

# Guide 4: Real-Time Actuals & Wrap Reports

## | The Trouble with Actuals and Wraps

Budget problems don't just appear at wrap—they build all along the way. When actuals stay hidden and updates lag, producers are forced to play catch-up instead of staying in control.

- **Data scattered everywhere.** Expenses live in email, Dropbox, random PDFs, and someone's glove box.
- **Manual updates slow you down.** Every new receipt means another spreadsheet tweak or file shuffle.
- **No visibility into real-time actuals.** You don't see the budget impact until it's too late.
- **Wraps turn into archaeology.** By the time you piece it all together, the project's already off course.

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### Making Numbers Work for You

Numbers don't have to be a postmortem—they can guide decisions in real time if you capture them as you go.

- 1. Treat every spend as live.** Don't wait for wrap—jot the cost where the team can see it.
- 2. Anchor updates to milestones.** Add costs when bids change, shots get approved, or crews expand—natural checkpoints.
- 3. Make “one stop” the rule.** Whether it's a sheet, a Slack channel, or a notebook, pick one place for numbers and stick to it.
- 4. Flag deltas, not dollars.** A note like “+10% on casting” is more useful mid-project than the exact receipt tally.
- 5. Summarize on the fly.** Drop a quick weekly note—where budget stands, what's trending up, what's holding steady.

### Extra Tricks from the Field

- **Log expenses from your phone.** Snap receipts on set and upload instantly. Waiting until later is when things slip.
- **Tag costs by type.** Mark expenses as “crew,” “equipment,” or “travel” to see where money leaks.
- **Reconcile weekly, not at the end.** Even 15 minutes on Fridays saves days at wrap.
- **Share interim snapshots with finance.** Builds trust and catches mismatches early.
- **Keep a “gotchas” list.** Track surprise costs (permits, OT meals, data wrangling) and bake them into future bids.

Smart habits keep the numbers from slipping—but without the right tool, you're still stuck stitching it all together at wrap.

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## How to Evaluate Creative Production Tools

Numbers don't become painful at wrap because producers are bad with them—they become painful because actuals stay hidden until it's too late. The right tool should:

- **Track expenses live and tie them to budgets.** See the financial impact of every cost as it happens.
- **Show real-time actuals against estimates.** No more guessing—you know exactly where the project stands.
- **Protect margins in the moment.** Automatic updates flag when profitability starts to slip.
- **Generate wrap reports automatically.** Reports build in the background while you produce.
- **Integrate directly with bids and estimates.** What you planned and what you spent should live side by side.
- **Output in finance-friendly formats.** If finance can't read it, you'll end up redoing the work.
- **Provide alerts when costs drift.** You should never find out you're over budget at the very end.

Bottom line: Stop reconciling in hindsight—know your numbers as you go.

## How Timmy Helps Producers Stay in Control

Timmy was designed to take the pain out of actuals and wrap reports by making numbers visible while the job is live.

|                                                                                                              |                                     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Centralized cost tracking</b> – All expenses live in one place, not scattered across inboxes and PDFs     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>Budget vs. actual visibility</b> – See the impact of every cost instantly, with alerts when things drift. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>Automatic wrap reports</b> – Built in the background as you go, ready when finance asks.                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>Seamless integration</b> – Planned vs. spent lives side by side—no more copy-paste.                       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>Finance-ready exports</b> – Clean reports your finance team can read immediately.                         | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

With Timmy, real-time transparency means no surprises and no scramble.

