



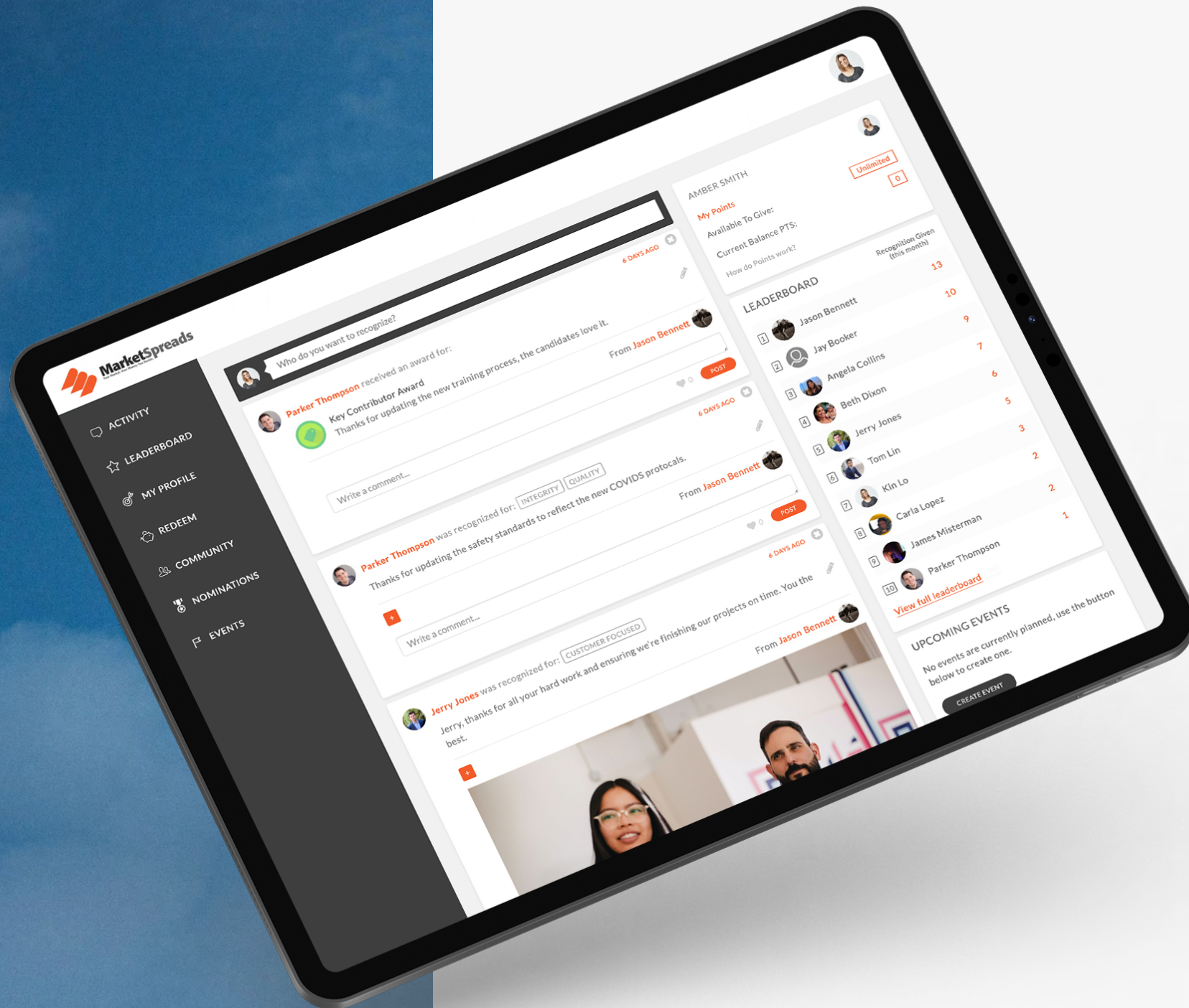
# Employee Recognition and Rewards Playbook

## How to Engage Employees and Boost Productivity

Any business can improve recruitment and retention by utilizing the power of employee recognition and rewards. This playbook will show you how.

## You'll learn these crucial steps:

- Understand the Importance of Employee Rewards and Recognition
- Recognize the Link Between Employee Engagement and Company Profitability
- Secure Support from Top Management
- Learn from Companies with Successful Programs
- Build a Rewards and Recognition Program Customized for Your Company's Needs
- Watch Your Employees Achieve their Goals as Productivity and Profits Increase
- Track the Effectiveness of Your Program
- Take Your Business to the Next Level of Success



**Jessie Smith**  
5 Years of Service  
Congrats on your five years of service!

**Marion:**  
I can't believe it's already been 5 years. Thanks for all the mentorship and support.

**Steve:**  
It's awesome working with you. Customer support team appreciates all your help!



## Why You Need A Recognition and Rewards Program - That Works

In today's challenging job market, recruiting and retaining top talent can be a full-time job for a busy HR department.

The competition is fierce, and your resources are limited. But the price of losing employees - or not getting them in the first place - can be significantly higher. Think of this as your NFL draft, and you want the first-round pick. When you don't get that pick, it means those employees you want on your team are playing for the opposing side. In sports, that means lost games. In business, that means lost profits.

### **Chances are, you already know this.**

Studies show that employee retention continues to top the list of challenges faced by HR departments - cited by nearly half (46%) of the HR professionals surveyed, according to the Society for Human Resources Management. That's nearly twice as many as cited retention in 2012, a reflection of a strengthening economy with a tightening job market. That challenge is followed closely by the related issues of employee engagement and recruitment.

It's no wonder the vast majority of recruiters - 83%, or more than eight out of every 10 - say that acquiring talent is the No. 1 priority at their company. At the same time, employees say the culture of their workplace is just as important - and sometimes more important - than the size of their paycheck.

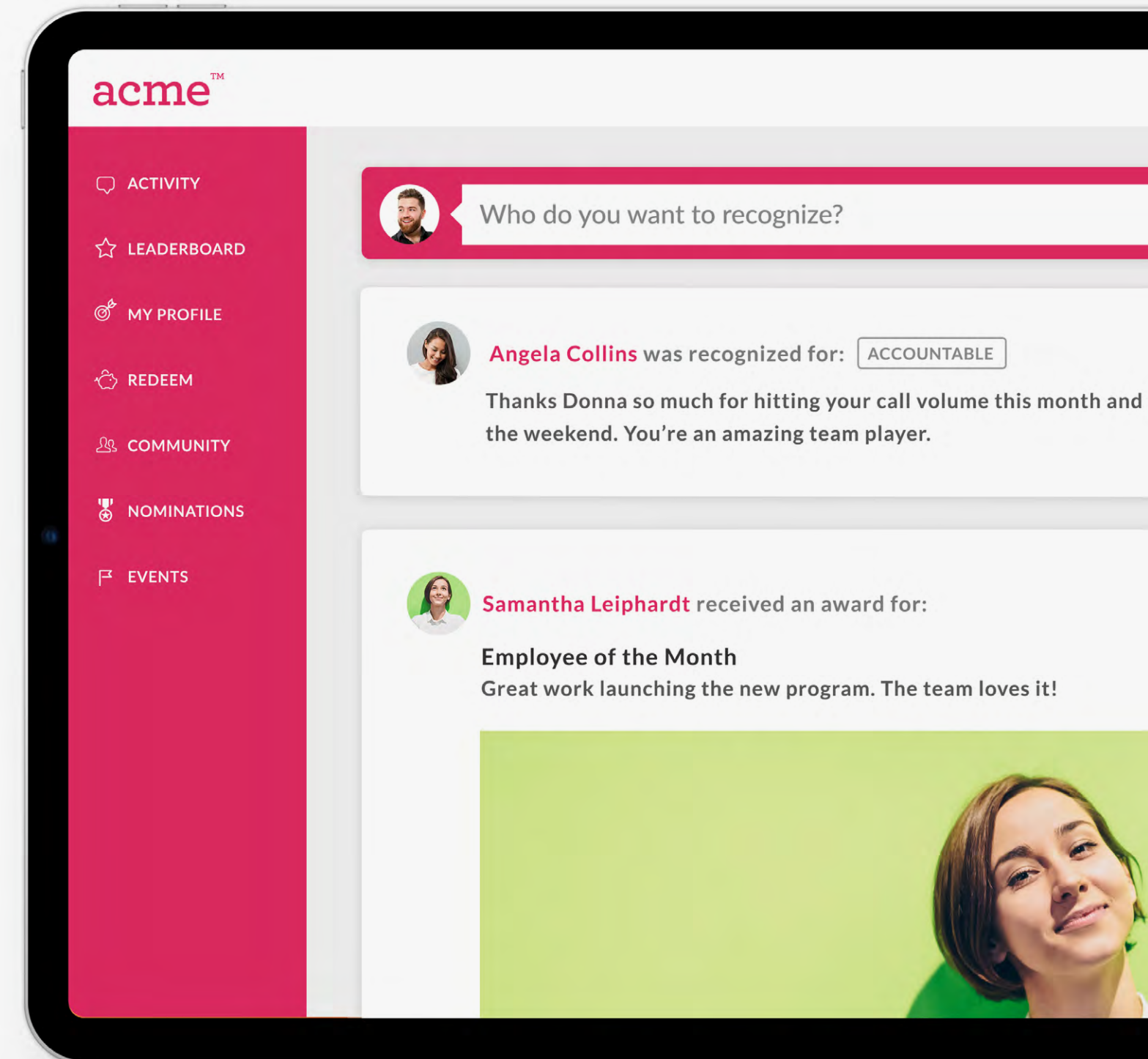
## Employee Engagement Impacts the Bottom Line

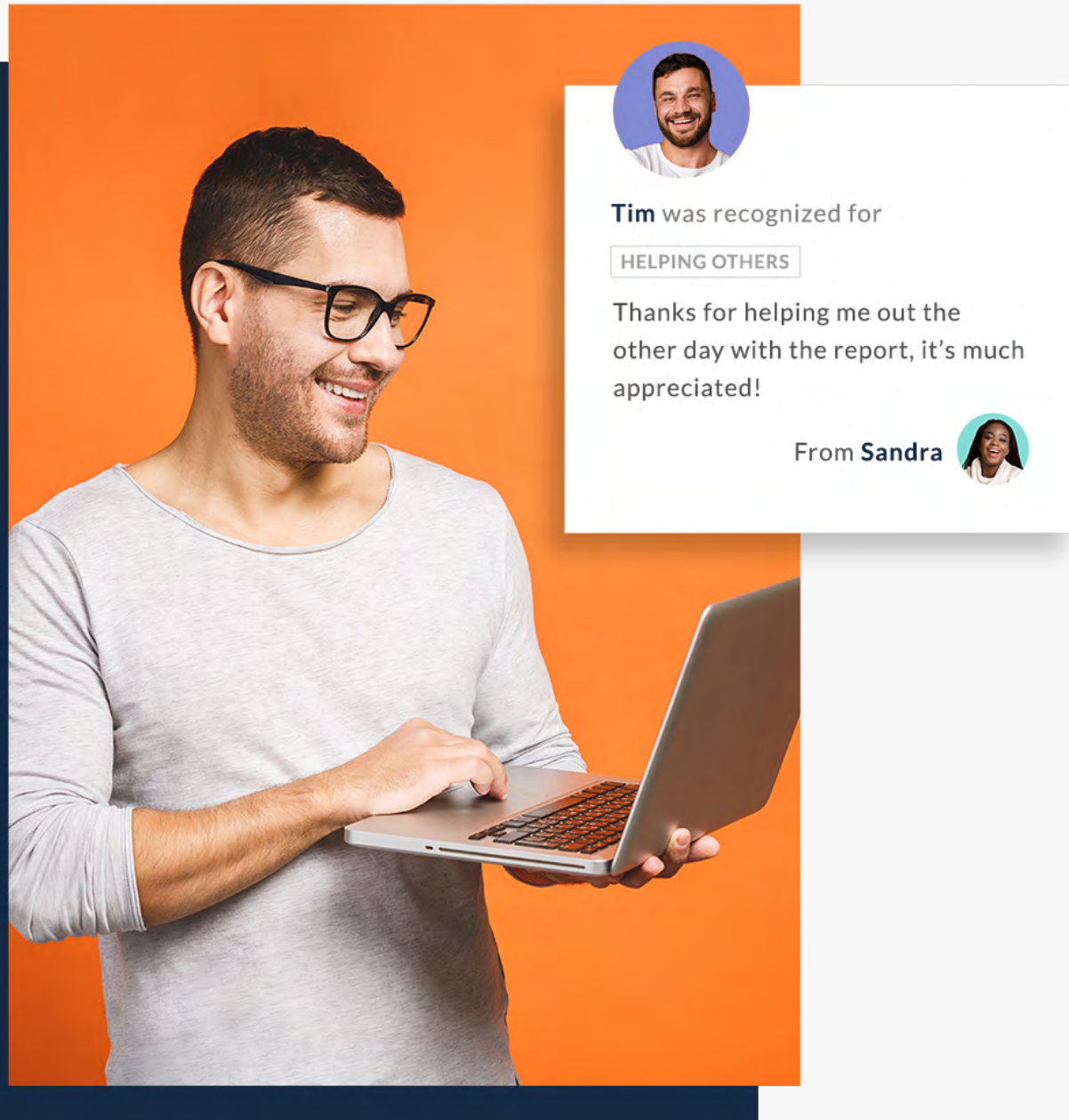
Researchers at Gallup found the No. 1 reason people leave their jobs is because they don't feel appreciated.

Entrepreneur Richard Branson understands this. He attributes his success to putting his employees first. "It should go without saying, if the person who works at your company is 100 percent proud of the brand and you give them the tools to do a good job and they are treated well, they're going to be happy," Branson explained. And he's not the only one who understands the positive impact that approach can have on your business.

Here are some compelling findings from Gallup's annual State of the American Workplace that help put the changing workplace into context:

- Only one in three workers strongly agrees that they received recognition or praise for doing good work in the past seven days.
  - Nearly 70% percent of workers are not engaged.
- Companies with the highest rates of engagement experience these benefits:
- 21% higher profitability.
  - 20% higher sales.
  - 17% higher productivity.
  - 70% fewer employee safety incidents.
  - 41% lower absenteeism.
  - 24% lower turnover.





## Why does this matter?

Because that same Gallup survey found that employees who don't feel adequately recognized are twice as likely to quit in the next year. In short, increasing employee engagement can reduce turnover and absenteeism at the same time it increases productivity and quality.

Offering an employee rewards program benefits not only your team, but your company culture - which ultimately translates into the bottom line. Recognizing the link between engagement and productivity is a hallmark of successful bosses and profitable businesses. Studies have shown [the value of rewarding your employees](#). When you boost employee engagement, you reap the rewards in a positive atmosphere, increased productivity, and longer retention.

Keep in mind that Millennials are evolving the workplace, changing its structure and its rules. You need [creative policies](#) to keep these younger workers motivated. It's worth the effort and the investment because they already account for [more than one-third](#) - the largest share - of the workforce.

All of this may sound daunting. But Patty McCord, who served as chief talent officer at Netflix, explained how HR departments succeed not by handing out t-shirts or other empty gestures, but by [helping the company succeed](#).

*"Instead of cheerleading, people in my profession should think of themselves as businesspeople. What's good for the company? How do we communicate that to employees? How can we help every worker understand what we mean by high performance?"*

That's exactly what the Bucketlist program does. It rewards employees for the work they do that's good for the company. And those rewards are meaningful because they're selected by the employees themselves, creating precisely the kind of authentic and creative culture that top talent is looking for.

## How To Get Management Buy-In

The professionals in the HR Department may be fully on board with the need for, and value of, employee rewards and recognition. But what about the folks in the C-suite? You know it will boil down to one basic question: What's the ROI? In essence, how does this help or hurt the bottom line?

Luckily, the answer is straightforward and backed by tons of research. Point out these scientifically sound statistics for getting executive buy-in.

First, there's research by the Society for Human Resources Management showing the benefits of employee recognition programs. When those programs are tied to organizational values, the benefits become even greater with 90% of those surveyed saying they boosted employee engagement.

Among other findings for the programs tied to core values:

**70%** said the program delivered a strong ROI

**88%** said it instilled & reinforced corporate values

**75%** said it increased employee productivity

**80%** said it helped maintain a strong employer brand

**71%** said it helped retain employees

Then there's additional research that continues to turn up similarly positive results for how employee reward and recognition programs benefit both workers and their companies:

- Deloitte's annual [Global Human Capital Trends](#) research found that culture (86%) and engagement (85%) are top concerns for executives.
- That's in line with other Deloitte research that found organizations with recognition programs which are highly effective at enabling employee engagement had 31% lower voluntary turnover than organizations with ineffective recognition programs.
- When [Gallup researchers](#) looked at companies that developed their employees' strengths, they found such programs could boost not only engagement levels, but profits up to 29% and sales up to 19% - numbers that corroborated the advantages in the same areas that come from increased employee engagement.
- A [Harvard Business Review study](#) found that employee engagement has become a top priority for business executives because "they recognize that a highly engaged workforce can increase innovation, productivity, and bottom-line performance while reducing costs related to hiring and retention in highly competitive talent markets."
- A WorldatWork report found that 46% of senior managers view recognition programs as an investment rather than an expense. And that's exactly what they are - an investment in your employees is an investment in your business.

You may be wondering what a typical program looks like in real life, in the everyday working world. We've got some success stories to show you.

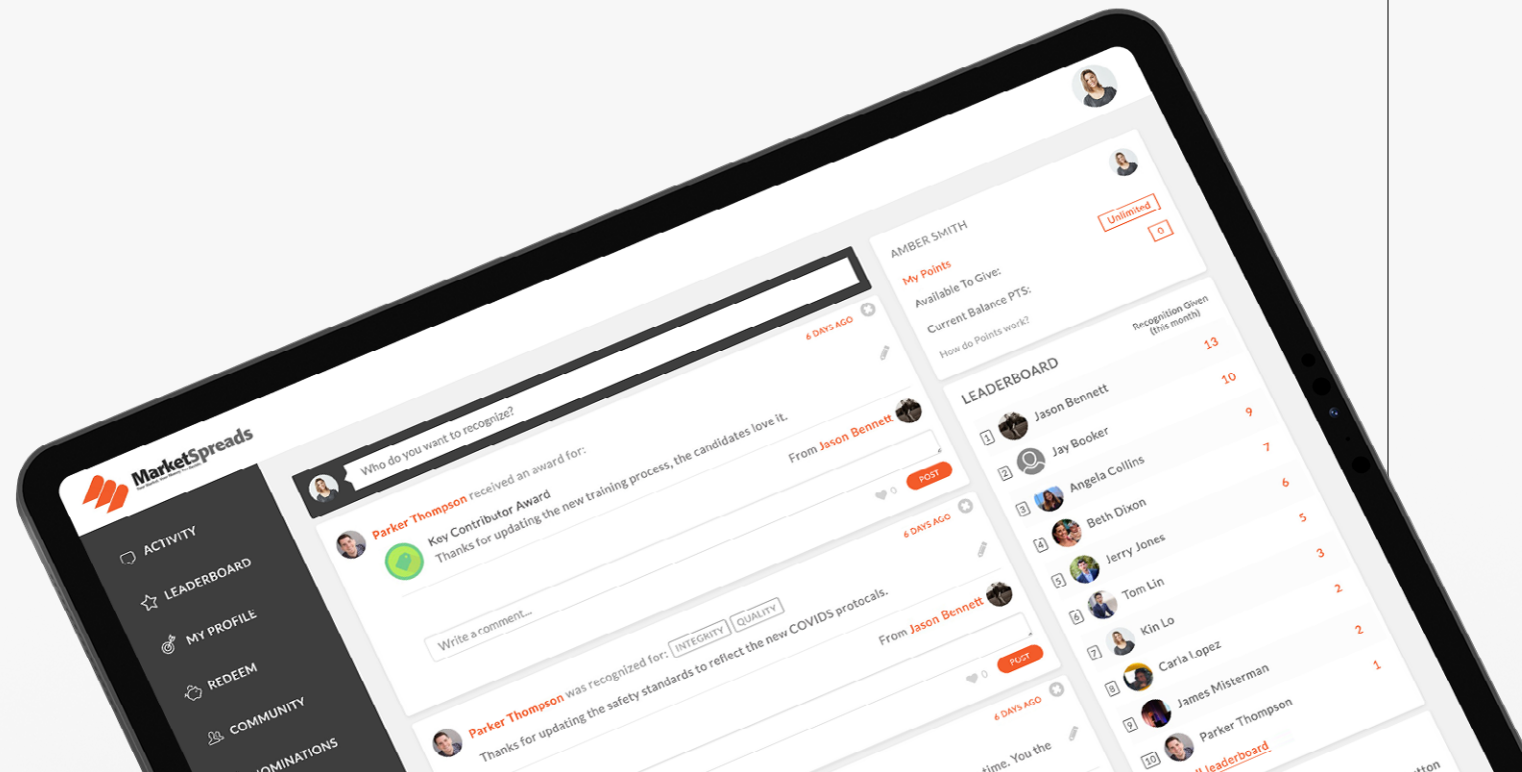
## These Companies Do It Right

While more than 80% of companies have some kind of employee recognition or reward program, they vary widely in terms of what that means. There are plenty of coffee mugs, gold watches, and employee-of-the-month plaques. But some companies, renowned for their culture, get more creative in the ways they thank their employees for a job well done.

Take Zappos, for instance. The online retailer is well known for its [culture](#) based on selling “happiness,” as CEO Tony Hsieh likes to describe it. And no small part of that attitude comes from the [peer-to-peer employee rewards programs](#) that help build a positive team spirit.

*“Zappos was built on the simple premise that to have happy customers, we need happy employees. To have happy employees, we need a great company culture. The success of Zappos demonstrates the linkage between company culture and employee engagement to company success. Our motto of ‘Deliver Happiness’ for customers and employees was also good for our business and investors”*

Not everyone is as large as Zappos, but there are plenty of ways companies of all sizes can make employees happy so they can make your customers happy.



For Damon Klotz, the Head of Community at Culture Amp, success ties into creating the kind of culture that makes employees want to come work with you and keep working with you.

*“Brand is a promise to the customer, but culture is a delivery of that promise. So, the best brands in the world are driven by the people they have with them.”*

Brian Scudmore, Founder and CEO of O2E Brands baked a philosophy of rewarding employees into his [powerhouse franchising company](#).

*“Encouraging people to dream - even on the job - is a powerful way to engage staff, boost morale, and create stronger teams”*

he explained in a column for Inc. magazine. All of his employees come up with life goals, then they work toward making that happen.

*“We help each other tick a few dreams off our bucket lists. It’s not rocket science, but it has transformed our company.”*

## Take a look at how other companies have joined O2E in using Bucketlist to integrate employee rewards and recognition into their culture:

### Gem Hospitality Group:

After researching ways to recruit and retain great people, CEO Nick Popoff found Bucketlist to be “the best tool I’ve found.”

*“Bucketlist is a culture-building platform,” he observed. “It’s a great way to align staff members around values and key activities. It’s also a ton of fun.”*

### Advisor Websites:

To keep employee engagement high, the tech company was looking for a tool that not only would fire up the staff but also compliment their existing communication system. Luckily, Bucketlist is designed to seamlessly integrate with Slack and other workplace applications. “It was, by far, the most popular program we’ve had this year,” explained Director of Culture Alex Wingert.

*“It was adopted very quickly by our team since it worked so well within our existing structure of recognition,” Wingert recounted. “It’s working well. I love the fact we have a leaderboard for peer-recognized core values.”*

These aren’t the only companies changing their culture. Click the logos to read the full case study below:

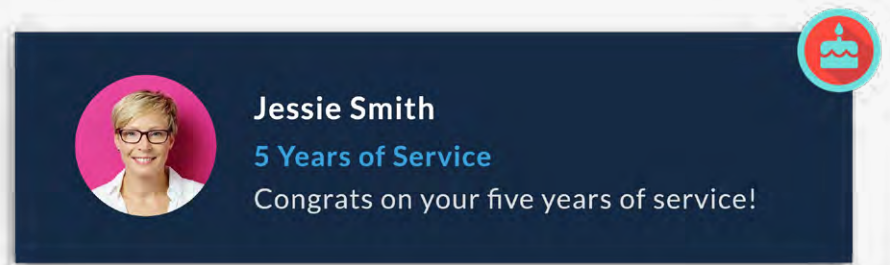


Ready to transform your company, too -- by starting your own program to get employees engaged, increase productivity and boost your bottom line? Let us give you some step-by-step advice on how to make that happen.

Find Out More about Bucketlist’s Employee Recognition & Rewards Program

<https://bucketlistrewards.com/request-a-demo/>





## Build an Effective Employee Rewards Program Tailored to Your Needs

You've got the goals and you're ready to roll out a rewards and recognition program for your staff. We'll help you with the specifics of how to make that happen. It will take some thoughtful planning, but it doesn't need to be difficult. Here are 4 best practices to keep in mind to help you create an effective employee rewards program:

### 1. Clear Vision:

Start with a [thorough plan](#) for recognizing milestones and achievements. No details are too big or too small when you're outlining how the program will work. Then communicate that plan effectively to your employees, top to bottom. Don't stop with the initial announcement: make communication an ongoing effort.

### 2. Relevant Rewards:

Get input from your employees about what they really want. To be effective, this recognition needs to be honest, authentic, and tailored to each individual. You need to know what makes it memorable and meaningful for each member of your team: an experience, a VIP treatment, or perks and discounts. Use your imagination – and your team's imaginations – to design a program that fits your environment. And keep in mind that studies show [money is not the best way](#) to reward excellent work.

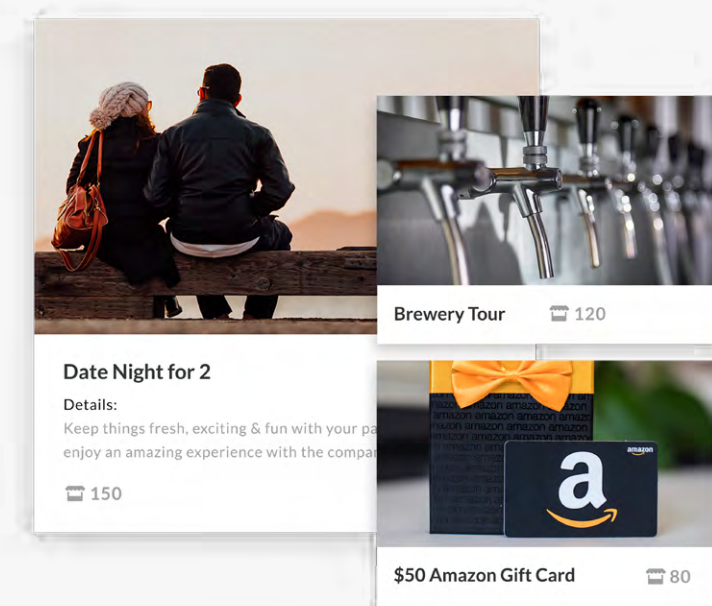
### 3. Encourage Participation:

Make sure everyone buys into the program, from the top management all the way through the company structure to the front-line workers. This will help you build a community atmosphere in the workplace. This is where you have the chance to demonstrate to employees how their performance affects [the company's mission](#), so everyone understands they're part of a larger team effort.

### 4. Timely Implementation:

Offer your rewards in a fair and timely way. Don't make your people wait for an artificial deadline, such as the end of the calendar or fiscal year. Make the program a regular part of your company culture. You can achieve this by using technology to your advantage. Use a single platform for all your incentive programs, whether that means recognizing birthdays or earning rewards. This creates consistency by putting everyone on the same page.

There are many forms recognition and rewards can come in, and money isn't everything. We've got some creative ideas to get you started.





## Real World Application: Here's How It Works

Now that you've got the framework in place, it's essential to reward your employees in a way that matters. With Bucketlist, recognition can come from managers or from peers. You can create custom awards or go with existing ideas like innovation awards, sales awards, or core value awards.

And when it comes to cashing in the rewards they've earned, the sky's the limit. Employees can choose from thousands of options or create their own reward - their way of checking items off that bucket list of life experiences.

That's exactly what's been happening at Advisor Websites. The company customized the rules of its recognition and reward program, so employees get \$200 to spend towards their Bucketlist items every year.

What have Advisor website's employees been doing with their rewards? "Soooooo much stuff," Wingert happily reported.

*"Float planes, helicopters, Vegas adventures, snorkelling, bungee jumping, whale watching, wine touring, snowmobiling, skiing in Whistler -- the list goes on and on and on. People love the recognition and the ability to knock things off their bucket list."*

A few specific examples from the folks who reaped the rewards:

- Product Manager Chris Li loved it when the whole gang chose to unleash their inner Robin Hood: "We decided as a group that we wanted to try out something that most of us haven't done before - archery. It was awesome to learn a fun new skill as a group. Great bonding."
- For Customer Success Team Lead Parker Thompson, it was all about getting behind the wheel of a supercar: "This experience was unreal. One of my favorite sounds in the world is a car engine shifting gears and there's nothing like a convertible Ferrari shifting gears down the Sea-to-Sky."
- Partner Manager Lester Tiro raved about taking part in the Redbull 400, the kind of team-building event that can be structured around shared employee goals: "This was, hands down, the most fun race I've ever competed in. Over 600 people raced up an Olympic ski jump. It was awesome doing this with my friends at work. An unforgettable experience."

Pulling all this together into a single integrated platform is the key to making a reward and recognition program work for your company. But how do you know if it's really working? We'll help you measure the results.

## Ensure Your Program Works Well: Measure, Act, Repeat

Once you've got a recognition and rewards program in place, you need to be sure it's working the way you want it to work, accomplishing the goals you established for it. You'll want to seek employee feedback and gather measurable data to track the success of your program. The best way to make this happen is utilizing a platform that generates reports so you can easily understand your employee engagement and performance.

Those detailed reports will help you see how your program is performing. They'll easily provide you with insights into employee engagement, satisfaction, budgeting, and overall performance. Without this data, you won't be able to clearly understand how well it's working or accurately calculate the ROI. [Measuring the program](#) is necessary to determine its effectiveness.

When it comes the survey design and implementation, keep three words in mind: measure, act, repeat:

- Phrase survey questions carefully because the way they're worded sends a message to your employees.
- Address any concerns raised in the survey because managers need to build trust with their employees.
- Utilize larger engagement surveys once or twice a year for a look at the bigger picture.
- Once you've measured and received the results, keep measuring to make sure the program continues to work.

Don't worry - you won't be doing this all by yourself. You receive full training and ongoing support. We'll work with you to define your goals, design your rewards and recognition program, and train your team. We'll also provide monthly account management and support so you know how your program is performing at all times.





## Take Your Business to the Next Level

Ultimately, offering a rewards program can help you create a cycle of success for your business. Companies with highly engaged workforces [outperform their peers by 147%](#) in earnings per share. Rewarding your workforce creates a positive company culture of engaged employees, which is the key to business success and profitability.

Frankly, it would be counterproductive not to implement your own recognition and rewards program when the data are so unambiguous about the benefits - for your company's culture, your employees' productivity, and your bottom-line profitability.

It's time to take the next step toward overcoming the obstacles to success. We're here to help you exceed your business expectations and reach your professional goals.

Contact us to learn how to build a customized high-performance recognition and rewards program.

[Find Out More about Bucketlist's Employee Recognition & Rewards Program](#)



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