SaaS Reporting Checklist

Use this checklist to systematically set up and/or refine your SaaS reporting process.

Step 1: Define Your Reporting Objectives

- [ ] **Identify Core Goals:** List your top 1-3 strategic business goals for the next quarter/year (e.g., increase market share, improve profitability, validate product-market fit).
- [ ] **Formulate Key Questions:** Write down the specific questions reporting must answer to track progress towards these goals
(e.g., "Which customer segments have the highest LTV?",
"What's our trial-to-paid conversion rate by channel?").
- [ ] **Define Audience:** Specify who needs these reports (e.g., Leadership Team, Product Managers, Marketing Team, Investors) and tailor complexity accordingly.
- [ ] **Write SMART Objectives:** Convert goals/questions into specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound objectives.
- [ ] **Confirm Alignment:** Ensure your defined objectives directly support current, critical business priorities.

Step 2: Identify Key SaaS Reporting Metrics

- [ ] **Link Metrics to Objectives:** For each objective from Step 1, list the primary metric(s) that will measure progress.
- [ ] **Select Core Financial Metrics:** (Check all applicable)
  - Monthly Recurring Revenue (MRR) / Annual Recurring Revenue (ARR)
  - MRR Growth Rate (%)
  - Revenue Churn Rate (%)
  - Logo (Customer) Churn Rate (%)
  - Average Revenue Per User/Account (ARPU/ARPA)

- [ ] **Select Core Acquisition & Unit Economics Metrics:**
  - Customer Acquisition Cost (CAC)
  - Customer Lifetime Value (CLTV)
  - CLTV:CAC Ratio
  - CAC Payback Period (Months)
- [ ] **Select Core Product Engagement Metrics:**
  - User Activation Rate (%)
  - Feature Adoption Rate(s) (%) - List specific key features
  - Daily Active Users (DAU) / Monthly Active Users (MAU)
  - DAU/MAU Ratio (Stickiness)
  - Session Duration / Frequency
- [ ] **Select Relevant Funnel & Marketing Metrics:**
  - Website Visitors / Sign-ups
  - Trial Conversion Rate (%)
  - Lead-to-Customer Rate (%)
  - Lead Velocity Rate (LVR)
  - Marketing Qualified Leads (MQLs) / Sales Qualified Leads (SQLs)
  - Channel Performance (CAC & Conversion by source)
- [ ] **Document Definitions:** Clearly define how each selected metric is calculated within your business to ensure consistency.
- [ ] **Prioritize Actionability:** Double-check that chosen metrics provide actionable insights, not just vanity numbers.

Step 3: Choose Your Reporting Tools

- [ ] **Assess Current Tools:** Evaluate the built-in reporting capabilities of your payment processor and CRM.
- [ ] **Identify Gaps:** Determine if specialized tools are needed based on your objectives and selected metrics:
  - Product Analytics Tool (e.g., Mixpanel, Amplitude, Userpilot)?
  - BI / Data Visualization Tool (e.g., Looker Studio, Tableau, Power BI)?
  - Dedicated Financial Analytics Tool?

- [ ] **Evaluate Options:** Research potential tools considering:
    - Budget (including free tiers/trials)
    - Necessary integrations with your existing software stack
    - Ease of implementation and use
    - Specific features required (e.g., cohort analysis, funnel building)
    - Scalability for future growth
- [ ] **Select Initial Toolset:** Make your selection.

Step 4: Collect, Consolidate & Validate Data

- [ ] **Map Data Sources:** Identify the primary source system for each metric chosen in Step 2 (e.g., MRR from payment system, Activation from product analytics tool).
- [ ] **Set Up Data Flow:** Configure necessary integrations between tools OR establish a reliable process for data export/import.
- [ ] **Ensure Consistency:** If using multiple data sources, establish and document consistent definitions across all platforms (e.g., definition of an "Active User," "Churn Event").
- [ ] **Validate Data:** Perform checks to ensure data is accurate, complete, and flowing correctly into your reporting tools/dashboards.
- [ ] **Confirm Compliance:** Verify that your data collection and handling practices comply with relevant privacy regulations (e.g., GDPR, CCPA).

Step 5: Visualize Data & Analyze Insights (Dashboards)

- [ ] **Plan Dashboards:** Outline the specific dashboards needed based on objectives and audience (e.g., Executive KPI, Marketing Funnel Performance).
- [ ] **Select Visualizations:** Choose appropriate chart types for the data on each dashboard (e.g., line charts for trends, bar charts for comparisons, scorecards for key numbers).

- [ ] **Build Dashboards:** Create the dashboards using your chosen visualization tool(s).
- [ ] **Add Context:** Ensure dashboards include comparisons (e.g., vs. previous period, vs. goal) to make interpretation easier.
- [ ] **Review for Clarity:** Check that dashboards are easy to understand, uncluttered, and directly address the key questions for their audience.

Step 6: Review, Iterate & Take Action

- [ ] **Establish Review Cadence:** Define how often reports and dashboards will be formally reviewed (e.g., Weekly tactical, Monthly strategic, Quarterly planning).
- [ ] **Schedule Meetings:** Book recurring review meetings with the necessary stakeholders.
- [ ] **Analyze During Reviews:** In meetings, focus on:

- Identifying significant trends, spikes, or dips.
- Discussing the "why" behind the numbers.
- Extracting actionable insights and potential opportunities or risks.

- [ ] **Document Actions:** Clearly record decisions and action items resulting from the analysis.
- [ ] **Assign Ownership:** Ensure every action item has a clear owner and deadline.
- [ ] **Track Impact:** Use subsequent reports to monitor the results of actions taken.
- [ ] **Iterate: Periodically** (e.g., quarterly or annually) revisit Steps 1 & 2 to ensure your objectives and metrics remain relevant and adjust your reporting process as needed.