

At-a-Glance Liquor Store POS Checklist

Print this page and use it during every vendor call!

Must-Ask Questions

Age Verification & Compliance

- "Show me age verification working with a real ID from my state."
- "What happens if the scanner can't read an ID?"
- "Do you store verification records for compliance audits?"

Inventory Management

- "How does case-breaking work for wine vs. beer vs. spirits?"
- "Can I set different reorder points for seasonal items?"
- "Do you integrate with my main distributors for catalog updates?"

Pricing & Costs

- "What's my exact total monthly cost including ALL processing fees?"
- "Are there setup fees, contract requirements, or early termination costs?"

Real-Time Access

- "Can I see live sales data from my phone?"
- "How do inventory transfers work between multiple locations?"
- "Can I access the system if my internet goes down?"

Support & Training

- "Who specifically handles my data migration and staff training?"
- "Do your support staff understand liquor store operations and ABC regulations?"
- "What's your average response time for technical issues during business hours?"

Trial & Implementation

- "Can I try this system in my store before buying?"
- "How long does implementation take, and what's included?"
- "Can you provide references from similar liquor stores in my area?"

Additional questions

- "What's the most common complaint you hear from liquor store customers?"
- "Can you walk me through exactly what happens during a busy Friday night rush?"
- "What would you do differently if you were running my store?"
- "How do you handle software updates – will they disrupt my business?"
- "What happens to my data if I decide to switch to a different system?"

Red Flags To Watch For

During the sales process

- Won't show you a live demo with real features
- Vague about total costs or says "it depends" without specifics
- Requires long-term contracts or won't discuss cancellation terms
- Pushes you to sign immediately with "limited time" offers
- Can't explain how their system handles liquor-specific needs

About their service

- Support only available during standard business hours
- No experience with liquor stores or alcohol regulations
- Can't provide current customer references in your industry
- Charges extra for "premium" support or basic integrations
- No clear data migration plan or timeline

Technical concerns

- System requires expensive proprietary hardware you can't replace
- No mobile access or cloud-based functionality
- No backup plan if their servers go down
- Charges per transaction instead of flat monthly fees

Final Checklist Before You Decide

Before signing anything

- You've seen a live demo with your actual products
- You have written quotes with ALL costs included
- You've spoken to at least two current customers
- You understand exactly what's included vs. what costs extra
- You have a clear implementation timeline
- You know your cancellation rights and data ownership
- The vendor has answered every question on this list

Remember: The right POS system should make your life easier, not more complicated. If a vendor can't clearly explain how their system solves your specific challenges, keep looking.