



# How Franklin University stepped into summer with wellbeing challenges

**Industry:** Education

**Number of employees:** 350

**Solutions:** Reward Gateway | Edenred's Wellbeing app

## About the company

Franklin University is one of the largest private non-profit universities in Ohio, with more than 50,000 alumni and around 350 full-time employees. While the university specializes in online adult learning, it also provides face-to-face classes from its main campus in downtown Columbus.

Supporting between 6,000 and 7,000 students at any one time, Franklin University has been committed to meeting the educational needs of working adults for more than 120 years.

Most of Franklin University's employees work a hybrid schedule with 2 days on campus and 3 days at home and are eligible for benefits including tuition assistance, generous vacation accrual and an on-site fitness center.

## Organizational needs

In 2008, Franklin University launched its first home-grown 'summer steps program' to encourage employees to increase their movement and physical activity. Each year, employees would take part in the challenge by tracking their steps, reporting them in one central Excel spreadsheet, and then coming into the office to redeem prizes for their step milestones.

The Franklin University team needed to find a way to run the program without having to manually track steps and sort through hundreds of emails every month. Around 125 employees consistently participated in the summer steps program, representing well over a third of the total Franklin University headcount. The admin burden was huge, and there was a lack of consistency in step tracking due to employees using different devices.



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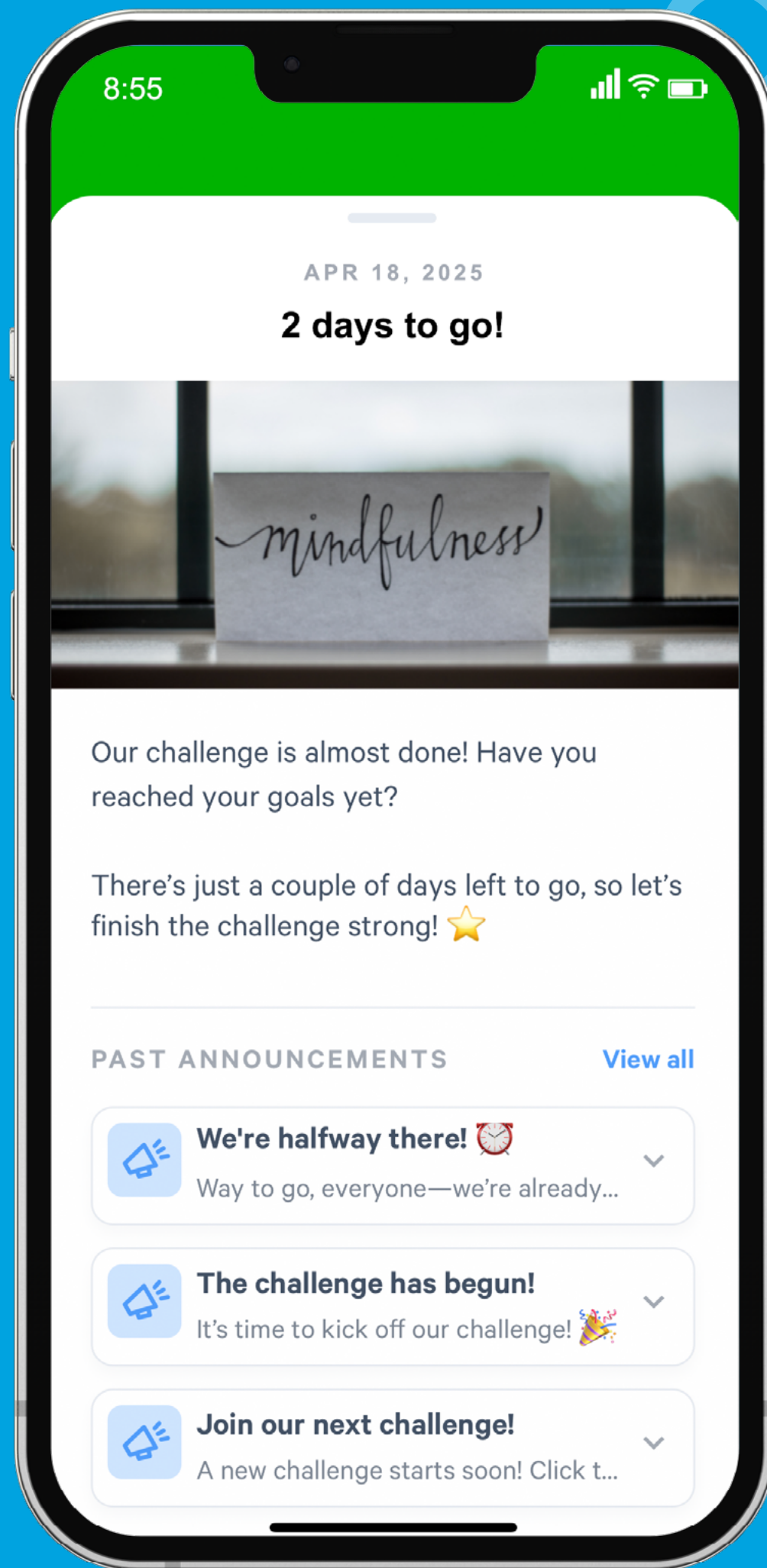
The program was very manual right up until COVID, when we realized we had to evolve to continue encouraging employees to remain active when everyone was working from home.

Jeanette Hayes,  
Benefits & Wellness Manager

There had to be a better way.

Jeanette's team began searching for a solution that everyone could use, regardless of whether they tracked steps on a smartphone or a wearable device, and without having to be physically on-campus to receive kudos for their milestones. They were looking for an automated solution that would facilitate their steps program and provide a place for people to connect, chat, and be on the same level as everyone else. As a non-profit organization, fiscal responsibility was also important.

**Reward Gateway | Edenred provided the answer.**



### Program goals

- ✓ **Automate the tracking process for the summer steps program and unite participants on one inclusive platform**
- ✓ **Increase the visibility of the steps program and build more of a community**
- ✓ **Create an opportunity to engage hybrid employees and create connections between colleagues**
- ✓ **Continue encouraging employees to be physically active and get moving**

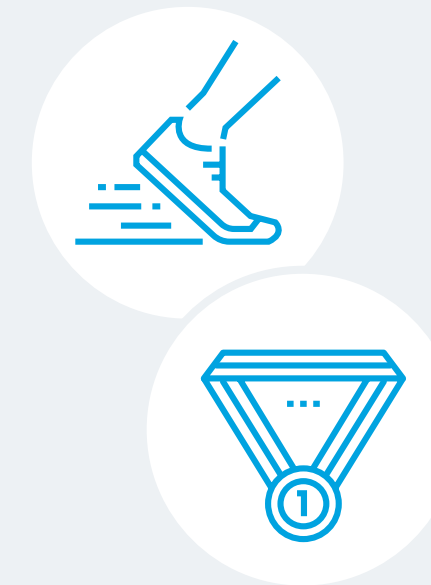
### Launching Wellbeing challenges

By spring 2023, Franklin University was set up and ready to begin its first new-and-improved summer steps program using Reward Gateway | Edenred's wellbeing challenges. They sent a launch email to all employees on May 1st, introducing the challenges and including FAQs and setup information.

Using an app has helped Franklin University take its summer steps challenge to a whole new level.

Instead of just doing one summer challenge each year, the Franklin team has added seasonal step challenges throughout the year to mark occasions such as Thanksgiving and Christmas.

“ We evolved our usual summer step program to make the most of what was available in the app. We did three challenges – one in May, one in June and one in July. We used May as an opportunity to get everyone familiar with using the app, and then we had another challenge launching in June and another in July.”



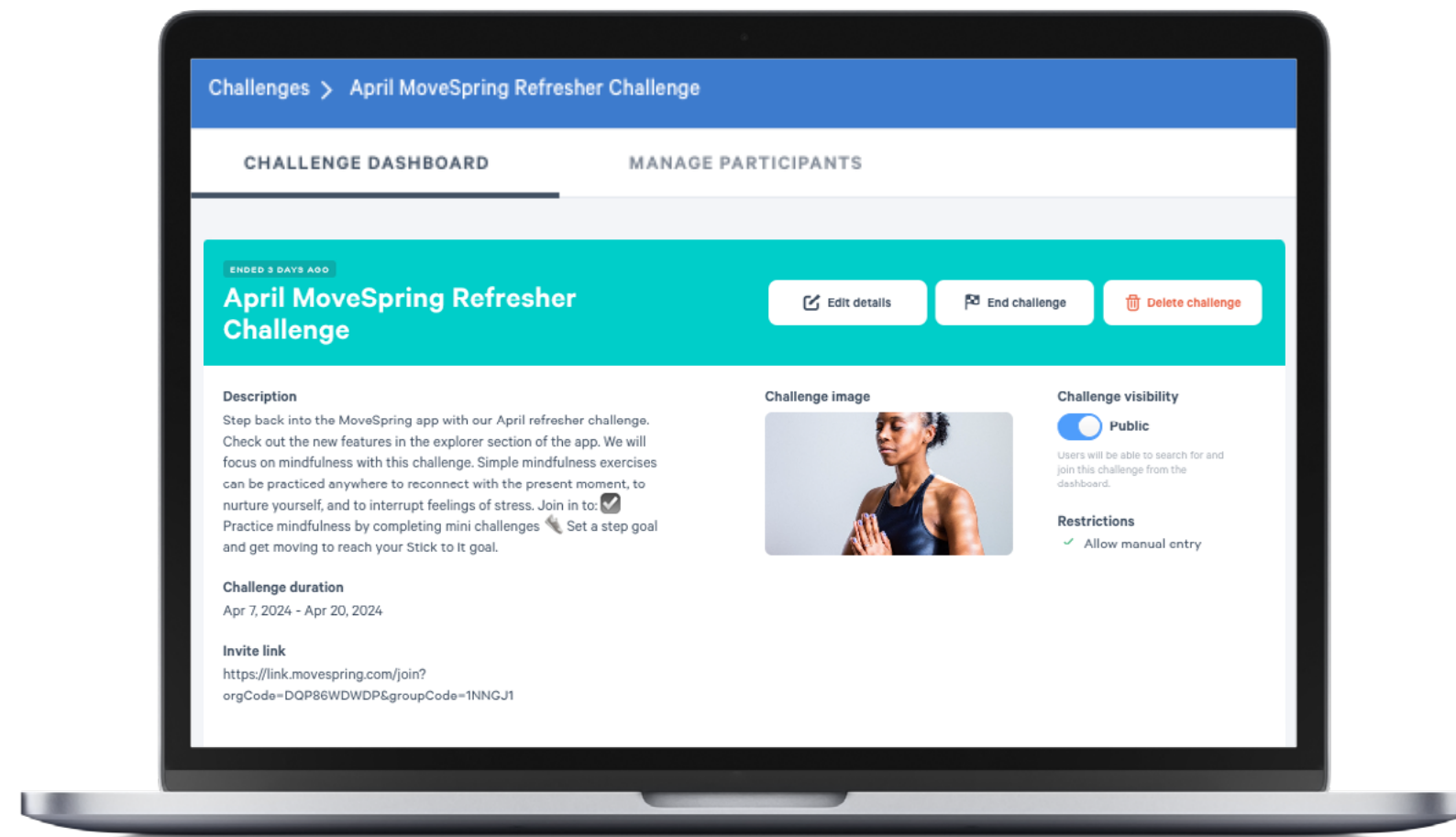
**Michele Ashmeade, Benefits & Wellness Specialist**

The team challenges were also a real hit with employees, and were easy to organize through the app by assigning employees to a team from one centralized list. By using the in-app templates, set challenges, ideas and content, Franklin's admins were able to successfully ramp up their steps program while reducing their admin burden.

“ We've been able to do a lot more because the administrative side and the commitment that we have is a lot less. The app makes it really easy.”

**Jeanette Hayes, Benefits & Wellness Manager**

Since the introduction of the Reward Gateway | Edenred app, the program's admin team has received incredibly positive feedback from employees.



## The results



**97%** of employees participating in the manual summer steps challenge successfully transitioned to the wellbeing challenge app



**500%** increase in the number of step challenges run throughout the year



Employees are much **more engaged** with the program



**36%** of Franklin University's full-time employees participate in challenges



**100%** of app users participate in the step challenges

## Most popular challenges

The most popular challenge so far was the first summer step challenge that Franklin University launched last May, and engagement has been growing consistently with the new challenges throughout the year.

One particularly popular challenge was a virtual race through some of the most breathtaking National Parks in the U.S. Participants were sent notifications when they hit a milestone, which created great engagement and prompted in-app conversations about real-life visits to the parks. Employees shared photos of their vacations to motivate each other and share stories, resulting in an active and engaged community!

## Favorite features

The simple, admin-free tracking of steps is definitely Franklin University's favorite feature, saving the Benefits & Wellness team hours of manual input!

The opportunity to increase engagement with challenges is also a winning feature for the university. The in-app prompts, reminders and push notifications have become a key communication channel to keep employees informed and up-to-date with important updates and announcements.

Having the ability to access and download such a wide variety of pre-programmed analytics and engagement reports has also been a game-changer for the team. It's a big step forward from the days of manually tracking steps in the spreadsheet without having any idea of the most engaged participants.

“Participating in challenges through the MoveSpring app not only gets me up and moving a bit more throughout the day, but also helps motivate me to meet the goals I have set for myself, or whatever fun challenge our Franklin team has encouraged us to try. I find I work a bit harder to get extra steps in when I'm part of a team or trying to reach a particular goal.”

**Lynn George, Welcome Center Associate at Franklin University**

## Key learnings

The Benefits & Wellness team at Franklin University has three key contributors to the success of their introduction of in-app challenges...

### 1 Using work email accounts

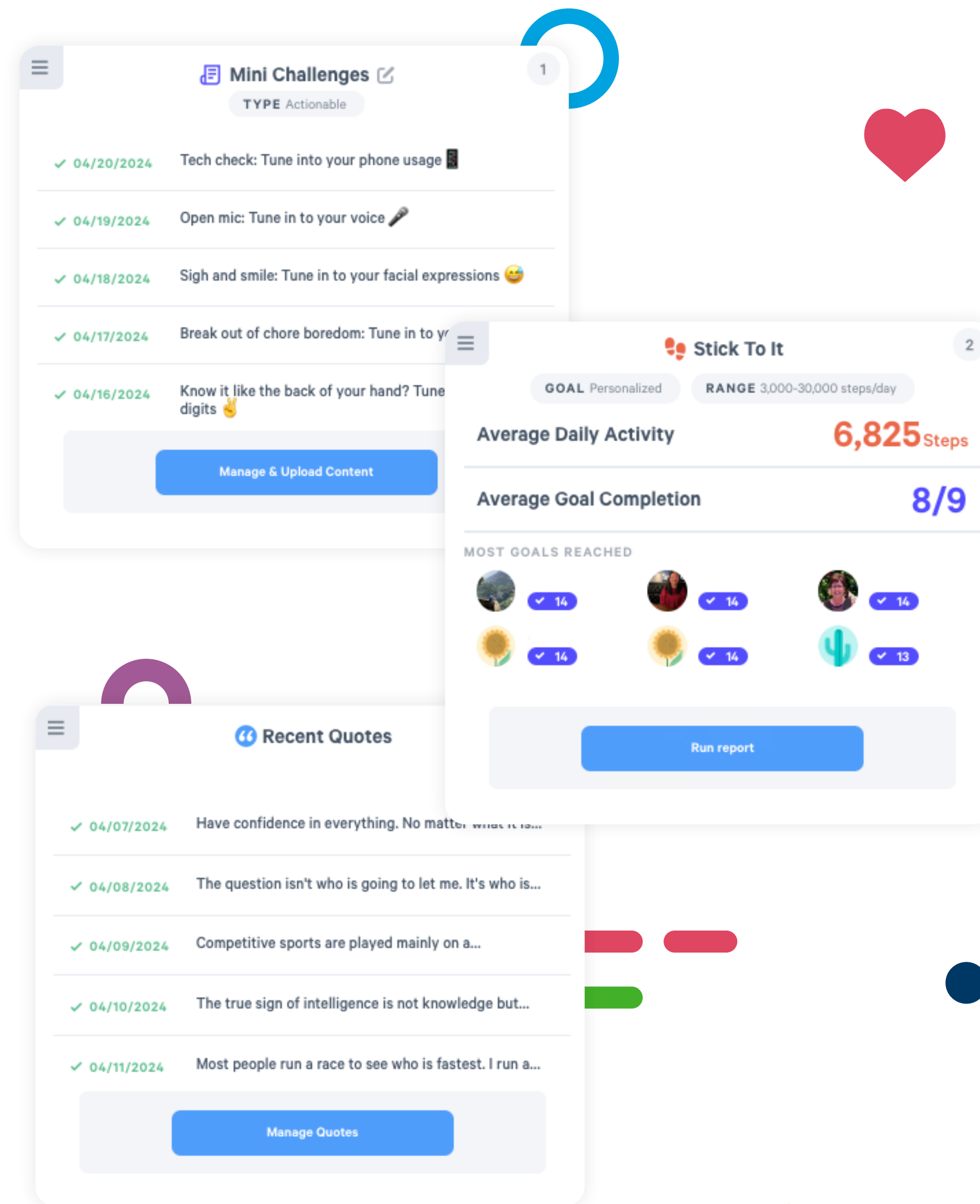
Ensuring employees registered for the app with their work emails was one of Franklin's keys to the seamless transition from manual tracking to this more engaging system. Avoiding the use of any personal email accounts enabled the admin team to easily identify all app users, and make sure there weren't any duplications.

### 2 Carefully planning the launch

Franklin University used its first challenge focused to know the app. The team launched in early May 2023 to allow enough time for employees to become familiar and comfortable before launching into the usual summer step challenge the following month.

### 3 Making the most of engagement reports

The Benefits & Wellness team made the most of the user reports by identifying the most active employees while planning the team members and captains for group challenges. Naming the most engaged and proactive employees as team captains helped build excitement around the challenges, and ensured some healthy competition!



# Keen to reduce your admin burden and encourage your employees to get moving?

Reward Gateway | Edenred's wellbeing app works for companies of all shapes and sizes and provides all the tools you need to have a healthy, happy and connected workforce.

We're here to help you succeed. Chat with our experts to learn what our clients are doing to meet their goals!

**Book a demo today**

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