



 Staffbase

The ROI of an Employee App: SAK Construction





500 full-time employees



St. Louis,
Missouri



8 offices

Laying the foundation for strong internal comms leads to returns across the business.

Companies of all shapes and sizes are finding value in mobile internal comms solutions that boost employee engagement and reduce work-related accidents. Staffbase customers have seen that by investing in digital solutions for internal communication, stakeholders across the business can track and measure their success.

Formed in 2006, SAK Construction hit the ground running in 2008 with headquarters in St. Louis, Missouri; four regional offices; and four satellite offices across the United States. SAK is a pipeline rehabilitation and tunnel contractor company. With almost 500 full-time employees, they're rehabbing sewer and water lines without having to dig up the lines themselves, thus avoiding disruptions to the areas needing repair.

“The app has become a part of how we do business at SAK. It has become a vital tool for our crews to perform their jobs daily, providing them with the resources they need, when they need them, right on their phones.”

- Scott Linke, SAK Construction
Marketing Manager



The Challenges

Scott Linke, SAK's Marketing Manager, started at the company in May of 2015. At the time, SAK was practicing "communication by blanketing." That meant a mix of emails, flyers, mailers, and phone trees were being used to get information to as many people as possible. "We were so spread out," Scott explained. "With four regional offices and frontline workers who are on job sites working on tunneling projects, they didn't have access to the same type of communication as the people who work in our offices."

Additionally, almost 50% of SAK employees travel Monday through Thursday, so sending out mailers often created communication gaps.

While the volume of communication going out to employees was high, the ability to track the success of those efforts was very low.

How could Scott measure the number of people who saw his flyer or the digital signage? How many employees read the email all the way to the end?

Scott and the SAK team needed a solution that would reach and engage **a workforce that's 70% non-desk.**

The Solution

In their search for a communications platform, it became clear quite early on that Staffbase was the right choice for SAK. **"The other companies that we were interested in were definitely priced higher, and didn't offer the same amount of customization."**

SAK launched their custom Staffbase mobile app in 2017. The customizable piece of Staffbase's solution continues to be a huge reason why Staffbase was the company for them.

"With Staffbase we could custom-develop the app and have it become an integral part of our operations and we were looking for a company that grows, changes, and adapts with SAK, not just an out-of-the-box product."

Their app now serves as a one-stop shop for all things related to internal comms, HR, and Department of Transportation compliance. Employees can find everything from employee spotlights, personal posts like wedding announcements, changes to their insurance benefits, and a real-time list of drivers available to operate special vehicles.



Since their launch, 97% of all SAK's employees are registered on the app, with an average of 357 active weekly users. That's 71% of SAK's workforce!

Cost

The app has been a great success when it comes to streamlining communication across the company. But that's not the only area where SAK Construction has benefited.

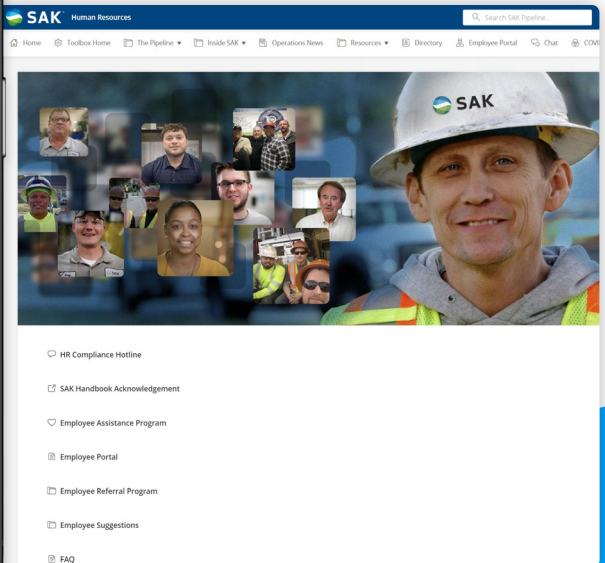
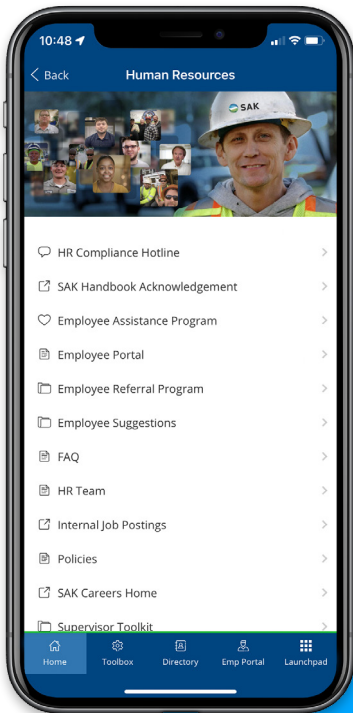
Previous comms strategies at SAK relied upon a plethora of paper-based strategies such as mailers and flyers. With their employee app, Scott and fellow SAK managers can easily spread targeted, relevant information instead of large mailer blasts. Scott can now segment specific regions of the business and send them news and notifications tailored to their location.

“We’ve reduced our print budget significantly, thanks to our app.”

The app has even produced some unforeseen cost benefits, such as a contribution towards a successful referral program.

“Since we implemented our app, our employee referral program has seen a significant increase in successful hires.”

This has saved both time and money — two crucial benefits for a small internal comms team.



Engagement

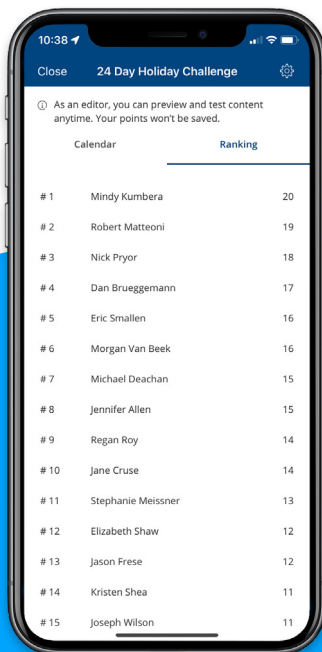
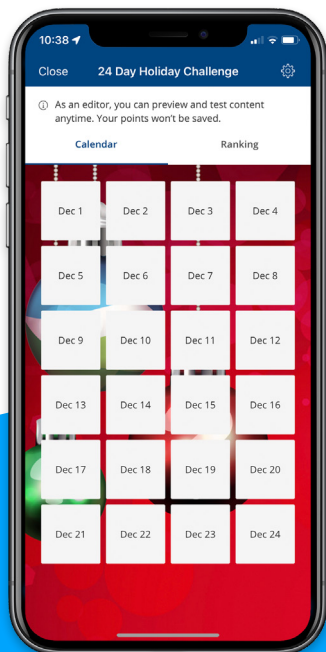
Internal communicators are often required to meet certain levels of engagement. However, without digital solutions, quantifying your success can be a challenge.

On the app dashboard, Scott can easily find analytics about the performance of his posts. Likes, comments, and acknowledgements are pulled together and Scott has the ability to send a push notification to only the employees who haven't yet seen important information.

“ You can send out a post and if only 20% of your employees read it, you can target users who haven't yet read or acknowledged a post with a click of a button.”

Scott has also held many contests in the app and watched engagement skyrocket. During the holiday season, he used the Advent Calendar feature to create a holiday trivia quiz, complete with a scoreboard and weekly prizes.

In 2021, the top performing post was part of the Holiday Gifts/SAK Rewards Program. This was a great campaign to increase employee engagement and experience.





Productivity

Inefficiency is the result of time-consuming activities that hamper employee productivity and workflow, such as searching for already available information and performing administrative tasks like vacation requests, filing expenses, and filling out timesheets.

Several studies confirm that employees spend on average 20% of their time at work searching for and gathering the information they need to do their jobs effectively. Additionally, another 12% of time is spent on administrative tasks.

To keep information easy to find and relevant to employees, Scott created two different home pages, one for employees who work in the office and another for employees in the field. For those at construction sites, they see a homepage called **The Toolbox**.

It includes forms to input information, how-to videos, and more, all designed to make finding information a breeze. If you're a driver, you'll log in and immediately see all of the specific tools and forms you need, such as pre and post-trip inspection guidelines or vehicle work order repair forms.

A few years ago, before they had the app, SAK had to cancel a party due to poor weather conditions. It took five hours on a Saturday morning and a team effort to reach 300 people to ensure no one would show up during the inclement weather. **Today, Scott can send out a weather alert or a cancellation notice instantaneously!**

Another time-saving feature has been the implementation of "tools." Scott was able to put together custom calculators that crews can easily access to take necessary measurements.

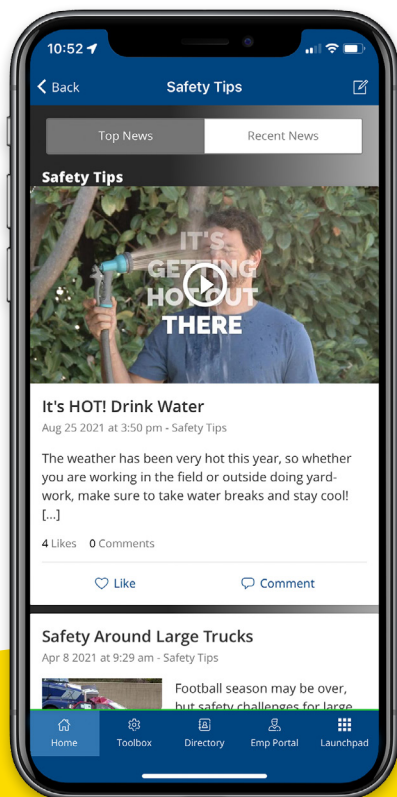
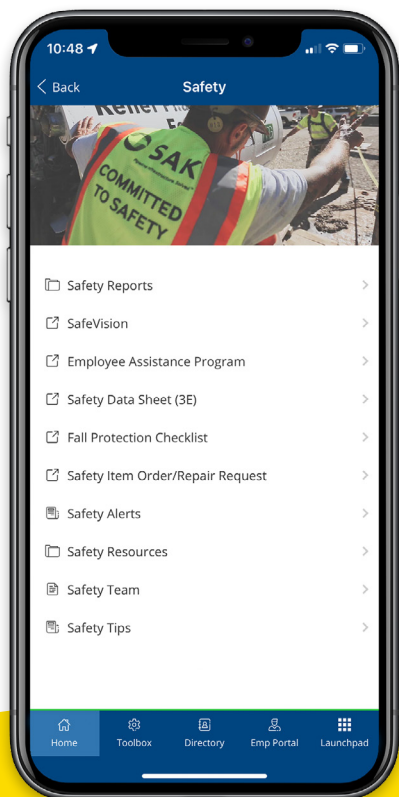
“Previously they would have needed to use spreadsheets and other methods to determine how much liner they needed, where they needed to cut, and more.”

Risk Reduction

In the construction industry, risk prevention is top of mind. One of the main safety challenges in construction is a lack of communication. It creates a more hazardous work environment and causes employees to be less aware of changing safety protocols.

The team at SAK enables their teams on the ground with a **digital safety handbook** they can access directly on their mobile devices. It includes safety checklists, forms to report incidents, and it's enabled for push notifications to be used in case of emergencies.

“*It has become a vital tool for our safety program: the ability to quickly relay safety alerts to crews. And furthermore, the ability to learn from other situations that have come up and how they should adjust in order to work safer.*”

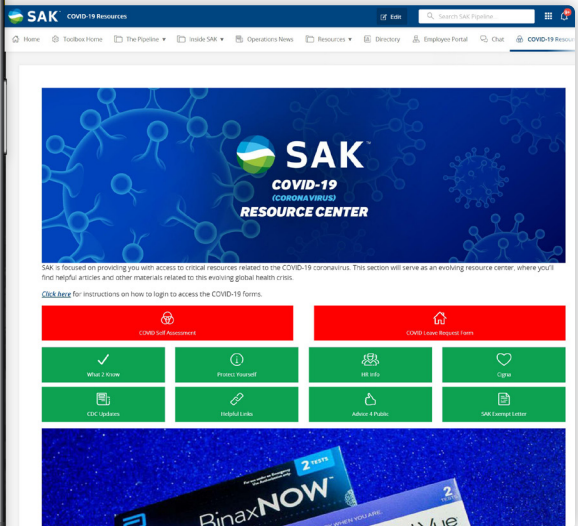
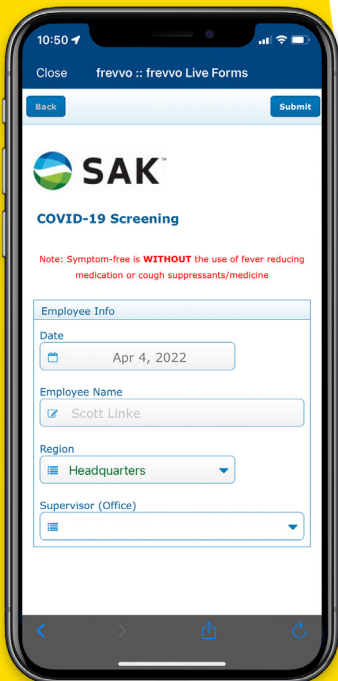


“More than just pushing out information, we’ve catered the app more to be a tool for our folks in the field.”

Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, SAK implemented a check-in for all employees to monitor any potential symptoms and reduce the risk of exposure. Employees were required to check-in daily. The data was simple to pull through the app dashboard, making it easier to ensure compliance and backtrace information in case of any possible exposures.

Documentation is key when it comes to preventing risks. With Staffbase, SAK now has a paperless submission system for incident forms. That makes it easy for employees to find and easy for site managers and administrators to track, saving everyone time.

Additionally, the app offers features that allow employees to check in on one another. A few years ago there was a hurricane in Florida where a crew of SAK employees were located. “The crew was using the Chat feature to check up on each other and make sure everyone was okay.”



Conclusion

Research shows that improved internal communication alleviates business problems and supports employee performance. Companies like SAK Construction are saving time and money with an internal comms solution that makes sending and receiving comms easy and efficient.

Insights into the effect of internal communication on business outcomes — and subsequently the impact of a mobile employee app on internal communication — point to a concrete and calculable return on investment.

Learn more about how Staffbase is the internal comms tool that manufacturing professionals trust.

Check out our 4 Effective Strategies for Communicating with Frontline Workers

[DOWNLOAD E-BOOK](#)



Want to see what Staffbase could do for you?

Book a free demo and see how we could help you reach your communication goals. No commitment, just a conversation!