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NUCLEUS RESEARCH

ANATOMY OF A DECISION: INFOR NEXUS CONTROL CENTER

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THE BOTTOM LINE

Nucleus interviewed Infor Nexus Control Center users to understand the primary drivers behind the Control Tower solution's selection. Users cited the solution's ability to provide in-transit visibility, reduce transportation costs, and standardize supply chain processes. Nucleus identifies the six best practices organizations employed when deploying Infor Nexus Control Center.

OVERVIEW

The absence of a control tower solution in modern supply chain management presents several challenges for organizations, including the lack of real-time visibility into internal and trading partner supply chain processes. This limited visibility leads to inefficiencies, delays, and uncertainty in decision-making stemming from fragmented data spread across various systems and departments, making effective integration and analysis nearly impossible. Consequently, organizations struggle to optimize their supply chain operations. Furthermore, existing siloed communication structures perpetuate misalignments, errors, and workflow bottlenecks. This absence of data centralization results in poor agility and an inability to predict, prevent, or resolve disruptions such as delays, overstocks, or stockouts. The lack of analytics for impact analysis and the absence of integrations to push changes to multiple groups or systems ultimately leads to suboptimal decision-making.

Implementing a control tower solution can transform an organization's supply chain operations. Acting as a centralized hub, a control tower provides real-time visibility into operations across all supply chain tiers. Control towers give advanced warnings of potential disruptions based on detecting events across the supply chain. This increased bandwidth allows users to address issues proactively. Some vendors even have AI-prescribed resolutions for automated decision-making. This enhanced visibility and control empowers organizations to monitor operations in real-time, enabling more proactive decisions and allowing organizations to address issues before they become major problems.

INFOR NEXUS

Infor Nexus is a supply chain management platform that provides solutions to improve supply chain efficiency and enhance collaboration within the supply chain ecosystem, including features such as procure-to-pay, supply chain finance, supply management, global transportation management, and a supply chain control tower. Infor supports enterprise organizations across the Consumer Goods, Aerospace and Defense, Automotive, Technology, Manufacturing, Fashion, Retail, Logistics Service Providers and Distribution verticals. The Infor Nexus Control Center is a cloud-based control tower solution for organizations seeking to improve supply chain orchestration and optimization. Infor Nexus enhances decision-making by offering predictive insights, intelligent decision support, and collaborative execution capabilities. It can also make dynamic adjustments to procurement and distribution plans, ensuring they align with an organization's current needs and conditions. These features empower organizations to make timely, informed decisions that positively impact supply chain operations.

WHY INFOR NEXUS?

Nucleus interviewed Infor Nexus customers across manufacturing and retail industries to identify the primary selection factors. Customers reported Infor Nexus' ability to provide in-transit visibility, reduce transportation costs, and standardize supply chain processes as the key drivers.

- **In-transit visibility.** An electronics manufacturer selected the Infor Nexus Control Center for its ability to provide the organization with real-time in-transit visibility. Infor provides in-transit visibility by collecting data from GPS devices from vehicles, sensor data from shipping containers, weather data, and data from supply chain partners. Infor enabled the manufacturer to proactively manage stock-outs two to four weeks in advance, prevent lost sales, and enhance operational efficiency.
- **Ability to reduce transportation costs.** The Infor Control Centers' ability to detect delays and inform stakeholders of the best alternative carrier and route selection allowed an aerospace and defense company to improve decision-making, reduce costs, and enhance workforce productivity.
- **Standardization of supply chain processes.** A European e-commerce brand selected the Infor Nexus Control Center to standardize its complex global supply chain operations and enhance collaboration. The organization faced limited visibility and fragmented systems, resulting in production delays, expensive transportation costs, and poor stakeholder collaboration. The retailer anticipates enhancing supply chain processes through data integration by improving freight visibility, enabling early warning alerts, facilitating proactive issue resolution, and fostering collaboration between internal and external stakeholders. These improvements are expected to enhance decision-making and overall efficiency.

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCES

Nucleus interviewed multiple Infor Nexus customers to investigate the value delivered by the platform.

ELECTRONICS MANUFACTURER

This US electronic equipment manufacturer generates billions in annual revenue with over 30,000 employees globally. The organization sought a modern supply chain Control Tower solution for near real-time in-transit visibility and control. The manufacturer had been a longtime user of GT Nexus. However, it lacked real-time visibility across suppliers, logistics, and its SAP ERP system. The ERP data latency meant the company could not proactively

mitigate stock-outs promptly. Additionally, its global network of 80-plus factories made identifying emerging inventory issues or demand spikes challenging. The organization searched for a Control Tower solution and assessed several software vendors, including Infor, e2open, SupplyOne, SAP Business Network for Logistics, and Bearing Point Log360. Infor Nexus Control Center emerged as the primary choice because Infor excelled at in-transit visibility and late shipment and stock-out detection. In contrast, other Control Tower applications were focused on a broader scope of use cases. The Control Center also integrated in-transit logistics and ERP data from SAP to grant near real-time freight visibility.

The Infor Nexus implementation kicked off in late 2020 and took about 18 months. The process included customizing the user interface for its Korea and Japan offices for language and regional compatibility. In addition, integrating with the ERP was complex due to a heavily customized SAP deployment. The manufacturer took a measured approach to the Control Center's rollout – first onboarding pilot users, then training nearly 100 employees. Infor Nexus Control Center's primary use case was for the early identification of potential stock-outs. Before, users would be notified of stock-outs several hours after the fact; now, the system alerts within 20 minutes of an event. The electronic manufacturer now leverages real-time visibility into thousands of order lines and shipments to identify micro-events that might impact the supply chain. This allows it to address potential stock-outs, often two to four weeks in advance, preventing lost sales, streamlining inventory management, and enhancing operational efficiency. Users also appreciate the solution's ease of use, noting that they can answer many questions with a single screen rather than search through multiple systems and windows. In addition to addressing stock-outs, users leverage the Control Center to manage customer events such as cancelations and expedite and identify demand fluctuations. Overall, the Control Center improved supply chain agility. The organization can adjust global production, repurpose inventory, and modify orders in transit further in advance while adhering to strategic policies around partners, margins, lead times, emissions, and risk.

A manufacturer can now address stock-outs 2 to 4 weeks in advance with Infor.

WEAPONS MANUFACTURER

This US-based weapons manufacturer generates $1.5B in revenue and employs 3,200 individuals worldwide. The organization relied on a legacy solution for inbound and outbound logistics, which led to suboptimal operational efficiency. Specifically, supplier selection and oversight were manual and time-consuming without modern tools or real-time

insights, where stakeholders could not obtain the oversight to source materials effectively. The organization sought a control tower solution to alleviate these issues by providing sourcing and transportation management functionality, forecasting and supplier communication capabilities, forecast automation, supplier communication features, and open reporting functionality to share supply chain data and insights with all stakeholders. The manufacturer decided between Oracle SCM and Infor Nexus Control Center. Ultimately, the organization selected Infor due to its history of solving complex supply chain issues for large organizations, forecasting and demand planning capabilities, transportation management functionality, and the platform's ease of use.

The organization initiated the implementation of Infor Nexus Control Center in October 2022, deploying its transportation management features first and going live in February 2023. With Infor Nexus Control Center, the organization can detect delays and inform stakeholders of the best alternative carrier and route selection to improve decision-making and reduce transportation costs. The forecasting and demand capabilities are being rolled out in a phased approach. With enhanced forecasting and demand abilities, the manufacturer anticipates transitioning 15 employees to more strategic roles by automating processes surrounding supply chain planning.

EUROPEAN E-COMMERCE BRAND

This Europe-based multinational retail and services conglomerate operates online marketplaces, physical stores, and a financial services business. It generates $17B in revenue and currently employs 50,000 individuals. Before implementing a control tower solution, the organization struggled with limited visibility and fragmented systems across its global supply chain operations. This led to production delays and poor stakeholder collaboration. The e-commerce brand wanted to standardize its supply chain processes surrounding freight tracking, carrier selection, and shipment delay investigations. The organization sought a platform that was easy to maintain and did not require complex changes if the organization adjusted or introduced a feature.

After evaluating several options, the e-commerce brand selected the Infor Nexus Control Center for its intuitive user interface, breadth and depth of its supply chain functionality, commitment to the ongoing partnership, and overall implementation expertise. The organization clearly understood the technical challenges with scaling their deployment and had confidence in Infors' customer support services, an aspect other vendors struggled with. The implementation process began in July 2022 and is expected to roll out across all regions by December 2023. The organization expects Infor's control tower solution will provide standardization for all supply chain processes, freight visibility, and a platform to promote collaboration, helping stakeholders proactively manage global operations, reduce costs, and meet customer delivery targets.

BEST PRACTICES

Through end-user conversations, Nucleus has identified the following best practices that organizations should consider when deploying Infor Nexus Control Center to maximize their returns:

- **Collaborative Data Integration.** Integrate real-time data from various sources across the supply chain, including carrier, supplier, and internal systems. This allows Infor Nexus Control Center to comprehensively view orders, shipments, and inventory across the supply chain.
- **Proactive Risk Management.** Proactively identify and mitigate supply chain risks using real-time data and predictive insights. Nucleus found that organizations leveraged the Control Center to prevent stock-outs, delays, and disruptions by providing early warnings and real-time visibility.
- **Continuous Performance Monitoring.** Continuously monitor and assess supply chain performance metrics and KPIs, ensuring a commitment to operational excellence by improving overall efficiency and reducing costs.
- **Cross-Functional Collaboration.** Cultivate collaboration among departments and partners to streamline decision-making processes and expedite issue resolution. Assemble a team comprising experts from various departments, such as supply chain, IT, operations, and logistics. Highlight the importance of collaboration within this team to effectively leverage the control tower's capabilities.
- **Scalable Implementation.** Plan for a scalable implementation process that accommodates the complexity of your unique supply chain and organizational needs. First, assess your current supply chain processes and form a cross-functional team. Evaluate your existing technology, emphasizing how a control tower solution can unify disparate systems. Develop a data integration strategy to streamline real-time data flow. Consider a pilot phase for testing and gathering feedback. Encourage continuous improvement to adapt to evolving supply chain needs.
- **Change Management Strategy.** Develop and execute a robust change management strategy to facilitate a smooth transition to the new system. A successful implementation of Infor Nexus Control Center depends on effectively managing changes in processes, roles, and responsibilities. When adopting a control tower for the first time, organizations commonly transition from reactive decision-making, based on historical data and manual analyses, to proactive decision-making using real-time data and insights. This fundamental shift enhances their ability to respond swiftly to supply chain challenges and optimize operations.