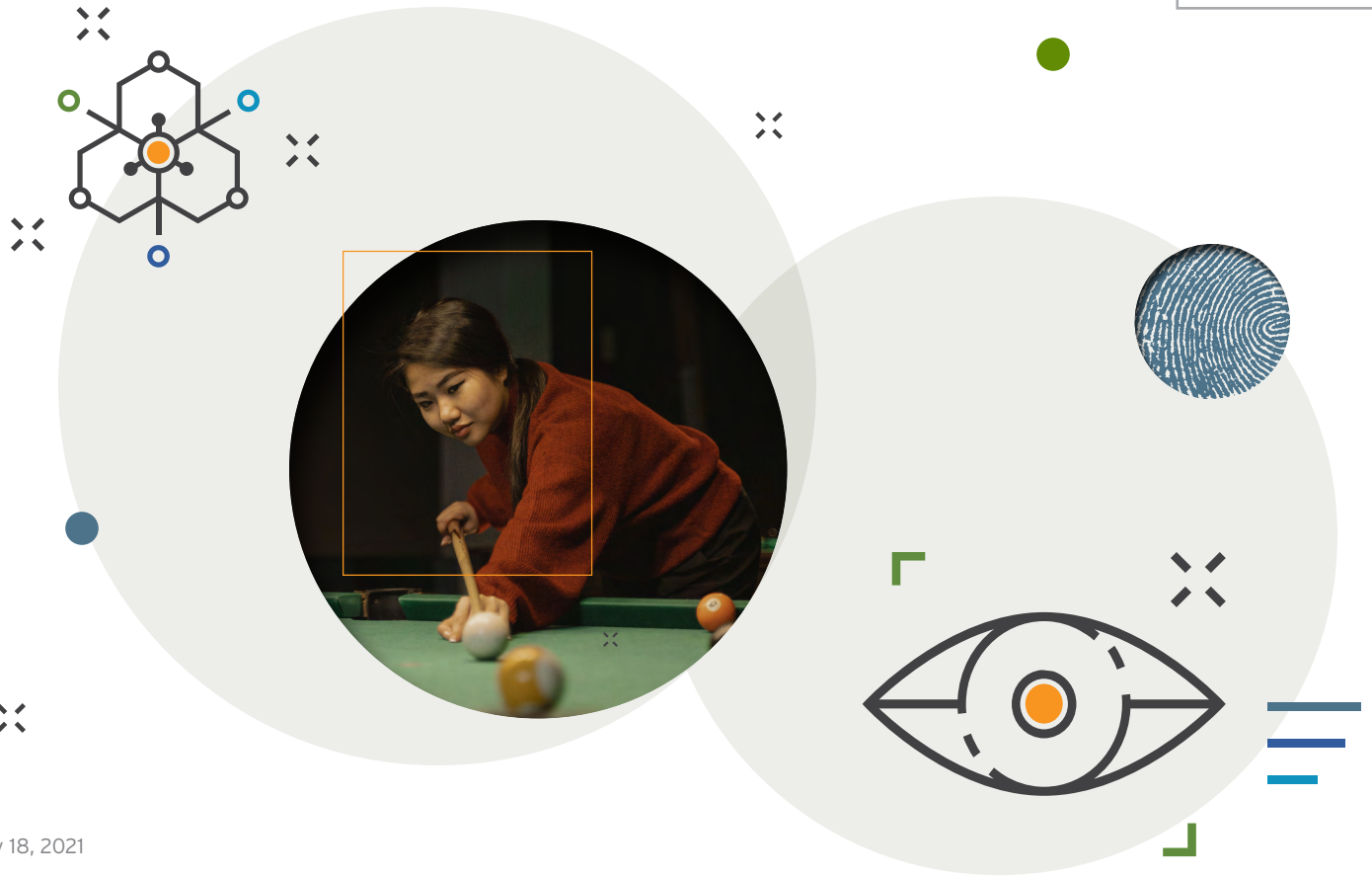




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Finding Balance

PART 3: RETAINING CULTURE

Written by: Jesse LaDousa, Chief Customer Officer

Anyone with exposure to Clientek knows how important our culture is to us. We work hard to create and maintain an open, transparent, and fun culture for our employees. Our office is outfitted with a wide range of features to support collaboration and enjoyment. From shooting a game of pool midday to blow off some steam, to our quarterly company-wide tournaments and summer BBQs - we take great pride in providing an environment that people want to be a part of.

While it appears that we will finally be heading back to some normalcy this summer, the last 16 months have been challenging from a culture perspective. I've spoken with many other leaders in our industry who have faced the same challenges with the results trending towards a loss of some of that cultural spark their companies once had.

We began talking about this right away when the shutdown occurred. We have become so adept at creating a collaboration-based culture over the last three decades we now had a new challenge: how to maintain that culture when you couldn't actually collaborate in person.

Like many things in life, we had to pivot and find a new way. We made a very conscious decision to try and reduce any negative impacts on our culture. Clearly this would be a challenging time for our teams, but we as leadership wanted to ensure everyone knew that Clientek would remain Clientek, regardless of the in-person status of the crew.

Our initial major effort was to hold Clientek's first all-virtual tournament for the Minneapolis based employees. We selected a multi-player game on Xbox that everyone could participate in and created a custom set of rules and scoring mechanisms for the contest.

Not surprisingly, most of our employees already had Xbox consoles at home but for the few that didn't, we grabbed extras from the office for them to use.

The Friday before the tournament, the leadership team packed goody bags filled with snacks, candy, and beverages for each of the employees. With safety top of mind, we set out early, in four separate cars wearing masks.

We drove to every individual employee's home to drop off the goody bags (and a few Xboxes) and say hello from a distance in driveways and front yards.

150 miles and 8 hours later, we had hit every house and prepared the team for our tournament the following week. The tournament was a success, and the team had a great time. For me though, the drive that day from house to house, seeing each of our team members and being able to deliver a bit of Clientek culture directly to them was the real win.

What have you done to ensure your culture remains strong?

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