Helper Files

Optional Data · https://dev.forecastpro.com/documentation/forecast-pro-trac/optional-data/helper-files/

Helper variables are used in conjunction with event modeling, forecast by analogy and the weighting transformation. In addition to creating helper variables interactively for event models and forecasting by analogy, Forecast Pro allows you to import helper variables from other Forecast Pro projects and from Excel spreadsheets.

You can create event schedules interactively using the Event Manager. However, if you wish, you can create helper variables containing the event schedules in Excel or in a database and import them into your project using the Data Manager. You may also import helper variables from other Forecast Pro projects using the Data Manager.

Forecast by analogy requires a helper variable containing the analogy series. Using a weighting transformation requires a helper variable containing the weights. Depending on your needs, you can either create these helper variables using the Create Helper Variable dialog box (accessed via the **Create Helper** icon on the **Forecasting** tab) or you can create them in Excel or in a database and import them into your project using the Data Manager. You may also import helper variables from other Forecast Pro projects using the Data Manager.

Helper variables are created like global explanatory variables. Please note the following:

1. Attribute fields are not used since helper variables are associated with items on the Navigator using modifiers.
2. Description, Starting Year, Starting Period, Periods per Year and Periods per Seasonal Cycle are all required fields.
   a. The Description field defines the name of the helper variable.
   b. The fields Starting year, Starting period, Periods per Year and Periods per Cycle should all match the historic data.

Several sample helper files are shipped with Forecast Pro including, *“Beer - Helpers.xls”* and the table *“Helpers”* in the sample Access database file *Beer.mdb*.