



# The 5 Best TMS Software Products and The Top TMS Service Integrations You Need In 2019 and 2020

As published by Danny Mills - August 2019

We're often asked about the best Transportation Management System software (i.e. the best "TMS Software") and the best, must-have, TMS software integrations for freight brokers, asset-based carriers and shippers looking to take advantage of newer logistics technology and services.

It can be argued that 30 years ago, TMS software decision making was much easier as there were only a few TMS products to choose from (although few people could afford them). Today, the number of cloud-based TMS software vendors and cloud-based third-party logistics services have grown into the thousands, making it hard to know the best TMS software & service providers from the pretenders.

The good news is that the best TMS software products and logistics integration services have seen prices fall dramatically over the last year or so which means that you can try them out with almost nothing to lose (except perhaps a little time).

The even better news is that we're going to tell you, *right now*, what logistics software products and logistics software services stand out through proven results as reported by thousands of logistics professionals. So, buckle up and give a few of these a try. You just might get a pay raise for your initiative!

**Best Enterprise TMS Software for Overall Value:** You probably can't beat **AscendTMS** ([www.TheFreeTMS.com](http://www.TheFreeTMS.com)) for overall value as the base system is totally free, and the Premium subscription is just \$59 bucks. It's also #1 rated by Capterra and Software Advice, and it's used by more logistics pros than any other TMS. AscendTMS supports shippers, brokers, and carriers in one unified software package; you just decide what features to turn on or off. You even get a complimentary 30-day trial of the full TMS software from their website without ever having to talk to a pesky salesperson, so there is nothing to lose by trying it.

**Top TMS Software for Global Freight Movements:** Moving freight across many countries or continents is the strength of several systems, from OTM to SAP, but they cost hundreds of thousands of dollars or more. For overall value, **CargoWise** from Wise Tech ([www.wisetechglobal.com](http://www.wisetechglobal.com)) edges it. This one handles multi-modes, it's web-based, and has all the import/export paperwork you can handle; just be prepared for a bit of a learning curve.

**Best Shipper TMS (With Managed Services):** The Granddaddy of 3PL's, **C.H. Robinson** ([www.mytmc.com](http://www.mytmc.com)), has the Granddaddy of managed service TMS systems. Your logistics team works in conjunction with C.H. Robinson's in their TMS to move your freight. You get a state of the art multi-modal TMS with the understanding that C.H. Robinson will be your main 3PL partner. Their TMS cost is somewhat bundled with their other services, but the price comes down the more freight you have (probably because they want to help you move it). So, if you are a large shipper that wants a dedicated team of logistics experts by your side 24/7, it might be a good fit.

**Best LTL TMS Software:** Hundreds of LTL web portals are out there that cater to Expedia-like price shopping. But, if you're looking for LTL software that bypasses the brokers so you can save up to 30% on every shipment, you might want to try **Banyan Technology**

([www.banyantechnology.com](http://www.banyantechnology.com)). They've been around for 20 years and connect to thousands of national, regional, and even local LTL carriers for quoting, booking, tracking, and billing. They handle volume discounts and recently were the first to include dynamic pricing, so when a lane is soft, they push out lower rates to you in real-time to encourage more freight shipments while space is available.

**Best "All In One" TMS:** Once again we have to point to **AscendTMS** as the winner ([www.TheFreeTMS.com](http://www.TheFreeTMS.com)). Most TMS software systems are aimed squarely at one single market segment (shippers, brokers, forwarders, or carriers). Even if they do offer add-on modules for other market segments, they can come with a hefty price tag. But, with AscendTMS, you get all modules for one low price and you just decide if you want to turn them on or not. That's nice.

**Best TMS Integration Service for Global Load Tracking:** Shipment tracking and freight visibility is becoming the norm today (thank you, Amazon). We all expect it. Few can deliver. However, FourKites ([www.FourKites.com](http://www.FourKites.com)) seem to have figured it out. Each trip segment, whether truck, rail, air, ocean (and soon, drone), FourKites keep both you and your customer in the know. Moreover, they also give you some amazing statistics on your entire supply chain network such as dwell times, your most efficient service providers, and real-time ETA's to all parties involved in a shipment. FourKites has grown to be the leader in freight tracking for the top global shippers. But, if you're not a top global shipper or 3PL, we're sure FourKites' tracking services will trickle down to the masses soon enough.

**Top TMS Service Integration for Loading Optimization and Truck Routing:** If you have tens of thousands of orders to ship or pallets to move, how do you optimize loading the trailers and picking the right mode of transport? PTV Group ([www.ptvlogistics.us](http://www.ptvlogistics.us)), owned by Porsche (yes, the car company) has you covered. Their systems are entirely cloud-based so you can have all their dedicated horsepower

run through billions of optimization permutations to give you the best results. Even DHL trusts them worldwide to optimize their truckloads and route their trucks in real-time. With their simple API, low cost, and global mapping, you can't go wrong.

### **Best Cost Effective ELD / Telematics Service for Fleets and**

**Carriers:** Just ten years ago, telematics in your truck would cost you \$1,000 upfront and \$500 per month. Today, with KeepTruckin ([www.keeptruckin.com](http://www.keeptruckin.com)), it's now \$0 upfront and just \$20 per month. Ironically, you also get more with KeepTruckin for \$20 that you ever did from those older devices. There's also no long-term contract with KeepTruckin and they are coming out with new features it seems every month or two. If you add KeepTruckin to your TMS software you'll have an instant end-to-end solution, from your back office to your drivers.

**Top Free Load Boards for Carriers, Brokers and Shippers:** It would be obvious here to mention DAT and Truckstop, the two largest load boards. Almost every logistics practitioner has an account with at least one of them. But today's cloud technology is moving so fast that you can get similar end results, often better, at no cost. **Cargo Chief** ([www.CargoChief.com](http://www.CargoChief.com)) has algorithm booking robots that act like your staff to find drivers and carriers, **Trucker Path** ([www.TruckerPath.com](http://www.TruckerPath.com)) has 500,000 carriers using their app, **NextLOAD** ([www.NextLOAD](http://www.NextLOAD)) has tens of thousands of free to see direct shipper and broker loads each day, and **Trucker Tools** ([www.TruckerTools.com](http://www.TruckerTools.com)) is blazing the trail with 600,000 drivers using their app, allowing brokers and shippers access to fast capacity, and for carriers to see tens of thousands of new loads before they even hit the traditional load boards. So, no *one* winner here. We suggest you try them all.

**Best Carrier Payment Service:** The smartest brokers and shippers don't pay their carriers themselves, they outsource carrier payments

instead. The best rated and most well-known service is **TriumphPay** ([www.TriumphPay.com](http://www.TriumphPay.com)) which is actually owned and operated by a publicly-traded national bank. The service pays your carriers for you when loads are complete in any form they want (check, ACH, wire, fuel card deposit, or money code), and they give you your own payment portal to put on your website. The payment service is totally free, and they'll even Quick Pay your carriers and share the fees they generate. Moreover, brokers & shippers report that after starting with TriumphPay the Quick Pay fees generated for the broker/shipper can increase by up to 300%. *Now, that's ROI!*

**Fastest Load Funding for Carriers and Brokers:** Again, a bank holds this title. **Triumph Business Capital** ([www.TBCap.com](http://www.TBCap.com)), a division of publicly-traded Triumph Bancorp, can get you paid on loads you've just completed in as little as 60 minutes (while *they* wait 60 days for your customer to pay *them*). Better still, they give you a host of other free services like a free Premium TMS software package for a year, and free credit reports on your clients so you can sleep well at night.

**Best Cargo Insurance (For Value, Access, and Coverage):** Insurance is a trust thing. Buying the cheapest cargo insurance that doesn't pay out is clearly a waste. But, getting really *low-cost* cargo coverage, that minimizes those pesky exclusions, is what **UPS Capital** ([www.upscapital.com](http://www.upscapital.com)), is all about. UPS' cargo insurance is becoming a mainstay in today's logistics portals because they've automated the process for buying the best overall coverage at the lowest possible price, and they make filing and following claims a breeze.

**Top Logistics Staff Outsourcing:** Just a few years ago, getting more staff (or replacing staff) was either handled internally through a painful process of advertising, interviews, testing or calling a local temp agency. Today, the reality is companies like **Lean Staffing Solutions** ([www.leanstaffing.com](http://www.leanstaffing.com)) and **Hubtek** ([www.GoHubtek.com](http://www.GoHubtek.com)) are just a mouse click away, whether you need 1 person or 100. These

“nearshore” logistics staffing experts are in Colombia (that’s South America, not South Carolina). They provide college educated logistics experts that speak fluent English and Spanish for half the cost of similar people employed in the USA. Most 3PL’s, brokers, shippers, and carriers simply start with 1 or 2 people to test the waters, but they end up liking their new staff so much that they quickly discover they can move entire back office, sales, and technical roles with no disruption to service – and at a much lower cost. Oh, and Columbia is the same time zone as US Central time!

**Best Overall Carrier App for Drivers:** This was a tough call. While the Trucker Tools app ([www.TruckerTools.com](http://www.TruckerTools.com)) is certainly super-cool, and it’s linked to lots of helpful services, the most *powerful* driver app has to be Mobile+ from **Transflo** ([www.transflo.com](http://www.transflo.com)), because its focus is *purely* on business and getting paid. Between iPhone and Android installs they have over 800,000 active drivers using the platform. Yes, it has lots of cool “stuff” in the app for drivers (truck parking, weigh station bypass, fuel stops, etc.), but its strength is that it’s connected to every major broker in the United States so drivers can submit load paperwork to them (and their own dispatcher) in real-time – which means getting paid faster.

I’m sure that in a year or two we can even add more to this list. But, if you’re looking for the *best of the best in logistics and TMS technology*, at the lowest possible cost (maybe even free in some cases), then these “best in class” TMS solutions and logistics technologies are a great place to start.

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