



# **The Health and Natural Product Retailer's Guide** *to Choosing a Point of Sale and Back Office Management System*



Retailers are challenged to adapt to constant change, and your health and natural products business is not immune from current industry disruption. Like many other retailers, your business is facing new competition from e-commerce and department stores. You may also be implementing new technology to keep with today's connected consumers. But your business also has some unique challenges to overcome.

Your merchandise mix must constantly reflect your customers' increased demand for fresh, safe, ethically sourced products. You may also be working with new distributors to keep up with this demand, as well as increasing your focus on traceability—for both compliance reasons and your customers' safety. These new demands and processes may be making it harder to optimize sales and profits.

The good news is that health and natural product retailers have an ally: their point of sale (POS) and back office management system. If you need to upgrade your current system to help your business meet today's challenges effectively—and profitably—look for technology with these critical features to support your business.

### FEATURE 1: **User-Friendly Interface**

Your customers expect fast, friendly service. Choose a POS system that helps your staff meet that expectation. Touchscreen interfaces make it easy for your sales associates to handle checkout, inventory lookup, and other customer requests with efficiency and accuracy. A POS system that's easy to use means less time sales associates spend on navigating (or troubleshooting) technology and more time focusing on customers. With the right POS system, in-store operations can center on personalizing experiences and providing the added-value that brings your customers back to shop in your store.

A user-friendly system also makes training new employees easier and faster and streamlines day-to-day tasks with back office tools and integrations that save time and minimize errors.



### FEATURE 2:

## Modern Integrations

Consumer behaviors and preferences are changing, so make sure your POS system enables you to use the modern technology that aligns with your customers' use of technology and their forward-thinking attitudes. In-store processes should be fast, accurate and convenient with support from technology such as barcode scanning for efficient checkout and inventory management and scales that meet Weights and Measures regulations for accurate weight and pricing.

Also ensure your system is equipped to securely accept your customers' preferred payment types including EMV chip card payments and near-field communication (NFC) contactless payments like Apple Pay and Android Pay, as well as gift cards, loyalty rewards, and manufacturer and store-issued coupons.

To align with your customers' concern for the environment, also look for a POS system that gives you the option to email receipts, reducing paper use. Demonstrating your business is likeminded with customers can build a sense of community and help earn loyalty to your brand.



### FEATURE 3:

## Intelligent Inventory Control

Health and natural product retailers often have diverse inventory from a wide range of producers, distributors and even local sources. Moreover, most items will have expiry that must be monitored. Your POS system must empower you with innovative inventory management capabilities.

When inventory levels decrease, use your POS system's [scientific purchasing](#) functionality to put the right item on the right shelf at the right time, maximizing sales and profits. Scientific purchasing takes trending, sales history, stock on hand, lead time from supplier, and minimum stock levels into account to ensure you are ordering optimal quantities, avoiding out-of-stocks as well as overstocks and waste. You can also leverage your POS system's [replenishment purchasing](#) functionality to compare orders to the sales over a specific time period to ensure the most popular products are in stock during specific seasons.

### FEATURE 4:

## Features that Nurture Business Growth

Your POS system collects a great deal of data about your customers and your business. Put it to use through easy-to understand and actionable reports. Insights in areas such as sales, profits, inventory, and labor can help you make smart, fact-based decisions that improve the efficiency and profitability of your business.

Your POS system should also enable you to implement a flexible [customer loyalty program](#). Engage customers and build loyal relationships by offering rewards your customers will respond to such as discounts or free products that can improve their health outcomes. Another advantage of your loyalty program is the data it collects, which helps you refine the program with targeted offers based on buying trends.

Gift cards continue to be a favorite option for both the gift-giver and recipient, so meet this demand and raise brand awareness with a [gift card program](#). Choose a POS system that enables your staff to easily issue, redeem, track and manage cards. Shoppers often spend more than the face value of a gift card, so a gift card program can help increase sales. Consider integrating your loyalty and gift card programs to increase repeat business.

## Dedicated to Your Business Success

Another important factor to consider when purchasing a POS system for your health and natural products business is the POS vendor. With so much riding on the reliable operation of your POS system, you need to choose a POS software vendor that provides an excellent product and excellent service and support. Also look for a vendor committed to innovation, regularly upgrading and enhancing its software to equip you to handle changes in the industry. Finally, if your long-term goals align with operating multiple stores, look for a POS vendor that offers the ability to control products, pricing, and report generation from a single location.

You will also benefit by working with a company that has extensive knowledge and experience in the natural health market and has memberships in industry associations such as the Canadian Health Food Association (CHFA) and Natural Products Association (NPA).

*Auto-Star's seamless POS systems have been developed from more than 20 years' experience in the health and natural food industry throughout North America. [Consult with an Auto-Star representative to learn more about how to select the POS system for your health and natural products business that will provide the greatest value.](#)*