

# Case Study

Extracon is more than a wellness platform. It is our central gathering spot.

**Connectivity**<sup>™</sup>  
Wireless Solutions



## The Client

Connectivity Wireless is a Distributed Antenna Systems (DAS) company located in the Atlanta, GA metro area. The company was founded in 2008 and designs, installs and maintains wireless antennas to improve cellular signal in large buildings. DAS is the reason your cellphone can get a good signal when you're in a large sports or concert arena, office building, hospital, or college campus.

Connectivity Wireless focuses on the largest and most prestigious DAS projects – in places like One World Trade Center. These projects require top engineering talent, which is in high demand from many employers. The wellness program is one reason Connectivity Wireless has become the employer of choice in the DAS field.

Suzy Mason is the Manager of Human Resources and Wellness. Her university degree is in Health Science with a specialization in Nutrition. She has a broad background in wellness and has worked for companies large and small. She says: "I am in the business of making wellness fun and very cool."



## The Problem

In 2013, Connectivity Wireless found their healthcare costs had increased 30% in a single year. The company needed generous health benefits to recruit and retain top talent, but they also knew 30% annual cost increases are unsustainable. How could they offer great benefits while still keeping costs under control?

The CEO realized it was time to invest in wellness. Because they believed so strongly in the value of the wellness program, the company decided to absorb the cost of the program and not pass it along to employees. The company hired Suzy Mason to design, build and run this new wellness program.



## Evaluating Alternatives

Suzy learned that she faced some interesting and challenging issues. She needed an effective wellness program to keep healthcare costs under control. But the traditional onsite wellness programs did not fit their needs.

Connectivity Wireless has its workforce scattered all over the country, working on many different DAS installations. The traditional approach to comprehensive employee wellness involves an onsite wellness center, onsite screenings, and often onsite coaching. None of those approaches will work for an organization with employees working in small groups, all over the country.

Initially, Suzy found and implemented a small, standalone wellness portal. This approach made the wellness program available to everyone, but it was far from ideal.



## Evaluating Alternatives

The vendor had a “cookie-cutter” approach to wellness that was not flexible enough for Connectivity Wireless to make it their own. And it was focused only on health content and self-report tracking programs. So it was not designed to collect validated data or move the needle on biometrics or prevention.

Suzy realized she needed to design a comprehensive and effective wellness program for a remote workforce. An all-digital program that improves prevention, biometrics, and lifestyle in a measurable and validated way. Without doing anything onsite. She needed a whole new approach.

She evaluated dozens of wellness vendors and ultimately selected Extracon.

Extracon’s focus on working through the employee’s doctor to drive prevention and biometric change was a perfect fit for a company that can’t do onsite screenings. And Extracon’s mobile App and Team Challenge programs offered a way to add validated data and engagement for physical activity and lifestyle.

By utilizing the doctor and the smartphone, Extracon could offer what other portals did not – the ability to run a comprehensive and effective program across her remote workforce. And she loved the capability for employees to do everything from their smartphone – with all the data stored securely on the cloud.

She was also impressed by the flexibility of the Extracon platform and the capabilities of the Extracon team to customize their programs and content to clients’ needs.

Suzy says “Extracon cost a little more but provided dramatically better capabilities for Connectivity Wireless.” Since Connectivity Wireless sees its employees as their most valuable asset, it was an easy decision to go with Extracon.



## The Implementation

The wellness program mission statement is to “Assist every single Connectivity Wireless member in achieving better health and quality of life through education, awareness and practice.”

Connectivity Wireless wanted to include the employee’s primary care physician in the wellness process. Management felt strongly about getting employees to work with their doctors annually on prevention. It was important for employees to know their critical health numbers, and understand what those numbers are saying about the employee’s health and lifestyle.

Connectivity Wireless calls this part of the program their VIP Club, where VIP stands for Very Important Physical. Employees who complete the annual physical are in the VIP Club and eligible for incentives and prizes. Since the ACA requires health plans to pay for an annual wellness exam, Suzy says there’s no longer any excuse not to include the doctor in the wellness program.

Extracon worked with Connectivity Wireless to design the process to verify that employees had completed the doctor visit, and provide a health assessment report showing employees what their health numbers are saying. Extracon offered a variety of options for working with the doctor, including options where incentives are tied to closing prevention gaps and working with the doctor to improve biometrics.

Connectivity Wireless also wanted to focus on healthy lifestyle education including digital lunch & learns. Extracon worked with Connectivity Wireless to offer the recorded lunch & learns through the wellness portal, along with a quiz that employees could complete to verify that they learned the material.

Connectivity Wireless is particularly proud of the customized Team Challenge programs it has collaborated with Extracon to design and run. For example, they've had a Cutthroat Kitchen – themed fruits & veggies program, and a walking program based on Pokemon Go. The Team Challenges are designed to help the company build its culture of health and deepen employees' connections to their coworkers.

Suzy says she also loves the reporting and incentive management that comes with Extracon. Employees know exactly where they are and can track what they need to do to achieve their incentive- with no manual effort from wellness staff.

The implementation of Extracon was a simple process and Suzy comments that "Extracon was a pleasure to work with. The process was easy and it only took a few weeks to implement." During implementation, Extracon worked with Suzy to define program and incentive goals, load eligibility files and configure the system to meet her program needs.



## Participation and Results

Management has set high expectations for the wellness program. After Suzy was hired, the CEO announced the program by saying: "We are going to be the healthiest company in the DAS industry. That is who we are."

It takes an ongoing promotional effort to drive high participation. Suzy uses a multi-pronged approach through open enrollment, quarterly company webinar meetings, virtual lunch and learns, email communications and management meetings where aggregate results are openly discussed. In addition, the wellness program is part of employee on-boarding.

Connectivity Wireless has seen participation and satisfaction increase in the wellness program each year. It now has participation rates in the 85%+ range. These results are especially impressive for an organization that has a remote workforce.

Suzy attributes these high participation rates to the engaging digital program, a strong promotional plan and a financial incentive program that rewards employees who get a physical and also participate in 6 wellness initiatives each year.

Connectivity Wireless measures multiple outputs from Extracon including things like total steps, water consumption, vegetable consumption, and minutes of exercise. Data is captured at an individual level from the app or website, and aggregate reports are available for the employer.

Suzy says the benefits of Extracon are outstanding. She has seen improved participation, lower costs, better physical activity, healthier eating, and more employees working with their doctors. Suzy says, "Extracon is more than a wellness platform. It is a communication vehicle where all of our employees come together. It is our central gathering spot. People share their progress."



## Lessons Learned

When asked what advice she would give to other organizations considering adding digital wellness she says: “First understand your employee population and what they will be receptive to. Next, identify what your goals are. You need to know the purpose of the wellness program and specifically what outcomes you want to achieve. Next, make sure that management is committed to the program. Management support and participation is critical.”

“Then, find a vendor that can accommodate your needs and is flexible in how they service those needs. You need a strong promotional plan. This promotional plan should also have management support and participation. Finally, make sure that you measure your outcomes and verify that you are achieving what you set out to achieve. ”

“You have to embed [wellness] in your culture to get the outcome that you want. This will all require a vendor who is willing to work with you and not treat you simply like a commodity customer.”

Now the wellness program, which is powered by Extracon, is part of the culture of Connectivity Wireless. The wellness initiative is a cornerstone of the company today.

To learn more or request your Discovery Call

Visit [www.extracon.com](http://www.extracon.com)

Or give us a call: 901-405-1914