

# COVID-19 RESTART; THINGS TO CONSIDER PRIOR TO CINEMAS RE-OPENING.

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CTC; the global cinema technology network  
[www.cinema-technology.com](http://www.cinema-technology.com)



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# Introduction

Cinema Technology Community (CTC) is an independent, not-for-profit membership organization that aims to advance the use of technology to enhance all aspects of the movie-going experience.

As well as providing guidance and support, CTC engages in a wide range of activities aimed at further educating industry professionals and improving the cinema experience. These include training courses, lectures, technical handbooks, educational visits, seminars, web seminars, networking events, projectionist certification and one of the industry's leading technical journals, Cinema Technology Magazine.

The outbreak of Covid-19 in late 2019 and early 2020 has placed critical pressure on the global cinema community with the exhibition sector in most major markets being forced to shut down as governments seek to prevent the spread of the virus by limiting mass gatherings and social interactions.

As a follow-up to the CTC produced "Covid-19 Closure; Technology Tips for Equipment Upkeep and Preparation for Re-opening" document published in March 2020, CT would like to offer the following considerations and general recommendations surrounding restarting an re-opening your cinema.

The points for consideration below is not intended as an exhaustive list. This document will be constantly evaluated and added to as a means of providing guidance to the exhibition sector.

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# Projection and Sound Equipment

## Pre-Opening Testing

It is essential that a rigorous plan for testing and re-calibrating projection and audio equipment is in place and carried out fully prior to re-opening to ensure that systems have remained operational and movies can be shown.

## Spare Component Inventory

Whilst most if not all projection and sound equipment should reboot if recommended power-down guidance has been followed, it would be advisable to create an inventory of internally held spare parts (items such as power supplies and batteries) particularly for Series 1 and early Series 2 projectors) and where necessary identify essential components which you do not have in stock which could prevent operations resuming.

## Manufacturer Capacity and Lead Times

Equipment manufacturers may have been forced to reduce operations during cinema closures due to downturn in order and may have a phased re-opening plan. For planned projects, check that your equipment manufacturer can provide the products you require and with the lead times necessary noting that equipment suppliers outside of your local area may still be closed due to local government regulations.

## Manufacturer or Integrator Spare Part Availability

Check with your product manufacturers or your local integrator to ascertain inventory stock of spare parts. Given that the global freight network has been dramatically reduced both in terms of capacity and capability, it is advisable to order spare parts in good time to ensure that you have these prior to opening.

## Powering Up Equipment

In some instances, it is advisable to power up equipment in multiple phases in order to avoid large peak voltages. A recommended order for powering up should be projector, server and lastly the audio rack.

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## Auditorium Cleanliness

Deep cleaning of auditoriums should be considered prior to re-opening. You should check with your equipment manufacturers (speakers, screens, seats, etc) to ensure that your chosen method will not affect product performance. It is also essential that your staff or contractors are supplied with the relevant PPE equipment in order to carry out or be present for deep cleaning operations.

## Pre-Opening Cleaning and Ongoing Sanitation

Whilst deep cleaning auditoriums, deep cleaning of all areas of the cinema should be considered including lobby spaces, wash rooms, stores, kitchen areas, projection booths, staff rooms, etc. HVAC systems disabled during shutdown may need to be sanitized in accordance with manufacturers guidelines.

Once your cinema has reopened you should consider the need for enhanced and regular sanitation programs for all areas and the relevant staffing requirements that these are likely to entail.

## Staff Safety and Training

Reviewing staff safety is of the utmost importance. Staff may well need PPE equipment in order to carry out their roles and in particular in areas where they come in to contact with customers and food and beverage services. Consider the use and the supply chain for visors, gloves, masks, aprons, additional hand sanitization stations as well as appropriate training and signage throughout staff centric areas.

## Social Distancing Throughout the Cinema

It is assumed that when cinemas open, there will be a degree social distancing measures required which are likely to restrict the number of movie-goers able to access the cinema at any one time. These are likely to be dictated by either local or national governments and are likely to change frequently so will need constant monitoring.

## Understanding Your Building

Social distancing will likely affect all facets of the movie-going experience from ticketing, concession sales through to auditorium capacity and loading. Consider exploring your cinema environments,

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where possible digitally with your architects, designers or third party surveyors to understand the impact of ingress and egress, queue management, pinch points, washrooms and auditorium loading and how your building may need to be adapted to allow for re-opening.

## POS and Ticketing Systems

You should also discuss with your online and on-site ticketing providers to understand the capability of making iterations to your ticketing systems to automate seating assignment based on social distancing guidelines and your own choices.

## Staffing Requirements

Consider what you need to keep your customers distanced as much as is possible upon re-opening and identify additional staffing requirements to manage customers. This may include enhanced safety requirements such as temperature checking customers upon entry or the installation of electronic equipment to assist with or connect to government led contact tracing schemes.

## Additional PPE Equipment

Think about the provision of social distancing equipment once movie-goers are inside the cinema and the potential for sufficient hand sanitization stations, safety screens within queues and ingress/egress areas. Also consider the potential for installing temporary partition screens in auditoriums, or seat covers to help ensure social distancing is maintained.

## Movie Programming

Consideration will need to be given to programming in your cinema. You may need to ensure that movie start and end times are staggered so that limited numbers of movie-goers are accessing high footfall areas (concession areas, washrooms etc) in the building at any one time.

## Process Automation and Digitisation

Review your entire customer journey and identify ways in which processes can be automated or digitized to reduce human interaction. This could be the issuance of all movie tickets electronically through your cinema's app or a printable QR code which can be scanned, similar to a boarding pass utilized by airlines.

Consider discussing with your POS and ticketing providers to turn your box office and concession stands in to cashless zones to prevent money being handled by customers and staff.



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## Attracting Audiences

Restoring confidence in movie-goers that the cinema is a safe place to visit is paramount to a successful re-opening. It is worth publicizing the steps taken to ensure safety in the cinema on your web site and social media channels as well as within the cinema itself.

Targeted Marketing will also play an important role and you may consider leveraging your most loyal customers (i.e. active loyalty program members or subscribers) to help ignite attendance. Given these audiences were likely the most frequent and loyal, pre-closure, they should also be the easier audiences to rapidly build back

## Movie and Event Cinema Content

Given that new content is likely to be sparse upon re-opening, work with film distributors in advance to create a compelling offering that will attract movie-goers back to the cinema. This could be a mix of movies that were released shortly prior to the enforced shut down, classic popular movies, special editions of movies and event cinema titles.

## Promotional Campaigns

Work with your digital marketing agencies and ticketing providers to create a communications plan that runs beyond that first visit of customers to your cinema. Consider creating compelling offerings to attract movie goers back to your cinema repeatedly. Consider launching gift cards schemes, discount codes and promotions relevant to your target demographic and then create compelling marketing campaigns to promote these across digital platforms and social media.

Where possible discuss with local trade organisations to create special events which may entice audiences not just to your cinema but to the cinema in general. This could be a national or regional film day.

## Discuss Plans with Authorities

To assist with re-opening, detailed operational plans may need to be presented to local and national authorities for approval. Ahead of re-opening identify key contacts and keep abreast of regulations. It is also possible that government subsidies may become available to assist with re-opening for items such as a PPE purchases.

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## Join Our Community and Share Ideas

CTC, the global cinema network, is an independent, not-for-profit membership organisation that aims to assist the cinema industry in recognizing the importance that cinema technology and indeed the way in which it's utilized can have a profoundly positive effect on the moviegoing experience.

From exclusive content, access to our global community, copies of our leading publication and much more, joining CTC is a must for organisations and cinema industry professionals. Our sponsorship programme is designed to allow organisations from distribution, post production, manufacturing and installation to show their support for the vital work CTC undertakes whilst maintaining accessibility for professionals, consultants and contractors to benefit from our deliverables.

Further information about CTC and our membership programme can be obtained by visiting our website – [www.cinema-technology.com](http://www.cinema-technology.com).

