MOUNTAIN CUTTER

Strategic finance & operations for early-stage startups

The Post-Series A Checklist

The infrastructure a startup needs after closing an A round

The A round changes the company's obligations, not just its bank balance: institutional investors with information rights, a use of funds the market will hold you to, a hiring wave, and a transition from proving the product to scaling it efficiently.

Items are tagged **[NOW]** (first 30–60 days) · **[≤6 MO]** (within the next six months) · **[BEFORE B]** (mature before the next raise).

1 Finance & Accounting

NOW	**GAAP financials and close process** — monthly close in ≤5 business days, accrual basis, deferred revenue schedule for SaaS rev rec
NOW	**Chart of accounts that scales** — department-level tagging from day one; painful to retrofit
NOW	**Budget vs. actuals by department, monthly** — feeds the board package
NOW	**Cash flow forecast** — 13-week rolling plus long-range runway model tied to the hiring plan
NOW	**AR / billing infrastructure** — invoice process, payment terms, collections owner, aging report; enterprise customers pay slow by default
NOW	**Spend management** — corporate cards with policy enforcement and automated categorization
≤6 MO	**Sales tax compliance** — Anrok (or equivalent) live before Jan 1, 2027: California SB 122 makes SaaS taxable in CA starting that date, and the $500K economic nexus threshold means most enterprise SaaS vendors with CA customers must collect from day one. Kick off implementation Q4 at the latest; add tax pass-through language to contracts signed between now and then
≤6 MO	**Multi-state payroll tax compliance** — triggered by remote hires; PEO covers most of it

2 Reporting & Governance

NOW	**Board meeting rhythm** — calendar the full year now; quarterly minimum; consistent package format
NOW	**Management KPI dashboard** — daily/weekly operating view that anchors executive meetings; MVP first, developed over time into a board reporting asset. One set of numbers everyone trusts
NOW	**Board reporting package** — designed as a subset of the management dashboard, not a separate workstream; maximum asset overlap
NOW	**Investor update cadence** — monthly or quarterly; short, consistent, metric-led

NOW	**Delegation of authority matrix** — who signs what dollar amount; matters immediately with fresh capital and new hires spending
≤6 MO	**Data room maintenance** — keep the Series A data room current quarterly; the B raise or M&A interest starts warm

3 Systems & Automation

Nothing is automated on day one — that's normal. The sequencing question is what to build, buy, integrate, and in what order, considered jointly with the hiring plan (every system decision is also a 'who runs this' decision).

NOW	**Single source of truth** — the ledger is the spine; CRM, payroll, and spend all reconcile to it. Establish while transaction volume is low and it's cheap to get right
NOW	**System build-out sequence** — map current state, define target stack, sequence integrations by pain and dependency; explicit buy-vs-build calls at each step
≤6 MO	**Software evaluation discipline** — lightweight rubric per category (cost, integration surface, scale ceiling, migration cost); avoid tool sprawl before an owner exists
≤6 MO	**Connector-based data pulls** — CRM and ledger feeding the dashboard automatically; manual exports are technical debt
≤6 MO	**Multi-entity architecture** — if foreign entities exist, consolidation approach decided deliberately, not by drift
BEFORE B	**AI-assisted reporting layer** — variance flagging, narrative generation, board-deck drafting on top of the dashboard

4 People & Equity

NOW	**PEO / payroll infrastructure** — co-employment for benefits leverage and multi-state compliance before the hiring wave
NOW	**Fresh 409A valuation** — prior 409A is stale post-financing; required before new option grants
NOW	**Equity grant mechanics** — board approval process for new hire grants; cap table hygiene (Carta or equivalent)
NOW	**Comp philosophy and benchmarking** — market positioning by role before the hiring wave sets precedents ad hoc

≤6 MO **Onboarding process** — repeatable day-one experience; IP assignment agreements signed before start date

≤6 MO **Key person insurance** — check the IRA; often contractually required on founders

5 Legal & Compliance

NOW **IRA compliance map** — information rights, pro rata tracking, protective provisions; know what you owe investors and when

NOW **Contract infrastructure** — standard MSA, order form, DPA templates; version control; e-signature workflow

NOW **Renewal calendar** — auto-renewal notice dates are contractual landmines; track from contract one

NOW **D&O insurance** — typically required by institutional investors; E&O and cyber alongside

≤6 MO **Employment law compliance** — multi-state handbook, employee-vs-contractor classification review

≤6 MO **GDPR / data privacy** — if EU customers or an EU entity touch customer data; DPAs with subprocessors

6 Security & Trust

NOW **SOC 2 Type II** — enterprise procurement will demand it; 6–12 months to obtain (observation window plus audit), so every month of delay delays deals. Vanta/Drata to automate

≤6 MO **Security review / pen test** — baseline before customer security questionnaires arrive in volume

≤6 MO **Vendor security process** — subprocessor list, security questionnaire response library

7 Revenue Operations

NOW **CRM as system of record** — pipeline stages defined, hygiene enforced; finance and sales reconcile to the same numbers

NOW **ARR waterfall** — new / expansion / contraction / churn tracked systematically from the ledger, not memory

≤6 MO	**Pricing governance / deal desk** — discount approval thresholds before new AEs set precedents; non-standard terms route to one owner
≤6 MO	**Sales process documentation** — required before AE hires can ramp; institutional knowledge out of founders' heads
≤6 MO	**Churn and renewal machinery** — renewal owner, health scoring, expansion playbook, before the first renewal cohort hits

8 Treasury & Banking

NOW	**Capital deployment strategy** — preserve capital, maximize liquidity, maximize yield, in that order; laddered treasuries for the long-duration reserve
NOW	**Operating cash architecture** — tiered structure with automated sweeps; defined working capital buffer (2–4 weeks of burn in operating)
NOW	**Bank diversification** — no single point of failure; SVB 2023 is the case study
≤6 MO	**Quarterly treasury review** — reassess ladder and allocation against updated burn and market context

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Knowing what's on this list is the easy part. The real work is figuring out what to do first when you're burning cash, watching your cap table, and hiring fast all at once. That's where we can help. Reach us at hello@mountaincutter.com.