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# People Practices Lens: Creating Employee Buzz

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always enjoy hearing about how small businesses think outside the box in their marketing strategies to create buzz and, through so doing, win the business of customers or clients that might not otherwise have known about them.

*Toilet Paper Entrepreneur* author Mike Michalowicz shares an example of this he came across today on his blog. Almost two years ago I shared another example here, implemented by the president of one of our profile of success companies.

To create a more memorable, harmonious, and productive workplace culture, you might think about how you can do the same with your internal, employee engagement strategies. Some of our 2011 Top Small Company Workplace award applicants have done this type of thinking, and have acted upon their decisions as part of an overall organizational strategic plan that includes performance optimization through people practices.

Two examples follow, based on their response to our award application question "Which employee recognition initiative have you found to be most effective?"

**Company Stats:** 8 years old, IT services, 58 employees

**Initiative:** *"Service Awards (length of service) always create a **buzz** and are a good retention tool. We also get great comments on our award dinners that we do twice a year for those that have been recognized by their customer for great service."*

**Results:** 2010 revenue of \$9.1 million; average employee tenure of 3.2 years

**Company Stats:** 14 years old, Marketing/Advertising, 30 employees

**Initiative:** *"While our Champagne Thursday events serve as monthly reminders of the great work we do and the great people we have here, the awards that inspire the most reaction each year are the MVP and Teammate of the Year awards. Employees are genuinely excited for the colleagues who win at the end of each year, and we think that speaks to how much our employees truly care and like to celebrate one another. It's a meaningful award, speaking to a whole year's body of work, that ends up with each of the employees immortalized as a bobblehead. There's always a **buzz** (or a loud guffaw) when the bobbleheads arrive each year as everyone gathers to compare the bobblehead likeness to the real deal of the MVP and the Teammate of the Year."*

**Results:** 2010 revenue of \$3.7 million; average employee tenure of 3.5 years

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