SharePoint uses simple sets of components – sites and pages – that make up your intranet. Ensure users can find the right sites and pages using navigation and hub site best practices. Customize content for users using audience targeting for sites and navigation.

Home site (company portal)

A home site is a communication site that you create and set as the top landing page for all users in your intranet. It brings together news, events, embedded video and conversations, and other resources to deliver an engaging experience that reflects your organization's voice, priorities, and brand.

Best practices

- ✔ Use audience targeting with SharePoint news and navigation links
- ✔ Set the site up for regular content updates
- ✔ Follow the guidance below and run the Page Diagnostics for SharePoint tool
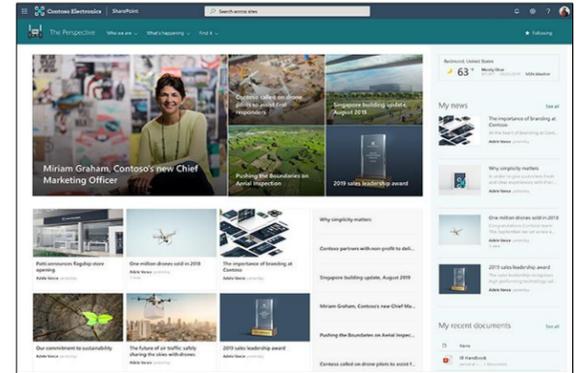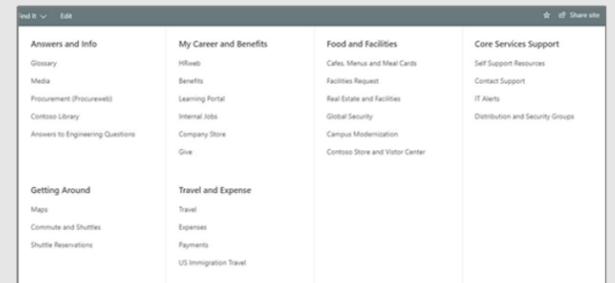
Navigation

Planning site navigation involves thinking about organizing and labeling navigational links into different levels of information that will enable site usability and findability. Navigation for the company portal is best provided by a mega menu. A mega menu can show comprehensive site navigation to be displayed at-a-glance. It shows the organization of your intranet sites and helps users find what they're looking for.

Best practices

- ✔ Use the mega menu style for navigation and add a site footer
- ✔ Plan navigation from the perspective of the user
- ✔ Ask for feedback from users during the design process

Hubs

Hub provide a way to associate related sites in your intranet so that they can share navigation, branding, search, and other elements. Hubs allow you to create flexible "families" of independent but related sites to eliminate the need for legacy sub-sites. This allows you to optimally manage governance and growth over time. As a starting point in your hub planning, think about hubs for key functions that your users need to get work done—for example: HR, Finance, Communications or Public Relations, Legal, and IT.

Best practices

- ✔ Plan hubs when you have multiple sites that need to share common elements
- ✔ Create a hub when your user experience would benefit from a shared search scope
- ✔ A site can only belong to one hub, but you can associate related hubs

Communication sites and team sites

Most of your intranet sites will be communication sites. A communication site is best when your objective is to share information, services, or content with a broad audience and most users will only have read permissions. In a team site, all members have edit permissions which is not ideal for an intranet. To plan your communication site, think about the visitors to your site and the information they frequently access and what content do you want to promote. Build your site with pages for each topic or task and then select web parts to help engage, inform, and empower your audience.

Best practices

- ✔ Use documents for content that needs to be downloaded or printed
- ✔ Engage your visitors by using Yammer web parts
- ✔ Enable comments on pages to encourage communication
- ✔ Maintain content over time to ensure relevancy and overall effectiveness
- ✔ Use site retention policies to manage the site's lifecycle
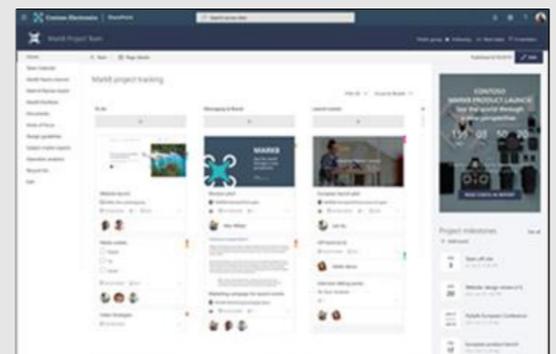
Just like SharePoint sites, pages are comprised of smaller building blocks. Web parts store your content in dynamic displays that engage and inform your audience. Leverage modern SharePoint tools like audience targeting, and the Highlighted content web part to personalize the viewing experience.

Pages

A page is the basic building block of a SharePoint site. You can choose from a variety of templates to meet the needs of your site.

Best practices

- ✔ Focus on the content of the page that helps the user meet their goal
- ✔ Use news pages to create engaging content and newsletters
- ✔ Use sections and headings to visually separate topics and keep content scannable
- ✔ Create custom page templates to drive consistency and simplify page creation
- ✔ Ensure you follow image and video guidelines to keep page performance high
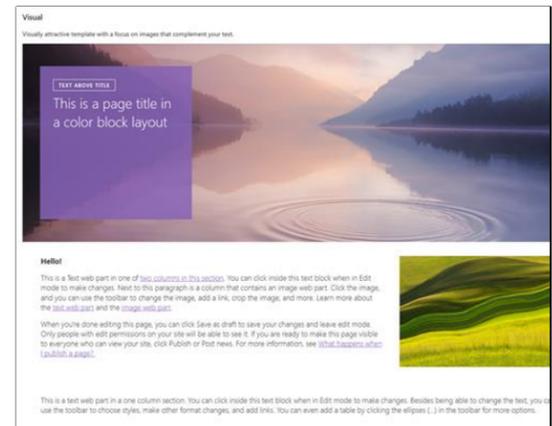
Web parts

Web parts are the building blocks of a SharePoint page. Add text, images, files, video, dynamic content and more using the web parts. For an intranet site, these are the most common:

- Hero web part – focus attention on the most important things
- Events web part – display a list of upcoming events
- News web part – post announcements and updates
- Yammer web part – Yammer conversations directly on the page
- Stream web part – Play videos directly on the page
- People web part – displays contact and organizational information
- Quick Links web part – dynamically displays regularly used links

Best practices

- ✔ Use audience targeting on pages to direct content to specific groups of people
- ✔ Avoid customizing webparts, but if necessary follow Microsoft Patterns and Practices
- ✔ Use web parts to address specific business needs, not to fill the contents of a page
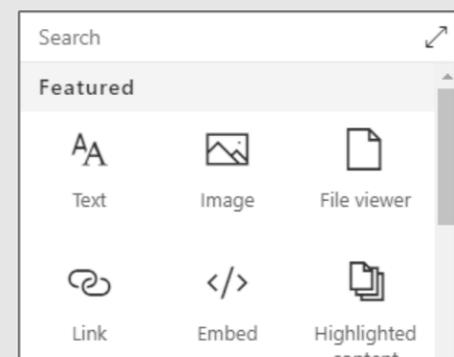
Intelligent content

Modern intranets enable organizations to communicate through sites and portals rather than email. Provide a personalized experience by using the Sites, Highlighted content, and News web parts. Each of these web parts have the ability to filter content based on the current viewer of the page.

Best practices

- ✔ User PowerApps and flows when possible to reduce day-to-day administrative tasks
- ✔ Develop user supports channels like a Yammer questions and answers thread
- ✔ Use highlighted content to display content from any site in your intranet
- ✔ Use an organization assets library to promote the use of brand-approved images and logos
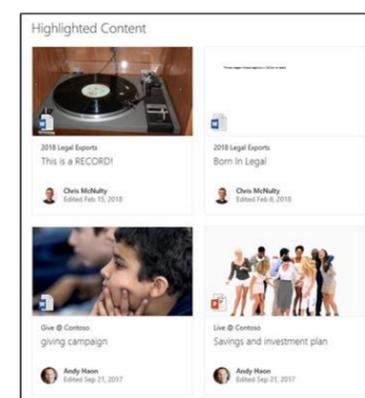
User engagement

Make it easy to get and stay connected with your network of coworkers and tap into your organization's knowledge. Engage and inform your audience using dynamic content like organizational news and the Yammer web part.

Best practices

- ✔ Develop a long term content management strategy
- ✔ Manage social communities by monitoring page comments and Yammer posts
- ✔ Target content and sites to specific audiences using audience targeting
- ✔ Use Microsoft Forms to create polls and surveys