

Digitizing Your Fire Door Inspection

By:



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Introduction

Routine fire door safety inspections have become commonplace in North America, especially if you oversee property management. When a fire door inspection is needed, the most time-consuming part of the process, however, isn't the inspection itself — it's the resulting paperwork.

For every fire door you inspect, you need to create a report. If you are a self-employed fire door inspector, this often happens at the end of the day — potentially even going into the evening. If you are a fire door inspector for a larger company, this might be done at the office, but it still takes approximately 30 minutes (or more!) per door to create a fully document inspection report and eats away time that could be spent on other tasks.

But paperwork is a necessary evil, right? Maybe not... What if we told you that you could do away with it almost all together?

In this eBook, we'll show how to maximize the time spent on fire door inspections to virtually eliminate reporting paperwork using technology. You'll be able to save time, save money, and save the hassle of juggling masses of papers.



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Why Go Paperless?

Going paperless is more than just a buzzword. Besides the obvious environmental impacts, going paperless can help fire door safety inspectors by:

- ✓ Making it easier to organize your notes. Everything is recorded and stored in one place.
- ✓ Keeping your photos in the same file as your documents and measurements — no more uploading and compiling in a spreadsheet when you get back to the office.
- ✓ Cutting down on your service vehicle filing system – no more file boxes in the backseat.
- ✓ Increased security. When you use technology for your fire door safety inspection, your notes are automatically backed up to the Cloud. This means less risk of losing an important piece of paper or measurements.

The reality is that the more efficient you become using technology, the more time you save. With the right field service technology, you can deliver faster and better services overall. If you work for a company, you can work faster and be more efficient without having to work harder. Good technology should simply speed up the time that it takes you to complete tasks. And when everything is stored in an app, it's easily accessible — no more digging through piles of paperwork to find one document.



Time Saving Case Study

There are many benefits to going paperless in your fire door inspections. One of the biggest is the potential time savings.

Case Study

Aspect	Assumption
Physical door inspection – each door	10 minutes
Follow-up with a fully documented report, including photos, full door & frame recommendations	30 minutes
Approx. # of annual door inspections	400 doors
Of those inspections, the number that are one door only	80 doors

This would mean for the year you would spend:

- 67 hours performing inspections
- 40 hours preparing single-door reports
- 120 hours preparing multi-door reports (with 25% efficiencies)

Total time spent for the year based on this case study: 227 hours



Time Saving Case Study

Case Study Continued...

Using a Fire Door Inspection App:

- ✓ Inspection time is the same at 67 hours.
- ✓ Report time is reduced to zero because reports are generated instantly.
- ✓ **That is a 70% time savings, or 160 hours.**

Let's run through a typical inspection process being mindful that the process may change slightly depending on whether you are an independent fire door inspector, work for a door inspection company, or are the employee of an organization that manages properties, such as a property management company or a government organization.



When the Fire Door Safety Inspection is Ordered

Pre-inspection workflow will vary whether you are an inspector or work for a company that performs the inspection internally. However, there are some things in common:

- The inspection has to be scheduled with the appropriate individual.
- If there is a quote involved, it needs to be created.
- If time has to be tracked, an instance has to be created.
- Documentation and research will need to occur to support the inspection – such as reviewing previous reports, lists of doors and openings that need to be inspected, etc.

These are all manual activities that can be performed digitally, meaning:

- ✓ The call can be logged into your app.
- ✓ You can create an estimate, invoice, time tracking ahead of the inspection.
- ✓ You can associate relevant documents to the file.

All of this can happen before you even leave the office — which means less time spent on this work after the inspection.



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At the Inspection

At the inspection, you will have a number of tasks to perform. You may bring pre-created paperwork to complete, such as a checklist or a blank form. But in a digital world, all of that information would be entered on your iPhone or iPad.

When performing your inspection, you will need to deal with:

Labelling: Identifying the door with a QR code or barcode sticker (if not already attached). You will also need to record the type of inspection, the type of door, and recording the fire rating labels on the door and frame. Photos help a lot here when included in documentation and reports.

Visual Inspection: This includes quick checks such as: Does the door swing freely? Does the door close completely? Does it latch securely? Is there anything missing or broken? Photos are helpful here, too.

Hardware Identification: What type of hardware does the door have? For example, fasteners, hinges, latching hardware, closers and coordinators, gaskets, plates, and more.



At the Inspection



Door Operation: This sometimes requires pressure testing.

Door/Frame Clearances: Measuring gaps on both hinge and latch/swing sides. You will need to record measurements and you may take photos as well.

During the inspection you might use checklists to note deficiencies and take photos to document your findings. If work will be required to correct issues, measurements of all aspects of the door and frame will need to be provided. All of these items will play a role in your final report.

All of the above are manual processes that can be digitized using technology. At the end of this eBook, we will summarize different apps and solutions that enable you to go paperless.

After the Inspection

Even when you have completed your inspection, the work is not over yet. In fact, as we outlined in the Time Saving Case Studies section, this may be where the bulk of your time is going. You will need to:

- ✓ Assemble all materials — including notes, photos, and measurements.
- ✓ Prepare your report, including the pass/fail with recommendations to remedy issues.
- ✓ Get the report reviewed, signed off, and sent to the client.
- ✓ If follow-up work is required, you will have to prepare a quote.
- ✓ A follow-up inspection will be required, which may involve an additional sign-off.
- ✓ An invoice may have been assembled at any stage in the above process.

This part of the inspection process can easily take up an hour — or more — of your time *per door*. If you are working in bigger batches of doors, you might not have to create individual reports and thus can save time, but there are still ways to make this task less tedious and more efficient by going paperless.



Choosing the Right Types of Apps to Do Away with the Paperwork

In the previous pages, we've outlined a typical fire door inspection process. If you are performing this process the traditional way — meaning manually with paper documentation — you likely already know the challenges. It can be time-consuming, tedious, difficult to keep track of so many different papers and, ultimately, lead to less efficiency.

However, if we put this same process into practice using the apps that can help complete inspections and reporting faster and be more connected to your team, you will see just how much this technology can boost your efficiency and profitability.



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Choosing the Right Types of Apps to Do Away with Paperwork

Preparing for the Inspection

Actions	Digital Solution
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The inspection has to be scheduled with the appropriate individual.• If there is a quote involved, it needs to be created.• If time has to be tracked, an instance has to be created.• Documentation and research are needed to support the inspection – reviewing previous reports, lists of doors and openings that need to be inspected, etc.	<p>Dispatch software solutions that offer customer relationship management (CRM), like Dispatch Board, or dispatching apps, like Service Call, are great for any professional who has to attend scheduled appointments. It is also helpful when there are multiple team members attending appointments and performing a service that involves invoicing, obtaining sign-offs, etc.</p> <p>That said, the Service Call and Dispatch Board creator, mpengo, has created an inspection tool for fire door inspectors that include some of these capabilities. <i>In the Fire Door Safety App, you can create the order, schedule it, create an estimate, create custom checklists, attach research and documentation, and more.</i></p>



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Choosing the Right Types of Apps to Do Away with the Paperwork

During the Inspection

Actions	Digital Solution
<p>You will have to complete the process of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Labelling.• Visual inspection.• Hardware identification.• Door operation.• Door/frame clearances.	<p>All of this can be achieved using the Fire Door Safety App. With this app, you can also take photos and store them associated to the file and more. Another useful tool is the measurement app that we discuss in our eBook: <i>The Paperless Fire Door Inspector</i>.</p>



Choosing the Right Types of Apps to Do Away with the Paperwork

After the Inspection

Actions	Digital Solution
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Assemble all materials.2. Prepare your report including the pass/fail with recommendations to remedy issues.3. Get the report review, signed off and sent to the client.4. If follow-up work is required, you have to quote the work.5. A follow-up inspection will be required, which may involve an additional sign-off.6. An invoice may have been assembled at any stage in the above process.	<p>This is where it gets really interesting and why having an app to support your fire door safety inspections is critical. All of the data relating to the inspection can be stored in one place, including digital sign-offs. This means that when you are done your inspection, the report is already virtually compiled for you in your app. You can also go back and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create estimates for work needed to be compliant.• Set up subsequent inspections to review work.

Conclusion

Going paperless isn't just a nice-to-have for fire door safety inspections — it can be a gamechanger. When you use an app, like Fire Door Safety, you can record everything in one place, meaning no papers to shuffle around, no figures to record in a spreadsheet, no photos to upload — it is all entered and recorded during the inspection.

This can save a significant amount of time in the post-inspection reporting and invoicing stages. Think of what you could do with that time — take on more inspections, spend time on other profit-building tasks, cut down on administrative resources, or even just finish early for the day. And there are savings to be found during the pre-inspection and inspection process, too.

Exploring technology for your industry will only lead to more efficiency and profitability over all – whether it is because each door becomes more profitable or because your staff's time is completely maximized, and insurance-optimized.



About the Authors



This eBook was produced by mpengo. Gary Jonas, president of mpengo and designer of our apps, including the Fire Door Safety app, contributed to this content.

Although primarily a software developer, Gary worked with a good number of field inspectors to create an app that could readily meet the needs of the industry. He also took the time to join the Door and Hardware Safety association, and attended the courses to certify as an industry partner. These extra steps are just one example of the efforts taken by Gary and his team to ensure good familiarity with the requirements of a proper fire door inspection product — and this dedication extends to other apps they develop.

Gary and the team's passion is mobile app development and usability for field service and inspection-based industries.

[Download a FREE Trial of the Fire Door Safety App Now](#)



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