

O P E R A T O R G U I D E

How to Build a 13-Week Cash Flow Forecast

A 13-week cash flow forecast is a week-by-week view of cash in and cash out. Thirteen weeks is one quarter. It is long enough to see a problem coming and short enough to be accurate.

01 Why 13 weeks

A month is too short. A year is too long. Thirteen weeks shows the payroll cycles, the rent, the vendor payments, and the customer receipts in one view. You can see if you will run short before it happens.

02 How to build it

- ☐ Start with the cash you have today.
- ☐ List the cash in for each week. Customer payments. Other income.
- ☐ List the cash out for each week. Payroll. Rent. Vendors. Software. Other.
- ☐ Calculate the net for each week. Cash in minus cash out.
- ☐ Calculate the ending cash for each week. Starting cash plus net.
- ☐ Set a minimum. Highlight any week that drops below it.

03 What to watch

- ☐ Weeks where ending cash drops.
- ☐ Large one-time payments.
- ☐ Customers who pay late.
- ☐ The gap between when you pay and when you get paid.

The forecast is only useful if it stays current. Update it every week.

04 What to do next

Open a spreadsheet. Put the next 13 weeks across the top. Enter what you know. Update it every week. The forecast is only useful if it stays current.