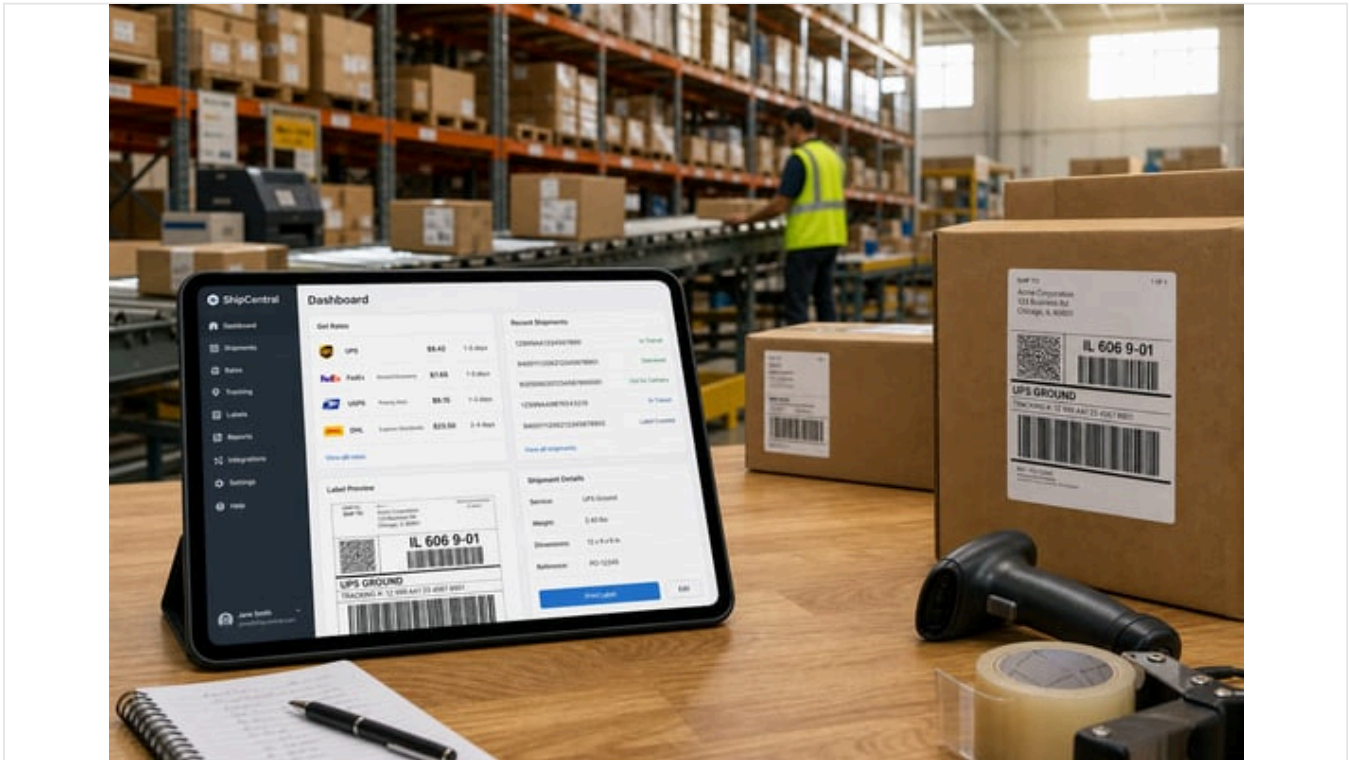


# NetSuite Carrier Integration & Ship Central Setup Guide

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## Executive Summary

NetSuite’s integrated shipping solutions have evolved significantly. Originally, NetSuite’s *Shipping Label Integration* allowed direct connections to legacy carriers (UPS, FedEx, USPS/Endicia) so that orders could be rated and labeled within NetSuite. However, Oracle now designates **NetSuite Ship Central** (launched circa 2022–2023) – powered by a built-in ShipEngine account – as the standard for new implementations (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)) (Source: [www.anchorgroup.tech](https://www.anchorgroup.tech)). As of 2026, NetSuite cooperates with ShipEngine (soon rebranded as ShipStation API (Source: [docs.shipstation.com](https://docs.shipstation.com)) to unify carrier accounts and automate [shipping workflows](#). For existing customers on legacy integration, Oracle continues limited support but encourages migrating to Ship Central (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)) (Source: [www.anchorgroup.tech](https://www.anchorgroup.tech)).

This report provides a comprehensive guide to setting up NetSuite carrier integrations and rate-shopping:

- **UPS Integration** – Registering your UPS account, enabling features, creating UPS shipping items, and printing labels.
- **FedEx Integration** – Registering FedEx accounts (with FedEx’s MFA steps), enabling shipping integration, and configuring FedEx shipping items.
- **ShipEngine/Ship Central Integration** – Creating the NetSuite ShipEngine account, connecting multiple carriers (UPS, FedEx, USPS, plus others like DHL), and enabling the NetSuite Ship Central plug-in.
- **Rate Shopping Setup** – Using Ship Central’s *Shop for Rates* (or “Get Rates”) and NetSuite’s *Multiple Shipping Routes* to compare real-time rates across carriers and select the best option per shipment (e.g. cheapest vs fastest) (Source: [www.stockton10.com](https://www.stockton10.com)) (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)).

Detailed configuration steps, background context, and expert insights are provided for each area. Industry perspectives and data (e.g. case studies showing reduced shipping costs via integration (Source: [www.toptal.com](https://www.toptal.com)) are integrated throughout. All claims are backed by NetSuite documentation and recent expert analyses (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)) (Source: [oracle.hydrogen.sagittarius.connect.product.adaptavist.com](https://oracle.hydrogen.sagittarius.connect.product.adaptavist.com)) (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)) (Source: [www.anchorgroup.tech](https://www.anchorgroup.tech)) (Source: [www.toptal.com](https://www.toptal.com)).

## Introduction and Background

Effective shipping automation is critical for [NetSuite ERP](#) users. Manually calculating rates and creating labels outside the ERP is time-consuming and error-prone. **NetSuite's Shipping Label Integration** and **Ship Central** modules address this by bridging NetSuite with carrier services. Historically, NetSuite's native integration (pre-Ship Central) supported real-time rates and label printing for **UPS, FedEx, and USPS/Endicia** (Source: [docs.oracle.com](#)). However, Oracle's strategy has shifted: new customers use *Ship Central*, which leverages an embedded ShipEngine account to connect to carriers (including UPS, FedEx, USPS, DHL, etc.) (Source: [oracle.hydrogen.sagittarius.connect.product.adaptavist.com](#)) (Source: [www.anchorgroup.tech](#)). Legacy FedEx/UPS integrations remain only for accounts created before Ship Central's rollout (Source: [docs.oracle.com](#)) (Source: [www.anchorgroup.tech](#)).

The **key goals** of carrier integration are to automate rate quoting, label generation, and shipment tracking within NetSuite. As one industry analyst notes, integration "automatically generates [shipping] labels based on [order details](#), saving ... time while reducing human error" (Source: [www.excelym.com](#)). Another highlights real-time multi-carrier rate comparisons so shippers "compare costs and select the most affordable option for every shipment" (Source: [www.excelym.com](#)). Stewart *et al.* comment that at high order volumes, carrier integration can dramatically cut [fulfillment time](#): the "per-shipment processing [drops] from manual steps to automated workflows" (Source: [www.anchorgroup.tech](#)). Indeed, one case study found automating carrier selection in NetSuite cut shipping costs by ~74% (Source: [www.toptal.com](#)). These savings underscore the business value of deep integration.

Below we review the **current state and setup procedures** for UPS and FedEx in NetSuite, explain NetSuite's Ship Central (ShipEngine) account management, and detail multi-carrier "rate shopping" configuration. We also consider historical context (older legacy integration), alternative SuiteApps, and future implications (e.g. ShipEngine's 2025 rebranding (Source: [docs.shipstation.com](#))).

## UPS Integration

### Overview and Prerequisites

Integrating UPS with NetSuite allows real-time rate quoting, automatic charging of the UPS account, [barcode label](#) printing, and tracking updates directly in NetSuite. The NetSuite help states: "**UPS Integration enables you to connect your NetSuite account directly to your UPS account**" (Source: [docs.oracle.com](#)). When an order is fulfilled using an UPS-integrated shipping item, the UPS charges post to the UPS account and the tracking number is saved on the Item Fulfillment record (Source: [docs.oracle.com](#)).

**Prerequisites:** Before integrating, you must have an active UPS account with permissions for real-time rates (i.e. Web Services access). Note your UPS account number if you've already registered for real-time rates, as NetSuite will require it (Source: [docs.oracle.com](#)). Generally, one should also enable NetSuite's **Shipping Label Integration** feature and set UPS as a default carrier (if desired) before proceeding (Source: [docs.oracle.com](#)) (Source: [docs.oracle.com](#)).

**Enabling UPS in NetSuite**

- 1. Enable Shipping Label Integration:** In NetSuite, go to **Setup > Company > Enable Features**, then under the *Transactions* subtab check **Shipping Label Integration**, and save (Source: [docs.oracle.com](#)). This activates the integrated shipping functionality across **UPS, FedEx, USPS (for legacy integration) or Ship Central (for new accounts)**.

- 2. Default Carrier Setup (Optional):** Under **Setup > Accounting > Shipping**, set **UPS** as the Default Shipping Carrier and save (Source: [docs.oracle.com](#)). (This ensures UPS is pre-selected on new orders but is not strictly required.)
- 3. Register UPS Account:** In NetSuite, navigate to **Setup > Accounting > Shipping**, and use the **Carrier Registration** subtab (legacy integration) or **Shipping Items** setup (Ship Central) to add your UPS credentials. For legacy integration, click **Add UPS Account**, read/accept the UPS terms, and fill in your account details (see below) (Source: [docs.oracle.com](#)). For Ship Central, instead add UPS under the ShipEngine settings (next section).
- 4. Unit Roles:** Perform these steps with an administrator or a custom role that has **Set Up Shipping** and **Manage Shipping Labels** permissions.

## Registering the UPS Account

Through the **UPS** help section, NetSuite provides a step-by-step form for integrating UPS. For the legacy integration path (Setup > Accounting > Shipping > Carrier Registration):

- Select **Add UPS Account**, accept the UPS Device ID consent form, and accept the USP/UPS agreement (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)).
- If using Multi-Location Inventory, specify the Warehouse Location for this UPS account (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)).
- Provide the contact person's name, title, company (as on UPS forms), and any location/phone/email details required (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)).
- Finally, enter your UPS *Account Number* when prompted. NetSuite only accepts 9-digit UPS account numbers (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)).
- Save the registration. *Important:* UPS requires correct address; use the exact address on file with UPS (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)).

NetSuite's documentation notes that if an address is invalid during fulfillment, UPS can validate it and prompt correction (for US/Canada addresses) (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)).

## Creating UPS Shipping Items

Once your UPS account is registered and Shipping Integration is enabled, you **create "Shipping Item" records** to define UPS shipping methods. Netsuite refers to shipping items as *Shipping Methods* or *Ship Via* selections (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)).

To add a UPS real-time shipping item (via the legacy integration): go to **Lists > Accounting > Shipping Items > New**. Complete the form:

- Enter an internal *Ship Name*, a display name, and optionally deactivate it if not in use (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)).
- On the **Shipping Rates** subtab, select **UPS Real-Time Rate** as the rate type (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)). Specify your negotiated discount (if any) as a multiplier. (Or choose Flat, By Weight, etc., if you prefer non-integrated rates.)
- Choose an income account for shipping revenue.
- On the **Shipping Labels** subtab, check **Shipping Label Integration** (to generate UPS labels) and **Return Label Integration** if you want UPS return labels (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)). Pick the UPS service (e.g. UPS Ground) that this item will use.
- Define any handling rates or packaging rules, then save (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)).

**Example:** A common setup is 3–6 shipping items: e.g. UPS Ground, UPS 2nd Day Air, UPS Next Day Air, each mapped to a real-time rate method. For each, enter correct rate multipliers to reflect negotiated rates (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)) (Source: [www.anchorgroup.tech](http://www.anchorgroup.tech)).

## Printing UPS Labels

With a shipping item properly configured, you can now fulfill orders via UPS. On the **Item Fulfillment** record for an order, select the UPS shipping method (via your shipping item). Check the box **Generate Shipping Label** (enabled by Shipping Label Integration) to have NetSuite call UPS and create a label. The tracking number is saved to the fulfillment (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)). NetSuite will print the UPS barcode label (PDF or ZPL/EPL for thermal printers) configured in your account. The UPS help reminds that NetSuite will display UPS trademarks on printed materials (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)).

Table 1 summarizes supported UPS integration paths by region:

SHIP FROM	SHIP TO	UPS INTEGRATION SUPPORT
U.S.	U.S.	Supported (UPS Real-Time Rates, labeling) (Source: <a href="https://docs.oracle.com">docs.oracle.com</a> )
U.S.	International	Supported (depending on service; see Oracle doc) (Source: <a href="https://docs.oracle.com">docs.oracle.com</a> )
Canada	U.S.	Supported (UPS) (Source: <a href="https://docs.oracle.com">docs.oracle.com</a> )
Other	U.S.	Supported (UPS) (Source: <a href="https://docs.oracle.com">docs.oracle.com</a> )
Other	Other	Supported (UPS) (Source: <a href="https://docs.oracle.com">docs.oracle.com</a> )

Table 1. Carrier integration options by origin/destination (source: Oracle NetSuite Help (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com))).

## FedEx Integration

### Overview and Prerequisites

FedEx integration in NetSuite parallels UPS: it enables real-time rates, label creation, and tracking via your FedEx account. NetSuite warns users that **“there is an Active FedEx account to use FedEx real-time rates and integration”** and that after enabling Shipping Label Integration one can print FedEx labels and receive tracking numbers (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)). Significantly, FedEx requires an extra step of **multi-factor authentication (MFA)** when you first register the FedEx account in NetSuite (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)).

As with UPS, ensure you have your **9-digit FedEx account number** ready. Note that FedEx requires MFA: during registration, you'll choose to receive a PIN (via SMS, call, email or invoice details) and then enter that PIN on the NetSuite FedEx registration page (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)). Without completing this step, label generation may fail (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)).

### Enabling FedEx in NetSuite

1. **Enable Shipping Integration:** As before, go to **Setup > Company > Enable Features** and enable **Shipping Label Integration** under Transactions (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)).
2. **Charge for Shipping:** In **Setup > Accounting > Shipping**, check **Charge for Shipping** on the Preferences subtab (if not already) (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)). This allows system-calculated shipping charges on orders.
3. **Register FedEx Account:** Still in **Setup > Accounting > Shipping**, switch to the **Carrier Registration** subtab and click **Add FedEx Account** (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)).
4. **Accept Terms and Enter Details:** Read and accept FedEx's user agreement. Enter the contact person's name and department. In the address section, **enter the exact address as it appears on your FedEx account** (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)). (Oracle emphasizes this match explicitly.) Then enter phone/fax/email for that contact (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)).
5. **FedEx Settings:** Select your FedEx Dropoff Type (e.g. "Predesignated Pickup", "Drop Box", etc.) and Label Type (8.5x11 PDF or thermal). If using perforated stock, indicate Doctab location (top/bottom) (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)). If using FedEx Ground Economy, check that box and provide FedEx's hub number (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)).
6. **Enter FedEx Account Number:** Input your 9-digit FedEx account on the form (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)).
7. **Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA):** In "Authorize your FedEx Account," choose an authentication method (SMS, call, email, or invoice number). FedEx will send a PIN via that method. Enter the PIN on the form (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)) to complete the registration. You may also have the option to bypass via FedEx support (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)). Finally, click **Save** to finalize the FedEx integration.

NetSuite documentation warns that until this MFA step is done, FedEx label creation will fail (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)), so be sure to complete it. It also notes that FedEx rates (list or negotiated) only apply if you **“Charge for Shipping”**; FedEx real-time rates cannot be used otherwise (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)).

### Creating FedEx Shipping Items

After the FedEx account is registered, create shipping items to offer FedEx service rates. Go to **Lists > Accounting > Shipping Items > New**, and fill in:

- **Name and Display:** Give a Ship Name and Display Name/Code for customers.
- **Description:** Optional note about the service.
- **Shipping Rates:** On the *Shipping Rates* subtab, select **FedEx Real-Time Rate**. Enter any discount multiplier if needed (for negotiated rates). [FedEx supports choosing either List or Negotiated rates under Preferences (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)).]
- **Income Account:** Select the revenue account for shipping charges.
- **Shipping Label:** On the *Shipping Labels* subtab, check **Shipping Label Integration** for FedEx (and **Return Label Integration** if applicable). Choose the desired FedEx service(s) to make available.
- **Additional Options:** Define handling charges, weight/packaging rules, etc. Then click **Save**.

Each shipping item corresponds to one FedEx service (e.g. FedEx Ground, 2Day, Overnight). A practical setup might include 3–5 items (Ground, Express Saver, 2Day, Overnight, etc.) to cover all needed options.

## Special Considerations for FedEx

- **Multi-Location:** If you operate multiple warehouses, NetSuite allows separate FedEx accounts per location. During registration (step 3 above), choose the Location. You can set additional FedEx accounts under **Setup > Accounting > Shipping** for each location (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)).
- **Residential Rates:** If many shipments are to residences, be aware that FedEx adds a surcharge. NetSuite exposes a “Residential Address” flag once an address is validated. On the order shipping subtab, choose residential if needed; the system will then include residential rate considerations (Source: [oracle.hydrogen.sagittarius.connect.product.adaptavist.com](https://oracle.hydrogen.sagittarius.connect.product.adaptavist.com)).
- **Weight Limit:** FedEx has package weight limits (e.g. 150 lbs per package). If an order exceeds that, FedEx will automatically split it into multiple shipments to calculate rates correctly. This is handled by FedEx during label creation and does not require extra steps in NetSuite.
- **Printing Labels:** As with UPS, simply fulfilling an order with a FedEx shipping item and checking “Generate Shipping Label” will produce the FedEx label. The tracking number is saved on fulfillment. The chosen format (PDF or thermal ZPL/EPL) will depend on the account settings entered above.

Table 2 lists typical rate types that shipping items can use under UPS or FedEx integration:

SHIPPING RATE TYPE	DESCRIPTION	INTEGRATION REQUIRED?
<b>Real-Time Rate</b>	Carrier’s current real-time rate (FedEx or UPS) for the shipment details (weight/location) (Source: <a href="https://docs.oracle.com">docs.oracle.com</a> ) (Source: <a href="http://www.excelym.com">www.excelym.com</a> ). The customer is charged the live rate (negotiated or list).	Yes (must register with FedEx/UPS)
<b>Flat Rate</b>	A fixed shipping charge per order, regardless of weight.	No (any order amount)
<b>By Weight</b>	Charge tiers based on package weight (e.g. \$X per pound up to Y lbs, then next tier). Allows manual thresholds (Source: <a href="https://docs.oracle.com">docs.oracle.com</a> ).	No
<b>By Item</b>	A fixed charge per item (independent of weight). Useful for flat-rate shipping schemes.	No
<b>Percent of Total</b>	Charge = a percentage of the order subtotal. Useful if including shipping in item prices.	No
<b>Shipping Table</b>	Table-based rates by weight or order total ranges (tiered rates).	No

Table 2. **Common Shipping Item Rate Methods** (source: NetSuite Help (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)) (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com))). Note: only **Real-Time Rate** requires an actual carrier integration and active account (as shown for UPS above and FedEx here). The other methods are built-in NetSuite rate calculation options.

## Ship Central (ShipEngine) Integration

### Overview

For new NetSuite accounts, Oracle’s recommended shipping platform is **NetSuite Ship Central**, which runs on a NetSuite-created ShipEngine account. Ship Central extends shipping automation with a mobile/desktop app and supports more carriers (UPS, FedEx, USPS, DHL, etc.) than the legacy integration. It brings features like **rate shopping**, barcode scanning for packing verification, and warehouse-scale workflows (Source: [www.stockton10.com](http://www.stockton10.com)) (Source: [www.stockton10.com](http://www.stockton10.com)). In essence, Ship Central uses a backend ShipEngine integration: you create a ShipEngine account *from within NetSuite*, then connect your carrier accounts to it (Source: [oracle.hydrogen.sagittarius.connect.product.adaptavist.com](https://oracle.hydrogen.sagittarius.connect.product.adaptavist.com)) (Source: [oracle.hydrogen.sagittarius.connect.product.adaptavist.com](https://oracle.hydrogen.sagittarius.connect.product.adaptavist.com)).

Anchor Group summarizes this transition: “NetSuite Ship Central is Oracle’s standard shipping solution for new NetSuite shipping implementations. It connects carrier accounts through ShipEngine and supports packing, shipping, label generation, and rate shopping workflows” (Source: [www.anchorgroup.tech](http://www.anchorgroup.tech)). Legacy FedEx/UPS integration now exists **only** for older customers, whereas new accounts must use Ship Central (Source: [www.anchorgroup.tech](http://www.anchorgroup.tech)) (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)).

## Registering and Connecting Carrier Accounts

To set up Ship Central shipping, follow these steps (using the **Ship Central Manager** role):

1. **Enable Ship Central:** Ensure the *Pick, Pack, and Ship* and *SCM Mobile* features are active. (This may already be enabled in new accounts or by enabling *Shipping Label Integration* previously.)
2. **Create ShipEngine Account:** In NetSuite, navigate to **Ship Central Setup > ShipEngine Integration > Manage Integration & Carriers** (Source: [oracle.hydrogen.sagittarius.connect.product.adaptavist.com](http://oracle.hydrogen.sagittarius.connect.product.adaptavist.com)). On the “Manage ShipEngine Integration” page, click **Create ShipEngine Account**.
  - If prompted, enter a 16-character encryption key to secure your ShipEngine API key (this only appears once) (Source: [oracle.hydrogen.sagittarius.connect.product.adaptavist.com](http://oracle.hydrogen.sagittarius.connect.product.adaptavist.com)). After creation, NetSuite generates an API key (encrypted) for the new ShipEngine account (Source: [oracle.hydrogen.sagittarius.connect.product.adaptavist.com](http://oracle.hydrogen.sagittarius.connect.product.adaptavist.com)).
3. **Add Carriers:** Still on **Manage Integration & Carriers**, click **Add Carriers** (Source: [oracle.hydrogen.sagittarius.connect.product.adaptavist.com](http://oracle.hydrogen.sagittarius.connect.product.adaptavist.com)). This opens the ShipEngine portal in a new browser window. On ShipEngine’s site, connect each carrier account you wish to use (UPS, FedEx, USPS, DHL, etc.) per ShipEngine’s instructions (Source: [oracle.hydrogen.sagittarius.connect.product.adaptavist.com](http://oracle.hydrogen.sagittarius.connect.product.adaptavist.com)). Once done, return to NetSuite.
4. **Sync Carriers:** In NetSuite, click **Sync & Update Carriers** (Source: [oracle.hydrogen.sagittarius.connect.product.adaptavist.com](http://oracle.hydrogen.sagittarius.connect.product.adaptavist.com)). The integration will pull in each connected carrier and its available shipping services into NetSuite’s list. You should see each carrier and its service levels now listed on this page.
5. **Enable Ship Central Plugin:** Go to **Ship Central Setup > Ship Central Plug-in > Manage Plug-in**. Check **PackShip – Shipping Plugin** and save (Source: [oracle.hydrogen.sagittarius.connect.product.adaptavist.com](http://oracle.hydrogen.sagittarius.connect.product.adaptavist.com)). This ensures the Ship Central code is applied when creating shipments.
6. **View Carrier Info (Optional):** Under **Setup > Custom > Carrier Integration Details**, you can click **Get ShipEngine Account ID** to view your ShipEngine account ID (used only internally by Ship Central) (Source: [oracle.hydrogen.sagittarius.connect.product.adaptavist.com](http://oracle.hydrogen.sagittarius.connect.product.adaptavist.com)).

After integration, all connected carriers (from ShipEngine) are available in Ship Central. You can then create shipping items for each service (see below). NetSuite recommends syncing carriers whenever you add new services or change international/third-party billing settings (Source: [oracle.hydrogen.sagittarius.connect.product.adaptavist.com](http://oracle.hydrogen.sagittarius.connect.product.adaptavist.com)).

*Sandbox accounts:* If you have a NetSuite sandbox, register a **separate** ShipEngine account just for it (use a different email and account ID) (Source: [oracle.hydrogen.sagittarius.connect.product.adaptavist.com](http://oracle.hydrogen.sagittarius.connect.product.adaptavist.com)). Free USPS (Stamps.com) label printing is available in sandbox only for cost estimation, not final shipping.

Oracle emphasizes that you *must* create the ShipEngine account from within NetSuite – external ShipEngine accounts cannot be linked to Ship Central (Source: [oracle.hydrogen.sagittarius.connect.product.adaptavist.com](http://oracle.hydrogen.sagittarius.connect.product.adaptavist.com)) (Source: [oracle.hydrogen.sagittarius.connect.product.adaptavist.com](http://oracle.hydrogen.sagittarius.connect.product.adaptavist.com)).

## Creating Shipping Items (ShipEngine/Ship Central)

With carriers connected, create shipping items to represent each service (just as with UPS/FedEx above). In **Setup > Ship Central Setup > Shipping Items**, add new items and select **ShipEngine** as the integration type. For each carrier service (e.g. UPS Ground, FedEx 2Day, DHL Express), define a shipping item: give it a name, display code, income account, etc. Under the **ShipEngine** subtab, select “**Real-Time Rate**” and choose the specific service from your synced list (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)) (Source: [www.anchorgroup.tech](http://www.anchorgroup.tech)). Enter any markup or discount as needed. Check **Generate Label** if you want immediate label creation on fulfillment.

For example, Anchor Group suggests creating 3–8 shipping items covering standard ground, express, and overnight services across your carriers (Source: [www.anchorgroup.tech](http://www.anchorgroup.tech)). These are then used on orders or shipments. Ship Central will use your ShipEngine-synced credentials to fetch live rates and process labels for those items.

## Rate Shopping in Ship Central

A key Ship Central feature is *rate shopping*: comparing live rates from all connected carriers for a given shipment. In the Ship Central **Shop for Rates** UI, you can retrieve all available services at once. Specifically:

- **Shop for Rates Page:** As an administrator, go to **Ship Central Outbound > Shipping Details > Shop for Rates** (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)). Enter the location and order number (or search criteria), and click **Shop for Rates**. Ship Central will fetch available shipping options from each connected carrier and display them in a list.
- **On Sales Orders:** Alternatively, while editing a Sales Order or Transfer Order in NetSuite, click the **Shipping** subtab and use **Shop for Rates** or a “Get Rates” button (Source: [www.anchorgroup.tech](https://www.anchorgroup.tech)). After selecting a shipping item and inputting package weight/dimensions, click **Get Rates**. NetSuite will call ShipEngine and return the current rate for that method, populating the **Shipping Cost** field (Source: [www.anchorgroup.tech](https://www.anchorgroup.tech)).
- **Per-Line Rates (Multiple Shipping Routes):** If you enable *Multiple Shipping Routes* (Source: [netsuitedocumentation1.gitlab.io](https://netsuitedocumentation1.gitlab.io)) (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)), you can specify different **Ship Via** services for individual line items on an order. NetSuite will then fetch rates per line (useful for split shipments).

Once Shop for Rates is executed, you will see all eligible shipping methods, along with their carriers, transit times, and costs. You can then **select the best option** (e.g. cheapest or fastest) directly from that UI (Source: [www.stockton10.com](https://www.stockton10.com)) (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)). NetSuite will update the order or fulfillment with the chosen method and rate. (If the order had already been calculated, choosing a new rate will override the shipping estimate.)

This built-in rate shopping meets the core need to compare carriers. As one partner explains, the integration “allows you to instantly retrieve real-time rates from multiple carriers, enabling you to compare costs and select the most affordable option for every shipment” (Source: [www.excelym.com](https://www.excelym.com)). In practice, users might first test by creating a dummy sales order, selecting each shipping item, clicking **Get Rates**, and verifying that the returned rates make sense (Source: [www.anchorgroup.tech](https://www.anchorgroup.tech)).

## Shipping Preferences and Advanced Configuration

Beyond carrier setup, NetSuite offers settings that affect integrated shipping:

- **Charge for Shipping:** Ensure **Setup > Accounting > Setup Tasks > Shipping – Charge for Shipping** is checked (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)). This tells NetSuite to automatically add a shipping charge (via a shipping item) to orders. Shipping items are then used based on the **Ship Via** field. (Without this, shipping would need to be added manually as a line item (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)).)
- **Handling Fees:** If needed, also check **Charge Handling Separate from Shipping** (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)). This allows a separate handling line item.
- **Shipping Item Configuration:** Shipping items can be restricted by country or website presence (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)), so be sure to specify where each applies. They can also be set to **Inactive** if temporarily unavailable (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)).
- **Flat vs. Real Rates:** Users on Ship Central typically use Real-Time Rate items. However, you can mix in flat-rate or table-based items if, say, you offer a promotional flat-rate ground shipping. Just ensure the shipping item’s *Carrier* and *Home Carrier/Service* fields align correctly (e.g. marking “UPS Real-Time Rate” vs “Flat Rate”).
- **Misc. Options:** On each shipping item, define default *packaging* or *Origin Address*. For example, specify which warehouse location the item is shipped from. Also set any insurance or signature-needed rules in Ship Central preferences if required.

## Multiple Shipping Routes

For orders with multiple destinations or partial shipments, NetSuite’s **Multiple Shipping Routes** feature is useful (Source: [netsuitedocumentation1.gitlab.io](https://netsuitedocumentation1.gitlab.io)). This lets one Sales Order ship items to different addresses and via different carriers within the same transaction. For example, one line could ship to Atlanta via UPS Ground, while another line ships to New York via USPS Priority (Source: [netsuitedocumentation1.gitlab.io](https://netsuitedocumentation1.gitlab.io)). To enable this (if not already enabled): go to **Setup > Company > Enable Features**, click the *Transactions* subtab, and check **Multiple Shipping Routes** (also requires **Advanced Shipping**) (Source: [netsuitedocumentation1.gitlab.io](https://netsuitedocumentation1.gitlab.io)). Once active, orders will show *Ship Via* and *Ship To* fields per line. Rate shopping can then be done per line as needed.

## Comparison: Native vs. Third-Party Solutions

Many SuiteApps address shipping (e.g. ShipRush, Descartes, ShipStation, ShipConsole, etc.). A recent analysis by Anchor Group offers guidance on when to use native vs. third-party. The table below summarizes their comparison (Source: [www.anchorgroup.tech](https://www.anchorgroup.tech)):

CRITERION	LEGACY (UPS/ FEDEX/ USPS)	SHIP CENTRAL (SHIPENGINE)	THIRD-PARTY SUITEAPP
<b>Availability</b>	Existing accounts only (Source: <a href="http://www.anchorgroup.tech">www.anchorgroup.tech</a> )	Standard for new NetSuite implementations (Source: <a href="http://www.anchorgroup.tech">www.anchorgroup.tech</a> )	Available via SuiteApp marketplace (Source: <a href="http://www.anchorgroup.tech">www.anchorgroup.tech</a> )
<b>Carriers Covered</b>	UPS, FedEx, USPS/Endicia (Source: <a href="http://www.anchorgroup.tech">www.anchorgroup.tech</a> )	Any carrier connected through ShipEngine (e.g. UPS, FedEx, USPS, DHL, regional carriers via ShipStation API) (Source: <a href="http://www.anchorgroup.tech">www.anchorgroup.tech</a> )	Multi-carrier networks (UPS, FedEx, USPS, DHL, LTL, regional)
<b>Shipping Modes</b>	Parcel only (Source: <a href="http://www.anchorgroup.tech">www.anchorgroup.tech</a> )	Parcel-centric warehouse fulfillment workflows (Source: <a href="http://www.anchorgroup.tech">www.anchorgroup.tech</a> )	Parcel, LTL, FTL, international, etc. (depending on app)
<b>Order Volume</b>	Small to moderate (simple parcel) (Source: <a href="http://www.anchorgroup.tech">www.anchorgroup.tech</a> )	Warehouse/enterprise scale	High-volume or specialized (cross-border, etc.)
<b>Rate Shopping</b>	Limited (basic multi-carrier compare)	Built-in multi-carrier comparison at fulfillment (Source: <a href="http://www.anchorgroup.tech">www.anchorgroup.tech</a> )	Often advanced multi-carrier optimization
<b>Setup Complexity</b>	Low-to-medium (simple setup)	Medium (requires ShipEngine account setup)	Medium to high (depends on integration)
<b>Best For</b>	Existing legacy accounts	New NetSuite shipping implementations (Source: <a href="http://www.anchorgroup.tech">www.anchorgroup.tech</a> )	Complex multi-carrier logistics or freight

Table 3. Integration Path Comparison (source: Anchor Group analysis (Source: [www.anchorgroup.tech](http://www.anchorgroup.tech))).

This comparison indicates: **Ship Central with ShipEngine** is now Oracle's recommended path for most customers, especially new accounts (Source: [www.anchorgroup.tech](http://www.anchorgroup.tech)) (Source: [www.anchorgroup.tech](http://www.anchorgroup.tech)). It covers carrier connectivity broadly and includes rate shopping, making it suitable for modern warehouse operations. Legacy integration is only used by accounts still on the older bundled solution (Source: [docs.oracle.com](http://docs.oracle.com)) (Source: [www.anchorgroup.tech](http://www.anchorgroup.tech)). Third-party apps are considered when you need carriers or features (e.g. DHL Express, global fulfillment hubs, or advanced freight rating) not easily handled by ShipEngine. In practice, companies often use a hybrid approach: native Ship Central for core parcel shipping, plus a specialized SuiteApp for any remaining needs.

## Data Analysis and Case Studies

Integrated shipping in NetSuite demonstrably improves efficiency and reduces costs. The Excelym partner blog highlights soft benefits: “centralizing your shipping processes within NetSuite... frees up your team to focus on other aspects of your business” (Source: [www.excelym.com](http://www.excelym.com)) and ensures accuracy and speed for order fulfillment (Source: [www.excelym.com](http://www.excelym.com)). More tangibly, Anchor Group reports that companies experience “meaningful reductions in fulfillment time” after carrier integration (Source: [www.anchorgroup.tech](http://www.anchorgroup.tech)). For example, per-shipment processing time can fall dramatically once manual portal entries are eliminated (Source: [www.anchorgroup.tech](http://www.anchorgroup.tech)).

A concrete industry case is provided by Toptal's middleware project: by automating major carriers (FedEx, UPS, USPS) in NetSuite, one client **cut shipping costs by ~74%** (Source: [www.toptal.com](http://www.toptal.com)). The solution automatically chose the lowest-cost carrier for each package, rather than relying on employees to pick manually. This underscores how rate shopping and automation jointly drive savings.

Survey research also underscores the stakes: consumers increasingly value optimized shipping (66–80% of shoppers rate free or fast shipping as critical). Although not NetSuite-specific, these trends make seamless integration (to quickly identify free/fast options) vital for competitiveness. Descartes notes that efficient shipping management is a “key determiner of customer satisfaction, operational efficiency, and competitive advantage” (Source: [www.pacejet.com](http://www.pacejet.com)).

Moreover, multi-location shipping is important. Official docs allow separate carrier accounts per warehouse (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)) (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)). Anchor Group emphasizes multi-location setup for accurate origin-based rates (Source: [www.anchorgroup.tech](https://www.anchorgroup.tech)). In practice, companies with multiple fulfillment centers set each location's default carrier account, ensuring the right negotiated rates apply.

Taken together, evidence is clear: rigorous carrier integration (with UPS, FedEx, and others) plus rate-shopping automation can vastly reduce errors, labor, and shipping spend (Source: [www.anchorgroup.tech](https://www.anchorgroup.tech)) (Source: [www.toptal.com](https://www.toptal.com)) (Source: [www.excelym.com](https://www.excelym.com)).

## Discussion: Implications and Future Directions

**Historical Context:** NetSuite's shipping capabilities have come a long way. Two decades ago, users printed labels from carrier websites. NetSuite then introduced basic integrated shipping around the 2010s. By 2024–2026, the approach has converged on Ship Central (ShipEngine) as the norm (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)) (Source: [www.anchorgroup.tech](https://www.anchorgroup.tech)). Existing customers still on legacy integration (pre-Ship Central) have a transition path but no new features.

**Current State:** Today, most NetSuite ERP implementations of significant size use Ship Central or partner apps. Ship Central supports not only traditional parcel (UPS/FedEx/USPS) but can connect to DHL and other carriers via ShipEngine (which now includes the ShipStation carrier network) (Source: [www.anchorgroup.tech](https://www.anchorgroup.tech)) (Source: [docs.shipstation.com](https://docs.shipstation.com)). NetSuite continuously enhances Ship Central: for instance, in March 2026 it added streamlined configuration for negotiated vs. list rates in preferences (Source: [netsuitechangelog.com](https://netsuitechangelog.com)).

**Future Outlook:** Several trends will shape NetSuite carrier integration:

- **API Evolution:** Carriers continue updating APIs (e.g. FedEx moved to OAuth2 web services).
- **ShipStation Rebranding:** Since ShipEngine is now becoming the ShipStation API (as of Feb 2025), NetSuite's Ship Central will gradually reflect that change (Source: [docs.shipstation.com](https://docs.shipstation.com)). Users need not act on this, but consultants should be aware.
- **AI and Optimization:** Advanced rate-shopping might incorporate machine learning (e.g. predicting best shipping option given historical data). While NetSuite's native tools rely on real-time API calls, third-party platforms may offer enhanced analytics or predictive routing.
- **Regulatory and Compliance:** International shipping requires compliance (e.g. customs documents). NetSuite Ship Central supports auto-generating commercial invoices, but evolving trade rules (e.g. IOSS for EU VAT) may necessitate more custom SuiteScript or SuiteFlow logic.
- **Expansion to Other Modes:** Today's focus is on parcel. Many companies also need LTL/FTL freight integration. NetSuite has separate tools (e.g. Freight management SuiteApps). How to unify courier, LTL, FTL in one system is an ongoing challenge.
- **Integration Depth:** Future improvements might further automate container/pack selection (cartonization) and returns processing within NetSuite. Oracle and partners are likely to add capabilities (e.g. consolidated invoicing, duty calculation).

In summary, organizations should follow Oracle's lead and implement Ship Central for new shipping setups (Source: [www.anchorgroup.tech](https://www.anchorgroup.tech)) (Source: [www.anchorgroup.tech](https://www.anchorgroup.tech)). Those on legacy integration should plan a transition path. For complex logistics (multiple carrier networks, international freight), evaluating additional SuiteApps is prudent (Source: [www.anchorgroup.tech](https://www.anchorgroup.tech)). Regardless, thorough configuration and testing (as outlined above) are essential to reap the documented benefits in cost and efficiency (Source: [www.anchorgroup.tech](https://www.anchorgroup.tech)) (Source: [www.toptal.com](https://www.toptal.com)).

## Conclusion

Integrating UPS, FedEx (and other carriers) into NetSuite streamlines the entire shipping process. By enabling **Shipping Label Integration**, registering carrier accounts, and creating integrated shipping items, users can obtain live rates and generate carrier-compliant labels directly within NetSuite (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)) (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)). The modern approach uses **NetSuite Ship Central** with an embedded ShipEngine account to connect multiple carriers (Source: [oracle.hydrogen.sagittarius.connect.product.adaptavist.com](https://oracle.hydrogen.sagittarius.connect.product.adaptavist.com)) (Source: [www.anchorgroup.tech](https://www.anchorgroup.tech)). This obviates external manual processes, reduces human error, and delivers tangible savings. Detailed configuration steps and best practices from Oracle's documentation and expert analyses (cited throughout) guide users through this setup.

Finally, real-world data confirms the value: one case showed a *74% shipping cost reduction* from automation (Source: [www.toptal.com](https://www.toptal.com)), and many companies report dramatically faster fulfillment after integration (Source: [www.anchorgroup.tech](https://www.anchorgroup.tech)). As shipping remains a key cost center in ERP-driven supply chains, leveraging NetSuite's carrier integrations and rate shopping features is both a current necessity and a strategic advantage.

**References:** NetSuite Help Center and Oracle documentation (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)) (Source: [oracle.hydrogen.sagittarius.connect.product.adaptavist.com](https://oracle.hydrogen.sagittarius.connect.product.adaptavist.com)) (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)) (Source: [docs.oracle.com](https://docs.oracle.com)); industry blog analyses (Source: [www.anchorgroup.tech](https://www.anchorgroup.tech)) (Source: [www.anchorgroup.tech](https://www.anchorgroup.tech)) (Source: [www.excelym.com](https://www.excelym.com)); and case study data (Source: [www.toptal.com](https://www.toptal.com)) (Source: [www.excelym.com](https://www.excelym.com)). All claims and setup instructions above are drawn from these authoritative sources.

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Tags: netsuite carrier integration, netsuite ship central, ups netsuite setup, fedex netsuite setup, shipengine netsuite, shipping rate shopping, netsuite erp shipping

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