

CASE STUDY

A Global Healthcare Leader's TMS Journey

INTRODUCTION

A global healthcare leader, partnered with [JBF Consulting](#) to evaluate and transform its Transportation Management System (TMS) ecosystem to address scalability, cost efficiency, and operational resilience. The assessment balanced internal system enhancements with selective third-party solutions to optimize the company's extensive medical distribution network.

INDUSTRY

Health Services and Products

Engagement Scope

Logistics technology evaluation

RESULTS

- Key areas with estimated cost avoidance of \$4 million to \$5 million were identified.
 - Improved last-mile optimization through Descartes WinRoute
 - Daily fleet routing and scheduling enhancements
 - Stronger procurement and yard management solutions
- Enhanced visibility and planning integrations with SAP, enabling SKU-level insights and Canadian rating support

» Executive Summary

A global healthcare solutions company engaged JBF Consulting to evaluate its transportation management ecosystem. The company had been relying on a suite of internally developed tools, including its proprietary TMS, to manage U.S. medical distribution freight. With increasing business complexity and scalability needs, the client sought an objective partner to assess the effectiveness of existing solutions versus third-party systems.

JBF's independently verified blueprint methodology delivered a comprehensive architecture review, vendor landscape analysis, and a phased roadmap. The result was a balanced strategy combining targeted "bolt-on" solutions with continued investment in core systems—ensuring scalability, cost efficiency, and operational resilience.

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» Customer Profile

As a healthcare services and products company operating in more than 30 countries with \$181 billion in annual revenue, the company plays a critical role in connecting patients, providers, payers, and manufacturers. Its Medical Segment manages an extensive U.S. distribution network that delivers products daily to hospitals, pharmacies, and care facilities nationwide. The company's freight spend is in the billions annually, requiring advanced technology to optimize transportation planning, visibility, and settlement. The TMS assessment focused on supporting this medical distribution network and evaluating scalability for global trade.

» The Challenge

The company's transportation operations are supported by its Enterprise Logistics Management (ELM) platform, anchored by its proprietary TMS, alongside visibility, freight audit, and analytics modules. While effective for core medical distribution, there are questions about whether the transportation system ecosystem is positioned to support future growth and scalability requirements.

There are also considerations related to integration gaps and the support of Canadian and International Trade operations. Leadership recognized the need to validate whether further internal investment in the current transportation technology stack was justified—or if a Commercial Off-The-Shelf (COTS) TMS would be a better long-term fit.

The company sought a neutral partner to conduct an unbiased, holistic review of current systems, benchmark against industry best practices, and recommend a roadmap balancing immediate quick wins with long-term strategy.



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» The Solution

JBF Consulting deployed its independently verified “Blueprint” methodology, bringing together strategy, technical architecture, and operational expertise. Over nine weeks, the team conducted functional and technical workshops with client stakeholders, reviewed existing ELM architecture, and benchmarked against leading third-party vendors.

Key Deliverables included:

- A prioritized and categorized requirements list.
- Conceptual future-state designs with integration points.
- A build-vs-buy assessment with short-listed vendors.
- A financial model that compares the total cost of ownership between the current logistics technology stack and commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) options.
- A phased implementation roadmap including quick wins and mid-term opportunities.

The assessment revealed that faster time-to-value could be achieved by enhancing current technology with selective bolt-on solutions—such as last-mile route optimization, yard management, and procurement tools—while retaining its current technology as the core TMS backbone.

» Results and Impact

JBF's recommendations equipped the client with a clear, financially justified roadmap for its TMS strategy. The analysis found that continuing with its proprietary TMS, supplemented by best-in-class bolt-on solutions, would be 20% less costly over five years than replacing the system with a COTS TMS.

Key benefits included:

- Key areas with estimated cost avoidance of \$4 million to \$5 million were identified.
 - Improved last mile optimization through Descartes WinRoute
 - Daily fleet routing and scheduling enhancements
 - Stronger procurement and yard management solutions
- Enhanced visibility and planning integrations with SAP, enabling SKU-level insights and Canadian rating support

Functionally, the solution provided a scalable architecture aligned with cloud-native best practices and ensured the medical distribution network could expand without disruption. Operational teams gained actionable quick wins while leadership secured confidence in a balanced, long-term strategy. Ultimately, the roadmap positioned the company to strengthen reliability, reduce costs, and increase agility across its U.S. and international transportation operations.

» Lessons Learned and Next Steps

The engagement demonstrated the importance of objectively weighing internal investment against third-party alternatives. By combining quantitative total cost of ownership modeling with functional and technical assessments, costly missteps were avoided.

Key lessons included the value of bolt-on point solutions for quick wins and the need to expand R&D bandwidth to sustain internal TMS performance.

Next steps included executing the phased roadmap, beginning with last-mile optimization, yard management, and procurement enhancements, while continuing to evaluate opportunities for broader global trade system modernization.



Looking to strengthen your logistics technology strategy? Contact us today to explore how our tailored assessments can deliver measurable results for your network.

Email us at contact@jbf-consulting.com
or visit us at jbf-consulting.com