



Engagement Excellence Awards 2018

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RewardGateway
the employee engagement people

Welcome

On October 9th 2018, Reward Gateway was once again honoured to host the 7th annual Engagement Excellence Awards at London's historic Roundhouse. In the shadow of rock and roll legends, leading HR professionals from around the world gathered to recognise and celebrate the passion and innovation of the people behind the finest employee engagement programmes available in the UK. The grand stage seemed fitting to highlight the achievements of the nominated HR superstars, and the glitz and glamour of the ceremony reflected how we feel their accomplishments should be recognised.

This book tells the story of the 2018 winners and showcases the incredible steps organisations such as Travis Perkins plc, Reed Specialist Recruitment, Missguided and GO Outdoors have made in their engagement journeys. We hope that you find these as enjoyable, helpful and inspirational as we do. Thank you again for helping us in our mission to Make the World a Better Place to Work.

Best regards,



Doug Butler,
CEO
Reward Gateway

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Winners Overview



★ Most creative communications for larger organisations

Selco Builders Warehouse

Industry Builders Warehouse	Number of employees: 3,100
Average age: 36 yrs	Male to female ratio: 70:30
Number of Locations: 67	Platform features: Employee benefits Employee discounts Employee recognition Employee communications

★ Most creative communications for public sector / charity organisations

★ Most strategic communications for public sector / charity organisations

Tower Hamlets Homes

Industry Social Housing	Number of employees: 480
Average age: 44 yrs	Male to female ratio: 1.8:1
Number of Locations: 200	Platform features: Employee benefits Employee wellbeing Childcare Vouchers

★ Most strategic communications for smaller organisations

Causeway

Industry Technology	Number of employees: 220
Average age: 40 yrs	Male to female ratio: 80:20
Number of Locations: 4	Platform features: Employee recognition Employee wellbeing Employee discounts Childcare Vouchers

★ Most creative communications for smaller organisations

MOSL

Industry Water Industry	Number of employees: 35
Average age: 34 yrs	Male to female ratio: 55:45
Number of Locations: 1	Platform features: Employee discounts Employee recognition Childcare Vouchers Employee wellbeing

★ Most strategic communications for larger organisations

Reed Specialist Recruitment

Industry Recruitment	Number of employees: 2,200
Average age: 33 yrs	Male to female ratio: 37:63
Number of Locations: 66	Platform features: Employee recognition Employee discounts Childcare Vouchers Employee wellbeing

★ Engagement leader of the year

Ashford Borough Council

Industry Public Sector/Local Government	Number of employees: 469
Average age: 45 yrs	Male to female ratio: 40:60
Number of Locations: 17	Platform features: Employee discounts

★ Engagement team of the year

Watford Community Housing

Industry Housing Association	Number of employees: 183
Average age: 42 yrs	Male to female ratio: 52:48
Number of Locations: 57	Platform features: Employee discounts Employee recognition Childcare Vouchers Cycle to Work, SmartTech™

★ Most effective relaunch

★ Best recognition strategy

NAHL Group

Industry Consumer Law	Number of employees: 221
Average age: 35 yrs	Male to female ratio: 34:66
Number of Locations: 4	Platform features: Employee discounts Employee recognition Employee wellbeing

★ Most innovative company benefits

Great Place to Work

Industry Management Consultancy	Number of employees: 24
Average age: 38 yrs	Male to female ratio: 50:50
Number of Locations: 1	Platform features: Employee discounts Employee recognition Childcare Vouchers

★ Best internal communications strategy

Missguided

Industry Retail	Number of employees: 600
Average age: 26 yrs	Male to female ratio: 19:81
Number of Locations: 6	Platform features: Employee benefits Employee discounts Employee wellbeing Childcare Vouchers Employee communications

★ Most effective launch

Maplin Electronics

Industry Retail	Number of employees: 2,500
Average age: 28 yrs	Male to female ratio: 80:20
Number of Locations: 218	Platform features: Employee discounts Cycle to Work

★ Best evolution of company benefits

Travis Perkins Plc

Industry Builders Merchants and Retail	Number of employees: 29,000+
Average age: 40 yrs	Male to female ratio: 74:26
Number of Locations: 2,000+	Platform features: Employee discounts Employee wellbeing

★ Best use of platform to drive business strategy

GO Outdoors

Industry Retail	Number of employees: 2,434
Number of Locations: 67	Platform features: Employee recognition Employee discounts Childcare Vouchers Employee communications Employee wellbeing

★ Best wellbeing strategy

★ Grand Prix

Hyde Group

Industry Housing Association	Number of employees: 1,135
Average age: 43 yrs	Male to female ratio: 45:55
Number of Locations: 14	Platform features: Employee discounts SmartTech™ Employee wellbeing




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Most creative communications for larger organisations

Selco Builders Warehouse use employee engagement platform to unite workforce and decrease employee turnover by 5% in the first two months of launch

The company

Selco Builders Warehouse is a national company providing the building trade with materials. The company currently has 66 branches across England and Wales, with a Birmingham-based Support Centre. Selco Builders Warehouse had been monitoring employee engagement levels and was searching for a tailored benefits package for its 3,100 employees which offers value for money and a return on investment.

The challenge

Selco Builders Warehouse has a primarily store-based workforce with a high element of manual work. Most employees work in a warehouse environment and have no immediate access to computers.

The company wanted to use different communication channels to get its messages across, as well as information about new benefit offerings and company updates. But people weren't having the best experience with the current communications, causing frustration and a lack of understanding about important information and where to find it.

Simon Ball, HR Manager at Selco, needed a way to streamline communications and benefits to increase employee engagement and decrease employee turnover.

After conducting an engagement survey in 2017, Simon and his team had five main objectives for 2018:

- Raise awareness of staff benefits package.
- Raise staff engagement levels.
- Improve employee communications.
- Increase traffic to employee engagement platform.
- Launch Holiday Buying.

The approach

Simon's overall approach included adopting an employee engagement platform to unite its workforce and strengthen internal communications. The goal was to have the marketing department strengthen and extend internal branding into employee communications.

The first step was introducing the "My Gateway" platform – the company's new engagement platform (housing employee benefits, discounts, reward and recognition, and employee communications initiatives) with Reward Gateway. The team introduced the platform with a "Mad March" themed campaign, which featured a "Hunt the Easter Egg" competition to drive awareness and excitement of the new employee engagement platform and all it entailed.

Another part of the approach included gaining buy-in from Senior Management. Simon knew this was going to be a vital component of My Gateway's success, which led him to incentivise managers with a competition, adding even more excitement to the launch. The team with the largest percentage increase in My Gateway registrations (in their respective regions) would win a hamper as a prize. Simon and his team attended a Senior Manager's meeting and presented the competition in-person, along with the target figure and a "Managers Tool Box" for them to give to Branch Managers with tips to increase engagement levels.

The last, big piece of the approach used Reward Gateway's platform to consolidate all offerings into one place, with a single login. Simon knew this meant ensuring that employees could access computers, and Branch Managers made sure their office computers were available for registration. There was also technical training including a video on "how to login" with inductions and "HR Terminals" in each branch to provide access to tablets for all employees.



The result

Using the platform's insights tool, Simon and his team were able to analyse registrations. At the end of February 2018, Simon saw a total of 2,299 employees had registered on My Gateway – 68% of the workforce. Following the "Mad March" campaign, registrations increased to 78% of Selco's workforce.

Now, 85% of the workforce is registered and counting. On top of that, staff turnover had decrease by 5% two months after launching the new employee engagement platform. And, after the launch of Holiday Buying in March 2018, 126 employees applied, with a total spend of £44,000. Meaning, employees saved £13,300 and the company saved £6,100 in National Insurance contributions – a significant first step in the launch of a new benefit.

Employees now rate the company's benefits 14% more favourably than they did before the launch of the employee engagement platform. And overall, there has been a tangible uplift in employee engagement as a result of the "Mad March" campaign with increased awareness in the staff benefits package.

Selco Builders Warehouse took home the award for **'Most creative communications for larger organisations'** at The Engagement Excellence Awards 2018.

Most creative communications for smaller organisations

Lyvia Nabarro, Communications Manager at MOSL, creates engaging, one-stop employee engagement platform which helps to build company culture by putting values to the centre

The company

As a newer organisation, just under three years old, MOSL is in the process of strengthening its Employee Value Proposition through creating core company values and building a culture. After analysing the data from an employee survey, MOSL identified two key areas to improve upon: employee communications and engagement initiatives.

The challenge

The first big challenge Lyvia Nabarro, Communications Manager at MOSL, faced was strengthening and creating MOSL's internal brand. Lyvia wanted to create an engaging, one-stop-shop for employees to visit where they could digest important company messages and information, recognise and reward colleagues, and gain insights from different teams.

The second big challenge Lyvia faced involved gathering all of the right materials, as not all of them were going to be ready from day one. After massive growth in April 2017, MOSL's company culture inevitably shifted as it became a new type of market operator. The company was seeking a strategically-phased launch which included culture, values, business strategy and people frameworks, alongside a consistent look and feel of the existing platform with Reward Gateway, called MyMO.

The approach

To help employees better connect with each other and the new company culture, Lyvia worked with an internal working group to brainstorm ways to diversify the company's internal brand from its external brand. This meant creating secondary colours which were bold, fun and easily recognisable. The internal team also worked on establishing a tone of voice which spoke directly to the team rather than the industry.

MyMO would now become the new home for a range of new initiatives to be launched between April and July,

including the new people frameworks, new HR policies and employee handbook, culture and values and brand centre. Meaning, timing and detailed planning were critical.

This led the team to launch the new platform in four phases:

- Phase one: reward and recognition.
- Phase two: people frameworks and HR policies.
- Phase three: brand material.
- Phase four: culture and values.

The team didn't want to overwhelm colleagues with the launch, so the phases helped to introduce the new approach as well as create lasting excitement around the platform by developing new aspects over a set period. After only two months, the team were midway through phase two and into preparations for phase three.

But what's a launch without some fun and excitement?

To encourage team members to engage with the platform, as well as to showcase the rewards and benefits available to them, MOSL employees were asked to create their own Bitmoji (a personalised avatar) and send it in along with three facts about themselves. The team then used the Bitmojis and three facts to create a brand new team directory – a key way to not only learn more about colleagues through their fun facts, but also a way to access key contact details.

To further add to the excitement element of the launch, MOSL created a "Best Bitmoji" competition, with a winning prize of a £50 MyMO voucher along with some extra goodies. After the platform launched, MOSLers were asked to send a "You're the Best Bitmoji" eCard to the person they thought should win. More than 40% of colleagues submitted a vote, and the team even created a MyMO "acceptance speech" blog about the winner of the competition.

By introducing the platform through a competition, employees were able to get familiarised with MyMO and learned how to send eCards and like or comment on the blog post. There was even a live demo which went through other areas of the platform – mainly the reward and recognition section – and a drop-in session for people to ask questions and walk through different areas of the site.



The result

Currently, 94% of the workforce is using MyMO, but the team's aspiration is to make that 100%. Since the platform first launched in April, MOSL's 35 employees have spent over £6,000 through the rewards platform, sent over 130 eCards and blog readership has increased by 160%. The company's CFO now writes a blog every fortnight, which helps support company objectives around leadership visibility and engagement – a key area of improvement identified in the employee survey.

As part of phase two, the robust people frameworks are a big part of MyMO and support the success of the business through continued commitment to employees' development. Having a platform which showcases company culture and values is an essential part of MOSL delivering strategic objectives and embedding the culture, which is part of phase four.

After two months of the platform launch, MOSL asked employees for feedback to help steer the next steps. The results showed that colleagues were logging in on average 1-3 times a week and wanted to see more MOSL news and potentially have more training as the

company rolled out new features. MOSL then redesigned the homepage to feature company and HR-related news first, as well as introduced MyMO as part of the performance management training, along with training on navigating the frameworks of rewards and recognition.

MOSL is looking to give its employees their own blog feature with the opportunity to connect directly with others and share thoughts in a dedicated "MOSLer blog." With the rollout of its new core values, MOSL has introduced specially designed, value-centric eCards and will be running a campaign for a different value each month, which will all play a key role in helping people understand, embed and celebrate these new values.

MOSL scooped the award for 'Most creative communications for smaller organisations' at The Engagement Excellence Awards 2018.

Most creative communications for public sector / charity organisations

Tower Hamlets Homes improves employee wellbeing and customer satisfaction as 40% of workforce engage with benefits within one month

The company

The team at Tower Hamlets Homes had four key aims in its engagement journey, identified through research and conducted as part of the wider business transformation. The main goal surrounded increasing employee engagement through new wellbeing initiatives, leading to higher customer satisfaction and fewer customer complaints across the board.

The challenge

Ten years ago, Tower Hamlets Homes (THH) was created through a staff transfer from the local council and its employee benefits offer hadn't changed since. As a result, it lacked a distinctive "THH identity." A February 2018 staff opinion "pulse" survey reported that only 57% of staff were proud to work for THH, and therefore there was a need to create a strong, exciting and distinctive THH offer that staff could see value in.

Being in the public sector brings challenges when it comes to offering staff reasonable pay increases, which is something that has had a negative effect on THH staff. In the October 2017 staff workshops, staff had consistently raised "reward and recognition" as an area they felt the company should be doing more work on.

The THH team wanted to evoke staff to take greater personal ownership of the customer experience. Feedback from customers brought up an area of concern with the services the organisation provides. Therefore, the team felt that giving staff greater ownership over the employee experience in terms of pay, benefits and wellbeing, would encourage the corresponding behaviour when it came to customers.

As an organisation, there are high sickness levels across the board compared to the industry average. As part of the pulse survey, the team had discovered that 47% of staff didn't believe THH cared about employee wellbeing, inspiring the team to develop a better employee wellbeing offering to reach beyond the traditional reactive approaches.

Lastly, a challenge was to develop a solution which would support THH's highly dispersed workforce, with 47% without office or computer access. And the remaining 53% of employees spread across four separate offices, meaning communicating the launch of the solution was a barrier the organisation needed to overcome.

The approach

The plan was to introduce a single, online platform where employee benefits were presented coherently in one accessible place for the first time – showcasing both pre-existing employee benefits and expanded wellbeing benefits as well. Creating excitement was top of mind, and the team realised they needed to present something out of the ordinary to employees, which was away from the existing traditional, corporate tone and inherited local authority language.

This led THH to focus on the employer brand, using corporate yellow and black colours while blending in photography of its homes and cartoon imagery in order to bring the site to life. This would help engage both property and community-oriented staff groups. This new blended approach was complemented through the brand name, "THHbuzz" – mixing the corporate "THH" with the less formal "buzz." On top of that, the new slogan became "get more for your bees and honey," – bees and honey being Cockney rhyming slang for money – and anchors THH to take pride in the heritage of its East End of London location.

THH created a teaser campaign with branded emails to send out to staff along with posters inviting people to "find out what the buzz is about." The team identified staff champions and gave them pre-access to the site so they could help colleagues post-launch.

The team took a two-phased approach, with phase one delivering wellbeing and benefits (including employee discounts), and wider recognition in phase two – ensuring buzz was created throughout both phases. THHbuzz launched on the company's payday, via drop-in seminars in the head office and then went



to the other offices. All of the seminars were attended by senior managers to demonstrate leadership backing.

The team created a range of merchandise which aligned to the employer brand that both offline and online teams could use. A lot of the merchandise reflected a "honey" theme – including honey dippers, honey-filled sweets and honeycomb chocolates. The team boosted awareness even more by sending postcards home to all staff, reaching out particularly to those not based in offices.

The result

The launch events were attended by 102 of THH's 486 staff. Through using the analytics tool available on the Reward Gateway platform, THH discovered that 30% of its workforce registered on THHbuzz within 12 days of the initial launch. By day 22, this increased to 40%, with over £8,000 spent on the platform and a high proportion of users active on the site.

Excitement and buzz were generated in the office, with open and honest conversations happening and face-to-face feedback occurring after the sessions. Post-launch, there was a real sense

that employees appreciated the new benefits offer as well as feeling valued and listened to.

Further feedback is still being gathered from employees through the survey tool about the wider benefits offer. Although the team is still in an early stage following implementation, they're anticipating a positive impact of THHbuzz on the staff sickness rate, employee conflict index, and the proportion of staff who say they're proud to work for THH – turning higher employee engagement into higher customer satisfaction and fewer customer complaints.

Tower Hamlets Homes won the accolade of **'Most creative communications for public sector / charity organisations'** at The Engagement Excellence Awards 2018.



Most strategic communications for larger organisations

World's largest family-owned recruitment company transforms reward culture and increases employee satisfaction and engagement

The company

Reed Specialist Recruitment, the largest family-owned recruitment company in the world, provides permanent, temporary and contract recruitment solutions, and has 2,200 employees, or Co-Members, across 91 offices across the UK. The recruitment industry in the UK is a highly competitive growing market, attracting a multitude of new entrants who can offer bespoke, tailored rewards and benefits to their staff.

The challenge

The main challenge for REED was changing its reward culture, which was heavily skewed towards commission and bonuses, which ultimately led to short-termism amongst its workforce. In addition, internal satisfaction surveys showed that employees believed they were offered few benefits and they were hard to find. Although the team at REED improved many commission structures the previous financial year, they hadn't seen an improvement in satisfaction levels and Co-Member retention. There was a recognition that the reward culture needed to change and Co-Members needed to see reward not just as pay, but as everything they get from working at REED – their Total Reward Package.

The team concluded that they had an unsustainable reward model and improving its benefits offering would be more cost-effective than increasing pay. By adopting a more holistic approach to reward, Co-Members would be more engaged, satisfied and feel more valued.

REED had never had a clear benefits strategy, so the team reached out to other HR & reward professionals and companies they met at various networking events. It quickly became apparent that effectively communicating benefits was one of the most challenging aspects of a benefits strategy. Therefore, it was essential to form a thorough and strategic communications plan to accompany the relaunch of employee benefits.

In terms of communication, the team faced two main challenges. Firstly, there was no budget, so costs would have to be as low as possible. Secondly, the workforce was spread over 91 offices across the UK, and communications often didn't reach all Co-Members.

However, knowing how essential a strategic communications plan was, REED had the primary objective: To increase Co-Members' knowledge and understanding of the benefits available, increase the uptake of benefits and through that, attempt to increase Co-Member satisfaction and engagement.

The approach

After researching best practices, the team created a communications plan for the next REED financial year and mapped out the content and channels they would use. To communicate new benefits, improvements to existing benefits and competitions to encourage engagement, the team worked with Reward Gateway to create a new benefits platform, called "Reward Hub."

The team shared the plan at its annual HR strategy meeting and it generated enthusiasm and new ideas. In order to get the information to as many Co-Members as possible, the team used a mixture of intranet news articles, emails, posters and flyers. Also, Personal Assistants of departmental heads added a benefits section in periodic newsletters to reach the entire network.

The team held presentations, conference calls and webinars in the first half of the year to communicate the new reward platform and new benefits (which included employee recognition, employee discounts, Childcare Vouchers and employee wellbeing). For Co-Members who couldn't attend, content was shared with managers to cascade to their teams. Due to budget constraints, the team utilised existing channels of communication: emails, intranet news articles and awarding small prizes for internal competitions.



Reed Specialist Recruitment took home 'Most strategic communications for larger organisations' at The Engagement Excellence Awards 2018.

To reach Co-Members when they're out of the office and to appeal to the millennial generation of employees, the team heavily promoted usage of the Reward Hub app and the SmartSpending™ discounts app. This tied into the wider business strategy towards mobilisation.

As part of the plan to increase engagement with external communications, the team created a two-page benefits document for applicants. They also changed the on-boarding material to a complete benefits booklet to send out to new starters in the post. This ensured that all Co-Members started off their REED journey with awareness of their benefits package from day one.

The results

The strategic communications efforts resulted in an immediate increase in the benefits uptake across the board. Benefits are now highly accessible to Co-Members regardless of location and there's been an increase of five times the previous amount of engagement with the number of registered users browsing the site. The #RewardsatReed LinkedIn photo competition ran from November 2017 to December 2017 and generated over one hundred submissions.

And externally, there's been an increase in REED's Glassdoor rating, which supports that Co-Member satisfaction and awareness of the Total Reward Package have both increased. Between October 2016 and July 2017, the average Glassdoor rating was 3.7. As of October 2017, the score rating has been climbing and is now at 4.1. The team is even seeing more reviews being left on Glassdoor after improving the benefits and their visibility.

Additionally, a higher number of employees now state they feel more valued and that their opinions matter, resulting in a higher score in employee experience. After only a year of launching Reward Hub, there has been a renewed interest in REED's benefits package and has led to the introduction of an annual benefits survey which allows employees to voice their opinion and propose new benefits for the Reward Team to evaluate. With continuous feedback, the team will strive to introduce new benefits that are in line with the strategy and meet the needs of REED's workforce and organisation as a whole. Currently, Reward Hub's ROI is sitting at £126,700 YTD and counting.

Most strategic communications for smaller organisations

Technology company improves employee resilience and work-life balance through series of wellbeing initiatives

The company

Causeway, a fast-paced technology company, provides software for the construction industry and employs 220 people in mostly technical and professional roles. The company employs a high-cost workforce, with 70% of UK employees being higher rate taxpayers. Therefore, employee absence is costly and impacts customer projects and services.

The challenge

The business was growing but the collapse of a major player in 2017 shook the construction industry and increased the pressure. The HR team recognised that supporting mental wellbeing would be as important to future success as ensuring that employees are physically equipped to meet challenges.

After assessing company health data and reviewing absence trends, incidences of anxiety and stress were identified, along with physical ailments commonly associated with stress.

Research statistics and employee feedback highlighted that men can be reluctant to discuss their mental health and personal difficulties. Although Causeway had already implemented a wellbeing programme, employing both proactive and reactive measures, it needed an innovative approach to support mental health and engage Causeway's 80% male audience.

The HR team identified the following key objectives for the wellbeing strategy:

- Improve employee mental wellbeing, resilience and work-life balance.
- Provide increased education and support to ensure that employees are mentally equipped to deal with challenges.
- Enhance wellbeing services to address stress-related problems.
- Enhance financial wellbeing and family-friendly measures to support personal responsibilities.
- Reduce absence and improve productivity.
- Reinforce and encourage a positive culture of wellbeing.
- Ensure that employees recognise that the company cares about their wellbeing.

The approach

Causeway's wellbeing strategy included carefully selected benefits and provisions, aimed at employees and their families, encompassing physical fitness, nutrition, health, resilience, lifestyle and financial wellbeing.

Some of the benefits include an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), physical activity discounts, a healthcare cash plan, free fruit and healthy refreshments, a Cycle to Work scheme and financial wellbeing support.

And some of the wider provisions include family and flexible working options, enhanced maternity and paternity options, Childcare Vouchers, showers and cycle racks, volunteer days and access to expert consultations and advisors. Reviewing HR data revealed increased patterns of behaviour and abstractions correlating to times of heightened pressure. Furthermore, personal responsibilities were frequently at the heart of the matter. Male colleagues, in particular, were perceived as reluctant or embarrassed about discussing personal problems and pressures, since this can be seen as a weakness. Many men at the organisation focussed on their physical health but did not consider their mental health.

In order for the team to meet their key objectives, they decided on a multi-pronged approach across the six key areas of wellbeing. The approach included increased communication, targeted promotions for the benefits and services available and education aimed at improving awareness and understanding of mental health. Practical tips were also provided on stress prevention, stress management and building resilience.

The HR team at Causeway used their research to help fuel an innovative and creative communications plan to engage employees. This included increased education, aimed at improving the understanding of anxiety, stress and impact on the body and mind, along with practical tips on stress prevention, management and building resilience, and expert advice on nutrition.

Strategically, Causeway tailored its communication strategy to appeal to sports enthusiasts in the business, by adding the concept of becoming "a corporate athlete." Also, to overcome negative perceptions, the term "mental health" was replaced with "building resilience" and "healthy minds."

The HR team also created a fun campaign to promote and recognise carers as "Unsung Heroes" to create



a sense of openness and pride. Along with this campaign, they promoted benefits focussed around "life journeys," making it easy for employees to identify with benefits relevant to them - including self-care, starting a career, buying a home, getting married, having a baby, caring for relatives or retirement.

To communicate these new offerings, the Causeway team used a variety of channels to get the message to the right people - including emails, posters, flyers, social media, personalised packs, and coffee mornings at Causeway's on-site cafes. Since 100% of employees were registered on the company's employee engagement hub, "Causeway Lifestyle," the team had another avenue to promote and support the campaign and its communications.

The responsive design of the employee engagement platform ensured that important information and benefits were accessible on the go, from any device, at any time - which was important for many field-based employees. Monthly promotions, features, events and communication were aligned to national campaigns and exciting, digestible content (including videos, discounts and employee stories) was added each month to encourage more visits and also inspire employees.

The result

The team was able to manage the campaign within existing budgets - requiring no additional costs. All aspects of the project were monitored and measured to understand the ROI, plus both quantitative and qualitative metrics were used to assess the effectiveness and progress of the team's objectives.

This renewed wellbeing strategy has shown significant improvements in employee mental, physical and financial wellbeing, resilience, and work-life balance, which resulted in reducing absence across the targeted areas by 66% and improving productivity and engagement. Additionally, annual survey results showed that 90% of employees believe the company genuinely cares about their wellbeing.

The company has also introduced education and support initiatives for employees to reinforce and encourage a positive culture of wellbeing. Causeway's team continues to review and improve their wellbeing strategy in an ever-changing environment in order to ensure a continued ROI and increase in employee engagement.

Causeway took home the awards for 'Most strategic communications for smaller organisations' at The Engagement Excellence Awards 2018.



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Most strategic communications for public sector / charity organisations

Social housing organisation uses employee engagement platform to improve customer satisfaction and employee communications

The company

In order for the team at Tower Hamlets Homes to reach their engagement goals, they identified four key aims: Increasing employee engagement, introducing new wellbeing initiatives, improving customer satisfaction and decreasing customer complaints across the board.

The challenge

As a result of the company being created through a staff transfer from the local council, Tower Hamlets Homes (THH) lacked a distinctive company identity and hadn't changed its benefits offering in 10 years. After conducting a staff opinion "pulse" survey in February 2018, the team discovered only 57% of staff were proud to work for THH. This fueled the need for a revamp of THH's current benefit offerings, for stronger employee communications and an overall need to improve employee engagement.

Offering staff reasonable pay increases is a challenge in the public sector, but there were other ways to increase engagement. THH staff mentioned "reward and recognition" as an area the company could improve on in an October 2017 staff workshop. On top of that, THH needed to support its highly dispersed workforce. While 47% of employees didn't have access to an office or a computer, the other 53% were spread across four offices. This meant communication needed to be thoughtful, strategic and reach all employees with the same message in different formats.

Lastly, THH wanted to encourage its staff to take greater personal ownership of the customer experience. Feedback from customers showed that 20% of leaseholder complaints received in 2017 related to the quality of THH's communication and customer-handling experience. By giving staff greater ownership over the employee experience in terms of pay, benefits and wellbeing, would encourage the corresponding behaviour when it came to customers.

The approach

In order to streamline employee communications, benefits and wellbeing, THH was looking for an online platform where employees could easily access both pre-existing and new benefits. After choosing Reward Gateway as its partner, THH needed to generate some buzz about the launch of the new programme.

The organisation brought its new brand to life by mixing together its corporate "THH" with "buzz" to create a new brand name for the employee engagement platform, called "THHbuzz." This new site would engage employees with a blend of photography of its homes and cartoon imagery.

Before the launch of the new employee engagement platform, the THH team created a teaser campaign with branded emails and posters to all staff to enhance communication of the new offering. Then, "staff champions" were identified and were granted pre-access to the site to help colleagues post-launch.

To deliver the message in-person about THHbuzz, the team launched wellbeing and benefits in phase one, and recognition in phase two, helping tailor the right message at the right time. On the day of the launch, senior managers attended seminars which were led by "team THHbuzz" experts. Branded merchandise reflected the "honey" theme and were useful for both offline and online demographics. The team further boosted awareness by sending postcards home to all staff, which helped reach those not based in offices.



The result

Due to the success of the launch campaign and a mix of targeted employee communications, the platform had a successful launch. By using the analytics tool through the THHbuzz platform, the team discovered that 30% of the workforce registered on the employee engagement platform within the first 12 days of the initial launch.

Although THH is in an early stage of implementation, the company is anticipating seeing a positive impact on the proportion of staff who say they're proud to work for THH. Higher employee engagement will lead to higher customer satisfaction and fewer customer complaints as a result of effective employee communications and a streamlined platform to house THH's new offerings.

Tower Hamlets Homes took home the award for **'Most strategic communications for public sector: charity organisations'** at The Engagement Excellence Awards 2018.

Engagement leader of the year

Susanna Aiano, HR Projects and Staff Engagement Officer at Ashford Borough Council, leads engagement to increase benefits satisfaction and receive national recognition

The company

Ashford Borough Council, by its own admission, is not a traditional local council – the team is forward-thinking and has a long-term strategy to become self-sufficient from Government funding by 2020. In light of this, the council was tasked with finding a cost-effective way to attract and retain employees with the same innovative values of the organisation. This is particularly important in the location of Ashford as it has such excellent transport links to London and Europe, so competition for the best candidates is high.

The challenge

Ashford Borough Council entrusted Susanna Aiano, the council's HR Projects and Staff Engagement Officer, with the challenge of rewarding staff in a public sector environment which is in the midst of budget cuts. This included finding a way to attract and retain forward-thinking employees who matched the council's uniquely innovative outlook. Susanna knew the council needed a benefits strategy which was future proofed to sustain successful recruitment and keep talent from going elsewhere.

Many will be familiar with the need to convince leadership that investment in employee benefits is a must, and for Susanna it was no different. Susanna gauged interest in the organisation's employee benefits offering by including a survey in the company's staff magazine. And after only a single day, a quarter of the staff had registered their support. Susanna used this people power to pitch a presentation to the council's Management Team, which highlighted the HR principles behind employee benefits, and passionately argued her case for moving away from traditional public sector views.

The council's leadership were quick to buy into Susanna's obvious passion for the project and agreed to implement the benefits offering so long as she could ensure it matched seven key objectives.

The approach

With the green light from management, Susanna quickly identified Reward Gateway as the right partner to provide an employee benefits offering for Ashford Borough Council – appropriately christened My Ashford Rewards. And using the highly customisable elements of Reward Gateway's offering, Susanna was able to start building an employee benefits brand which was instantly identifiable to all of the council's staff members. This included a personal name for the offering, matching the organisation's corporate branding and the introduction of Sir Wilbur of Trottsville – who quickly become the council's much loved internal benefits mascot.

Wilbur was featured heavily in Susanna's promotion of the council's employee benefits offering, including a monthly article in the staff magazine, being placed on branded chocolate bars when the offering was launched, changing up his appearance with the seasons – and even appearing in person at key staff events! Susanna didn't stop at Wilbur and used a bespoke communication strategy which used a range of engagement tools to reach Ashford Borough Council's diverse workforce.

Susanna's strategy focussed on the drip feeding of information at employee's desks and around the office, helping the My Ashford Rewards sink in and form part of employee's everyday shopping habits. And as an added bonus of Susanna's role, she comes into contact with all members of staff and can personally educate new starters on the merits of My Ashford Rewards as well as engaging existing staff members in conversation about the savings to be made. With this direct, tailored approach being so effective, Susanna created the council's first staff engagement team to support with the increase in popularity.



The result

Thanks to Susanna's proactive approach, Ashford Borough Council has seen the following results since launch:

- £1.5 million spent through My Ashford Rewards.
- £156,000 saved by staff through employee discounts.
- 82% engagement with the platform despite increasingly offline workforce.
- Increase in satisfaction in the latest Best Companies Survey regarding a "Fair Deal" – 4% higher than a one-star, mid-entry organisation.

If the savings above were given by the council as a payrise, it would have cost them over £193,000 to provide. Instead, their investment has only been £39,000 so far.

On top of those stats, the council was shortlisted for two categories in the Local Government Chronicle Awards this year which was incredible national recognition.

Underpinning this was Susanna's benefits strategy to attract and retain staff that display the right behaviours to deliver the council's ambitious and creative aspirations.

Susanna Aiano of Ashford Borough Council scooped the award for **'Engagement leader of the year'** at The Engagement Excellence Awards 2018.

Engagement team of the year

Watford Community Housing puts greater focus on recognition and learning & development to increase employee satisfaction and drive multiple business results

The company

Watford Community Housing created a new people strategy to improve low employee satisfaction scores and increase understanding of the organisation's Total Reward Package. The strategy focussed on using recognition and learning and development to improve engagement – with the ultimate goal of increasing customer satisfaction.

The challenge

In 2017, Watford Community Housing's HR Team, also known as the organisation's "fairies," sent a survey to all of the line managers to get feedback on what was being delivered to employees and how it could be improved – returning an overall satisfaction score of 3 out of 5. A deeper dive into the results showed that employees were not engaging with their reward package due to a lack of understanding, an issue which crossed over to Watford Community Housing's training and development initiatives. The survey also showed employee relations with HR were an issue, largely due to the open plan office and lack of privacy for confidential conversations.

Wearing their fairy wings to spread a bit of magic wherever they go and believing that an increase in employee engagement would lead to an increase in customer satisfaction, the team used their close partnership with Reward Gateway to speak with subject matter experts on where they could improve. This led to the team launching their first ever people strategy to improve employee engagement, increase the understanding of recognition and boost participation in training sessions.

The approach

With a focus for the team's people strategy set, they began introducing new elements to their recognition programme. This included a "wheel of fortune" which employees who hit performance targets could spin to win a prize, and the introduction of "Thank You Thursdays," which encourages peer-to-peer recognition aligned to Watford Community Housing's organisational behaviours.

Providing greater transparency around the organisations reward package was the next step. The team achieved this by seamlessly integrating Total Reward Statements into the organisation's employee engagement platform, giving the workforce a fuller understanding of exactly what working for Watford Community Housing brought on top of their pay.

To improve learning and development at Watford Community Housing, the team launched the "People Learning Academy." Importantly, the team involved line managers to develop the foundations of training which were core to the outcomes of the organisation. As 36% of Watford Community Housing's employees work remotely, a new provider which allows training to be completed from a mobile device was sourced and brought all training information, whether mandatory or supplementary, under one roof.

And, finally, private conversations with HR were given a place to flourish with the team now sitting in a soundproof, glass office – affectionately known as "The Cube."



The results

The team used their quarterly engagement survey to measure the impact of their new people strategy, with incredibly positive results. In December 2016, 34% of employees participated and gave a satisfaction score of +52. A year later and participation jumped to 60% with the satisfaction score climbing to +68. And in June 2018, Watford Community Housing's satisfaction score had reached +73, an increase of 21 points in just 18 months!

Introducing the People Learning Academy also had positive effects on the organisation and within six months, there was an increase in the amount of employees completing training sessions. On top of this, 60% of employees are now attending one-on-ones with their managers compared to 26% previously, and the growth in employees' skills has brought more opportunities for internal promotions.

And confirming the team's belief that an increase in employee engagement would increase customer satisfaction, Watford Community Housing saw tenant satisfaction increase to 4.5% above the annual target for 2017/2018, first call resolutions increased by 5.5% compared to the previous year, and the ratio of compliments to complaints increased from 24:76 to 49:51. On top of this, the team's efforts combined with Reward Gateway's benefits have delivered a £9,500 return on investment per annum, and a team of four fairies!

Watford Community Housing showed that teamwork makes the dreamwork by winning the award for 'Engagement team of the year' at The Engagement Excellence Awards 2018.

The electronics specialist maplin

Most effective launch

Maplin Electronics engages 60% of its workforce within three months of launching employee engagement solution. Both employee turnover and absence fall, with Glassdoor rating also increasing

The company

Maplin Electronics employed 2,500 colleagues across 220 sites including two support centres. With labour costs rising and an evermore competitive high street, Maplin wanted to improve its employee offering with a value for money solution.

The challenge

Maplin Electronics had 2,500 colleagues across 220 sites and wanted a solution which would make their lives easier, could be accessed on the go and would fit alongside the company's culture and values. Maplin had, in fact, launched a benefits offering the year before but this was heavily criticised by colleagues as it wasn't user-friendly, didn't include colleagues in Ireland. Plus, it relied heavily on salary sacrifice offers which didn't resonate with a workforce who were mainly on the National Minimum Wage.

Unsurprisingly, Maplin's colleagues had completely switched off from the offering in place, reflected in colleagues' response to "I am satisfied with my total benefits package" in Maplin's annual engagement survey dropping from 52% to 44%.

There were also limitations in the service from Maplin's provider at the time, especially in the communications delivered to colleagues. The main channel for communications was through a single, store-specific email address which only store managers had access to, and communications were also biased towards a millennial mindset which didn't land well with Maplin's multi-generational workforce.

The approach

The People Team knew they needed a solution which would solve all of their current problems and took the time to research providers in the market. They found Reward Gateway to be the best fit – offering a solution which is user-friendly, inclusive of all employees and

utilises bespoke, segmented communications. With a provider selected, Maplin's team were keen to engage their colleagues from the start and invited people to step forward as Engagement Champions. The Champions helped to conjure up the name "Boost" for Maplin's new platform and also helped the People Team to create excitement with a teaser campaign designed to inspire mystery and to get the rest of the workforce talking about the offering.

The teaser campaign was tailored to be location and audience-appropriate with deep consideration given to what would work in stores versus support centres. In stores, the pre-launch push included magnetic jigsaw puzzles which would show retailers available through employee discounts and the Boost logo when completed. On launch day, goodie boxes were delivered to stores containing Boost-branded chocolate bars, pens and joining leaflets.

In support centres, the pre-launch push included desk drops of Boost-branded chocolate bars and an intriguing double-sided postcard. On launch day, goodie boxes were delivered to each centre containing travel cups, tea bags, pens, cupcakes, headphones and a joining leaflet. To make it even more location-specific, tea bags were chosen specifically – Yorkshire Tea for Rotherham and London Tea for London.

Maplin also used a company-wide communication campaign to bolster its local initiatives. This included a teaser video, the introduction of the Boost Bot, a competition on the platform and a roadshow to demonstrate the platform with Reward Gateway present to educate and engage Maplin employees. All of this helped to create a buzz around the new offering, overcoming colleagues' previously held negative perceptions.



The results

Within only one month of launch, 50% of Maplin's workforce had registered to use the Boost platform, with 60% being engaged with the new offering within three months. Spend through the new employee discounts platform reached £100,000 in the first three months, with savings reaching £10,500 – the equivalent of £80 per person. At a time when Maplin was unable to provide salary increases, these savings were the equivalent of a 1.5% pay increase, further demonstration of how the offering added value to colleagues' overall reward package.

Maplin also saw wider benefits to their business. The organisation achieved a return on investment within three months and saw colleague turnover and absence decrease by 13% and 18% respectively compared to previous years. The development of Maplin's Employee Value Proposition, bolstered by the new discounts offering, further supported the attraction and retention of talent – marked by the improvement of their Glassdoor rating from 1.6 to 2.8 out of 5.

Maplin won the accolade of **'Most effective launch'** at The Engagement Excellence Awards 2018.



Most effective relaunch

NAHL Group relaunches platform to bring business entities closer together, increasing visits by 276% and amount of recognition sent by 182%

The company

As an umbrella group with four separate organisations across four different office locations, NAHL Group wanted to create a single source of truth with their employee engagement platform and build a better sense of togetherness.

The challenge

NAHL Group is an umbrella group of four separate organisations which work across three different divisions and four geographically spread out offices. Whilst each organisation under the umbrella operates separately, each shares a number of central office amenities, including employee discounts provided by Reward Gateway.

The team at NAHL were introduced to Reward Gateway's new employee engagement platform and straight away saw its potential to help achieve their business goals. This led NAHL to relaunch with the new platform, putting a greater focus on being an engaging, inclusive space for employees to come together with a bigger emphasis on using recognition to drive company values.

The approach

NAHL's team renamed the platform to "SourceIt!" with the supporting tagline of "Find It, Use It, Buy It, Own It," reflecting the platform acting as a one-stop-shop for everything an employee in the Group would need. This included an NAHL Group news blog, library of HR information, employee photo gallery with accompanying fun facts, and the addition of the Wellbeing Centre – a holistic, online resource covering physical, mental and financial wellbeing. The team worked closely in collaboration with Reward Gateway to ensure the build, redesign and delivery focussed on the user experience.

A new set of awards were created to bolster NAHL's recognition strategy, including peer-to-peer eCards and top-down instant awards with a monetary value attached. The addition of a social recognition wall also increased the visibility of recognition moments being sent across

the Group by allowing colleagues to share in each other's successes with likes and comments. Annually, recipients of certain awards are chosen by the CEO to receive £250 to spend towards personal or professional development of their choosing.

As the NAHL Group is a business built on relationships and healthy competition, a personal approach was taken to promote the relaunch to engage all employees – especially those who had expressed cynicism about the platform and its value. The centrepiece of the team's approach was their communications plan deployed two weeks before launch. Highlights of which included teaser emails, how to guides, roadshows, quizzes, an orientation video, and SourceIt! Champions to update teams about changes, create anticipation and build excitement.

The result

With the SourceIt! platform live, NAHL were quick to see the business message reinforced across the Group thanks to the reduction in silo working and a greater interest in the news being shared on the blog. This was backed up by the amount of unique monthly visitors to the platform increasing by 276%, with the average percentage of users returning to the platform reaching 82%.

And as more employees accessed the platform, the social recognition wall also improved two-way communication between employees, with an 182% increase in the amount of eCards being sent in the first six months of launch.

NAHL's team also saw year-over-year progress through key measurements in the company's employee survey. The amount of employees who agreed with "I have the ability to recognise and reward my colleagues" rose from 60.4% to 94.9%. Also, "There is a strong feeling of teamwork and fun across the company" rose from 54.0% to 85.0% and "I am clear about what the company is trying to achieve" rose from 77.9% to 94%.



NAHL Group plc won the award for 'Most effective relaunch' at The Engagement Excellence Awards 2018.

Best evolution of company benefits

Travis Perkins plc enhances its extensive benefits offering by adding financial wellbeing support to employees across the UK

The company

Travis Perkins plc takes employee engagement seriously and has developed a best-in-class benefits platform with Reward Gateway to bring a wide range of tools, benefits and support services to its colleagues. Health and wellbeing are a major focus for the Group and the support on offer includes a confidential 24/7 Employee Assistance Programme to support colleagues with advice, information and counselling on issues causing concern. The organisation needed to put a solution in place to offer financial education and benefits, including saving and investment plans and affordable loans, whilst communicating it effectively to over 29,000 employees.

The challenge

It's a well-known fact that money worries, life events and financial problems are a common source of stress, and so in addition to the employee assistance already on offer, Travis Perkins plc decided to add financial wellbeing support to provide advice, and a financial health-check for colleagues.

Employees across the Group work in over 2,000 different locations, the length and breadth of the UK, and many have important operational roles that mean they are not sat at a desk or a computer! The HR Team knew it would be difficult to communicate the people strategy and the new tools quickly and clearly to everyone, whilst providing assurance of confidentiality for those wishing to take a look at their finances and ways to improve them.

The approach

Travis Perkins plc launched the dedicated financial wellbeing hub alongside its already popular Reward Gateway benefits platform, which includes many discount offers for products and services, alongside the education, advice, support and guidance.

As it was the team's priority to make sure colleagues received professional support, its communication campaign had to reach many colleagues, with very different working environments, and it needed to land with impact. The Travis Perkins plc's dedicated campaign was supported with a comprehensive array of online and offline media, including a teaser campaign, posters, emails, and community posts. The team spent time to ensure the buy-in of Senior Management to help disseminate the message to their teams also.

The result

Since launch, Travis Perkins plc's financial wellbeing hub has seen solid visitor numbers each month, and these continue to grow as more people come to understand the support available. The addition of Neyber has further spiked visitor numbers proving that adding Neyber to the wider financial wellbeing offering was a positive move and that employees were open to exploring an important topic, so often considered a taboo, in a secure and confidential way.

Since offering employees the wellbeing support, registrations for the existing employee benefits platform have doubled compared to the same time last year. Spend through the other employee discounts available – everything from low-cost travel to flu jabs – also increased by over £2 million giving Travis Perkins plc employees a massive saving of £190,000 – further embedding the benefits platform and its extensive offers as a critical part of the overall Travis Perkins plc package of support.



Travis Perkins plc plc scooped the award for 'Best evolution of company benefits' at The Engagement Excellence Awards 2018.



Most innovative company benefits

Great Place to Work overhauls employee benefits offering through easy-to-use engagement platform with open communication at the core company sales increased by 50% and profitability reached higher point than ever before

The company

Great Place to Work provides insight, recognition and organisational development to numerous organisations. With its own employee engagement initiatives falling short of what it provides to customers, Great Place to Work looked to improve its benefits offering and increase open communication across the business.

The challenge

After a year of transformation and substantial managerial change in the business, Great Place to Work felt it had let employees down with initiatives which were seen as tick box exercises, unoriginal and lacking longevity. This was combined with a lack of continuous communication from Great Place to Work to promote the ongoing business strategy, build a culture of trust and align employees with business outcomes.

In an effort to focus further on where to improve, Great Place to Work's Leadership Team conducted an employee survey, revealing double digit drops across main strategy areas of reward, communication and involvement. As 93% of the workforce completed the survey, Great Place to Work didn't second-guess the results and hired a Chief People Officer (CPO) to deliver change.

Together, Great Place to Work and the new CPO saw the need to use The Place, the existing employee engagement platform, to help with the long-term people strategy. The Leadership Team also challenged themselves to make sure their new offering would educate current employees by showcasing all of the benefits available when working for Great Place to Work, as well as being a recruitment tool for prospective candidates.

The approach

With the mandate for change across their offering and communication, Great Place to Work's Leadership audited the organisation's benefits against the benchmark of what they and their colleagues wanted in order to cultivate an improved culture and create a uniquely great place to work. This was done with a simple question: "What do you want and need?" The results gave Great Place to Work the insight to build a strong, distinctive and tailored platform for employees.

Working in tandem with the newly hired CPO, Great Place to Work's Leadership Team introduced two working from home days a week, two volunteering days per year, free breakfast, and new summer hours of shutting the office at 1 p.m. on Fridays between May Bank Holiday and August Bank Holiday.

Great Place to Work also added one "My Time" day a year where employees can take the day to do something they love, the "Live a Dream Lottery" where employees can pick a once in a life experience, within reason, and win it if drawn, increased maternity leave to 16 weeks full pay and eight weeks at 50%, and increased paternity leave to six weeks full pay.

The result

Half a year after unveiling the new offerings, Great Place to Work saw increased dedication to the company's business goals. Company sales were 50% higher than at the same time in the previous year, Great Place to Work tracked at a higher level of profitability than ever before and there was no turnover in staff.

Great Place to Work's Reward Gateway platform, The Place, was instrumental in centralising all benefits and company information, acting as a vehicle for enhanced, focussed and up-to-date communication. Anecdotally, new hires have also been raving about the offerings and state that the culture at Great Place to Work is one of their main reasons for joining.



Best use of the platform to drive business strategy

Retail organisation uses platform to drive business strategy, increase customer satisfaction and improve employee wellbeing

The company

The retail organisation GO Outdoors welcomed in new owners and a new Managing Director whose focus was on building passion for people, while also creating a culture of high performance. The changes in strategy created a huge opportunity to increase engagement, and in turn, improve customer service.

The challenge

New owners and a new Managing Director, both with a passion for people and an ambition to create a culture of high performance, meant two big things for GO Outdoors: A change in strategy and a huge opportunity. The new MD made the strategy simple, make GO “a great place to work and a great place to shop.”

Why? Because happy colleagues create happy customers, and happy customers spend more and are more loyal. GO’s customer insight showed that highly satisfied customers were twice as likely to return, spend more money and be four times more likely to recommend GO.

The mission was straightforward – make GO a great place to work and shop, create a positive work environment where colleagues bring the best version of themselves to work and are focussed on creating memorable moments for customers so they leave the store feeling highly satisfied.

With 2,500 colleagues predominantly working part-time across 67 locations, GO Outdoors faced communications challenges. What’s more, 98% of the workforce worked offline with no means of accessing the intranet due to limitations with the company’s IT infrastructure. On top of that, GO wanted employees to feel proud of working for the company, and wanted to implement a reward and recognition programme but had little to no budget to support this initiative.

To reach its goals, while still staying within budget and infrastructure limitations, in 2016 GO launched its employee engagement platform with Reward Gateway, called “GOforit!” The company successfully engaged its workforce with the platform and decided they could capitalise on this success to share and drive the new strategy.

After analysing the results of the latest employee engagement survey, the HR team had a much clearer understanding of how engaged the employees were and what areas they needed to impact in order to drive overall engagement. These areas included:

- Improve reward, recognition and wellbeing.
- Improve line management effectiveness, leadership and change management.

The approach

With employee wellbeing at the heart of championing better working lives and creating a culture of high performance, introducing a wellbeing programme was a no brainer to increasing engagement. The launch communications of the new wellbeing programme promoted living a healthier, happier lifestyle, and helped the HR team to enhance the benefits profile that employees had access to by adding a more holistic offering. Using the engagement platform, GOforit!, meant easy access for employees and delivered the right message to employees’ fingertips.

The Engagement survey highlighted areas where GO could improve. With 66% of employees feeling valued and recognised, the team knew turning the dial on this would have a positive impact on employee engagement and would be a focal point for strategic efforts. The team knew peer-to-peer recognition was one of the most effective ways to recognise and celebrate employee achievements and could yield a 40% better engagement result than manager-only recognition, so launching peer-to-peer eCards with Reward Gateway was a logical next step.

Alongside recognition, GOforit! was also used to remind employees they could make their money go further using their employee discounts programme. They promoted the employee discounts app and seasonal retail offers, and even published a new colleague magazine through GOforit!, which discussed all the great things happening in GO that made it a great place to shop and work. GOforit! also provided business updates so employees felt updated, connected and involved.

The survey also told the HR team they needed to get better at improving line management effectiveness, leadership and



change management. So, the team launched a dedicated manager-only area in GOforit! which provided first-time managers with learning tools, webinars, templates and guidance documents to support them in engagement and managing their staff.

The result

GOforit! was designed with employees in mind. The participation, stories of savings made, reviews of items purchased and celebrating one another’s achievements at work is critical, but the platform also plays an important role in helping the company achieve its goals and measure progress.

GO Outdoors’ customer insights informed the HR team that the stronger the engagement scores were, the higher the “My Customer” scores were. As staff survey results indicated, in a time of transition, relevant change was possible and the organisation’s overall employee engagement scores increased – being the highest scores to date. On top of that, the new initiatives launched via GOforit! were directly linked to highly satisfied customers and improved financial performance. The launch of the wellbeing hub encouraged employees to participate in healthier activities, like walking meetings, a carpooling scheme and recipe swapping.

After launching peer-to-peer eCards, employees have sent and received nearly 3,000 eCards, with a focus on celebrating successes and giving feedback. eCards have made it easier for colleagues to say thank you, job well done or great work. The senior leadership team fully supports the recognition initiatives, and the Managing Director in particular has sent 170 eCards to individual colleagues who were named in customer feedback emails. One eCard at a time, GO Outdoors is building a culture of recognition and celebration.

All stores improved their “My Customer” satisfaction scores from last year, with an overall 4% increase on scores. Most notably, so far 25 GO Outdoors stores reached over the 70% customer satisfaction target. By using its already existing employee engagement platform to drive new initiatives, GO Outdoors is creating a culture of highly satisfied customers and engaged employees to move closer to being a great place to work and shop.

GO Outdoors won the accolade of **‘Best use of the platform to drive business strategy’** at The Engagement Excellence Awards 2018.

MISSGUIDED

Best internal communications strategy

Retail organisation uses employee feedback and internal communications to create new company values

The company

In August 2017, Missguided began a new journey focussing on defining and creating business values to help the company achieve its vision and future goals. Missguided isn't your average business though, so instead the company refers to its values as "Vibes." Through these Vibes, Missguided wanted to highlight and define what makes it different and discover which behaviours it needed to introduce, or enhance, to prepare for future growth.

The challenge

Instead of starting the process in the boardroom with the Executive team, the People team decided this was a task that would start at the heart of the business: With its people. The strategy was to encourage and invite the team to give open and honest feedback, tell the People team exactly what made Missguided special, where the company needed to improve, and try to explain in words the uniqueness of the brand.

This process required collaboration from everyone within the business to make sure everyone felt they had contributed to the Missguided Vibes, could instantly buy into them and understand their importance in the future of the business.

The research phase kicked off with interactive "Holla at Us" listening events, where questions were divided into two themes: You and the business.

Key questions included:

- What do you know?
- How do we make you feel?
- What makes Missguided different?
- What do you think Missguided wants to achieve in the future?

This research outlined four very clear themes – love, empowerment, positivity and fun. After the research phase, the next phase was focussed on connecting with as many employees as possible to discover why these words were important to them and the business. In order to do this, the team needed some help, which led to the creation of the "Vibe Tribe."

The Vibe Tribe consisted of a community of people who wanted to support the Vibes process. These people were

to be naturally enthusiastic and had a voice within their teams. The People team was looking for people who were influencers and passionate about the organisation – enabling them to reach more people and collate information in their language.

The approach

To kick off this new initiative, the Vibe Tribe started hosting "Vibe Weeks," which centred around taking one of the key areas that had been highlighted through research and spending the week talking to the team about that behaviour through interactive activities.

The first potential Vibe the team explored during week one was love. The Vibe Tribe hand-delivered Love Notes, along with Loveheart sweets with two simple questions for employees to answer: "What are you passionate about?" and "What do you love to do outside of work?"

Keeping in mind different communications preferences, the team tried to appeal to different styles and activities. The Vibe Tribe was tasked with "Love Selfies," which included getting team members to write and share one of their greatest loves. The team also introduced a survey called the "Love-o-meter" to ask people questions about what they loved to do as part of their day job, as well as a video to gain feedback.

The second week of Vibe Weeks, the team explored positivity. Team members dropped 500 little smileys on employee's desks, not only to make people smile, but to ask the important question "what made you smile last?" This was an important question, when it came to employee engagement at Missguided. The Vibe Tribe also asked employees to show their creative side with the smileys, demonstrating what made it happy.

Following positivity week was fun week. The team found out quickly that although Missguided was a fun place to work, people didn't like talking about having fun, and "forced fun" was something no one liked. The Vibe Tribe also dropped gummy sweets on people's desks with the statement, "show us how you have fun at work," and received some great entries. During fun week, a giant "Ha Ha board" was passed from floor to floor, encouraging employees to write down what made them laugh last at work.



The final week was focussed on empowerment. The Vibe Tribe explored dreaming big by asking employees, "what is your biggest dream?" and invited employees to write their dream on a giant board in the company's Social Space. The team also asked, "what would you like to find at the end of a rainbow?" Which was cleverly attached to rainbow sweets and gave the Vibe Tribe an idea of different thought processes. The Vibe Tribe and People Team spent hours asking people about the behaviours associated with the proposed Vibes, and made sure everyone agreed upon what was right for the people and the business.

The result

At the end of July 2018, the team began to launch the new Vibes – with one launching each week through a number of different communication and engagement activities. Throughout the entire process, the Vibe Tribe had support from the Institute of Management and Bolton University which helped with data collection and validated the research.

The research helped give the team early signals and confirm what should be a Vibe or a behaviour. Nearly all

of Missguided's head office contributed in some part of the research and discovery phases. The Vibe Tribe ensured that the retail teams were involved during the discovery phase and the People Team spent time working on the sales floor, speaking to the team and helping customers.

Around 50 different versions of the Vibes were discussed with team members and senior leaders throughout the discovery phase. By using honesty, transparency, open communication, collaboration and some fun throughout the process, the Vibe Tribe created the Missguided Vibes. These Vibes will help Missguided employees connect to the vision and purpose more than boardroom-created values could have. The new Vibes are:

- Love Lots: do everything with passion and pride.
- Believe Always: empower ourselves and others to be their best.
- Dream Big: use ideas and innovation to lead the way.
- Win Together: collaborate and win as a team.

Missguided won the accolade of 'Best internal communications strategy' at The Engagement Excellence Awards 2018.



Best recognition strategy

NAHL Group moves from incumbent provider to launch new, values-based recognition programme. The organisation sees an 182% increase in the amount of recognition sent and overall engagement with the Group improve

The company

NAHL Group had an incumbent recognition programme based only on incentive. To align recognition with its new people strategy, the organisation moved to a new provider who tailored recognition to NAHL's company values to reinforce value-led behaviour.

The challenge

NAHL Group is an umbrella group of four separate organisations who work across three different divisions and four geographically spread-out offices. Whilst each organisation under the umbrella operates separately, each shares a number of central office amenities, including NAHL's incumbent recognition offering and a Reward Gateway benefits platform – "Sourcelt!".

NAHL saw recognition as an important part of its people strategy to build a better sense of togetherness and bring its business entities closer together. Unfortunately, NAHL's incumbent recognition offering was financially-driven and didn't recognise good behaviours or reinforce company values.

The Group's team used plays from the book, "Build It: The Rebel Playbook for World-Class Employee Engagement," and their own research to settle on the need for recognition which encourages peer-to-peer recognition in an authentic way whilst amplifying the message across the Group every day. With change always being a challenging factor, initial feelers showed push-back from staff who liked elements of the incumbent offering.

The approach

Seeing the opportunity to extend a successful partnership, NAHL chose to add Reward Gateway's recognition offering to Sourcelt!, giving employees any time, any device access to online, social recognition which is tailored to the Group's values and employer brand.

The Group's team chose to split their recognition across three levels. The first, peer-to-peer eCards, allows employees to send colleagues a personalised message of thanks with no financial value attached. The second, an award tied to NAHL's values which allows the recipient to redeem against a set of gifts, with each employee being allowed to distribute one award per quarter. And the third, top-down instant awards with a monetary value attached for recipients to redeem at a retailer of choice on Sourcelt!. Annually, recipients of certain awards are chosen by the CEO to receive £250 to spend towards personal or professional development of their choosing.

NAHL also embedded a social recognition wall onto the platform to increase the visibility of recognition moments being sent across the Group by allowing colleagues to share in each other's successes with likes and comments. This was key for NAHL as it meant that recognition was no longer seen as a secret act, providing employees with a fun, public and easy to use platform to both recognise one another and engage with each other's recognition.



The result

Overhauling its recognition strategy and offering allowed the Group to provide employees with a tangible benefit which directly improved its Employee Value Proposition – seen by overall engagement across NAHL improving from 60% in 2017 to 81% in 2018.

The new recognition programme was a hit with employees too, with an increase in visits of 50% from the previous quarter and 82% of employees now logging in more than five times a month. There was an 182% increase in the amount of eCards sent from what they saw in a six-month period with their previous provider, and NAHL also found that the first employees to send eCards were those who initially didn't want the offer to change or didn't engage with the incumbent at all.

In addition, NAHL's team saw year-over-year progress through key measurements in the company's employee survey. The amount of employees who agreed with "I have the ability to recognise and reward my colleagues" rose from 60.4% to 94.9%, "There is a strong feeling of teamwork and fun across the company" rose from 54.0% to 85.0% and "I am clear about what the company is trying to achieve" rose from 77.9% to 94%.

NAHL Group plc took home the award for **'Best recognition strategy'** at The Engagement Excellence Awards 2018.



Best wellbeing strategy & Grand Prix

The Hyde Group launch extensive wellbeing initiative which sees employees state they are more aware of their employers commitment to their health, have noticed a decrease in their stress levels and an increase in their productivity

The company

Like most in the social housing sector, The Hyde Group find themselves in an increasingly competitive market, which requires attracting and retaining talent whilst getting value for money. And with the business success focussed on customer service, The Hyde Group looked to bridge the gap between employee wellbeing and customer positivity.

The challenge

Operating in the increasingly competitive environment of social housing, attracting and retaining the best employees whilst still getting value for money is critical to The Hyde Group. Especially when the success of its business is based on the exemplary, 24/7 customer service when managing 50,000 social homes with over 100,000 customers. With employee positivity and customer service inextricably linked, The Hyde Group knew it needed to focus on the wellbeing of its workforce above all else.

The Hyde Group's team faced three main challenges in increasing employee wellbeing – budget, communication and engagement. With a limited budget, the team was quick to exhaust all of the free wellbeing resources which they could offer in-house, and were out of ideas.

The approach

To give the wellbeing approach a greater focus, The Hyde Group split its wellbeing offering into four main pillars – LiveWell, CopeWell, WorkWell, and SpendWell. LiveWell focussed on promoting physical health and healthy lifestyle choices through healthy lunches, free fruit, BMI and blood pressure checks, as well as a step challenge and Cycle to Work scheme to keep people active. CopeWell focussed on the support available for employees during difficult times at home or at work. This included an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) with 24/7 confidential advice on matters from financial and legal to medical and counselling.

WorkWell focusses on giving employees a positive working environment and a sustainable work-life balance by providing clarity on flexible working, sabbaticals, and volunteering days. SpendWell focusses on raising financial education across The Hyde Group, as well as using Reward Gateway's employee discount and technology net salary deduction benefit, SmartTech™, to make employees' money go further.

The Hyde Group knew that keeping its wellbeing offering fresh was key to its retention strategy. This included the organisation using innovative Vitamin D health checks linked to the principle that a lack of sunlight could impact performance levels, as well as an annual step challenge with a cash prize for the winning team. On top of this, a free mortgage broker and money advice tool were made available to employees.

The results

Wellbeing is one of the more notoriously difficult offerings to measure the success of, and The Hyde Group chose to measure success based on how employees reported feeling from the initiatives being provided.

To do this, The Hyde Group conducted a wellness survey to assess the impact of the annual step challenge, with the results showing 57% of employees who took part saying they are now more aware of the organisations commitment to health and wellbeing, with 62% saying they have seen a decrease in their stress levels either at home or at work, and 48% saying that they have felt an increase in their productivity and concentration.

Compounding this, The Hyde Group's team saw a reduction in absenteeism across the workforce which – when combined with flexible working also put in place – has had a positive benefit to the overall business performance.



The Hyde Group took home 'Best wellbeing strategy' and the prestigious 'Grand Prix: Best of the Best' at The Engagement Excellence Awards 2018.

Reward Gateway is proud to partner with so many incredible companies committed to employee engagement, and The Engagement Excellence Awards allow us to bring together hundreds of like-minded HR professionals to recognise and share their successes. These awards are only made possible by the amazing work of a global community of HR professionals who live and breathe the challenges and benefits of employee engagement every day. Like the “roadies” who allow the true stars to shine, we’re pleased to play a part in supporting all of your efforts, and thankful to be working together in making the world a better place to work.

Best wishes,

Doug Butler

Doug Butler,
CEO
Reward Gateway



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