



# Creating digital safe spaces for LGBTQ+ employees

## Information on the case study:

**Organisation:** PageGroup

**Size:** 1000

**Location:** France

**Sector:** Recruitment

## Operational context

With the rise of remote and hybrid work models, digital communication platforms have become central to workplace interactions.

One of the challenges we are facing is ensuring these platforms are safe, inclusive, and supportive for LGBTQ+ employees. This is crucial in the absence of physical office spaces where inclusivity efforts are more visible and direct.

## The problem/opportunity

### Problem:

Some employees or even leadership may resist the idea of creating digital safe spaces, viewing them as unnecessary or as a form of favouritism. This resistance can stem from a lack of understanding of LGBTQ+ issues or from a broader resistance to DE&I initiatives.

Low participation can limit the effectiveness of these spaces, making it difficult to build a supportive community or to address issues faced by LGBTQ+ employees.

While anonymity can protect employees from discrimination, it can also hinder the development of a close-knit, supportive community. Striking the right balance between anonymity and visibility is difficult.

Measuring the impact of digital safe spaces can be difficult. Metrics such as participation rates, user satisfaction, and impact on employee well-being are not always easy to quantify or track. Without clear success metrics, it can be challenging to demonstrate the value of these spaces to the organisation, potentially jeopardising their future.

### Opportunity:

A company's reputation is closely tied to its commitment to diversity and inclusion.

Organisations that create and promote digital safe spaces for LGBTQ+ employees are seen as leaders in DE&I. This positive reputation can enhance customer loyalty, attract investors, and build stronger relationships with stakeholders.

Providing digital safe spaces can also help avoid potential legal issues related to discrimination and harassment. It demonstrates a proactive approach to creating an inclusive environment, aligning with both legal requirements and ethical standards. This contributes to a more equitable workplace.

Digital safe spaces allow LGBTQ+ employees to share experiences, seek support, and connect with others in similar situations, which can significantly reduce stress and anxiety. Healthier employees are more productive, have lower absenteeism rates, and are less likely to experience burnout.

## **What was done**

We started with a pilot program to test the effectiveness of digital safe spaces, gather feedback, and make necessary adjustments before a full-scale rollout.

The key concepts covered was allyship strategies which are broken down into:

- Facilitate inclusive meetings
- Fair hiring / promotions
- Promote inclusive culture

Then, we discussed individual responsibility through individual and interpersonal allyship experiences. The pilot gathered about 100 attendees.

## **Outcomes**

The existence of digital safe spaces signals to all employees that the organisation values diversity and inclusion, fostering a more inclusive culture.

These spaces allow LGBTQ+ employees to voice their concerns, share their experiences, and contribute to organisational discussions about diversity and inclusion.

Our LGBTQ+ employees have asked us to take more significant action on transidentity; that request came first in all geographical areas.

Digital safe spaces provide a platform for LGBTQ+ employees to connect with others at an international level who share similar experiences, fostering a sense of community and belonging through our 34 international locations.