Nomination: 9226

The Spirit of Whyte and Mackay – B.A.R

Page: General Information

Provide information about the company to be considered for the award. If you will be nominating an individual, specify the nominee's employer.

Name of Organization/Company

Whyte and Mackay

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Additional Contacts

I would also like to have others receive emails about the disposition of our entries.

Page: Entry Information

Entry Title

The Spirit of Whyte and Mackay – B.A.R

Category

B01 - B67 Achievement > B46 - Best Reward & Recognition Strategy

Achievement Submission Format

Written Answers

a. Briefly describe the nominated organization: its history and past performance (up to 200 words). Required

A STRATEGIC SHIFT: THE 3Rs

Whyte and Mackay (W&M), an alcoholic beverage manufacturer, employ 750+ colleagues worldwide (Appendix-1). With 60% of its workforce in offline roles – including distilleries, bottling plants, and warehouses – delivering inclusive, consistent recognition posed a significant challenge.

In 2023, W&M launched the 'Spirit of Whyte and Mackay' – an ambitious strategy to engage, recognize, and reward their people globally. Underpinned by their 3Rs framework: Recognize, Reward, Retain (Appendix-4), it ensures the strategy isn't just surface-level.

Their goals were clear:

-Embed a culture of meaningful, everyday recognition

-Engage deskless and offline colleagues

-Improve Great Place to Work recognition scores by 15%

-Create fairness and consistency across teams and locations

-Personalize rewards for a diverse, global workforce

DELIVERING CHANGE THROUGH DIGITAL INNOVATION

To deliver these goals, W&M partnered with Benifex to create their first digital reward and recognition platform, named B.A.R (Benefits Awards Recognition). In November 2023 they soft launched OneHub (Appendix-7) to 200 employees (including deskless population), driving strong participation, creating super-user advocates, and capturing learnings before the full rollout in January 2024. The platform reflects their core values (Appendix-2) and laid the foundation for long-term cultural change.

The OneHub Discounts release followed in November 2024.

b. Outline the team's or organization's achievements since the beginning of 2023 that you wish to bring to the judges' attention (up to 250 words). Required

TRANSFORMING RECOGNITION CULTURE

In W&M's 2023 Great Place to Work (GPTW) survey, only 41% of employees said they had the opportunity to be recognized (Appendix-6). Just five months after the platform launch, that number jumped by 25% to 66% – their biggest survey gain and proof their new recognition strategy is a resounding success.

B.A.R has driven cross-functional recognition, supported by campaigns like Spotify-style wrap-ups (revealing 5,000 reactions in the last year) and national day celebrations (Appendix-11), creating fun, visibility, and momentum.

HIGH ENGAGEMENT ACROSS THE BUSINESS

One-month post-launch, login reached 73% (Appendix-8). At three months, it rose to 84% (Appendix-9) – 60% from deskless roles – and their emotional resonance score, reflecting how colleagues felt after receiving recognition, was rated 4.48 / 5. After six-months, platform logins hit an outstanding 91% (Appendix-10)!

There are now daily recognitions, with:

-811 posted in first six months

-3,346 reactions

-563 comments

Employees don't just give recognitions – they engage with others' posts, enhancing the feel-good factor and reinforcing culture as each post is tied to core values (Appendix-2).

PERSONALIZED, PURPOSEFUL REWARDS

Functional value and long service awards, manager-led rewards, and custom campaigns have made recognition meaningful and equitable. Previously, rewards were limited and often alcohol based. Now, colleagues choose what suits them – including digital and global options.

B.A.R is now embedded into company culture and supports broader business goals, including sustainability campaigns and health and safety awards, enabling GPTW accreditation, advancing W&M's HR strategic priorities, and enhancing EVP, retention, and organizational success (Appendix-10).

c. Explain why the achievements you have highlighted are unique or significant. If possible compare the achievements to the performance of other players in your industry and/or to the team's or organization's past performance (up to 250 words). Required

FROM INCONSISTENCY TO INCLUSION

W&M's reward and recognition strategy is remarkable for both its speed of adoption and depth of transformation. Previously, recognition was inconsistent and biased toward commercial functions, creating resentment between teams. Rewards were often alcohol-based – a well-meaning but non-inclusive gesture, with their survey finding employees wanted more personalized rewards. Deskless workers were underserved, and recognition went largely untracked.

REACHING EVERYONE, EVERYWHERE

Now, recognition is equitable, data-driven, and global. Deskless teams engage daily, with distilling and bottling teams among the most celebrated (Appendix-10) – a dramatic shift from pre-launch culture. That shift has been significant:

-84% login rate at three months (vs Benifex benchmark of 40%)

-58% interaction rate (vs. 55% benchmark)

-91% login rate at six months (vs 60% benchmark)

-25% improvement on recognition-related questions in the GPTW survey (smashing original 15% target)

Deskless colleagues are empowered through mobile access, onsite training, and recognition champions – ensuring access and inclusion across all roles.

EMPLOYEE ADVOCATES DRIVING SUCCESS

Compared to peers, W&M's strategy excels in employee-led advocacy. They trained 12 Super Users across different functions, and each team has Recognition Champions (Appendix-11). In an industry where employee advocacy is rarely embedded in reward and recognition strategies, this people-led approach proved essential. It drove engagement, word-of-mouth adoption, and made the platform feel truly employee-owned – not just an HR initiative.

A SCALABLE MODEL

The strategy's blend of people-led advocacy, cross-functional engagement, and digital inclusion makes it standout – and a blueprint for scalable recognition in traditionally hard-to-reach workforces.

d. Reference any attachments of supporting materials throughout this nomination and how they provide evidence of the claims you have made in this nomination (up to 250 words). Optional

The supporting document showcases the success of W&M's 'Spirit of Whyte and Mackay' recognition strategy, delivered through their OneHub platform, B.A.R.

Appendix 1 includes the live global locations of the platform and visuals of the platform across OneHub Recognition, Reward, Discounts and Home.

Appendices 2 and 3 list the core values that their recognitions reflect and presents example recognitions and awards, showing how employees use the platform to celebrate success.

Appendices 4 and 5 explain the strategy foundations, including their 3Rs framework (Recognize, Reward, Retain) and the equity, consistency, and inclusion goals behind it.

Appendix 6 shows the 25% improvement in recognition-related GPTW scores – their biggest improvement across the survey.

Appendix 7 details the soft launch of B.A.R, targeting 200+ offline colleagues and piloting long service awards.

Appendices 8–10 showcase platform metrics over one, three, and six months:

-91% login rate at 6 months (vs. 60% benchmark)

-811 recognitions, 3,346 reactions, and 563 comments

-Steady GIF usage and emotional engagement

Appendix 11 outlines advocacy and communications, including the training of 12 Super Users and the use of offline tactics like recognition postcards, manager cascades, and newsletters.

Appendix 12 features colleague feedback on the platform.

Appendix 13 includes a testimonial from senior leadership at W&M, reinforcing how recognition is now embedded in team culture.

Together, these appendices show a measurable, scalable, and culturally embedded transformation – led by people, powered by technology.

Webpage Link

Would you like to add an additional webpage link?

No

[REDACTED FOR PUBLICATION]

Would you like to add an additional supporting document?

No

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