

Small Public Company CFOs & Controllers: The 10-Q Deadline Survival Checklist (Your 40-Day Sprint Plan)

How to get your next 10-Q filed on time without turning quarter-end into a fire drill.

How to Use This Checklist

This is not a whitepaper. This is a working document.
Print it. Share it with your controller. Walk through it with your team.
If you cannot confidently check off an item, that's where your next deadline risk lives.
This checklist assumes a 40-day filing window and works backward from the due date.

The 40-Day 10-Q Sprint Checklist

Phase 1: Pre-Close Alignment (Days 1–10 After Quarter-End)

- Confirm filer status and exact deadline
- Lock internal close calendar with hard dates
- Assign owner for every major reporting section
- Confirm auditor availability and touchpoints
- Freeze any non-essential accounting policy changes
- Confirm all recurring journal entries are documented
- Update disclosure checklist for the current quarter
- Identify unusual transactions early (revenue spikes, impairments, legal, etc.)

If these steps aren't locked early, compression happens later.

Phase 2: Close Discipline (Days 10–20)

- All bank and cash accounts reconciled
- Major balance sheet accounts tied out
- Revenue recognition reviewed and documented
- Inventory and COGS reconciliations completed (if applicable)
- Accruals reviewed and supported
- Related party transactions reviewed
- Variance analysis prepared vs prior quarter and budget
- Supporting schedules organized in one central folder
- Version control system confirmed (no "Final_v7_REALFINAL.xlsx" chaos)

This is where most delays originate.

Phase 3: Drafting & Review (Days 20–30)

- MD&A updated with current quarter analysis
- Disclosure language updated for changes in risk factors
- Legal review initiated early
- Financial statements internally reviewed line by line
- Tie-outs completed between statements and footnotes
- Earnings narrative aligns with actual financial performance
- Board/Executive preview scheduled
- All SEC reporting templates updated

If drafting begins late, everything compresses.

Phase 4: Finalization & Filing (Days 30–40)

- Final numbers locked
- Auditor comments resolved
- Legal sign-off received
- CEO/CFO certifications prepared
- XBRL tagging reviewed
- EDGAR filing test completed
- Filing time scheduled in advance
- Contingency buffer built in (at least 24 hours)

If there's no buffer, you're gambling.

The Hidden Risks This Checklist Prevents

- Late filings that damage credibility
- Last-minute accounting adjustments
- Audit rework loops
- Disclosure inconsistencies
- Investor confidence erosion
- Team burnout every quarter
- Emergency hiring decisions

At \$5M–\$50M in revenue, you don't need chaos. You need rhythm.

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

Deadlines don't move. Boards don't like surprises. Auditors don't accept "we ran out of time." And capital markets don't reward sloppy reporting. A disciplined 40-day sprint changes everything: Clear owners. Tight timelines. Controlled close. Predictable filings. When reporting is structured, leadership can focus on growth. When reporting is reactive, growth slows.

Want Help Pressure-Testing Your 10-Q Process?

If you reviewed this checklist and found 3–5 items you're not fully confident in... That's your early warning sign. Brimmer Company works with \$5M–\$50M small public companies to stabilize reporting, tighten close cycles, and eliminate quarter-end chaos — without hiring a full-time CFO too early.

[URL HERE](#)