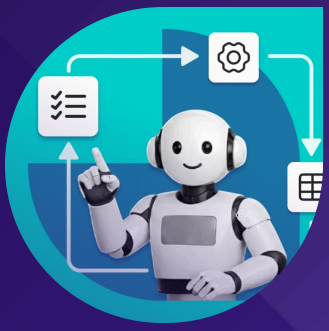
The Month-End WIP Guide: from workbooks to one review

For utility and energy services contractors. What a WIP review is for, a better way to run it across every company, what to measure first, and where AI fits.



THE BENEFIT THIS GUIDE IS ABOUT

1	2	3	4
Every job's margin before the month closes	**The right answer for whoever's asking**	**One question across every company**	**Your IT team runs your systems. We bring the AI.**
This guide	Employee Answers	Built on approved WIP numbers	Your AI team

SECTION 1

What a WIP review is for

The review turns raw job cost into numbers the owner, the board, the bank and the surety can rely on.

Four questions per job, every month

What did we bill?
Invoices posted to the job in the accounting system.

What have we earned but not billed?
The revenue accrual: work done that isn't on an invoice yet.

What cost has hit?
Payroll, materials, equipment and subcontracts posted to the job.

What cost is coming?
The cost accrual: invoices expected, work done but not yet costed.

Quarterly

Contractors' WIP reports are usually updated and resubmitted to their surety every quarter, and typically go to sureties and banks as PDFs or spreadsheets.

XBRL US Surety Working Group, May 2016

Profit fade

Sureties ask contractors for a detailed work-in-progress report and track it against actuals to spot profit fade.

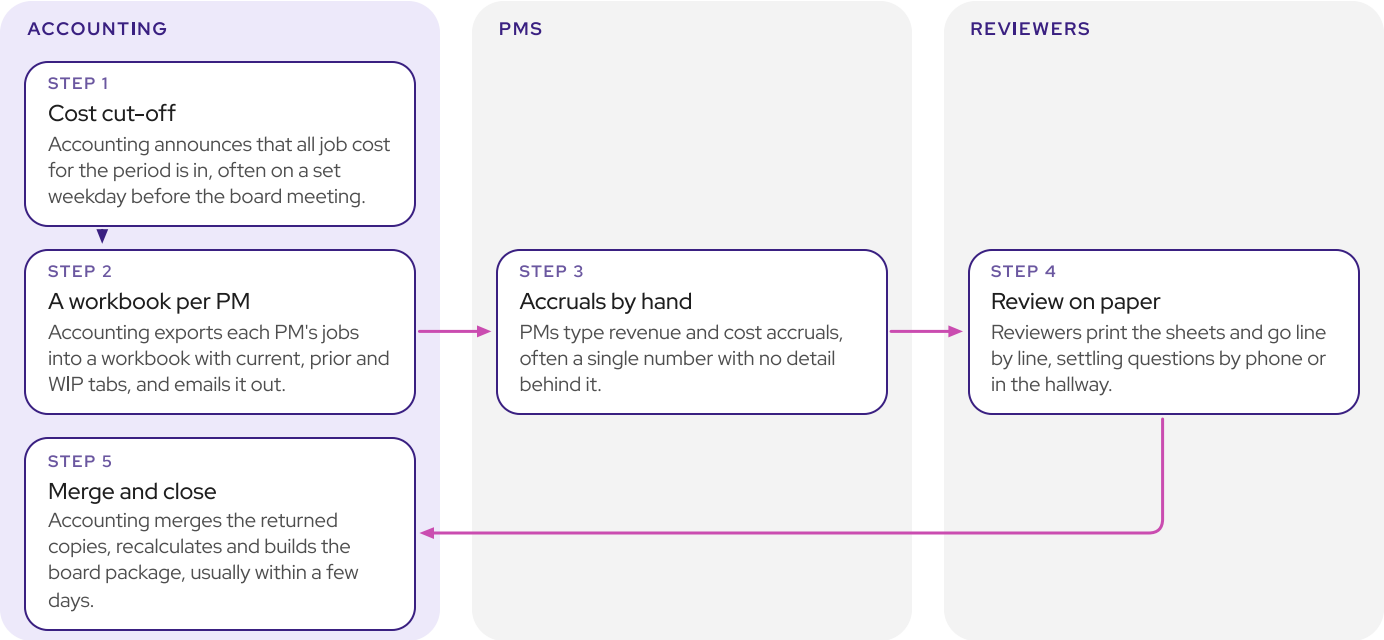
NASBP Surety Bond Quarterly, Winter 2021

The output that matters: approved, locked, job-level numbers for every company, before the board meeting.

SECTION 2

How the month usually closes today

Most multi-company contractors we meet run the review the same way.



Three limits that grow with every company

Accruals without detail

Is it ten invoices at $12,000 or one at $120,000? The workbook can't say.

Reviewers can't check every job

With hundreds or thousands of jobs, they check the ones they're worried about and hope the rest are right.

Problems surface late

A job that went sideways shows up after the month has closed.

None of this is anyone's fault. Accounting software is built for every contractor, so it has to be standard. Your companies aren't, so the review moved into workbooks. The fix keeps your accounting system exactly as it is and replaces only the workbook step.

SECTION 3

One review: PM, reviewer, accounting lock

Every job in every company on one screen.

WIP REVIEW — ILLUSTRATIVE

Which jobs need a look before close?

JOB	REVENUE ACCRUAL	COST ACCRUAL	MARGIN	STATUS
3102 Service line renewals	0	3,200	21.4%	Approved
3108 Gas main replacement	**18,000**	**22,400**	**7.4%**	Below 10%
3115 Regulator station	12,500	9,900	17.9%	Ready
3121 Underground feeder	4,000	6,800	18.6%	Locked

Open → Ready · only the PM → Approved · only a reviewer → Locked · only accounting, company by company

Accruals with detail

PMs enter revenue and cost accruals per job, each with a category (traffic control, restoration, materials) and a note. Categories are company-specific and managed by accounting.

Read from the accounting system

Job cost and billing are read on a schedule, for example every 15 minutes, and never written. The app's own database holds only accruals, statuses, comments, flags and the audit trail.

Flags that point reviewers

Accounting sets the rules, such as negative margin or margin under a floor. Flagged jobs come first, mid-month, while there's still time to act.

Period lock and export

A locked period stays locked. Accounting gets an export file to import.

Drill down to the source

Click a number to see the invoices, payroll, equipment and materials behind it.

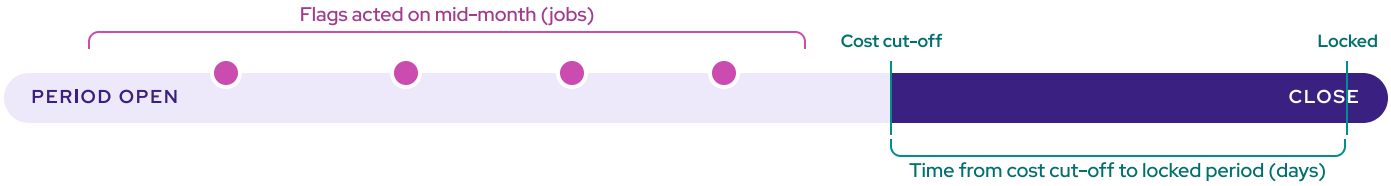
Plan the change as well as the software. Some PMs will want to keep their workbook. Decide early: one month in parallel, or a clean switch? Who owns the flag rules afterwards?

SECTION 4

What to measure before you change anything

Without a baseline, nobody can say later whether the change helped. Write these down for your last three closes, before anyone builds anything.

MEASURE	CLOSE 1	CLOSE 2	CLOSE 3	HOW TO GET IT
Time from cost cut-off to locked period (days)				Accounting's email trail
Flags acted on mid-month (jobs)				Count jobs changed before close
Accounting hours on the review				Calendars and memory
Workbooks sent and merged				Sent folder
Jobs on the WIP, all companies				Accounting system
Accruals carried unchanged from last month				Compare two workbooks
Jobs found after close that should have been flagged				Ask the controller



The two that matter most

Time to lock tells you how long the month stays open. A flag nobody acts on before the close is only a report.

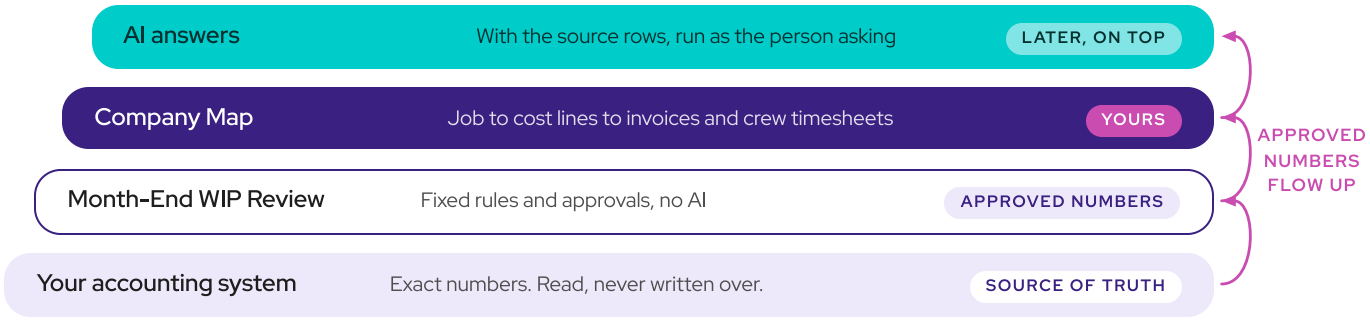
Then measure two closes after

Run the same measures for the first two closes in the new review. Report what you see, including what didn't move. Expect the first month to be slower while people learn it.

SECTION 5

Where AI fits: later, and on top

Exact numbers come from your accounting system, never from a model.



Questions people can ask, once numbers are approved

- Why did job 3108 drop below a 10% margin this period?
- Which jobs have carried the same accrual for three months?
- Which jobs across all companies are flagged right now?

Illustrative questions.

How the AI answers

1. Resolve the scope first: which companies, jobs and periods.
2. Follow the links in your Company Map.
3. Use the approved month-end figures, then apply your rules.
4. Return the answer with the source rows, run as the person asking.

You own it

It runs in your own Microsoft tenant, and the code sits in your repositories.

We're an AI company

Your IT team runs your accounting system. We don't sell, configure or replace it.

Book a Job Trace

Pick one job. In 45 minutes we trace its cost, crew hours and month-end review, and tell you honestly what's worth changing. ninetwothree.co

Book a Job Trace

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