Brinecroft Retail

Welcome to the team

DEMO ENVIRONMENT | CORE TIER | 6 USERS | ~35 STAFF

The business

Brinecroft sells phone cases, chargers, cables, smart home gadgets, and novelty tech gifts online. We turn over about £5 million a year — roughly 70% through our own Shopify website, 20% via Amazon, and 10% wholesale to independents. We're based in Reading with a single warehouse and about 35 staff, most of them in fulfilment.

We grew fast in 2022–23 but have plateaued. That growth phase left us with a £400k revolving credit facility from NatWest that we leaned on hard. The covenants renew September 2027 and we're running close to the wire on the ratios. Cash flow is tight, particularly around peak season when stock build-up runs ahead of receipts. This is the thing that keeps Sarah up at night.

IT and supply chain

All IT is outsourced to Nexus IT Solutions, a three-person local MSP. The relationship has deteriorated — poor response times, no SLA, constant scope disputes. They pushed a broken website update in November that cost us ~£4,200 in lost sales ten days before Black Friday.

Supply chain is fragile. One of our three UK wholesalers nearly went under in December — £18,000 in orders at risk, emergency sourcing at a premium. Our Shenzhen imports have recurring quality problems; we recalled 340 chargers in October after one overheated. Lisa is validating backup suppliers but it's early days.

Legal exposure

In August 2024 a warehouse operative fell from a ladder and fractured his wrist. He's since left and his solicitor is pursuing a negligence claim (£30–45k). Aviva are handling it, but the H&S reassessment we commissioned keeps getting delayed, and the likely fix (stock picker or racking reconfiguration, £4.5–12k) hasn't been budgeted given cash pressures. This sits uncomfortably between “we need to act” and “we can't easily afford to.” Access to this event is restricted to Sarah, David, and Lisa given the sensitivity.

What's going well

Priya is driving Cyber Essentials certification — about 70% complete with most technical controls in place. The motivation is a public sector framework contract worth ~£200k/year that requires certification to bid.

The team on the platform

Sarah Chen MD, tenant admin	**David Okafor** Finance	**Lisa Sheridan** Operations
James Whitfield Commercial	**Priya Kapoor** Compliance	**Tom Granger** Warehouse, contributor access

Where we're focusing

The two risks demanding most attention are FIN-02 (Cash Flow Pressure) and FIN-03 (Covenant Breach) — both exceed our tighter cash flow appetite. The active actions are supplier diversification (Lisa, due end of Feb), Cyber Essentials certification (Priya, targeting March assessment), and the H&S reassessment (Lisa, overdue). Financial controls were independently reviewed in December and are solid; IT and operational controls are patchier and are next in line for attention.