



The Ultimate Guide to Specialty Point of Sale



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Businesses come in an enormous variety of sizes, shapes, and concepts — and so do their point of sale (POS) needs. Priorities and requirements for your specialty business can differ widely from other types of retail and restaurant businesses, like department stores, discount outlets or the typical fast casual or quick service restaurant, which makes it difficult for a POS software application to be a one-size-fits-all solution.

So how do you find the best fit for your business? Consider deploying a specialty retail POS system, designed with your type of business in mind. Here are some things to look for when exploring your options.

Applications and Environment

When you're ready to upgrade to a new POS system, don't start by looking at the technology that's available. First, evaluate your business. Define your application needs and consider your working environment. What are you selling, and where? Is your venue indoor or outdoor? Temporary or permanent? Mobile? A stadium concessions stand will have different needs than a pet store or pottery shop, which will also be different than a festival booth or a sporting goods shop. Answers to these questions will help point you in the right direction when you're ready to shop for a POS system:



Does your POS hardware need to be rugged?

Does your POS system need to withstand high-volume use? Will it be exposed to dust, dirt, and will it need to withstand vibrations or impacts? Outdoor venues and mobile applications especially require hardware that is built to withstand harsh weather conditions such as temperature extremes and precipitation and the increased potential for drops and spills.



Do you need self-service kiosks?

Self-ordering solutions can bust lines and improve order accuracy, since customers can enter and check their own specifications. Ticket sizes also tend to increase with self-service, as upselling features are automatic.



What about payment options?

Fast, convenient customer service is a universal need for all types of retailers, but other requirements may need to be more specialized. The Miami Open international tennis tournament, for example, needed a POS system that could accept special meal cards issued to players and volunteers for use at any of the various food venues available. In addition to accepting cash and credit cards, your customers may prefer to pay with mobile wallets like Apple Pay or Google Pay, which requires near field communication (NFC) technology. You also need a payment card reader that's EMV-compliant for the best card-present security and protection from liability for chargebacks. Or you may need to use card readers that pair with a tablet via Bluetooth.



Will you need a 4G router?

Venues such as food trucks or festival booths at remote outdoor locations (or even some remote indoor locations) may not have wired internet access. In those cases, you'll need your own router to keep operations up and running.





Scalability and Flexibility

Whether you operate from a fixed location, such as a brick-and-mortar store or a stadium, or temporary location, such as a pop-up shop or festival booth, you should consider choosing a POS system that will scale with your needs. Whether you need a greater number of POS terminals for a temporary initiative — or you are expanding to new, permanent locations, you need a POS system that is also flexible. A gift shop that opens pop-up shops for the holidays in different locations will need a flexible solution that can work in different venues and, perhaps, manage sales of different types of inventory. Look for POS systems that allow you to keep your options open.

Ease of Use

Another aspect to consider when choosing a specialty POS system is the user experience you and your employees can expect. Some questions to ask include:



How easy is the software to use?

The time and cost of training your employees on a new system can be significant, particularly if you have a high number of temporary or seasonal workers or if your business experiences high employee turnover. You want POS software that is intuitive and user-friendly so your employees can learn quickly and spend less time training and more time providing great customer service.



Does the POS system contribute to employees' productivity and efficiency?

Does it offer all of the features and functions your employees need to do their jobs well? If your business offers repair services, does the POS system allow your employees to accurately and easily manage that part of your business?

You may also want to consider an embedded POS system, which can increase productivity because of what it doesn't have. Embedded POS systems are designed and built for the singular purpose of POS functions. They aren't computers that employees can use to access to non-work-related functions such as games, videos, social media, and e-mail, unlike a system that runs on a traditional PC or tablet. Without those distractions, employees can be more focused on their jobs and productive.



 ***Will employees see standard screens whether they use a fixed or mobile terminal?***

As your business grows, you may find you need the increased mobility of a tablet as well as the stability of a fixed terminal. If both interfaces are consistent, you won't need to retrain employees to use mobile POS, saving you time and money.

 ***Does it provide upselling/cross-selling prompts?***

Employees don't always remember to upsell consistently. A good POS system will have suggestions and prompts built in to help ensure you don't miss any chances to increase ticket sizes and revenue.

Customer Experience

In today's competitive environment, it's important to provide the types of experiences your customers want — so they aren't tempted to shop with the competition. What do your customers want most, and how can your POS software maximize their satisfaction?

 ***Speed and accuracy at the checkout***

No one wants to wait in line. Customers want fast, efficient services at the point of sale. Using self-service kiosks is one way to improve the speed and accuracy of service.

 ***Flexible, secure payment***

Can your POS handle a variety of different payment methods and keep your customers' sensitive financial information secure? An embedded POS is especially secure because files cannot be downloaded or uploaded — so viruses or spyware can't be installed, and data can't be stolen.



✓ **Robust inventory control**

Make sure you stay fully stocked with essentials and popular items so you never have to send customers away disappointed.

✓ **Engagement and connection**

You may want to consider choosing a POS system that supports a customer facing display or digital signage. This can assist with upselling opportunities by providing product images and messages and keeping customers engaged as they wait in line. Your POS system should also give you the ability to reward customers through a loyalty program and to collect data that helps you personalize service and promotions.

Installation, Training, and Support

Regardless of the type of POS system you choose or the features it offers, you will need installation, training, and support services to properly deploy your system and get the most value from it. Finding the right dealer to provide these services can be just as vital as finding the right technology. Some questions to ask your dealer:

💬 **Do they have extensive installation experience?**

Specialty POS installation can have issues and requirements that are as unique as your business itself. Is your prospective dealer well-versed in serving specialty retail markets like yours?



What kind of training do they offer?

You can have a POS system with the greatest features in the world, but if you and your employees don't know how to run it, it won't benefit your business. Find out if software training is included in the installation services to help you take full advantage of all your system has to offer.



How good is their support?

Problems and IT failures are bound to occur at some point. Look for a dealer that offers reliable and responsive support to minimize downtime and keep your business operating.



Will you need uninstall services?

In some cases, such as large temporary or seasonal events you may require uninstallation assistance when it's over. Ensure that the dealer you choose to work with will offer this as part of your package.

About NCC

NCC provides comprehensive software solutions designed for the retail and hospitality industries, in traditional and specialty environments. We have more than 40 years of experience installing more than 50,000 POS systems all over the world. We've partnered with top-of-the-line hardware manufacturers to provide POS services to specialty events such as the London and Rio Olympics and Paralympics, Roskilde Music Festival, the FIFA World Cup, and the Miami Open tennis tournament, as well as restaurants and shops of all sizes. [Contact NCC](#) to find out more about how our POS solutions can help your specialty retail business thrive.