THE END OF YEAR IT BUDGET PLANNER

10 Projects That Protect Your Business

Use your remaining IT budget wisely and make every dollar count.

Spend Smart, Not Scrambled

Every December, we see it happen. Montana businesses scramble to spend what's left of their IT budgets before the year ends. The problem? Quick spending often leads to short-term fixes that don't solve long-term risks.

How many times have you found yourself in December wondering where those last dollars should go?

The truth is, your end-of-year budget can be one of the most powerful tools for protecting your business. When you invest strategically in projects that reduce risk, strengthen security, and improve performance, you're not just spending money. You're building peace of mind.

In This Guide, You'll Learn:

- How to identify IT projects that deliver real value
- Where to focus your remaining budget for maximum impact
- How to protect your business for the year ahead

This quick guide outlines 10 high-impact IT and cybersecurity investments that can be started before December 31 and will continue to pay off long after the new year begins.

Need help prioritizing what to tackle first?

We can review your current IT setup and help you identify where your remaining budget will make the biggest impact.

10 Projects That Protect Your Business

1. Test Your Backups

Don't assume your backups are working. A failed backup is one of the most expensive lessons a business can learn. Verifying that you can restore data quickly could save you days of downtime and thousands in lost productivity.

ROI: Protects your data & ensures fast recovery during downtime.

2. Strengthen Your Disaster Recovery Plan

A documented, tested disaster recovery plan keeps your team calm and your business running when something goes wrong. This is one of the fastest ways to reduce risk and boost compliance.

ROI: Minimizes disruption and builds operational resilience.

Continued….

3. Roll Out Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA)

Still relying on passwords alone? It's time to add MFA. It's one of the simplest & most effective ways to block cyberattacks. According to Microsoft, MFA stops 99.9% of automated threats.

ROI: Blocks common cyberattacks and boosts compliance instantly.

4. Replace or Upgrade Outdated Hardware

Legacy systems are like open doors for attackers. Upgrading old servers, firewalls, or unsupported operating systems helps you stay compliant and secure while improving speed and efficiency.

ROI: Reduces security risks and improves performance across systems.

Still going....

5. Review Firewall and Endpoint Security

If you haven't reviewed your firewall or antivirus tools in a year, do it now. Modern solutions use automation and AI to detect and stop attacks faster than older versions ever could.

ROI: Enhances protection and detects threats before they spread.

6. Run a Compliance Readiness Assessment

Regulations like CMMC, HIPAA, and NIST require proof that you're following security best practices. A quick assessment helps you find gaps before an auditor or client does.

ROI: Prevents compliance penalties and secures long-term partnerships.

Nearly there....

7. Update Your Incident Response Plan

When an attack happens, every minute matters. Update your plan now so your team knows exactly what to do, who to call, and how to respond.

ROI: Shortens recovery time and limits potential financial damage.

8. Train Your Team

Cybersecurity awareness training is one of the cheapest, most effective defenses you can invest in. Most breaches start with human error. Help your employees spot phishing attempts and protect your data.

ROI: Reduces human error and empowers employees to act safely.

You did it!

9. Audit User Access

Too many employees still have access to systems they don't need. Tightening permissions and removing inactive accounts reduces your attack surface immediately.

ROI: Decreases internal risks and strengthens data protection.

10. Schedule a Strategic IT Review

A one-hour strategy session with your IT partner can help you identify your biggest risks and your best opportunities. Start 2025 with a clear roadmap instead of last year's leftovers.

ROI: Clarifies priorities and turns technology into a business advantage.

How to Prioritize Your Projects

When every dollar counts, focus on risk, return, & readiness.

Here's how to decide what to tackle first:

High Risk: Projects that address critical vulnerabilities (backups, MFA, outdated systems).

High Return: Projects that reduce recurring costs or prevent downtime (firewall upgrades, training).

Fast Win: Projects you can complete quickly before year-end (access audits, testing backups).

If you can only pick one or two items this month, start with the ones that protect your data and prevent business disruption. You can always build on your progress in Q1.

Pro Tip: A small, well-timed IT project now can prevent a six-figure loss later.

Leadership Insight: This approach helps leadership stay focused on outcomes, not just spending.

firstsolution.com

Ready To Take Action?

Make This Year's Budget Work for You

At First Call Computer Solutions, we've helped Montana businesses protect what they've built for over 25 years.

We don't believe in last-minute spending sprees. We believe in smart, lasting investments that make your business stronger.

Before the clock runs out, let's make sure your IT dollars are working as hard as you are.

📞 Contact First Call Computer Solutions

🔗 Visit: firstsolution.com

📍 Proudly supporting Montana businesses since 1998.

firstsolution.com