



POS toolkit



POS Toolkit

Choose the best POS for you!

10 Things to Consider

Retailers have enough on their plate with customers, staff, general day to day store duties, dealing with suppliers, purchasing and receiving...the list goes on and on. It would be great if you could simplify some of these tasks so that you can spend more time on what is important- **growing your business!**

Do you know your number one performing vendor, or your top 50 selling items? Who are your most reliable suppliers? What are your top 5-10 selling classes by GMROI (Gross Margin Return On Investment)? What about your most popular selling sizes by vendor, and best margin items?

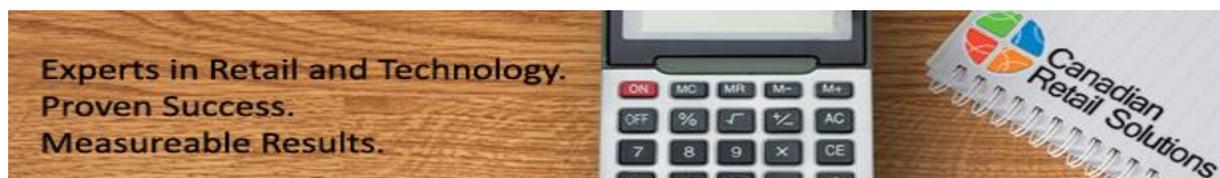
Have you ever thought about starting a customer database and keeping track of your best customers? What about implementing a loyalty program to have greater shopping frequency and higher tickets? Have you been intending to start a custom tailored direct mailing campaign to **your clients**?

If only there was a simple way to get at this type of information! A basic POS program can make answering these questions (and many others) easy. POS should stand for Point of Sale, not something else! A good POS should also:

- provide you with the reports you need to plan for your growing business
- eliminate the time you spend sorting through the racks trying to figure out what is selling
- help you know what needs to be reordered and how items are performing.
- automate your physical inventory process allowing you to spend more time working **on** your business rather than **in** your business
- generate reports at the touch of a button instead of having to leaf through your filing cabinet, take manual stock counts or worse yet...guess?!

These are all things that a **GREAT** point of sale program can bring to your business! The challenge is this – there are THOUSANDS of point of sale programs available out there...so how do you choose and choose smart?

This guide will give you a starting point by highlighting some of the major concerns that retailers should have when deciding on their point of sale program and tips to help you avoid problems!



1 Choose based on FUNCTIONALITY, not just price

Ever heard the adage - “you get what you pay for”? Well it is very true in the area of point of sale solutions. Although price will be a factor, as you will have to work within the confines of your budget, it should not be the primary deciding factor. The most important factor that you should be considering is **FUNCTIONALITY!**

Does the system you are evaluating have the functions that you will require for your day to day processes today? How flexible is the system to adapt to your business? Will this system grow with you as your needs become more demanding? Is the system easy to use?

Your Point of Sale system is a very powerful tool in your business that should not be looked upon as solely an expense – it is a tool to help you in your business. Make sure that it has all the features and functions to help you take your business to the next level!

2 Do your RESEARCH

A common example: Retailer A is not sure what they need in a point of sale system. Retailer A goes to their neighbour's to see what they are using. Retailer A decides on the same system.

Talking to other retailers about the system they are using is a great place to start BUT every retailer runs their store differently. What functionality is great for one store may not be the right solution for another – even if they sell exactly the same products.

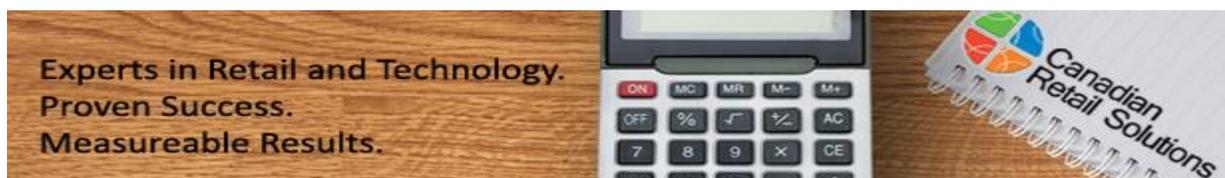
It is really important that you use the resources available to you while you are researching your point of sale program. Remember your point of sale program will become one of your most powerful tools to take your business to the next level. You will be making a substantial investment and you really want to ensure that you will get a strong return on that investment.

Your neighbours can be a great resource to let you in on the inside scoop on the POS and the company supplying it. Just avoid letting them do the research for you!

Start googling, talk to retail consultants, talk to different retail associations – they will often have resources for you.

3 Research the COMPANY that is supplying the POS

It is important that you investigate the POS itself, but it is almost *more* important to investigate the company that is supplying you the program. Remember you are entering into a PARTNERSHIP with this company. You will be reliant on them to ensure that your system is kept up to date and especially reliant on them for technical support! Find out:



- How long have they been in business?
- Do they have the resources to maintain your system and keep things up to date?
- How does their support structure work – retail is a 7 day a week business – do they offer technical support on weekends? Holidays? Evenings?
- If something were to happen to your POS provider – how would you receive POS support?
- Who are their clients? Can you talk to some of them as references?
- Are they focused specifically on retail or just a technology or accounting company?

4 Get involved in the PROCESS

Not everyone is computer savvy. It's easy to rely on the knowledge of others in this area. That is one of the main reasons why many retailers will put the point of sale solution search into the hands of an employee, accountant or friend and simply trust their judgment. This *can* be a big mistake. This is not to say that their input is not important, it just means that you should not relinquish the process completely to them.

No other person knows your business better than you. You are the one with the vision of where you would like your business to go. Your choice in POS can play a big role in giving you the tools to get there. Enlist the help of others that you trust **but** make sure you are still involved in the process every step of the way!

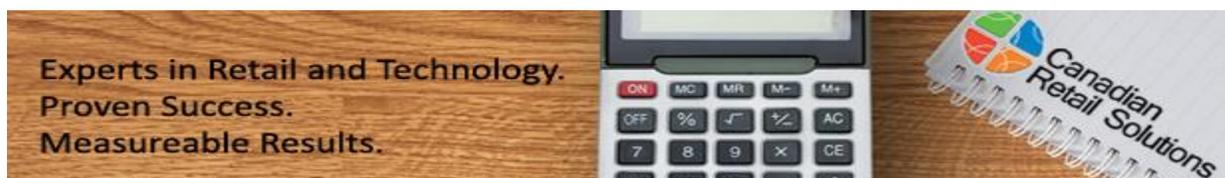
5 Speak to existing USERS of the POS solution you are evaluating

Everything is great in theory or looks fantastic in a demo – but how does the program perform in a live environment?

The sales representative of the POS you are evaluating should be able to provide you with some references of similar retailers who are using the product. Contact or visit them.

Prepare a list of question for these referrals so that you can really see how they feel about the program in action.

- How do they like the system?
- How easy is the POS company to work with?
- How is their technical support?
- What is their response time?
- What do they like most about the system?
- What do they like least about the system?
- Would they recommend this system? Why or why not?



Another retailer can give you the inside scoop on the program and the company that you cannot get anywhere else! Use it.

6 Get a DEMO from the sales representative

Anything can be made to look good in marketing material and a verbal description of functions can only go so far. How does the system feel? What is the workflow like? Will the system be easy to use? Does it have a nice interface? Most importantly – WILL IT DO THE FUNCTIONS THAT YOU NEED FOR YOUR BUSINESS? IS IT ADAPTABLE TO THE WAY YOU WANT YOUR STORE(S) TO RUN?

The only way to truly see how the system will work in your environment is to see it in action! Ask the sales representative questions about how the system will handle special functions that are required for your store. Walk through all the different areas of the program so that you can see the workflow. This will eliminate any surprises during your installation.

7 Allow for enough TIME to go through the process

Quite often retailers will leave researching and selecting their POS to the last minute – not realizing the amount of time that is necessary to go through the process.

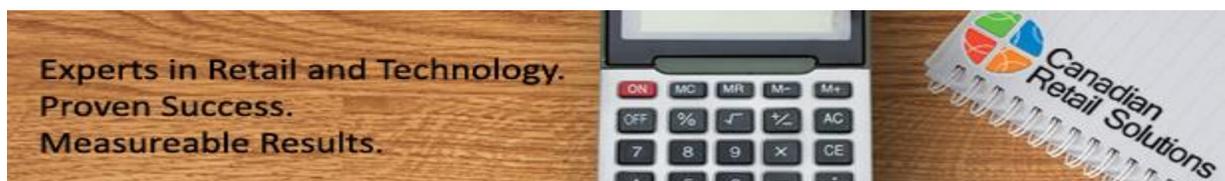
Researching the different POS options out there (there are hundreds, maybe thousands), getting demonstrations and narrowing down your choices takes time. Another thing that retailers tend to forget is that once a decision is made there are many things that need to happen before your installation can occur. Hardware and software will have to be ordered and delivered and your installation will have to fit into the company's tech schedule. This can sometimes mean lead times of four weeks or more depending on the time of year.

Also, remember if you are opening a new store you will have to input all of your new inventory and price all your items before you can open your doors.

Every step of the process takes time – allow yourself a minimum of four months from the beginning of your research until the dates you are hoping for an installation. This will streamline the process and help to remove some of the stress.

8 Do NOT buy HARDWARE first

A common mistake that a retailer makes is to purchase hardware (computers, printers, scanners, etc.) **BEFORE** they decide on the POS program itself. This can really cause difficulties by limiting the options that will work with that hardware. It can also cost you more in the long run if you have to upgrade or replace hardware to fit the POS you chose.



Every POS will have a set of hardware requirements that will ensure that it runs at its optimum level. This is also true for the peripherals (cash drawers, receipt printers, scanners and label printers etc). They are not all created equal!

Also many point of sale companies will offer a total package solution which includes all the necessary hardware you would require. This is the ultimate solution as it will save you time trying to source out the different components and you'll have only one phone number to call for any situation!

9 Get enough TRAINING

Some retailers decide that a good way to save money is to attempt to teach themselves how to use and set up their new POS. This is the biggest, most tragic mistake! Your new POS is not as simple as an out of the box piece of software. There is much more involved in the setup to make it meet your unique store policies and procedures. There are many shortcuts or workflows that may not be found in the manual. What is your time worth? Trying to learn from the manual could take you hundreds of hours – hours that you do not have!

POS technicians and trainers should be certified and experienced in the program. This means that they can custom tailor their training and your POS to meet the needs of your store!

Another common mistake for most retailers is that they do not get **ENOUGH** training. They received the initial training session and they leave it at that! You will never get your return on investment this way. What a shame! How can you learn every single function available in the program in your first session? Generally, you will only be shown the basics in order to get you up and running. There will still be a world of additional features to learn that will simplify your processes. This includes learning the reports feature using your very own data.

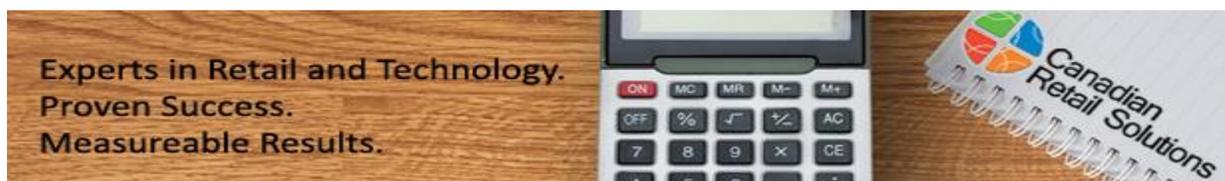
TRAINING SHOULD BE A CONSTANT! Your business will always be growing and evolving. You will need to have follow-up training to allow your POS to grow and evolve with you.

NEVER. STOP. LEARNING.

10 Plan for the FUTURE of your business

When you are evaluating POS solutions it is important to think about the future. Do you have plans for expansion? Are you thinking about adding a web store at some point in time?

The functionality you are looking for right now may seem pretty basic but you should always think about the future – what will you need then? Once you get more comfortable with the system your view on what functions are vital to your business will evolve – will the system you are looking at grow with you?



This is also true for the company supplying you with your point of sale solution – what are their future plans? What are the future plans for the development of the POS software?

Think about what features are available to meet your needs now but also what features are available to you in the future.

How do I choose wisely? Here are some tips on what TO DO for a successful POS solution search.

- **DO Start your research EARLY & take your time**
Use the tools available to you: Google, ask other retailers, go through trade magazines, ask retail consultants, retail associations
- **DO Start gathering information on the POS systems that you are interested in.**
Go to their websites, call them directly, request information, request a personalized demo, talk to their users and learn about the company.
- **DO Create a list of functions and must haves for your store.**
What are the possible transaction types, customer functions, back office functions that you do on a daily basis?

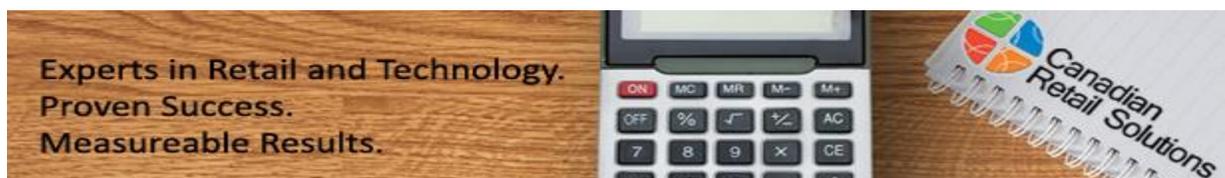
We made this nice and easy for you with the special BONUS in the POS toolkit – we have created a spreadsheet of common functions that you can use to help identify and narrow down which ones are required for your business to help you in your search!

- **DO Prepare for demos of the POS systems you are evaluating.**
Prepare a list of standard questions to ask each sales representative and take your spreadsheet of requirements. Ask them to show you how they would process some of the specialty functions that are unique to your store. Go through your spreadsheet and check items off as they demo them to you.
- **DO narrow down your list of POS vendors to 2-3 and further investigate these vendors.**
Call their existing users, discuss their technical support structure. Ask about their installation and training methods. Evaluate the company and the developers of the point of sale program – are they financially stable? Who are their clients and how many of them are there? How much do they really know about retail? What other services do they offer – do they offer Open to Buy merchandising consultation services?
- **DO make an informed decision.**

Give yourself time to make an informed decision and prepare for your installation!

START YOUR POINT OF SALE SOLUTION SEARCH NOW!

What are you waiting for?



For a Free Consultation and Retail Audit Contact Canadian Retail Solutions

Email: sales@retailbycrs.com

Phone: 800.725.6810

Website: retailbycrs.com

Canadian Retail Solutions helps retailers navigate the fast-paced world of retail.

We make it easy for you to decide which POS and related technologies are best for your business. Our team of certified consultants and technicians will:

Complete a Needs Analysis

Identify essential functions for both immediate success and future growth of your business

Determine the Best Software

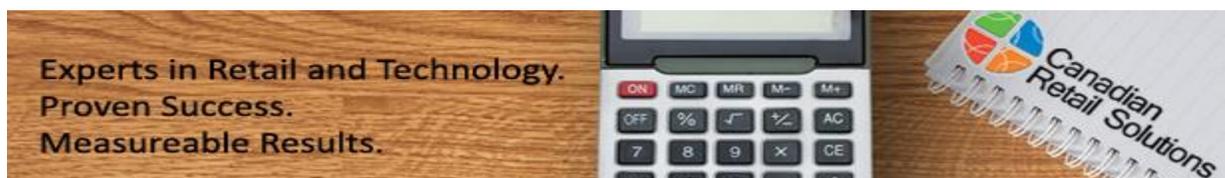
Reliable and practical technology to run your business more efficiently

Provide Customized Implementation, Training & Ongoing Support

Personal assistance and training from our IT and retail experts

Provide Additional Services

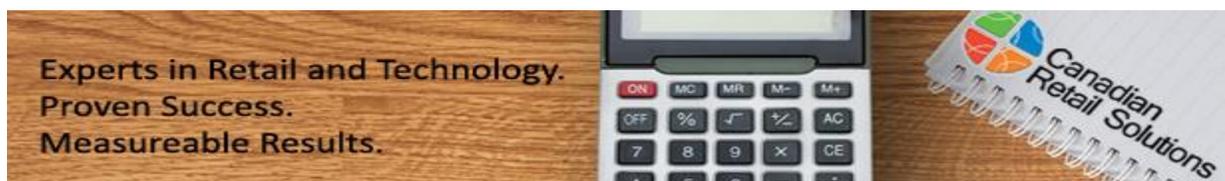
Merchandise Open to Buy Planning and Consulting Services that extract the data from your POS to increase cash flow and profit



BONUS | Software Needs Analysis Guide

In order to help organize your POS search you must first decide what functions are important to you. Use the Software Needs Analysis Audit tool that lists the most common POS features. Decide which of these features are **NEEDS** (absolute requirements), which features are **WANTS** (love to have but not a deal-breaker) and which are not required for your business. Once complete you can use it as a tool to help you evaluate the different POS systems out there. Good Luck!

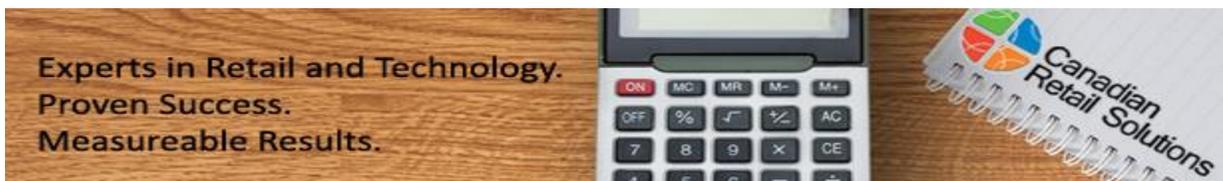
POS Functionality				
	Required	Like to have	Not Required	Comments / Questions
Will point of sale require touch screen functionality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Will a built in customization tool be required to design content & layout of any screen?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Will the ability to change names of fields, headings on screens and reports be necessary to personalize the system to meet business needs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are direct (integrated) debit/credit card links required?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Will mobile POS be required (line busting)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
PLU# or SKU# Lookup functionality required?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Need to allow for detailed product descriptions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is inter-store inventory lookup required?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Will quick item searches or look up be required at POS?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Will transactions require hold functionality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Will receipts or invoices be created?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Will emailed receipts be required?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Will returns and exchanges be required?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Will access to the original receipt for verification be required for returns?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you need to create and track layaways?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you need to create and track special orders? (product that is not part of inventory)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	



Do you need to track a store gift registry?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Tracking Store Credit?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Will non-inventory and service be sold?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are multiple currencies accepted?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Will personalized messages be required on receipts?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Will Package and Kit pricing be required?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Tracking inter store gift certificates?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Will predefined discounts, such as employee or wholesale discounts be required?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Will salesperson/Operator tracking be required?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Will multiple sales associate tracking be required on the same receipt?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Will multiple sales associate tracking be required by line item?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Will an employee defined commission structure be required?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Will Time Clock employee tracking be required?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Will Z-total details be required?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Receipt History lookup required?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
View customer purchase history and profile?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Will a practice mode be required to train staff?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Report on Voided receipts and cash draw opening?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Back Office/Administration Functionality

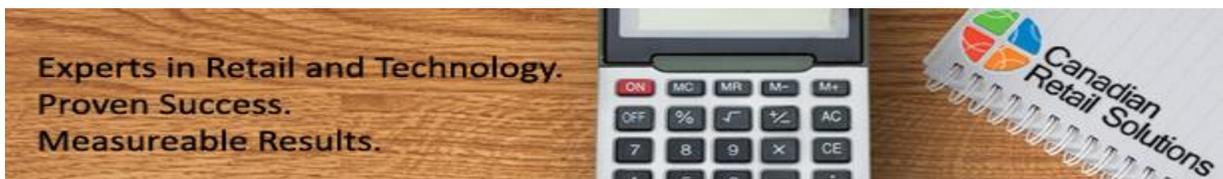
	Required	Like to have	Not Required	Comments / Questions
Is multi-store tracking required?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is promotional price management required?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are price changes and updates required for existing product?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is the ability to plan a markdown required?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is managed database or auto back up required?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	



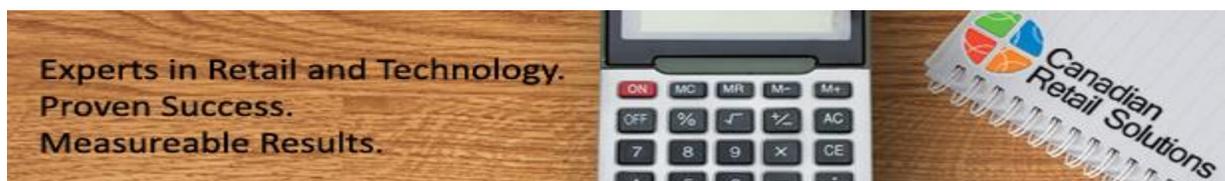
Do employees require secured access levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are searches required by Vendor, Style, Size and Colour?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are detailed item descriptions required?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is UPC/PLU/SKU support required?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is Suggested Merchandise Replenishment based on Maximum and Minimum levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Does your company have a department and category structure for inventory?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are Data collector uploads used/required?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is inventory pre-distribution required?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Will inter-store transfers be required?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you require low stock alerts and auto PO generation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Inventory Management

	Required	Like to have	Not Required	Comments / Questions
Require user-defined fields to record miscellaneous information such as season code, collection etc?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Require the ability to assign a substitute item to each item that will be suggested at POS when the item is out of stock?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Require an alternative look up field?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Require item messages that appear at POS?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Require the ability to create and view matrix items in a grid format or style grid?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Will item images be required for item-verification at POS?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Require user-designable barcoded price tags?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Ability to link items with online shopping cart?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Require an audit trail be required to track changes made to inventory quantities, price or cost?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Easy to use physical inventory module including the ability to upload scans from a portable scanning device?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	



Purchase Orders/Receiving				
	Required	Like to have	Not Required	Comments / Questions
Require "user-designed" PO and Receiving screens?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Require the ability to create new items, departments or vendors on the fly in a PO or receiving document?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Require the ability to receive items that are variations to the original PO?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Require the ability to manage partial shipments against a PO?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Require the ability to automatically update PO due status when receiving merchandise?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Ability to specify order date, delivery date and cancellation date?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Require the ability to maintain MIN/MAX stock levels for core merchandise?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Require the ability to automatically generate proposed PO's based on MIN/MAX levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Require the ability to quickly generate barcode price tags for received items?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Customer Management				
	Required	Like to have	Not Required	Comments / Questions
Require the ability to view detailed customer history?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Require the ability to generate a customer report or print mailing labels based on sales history or sales volume for any time period?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Require the ability to generate reports or print mailing labels, email blasts based on certain specific customer criteria (ie: purchase volume, purchase of a given item, supplier, size, colour, style etc)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Require the ability to view customer information (name, address, phone etc) on POS screen?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Require special discount percentages to be assigned to individual customers?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	



Management Reporting				
	Required	Like to have	Not Required	Comments / Questions
Require Merchandise Sales and Profit reports?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Require Dept/Category Sales and Profit reports?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Require style ranking reports?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Require vendor performance reports?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Require store performance reports?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Require salesperson performance reports?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Require ability to see KPI's on reports (GMROI, Turn, Stock to Sales)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Require commission reports?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Report on receiving shortages and overages?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Require layaway payment tracking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Require packing and shipping reports?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Require custom designed reports?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Require the ability to export into Excel or PDF?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Require the ability to schedule reports to print at a given date/time?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Open To Buy				
	Required	Like to have	Not Required	Comments / Questions
Ability to extract Data to use with CRS Merchandise OTB consulting services?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Require Specialty reports for class performance, PO's and vendor performance to plan better?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

