



The 10 Essential Questions to Ask When Assessing Your POS System

What's the status of your company's POS?

For today's retailers, the POS system plays a critical role in staying ahead of the competition, cultivating customer loyalty and increasing sales and productivity. Still, many organizations run outdated legacy systems that are incapable of handling the complexities of omnichannel retailing.

Is your point of sale system preventing you from achieving your objectives? Here are 10 questions you can answer to quickly determine the state of your software:

1. Is your POS software built with the customer in mind?

Your system should make it effortless for you to give customers exactly what they're looking for. Aside from the basics like product information and available inventory levels, your system needs to be able to support more advanced engagement initiatives, including client profiles, loyalty programs and personalized offers. Convenience goes a long way. Ensuring shoppers are in and out of your store as fast as possible increases the frequency of store visits.

2. Do you receive real-time information?

Access to the most up-to-date information is essential to making better business decisions. Your POS must provide real-time visibility of data and statistics about your entire supply chain, regardless of the channel. A prime example is the ship from store service model, in which brick and mortar stores fulfill online orders from locations that are closest to the customer. Complete inventory visibility across the enterprise is precisely what makes this possible. Retailers gain the flexibility to fill orders from their entire network of stores and distribution centers – increasing stock turnover, reducing markdowns and truly enabling the endless aisle of product selections for customers.

3. Does your POS solution properly support unified commerce?

With unified commerce, there is one version of the truth. POS, website and store are all connected in real time. While there may be several channels, there is one piece of software connecting them all. POS should not be separate, but linked together through a unified commerce platform to consolidate key elements historically housed on multiple systems.

4. Does your POS solution meet all security and compliance requirements?

With multiple data breaches plaguing the retail industry, compromising on information security is not an option. Your point of sale software must be up-to-date on the latest industry standards and regulations (i.e. PCI DSS and EMV). Ensuring the absolute integrity of customer information as well as vital internal data is paramount as even a minor glitch could cost you your entire reputation.

5. Does your POS system include a strong mobile component?

If you aren't putting mobility first, you're already losing. Beyond line busting, mobile capabilities give sales associates the ability to engage customers on a personal level – armed with key customer and product information that can be accessed from anywhere on the sales floor. Mobility gives you the tools to provide an exceptional in-store experience and keep your customers coming back for more.

6. Is your POS solution fully integrated?

The POS system is the point of convergence for omnichannel operations. It's the platform that connects all the different areas of the enterprise to the retail store customer. Pieces of data that were once siloed must now seamlessly integrate to support the seamless customer experience. This single point of commerce is the key to success in modern retailing. In this context, information must be able to flow freely across your organization. Your POS should be integrated with all mission-critical processes, including the management of your inventory, warehouse, distributed orders, planning/allocation, customers and financials, putting you in the driver's seat to sell down to the last SKU.



7. Is your return on investment high and total cost of ownership low?

Your POS represents a significant financial investment and as such, you need to make sure that you're seeing results. Top notch maintenance and support services are non-negotiables, not extra perks. Ongoing training services with abundant documentation should be included as well. Investing in a functionally rich, configurable and integrated platform increases sales from all channels, minimizes markdowns and produces tangible results that boost your bottom line.

8. Is your POS system adaptable to your business needs?

Every business is unique and your POS should be too – without compromising your ability to upgrade to newer versions of your software. Your POS should be tailor-made to the needs of your industry, while being adaptable to your specific requirements. Therefore, your system should be configured precisely according to your business rules and processes, from discounts, reason codes, tenders and menus to a personalized interface to match the look and feel of your brand. Customized dashboards corresponding to specific user roles are essential, as are multi language and currency capabilities. After all, one size doesn't fit all!

9. Are you sure of the future of the application?

The digital revolution currently sweeping the retail landscape means that the demands of tomorrow will be vastly different from today's. To get a leg up on the competition, make sure your POS meets the requirements of the present and future – such as new payment methods (e.g. Apple Pay) and advanced in-store technologies (e.g. beacons). Next time you speak with your vendor, ask them about their roadmap for the next three to five years. This will give you a good idea of whether your POS is in line with your future needs.

10. Is your POS user-friendly?

Your associates on the frontline use the application daily, so an easy-to-use interface for POS terminals and mobile units is essential. Too often, organizations deploy mobile devices that end up collecting dust, as employees find them convoluted and feel they only add to their workloads. An intuitive solution requiring minimal training empowers your staff to serve today's connected consumers with the same rich information these shoppers access on their smartphones. This is especially true with popular service models such as BOPIS (buy online, pickup in store), which requires retailers and associates to quickly and flexibly access previous customer history and inventory information.

If you answered "No" to five or more of these questions, there are definite gaps in your company's retail point of sale software. You are now at a crucial crossroads, and it may be time to consider a new POS solution. Of course, you can choose to look the other way and continue with the status quo. However, the consequences of such a decision could be disastrous given today's ultra-competitive retail landscape that grows more digital by the day.

Contact us today to learn more!

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