

26 New Ways to Boost Your Benefits Strategy

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Introduction

Hi, I'm Megan and I'm the Head of Client Success at Reward Gateway. As we often say here, employee engagement is a marathon, not a sprint. There are several building blocks to put in place, which can include initiatives like a discounts or reward and recognition platform, or a refresh of your internal communications strategy. There are always new ways to attract, engage and retain your workforce, and we also believe there is always room to improve and drive even better results.

A stellar benefits platform can be a great start, but it might not be enough. To really boost your employee engagement — whether you already have

a discounts, reward and recognition or salary sacrifice benefit in place — you need more tricks up your sleeve.

As the global leader in employee engagement technology, helping you get the most value from your benefits platform is what we love to do most. As Head of Client Success, I coach our 1,800 clients on ways to engage and excite their employees into better benefits uptake. Read on to learn about:

- The power of content
- Our quick tips on creating your first content strategy

- Targeting your message for the largest reach
- How to re-launch a potentially stagnant benefits platform and brand.

In this eBook, we'll explore a number of different tactics you can use to get the most out of your benefits platform by centralising and branding your benefits so they speak to *your* audience – your employees.

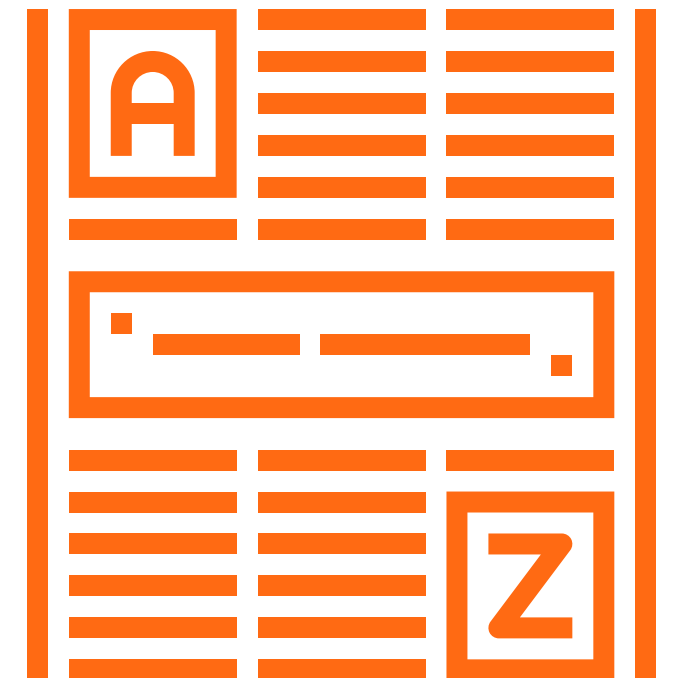


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How to Harness the Power of Content to Better Engage Your Employees



Content is arguably one of the most underrated tools in employee engagement.

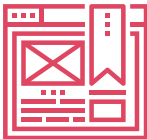
Content can be anything from a company-driven blog to how you talk about your benefits, values or how you deliver important company updates.

No matter what your content, it needs to speak directly to the individual, delivering a personal message that is relevant to them. Whether you feel confident enough to produce your own content or not, either written or visual, if you don't have the right platform and means of delivery for it then you'll find that your audience won't tune in. You could produce the most mind-blowing content but if no one knows it exists then they're not going to consume it.


So how can you make sure that you're actually reaching your employees? Here are a few tactics to take to your next team meeting:

1. Ask yourself: Are people really listening? And then ask even more questions.

Many HR Teams and Reward professionals are finding that a change in how their content is delivered, rather than how it is produced, is having a big impact on how their employees engage with the wider business vision and culture. A communications platform, or digital hub, can help deliver content to employees when and how they want and create a two-way conversation between employee and employer, no matter where they're located. Consider:



Bespoke content that's customised to your company, such as branded blogs and pages on your hub specific to your employees so that they trust it



Embedded videos for more modern communication, and to potentially reach a larger audience based on their communication style preference



Flexible news pages that can be changed instantly to reflect real-time business updates.

Once you've got your communications hub strategy set, you can gather feedback from polls and surveys to see what's working and what isn't. A digitally-hosted platform can even help stamp out errors, as changes can be made immediately. The main thing, though, is to relax. Even if you don't feel like Shakespeare at the keyboard, these tools let you get your content into the open, gather feedback, and make it better and better each time.

2. Start to create or rethink your company blogs

Blogs are a great place to start with your communication strategy. Typically blogs are shorter, personable pieces of content that delve into a specific topic, for instance a roundup of company updates or an introduction to a new member of the leadership team.

JCB Group, a UK-based global manufacturing company, uses blogs in a very powerful way to announce company news such as business achievements and product launches. They add a human touch to their blogs, too, as features on colleagues across different sites help to bring the company closer.

“We need to be creative and innovative with how we communicate. We find that blogs is a fantastic and valuable way of communicating to our workforce. We use blogs for a number of things; our JCB News Hub, Meet the Team profiles, Staff Suggestions and Internal Vacancies, as well as some more quirky ideas such as a Free Ads blog for staff to buy and sell items.”

Anna-Lisa DeVoil

Group HR Manager, JCB

The JCB Group logo, featuring the text "JCBGroup" in white on a dark blue rectangular background.

3. Experiment, experiment, experiment!

Having a blog in place is a great first step but using it to reach the right audience at the right time is crucial. You don't want your message to get lost on the high seas of old news and outdated info.

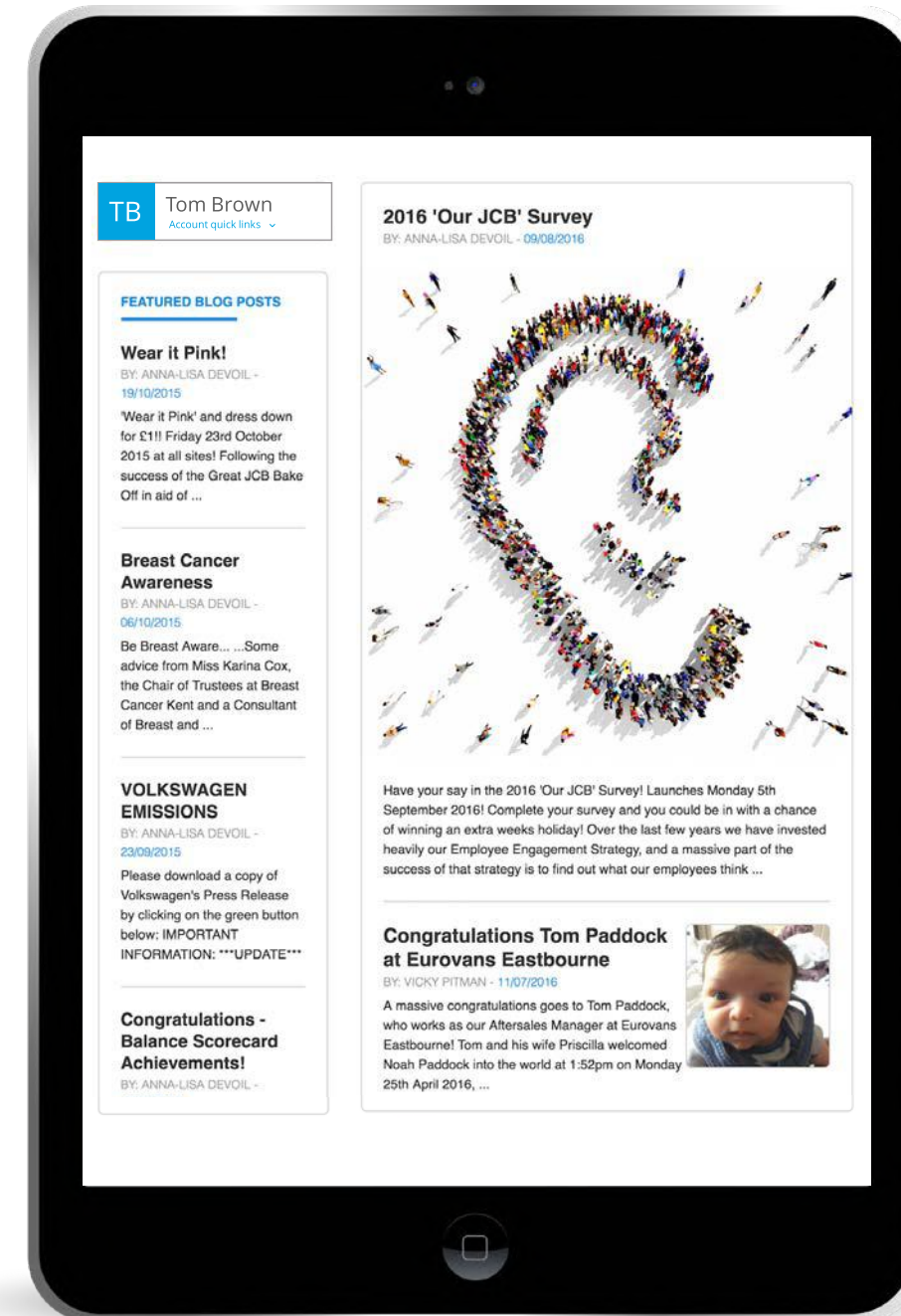
That's why your blogs should have meaning and purpose.

For instance, you can introduce the entire company to new faces through a clearly-labeled blog that your Recruitment Team could manage. Encourage employees to comment, or like

the post to drive engagement. It will help new starters settle in quicker and give them a big wow on their first day.

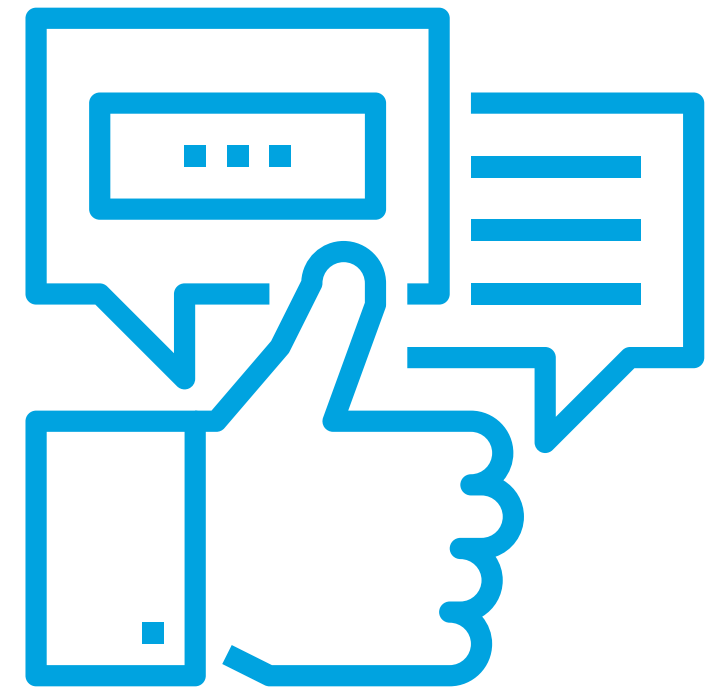
Lastly, you can use content design to clearly set boundaries between company policies (that HR can manage and update as needed) and fresh news, business updates, charity events, people news or even an employer-sponsored book club.

What you might have already realised is that all of this will build a better connection with your people, but how else can you get more value from an internal platform? Let's read on ...



JCB uses the power of blogs to deliver company news and updates to their employees in real-time.

How to Use a Coherent Communication Strategy to Achieve Your Goals



Here's what you want to do: Create an effective communication strategy that will resonate with your people and call them to the action you want. Sounds good, right? But with so many avenues to communicate with your people, where should you start? Let's break it down...

Get it right at the beginning

You probably won't be surprised to learn that planning and getting the right pieces in place at the beginning will be key to your success. To do this, we recommend asking yourself the following questions:

- **Who are your employees?**
- **What channels do they react to best?**
- **Where do they like to digest communications?**

- **What is the campaign focused on (a benefits launch, a new recruitment strategy, etc.)?**
- **When will you launch the campaign?**
- **How long will it last for?**

The answer to a few of the above can be multi-layered so don't feel like you have to only cater to one segment of your audience.

Use budget-friendly channels to boost your platform

Emails, posters, postcards, and text messages are easy wins when thinking of how to communicate your new platform – and they cost very little. Our client Oliver Bonas are a retail company with 550 employees across 55 locations in the UK. To really grab their attention, a pre-launch, launch, and post-launch

plan was devised to get the word out about the exciting new platform.

The launch day itself involved store employees opening a special box of goodies, and office-based staff were treated to a jam-packed launch event, managed by Reward Gateway. Following the launch, Oliver Bonas rolled out a series of post-launch activities from emails and multi-dimensional business cards to roadshows at each of the stores and a competition which saw Oliver Bonas and another Reward Gateway client swapping their products to set as prizes.

Make your campaign long-lasting

This will largely fall from what you have chosen as your focus but you should always look for a durable theme. What we mean by that is try to stay away from

one-off events such as Valentine’s Day. Instead, think about the bigger picture on what value your employees are deriving from your benefits platform.



Remember: Benefits should be beneficial, right? So why are these benefits or platforms exciting to your workforce? For instance, communicating how a discounts platform can help ease the cost of family or life events that have an actual impact on them as people will ring much truer than simply stating the benefit without any context.

Use tools that are already available

An engagement platform which can instantly adapt to the changing shape of your campaign is a big wow for employees. Imagine if you could create multiple versions of your communications and schedule them to go live on a particular date and time. What can be better than setting out the vision for your next promotion and have it unveil with minimal administration on your part?

Next up, let’s explore other ways to personalise your benefits campaigns...

“We wanted to communicate and promote all of our employees benefits and generous discounts to our varied workforce, ensuring they took full advantage of what was on offer to them and to increase engagement and uptake. We’ve completely changed the way we promote our reward offering to our employees.”

Megan Kennedy
HR Manager-Support Office
Oliver Bonas

OLIVER BONAS



OB REWARDS
YOUR BENEFITS AND DISCOUNTS



Tell me more!

For all your HARD WORK, we wanted to BE KIND and help you PLAY HARD with a whole new batch of rewards and benefits.

In addition to the fabulous discounts at top retailers, you now also have some new benefits.

A really exciting new addition is the opportunity to request more annual leave so you can have some more 'me' time, along with more pampering and health and wellbeing options!

To find out more about your rewards, all you need to do is register at www.obrewards.com with your date of birth and payroll number to hand.

Enjoy!

Best wishes,
The OB HR Team

Log on to www.obrewards.co.uk to find out more



Something to really dance about!



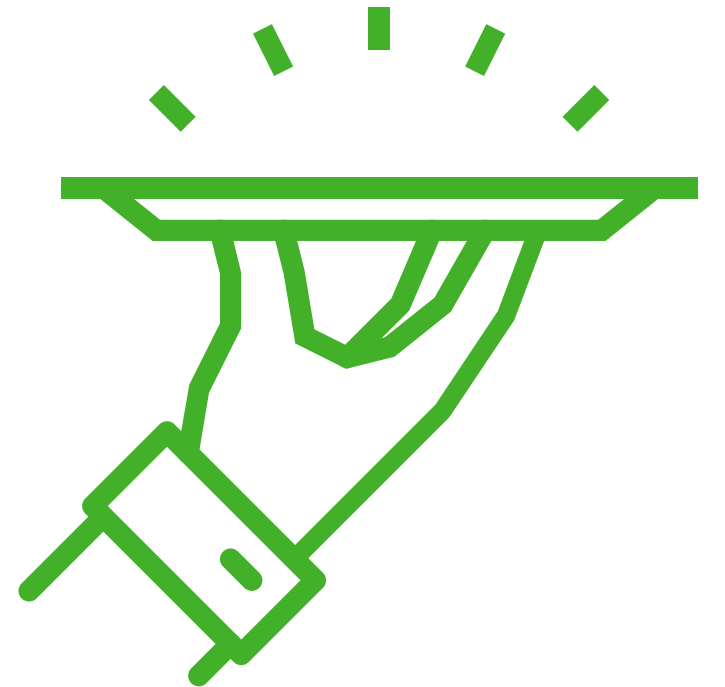
Butterflies
has had a
facelift...

OB REWARDS
YOUR BENEFITS AND DISCOUNTS



Retailer Oliver Bonas captured the attention of its workforce with creative, fashion-forward handouts for the launch of its engagement platform.

Make it Personal, Make it Compelling



Relevance is what keeps an audience from enthusiastically seeking to feast on your content versus glazing over after a few seconds and skimming over the important message.

The way to create relevance in the content that you produce — and compel your employees to solely focus on your message — is to deliver it through a platform that is purpose-built for an ultimate level of personalisation.

Traditional intranets lack visibility and the personal touch because they are so widespread and bogged down with trying to please everyone. Sort of like the host at a big party who can only pass on a few pleasantries before having to say hello to the next guest. Much like the guests at that party, engaging your employees in this way doesn't create a memorable experience and leaves them feeling as though they're an

insignificant part of a wider group — this is where traditional intranets fall down.

When you're creating content for your workforce — whether rolling out a new benefits package, announcing a change on the leadership team or distributing your annual engagement survey, you have to think about who you're really trying to reach.

Here are a couple ways to help reach the most relevant audience:

Segmentation: Targeting audiences in a relevant way

Imagine if you could create multiple versions of your communications, schedule them to go live on a particular date and time, and be segmented to target any particular part of your workforce. What can be better than setting out the vision for your next promotion and have it unveil with minimal administration on your part?

A platform that can put instant segmentation of newly-created content at the click of a button is one of the first steps to greater personalisation.

Segmentation allows employee demographics to be separated and targeted with communications accordingly. Here are a few ways to use segmentation:

Got three different office locations but only want to show news to one?

You can segment the office locations so that your workforce from different locations only sees what's relevant to them.

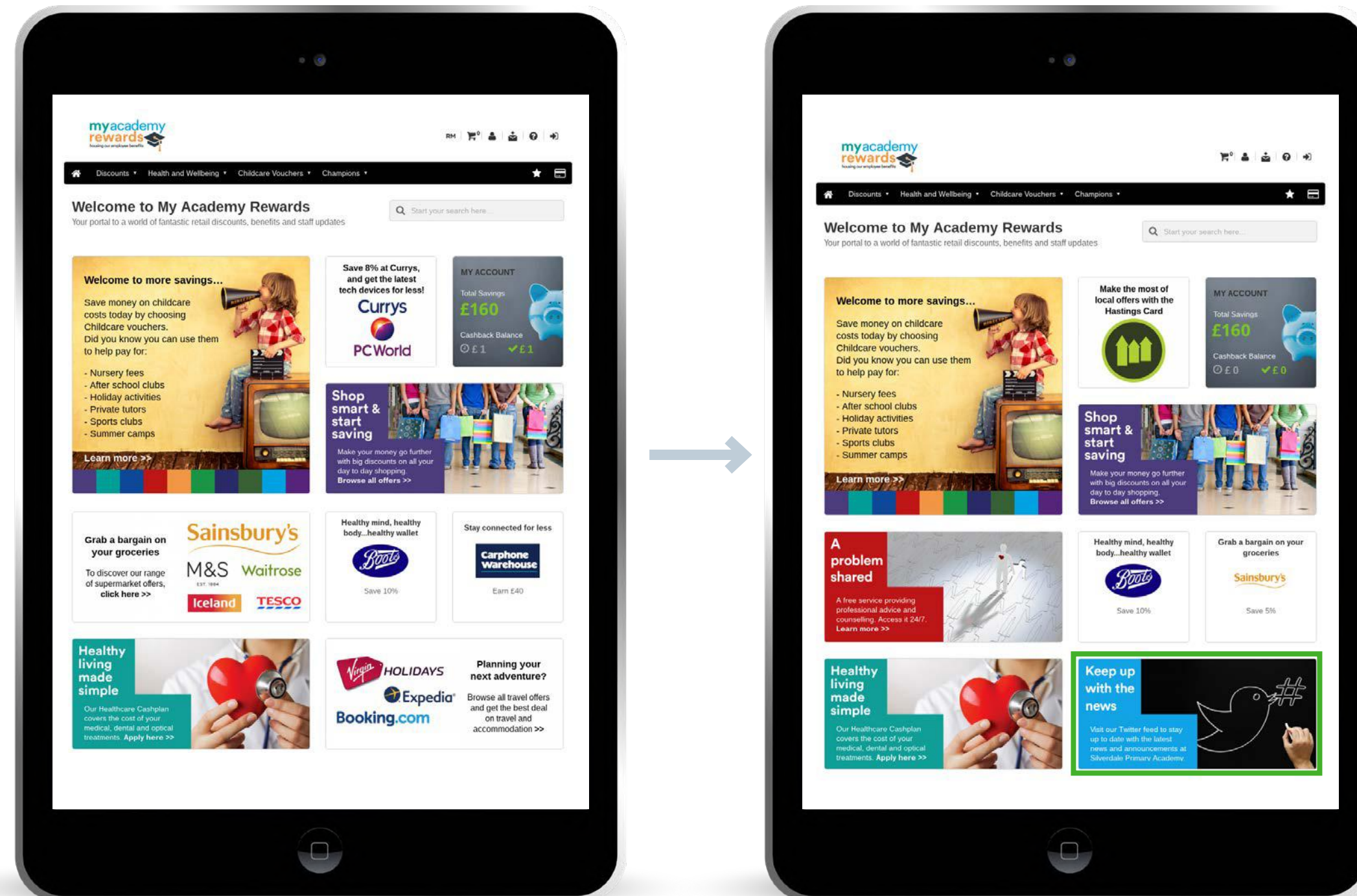
Want to film some sparkling video content on pension enrollment for your employees under 30?

You can segment by demographics to target specific benefit take up.

Want to message discounts and retailers that would appeal to employees based on their salary ranking?

You can segment by income bracket to message high-luxury products to your C-levels.

By creating a branded experience, you can swap out messaging to tailor the employee experience, like Hastings Academy Trust did.



Tagging: Make it fun, human and personal

To make the experience truly personal, tagging will directly speak to your people within content that you've written for a wider audience. You could write as many articles as you have employees to reach but that's really not practical – no matter how beautifully unique each article would be.

Lots of people in HR and Reward have found that tagging allows them to make the homepage of their platform and the articles as unique as they want. So long as the relevant data has been collected, tags can be written into the articles such as:

Name

Address

Age

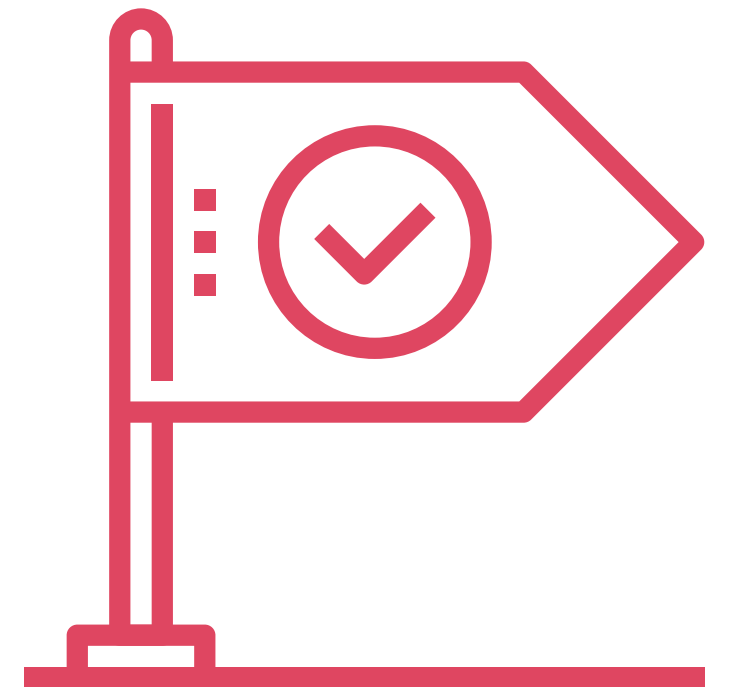
**Favourite
colour**

Pet name

And anything else your fantastically inquisitive mind can think of collecting!

When you're creating content and delivering it to your workforce, a few well-placed tricks can help your content go the distance. But what if it's not just your content that needs a new spin, but your entire benefits brand? That's up next ...

Why a Re-Launch Might be Exactly What Your Benefits Need



You've got the discounts, you've got the salary sacrifice and payroll benefits, you've got the recognition tools, maybe you have a whole suite of initiatives that you've cooked up. But for some reason, your employees don't engage with them anymore.

They're on the shelf gathering dust and it's time you gave them a bit of a shake.

For many HR Teams, they quickly see how the sporadic nature of their offerings has led to a downward trend in engagement. That's because they require employees to remember multiple usernames, passwords, and litter the bookmark bar on their browser with every site they need to visit. An employee engagement platform which brings everything together into one single place is exactly how Reward professionals are combatting this.

A new platform isn't the final answer on how to get your employees engaging with their benefits like they used to, but it's a start. Once you've got a new platform in place you need to parade it to your employees with an exciting re-launch that will grab their attention. Here's how:

1. Add a new twist to your benefits brand

Finding a platform that offers full end-to-end customisation will give you a unique opportunity to fully brand your benefits with something memorable for your employees. Ladbrokes, the betting and gaming company, used this approach to re-launch their platform under a new Reward Arena brand. This innovative move embraced the sports culture at the company to harness the idea of live gaming.



Pro tip

Try working with a design team to customise your platform to resonate with your employees. Ladbrokes, a betting and gaming company, embraced their sports culture with its platform.

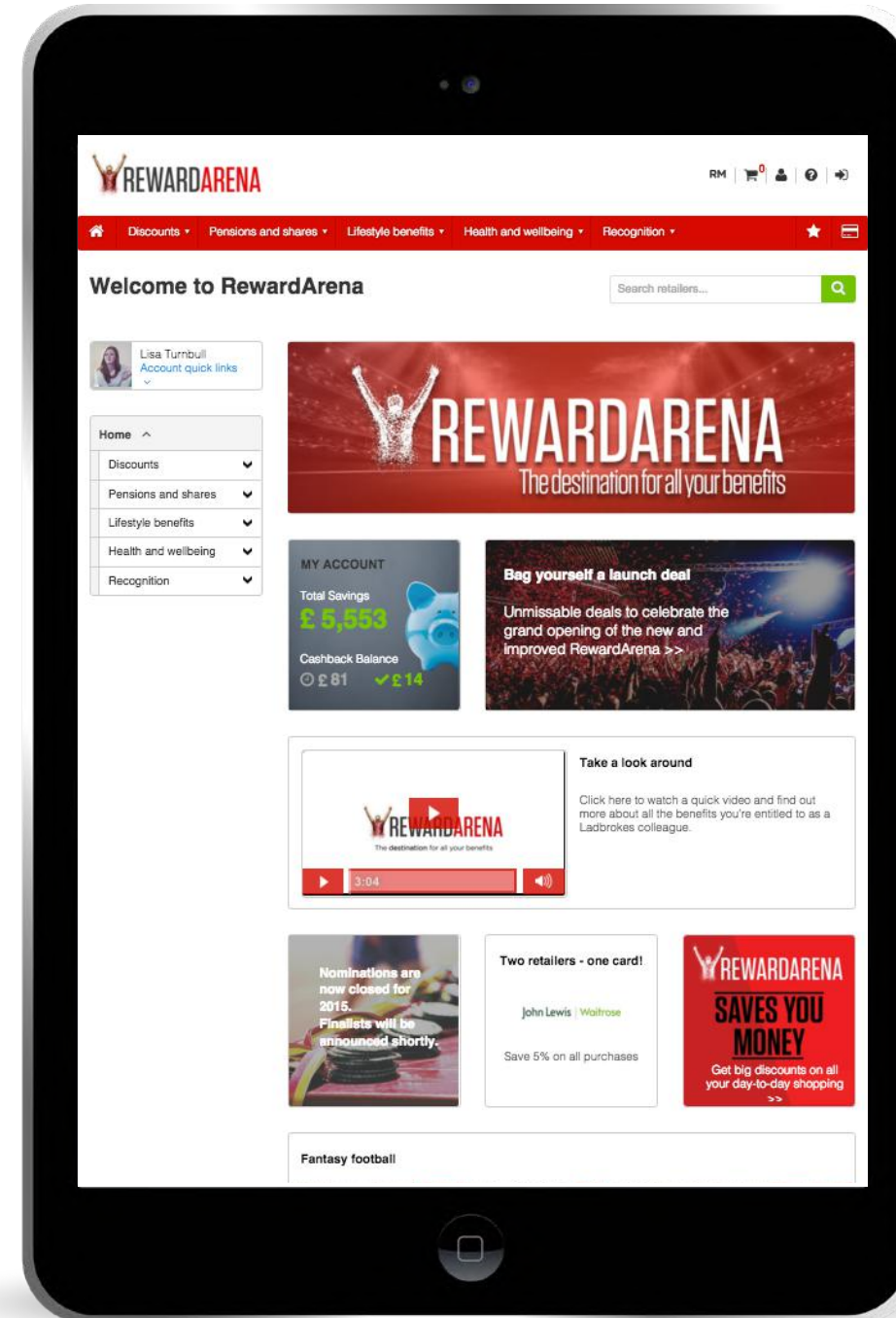
2. Use your knowledge to drive through communication channels

No one knows your workforce better than you. You likely have collected demographic information that helps you think of what your workforce would really be interested in. Use that to your advantage. You'll have a great insight on the communication channels that will work for your people and, importantly, what won't. For instance, if your workforce is mostly made of millennials, expanding your creativity

on social media channels might work better than for an offline workforce that rarely signs onto Facebook!

3. Reinforce ease of use and mobile access

Once you know the communication channels you want to use, you need to hammer home the positives of the platform. All of your benefits should now be in one central place, so shout about it. You should have a platform that is optimised for use on any device so demonstrate it working on a smartphone or tablet.



The hub from Ladbroke's represents the connection to the business by showcasing elements of sports and gaming.



Pro tip

Always ask yourself, what will my workforce engage with and understand the most? Ladbrokes, a betting and gaming company, promoted their launch with invitations designed to look like sporting event tickets.

4. Find Champions within your workforce

Word-of-mouth is one of the most compelling ways to gather excitement around a new idea, and that's exactly what having Champions within your workforce will do. They will act as advocates for the re-launch and excite people with the prospect of a new place to access all of their benefits. Champions are ideal for reaching offline demographics, too, and can interact with those employees much more than an email can.



Champions come in all shapes and sizes. We once even used a snake to promote a new benefit.



Reward Gateway delivers employee engagement solutions to more than 1,800 clients worldwide.

Reward Gateway employee engagement products are powered by a centralised hub tailored to your organisation, giving your employees better access to tools such as benefits, recognition, communications, surveys and more.

Get in touch:

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E: info@rewardgateway.com



Now it's your turn

You've read about dozens of ways to boost your benefits platform, so we hope you have a few of these bookmarked to bring to your team. An all-in-one centralised, branded hub can help make the tactics we've explained in this eBook that much easier.

Reward Gateway's tailored employee engagement platform houses discounts, benefits, reward and recognition and communication all in one easy sign-on for your employees. Our clients are assigned to a specialised Client Success Manager to help jumpstart benefits campaigns and increase uptake in areas your employees might be ignoring. The technology makes segmentation

and targeting your message to your workforce easy to implement, with minimal administration required from your team.

To learn more about our products, and to speak with an Employee Engagement Consultant to help you on your engagement journey, [let's chat](#).

Remember, you can always find our latest employee engagement tips on the [Reward Gateway Blog](#). We hope to see you online soon!

To better engagement,



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