



# THINK CLEAR. MOVE FAST.

A BLUEPRINT FOR DISCIPLINED GROWTH IN 2026



# Letter from the CEO



## Rich Krul

CEO of Hoplite

Over the last couple years, I've heard the phrase "founder fatigue" more times than I can count. And I'll be honest—you don't fully get it until you're in it. The long nights are expected. What surprises you is how often the pressure shows up, how consistent it can be, and how quickly life stacks on top of business.

But that's also where the growth happens. The hurdles don't stop—they just change shape. And somewhere along the way, you stop thinking you're "getting lucky" and realize you're simply getting better. More resilient. More disciplined. More clear on what matters and what doesn't.

That clarity has been one of the biggest shifts for me. Flexibility is important in a startup. But not when it comes at the cost of your peace, your standards, or your people. We've learned where to bend, and where not to.

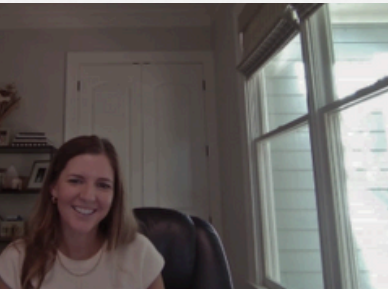
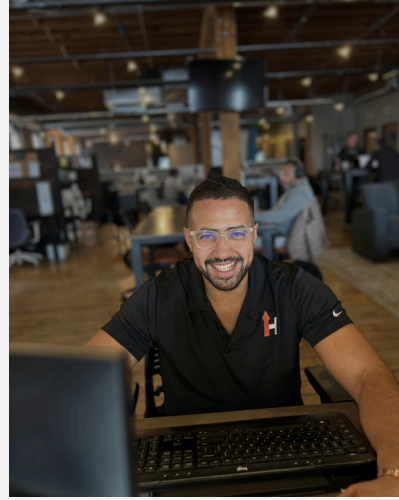
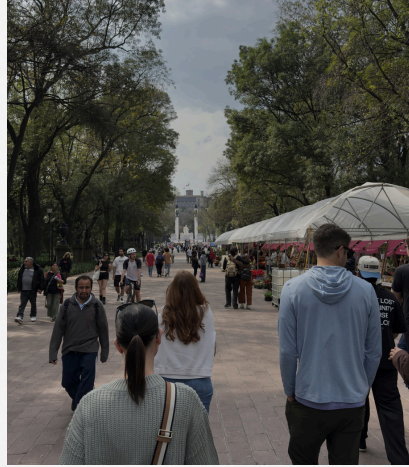
As we head into 2026, my confidence in Hoplite is higher than it's ever been. We have the right team, the right partners, and the right structure to keep scaling. We're closing 2025 with strong momentum, and we're just getting started.

Most importantly, I want to say thank you. To our customers who continue to put real trust in us, to our partners who help us execute at a higher level, and to everyone in our corner who has offered support with nothing guaranteed in return—it doesn't go unnoticed. You don't build something meaningful alone.

Here's to another year of pushing forward, learning fast, and winning the right way.

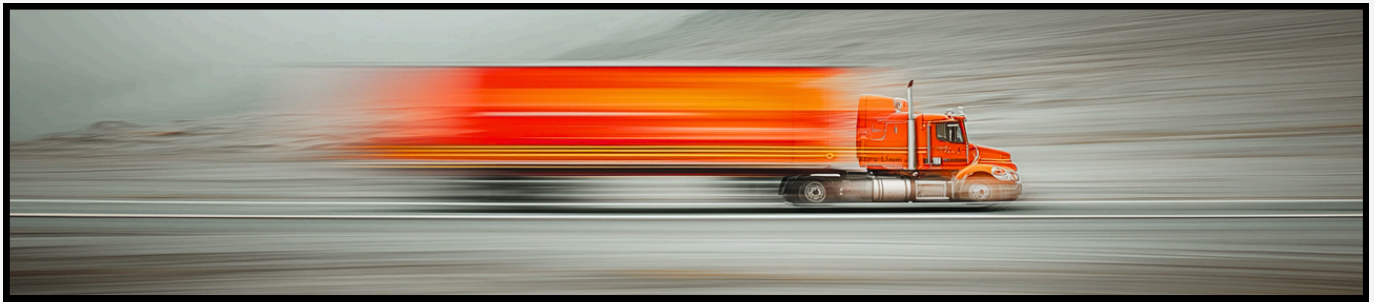
Cheers.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rich Krul". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end.



# THINK CLEAR, MOVE FAST

Why Hoplite chose **GOODSHIP** to power faster, more disciplined execution from insight to action



Transportation has never been short on opinions. What it has been short on is a single, clean version of the truth—one that makes decisions obvious and execution faster. In 2026, that’s the difference between “we think we’re doing fine” and “we know exactly where we’re bleeding, why, and what to fix next.”

## **That’s why Hoplite is partnering with GoodShip.**

When we sat down with **Jessica Lenz** and **Les Akin** (both Enterprise Sales Directors at GoodShip), the message was consistent: the biggest wins aren’t hidden in theory. They’re hiding in everyday moves, buried under daily noise, broken visibility, and a thousand spreadsheets that all disagree. As Les put it, **“every company had a version of the truth buried in someone’s spreadsheet,”** and teams often spend more time debating data than solving problems.

GoodShip has been building a platform focused on solving that problem for shippers,

with growing relevance for partners, like Hoplite, navigating the messy middle of freight.

## **Built by People Who’ve Lived It**

Jess’s background is familiar to us: Coyote early, then deep operator experience, then sales leadership—and ultimately a front-row seat as GoodShip took shape. She described those early Coyote years as “formative, fun, and challenging,” and credits that foundation for everything she’s doing now.

Les came at it from a different angle—finance, then transportation immersion, then a career spanning shipper, consulting, and strategy. He remembers Coyote as “electric,” chaotic and intense in the best way, and says it taught him grit and a “no excuses” mentality that still shapes how he operates today.

That operator DNA matters, because it shows up in how GoodShip thinks: not “more dashboards,” but faster decisions, tighter accountability, and less noise.

## The Wins are Hiding in Plain Sight

One of the most practical examples Jess shared was carrier commitments. Once a shipper fulfills committed tender volumes, it opens the door to evaluate whether they're still tendering to the right carrier, or over-tendering out of habit. She said it plainly: **you'd be "shocked by the hundreds of thousands of dollars hiding"** in these scenarios.

Les reinforced why that matters: these insights move the needle quickly, and they're a big reason GoodShip can "pay for itself within the first couple of months."

And it doesn't stop at procurement. Les described how customers are using GoodShip to make smarter operational calls—private fleet versus open market, or when weight breaks justify skipping LTL workflows and going straight to truckload. These aren't theoretical wins; they're daily decisions that impact cost, service, and even carbon footprint.

## One Scorecard: Three Pillars

GoodShip typically anchors success around three buckets:

- **Cost:** What are you paying versus market or peers? Where's the variance by lane?
- **Service:** Are carriers showing up on time and accepting tenders—and how does that correlate with spend?
- **Efficiency:** Are you using your primary carriers effectively? Optimizing modes? Allocating fleet smartly?

The point is not more reporting. The point is clarity. As Les said, "shippers finally get to see the full network story in real time and decide where to take action first."

## Fast Insights, Faster Implementation

Jess laughed when we asked about the "aha" moment: most often, it happens when customers see a demo for the first time.

She also shared that customers commonly see a 1.5–5% spend reduction to market—a "15–50x return"—and that GoodShip's five-week implementation helps them see ROI quickly.

That speed isn't accidental. Their five-week process centers on data collection and testing, with only 1–2 hours per week required from the shipper, and typically avoids longer, heavier API builds that slow everything down for resource-constrained teams.

## Why This Partnership Matters to Us

At Hoplite, relationships are at the center of everything we do—but we're also obsessive



about execution. We want to move fast without cutting corners, which means we're selective about who we partner with.

What drew us to GoodShip was something Les said: "It's not just analytics anymore—it's accountability." Even better, the platform makes collaboration seamless. Lane reviews, carrier discussions, and 3PL coordination happen right alongside the data—"streamlined, documented, and actionable."

That kind of clarity doesn't just improve decision-making. It improves outcomes. For shippers, it means working with a brokerage partner that operates with both speed and discipline, backed by data that aligns every decision from procurement through delivery.

## The Next Chapter: Extending Clarity Across the Freight Network

Here's what we're especially excited about: applying this same "single version of truth" approach to our business, where speed, consistency, and margin discipline matter every single day.

From our perspective, the opportunity is clear. Better visibility and cleaner workflows help us identify where breakdowns actually happen—not where we assume they happen. They help us source the right capacity more consistently, understand what's driving carrier performance lane by lane, and streamline the messy middle: handoffs, exceptions, and the repeatable work that quietly drains time and margin.

We're not using this to make brokerage more opaque. We're using it to sharpen our decisions, reduce the noise, and create more consistent execution for our customers—especially in a market where small mistakes add up fast.

That's the real win. Transportation will never be perfectly predictable. But the best teams will be the ones who close gaps quickly, communicate clearly, and improve relentlessly. When the noise drops, the conversation shifts from "who caused this?" to "how fast can we fix it?"

That's the standard we're building toward at Hoplite in 2026. Clarity is what turns good intentions into real execution—and that matters to everyone we work with.



Jessica Lenz



Les Akin

# SWORD & SHIELD

## HOPLITE'S 2026 TECH BLUEPRINT

Written by: Bryan Rekowski, Co-Founder & COO

Tech is at the forefront of everyone's minds in our industry. The idea is simple: automate as much as possible and drive efficiency at scale. The problem is there are so many players entering the space, all offering different AI-driven capabilities. As much as we'd love one partner to do it all, that's not realistic yet. The only way to approach this the right way is to put your business under a microscope and get crystal clear on what's a need vs. a want.

At Hoplite, we've done exactly that. We take our partnerships seriously, and we're intentional about how we leverage technology alongside an incredibly tenured, skilled team—so we can deliver a best-in-class product at a scalable cost. As we kick off 2026, here's our approach to using these tools alongside our growth strategy.

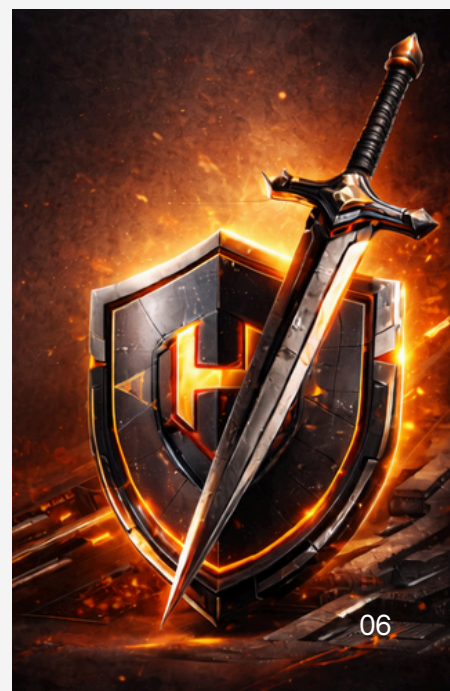
### Compliance and Safety

With fraud and double brokerage running rampant—and carriers teetering on the edge of solvency—we look at compliance and safety through three tiers.

#### 1) Carrier compliance

Carrier compliance is something we take very seriously. That's why we've been a **Highway** partner since day one. We have a smooth integration into our TMS and we're continuing to expand our usage of their tools, including their new load board, TFX, where we can safely share opportunities and drive conversations with a strong carrier base. At the booking level, Highway helps us weed out non-compliant carriers—because we simply don't work with anyone who can't meet their standards.

As an additional layer, we're checking carriers against **GenLogs** to verify accurate tractor and trailer matching, catch red flags around potential double brokering, theft, or missing equipment, and confirm they actually run the lanes we're sourcing them for. This can add a little time to booking, but it keeps our reps diligent and disciplined. Pair that with carrier sales reps who average 10 years of industry experience, and you get a lot of security built into the process.



## 2) Insurance + risk protection for our shippers

As a broker, there's a level of risk we help our shippers mitigate. It's our duty to make sure Hoplite is protected from all angles, which is why we chose **Reliance Partners** for our core insurance coverage. We cover liability across the board—\$250,000 cargo, cyber security, worker's comp—and we can build specific policies for shippers with higher liability needs or unique endorsements and requirements. We do this quickly so onboarding and renewals don't slow down.

Alongside Reliance, we lean on our claims risk partner **Inway Risk Management** and our shipper's interest policy partner **Mikargo 247**. Through Mikargo, we can offer coverage up to \$2 million on a per-shipment or contracted basis across the U.S., Canada, and Mexico. Inway has also been a big piece of keeping our claims process moving smoothly—bringing in experts when needed so our team can stay focused on the day-to-day.

## 3) Post-delivery invoice and payables controls

Once shipments are delivered, the accounting and payables side of this industry is still pretty antiquated. We wanted a solution that could be a true catch-all while keeping the back office fast and efficient. Enter **Lighthouse**—an AI-driven accounting tool we use to check and verify invoices, paperwork, and payable details against our TMS. It processes carrier invoices, flags discrepancies, and helps catch fraud or double brokering—removing manual labor and human error from the equation.

Across the entire life of a shipment—from vetting to booking to transit to invoicing—we've built an airtight operation. We lean on the right partners at each step, which gives us both high-level protection and expert support when trouble shows up. With our 2026 growth plans, these layers will help us avoid costly risk and resolve issues faster when they do happen.

## Repetitive Operational Tasks

With our recent move to **Turvo**, we've found a long-term TMS partner that fits our split-model style while giving us the ability to customize workflows and operate at speed. Whether shipments are approaching late, tracking is delayed, or a specific update is needed, we can automate internal communication through multiple channels. Every customer has different requirements, and Turvo gives us the flexibility to build workflows that match those needs.



Coupling these capabilities with their strategic partnership with **Augment**, another Hoplite partner, has been ideal. Where workflow automation stops within Turvo, Augment's AI capabilities kick in.

Hoplite went live in Turvo on January 1, and the majority of our integrations were completed by that deadline. As we finish the remainder, our operational focus is on mastering the rule sets and leveraging our integrated tech so we can react faster across day-to-day tasks.

The intent is simple: take the mundane manual work out, reduce human error, and put more power in the hands of our sales and operations teams. We're through and through a relationship-based brokerage, and this will always be a relationship-driven industry. These tools don't replace that—they amplify it. They help us deliver a stronger carrier and customer experience without over-hiring or under-hiring. Just like the Hoplite warriors, we can do more with less—using technology as our sword and shield.



## Reporting and Analytics

As mostly former Coyotes, one of the many things we learned is the power of reporting and continuous improvement. Data tells a story—it's our job to uncover what that story is telling us, and what it can tell our customers and carriers.

That's why we were excited to partner with our friends at **Goodship**. We're looking forward to going deeper into their analytics to strengthen both our offense and defense in 2026. Alongside our carrier sourcing tools and our pricing/market analytics partner Triumph Intelligence (formerly Greenscreens), we plan to attack RFQs more strategically, use real-time data to make better decisions, and take a more unique approach to carrier and customer sourcing.

In the end, there's proactive and reactive. I don't believe you can ever be purely proactive in transportation, so you need the ability to close internal and external gaps quickly—and communicate clearly while you do it. This industry will never be perfect, and it will always be unpredictable. But if we want to be best-in-class, we better be quick on our feet and know exactly where to look for improvement.

Using our tech the right way—with the right blueprint, in the hands of the right people—is something we believe sets us apart. And we'll keep learning, refining, and building on it as we deliver the Hoplite experience in 2026 and beyond.



# Hoplite SPOTLITE.

If you're a football fan, you probably know Alex.

Having worked with him at several stops in our careers, we've always been impressed (but not surprised) that someone who's succeeded at the highest level in one field is wired to relentlessly do the same in logistics. Alex is a tireless worker, charismatic professional, family man, and all-around great guy. He fits what we're all about and we couldn't be more thrilled to highlight him as our **HOPLITE SPOT-LITE** for Q1!

### Tell us a little about yourself.

"Well, I am a Florida boy, born and raised! Needless to say, I am very proud of where I come from. On top of that I am a country boy that had this skill to play football. I was very fortunate to get the opportunity to play at the University of Florida and play nine seasons in the NFL. I am a very proud father and husband. Family is always first to me and there is nothing I wouldn't do to make sure their world is better than the one I grew up in."



**Alex Brown,**  
Sr. Sales Executive

### **How did you get into logistics?**

“Once I finished football things slowed down quite a bit and fortunately I had a friend that started a logistics company called Coyote. I reached out to his wife, she called me back and said could I start tomorrow. I have been in the industry ever since.”

### **What is the most rewarding thing about your role?**

“As a kid I was always interested in how things are made. Getting the opportunity to go to manufacturing plants and see how the things we use on a day-to-day basis are produced is really a highlight of my job.”

### **What is the ideal carrier you like to work with?**

“Honest and reliable. I truly believe if a carrier has these two then everything else will work itself out.”

### **What made you decide to work at Hoptite?**

“The people! The two founders of Hoptite grew up in this industry like I did and we share a ton of the same views. It wasn't hard to be convinced that this was the place for me.”

### **Why should a shipper work with Hoptite?**

“The people, again. Working with people you like, trust, and can count on doesn't come easy. So when you find a place like that with those types of people you make sure they're in your network to some degree. It's truly that simple.”

### **What do you like to do outside of work?**

“I am a father, husband, coach for my daughters flag football team, & sports analyst.”

### **How does it feel working at a company alongside Lions, Packers, and Vikings fans?**

“It's fine I guess... I don't enjoy seeing the sadness on their faces because we took the North and will never give it back but that's just the reality I'm going to have to learn to live with 😊”

### **Anything else you'd like to add?**

**#BearDown!**

**HOPPLITE**