

FREE REPORT

How To Tell If Your Business Has The Right IT Infrastructure



→ *Delivering IT Peace Of Mind*



Does your IT infrastructure support your business strategy and keep operational performance optimum? It should.

A sound IT infrastructure is the foundation of your organization's operational performance and a critical component of worker productivity, which in turn contributes to revenue. If you haven't assessed your IT infrastructure recently, now is the time to take another look, both at the separate components and how they work together as a whole.

Consider these areas when evaluating whether your current IT infrastructure supports your business needs:

• Hardware

When did you purchase your work stations, servers and peripherals, such as printers, fax machines and scanners? How are they performing? Are they out of date? Do newer models offer other features that would improve or enhance your business process? Does your current hardware's function still support your business? Do all of the components work together? Perhaps your business has grown and you've hired more employees.

Does your current hardware configuration support growth? If your current hardware isn't living up to your expectations, it's time to consider an upgrade or new equipment. Before making an expensive investment, consult with a knowledgeable IT professional, who can help you develop a plan to meet your current and future needs.



• Software

Are you a Mac shop or a PC office? Which operating platform does your business run on (Windows, Mac OS, Linux or Unix)? Are you satisfied or are you considering switching platforms? Do you have the business applications your employees need to work efficiently and are they up-to-date? Does your company use proprietary software and if so, is it fully supported by your operating platform? Before you conduct a changeover, consider the expense of not just the new software, but any new hardware or drivers needed to support it. Your IT team should be able to provide you with a cost/benefit analysis of implementing new software.

• LAN/WAN

Does your current local area network (LAN) and/or wide area network (WAN) meet your business needs? A centralized network location for file storage makes data backup easier, fosters collaboration among employees and supports a mobile workforce, but if the server is difficult to access or is constantly offline, your current network might be hindering productivity. A good network provides layers of security for your data via firewalls, automatic software updates and pre-scheduled data backups. It also makes high-speed Internet access more affordable, since multiple workers share a broadband connection.

• Phones And IP Telephony

Do you have multiple phone lines in your office? Do you find that approach to be cost-effective? Or do you wish every employee had his or her own phone extension, rather than having to share an outside line? Perhaps you've heard of IP telephony, where voice is converted into digital data packets and sent over the Internet, but are not sure whether your business would benefit from it, let alone how to implement it. IP telephony, also known as Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP), costs less than standard telephone systems, since both voice and data systems run on the same network. In addition, calls between VoIP users are often free and international calls are inexpensive, especially important if you have offices overseas or work with international clients. And, a conversation conducted with VOiP can be secured with data encryption protocols – unlike a conversation transmitted via a traditional copper wire phone system – further protecting your business.



• Security Systems

Data protection and data recovery are crucial components of your IT infrastructure. After all, without your accumulated business data – from clients' contact information to calendar appointments to accounts payable and everything in between – your business won't be able to function. Do you have adequate security in place to protect your business from hackers, viruses and attempted data breaches? Your IT infrastructure should contain firewalls and virus protection software, as well as require employees to regularly update their passwords.

• Disaster Recovery Strategies

Have you created a detailed plan that outlines how your business would operate after a major disaster, such as a hurricane or flood? Even a minor disruption, such as a temporary power outage, costs your business revenue. That's why it's important to have in place, at the very least, regularly scheduled data backups and data recovery systems. Also consider using an off-site data recovery backup storage facility to protect against data loss. Cloud-based server solutions – where you store your data on the storage infrastructure of a large service provider – offer you a cost-effective alternative to storing data on your own backup servers.

After you've evaluated your current IT infrastructure, note where there are any gaps and create a plan for addressing them. Ideally, you want to create a strategy for keeping your IT infrastructure up-to-date. This strategy should take into consideration any unforeseen developments, such as upgrading and implementing new technology. As your business grows, your IT infrastructure should continue to evolve.

Ready to upgrade your IT infrastructure but feel overwhelmed by the choices involved? [Contact the experienced and knowledgeable IT experts at Advanced Network Products, Inc.](#) or call **215-572-0111** or **800-572-3282** for assistance.



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