

How to Gain Critical Insights with Onsite Surveys

Your Ultimate Guide to Cost Savings,
Staying Compliant and Winning at Retail

AccuStore[®]

To remain competitive in today's always-evolving retail landscape, a comprehensive survey of your stores is critical to your success. You must understand how each of your store locations differ to create winning strategies.

From square footage, number of windows and architectural details to keeping track of new fixtures such as sneeze guards or hand washing stations, every store varies from other stores.

Gaining that store-specific knowledge starts with an onsite survey – also known as an equipment survey, store asset survey or store fixtures survey.

This guide offers **detailed info and examples** on how surveys can help you:

- **Improve operational efficiencies**
- **Reduce expenses**
- **Manage brand compliance**
- **Prevent wasteful spending on point of purchase (POP)**

Let's get started.

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CHAPTER ONE

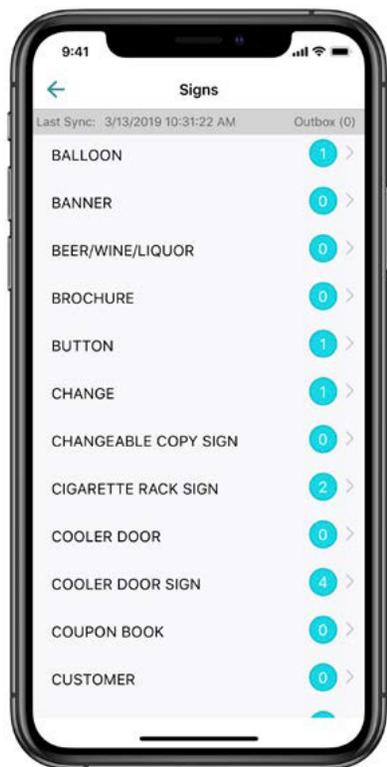
What Are Store Surveys and Why Do Retailers Need Them?

What Are Store Surveys and Why Do Retailers Need Them?

Keeping your stores' information current is the key to building an accurate database your employees can rely on as well as a smart way to stay competitive.

Store surveys bridge the gap between what you think is happening and what's actually happening. It's the site-specific info needed to grow your business. For example, knowing the exact size and number of front windows in all your stores makes it easy to order the correct amount of POP needed. Surveys provide you with critical details such as how many linear feet of seasonal merchandise each store has or that each location has fully functioning safety equipment.

For example, if you're a convenience store retailer, maybe you've recently added a counter for pickup and delivery. If you're a grocery store or QSR retailer, maybe you're considering installing additional handwashing stations in



your larger locations. If you're a fashion retailer, maybe you're expanding your buy online, pick up in-store area or reconfiguring your dressing rooms.

Gathering all that information seems challenging, but it doesn't have to be. An onsite store survey is a good place to start collecting the data needed about each location.

Each Store Differs

Every location's square footage, architecture, layout, fixtures, number of terminals, safety equipment, even the number of parking spots could differ from store to store. This data will all be documented during each survey.

Store Surveys Should Be Customized

Before you begin, expert surveyors will meet with company stakeholders to determine your business needs and refine all survey terminology. Keep in mind, this isn't a one-size-fits-all solution. For example, a footwear or shoe store and mobile phone retailer have different fixtures and display features. With that in mind, your survey questions can and should be customized to align with your stores.

Surveys capture store-level details and help you:

- Reduce capital expenditures
- Minimize indirect spend
- Track and improve maintenance scheduling
- Facilitate compliance and safety audits



CASE STUDY:

Professional Surveys Leads to Accurate Site Profiles for U.S. Cellular

U.S. Cellular wanted to eliminate guesswork and determine the investment needed to plan capital improvements. By using expert retail survey methodology, the retailer obtained an organized, sharable set of site intelligence data that empowers marketing, facilities and operations to improve execution and eliminate delays caused by inaccuracies.

Read Full Case Study (ow.ly/DE4a50CIY9H)

Details Must Be Documented

Every fixture, window, door, and piece of equipment in each store is counted and an inspection documenting the condition of each item will be done to help you know what should or shouldn't be replaced or repaired. An experienced professional surveyor who fully understands the retail industry will note every detail.

Store Surveys Become Sharable Data

Using their expert methodology, the survey team will take photos while conducting surveys to ensure complete visibility. Once the survey is completed, you and your teams gain access to an organized, sharable set of accurate site intelligence. This store data can be used by all departments to make more informed decisions and improve execution.

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What Are Store Surveys and Why Do Retailers Need Them?



CHAPTER TWO

Why Store Surveys Are a Win for Retailers

Why Store Surveys Are a Win for Retailers

You may be wondering, “If I commit to store surveys, what’s in it for me?” A survey can benefit your retail business in a variety of ways. From driving brand compliance and cost savings to enhancing the overall customer experience.

Better Understand Your Stores

Surveying your stores provides you with reliable insight about every location. Though you may think you know what’s going on in your stores, Corporate and store managers view things differently and may even rely on different methods. A survey allows you to compile a detailed repository of site-specific information that becomes your company’s single source of knowledge giving you the insight needed to know your stores from top to bottom.

Drive Brand Compliance

A store survey yields an accurate set of site data, such as measurements and photos to maximize operational effectiveness, eliminate overspend, and empower your marketing. High turnover, competing demands on employees’ time, and endemic inconsistencies among stores can allow POP compliance to fall by the wayside. Onsite store surveys help retailers reverse that trend. Survey teams identify gaps in POP compliance and empower you to follow established standards. Resulting in high sales, happier customers, and endless accolades from corporate.

Create Your Single Source of Truth

A site intelligence platform provides a single source of truth or centralized location to house and manage the survey data giving retailers a complete view inside every store and accurate, system-generated reports – an effective replacement to Excel spreadsheets and clogged inboxes. A mobile app allows easy on-the-go access, as well as a faster and more efficient way to conduct store walks and to update site profiles so store data is always accurate.



CASE STUDY:

Sports Retailer Makes Faster Merchandising Changes

A 220-store sporting goods retailer was relying on dated information to make merchandising and marketing decisions – rolling out new strategies took months. Onsite surveys of all their stores optimized space planning, product allocation, brand execution, and eliminated overages.

Read Full Case Study (ow.ly/6cSM50CIYaH)



Reduce Capital Expense

Store surveyors will help you better understand inventory capacity and fixture counts in every store. Keeping track of your stores' air conditioning, lighting, refrigeration, registers and more can be complex, stressful, and time-consuming. With store surveys, you can easily monitor warranties, equipment age and maintenance records for all your stores. Know when your inventory is ready to retire before it's too late by managing warranty details via one safe, secure and shareable platform. Quickly find items that have been recalled for safety or warranty issues.

Reallocate Inventory

An onsite survey of your store offers you the ability to reallocate inventory. Evidence-based inventory reallocation can help you avoid missed sales opportunities as well as:

- Identify available shelf space capacity to avoid overstocked and understocked products
- Pinpoint opportunities to shift inventory among locations based on store types, local competition
- Rebalance existing inventory to avoid overbuying
- Rethink visual merchandising practices to move products from shelves based on store planning analysis driven by visibility into floorplan capacity

CHAPTER THREE

How to Prepare for Your Onsite Surveys

ASK YOUR SURVEYORS:

Q: HOW MUCH TIME DOES EACH SURVEY TYPICALLY TAKE?

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Q: WILL IT INTERRUPT MY BUSINESS? IF SO, HOW?

.....

Q: WHAT TYPE OF COMMUNICATION NEEDS TO TAKE PLACE WITHIN OUR ORGANIZATION?

.....

Q: HOW DO WE DECIDE WHAT NEEDS TO BE SURVEYED?

.....

Q: DO WE SURVEY ALL STORES OR JUST SOME STORES - HOW DO WE DECIDE WHICH ONES TO SURVEY?

.....

Q: DO WE NEED TO PROVIDE SURVEYORS WITH A PROJECT TEAM?

.....

Q: ONCE WE RECEIVE THE SURVEY INFORMATION, HOW DO WE TRACK OR MANAGE IT?

Now that you understand the benefits of onsite surveys, you may be wondering how to prepare for surveys of your stores. When you're ready to begin the survey process, it's best to collect information from all business stakeholders. You can always focus on more critical business needs once the full scope is confirmed.

4 QUICK TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL ONSITE SURVEYS RESULTS

Making the decision to survey your stores is the first step to gaining the knowledge needed to grow your business. By surveying your stores you're able to gather and track important details associated with each of your store locations. However, every big initiative has the potential for roadblocks. Here are some tips to guide you through the process.

1. Select Surveyors With Retail Experience

Like most retailers, you're busy managing your stores, you most likely don't have the staff or bandwidth to tackle store surveying on your own. Relying on outside or third-party survey vendors may not be the best option. Sure, they may be skilled at surveying banks, hospitals, and apartment buildings, but many aren't "retail ready." When selecting a professional surveyor, it's smart to work with surveyors who specialize in retail. Retail-ready surveyors understand the nuances, different fixtures, and specific needs retailers face. They know what to look for and can provide that eye for retail detail.

2. Provide Detailed Store Information

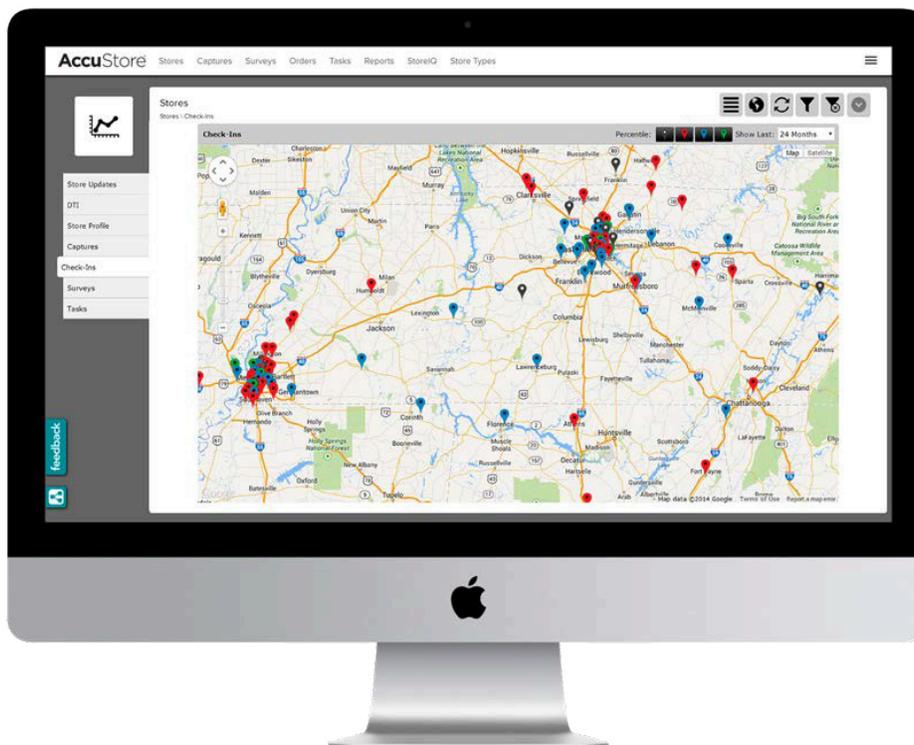
Surveyors will need a list of all the stores you're looking to survey. To avoid potential errors, be sure this list is current, complete and includes each store's full street address, store number, operating hours, and contact names and phone numbers. Make sure your surveyors know which stores they're visiting. Review store lists several times to make sure it's complete and that those are the exact stores you need surveyed.

3. Communicate Your Needs Prior to Project Kickoff

Communication is the key to any successful project. To ensure your surveys are turned around on time and within your budget, be sure to communicate everything you're looking for prior to project kickoff. Your surveyors will need an initial list of data points (survey questions) you want captured. To help you prepare, your surveyor can provide you with an example of a sample survey. However, to stay within your time frame and pricing, it's critical that you do not change the data points once the project begins. If data points are changed and stores have already been surveyed, surveyors will need to return to those completed locations. This will create additional costs and timing to your survey plans.

4. Consider Incorporating Store Intelligence Technology

If investing in surveying your stores, you'll need a way to safely house, manage and keep your data current. Once your onsite surveys are complete, you're likely to make changes to your stores over time. For example, if you decide to create additional parking spots or replace the HVAC units in several of your locations, it's important to track those changes. Incorporating a store intelligence platform/single source of truth with mobile functionality will allow your teams the convenience of updating and sharing your stores' data even on the go.



Data Point Cheat Sheet

Whether surveying a store or quick service restaurant (QSR), surveyors will need to take photos and video of all exterior and interior areas of the property. All onsite surveys can be customized with questions before they begin. Here is a simplified checklist a surveyor typically uses in a 60-90-minute survey of a fuel station with a convenience store. Keep in mind, these are very basic data points. An actual survey is much more detailed and would include:

- Counts
- Precise measurements
- Equipment details, make and model
- Photos of all data points

Example of Survey Data Points for Fuel Station With Convenience Store



EXTERIOR LOT

- Marquee or Permanent Exterior Sign
- Fuel Pump Areas:
 - Gas Canopy
 - Gas pumps
 - Pumps Bollards
 - Pump Toppers



BUILDING & SIDEWALK

- Building Bollards
- Building Bollard Crash Hoops
- Spanner Snap Frames
- Ice Merchandiser Exterior Store Window & Entrance
- All Building Windows
- All Customer Entrances/Exits



INTERIOR OVERVIEW

- Store Interior Image Overview
- Checkout Area
- Register Area
- Registers



FOODSERVICE AREA

- Counters
- Food Warmer(s)
- Roller Grills
- Microwave(s)
- Cold Sandwich Deli Case(s)
- Indoor Seating Area
- Bakery Case(s)



COFFEE BEVERAGE

- Coffee Area
- Bean-to-Cup Machine
- Coffee Drip Brewers-Single/Double
- Coffee Warmers-Single/Double
- Coffee Urns & Glass Pots
- Cappuccino Machine
- Creamer Machines
- Iced Coffee Machines
- Coffee Cup/Lid Dispensers
- Iced Coffee Cup/Lid Dispensers



FOUNTAIN & FROZEN BEVERAGE

- Fountain Machines
- Fountain Machine Shroud
- Frozen Beverages
- Fresh Brewed Iced Tea Urns
- Cold Beverage Cup/Lid Dispensers
- Frozen Beverage Cup/Lid Dispensers
- Trash Receptacles - Fountain Area



BUILT-IN COOLER & FREEZER DOORS

- Cooler Built-In Area
- Cooler Doors Built-In
- Frozen Doors Built-In
- Beer Cave
- Cooler Built-In Entrance Door
- Novelty Ice Cream Case
- Countertop Standing Coolers
- Free Standing Coolers/Freezers
- Ice Merchandisers Interior Double/Single Door

CHAPTER FOUR

Frequently Asked Questions



CASE STUDY:

Walgreen Reduces Marketing Costs By 20%

When Walgreens marketing department could no longer trust the accuracy of its data to make good ordering decisions for its 8K+ stores, they resorted to sending out generic store signage kits – up to 50% of what they printed was being thrown out. Thanks to better store profile data, the retailer was able to reduce its marketing costs by 20%.

Read Full Case Study (ow.ly/Z5Ky50CIYba)



Costs, timing, and ROI are the primary concerns that come to mind before kicking off a significant project. Here are some answers to important survey project questions to help get you started.

What are the costs involved in surveying stores? Pricing depends upon the complexity of the survey. For example, how many data points will be collected at each site? What's the distance between each store? Does your staff need a high level of post-survey support? Surveyors will work with you on pricing.

How long does it take to complete a store survey? Surveys can range between several hours to one or two days based on the amount of data that needs to be captured.

How will store surveys benefit my ROI? The data and insights gathered through store surveys is priceless. It's one of the easiest ways to reduce indirect costs and eliminate overspending and printing of your marketing materials. By knowing each store's exact number of fixtures, windows, and display specifications, you can make sure each store receives the correct amount of POP, without having to dispose of excess promotional graphics, materials, or signage. Additionally, you can easily streamline your communications by creating a centralized cloud-based single source of data.

Can surveys help save me money on my retail marketing costs? Bringing together your marketing staff, creative department, category managers and other stakeholders. Businesses using cloud-based collaboration and computing can increase productivity by nearly 400%. Additionally, creating a database of store details allows retailers to eliminate overage. Knowing the details of every store, they can customize their signage and POP by store. For example, not all stores have 10 windows, not all stores have the same signage hardware, etc.

CHAPTER FIVE

About AccuStore

AccuStore, a GSP Company, is the result of 40+ years of retail industry experience and serves over 80K retail locations including fashion, convenience, grocery, and pharmacy. We offer a variety of services that empower retailers through onsite surveys of their stores, in-store marketing, and retail execution. Our goal is to help you make smarter, data-driven decisions, reduce your marketing and indirect spending, and grow your business.

OUR SERVICES

Onsite Surveys - We provide you with consistent and accurate store survey data you can depend on to drive your most important customer-facing decisions. As your professional onsite surveyors, we deliver the precise, detailed information you need to succeed.

Site Profiles - AccuStore site profile management houses your surveyed data and provides you with a detailed repository of site-specific information that becomes your company's single source of truth. Site profiles make it easy for retailers to set up formulas for site-specific, cost-effective POP campaign kits and enables marketing to print exactly what's needed by store size and location - saving time, costs and unnecessary waste.

Retail Execution - Maximize the data derived from store surveys by combining it with AccuStore's store intelligence technology to optimize planning and enable flawless, store-specific retail execution. Effectively drive execution of your retail strategy with our services and tools that enable you to roll out campaigns faster—and improve in-store accuracy, operational compliance, and retail performance.

THE ACCUSTORE ADVANTAGE

AccuStore makes it easy for retailers to survey their stores.

One Point of Contact - Work with one AccuStore Project Manager who handles your entire survey project from start to finish

Try Before You Buy - Each survey includes complimentary access to a 90-day trial of AccuStore's Store Profile Management system and training

Retail Specialist - Our teams are trained specifically in surveying retail structures and understand the demands and needs of today's retailers

Get Started With Onsite Surveys Gain the site-specific insight needed to reduce costs, drive brand compliance, and accelerate your growth. Contact us today to learn how to set up onsite surveys for your stores.

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