

Transforming Employee Reward and Recognition for One of the Biggest Retail Co-Ops in the UK

Discover how Central Co-op launched its
workplace culture into the modern age





Industry:

Retail



Number of employees:

7,500



Platform features:

Employee discounts,
employee communications,
reward and recognition,
employee wellbeing

About the company

Central Co-op is one of the largest independent retail co-operative societies in the UK, with a heritage stretching back over 175 years. The Society has over 460 trading outlets spread across the country, a network of around 7,500 colleagues and around 250,000 active Members.

As a business that has continually grown and evolved over the course of nearly two centuries, Central Co-op spotted a need to revolutionise its approach to employee reward, recognition and wellbeing, and deliver an experience to meet the expectations and demands of today's workforce.

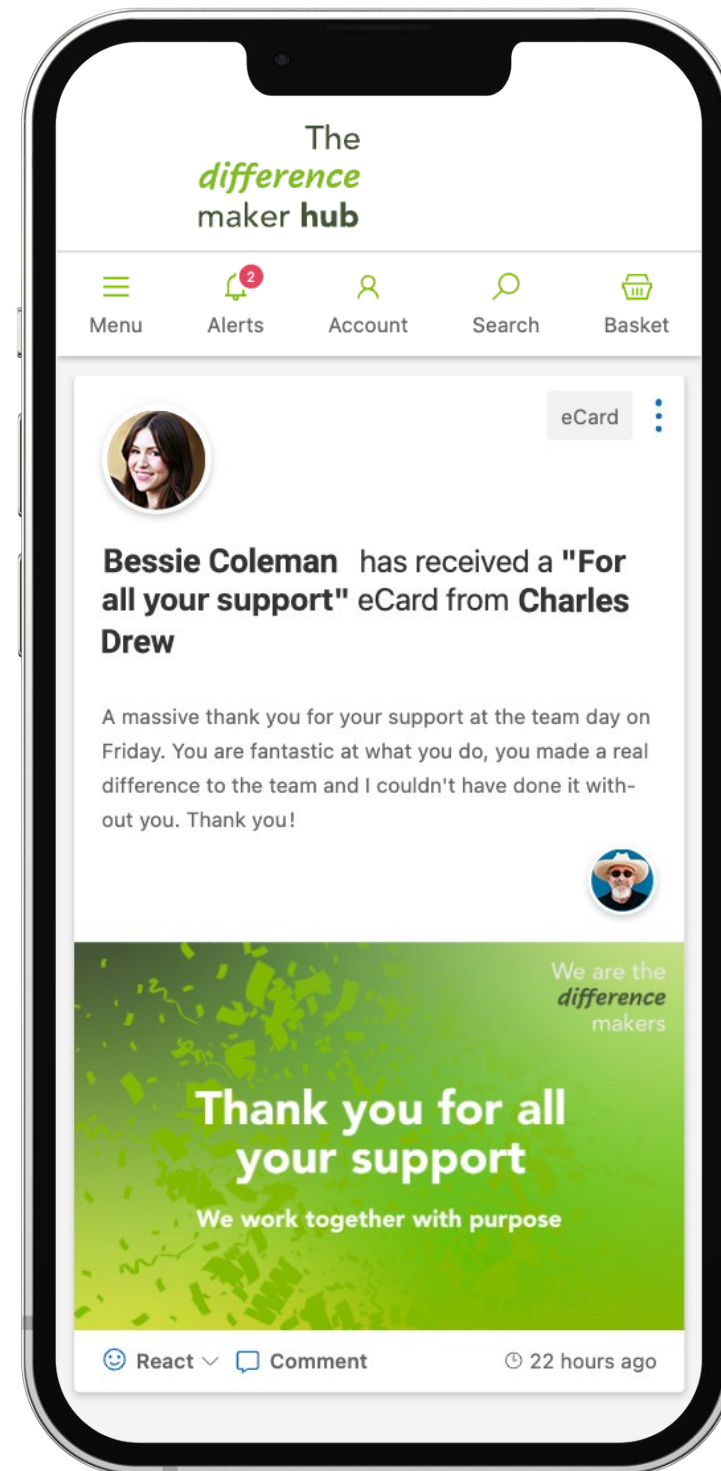


The challenge

Reward Gateway immediately got to work creating a bespoke hub – named ‘The difference maker hub’ – to house Central Co-op’s full range of recognition, communications and discount initiatives.

Crucially, the platform needed to be easy to access and navigate on mobile devices as well as desktop. This was essential to generate engagement from deskless colleagues that don’t use a laptop or computer during work, enabling them to sign up and browse all of Central Co-op’s great offerings within just a few clicks.

The company’s internal communications team films their CEO, Debbie Robinson, for a regular vlog, which is posted directly to the hub, which has become a great way for the exec team to reach frontline colleagues.



“Our senior leaders immediately saw the value in the new platform. Their buy-in was instrumental to put different functionalities on people’s radar and inspire engagement... It also didn’t take long for the ball to start rolling with the eCard system, and we’ve seen well over 1,000 recognition moments sent so far – between both managers and colleagues, and peer to peer.”

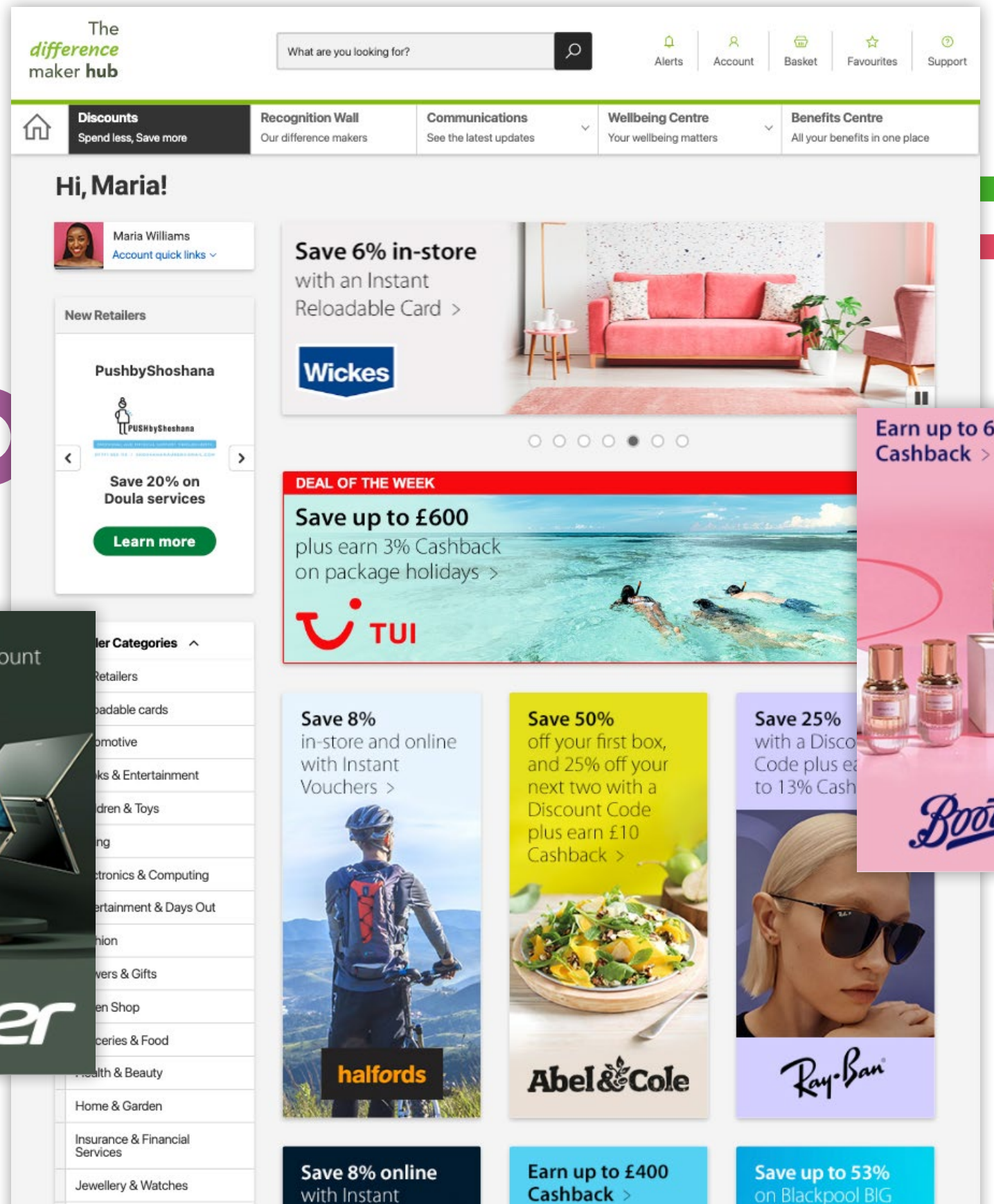
Senior Reward and Wellbeing Manager at Central Co-op

On top of engaging communications and centralising recognition, The difference maker hub also brings discounts and cashback at over 900 global retailers to life, saving Co-op employees valuable pounds on everyday shopping. The most popular retailers are Currys and TUI. **Colleagues have spent over £170k on the hub, taking advantage of discounts and cashback with retailers.**



“The retail discounts have been extremely popular too, which has definitely helped fulfil our vision to provide first-class financial wellbeing support. The fact we launched just before the busiest shopping period ahead of Christmas turned out to be a good strategic move to get people using the platform straightaway. It’s been a huge hit!”

Senior Reward and Wellbeing Manager
at Central Co-op



Saving time and money through self-service

From the start, Central Co-op made it clear they needed a system that could evolve over time. It needed to be scalable and simple for their internal team to change, test out initiatives and plug in new functionalities when the time was right.

“

“The ability to customise the platform ourselves has been a game-changer for us. It means we can tweak and fine-tune the look and feel of the system as we go along and create what we need, when we need it. It’s incredibly cost-effective and allows us to work in a much more fluid, dynamic way than before.”

Senior Reward and Wellbeing Manager at Central Co-op



Alongside this, the team are also benefiting greatly from the platform's analytics dashboard and reporting functionality, giving them real-time, measurable insights into key performance indicators like employee engagement, spend and recognition. The Senior Reward and Wellbeing Manager meets with their Client Success Manager fortnightly to discuss big-picture strategy, go over engagement analytics and chat communication campaign ideas.



“We now have a number of the team who have access to the back end of the system. This is helping to bring our vision for the platform to fruition much quicker than we first anticipated. It’s great to have the ability to launch new content and send out important updates and communications to our entire workforce quickly.”

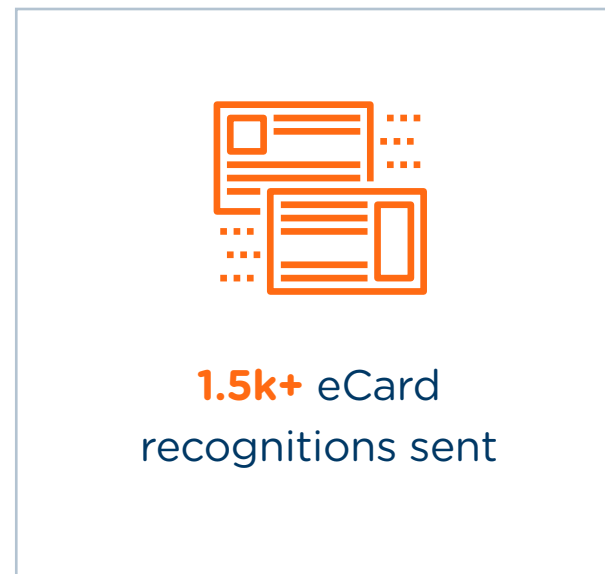
Senior Reward and Wellbeing Manager at Central Co-op



The results

Since launching in November 2022, Central Co-op colleagues have made impressive use of the platform features, particularly in its Holiday Buy scheme. In the first week, **435** colleagues used the scheme to buy more than **£170k** in holidays.

The company has seen over **43%** of colleagues sign up to the hub, which is fantastic engagement considering its large population of deskless colleagues, and the fact the platform launched less than six months ago.



“We’ve got some great plans for the hub over the next two years. We’re already building our benefits centre, which will mean all colleagues can access information about their benefits in the palm of their hand, for the first time. In 2024, we’ll launch our Total Reward Statements for all colleagues, which will be the first time they will have all their rewards in one place!”

Senior Reward and Wellbeing Manager at Central Co-op

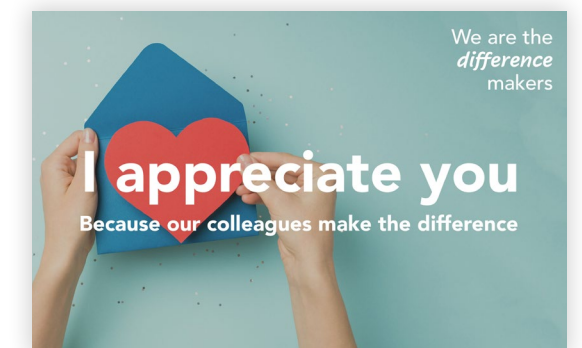
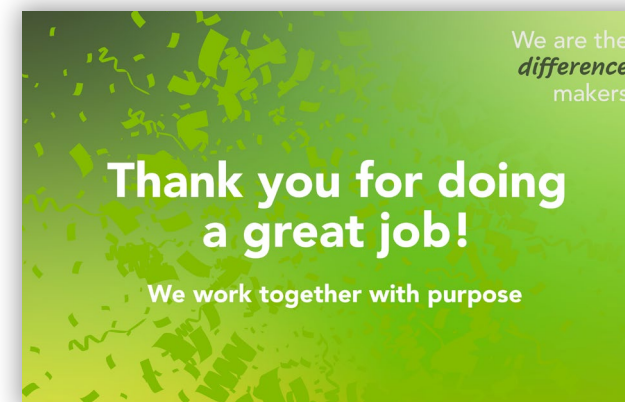
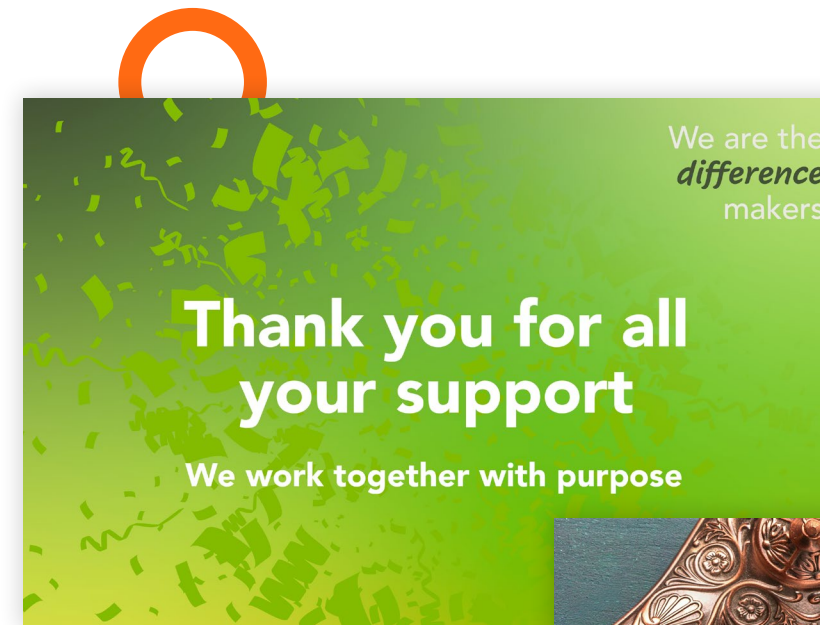
The recognition system has seen excellent uptake, with **over 1,500 eCards sent** between colleagues. The most popular recognitions are ‘Thank you for all your support,’ (30%) and ‘Thank you for doing a great job!’ (27%).

As a bonus and in recognition of their hard work, the Senior Reward and Wellbeing Manager at Central Co-op was recently awarded the Difference Maker of the Year award – Support Centre, thanks in large part to the launch of the platform, from the Society.

“

The hub has allowed us to take our Employee Value Proposition to another level, and it’s great to finally have a one-stop shop for all our communications and recognition. Really, it’s never been so easy for our colleagues to engage with us as an employer. We can’t wait to see how things continue to evolve.”

Senior Reward and Wellbeing Manager at Central Co-op

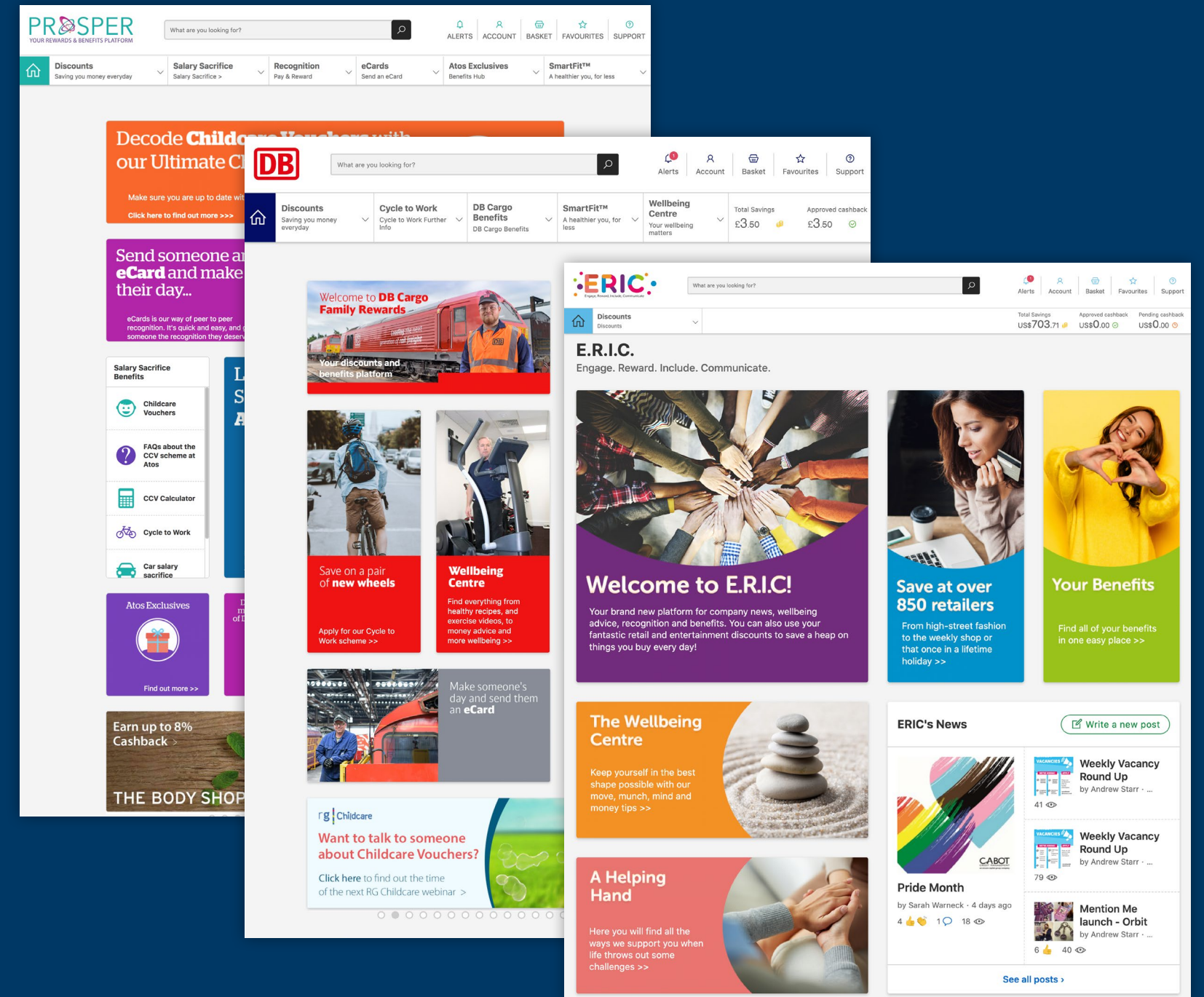


Interested in your own employee engagement solution?

Reward Gateway empowers more than 8 million employees to connect, appreciate and support one another to make the world a better place to work. Our unified employee engagement hub provides the best of recognition, reward, wellbeing, surveys, benefits and discounts that support talent acquisition, retention and values-driven growth.

Email: info@rewardgateway.com

Phone: +44 20 7229 0349



Reward Gateway delivers employee engagement solutions to more than 4,500 clients worldwide.