



WINSOR  
CONSULTING

A NETWORK PLANNING GUIDE

# THE NETWORK UPGRADE PLANNING GUIDE

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## FOR CONSTRUCTION & MANUFACTURING COMPANIES

A practical way to decide what to fix now, what to plan next, and what can wait – before downtime, cyber risk, or surprise costs force the decision for you.

SIMPLE. SINCERE. SECURE. IT'S THE WINSOR WAY.

877.225.8211

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## WHY NETWORK UPGRADE PLANNING MATTERS

Most network problems don't show up all at once. They start small – a slow morning, a dropped scanner, a crew that can't pull up drawings from the field. Then they pile up until something finally breaks at the worst possible time.

If any of these sound familiar, your network is already telling you where the work is:

- Wi-Fi dead zones in warehouses, plants, offices, or jobsites
- Slow ERP, MRP, estimating, scheduling, accounting, or project systems
- Vendor finger-pointing between your internet provider, software vendor, and IT
- No current network map or documentation
- Repeat complaints from the same departments, shifts, jobsites, or production areas
- Field teams struggling to reach files, drawings, schedules, photos, or cloud apps
- Aging firewalls, switches, and access points
- Cyber-insurance questions you're not ready to answer
- Equipment that still runs but may no longer be supported

### THE WHOLE IDEA

**The goal is not to replace everything. The goal is to know what matters first.**

Use this guide to identify your biggest network concerns. Then schedule a 30-minute Network Readiness Review with Winsor Consulting to pressure-test your priorities with someone from our team.

# THE NOW, NEXT, LATER FRAMEWORK

Not every network issue deserves the same urgency or budget. Some should be fixed quickly. Others should be scoped, budgeted, and scheduled. And some can wait. Sorting your list into three buckets is the fastest way to make a smart decision.

## **FIX NOW** Could affect uptime, security, insurance, production, field ops, or business continuity.

- Unsupported firewall
- Recurring outages
- Open security gaps
- Critical Wi-Fi dead zones
- Remote-access issues hurting field teams
- Jobsite trailer connectivity problems
- No backups or poor backup visibility
- Network gear no longer supported
- Single points of failure on key operations

## **PLAN NEXT** Important improvements to scope, budget, and schedule.

- Replacing aging switches or access points
- Improving warehouse, plant, office, or jobsite Wi-Fi
- Segmenting networks for security
- Improving documentation
- Planning for a new ERP, MRP, app, location, or expansion
- Standardizing remote access
- Improving monitoring and visibility
- Building a phased equipment replacement plan

## **CAN WAIT** Worth doing, but not urgent.

- Nice-to-have speed improvements
- Cosmetic cabling cleanup that doesn't affect reliability
- Equipment upgrades with no immediate risk
- Secondary location improvements
- Optional monitoring enhancements
- Low-impact convenience improvements

**The right plan helps you avoid both underreacting and overspending.**

# THE 10-MINUTE INTERNAL NETWORK CHECK

Run through this with your team before you call anyone. Check the box if the answer is a confident "yes." Leave it blank for "no" or "not sure."

## RELIABILITY

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- More than one outage or major slowdown in the last 90 days?
- Do people complain about the same connection problems repeatedly?
- Are certain areas of the office, warehouse, plant, or jobsite unreliable?
- Do slow systems delay shipping, scheduling, estimating, production, or updates?

## REMOTE ACCESS

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- Can field staff, remote employees, trailers, and vendors reliably get what they need?
- Do people rely on workarounds – personal devices, personal cloud, shared passwords?
- Do remote-access problems slow estimating, PM, scheduling, or leadership decisions?

## DOCUMENTATION

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- Do we have a current network map?
- Do we know what systems depend on what equipment?

## EQUIPMENT

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- Do we know the age of our firewall, switches, and access points?
- Do we know whether they're still supported by the manufacturer?
- Do we have a replacement plan for core network equipment?
- Do we know which gear is most critical to daily operations?

## SECURITY

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- Do we know whether our firewall is current and properly configured?
- Could we answer cyber-insurance questions confidently?
- Are users, vendors, guests, and production systems separated where needed?
- Do we know who has remote access – and whether it's still needed?

- Do we know where key equipment is located?
- Do we know who to call for internet, phones, firewall, software, and IT support?

If you answered "no" or "not sure" more than three times, schedule a 30-minute Network Readiness Review **before** buying new equipment or waiting for the next outage.

SCHEDULE YOUR REVIEW

## SCHEDULE A 30-MINUTE NETWORK READINESS REVIEW

In a focused 30-minute conversation, a Winsor team member will help you review your current concerns, sort priorities into Now / Next / Later, and identify the smartest next step before you spend money on upgrades.

[SCHEDULE MY NETWORK READINESS REVIEW →](#)

or call **877.225.8211** No audit. No obligation.

# 7 THINGS YOU CAN DO TODAY

## WITHOUT BUYING ANYTHING

- 1 Write down the last three network issues people complained about**  
Capture who was affected, where it happened, what system was involved, and whether it happened more than once.
- 2 Identify your most critical systems**  
List the systems you can't afford to lose for a full day – ERP, MRP, accounting, estimating, CAD, project management, scheduling, file storage, VoIP, shipping, cameras, access control, or production systems.
- 3 Mark trouble spots on a floor plan or simple sketch**  
Flag Wi-Fi dead zones, slow areas, scanner-disconnect zones, conference rooms, trailers, production areas, shipping/receiving, and offices where issues repeat.
- 4 Find your firewall model and approximate age**  
You don't need to fully assess it. Just find out what you have and whether anyone knows if it's still supported.
- 5 List who needs remote access**  
Include field crews, project managers, estimators, executives, office staff, vendors, remote workers, and jobsite trailers.
- 6 Ask where your network documentation lives**  
If no one knows, that's important to note. Missing documentation is itself a planning issue.
- 7 Ask your cyber-insurance provider what technical controls matter this year**  
Don't wait until renewal week to discover new requirements.

These steps make your 30-minute review more productive. You don't need perfect answers – you just need a starting point.

# COMMON NETWORK UPGRADE MISTAKES

## 01 Buying equipment before understanding the problem

Replacing access points when the real issue is poor placement, cabling, switching, interference, internet failover, or outdated firewall rules.

## 02 Waiting until something fails

Reactive upgrades usually cost more, create more disruption, and force rushed decisions under pressure.

## 03 Treating office, warehouse, plant, and jobsite the same

Each environment has different connectivity, durability, access, and security needs.

## 04 Ignoring documentation

Undocumented networks create delays, vendor confusion, troubleshooting problems, and higher support costs.

## 05 Only thinking about speed

Reliability, supportability, security, visibility, and recovery often matter more than raw speed.

## 06 Not involving operations early enough

The people who feel the pain day to day usually know where the real problems are.

## 07 Assuming "still working" means "still safe"

Equipment can still pass traffic while being unsupported, poorly documented, or risky to rely on. Working today doesn't mean protected tomorrow.

**Before you replace your firewall, switches, access points, cabling, or internet service – make sure you know which problem you're actually solving.**

# WHAT TO GATHER BEFORE YOUR REVIEW

Pull together whatever you can find. The more of this you have on hand, the more useful your 30 minutes will be.

- Recent outage or slowdown examples
- Current internet provider information
- List of critical systems
- Known cyber-insurance requirements
- Existing network diagrams or vendor documentation
- Any expansion, new line, new ERP/MRP, new cloud system, or new location
- Areas where Wi-Fi or connectivity is unreliable
- Firewall, switch, and access point info, if available
- Remote-access needs (field, trailers, remote staff, vendors, leadership)
- Upcoming business changes
- Budget timing or planning windows

You don't need perfect documentation to start. In fact, missing documentation is often one of the first things worth fixing.

## BRING WHAT YOU HAVE TO YOUR REVIEW

We'll help you sort what matters now, what should be planned next, and what can wait.

[SCHEDULE MY NETWORK READINESS REVIEW →](#)

or call 877.225.8211

# CONSTRUCTION-SPECIFIC PLANNING



Construction networks live in two worlds at once – a main office and a constantly changing set of jobsites. The plan has to hold both together:

- Jobsite trailers and temporary offices
- Field crews reaching drawings, photos, schedules, RFIs, submittals, and cloud apps
- Remote access for PMs, estimators, superintendents, and executives
- VoIP and communication reliability
- Secure access from mobile users and shared jobsite environments
- Internet failover for important locations
- Supporting growth across multiple offices or jobsites
- Avoiding delays from file access, connectivity, or vendor confusion
- Standardizing how new jobsites come online and go offline

## CONSTRUCTION NETWORK QUESTIONS

- Can field teams reliably access the systems they need?
- Are jobsite trailers set up consistently?
- Do PMs and superintendents have secure remote access?
- Do connectivity issues delay decisions, RFIs, submittals, or drawings?
- Do we have a standard process for bringing new jobsites online?
- Do we have a plan for internet outages at critical locations?
- Do we know who owns support when a jobsite has issues?

### EXAMPLE

A construction company may think it has a "software problem" because project files load slowly from the field. But the real issue may be inconsistent remote access, weak jobsite connectivity, or a poorly configured firewall/VPN. A readiness review helps separate symptoms from root causes **before** money is spent in the wrong place.

# MANUFACTURING-SPECIFIC PLANNING



On the plant floor, the network is part of the production line. A dropped connection isn't an annoyance – it's a stalled shift. The plan should protect the work, not just the wiring:

- Plant-floor Wi-Fi coverage and roaming
- Warehouse scanners and handheld devices
- ERP / MRP connectivity
- Label printers, shipping stations, time clocks, cameras, production devices
- Segmentation between office and production / OT environments
- Downtime risk and single points of failure
- Shift work and after-hours support
- Network visibility and troubleshooting
- Planning upgrades without disrupting production

## MANUFACTURING NETWORK QUESTIONS

- Are scanners, tablets, printers, or production devices losing connection?
- Do Wi-Fi problems slow receiving, shipping, inventory, or production?
- Are office and production systems properly separated where needed?
- Can we troubleshoot issues without stopping operations?
- Are key systems protected from unsupported gear or single points of failure?
- Can network work be scheduled around production needs?
- Do we understand which systems are most critical to each shift?

### EXAMPLE

A manufacturer may think it needs "faster Wi-Fi" because scanners keep disconnecting. But the real issue may be access point placement, interference, roaming, cabling, switching, or an aging firewall. A readiness review helps identify what actually needs to change.

# THE NOW / NEXT / LATER WORKSHEET

## FIX NOW

ISSUE	BUSINESS IMPACT	WHO FEELS IT	RISK IF IGNORED	OWNER	TARGET
Unsupported firewall	Security & insurance exposure	Leadership, office, remote users	Higher risk at outage, renewal, or security event	IT / Winsor	30 days

## PLAN NEXT

IMPROVEMENT	WHY IT MATTERS	DEPENDENCIES	BUDGET?	TARGET QTR
Warehouse Wi-Fi redesign	Reduces scanner disconnects & shipping delays	Cabling & access point placement review	Yes	Q2

## CAN WAIT

ITEM	WHY IT CAN WAIT	REVISIT DATE
Secondary office Wi-Fi refresh	Current performance is acceptable; no urgent complaints	Next budget cycle

### BRING THIS WORKSHEET TO YOUR REVIEW

A Winsor team member will help you confirm what belongs in Fix Now, Plan Next, and Can Wait.

[SCHEDULE MY NETWORK READINESS REVIEW →](#)

or call 877.225.8211

## BUDGETING AND SEQUENCING

Don't start with:

"How much does a network upgrade cost?"

Start with:

"Which problems create the most business risk if we do nothing?"

From there, a few principles keep spending sane:

- ◆ Separate urgent risk from planned improvement.
- ◆ Avoid replacing everything at once unless there's a clear business reason.
- ◆ Plan around operational windows, production schedules, jobsites, shifts, and budget cycles.
- ◆ Build a phased roadmap so leadership can approve work intelligently.
- ◆ Make sure upgrades support business changes, not just technical preferences.
- ◆ Review dependencies before approving equipment purchases.

**A good network plan helps you avoid both underreacting and overspending.**

Sometimes the right first move is replacing unsupported equipment. Sometimes it's documenting what you have. Sometimes it's fixing one painful connectivity issue before it spreads. **The point is to know the difference** — that's exactly what the readiness review is for.

# NETWORK UPGRADE PLANNING SUMMARY

A one-page snapshot to bring to your leadership meeting.

## OUR BIGGEST CONCERNS

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## AREAS AFFECTING OPERATIONS

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Office connectivity      | <input type="checkbox"/> Warehouse Wi-Fi            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Plant-floor connectivity | <input type="checkbox"/> Jobsite access             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Remote access            | <input type="checkbox"/> ERP / MRP systems          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Project mgmt systems     | <input type="checkbox"/> Phones / VoIP              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cameras / access control | <input type="checkbox"/> Cyber insurance / security |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Documentation            | <input type="checkbox"/> Aging equipment            |

## TOP 3 PRIORITIES

- 1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_

## RECOMMENDED CATEGORY

- Fix Now    Plan Next    Can Wait
- Need Outside Review

## QUESTIONS FOR WINSOR CONSULTING

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Use this page during your 30-minute Network Readiness Review so the conversation stays focused on business priorities, not just technical details.

# READY TO SORT YOUR NETWORK PRIORITIES?

Schedule a 30-Minute Network Readiness Review with Winsor Consulting.

In a focused 30-minute conversation, a Winsor team member will help you review your current concerns, sort priorities into Now / Next / Later, and identify the smartest next step before you spend money on upgrades.

## THIS REVIEW IS BUILT FOR COMPANIES THAT...

- › Aren't sure which network issues are urgent
- › Are planning an expansion, new jobsite, software, or operational change
- › Need to prepare for cyber-insurance, compliance, or security questions
- › Have an IT environment that's undocumented or hard to troubleshoot
- › Have aging equipment but no replacement plan
- › Have Wi-Fi, remote access, or slow systems hurting productivity
- › Want an outside opinion before spending on new equipment
- › Want a practical roadmap before problems get expensive

## SCHEDULE A 30-MINUTE NETWORK READINESS REVIEW WITH WINSOR CONSULTING

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No audit. No obligation. Just a practical conversation to help you decide what to do next.



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We don't just sell services – we build relationships based on trust, expertise, and straight talk. We'd be glad to help you plan smart.

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