



MAGNUS
TECHNOLOGIES

The Next Step Forward in Load Planning

A Guide to Successfully
Manage Truckloads of Chaos
with Next-Gen Technology





The human brain can process 11 million bits of information every second.

Pretty impressive. That's far more data than the brain can store in its working memory. Research shows our mental notepads max out at about four items.

Consider what that means for your trucking operation, particularly load planning.

At a basic level, load assignments consider location, equipment type, origin and destination appointments, and driver clocks. So, already five things.

But the details do not apply to just one truck and one load. Multiply them across every order and asset. Now factor in empty miles, trailer balance,

road conditions, customer priority level, a driver's current assignment, routing requests, and revenue goals. The list is nearly endless. And with every new order and dispatch, the collection of data changes.

Brain power alone cannot fully perfect every load assignment. When load planning is not optimized,

research indicates fleets pay up to 30% more

while utilizing driver hours and equipment 30% less. That represents a substantial hidden cost burden for many small and mid-sized carriers.

That is why more fleets are switching from pen-and-paper planning to transportation management systems. However, not all TMS platforms are created equal. Even big-brand software providers need to catch up in critical areas. Knowing what matters in a planning platform makes a difference when every assignment impacts a company's bottom line.

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Picking the Right Planning Program

The human mind cannot beat machines in processing power. The brain wins in learning and problem-solving. Therefore, human planning is a perfect partner for computers to optimize load assignments, minimize spending, and maximize revenue across every mile. The key is selecting the proper technology to achieve a synergy that delivers superior results. **Consider these five important factors:**

1

The Value of Visibility

The human brain processes visuals 60,000 times faster than text. Pictures help people see information in a way that is easy to understand and respond to. Therefore, look for planning programs that transform data into visuals with the power of business intelligence.

Helpful elements include live maps divided into regions showing the positions of trucks and freight. Seeing what 100 miles of deadhead looks like is more meaningful than simply reading the number. Colors can help planners quickly spot imbalances by region. Visual cues like equipment types, low driver hours, or waiting drivers aid decision-making. The key is presenting critical data to promote intelligent assignments.

2

Data On Demand

Paramount to good planning is seeing all the information to create the best assignment. Many TMS options place vital information across several screens or require separate platform integrations. Planners hunt for important details by shifting between screens and systems. This process wastes time and increases the likelihood of errors.

Effective planning programs aggregate all essential data within one screen. Seeing the information through a single pane of glass enriches decisions while simplifying the process.

Every trucking operation is different, and their planning screens should reflect that. Carriers must be able to customize the screen with the data most important to their fleets. Filters and tiered sorting transform gathering data from multiple places to direct, one-click detail access. Users get to enjoy the benefits of more data with less work.





Problematic Planning

An observation of planners at a truckload carrier found they spend more than 30% of their day moving around different applications to find relevant data to make load assignments. Comparatively, when planners have all order, driver, and equipment data aggregated in one screen, it took them 30 seconds to make a decision.

Imagine how much time a load planner wastes switching between three applications in this all-too-common scenario:

Screen 1

Transportation management system

Screen 2

Telematics data for truck and trailer tracking

Screen 3

Incoming orders spreadsheet

In this example, planners must manually key the order ID from the spreadsheet into the TMS for load details. They then search for available drivers in the planning module. Staff must verify driver hours and equipment location details through the fleet management platform. Then, a planner creates the assignment using handwritten notes from the disparate systems.

Multiply this time by hundreds of trucks, and a real problem emerges. Increasingly, fleets want to transition to an all-in-one planning software with integrated data that enables users to make intelligent assignments in seconds—no screen switching required.

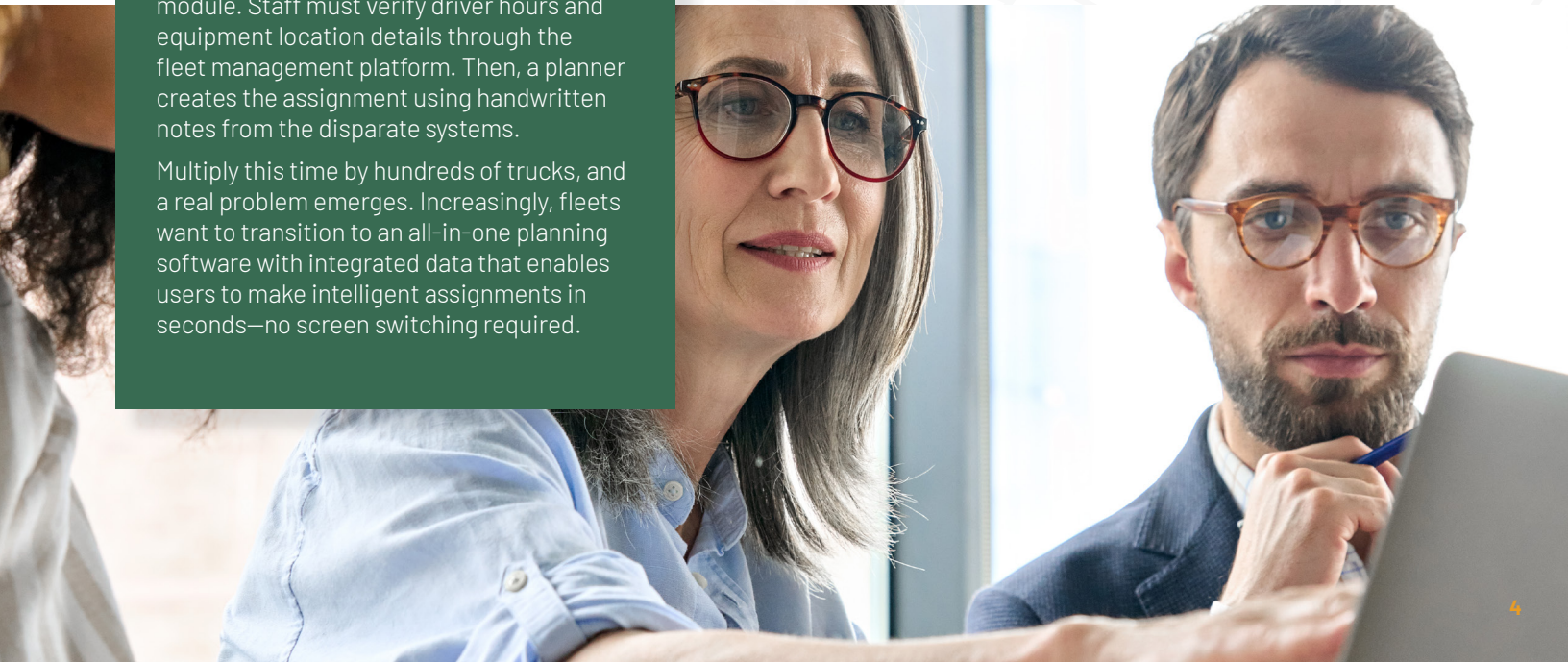
3

Proactive Problem-Solving

Every new order, every out-of-service truck, and every driver clock changes the network. Things vary from minute to minute. Planners need a platform that helps predict the future to stay ahead of problems. Yet most popular programs leave planners solving challenges the day of, which creates driver frustration and service failures. The practice forces planners to react to situations rather than the data—a surefire way to sacrifice utilization and profitability.

Planning should be proactive. Look for a forecasting feature that works days in advance. When planners can see into the future, they can help shape it. This may include imbalance indicators for orders, trucks, and trailers. By working three to five days out, planners can spot issues to shift equipment, broker loads, or solicit additional freight. Mitigating issues in advance improves operational efficiency and lessens the need for costly reactive responses.

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4

Measure What Matters

For most planners, assessing performance happens after the fact. A manually pulled report provides some metrics, but the opportunity for real-time learning does not exist. An effective planning program must answer, “How am I doing?”

Planners need to know how well they operate in the moment and over time. On-screen metrics should include information on the effectiveness of their plans measured against company goals. Important KPIs show the number of deadhead miles, layovers, equipment shifts, on-time service, and maintenance routings.

The system should assess how often the planner follows recommendations or driver match scores. Rather than stick to a weekly or monthly report, the metrics should be updated on the planning screen with each assignment. This enables planners to assess their performance and set goals for improvement that increase utilization, service, and driver satisfaction.

Modern planning programs consider the person behind the wheel when creating the plan.

5

Deliver for the Driver

One of the most critical features to look for in an upgraded planning program is what the system does for the driver. Platforms simply focused on available loads and trucks not only sacrifice optimization but do little, if anything, to factor in driver needs. That is a huge mistake when road pros can always find greener pastures.

Modern planning programs consider the person behind the wheel when creating the plan. When recommending driver-load pairings, the system should factor in routing requests, past service performance, and driver certifications. The platform also should offer load notes to help the driver be successful. Trucks showing a breakdown or maintenance trend can be prioritized for service.

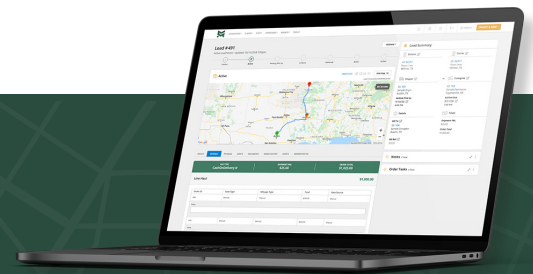




Perhaps most important is using driver pay goals as a data point for load planning. Drivers below a certain threshold can receive longer hauls or priority status to boost their paychecks and prevent turnover. The data should be presented in a way that allows planners to build a series of assignments, rather than one load at a time, to help drivers plan their week. No guesswork, waiting, or wondering. Acting on this level of driver detail levels up planning's impact on the entire operation.

Suboptimal load planning can sink a fleet. Assigning trucks and loads are table stakes, whether by pen and paper or planning software. The difference is the data. The best planning programs aggregate hundreds of pieces of information to create more plans in less time. But most importantly, they identify the best driver for the best load, leading to the best results—better utilization, more margin, and less waste.

This load planning guide is brought to you by Magnus Technologies



Get to the Future Faster with Magnus

Magnus Technology Group, headquartered in Austin, Texas, has 20 years of experience designing, developing, and delivering enterprise TMS software. Our record of innovation continues with a next-generation load planning solution that will set a new industry standard for one-stop visibility and efficiency.

The Magnus TMS platform works seamlessly with the Magnus Driver App, Magnus Carrier Advantage network, and Business Intelligence module to deliver a complete, end-to-end mobile dispatch and order fulfillment solution for truckload fleets to maximize profitability and growth. **Transportation simplified.**

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