Build or buy?

A practical scorecard for the trucking workflow you need to fix.

Start with one workflow: driver onboarding, yard management, phone routing, billing or document entry. Compare a real off-the-shelf option with a clearly scoped custom build.

Company _____ Workflow _____

01 Score what matters to your operation

Rate each option from 0 (does not meet the need) to 5 (meets it well). Multiply by the suggested weight. Adjust weights before scoring; use vendor evidence, demos and a written scope.

DECISION CRITERION	WT.	BUY x WT.	BUILD x WT.
Daily workflow fit Can office staff complete the real task without a side spreadsheet?	3		
Systems and data Can it connect to your tools and avoid repeat data entry?	3		
Ownership and exit Can you export usable data and understand who owns the code?	2		
Time to usable software Does the rollout fit your deadline and migration capacity?	2		
Three-year total cost Include licenses, build, hosting, support, migration and changes.	3		
Support and change Who fixes problems, maintains integrations and approves updates?	2		
WEIGHTED TOTAL	Suggested weights: 75 points possible		

02 Use the score to start a decision

BUY: proven fit, simpler rollout

A standard tool handles the core workflow and its ongoing fees, limits and data exports are acceptable.

BUILD: a specific gap worth fixing

A valuable workflow cannot be covered cleanly, and you can own the scope, budget and operating decisions.

A higher total is a discussion aid. An unmet must-have can rule out either option.

Put numbers to the decision.

Use your own records. Keep recoverable capacity separate from cash savings.

03 Calculate your annual baseline

Fill in the inputs and annual amounts. This worksheet uses 52 weeks and 12 months.

A — Manual office work

Staff ____ x hours/week each ____ x loaded hourly cost $____ x 52

Annual cost $ _____

B — Late or missed billing exposure

Invoices/month ____ x late or missed fraction ____% x average $____ x 12

Annual exposure $ _____

C — Software subscriptions

Total monthly subscriptions $____ x 12

Annual cost $ _____

Billing exposure is not automatically lost revenue. Late invoices may affect timing only. Exclude amounts already collected, and avoid counting the same benefit twice.

04 Choose conservative and stretch assumptions

Enter your recovery rates. Ranges shown are calculator assumptions, not reported results.

ANNUAL BASELINE	CONSERVATIVE	STRETCH
A. Manual work (25-50%)	____% = $_____	____% = $_____
B. Billing recovery (10-30%)	____% = $_____	____% = $_____
C. Tools removed (10-30%)	____% = $_____	____% = $_____
ESTIMATED RECOVERABLE / YEAR	$_____	$_____

Each result = baseline x recovery rate; total = A + B + C. This is a gross estimate before implementation and operating costs. Labor capacity becomes cash savings only if paid work changes.

05 Compare the full cost before committing

Three-year cost: upfront setup/build + migration/training + 36 x monthly licenses, hosting and support + expected changes. Buy $_____ Build $_____

Next step: bring the scorecard, one real workflow and sample records to a software call. These are planning estimates, not a quote, guarantee or reported client results.