

Intimidated by Self-Service Kiosks?

5 Reasons Why You Shouldn't Be.



Five Reasons Why Self-Service Kiosks Will Put Your Business On Top.

Customers use self-service kiosks every day – in restaurants, retail stores, airports, even the DMV, but are YOUR customers included? Touchscreen self-service kiosks are penetrating every industry, because guests want convenience, and that means the ability to buy what they want when they want – with or without staff interaction.

Yet still, adding interactive kiosks can feel intimidating. Dig into the details, and you'll discover quite the opposite is true. Here are five reasons why self-service will put your business on top – and why your CFO will love you for it.



01

Operational Efficiency

The headlines may tout fears that automation and robots will take over the world, usurping jobs. In reality, they'll likely change the way we work. With those handy touchscreens at the front of your business, it's not about reducing labor but elevating what employees bring to the table.

Rather than standing in a fixed location while handling a line of customers, touchscreen kiosks liberate employees to interact with customers, clean tables, cook more food and handle the higher-level tasks that make your business shine.

Self-service kiosks also enable you to better manage traffic surges, those crazy (and always welcome) times when a concert lets out and the line wraps around the corner. A line is good, but only if it moves fast – otherwise customers will walk away. If you've got rows of machines waiting to take orders, while at the same time having more employees focused on back-of-house operations, you're suddenly boosting customer service and eliminating that bottleneck to potential sales.

Evidence already shows that kiosks reduce the time customers wait in line. The airline industry witnessed a 60-second drop in

service times when they incorporated self-service kiosks, while a number of restaurants have noted that kiosks cut the time to take orders by nearly half. In addition, research shows that fast food companies that employed self-service kiosks reduced their service times enough to boost market share by 1% to 3%.

After all, what's more important to a customer? Faster, more attentive service? Or telling a clerk at the counter they want anchovies on their pizzas? Thought so.



DID YOU KNOW?

Your touchscreens can build your brand affinity, by showing customers factoids, such as, "We use organic pork from local farmers!" Or, the screens can add to the experience, giving customers the opportunity to personalize anything from the name of their burger to the pattern on their new sneakers.

02

Kiosks Change Customer Behavior & Boost Revenue

Research shows that self-service technologies can dramatically change what people do and how they act. Remove the direct customer-clerk interaction, and what happens? Social anxiety drops and spending grows. Consider research by Duke University and the National University of Singapore, which found that when a liquor store adopted self-service kiosks it experienced an 8.4 percent boost for products that were difficult to pronounce. The take-away: Consumers feared being misunderstood or unsophisticated in front of clerks. This is great news for the gewürztraminer industry.

Another advantage: you can upsell without being pushy. A string of fast-food companies, restaurant chains and theaters that installed touchscreen ordering saw an increase in per-ticket orders to the tune of 20 to 30 percent.

Kiosks, of course, never forget to upsell, but their sales savvy doesn't come across as brash. Ryan Buell, a Harvard Business School researcher who studies the intersection of operations and customer behavior, surmises that's because with kiosks people can supersize a drink without somehow feeling guilty – no judgy clerk stare, no guilt. Kiosks offer an easy upsell, resulting in guests buying that extra drink or adding on that dessert item they never knew they wanted. Fast-food chains have watched consumers add more additional ingredients – which might cost 30 to 70 cents – when prompted by a kiosk. A major burger chain also found that 20 percent of customers who didn't initially order a drink would buy one when it was offered via kiosk. The kiosk even takes the shame out of going back for seconds or ordering desserts. For kids, it's a great end-of-the-visit treat.



03

No Training Required

The idea can seem daunting: If we install kiosks, then we also must implement employee training, hire teams of IT people to integrate the software (and routinely update it) – without working kiosks, people can't order food. Yet today's self-service kiosks seamlessly integrate into businesses with programming and updates done at a central command server – the work doesn't require scheduling visits from techies. Installing and running them does not require feats of intense technological prowess. And if you have a mobile ordering app, you're ready to go.

Worried about kiosks baffling customers? Don't. People look at their phones some 250 times a day, so asking them to tap on an even bigger screen to make decisions isn't a big deal. They don't have to be trained. They're ready, waiting and eager for this option.

DID YOU KNOW?

Android OS is an emerging leader when it comes to deploying and managing business applications geared toward self service. Android has both consumer and business editions, so it's critical to have an industry expert on your side to ensure you roll out your system for a long-term hardware and software partnership.

[Check out this video for one such example](#)



04

Sales Have No Border

A lonely employee standing behind a counter, waiting for customers to swing by so she can tap on a keyboard. Does that sound especially 21st Century? It shouldn't. With kiosks, "POINTS of sale" can be where your customer wants to be – not only where you expect them to be.

A major professional football team saw a lift in downtown store sales when it added kiosks enabling fans to buy team jerseys inside the stadium, near to their seats or beside the food vendors. While the downtown store thrived, thanks to a high profile and lots of foot traffic, kiosks in the stadium that let people order their favorite hats and jerseys boosted sales even more. No longer did fans in the stadium have to trek to the busy downtown store to snag that scarf – now all they had to do was visit the kiosk. The impulse buy would get delivered to their house – no downtown crowds, no hunt for expensive parking, no hassle. Yet the store captured the attention of fans at that special moment when they were most inspired.

The same goes for those purchases that are even more of a headache and hassle. Instead of driving to the state department of motor vehicles and standing in line to renew a driver's license, citizens now easily renew them in airports or train stations. A wide range of state services, many of which tend to involve long lines and longer waiting times, conceivably could happen anywhere, in any public place, making it easier and faster for people to take care of business.

Wait – isn't there an app for all of that? Apps have their place, including integration with kiosks. But self-service kiosks offer something that phones alone cannot: a visible reminder, a physical prompt to buy something, or handle their affairs - without asking customers to sacrifice valuable phone space. The message here? Go to the people, rather than waiting for them to come to you.



05

Kiosks Understand and Delight Customers

Kiosks not only let you upsell products, they offer additional insight into your brand and products. They provide unique opportunities to recognize customers, make them feel special and delight them with personalized experiences. Customers fully customize their sandwiches or burgers – shaved Parmesan and mushrooms? No problem.

The personalization goes far beyond taco toppings. Thanks to things like facial-recognition software and loyalty cards, kiosks get to know your customers personally. For example, a kiosk could automatically identify a returning shopper and understand her stated, as well as implicit, tastes and preferences. Ferreting-out implicit tastes is not a common talent for many people who work retail (or anywhere else, for that matter). But smart kiosks introduce another potentially powerful sales tool for retailers.

With gamification, shopping becomes a (pleasant) competitive activity. Swiping loyalty cards or scanning phones at the kiosk can earn points that turn into discounts and special (and customized) sales opportunities. That kind of stickiness translates into gold for brand loyalty while driving local sales.

Then there's the matter of endless inventory. No more fears that a customer will research in your store and then shop elsewhere. Screens can display the myriad color, fabric and style variations that come with individual products – everything from all 48 color combinations for the sneakers to the personalization options for a sports jersey. A petite furniture showroom? Not a problem. Kiosks clue-in customers to the full catalog of styles and colors for that contemporary line of chairs and sofas. Thanks to the kiosk, customers can find items they might never have purchased otherwise.

Kiosks represent an important part of retail's future. By elevating employees to perform truly valuable work, rather than just pushing buttons on a register, they accomplish multiple key goals. Kiosks optimize employee time and effort. They improve customer service and speed-up wait times. And they remove barriers, like customer guilt, that negatively influence consumer spending habits.



Intimidating?

Never.

Flexible?

Absolutely.

Profitable?

Always!