

## DISPLAY MANUFACTURER GUIDE

*The Ultimate Guide to Choosing a Display Manufacturer*

In a market flooded with copycat manufacturers of LCD monitors and keyboards, it can be hard to know what to look for—and what you're getting.

At General Digital, we understand everything that goes into a high-performance display system because we innovate, design, develop, and manufacture displays every day. We know the process of finding a display that is up to spec and up to snuff can be complicated, confusing, and a little overwhelming—and we're here to walk you through it.

### **When you're looking for the best display for your needs, here are 10 questions to ask—and the 10 answers to look for.**

#### **1. PRODUCTION VALUES: WHERE IS YOUR DISPLAY DESIGNED AND MANUFACTURED?**

Much can be said about the benefits of overseas manufacturing, and most of it has to do with cheaper prices. Savvy material sourcers know that cost savings only go so far if it sacrifices quality, performance, and customer experience. There are several reputable display manufacturers right here in the U.S. that offer a top-of-the-line product that ticks all the boxes in the long run—custom builds, high-performance, low-maintenance, cost-effective—and they're all too happy to prove it.

**LOOK FOR:** *“Made in” labels, as well as manufacturer guarantees, customer reviews, and a real person on the other end of the line who can readily answer, direct, and own your customer experience.*

#### **2. SIZE MATTERS: WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS & DRAWBACKS OF WORKING WITH A SMALL BUSINESS VS. A BIGGER ONE?**

It truly depends on what you are looking for in a manufacturer. Bigger companies can often handle large, non-custom orders because they have the overhead to support them. Their size, however, works against them when it comes to special modifications or custom products that they can't feasibly design, test, and quality check. Small businesses, on the other hand, are usually agile enough to accommodate special requests—and they leverage their expertise and resources to become your partner in the product development and manufacturing process.

**LOOK FOR:** *A product catalog that highlights not only what they've done, but what's possible—and a representative who asks the right questions—from how you'll use your display to its environmental/performance conditions to the problems for which you are solving.*

### 3. PROVEN TRACK RECORD: HOW EXPERIENCED IS THE PRODUCTION AND ENGINEERING STAFF?

It's worth taking a look at how long the company has been in the business of manufacturing displays—and their hiring practices. Does the engineering team have the expertise they need to design systems and applications tailored to meet your specific requirements? If it isn't evident on their Web site, **ask**. Seek out a company with a highly trained and tenured production staff, and you'll be rewarded with a manufacturer that is able to deliver quality, reliability, and innovation in every product.

**LOOK FOR: A careers page that hints at the depth of their talent, expertise, company culture, and core values. You can tell a lot about a company through its hiring practices!**



### 4. SELECTION: IS THERE ENOUGH TO WORK WITH?

It may seem like you're only hunting for the perfect display, but what you're really looking for is the ability to build a product that has the potential to change the world—to save lives, to protect resources, to reveal the unknown. A narrow product selection narrows your options and your abilities, and could be seen as a red flag—unless that narrow product selection goes deeply into the specialty product you need. Chances are, however, that you'll likely be sourcing for a variety of display types, conditions, and specifications—and you're much better off establishing a partnership with a company that can build anything to suit versus a company that suits a single product.

**LOOK FOR: A manufacturer that provides a vast standard product offering to suit specialized and customized applications. Bonus if it can also fit and create options for further customization.**

## 5. SPECIAL FEATURES: HOW DO THEY PRIORITIZE PROBLEM-SOLVING?

If you're someone who appreciates bells, whistles, and the latest tech, you'll want to make sure your display manufacturer can see the future—in other words, they have the in-house expertise and innovation skills to not only predict what's next, but also design, develop, and manufacture it. The best companies will balance that passion for innovation and problem solving with a keen commitment to the end-user experience—they won't innovate for innovation's sake. Reputable display companies aren't in the gadget business; they are in the tool business—and tools should make the job easier.

**LOOK FOR: Companies that prioritize user experience, product performance, and long-term relationships know what their products can do—and what they can't. Be leery of companies with one-size-fits-all solutions.**



## 6. COST EFFECTIVENESS: ARE YOU GETTING THE BEST BANG FOR YOUR BUCK?

Price is always a consideration when selecting a product manufacturer—everyone has a budget—but a rock-bottom price doesn't always translate to the best short- and long-term value. As you source equipment, do what you can to compare apples to apples on components, performance specs, customization options, availability, production timeline and service experience **before** comparing prices. There's a lot that can go into those dollar signs!

**LOOK FOR: A manufacturer that integrates displays from multiple supply sources and keep a keen eye on performance and product (not low price) guarantees.**

## 7. QUALITY CONTROL: HOW DOES THE MANUFACTURER HANDLE QUALITY CONTROL?

Does your manufacturer offer its own quality control or is that crucial service outsourced? A company that holds itself to the highest standards will provide in-house and on-site quality control from inspectors trained and certified to IPC standards who can design, test, and validate.

**LOOK FOR: Compliance and ISO Certification seals on their Web sites and/or product labels.**

## 8. LONGEVITY PLAN: HOW DOES THE MANUFACTURER MANAGE AGING AND OBSOLETE COMPONENTS?

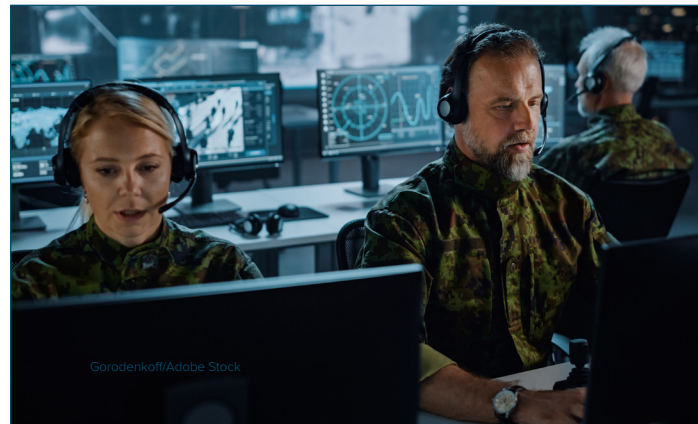
All products evolve, and with that evolution comes a paring down of parts and support. As this is a natural lifecycle for every tech product, the best display companies will often offer last-time buy opportunities upon notification of component obsolescence. They will also continue to support products long after component obsolescence with like or equivalent replacement components.

**LOOK FOR: Companies (and representatives) who can speak with confidence about where a display product stands in its lifecycle and how they are prepared to support it after purchase.**

## 9. CERTIFICATION GUARANTEED: DOES THE COMPANY MEET—OR EXCEED—INDUSTRY STANDARDS?

It's easy to gloss over or immediately trust a company's list of certifications, codes, and compliance seals on their Web site. In a word: **Don't**. Check to see if the company is in good status with the organizations it lists. At a minimum, it should be registered with the United States government's Central Contractor's Registration (CCR), the Small Business Administration (SBA), and other industry-leading organizations.

**LOOK FOR: Active links on the company's Web site to check for immediate compliance. Know your industry standards ahead of time, so you can easily assess when a company goes above and beyond.**



## 10. CUSTOMER CARE: HOW HIGHLY DOES THE MANUFACTURER VALUE THE CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP?

There's no better indication of how a company **values** its customers than how a company **treats** its customers. Does the company you're considering have a reputation for treating customers the "old-fashioned" way—with respect and concerns for their needs?

**LOOK FOR: Responsive customer care (returned e-mails, phone calls, etc.), accurate orders, performance follow-ups, and ongoing communication.**



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