

10

TIPS FOR

EXCEPTIONAL WAITING LINES



ARE YOUR CUSTOMERS HAPPILY WAITING?

There's nothing your customers would rather be doing than NOT standing around waiting.

According to some estimates, Americans spend roughly 912 days waiting in line over the course of a lifetime. But that's not the worst news. Rather, it's the feelings of stress, boredom, and frustration that make waiting in line a real drag.

It takes time to serve a customer and without having people in line most businesses would be out of business, so those waiting lines aren't going away anytime soon. But we sure can make them shorter, more productive, and more enjoyable.



In this guide we highlight 10 tips for a more enjoyable, productive, and all-around exceptional waiting line experience. One that will have your customers happily waiting their turn to do business with you.

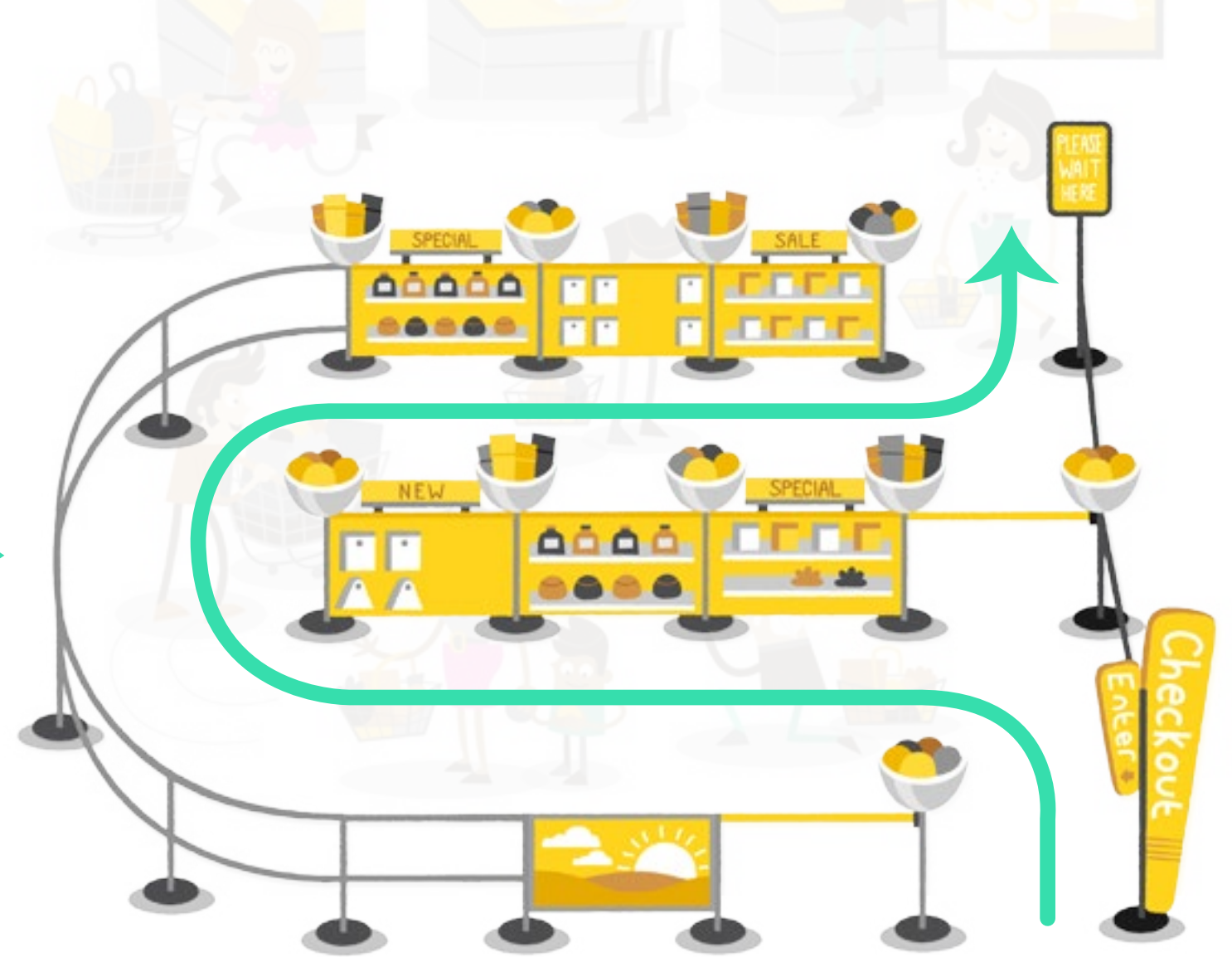
1 MAKE IT A SINGLE LINE

Experts will tell you that probably the single biggest factor driving a customer's waiting line experience is how they perceive the fairness of the line.

A single line queue cuts the time spent in the checkout process, including reducing the time your customers spend waiting. **First-come, first-served is the universal line of fairness.** Stray from this approach and you better be sure you have a good explanation.

The best way to instill a sense of fairness in your waiting line system is to go with a single line queue. Plus, a single line queue will improve service efficiency, shorten actual wait times, and lead to greater customer satisfaction.

1



Watch our video, [“Make it a Single”](#) to learn why single lines are faster.

PLAY VIDEO



IT'S FASTER



IT'S LESS STRESSFUL



IT'S MORE ORDERLY



IT'S FAIRER



With multiple line queues you stand a chance of being a big winner. You also stand a chance of being a big loser.

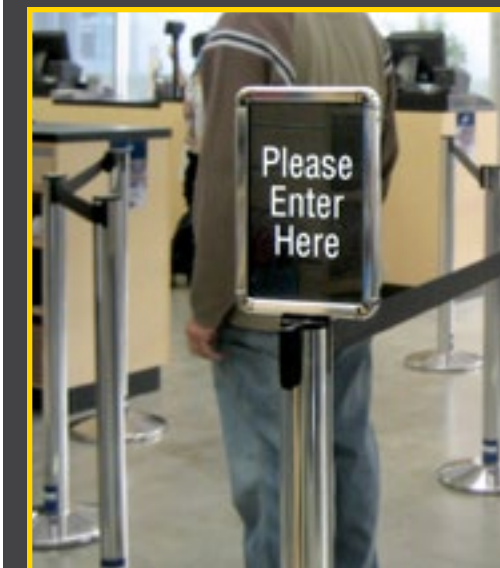


- RICHARD LARSON, QUEUE SCIENCE EXPERT

2 CREATE A CLEAR CLUE TO THE QUEUE

Customers won't get in line in the first place if they don't know where it is. And don't think they're going to hunt it down for long. The most clearly identifiable clue to the queue is the presence of a belted stanchion at the entrance of the line.

A retractable belt stanchion is the universal symbol of "the line starts here." Add to that simple signage and you have an easy-to-see entrance that keeps customers flowing into the queue.



Tip:

Don't assume your customers know what to do. Design your queues with first-time customers in mind.

3 BUILD A WELL-CONSTRUCTED PATH

When positioning stanchions, keep in mind how people will travel through the queue. Make lanes and turns wide enough to handle carts or luggage, and use switchbacks to optimize floor space.

Also consider the type of base you'll use for your stanchions. Traditional and retractable belt posts can be mounted with either removable mounting solutions or permanent mounting solutions. Or you can choose a completely portable base with no mounting requirements.



3

Download our [Stanchion Buyer's Guide](#) for details on choosing the right stanchions and bases for your queue.

[DOWNLOAD GUIDE](#) 



Tip:

Merchandising narrows the lane so be sure to account for racks, displays, tables, etc. when planning the space you'll allocate to your queue.

4 ADD IN-QUEUE MERCHANDISING

In-queue merchandising provides the opportunity to turn otherwise idle space into a profit center for retailers, while also boosting customer satisfaction by reducing perceived wait times. Keeping people 'occupied' with great deals and great merchandise while they wait for the next available cashier is a win-win for retailers and shoppers.

As with all other areas of retail merchandising, in-queue merchandising requires careful planning and consideration.

Visit our [In-Queue Merchandising Spotlight page](#) for tips, products, and resources to plan your approach.

VISIT SITE



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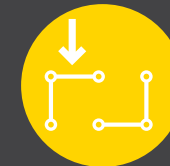


Here are 4 quick tips to get you started:



1. Keep it balanced

Just as having too little merchandise can be a wasted opportunity, overstuffing your queue with merchandise is also ineffective.



2. Maintain the perimeter

Don't neglect the outside of the queue. It can be a highly effective space in your merchandising plan.



3. Start small

Before you overhaul your waiting line, give it a try with something simple, like merchandising bowls.



4. Bring your products to life

Use digital signage to display informational or promotional videos related to the products on display.

5 INCORPORATE DIGITAL SIGNAGE

Adding marketing and promotional messaging into the queue boosts impulse purchasing and keeps customers entertained, reducing perceived wait time and enhancing the overall customer experience.



Digital signage occupies the time of customers waiting in line so that perceived wait times are shorter.

In a Lavi field study, digital signage reduced perceived wait times by 35%.



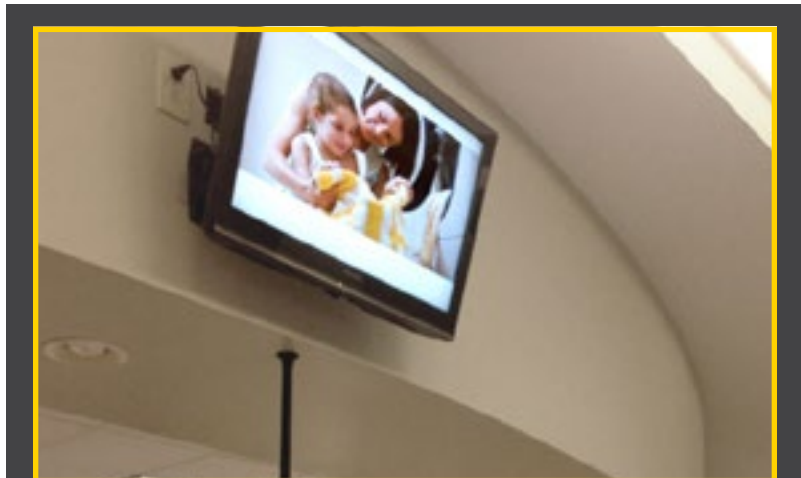
Digital signage informs customers to help manage expectations and better facilitate customer flow.

“Unexplained waits feel longer than explained waits.”

- DAVID MAISTER, PSYCHOLOGY OF QUEUING



Digital signage sells, especially when combined with in-line merchandising.



4 in 5 product brands experienced increases of up to 33% in additional sales through the use of digital signage in the waiting line.

SOURCE:
DIGITALSIGNAGETODAY.COM

6 BRING IN THE SIGNAGE

Framed panels, slat wall headers, post-top signage—there are dozens of ways to keep customers informed by extending signage into the queue.

6



Example:

“Wait Here” signage can offer a clear wait point for service, preventing customers from crowding behind each other and blocking the flow of those completing their transactions.

Here are 3 simple ways to use signage to your advantage:



1. Place signage on entrance posts

Don't underestimate the beauty of logic. A simple “Line Starts Here” post-top sign at the entrance to a queue is a simple yet effective way to maintain customer flow where waiting lines are involved.



2. Place signage at the end of the queue

If you've successfully managed to get people through the queue, don't leave them to their own defenses once they've reached the end of the line.

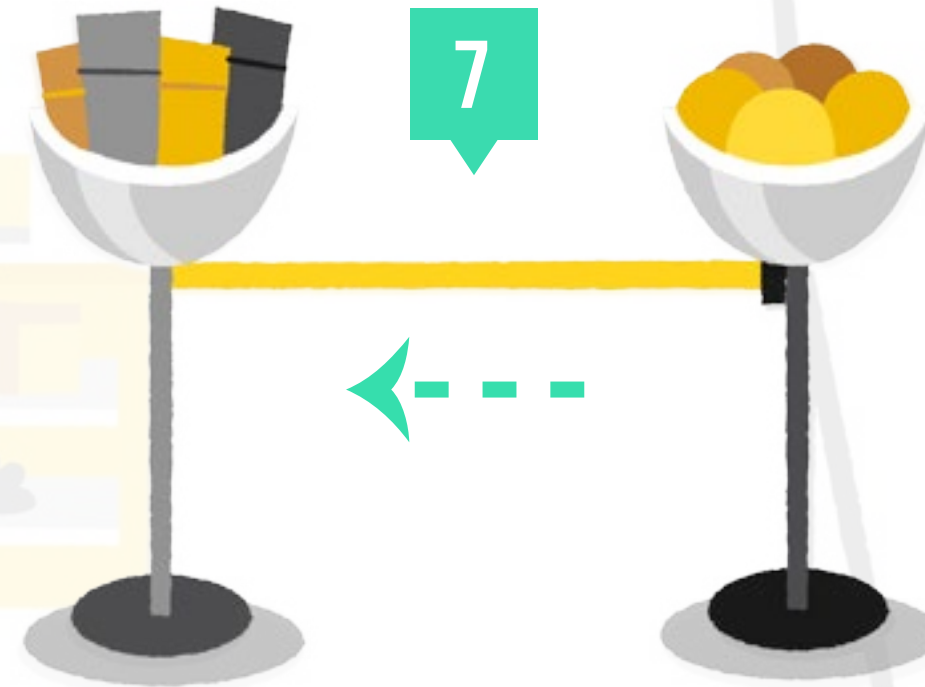


3. Combine Signage with In-Queue Merchandising

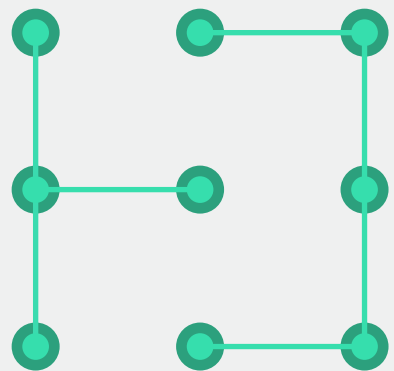
From simple price tag signs to full-color sign panels or video screens, queue merchandising systems can go beyond just merchandise display to delivering information, education, and entertainment. Signage in the queue helps to grab your customer's attention from a distance or direct them to information at their fingertips.

7 CREATE A SHORTCUT

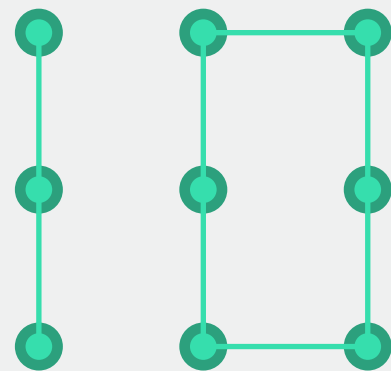
During non-busy times or off-peak hours it's wise to provide a way to bypass the queue switchbacks. By retracting the belt from a strategically placed stanchion or two, a shortcut lets customers breeze through the queue.



Normal Queue Path



Shortened Queue Path



Word to the wise:

Remember to merchandise on the "shortcut" path.

8 GO ELECTRONIC

Reducing perceived and actual wait times remains one of the biggest goals of any queue management or customer flow strategy.



A Solution for Any Queue

Electronic queuing systems can instill a sense of fairness, order, and flow in any situation. Overhead LCD monitors direct customers to the next available service agent so everyone keeps moving – customers and employees alike. No one waits longer than is absolutely necessary, and service efficiency is increased by as much as 35 percent.



Greater Service Efficiency = Better Customer Flow

With the push of a button, an agent can cue flashing lights or an audible call-forward instruction alerting the next customer that it's their turn. This also means the shouts of “Next customer!” and “I can help you over here!” are eliminated, making for a more peaceful customer flow and eliminating the rubbernecker looking for a better spot in line.

8



Electronic queuing can reduce perceived wait time by 35% as customers are kept busy with electronic media and kept in check with known wait times. The true win-win is a queue that not only feels like it's moving faster—but actually is moving faster.



9 DEFINE THE WAIT POINT

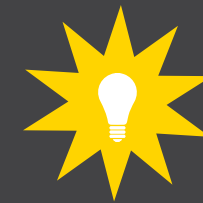
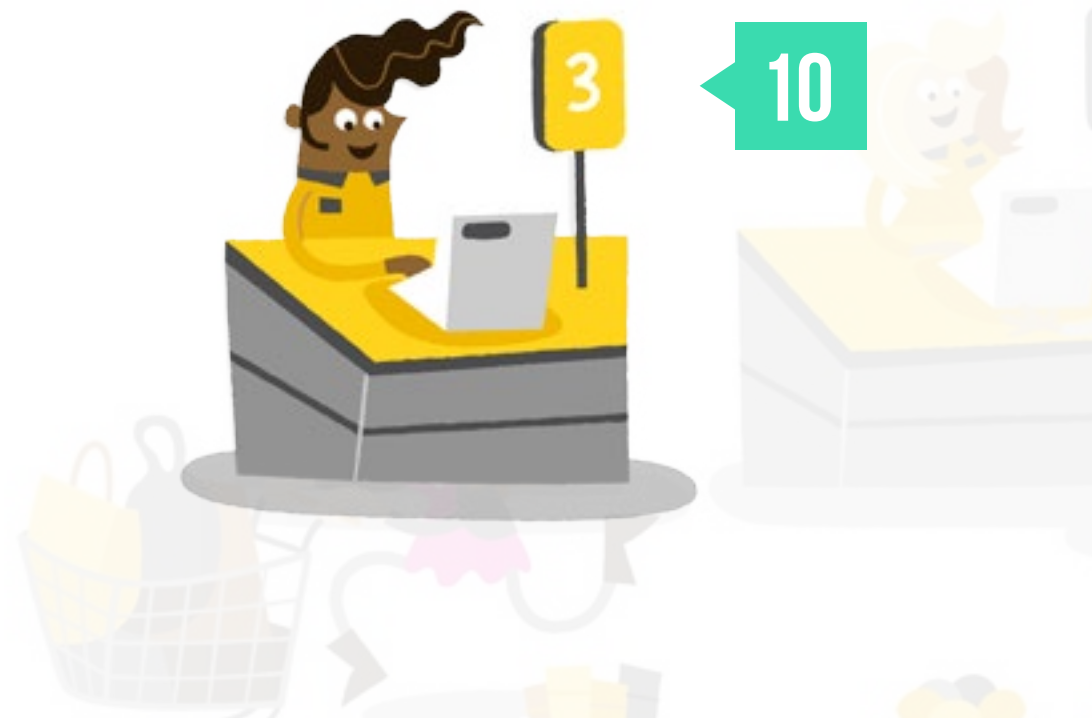
To prevent confusion, frustration, and traffic jams it's important to let customers know where they should stand while waiting to be called.

A simple "please wait here" sign is usually all it takes.



10 LIGHT THE WAY

Add station lights to your electronic queuing system to provide an important indicator of available service points.



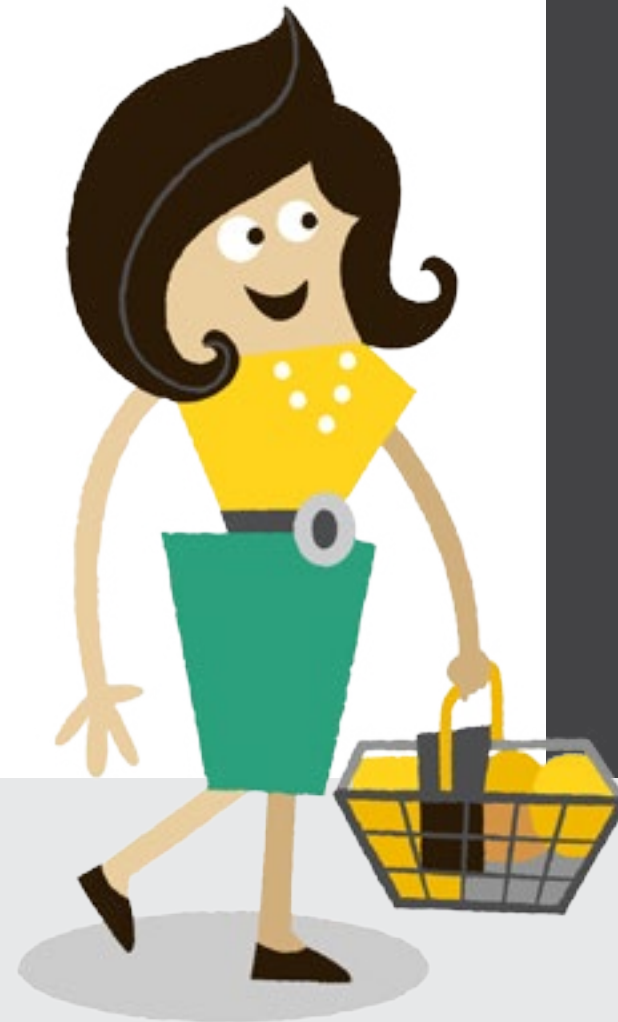
Tip:

A flashing light is an unobtrusive yet extremely effective way to reveal open positions and maximize queue efficiency.

WHAT'S YOUR NEXT STEP?

Your waiting line can be more than just a place to stand. The 10 tips outlined in this guide can keep your customers better-informed, happier, and moving forward to complete their transactions.

Hopefully you've been inspired to take a few of these steps to improve the waiting line for your customers and your business.



Need help planning your approach?
Call on a Lavi queuing expert.



www.lavi.com (888) 285-8605