

 **BRAVO WELLNESS**[®]



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Health Wellness

CONSULTING SOLUTIONS



Written by Leon Bracey

Cleveland, Ohio-based Bravo Wellness provides wellness incentive program consulting and administrative services regarding health insurance to businesses, their employees and health insurance providers. The company offers a consultative and innovative approach in administering wellness programs, tailoring its solutions to what works best for each client's culture.

The team has the technology and flexibility to offer customized wellness solutions to accommodate any organization; they also review their clients' programs for compliance using proprietary technology built to specifically serve this purpose. This compliance is time-stamped, tracked, fully secured and independently audited to meet or exceed industry standards.

Jim Pshock, Founder and CEO of Bravo Wellness, talks about the company's growth and success over the years. "We've been able to achieve 95 percent participation in the programs we offer," Pshock says. "There has been measurable health improvement in



Implementing wellness incentives and programs that enhance the lives of employees and control costs has become increasingly important for many businesses. Meeting this need since 2008, Bravo Wellness provides companies with innovative approaches to administering such programs to ensure workers are living their best lives and employers are investing wisely.

companies that let us help design the program. We really get to know the business objectives of our customers and tailor solutions for them. We are also very educated in healthcare regulations – not just wellness – and our technology and analytics stand out.”

Pshock says that Bravo’s consultative and innovative approach in administering programs that work for the culture of a given company is what has made the company stand out in the market. “We provide customized solutions; we’re not a cookie-cutter company offering these programs,” he says.

Bravo Wellness’ extensive knowledge of the rules, regulations, and trends that guide and define results-based wellness, as well as its expertise in compliance, appeals, and plan designs, have been developed by way of over 400 unique implementations with over 300,000 participants. The company has grown by building best practices around the results of these ►►

► programs and consulting with its customers to develop wellness programs to suit.

By bringing the right blend of goals, incentives, and resources together to build an effective wellness program, Bravo Wellness' proprietary Decision Support Platform is designed for companies to model different scenarios of goals and incentives, and predict the financial and health results of each scenario.

Mr. Pshock has 25 years of experience in the healthcare industry and felt a need to start a company that truly emphasized wellness programs and how they could best be put into practice. "I started this company to help employers who want to implement these new regulations and remove complexities and the stress involved," he explains. "There is a lot of fluff and different ideas of what wellness means and many times, I think they're ineffective. I wanted to help effectively communicate a good driver discount for the health insurance market. We were met with a lot of skepticism, but now half of employers throughout the country are planning to use a program like ours and include shared rewards for their associates who do their best to reduce their health risks."

Pshock says that adhering to guiding principles is what keeps Bravo Wellness a market leader. "It's about service and stewardship," he believes, "and the fact that everybody, including customers and coworkers, deserves respect. We do the right thing; it's not about making the most money the fastest. When you take care of your employees, they take care of the customers, and success will take care of itself."

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Many companies, of course, have successfully used Bravo to design and develop wellness programs. One company that has benefited from Bravo Wellness' programs is Minneapolis-based Graco, a provider of pumps and spray equipment for fluid handling in the construction and manufacturing industries. One of Graco's largest cost drivers was its medical expenses. Graco was looking to slow down these cost increases to maintain a leadership position in the market. Its CEO also wanted to improve the total health of Graco employees and dependents by creating a wellness program that would spark employee engagement,

drive productivity, and control healthcare costs. The company initially gave benefit-eligible employees the opportunity to engage in a participation-based program in which participants earned points for biometric screening completion, watching wellness videos, and completing a health risk assessment. Of those eligible, only 60 percent elected to participate. Graco wanted to reach more people and see greater measurable improvement.

Graco converted its participation-based approach into an outcomes-based wellness incentive program administered by Bravo Wellness. In its first year with Bravo, biometric goals were presented alongside continued rewards for activity completion and health education. Since the collaboration began, Graco and Bravo have worked to tighten the biometric screening goals to healthier ranges and have eliminated the impact on healthcare costs, while still maintaining a high percentage of participation in offered activities. Graco's programs include partnerships with Weight Watchers, onsite yoga, a program to quit smoking, an onsite wellness staff, and gym discounts. Graco employees can earn up to \$1800 per year for meeting healthy goals or making marked improvements in blood pressure, cholesterol, weight and tobacco use metrics through the family plan; additionally, smaller, more frequent rewards are also available for participation in events throughout the year. As a result of working with Bravo Wellness, biometric screening categories at Graco have been improving year-on-year. The percentage of obese participants has decreased from 37.2 to 31.2 percent and the percentage of the population with elevated LDL cholesterol has been reduced from 59 to 48 percent. Additionally, the percentage of people with high blood pressure decreased from 77 to 31 percent. Even better, overall participant health has been impacted greatly by the wellness program as there has been a relative decrease of almost 50



percent in the number of participants who had more than one high risk factor.

“Financial savings and health improvement are typically an organization’s primary objectives,” explains Pshock. “We have been successful in demonstrating this. We help take those savings and invest in greater resources for losing weight, or quitting smoking. We have the data, business intelligence and algorithms to take companies and make effective solutions. We have created a platform that allows you to use something built to order that will be most effective for your company. We have been often met with skepticism because the results are too good to be true – but why does something have to be bad to be true? When people stick to best practices, we have tremendous results.”

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Pshock also credits Bravo Wellness’ dedication to service and leadership as a reason behind its growth and success over the years. “We have an incredible staff of 165 employees and a tremendous leadership team that leads by example. We have built tremendous technology and are known to deliver and exceed the expectations of our customers. We consider it an honor to serve each other and our customers and have lots of respect for each other.”

He does acknowledge the challenges of changing regulations and the conflicting information that often comes with them, but says the team has overcome these challenges by working closely with industry trade associations and government agencies to stay in front of new regulations such as those issued by the EEOC as well as changes like the Affordable Care Act (ACA). As well, the company is constantly innovating and keeping up with the overall trends that affect the healthcare industry.

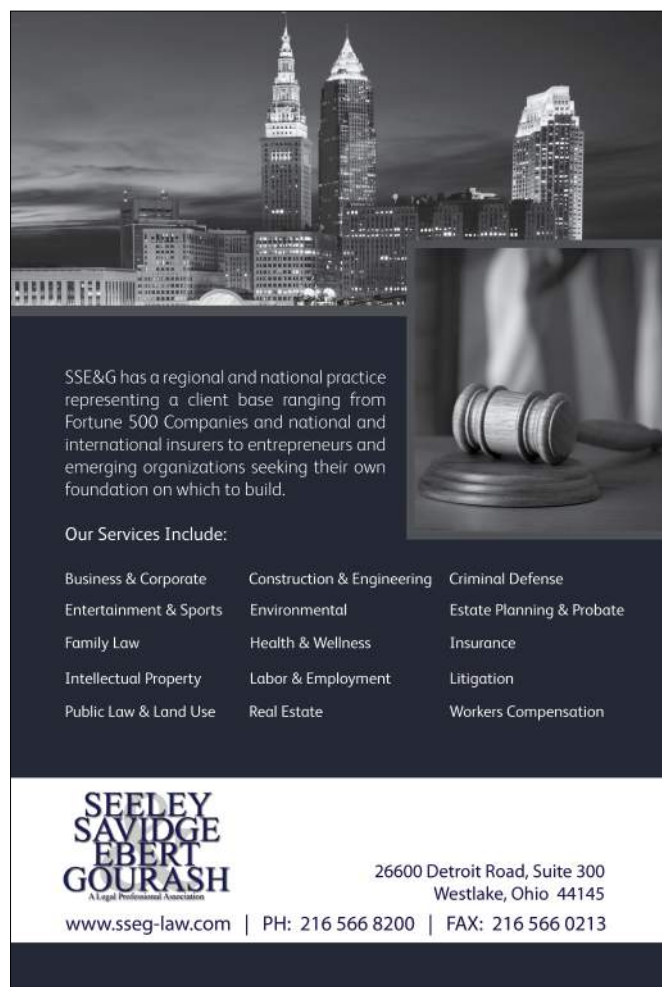
“We make major strides all the time,” Pshock says. “Every year, we make major improvements in analytics, data, and user communication. We have the ability to partner with customers with specific needs in mind and to customize, as you need to have messaging and programs that resonate with employees. Our customers always come first, and we are a solution-oriented company; if we can’t solve a problem, we’ll call the right people to come together to find a solution.”

Bravo Wellness has been recognized for its accomplishments over the years as a result of this successful approach. The

company has been honored with numerous major awards for business growth and success in the healthcare industry. The company has made the Inc. 5000 list in 2013 and 2014 and was awarded as Northeast Ohio’s top workplace by the Cleveland Plain-Dealer several times. “We’re also proud when our customers win awards for having innovative and effective wellness programs. We take most pride in that,” says Pshock.

Since its inception in 2008, Bravo Wellness has been successful in developing wellness programs for companies and developing the technology to ensure their compliance to measure the overall well-being of employees. Pshock says that providing optimal solutions for these companies is what has driven Bravo Wellness to become an innovator and a market leader.

“Companies that are open minded can work with us to find solutions that are unconventional, but proven to be effective,” he says. “Employees who are doing preventative and proactive things to live a healthy lifestyle appreciate opportunities to receive financial rewards. When spending money on a wellness program, companies need to have results. Starting with the idea of employers who are willing to equip people to succeed, reward results, and share rewards with employees can lead to an effective program that is a win-win”. ■



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