



## Picking a POS

### Choose the product

It's wise to shop for simplicity. Make sure the system has an easy-to-use interface that requires minimal training. Most POS systems are scalable. Buy what you need now and add features as required. Be clear on why the POS system is needed for the business. What will it do that really helps the bottom line? How long will it take to pay for itself?

Choose software compatible with other hardware or applications the business is already using on the backend. For example, consider the accounting software already in use, and the credit card processing system your bank uses.

### Choose the Vendor

Choose a vendor and software package designed for the type of business being outfitted. A book store shouldn't buy POS software from a company that specializes in serving restaurants.

Check the vendor's references; talk to three or four customers.

Beware of the independent contractor with the homemade system. It would be great to have the right person just down the street, always available, reasonably- priced, and able to tailor the software specifically to the business. But what if that person botches the job or moves on without notice?

Check the service contract. If the system goes down, how long can the business get by without a service call? Some businesses demand no less than a half hour wait for service, others two hours. Waiting 24 hours for service is likely a revenue killer for most companies. Read the fine print before making a commitment.

### Hidden costs

Factor in the labor cost of implementation and training. Paying someone to install the system, debug it, maintain it and train all the staff to use it can cost as much as the system itself in some cases.

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