

Why gifts are employers' secret weapon for engaging remote workers!

By Evelina Nedlund | Employee Benefits News

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With a large part of the workforce remote and many workers furloughed, sending employees a gift can foster employee engagement and help companies show appreciation during a time when teams can't meet in-person.

"We're in a time where so many people are working from home and where so many people are generally feeling disconnected," says Sara Rodell, founder of Loop & Tie, a corporate gifting platform. "Gifting is a wonderful way to make sure that somebody feels acknowledged, and counter that feeling of separation and loneliness that I think a lot of people are experiencing right now."

Loop & Tie lets employers choose a price point and design a personalized card. Employees can then choose their own gifts through the platform, ranging from coffee makers and olive oil, to plants, pillows, robes and hair and body sets. Recipients also

have the option to donate the gift or choose an item that has a social impact or give-back component to it. The company has seen a 152% increase in business over the last year, doubling quarter over quarter during the pandemic.

“The idea with choice is that when you empower somebody with the ability to select something that is meaningful to them, you’re creating an interaction that’s memorable and ends up being a part of their lifestyle,” Rodell says. “This creates a really nice moment between the gift giver and the recipient.”

Employers have been challenged with connecting and engaging with their employees throughout the pandemic and have turned to new benefit offerings to promote workplace culture and employee well-being. Employers are turning to a variety of options like free fitness classes, grocery and food delivery and access to streaming services like Netflix to engage with employees. According to a recent survey by Staples, 62.3% of employees said they would accept a lower salary in exchange for better workplace perks.

Loop & Tie has worked with 100 businesses — including companies like Visa, Greystar and Salesforce — across sales, marketing, tech and sports industries and has delivered more than 200,000 gifts from 400 brands. The Loop & Tie platform can help employers optimize budgets, save time on picking out gifts and gain insights and analytics on employee engagement data.

From an HR and employee retention perspective, employees will remember how their employer treated them during the pandemic, says Benish Shah, chief growth officer of Loop & Tie.

“As we move into a new phase and interviews start up again, a question that will be asked very commonly by prospective employees is how the company handles a pandemic and what special things they do for their team members during that time,” she says. “I think being able to say that they provided gifts — that allowed their employees to choose what they needed and what they wanted during the time — will be something that is a very positive note to be able to talk about.”