5 Important Steps to Better Data Protection

Data breaches are not merely an inconvenience; they can lead to severe consequences, including regulatory fines, business disruptions, financial losses, and damage to a business's reputation, ultimately resulting in the loss of consumers.

Here are 5 ways to help improve data protection:

1 | Data Risk Management:

► Locate and understand your data by documenting business processes, systems, and data repositories, which includes:

— Electronic data (on-premises and cloud-based)

— Printed data (onsite and offsite)

— Duplicated data

— 'Shadow data', which includes:

- Unstructured data in spreadsheets, emails, presentations, etc.

- Local copies of databases

- Data in AI and productivity tools (e.g., Slack)

► Collaboration is critical to the process.

— Partner with IT, legal, records management, cybersecurity, privacy, and functional leaders based on data type.

— Establish links to other key datasets, such as a Configuration Management Database (CMDB), when possible.

2 | Assess and Remediate, then Repeat

► Perform a comprehensive security risk assessment of the organization to help identify vulnerabilities and enable businesses to address them proactively.

► Invest in current IT tools and updated cybersecurity software to help detect and reduce data security risks.

► Check out resources, such as Shred-it's® online security risk assessment tool to help support these efforts.

3 | Close the Data Protection Knowledge Gap

► Implement regular employee training to help staff to better understand their role in protecting data, practicing appropriate behaviors for maintaining security, and identifying and avoiding potential data breaches. The right training helps employees identify both physical and digital security risks and respond appropriately.

► Leadership should demonstrate their commitment to building a culture of data protection and overcommunicate across all parts of the organization to help ensure the message is heard. That culture should start at the top and permeate the organization; when management is committed, employees are more likely to follow suit.
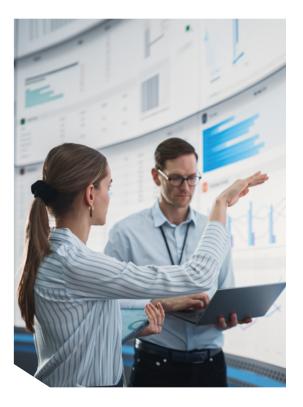
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4 | Be Prepared

▶ Develop incident response plan, including a data breach response plan.

▶ Conduct risk assessments to identify the risks, threats, and vulnerabilities that are core to the plan.

▶ Designate a core incident response team with cross-functional membership, including external partners.

5 | Establish Trusted Third-Party Partnerships

▶ Many businesses can't manage data protection alone. Partnering with the right trusted third-party for data protection, management, and compliance issues can help organizations:

— Navigate complex regulatory requirements

— Provide training and education

— Implement processes and tools

— Manage difficult technical issues

— Feel confident in the organization's ability to protect their company's sensitive data and information

Having a trusted partner like Shred-it® can help protect your business' data. For more information, contact us at 800-697-4733.

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