

Infor Demand Forecasting



Challenge

Accurately predicting demand requires the right data at the right time. Any errors risk higher costs, lower customer satisfaction, and excess inventory, to name a few. Deep integration between the ERP and the demand forecasting tool is required to make it all work. Your demand forecasting tool needs your customer data, sales history, sourcing and product information, and other valuable parameters to create an accurate forecast. Your ERP needs your forecast to drive action across your organization, from purchasing to finance to manufacturing. But often these barriers stand in the way:



Complex, costly integration processes—delaying time to value

Deploying and aligning business processes between two highly configurable systems like an ERP and a forecasting application takes months and requires extensive IT support and manual data entry.



Lack of real-time data at scale

Processing power in legacy, on-premises demand forecasting and ERP solutions can be limited, making it expensive to exchange large amounts of data. Data is often sent in batches, leaving organizations with systems that are out of sync and data that is not up to date. These gaps limit visibility and risk missing a market shift that could impact the forecast accuracy.



Manual, resource-intensive processes

These barriers leave fewer options to automate, forcing users to manually address the gaps and pull everything together.

Infor Demand Forecasting

Infor® Demand Forecasting is a next-generation forecasting application that is artificial intelligence (AI)-driven and especially architected to overcome these challenges. It is cloud-based and extensible to any ERP, but because it is embedded with Infor M3® CloudSuite™ ERPs (Distribution, Food & Beverage, Fashion, Chemical, and Manufacturing), it provides these additional benefits:



Deploy in as little as 30 minutes

When Infor Demand Forecasting is deployed, set up is in minutes, not months. As it is embedded with Infor CloudSuite ERPs, you don't have to worry about technical integration. Instead, you can focus on your forecasting needs. It uses a wizard to prompt needed inputs to help you easily set up what you need to track, predict, and prioritize from a business perspective.



Improved accuracy at scale using near real-time data

Infor Demand Forecasting uses the power of the cloud and a live connection (versus a standard API) to exchange data with Infor CloudSuite ERPs. Unlike many tools on the market, Infor Demand Forecasting only shares incremental changes without needing to pull all product data and create a whole new forecast. The efficiency of this architecture allows us to provide near real-time forecasts at scale. For organizations with massive amounts of products and data, such as distributors, this feature is key. It helps ensure that any demand variation is known and actioned upon immediately to avoid being left with too much inventory or losing customers to the competition if orders cannot be fulfilled.



Frees up forecasters' time as they can now manage by exception

The application offers advanced exception management with priority-rated situations and exceptions so that forecasters only focus on the outliers and areas that can be improved. Infor Demand Forecasting keeps track of all updates on all levels so that manual intervention is known and can be analyzed.

Infor Demand Forecasting combines near real-time data and insights with intelligent automation and scalability to help make your forecasts more accurate, efficient, and effective.



Feature chart

Feature	Description
Multi-tenant cloud-native	Eliminates upgrades and keeps you always up to date. The cloud also has the processing power to support near real-time data at mass scale.
Extensible to any ERP	<p>Infor Demand Forecasting is extensible to any vendor's ERP. See the section below for details on deployments with third-party vendors.</p> <p>Note that Infor Demand Forecasting is embedded with Infor M3 CloudSuite ERPs (Distribution, Food & Beverage, Fashion, Chemical, and Manufacturing) speeding time to value with deployment in as little as 30 minutes. Although not embedded, Demand Forecasting offers easier deployment with Infor LN™ CloudSuite Industrial ERPs.</p>
Demand Sensing	<p>This is a fully integrated functionality. By using real-time data from external sources (like market intelligence) and internal sources (like customer orders) along with machine learning (ML), companies can adjust their short-term forecasts to reflect the actual demand. This helps to improve the accuracy of the forecast and reduce the risk of stockouts or excess inventory. By continuously monitoring customer orders and adjusting the forecast accordingly, companies can ensure that they have the right products in the right quantities to meet customer demand.</p> <p>Demand Sensing helps you go beyond historical data to better predict demand. Fully integrated, it uses real-time internal and external data, AI, and ML to determine deviations in the short and long term. It closely monitors daily forecasts to ensure accuracy and responsiveness to real-time demand. It also assesses long-term and near-term events for the most accurate forecasting. It covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tactical horizon: Focuses on generating the best forecast for execution in Supply Planning • Strategic horizon: Provides a forward look at trends to inform long-term planning
AI/ML	<p>ML, a subset of AI, is essential for Demand Forecasting. It helps select the best algorithms to analyze historical data and identify patterns. These patterns are then used to predict future demand with a high degree of accuracy. By comparing various algorithms and combinations thereof, Demand Forecasting can determine which is the most effective for a given dataset. This selection process is critical as it ensures that the forecast presented is the best fit for the data at hand, leading to more informed and strategic decision-making in supply chain management.</p>

Feature	Description
Proven, industry-leading algorithms	<p>Improves forecast accuracy through advanced algorithmic predictions. Infor Demand Forecasting uses dozens of algorithms and their combinations to generate predictions based on previous sales data. ML improves the forecast by selecting the best prediction model. Demand Forecasting then dynamically updates the forecast every time new information is available, maintaining up-to-date accuracy.</p>
Customized views	<p>Infor Demand Forecasting's configuration in Infor CloudSuite is highly customizable, catering to individual user preferences. With over 750 default M3 CloudSuite ERP parameters, users can aggregate forecasts to suit their needs. They can choose to display data in volume or value and even alter periodicity. Signal levels also can be adjusted to flag more or fewer cases for exception-based management, enhancing the tool's responsiveness to specific business scenarios and decision-making requirements. This level of customization ensures that forecasts are not only accurate but also relevant to the unique demands of your business operations.</p>
Collaboration	<p>See and track user-specific contributions. Each user's edits are tracked for accountability and transparency. Changes can be traced along with the rationale behind the changes.</p>
Better business alignment with business areas	<p>By setting up business areas, planners can ensure the right people are working on the right forecast and the right data, bringing these benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved security: Segment data and access by business unit or configure by region, brand, product, and more • Improved performance through focus: Business areas help users focus on their key areas of expertise • Better collaboration: Business areas promote collaboration among groups of knowledgeable people and help ensure no overlap of responsibility or work
Advanced exception management	<p>This feature reduces manual intervention by helping forecasters manage by exception. An all-in-one dashboard helps identify situations and exceptions quickly. They are priority-based so users can easily see which entries are high severity or choose issues by a specific type to ensure relevance. This method helps ensure users spend their valuable time on areas that enhance the accuracy and value of the forecast.</p> <p>Demand Forecasting advanced exception management has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exception handling: Identifies anomalies in the forecast or data history, such as step changes and outliers • Situational analysis: Identifies and prioritizes issues such as strategic changes or accuracy issues • Comprehensive evaluation: All areas, including exceptions and situations, must be considered before finalizing forecast results

Feature	Description
Near real-time data at mass scale	Infor M3 CloudSuites are embedded with Infor Demand Forecasting using a pre-built live connection that allows them to exchange data. Instead of sending data in batches, only incremental changes in the ERP are sent to Demand Forecasting. The live connection captures changes in the ERP as data snippets, and if a forecast is approved, Demand Forecasting sends it back. This ensures both systems are synchronized and up to date, providing a consistent view of information and facilitating automatic updates.
Forecasting, editing, and reporting aggregates	<p>Infor Demand Forecasting provides aggregation, meaning it provides a summation of sales, forecasts, or any metric to an aggregate level from lower levels. For example, a stock-keeping unit or customer sale can be aggregated to a product category or warehouse level. These aggregations are flexible and can be built and tailored to each area of your business.</p> <p>Demand Forecasting also allows for edits/changes to be made at any level of the forecast. These changes are then automatically propagated across the different hierarchy levels and recorded and stored in a change log for tracking and reference. This feature helps maintain consistency and accuracy in the forecasting process across all Business Areas and all levels.</p> <p>Reporting aggregates are the sum of forecasts from base levels, providing a consolidated view. These reports do not allow edits and are not modifiable at the aggregate level.</p>
Situation-based alerting	Situation-based management in Demand Forecasting allows for the identification and prioritization of various scenarios and exceptions that may arise. It provides an all-in-one dashboard to quickly spot situations and manage forecasts effectively by focusing on high-priority or specific types of entries. This approach ensures that forecasters spend their valuable time on areas that enhance the accuracy and value of the forecast output, managing by exception and improving overall forecast management.
Extensible to other systems	User data series in Demand Forecasting allows demand planners to include additional data, like data from promotional management systems, to assist in managing forecasts. This feature enables viewing forecast engine outputs and manual data series in forecast tables and graphs, enhancing forecast assessment and promoting confidence in demand plans.
Predictive modeling	Model your forecasts based on changes to price, volume, and more. Coming in 2025.
Inventory optimizations	Coming in 2025.



Deploying with third-party ERPs

Infor Demand Forecasting integrates with Infor and third-party ERPs to help ensure the right data and actions are taken for a more predictable forecast.



As described in the introduction, Infor Demand Forecasting is embedded with Infor M3 CloudSuite ERPs (Distribution, Food & Beverage, Fashion, Chemical, and Manufacturing) to speed time to value with deployment in as little as 30 minutes.



For Infor LN CloudSuite Industrial ERPs, Demand Forecasting has a pre-built connection, uses a simple wizard-based setup, and automatically retrieves data from the Infor Data Lake to drastically speed deployment.



For third-party ERPs, Infor Demand Forecasting deployment is also simplified. It uses a wizard to help easily configure hierarchies, datasets, filter capabilities, and optional attributes.

Both third-party and Infor LN CloudSuite Industrial ERPs use Infor's Supply Chain Vault as the connection to Demand Forecasting. The Supply Chain Vault is a platform that ingests and cleans the data before putting it in a format that Demand Forecasting can understand and use. This architecture ensures that all systems have access to the same data, maintaining consistency and accuracy across the supply chain.





Licensing options

Infor Demand Forecasting has two licensing tiers: Infor Demand Forecasting Essentials and Infor Demand Forecasting Professional. The chart below highlights its differences.

	License levels	
	Infor Demand Forecasting Essentials	Infor Demand Forecasting Professional
Extensible to third-party ERPs (other than Infor)	No	Yes
Number of business areas supported for policy-enabled access	5	Unlimited
Wizard-based setup	Yes	Yes
Live connection for Infor M3 CloudSuite ERPs	Yes	Yes
Support for Supply Chain Vault integration	No	Yes
Situations-enabled A situation is an alert condition with a defined threshold. The system alerts the planner when tolerance is exceeded.	Up to 10	Up to 20
Total number of reporting aggregates	Max 10	Max 15
Number of forecasting aggregates	Max 1	Max 5
Number of data series from other systems	1 (manual input only)	10
Demand Sensing	Yes	Yes



About Infor

Infor is a global leader in business cloud software products for companies in industry-specific markets. Infor builds complete industry suites in the cloud and efficiently deploys technology that puts the user experience first, leverages data science, and integrates easily into existing systems. Over 67,000 organizations worldwide rely on Infor to help overcome market disruptions and achieve business-wide digital transformation.

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Stay ahead of market shifts with intelligent demand forecasting

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