everbridge®

The Communications
Framework Critical to
Your Business Success
**Unlocking the power of
your workforce through
a fully-integrated
multi-channel platform**

SnapComms
AN EVERBRIDGE COMPANY

"Business success is about taking teams on a journey and bringing everyone along for the ride."

FOREWORD

Business success is about taking teams on a journey and bringing everyone along for the ride. Letting people collaborate and work things out for themselves, but recognizing the importance of providing the direction, vision and guidelines to align efforts and achieve outcomes.
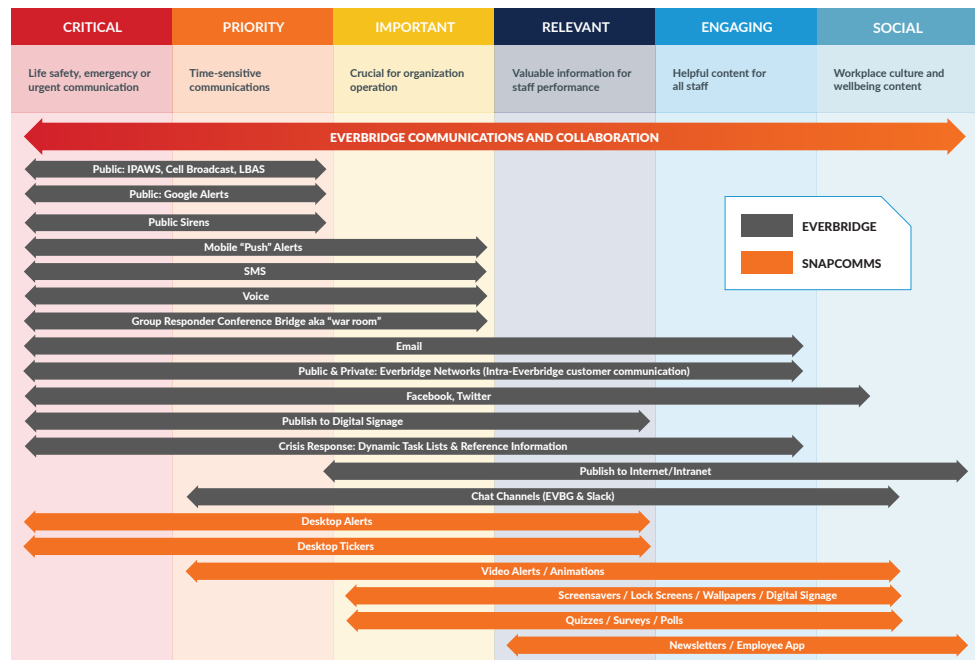
As business leaders, we are continually required to keep our employees informed and engaged. Informed about organizational direction and important strategic updates. Engaged with communications that help them focus on and succeed in their jobs. Both are essential for high-performing businesses.

Employee experience is more important now than ever before. It transcends the type, tone and channels used to deliver communications, to also incorporate how messages are received and how employees engage with them. How communications are presented to and experienced by employees can either add to or detract from their effectiveness.

Autonomous teams, often working remotely or distributed across geographies, have embraced peer-to-peer collaboration as a standard mode of workplace operations. This has increased the level of interpersonal communication and collaboration within teams, but how can we as leaders best unlock the 'power of the crowd' to achieve desired outcomes across all teams?

Today we see lots of communications competing for employee attention as well as employee engagement. The problem is that without diversity of channels and presentation formats, a single channel quickly becomes saturated and employee attention and engagement gets lost in information-overload and message-fatigue. The challenge we face now is a raft of disparate, single-purpose channels that rarely integrate in terms of communications delivery and management, and cannot be used in a collective and coordinated manner to maximize reach, readership, impact and engagement.

This guide offers businesses the key to resolving that. The combination of SnapComms with Everbridge's proven platform delivers powerful end-to-end capabilities across the communications spectrum.

CRITICAL	PRIORITY	IMPORTANT	RELEVANT	ENGAGING	SOCIAL
Life safety, emergency or urgent communication	Time-sensitive communications	Crucial for organization operation	Valuable information for staff performance	Helpful content for all staff	Workplace culture and wellbeing content

Legend: EVERBRIDGE (dark), SNAPCOMMS (orange)

EVERBRIDGE COMMUNICATIONS AND COLLABORATION *(spans all columns)*

Everbridge channels:
- Public: IPAWS, Cell Broadcast, LBAS *(Critical)*
- Public: Google Alerts *(Critical)*
- Public Sirens *(Critical)*
- Mobile "Push" Alerts *(Critical–Important)*
- SMS *(Critical–Important)*
- Voice *(Critical–Important)*
- Group Responder Conference Bridge aka "war room" *(Critical–Important)*
- Email *(Critical–Relevant)*
- Public & Private: Everbridge Networks (Intra-Everbridge customer communication) *(Critical–Relevant)*
- Facebook, Twitter *(Critical–Engaging)*
- Publish to Digital Signage *(Critical–Relevant)*
- Crisis Response: Dynamic Task Lists & Reference Information *(Critical–Relevant)*
- Publish to Internet/Intranet *(Relevant–Engaging)*
- Chat Channels (EVBG & Slack) *(Priority–Engaging)*

SnapComms channels:
- Desktop Alerts *(Critical–Relevant)*
- Desktop Tickers *(Critical–Relevant)*
- Video Alerts / Animations *(Priority–Engaging)*
- Screensavers / Lock Screens / Wallpapers / Digital Signage *(Important–Social)*
- Quizzes / Surveys / Polls *(Important–Social)*
- Newsletters / Employee App *(Relevant–Social)*

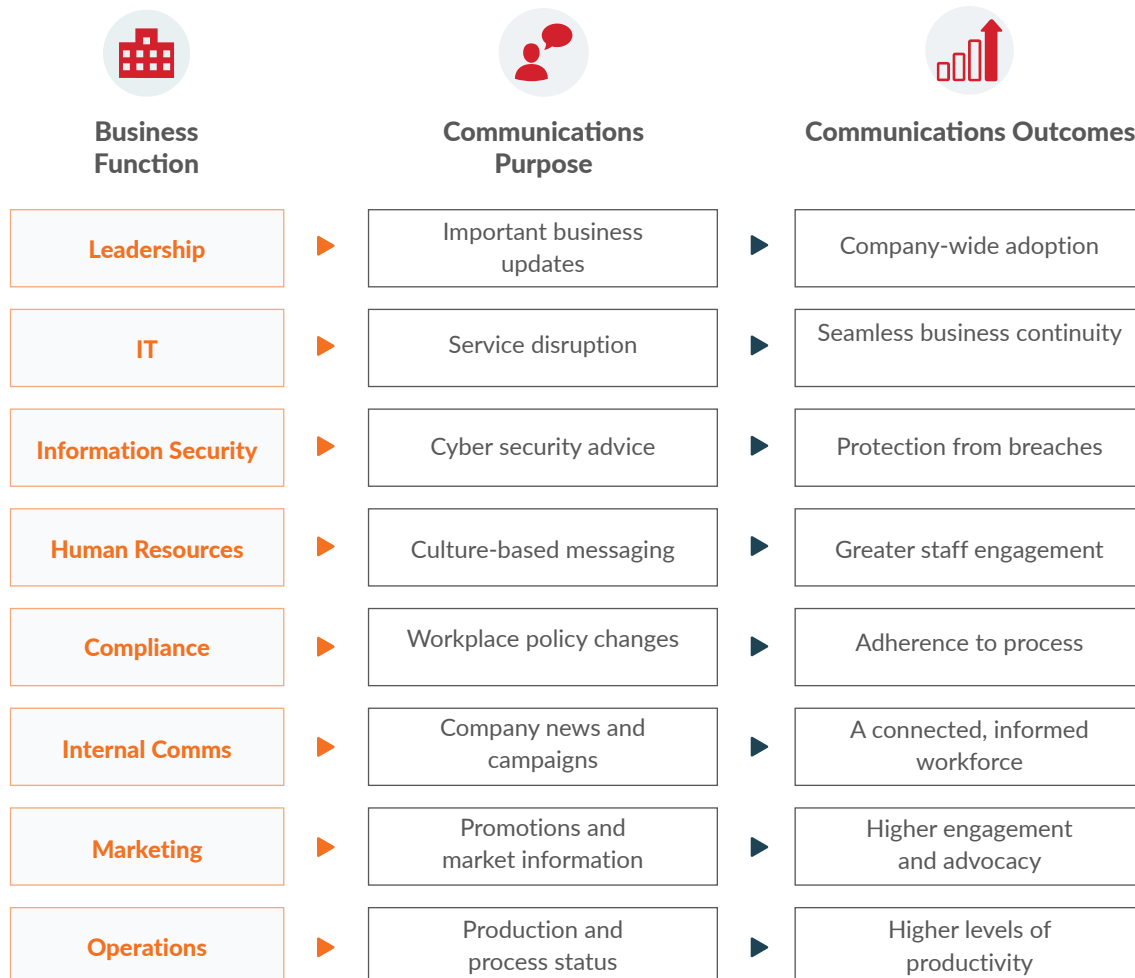**COMMUNICATION BREAKDOWN: THE STATE OF THE MODERN WORKPLACE**

Businesses rely on communication to power their workforce. It directs efforts, sustains growth and motivates employees to achieve.

Yet the demands of modern workplaces have led to a dangerous misuse of communication – one that is putting workplaces at risk.

Different functional areas of your business have unique communication needs. Notifying staff of important changes, driving immediate action in relation to a cyber security threat, ensuring employee compliance with company policy or soliciting employee feedback to determine levels of engagement across the organization.

But the conflicting demands of each functional area compete for limited employee attention. To achieve what they need, every function resorts to the same methods – communications channels which are ungoverned, unsuited and overused.

The ease of sending messages and the abundance of different communication tools has created an environment where staff are inundated with messages of often low relevance, conflicting priorities and minimal value.

"Businesses rely on communication to power their workforce. It directs efforts, sustains growth and motivates employees to achieve."

Business Function		Communications Purpose		Communications Outcomes
Leadership	▶	Important business updates	▶	Company-wide adoption
IT	▶	Service disruption	▶	Seamless business continuity
Information Security	▶	Cyber security advice	▶	Protection from breaches
Human Resources	▶	Culture-based messaging	▶	Greater staff engagement
Compliance	▶	Workplace policy changes	▶	Adherence to process
Internal Comms	▶	Company news and campaigns	▶	A connected, informed workforce
Marketing	▶	Promotions and market information	▶	Higher engagement and advocacy
Operations	▶	Production and process status	▶	Higher levels of productivity

A company's financial performance rises and falls, in part, with the quality of its employee communication*.

Email is used extensively. Tools promoted to encourage collaboration frequently drain productivity. Measurement of effectiveness is neglected. Information-overload and message-fatigue has never been worse.

In this environment, business leaders find that the resulting communications breakdown results in a business slowdown. A disruption of staff focus on achieving key business outcomes, driven largely by lower employee engagement and productivity.

The solution is a strategic communications framework that delivers a quantifiable return to the business. A framework that aligns communications purpose to a comms stack made up of specific channels that collectively maximize communications impact and employee engagement.

*Sources: ROI Communication Benchmark 2017

30%

of every workday is compromised by information overload*.

Assessing the Impact:
A Recipe for Workforce and Financial Disruption

Employee productivity and business performance are the casualties of ineffective communication.

EMPLOYEE RESPONSES

Workplaces today are defined by distractions. Employees are bombarded by large volumes of low-value messages. The effect of these interruptions is to erode employee focus and productivity.

Every employee loses 8 hours per week in unproductive time due to information-overload*. Too many messages are competing for their attention, resulting in message fatigue and lost productivity.

Practicing 'attention management' is employees' way of regaining control.

Only those messages that they perceive – often subconsciously – as easy to consume and directly relevant to them make it past their selective attention. This psychology of avoidance is their response to undesirable cognitive mental strain.

Yet every missed message is a missed opportunity for the business to drive action, grow knowledge, improve performance or lift employee engagement.

Overloaded Channels → **Overwhelmed Employees** → **Overlooked Messaging**

Attention Management:

[NOUN]

The deliberate attempt by employees to get back control through selectively ignoring communications.

BUSINESS IMPACTS

The business impacts are equally serious – reduced efficiency, wasted effort and lower ROI. Employees are unequipped with information essential to performing their role to the highest standards. This leads to lower levels of customer satisfaction, breaches of process and reduced quality of output.

In today's competitive marketplace, such impacts can result in a business spiraling into financial freefall. Businesses need differentiated and novel communications to get employee attention and lift engagement.

Workplaces with disengaged staff have twice as many safety incidents and 4x more quality defects*.

Inefficient communications waste approximately

$15,000

per employee, per year*.

*Sources: Information Overload Research Group, Aon Hewitt, ROI Communication Benchmark 2017

"Critical misalignments of communication objectives and channel selection cause considerable business disruption."

Analyzing The Cause:
Why Multi-Channel Comms Stack Up

Critical misalignments of communication objectives and channel selection cause considerable business disruption.

Internal business communication fails when single-dimensional tools are used to deliver diverse communications objectives. Flooding a single channel with multiple messages on different subjects, each with a different intent, dilutes the impact of both the channel and intended outcome of the communication. When channels are overused and employed for purposes they're ill-suited to, the effectiveness of every message sent is compromised.

Channel selection is fundamental to communication effectiveness.

Your communications staff agree – excessive messaging on overused channels, unrestricted by governance or tempered with best practice, is the single biggest obstacle to their success.

This is especially pronounced in sectors where the workplace environment influences channel effectiveness. Healthcare, manufacturing and frontline retail are dominated by a mobile workforce focused on attending to patients, customers or machinery. Smooth management of these workplaces cannot be adequately sustained when all internal communication from across the organization is funneled through a single, overloaded channel.

EVALUATING STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Aligning communication channels with workplace environments and the way employees consume information provides greater potential for mobilizing a high-performing workforce.

Every communication tool has inherent strengths and weaknesses. Successful use requires evaluating the attributes of each channel against the communications objectives and how this ultimately impacts business objectives.

Evaluating channels to compare their strengths and weaknesses is useful for determining which types of communications will best suit a particular channel. Some channels are effective at fostering dialogue and engagement, but are ineffective when immediate notification of at-risk employees is needed. Other channels are useful for mass coverage where reaching all employees is important, but are not suited for targeting specific messages to specific individuals where relevance is key.

Requirement	Email	Alerts	Collaboration tools	Intranet	Digital screens	Newsfeeds
Long-form messages	Very Effective	Ineffective	Ineffective	Somewhat Effective	Ineffective	Ineffective
Time-critical notifications	Ineffective	Very Effective	Ineffective	Ineffective	Somewhat Effective	Somewhat Effective
Connection and community	Ineffective	Ineffective	Very Effective	Ineffective	Ineffective	Ineffective
Document repository	Somewhat Effective	Ineffective	Ineffective	Very Effective	Ineffective	Ineffective
Campaign promotions	Somewhat Effective	Ineffective	Somewhat Effective	Somewhat Effective	Very Effective	Somewhat Effective
Operational status updates	Somewhat Effective	Very Effective	Ineffective	Somewhat Effective	Somewhat Effective	Very Effective

■ Very Effective   ■ Somewhat Effective   ■ Ineffective

More than three-quarters of staff don't click through from internal emails*.

This table reflects how email remains effective for communicating lengthy messages and documenting actions but is a poor fit for time-based messaging. Timing of delivery is unpredictable, visibility of individual messages is low and engagement rates declining. The channel is highly susceptible to external hacking or misuse. Business communications that demand action are unsuited to email.

Workflow and collaboration tools (such as Slack or Microsoft Teams) are designed for team communication around ongoing projects and tasks. Their strength lies in fostering collaboration, but businesses have increasingly found that these tools are more effective when combined with other channels that deliver greater cut-through of information.

50%

Nearly half of internal communicators don't consider collaboration tools an effective channel*.

Channel - Format Conditioning:

[VERB]

Training employees to react or respond in a certain way based on subconscious cues presented in messages.
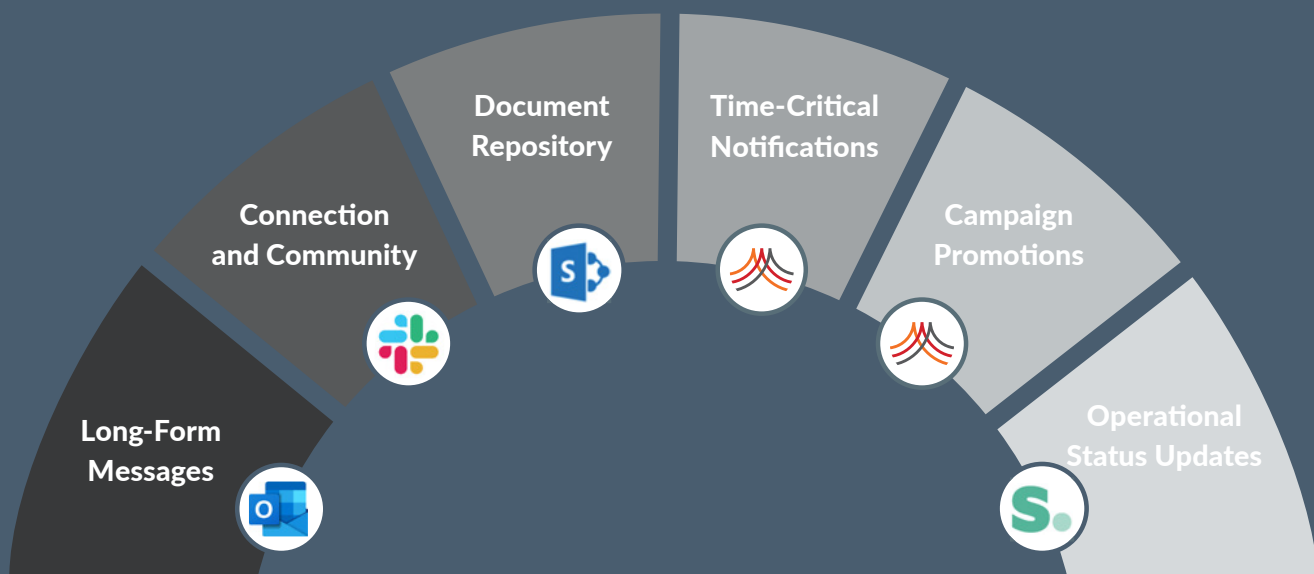
Spreading your employee communications needs across a range of diverse tools where communications purpose is matched with a dedicated channel ensures the right outcomes are achieved.

These outcomes could be 100% readership of essential notifications, high completion rates of employee sentiment surveys, tracking staff acknowledgement and acceptance of compliance changes, and increasing adoption and usage of employee apps.

How a Multi-Channel Model Stacks Up

A multi-channel approach delivers greater returns by maximizing the best attributes of each channel. It relieves businesses of the risk in relying on the effectiveness of a single channel for most of their communications needs.

Each channel becomes a component of your overall employee comms stack, a concept borrowed from the technology stack employed by IT teams in organizations the world over. Selecting the right mix of channels to make up your employee comms stack will be essential if you are looking to optimize business performance and outcomes.

Long-Form Messages

Connection and Community

Document Repository

Time-Critical Notifications

Campaign Promotions

Operational Status Updates

Messages presented consistently are up to 4 times more likely to be recognized by staff*.

A concept known as channel-format conditioning also comes into play. A channel can have attributes that serve to reinforce the impact of the message. For example, the effectiveness of a time-critical message delivered as an on-screen alert is increased by conditioning employee response through the use of color, sound and persistence.

In addition, one channel can support the effectiveness of another by using a campaign-based approach.

Screensavers, for example, can be used to passively promote the steps that should be followed when an active shooter is on the premises, while emergency alerts can be used to immediately notify staff of such an event when it occurs.

Staff awareness of what's expected is increased, which conditions them to react appropriately, heightening the effectiveness and speed of their response.

This has its roots in psychology. The concept of salience shows that people pay more attention to things that appear easy and accessible. In business, it means that personally relevant and easily digestible information is more effective than low-relevance, dense information which creates cognitive strain.

Delivering content in a consistent style and manner helps employees create a mental 'short cut' which conditions them to pay attention and respond.

When used consistently, dedicated channels with specific attributes and predictable formats will increase familiarity. Because people prefer things they're familiar with, this increases employees' likelihood to respond, whether that's to take action, provide comments or change behavior.

Salience:

[NOUN]

Making something seem appealing to employees by making it stand out and reducing resistance to it.

"Fewer than half of all internal communication teams use a formal channel framework."

Charting Success: A Communications Framework for Business Improvement

Your channel mix is the basis for a new model of communications, one where the communications-stack can be leveraged to reposition your internal messaging into a powerful tool for driving business performance.

The Communication Spectrum is a strategic framework that aligns business objectives with workplace outputs. It's a framework that defines the critical pathways linking business objectives, channel selection, tactical execution and employee responses.

This Communication Spectrum was developed using best practices in communications, psychology and management. It adheres to recommendations from industry experts, including the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC).

The importance of this approach has never been greater, with only 46% of internal business communicators using a formal framework to direct their activities*. Small wonder the results are often disappointing – if they are quantified at all.

The Communication Spectrum

The tiered format of the Communication Spectrum reflects the hierarchy of business decision-making and communications. Important business requirements are defined, which are translated into communication prerogatives, which are disseminated to staff, who then respond accordingly.

A failure in any of these steps undermines the success of the entire process.

This framework is entirely flexible and adaptable to the needs of individual businesses, as an examination of each of the layers of the Communication Spectrum shows.

CRITICAL	PRIORITY	IMPORTANT	RELEVANT	ENGAGING	SOCIAL
Emergency or urgent communication	Time-sensitive communications	Crucial for business operation	Valuable information for staff performance	Helpful content for all staff	Workplace culture and wellbeing content
I need to read this now to be safe.	I need to read this as soon as possible.	I should read this sometime today.	I should read this during the next 2-3 days.	I should try to read this sometime this week.	I'll read this if it interests me and I have time.

Mission Critical   **TEMPLATES**   **Good to Know**

←———→

Emergency Comms	Health and Safety	Business Operations	Leadership Comms	People and Culture	Social News
Active Shooter	Workplace Incident Advisory	Change to Logistics Operations	CEO Update	Welcome New Staff	Employee Awards and Recognitions
Fire in the Building	COVID-19 Case in Workplace	System and Process Update	Reinforce Strategy	Company Values Promotion	Celebrating Achievements and Holidays
Crisis Comms	**IT and Cybersecurity**	**Compliance**	**IT and Cybersecurity**	**Employee Engagement**	**Employee Wellbeing**
Extreme Weather Warning	Unplanned Outage	Read and Comply With New Policy	Planned System Maintenance	Sentiment Survey	Stay Hydrated Reminder
Critical Outage	Cyber-Attack Underway	Workplace Ethics Training	Cybersecurity Awareness	Engagement Survey	Mental Health Awareness

Emergency Alerts

Alerts / Video Alerts / Notifications / Animations

Scrolling Tickers

Screensavers / Lock Screens / Wallpapers / Digital Signage

Quizzes / Surveys / Polls

Newsletters / Employee App

The top layer defines the range of business communication objectives, distributed along a continuum based on criticality. These range from high criticality on the left to non-critical (or social) on the right.

Each type of communication includes a definition of its relevance to the business and the desired employee response.

For example, Critical refers to emergency or urgent communications which staff need to receive (and act upon) immediately. Priority refers to time-sensitive communications which employees should read as soon as they're able.

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The middle layer defines the essential linkage between communication objectives and channels. This linkage is demonstrated through use cases – specific communication needs common to different functional areas across the organization.

For example, crisis communications from the leadership team, system outages from the IT department, training and development initiatives from Human Resources, and so on. These use cases may be different for certain industries or types of business. In the healthcare sector, use cases typically focus on enabling staff to provide essential patient care. In the financial services sector, managing compliance and regulation is a greater priority.

The sample use cases shown illustrate a range of common communication needs, from critical comms concerning active threats, through to policy updates and reminders, to celebrating achievements.
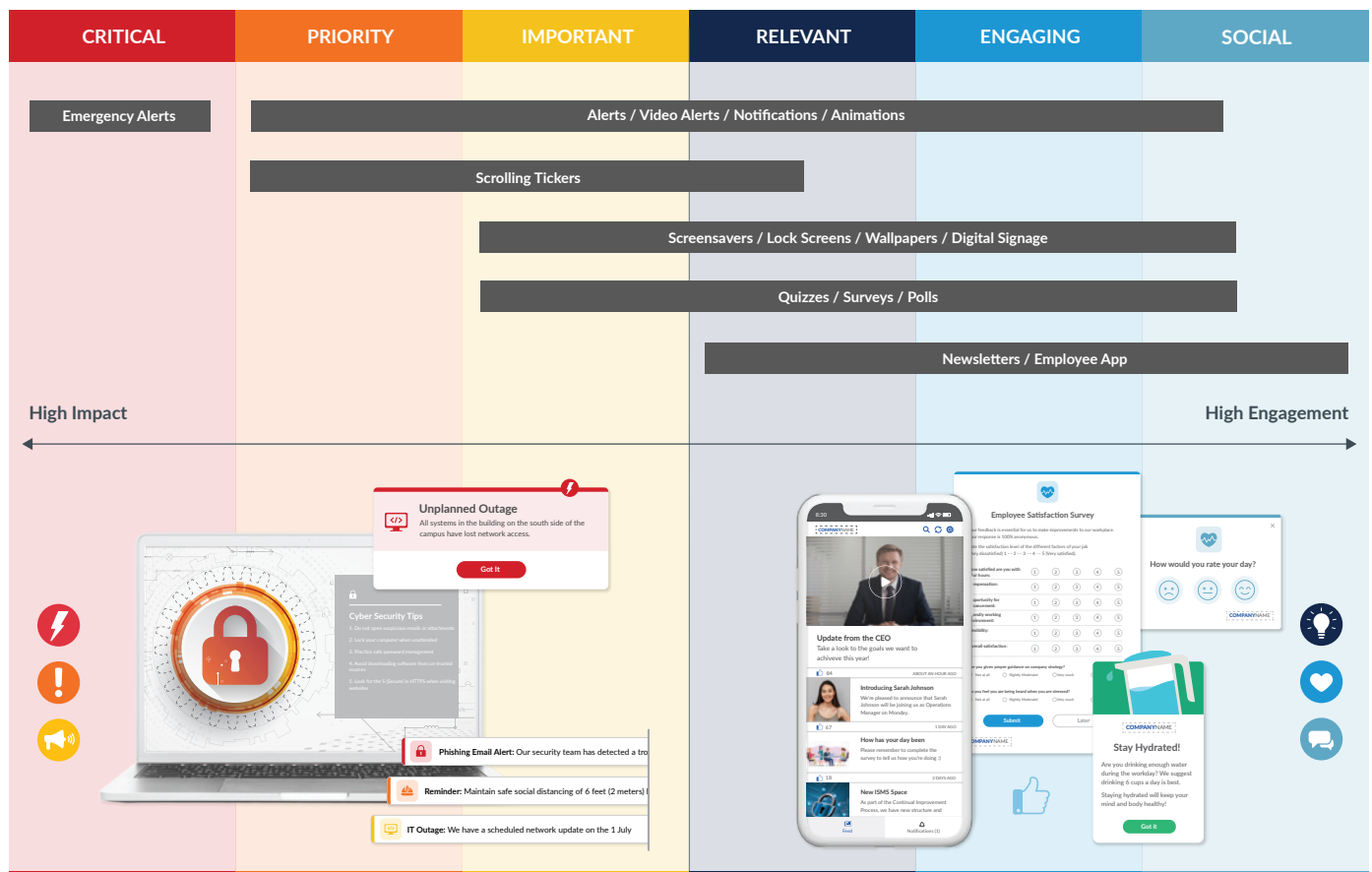
Mission Critical			TEMPLATES		Good to Know
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Critical Outage	Cyber-Attack Underway	Workplace Ethics Training	Cybersecurity Awareness	Engagement Survey	Mental Health Awareness

The bottom layer defines how various different communication channels are best aligned to specific use cases. As with the other layers, these channels are distributed across a continuum from high to low levels of intrusiveness.

The more intrusive channels have high-impact formats that deliver immediate widespread attention.

Less intrusive channels use subtle formats that achieve sustained behavioral change.

A range of message formats and examples are shown to illustrate this, from most intrusive emergency alerts to least intrusive corporate wallpapers and screensavers.

CRITICAL	PRIORITY	IMPORTANT	RELEVANT	ENGAGING	SOCIAL
Emergency Alerts					
	Alerts / Video Alerts / Notifications / Animations				
	Scrolling Tickers				
		Screensavers / Lock Screens / Wallpapers / Digital Signage			
		Quizzes / Surveys / Polls			
			Newsletters / Employee App		

High Impact   High Engagement

Putting It Into Practice – A Cyber Security Example

The following example takes a common business issue to illustrate how the Communications Spectrum works.

1

An attempted cyber-security attack relating to phishing emails has been thwarted, but the business has updated several of its processes for improved protection

→ The communication objective is to ensure 100% employee compliance with the updated cyber security processes

2

IMPORTANT

Crucial for business operation

I should read this sometime today.

Adhering to the updated process is key to continuity of ongoing business operations

→ The cyber security update is an important communication that staff need to read today (the yellow column in the top layer of the Spectrum)

3

Security Information

The updated policy will be communicated to employees via the Information Security teams

→ It will be constructed and delivered in the optimal format for information security tips and data security policy reminders

4

Cyber Security tips to help keep you safe online

Channels selected must ensure every employee is aware of the cyber security update and complies with the stated requirements

→ Alerts are selected to achieve immediate message visibility (including a mandatory button which employees must click to acknowledge receipt and readership), supplemented by Screensavers to reinforce the importance of the policy change (and including a hyperlink to the policy itself on the business intranet site)
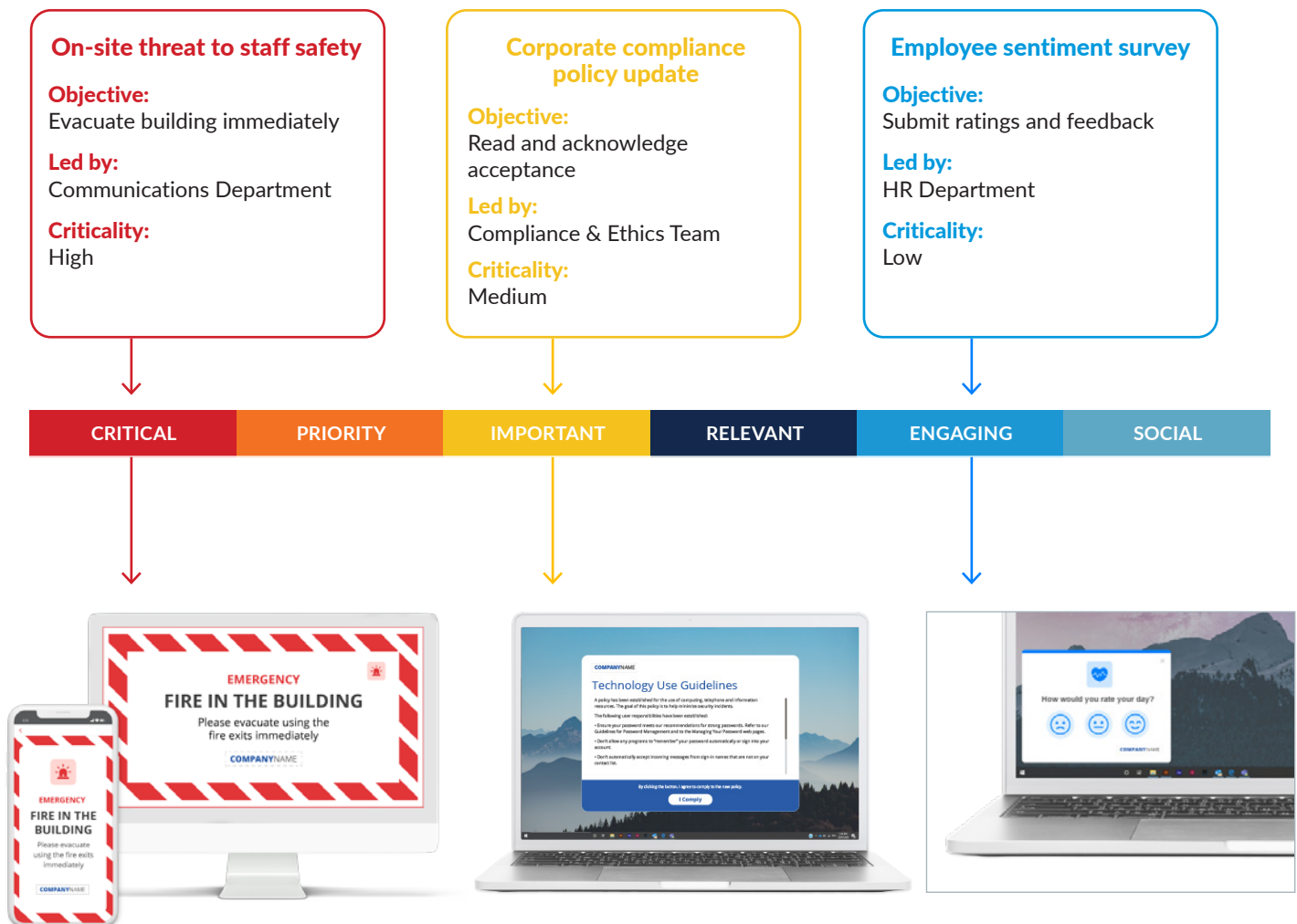
Any business objective can be handled using the same procedure. System outages or on-site threat alerts require high message velocity and readership, and sit in the left side of the Spectrum. Improving adoption of new workplace processes or promoting campaign activities sit in the center. Soliciting staff feedback on workplace culture would sit on the right.

In following this process, managers of each functional area can readily identify communication channels and formats that suit their communications objectives, without competing with communications being delivered from other departments.

The framework also supports effective communications governance – managing the various communication functions so reach, readership and action aren't compromised in any way.

Example Scenarios

On-site threat to staff safety

Objective:
Evacuate building immediately

Led by:
Communications Department

Criticality:
High

Corporate compliance policy update

Objective:
Read and acknowledge acceptance

Led by:
Compliance & Ethics Team

Criticality:
Medium

Employee sentiment survey

Objective:
Submit ratings and feedback

Led by:
HR Department

Criticality:
Low

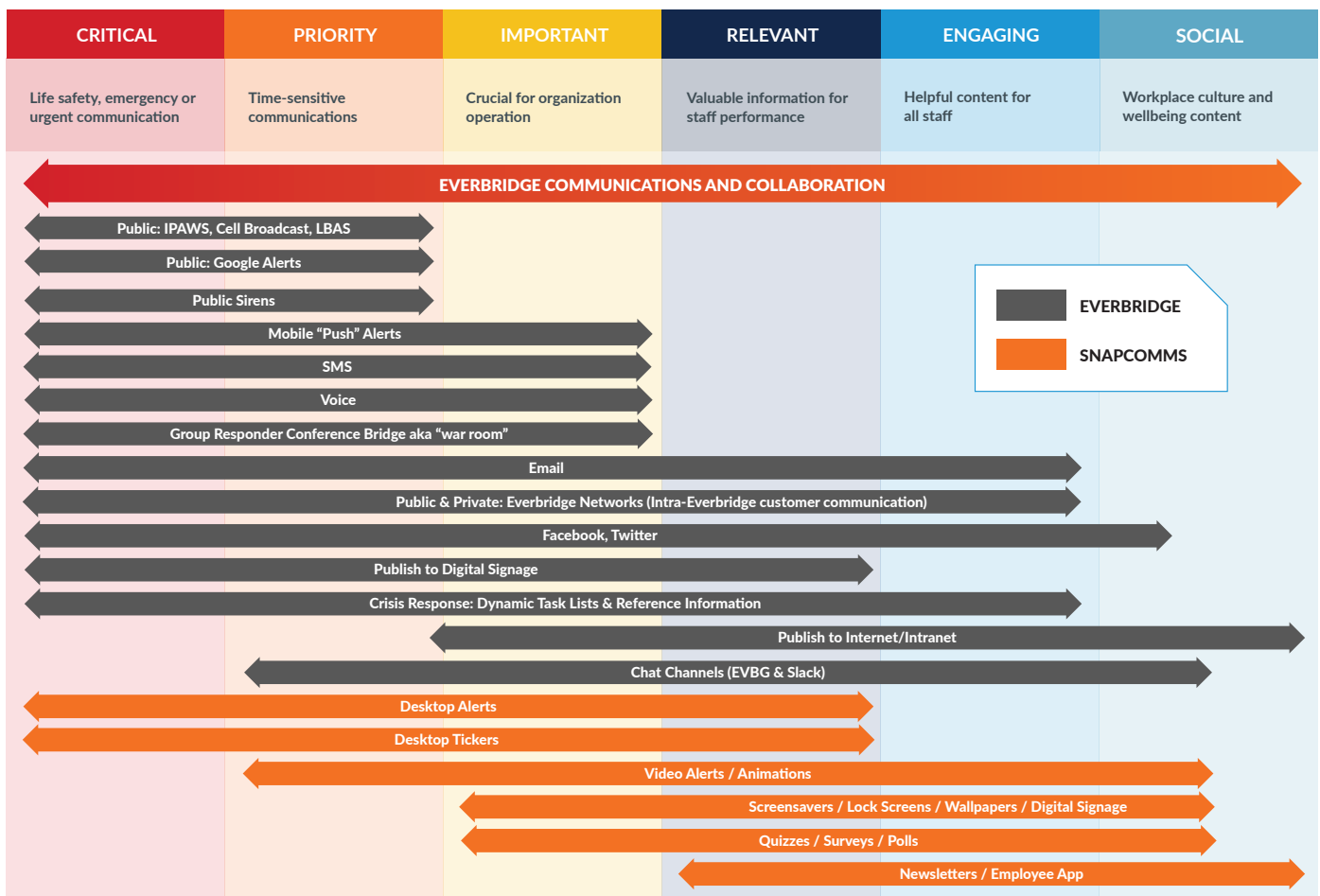| CRITICAL	PRIORITY	IMPORTANT	RELEVANT	ENGAGING	SOCIAL

Overlaying Multi-channel Messaging

The Communication Spectrum provides a framework for achieving business objectives, while the right comms stack maximizes communications impact and employee engagement. The final step is to bring these together.

The multi-channel messaging framework is an extension of the Communication Spectrum, charting different channels across the criticality continuum. While individual channels align best to specific communications needs, a multi-channel approach combines the strengths of multiple individual channels while negating their weaknesses.

Channels can then be combined to more effectively condition employees to read, engage and respond. SnapComms channels permit customization of how messages are received, presented and visualized, through on-screen positioning, color coding, icons and many other behavioral elements designed to achieve desired communications outcomes.

Business leaders that introduce this framework into their workplaces, and adopt appropriate governance and best practice to ensure it is followed, will find it an essential strategic tool for marshalling the power of their workforce and enjoying sustained business success.

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Video Alerts / Animations

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Newsletters / Employee App

■ EVERBRIDGE
■ SNAPCOMMS

*Sources: Gatehouse State of the Sector 2020

Summary

The distractions and competing demands of today's workplaces threaten business success. Mishandled communications annoy employees, impair their productivity and reduce overall performance.

A multi-channel approach to communications overcomes this by maximizing the strongest attributes of each channel. Building a multi-channel platform into a business's comms stack delivers more effective leadership communications to empower a high-performing workforce.

The Communications Spectrum is a strategic framework designed for today's successful business leaders. In practically aligning business objectives with workplace outputs, it offers a powerful tool for driving business success.

About Everbridge

SnapComms is part of Everbridge, Inc. (NASDAQ: EVBG), and provides solutions to solve internal communication challenges for organizations worldwide. The SnapComms employee communication platform provides a range of channels to get employee attention across the Communications Spectrum, including Alerts, Tickers, Wallpapers, Screensavers, Quizzes, Surveys and Newsletters. Learn more about the SnapComms employee communications platform at www.SnapComms.com

Everbridge, Inc. (NASDAQ: EVBG) is a global software company that provides enterprise software applications that automate and accelerate organizations' operational response to critical events in order to Keep People Safe and Businesses Running™. During public safety threats such as active shooter situations, terrorist attacks or severe weather conditions, as well as critical business events including IT outages, cyber-attacks or other incidents such as product recalls or supply-chain interruptions, over 5,200 global customers rely on the company's Critical Event Management Platform to quickly and reliably aggregate and assess threat data, locate people at risk and responders able to assist, automate the execution of pre-defined communications processes through the secure delivery to over 100 different communication devices, and track progress on executing response plans. The company's platform sent over 3.5 billion messages in 2019 and offers the ability to reach over 550 million people in more than 200 countries and territories, including the entire mobile populations on a country-wide scale in Australia, Greece, Iceland, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, Sweden, and a number of the largest states in India. The company's critical communications and enterprise safety applications include Mass Notification, Incident Management, Safety Connection™, IT Alerting, Visual Command Center®, Public Warning, Crisis Management, Community Engagement™ and Secure Messaging. Everbridge serves 8 of the 10 largest U.S. cities, 9 of the 10 largest U.S.-based investment banks, 47 of the 50 busiest North American airports, 9 of the 10 largest global consulting firms, 8 of the 10 largest global auto makers, all 4 of the largest global accounting firms, 9 of the 10 largest U.S.-based health care providers, and 7 of the 10 largest technology companies in the world. Everbridge is based in Boston and Los Angeles with additional offices in Lansing, San Francisco, Abu Dhabi, Beijing, Bangalore, Kolkata, London, Munich, New York, Oslo, Singapore, Stockholm and Tilburg. For more information, visit www.everbridge.com, read the company blog, and follow on LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook.

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