

Should you build a custom TMS?

A 5-minute decision checklist for dispatch, settlements and freight operations.

1 Do you actually need custom?

tick what's true

- ☐ You keep shadow files in the dispatch office.
- ☐ Settlements and driver pay are calculated by hand.
- ☐ Your rates or lanes don't fit off-the-shelf software.
- ☐ A big customer wants a portal or specific reports.
- ☐ Your data is spread across tools that don't talk.

Two or more ticks? A custom build is worth pricing out.

2 Which one are you?

2026 ballpark, roughly

Off-the-shelf TMS

Standard dispatch and tracking, no custom rules. Lowest upfront cost.

Live in days-weeks

Custom first version

Your lanes, rates, settlements and integrations.

≈ 3–6 months · price depends on scope

3 What moves the number

Integrations	ELD, accounting, load boards and a supplier's API — where real hours go.
Settlement logic	Your rates, splits and driver pay are the reason off-the-shelf won't fit.
Roles & portal	Dispatch, drivers, a customer portal — each adds screens and permissions.
Data migration	Getting messy history out of files cleanly is easy to underestimate.

4 How we de-risk your project

-  **You own code & IP**
From day one — no lock-in.
-  **Fixed-scope phase one**
A defined MVP with a fixed price and date.
-  **Demo every sprint**
You see progress, not promises.
-  **Start small, expand**
Later phases are funded by the results of the first.

Get a free, no-obligation estimate

A clear scope, timeline and price range within 1 business day. No pitch, no pressure.

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