Self Storage Business Plan and Operations Starter Kit

A working kit for independent self storage sites. It prices every unit size by the doors it lets and the site hours it takes, builds the rent roll month by month from move-ins and move-outs, turns unit rent into a cash pattern, finds cash break-even through the winter trough, and scores the plan on six pass-or-fail tests.

SELF STORAGE FACILITIES
FREE EDITION · VERSION 1.0 · OCTOBER 2026
19 PAGES · PRINT IT, WRITE ON IT, KEEP IT
LATEST VERSION: BUSINESSCONSULTANT.SERVICES/KITS/SELF-STORAGE-FACILITIES/
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PAGE 2

Start here

A storage site can open with most of its doors let and still be short of cash by the next spring. Ground rent and the loan on the unit build-out are due whether the site is full or empty, and a tenant who leaves takes a unit's rent with them that month. This kit writes those numbers down and tests them before a lender asks.

WHAT IS INSIDE

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HOW TO USE IT

1. Build units, plans and retail on page 6 and costs on pages 5 and 8. Run the cash forecast on page 11, then score the plan on page 4. Draft pages 3 and 4 last.
2. Use pencil. Rents, unit sizes and the opening rent roll move before the site opens, and every worksheet expects your own figures.
3. Once you open, use the page 14 checklists on every move-in and the numbers review every week. Run the page 7 unit table at every month end and update the page 9 rent roll as tenants move in and out.

HOW THIS KIT WAS BUILT

- **AI tools helped create this kit.** Example figures are illustrative, not benchmarks.
- **The owner question** on page 3 is one of the self storage site questions published at businessconsultant.services; the answer is general guidance, not a research finding.
- **The six questions** on page 14 were drafted by AI models from World Consulting Group desk research and challenged by a second AI model. None was measured in the field, so treat them as hypotheses to test, not findings.

SCOPE

This kit gives general operational information. It is not legal, tax, accounting, employment, rental agreements, billing and access or financial advice. Requirements vary by location; review with a qualified professional. Review them with qualified professionals before you commit money.

PAGE 3

Business plan, part one

A lender or a landlord will ask whether unit rent throws off enough cash for the ground rent, the staff and the loan through the winter trough. Answer each point here and draft the full sections on separate sheets.

1. Executive summary (write it last)

Describe the site, the tenants and what the money buys, from the unit build-out to the first payroll; then give the month the page 6 forecast first clears cash break-even from page 8, and the page 4 result.

2. Unit sizes, tenants and lead sources

Describe the unit sizes you let, the access and the hours behind them, and what tenants are really paying for beyond the space: a gate that works, a unit that is dry, a call answered when a payment fails. Write it the way tenants talk, and say which tenants and local businesses send others to the site.

3. Positioning and doors

Be clear about who the site is built for and who it is not. Then count how many doors of each size the building can let, the hours the gate is open, and the site hours that keep the counter, the grounds and the follow-up on unpaid rent covered.

4. Unit sizes, rent and site hours

For each unit size, note the doors it can let, the monthly rent and the site hours behind it. Rent matched to a competitor's sign, with no site hours under it, is a guess.

UNIT SIZE	DOORS IT CAN LET	MONTHLY RENT	SITE HOURS A MONTH

> *Owner question: most of the doors are let and the bank balance still barely moves. Are the rents too low?*
>
> Rule out this cause before touching the rents: a tenant who was not walked to a clean, dry unit, given a gate code that works and told how billing works is the tenant who leaves at the first bill. Log every move-in by source with the date the unit was first opened (page 14), confirm the gate code at the door, and compare the six-month move-out rate of like groups by move-in month and unit size. Treat a gap as an association worth a test, not proof of a cause.

PAGE 4

Business plan, part two

5. Operations

Describe a day from the first gate opening to the last lock-up: who opens, how the counter and grounds are covered, how move-ins and move-outs are handled, and the cleaning. Name who runs the site when you are not there.

6. Team

List every role, its hours and its pay, including a market wage for your own hours. Name the person who can run the site for a week without you; page 14 checks that dependency.

7. Marketing and sales

Explain where inquiries come from, how one becomes a move-in, and why tenants stay and refer; measure whether referrals cover the move-outs.

8. Financials and funding

Attach pages 5, 6, 8 and 11 and the result below.

DOES THE PLAN PASS? SCORE IT BEFORE ANYONE ELSE READS IT

TEST	PASS?
Gate 0. Signed rental agreements and the opening rent roll for the units already let, build-out and insurance quotes, the ground lease, and the compliance and registration review with a qualified professional are in writing.	
1. In the expected case, sales reach cash break-even at the month-12 run rate (page 8), and closing cash with payment timing holds your floor for 24 months (page 11).	
2. Slow start (tested share of sales, page 11): closing cash holds at or above your floor every month (if not, note the reserve that would hold it).	
3. Planning debt service coverage at full-run sales and at the month-12 run rate (page 8) meets your lender's ratio, on your lender's definition.	
4. The peak month's rented units fit the doors and its site hours fit the roster (pages 6, 7 and 9), and the rent roll reaches break-even (page 8).	
5. Signed rental agreements and the opening rent roll back the month-one units; an inquiry list forecasts showings, not move-ins.	
6. The full-run steady-state year (seasons in; not the forecast year) leaves net cash above zero after principal, before income tax set-aside, replacements and stock build-up; set aside its largest fall in running net cash, the year run twice.	

Not ready: Gate 0 fails. **Green:** Gate 0 and all six tests pass. **Amber:** Tests 1 and 3 pass, but Test 2, 4, 5 or 6 fails, so fix the plan before you sign the ground lease or the loan. **Red:** Test 1 or 3 fails, so change the plan before you commit money. Tests 1 and 3 score the plan as written; Test 2 is the slow start, and the page 13 what-ifs stress-test Tests 1, 3 and 6. Count a test without evidence as a fail. Result: _____

PAGE 5

Startup budget worksheet

Fill the estimate column first, then record each source: a written quote from the build-out contractor, the insurer or the landlord, or a documented calculation. Storage budgets break on the build-out and the first slow winter, so leave no line blank without a reason.

LINE ITEM	INITIAL ESTIMATE	QUOTE OR SOURCE	APPROVED BUDGET	ACTUAL OR COMMITTED
UNIT BUILD-OUT				
Unit partitions, doors, rollers and interior lighting				
Climate-controlled bays and insulation				
Floor coating, corridor and unit numbering				
SITE WORK				
Office and counter fit-out				
Keypad gate, fencing, cameras and lighting				
Signage and grounds work				
PRE-OPENING				
Pre-opening payroll and hiring				
Opening marketing, listing feed and website				
Opening stock of locks, boxes and tape				
WORKING CAPITAL				
Working capital reserve (cash you open with)				
Contingency for overruns on the lines above				
Total				

Size the reserve in two passes: run the page 11 expected case with opening cash of zero (no reserve, no other cash), set the reserve to your floor, plus one more month of fixed costs and principal as a buffer, plus how far its lowest closing cash falls below zero (zero if it never does), rounded up to the next $100, then rerun. If the Test 6 cushion (page 4) is larger than that buffer, add the difference. If the unit build-out runs over, the contingency pays first and the reserve second; then rerun page 11.

PAGE 6

Sales forecast builder

Every other number depends on rented units, so build them from signed agreements, the opening rent roll and the doors you can let, not from the ground rent you need to cover. Count units first, month by month from page 9; add protection plans and retail at the volume your inquiry record supports.

```
Monthly sales for a line = units times average rent; apply days open in the month only to a line priced by the day
Days open in a month = days open per week times 52, divided by 12
```

SALES LINE	UNIT	UNITS PER DAY OR MONTH	AVERAGE RENT	DAYS OPEN PER MONTH (OR 1 FOR MONTHLY UNITS)	MONTHLY SALES
Unit rent	units				
Tenant-protection plan	plans				
Locks, boxes and tape	sales				

Full-run month

RAMP AND SEASONS

MONTH	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7	M8	M9	M10	M11	M12
Ramp, % of full run												
Season, % of full-run month (M1 = opening month)												
Expected sales												

Expected sales for each month = rented units at month end on page 9 times average rent (no separate ramp), plus protection plans and retail at full run times ramp (the share of full-run volume the inquiry record has reached) times season. Use 100 percent where a factor does not apply. The rent roll, ramp and season are your assumptions; write down the evidence for each, such as signed agreements and your inquiry record.

CAPACITY CHECK

```
Staff hours the site can field a month = the sum over the site crew of each one's hours a day times days worked a week, times 52, divided by 12; site hours needed in the peak month = the direct unit hours on page 7 at the settled rent roll (page 9); settled rented units against the doors. The roster is read as people x hours a day x days a week x 52 over 12
```

Write how many people are on the site crew, the hours each is paid a day and the days each works a week. Take the peak month of the season list, rented units at the settled rent roll (page 9), add up the direct unit hours the mix needs that month (page 7) and set them against the hours the crew can field; set that month's rented units against the doors. In the example the doors bind first and the hours leg passes with slack, but check both on your own numbers, because at a very small site the roster can bind before the doors do. The crew's paid hours and its desk-cover hours are two different counts, because the paid figure includes admin time the gate does not need (in the example the roster is paid 246 hours a month and 208 of them are the hours the six-day, eight-hour week puts on the desk). If the plan needs more doors than you have, the plan is wrong, whatever the inquiry list says.

PAGE 7

Unit sizes, doors and rent per available unit

A unit costs its site hours whether it is rented or empty. Price every unit size on the doors it can let, the rent it earns and the site hours it takes.

```
Unit fill = rented units over the doors; rent revenue = rented units x monthly rent; site staff cost = site hours x the loaded wage; after site hours = rent less site staff cost less card fees and bad debt at their page 8 shares (the site staff cost is the roster's share, already inside fixed line 3, and is not charged again there)
Revenue per available unit = rent over units, the rent each door earns on average once the empty ones are counted
```

WORKED EXAMPLE: FOUR UNIT SIZES AT FULL RUN (ILLUSTRATIVE)

UNIT SIZE	UNITS	RENTED	FILL	MONTHLY RENT	RENT REVENUE	SITE HOURS	SITE STAFF COST	CARD FEES, BAD DEBT	AFTER SITE HOURS	PER UNIT
5x5 locker, interior	120	107	89%	$55	$5,885	3	$77	$247	$5,561	$49.04
10x10 drive-up	150	129	86%	$135	$17,415	8	$205	$731	$16,479	$116.10
10x20 drive-up	60	54	90%	$240	$12,960	6	$154	$544	$12,262	$216.00
10x10 climate-controlled	40	36	90%	$170	$6,120	3	$77	$257	$5,786	$153.00

Site hours cost $25.62 an hour loaded ($21.00 base plus 22 percent). This table costs every unit size at that rate so the sizes compare like for like; the rate to price rent on is the page 10 cost per hour actually served, which is higher because the paid hours include the quiet ones. Each available unit earns most on 10x20 drive-up ($216.00) and least on 5x5 locker, interior ($49.04). Doors are the units the building can let; the unit mix is the operator's own figure for this site. The rent line carries no line-14 cost on page 8: the four sizes take 20 site hours a month between them and the salaried roster already pays for 246, so the hours are inside line 3 and are not charged again. The site staff cost in this table is that roster share, shown so each unit size can be compared; it does not add to the costs on page 8.

YOUR UNIT SIZES

UNIT SIZE	UNITS	RENTED	FILL	MONTHLY RENT	RENT REVENUE	SITE HOURS	SITE STAFF COST	CARD FEES, BAD DEBT	AFTER SITE HOURS	PER UNIT

CAPACITY CHECK

The peak season month is the test (July in the example): rented units against the doors, and site hours against the hours the crew can field. In the example the doors bind first and the hours leg passes with slack; that is the result here, not a rule, and at a very small site the roster can bind before the doors do.

```
Rented units at the settled rent roll (page 9) in the peak season month against the doors; that month's site hours against the hours the crew can field (people x hours a day x days a week x 52 over 12)
```

PAGE 8

Break-even and coverage

Use this one numbered cost list everywhere in the kit. Loan interest is a fixed cost here. Loan principal is not an operating cost: it enters cash break-even below and the cash forecast on page 11, so interest and principal are each counted once. A line that starts or steps up during year 1 goes in at its amount once in place; page 11 uses each month's amount.

FIXED COSTS PER MONTH	PER MONTH
1. Ground rent, 3.0-acre ground lease	
2. Property and liability insurance, the site's own policy including cover for the plan	
3. Site manager and weekend relief, salaried, with payroll taxes and benefits (the minimum staff)	
4. Owner's market wage	
5. Loan interest (unit build-out loan)	
6. Utilities, lighting and climate control	
7. Marketing, listing fees and signage	
8. Management software, access control and cameras	
9. Accounting, bookkeeping and bank fees	
10. Maintenance and repairs, doors, rollers and HVAC	
11. Cleaning, landscaping and snow removal	
12. Phone, security monitoring and administration	
Total fixed costs	

VARIABLE COSTS AS A SHARE OF NET SALES	SHARE
13. Protection-plan underwriter share and retail cost of goods	
14. Direct site hours above the salaried site roster, at the loaded wage	
15. Card processing on unit rent, plans and retail	
16. Bad debt on unpaid rent	
Total variable cost share	

```
Contribution margin ratio = 1 minus variable cost share; contribution = sales times the line's ratio
Operating break-even sales = fixed costs divided by contribution margin ratio
Cash break-even sales = (fixed costs with line 4 even if undrawn, plus principal and other recurring
cash out) divided by contribution margin ratio; page 13 covers a result with no usable number
Break-even rented units = (fixed costs with line 4 even if undrawn, plus principal, minus protection-
plan and retail contribution at their own shares) divided by one rented unit's monthly contribution; 0
if covered
Month-12 run rate = average monthly sales over a year at month 12's ramp and bookings, seasons applied
Planning debt service coverage (before income tax and replacements) = (full-run sales times contribution
margin ratio, minus fixed costs other than line 5) divided by (line 5 + principal)
```

RESULT	PER MONTH	PER WEEK	PER DAY OPEN
Operating break-even sales			
Cash break-even sales			
Break-even rented units (use cash break-even)	one figure per month		
Ground rent share and debt service coverage at full-run sales		ratios, monthly only	

Weekly = monthly times 12, divided by 52; per day open = weekly divided by days open per week. Ground rent share = line 1 divided by net sales.

PAGE 9

Move-ins, move-outs and the rent roll

A rent roll is a stock that leaks. Every month some tenants leave and new ones move in, and the forecast has to follow that build month by month rather than a smooth ramp.

```
Units rented at month end = units at the start, less move-outs at the monthly churn rate, plus move-ins, never more than the doors
Units rented at steady state = move-ins a month over churn; average stay = 1 over churn; unit-rent lifetime value = monthly rent x stay x rent's own contribution ratio (plans and retail not counted); move-ins that hold the rent roll = churn x full-run units
```

WORKED EXAMPLE: THE RENT ROLL BUILDS FROM THE MARCH TAKEOVER (ILLUSTRATIVE; UNITS ROUNDED)

	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB
Move-ins sold	45	42	39	37	34	31	29	27	25	23	22	21
Move-outs	7	9	11	12	14	15	16	16	17	17	18	18
Units rented	159	192	220	245	265	281	294	305	313	318	323	326
Of full run, percent	49	59	68	75	81	86	90	93	96	98	99	100

March opens with the 120 units already rented at takeover; the plan holds 326 once move-ins settle at the 18 a month that replace move-outs. This table is the unit rent line on pages 6 and 11, month for month; a new tenant pays rent from the month they move in. The 120 units already rented at takeover are the opening balance in the rent roll above, which is the Test 5 evidence a real plan has to hold (the example holds none, so Test 5 fails); March's move-ins are new move-ins on top of that balance, not the balance itself. The slow start cuts every month here to 70 percent of the plan, and year 2 runs the steady pattern from February's level. The site never reaches its doors in this plan, so no new tenant waits for a unit.

NUMBER	EXAMPLE	FROM
Monthly move-outs	5.59%	Move-outs in a month over the units rented on its first day
Average tenant stay	17.9 months	One over the monthly churn
Unit-rent lifetime value	$2,229	Rent x months (17.89) x contribution ratio 0.958
Move-ins a month, December to February	22.2	The last quarter of the table, averaged
Move-ins that hold the full site	18.2	The settled yearly joins averaged (churn x 326 units)
Units rented once steady	326	18.2 move-ins a month x the stay, equal to joins over churn
Marketing per move-in	$91	$1,650 of line 7 over move-ins a month in a steady year

YOUR RENT ROLL, MARCH TO FEBRUARY

	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB

MOVE-IN AND MOVE-OUT LOG

Note each move-in and each move-out with the reason the tenant gave; treat a stated reason as what the tenant said, not a verified cause.

MONTH	MOVE-INS	MOVE-OUTS	WHAT THEY SAID	MONTHS AS A TENANT	UNIT SIZE

PAGE 10

Site utilization and the true cost of a paid site hour

A site manager's paid hour buys the whole shift, and rent pays for the hours a unit is walked, cleaned and turned. The counter, the camera checks, the grounds and the quiet hour at two o'clock are paid hours no unit is billed for.

```
Site utilization = hours on site and at the counter divided by paid hours
Loaded site-hour cost = the wage times one plus the payroll tax, workers' compensation, benefits and paid time off share
Cost per hour on site = paid hours times the loaded site-hour cost, divided by the hours actually on site
```

WORKED EXAMPLE: ONE SITE CREW MEMBER, ONE WEEK (ILLUSTRATIVE)

HOURS	HOURS THIS WEEK	PERCENT OF PAID HOURS
Paid hours	40	100%
On site and at the counter	30	75%
Trips off site and referral visits	4	10.0%
Return trips for call-outs and repairs	2	5.0%
Training, meetings and breaks	4	10.0%

At a $21.00 wage with 22 percent payroll taxes and benefits, loaded cost is $25.62 an hour; of the 40 paid hours, 30 are on site and at the counter and the 10 below are the hours away from it; at 75 percent utilization each hour on site actually costs $34.16. Price unit rent on the true cost of an hour on site, not the base wage and not the loaded rate.

YOUR SITE CREW, BY WEEK

PERSON	PAID HOURS	ON SITE	OFF-SITE TRIPS	RETURN TRIPS	SITE UTILIZATION	COST PER HOUR ON SITE

WHERE LOSING THE SITE MANAGER HURTS MOST

When a site manager leaves, the gate codes, the wait list and the follow-up on unpaid rent can leave with them, unless the routines, the unit notes and the tenant history were the site's and not one person's. Keep them documented, so a replacement can open on Monday. Write the routine for the jobs that repeat: the walk of the corridors at lock-up, the unit check before a move-in, the call on a failed payment on its second day, and the note a tenant leaves with. A site with a drive-up block and a climate building carries two sets of jobs, because the climate bays need a temperature check and a door seal check that the drive-up doors do not. Record the hours each job takes, so the next hire is priced from the work rather than from the wage the last manager accepted.

PAGE 11

Twelve-month cash forecast

Ground rent and payroll leave before failed payments clear. Enter $000 (51.25 means $51,250), receipts as they clear.

EXPECTED CASE ($000)	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7	M8	M9	M10	M11	M12
Opening cash												
In: collections, in the month each payment lands												
Memo, not cash: billed this month (page 6)												
In: owner money and loans received												
Out: cost of goods, programs, fees and bad debt (lines 13, 15, 16)												
Out: payroll, line 4 if drawn in cash (lines 3, 4, 14)												
Out: ground rent (line 1)												
Out: other costs, with loan interest (lines 2, 5 to 12)												
Out: income tax set-aside, equipment replacement, stock build-up												
Out: loan principal												
Out: startup bills still to pay												
Net cash flow (in minus out)												
Closing cash, expected (your floor: _____)												
Actual closing cash, once open												
Memo: sales tax collected (not in closing cash)												
Memo: sales tax remitted												
Memo: tax owed = last month's + collected minus remitted												
Memo: receivables = last month's + billed minus collected												
SLOW-START CASE												
Sales receipts, slow start												
Out: variable costs, slow start (lines 13 to 16)												
Out: fixed, principal, bills, less funding												
Net cash flow, slow start												
Closing cash, slow start												

Month 1 opening cash is cash on the first day the site opens after startup spending is paid; each closing balance opens the next month, and the slow start opens with the same cash. Your floor is at least one full-run month of fixed costs plus principal. Staff and suppliers are paid in the month of the work. For the slow start, test 70 percent of expected sales in every month (a stress assumption, not a benchmark; a higher share only with evidence); fixed costs, other cash out, principal, startup bills and funding stay as expected, and all variable lines fall with sales; line 14 holds only hours you would cut. The first month below the floor is your deadline. Then run a second year at the month-12 run rate (page 8) and check the floor holds.

PAGE 12

Runway, and what the winter trough costs

Runway counts the months ahead from the latest closed month, or from opening day before the site trades, and stops at the first month whose closing cash drops under your floor

Worked example: a hypothetical storage site

Illustrative numbers only: they show how the arithmetic works and are not a benchmark for a storage site. The site manager and weekend relief work from month 1; rent is billed on the first of each month. Cash floor $34,422. Rent clears in the month it is billed; a protection plan and a retail sale are paid at the counter; payroll and suppliers settle in the month the work happens; the owner draws a market wage in cash and the loan payment leaves on its own date. Where a tenant pays at the start of the month the cash arrives earlier than shown, and months paid for but not yet used are owed back rather than earned; keep those months held apart from spending cash.

Page 5, budget	The money to open comes to $1,512,900, funded by a $650,000 loan (9.25 percent over 10 years) and $862,900 of owner money; the total includes a $97,900 reserve that carries the winter trough, failed payments and the buffer. The reserve is sized in two runs: the floor, $34,422, plus a month's buffer, $34,422, plus $28,958 (what a first run begun with no cash runs short), rounded up to $97,900.
Page 8, costs	Standing costs of $30,966 a month, with $3,400 for the storage site and $4,866 of loan interest inside it; principal $3,456 a month (both year 1 averages); variable costs come to 8.7 percent, which leaves a contribution margin of 0.913. Lines 13 to 16 take 4.5, 0, 3.3 and 0.9 percent of sales. The twelve fixed lines run $3,400, $1,800, $6,300, $5,500, $4,866, $2,400, $1,650, $850, $700, $1,800, $1,100 and $600 a month.
Page 8, break-even	The site covers its operating costs at about $33,917 a month. Cash break-even (fixed $30,966 plus principal $3,456, over 0.913) is about $37,702 a month: 257.6 rented units after the other lines' contribution (rent carries no cost of goods; the plan keeps 45.8 cents of each dollar after its underwriter share and fees and retail keeps 55.8, so $1,254 on $2,736 and $1,072 on $1,920), so 258, against the 326 the plan signs.
Page 6, sales	Unit rent: 326 units a month at $130 month for month, from 120 units at the March opening to the full-run count. Tenant-protection plan: 228 plans a month at $12. Locks, boxes and tape: 120 sales a month at $16. A steady year averages about $47,034, the rent line at its steady-year average (unit rent 325.98 units a month); protection plan and retail ramp 55, 68, 78, 86, 91, 95, 97, 99 percent from March to month 8, then 100 percent; season 90, 100, 109, 119, 125, 121, 106, 97, 87, 81, 80, 85 percent, March to February, on protection plans and retail; rent follows page 9.
Page 19, expected case	March rent and sales of $22,935; March closes out at $84,402, February at $113,238. Low: month 4, closing $68,942, $34,520 clear of the floor.
Page 19, slow start	Rent, plans and retail at 70 percent of the expected case: month 1 sales $16,055; March closes out at $78,125, February at minus $15,282. Cash sinks under the floor in month 5 (closing $26,837) and below zero in month 9 (closing minus $367), which leaves runway, counted from opening day, at 4 months.
Page 8, coverage	On a steady-year average month of $47,034, planning coverage, before income tax and unit replacement, comes to 2.02 against the 1.25 the example lender requires; at February's run rate it reaches 2.02, and Test 3 weighs both. Ground rent takes about 7.2 percent.

THE PAGE 4 CHECK SCORES THIS EXAMPLE AMBER

Gate 0 is taken as met for the example. The first test passes: held at month 12 the site earns about $47,025 a month, above the $37,702 break-even; cash holds the floor through a second year at that rent roll (lowest close $121,516, the second March). (Outside the test: rent and sales first cover cash break-even in month 5.) The second test fails: at 70 percent of the plan the floor gives way in month 5; about $49,800 of extra reserve at the start would carry it through. The third test clears on the planning arithmetic, subject to the lender's own definition. Test 4 passes: in the peak month (month 5, season 125 percent) 326 rented units against 370 doors, and about 20 site hours against the 208 hours a month of desk cover the roster can field (8 hours a day, 6 days a week); the break-even count of rented units on page 8 is met. Test 5 fails: there is no evidence for it here. Test 6 passes: a full year at a settled rent roll, trough included, banks about $102,239 after principal, and monthly cash never turns negative in that year, so no cushion is needed. That is the settled year, not the first one: page 19's opening year adds about $15,338 to cash because the rent roll fills slowly and the early months are paid for before it does. The doors fill slowly, the winter trough comes before the spring move-ins repay their cost, and the site hours stay nearly flat while the rent roll moves.

PAGE 13

What moves the result

Each row changes one input of the page 12 example and reruns the forecast. A row names Test 1, 3 or 6 when the change would newly fail or pass it; a test the example already fails stays failed. The last column also gives the slow start, which is Test 2.

WHAT MOVES THE RESULT (FULL-RUN MONTHLY CHANGES; DEADLINES RERUN; SLOW-START LOSSES SCALE WITH SALES)

CHANGE	MONTHLY CASH	CASH BREAK-EVEN AND DEADLINE
All three lines 10 percent lower: rent, plans and retail (the costs on lines 13 to 16 fall with them)	minus $4,294	Expected case holds the floor
Unit rent: average rent 5 percent higher, same volume (card fees and bad debt are the only cost that rises)	plus $2,030	Break-even units fall from 257.6 to 245.3 a month, so from 258 to 246: per-unit costs stay the same, so the ratio rises from 0.913 to 0.915 on the new sales (sales-linked fees, lines 15 and 16, take 4.2 percent of each added dollar)
Fixed costs $1,000 lower	plus $1,000	Cash break-even falls to about $36,607
Monthly churn 2 points higher (5.59 to 7.59 percent; about 43 fewer units rented by month 12, $7,406 a month less on average in year 2)	minus $7,406	Expected case still clears the floor; slow start below the floor in month 4 (closing $33,778); full-run coverage falls to 1.13; would fail Test 3
Unit rent: street rate 5 percent lower on the same tenants ($2,030 a month less), from month 1 onward	minus $2,030	Expected case still clears the floor; slow start below the floor in month 4 (closing $30,639)
A block of 33 units empties from month 7 and stays empty ($4,290 a month), from month 7 onward	minus $4,112	Expected case still clears the floor; slow start deadline unchanged (month 5)
Occupancy capped at 80 percent: the roll stops at 296 units from month 8, leaving 30 units empty in year 2 ($3,728 a month)	minus $3,728	Expected case still clears the floor; slow start deadline unchanged (month 5)
Ground rent 15 percent higher from month 1, permanent ($510 a month more on line 1)	minus $510	Expected case still clears the floor; slow start below the floor in month 4 (closing $34,283)
Marketing 100 percent higher from month 1, permanent ($1,650 a month more on line 7)	minus $1,650	Expected case still clears the floor; slow start below the floor in month 4 (closing $29,723)
Build-out overrun of $25,000 beyond the contingency, met out of the cash reserve	no change	Expected case still clears the floor; slow start below the floor in month 3 (closing $22,748)
Opening 3 months late (the storage site, insurance, loan interest and principal, $13,522 a month, paid while closed; no sales; the ramp starts at the new opening, and seasons stay on the calendar)	no change	Expected case below the floor in month 6 from the planned opening; slow start below the floor in month 5 from the planned opening, as on time; about $5,400 more opening cash holds the expected case at the floor; would fail Test 1

WHEN A PAGE 8 FORMULA GIVES NO USABLE NUMBER

```
Contribution margin ratio zero or below: break-even is N/A; score Tests 1 and 6 as failed
One unit's contribution, or the count it is multiplied by, zero or below: break-even units are N/A;
score Test 4 as failed
Other lines already cover fixed costs and principal: break-even units are 0, never a negative number
No loan: coverage is N/A; score Test 3 as passed
```

PAGE 14

Move-in checklists, weekly review, six questions

Operations checklists for running the site, not a compliance program. Add each rental agreement, billing, move-out and safety step your location and your own advisers call for.

BEFORE A TENANT MOVES IN

- [ ] Hold the gate code back until the rental agreement is signed and the first payment has cleared.
- [ ] Take the tenant to the door, open it, and check the light, the latch and the floor for damp.
- [ ] Write the unit size, the rent, the billing date and the notice period into the agreement and the billing system.
- [ ] Take the contact and alternate contact details your site requires.
- [ ] Enter the tenant in the source log with the inquiry source and the move-in date.
- [ ] Mark the unit rented on the page 9 table the same day.

MONTH END AND MOVE-OUTS

- [ ] Set each unit size's rented units against its doors, and the site hours worked against the hours rostered.
- [ ] Put every move-in and move-out on the page 9 table with the reason the tenant gave at the counter.
- [ ] Retry a failed payment on the timing the rental agreement and the processor allow, and record each attempt and contact.
- [ ] Work out the month's churn: move-outs divided by the units rented on the 1st.
- [ ] Log each inquiry with its source, the showing date and whether it rented.
- [ ] When a tenant leaves, ask what would have kept the unit and which neighbor might take it.

WEEKLY NUMBERS REVIEW

MEASURE	TARGET	THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	VARIANCE TO TARGET
Rent billed against cash cleared, by unit size and payment step				
Rented units by size against the doors				
Site hours worked against hours rostered				
Move-ins, move-outs and transfers by unit size				
Inquiries, showings and move-ins by source				
Failed payments and balances older than 10 days				
Owner hours on the site or behind the counter				

SIX QUESTIONS TO INVESTIGATE

1. **Founder dependency.** Do showings, gate faults and payment disputes wait on the owner, with the counter sitting on questions until the owner appears?
2. **Reactive operations.** In one week, how many units stayed empty because no showing was booked, how many payments failed, and how many hours did the owner put in behind the counter?
3. **Growth without structure.** How many new tenants leave before their 90th day, and how many unpaid balances are still outstanding on the 15th?
4. **Talent and retention.** Which routines would walk out with the site manager, because the gate codes, the wait list and the unpaid-rent follow-up live in one head?
5. **Revenue plateau.** How many days pass between an inquiry and a showing, and how many inquiries never turn into a visit?
6. **Strategic confusion.** Do unit sizes earn very different rent per door for the same site hours, and has the mix you run drifted from the one you priced?

Hypotheses from AI-assisted World Consulting Group desk research, described on page 2. Check each one against a record: the inquiry and showing log, the page 9 rent roll, site hours against the roster, or the failed-payment list.

PAGE 15

Your first 30 days

WHEN	DO THIS
Week 1	Start the weekly numbers review and log site and counter hours every day. Log the hours the owner covers.
Week 2	Fill the page 7 unit table at the loaded wage and mark any unit size whose rent does not cover its site hours, card fees and bad debt.
Week 3	Fill the page 9 rent roll with every move-in and move-out and work out the month's churn.
Week 4	Enter actual closing cash on page 11 and recalculate runway. Write the decisions the counter may make without calling you.
After month 1	Compare each unit size's rented units with its doors and the site hours worked with the roster on page 6.

BEFORE YOU SIGN A LEASE, GET WRITTEN ANSWERS TO THESE

- [ ] Will you have to sign a personal guarantee, how much does it cover, and when does it end?
- [ ] Which charges sit on top of base rent, such as common area, property tax and insurance, and how are they settled each year?
- [ ] What does the space need before you can open, and who pays to add or upgrade it?
- [ ] Does the landlord contribute to the build-out, when is that money paid, and must any of it be repaid if you leave early?
- [ ] When does rent start, at signing, at permit or at opening?
- [ ] Are there limits on operating hours, signage, parking, deliveries or the uses allowed in the space?
- [ ] What happens to the lease and the fixtures if you sell the business?

Have a qualified professional review the lease before you sign. These questions prepare you for that conversation; they do not replace it.

WHAT THE FULL KIT ADDS

The full Self Storage Business Plan and Operations Kit adds an editable business plan, a three-year financial model with profit and loss, cash flow and a debt schedule, a unit pricing calculator from site hours and rent to a margin, a rent roll and churn tracker, editable inquiry and showing trackers, move-in and move-out checklists and hiring checklists. Release status is on the kit page.

SOURCES

World Consulting Group material. Origin of the questions: AI-assisted World Consulting Group desk research on independent self storage sites, 2026, an internal working file that is not published, described on page 2; the questions are hypotheses and no figure in this kit comes from it. Self storage facilities owner questions, businessconsultant.services, 2026.

SCOPE AND DISCLAIMER

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About the author. Kamyar Shah is the founder of World Consulting Group and works as a fractional COO and CMO. He has more than 25 years of experience and more than 650 engagements across more than a dozen industries. Contact and the latest version: businessconsultant.services.

PAGE 16

Customize this kit with AI

Attach this PDF to ChatGPT, Claude or Gemini, paste the prompt below, and answer with your own units, rents and costs. A copy-ready version is on the kit page.

BEFORE YOU RELY ON THE ANSWER

Check every total with a calculator. An AI assistant can misread a file or slip on arithmetic, even when it runs code, so rerun every figure you will act on with the page formulas. Check your AI provider's data settings first, and never paste personal data, account numbers, passwords, customer-level records or anything an agreement restricts, such as rental agreements, tenants' names, gate codes, contact details, staff records or bank account details. Rounded figures serve the arithmetic, though rounding does not make a record anonymous.

I run an independent self storage site. I have attached the Self Storage Business Plan and Operations Starter Kit from businessconsultant.services. Help me turn it into my own plan for my unit sizes, tenants and staff, using my numbers only.

Follow these rules for the whole conversation:
1. Use only numbers I give you, or numbers you calculate from mine with the formulas below. Never invent a rent, a wage, a churn figure, a capacity count, percentage or benchmark.
2. The numbers printed in the kit are worked examples. Never use them as my numbers, not even as a placeholder.
3. If a number you need is missing, ask me for it. If I ask you to estimate or use typical figures, write [NEED: ...] instead and tell me which quote, record or calculation will give me the real number. If I give you my own estimate, label it MY ESTIMATE.
4. Use these formulas exactly, and show your arithmetic for every number you calculate:
- Monthly sales = units times average rent or price (every line is counted per month). Unit rent follows the page 9 rent roll (rented units at month end times average rent); plans and retail = full-run sales times ramp times season. Full-run sales, break-even and coverage take unit rent at its settled-year average (page 9), not the planned count.
- Net sales exclude sales tax. Labor = wages, payroll taxes and benefits, plus a market wage for the owner's management time (line 4); the owner's hours on shift go in line 14 at a market wage. Shift hours count as cash even if I skip my own pay, so the plan still holds when I step back from the work; only line 4 may go undrawn, and Tests 1 and 6 count it anyway.
- Contribution margin ratio = 1 minus variable cost share; a line's contribution = its sales times its own ratio. Operating break-even sales = fixed costs divided by contribution margin ratio. Cash break-even sales = (fixed costs with line 4 even if I do not draw it, plus monthly loan principal and any recurring other cash out) divided by contribution margin ratio; only the cash forecast drops an undrawn wage. A blended ratio holds only at its own sales mix: name that mix beside each break-even, and recompute from each line's own contribution when a what-if changes one line. Loan interest is fixed; principal is not an operating cost, so it never enters operating break-even or operating profit.
- Weekly = monthly times 12, divided by 52. Daily = weekly divided by days open per week.
- Break-even rented units = (fixed costs with line 4 even if undrawn, plus principal, minus protection-plan and retail contribution at their own shares) divided by one rented unit's monthly contribution; 0 if covered. If the other lines already cover fixed costs and principal, report 0 and say so; never report a negative break-even count. Staff hours the site can field a month = the sum over the site crew of each one's hours a day times days worked a week, times 52, divided by 12; site hours needed in the peak month = the direct unit hours on page 7 at the settled rent roll (page 9); settled rented units against the doors. The roster is read as people x hours a day x days a week x 52 over 12.
- Ground rent share = line 1 divided by net sales. Planning debt service coverage, before income tax and equipment replacement = (full-run sales times contribution margin ratio, minus fixed costs other than loan interest) divided by (loan interest + loan principal).
- Month-12 run rate = average monthly sales over a year at month 12's ramp and bookings, seasons applied (not month 12's own sales). Test 1 needs that rate at or above cash break-even and my floor held 24 months; Test 3, coverage at full run and at that rate.
- Test 6 = 12 months of (full-run sales minus their variable costs, minus full-run fixed costs, line 4 included, minus principal), seasons applied to every sales line but booked lines, which run in their own months, and seasonal fixed lines at each month's amount. The cushion to set aside = the largest fall in running net cash from a high to any later low, the year run twice so a dip can cross into month 1 (zero if it never falls).
- Full-run figures (break-even, coverage, floor) take booked lines at full bookings averaged over 12 months, a late-starting fixed line at its full amount, and a seasonal fixed line at its year average.
- For pages 7, 9 and 10, use the formulas printed on those pages of the attached kit, exactly as written, with my own figures.
- Cash forecast: closing cash = opening cash + cash in minus cash out. Month 1 opening cash = cash on hand on the first day the site opens after startup spending is paid. Place every receipt and payment (deposits, supplier invoices, startup bills, funding) in the month the cash moves. Income tax set-aside, unit replacement and stock build-up go in their own row. Open month 1 with the cash I give; the page 5 two-pass size is advice to report beside it, never a substitute. Place each receipt in the month my payment terms say; if a term is missing, mark [NEED: payment timing]. The worked example bills rent on the first (new tenants pay at move-in), collects it in the service month, with unpaid rent carried in the bad-debt share rather than delayed, and lands protection plans and retail in their month; payroll and suppliers are paid in the month worked. In the slow-start case, every month's sales on every line are the tested share of expected sales; fixed costs, other cash out, principal, bills and funding stay as planned; all variable lines fall with sales, each figured from the slow-start sales of the same month, on the same payment timing as the expected case (fair because line 14 holds only hours I would cut). Runway = the number of consecutive future months, counted from the latest closed month (before opening, from the first day the site opens), before the first month in which closing cash falls below my cash floor.
(Continued on page 17.)

PAGE 17

The prompt, continued

Paste this part directly after the rules on page 16, as one message.

5. Do not give legal, tax, licensing, permit, rental agreements, billing, access and unit-mix requirements, employment, wage or lease advice. Do not name laws, license or permit types, agencies, government fees or wage rates, even as examples. When my question touches these, write only "Review this with a qualified professional" and continue with the rest. You may record and use figures I give from my own records, such as my sales tax rate and when I remit it, without checking, interpreting or advising on them.
6. Do not quote statistics, studies or sources that are not in the kit. For the market and marketing sections, use only what I tell you, and list the local facts I should gather.
7. Work every total step by step and recheck it a second way. In the cash forecast, show the arithmetic for month 1, one later month and the year total; give plain numbers for the other months.
8. If a formula would divide by zero or a contribution margin is zero or below, write N/A, say why, and do not continue that calculation. If my lender defines coverage differently, show both results and label each. If cash never falls below my floor in the forecast, write the runway as more than 24 months; otherwise give the runway in months and, separately, the first month below it, counting year 2. With no loan, Test 3 passes.
9. Use business figures only, with anonymous tenant IDs. Do not ask for names, addresses, bank account numbers, payment card details, tenant lists, or the names of my tenants or staff.
10. Mark every output: Draft for my own planning. Not for a lender or investor until a qualified accountant has reviewed it.
11. If your full answer would be very long, deliver outputs 1 to 4 first, then stop and ask me to type "continue" for the rest.
12. Build the cash forecast month by month from the sales build, the cost lines, my payment terms and my opening cash; it does not need the inputs for pages 7, 9 and 10. Each month: cash in = sales receipts plus money arriving; cash out = each variable cost, calculated from the sales that created it and placed in the month it is paid under my terms, plus fixed costs (lines 1 to 12, with line 4 only if I draw it in cash), plus loan principal, startup bills and other cash out. Loan interest is already in line 5; never add it again. Supplier payments follow the cost of what I sold plus any stock build-up I give; if I buy ahead or carry supplier balances, ask me for purchases and payments by month instead. If you can run code, do every calculation in code.

Step 1. Before you write anything else, ask me for the inputs below in three rounds, one message per round. Ask round A as one numbered list, then wait for my answers. When I answer, ask round B and wait; then round C and wait. Start Step 2 only after I answer round C.
Round A, sales, capacity and evidence:
a. Unit sizes and doors, hours the gate is open, inquiries and their sources, the site crew with paid hours a day and days a week, and days open per week.
b. Sales build: for unit rent, each unit size's doors, the rented units at full run and the monthly rent, my monthly churn and my planned move-ins for each month from 1 to 12 (March's are new move-ins in the opening month; the units already rented at takeover go in as the opening balance on page 9, not as move-ins), the recurring yearly move-ins that hold full run, and the doors the building has; for protection plans and for retail, the plans or sales a month at full run and the average charge, a ramp percentage of full-run volume for every month from 1 to 12 (ask me to confirm any month I leave out); a seasonal percentage for each month for those two lines from my inquiry record or my market; and the slow-start percentage I want to test (this kit sets a 70 percent stress test, a kit rule rather than my estimate; use it unless I give evidence for a higher share). Never daily; the page 9 rent roll replaces the rent line's count once fully let. Give counts at full run, with month 1 as my opening month. Give the evidence behind each count (site counts, comparables, signed orders or my history), and for each booked line (unit rent) its bookings, and its count once fully booked, for each month 1 to 12.
c. For each unit size: the doors it can let, the units rented at full run, the monthly rent, and the direct site hours a month it needs; the salaried roster's paid hours a month; the loaded wage of the hourly staff above it.
Then wait for my answers.
Round B, costs, the startup budget and my lender:
d. Startup budget: an amount and its source (build-out quote, insurer quote, ground lease or calculation) for each line on page 5, from the unit build-out to the working capital reserve and contingency.
e. Monthly fixed costs for lines 1 to 12 on page 8, including the ground rent, the salaried site staff, the loan interest and my market wage; whether I draw that wage in cash; and my monthly loan principal. Give interest and principal as year 1 monthly averages for break-even and coverage, and, for the cash forecast, any payment, fixed line or other cash line that changes in months 1 to 24 (a payment holiday, a balloon payment, a rent step) with its month. My market wage covers management time (line 4); my hours on shift go in line 14 at a market wage.
f. Variable cost shares of net sales for lines 13 to 16: line 13, protection-plan underwriter share and retail cost of goods; line 14, direct site hours above the salaried site roster, at the loaded wage; line 15, card processing on unit rent, plans and retail; line 16, bad debt on unpaid rent; and any sales line whose own shares differ, given for that line. Line 13 is a blended average of the protection plan and retail costs across all sales and is not a cost charged to rent itself; rent carries no cost of goods.
g. Confirm the churn, the move-in plan and the doors from item b; change nothing unless I say so.
h. For one typical week per site crew member: paid hours, hours on site and at the counter, off-site trips and referral visits, return trips for call-outs and repairs, and training, meetings or breaks; the base pay and the payroll taxes and benefits share.
i. The debt service coverage ratio my lender requires and how the lender calculates it, if I know them.
Then wait for my answers.
(Continued on page 18.)

PAGE 18

The prompt, last part

Paste this part directly after the text on page 17, still as one message.

Round C, cash timing, sales tax, deposits and Gate 0:
j. Payment terms: when each line pays (rent billed on the first and cleared in the month, or later, and the share of payments that fail), deposits or administration charges I collect and when, and when payroll and suppliers are paid.
k. For every other cash line (payroll, card settlements, insurance, loan payments, rent and fixed bills), when it is paid, or confirm it is paid in the month it is incurred.
l. Monthly cash out beyond operating costs: income tax set-aside and unit replacement.
m. Cash on hand on the first day the site opens after all startup spending, startup bills still to pay by month, owner money or loans still to arrive by month, and my minimum cash floor (at least one full-run month of fixed costs plus principal).
n. If I am already open: what customers owe me and what I owe suppliers and staff, each by the month it will be paid, deposits I already hold, and sales tax already owed with its payment month.
o. Sales tax: the rate I collect on taxable sales, from my own registration, which sales lines (or what share of each) are taxable, and when I remit what I collect (each month, each quarter or another schedule), so the forecast holds collected tax apart until it is paid.
p. Gate 0: which agreements, quotes and approval requirements I already have in writing.
Then wait for my answers.

Step 2. When I answer, produce these as plain tables I can copy back into the kit:
1. Business plan sections 1 to 8 for my storage site, drafted from my answers, with gaps marked [NEED: ...].
2. The sales build by unit-rent line, protection-plan line, retail line and month, with annual sales and the capacity check from page 6.
3. The completed startup budget, line by line as on page 5, with the total. Size the reserve by the page 5 rule; if I gave another, show both and the result for each.
4. Operating and cash break-even per month, per week and per day open; break-even rented units (use cash break-even); ground rent share and planning debt service coverage at full-run sales, labeled before income tax and equipment replacement, and on my lender's definition too if I gave it.
5. The 12-month cash forecast for the expected and slow-start cases, in thousands of dollars to two decimals (51.25 means $51,250) to match the kit, with, for each case, the first month below my cash floor and the first month below zero, and the runway; the second year's lowest closing cash (month 12's ramp and bookings held, each month with its own season, not a flat average); any extra reserve the slow start needs; and the Test 6 cushion, with whether the page 5 buffer covers it (add any excess to the reserve). Add memo rows for each month, kept out of closing cash: money collected for others and remitted at month end (last month's owed + collected minus remitted), and receivables (last month's + billed minus collected).
6. Unit economics by size, doors, rented units, rent, site hours and revenue per available unit, ranked, with the capacity check on doors and site hours.
7. The 12-month rent roll (move-ins, move-outs, units rented, percent of full run), steady state against the plan, average stay, unit-rent lifetime value and cost per move-in.
8. On-site utilization and the true cost of a site hour, with the largest leak named.
9. The kit's page 4 check: Gate 0 and pass or fail for each of the six tests with the reason (if Gate 0 fails, the result is not ready), and the overall result: not ready if Gate 0 fails, with no color; otherwise green, amber or red under the page 4 rules.
10. A final checklist: every MY ESTIMATE figure, every [NEED: ...] gap, every unit count or payment term I should verify, and every question that needs a qualified professional.

WHEN THE ANSWER COMES BACK

Copy each table into the matching kit page in pencil. Check every [NEED: ...] gap and MY ESTIMATE figure, starting with the rent roll, site hours and payment terms, before anyone sees the plan, and recheck the page 4 result with a calculator.

The worked example's twelve-month forecast, filled in

The page 12 example entered on the page 11 form, month by month, in dollars. Parentheses mean minus. Each column adds up as printed, so a row can move by a dollar between months with the same sales; each closing balance becomes the next month's opening cash. Cash floor $34,422.

LINE ($)	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7	M8	M9	M10	M11	M12
EXPECTED CASE												
Opening cash	**97,900**	**84,402**	**75,522**	**70,511**	**68,942**	**70,143**	**73,379**	**77,978**	**83,735**	**90,289**	**97,419**	**105,074**
In: sales receipts	22,935	28,166	32,582	36,558	39,705	41,854	43,006	44,063	44,693	45,160	45,685	46,329
In: owner money and loans received	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Out: cost of goods, programs, fees and bad debt (lines 13, 15, 16)	2,011	2,624	3,171	3,706	4,081	4,196	3,985	3,884	3,717	3,608	3,609	3,742
Out: payroll, line 4 if drawn in cash (lines 3, 4, 14)	11,800	11,800	11,800	11,800	11,800	11,800	11,800	11,800	11,800	11,800	11,800	11,800
Out: ground rent (line 1)	3,400	3,400	3,400	3,400	3,400	3,400	3,400	3,400	3,400	3,400	3,400	3,400
Out: other costs, with loan interest (lines 2, 5 to 12)	15,766	15,766	15,766	15,765	15,767	15,766	15,766	15,766	15,766	15,766	15,765	15,767
Out: income tax set-aside, equipment replacement, stock build-up (none in the example; see below)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Out: loan principal	3,456	3,456	3,456	3,456	3,456	3,456	3,456	3,456	3,456	3,456	3,456	3,456
Out: startup bills still to pay	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Net cash flow (in minus out)	**(13,498)**	**(8,880)**	**(5,011)**	**(1,569)**	**1,201**	**3,236**	**4,599**	**5,757**	**6,554**	**7,130**	**7,655**	**8,164**
Closing cash, expected	**84,402**	**75,522**	**70,511**	**68,942**	**70,143**	**73,379**	**77,978**	**83,735**	**90,289**	**97,419**	**105,074**	**113,238**
SLOW-START CASE (70 PERCENT OF EXPECTED SALES IN EVERY MONTH)												
Opening cash, slow start	**97,900**	**78,125**	**61,583**	**47,748**	**36,323**	**26,837**	**18,776**	**11,669**	**5,372**	**(367)**	**(5,703)**	**(10,671)**
Sales receipts, slow start	16,055	19,716	22,807	25,591	27,793	29,298	30,104	30,844	31,285	31,612	31,980	32,430
Out: variable costs, slow start (lines 13 to 16)	1,408	1,836	2,220	2,594	2,857	2,937	2,789	2,719	2,602	2,526	2,526	2,619
Out: fixed costs (lines 1 to 12), principal, bills, less funding	34,422	34,422	34,422	34,422	34,422	34,422	34,422	34,422	34,422	34,422	34,422	34,422
Net cash flow, slow start	**(19,775)**	**(16,542)**	**(13,835)**	**(11,425)**	**(9,486)**	**(8,061)**	**(7,107)**	**(6,297)**	**(5,739)**	**(5,336)**	**(4,968)**	**(4,611)**
Closing cash, slow start	**78,125**	**61,583**	**47,748**	**36,323**	**26,837**	**18,776**	**11,669**	**5,372**	**(367)**	**(5,703)**	**(10,671)**	**(15,282)**
STEADY-STATE YEAR FOR TEST 6 (RAMP DONE, SEASONS IN; NOT THE FORECAST YEAR)												
Net cash flow, steady-state year	**8,285**	**8,518**	**8,727**	**8,960**	**9,099**	**9,006**	**8,662**	**8,452**	**8,220**	**8,080**	**8,057**	**8,173**

Reading this forecast. It is in whole dollars, rounded so each column adds up, so a row can differ by $1 between like months; the page 11 form uses thousands. The floor is cash you never plan to spend. The page 5 buffer holds one more month of fixed costs and principal above it, so a small miss spends the buffer, not the floor. The opening cash was sized by the two passes on page 5, buffer included. Variable costs use each sales line's own shares, so a month can differ by a few dollars from the blended share. The example sets aside no income tax (it depends on the owner's whole return, so take the figure from your accountant), replaces no equipment in its first two years and builds no stock beyond the opening stock in the startup budget; enter your own amounts. Second year at the month-12 run rate (about $47,025 a month, against month 12's own billed sales of $46,329): closing cash runs $121,516 in month 1 and $215,380 in month 12, lowest $121,516 in month 1, above the floor. Sales are net of sales tax, and the example pays each month's tax in the month it is collected, so it owes none at any month end; enter your own rate and payment timing in the page 11 memo rows. If you borrow the reserve, add its interest and principal to the forecast and run both passes again. The slow start lets variable costs fall with sales, which is fair only because hours you cannot cut sit in line 3; waste or purchases you cannot cut make a real slow start worse.