

# How Brenntag replaced manual rewards with a transparent, always-on recognition culture

Brenntag moved from manually procured bank gift cards to a fully automated R&R platform on AWS, achieving 92% adoption, 3x more social recognition, and 80% less time on admin tasks within six months.

## CAPABILITIES USED



### RECOGNITION & REWARDS

#### Automated awards and milestone workflows

Empuls automated Brenntag's entire R&R cycle: performance awards, tenure milestones, birthday celebrations, and team activities, replacing manual procurement and distribution with instant, on-time digital rewards.



### SOCIAL INTRANET

#### Company-wide recognition visibility

A social intranet with community groups lets employees cheer, comment, and amplify every recognition moment, ensuring even small achievements are seen across the organisation and driving a culture of appreciation.



### SURVEYS

#### Engagement pulse and program feedback

Empuls surveys gave HR real-time signals on employee sentiment and reward program effectiveness, enabling quick adjustments to keep engagement high and reward choices relevant.



### PEOPLE ANALYTICS

#### Real-time dashboards and budget visibility

HR gained live visibility into adoption rates, budget utilization, and redemption patterns, eliminating guesswork and enabling accurate reporting, forecasting, and ROI measurement of the entire rewards program.

## THE CHALLENGE

### A rewards program that was slowing HR down and leaving employees underwhelmed

Brenntag's employee rewards program covered performance awards, milestone recognitions, and a range of engagement activities. But the execution relied entirely on manual processes, with bank gift cards physically procured, distributed, and tracked by the HR team.

An internal assessment made the gaps clear: employees felt recognition was opaque and infrequent, reward choices were uninspiring, and HR was spending disproportionate time on administrative tasks rather than meaningful engagement.

**No transparency in recognition**, employees had little visibility into how awards were decided or who was being recognised. Without a platform to surface these moments, recognition remained private and failed to build the culture of appreciation Brenntag intended.

**Unexciting, limited reward choices**, bank gift cards were the default reward, practical but uninspiring. Employees showed little excitement around earning or redeeming them, reducing the emotional impact of the recognition itself.

**Manual procurement draining HR bandwidth**, HR managed multiple reward programs across vendors, negotiating procurement and distribution for every award cycle. This left little time for strategic people initiatives and made accurate budgeting and reporting a persistent challenge.

**Low social recognition frequency**, without a shared space for peer appreciation, recognition stayed transactional. Colleagues rarely celebrated each other's wins publicly, limiting the sense of community and belonging that drives long-term engagement.

## THE SOLUTION

### A cloud-native R&R platform that automated the work and amplified every recognition moment

After evaluating multiple solutions, Brenntag chose Empuls, an AWS Partner, for its intuitive UX, AI-led engagement approach, and comprehensive professional services support. The platform consolidated recognition, rewards, perks, surveys, and social intranet into a single, scalable system built on AWS infrastructure.

With workflow automation handling the end-to-end R&R cycle, HR was freed from manual tasks while employees gained a social, interactive platform where every achievement, big or small, became a shared moment.

**Automated recognition and reward workflows**, Empuls automated awards and milestones end-to-end. Recognition triggers fired automatically, approvals were instant, and rewards reached employees on time, every time, without manual intervention from HR.

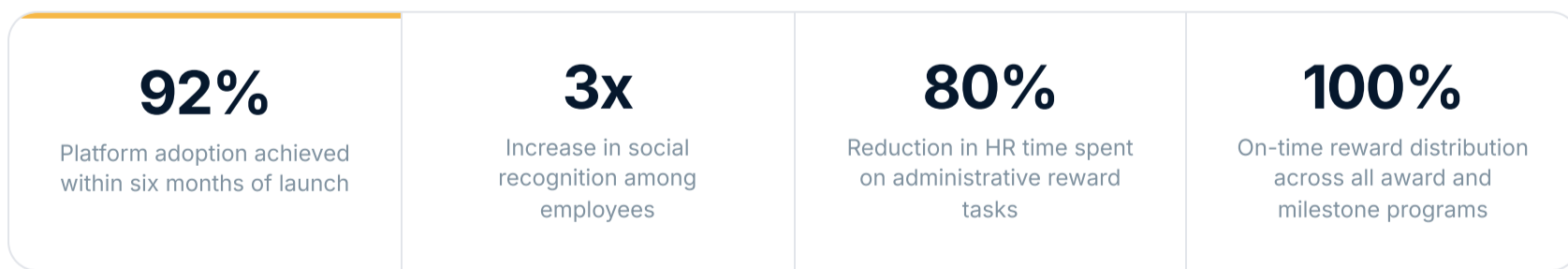
**Social intranet amplifying every achievement**, a user-friendly web and mobile app let employees cheer, comment on, and celebrate recognitions as they happened. Even small wins became visible company-wide, reinforcing a culture where appreciation was public and continuous.

**AI nudges driving manager participation**, AI prompts and nudges guided people managers to recognise team members at the right moments, reducing the recognition gap caused by busy schedules and ensuring no contribution went unnoticed.

**Professional services for ongoing optimisation**, Empuls' Professional Services team worked alongside Brenntag to refine the program over time, sharing insights, adjusting reward structures, and ensuring sustained ROI as employee preferences evolved.

## THE RESULTS

### More moments celebrated, less time spent, and a culture that shifted for good



Within six months of deploying Empuls, Brenntag saw measurable transformation across HR efficiency, employee adoption, and recognition culture. What began as an operational fix became a strategic advantage, giving HR real-time visibility and giving employees a recognition experience they actually used and valued.



HR and employees highly benefited since implementing Empuls.

**It has every reward and recognition option possible, helping us drive complete transparency. When an employee gets recognised even for the smallest achievements, everyone gets to know, which is the best way to recognise people.**



**Nidhi Verma**  
HR Manager, HR Information Centre - Asia Pacific, Brenntag

## COMPANY PROFILE

INDUSTRY  
Chemical Distribution

LOCATION  
APAC

EMPLOYEES  
17,700+

USE CASE  
Recognition, Rewards & Social Intranet

## CAPABILITIES

- Recognition & rewards
- Social intranet
- Automation
- People analytics
- AWS
- Culture

Brenntag is a Germany-based global market leader in chemical distribution, operating from 600+ locations across 72 countries with 17,700+ employees. The APAC team deployed Empuls on AWS to overhaul their R&R program and achieved 92% adoption within six months.