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THE #1 iPad-based Visitor Management System in the world!
#1

The Complete Guide to Visitor Management in the Manufacturing Industry

Why automated visitor management is vital for security, safety, and compliance

Trusted by the world's best

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Creating a Visitor Management Solution That Makes Sense for the Manufacturing Industry

Manufacturing companies have the market cornered when it comes to innovation and automation. And when they choose a new piece of equipment, that choice comes with careful consideration.

When you think about it, the technology in your front office says a lot about your image. Even the most cutting-edge manufacturers can often neglect to apply that same attention to quality and innovation to their administrative procedures — especially the visitor management process.

Visitor management might not seem like a huge deal, but people notice the small stuff like paper sign-in sheets or a slow registration process, both of which make a poor first impression. Worse, these outdated processes leave your business open to unnecessary risk.

In manufacturing, compliance, safety, and security are at the center of everything you do. And when visitors enter the mix, you need to make sure they follow procedures they may not be familiar with from the outset.

How Regulations Impact Your Visitor Management System

Manufacturing is a highly regulated industry whether you're making car parts or candy. As such, your visitor management solution must comply with various regulations like Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI), International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR), and Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP).

The Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (C-TPAT) compliance, for example, requires taking photos of all visitors, issuing badges, and recording visitor records in a

secure database to protect your supply chain from harm.

Or, consider the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) — the latest set of regulations set by the United States FDA's food defense rule. Best practices here include vehicle documentation, ID verification, and more. Meaning, you'll need to have an airtight, in-out procedure to stay compliant. We've covered this in more detail on our blog.

Failure to comply with ITAR, FSMA, or other relevant compliance rules can result in fines or closure — and as such, you'll want to implement some new technology to ensure that no regulatory stone goes unturned.

How Digital Visitor Management Helps You Stay Compliant

For one, adding a digital check-in process to your visitor management strategy allows you to make sure you never forget a signed NDA form or waiver again.

During an audit, you'll need to prove that you have appropriate security protocols in place, as well as a system for handling visitor registration and security.

While digital visitor management removes the inconvenience of paper logs, it also ensures you don't overlook any step in the process.

Finally, there's also the benefit of cloud-based recordkeeping. This serves to make things easier on front desk staff — no longer tasked with filing systems and more able to collect the data that proves compliance in the event of an audit or accident.

In Chapter 2, we'll look at emergency procedures and evacuation planning.

In general, visitor management systems benefit manufacturing companies. Between regulatory issues, recordkeeping, and a plan to keep visitors safe, we've already racked up a long list of reasons to try The Receptionist for iPad.

Andy & the team at The Receptionist

P.S. Looking for an easy solution to checking in your guests? Try a free demo of The Receptionist for iPad today.

CHAPTER 2

Clarify Your Safety and Emergency Procedures

Chances are, you already take measures to keep your employees safe on site. Manufacturers know safety, after all.

Still, without a procedure that accounts for everyone from office staff to visitors, there are some hazards you'll need to watch out for.

As such, it's your responsibility to make sure that everyone who arrives on the scene is safe — and prepared for anything from natural disasters and lockdowns to how to properly stay safe in the production area when surrounded by machinery and potentially hazardous materials.

Here are some tips for ensuring everyone on-site stays safe:

Make Sure Your Site is Ready for Anything

Before you start revising your visitor safety plan, make sure to cover the basics:

- Are appropriate warning signs in place? Hazardous materials must be marked, for example.

- Are designated walking areas painted the appropriate colors?

- Are exits marked?

- Is your intercom system set up—and can employees and guests hear important announcements over regular activity?

- Is the area clean?

- Are special tools/equipment properly maintained?

Establish a Visitor Safety Policy

While workers know your safety procedures inside and out, sometimes other people need

to be onsite. Whether visitors are there on business or stopping by for a tour, safety is essential within manufacturing facilities.

We get it; there's no way visitors can be expected to receive the same level of training as a full-fledged employee. Still, it's your responsibility to keep them safe.

With that in mind, you'll need to develop a visitor safety plan.

Some things to keep in mind:

- What are the conditions under which an evacuation would be necessary?

- What are the routes and exits?

- How will visitors and employees evacuate?

- Who will shut down operations before evacuating?

- Are visitor parking areas and entrances marked?

Additionally, make sure you have all of the appropriate equipment on-site. This includes:

- Respirators

- First-aid supplies

- Construction vests or hardhats

- Hairnets

- Protective gloves or masks

Additionally, clarify which items are not allowed on the premises. Examples include:

- Alcohol

- Illegal drugs

- Firearms/weapons

- Recording equipment

- Flammable materials

• Outside food or drink

Provide Safety Information Online and On-site

A visit to your facility ideally starts before the visitor comes on the scene. Update your website with general information about your company, as well as some safety information.

Obviously, you've trained your staff to stay safe at work. We recommend teaching staff how to relay that information to incoming visitors. What materials do they need to hand out to visitors? Offer clean safety glasses, earplugs, vests, or hard hats, if applicable.

Where will protective gear be stored? Are staff prepared to answer safety-related questions? Are they prepared to help visitors get out safely in the event of an emergency?

Address all of these issues straight away.

On the visitor side, you may include a written outline of the rules and procedures. Give them a few minutes to review before heading into the production area.

This is another area where the Receptionist for iPad comes in handy. You can preload any relevant documents, which cuts back on paper printouts, time spent searching for papers, and allows users to review materials quickly.

Some companies provide a short safety video to visitors when they arrive on the scene. This may seem like overkill in certain instances, but visitors to the premises in a hands-on capacity might need more training than a client.

Implement an Escort Policy

Visitors should be accompanied by a designated escort unless in the lobby or outside of the facility. Train front desk staff to ensure that escorts meet their visitor and will guide them throughout the visit.

Finally, Make Sure You Have a Real-Time RecordKeeping System in Place

Whoever is in charge of safety planning should have a log of who is on site at any given time. Accurate recordkeeping prevents confusion or dangerous attempts to locate those unaccounted for.

Safety First — How to Keep Your Staff, Data, and Facility Safe

Manufacturing companies have to deal with a lot when it comes to keeping things secure.

From keeping trade secrets close to the chest to protecting against cyber attacks, security starts at the front desk.

As such, you'll need to develop a physical security plan that gives you control over how people move through the facility. With that in mind, we'll look at a few ways to improve your onsite security.

Lobby Design and Layout

Lobby design is about more than putting a stylish spin on the front office. It's also about controlling access to your facility. It's about strategically placing security cameras and iPad sign-in systems at every entrance.

The point is, the lobby needs to be able to support security—combining technology and ID validation with physical barriers and a clear plan for traveling through the facility.

Some things to consider:

- **Front door visibility**: Ideally the receptionist's desk should face the front door. The goal here is to create visibility for the person working the counter, allowing them to see everyone who comes and goes. While a software system will ensure a seamless registration process, the receptionist must remain vigilant and aware of his or her surroundings.

- **Restroom access requires registration**: If your restrooms are located in a private area, make sure that visitors register before they use the facilities.

- **Create a barrier between the lobby and the rest of the facility**: Physical barriers (like a locking door between reception and other offices/production area) prevent

guests from wandering into restricted areas and compromising security.

- **Add an employees-only entrance**: Separating employee and visitor entrances makes a big difference in front-office security. For one, you'll cut down on office foot traffic, making it easier for the receptionist to observe incoming visitors. The second entrance also eliminates the risk of visitors sneaking in behind an employee.

Make Sure the Front Desk is Never Left Unattended

While some organizations are opting to go without an actual person operating the front desk, it might not be the smartest security idea.

Some companies opt to have employees work near the door, which subjects them to distractions throughout the day. These employees may also have a hard time remembering events, visitors, or other details that come in handy in the event of an incident.

Visitor Privacy

Customer privacy should top your list of priorities. Visitors need to feel protected when they arrive on the scene, and it's your job to ensure that their information is secure.

Network Access

Visitors who require WiFi access should be provided with a guest username and password. Guests should not have access to the company's official network, as this can compromise system security.

In the end, modern security management covers a long list of moving parts that come together to reduce the potential for internal and external threats.

Implementing a visitor management system allows you to record every visitor, keep time-stamped logs, and display all legal and compliance-related documents.

CHAPTER 4

From Badges to Check-Ins, How Employees Should Handle Visitor Security

Paper logs no longer cut it for manufacturing facilities. The old-school sign-in system leaves visitor information out in the open and makes recordkeeping a bigger headache than it needs to be. Today's front desk needs to be prepared for receiving guests digitally and handling badge-printing, paperwork, and more in a welcoming, friendly manner.

Here's how to develop a check-in plan that protects your business without frustrating visitors in the process.

Create a Check-In Process for Each Type of Visitor

Your first step in developing a visitor security plan is thinking about who comes to visit, and how to handle each type of visitors.

Dividing your process into different groups ensures your staff knows exactly what to do. When you define specific steps for your employees, they'll have a procedure that covers all the bases.

Additionally, defining a process for every type of visitor will help employees move through registration quickly, thus reducing any instances of frustrated visitors and bottlenecks at the front desk.

Write a list of anyone who might visit your manufacturing site. These visitors might include the following groups:

- Potential hires

- Clients and vendors

- Delivery people

- Temporary employees

• Community members

Once you've come up with your list of likely visitors, write down the steps associated with each type.

Clients and vendors, for example, are likely to be repeat visitors. Pre-register guests ahead of time. The Receptionist for iPad will save visitor information, so frequent visitors don't have to jump through the same hoops every time they stop by.

You can have your receptionist prepare a badge, along with any necessary safety equipment such as earplugs, masks, or protective garments.

Community members taking a plant tour could be allowed to preregister for a visit, thus making the check-in process much faster.

Delivery drivers likely won't go inside of the production area and as such, won't need a badge. In general, those making a drop-off should remain in the lobby or outside of the front entrance.

Design Your Visitor Check-In Experience

Beyond determining who might visit your manufacturing facility and why, you'll need to develop a check-in process that makes sense for your business.

Virtual check-ins can be customized to help you maintain compliance and identify guests. For example, if you're using The Receptionist for iPad, you can capture a photo during the registration process, ask questions, and show a short video. You can even build in an NDA or a safety waiver for added legal protection.

Create a Visitor Management Plan

• **Mandatory check-in and out**: All visitors must be registered in the visitor management system. Upon entry, all visitors will have their photo taken and the front desk will scan their ID to verify their identity.

• **Validate the visit**: What is the reason for the visit? Does the visitor have an appointment? If not, what is your policy for drop-ins?

- **Screen for contraband**: If applicable, check bags and pockets for hazardous materials. In some cases, it might be appropriate for guests to leave smartphones or cameras at the front desk.

- **Issue a badge**: All visitors will be given a badge that displays their name and a reference number.

- **Provide an escort**: A relevant employee should accompany visitors at all times. An escort ensures guests stick to the approved route and stay safe during their visit.

Maintain Proper Recordkeeping

Visitor sign-in logs need to be stored in case of an audit, as do legal agreements like waivers or NDAs, in the unfortunate event of a lawsuit.

Software allows you to improve recordkeeping efforts by storing them in the cloud. Visitor logs are transformed from an unkempt paper log in a filing cabinet, into a digitized, searchable log.

Implement a Policy for Handling Unauthorized Visitors

Security staff who spot unauthorized guests may ask them to leave and escort them off the premises. Visitors engaging in disruptive or unsafe behavior may be asked to leave or prosecuted, depending on the nature of the behavior.

If employees spot unauthorized visitors, they should defer to security or a supervisor. While employees likely won't handle any significant confrontations, you will need to train them to look out for suspicious activity or guests without a badge.

CHAPTER 5

Your Visitor Management Procedure — Reviewing & Measuring Your Strategy for Long-Term Success

We've looked at everything from safety planning to setting up a check-in policy for visitors of all kinds.

Again, your visitor management policy isn't just a way to check all of your compliance-related boxes. It's also a major part of the visitor experience.

As such, create a policy that considers the visitor check-in process as a reflection of your brand and values.

Here are some elements to consider when putting together a plan.

Staff Needs to be On the Same Page

While implementing a digital check-in process allows reception to handle other tasks, you'll still need to make sure they're prepared to welcome incoming visitors.

First impressions start at the front desk. Make sure your employees engage in pleasant chit-chat, ask guests if they need anything, and are ready to answer questions.

Additionally, your front desk staff must be well-versed in all of the safety and security measures you've included in your plan. While the system handles the processing component, those extra hands on deck function as an added security measure.

Understand That Your Strategy is a Work in Progress

A visitor management plan isn't something that you set up and forget about. Instead, you'll need to constantly be optimizing. Regulations change. Security and safety need to be evaluated, and technology ages.

Aside from the usual updates and rule changes, consider how to ensure that guests walk away with a favorable impression of your company.

Here are some things to consider as you look at your strategy:

- Review your process by looking for places you can make things more efficient.

- Note any complaints or confusion associated with the sign-in process.

- Are there ways to make sure guests have a better experience?

- Does the process align with company branding?

- Are there security issues that need to be addressed?

Learn from Your Data

As we mentioned in Chapter 1, visitor data is collected to ensure you have proof of compliance in the event of an audit.

But access to visitor records also helps you improve the visitor management process. You'll be able to see things like which times of day or year are busiest, which can inform staffing efforts.

Your system functions as a way to keep track of visitor patterns, like how many people are processed on a daily or hourly basis and when are the peak times for visitors?

Finally, should any major issues crop up, your audit trail serves as a means of reconstructing events — pinpointing issues like how someone got through security and finding a way to close the holes.

In Chapter 6, we'll look at how you can use The Receptionist for iPad to upgrade your manufacturing facility visitor management process.

CHAPTER 6

How The Receptionist for iPad Can Transform Visitor Management in Your Manufacturing Facility

Any good visitor management strategy for manufacturing companies should handle all of the legal, safety, security, and administrative components of visitor management in a streamlined, straightforward manner.

Luckily, visitor management software makes this process as painless as possible.

The Receptionist for iPad allows users to customize your check-in process by visitor type. You can update the data fields, add legal agreements, collect signatures, and capture photos, all from one central hub.

Preregister visitors or expedite the process for those who pop by on a regular basis.

The main benefit of using The Receptionist's software is, visitors can check themselves into the system by pushing a few buttons on the iPad. Administrators can opt to set up notifications that alert staff when someone checks in, which may be routed to Slack, email, or SMS.

Notifications may be sent to full departments, individuals, and even backup contacts there in case the main point of contact isn't available.

What's more, the system comes equipped with a dynamic reporting system that can help you learn more about visitor patterns, and provides a real-time view of who is on site, an essential feature in the case of an emergency.

Finally, all features and unlimited support are included with each plan — even the two-week free trial.

With that in mind, we invite you to join the ranks of the many manufacturing companies

already using The Receptionist for iPad to streamline their visitor management process.

The smartest manufacturers know that automation is the key to success, whether at the front desk or in the production line. So ditch the filing system and inefficient paper logs and step into the future.

If you're ready to transform your visitor management system, get in touch with The Receptionist for more information.

P.S. Interested in learning how The Receptionist for iPad boosts productivity? Click here to find out.

TheReceptionist.com

Questions and Answers about The Receptionist

If you're unsure about whether The Receptionist is the right choice for your manufacturing company? Here are a few questions (and answers) that we get a lot.

DOES THIS PROGRAM REPLACE AN ACTUAL RECEPTIONIST?

No. We've covered this in detail on our blog. The purpose of our software is to help your receptionist do his or her job better. Your front desk person has enough to worry about, including staying alert and making sure the lobby and surrounding areas are kept clean, safe, and secure.

This tool also allows your receptionist to register visitors quickly, no paperwork required. They'll have insights into who visited, right there in the cloud.

HOW MUCH IS THE RECEPTIONIST FOR IPAD?

Our service is offered on a subscription basis. We charge per location, per month and pricing is determined by the number of employees at each location with permissions to receive visitors.

Plans start at $49 per month, which allows up to 24 registered employees. It's $99 for up to 49 registered employees and $149 for up to 99 employees. For further details, we recommend heading over to the pricing page.

We hope this ebook was helpful and we encourage you to reach out with any questions or comments.

DOES MY PLAN COME WITH SUPPORT?

Absolutely! We're here to make sure that someone is always there to help whenever you need it. Though we'd like to say we have the easiest set up around, we offer free, unlimited support in case you have questions or get stuck along the way.

The Receptionist.com

WHAT DO I NEED TO GET STARTED WITH THE RECEPTIONIST?

You'll need an iPad and a stand—or prime counter space, plus a badge printer. You can order our Receptionist in a Box, which includes everything needed to get set up.

Or, you can use your own iPad. Devices must have iOS 8+ and compatible devices include the iPad Mini, iPad Mini 2, iPads 2, 3, and 4, iPad Air, iPad Air 2, and iPad Pro.

At this time, our software does not support Android tablets.

We've found most of our clients prefer to start with a clean slate and purchase a new iPad for their reception area.

IS THERE A CONTRACT?

Once your free trial comes to an end, you'll have the option to choose a plan that fits your company size and goals on a monthly basis. You can cancel, upgrade, or downgrade at any time.

Kind regards,

Andy & the Team at The Receptionist
Click here to get started with your free trial

Visitor Management in the Manufacturing Industry

Get more done.
Try the smart program that makes your business lobby secure and your business compliant.