



A QOS MSP PLANNING WORKSHEET:

BUSINESS NETWORK DESIGN CHECKLIST

Is your network due for a redesign?





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A 15-minute worksheet to see whether your network is due for a redesign — before you talk to anyone.

Is your network due for a redesign?

Most business networks aren't designed — they accumulate. A switch added for a new hire, a router kept past its warranty, a “temporary” run between two floors that became permanent. It works until it doesn't, and the failure always arrives at the worst possible time.

This worksheet helps you take stock **before** you talk to anyone. Work through your device inventory and ages, your user and site counts, and the questions that decide whether you need VLAN segmentation — then use the scoring section to see where you stand. Bring the finished sheet to your **free network assessment** and we'll pick up exactly where you left off.

What you'll need

Time to complete: about 15 minutes. **What to have on hand:** a rough list of your network gear (switches, routers, firewalls) and a sense of how many people and locations it serves. Estimates are fine — this is a planning tool, not an audit.

How this worksheet is scored

Three short sections each produce a count — devices past their lifecycle, VLAN triggers, and multi-site/growth needs. You'll add the three counts on the final page and read your total against a simple scale that tells you whether you're looking at ongoing management, a few targeted upgrades, or a full design-and-build project.

One thing up front: a network project isn't always the answer. If your gear is young and you're not adding sites, this worksheet will tell you that plainly — and so will we.



1 – Device inventory & lifecycle

List each core network device. Compare its age to its expected lifecycle to see what's due.

Lifecycle reference: business switches last 7–10 years · routers 5–7 years.

Past that window, most gear falls out of vendor support and stops getting firmware and security updates — that's the “replace” line, whether or not it still powers on.

Device	Model	Age (yrs)	Expected life	Replace? (Y/N)
Core switch <i>(example)</i>			7–10 yrs	
Edge router <i>(example)</i>			5–7 yrs	

Rule of thumb: any switch past 10 years or router past 7 is a “Y” even if it's still running — you're one firmware gap or hardware failure away from an outage with no vendor support behind it.

2 – User & site counts

Size drives design. Fill in your current counts and your best 24-month estimate.

Metric	Today	In 24 months
Total users on the network		
Wired devices (PCs, printers, phones, cameras)		
Wireless devices		
Physical sites / locations		
Largest single-site user count		

If any number roughly **doubles** in your 24-month column, your current network was almost certainly not sized for where you're headed — flag it for the assessment.

3 – VLAN trigger questions

VLAN segmentation isolates traffic types onto separate logical networks — better security, less congestion. Below about 10 users on a single site you usually don't need it. Above that, these are the triggers. **Check every box that's true:**

- ☐ We carry **guest** Wi-Fi / internet traffic that shouldn't touch internal systems
- ☐ We run **voice / VoIP phones** on the network
- ☐ We have **IP cameras or physical-security** devices on the network
- ☐ We run **POS / payment** terminals
- ☐ We operate across **multiple sites** or buildings
- ☐ We have a **compliance requirement** (HIPAA, PCI, SOC 2, etc.) that requires separating sensitive traffic
- ☐ We have **10+ users** on a single flat network today

Two or more boxes checked? VLAN segmentation will earn its keep — note it as a design requirement.

Count checked boxes: _____

4 – Multi-site & growth needs

If you run — or plan to run — more than one location, answer these. They shape the routing and WAN half of the design. **Check every box that's true:**

- ☐ Users at one site need to reach servers, files, or applications at another
- ☐ We have (or need) a **backup internet path / failover** at any site
- ☐ We're **opening, moving, or merging** a site in the next 12–24 months
- ☐ Remote or hybrid staff connect back into the network (VPN / remote access)
- ☐ After a merger or acquisition, we need to **standardize** different sites onto one design

Every box checked here is a routing decision — inter-site paths, capacity headroom, and failover — that's cheaper to design in now than to retrofit later. **Count checked boxes:** _____



5 – Your score & what to do next

Add your three counts together:

Section	Your count
Section 1 – devices marked “Replace = Y”	
Section 3 – VLAN triggers checked	
Section 4 – multi-site / growth needs checked	
Total	

Where you stand

Total	What it means	What to do
0–1	Stable	Likely a management job, not a rebuild. Keep monitoring your lifecycle dates.
2–4	Watch	Targeted upgrades or segmentation are due soon – plan them before something forces the timing.
5+	Redesign	Your network has outgrown its current design. A design-and-build project is warranted.

Next step – book your free network assessment. Bring this completed worksheet. We'll audit your switches, routers, and topology against what you've captured here and give you a clear, vendor-neutral picture of what to keep, what to replace, and what to segment. Schedule at www.qosmsp.com or call **+1 (877) 800-7672** – no cost, no obligation.

Honest note: if your gear is under five years old and you're not adding sites, you probably need ongoing *management*, not a rebuild. The assessment will tell you straight – we don't sell projects you don't need.

QOS MSP – network infrastructure design, build, and management for businesses across Indianapolis, Indiana, and Chicagoland. Founder-led since 2007.

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