




SETTING UP AN LGBTQ+ NETWORK

Outvertising



about us

This guide sets out to offer advice and best practice in setting up an LGBTQ+ network in your place of work. It draws on the experience of those in our industry who have already done so, outlines the benefits to be had and addresses the most frequently asked questions.

Outvertising started life in 2015 and was the first LGBTQ+ body for the advertising industry. A voluntary and not-for-profit organisation, it is our aim to improve the experience, support and representation of LGBTQ+ people both within the industry and in brand communications.

We are happy to provide support and advice in setting up your LGBTQ+ network and can connect you with the experience of others.



why?



41% of LGBTQ+ staff
don't feel comfortable
coming out at work¹

43% of gay men
experienced homophobia at work
(not including office banter)²

62% of LGBTQ+ graduates
go back into the closet
after starting their first job³

¹ Centre of Talent Innovation, 2013

² Gay in the Workplace Survey

³ Human Rights Campaign



why?

In order to counter that, simply talking about diversity isn't enough. To be an employer of choice diversity needs to be encouraged and inclusivity actively promoted. Setting up an LGBTQ+ network demonstrates a commitment to a safe, inclusive culture that in turn can deliver benefits to both business and employees.

- provides a safe environment for employees without need to 'self-censor'
- encourages support network of 'allies' within the business
- enables employees to be their authentic selves
- establishes LGBTQ+ role models within the agency
- increases productivity and happiness of staff

The background is a solid orange color with a fine, grainy texture. On the right side, there are several large, overlapping circles. The outermost circle is a vibrant blue. Inside it is a smaller circle with a gradient from light blue to pink. The center of these circles is a large, solid orange circle. On the left side, there is a smaller, partial view of a similar set of overlapping circles, also showing the blue, pink, and orange layers.

how?



setting objectives

An LGBTQ+ group will provide a chance for employees to network and there should be a social element but before you start in earnest, be sure to draw up a clear mission statement and set of objectives, which also benefit your workplace.

Establishing these up front will provide targets to work to and an effective way to measure your impact for the company.



The following objectives are an example taken from a recently launched LGBTQ+ network:

- Ensure that the agency policies are inclusive and fully consider the needs of the LGBTQ+ community
- Help raise the agency profile within the industry and to external clients
- Inspire and encourage champions and allies within the agency to support the network's diversity agenda, facilitate a culture of acceptance and awareness of issues faced by the LGBTQ+ community
- Provide support and information to LGBTQ+ people and allies working or seeking to work in the agency
- Work with clients and partners to ensure a fair representation of the LGBTQ+ community within advertising
- Engage with the wider LGBTQ+ community and demonstrate corporate social responsibility by supporting and partnering with a chosen charity



creating roles & responsibilities

The task of setting up and running any network is no small one, all the more so when time has to be applied by members alongside the day-to-day.

Therefore it is important to utilise resource already in place as well as setting out roles, responsibilities and work streams amongst the membership.

This will spread the work, increase productivity and further promote inclusivity.

The following workstreams are taken from a recently launched LGBTQ+ network:

policies and Internal Comms

- Ensuring company policies are in line with Stonewall/Outvertising recommendations
- Ownership of agency's visual allegiance to LGBTQ+ network
- Educating staff of LGBTQ+ network and encouraging membership
- Ensuring up to date education and training
- Working with HR to ensure LGBTQ+ education is available throughout the agency
- Ensuring LGBTQ+ network visibility in all new staff literature and training

external Comms

- Ensuring external visibility in achievements
- Working with PR/New Business/Marketing to promote activity
- Working with media owners/client teams/clients to push LGBTQ+ representation in the agency's work

administration

- Membership management, monitoring of diversity and representation
- Business plan maintenance
- Minute taking, allocation of actions

events coordinator

- Event diary and planning timelines for production
- Team management for delivery and successful production of events

treasurer

- Annual and individual budget management
- Fundraising targets and donations management

social secretary

- Planning of social diary and ensuring inclusion of all groups within LGBTQ+ event calendar
- Seek out events to further raise awareness and strengthen client relationships

HR

- Support policy development and embedding policies within HR functions
- Ensure recruitment communications are inclusive to the LGBTQ+ community

client liaison

- Heading the LGBTQ+ diversity work stream from a client perspective
- Liaising directly with clients and providing support to account teams in promoting inclusive work

branding & merchandise

Create an identity for your network which serves to make any assets, communications or events you create, immediately recognisable and memorable.

It should also serve to embody your network's ethos as well as that of the company.

make some noise

Communication of the network and its work will generate awareness, encourage participation, promote the company's inclusive stance and generate support.

Consider a launch plan with the following in mind:

- Best use of company resources to spread the word (online, social, e-newsletters)
- Launch event which leverages client and partner opportunities
- Inclusion in HR documentation and new starter packs
- Presence at relevant events
- Ongoing dialogue and education



01

Be realistic, take time to establish yourself over time and don't over-commit

02

Ensure your group is clear on the overall 'mission statement' and set clear goals and a year plan

03

Be inclusive in getting involved with L, G, B, T and other events and initiatives

04

Secure senior management sponsorship

top tips

sources & further reading



The Glass Closet: Why Coming Out is Good Business

John Browne
(Harper Business)



Forbes Diversity and Inclusion Report

http://images.forbes.com/forbesinsights/StudyPDFs/Innovation_Through_Diversity.pdf



Advocating for LGBTQ+ Equality in Your Workplace

<http://www.hrc.org/resources/advocating-for-lgbt-equality-in-your-workplace>



If you want more information, have any further questions relating to setting up your network or just want to find out more about outvertising, please contact us

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