

# Meet Training & Business Goals With **Gamification**

*To increase productivity, reduce labor costs, and improve service, let the games begin!*

By: Tina Serio



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Gamification? Never heard of it? I know keeping up with business trends does not take precedence over meeting the demands of clients, the challenge of growing sales, and dealing with the day-to-day business to ensure the operational excellence to which you aspire.

However, gamification is a trend that should not be put on the back burner because it can directly affect of your daily priorities: employee productivity, service excellence, and labor costs. Take a look at how and why you should proactively deploy gamification tools to jump start your company's success.

## What is Gamification?

According to Gabe Zichermann, author of *The Gamification Revolution*, gamification is "implementing design concepts from games, loyalty programs, and behavioral economics to drive user engagement."

The goal of gamification is to hone in on the motivational and competitive aspects of games with the rewarding aspects of loyalty programs to make our staff, prospects, and customers want to interact with us in specific ways.

To take that a step further, I would point out that for building service contractors and in-house cleaning staffs, the "user engagement" objectives would be those engagements that actually drive a positive and measurable change in business metrics.

What business metrics might we be able to impact with an active gamification system? How about employee:

- Engagement & recognition
- Health
- Knowledge (of the industry, processes, people, products, and policies)

- Change acceptance
- Social media interaction and advocacy.

Let's take a brief look at how gamification can impact these metrics.

## Engagement

*Ford Canada used gamification to motivate sales, parts, and service teams. Engagement was up 60 percent in five weeks with correlated increases in key sales/satisfaction metrics.*

—Source: [www.bunchball.com](http://www.bunchball.com)

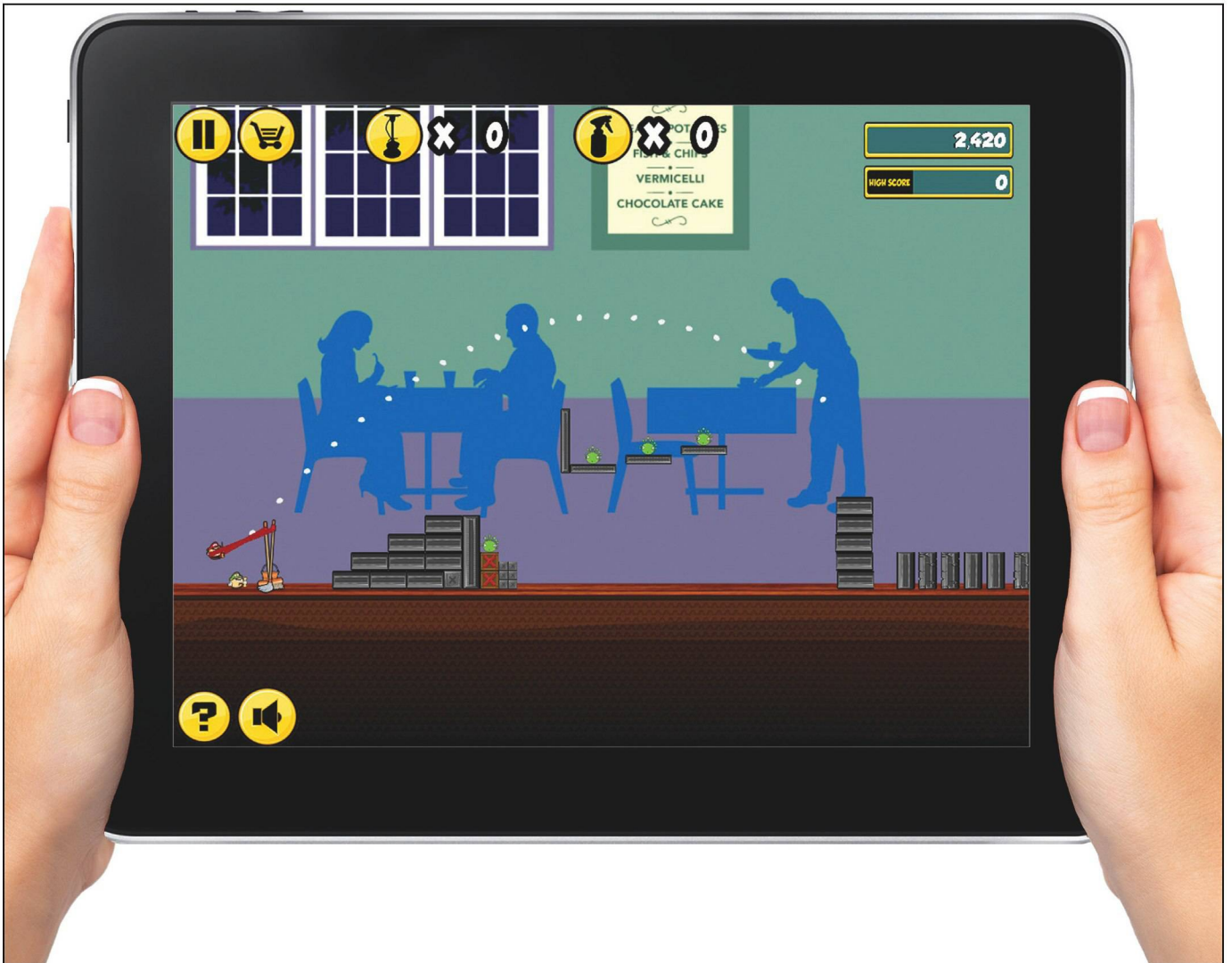
Employee engagement is one of the most popular business metrics to gamify, and it is one that is sorely in need of a boost! Last year, Gallup revealed that 70 percent of America's 100 million employed workers are disengaged from their jobs.

According to a 2013 Gartner report, disen-

## Fun Facts

- More than 70 percent of the world's largest 2,000 companies are expected to have deployed at least one gamified application by year-end 2014.
- The overall market for gamification tools, services, and applications is projected to be US\$5.5 billion by 2018.
- More than two-thirds of employers consider gamification an effective strategy for encouraging their employees to improve their health.
- Of American adults, 63 percent agree that making everyday activities more like a game would make them more fun and rewarding

—Source: [punchtabinsights.com](http://punchtabinsights.com)



agement costs American enterprises US\$500 billion annually in losses.

If 70 percent of all American workers are disengaged from their jobs (even those at Google, NBA, Facebook, Disney, etc.), can you imagine what percentage of our environmental service workers, custodians, janitors, housekeepers, and their supervisors, managers, directors, and trainers are disengaged from their work?

Cleaning, for the most part, isn't a fun activity in and of itself. So as industry leaders, we have to find ways to make being a part of this industry a little more fun for everyone. We also need to be absolutely sure that everyone on our team knows that s/he is an instrumental factor in creating clean and healthy facilities.

Disengaged and uninformed employees cannot possibly consistently portray the friendly, positive, and service-orient-

ed image your business needs. In facility maintenance, perhaps more than any industry, your employees are a key and ever-present medium for promoting your brand, values, and mission.

### Recognition

Peer-to-peer interaction and recognition both have a huge impact on engagement. You can find simple ways to reward your employees for legitimately recognizing their peers. For example, a compliment box to enable Joe to give kudos: "Sue came in for an extra shift on the weekend for me when I had a family emergency. I really appreciate her teamwork." Or, digitally, encourage employees to post comments to a (monitored) public site, such as Facebook and/or LinkedIn. You also can integrate supervisor comments, great inspection scores,

and customer compliments for even more impact.

These are all steps in the right direction to encourage teamwork and enable recognition, which helps engagement, but this is not "gamified." This explanation may be oversimplified due to space restrictions, but to integrate simple game mechanics, you need to tie this recognition to certain attributes. We will discuss more about these later in this article but for now, these attributes are:

- Instant feedback
- Points/progress toward a goal
- Competition
- Rewards.

### Health

*"Next Jump used gamification to get 67 percent of its employees into the gym."*

—Source: *Huffington Post*