



How to Evaluate and Choose a Recognition Vendor



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What to Look For

Choosing the right recognition vendor is no small feat. Here are some things to consider in a partnership.

Cost

First, confirm that outsourcing is a better option than creating a recognition program in house. It is a good choice if you don't have the staff to run it, lack expertise, need new technology, and - of course - if you have a budget set aside.

Having a **budget** for recognition and engagement is crucial, but not the only element to consider. Avoid picking a vendor just because they offer the lowest price. Think about who will add the most value.

Compatibility

Ask about the recognition vendor's company values and goals. While they do not need to perfectly align with those of your organization, it is certainly helpful to have similarities in this regard. Building out the recognition program you want to see is more natural when the provider already relates to your culture.

Capabilities

It's important that the recognition provider you choose has the capabilities needed to meet your organization's desires. Try to determine what your needs are, then formulate questions. Some examples may include:

- **Does the vendor have a proven track record in providing the services your organization needs?**
- **How long has the vendor been in business?**
- **Do they have adequate staffing?**
- **Can the vendor meet your organization's requirements of multi-site and/or global?**
- **Do they work with companies of similar sizes and in similar industries?**

You may not be able to answer some of these questions right away, but you can typically gain more answers in a casual RFI (Request for Information) or more formal RFP (Request for Proposal).



Thought Leadership

Assess whether or not the vendor appears to be a thought leader in the recognition space. Expertise in the field should be apparent. There are many different forms of content to look out for that reflect thought leadership. Some of the thought leadership content forms you may observe are:

- Blogs
- Articles
- White papers
- Research studies
- Webinars
- Podcasts



Reporting & Communications

We hear phrase a lot, but communication truly is key. It is a green flag if they offer a designated point of contact. Find out how they will be communicating, how often, and what data they will report. It is helpful to be able to see reporting and results on a regular basis to see how your program is performing.

Training

Implementing a recognition program is one thing, but people need to know how to use it for it to gain traction and successfully engage employees. Training for leaders and other helpful resources are important. You need a core group of people who can start advocating for and utilizing the new program(s) in place. It will then “trickle down” as the rest of your employees follow by example.



Customer Service

As mentioned, having a designated point of contact is great. Having designated customer support is even better. Solid customer service can make or break a vendor experience.

Is customer support available via phone or only email? What hours are they available? What is the average response time? Will the support be available during the time zone/hours that you need it?

Information Security

As with any technology, managing an HR platform comes with risks. It is crucial to consider how vendors will take precautions to protect your intellectual property as well as maintain data integrity. Ensure that they are safe, secure, and compliant with company and local requirements.



References

Pay attention to what other current and past clients are saying about the provider. Other people's experiences can help you predict what yours would be like. Keep an eye out for recognition vendors with glowing reviews and a track record of providing high quality services.

Look referemces tp each of the considerations listed above. Certain aspects such as customer service, capabilities, and communications will be more apparent in reviews than others.



A woman with curly hair is sitting at a desk, writing on a piece of paper with a pen. She is looking down at her work. The background shows a corkboard with some papers pinned to it and a small vase with flowers. The entire image has a teal overlay.

Weighted Evaluation

There are structured processes that can aid in the decision-making processes, one of which involves a weighted point evaluation.



How to Use It

Set up an evaluation scale weighted by importance to help you determine which vendor might be the best fit for your organization. To utilize this process, follow these steps:

1 List criteria you want to see fulfilled by each recognition vendor you are evaluating.

2 Assign a point value to each of the criteria based on varying levels of importance.

3 Adjust as needed and total the points to 100.

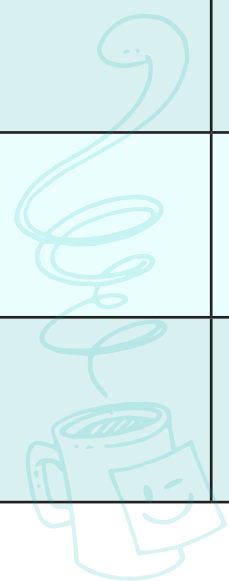
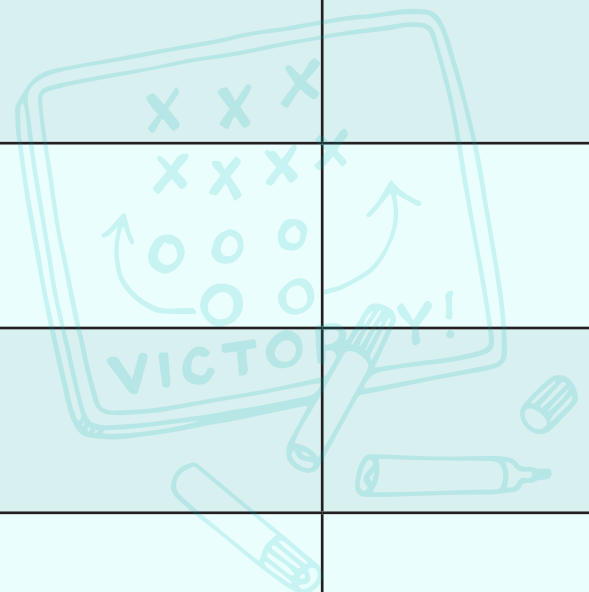
4 Have each person score separately to compare.

5 Add all points together, discuss differences, and select one of the highest rated vendors.

<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Points</i>	<i>Vendor A</i>	<i>Vendor B</i>	<i>Vendor C</i>
Culture fit	10	7	9	5
Customer service	25	23	23	20
Gift selection	15	15	12	14
Technology	15	7	12	10
References	20	16	20	15
Training included	15	12	13	14
TOTAL	100	80	89	78

Above is an example chart. The highest rated vendor is Vendor B. Keep in mind that the scoring is subjective and may vary by reviewer. We recommend having at least three or more people involved in the process. You will be able to compare opinions and discuss all of the differences after scoring separately.

Criteria	Points	Vendor A: RecogNation	Vendor B: _____	Vendor C: _____	Vendor D: _____	Vendor E: _____
TOTAL	100					



What's Next?

We help organizations create a program with a holistic approach to recognition. We've got everything from formal service awards to a digital platform for daily engagement.

We love enabling organizations to shine a light on all the moments that matter. Partner with us!



RECOGNATION

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