

parabola

How to automate your freight audit process





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The entire world relies on shipping. Retailers as well as freight and logistics companies are responsible for the movement of every product we get our hands on, but so many of them are reliant on legacy systems that are difficult to integrate, leaving their partners at the mercy of spreadsheets.

Around [20% of freight invoices contain errors](#), which means it's not uncommon for shippers to pay more than they owe — and conducting a freight audit recoups [8% of transportation costs on average](#).

Freight audit allows shippers to improve their bottom line by reducing unnecessary spend from invoicing errors. But it usually involves messy data spread across disparate sources like emails, PDFs, and spreadsheets, making the process painfully manual, time-consuming, and error-prone — especially when you have multiple shipping partners.

Prior to automating in Parabola, many of our customers spent multiple hours a day on freight audit, and they still couldn't trust their outputs because everything was done by hand.

Even worse, some companies don't even attempt freight audit because they simply don't have the bandwidth. Some try to get time back by outsourcing it, but this can be just as expensive with even less visibility and oversight.

Automating freight audit reveals discrepancies to cut overcharges and creates substantial labor cost savings by eliminating manual processes, allowing your team to focus on the impactful work they were hired for.

Read on to learn how to create a repeatable, automated freight audit process.

[Want to try for yourself? Sign up for free and begin automating your freight audit process today.](#)



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Step 1

Compile your rate cards

At its core, freight audit consists of two main sources of data:

- A rate card with the agreed-upon carrier rate
- An invoice for the amount you were actually charged

Comparing these two documents is incredibly time-consuming because carriers provide invoices and rate cards in a ton of different formats — everything

from CSV files to emails to scanned, scribbled-on PDFs. When you're comparing hundreds of invoices, it can feel impossible for freight audit to be done accurately and completely by hand.

But first things first — before comparing your rate card and invoice data, you need to get each individual piece into a reportable format. Instead of manually entering all of the data into a spreadsheet, here's how to pull multiple rate cards into Parabola and set them up for freight audit.



How-to

Open up the builder toolbar in Parabola and use the [Pull from Excel](#) step to pull in the data source(s) that your rate cards are in.

UPS Rates



FedEx Rates



DHL Rates



Set yourself up to build an organized Parabola Flow by creating a [Parabola card](#) for each data source. It's helpful to group sets of logic into cards, label them with headers, and include descriptions of what's happening within each card.

Step 2

Standardize & clean your rate card data

Pulling your data all into one place is half the battle, but you still need to get it into a cohesive, reportable format.

This is the magic of automating in Parabola. You used to spend hours manually pulling data from various sources into a spreadsheet to compare your data.

Now, it'll only take you a few minutes to create a repeatable workflow to do this previously tedious process instantaneously.

No matter what format your rate cards and invoices are in — whether they're in spreadsheets, PDFs, or emails — you can easily standardize them in a few clicks.

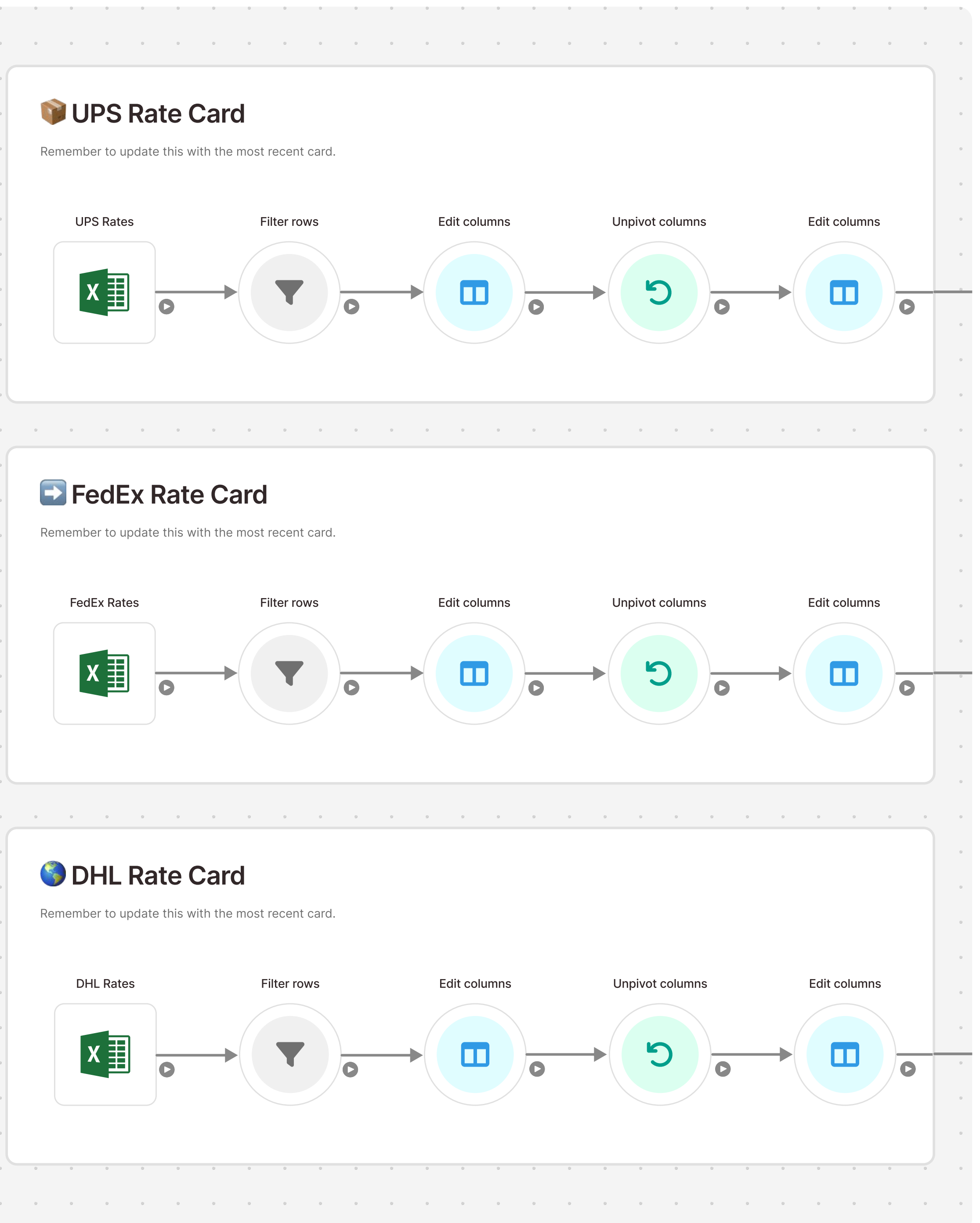


How-to

For each rate card, you can use any combination of Transform steps to standardize the data within them.

Within each card, you can use steps like [Filter rows](#), [Edit columns](#), and [Stack tables](#) to get all of your rate card data in the same format so it's easy to compare against your invoice data.

You can standardize even the messiest data with the [Unpivot](#) and [Pivot Columns](#) steps.



Step 3

Compare your agreed-upon rates to your invoice charges

This is the essential component of freight audit: Comparing your standardized rate card data to your invoices. This is what makes the process worthwhile, and it's where shippers typically recoup around 8% of their transportation costs.

You can pull in any data source (and using our [Extract with AI](#) step, you can parse messy, unstructured PDFs").

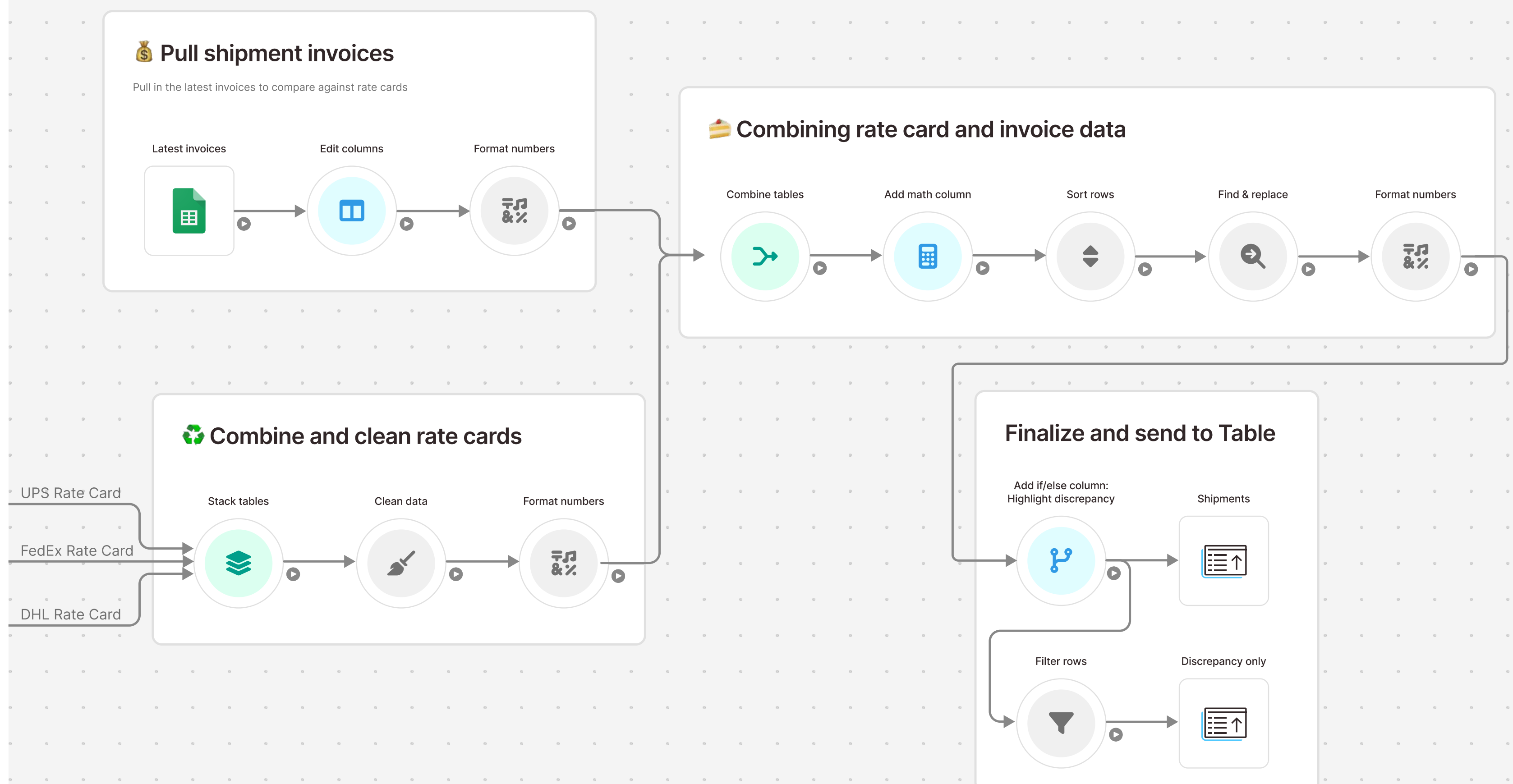
When you build a Parabola Flow, you can see the formatting of your data when you click into each step, so it's easy to make sure it's accurate and reportable.



How-to

Use the Integration steps to pull in your invoice data. For simplicity, we're pulling in a CSV file, but remember: You can pull in any data source — you can even pull a PDF or CSV directly from an email attachment.

Pull together your rate card and invoice data using the [Combine tables](#) step. Then, use any number of Transform steps to format and highlight discrepancies in your combined data and send it to a Parabola Table so you can create custom reports right in Parabola.



Step 4

Visualize, share, & collaborate on your freight audit

When you automate a process in Parabola, you're also creating documentation on that process as you go. The logic of the Flow is baked into each step, making it simple for anyone to see how your Flow works.

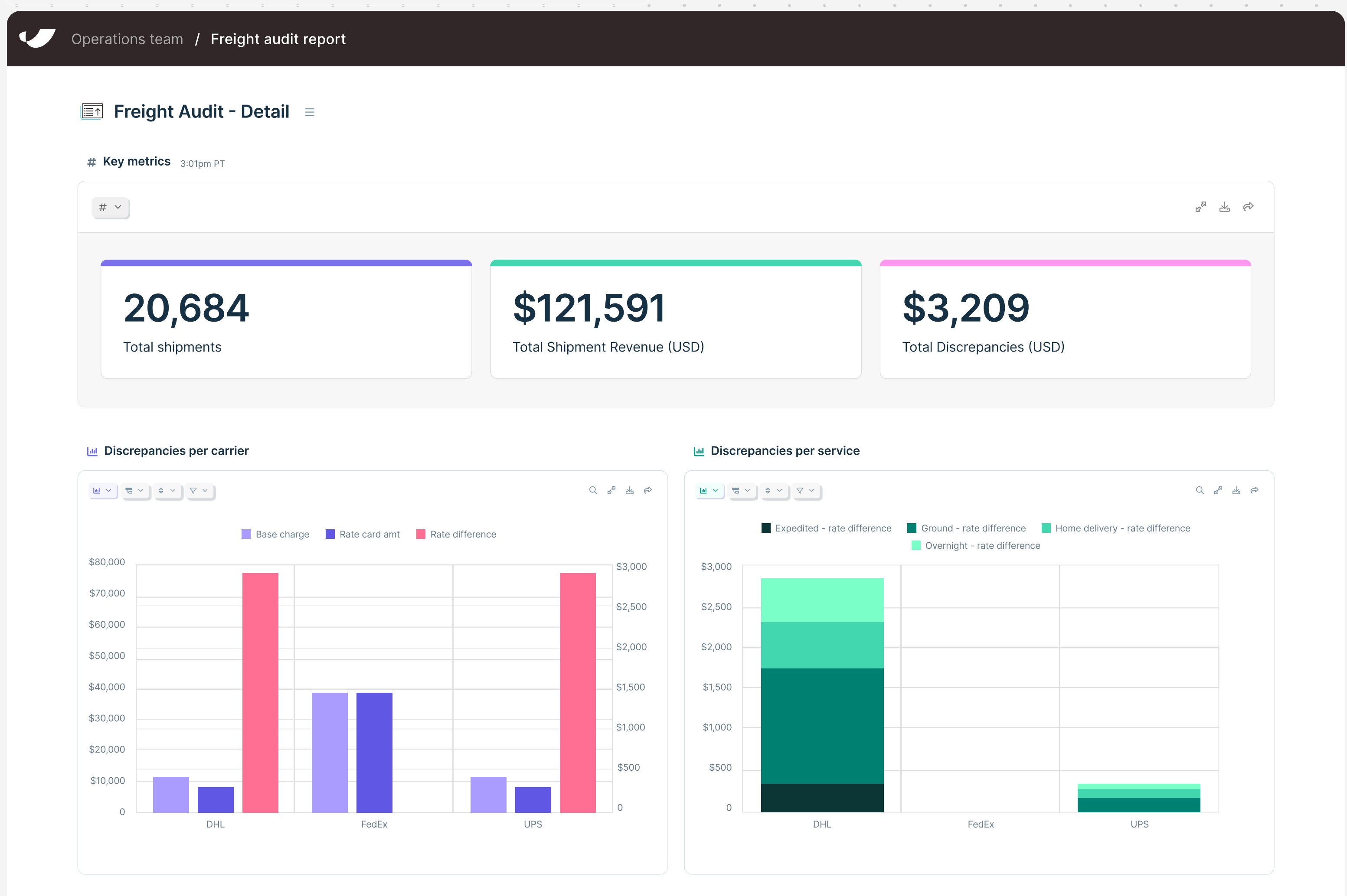
With Parabola's data visualizations, anyone on your team can create their own views of your data without messing with the Flow itself.



How-to

Send your data to a Parabola Table, which you can use to create dashboards. You can customize visualizations of the data in your Flow any way you

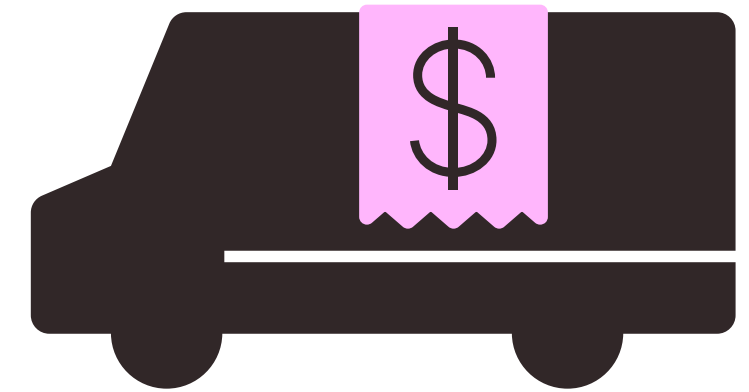
need, whether you want to highlight key metrics in tiles, view discrepancies by carrier or by service, and even get a tabular view of your raw data.



Now you have an automated & repeatable freight audit workflow

Some of our customers have gone even further to use their freight audit Parabola Flows to build historical databases of freight spend and discrepancies across carriers, enabling historical spend analysis and carrier scorecards.

Seeing freight audit as a nearly impossible “nice-to-have” is a thing of the past. When you’ve created an automated, repeatable freight audit process that allows you to visualize your data any way you need, you can be confident in submitting a claim to recoup your transportation costs.



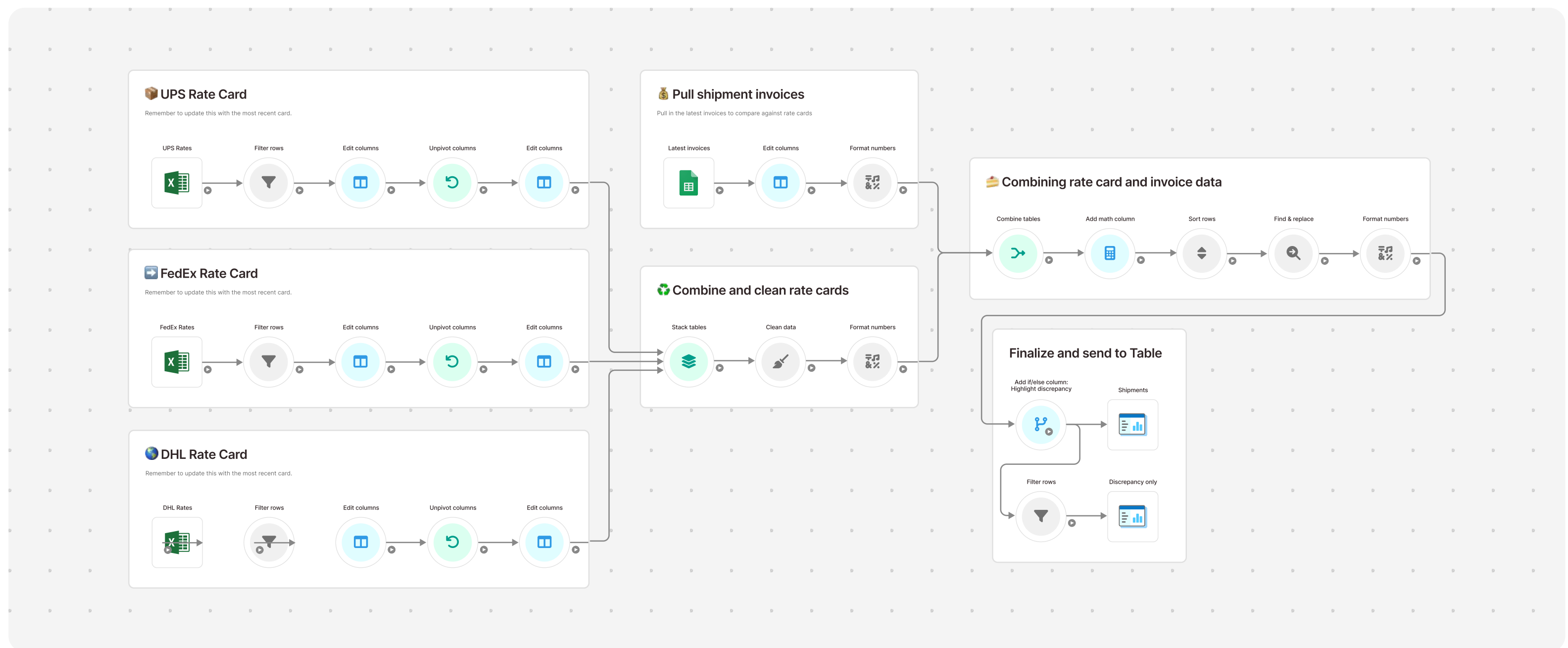
Operations team / Freight audit report

Freight audit report

Quick filter

Share dashboard

Created by Alex Couch ✓ Last run 3:01pm PT ⚡ Add schedule / trigger



Shipping table

Key metrics 3:01pm PT

#

🔍 📄 🔄

20,684

Total shipments

\$121,591

Total Shipment Revenue (USD)

\$3,209

Total Discrepancies (USD)

Discrepancies per carrier

🔍 📄 🔄

■ Base charge ■ Rate card amt ■ Rate difference

Discrepancies per service

🔍 📄 🔄

■ Expedited - rate difference ■ Ground - rate difference ■ Home delivery - rate difference ■ Overnight - rate difference



Stop manually completing processes that should be automated

So many freight and logistics companies are stuck manually pulling together data from disparate sources — but your workflows are more automatable than you think.

No matter how bespoke your process is or how many data sources you're pulling from, you can take control of your shipping data and make it easy for your team to take action on it.

Some of our customers stand to save hundreds of thousands of dollars annually by automating their freight audit in Parabola.

[Want to try for yourself? Sign up for free and begin automating your freight audit process today.](#)

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To see where Parabola can help you save time and resources, head to our [website](#) to learn more.