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Choosing the Right Employee Recognition Tool

As you compare employee recognition tools, there are several key categories of features that you should research and compare. The following charts will help you evaluate each platform, ensuring your final selection is the right fit for your business.

Directions: Review each checklist and compare potential employee recognition tools side-by-side. Once your comparison exercise is complete, make a note of what is missing for each platform. Get clear on which features are critical for your business and which features align with your goals for employee recognition.

Recognition Programs	Software Name: _____	Software Name: _____	Software Name: _____
Nomination-based Awards and Badges Customize Awards and Badges for nomination awards like Employee of the Month, CEO awards, and more.	☐	☐	☐
Automated Milestone Awards/Service Awards Celebrate employees on the days that are important to them (birthdays, anniversaries, and more).	☐	☐	☐
Challenges, Achievements, & Incentives Build opportunities for challenges, achievements, and incentives within your recognition program.	☐	☐	☐
Peer-to-Peer Recognition Allow employees to recognize their peers instead of waiting for management to notice good work.	☐	☐	☐
Employee & Group QR Codes Use QR codes for appreciation on the go or deskless team members.	☐	☐	☐
Public (or Private) Recognition Make employee recognition public for everyone to see or keep recognition private, based on employee preferences.	☐	☐	☐
Integration of Company Values Tie recognition rewards to your company values to reinforce positive behaviors.	☐	☐	☐
Bulk Recognition Recognize more than one employee at a time	☐	☐	☐
Spot Recognitions Celebrate employees who go above and beyond with a one-time special recognition.	☐	☐	☐
Service Shoutouts Allow customers and patrons to recognize your employees for outstanding service.	☐	☐	☐
Value Flexibility/Currency Configuration Choose to give points or dollars and configure your program currency value based on your company's needs.	☐	☐	☐

🎁 Rewards and Gifting

	Software Name: _____	Software Name: _____	Software Name: _____
Gift Cards Allow employees to choose from a huge library of gift cards specific to their country.	☐	☐	☐
Cash Outs Offer cash payouts as a reward from PayPal or Venmo.	☐	☐	☐
Charitable Donations Choose from pre-approved charities or create an internal cause so employees can donate their reward dollars.	☐	☐	☐
Automated Employee Gifting Options Gift a shopping spree, a select number of items from a catalog, or specifically curated items.	☐	☐	☐
Redemption-Only Gifting Offer solutions for employees who only receive gifts/rewards and won't be included in the recognition platform (part-time employees, contractors, etc).	☐	☐	☐
External Gifting Send gifts outside your organization (non-FT-Es/employees such as vendors, customers, etc).	☐	☐	☐
Amazon Shopping Allow employees to select rewards from Amazon, and pay no markup fees.	☐	☐	☐
Inventory Management & Storefront Controls Maintain full control over store inventory, connected stores, and the redemption experience.	☐	☐	☐
Connected Shopping Sites Add any Shopify-supported store to your employee rewards marketplace and filter by local vendors.	☐	☐	☐
Seamless Checkout Experience Offer a quick and easy checkout experience for employees.	☐	☐	☐
International & Local Fulfillment Allow all of your employees around the world to shop and have rewards shipped at a low cost.	☐	☐	☐

	Software Name: ⚙️ _____	Software Name: ⚙️ _____	Software Name: ⚙️ _____
Custom Rewards Catalogs Curate rewards for specific programs or groups.	☐	☐	☐
Lifestyle Spending Accounts Offer a lifestyle spending account for wellness initiatives (physical, mental, or financial).	☐	☐	☐
Rewards Dollars Tied to a Debit Card Get instant access to reward dollars and spend it where Visa is accepted.	☐	☐	☐
Integrated Swag Leverage a swag partner, connect it to your rewards platform, or get done-for-you swag.	☐	☐	☐
Flexible Redemption Enable employees to decide how they want to spend rewards balances; gift cards, swag, etc.	☐	☐	☐
Custom Rewards Personalize rewards and offer custom options, like an extra day of PTO.	☐	☐	☐
Travel & Experiences/Perks Offer travel and experience packages and consumer discounts.	☐	☐	☐

🤝 **Social Recognition Platform**	Software Name: ⚙️ _____	Software Name: ⚙️ _____	Software Name: ⚙️ _____
Social Feed See a social feed filled with news and recognitions (with a filter to show recency and relevancy).	☐	☐	☐
Employee Profiles See information about each employee including key interests and bios, birthdays, hire dates, and more.	☐	☐	☐
Organization Chart View a complete org chart for your business.	☐	☐	☐
Personality Test/Profiles Take a personality assessment, view your personality profile, and get guidance about interacting with your colleagues.	☐	☐	☐

Global Search Find what you need to know with a comprehensive search of your recognition platform.	☐	☐	☐
Easy Setup and Controls Get started quickly with a user-friendly interface and setup process.	☐	☐	☐
HRIS Integrations Integrate with your HRIS for a seamless recognition experience.	☐	☐	☐
SSO Implement SSO for increased security.	☐	☐	☐
Collaboration Tool Integrations Integrate with your existing collaboration tools.	☐	☐	☐
Custom People Organization Build out a custom people organization with user groups and custom rules.	☐	☐	☐
Budget and Funding Management Create, run, and fund multiple budgets for your people programs and see comprehensive burnup reporting.	☐	☐	☐
Reports, Dashboards, and Analytics Get insights into recognition received per person, by day, given per person, and more.	☐	☐	☐
AI Leverage AI for reporting insights, industry benchmark comparisons, and recommendations for improvement.	☐	☐	☐

Employee recognition doesn't just affect your recognition & rewards program. In fact, elements of employee recognition, rewards, and experience bleed over into nearly every HR initiative and people program you're likely running. To maximize the benefits of your people programs and increase engagement, finding a recognition tool that also incorporates internal communication tools is a game changer.

💬 Internal Communications

	Software Name: _____	Software Name: _____	Software Name: _____
Employee and Company Spaces Create spaces for specific groups of employees (e.g. key programs, initiatives, etc.).	☐	☐	☐
Resources & Assets Create, manage, and store all of your relevant resources by libraries in context of their programs.	☐	☐	☐
Resource Insights Pin or highlight specific resources for the company, specific teams, special groups, etc.	☐	☐	☐
Event Management Host events in context of their programs and make sure employees are always up to date on critical information.	☐	☐	☐
Announcements Keep everyone on the same page for upcoming events, messages, and company information.	☐	☐	☐
Highlights Celebrate a team, event, or a certain individual (new hires, team lunch, etc.).	☐	☐	☐
Post Scheduling Schedule a future message or announcement.	☐	☐	☐
Targeted/Segmented Communication Select who receives specific announcements/ messages.	☐	☐	☐
Post Engagement Insights See engagement insights on posts from HR or the c-suite.	☐	☐	☐
Program-Specific Awards and Challenges Create and manage awards, challenges, and incentives for your people programs.	☐	☐	☐

Beyond employee recognition features and tools to simplify your internal communication efforts, the right recognition tool will also include features that enhance the employee experience. Recognition and streamlined internal communication are critical to building and improving great culture, but to truly understand the impact that your programs are making—look for a tool that will also help improve your employee listening skills.

Employee Listening	Software Name: _____	Software Name: _____	Software Name: _____
Employee Surveys Send surveys bi-annually, quarterly, and even monthly to keep tabs on employee satisfaction and feedback.	☐	☐	☐
Actionable Insights Learn from employee feedback and take actionable steps to improve your culture.	☐	☐	☐
eNPS Data Gather eNPS results (anonymously) regularly to find out how employees feel about their job and the company.	☐	☐	☐
Pulse Surveys Understand team satisfaction throughout the organization with a quick pulse survey.	☐	☐	☐
Reporting Identify trends, compare against industry benchmarks, and make better-informed decisions to improve employee engagement.	☐	☐	☐
Custom Surveys Increase employee participation in surveys by tailoring the survey to your needs and your employees (surveys can be customized by team, department, or the entire company).	☐	☐	☐

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