Market Timing, Investment, and Risk Management

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Abstract

Firms face uncertain financing conditions, which can sometimes be severely restricted, as exemplified by the recent financial crisis. We analyze firms’ precautionary cash hoarding and market timing responses in a tractable dynamic corporate financial management model, in which external financing conditions are stochastic. Firms value financial slack and build cash reserves to mitigate financial constraints. Temporary favorable financing conditions induce them to rationally time equity issues. We show that market timing responses can result in investment that is decreasing in financial slack and lead a financially constrained firm to gamble. Quantitatively, we find that firms’ optimal responses to the threat of a financial crisis can significantly smooth out the impact of financing shocks on investment, the marginal values of cash, and the risk premium over time. This smoothing effect can help separate financing shocks from productivity shocks empirically.

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1. Introduction

The financial crisis of 2008 and the European debt crisis of 2011 are fresh reminders that corporations at times face substantial uncertainties about their external financing conditions. Recent studies have documented dramatic changes in firms’ financing and investment behaviors during these crises. For example, Ivashina and Scharfstein (2010) document aggressive credit line drawdowns by firms for precautionary reasons. Campello, Graham, and Harvey (2010) and Campello, Giambona, Graham, and Harvey (2010) show that more financially constrained firms planned deeper cuts in investment and spending, burned more cash, drew more credit from banks, and also engaged in more asset sales in the crisis.

It is plausible that rational firms will adapt to fluctuations in financing conditions by hoarding more cash, postponing or bringing forward investments, timing favorable market conditions to raise more funds than they really need, or hedging against unfavorable market conditions. Yet, there is very little theoretical research that tries to answer the following related questions. How should firms change their financing, investment, and risk management policies during a period of severe financial constraints? How should firms behave when facing the threat of a future financial crisis? What are the overall real effects of changes in financing conditions when firms can prepare for future shocks through cash and risk management policies?

We address these questions in a quantitative model of corporate investment, financing, and risk management for firms facing stochastic financing conditions. Our model builds on the recent dynamic frameworks by Decamps, Mariotti, Rochet, and Villeneuve (2011) and Bolton, Chen, and Wang (2011) (henceforth BCW)), mainly by adding stochastic financing opportunities. Thus, the five main building blocks of the model are: 1) a constant-returns-to-scale production function with independently and identically distributed (i.i.d.) productivity shocks and convex capital adjustment costs as in Hayashi (1982); 2) stochastic external financing costs; 3) constant cash carry costs; 4) risk premia for productivity and financing shocks; and 5) dynamic hedging opportunities. The firm optimally manages its cash reserves, financing, and payout decisions, by following a state-dependent optimal double-
barrier (issuance and payout) policy, combined with continuous adjustments of investment, cash accumulation, and hedging between the issuance and endogenous payout barriers.

The main results of our analysis are as follows. First, during a financial crisis, in an effort to avoid having to incur extremely high external financing costs, the firm optimally cuts back on investment, delays payout, and if needed engages in asset sales, even if the productivity of its capital remains unaffected. This is especially true when the firm enters the crisis with low cash reserves. These predictions are consistent with the stylized facts about firm behavior during the recent financial crisis.

Second, during favorable market conditions (a period of low external financing costs), the firm may time the market and issue equity even when there is no immediate need for external funds. Such behavior is consistent with the findings in Baker and Wurgler (2002), DeAngelo, DeAngelo, and Stulz (2010), Fama and French (2005), and Huang and Ritter (2009). We thus explain firms’ investment, saving, and financing decisions through a combination of stochastic variations in the supply of external financing and firms’ precautionary demand for liquidity. We also show that due to market timing, investment can be decreasing in the firm’s cash reserves. The reason is that the market timing option is more valuable when the firm’s cash holdings are low, and when the firm faces fixed external financing costs the market timing option can cause firm value to become locally convex in financial slack. This local convexity also implies that it may be optimal for the firm to engage in speculation rather than hedging so as to increase the value of the market timing option.

Third, along with the timing of equity issues by firms with low cash holdings, our model also predicts the timing of cash payouts and stock repurchases by firms with high cash holdings. Just as firms with low cash holdings seek to take advantage of low costs of external financing to raise more funds, firms with high cash holdings will be inclined to disburse their cash through stock repurchases when financing conditions improve. This result is consistent with the finding of Dittmar and Dittmar (2008) that aggregate equity issuances and stock repurchases are positively correlated. They point out that the finding that increases in stock repurchases tend to follow increases in stock market valuations contradicts the
received wisdom that firms engage in stock repurchases because of the belief that their shares are undervalued. Our model provides a simple and plausible explanation for their finding: improving financing conditions raise stock prices and lower the precautionary demand for cash buffers, which in turn can result in more stock repurchases by cash-rich firms.

Fourth, we show that a greater likelihood of deteriorating financing conditions provides strong cash hoarding incentives. With a higher probability of a crisis, firms invest more conservatively, issue equity sooner and delay payouts to shareholders more in good times. Consequently, firms’ cash inventories rise, investment becomes less sensitive to changes in cash holdings, and the ex-post impact of financing shocks on investment is much weaker. This effect is quantitatively significant. When we raise the probability of a financial crisis within a year from 1% to 10%, the average reduction in the firm’s investment-to-capital ratio following the realization of the shock drops from 6.59% to 1.78%. These predictions are consistent with the evidence on corporate investment and saving policies of US non-financial firms prior to the financial crisis of 2007-2008 reported in Bates, Kahle and Stulz (2009). Our results provide important new insights on the transmission mechanism of financial shocks to the real sector and help us interpret empirical measures of the real effects of financing shocks.

Fifth, due to the presence of aggregate financing shocks, the firm’s risk premium in our model has two components: a productivity risk premium and a financing risk premium. Both risk premia change substantially with the firm’s cash holdings, especially when external financing conditions are poor. Quantitatively, the financing risk premium is significant for firms with low cash holdings, especially in a financial crisis, or when the probability of a financial crisis is high. However, due to firms’ precautionary savings the financing risk premium is low for the majority of firms, as they are able to avoid falling into a ‘low cash trap.’

Our analysis reveals that first-generation static models of financial constraints are inadequate to explain corporate investment policy and how investment responds to changing financing opportunities. Static models, such as Fazzari, Hubbard, and Petersen (1988), Froot, Scharfstein, and Stein (1993), and Kaplan and Zingales (1997), cannot explain the
effects of market timing on corporate investment, since these effects cannot be captured by a permanent *exogenous* change in the cost of external financing or, an *exogenous* change in the firm’s cash holdings in the static setting. Market timing effects can only appear when there is a *finitely-lived window of opportunity* of getting access to cheaper equity financing. More recent dynamic models of investment with financial constraints include Gomes (2001), Hennessy and Whited (2005, 2007), Riddick and Whited (2009), and Bolton, Chen, and Wang (2011), among others. However, all these models assume that financing conditions are time-invariant.

Our work is also related to two other sets of dynamic models of financing. First, DeMarzo, Fishman, He, and Wang (2011) develop a dynamic contracting model of corporate investment and financing with managerial agency, by building on Bolton and Scharfstein (1990) and using the dynamic contracting framework of DeMarzo and Sannikov (2006) and DeMarzo and Fishman (2007b).\(^1\) These models derive optimal dynamic contracts and corporate investment with capital adjustment costs. Second, Rampini and Viswanathan (2010, 2011) develop dynamic models of collateralized financing, in which the firm has access to complete markets, but is subject to endogenous collateral constraints induced by limited enforcement.

Our paper is one of the first dynamic models of corporate investment with stochastic financing conditions. We echo the view expressed in Baker (2010) that *equity supply effects* (in favorable equity markets) are important for corporate finance. While we treat changes in financing conditions as exogenous in this paper, the cause of these variations could be changes in financial intermediation costs, changes in investors’ risk attitudes, changes in market sentiment, or changes in aggregate uncertainty and information asymmetry. Stein (1996) develops a static model of market timing, and Baker, Stein, and Wurgler (2003) empirically test this model.\(^2\) To some extent, our model can be viewed as a dynamic formulation of Stein (1996), where a rational manager behaves in the interest of existing shareholders in

\(^{1}\)DeMarzo and Fishman (2007a) study optimal investment dynamics with managerial agency in a discrete-time setting.

\(^{2}\)Using a panel of international data, Birru (2012) documents that market-wide mispricing can mitigate under-investment through its effect on the cost of capital, and links market-wide mispricing to the macroeconomy.
the face of a market that is subject to potentially irrational changes of investor sentiment. The manager then simply times the market optimally and issues equity when financing conditions are favorable. What is more, markets then tend to under-react to the manager’s timing behavior, causing favorable financing conditions to persist as in our model.

Finally, in contemporaneous work, Hugonnier, Malamud, and Morellec (2011) also develop a dynamic model with stochastic financing conditions. They model investment as a growth option, while we model investment as in Hayashi’s \( q \)-theory framework. In addition, they model stochastic financing opportunities via Poisson arrival of financing terms, which the firm has to decide instantaneously whether or not to accept. In other words, the duration of the financing opportunity in their model is instantaneous. In our model, the finite duration of financing states is important for generating market timing. The two papers share the same overall focus but differ significantly in their modeling approaches, thus complementing each other.

2. The Model

We consider a financially constrained firm facing stochastic investment and external financing conditions. Specifically, we assume that the firm can be in one of two states of the world, denoted by \( s_t = 1, 2 \). In each state, the firm faces potentially different financing and investment opportunities. The state switches from 1 to 2 (or from 2 to 1) over a short time interval \( \Delta \) with a constant probability \( \zeta_1 \Delta \) (or \( \zeta_2 \Delta ) \).\(^3\)

2.1. Production Technology

The firm employs capital and cash as the only factors of production. We normalize the price of capital to one and denote by \( K \) and \( I \) respectively the firm’s capital stock and gross investment. As is standard in capital accumulation models, the capital stock \( K \) evolves

\(^3\)We generalize the setup to \( n \geq 2 \) states in Appendix A.
according to:

\[ dK_t = (I_t - \delta K_t) \, dt, \quad t \geq 0, \quad (1) \]

where \( \delta \geq 0 \) is the rate of depreciation.

The firm’s operating revenue is proportional to its capital stock \( K_t \), and is given by \( K_t dA_t \), where \( dA_t \) is the firm’s productivity shock over time increment \( dt \). We assume that

\[ dA_t = \mu(s_t) \, dt + \sigma(s_t) \, dZ_t^A, \quad (2) \]

where, \( Z_t^A \) is a standard Brownian motion, and \( \mu(s) \equiv \mu_s \) and \( \sigma(s) \equiv \sigma_s \) denote the drift and volatility in state \( s \). The firm’s operating profit \( dY_t \) over time increment \( dt \) is then given by:

\[ dY_t = K_t dA_t - I_t \, dt - \Gamma(I_t, K_t, s_t) \, dt, \quad t \geq 0, \quad (3) \]

where \( K_t dA_t \) is the firm’s operating revenue, \( I_t \, dt \) is the investment cost over time \( dt \) and \( \Gamma(I_t, K_t, s_t) \, dt \) is the additional adjustment cost that the firm incurs in the investment process.

Following the neoclassical investment literature (Hayashi, 1982), we assume that the firm’s adjustment cost is homogeneous of degree one in \( I \) and \( K \). In other words, the adjustment cost takes the homogeneous form \( \Gamma(I, K, s) = g_s(i)K \), where \( i \) is the firm’s investment capital ratio \( (i = I/K) \), and \( g_s(i) \) is a state-dependent function that is convex in \( i \). For notational convenience we use the notation \( x_s \) to denote a state-dependent variable \( x(s) \) whenever there is no ambiguity. We also assume that \( g_s(i) \) is quadratic:

\[ g_s(i) = \frac{\theta_s(i - \nu_s)^2}{2}, \quad (4) \]

where \( \theta_s \) is the adjustment cost parameter and \( \nu_s \) is a constant parameter.\footnote{In the literature, common choices of \( \nu_s \) are either zero or the rate of depreciation \( \delta \). While the former choice implies zero adjustment cost for zero gross investment, the latter choice implies a zero adjustment cost when net investment is zero.} These assumptions make the analysis more tractable and our main results do not depend on the specific functional form of \( g_s(i) \) assumed here. Note that our model allows for state-dependent ad-
justment costs of investment. For example, in bad times assets are often sold at a deep
discount (see Shleifer and Vishny, 1992; Acharya and Viswanathan, 2011), which can be
captured in this model by making $\theta_s$ large when financing conditions are tough.

Finally, the firm can liquidate its assets at any time and obtain a liquidation value $L_t$
that is also proportional to the firm’s capital stock $K_t$. We can also let the liquidation value
$L_t = l_s K_t$ depend on the state $s_t$ (where $l_s$ denotes the recovery value per unit of capital in
state $s$).

2.2. *Stochastic Financing Opportunities*

The firm may choose to raise external equity financing at any point in time. \(^5\) When
doing so, it incurs a fixed as well as a variable cost of issuing stock. The fixed cost is
given by $\phi_s K$, where $\phi_s$ is the fixed cost parameter in state $s$. We take the fixed cost to
be proportional to the firm’s capital stock $K$, as this ensures that the firm does not *grow
out of its fixed costs of issuing equity*. This assumption is also analytically convenient, as it
preserves the homogeneity of the model in the firm’s capital stock $K$. After paying the fixed
cost $\phi_s K$ the firm incurs a variable (state dependent) cost $\gamma_s > 0$ for each incremental dollar
it raises.

We denote by:

1. $H$ – the process for the firm’s cumulative external financing (so that $dH_t$ denotes the
   net proceeds from external financing over time $dt$);

2. $X$ – the firm’s cumulative issuance costs (so that $dX_t$ denotes the financing costs to
   raise net proceeds $dH_t$ from external financing);

3. $U$ – the firm’s cumulative non-decreasing payout process to shareholders (so that $dU_t$
   is the payout over time $dt$).

\(^5\)For simplicity, we only consider external equity financing as the source of external funds for the firm. We leave the generalization to include corporate debt issues for future research.
The financing cost to raise net proceeds $dH_t$ under our assumptions is given by: $dX_t = \phi_{s_t} K_t 1(dH_t > 0) + \gamma_{s_t} dH_t$. If the firm runs out of cash ($W_t = 0$), it needs to raise external funds to continue operating, or its assets will be liquidated. If the firm chooses to raise new external funds to continue operating, it must pay the financing costs specified above. The firm may prefer liquidation if the cost of financing is too high relative to the continuation value (e.g. when $\mu$ is low). We denote by $\tau$ the firm’s stochastic liquidation time.

Distributing cash to shareholders may take the form of a special dividend or a share repurchase. The benefit of a payout is that shareholders can invest the proceeds at the market rate of return and avoid paying a carry cost on the firm’s retained cash holdings. We denote the unit cost of carrying cash inside the firm by $\lambda dt \geq 0$.

We can then write the dynamics for the firm’s cash $W_t$ as follows:

$$dW_t = K_t dA_t - [I_t + \Gamma(I_t, K_t, s_t)] dt + (r(s_t) - \lambda) W_t dt + dH_t - dU_t,$$

where $r(s) \equiv r_s$ is the risk-free interest rate in state $s$. The first term is the firm’s cash flow from operations $dY_t$ given in (3), the second term is the return on $W_t$ (net of the carry cost $\lambda$), the third term $dH_t$ are the net proceeds from external financing, and the last term $dU_t$ is the payout to investors. Note that (5) is a general financial accounting equation, where $dH_t$ and $dU_t$ are endogenously determined by the firm.

The homogeneity assumptions embedded in the production technology, the adjustment cost, and the financing costs allow us to deliver our key results in a parsimonious and analytically tractable framework. Adjustment costs may not always be convex and the

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6We cannot distinguish between a special dividend and a share repurchase, as we do not model taxes. Note, however, that a commitment to regular dividend payments is suboptimal in our model. We also exclude any fixed or variable payout costs so as not to overburden the model.

7The cost of carrying cash may arise from an agency problem or from tax distortions. Cash retentions are tax disadvantaged because the associated tax rates generally exceed those on interest income (Graham, 2000). Since there is a cost $\lambda$ of hoarding cash the firm may find it optimal to distribute cash back to shareholders when its cash inventory grows too large. If $\lambda = 0$ the firm has no incentives to pay out cash since keeping cash inside the firm does not have any disadvantages, but still has the benefit of relaxing financial constraints. We could also imagine that there are settings in which $\lambda \leq 0$. For example, if the firm may have better investment opportunities than investors. We do not explore this case in this paper as we are interested in a trade-off model for cash holdings. We could also let the cash carry cost vary with the state of nature: $\lambda(s) \equiv \lambda_s$, but for the sake of brevity we do not pursue this generalization in this article.
production technology may exhibit long-run decreasing returns to scale in practice, but these functional forms substantially complicate the formal analysis.\textsuperscript{8} As will become clear below, the homogeneity of our model in $W$ and $K$ allows us to simplify the analysis of the firm’s optimization problem.

2.3. Systematic Risk and the Pricing of Risk

There are two different sources of systematic risk in our model: 1) a small and continuous diffusion shock, and 2) a large discrete shock when the economy switches from one state to another. The diffusion shock in any given state $s$ may be correlated with the aggregate market, and we denote the correlation coefficient by $\rho(s_t) \equiv \rho_s$. The discrete shock can affect the firm’s productivity and/or its external financing costs.

How are these sources of systematic risk priced? Our model can allow for either risk-neutral or risk-averse investors. If investors are risk neutral, then the prices of risk are zero and the physical probability distribution coincides with the risk-neutral probability distribution. If investors are risk averse, we need to distinguish between physical and risk-neutral measures. We do so as follows.

For the diffusion risk, we assume that there is a constant market price of risk $\eta_s$ in each state $s$. The firm’s risk adjusted productivity shock (under the risk-neutral probability measure $Q$) is then given by

$$dA_t = \hat{\mu}(s_t) \, dt + \sigma(s_t) \, d\hat{Z}_t^A,$$

where the mean of productivity shock accounts for the firm’s exposure to the diffusion risk:

$$\hat{\mu}(s_t) \equiv \hat{\mu}_s = \mu_s - \rho_s \eta_s \sigma_s,$$

and $\hat{Z}_t^A$ is a standard Brownian motion under the risk-neutral probability measure $Q$.$^9$

\textsuperscript{8}See Riddick and Whited (2009) for an intertemporal model of a financially constrained firm with decreasing returns to scale.

\textsuperscript{9}In Appendix A, we provide a more detailed discussion of systematic risk premia. The key observation
A risk-averse investor will also require a risk premium to compensate for the discrete risk of the economy switching states. We capture this risk premium through the wedge between the transition intensity under the physical probability measure and the transition intensity under the risk-neutral probability measure $Q$. Let $\hat{\zeta}_1$ and $\hat{\zeta}_2$ denote the transition intensities under the risk-neutral measure from state 1 to state 2 and from state 2 to state 1, respectively. The risk-neutral intensities are then related to their physical intensities $\zeta_1$ and $\zeta_2$ as follows:

$$\hat{\zeta}_1 = e^{\kappa_1} \zeta_1, \quad \text{and} \quad \hat{\zeta}_2 = e^{\kappa_2} \zeta_2,$$

(8)

where the parameters $\kappa_1$ and $\kappa_2$ capture the risk premium required by a risk-averse investor for the exposure to the discrete risk of state switching. A positive $\kappa_s$ implies that $\hat{\zeta}_s > \zeta_s$, so that the transition intensity is higher under the risk-neutral probability measure than under the physical measure. As we show in the appendix, $\kappa_s$ is positive in one state and negative in the other. Intuitively, this reflects the idea that a risk-averse investor captures the risk premium associated with a change in the state $s$ by making an upward adjustment of the risk-neutral transition intensity from the good to the bad state (with $\kappa_s > 0$) and a downward adjustment of the risk-neutral transition intensity from the bad to the good state (with $\kappa_s < 0$). In sum, it is as if a risk-averse investor were uniformly more ‘pessimistic’ than a risk-neutral investor: she thinks ‘good times’ are likely to be shorter and ‘bad times’ longer.

2.4. Firm Optimality

The firm chooses its investment $I$, cumulative payout policy $U$, cumulative external financing $H$, and liquidation time $\tau$ to maximize firm value defined as follows (under the risk-neutral measure):

$$E^Q_0 \left[ \int_0^\tau e^{\int_0^u r_u du} (dU_t - dH_t - dX_t) + e^{\int_0^u r_u du} (L_\tau + W_\tau) \right],$$

(9)

is that the adjustment from the physical to the risk-neutral probability measure reflects a representative risk-averse investor’s stochastic discount factor (SDF) in a dynamic asset-pricing model.
where \( r_u \) denotes the interest rate at time \( u \). The first term is the discounted value of payouts to shareholders, and the second term is the discounted value upon liquidation. Note that optimality may imply that the firm never liquidates. In that case, we simply have \( \tau = \infty \).

**3. Model Solution**

Given that the firm faces external financing costs \((\phi_s > 0, \gamma_s \geq 0)\), its value depends on both its capital stock \( K \) and its cash holdings \( W \). Thus, let \( P(K, W, s) \) denote the value of the firm in state \( s \). Given that the firm incurs a carry cost \( \lambda \) on its stock of cash one would expect that it will choose to pay out some of its cash once its stock grows large. Accordingly, let \( \overline{W}_s \) denote the (upper) payout boundary. Similarly, if the firm’s cash holdings are low, it may choose to issue equity. We therefore let \( \underline{W}_s \) denote the (lower) issuance boundary.

**The interior regions:** \( W \in (\underline{W}_s, \overline{W}_s) \) for \( s = 1, 2 \). When a firm’s cash holdings \( W \) are in the interior regions, \( P(K, W, s) \) satisfies the following system of Hamilton-Jacobi-Bellman (HJB) equations:

\[
\begin{align*}
    r_s P(K, W, s) &= \max_I \left[ (r_s - \lambda)W + \hat{\mu}_s K - I - \Gamma (I, K, s) \right] P_W(K, W, s) + \frac{\sigma_s^2 K^2}{2} P_{WW}(K, W, s) \\
    &+ (I - \delta K) P_K(K, W, s) + \hat{\zeta}_s \left( P(K, W, s^-) - P(K, W, s) \right). \quad (10)
\end{align*}
\]

The first and the second terms on the right side of the HJB equation (10) represent the effects of the expected change in the firm’s cash holdings \( W \), and volatility of \( W \), on firm value. Note first that the firm’s cash grows at the net return \((r_s - \lambda)\) and is augmented by the firm’s expected cash flow from operations (under the risk-neutral measure) \( \hat{\mu}_s K \) minus the firm’s capital expenditure \((I + \Gamma (I, K, s))\). Second, the firm’s cash stock is volatile only to the extent that cash flows from operations are volatile, and the volatility of the firm’s revenues is proportional to the firm’s size as measured by its capital stock \( K \). The third term represents the effect of capital stock changes on firm value, and the last term is the expected change of firm value when the state changes from \( s \) to \( s^- \).
Since firm value is homogeneous of degree one in \( W \) and \( K \) in each state, we can write \( P(K, W, s) = p_s(w)K \). Substituting for this expression into (10) and simplifying, we obtain the following system of ordinary differential equations (ODE) for \( p_s(w) \):

\[
    r_s p_s(w) = \max_i [ (r_s - \lambda) w + \hat{\mu}_s - i_s - g_s(i_s) ] p'_s(w) + \frac{\sigma^2}{2} p''_s(w) + (i_s - \delta) (p_s(w) - wp'_s(w)) + \hat{\varsigma}_s (p_s(w) - p(w)) .
\]

The first-order condition (FOC) for the investment-capital ratio \( i_s(w) \) is then given by:

\[
    i_s(w) = \frac{1}{\theta_s} \left( \frac{p_s(w)}{p'_s(w)} - w - 1 \right) + \nu_s, \tag{12}
\]

where \( p'_s(w) = P_W(K, W, s) \) is the marginal value of cash in state \( s \).

The payout boundary \( \overline{W}_s \) and the payout region \( W \geq \overline{W}_s \). The firm starts paying out cash when the marginal value of cash held by the firm is less than the marginal value of cash held by shareholders. The payout boundary \( \overline{w}_s = \overline{W}_s/K \) thus satisfies the following value matching condition:

\[
    p'_s(\overline{w}_s) = 1. \tag{13}
\]

When the firm chooses to pay out, the marginal value of cash \( p'(w) \) must be one. Otherwise, the firm can always do better by changing \( \overline{w}_s \). Moreover, payout optimality implies that the following super contact condition (Dumas, 1991) holds:

\[
    p''_s(\overline{w}_s) = 0. \tag{14}
\]

We specify next the value function outside the payout boundary. If the marginal value of cash in state \( s \) is such that \( p'_s(w) < 1 \) the firm is better off reducing its cash holdings to \( \overline{w}_s \) by making a lump-sum payout. Therefore, we have

\[
    p_s(w) = p_s(\overline{w}_s) + (w - \overline{w}_s), \quad w > \overline{w}_s. \tag{15}
\]
This situation could arise when the firm starts off with too much cash or when the firm’s cash holdings in state $s$ are such that $w_s > \bar{w}_s$ and the firm suddenly moves from state $s$ into state $s^-$. 

The equity issuance boundary $W_s$ and region ($W \leq W_s$). Similarly, we must specify the value function outside the issuance boundary. Indeed, it is possible that the firm could suddenly transition from the state $s^-$ with the financing boundary $w_{s^-}$ into the other state $s$ with a higher financing boundary ($w_s > w_{s^-}$) and that its cash holdings lie between the two lower financing boundaries ($w_{s^-} < w < w_s$). What happens then?

Basically, if the firm is sufficiently valuable it then chooses to raise external funds through an equity issue, so as to bring its cash stock back into the interior region. But how much should the firm raise in this situation? Let $M_s$ denote the firm’s cash level after equity issuance, which we refer to as the target level, and let $m_s = M_s/K$. Similarly, let $W_s$ denote the boundary for equity issuance in state $s$ and $w_s = W_s/K$. Firm value per unit of capital in state $s$, $p_s(w)$, when $w \leq w_s$ then satisfies

$$p_s(w) = p_s(m_s) - \phi_s - (1 + \gamma_s)(m_s - w), \quad w \leq w_s. \quad (16)$$

We thus have the following value matching and smooth pasting conditions for $w_s$:

$$p_s(w_s) = p_s(m_s) - \phi_s - (1 + \gamma_s)(m_s - w_s), \quad (17)$$

$$p_s'(m_s) = 1 + \gamma_s. \quad (18)$$

With fixed issuance costs ($\phi_s > 0$), equity issuance will thus be lumpy. The firm first pays the issuance cost $\phi_s$ per unit of capital and then incurs the marginal cost $\gamma_s$ for each unit raised. Condition (17) states that firm value is continuous around the issuance boundary. Additionally, the firm optimally selects the target $m_s$ so that the marginal benefit of issuance $p_s'(m_s)$ is equal to the marginal cost $1 + \gamma_s$, which yields (18).

How does the firm determine its equity issuance boundary $w_s$? We use the following two-step procedure. First, suppose that the issuance boundary $w_s$ is interior ($w_s > 0$). Then,
the standard optimality condition implies that:

\[ p_s'(w_s) = 1 + \gamma_s. \]  \hfill (19)

Intuitively, if the firm chooses to issue equity before it runs out of cash, it must be the case that the marginal value of cash at the issuance boundary \( w_s > 0 \) is equal to the marginal issuance cost \( 1 + \gamma_s \). If condition (19) fails to hold, the firm will not issue equity until it exhausts its cash holdings, i.e. \( w_s = 0 \). In that case, the option value to tap equity markets earlier than absolutely necessary is valued at zero. Using the above two-step procedure, we characterize the optimal issuance boundary \( w_s \geq 0 \).

We also need to determine whether equity issuance or liquidation is optimal, as the firm always has the option to liquidate. Under our assumptions, the firm’s capital is productive and thus its going-concern value is higher than its liquidation value. Therefore, the firm never voluntarily liquidates itself before it runs out of cash.

However, when it runs out of cash, liquidation may be preferred if the alternative of accessing external financing is too costly. If the firm liquidates, we have

\[ p_s(0) = l_s. \]  \hfill (20)

The firm will prefer equity issuance to liquidation as long as the equilibrium value \( p_s(0) \) under external financing arrangement is greater than the liquidation value \( l_s \).

For our later discussion it is helpful to introduce the following concepts. First, enterprise value is often defined as firm value net of short-term liquid asset. This measure is meant to capture the value created from productive illiquid capital. In our model, it equals \( P(K, W, s) - W \). Second, we define average \( q \) as the ratio between enterprise value and its capital stock,

\[ q_s(w) = \frac{P(K, W, s) - W}{K} = p_s(w) - w. \]  \hfill (21)

Third, the sensitivity of average \( q \) to changes in cash holdings measures how much enterprise
value increases with an extra dollar of cash, and is given by

\[ q'_s(w) = p'_s(w) - 1. \] (22)

We also refer to \( q'_s(w) \) as the \textit{(net) marginal value of cash}. As \( w \) approaches the optimal payout boundary \( \bar{w}_s, w \to \bar{w}_s, q'_s(w) \to 0. \)

4. Quantitative Results

Having characterized the conditions that the solution to the firm’s dynamic optimization problem must satisfy, we can now illustrate the numerical solutions for given parameter choices of the model. We begin by motivating our choice of parameters and then illustrate the model’s solutions in the good and bad states of the world, respectively.

4.1. Parameter Choice and Calibration

In our choice of parameters, we select plausible numbers based on existing empirical evidence to the extent that it is available. For those parameters on which there is no empirical evidence we make an educated guess to reflect the situation we are seeking to capture in our model. Finally, there are a few parameters we do not allow to vary across the two states so as to better isolate the effects of changes in external financing conditions.

The capital liquidation value is set to \( l_G = 1.0 \) in state \( G \), in line with estimates provided by Hennessy and Whited (2007).\textsuperscript{10} In the bad state the capital liquidation value is set to \( l_B = 0.3 \) to reflect the severe costs of asset fire sales during a financial crisis, when few investors have sufficiently deep pockets or the risk appetite to acquire assets.\textsuperscript{11} The model solution will depend on these liquidation values only when the firm finds it optimal to liquidate instead of raising external funds.

\textsuperscript{10}They suggest an average value for \( l \) of 0.9, so that the liquidation value in the good state should be somewhat higher.

\textsuperscript{11}See Shleifer and Vishny (1992), Acharya and Viswanathan (2011), and Campello, Graham, and Harvey (2010).
We set the marginal cost of issuance in both states to be $\gamma = 6\%$ based on estimates reported in Altinkihc and Hansen (2000). We keep this parameter constant across the two states for simplicity and focus only on changes in the fixed cost of equity issuance to capture changes in the firm’s financing opportunities. The fixed cost of equity issuance in the good state is set at $\phi_G = 0.5\%$. In the benchmark model, this value implies that the average cost per unit of external financing raised in state $G$ is around 10%. This is in the ballpark with estimates for seasoned offers in Eckbo, Masulis and Norli (2007).\textsuperscript{12} As for the issuance costs in state $B$, we chose $\phi_B = 50\%$. There is no empirical study on which we can rely for the estimates of issuance costs in a financial crisis for the obvious reason that there are virtually no IPOs or SEOs in a crisis. Our choice for the parameter of $\phi_B$ is meant to reflect the fact that raising external financing becomes extremely costly in a financial crisis, and only firms that are desperate for cash are forced to raise new funds. We show that even with $\phi_B = 50\%$, firms that run out of cash in the crisis state still prefer raising equity to liquidation.

The transition intensity out of state $G$ is set at $\zeta_G = 0.1$, which implies an average duration of ten years for good times. The transition intensity out of state $B$ is $\zeta_B = 0.5$, with an implied average length of a financial crisis of two years. We choose the price of risk with respect to financing shocks in state $G$ to be $\kappa_G = 3$, which implies that the risk-adjusted transition intensity out of state $G$ is $\hat{\zeta}_G = e^{\kappa_G} \zeta_G = 0.3$. Due to symmetry, the risk-adjusted transition intensity out of state $B$ is then $\hat{\zeta}_B = e^{-\kappa_G} \zeta_B = 0.167$. These risk adjustments are clearly significant. While we take these risk adjustments as exogenous in this paper, they can be generated in general equilibrium when the same financing shocks also affect aggregate investment and output (see Chen 2010).

The other parameters remain the same in the two states: the risk-free rate is $r = 5\%$, the volatility of the productivity shock is $\sigma = 12\%$, the rate of depreciation of capital is $\delta = 15\%$, and the adjustment cost parameter $\nu$ is set to equal the depreciation rate, so that $\nu = \delta = 15\%$. We rely on the technology parameters estimated by Eberly, Rebelo, and Vincent (2009) for these parameter choices. The cash-carrying cost is set to $\lambda = 1.5\%$. While

\textsuperscript{12}Eckbo, Masulis and Norli (2007) report total costs of 6.09% for firm commitment offers, excluding the cost of the offer price discount and the value of Green Shoe options. They also report a negative average price reaction to an SEO announcement of -2.22%.
we do not take a firm stand on the precise interpretation of the cash-carrying cost, it can be due to either a tax disadvantage of cash or to agency frictions. Although in reality these parameter values clearly change with the state of nature, we keep them fixed in this model so as to isolate the effects of changes in external financing conditions. All the parameter values are annualized whenever applicable and summarized in Table 4.

Finally, we calibrate the expected productivity $\mu$ and the adjustment cost parameter $\theta$ to match the median cash-capital ratio and investment-capital ratio for U.S. public firms during the period from 1981-2010. For the median firm, the average cash-capital ratio is 0.29, and the average investment-capital ratio is 0.17. The details of the data construction are given in Appendix B. We then obtain $\mu = 22.7\%$ and $\theta = 1.8$, both of which are within the range of empirical estimates documented in previous studies (see for example Eberly, Rebelo, and Vincent (2010) and Whited (1992)).

4.2. Market Timing in Good Times

When the firm is in state $G$, it may enter the crisis state $B$ with probability $\zeta_G = 0.1$ per unit time. As the firm faces substantially higher external financing costs in state $B$, we show that the option to time the equity market in good times has significant value and generates rich implications for investment dynamics.

Figure 1 plots average $q$ and investment-capital ratio for state $G$ as well as their sensitivities with respect to the cash-capital ratio $w$. Panel A shows as expected that the average $q$ increases with $w$ and is relatively stable in state $G$. The optimal external financing boundary is $w_G = 0.027$. At this point, the firm still has sufficient cash to continue operating. Further deferring external financing would help the firm save on the time value of money for financing costs and also on subsequent cash carry costs. However, doing so would mean taking the risk that the favorable financing opportunities disappear and that the state of nature switches to the bad state when financing costs are much higher. The firm trades off these two margins and optimally exercises the equity issuance option by tapping securities markets when $w$ hits the lower barrier $w_G$. 

17
A. average q: \(q_G(w)\)

\[ \text{average } q: \quad q_G(w) \]

\[ \leftarrow w_G \quad \leftarrow m_G \quad \leftarrow \pi_G \]

B. net marginal value of cash: \(q'_G(w)\)

\[ \text{net marginal value of cash: } \quad q'_G(w) \]

\[ \leftarrow w_G \]

C. investment-capital ratio: \(i_G(w)\)

\[ \text{investment-capital ratio: } \quad i_G(w) \]

\[ \leftarrow w_G \]

D. investment-cash sensitivity: \(i'_G(w)\)

\[ \text{investment-cash sensitivity: } \quad i'_G(w) \]

\[ \leftarrow w_G \]

Figure 1: **Firm value and investment in the normal state, state G.**

Should the firm start in stage G with \(w \leq w_G\), or should its cash stock shrink to \(w_G\), it will raise fresh external funds of an amount \((m_G - w) \geq 0.128\) per unit of its capital stock. The lumpy size of the isse reflects the fact that it is efficient to economize on the fixed cost of issuance \(\phi_G\). Similarly, should the firm start in stage G with \(w \geq \bar{w}_G = 0.371\), or should its cash stock grow to \(\bar{w}_G\), it responds by paying out the *excess cash* \((w - \bar{w}_G)\) since the net marginal value of cash (that is the difference between the value of a dollar in the hands of the firm and the value of a dollar in the hands of investors) is less than or equal to zero for \(w \geq \bar{w}_G\): \(q'_G(w \mid w \geq \bar{w}_G) \leq 0\). See Panel B.

When firms face external financing costs, it is optimal for them to hoard cash for precautionary reasons. This is why firm value is increasing and concave in financial slack in most models of financially constrained firms. In our model, while the precautionary motive for hoarding cash is still a key reason why firms save, stochastic financing opportunities
introduce an additional motive for the firm to issue equity: timing equity markets in good times. This market timing option is more in the money near the equity issuance boundary, which causes firm value to become locally convex in $w$. In other words, the firm actually becomes endogenously risk-loving when $w$ is close to the lower barrier $w_G$.

Panel B clearly shows that firm value is not globally concave in $w$. For sufficiently high $w$, $w \geq 0.061$, $q_G(w)$ is concave. When the firm already has a lot of cash, the benefits from timing the market are outweighed by the cash carry costs it would incur, so that the financing timing option is out of the money. Corporate savings are then only driven by precautionary considerations, so that the firm behaves in a risk-averse manner. In contrast, for low values of $w$, $w \leq 0.061$, the firm is more concerned about the risk that financing costs may increase in the future, when the state switches to $B$. A firm with low cash holdings may want to issue equity while it still has access to relatively cheap financing opportunities, even before it runs out of cash.

Since the issuance boundary $w_G$ and the target cash balance $m_G$ are optimally chosen, the marginal values of cash at these two points must be equal:

$$q'_G(w_G) = q'_G(m_G) = \gamma_G. \tag{23}$$

The dash-dotted line in Panel B gives the (net) marginal cost of equity issuance at $w_G$ and $m_G$: $\gamma_G = 0.06$. Note that one immediate consequence of condition (23) is that $q_G(w)$ (or equivalently $p_G(w)$) is not globally concave in $w$, which in turn has implications for investment, as can be seen from the expression for the cash-sensitivity of investment $i'_s(w)$ obtained by differentiating the optimal investment policy $i_s(w)$ in (12) with respect to $w$:

$$i'_s(w) = -\frac{1}{\theta_s} \frac{p_s(w)p''_s(w)}{p'_s(w)^2}. \tag{24}$$

As (24) highlights, investment increases with $w$ if and only if firm value is concave in $w$. For $0.061 \leq w \leq 0.371$, $q_G(w)$ is concave and corporate investment increases with $w$. In contrast, in the region where $w \leq 0.061$, $q_G(w)$ is convex in $w$, which implies that investment decreases.
with \( w \), contrary to conventional wisdom. This surprising result is due to the interaction effect between stochastic external financing conditions and the fixed equity issuance costs.

Panels C and D of Figure 1 highlight this non-monotonicity of investment in cash. Our model is thus able to account for the seemingly paradoxical behavior that the prospect of higher financing costs in the future can cause investment to respond negatively to an increase in cash today. Notice also from Panel C that investment at the financing boundary \( w_G \) and the target \( m_G \) are almost the same. That is, in a situation of market timing, the firm holds onto the cash raised and leaves its investment outlays more or less unchanged. By combining (12) and the boundary conditions one can show that we must have

\[
 i_G(m_G) - i_G(w_G) = \frac{\phi G}{\theta(1 + \gamma)}, \tag{25}
\]

which is a small difference when the fixed cost of financing in the good state is low. This explains why most of the new cash raised in a market timing situation is hoarded.

Although there is considerable debate in the literature on corporate investment about the sensitivity of investment to cash flow (see e.g. Fazzari, Hubbard, and Petersen, 1988; Kaplan and Zingales, 1997), there is a general consensus that investment is monotonically increasing with cash reserves or financial slack. In this context, our result that, when firms face market-timing options the monotonic relation between investment and cash only holds in the precautionary saving region is noteworthy, for it points to the fragility of seemingly plausible but misleading predictions derived from simple static models about how corporate investment is affected by financial constraints proxied by the firm’s cash holdings.

Another example of a misleading proxy for financial constraints in our dynamic model relates to the ‘cash flow sensitivity of cash’ of Almeida, Campello, and Weisbach (2004). They find empirically that there tends to be a positive propensity for firms to save out of cash flow. They explain their finding within a static model, where firms save more for higher cash-flow realizations because an increase in realized cash flow is not related to a higher productivity shock and therefore does not lead to higher capital expenditures. In a dynamic model, Riddick and Whited (2009) make the opposite theoretical prediction and they find
empirical support for the possibility that the corporate propensity to save out of cash flow could be negative. They suggest that the contrasting findings of their analysis and Almeida, Campello, and Weisbach (2004) could be due to differences in the measurement of Tobin’s $q$. It is worth pointing out, however, that by our analysis above, a firm with low $w$ may not necessarily save more out of cash flow in favorable equity-market conditions, even when its investment opportunities remain unchanged.

Note finally that since productivity shocks are $i.i.d.$ in our model, this implies that the firms that tend to time equity markets are those with low cash holdings, as opposed to those having better investment opportunities.$^{13}$ In reality there is likely to be a mix of firms with low cash and/or high investment opportunities timing the market.

We turn next to the derivation of investment and firm value in bad times (state $B$) and compare these with those in good times (state $G$).

4.3. High Financing Costs in Bad Times

Figure 2 plots average $q$ and investment for both states, and their sensitivities with respect to $w$. As expected, average $q$ in state $G$ is higher than in state $B$. More remarkable is the fact that the difference between $q_G$ and $q_B$ is very large at for low levels of cash holdings $w$. Since productivity shocks in our calibration are the same in both states, this wedge in the average $q$ is solely due to the differences in financial constraints. An important implication of this observation for the empirical literature on corporate investment is that using average $q$ to control for investment opportunities and then testing for the presence of financing constraints by using variables such as cash-flow or cash is not generally valid. Panel C shows that investment in state $G$ is higher than in state $B$ for a given $w$, and again the difference is especially large when $w$ is low. Also, investment is much less variable with respect to $w$ in state $G$. It is almost as if investment were independent of $w$, which might

$^{13}$Time-varying investment opportunities may also play a significant role on cash accumulation and external financing. Eisfeldt and Muir (2011) empirically document that liquidity accumulation and external financing are positively correlated, and argue that a pure precautionary savings model can account for the empirical evidence.
Figure 2: Firm value and investment: Comparing states B vs G.

lead one to misleadingly conclude that the firm is essentially unconstrained in state G, if one
focuses only on the investment sensitivity to cash in state G.

In state B there is no market timing and hence the firm only issues equity when it runs
out of cash: \( w_B = 0 \). The amount of equity issuance is then \( m_B = 0.219 \), which is much
larger than \( m_G - w_G = 0.128 \), the amount of issuance in good times. The significant fixed
issuance cost \( \phi_B = 0.5 \) in bad times causes the firm to be more aggressive should it decide
to tap equity markets. The amount of issuance would of course be significantly decreased in
bad times if we were to specify a proportional issuance cost \( \gamma_B \) that is much higher than the
cost \( \gamma_G \) in good times. Note also that, since there is no market timing opportunity in state
B, firm value is globally concave in bad times. The firm’s precautionary motive is stronger
in bad times, so that we should expect to see more cash hoarding by the firm. This is indeed
reflected in the lower levels of investment and the higher payout boundary \( \bar{w}_B = 0.408 \),
which is significantly larger than $\bar{w}_G = 0.371$.

Panel B underscores the significant impact of financing constraints on the marginal value of cash in bad times, even though state $B$ is not permanent. In our model, when the firm runs out of cash ($w$ approaches 0) the net marginal value of cash $q'_B(w)$ reaches 23! Strikingly, the firm also engages in large asset sales and divestment to avoid incurring very costly external financing in bad times. Despite the fact that there is a steeply increasing marginal cost of asset sales, the firm chooses to sell up to 40% of its capital near $w = 0$ in bad times ($i_B(0) = -0.4$). Finally, unlike in good times, investment is monotonic in $w$ because the firm behaves in a risk-averse manner and $q_B(w)$ is globally concave in $w$.

Conceptually, the firm’s investment behavior and firm value are thus quite different in bad and good times. Quantitatively, the variation of the firm’s behavior in bad times dwarfs the variation of its behavior in good times. In particular, firm value at low levels of cash holdings is much more volatile in state $B$ than in state $G$, as can be seen from Panel A. This may be an important reason why stock price volatility tends to rise sharply in downturns.

4.4. The Stationary Distribution

Table 1 reports the conditional stationary distributions for $w$, $i(w)$, and $q'(w)$ in both states $G$ and $B$. Panel A shows that average cash holdings in state $B$ (0.312) are higher than in state $G$ (0.283) by about 10%. Understandably, firms on average hold more cash for precautionary reasons under unfavorable financial market conditions. Additionally, for a given percentile in the distribution, the cutoff wealth level is higher in state $B$ than in state $G$, meaning that the precautionary motive is unambiguously stronger in state $B$ than state $G$. Finally, it is striking that even at the bottom 1% of cash holdings the firm’s cash-capital ratio is still reasonably high, 0.088 for state $G$ and 0.114 for state $B$, which reflects the firm’s strong incentive to avoid running out of cash.

Panel B describes the conditional distribution of investment in states $G$ and $B$. The average investment-capital ratio $i(w)$ is lower in state $B$ (16.1%) than in state $G$ (17%), as cash is more valuable on average in state $B$ than in state $G$. Naturally, the under-investment
Table 1: Conditional Distributions of Cash-Capital Ratio $w$, Investment-Capital Ratio $i_s(w)$, and Net Marginal Value of Cash $q'_s(w)$

The conditional distributions of the investment-capital ratio and the net marginal value of cash are computed based on the conditional distributions of the cash-capital ratio in each state. All the parameter values are reported in Table 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>mean</th>
<th>1%</th>
<th>25%</th>
<th>50%</th>
<th>75%</th>
<th>99%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. cash-capital ratio: $w = W/K$</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$G$</td>
<td>0.283</td>
<td>0.088</td>
<td>0.240</td>
<td>0.300</td>
<td>0.341</td>
<td>0.370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$B$</td>
<td>0.312</td>
<td>0.114</td>
<td>0.266</td>
<td>0.325</td>
<td>0.371</td>
<td>0.408</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. investment-capital ratio: $i_s(w)$</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$G$</td>
<td>0.170</td>
<td>0.112</td>
<td>0.166</td>
<td>0.176</td>
<td>0.179</td>
<td>0.180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$B$</td>
<td>0.161</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>0.159</td>
<td>0.173</td>
<td>0.178</td>
<td>0.180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. net marginal value of cash: $q'_s(w)$</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$G$</td>
<td>0.015</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.005</td>
<td>0.019</td>
<td>0.111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$B$</td>
<td>0.031</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.008</td>
<td>0.028</td>
<td>0.351</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Problem is more significant for firms with low cash holdings in state $B$ than state $G$. For example, the firm that ranks at the bottom 1% in state $B$ invests only 0.3% of its capital stock, while the firm that ranks at the bottom 1% in state $G$ invests 11.2%, which is about 38 times the investment level for the firm that ranks at the bottom 1% in state $B$. Thus, firms substantially cut investment in order to decrease the likelihood of expensive external equity issuance in bad times. As soon as the firm piles up a moderate amount of cash, the under-investment wedge between the two states disappears. In fact, the top half of the distributions of investments in the two states are almost identical. This result is in sharp contrast to the large gap between the investment-capital ratios $i_G(w)$ and $i_B(w)$ in Panel C of Figure 2. It again illustrates the firm’s ability to smooth out the impact of financing constraints on investment.

Panel C reports the net marginal value of cash $q'(w)$ in states $G$ and $B$. As one might expect, the marginal value of cash is higher in state $B$ than in $G$ on average. Quantitatively,
the firm values a dollar of cash marginally at 1.015 in state $G$ and 1.03 in state $B$, implying a difference of 1.6 cents on a dollar between the two states, on average. Remarkably, firms are able to optimally manage their cash reserves in anticipation of unfavorable market conditions and therefore end up spending little time around the issuance boundary. For low cash holdings, the difference between the marginal value of cash in states $G$ and $B$ are larger. For example, at the 99th percentile, the firm values a dollar of cash marginally at 1.35 in state $B$ and 1.11 in state $G$, implying a difference of 22 cents on the dollar. This is a sizable difference, but still much less than the extreme cases we observe in Panel B of Figure 2.

4.5. Timing of Stock Repurchases

One can also see from Panel A in Figure 2 that the payout boundary in state $B$ is significantly larger than the payout boundary in state $G$: $\bar{w}_B = 0.408 > \bar{w}_G = 0.371$. This implies that a firm in state $B$ with cash holdings $w \in (0.371, 0.408)$ will *time* the favorable market conditions by paying out a lump sum amount of $(w - \bar{w}_G)$ as the state switches from $B$ to $G$. To the extent that the payout is performed through a stock repurchase (as is common for non-recurrent corporate payouts), our model thus provides a simple explanation for why stock repurchase waves tend to occur in favorable market conditions. Just as firms with low cash holdings seek to take advantage of low costs of external financing to raise more funds, firms with high cash holdings disburse their cash (through stock repurchases) when financing conditions improve.

This result provides a plausible explanation for Dittmar and Dittmar’s (2008) finding that equity issuance waves coincide with stock repurchase waves: as financing conditions improve, firms’ precautionary demand for cash is reduced, which translates into stock repurchases by cash-rich firms. Note that, our model does not predict repurchases when firms are undervalued, the standard explanation for repurchases in the literature. As Dittmar and Dittmar (2008) point out, this theory of stock repurchases is inconsistent with the evidence on repurchase waves. They further suggest that the market timing explanations by Loughran and Ritter (1995) and Baker and Wurgler (2000) are rejected by their evidence on
Figure 3: The effect of duration in state $G$ on $q_G(w)$ and $i_G(w)$. This figure plots the net marginal value of cash $q'_G(w)$ and investment-capital ratio $i_G(w)$ for three values of transition intensity, $\zeta_G = 0.01, 0.1, 0.5$. All other parameter values are given in Table 4.

repurchase waves. However, as our model shows, this is not the case. It is possible to have at the same time market timing through equity issues by cash-poor firms and market timing through repurchases by cash-rich firms. These two very different market timing behaviors can actually be driven by the same external financing conditions. The difference in behavior is only driven by differences in internal financing conditions, the amount of cash held by firms.

4.6. Comparative Analysis

The effect of changes in the duration of state $G$. How does the transition intensity $\zeta_G$ out of state $G$ (or, equivalently, the duration $1/\zeta_G$ of state $G$) affect firms’ market timing behavior? Consider first the case when state $G$ has a very high average duration of 100 years ($\zeta_G = 0.01$). Not surprisingly, in this case the firm taps equity markets only when it runs out of cash ($w_G = 0$). Firm value $q_G(w)$ is then globally concave in $w$ and $i_G(w)$ increases with $w$ everywhere. Essentially, the expected duration of favorable market conditions is so long that the market timing option has no value for the firm.
With a sufficiently high transition intensity $\zeta_G$, however, the firm may time the market by selecting an interior equity issuance boundary $w_G > 0$. The firm then equates the net marginal value of cash at $w_G$ with the proportional financing cost $\gamma$: $q_G'(w_G) = \gamma = 6\%$, as can be seen from Panel A. Since the net marginal value of cash at the target cash-capital ratio, $m_G$, also satisfies $q_G'(m_G) = 6\%$, it follows that for $w \in [w_G, m_G]$, the net marginal value of cash $q_G'(w)$ first increases with $w$ and then decreases, as Panel A again illustrates.

When $\zeta_G$ increases from 0.1 to 0.5, the firm taps the equity market even earlier ($w_G$ increases from 0.027 to 0.071) and holds onto cash longer (the payout boundary $w_G$ increases from 0.370 to 0.400) for fear that favorable financial market conditions may be disappearing faster. For sufficiently high $w$, the firm facing a shorter duration of favorable market conditions (higher $\zeta_G$) values cash more at the margin (higher $q_G(w)$) and invests less (lower $i_G(w)$). However, for sufficiently low $w$, the opposite holds because the firm with a shorter lived market timing option taps equity markets sooner, so that the net marginal value of cash is actually lower. Consequently and somewhat surprisingly, the under-investment problem is smaller for a firm with shorter-lived timing options and its investment is actually higher, as Panel B illustrates.

We note that both investment and the net marginal value of cash are highly nonlinear and non-monotonic in cash despite the fact that the real side of our model is time invariant. Our model, thus, suggests that the typical empirical practice of detecting financial constraints is conceptually flawed. Using average $q$ to control for investment opportunities and then testing for the presence of financing constraints by using variables such as cash-flow or cash (which is often done in the empirical literature) would be misleading and miss the rich dynamic adjustment involved to balance the firm’s market timing and precautionary saving motives.

The effect of changes in issuance cost $\phi_G$. Table 2 reports the effects of changes in the issuance cost parameter $\phi_G$ on the issuance boundary $w_G$, the issuance amount $(m_G - w_G)$, the average issuance cost, and the payout boundary $w_G$.

Consistent with basic economic intuition, when the issuance cost $\phi_G$ increases, the issuance boundary $w_G$ decreases, the payout boundary $w_G$ increases, the amount of issuance
Table 2: Fixed Cost of Equity Issuance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>$\phi_G$</th>
<th>$m_G - w_G$</th>
<th>average cost</th>
<th>$w_G$</th>
<th>$\bar{w}_G$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.060</td>
<td>0.092</td>
<td>0.357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>0.128</td>
<td>0.099</td>
<td>0.027</td>
<td>0.370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>0.153</td>
<td>0.126</td>
<td>0.013</td>
<td>0.375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>0.176</td>
<td>0.174</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>0.189</td>
<td>0.324</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.388</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>0.199</td>
<td>0.563</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.394</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$(m_G - w_G)$ increases. As expected, the more costly it is to issue equity, the less willing the firm is to issue and hence the lower the issuance boundary $w_G$, the longer the firm holds onto cash (higher payout boundary $\bar{w}_G$), and the more the firm issues when it taps the equity market. Note that while a firm with a larger fixed cost issues more, the average issuance cost is still higher. Without any fixed cost ($\phi_G = 0$), the firm issues just enough equity to stay away from its optimally chosen financing boundary $w_G = 0.092$, and the net marginal value of cash at issuance equals $q_G'(w) = \gamma = 6\%$, so that the average issuance cost is precisely 6%. In this extreme case, the marginal value of cash $q_G'(w)$ is monotonically decreasing in $w$, and firm value is again globally concave in $w$ even under market timing.

When the fixed cost of issuing equity is positive but not very high (consider $\phi_G = 1\%$), the firm times equity markets at the optimally chosen issuance boundary of $w_G = 0.013$, and issues the amount $(m_G - w_G) = 0.153$. Neither the marginal value of cash nor investment is then monotonic in $w$ in the region where $w \in [w_G, m_G]$. Moreover, higher fixed costs lead firms to choose larger issuance sizes $(m_G - w_G)$. Notice also that $w_G = 0$ when $\phi_G = 2\%$. This result shows that market timing does not necessarily lead to a violation of the pecking order between internal cash and external equity financing, and importantly that $w_G > 0$ is not necessary for the convexity of the value function. Finally, when the fixed cost of

\[14\] The case with low (close to zero) financing costs is empirically relevant. Baker and Wurgler (2000) claim that financing costs can be precipitously close to zero in market conditions that can be identified (in sample) by econometricians.
issuing equity is very high (not shown in the graph), the market timing effect is so weak that the precautionary motive dominates again, so that the net marginal value of cash is monotonically decreasing in $w$.

Having determined why the value function may be locally convex, we next explore the implications of convexity for investment. Recall from equation (24) that the sign of the investment-cash sensitivity $i_s''(w)$ depends on $p_s''(w)$. Thus, in the region where $p_G(w)$ is convex, investment is decreasing in cash holdings $w$.

There may be other ways of generating a negative correlation between changes in investment and cash holdings. First, when the firm moves from state $G$ to $B$, this not only results in a drop in investment, especially when $w$ is low (see Panel C in Figure 2), but also in an increase in the payout boundary, which may explain why firms during the recent financial crisis have increased their cash reserves and cut back on capital expenditures, as Acharya, Almeida, and Campello (2010) have documented. Second, in a model with persistent productivity shocks (as in Riddick and Whited, 2009), when expected future productivity falls, the firm will cut investment and the cash saved could also result in a rise in its cash holding.\footnote{This mechanism is captured in our model with the two states corresponding to two different values for the return on capital $\mu_s$.}

Is it possible to distinguish empirically between these two mechanisms? In the case of a negative productivity shock, the firm has no incentive to significantly raise its payout boundary. This prediction is opposite to the prediction related to a negative financing shock. Thus, following negative technology shocks we should not see firms aggressively increase their cash reserves. Actually, firms that already have high cash holdings may pay out cash after a negative productivity shock, but would hold on to even more cash after a negative financing shock.

Another empirical prediction which differentiates our model from other market timing models concerns the link between equity issuance and corporate investment. Our model predicts that underinvestment is substantially mitigated when the firm is close to the equity financing boundary. Moreover, the positive correlation between investment and equity issuance in our model is not driven by better investment opportunities (as the real side of
the economy is held constant across the two states); it is driven solely by the market timing and precautionary demand for cash.

5. Real Effects of Financing Shocks

Several empirical studies have attempted to measure the impact of financing shocks on corporate investment by exploiting the recent financial crisis as a natural experiment\textsuperscript{16}. A central challenge for any such study is to determine the degree to which the financial crisis has been anticipated by corporations. To the extent that corporations had forecasted an impending crisis, the real effects of the financing shock would already be present before the realization of the shock. And any real response after the shock has occurred would merely be a “residual response”. Our model is naturally suited to contrast the impact of more versus less anticipated financing shocks on investment and firm value.

The fact that shocks are anticipated does not necessarily mean that the firm knows exactly when a financial crisis will occur. It simply means that the firm (and everyone else in the economy) attaches a certain probability to the crisis. In our benchmark model the firm solves the value maximization problem in the good state, assuming that $\zeta_G = 0.1$. This is a scenario where a negative financing shock is thought to be quite likely, at least compared to a scenario where the firm assumes that $\zeta_G = 0.01$. What are the real effects of an increase in $\zeta_G$ from 0.01 to 0.1 both before and after the economy switches from state $G$ to state $B$? We explore this question below, while keeping the transition intensity in the bad state fixed at $\zeta_B = 0.5$.

A higher probability of a crisis will lead firms to respond by holding more cash, adopting more conservative investment policies, or raise external financing sooner, etc. As a result, the ex post impact of the financing shock on investment and other real decisions can appear to be small due to the fact that the shock has already been partially smoothed out through precautionary savings.

\textsuperscript{16}See Campello, Graham, and Harvey (2010), Campello, Giambona, Graham, and Harvey (2010), Duchin, Ozbas, and Sensoy (2010), and Almeida, Campello, Laranjeira, and Weisbenner (2012).
Figure 4: **Impact of Financing Shocks on Investment.** This figure illustrates the response in investment when the financing shock occurs. The two solid lines plot the investment-capital ratio in the case of more anticipated shocks, with $\zeta_G = 0.1$. The two dotted lines are for the case of less anticipated shocks, where $\zeta_G = 0.01$.

Figure 4 illustrates this idea. A comparison of the two scenarios with different probabilities of a negative financing shock demonstrates that the firm smooths out financing shocks in two ways. First, a heightened concern about the incidence of a financial crisis pushes firms to invest more conservatively in state $G$ most of the time. Second, a firm anticipating a higher probability of crisis also holds more cash on average, which further reduces the impact of financial shocks on investment.

Figure 4 illustrates the size of the investment response to a financing shock at the average cash holdings in state $G$. With a lower probability of a financing shock ($\zeta_G = 0.01$), the average cash holdings in state $G$ is 0.224, at which point investment drops by 4.03% following the shock. In contrast, with a higher probability ($\zeta_G = 0.1$), average cash holdings in state $G$ rise to 0.283, and the drop in investment reduces to 0.96% at this level of cash holding.

Importantly, this analysis reveals that a small observed response to a financing shock
does not imply that financing shocks are unimportant for the real economy. As Figure 4 illustrates, with a higher risk of a crisis, the firm responds by taking actions ahead of the realization of the shock. Thus, the firm substantially scales back its investment in state $G$ when the transition intensity $\zeta_G$ rises from 1% to 10%, which is a main contributor to the overall reduction in the firm’s investment response. The ex-ante responses of the firm in state $G$, such as lower levels of investment, higher (costly) cash holdings, earlier use of costly external financing are all reflections of the impending threat of a negative financing shock and are all costs incurred as a result of the deterioration in financing opportunities.

Panel A of Table 3 provides information about the entire distribution of investment responses to financing shocks in the two cases. The average investment reduction following a negative financing shock is 1.78% when $\zeta_G = 10\%$, compared to 6.59% when the shock was perceived to be less likely ($\zeta_G = 1\%$). The median investment decline is 0.76% for $\zeta_G = 10\%$, which is much lower than 3.66%, the median investment drop when $\zeta_G = 1\%$. Moreover, in the scenario where the financing shock was seen to be less likely, the distribution of investment responses also has significantly fatter left tails. For example, at the 5th percentile, the investment decline is 23.66% when $\zeta_G = 1\%$, which is much larger than the drop of 6.49% when $\zeta_G = 10\%$. In other words, when a financial crisis strikes, firms that happen to have low cash holdings will have to cut investment dramatically.

This result is consistent with the findings of Campello, Graham, and Harvey (2010). They report that during the financial crisis in 2008 the CFOs they surveyed planned to cut capital expenditures by 9.1% on average when their firm was financially constrained, while unconstrained firms planned to keep capital expenditures essentially unchanged (on average, CFOs of these firms reported a cutback of investment of only 0.6%). In addition, our scenario of more anticipated shocks matches the average investment response observed in the recent financial crisis. As Duchin et al. (2010) have found, corporate investment on average declined by 6.4% from its unconditional mean level before the crisis, which translates into a 1% decline in the investment-capital ratio for our model (the average investment-capital ratio in our model is 17%).
Table 3: Distribution of Investment Responses

This table reports the distributions of instantaneous investment responses when firms in state $G$ experience a negative financing shock. The distributions of investment responses are computed based on the stationary distributions of the cash-capital ratio $W$ conditional on being in state $G$. For example, the column $25\%$ gives the investment response by a firm whose cash holding is at 25th-percentile of the stationary distribution in state $G$. The mean responses are integrated over the conditional stationary distribution in state $G$.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>mean</th>
<th>1%</th>
<th>5%</th>
<th>25%</th>
<th>50%</th>
<th>75%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A. financing shock</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\zeta_G = 1%$</td>
<td>-6.59</td>
<td>-43.17</td>
<td>-23.66</td>
<td>-7.06</td>
<td>-3.66</td>
<td>-2.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\zeta_G = 10%$</td>
<td>-1.78</td>
<td>-18.11</td>
<td>-6.49</td>
<td>-1.67</td>
<td>-0.76</td>
<td>-0.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B. shock to expected productivity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\zeta_G = 1%$</td>
<td>-6.59</td>
<td>-6.84</td>
<td>-6.84</td>
<td>-6.81</td>
<td>-6.67</td>
<td>-6.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\zeta_G = 10%$</td>
<td>-3.15</td>
<td>-3.17</td>
<td>-3.17</td>
<td>-3.17</td>
<td>-3.16</td>
<td>-3.15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Our results further demonstrate that the fraction of firms that have to significantly cut investment (e.g., by over 5%) following a severe financing shock decreases significantly as firms assign higher probabilities to a financial crisis shock.

While firms can effectively shield investment from financing shocks by hoarding more cash, changes in cash reserves have almost no effect on firms’ investment responses when they are hit by an expected productivity shock. To illustrate and contrast the effects of shocks to expected productivity with the effects of financing shocks, we carry out the following experiment. Holding the financing cost constant ($\phi_G = \phi_B = 0.5\%$ and $\gamma_G = \gamma_B = 6\%$), we instead assume that the conditional mean return on capital (productivity) is higher in state $G$ than $B$. Specifically, we hold $\mu_G$ at 22.7% as in the benchmark model but calibrate $\mu_B = 19.25\%$ such that the average drop in investment following a productivity shock is 6.59% when $\zeta_G = 1\%$, the same as in the scenario with financing shocks. Again, we consider the two scenarios with $\zeta_G = 1\%$ and $\zeta_G = 10\%$ respectively, while holding $\zeta_B = 0.5$. The results for the distribution of investment responses in the wake of a productivity shock are
reported in Panel B of Table 3.

A higher transition intensity $\zeta_G$ means that the high-productivity state is expected to end sooner on average, and that the firm will invest less aggressively in state $G$ as a result. This is why the average decline in investment following a productivity shock is smaller when $\zeta_G = 10\%$ than when $\zeta_G = 1\%$ although the impact of the rise in transition intensity $\zeta_G$ for productivity shocks is smaller than that for financing shocks. Even more striking is the finding that, unlike the effects of financing shocks, for which there is significant heterogeneity in investment responses across different levels of cash-capital ratios, the investment responses following a productivity shock are essentially the same across all levels of cash holdings. The contrast of investment responses to financing shocks and shocks to expected productivity in our calibrated model suggests that financing and productivity shocks can have significantly different implications for investment responses among firms with different amount of financial slack, which can help us distinguish between these two types of shocks empirically.\footnote{Fixed capital adjustment costs can also generate heterogenous investment responses to shocks to expected productivity. However, the response is likely to depend more on how close the firm is to the adjustment boundary than on the firm’s cash holdings.}

In summary, the effects of financing shocks on a firm’s investment policy crucially depend on two variables: (1) the probability that the firm attaches to the financing shock, and (2) the firm’s cash holding. A relatively small rise in the probability of a financing shock can already cause firms to behave more conservatively in good times. The result is that the average impact of financing shocks ex post is small. However, it will vary significantly across firms with different cash holdings. In contrast, cash holdings will not significantly affect a firm’s response to a shock to expected productivity. As a result, there will be little heterogeneity among firms with different amounts of financial slack in how they adjust their investment policies following such shocks.
6. Financial Constraints and the Risk Premium

In this section, we explore how aggregate financing shocks affect the risk premium for a financially constrained firm. Without external financing constraints, the firm in our model will have a constant risk premium. When the firm’s financing conditions remain the same over time, a conditional CAPM (capital asset pricing model) holds in our model, where the conditional beta is monotonically decreasing in the firm’s cash-capital ratio. In the presence of aggregate financing shocks, however, the volatility in stock returns tends to rise sharply in state $B$, as can be inferred from Figure 2. This suggests that the conditional risk premium will be determined by a two-factor model, which prices both the aggregate shocks to profitability and the shocks to financing conditions.\footnote{Livdan, Sapriza, and Zhang (2009) also study the effect of financing constraints on stock returns. Their model, however, does not allow for stochastic financing conditions or cash accumulation.} \footnote{One interpretation of the pricing model in this section is that all investors are rational risk-averse investors who anticipate shocks to a firm’s financing opportunities, which may be driven by (unmodeled) shocks to financial intermediation costs or changes in the opaqueness of the firm’s balance sheets. An alternative interpretation is that the firm’s external financing costs are driven by (unmodeled) changes in market sentiment. This behavioral interpretation is still consistent with the view that investors require compensation for the risk with respect to changes in the firm’s financing opportunities if one takes the approach based on differences of opinion à la Scheinkman and Xiong (2003). The point is that in the differences of opinion model investors are aware that at any moment in time there may be more optimistic or pessimistic other investors. Each investor is not always the marginal investor and to the extent that each investor is aware of this (as is assumed in the differences of opinion model) he faces risk with respect to other investors’ optimism (which here takes the form or risk with respect to the firm’s financing opportunities) for which he requires compensation.}

A heuristic derivation of the firm’s (risk-adjusted) expected return involves a comparison of the HJB equations under the physical and risk-neutral measures $\mathbb{P}$ and $\mathbb{Q}$. Let the firm’s conditional risk premium in state $s$ be $\mu^R_s(w)$. We may then write the HJB equation under the physical measure as follows:

\[
(r_s + \mu^R_s(w)) p_s(w) = \max_{i_s} \left[ (r_s - \lambda) w + \mu_s - i_s - g_s(i_s) \right] p_s^i(w) + \frac{\sigma^2_s}{2} p''_s(w) + \zeta_s (p_{s^-} - p_s(w)) + \zeta^2_s (p_{s^-} - p_s(w)), \tag{26}
\]

where $\mu_s$ and $\zeta_s$ respectively denote the expected return on capital and the transition intensity from state $s$ to $s^-$ under the physical probability measure. By matching terms in the
HJB equations (11) and (26), and using the risk adjustments specified in (7) and (8), we then obtain the following expression for the conditional risk premium:

$$\mu^R_s(w) = \eta_s \rho_s \sigma_s \left( \frac{p'_s(w)}{p_s(w)} \right) - (e^{\kappa_s} - 1) \zeta_s \left( \frac{(p_s - (w) - p_s(w))}{p_s(w)} \right).$$

(27)

The first term in (27) is the productivity risk premium, which is the product of the firm’s exposure to aggregate (Brownian) productivity shocks $\rho_s \sigma_s p'_s(w)/p_s(w)$ and the price of Brownian risk $\eta_s$ (where $\rho_s$ is the conditional correlation between the firm’s productivity shock $dA$ and the stochastic discount factor in state $s$). This term is positive for firms whose productivity shocks are positively correlated with the aggregate market.

The second term is the financing risk premium, which compensates risk-averse investors for the firm’s exposure to aggregate financing shocks. Financing shocks will be priced when their arrival corresponds to changes in the stochastic discount factor. As seems empirically plausible, we suppose that the stochastic discount factor jumps up when aggregate financing conditions deteriorate, that is, $\kappa_G = -\kappa_B > 0$ in our two state model. In other words, investors will demand an extra premium for investing in firms whose values drop (rise) during times when external financing conditions worsen (improve) ($p_G(w) > p_B(w)$).

In the first-best setting where a firm has free access to external financing, its risk premium is constant and can be recovered from (27) by setting $\eta_s$, $\rho_s$, and $\sigma_s$ to constants and dropping the second term. We then obtain the standard CAPM formula:

$$\mu^{FB} = \eta \rho \sigma \frac{1}{q^{FB}}.$$  

(28)

The comparison between $\mu^R(w)$ and $\mu^{FB}$ highlights the impact of external financing frictions on the firm’s cost of capital.

**Constant equity issuance costs:** When financing opportunities are constant over time, financial constraints only affect the cost of capital by amplifying (or dampening) a firm’s exposure to productivity shocks. This effect is captured by the productivity (diffusion) risk premium
in (27). As the cash-capital ratio $w$ increases, the firm tends to become less risky for two reasons. First, if a greater fraction of its assets is in cash, the firm beta is automatically lower due to a simple portfolio composition effect. As a financially constrained firm hoards more cash to reduce its dependence on costly external financing, the firm beta becomes a weighted average of its asset beta and the beta of cash, which is equal to zero.\footnote{In particular, with a large enough buffer stock of cash relative to its assets, this firm may be even safer than a firm facing no external financing costs and therefore holding no cash.} Second, an increase in $w$ effectively relaxes the firm’s financing constraint and therefore reduces the sensitivity of firm value to cash flow, which also tends to reduce the risk of holding the firm.

*Time-varying equity issuance costs:* Time-varying equity issuance costs affect the cost of capital for a financially constrained firm in two ways. First, the firm’s exposure to productivity shocks changes as financing conditions change, since the marginal value of cash $p'_s(w)$ and firm value $p_s(w)$ both depend on the state $s$. Second, when external financing shocks are priced, investors demand an extra premium for investing in firms that do poorly when financing conditions worsen. These firms expose investors to higher stock-return volatility in state $B$. This effect is captured by the second term in (27). Note that $(p_s(w) - p_s(w))/p_s(w)$ gives the percentage change of firm value if financing conditions change, and this term measures the sensitivity of firm value with respect to changes in $w$. Intuitively, the financing risk premium is larger the bigger the relative change in firm value due to a change in external financing conditions.

Figure 5 Panel A plots the productivity risk premium (the first term in 27) in state $G$ as a function of the cash-capital ratio $w$. This premium is generally decreasing in the cash-capital ratio, except near the financing boundary. In the benchmark case ($\zeta_G = 0.1$), the risk with respect to higher future financing costs generates market timing behavior and non-monotonicity in the marginal value of cash (Figure 1, Panel B), which in turn may cause the productivity risk premium to be locally increasing in $w$ for low levels of $w$. As the non-monotonicity in the marginal value of cash is partially offset by the asset composition effect, the non-monotonicity in the productivity risk premium is relatively weak.
Similarly, holding $w$ fixed at a low level, market timing can lower $p_G'(w)$ as the transition intensity $\zeta_G$ increases. This explains why the productivity risk premium may be decreasing in the transition intensity for low $w$. When the transition intensity is sufficiently low (e.g., $\zeta_G = 0.01$), the non-monotonicity in the productivity risk premium disappears.

Second, Panel B plots the financing risk premium. The size of this premium depends on the relative change in firm value when external financing conditions change. It is increasing in the transition intensity $\zeta_G$, but decreasing in $w$. Intuitively, when cash holdings are low, a sudden worsening in external financing conditions is particularly costly; but when cash holdings are high, the firm is able to avoid costly external financing by cutting investment, engaging in asset sales, and deferring payout, all of which mitigate the impact of the financing
shock.

In Panel C and D, both the productivity risk premium and financing risk premium in state $B$ are monotonically and rapidly decreasing in the firm’s cash holding. When $w$ is close to zero, the annualized conditional productivity risk premium can exceed 80%. The high premium and sharp decline with $w$ mirror the rapid decline in the marginal value of cash (see Figure 2, Panel B): high marginal value of cash in the low $w$ region can dramatically amplify the firm’s sensitivity to productivity shocks. The productivity risk premium eventually falls below 2% when the firm is near the payout boundary. Similarly, the conditional financing premium can exceed 30% when $w$ is close to zero; this is due to the large jump in firm value when the financing state changes (see Figure 2, Panel A).

Quantitatively, the level and variation of the conditional risk premium generated by financing constraint should be interpreted in conjunction with the stationary distributions of cash holdings in Section 4.4. Because the firm’s cash holdings will rarely drop to very low levels, its risk premium will be small and smooth most of the time in our model.

Our model has several implications for expected returns of financially constrained firms. Controlling for productivity and financing costs, the model predicts an inverse relation between returns and corporate cash holdings, which has been documented by Dittmar and Mahrt-Smith (2007) among others. Our analysis points out that this negative relation may not be due to agency problems, as they emphasize, but may be driven by relaxed financing constraints and a changing asset composition of the firm.\textsuperscript{21}

A related prediction is that firms that are more financially constrained are not necessarily more risky. The risk premium for a relatively more constrained firm can be lower than that for a less constrained firm if the more constrained firm also holds more cash. This observation may shed light on the recent studies by Ang, Hodrick, Xing, and Zhang (2006) documenting that stocks with high idiosyncratic volatility have low average returns. In our model, firms

\textsuperscript{21}When heterogeneity in productivity and financing costs is difficult to measure, it is important to take into account the endogeneity of cash holdings when comparing firms with different cash holdings empirically. A firm with higher external financing costs will tend to hold more cash, however its risk premium may still be higher than for a firm with lower financing costs and consequently lower cash holdings. Thus, a positive relation between returns and corporate cash holdings across firms may still be consistent with our model [see Palazzo (2008) for a related model and supporting empirical evidence].
that face higher idiosyncratic risk will optimally hold more cash on average, which could explain their lower risk premium.

With time-varying financing conditions, our model can be seen as a conditional two-factor model to explain the cross section of returns (we provide details of the derivation in Appendix C). A firm’s risk premium is determined by its productivity beta and its financing beta. Other things equal, a firm whose financing costs move closely with aggregate financing conditions will have a larger financing beta and earn higher returns than one with financing costs independent of aggregate conditions. Empirically, this two-factor model can be implemented using the standard market beta plus a beta with respect to a portfolio that is sensitive to financing shocks (e.g. a banking portfolio). This model, in particular, shows how a firm’s conditional beta depends on the firm’s cash holdings.

7. Market Timing and Dynamic Hedging

We have thus far restricted the firm’s financing choices to only internal funds and external equity financing. In this section, we extend the model to allow the firm to engage in dynamic hedging via derivatives such as market-index futures. How does market timing behavior interact with dynamic hedging? And, how does the firm’s dynamic hedging strategy affect its market timing behavior? These are the questions we address in this section. We denote by $F$ the index futures price for a market portfolio that is already completely hedged against financing shocks. Under the risk-neutral probability measure, the futures price $F$ then evolves according to:

$$dF_t = \sigma_m F_t d\tilde{Z}^M_t,$$

where $\sigma_m$ is the volatility of the market index portfolio, and $\{\tilde{Z}^M_t : t \geq 0\}$ is a standard Brownian motion under $Q$ that is correlated with the firm’s productivity shock $\{Z_t^A : t \geq 0\}$ with a constant correlation coefficient $\rho$.

We denote by $\psi_t$ the fraction of the firm’s total cash $W_t$ that it invests in the futures contract. Futures contracts require that investors hold cash in a margin account. Thus, let
\( \alpha_t \in [0, 1] \) denote the fraction of the firm’s total cash \( W_t \) held in the margin account. Cash held in this margin account incurs a flow unit cost \( \epsilon \geq 0 \). Futures market regulations typically require that an investor’s futures position (in absolute value) cannot exceed a multiple \( \pi \) of the amount of cash \( \alpha_t W_t \) held in the margin account. We let this multiple be state dependent and denote it by \( \pi(s_t) \). The margin requirement in state \( s \) then imposes the following limit on the firm’s futures position: \( |\psi_t| \leq \pi(s_t) \alpha_t \). As the firm can costlessly reallocate cash between the margin account and its regular interest-bearing account, it optimally holds the minimum amount of cash necessary in the margin account when \( \epsilon > 0 \). Without much loss of generality, we shall ignore this haircut on the margin account and assume that \( \epsilon = 0 \). Under this assumption, we do not need to keep track of cash allocations in the margin account and outside the account. We can then simply set \( \alpha_t = 1 \).

The firm’s cash holdings thus evolve as follows:

\[
dW_t = K_t \left[ \mu(s_t)dA_t + \sigma(s_t)dZ_t \right] - (I_t + \Gamma_t)dt + dH_t - dU_t + [r(s_t)] - \lambda W_t dt + \psi_t W_t \sigma_m dZ_t^M, \tag{30}
\]

where \( |\psi_t| \leq \pi(s_t) \). To avoid unnecessary repetition, we only consider the case with positive correlation, i.e., \( \rho > 0 \). We consider first the crisis state.

**In state** \( B \). Given that firm value is always concave in cash in state \( B \) \( (P_{WW}(K,W,G) < 0) \), the firm in state \( B \) faces the same decision problem as the firm in BCW. BCW show that the optimal hedge ratio (with time-invariant opportunities) is given by

\[
\psi^*_B(w) = \max \left\{ -\frac{\rho \sigma_B}{w \sigma_m}, -\pi_B \right\}. \tag{31}
\]

Intuitively, the firm chooses the hedge ratio \( \psi \) so that the firm only faces idiosyncratic volatility after hedging. The hedge ratio that achieves this objective is \( -\rho \sigma_B \sigma_m^{-1} / w \). However, this hedge ratio may not be attainable due to the margin requirement. In that case, the firm chooses the maximally admissible hedge ratio \( \psi^*_B(w) = -\pi_B \). Equation (31) captures the effect of margin constraints on hedging. Because there is no haircut (i.e., \( \epsilon = 0 \)), the hedge ratio \( \psi \) given in (31) is independent of firm value and only depends on \( w \). We next turn to
In state $G$. Before entering the crisis state, the firm has external financing opportunities. Moreover, the margin requirement may be different (i.e., $\pi_G > \pi_B$). In state $G$, the firm chooses its investment policy $I$ and its index futures position $\psi_W$ to maximize firm value $P(K,W,G)$ by solving the following HJB equation:

$$r_G P(K,W,G) = \max_{I,\psi} \left[ (r_G - \lambda) W + \mu_G K - I - \Gamma (I,K,G) \right] P_W + (I - \delta K) P_K + \frac{1}{2} \left( \sigma_G^2 K^2 + \psi^2 \sigma_m^2 W^2 + 2 \rho \sigma_m \sigma_G \psi WK \right) P_{WW} + \zeta \left[ P(K,W,G) - P(K,W,B) \right],$$

subject to $|\psi| \leq \pi_G$.

When firm value is concave in cash, we have the same solution as in state $B$, but with margin $\pi_G$. That is,

$$\psi^*_G(w) = \max \left\{ -\frac{\rho \sigma_G}{w \sigma_m}, -\pi_G \right\}. \quad (33)$$

However, market timing opportunities combined with fixed costs of equity issuance imply that firm value may be convex in cash, i.e., $P_{WW}(K,W,G) > 0$ for certain regions of $w = W/K$. With convexity, the firm naturally speculates in derivatives markets. Given the margin requirement, the firm takes the maximally allowed futures position, i.e. the corner solution $\psi_G(w) = \pi_G$. Note that the firm is long in futures despite positive correlation between its productivity shock and the index futures. Let $\hat{w}_G$ denote the endogenously chosen point at which $P_{WW}(K,W,G) = 0$, or $p''_G(\hat{w}_G) = 0$. We now summarize the firm’s futures position in state $G$ as follows:

$$\psi^*_G(w) = \begin{cases} 
\max \left\{ -\frac{\rho \sigma_G}{w \sigma_m}, -\pi_G \right\}, & \text{for } w \geq \hat{w}_G, \\
\pi_G, & \text{for } w_G \leq w \leq \hat{w}_G.
\end{cases} \quad (34)$$

Note the discontinuity of the hedge ratio $\psi^*_G(w)$ in $w$. The firm switches from a hedger to a speculator when its cash-capital ratio $w$ falls below $\hat{w}_G$. For numerical illustration, we choose the correlation between index futures and the firm’s productivity shock to be $\rho = 0.4$ and a market return volatility of $\sigma_m = 20\%$. The margin
Figure 6: **Optimal hedge ratios \( \psi^*(w) \) in states \( G \) and \( B \) when state \( B \) is absorbing.** The parameter values are: market volatility \( \sigma_m = 20\% \), correlation coefficient \( \rho = 0.4 \), margin requirements \( \pi_G = 5 \) and \( \pi_B = 2 \). All other parameter values are given in Table 4.

requirements in states \( G \) and \( B \) are set at \( \pi_G = 5 \) and \( \pi_B = 2 \), respectively. All other parameter values are the same as in the previous sections.

**Optimal hedge ratios \( \psi^*_s(w) \).** Figure 6 plots the optimal hedge ratios in both states: \( \psi^*_G(w) \) and \( \psi^*_B(w) \). First, we note that for sufficiently high \( w \), the firm hedges in the same way in both states. Hedging is then unconstrained by the firm’s cash holdings and costless. The firm then chooses its hedge ratio to be equal to \( -\rho \sigma \sigma^{-1}_m / w \) so as to eliminate its exposure to systematic volatility of the productivity shock. This explains the concave and overlapping parts of the hedging policies in Figure 6.

Second, for low \( w \) hedging strategies differ in the two states as follows: in state \( B \) the hedge ratio hits the constraint \( \psi^*_B(w) = -\pi_B = -2 \) for \( w \leq 0.12 \). In state \( G \) on the other hand, the firm issues equity at \( \bar{w}_G = 0.0219 \) and firm value is convex in \( w \) (due to market timing) for \( w \leq \bar{w}_G = 0.0593 \) (where \( p''(\bar{w}_G) = 0 \)). In other words, for \( w \in (\overline{w}_G; \bar{w}_G) \) firm
value is convex in $w$ and the firm does the opposite of hedging and engages in maximally allowed risk taking by setting $\psi^*_G(w) = \pi_G = 5$ for $w \in (0.0219, 0.0593)$.

Hedging lowers the firm’s precautionary holdings of cash and hence lowers its payout boundary from $0.371$ (no hedging benchmark) to $0.355$ in state $G$ and from $0.408$ to $0.385$ in state $B$. Intuitively, because both cash hoarding and risk management mitigate financial constraints, they act as substitutes for each other. Leland (1998) studies the effect of agency costs on leverage and risk management, and finds that risk management allows the firm to choose a higher leverage. We find that risk management lowers cash holding, which is in line with Leland’s finding, although the mechanism is different between Leland (1998) and ours.

For sufficiently low cash holdings, the ability to speculate lowers the firm’s issuance boundary $\underline{w}_G$ because the marginal value of cash for a firm with speculation/hedging opportunity is higher. The ability to increase the volatility of the cash accumulation process makes the equity issuance option more valuable and hence causes the issuance boundary $\underline{w}_G$ to be lowered from $0.0268$ (no hedging/speculation benchmark) to $0.0219$.

Froot, Scharfstein, and Stein (1993) argue that hedging increases firm value by mitigating its underinvestment problem. However, we show that this result does not hold generally in a dynamic setting. For sufficiently high cash holdings, hedging indeed mitigates the firm’s under-investment problem by reducing exposure to systemic volatility. However, when the firm’s cash holdings are sufficiently low, the firm optimally engages in speculation to take advantage of its market timing option.

Rampini and Viswanathan (2010) show that more financially constrained firms hedge less and may not engage in any form of risk management at all. The reason in their model is that the firm’s financing needs for investment override hedging concerns. There is thus an important link between firm financing constraints and risk management: both involve promises to pay by the firm that are limited by collateral.
8. Conclusion

There is mounting evidence of large market-wide swings in the valuation of stocks. What is more, in rare episodes of financial crises primary markets essentially shut down. In addition, firms have become increasingly aware of the risks and opportunities they face with respect to these external financing costs, and they do appear to ‘time equity markets’ as Baker and Wurgler (2002) have shown. However, despite the rapid growth in empirical research on the effects of shocks to the supply of capital on firms’ corporate policies (see Baker and Wurgler (2011) for a survey of the literature), very few theoretical analyses are available on the implications of changing external financing costs for the dynamics of corporate investment and financing. This study aims to close this gap by taking the perspective of a rational firm manager maximizing shareholder value by timing favorable equity market conditions and shielding the firm against crisis episodes through precautionary cash holdings.

We have proposed a simple integrated analytical framework based on the classical \( q \)-theory of investment, but for a financially constrained firm facing stochastic financial market conditions. We have shown that firms optimally hold cash buffer stocks and issue equity in favorable market conditions even when they do not have immediate funding needs. This dynamic behavior is broadly in line with existing empirical evidence. As simple as this market timing behavior by the firm appears to be, we have shown that it has subtle implications for the dynamics of corporate investment and for the stock returns. The key driver of these surprising dynamic implications is the finite duration of favorable financing conditions combined with the fixed issuance costs firms incur when they tap equity markets. Finally, we have highlighted how much a firm that optimally times equity markets and holds optimal precautionary cash buffers is able to shield itself against large external financing costs. A firm entering a crisis state with an optimally replenished cash buffer in good times is able to maintain its investment policy almost unaltered, and thus substantially smooth out adverse external financing shocks.

One natural question for future research is how would time-varying financing conditions interact with time-varying investment opportunities to affect firms’ financing constraints.
Our analysis in Appendix D shows that a firm with positively correlated financing and investment opportunities can actually be more financially constrained than when the two are negatively correlated. Another interesting question is how time-varying uncertainty about the probability distribution of financing shocks may affect corporate decisions. Bloom (2009) studies uncertainty shocks about productivity for a financially unconstrained firm. The recent financial crisis suggests that uncertainty shocks about external financing shocks can potentially have first-order effects on investment and output.
Table 4: Summary of Key Variables and Parameters

This table summarizes the symbols for the key variables used in the model and the parameter values in the benchmark case. For each upper-case variable in the left column (except \(K\), \(A\), and \(F\)), we use its lower case to denote the ratio of this variable to capital. Whenever a variable or parameter depends on the state \(s\), we denote the dependence with a subscript \(s\). All the boundary variables are in terms of the cash-capital ratio \(w_t\).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Parameters</th>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>state (G)</th>
<th>state (B)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A. Baseline model</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital stock</td>
<td>(K)</td>
<td>Riskfree rate</td>
<td>(r)</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash holding</td>
<td>(W)</td>
<td>Rate of depreciation</td>
<td>(\delta)</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment</td>
<td>(I)</td>
<td>Mean productivity shock</td>
<td>(\mu)</td>
<td>22.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumulative productivity shock</td>
<td>(A)</td>
<td>Volatility of productivity</td>
<td>(\sigma)</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment adjustment cost</td>
<td>(\Gamma)</td>
<td>Adjustment cost parameter</td>
<td>(\theta)</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumulative operating profit</td>
<td>(Y)</td>
<td>Center of adjustment cost</td>
<td>(\nu)</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumulative external financing</td>
<td>(H)</td>
<td>Proportional cash-carrying</td>
<td>(\lambda)</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumulative external financing cost</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>Proportional financing cost</td>
<td>(\gamma)</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumulative payout</td>
<td>(U)</td>
<td>Correlation between (Z^A_t) and (Z^M_t)</td>
<td>(\rho)</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firm value</td>
<td>(P)</td>
<td>Price of risk for technology shocks</td>
<td>(\eta)</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average (q)</td>
<td>(q)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net marginal value of cash</td>
<td>(q')</td>
<td>State transition intensity</td>
<td>(\zeta_s)</td>
<td>0.1 0.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payout boundary</td>
<td>(\bar{\pi})</td>
<td>Capital liquidation value</td>
<td>(l_s)</td>
<td>1.0 0.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financing boundary</td>
<td>(\bar{w})</td>
<td>Fixed financing cost</td>
<td>(\phi_s)</td>
<td>0.5% 50%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target cash-capital ratio</td>
<td>(m)</td>
<td>Price of risk for financing shocks</td>
<td>(\kappa_s)</td>
<td>(\ln(3)) (-\ln(3))</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditional risk premium</td>
<td>(\mu^R)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B. Hedging</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hedge ratio</td>
<td>(\psi)</td>
<td>Market volatility</td>
<td>(\sigma_m)</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraction of cash in margin account</td>
<td>(\alpha)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Futures price</td>
<td>(F)</td>
<td>Margin requirement</td>
<td>(\pi_s)</td>
<td>5 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum-hedging boundary</td>
<td>(\bar{\hat{w}})</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speculation boundary</td>
<td>(\hat{\hat{w}})</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix A  General model setup

Our analysis in the text focuses on the special case of two states of the world. However, it is straightforward to generalize our model to a setting with more than two states, denoted by $s_t = 1, \ldots, n$. The transition matrix in the $n$-state Markov chain is then given by $\zeta = [\zeta_{ij}]$. The $n$-state Markov chain can also capture both aggregate and firm-specific shocks, and also productivity and financing shocks. In sum, the firm’s expected return on capital, volatility, and financing costs may all change when the state changes in the general formulation of the model.

A.1 Risk Adjustments

To make the adjustments for systematic risk in the model, we assume that the economy is characterized by a stochastic discount factor (SDF) $\Lambda_t$, which evolves as follows:

$$\frac{d\Lambda_t}{\Lambda_t} = -r(s_t^-) dt - \eta(s_t^-) dZ^M_t + \sum_{s_t \neq s_{t-1}} \left( e^{\kappa(s_{t-1}, s_t)} - 1 \right) dM_t^{(s_{t-1}, s_t)}, \quad (A.1)$$

where $r(s)$ is the risk-free rate in state $s$, $\eta(s)$ is the price of risk for systematic Brownian shocks $Z^M_t$, $\kappa(i, j)$ is the relative jump size of the discount factor when the Markov chain switches from state $i$ to state $j$, and $M_t^{(i,j)}$ is a compensated Poisson process with intensity $\zeta_{ij}$,

$$dM_t^{(i,j)} = dN_t^{(i,j)} - \zeta_{ij} dt, \quad i \neq j. \quad (A.2)$$

In equation (A.1), we have made use of the result that an $n$-state continuous-time Markov chain with generator $[\zeta_{ij}]$ can be equivalently expressed as a sum of independent Poisson processes $N^{(i,j)}_t$ ($i \neq j$) with intensity parameters $\zeta_{ij}$ (see e.g., Chen (2010)). In the above SDF captures two different types of risk in the market: small systematic shocks generated by the Brownian motion, and large systematic shocks from the Markov chain. We assume that $dZ^M_t$

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22More specifically, the process $s$ solves the following stochastic differential equation, $ds_t = \sum_{k \neq s_{t-1}} \delta_k (s_{t-1}) dN_t^{(s_{t-1}, k)}$, where $\delta_k (j) = j - i$. 

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is partially correlated with the firm’s productivity shock $dZ_t^A$, with instantaneous correlation $\rho dt$. Chen (2010) shows that the SDF in (A.1) can be generated from a consumption-based asset pricing model.

The SDF defines a risk neutral probability measure $Q$, under which the process for the firm’s productivity shocks becomes (6). In addition, if a change of state in the Markov chain corresponds to a jump in the SDF, then the corresponding large shock also carries a risk premium, which leads to an adjustment of the transition intensity under $Q$ as follows:

$$\tilde{\zeta}_{ij} = e^{\kappa(i,j)} \zeta_{ij}, \quad i \neq j.$$  \hspace{1cm} (A.3)

\section*{A.2. Solution of The n-state model}

Under the first best, the HJB equation for the n-state model is as follows,

$$r_s q_s^{FB} = \hat{\mu}_s - i_s^{FB} - \frac{1}{2} \theta_s (i_s^{FB} - \nu_s)^2 + q_s^{FB} (i_s^{FB} - \delta) + \sum_{s' \neq s} \zeta_{ss'} (q_{s'}^{FB} - q_s^{FB}),$$  \hspace{1cm} (A.4)

where for each state $s = 1, \ldots, n$ the average $q$ is given by:

$$q_s^{FB} = 1 + \theta_s (i_s^{FB} - \nu_s).$$  \hspace{1cm} (A.5)

While there are no closed form solutions for $n > 2$, it is straightforward to solve the system of nonlinear equations numerically.

With financial frictions, the HJB equation is generalized from (11) as follows:

$$r_s P(K, W, s) = \max_I [[(r_s - \lambda) W + \hat{\mu}_s K - I - \Gamma (I, K, s)] P_{W}(K, W, s) + \frac{\sigma^2 K^2}{2} P_{WW}(K, W, s) + (I - \delta K) P_{K}(K, W, s) + \sum_{s' \neq s} \zeta_{ss'} (P(K, W, s') - P(K, W, s)),$$  \hspace{1cm} (A.6)

for each state $s = 1, \ldots, n$, and $W_s \leq W \leq W_s$. As before firm value is homogeneous of
degree one in \( W \) and \( K \) in each state, so that

\[
P(K, W, s) = p_s(w)K,
\]

where \( p_s(w) \) solves the following system of ODE:

\[
\begin{align*}
& r_s p_s(w) = \max_{i_s} \left[ (r_s - \lambda) w + \mu_s - i_s - g_s(i_s) \right] p'_s(w) + \frac{\sigma^2_s}{2} p''_s(w) \\
& \quad + (i_s - \delta) (p_s(w) - wp'_s(w)) + \sum_{s' \neq s} \tilde{\zeta}_{ss'} (p_{s'}(w) - p_s(w)).
\end{align*}
\]

The boundary conditions in each state \( s \) are then defined in similar ways as in Equation (13-16).

Appendix B    Calibration

We use annual data from COMPUSTAT to calculate the moments of the investment-capital ratio and cash-capital ratio for our model calibration. The sample is from 1981 to 2010 and excludes utilities (SIC codes 4900-4999) and financial firms (SIC codes 6000-6999). We require firms to be incorporated in the United States and have positive assets and positive net PPE (property, plant, and equipment). In addition, since our model does not allow for lumpy investment, mergers and acquisitions, or dramatic changes in profitability, we eliminate firm-years for which total assets or sales grew by more than 100%, or investments exceeded 50% of capital stock from the previous year.

Capital investment is measured using capital expenditure \((CAPX_t)\). Since our calibrated model does not allow for short term debt, we measure cash holdings as the difference between cash and short-term investments \((CHE_t)\) and average short-term borrowing \((BAST_t)\). Capital stock is the total net PPE \((PPENT_t)\). Then, the cash-capital ratio for year \( t \) is defined as \( \frac{CHE_t - BAST_t}{PPENT_t} \), while the investment-capital ratio for year \( t \) is \( \frac{CAPX_t}{PPENT_{t-1}} \). We first compute moments for the cash-capital ratio and the investment-capital ratio at the firm level, and then calibrate the model parameters to match the moments of the median across firms.
Appendix C Beta Representation

Since there are two sources of aggregate shocks in this model, the CAPM does not hold. Instead, expected returns reflect aggregate risk driven by a two-factor model. We thus assume that there are two diversified portfolios $T$ and $F$, each only subject to one type of aggregate shock, a technology or a financing shock. Suppose their return dynamics are given as follows:

$$
\begin{align*}
\frac{dR^T_t}{T} &= (r_s + \mu^T_s)t + \sigma^T_t dZ^M_t, \\
\frac{dR^F_t}{F} &= (r_s + \mu^F_s)t + \left(e^{\kappa^F_s} - 1\right) dM^1_t + \left(e^{\kappa^F_1} - 1\right) dM^2_t.
\end{align*}
$$

Then, the stochastic discount factor (A.1) implies that

$$
\begin{align*}
\mu^T_s &= \sigma^T_s \eta^s, \\
\mu^F_s &= \zeta_s (e^{\kappa^F_s} - 1)(e^{\kappa^s} - 1).
\end{align*}
$$

We can now rewrite the risk premium in (C.1) and (C.2) using betas as follows:

$$
\mu^R_s(w) = \beta^T_s(w)\mu^T_s + \beta^F_s(w)\mu^F_s,
$$

where

$$
\begin{align*}
\beta^T_s(w) &= \frac{\rho_s \sigma_s p^{'\prime}(w)}{\sigma^T_s p_s(w)} , \\
\beta^F_s(w) &= \frac{p_s - (w) - p_s(w)}{p_s(w)(e^{\kappa^F_s} - 1)}
\end{align*}
$$

are the technology beta (beta with respect to portfolio $T$) and financing beta (beta with respect to portfolio $F$) for the firm in state $s$. The technology beta will be large when the marginal value of cash relative to firm value is high; the financing beta will be large when the probability that financing conditions will change is high, or when the change in financing conditions has a large impact on firm value.
Figure 7: Investment-capital ratio for firms with different correlation between investment and financing opportunities. The financing costs are the same as in our benchmark model (see Table 1 in the paper). We assume Firm 1 has $\mu_G = 22.7\%$ and $\mu_B = 19.7\%$. Firm 2 has $\mu_G = 19.7\%$ and $\mu_B = 22.7\%$. Finally, we set the risk-neutral transition intensities $\hat{\zeta}_G = \hat{\zeta}_B = 0.1$.

Appendix D  Correlated investment and financing opportunities

In order to focus on the effects of stochastic financing shocks, we have set the productivity shocks to be i.i.d in the paper. In this section, we relax this restriction and explore the implications of correlation between investment and financing opportunities.

We conduct the following thought experiment. Suppose two firms face identical financing conditions as in the benchmark model (determined by the states $G$ and $B$). To make the two states symmetric, we assume the risk-neutral transition intensities are the same in the two states. Firm 1’s investment opportunities are positively correlated with financing opportunities. That is, its expected return on capital (i.e., expected productivity shock $\mu_s$) is higher when the financing cost ($\phi_s$) is lower. The opposite is true for Firm 2, in that $\mu_s$ is higher when the financing cost ($\phi_s$) is higher.

Figure 7 plots the investment-capital ratio for the two firms in state $G$ (with low financing
costs) and $B$ (high financing costs). Not surprisingly, Firm 1 has higher return on capital in state $G$ and thus invests more in this state, while the opposite is true in state $B$, especially when cash holdings are high. Note that Firm 1 on average holds onto more cash in state $G$ than Firm 2, but less in state $B$ (as indicated by the payout boundaries on the right ends of the curves). These results indicate that Firm 1 can sometimes have a stronger precautionary motive than Firm 2 due to the fact that better investment opportunities call for more cash holding to reduce underinvestment.

More interestingly, we find that Firm 1 can be more financially constrained as measured by a higher marginal value of cash than Firm 2 in both states of the world. Figure 8 plots the differences in the marginal value of cash for the two firms. When the cash holding is low, the marginal value of cash for Firm 1 (with positively correlated investment and financing opportunities) is lower in both state $G$ and $B$, suggesting that the positive correlation makes the firm less constrained. However, as the cash holding rises, this order gets reversed for both states. (In fact, in state $B$, the marginal values of cash for the two firms cross each other twice.)

Figure 8: Differences in the marginal value of cash for two firms with different correlation between investment and financing opportunities. Panel A and B plot the differences in the marginal value of cash in state $G$ and $B$, respectively. See Figure 1 caption for details of the setup.
Firm 1 can have a higher marginal value of cash in state $G$ because of its higher productivity in this state. In state $B$, the reason is more subtle. A positive correlation can make the good state even more valuable, making survival of bad states of the world all the more important. As Figure 8 shows, this effect can more than overcome the effect of low productivity in the bad state.
References


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