

Age Verification for Cigarettes and Tobacco Products: A Brief Insight

In 2024, 90% of all tobacco product sales, amounting to \$107.5 billion in the US, occur through convenience stores. Ensuring employees adhere to proper age verification practices is crucial for protecting young consumers and safeguarding businesses.

To assess how well operators are performing, Intouch Insight conducts an annual mystery shopping program. This year, we evaluated age verification practices in US convenience stores through over 200 covert visits across 49 different brands in 36 states. The mystery shoppers, aged 21 to 26, provided valuable insights into the current state of age verification. Here's what we discovered:

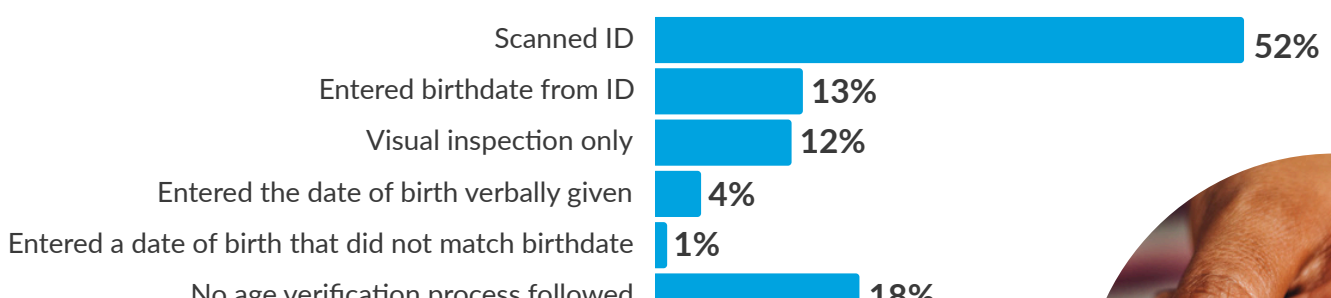
In more than **1 out of 5 visits**, a tobacco product was sold **without ID being requested**, but we did see an improvement over last year.

Did a store employee request your ID when you asked to purchase a tobacco product, or at any other point during the visit?



12%
Increase in requesting ID compared to 2023.

How are employees verifying age?



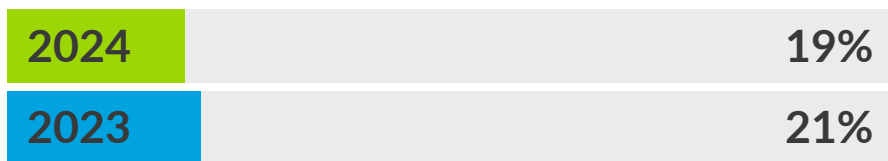
In 2024, employees did not **visually inspect** a scanned ID 19% of the time compared to 21% in 2023.

Leveraging AVT

Age verification technology was used in the majority of visits. **But it all comes down to execution.**



No visual inspection



National vs Regional Brands

	National Brands	Regional Brands
Was your ID requested?	72%	82%
Was your ID scanned?	46%	60%
Was your ID visually inspected?	84%	88%

ID's were **visually inspected**:

77%

7:00am to 12:59pm

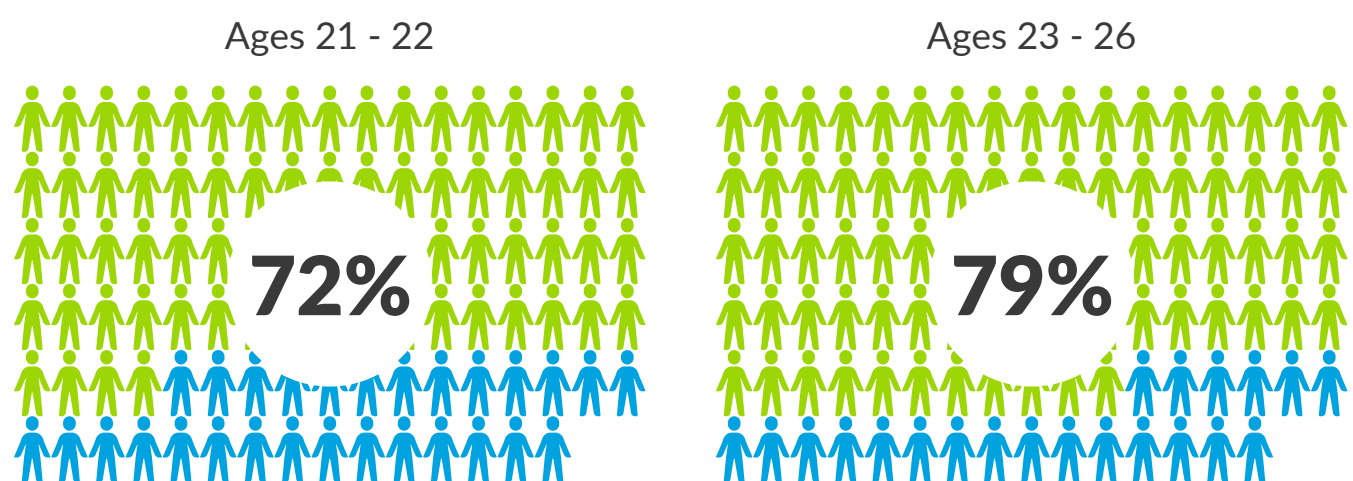
85%

1:00pm to 6:59pm

97%

7:00pm to 12:59am

Among our **youngest** shoppers, the rate of asking for ID was **7% lower** than the top end of the age range.



There was almost **no difference** by gender.

	Female Shoppers	Male Shoppers
Requested ID:	77%	78%
Scanned ID:	51%	55%
Visually Inspected ID:	77%	87%

10% of locations had no signage anywhere in the store, including point of entry and point of purchase.

82% of locations had "we ID" signage at the **point of entry**.

72% of locations had "we ID" signage at the **point of purchase**.

46% of locations had **other signage** regarding selling to minors.



Why is this important?

Ensuring robust tobacco age compliance is crucial for several reasons. Firstly, it helps brands avoid significant legal repercussions that can arise from non-compliance. Secondly, maintaining strict adherence to age verification protocols protects the brand's reputation and fosters trust with consumers and regulatory bodies.

Additionally, effective compliance programs contribute to operational efficiency by minimizing the risk of costly infractions and potential shutdowns. Ultimately, strong compliance measures support the long-term sustainability of the business and the industry, promoting a responsible retail environment.

Contact our team today!
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[Find out more](#)

About Intouch Insight

At Intouch Insight, we specialize in helping multi-location brands achieve operational excellence, exceed customer expectations, and build long-term customer loyalty. As a North American company, we are proud to deliver growth solutions to over 300 of the continent's most beloved brands.

Our solutions are designed to streamline operations, maintain brand standards, and provide actionable insights to help our clients enhance their CX. With over 40 years of CX expertise, we excel in providing our clients with top-notch CX, customer surveys, mobile brands, mystery shopping, as well as operational and compliance audit solutions.