FRAMEWORK #80

Operational Amortization Window

DEFINITION

The period over which repatriation's operational investments — staff, tooling, facilities — must amortize before the move nets positive.

FRAMEWORK FLOW

01

The Condition

A repatriation decision is approved against a forecast — a Break-Even Month often modeled in the 9-12 month range for stable workloads, and a 5-year TCO curve — before any capital has actually been spent.

02

The Boundary

The Amortization Window is the real, calendar-measured period between capital outlay and the month realized savings actually catch the projection — a distinct thing from the Break-Even Month, which is only ever a forecast.

03

Failure State

Elasticity forfeited, residue left cloud-billed, and stranded capacity all compound inside this window — each silently pushing the realized crossover later than the forecast said, while Persistence Bias keeps anyone from checking.

04

Consequence

The organization that budgeted for a month 9-12 breakeven is still carrying both cost structures well past it, with no review ever confirming whether the window actually closed or just moved.

Failure State: The Forecast Stops Being Checked

`Break-Even Month set as a forecast at approval time` →

`Capital outlay begins; on-prem cost structure is now fixed` →

`Elasticity, residue, and stranded capacity compound against the forecast` →

`Realized savings lag the projected crossover` → `Nobody re-checks whether the window actually closed`

THE DIAGNOSTIC SIGNAL

FORECAST VS. REALIZED

Ask whether anyone has compared actual monthly cost delta against the original Break-Even Month forecast since the move happened. Most repatriation programs check this once, at approval, and never again.

WINDOW COMPOSITION

Ask what's compounding inside the window. Structural dependency residue and Severe stranded capacity both push the realized crossover later than the forecast one — independent of whether the original math was right.

TRIGGER CONDITION

The window only becomes visible as a problem once enough calendar time has passed to compare against the forecast month. Early on, every timeline still looks on track by default.

REMEDIATION SHAPE

Track realized cost delta monthly against the original Break-Even Month — not just at decision time — and re-run the Repatriation Timing Window output if elasticity, residue, or capacity findings change after the move.

ARCHITECTURAL RELATIONSHIPS

#76

Repatriation Elasticity Gap

RELATED | MODERATE

The Elasticity Gap is a cost the Amortization Window has to absorb — the fixed-capacity delta compounds every month until the on-prem investment normalizes.

#77

Cloud Dependency Residue

RELATED | MODERATE

Structural residue extends the Amortization Window directly — the on-prem investment can't normalize against savings that a still-cloud-billed dependency layer keeps eroding.

#78

Stranded Capacity Risk

RELATED | MODERATE

Stranded capacity is dead weight inside the Amortization Window — idle hardware still has to be paid down on the same clock as capacity that's actually earning its keep.

#79

Economic Persistence Bias

RELATED | MODERATE

Persistence Bias is what makes the Amortization Window feel longer than it actually is — the same inertia that discounts the case for moving discounts the payoff once the window is already running.

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FRAMEWORK HOME

The Cloud Repatriation Economics Engine's Economic Viability pillar computes the forecast this window is measured against — Break-Even Month, 5-year TCO curve, Economic Inversion Point — plus the Repatriation Timing Window output. What the engine can't do is re-run itself against realized numbers after the move; that reconciliation is this framework's job, not the tool's.

"A Break-Even Month is a forecast. The Operational Amortization Window is what actually happened to it — the only one of these five numbers that gets checked against a calendar instead of a spreadsheet."