

# Breaking the Cycle of Month-End Madness

You have nothing to lose but the pain  
behind the eyes

**S P I T F I R E**  
ANALYTICS LIMITED

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# Long days and Lost Weekends...

Month-end comes around without fail.

And every time it involves too much effort across too few people in too short a time-frame.

It can seem like a never-ending cycle. But it can seem equally unavoidable.

The answer lies in the root cause. In the challenges within the tools and the process.

Tackle these and the future could be much brighter.

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# Excel is not the enemy

(but it is at the root of the cycle of madness)

It's a powerful tool. Analysing numbers or complex modelling on a static dataset - it's tough to beat.

## But...

Running a company involves collaborative, multi-departmental processes like planning, budgeting, forecasting and reporting.

And unfortunately, individual, disconnected Excel spreadsheets fall short of the task.

It's inadequate for

- Collaborative planning and reporting
- Management Information
- Managing financial processes
- Multidimensional performance analysis

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# The Hamster Wheel

Every month, every year...

Every month your finance team and you get crushed by the wheel of Excel's infernal machinations whilst trying to:

- Consolidate a mass of spreadsheets
- Model potential future scenarios and answer 'what-if?' questions
- Catch the errors that plague plans, forecasts and budgets

The Pain, The Cost, The Missed Opportunities!

You're wasting weeks of every year on low-level, non-value activities.

Because you're pushing Excel beyond its limits. Because you're fighting against a tool that simply wasn't designed to do what you need it to do.

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# Import Tax

Getting the all the data from all of  
the spreadsheets ...

It's hard to get non-Excel data into Excel. If you spend hours laboriously exporting operational data from your GL, payroll, purchasing, or other systems and manually configuring it in Excel, you'll know there has to be an easier way.

Individual Excel spreadsheets are a huge pain to consolidate. Pulling data from multiple sources is time-consuming and its an open invitation for a visit from Mr Cock-up.

How many finance professionals relish the prospect of spending weeks consolidating a ton of departmental plans into a single master plan? And as for trying to produce a rolling forecast with anything like the frequency the business needs - just don't...

Yet here we go, every month. Another set of 14-hour days and another weekend worked.

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# Silent but deadly

The hard to find errors that stink  
the process out

Whodunnit??? Where were the changes made? Which formula in which spreadsheet is causing the totals to misbalance? What do you mean there's another version? Can I even trust anybody anymore?

When you have a lot of people updating a mass of disconnected Excel spreadsheets it's impossible to track all of the changes that might have been made - correctly or otherwise.

Managing governance is one thing. But getting to the right numbers with a deadline looming becomes a chore. It's painful, it's frustrating and it's completely inefficient.

Wait a minute? What about adding the complexities of different fiscal regimes, different currencies .... You could be excused for giving up altogether.

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# Flat and Uninspiring

Static and backwards looking

Excel spreadsheets can't give you real-time data. They can only provide a historical snap-shot at a single point in time.

It takes time to consolidate. And if you want a more up to date number, you have to ask everybody to update the whole shooting match all over again.

And what about working in multiple dimensions? Modelling profitability by product line might be fine in a single spreadsheet.

But what about helping the whole business model the impact of a small change in one area - and understand the impact by department as well as the P&L, cash-flow and balance sheets?

Manual Excel processes just won't cut it

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# Picture this: A Smarter, Brighter Future

If you're still using manual Excel spreadsheets and processes for FP&A, it's probably not because you think these are the best tools for the job.

It's more likely that your business has grown and you need something more powerful.

Why Don't You ....

Consider a different approach.

An approach where the month-end balances without effort.

Where financial planning and analysis is dynamic and forward-focused. Where the team have time to run scenarios that provide powerful insights that drive the business forward.

Talk to us, we know your pain – we can help.

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# Spitfire Analytics

We are finance professionals who specialise in helping companies bring efficiency, speed and agility to their Finance Teams.

We do this by designing and implementing the automation of your planning, budgeting, forecasting and analysis processes, using IBM® Planning Analytics, powered by IBM TM1.

Get in touch:

Southgate 2,  
Wilmslow Road,  
Cheshire  
SK8 3PW

[www.spitfire-analytics.com](http://www.spitfire-analytics.com)

[info@spitfire-analytics.com](mailto:info@spitfire-analytics.com)  
+44 (0) 0161 464 3687