

Nomination: 9720

Acorn's Employee Recognition Solution

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 Acorn ██████████ ██████████
Additional Contacts I would also like to have others receive emails about the disposition of our entries.
Page: Entry Information
Entry Title Acorn's Employee Recognition Solution
Category F01 - F80 Solutions, Implementations, and Training Programs or Media > F01 - F50 Solutions & Implementations > F18 - Employee Recognition Solution - Implementation
Solutions & Implementations Submission Format Written Answers
a. If you are nominating a brand-new product, state the date on which it was released. If you are nominating a new version of an existing product, state the date on which the update was released. If you are nominating an implementation, state the date on which the implementation was completed. Required Acorn launched its new recognition solution, internally branded as "Your Today", through Benifex on Colleague Appreciation Day in March 2024.

b. Describe the features, functions, and benefits of the nominated product, service, or implementation (up to 350 words). Required

With 1,800+ employees spread across multiple brands and divisions, Acorn needed a solution that was flexible enough to drive visibility, connection, and empowerment across a large, complex workforce. With strong backing from executive leadership, Acorn partnered with Benifex to implement a fully integrated recognition and reward platform, branded internally as Your Today (appendix-1).

Key features include:

- Organization-wide visibility: All recognition posts can be seen, liked, and commented on across the business, breaking down silos between teams (appendix-3).
- Social-media-style interaction: Employees can use GIFs, emojis, and value tags to personalize messages and reflect company culture (appendix-3). This makes recognition more relevant, timely, and joyful.
- Manager-owned budgets: Every division is allocated a budget, with autonomy to decide how it's used (appendix-6) – empowering teams to act in the moment.
- Custom tagging framework: Recognition posts can be tagged with Acorn's newly launched company values or key life events such as birthdays, new roles, and marriages (appendix-2).
- Recognition tied to onboarding: New hires receive public recognition after completing training, immediately embedding them in the culture (appendix-7).
- Seamless campaign support: Integrated into initiatives like Mental Health Awareness Week and Neurodiversity Week (appendix-4), and onboarding milestones (appendix-7). 70–80% of campaign rewards are delivered through Benifex's platform.

Key benefits include:

- A shift toward more inclusive, peer-led recognition across the business.
- Greater cultural visibility, team-to-team connection, and idea-sharing.
- Consistent use across all career stages – from onboarding to ongoing celebration (appendix-7/8).
- Simplified reward tracking and better use of budgets; some divisions have even reallocated social spend to the platform due to its impact.

Supporting strategic business goals:

Recognition is now tied to both performance and purpose. Awards and reward moments reinforce new values – launched alongside the platform (appendix-2). Colleagues can now also recognize life events, colleague milestones, and cultural moments like International Women's Day and Mental Health Awareness Week. The platform has not only transformed culture but is driving organizational success (see below).

c. For the nomination of a product or service, outline the market performance, critical reception, and customer satisfaction with the product or service to date. State monetary or unit sales figures to date, if possible, and how they compare to expectations or past performance. Provide links to laudatory product or service reviews. Include some customer testimonials, if applicable. For the nomination of an implementation, outline the need or problem that was identified, why the solution was chosen, how the solution was implemented, and the results of your implementation to date (up to 350 words). Required

Acorn's transformation is remarkable for its scale, speed, and impact. In under 12 months, they [REDACTED] f [REDACTED] ognition process wit [REDACTED] alues-led, people-powered culture of appreciation.

Previously, recognition was siloed and inconsistent – an underused function of a previous discounts platform not designed with engagement in mind. Recognition messages weren't visible beyond individual teams, reward budget tracking was complex due to points-based systems, and only managers could nominate colleagues. The business needed a solution that was more inclusive, [REDACTED] and impactful.

The platform's features (GIFs, organization-wide visibility, and manager-owned budgets) created a dynamic, social-media-style experience. To launch the platform, every employee received a £25 personal reward from Acorn's CEO on Colleague Appreciation Day – a £38k investment that got everyone talking, driving engagement (appendix-4). Immediate integration into onboarding and manager toolkits (appendix-7) also helped the platform gain rapid traction across the organization.

Key implementation strategies included tailored rollouts by division. In the Claims team, 80% of the R&R budget now sits with managers for ad hoc recognition, with 20% used for quarterly awards (appendix-6). Recognition is embedded from day one – new hires are celebrated publicly during onboarding. The L&D team and managers consistently drive visibility using QR scavenger hunts, fantasy football leagues, and campaign themes tied to values, national days, and events (appendix 4). Teams also tag recognitions with value-specific icons or life moments like birthdays, new roles, and weddings (appendix-2).

Some divisions moved social budgets onto the platform to amplify impact.

Results to date:

- 7,000+ recognition moments in one year (appendix-5) – more than triple the total from the previous five years.
- Peer-to-peer recognition now outpaces manager-driven recognition.
- Award nominations rose from 200 to 750 in 2024 (appendix-7) – a 275% increase.
- 75% platform engagement year one (appendix-5).
- Overall employee engagement increased from 68% in 2022 to 76% in 2024 (appendix-5).
- 80% of employees say Acorn is a great place to work.

[REDACTED]

-99% of the R&R budget was used (appendix-6).

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

Appendix-1 shows Acorn's OneHub platform, branded internally as "Your Today."

Appendix-2 outlines Acorn's new company values, launched on the platform and used as recognition tags to reinforce cultural change.

Appendix-3 displays real recognition moments shared between colleagues, illustrating the tone, volume, and consistency of use across teams.

Appendix-4 features campaign communications, such as the CEO's platform-launch message for Colleague Appreciation Day and examples from themed initiatives tied to Mental Health Awareness Week, Neurodiversity Week, and International Women's Day.

Appendix-5 presents impact data: Acorn's engagement score rose from 68% (2022) to 76% (2024), and 80% of employees said Acorn is a great place to work (vs. UK average of 54%)—earning them Great Place to Work certification. It also evidences the 3x increase in recognition volume and progress toward the 25% attrition target.

Appendix-6 summarizes total reward spend (£85,000) and shows how reward is used across launch, campaigns, and award ceremonies.

Appendix-7 shows employees being celebrated at the Acorn Awards.

Appendix-8 includes employee testimonials from across the business, such as a new hire who described the platform as "a massive part of my journey," and a Training Manager who uses the tool to celebrate academy graduates.

Webpage Link

Would you like to add an additional webpage link?

No

Supporting Document

[REDACTED FOR PUBLICATION]

Would you like to add an additional supporting document?

No

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