

CASE STUDY:



Built on Gratitude: An Innovative Approach to Employee Awards

Results

- ▶ **98%** adoption rate
- ▶ **50%** reduction in internal handling time
- ▶ **15%** cost reduction

About Customer

Pure Storage is redefining the storage experience and empowering innovators by simplifying how people consume and interact with data.

Industry:

Computer Hardware
and Software

Website:

www.purestorage.com

Company Size:

1,001-5,000
employees

Joined Thnks:

April 2020

Solution:

Employee Appreciation

"Immediately showing gratitude and rewarding the inventors upon engagement is really what made this work."

Frances Winkler

Senior Paralegal and IP
Operations Manager



The patent team at Pure Storage created a unique, gratitude-oriented awards program for their inventors. The team receives invention disclosures from their employee-inventors weekly, sometimes daily. For the lean team, and growing inventor pool, the manual award sending process they previously relied upon was neither efficient nor scalable. "We were looking for a digital transformation," says Frances Winkler, Senior Paralegal and IP Operations Manager who now spearheads the patent awards program. "We were automating the disclosure awards through our IP management system for more immediate gratification: 'submit a disclosure, receive an award,' and we also needed an overall solution to automate the award fulfillment process. Then we found the Thnks platform and it was a meeting of efficiencies." Working with the Thnks team, they created a workflow that triggered award sends for the inventors involved in each disclosure. "We used to have to wait until the end of the quarter to vet our awards list and get people their awards, now they get it the day or the week of their disclosure. Immediately showing gratitude and rewarding the inventors upon engagement is really what made this work," Frances explains. **Within three months of launching the program, they saw a 98% adoption rate.**

Additionally, the Pure Storage patent team saw a **50% reduction in internal handling time**. “There was no lack of white glove service because the front-end process did not change, only the backend process. Thnks handles everything on the backend. That’s 50% of that part of the program taken care of by Thnks, and I really love it.” With that huge time savings, Frances has been able to spend her time focused on more strategic initiatives for the patent team that move their business forward.

Not only did they reduce the time spent physically ordering, packaging, and sending out awards, **the partnership with Thnks also reduced their costs by 15%**. “Thnks provides our inventors with such a wide range of options to choose from, and that satisfies everyone while staying within budget,” says Frances. After seeing that significant cost savings in their first quarter of running the program, they were able to increase their future award amounts. “We were able to raise the award amount because of all the savings that we had not considered. The shipping, the handling, all of that stuff, just went away,” Frances adds.

Pure Storage has always considered their patent award program to be a success, and through the partnership with Thnks it has been elevated to the next level of automation and scalability. Joseph Kucera, the Director of IP Strategy at Pure Storage, says, “We did something that defied the laws of the universe: we dialed back our time and cost while increasing our engagement. For our inventors, their white glove experience was never damaged. The whole way, they seem to love the experience. With our Thnks partnership, we were able to give our company lower cost and scalability.” **Pure Storage’s patent award program is not the typical award program; rather they focus on using gratitude and collaboration to build real relationships with their inventors as opposed to old-school standard cash awards.** “By building that bridge with our inventors, it’s become a positive cycle for us. Rather than trying to shake down ideas from them, they’re actually coming straight to us because they love the experience so much.”

The Pure Storage patent team and Thnks continue to work together to build what they hope to be known as “the gold standard of patent award programs.” Frances and Joseph expect to see the program grow rapidly over the next several years and are excited to continue expanding their partnership with Thnks. Thnks is proud to be part of this team’s success. To read more about Pure Storage’s inclusive and innovative patent program, check out this [IAM Media article](#).



“With Thnks, we did something that defied the laws of the universe: we dialed back our time and cost while increasing our engagement.”

Joseph Kucera
Director, IP Strategy