

# FrontAccounting vs. webERP

FA had been forked out of an early version of webERP and both projects have diverged quite a bit. The info presented herein may be used for providing support and migration services besides a study of the outcome (pains and pleasures) of the respective chosen development paradigms and design.

As on date (Oct 2012), **FA is the best choice for most users** for it's:

- simplicity
- fully working codebase
- no learning curve
- well stocked wiki
- fantastic community userbase - between 4 to 6 users register on the forum each day apart from spikes around release dates.
- Codebase development is very cautious keeping in mind full backward compatibility.

Versions compared:

- [webERP v4.09.1](#) (2012-10-13) - [Phil Daintree](#)'s mainline - referred henceforth as **WERP**.
- FA v2.3.12+ Mercurial Build 3084 (2012-10-17) - referred henceforth as **FA**.

Repository:

- WERP uses SVN - Phil and Tim are the committers.
- FA uses Mercurial now - Janusz and Joe Hunt are the committers.

Company Database and folder:

- Both use different table sets for each new company. New companies can be created only from the first (0) default company in both applications.
- WERP uses a separate database for each new company with no table prefixes and the company's shortname (no spaces) will be the database name and the company folder name.
- FA can use a different database (with or without table prefix) or the same database with different table prefix for each new company. The company folders are sequentially numbered and have no relationship with the company name, being lined in an array available in the file **installed\_extensions.php** (with next array index number) in the root folder and in each company folder (without next array index number). A security vulnerability however exists and plausible workarounds discussed in [this forum post](#).

Exchange Rates:

- WERP uses a plotted Graph (Forward and Reverse) for exchange rates taken from ECB and is currently broken. Currency table contains the latest set exchange rate. Actually

used Exchange Rate is stored in the transaction and hence a separate table for it is avoided.

- FA can be set (in config.php) to use ECB, YAHOO, GOOGLE or BLOOMEBERG - all are working as on date. Separate rate table is used with Buy and Sell Rates separately definable in the table but not in the GUI and set only together and this buy/sell rate feature has yet to be used in the code.

#### Printing:

- Both support PDF creation and Screen Vieweing of reports.
- WERP does not support LPD printing natively as yet.
- FA can use LPD Printers and sports Print Profiles per user / per company when **cups-bsd** package is installed.

#### Barcoding:

- WebERP has full BarCode functionality - Reading and Writing.
- FA can currently read BarCode using Keyboard buffer only. It does not natively print BarCode Labels.

#### Module Distribution:

- WERP bundles all functionality with themes, languages, single standard COA (editable at will), etc and hence its distribution size is around 20 MB.
- FA is distributed slim at just a little over 1MB, with themes, fonts, languages, COAs, etc available from a signature verified repo (frontaccounting.eu - secret key safe with core trusted developers - using Debian Standard Repo Format) - some COAs are out of date and will be replenished soon. Separate COAs (including user defined and not listed ones) can be selected at new company creation time.

#### API Functionality:

- WERP uses XMLRPC to interface third party applications (like POS, etc). The Error codes are CamelCased and available as DEFINES in **api/error\_codes.php**.
- FA does not possess any such functionality out of the box as on date - a FA user contributed the [SimpleAPI module](#) now to be the equalizer. SOAP may be the way forward here, complex though it may seem, a lot of mature libraries are now available. **Caveat:** Potential exploits on it's possible misuse to be taken care of or restricted to being merely used for trivial / one way updates.

#### Code for sale:

- WERP has proprietary POS and other software made for commercial sale by the lead developer Phil Daintree's company [LogicWorks](#). Tim Schofield, another developer, too has his WebERP Integration with Care2x and possibly other offerings that may or may not be proprietary.

- FA has nothing for sale as of now. Some users have some modules they sell like Payroll, Fixed Assets, etc. Slow development is however being done in parallel on the Free and Open Source versions of these and other community desired modules. Some repo commits are kept hidden for various reasons like code vetting, pending module creation (SecuriCAPTCHA), etc.,.

Misc:

- WERP may have a serious amount of additional functionality over FA in (those features already assimilated into FA have been struck thru):
  - serialised/batch stock
  - MRP
  - Extensive Purchase Order and Planning options
  - Shipment Costing
  - Contract Costing
  - Fixed Assets Module
  - Integrated SQL Report Writer Module
  - ~~○ GL Tags, Dimension (Profit Centres, Depts, Branches)~~
  - ~~○ Automated DB Upgrade~~
  - ~~○ Weighted Average and Standard Costing~~
  - ~~○ Tax, Tax On Tax~~
  - ~~○ Context Sensitive Links to Manual~~
  - ~~○ API~~
- FA is (VERY) slowly and systematically transcending most if not all of the above. Third party modules are now showing up for [Payroll](#), Fixed Assets, Slim FrameWork's [SimpleAPI](#), ReportWriter (outdated), etc.,

Those in the know, please compare and provide info regarding the following features in WERP as present / absent / different in FA:

- Inventory reorder levels and planning reporting, extensive functionality for reporting - can create purchase orders and work orders from MRP directly.
- Pricing utilities pricing based on other price lists/cost - effectivity dates for pricing - so you can set up future prices and expiry dates for prices.
- Purchasing data with minimum order quantities
- petty cash/expense claim module
- Full audit trail of who did what retained with inquiry/search facility
- Ghost bills of materials
- Labour type items
- Delivery in Full on Time reporting?
- Supplier tenders - supplier login to administer tenders?
- Factor companies?
- Stock check system?
- Various sales inquiries - top items, daily sales, category sales
- google maps integrations for customers
- Auto-issue components to work orders

- Discount Matrix - for discounting by product group/customer group combination with quantity breaks over a range of products.
- ~~Part pictures~~
- Variable decimal places by item
- Variable decimal places by currency
- numbers displayed in number format of the locale the user selects ... (not sure if Indian number format is right yet)
- UTF-8 PDF reports - using CID fonts to avoid bundling enormous font files .i.e. still low bandwidth efficient pdf but render full utf-8 character set (with adobe reader installed with appropriate fonts)

The above may be chosen according to the FA user community's wish list and developer order of inculcation into the FA codebase.

OpenVZ Template Availability:

- WERP OpenVZ template is now being made.
- FA OpenVZ template for v2.2.11 is available at the [Proxmox Wiki](#), v2.3.12+ is available with [Planettel](#). (Advt for my sponsors - [GNUAcademy](#) - HeHe!)