



Navigating your project's curves

Calculated Controls LLC

Every project manager should require the, often underappreciated, "3-Part Curves" set of charts to be in his or her toolbox. This report consists of two line charts and a column chart depicting progress, productivity factor and manpower. Each of the charts will illustrate the baseline target vs. actuals to date and typically will account for direct resources only. It all should be based upon identical intervals (by shift, day or week, etc.). And, it is most helpful to show all three charts on the same page for quick comparison and analysis.

The method in which the baseline is developed is a frequently overlooked, but very important, aspect of the report. As a project manager, you most likely know the curves

she is reviewing an under the curve report that indicates otherwise.

Please note this does not mean you should use the late dates to develop your curves. This type of baseline will have zero margin for delay and is similar to planning all of your activities will be in the critical path. Many

project controls professionals have adopted the method of taking an *average* of the early and late dates to develop the curves, which is what we consider the best approach.

An easy way to find out what your curves are telling you is to visit www.calculatedcontrols.com/tools/3-part-curves for 3-Part

Curve samples, templates and a helpful table to assist you in interpreting what your curves are telling you.

For more information, call Clayton Richards at (888) 790-9398, email info@calculatedcontrols.com or visit www.calculatedcontrols.com. ●

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were derived from schedule and resource information within your Primavera™ project schedule. However, you can ask five separate schedulers how they develop their curves and you may receive five different answers — all of which may be correct.

It is important for you to know if the curves are based upon early dates, late dates or an average of the two. You may be unfamiliar with these terms, but they are significant and your scheduler should be fully aware of what each date represents. The early start date represents the earliest date an activity can start because of logic, resource leveling or the data date. The late start date represents the latest date the activity can start without affecting the project's end date. Activities on the critical path will have the same early and late start date because there is no float in the schedule to allow these activities to slip.

Conversely, noncritical activities may have a large delta in time between their early and late start dates. Many schedulers export the Primavera information to Excel™ using only the early start dates and derive their curves from this information only. Why is this important to know? It is vitally important because it means you may be agreeing to an initial baseline target that allows for no delays whatsoever, even though delaying activities not on the critical path is considered acceptable. It is much easier to develop the curves correctly in the first place rather than sitting across from your client or manager explaining the project's progress is acceptable while he or

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We offer three areas of expertise to help you bring your next project or turnaround to a successful conclusion.

Project Controls Resources

We provide the project controls resources necessary to augment your staff, including project controls managers, field planners, analysts and more. All have special skills, a verifiable work history and are trained to easily adapt to your methods, procedures and processes.

Planning and Scheduling Services

We have a unique understanding of your needs because of our history in the field services industry. Properly estimating activities, sequencing the work and efficiently utilizing manpower are just part of how we assist you. We help with scope development, project and portfolio scheduling, bid package preparation and more.

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We help you get useful information from your data. We can take your data and design a specialized database specifically tailored to your business needs. With our system, you will receive real-time reporting through automated information delivery, easy "Google™-like" search capabilities, one-click collaboration and sharing, custom dashboards and more. Every company relies on data to run its business. The easier it is to turn data into information, the faster you can use that information to improve your business.

For more information, call 1-888-790-9398, e-mail info@calculatedcontrols.com or visit www.calculatedcontrols.com.



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The new Calculated Controls race car will be used for charity races and displayed at industry events.