

 theEMPLOYEEapp[®]

Veterans United

How Veterans United Drove Culture
With Mobile

The Situation

Creating a digital employee experience that extends workplace culture



Veterans United employs over 3,900 employees with offices in St. Louis, Kansas City, and Irving, TX. This includes 17 buildings in Columbia, MO alone. At VU, culture is of paramount importance and a huge focus. Since 2016 they have been named a “Great Place to Work” by Fortune Magazine, but they knew they needed more and better ways to connect employees from all their locations and be able to target content based on various groups.

“Email is necessary, but it’s boring,” said Cooper Lefler, the Internal Communications Manager at Veterans United on why they decided to take their communications strategy mobile. “We had a few things we needed on [a mobile] platform... Luckily enough, everybody in our company has an email, everybody in our company has access to a desktop or a laptop. It was when they were away from work that we were concentrating on.”

The team at Veterans United knew a mobile solution would help them achieve their goals of being able to share both need-to-know and nice-to-know information, reach all their employees and their families wherever they were, and cultivate their desired culture.

The data behind their decision:

- Smartphone ownership continues to rise with 92% of people aged 30-49, and that number climbs up to 96% for 18-28.
- The average smartphone user has **63 interactions** on their phone a day
- Roughly **50%** of Americans own some sort of tablet that can use apps

The App: Outpost

Seeing this trend towards mobile and the need within their own organization, Veterans United selected theEMPLOYEEapp and launched it to all employees at the beginning of March 2020.

Their keys to success were making it easy for employees to download the app (using a QR code) and organizing focus groups to figure out what their employees wanted and needed in their mobile app. They learned from these focus groups that employees wanted to be able to RSVP to events, participate in fun activities virtually (an extension of their active in-person programming), and to be able to contribute their own feedback and ideas. Now, all this feedback is reflected in their app.

Veterans United has mastered the art of virtual culture-building, even as they launched their mobile app at the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis where all in-person programs and activities were canceled. They have many ways to engage their employees and extend their fun culture on mobile, including:

- Cash Cab
- Trivia Nights
- VU's Got Talent
- VU Radio (their own radio station)
- Question of the Day

But they also engage other departments and teams to share useful resources and ways to get involved, like:

- Work from home tips and tricks from the IT team
- Financial tip of the week
- The Be Well Team's "Wellness Wednesdays"
- Health updates, including COVID-19 facts, stress management tips, and even virtual Pilates and stretch breaks

VU Radio



“ Mainly people, whether they’re in the office or not, all they want is to feel connected.

— Cooper Lefler, Internal Communications Manager

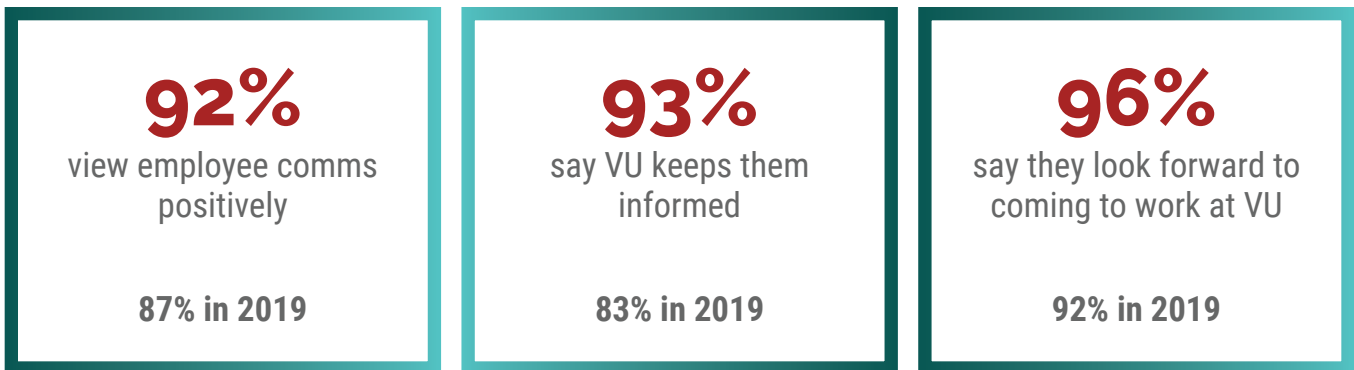
Veterans United has run their own, internal radio show for four years. Since launching their mobile app in March 2020, they have now brought VU Radio onto their app. Within the first three hours of publishing the first episode through the app, 255 people tuned in. Their employees love the show and the content shared on the program, and they are able to listen wherever they are, whether they’re at their desk, at home, or in their car.



Successes:

Veterans United has achieved incredible successes, all **within just 90 days** of launching their mobile app:

- Leaders preached the app as a must-have and way to get information during COVID-19.
- They have achieved a high level of awareness of the new tool, where employees talk about the app and they have reached an incredible 63% adoption rate.
- They see an average of 1,000 views of their app each week (roughly a third of employees using it once weekly).
- Their 2020 Great Place to Work survey results (ran in May 2020) increased in spite of the disruption COVID-19 caused in the workplace:



Company Background:

Veterans United Home Loans is the nation's largest VA lender. They are headquartered in Columbia (MO), and were founded in 2002 by a pair of entrepreneurial brothers who continue to help shape Veterans United's future. Learn more at www.veteransunited.com.



Interested in learning more about how theEMPLOYEEapp can help strengthen communications at your organization? Schedule an online demo today.

Request a Demo