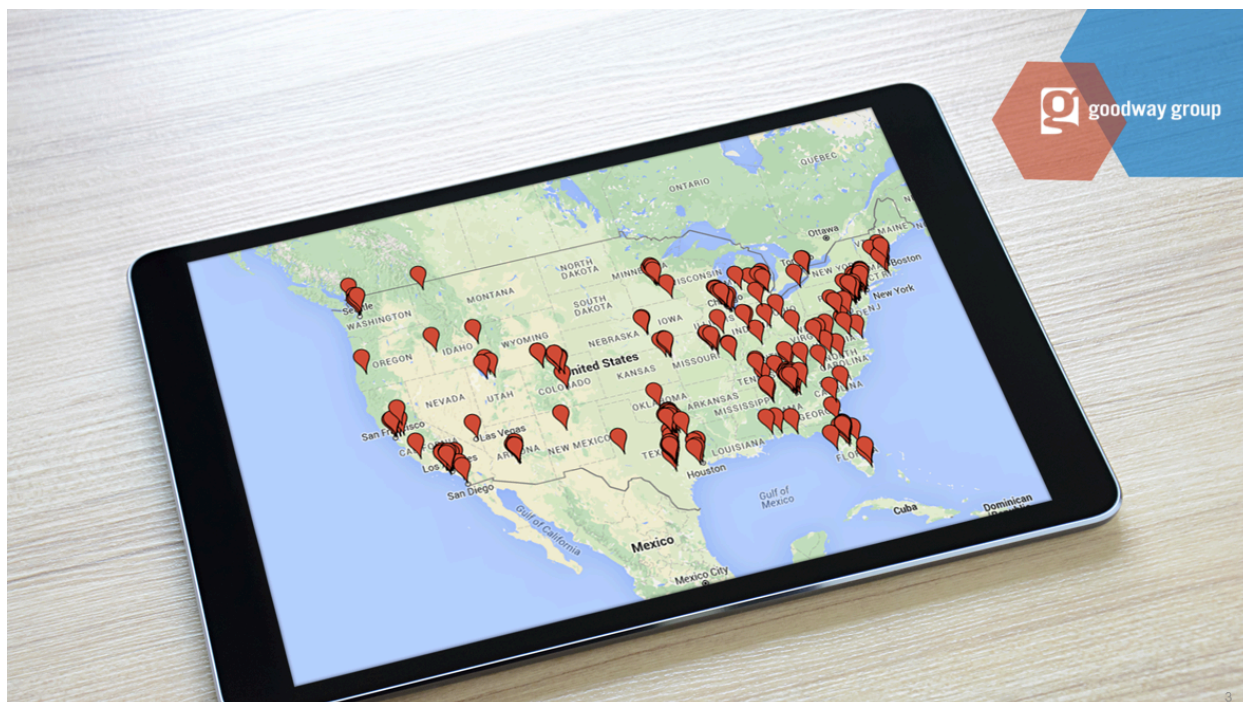# 6 Tips for Managing a Virtual Workforce
Goodway Group Has a 98% Virtual Workforce in 36 States

JENKINTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA – (Feb. 17, 2016) – How many hours per week are spent in traffic? On gas money? Missed family dinners due to working late? Telecommuting and virtual workspaces solve these problems and much more. In the past 10 years, there has been a [103 percent spike in virtual workforces](#), and [44 percent of U.S. companies](#) say they are currently looking to increase their work-from-home staff. It's no longer a fad but a legitimate and growing trend in the business world today.

[Goodway Group](#) – a programmatic advertising technology firm – knows change. In 2006, it took 77 years of being a traditional print company and turned it into a 100 percent digital ad tech firm. It was then that leadership decided to go all virtual, and in the past year have increased their workforce by 50 percent. Currently, Goodway Group has 290 employees, 284 of which work from home in 36 states across the U.S.: a 98 percent virtual workforce. However, implementing remote work places doesn't happen over night. For Goodway Group it was a three-year process. As an industry leader in the digital advertising space, how do they sustain themselves while creating a successful work environment?

"We manage our virtual workforce in four ways: culture, people, process and tools," says Jay Friedman, Goodway's chief operating officer. "Our culture is such that we don't treat those that work from home any differently than if they were in a centralized office setting. We conduct significant screening before hiring to make sure the candidate is a good fit, our processes are built around being remote, notes are taken at every meeting and shared/documented, and we use tools that make remote collaboration much easier."

As an experienced virtual workforce leader, Friedman has six key tips for managing a virtual workforce:

1. **Use the right tools:** Providing employees with the right tools for success is of the utmost importance. There are so many tools that allow virtual workforces to maintain and even exceed typical productivity benchmarks. These include Office365, Yammer, Skype for Business, Confluence, OneDrive and ReviewSnap. These connectivity suites allow simultaneous, multi-user editing and collaboration.

2. **Treat all employees the same:** It is necessary not to treat remote employees any differently. They can't be seen as exceptions or special cases. They should have the same expectations of them as they would in a traditional office setting.

3. **Establish rules:** In a physical space it's easier to establish the basic rules of the office. With a virtual workforce, this can be more difficult, but it's necessary to have firm rules of conduct. For instance, working remotely is not the same as flex-time. If an employee is going to be away from their desk, they need to notify a supervisor, just like in a traditional office.

4. **Cultural symbols:** If a company thrives on cultural symbolism, such as awarding perks for high-achieving employees, keep in mind that virtual companies don't have prime parking spaces in the lot out back to give away. The same goes for birthday gatherings and group employee outings. Virtual companies must make it up to their staff in other ways.

5. **Remote leaders:** If some of a company's staff works remotely and some don't, it's important for the organizations' leadership to set an example of working remotely from time to time, as well as being in the office. This shows that the company leadership does not favor one type of working environment over another.

6. **Virtual process:** It's important to make sure the company's particular business model lines up with the option of having a remote workforce. If the organization's process and way of conducting business requires all employees to be in a centralized office, having remote employees will never be the best option. In addition, constant communication, documentation of everything and storing notes in a centralized location for everyone to view, is a necessary step in the virtual process.

Goodway Group is a leading managed-services programmatic partner to local, regional and Fortune 500 brand agencies. Bootstrapped and 100 percent privately owned since 1929, Goodway moved into the programmatic digital media space in 2006 to continue its rich history of tackling complex local and regional campaign executions with data science-driven targeting and support services to make achieving success easy for agency clients. Its proprietary algorithms pair with a technology-agnostic approach to enable agencies and marketers to achieve their ultimate goal – better results while remaining lean and nimble.

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