

# Ascentis/NetSuite at NCI

*Ascentis and NetSuite Streamline Human Capital Management at Real Estate Industry Publisher*



## Company Name:

Network Communications Inc.

## Industry:

NCI is the largest U.S. publisher of local printed and online magazines for the multi-family, real estate and home design and home improvement markets, doing business with more than 15,000 advertisers a month

## URL:

[www.nci.com](http://www.nci.com)

## Headquarters:

Norcross, Ga.



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— Diana Young  
Senior Vice President, NCI

## Challenge

Abandoning an outdated on-premise Lawson application for the NetSuite Cloud, NCI wanted to augment its new environment with a complementary cloud solution for HR management.

## Solution

Ascentis was selected for HR management, recruiting and onboarding, supporting integration of employee data with NCI’s NetSuite ERP solution.

## Results

NCI has dramatically improved efficiency and productivity, empowered employees and managers with a robust self-service portal and is saving \$60,000 in synching data with third-party benefits providers.

## Network Communications gains cloud efficiency, eliminating repetitive manual work and savings of over \$60,000 a year

Network Communications Inc. (NCI) is in the business of delivering timely, high quality information in the multi-family, real estate and home design and improvement markets. Providing integrated media solutions, NCI does business with more than 15,000 advertisers each month through such brands as Apartment Finder, DigitalSherpa and New England Home.

Until recently, the Norcross, Ga.-based company was also in the tedious, unproductive business of manually managing human resources (HR) data atop an on-premise Lawson ERP/HR application installed 20 years earlier. HR personnel entered the same data into as many as six different systems, including those of third-party health insurance, retirement and benefits providers—not a small task for a company with 500 employees.

Besides that, NCI’s HR processes made heavy use of paper, further hurting productivity. Resource costs and risks of error were needlessly high, and reporting on HR data problematic. Employees themselves, including 300 sales staff, lacked robust self-service functionality to manage benefits, vacations and more. Manual, paper-based expense reporting and approvals were slow and painful for the workforce at large.

## A One-Stop Shop for Human Capital Management

That’s changed with an implementation of a cloud-based workforce management system from Ascentis, a NetSuite partner that offers HR, Payroll, Recruiting and Time solutions, for small and mid-sized U.S. businesses. Live as of April 2013, after three short weeks of implementation, the joint Ascentis/NetSuite solution synchronizes critical data elements such as employee records between the two systems, enabling groundbreaking improvements in HR, payroll and recruiting practices while saving up over \$60,000 a year.

“The Ascentis/NetSuite solution has been a godsend for us,” said Diana Young, NCI Senior Vice President. “We’ve been able to go paperless and take advantage of automated workflows to improve efficiency. We’ve brought everything together into a one-stop shop and increased transparency for employees.”

One large gain has been realized by synching Ascentis/NetSuite with third-party benefits providers, automating what had been a manual process to exchange critical data with the previous system. Young estimates the annual savings through automation with external partners in the range of \$60,000 to \$80,000.

 To find out more, contact NetSuite Inc. at 1-877 NETSUITE or visit [www.netsuite.com](http://www.netsuite.com).

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### Building a Stronger Workforce

Covering Human Capital Management, Ascentis has also given NCI streamlined and transparent capabilities to recruit, hire and onboard new employees, as well as manage performance reviews. Productivity and security is improved with capabilities for single sign-on (SSO), replacing what had been multiple passwords to multiple systems.

Employees enjoy a richly interactive self-service portal to manage information, schedule time off and engage in online dialogue with management. Expense reporting and approvals have been accelerated in a workflow-driven environment, replacing multi-step paper processes. Young believes the solution is helping NCI make the most of its critical asset of people.

“It’s affected every single employee in the organization for the better,” Young said. “We’re equipped to nurture a strong and healthy workforce and have given our personnel the tools they need to be more efficient. Ascentis has been great to work with—they’re very fluid in understanding how to truly support their customers.”

Ascentis, based in San Mateo, CA., is a member of the SuiteCloud Developer Network with technology validated as “Built for NetSuite” and available at [www.suiteapp.com](http://www.suiteapp.com). Joelle Vail, Ascentis VP of Company and Sales Operations, said NCI is a good example of the wholesale improvements possible with a joint Ascentis/NetSuite solution.

“The time savings NCI has achieved have been tremendous by replacing systems that didn’t talk to each other,” Vail said. “Ascentis’ integration with NetSuite enables companies to fill a critical gap between core systems and manage and automate critical processes that span the entire employee lifecycle.”

### ‘A Huge Amount of Efficiency’

Outside of the HR realm, the new NetSuite ERP solution has dramatically improved NCI’s financial management efficiency and reporting. Managers have real-time visibility into business performance across more than a dozen brands and new ability to make data-driven decisions, compared to the limited rear-view mirror view possible with Lawson.

NCI also relies on NetSuite to bill about 14,000 customers, with a move towards consolidated invoicing for customers advertising in multiple media properties. Replacing a previous multi-invoicing system, NCI is able to improve customer satisfaction with greater billing simplicity while speeding cash flow and boosting internal efficiency.

“There is definitely a huge amount of efficiency and ability to give people visibility into information that we couldn’t before,” Young said. “We have more fluid information and communications going out to more people.”

Selected after diligent comparison to 13 competing systems, the NetSuite cloud enables NCI to avoid high IT capital costs and ongoing troubleshooting while supporting mobility with anytime, anywhere access. NCI also takes advantage of solutions from NetSuite SuiteCloud partners Avalara for sales tax compliance across multiple states and Adaptive Planning, which powers the NetSuite Financial Planning module.

“We liked the idea of going with a cloud-based solution with more flexibility and functionality than we had with our previous systems, and NetSuite is proving to be the ideal solution,” Young said.

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