

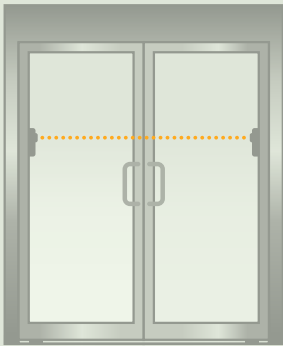
Don't Waste Time and Money on the Wrong Store Traffic Counter

Investing in technology is expensive and time consuming. You don't want to take the risk of making the wrong decision and wasting a lot of time and money... not to mention your reputation.

Traffic counting in retail stores has been around for as long as retailing itself. There have been a lot of technology changes over the years. It can be very confusing as every traffic counting manufacturer has their own claims.

HeadCount doesn't manufacture a proprietary device and, therefore, has been in a strong position to objectively evaluate, install, and monitor the effectiveness of a variety of traffic counters for 20 years.

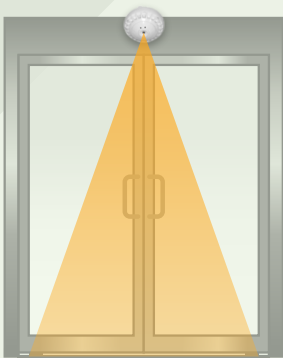
Pros and cons of three major types of counters



Infrared Beam Sensors

1. Infrared Beam Sensors or 'Break-beam' Counters

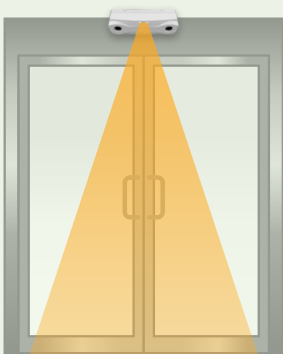
- These simple devices are attached to the doorframe of the store entrance and every time somebody passes through that beam a count is logged.
- They are inexpensive and easy to install.
- A simple break-beam sensor can't tell directionality and so shoppers get counted twice – first when they enter the store and again when they leave the store. If you use a break-beam counter, you would always need to divide the counts by two to get an accurate daily count. This manipulation can create errors.
- The other problem is that the sensors can get blocked. For example, from somebody pulling merchandise to the front of the store. That will stop the counting from happening.



Thermal Sensors

2. Thermal Sensors

- This counter is based on thermal technology – essentially heat.
- They are more accurate and use more sophisticated technology than the infrared beam counters. These devices count as they pick up on the body temperature of people passing under it.
- The algorithms that work with the counters are sophisticated enough to discern directionality, that is, they only count people coming into the store. These are really sophisticated devices and when they are set up and calibrated properly, they can work really well.
- They are complicated to install and relatively expensive. These devices sell for between \$500 and \$1000. Although they are more accurate than beam sensors, they are not the most accurate traffic counter on the market.



3D-stereo Cameras

3. 3D-stereo Cameras

- These devices have two small cameras that look down on the count zone of the store entrance.
- They can pick out directionality so you are not counting customers coming in and going out of your stores.
- Because they view the count zone as a three-dimensional space, you can set a height threshold so that you only count people of a certain height, enabling you to eliminate counts from children, shopping carts, or strollers.
- The big advantage to 3D-camera traffic counters is that you can conduct visual audits of the count accuracy. This is a huge advantage.
- The cost is premium and the price is about the same as the thermal sensors. Also, there can be ongoing investments for calibration and in maintaining these devices. Professional calibration and maintenance is as important as the traffic counter you choose – you need to make sure your data is accurate on an ongoing basis.



"You get what you pay for. Given the important decisions you will make using your traffic count data you should select 3D-camera traffic counters. You will be quickly paid back by more efficient staff scheduling, ability to measure marketing impact, and improved conversion rates."

Mark Ryski Author, Founder & CEO of HeadCount

Have questions about selecting the right traffic counter?

talk@headcount.com

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