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PERFORMANCE

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HOW TOP WORKPLACES
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Next Level Performance: Inspiring Workforce

By Eileen Singh



Dave Dittman,
MD

The founder of Next Level Performance, Jim Dittman, always believed that the dynamic between employees and the organization is the key to performance. Having spent several years in corporate life, he set out to build a company that emulates this idea with opportunity and recognition at its very core, delivering world class incentive and engagement programs to foster better employee and organization relationship. Dave Dittman, the organization's Managing Director notes, "Our company, as well as the products and services we create for clients are built on this foundation, and while the tools

and words we use have changed, the fundamentals remain the same." Through the years, Next Level Performance has seen the evolution of the marketplace and ridden the tides of a changing economy. "Today, we are proud to be technologically at the forefront of our industry, through our world-class incentive travel and rewards programs, with sound program design, and award-winning communications," adds Dave. "We know that the work we do every day improves business outcomes for our clients and helps people within those organizations reach higher and do better." Next Level Performance provides thoughtful program design that moves clients closer to their

objectives, as well as the tools needed to make meaningful recognition and rewards easy and accessible.

Enhanced Employee Engagement

Years of service and peer-to-peer Recognition are the bedrock of any employee engagement program. The company's unique solution is TotalPRO® (Performance Recognition Online) that manages all employee recognition and rewards programs on a single custom-branded software platform. It provides an easy way to integrate these functions with nominations for quarterly or annual awards, bright ideas to capture employee suggestions, and a campaign module for sales, wellness and safety incentive programs. With a modular design, TotalPRO can be set-up quickly, and expanded depending on organizational needs. The platform is branded to represent the client organization's image and messaging, and provides a wide range of rewards options, as well as extensive reporting capability.

Next Level Performance understands that every satisfied customer begins with an engaged employee. "We provide the guidance, communications, and tools to inspire people towards their best performance, and to recognize a job well done. We collaborate with our clients to build cultures where people thrive," says Dave.

Next Level Performance has designed TotalPRO to be the hub



for the incentive and engagement activities of an organization. From the social stream on the landing page to modules driving specific behaviors the platform act as a central resource for all employees and their managers. Through TotalPRO, teammates can recognize one another with eCards, and applaud or comment. This creates social buzz around the great work done on the team, beyond what might normally be visible to HR or management. Managers can use eCards and Spot Awards to recognize teammates in the moment, when it is most meaningful to employees to be recognized for their efforts. Depending on business rules, managers are typically able to award points to reinforce the behavior and to share the benefits of the success.

TotalPRO's reporting tools allow HR managers to access a standard suite of reports or to build their own, unique reporting in an easy and intuitive way. And the Rewards Mall provides the important element of choice, which is known to be an effective driver of motivation, since it taps into personal aspirations. Additionally, the formal nomination module of TotalPRO gives everyone in the organization a forum to acknowledge those who have gone above and beyond. This also flags up the best practices—and best employees—through the firm. TotalPRO offers both automated and built-in communications, as well as provides the tools for personalized, in-the-moment communication between colleagues.

A regional financial services company approached Next Level Performance during the recession, to implement a Values in Practice (VIP) recognition program. The initial goal was to increase employee engagement at an unsettled time. Over the years, the program has grown to reflect the



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evolving marketplace and to continue to deliver on the organization's recognition and engagement strategy. Today, the organization has peer-to-peer recognition with eCards, and social stream that creates a constant flow of appreciation and applause for a job well done. Current participation is 92 percent, with the average employee receiving recognition multiple times throughout the year, from peers or managers. The program

helps the client achieve their goal of a corporate culture that inspires excellence and encourages retention.

Course of Action

Next Level Performance practices what they preach. The company knows that their business succeeds because every member of the team is committed to delivering on the brand promise. "We help people Achieve More. And we do that here in our own company, using the same philosophy and solutions we offer to our clients. Everything we do is rooted in our core values which we refer to as CARES, which stands for Collaboration, Accountability, Respect, Ethical Behavior, and Service," adds Dave. "If there is one thing we have learned in our 40 years of delivering relevant and exciting solutions to our clients it is that it is essential to constantly monitor the marketplace. It is not enough to be a great partner to our clients, if we expect to rest on our successes. It is our responsibility to them and to our own team to continually strive to be better," says Dave.

In the next few weeks, Next Level Performance will be launching a new social recognition platform, Applaudit®, which will take their clients' programs to the next level. The new product is at the front edge of technology in the employee engagement industry, and Next Level Performance is looking forward to some exciting new possibilities. The company is also looking towards further enhancing their reseller rewards and sales incentive solutions. They are constantly reviewing and updating their existing products, but also developing new approaches and tools for the industries they serve. "Our goal is always to provide the best available solutions, and to provide exceptional value," concludes Dave. 