IT Systems Health Check

Self-Assessment Checklist

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AN IMPORTANT STEP TOWARD BUSINESS CONTINUITY

IT best practices aren't created overnight. They come from years of proactive management, careful monitoring and adjusting, and constant learning. That's why all IT experts stress the importance of performing a regular IT health check. It's vital for companies to not only understand their current systems' gaps and make a plan that holistically addresses them, but how to maintain an optimal system once they are addressed.

Since you're reading this document, then we hope that your need arises from your understanding that IT systems are affected by variables outside of your control (not because of consistent breakages and user issues that are causing business interruptions). Whatever the reason, this checklist provides you with the baseline considerations that you must include in your self-assessment to ensure data security, peak network performance, and consistent uptime.

We're an Email or Phone Call Away

If at any point in this process you have questions or need assistance, you're welcome to contact us. We pride ourselves on providing Kitsap County businesses with IT guidance that they can rely on. If your company is in the Kitsap County or neighboring areas, you can always reach out to our team at Biz@HDCav.com or 360-930-6990.

IT SYSTEMS HEALTH CHECKLIST

The checklist can help you identify:

- If you have performance or stability issues that may cause production outages, delays, or financial impacts.
- Any data, authorization, or authentication security holes.
- Any gaps in the backup and disaster recovery plan and business continuity compliance.
- The current and required monitoring and alerting processes.
- The level of potential for data corruption or error.
- Licensing concerns.
- Minimum hardware requirements.
- If outsourced support may be appropriate for your needs.

This list is designed to walk you through each aspect of your IT systems, focusing on key elements that can identify problems. Simply by understanding if your company understands these needs, you can begin to form or refine your own IT policies and tracking that form the backbone of your system maintenance. They will also save you time, money, and headaches when you assess adding a technology vendor or dissolving an agreement.

Though this checklist is easily filled out by marking the boxes, remember that it is vital you document your findings, as well as any recommendations or needs that you discover. Documentation is the key to creating your own self-assessment report which can serve as instruction for your internal staff or as a map for a Managed Service Provider. Either way, spending a little time to investigate each of the following and capture the results will speed up your move to a healthy, manageable IT network.

Policies & Processes

Well-documented systems are essential to help you take care of routine procedures and emergencies as immediately as possible.

Is there an IT Acceptable Use Policy and do the employees understand it?

Do you have a written IT procedure in place for offboarding staff members and locking down their access across all of your internal applications and cloud services?

Does your staff have a defined procedure for escalating IT issues?

Do you have password policies in place and are they enforced?

Do you have a policy in place for handling IT security issues or data breaches?

Do you use named, audited administration accounts to make changes to internal and cloud-based IT systems?

Are your administrative practices documented and updated regularly to reflect change?

Do you have a documented data protection policy?

Do you have a documented IT disaster recovery policy?

Do you have a Business Continuity plan?

Do you have an up-to-date map of your critical network infrastructure?

Internet Service Providers & Cloud Services

Tracking your online assets allows for easier management and quicker answers if you need to contact your service providers.

Can you track if your website is continuously available? Do you receive notification if it is down?

Do you have a consolidated list of all of your Internet service providers and emergency contact information?

Do you know how much bandwidth is being used and can you tell when it's time to get more?

Do you have a consolidated list of all of your Cloud Service Providers and their support contact information?

Can you pinpoint the internal cause of Internet connection slowdowns beyond web traffic?

Can you verify that your external service providers are meeting their agreed service levels?

Security

Arguably one of the most important areas to always keep updated. These are designed to make sure your computers and network stay safe from threats, both external and internal.

Do you have active measures in place that scan all emails and web traffic for known threats?

Do you have a defined password policy and is it enforced?

Are processes in place to ensure regular patch management of desktops and applications?

Are critical updates regularly deployed to all servers and workstations?

Can you verify that your virus protection system is working across the board?

Can you verify if personal storage devices have accessed the network, potentially leading to information leakage?

Does your firewall have an active IPS?

Does your firewall notify you of high-risk security alerts?

Do you provide secured password management tools to encourage staff to use strong passwords across all company resources?

If you have compliance requirements to follow (such as PCI-DSS, HIPAA, ITAR, NIST, etc.), do you feel comfortable that you are following them adequately enough to minimize your risk exposure?

Are regular external security audits performed?

Does your staff receive regular security training?

Data Protection: Backup and Recovery

Backing up your applications, files, and data is critical to guarantee restoration after a failure or emergency.

Do you have a daily backup system and process?

Do you have a reporting system to verify the success of backups and is it checked daily?

Are you notified if there are large variances in the number of files backed up day to day?

Is the data backed up off-site and imaged locally for quick restoration in the event of a disaster?

Do you regularly test your backups to ensure they work?

How fast can you get failed systems back up and running, and is that amount of downtime tolerable for your business?

Desktops & Support

Making sure your users' desktop support needs are met quickly and efficiently helps you achieve optimal productivity and employee satisfaction.

Do employees get support when they need it within 30 minutes or less?

Are desktop users able to track their support requests via a ticketing system?

Do you have a single helpdesk that covers all technical needs and triages to other vendors as necessary?

Are desktops managed such that patches are installed, malware is removed, and viruses cleaned regularly?

Do you have a desktop standard based on department to ensure every user has the applications they need based on their job function?

Asset Management

You have processes in place to manage your cash, and your IT assets are no different. Managing your IT assets is as important as reconciling your bank account.

Can you report on which applications are installed on your network desktops?

Do you track how many licenses you have for each application?

Is there a difference between the number of installed applications and those that you own?

Can you tell if there are more copies of Microsoft Office running on the network than you have licensed?

Can you identify if someone has installed an unauthorized application, such as BitTorrent or a Bitcoin miner, opening you to potential security breaches and data loss?

Has hardware been removed / added / replaced in workstations without authorization?

Can you tell when your warranties are up on every workstation?

Do you have a comprehensive list of workstation and server serial numbers for warranty and insurance purposes, and is it completely up to date?

Do you know when to replace your workstations or servers?

Can you track questions about network peripherals, such as printers, including things like:

When will our printers run out of toner?

When will they need new fusers or drums?

When should they be replaced?

If you wish to have a complete diagnostic report of findings with a plan to correct, stabilize, and properly maintain any issues found, then contact us directly. In many areas, a formal assessment from an MSP requires skilled calculation and our teams perform these kids of assessments every day. Your assessment will most likely be free of charge. Contact us to find out more.

Help Desk Cavalry

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