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Sep. 29, 2005

*From the October 2005 [Review of Not-for-Profit Accounting Software](#)*

As mentioned in the introduction to this review, nonprofits pose a unique challenge in the software industry. When rating products, it's best to look at certain areas of a product and rate them based on those categories. The categories considered here included the following:

**EASE OF USE/FLEXIBILITY**

This category will be particularly important to those looking to find a quick solution with little time or money to spend on implementing a difficult system. Ease of use can only be determined by spending some time using the product. Fortunately, many vendors offer demo CDs or online demos that you can spend some time navigating.

**MODULES/SCALABILITY**

This is a straightforward area. We tell you what modules are provided with the base system. Or if it's modular, we provide a list of all available modules. If you need an Inventory module, why look at a product that doesn't offer one?

**FEATURES/FUNCTIONALITY**

This is where going to the software's web site really pays off. Reviews tend to mention more prominent software features. What's important to you? If you absolutely have to have a certain feature, it's best to look at the web site. Don't assume it isn't there just because it isn't mentioned in this review.

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This is the tricky one. What is the value of the product? Is a low-priced product a good value if it has the features you need? What about more expensive products? It can be difficult to assign values to these products. If a product is affordable, does what it purports to do, and has the features you need, then that makes it a good value. On the other hand, if lower-priced products do not have the features/modules you need, do the higher-priced systems then become a better value? Value is what you need and what you are willing to pay for it. If the least expensive program reviewed has all the features you need, then it's an excellent value. But the same goes for the most expensive program reviewed. If it has the features you want, and does what it says it will do, then it's a good value.

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