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Case Study: The Ministry of Justice and Yammer

It's hard to miss something that you've never had, and it was only once we started using Yammer at MoJ that we appreciated the comms need that it fills. MoJ doesn't have a social intranet, and this is what Yammer adds to our internal comms mix – an opportunity to have a conversation with staff rather than one-way publishing.



The network had been created about 18 months previously, but we've only been actively using it for the last six months. We – the corporate comms team – decided to let the network grow organically rather than promote it via our existing staff channels. Where we saved on “promotional” comms, we invested in regularly posting tips and updates to Yammer, sharing interesting stuff that we were working on so that the newsfeed was refreshed and giving those people who joined a reason to keep coming back.

Membership of a Yammer network is defined by email domain, so it's not public in the same way as Twitter or Facebook – although it's not secure. Users have to register with their email address, which means you can't post anonymously (a big deterrent to abuse and trolling). This also means that you can be pretty confident that posts have been genuinely published by the individuals themselves – including those from senior leaders. I think this has been part of the attraction of Yammer to staff: it feels quite “safe” for social media, and people like the informal contact that's possible with colleagues from all levels of the organisation. It's also been nice to see how democratic Yammer is – the interesting topics will always float to the top of the news feed, and vanity publishing tends to sink to the bottom. In fact, my best example of Yammer in action was seeing how a discussion about Firefox led to it being rolled out across the business.

One of the things we'd like to explore once the new security classification system is in place is whether Yammer, alongside other



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tools, can be used to share and discuss developing policy. I think Yammer has real potential as an open policy making tool if we use the external network functionality, but this would need to go hand-in-hand with the wider shift in approach that open policy making requires.

Elizabeth Atkins,

Communications Advisor, Ministry of Justice