



# Nine Questions to Answer When Selecting a Recording Solution.

Whether you're working with SMB or enterprise businesses, customers are looking for the right video management and storage technology to meet their unique needs (and budget). With so many products on the market, how are you supposed to know which recording solution to choose? The obvious considerations include, storage requirements and retention time. Here are nine questions that are often times forgotten and answering them can help you make the best selection for your customers.

## 1. Is it easy to install?

There's no doubt technology makes our lives easier, and thankfully some network video recorders (NVR's) come with a plug and play option making it easy to setup. Out of the box, it comes pre-loaded and pre-configured with a video management software (VMS), device licenses, and an operating system. The system is quick to deploy without needing advanced IT experience or knowledge. That means you're in and out of the site and your customer is up and running quickly. Additionally, it simplifies the procurement process by having an all-in-one system from one vendor. Nothing like a one-stop shop!

## 2. Will my customer find it easy to use?

So, you found an NVR that was easy to install, or "plug", but how easy is it to "play"? NVRs that provide an intuitive interface allow for easy device management and users can do everything they need – view video, event configuration, alarm management, responsive PTZ control, and more – within a few clicks. Don't be afraid to ask for a live demo or free trial of the VMS to see if you think it would be a good fit for your customers. Even better, have your customer test drive the trial version themselves.

## 3. Does it integrate smoothly with other systems on the network?

With so many devices and systems on their network, wouldn't your customer love the option to integrate all of them? Finding an NVR built on an open platform removes the headache of running completely separate systems by allowing integration with third party devices. Users can have total control of their systems – cameras, access control, fire and burglar alarms, and more all from one place. This is what makes industry standards such as ONVIF so important.

## 4. Is remote access an option?

Your customer may still need access to their video footage but is unable or cannot travel to each location. Everything is mobile these days, so it's very likely that your customer wants a solution that allows access to live or recorded video from a cell phone or tablet. These on-the-go customers need a recording solution with remote access, including visibility via smartphone apps.

## 5. How much upkeep will it need?

Regular firmware and system updates are unavoidable and necessary for the health of any solution. Where some users are comfortable taking it all in-house, including troubleshooting, others want a solution they can "set and forget" unless they need to access the video. If remote access is an option, you have an opportunity to increase your recurring monthly revenue (RMR) through service contracts including remote health monitoring and maintenance agreements. Depending on the solution, you could remotely conduct firmware updates, troubleshoot when needed and regularly ensure all is in working order, with minimal overhead costs.

## 6. Will it scale?

Businesses change quickly and so can the needs of your customers. When recommending a solution, you'll need to understand how many devices they are looking to connect to determine today's storage requirements. This should also lead to conversations about any plans to add devices down the road. While the customer may not know specifics, you could suggest options that can easily expand storage capabilities, for example, through the addition of internal disks. This way they can add more storage without paying for it upfront. You could also suggest a recording solution that can scale based on channel count, rather than recommending a device that only meets their needs today.

## 7. Does the entire solution come in one box?

NVRs can be found in many shapes and sizes. Some slide right into a server rack. Others operate as a standalone unit, like a computer tower. While form factor considerations are crucial, connectivity and other peripherals are also important. Some network video recorders come with a built-in Power over Ethernet (PoE) switch, reducing the need for another piece of hardware and additional costs. There are also options on the market that come ready with device management, remote troubleshooting, and other value adds to help reduce total cost of ownership.

## 8. What if it stops working?

Even though you only offer your customers recording solutions backed by high-quality and reliability – sometimes, issues happen. In the off chance that an NVR needs a little TLC, you want one that provides extra peace of mind. Does the system provide redundant recording in the event of a disruption? Does the recording solution come with a multi-year warranty? Do you have to jump through hoops to get troubleshooting assistance? The key is to find a manufacturer that stands behind the product, providing you and your customer knowledgeable, free and fast technical support when you need it.

## 9. How much should it cost?

Let's be honest, typically, you get what you pay for. Be sure when comparing recording solutions, you are comparing apples to apples. While one solution may cost less, what are the tradeoffs? Is it reliable? Is it secure? What's guaranteed in the warranty? Will it be able to grow with the business needs of your customer? At the end of the day, only the customer can determine which assurances they're willing to live without depending on the price point. It's up to you to present the best options and recommendations for their needs.



Remember to consider the value outside the spec sheet. Many manufactures even offer free resources and design tools to help make your job and the installation easier, saving both you and the customer time and money in the long run.

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