

Dallas innovators

As Seen In... *Inc. Magazine, March 2010*

Increasing Employee Engagement in the New Economic Environment

In today's business climate, managers with little cash available to make employees feel valued are learning what savvy CEOs and HR leaders have known for decades: It takes more than pay to get the most out of a workforce.

Five years ago, RRI Energy's Director of Human Resources, Laura J. Moody, decided to take a low-risk approach to increase employee engagement, productivity and performance. Her biggest challenge was finding what would motivate a group of professionals that included Gen-X females, Boomer males and everyone in between. "We didn't feel as if we knew what they would be interested in, didn't know exactly how to measure results, and didn't want to spend a great deal of time implementing a major plan," says Moody. "Online Rewards brought us the support we knew we needed and much more."



Founded in 2002, Dallas-based Online Rewards goes far beyond what typical fulfillment-house incentive programs provide. Led by a strong management team with backgrounds in *Fortune* 100 Internet consulting, the U.S. government and large-scale e-commerce platforms, Online Rewards gives its clients the technologies, tools and processes to develop sophisticated, private-labeled reward programs.

"We translate positive behavior change objectives into a rewards program framework that employees and managers can understand. Then we encourage positive behavior change through an almost limitless array of reward options," explains Online Rewards' President Michael Levy.

According to Moody, the level of support Levy and his staff provide makes RRI Energy's "Power Bucks" program a great success. "Online Rewards are truly partners. They made it possible to set in place a program that is unique to our needs and flexible enough to address the diverse interests of our employees with high quality, brand-name merchandise. It's not only hassle-free for my department, but it's easy for leadership, management and employees to recognize each other at a moment's notice for living our company's values."

"Managers are often daunted at undertaking this potentially game-changing task," says Levy. "We manage the time-consuming technical aspects for our customers, and let the HR managers and CEOs be the heroes to their employees and their stakeholders."

In addition to RRI Energy, companies such as BMW, Reliant, Phillips, DeWalt, Harley-Davidson, MasterBrands, YMCA, Ace Cash Express, Benjamin Moore and many others utilize Online Rewards' services and expertise to build their own custom programs. Clients use the Online Rewards programs to elicit a variety of positive behavior changes that lead to improvements in productivity, revenue growth, wellness, safety, profitability and sales, among others.

And one more satisfied client: Online Rewards itself. The company's own internal employee program is called "MBO Rewards." The company converted its major annual goals into a list of key objectives and assigned a team leader to each objective. Every team is evaluated monthly and awarded based on performance.

"Given the way many U.S. corporations have handled their payroll reduction strategies, I believe we are in the early stage of a major and positive shift in reward and employee recognition," says Levy. "The considerable opportunities to drive positive behavior change and employee engagement necessitate the evolution of reward programs. That's where we can help by equipping companies with the tools, technology and expertise to help realize their goals."

DALLAS, TX
CINCINNATI, OH
888-826-0783
online-rewards.com

