Selecting a Data Format

Setting Up Your Data · https://www.forecastpro.com/documentation/forecast-pro-trac/reading-in-your-data/selecting-a-data-format/

The program accepts three different data formats—Excel (XLS, XLSX), CSV and Open Database Connectivity (ODBC). Examples of each file type are shipped with the program.

Which data format you choose will depend on your application and database operations. Before making your choice, you should be aware of the following advantages and disadvantages of each file type.

Excel (XLS, XLSX) files

Excel files are frequently used for managing Forecast Pro Data input files. You can make and forecast multiple spreadsheet files in one project if you wish.

PROS. If you are comfortable using a spreadsheet, then the spreadsheet format allows you to create, update and manipulate your data in a familiar environment. Processing time for xls files is faster than for ODBC. Creating forecast reports from Excel is straightforward.

CONS. If someone has an xlsx file open in Excel, you cannot read it into Forecast Pro. Processing time for xlsx files can be slow (xls is faster and csv is faster still).

ODBC

Open database connectivity (ODBC) allows Forecast Pro to read and write data directly to databases for which an ODBC driver exists. Most popular databases support ODBC, including Access, Oracle and SQL server.

PROS. ODBC can provide direct access to data stored in the corporate database obviating the need for intermediate files.

CONS. Reading and writing directly to the corporate database can raise security issues. Data transfer can be slow for some configurations. Reading data from a view is slower than reading from a table.

CSV files

Text files can also be used to hold your data inputs. You can make and forecast multiple text files in a single project if you wish.

PROS. Processing time is faster than for ODBC and spreadsheets. Most databases can output text files.

CONS. Not as flexible as Excel files.