

From four disconnected tools to *one* delivery operations platform

A bespoke route-planning, scheduling and analytics system built for a UK garden-products retailer — replacing a manual chain of CRM exports, pin-mapping sites, consumer mapping tools and hand-typed calendar entries with a single piece of software designed around the team's actual working day.

SECTOR	Horticulture & garden products — UK-wide own-fleet delivery
BUILT	A private web application owning the delivery workflow end to end
REPLACED	CRM re-typing · a pin-mapping site · a consumer mapping tool · hand-typed calendar entries
STATUS	Live in production, planning real routes today
ELAPSED	Days, not months — shipped feature by feature

01 Executive summary

The client sells and delivers high-value garden stock — pleached trees, topiary and instant hedging — across the UK on its own vehicles. Every delivery run used to be assembled by hand.

Deals were copied out of the CRM, pasted into a pin-mapping website to see where customers were, juggled through a consumer mapping tool to guess a sensible driving order, then typed into a shared calendar stop by stop, with invoices hunted down and attached separately. Planning a single multi-drop run could absorb the best part of a morning, and nothing about the process was checkable, repeatable or visible to management.

The delivery planner replaces that entire chain. Orders flow in from the CRM automatically the moment the sales team flags them; the software maps them, colour-codes them by stock status, builds optimised routes that respect real driver-hours law and break rules, prices every run, and publishes the finished schedule to the team calendar — customer details, phone numbers, delivery notes and a tap-to-open invoice included — in one click. Completed runs lock into a permanent analytics record the morning after the wheels stop turning.

9

delivery workflow steps
automated

hrs → mins

route planning time

Zero

re-keying between tools

Full

management visibility

02 The problem

Four separate tools, none of them talking to each other, stitched together by copy-and-paste:

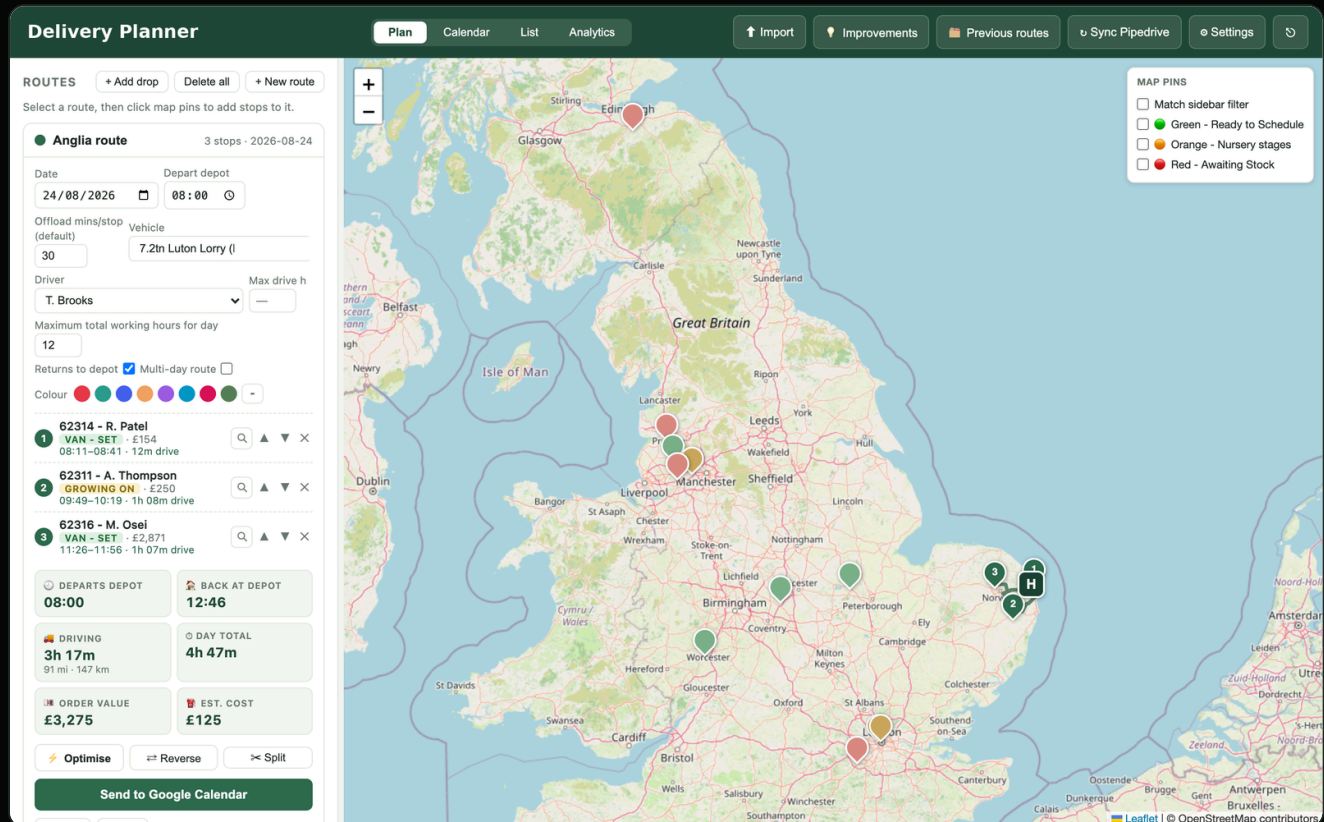
- **The CRM held the orders** — but every delivery had to be manually re-read and re-typed out of it.
- **A pin-mapping website** was used just to see where the week's customers were — every address pasted in by hand.
- **A consumer mapping tool** was used to guess a driving order between the pins — with no drive-time limits, offload times, break rules or overnight logic, and no idea what the run would cost.
- **The shared calendar** was typed up last — one entry per drop, invoices found in the CRM and attached one at a time. Any change to the plan meant doing it all again.

The costs were the quiet kind: senior time burnt on clerical assembly, routes that were driveable but not efficient, no record of what a delivery day actually cost, mistakes when a postcode was mistyped or a stop forgotten, and zero historical data — once a week was driven, the knowledge of it evaporated.

03

One platform, the whole journey

A custom web application, private to the business, that owns the delivery workflow end to end. The screenshots throughout are the production software, with client and customer data removed.



The Plan view: live CRM orders as colour-coded pins (green = ready to schedule, orange = at the nursery, red = awaiting stock), a route being built with its full schedule, and pin filters for the operator.

Orders arrive on their own

When sales flip one field on a CRM deal, the delivery appears in the planner within minutes — address geocoded, order value, customer, mobile number and PDF invoice already attached. Cancellations are the same field flipped back. Nobody re-types anything.

Routes build themselves around the rules

One click proposes routes grouped by region or county — or the operator clicks pins on the map. The engine schedules every stop with real road drive times, per-stop offload windows, legal driver-hours limits, mandatory 45-minute breaks for the 7.2-tonne vehicle, multi-day splitting with realistic overnight positioning, and per-vehicle low-bridge-aware routing. Every route shows its revenue, estimated running cost, load-space fill and progress against the vehicle's revenue target as it is built.

THE ROUTE CARD

Dated, crewed and costed

Every route carries its vehicle, its licensed driver, an ETA window and a stage tag per stop, day totals for drive time and working time, and the money — order value against estimated running cost.

The planner refuses to crew a lorry with a van-only driver: vehicle licences are held against each driver, and only the vehicles they may legally drive are offered.

One click to the calendar

Send to calendar creates a timed event per delivery — customer, phone, delivery notes, driver, and named links to the invoice PDF and the CRM deal — plus a banner event spanning the run with departure, return, drive time and total value.

Re-sending after a change updates the same events in place; recalling deletes them. The drivers simply follow their calendar.

WHY IT MATTERS

The old calendar step was **30–60 minutes of typing per run**, plus hunting invoices out of the CRM one at a time. Any change meant starting again.

Anglia route3 stops · 2026-08-24

Date24/08/2026

Depart depot08:00

Offload mins/stop (default)30

Vehicle7.2tn Luton Lorry

DriverT. Brooks

Max drive h—

Maximum total working hours for day12

Returns to depot

☒ Multi-day route

Colour

162314 - R. Patel

VAN - SET

· £154

08:11–08:41 · 12m drive

262311 - A. Thompson

GROWING ON

· £250

09:49–10:19 · 1h 08m drive

362316 - M. Osei

VAN - SET

· £2,871

11:26–11:56 · 1h 07m drive

DEPARTS DEPOT

08:00

BACK AT DEPOT

12:46

DRIVING

3h 17m

91 mi · 147 km

DAY TOTAL

4h 47m

ORDER VALUE

£3,275

EST. COST

£125

Optimise

Reverse

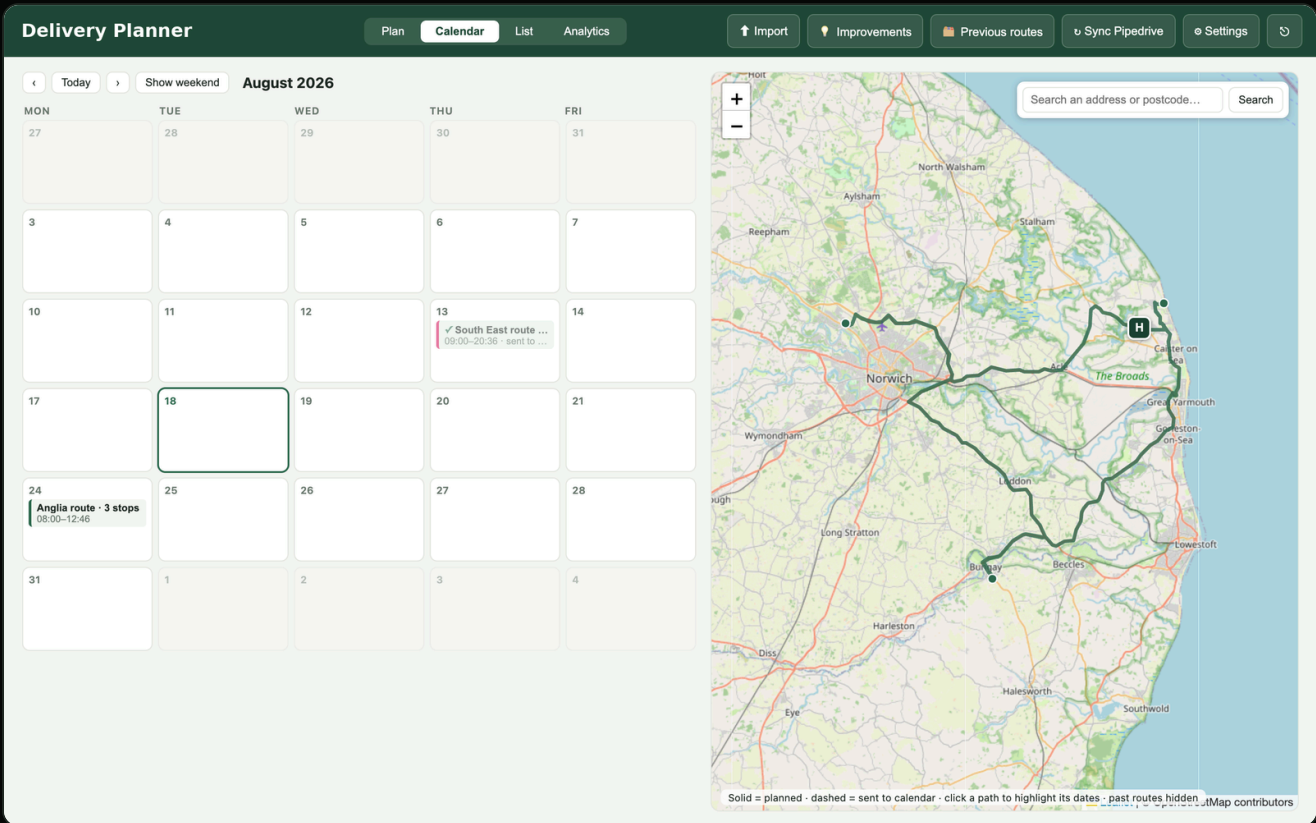
Split

Send to Google Calendar

Archive

Delete

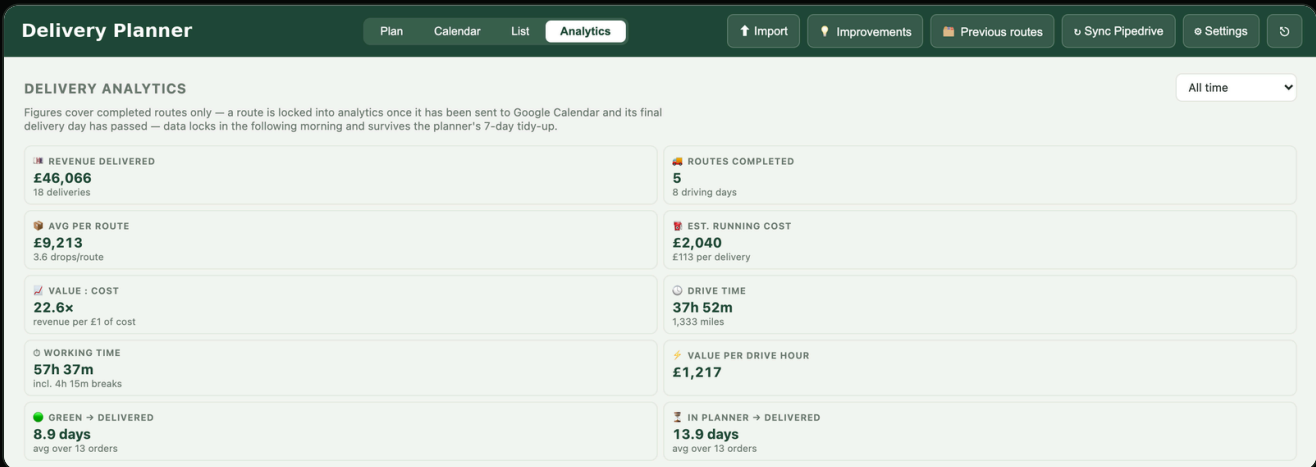
A route card, top to bottom: date and depot departure, vehicle and licensed driver, working-hour caps, each stop with its ETA window and stage tag, then day totals — and one button to publish the lot.



The Calendar view: every planned and sent run on one board, with the routes drawn on a live map beside it.

Management sees everything, permanently

The morning after a run finishes, it locks into an immutable analytics record: revenue delivered, drops, miles, drive and working hours, breaks, estimated cost at that day's rates, and how long orders took to reach the customer from the moment stock was ready. The working planner stays clean — history is never lost.



The Analytics view (demonstration data): revenue delivered, running costs, value-to-cost ratio, processing times and per-vehicle, per-region and per-stock-status breakdowns over any date range.

04 Full capability list

AREA	WHAT IT DOES
Order intake	Automatic CRM sync on a field trigger; duplicate-proof; CSV import; manual entry; live stage tags that follow the deal
Mapping	Geocoded pins colour-coded by stock status; region and county tags; search, sort and filters that also drive the map and route proposals
Route building	Click-to-build, drag-to-reorder, one-click optimise, split and reverse; propose by region, county or filter; automatic top-up of existing routes when time rules and revenue targets allow
Scheduling engine	Real road drive times; per-stop offload; HGV driver-hours law; mandatory break rules per vehicle; multi-day splitting with evening drive-ahead and overnight positioning; requested-date mismatch warnings
Costing	Fuel and driver-hour cost estimate per route; order value totals; per-vehicle revenue targets with live progress
Load planning	20 cm-grid load-space visualiser per vehicle with per-delivery footprint shapes and fill percentage
Calendar publishing	One-click publish: per-stop events plus a spanning banner; update-in-place re-sends; recall; drag-to-reschedule
Invoices	PDF invoices pulled from the CRM automatically; in-app split-screen viewer beside the map; secure tokenised links for drivers
Fleet & drivers	Vehicle dimensions, weight, load space, targets and break rules; driver licences per vehicle; bridge-height-aware routing per vehicle
Analytics	Locked history of completed runs; custom date ranges; revenue, cost, ratio and processing times; weekly revenue and volume charts; vehicle, region and stock-status breakdowns
Platform	Secure logins, roles-ready user management, custom branding, an in-app improvements board, cloud hosting with daily backups and a custom domain

05

Before and after

	BEFORE	AFTER
Getting orders into the plan	Read the CRM, re-type each delivery	Automatic within minutes of the sales team flagging it
Seeing where customers are	Paste every address into a pin-map site	Already on the map , colour-coded by stock status
Choosing a driving order	Trial and error in a consumer mapping tool	One-click optimised route with legal hours, breaks and costs
Knowing what a run costs	Unknown	Estimated per route as it is built; actuals locked into analytics
Publishing the schedule	Type every calendar entry; attach invoices by hand	One click — events, notes, driver, invoice links, banner
Handling changes	Start again	Edit the route ; re-sending updates the same calendar events in place
Compliance	In the driver's head	Enforced by the engine — drive-time limits, working-hour caps, break rules
Management oversight	None	Permanent analytics : revenue, cost, hours, processing times, trends

THE SHAPE OF THE WIN

Nothing on this page required the team to change how they work. The software was built around the working day they already had — **the same decisions, with the clerical assembly taken out from underneath them.**

06 Value delivered

Conservative estimates, based on the workflow the software replaced. Figures are illustrative and easy to check against the client's own experience.

TASK	BEFORE	AFTER	TIME RETURNED
Route planning & mapping	60–120 min per run	5–10 min	≈ 6–9 hrs/week
Calendar entry & invoice attaching	30–60 min per run	One click	≈ 3–5 hrs/week
Replanning after changes	Repeat the whole process	Seconds	≈ 1–2 hrs/week
Chasing invoices & order details	Ad hoc, constant	On every event and pin	≈ 1–2 hrs/week

IN MONEY

10–18 hours of skilled staff time returned every week.

At a loaded admin cost of £15–£20 per hour, that is roughly **£8,000–£17,000 a year in clerical time alone** — before any routing gains.

- **Tighter routes.** Optimised stop orders and honest drive-time maths typically trim 5–10% from miles driven; on this fleet's mileage that is fuel, hours and vehicle wear recovered every single week.
- **Fewer errors.** No re-typing means no mistyped postcodes, forgotten stops or stale calendar entries — failure modes that each cost a wasted journey or a let-down customer.
- **Compliance by construction.** Driver-hours law and break rules are enforced by the scheduler, not by memory.
- **Decisions from data.** Revenue per drive hour, cost per delivery, vehicle target attainment and ready-to-delivered lead times now exist — none of this was measurable before.

07

What software like this normally costs

This is a genuine multi-integration logistics platform: CRM sync, geocoding, road-network routing, a constraint-based scheduling engine, calendar API publishing with OAuth, PDF handling, fleet management and an analytics warehouse. Market rates for a build of this scope (UK, 2026):

APPROACH	TYPICAL COST	TIMELINE	NOTES
UK software agency	£60,000 – £150,000+	3–6 months	Discovery workshops, sprint teams, project management overhead
Established freelance developer	£20,000 – £45,000	2–4 months	Single developer at £350–£600/day across 40–80+ days
Off-the-shelf routing SaaS	£1,500 – £6,000 / year	Ongoing	Per-vehicle, per-month pricing; generic fit — no CRM trigger flow, no invoice pipeline, no bespoke analytics. The manual glue survives.
This build	From £5,000	Days, not months	Delivered feature-by-feature against the team's real working day, live in production and already carrying real routes

Ranges are indicative UK market figures for comparable scope and should be validated against current quotes. The point stands at any position in those ranges: the traditional routes cost tens of thousands of pounds and a quarter to half a year of elapsed time — and the SaaS route never actually fits the business.

08

How it was delivered

- **Built against real pains, not a spec document.** Every feature answers something the team actually does: the stock-status colours mirror their CRM pipelines; the break rules match their 7.2-tonne lorry; the calendar format is the one their drivers already read.
- **Production from week one.** Cloud-hosted on managed infrastructure with a custom domain, secure logins, persistent storage and daily backups — the team plans real routes on it today.
- **Iterated in conversation.** Improvements ship the same day they are raised — the software has its own in-app improvements board the team uses to ask for changes.
- **Deliberately boring technology.** A Node.js service, interactive Leaflet mapping, OSRM road-network routing with vehicle-restriction-aware fallback, REST sync to the CRM, calendar OAuth integration, and a zero-maintenance data store. Reliable choices.

09 Could your operation use this?

If your business runs on a chain of tools glued together with re-typing — CRM to spreadsheet to maps to calendar to invoice — that chain can almost certainly be collapsed into one piece of software shaped exactly around how your team works.

In days rather than months, and from £5,000 rather than an agency's £60,000.

WHERE IT USUALLY STARTS

An operations audit. A walk through your working week, a map of every re-typing step between your tools, and a costed list of what could be collapsed — with the numbers attached, so you can decide whether any of it is worth building.

Days

to a working first version, not months of discovery

Yours

built around your working day, not a generic template

Live

in production and carrying real work from week one