

Building a business continuity plan

7 ways to get your agency ready for anything.

Nimbus



If the last couple of years taught us anything, it's that the unthinkable can indeed happen.

In order to survive through a host of cumulative challenges, businesses had to learn to embrace two key skills: adaptability and, importantly, preparedness.

After all, no matter how well your agency is able to adapt to unexpected changes, there's no denying that having to deal with issues, from scratch, whenever they arise is an incredibly risky (and time-consuming) approach.

That's why we've put together this agency guide to building a business continuity plan.

It's agency-specific, and it will teach you how to put measures into place to minimise risks – meaning you can approach periods of uncertainty with the confidence that you'll be able to face down any challenges and keep your business up and running.

Because, no matter what the future holds, there are practical steps you can take to make sure your business is protected.

Seven practical steps, to be specific. Let's get started.



Step 1: Identify and prioritise your risks.

Protecting your business begins with understanding your risks and their potential impacts. For example, a cyber attack might bring down your IT systems, but not harm your hardware.

Whereas a pandemic might put your people out of action, but leave your studio untouched.

The agency view: If something major puts your agency out of action, you'd have a huge task (and a major headache) untangling your clients and giving them all the necessary access to their sites.

To get ahead of that risk, give them the access they need from the get-go, so if you're not able to support them, their hosting provider can move them to another server and keep their sites live.

If you're with us here at Nimbus, that's easy to set up at website level in just a few clicks on our platform.

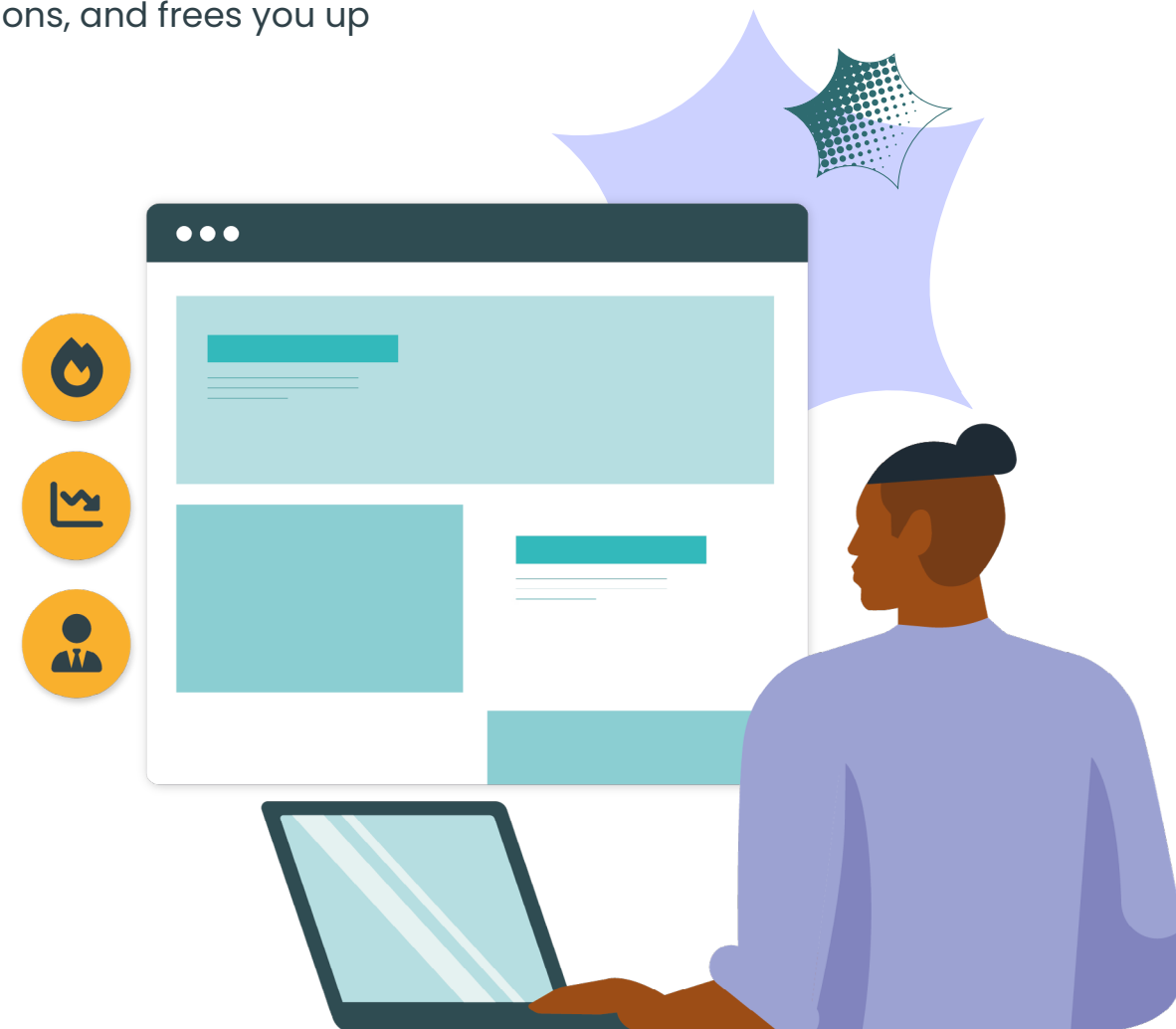
For even more protection, we also recommend getting your clients to register their own domains. That way, they've got ownership of their own sites and responsibility for renewals.

Otherwise, should something happen that means your team misses a renewal date and your client loses their domain, (a huge hit for their visibility, reputation and SEO ranking), the blame lands squarely with you.

Putting domains in your clients' hands means they're solely responsible for registrations, and frees you up from billing admin.

Where to start: Make a list of potential risks, then prioritise them. Begin with the ones most likely to happen, or most harmful for your business.

We've put together a risk assessment template you can use to get the ball rolling.



Step 2: Share **knowledge** across your team.

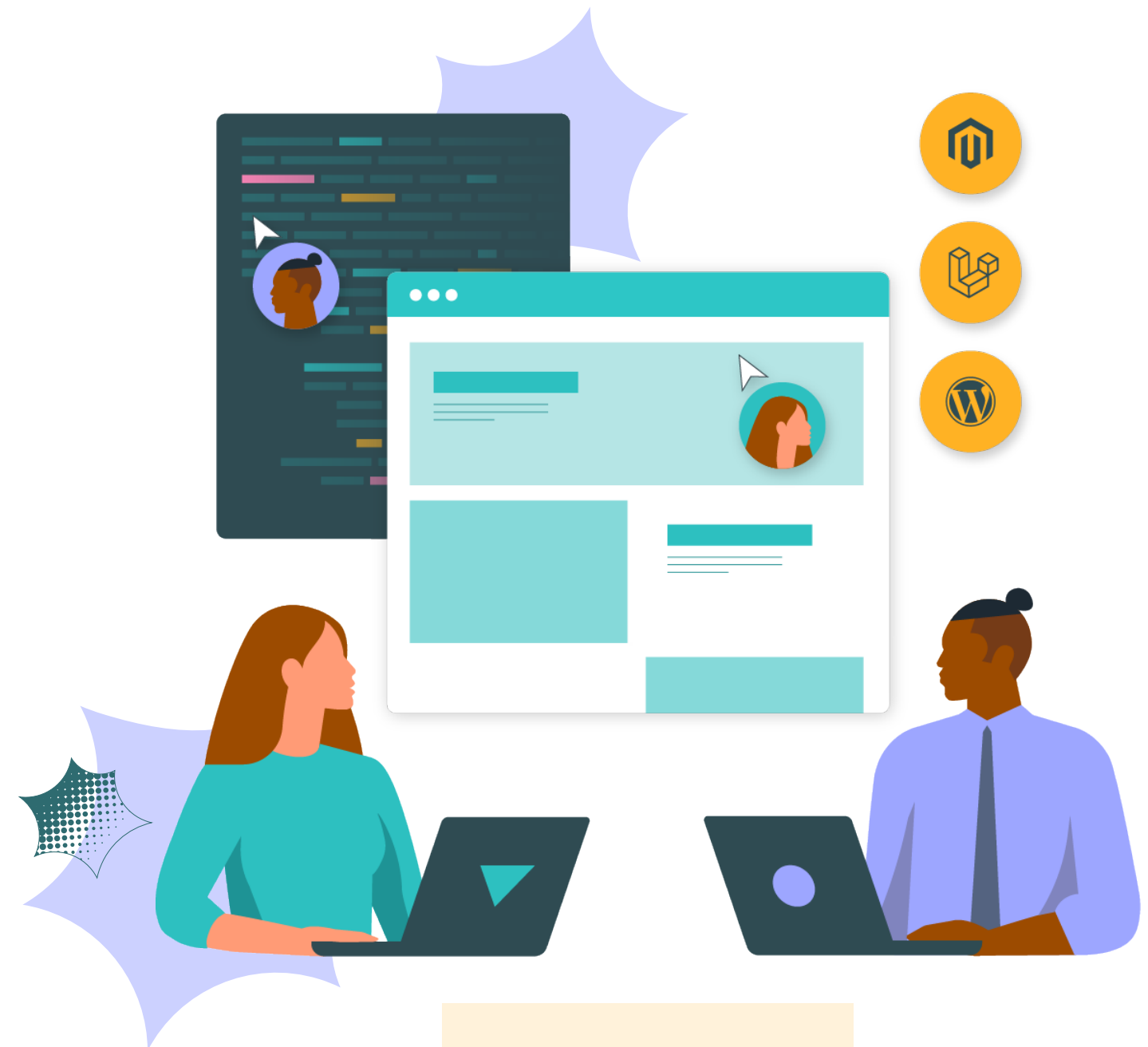
Threats to your business won't always be malicious or dramatic they could be as simple as a key team member moving on or falling unwell for an extended period of time.

For that reason, it's important not to put too much knowledge or control in just one person's hands.

The agency view: A leading developer often creates amazing bespoke setups – but if they're the only person who understands how they work, you're in danger of losing clients if that person moves on or is out of action.

Make sure your whole team understands how to manage your sites and servers – even the unique ones.

Encourage your team to be open about their work, sharing knowledge across teams so anyone can pick up a project without confusion or delay.



Where to start:

Document your processes in detail, as clearly as possible, and save them centrally so you can access them anytime.

Step 3: **List** what keeps you running.

A lot of functions and processes go into making an agency tick; from revenue-generators like designing websites, to support services like billing and payroll.

Some will be manually carried-out by your team, while others will be automated by systems.

But what would happen if one, some, or all of them failed?

The agency view: The websites you create are often pivotal to your clients' businesses, so any period of downtime is going to have a huge impact on them, too.

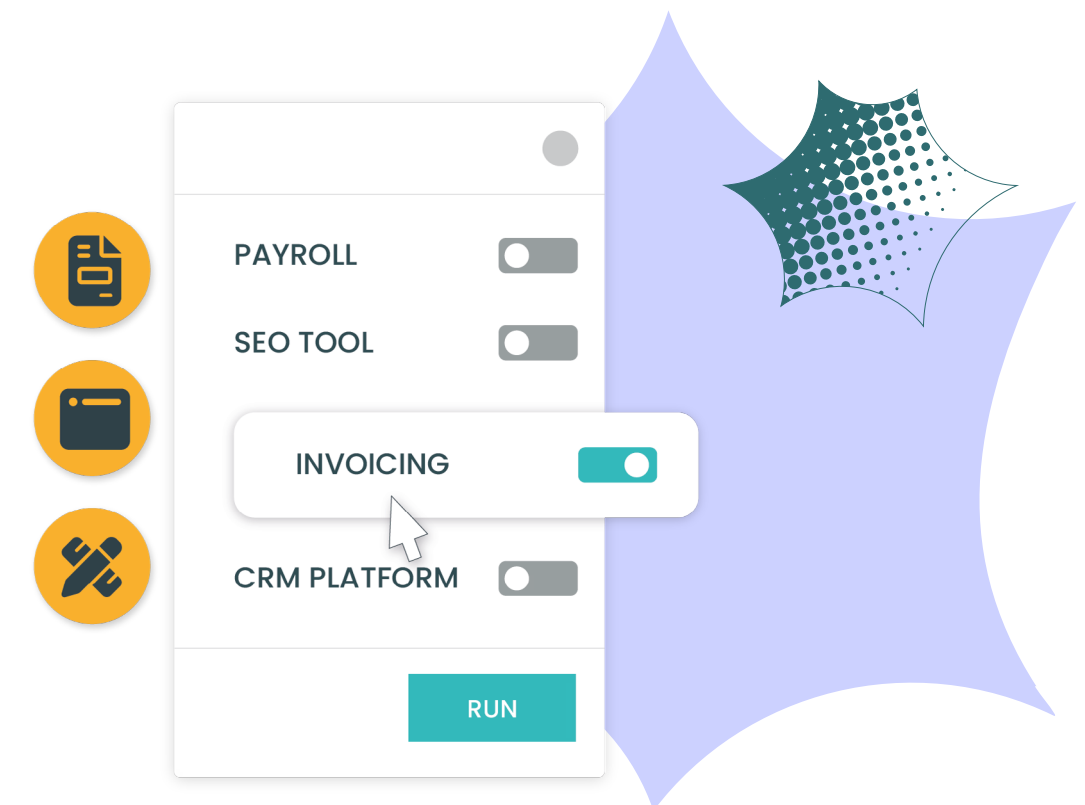
Talk to your hosting company about protecting your creative work – and maintaining uptime – if something serious goes wrong.

Our Nimbus hosting platform makes it easy for anyone to learn how to manage your whole portfolio. If you find that it's tricky with your hosting provider, ask us to show you around.

[We'd be happy to book you a tour.](#)

Where to start: List all the functions that go into running your agency, then work out the knock-on effect of each one being disrupted.

Thinking about the impact each element has on the rest of your business will help you to prioritise the protection of the ones you rely on most heavily.



Step 4: Protect your tech, and **back up** your data.

Agencies rely on a range of tech, and its value goes much further than solely the devices themselves.

Your computers store huge amounts of valuable creative work, not to mention critical client information, so it's important to plan how you'll protect and retrieve it should the worst happen.

The agency view: The better your backup processes, the better prepared you'll be for any eventuality. Make sure you're backing up every website and server, every night, to a secure offsite location.

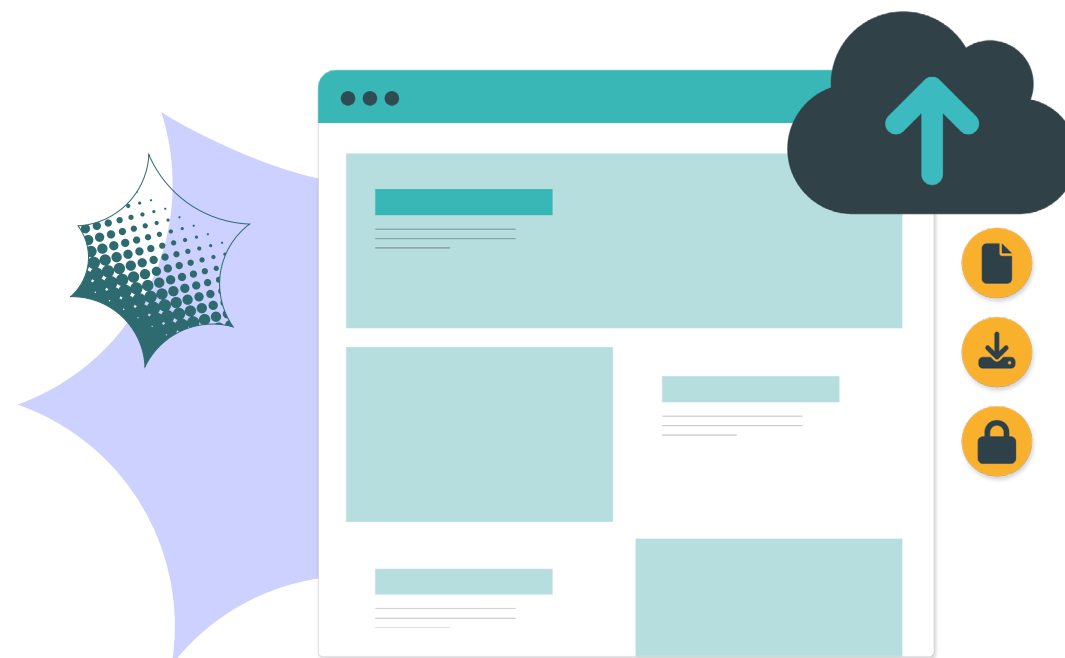
At Nimbus we do this automatically for all of our agencies, but if you're not sure what kind of backup service you're getting, talk to your hosting provider.

If you're updating a client's site, we also recommend making a secondary backup copy of their existing site before you push any changes live.

Again, if you're hosted with us, we've got an instant backup feature that means you can do this through our platform, anytime, with the click of a button.

Don't forget - taking backups is only useful if you can confidently restore them. We always recommend building a testing-restore process into your agency; regularly checking that your backed-up sites can be restored by running them on a test site on your server, or computer in your studio.

It's a quick, easy way to give you (and your clients) peace of mind - with the knowledge that you've got next-level protection against cyber attacks, hardware damage and accidental deletions.



Where to start: Make sure you've got rock-solid insurance that covers your studio equipment, software and office set-up especially any priority items you simply can't function without.

It's a good idea to look into professional indemnity and public liability insurance too.

Making sure you've got the cover you need if there's any impact on your team members, clients or the general public could save you a lot of pain in the future.

Step 5: Make an **emergency contacts** list.

If an emergency happens, time is valuable. Chances are, you won't have time to hunt around for all the contacts you need.

So get them ready ahead of time, and make sure every team's got a copy.

The agency view: In some emergency situations you'll need to contact your clients quickly, without access to your usual computers.

Make sure you've got the name and number of at least one up-to-date key contact at each client company, and add those to your emergency list.



Where to start: Make a list of your agency's essential suppliers: the people who can help you put things right, as quickly as possible.

That might include your security company, as well as the providers of your hosting, broadband, phone and utilities.

We're ready to support you, 24/7 – If you've got hosting with Nimbus, you can rest assured that our out-of-hours emergency support team are ready to rescue your sites and servers, should the worst happen, whenever you need them.

Just add our out-of-hours support number [0203 005 9181](tel:02030059181) to your emergency contacts list.

Step 6: Run emergency **drills.**

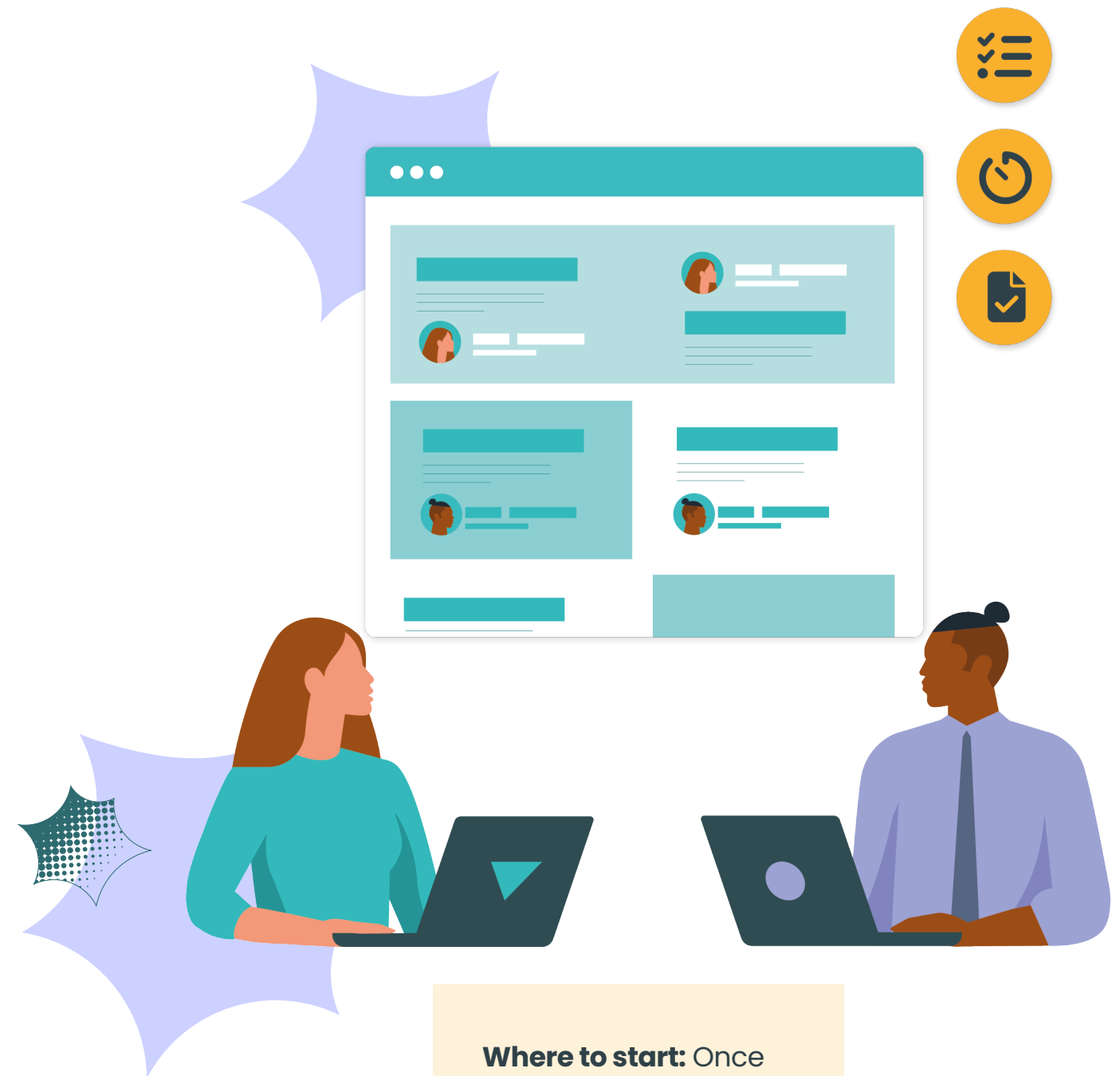
Just like a fire drill keeps people calm during an emergency, running over the processes you'll need to follow will give your people clarity and peace of mind.

As well as the practical tools to look after themselves – and your business better.

The agency view: Show people how to safely shutdown computers and systems if there's a power failure, so they're able to protect valuable hardware.

If there's a potential risk to your clients, make sure your team knows their responsibilities, has a plan for contacting the right people, and understands the right steps to secure sites, data and uptime.

Run practice drills so everyone knows their individual roles, what to do and where to go should an emergency affect your agency's operations.



Where to start: Once you've got a good idea of the different risks your agency might face, make sure your team knows how to tackle them.

Step 7: Make a **relocation** plan.

There are lots of reasons why you might have to move out of your HQ; from pandemic lockdowns to fire damage, flooding or telecoms failures.

If that happens, you'll need a clear idea of where and how everyone's going to work.

The agency view: The beauty of digital working is that you don't always need to be in the same room to deliver on a brief. But there's a difference between planned remote-working and a sudden pivot.

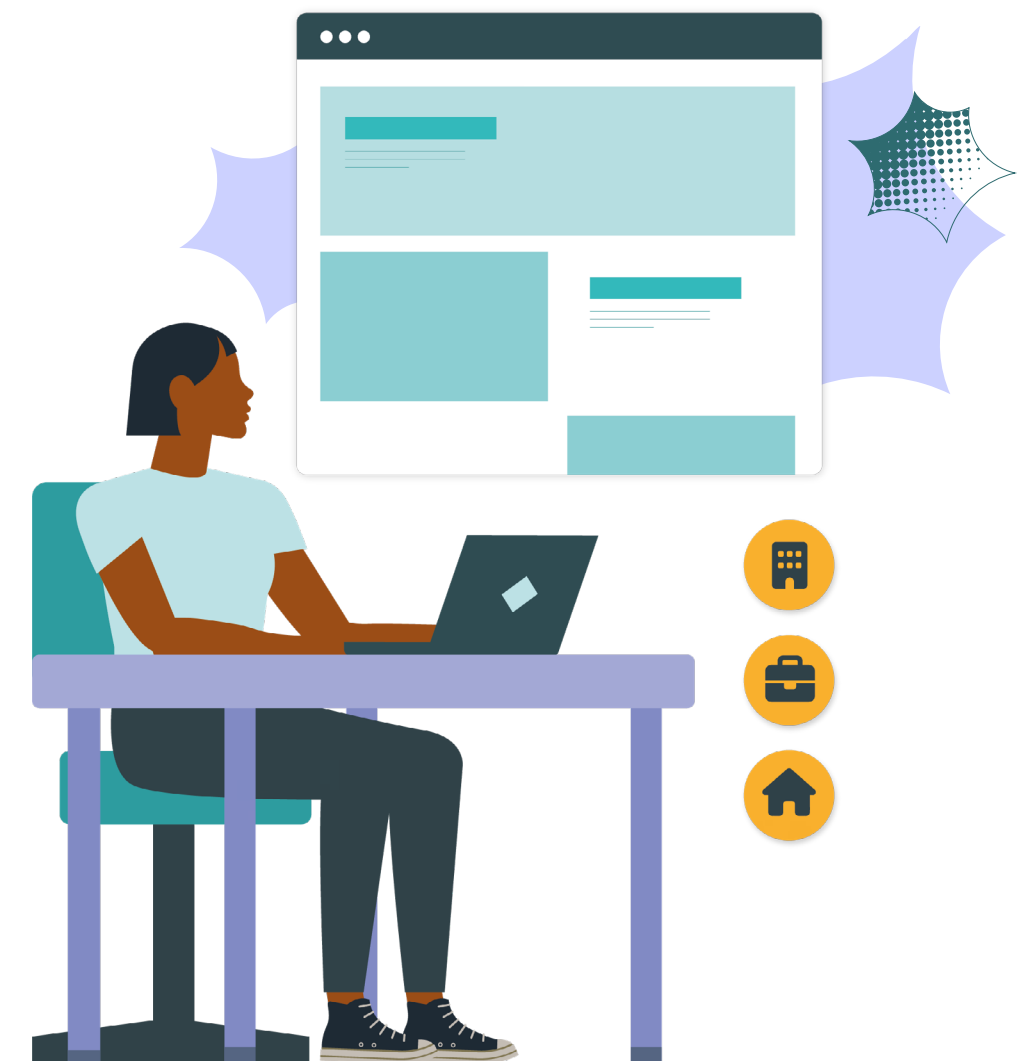
If you can't be in the studio but find you still need to be together, have a plan for an alternative office space or location you can get to quickly, complete with any essential equipment you'll need to source – and how you're going to do it.

Our intuitive hosting platform is clear, user-friendly, and designed with agencies in mind – so your whole team can easily learn how to manage your sites and servers.

Interested? [Book a tour](#). We'd love to show you around.

Where to start: The last couple of years have shown us that most people can work from home for a while, if they need to.


It's a good idea to check in with your team regularly to find out whether that's still possible, and make sure they've got the devices – and secure access – they need to pivot to remote work in a hurry.



Don't wait for the worst to happen.

A lot of thought goes into a good business continuity plan, so don't be overwhelmed. Break it down, make a start, fill out our handy template and build it up over time. Once it's ready, you'll be able to face down any eventuality with confidence.

If you've got any questions about how your hosting provider can help with your continuity planning, give our friendly team a call **0208 146 6797** or send us an email at **sales@nimbushosting.co.uk**. We'll be happy to help.

Risk Assessment Template										
	Risk or hazard description	Resources & parties impacted	Risk probability	Risk impact	Risk rating	Prevention methods	Assigned to	Responsibilities	Action date	Status
Department or Project Name			Highly Likely	Extreme	Extreme					
			Likely	High	High					
			Unlikely	Medium	Medium					
			Very Unlikely	Low	Low					
Department or Project Name										
Department or Project Name										
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Department or Project Name										

ACCESS NOW

Nimbus

Powerful web hosting, designed especially for agencies and freelancers.

Our green hosting doesn't just run on renewables, it's also reliable and phenomenally fast. In fact, it's 400% more capable than the competition when you hit a traffic spike, with guaranteed 99.995% uptime.

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