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Why so called ‘cheap’ thermometers are costing you more than you think

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In today’s fast paced and connected world, we are all expected to do more with less, making time one of our most important assets. These workplace norms are also the case for today’s food safety and public health professionals who need to be sure of the of the accuracy of the information that is being recorded.

Thankfully, the ability to be more efficient and capture more accurate information has never been easier for those using thermometers and managing food safety programs that require the use of thermometers. As defined in the 2013 FDA Food Code, certain foods require time and temperature controls to limit the growth of harmful bacteria. Utilizing a food thermometer is the most accurate and efficient way to monitor these foods while ensuring the highest level of product quality for customers. Thermometers also provide an easy way of making sure that prepared food is kept at the appropriate temperature prior to being served.



The testo 104 food probe thermometer allows you to carry out quick and easy spot checks during the production, storage and processing of food.

Since a food thermometer is such an important tool during various portions of food preparation, it has become essential that accurate and reliable thermometers be readily accessible. With so many cheap, poorly manufactured thermometers available, many businesses are tempted to purchase a lower quality product. This is understandable to an extent; if the person responsible for sourcing the company's equipment is looking through a brochure or website, it can be hard to differentiate between models when it comes to things like accuracy, toughness and build quality. If all the options look the same, I may as well buy the cheap one, right? In the short term, perhaps this is the case, but a few months/years down the line, try taking another look at the numbers when it comes time to replace units. You'd be surprised.

In many cases, we've found the frequent replacement of low-cost thermometers is more of an issue than you'd think, particularly for those organizations purchasing thermometers in large quantities. And with costs continuing to rise in the restaurant industry, any way a business can cut costs and improve efficiency is of course very welcome. According to a recent benchmarking report from [ALMR Christie & Co.](#) operating costs in the food industry are at an all-time high of 51.5% of annual revenue.

Some of the cheaper models of thermometers are flimsy, and built with such poor quality that they should almost be considered disposable. For example, say you're paying as little as \$15 for a bi-metallic stem pocket thermometer; these thermometer types require daily calibration to ensure accuracy (possibly more frequent calibration if they are not handled correctly), and on average need to be replaced every 2-3 months because they get lost, get dropped repeatedly, get wet, the probe snaps or the unit just stops working. Taking the time for employees to calibrate at least once a day can start to add up, and the need to buy and keep replacement units on hand isn't doing much good for your labor and equipment budget. Not to mention the risk of a situation where there isn't a thermometer available for employees to check final cooking temperatures. This leaves you with no adequate way of making the required checks, and ultimately puts your customers and your brand's reputation at risk.



Only by using top quality thermometers like those from Testo can you guarantee both accuracy and longevity.

In this situation, it may make sense to explore a higher quality option, like a robust waterproof thermometer that could **last 5 to 6 times longer**. Some manufacturers, such as Testo, offer a 2-year warranty on all thermometers, so you can be sure they have been built to last. With so many things in life, you get what you pay for, and thermometers are no exception.

In addition to longevity, cheap thermometers cause issues regarding functionality and, more importantly, **accuracy**. They will only offer basic functions while top quality thermometers can offer more than one measuring function. For example, Testo offers a thermometer with both an infrared sensor for non-contact measurement as well as a penetration probe for core temperatures. When you use a cheap thermometer you can't be certain you are even getting the correct measurements. Of course, when using a measurement device, accuracy is critical.

Want more info?

For more information on Testo thermometers, please go to www.testo.com or give us a call at 800-227-0729 and we'll be happy to help.