



DESCARTES™

## BUYER'S GUIDE

# What to Look for in a Best-in-Class Rate Management Solution

# Introduction

Are your customers online? Do they want to receive quotes quickly? Has it become inefficient to manage rates manually? Are you looking to ensure that services are priced correctly to maximize margins? Do you want to enable customers to easily book, rate, ship, and track on-demand?

These are the pointed questions that Logistics Service Providers (LSPs) are asking, and why we created an innovative technology called Descartes Digital Rate Management™, a leading-edge solution that allows LSPs to provide an online quoting, booking, and tracking experience while ensuring the highest profit margin per file.

To help you evaluate the technology, we developed this buyer's guide to cover what the solution does, explain how each of its features can benefit you, and help you determine if the solution is the right match for your business, provide a clear overview of how our purchasing process works, and review how Descartes Digital Rate Management can help you elevate operations.

The guide covers:

- **Quick Overview: What Is Descartes Digital Rate Management?**
- **Determine Your Needs: What Are Your Top Pain Points?**
- **What Are the Key Features of the Solution & Why Do They Matter to You?**
- **Success Story: A Customer that is Using Descartes Digital Rate Management to Thrive**
- **How Does the Buying Process Work?**
- **Next Steps**



*Descartes Digital Rate Management not only delivers customer quotes on-demand, but also provides deep insight and analytics on operational trends.*

## Quick Overview: What is Descartes Digital Rate Management?

Descartes Digital Rate Management helps LSPs provide a customer-facing, white-labelled digital booking and rating experience to manage the complexities of providing an accurate online quote. The rapid-deploy technology can automatically collect and manage contracted and spot-rate carrier rates to reduce labor costs.

From an operational perspective, this means that labor is freed from manual and repetitive quote requests. When a quote is provided, the rates delivered reflect acceptable profit margins that you control both on the 'buy' and 'sell' sides. The solution also integrates with Transportation Management Systems (TMSs) helping LSPs enhance their operational efficiency while preserving investments in their existing back-office technology. From a customer-facing perspective, by placing online quote-to-book-to-track capabilities at clients' fingertips, the solution gives your customers full control over the booking process.

## Determine Your Needs: What Are Your Top Pain Points?

Before delving deeper into the features of Descartes Digital Rate Management, it is important to review the top pain points regarding customer booking/rating and managing rates internally. We have put together a short list of the top challenges that LSPs face:

✓	We are spending too much time providing customer quotes.
✓	It is difficult to provide an accurate quote with complex surcharge and fee structures.
✓	We would like to improve our quote-to-book ratio without expending sales bandwidth.
✓	We do not always know the profit margin of a shipment at the time of booking.
✓	We would like to easily upsell services, but this can be challenging and absorb resources.
✓	We waste valuable time accessing multiple carrier websites to obtain spot rates.
✓	Our customers have carrier allocation commitments that are complex to manage.
✓	We need an online booking presence that connects to our TMS.

As you continue to read this guide and explore the technology's features, we encourage you to jot down the pain points that you are experiencing and consider if Descartes Digital Rate Management may help alleviate some of your key challenges.



## What Are the Key Features of the Solution & What This Means for You

The features of Descartes Digital Rate Management were developed to not only counter many of the top pain points that LSPs face but to also meet customer expectations and accelerate operations. Please carefully review and evaluate the features to determine if they align with your individual business needs. Some of the top features of the solution are listed below with a deeper dive into each:

## Customer Booking & Rating

Today's customers have high expectations. They want instant access to quotes online and to book with confidence knowing that space has been allocated for their shipment. They also want competitive rates, to be able to get accurate landed costs, and be presented with alternate shipping options.

Descartes Digital Rate Management's booking and rating capabilities allow for real-time customer price discovery on any internet enabled device. The solution can be customized with your logo, color scheme, and a personalized URL as the face behind the technology. Quotes provided can be for simple one-leg bookings as well as complex, multi-leg shipments. LSPs can even run promotions to boost sales and easily enable new clients to begin booking. With an ecommerce-like customer experience and accurate quoting, LSPs are not only raising their quote-to-book ratio but are also upselling services as part of the customer user experience to bring in more business.

### What Does This Mean For You?

- Increase customer satisfaction with an improved user experience, ease of booking, accurate quotes, and online tracking.
- Minimize labor-intensive one-off quoting.
- Upsell services, such as maritime insurance, trade finance or customs brokerage to grow revenue.
- Increase the number of customer quotes that result in bookings
- Eliminates the need to build a customer-facing system using internal resources.





## Connectivity to Existing Systems

Internal systems are the powerhouse behind LSPs operations, and many platforms are deeply embedded in day-to-day processes. While LSPs may know the benefit of adding a customer-facing booking and rating solution to their tech stack, some are concerned that this will require a complete replacement of internal systems.

Descartes Digital Rate Management does not require LSPs to switch existing platforms. Instead, the solution can be deployed as a technology layer that easily connects with your current TMS. With 55 out-of-the-box Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) and other available system-to-system connectivity protocols such as Electronic Data Interchange (EDI), it is easy to deploy Descartes Digital Rate Management. The data can easily populate existing platforms and trigger automations to drive operational efficiencies. Beyond this, Descartes already has data streams from carriers and regulatory agencies populating our network which ends the need to use internal LSP bandwidth to make external connections.

### What Does This Mean For You?

- Keep existing systems intact to maintain business continuity.
- Eliminate the need to re-key customer booking data into current platforms.
- End the need to expend valuable IT labor to connect systems.

## Rapid Implementation Model (RIM)

LSPs operate in a service and time-oriented industry, and interruptions to day-to-day processes can mean lost revenue. After collaborating with LSPs, we developed Descartes Digital Rate Management to be deployed via a rapid implementation model. We have taken the best of our customer-facing booking and rating solution, paired it with our powerful rate management engine, bundled it in a fast rollout model, and prepared our customers for success with world-class implementation and ongoing support. This means that you'll get the most out of the solution and go live in as little as two weeks after the implementation process starts!

What's different about Descartes' quick launch process is that we address pain points and potential challenges well before go-live. We work with you to identify areas within your organization which might be impacted by the software rollover including current methods of doing business, problems experienced with existing booking/rating processes, as well as business or system inefficiencies that can be addressed by Descartes Digital Rate Management.

### What Does This Mean For You?

- Less down time for your business with minimal disruptions to service levels.
- End-to-end training to enable resources to hit the ground running ahead of go-live.
- A full understanding of potential risks and challenges to be impacted before implementation.





## Configurable Profit Margin Settings

Keeping the bottom-line top-of-mind is critical for LSPs. For this reason, it is important for LSPs to keep sell-rates above buy-rates to stay in-the-black. In a highly competitive market where freight rates fluctuate and negotiated rates are hard won, it is challenging for LSPs to ensure that each booking remains profitable.

Descartes Digital Rate Management was engineered to automatically refresh sell-rates whenever buy-rates are updated. This means that LSPs can remain nimble and cost-effective should buy-rates change. LSPs can define profit margins and configure pricing for each client to ensure profitability and tailored service. LSPs can choose to have specific rates for a given customer or can establish pricing tiers for a segment of customers, business niche, trade lane, or time periods.

The solution also continuously takes the pulse of user interactions with options to view and analyze which users are logging in, what routes they are quoting, how often customers are requesting a quote, and how long they're staying on the platform. With deep analytics on-hand, LSPs can refine and adjust profit margins and stay on top of seasonal and industry-wide customer booking trends.

### What Does This Mean For You?

- Automatically ensure that each shipment booked is profitable.
- Keep pace with evolving spot rates and contracted rates while maintaining revenue.
- Monitor customer quoting requests to stay on top of hot booking trends.

## Customer Success Story: Hellman Worldwide Logistics

*How One LSP is Using Descartes Digital Rate Management to Exceed Customer Expectations*



With a goal of maintaining exceptional customer service and logistics execution, Hellman Worldwide Logistics continues to expand. The need to maintain its growth trajectory and meet customer expectations became challenging. The company needed to tap the expertise of a technology provider that could gather and collect carrier pricing and serve it up to customers.

"We deliver services to the customer and have rich domain knowledge about how shipping and global supply chains work," said Christian van Eeden, VP, Transformation Architecture at Hellman Worldwide Logistics, "At the same time, we still have customers reaching out to us continuously that need pricing. We knew that we needed a digital tool that we did not have to build to serve-up this pricing. Being able to leverage the expertise of Descartes Digital Rate Management is a huge bonus for us. The pricing component is central to our customers' journey. With Descartes, we can focus our resources on execution since that is one of Hellman's core differentiators to bring value."

Using Descartes Digital Rate Management, Hellman Worldwide Logistics was able to:



### Increase Efficiency

By eliminating time-consuming manual processes, the Descartes Global Price Management solution is able to optimize the quote workflow.



### Achieve Exceptional Customer Service

With Descartes, Hellman can provide consistent, reliable communication with customers about their quotes across complex or multi-leg shipments.



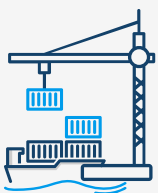
### Free Resources for Growth

With less labor required to communicate and gather carrier rating data, employees refocused on tasks that expand the business worldwide.



### Improve Profitability:

Descartes GPM provides up-sell service recommendations to help Hellman drive-up revenue and expand service offerings.



*"Being able to leverage the expertise of Descartes Digital Rate Management is a huge bonus for us... With Descartes, we can focus our resources on execution since that is one of Hellman's core differentiators to bring value."*

*Christian van Eeden, VP, Transformation Architecture, Hellman Worldwide Logistics*

# How Does the Buying Process Work?

Descartes is skilled in getting LSPs live as quickly as possible to ensure that Descartes Digital Rate Management will benefit operations and the bottom line. Here is what to expect from the buying process:

1

## A Discovery Call to Understand Your Requirements

During this conversation, we'll listen to your biggest pain points regarding rate management and determine how Descartes Digital Rate Management can address them.

2

## A Live Product Demonstration (Virtual)

We take you through a product tour that gives you a transparent view of the features that you would use if you chose our solution.

3

## A Solution Proposal & Implementation Timeline

We provide you with a price quote that includes implementation. If you're ready to hit the ground running, we'll build out a clear timeline with milestones.

4

## Signing The Agreement & Starting Implementation

By the time you sign, you will have a clear view of what will happen and the results you can expect from Descartes Digital Rate Management.

5

## Implementation & Go-Live

Your two-week implementation timeline starts now. Our expert implementation team will work with you to implement the solution and train your staff. By the time you reach go-live, your operations team will be ready to use Descartes Digital Rate Management with confidence.

6

## Ongoing Support

With Descartes, you're inheriting a solid team that will support you and your business as it continues to grow. Our live support team and Customer Success Managers (CSMs) will remain available, providing ongoing attention to ensure things run smoothly.

## COST CONSIDERATIONS

To prepare for your discovery with us to see if Descartes Digital Rate Management is the right fit for you and for us to provide an accurate quote, we encourage you to have the answers to the following three simple questions ready.

- How many users will be accessing the system?
- How many bookings do you anticipate monthly?
- How many shipping price/rating lists do you anticipate uploading to the system a month?



## Next Steps

Descartes Digital Rate Management is transforming how LSPs service their customers and manage rates. With Descartes Digital Rate Management in place, LSPs are delivering a premiere customer booking and rating experience, connecting with internal systems, and ensuring that profit margins remain high. It is our 30+ years of experience, deep domain expertise, understanding of LSP operations and market, integrative capabilities, and on-demand customer-facing interface that sets Descartes apart. As you explore your buying journey, we encourage you to carefully weigh the features available to you from the solution, gather your pain points, and connect with us to explore if Descartes Digital Rate Management would benefit your operations and your bottom-line.

## We're Here to Help

No matter the size of an LSP's operations, Descartes can help you digitize to better compete. It is our domain expertise and understanding of the complex freight forwarder and customs broker market that sets us apart. Our solutions enable large and small organizations to take advantage of robust automated capabilities for bookings, security filings, customs entries, multimodal shipment management, rating, quoting, and financial management as well as visibility, tracking, and automation solutions such as Descartes Digital Rate Management. To gather more information and to begin your buying journey, [click here](#).



## About Descartes Systems Group

Descartes (Nasdaq:DSGX) (TSX:DSG) is the global leader in providing on-demand, software-as-a-service solutions focused on improving the productivity, security and sustainability of logistics-intensive businesses. Customers use our modular, software-as-a-service solutions to route, track and help improve the safety, performance and compliance of delivery resources; plan, allocate and execute shipments; rate, audit and pay transportation invoices; access global trade data; file customs and security documents for imports and exports; and complete numerous other logistics processes by participating in the world's largest, collaborative multimodal logistics community. Our headquarters are in Waterloo, Ontario, Canada and we have offices and partners around the world.

Learn more at [www.descartes.com](http://www.descartes.com) and connect with us on [LinkedIn](#) and [Twitter](#).

## Uniting the People & Technology That Move the World.