

## *Fishbowl Inventory by Fishbowl Inventory*

**Overall Rating****9.5****Summary****Product Name**Fishbowl Inventory by  
Fishbowl Inventory

Fishbowl Inventory is a great inventory package for retailers, light manufacturers, and businesses with one or multiple warehouses. There is a lot of depth in this software while still maintaining ease of use.

**Reviewed By**Inga Arendt  
[larendt@WIPFLI.com](mailto:larendt@WIPFLI.com)**Strengths**

There are many strengths of this product including: multiple warehouse and/or store tracking at real-time, a light bill of materials that can include an allocation of labor and/or overhead at an entered rate, part/product pictures, ability to attach URLs to inventory items, ability to build-to-stock or build-to-order, cycle counts, sales orders, purchase orders, work orders, variable bill of materials, flexible pricing options, units of measurement conversion, point of sale, serial number, lot, revision, and expiration date tracking, re-order point determination, consideration of lead times, automated purchase orders, availability of quotes/estimates that can be turned into sales orders, multiple billing and shipping addresses for customers and vendors, use of a SQL database, and integration with QuickBooks. There is also the ability to pay an additional charge for Fishbowl Mobile which integrates the software with wireless PDA-type barcoding equipment for employees working in receiving or shipping and those doing cycle counts. The license is non-expiring, portable, networkable, and is based upon the number of simultaneous users, not the number of computers needing to access the Fishbowl software.

**Date Reviewed**

October 8, 2005

**Limitations**

The product allows inventory to be kept only on the average cost method and users can only be granted access to all or none of the reports instead of reports pertaining to their areas of permitted access (ex-purchasing, sales, etc...) or specific reports.

**Wish List**

It would be really nice to see the unit of measurement conversion feature expanded to allow tracking by the different units of measurement for each item, ability to set-up and use product variations, ability to link the software to a company's website to allow on-line orders, more advanced shipping features, and an audit trail report to log users' activity.

Product Ratings	Rating	Ratings Definitions
<p><b>Setup and Installation:</b> The installation and set-up of the product is very straightforward and easy. The initial setup wizard is very short, easy to complete, and most options can be accessed and changed at a later time if needed. Additional set-up is needed beyond the initial set-up wizard, but is not difficult to find. The ability to import from QuickBooks and/or other database applications (Excel, Access, etc...) is a very easy, helpful, and time-saving feature for customers converting from QuickBooks inventory or another package.</p>	9.5	<p><b>10.0 (Perfect):</b> This is a very rare score is reserved for a product that is as perfect as it could be.</p> <p><b>9.0 to 9.9 (Spectacular):</b> A product that receives a rating in this range succeeds at meeting all of its intended users' needs and has no major drawbacks.</p> <p><b>8.0 to 8.9 (Excellent):</b> A product that receives a rating in this range is superior in so many ways that its few drawbacks do not have much negative impact.</p>
<p><b>Interface:</b> The interface is very user friendly and straightforward. Everything is categorized by related groups (materials, sales, purchasing, accounting, etc...) which make it easy to finding tasks and information.</p>	9.5	<p><b>7.0 to 7.9 (Very good):</b> While the strengths of a product scoring in this range certainly outweigh its weaknesses, it has some minor faults that users should be aware of.</p>
<p><b>Features:</b> All of the features within Fishbowl are extremely useful for businesses that need additional depth with inventory-related functions but would still like to use QuickBooks to maintain the accounting functions.</p>	9.0	<p><b>6.0 to 6.9 (Good):</b> This range represents a product that is above average. Its strengths outweigh its weaknesses, making it good for most uses but not a standout.</p>
<p><b>Follow-through on Claims</b> The product is very effective at following-through on the claims it makes in its packaging and on its website.</p>	10.0	<p><b>5.0 to 5.9 (Average):</b> A product that scores in this range is functional but unremarkable.</p>
<p><b>Ease of Use/Service and Support</b> The product is very easy to use; however, when questions do arise, there are a variety of options. There are in-product Help topics and access to the user manual. One year of live phone support is included in the purchase price as well as several hours of internet training. Paid support is available as well. On-line options include user forums, on-line support request forms, and FAQ. There is also the option of using Virtual Network Client that allows a technical support person to remotely access the user's computer to help address the issues a user may be having which makes the trouble-shooting and solution side of the process move much quicker and easier.</p>	9.5	<p><b>4.0 to 4.9 (Mediocre):</b> Products in this range are below average. They fall in the middle of the pack for most features, but suffer from a few additional major flaws.</p>
<p><b>Data Security</b> Fishbowl Inventory starts with a default administrator user name and password but the password is required to be changed at set-up and can be changed again later as needed. The product does allow multiple users with separate user ids and passwords for each user and passwords are required for all users. There is no requirement to use a mixture of lower-case and upper-case letters and at least one number or to periodically change passwords however the user id and password are case-sensitive, which helps. The product also offers a user group feature which provides the ability to grant or restrict access down to individual tasks.</p>	8.8	<p><b>3.0 to 3.9 (Poor):</b> A customer should probably not consider purchasing a product in this range or lower. There may be one or two specialized circumstances, however, that could justify the purchase of this product for a very low price for a specific demand.</p>



**Privacy**

The stated privacy policy was found on the website for Fishbowl Inventory ([www.fishbowlinventory.com](http://www.fishbowlinventory.com)).

**10.0**

**Integration with QuickBooks**

The integration with QuickBooks works very smoothly. Company information, customers, vendors, and/or items can be imported from QuickBooks at initial set-up or at a later date. Some, all, or none of the above information may be selected for import. A user may also select to use Fishbowl generated general ledger accounts or to assign Fishbowl items to accounts already set-up within QuickBooks. There is a lot of additional flexibility within Fishbowl which allows individual inventory items to be assigned to different asset and/or cost of goods sold accounts than the defaults. The exporting process is very simple. There are options to do a standard export (all new transactions), re-export transactions from a particular date, and mark all transactions as exported (so they will not export into QB) which provides flexibility within the exporting process. There is a status screen that tracks the progress by group (customers, vendors, invoices, etc...) and a report is available as well that provides the detail of the individual transactions exported for specified dates/date ranges.

**9.5**