

# Iris Intranet: Enhancing the Way People Work

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## ABSTRACT

In this paper, triptic BV describes Iris Intranet, the intranet platform that enables people to deliver better business performance thanks to its HCI design. Iris Intranet is one of the winners of the worldwide Intranet Design Annual 2014 organised by the Nielsen Norman Group, receiving praise for the appealing design: “One of several traits that differentiates Iris, the triptic intranet, from other intranets is that it actually looks like fun to use.” [4]

## Author Keywords

demo; usability; collaboration; intranet; system integration

## ACM Classification Keywords

H.5.3. Information interfaces and presentation (e.g., HCI): Collaborative computing.

## INTRODUCTION

An intranet that combines up-to-date, business-critical information with flexible collaborative tools, thus enhancing the way people work. That is Iris Intranet. The approach behind her award-winning design and process-oriented system integrations are explained in this paper. Also, plans on how to make Iris more context-driven are discussed.

## THE MAIN OBJECTIVE: ENHANCING PERFORMANCE

The main objective of Iris Intranet is to enable people to work smarter, faster, better. By providing employees with all the essential business information they need, in one place. No more expensive minutes of searching unfriendly systems: Iris serves information in a dashboard that employees can tailor to their personal wishes. Other platforms currently available are mostly social intranets, aiming to stimulate knowledge sharing, but Iris does more. Combining process-driven information with flexible collaboration tools, Iris helps everyone in an organisation gain more insights in less time together, wherever they are. That's why Iris calls herself *the intranet that actually works*. Having seen the light in 2013, Iris has arrived at a good

time. The McKinsey Global Institute, for instance, found that this kind of technology “could raise the productivity of interaction workers by 20 to 25 percent.” [1].

## THE DESIGN APPROACH

Working with usability methods as proposed by Krug [3] and (service) design thinking methods as discussed by Schneider and Stickdorn [5], and benefiting from years of web design and system development experience, triptic developed Iris Intranet into a platform geared to people and in the service of business processes.

The design of Iris Intranet is highly user-centered. Mapping out employee journeys following Schneider and Stickdorn [5], the (most probable) needs of people in a general workforce were identified and used as a starting point for the design, which was repeatedly subjected to usability testing to make sure people can work with Iris intuitively (i.e. 'without thinking') following the “Don't make me think” user perspective coined by Krug [3]. One key outcome of this designing for intuitive use is the so-called Swiss Army Knife, a toolbox that is always present wherever users go on the intranet and allows them to fulfil key tasks quickly. To make sure that employees can work with Iris on any device, she was designed responsively.



Figure 1. Screenshot Iris Intranet.

The result of the design approach was rewarded by research consultancy Nielsen Norman Group from Silicon Valley. In their worldwide Intranet Design Annual, they named the Iris that triptic works with as one of the 10 best intranets of 2014. “One of several traits that differentiates Iris, the triptic intranet, from other intranets is that it actually looks like fun to use.” say the Nielsen Norman Group's consultants [4].

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## ENTERPRISE SYSTEMS INTEGRATED

To facilitate employees' information needs within the processes of their business context, Iris integrates with enterprise systems. Examples may be project management systems and customer relationship management systems. From there, Iris serves up-to-date business-critical information in bitesize chunks in widgets on the dashboard. This way, the dashboard shows employees the current state of affairs at a glance. Such process-related information will make the intranet more attractive to managers, whose presence is very likely to stimulate activity amongst employees [2].

## MEETING REQUIREMENTS FOR SUCCESS

Haan et al. [2] from the Dutch consultancy Evolve studied the use of internal social media in 76 Dutch organisations with more than 50 employees. They formulated four requirements for success (which has to be defined in terms of for instance activity, participation, Return On Investment), namely use, goal orientation, formal organisation, and embedding in processes. With the seductive design of Iris Intranet – it “actually looks like fun to use” according to Nielsen Norman Group [4] – and goal oriented integration of process-based information, Iris enables organisations to quickly cover three of these four requirements. Thusly, she sets an example in the field of intranets and enterprise social media, increasing the relevance for and impact on business performance. The remaining requirement, the formal organisation of the internal community on the intranet, is a change management initiative, most likely to fall in the hands of HR, communications and senior management.

## THE NEXT AIM: TO BE MORE CONTEXT DRIVEN

Currently, the architects behind Iris Intranet are studying ways to make the intranet even more context-driven, mostly based on the employees' location. Use will be made of technology which is a driving force of the Age of Context, a term coined by Scoble and Israel [6] to describe how current technological developments allow for extensive personalization in a wide range of products and services.

## CONCLUSION

The concept of what an intranet is is changing. Iris is a pioneer in this particular shift, because of its HCI design. The result is one platform with both collaborative social tools and, thanks to system integrations, business-critical information. A combination that enables people to work smarter, faster, better. Anytime, anywhere, thanks to the responsive design. To facilitate the needs of employees in the workforce, Iris is based on a highly user-centered design approach containing certified usability methods and service design thinking methods. People can work with Iris intuitively, and are seduced to do so by the appealing design for which the intranet received an international award. In the future, Iris will become more context-aware, further enabling people and organizations to perform better.

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