![Tai — The TMS for Brokers]

Turn Market Pressure *Into a Strategic* Advantage

Let's face it

Despite early optimism, **2025** is shaping up to be another uphill battle for freight brokers. A recent article in **Reuters** sums up the current climate this way: *"Trade fears fueled a freight binge to kick off the year. It probably presages a nasty hangover. No matter what happens with trade policy, a pullback is inevitable."*

Here's a more complete story:

1 The National Retail Federation reports that, during the second half of **2025**, it expects imports to be down at least **20%** year-over-year.

2 The Port of Los Angeles, a major hub for imports from China and Asia, will receive 35% less traffic than last year.

3 Major trucking routes are seeing cancellation rates above **30%**. And consumers are paying attention.

4 The U.S. economy contracted by 0.3% in Q1. **This is the first dip in three years.**

If you're a freight broker, you're likely feeling this through shrinking gross margins and weakening revenue per shipment. You're dealing with fewer loads, tighter capacity, volatile shipping rates, and longer payment cycles.

Many brokers are hunkering down, cutting costs and staff, and preparing to ride out the storm. It's tempting to respond to market volatility by cutting back.
But what if you took a different approach?

What Successful Brokers Are Planning For the Last Half of 2025

A recent poll asked freight industry professionals how they plan to tackle the current uncertainty of the market. What they learned was that savvy, forward-thinking brokers are not pulling back. Instead, they're investing in strategies and tech that will enhance their efficiency for two reasons: to stay ahead by increasing their productivity, and be ready to scale the minute the market rebounds.

They're doing this through four key strategies:

Investing in new systems that boost productivity, including AI, automation, and machine learning platforms.

Prioritizing automation over manual work to cut costs, eliminate bottlenecks, and improve cash flow.

Expanding teams selectively by hiring for roles that can't be automated, such as customer service and more complex operations.

Exploring alternative business strategies such as freight diversification, expanded freight offerings, and new partnerships.

At the center of all of this is a Transportation Management System (TMS), the brokerage's operating system.

Your TMS is the Foundation of Your Business

Today's most forward-thinking brokers are using their TMS for more than just moving freight. They're using it to build a more resilient and scalable business. The right TMS can help you tackle each of those four critical strategies above.

Investing in New Tech

AI, machine learning, and automation are built into your TMS platform; no customization or IT support is needed.

Prioritizing Workflow Automation

From load matching and status updates to document handling and invoicing, the right TMS eliminates busywork so your team can focus on customer service, problem-solving, and closing new business.

Expanding Teams Selectively

When your TMS handles routine processes, your staff has more time for high-touch roles. This means you can expand your team with intention, hiring for value-added positions rather than just volume.

Exploring Alternative Business Strategies

With a centralized system that offers you better data and greater flexibility, it becomes easier to expand your offerings and your market share.
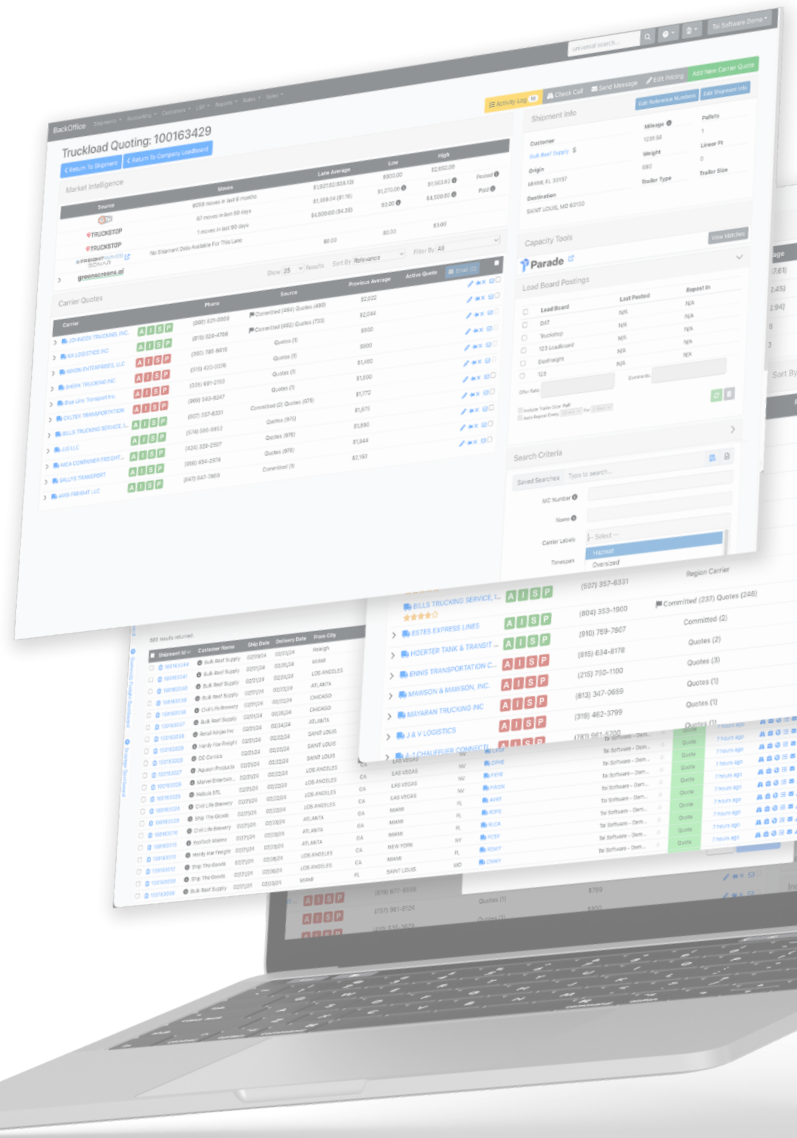
A good TMS will never replace experience; it enhances it. In times like these, it's critical. The right TMS isn't just a back-office upgrade. It's a growth engine.

Why a Generic TMS Falls Short

Like freight brokers, not all TMSs are the same. Many packaged generic TMS platforms claim to support all freight operations, but most weren't designed for brokers. Here's where they typically fail:

Slow Implementation

Even though they promote their "out-of-the-box" versatility, generic systems often take months to go live. They require substantial internal IT resources and extensive (and expensive) customization to make them work for a specific business.

No Broker-Specific Workflows or Automation

It's impossible to solve labor constraints with solutions that don't understand the work you do. Generic platforms that weren't built for brokers often miss key nuances in FTL and LTL quoting, margin tracking, carrier compliance, and back-office workflows. Other systems don't support both FTL and LTL modal needs. Automating these specific workflows can be the difference between winning more loads and maximizing your profit margin.

Disjointed and Hard-to-Access Tools

With generic systems, only some of the common tools used by brokers are available for integration. Users often end up juggling multiple systems or software for booking, invoicing, and carrier management. In addition, the integrations available within the TMS are shallow or unreliable, meaning brokers spend too much time troubleshooting IT connections or finding workarounds to get their work done.

No IT Support and Outdated Technology

A generic TMS often runs on outdated, on-premise servers that limit adaptation, slow down operations, and create security risks. Without strong IT support or cloud-based infrastructure, these systems struggle to keep up. They offer limited data access, poor integration capabilities, and lower security standards, putting your business and your customer information at risk.

The Core Capabilities Brokers Should Demand from Their TMS

Considering the slow market, finding resources that help you capitalize on every emerging opportunity is vital. Digital intelligence, analytics, and tracking tools enable you to scale your daily operations safely.

Why?

Because guesswork is expensive. Your TMS should help you avoid it by providing:

- Access to historical lane data and real-time rates
- Lane forecasting tools
- Quote win/loss analytics
- KPIs tied to profitability and performance
- Carrier vetting tools

This is all possible with a platform built from the ground up for freight brokers rather than a system adapted from shipper or carrier software systems.

1. Automation that Works

FreightCaviar reports that 42% of brokers spend at least an hour a day manually auditing paperwork. That's 260 hours per year lost on one specific back-office task. Not to mention that 93% of brokers still handle invoice disputes over email and phone, wasting valuable time chasing paperwork instead of booking loads.

You need a TMS that offers the following:

- Faster access to payments via factoring or payment platforms
- Real-time visibility into receivables and payables
- Automated paperwork filing and storage
- AI-driven invoice auditing, reconciliation, and processing

And that's just the back office. Imagine how much time your team could save in quoting, booking, and tracking with automated workflows that support your specific processes, carriers, and customers.

Your TMS should eliminate repetitive and time-consuming front-office paperwork with smart time-saving tools like:

- Real-time notification of updated load status (inquiry, quoted, confirmed, dispatch, and tracking)
- Automated email capture and storage in load activity logs
- Automatic load building from customer inquiries
- AI-driven branded communication templates for consistent customer service

2. Built-In Integrations

Your TMS should be your team's single source of truth, the place they go for information, analytics, communication, and task management. It should include direct integrations to:

- Email & CRM
- LTL carriers integrations
- Carrier onboarding tools
- Load boards
- Rate intelligence tools

- Load tracking tools
- Accounting software
- Factoring platforms
- Claims and insurance tools

These are not just digital connections. They're crucial opportunities to protect and scale your operations. Because you'll use them daily, every integration must be reliable and strong. If they're not, your single source of truth becomes the source of lost money and time.

3. Reliable and Expert Tech Support

With generic TMS systems, once you go live, you're on your own when something goes wrong, or your team has usage questions. Instead, the best TMS providers will consider themselves your partners in operations. You won't need an IT department or software expert.

The best TMS includes
- Cloud-based setup
- Guided and documented onboarding
- Responsive human support

Operate Lean. Win Big.

You don't need a generic, bloated TMS that tries to be everything to everyone. You need a system that understands your business and delivers where it counts.

Tai TMS is purpose-built for freight brokers. It offers enterprise-level power without the overhead. With Tai, you can automate manual tasks, improve margins, and increase your freight capacity using your existing team.

- No IT department required
- No pricing specialists needed
- No hidden fees or costly workarounds

Ready to Take the Next Step Now?
Book a Demo Today

Schedule a Call