Sneak Peek for Retailers: NetSuite 2022 Release 1 Fuels Warehouse Efficiency, Eases Supply Planning and Cash Flow Forecasting

When describing current areas of concern for retailers, one word rises to the top: labor. Job openings in the warehouse and transportation industry hit what was then a record 490,000 last summer and rose to 611,000 by October, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Department of Labor statistics imply that there are far more warehouse job openings than applicants – a vast change from 2018, when each opening saw three to five applicants.

And then there's an uptick in consumption. Holiday sales grew at least 8.5% over 2020, according to the National Retail Federation, and last year's retail imports were up nearly 18% over the previous year. Overworked, some retail warehouse workers are quitting the industry altogether.

Retailers with warehouse operations know they must use their teams as efficiently as possible, to both handle the influx of goods and prevent the burnout that leads to employee churn. Meanwhile, those without warehouses are keenly aware of the many other tasks at hand: unlock revenue via flexible fulfillment; build a strong supply chain capable of responding to nonstop fluctuations; and keep cash flowing and the business growing.

NetSuite 2022 Release 1 delivers new functionality designed to help retailers turn this pressure into profit.

A More Efficient Warehouse
Retailers that operate a warehouse can now assign pickers to a specific warehouse zone with **zone pick and merge** capabilities in the **NetSuite warehouse management system (WMS)** . Each zone's assigned picker will receive pick tasks *only* for that zone, which will speed the process, avoid duplicate efforts and minimize crowding in any given area of the warehouse. When all pick tasks are complete, warehouse managers can merge them into a common staging area. This allows

teams to pick multiple orders at once and then pack all of them vs. picking and packing each order individually.

WMS System Rules

Enable Zone Picking for single orders

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NAME Enable Zone Picking for single orders	**DESCRIPTION** Enables single order picking from one or more zones through a mobile device.	**PROCESS TYPE**
ID 913	**RULE TYPE**	**SCRIPT ID**
☐ INACTIVE		**DEPLOYMENT ID**
LOCATION AutoTestWarehouse	**RULE VALUE** Y ✔ ACTIVE	**PICKING TYPE** Pick & Merge

Single order zone picking instructions.

- Enhancements to the WMS mobile app allow warehouse teams to complete more tasks, boosting productivity. Warehouse workers can **search and print item labels** from any screen on the mobile app, while pickers get **a visual representation of sales orders, transfer orders and waves that need picking**. This helps them quickly find another task when one is complete – and confirm that nobody else is doing it. New **tally scan functionality** counts items *as* they're scanned and now applies to bin putaway, inventory transfers and cycle counting. Warehouse managers can **release multiple waves at once** vs. releasing them one by one.

- The **NetSuite Pack Station**, which debuted in 2021 Release 1, gets many enhancements to make packing more efficient. Workers can **bulk pack and unpack "ship as is" items**, those often fragile items that need to be packed alone. Users can now select "ship as is" for items that are breakable and have all been picked, but where each belong to separate orders. Previously they would have had to select "ship as is" for each item individually. Additionally, now *before* they start packing an order, workers can also **view an item's packing instructions**. They can also now **change weight units** between pounds and kilograms when weighing packages.

A Stronger Supply Chain

- Supply chain planners can now **create templates that determine the items included in, and the filters applied to**, their Supply Planning Workbench. This single-page overview also now displays item description (in its Workbench detail view), safety stock (in the date-based view) and vendor information (in the supply detail view).

These additions give planners more insight into the state of supply and demand and allow them to see only the information most relevant to them without toggling between multiple screens.

- In the supply chain snapshot there is now **more detail around allocated demand and supply via** a hyperlinked pop-up. For example, if there's an inventory shortage, the pop-up describes where inventory is tied up without navigating to another screen.

As a result, fulfillment managers and customer service representatives get a full picture of supply-demand imbalances so they can best expedite supplies, and inventory planners and buyers see full details of any impact from supply constraints. As many retailers work with limited supplies, the pop-up can help them allocate those supplies in the smartest way possible.

- When starting a purchase order, retailers will now see a **vendor performance score** for each vendor that shows the order's predicted days early or late based on historical performance, along with a confidence rating (1-100). Instead of clicking into individual vendor records to investigate past performance, buyers can use this at-a-glance view when deciding which vendor to buy from in a retail market fraught with delays.

- Retailers can now further **customize details shown on the supply chain management (SCM) mobile app** without any scripting. They can easily add columns to tables on the app interface to display fields like customer, rate, quantity committed and location, depending on their priorities.

Easier Inventory Inspections and Allocations

- New **first expired first out (FEFO) allocation at fulfillment** functionality makes it easier for operations employees to assign lots to lot-numbered items. And now, they can use FEFO to both allocate and ship in one process, eliminating an extra step. With this functionality, retailers can further ensure they're using inventory appropriately and decreasing waste from expired items.

A Full Picture of Cash Position

- Retailers face a market in which many vendors are hiking prices, shipping costs continue rising and most experts advise frequent forecasting. The **new Cash 360 dashboard** offers a full view of current cash position and projects cash flow six months out, using current NetSuite transactional data and projected collections and disbursements. Financial analysts can add one-off events that impact the cash flow forecast, such as asset purchases, loans or factoring receivables. They can then review the dashboard's projections and drill down into any transaction for more details.

The Cash 360 dashboard replaces the process of creating short-term cash flow forecasts in spreadsheets or a third-party app. The result is a huge time-savings: Instead of moving data from one system to another, users now get more accurate cash flow forecasts that are updated automatically.

- New functionality allows accountants to **match a credit memo to an invoice**, a benefit for retailers that do *some* intercompany transactions but not enough to warrant a full, automated intercompany netting workflow. This eliminates the complicated process of manually identifying intercompany transactions and applying credits, saving time and lowering the risk of misapplying credits.

More Powerful Data Analysis

- Retailers can now save time by linking datasets together in a single SuiteAnalytics Workbook without a developer, SuiteScripts or APIs. They might link datasets like budgets

vs. actuals; forecast vs. actuals; and planned vs. actuals. This functionality allows them to more quickly combine multiple datasets into a single workbook, including custom records, creating one visualization for better data-driven decision making.

- The NetSuite Analytics Warehouse gets **18 more prebuilt transaction types** in this release, including transaction types for **employee** and **banking** functional areas. Three new historical snapshot datasets include **work orders**, **inventory** and **expense reports**, allowing managers to easily perform point-in-time analyses in these areas. There are also **six new dashboards**, giving analysts more insight into metrics. These additions save development costs and time, offering retailers new ways to analyze their NetSuite data along with other data sources.

A Hub for Commerce Integrations

- Administrators can now more easily access the **NetSuite Connector**, via a "Connector" center tab. There, they'll find all NetSuite Connector pages and settings in one location.

More on NetSuite 2022 Release 1

This is just a partial list of the game-changing new functions and capabilities in NetSuite 2022 Release 1. For a more details of what the new features can deliver to retail organizations, read the release notes.