Acumatica
The Cloud ERP

# Comparing Acumatica and Infor CSD: Considerations for Distributors

## A Solution Brief for Progressive Wholesalers

### WHY ACUMATICA IS A SUPERIOR ERP SOFTWARE OPTION COMPARED TO INFOR CLOUDSUITE DISTRIBUTION (FORMERLY SX.ENTERPRISE)

Infor CloudSuite Distribution (Infor CSD) was a popular ERP platform for more prominent wholesale distributors in many durable goods markets. Acquired by Infor in 2004, Infor CSD has been modernized for the cloud with connections to strategic Infor applications for extended functionality.

However, a slow move to the cloud, a deteriorating partner ecosystem, and limited features outside core distribution requirements leave customers rethinking their future ERP strategies. Industry features from acquired legacy applications were designed into Infor CSD, challenging smaller distributors with multi-step workflows and rigid business processes. In an era of digital transformation, Infor CSD's inflexible reporting and cumbersome analytics applications create barriers to information needed for strategic business decisions to drive growth.

Acumatica is a cloud-native distribution ERP platform providing a simpler and more cost-effective alternative for Infor CSD customers and distributors evaluating business systems—especially those in non-durable goods industries or distribution businesses with construction or manufacturing business requirements. Acumatica's financial suite provides automated bank feeds, advanced expense management, and other advanced features not available natively with Infor CSD.

Distribution leaders and departmental managers thrive with role-based dashboards, real-time alerts via business events, flexible inquiries, actionable reports, and dimensional analytics with Microsoft Power BI. Gain insights to drive growth, fend off competitors, and act instead of reacting to challenges armed with complete, accurate, and timely information.

This solution brief examines Infor CSD's history, available applications, partner ecosystem, and support and service offering compared to Acumatica Distribution Edition. Discover why many wholesale distributors choose Acumatica to modernize distribution operations with an arsenal of resources for support, services, and certified product extensions.

### ACUMATICA: THE EASIEST AND MOST COMPREHENSIVE DISTRIBUTION ERP SYSTEM



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"Being able to access data and have the various departments working together in one system is a real benefit . . . If the warehouse has low inventory for an item, it is immediately exposed to purchasing to place the order for more. We now have real-time visibility to pertinent data . . . Our success is ultimately tied to Acumatica's success, and they are building a strong and healthy product, they have a vibrant customer and development community and a product that's growing, not stagnant. We can really craft Acumatica to do what we need it to do."

**– BEN ROTHE, PRESIDENT, PREMIER 1 SUPPLIES**

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## PRODUCT HISTORY

# Dozens of Acquisitions Form a Complex ERP System with Loosely Coupled Bolt-On Modules

Infor CSD (formerly SX.Enterprise) originated in Colorado Springs, CO, in 1979 as R&D Systems. In 1995, the industry veteran rebranded as NxTrend and acquired Ultimate Data Systems automotive distribution software. BuildNet acquired the company in 2000 only to return SX.E to the original owners in 2001 following bankruptcy proceedings. NxTrend acquired competitor Dimasys (Enspire) in 2003.

Meanwhile, Systems & Computer Technology (SCT) corporation spun off its Adage process manufacturing application to form Agilysis (later rebranded as Infor). Backed by considerable venture capital, Infor consolidated dozens of legacy ERP and enterprise business applications. Infor acquired NxTrend in 2004, part of an extensive distribution portfolio including Lawson (now Infor M3), daly.commerce (A+), and Aperum (FACTS, TakeStock, and DMAS), and others.[1]

NxTrend had 1,900 customers at the time of the acquisition. Installed base numbers included customers using products other than SX.E.[2] Infor CSD reported just **2,800 customers** in 2016, with slow growth stemming mainly from migrations from Infor's exhaustive portfolio of legacy distribution applications like FACTS and A+.

In 2017, Infor modernized SX.E for the cloud, rebranding it as Infor CloudSuite Distribution. Functionality from Infor's legacy distribution applications was incorporated into Infor CSD. Infor acquired other applications that are cobbled together for Infor CSD. Most of these applications are on disparate platforms with varied integration to core distribution systems and processes. Connected Infor apps include Infor CRM, Pricing Science, Project Job Management, Service Repair, Rental Management, Birst for BI, Infor WMS, Ming.le for collaboration, Rhythm for commerce, Infor CPQ for configured quotes, and Infor Coleman for artificial intelligence. The addition of legacy industry features combined with connectivity with many disparate applications makes Infor CSD cumbersome. Users complain about multi-step processes, multiple logins, and challenges pulling data together for reporting and business analysis.

- *"Infor does not integrate with CRMs very well."* **G2.com 2022**
- *"Integration between certain aspects of the system sometimes feel like they were an afterthought and could have been implemented much better . . . "* **G2.com 2020**
- *"You have to go through so many different screens to just do one task"* **G2.com 2019**

**Founded in 2008, Acumatica was born in the cloud. Unlike Infor, Acumatica acquires complimentary business applications natively developed in the Acumatica xRP platform. Further, Acumatica invests heavily in a single platform for businesses across industry segments with robust and intuitive business intelligence applications native to the platform and connected to all parts of the system.**

[1] Source: MDM Modern Distribution Management
[2] Source: Supply and Demand Chain Executive

# Discover Why Distributors Rely on Acumatica for their Success

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## APPLICATION OVERVIEW

# Functional Gaps and Inflexible Reporting Undermine Robust Distribution Industry Features

NxTrend was a pioneer in the field with decades of experience in electrical, HVAC, plumbing, and industrial markets. Knowledge gained through scores of acquisitions positioned Infor to develop Infor CSD with deep industry functionality for other markets, including automotive, building materials, fluid power, janitorial and sanitation, and more.

Infor CSD provides a solid platform for most durable goods distributors with a complete suite of financial applications and best-in-class modules to manage orders, inventory, and warehouse transactions. Connected Infor apps extend core features for enterprise analytics, pricing, CPQ (configure, price quote), commerce, service repair, rental, projects, customer management (CRM), and more. However, Infor CSD has a negligible market share in non-durable goods distribution industry segments.

Despite the impressive feature set, Infor CSD has noticeable gaps restricting growth. The financial suite does not include native apps for fixed assets, automated bank feeds, advanced expense management, or traditional project accounting. Further, the application offers only light manufacturing capabilities and few features for distributors with heavy field service or construction requirements.

Further, smaller Infor CSD users need help with connected Infor apps designed for much larger customers. For example, many customers use ISV apps for business intelligence rather than the native Infor Birst application. The addition of industry features is challenging for many small distributors. Reporting is a common complaint among users citing difficulty accessing data, even with Infor's specialized Birst reporting application.

- *"The reporting side of the software is lacking and not very organized. A third party will typically be wanted for this side of the product."* **Gartner 2022**
- *"Currently, reporting . . . data out to excel remains a challenge for the software in the ERP product which at times only allows for export to PDF or flat text file which then needs to be converted."* **GetApp 2020**
- *"The reporting module (BIRST) is still a work in process, and needs to be completed, it will make the software more of a complete package."* **GetApp 2020**

**Acumatica is more than just a great distribution application with a full suite of applications built on the same platform for simplified reporting and deep business analysis. Role-based dashboards, no-code reporting and inquiries, native Microsoft Power BI connectivity, and configurable business events for notifications empower non-technical users to access meaningful data easily. Acumatica's financial applications offer comparable features to Infor CSD plus native fixed assets, payroll, automated bank feeds, mobile expense reporting, and robust project accounting. Acumatica Manufacturing Edition provides advanced capabilities for material planning, production scheduling, engineering change management, and quality control. Native apps for construction and field service open new markets for distributors who need project management, job estimating, appointment scheduling, warranty management, and advanced construction functionality.**

[3] Source: Infor Distribution SX.E Town Hall



## PARTNER STRATEGY

# A Deteriorating Reseller Channel and Dwindling Marketplace Limit Service and Extension Options

Infor CSD used to have a thriving partner ecosystem. Despite listing more than five hundred resellers on their partner directory, independent sites like G2 and sources close to Infor confirm that there are less than 30 active partners with a substantial installed base of customers. Further, many Infor CSD partners are smaller, boutique consulting firms with limited resources.

At most, 20 ISV solutions are listed for Infor CSD or SX.E on the Infor Marketplace. These solutions are from just six unique development partners. Infor touts its Infor ION integration platform for connecting business applications. However, most customers avoid it due to limitations, instability, and complexity.

**More than 350 resellers make Acumatica their partner of choice, providing customers with ample service and support options based on geographic preferences and business needs. Acumatica partners are among the largest and most respected ERP resellers in the industry, including national resellers, leading accounting firms, and strategic international partners. Further, over 200 market-leading business applications connect seamlessly with Acumatica providing options to extend the application for business and industry requirements.**



## SUPPORT AND SERVICES

# Limited Options and Internal Issues Leave Customers Questioning Support and Service Quality

Infor CSD's robust industry features and advanced bolt-on products make the ERP platform challenging to learn and support. SelectHub notes that 80% of users said that Infor does not supply sufficient user training and that the documentation is difficult to understand. Further, most customers rely heavily on resellers for support and training with limited partner options due to the modest reseller channel.

Infor employees note shifting priorities and overall dissatisfaction with management as issues contributing to turnover in critical areas of the organization affecting customer support and professional services.

- *"Technical support is also very lacking at Infor."* G2.com, 2018
- *"Tell the Client whatever they want to hear to make the sale, but Project Teams are left holding the bag to deliver or drive a change order which causes Customer conflict with the team."* Indeed.com, 2019
- *"Implementation is a joke and VPs blame everyone…but the implementation teams. If they had good PM's they wouldn't have to worry but most don't know the products their implementing."* Indeed.com 2018

**Acumatica is consistently rated high in usability with dual levels of support by Acumatica and more than 350 channel partners globally, providing customers with plenty of options for support and services. Users rave about the intuitive user interface, active Acumatica Community, rich online help, and free Acumatica University for training. Glassdoor.com shows that Acumatica employees are happier (4.3 Rating) compared to Infor employees (3.9 Rating), resulting in expert support and services.**

"We need to get data in and out quickly and have the ability to meet and get ahead of the market to remain an industry leader in our category . . . Now that everyone is using Acumatica . . . it's made a big improvement having all that information in one platform, no more digging around wondering if the data is correct."

**– LESTER YUEN, VP OF OPERATIONS AND FINANCE, TIMEBOMB TRADING, INC.**

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"With Acumatica as the heart of the business, there isn't a challenge or technical problem we can't overcome."

– AARON GABRIELSON, CTO
REDMOND INC.

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## HEAR WHAT OUR CUSTOMERS HAVE TO SAY:

**EXCERPT FROM EAGLE FENCE DISTRIBUTING CASE STUDY**

*Eagle Fence . . . evaluated . . . Oracle NetSuite, Infor, and Sage Intacct . . .*

"I also liked that Acumatica continues to move forward in releasing new versions twice a year and that they really listen to their customers . . . They are moving in the direction that their customers want them to go, not where an executive behind a desk wants to go. Acumatica's mindset is 'here are the resources we need to add to make our customers successful.' "

– KEITH FORD, PRESIDENT
EAGLE FENCE DISTRIBUTING

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**EXCERPT FROM FREDERICK BLOCK, BRICK, AND STONE CASE STUDY**

*FBBS . . . identified 40 potential ERP systems . . .*

"Acumatica can be configured to do all the things we needed for our industry . . . I love that they are quickly growing . . . I like that they are putting money back into the solution to make it better for everyone. We now have a business solution that we know is going to continue to improve over time."

– STEVE SLAUGHTER, PRESIDENT/CEO
FREDERICK BLOCK, BRICK & STONE

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# Future-Proof Distribution Operations with Acumatica's Comprehensive and Adaptable Cloud ERP System

Infor CSD offers deep industry functionality for varied durable goods distributors, but at a cost. Users complain about Infor's slow move to the cloud, rigid reporting features, and complex workflows.

Acumatica is a cloud-native business application with high usability ratings supporting durable and nondurable goods distributors. Acumatica's low-code and no-code report designer, flexible Generic Inquiries, role-based dashboards, flexible business events for notifications, and native Microsoft Power BI integration provide real-time insights to users without complex coding or customizations.

Ancillary Infor products provided varied integration with core Infor CSD features for critical functions like CRM, project job management, service repair, and commerce. Infor CSD users struggle with gaps in the accounting suite requiring costly, one-off integrations or stand-alone systems for fixed assets, automated bank feeds, advanced expense management, and project accounting. Limited functionality for manufacturing and construction prevents businesses from expanding into new markets.

Acumatica Cloud ERP provides a future-proof business platform with a comprehensive suite of financial applications, flexible inventory and order management, embedded warehouse management, CRM with marketing and sales force automation, and native applications for manufacturing and construction.

Infor's eroding partner channel and dwindling ISV community leave customers with few options for service, support, and extended business applications to automate ancillary business processes.

Conversely, Acumatica's thriving partner ecosystem provides ample choices, including more than 350 reseller and consulting partners and over 200 connected marketplace applications making Acumatica the clear choice for growth-minded distribution companies who need to compete and thrive in today's competitive digital economy.



"Being able to drill down inside reports, so we can see from a profit-loss statement right down to the customer that's placed the order has helped us to see exactly what is going on at the moment. We can very quickly drill into what's happened . . . Acumatica has already proved effective in handling future needs with a clean and simple integration to our e-commerce system . . . I would recommend Acumatica to any growing distributor looking for a great system."

– JUSTIN LEFLAIVE
FINANCE MANAGER, TOFFELN

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Acumatica
The Cloud ERP

**Acumatica Cloud ERP is a comprehensive business management solution that was born in the cloud and built for more connected, collaborative ways of working. Designed explicitly to enable small and mid-market companies to thrive in today's digital economy, Acumatica's flexible solution, customer-friendly business practices, and industry-specific functionality help growing businesses adapt to fast-moving markets and take control of their future.**

**For more information on Acumatica, visit www.acumatica.com or follow us on LinkedIn.**