



5 Tips For A MORE EFFICIENT WAITING LINE

A Guide to Improving Customer Flow





The average
person spends

2 YEARS
WAITING IN LINE
in a lifetime.

Everyone can appreciate a smooth car ride, a plane ride without turbulence, **and an efficient waiting line.**

In an ideal world there would be no waiting in line, but that's just not realistic. In fact, queues play a salient role in everyday life. According to some estimates, in a lifetime the average person spends two years waiting in line.

The impact of these waiting lines on profits, public and customer satisfaction, and even public safety can be profound. For managers, "waiting in queue" implies a series of challenges and concerns, including productivity, customer service, and lost revenue. For customers, "waiting in line" can imply anxiety, boredom, and wasted time, among other feelings.

Still, marking time doesn't have to create dissatisfaction among customers; you can take action to make a queue shorter and faster, and help the people waiting in those lines calm their restless energy.

Here are 5 ways to make your waiting lines more efficient ➤

1

Occupy their time.

You don't have to be a parent to know that unoccupied time is a dangerous animal. Occupied time feeds the mind, keeps the hands busy, and distracts you from the wait at hand. And though we may grow up, these truths never change. Waiting in a queue can nearly drive us to throw a tantrum.

So find something for
your customers to do.



Keep them busy with digital signage in the queue that plays interesting or entertaining videos or informational advertisements.

Pepper your queue with **in-line merchandising** that presents unique or useful products your customers can explore (and purchase).

You might even consider a **virtual queuing** solution, allowing customers to relax or shop some more as they wait to be called to service – anything but making them stand around with nothing to do but wait.



2

Get them started.

The waiting is over once the transaction or service begins. People just want to get started and the sooner you can make this happen, the better. A classic example of this is the grocery store where, once you begin unloading your cart you feel that your wait is over and you're officially being served.



The point is, getting your customers started before they reach your service point increases both the efficiency of your line and the satisfaction of your patrons.

Banks and other service centers can give people the opportunity to complete paperwork while standing in line. A fast food restaurant can send representatives into the queue to begin taking customer orders. Retailers can send associates into the line to relieve patrons of armloads of clothing and begin the process of folding and prepping for the register.



3

Reduce the anxiety.

The savvy businessperson knows that you don't just set up barriers for a queue and leave it to its own devices. An unmanaged queue can grow teeth very quickly, so manage your waiting lines and reduce the anxiety of the people in them by carefully planning their purpose.

Virtual queuing allows people to relax while they wait, no jostling in line or feeling crowded – and where there is relaxation, there is less anxiety!



Single-line queuing promotes fairness and reduces the need for people to jockey for the “best” line or the “right” line – it’s first come, first served, so there is no sense of injustice among customers.

Electronic queuing reduces anxiety by announcing through visual or auditory cues that another agent is available to provide service – there’s no need for customers to pay close attention to what’s happening in other lines because the digital signage will do the work for them.



4

Make the wait time known.

Uncertainty also causes anxiety. And when a customer doesn't know how long their wait in line is going to be, they become antsy, irritated, and impatient. That's because uncertain waits are longer than known, finite waits.



So provide your waiting customers with information – it's the key to breaking that feeling of angst that uncertainty breeds.

Use signage or other electronic cues to inform people about how long their wait time will be and you'll discover that they'll be more patient about waiting.

They'll love you even more if their wait time ends up being shorter than anticipated.

5

Promote fairness.

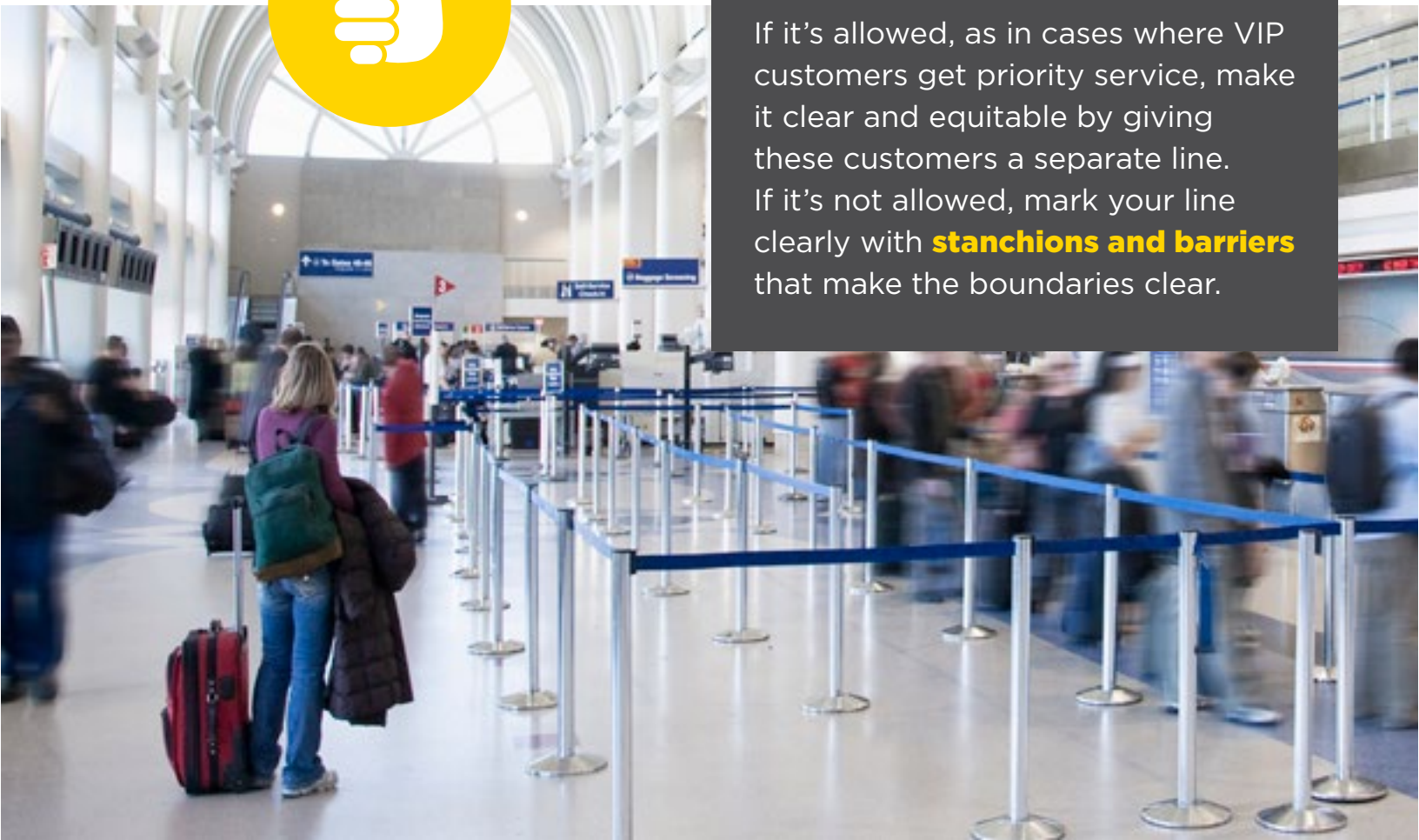
Unfair waits in line feel longer to people than equitable waits, so do everything you can to keep each queue designed in a fair and balanced manner.

Probably the single best way to promote fairness is to have just one line.



Single-line queuing features “first come, first served” as its modus operandi, making it unquestionably fair. Consider other ways to promote fairness by establishing a clear cut system for queue jumping (cutting ahead in line).

If it's allowed, as in cases where VIP customers get priority service, make it clear and equitable by giving these customers a separate line. If it's not allowed, mark your line clearly with **stanchions and barriers** that make the boundaries clear.



An efficient and well-managed queue is one of the quickest and most cost-effective ways a business can increase operational efficiencies and squeeze additional revenues from existing real estate.

Moving customers in, through, and out of waiting lines with effective queue management is proven to:



**Reduce
customer
walk-aways**



**Increase
revenues per
square foot**



**Stimulate
impulse sales**



**Enhance the
overall customer
experience**

It pays to do it right.

Ready to improve the flow and efficiency of your queue?

Create a more enjoyable checkout experience for your customers and revel in better results for your business or organization. Consult the **public guidance** experts at Lavi for recommendations customized to fit your space and needs.

Let's Plan Your Approach

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