AMERICAN
TECHNOLOGY
SERVICES

Incident Response Preparedness Checklist

How to Know If You're Ready for a Cyber Incident

If This Is the First Time You're Thinking About IR... It's Already Late.

A cyber incident is not just an IT problem; it is a test of your team, tools, and timing. The organizations that recover quickly are not just reacting; they have already made decisions ahead of the crisis. This checklist helps you identify gaps now so that when it matters, you are not scrambling.

Is Your Organization Prepared for a Cyber Incident?

Check all that apply. The more blanks you leave, the more urgent the conversation.

- ☐ **We know who would lead our response if a cyber incident occurred.**
  IR needs a quarterback. If your first move is to figure out who's in charge, you're already behind.
- ☐ **We have designated internal roles for legal, communications, and IT during a crisis.**
  A ransomware attack is not just an IT issue; it affects leadership, clients, regulators, and public relations. If roles are not clearly defined, delays and mistakes are inevitable.
- ☐ **We have a current incident response plan that's actually been reviewed.**
  Old PDFs in shared drives don't count. If no one's looked at the plan in the last 12 months, you don't really have one.
- ☐ **We know what qualifies as an incident and when to escalate.**
  Would your team recognize the early signs? Do they understand the difference between a false positive and a breach? If not, detection may come too late.
- ☐ **We have a cybersecurity partner on call for emergency response.**
  If you're Googling "incident response help" during an attack, you're already losing time.
- ☐ **Our backups are recent, tested, and stored separately from the main environment.**
  Many organizations believe they are safe until they discover that their backups were also encrypted.
- ☐ **We've walked through a tabletop exercise or simulated breach.**
  Practice matters. If your team has never run a drill, expect confusion under pressure.
- ☐ **We know how long it would take to get expert help in place.**
  Would it be hours? Days? How fast your support shows up can determine the outcome.

What This Means

If you checked fewer than five boxes, you are not alone, but you are at risk. Having a response plan on paper is not the same as being able to act quickly and decisively. Incident response is not just about reacting; it is about limiting damage, protecting your reputation, and demonstrating control when everything feels uncertain.

You can't schedule a cyberattack.

But you can be ready for one.

info@networkats.com