



The Fashion and Apparel Brand's Blueprint for Success:

# Enabling Great Customer Experiences

**ORACLE  
NETSUITE**

Apparel and fashion brands today confront challenges that are unprecedented in other industries. In fact, whether they're a manufacturer, retailer, wholesale distributor or all of the above, apparel brands have experienced significant change in the past few years. As a result, apparel companies need to adapt to deliver on changing customer expectations. Those who succeed are able to differentiate themselves in the marketplace, while those that fail become irrelevant.

The blueprint for success starts with a solution that can accommodate the complexities across all channels of business.

Apparel and fashion companies need a technology foundation that links an organization's front- and back-ends, provides a single view of the customer, helps deliver a consistently outstanding customer experience, and is flexible and scalable.

## Disruptions in Retail

In just the past few years, retail has gone through massive disruption—technological transformation, the rise of direct-to-consumer brands, and a global pandemic have all led to an overall change in consumer preferences. Today, the



consumer is in the driver's seat. They expect information and products at any time from any location, and no longer follow a linear purchasing path. Consumers expect a fast, easy and consistent process.

As a result, the lines between retail and ecommerce have blurred, becoming omnichannel. Business models are shifting as product companies become service companies and service companies become product companies. Now, more

than ever, an efficient and optimized supply chain is essential for providing a seamless customer experience, competitive prices and more sales.

Some apparel brands have been unable to adapt, while others have made dramatic changes to stay relevant. This disruption is forcing brands to rethink business processes, business models and business systems. Point solutions built for specific needs, such as inventory, financials or customer data, are ill-suited to facilitate these sorts of transformations.

## Challenges

Amid these disruptions in retail, challenges holding apparel and fashion brands at large include:

- **Aging, disconnected IT systems.** Fashion and apparel brands can have as many as six to 12 on-premises legacy point solutions, which are heavily customized and have to be integrated. The result is a big hairball, with each system providing different data, and high costs to constantly update and integrate these disparate systems.

Traditional ERP systems have contributed to an IT deficit. ERP systems have historically been for the back-end. When a front-end solution was needed—like an ecommerce

solution or mobile site—it was simply bolted on. Solutions were not designed with customers in mind and companies lacked a single version of the truth. Most ERP systems fall short in helping brands deliver great customer experiences. They result in:

- **Inconsistent data.** Data has to be consistent across all customer touchpoints to ensure a consistent, simple experience.
- **Employee impediments.** Without the tools and data to provide personalized, relevant experiences, employees aren't empowered to provide experiences that stand out to customers.

Whether they're facing disruptions in the market or the global supply chain, many apparel brands are limited by aging systems, inconsistent data and employee impediments. Fashion and apparel companies need to transform themselves with connected systems that enable delivery of great customer experiences.

**“SuitePeople has carried us to a point where no matter what happens, including a global pandemic, onboarding and offboarding are fluid.”**

**Guido Campello, Co-CEO and Creative Director, Journelle**

## Customer-Focused Commerce Musts

In this hyper-competitive environment, NetSuite has identified five pillars to building a unified customer experience based on the experiences of its strong base of retail customers.

- **A holistic customer view.** This requires having all customer data in one place, including purchase history, returns and preferences.
- **Innovative experiences.** Flexible platforms enable innovative new experiences that go beyond traditional ecommerce.
- **Intelligent order orchestration.** Companies need to be able to orchestrate orders intelligently and use inventory more efficiently to better serve customers.
- **Unlimited expansion.** Retailers need scalable platforms that allow for expansion across the globe, as well as into new products and services cost effectively.
- **Single cloud platform.** Because change is so fast, cobbling together and constantly upgrading on-premises systems is prohibitive. Outstanding customer experiences require a cloud platform.

## Supply Chain

Exceptional experience has become an expectation for consumers. The supply chain must do more than stock and ship products. Today's customers expect the logistics behind their orders to be flawless.

Both the order and return processes must be as efficient as possible and available when, where and how the customer wants. They depend on the seller to meet—and even anticipate—their needs.

Delivering an amazing customer experience requires the supply chain to prepare, operate and delight the customer at every touchpoint throughout that entire journey. This requires collaboration across demand-inventory planning and management.

## NetSuite: A Unified Business System for Retail and Apparel

Apparel brands face a choice of continuing to use multiple point solutions, using a traditional back-end ERP system and bolting on front-end pieces, or adopting a cloud-based business system.

NetSuite enables retail and apparel brands to prioritize customer retention and relationship management throughout their journey, while also building an agile supply chain to anticipate and meet consumer demands. Integrate your back-end system of record and front-end system of engagement within one unified suite. Enable your brand to deliver on all customer-focused business musts: a complete customer view, a platform for innovative experiences, advanced order management, and a cloud-based architecture that can scale for unlimited expansion.

“NetSuite is the core backbone of our company and has supported our dramatic growth since we first went live.”

Hestra USA



## NetSuite Functionality

NetSuite provides multiple tools for fashion and apparel brands to navigate complex scenarios, all with the goal of delivering an outstanding customer experience.

These include:

### SuiteCommerce

NetSuite's commerce solution unifies business operations and ecommerce to provide a single source of item, inventory, customer and order data—so you can create intuitive, cross-channel, personalized shopping experiences. Rapidly create unique, personalized and consistent B2B and B2C mobile, web and in-store experiences that differentiate your brand and exceed customer expectations. With centralized order management and a single view of inventory across all channels and the supply chain, you can meet customer expectations to buy, fulfill and return from anywhere.

### Intelligent Order Management

This produces a unified commerce experience and prevents fracture points. For orders, NetSuite's order management tools use easily configured rules and preferences. Capabilities include the ability to split orders, see and manage exceptions, and deliver full visibility throughout all steps of the ordering and fulfillment process. The workflow can also include a follow-up email after an order arrives to thank a customer, remind them of return policies, and provide contact information for questions.

### Warehouse Management System

The NetSuite Warehouse Management System (WMS) optimizes day-to-day warehouse operations using industry-leading practices, such as mobile RF barcode scanning, defined strategies for putaway and picking, task management, return authorization receipts, and cycle count plans. With hundreds or even thousands of SKUs to handle, often across multiple locations, each transaction entered is automatically updated in the NetSuite inventory record and reported in real time.

## Inventory Management

NetSuite Inventory Management minimizes manual processes by providing real-time, company-wide inventory visibility—across warehouses, retail stores, pop-up shops, drop shippers, 3PLs or any other place where you manage or stock inventory. This is key to enabling a buy anywhere, fulfill anywhere customer experience. Finally, put an end to drastic markdowns on excessive stock and unlock cash flow that is tied up in tired inventory.



## Verticalization: Fashion Apparel

NetSuite is also investing to go even deeper into specific retail sub-segments, with the first sub-segment being fashion apparel. NetSuite has created an Apparel Edition with specific features and functionality tailored to this space. The Apparel Edition includes:

- Unified Online and In-Store Shopping
- Optimized Inventory Allocation
- Retail Business Operations
- Enriched Online Experience
- Merchandise Management

## Making It Happen

In implementing NetSuite, best practice is looking holistically at the needs of customers and involving partners to provide the best solution. This may mean identifying the best partners in areas like strategic services or complementary products, such as website design or loyalty marketing. Another leading practice is to replace systems through a phased “stairway” approach. The steps include:



- **Remediate.** This is getting the house in order by fixing broken processes and can involve standardizing on a cloud platform. In the short term, retailers may keep and leverage third-party applications, while beginning on a path of consolidation.
- **Unify.** The goal is to create a unified foundation, providing a single version of the truth in real time.

- **Enhance.** This continues the theme of unifying by connecting all channels in the shopping experience.
- **Innovate.** Once consolidation has occurred and the shopping experience is connected, retailers can think more creatively and leverage technology to enhance the customer experience through personalized, targeted email campaigns or loyalty programs.
- **Disrupt.** Gone are the days of technology inhibiting the customer experience. Now, technology can differentiate the brand and the experience.

### NetSuite Stairway for Apparel, Footwear and Accessories: A Strategy for Fashion Brands to Deliver Personalized and Engaging Journeys for Shoppers

## Customer Experiences

Click on a customer logo to read their success stories.

### Hammitt

[Hammitt](#) is a luxury accessories brand based in Los Angeles selling in more than 850 boutiques nationwide as well as its flagship store in Las Vegas. Implementing NetSuite shortly after incorporating, NetSuite helps Hammitt manage manufacturer relationships, consumer commitments and boutique resellers, with a data-driven approach to growth. Hammitt is extending its retail footprint with new pop-up stores and continues to build a brand following with its lifetime product guarantee model, while NetSuite's demand planning will keep the company on target with the right amount of product to meet discerning customer tastes.



[Mystery Ranch](#) manufactures and sells packs and load carriage systems across a variety of channels and types of customers. The company began in 2000 and now boasts seven manufacturing plants across North America and Asia and manages an international distribution network.

Its QuickBooks implementation could no longer accommodate the expanding business model. The company also shifted to a direct-to-consumer strategy and needed an ecommerce solution to engage consumers. Mystery Ranch is now equipped to better serve its traditional customers while growing new markets and channels, including its online business.

### pact

[pact](#) promotes “Change You Can Wear” through socks, underwear and other everyday essentials made with environmentally friendly, socially conscious organic cotton. pact relies on NetSuite to manage its fair trade-certified supply chain and to oversee complex financial relationships and inventory at every step, from organic cotton procured by manufacturing partners in India to finished goods at 3PL locations. As it expands into new retail channels and product lines, its use of NetSuite has also grown. pact uses NetSuite for financials, forecasting, CRM and case management, inventory planning, revenue recognition, and 3PL integration.

# ORACLE NETSUITE