



Zastro

NetSuite Cloud ERP and IllumiNET for Lighting Dealers



From the time Edison's first incandescent electric light replaced the kerosene lantern in 1879, the lighting industry has been steadily improving upon itself. In most cases, the companies selling these innovative products utilize platforms like LightsAmerica or XOLogic, both of which are linked to the primary lighting manufacturers.

Over time, lighting dealers' inventory management and procurement processes have become extremely complex. For example, the dealer that's selling products from 50 different manufacturers—each making 200 different product stock keeping units (SKUs)—is probably managing transactions for 10,000 products on one or both industry platforms.

“Combined, these challenges make it difficult for the lighting industry to achieve real gains in a sector that continues to innovate and grow every year.”

Dean Mitchell, President, Zastro, LLC

Those platforms feature all of the products, the images, list prices and other key data that the distributors need. They're great tools, but they lack direct integration into the enterprise systems that lighting companies need to be able to run their businesses efficiently and profitably.

Lighting dealers also confront aging software tools and the fact that their industry-specific systems lack robust functionality. Plus, many of these older, point systems are no longer supported. As a result, distributors generally have poor visibility into their showroom or warehouse inventory, particularly if those items have been returned and need to be resold.

A Platform Tailored to the Lighting Industry

By implementing NetSuite ERP and IllumiNET, an industry-specific solution designed by Zastro, lighting companies can overcome these challenges, maintain their market positions and improve their bottom lines.

Key IllumiNET functionalities include:

Special Order Product Automation

- As qualified products are ordered, they are automatically bucketed into "to order" purchase orders based on the preferred vendor.
- As these "buckets" grow, selected users can view all pending purchase orders, the amount, days open, etc.
- If certain vendors have preferred order days or preferred order amounts, IllumiNET can auto-create the purchase order and send it out (if instructed).

Full LightsAmerica Integration

- Users can create a "wish list" through their website and export it directly into NetSuite.
- By integrating with LightsAmerica, IllumiNET supports a "touchless" sales environment, where customers can shop online versus having to visit a physical location.
- Customers can use the shopping cart function to order directly through LightsAmerica.
- Orders can be automatically drop-shipped to the customer.

Maximize Manufacturer Incentives

- IllumiNET comes with built-in customizations for consolidated POs within NetSuite.
- These customizations aggregate the manufacturer's purchase requirements across the distributor's orders (including those placed by different customers).
- This ensures that manufacturers reach the threshold and are awarded the incentive, thus saving dealers money on every sale.

Custom Label Generation

- Once an item receipt is created in the system, the user can print customized, package-specific labels with the box contents listed, customer address and special notes.
- Customized hang tags can be created for the showroom floor.

Bulb Allocator

- If an item has a designated "preferred bulb," when editing the sales order the user can automatically allocate that bulb.

- The system will determine how many bulbs each fixture needs.
- It will then apply the appropriate quantity based on specs and the amount ordered.

Pricing and Other Industry-Specific Features

- IllumiNET imports all updated manufacturers' pricing information into NetSuite on a regular basis, thus ensuring that the lighting dealer always has the most current cost and price.
- The ability to customize print-view forms to show item images, display product specs, and sort and display items by room location.
- Auto-creating and managing POs is a breeze, the user can designate vendor-specific email messaging and use it when delivering the new PO requests.

Letting You Focus on What You Do Best

IllumiNET also allows designers to align their original material wish lists with the actual work that's being done at the customer's home or place of business. It does this by automatically generating product labels that are tied back to the original sales order (which shows which room the light fixture belongs in and other important details). This helps dealers organize the boxes and/or individual items right in the showroom, before they're delivered to the jobsite.

NetSuite's core offering supports the inventory management processes that all lighting companies need. Most lighting showrooms realize the benefits of NetSuite's inventory management, primarily due to how it keeps track of the goods, reorders the items that need to be kept in stock, and uses cycle counting to ensure high levels of accuracy.

Building on those capabilities, IllumiNET tracks all returned goods and then alerts the dealer to their location, thus ensuring that all returned merchandise can be resold quickly. In an industry where too much inventory can impact the bottom line—and where not enough means stockouts and lost sales—these alerts can translate into significant benefits for the dealer.



Company Snapshot

Company: Zastro, LLC

Industry: ERP, Ecommerce, CRM implementation and consulting

Location: Wayzata, Minn.

Solution: IllumiNET

