

MyFlender: The intranet as the centrepiece of the digital workplace

Client

FLENDER

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Company

Flender is a leading international manufacturer of drive systems that has stood for mechanical and electrical components of the highest performance for 125 years, innovation, quality and reliability. With around 9,000 employees in 33 countries, Flender offers a wide range of gear units, couplings, generators and related services focussing on key industries such as wind energy, cement, mining, oil and gas, power generation, water and wastewater, marine, cranes and materials handling. Flender products and services combine state-of-the-art technology with extremely high quality and have been ensuring optimum power transmission for decades.

Initial situation & goals

Since 2005, Flender had been part of the Siemens Group as a business unit and thus also part of the internal communications landscape at Siemens, both on the corporate intranet and the other communication channels. After it was decided that the company would leave the Siemens Group in 2021, Flender's internal communications faced the major challenge of standing on its own two feet.

An interim solution was therefore initially created based on SharePoint, which still mapped the most important basic functions for the intranet as part of the Siemens IT infrastructure in order to maintain communication with employees. At the same time, the go-ahead

was given for a new global intranet based on SharePoint Online, which was to be established as a central element of corporate communication in Flender's Microsoft 365 infrastructure and application landscape.

Many decentralised SharePoints at the various locations had to be captured and all the content integrated into the new myFlender in order to create a living, global intranet for Flender and thus a „single point of truth“. The main objective was to make all relevant information digitally accessible to all employees in a pragmatic and well-structured way, thus mastering the change from a debt to bring to a debt to pay. Further ambitions included reducing the number of information channels as well as the constantly growing email traffic.

The project

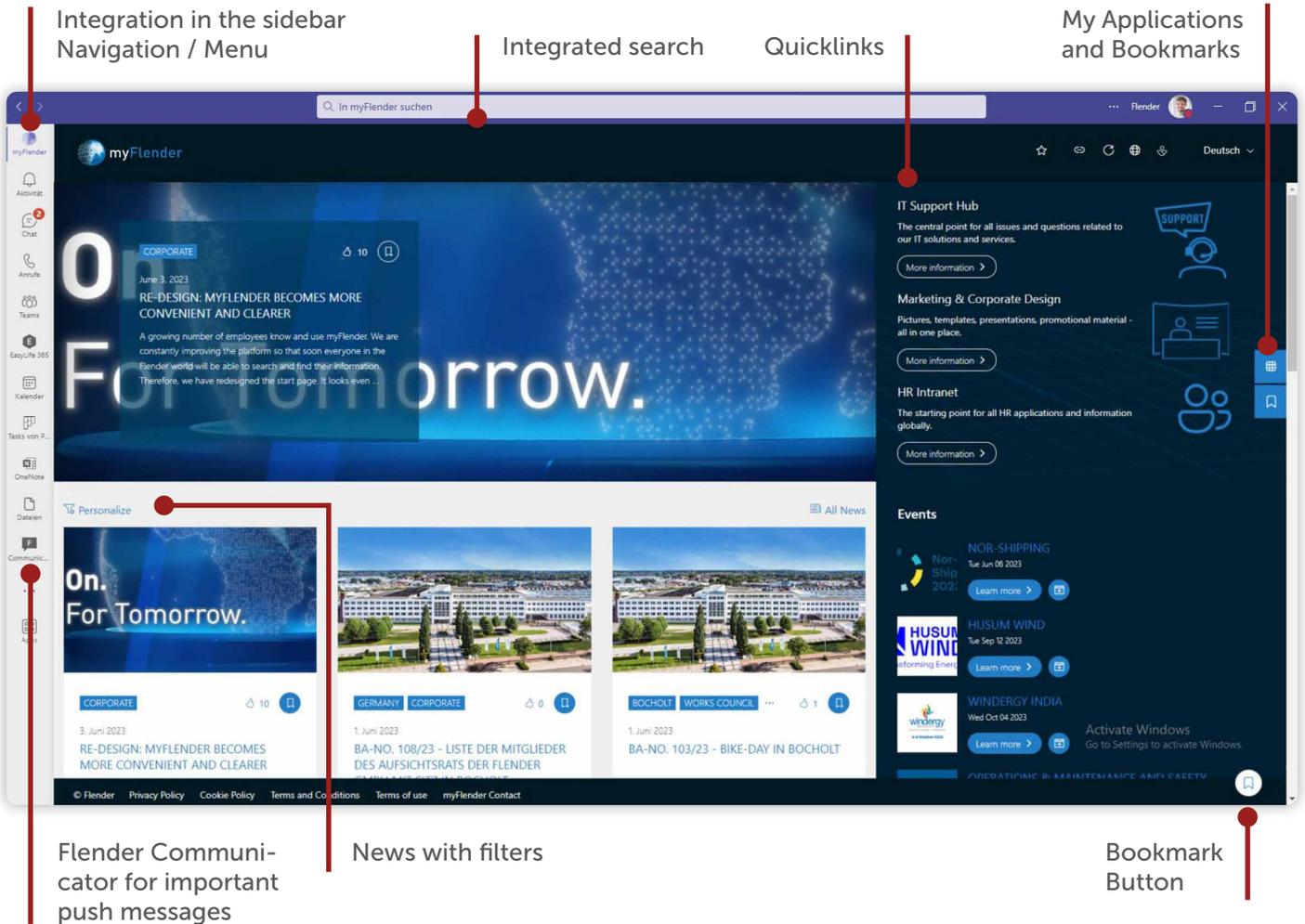
Due to the many advantages that Microsoft 365 offers – primarily in terms of integration options – this was the basis for myFlender right from the start. The homepage in particular was heavily customised, with expressive images and a design and features based on the Flender website. Together with the IPI and feedback from employees, we considered which functions were necessary to ensure acceptance outside of the headquarters. A great deal of time was invested in getting colleagues on board, talking to site owners, training them and enabling them to bring the content into the new intranet with the help of ready-made templates, which is a central component of the digital and modern workplace at Flender.

The solution

With the help of Viva Connections, the intranet was integrated into Microsoft Teams and thus also made available on mobile devices. This created a cockpit for employees to manage their day-to-day work.

The intranet is **integrated directly into the sidebar in Teams** and **offers an all-encompassing search function**. Administrators can prioritise important news in the **header area**. Each department and business unit is able to create news items on the subpages that are displayed on the homepage. This was technically implemented with a **news filter** and a mixture of active and passive personalisation. The information for passive personalisation is taken from the employee's SharePoint profile. This means that they are automatically shown the global news and the news from the region in which they are based, as well as security and IT incidents. All other channels (e.g. Legal & Compliance) can be actively deactivated. This ensures that employees are not flooded with information and that only what is really of interest is displayed.

IPI CASE STUDY



The screenshot shows the myFlender intranet interface with several key features highlighted by red lines and labels:

- Integration in the sidebar Navigation / Menu:** Points to the left sidebar containing icons for Aktivität, Chat, Anrufe, Teams, EasyLife 365, Kalender, and Tasks von P.
- Integrated search:** Points to the search bar at the top of the page with the placeholder text "In myFlender suchen".
- Quicklinks:** Points to the right-hand section containing "IT Support Hub", "Marketing & Corporate Design", and "HR Intranet".
- My Applications and Bookmarks:** Points to the floating "My Applications and Bookmarks" button in the bottom right corner.
- Flender Communicator for important push messages:** Points to the "On. For Tomorrow." news card in the "Personalize" section.
- News with filters:** Points to the news cards in the "All News" section, which include filters for "GERMANY" and "CORPORATE".
- Bookmark Button:** Points to the bookmark icon in the bottom right corner of the browser window.

In addition, a chatbot, the „**Flender Communicator**“, offers the opportunity to push important news, such as IT disruptions or information from the management. A chat message in MS Teams with the selected news is automatically sent to every employee, ensuring that it has a high level of visibility and reach.

The right-hand section of the intranet is used to make access to relevant information and applications easier and more efficient for all employees. The „IT Support Hub“, „Marketing & Corporate Design“ and the „HR Intranet“ are important pages that are accessed very frequently and are available here directly as **quicklinks**. Using the floating buttons „**My Applications and Bookmarks**“, which are also displayed on all subpages, employees have direct access to all the applications and links they need for their daily work and can compile their own favourites. For example, an employee from China can bookmark all relevant pages for China and save themselves the tedious task of navigating through the respective subpages.

Challenges & Outlook

The redesign of the myFlender intranet, which went live in June 2023, was a major step towards a digital workplace that has brought and continues to bring many challenges.

- » **Blue collar communication: currently no access to myFlender yet**
The aim is to integrate colleagues in production through an employee app or initially make the mobile view of myFlender available on private devices.
- » **Internationality: Awareness, acceptance and use at foreign locations can be expanded**
The content of the local intranet solutions must be further integrated in order to gradually eliminate them and thus further increase the incentive to access the global intranet.
- » **Language concept: currently 5 language versions, high translation effort**
Automatic translations are to be further expanded in future to ensure a good user experience for all employees – regardless of their location and language – while minimising the maintenance effort for editors.
- » **Resources: small team from CC & IT**
Four people worldwide who drive „myFlender“ forward, coordinate content and news and provide technical support. The content of all company divisions and locations is therefore not yet complete.
- » **High effort due to customising and bugs**
The extensive customising of the start page requires increased effort on Microsoft's part after updates to ensure that everything works as it should.

„We are definitely not there yet, but we are on the right track.
It's a clear step forward.
And we are looking forward to driving the digital workplace forward.“

Tobias van der Linde, Manager Corporate Communications, Flender GmbH
