

Everything you should tick off when looking into a transport management system

Finding the best transport management system to fit your business can be a challenge. This is more than just buying a software package, it's about understanding why you need it, how it will work for you, and making the most of the program to ensure it makes your business operate more efficiently.

Implementing the right transport management system can reduce your overall transport spend, reduce the amount of paper in the process, and make your whole business more efficient.

Here are 10 things to consider:

1. Keep it simple

Don't try and redesign the world. Find someone who's done it before, talk to your competitors, and listen to recommendations both positive and negative. What's right for someone else isn't necessarily right for you.

The system needs to be simple for you to use. You want something that's going to enhance your business, not be a noose around your neck.

2. Research the programme

Look for a system that has been designed specifically with transport management in mind. If they've not consulted with or been part of the industry, steer clear. It needs to be simple and practical for your type of business.

If your system is going to add value, it needs to also seamlessly integrate with your accounting system. Also consider how well your accounting system is working for you; this might be the perfect time for a change.

3. Is it cost effective

What are you looking to save? The right transport management program will certainly save you time and money in the long run, but you need to be prepared to spend some time learning about the program and what it can do for you.

Be sure to ask what the set-up cost is, and will there be ongoing costs for help and support?

4. Don't fear technology

Don't be scared of technology. It is the way of the future and it can be simple to use, and will certainly make your life way easier. Sit down for five minutes and have a play with your iPad or smartphone – you will be surprised how easy it can be.

5. Cloud

Cloud?! Yes it does sound scary. What it really means is that your information is available to anyone at any time. You can effectively manage your business from anywhere. You can be overseas, or even out on your boat fishing.

6. One data entry

It is important to know that one data entry into your transport management system will flow on to do the various things you want it to do, rather than re-entering the details a number of times. Ask the question, does one data entry flow right through to invoicing?

7. Mobile app

Is there a mobile application? A mobile app ensures your drivers have the correct job information at all times. Ensure the mobile app is applicable to both Apple and Android devices.

8. Paperless

With Cloud storage, everything is saved online and therefore paperless. Contacts, day sheets, pricing, invoicing, and reporting – all online. Your transport management system should remove the hassle of endless paperwork, and again be accessible any time, anywhere.

9. Multiple users

Is the number of users unlimited, or do you pay per user? Be sure to check this one out. It is very handy to be able to have multiple dispatchers or users being able to use the same information at the same time. Ensure your users can have different access levels so they can't see all information.

10. Support

Support is key, especially in the early stages of learning how to use your transport management system. You want to ensure you have the ability to contact someone at all times to assist you with your questions.