



Successfully navigating the path to kiosk deployment

5 steps to make the process understandable, less complex

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At the time this white paper is going to press, the COVID-19 pandemic is spreading across the globe and businesses are closing to the public to maintain the safety of our communities. While nobody can say how long people will be sheltering at home to help flatten the virus's curve, one thing is certain. When businesses begin to open their doors again, they'll be serving a new type of customer – one who is more mindful of social distancing and safety precautions.

Without a doubt, kiosks will be an integral part of many businesses' solutions to address these new concerns, both by encouraging less close human contact in public and providing a simple way to streamline services while allowing easy disinfection. As companies take this period to reflect on objectives and strategize their next moves, we are working within Frank Mayer and Associates, Inc. to meet the changing needs of our clients and to help them accelerate their growth in the marketplace. Frank Mayer and Associates, Inc. is committed to providing best-in-class kiosks to support a multitude of industries.

Deploying kiosks – be it a single unit or a fleet – should be intentional, a strategic move that can positively impact all aspects of a business, from the consumer experience to the bottom line.

Self-service kiosks gradually have permeated everyday life, reaching a point these days where the technology no longer intimidates users but seamlessly blends with their routines. We use them to pay for coffee, check in and out of hotels and obtain subway tickets.

The growth trajectory of the kiosk market has skyrocketed in recent years and is predicted to continue growing at a rate of more than 13% annually, with the industry's value topping \$45 billion by 2026, according to Fortune Business Insights. Driving that growth, research shows, is unattended retail, or self-service kiosks, that provide information, merchandise and transactions.

While many businesspeople are familiar with kiosks, their functionality and their potential, deploying a kiosk is largely unfamiliar territory. Oftentimes, they are not even sure where to begin.

Incorporating kiosks into the strategic fold is a journey, not an instantaneous action. Here are five steps to help prospective deployers navigate the path to deployment.

Define the purpose

Kiosks are seen as innovative, but innovation comes at a price. Unless your business is awash with cash, don't buy technology for technology's sake. Purchase a solution that fits the business plan and enhances the relationship between the consumer and a product.

There are countless stories of interactive solutions that failed miserably because businesses tried to force technology on consumers without understanding the consumer experience and their needs.

Start with the end-state in mind. What need will a solution meet? Will it create added convenience for customers and spur revenue? Most importantly, what is the intended return on investment? A strategic plan – both from overall company and project perspectives – will drive the budget and dictate how kiosks will be used, branded and marketed to users.



Defining the kiosk's purpose perhaps is the most critical step after deciding to explore a deployment because it sets the stage for all other decisions to follow.

Determine the proper software

Because businesses and their needs vary, all software is not created equal. Generally speaking, a solution should be easy to navigate, both for customers and for those with the business using the interface.

Many businesses already rely on other software to manage operations, labor and sales. A kiosk system that easily integrates with other in-house systems lessens the possibility of hiccups or prolonged interruptions once the kiosk is online.



Although most software platforms already in use may be irrelevant to a kiosk project, POS integration should be top of mind since such systems will be the critical source for updating pricing and menu items from a central, back-of-house hub. A deployer needs to pay added attention to ensure that things attracting users like loyalty and gift cards are accepted at the kiosk.

“The last thing you would want for a customer to do is spend a few minutes creating their perfect order, then going to pay and realizing they must wait in line to redeem their gift cards,” said Alex Gomez, marketing manager for GRUBBRR, a business automation platform.

Pinpoint the kiosk type

Defining an objective early on helps determine the type of equipment needed.

There are two types: standard and custom. Standard designs consist of pre-designed and sometimes pre-built kiosks that could have specific sets of components with a broad range of functions. A manufacturer can produce them more quickly because the housings are all but ready to go, much like any other pre-made product, although some small customization will most likely need to take place.

Custom products are unique, purpose-driven and developed around specific requirements to meet the needs of the customer. Custom designs tend to emerge through design aesthetics and the necessity to properly facilitate the mix of hardware going into the kiosk.

Location determines a lot about the makeup of a unit. That spot with which the kiosk will occupy will help a company decide what kind of unit it needs. If there is limited space, the business might consider a tabletop or wall-mounted unit. If space is not limited or the company wants its kiosk to stand out, it might go with a free-standing unit.

Outline aesthetics

Consider the kiosk enclosure as the skin and bones of a unit. While intricate software – the brain of the kiosk – crunches numbers and produces information inside, the enclosure plays a pivotal role on the outside.

It can protect. It can exude personality. It can adapt to an environment. It can withstand abuse, both malicious and persistent everyday wear and tear.

The venue where the kiosk will operate needs to allow for integration into the surrounding environment while loudly telling customers it is there for them to use.

Deployers want their kiosks to be accessible to everyone. Firms launching in the United States, in particular, must comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. The 1994 policy requires businesses to make their stores and equipment accessible to all. In terms of kiosks, they must have easy accessibility for those with any disability, to include easy use of the keyboard and other instruments such as printers and bill and change acceptors.

The law states that the kiosk and enclosure must have at least 34 inches of space in front to allow for easy access by those using wheelchairs. The ADA also mandates minimum and maximum heights for components with no obstructions and guidelines for audio and video capabilities.

“Most of our design considerations concern reach requirements for people who use a wheelchair to get around,” said Ryan Lepianka, creative director for Frank Mayer and Associates. “Some requirements are also in place to provide a shopping environment that is reasonably free from obstruction for those with impaired vision who use a cane. In larger shop-in-shop scenarios, we take into account things like accessible routes through the space we design for those using wheelchairs.

“Consider also installing listening devices with lighted brail navigation pads for the sight-impaired. Now, most people who will utilize a device like this are not 100% vision-impaired, but may not be able to read small text on a backlit screen.”

Obtain proper support

A business wants to know that if a problem surfaces with a kiosk, they can turn to the manufacturer or a reliable service firm for help.

Though some large businesses tend to their own kiosks, most rely on the assistance of outside agencies. The extent of a maintenance provider’s offerings can vary. While many businesses want a firm they can call when a problem occurs, others opt for packages with service plans that cover an extended period of time and offer everything from preventative care to consultation to full-scale fixes – all done on-site, by phone or by video.

Gomez recommends “having a comprehensive package that identifies all up-front costs, so that hidden fees don’t keep a unit offline any longer than necessary.”

Using a dedicated maintenance provider offers additional benefits in that they typically are abreast of changing requirements and evolving needs and can ensure kiosks are constantly up to date.

Support can even go beyond standard repairs, providing training for businesses on using the kiosk and, in turn, teaching their consumers how to use it. Despite the fact that kiosks have become and continue to become a more familiar part of everyday life, an educational gap remains among many consumers over how and why they should interact with an electronic device.



“When implementing a kiosk, you must ensure from Day One that your customers gravitate toward the kiosk and enjoy using it,” Gomez said. “We have one chance to ensure their experience was great or else your customers will not use it again.”

About the sponsor:

Frank Mayer and Associates Inc. is an in-store merchandising company with vast experience in designing and manufacturing branded permanent displays for virtually every retail format. Our clients are a wide range of Fortune 500 brands and retailers. We have been recognized by industry peers for creating and producing award-winning point-of-purchase displays, interactive merchandisers and kiosks. We offer promotional marketing capabilities that allow us to provide our customers with an unmatched depth of service.