

January 2024

W E ■
A R E
C O M

The organization of communication departments

How communications departments are organizing themselves to produce content faster and more efficiently

SUMMARY

1. Introduction: why content production organizations and strategies are changing
2. Hyperdecentralized model
3. Hypercentralized model (SG)
4. Centralized model (CA)
5. Semi-centralized model (Danone)
6. Hybrid model (Total)
7. Cooperative model (PE)
8. Glocal model (Airbus)

INTRODUCTION

CONTENT PRODUCTION
ORGANIZATIONS
& STRATEGIES

Corporate communications' history in a nutshell

DISPENSE WITH A HORSE



and save the expense, care and anxiety of keeping it. To run a motor carriage costs about $\frac{1}{2}$ cent a mile.

THE WINTON MOTOR CARRIAGE

is the best vehicle of its kind that is made. It is handsomely, strongly and yet lightly constructed and elegantly finished. Easily managed. Speed from 3 to 20 miles an hour. The hydrocarbon motor is simple and powerful. No odor, no vibration. Suspension Wire Wheels. Pneumatic Tires. Ball Bearings.  Send for Catalogue.

Price \$1,000. No Agents.

THE WINTON MOTOR CARRIAGE CO., Cleveland, Ohio.

1st car ad - 1898

December 1926 Industrial Welfare

An odds-on winner is better than a 100 to 1 loser.



IN THE LONG RUN
SAFETY ALWAYS PAYS.

Our Annual Ballot.

WOULD YOU LIKE AN XMAS BOX?

NUMEROUS PRIZES.



WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO.

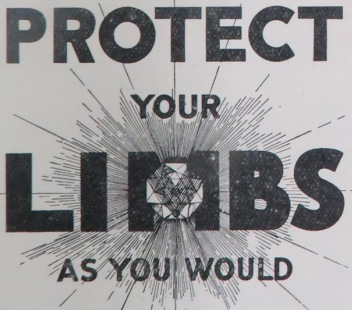
State your opinion of the order of popularity of the above reproductions of our Pattern with your Name, Check No., and the Name of your Employer on a postcard which should be given to your Management to forward to the Department on 11th December, 1926, to enable the distribution of Prizes by the 23rd inst.

Example— 6, 7, 5, 3, 4, 8, 9, 1, 2, 10, 11, 12.

DO NOT DELAY—ENTER TO-DAY.

One envelope of a number three can submit one entry. Entries will be received by mail on or before 11th December, 1926. Only entries on postcards will be considered.

PROTECT YOUR LIMBS AS YOU WOULD PRECIOUS STONES



THINK



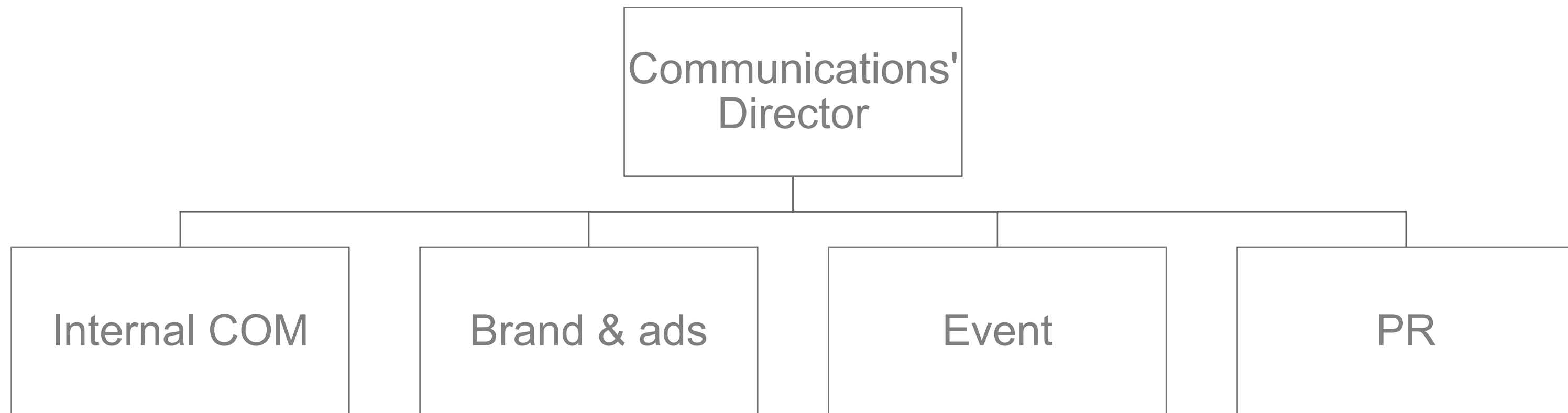
YOU DO THINGS JUST AS RISKY

The month's accident prevention posters, which are offered at special rates to readers of this journal.

423

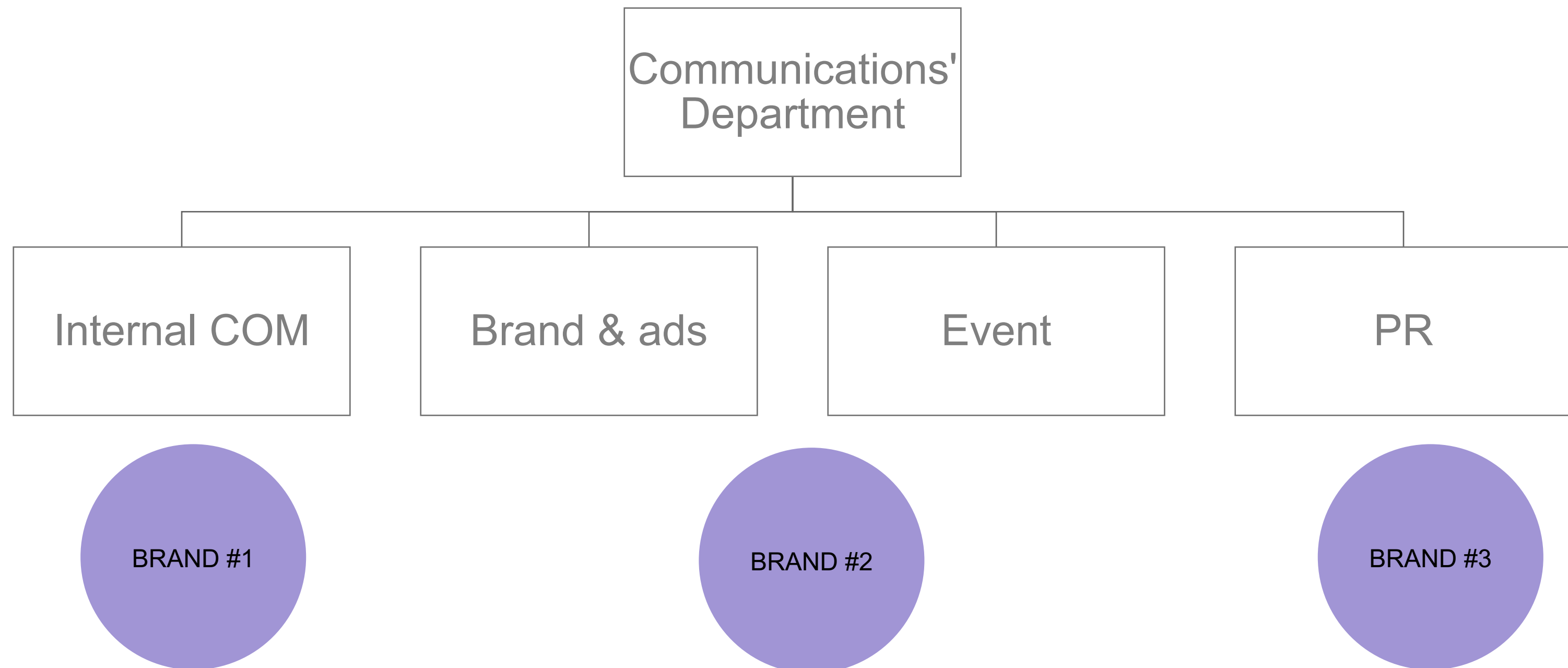
Internal communication - 1926

An "organic" organization



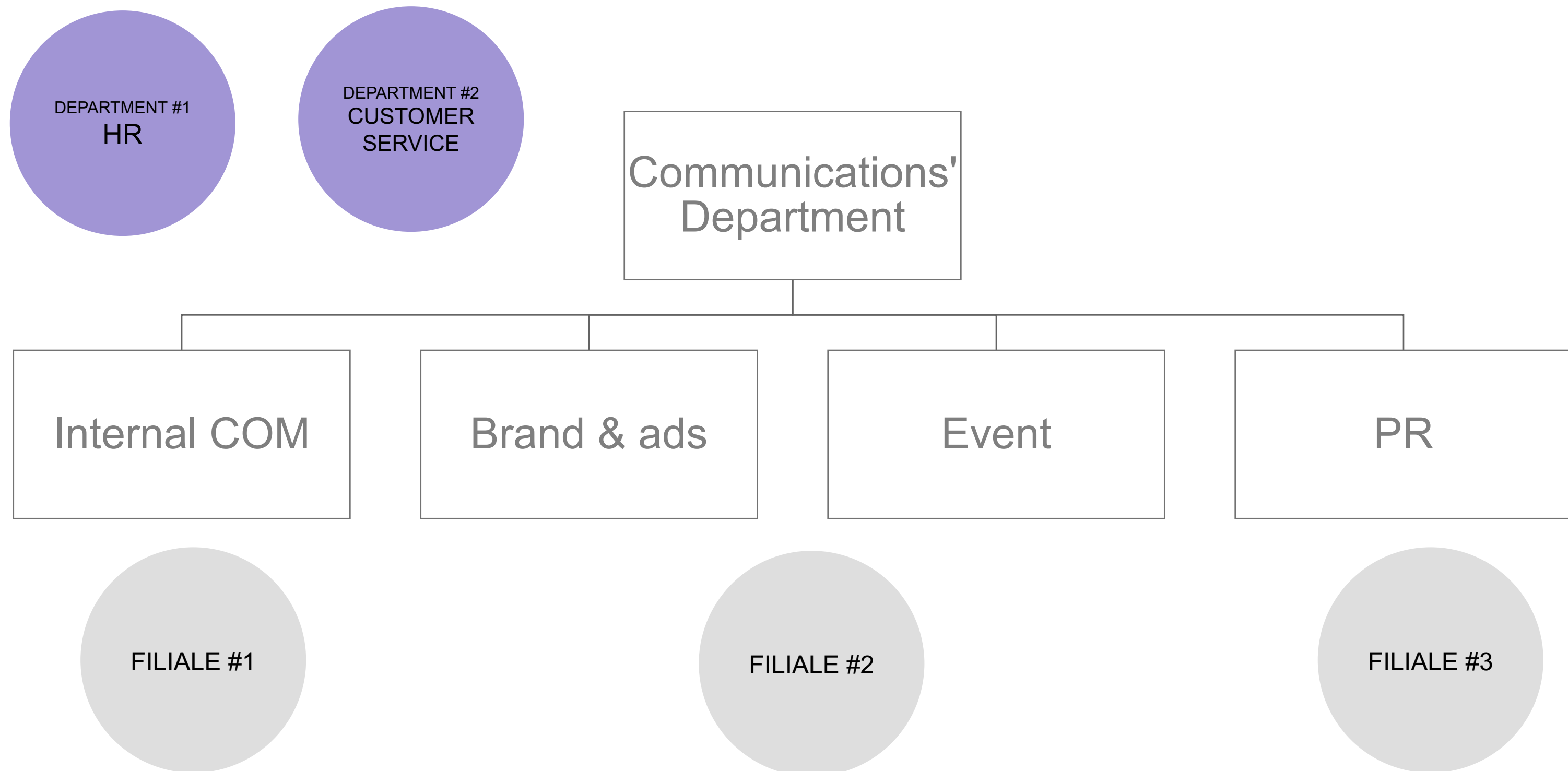
A natural evolution: the multiplication of broadcasters

As companies have grown, communications « people » and tools outside the Communications department have emerged.



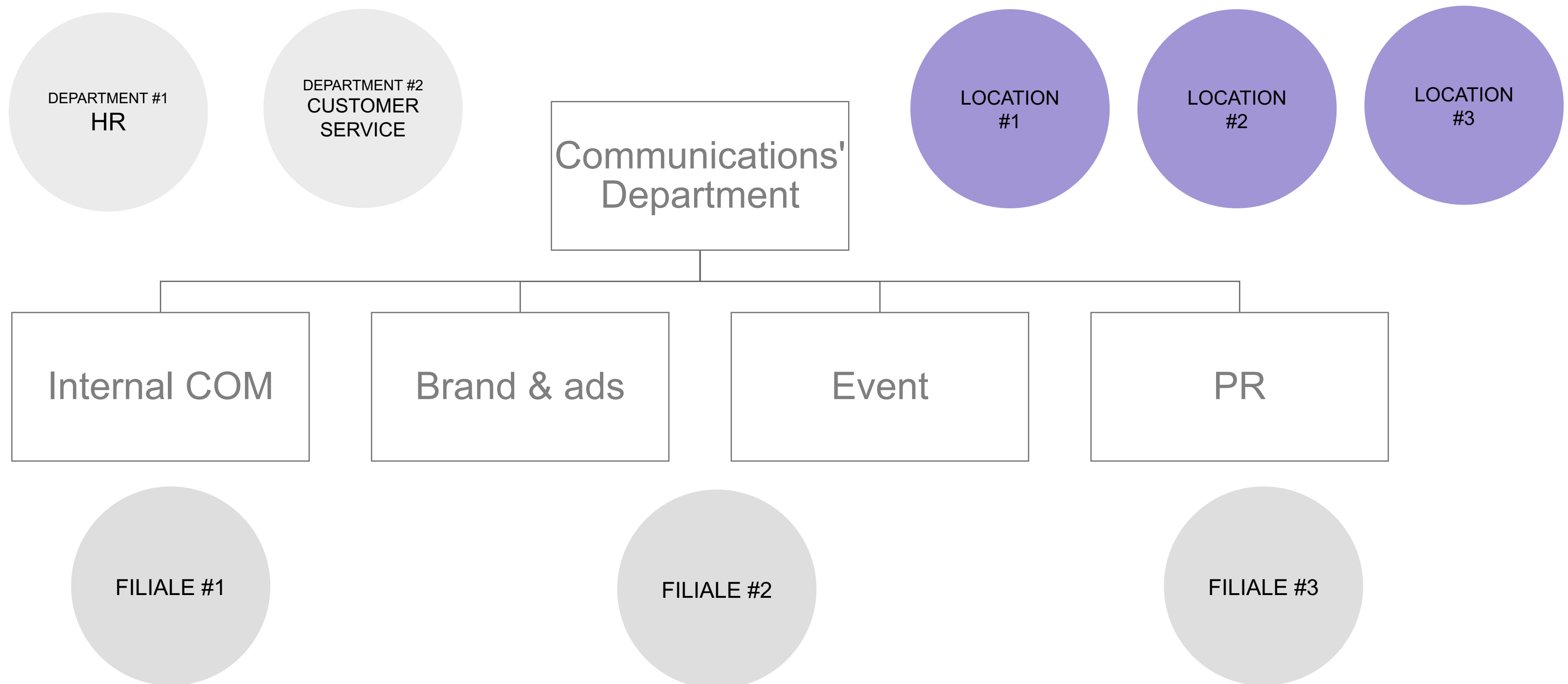
A natural evolution: the multiplication of broadcasters

As companies have grown, communications « people » and tools outside the Communications department have emerged.



A natural evolution: the multiplication of broadcasters

As companies have grown, communications « people » and tools outside the Communications department have emerged.



A technical evolution: the multiplication of media

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Abonné

 Suivi par Delphine Remy-Boutang et 6 autres personnes

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@msdev_fr

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@Microsoft

**Surface France** ✓
@SurfaceFrance

**Microsoft Education** ✓
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A company can create multiples channels on the same social media.

A social evolution:
porous internal/external targets

What are the implications
for my organization?

Loss of **coherence** in tone,
style and visuals of communications

Dilution of **target knowledge and tools**

Difference in the "**level**" of communications

Overlapping of communications

Reorganizing corporate communications

With these challenges in mind, **companies have, over the years, repositioned their communications teams.**

Depending on their corporate culture, profiles and products, we've seen the emergence of various new COM organizational profiles.

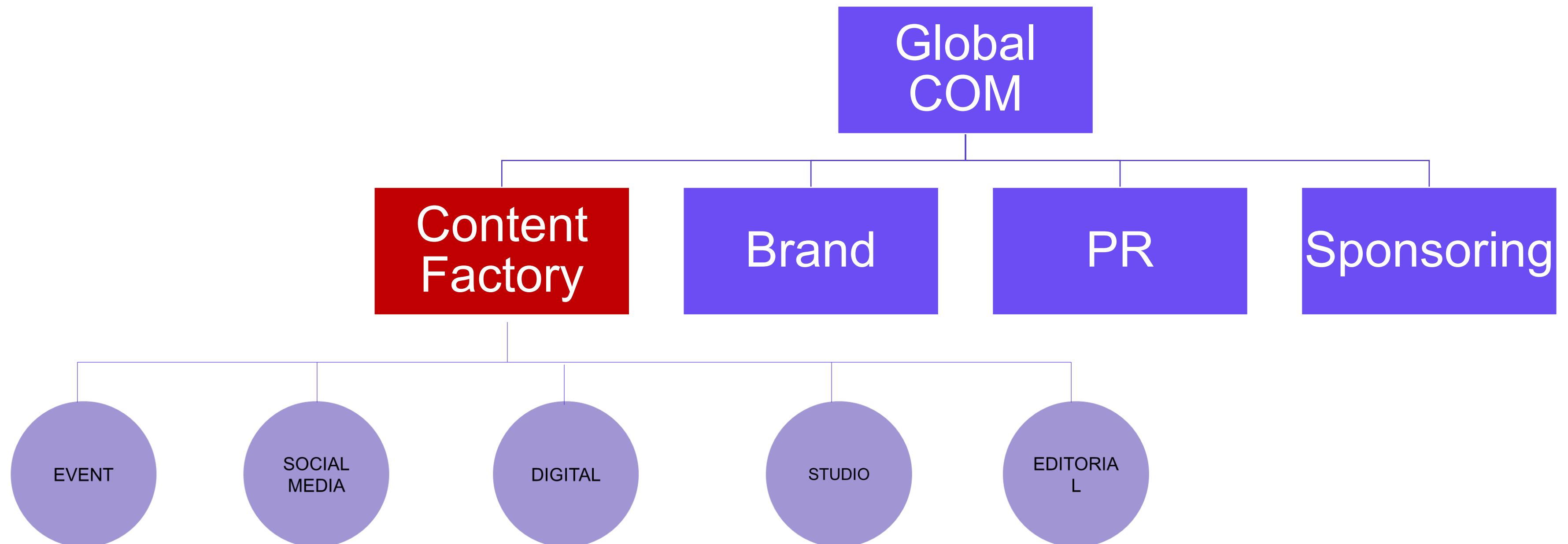
CONTENT FACTORY

ORGANIZATION

CONTENT FACTORY ARRIVAL

In this new concept, we note the appearance of a specific organization which includes different specialities.

Some original directions – like Brand, PR or Sponsoring – remain independents. Nevertheless, they can work with the content factory when they need.



The in-house agency, a growing appetite among advertisers

More than an isolated phenomenon, a general trend

66%

of multinational companies
have an in-house agency

+16% Increase in the number of multinational
companies with an in-house agency

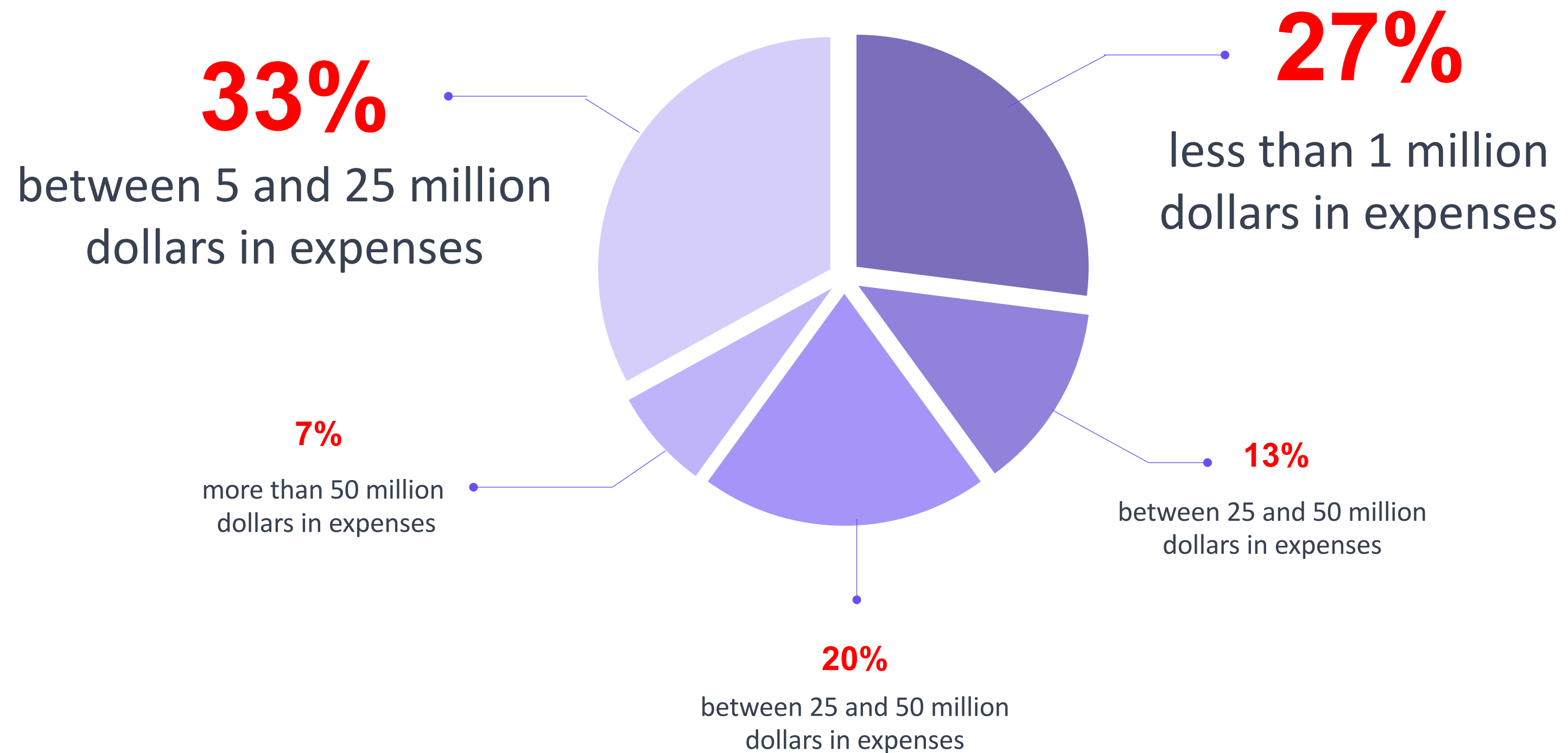
21%

are actively considering
creating one

+17% The likelihood of creating one
for other brands

Source : survey 2024 « Global Trend in Agency In-Housing », publiée récemment by the WFA – World Federation of Advertisers and The Observatory International

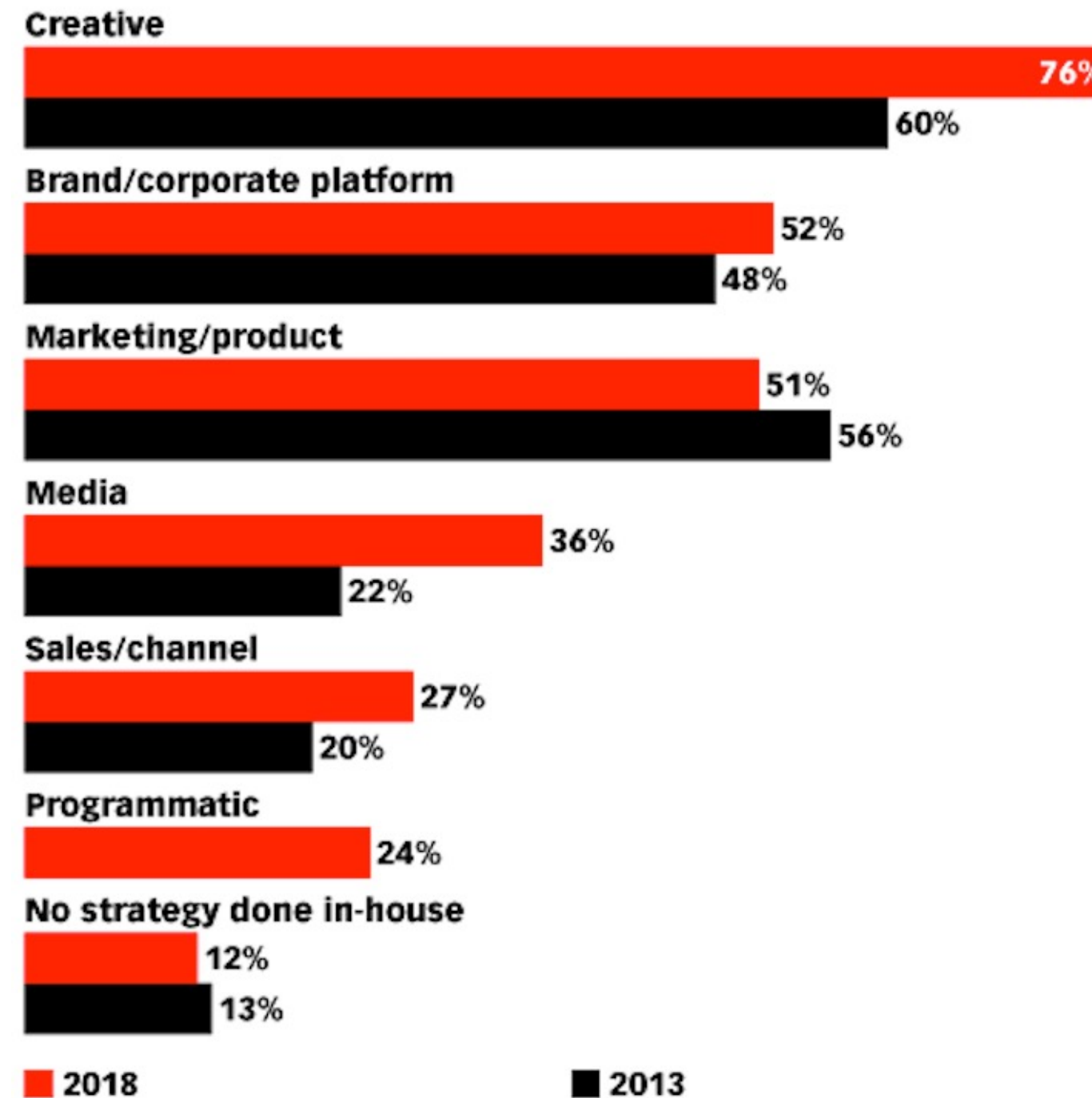
How much does the in-house agency cost ?



Source : Influentia

Which Services Are Handled by US Companies In-House Agencies ?

% of respondents, 2013 & 2018



Note: 2018 n=237 client-side marketers
Source: Association of National Advertisers (ANA), "The Continued Rise of the In-House Agency," Oct 15, 2018

Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow

**Less than
5 years**
of existence
for 75% of them

70% vs 65%

of business leaders have some form
of in-house strategic capabilities

Evolution the last 3 years

56%

of business leaders plan to
transfer more digital production

For the next 3 years

Which issues ?

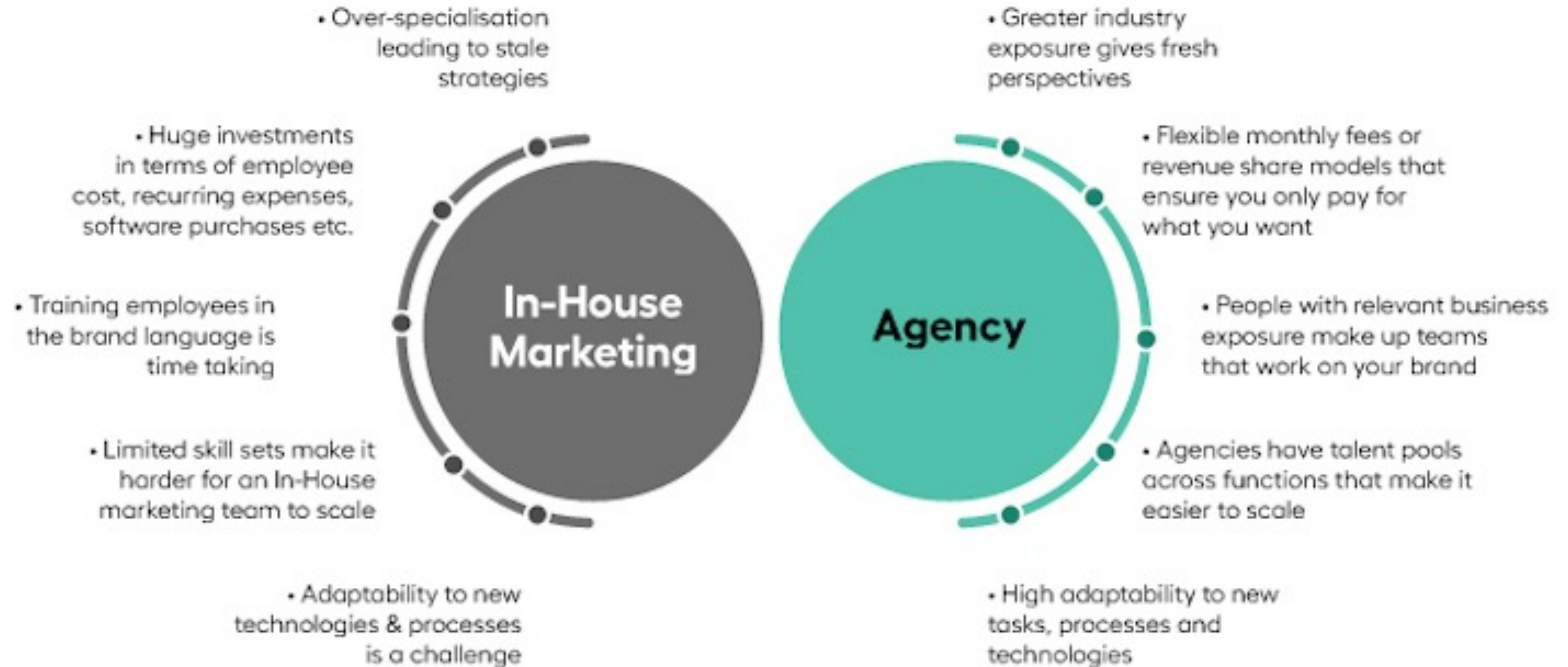
Addressing internal challenges and motivations:

- Better adherence to budget constraints
- Ensuring faster and more efficient delivery at a lower cost
- Improved control over the quality of work, deadlines, confidentiality, and data security

Avoiding drawbacks of outsourcing:

- Risk of identity and independence loss
- Potential loss of expertise
- Lack of consideration for their specificities

The in-house agency present a number of challenges



Source : Influentia

HYPER DECENTRALIZED MODEL

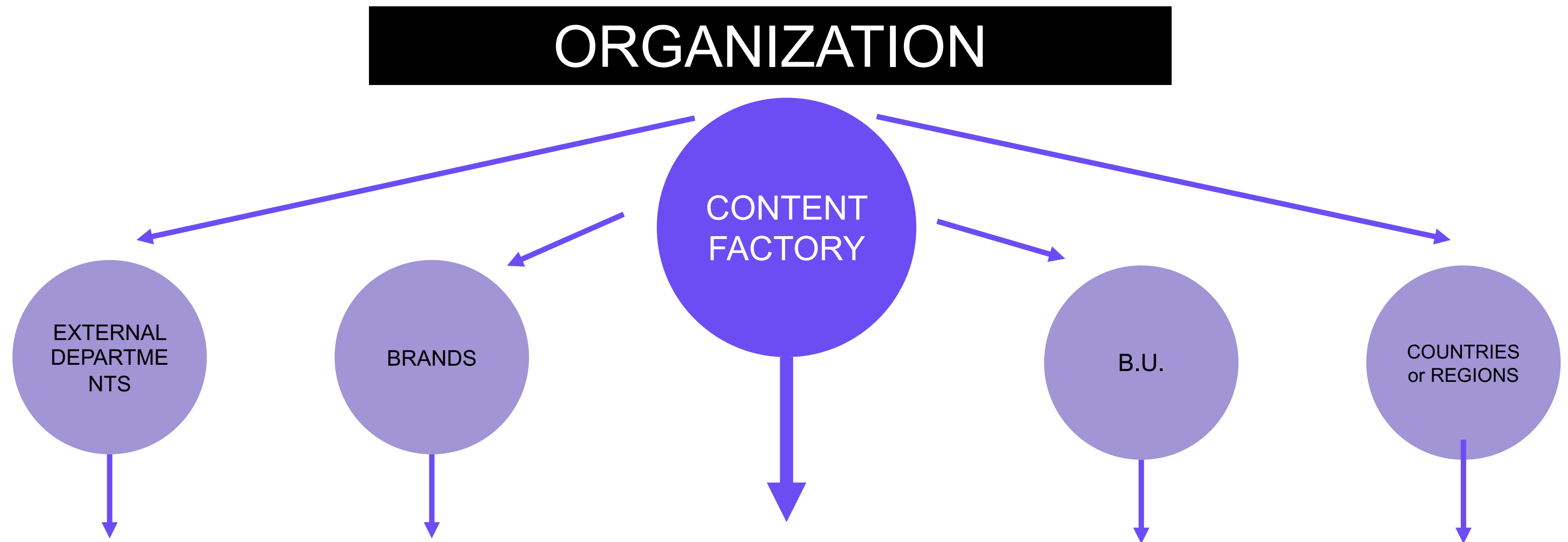
HOW DOES IT WORKS?

ROLE

**All communications are produced
and distributed locally,
by each entity.**

HOW DOES IT WORKS?

Declination of "global" content



In case of global communications, entities produces their own content: they have their **own communications teams**.

HOW DOES IT WORKS?

PROCESS

Content Factory creates and shares **guidelines** and **distributes local content globally.**

HOW DOES IT WORKS?

BUDGET BREAKDOWN

Each "entity" (external department, brand, or location) has its own communications budget (and its own team).

DIRECT BENEFITS OF THIS ORGANIZATION

- In-depth **knowledge of target audience**
- **Short reaction time**
- Global COMMS can **boost local communication on its own channels**



MORE TARGETED IMPACT

CHALLENGES OF THIS ORGANIZATION

- Possible **lack of consistency** in productions and release schedules
- No **synergy** in terms of **budgets** and content production



Need to set up a flexible but consistent business line management system

HYPERCENTRALIZED MODEL

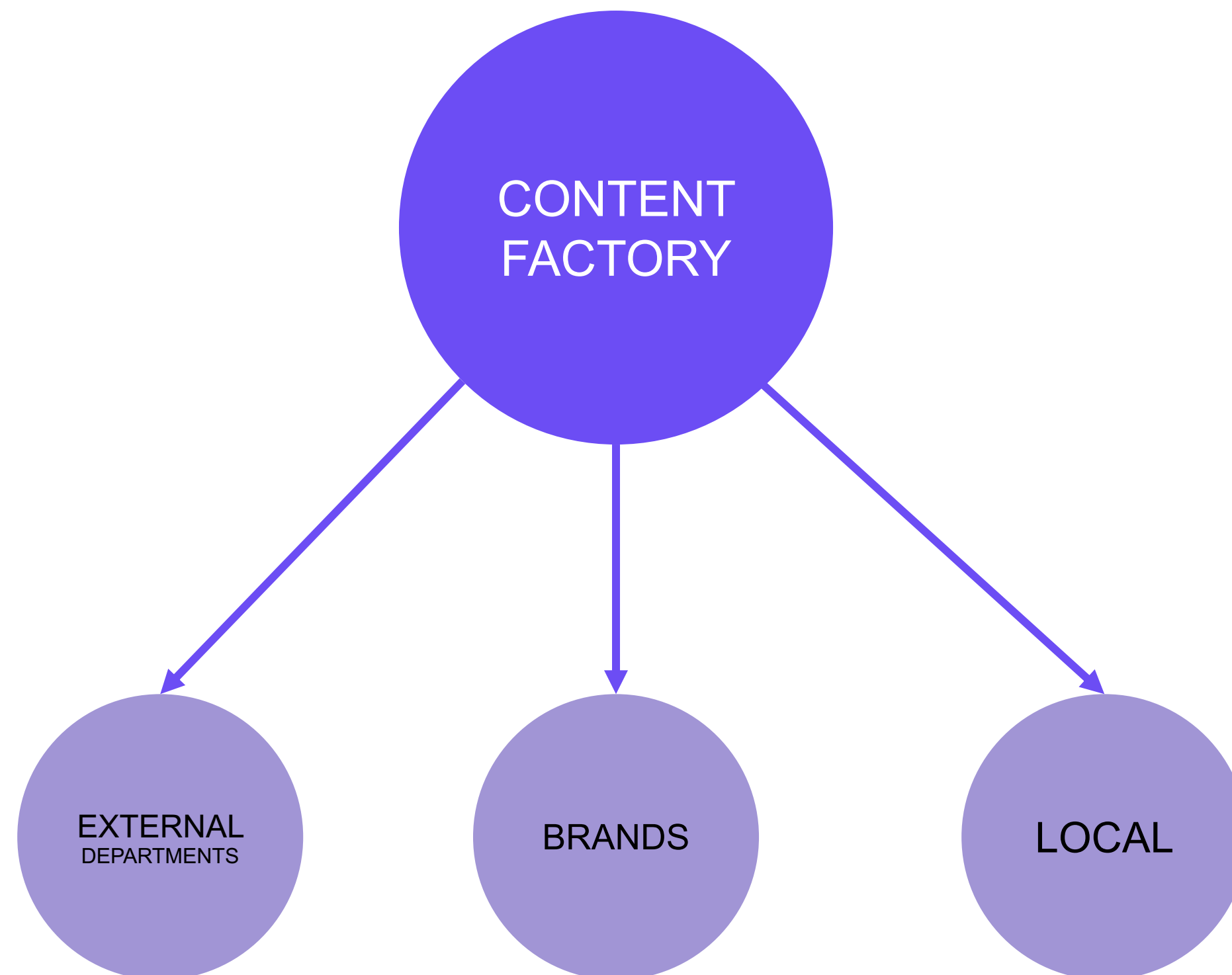
HOW DOES IT WORKS?

ROLE

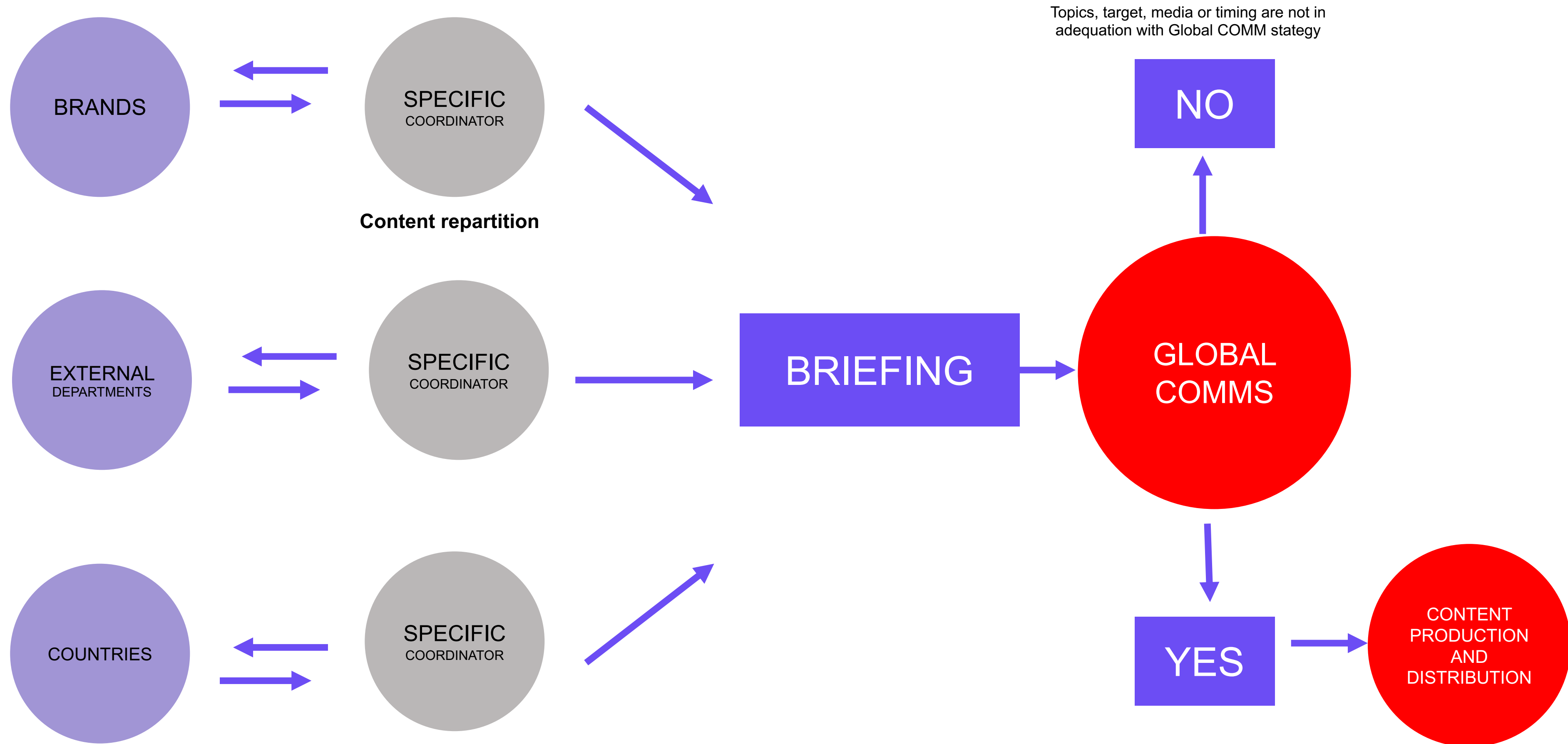
**All communications are produced
and distributed by the Content
Factory.**

HOW DOES IT WORKS?

CONTENT FACTORY creates content that its internal clients have to use.



HOW DOES IT WORKS?



HOW DOES IT WORKS?

PROCESS

The creation of a **center of expertise** dedicated to content production in all its forms (text, video, photos, supports...). Generally speaking, this department handles and responds to requests without distinction between internal and external communications needs.

HOW DOES IT WORKS?

BUDGET BREAKDOWN

In most cases, the entire budget is covered by global COMMS.

It is possible for "client" entities to finance content production (according to their requests or according to a distribution key).

DIRECT BENEFITS OF THIS ORGANIZATION

- overall management of communication **planning**
- a **unified** tone of voice
- a **consistant** graphic and brand platform
- overall **consistency**
- Expertise in **production and distribution tools**



MORE IMPACT

INDIRECT BENEFITS OF THIS ORGANIZATION

- larger, centralized **budget**
- enhancing the **skills of communications specialists**
- **clear, streamlined** processes



FASTER PRODUCTION

CHALLENGES OF THIS ORGANIZATION

- can create **frustration** on the part of requesters (why no?)
- can make communication staff feel **estranged** from their targets
- difficult for some to say "**no**" to colleagues



**REQUIRES COACHING, COMMUNICATION, PROCESSES
AND TOOLS**

Example: Société Générale



Société Générale, one of Europe's leading financial services groups, present in 66 countries. It employs over 200 communication specialists, with more than $\frac{3}{4}$ of them located at the headquarters in La Défense (Paris).

Why did they decide to change their organization?

To really benefit from a **synergy of COM experts' skills** by choosing to **hypercentralize** them. It's the result of a thorough understanding of their targets, the specificities of their COM and the evolution of (regulatory) constraints.

RESULTS:

- Creation of a **CONTENT FACTORY** at **Global COMMS level** gathering more than 50 experts
- This team is in charge of **producing almost ALL of the bank COM worldwide**
- **No more distinction between internal and external COMMS**
- A strategic planner ensures consistency

→ **1600 contents produced in 1 year!**

CENTRALIZED

MODEL

HOW DOES IT WORKS ?

ORGANIZATION

Global COMMS produced all the content necessary to the entities. Entities can adapt or create specific content if required.

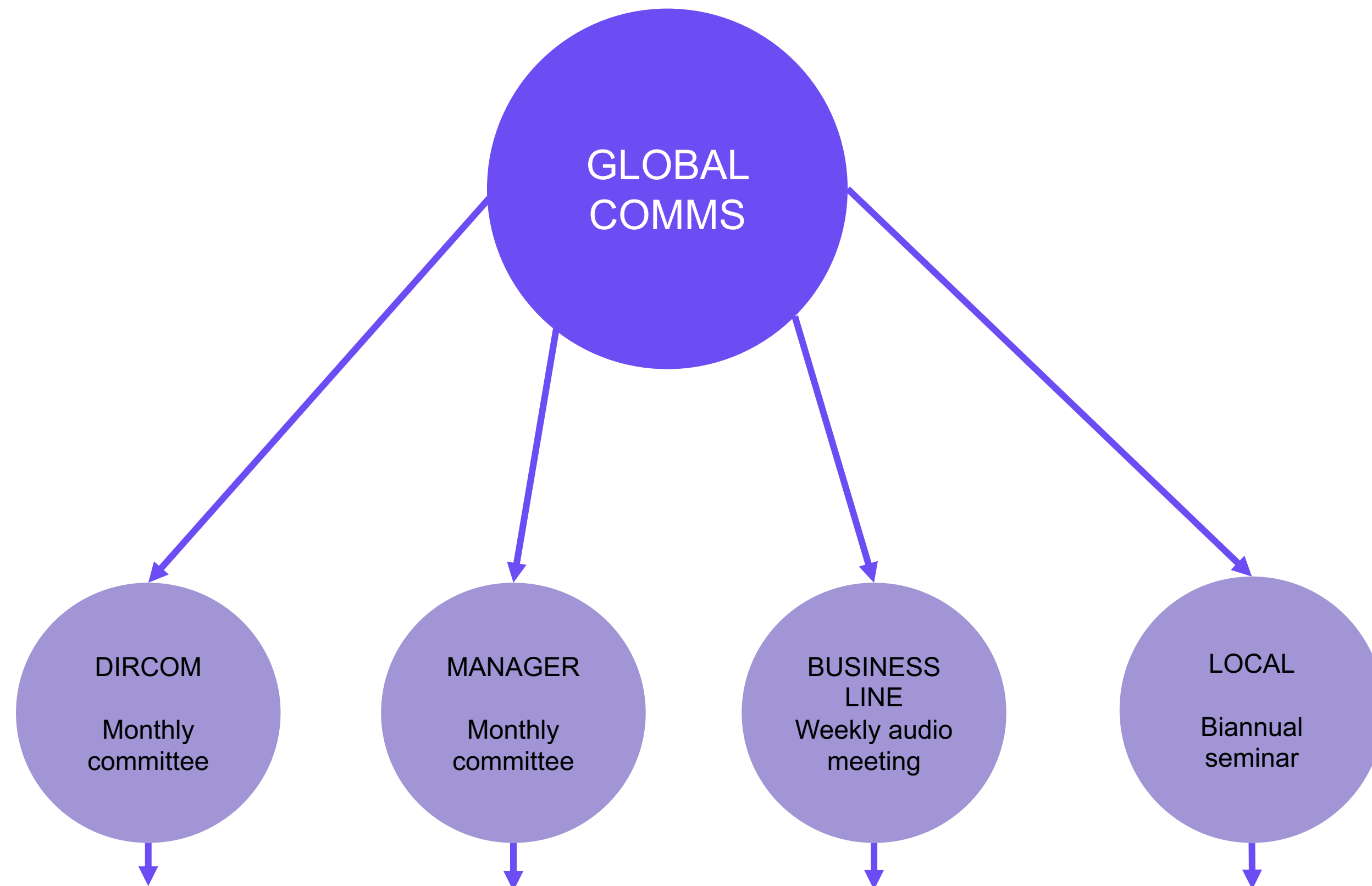
HOW DOES IT WORKS ?

PROCESS

Global COMMS has a very transversal communication.

Why ? To generate synergie between the stakeholders and create relevant content.

HOW DOES IT WORKS?



HOW DOES IT WORKS ?

STRENGTH

Involvement of stakeholders financially and in strategic choices.

Content Factory produces 100% of the content.

Possible adaptation by the local teams.

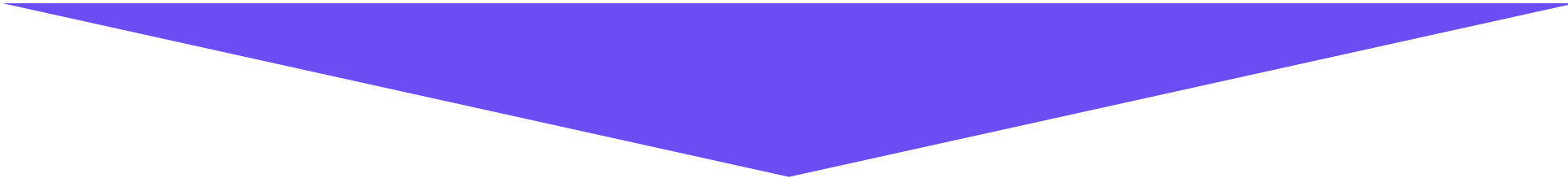
HOW DOES IT WORKS ?

BUDGET BREAKDOWN

In this model, entities contribute to the global budget based on a distribution key. Consequently, the budget is shared between national and entities. Global COM provides all the necessary tools, while the local entities finance them partially, encouraging their usage. Nonetheless, they have the flexibility to adapt or create specific content if the need arises

DIRECT BENEFITS OF THIS ORGANIZATION

- Shared global strategy, a sign of **coherence**
- Targeted media and communications managed **locally**
- Local teams can benefit from **Global COMMS tools, materials and expertise**
- Budget and campaign **synergies**
- Access to better tools, thanks to the **pooling** of certain costs
- Possibility of global comms with higher impact



**MORE COHERENCE AND MORE IMPACT
« BETTER » PRODUCTION**

CHALLENGES OF THIS ORGANIZATION

- the **adoption** of tools and the use of ready-to-use content in more or less coercive modes of collaboration
- the possible **reorganization** of communication teams in order to optimize the local work and the costs



**REQUIRES AN ACCEPTANCE
OF THE COMMS ORGANIZATION AND ITS BENEFITS**

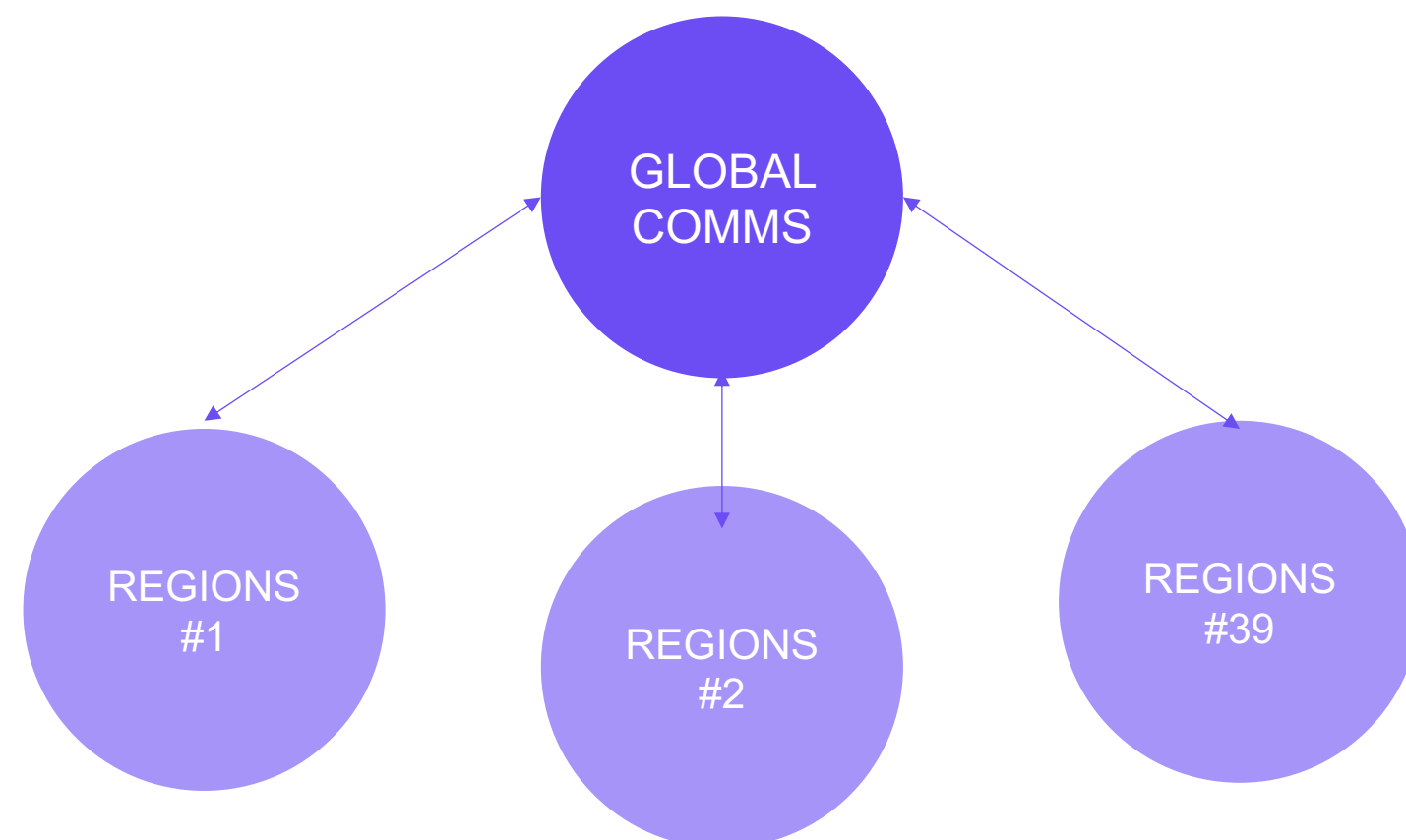
Example : Crédit Agricole Group



Crédit Agricole is a French international banking group and the world's largest cooperative financial institution and mutual banks, including 39 regional mutuals. It also has subsidiaries in France and abroad. It has several hundred communicators on its teams.

Why did they decide to change their organization?

The decentralized, collaborative organization of communications at Crédit Agricole reflects the way it is organized. It enables them to have a strong national strategy (and visibility), but also to leave some power to the teams in the field, as close as possible to their customers.



RESULTS:

- National communications **with major impact** thanks to important (centralized) budgets
- **Impactful regional COMMS** to target audience (local market, regional economy, etc)
- A **consistent tone of voice** despite numerous senders

SEMI-CENTRALIZED

MODEL

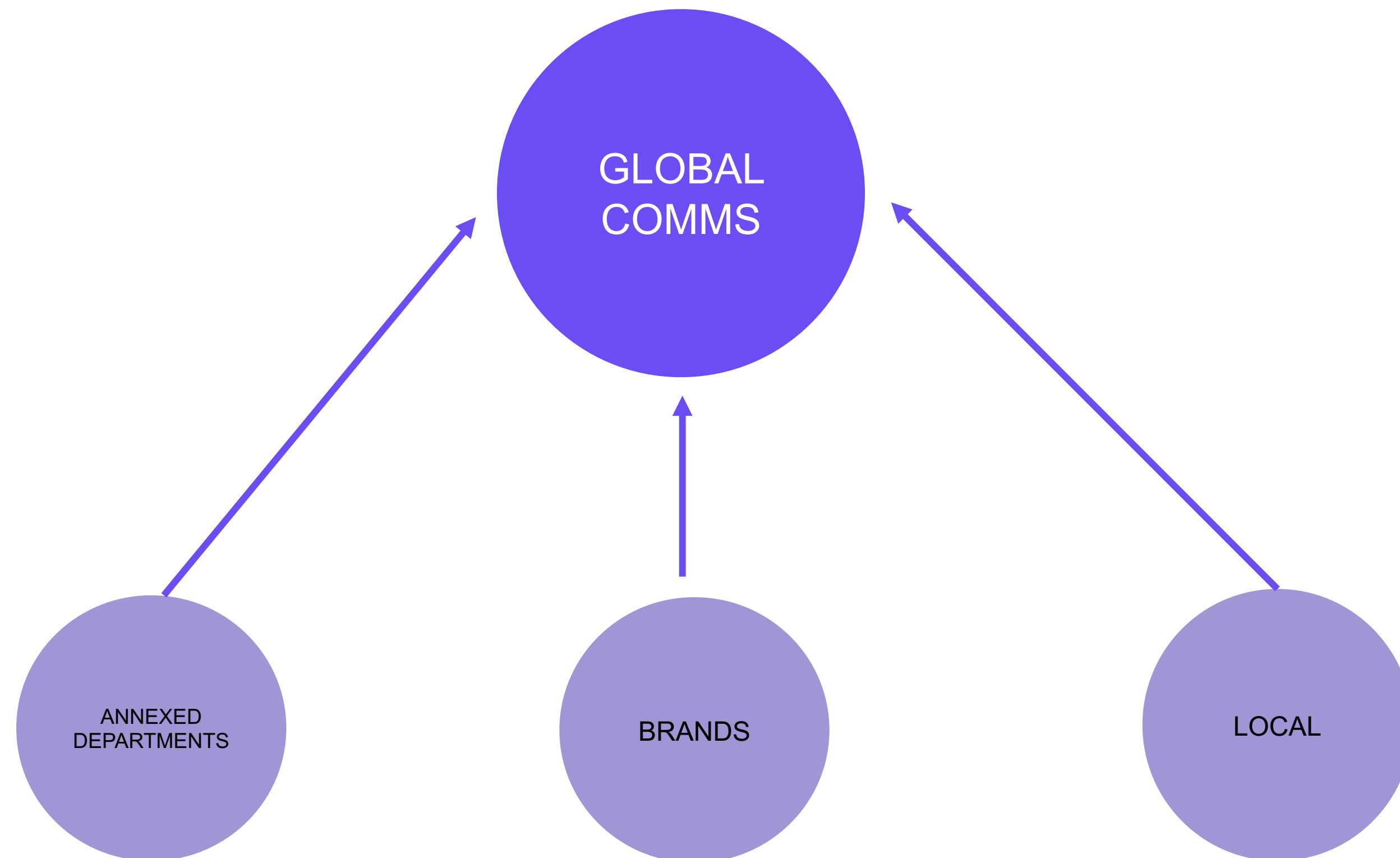
HOW DOES IT WORKS?

ROLE

Content Factory decides the strategy and chooses who will take in charge the production.

HOW DOES IT WORKS?

Entities contact Content Factory
in almost any case.



HOW DOES IT WORKS ?

PROCESS

Regular meetings gather all the stakeholders who are part of the Content Factory.

**Every entity can contact anyone in the Content Factory.
Everyone, inside the Content Factory, will give a brief model. Then, the topic will be added to the agenda of the next meeting.**

HOW DOES IT WORKS ?

BUDGET BREAKDOWN

In this model, the budget is shared between the national and the entity.

HOW DOES IT WORKS?

STRENGHT

The Content Factory's Director follows the strategic planning. His role is to ensure the implementation of the plan within the Content Factory.

DIRECT BENEFITS OF THIS ORGANIZATION

- Shared global strategy, a sign of **coherence**
- Global **synergies** (break the traditional vertical organization)
- Budget and Campaign optimized



MORE COHERENCE AND MORE IMPACT

CHALLENGES OF THIS ORGANIZATION

- The process can be **more or less coercive** for local teams.
- Gaining **acceptance** from entities when the Content Factory refuses a project can be a challenge.
- Thinking globally and **minimizing external and internal specificities** is necessary.
- Extending this process to all company entities, especially countries, may seem more **challenging**.



**REQUIRE A SHARED AND CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF
THE BENEFITS TO REPEAT OR EXTEND IT**

Example Danone Group



A multi-local company among the leaders in food, Danone is developing in health-oriented and fast-growing categories through its 4 businesses: Essential Dairy and Plant-Based Products, Early Life Nutrition, Medical Nutrition and Waters. With more than 100,000 employees and products sold in more than 120 countries, Danone achieved a turnover of 27.7 billion euros in 2022.

Why did they decide to change their organization?

The objective was clear : **break the hierarchic lines**, have a transversal organization to optimize budget, time and work of the teams.

RESULTS:

- A **control** of all the contents producted and a **consistent** tone of voice
- A **strategy optimized** thanks to the coordination with the planning strategic and the knowledge of almost the projects.

HYBRID

MODEL

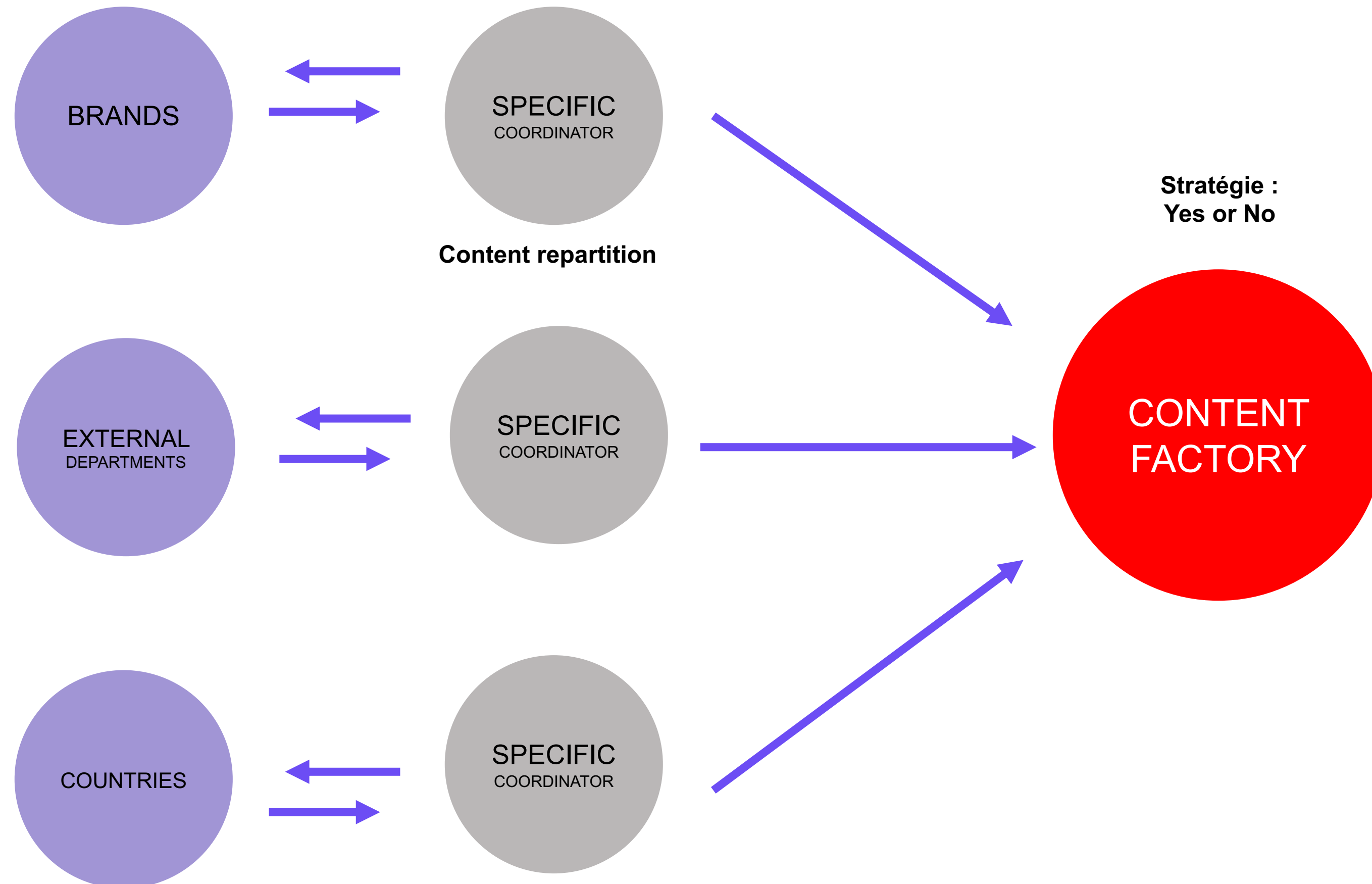
HOW DOES IT WORK?

ROLE

Global COMM decides the strategy and divides the creation between the entity and the Content Factory.

HOW DOES IT WORKS?

Global COMMS decide who creates content



WHO CREATES CONTENT?

PROCESS

**Content Factory, brought the coordinators,
accept or not the project.**

The coordinator decides who create the content.

**Content Factory give guidelines to the local
teams in case they are in charge to produce.**

HOW DOES IT WORKS ?

BUDGET BREAKDOWN

In this model, local teams have their own budget to produce their own content.

DIRECT BENEFITS OF THIS ORGANIZATION

- **Shared repartition** for the costs and the missions
- Entities can benefit from Global COMMS **contents or guidelines**.
- Targeted media and communications managed **locally**



A FLEXIBLE ORGANISATION

CHALLENGES OF THIS ORGANIZATION

- **Unequal collaboration** based on the projects or entities.
- **Lack of consistency** in local communication.



**REQUIRES A SHARED AND CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF
THE COMMS ORGANIZATION**

Example : Total Energies Group



TotalEnergies is a multi-energy company that produces and markets fuels, natural gas and electricity. TotalEnergies is ranked as the 21st largest public company in the world. Active in more than 130 countries, they gather 100,000 employees.

Why did they decide to change their organization?

They created an editorial department who acts as a Content Factory. It is a **transitional model**. It help the entities but the process is not totally defined yet.

RESULTS:

- The possibility for the entities (external departments) to **be helped** by the Content Factory : a financial and creative support
- **Limit** between the editorial and production departments is not very clear.
- A process who will probably **evolve**.

COOPERATIVE

MODEL

HOW DOES IT WORKS?

ROLE

In this model, the Content Factory handles national projects. In the case of local projects, Global COMMS can co-organize with the local teams.

HOW DOES IT WORKS?

PROCESS

Global communications will provide **tools**, a **framework**, and even **ready-to-use communications** through its Content Factory. This team is responsible for **global coordination, strategy, and content production**. Depending on the significance of the local project and its potential for **replication** in other regions, the global team can decide to **co-organize**. In such cases, the Content Factory collaborates with the local teams.

HOW DOES IT WORKS ?

BUDGET BREAKDOWN

In this model, the budget is most of the time managed by the Global COMM. But sometimes, it can support local productions with additional budgets or according to a distribution key.

DIRECT BENEFITS OF THIS ORGANIZATION

- Shared global strategy, a sign of **coherence**
- Targeted media and communications supported **locally**
- Local teams can benefit from **Global COMMS tools, materials and expertise**
- Budget and campaign **synergies**



MORE COHERENCE AND MORE IMPACT

CHALLENGES OF THIS ORGANIZATION

- the **multiplication** of communication **teams**, and therefore potentially of **costs**
- the multiplication of **communication levels**



REQUIRES A SHARED AND CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF THE COMMS ORGANIZATION IN PARTICULAR FOR CO-ORGANISED EVENT

Example : Pole Emploi



Pôle emploi is France's public employment service. It has more than 120 communication specialists through France.

Why did they decide to change their organization?

To stop thinking "tool" before thinking content/target. It's a paradigm shift: they needed to bring content closer to its final distribution and promotion.

RESULTS:

- The production of **higher-quality content**: a 120% increase in video views!
- **Enhanced skills of central communications staff**
- A better understanding of teams across France and greater **cross-functionality**

GLOCAL

MODEL

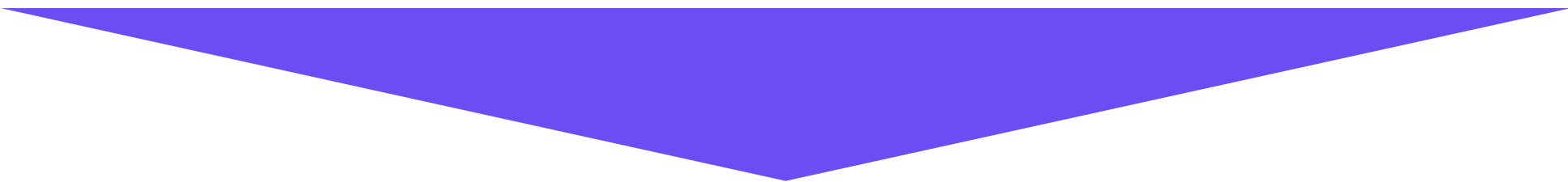
HOW DOES IT WORKS?

ROLE

**Entities can solicitate the Content
Factory or produce content
themselves.**

DIRECT BENEFITS OF THIS ORGANIZATION

- Local teams can benefit from **Global COMMS tools, materials and expertise** if they want
- Targeted media and communications managed **locally**



NO COERCITIVE ORGANIZATION

CHALLENGES OF THIS ORGANIZATION

- the **multiplication** of communication **teams**, and therefore potentially of **costs**
- the multiplication of **communication levels**



**REQUIRES A SHARED AND CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF
THE COMMS ORGANIZATION AND ITS BENEFITS**

Example: Airbus

The Airbus logo, consisting of the word "AIRBUS" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font.

Airbus is a European aircraft manufacturer and international industrial cooperation active in the civil and military aerospace sector. It employs over 130,000 people at more than 180 sites worldwide.

Why did they decide to change their organization?

Produce more "complex" content with a guarantee of quality Groupe but with a recognized expertise of its most important subsidiaries.

RESULTS:

- Global COM team is in charge of **global Airbus content (corporate)** and create **guidelines** for all the company's communications
- Major subsidiaries are still **free to produce their own content in the perimeter created by global COM**

APPENDIX

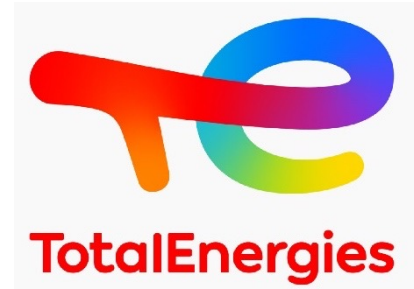
SUM UP

OVERVIEW OF COMMS ORGANIZATIONS



MODEL	HYPER CENTRALIZED	CENTRALISED	SEMI CENTRALIZED
COMMS	Changing the COM paradigm: bringing content closer to its final distribution and promotion	+800 communicators in the Crédit Agricole Group Content Factory (20) at national level + Web factory for integration (10) + specialists in each CA	Changing the COM paradigm: breaking the vertical organization (by specific communication direction)
WHY?	Synergy and hypercentralization of skills	Offer a hyper-powerful COM at national level and a hyper-personalized COM at local level	Synergy : budget and work optimization
WHO PRODUCE WHAT	Global: international campaigns and local COMMS on demand Local: no content production	Global: high-end production, national campaigns and events, COMM kit Local: localized content, sometimes in co-production	Global: manages strategy and produces almost all the content except for the very local target and for the countries
BENEFITS	- Professionalization - Increasing the impact of speeches - Process simplification - Smoother sharing of information	- Better knowledge of its distribution ecosystem - Better knowledge of targets - Smoother collaboration	- Process simplification - Time and budget optimization - Improved impact of communication
CHALLENGES	- Implementation (sharing benefits and including teams) - Product factory" perception (emergency management, refusals)	- Internal corporate culture must evolve - Develop tools to facilitate sharing	- Implementation (sharing benefits and including teams) - Extension to the countries

OVERVIEW OF COMMS ORGANIZATIONS



MODEL	HYBRID	COOPERATIVE	GLOCAL
COMMS	Having a dedicated team for creating specific content.	180 communications specialists in total 25 in the Creative Factory (created in 2019)	+500 communication specialists worldwide
WHY?	Governance role for the entities (manage the strategic decisions).	Changing the COM paradigm: bringing content closer to its final distribution and promotion	Produce more "complex" content with a guarantee of quality
WHO PRODUCE WHAT	Content Factory : some global content, sometimes content for external departments. Concerning countries and brands : it produces only guidelines.	Global: high-end production, national campaigns and events, COMM kit Local: localized content, sometimes in co-production	Global: high-end production, national campaigns and events, COMM kit Local: localized content, sometimes in co-production
BENEFITS	• Production centralization • Better control of the strategy	• Team professionalization • Improved impact of communications • Cost mutualization	• Production centralization • Team coordination • Improved customer experience
CHALLENGES	• Having a better delimitation in the repartition of the missions and the contents.	• Being perceived as the (bad?) "cop" • Pedagogy needed on the value of COM • Creating a bond with internal clients	• Supporting and managing change Business expertise / communication expertise

A model on the rise: THE CONTENT FACTORY

A "content factory" is an organization (a departement) dedicated to producing content for the company.

It gathers communications specialists (of their targets, their tools) to handle communications needs formulated within their management and/or by employees or departments (business unit, HR for example) all over the company.

The aim of a "content factory" organization is to enhance the impact of communications by strengthening the teams' expertise, and by pooling costs and content (internal/external barriers, content reuse, etc.).

It generally requires greater coordination and specific tools - charter, guide but also messaging, storage - to operate.

Non-competing logics

- In reality, these models are applied in a hybrid way, depending on the company's culture and strategic challenges
- The distinction between internal and external communication is maintained most of the time, sometimes at a more operational level.
- Reorganizations are guided by the challenge of finding the right degree of centralization, coordination and subsidiarity, at a time of economic constraints on support functions and the multiplication of means of communication through social networks.

A step by step process

1

Define the scope of the Content Factory
(e.g. : Corporate COM / Customer COM / Paris 2024)

Define the role of the Content Factory for each entity :

- Support: Global guidelines (only or not?)
- Strategy: Arbitration for each project (obligation for entities to refer to the CF)
- Production: Systematic / choice between CF and delegation to the entity / local-national allocation

A step by step process

3

Have a clear organization and process:

- Which is the entry point:
 - any expert within the team
 - expert manager
 - coordinator
 - CF director
- Who responds and when?
 - in meeting with all stakeholders
 - expert or expert manager
 - coordinator
- What brief to give (consider a brief model)?
 - according to the expertise sought
 - according to the target / problem
 - other
- Define the budget breakdown between Global and local

Identify stakeholders

- Only Global COMM
- Global COMM and coordinator
- Global COMM, coordinator and local person (from a specific entity) for the project

Have a clear organization to allow cross-functional organization

- Meeting
- Online exchange platform
- Online distribution platform
- Additional meetings to insure a transversal communication (with directors, business lines, regions/countries, etc.) in order to :
 - identify the needs,
 - involve local teams (entities) and insure relevant content production,
 - inform of the existent content.



Reorganizing teams requires a shared and clear understanding of the Content Factory organization and the benefits.

Thank you!

SAVE THE DATE

Next meetings

SAVE THE DATE

**Tuesday, February 6th at 9:00 AM
via video conference**

Best Practices Workshop

**Speechwriting: What are the tips
from executive speechwriters?**



Club

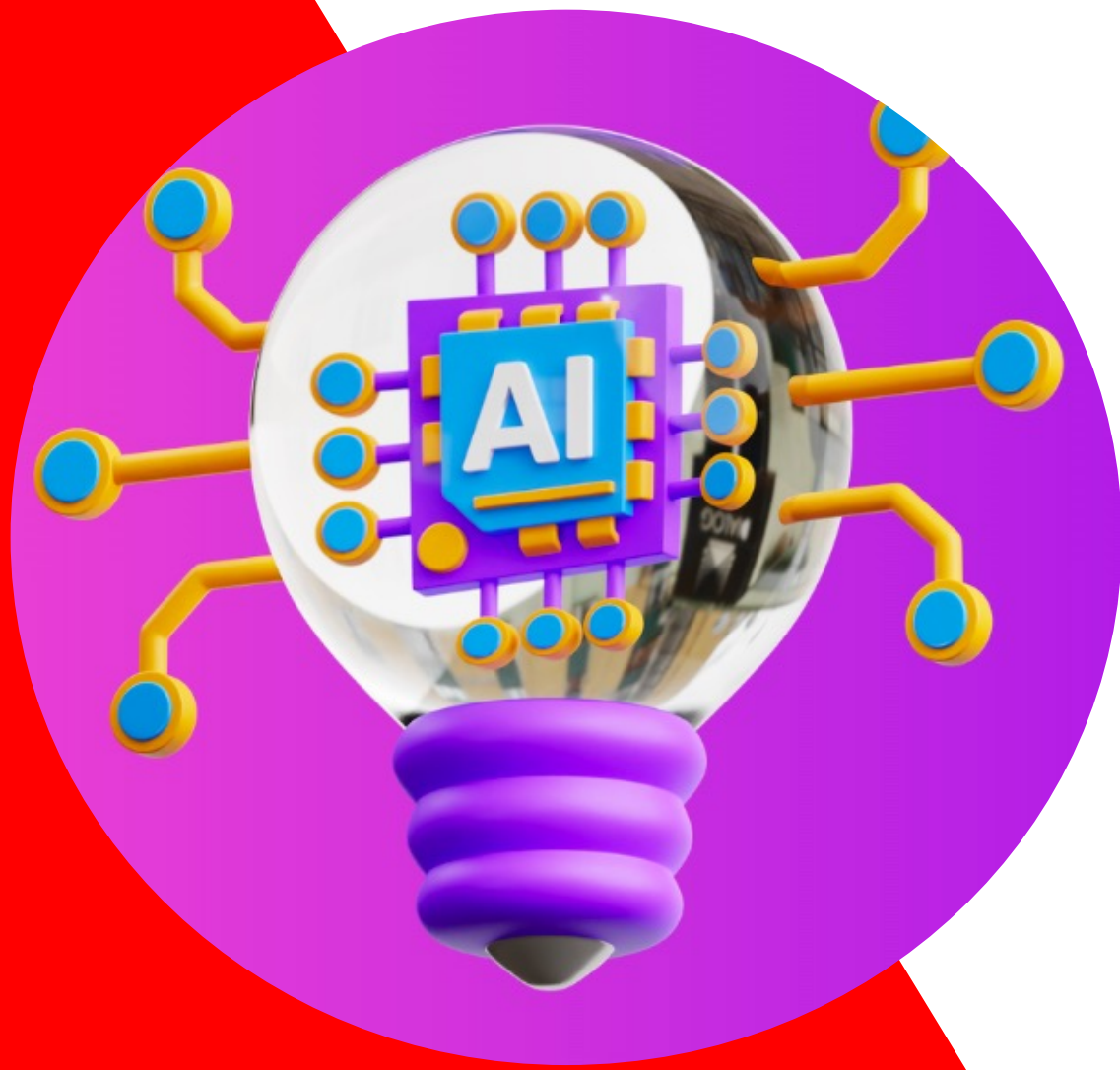


HUMAN RESOURCES COMMUNICATION & EMPLOYER BRAND

Thursday, February 8th
In-person (Paris) and remotely

Training

**Attract, retain, and transform
your employees into ambassadors**



AI IN COMMUNICATIONS

Thursday, March 21st
In-person (Paris) and remotely

**Harness the power of AI for
your communications**

Training
