



How Santee Cooper's 'The Coop' Builds Connection Across Every Corner of its Workforce



“ People in the field can sometimes be disconnected with what’s happening corporate-wide. That’s just a natural result when your jobsite is a turbine floor or a bucket truck. That means a lot of our folks have limited access to a computer.

The Coop gives us a way to close that gap. ”

- Jeffrey Straight, Public Relations Specialist at Santee Cooper





COMPANY:
Santee Cooper

INDUSTRY:
Not-for-profit Utility
(electric & water services)

EMPLOYEES:
1,600+

OVERVIEW:

Santee Cooper is South Carolina's public, not-for-profit utility, serving over two million people with reliable, affordable power and water. Its 1,600 employees share a mission of improving the quality of life for all South Carolinians.

A UTILITY WITH A WORKFORCE AS DIVERSE AS ITS CUSTOMERS

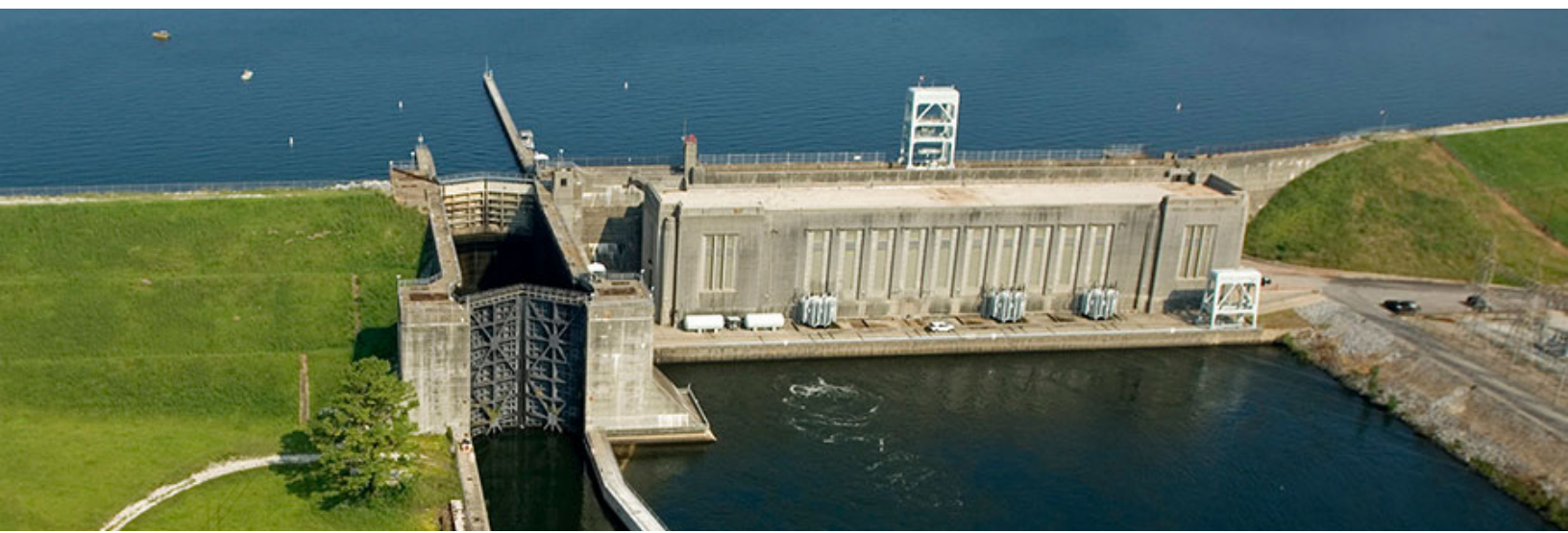
Santee Cooper is South Carolina's public, not-for-profit electric and water utility, serving more than two million people across the state. With a workforce of over 1,600 employees, the organization powers communities not just with energy and water, but with a steadfast commitment to improving the quality of life of all South Carolinians.

That mission is carried out by a workforce as varied as the state itself. Crews restore power in the middle of storms and keep critical infrastructure humming. Customer service teams provide frontline support. Office staff manage finance, planning, and IT systems. Each role is distinct, but all are connected by a shared responsibility: delivering reliable, affordable service to South Carolina.

As a public utility, Santee Cooper operates with a focus on providing value to the communities it serves. That philosophy extends to its employees as well. Ensuring they feel connected, supported, and informed isn't just good for the organization, it's essential for fulfilling its public mission.

But with such a diverse workforce spread across offices, generating stations, water plants, field crew quarters and more, internal communication has always been a complex undertaking. Different roles require different tools, and messages that reach one group might not easily reach another.

It's a challenge that comes with scale and diversity, but also an opportunity: if employees can be brought into the same conversation, they can better deliver on the promise Santee Cooper makes to its customers every day.



THE COMMUNICATION CHALLENGE AT SCALE

Santee Cooper's workforce has always been deeply committed to its mission—delivering reliable, affordable service and improving lives in communities across South Carolina. Crews in the field work long hours, often in difficult conditions. Office staff support them behind the scenes, making sure systems and communications run smoothly. Every employee is doing their part to keep the organization moving forward.

But with a team this large and diverse, staying connected internally has never been simple.

With more than 1,600 employees spread across the state, communication isn't a one-size-fits-all effort. It requires multiple approaches, tailored to different groups. For a public utility that prioritizes putting its dollars into customer service and community value, dedicating significant resources to new communication systems must always reflect a priority on efficiency and value.

Santee Cooper's people were optimizing the use of all the tools they had—and they now needed a modern, unified way to keep everyone connected that was easy to use and access.

Launching The Coop:

A CENTRAL HUB EMPLOYEES COULD CALL THEIR OWN

When Santee Cooper introduced MangoApps, the vision was to build something that employees would see as theirs. From the start, the focus was on creating a hub that reflected the culture and values of the organization: relationships, innovation and respect.

That began with the name. Rather than handing down a brand from leadership, employees were invited to participate in a naming contest. Hundreds of submissions poured in, and the winning choice—The Coop—quickly stuck. More than just a clever nod to Santee Cooper's name, it became a symbol of ownership. Employees had shaped the identity of the platform before it even launched, and that sense of buy-in carried through to how they engaged with it.

"We had a pretty aggressive educational campaign. We shared articles and emails, put up posters with QR codes, and hosted info sessions," Jeffrey Straight explained. "And we held a naming contest. Hundreds of employees voted, which gave them a sense of ownership from day one. That early engagement went a long way."

At its core, The Coop brings together tools and functions from multiple systems onto one platform, accessible by computer and mobile devices:



Communication and updates: leadership announcements, safety notices, IT alerts and storm communications all in one place.



Recognition and culture-building: peer-to-peer recognition, spotlights and celebration posts that make appreciation visible to everyone.



Feedback and surveys: onboarding and exit surveys—plus quick forms for outreach and feedback—providing leadership with direct insights.



Everyday utilities: links to email, Webex, phone directories and business process forms that employees use daily.



Engagement activities: contests, gamified campaigns and community drives that encourage participation and interaction.

For administrators, The Coop also delivered a more modern toolkit:



Consolidated management of timely articles, alerts and resources from one central dashboard.



Analytics and reach metrics to understand how employees were engaging with different content.

For employees, the experience was equally straightforward: instead of bouncing between disconnected platforms, these important functions and resources now live in one space—accessible by desktop or phone. The Coop became a natural extension of how they already worked.

Just as important was the way MangoApps partnered with Santee Cooper throughout the rollout. The Santee Cooper team wasn't left to manage adoption alone – the MangoApps team was there every step of the way providing hands-on support, responsive troubleshooting, and resources to bring the vision to life.

That partnership, grounded in the same values Santee Cooper lives by, ensured The Coop wasn't viewed as just another tool. It was received as a new foundation for stronger connection across the organization.

“As part of our onboarding process with new teammates, one of the first things I share is how easy it is to access articles, polls and other resources. Just one click and they're connected. It's simple, and it helps teammates feel connected right away.”

- **Valerie Crawford**, Employee Relations Rep.

FROM FRAGMENTATION TO CONNECTION

The real measure of The Coop's success has been in the impact it's had on employees, administrators and the organization as a whole.

For employees, the changes were immediate and meaningful.

- Users in the field no longer felt like they were on the outside looking in. With direct access to leadership updates, storm alerts and recognition posts, they became part of the same conversation as office staff.
- New hires stepped into a more engaging experience, one that introduced them not only to their role but also to the culture and community of the organization.

- Recognition posts turned private thank-you into public moments of pride, creating stronger bonds between employees across different departments.

“We've seen recognition double since moving it into The Coop. Employees are recognizing each other for anniversaries, birthdays and everyday contributions. That wasn't even possible before. Now it's part of our culture.”

- **Rylee Simons**,
Santee Cooper IT
Applications Analyst

For the communications team, The Coop can create breathing room.

- Instead of wrestling with multiple systems, they are populating The Coop with content from multiple systems, offering “one stop shopping” to field employees now and working towards the goal of eventually transitioning the majority of communications to this central location.
- Templates and push notifications complemented existing updates, helping to ensure a broader reach.
- When routine logistics are fully streamlined, the team can shift focus toward more strategic, creative communication efforts.

For the organization, the benefits went beyond efficiency.

- Engagement is rising across the board, from participation in contests to response rates on surveys.
- Leadership has access to clearer insight into employee sentiment and feedback, which can help them act with greater awareness.
- Culture is growing stronger, with employees more connected not just to their work, but to each other and to the mission they serve.

“The survey and polling tools have been a huge value,” Valerie Crawford shared. “I send onboarding and exit surveys, as well as use the polling for engagement. It’s simple for employees to complete, and the data is easy to work with.”

Most importantly, The Coop reinforced what Santee Cooper’s workforce had always embodied: commitment to their mission and their community. By giving employees a modern, unified hub, the organization unlocked new levels of connection, collaboration and pride – building the foundation for the next chapter of their journey.

“The Coop really gives us the ability to get messages out across the team, immediately,” expressed Jeffrey Straight. “Whether it’s a CEO update, a safety alert or just recognizing

someone’s work, it’s all in one place. Employees can scroll through recognitions, see what’s happening, and feel connected to the larger organization.”

WHAT’S NEXT: EXPANDING THE COOP’S ROLE

The Coop has improved many of the engagement challenges at Santee Cooper. Employees now receive critical updates, communication is more robust, and employees have new ways to connect and engage. But the team isn’t stopping there.

Digital signage rollout is next on the horizon. Across worksites, QR-enabled screens will provide another touchpoint for employees to connect with The Coop, making updates even more visible and accessible to those who may not be in the habit of logging in.

Access to important HR information is another major step. As upgrades are completed, The Coop will eventually include general HR information and resources, including payroll and benefits information. That shift will turn the platform into a daily resource as well as a communications hub – driving adoption further and embedding it into the fabric of employees’ work lives.

Expanding gamification and recognition is also on the roadmap. Building on early success with contests and outreach programs, the team plans to use The Coop to host more initiatives that celebrate employees and create community across the organization.

The vision is clear: while The Coop started as a solution to communication challenges – it’s now laid the foundation for the future of the employee experience at Santee Cooper. As it continues to grow and evolve, The Coop will ensure that every employee, whether in the office or the field, feels connected, informed and valued.

OTHER RESOURCES

[Building A Connected Workforce: How PROBIOMED Used MangoApps to Transform Internal Comms and Boost Efficiency & Collaboration](#)

[A Strategic and Tactical Tool: How Great HealthWorks Uses MangoApps to Balance Growth and Stability](#)

[A Solution For Clinical Communication Across Thousands of Health Systems, TeamHealth Case Study](#)

[Upgrading to a Modern Intranet: How Marion Health Used MangoApps to Improve Employee Engagement](#)

TRANSFORM HOW YOUR COMPANY COLLABORATES, COMMUNICATES, & GETS WORK DONE.

Contact us for a more detailed capabilities demo
sales@mangoapps.com | mangoapps.com

Schedule A Demo