2025 Cybersecurity Essentials Checklist

Managed IT | Co-Managed IT | Cybersecurity

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Does Every Business Need to Worry About Cybersecurity?

These days, the answer is a resounding "**yes**". As widespread and indiscriminate cyberattacks have become the status quo, small, medium, and large businesses have become increasingly vulnerable, facing a growing array of cyber threats that can devastate their operations, finances, and reputation.

In fact, the global cost of ransomware or other malicious attacks is expected to exceed a staggering

$10.5 Trillion

in 2025 (**Cybersecurity Ventures**). And according to **IBM's 2024 Cost of Data Breach** report, the average cost for recovering from a breach has risen to **$4.8 million**. For many businesses, a cyberattack at that scale can be fatal.

The reality is, cybersecurity is no longer optional—it's a critical necessity for any business looking to protect its future. This comprehensive checklist will walk you through the essential elements you need to build a robust cybersecurity posture and ensure your company is prepared to mitigate emerging threats.

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Hardware Security

The foundation of your company's cybersecurity starts with your core hardware infrastructure—from servers and firewalls to workstations and network devices. Regardless of your technical expertise, you should be able to identify your business's primary hardware devices.

While having the right enterprise-grade equipment is essential, proper installation is just as important. Professional configuration of your hardware ensures your business can run smoothly and securely.

Can you identify your:

- [ ] **Hardware Firewall?**
- [ ] **Router/Modem?**
- [ ] **LAN Switch?**
- [ ] **Is your hardware properly configured to protect you now and as your business grows?**
- [ ] **Do you and your employees know what to do if there is a problem?**

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Software Security

Don't let your cybersecurity be an open invitation for bad actors. While familiar tools like antivirus programs and spam filters provide baseline protection, they require constant vigilance to stay effective.

The first line of defense is ensuring your workstations have the correct software configured properly. Leaving systems unpatched, such as using the outdated Windows 7 software, is like leaving the front door wide open. Security updates aren't just minor tweaks—they plug known vulnerabilities that criminals can exploit to infiltrate your defenses.

If you don't keep your software up to date, you're rolling out the red carpet for attackers to gain access. Once inside, they can monitor your activities, prepare larger assaults, infect your network with ransomware, or steal your most valuable data.

As soon as software updates are available, make it your top priority to install them. And upgrade unsupported programs as soon as possible.

Do all your workstations have:

- [ ] **Updated Operating Systems and Applications**
- [ ] **Antivirus/Anti-Malware Protection**
- [ ] **Software Firewalls?**
- [ ] **Website Blacklisting?**
- [ ] **Robust Email Filters?**

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Breach Readiness

Let's face it—in today's world, it's not a matter of if your business will be targeted, but **when**. That's why preparing for a potential breach is essential. Having the right safeguards in place can mean the difference between a minor incident and a full-blown catastrophe that can cripple your business's money, data and reputation.

Don't wait for disaster to strike. Take proactive steps to fortify your defenses and minimize your risk.

- [ ] **Do you have properly configured and regularly tested data backups?**
- [ ] **Have you set up strict user access controls that are reviewed annually?**
- [ ] **Are all your mobile devices and laptops encrypted?**
- [ ] **Have you enabled multi-factor authentication wherever available?**

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Incident Response

Unfortunately, even the most diligent security measures can't prevent every cyberattack. But having the right incident response plan can minimize the damage and get your operations back on track quickly.

Cybersecurity threats are always evolving, so it's crucial to ensure that your incident response capabilities keep pace. Regular testing and refinement of your response plan is essential.

With a comprehensive, battle-tested plan, you can protect your business, data, and reputation - even when the worst case scenario becomes reality.

- [ ] **Do you have a detailed Incident Response Plan with step-by-step procedures?**
- [ ] **Have you designated an incident response team with clearly defined roles?**
- [ ] **Do you have contact information for external incident response experts?**
- [ ] **Do you regularly test and update your incident response plan?**

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Password Management

We know that passwords can be a nuisance, but they're essential for keeping your data and systems secure. If your employees are recycling a few go-to passwords that they use everywhere, that puts your business at serious risk. Give them the support to create and manage secure passwords through a robust password policy.

Password manager tools are a game-changer for streamlining secure password practices across your organization. They generate complex, unique passwords and store them safely, so your team doesn't have to remember or reuse weak ones.

Do all user access controls:

- [ ] **Require a minimum of 12 characters?**
- [ ] **Prohibit password reuse?**
- [ ] **Encourage random alphanumeric passwords?**
- [ ] **Require regular password changes?**
- [ ] **Are employees required to use password managers?**
- [ ] **Do you use multi-factor authentication whenever available?**

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Employee Cybersecurity Training

Your employees are your first line of defense against cyber threats. In the last year alone, **68% of breaches involved a human element** (Verizon). That's why ongoing security awareness training is so crucial. **Empower your team to recognize and avoid the latest scams and social engineering tactics through continuous training and testing.**

Wondering if your business could benefit from managed IT Services?

If you left any of the checklist items unchecked, having access to a team of experienced IT professionals could be exactly what you need. **Cybersecurity may seem daunting, but with the right partner by your side, it doesn't have to be.**

For over 20 years, Anderson Technologies has been helping businesses handle their IT needs. We're committed to providing the friendly, trustworthy guidance you need to keep your business safe. We can support you in addressing the essential elements outlined in this checklist, significantly reducing risk and protecting your company's future.

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Have Any Questions?

The team at **Anderson Technologies** is happy to discuss any questions you have or schedule a time to **help educate** your employees about best practices. Give us a call today at **314.394.3001.**