
BOOK • RENT • ROUTE

BOX TRUCK GUIDE

Book work before the asset.

Know the weight thresholds.

Price every mile and hour.

DEMAND | COMPLIANCE | LOAD | MARGIN

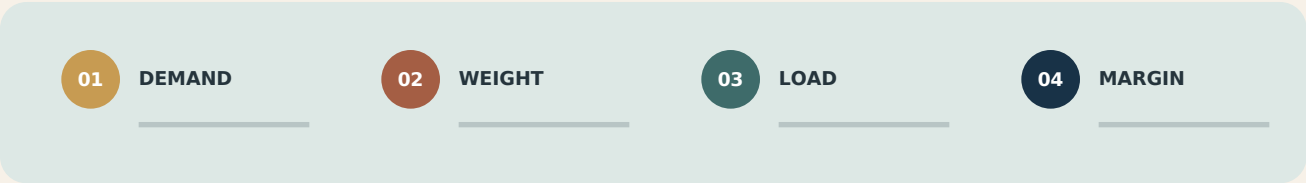
Veteran's Strategic Solutions LLC



START HERE

How to Use This Guide

Read the core guide first. Then use the worksheets to test demand without buying a truck, choose the correct vehicle class, budget equipment and insurance, estimate jobs and routes, document scope and cargo, invoice completed work, track gross margin, and control DOT, weight, driver, vehicle, cargo, securement, insurance, claims, and state or local operating risks.

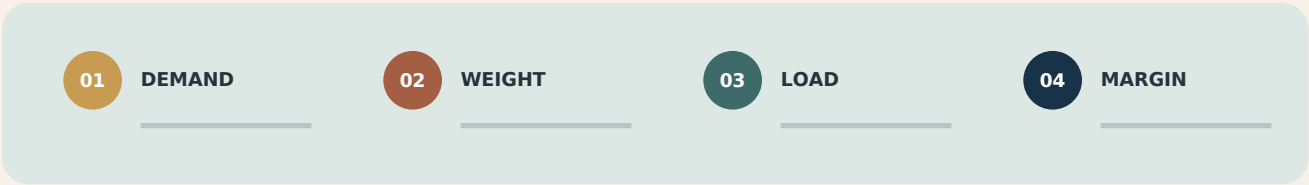


ASSET-LIGHT TEST | Book the job first, rent the correct truck, and prove route economics before financing.

PIECE	USE
Core guide	Book and complete profitable work with a rented truck before financing a vehicle.
Operating kit	Use the startup, budget, estimate, hauling agreement, invoice, job tracker, and compliance pages for every load.

CORE GUIDE 01

1. The bet



The core assumption that must be true: that there is enough commercial and institutional hauling inside a 60-mile radius — final-mile, appliance and furniture delivery, office and government moves, medical equipment, event logistics, cleanouts — to keep a truck earning, without competing against the established household movers.

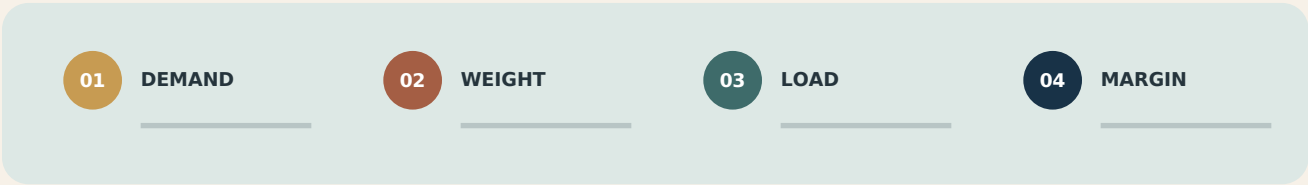
The opening is somewhere else, and it is visible in the review data.

The fastest zero-budget test: call twenty local businesses and ask one question — “when you need something moved or delivered and it’s too big for a van, who do you call?” If most name the same one or two companies, the market may be saturated. If most make do themselves or wait for a vendor, there may be a business to test.

Cost: a week of phone calls. Do this before spending a dollar.

BUSINESS LENS	CONTROL
Weight	GVWR and operation type determine the compliance path before the load moves.
Asset	Prove profitable demand with rentals before financing a truck.
Margin	Track job contribution after rental or ownership cost, mileage, crew, wait time, and claims.

1. The bet Continued



Three reasons it fails before any money is spent:

The truck sits. A truck payment, insurance, and registration are fixed; revenue is not. One week of no calls does not stop the bill. Utilisation, not rate, is what kills small trucking operations.

The compliance load is underestimated. For-hire hauling at 10,001 lbs and up brings a USDOT number, driver qualification file, medical card, hours of service, annual inspections and an accident register. None of that is optional and all of it takes time.

He buys the truck before the owner has the customer. The order that fails is: buy asset, then find work. The order that works is: get committed work, then buy the asset to serve it.

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2. Who pays, in their own words

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The furniture or appliance retailer. “I can sell it, I just can’t get it to them. I’ve got one guy with a trailer and when he’s out, I’m telling customers two weeks.”

The property manager. “Somebody skipped out and left a whole apartment full of furniture. I need it gone by Friday so I can turn the unit.”

The office or clinic manager. “We’re moving down the hall, not across town. The moving companies want a full-day minimum and it’s a four-hour job.”

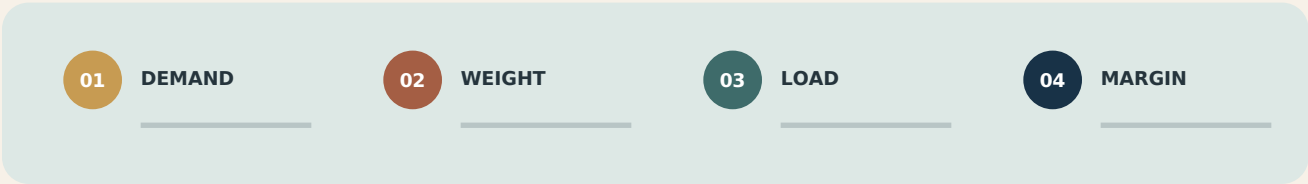
The event organiser. “I need tables, chairs and staging picked up Friday and back Sunday night. Nobody wants weekend work.”



SAFE LOADING | Match cargo, equipment, securement, liftgate, crew, access, and declared value to the job.

2. Who pays, in their own words

Continued

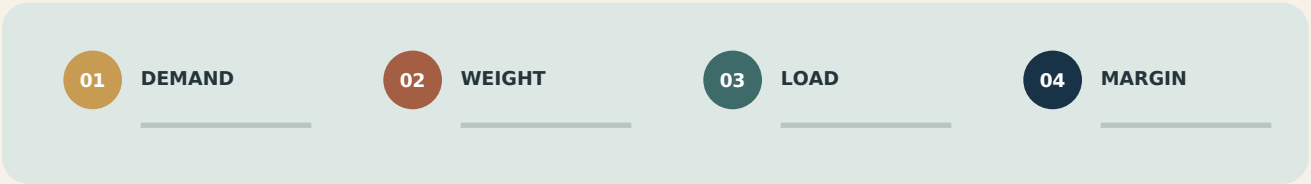


The small institution. “We had it in the budget but our own truck died and nobody here has a license for anything bigger than a pickup.”

The pattern in all five: it is not a big enough job for a moving company and it is too big for a pickup. That gap is the business.

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3. The smallest version he can charge for



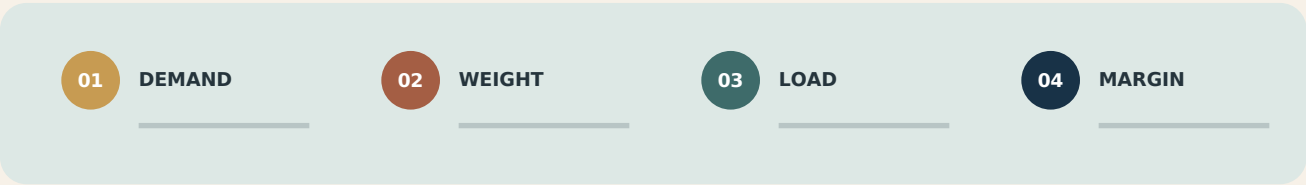
This proves demand with no asset, no payment, no depreciation. If the owner cannot fill a rented truck profitably, the owner certainly cannot fill a financed one.

What it charges for on day one: apartment and rental-unit cleanouts, single-item delivery for a local retailer, an office suite relocation, a weekend event load-in and load-out.

The rule: do not buy a truck until the same customers have called back a second time.

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4. What it actually takes



The line that decides everything: 10,001 pounds

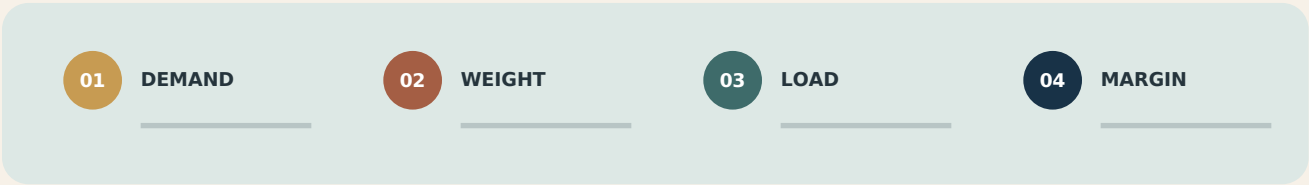
Under 49 CFR 390.5, a vehicle is a commercial motor vehicle at 10,001 lbs GVWR or more. Not 26,001. That is the CDL line, and it is a different line entirely.

Version A — under 10,001 lbs GVWR

Version B — 26-ft box truck at 25,999-26,000 GVWR

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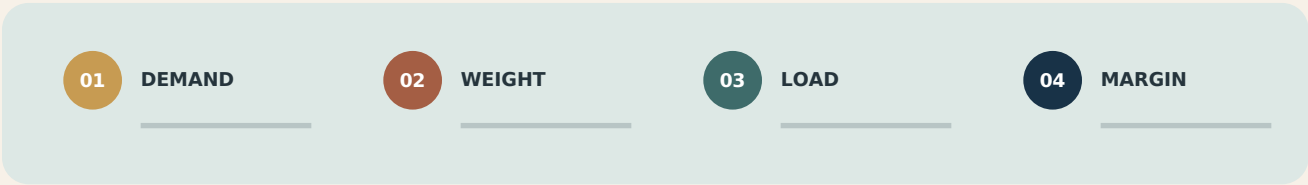
4. What it actually takes Continued



Where to get each thing cheapest

BUSINESS LENS	CONTROL
Weight	GVWR and operation type determine the compliance path before the load moves.
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5. Pricing



Rates below are the structures used in this market. Get three competitor quotes before publishing a price list — that is a phone call, not a guess.

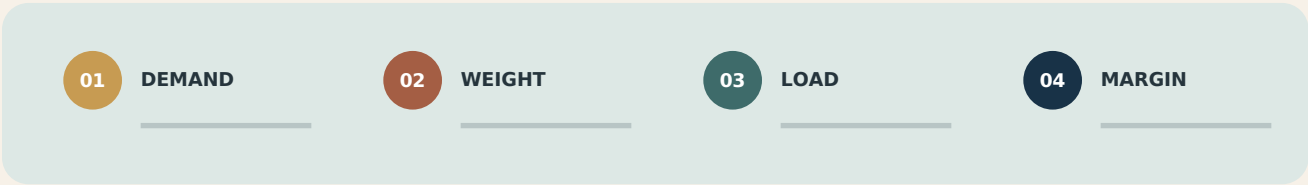
Low — hourly, two-hour minimum. Simple. Competes on price, which is the weakest position available and attracts the customers who argue about invoices.

Mid — flat rate by job type. Cleanout by unit size, delivery by mileage band, office move by room count. Customers prefer knowing the number in advance, and it rewards the owner for being fast rather than punishing him.

Premium — contract and retainer. A retailer pays a monthly minimum for guaranteed delivery capacity. A property manager pays per turn. Predictable, invoiced monthly, and it is the only version that produces the past-performance record that opens government work.

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5. Pricing Continued



Recommendation: mid-tier flat rate for one-off jobs, premium retainer as the goal. Never hourly. Hourly rewards slowness and invites disputes, and the two 2.5-star incumbents are already competing at the bottom.

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6. First 90 days, and the one metric

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Days 31–60 — build the record. Ten paid jobs on rented equipment. Photograph every one. Ask every customer for a Google review; the two-star incumbents make that a weapon. Approach the local retailers and property managers directly.

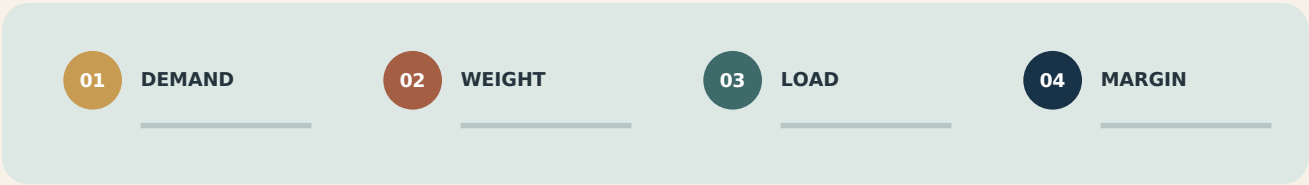
Days 61–90 — decide. If there are repeat customers and a booked pipeline, buy the truck sized to the work actually appearing. If not, walk away having spent rental fees instead of a down payment.

The one metric: booked days per month. Not revenue, not rate, not calls. A truck that earns twelve days a month is a hobby. One that earns eighteen to twenty is a business. Track it from the first rental, before there is a truck to track it on.



ROUTE CONTROL | Price mileage, drive time, stops, wait time, deadhead, fuel, rental, and backup capacity.

7. Honest assessment



What is genuinely good here: small delivery contracts can build documented past performance for larger work, and reliability, schedules, load plans, documentation, and showing up are valuable differentiators.

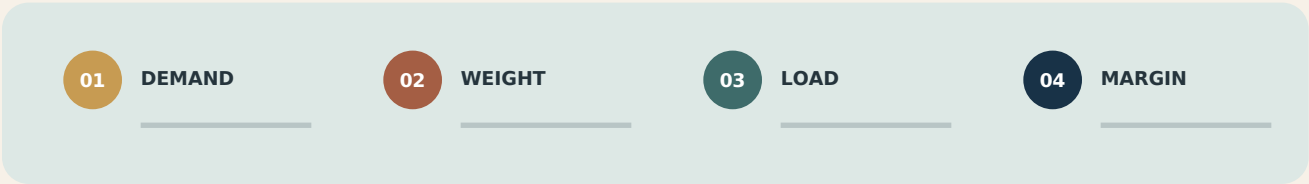
What is against it. This is the most capital-intensive line in the portfolio by a wide margin. A truck is a fixed cost that does not care whether the phone rings. The compliance load at 10,001 lbs is real work, and none of it produces revenue.

The recommendation. Version A, and only after the twenty phone calls. A sub-10,001 lb truck covers cleanouts, single-item delivery and small office moves — which is most of the gap — with no USDOT number, no medical card and no hours of service. Version B is what the owner buys in year two if, and only if, the booked-days number justifies it.

BUSINESS LENS	CONTROL
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Margin	Track job contribution after rental or ownership cost, mileage, crew, wait time, and claims.

CORE REFERENCE

Federal Weight and Operating Reference



Use the source figures as the planning baseline. Replace local, personal, already-owned, and time-sensitive assumptions with actual quotes and requirements before launch.

Vehicle	Cargo van or small box truck spec'd under 10,001 lbs GVWR
CMV status	Not a commercial motor vehicle under 49 CFR 390.5
CDL	No
USDOT number	Not required on weight alone
Medical card, HOS, DQ file	No
State or local requirement	Check licensing, zoning, and tax rules for your own city and state before starting.
State or local requirement	Check licensing, zoning, and tax rules for your own city and state before starting.
Federal insurance minimums	Exempt. FMCSA states property carriers under 10,001 lbs GVWR are outside 49 CFR Part 387 Subpart A, absent hazmat
Capacity	Roughly a one-bedroom apartment, or a pallet or two

CORE REFERENCE

Startup Equipment and Compliance Reference

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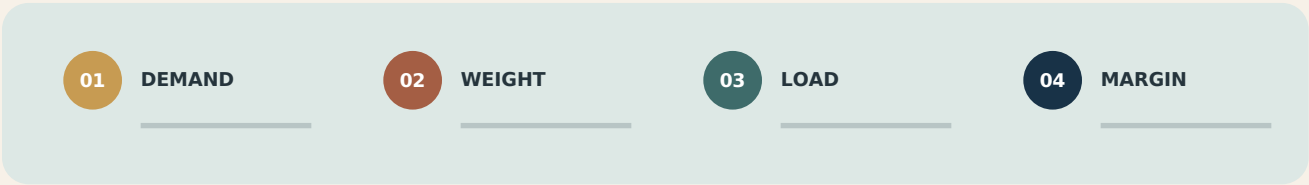
MARGIN

Use the source figures as the planning baseline. Replace local, personal, already-owned, and time-sensitive assumptions with actual quotes and requirements before launch.

Vehicle	26-ft box, spec'd just under the CDL line
CMV status	Yes, from 10,001 lbs up
CDL	No, if GVWR is 26,000 or less — the CDL line is 26,001 under 49 CFR 383.5 and 383.91
State or local requirement	Check licensing, zoning, and tax rules for your own city and state before starting.
Medical card	Yes
Driver qualification file	Yes
Hours of service	Yes
Annual DOT inspection	Yes
Vehicle marking	Company name and USDOT number displayed
Accident register	Yes
State or local requirement	Check licensing, zoning, and tax rules for your own city and state before starting.
State or local requirement	Check licensing, zoning, and tax rules for your own city and state before starting.
Interstate for-hire	Operating authority (MC number), BOC-3, UCR, and \$750,000 minimum public liability — 49 CFR 387.9, for-hire interstate nonhazardous property at 10,001 lbs or more
Drug and alcohol testing	No. Parts 380, 382 and 383 use the CDL definition of a CMV, not the 390.5 one, so testing follows the 26,001 lb line
IFTA	Only above 26,000 lbs or 3+ axles across multiple jurisdictions, so not applicable here

CORE REFERENCE

Source Pricing Reference



Use the source figures as the planning baseline. Replace local, personal, already-owned, and time-sensitive assumptions with actual quotes and requirements before launch.

Item	Cheapest route
USDOT number	Free, direct from FMCSA. Never pay a filing service
State or local requirement	Check licensing, zoning, and tax rules for your own city and state before starting.
State or local requirement	Check licensing, zoning, and tax rules for your own city and state before starting.
Insurance	Quote three. His existing agent, plus two commercial transport specialists
Pallet jack, straps, blankets, dollies	Tool retailer or verified surplus source [VERIFY]
Load boards	Free tier first; do not subscribe before there is a truck earning

Startup Checklist

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DONE	ACTION	OWNER DATE NOTES
☐	Define the exact box truck guide customer, problem, deliverable, service area or channel, and buying trigger.	
☐	Run the source's smallest low-cost demand test before buying major equipment or committing to long-term overhead.	
☐	Write the offer, inclusions, exclusions, timing, acceptance standard, and customer responsibilities.	
☐	Check licensing, zoning, and tax rules for your own city and state before starting.	
☐	Confirm federal, state, local, tax, advertising, privacy, accessibility, contract, and record requirements [VERIFY].	
☐	Obtain general liability, professional liability, cyber, property, auto, workers' compensation, and client-required coverage as applicable [VERIFY].	
☐	Create intake, estimate, scope, approval, delivery, quality-control, incident, invoice, and closeout records.	
☐	Price from actual labor, materials, equipment, travel, payment fees, taxes, rework, overhead, and reserve.	
☐	Complete one paid pilot and document the result only with written customer permission.	
☐	Track the one metric from the source, plus gross margin, delivery time, exceptions, referrals, and repeat work.	

WORKSHEET 02

Equipment and Budget Worksheet

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HAULING SYSTEM | Standardize quotes, inspections, loading, securement, delivery, claims, maintenance, and records.

ITEM	NEEDED	ESTIMATE	ACTUAL	NOTES
Business formation, registrations, licensing, tax, contracts, and professional review [VERIFY]				
General liability, professional liability, cyber, property, auto, workers' compensation, and client coverage [VERIFY]				
Core equipment, tools, supplies, safety gear, storage, maintenance, replacement, and backups				
Computer, phone, software, scheduling, payment, e-signature, records, security, and backup				
Website, business email, phone, listings, signage, accessibility, privacy, and marketing [VERIFY]				
Original intake, estimate, scope, checklist, quality, incident, invoice, and closeout templates				
Training, credentials, continuing education, renewal, testing, and professional memberships [VERIFY]				
Vehicle, delivery, travel, fuel, mileage, parking, tolls, rental, and route costs as applicable				
Bookkeeping, merchant fees, taxes, legal review, data protection, and records [VERIFY]				
Contractor, employee, payroll, supervision, quality control, and administrative support [VERIFY]				
Working capital, refunds, rework, claims, chargebacks, downtime, deductibles, and reserve				

BUDGET CONTROL

TOTAL ESTIMATE: _____ TOTAL ACTUAL: _____ CASH RESERVE: _____

Pricing and Estimate Template

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MARGIN

CLIENT	SERVICE LOCATION	ESTIMATE NUMBER	DATE

SERVICE OR INPUT	BASIS	AMOUNT
Discovery or intake	Customer and scope	
Core service or product	Quantity and basis	
Materials or direct costs	Actual or allowance	
Labor or professional time	Hours or fixed scope	
Equipment, delivery, or travel	Written basis	
Documentation and quality control	Included or added	
Approved option or add-on	Written basis	
Rush, after-hours, or change [VERIFY]	Written basis	
Tax or required fee [VERIFY]	Confirmed basis	
Total estimate		

TOTAL ESTIMATE	DEPOSIT OR AUTHORIZATION	VALID THROUGH

WORKSHEET 04

Box Truck Delivery and Hauling Agreement

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FIELD	AGREED DETAIL
Customer, legal entity, contacts, billing, service or delivery location, dates, and decision-maker	
Customer need, current condition, objective, constraints, success standard, and source documents	
Selected offer, quantities, deliverables, inclusions, exclusions, options, and completion standard	
Schedule, access, dependencies, customer preparation, approvals, delays, and communication	
Materials, equipment, substitutions, delivery, storage, utilities, security, and site conditions [VERIFY]	
Inspection, testing, checklist, documentation, acceptance, correction, and handoff	
Change orders, added work, hidden conditions, cancellation, rescheduling, and out-of-scope requests	
Fee, deposit, expenses, tax, invoicing, payment, late payment, refunds, and chargebacks [VERIFY]	
Licensing, permits, insurance, safety, privacy, accessibility, and customer-required controls [VERIFY]	
Warranty, maintenance, service response, damage, loss, limitation, and claim procedure [VERIFY]	
Confidentiality, records, photos, data, testimonials, portfolio use, retention, and deletion [VERIFY]	
Completion, acceptance, closeout, support period, complaint, dispute, termination, and signatures [VERIFY]	

Invoice Template

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MARGIN

BUSINESS	CLIENT	INVOICE NUMBER	DATE DUE

DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	RATE	AMOUNT
Discovery or intake			
Core service or product			
Materials or direct cost			
Delivery or travel			
Documentation or quality control			
Approved option			
Approved change			
Tax or required fee [VERIFY]			

SUMMARY	AMOUNT
Subtotal	
Tax [VERIFY]	
Credits / adjustments	
Total	
Balance due	

Job Log and Lead Tracker

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MARGIN

DATE	LEAD SOURCE	NEED OR SCOPE	QUOTE	STATUS NEXT STEP

DATE	CUSTOMER / LOAD	MILES	REVENUE	DIRECT COST	MARGIN
DATE	CUSTOMER / LOAD	MILES	REVENUE	DIRECT COST	MARGIN
DATE	CUSTOMER / LOAD	MILES	REVENUE	DIRECT COST	MARGIN
DATE	CUSTOMER / LOAD	MILES	REVENUE	DIRECT COST	MARGIN

DATE	CUSTOMER / LOAD	MILES	REVENUE	DIRECT COST	MARGIN
DATE	CUSTOMER / LOAD	MILES	REVENUE	DIRECT COST	MARGIN

ONE METRIC

GROSS MARGIN / JOB: _____ PAID MILES: _____ CLAIMS / EXCEPTIONS: _____

Box Truck Compliance and Load Safety

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Check licensing, zoning, and tax rules for your own city and state before starting.

CHECK	CONTROL	INITIALS NOTES
☐	Licensing, zoning, tax, advertising, privacy, accessibility, safety, environmental, and local rules are confirmed [VERIFY].	
☐	Required insurance, certificates, limits, exclusions, additional insureds, drivers, workers, and subcontractors are confirmed [VERIFY].	
☐	Written scope defines the offer, exclusions, responsibilities, schedule, acceptance, payment, warranty, and change control.	
☐	Equipment, tools, vehicles, products, software, storage, access, and backups are inspected and fit for the actual work [VERIFY].	
☐	Training, credentials, permits, inspections, records, recurring renewals, and customer requirements are current [VERIFY].	
☐	Customer, payment, property, employee, health, identity, and confidential data are minimized and protected [VERIFY].	
☐	Pricing, credentials, affiliations, testimonials, savings, results, and outcome claims are truthful and documented.	
☐	Incident, damage, spill, injury, complaint, refund, breach, interruption, and escalation procedures are written [VERIFY].	
☐	Work stops for unsafe conditions, missing authorization, inadequate coverage, prohibited scope, deception, or requirements outside competency.	

STOP RULE

Do not dispatch until the vehicle class, GVWR, driver qualification, operating authority, insurance, cargo, declared value, route, access, equipment, crew, securement, inspection, hours, weather, and delivery authorization are confirmed [VERIFY].