



SME Data Audit Checklist

Here's a **Data Audit Checklist** for an SME to help with implementation. You can use this to **identify, assess, and improve** your data sources, quality, risks, and compliance.

Data solutions. Data quality. Data compliance. Search & discovery.
Data Lakehouse. Custom data solution. Cloud migration.

Step 1: Define the scope

- ✓ What departments will be audited? (Finance, HR, Sales, Marketing, Operations, etc.)
- ✓ What types of data are involved? (Customer, Employee, Financial, Marketing, Operational)
- ✓ What time period does the audit cover? (Current data, last 1-3 years, historical)

Step 2: Identify data sources

Fill out this table for each system or dataset in your business: (include application databases, operational spreadsheets and document folders such as shared drives or cloud stores like Office 365 (OneDrive, SharePoint) etc...)

Data Source	Depart.	Owner	Location	Type of Data	Usage
CRM (e.g., HubSpot, Salesforce)	Sales	Sales Manager	Cloud	Customer details, purchase history	Customer communication, sales tracking
Payroll System (e.g., Xero)	HR	HR Manager	Cloud	Employee salaries, tax data	Payroll processing
Marketing Email List	Marketing	Marketing Head	Google Drive	Customer emails, consent records	Email campaigns
Accounting Software	Finance	CFO	Cloud (QuickBooks)	Revenue, expenses	Financial reporting
Shared Drive	All	All	Shared network drive	Files, documents, photos, contracts, downloads etc...	Operational

Step 3: Assess data quality

Check for accuracy, completeness, consistency, timeliness, and duplicates in each data source.

Source	Completeness	Accuracy	Duplicates	Update	Issues Found?
CRM	✘ (missing emails)	✓	✘ (duplicates)	Daily	Duplicate customers, missing data
Payroll	✓	✓	✓	Monthly	No issues
Email List	✘ (some unsubscribed users)	✘ (typos in emails)	✓	Weekly	Needs cleaning

Step 4: Assess risk & security

Evaluate data security risks, access controls, and backup policies for each system.

Risk Factor	Check?	Action Needed?
Access Control: Are access permissions restricted to necessary staff?	✘	Implement role-based access control
Data Encryption: Is sensitive data encrypted?	✓	No action needed
Backups: Are backups in place?	✘	Automate cloud backups for financial and payroll data
Third-Party Risk: Are external services GDPR-compliant?	✓	No action needed

Step 5: Assess compliance (GDPR, DPA 2018, etc.)

Compliance Area	Check?	Action Needed?
Customer Data Consent: Is marketing consent recorded?	✘	Implement GDPR-compliant consent collection
Data Retention: Are policies in place for deleting old data?	✘	Set up automated retention policies
Data Subject Rights: Can users request deletion or correction?	✓	No action needed
International Transfers: Is data stored in the UK/EU or safely transferred?	✓	No action needed

Step 6: Create an action plan

Summarise key issues and assign **priority actions**.

Issue	Risk Level	Recommended Action	Deadline	Owner
Missing customer emails in CRM	Medium	Make email a mandatory field on forms	2 weeks	Sales Team
No backups for financial data	High	Set up automated cloud backups	1 week	IT Manager
Duplicate records in CRM	Medium	Run deduplication process	3 weeks	Sales Team
Marketing list contains unsubscribed users	High	Clean and verify email list	1 week	Marketing

Final steps

- ✓ Document findings in a Data Audit Report
- ✓ Share with key stakeholders
- ✓ Implement improvements & fixes
- ✓ Schedule the next audit (e.g., quarterly, yearly)

How does infoboss help?

Achieving your data quality & compliance objectives may seem like a daunting task. We can help you to embed sustainable, cost effective processes to identify, analyse, fix and monitor the quality and compliance of your *data* assets forever...

How we help improve data quality

We recognise that correcting the quality of data is not a point in time event.

Infoboss enables you to get your data quality improvement initiative up and running quickly. Within minutes you will discover data of interest, analyse and identify fix strategies, assign ownership and put in place data validation and monitoring rules to ensure your data stays fixed.

Our solution provides a best practice approach to data quality management and will deliver a long term, sustainable, data quality management programme for your business.

We help you to:

- Assign ownership to your data assets;
- Identify poor quality data;
- Analyse data using simple point-click and search techniques;
- Alert data owners when poor quality data enters the data estate;
- Track your data quality improvement performance indicators;
- Provide tailored stakeholder views of data; and most importantly,
- Build a sustainable data quality improvement culture within the business.

We support the principal of data democratisation. Empowering those that can improve data quality with the tools to do so.

How we help improve data compliance

Infoboss provides the tools that empower you to efficiently meet your regulatory compliance obligations by automating many of the processes required. It enables you to:

- Automatically collect data from any data source;
- Store it in a secure, scalable, searchable enterprise data store;
- Automate the indexing and classification of your data;

- Discover PII and special category data;
- Audit and understand your data, be that structured (as that held in databases) or unstructured text within documents or other sources ;
- Monitor and enforce data retention, minimisation and other data protection policies;
- Understand who has access to what data;
- Enforce data subject rights. E.g. Access, Erasure, Consent etc.; and
- Efficiently and effectively find the information to service data subject access requests.

In essence, Infoboss undertakes the heavy lifting (and perhaps more mundane aspects) of the compliance manager's role. Helping you to mitigate the risks of non-compliance.

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Data Audit

Our **data audit service** for a **Small or Medium-sized Enterprise (SME)** aims to **identify, assess, and document** all data sources (structured and unstructured) within the organisation. This helps understand **what data exists, where it comes from, its quality, risks, and compliance requirements**.

This document outlines our recommended and structured approach to conducting the audit.

Need help?

We can provide an expert data consultant to work with you to conduct the audit. See page 3 for details.

Data solutions. Data quality. Data compliance. Search & discovery.
Data Lakehouse. Custom data solution. Cloud migration.

1. Define the objectives and scope

Objectives:

- Identify all **data sources** used across the business.
- Assess data quality, accuracy, and integrity.
- Evaluate **compliance** with **GDPR, DPA 2018**, or other relevant laws.
- Identify security risks and data vulnerabilities.
- Provide recommendations for **improving data governance**.

Scope:

- What **departments** will be audited? (Finance, HR, Marketing, Sales, etc.)
- What **types of data** are included? (Customer data, employee data, financial records, operational data)
- How far back will the audit go? (Historical vs. current data)

2. Identify all data sources

Create a **Data Inventory** by listing all systems, databases, and sources where data is stored.

Key Data Sources to Identify:

Category	Example Sources
Customer Data	CRM (Salesforce, HubSpot), email lists, order history
Financial Data	Accounting software (Xero, QuickBooks), bank statements
Employee Data	HR system, payroll records, contracts
Marketing Data	Google Analytics, social media insights, email campaign tools
Operational Data	Inventory management system, supplier records
Legal & Compliance	Contracts, GDPR consent records

3. Assess what data is included in each source

For each data source, document:

- **Types of data collected** (Names, emails, payment details, etc.).
- **Who owns the data** internally.
- **How data is stored** (Cloud, local servers, spreadsheets, databases).
- **How data is processed and used**.

A **Data Register Template** could look like this:

Data Source	Data Owner	Data Types	Storage Location	Usage
CRM System	Sales Team	Names, emails, phone numbers	Cloud (HubSpot)	Customer communication, sales follow-ups
Payroll Software	HR	Employee salaries, tax info	Cloud (Xero)	Monthly payroll processing

4. Assess data quality

Determine if the data is accurate, complete, and up to date.

Key Questions to Ask:

- **Completeness:** Are key fields missing (e.g., customer phone numbers)?
- **Accuracy:** Are addresses, emails, and dates of birth correct?
- **Consistency:** Does the same data appear differently in different sources?
- **Timeliness:** How often is the data updated?
- **Duplicates:** Are there duplicate records causing inefficiencies?

Common Issues & Fixes:

Issue	Example	Solution
Incomplete Data	Missing email addresses in CRM	Implement mandatory fields for sign-ups
Outdated Data	Customers who haven't purchased in 3 years	Run periodic data cleaning
Duplicate Data	Same customer appears twice in different formats	Use deduplication tools

5. Assess risk & security

Identify data security risks, including unauthorised access, data breaches, and loss.

Risk Assessment Checklist:

- ✓ **Access Control:** Who has access to sensitive data? Is access limited to relevant staff?
- ✓ **Encryption & Security:** Is customer/payment data encrypted?
- ✓ **Backups:** Is there a data backup strategy in case of system failures?
- ✓ **Third-Party Risks:** Are external service providers GDPR-compliant?
- ✓ **Data Retention:** How long is data stored before deletion?

6. Assess compliance (GDPR, DPA 2018, etc.)

If handling personal data, ensure compliance with legal and regulatory requirements.

Key Compliance Checks:

Area	What to Check
GDPR Consent	Do you have valid opt-in consent for marketing communications?
Data Subject Rights	Can customers request access, correction, or deletion of their data?
Data Transfers	Is data stored in the UK/EU or transferred internationally?
Data Retention	Are you only keeping data for as long as necessary?

7. Document findings & create an action plan

Once all data sources have been reviewed, compile a **Data Audit Report** outlining:

- 1. Data Inventory** (What data sources exist?)
- 2. Data Quality Issues** (Where are gaps and inconsistencies?)
- 3. Security Risks** (What vulnerabilities exist?)
- 4. Compliance Gaps** (What needs to be improved for GDPR, DPA 2018?)
- 5. Recommendations & Next Steps** (How to fix the issues?)

Example Action Plan

Issue	Risk	Recommended Action	Priority
Customer emails missing in CRM	Medium	Implement email validation on sign-ups	High
No regular backups for payroll data	High	Set up automated cloud backups	High
Employees have unrestricted data access	High	Implement role-based access control	High
Duplicate customer records in sales database	Low	Run quarterly deduplication process	Med

Final thoughts

A **data audit** helps SMEs:

- ✓ Gain better control over their data
- ✓ Reduce security risks & compliance failures
- ✓ Improve data quality for better decision-making
- ✓ Ensure GDPR/DPA compliance

Let us help?

We will provide an expert data consultant to work remotely with you to conduct the audit, draft an audit report and playback findings and recommendations to key stakeholders within your business. The cost of our SME Data Audit Service is £1,500 (ex VAT)

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