



EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION AT BANKWEST

HAPPY BANKING

Bankwest introduced four strategic priorities to the organisation, on which the foundations for business growth would be established. These strategic priorities were relevant for all and employees were encouraged to focus on these behaviours in their everyday work to drive Bankwest's commitment of "bringing happy banking to all Australians", and support the goal to unite almost 5,000 employees as a single connected team.

In parallel, Bankwest had historically operated a number of disparate employee recognition and incentive programs across the organisation, resulting in inefficient administrative processes. Bankwest recognised the opportunity to bring these multiple recognition and reward activities into a single program, under a single brand and theme.

One of the major drivers behind achieving this vision was the introduction of the "Bankwest Heroes" employee incentive program.

Program objectives:

- Drive a new behavioural direction
- Develop a single, consistent and creative approach to incentives across the organisation
- Establish a sustainable method to managing incentive and recognition activities

Bankwest's definition of success is defined via four strategic priorities:

- 1) **People and culture** – maximise employee potential and drive a "can do" innovative culture
- 2) **Customer relationships** – continuously improve the customer experience to grow relationships
- 3) **Productivity** – continuously improve all aspects of the banking experience to simplify processes for employees and customers
- 4) **Sustainable growth** – grow the business in a risk aware and disciplined manner

A FAIRER AND MORE CONSISTENT CULTURE OF APPRECIATION

Bankwest employs more than 5,000 people throughout Australia in nine business divisions including head office, retail and business sales and customer service, IT, and a variety of back-office functions. To support their strategic priorities and improve the incentive proposition for all employees, Bankwest wanted to create a fairer and more consistent culture of appreciation across the entire organisation. A key challenge was developing a program that would appeal to all members of this diverse workforce.

A simple, fun and creative program theme, "Bankwest Heroes", was developed as the single, consistent recognition and award vehicle. The aspirational "Heroes" theme easily related to all aspects of Bankwest's business and tapped into the familiarity of popular super heroes. The program encapsulates all behavioural incentives including loyalty (length of service milestones); advocacy (customer referrals); sales focus (available to employees in the retail, call centre and business parts of the organisation); and general performance improvement (regardless of role and in line with one or more strategic priorities). Designated brand Heroes act as champions for each strategic priority to ensure recognition and incentives are inclusive and attainable for all employees.

"Heroes" combines tangible rewards and opportunities to publically recognise employees, share success stories, and celebrate achievements. The program website was created as the hub for recording and viewing recognition activity. A tiered program of recognition and reward mechanisms from daily "business as usual" options to bi-annual, and annual, prestigious recognition events, with each level feeding the next, is clearly communicated to all employees.

RECOGNITION CHANNELS

Employees at all levels are able to send instant Hero Mail (e-cards) to thank or recognise a colleague for their work. With manager approval, any Bankwest employee may nominate another employee for behaviour that clearly supports one of the bank's strategic priorities.

Approved nominations are displayed on the Heroes Wall, a real-time feed of all recognition activity, which allows other employees to show their appreciation by clicking the "Great" button. The Bankwest Managing Director makes a weekly phone call to selected nominees to congratulate them on their achievements. Leaders of sales functions also have the opportunity to hand out instant recognition vouchers when they observe an employee displaying outstanding behaviors.

Employees are awarded "Hero Points", the program's single currency. Hero points may be accumulated and redeemed for rewards from the Heroes catalogue that includes a broad selection of products from leading brands in all major categories.

A SUPER (HERO) LAUNCH

The success of the program, in part, is due to the strategically planned and effective launch that involved executive and senior management. Pre-launch, an interactive digital manager brochure was delivered to ensure managers understood their critical role in creating the culture of recognition across Bankwest. Lunch 'n' Learn sessions were also hosted by business stakeholder groups to ensure leaders had a forum in which to ask questions about the program and their role in implementing it.

On the day of the launch, Bankwest leaders from the head office dressed as super heroes and handed out gifts to employees as they arrived at work. A screensaver was loaded onto the computer of every employee, introducing the faces of the program (the brand ambassadors dressed as super heroes) and encouraging them to visit the "Heroes" site. The site houses a video featuring the Bankwest Managing Director welcoming employees to the program and outlining its intent, together with an illustrative, animated video that strongly represents the 'Heroes' theme and steps through the intent and elements of the program in a fun, creative way. A user-experience recording, which addresses all elements of the "Heroes" site, was also made available via the intranet, which was especially important for employees working in remote locations.

New employees receive a "starter pack" that includes "Heroes" program information and invitations to view the "Heroes" welcome video and to access the user experience recording.

STRONG ENGAGEMENT. IMMEDIATE IMPACT.

In the first five months of the Bankwest "Heroes" program being introduced participation metrics showed high levels of engagement across the organisation.

- 82% of participants logged into the "Heroes" site
- 65% of participants earned reward points
- 67% (more than 3,400) employees had been recognised for their behaviour either with a Hero Mail or a recognition nomination
- 70% of managers and 31% of employees had placed recognition nominations

While the program is still in its infancy, evidence of Bankwest's new culture of recognition and collaboration can be seen in a variety of forums:

- "Heroes" successfully incorporates disparate organisational and reward activities under a single umbrella brand, eliminating administrative inefficiencies related to managing multiple programs.
- The program is driving a new behavioural direction. Achieving Bankwest's desired focus on the customer is evidenced by the fact the most used keywords in Hero nominations are "Customer" and "Team".
- "Heroes" is now a part of the Bankwest vernacular. The new culture of recognition is illustrated by the frequent inclusion of the terms "Hero Points", "Hero Mail", "That's worth heroing", and "I've heroed you" in formal staff meetings, manager-employee discussions, and informal employee conversations.