

 CHEQRROOM

# 5 equipment management challenges for 2022

And how to tackle them



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# Taking stock of a world in flux

*Equipment (and office) managers take care of a whole lot of stuff. Literally – as in actual stuff – but also figuratively. They're in charge of purchasing, renting, maintaining, repairing, and cleaning equipment. Inventorying, tracking and auditing. Keeping everything organized. Managing bookings, reservations, and checkouts. And even evaluating processes, spotting opportunities for improvement and planning future purchases.*

As if that list of responsibilities wasn't enough, equipment management is subject to a host of external influences and challenges as well. To ensure that all the organization's assets are optimally available, teams can collaborate efficiently, and new gear gets purchased on time, equipment managers must take into account:

- the ongoing shift to **working from home**
- faster **staff turnover** across all sectors
- changing user expectations in a **mobile-first world**
- the increased **unpredictability of supply chains**
- a growing focus and reliance on **data-driven insights**
- rising awareness about **cybersecurity threats**

At CHEQROOM, we're on a mission to help **equipment managers in their never-ending quest of keeping chaos at bay**. That's why we created this overview of some of the most pressing challenges in their field. We also added plenty of best practices, tips and tricks and handy features to help them get a grip on asset management in 2022.

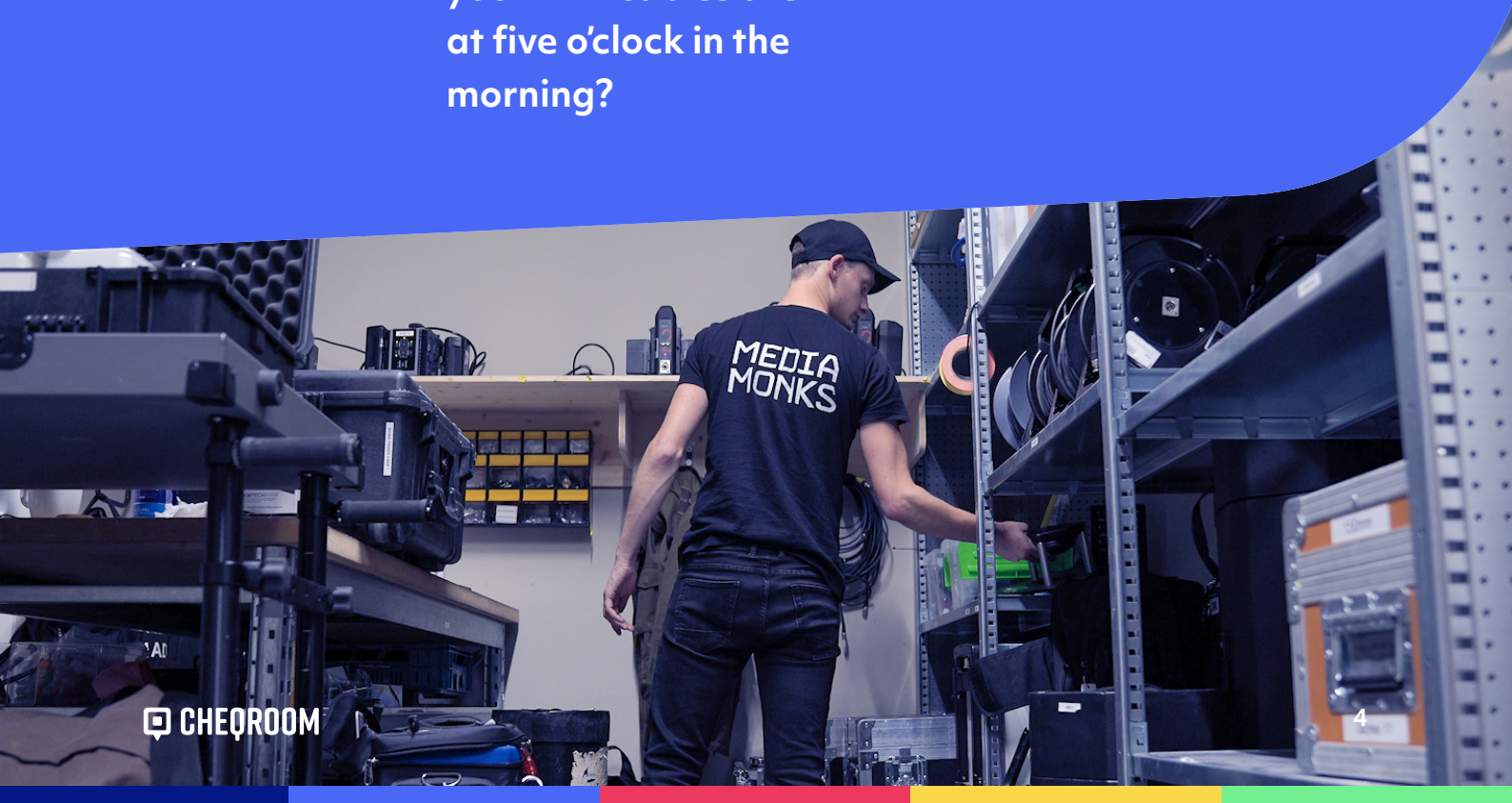
So, if you know an equipment manager in need of some inspiration – or if you are one yourself – you can make the world a little bit brighter by sending them this e-book. That being said, let's dive right in!

# Keeping track of equipment in a work-from-home world

Ah, remember 'the new normal', when offices were closed and we were all working from home most of the time? So 2020. And 2021. And, well, pretty much still the case in early 2022 (the time of writing). Safe to say that 'remote working' isn't going anywhere. But what does that mean for equipment management?

This new reality hasn't exactly made it easier to keep track of office supplies, AV gear, and other company equipment. When Kurt takes home an extra monitor for smoother coding, Hana snags a wireless keyboard for optimal typing speed, and Marie-Helene needs her set of special camera lenses, **it pretty quickly becomes hard to know where company stuff is – much less in what state it is.**

**“Do you know where your XLR cables are at five o'clock in the morning?”**





# The case for accountability

That's why effective equipment management in a work-from-home world goes hand in hand with a little something called 'accountability': ensuring everyone in your company feels responsible for the items they're using or taking home.

Of course, you can't change your colleagues – *looking at you, Dieter* – but you can **nudge them by:**



setting **clear rules and restrictions** on which items can be taken home for prolonged periods of time, for which projects, and by whom



creating a **sign-out agreement** users need to sign before they get the equipment, including **a description of the condition the asset is in** (e.g., new, slightly used, barely holding it together, etc.)



sending **reminders via email, text message, or push notification** when items are due in order to eliminate any excuses for late returns



giving users a **heads-up via a dedicated Slack or Microsoft Teams** channel

And for your own peace of mind, make sure you **track the history of each asset** on a timeline.

## Getting custody over equipment

What if equipment managers could assign assets to users for an unspecified amount of time? You know, like when you got a bunny rabbit for your fifth birthday (how's Fluffy doing now, by the way)? One of CHEQROOM's most recent features, Custody, does exactly that. It also tells you who has what item, and how long they've had it. [Read more about it here.](#)

# Keep calm and collaborate

At work, we're all one big happy family. That is, until someone urgently needs a battery pack or hot shoe and no one has any idea which colleague currently has it. **As an equipment manager, you must know who has what asset, and for how long it will be in their custody.** And ideally, your team needs to have access to that information as well.

The latter is especially true in today's hybrid work model where people often don't come into the office for days or even weeks. Making information about assets' whereabouts easily accessible from anywhere helps to limit frustrations. Pair with smooth communication tools, and you're one (very small) step closer to winning a Nobel Peace Prize.

## Getting your head in the cloud

Cloud-based applications allow you to track company assets from anywhere, at any time. Some even enable remote collaboration and empower teams to share equipment smartly.

Moreover, **by choosing cloud technology** such as CHEQROOM, organizations eliminate the hassle of running software on-site.

Instead of spending lots of money on expensive hardware and regular maintenance, they pay a fixed monthly price/fee: no alarms and no surprises. Security, redundancy, software updates and seamless integration with your enterprise systems are all taken care of as well.

Call us biased, but at CHEQROOM, we hold cloud technology in high regard. [Take a look.](#)



# Beat the crowds

Does your company have central storage where folks need to pick up and drop off equipment on the regular?

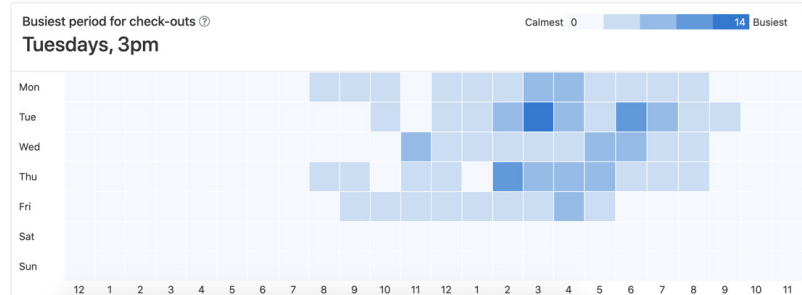
Create a central calendar for employees to consult [the busiest and least busy times](#). It will make the whole process a lot more efficient – and safer!

## Check-outs / Busiest Times

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## Nothing new about this “new” normal

One thing is clear: when it comes to working from home, we might as well drop the ‘new’ in ‘new normal’.

However, **accountability, transparency, and efficient communication** are key to making remote working feasible in the long term. New technologies – including but not limited to a nifty equipment management tool called CHEQROOM – can provide essential support.





# The ins and outs of employee turnover and the gig economy

Before 'the great resignation', there was job-hopping. The undeniable fact is: people switch jobs a lot easier today than they did a few decades ago. On top of that, businesses often outsource certain assignments to agencies or freelancers.

For the equipment manager, who needs to ensure every piece of equipment is accounted for and prepared for new users, that might be a challenge. Luckily, technology is catching up.

**43%** of US companies indicate that equipment onboarding for new hires is a major issue



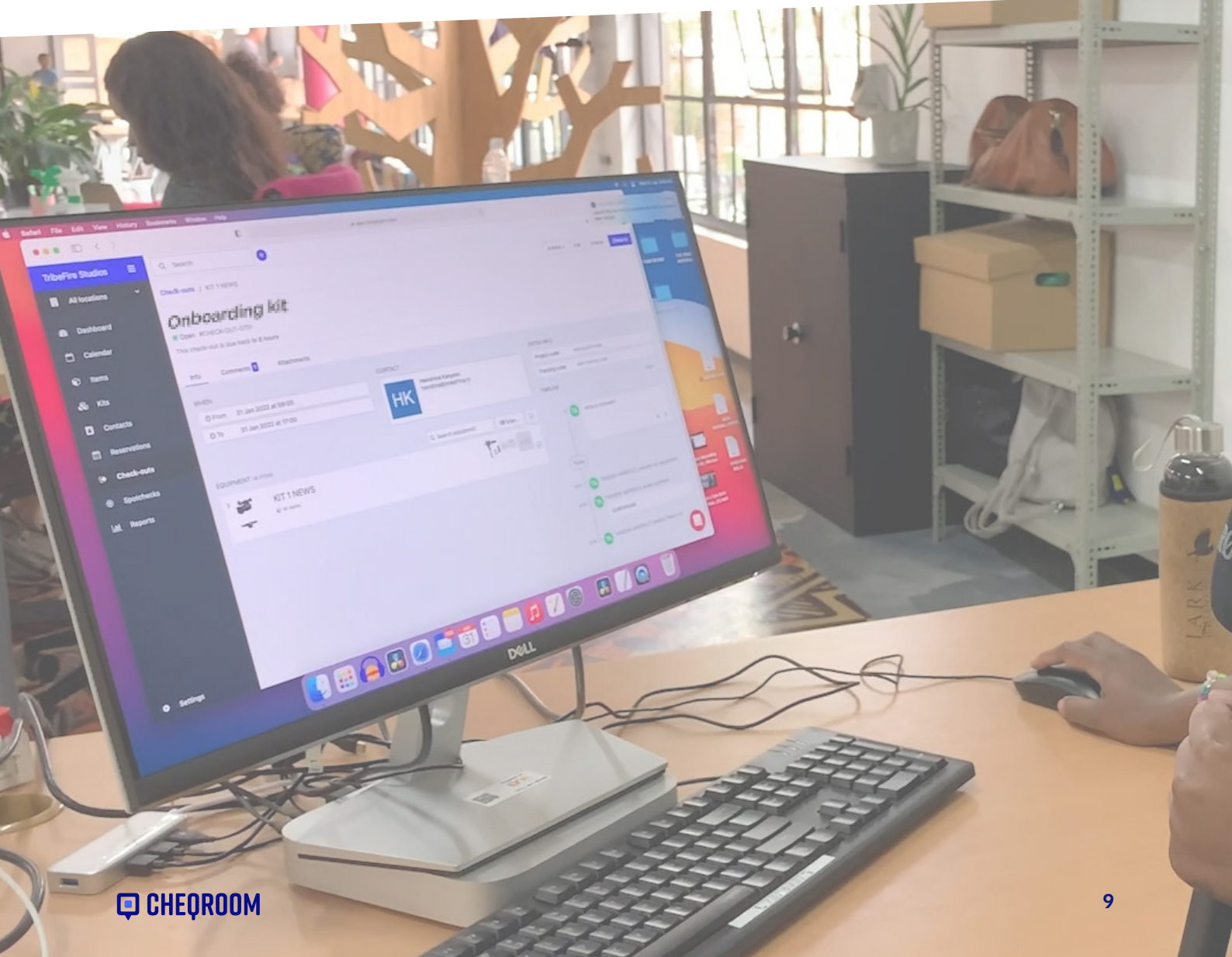


# Expediting the onboarding process

A good onboarding program can have tremendous impact on how long people will remain at a certain company. In fact, according to a survey by CareerBuilders, companies lose 1 in 10 people to a poor onboarding experience.

While it might not be immediately obvious, equipment managers have an important role to play here too. By giving new hires access to all the tools they need to take on their new challenge – and making sure the equipment they get is in good condition –

you're doing your part in setting them up for success. At the same time, it is in your organization's best interest that the newest team members can start doing their magic as quickly as possible.



# Free the freelancers

The same goes for freelancers, whose number is expected to grow from 57 to 68 million by 2027 in the US alone. Needless to say, if your organization is planning on hiring third-party experts, having a solid equipment check-out and check-in process in place is an absolute must.

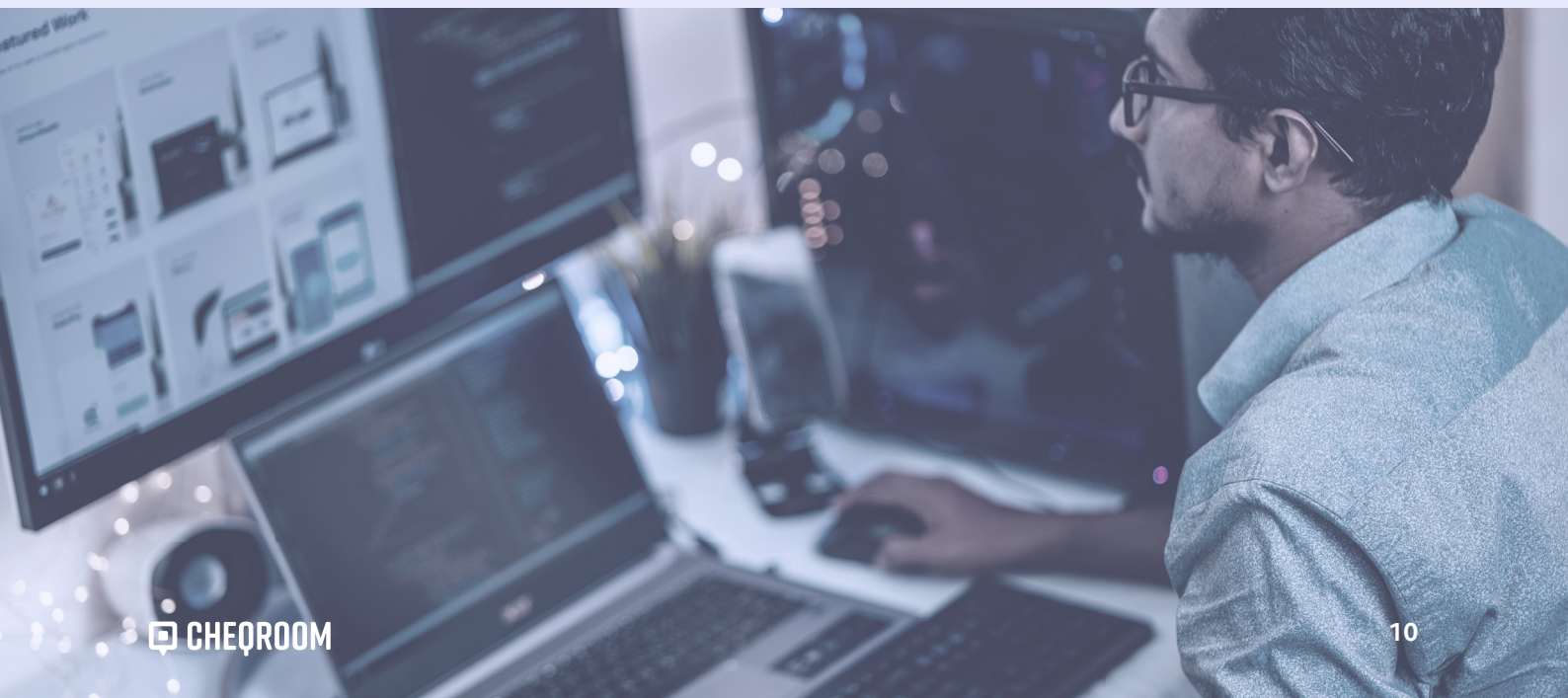
**With a centralized equipment management platform, you can easily track, manage and organize the check-in and check-out processes.** You could even set-up a [hybrid equipment room](#), where users and freelancers have the freedom to check out whatever they need, whenever they need it – all while the equipment manager keeps a watchful eye, of course.

## Where all the freelancers at?

According to a survey by Payoneer, the primary fields of freelancing are:

- Web & graphic design (30%)
- Programming (19%)
- IT (10%)
- Multimedia production (8%)

Most of these fields require at least some form of equipment or asset sharing, whether it's a storage device, laptop or PC, or AV equipment.







# Single Sign-On: a one-stop solution to securely add and remove users

More external experts requiring access to company equipment means increased risk of security breaches. Which is why you need a bulletproof authentication system. But keeping track of who has which rights is often simply unmanageable.

Luckily, a bunch of Really Smart People fixed that problem with Single Sign-On: a user authentication solution that allows users to access multiple accounts with only one login. That's not just great news for users though: it also makes maintaining and updating a user database a lot easier for administrators. So when the next bunch of new hires starts, or multiple people leave at the same time – we hope not! – updating user rights for enterprise software can be done in a heartbeat.

[At CHEQROOM, we're all aboard the SSO hype train.](#)

# Managing (AV) equipment on the move

Traveling with your family can be quite stressful: did everyone bring their toothbrush and clean underwear? Now imagine having to travel with thousands or even millions of dollars' worth of gear. If you're an equipment manager for a production company, that probably sounds familiar. When the world is your team's playground, you'd better make sure all your toys are always accounted for.



Time for a scary story. During the 2018 World Cup, while everyone else was stocking up on beer and snacks, our client **Fox Sports** – the sports programming division of Fox Corporation – **had to ship over 3,400 pieces of equipment to over 250 different locations**. Total value: 2 million dollars. And while the French celebrated their win, it all had to be shipped back home to Los Angeles. But one crucial piece of equipment was missing: a coffee machine. Guess which item wasn't put in CHEQROOM?





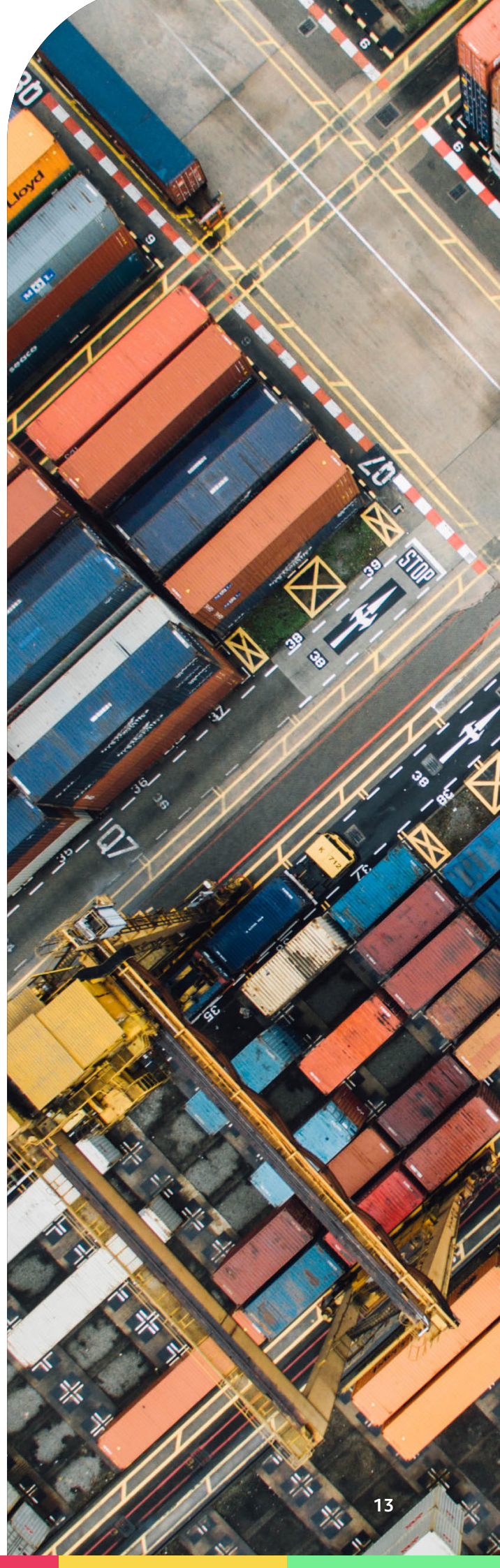
# Visible, accountable, and available

We're not sure whether the people at Fox Sports ever recovered from this tragedy, but the fact remains that **shipping equipment to multiple locations is a pretty challenging endeavor**. While most productions are somewhat less extreme in terms of scale and total value, there are **three main points** that always need to be covered:

-  **Visibility:** Where is every piece of equipment?
-  **Accountability:** Who is responsible for what?
-  **Availability:** Is this specific piece of equipment available for use?

*Now, imagine you're an equipment manager at Fox, and you must remember these three points for over 3,400 pieces. Unless you're Rain Man, it's unlikely you'll succeed – no matter how big and advanced your Excel spreadsheet is.*

With specialized equipment management software, however, things start to look a lot more feasible. You can put a scannable tag on every piece, manage user rights and accountabilities, and most importantly: consult the whereabouts of every item wherever, whenever, from your phone. Just, please, don't forget to label the coffeemaker.



# The whole kit and caboodle

Another way to make equipment on the move more manageable is grouping items together as a kit. A kit is – you guessed it – a group of items that belong together, get used together, travel together and – ideally – come back together when the project is done. They always remain in the same configurations, such as:

- A camera body, standard set of lenses, memory card, and tripod
- A podcast set with microphones and headsets
- A guitar, speaker, amp, pedal board and cables
- ....

**Working with kits** can make equipment management a whole lot easier. **Not only does it save plenty of time, it also prevents double-bookings** and improves team collaboration. In addition, you'll get a clearer picture of which equipment needs to be replaced. At CHEQROOM, we love kits so much, we even made a webinar about it, [which you can watch here](#).





# Tag that asset: the proliferation of asset tags

Efficient equipment management and asset tags go together like Meghan Markle and Prince Harry – and they're just about as popular. That's because these handy, scannable labels make equipment management a whole lot easier, even in the direst circumstances.

**The most popular scanning device for QR codes is the iPhone.**

An 'asset tag' usually comes in the form of an adhesive label with a unique serial number or (bar)code that is attached to equipment. By coupling the code on the tag with your equipment management software, you'll get relevant information about the asset's status, whereabouts, current user, expiration data, etc.

While most tags are made from laminated polyester or anodized aluminum and a simple bar- or QR-code, there are plenty of other options as well, including RFID-, NFC-, GPS- and BTLE-codes.



# Tag teamwork

No wonder asset tags are so popular: they are by far the easiest and most cost-effective way of tracking equipment electronically. If you opt for a non-fancy, paper barcode version, they'll cost you no more than a few cents apiece. You can even print them yourself. And as far as scanners go, your smartphone will most likely do the trick.

## Tag into your full potential

In short, if you're aiming for smooth workflows, maximum security, and no-fuzz collaboration, tagging equipment is a real game changer. We're so excited about asset tags, we wrote a whole book about it. [Read our asset label e-book.](#)

Want to get straight down to business and get your hands on some upscale, customizable asset labels that will survive drone flights, constant travel and whatnot? [Get free asset labels.](#)

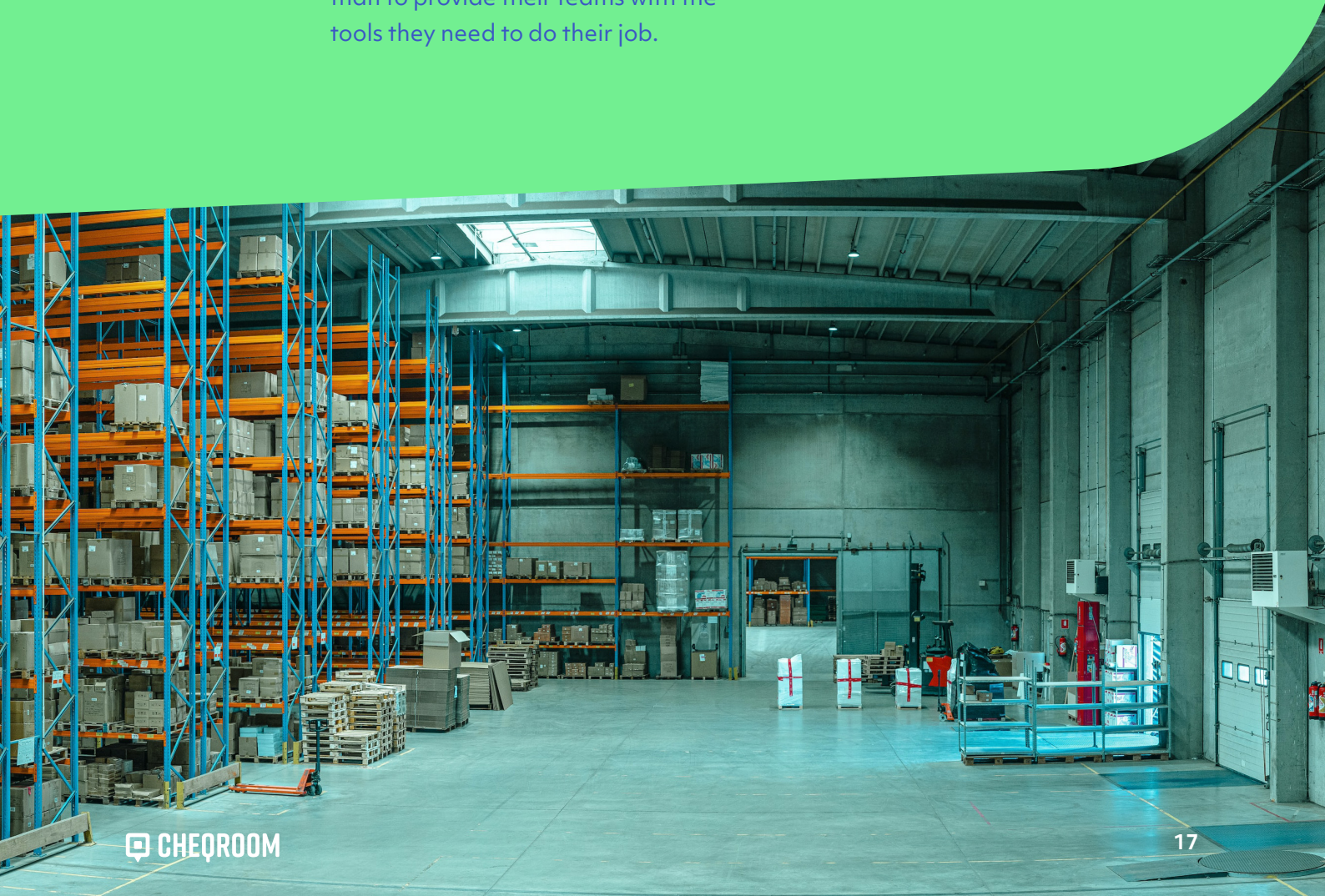




# How disrupted supply chains can grind your gear(s)

Have you tried to purchase a PlayStation 5 in the last year? While the gaming console had already been released as of November 2020, it's still almost impossible to get in February 2022. The same goes for AV equipment, laptops, and other critical company assets. **All over the world, disrupted supply chains pose a potential threat for equipment managers** who want nothing more than to provide their teams with the tools they need to do their job.

Over the past few years, it became apparent that global supply chains are not as resilient as we expected. Technological devices – gaming consoles, but also cameras, laptops, etc. – are particularly affected by the Great Microchip Shortage. But the global pandemic had a long-lasting impact on virtually every supply chain.



# Building supply chain resilience

As an equipment manager, your job is to safeguard business continuity by making sure functional gear is available to your colleagues when they need it. Which is why you also need to **take into account disrupted supply chains when planning new purchases** or ordering replacements.

## Here are some tips:

- This might be a no-brainer, but take excellent care of your equipment and plan regular maintenance. It's arguably the best way to avoid new purchases – and long waiting times.
- Map out who you are currently getting your equipment from and identify their biggest risks factors.
- Make a list of alternative suppliers in case things go south with one of your current partners. Negotiate deals in advance to increase your flexibility.
- Go local as much as possible: not only does it lower your carbon footprint, it's also less likely that your gear will get stuck in transit.

# Innovative inventory management

The most important aspect of building supply chain resilience for equipment managers, however, is efficient inventory management. If you know in advance which items are due for replacement or repair soon and plan accordingly,

you're less likely to be confronted with missing or faulty items. Moreover, you won't have to settle for second-rate gear just to get the job done. This brings us to the last chapter in this e-book.

# The data-driven equipment manager

It's obvious by now: equipment managers pretty much need to be omniscient beings. They must know who has the gear, for how long, when it's due back, in what state it is, etc. Luckily, they can count on advanced asset management solutions to provide them with instant answers. But here's the kicker: because these solutions collect so much data, they can provide relevant insights to make super smart decisions.

Knowing what you have is great. Also knowing how, when and where it is being used is even better, as it enables you to **spot improvement opportunities**. For example:

- When your organization consists of multiple locations, **knowing which equipment is needed most where** will tell you how to divide your assets between them.
- Knowing which equipment is used the most (and which the least) will tell you when it makes sense to purchase more of one item (or **when to resort to renting or leasing** for others).
- With insights into the frequency or time spent on repair or maintenance for each item, you can **start planning ahead and avoid unexpected downtime**.
- Similarly, knowing when items are used the most allows you to **schedule maintenance** at the least busy times.





## Get to the root of the problem

Going one step further, equipment management data can help you reveal underlying issues as well. Have a laptop or camera of a particular brand that keeps breaking down? Now you know what to avoid. Are new employees bringing in stuff for repair more often than others? Time to update your training program.

## Stocking up / cleaning out your closet

These insights can also help you to make smarter purchasing decisions. You'll have a clear idea of which brands offer the best bang for the buck, which equipment gets used in extreme conditions most often, and when to invest in back-up equipment.

After a while, you'll be able to **calculate the average cost of equipment and the time spent tracking down lost equipment**. Centralizing all this information – price, warranty, usage, etc. – helps you make the business case for renting or acquiring shiny new gear. And we all love new gear, right?



# CHEQROOM cheat sheet

Don't have the time to read through the whole e-book, but want to impress your friends with some amazing insights? We've got you covered.

With cloud technology, you don't have to run asset management software on expensive on-site servers. Instead, you pay a fixed monthly fee, resulting in increased predictability.

>>> Learn more on p. 4



Single Sign-On is a user authentication solution that allows users to access multiple accounts with only one login. It also makes maintaining and updating the user database a whole lot easier.

>>> Learn more on p. 8

Managing equipment on the move? Do yourself a favor and create kits: groups of items that belong together, get used together, travel together and – ideally – come back together.

>>> Learn more on p. 12





Asset tags are by far the easiest and most cost-effective way of tracking equipment electronically. No wonder they're so popular!

>>> [Learn more on p. 15](#)

Disrupted supply chains are affecting businesses everywhere. As an equipment manager, you need to anticipate these when planning purchases.

>>> [Learn more on p. 17](#)



Data insights from equipment management software can tell you which brands offer the best bang for the buck, which devices get lost, stolen or broken most often, etc. This can help you make smarter purchasing decisions.

>>> [Learn more on p. 19](#)

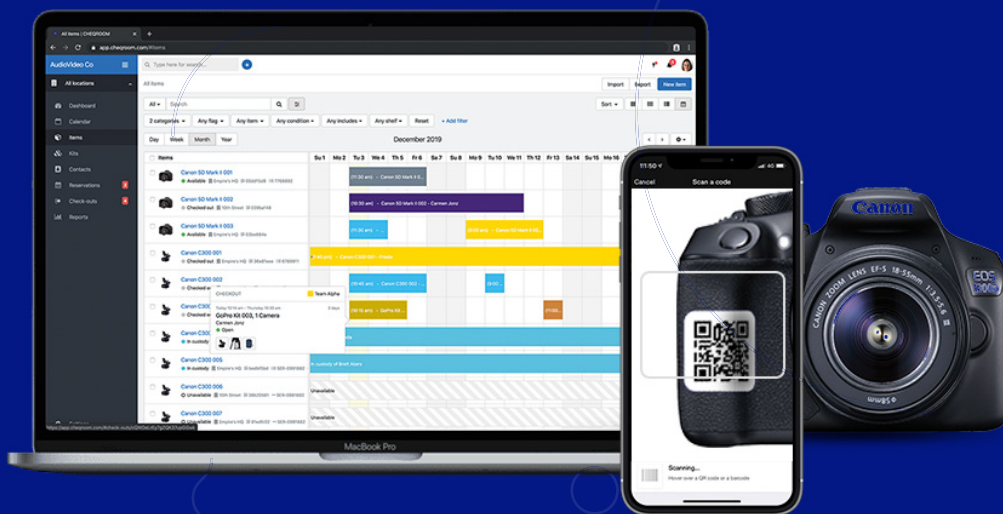


Future-proof your  
equipment management:









# Check in with CHEQROOM

Do you know what Google, Fox Sports, ESPN, Vice, Kent State University and drone manufacturer DJI have in common? Besides being awesome organizations, they also don't lose their stuff. You know why? Because they put their trust in CHEQROOM.

With CHEQROOM's mobile equipment management solutions, teams can manage and track valuable equipment from anywhere and enjoy sophisticated inventory control without a spreadsheet in sight.



## Check out these benefits:

-  Quick & easy equipment checkout
-  Reduce loss & damage control
-  Automated notifications and reminders
-  Flagging damaged equipment via the mobile app
-  Depreciation, analytics & reporting
-  Track item history
-  Keep your users accountable
-  Allow team members & freelancers to make their own equipment bookings