

Employee Newsletter Transformation

ThedaCare

Challenge: To manage production of At Heart, an internal newsletter for staff and physicians, during a staff transition at ThedaCare, a four-hospital healthcare system in Wisconsin's Fox Valley.

Target: ThedaCare employees, physicians, specialty physicians and volunteers in all departments system-wide; employees of Appleton Medical Center, Theda Clark Medical Center, New London Family Medical Center and Riverside Medical Center, and employees at more than 20 physician practice locations.

Solution: Bottom Line analyzed the newsletter's existing style and standard work. We found the publication lacked regular columns, articles lacked a consistent format and were not tied to ThedaCare's business strategies and objectives. We worked through the first few issues of the newsletter to obtain an understanding of the current process. This enabled us to identify areas that needed improvement. Bottom Line offered ThedaCare recommendations on how to improve the newsletter by linking it more directly to organizational goals.

To maximize ThedaCare's ability to disseminate information through At Heart, and to engage employees, Bottom Line restructured the newsletter to highlight strategic content and to better cover supporting subject matter. The front page article supports ThedaCare's strategy and organizational objectives. We established several standing columns to highlight key departments and initiatives, and we set word counts for articles. This new format now guides the content for each issue. For example, we instituted regular features that address the ThedaCare Improvement System (TIS), the client's continuous improvement initiative. These features are placed on the same page, and use the same style, in every issue.

Bottom Line also revitalized the newsletter's design, making it more relevant to readers. We worked closely with a graphic designer to create a standard format for the newsletter, placing copy consistently issue after issue.

To encourage employee input, Bottom Line continued to work with the already established news team. We developed strong relationships among the members, which has prompted additional story ideas and increased submissions. In

addition, Bottom Line established an At Heart email account where news team members and employees can send their story submissions, photos and feedback.

Outcome: The newsletter redesign successfully highlighted ThedaCare's strategic business objectives by restructuring content, and by increasing employee awareness and interest in key initiatives. It also resulted in a cleaner, more refined graphic appearance. The internal leadership team and employees at ThedaCare have shared their positive feedback regarding At Heart's new look and the publication's strategic focus. At Heart now more accurately captures the organization's culture. As a result, ThedaCare has entrusted newsletter production to Bottom Line for the foreseeable future.