Fishbowl Unveils Latest Small Business Inventory Software

Written by Thor Olavsrud
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Fishbowl, provider of a highly popular inventory add-on for QuickBooks, will tomorrow unveil Fishbowl Inventory 2012—small business software that can help manage a business's inventory and processes and grow with it through every stage, from startup to enterprise.

"It allows small businesses to grow and stay with Fishbowl," said David Williams Fishbowl's CEO. *"You'll never outgrow us."*

Fishbowl President Mary Scott added, *"We put the control back in the hands of the business leaders and not the IT department."*

Fishbowl, an Orem, Utah-based company, is celebrating its 10th anniversary this year, and for six years running it has been the top-selling add-on for QuickBooks. In fact, Williams said that Fishbowl's leading challenge right now is hiring enough trainers to keep up with demand.

"We're hiring about five trainers every month," he said.

Designed with wholesale distributors and manufacturers in mind, Fishbowl adds a whole new dimension to the Quick-Books small business financial software. The small business software is a seamless and integrated inventory add-on that can track items by serial number, barcode, lot number, department, bin number and expiration date. It can also subdivide offices or warehouses, track items across multiple locations, monitor and report on item levels and create reports based on custom needs.

According to Williams, some Fortune 500 companies even use it as a standalone asset tracking solution because of these capabilities.

"For almost every size and type of business, effective inventory management is essential to company agility, responsiveness and sustainable success," said Michael Dortch, principal analyst at DortchOnIT.com and Constellation Research. *"Solutions such as the latest offerings from Fishbowl can provide those companies with both immediate benefits and firm foundations upon which to craft solid planning and management strategies for all business-critical resources."*

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Fishbowl Inventory 2012 adds a new point-of-sale integration with SalesPoint, offering small businesses with a backend warehouse and a retail storefront the opportunity to streamline operations.

The new edition of the small business software also increases software stability, reduces bugs and updates the interface to make it easier to use. But Fishbowl has resisted the urge to simply shovel in new features.

"Less is more," Scott said, explaining that new features are wonderful if they help businesses more efficiently achieve their core mission, but miss the point if they make the product more complex and difficult to manage without adding corresponding value.

"Our easy-to-implement and simple-to-use software is a breath of fresh air in a world that is increasingly complex and over-engineered," Williams added. *"Fishbowl provides small businesses with a transparent view of their product inventory by giving them more control, making them more efficient, saving them time and money, and ultimately helping them become fiscally strong and able to make sound decisions."*

Adding CRM Capabilities

That's not to say there won't be more additions to Fishbowl. In fact, later this year the company will debut a new customer relationship management (CRM) system for use with Fishbowl Inventory and built on its new cloud platform, Fishbowl Pipeline (still in beta).

According to Kendrick Hair, one of Fishbowl's product managers, almost 50 percent of all customer feature requests involve CRM.

"It's one of the few features that both prospective and existing customers always hit on," he said.

Williams added that the CRM add-on will give Fishbowl Inventory the same features and functionality that enterprise resource planning (ERP) solutions intended for large enterprises offer, while maintaining ease of use so even companies with limited or no small business IT staff can use it.

Combined with Fishbowl's already robust inventory capabilities, the CRM add-on means that small businesses growing into something larger should feel comfortable sticking with Fishbowl, according to Williams.

"A lot of companies have grown with us," Hair said. *"Our services and products have changed with them."*

Hair referred to a Texas-based nut company with four employees. When he arrived at the company to help it install Fishbowl, he found that inventory records were being kept on a roll of paper towels. Within six months, he said, the company
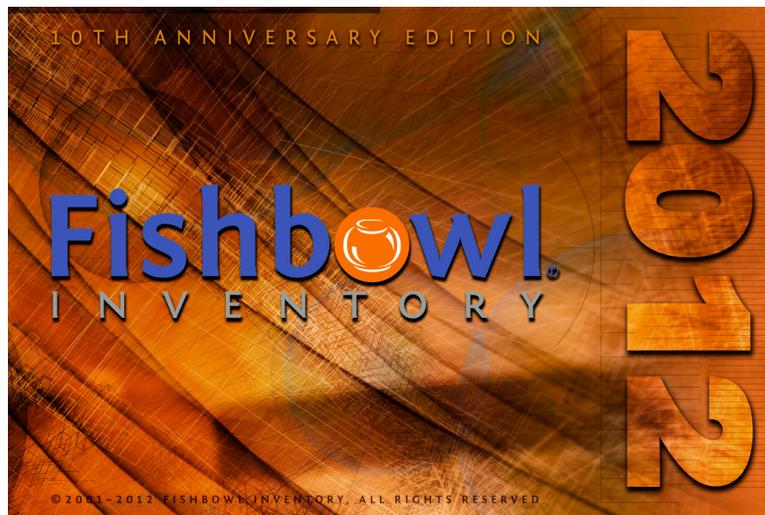
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had expanded to 12 employees. A year and a half later, he helped the company add a fifth warehouse to its operations. Fishbowl was able to stay with them and remain relevant through every stage, he said.

Thor Olavsrud is a contributor to SmallBusinessComputing.com and a former senior editor at InternetNews.com. He covers operating systems, standards and security, among other technologies.

About Fishbowl

Fishbowl Inventory is the No. 1 requested inventory management solution for seamless integration with QuickBooks, and is a popular standalone solution for organizations or enterprises looking to track assets. For QuickBooks users, it provides the same advanced features, flexibility and mobile inventory management control larger organizations enjoy. Available from www.fishbowlinventory.com or a growing number of Fishbowl sales partners.

Sign up for a personalized product overview by calling 1.800.774.7085 ext. 2 or visit our website at www.fishbowlinventory.com

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