CASE STUDY: Gardiner

Listening at Scale: Gardiner Turns Employee Feedback Into A Culture of Recognition

With 12+ years of average tenure already built on strong culture, Gardiner used Recognize's survey tools to close a feedback gap with field associates and boosted field associate participation in recognition by 10.7% within one year.

COMPANY SIZE	INDUSTRY	LOCATIONS	COUNTRY
250+	Building Technology	Solon, Ohio	USA

Logo:



Hero Image:



About the company

Gardiner uses building technology and data to help clients solve facility challenges and create spaces that are safer, more comfortable, and more efficient. Their solutions span HVAC systems, building automation and controls, energy solutions, and fire and safety services. But what sets Gardiner apart is more than their technical expertise, it's their culture. Fifty of their employees have been with the company for 20+ years, and average associate tenure sits above 12 years. That kind of loyalty doesn't happen by accident; it reflects a workplace where people feel valued and want to stay. Still, Gardiner never treats a strong culture as finished business. They're constantly looking for ways to listen better, act faster, and make sure recognition and appreciation reach every associate, including the field teams who don't always have the same access to company communications as office staff.

History of the company

Gardiner has built its reputation on combining deep technical know-how with a genuine commitment to both the clients they serve and the associates who do the work. Over

the years, that dual focus has shaped a workforce known for long tenure and strong internal loyalty, a rare feat in an industry built on field technicians and distributed teams. As the company grew, leadership recognized that maintaining this culture would take more than tradition: it would require real infrastructure for listening to associates and acting on what they heard. That mindset set the stage for how Gardiner approaches employee recognition as a deliberate, data-informed part of how they run the business.

Why the company chose Recognize

About a year after launching Recognize, Gardiner wanted to move beyond gut feeling and understand whether recognition was actually landing with associates in a meaningful way. The challenge was clear: they had no consistent, formal channel for gathering feedback, and that gap was most pronounced among field associates, who don't see the same emails or platform notifications office staff do every day.

Recognize's survey tool gave Gardiner exactly what they were missing, which was a structured, anonymous way to hear from everyone from the field and office alike. As one team member put it, the automated nudges and reminders made all the difference in reaching field associates who are harder to engage through typical channels. And because Gardiner had never run a formal survey before, the simplicity of the tool mattered. It meant they didn't have to build a communication process from scratch or spend time chasing responses manually.

Beyond the survey itself, Recognize gave Gardiner a way to close the loop. They could compile results, address concerns directly, and post takeaways to their Announcements page so associates could see, in real time, that their feedback led to action. That transparency turned a simple survey into a trust-building exercise, reinforcing that recognition at Gardiner isn't just top-down, but shaped by what associates really say they need.

Results

The survey surfaced a clear, actionable insight: while associates appreciated peer recognition, what they wanted more of was recognition from their direct managers. That finding lines up with Gallup research showing managers account for roughly 70% of the variation in team engagement.

Gardiner used that insight to focus on manager activation. Here’s what Gardiner’s listening process delivered:

- Field associate participation increased by 10.7% compared to the previous year

- High-level survey results were shared company-wide, with top takeaways posted directly to the Recognize Announcements page
- Associate concerns were compiled, addressed, and communicated back. This gave associates visible proof that their input drove change
- Gardiner is now developing a Manager's Recognition Challenge, encouraging managers to recognize at least one direct report per week, to build recognition into managers' regular habits

Gardiner's approach reflects a simple but powerful sequence: listen to employees, identify a practical opportunity, activate managers, and measure the response. It's a model other organizations can follow to turn recognition data into lasting cultural change.

Quotes

Quote #1 – “When we launched Recognize, we wanted to give our associates another way to recognize each other and celebrate the work they do. After using the platform for a while, we wanted to better understand what was working and what we could improve. The survey gave us an opportunity to hear directly from our associates, and it was important to us that we didn't just collect their feedback, but actually share what we learned and use it to make changes.” – Elizabeth Dailey, Gardiner

Quote #2 – “One of the biggest things we learned was that recognition looks different for everyone. Our field associates don't always have the same access to company communications as those working in the office, so we have to be intentional about making sure their voices are heard, too. Seeing field associate participation in recognition increase by 10.7% in one year was encouraging, and it reinforces why continuing to find ways to reach and engage everyone matters.” – Elizabeth Dailey, Gardiner

Quote #3 – “Recognition is about more than sending a High Five or earning points. It's about making sure people know their work is valued and that what they do makes a difference. Our survey showed us that associates want to hear more recognition from their managers, so we're working on ways to make that a more consistent part of our culture. We have a strong foundation at Gardiner, and I think continuing to listen, learn, and make improvements is how we keep building on that.” – Elizabeth Dailey, Gardiner

Company's Recognition Summary

Gardiner has fully integrated Recognize by sending daily recognitions. They have a monthly drawing from the recognitions sent and received to award a CX High Five recipient.

Badge Examples



Be the reason people choose Gardiner.

Every interaction matters whether it's with customers, teammates, or partners. At Gardiner, they go the extra mile, show up with a great attitude, and deliver on their promises.



Awarded to their monthly CX High Five drawing recipient

Gardiner has a monthly drawing of recognitions sent or received each month, with unlimited chances to win. Naturally, this award goes to those who exemplify The Gardiner Way by actively recognizing and being recognized by others.



Always address issues

Gardiner faces challenges head-on rather than ignoring them or hoping they go away. From customer challenges to internal troubleshooting, speaking up and acting shows integrity and care. Addressing issues early builds trust, prevents bigger problems, and keeps things moving in the right direction. They believe great teams solve problems together.

Statistics

Stat #1 – Within one year, field associate recognition participation increased by 10.7%

Stat #2 – About 20% of employees have been with Gardiner for 20+ years

Stat #3 – Gardiner's average associate tenure is 12+ years

In Summary

Gardiner, a building technology and facilities services company known for exceptional employee tenure, wanted to know whether its recognition program was truly resonating with associates, especially those in the field who had fewer natural touchpoints with company communications. Using Recognize's anonymous survey tool, Gardiner created a structured listening channel, then closed the loop by sharing results and acting on what they heard. The clearest insight: associates wanted more recognition from their direct managers. Gardiner is now activating managers through a recognition challenge, and field associate participation with recognition grew by 10.7% within one year. Together, it’s proof that listening, transparency, and manager engagement drive real cultural impact.