

CAF STORE CHECKLIST



Please rate your store with 1 = horrible and 5 = excellent.

- 1.** 1 2 3 4 5 **Cleanliness:** *Is your store clean?*
Cleanliness should start from your forecourts to your parking lots, continue through your entry way and throughout your entire store. Remember Clean Stores Sell More! By keeping your store clean and free from debris, oil and food stains, graffiti and grime increases your profits by 5-15%!
- 2.** 1 2 3 4 5 **Bathrooms:** *This is a make or break moment!*
Are your bathrooms clean? Bathrooms are a very important part of the customer experience and ultimately says to your customer whether your food is fresh and your store is safe to come in.
- 3.** 1 2 3 4 5 **Lighting:** *Is it appropriate for your store's image, merchandise, and customer safety?*
Lighting can create or destroy a store's competitive edge. Featured products should be highlighted to attract attention. Is there enough lighting to walk safely from the pump, to your bathrooms or towards your store? Keeping your store bright and airy and make sure all areas are adequately lit and not leave any dark corners.
- 4.** 1 2 3 4 5 **Accessibility:** *How easy is it to get from the pump to your store and inside navigation to your merchandise?*
Help create a pathway that is simple to navigate, easy to see from the entry way and even accessible from the roadway.
- 5.** 1 2 3 4 5 **Merchandise:** *Is your shelves clearly displayed with fresh merchandise and easy to find?*
Help create a sensory experience when customers enter your store. The idea is to have your customer's salivary glands activate through sight, smell, and taste. Your customers expect fresh items and clearly marked locations to easily access your products. Make sure they are not out of date and found half opened or damaged.
- 6.** 1 2 3 4 5 **Displays:** *Are they eye catching, fun, and consistently changing (refreshed)?*
Use creative signage to add interest. Many product vendors offer free, pre-printed signage to highlight their products. In any case displays, should always look complete, untorn or damaged and product fully stocked.
- 7.** 1 2 3 4 5 **Fixtures:** *It's all about convenience!*
Product and fixture displays must work together to produce the right experience and a sale. If you succeed in capturing those first ten feet and seconds, then the rest of the experience is interacting with product, displays and staff.
- 8.** 1 2 3 4 5 **In -Store Signage/Graphics:** *Do they match the store brand in color and theme? Does it stand out?*
Color's and theme's influence on consumer behavior isn't confined to just merchandise. The colors surrounding customers while they're shopping also can influence whether they make a purchase. Colors in a store format can create different emotions and store retailers can use that to benefit a better customer experience.
- 9.** 1 2 3 4 5 **Flooring:** *Does it help guide customers thru your store?*
As flooring options become increasingly affordable, it's easy for you to take full advantage of different flooring throughout your shop. Use hard surfaces in high-traffic areas and carpeting to add class to specific areas.
- 10.** 1 2 3 4 5 **Competitive Pricing:** *Is your merchandise priced to sell quickly?*
A customer, while looking at a product in your store, may decide to search for it online – while in your store. Finding a better deal, he leaves your store – to go and get it elsewhere at a better price. Price – it has become a key consideration in the purchase decisions of today's budget-conscious shoppers, as they grapple with a recessionary economy.
- 11.** 1 2 3 4 5 **Location:** *Is your store located for convenience?*
The best location for c-store business combines visibility, affordability, and geography. You need to be where the action is, so deciding where to put your business is every bit as important as the business you decide to go into. Take the time to analyze the areas that appeal to you. The best locations are where there is a growing community of people with regular incomes and interest in the goods or services you plan to offer.

- 12.** 1 2 3 4 5 **Merchandise Mix:** *Target your customer's needs?*
Right from the onset customers should know who the store is intending to attract when it comes to an assortment of merchandise. Keep in mind your location to local attractions, outdoors, sporting venues and more! These choices help provide towards the customer's desires and ultimately your customer experience. If your selection is too broad, you may lose out on what appeals to the customer and could spread yourself too thin towards profit margins.
- 13.** 1 2 3 4 5 **Parking:** *Is your parking lot clean, safe, and free of potential hazards?*
If your store's parking area isn't clean, safe, and clearly marked, you may inadvertently discourage business. Consider the practicality of your parking lot for customers coming at night or in bad weather.
- 14.** 1 2 3 4 5 **Music:** *Is there music playing? Is it targeted for customers or for staff?*
Mood and music are inextricably intertwined, and playing the right music in a retail environment can make a big difference. But be careful—music should always be selected to appeal to the customer, not the staff. Also, keep the music volume low—it should never intrude on conversation.
- 15.** 1 2 3 4 5 **Quality:** *Is the value of your merchandise evident?*
Don't assume customers will be familiar with the quality of your merchandise. However, many convenience stores are concentrating on providing a greater variety of fresh, high-quality foods that are much more familiar with customer's. This leads to growing competition with fast-food restaurants.
- 16.** 1 2 3 4 5 **Smell:** *What does your store smell like?*
Don't assume customers will be familiar with the quality of your merchandise. However, many convenience stores are concentrating on providing a greater variety of fresh, high-quality foods that are much more familiar with customer's. This leads to growing competition with fast-food restaurants.
- 17.** 1 2 3 4 5 **Store Image:** *It's about attracting a larger demographic!*
As the convenience store industry continues to evolve, one area that is demanding greater attention is brand image. Brand image is a hot topic for even the smallest of convenience store chains. Successful stores are creating eye-catching graphics and impressive branded and proprietary foodservice programs. Foodservice is behind the need for attention. The newer stores present a refined retail experience attractive to broader customer demographics, and they help to build the perception of a quality provider of fresh food on the go.
- 18.** 1 2 3 4 5 **Special Services:** *What are the "extras" your store will provide?*
Anything extra you offer that differentiates you from your competitor will get more customers through your door, and most likely once there, they'll pick up some additional products or use your branded services.
- 19.** 1 2 3 4 5 **Storefront:** *Is it clean, attractive, and appealing?*
This is your first handshake with a customer and the first impression you have to get them from the pump to the store. Outdated signage, dirty forecourts and fuel dispensers, unkept parking areas are just a few items your customers are rating and evaluating your business. Rarely are there second chances. This is an opportunity to creating an inviting atmosphere and appeal to your customers' experience.
- 20.** 1 2 3 4 5 **Windows:** *Are your windows cluttered with signage, equipment blocking or just plain dirty?*
Signage can be a visual overload and much of it goes ignored when cluttered with other advertisements. Even having equipment in front of a window can be a safety issue and unattractive visual for your customers. Make sure to have windows that are uncluttered, unobstructed, and clean. Make sure windows are well lit and open for customers to see inside, as well out see outside, for better customer service.
- 21.** 1 2 3 4 5 **Cash/Wrap:** *Is your counter space disorganized and free of clutter?*
This is considered the customers' last real impression of your store when they come to your counter to purchase items. Don't assume by jamming up a constant barrage of products and promotional items will impress your customer or engage in a purchase. Be mindful of open shelving, be neat and representative of your store's dedication to service and organization.

- 22.** 1 2 3 4 5 **Behind the Counter:** *Are you and your staff being proactive, professional, and courteous?*
Do your employees represent you as an owner and as a brand? Friendly, personable, presentable, and helpful should be the adjectives used to describe your staff members. Are they engaged with communicating to your customers or sit behind the counter listening to music, playing on their phones, or viewing the store TV? It's important you put on a show for the customers. Actors always look their best on screen and the convenience store is your theater.
- 23.** 1 2 3 4 5 **Fuel/Service Islands:** *Are your fuel dispensers, garbage area and concrete full of food and hydrocarbon stains?*
We talked about first impressions and your first handshake to your customers but this is by far the very first thing a customer sees and the first initial rating on how they view your store. Cleanliness is by far the most important aspect
- 24.** 1 2 3 4 5 **Landscaping/Plants:** *Does your store have curb appeal?*
Make sure if you have a landscape or potted plants near the entrance of your store to make sure they are trimmed, watered and visually appealing. Many customers are invited by the organic character plants and flowers present in a convenience store environment.