

FALL 2021

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4imprint[®]

How to find employees

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Thank-you gifts for employees

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4imprint[®]

Virtual company holiday parties

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I personally view empathy as the single most important skill you can develop.



Kevin,
with 4imprint
30 years

That's because it can help build bridges, connect people and uncover new opportunities.

In times of disruption and change, empathy is particularly important. As the pandemic unfolded, all of us were called to see things through others' eyes. Perhaps that's why our customers are sharing so many stories involving empathy in this issue of amplify®.

In our [Cover Story](#) on hiring employees, we hear from two employers about the importance of engaging existing employees in the hiring process and helping new employees feel welcome. Our [Swag Master](#) shows how continuing to appreciate employees matters—long after new hires are on board.

In [Lasting Impressions](#), we hear from a community organization that demonstrated empathy when employees needed to shift

to a hybrid work model—and how that influenced the laptop bags it selected.

And, in our [Trend](#) story, a local government agency describes how it put itself in the shoes of firefighters and first responders when planning a virtual company holiday party for Valentine's Day—right down to the totes it selected.

If empathy can be the difference between success and failure, we hope these stories will inspire you to consider what you might learn from putting yourselves in the shoes of a team member, customer, volunteer or other stakeholder.

We can't wait to hear what you discover!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kevin'.

Kevin Lyons-Tarr, CEO
4imprint

Are you finding clever new ways to reach customers? Tell us your story.
Email 4ideas@4imprint.com.



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Feeding people, not landfills

amplify® offers an unmatched glimpse into real-life ways you can use promotional products to gain remarkable results.

We'd love to hear your feedback! Please send questions, comments or concerns to 4ideas@4imprint.com.



Finding new staff members is one of the toughest challenges organizations face today. Customers share tips in our [cover story](#).

Meet this month's featured contributors



Mary Curtin

Senior VP Administration
4imprint

Organizations everywhere are struggling to find new staff members—but the tried-and-true methods are in need of some updating. Mary, with 4imprint 26 years, offers suggestions for finding and keeping new employees in our [Cover Story](#).



Suzanne Worwood

Senior VP Merchandising
4imprint

Searching for that perfect holiday gift to share with customers? On the hunt for that perfect end-of-year thank-you item for your staff? In the [Product Highlight](#) story, Suzanne, with 4imprint since 2000, shares gifts for everyone on your list.



David Vignali

Social Media Specialist
4imprint

David Vignali can't wait for you to discover this issue's [Swag Master](#)—a company that's making it possible to show your staff the gratitude they deserve with just a few clicks. David, with 4imprint 7 years, is always on the hunt for the next Swag Master as he coordinates 4imprint's social media communities.



You!

Getting your staff and customers ready for the coming cold snap, but can't seem to find that just-right gift or giveaway? In this issue's [Overheard](#), customers are sharing pictures of the branded outerwear everyone loves to wear—and sharing their #SwaggingRights® stories.

#SwaggingRights®

Branded outerwear warms heads and hearts



firescapeart

Downtown Oshkosh's 3rd Annual Cocoa Crawl is tomorrow! ❤️ Check out our cute hats from [@4imprint](#)



Barb

Gave these as Xmas gifts to my clients. Very warm beanie so perfect for my clients walking their pups and dogs through the cold weather months.



transitionhomestaging

Our new wearable that our team will be sporting while staging properties. [#4imprint](#)



Jane

Celebrating Women in Construction Week with the Crossland heather fleece Jacket. We love the softness of these jackets!!

4

Katrina

We purchased these jackets for the staff in our school district. They were a huge hit! They are a comfortable mid-weight jacket. The quality was great as well.



griffins.journey
The new Griffin's Journey merch ambassadors 🥰❤️ #4imprint #farmlife

4

Jeff

I ordered these beanies as a thank you to the athletes I coach for a blessed first year of full-time coaching. Many are now using them daily to stay warm when outside training during the winter months. I've received a number of comments about them being warm enough to keep warm but not so heavy that they collect moisture to the point of becoming cold late in a workout.



Check out our Pinterest® boards for [branded beanies](#), [custom sweatshirts](#) and other [branded outerwear](#) that will keep your staff and customers warm this season.



How to find employees

By Joshua Grover-David Patterson

Discovering and welcoming new staff





While many companies spent 2020 experiencing reductions in their employment needs, [Silgan Plastics Inc.](#) was as busy as ever.

“Among other things, we were making plastic bottles for hand sanitizer,” said Human Resource Business Partner Kim Allman.

That meant company leaders were frequently asking themselves how to find new employees. This year, those needs are changing again—for Silgan Plastics Inc. and seemingly every other organization. One recent survey showed that [42% of business owners had jobs that couldn't be filled](#), with 91% stating they had few or no qualified applicants. For Silgan Plastics Inc., part of the challenge came from the loss of one of its best recruitment opportunities, a local job fair that has been on hold.

“Most years, we take part in a local job fair,” Allman said.

For now, they're trying a classic hiring technique—getting hiring recommendations from current staff.

Ask staff to spread the word

Much like Silgan Plastics, Inc., 48% of businesses report high-quality hires come from team referrals. That's just one of the great reasons to let your employees know you're trying to find new team members.

“Our team members are our best source of referrals,” said Mary Curtin, Senior Vice President of Administration, 4imprint.

In addition to asking staff members to keep an eye out for new team members, 4imprint has also invited staff members to share “We're Hiring” signs on their personal lawns.



79%

of job seekers use social media when looking for work.

Make your brand stand out

Employees today aren't just thinking about what kinds of jobs they want, they're also taking into account who they want to work for. Studies show [75% of staff members consider an employer's brand before they apply](#). To get potential staff excited to join the team, [create posts and pages on your website that share:](#)

Values: Show potential staff members what you care about by sharing corporate culture, ideals and the volunteer activities/nonprofits your organization supports.

Story: Offer details that start with your founding and end with future plans.

Differentiators: Explain how your vision, mission, goals, products and services set you apart.

Emphasize social media recruiting

If a successful business is about "location, location, location," finding potential

employees is often about being where candidates are looking for their next opportunity. According to one study, [79% of job seekers use social media when looking for work](#).

Sharing open positions via organic and paid social media posts is step one. To [get even more bang for your job-posting buck:](#)

Share daily life posts: [What matters in the life of your organization?](#) Post pictures of someone working at home, in the office or on the front lines. Share special occasions and everyday events.

Make it easy to apply: Making your application simple and mobile-friendly ensures no one decides to apply "later."

Respond to people who reach out: When you share a job posting, it's inevitable that people will have questions. Responding quickly to potential recruits will give them the information and encouragement to apply.

4imprint has asked its team for assistance in sharing their stories via social media.

“We’ll ask staff to share their stories on Yammer®, our internal social media network,” Curtin said. “And we’ll get permission to share those stories to help attract new staff through external social media.”

Connect with nonprofits and universities

Universities and organizations that serve veterans, refugees, the homeless and other groups are [frequently looking to connect with businesses](#) to find work and internship opportunities. By connecting with these organizations, you can often expand your pool of potential staff members.

Search for soft skills over hard skills

With [97% of managers stating that soft skills are either as important or more important than hard skills](#), keep in mind that your next ideal staff member might just be a few weeks of training away. Instead of seeking experience first and soft skills second, flip the script and look for great employees who are eager to learn a new industry.

The search for soft skills has helped [Pella Windows & Doors of Boston](#) fill multiple positions.

“We’ve definitely been searching for people who have a hunger for learning,” said Administrative Assistant Janice Potvin.

Improve the onboarding process

Keep in mind that finding a great candidate is only the first step to keeping a great candidate. New employees who experience a great onboarding process—including [setting up meet and greets](#), creating a schedule, and setting plans for the coming year—are [18 times more committed to their organization](#). At 4imprint, the pandemic created an opportunity to use video to help with both the hiring and training processes.



Set up meet and greets to create a great onboarding experience.

“Before we perform an interview, we’ll sometimes have the interviewee watch a video that details the day-to-day work they’ll be doing,” said Curtin. “It lets us and them know if they’ll be comfortable in the position up front.”

Once they’re hired, candidates will then watch training videos before receiving individual or small-group coaching.

“Having them learn the basics of the job up-front makes it easier for them to ask questions and make the most of their coaching time,” said Curtin.

Create a community of care

In addition to creating a great onboarding experience, it’s also important to know how to welcome new employees—and make a regular habit of letting them know they’re appreciated.

“Everyone gets a bag filled with swag,” said Potvin. In fact, she jokingly refers to herself as the ‘swag fairy.’

The bag contains multiple branded employee gifts, including a [mug](#). The onboarding care extends far beyond the first day or week, with the team sending congratulatory cards for births and buying lunch and pastries for the company on a regular basis.

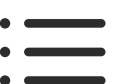


Welcome new employees with branded promotional items.

Today’s tactics pull in top recruits

In the end, knowing how to find employees may be all about sharing—whether it’s information, your brand, new opportunities, or care for your current staff. And even as the job marketplace continues to shift, that sharing is sure to lead to one great new staff member after another. [4](#)

Looking for more information about this topic? Email 4ideas@4imprint.com with inquiries.



PRODUCT HIGHLIGHT

Holiday business gifts 2021

By Suzanne Worwood

Presents to build a stronger
presence in your recipients' lives



Nearly two-thirds of companies use holiday business gifts to nurture relationships with their customers. What's more, over 60% of organizations that offer gifts to staff do it during the holiday season. These corporate holiday gifts feature beanies, blankets, tech items, and other gifts sure to leave a warm smile.

Logoed coolers that go the extra mile

The [Crossland® Journey Cooler Tote](#) is the corporate holiday gift that doesn't stop. It can be unrolled to hold 30 cans instead of the usual 24—which means your customers or team members can bring extra food and beverages for winter vacations and summer barbecues.

Toast another year with branded drinkware

The [Corkcicle® Vacuum Canteen](#) helps keep a hot drink hot or a cold drink cold for hours on end. It pairs well with hot chocolate, coffee and wine—among others. It's sure to be a favorite beverage holder for seasons to come.



Give high-end corporate gifts during the holiday season.



Your thank-you is loud and clear with branded ear buds

High-end Bluetooth® [Skullcandy® Jib True Wireless Ear Buds](#) are a perfect gift for anyone who needs to be cord-free during online meetings and phone calls, or while listening to their favorite podcast.



Skullcandy® Jib True Wireless Ear Buds



Get comfortable with these custom blankets.

They'll feel warmed by gratitude with this logoed blanket

The [Field & Co. RPET Sherpa Blanket](#) offers a cozy chenille top and teddy bear bottom, making it the blanket they'll reach for any time they feel a chill. Bonus: It's made from 100% recycled materials.



Field & Co. RPET Sherpa Blanket

Beanies keep your thanks top of mind

If you're looking for a gift that will cap off your gift list, check out the [Atlantis Shore Cable Knit Beanie](#). Knitted from REPREVE®, a performance fiber made from recycled materials, these beanies are easy to mail with a holiday greeting.

Atlantis Shore Cable Knit Beanie



Show appreciation with personalized gifts.

Add an extra layer of gratitude with branded outerwear

For customers and team members who deserve special recognition, the [Under Armour® Hustle Fleece Hoodie](#) and [Under Armour® Hustle Fleece Full-Zip Hoodie](#) deliver. Versatile and comfortable, they add a layer of thanks to casual workdays and weekend outings.

Under Armour® Hustle Fleece Full-Zip Hoodie



Under Armour® Hustle Fleece Hoodie



Create a memorable connection

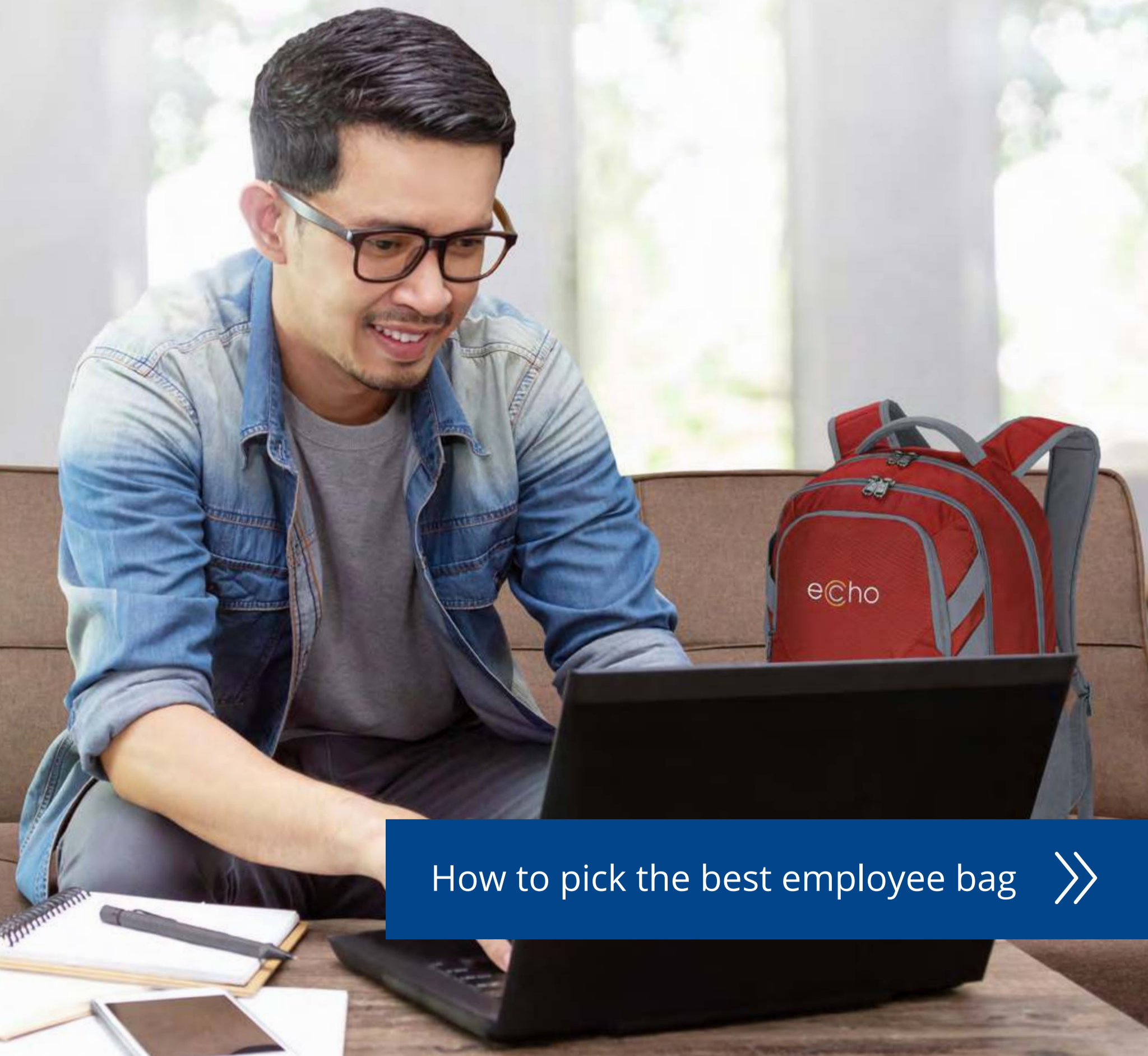
Holiday business gifts make the holidays merry and bright while keeping connections alive for years to come. 📌

Looking for more information about this topic? Email 4ideas@4imprint.com with inquiries.



Keeping teammates connected

By Joshua Grover-David Patterson



How to pick the best employee bag





In times of crisis, [United Community Action Partnership](#) steps up, helping ensure that people in need can weather the storm. With an overall mission of empowering individuals and strengthening communities, the organization knew it needed to move quickly to assist during the pandemic.

“We received some COVID-19 funding that we needed to get out to people in need,” Family Services Director Angela Larson said.

The United Community Action Partnership emergency-housing team quickly got up to speed. They added staff and equipped everyone with laptops so they could work from home (or anywhere else), as they assisted people needing housing stability.

“We frequently work with people who don’t have a phone or access to the internet ... so, we would always have one person at the office staffing those programs. We would rotate who needed to be at home and who needed to be at the office.”

Key to making the plan work: Employees needed [branded laptop bags](#) that would allow them to transition easily from the office to home and back—a new experience for many.

“We had to ramp up our services,” Larson said. “Quite a few of our staff members didn’t have laptops before. And we needed to make sure we had the gear in place to protect the laptops.”

The bag also had another important mission: team-building.

“The imprint on the bags helped our staff remember they were part of a team, even though they weren’t seeing each other in person every day,” Larson said.

So, what's the secret to selecting the perfect branded bag? These four tips will help you choose!

Tip #1: Think about how staff will use the bag

When it comes to team bags, think digital first. If your team will be toting laptops, headphones, chargers and other gear, consider a branded laptop bag. By contrast, if your team simply needs to get a few mission-critical items from place to place, a [tote bag](#) may be the best office bag for their needs.

United Community Action Partnership knew its team needed to transport and protect laptops and other gear. For assignments like this, bags such as the [Verve Checkpoint-Friendly Laptop Messenger Bag](#) do the job flawlessly.



Verve Checkpoint-Friendly Laptop Messenger Bag

Your logo makes regular check-ins with team members.

“A lot of our multilingual staff members were more easily able to travel from one office to another as needed,” Larson said.

Tip #2: Note ALL the add-ons

For many organizations, a bag that holds a laptop and power cable is a lightweight, easy-to-manage option. But this can also [create a multi-bag situation](#), where employees grab extra bags whenever they need to change locations. This can result in misplaced items or forgotten equipment.

Consider asking your staff what they might need to carry on a regular basis and pick your bag accordingly. Items could include:

- ✓ Mouse
- ✓ Keys or key fobs
- ✓ Credit cards or wallet
- ✓ Writing utensils
- ✓ Notebooks or padfolios
- ✓ Phones
- ✓ Electronic tablets
- ✓ Ear buds or a headset

When you have a complete list, you can easily choose the right-sized tote to meet your team's needs.

Tip #3: Know where your bag is headed

Once you've determined what needs to go into the office bag, it's time to think about where it'll go and how often.

[Laptop backpacks](#) can be a great choice when staff will be walking long distances. People who travel overnight might prefer a [duffel](#) with space for clothes, toiletries and other work gear.

It's also a good idea to consider the elements—like whether the bag needs to be waterproof or reinforced at the bottom.

Tip #4: Determine what your brand should do

For United Community Action Partnership, the brand served as a reminder: We are all on the same team. To amp the team theme of your bag, consider a bag style that will stand out. That helps reinforce the team story that, together, we are part of something unique.

If you prefer your bags to serve as a billboard for your organization, choose a color from your brand palette, upsize your logo or add it in a contrasting color to make it stand out. These subtle tweaks can help turn a simple branded bag from functional to fun and make it a conversation starter in the process.



Carry your mission everywhere

As United Community Action Partnership experienced, one bag can check multiple business boxes.

“These bags made it possible for our staff to carry the equipment they needed, and the logo reminded them of the team on a daily basis,”
Larson said.

After all, the best employee bag is the one that helps you and your team accomplish your goals. [4](#)

Looking for more information about this topic? Email 4ideas@4imprint.com with inquiries.



Thank-you gifts for employees

Staff appreciation is just a few clicks away

[The Culture Club](#) takes the power of recognizing employees and simplifies it. By creating subscription boxes that arrive on staff doorsteps on a quarterly basis, the organization makes sending regular thank-you gifts for employees a snap. With this unique approach to showing teams consistent gratitude, it captured the Swag Master title.

★ Putting the power of gratitude in managerial hands

The Culture Club understands that regular praise is the best kind of praise, with nearly two-thirds of employees stating they [won't start searching for another job if they get recognized](#) on a frequent basis. Its service creates a win-win scenario, with staff members getting fun and useful gifts and managers saving the time it would take to create perfect thank-you gifts for staff on a regular basis.

★ Every shipment of gratitude offers themed fun

Every box doesn't just bring fun—it brings staff thank-you gifts that fit the moment,



humor included. For example, a Halloween-timed box include gifts resembling pumpkins and ghosts, with a [mug](#) that said, “2020: Now That Was Scary.”

★ The gift of gratitude

From celebrating holidays to saying, “Bon voyage!” with travel boxes, The Culture Club gives organizations a powerful way to show their appreciation. With every employee thank-you gift, organizations let their teams know just how much they're valued.

TREND

Virtual company holiday parties

By Joshua Grover-David Patterson

Tips for corporate holiday party fun





The [Village of Merton](#) takes an out-of-the-box approach to its holiday gathering. Every year, it avoids the “usual” holiday season. Instead, the municipal office hosts a Valentine’s Day thank-you dinner for Fire department and EMS staff and their significant others. In 2021, they took the event virtual.

“First Responders’ jobs take them away from their family at any time,” said Julie Ofori-Mattmuller, deputy clerk/treasurer. “Birthday parties, Christmas, or any important event in their lives. So, when COVID-19 hit, we all asked, ‘What are we going to do?’”

Creative sparks started flying. Branded holiday gifts added fuel to the inspiration fires—and planning for the virtual company party was underway. Prepared food, including steak and potatoes, were tucked inside an [XL Insulated Shopping Tote](#). Everything from salad to candles to wine were added to a [Big Thunder Tote](#).

“People pulled up, called or texted in, and we had runners take out their order,” said Ofori-Mattmuller.

To give the virtual gathering a “together” feel, planners distributed a QR code linking to a music playlist. Participants sent in selfies and a staff member created an after-party picture show of their meal to distribute to everyone so they could watch what their colleagues’ Valentine’s dinner was like. “It was so nice to hear back from them that this event really meant a lot to them,” said Ofori-Mattmuller.

Get ready to promote with branded reusable totes!





With only [23% of organizations planning a holiday party](#) in 2020, many organizations are looking for a fun way to create their own virtual company holiday party in 2021. We've got a few tips that will help you bring your team together (while apart) at your next holiday gathering.

Tip #1: Give your gathering a goal

Creating a new kind of event provides an opportunity to think about why you hold one—and build your new gathering around that theme. Your virtual event can:

- Thank staff for their hard work.
- Celebrate company achievements.
- Create networking opportunities.
- Give people a chance to have fun and relax.

Knowing your “why” makes it easier to achieve your “how.”

Tip #2: Take staff needs into account

While eliminating travel time and letting people meet via monitor might seem simpler, it adds fresh challenges. Kids and pets may want to join the fun—whether or not a babysitter is available.

[To simplify planning, consider:](#)

- Holding the virtual gathering during business hours to ensure max participation.
- Making it an all-family party so kids can participate in games or crafts instead of having to stay out of view of the cameras.
- Sending a gift or gift basket to all staff members and holding a short thank-you and opening ceremony online just before or after work hours.

The [Chemol Company, Inc.](#) in Greensboro, North Carolina chose to simplify gift-giving and gathering to ensure its staff members knew just how much they were appreciated, without holding a traditional holiday event.

“In past years we’ve held holiday gatherings for the staff,” said Rhonda Rice, an executive administrative assistant. They also handed out branded holiday gifts or gift boxes, with past presents including a [Roll-Up Beach Blanket with Pillow](#).

Last year, instead of an in-person corporate holiday gathering, shift leaders handed out the gifts to their teams. Each one contained a letter written by the president of the company that shared the organization’s appreciation.

For organizations who decide to do something similar, holding a virtual countdown where everyone opens their cards or gifts simultaneously is a great way to “gather” for a celebratory moment.

Add fun to your holiday gifts.



Tip #3: Set a date early

Like any other holiday season, people appreciate the ability to plan ahead. Make people aware of the date weeks—or even months—in advance so they’re able to manage any conflicts. You can also check local event calendars to avoid obvious conflicts with community events.



Tip #4: Bring the fun—virtually!

While the idea of a virtual company holiday party might sound like just another screen meeting, there are a variety of ways to bring in-person fun to an in-home gathering. [Below are some ideas that offer holiday cheer regardless of location.](#)



Hold an ugly sweater

contest: This classic holiday staple can be simple or elaborate, with participants [showing off their sweaters live on camera](#) or posting “fashion shoots” of their sweater. You could have live voting during the event. (Bonus idea: Have them dress up a family pet instead—or to match.)



Run a cooking or craft class:

Staff members can learn to create a holiday treat or craft project either in-person or from the comfort of their own homes with the help of [colored pencils](#), paints or other art supplies sent in advance.



Create a scavenger hunt:

Send people through their home, the office, or outdoors by building a scavenger hunt that creates socially distanced fun.



Host a holiday reading:

Have staff members [take turns reading a holiday classic](#), like The Polar Express or How the Grinch Stole Christmas. Staff can just enjoy story time or have people vote for the best reader and offer an [ornament](#) as a prize.

Safe holiday gatherings show that you care

A virtual company holiday party can be just as fun as an in-person gathering—and comes with extra advantages. For the heroes of the Village of Merton, a virtual presentation means team members can view the event again and again. And gift bags will remind them of the organization’s drive-thru holiday celebration every time they use them. **4**

Looking for more information about this topic? Email 4ideas@4imprint.com with inquiries.

Colored Pencil & Sharpener Set



Jade Crystal Ornament



Feeding people, not landfills

Acknowledging food rescuers with uniform caps

Rescuing Leftover Cuisine bridges organizations with excess food and groups that provide meals to people experiencing food insecurity. Hundreds of volunteer food rescuers help transport five million meals' worth of nourishment. As a thank-you, the organization provided logoed caps volunteers can use as a uniform. Now, that's a nourishing partnership!



*Note: 4imprint is a sponsor
of Rescuing Leftover Cuisine*

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Check out past issues.



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Spring 2021



Winter 2021



Fall 2020

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