

Bolt Threads and Carbon Health case study



BACKGROUND

Since March 2020, the novel Coronavirus—COVID-19—has significantly impacted our lives in numerous ways. To help control its rapid spread and burden on the healthcare system, government officials across the country have enacted lockdowns and shelter-in-place orders, as well as mask and social-distancing mandates. Except for essential workers, businesses were ordered to continue their operations remotely, at least until the level of viral transmission was reduced to a controllable level. While some businesses can reach the same level of efficiency and effectiveness by operating remotely, and can, therefore, remain remote for longer durations, many companies cannot and require on-site and in-person interactions. As shelter-in-place orders are lifted and people return to worksites, it is imperative that businesses take decisive, evidence-based actions to protect their employees. This is especially important given a vaccine is currently not available, and a large portion of the population remains susceptible to becoming infected with COVID-19.

THE MISSION | Bolt Threads & Maintaining Long-Term COVID-19 Workplace Safety

Founded in 2009, Bolt Threads is a material solutions company located in Emeryville, California, that specializes in creating sustainable, scalable materials that benefit both humans and the environment. Some of their trademark creations include MICROSILK™, a sustainably-produced textile spun from the same proteins as a spider's web, and MYLO™, a mycelium-based alternative to animal and synthetic leather. Bolt Threads' employees include a diverse and eclectic group of professionals, including laboratory scientists, engineers, and operations and product development specialists.

Shelter-in-place and work-from-home orders took effect in Emeryville in mid-March. Bolt Threads shut down its laboratory, and all employees were required to work from home. The back-office operations, product, and commercial teams easily adapted, while the laboratory scientists and engineers spent their time analyzing and organizing data. However, over time, it became clear the scientists and engineers needed to be on-site to access specialized equipment and continue their research. Bolt Threads realized they could not sustain their remote-only business in the long term. The Workplace Operations team initially created return-to-work safety protocols, including trainings and online forms for symptom checks, spreadsheets for scheduling, and contact tracing, while putting their employees' safety first and foremost. While these internal measures worked well for the small on-site team they welcomed back first, Bolt Threads needed a scalable solution that would work for maintaining the safety of larger groups on-site. That's when the company decided to look for a safe and efficient solution.

THE SOLUTION | Carbon Health COVID Ready

Bolt Threads' CEO and VP of People & Places was referred to Carbon Health, a rapidly growing, technology-based healthcare company based in San Francisco. Carbon Health developed COVID Ready, an evidence-based program designed to help businesses safely bring people back to work.

COVID Ready has several key features: Testing, Education, Monitoring and Reporting, Customized Action Plans, and Complete or Virtual Care. Carbon Health's robust testing features and partnerships with FDA-approved labs allows companies to do fast diagnostic or antibody tests onsite or at-home. COVID Ready comes with frequently updated educational tools, providing employees with the most recent, evidence-based information for reducing the risk of infection and outbreaks. COVID Ready allows for daily check-ins and symptom tracking of employees, all of which can be viewed and managed through a user-friendly dashboard.

If an employee has symptoms, COVID Ready's customized action plans provide clear and easy steps to follow, as well as anonymous contact tracing managed by Carbon Health. Through Carbon Health's app, an employee can create an in-person appointment at a clinic or have instant access to their Virtual Care offerings. In addition to having successfully tested 35% of San Francisco residents, Carbon Health's Virtual Care program currently reaches 2/3 of the United States population and continues to grow. The COVID Ready app is HIPAA-compliant, ensuring all employee data is kept private and secure.

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Sholeh Esmaili-Montoya | Vice President of People & Places



THE OUTCOME

Bolt Threads was happy to partner with Carbon Health, a reputable healthcare provider that values a culture of safety as much as they do. They were also pleased with how responsive Carbon Health was to feedback and their willingness to work together as a team. Bolt Threads' VP of People & Places stated COVID Ready easily automated the work they initially tried to do manually, making it much more sustainable from an administrative standpoint. The Workplace Operations team also said contact tracing through COVID Ready was more reliable and much easier to manage. Bolt Threads also appreciated that the dashboard was easy-to-use and made it simple to monitor employee compliance. Employees were pleased with the easy access to Virtual Care and how it saved them hours of time trying to find an in-person appointment. Also, the efficiency of employee testing continued to improve as Carbon Health's partner labs continued to improve their own efficiency.

There was uncertainty amongst employees about COVID-19 and their work situation during this time. The fact that Carbon Health always utilized clinical expert oversight created peace of mind for the Bolt Threads team. Employees were also confident the health information was science-based and their personal data was kept confidential. As one employee stated, “I was impressed with the implementation of Carbon App and testing.” After a few weeks, Bolt Threads noticed an increase in workplace operations efficiency allowing the rest of the team to continue focusing on their work.

Get your workforce COVID Ready >

