

Sneak Peek for Distributors: NetSuite 2022 Release 1 Boosts Warehouse Productivity, Employee Engagement

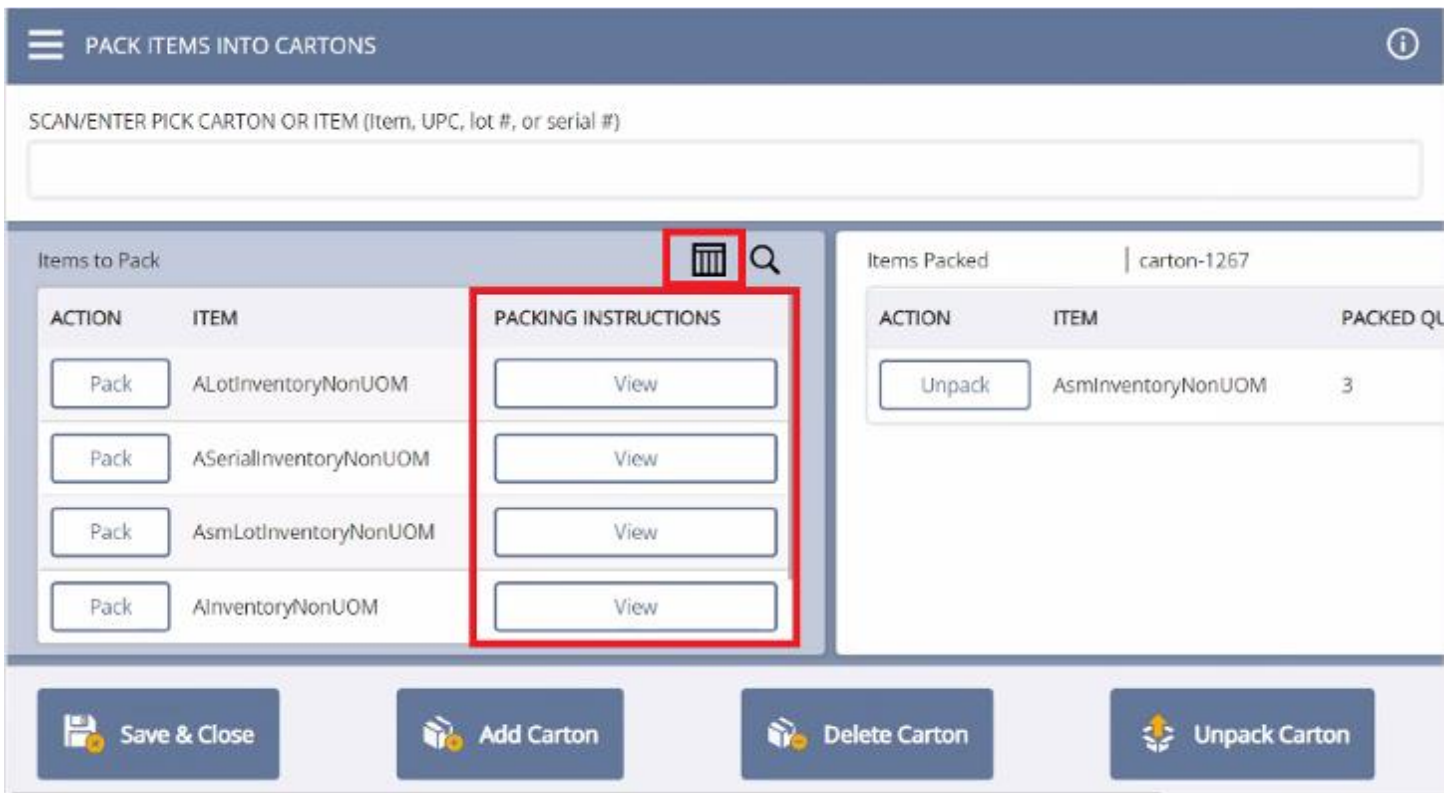


Wholesale distributors occupy a space between manufacturing and retail and feel the impact of shifts in both industries. Distributors have been hit by the rising costs of materials and transportation and the worker shortage that's affected manufacturing and retail. At the same time, they need to provide excellent B2B online shopping experiences as that becomes the preferred buying channel for many.

In response to those trends, distributors must optimize inventory levels to minimize the impact of higher costs and also figure out how to successfully market and sell products online. NetSuite 2022 Release 1 includes several features to drive supply chain efficiency and support cross-channel sales.

Improving Warehouse Efficiency

- The NetSuite Pack Station mobile app now allows warehouse staff to **choose between pounds and kilograms** when weighing packages, and they can review the packing instructions before putting together an order. Warehouse employees can also **pack and unpack “Ship As Is” items in bulk**. Previously, packers had to choose “Ship As Is” for each item that needed special treatment.



NetSuite Pack Station packing instructions.

- Warehouse automation offers opportunities for efficiency gains for distributors, and the NetSuite Warehouse Management System (WMS) can help. The latest version of the WMS supports **zone picking**, where pickers are assigned to specific zones and items are then consolidated before packing. This is the most efficient approach for some operations, and it gives businesses that may use multiple picking methods another option.

Additionally, the WMS now **counts items as they're scanned**, rather than someone entering the quantity when putting away products, cycle counting or transferring inventory. Warehouse workers can also search for and print item labels from a mobile device and managers can release multiple pick waves with just one click.

Finally, paperless wave filtering in the WMS provides employees a visual representation of all orders and waves not currently being picked. That helps warehouse workers find tasks to start and avoid duplicate picks.

More Help to Manage the Supply Chain

- Supply chain managers can now **create custom views of the supply planning workbench**, a single page that shows supply and demand orders, and save them for future reference. They can change the filters applied – such as item location and preferred supplier – and the items included in the workbench. They can also now see item description, safety stock levels and vendor information on that page. These new views make it easier to determine the ideal order quantity to avoid both out-of-stocks and excess stock.

- NetSuite’s mobile manufacturing app should boost efficiency in the warehouse with **simpler on-screen instructions**. Production managers can also use the app to validate quantities for production runs and enable or disable overproduction if they have surplus supplies. The supply chain management app allows managers to add or remove fields from standard data tables depending on what’s relevant to the work they do.
- Inventory allocation is more complex once you’ve added online channels. New functionality allows purchasing managers to **dig into the details of allocated demand**. Clicking into allocated demand for any item shows what it’s reserved for, including the channel and customer, to facilitate faster and more informed inventory decisions.

Better Purchasing Decisions

- Even as conditions toughen, customer expectations remain high and NetSuite’s new **vendor performance scores** help distributors meet them. When ordering items, buyers can see the predicted days early or late for a specific shipment, along with a confidence score. This score is based on the supplier’s historical performance with that company. Purchasing employees can consider this information when they’re placing or approving orders to give customers realistic delivery dates and optimize inventory on hand. It can also prove useful in negotiations with suppliers.

Reducing Inventory Waste

- Certain goods may need to be re-inspected for quality before they’re included in a customer order. These inspections could be triggered by certain scenarios, like if an item has been fixed or barely failed the first inspection. The new **inspection on demand** function in NetSuite Quality Management enables quality assurance professionals to do these inspections on an ad-hoc, timed or repeat basis.
- Avoiding obsolete inventory is an absolute must when expenses spike. Supply chain managers can now **assign and fulfill based on First Expired, First Out (FEFO)** methodology rather than just committing inventory, turning what was two steps into one. FEFO ensures the oldest items are sold before they lose value and is driven by lot numbers that show the production date. The new release also simplifies the process of assigning lots to these items.
- Operations employees have access to a **consolidated report showing forward and backward tracing of all lots**. There are also new filters to sort this information so they can quickly find the data they need.

Keeping a Close Eye on Cash Flow

- Cash flow has come into greater focus for distributors — and most other businesses — since the start of the pandemic. 2022 Release 1 brings Cash 360, which **shows finance departments their cash balance, AP, AR and a six-month cash forecast** in one NetSuite dashboard. Accounting or FP&A teams can add events like loans, asset purchases or receivables factoring that will then be included in the cash projection. Having all this

information in one place helps leaders plan for potential shortfalls.

- It's easier than ever to **find and pair credit memos and bill credits with invoices** for intercompany transactions through tagging. This is especially valuable for companies that don't have a full purchase order-sales order workflow set up for these transactions.

Increasing Employee Engagement and Retention

- Managers understanding the specific goals of their reports is one way to increase employee retention, and improvements to SuitePeople Performance Management help with that. In the newest release, **employees can remove unapproved or unnecessary goals**, and they can see the history of updates for in-progress goals.

A new manager digest **gives managers monthly updates on their employees' progress** toward goals and what they're ahead or behind on.

- Scheduling **performance reviews for a group of employees is faster and easier** with SuitePeople Advanced Scheduling. Instead of manually scheduling reviews based on a work anniversary, managers can now add all employees to a dataset that will automatically send requests for those reviews to managers. This works for both annual reviews and 30-, 60- and 90-day check-ins with new employees.

Drive Better Decision-making Through Analytics

- Distributors must embrace analytics to succeed today and they can glean all kinds of new insights with the recently released NetSuite Analytics Warehouse. This release provides 18 more prebuilt transaction types, six additional dashboards and prebuilt historical datasets for work orders, inventory and expense reporting. The data model also now includes custom fields for entities and items are also now included in the data model.
- SuiteAnalytics Workbook users can use a new interface that makes it **easy to link multiple datasets to a single workbook by dragging and dropping needed links, without writing any code**. This new user interface decreases the amount of time and resources needed to analyze business performance in areas like budget to actual, forecast to actual or planned to actual.

Simpler Integration Management

- As distributors start selling through their own ecommerce site and online marketplaces, they may use the NetSuite Connector so information can flow between those external systems and NetSuite. A new connector tab in NetSuite puts all the connectors in one place for simpler management.

Discover How NetSuite 2022 Release 1 Can Help You

This is just an overview of a few of the notable features in this release that can help wholesale distributors prevail in a rapidly shifting environment. To learn about all the new functionality in detail, check out the [release notes](#).

