Financial Visibility vs Economic Instability: Why a Real-Time View of Financial Data Will Be Crucial in the Coming Year

Research commissioned by BlackLine suggests that C-suite executives and finance and accounting (F&A) professionals are anticipating growing pressure and scrutiny as a result of ongoing economic uncertainty—and that real-time visibility over financial data will be key.

Senior executives and F&A professionals are concerned about the prospect of rising interest rates and a global recession

63% of senior executives and F&A professionals anticipate we will enter a worldwide recession within a year

95% expect rising interest rates to have an impact on the way their business operates



Findings suggest that for the majority of the C-suite, it will take between six months and a year for them to feel confident about the economy again

"I will feel confident about the economy again"

Up to 6 months: 38% of C-suite

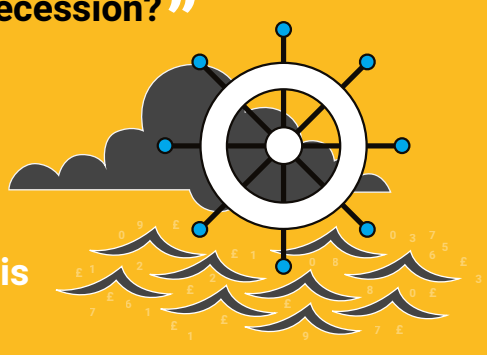
Up to a year: 61% of C-suite

More CFOs feel that they, rather than the CEO, are responsible for steering their organization through tough economic times

"Who do you think is most responsible for steering a company through a recession?"

41% of CFOs say they are

30% of CFOs say the CEO is

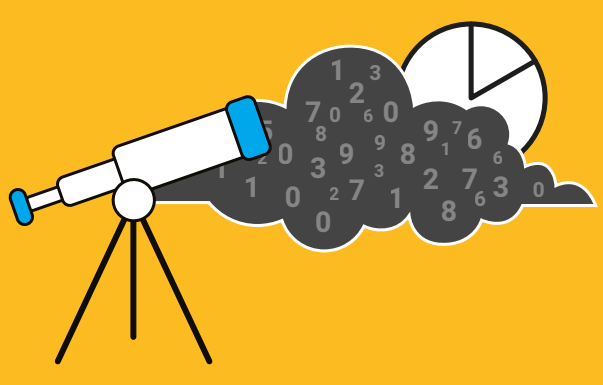


In the midst of this economic uncertainty, respondents predict the finance function will come under greater scrutiny and pressure

62% of C-suite and F&A professionals believe their company's financial reporting will come under increased scrutiny over the next year

62% agree that understanding cash flow in real time is going to become more important for their company over the next year

62% agree that real-time visibility over financial data will be a "must-have" for businesses to survive the next three to 12 months



Although real-time visibility over financial metrics will be crucial in the coming year, nearly all respondents say they could be more confident in the visibility they currently have over cash flow



98% of respondents indicated they could be more confident in the visibility their organization currently has over its cash flow

Of those that believe visibility could be improved:



49% are worried that their company is making decisions based on inaccurate or out-of-date information

44% say the lack of visibility over cash flow makes them less confident that their organization can remain competitive over the next 12 months

As a result, organizations now need to look internally for ways to optimize working capital and processes

40% say they now need to find ways to optimize working capital without looking externally to borrow funds

56% want to implement or scale automation solutions to help optimize and increase working capital within the next years



Key takeaway

Economic instability and volatility are on the horizon. CFOs, and those who report to them, are feeling the pressure. There is wide acknowledgement that better visibility over financial data, processes, and working capital is needed if organizations want to weather the storm. With external pressures that are hard to predict, finance leaders and professionals must look internally for ways to optimize outdated processes that could be hampering their organization's ability to respond effectively.

The survey included a breakdown of respondents by job title.

About This Research

The research was conducted by Censuswide, with 737 C-level and 746 F&A professionals in seven markets (US, Canada, UK, France, Germany, Australia, and Singapore), with minimum annual revenues as follows:

- US: 150m USD
- Canada: 50m CAD
- UK: 50m GBP
- France: 50m EURO
- Germany: 50m EURO
- Singapore: 20m SGD
- Australia: 20m AUD

The survey was conducted online between July 29th and Aug. 18th, 2022.

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