



Temperature Screening for Employees?

According to one UK Sales Director, innovative technological approaches like temperature screening will be crucial in enhancing confidence in workplace and public safety following the Coronavirus pandemic – but potential users need to be aware of issues around their implementation, and realistic in their expectations about performance.

The current public health crisis, as we're constantly reminded, is unprecedented. Society is rapidly being forced to adapt to an all-new set of realities – realities which include new approaches to our public interactions. Over the next months and years, we're going to see a range of innovative technological responses to the challenge of restoring workplace and public confidence and safety.

One technology currently being deployed by businesses and organisations to provide reassurance for employees and others is thermal imaging-based temperature screening. These systems provide rapid, contact-free preliminary detection of elevated skin surface temperatures.

One version, the Temperature Screening Thermal Solution, utilises thermal and conventional lenses and sensors, scans multiple people simultaneously, and provides automatic alerts when anyone passing the camera exhibits a temperature in excess of a pre-configured range, allowing them to be clinically measured and assessed in an appropriate environment.

A standalone system is accurate to **$\pm 0.5^{\circ}\text{C}$** , and this can be enhanced to **$\pm 0.3^{\circ}\text{C}$** using a **blackbody calibrator add-on. AI is employed** in order to minimise false alarms caused by heat from other sources. It comes in a variety of formats, including handheld versions and a model integrated into metal detector doors.

Employee Confidence

Thermal imaging-based temperature screening systems are already being used across a wide range of industries, including hospitals, enterprise head offices, construction sites, government buildings, meat processing plants, nursing homes, food and drug distribution centres, and retail stores. In many cases their use has formed a significant part of the organisation's strategy for returning employees to work.

But before any organisation makes a decision about implementing this screening technology, it's worth being clear about what it can and cannot do.

Thermal screening cameras **can**:

- Detect skin surface temperature on a non-contact basis, reducing risk
- Indicate if that detected temperature falls outside of the pre-configured range, providing a first line of screening for a facility
- Screen a high volume of people in a short timeframe
- Provide an audit trail of steps taken to assist with health, safety and welfare compliance

Thermal screening cameras **can't**:

- Detect coronavirus
- Detect a fever

These aren't medical devices: they provide preliminary screening in order to offer reassurance and confidence for those entering a facility, with risk for screening staff minimised due to the non-contact nature of the system.

Further Considerations

Once a decision has been made to implement a temperature screening solution, a number of factors should be taken into account, including: company approvals, set-up and management guidance, communications to staff (and, if necessary, the wider public), and a data protection assessment.

Before a system is installed, organisations should also consider ensuring staff consent forms are completed, and that there is a policy in place for screening visitors to a facility. Who will monitor the screening? Will they need special training and how will they be asked to manage any person who represents a temperature outside of the set threshold? There may be reasons, other than signs of a fever, for that person to present an elevated temperature – they may have just cycled to work or recently finished exercising in which case they may just be running a little hot! Consideration needs to be given to where the person will be asked to stay whilst they wait if a second screening is to take place.

These considerations will vary from site to site, dependent on how it is used and who is being screened. A number of other considerations are also relevant, including GDPR.