

By definition, intranets are located within organisations, unseen by the outside world. As a result, little is generally known about corporate intranets, the teams that produce them, and the processes they use.

In particular, questions often arise about the size and composition of intranet teams, where they sit within the organisation, and the skills they have.

To answer these questions, a public survey was conducted in early 2005. This article summarises the results and key findings from this review of intranet teams.

Intranet teams survey

In February and March 2005, a survey was conducted to gain an understanding of the size of intranet teams, the skills within the teams and their location within the organisation.

The survey was widely promoted, and 284 responses were gained from across the globe. This article presents a visual summary and a brief discussion of the key findings, with the full results provided online:

www.surveymonkey.com/DisplaySummary.asp?SID=868860&U=86886061581



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Number of intranet team members ^a	Percent (%) of organisations surveyed
1	13.2%
2	15.5%
3	15.0%
4	8.5%
5	6.6%
6	7.0%
7	8.9%
8	4.2%
9	2.8%
10	6.6%
11–20	5.2%
21–30	1.9%
31+	4.7%

a. Excludes content contributors and other decentralised authors.

Key findings and discussion

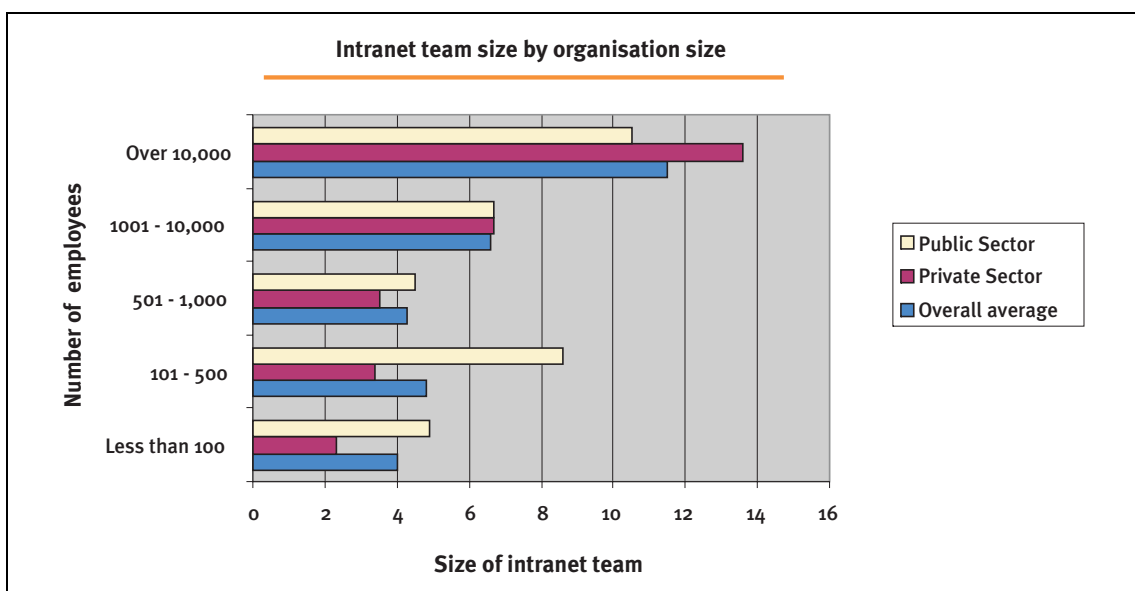
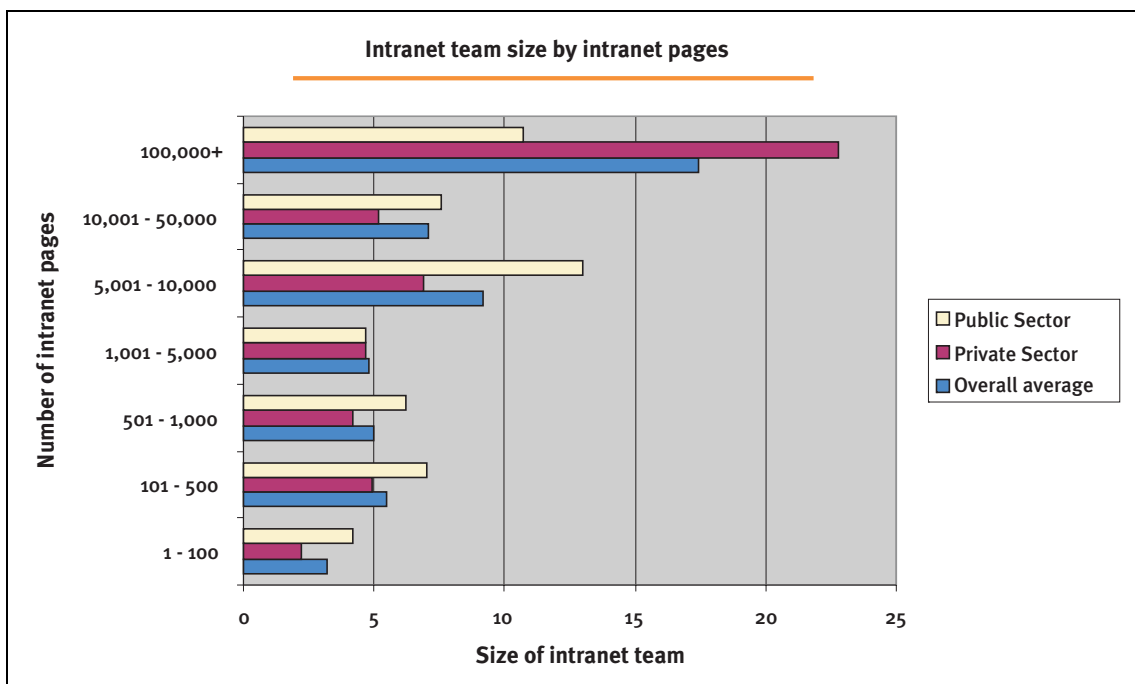
The key findings from the survey are outlined in the following sections:

Over half the intranets are managed by teams with 4 or fewer members

One of the most common questions asked by all intranet managers is: how large are most intranet teams, and how does my team compare? This addresses the key issue of how well-resourced intranet teams are, and therefore their ability to deliver an effective intranet.

The survey reveals that over 52% of intranets are managed by teams with 4 or fewer members. It is also noted that approximately 10% of intranets are managed by teams of over 11 people.

It is expected that some of the large variation in team sizes comes from the lack of consen-



sus regarding what constitutes the “intranet team”. While the generally-accepted definition focuses on the centralised resources allocated to maintaining the intranet, some organisations undoubtedly included some (or all) of their decentralised authors in their figures.

Larger organisations (and intranets) tend to employ more staff within their intranet team

The survey revealed that the overall size of the intranet (as defined by the number of intranet pages) appears to have an influence on intranet team size. This trend is most marked within the private sector.

Intranet sites with 100,000+ pages have an average of 17 intranet team members looking

after them. While intranets with under 100 pages have an average of only 3 intranet team members looking after them.

Within larger intranets (100,000+ pages) there was a notable discrepancy between the size of public sector intranet teams (average of 10 intranet team members) and private sector intranet teams (average of 23 intranet team members).

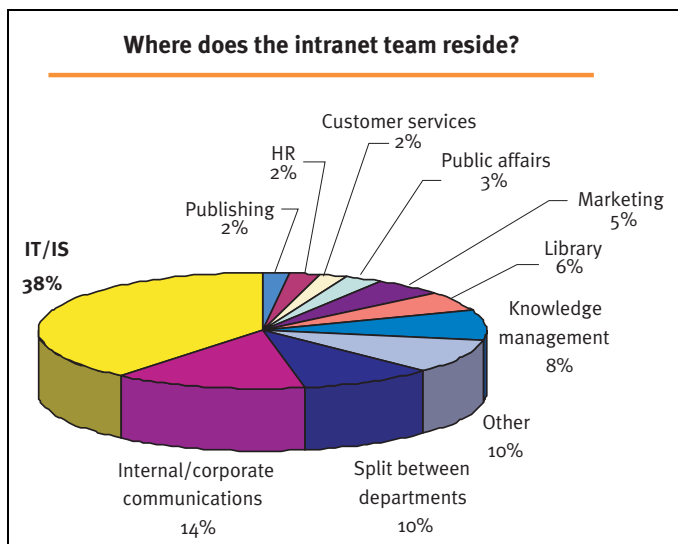
Larger organisations tend to have larger intranet teams. Organisations with 10,000+ employees had an average of over 11 people within their intranet team. Organisations with fewer than 100 employees had an average of 4 people within their intranet team.

The intranet teams are most likely to reside with the IT/IS team

The single most common location within the organisation for the intranet team to reside is within the IT/IS department (38%). Other common homes for the intranet team were Internal/Corporate Communications (14%), Publishing (10%) and Knowledge Management (8%).

It is interesting to note that while the IT/IS department is the single largest category, it is far less than 50% of the total responses, with a wide variety of intranet team locations within the surveyed organisation.

It would also be valuable to repeat this survey in a few years, and to track the locations of intranet teams over time. Anecdotally, intranet teams are tending to move out of IT areas, although the survey indicates that this shift is far from universal, at least at the current point in time.



Many intranet teams lack the core skills required to create a good intranet

The survey found that many intranet teams lack some of the core skills required to create an effective intranet.

Only around 50% of intranet teams have skills such as information architecture, usability and content writing, which could be considered key skills for all intranet teams.

Significantly less than 50% of intranet teams have supporting skills such as communications/marketing, business analysis, graphic design, change management, library science or mentoring/coaching skills.

To improve the overall quality of the intranet organisations need to invest in bringing these skills into their intranet teams. This can be achieved either via training or selective recruitment.

The most common skills within intranet teams were web design/HTML (77.6%), project management (62.1%) and development/database/coding skills (62.1%).

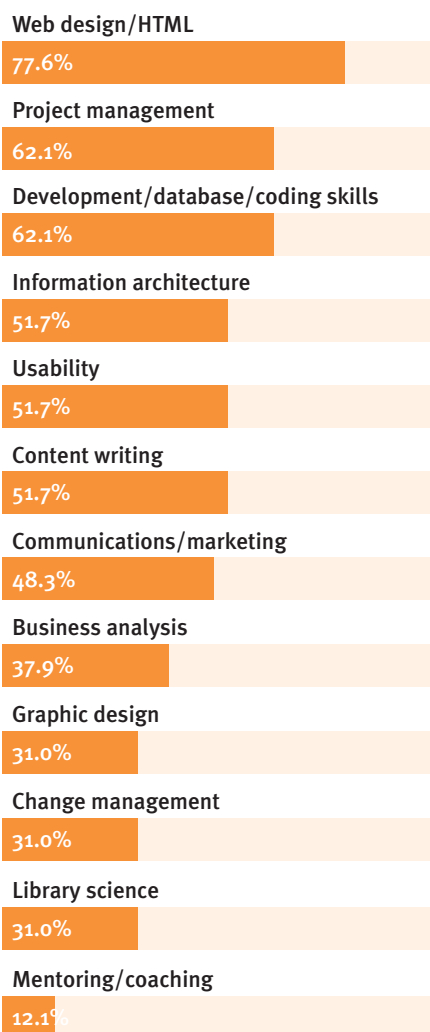
Web teams suffer from similar skill deficiencies as intranet teams

The survey revealed that the skills within web teams aren't significantly better than intranet teams.

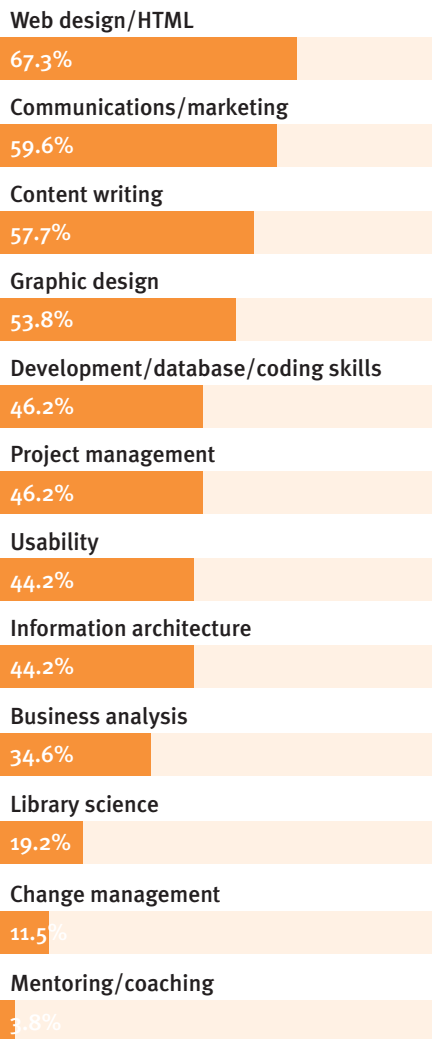
Less than 50% of web teams have development/database/coding, usability, information architecture, business analysis, project management, library science, mentoring/coaching or change management skills.

The only areas where the web teams were significantly more skilled than intranet teams were communications/marketing and graphic design.

Which of the following skills do you have within your intranet team?



Which of the following skills to you have within your internet team?



Teams that were responsible for both the intranet and internet had a significantly higher coverage of key skills.

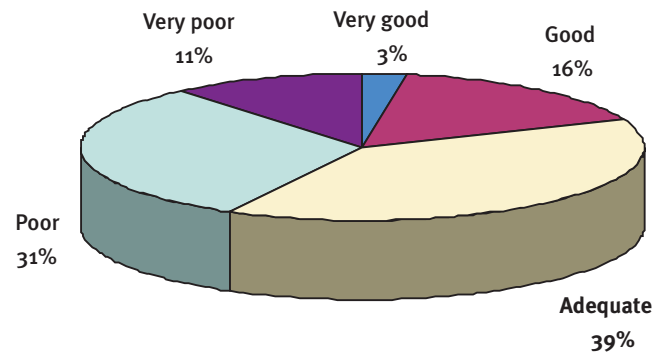
Over 42% of respondents felt their intranet was poorly resourced

42% of respondents felt their intranet was poorly resourced, while only 19% felt the intranet resourcing was good or very good. 39% of respondents felt intranet resourcing was adequate.

This supports the anecdotal evidence that many intranet teams are struggling to maintain their sites with the current resourcing levels, let alone further enhancing them.

The overall resourcing of intranet teams is one of the key issues that needs to be tackled in many organisations, if the intranet is to deliver concrete and measurable business benefits.

What do you think of the resources available to maintain your intranet?



The majority of intranet teams are also responsible for the organisations website

71% of respondents worked within teams that were jointly responsible for the internet and the intranet. Only 29% of respondents worked for a separate intranet team.

While this is not a surprising result, it is interesting to note in light of the considerable differences between the sites, as outlined in the earlier article, *Worlds apart: the difference between intranets and websites*.

There are few significant differences between the public or private sectors

While it might be expected that there would be significant differences between the size of teams, skills and resources in the public and private sectors, this was not seen in the survey results.

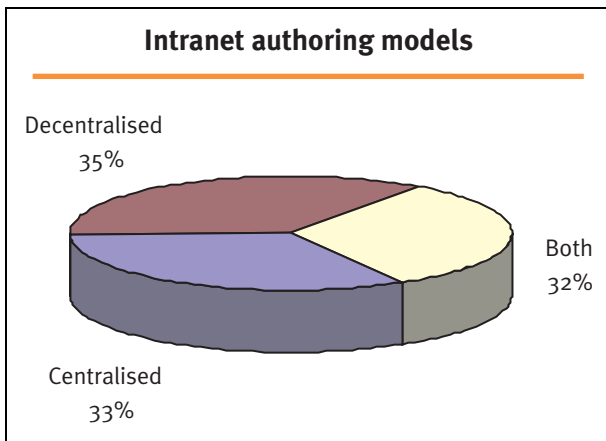
58% of survey respondents came from the public sector, 28% were from the private sector and 14% were from other sectors (such as education).

Analysis of the survey responses by sector revealed few discrepancies of any significance between the sectors. Overall, consistent results were found across:

- intranet team sizes
- skills
- location within the organisation
- sufficiency of resources

This is despite the obvious differences between these two sectors, in terms of overall business models, strategic goals, and organisational structure.

This further reinforces the view that intranet challenges are fairly consistent across organisations of all types and sizes.



A mix of authoring models are used

There is an even mix of authoring models used across intranets, including centralised, decentralised, or both.

This reflects the reality that intranet content is drawn from many areas of the organisation, and that a variety of approaches are required to ensure that published information is accurate and up-to-date.

For more on the difference between these models, see the earlier article *Centralised or decentralised authoring?*

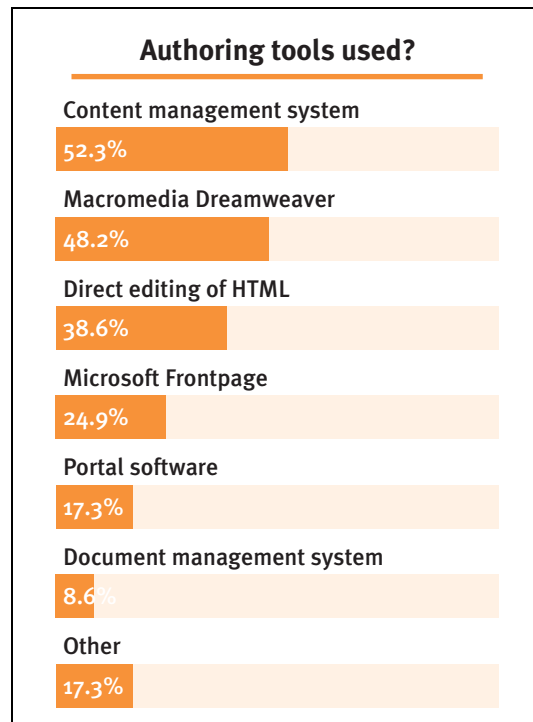
Only half of organisations have deployed a content management system (CMS)

Of the surveyed organisations, only a little over half (52.3%) have implemented a content management system (CMS) for their intranet.

Implementing a CMS is a prerequisite to managing a large intranet or a widely decentralised authoring model. Based on this, it can be seen that many organisations may well be looking for a CMS at present, or in the near future.

Note that it was beyond the scope of this survey to identify the particular CMS products in use, and this may be the focus of a future survey.

The survey results also show that a mix of tools are used within many organisations, with a common reliance on more labour-intensive options such as Dreamweaver or Frontpage.



Conclusion

While considerably more analysis could be made of the survey results, this article has focused on drawing out the key findings of direct relevance to most intranet teams.

Key findings include:

- over half of intranets are managed by teams of 4 or less
- IT/IS departments are the most common home for intranet teams
- many intranet teams lack the core skills required to create an effective intranet
- many intranet teams feel their intranet is poorly resourced
- there are few significant differences between the public and private sectors
- only half of organisations have deployed a CMS for their intranet
- an even mix of authoring models are used (centralised, decentralised or both)

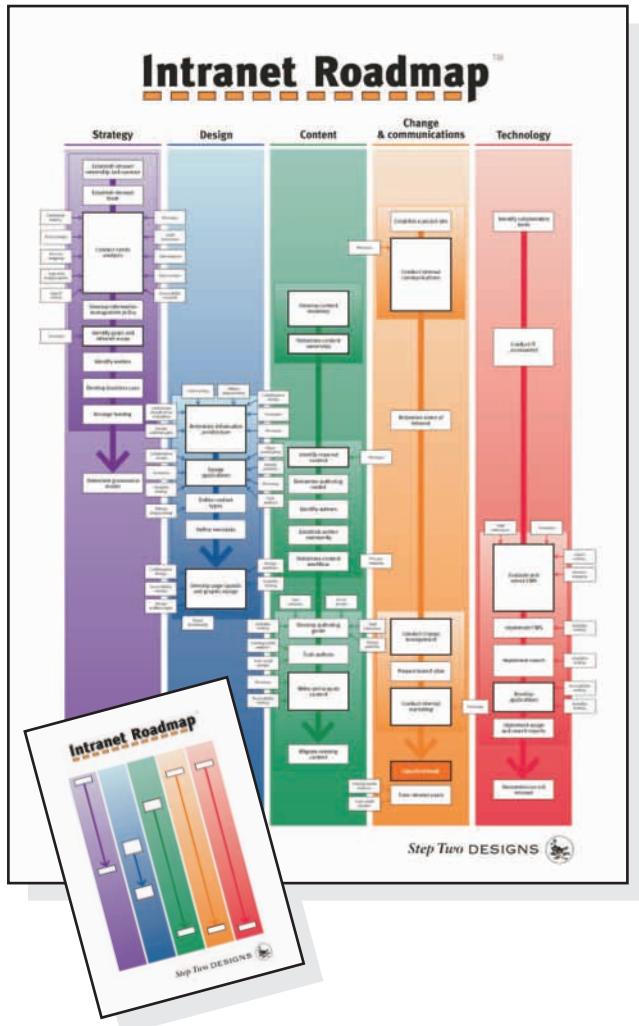
As the full survey results are provided (see the link at the beginning of the article), readers are encouraged to conduct further analysis to answer specific questions of interest.



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Intranet Roadmap™



The **Intranet Roadmap™** provides the first truly comprehensive methodology that describes all the activities required to develop (or redevelop) an intranet.

Beyond just implementing software or redesigning the site, the Intranet Roadmap covers activities in five key streams:

- **strategy**
- **design**
- **content**
- **change & communications**
- **technology**

The Intranet Roadmap does more than just indicate what activities need to be conducted, it clearly shows the sequence of activities required, and the techniques that will help at every stage of the project.

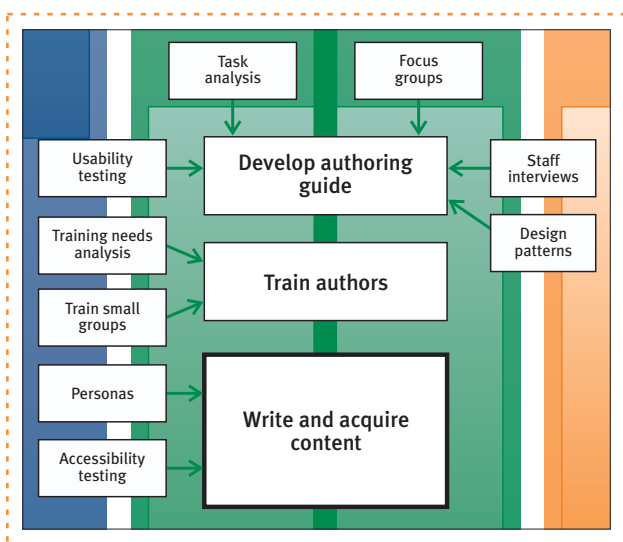
The Intranet Roadmap is delivered in two forms:

- **full colour A1 wallchart**
- **supporting 54 page booklet**

The **wallchart** lists the key activities required in each of the project streams. It also highlights which activities (such as usability testing, affinity diagramming, personas and collaborative design) can be used to support individual activities.

The supporting **booklet** then provides an overview of every activity and technique listed on the Intranet Roadmap, as well as linking to further resources and information.

The combination of the wallchart and booklet will be invaluable for any team looking to develop or redevelop an intranet, and it will assist in both planning and reviewing the approach taken.



US\$120 + \$15P&P
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