

The Impact of Recognize on Employee Engagement and Happiness at World Vision Australia

Recognize enabled World Vision Australia to create a dynamic, highly valued recognition program that increased employee engagement and satisfaction.

COMPANY SIZE 500+	INDUSTRY Nonprofit	LOCATIONS 1	COUNTRY Australia
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Logo:



Hero:



About the company

WVA is Australia's largest international NGO focused on tackling poverty and injustice, particularly for vulnerable children. It's registered as a charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission as a public benevolent institution and is a tax-deductible gift recipient. While guided by Christian values, it works inclusively across faiths and cultures, funded largely by Australian public donations, including long-running child sponsorship programs.

WVA's work centers on three areas: child well-being, climate resilience, and support for First Nations communities. Globally, it delivers emergency relief, often among the first responders in a crisis, and is the largest non-government provider of clean water in developing nations, alongside child sponsorship, education, health, and disaster recovery programs. It also advocates for systemic change through policy engagement and public campaigns, and in Australia partners with Indigenous communities on self-determined development, combining relief, development, and advocacy as its core model.

History of the company

World Vision Australia (WVA) is a Melbourne-based Christian humanitarian and development organization, and the Australian arm of the global World Vision Partnership. World Vision International was founded in the US in 1950 by Baptist missionary Robert Pierce to aid children in need, launching its first child sponsorship scheme in 1953 to support children in Korea after the Korean War. WVA was established in 1966 and now operates within a network active in nearly 100 countries.

Why the company chose Recognize

World Vision Australia decided to use Recognize because of its flexible funding, ease of use, and ability to integrate with Microsoft Office. As a nonprofit, frontloading the rewards program with money that may not be spent was too risky—they needed to be able to decouple rewards from recognition, which Recognize offers. Secondly, Recognize is incredibly user friendly and convenient for sending peer-to-peer recognition, which is something that was important to World Vision. They wanted to create a culture of appreciation instead of a yearly awards ceremony, which they had previously relied on for all their recognition efforts. Lastly, Recognize integrates with Microsoft Office software, making recognition easy to give within Teams and Outlook. Reducing friction to use the app was imperative to a successful implementation of Recognize App. They wanted employees to actually engage with Recognize App instead of thinking of it as a sporadic nice-to-have option.

Results

After deploying Recognize, World Vision Australia transformed its culture, moving from a single annual day of recognition to everyday peer-to-peer appreciation. Today, a new recognition is sent roughly every 49 minutes of the workweek, and even in their quietest weeks, employees still share nearly 30! Recognition is no longer an event; it's a daily habit. The impact shows in that nearly 3 in 4 surveyed employees say they're satisfied with their workplace culture.

Quotes

Quote #1 – The Recognize platform helps us to reinforce connections across departments. It always means a lot to me when I'm recognized by someone from a different team and it reminds me of what we were able to achieve together, despite not always working together. I think Recognize makes giving encouragements really accessible and fun. I would recommend it to any workplace. - **Cate Buchanan, World Vision Australia**

Quote #2 – The Recognize team was fantastic to work with and consult with. Over the time that we were researching, and then building out and onboarding the program, it became app enabled: we could integrate it into Microsoft Teams; we could integrate it into Yammer; it's now integrated into Outlook. It's now fully embedded in our technology environment which makes it incredibly easy to use. – **Jason Mete, World Vision Australia**

Company's Recognition Summary

They have ingrained recognition into their daily habits with an average of 49 recognitions sent per week.

Badge Examples



Lightning Strike – World Vision is responsive to needs, opportunities, and challenges.



People First – World Vision champions others, celebrates differences, and promotes a culture in which people feel respected enough to contribute their unique gifts.



Legacy Builder – World Vision stewards resources, relationships, and the environment to create lasting impact.

Statistics

Stat #1 – A new recognition sent every 49 minutes of the workweek.

Stat #2 – Nearly 3 in 4 surveyed employees are satisfied with their workplace culture.

In Summary

World Vision Australia (WVA), Australia's largest international NGO focused on child welfare, climate resilience, and First Nations support, adopted Recognize to transform its employee recognition culture. Previously relying on a single annual awards ceremony, WVA sought a solution offering flexible funding, ease of use, and Microsoft Office integration. As a nonprofit, decoupling rewards from recognition was essential to avoid financially risky frontloading. Recognize's user-friendly peer-to-peer system and seamless integration with Teams, Yammer, and Outlook reduced friction and encouraged genuine daily engagement rather than sporadic use.

Since implementation, WVA has shifted from once-a-year recognition to a thriving daily culture of appreciation, sending an average of 49 recognitions per week (ranging from 28 to 69). Employee satisfaction with workplace culture now sits at 73 out of 100. Staff highlight how Recognize strengthens cross-departmental connections and makes giving encouragement accessible and enjoyable, while leadership praises the smooth technology integration and collaborative onboarding experience with the Recognize team.