



# COMPARING COMMERCIAL REACH-IN REFRIGERATION

## WHITE PAPER SERIES



Purchasing a new reach-in refrigerator for a commercial kitchen can be a daunting task for even the most experienced foodservice operators. With so many features, styles, and brands to consider, the research process can be overwhelming. In this white paper series, we'll discuss critical factors to consider when selecting a reach-in cabinet so that you can confidently make a selection for your kitchen needs.

### PART 1 OF 3: WHAT'S IN A CABINET?

THERE IS A TRAUlsen DIFFERENCE, LET US SHOW YOU.

# COMPARING COMMERCIAL REACH-IN REFRIGERATION

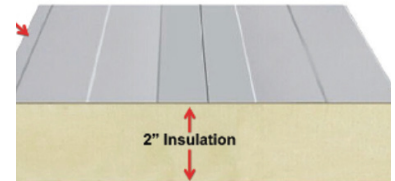
## CABINET COMPONENTS

When comparing refrigeration brands, many typically refer to the exterior and interior finish as primary characteristics relating to cabinet durability. However, there is much more to consider. What provides strength to the cabinet is the whole “sandwich” consisting of metal inside and outside with thick, foamed in place insulation in between. The thicker the insulation, the stronger the cabinet will be, providing for increased cabinet durability.

Foaming the cabinet in place may not sound like much of a benefit, however, it is a major component of building a strong, long-lasting piece of equipment. When structural components such as mullions between the doors are constructed and insulated separate from the cabinet and installed later, they can become progressively loose through time as the doors are continually opened and closed, potentially undermining the cabinet’s strength and longevity.

Related to this are the breaker caps which serve as a thermal break between the cold cabinet interior and the warm exterior outside. These are continually exposed to damage during cabinet loading and unloading. Some brands construct these from plastic or PVC that can crack and break. Cracks and breaks in plastic are prime areas for food particles and bacteria to settle and grow, potentially causing a contamination issue down the line. Breaker caps constructed from stainless steel are far superior because although they may scratch or dent during use, it is highly unlikely they will crack or break.

Most refrigeration brands feature self-closing doors. However, many are built with spring loaded hinges which not only lack a stay-open feature but can also break. Cam lift hinges provide both stay open and self-closing action and are far less prone to damage allowing some brands to offer lifetime warranties on these hinges.



### FOAM INSULATION

Foaming the cabinet in place provides structural integrity to a cabinet.



### STAINLESS STEEL BREAKER CAPS

Breaker caps constructed from stainless steel are less prone to breaking into pieces or cracking.



### CAM LIFT DOOR HINGES

Cam lift hinges close doors automatically and have a 120 degree stay-open feature.

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## INTERIOR LIGHTING

LEDs have mostly replaced incandescent light bulbs and just about every brand offers automatic operation when the door is opened. However, there are several differing methods in which these are operated. Those built with exposed “plunger” type switches are prone to damage during product loading/unloading. Repairing a damaged light switch can cost as much as \$200.

Other brands make use of “concealed” switches, either magnetic “proximity” type or concealed within the door hinges. Both are far less likely to become damaged during use.

## NOT ALL SHELVES ARE THE SAME

It is not just about the number of shelves provided, but also consider the shelf type, surface area, mounting, and individual weight-bearing capacity. Chrome-plated shelves have the potential to flake off their coating through wear, which can end up in food. To prevent this, epoxy or clear coated, or stainless steel shelves are far preferable. Physical gaps between the shelves on two and three-section models limit storage area, so look for those where these shelves meet with no gaps. Different mountings each have their pros and cons. Most brands utilize the pilaster and mounting arrangement. This offers greater flexibility in terms of spacing and maximum number of shelves, but in many cases are difficult to remove for cleaning (requiring tools) and are prone to accidental falling.

Some brands offer the shelf pin system. These provide a better alternative to pilasters and clips as they are easily removable (without tools) and provide a very firm mounting for the shelves, making accidental falling extremely unlikely.

### CONCEALED SWITCH



Door hinge houses a special concealed light-activating switch, making it less likely to get damaged than exposed switches.



### SHELF PIN SYSTEM



Shelf pins allow quick shelf removal and provide firm support for shelves.



### ABOUT TRAULSEN

Traulsen, an ITW Food Equipment Group brand, has been providing the most trusted refrigeration equipment for foodservice and food retail operations since 1938. Traulsen offers a broad refrigeration product offering that includes reach-ins, roll-ins, undercounters, blast chillers, prep tables, merchandisers and milk coolers. Traulsen is part of ITW Food Equipment Group LLC (a subsidiary of Illinois Tool Works) and is proud to be an ENERGY STAR® Partner of the Year since 2008. To learn more about Traulsen, visit [www.traulsen.com](http://www.traulsen.com) or connect with us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/traulsen](http://www.facebook.com/traulsen).

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