

## Sweet Squared

[www.sweetsquared.co.uk](http://www.sweetsquared.co.uk)



### At A Glance:

- **Company:** Sweet Squared is a professional beauty distributor and is the UK partner for the industry's hottest brands such as Creative Nail Design (CND), The Creative Nail Academy, Minx, Poplts, Mundo, SalonGeek.com, and Eufora.
- **Location:** Leeds (UK)
- **Industry:** Wholesale distribution
- **Challenges:**
  - Separate payment systems for different channels
  - No insight into inventory availability
  - Sales during office hours only
- **Results with NetSuite:**
  - More informed decision making due to timely and accurate KPIs
  - Global access to system for virtual management team
  - Integrated view of sales and inventory across the business
  - Reduction in manual and administrative work
- **Software switched from:**
  - QuickBooks, bespoke sales & stock system

### *“My auditor loves NetSuite!”*

— *Kate Linley, Financial Controller, Sweet Squared*

#### Results

Quite simply, using NetSuite has put Sweet Squared firmly in control of its business. “Before NetSuite we used a number of different systems,” says Kate Linley, Financial Controller for Sweet Squared and administrator of the NetSuite system. “It was really difficult to get the information we needed to run our business smoothly.”

Having used the system for several months, managers at nail products and services company Sweet Squared are now able to see trends in the business and make decisions accordingly. For the operations director, re-ordering the right levels of stock based on sales history has never been easier. The company is also able to see a direct correlation between promotions and the impact on sales, such as a recent marketing mail shot to customers in a particular region that showed a direct uplift in sales from customers in that area.

Now they can easily generate a range of Key Performance Indicator (KPI) reports for their weekly management meetings, from the number of parcels sent out, new customers, levels of return, or even the stock valuation. “Prior to NetSuite I had to keep calling reception to find out how many catalogues we’d sent out to customers. Now I’ve got the information at the push of a button,” says Linley. “The detail is better, there’s more of it, and there’s less margin for human error. Now we can easily create reports to do weekly, monthly or even yearly comparisons. That’s the beauty of it.”

Based in California, it was crucial for Sweet Squared’s Financial Director Jim Nordstrom to be able to access the NetSuite system fully at any time. Those closer to home have found the ability to connect over the Web similarly useful. “My auditor loves NetSuite! He can generate all the reports he needs at any time,” says Linley, who gave the external auditor a “viewer-only” login enabling him to log in off-site and after hours.

#### Challenges

Launched in August 2006, Sweet Squared was appointed the main UK distributor for US-headquartered professional nail products and services company Creative Nail Design just over a year later. Taking over the distribution rights from another company, Sweet Squared had a customer base ready and waiting, including three sub-distributors and a database of over 20,000 direct customers. The company needed a system to run the business right away.

 **Find out more: contact NetSuite, Inc. at +44 (0) 1628-774400 or visit [www.netsuite.co.uk](http://www.netsuite.co.uk)**



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— *Kate Linley*  
*Financial Controller*  
*Sweet Squared*

To address the short-term need, Sweet Squared used a combination of QuickBooks and Neuroarts, a home-grown application built by Sweet Squared Managing Director Samuel Sweet. But with disconnected IT systems, fulfilling orders wasn't always simple. A customer could place an order over the phone, but with no link to inventory it was impossible to know if the stock was actually available. This resulted in the company issuing numerous “out of stock credits,” creating additional work for the customer service teams and disappointing customers.

Running multiple channels also presented management information challenges. Approximately 90 percent of sales orders were transacted over the phone, with payment taken using the WorldPay online payment system. The remaining 10 percent of sales came via a wholesale outlet at the company's headquarters in Leeds, UK. Having a separate EPOS machine in the store meant that the company did not have a consolidated view of sales at any one time.

### Solution

Although the company had to fill a short-term gap with other systems, Sweet Squared had its eye on NetSuite right from the start. Financial Director Jim Nordstom had used NetSuite in a previous company and knew that its solid accounting capabilities made it the right system for Sweet Squared too.

Having had a previous “nightmare” experience of putting in an alternative system at another company, the UK Sweet Squared management team knew that preparation was everything. The team knew exactly what they wanted the system to do and how challenging it might be given the complexity of a business with over 3000 SKUs including a number of matrix items and a number of different customer types requiring different product pricing.

The NetSuite system went live on a busy Monday morning in March 2008. “The launch went seamlessly,” says Linley. “We were able to take customer orders straightaway, no problem.” The company chose to use NetSuite Professional Services to do the implementation, a decision highly recommended by Linley: “The NetSuite team held our hand every step of the way. They were really helpful.”

Today Sweet Squared uses NetSuite across its business, with 14 users across sales and marketing, accounts, inventory and warehouse management. The EPOS machine in the retail store is also connected into NetSuite. A full e-commerce capability should be available via the Sweet Squared web site later, providing 24/7 access for customers to browse and purchase at their leisure—an attractive proposition for many of the company's nail technicians who are busy with their own customers during the day but until now have only been able to place orders by telephone between the hours of 8am and 5pm.

For Linley, the NetSuite system is powerful yet easy to use. “We know our business inside out but I was gob-smacked by some of the things NetSuite can do!”



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