ACQUIRE. STRENGTHEN. GROW.

The Sale-Ready Checklist

Is your business ready to be worth its best number?

Most owners only sell a business once. Buyers do this all the time, and they pay more for businesses that are ready. Work through this checklist honestly. Every box you can tick moves you toward the top of your value range, and every box you can't is simply your to-do list, whether a sale is one year away or five.

01 Financial records

Buyers pay for certainty. Clean numbers are the difference between a premium and a discount.

- [ ] Three full years of profit-and-loss statements and balance sheets, ready to hand over.
- [ ] Personal expenses fully separated from business expenses (or clearly documented as add-backs).
- [ ] Owner earnings (SDE) documented: salary, perks, one-time costs, and what the business truly generates.
- [ ] Margins tracked monthly, and you can explain why they moved when they moved.
- [ ] Accounts receivable current, taxes filed and paid, no surprises waiting in the books.

02 Operations and systems

A business that runs on documented systems, instead of your memory, is worth more to every buyer.

- [ ] Your core processes (quoting, scheduling, fulfillment, follow-up) are written down and actually followed.
- [ ] The business passes the vacation test: two weeks without you, nothing breaks.
- [ ] Vendor and supplier relationships documented, with key agreements in writing.
- [ ] Equipment and asset list current, with condition and replacement timelines noted.
- [ ] Repeatable work is automated or templated wherever it sensibly can be.

03 Team

Buyers are buying the people who stay. Owner-dependence is the most common value killer we see.

- [ ] A manager or key employees run the day to day without escalating everything to you.
- [ ] Every key role has a documented backup, so no single departure stops the business.
- [ ] Compensation, roles, and expectations are written down, not handshake arrangements.
- [ ] You know who is likely to stay through a transition, and what would keep them.

04 Customers and revenue quality

Predictable revenue earns a higher multiple. Concentration and one-off work discount it.

- [ ] No single customer is more than 20 to 30 percent of revenue (or you have a plan to get there).
- [ ] Recurring, contracted, or reliably repeating revenue is identified and growing.
- [ ] Customer contracts are transferable to a new owner without renegotiation.
- [ ] Your reputation is visible: reviews, referrals, and a track record a stranger can verify.

05 Legal and housekeeping

Deals die in due diligence. Quiet paperwork problems become loud at the worst moment.

- [ ] Entity records, licenses, and permits are current and in the business's name.
- [ ] Your lease (or property) is transferable, with enough term left to satisfy a buyer.
- [ ] The business name, brand, phone number, and website are owned by the business, not you personally.
- [ ] Any disputes, liens, or loose ends are resolved or fully disclosed and documented.

06 Personal readiness

The best exits are chosen, not forced. This section is about you, not the business.

- [ ] You know your number: what the business is likely worth today, and what you need it to be.
- [ ] You have a real picture of life after the sale (or after stepping back), not just an escape fantasy.
- [ ] You are open on structure: full sale, partial sale, or a partner, depending on what fits your goals.
- [ ] Your timeline is honest. Even if it is three years out, the preparation starts now.

Know your number. It changes everything.

Get a free, private estimate of what your business may be worth today, in about two minutes:

mcnattventures.com/whats-my-business-worth.html

Want to talk through your checklist? Book a relaxed 20-minute call at mcnattventures.com/contact.html or email brad@mcnattventures.com. No pitch, no pressure, fully confidential.