

Point of sale practices

How can your business ensure its growth and success in the future? The answer is your point of sale practices. Effective POS (Point of Sale) practices are crucial to the success of your business transactions and enhance opportunities for further business.

Effective POS practices

A dynamic POS will:

- Convey a positive lasting impression for your customers.
- Optimise the opportunity for repeat business.
- Efficiently and accurately process sales.
- Incorporate security practices.

Use the POS area to market and merchandise products that capture the ad-ons or impulse sales. The POS area is also an opportunity for you to dazzle your customers with staff product knowledge, efficiency and superior customer service.

POS systems

Your POS systems (usually computers or cash registers) come in all shapes, sizes, brands and functions. Regardless of your system, three things are essential:

1. Know how to use your system accurately and effectively.
2. Follow safe, simple and thorough procedures when handling cash.
3. Understand whether your system produces meaningful information that will assist you to better manage your business. For example, will your system allow you to identify which merchandise lines are selling well?

If you are considering an upgrade, find out about systems that can provide an integrated financial management system for your business.

POS Technology

When investigating a POS system for your business it is important to have a clear idea of both your needs and your customers' needs. Your POS system should complement your existing processes, not hinder them.

Consider implementing a system that will track the following:

- Daily sales.
- Shift sales.
- Department and merchandise breakdowns.
- Stock control.
- Cash out and banking.
- Cash drop.
- Stock adjustments.



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Your POS practices complement your customer service standards. Take time to determine both the needs of your business and your customers when selecting a POS system and incorporate those needs into your system.

Tip: Use this fact sheet to review your POS practices in order to enhance your customer service and also deal with security issues.

When deciding on your POS practices you may like to consider the following points:

Marketing

This is your opportunity to gather and receive information from your customers. Many questions from customers occur at the POS, therefore it is important that both you and your staff are able to correctly answer these questions. Consider running product knowledge training in your store so that your employees are more aware of what your business can offer the customer. This can be done in a fun way by using quizzes and competitions.

This information is provided as a guide only. Each business is different and will need to have its individual needs assessed. The Queensland government, its Ministers, officers, employees or agents do not accept responsibility in respect to this information or any consequence of relying on it.

The POS is also an opportunity for you to gather information about your customers. It could be a database, or perhaps involve collecting customers' business cards. The information will assist you in keeping customers informed regarding products, services and promotions. You will also be able to establish a profile of your customers. The customer profile will provide guidance on 'where' and 'how' to target your marketing activities more effectively.

Security

Security procedures need to be incorporated into your POS practices in order to minimise your risks. Although the security of your business is an important aspect, these procedures should be integrated in such a way that they do not become intrusive, or affect relationships with your customers.

Your POS area is where the 'bottom line' activity takes place. By making your POS area more efficient and secure, you will increase your turnover and protect what you've worked so hard for!

Cash handling

When handling cash, both you and your employees need to consider the following points:

- Count cash away from public view.
- Perform cash drops quickly and when there are no customers.
- Never allow unauthorised people into your POS area.
- Don't discuss security procedures with customers.
- Keep banking information and credit card limits confidential.
- Never leave cash drawers open or unattended.



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Devise procedures for receiving payment from customers. Ensure these procedures are followed by EVERYONE in your business at all times.

There is an accepted industry standard for handling cash transactions. When serving customers who pay in cash:

1. Total the sale and tell the customer the amount total.
2. Call the amount of money tendered by the customer.
3. Place the amount on the cash drawer (not in the register).
4. Make up the change.
5. Count the change back to the customer.
6. Place the amount tendered into appropriate compartments in the cash drawer.
7. Close the cash drawer.

Detailed and tightly monitored procedures are designed not only to protect your business against loss, but also to protect honest staff against false accusations when a loss occurs.

Remember this is the final point of contact for your customers. Make it a memorable experience. It may be the beginning of the next sale...!

Keys to effective POS practices:

1. Ask what you want your POS system to do for your business?
2. Utilise the marketing aspects of your POS system to meet customer needs and maximise profits.
3. Value add to your customer service by ensuring full staff training in POS system use.
4. Develop and tightly monitor all security procedures at POS.

Further information

The following fact sheets provide further information on these issues:

- Buying
- Customer service and selling
- Identifying customer needs
- Marketing
- Merchandising
- Security