ANNUAL HEALTH CHECKLIST

Assessing the health of your business tech and possible risks

Importance of annual check

Running a business means facing constant surprises.

But when it comes to your tech operations, you can predict, plan for and minimize the disruptions.

Regular assessment reveals risks early, helping you to develop strategies and allocate appropriate budgets for mitigation. How often should you run the assessments? Once a year is a good starting point, but choose the frequency that works for your business.

Use this guide's questions and actions as a starting point to evaluate your current state and build a practical tech resilience strategy for your organization.

Questions? Reach out for personalized guidance.

Vendor Assessment

Questions to ask

- Is the benefit of using this vendor's product justifies the cost?
- Is the rate of subscription increase sustainable for your operations?
- Are there features that you pay for but do not use
- Can you exit the contract without penalties?

- Is your data locked in vendor's ecosystem?
- Is the vendor stable?

Actions to take

- Perform inventory of all vendors.
- Create a vendor replacement list with at least 2 alternatives for each critical function and run pilot tests.
- Review usage metrics and cancel underutilized services.
- Identify tools with overlapping capabilities and consolidate them.
- Note vendor red flags like unjustified price hikes, instability of shifting support focus.

Tip: when making vendor lists, don't forget all SaaS providers and your website platform/host

Marketing and Content Ownership

Questions to ask

- Do you maintain backups of your contacts and leads outside your marketing platform?
- Do you keep backups of marketing assets posted to social media?
- Is performing content reused on your website?
- Do you have alternative lead acquisition channels if your primary channel fails?

Actions to perform

- Maintain clean customer lists and social media followers. Review quarterly, removing duplicate and stale records.
- Repurpose performing social content into blog posts, case studies or resources on your website.
- Backup your website.
- Build additional lead channels, focusing on the ones you can control (like email)

Data

Questions to ask

- Have you categorized your data based on importance?
- Are you collecting sufficient volume of business data?

- Do you have local copy of critical data (i.e. customer list, financial information)?
- How old is your backup?
- Are your backups stored in easily portable (non-proprietary) formats so the data can be used if platform goes away?

Actions to perform

- Implement 3-2-1 backup rules (3 copies, 2 storage locations, 1 offsite).
- Ensure that your critical data is backed up regularly (daily for critical).
- Test backup restoration.
- Check that data is being collected properly.

Business Continuity

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Questions to ask

- Do you have a documented plan in place if a critical vendor is not available?
- Have you defined your maximum acceptable downtime for critical systems?
- How quickly can you redirect the business operations to a different flow in case of outage or account shutdown (i.e. payment, website hosting, etc)?
- Were those alternative plans tested?
- Do you know how to be informed on service restoration status and scheduled maintenance downtime?

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Actions to perform

- Maintain contact list for vendor support
- Create and test disaster playbook covering the most typical scenarios - payment processing failure, web and app hosting outage, data breach and vendor shutdown.
- Train team on recovery procedures.

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Innovation

Questions to ask

- Do you evaluate emerging technologies for competitive advantage?
- Do you have budget for innovation research?
- Do you have internal team capable of evaluating new solutions?
- Is there a process for deciding if technology worth pursuing from ROI standpoint?

Actions to perform

- Create and train innovation team to stay on top of latest developments.
- Stay on top of industry developments.
- Allocate budget and time for pilot projects
- Define framework for rapid tech evaluation

Annual Summary

Tip: create annual scorecard and strategic To Do list to document your progress

Questions to ask

- What risks/blind spots have you identified?
- Are there new opportunities?
- What are the top 3 priorities for this year?