



Ryman Hospitality

Adopting a Mobile-First Employee
Communication Strategy



The Situation

Supporting a Mobile Workforce With the Right Channels



Ryman Hospitality operates and manages multiple properties with most of their employees working on the floor, interacting with guests, rather than working at a computer.

For the last several years, Ryman has had to rely on email for internal communication, but that only worked well for their deskbound employees.

“Email is not practical for real-time updates or quick bites of information for frontline workers,” says Hannah Vincent, Ryman’s Corporate Communications Associate. “An employee app gives us the opportunity to share updates every day or multiple times a day without flooding inboxes. And it gives employees a place to see what is happening across our brands in a timely manner.”

Hannah Vincent is responsible for all of Ryman’s employee communications, and her team recognized that they needed a new way for reaching all their workers, not just corporate staff. The corporate communications team made the case for why better communication needed to be a top priority for her growing staff by sharing the results of their Employee Engagement Survey, where employees specifically asked for a mobile solution.



The App: RymanConnect

The team at Ryman Hospitality selected theEMPLOYEEapp as their mobile communications app provider because of the app's usability.

"theEMPLOYEEapp is quick and easy to use. It's easy for employees to scroll, search, or receive push notifications about urgent updates, and there isn't a huge learning curve because of how familiar it is to social media," Hannah explains.

How Ryman Uses theEMPLOYEEapp

- **Employee recognition.** The team believes in celebrating small wins like promotions, anniversaries, or venue milestones.
- **Company updates.** They can share important updates at the company, like company news, through the app.
- **Urgent announcements.** Push notifications allow the Ryman team to notify employees of urgent updates that require their immediate attention.
- **Employee engagement.** They share interactive posts like giveaways or team shoutouts where employees can comment and congratulate one another.

"Through the app, I can highlight exceptional employees, share pictures from team outings, and create a space where we share our wins and congratulate one another for our accomplishments," Hannah says.

Ryman's Goals for Their Mobile-First Communication Strategy

In the short-term, Vincent is focused on **driving adoption** on their employee app. They hope to have 52 - 57% of their employee population using the app by the end of 2023.

They also hope to make the app an **integral part of employee onboarding**. As they continue opening new locations, the goal is to introduce the app from day one as their primary means of communicating with one another.

Their long-term vision for the app is **improved retention and employee engagement**.

Hannah explains, "Our retention rate is already above the average for our industry, but we hope to continue developing our workforce and creating highly engaged employees who want to stay and grow their careers with us."

Creating a Winning Content Strategy

“ I’m passionate about highlighting the people and the moments that make employment at Ryman Hospitality special and connecting our company updates back to our culture.

– Hannah Vincent, Corporate Communications Associate

Any communication channel is only as good as the strategy behind it. At Ryman Hospitality, Hannah Vincent has created a four-pillar internal communication strategy to use for the app.

Pillar 1: Communicate

The app’s primary function is to help Ryman communicate. They use the app to provide easy access to important company information and updates. This includes updates on what Ryman’s Diversity Council is doing, sharing events happening at their venues, and other messages pertaining to employee benefits or need-to-know, operational information.

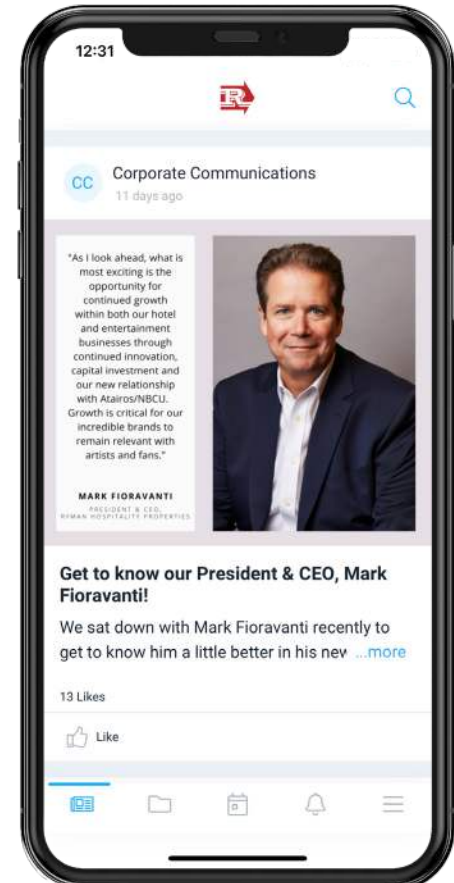
Pillar 2: Inspire

It’s important to not just inform, but to inspire employees.

The communications team does this by tying all their messaging back to their Vision Statement and highlighting their growth and development as a company.

For example, Hannah recently shared a Q&A with their CEO where he talked about his goals and what the company should be focused on.

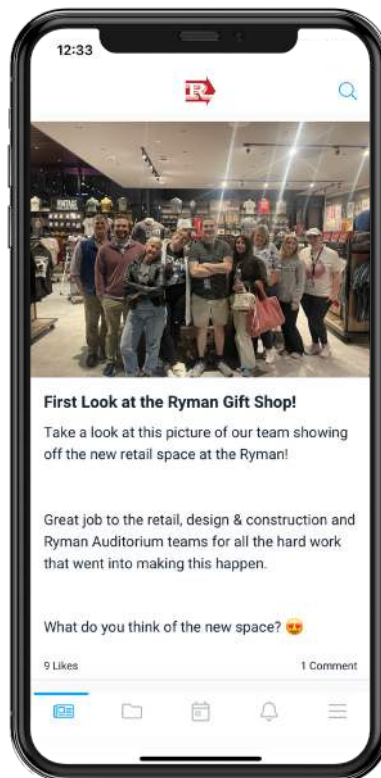
“Creating alignment from the top-down is inspirational and makes our employees feel part of the bigger picture,” she explains.



Pillar 3: Engage

Engagement is about providing opportunities for two-way communication and fun ways to get involved:

- **Interactive Posts.** Vincent has had a lot of success doing things like word searches where users can comment the first word they see and other fun posts that get employees to get involved.
- **Peer Recognition.** Employees are encouraged to tag coworkers in posts to give them a shoutout.
- **Company Recognition.** Vincent shares their quarterly Standing Ovation rewards program winners as well as employee milestones.
- **Questions.** Ryman keeps comments enabled on their app so employees can always ask questions.



Pillar 4: Collaborate

“Our CEO believes collaboration is the best tool we have to create an inclusive work environment, and through this app I am seeking to promote stronger collaboration cross-functionally.”

As Ryman gets more employees engaged on their app, they plan to identify app admins at all of their venues. This will help to localize communication and encourage more collaboration across the business, including exchanging ideas, swapping shifts, and gathering employee feedback.

“As I execute each of these pillars, I rely heavily on visuals. I source employee photos from leaders in each department because people get excited about seeing their photo featured and are more engaged when content is tied to a real person,” Hannah says.

Successes:

Having launched their employee app in December 2022, Ryman Hospitality Properties is already seeing some promising results.

40% of their employees have registered for the app, which is on target with where they hoped to be after just a few months.

“My most proud moment was in a meeting with one of our Business Employee Resource Groups. One of the attendees said they knew the meeting was happening because of the reminder in RymanConnect,” Hannah says. “It feels good to help employees stay informed and engaged, so they aren’t missing out on opportunities.”



Company Background:

Ryman Hospitality Properties is a leading lodging and hospitality real estate investment trust that specializes in upscale convention center resorts and country music entertainment experiences.



Opry Entertainment Group, a subsidiary of Ryman Hospitality, is a portfolio of entertainment venues that helps connect millions of music fans to the artists they love through experiences they’ll never forget.



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

[Request a Demo](#)