

The Top 5 Questions to Ask Before Upgrading AV Systems



The AV technology at your organization may have been top of the line 10 years ago, but advancements in AV functionality have drastically changed.

You may have a hard time connecting the latest technology with legacy AV hardware and software.

Time to upgrade?

Before you start shopping around for a replacement system, there are five critical aspects you should consider to save time and money throughout the installation:

- Power Requirements
- Network Requirements
- Building Infrastructure
- Hazardous Substance Remediation
- Staffing

Keep reading to learn how to consult on these matters with your preferred AV integrators, manufacturers, facilities team, and IT department to make the right choice for your needs.

#1 Power Requirements

As straightforward as it may seem, power is needed to run electronic equipment.

This is your first and most important point to consider. While most rooms will have power outlets, not all of your ideal AV placements will be equipped with enough power in the place you'll need it.

Make sure to review the layouts of each and every room scheduled to receive an upgrade, and think through these questions:

- Where is the power currently located? Is the location conducive to your desired equipment placement?
- Will the existing power supply be sufficient for the upgrade?
- Are additional circuits and outlets needed? If so, how many, how much power will they draw, and where will they be placed?

Insufficient power and ill-suited placement greatly increase the time and cost necessary to upgrade AV equipment. If there are limitations, be sure to account for these in your plans.

#2 Network Capability

Installing a managed AV system is beneficial for improving uptime, remote troubleshooting, and managing maintenance needs.

However, these benefits can only be realized with a managed system that is connected and online.

It's essential to understand the capabilities required for successful operation. Questions to consider include:

- Will video be on the network or only control and management information?
- Do AV devices need power-over-ethernet (POE)?
- What provisioning is required in IP assignments, routing, port forwarding, VLANs, security, and remote access?



A managed AV system needs at least one LAN connection for monitoring and management, but may require several depending on the functionality, design choices, and manufacturer.

Make sure to understand exactly how many connections will be required, where they terminate in the room, and where they terminate in your IT infrastructure.

Like power requirements, networks must be in place and functional before installations begin. Scope them early, partner with your IT department, and implement in advance.

#3 Building Infrastructure

Unless you're inhabiting a newer building, it's possible your building may need infrastructure updates to be able to support the AV upgrade.

For example, depending on a room's layout and building material, additional dedicated conduits may be needed to run wiring. This may require construction and build out.

When you know where the power and network cables are needed, consider whether related infrastructure construction will be required, and plan ahead to minimize the potential for disruption.

#4 Hazardous Substance Remediation

AV system upgrades are not superficial installations. Conduits or attach points for equipment and wiring must be run in the ceiling and walls of each room, and depending on the upgrade, the work may be extensive.

Additionally, regardless of the installation complexity, any hazardous substances like mold or asbestos must be remedied before an installation can take place. Before you begin your AV upgrade, get each room tested if there is any question or concern about mold or asbestos. If a hazardous substance is found, contact a licensed professional company to have it taken care of.

An AV installer can only upgrade a room *after* hazardous substances are removed or certified cleaned. If remediation is simply not an option, seek solutions that work around these limitations.

#5 Staffing

Last but not least, even fully automated managed systems require the attention of dedicated staff to keep it running and respond to maintenance needs as they arise.

Managed systems are the most efficient method for keeping AV technology up and running, and they provide reports on usage and system maintenance requirements.

However, just as a to-do list will not complete your tasks for you, a managed system will only alert staff in the event of maintenance or outages.

Make sure that you have dedicated staff in place when these situations arise, and address alerts and maintenance requirements early to ensure the AV system is always up and running when needed.



Final Thoughts

When these five points are addressed before your upgrade, rest assured that you've mitigated as many potential roadblocks as possible on your path to improved equipment.

Thanks to your foresight, you'll reap the rewards in the form of preserved resources and minimal workplace disruption.

Need custom guidance? Schedule a call with our team to learn more.

Contact us at www.tekvox.com for information about exploring AV Managed Systems in your organization.