

Challenge: Making Company Goals Everyone's Goals

MR Williams distributes packaged goods to small retailers, convenience stores, and campuses over four states in the Southeastern part of the U.S. In 2023, the executive team established new corporate sales and operational goals for the company: to generate growth, revenue, and profit by shipping 230 million cases over the next seven years. Over the next nine months, the internal marketing team worked to create a program designed to create internal excitement, enthusiasm, and buy-in from internal stakeholders, but nothing resonated. Several key factors played a role in this, including:

- MR Williams' employee base is a mix of marketing, operations, sales, transportation, operations, and warehouse teams, each requiring a different level of skill and education.
- A key part of the company culture is to be an active part of the local community in which it is based. Instead of focusing on company revenue, employees placed more importance on supporting numerous charities, sports teams, and programs.
- The company goal was a sales goal and based on a number that meant little to any one person or part of the company.
- There was little to no incentive for anyone other than sales staff to "buy in" to the goal.

The Goal:

- Create ownership, engagement, and buy-in into MR Williams' strategic growth plan from internal stakeholders, partners, and customers.
- Articulate how individual employees and teams impact success to motivate better performance as it relates to key areas critical to growth.

A Cultured Approach:

Connect2 understood the key to unlocking employee buy-in was to develop a messaging framework that explained to each division and each person's role was critical to achieving the company's goal. To do this, it had to better understand the company culture, as well as what each employee valued about the role it played in the local community.

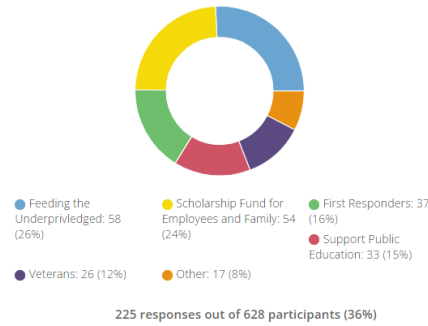
To do this, Connect2 worked with MR Williams' HR team to ask internal groups how each person would like to see the company give back to the community.

Connect2's idea was to tie the sales goal to the company's ability to give back to the community in which most of its employees live, so each could feel they had an impact on improving the lives of their friends, neighbors, and families.

Making the Case:

Connect2's approach was to "make the case" for how each case shipped was an opportunity to have an impact on the local community and that each person at the company had a role to play from how it was sold to packaged, crated, loaded, transported, and stocked.

1. As an employee, how would you like to see MR Williams give back to the community?



A Case for Community Engagement

- Fund local programs, sports teams, and events that will be highly visible to employees to help foster pride of ownership and understanding of how their work impacts the company's ability to fund community programs.

A Case for Personal Growth

- Fund scholarship programs for continuing education or dependent education, possibly funding better programs within the local school system.

A Case for Service

- Create opportunities for employees to give back to their community as a representative of MR Williams.

A Case for Accountability

- Reward individuals and teams for improving processes, reducing waste, and expanding relationships with customers and vendors.

A Case for a Case

As mentioned, philanthropy has always been a part of MR Williams' DNA. When launched, the *Impacting Communities One Case at a Time* program was perceived as a natural evolution of how the company has historically given back to its community, with a new understanding of each person's role in how MR Williams can do more to develop a path to stronger community engagement. The company committed to its employees that as it hit milestones related to cases sold, MR Williams would help fund additional programs in its community and the communities of its customers, expanding the focus and impact of the program to include long-time customers.

Keeping Engagement High:

Once announced, the company created internal branding around the campus to remind each person and department of the role they can play, highlighting what each case could mean to the local community, and helping the company achieve its goal one case at a time. Connect2 created the text to ensure each team and person felt included and understood the role each member would play in achieving the goal and giving back to the community.

You Have a Role to Play

We cannot do this alone; it will take all of us working collectively and collaboratively across the company. Everyone at MR Williams has a role to play as a single case is ordered, processed, inventoried, sold, packaged, shipped, and stocked.

How can you contribute? In the following spreads, we'll explore some members and in the coming months, we'll have activities to help you, and everyone at MR Williams realize the important part they play in impacting communities one case at a time.



OPERATIONS

We Care to Take Care

- ✓ Careful packing of cases to reduce breakage
- ♻️ Commitment to fight inventory waste and management to reduce waste
- ♻️ Consistent labeling practices to ensure each case gets where it needs to go

SALES

We Grow Through You

- 🤝 Creating deeper, more strategic relationships with customers built on trust and reliability
- 💡 Thoughtful consideration of new product introductions and effective product placement
- 📈 Strategic sales on how to increase percentage of customer inventory MR Williams delivers

CORPORATE

Every Case Counts

- 🔄 Introduction of new products, categories and expansion into new markets
- 🎯 Accurate and transparent forecasting, strategy and program level practices
- 🤝 Improved issue resolution practices to find new ways forward together

Conclusion:

When launched as part of an all-company gatherings, and then explained in depth in departmental meetings, the program was viewed as a means for the company to give back and ideas started to flow amongst teams on how further efficiencies could be discovered to help show how individual departments were “on the case.” While still early in the seven-year strategic plan, MR Williams has the buy-in it wanted from employees that the company’s goals were everyone’s.