



## How to buy

# How do I buy and roll out an automated internal control system?

## Introduction

We have written this document for those of you who are responsible for internal control within larger organisations such as municipalities, county councils and restaurant chains.

Buying a digital internal control system is not something you do every day. We have produced this document to give you an overview of the process of buying and rollout. What do you need to consider?

## Start with an analysis

The first step in the project is for you to prepare an analysis of your organisation and your requirements, both those that you have internally and those from authorities. How many operations/sites do I have, and of them, how many should/can use the system? There is nothing here that cannot be adjusted later, but it is always a good idea to create an overview of the operations.

In larger organisations, it may be appropriate to appoint a project group and project manager. Suitable participants include those from the various sections involved. For example, this could be someone from central management, the local kitchen manager and someone who will be responsible for the actual elements of the control points such as taking measurements of goods on receipt. It may also be interesting to review the entire internal control plan, and it may be appropriate to engage a HACCP specialist who will become part of the project.

## How do I know who should use the system?

All operations that currently use internal control of recurrent work tasks are instrumental to using digital internal control. For automatic temperature monitoring, an inventory of the refrigerators and freezers can be drawn up. Large fixed refrigerators and freezers should use fixed nodes, while for smaller, portable refrigerators/freezers/heating cabinets, measurement by handheld unit will suffice. It depends partly on the location of the refrigerator units. If units are located outside the kitchen – for example, in the restaurant itself – the distance and any obstacles in the way may block the radio signal from the node to the central unit. In these cases, a handheld unit may be an alternative to fixed nodes.





### **In general terms, the process is as follows:**

A floor plan of the operation(s), showing the refrigerators and freezers, is a useful first step. You should send this document to your system supplier contact, who can then produce a quotation on the basis of the documentation. Once you know the cost – both the initial setup cost and the monthly cost – you can (if necessary) establish the quality investment in your budget.

If you have many varied operations within a large organisation such as a municipality or county council, there is also the option of setting up one or two pilot operations. In this way, a preliminary study is carried out on the basis of your own organisation's unique requirements, enabling you to foresee the pitfalls before rolling out to more operations. The basic rule should always be to make as few adjustments to a working internal control system as possible.

Once you have established the number of operations that will use digital internal control, the time has come to look at the specific requirements of the operations. You will then review, in consultation with the system supplier, which refrigerators and freezers are suitable for automatic monitoring.

- Will the operation be using wireless or hard-wired (network-based) nodes?
- Would a handheld unit be suitable?

How will the system be accessed? Through existing IT equipment? For example, computers that are already used by the operation; or should the operation have a dedicated screen set up solely for digital internal controls?

The existing control points from your internal control plan must be implemented and periodised in the system. If you already have ready-made control points, the HACCP specialist or system supplier can help you to create a template and set up operations. In cases where the control points are not equally clear, there are ready-made control points in the system. These control points cover all the basic conditions for all food handling, and it may be necessary to add specific control points for your precise operations. For example, production kitchens and receiving kitchens have different types of control point, even though the basis is often the same.

If you need help carrying out a more thorough update of your internal controls, you should look for HACCP specialists who are used to working with digital internal control.

Once the preliminary analysis work is complete, an appointment should be booked for the technician to come and install the temperature monitoring hardware at your premises. This takes several hours per operation (depending on the number of measurement points), and the technician will briefly run through the most important functions of the temperature monitoring hardware.

Review/training of staff at operational sites in question. This takes around 1–2 hours per operation. The training concentrates on practical aspects and is specifically aimed at staff who will be managing the day-to-day operation of the system.





## What are the pitfalls, and how do you deal with these?

One of the commonest pitfalls is lack of sufficient support for the introduction of digital internal controls from your operations. The initial reaction from those who will be using the system on a daily basis is often a negative one. People feel that it takes up time and that there will be more surveillance of their work.

The solution here is always to include a key person from the project's pilot operation and to let this person be involved in implementation.

Another pitfall is not checking the existing IT. If you choose digital internal control via the Internet, there needs to be Internet access on the premises. If not, you need to contact your local IT department – at an early stage – and ask them to set up the necessary IT. Should your local IT department be unable to guarantee an Internet connection, you could set up an Internet connection through 3G or 4G (mobile broadband).

In all parts of the process, your system supplier should always be available to answer any questions or provide advice.

## What is the next step?

If you feel that you would like to take a closer look at a system, by all means look at our demonstration film or contact one of our sales staff to arrange a demonstration.

If this is of interest to you and you would like to find out more about a digital internal control system for your operation, start by drawing up a floor plan of your premises. We will happily prepare a budgetary quotation based on your list of equipment and floor plans.

## About the author

Carl Strömberg has an IT background and long experience of web-based services. He has worked on digital internal control since 2005, as a project manager, product owner and developer.

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