Intranet DASHBOARD (iD)
Evaluation Report

August 2017

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Executive Summary

Intranet DASHBOARD (iD) is a comprehensive intranet-in-a-box solution, which offers a wide range of functionality as expected from a digital workplace in 2017. The product provides a central location for business communication, collaboration and information.

The current version 8 was released in late 2016 and has been well received in the marketplace. iD is not only known as a capable software vendor, but also for its professional services that assist clients to launch their intranets quickly and in line with business needs.

While lacking a dedicated mobile app, the solution is fully responsive and works on tablets and mobile phones, where you can access, engage and edit content. The technology is available either on-premise or as a cloud solution.

About this paper

This J. Boye insight paper is written on the basis of the expert knowledge of members of the J. Boye expert team, interviews with customers of iD, and a briefing from iD. The intention of the evaluation is to give you as a buyer or an existing customer an easily accessible tool to evaluate whether the current release of iD would be the right intranet for your targets and objectives.

In order to provide you with a high level overview of iD, we have provided a fact sheet for an easy at a glance overview.

The information is based on best available resources. Opinions reflect judgement at the time and are subject to change.

In the following, we will evaluate iD against the top requirements for a new intranet platform, seen from the point of view of J. Boye network members.

Finally, we look at technology, certain vendor intangibles, and provide an overall evaluation. The term user in this report refers to the back-end user of iD.

Lead analyst

Janus Boye is the Founder of J. Boye Group and has worked with intranet and digital workplace for almost 2 decades. At J. Boye he moderates group meetings, in particular with experienced intranet professionals in Europe and North America. Prior to founding J. Boye he worked in various roles in software firms and agencies. Janus Boye can be reached on jb@jboye.com
Intranet DASHBOARD at a glance

Ownership
Privately owned

Geography
Global. HQ in Australia with offices in Canada, New Zealand, United Kingdom, India and United States.

Technology
Based on Microsoft .NET and available either on-premise or cloud

Pricing
Starting at USD 2,400 for 100 users on-premise or USD 7,500 in the cloud
Average deal size USD 50,000

Differentiation
Ease of implementation, strong training and support, solid social features for employee engagement and collaboration, customisable

What’s new
Improved file management and enterprise social features

Often used by
Organisations with more than 100 employees

Less used by
Organisations with many blue collar workers

Compare with
Igloo, Interact Intranet, Microsoft Office 365

Overall review
High level of satisfaction among customers

Strengths
A work tool and not just a communications channel. Strong track-record of satisfied customers. Short implementation times
dedicated mobile app, analytics & form builder leaves room for improvement

Weaknesses
Offices around the world which engage in consulting, training, support and customer success

Community and support
Simple and intuitive. Easy learning curve also for non-technical colleagues

Usability

SCORING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Score</th>
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<tr>
<td>Your new intranet</td>
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Intranet DASHBOARD: The product

What are some of the most prominent features and how are these supported? In this chapter you’ll find a review of the features in terms of how they support current intranet requirements, and how the users are supported in solving their tasks necessary to support their business goals and objectives.

Your new intranet

Now in version 8 released in late 2016, iD has come a long way to help you deliver not only an internal communication channel, but also a digital workplace, with built in document management, Enterprise Social Network, process automation and integration capabilities.

A key trigger for many organisations to move towards a next generation intranet - or digital workplace if you like - is that employees have too many tools. iD does a good job of enabling you to improve the employee experience, by integrating various tools seamlessly into a centralised and interconnected platform.
Once you get started with iD, your new intranet is comprised of two working areas; the Front End & the Admin.

- The Front End is where users view, share, and contribute content.
- The Admin is where administrators manage system administration tasks.

iD’s CMS allows for front end, inline creation and editing of web pages through an easy to use, drag and drop interface. Users can add content, images and videos into pages quickly to get the intranet up and running.

**Out of the box features**

iD comes with an impressive set of over 40 apps that can be switched on or off to meet individual business requirements. All apps and features are included upon purchasing the product. A full application listing can be found [here](#).

Among the key improvements in version 8 was totally revamped document management. Many are using the tool to do basic file management, such as handling PDF files with processes, but the feature can be leveraged with extensive usage of rights, versioning, document permissions and custom metadata. All documents within iD can be #Hashtagged to instantly share updates to a #Channel feed, allowing for information retrieval and collaboration via comments, likes and @Mentions. This is a key element of iD’s ‘all in one’ nature, as it contains information and conversation in one environment—reducing the need for email or 3rd party tools.
If you are using SharePoint, iD allows you to view files or document lists from a SharePoint Library or other existing directories/sources. SharePoint integration is expectedly one of the common questions from customers, and iD has extensive experience with this.

Key selection criteria for more recent customers is the system’s inbuilt Enterprise Social Network. iD’s #Channel feeds are an exciting new feature that enable collaboration across categorized topics. Everything within the intranet can be instantly shared to a #Channel by adding the relevant #Hashtag. Users of Slack will find this way of working familiar. Another ESN feature worth highlighting is Private Groups, which can be used for confidential discussions and file sharing in smaller groups. This feature may be used for projects or for department teams to help them collaborate.
From a business perspective, workflows, in particular with forms for processes and tasks, is key. iD enables users to easily build online forms and workflow, which can be applied to a multitude of scenarios. For example, many customers use the tool to complete employee induction.

Among the usual killer apps for any intranet is the staff directory. iD has a smooth demo for this and it is highly configurable, so that you can integrate with your data source and modify the layout to fit your needs. The staff directory also auto-syncs to Active Directory to ensure consistencies across networks.
Search

Search is paramount to any intranet. Many colleagues will search rather than browse to find what they are looking for on your intranet.

There are multiple ways to find what you are looking for in Intranet DASHBOARD. The vendor speaks more broadly of findability using:

- A built in search engine that can return findings based on key words, metadata and custom filters.
- #Hashtags as known from social media (such as #Marketing) to categorise content which is then automatically pushed to a #Channel feed.
- Staff Directory that allows for all users to be searchable via custom fields such as expertise, location, department etc.

The inbuilt search engine is proprietary to iD; named Enterprise Search. It can find content within your intranet, apps and nominated shared sources such as network drives, SharePoint sites, websites and pre-existing content management systems. Customer feedback on search has been overwhelming positive.

In order to capitalize on Enterprise Search’s power, some planning is recommended. If you do not do proper tagging and metadata, as well as set your security settings, search results may look like this.

If you want information on search logs, for example to find frequent search terms with 0 results, the iD helpdesk can provide a SQL script to run when you see fit, eg. on a weekly basis.
Multi language

For multinationals, a key requirement is to be able to offer multi-lingual intranets. With iD you can localize the language of your intranet. The product comes with the following languages out of the box,

- English
- German
- Spanish
- French
- Italian
- Dutch
- Portuguese
- Chinese
- Japanese
- Russian

You can also tailor the interface for corporate terminology and iD will work with customers to configure additional languages where required.

Multi device

Getting people in the field to use the intranet has remained a challenge for organisations. This is rapidly changing, however, with the increasing use of tablets and mobile phones. Employees can now access the intranet on any phone, tablet or laptop.

With iD, you can create customised content layouts tailored for each device. You can also configure security for staff to securely browse the intranet remotely, including from mobile devices.

Unfortunately, iD currently does not come with an employee app. Some customers built their own and then integrate to iD, while others get by without an app. The key attraction for an app is the ability to do push notifications and also simplified login experience and an improved user interface.
Analytics

Intranet Analytics is another app in the iD collection. With the app, you can track “impressions” and “visits” to help validate decisions about layouts, navigation, and design. All data can be outputted for further analysis into MS Excel.

If you are using Google Analytics, you can add your iD intranet to your list of reported sites to provide even more detailed user metrics. Be aware that when it comes to internal communications, both legal departments and working councils might not enjoy the idea of usage data going through Google Analytics.

Some customers asked for more reporting and analytics features. While not on the current roadmap according to iD, this is one part of the product that could be further developed.
Platform extensibility & integration

While iD is an out-of-the-box product, it does allow for further customisation in comparison to other providers. It’s simple to edit the design to reflect your company’s brand, which is important to a lot of businesses. With unlimited users and the ability to switch functionality on or off, iD is a solution that can evolve as businesses change and grow. A list of out of the box integration plugins can be found here.

Regardless of the size of your organisation, you will need to integrate your intranet with other systems to provide a smooth employee experience. Platform extensibility and the option of making custom developments are necessary as to meet emerging requirements.

Making the intranet the one-stop hub for employees is a wish for many organisations. It is simply easier, if you only have to log on in one place and then all your tools are collected in one spot. This will naturally also help foster collaboration besides on e-mail.

iD comes with an API built in the .NET framework, which lets developers create and manage your own custom Intranet DASHBOARD apps and components. This is a common way to integrate new functionality and tailor the platform to meet to your requirements.

SSO allows for authentication across business applications, internally and on cloud-based apps. iD supports enterprise grade authentication processes based on SAML.
Intranet DASHBOARD: Beyond the product

With the decision to use iD as the platform for your intranet, comes also a partner that you need to collaborate with in order to be successful. Apart from the intangibles of good chemistry (which is in fact hugely important, but not easy to evaluate) there are a few things you ought to look at. Does it fit your organisation and budget? Do they have relevant references? In this chapter we look beyond the product to help you make the best decision.

iD was launched in 2004 and is a product of The ADWEB Agency, founded in Australia. A good indicator of their continued focus on ensuring implementation success, is that according to iD, 70% of their revenue comes from services, leaving the remainder 30% to license revenue.

On implementations

As mentioned in the previous chapter, implementation plays a huge role at iD. Unlike other software vendors, they do not have a partner network, but instead support customers directly with a range of professional services to ensure their implementation and ongoing success.

A basic implementation can happen as quickly as one month, which may include; installation, establishing information architecture, user testing, custom design, site building and training. More common implementation times vary from 6 - 8 weeks, which still is considered quick based on usual intranet implementation times. In other words, many customers choose iD not only for the comprehensive feature set, but to get up and running quickly and under the guidance of experienced consultants.

Besides the product specific services offered, iD also offers to help with your governance strategy. This is a crucial and often overlooked part of intranet success and worth considering. Customers we spoke to found this highly valuable.

In the marketplace

While Intranet DASHBOARD enjoys far from the widespread global adoption of Office 365, it is probably the most recognised specialised intranet vendor.

The number of vendors in this space seems to continue to grow, but iD is among the most prominent in the space, certainly in North America and the Australian home market.
Customers

You can find iD customers around the world and in all sectors. Today, most new customers have an existing intranet, whereas some are still in the early stages of transitioning to a digital workplace.

Among the more prominent references of the product are Shell, Audi, Jetstar and Panasonic. As of writing, iD claims over 2,000 customers and 1.2 million users in 65 countries around the world.

A full client list broken down by industry and country can be found here.

Pricing

When you purchase a license with iD, everything is included, so you don’t need to spend money on the individual additional apps that they offer.

The price starts at USD 2,400 for 100 users on-premise or USD 7,500 in the cloud. These fees are billed annually, and include technical support.

Pricing is available directly on the website, so you can easily go in, enter your amount of users, and then get your price quote.
Community, user group and support

According to several customers, iD is a pleasure to work with.

Many opt for the training offered, which helps them to get up and running successfully.

Online technical support is available 24 hours a day, 5 days a week via subscription.

There is not currently a client user group, however they have a designated Help-site with step by step tutorials for all of its features, which is publicly available.

Annual Intranet Health Checks are also complimentary and allow for ongoing best practice advice.

Roadmap

According to iD, the big themes on the roadmap for the next major release includes more collaboration (social), process and forms features as well as improved mobile/tablet functions. iD has not shared details on timing for an upcoming version.
A word of caution: We did speak to several early adopters of version 8. While none reported major flaws or shortcomings, several did report first mover disadvantages with bugs that needed fixing.

**Technology**

iD offers a similar product whether you want it run on-premise or in the cloud. The product is built on the Microsoft technology stack, including Microsoft SQL Server to run the back end databases.

The product works natively with Active Directory to keep information consistent and up to date. Single sign on is supported and the product comes with extensive security features and permissions controls.

Hardware sizing guidelines are offered but for installations with greater than 3000 end users, it is recommended to work directly with iD for a customised infrastructure review and recommendation. A [Technical Kit](#) can be found on the iD website.
Market trends

When deciding for a new intranet platform, you should keep the bigger picture in mind. Based on extensive input from the global J. Boye community the below are the headlines for each of what we consider the key 2017 market trends:

1. Focus on the employee experience, incl. mobile & a widening gap between youngest and oldest employee
2. Towards the future of work - meaning a broader look at how we organize our everyday working lives, working as a global network)
3. Increased usage of visual communications, incl. video and infographics
4. Chatbots/AI are coming and have a big role to play in internal communications
5. Email is back, e.g. for notifications, smarter working with tasks and getting organised

Recommendations for choosing an intranet platform

Choosing the right platform for your intranet is not just about choosing a vendor. It is about choosing a system that fits your business needs and objectives.

When you select a new intranet vendor, you also decide for a partner that will have an important part to play both when you develop and implement your solution. This collaboration should continue when you further improve your intranet in the coming years.

This means looking beyond price and feature match when making your decision. Just like this evaluation, take a broader look at the product as well as the intangibles covered in this report under the headline “beyond the product”. This looks at references, community, roadmap and documentation to just name a few criteria.

To best support your new intranet and help select the right vendor, here’s our key recommendations:

- Create a cross-divisional team with people who know your business, users and key systems
- Prepare a details business case built on specific goals and strategies
- Get to know your colleagues and their behaviour and understand how a new intranet might help
- Think about your governance model before you buy - not only afterwards
- Do your due diligence by not only reading reports like these - take the product for a test
About J. Boye

Founded in Denmark in 2003 on the belief that peer-to-peer learning is the number one way to learn, J. Boye has grown to become a global community for digital leaders which meet regularly in peer groups.

J. Boye Groups are exclusive, carefully moderated groups that bring together experienced professionals. You will meet peers with similar responsibilities and challenges on a regular basis. Get input and feedback on current projects and challenges.

Among the members are large, global and complex organisations like British Council, Chubb, Citi, Copenhagen University, DHL, Discovery, European Commission, KPMG, Maersk, MITRE, Panasonic, Public Broadcasting Service, Putnam, Siemens, Sitecore and Verisign.

What happens at a J. Boye group meeting? The focus is on developing professional relationships, sharing expertise and learning from each other. Ask fellow members what they’d do and get useful input and answers fast.

Besides the group meetings, J. Boye organises an annual international summit for the wider J. Boye community held every year in November in Aarhus, Denmark and attracting some of the global thought leaders for internal communications, digital leadership and business development.

For more details, refer to jboye.com