




Case Study: Welnys

Bringing Wellness to Work With a Consolidated Marketplace for Corporate Wellness Programs





“The platform that 7Factor built for us is a gamechanger for corporate wellness programs. They build stuff, and it works.”



Heather Waibel, Founder, Welnys



AN ACCELERATED LAUNCH FOR A CORPORATE WELLNESS PLATFORM

Welnys helps employers bring wellness to the workplace, and to wherever else employees may be. With a consolidated marketplace of health and fitness professionals, the company offers a turnkey solution for on-site corporate wellness programs. Through their recently launched Welnys TV, they also stream to distributed workforces and employees currently working from home.

“Our platform serves as a wellness concierge,” says Welnys founder Heather Waibel. “Instead of signing 100 contracts with 100 vendors, they can subscribe to Welnys and get a full range of wellness services across the geographic range of the company.”

To create Welnys, Waibel left a successful career with PayPal, where her roles included that of lead global solutions producer. With a limited startup budget for Welnys, she turned to a freelance developer friend to build the original platform for her as a side project, using React and Go on top of Google App Engine in Google Cloud. Development work initially proceeded slowly.

Waibel spent about a year bootstrapping the business, even putting herself through a self-directed, two-week sales bootcamp. Then, in 2017, Welnys was accepted to the prestigious Entrepreneurs Roundtable Accelerator in New York. In March of 2018, Welnys won both the investor panel and audience choice vote at the annual TechLaunch BullPen pitch event at Rutgers University. The startup has been growing rapidly ever since.



GROWING PAINS

However, as the marketplace of vendors and served employees grew, the Welnys platform struggled to scale to the increased demand. Stability issues emerged, and there was a growing backlog of bugs and needed features. Technology development requirements outpaced what Waibel's freelancing friend could handle on a side-project basis, and the developer wasn't available to join Welnys full-time.

Two attempts to hire an in-house engineer were thwarted by last-minute offers from another company, so, on the advice of one of her advisors, Waibel decided to hire an agency instead. She put out an RFP, evaluated several firms, then hired 7Factor.

Blow It Up or Fix It?

“When we came on with Welnys, we knew their platform was having stability issues,” says Jeremy Duvall, founder of 7Factor. “So our first job was to do an assessment of their codebase, then recommend the best way forward.”

This was primarily due to insufficient and unreliable access to engineers, a problem we could easily solve. A manual build and deployment process had also slowed the pace of development, but we knew how to fix that too.

Our audit did identify some serious problems and instabilities, but we ultimately concluded that it would be more cost-efficient to fix the existing codebase than to start from scratch. Waibel accepted our recommendation and contracted with us to do the needed work.

Aside from the stability issues, the main problem at Welnys was the large backlog of bugs and features that had built up over time.

ESTABLISH A DEVOPS INFRASTRUCTURE AND A DISCIPLINED SDLC

When you're bootstrapping an early-stage startup, you do the best you can with the resources you have. However, Welnys was now a fast-growing company doing business with Fortune 500 companies, and Waibel finally had her team of professional software engineers. So we built a more sophisticated, automated development infrastructure for Welnys, then took responsibility for managing a disciplined development process, freeing Waibel to focus on business growth.

STABILIZE THE ARCHITECTURE AND CLEAR OUT THE BACKLOG

With a robust DevOps infrastructure in place, we got to work stabilizing the Welnys platform, including the API, the database, and the web-based user application. We updated the version of Google Cloud it was running on and made many architectural improvements. We also commented and refactored the code extensively to make it easier to follow and read, preparing it for future debugging and added

features. With a disciplined SDLC and DevOps infrastructure in place, and with a stabilized architecture and refactored codebase, we could now clear out the Welnys backlog of bugs and features. We brought the technology in sync with business growth while preparing the way for future growth and extensions.



RESULTS

Supported by a stable software architecture and a reliable technology partner, Welnys has continued its rapid growth. Organizations subscribing to Welnys for their employees include the City of Boston, MongoDB, and Fortune 500 and S&P 500 companies such as Walmart and Waibel's former employer, PayPal.



We're glad we can help such an inspiring company in its mission... and Welnys has also inspired us to get up from our chairs and exercise a little more often.



We build good things

Let us show you how

