Inventory White Paper

COMPARISON

Odoo vs. Zoho Inventory

odoo

ZOHO

2024

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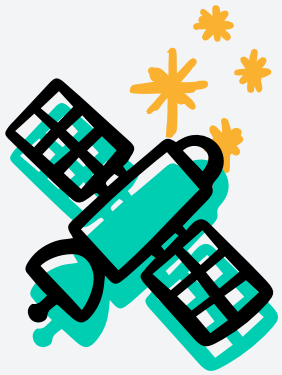


Overview

Introduction

Competent inventory management is the backbone of any successful commerce-based business. How many products do you sell? How many of each product do you have on-hand? How many will you have next week, next month, or next year?

These aren't simple questions, and they only become more complicated as your business grows. However, knowing how to answer them can be a deciding factor in how fast that growth happens - or if it happens at all.

Fortunately, for the modern business owner, there is no shortage of applications and platforms designed to reduce the complexity of managing inventory. Keep reading for a comprehensive overview of two of the most popular inventory management systems. Odoo and Zoho Inventory.

Features Comparison Overview

In this document, we will compare Odoo and Zoho Inventory, in order to analyze the key differences and similarities between the two platforms. This is done with the purpose of helping readers better understand each platform, arming them with the necessary knowledge to make an informed decision about which one is right for their specific needs.

This comparison will consider a number of factors, including functionality, pricing, and usability. To simplify the comparison, we've put much of the data into a series of tables that will allow readers to easily determine the features of each platform.

Odoo

Odoo was founded in Belgium in 2005, and was originally known as TinyERP. Today, Odoo provides a full suite of business management software tools that continues to grow. Odoo currently has 19 offices located in 14 different countries. In 2022, Odoo switched to a simplified pricing structure that provides access to every Odoo app for a single “per-user” fee.

“Because Amazing Employees Deserve Amazing Software”

12+
million users

80+
apps

5k+
partners

3.6k+
employees

Zoho Inventory

Originally founded in 1996, as AdventNet, Inc., the company was renamed to Zoho Corporation in 2009. Zoho is based in India, and has offices in nine countries around the world. They provide a variety of business management products, including a CRM platform and an office suite. In 2015, Zoho released Zoho Inventory, an inventory management system.

"Your life's work, powered by our life's work"

80+
million users

40+
apps

700+
partners

17k+
employees

Why Odoo is being compared to Zoho Inventory (not Zoho One)

Those familiar with Zoho's offering already know that Zoho Inventory can be purchased as a standalone product, or as part of the Zoho One subscription, which includes a variety of different Zoho apps. For the purposes of this whitepaper, the standalone version of Zoho Inventory will be compared with the full Odoo platform, with select references to the Zoho One offering, where necessary. The reasons for this decision are outlined below.

While each company offers a free version of their software, the free version of Odoo provides full access to the entire Inventory app. On the other hand, the free version of Zoho Inventory only provides partial access to the Inventory app, with full functionality locked behind a tiered subscription system.

Furthermore, Odoo allows subscribers to choose either the free version of one app, or pay a subscription fee to access every app. Zoho Inventory can be paid for without gaining access to other Zoho apps, which are available by subscribing to Zoho One, or by paying for each additional app individually.

In summary, Odoo is a standalone product that costs a single fee to access the entire platform, including Odoo Inventory. In the case of Zoho, however, Zoho Inventory is a standalone product. Paying for it does not grant access to any additional applications. For these reasons, we believe that it makes sense to use Zoho Inventory for this comparison. Some details about Zoho One will also be provided, where necessary or relevant.

For the most part, this whitepaper provides an analysis of the paid version of Odoo and the paid version of Zoho Inventory. If the free version of either app is being referenced, it will be explicitly noted.

Open-Source vs. Closed-Source Software

Possibly the largest difference between Odoo and Zoho Inventory is the fact that the Odoo platform is available in both open-source and licensed formats, while every Zoho app is closed-source software. This is a difference that transcends the simple functionality of each platform, speaking to the inherent design philosophy on which they are built.

To put it simply, saying that software is open-source means that users have access to its source code. This provides total transparency to the user, allowing them to see the building blocks on which the software is built.

It also means that users can make changes to the software as they see fit, empowering them to reshape it into whatever they require. This can be something as simple as changing the color of a banner, or as complicated as creating a whole new app within a platform.

Open-source software also allows you to take advantage of changes that other users have made. This opens up a whole new world of possibilities, enabling collaboration with others to learn their strategies and solutions, and show them what you've discovered and created.

In certain cases, open-source software can even be more secure than closed-source software. This is because there are more people looking at the code due to it being freely available, which means that vulnerabilities are more likely to be found. Allowing users to change the code themselves also means that those vulnerabilities can be fixed faster.

There are, of course, advantages to using closed-source software, as well. For instance, the developer of the software takes care of everything related to how it functions. Bug fixes and new features are simply applied with each subsequent update. Additionally, while security is not something that users have control over, it's also not something that they have to worry about, as this is left to the developer.

Zoho, and other closed-source platforms, do not provide the flexibility that open-source software offers. This is fine for those who don't want to make customizations to the software they're paying for, but it also limits them to its built-in features.

Odoo, on the other hand, provides the best of both worlds - an open-source Community version that can be adapted to any need, as well as a licensed Enterprise version.

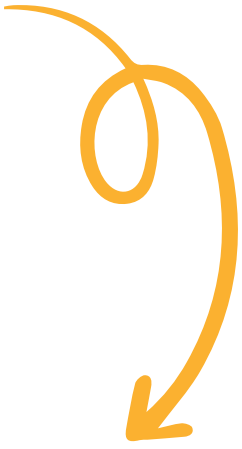
It is worth noting that Odoo Enterprise, while not quite as flexible as its Community counterpart, still allows for deep customization through the Odoo Studio offering. This provides a level of flexibility that is not found in most closed-source software.

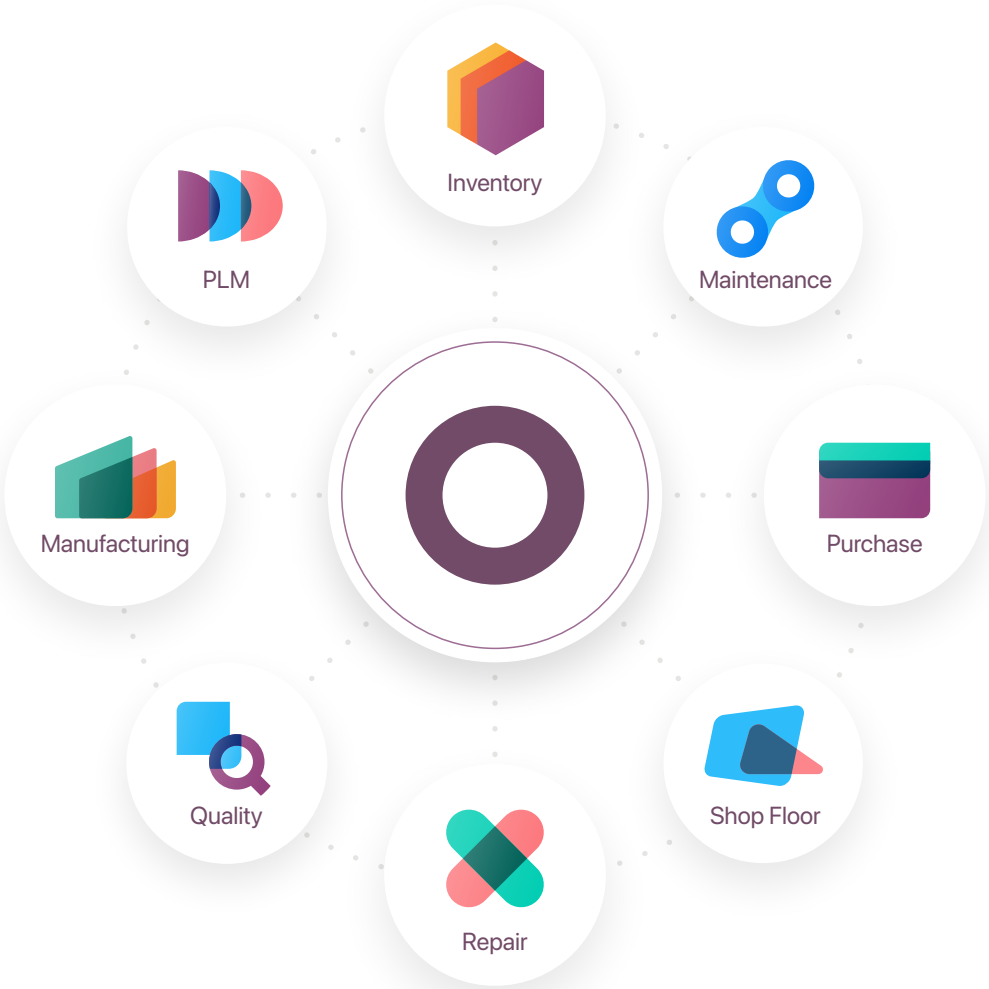
App Ecosystem

When choosing an inventory management platform, another factor to consider is whether or not the platform is part of a larger app ecosystem. This includes the variety of additional apps available to users, as well as how those apps integrate and sync with each other.

In addition to Zoho Inventory, Zoho has a wide variety of other apps that comprise a full business management suite. This includes apps dedicated to CRM, bookkeeping, marketing, HR, and more. However, Zoho requires subscribers to pay an additional fee for each app, or purchase their comprehensive Zoho One subscription.

With Odoo, paying for a subscription grants access to every available app, along with any additional applications that get added in the future. This provides a full business management platform that is able to grow alongside a company. For instance, you may start out using only Odoo Inventory, but if you ever need a CRM app that integrates with it, you already have access to Odoo CRM. Simply download it from the Apps application, and start using it right away.





If you do plan to use multiple apps, another factor to consider is how well they integrate with each other. This includes making sure the data from one app mirrors what is found on every other, as well as inter-app functionality, like having inventory products automatically linked to sales orders that include them.

While Zoho users can sync data across multiple Zoho apps, this integration is less than seamless, and requires input from the account owner to set up. For instance, to have Zoho CRM sync with Zoho Inventory, the integration must be set up manually.

Odoo, on the other hand, is a completely holistic solution, with dozens of apps that work together seamlessly without the need for manual integration or regular syncing. From the moment you start using Odoo, the data in one app is always up-to-date with the rest of the platform, and will always reflect what is displayed by another app.

If a standalone inventory app meets all of your requirements, then the ability to integrate it with applications designed for other tasks may not be a critical selling point. However, if you're looking for a platform that can grow with your needs, then being part of a larger app ecosystem is definitely a factor to consider.

Features Comparison

	Odoo	Zoho Inventory
General		
Inventory Dashboard	✓	✓
Integrated Chat	✓	Only in $199 tier and higher
UoM Conversion	✓	Only in $199 tier and higher
Website Builder	✓	Only with Zoho One
Basic Multi-Currency	✓	Only in $79 tier and higher
Multi-Currency for Each Contact	✓	Only in $299 tier and higher
eSignature	✓	✓
External API	✓	✓
Warehouse		
Warehouses	Unlimited	2-15[1]
Serial Number Tracking	✓	Only in $129 tier and higher
Batch/Lot Tracking	✓	Only in $129 tier and higher
Backorders	✓	✓
Picking Module	✓	✗
Picklist	✓	Only in $199 tier and higher
Trigger Operations Using Barcodes	✓	✗
Manufacturing Integration	✓	✗
Forecasting	✓	✗
Lead Times	✓	✗

[1] Depends upon Zoho Inventory pricing tier.

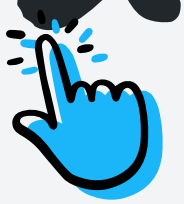
	Odoo	Zoho Inventory
Sales		
Sales Orders	Unlimited	50-25,000 per month[1]
CRM Integration	✓	✓
Customer Portal	✓	✓
Invoice for Partial Amounts	✓	✓
Returns	✓	✓
Dropshipping	✓	✓
Credit Notes	✓	✓
Shopify Integration	Requires Third-Party App	✓
Shipper Integration	✓	✓
AfterShip Tracking	Requires Third-Party App	✓
Purchase		
Purchase Orders	Unlimited	20-15,000 per month[1]
Bills	Unlimited	20-15,000 per month[1]
Vendor Portal	✓	Only in $129 tier and higher
Automated Reordering	✓	✓
Purchase Approval	✓	✓
Vendor Payments	✓	✓

[1] Depends upon Zoho Inventory pricing tier.

	Odoo	Zoho Inventory
Analytics		
Records	Unlimited	5 million, and only in $399 tier and higher
Custom Reports	✓	Only in $399 tier and higher
Custom Dashboards	✓	Only in $399 tier and higher
Export Reports	✓	Only in $399 tier and higher
Financial Metrics	✓	Only in $399 tier and higher
Support		
Email Support	24 hrs/day x 5 days/week	8 hrs/day x 5 days/week[2]
Toll-Free Support	24 hrs/day x 5 days/week	8 hrs/day x 5 days/week, only for paid plans[2]
Product Documentation	✓	✓
Community Forums	✓	✓

[2] For an additional fee of $49/month, $490/year, or 20% of the Zoho Inventory subscription fee, email and toll-free support are available 24 hours/day for 5 days/week.

User Interface



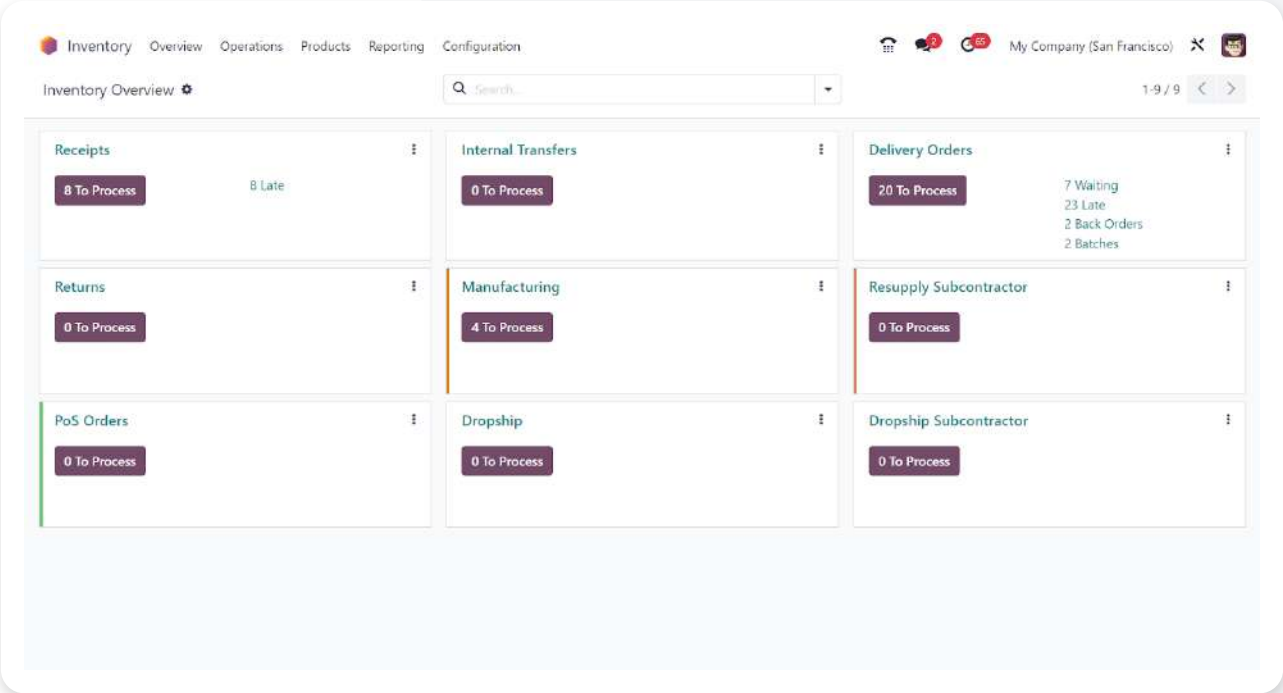
The features of a platform are important, but what's almost as important is how you experience those features. This is known as the user interface, and it includes the appearance of an application, along with how you navigate through and interact with it, among other things.

A good user interface should be intuitive, allowing for new users to acclimate to it quickly. It should also be as concise as possible, while still providing the user with the right amount of clarity regarding its various functions and abilities. In short, the best user interfaces are the ones that appear virtually invisible to the user.

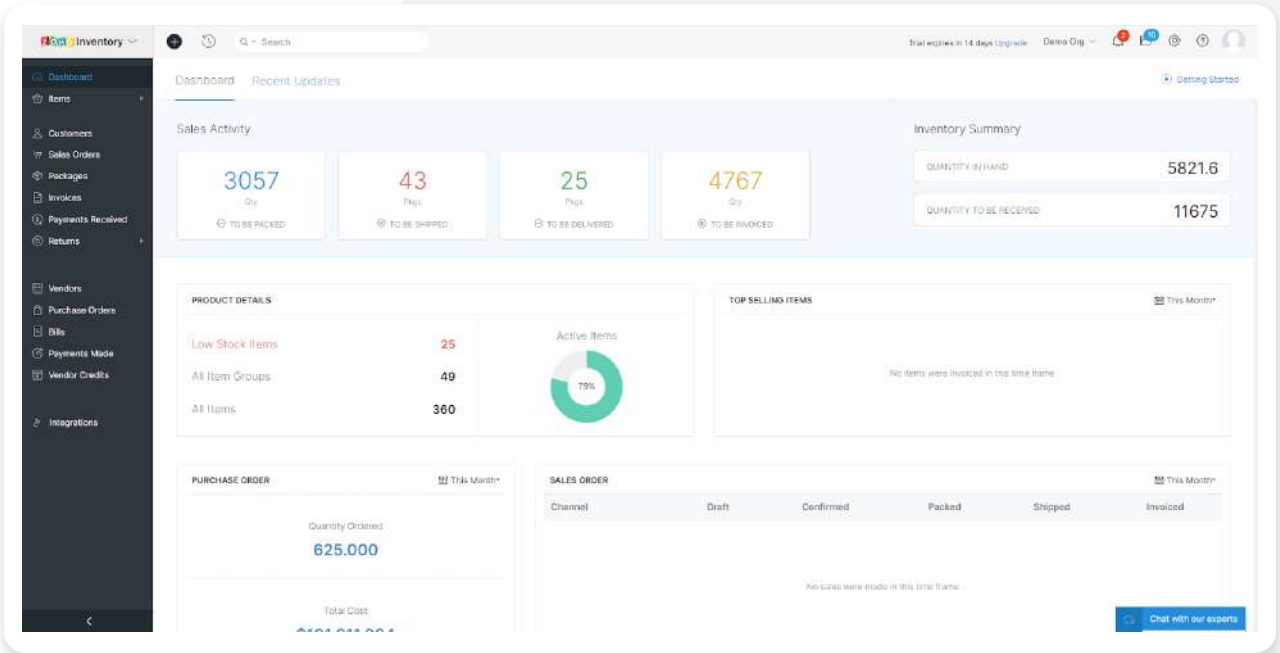
In the next few sections, this document will provide details about the user interfaces of the Odoo Inventory and Zoho Inventory applications. This includes screenshots of important features as they appear in each platform, as well as a table communicating their usability attributes.

Main Dashboard

Odoo

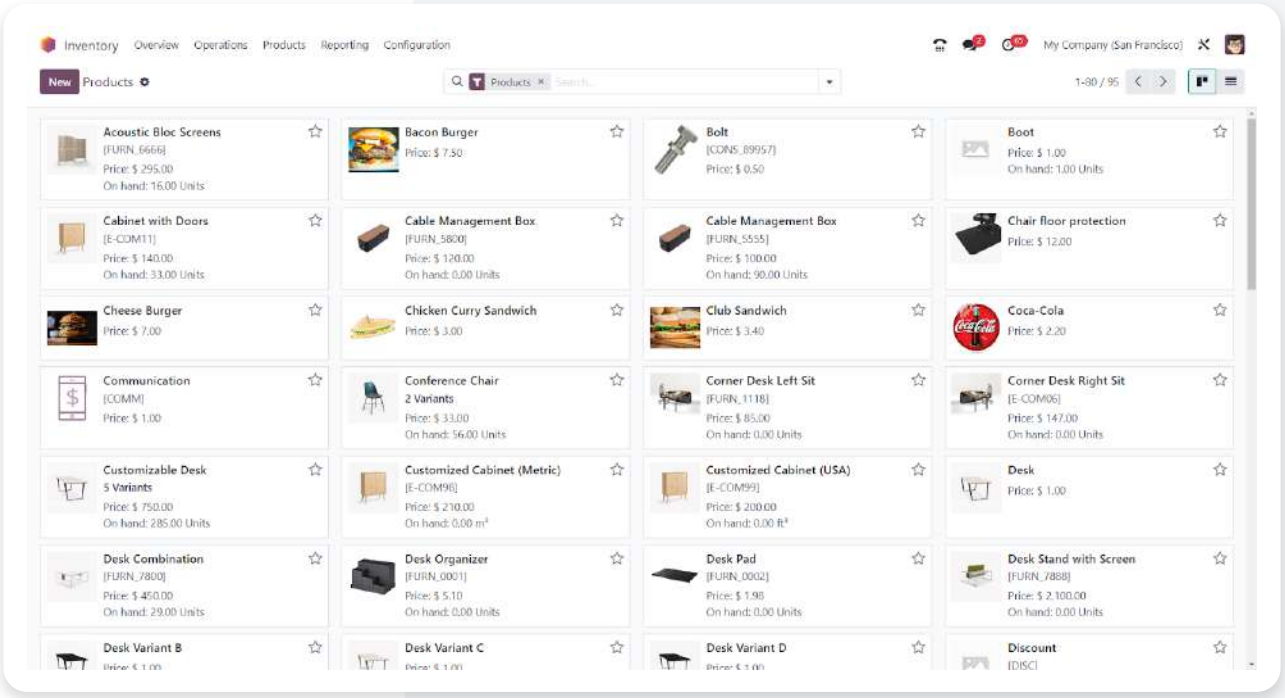


Zoho Inventory

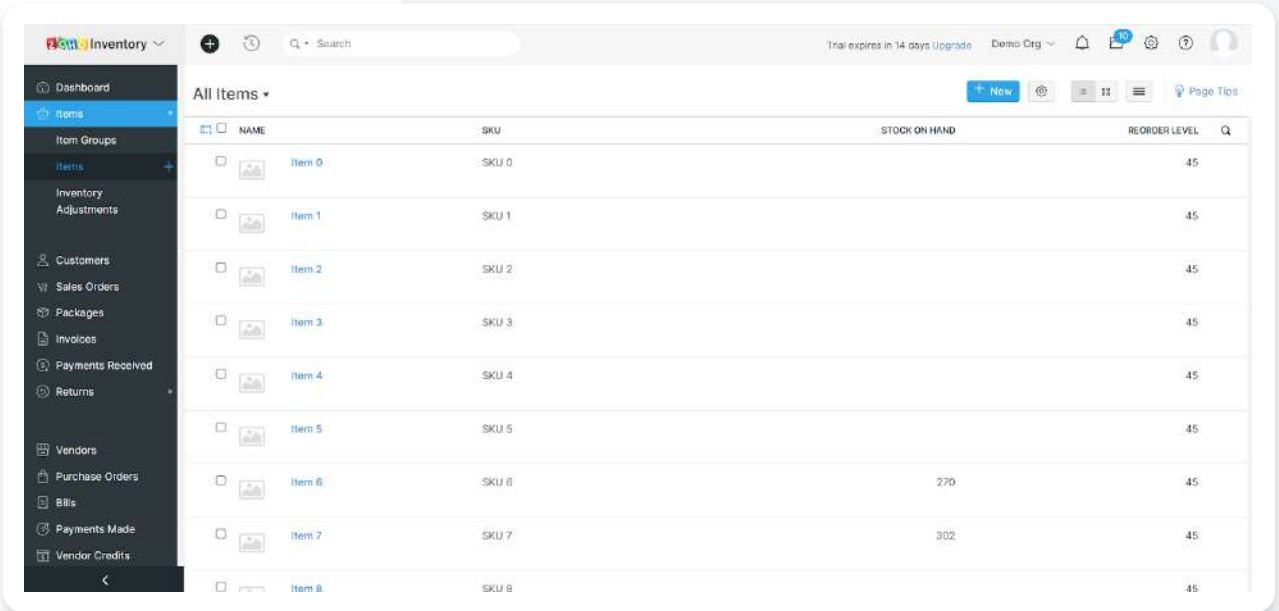


Products/Items

Odoo

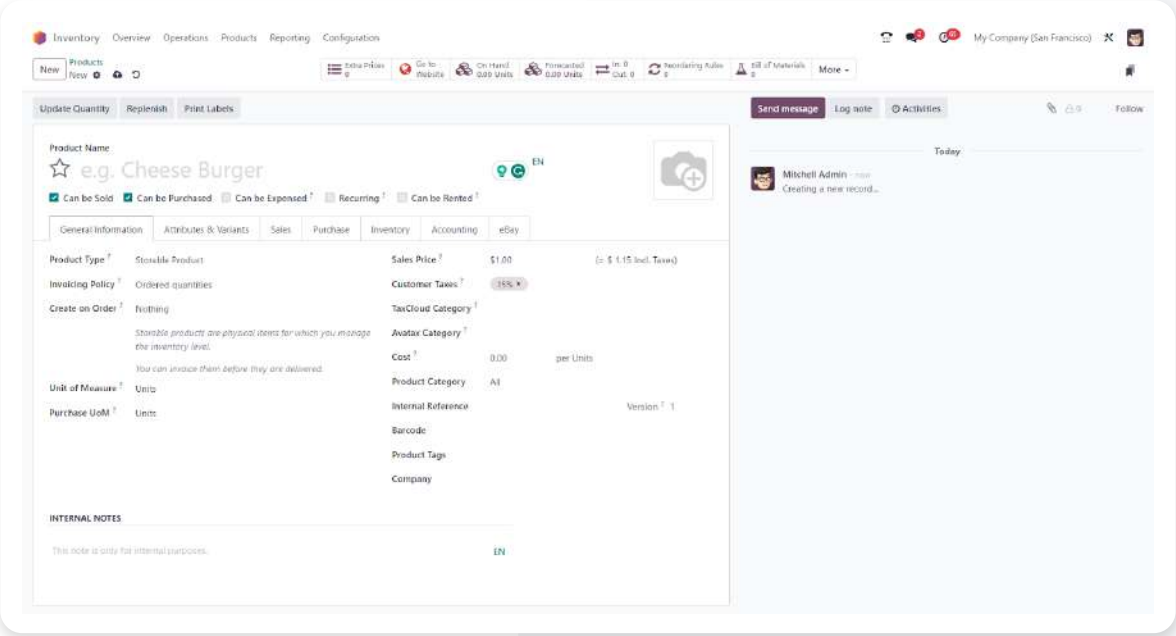


Zoho Inventory

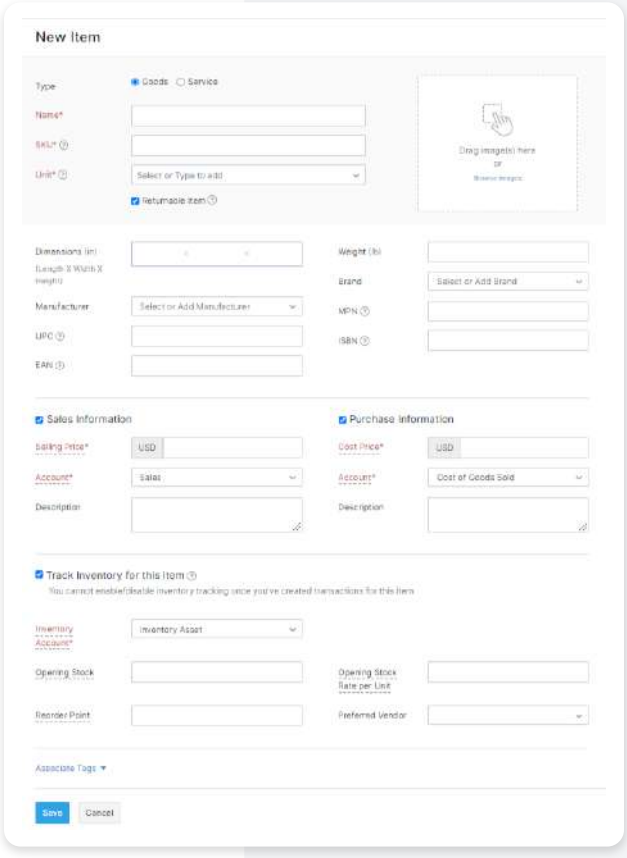


New Product

Odoo



Zoho Inventory



Usability

	Odoo	Zoho Inventory
User Interface		
Cloud-based Platform	✓	✓
Desktop App	✓	✗
On-Premise Deployment	✓	✗
Mobile App	✓	✓
Configurability		
Open-Source	✓	✗
Marketplace		
Official Apps	80+	40+
User-Created Apps	16,000+	0

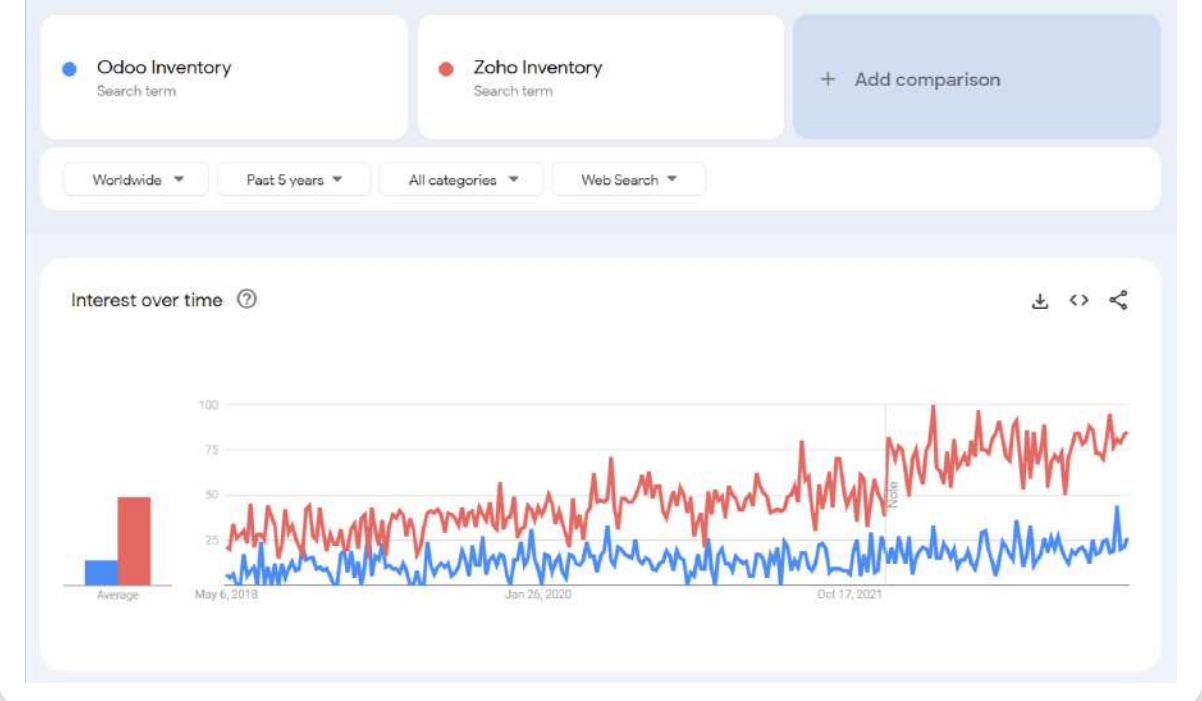
	Odoo	Zoho Inventory
Pricing		
Free Version	Yes, with full access to all Inventory app features[1]	Yes, with partial access to all Inventory app features
Monthly Pricing	$31.10/user	$79 - $399/organization[2]
Users	Unlimited	2-15[3]

[1] Odoo is free for unlimited users, as long as you only use the Inventory app. Access ALL Odoo apps for $31.10/month.
[2] If Zoho Inventory is purchased as part of the Zoho One subscription, you can choose to pay $45/employee/month if a license is purchased for EVERY employee. If you do not purchase a license for every employee, the subscription costs $105/user/month.
[3] Depends upon Zoho Inventory pricing tier.

User Satisfaction

	Odoo	Zoho Inventory
User Reviews		
Ratings on G2	★★★★½	★★★½☆
Ratings on GetApp	★★★☆☆	★★★½☆
Ratings on Capterra	★★★☆☆	★★★½☆

Google Trends



Conclusion

Inventory management isn't simple. Tracking on-hand product counts, forecasting future stock levels, processing deliveries, accepting returns... these are just a few of the many vital elements every company needs to manage efficiently. When it comes to the tasks required for managing inventory properly, their number is matched only by their complexity.

As a result, the decision of which inventory management software is right for your business is not one that should be taken lightly. The factors that must be considered are just as numerous as the tasks the software needs to perform.

What is the best cost-to-feature ratio for your business? Will you only use the software to manage inventory, or do you require solutions for manufacturing, project planning, marketing, etc.? If you do need these additional solutions, how well must they integrate with the inventory management software you choose?

These are some of the most important questions that need to be asked, but they are far from everything that needs to be considered. No matter the size of your business, it's important to weigh the pros and cons of each solution carefully, only committing to one when you know that it meets your needs better than any other. We hope the information in this document sets you on the path to making the best decision for your specific needs.

This whitepaper was compiled by Odoo Inc. We did our best to make it objective and fair. If you find a mistake or a missing feature, please report it to growth@mail.odoo.com and we will update this document. Our goal is to have a continuously updated comparison of the main competitors to be as accurate as possible.