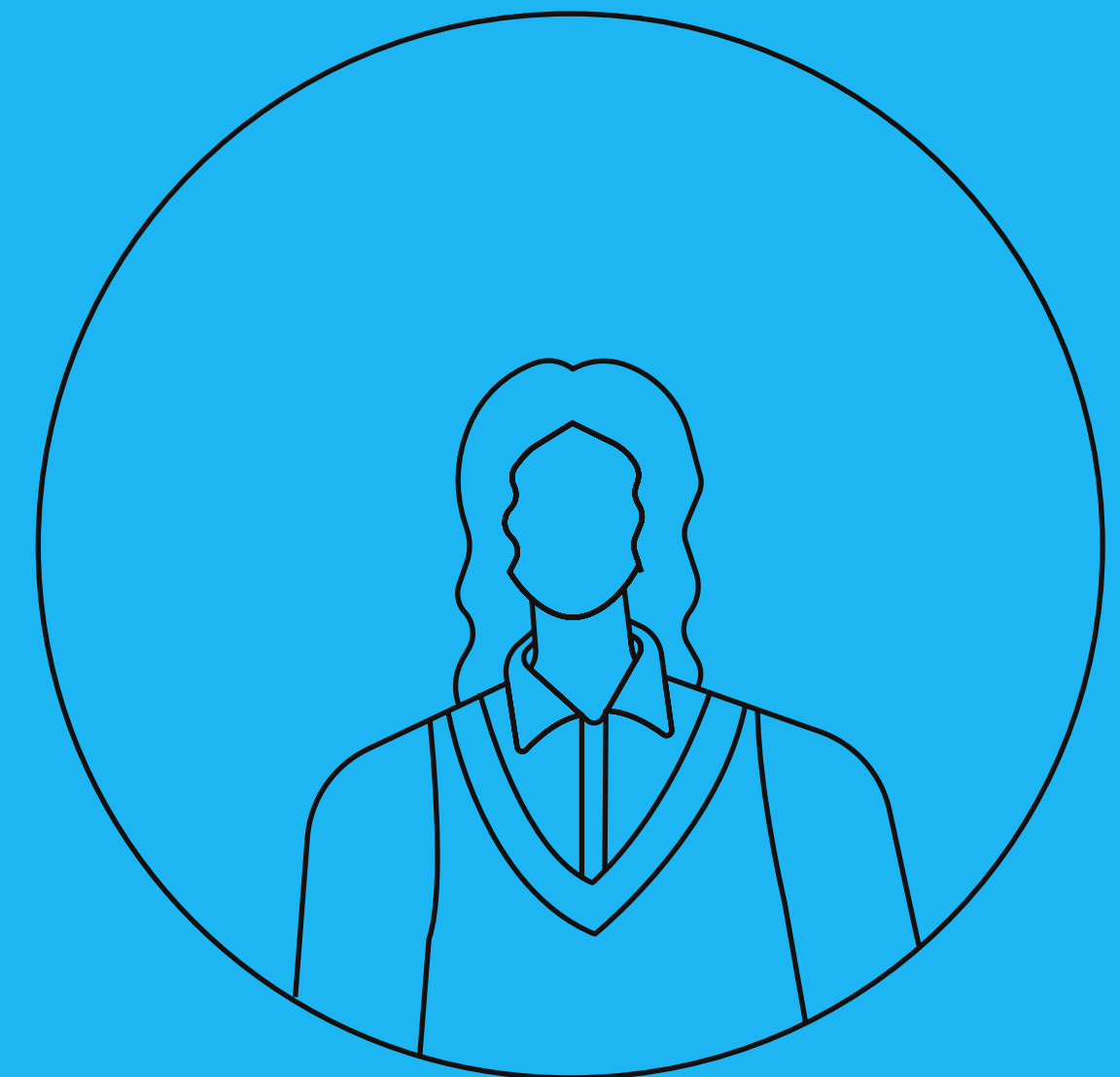
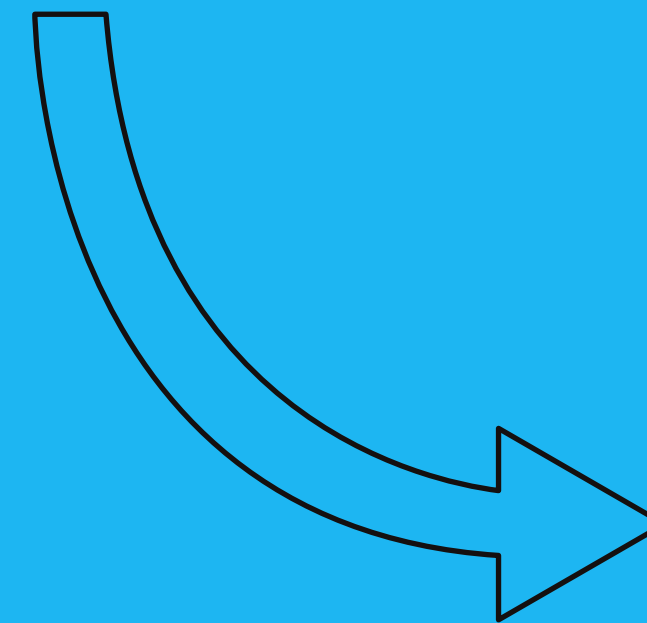
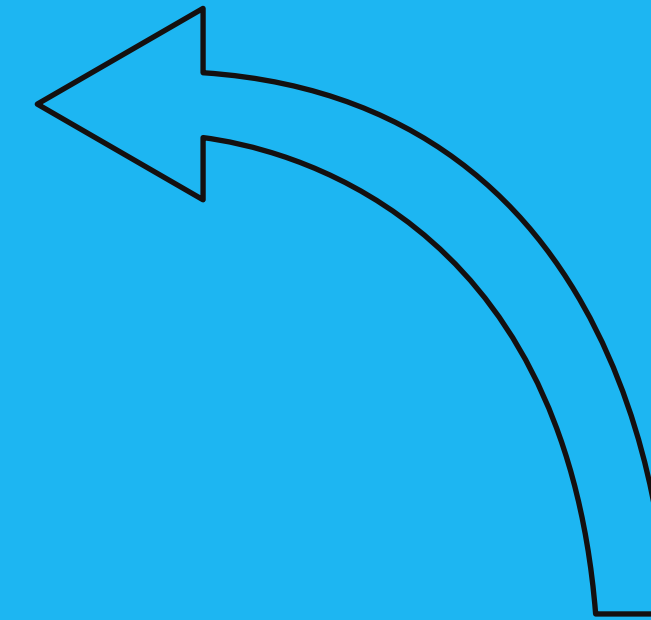
This is exactly what some of our colleagues from **Mercedes-Benz AG** experienced today at the IAA Mobility 2023. As the highlight of a campaign in which we brought a total of more than 500 employees from a wide variety of areas to Munich by bus, **Ola Källenius** "surprised" a group - and without further ado led through our pavilion together with tour guide Michael. I think: That's how appreciation works!

Thanks to the many colleagues who made our amazing appearance in the Bavarian capital possible! And thanks to the best team at Employee Engagement Travel: **Carolin Emmerich Eva Stollenwerk Sven Sattler Christian Scholz** Kerstin Bach-Schuff **Michael Jochum Shama Alam Levi Regenfuß Linus Kieser**.



#02

**Internal Comms and HR
will collaborate more
than ever before**



A 2024 internal communications report from Workshop* found that creating employee influencers is high on internal communicators' to-do lists, with 55% saying they're interested in exploring this trend. That means IC and HR will not only need to collaborate with each other, but they'll also be working with the marketing department to identify these influencers and create content that resonates and engages.

In August 2023, consultant Craig Smith interviewed Kerry-Ann Betton Stimpson, the CMO of JMMB Group, on the Engaging Internal Comms* podcast. They discussed how important it is for internal comms, marketing, and HR to collaborate in order to engage employees.

It's long been debated just where Internal Comms belongs. Is it HR? Marketing? Global Communications? Or, perhaps IC is its own independent department?

In 2024, IC professionals will find themselves working alongside HR more and more. Internal communications' role is so crucial and so connected to HR that many companies will choose to overlap the two functions or converge the two departments into one entity.

In Gallagher's 2023 State of the Sector report*, 74% of communication and HR leaders said the purpose of internal communications is to foster a sense of culture and belonging – a domain traditionally owned by HR.



"That partnership with marketing and internal comms, and bringing in HR as the people specialist, can really be a magical thing."

– Kerry-Ann Betton Stimpson, the CMO of JMMB Group*

In fact, IC and HR are increasingly sharing many similar responsibilities:

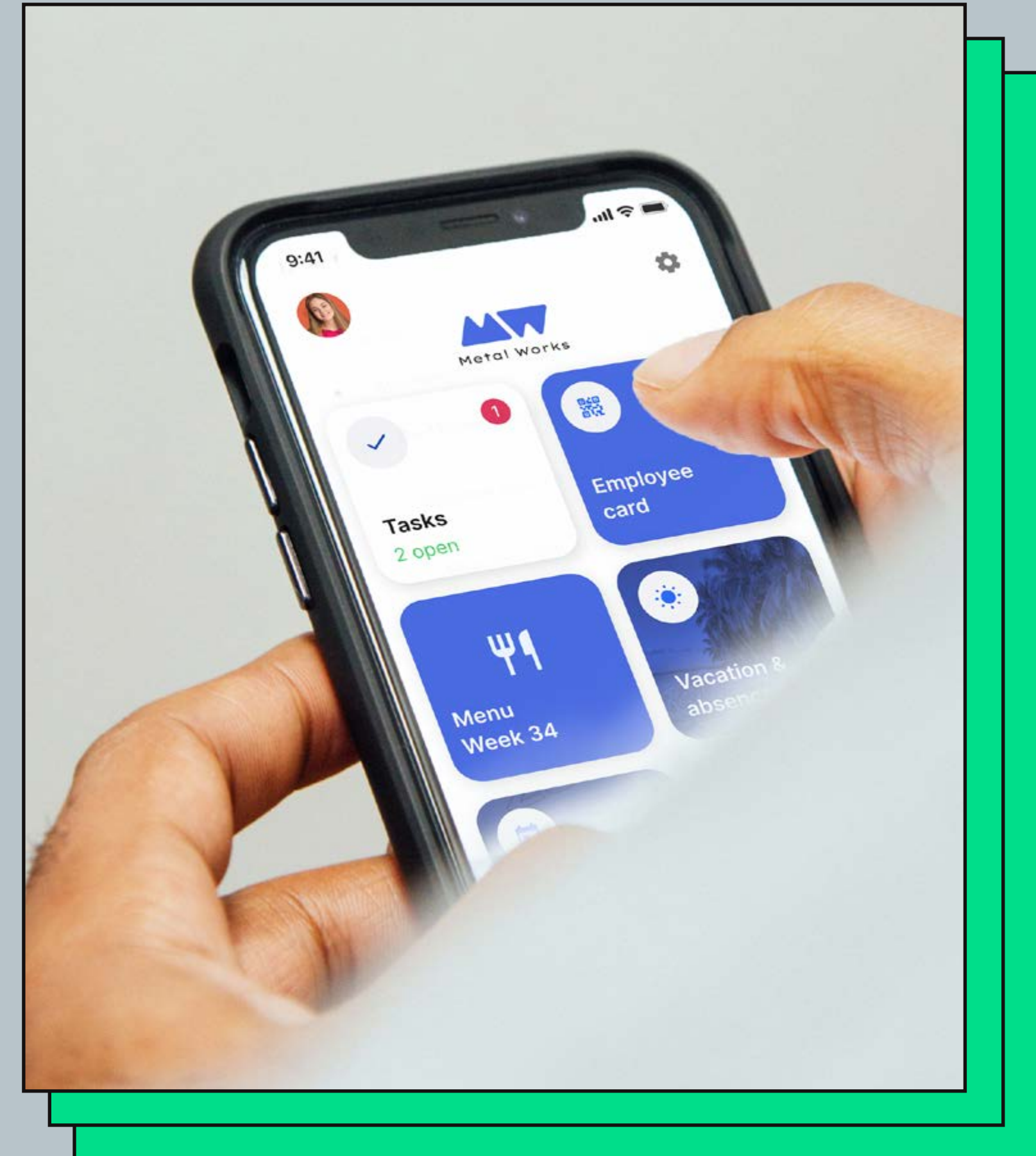
As a company that works with large enterprises across frontline employee-dominated sectors including retail, manufacturing, and healthcare, we’re seeing it firsthand here at Flip. Initially launched as a communications tool to connect businesses with their non-desk workers, Flip has grown alongside customer needs to become a communications and workforce management platform for both HR and Internal Comms, whose roles and responsibilities are growing closer than ever before.



How you can ride the wave of this trend

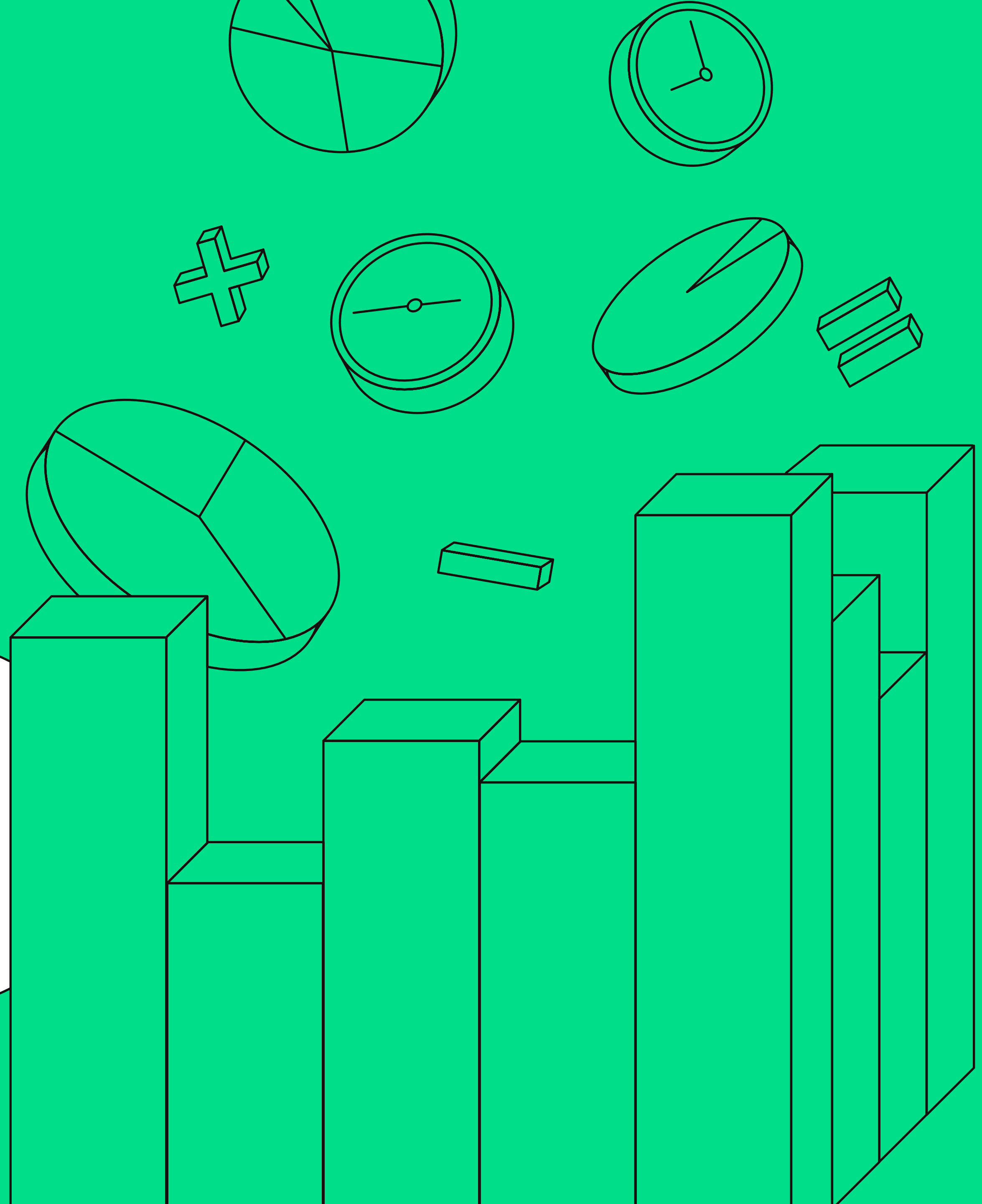
The trend of Internal Communications placing continued emphasis on employee engagement, coupled with the increasingly shared areas of responsibility with HR means these two departments are poised to team up and conquer – together. See these as complementary roles. HR designs the programmes, and IC promotes them throughout the workforce. HR develops policies, and IC communicates them. Tackle these as a team and you'll have greater impact.

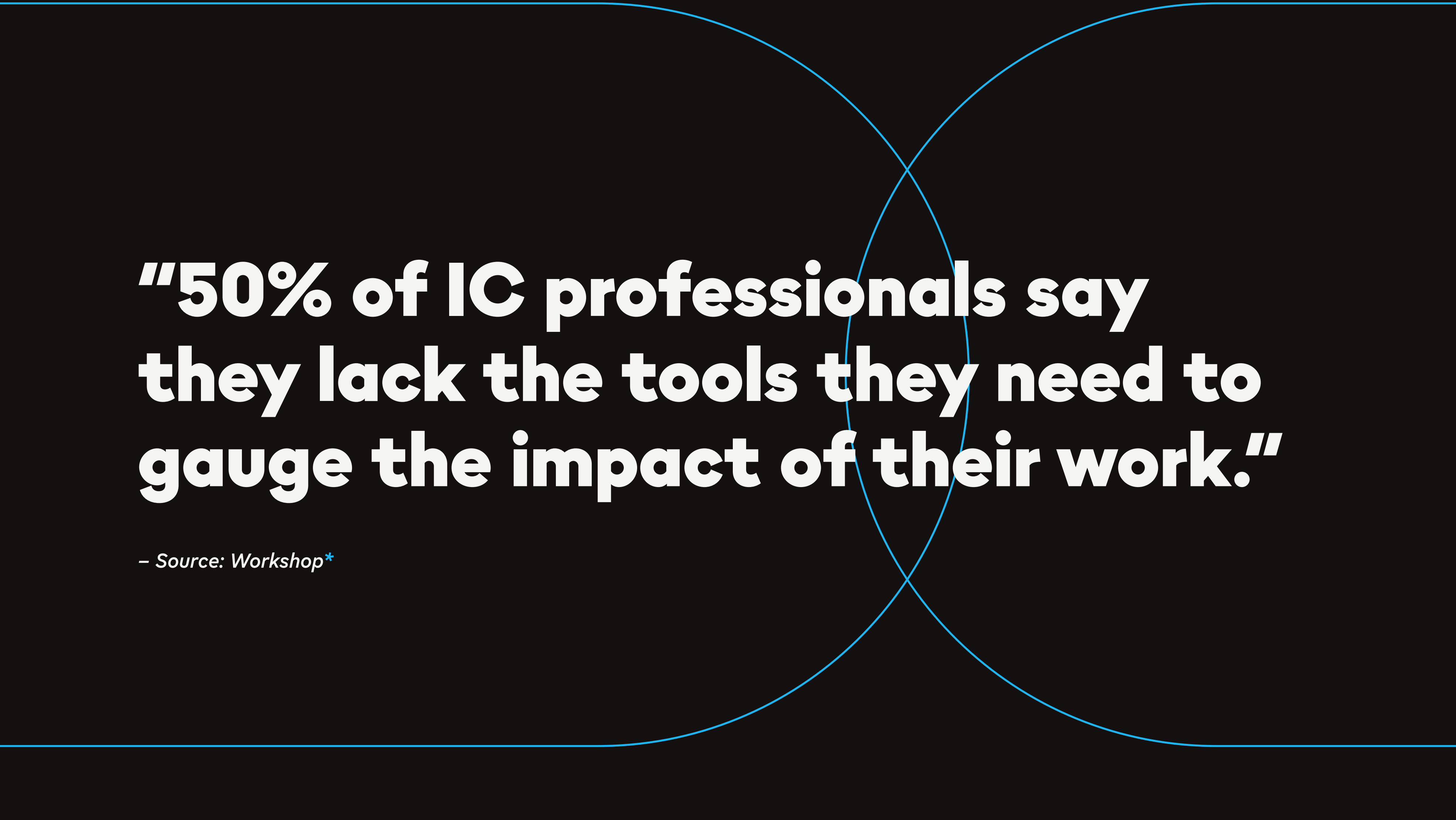
To drive better collaboration between the two departments, consider an employee app like Flip. With group-specific chats and channels, you can avoid distractions and ensure that the right information reaches the relevant parties of both HR and IC teams.



#03

**Both IC and HR will
leverage analytics tools
to prove business impact**





**“50% of IC professionals say
they lack the tools they need to
gauge the impact of their work.”**

– Source: Workshop*

Now that the corporate hiring sprees of 2021 and 2022 are behind us, and as economic uncertainty looms, companies will continue to cut costs and decrease expensive staff. Any team that can't prove the revenue impact of their work risks losing their jobs.

As an HR or IC professional, you don't have to convince us that your role is important – we already know! However, many HR and comms pros will struggle to show their value to the organisation in 2024. According to Lattice's 2024 State of People Strategy* report,

44%

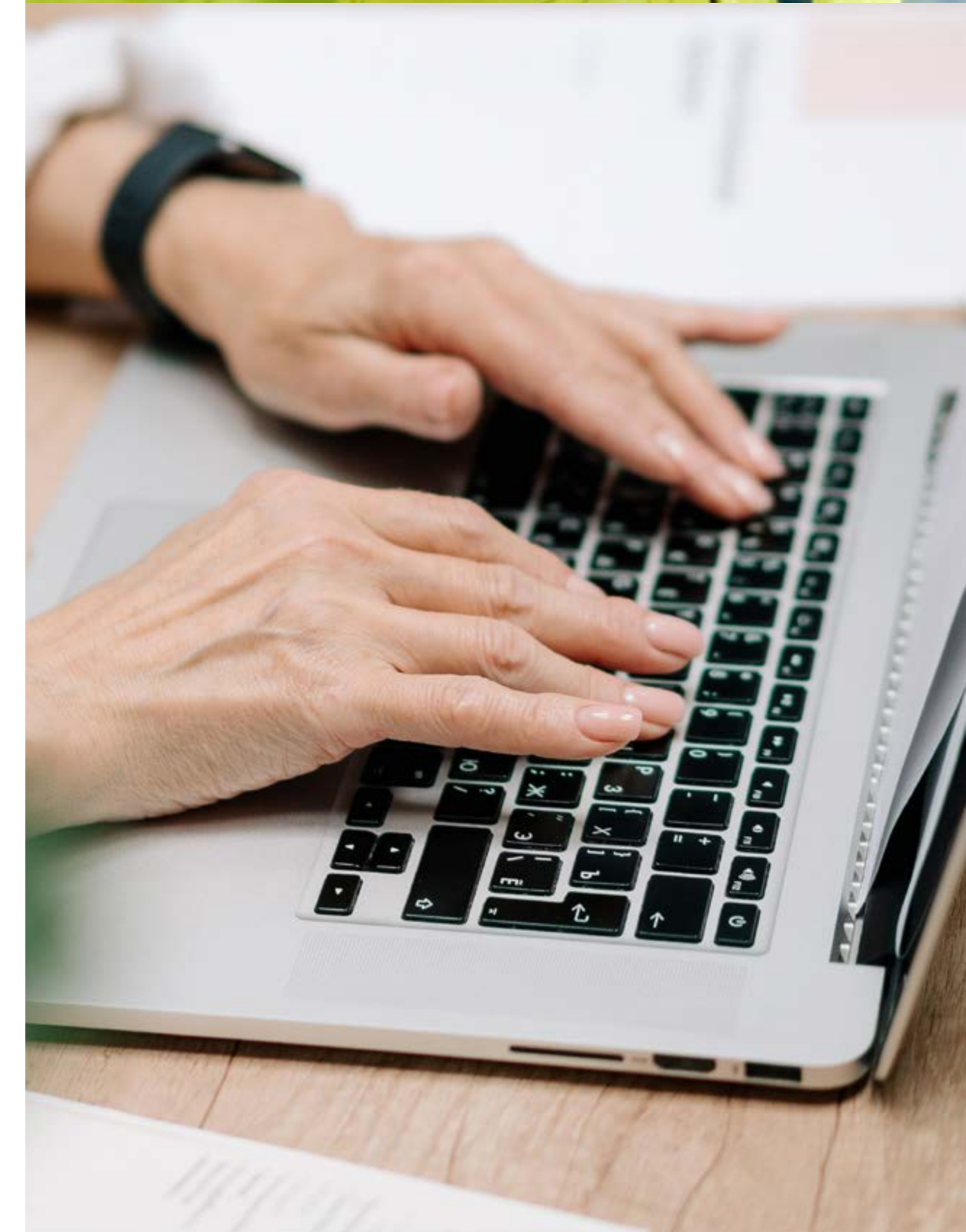
of HR leaders say they're feeling more pressure from C-suite leaders to prove their work is worth the investment.

If your team is not already using digital channels for employee communication, engagement, and HR services, now is the time to start. At a minimum,

choose a single channel that has built-in analytics so you can track key metrics like adoption, reach, comments, and clicks. But it shouldn't stop there: HR and Internal Communications leaders need to show the impact of their communications.

'As a communications professional, I want to know if we can use data to analyse whether certain communications result in a change in behaviour,' writes Rebecca Nicholson*, VP Global Employee Communications at SAP. 'What did people learn or take away from a communication? What impact did it have? How did it make them feel? Was there anything that they learned that might change the way that they perceive or understand something?'

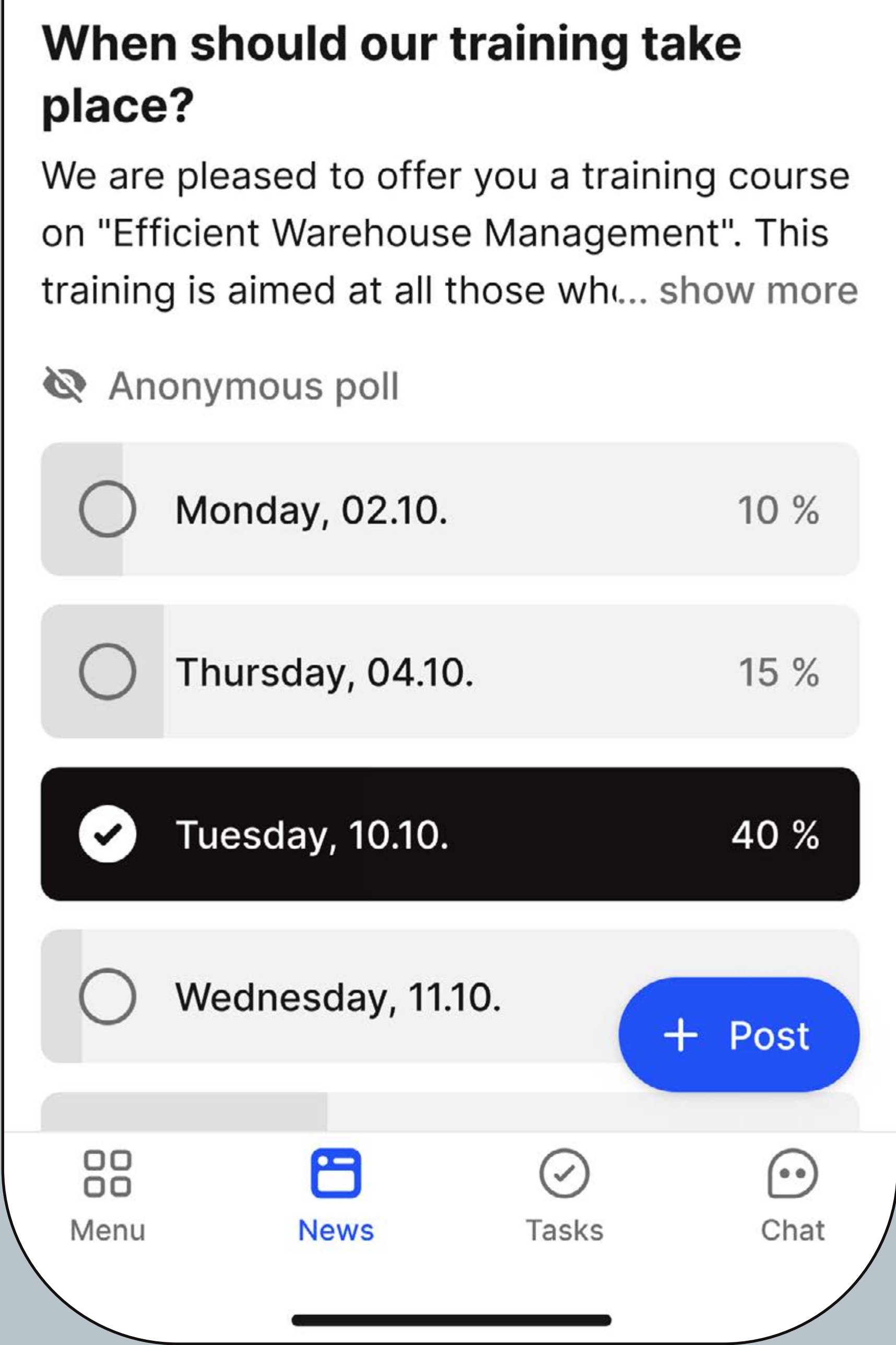
HR and IC can demonstrate their function's impact through sentiment analysis, which can be achieved at scale through special analytics capabilities and AI. Nicholson shares how she and her team at SAP do it: "In my organisation, we're seizing the opportunity to utilise sentiment insights to guide leadership on the organisation's prevailing mood and key concerns. We're implementing new strategies such as linking people survey questions to post-event polls, allowing us to gauge and track sentiment throughout the year".



How you can ride the wave of this trend

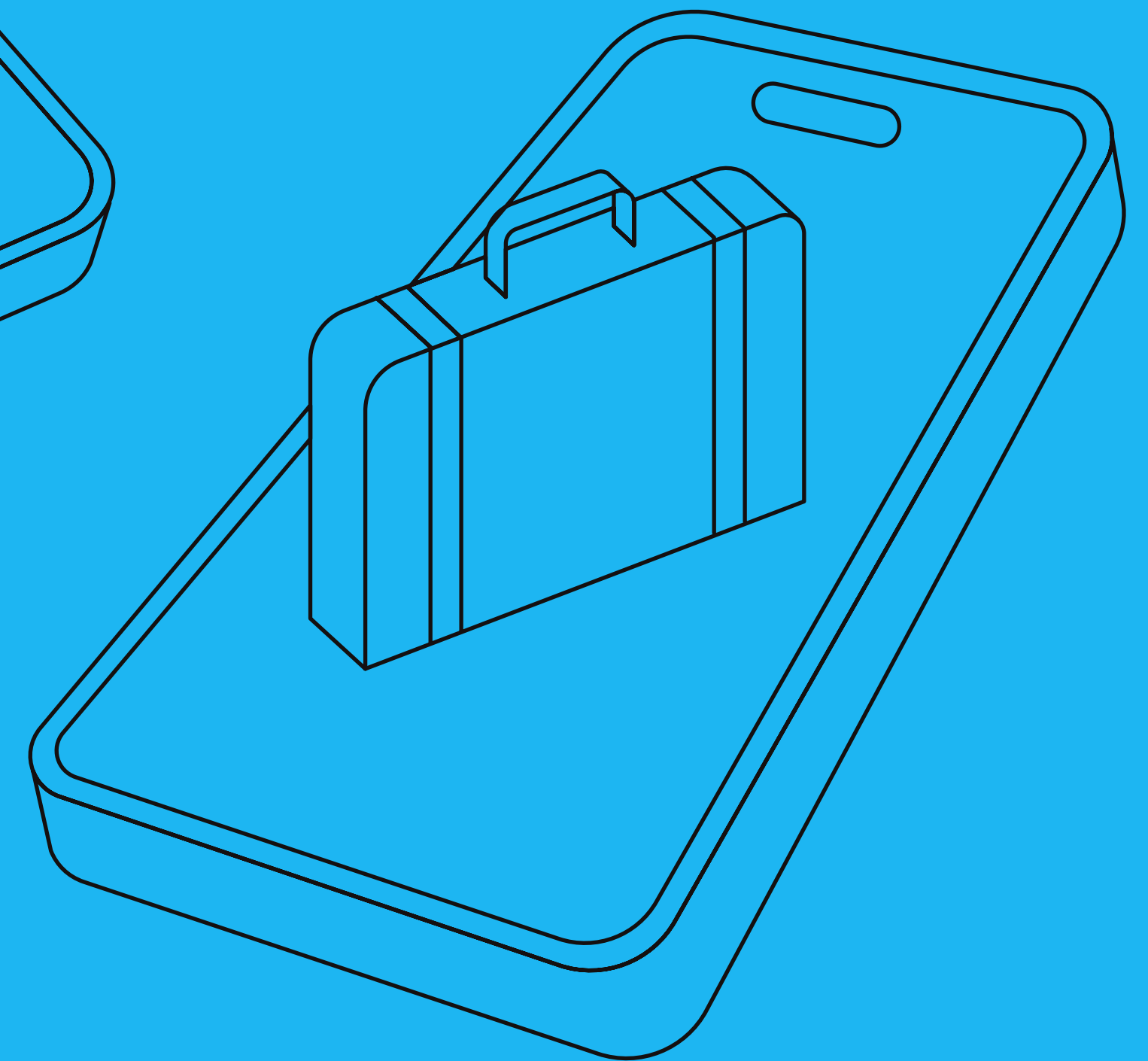
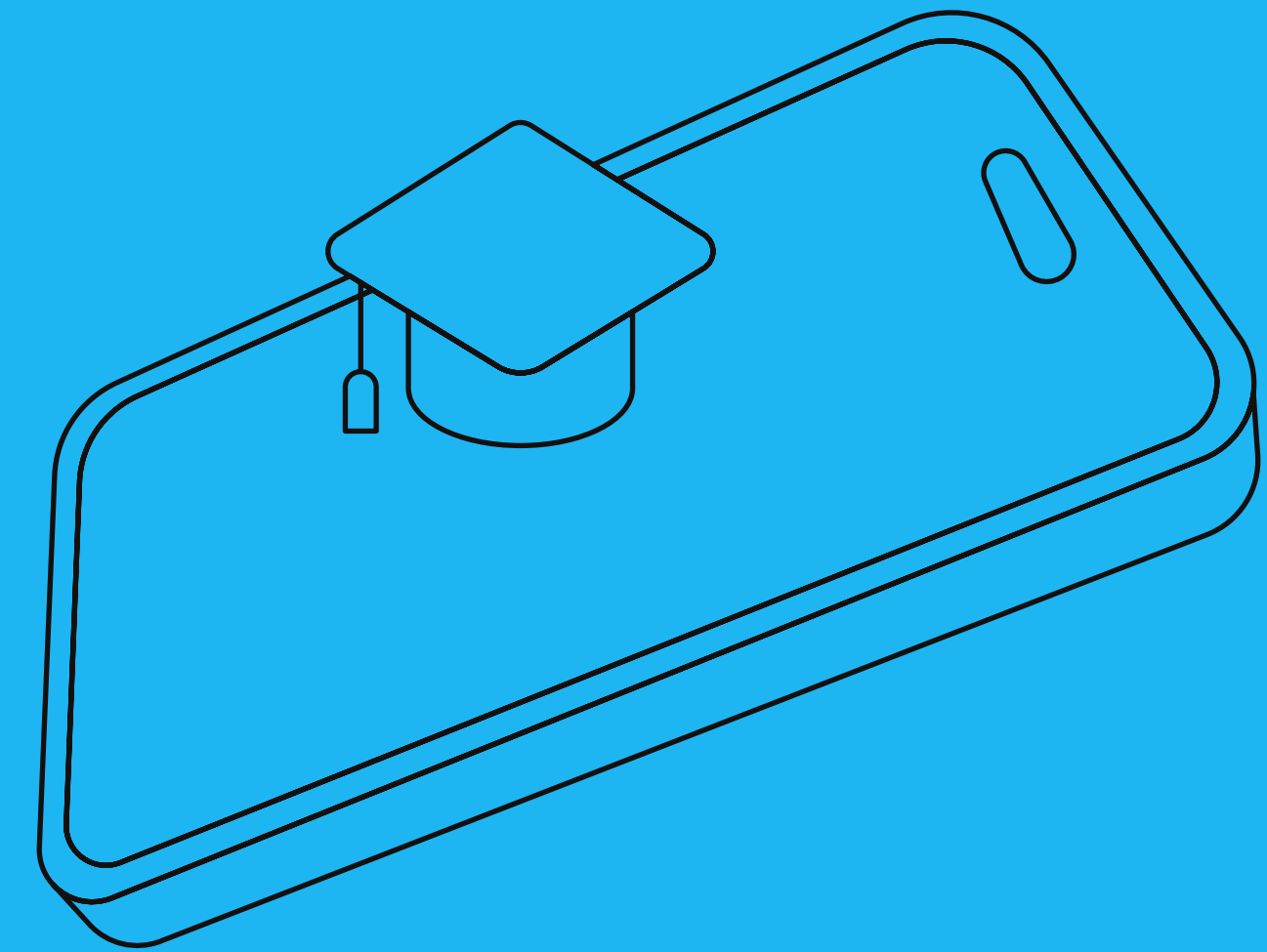
Using the right tools will be key in harnessing impactful data insights in 2024. If you're a business with a large proportion of frontline employees but haven't yet digitalised your frontline communications and HR service delivery, start there (the team here at Flip will be happy to show you how). Once you've got the right tools in place, you'll be able to understand (and demonstrate) how many employees are using your channels and what percentage of them your communications reach.

Now it's time to take it to the next level. Begin tracking employee sentiment with surveys, polls, and sentiment analysis of comments and reactions. Flip, for example, lets employees answer ESAT questions or tell you how they felt about an event you hosted with a single click. They can even remain anonymous, which allows them to speak more freely. Simple surveys like this provide one easy way to measure employee engagement, satisfaction, and morale – all metrics that C-Suite leaders want to see movement on.



#04

**Mobile employee
self-service will be
in higher demand**



When an employee needs to update their contact information, where do they go? When they want more information about the company's leave policy, who do they ask? What about requesting PTO?

In the past, these queries would all be passed to their line manager or HR. But you've already got your hands full. Axonify's 2023 Deskless Report* found that nearly half (49%) of frontline managers report feeling burned out every day. Modern-day organisations are offloading these tasks to an Employee Self Service (ESS) platform, also known as an online portal. In an April 2023 ISG survey* of enterprise leaders, 73% of respondents named self-service as a 'must have' or 'top priority' in their HR tech stack, and 74% said the same about mobile access.

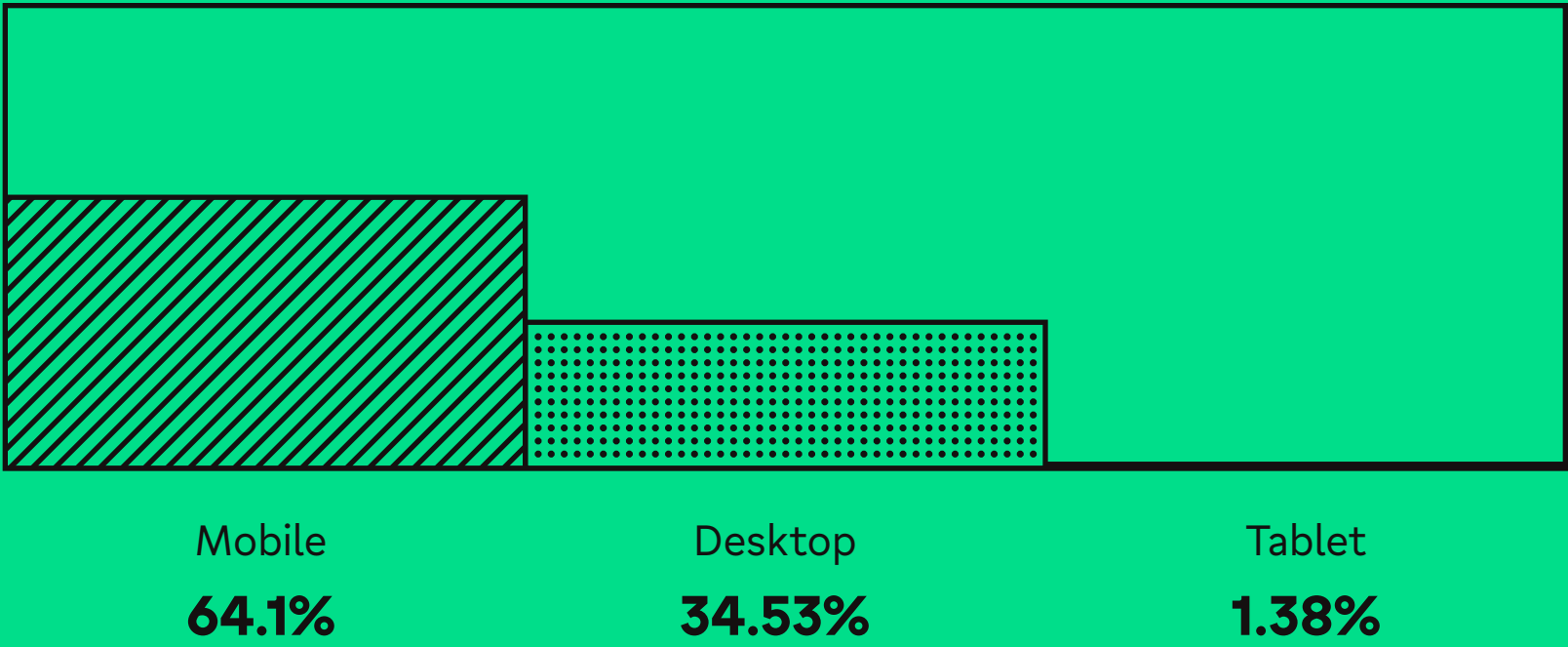
Mobile usage* increased in 2023, and mobile user experience is evolving. In September, Apple discontinued* the last of its smaller-sized iPhones, reflecting the growing amount of tasks we accomplish on mobile.

As hybrid work continues* and mobile usage increases, in 2024, we'll see organisations move to employee self-service that is mobile-first. Just as AI can offload menial tasks from the already full plates of HR pros, mobile employee self-service can save your team time and money. By making it convenient for your workforce to enrol in health insurance, check their benefits, access pay stubs, and request time off (all on their smartphones), you achieve two worthwhile things:

- You empower your employees to stay informed and take advantage of existing tools and benefits.
- You empower your HR staff to stay focused on the tasks that really move the needle on employee engagement, such as coaching managers and developing recognition programs.

**Traffic share
by platform
in October 2023**

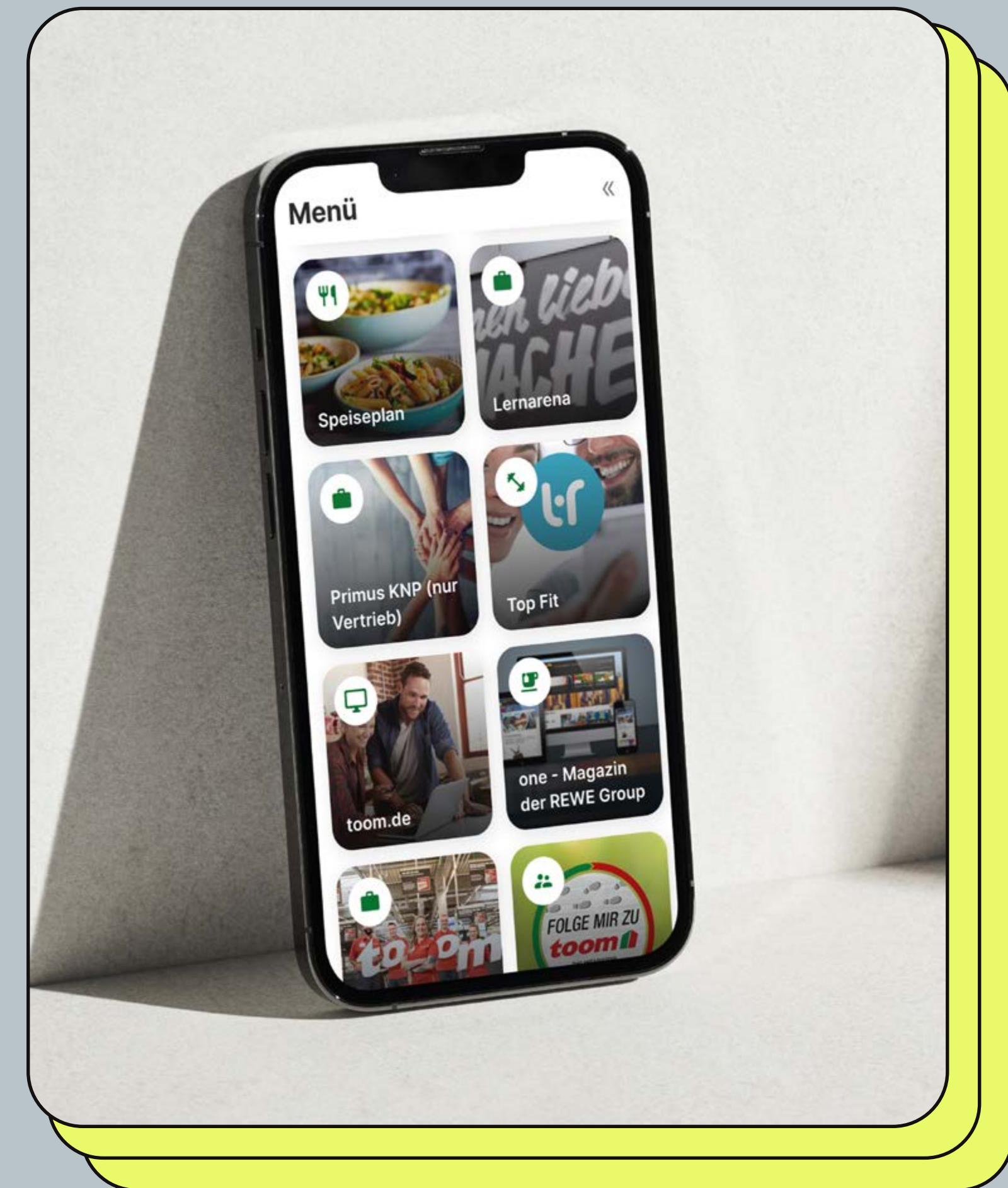
Mobile traffic market share is the largest in October 2023 with 64.1% of all mobile traffic



→ According to Similarweb*, mobile outpaces desktop by a landslide, grabbing 64% of the traffic market share in October 2023 compared to only 34.5% for desktop.

How you can ride the wave of this trend

Just look at the home improvement retail chain toom. With toomunity* (the branded name the company gave its employee app), workers no longer need to hassle HR with requests. They can simply pull out their smartphones and access training videos, report a problem, apply for internal jobs, and check their payroll information. With 18,000 employees – many of whom aren't at their desks – this mobile self-service solution is a game-changer.





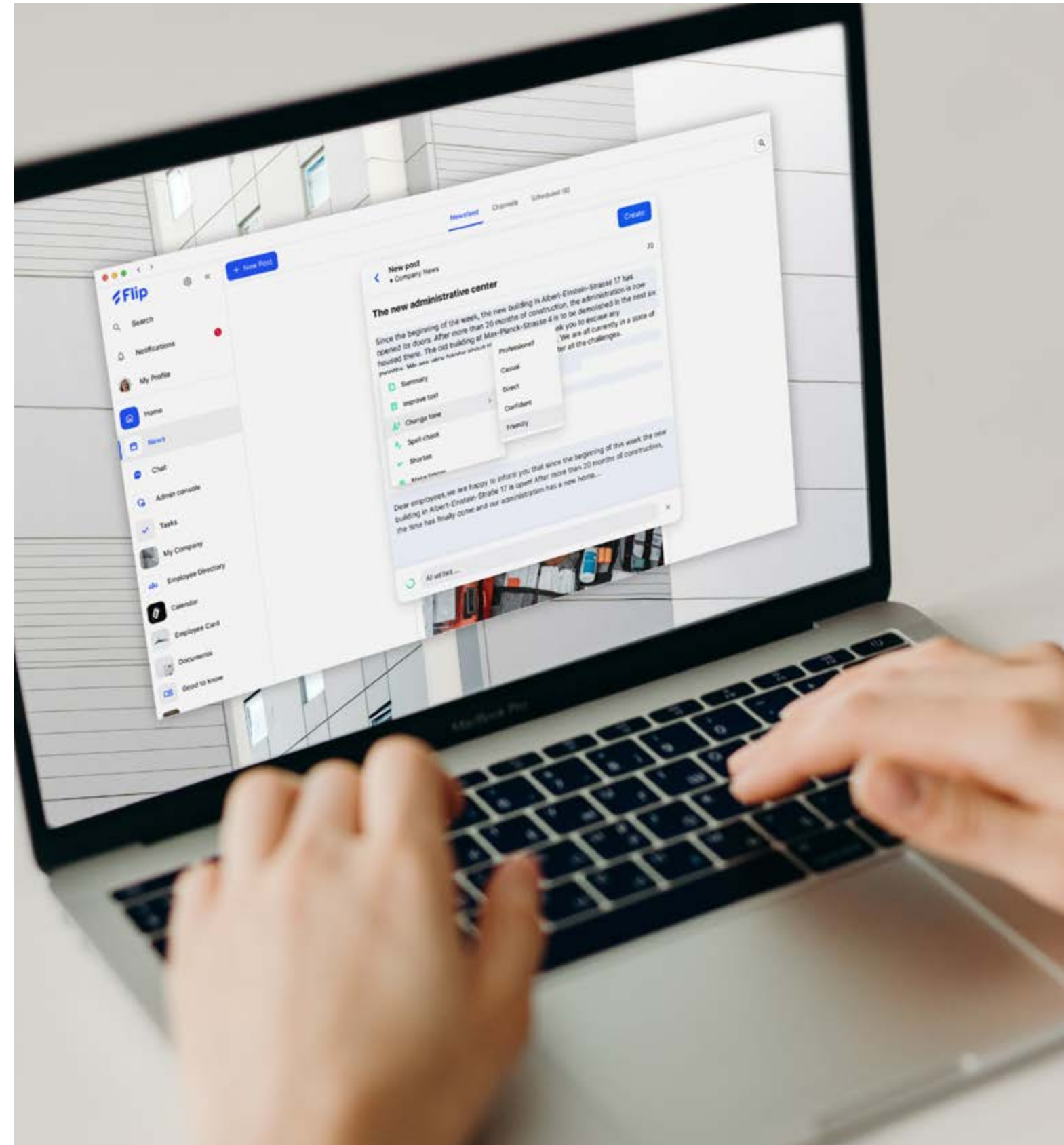
#05

**AI will enhance
communications to –
and between –employees**



"The more you automate the mundane, the more you also empower HR teams to take on strategic initiatives that might have otherwise stayed on the back burner."

*– Evelyn McMullen, research manager specialising in recruiting, talent management and the employee experience for Nucleus Research**



"76% of HR leaders said they will be behind in organizational success if they don't start using generative AI in the next 1-2 years."

– Gartner 2024 HR Priorities Survey*

While a Gartner* survey in June 2023 found only 5% of HR leaders saying they're already using generative AI, more than half said they're exploring how to leverage it in their function in the future. The same survey also found that 84% of HR leaders believe using generative AI will make their function more productive. The 2024 Workshop report found that 38% of internal communicators are interested in exploring using AI in their work in 2024 – up from only 7% in 2023.

If 2023 was about running experiments on how to use AI in HR, 2024 will be the year we see them put into place – and set apart those leaders who do so. There will be greater adoption of AI in people roles, including:

- Writing job descriptions
- Writing employer policies
- Communicating with applicants and employees
- Creating personalised career development plans

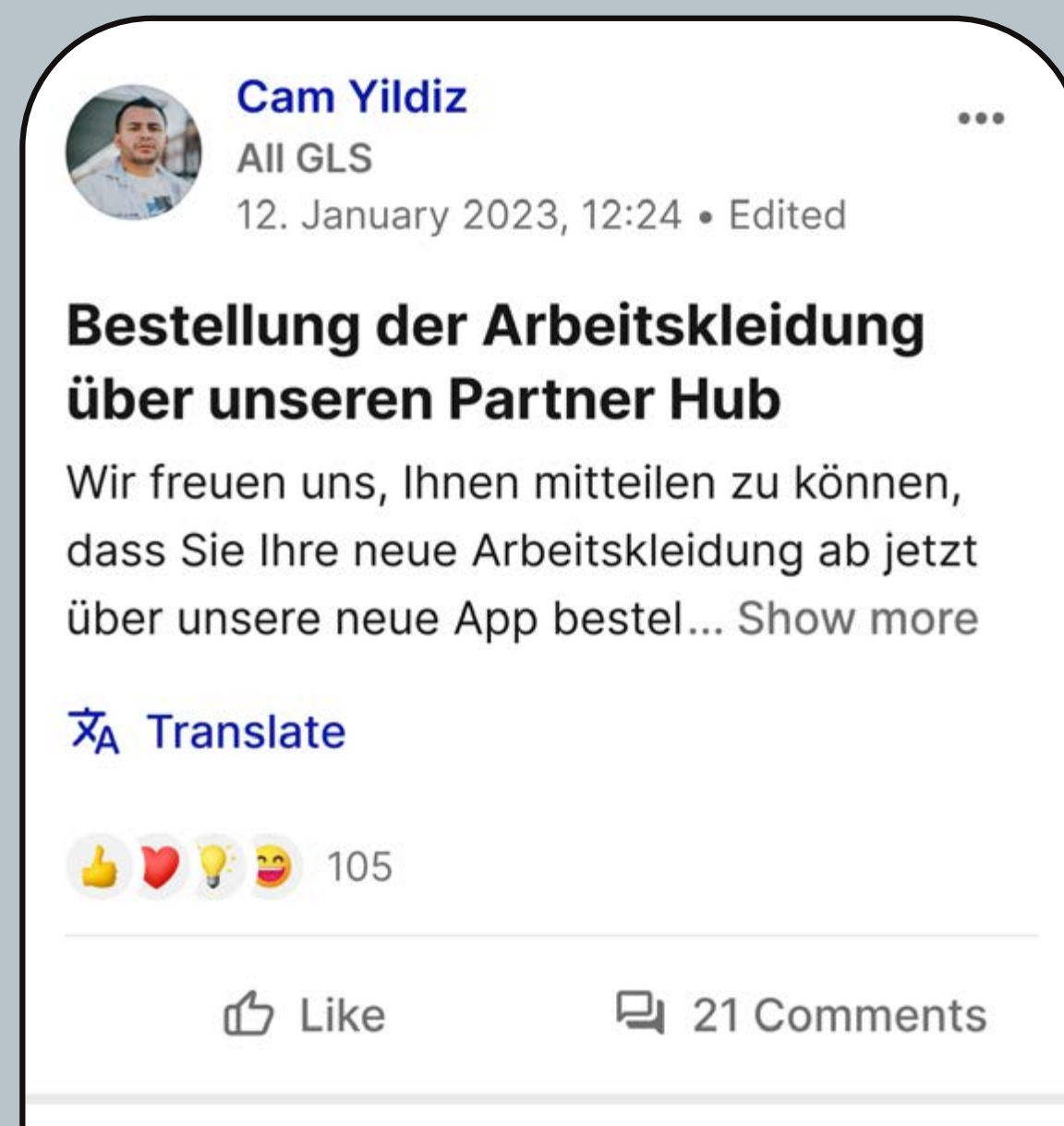
Source: Gartner and Canadian HR Reporter

When HR teams use AI to enhance their work, they can be more creative and come up with fresh ideas for connecting with employees and fostering stronger relationships.

At Flip, we're also seeing our customers experiment with AI knowledge base assistants for frontline employees to find answers more easily so they can do their jobs well. The AI revolution will really touch everyone!

How you can ride the wave of this trend

GLS*, a shipping provider with roughly 9,000 employees and 550 transport partners in Germany alone, worked with Flip to design its Partner Hub, a mobile employee app with built-in AI-powered translation. Now, everyone can type in their native tongue, and recipients can instantly translate the message. With such a diverse, dispersed workforce, GLS relies on quick and efficient communication, which it achieves thanks to this one-click live translation.



As with any new technology, generative AI can seem intimidating until you get used to it. So start small. What if you could...

- Improve your writing tone so it sounds more professional, empathetic, or confident?
- Instantly summarise important communication into the five main bullet points?
- Double-check for grammatical mistakes?
- Automatically filter out unqualified applicants?
- Quickly sort the best applicants?
- Cut down on time spent on email because AI is writing replies for you?
- Get 10 ideas for a blog post headline that are better than any you could come up with?

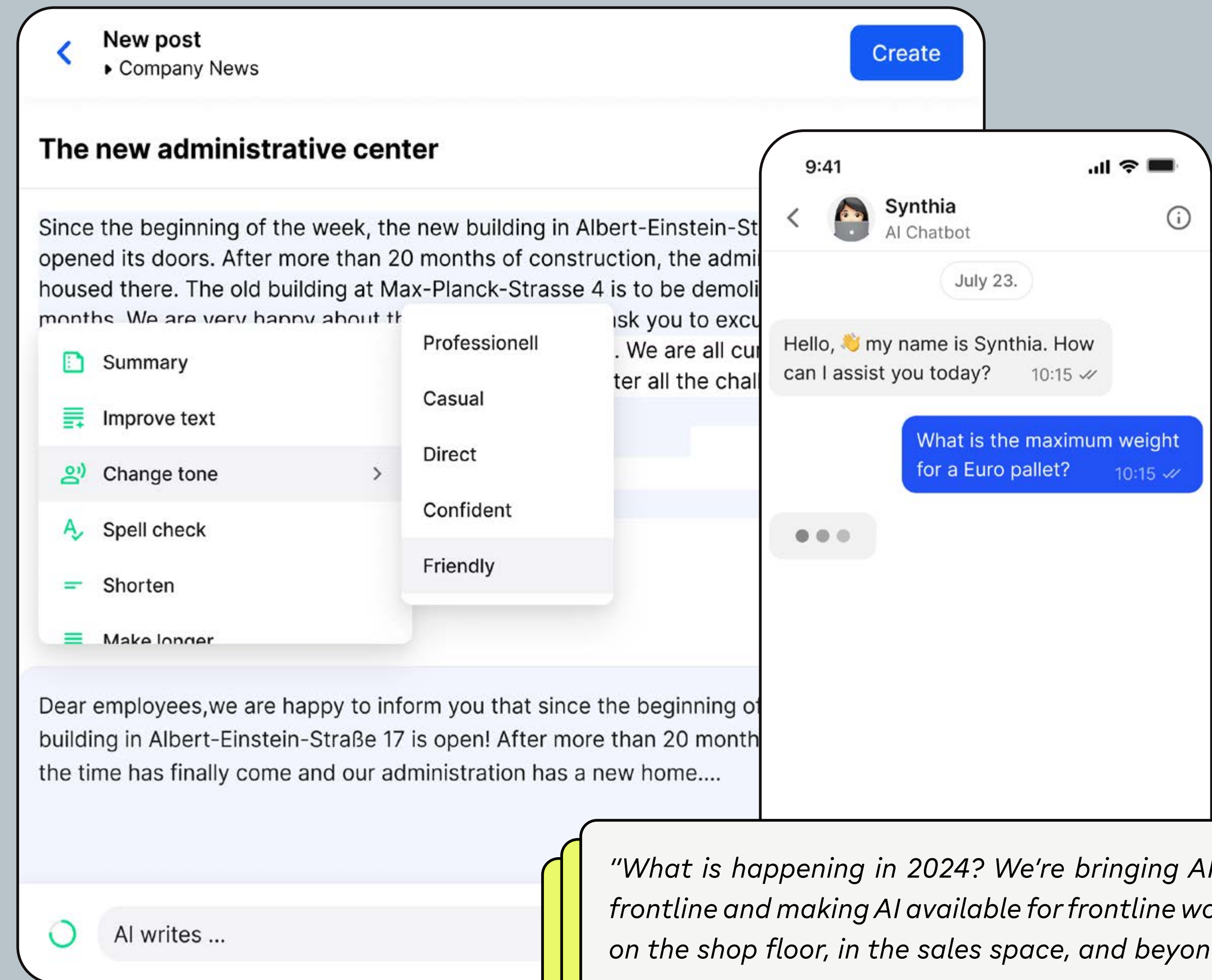
AI makes all those things possible and more. Two features Flip is currently testing with our customers to help them leverage generative AI include:

AI Writing Assistant:

Content creators can quickly summarise post content as they write, improve their writing style or tone, and correct spelling.

Synthia Chatbot:

It feels like ChatGPT because it's powered by it! Now, even frontline employees can experience the power of generative AI. Users can ask Synthia questions and get answers immediately – all from their smartphones.



"What is happening in 2024? We're bringing AI to the frontline and making AI available for frontline workers – on the shop floor, in the sales space, and beyond."

– Benedikt Ilg, CEO & Co-Founder of Flip

Conclusion

The past few years have hit HR and IC teams with wave after wave of challenges, but there are calmer waters ahead.

Much of the turbulence of the pandemic has died down, and senior leaders have had a wake-up call. They've learned that while trends come and go, and tides shift to favour job seekers in one moment and employers the next, one thing remains constant: Crises will always reveal deeper structural issues that, if you fail to address now, could permanently alter the course of your organisation. However, anchoring your workforce in strong communication and a healthy, happy culture will give you the resilience to weather any storm.

In the new year, people teams and internal communicators will need to band together, show their impact via advanced analytics, invest in mobile self-service, and leverage AI to enhance their work. Employee engagement will be the focus of 2024, and no one drives that metric more than HR and IC. Equipped with the right information and tools, you'll be sailing smoothly in no time.

How much is disconnected frontline communication costing you?

Get a line-by-line estimate of how much money your organisation could save due to employee retention, streamlined communications, process improvements, and more! All it takes is a few clicks.

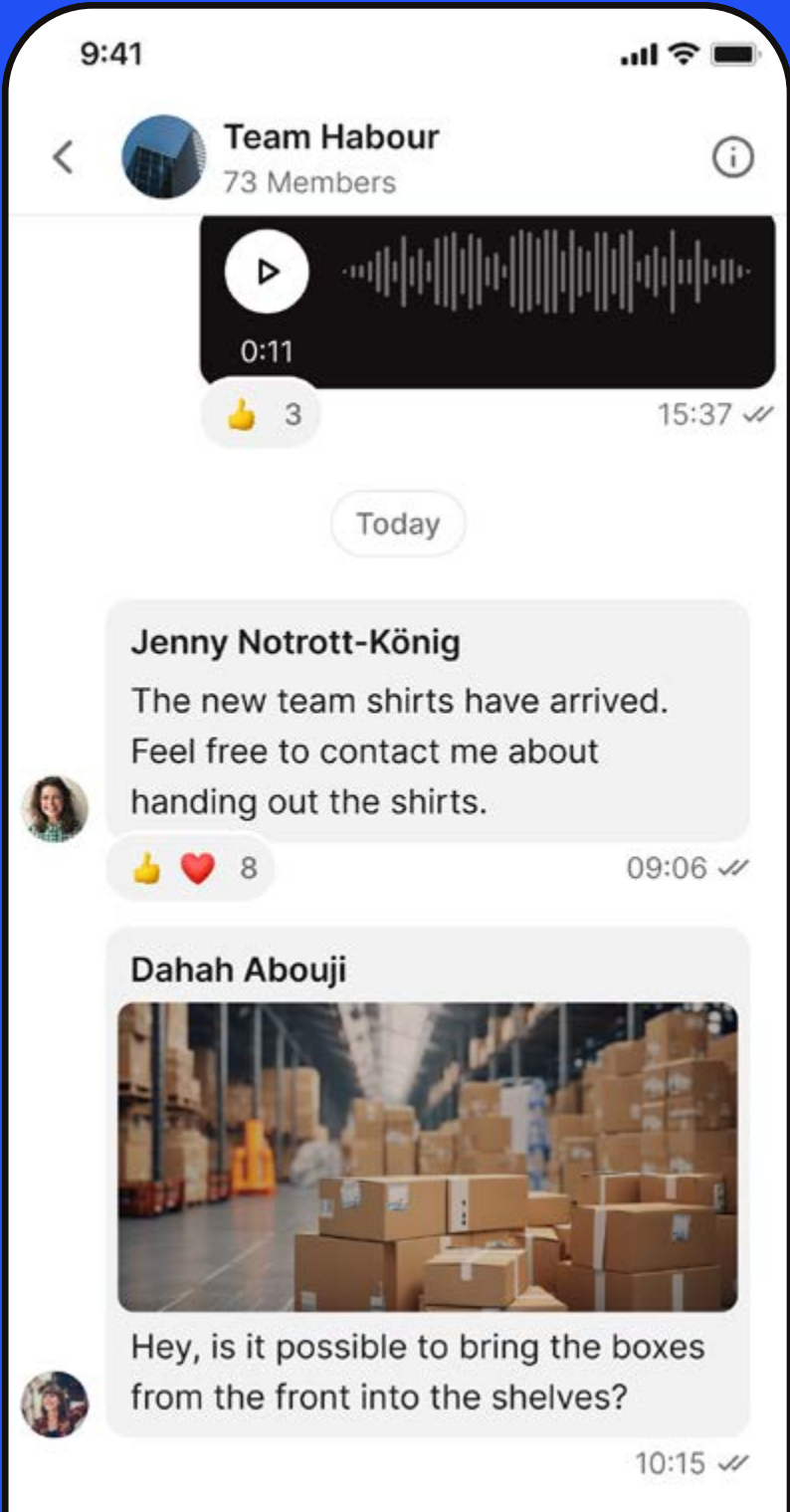
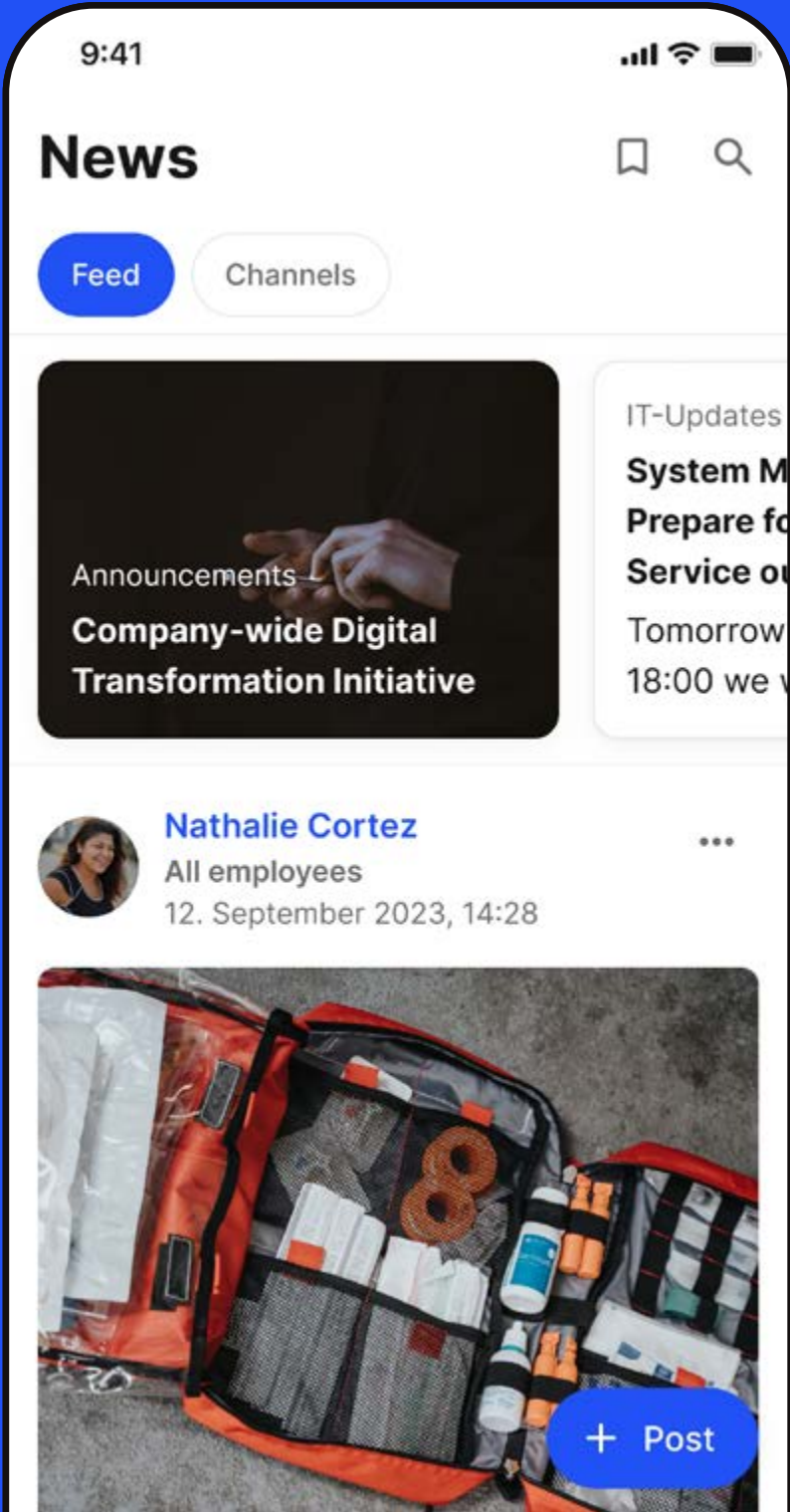
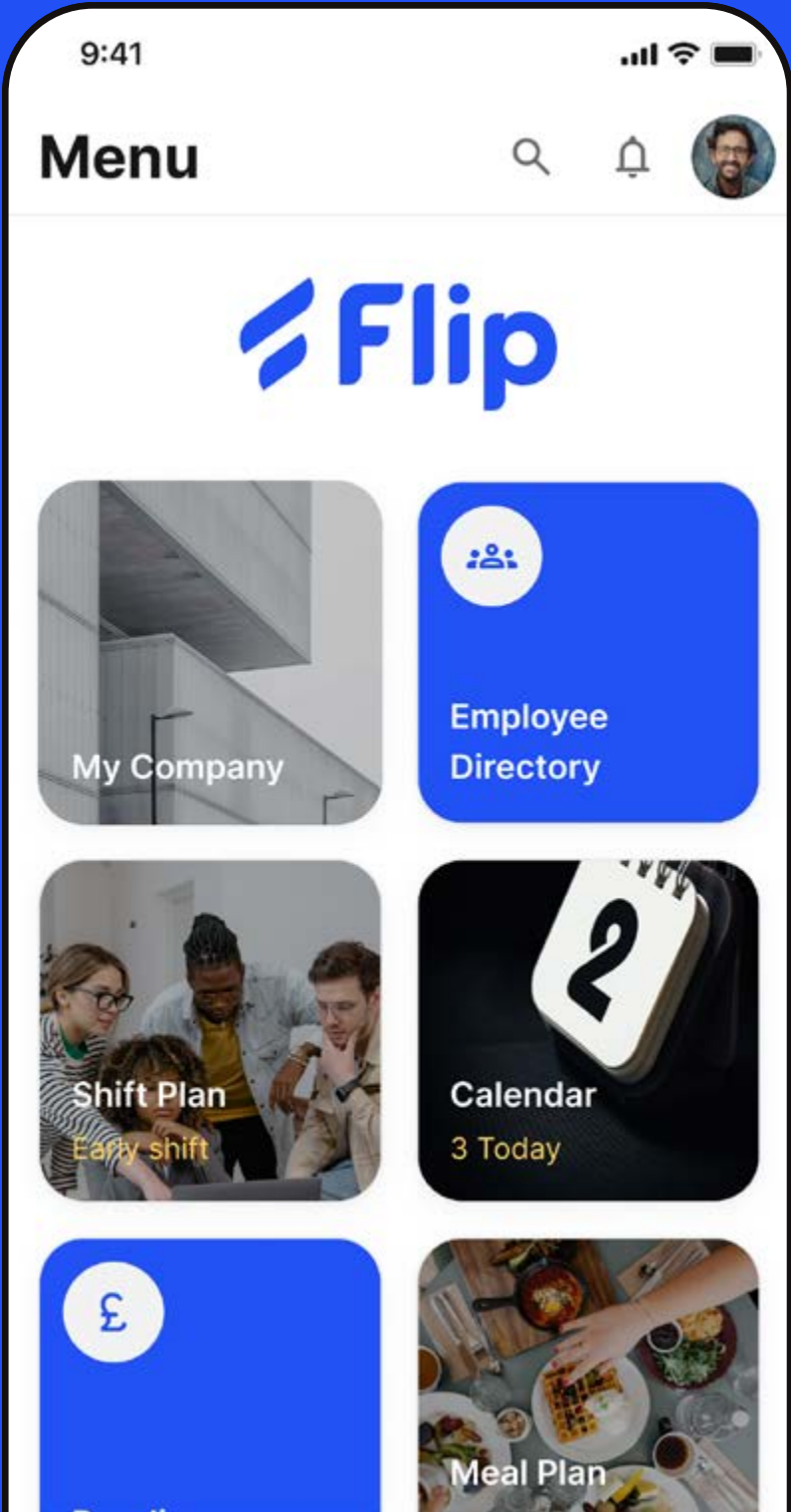
Flip

Access our free cost savings calculator →

About

Flip is the employee experience platform that heavyweights like Bosch, Porsche, and McDonald’s Germany use to reach and rally their whole company, from head office to the shop floor. It’s renowned for its super easy-to-use white-label app, which connects employees with the right people, news, and knowledge in an instant, and makes everyday tasks like coordinating shifts and sharing success effortless.

Get to know the Flip App →





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