



Business challenge

Instead of relying on periodic reviews and awards ceremonies, how can companies give their teams immediate recognition for day-to-day achievements, and ensure that great work is never overlooked?

Transformation

The KangoGift Employee Recognition Platform, built on IBM® Cloud™ and Watson™ technologies, helps teams share feedback instantly and gives managers the insight they need to recognize and reward success.

Business benefits:

Creates

Creates a happy, positive workplace culture that helps to increase employee retention

80%

of employees at one client receive frequent praise via the KangoGift platform

Delivers

insight that helps managers recognize top performers and motivate teams

KangoGift

Building a positive workplace culture with AI-powered employee recognition

KangoGift works with organizations committed to creating outstanding corporate cultures. By tapping into the digital workplace, KangoGift offers simple and effective HR tools that help companies capture, recognize, reward, and amplify exemplary employee actions and performance.

“Employees get feedback instantly when they do good work. It’s much more motivating, and it opens up new lines of communication.”

Todd Horton
CEO
KangoGift

Share this



Driving cultural change

KangoGift recognized that for companies to outperform their competitors, their employees need to be 100 percent committed to the organization's goals. Keeping people happy and productive is a huge factor in overall success, reducing the costs of employee turnover, protecting investment in training, and helping to build long-tenured teams who are experts in their field.

CEO Todd Horton explains: "If people don't get frequent feedback on their work, it's easy for them to start feeling that their efforts aren't appreciated. And it's not enough to make a token effort to host an employee awards ceremony once a quarter. You need to embed employee recognition into all your day-to-day working processes to build a positive feedback loop where success is always recognized and rewarded in a timely manner."

Changing a company's approach to recognition is more than just a technical and process-related challenge—it requires cultural change too.



Horton comments: "It's common for companies to have a working environment where feedback is rare, which can make people feel awkward about thanking or praising their co-workers. Employees quickly come to see this experience as normal, and can be resistant to change—that's the root of the common attitude that 'people shouldn't expect praise for just doing their job.'

"But it's remarkable to see how quickly the atmosphere of a workplace can improve when recognition is built into the culture through our technology. It's a story we've seen repeated over and over again with our clients."

Recognizing achievement

KangoGift has developed a sophisticated employee recognition platform that integrates with existing HR and business systems, and applies cognitive technology to help companies capture, analyze and reward positive behaviors and achievements in the workplace.

The solution provides each employee with an intuitive web-based tool that they can use to message their coworkers to thank them for their help, provide feedback, or recognize an excellent piece of work.

The platform also analyzes and summarizes the content of these messages for managers, who can then choose to send additional recognition messages to deserving employees, and allocate rewards such as gift certificates. It tracks key dates and milestones, such as birthdays and work anniversaries, reminding managers to take the time to show their appreciation of loyalty and long service.

The core databases that support the KangoGift platform are hosted on [IBM® Cloud™ bare metal servers](#). The dedicated hardware gives KangoGift's clients absolute control over where their sensitive employee-related data

is stored, helping to minimize security and privacy concerns. Meanwhile, for components of the solution that involve number-crunching and analysis rather than data storage, KangoGift uses [IBM Cloud Virtual Servers](#) that can be spun up and down in an elastic manner to handle peaks and troughs in demand.

KangoGift also integrates with a variety of [IBM Watson™ APIs](#) to analyze the written feedback that employees log in the system. For example, it uses [IBM Watson® Natural Language Understanding](#) to identify keywords in unstructured text, showing the hot topics and trends in employee recognition messages. Meanwhile, [Watson Tone Analyzer](#) plays a similar role in analyzing the sentiment of each message. This helps managers identify successful projects and high-performing employees and teams, and ensure that they appreciate and reward them appropriately.

Finally, to understand how best to support individual employees, KangoGift is exploring the use of [IBM Watson Personality Insights](#) to help highlight differences in personalities and communication styles. For example, the Watson solution could help to indicate that one employee may need continuous praise and encouragement to perform at their best, while another may appreciate more targeted feedback.



Boosting positivity

Among clients who have already adopted the KangoGift platform, the vast majority have seen significant improvements in their working culture within the first year of deployment.

One client has seen participation in their employee engagement program increase to 93 percent since introducing KangoGift, while another has seen the percentage of employees who receive frequent praise rise to 80 percent.

“Employees get feedback instantly when they do good work,” Horton. “It’s much more motivating, and it opens up new lines of communication. Managers feel much more comfortable about giving constructive criticism, because they can balance it with praise. And because employees have an easy mechanism to give feedback to their peers, recognizing each other’s achievements becomes a normal part of everyday life.”

For senior leaders, KangoGift also provides insight that helps them track employee activity and sentiment over time, and ensure that the workforce as a whole remains happy and engaged.

Horton comments: “Over the course of a week, you might have hundreds of employees and managers giving feedback to each other. The solution can take all of the recognition messages and pick out the common themes and keywords in a word-cloud, so the management team can quickly understand who is getting recognized and which projects are attracting the most positive feedback. This not only gives executives new insight, it also shows employees that their good work won’t go unnoticed or unappreciated by senior management.”

Across all clients, KangoGift has noticed some interesting trends in recognition patterns as users get more comfortable with the platform. For example, there has been more than a 500 percent increase in the use of the word “team” in recognition messages, which might imply that successful collaboration becomes more prevalent in cultures where employees feel supported and recognized.

He concludes: “Ultimately, the KangoGift platform helps our clients nurture employee loyalty and trust, which keeps everyone aligned with the goals of the company and reduces the risk of employee attrition. If you work in a ‘just do it’ culture, then employee recognition might not seem important—but our clients’ experience proves that the little things you do every day really add up, and before long, you’ll see real positive change in the culture.”



“Because employees have an easy mechanism to give feedback to their peers, recognizing each other’s achievements becomes a normal part of everyday life.”

Todd Horton, CEO, KangoGift

Solution components

- IBM® Cloud™ bare metal servers
- IBM Cloud Virtual Servers
- IBM Watson™ Natural Language Understanding
- IBM Watson® Tone Analyzer
- IBM Watson Personality Insights

Take the next step

To learn more about IBM Cloud and IBM Watson solutions, please contact your IBM representative or IBM Business Partner, or visit ibm.com/cloud and ibm.com/watson

KangoGift works with organizations committed to creating outstanding corporate cultures. By tapping into the digital workplace, KangoGift offers simple and effective HR tools that help companies capture, recognize, reward, and amplify exemplary employee actions and performance. To learn more about KangoGift, please visit kangogift.com.

Connect with us



© Copyright IBM Corporation 2018. 1 New Orchard Road, Armonk, New York 10504-1722 United States. Produced in the United States of America, November 2018.

IBM, the IBM logo, ibm.com, IBM Cloud, IBM Watson, and Watson are trademarks of International Business Machines Corp., registered in many jurisdictions worldwide. Other product and service names might be trademarks of IBM or other companies. A current list of IBM trademarks is available on the web at “Copyright and trademark information” at ibm.com/legal/copytrade.shtml.

Not all offerings are available in every country in which IBM operates.

The performance data and client examples cited are presented for illustrative purposes only. Actual performance results may vary depending on specific configurations and operating conditions.

All client examples cited or described are presented as illustrations of the manner in which some clients have used IBM products and the results they may have achieved. Actual environmental costs and performance characteristics will vary depending on individual client configurations and conditions. Contact IBM to see what we can do for you. THE INFORMATION IN THIS DOCUMENT IS PROVIDED “AS IS” WITHOUT ANY WARRANTY, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING WITHOUT ANY WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY, FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE AND ANY WARRANTY OR CONDITION OF NON-INFRINGEMENT. IBM products are warranted according to the terms and conditions of the agreements under which they are provided.

It is the user’s responsibility to evaluate and verify the operation of any other products or programs with IBM products and programs.

KangoGift is not an IBM product or offering. KangoGift is sold or licensed, as the case may be, to users under KangoGift, Inc.’s terms and conditions, which are provided with the product or offering. Availability, and any and all warranties, services and support for KangoGift is the direct responsibility of, and is provided directly to users by, KangoGift, Inc.

The client is responsible for ensuring compliance with laws and regulations applicable to it. IBM does not provide legal advice or represent or warrant that its services or products will ensure that the client is in compliance with any law or regulation.



68021868USEN-00

