

Evergreen Home Loans

Creating an Award-Winning Culture

“Our CEO loves YouEarnedIt because it’s so popular — employees rave about it all the time.” – Regina Angulo, Human Resources Manager

Challenges

- **Time-Consuming Service Awards:** The company’s service award programs were carried out manually, making them a cost center for Human Resources.
- **Inconsistent Employee Recognition:** Recognition levels and approaches differed between departments, managers and locations. Engagement surveys showed some job functions didn’t feel recognized and valued for their work.
- **Compliance Training:** As compliance standards change, employees need to be updated. The company needed higher participation levels in employee training and development.

Approach

- Automate service awards on the YouEarnedIt platform.
- Create a consistent culture of recognition by launching YouEarnedIt’s real-time, peer-to-peer, public recognition platform across the company.
- Reinforce core values and company culture by publicly tagging employee recognition with company core values.
- Gamify compliance training participation using YouEarnedIt Behavior Bonus incentives.

Profile

- Evergreen Home Loans originates, funds, and services customer home loans and provides mortgage solutions for its business partners, banks, and credit unions. They are committed to providing a “WOW” experience for customers and the Evergreen Family of Associates. Their powerful culture has gained multiple prestigious “Best Places to Work” awards.
- **Size:** 750 employees
- **Location:** 64 Locations across Washington, Oregon, Idaho, California, Nevada, and Arizona

Results

*Drastically **reduced admin costs** — the company estimates it now saves a part-time position’s pay worth of admin time.*

***23,000+** pieces of employee recognition sent since launch.*

*Significant increase in **corporate program participation** — compliance training is seeing the company’s fastest-ever completion rate.*

*Improved corporate brand — Company culture recognized with multiple **Best Places to Work** awards.*

Evergreen Home Loans: Creating an Award-Winning Culture

As an independent mortgage company, Evergreen Home Loans' culture is their big differentiator. It helps keep the talented employees who give a level of service that brings customers back for loan after loan.

"We've always had a great culture," says Regina Angulo, Human Resources Manager "But, in 2016, we realized that not all of our employees were feeling recognized."

Evergreen has branch offices spread throughout the western states. While some functions of loan processing are centralized, recognition wasn't centralized before the company implemented YouEarnedIt. Each manager was in charge of implementing recognition programs for their employees. While a customer-facing employee in one branch may get a lot of recognition – another person in the same job at a different branch, or the back office staff may not get the same level – even if their work was just as good. Staff service awards were manually done through HR and may take time to send. Despite having good overall engagement – a 2016 employee engagement survey clearly demonstrated that many employees weren't feeling appreciated enough. To combat that, Evergreen Home Loans implemented YouEarnedIt.

"We wanted to give managers an additional tool to extend our family feeling across departments. It's gone far beyond that initial goal."

– Regina Angulo, HR Manager

Since implementing YouEarnedIt, Evergreen employees have sent over 23,000 pieces of recognition. It hasn't just connected employees and managers. It's connected teams in different locations or departments that support each other every day. "We've always had an open culture, but YouEarnedIt has taken this to a whole new level. Ever since we started talking about recognition, the Loan Delivery team has started sending out notices recognizing back office Processor employees who work in a completely different location. YouEarnedIt prompted that way of getting more creative with recognition."

"I'm surprised at how little I think about rewards budgeting and administering our rewards program now. We're saving at least a part-time position each year due to fewer administrative costs, time and labor, and rewards budget savings."

– Regina Angulo, HR Manager

On top of recognition, Evergreen has started using YouEarnedIt to gamify initiatives like wellness and compliance training. The company created a YouEarnedIt Behavior Bonus that rewarded points to the first 10 employees to take a training. As a result, training was completed in record time.

Since implementing YouEarnedIt in 2016, Evergreen's Glassdoor reviews have gone from 4.2 stars to a nearly perfect 4.7 rating. During the same period, the company won a number of prestigious awards for their culture. Seattle Magazine named them the #1 Best Company to Work For in 2017. Fortune named them one of the best small-to-medium size companies to work for in 2016 and 2017 along with one of the best workplaces for women. Puget Sound Business Journal ranked them #2 on the list of Washington's best workplaces for both 2016 and 2017.

Evergreen's culture comes from core values like Family, Integrity, Fun, and Growth that are important to the executive team and spread to employees with each piece of recognition. The YouEarnedIt Platform helps streamline their efforts to maintain an award-winning culture in these areas, making it easy to keep the company culture great while benefitting their bottom line.