Ignore These 6 Growth Strategies and Watch Your Business Collapse

Opinions expressed by Entrepreneur contributors are their own.

Key Takeaways

- Sustainable growth requires aligning purpose and value before scaling aggressively.
- Starting small builds strong foundations, culture and systems that support long-term success.
- Continuous reinvention and reflection ensure relevance and prevent growth from becoming destructive.

Starting a company takes courage. Keeping it successful requires vision, focus and constant evolution. Rapid growth may seem like the obvious path to success, but as founders know, long-term sustainability and value are built far more intentionally. Success isn't about growing faster, but about building something aligned with your purpose and your life. That idea connects with a truth many ignore: not all growth creates value, and market perception can be just as important as financial results.

And here's the part founders often learn the hard way: if you scale before you're ready, the business can outgrow *you*. Systems crack, culture drifts and the work that once energized you starts to feel like a weight.

Sustainable growth forces you to slow down long enough to ask better questions: What am I building toward? What's actually

working? What can I let go of?

1. Grow without losing direction

For years, the entrepreneurial ecosystem has idolized growth, more employees, more sales, more offices. But growing without direction can weaken your company. The more you spread yourself thin, the more you dilute your essence. In contrast, when you double down on what makes you unique, you become irreplaceable.

Businesses that endure aren't the ones that grow the fastest, but the ones that grow with intention. Every new product, client or market should reinforce your core purpose, not distract from it.

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2. Perception builds or destroys value

The value of your company doesn't depend solely on revenue; it depends on how the market perceives you. When investors or potential buyers evaluate a business, they quickly categorize it into an industry. If that category is associated with low margins or little innovation, changing that perception becomes an uphill battle.

For example, an entrepreneur I know once faced this when trying to sell his promotional products company. Investors saw him as just another distributor. So, he changed the narrative, *reworking his brand,* his presentation and his digital experience to position the business as a technology-driven e-commerce platform. That shift radically increased his valuation. The company itself didn't change much structurally; what changed was its story.

The lesson: your first impression defines your multiple of value. That’s why every touchpoint, your website, your pitch, your design must project coherence, innovation and leadership.

3. Starting small is a strategic advantage

Many founders who began with limited resources learned to optimize before scaling, building solid systems that fueled them later on. Starting small isn’t a disadvantage. It’s rather a laboratory to experiment, adjust and build real foundations.

Founders who grow progressively tend to develop stronger cultures, clearer processes, and healthier finances. The initial size doesn’t matter as much as the quality of the foundation. A lean company with a clear purpose can adapt faster, while larger but rigid organizations often collapse under their own weight.

Sustainable growth is built on patience, knowing when to advance and when to consolidate.
Scaling too soon can be more dangerous than never scaling at all. That’s why my own purpose has always been clear: since co-founding Growth Institute alongside Verne Harnish, I’ve focused on scaling with structure, reducing the chaos and drama of disorganized growth.

Over the years, I’ve confirmed again and again that when your foundations are solid, scaling becomes simpler and far more sustainable.

Related: Chasing Results Will Stall Your Business. Build These Simple Habits to Grow It.

4. Reinvention as a discipline

Every company goes through stages where what once worked no longer does. The market shifts, customers evolve and competition modernizes. Some call this “the reinvention cycle,” recognizing that success isn’t a destination but a continuous process of adaptation.

Effective reinvention comes down to three habits:

- Constant reflection. Review each quarter to determine which practices no longer add value.
- Structured curiosity. Create space for experimentation and learning without fear of mistakes.
- Speed in execution. Changing quickly without losing quality is what separates resilient leaders from the rest.

Founders who started small often master this mindset because they’re used to adjusting as they go. Agility is the best tool to keep a business relevant and successful.

5. Balancing growth, purpose and perception

Balance is one of an entrepreneur’s biggest challenges. Grow too fast and you strain your finances; grow without purpose and you weaken your culture; grow without shaping perception and you risk your reputation. The businesses that endure are the ones that connect all three: real value, a clear story, and a human-centered mission.

Value comes from specialization, perception from consistency, and purpose from intentional leadership. When those elements align, growth becomes steady, natural and sustainable.

6. The invisible cost of success

Success can also be destructive if it comes at the expense of personal well-being. Many founders sacrifice time, health and relationships to sustain a growing business – but without balance, success loses meaning.

Related: When Does the Cost of Success Become Too High?

Here are some tips to keep success alive

1. Keeping your business successful doesn’t mean never stumbling—it means continuing to adapt with purpose and clarity.
2. Learn from those who started small: every step counts when it aligns with your values.
3. Learn from those who grew with focus: real value lies in specialization, not expansion.
4. And learn from those who constantly reinvent themselves: evolution is the only path to permanence.

In the end, the most enduring success isn’t measured by how quickly you reach the top, but by your ability to keep moving forward without losing yourself.

Key Takeaways

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Starting a company takes courage. Keeping it successful

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Why Elite Entrepreneurs Are Borrowing This Practice from Pro Athletes

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Key Takeaways

- Elite recovery tools once reserved for athletes are now accessible and valuable for executive performance.
- Practices like HBOT, red light therapy and contrast training improve clarity, stress resilience and long-term cognitive endurance.
- Leaders who schedule and measure recovery the way athletes do gain sustainable focus, energy and performance.

Leadership has become an endurance sport. Long hours, nonstop decisions and constant cognitive demands test even the most disciplined minds. Yet few executives approach recovery with the same strategic intent as performance. That mindset is beginning to shift.

I am writing this from the Hospital for Special Surgery, where my husband is undergoing shoulder surgery with Dr. Sam Taylor — the same orthopedic surgeon trusted by the New York Giants. Sitting in this waiting room surrounded by the quiet hum of recovery science in action, I can't help but reflect on how elite athletes treat healing as an essential part of their success. They invest in recovery with the same intensity most leaders reserve for growth and performance. It made me wonder: what if CEOs and executives approached recovery the same way?

Technologies once reserved for Olympic training facilities and professional locker rooms are now accessible for homes and offices. From hyperbaric oxygen chambers to red light panels, contrast and compression systems and PEMF devices, the tools of elite recovery have become part of the modern executive strategy.

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Oxygen as a catalyst for clarity

Hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT) involves breathing concentrated oxygen in a pressurized chamber to increase oxygen delivery throughout the body. Peer-reviewed studies show HBOT can reduce inflammation, enhance oxygen efficiency and support recovery.

HBOT is also moving into mainstream use. *Fortune* recently reported that longevity and performance leaders such as Bryan Johnson and LeBron James have incorporated HBOT into their recovery routines. The technology has been formally adopted by major athletic organizations; according to signed Master Services Agreements between Oxygen Health Systems and the New York Giants (September 2022) and New York Yankees (September 2023), both franchises have integrated clinical-grade chambers into their training and rehabilitation programs.

The company manufactures more than 40 ISO-certified chambers for both professional and personal use, reflecting a growing shift toward accessible, in-home recovery technology.

The global HBOT devices market is projected to reach $4.9 billion by 2030, according to Grand View Research, underscoring how oxygen-based recovery is becoming a cornerstone of modern performance science.

Light as a power source

If oxygen fuels recovery, light powers regeneration. Red-light therapy, also known as photobiomodulation (PBM), uses near-infrared wavelengths to stimulate mitochondria — the energy centers of cells. Controlled trials report improvements in muscle performance, reduced oxidative stress and faster recovery.

High-profile users such as Tom Brady and Novak Djokovic have publicly discussed using red-light therapy to improve recovery

and sleep. For executives, compact panels and handhelds can easily fit into morning or evening routines to counteract digital fatigue and support better sleep quality.

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The science of stress resilience

Contrast therapy — alternating heat and cold exposure — has long been a recovery mainstay for professional athletes. Infrared saunas and cold plunges are now common in both corporate wellness programs and home setups. Research in the *European Journal of Applied Physiology* and *Journal of Strength and Conditioning Research* shows that alternating temperatures improves circulation, reduces soreness and enhances mood regulation.

The deliberate discomfort of contrast therapy trains the body (and the nervous system) to adapt to stress more efficiently. For leaders, it becomes a practice in composure, conditioning both body and mind to remain steady and clear under pressure.

Electromagnetic and compression recovery

Pulsed electromagnetic field therapy (PEMF) delivers low-frequency pulses that can stimulate cellular repair and blood flow. Studies confirm PEMF can reduce delayed-onset muscle soreness and support functional recovery.

Compression systems apply rhythmic pressure to improve circulation and lymphatic flow. Evidence links compression with improved blood flow, oxygenation and recovery markers (*Frontiers in Physiology*). Portable PEMF mats and recovery sleeves now fit under desks or next to sofas, bringing once-exclusive modalities into home and office routines.

Related: Exercise Isn’t Just Good for You. Your Startup’s Success May Depend on It.

Recovery as a leadership strategy

Athletes do not leave recovery to chance. They schedule it, measure it and treat it as essential to performance. Executives can adopt the same mindset.

1. **Schedule recovery with intention.** Protect time for practices like oxygen therapy, red-light sessions or contrast therapy. Treat recovery with the same seriousness as a strategic meeting.
2. **Measure what matters.** Track sleep quality, heart-rate variability and focus as indicators of resilience.
3. **Integrate recovery into daily life.** Use short PEMF or compression sessions during breaks or after workouts. Small, repeatable habits build consistency.

The lesson from elite sport is clear: you cannot perform at your peak if you do not recover with precision. With today’s technologies, recovery tools that once belonged to professional teams now fit seamlessly into modern executive lifestyles.

The future of leadership will not be defined by who works the longest hours. It will be defined by who recovers the best. In an era of burnout and decision fatigue, recovery is not indulgence — it is strategy.

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Should You Start a Business Before the Holidays? I'm Doing It — Here's My Take

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Key Takeaways

- A tailored approach to launching can yield a strong market entry — consider a soft launch or plan for a post-holiday debut.

As entrepreneurs, we often get excited about new ideas only to stare at the calendar and wonder: should I really launch now, with the holidays around the corner?

I'm living this very question as I work on my upcoming business, Fix Your Search — a course, YouTube show and one-on-one coaching experience to help people finally show their true selves online. My journey is all about helping others put their best foot forward on the internet. And right now, I'm knee-deep in mapping out the course, scripting videos and planning content, aiming for a full launch at the end of 2025.

But when is the best time to launch a new business? Before the holidays, or after? The answer depends on your business, your goals and the type of customers you want to reach. Let's break down the decision with real examples from my own process.

Related: 4 Ways to Determine If Now Is the Right Time to Launch Your Business

1. Does your business thrive during the holidays?

First, ask yourself if your business directly benefits from holiday activity. Retailers with giftable products, event planners, caterers or businesses offering home services can

see huge demand spikes in November and December. For these, launching before the holidays could be a goldmine – you're entering the market right as customers are searching for help.

Example: If you're selling custom ornaments or running winter photography sessions, now is your season. Seize the holiday surge!

For something like Fix Your Search, my course isn't specifically tied to holiday needs, but many people and businesses use the end of the year to get things in order or set resolutions. So for me, it's less about holiday demand, more about positioning for the New Year.

2. Holiday timing can help you test and iterate

Launching a new business before the holidays can give you a vivid, high-pressure environment to test. Customers are motivated, purchasing decisions happen faster and you'll get real-time feedback quickly.

With Fix Your Search, I'm using this period to film initial episodes, map out course modules and pilot my one-on-one coaching. Instead of a full launch, I'm letting a handful of clients and subscribers into the early stages – gathering feedback, tweaking my process and building anticipation for a bigger release after the holiday dust settles.

3. Consider the "noise" of the season

Here's the flip side: The holidays are crowded. Inboxes overflow, social media buzzes and people tune out of normal routines. If your business isn't directly tapping into holiday needs, your launch might get lost in the whirlwind.

That’s why I’m building content and community now, creating a foundation instead of shouting for attention. By filming YouTube episodes and running small-scale beta tests, I avoid competing with every holiday ad and can better focus on product quality.

For B2B services, waiting until January might make more sense, when decision-makers come back recharged and ready to focus.

Related: 3 Signs That It’s Time to Start Your Own Company

4. Use the holidays for strategic preparation

If, like me, your business is laying the groundwork (filming, writing, planning), the holidays are an ideal time to focus. Many people slow down, but I see this season as a perfect chance for deep work. I treat December as “creation season” — less about the launch, more about getting the content right.

Some things on my current checklist:

- Storyboarding course modules
- Scripting and batch filming my YouTube show
- Planning a marketing calendar for the first quarter
- Outlining a smooth onboarding process for my coaching clients

If your product doesn’t need to be holiday-ready, build quietly now and launch loud in January when your audience is back online and eager to invest in themselves.

5. Will holiday launches help (or hurt) your story?

Launching before the holidays can make for a compelling narrative — “I started when most people rest.” It can also

train you to act and adapt under pressure, a skill every entrepreneur needs. But if you launch into a crowded, distracted market and silence follows, it may feel discouraging.

That's why with Fix Your Search, I'm choosing a hybrid: building and teasing now but mapping my big reveal for after the holidays. This lets me tap into those people motivated by New Year's resolutions and those who want to finally sort their online presence or level up their digital brand.

Related: Starting a Business: How to Start a Business in 12 Steps

The bottom line: It depends on you and your customers

So, should you launch your business before the holidays? Here's my honest coaching advice:

- **If you have a product or service that is perfect for the holiday season**, don't wait. Jump in now, ride the demand and gather invaluable early feedback.
- **If your audience is distracted during the holidays or your business isn't tied to seasonal needs**, use this time to create, plan and set yourself up for a powerful launch after the holidays.
- **If you're not sure**, consider a soft launch, open to beta testers or a small group, then use their input to polish your offering for a broader launch in January.

Whatever you choose, don't let fear or timing be an excuse not to act. I'm proof that you can make meaningful progress year-round. I'm laying the foundation for Fix Your Search every single day: filming, mapping and prepping. When the world is ready to act in January, I'll be more than ready, and you can be, too.

So, is now the right time? Only you can answer that. But I hope my experience helps you weigh your options and move forward with confidence, whenever you decide to launch. Cheers!

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5 Powerful Lessons to Help

Leaders Navigate Disruption

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Key Takeaways

- In an era of constant change, leadership is no longer about maintaining stability but about creating momentum.
- Leaders navigating disruption should understand that narratives shape reality, transparency builds confidence and leadership is a team sport.
- It’s also important to understand that purpose powers innovation and resilience creates opportunity.

Periods of disruption define the leaders who last. Whether in technology, finance or new frontiers like crypto, real leadership is about turning uncertainty into progress.

I have built a career by making things happen. From advising political leaders to helping build high-growth companies, I have seen how execution and communication drive results. At Blockchain.com, I lead one of the most established names in digital assets, helping to transform it from a fast-moving startup into a mature global business.

When I joined the company, I came from a background in politics, communications and corporate affairs. Over time, I expanded that foundation into broader leadership, first as Chief Business Officer, then as President and now as Co-CEO. My experience in policy and corporate strategy has proven especially valuable as the regulatory environment for crypto becomes more constructive.

Today, digital assets are finally being recognized by

policymakers and institutions as a legitimate part of the global financial system. Navigating that shift requires trust, discipline and clear execution.

Between late 2021 and mid-2024, Blockchain.com operated through one of the longest and toughest downturns the industry has ever experienced. During that period, I helped raise capital, keep our teams aligned and focus our energy on what mattered most. Many of our peers and competitors disappeared. We stayed the course. We built through the cycle and came out stronger.

Here are five lessons that have guided me through disruption and continue to shape how I lead.

Related: How I Built a Business That Thrives Through Constant Disruption — and How You Can Too

1. Narratives shape reality

In moments of volatility, clarity matters more than speed. Leaders who can define a clear story about where their organization is heading create confidence when others hesitate.

During the market reset, I learned that communication is not a side task; it is a strategic tool. Internally, clarity kept teams focused on priorities. Externally, it gave partners and investors confidence that we had a plan and the discipline to follow it.

Your story should not be spun. It should be the truth, told clearly. In fast-moving industries, perception and performance are deeply connected. If people understand your direction, they are far more likely to help you get there.

2. Transparency builds confidence

Trust is built in hard times, not easy ones. When the market tightened, we made a choice to be open with our teams, partners and investors. That transparency created stability when the industry around us was filled with speculation and uncertainty.

We focus on clear communication and consistent delivery. When something changes, we say so. When we face challenges, we share them honestly. People do not expect perfection, but they do expect candor. Transparency builds confidence because it shows that you are in control, even when conditions are difficult.

In business, silence breeds doubt. Communication creates trust.

Related: 10 Tips for Leading Disruption During Times of Uncertainty

3. Leadership is a team sport

No company succeeds because of one person. Leadership is about building structures and cultures that can function without constant intervention.

I have focused on giving teams the ownership and clarity they need to make smart decisions quickly. When people know what success looks like and feel trusted to execute, they move faster and more confidently.

Great organizations are built on trust that runs in both directions. Leaders trust their teams to deliver. Teams trust their leaders to remove barriers. That shared trust creates the environment for sustained performance.

4. Purpose powers innovation

Disruption can easily distract. A strong mission keeps people grounded. At Blockchain.com, our purpose has always been clear: to empower people around the world to achieve financial independence.

That purpose matters because it turns ambition into impact. It shapes how we think about growth, risk and responsibility. It guides the products we build and the partnerships we pursue. When markets shift or headlines change, a clear mission keeps everyone aligned on why the work matters.

Purpose also drives innovation. It reminds teams that they are part of something bigger than themselves. When people connect to that idea, they give more, create more and stay resilient through uncertainty.

5. Resilience creates opportunity

Disruption can be uncomfortable, but it often forces the best kind of growth.

The last few years in crypto have tested every company in the space. For us, it was a chance to strengthen the fundamentals: balance sheet discipline, operational focus and long-term vision. We proved that resilience is not just about endurance; it is about preparation.

When markets recovered, we were ready. We had a leaner structure, sharper focus and stronger relationships with partners and regulators. The groundwork built during difficult times became the platform for new opportunities.

Resilience is not just surviving the storm; it is learning how to use it to your advantage.

Related: **The Surprising Strategy Smart Leaders Use to Outpace**

Disruption

Leadership today is about more than managing people or processes. It is about creating clarity when there is noise, stability when there is change and confidence when there is doubt.

At Blockchain.com, we see disruption as a constant. And that is what makes this work so exciting. This industry will never settle into predictable patterns. And that’s the opportunity: Every obstacle is a proving ground, every challenge a chance to get stronger, clearer and more aligned.

For me, the lesson is simple. In crypto, disruption is inevitable, but growth is a choice. The leaders who turn that energy into momentum, stay focused on purpose and lead with trust are the ones who turn volatility into lasting progress.

Key Takeaways

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4 Surprising Ways Email Marketing Can Improve Your SEO (and Vice Versa)

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Key Takeaways

- Despite the rise of AI search and social media, SEO and email continuously drive a high ROI for B2B and B2C brands.
- Content is foundational to both SEO and email, and with a few tweaks, the same assets can be used on your website and in your emails.
- You can integrate email marketing into SEO strategies by driving email sign-ups via web pages, using email as a keyword research tool, gathering user-generated content and repurposing top-performing content.

If you were asked what email marketing and SEO have in common, you'd likely answer that both are outdated marketing strategies. After all, hasn't ChatGPT replaced Google, and

aren’t direct messages preferred over email?

Yet, HubSpot’s The State of Marketing 2025 report reveals that for B2B brands, SEO, websites and blogs were the top marketing channels in 2024. For B2C businesses, email marketing generated the best return on investment.

As a founder of an email marketing platform, I’ve seen the type of results that email can deliver. Based on Selzy’s research, which looked at more than 40 billion marketing emails sent, email is the top choice for outbound messaging, boasting a dominance rate of 80%. Drawing from the success stories of our users, marketing best practices and my own experience, here are four ways that I would integrate email marketing into SEO strategies.

Related: Don’t Sleep on Email Marketing – Here’s Why It’s Still Your Business’s Most Powerful Tool

Drive email sign-ups via web pages

You need engaged subscribers for email marketing to be effective. Who better than your website visitors?

Your website content essentially advertises your email newsletter. It shows potential email subscribers the type of value they can expect. It’s like offering website visitors the chance to enjoy a second serving of helpful content.
A lead magnet, like a downloadable checklist or guide, is the cherry on top. This can also be repurposed as blog content later, which, of course, will help your SEO efforts again.

In addition to growing your subscriber list, this approach can also improve your email segmentation. For instance, subscribers who signed up via product pages can receive emails related to that specific product category.

Use email as a keyword research tool

While SEO's focus shifted to creating content that shows experience, expertise, authoritativeness and trustworthiness (E-E-A-T), keywords still play a key role. Make no mistake, keyword research tools like Semrush, Ahrefs and Surfer have a place in your martech stack. However, your emails can also double up as a keyword tool.

To turn your emails into an SEO tool, study the subject lines that generate the highest open rates. The words and phrases used will give you a good indication of the topics that your target audience members find more relevant.

Alternatively, you can take a more direct approach and ask your subscribers via a poll which topics they want to learn more about. Polls are also great for engagement, making it a double win.

As mentioned, keyword research tools remain valuable, and you can use the keywords identified by these tools as inspiration for your next email campaign. The benefit of this approach is that you can ignore keyword difficulty and solely look at search volume, as the goal isn't to outrank your competitors, but rather to create content that your target audience members want to read about.

Related: How to Write Emails That Stick and Get Action

Gather user-generated content

In addition to keywords, email marketing can also help with E-E-A-T. Since it's a two-way communication channel (a feature that's easy to forget if you're zoomed in on using it as a marketing tool), it's great for gathering social proof that can act as trust signals.

In practice, this can take the shape of a follow-up email asking customers to review a recent purchase, while SaaS companies can ask users to rate their recent interaction.

Before you publish any feedback, though, remember to get their permission first. Once again, this can easily be done with email.

While a review is typically limited to two to three sentences, it can also serve as extra content. Customers often include the same search terms that other potential customers will use, turning a review from a trust signal into a keyword-rich paragraph.

You can also extend your focus beyond your own subscriber list and customer base and target influencers. For example, when you add a new product to your range, you can send a personalized email to influencers in this niche. This way, you can potentially secure a backlink, too.

Related: How User-Generated Content Helps You Build Trust and Credibility

Repurpose top-performing content

Whether you're launching an email marketing campaign or trying to improve your visibility in search, you need content. While the format of an email message and a long-form blog post is different, the message will remain relatable to both audiences.

You can, for example, summarize the key takeaways of a recent blog post or the results of a case study in a newsletter. Then, you can include a link to the full article to drive traffic back to your website.

You can apply the same approach to your emails. Instead of summarizing, you'll flesh out a top-performing email so that it can be published as an article on your website or function

as a landing page.

If that sounds like too much effort, simply share them as they are in an online newsletter archive. Aside from helping your website rank for certain keywords, it can also grow your email list as website visitors can see what type of content you share, convincing them to sign up.

Effective marketing is a continuous balance between acquisition and retention. While SEO is great for attracting business and email for keeping your new leads engaged, they can also work together to grow brand awareness and trust. After all, it’s about creating consistent messaging. If your SEO content and email campaigns discuss the same themes and topics, it will be easy for your target audience members to associate your brand with specific expertise.

Key Takeaways

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Your Data Backups Are Useless If You Skip This One Crucial Step

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Key Takeaways

- Most businesses understand the importance of backing up their data regularly, but a backup only works as long as the files are recoverable and usable.
- Backup recovery testing needs to be performed on different devices. A device with a different hardware configuration and operating system might cause the restored files to be completely unusable.
- Testing recovery on the same device will give you a false sense of security with high potential risks.

One of the best ways to secure your data is to create a backup

that is recoverable in case of data loss. Even more important is to test backup recovery systems regularly. This is because backing up data is useless if it cannot be completely restored when required.

However, one of the biggest mistakes made during recovery testing is that it is mostly performed on the same device. The assumption is that if the test is successful on the same device, it'll always work on different devices.

Of course, reality is not that simple. For true data recoverability, it's important to test it on multiple different devices. This article dives deeper into how you can make your recovery testing even better and more robust.

Related: 5 Data Backup Mistakes that Could Bankrupt Your Startup (and How to Quickly Fix Them)

The importance of backup recovery testing

Most businesses understand the importance of making a backup of all their data regularly. However, a backup only works as long as the files are recoverable and usable. This seems simple enough – until it fails.

Common computer errors, such as network failure, hard disk errors or corrupted files, might cause corrupt backup files and not allow them to be restored successfully.

On the other hand, even if files can be restored successfully, they may not be usable. Simple OS problems and even software incompatibility can cause a lot of issues in using this data.

Therefore, it is important to regularly perform backup recovery testing on different scenarios.

Restore to different devices in your test

Backup recovery testing needs to be multifaceted – you need to test various scenarios and simulations to ensure the systems are working correctly. One of the most overlooked steps of recovery testing is the need to perform it on different devices.

A different device with a different hardware configuration and operating system might cause the restored files to be completely unusable. The reasons are mostly compatibility issues, such as hardware-dependent features, device-bound encryption or even software limitations.

Just think – what can you do if the original device is damaged, stolen or lost, and the replacement hardware is different and incompatible with your restored data?

Therefore, testing recovery on the same device will give you a false sense of security with high potential risks. In your data recovery plan, backup recovery testing must be done on multiple devices with various configurations and operating systems.

Related: The Step Most Businesses Skip (and Regret) When It Comes to Data Protection

iCloud backup recovery failure: A real case study

One of my clients actually found this out the hard way. He was an iPhone user and had a regular backup on his iCloud. One day, his iPhone suddenly stopped working. It was just a black screen, and it wouldn't switch on. After trying everything and even taking it to the Apple store, his phone was finally declared "dead."

This is usually not the worst news for him. Since all important data is already backed up to iCloud, he just bought a new iPhone with the same model and restored all data from iCloud. Unfortunately, not all data was restored to his new phone as planned.

While he was able to restore most of his apps, emails and pictures, he could not find all the entries in Google Authenticator and Microsoft Authenticator apps.

Due to security reasons, both these apps are bound to the original device. If run from a different device, even if the data is restored, they are not shown in these apps. Since access to some of his most important accounts (e.g., social media, Amazon account, etc.) is using two-step verification with these apps, he lost access to these accounts.

He wasn’t the first person this has happened to, and probably won’t be the last.

Related: How This Hidden Data Issue Silently Erodes Business Value and Decision-Making Over Time

Backup recovery for authenticator apps

If you ever face a scenario like the above, there is a simple solution that just might work. Follow these simple steps to make sure your data is secure, especially if you lost access to your original device:

First solution:

Before using Google Authenticator or the Microsoft Authenticator apps to add entries, users must log into their corresponding accounts. This guarantees the entries are stored and bound with the account, not with the device.

Second solution:

Step 1: Tap the three-dot menu icon (or “Menu”).

Step 2: Tap **Transfer accounts** > **Export accounts**

Step 3: Select the entries you want to transfer to your new device.

Step 4: Tap **Next**.

Step 5: You will see a QR Code for these entries.

Step 6: Make a screenshot of the QR code, then back up the screenshot image.

Step 7: Tap **Cancel** instead of **Next** since you only want to back up the data.

Going forward, this operation needs to be performed manually every time you make a backup. Always confirm the QR code contains the latest data. If recovery codes are not created regularly, the entries since the last creation of the recovery code will be lost.

Always plan for complete device failure instead of just data loss. This is because regular backups do not fully secure data. True backup reliability will only be achieved if you are able to successfully restore and use data on various devices.

This is true, whether you have a PC, a mobile device or a local server. This is a simple step in backup recovery testing that can prevent major data losses.

Key Takeaways

- Most businesses understand the importance of backing up their data regularly, but a backup only works as long as the files are recoverable and usable.

- Backup recovery testing needs to be performed on different devices. A device with a different hardware configuration and operating system might cause the restored files to be completely unusable.
- Testing recovery on the same device will give you a false sense of security with high potential risks.

One of the best ways to secure your data is to create a backup that is recoverable in case of data loss. Even more important is to test backup recovery systems regularly. This is because backing up data is useless if it cannot be completely restored when required.

However, one of the biggest mistakes made during recovery testing is that it is mostly performed on the same device. The assumption is that if the test is successful on the same device, it'll always work on different devices.

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Founders Are Fleeing to Florida. Here's When You Actually Need to Go.

Opinions expressed by Entrepreneur contributors are their own.

Key Takeaways

- Residency isn’t paperwork — it’s a story built through months of consistent, documented life choices.
- Planning your Florida move early protects sale proceeds, credibility, and long-term wealth strategy.

You just sold your company. The wire hits, the pressure lifts and for the first time in years, you can breathe. Then your accountant calls.

The numbers don’t look right. Between federal taxes and your former state’s claim on your sale, the celebration turns into a calculation.

That’s when many entrepreneurs start thinking about Florida. The sunshine, the lifestyle and the tax benefits all make sense. But before they can even find a Florida home, the transaction is done, the gain is realized, and the opportunity to structure things more efficiently has already passed.

It’s not that they failed to plan. It’s that they planned too late.

Timing is everything

Many people assume becoming a Florida resident is as simple as buying a home and changing a driver’s license. Those are steps in the process, but they are not the plan. When the timing of your move happens too close to a liquidity event, state tax authorities start asking questions.

Auditors look for intent. They want to know when you decided to relocate, how established your Florida life is and whether the move was driven by lifestyle or by taxes. If your sale agreement is dated March and your Florida lease or home purchase starts in April, it tells a story that auditors won’t ignore.

Florida residency extends far beyond how many days you spend in the state. Your lifestyle tells the truth. Where you spend time, where your family gathers, and where your records live all become part of your story. High-tax states like New York, New Jersey and California have entire audit divisions dedicated to tracking this. They are looking for one thing: proof that you genuinely left before the deal.

The story your life tells will either support your residency claim or work against it. The key is to start shaping that story early, long before anyone comes looking for proof.

Related: The No. 1 Place to Retire in the World Might Not Be On Your Radar — Plus, 9 Other Top Retirement Destinations

What waiting really costs

Most entrepreneurs have a list of things they plan to handle "after the sale." Claiming Florida residency often ends up on that list. It feels like something that can wait — until it can't.

By the time the deal is in motion, every decision carries potential consequences. A few months of planning can protect years of work. A few weeks of hesitation can cost millions.

Picture a founder who has a deal to sell their business for $30 million while still a resident in a high-tax state. The sale closes, the wire hits, then, as the excitement wears off, the tax estimate arrives. If that same founder had started establishing Florida residency six months earlier, the outcome would look very different.

I've seen founders lose hundreds of thousands, sometimes more, because they waited until the transaction was already moving to make their residency official. They assumed it could be cleaned up later. But once the ink is dry, the story is set.

Florida residency isn't complicated, but it requires

intention. The timing, documentation and consistency of your actions must align with the story your records tell. A few deliberate steps now can protect what took decades to build.

When you wait, you don’t simplify your life — you invite scrutiny. High-tax states don’t need one big mistake to challenge your story; they just need enough small ones to raise doubt.

Residency isn’t a checklist

The biggest misconception about Florida residency is that it’s a form you file. It isn’t. It’s a reflection of how you live.

Residency is built through daily choices that prove where your life is centered. The way you spend your time, the priorities you set, and the records you keep all tell a story. The goal isn’t to check boxes. The goal is to create a life that makes your residency undeniable.

Just like building your company, building your residency takes structure, intention, and consistency. Entrepreneurs who understand this see Florida as part of a broader wealth strategy. They treat the move as a structural advantage — one that supports their next chapter, whether that means scaling new ventures, managing liquidity, or passing wealth to the next generation.

Related: This State Just Replaced New York as the Country’s Second Most Valuable Housing Market

Turn Florida into a wealth advantage

The decision to move is ultimately about freedom — the freedom to live where you want, to keep more of what you’ve built, and to make decisions on your terms. Florida offers that freedom,

but only to those who plan ahead.

If you’re even considering selling your company, the time to start your Florida move is now. Not after signing a letter of intent. Not after due diligence. Now.

A move that’s planned early tells a story of true intention. It proves that your decision was thoughtful, strategic, and credible. It gives you time to align your personal, financial, and professional life around where you want to build your future.

As an entrepreneur, you’ve built success by taking action. Do the same for your Florida move. Start early, build a record that stands up to scrutiny, and live the story you want to tell. That’s how you turn a relocation into a wealth strategy — and a financial advantage that lasts.

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Home Depot’s Sales Are Down. Weak Housing and Good Weather Get the Blame.

Home Depot reported another drop in sales in the third quarter, trimming back its outlook for the rest of the year. The company said shoppers pulled back as repair projects slowed.

Executives blamed weak housing activity and an unusually calm stretch of weather. Fewer storms meant fewer emergency fixes, which normally push traffic. Shoppers also scaled back on home-improvement projects, especially the bigger jobs that usually follow a move or a remodel.

A dip at Home Depot often points to where the economy is heading next. A softer quarter means homeowners are being cautious. It also hints that the broader economy may be losing some steam.

Read more

Panera Bread Is Going Through Multimillion-Dollar Makeover After Sales Go Stale

Photo by Kevin Carter/Getty Images

Panera Bread is gearing up for a reset. Sales fell about 5 percent last year. That drop pushed new CEO Paul Carbone to admit the company lost it’s way and needed a course correction, according to The Wall Street Journal.

The changes start with the basics. Panera is bringing back better ingredients, beefing up its portion size, and reworking its salads. Stores are being freshened up. Staffing is being rebuilt. The company also put its planned IPO on hold until the turnaround takes shape.

The move shows how rough the fast-casual landscape has become. Diners are fussier. Margins are tighter. If Panera Bread can heat back up, the rest of the sector will be watching.

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Netflix’s Next Big Move? Live

Events and Merch.

Photo by: Plexi Images/GHI/UCG/Universal Images Group via Getty Images

Netflix is taking a page out of the playbook of rivals such as Disney and Universal, and turning its shows into merch, games, dolls, and real-world experiences people can buy.

Netflix has already tested *Bridgerton* balls and *Squid Game* live challenges. Now it wants a steady pipeline of merch and attractions tied to upcoming releases. This month it opened Netflix House in Philadelphia, which features immersive experiences, games, live shows, and themed restaurants. Look for *KPop Demon Hunters* dolls to drop soon.

With streaming down overall, the company is looking for revenue it can’t get from subscriptions alone. And as more streamers fight for attention, Netflix is betting that selling the world around its hits will matter as much as the hits themselves.

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Google Debuts Gemini 3 Pro for Smarter Search

Photo illustration by Li Hongbo/VCG via Getty Images

Google has unveiled its latest AI model, Gemini 3 Pro. The much-anticipated model will power “AI mode” in Google Search and the standalone Gemini app. It’s in preview now, but it represents the biggest upgrade to Google’s AI-powered search experience since Gemini launched last year.

The model handles text, images, audio, and video in one system, and it’s built to deliver leaner answers and even interactive graphics. Google is pairing it with a new developer tool called Antigravity that lets programmers describe an app they want to build rather than write out every line of code.

This is the first time Google is pushing a brand-new model directly into its search product. As the AI Wars continue,

this is the company’s latest attempt to keep pace with competitors such as Open AI and show that Google can still shape how people search and build with AI.

Silicon Valley Billionaries Set Their Sights on Suisun City

Philip Pacheco/Bloomberg via Getty Images

Billionaires trying to build a brand-new city in Northern California may have found a surprising partner: Suisun City.

California Forever, the tech-backed group behind the plan, wants the small, depressed Solano County city (pop: 30,000) to annex nearly 23,000 acres and pull the ambitious project inside its borders instead of constructing a standalone city on farmland.

The proposal includes sustainable housing, jobs, manufacturing sites and long-term growth for as many as 400,000 people. Suisun City, threatend with insolvency, sees a chance to grow its tax base and upgrade services. If approved, the

controversial “new city” experiment becomes a real test of local politics and urban expansion.

Read More

Cloudflare Outage Takes Many Sites Offline

Photo by Smith Collection/Gado/Getty Images

If you were having trouble getting on X earlier today, it wasn’t just your internet. A widespread outage at Cloudflare caused many major websites and apps to throw internal server errors. The issue began around 6:40 a.m. ET and affected consumers worldwide.

Cloudflare is a major web-infrastructure firm that powers about one-fifth of all websites globally.

Service was restored, but the outage showed how critical and centralized internet infrastructure has become. When a single provider like Cloudflare hits an error, a huge range of

platforms — including X and ChatGPT — can go offline in an instant.

Read more

Judge Rules That Meta Is Not a Monopoly

Photo illustration by Li Hongbo/VCG via Getty Images

A federal judge ruled that Meta is not an illegal monopoly and will not have to spin off Instagram or WhatsApp. The decision knocks down the Federal Trade Commission's long-running claim that Meta built its power by buying up would-be rivals.

The FTC argued that Meta used a "buy or bury" strategy to dominate personal social networking. Regulators said the Instagram and WhatsApp deals were designed to box out competition. Judge James E. Boasberg rejected that view and said the agency failed to prove Meta still holds monopoly power, especially with TikTok and YouTube in the mix.

The ruling is a major blow to the government’s push to rein in Big Tech. It raises questions about how regulators can define markets in a fast-moving industry. And it leaves Meta’s empire — and its core business model — fully intact.

Read more

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How AI Research Labs Became

the New High-Stakes Global Arms Race

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Key Takeaways

- The UAE links national policy, residency incentives and sovereign capital to accelerate AI development.
- Growing research output and rising investment share position the Middle East as a durable competitor.
- Trust, regulation and export controls will determine whether Gulf AI becomes globally accepted.

The United Arab Emirates already has the world's first Ministry of Artificial Intelligence, a federal strategy that aims for AI to add fourteen percent of GDP by 2030, and a growing network of sovereign-backed chip ventures. The International Institute for Strategic Studies describes the effort as a bid for "digital leverage" that reaches far beyond the Gulf.

Policy comes first. All ministries must adopt AI tools and share data through a national cloud, while new "golden visas" let scientists stay for ten years or more. Capital follows policy. Sovereign funds have poured billions of dollars into cloud infrastructure, semiconductor design and large-language-model research.

Talent is rising in step with capital. MacroPolo's Global AI Talent Tracker reports that the Middle East's share of top-tier conference papers grew sixfold between 2018 and 2024, with the UAE accounting for roughly half of that increase.

Dual-degree PhD programs with U.S. and European universities and long-term residency incentives have helped attract that talent.

Related: Meta Poaches the CEO of a $32 Billion AI Startup — After Trying to Buy the Company and Being Told No

Silicon Valley counters

In a move to strengthen domestic technological competitiveness, the United States Congress enacted legislation that restored full and immediate expensing for U.S.-based research and development (R&D) costs, while still requiring R&D expenses incurred in foreign countries to be amortized over 15 years.

MAGO Venture finds that 16 percent of global AI investment flowed to the Middle East in 2024, triple its share just two years earlier. Silicon Valley firms now defend their lead by emphasizing proprietary data sets, advanced ethics review and access to the largest commercial markets.

Why research labs matter

Owning first-rate labs shapes standards, patent pools and talent pipelines. Plug and Play Tech Center argues that the country concentrating the best researchers “sets the clock speed” for global innovation. Abu Dhabi links lab agendas directly to public priorities. The Malaffi health-records platform feeds anonymized clinical data into local training runs, accelerating medical-AI research while staying inside national borders.

Economic logic supports the push. AI clusters spin off high-value jobs in chip packaging, cloud-security auditing and specialized venture finance. Digital Bricks estimates that Gulf Cooperation Council members could see AI contribute up to

320 billion dollars in annual economic value by 2030, with the UAE capturing the largest slice.

Risks and constraints

Rapid expansion carries costs. The same Digital Bricks study warns that a regional talent bidding war can inflate salaries faster than productivity gains. New data centers will raise power demand and water use in a climate already under stress. Export-control regimes add more friction. U.S. rules now restrict top-end GPUs from shipping to mainland China and place additional licensing requirements on sales to Gulf buyers. The IISS report notes that these constraints force the UAE to investigate domestic chip fabrication, an expensive long-term play.

Trust also matters. European clients may hesitate to move sensitive intellectual property to jurisdictions where data-protection laws differ from the General Data Protection Regulation. Abu Dhabi's response is a sector-specific data framework that promises GDPR-equivalent safeguards, but global acceptance is still evolving.

Outlook

Can Abu Dhabi turn momentum into lasting influence? Three milestones will give the answer.

1. **Lab credentials.** Watch the share of peer-reviewed breakthroughs that come from Gulf AI institutes. An uptick will confirm research depth, not just spending power.
2. **Capital flows.** Keep track of the Middle East's slice of global AI investment. If the region holds or grows its 2024 share, Silicon Valley will face a permanent challenger rather than a temporary boomlet.
3. **Regulatory acceptance.** See whether EU and U.S. agencies

certify models primarily trained on Gulf infrastructure. Approval would validate the UAE’s data-governance framework and open export markets.

Combined with these dynamics, it indicates that leadership will not be dependent on a particular breakthrough but rather on the success of each ecosystem in aligning its moving parts. Abu Dhabi is an example of what can be achieved when policy incentives, sovereign capital and specific talent programs are all geared towards the same direction, making research laboratories become innovation engines as well as geopolitical assets.

Silicon Valley continues to have stronger networks in the private sector and a longer history of open cooperation, but now it is in a sector where other areas can combine strategic capital with quick regulatory response to bridge gaps. The question of whether the competition will turn into collaboration or become regional silos will be determined by how each party will strike the right balance between openness and security, cost and quality, national interests and international standards.

The contest is unlikely to end in a winner-take-all outcome. Core algorithm design may stay rooted in California, application layers could migrate to Gulf hubs and manufacturing might remain centered in East Asia. If the UAE hits its benchmarks on research output, investment share and regulatory trust, global AI leadership will shift from a single-pole Silicon Valley model to a two-pole landscape before the decade closes.

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His Restaurants Won Awards — Then His Next Business Changed the Industry

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Key Takeaways

- A Food Network victory launched Shemtob's career, but a kitchen injury inspired his next big idea.
- Drawing on his own years in hospitality, Shemtob built Snibbs to elevate workers who spend their days serving others.
- After losing his home in the 2025 LA fires, Daniel Shemtob turned tragedy into action.

What's harder? Running a restaurant or a shoe company?

Daniel Shemtob doesn't even pause before answering. "They're both so goddamn equally hard," he says, laughing.

He would know. The chef-turned-founder has done both. In hospitality, he's the force behind The Lime Truck, a Southern California favorite that became a national name. Before winning *The Great Food Truck Race* on the Food Network, Shemtob had already built a loyal following with his fresh, fast and fearless approach to food. Then he took that same truck, drove it from Malibu to Miami and won the entire competition.

"Running a food truck teaches you everything about business," Shemtob says. "Real estate, logistics, customer service, supply chain, you learn it all." That education led to more than just TV fame. It fueled a restaurant career that includes Hatch, his acclaimed full-service concept.

Related: This AI Tool for Restaurant Owners Is Giving 'Hours' of Time Back

Somewhere between late-night service and early-morning prep, Shemtob found his next obsession: shoes. After a bad slip in the kitchen left him injured, he started questioning why every non-slip work shoe looked and felt terrible. "Nothing

represented who we are," he says. "Chefs, nurses, bartenders, they deserve something better."

That frustration became Snibbs, a design-forward footwear company built for workers who never sit down. Five years of trial and error produced a shoe that chefs actually want to wear. Collaborations with industry icons like Nancy Silverton followed, along with a mission-driven program that has donated more than 1,000 pairs to hospitality workers in need.

I put Snibbs to the test. My company's catering manager, Steven Swiderski, tried them for a week and called them "lightweight, breathable and top-tier for long shifts." When I read the review live during the show, Shemtob's reaction said it all. "Tell Steven I'd give him a big hug," he laughed. "That's the best feedback you can get."

Moments like that remind him why he started Snibbs in the first place. "I started as a busboy and worked every job up to CEO," Shemtob says. "So if I can make life a little better for the people in those shoes, that's success to me."

Related: He Signed His First Business Deal on His Honeymoon. Now His Drive-Thru Coffee Brand Has 15 Locations.

Finding strength after the fire

On January 9, 2025, everything changed for Shemtob.

He and his wife had just settled into the Pacific Palisades, surrounded by family and preparing to welcome their first child. When a wildfire broke out nearby, they packed up quickly, assuming it was just a precaution. Hours later, their home security app sent an alert. Smoke had been detected. Then a window shattered. "That's when we knew everything was gone," he says.

Days later, Shemtob borrowed a friend's bike and rode back into the neighborhood to see the damage for himself. "It

looked like a war zone," he recalls. "Cars burned out. Houses leveled. I passed my own house because I didn't even recognize it."

He lost nearly everything. His car, his late mother's belongings, baby photos and years of memories were gone. But grief wasn't where he stayed. Having already endured the pandemic, the loss of his mom and two failed businesses, he recognized that familiar ache and knew what to do next. "I learned during Covid that the best way to heal is to serve," he says. "So I got to work."

Within days, Shemtob was volunteering with World Central Kitchen, cooking for first responders and displaced families along the Pacific Coast Highway. Instead of accepting donations for himself, he raised money to help others rebuild. Snibbs joined the effort too, donating hundreds of pairs of shoes to hospitality workers and partnering with the California Restaurant Association to support those affected.

"Our company's mission is to elevate the worker," Shemtob says. "These are people who serve others every day. The least we can do is take care of them when they need it."

For Shemtob, service connects everything. Whether he is feeding a crowd, designing a better shoe or rebuilding a life, his motivation is the same. "You have to stay active," he says. "Helping people is what pulls you out of the dark. It's the only way I know."

Related: She Worked in High-Pressure Kitchens — Then Used the Experience to Start Her Critically Acclaimed Restaurant

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Restaurant Influencers is brought to you by Toast, the powerful restaurant point-of-sale and management system that helps restaurants improve operations, increase sales and

create a better guest experience.

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