

ANALYZE

Advanced

60 MIN

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Build a rolling 12-month sales forecast with ARIMA in Excel.

Feed monthly sales history to Copilot and have it build a real ARIMA forecasting model instead of a simple trendline.

MICROSOFT 365

Excel

WORKS WITH

Copilot

Business Outcome

A statistically grounded revenue forecast leadership can plan hiring and inventory against.

Workflow Steps

Step 1: Prepare the monthly history

Excel

Lay out at least 24-36 months of monthly sales in a single clean column with dates, no gaps or merged cells — ARIMA needs a continuous series to fit properly.

Step 2: Ask Copilot to build the model

Copilot in Excel

Use Excel's Python integration through Copilot instead of a manual trendline, so the model accounts for seasonality and autocorrelation.

PROMPT

Using the monthly sales data in column B, write a Python ARIMA model in this sheet to forecast the next 6 months. Show the model's order parameters, plot actuals vs. forecast, and flag if the series isn't stationary.

Step 3: Sanity-check the model choice

Copilot

Ask Copilot to explain why it picked those ARIMA parameters (p, d, q) and what the confidence interval looks like – a forecast without an explainable basis isn't one you can defend in a planning meeting.

Step 4: Chart and share

Excel

Turn the forecast into a chart with the confidence band shown, and note the model's assumptions directly on the sheet so anyone revisiting it in three months knows what changed if actuals diverge.

✓ Check the work

- Confirm the historical data has no missing months before trusting the fit.
- Ask Copilot to explain the ARIMA order in plain language – if it can't, don't ship the forecast.
- Compare the model's backtested predictions against the last 3 known months before extending it forward.



Expected Outcome

A 6-month rolling forecast chart backed by an ARIMA model, with the underlying Python code visible in the sheet.

Want help rolling this out across your team? **Go to Liminals.Tech** ■