INERTIALABS

DATA CENTER PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

# Retrofit Readiness Checklist

Nine questions that tell you whether your datacenter retrofit program is on track, or quietly building risk that will show up in your schedule, your budget, or a compliance event you did not see coming.

**How to use this checklist.** Answer each question honestly based on where your program stands today. Questions are grouped into three categories. If you hesitate on more than one answer in any category, your program has risk worth addressing before it becomes a schedule slip, a budget overrun, or a compliance event.

CATEGORY 1 • QUESTIONS 1 THROUGH 4

## Infrastructure and Schedule Risk

The foundational risks that determine whether your program finishes on time and within budget.

### 1 Transformer and Switchgear Lead Times

*Do you have confirmed delivery dates from your transformer and switchgear vendors, locked into your master schedule with contingency built in for a second delay?*

- [ ] A Confirmed dates in hand, loaded into the schedule with a contingency buffer
- [ ] B Quotes received but no confirmed delivery dates yet
- [ ] C Still working through procurement with no confirmed dates

**WHY IT MATTERS**

Transformer lead times have stretched to 52–80 weeks in many markets. Programs without confirmed dates before site work begins are the programs that slip 6–12 months with almost no recovery options.

### 2 Vendor Coordination and Accountability

*Do you have a single point of accountability across your GC, MEP subcontractors, equipment vendors, and commissioning team, with a documented escalation path that activates the moment a milestone slips?*

- [ ] A Single accountable owner in place with a documented escalation process
- [ ] B The GC is managing but cross-vendor coordination is informal
- [ ] C Coordination is happening but no one owns the full picture

**WHY IT MATTERS**

Most retrofit delays are not caused by one vendor failing. They are caused by the gaps between vendors that no one owns. By the time the gap is visible, the schedule has already moved.

### 3 Method of Procedure Coverage

*Do you have approved MOPs for every planned power outage, cooling cutover, and critical path activity, reviewed and signed off by operations, not just engineering?*

- [ ] A All MOPs drafted, reviewed, and approved by operations before any live work begins
- [ ] B MOPs are in progress but not all are approved yet
- [ ] C MOPs will be drafted closer to each activity as it approaches

**WHY IT MATTERS**

MOPs written without operations sign-off are the leading cause of unplanned outages during retrofits. If your ops team has not challenged the procedures before a crew is standing in front of live infrastructure, the risk has already materialized.

## 4 Schedule Confidence

*Has your current program schedule been stress-tested against realistic vendor lead times, site access constraints, permitting timelines, and parallel workstreams, and do your key stakeholders agree it is achievable?*

- [ ] **A** Schedule has been formally reviewed and all stakeholders are aligned on it
- [ ] **B** A schedule exists but has not been formally stress-tested
- [ ] **C** Working from a baseline that has already slipped at least once

**WHY IT MATTERS**

A schedule that has not been stress-tested is not a schedule. It is a wish list with dates attached. Programs that discover this at month six spend months eight through eighteen trying to recover ground they were never going to make.

CATEGORY 2 • QUESTIONS 5 THROUGH 7

## Operational and Workforce Execution

The execution risks that determine whether your crew can do the work once the schedule is set.

### 5 Operational Continuity During Construction

*Do you have a documented plan for maintaining customer SLAs, managing live load, and protecting existing tenants through each phase of the retrofit, with clear go/no-go gates that must be satisfied before any work begins on live infrastructure?*

- [ ] A Continuity plan is documented, tested, and go/no-go criteria are enforced
- [ ] B General plans exist but are not fully documented or formally tested
- [ ] C Being managed informally as each phase approaches

**WHY IT MATTERS**

A retrofit that causes a customer SLA failure costs more than the retrofit itself, in contract penalties, relationship damage, and executive trust. If your continuity plan has not been challenged by someone who has run a live cutover before, it has gaps you have not found yet.

### 6 Stakeholder and Executive Alignment

*Are finance, operations, IT, facilities, and executive leadership aligned on scope, schedule, and budget, with a standing decision cadence that prevents critical issues from sitting unresolved?*

- [ ] A All stakeholders aligned with a decision cadence in place and functioning
- [ ] B Executive alignment exists but operational alignment is inconsistent
- [ ] C Stakeholder misalignment is a known and active problem on this program

**WHY IT MATTERS**

Programs die in the gaps between organizations. When finance has one version of the budget and facilities has another, someone is always surprised. In a live datacenter environment, surprise is expensive.

### 7 Workforce Compliance and Site Access

*Does your program have a system for verifying certifications, background clearances, and work authorization for every worker before they arrive at the gate, and is that system integrated into your schedule so a failed clearance shows up as a schedule risk rather than a day-of surprise?*

- [ ] A Verified in advance, tracked in the program, gate failures are not a regular occurrence
- [ ] B Managed but mostly manual and reactive; someone gets turned away and the crew absorbs it
- [ ] C Access failures and certification gaps have already cost this program time

**WHY IT MATTERS**

A worker who arrives without current certification or cleared authorization on a live datacenter floor does not get a second chance that day. Across a large crew on a compressed schedule, this becomes a pattern no recovery plan fixes. The lost windows do not come back.

CATEGORY 3 • QUESTIONS 8 THROUGH 9

## Safety and Compliance Governance

The compliance risks that can stop your program entirely, regardless of how well everything else is running.

## 8 Red Zone Coordination and Information Flow

*When your crew is working in the live floor environment (where phones are often prohibited, Wi-Fi restricted, and standard digital tools unavailable), do you have a system for capturing work status, punch list completions, and safety sign-offs in real time and getting that information back into your master program record the same day?*

- ☐ **A** Red zone protocols are defined, crew leads are trained, records are current within 24 hours
- ☐ **B** There is always a lag; the schedule and the floor are rarely fully in sync
- ☐ **C** The floor and the office are operating on different information and everyone knows it

**WHY IT MATTERS**

In a live datacenter environment, every deviation from an approved MOP requires documentation. Information lag is not an administrative problem. It is a compliance and safety exposure that compounds every day it is not addressed.

### 9 Safety Compliance and OSHA Readiness

*If OSHA conducted an unannounced site inspection today, would your safety documentation (LOTO procedures, energized electrical work permits, arc flash studies current to NFPA 70E, hot work permits, subcontractor safety certifications, and your written Injury and Illness Prevention Program) be complete, current, and accessible within the hour?*

- [ ] **A** Documentation is current, organized, and the program would pass a site inspection today
- [ ] **B** Most of it is in order but there are gaps that have not been closed yet
- [ ] **C** An unannounced OSHA audit right now would be a serious problem

**WHY IT MATTERS**

In a live datacenter environment, construction touching energized infrastructure creates OSHA exposure most program teams underestimate. A citation does not just cost money. In a 100% uptime facility, a stop-work order is a customer SLA failure. On programs moving fast under pressure, compliance documentation is the first thing that falls behind.

## Your Score

Count your B and C answers in each category. One or more in any single category means identifiable risk. Two or more B/C answers across any combination of categories means your program needs outside eyes before the next major milestone.

**CATEGORY 1: INFRASTRUCTURE AND SCHEDULE RISK (Q1 THROUGH Q4)**

✓ **All A answers: Infrastructure and schedule risk is well-managed**
Your program has the fundamentals in place. An independent Triage review from Inertia Labs can validate your readiness before you go deeper into execution and give you something concrete to show your stakeholders.

! **One or more B/C answers: Schedule risk is present and will compound**
Your program has specific gaps that will compound if left unaddressed. The Data Center Retrofit Triage identifies exactly where the risk is, how serious it is, and what to do about it, delivered in three weeks.

**CATEGORY 2: OPERATIONAL AND WORKFORCE EXECUTION (Q5 THROUGH Q7)**

✓ **All A answers: Execution foundation is solid**
Consider an independent review before the next major phase to validate your continuity and workforce posture under real program conditions.

! **One or more B/C answers: Execution gaps that surface mid-program**
Execution gaps at this level tend to surface when recovery is most costly. The Triage surfaces them now, before the crew is on the floor and the window has passed.

**CATEGORY 3: SAFETY AND COMPLIANCE GOVERNANCE (Q8 THROUGH Q9)**

✓ **All A answers: Compliance posture is strong**
Document it and keep it current as the program evolves. Compliance posture degrades fast on programs under schedule pressure.

! **One or more B/C answers: Compliance exposure that escalates**
A documentation gap becomes a citation. A citation becomes a stop-work order. A stop-work order becomes a customer SLA event. This needs attention before the next work window.

**NEXT STEP**

## Find out where your program stands

The Data Center Retrofit Triage is a three-week fixed-fee engagement. We review your program charter, schedule, vendor contracts, risk log, workforce documentation, and safety records. We deliver a Red/Amber/Green scorecard by category and a 90-day recovery plan with clear owners, milestones, and go/no-go gates.

inertialabs.io/retrofit-triage

or

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