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Marketing, Manufacturing, and E-commerce:

Top 4 KPIs for Data-Driven Quality Management

(Ghostwritten For Inspectorio)



In the past, product quality management was wholly reliant upon post manufacturing reports and issue descriptions. In other words, the traditional approach has been to catch issues once they've already left the production line and then work on finding a solution for future rounds of production. However, the most cutting-edge companies are now shifting towards a much more resilient and adaptive practice—one that involves gathering data throughout the whole production process and applying it as early as possible to eliminate problems sooner.

Increasingly predictive and preventative measures will nip product quality issues in the bud and keep them from ever making it through the production process, paving the way for happy, loyal customers and great sales performance. In this paper, we'll delve into the details of data-driven product quality management so that you can get an idea of how it can help you revamp your approach to production for the best possible results. We'll also address why this data-driven management strategy is so important for any modern production line and go over which key performance indicators (KPI's) to pay the most attention to. And, you'll gain some valuable insight on how to ensure that you're closing the loop on quality management and optimizing your strategies for future rounds of production.

What is data-driven quality management?

The approach of data driven quality management involves utilizing technology to gather product information from each stage of the manufacturing process and analyze it all to keep potential future issues from ever even happening. This data and resulting analysis can then be leveraged with each new round of production in order to produce better and better results each time.

The next great step in data driven quality management is the utilization of cutting-edge A.I. and machine learning in order to optimize data collection and analysis real-time—giving retailers better opportunities than ever before to catch problems before they take off. When machine learning and A.I. collect and analyze data real-time for you, you'll have more and better opportunities to proactively jump on potential issues, mitigating problems and protecting your company from painful profit losses. [The more resources you put into catching and correcting product quality issues, the less you'll have to put into warranty costs and potential damage to your brand's reputation.](#) It's infinitely better to catch a defect in the production stream than it is to let it reach retail shelves and wind up disappointing your consumers.

Utilizing modern technology that collects and processes data real-time will give you and your manufacturing partners priceless information that they didn't have such early access to before. This improved and optimized data collection can help your manufacturing partners streamline their production approach from the very beginning of each production cycle and prevent potential issues from ever incurring costs. Prevention is key, and optimizing your approach to data collection and analysis will leave you with more resources to put into other areas and maximize your Return on Investment (ROIs) more effectively.

Machine learning and A.I. transform data-driven quality management, empowering you to:

1. Predict and prevent defects entirely, instead of only recognizing them in hindsight
2. Actively find areas to improve your products, process, and global quality & compliance
3. Compile performance metrics that are tailored to each business' unique needs
4. Improve overall quality of production to optimize use of company resources

So, what kind of information should A.I. and machines be collecting in order to assist with data driven quality management? To put it simply: You want data from as many spots in your supply chains and production line as possible so that you can form a holistic and well-rounded overview of how everything works.

Every modern company ought to address the vulnerable areas of its process and be able to predict potential profit losses so that they can adapt their strategies to be more

resilient and effective. What's more is that they need to be able to organize and analyze all this info together in order to get a cohesive overview of the company's process. At this stage in the game, real-time information gathering and analysis are essential, and A.I. and machine learning come together to offer decision-makers the perfect solution.

Why is this important?

In order to ensure that your company is making the best possible use of its resources and time, it's crucial for you to keep a steady eye on progression as a whole. In order to gauge progression, you'll need every piece of the puzzle in order to put together a complete understanding of where your resources are going and the direction your company is headed. So, when you use technology to gather and analyze inside information from all key points of the production process, you'll be far more able to take a look at the big picture and pinpoint potential risks. Additionally, you'll be more able to respond to these risks right away and identify opportunities to smooth out the process, reduce costs, and optimize your supplier base.

Altogether, you want to be able to garner valuable info from all areas, including those that commonly weaken the communication chain, such as factories that conduct self-inspections and suppliers in faraway locations. Data-driven quality management provides you with the unique opportunity to fill in impactful (and potentially risky) information gaps by giving you 360-degree visibility within your production network. The more information gathering is left in the hands of suppliers and other partners that bring an unavoidable margin of human error into the mix, the more likely you are to miss something that could result in problems and losses.

The less able you are to prevent errors and potential defects from reaching the production line where they'll need correction, the more cost of quality you wind up having to pay for. Data-driven quality management places the power in the hands of decision-makers who can stay on top of important tasks, such as keeping an eye on supplier performance and ensuring that their stores remain stocked on time, preventing costly issues from gouging into profits and harming brand reputation.

How to do it:

So, how do you go about gathering useful data and successfully leveraging it in your favor so that you can streamline operations and improve your business' game plan? Well, one of the most important things to remember is that the quality and applicability

of your data are crucial. There is no room for murkiness or uncertainty in a data-driven quality management strategy: You need to be able to process high-quality data and then display the results of your analysis in a clear, organized way that your team members can easily grasp and apply.

The two key components that retailers and brands need in order to do this are:

- Standardized data to use for comparisons and learning
- Good, high-quality data for increased accuracy

Standardizing data is critical so that you know what you're comparing fresh information to. You can think of standardizing data as being relatively similar to establishing the control group in a science experiment—you have to have something consistent and normal that you (and everyone else) can use to help consistently measure changes and interpret new data.

Additionally, it's important to not underestimate the power that that last bullet point has to make or break your company's strategies. This process of gathering and analyzing data becomes all but useless if the data is inaccurate—just a few outliers that go unaccounted for can skew results and compromise your preventative methods in a way that can spiral out of control later. If the data you're using is no good, then the skewed results that you get won't help your process or improve profitability, and the resources you put into analysis will be wasted.

Now that you're familiarized with the core concepts behind data-driven quality management and why it's so useful, you're probably wondering what kind of data you should focus on collecting! Luckily, there are four Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that you can utilize to keep an eagle eye on your production network's inner workings and get the best-possible quality information on where you can strategize even more effectively.

Generally speaking, the best KPIs to use are bound to vary from one business to the next. Each company's prime KPIs and performance metrics will vary depending on what their goals are: It's the decision-makers in the company who look critically at the company as a whole and set the goalposts for the results they want. However, the vast majority of proactive decision-makers, especially those in industries like clothing and shoe retail, will benefit from these four KPIs which have been found to help companies noticeably improve product quality.

Top 4 KPIs for data-driven quality management

As the name suggests, Key Performance Indicators are metrics that businesses can use to help measure performance quality and progress and improve their strategies while they strive to meet their goals. Since quality control and assurance are tricky to measure, the resulting lack of measurement leaves companies with no way to pinpoint the issues that need solving or to navigate their efforts towards improvement. For this reason, KPIs are invaluable.

How can you close the quality management loop to minimize errors and the resulting costs sooner? Where can you find the information needed to do this, especially in the often-intricate web of supply chains and production lines? Questions like these can quickly slog down the production process if left unanswered—but, fortunately, these KPIs provide you with reliable metrics that you can fall back on in order to solve difficult and important issues.

Tracking these 4 KPIs will assist you with a data-driven approach to quality management:

1. Right First Time (RFT)

This highly useful KPI helps you gauge the quality level of your production process by taking a critical look at the final product. For example, in clothing retail, RFT would measure the number of garments out of your total production quantity that emerge from your production line [with no defects and no modifications to be made before the sale](#). In other words, RFT answers the question: *Out of all the total garments you produce, how many of them are perfect?*

Once that number is obtained, you can [use it to figure out your RFT percentage](#). The fewer defective items that leave your production line, the higher your score. Obviously, the ultimate goal is to reach a point where you're producing zero defective products for an RFT of 100%.

How can you work towards the goal of 100% RFT?

Always remember that error prevention is the most cost-effective way to improve your strategy. So, making sure that everyone's on the same page during your Pre-Production Meetings (PPMs) is an ideal way to set your company up for success. Make sure you

present the data you have in a clear and organized way: Each person involved in the production process should walk away from the PPM knowing exactly what their responsibilities and goals are.

Every member of the team should be aligned in terms of the company's current goals and direction, especially any corrections or improvements that must be made to the process. After all, if every wheel on a cart is turning in a different direction, it won't get very far! Everyone should also walk away from PPMs feeling crystal clear on details such as customer specifications, key details about the raw materials used in the production process, and the quantity of goods to be produced.

You can improve the effectiveness of your PPMs by:

- a. **Making PPMs more efficient and inclusive with digital tools.** Utilize tools such as PowerPoint, screen sharing, video conferencing, and shared documents to make sure that each team member involved in the PPM is given every possible opportunity to understand company goals. Even when someone isn't present for the PPM in person, digital tools can help you bridge the gap so that they're just as well-informed as everyone else. It's also advisable to record your PPMs for future reference.
- b. **Getting data analytics on the success rate of your PPMs.** Another advantage of recording your PPMs is that it improves traceability, helping you gather important data that can be used to streamline future meetings and communications. Bring that invaluable closed-loop process into play here as well as throughout the production stream: Gather information on the success rate of your PPMs and apply those learnings to improve strategies for the next PPM to ensure better communication and results.

Another method that you can use to achieve your goal of 100% RFT is to hone in on the root causes of defects and eliminate them so that they never reach the production line and start accumulating costs. The first step is to identify these root causes so that you know precisely what to eliminate from the production process. Diligently applying Corrective Action and Preventive Action (CAPA) is a great way to incorporate previously-learned data into each next round of production so that your RTF percentage will continue to improve. Corrective Action comes into play when a defect has already reached the production line, and Preventative Action is then taken to ensure that there are no repeats.

Here are a couple of particularly helpful CAPA methods:

- a. **Collaborative CAPA.** Collaboration can be extremely helpful by enabling a team to build off of one another's ideas for both Corrective and Preventative Actions that could completely revamp your production process. More eyes on the historical data you've collected in terms of past defects can offer you fresh perspectives and spot important trends that might otherwise have gone unnoticed. And, once problematic trends have been identified, they can be addressed through Preventative Action.
- b. **Emphasizing real-time communication with CAPA.** Real-time communication, alongside bringing out the best in your team's ability to problem-solve, also streamlines the data collection process. Instead of struggling to compile notes from scattered calls and buried email threads, you'll be able to record the CAPA application as it unfolds. This real-time data provides you with priceless insight and more easily measurable data that you can apply in the future. Corrective Action increases involvement and transparency in the production process, leading to more effective Preventative Action after data collection.

2. Defect Rate

The defect rate is another handy KPI that can help you gauge what kinds of defects are most likely to pop up in the future and where. This KPI tells you how many defects you can expect to find in any given unit, based on historical data gathered via inspections over time. The defect rate is calculated by [dividing the number of defects observed over the number of units inspected](#). The resulting number shows your Defects Per Unit, or DPU. Every company wants to keep this number as low as possible.

Since quality is such a huge determining factor in whether or not your company will be able to get a leg up on the competition, you want to ensure that you're collecting and analyzing the quality data needed to actually cut down your defect rate. The lower the defect rate, the better this KPI is—and the better your production strategy is working.

How can you lower your defect rate over time?

- a. **Gather accurate data about defects in the production line.** The importance of accuracy here must not be underestimated: It's imperative to make sure that the data you're gathering is as thorough as possible. An overlooked defect here or

there might not seem like much, but those mistakes can add up and dramatically skew your data, preventing you from accurately identifying and solving problems.

Make sure that your inspectors are as well-trained as they can possibly be so that they're less likely to miss important details and leave defects unreported. We also recommend increasing the use of technology to increase transparency and verify each inspector's integrity—which helps to verify the integrity of the data they give you as a result. Requiring e-signatures from inspectors is one example of how to do this simply and effectively: When someone must personally sign off on their data, the accountability will motivate them to do better work.

Additionally, as you know, it's important to standardize data. A “defect” can be broadly defined as a *noncompliant condition*, but various companies may break this down differently. If you don't standardize your data, then you'll wind up comparing things that don't go together and you'll struggle to interpret the data into applicable results. In short: If your data isn't standardized, then your data analysis will be inaccurate.

Standardized data is critical when centralizing data gathered from different brands, product lines, countries, and so on. Everyone must sync together and ensure that they're discussing and comparing the same things. Acceptance Quality Limits (AQLs), defect classification lists, and inspection processes are prime examples of data that retailers and brands should standardize.

Even with standardized data and improved management strategies, solving the issue of unreported defects will always be tricky. However, through the use of tools such as digital signatures, monitoring systems, and inspection comparisons, you can keep a closer eye on the production stream and spot areas to improve.

- b. **Use the defect rate to help you nail down where defects are originating.** You can analyze the defect rate by factory, by country, by inspection type, or by product line in order to gain a more comprehensive overview. This well-rounded data set will then enable you to better pinpoint where problems are originating, set performance standards throughout the supply chain, and identify which areas need improvement.

This is another key area where standardized data comes into play: Brands and retailers need to be able to compare their data against a standard “measuring

stick” so that they know where to better allocate their resources. You don’t just need to know the defect rate, after all: You must be able to act on it.

- c. **Once you’ve zeroed in on where the issues are, you can finally dig up the root of each problem.** In the apparel retail industry, there are [several common culprits](#) that result in defects, such as:

- Improper handling of the garment during production
- Improper or inefficient usage of machinery
- Failure to follow patterns properly
- Sub-par maintenance of production machinery

Keeping an eye out for these common issues can help you spot and predict small mistakes that have the potential to snowball into major problems further down the production line. By specifically watching out for common production problems and making sure that every member of your team knows how to do the same, you can prevent issues in your production line that will set less-proactive competitors back.

- d. **Maintain high-quality historical data about your defect rate.** Compiling information over time is necessary in order to see if your adaptive strategies are actually resulting in the improvements you want. Determining whether your defect rate is improving or not will clearly indicate whether you’ve eliminated root causes of production issues. Comparing month over month, year over year, or year to date will also help you zero in on specific indicators that show how you improve your strategies even further.

3. Inspection Pass Rates

Out of all the inspections that are carried out, the “inspection pass rate” addresses the number of those inspections that pass. This metric is a good one to keep an eye on since it gives you a good idea of how well each specific link in the supply chain is performing. The higher the inspection pass rate, the better this KPI is and the better things look for your company in terms of profits and reputability.

How do you improve inspection pass rates?

- a. **Remember that inspection rates directly correlate with product quality.** So, as you can imagine, the most important goal here is to improve product quality,

which will then boost the inspection rates as well. This goal requires a proactive approach with a sharp focus on gathering reliable inside info on how you can catch problems as early as possible to improve quality.

- b. **First, pinpoint the source and severity of the defects that are occurring.** Where can the defects be traced back to? And, are they minor, major, or critical in terms of potential damages to profits and brand image? Finding the answers to these questions will help you determine where to focus company resources in order to solve the root issue. Of course, one of the simplest ways to spot problems as soon as they emerge is to maintain strong visibility over production, inspection, and current defects at all times.
- c. **Compare inspections with their respective AQLs.** Whether an inspection passes or fails depends entirely upon its metric, or AQL—and AQLs can vary between different types of products. Ensure that you're comparing each inspection with the appropriate AQL to keep your data at peak accuracy: You need to know for certain which products are failing which inspections in order to hone your strategy for eliminating the issue. If the context within which you interpret your data is incorrect, then your attempts at solving the problem will likely fall short and become wasted efforts.
- d. **Identify patterns through different types of comparisons.** In order to gain a thorough understanding of the data you've collected, compare your inspection pass rates across different product lines, factories, and countries. You want to have a broad and well-rounded context for your data so that you have increased opportunities to spot patterns that will highlight where you can improve your production. For instance, if inspection rates get significantly worse at a certain factory, then you'll want to invest your resources there to improve production quality and lift those rates back up.
- e. **Implement CAPA with your suppliers to fix root causes of production issues.** Collaborate with members of your supply chain to apply Corrective Action to any defects that have already made it to the production line and use Preventative Action to keep it from happening again in the future. Remember that CAPA can also be used during your PPMs to discuss what you've learned from defects: You can use that information to close the loop and apply improved methods to future rounds of production. Ensuring that everyone is on the same page and working to solve the same issues will do wonders to optimize the production process, boosting brand reputation and profitability.

4. Customer Ratings

You're undoubtedly already familiar with the fact that customer satisfaction is a massive factor in the success of a company, and the internet has made it easier than ever for you to use customer feedback to your advantage. [The voice of the customer \(VOC\) is highly valuable as a tool to gather data](#) on your level of success—especially when it comes to boosting your brand's reputation and demonstrating concern for the customer's needs.

Retailers and brands should encourage customers to leave feedback and ratings on their purchases, and then use their overall ratings as a KPI. And, of course: The better your rating, the better the KPI.

How can you collect customer ratings and use the voice of the customer in your approach to quality management?

- a. **Use your online presence to collect ratings on your products.** Leverage your online stores as ways to encourage customers to give feedback and leave ratings on things they've purchased. The best way to make sure that this information is quantifiable and easy to interpret is to use a consistent rating system for them to provide their opinions on your product quality. A classic example of this is the "1-5 Star" rating system, which is more easily quantifiable than many written reviews.
- b. **Let customer reviews help you identify high and low points.** Once you have your rating system in place and consistently compile customer satisfaction data, you'll be able to see the patterns that come to light over time. Poor ratings can help you spot issues with your products that you can then address during your next round of production. And, high ratings can highlight areas where you're doing well and can carry on without the need for any major changes in how you're allocating those resources.
- c. **As always, trace issues back through the supply chain to identify the root.** If you receive poor customer feedback on a particular product, make sure you take a look at other KPIs and trace the problematic item back through the production line. Analyze the big picture, integrating all the data you've gathered throughout the production process, to identify high-risk areas in the production chain where things might have gone wrong.

Luckily for brands and retailers with access to the cutting-edge technology of today, it's much easier than it used to be to trace products back up the production stream. For example, if you've already been seeing less-than-stellar inspection pass rates from a certain factory, you'll know to analyze how that might have affected the poorly-rated product. Without a smooth, integrated technological system, following the problem product's journey and tracing it back to solve root issues wouldn't be possible.

d. **Never underestimate the value of collaboration and communication!**

Opening communication between retailers and their suppliers is an incredible step in the right direction, since it enables everyone to stay on the same page and quickly share info about pressing issues. In addition to maintaining maximum transparency throughout the production process and keeping the lines of communication open, the advantages of collaboration can't be emphasized enough.

Not only does collaboration allow for even faster information exchange, but it speeds up productivity and streamlines effective systems like CAPA as well. Bringing the supply chain together to address quality and compliance on one platform provides a beautiful solution to numerous problems, enabling companies to find issues quickly and form the best possible plans to fix them in the future.

Closing the loop on quality management

Data-driven quality management is, by and large, one of the most effective ways out there to calculate your business' production quality and increase overall success. In order to get the data that you need to form a complete view of the bigger picture, it's crucial to keep an eye on each stage of production, from PPMs to the end consumer. That way, you can close the loop on quality management and apply more and more knowledge to each stage of production, resulting in vast improvements to your strategy and your outcomes!

Each of the KPIs we've broken down here touch upon different critical stages of the production process, and each one can give you an invaluable piece of the puzzle so that you can put together a more accurate view of your current state of production. When you can clearly see what's going on, you'll be more able to collaborate with other team members and identify areas that need improvement. Gathering data from every step of the process enables you to optimize your decision making and allocate your company's resources where they're needed the most.

[The closed-loop process enables powerful decision-makers to unite people with data and processes](#) across the entire production stream. This method unifies the company so that everyone is aware of their shared goals and can work together to optimize their efforts towards meeting those goals. Within the closed loop, everyone gets to learn from what went on in the past and apply those learnings to the future: No one gets left in the dark, wondering how they could have done better or why their efforts to adapt don't seem to be solving the current production quality issues.

Once you apply the data you've gathered using these four highly effective KPIs, you can take the analysis of that data back to the beginning of the production stream using the closed-loop process. Then you can use those learnings to update everyone involved in the production process so that you can move quality issues further upstream—that way, they impact profits and reputation less. When you've reached the point where those learnings have come full circle, your team can collaborate on preventative actions and stop quality issues and defects before they even start.

With the help of today's technology, you can collect data and standardize it, establishing reliable metrics to ensure that your data is verifiable and accurate. Then, you can analyze your quality and performance data at an improved rate that enables you to identify and address problems faster, minimizing any potential blows to company profits in the process. Utilizing cutting-edge quality management strategies to give your company a greater advantage over competitors is easier than ever when you employ technology to optimize the process.

How Inspectorio can help you collect better data

Every business out there wants to optimize their production process so that they can rest assured that each company dollar is being put to good use. We're here to help with data-driven quality management methods that can improve your production strategies and make the most of your company's valuable resources.

Inspectorio provides a centralized platform to collect, standardize, and analyze data about every area of quality performance. In other words, we provide all the access you need to KPIs that can revolutionize your production strategy on a single platform.

Measuring KPIs for data-driven quality isn't merely about gathering data—it's about gathering data that you can trust. The quality inspections industry is riddled with obsolete, disconnected, and inefficient systems that allow persistent problems to slip

through the cracks. You need your data to be trustworthy, accurate, and thorough. With the right technological tools to adapt your business goals and strategies, you can take your data-driven quality management to the next level. Inspectorio can fill this gap in your toolbox and help you optimize your game plan like never before!

How The 1 – 10 – 100 Rule Can Save Your Company on Return Costs

(Ghostwritten For Inspectorio)



The problem: Hidden Costs of Returns for Retailers

Unfortunately, consumers often return defective products because of quality issues that go unresolved throughout the production process. This is especially common in clothing and shoe retail, causing high profit losses in multiple areas.

On top of losing the sale itself when the customer returns a defective product, you then have to shoulder the numerous costs of processing the return. Then comes the laborious and costly job of tracing back to where the problem started. Additionally, your brand will lose face if you're processing a high return volume—a loss which, while difficult to quantify, will noticeably impact future sales.

To give you a better idea of the total expenses that product returns can add up to: Consider the fact that US retailers lost \$428 billion in returns. Additionally, the majority of these returns and losses (12.2%) fell under the apparel retail category.

ECommerce-specific expenses

Costly returns have also piled up in the eCommerce category of apparel retail. Most eCommerce companies have greatly expanded their reach during the pandemic, thanks to the increased demand for product delivery. Regrettably, this jacks up the costs of product returns because the expenses of processing returns have gone up—it's a lot pricier to deal with shipping costs, on top of the existing profit losses.

Out of the \$565 billion in 2020 online sales in the US, (approximately 14% of US retail sales), \$102 billion (18.1% on average) in profits were lost to product returns. [80.2% of those returns were a result of the item reaching the customer damaged or broken](#), likely as a result of preventable defects.

Breakdown of return costs

When a customer returns something, it sets off a whole chain of processing events—and each link incurs additional costs. On average, processing an online return can cost [\\$10-\\$20 dollars](#). This cost can be broken down into packaging and fuel expenses, alongside handling expenses.

Shipping and handling expenses shouldn't be underestimated: Each time a worker touches a product on its way through the return process, [that's an added labor cost](#). Products also lose value the longer they sit, tied up and unsellable, in the return process.

Nothing's perfect:

As long as retailers are selling, products will get returned. Returns fall under one of two categories: Controllable returns and uncontrollable returns.

Uncontrollable returns include things like fraudulent returns (around 7.5% of online returns).

Controllable returns are those that your company can change, and predominantly revolve around defects.

Attack quality issues at the root while streamlining your response to uncontrollable returns.

The 1 – 10 – 100 Rule

Controllable returns related to defects are usually rooted in operational issues. Therefore, the best method of attack is to improve operational efficiency. You can hone this strategy with the 1-10-100 Rule, which relates to the [“cost of quality”](#).

Here's how the cost of quality generally plays out:

- \$1 = cost of prevention
- \$10 = cost of correction
- \$100 = cost of failure

In the context of apparel retailers, we'll define failure as a dissatisfied customer returning a product, saddling the company with all the aforementioned costs of the return.

Why let production quality issues snowball until you spend \$100 on the cost of failure in the form of a product return? And, why spend \$10 correcting a problem with production quality when you could spend merely \$1 maximizing your operational efficiency and preventing the problem from reaching production in the first place?

In short: Prevention is less costly than correction—and much less costly than failure.

It's far more logical for a company to spend a dollar nipping defects in the bud before they even reach the production line than to wait for a problem to spread throughout production, undermining profits. Investing in prevention and correction will dramatically reduce profit losses incurred by the failure of product returns and all their related expenses.

The Solution:

Now that you've seen a detailed breakdown of how much product returns can cost, you're surely eager for a way to reduce \$100 in company losses to \$10—or, ideally, to only \$1. Luckily, there are five great tips that you can use to improve your company's quality assurance and prevent defects from ever reaching your customers, improving reputability and maximizing profits.

1. Utilize key strategies like Pre-Production Meetings.

Taking advantage of Pre-Production Meetings (PPM) early on in the process will help your company spot potential risks as soon as possible. Once you've spotted areas with a higher risk for defects or quality issues, you can then collaborate with your manufacturers and form a solid plan on how to manage those risks and prevent them.

By identifying and taking countermeasures against potential risks early in the game, you and your manufacturing partners can nip them in the bud before they ever reach production. This step is one of the best ways to keep a defect from ever reaching the consumer.

2. Make sure you have an inside view of the production process.

In the event that a quality issue or defect risk does manage to make it past your PPM, then you'll be most able to catch it early if you have a reliable information source from within the production stream. Being able to keep a close eye on production will allow you to catch budding issues quickly so that you can intervene immediately and minimize both current and future damages to profitability.

By capturing quality information from an inside source while the product is being made, you'll be able to get a jump start on knowing exactly where to correct any problems and prevent a \$10 cost from ballooning into a \$100 loss.

3. Optimize your quality checkpoints.

Another great way to keep an eagle eye on production quality is to ensure that you have the right quality checkpoints in place. Product inspections throughout the production stream are highly important since these will allow you to identify potential issues sooner. Final inspections are also ideal to include so that you can check thoroughly for defects and flaws before your goods even leave the manufacturing location.

It's even ideal to have a quality checkpoint set up at your warehouse so that you can make a final pass over the quality of your goods before they're distributed to retail locations or online consumers. The warehouse might be awfully far down the production stream, but it's still another golden opportunity to catch errors and protect yourself against profit loss.

4. Begin as far upstream as possible to minimize risk.

No matter how much intel you have on the inside or how many quality checkpoints you've installed throughout the production process, it's crucial to start as far upstream as possible. This concept can't be stressed enough: The more time and energy you put into the earliest stages of production, the more likely you are to mitigate problems and prevent defects from ever happening in the first place.

Alongside holding a thorough PPM before each product's manufacturing stream, it can also help to put some extra resources into earlier quality checkpoints. The earlier the correction, the less it costs!

5. Build upon previous data in order to improve.

Make sure you're gathering and organizing data from each round of production so that you can build off of the trends that you see. A.I. and machine learning are wonderful tools that can help you do this by analyzing data and highlighting potential errors that are likely to occur. Embrace this technology's ability to predict future risks and formulate plans for how to avoid them in advance. This way, you can prevent defects entirely.

These five tips all converge into what's known as the closed-loop process: After your PPM, gather important data on the production process with inside info and skillfully-placed quality checkpoints and tie it all together.

Once you centralize the information you've gathered through one round of production, you can learn from it and circle back to the beginning of the next round of production with those learnings in hand. Apply what you've learned from the data you've gathered and tied together to prevent even more defects before they happen. Then, repeat the process so that you can fine-tune your quality assurance strategy with each round of production after that.

How Inspectorio Can Help

Certainly, every business does their best to spot defects and quality issues before they reach the consumer—often by catching them during the final inspection. With help from Inspectorio, retailers and brands can improve their strategies by taking what they've learned during final inspections and carrying that information further up the production stream to catch potential risks sooner.

Inspectorio uses the closed-loop process to teach retail companies how to apply their learnings to earlier and earlier stages of production. That way, clients can optimize their processes like never before, maximizing their profits and streamlining their processes to take their production and brand reputation to a whole new level!

Marketplace Vs. Punch-Out Selling: Which is Better?

(Ghostwritten)



What is the best solution for your B2B online marketplace?

In the industrial world of life sciences, it's critical to nail down the ideal B2B digital procurement system. A convenient and efficient setup is necessary to reduce the costs of fulfillment and procurement for the seller and eliminate unnecessary hassle for the buyer. By obtaining software that smooths out these areas of e-commerce for niche B2B markets such as pharmaceuticals and supplies for research institutions, companies can allocate their resources more effectively.

As things stand, many industrial e-procurement platforms take the route of a punch-out website. In the past, punch-out selling has been a staple for B2B transactions online—but is it still the most cutting-edge approach in terms of digital procurement?

What are e-procurement punch-outs, and why did they become popular?

A punch-out catalog, or punch-out website, is a way for suppliers to sell their goods on an efficient B2B platform that eliminates the “digital middleman” that the average end consumer would have to go through. Instead of requiring other businesses to shop through the vendor version of your ecommerce store, a punch-out enables them to shop third-party vendors through their own e-procurement platform.

The items in the buyer's shopping cart do not generate any orders while they're shopping in the punch-out version of a website—they simply shift over to the buyer's preferred e-procurement platform so that they can check out there instead. When the buyer is done and checks out, then their order is automatically generated much more smoothly than it would have been had they used the customers' version of your online store.

The advantages of using a punch-out version of e-commerce sites to sell to other businesses include streamlining the B2B procurement process by remembering buyers and optimizing their user experience with increased accessibility and fulfillment speed. However, the vendor and supplier options are very limited in their selection. The

shopping process is also made unnecessarily clunky by requiring a lot of manual operation.

While the punch-out approach was novel when it was new and previously provided the most modern approach to B2B selling, it has since lost some of its limelight to a newer and sleeker solution: The e-commerce marketplace.

What is an e-commerce marketplace?

E-commerce marketplaces provide a highly appealing solution to buyers who want the convenience of being able to compare goods from multiple vendors without leaving their preferred platform. The marketplace host provides a streamlined shopping experience for the buyer, and each different vendor is responsible for purchase fulfillment as usual.

Instead of providing a different version of the same, single vendor and still requiring a shopper to checkout from one store at a time, an e-commerce marketplace acts as a central hub for optimized shopping so that businesses can save valuable time by making purchases from numerous vendors through a single portal.

Classic examples of e-commerce marketplaces are eBay and Amazon, both of which are most commonly known for their B2C sites that are geared towards the end consumer.

What makes e-commerce marketplaces better than punch-outs?

One of the key perks of e-commerce marketplaces is convenient access to a broader and more well-rounded selection of goods while shopping. Instead of being limited to the punch-out version of just one store at a time, businesses are able to compare selections and prices across multiple vendors at once from their preferred digital marketplace.

Since shoppers can use e-commerce marketplaces to compare so many purchasing options simultaneously, they're then able to make much better-informed purchase decisions. They can also compare prices and quality more efficiently than ever, with no need to manually pull up different stores for comparison. Businesses who shop through digital marketplaces also enjoy the perk of seeing newly available products and updated prices quicker.

The convenience and centralization that e-commerce marketplaces offer took off among end consumers with the rising popularity of sites such as Amazon and eBay. Keeping in mind that anyone shopping B2B also has shopping experience as an end consumer, it should come as no surprise that a centralized digital marketplace has become a must for B2B sellers. No one wants to go from shopping on their couch with ease on a B2C digital marketplace to working around the dated limitations of a punch-out catalog while making important purchases for their business.

What do we offer over the B2B versions of other popular e-commerce marketplaces?

One of the biggest limitations among today's digital marketplaces is that their B2B platforms are almost like afterthoughts or spin offs of their B2C platforms. The B2C platforms are overly generalized in order to appeal to a wide customer base of shoppers who love being able to buy everything from pet supplies to electronics in one place—and the B2B versions of these marketplaces tend to follow a similar structure, offering smaller selections within specific niches as a result. This structure is great for end consumers, but a poor fit for industrial-level shopping.

In other words: A lot of existing e-commerce marketplaces have centralized too many different options, B2C style, to be able to suit the specialized needs of B2B shoppers.

When you're dealing with life sciences and other niche industry sectors, it's important to have the convenience of comparing industry-specific goods and prices from multiple vendors. However, it's also crucial to know that the digital marketplace you're using has allocated its resources specifically to centralizing the best products and vendors within your niche.

Our software integrates with existing digital procurement software in order to provide scientists and researchers with the same product and price comparison features that end consumers already have via websites such as Amazon.

Critical life science industries should have access to peak efficiency.

Why navigate e-procurement within highly advanced and socially integral fields with techniques that are more obsolete than what people use to shop for common household and recreational items? Punch-out sites certainly have their time and place, but modern

B2B shoppers within pharmaceutical, biotech, and institutionalized research industries need something more cutting-edge.

It's crucial for the life sciences industry sector to be able to compare supplier options within the appropriate niches smoothly and efficiently so that more company resources are left to dedicate to more important tasks. Integrate with us and enjoy the fluidity of an end-consumer marketplace that specializes in your niche and provides a superior B2B sales experience!

Technology:

How to Optimize Videos for Mobile Devices

(Ghostwritten For Sprout)



In today's world, ensuring that your digital content delivers a smooth experience for the mobile user is more essential than ever. Most video makers already optimize for computers, but mobile optimized video can now make or break your success: Especially if your videos follow a subscription model. Mobile optimization allows a much broader audience to access your content, increasing your reach and relevance.

And don't worry: You don't need to be a skilled web developer to be able to optimize your videos for mobile users. Just follow along with our simple tips for mobile optimization and you'll be in the fast lane to success!

The Benefits of Video Optimization

So, why is video optimization for mobile devices so important? As a video maker, you'll want to consider the following points:

- **Boosts engagement** – Videos are also simply more engaging than static images and text, so they strengthen the relationship between your audience and brand much more effectively. Today's mobile viewers are now more likely to stick with longer videos and absorb their content (including any calls to action), boosting your stats.

The use and effectiveness of mobile ads is also leaving desktop ads in the dust, meaning that you're likely to make out better by tailoring your content to mobile users. In fact, [almost half of all mobile users are motivated to actually click on ads after viewing them on mobile](#). If your ad revenue model is pay-per-click, then this is good news!

- **User-friendly content ranks higher** – Mobile optimized video will improve your SEO and boost your site’s position in Google’s search results. Displaying a video thumbnail on the search results page has become a big factor in SEO ranking, since Google wants to immediately convey cross-platform availability in its top results. SEO engines are made to seek out user-friendliness, so upload mobile optimized videos on your website and watch your ranking climb!
- **Traffic to videos is steadily increasing** – Mobile traffic has already overtaken desktop traffic, and this trend shows no sign of stopping. Younger audience members are especially drawn to video content, making mobile optimized video the way of the future.

Around 50% of mobile users report watching more video content this year than they did during the past—and that’s just in the USA alone. An increasing number of users have also started turning to online video as their preferred format for lessons and entertainment, with [viewers and subscribers on the rise who often use online video content to replace TV](#).

Many people solely use mobile devices for media consumption - More and more people rely on handheld devices entirely, almost always choosing a smartphone over a computer if their budget only allows for one. It’s completely impractical to ignore mobile optimized video in favor of desktop, because a big chunk of your potential audience won’t even see your desktop videos. The evidence is clear—[mobile usage keeps rising, while desktop usage is on the decline](#).

10 Ways to Optimize Videos for Mobile Devices

After seeing the breakdown on why mobile optimized video is so important, you’re probably eager to start revolutionizing your own content. Try these simple tips to make mobile video optimization easier:

1. Cater to Different Attention Spans – The ever-improving image quality of smartphones has made video length less of an issue than it used to be, but short is still best. Even if desktop users are willing to watch videos 5 minutes or longer, you won’t get the same window of opportunity to engage mobile viewers with shorter attention spans.

The longer your video, the less likely mobile users are to see it through to the end or answer your call to action. Merely seeing a long loading bar or video timestamp will turn many users away, so strive to keep your videos under 2 minutes in length.

2. Keep it Quiet – No one enjoys loud commercials that blast the audience with high volumes in case they've left the room. And alongside being an ugly feature, it's also dated on mobile: Users are most likely to simply carry their smartphone or tablet with them, making high volumes especially pointless—and grating.

Additionally, most mobile users will view your content in a public location at some point. So, your videos shouldn't embarrass people with blaring audio. Nix auto-play features completely, letting your viewers maintain control.

3. Careful with your Call to Action – Work your Call to Action (CTA) into mobile optimized videos early. And if you want to nudge your viewers to engage with your brand even further and convert them into leads, then consider opting for a third-party service to smooth out the user experience. If someone struggles to answer a CTA then they're unlikely to keep trying, meaning that you've lost a lead.

Consider which mobile CTA option fits your budget and integrate it strategically for user-friendliness. This may involve streamlining your CTA, leaving more involved redirects and longer sign-up forms for desktop users.

4. Narrow Your Focus – Hone your point and get to it quickly! Your videos must be extremely dynamic and focused on the core message in order to keep mobile users' attention, so look for opportunities to trim things down. They aren't going to wait or skip around for the best parts, so you have only one shot at getting your audience to absorb your message. Your mobile optimized videos should be bite-sized, easily synthesized, and concise.

An added perk in this area is that, by forcing yourself to narrow each video's focus, you can put out more videos for mobile users to enjoy. This crumb trail can boost brand visibility, expand your audience, and help your stats skyrocket.

5. Create Better Video Thumbnails – It may be ill-advised to judge a book by its cover, but people do it anyway. No one will even bother to open up your video if it has an unappealing, uninformative, or generic thumbnail.

Don't leave algorithms to generate a thumbnail image for you: Comb through the video for a great frame that most efficiently demonstrates your video's purpose. Add some

bold text over the image that tells your viewers what to expect. Make sure the text overlay isn't positioned awkwardly in a way that obscures key visual elements, and pick a bold color that's easy to read—for example, yellow or white with a black outline is a classic and effective choice.

6. Hook Viewers in the First 3 Seconds – Some people claim that you have up to 4-5 seconds to hook a mobile viewers' attention, but we recommend aiming for only 3. Since you don't have long to grab your audience's attention on mobile, avoid splash screens and dive right into your core content with strong characters and interesting imagery.

7. Optimize Mobile Video for Audio Independence – Remember how many mobile users are tuning in to view your content on the go, often preferring quiet videos to avoid disruption? Well, be prepared for the distinct possibility that users may not turn on the sound at all.

Plenty of viewers mute videos while in public, so your content should come with plenty of visual features like infographic elements and closed captions. Animated videos and other types of content with strong visual elements will make your videos more accessible to people with hearing impairments as well, further expanding your connections.

8. Establish Visual Hierarchy – Visual hierarchy is crucial to the effectiveness of your video since it guides the viewer's eye and helps them absorb information better. Using brighter colors and larger text to highlight the most important points will emphasize them better than any audio element will. Plus, you'll be able to communicate better with viewers who prefer to watch on mute.

9. Add Some Text - Never underestimate the power of enriching your mobile videos with helpful text and closed captions! Adding text is right up there with a strong visual hierarchy in terms of making your mobile optimized videos audio-independent. Even if mobile users do choose to watch with the sound on, they'll be able to process your message much faster if they can both listen and read: And this can improve watch time and engagement by far.

10. Use the Right Aspect Ratios – Formatting your videos in the ideal aspect ratios for mobile is also crucial when streamlining your user experience. Think of details that determine the ideal aspect ratio for your mobile video, including the platform or channel where you'll be sharing it. It also pays to keep in mind that the vast majority of mobile

users hold their phones vertically and won't bother to full-screen a video—so make sure you pick video dimensions that look good nested on a vertical screen.

Host Your Mobile-Optimized Videos with SproutVideo

At SproutVideo, we handle most of the legwork that goes into optimizing your video for mobile users. We offer a variety of user-friendly themes that already look good, but afford you the freedom to make your website look great with your own visual flair. Plus, they're all incredibly responsive, so you'll have ample opportunities to ensure that your videos and streams are mobile-ready. You can upload just about any type of video file and let us help you adapt it to all kinds of mobile devices, and you can take advantage of optimized perks such as social media buttons and video player features that will make mobile engagement a breeze.

We've also adapted our arsenal to include compatibility and optimization for every modern browser and device, so you won't hit any walls while using our features to optimize videos for your mobile viewers. And once your masterpieces are out there, you can use our analytics to gauge effectiveness and learn where you might be able to improve your approach in the future. After all, practice makes perfect—so don't worry if it takes you a few tries to get a feel for how to make your content the best it can possibly be!

Contact Us Today

Don't worry if you don't feel completely confident just yet in your ability to optimize your live streaming or video content for mobile: SproutVideo is here to help video makers like you share each seminar, lesson, brand success story, and snippet of entertainment with mobile viewers everywhere. While you're optimizing your video content for mobile, keep key details such as length, concision, audio independence, and compelling visual elements in mind.

Dive right into the world of mobile optimized video today by getting in touch with us at SproutVideo so that we can help make your project a success!

Should You Password Protect Your Business' Videos?

(Ghostwritten For Sprout)



One of the most effective ways to build your brand successfully online is to offer premium or subscribers-only content. Of course, you'll want to hook your viewers by letting them view some videos for free, but exclusive content provides excellent motivation for them to come back and pay for more.

The nature of video security depends strongly on the type of content that you offer—when video creation is a side hobby, monetization might just be a perk. But for businesses, profits and data protection are critical. So: should your business' videos be password protected?

Importance of Password Protection

The short answer is: Yes, you should absolutely password protect your business' videos! A secure password is invaluable for protecting the integrity of any online media, including art, music, creative writing, and educational or news articles. But password protection is especially important when it comes to guarding your business' videos from unauthorized viewers.

When your brand reputation and a good chunk of your profits hinge on paid subscribers or data protection, controlling who can watch your video offers several benefits:

- **Protect from unauthorized access/sharing** – In order to sustain your business model, your viewers must be able to access your content strictly through your authorized domain. If people can watch your videos independently from your website, then the motivation for them to stay and pay is gone: And if they distribute your videos for free, your profit losses will snowball.
- **Keep your data confidential** – Many businesses use videos to share important strategy, policy, or employment information internally with trusted viewers. However, whether you're dealing with tricks of your trade or strategic lesson plans, your data should remain private.

- **Bolster your defenses with a strong password** – This doesn't just mean creating one strong password that's difficult to figure out: You'll want to create unique passwords for each account, tiered video bundle, and subscriber-only channel. Even individual videos should have unique passwords if they're especially valuable or sensitive.
- **Ability to lock if a wrong password is entered repeatedly** – A couple of failed attempts to watch your video might be understandable, but multiple incorrect password entries are a red flag. If someone's trying to bypass your paywall, make sure you can disable their attempts and require additional validation before allowing them to play the video.

Why You Should Use Password Protection for Videos

Let's go into greater depth concerning why password protection is especially important for your business' video content. When you use videos and live streaming to connect with coworkers or employees, passwords create a feeling of security—alongside providing actual security, of course.

People are more communicative and productive when you create a digital environment that feels safe, protected, and private. And, [with hackers attempting data attacks every 39 seconds](#), it's crucial that you do everything in your power to guard your team. Using strong passwords to secure your video connections is a must for multiple reasons:

- **A solid, secure Enterprise Video Platform (EVP) facilitates more effective communication between businesses and workforces** – Internal communications have become more central to your business' success than ever, especially with a primarily remote workforce. When you can no longer approach someone in person to explain detailed plans for an important project, secure video is your new go-to.

Using an EVP to communicate with your workforce or network with other businesses is far more effective—and secure—than exchanging lengthy emails or documents. Password-protecting your videos boosts team confidence to improve brainstorming, collaboration, and progress.

- **High-quality digital tools make it easier for employees to connect and engage** – How many times have you sent an email or text, only to later discover

that there was a complete miscommunication? Digital disconnect happens all too often via text, and using a secure video connection will help fill in the blanks.

Video restores key facets of communication like vocal tone and nonverbal cues, such as facial expressions and gestures, that would be lost in emails or documents. The ability to see one another's faces and converse real-time can greatly improve team connection and engagement, increasing clarity and enthusiasm about the project.

- **Maintaining effective team communication is crucial for any successful business** – It's essential to keep the lines of communication with your team open, confidential, and easily accessible. For starters, your team members must be able to connect safely with one another and collaborate on tasks in real-time.

Additionally, people in leadership positions must be able to deliver updates, assignments, and feedback to the team in an effective and secure manner. Password protection also becomes highly useful in management settings: Higher-ups must be able to openly discuss private executive decisions before sharing them.

- **Smooth communication becomes increasingly difficult for a team that's adjusting to a remote work environment amidst the current global health crisis** – Communicating clearly while juggling collaboration, task organization, and multiple deadlines can be challenging on the best of days—and it gets even tougher when faced with a sudden, major upheaval in both life and the workplace.

Many people find a sudden change in their work environment to be jarring and have trouble getting comfortable online when they're used to popping around the corner with a quick question. Using quality, password-protected videos to communicate can [make the adjustment easier by improving clarity and restoring interpersonal connection](#).

How to Use SproutVideo for Secure Video Uploading

After considering the importance of using passwords and any other possible security measures to protect your business' videos, you'll be glad to know that SproutVideo is here to make it easy for you. With all our helpful features, you'll be able to secure your content, set your team at ease, and preserve your customer base.

Here's a glimpse into our toolbox so that you can see a few of our extensive video security features:

- **Password and Login Protection** – Use passwords to protect single videos, playlists of multiple videos, or exclusive content tiers. Manage who can access which videos by specifying credentials for individual users.
- **Signed Embed Codes** – Assign expiration times to embed codes, preventing unauthorized video sharing.
- **Private Videos** – Make sure your content only appears where embedded.
- **Access Restriction** – Control access to your videos based on URL, IP address, or geographical location.
- **Analytics** – Monitor the locations where your video was played. Get reports of your videos downloading, including the number and type of downloads.
- **Live Events Streaming** – Protect your live streams from unauthorized viewers.
- **Secure Video Uploading** – Rest assured that your data and videos are protected while you're uploading them, no matter the file type.

Remember:

Now you know just how imperative it is to password-protect your business' videos alongside taking as many security measures as you can. And it should be easy for you to manage and save changes to your security and privacy settings, passwords, and viewer authorization features.

At SproutVideo, we understand that videos and streaming have become central: Videos help people connect with one another despite the challenges of today's world, communicate and collaborate more effectively, and improve business success overall.

Contact us today to learn more about what our array of video security features can do for you!

How To Create a Live Streaming Website

(Ghostwritten For Sprout)



What Is a Live Streaming Website?

A live streaming website is simply a site that allows people to experience video and audio content in real-time. People often use these sites to attend virtual classes or kick back for some live entertainment in the comfort of their own home. Additionally, many audience members enjoy watching independent live streams so that they can support and interact directly with their favorite creators.

Live TV/Video Streaming Vs. Live Streaming:

Plenty of websites live stream pre-made video or television content to the viewer, providing alternatives to expensive TV plans. These sites may also allow independent creators to share their own pre-recorded content. However, real-time engagement is extremely limited or nonexistent.

On the other hand, live streaming websites give creators the opportunity for real-time interaction with their audience. The capability for live engagement is indispensable in educational, entertainment, and professional communication settings.

The best approach that you can take with your live streaming website is to offer the best of both worlds: You want to be able to interact with your audience real-time and give them access to your previously completed streams as well.

Why Create Your Own?

So, what makes it worthwhile to create your own website when there are already plenty of live streaming tools out there?

Freedom and Control

While the big-name streaming platforms that most brands and creators use could definitely save you time and effort early on, they also come with limitations. For instance, if you monetize your content, you'll probably have to play by someone else's rules to stay monetized. You may also lose a slice of your income to unnecessary fees.

Besides, live streaming on the same websites as everyone else simply makes your content feel more generic. When you create your own website, you retain control over its functionality and appearance. If you want people to truly remember your content, then it's more effective to create a digital space that stands out from the mainstream websites that everyone is used to.

Brand Awareness and Credibility

Creating a memorable live stream website is especially important when it comes to branding your content. When you nail down the perfect recipe for a polished live streaming site, you can [promote your brand](#) more effectively.

Demonstrating to your viewers that you have the dedication and resources to invest in your own live streaming site will cause them to see your brand and content as more credible—and more worth their time.

Sustainability

Live streaming has blown up during recent years, but bloated mainstream platforms will inevitably taper off and [many live streamers are moving away from them already](#). But your content and visibility don't have to suffer from the crash: By creating your own live streaming website now, you can bring your audience with you and establish yourself independently from oversized websites that could drag you down.

How To Create a Live Streaming Website:

Choose Your Platform

Before you start, consider your options for building your own live streaming website. You'll essentially be weighing convenience, price, and customizability against each other while comparing these main choices:

DIY – Unless you already have an arsenal of web development skills, not to mention the time and energy it'll take, the road to creating your own DIY live streaming site will likely be bumpier than it's worth. However, this approach does afford you complete control over your project.

Hiring a full-stack developer – This method conveniently alleviates the need to figure things out yourself, and hiring a professional can make your website look streamlined and unique. But working with an independent developer still requires a lot of time, money, and collaborative maintenance.

Using a pre-existing video-monetization platform – Creativity is essential, but there's no need to reinvent the wheel: If you're looking to save both time and money, use a pre-existing platform to build and host your live streaming website. A toolbox of premade features will do wonders to make your site into a striking, user-friendly masterpiece—and fast!

Nail Down Your Business Model and Game Plan

Planning far ahead is key to the success of your live streaming website. Before you build anything, clarify your starting budget and your streaming goals. Regardless of your content style, your underlying goal will be to keep the user experience simple for both you and your target audience.

Next up, consider what kind of business model you'll use: Will viewers pay per stream or access your content via subscription instead? It's generally advised to use a subscription-based model: Subscriptions will increase viewer retention and boost your stats—just plan and schedule your content a few weeks ahead for consistency's sake. Free trials also make viewers far more likely to subscribe and stay.

Subscriptions provide a great starting point for monetization, but you can boost income further with:

- Ads
- Donation buttons
- Exclusive or custom content

- Premium features

While you shouldn't over-extend yourself, stay dedicated to a steady schedule and always deliver your viewers what you've promised. Consistency is especially crucial for educators and entertainers. If your audience can rely on you, they're more likely to stay—and share your content with others.

Establish Core Functionality

While a main point in favor of creating your own live streaming site is individuality, there are some essential features that you should never leave out:

- **Login and signup** – Subscribers must be able to sign up quickly and easily. Make subscription and payment details clear. Offer user-friendly functions like password/account recovery.
- **Live stream start/finish** – Make it simple for you and your audience to start and stop a broadcast.
- **User profile and personal data** – Include options for streamers and viewers alike to display nicknames, social media links, and short personal bios.
- **Following** – Allow viewers to easily follow streamers, see everyone they follow, and get follower notifications.
- **Settings and user preferences** – Always give your users control over notifications, privacy regarding online status and personal info, and blocking.
- **Search** – Let users search effortlessly for videos and other people.
- **Live chat function** – Most webinar platforms integrate live chat functionality already, but you'll want to offer something better. When creating your own live chat feature, consider moderation tools like filters and message frequency parameters to combat spammers.

You can also boost online success with additional features like social media and sharing buttons, content rating systems, chat reaction GIFs and emojis (depending on your content style) and video embedding links for both live and past streams.

Make It Yours

You want your viewers to recognize you at a glance, so customize your live streaming site's user interface. Letting your subscribers change the text size or color palette on their own profiles will also increase your website's appeal.

Visual customizations should display your personal flair without interfering with functionality or accessibility. Select colors and fonts that reduce eye strain and strengthen your branding so that your live streaming website is both enjoyable and memorable—and your audience will keep coming back for more!

Five Features to Look for When Evaluating Freezer Temperature Sensors

(Ghostwritten For Therma)



Learn about five of the most important features to look for when looking for the best possible freezer temperature sensors for your business. Evaluating your choices effectively will help you pick systems that nip problems in the bud and maintain optimal performance.

How Can Temperature Sensors Help You?

A good temperature maintenance system can make a world of difference for anyone in the restaurant business, helping to detect temperature fluctuations that can affect valuable inventory. However, many people aren't sure what kind of checklist they should use to find the best possible temperature sensors. For many business owners, affordability comes to mind first. While the initial cost of installation is important, there are some other things to consider for the long-term as well.

I'd like to share five key factors with you that I wished I'd known about sooner so that you can evaluate your options effectively and pick the best possible temperature sensors to protect your business. Many of these features play off of one another, and all work together to create the smoothly-functioning system that you need.

1. Wireless Efficiency and Accuracy

Alongside being affordable to install and maintain, good freezer temperature sensors will obviously be both accurate and efficient. For starters, opting for wireless freezer temperature control systems will make them much easier and cheaper to install than counterparts that utilize ethernet. Wired systems require cables running all over the establishment to make things work—and then you're essentially stuck in that system arrangement unless you re-run the cables again later.

With wireless temperature systems, you can install each temperature probe wherever you need it most, move it to a new location if you do some in-house rearranging, or

simply tweak the probe's location for greater accuracy. Freezer temperature sensors that rely on 4G for connectivity also provide a much more easily-adapted system that you can lay out for optimal performance. Additionally, you won't have to pick between clunky, restrictive wired systems or spotty wifi.

Once you've nailed down the optimal locations for your temperature sensors, accurate probes will help prevent expensive losses in the form of spoiled inventory or business lost from dissatisfied customers who were served bad food. No matter where you place your sensors, you need to know that you can rely on them to gauge temperature precisely and report it effectively.

2. Automated Data Reporting and Interpretation

Once your freezer temperature sensors have been installed in their optimal locations within your restaurant, they should be collecting temperature and humidity data constantly. What's more: That data should be compiled and processed automatically. I don't want to have to spend time manually calculating temperature trends and stressing out over data interpretation—who would?

When you're evaluating freezer temperature sensors to determine whether they're ideal for your business, you always want to check on how much data processing is automated. The more data reporting and interpretation is done automatically, the more time and money you save. Additionally, sensors with automated data interpretation eliminate nearly all room for human error. The likelihood of human errors when conducting manual temperature checks is already eliminated when you install temperature probes, but you want a system that will reduce human error in data interpretation as well.

Alongside requiring mechanically accurate data interpretation and trend recognition, you'll want your freezer temperature sensors to send you that info automatically instead of having to seek it out yourself. A good sensor that can efficiently gather accurate data and then automatically recognize and report informative trends in temperature fluctuations will save you worlds of trouble and minimize dangerous risks for your business.

3. Quick Responsiveness and Alerts

Obviously, any freezer temperature sensor you install in your restaurant should be sensitive enough to recognize temperature fluctuations quickly. The whole point of installing temperature probes in the first place is to catch undesirable temperatures and correct them before they have the chance to damage inventory that'll wind up having to go into the trash.

It's especially imperative to catch temperature changes quickly so that you can avoid accidentally serving compromised food to your customers—there's a dangerous window within which spoiled food will appear to be perfectly fine, and any restaurant owner would want to avoid temperatures reaching that window at all costs.

Once your temperature sensors catch undesirable temperature fluctuations, they should be able to deliver that information to you immediately so that your staff can correct the problem right away. Detecting unacceptable temperatures does no good if that information fails to reach you in a timely manner, so your freezer temperature sensors should have the ability to send you alerts instantly, no matter where you are.

4. Customizability

By this point, you may be wondering how a freezer temperature sensor knows what falls within the acceptable range so that it knows when to send you an alert: And you should be the one who controls that. Instead of relying on sensors that simply fall back on a [health code-specified range](#) as a default, you want the ability to adjust your sensors to settings that will keep you ahead of the game.

You'll need to make sure that you can adjust those temperature ranges with ease in case your sensor's automated data reporting detects some undesirable patterns. For instance, if my kitchens are running at their hottest during lunch rush and those higher temperatures are affecting the temperatures in my freezers, I'll want my employees to adjust the freezer's temperature settings preemptively to circumvent the problem entirely.

5. Remote Accessibility and Controls

As you already know, it's imperative for your temperature sensors to be able to send you notifications about temperature fluctuations immediately: But that channel of instant communication should go both ways. Considering how important it is to be able to look at your data trends and customize your kitchen's workflow or settings accordingly, you'll

want to choose a freezer temperature sensor that provides you with remote access and controls.

You should have the ability to check up on temperatures and make adjustments at any time, no matter where you are, in order to minimize potential health risks and inventory losses. To refer again to the previous example, you may want to check up on the current temperature of your freezers right before lunchtime business usually kicks up to see if temperatures are rising according to the reported trend. That way, you can whip out your smartphone on a dime and take action before temperatures even break out of the acceptable range and trigger an alert.

Choose Freezer Temperature Sensors that Check all the Boxes

So many factors go into streamlined, effective temperature management that it takes a very well-rounded control system to do the job. I highly recommend Therma° freezer temperature sensors since they can accurately and efficiently gather high-quality data, automatically sending you reports and detecting patterns that you can respond to from any location.

Outdated temperature regulation methods can leave you regretfully calculating your losses, and it's far better to install good sensors that offer you an ideal range of features for taking preventative action. For reliable temperature control in your restaurant, go with Therma°!

Creating a Culture of Food Safety with IoT Monitoring

(Ghostwritten For Therma)



Learn how to promote a culture of food safety and proactivity in your workplace with IoT tech.

From a managerial perspective, actively implementing steps to ensure food safety can decrease your inventory costs, help you comply with the law, and keep your customers happy. You need to trust your team to follow through with the necessary actions to achieve your desired results. However, knowledge of food safety protocols may not be something your employees inherently know. Currently, [40% of US states](#) require managers to pass a food safety course to work. While some areas require the certification of all employees, these regulations vary by locality.

Everywhere else, foodservice operators are left to teach safe food handling practices to their employees on the job. Due to the fast-paced nature of restaurant service, these tasks can often fall by the wayside. Even if you train your team adequately there is no guarantee that they will effectively implement their training in their daily operations. This can often result in the forging of logs and records otherwise known as pencil whipping.

The success and longevity of your restaurant partially depend on creating a culture of food safety among your employees. You want to empower your employees to educate and hold each other accountable for food safety before an incident occurs. Therefore providing your team with the best equipment to do just that is essential.

Educating teams on the importance of temperature monitoring

Temperature monitoring is a prime area to integrate IoT monitoring because of how central it is to restaurant processes. Improper inventory holding temperatures rapidly deteriorate the quality of your inventory, in many cases forcing teams to discard it. These “loss events” are prevalent in foodservice, with the typical restaurant throwing away [50,000 lbs of food](#) per location annually. While an expensive proposition, opting to serve spoiled food is known to cause foodborne illness, leaving your business vulnerable to legal consequences and a negative reputation on the ever-important review websites.

Federal law and many local jurisdictions require businesses to log the holding conditions within their cold storage routinely. Frequently, health inspections include the checking of temperature logs as part of their audit. These logs can be time-consuming to fill out when performed correctly and sometimes require staff to come in on nights and weekends. Therefore, implementing IoT monitoring is a great way to increase team morale and create a positive mindset towards food safety.

For these reasons, it's essential to train your team on the importance of temperature monitoring. Your staff is the first line of defense against food spoilage given their frequent interaction with your inventory. By training them to notice the signs of food spoilage and how to properly utilize temperature monitoring, you can reduce inventory loss, health inspections, and food-borne illness in your business.

Make it easy

To get buy-in from your team, you need to make following food safety protocols as easy as possible. If your team perceives food safety practices as monotonous or arduous, they may be reluctant to take them seriously, let alone perform them proactively. One of the best ways to accomplish this is by automating some of these tasks.

Automation through IoT-enabled devices has changed the way teams in all industries perform essential tasks, creating better data and saving time along the way. The foodservice industry is no different. The integration of this technology into restaurant operations, specifically in temperature monitoring, can be a crucial component in your food safety program, keeping your restaurant safe and profitable along the way.

What is IoT technology?

The Internet of Things (IoT) is the network of physical objects—such as your phone or laptop—connecting through software, sensors, or any other technology. These objects communicate information to each other and to the cloud.

With an increasing number of items existing in the IoT, experts estimate that more than [7 billion devices](#) are connected today, with experts expecting this number to grow to 22 billion by 2025.

Keep everyone informed

Another way to get your team personally invested in food safety is to give them agency in the process. One of the best ways is to keep them informed on key food safety indicators with IoT monitoring. IoT monitoring systems, like Therma°, often have alert systems that allow teams to anticipate and respond to cold storage-related food safety mishaps before they happen.

Consider implementing a technique known as tiered alerting to keep your employees in the loop. Tiered alerts are successive alerts that notify different team members based on the time a unit has been out of threshold.

For example:

- The first alert sends after 30 minutes to your shift lead
- The second alert sends after 60 minutes to the location manager
- The third alert sends after 90 minutes to the regional director
- By allowing your staff to make proactive decisions to protect your inventory, you also instill ownership, which can lead to a sense of pride in their work.

Promote food safety culture with Therma's IoT technology

At Therma°, we thoroughly understand how promoting and maintaining food safety can affect the success of your business. Therma's IoT monitoring system provides easy-to-understand, customizable temperature alerts that keep your team at the center of your food safety strategy. Ultimately, this approach promotes personal empowerment and responsibility, which will keep your inventory and customers safe. Click below to try Therma° for yourself today.

Thank you for reading.

For more samples, please email me at desmond.harris.writer@gmail.com or reach out to me through [LinkedIn](#).

