



Buyer's Guide to Employee Recognition

9 Questions to Ask Recognition Providers

Reward and recognition providers have evolved into a much more strategic and comprehensive role when it comes to leading culture change and providing an exceptional employee experience.

It can be difficult to know where to begin when selecting an employee recognition provider. In no particular order, here are nine questions you should be asking prospective partners to ensure a best practice recognition program.

1. Are your client satisfaction scores, customer retention rates, and company vitals readily available?

Gaining a deeper understanding of what a recognition provider actually does for their customers and finding out what people are saying about them online can tell you what kind of employee experience they are capable of delivering. Anyone can put a logo on a website, but things like Net Promoter Scores, crowd-sourced reviews, and other bellwethers like customer retention rates and steady financials are always helpful to ensure you are dealing with a complete strategic provider.

68% of B2B customers prefer to research independently online. (Forrester)

2. How do you ensure a positive employee experience?

Deloitte Insights found that 80% of executives rated employee experience as “important” or “very important”, but only 22% say they are excellent at building one.¹ This is where an experienced recognition provider can help by offering ongoing support and improvement. Strong account management models, regular business reviews with program enhancement suggestions, thought leadership, and satisfaction guarantees for employees are all positive signs.



¹Deloitte Insights - The employee experience: culture, engagement, and beyond (<https://www2.deloitte.com/insights/us/en/focus/human-capital-trends/2017/improving-the-employee-experience-culture-engagement.html>)

3. How do you account for recognizing all generations in the current workforce and beyond?

Every generation of worker needs to feel included and motivated, which is why variety and catering to generational tastes are core design principles for any best-practice recognition program. Make sure you're working with somebody who's active in understanding the needs of everyone in your workforce. Are the rewards, tools, and engagement methods offered balanced to appeal to everyone from Boomers to Gen-Y, and are they adaptable to future workforce trends? Simply put, the widest appeal encourages the most participation.

4. What is your strategy for recognizing remote or offline workforces?

The pandemic has shifted the way we work, and the trend to work remotely or in a hybrid model continues to grow. In fact, 48% of people polled in a study by Owl Labs and Global Workplace Analytics said they would look for another job if they could no longer work remotely. In addition to remote workers, companies must also consider how to connect with field and service workers who are constantly moving. How a provider reaches these employees is critical to providing a consistent experience. Ideally, employees should be able to give and receive all forms of corporate recognition from a mobile device.



80% of full-time workers expect to work from home at least three times per week.

Companies must rethink their workplace culture to be more inclusive of remote and hybrid work - this is the new normal.

(Owl Labs and Global Workplace Analytics)

5. What social recognition experience will employees receive?

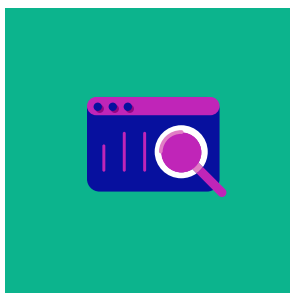
Recognition has always been a social experience, and the rise of social networking has raised the bar for providers. Every program should include some sort of online social component that leverages the strengths of social networking to encourage cross-departmental recognition and help get senior leaders in the mix. The more ways employees can share interdepartmental praise, the better.

6. How do you promote and market the program to employees?

There are many employees without company email, and paperless reward initiatives are more popular than ever. Best practice providers have marketing strategies to suit every workforce situation, with promotional campaigns customized to each program's unique goals, and the capability to produce both physical and digital collateral for on and offline campaigns.

7. What kind of experience do you provide global employees?

If you have a global presence, your recognition provider should have a supply and distribution logistics in place to ensure you won't get hit with excessive duties, tariffs, or shipping costs for recognizing workers in foreign locales. Other details like appropriate copy translations and region-specific gifts deliver a consistent experience and universal appeal.



54% of U.S. companies have some foreign market involvement, with 29% of them operating in at least two international regions.

8. What steps do you take to ensure our data will be secure?

We often take for granted the fact our data is secure in the cloud when it is in fact quite vulnerable, unless specific controls and precautions are taken by the providers handling it. This is why it's a good idea to find out what sort of industry certifications and data security standards your recognition provider has in place before turning over your employees' data, and ensure compliance with universally recognized privacy laws in different global regions, such as the newly instituted GDPR standard for providers in the UK.



According to the Identity Theft Resource Center's (ITRC) data breach analysis, there were **1,291** data breaches through September 2021. This number indicates a **17% increase** in data breaches in comparison to breaches in 2020, which was 1,108.

9. What other services do you offer to enhance the employee experience?

Many recognition providers are single-solution providers. Asking about additional services and rewards outside of standard service- and achievement-based programs is a good way to ensure you are dealing with a single-source provider capable of maximizing consistency and cost-saving benefits. The ability to create custom touchpoints like company stores, branded apparel/uniforms, company wide events, and employee giveaways are the hallmarks of a single-source provider and can greatly enhance the employee experience.



Selecting an Employee Recognition Provider

Whenever you're in the market for a new recognition provider, keep these nine questions in your pocket to get the most out of your investment and guarantee you are getting a program that meets the recognition needs of the modern workforce. A little curiosity can go a long way, and help you deliver a winning employee experience. Let us know if you need any help!



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