

SUMMER 2019

amplify

4imprint®

Promotional products.

Remarkable results.

Powerful partnerships

Cool tech giveaways
for the home

Gift giving just got smarter

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Supporting our valued veterans

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from military giveaways

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4imprint

Few successes happen on the first try.

More often, people will see an opportunity, take a swing at it, fall short and learn from the experience.



Kevin,
with 4imprint
28 years

That, in and of itself, is a win. Their next attempt will reflect the lessons they learned. The next outcome will be stronger. And, their learning process will go on and on—until the winning idea is well-developed and ready for launch.

When organizations send a message that it is OK to fail and failure isn't something to sweep under the rug, people are willing to try new things.

And that's where the innovation comes in.

In our [Lasting Impressions](#) story, we discuss the business benefits of workplace safety programs and talk with a company that took a new approach to making its workplace safer—with promising results.

Likewise, in our [Cover](#) story, we'll look at how two educational institutions are piloting new ways to engage alumni in both recruitment and student retention.

The ideas help alumni capitalize on their knowledge of the institutions and allow them to make meaningful connections with the next generation of students. That's a partnership with mutual benefits.

Perhaps one of these success stories will spark your next innovation ... or the next iteration on your path to a winning idea.

Happy innovating!

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

Kevin Lyons-Tarr, CEO, 4imprint

P.S.—Speaking of opportunity, read how one organization built safety into its company culture to turn negative events into teachable moments. Check out the story on [page 17](#).

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amplify[®]

Promotional products. Remarkable results.

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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.



Businesses grow stronger when they partner with schools and their alumni. See how to use school promotional products to make those connections.

Meet this month's featured contributors



Suzanne Worwood
Senior VP Merchandising
4imprint

Americans love to be connected. In this month's [Product Highlight](#), Suzanne, with 4imprint 18 years, gives ideas on cool tech giveaways for the home that your clients will find useful and fun!



Cheryl Sina
one by one® Coordinator
4imprint

In the [Remarkable Moment](#) story, Cheryl shines a light on the CORE Foundation, which used promotional cowbells so donors could sound out their support. Cheryl has been coordinating the 4imprint *one by one*® program since its inception in 2006 and has been with 4imprint for 20 years.



Erika Ferguson
Social Media Manager
4imprint

Erika has been on the lookout for a company that takes its promotional products to the next level. Our [Swag Master](#) did just that! Erika will tell you how they were able to use branded giveaways to merge two distinct teams into one. She has been with 4imprint 12 years and coordinates 4imprint's social media communities.



You!

Customers who squashed out stress posted photos of the promotional stress balls that helped them do it! Their [#SwaggingRights](#)® shout-outs were [Overheard](#) and featured here, in amplify.

#SwaggingRights®

Promotional stress balls squash away tension



higherorbits

Higher Orbits

Everyone loves space swag... Just ask @tails_from_orbit! She loves to get Higher Orbits & Go For Launch! swag and she's great at balancing it and doing all sorts of out-of-this-world stellar tricks with it! What's your favorite #spaceswag you've received? #SwaggingRights @4imprint



raeofsunshine16

Love our new stress piggy banks from @4imprint! #SwaggingRights



Sarah

We have a bowl of these stress hearts for patients to use during their appointments, or to take home or to work. Everyone loves them!





4

Valerie

Working in healthcare is a tough job, so this spring we'll be giving our employees a number of items to help them have a stress-free spring!



paulaDuren
@DrDuren
#SwaggingRights

4

Kyle

Filled a cooler with stress reliever water droplets at a trade show. Gave the cooler away in a drawing. Gave away water droplets and koozies, all from 4imprint.

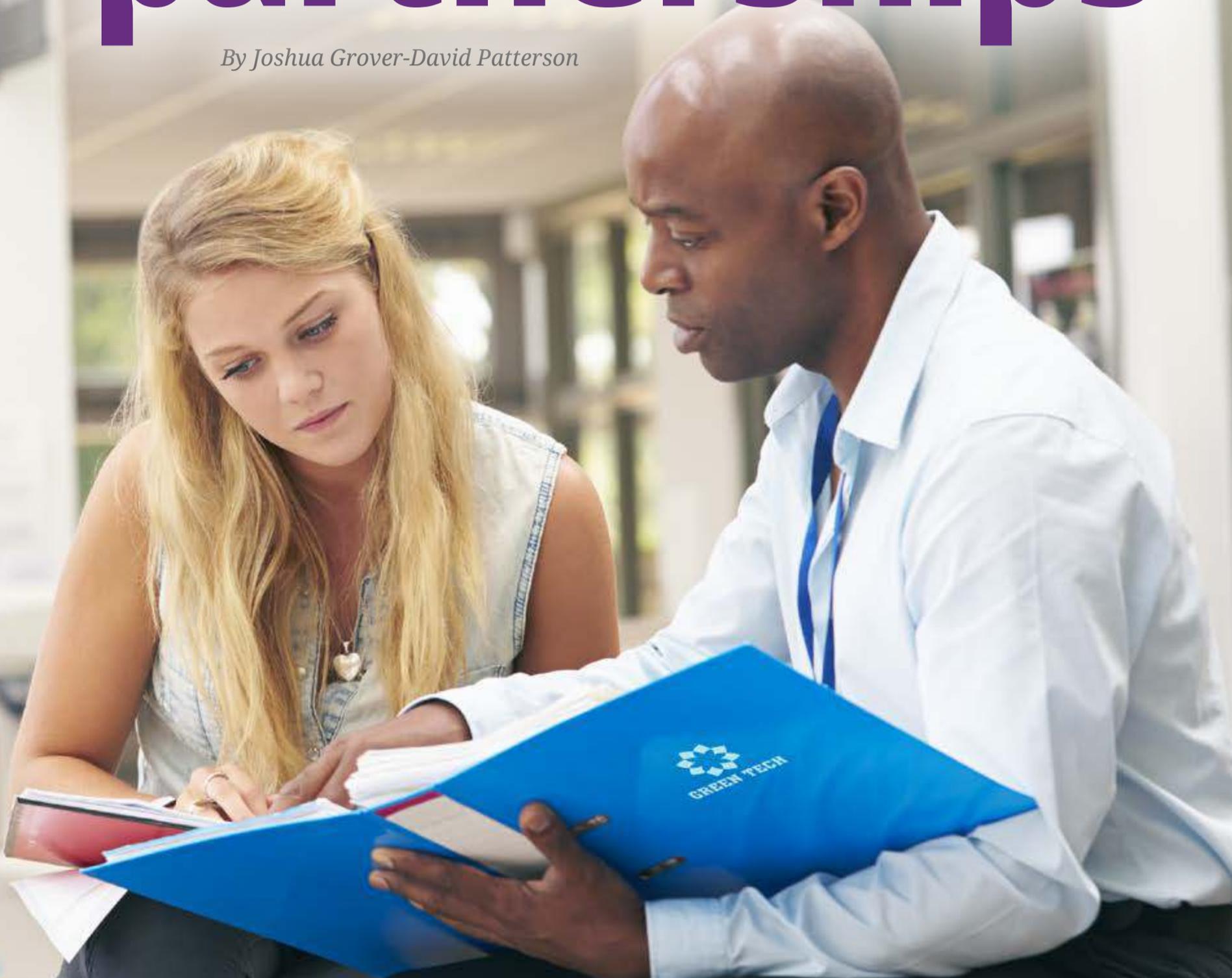


See the many promotional stress ball shapes and designs on our [Pinterest® board!](#)



Powerful partnerships

By Joshua Grover-David Patterson



Cultivating business and alumni connections with university promotional products





There's an Ethiopian proverb that states, "When the webs of the spider join, they can trap a lion." And today, there's no bigger lion than the speed of business. With the business landscape and technology changing faster than ever, there is a variety of interconnected challenges to tackle. These include:



Companies looking for ways to fill skill gaps in their workforce



Students looking for experiences and connections that give them access to good jobs



Universities trying to ensure their students are getting the knowledge and experience they need to thrive

Bringing businesses, universities and students together can create a three-way win. Companies and universities that work together can build a connection that can turn any lion of a challenge into a lamb of opportunity.

Connecting businesses and universities fosters growth

✓ Start small

When building a partnership, start with a few simple ideas, and let the relationship evolve. For example, ask company staff members to do mock interviews so students can hone their skills. Or ask them to speak to a class about their employment experience. According to Laura Wijkowski, an administrative assistant at the [University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma](#), alumni periodically offer workshops or talk to students about how their degrees led them to their current careers.

✓ Benefits for both

A popular company phrase is Corporate Social Responsibility. It can be a two-way street. Universities should thank businesses publicly for assistance, sponsorships or opportunities they create for students. This will affect the community's impression of the company, boosting its bottom line

Companies that hire students or bring them on board for [internships](#) provide students valuable experience and ensure a steady stream of potential future employees. This helps the university because business involvement has been linked to [lower student dropout rates](#).



✓ Make an educational exchange

Students aren't the only ones who can learn valuable skills when connecting with businesses. Educators who are looking for real-world knowledge of their industry may want to job shadow or even take on a limited role in a business project to provide the most current information on the subject they teach.

Companies can also take advantage of learning opportunities. Have employees audit a university class to help polish their skills. They may also benefit from the student discussions about how the industry is changing.

✓ Exchange research information

As students reach higher levels of education, they frequently research new and complex scientific problems or technology that may be of interest to local companies. Businesses may want to reach out to universities to help fund long-term projects. Both schools and companies benefit from these partnerships.

No matter what the size of your business or budget, there are opportunities to partner with local schools.

Connections create opportunities

Once a student's tassel is turned, universities begin the sometimes difficult process of maintaining a connection. Alumni are critical for universities because former students often serve as the school's ambassadors, helping them to:



Create and maintain corporate contacts



Recruit and retain students



Raise money for the future

Staying in touch with alumni can be challenging. In fact, **85% of people working in alumni offices** feel that their organization needs to engage more with recent graduates.

For the University of Kentucky, graduation is the beginning of its connection with new alumni. And it uses university promotional products to help build a bond.

Make connections using school promotional products.



Camden Metal Keychain



“During graduation weekend, we hold an event called the ‘Grad Gathering,’” said Kathryn Kearns, an administrative support associate at the [University of Kentucky Alumni Association](#) in Lexington, Ky. “People can come and go as they please, there’s a photo opportunity, and we hand a [keychain](#) to them there in the room.”

“It’s their first piece of alumni gear,” Kearns said.

If you’re searching for ways to keep your ultra-valuable alumni engaged, these tips (and university swag) can help.



4 ways to communicate with alumni

Address audience segments

No two graduates are alike, which means how you communicate with them will differ. **Keep the specifics in mind.** Consider the year they graduated, their current profession, their family life and their major to build specific messaging to help increase interest and engagement.

Take the focus off funding

While you'll always value donations, some alumni would rather **offer their time or expertise.** These types of contributions can have an enormous impact.



For example, University of Kentucky alumni sometimes offer a personal touch. “We have a letter writing campaign, where we send alumni a pen and a postcard and they write a message to people who haven't yet declared

they want to go to UK,” Kathryn Kearns said. “It's been very successful.”

And the [University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma Alumni Association](#) has found ways to help students succeed. The school recently offered a new program for struggling students.

“This past year, we started a mentorship program with some of our sophomores,” said Laura Wijkowski. “We matched up previous grads in their majors with students we felt were in danger of hitting a ‘sophomore slump’ and offered them three or four opportunities to talk in person or via Skype® to offer encouragement.” All the students ended the year successfully and will be returning for their junior year.

Alumni also share their experience at the school, serving as an important touchpoint for new students at the school's annual “Dover Launch” event.

Students who meet with alumni and staff also receive university swag. Most recently, the school gave them a [ShimmerZ Outdoor Bottle with Flip Straw Lid.](#)



ShimmerZ Outdoor Bottle with Flip Straw Lid



Branded swag can help schools connect with alumni.

“The bottles were so popular we ended up ordering more of them to hand out at alumni events,” Wijkowski said.

“We pass them out at alumni happy hours and we also have tables of the bottles and [stickers](#) whenever we hold an alumni gathering on campus.” The university promotional products have helped the school connect with new

and former students while also serving as a brand booster.

Give alumni designated web space

Create an alumni microsite or portal on your university website to make it easier for them to find information and events.

Opportunities arise

Building connections with businesses and alumni has long-term benefits for everyone. Nourishing these connections (and sharing a few university promotional products) can result in programs that will help several generations to come. [4](#)

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

Promotional products can be a great way to connect to alumni and future graduates.

Attune Messenger Bag



Omni Stylus Metal Pen with Laser Pointer and Flashlight



Pacific Aluminum Sport Bottle

Alumni swag everyone will love!



Full Color Sticker by the Roll

Jabba Bluetooth® Speaker



PRODUCT HIGHLIGHT

Cool tech giveaways for the home

By Suzanne Worwood

Gift giving just got smarter



Cool tech giveaways are a smart choice for employee giveaways, customer thank-you gifts, trade show prizes and more. An estimated **477 million** smart home devices will be shipped globally in 2020, and by 2021, the average American will own **13 connected devices**. If you're looking for a new class of swag, imprint your brand on one of these innovative promotional giveaways.

Smart bulbs and plugs

People—especially **millennials**—love smart technology. Consider: 47% own at least one smart device and 70% say they plan to buy another. Give them what they want with smart bulb sockets and plugs that transform ordinary lights and home electronics into smart ones.

The **Wi-Fi Smart Bulb Socket** screws into a standard light socket. Users can turn lights on and off or program them on a schedule—all by using an app on their smartphone or tablet.



Wi-Fi Smart Bulb Socket

Millennials will love these programmable smart bulb sockets.



Wally Wi-Fi Smart Plug

The **Wally Wi-Fi Smart Plug** works much the same way. Simply plug into a standard outlet and transform lamps or other home electronics into smart devices that can be operated from a mobile device.

These innovative promotional giveaways are just the thing to make an impression at a conference or event. Hand them out to key customers or offer them as a raffle prize.

Associate your brand with the innovative and easy-to-use smart plug.



Smart doorbells

Three in five Americans have purchased a product that enables them to monitor their home from their mobile phone.

They'll associate your brand with peace of mind when you give them a **Wi-Fi Smart Video Doorbell**. When it is connected to Wi-Fi, the recipient can see, hear and speak to whoever is at the door.

This smart video doorbell allows you to see, hear and speak to visitors.



Wi-Fi Smart Video Doorbell

Bluetooth® trackers

Your brand helps take stock of their valuables when you give them a tracking device imprinted with your logo.

Lost keys, wallets or bags are a thing of the past with the **ANKR® Bluetooth® Tracker** that communicates with an app to locate any tagged item within a 250-foot range.



ANKR®
Bluetooth® Tracker

Wireless chargers and more

Power up your promotions by offering a wireless charger with a little something extra.

The **Desk Lamp with Fan and Wireless Charger** is a light, fan and wireless charger in one. It is ideal for desks, nightstands or to use while on the road.

Help your customers “charge-up” with these dual-purpose chargers.



Desk Lamp with Fan and Wireless Charger



Keen Wireless Charging Desk Clock



The **Keen Wireless Charging Desk Clock** is a perfect gift to welcome new employees, thank customers or reward sales goals. It combines an attractive desk clock and alarm with cordless charging capabilities.

Make a wise choice with smart tech giveaways

When you're looking for your next employee gift, customer thank-you or trade show swag, these cool tech giveaways are a smart choice. [4](#)

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



LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Supporting safety

By Joshua Grover-David Patterson

Workplace safety programs
build better businesses





The importance of having a well-designed workplace safety program can't be understated. It helps protect the health and wellness of your employees, but it can do so much more. It will help your business by reducing costs incurred from accidents and by helping attract and retain employees.

Big benefits in business

The [Occupational Safety and Health Administration \(OSHA®\)](#) says there are many ways businesses can see positive changes if they implement a [workplace safety program](#), including:



Improved morale



Better recruiting and retention



Improved image to customers, employees and the community

In addition to these benefits, one study showed that implementing an OSHA safety program decreased claims by more than 50% and lowered the cost per claim by 80%.

And you'll reap the most important benefit: Knowing your staff is in a safe and secure workplace every day. If you're looking to build your own culture of safety, check out these workplace safety tips.

An OSHA safety program can decrease claims by more than



50%



Make safety job one

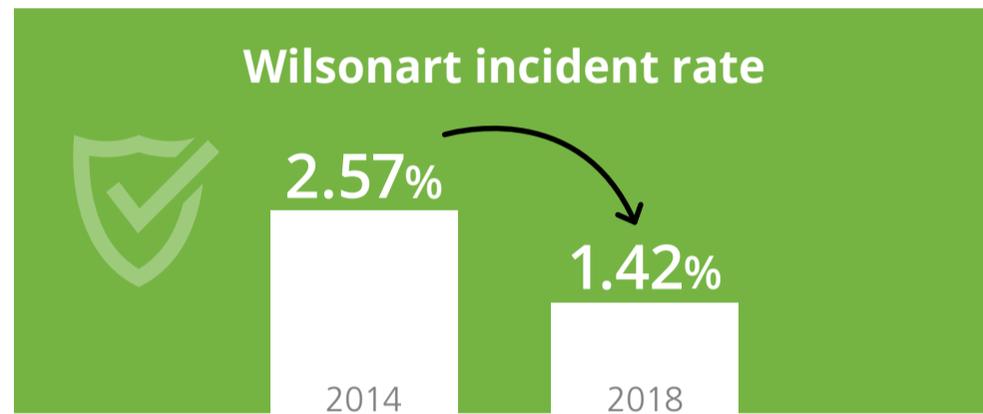
For the last three years, EHS Technician Daniel Bradley has been coordinating Wilsonart's safety rewards program, using a combination of training, praise and incentives.

"We see OSHA and the other compliance-related organizations as the bare minimum," Bradley said of the Fletcher, N.C., company. "Our goal is to look at those top safety performers' ideas from all types of businesses to help our employees go above and beyond."

Their hard work is paying off.

The company has **lowered its incident rate over the last four years from 2.57% to 1.42%**, with safety audits and incentive gifts playing crucial roles in the process.

"We audit employee safety every six months, and at the end of the year, we combine scores. And, the groups that exceed expectations, that's who gets the gift," Bradley said.



Make safety part of company culture

Creating a safe workplace is a continuous process. As you build a culture of safety, discuss it at every opportunity, such as:



In the interview process



During new employee training



In the workplace on a frequent (even daily) basis

Daily safety check-ins can take multiple forms, from short discussions to [daily stretching exercises](#) at the beginning of every shift.

Make learning routine

Much the way machines require regular inspections and repairs, safety training also works best when maintained regularly.

Setting a [consistent](#) training schedule and making sure everyone follows it will keep the team well versed on new procedures.

Because it's critical that everyone keeps up to date, training shouldn't be used as a [reward or punishment](#). Treating mistakes and incidents as learning opportunities makes it easier to foster a culture of improvement. [OSHA](#) emphasizes that an essential part of training is making sure your employees know where

and how to report accidents. They should also be reminded that reporting accidents will not result in retaliation.

Wilsonart conducts monthly safety training. "We work together in groups to schedule safety training so that it's spread out throughout the year, so they're not doing two hours one month and 15 minutes another month," Bradley said.

That culture of safety improvement is seen throughout the business. "We have safety professionals in place through several layers of the organization and are constantly researching and attending conferences to evolve our process so that we can be ahead of the injury before it happens," Bradley said.

Use positive reinforcement

The statement "You catch more flies with honey than you do with vinegar," isn't just a saying—it's also backed by neuroscience. One study showed that offering praise for following safety procedures resulted in [90% compliance within four weeks](#).



Reminding staff you appreciate their help in keeping everyone safe **encourages them** to keep it up.

Wilsonart goes out of its way to recognize the positive short-term and long-term safety choices staff makes. “We do weekly safety contacts, letting employees know positive things they do on the safety side every week,” Bradley said.

The company also has a system in place to create systemic improvements—and a strong process for keeping up with it.



Jerzees®
Dri-Power
Tri-Blend
T-Shirt



Crossland® Fleece Jacket

“We have a safety recognition process,” Bradley said. “Every six months, our teams have to score themselves on 10 categories, and if they exceed expectations on that score, they receive a gift at the end of the year.”

Past rewards include a **Jerzees® NuBlend ¼-Zip Sweatshirt**, a Jerzees Dri-Power Tri-Blend T-Shirt for **men** and **women**, a Crossland® Fleece Jacket for **women** and **men** and an **Arctic Zone® Titan Deep Freeze Backpack Cooler**. Because the gifts get so much use, they also serve as a reminder to employees to keep improving safety so they can get next year’s swag.

To be OSHA compliant, prizes cannot be awarded for inadvertently or purposefully **discouraging employees** from reporting injury or illness. OSHA recommends using incentives to encourage people to point out potential safety violations. OSHA suggests **offering rewards or praise** for:



Providing safety suggestions



Guiding a co-worker or new employee in a safety task



Participating in a safety committee

Encourage safety with branded incentives that let employees know you appreciate their help.



Give employees ownership

Making employees aware that proactively improving safety comes with an extra perk has been a strong motivator, according to Bradley.

“When employees come to us asking why they didn’t get a gift, we tell them, ‘Go to your foreman to see where you fell short, and how you can get involved to help exceed expectations this time,’” he said. “By focusing on identifying risks and pushing the leading indicators that happen before an accident, our safety has improved, and employees get great gifts to wear with pride.”

Statistics bear this out, with one study showing that the top **25% of engaged workplaces** had 70% fewer safety incidents than the bottom 25%.



Create a culture of safety

While creating a safety program from scratch might seem like a daunting task, OSHA offers multiple ways to approach it, from a simple **10-step process to get started** to a variety of workplace safety tips as well as a **variety of cooperative programs**.

Wilsonart’s workplace safety program has undoubtedly had positive results.



“Employees are happy, safety has improved, and employees are getting promotional items they love to use,” Bradley said. 4

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



Coming together over a cup of coffee



Valhalla Vacuum Travel Tumbler with Cork Base

With branded giveaways, two teams unite

The stage was set for a big meeting. After a recent acquisition, members of [Accord Financial](#) and [CapX Partners](#) came together to unify the two teams. You only get one chance to make a first impression, so Accord Financial rolled out the welcome swag. This story of two teams uniting gives them [#SwaggingRights®](#) and the coveted title of Swag Master!

★ Duo-branding for the win!

Accord created a distinct custom logo that allowed both brands to shine. As a special gesture, they ordered branded giveaways.

★ A great first impression

Because it was important that everyone felt welcome, leaders knew they had to make a great first impression. The first step: hand out branded giveaways. A [Valhalla Vacuum Travel Tumbler with Cork Base](#) combined serious and fun—just what the first meeting was meant to achieve.

★ A quality gift everyone can use

Whatever their drink preference, the tumbler kept the team refreshed for that first meeting, and stands as a reminder of their shared goals in the weeks and months ahead. And with the trendy drinkware design, the team is sure to keep it close at hand.

Only a Swag Master can use branded giveaways to merge two distinct teams into one.



TREND

Supporting our valued veterans

By Joshua Grover-David Patterson



Tactics for reaching out with
help from military giveaways





Military veterans are often a target market for employers and nonprofits alike. Companies like the soft skills, such as [leadership, integrity and the ability to work under pressure](#), that veterans bring to the table. Nonprofits are often involved in the process as veterans acclimate to civilian life. And while there are more than [18 million veterans](#) in the United States, connecting with them can be challenging. That's where military giveaways can help.

The veteran advantage

[Odyssey Technical Solutions](#) in Round Rock, Texas, seeks out veterans to join its company. In fact, its employment roster is 46% veterans. It connects with veterans in several ways, including at Texas Veterans Commission and Texas Workforce Commission events.

Senior Director of Global Sales and Marketing, Larry Broome, brings a variety of promotional giveaways to boost awareness of their company. Most recently, it was a lanyard, similar to the [Retractable Polyester Lanyard](#).

While Broome seeks veterans for their unique skills, there is one skill he is quick to emphasize. "On the repair floor, it's a real team atmosphere, and ex-military really fits into that because they're very much 'an all-for-one attitude,'" he said.

If you would like to reach veterans through job fairs, check out [Recruit Military®](#). It offers a variety of military recruiting fairs across the country and online.



Boost awareness of your company with veterans!

Other tactics to connect

Besides attending job fairs and events that focus on veterans, there are a number of other tactics you can use to reach out to this sought-after audience.

Find veterans via social media

When reaching out to veterans online, consider:

 Joining Facebook® and LinkedIn® groups that focus on veterans and their needs.

 Creating short videos featuring your current veteran staff, supporters or others discussing your organization. Post them to YouTube® and other relevant platforms.

 Using relevant hashtags, such as #veterans #veteranhiring #veteranemployer or #militaryfriendly when posting jobs.

 Using veteran-focused hashtags, like #vets, #veterans, #MilitaryMonday, #SOV (Support Our Veterans), and #MilFam (Military Family), when posting broader opportunities.

You may also want to create your own hashtag if you post often. The annual [National Veterans Wheelchair Games](#), uses its hashtag #NVWG when sharing information to capture attention and make events easier to find. Getting people to the Games is a year-round process.

“We’re in constant contact from the moment the last event ends,” Senior Associate Director of Sports and Recreation, Jennifer Purser, said. In addition to frequent social media posts, the organization sends multiple emails to people who have participated in the past. Because each game takes about two years to plan, the next date and location is already in place when current games wrap up.



Use military-to-civilian translators for job postings

While veterans learn a variety of useful skills in the military, many of their skill sets may have names that don't typically align with civilian job postings. The [MOC \(MOS/AFSC/Ratings\) Code to Civilian Occupations Translator](#) can assist you with locating the proper military names for the skill sets you're seeking.



Connect with military bases

If your organization is located near a military base, contact their transition office. This office assists veterans with separation and retirement programs, helping recent service members move into civilian roles. Connect with job seekers by hosting an industry workshop or seminar or offering to mentor transitioning individuals.

Contact Community Veteran Serving Organizations (VSOs)

Almost every community has a VSO that works with veterans to improve their lives. If you're a nonprofit, partnering with another group whose work complements yours can help both of you locate veterans in need of your services.

For example, the Paralyzed Veterans of America and Department of Veterans Affairs maintains contact with sports coaches so they can share upcoming game information with players. Businesses can also build connections with nonprofits. Partnering with a VSO that aligns with your mission and values can be a great brand builder and create a pipeline of veteran talent.



A reminder of veteran's successes

Since 1985, the National Veterans Wheelchair Games have been a source of empowerment and fun. See how something as simple as promotional products can have a huge impact on self-esteem.

WATCH VIDEO 

Military giveaways keep memories fresh

Promotional giveaways can serve more than one purpose as you reach out to vets. At the National Veterans Wheelchair Games, swag builds excitement for current and future games and helps attendees cheer on the athletes.

“I loved the fact that people were using their FAN-ta-STICKS Stadium Bangers for cheering on the Games,” Purser said. “It brings a whole new level to the Games. Whenever our veterans can see cheering or they get a

keepsake that reminds them of the event, it ups the excitement level of the Games.”

Sharing a salute

With so many veterans seeking jobs and services, connecting them to your organization is truly a win-win. By offering military giveaways and associating with like-minded organizations, you'll bring more veterans to your door. 

Note: 4imprint is a sponsor of the National Veterans Wheelchair Games

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

Branded swag builds excitement for the National Veterans Wheelchair Games.



Go Go Rally Towel

Megaphone



Rally Stick Pom



A ringing endorsement

Promotional cowbells let gala attendees sound out their support

By Cheryl Sina

The [CORE Foundation](#) in Reston, Va., made a sound investment for its first annual Giving Gala by giving donors promotional cowbells as a symbol of doing more good in the community so they could “make some noise” to support the organization’s mission. The foundation hopes attendees will use the gift to cheer on participants at its many athletic events and fundraisers.



The CORE Foundation was a 4imprint [one by one](#)® promotional products grant recipient.

