

White Paper

ExSite Webware **Powering Websites and Web Services**



410-1050 Alberni Street
Vancouver, BC V6E 1A3

Tel: 604.684.9440

Fax: 604.684.5894

E-mail: info@exware.com

URL: www.exware.com

What is ExSite Webware?

ExSite Webware is a website operating system.

Just as a conventional computer operating system (such as Windows) helps you manage your computer's hardware, data, and applications, a website operating system helps you manage your website's content, databases, login accounts, and web applications.

PC operating systems have simplified and abstracted the technical details of operating a computer to the point where the user can simply click and drag icons to perform complex operations that once required an advanced technical degree. More and more applications and services are moving onto the web, but website administration is still stuck in the nuts-and-bolts world of command line interfaces, network protocols, and custom application programming. ExSite Webware aims to bring the simplicity of the PC interface to the realm of managing web applications and web services.

Like any other operating system, ExSite Webware works on two levels

1. The largely unseen "kernel" that sits under the hood like an engine, and does the real work of managing your data and programs.
2. The desktop and utility applications that you actually interact with. In the case of ExSite Webware, these utilities include a full content management system, a database administration utility, a login account manager, and some simple web applets, such as Search.

Additionally, any number of additional web applications may be downloaded, purchased, or developed from scratch.

Why Use ExSite Webware?

Exsite Webware can power a single site or multiple websites, allowing them to share:

- graphic designs
- content
- administrators
- dynamic web applications

It is ideally suited for organizations that operate numerous websites that have any or all of the above things in common. The common services are shared between websites, reducing administrative overhead. Services that are not shared can be autonomously managed by the individual websites.

This allows the overall system administrator to control exactly as much of the system as they need to control, and no more. Individual site editors have control over local content specific to their site, but need not concern themselves with the more complex system-wide administration tasks normally associated with managing dynamic database-driven websites. For instance, the system administrators can control what graphic designs, web applications, and services are available, whereas the site editors can control the specifics of their content and how it is presented.

This architecture is ideally suited for:

- organizations with multiple branches or departments that each require their own web presence
- umbrella organizations whose member organizations require independently-managed websites, but need to share common services
- web services that offer "private label" versions of their service



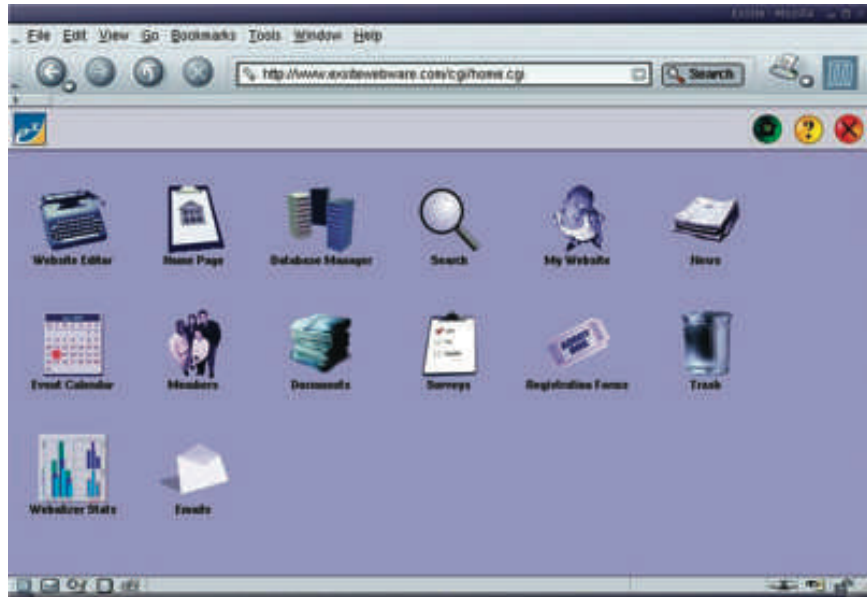
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Understanding how ExSite Webware Works

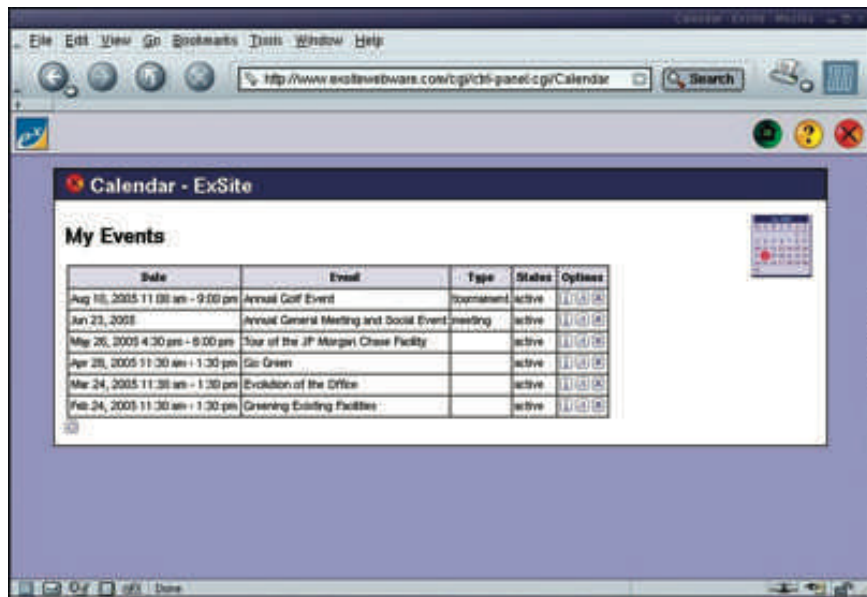
The following screenshots illustrate the ExSite Webware user experience:

Webtop - The ExSite Webware administrator webtop, showing the web applications that are available to the websites on this particular system.



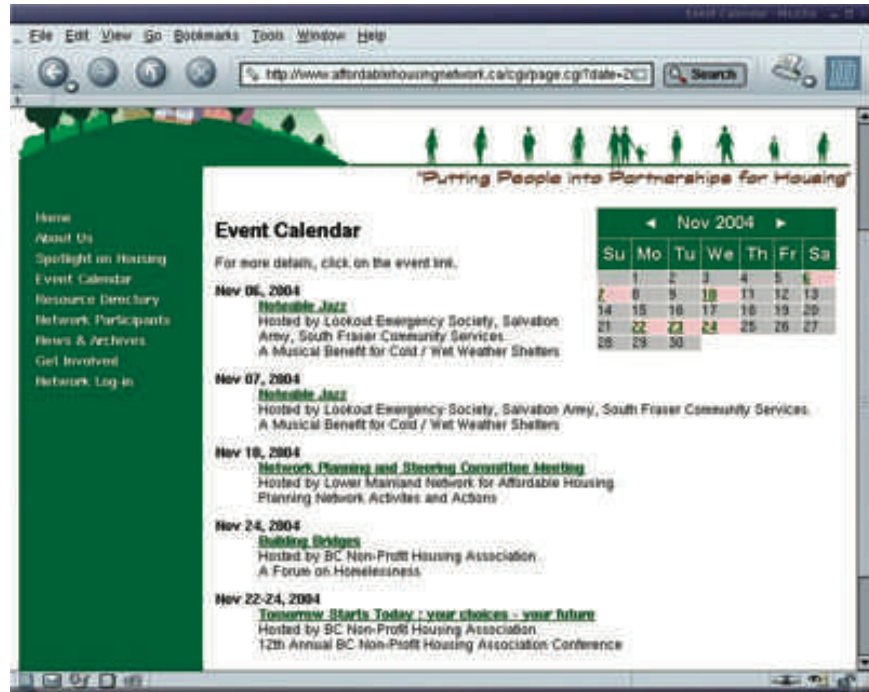
To configure or manage an application, simply click on its icon to launch its administrator control panel.

Control Panel - this is a typical administrator control panel for a simple web application. In this case, the administrator is viewing a list of events in a Calendar applet, with options to edit, delete, or add new events.



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Public View of Web Application - this screenshot shows the public view of an event calendar. The calendar's content is inserted into the website's template, and automatically conforms to the site's graphic design.



Content Management - the next screenshot illustrates the process of editing general web content through your browser. No special software is needed - the editor embeds itself right into the web page, and gives you tools to enter and format text, insert images, links, and drop in entire web applications.



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Leveraging Open Source Technologies

ExSite utilizes the most common open web technologies to ensure that it can run on the largest number of web serving environments. The core software is written in Perl, but web applications can be developed in a variety of languages, since all applications interface to the operating system through a simple driver layer. Database management uses MySQL by default, but is adaptable to a wide variety of database engines, including non-SQL data storage technologies. The software is normally installed on Linux/Apache web servers, but has been successfully loaded on Microsoft IIS servers.

The default configuration of Linux-Apache-Perl-MySQL conforms to the most common low-cost web serving configurations offered by ISPs. The fact that ExSite is extensible to other servers, languages, and databases means that you are not locked in to any particular technologies.

It can run on virtual or stand-alone servers in easy-to-install CGI mode, or on high-performance servers in mod_perl mode. That means that ExSite is highly scalable, from low-cost entry-level websites, to high-performance enterprise systems.

ExSite also relies only on standard client-side technologies for its administrator and content management functions. No special software or plug-ins are needed, and the system is fully compatible with the following browsers: Windows IE 6+, Netscape 7.1+, Mozilla 1.4+, and Firefox. At least one of these browsers is available on every modern operating system, including Windows, Mac, and Linux.

Web Applications or Applets

Web applications are installed as plug-ins, and are automatically picked up by the system. Exware Solutions has many web applications available, including:

- Event Calendar
- Online Surveys
- Registration Systems
- Blogs and Photoblogs
- Forums
- E-zines
- News
- Document Libraries
- Photo Albums and Galleries
- Search applets
- Alternative (simplified) Content Management tools
- Database Manager
- Web stats reporting
- Advanced Event Management Systems
- E-Learning tools
- E-mail Notifications
- DNS and POP managers
- Member Management tools

Exware is continually adding to its suite of plug-ins. In addition, third party or custom applications can be easily added to the system.



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Manage Multiple Configuration Modes

ExSite Webware can power a single website, or multiple websites simultaneously.

In the case of a single website, ExSite provides an easy-to-use content management and web application framework for keeping your site fresh and up to date.

In the case of multiple websites, ExSite provides a common set of services that are available to any/all of the websites. Each website can have its own set of (overlapping) administrators and access controls. In short, ExSite serves as a web service management tool, in which a common set of services can be delivered via multiple sites, each of which is independently managed to a certain degree. Areas where this management model is useful include:

- Delivering private-branded instances of commercial web services
- Providing instant websites with standardized designs and/or content for member organizations, franchises, branch offices, or corporate divisions.
- Delivering high-volume, low-cost websites with advanced management tools.

Licensing

The core ExSite operating system code is available under the General Public License (GPL). This protects you from vendor lock-in, and ensures that you have unrestricted access to your code.

Web applications are treated as separate products under the licensing terms of ExSite Webware. That means that the particular applications running on your site may have different vendors and licensing terms from the above. It also means that you can market and re-sell your own web applications.

Service and Support

Full commercial support is available from Exware

Exware provides software warranties, tech support, software development services, and design services to its supported clients. In other words, ExSite Webware is backed up by a level of commercial support that other open source technologies lack.

Contact Exware Solutions for a full technology demo, or a consultation on how the ExSite Webware technology can enhance your site or web service.

To see how easy it is, go to www.ExSiteWebware.com



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