



Load Board Buyer's Guide

11 features to look for in a load board to take your business success to new heights



Introduction

Whether you're a carrier or an owner-operator, a load board is an essential tool for success. A quality load board ensures that drivers and freight are matched quickly, that relationships can develop and grow, and that the industry as a whole keeps moving forward.

If you're looking to grow your business, you need to be careful and diligent when selecting your load board to ensure you get one that meets all your needs both today and in the future. Before we dive into what to look for in your load board, let's quickly go over the basics.



Types of load boards

Load boards are online matching systems that enable those in the trucking industry to find suitable carriers, brokers, or loads. Think of them as digital freight matching services that save everyone time and energy!

Load boards come in a few forms, including:

Free load boards

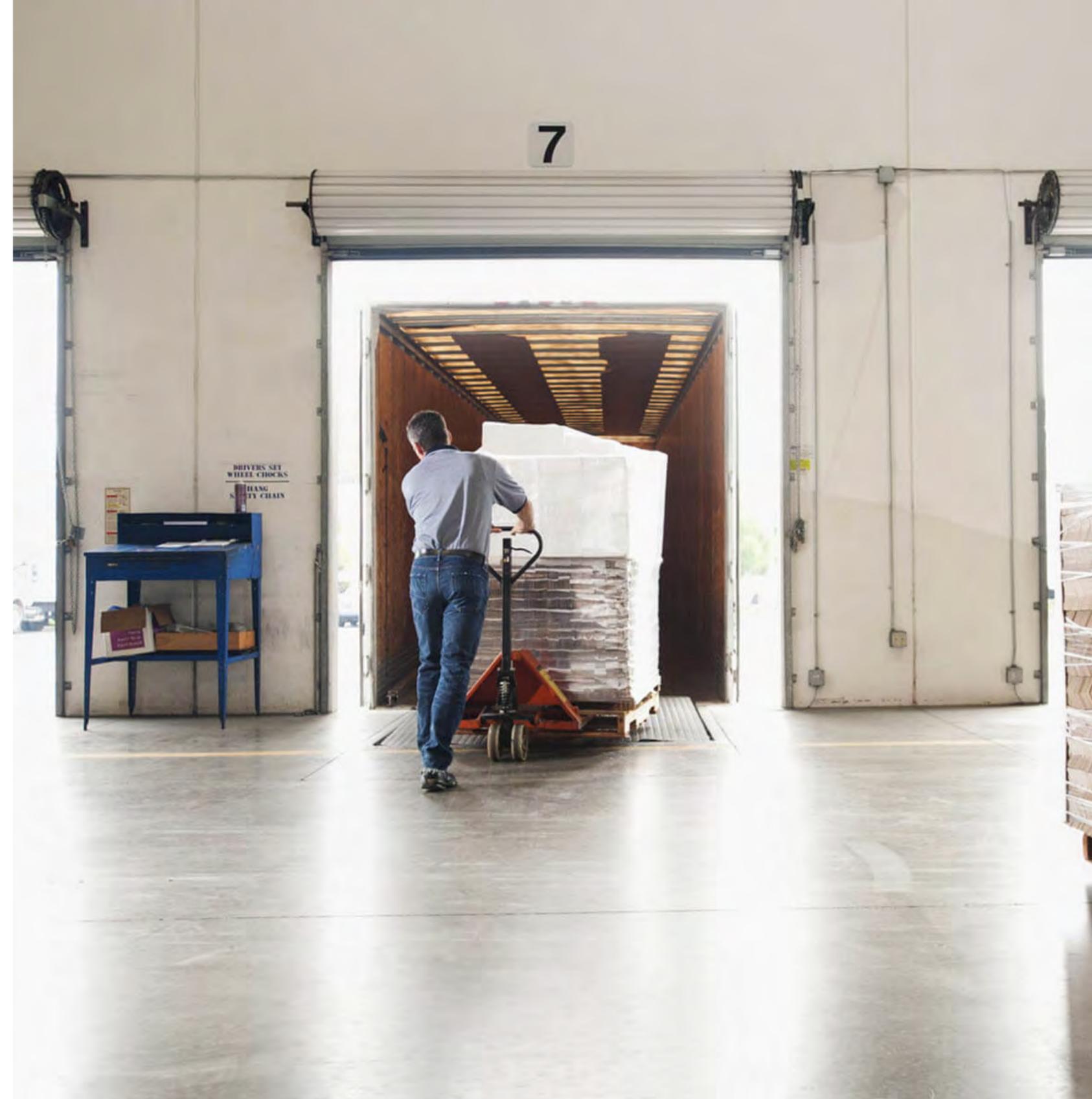
For those hesitant to invest in a paid load board right away, there are plenty of free options to choose from. These free load boards typically include ads or product placement and, when it comes to searching, you may be limited to basic searches or you may have a limited number of searches.

Paid load boards

While free loads have their purpose, paid loads generally offer greater functionality, better filtering capabilities, a more powerful search feature, and a more extensive selection of loads and carriers. Usually, you'll need to purchase a monthly or yearly subscription to use paid load boards, so remember to set aside room in your budget.

Specific load boards

While expansive free and paid load boards suit most people, some people want load boards that concentrate on specific types of freight, like less-than-truckloads (LTL) or hot shot freight.

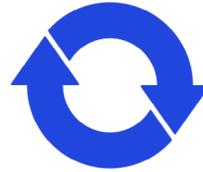




Number of Loads



Load Locations



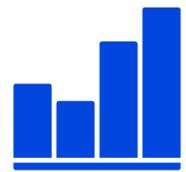
Load Update Frequency



Alert Features



Partner Info



Market Data

What to consider when choosing a load board



Ease of Use



Mobile App



Integrations



Value Add



First Month Free

There are a lot of load boards out there, but some will do more for your business than others. Here's what you need to pay attention to when selecting a load board:

The number of loads

First and foremost, you'll want to choose a load board with many loads. If you go with a smaller load board, you'll likely have to consult multiple boards to find the perfect freight, which can take up valuable time and quickly become confusing. On the other hand, if you use a load board with thousands of new loads each day, you'll be able to find your ideal load in no time. The more options, the better!

When you use a larger load board, you'll also be able to connect with more people. Whether you're a broker looking for carriers to work with or an owner-operator looking for loads to haul, you'll want a popular load board that can help you expand your network.

While there are many load boards on the market, none can compete with DAT when it comes to number (and quality!) of loads. With over 400 million loads and trucks posted in 2022, the [DAT load board](#) has everything brokers, shippers, and carriers could want, including many loads exclusive to DAT.

The location of loads

A load board is no good if all its loads are located in an area of the country where you don't operate. At the very least, you should choose a board with loads in your region, but ideally you should choose a load board with freight available all over the country. You never know where you'll end up in a few years and you don't want to be left scrambling for a new load board to find freight in a new region.



448
million
loads & trucks posted
on DAT annually





Load update frequency

A load board will be useless if you can't see recent loads. As a carrier or owner-operator, you want to find quality loads that meet your needs — and you can't do that if you're looking at an out-of-date load board. Otherwise your competition will snatch the perfect freight out from under your nose using other load boards before you know what's happened! Similarly, brokers and shippers can't succeed without up-to-date information on truck availability.

Stale data can kill your business, so opt for a load board that offers real-time updates. When you have a load board that updates every minute or less, you'll be able to stay in the know and make valuable connections with carriers, shippers, or brokers fast.



Alert and notification features for loads

In the same vein, look for load boards that offer alerts or notifications. As a carrier or owner-operator, you'll never miss a load that meets your needs. Similarly, as a broker, you'll be able to quickly match shippers' loads to available drivers, and as a shipper, you'll get your goods in customers' hands faster than ever. When you opt for a load board that can send alerts or notifications about new freight and truck posts in real-time, you'll never miss out on a perfect opportunity.

“Stale data can kill your business, so opt for a load board that offers real-time updates.”



Information on potential partners

Who you work with matters. Carriers and owner-operators want to work with brokers that pay on time, while shippers prefer to work with brokers who are knowledgeable and reliable. Brokers want to work with carriers that can quickly and safely deliver cargo.

However, just because someone is on a load board doesn't mean you can automatically trust them to get the job done. That's why it's important to use a load board that provides information on potential partners. For example, the DAT load board provides company reviews, credit scores, average days-to-pay information, and more so you'll know who you're working with before initiating contact.



Market data

Getting the scoop on potential partners is just half the story. It's also important that your load board offers insights into what's happening in the market to help you make better business decisions. After all, you can't negotiate rates if you don't know what everyone else is paying or charging. You risk going too high or too low and losing out on money or alienating brokers, shippers, or carriers who would have otherwise worked with you. To avoid that, choose a load board that offers up-to-date insights on market rates for a wide variety of lanes.

National Spot Rates

Spot rates get end-of-month lift



VAN



FLATBED



REEFER

Ease of use

The last thing you need is a complicated load board that only frustrates you and slows you down. There's no need to waste time and energy learning how to use a load board with a steep learning curve when plenty of other load boards offer manageable systems.

Before choosing your load board, try to get a feel for how searching and posting work. Look for video tutorials, forums, or even free demos to truly understand how easy (or difficult) it is to use every board you consider.

Mobile app availability

Another major factor in terms of ease of use is mobile app availability. After all, we use our phones for almost everything these days, and that should include our load board.

By choosing a load board with a mobile app, you'll be able to access your full load board whenever and wherever you want and receive real-time updates.



Integration with other tools

A load board that seamlessly integrates with other tools is invaluable for carriers, brokers, and shippers. With greater visibility and control into operations in a single system, you can manage transportation and logistics with more confidence and ease.

For example, the DAT load board seamlessly integrates with various TMS software options, making finding high-quality loads and partners easier than ever. With DAT, you'll be able to access everything you need from one place, keeping customers up to date, sharing tracking links, and providing accurate estimated delivery times.

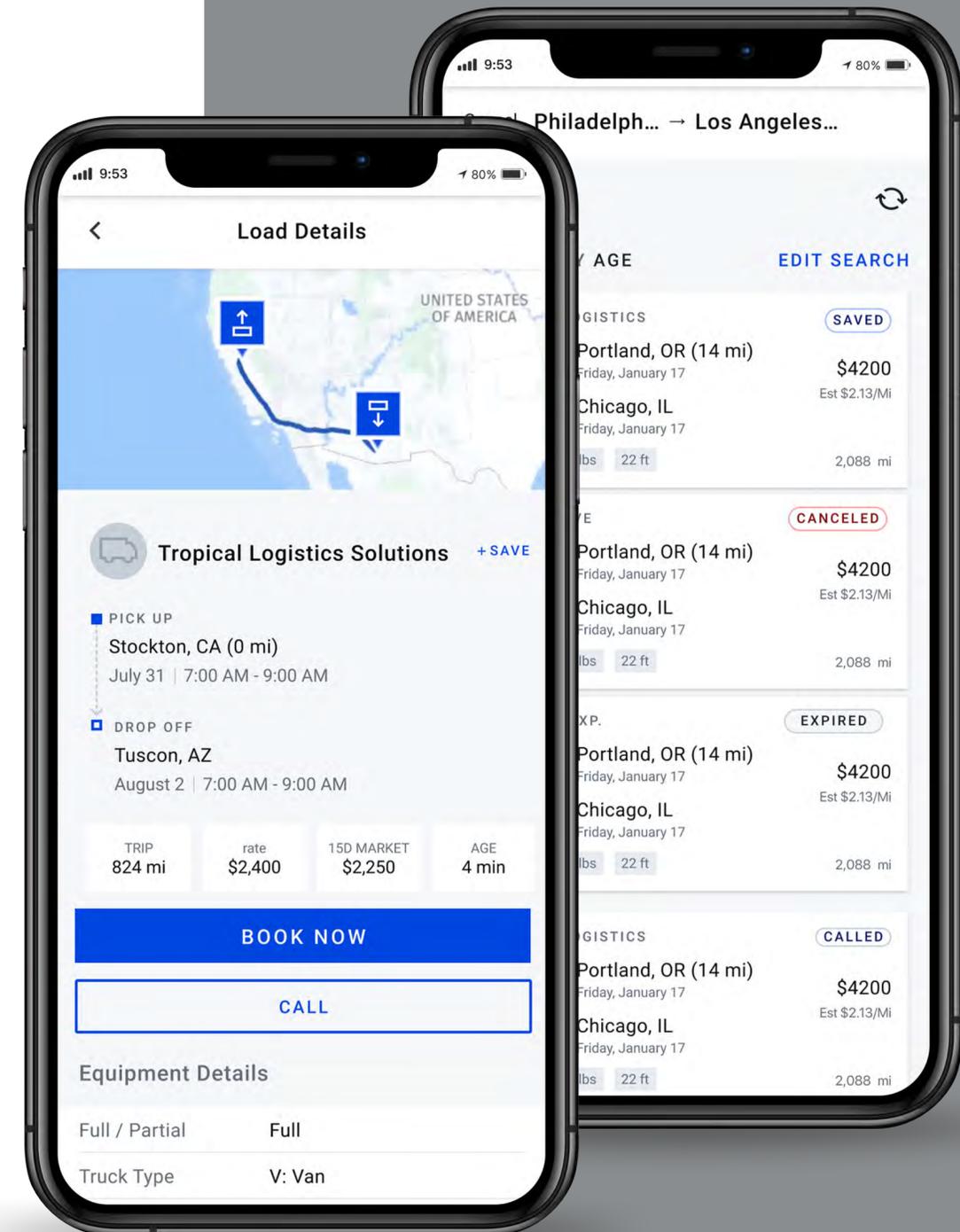
Value-add features

A great load board is more than just a place for finding freight. The best load boards offer value-added features that can help your business. The more things your load board can help you accomplish, the better!

For example, the DAT load board helps you factor loads and find higher-paying routes. It also offers information on average days-to-pay, freight rates, market conditions, and more — all of which can help your business get and stay ahead of the competition.

First month free

There's no better way to understand whether a load board will meet your needs than to try it out for free. You'll be able to see exactly how the load board works and determine whether it's the right fit for your business. Choose a load board that's confident enough to let the product do the talking and test it for yourself.





DAT

Grow your business with the DAT load board!

Looking for a load board that checks all of these boxes and more? Look no further than the [DAT load board](#)! Featuring the largest selection of freight, current market data, value-add features, and much more, the DAT load board has everything carriers, brokers, and shippers need wrapped in one easy-to-use tool.

Sign up for the DAT load board today to get started!

DAT Freight & Analytics