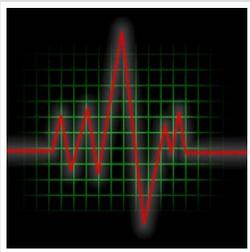




You are here: [Home](#) » [An Outsourced Wellness Program That Walks Away with Success | Article](#)

An Outsourced Wellness Program That Walks Away with Success | Article

Beth Ellyn Rosenthal, Editor | May 15, 2012 | no comments



Many of the 92 team members of Hanson Mold operate machining centers, so they are either standing in place or seated all day. Ditto for the 140 employees of Horizon Software, who are glued to their computer screens the majority of the work day.

Both companies provide healthcare benefits. They are committed to helping their employees become healthier. This increases productivity, reduces absenteeism and of course slashes insurance costs. Horizon Software is fully insured but still reduces

costs.

These companies wanted to find a wellness program that everyone could do. Serendipitously both discovered Walkingspree, a specialized wellness provider offering employee wellness and health programs to corporations.

"People are getting the idea they should become leaner and fit so they don't become a patient in the medical system," explains Walkingspree co-founder and CEO Hiran Perera.

Hanson Mold

Hanson Mold, located in St. Joseph, Michigan, completed health risk assessments and biometric screenings on all its employees and spouses; the picture wasn't pretty. "We wanted to take the next step to health," recalls James Todd, HR director. But every program he looked at just worked for a short time. He wanted a program that his employees could stick with.

He found Walkingspree on the Web. "I knew this was exactly what we needed," he reports. "Not everyone can run. But everybody can walk," he notes.

The company investment was about \$10,000 for a pedometer for every participant, the monthly fees for the personalized Web sites and the rewards to keep team members motivated. The company even provides the new batteries on the pedometer after six months of use.

Walkingspree personalized a Web site for Hanson Mold, which tracks the steps of each participant and the HR manager can access. But the rest of the site is password protected. Participants can monitor their steps, food intake, chart their weight loss and record their blood pressure and cholesterol. The Web site also has a wealth of information to peruse.

Most people became interested when he walked around the plant wearing the Walkingspree pedometer. "It's pretty high tech," he notes.

But the big selling point was that spouses could sign up, too. In September 2011 the company signed up 80 participants: 50 team members and 30 spouses.

Today many participants walk around the plant during the lunch break for at least 30 minutes. In the winter they walk inside the plant.

» Search

» Subscribe

Want to stay informed about outsourcing? Sign up to receive email updates from us. [Click here to subscribe.](#)



» Related Content

- » [Start-up Healthcare Company Overcomes Risks and Captures Success in Outsourced R&D | Article](#)
- » [Administrative Firm and Its Data Provider Keep Ohio's Workers' Comp Program Operating Smoothly | Article](#)
- » [Public/Private Outsourcing Program Improves Medicaid Services In Oregon | Article](#)
- » [An Outsourced Way to Move to the Cloud \(Almost\) Free | Article](#)
- » [Changing Suppliers Improves Health Program Offerings, Benefitting the Buyer and its Employees | Article](#)

» Market Analysis

- » [Top 10 Takeaways: CTS's Guidance Revives Macro Concern Data Point's for Your Investment Mosaic - Market Analysis](#) Posted on: May 15, 2012
- » [Taking IT Offshore Weekly: Macro Scare Is In the Air 2012 Off to Less than Optimal Start - Market Analysis](#) Posted on: May 11, 2012
- » [Taking IT Offshore" Weekly: BPO takes Center Stage - Market Analysis](#) Posted on: May 8, 2012

» Archives

The company hosts challenges. The January challenge was to walk around Lake Michigan (figuratively, not literally.) Currently they are in the midst of a race to Reno. The big challenge will come in May with a contest called "Get Your Kicks on Route 66." The goal is for teams to walk enough steps to go from Los Angeles to Chicago. Walkingspree will post a virtual map on its website so teams can chart their progress.

Today Hanson Mold has one employee averaging over 40,000 steps a day. (That's a lot!)

Todd says the goal is to have participants lower their blood pressure, lose weight and get their diabetes under control. "We want to become healthier than the national average," he says.

The company has also enjoyed unintended benefits. "We now have more camaraderie in the plant. Walking has really brought people together," he reports.

Horizon Software

Office manager Julie Denmon says she stumbled upon Walkingspree by accident.

The Georgia company has an annual users conference. Denmon was visiting Lake Lanier Islands Resort when she noticed the senior sales manager of the resort had a pedometer on his hip. "I thought that was cool," she says, so she inquired. After researching Walkingspree, she pitched it to her boss, the director of HR.

Last August, 84 of the company's 140 employees joined the program. To keep interest high, the company ordered a special trophy. Every Monday morning the person who walked the most steps the week before gets to snatch the trophy from last week winner's desk. Denmon also created a prize closet with health-related gifts.

A similar-sized software company in Chicago challenged them in March. Alas, they lost the "Chicago Smack Down," so they had to send the Windy City walkers some Georgia pralines. "We lost by a mere 2,037 steps," she reports.

The company itself, though, won too because 10 people increased their steps 100 percent. One woman increased her steps by 330 percent during the contest.

The company has won in other ways, too. One manager now holds his weekly staff meeting with the team walking around the building instead of sitting in a conference room. Now people walk to talk to their peers instead of sending emails.

The company occupies two floors of an office building. Denmon printed T-shirts that said, "Avoid the elevator." Now most people take the steps. She says she actually met people she had never known on the other floor going down the stairs.

Walkingspree is a cloud-based provider

Perera says the Web sites and applications reside in the cloud using Amazon servers. Because it is a SaaS application, the company now has international clients. It is currently setting up an international competition for a U.S. law firm with 35 international locations.

Six years ago Perera wanted to start a wellness program for consumers on the Internet. Many of his consumers asked if he could provide a corporate solution, too. "We had a change of strategy to serve the demand of our corporate clients and they love the security of our SaaS application," he says.

Select Month

» Premium Sponsors



» Sponsors

