

How Boston Beer Company Addressed MSD Injuries through a Comprehensive Ergonomic Risk Assessment and Wellness Program

BOSTON BEER co.

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With The Power Of AI, Boston Beer Completes Ergonomic Risk Assessments In 5 Minutes, Instead Of 60

Boston Beer Company, known for its flagship brands such as Samuel Adams, Angry Orchard, Truly Hard Seltzer, Twisted Tea, Coney Island Brewing Company, and Dogfish Head, has experienced significant growth, doubling in size in 2017, and then again following the COVID-19 pandemic. This rapid scaling highlighted the need for sustainable ergonomic and risk management programs.

Boston Beer Company (BBC) implemented our ergonomic assessment, concern reporting, action tracking system, and incident management solutions to record and analyze ergonomic risks and injuries.

With the help of Benchmark Gensuite, Boston Beer Company was able to:



Efficiently assess MSD risks, prioritize them, and create mitigation plans



Demonstrate the value of their program and boost engagement from all levels of the workforce



Communicate results and continuously reduce ergonomic risks

The Challenge: Addressing the Precursors of Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSD)s

In 2023, 45% of all injuries at Boston Beer Company were related to Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSDs) and ergonomic issues, including awkward postures and repetition. Their existing injury prevention measures were not adequately addressing these risks, leading to a resurgence of injuries.

"At the heart of all our programs, are our coworkers ... They're the folks that we need to take care of. We really went after our MSD injuries which, at the time, seemed like the right thing to do. But we were chasing injury rates, and what we weren't doing was really assessing our sites for precursor ergonomic and MSD risks," said Mike Malchitsky, Senior Manager, EHS Corporate Programs at Boston Beer Company. "It took away the injuries for a short period of time, but then they started to bubble back. It wasn't sustainable."

BBC aimed to better understand and identify MSD risk factors. By addressing these root causes, they could consistently decrease and eliminate MSD injuries wherever possible, and enhance co-worker health and well-being.

The Solution: Resolving MSD Risks with Advanced Tech

Boston Beer Company realized it needed to take a more data-driven, holistic approach to improve worker health, safety and productivity. They also were willing to invest in a better system to get them to greatness. Previously, we didn't use our data as well as we could have. We were doing a lot of ergo evaluations manually and that was a pretty tedious task. So, the intent was also to find technology to help us," Malchitsky shared.

Boston Beer turned to Benchmark Gensuite's Ergo Evaluator and integrated AI video-based assessments powered by our partner, 3motionAI, for a more efficient way to identify and score ergonomic risks.



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Boston Beer doesn't want to be good at anything; we want to be great ... We want people to feel healthy, comfortable, happy, whether they're at work or at home.”

Quick, AI-Powered Ergonomic Assessments

Before implementing these solutions, ergonomic evaluations took about an hour to complete using manual methods like tape measures, scales, and yardsticks. Using AI-powered assessments, videos of workers completing a task can now be analyzed in real time, providing risk scores in just 3–5 minutes.

“The technology to me opens the floodgates and makes everything more efficient,” Malchitsky explained.

Another major priority for BBC was distilling the results of these assessments into a run-down that workers could easily understand and digest. Previously, the output of assessments featured paragraphs of text, which busy workers struggled to make time for. They preferred quick, to-the-point visuals that could tell the same story in a fraction of the time.

Now, employees can quickly watch a video recording and discover where the risks are, pinpoint the movements that are creating those risks, and in just a few minutes can be better educated and understand how they need to approach a task.

“Our business runs on a lot of visual metrics; that’s the way we’re programmed,” Malchitsky said. “Our brewery directors don’t want to sit down and read emails ... Everything has to be quick and easy. Instead of reading this giant report, we go right to what’s important at the right time.”

Data to Drive Informed Decisions

To better prevent MSDs and ergonomic injuries, BBC established a holistic program based on four strategic pillars:



Boston Beer Company relies on the data that it collects within Benchmark Gensuite to continually evaluate the performance of their program and zero in on areas that need more attention. The best part? It’s all in one place.

“Our old workplace injury prevention program was kind of stand-alone, managed in spreadsheets and Word documents. It just didn’t make sense,” Mike said.

“Now, our supervisors, our leads, our managers, and our coworkers see how the links work. We can have a concern report put in, which funnels straight to an Ergo Evaluation, which could funnel to an Injury & Illness log. Having that connectivity is really powerful. It’s just nice having it all in one platform. Now, we’ve got a ton of data that we’ve used to really help guide us where we need to focus. It’s like a heat map for our breweries,” Mike explained.

Gaining Engagement from All Levels of the Organization

It’s no secret that implementing a thorough program requires buy-in and participation from all areas of the workforce. Boston Beer knew for the program to stick, everyone had to understand its objectives and the role they played in reaching them.

The metrics and dashboards from Benchmark Gensuite served as a key way for the team to demonstrate the program’s value to leadership and the frontline. “Our leadership and teams at sites really want to know ‘Why are we doing this? Show me the data.’ Now, we actually have the data at our fingertips, which is great,” Malchitsky shared.

The platform’s ease of use also made it simple for employees to learn, which significantly boosted engagement and paved the way for a successful deployment. By communicating results and getting workers participating in live scans and assessments, Boston Beer is empowering its entire workforce to build ergonomic best practices into everyday work.

With its holistic approach to addressing MSD-related injuries, its use of advanced technology, and culture of continuous improvement, Boston Beer Company is setting new benchmarks in the industry for ergonomic excellence and workforce well-being.

01 Create a Stronger Safety Culture with Behavior Based Safety Software

Promote a safer work environment by empowering employees to record safety observations.

02 Manage Incidents and Injuries

Report and track incidents and near misses to improve workplace safety.

03 Ensure Timely & Complete Corrective Actions

Manage and track corrective actions from start to finish.

04 Mitigate Workplace Hazards

Proactively assess and resolve safety concerns before they escalate.