**Tackling the Trucking Industry’s Top 10 Concerns With Algorithms, Machine Learning and Tech**

In a recent [white paper](https://truckingresearch.org/2019/10/06/critical-issues-in-the-trucking-industry-2019/), the American Transportation Research Institute (ATRI) released a list of the top concerns facing the trucking industry:

1. Driver shortage
2. Hours of Service (HOS)
3. Driver compensation
4. Detention/delay at customer facilities
5. Truck parking
6. Driver retention
7. Electronic Logging Device (ELD) mandate
8. Compliance, Safety, Accountability (CSA)
9. Transportation infrastructure/congestion/funding
10. Economy

While these are concerns shared across the industry, certain segments have their own headaches. For example, if you’re operating a less-than-truckload (LTL) fleet, it’s particularly challenging to perform pickup and delivery (P&D) operations. It can be difficult to route last-mile stops that crisscross the same territory, wasting fuel, money, and your drivers’ time. Unexpected delays kick in, and before you know it, you miss your delivery appointments and your customers are irate.

To address these problems, Gainesville, FL-based optimization intelligence company [Optym](https://www.optym.com/) created a software product called [RouteMAX](https://routemax.com/) that creates and executes the best feasible set of routes for an LTL P&D operation. By optimizing the inbound routing process, it reduces miles while consistently meeting all service commitments. Using the mobile application, your drivers become more productive, since higher efficiency leads to increased pay. They can avoid detention/delay at customer facilities because RouteMAX prevents them from arriving too early and having to wait at appointment stops. Thanks to RouteMAX’s real-time traffic integration, they can also avoid congestion, and dispatchers manage in real-time through the user-friendly dispatch application.

Linehaul costs climb to hundreds of millions of dollars every year. It can take months of painstaking effort to create linehaul plans manually, and the economy and operating conditions change too quickly to adapt the plan effectively using manual methods. Only 70% - 80% of an LTL carrier’s shipments move according to plan, with the rest of the routings decided dynamically each day. Most LTL carriers operate reactively by dealing with hotspots on a daily basis as they show up.

Created with these issues in mind, Optym’s [HaulPLAN](https://www.optym.com/trucking/haulplan/) is a linehaul planning tool that uses optimization algorithms to reduce miles and improve service quality for LTL carriers. To counteract the driver shortage, it cuts down on your required driver hours by reducing the number of loads you need to move your freight. When poor or dangerous infrastructure turns into an obstruction, HaulPLAN creates a plan that circumvents it. The platform also gives you the flexibility to adjust to economic changes. As freight volumes rise and fall with the economy, HaulPLAN allows you to proactively adapt your network plan to ensure that you’re always operating at minimum cost.

Load planning entails its own set of obstacles. Shipments get delayed, or the original loading wasn’t done as expected. When you’re shuffling loads, it can be hard to deliver freight on time while you’re restricted to available hours of service. Meanwhile your drivers get frustrated with the hurry-up-and-wait as they watch productive hours go out the window.

As a solution, Optym’s software tool [Axele](https://axele.com/tms/) tackles load planning with two built-in advantages. Its driver-facing mobile app collects documents, status updates, and seamless contact from the driver, while its award-winning algorithms generate the best options for trip plans and load selection. Drivers like Axele because it creates a workplan that honors their preferences and fosters work/life balance. And with Axele, it’s easy to file a detention charge.

Yes, the trucking industry faces serious challenges these days. But Optym is on your side. If your logistical scheduling gets fouled up because of time constraints and unforeseen circumstances, Optym’s award-winning algorithms automatically reshuffle all the possibilities and deal you a deck of here-to-there options and alternatives you can choose from.

Below is a chart that will let you see at a glance how Optym’s Haul Suite of software solutions helps to answer the top 10 concerns facing the trucking industry today:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **2019 ATRI Top 10 Issues** | **RouteMAX** | **HaulPLAN**  | **Axele**  |
| Driver shortage | ✔ | ✔ | ✔ |
| Hours of service (HOS) |  |  | ✔ |
| Driver compensation | ✔ |  | ✔ |
| Detention/delay at customer facilities | ✔. |  | ✔ |
| Truck parking |  |  |  |
| Driver retention | ✔ | ✔ | ✔ |
| Electronic Logging Device (ELD) mandate |  |  | ✔ |
| Compliance, Safety, Accountability (CSA) | ✔ |  | ✔ |
| Transportation infrastructure/ congestion/funding | ✔ | ✔. |  |
| Economy | ✔ | ✔ | ✔ |

Learn more about [RouteMAX](https://routemax.com/), [HaulPLAN](https://www.optym.com/trucking/haulplan/) and [Axele](https://axele.com/tms/) and see how the Optym Haul Suite can turbocharge your business.