

How a global digital infrastructure leader fixed **top-down recognition**

Recognition was a top-down ritual. Here's how it became everyone's habit across 190 countries, one recognition every two minutes.

INDUSTRY Digital Infrastructure

A global leader in digital infrastructure, founded in 1986 and running one of the world's largest IoT networks, employs more than 10,000 people across a presence spanning 190+ countries. As it transformed from an infrastructure provider into a platform-based organization, it needed a culture shift to match, anchored by a recognition and rewards program later recognized in the Brandon Hall Group Excellence Awards for Best Employee Recognition Program.

185%

surge in peer-to-peer recognition

134%

increase in active platform users

58%

rise in monetary award givers

26%

growth in managerial monetary recognition



The Challenge

Founded in 1986, the company has grown into a global leader in digital infrastructure, with a presence in over 190 countries and one of the world's largest IoT networks. Over the last two decades it transformed from an infrastructure provider into a platform-based organization. That evolution demanded more than operational change; it required a fundamental shift in culture and employee behavior. The recognition and rewards program, which began roughly a decade ago, became the key enabler, but it needed a redesign to do more than drive engagement. It had to foster trust, transparency, and behaviors aligned with business priorities.

Key challenges

A culture of appreciation for a dispersed workforce

With employees working remotely, building a culture of appreciation that reached everyone became a major challenge during the pandemic.

Limited flexibility in reward redemption

Flexible, mobile-friendly, globally accessible redemption became critical to keeping a remote, diverse workforce engaged.

Integration complexities

Seamless compatibility with existing HR systems was essential to deliver a unified, efficient recognition experience for all users.

Recognition at scale

A simple, scalable way to recognize thousands of employees across geographies was vital, so every contribution was acknowledged.

The organization needed a recognition platform that could scale globally, simplify appreciation, and reinforce the values behind its cultural transformation.



The Transformation

The redesigned program, built on the Vantage Circle platform and grounded in the AIR^e framework (Appreciation, Incentivization, Reinforcement, and eMotional Connect), made recognition intentional and inclusive. Both leaders and peers could recognize contributions in real time, transparently and meaningfully. No matter the team or title, every employee could now be appreciated in the moment, through a spot recognition, a peer shoutout, or a milestone celebration.

1. Embedding recognition into daily work

- **Integrated with performance and development:** Managers were trained to recognize and reward employees immediately when they demonstrated desired behaviors, keeping recognition timely and reinforcing what mattered for the company's success.
- **Fair and consistent:** The program applied consistently across all levels. Every employee, regardless of role or department, was eligible, reinforcing that recognition was for everyone, not just top performers.
- **Leadership-led:** Leaders modeled recognition from the outset, with regular reviews focused on clear outcomes, so recognition became a strategic tool for business objectives rather than just an activity.
- **Transparent:** Recognition citations were shared on the company's internal social platform, so employees could see who was being recognized and why, reinforcing the behaviors the company wanted to cultivate.

2. The features that powered it

- **Meaningful monetary rewards:** A tiered, point-based system rewarded specific contributions, redeemable globally via gift cards, merchandise, or experiences. With no recognition quotas and centrally managed budgets, it fostered frequent, authentic appreciation within financial limits.
- **Value-based digital badges:** Shareable badges tied to core values made non-monetary recognition visible and culturally aligned, keeping peer-to-peer appreciation seamless and meaningful.
- **Leaderboard:** Real-time visibility of top performers made appreciation visible, inspired friendly motivation, and reminded everyone that great work never goes unnoticed.
- **Inclusive for all:** A phygital approach combined the digital platform with physical recognition cards, so field and frontline employees working beyond office walls were fully included in the recognition ecosystem.
- **Seamless access:** Mobile access, HRIS integration, and Microsoft Teams integration let employees recognize each other anytime, without disrupting their workflow.
- **Data insights:** Data-driven dashboards let HR and leadership track recognition frequency and budget utilization across departments with greater accuracy and transparency.

Results & Impact

Embedded into daily work from FY2020-21 to FY2024-25, the program reshaped how recognition happened across the organization. Managerial monetary recognition rose **26%**, and peer-to-peer non-monetary recognition surged **185%**, a clear shift toward a more inclusive, emotionally resonant culture.

Adoption followed: a **134% increase in active platform users** and a **58% rise in monetary award givers** over the five-year period, evidence that recognition had become everyone's habit rather than a top-down ritual.

By FY2024-25, the rhythm was unmistakable: **one recognition every two minutes** across the organization.

What began as a structured initiative to encourage desired behaviors grew into an organization-wide mindset rooted in appreciation. The transformation was recognized in the Brandon Hall Group Excellence Awards for Best Employee Recognition Program, validation that, here, appreciation is no longer a task. It is a way of working.

Success Highlights

- **Peer-to-peer surge:** A 185% surge in peer-to-peer non-monetary recognition over five years, a clear move to an inclusive, emotionally resonant culture.
- **Rising adoption:** A 134% increase in active platform users over five years, recognition becoming part of everyday work.
- **More givers:** A 58% rise in monetary award givers, with managerial monetary recognition up 26%, spreading recognition across the organization.
- **Recognition at scale:** By FY2024-25, one recognition every two minutes across a 190+ country workforce.



The platform behind results like these.

Vantage Circle is a global employee recognition and rewards platform, grounded in behavioral science, backed by a dedicated program advisory team, and connected to a rewards catalog spanning 70+ countries. Recognition happens in the flow of work, right inside Microsoft Teams and Slack. More than 700 companies and 3.2 million employees use it to make recognition consistent, meaningful, and measurable. Pair it with Vantage Pulse, Vantage Fit, and Vantage Perks when you're ready to extend into listening, well-being, and benefits.

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