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NetSuite 2026.2 Work Order Creation: MPS vs MRP Controls

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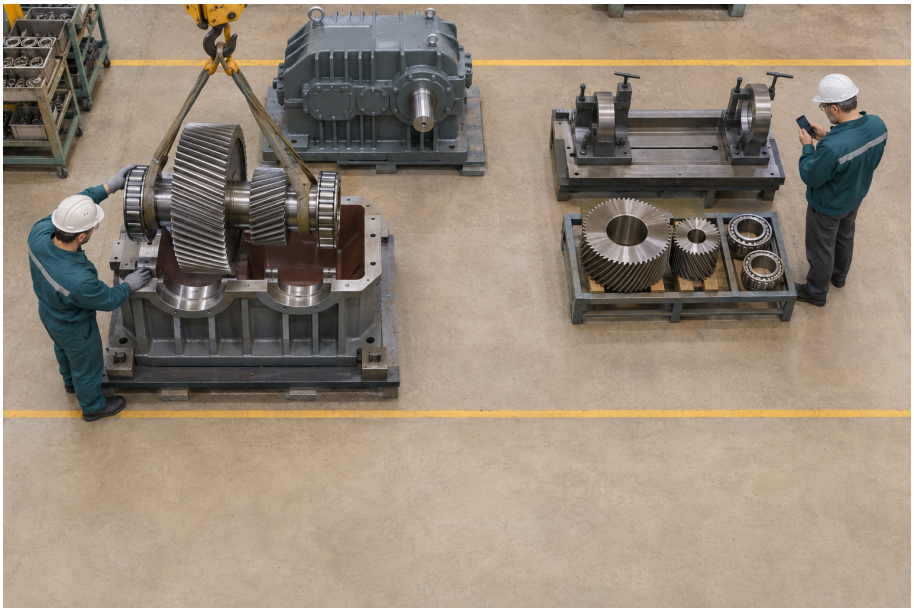

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Executive Summary

NetSuite's August monthly release for 2026.2 added two independent preferences, **Create Work Orders for MPS Items** and **Create Work Orders for MRP Items**, that control whether Supply Planning leaves output as planned work orders or turns it into actual work orders, and in which status (docs.oracle.com). Each preference offers five options. **Do Not Generate** keeps the legacy path through Mass Create Work Orders. **Generate from Planned Order Release** creates a work order only when a planner uses Release Selected Orders or Release All Orders in the Planning Workbench. Three further options create work orders after the planning run, for example in **Pending Approval** status with the Firmed box cleared (netsuitechangelog.com).

Both preferences default to Do Not Generate, and existing accounts continue to use Mass Create Work Orders after upgrade unless an administrator changes them (netsuitechangelog.com). The upgrade by itself therefore changes nothing. The feature also depends on enabled features and account eligibility: Oracle's release page ties the functionality to NetSuite Next, which is being made available in phases (docs.oracle.com), and a partner summary notes that Next is not switched on automatically at upgrade (terillium.com). Planned purchase and transfer orders stay on their existing workflows (docs.oracle.com).

The decision is a control-point choice made separately per item class. NetSuite describes MPS items as finished goods and key items, and MRP items as the components and subassemblies derived from them (docs.oracle.com). The stakes are practical: planned work orders commit no components, while released ones can (www.anchorgroup.tech), and a firmed order is protected from later planning runs (trycadbury.com). Academic simulations support freezing near-term plans: one found freezing within the planning horizon dominant under most conditions (ideas.repec.org), and another that freezing up to 50% of the horizon had a marginal effect on cost (ideas.repec.org). These are stylized models, not measurements of NetSuite.

Two points need testing rather than assumption. Oracle's Supply tab labels the Released-status option's outcome Pending Build, while a separate Oracle page describes Pending Build as the former name of Released (docs.oracle.com), and the pages reviewed do not describe approval routing for Pending Approval

work orders. After creation, a Planning Repository Refresh and a rerun of the plan are required before the work orders appear in the workbench (docs.oracle.com). No public benchmark quantifies the preference's effect on lead time or work in process, so every timing in this report is illustrative. For context, the Census Bureau reported a U.S. manufacturing inventory-to-shipments ratio of 1.46 for September 2026 (www.census.gov). The recommended path is a sandbox cycle per item class, a documented rollback, and controller ownership of the setting.

Introduction and Background

Manufacturers running NetSuite Supply Planning face a recurring control question: at what point should a computed recommendation become an executable shop-floor document? Under the legacy process, planned work orders waited on the Mass Create Work Orders page for a planner to submit. Consultants describe MRP output the same way, as a set of recommendations that planners review and adjust before releasing them (www.brokenrubik.com). The August release changed the menu of answers.

Oracle's release notes describe the change as one enhancement: Supply Planning can now create work orders automatically after a planning run or when eligible planned work orders are released in the Planning Workbench. The same note says that when automatic creation is chosen, NetSuite creates the work orders without a separate Mass Create Work Orders step (docs.oracle.com).

This report is written for operations directors, manufacturing planners, controllers and NetSuite implementation leads. It answers the questions behind several related searches: how NetSuite MRP work order creation works, what the Create Work Orders for MPS Items setting does, how a planned order becomes a work order, how MPS and MRP differ, and how to release planned work orders automatically. It also covers the setup path, the Planning Repository refresh requirement, and a test and rollback approach.

Three scope notes apply. First, the analysis treats Oracle's help pages, read for this report in November 2026, as the authoritative description of behavior, and uses partner commentary only for corroboration. Second, no public benchmark quantifies how these preferences change lead time, work in process (WIP) or planner workload, so the report avoids such claims and uses simulation research and public statistics only as context. Third, the report separates a preference-driven outcome, meaning the documented result of a setting, from a defect, meaning behavior that contradicts the documentation. Every behavior described here as a preference outcome should be reproduced in a sandbox before production use.

What Changed in 2026.2 and Why Existing Accounts See No Difference

The release and its timing

NetSuite 2026.2 began rolling out to accounts on August 17, 2026, according to one partner summary (consulesolutions.com), and Oracle's own announcement says the release marks the start of the NetSuite Next rollout (www.netsuite.com). Trade press reported that Oracle started the North America rollout of NetSuite

Next in the same period (erp.today). The work order preferences were published in the **August monthly release** page for 2026.2 rather than in the main version notes. Because accounts upgrade in phases, administrators can check their own upgrade date in the New Release portlet on the dashboard (terillium.com).

The NetSuite Next qualifier

The release page carries a notice that it describes functionality available in NetSuite Next, which is being made available in phases, so the features may not yet be available in a given account. Oracle's announcement adds that access can be enabled by role (www.netsuite.com), and a partner summary says Next is not automatically enabled when an account upgrades (terillium.com). The Supply tab help page that lists the five options does not repeat the Next notice in the text reviewed. The safe verification is therefore practical: open Manufacturing Preferences in the target account and check whether both preferences are present.

Why the default changes nothing

Oracle's help states that both preferences default to Do Not Generate and that existing accounts continue to use the Mass Create Work Orders workflow after upgrade unless an administrator changes them (docs.oracle.com). A partner changelog repeats the same default (netsuitechangelog.com). An upgrade alone cannot produce a surprise batch of work orders. Any surprise must come from an administrator saving a different option, which is why change control on the preference matters more than the upgrade itself. Sandbox timing supports a low-risk pilot: one partner reports that Oracle pushes 2026.1 and 2026.2 to sandbox accounts about four weeks before production (www.brokenrubik.com), and another suggests a Release Preview account for testing critical workflows (consulesolutions.com). A changelog also cautions against requesting a sandbox refresh during the scheduled upgrade window (netsuitechangelog.com).

Definitions: MPS Items, MRP Items and the Work Order Lifecycle

MPS versus MRP in NetSuite terms

NetSuite's glossary defines the Master Production Schedule as the build schedule for items designated as MPS items (docs.oracle.com). It says these items typically represent independent demand from a forecast, and that the schedule becomes a set of planning numbers that drives material requirements planning. In the Planning Workbench, the replenishment method filter describes MPS items as focused on finished goods and high-level planning for key items, and MRP items as calculated from demand and supply for all components and subassemblies (docs.oracle.com). A NetSuite partner summarizes the same split: MPS works with finished goods and focuses on capacity and production timing, and for complex multi-level bills of materials, running MPS before MRP produces more coordinated recommendations (netsuite.folio3.com).

Independent sources use the same logic. A TechTarget explainer says the MPS is based on independent demand, while dependent demand is the need for the components that make up a finished product (www.techtarget.com). An ASCM (formerly APICS) learning system excerpt describes the master schedule output as indicating what will be made (learningsystem.ascm.org), and a U.S. Department of Energy training module describes an MPS as a plan for individual commodities to be produced in each time period (www.energy.gov). SAP defines it as a build plan for sellable products with planned quantity, start date and due date (www.sap.com). NetSuite's resource article summarizes the split as master planning focusing on high-

level production needs and MRP on specific material requirements (www.netsuite.com). Open-source ERP documentation makes a point that matters here: in Odoo, adding a product to the MPS does not create orders, because the MPS only suggests the amount to replenish (www.odoo.com).

The classification is set on the item through its replenishment method. Time-phased items have their own work order preference (docs.oracle.com).

Planned versus actual work orders

A planned work order is a recommendation. Partner guidance puts it plainly: planned work orders should remain planning artifacts, and they do not commit components, while released work orders can (www.anchorgroup.tech). Another partner notes that releasing a work order commits components and, with routings, creates the operations the floor works through (consulesolutions.com). Oracle states that a planned work order commits no components until it is released (docs.oracle.com).

Downstream of release, NetSuite's WIP feature tracks progress with three records: work order issue, work order completion and work order close. The close reconciles the accounting by reviewing all issues and completions for the work order. Partners list unclosed work orders as a common problem because they hold cost in WIP and distort the balance sheet (consulesolutions.com). Controllers should therefore treat creation and release as the start of a financial and inventory trail, not merely a planning artifact.

Prerequisites and Item Classification Checklist

Oracle states that the MPS and MRP preferences are available when the Assembly Items, Work Orders and Material Requirements Planning features are enabled (docs.oracle.com). The setup path is Setup, Manufacturing, Manufacturing Preferences, in the Production Planning, Scheduling and Allocation section (docs.oracle.com). The list below is a pre-change checklist that follows from the documentation and from partner practice.

- **Features:** confirm Assembly Items, Work Orders and Material Requirements Planning are enabled in the target account.
- **NetSuite Next eligibility:** confirm with the administrator whether the account is eligible and whether role access is enabled, since Oracle ties the release note to Next (www.netsuite.com).
- **Item classes:** list which items use the MPS replenishment method and which use MRP, since each class has its own preference.
- **Time-phased items:** list any items still on time-phased planning, governed by the separate Create Work Orders for Time-Phased Items preference.
- **Existing process:** document who currently submits Mass Create Work Orders, how often, and with what review, because that human step is what an automatic option replaces.
- **Approval states:** record which statuses the approval process expects, since two of the five options create work orders in Pending Approval (netsuitechangelog.com).
- **Master data quality:** verify bills of materials, lead times and on-hand balances, because partners stress that MRP is only as good as on-hand balances (consulesolutions.com), that phantom assemblies must be configured correctly or MRP will plan work orders for items never built independently

(www.brokenrubik.com), and that the horizon should match the longest cumulative lead time (www.brokenrubik.com).

The older preference and a naming overlap

Administrators who have used Supply Planning for some time may recognize a related setting. Oracle's Manufacturing Preferences help describes a Create Work Orders in Supply Planning setting that defines the default for supply planning work orders, and a separate page says the selection defines the default status of new work orders generated by a planning process run. It also describes a distinct Default Work Order Status that applies only to work orders created manually. The older setting's help page lists four options, while the new MPS and MRP preferences have five (docs.oracle.com). The pages reviewed do not explain how the older setting and the new pair interact, so that relationship is a verification item for the sandbox rather than something to assume.

The Five Options Compared

Table 1 below sets out the decision for each preference. It reproduces the documented status and Firmed flag from Oracle's Supply tab help and adds the trigger, the type of item it suits, and the main design consideration. The same five options exist for MPS and for MRP, and they are selected independently.

Option	What triggers work order creation	Resulting status and Firmed flag	Best suited to	Main design consideration
Do Not Generate	Nothing at planning time; a planner submits Mass Create Work Orders (docs.oracle.com)	Planned work order stays in the plan until submitted	Items needing human review of every order, or accounts not ready to change	Preserves the legacy process, so manual effort scales with order volume
Generate from Planned Order Release	Planner uses Release Selected Orders or Release All Orders in the Planning Workbench; planning alone creates nothing (netsuitechangelog.com)	Work order in Released status, Firmed box checked (docs.oracle.com)	Items where a planner reviews the recommendation but wants no second creation step	The release click becomes the creation event, so release permission matters
Generate in Planned Firm Status	After planning, automatically	Pending Approval, Firmed box checked (docs.oracle.com)	Items where the order should persist across reruns but still pass an approval step	A firmed order is kept by later planning runs (trycadbury.com)
Generate in Planned Open Status	After planning, automatically	Pending Approval, Firmed box cleared (docs.oracle.com)	Items where the plan should keep control of timing	Behavior across later runs should be confirmed in UAT
Generate in Released Status	After planning, automatically	Pending Build, Firmed box checked (docs.oracle.com)	Stable, low-risk items with trusted data	Highest shop-floor exposure; the status label needs confirmation (docs.oracle.com)

The table shows one structural split. Only one option, Generate from Planned Order Release, makes a human click the creation event, and Oracle states that it works only with the release actions in the Planning Workbench. Three options create work orders at the end of the planning run, and one creates none. Counting the five documented options, three remove the Mass Create Work Orders step entirely for the item class concerned, one leaves it in place and one moves the human step to the workbench. The count is simple arithmetic on the documented options, and with two independent preferences it yields 25 possible MPS and MRP combinations, before any time-phased setting is considered.

Reading the status and firm flag together

The firmed flag and the status answer different questions. Partners describe firmed as a flag separate from released that keeps later planning runs from deleting or rescheduling the planned order (trycadbury.com), and a changelog article advises treating firming and releasing as distinct decisions rather than assuming one checkbox performs the other function (netsuitechangelog.com). Oracle also notes that a planned order generated from a supply plan cannot be un-firmed and must be deleted if no longer needed (docs.oracle.com). Separately, firmed or released planned orders that have not been implemented are not purged during a new planning run (docs.oracle.com). That one-way behavior is a reason to pilot the firmed options on a small item set first.

Other ERP vendors document the same pair of concepts, which helps explain the intent. In SAP's planning time fence, all procurement proposal types inside the fence are treated as firmed (help.sap.com), a protection SAP describes as useful for master schedule items (help.sap.com). In Microsoft Dynamics 365 Supply Chain Management, auto-firming turns planned orders into actual orders when the order date falls within a time fence (learn.microsoft.com), and Microsoft warns that a broad firming query can create massive numbers of unwanted orders (learn.microsoft.com). The NetSuite options with automatic creation carry the same risk profile, which is why the item class should be narrow at first.

Table 2 translates each option into the questions planners, controllers and shop supervisors usually ask: who acts, which gate applies, and whether the shop floor can start.

Option	Planner action required	Approval gate (as documented)	Shop-floor readiness
Do Not Generate	Review and submit on Mass Create Work Orders	Whatever the current review step is	Not ready until the planner submits
Generate from Planned Order Release	Select and release in the workbench	Release itself; no separate gate is named in the pages reviewed	Released status, which can commit components subject to commit settings (consulesolutions.com)
Generate in Planned Firm Status	None at creation; review in the approval queue	Pending Approval status; routing is not described in the pages reviewed	Not described as ready; planned work orders commit no components (www.anchorgroup.tech)
Generate in Planned Open Status	None at creation; review in the approval queue	Pending Approval status; routing is not described in the pages reviewed	Not described as ready; confirm retention across reruns in UAT

Option	Planner action required	Approval gate (as documented)	Shop-floor readiness
Generate in Released Status	None at creation	Pending Build status; no approval gate is named	Appears ready, but the label discrepancy must be resolved

Two cautions follow. First, the pages reviewed document the statuses but not the approval routing, so the gate for the two Pending Approval options must be mapped to the account's own configuration. Second, the Supply tab page labels the Released-status option's outcome as Pending Build, whereas the Manufacturing Preferences page says Pending Build was the former name of Released. Whether this reflects two labels for one stage or a distinct state is not stated in the pages reviewed, so the sandbox should record the actual status text and whether components commit.

Why the release option sits in the middle

Generate from Planned Order Release is the only option that keeps a deliberate human act while removing the second step. Partner guidance on the older workflow observed that releasing a recommendation alone does not create production or increase inventory (trycadbury.com), that release makes the order eligible for creation (trycadbury.com), and that a released planned purchase order is likewise not created until the follow-on page is submitted (trycadbury.com). Another partner recommends using the release step as a checkpoint to review material and capacity (www.brokenrubik.com), and a further one advises defining when work orders move from Planned to Released and who approves that step (www.anchorgroup.tech). Under the new option, the checkpoint can remain while the follow-on page disappears. The trade-off is that release permission effectively becomes work order creation permission.

Related Workflows: Purchase, Transfer and Time-Phased Items

The new preferences cover work orders only. Oracle's text says to continue implementing planned purchase orders and planned transfer orders through their existing workflows. The help names the destinations: planned purchase orders on the Order Items page and planned transfer orders on the Replenish Location by Transfer Order page (docs.oracle.com). Oracle's action message documentation describes separate consolidation for each order type, including purchase orders on the order item page and work orders on the mass create work order page. The Order Items page generates one purchase order per vendor for the items submitted.

This separation has a design implication. If MRP items are set to a Released option while a component's supply arrives through a planned purchase order that still awaits manual Order Items processing, the work order may exist before its material is on order. A planner should treat the three order types as separate queues even when the work order queue is automated. A related mechanism is the workbench's suggested actions: a changelog article explains that processing one creates a change order that must be approved before the suggested supply-plan changes are implemented (netsuitechangelog.com).

Time-phased items have their own control. Oracle says to set Create Work Orders for Time-Phased Items for them, and the Mass Create Work Orders page has a Time Phased Items subtab whose enhancements require the Demand Planning feature. The same page describes production work orders generated when the back

ordered quantity of an assembly reaches its build point. An account that mixes MPS, MRP and time-phased items therefore has up to three work order preferences, and the combined configuration should be documented on one sheet.

Refreshing the Planning Repository and Rerunning the Plan

Oracle's instruction after automatic creation is direct: complete a Planning Repository Refresh and rerun the supply plan, after which the created work orders appear in the Planning Workbench. A partner changelog restates the sequence (netsuitechangelog.com). The reason is the architecture: MRP reads item and transaction data from the planning repository, not from live records (trycadbury.com). After a planner implements orders, the engine will not identify the new transactions and will suggest them again unless the repository is refreshed.

Which refresh approach to use after a large automatic creation batch is a judgment call; the pages reviewed do not prescribe one, so the UAT plan should time the refresh options available in the account on realistic data.

The purge behavior matters for duplicates and superseded plans. During a new planning run, NetSuite purges and recreates planned purchase, transfer and work orders when needed, but firmed or released planned orders that have not been implemented are not purged (docs.oracle.com). Together with the one-way firming rule documented for planned orders, this suggests that a firmed automatic work order can outlive the plan that created it, and that if demand falls the order remains until someone cancels it; confirm this for work orders created by the new preferences in a sandbox. The underlying planned-order behavior is documented, not a defect, and it is the strongest argument for restricting the firmed options to trusted items.

Capacity views add a dependency. A changelog article on the 2026.2 Rough-Cut Capacity Planning report says that, when Supply Planning is used, only planned work orders created from the supply plans will be included (netsuitechangelog.com). Teams that rely on that view should check how automatically created orders appear in it.

Implementation Guidance: UAT, Rollback and Governance

A phased test approach

Because no benchmark exists for the preference's operational effect, the evidence must come from the account's own sandbox. One partner advises testing manufacturing preferences with representative scenarios (versich.com) and notes that thorough sandbox testing can avert months of production challenges (versich.com). Another recommends starting MRP with a smaller planning scope and expanding gradually (www.randgroup.com). A defensible test sequence has seven steps.

- **Baseline:** run the current plan with both preferences at Do Not Generate and export the planned work orders, so there is a reference result.
- **Select item classes:** choose a small MPS set and a small MRP set, including one multi-level assembly whose component is an MRP item.
- **Change one preference at a time:** set the MPS preference first, rerun the plan, and record status, Firmed flag and component commitment for each created order.

- **Release-path test:** for Generate from Planned Order Release, test Release Selected Orders and Release All Orders separately, and confirm that planning alone creates nothing (netsuitechangelog.com).
- **Repository and rerun:** complete the refresh, rerun the plan, and confirm the created work orders appear in the workbench and are not proposed again.
- **Supersession test:** reduce demand and rerun, then record which firmed and open orders survive.
- **Approval test:** push a Pending Approval order through the account's approval path and record who can approve it and what happens to its status.

Planners should also review action messages before executing them rather than accepting them blindly (www.randgroup.com), and disruptions such as late components often trace back to earlier planning decisions shaped by incomplete data or outdated assumptions (www.crowe.com).

Rollback

Rollback has two layers. The configuration layer is simple: the preference can be returned to Do Not Generate, which restores the Mass Create Work Orders workflow. The data layer is harder. Work orders already created remain real records, and Oracle states that a planned order generated from a supply plan cannot be un-firmed. The rollback procedure should include a saved search of orders created during the pilot window, a decision rule for cancelling or keeping each, and an owner for the cleanup. Released orders that have progressed into WIP issue and completion records follow the normal close process instead.

Segregation of duties and the RACI

Release and approval decisions create financial documents, so separation of duties is relevant. NIST's glossary defines separation of duty as the principle that no user should be given enough privileges to misuse the system on their own (csrc.nist.gov). An ERP security guide offers a manufacturing example: editing permission to the manufacturing forecast combined with authority to create a manufacturing work order (www.erpfocus.com). Under the Planned Order Release option, a planner with release permission effectively creates work orders, so role design deserves the same attention as the preference itself. This is a design consideration, not an Oracle requirement.

Table 3 below proposes a responsibility split. It is a suggested starting point, not an Oracle prescription, and roles should be adapted to the organization.

Activity	Planner	Manufacturing	Controller	Administrator
Select option per item class	**R**	**C**	**C**	**I**
Change the preference in Manufacturing Preferences	**I**	**I**	**A**	**R**
Define approval path for Pending Approval orders	**C**	**R**	**A**	**R**
Run UAT scenarios and record statuses	**R**	**R**	**C**	**R**
Approve go-live and rollback decision	**C**	**C**	**A**	**R**
Monitor created orders and WIP after go-live	**R**	**R**	**C**	**I**

In the table, R is responsible, A accountable, C consulted and I informed. The structure puts accountability with the controller for settings that create financial documents, while the planner owns the content of the plan. The administrator executes the change but does not own the policy.

Worked scenario (Hypothetical Example)

A hypothetical manufacturer has two items. **FG-100** is a finished good on the MPS replenishment method, forecast-driven, with weekly demand around 200 units. **SA-200** is a subassembly of FG-100 on the MRP replenishment method, with a stable bill of materials. All figures are illustrative and are not benchmarks.

The team sets the MPS preference to Generate from Planned Order Release. The master scheduler reviews the FG-100 plan, checks capacity, then selects the planned orders and uses Release Selected Orders, which per Oracle creates a work order in Released status with the Firmed box checked. The MRP preference is set to Generate in Planned Firm Status, so after each planning run SA-200 work orders appear in Pending Approval with Firmed checked, where a production supervisor approves them according to the account's approval setup.

The test finds three things, each illustrative. First, after the plan run and before the refresh, the workbench does not show the new SA-200 work orders; they appear after the Planning Repository Refresh and a rerun, which matches Oracle's instruction. Second, when forecast demand for FG-100 drops by half in the next scenario run, the firmed SA-200 orders persist, consistent with the documented behavior for firmed orders. Third, a purchase order for a purchased component of SA-200 still requires the Order Items workflow because the preferences do not cover it. The team concludes that Firm status should stay on SA-200 only, and that more volatile subassemblies remain at Do Not Generate until the cleanup process is proven.

Data Analysis and Evidence

What the public data can and cannot show

No public benchmark measures the operational effect of NetSuite's work order preferences, so the evidence base consists of Oracle's documented behavior and adjacent research. The figures below are context for why a release control point matters, not measured outcomes of the 2026.2 feature.

- **U.S. inventory position:** the Census Bureau's M3 report for September 2026 shows an inventories-to-shipments ratio of 1.46, down from 1.47 in August (www.census.gov). In the January 2026 report the ratio was 1.55, down from 1.56 (www.census.gov).
- **Inventory level:** manufacturers' inventories rose for twelve consecutive months, to $976.0 billion in September 2026 (www.census.gov). The Census Bureau collects work-in-process statistics alongside finished goods and total inventories (www.census.gov).
- **Order backlog:** the unfilled orders-to-shipments ratio was 6.84 in September 2026 (www.census.gov). A long order book raises the cost of releasing the wrong work first, though the report does not link backlog to any planning setting.
- **Platform scale:** NetSuite's own page says the platform is used by more than 44,000 organizations (www.netsuite.com).

- **Logistics cost context:** the 37th State of Logistics Report put U.S. business logistics costs in 2025 at $2.4 trillion, or 7.8% of GDP (www.prnewswire.com).

The Census figures describe the national manufacturing sector, and their movement over 2026 cannot be attributed to planning practice. They calibrate the stakes only at the macro level: an inventory-to-shipments ratio of about 1.5 means, by simple arithmetic on a monthly shipments base, that aggregate inventories equal roughly one and a half months of shipments.

Research on freezing, nervousness and release control

MRP "nervousness" is the frequent change of already-scheduled production. Kazan, Nagi and Rump state that uncertainty in demand forecasts and a rolling horizon create volatility in lot-sizing results (www.eng.buffalo.edu), and Lin and Uzsoy describe rolling-horizon procedures as leading to frequent changes in planned release and production quantities (ideas.repec.org). A 2024 rolling-horizon study describes standard MRP as highly susceptible to planning nervousness triggered by master schedule changes (arxiv.org), and another simulation study reports that information updates disturb production orders (arxiv.org). A Technical University of Munich working paper observes that nervousness mitigation strategies work by restricting planning flexibility, which may reduce performance (www.ot.mgt.tum.de).

Freezing is the classic remedy, and it maps to firming in NetSuite. Blackburn, Kropp and Millen's 1986 simulation found that freezing the schedule within the planning horizon appeared dominant among the strategies compared (ideas.repec.org). Sridharan, Berry and Udayabhanu reported in 1987 that freezing up to 50% of the planning horizon had a marginal effect on production and inventory cost (ideas.repec.org). A dissertation summary adds the trade-off: a frozen master schedule, where no changes are allowed for a period, reduces nervousness but responds poorly to changing demand (ninercommons.charlotte.edu). A 2026 version of a rolling-horizon preprint found that the best fixed-quantity interval depends on utilization, with a whole-horizon choice most suitable at 98% utilization (arxiv.org). These are simulations on stylized models. They support the intuition behind the firmed options but do not measure NetSuite behavior.

On the shop-floor side, a systematic review of workload control says job entry is decoupled from release, with orders held until the shop can take them (eprints.lancs.ac.uk). A related ConWIP description says jobs may enter only while a WIP cap is not exceeded (eprints.lancs.ac.uk). A lab-scale study found that regulating WIP reduces the time a job takes to pass through the production system (research.polyu.edu.hk), and a release-policy simulation found that applying a time limit only in periods of high load was the best policy (link.springer.com). This is the shop-floor argument against releasing everything at planning time. A planning-theory preprint frames the goal as scheduling the release of work so output matches demand (www.arxiv.org), and MIT course notes show why order timing propagates: planned order releases at one level become the gross requirements of the next (ocw.mit.edu).

Implications and Future Directions

For planners, the creation event can now live in one of three places: the Mass Create page, the workbench release click, or the planning run itself. Teams that have used release as a soft checkpoint (www.brokenrubik.com) can keep that habit with the release option. Teams that struggle with the volume of pending work orders can move the lowest-risk item classes to automatic creation first.

For controllers, the implication is governance. Oracle documents that firmed planned orders persist and cannot be un-firmed, so confirm in a sandbox whether work orders created by the new preferences behave the same way; released orders become inventory and WIP documents. A preference change is a configuration change with financial effects, so it deserves the same change management as an accounting preference. A partner also cautions that new tools do not solve underlying data problems such as incomplete bills of materials (versich.com), which applies here: automatic creation amplifies the quality of the plan, good or bad.

For implementation leads, the open questions are the ones the documentation leaves open: approval routing for Pending Approval work orders, the status label for the Released option, interaction with the older Create Work Orders in Supply Planning setting, and Next eligibility. Implementation partners and managed administrators can help run the sandbox cycle, but the answers should come from the account's own behavior and Oracle's current documentation.

Looking ahead, planning enhancements can arrive in monthly releases while the NetSuite Next rollout continues (erp.today). Readers should recheck Oracle's help pages before each upgrade, since the documented options can change.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Does the 2026.2 preference automatically change my existing account?

No. Both preferences default to Do Not Generate, and existing accounts continue to use the Mass Create Work Orders workflow after upgrade unless an administrator changes the settings (netsuitechangelog.com).

What is the difference between MPS and MRP work order creation?

The two preferences are independent. Create Work Orders for MPS Items governs items on the MPS method, which typically represent forecast-driven independent demand, while Create Work Orders for MRP Items governs items whose requirements derive from demand and supply for components and subassemblies.

How does a planned order become a work order?

It depends on the option. With Do Not Generate, a planner submits Mass Create Work Orders. With Generate from Planned Order Release, a planner releases the order in the Planning Workbench, and planning alone creates nothing (netsuitechangelog.com). With the other three options, NetSuite creates the work order after planning (netsuitechangelog.com).

How do I release planned work orders automatically?

Choose one of the three planning-run options for the item class, and test whether firmed or open, approval or released behavior fits the process. The path is Setup, Manufacturing, Manufacturing Preferences.

Why did a created work order not appear in the Planning Workbench?

Oracle says to complete a Planning Repository Refresh and rerun the supply plan, after which the created work orders appear in the workbench. A partner explains that MRP reads the repository, not live records (trycadbury.com). This is the documented sequence, not a defect.

What happens to purchase and transfer orders?

They stay on their existing workflows, Order Items and Replenish Location by Transfer Order.

Conclusion

The 2026.2 work order creation preferences give NetSuite planning teams a documented choice of control point for MPS items and MRP items separately. The five options range from the legacy Mass Create step, through release-driven creation, to three post-planning creations that differ by status and Firmed flag. The default keeps existing behavior, so the decision is an opt-in design exercise rather than an upgrade side effect (netsuitechangelog.com).

The sensible way to decide is by item class. Keep human review where forecast error, capacity or data quality is a concern, use release-driven creation where a planner wants a checkpoint without a second page, and reserve automatic firmed or released creation for items whose plans are trusted. Document the unresolved points, confirm availability for the account, and rehearse rollback before changing production settings. Finally, refresh the Planning Repository and rerun the plan after creation.

Source links

Links cited in this article, in order of first appearance. Full addresses are provided for readers using extracted text.

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