

National Association of State Personnel Executives

2016 NASPE Communications Award

Utah

Department of Human Resource Management

Newsletter

Angela Kula

Executive Assistant & Communication Coordinator
450 N State Street, State Office Building Suite 2120

Salt Lake City, Utah 84114

Office: 801.538.3080

Fax: 801.538.3081

akula@utah.gov

1. Provide a brief description of the submission

The Utah Department of Human Resource Management (DHRM) has a new, revamped online newsletter entitled, *Strategically Speaking*. This is a newsletter only available to DHRM employees and is published bi-monthly. It is WordPress based and captures articles that focus on strategic HR directives, employee relations, thoughts from the executive director, department updates and initiatives, employee recognition, and professional development.

2. How long has the submission been in existence?

Strategically Speaking was first released department wide on Tuesday, December 1, 2015. Prior to this date we had a pdf employee newsletter entitled *HR2HR* that originated in 2005 and it was also published bi-monthly until October 2015.

3. Why was the submission created?

DHRM's *Strategically Speaking* was created to 1) streamline the newsletter production process; 2) provide data-driven content; and 3) implement a more engaging newsletter platform. As previously mentioned, before the department's online newsletter, we had one that was a pdf format. It was developed in Adobe InDesign and the layout for each issue was estimated at eight hours. We anticipated that by switching to WordPress for an online newsletter, our layout time would decrease to three hours or less. Furthermore, because of the expense of the Adobe InDesign software license, layout could only be performed by the one person who had the software. Now that we have a WordPress site, we have multiple administrators who can add content and assist with formatting. Therefore, the reduced layout time is now divided among three people averaging no more than one hour per person and saving the department an estimated \$757.02 per year.

Secondly, *Strategically Speaking* provides data analytics, which allow us to track total readership. It also allows us to analyze which articles get read the most and which do not; thus,

enabling us to tailor content by spending more time on drafting articles that we know our readers are interested in seeing and eliminating article series that do not get read as frequently.

Lastly, *Strategically Speaking* brings not only a fresh new look and feel to our workforce, but it also fosters greater potential for employee interaction through integrated social media sharing as well as our ability to run polls. The previous pdf formatted newsletter was antiquated both aesthetically and functionally. We found readers would infrequently engage because they had to scroll through multiple pages before finding the content they wanted; therefore, it ultimately deterred them from reading it at all. Now readers are able to search the newsletter for the articles they enjoy most with little effort and minimum scrolling.

4. How does this submission support the goals and objectives of your agenda/department?

In 2014, DHRM was tasked by Governor Gary R. Herbert to improve department efficiencies by 25% in his statewide initiative “Operational Excellence.” That began the drive for DHRM to develop strategies to do everything better, faster, and cheaper. While the newsletter was not deemed as a mission critical human resource function, it was still a function that could be developed to be better, faster, and cheaper.

As illustrated in point 3, *Strategically Speaking* is much better than our previous newsletter because of a streamlined production process, data-driven content, and its engaging platform. It is faster due to the amount of time we were able to gain with the new online layout, which in-turn, has offered the department immediate savings through human capacity and hourly salary because layout is no longer a specialized skill and it can now be done by any employee at a lower cost and the work is more evenly divided so it takes less time away from other mission-critical projects.

5. Have you been able to measure the effectiveness of this submission? If so, how?

While *Strategically Speaking* has only published two issues so far, we have already begun to measure the effectiveness of the newsletter. Our first released issue had 1,518 pageviews with 7.91 views per visitor. Our second released issue had 1,576 pageviews and 10.58 views per visitor. There was also a 14% increase in the number of people clicking on links placed in page posts from the first issue to the second.

From the data we have so far, we have also been able to determine that the best time to publish a new issue is on Tuesday around 2:00pm.

Going forward, we will continue to use the data to measure which elements of post encourage the most engagement (e.g. is it the title, header image, germane links, or general content?) and if we notice a trend in a certain post type not meeting our expectations in readership, we can redirect our focus to posts we know are of interest to our readers.

To view DHRM's previous pdf formatted newsletter, click [here](#)

To view DHRM's new and improved newsletter, *Strategically Speaking*, click [here](#)