



# New MIVA Shopping Cart: “Dramatic” Improvement



Storeowners have more control and flexibility



The long anticipated newest version of MIVA Merchant is now available. Version 5 is a dramatic shift from previous versions to a new paradigm that makes store creation and maintenance easier and more powerful for the end user. Many tasks that currently require third-party modules and possibly a developer's help are now implemented into the main system.

MIVA Corporation, known for having a strong third-party developer community, broke with tradition for this version by asking the third-party developers themselves for their thoughts and opinions during development. “It was quite exciting working with our third-party development community, and gratifying to be able to imple-

ment their suggestions,” said James Waters, MIVA Senior Software Developer. “Our commitment to incorporating feedback is part of what makes MIVA Merchant a best-of-breed product.”

Most significant in version 5 is a new template-

based design system MIVA calls “Store Morph Technology™.” Each store page has a template that can be edited directly in the administrative area. You can display what you need, hide what you don't, and control the look and placement of buttons, products, category lists and other components.

What does Store Morph Technology™ mean for a MIVA Merchant site owner? First, the owner now has much more control of the look and feel of the site without needing third-party modules. Second, once a template is saved, it is compiled, meaning when a page loads for your customer, it does not have to “create itself” as current dynamic pages do. The difference is that now pages load more quickly, which makes happier customers who stay at your site longer.

“We are really excited about our breakthrough Store Morph Technology™. It enables businesses to easily create their own unique, professional look and specialized functionality,” commented James Harrell, MIVA Director of Software Development. “MIVA Merchant 5 offers a professional alternative to ready-made ‘starter’ stores. We are looking forward to seeing the results of our customers’ creative applications of this new technology.”

MIVA Merchant 5 now supports multiple database formats. The default format is MIVA Corp's new proprietary database format named MIVA-SQL. An alternative is the widely-used MySQL database format. Both are much faster and more



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stable than previous MIVA Merchant versions. One doesn't need to understand the databases, however. It's enough to understand that the new system has blazing download speeds and more stability. MIVA Merchant users will understand this – no more packing your data all the time! And, while prior versions didn't perform well with more than a few thousand products, there are no limitations to the number of products and categories in a store with the new database formats .

MIVA Merchant 5 now allows updates at the click of a button. Previously, the update process involved downloading the newest patches and running a complicated, multi-step update process. Most users either (a) never updated, or (b) relied on their hosting companies to do it for them. "The new software updating process is so simple now. It's going to save businesses time and frustration – absolutely painless," according to MIVA Software Developer Alex Kruglyak. Kruglyak also mentioned MIVA Merchant 5's new product, category and customer import/export technologies, saying, "[the] improved import/export functionality means store owners can easily load their product database into MIVA Merchant."

"Creating MIVA Merchant 5 has involved mastering some interesting technical challenges," according to Q Jackson, MIVA Software Developer. "The new database technology makes MIVA Merchant 5 stores quick and responsive, for a better shopping experience."

This version upgrade is really a whole new platform from previous versions. If your site runs third-party modules, you'll want to make sure those mod-

ules are compatible with Version 5 prior to upgrading. As noted below, most third party developers are quickly updating their modules. The good news is you can keep your MIVA Merchant 4 site running while you work on the new version.

There are few third-party modules available for MIVA Merchant 5 at press time. Most third-party developers are working furiously to remedy that. Their first step is to duplicate their MIVA Merchant 4 modules. Then they'll create new modules that take advantage of the new technologies behind MIVA Merchant 5. Expect many new improvements to come quickly from MIVA Corp, as their new Quick Updates feature makes updating MIVA Merchant much easier.

MIVA Corp. charges for online and phone support, with plans priced from \$399 to \$999 per year. However, many users get the help they need from the very active user community accessible through several email-based user groups hosted by MIVA Corp., which maintains a list just for MIVA Merchant 5 users, as well as for MIVA Merchant 5 template developers and module developers. You can learn how to subscribe to these lists at [miva.com/support/usr\\_grps/](http://miva.com/support/usr_grps/). The template list demonstrates MIVA's expectation that the new Store Morph Technology™ will spawn a third-party market for entire site templates. When this occurs, a store will be able to change its look and feel in a few quick steps and little or no down time. It's truly a new day for MIVA Merchant users. 🐉

– Chuck Lasker

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## About MIVA's Store Morph Technology™

### What is Store Morph Technology?

Store Morph Technology (SMT™) is a completely new store design system created exclusively for MIVA Merchant 5. It provides complete control over the look and feel of your online store.

With SMT, you control the layout and content of each store page. Move buttons, change labels, drop in custom components and more. Every page of your MIVA Merchant 5 online store can be customized to suit your business needs.

### What can I do with Store Morph Technology?

Use SMT to control what each page displays, and how it is formatted.

For example, put a search box on your navigation bar. Then customize how that search box looks, what the search

button says, and where the search results are displayed.

You can completely change the layout of any of your online store pages. Move the category tree to the right side of the page--or remove it altogether.

The power is in your hands with Store Morph Technology, making your MIVA Merchant 5 online store truly customized for your business.

### How do I use Store Morph Technology?

There is nothing additional to install or purchase. SMT is integrated throughout the MIVA Merchant 5 administration interface. When you begin designing your store, SMT controls will be easily accessible.

Detailed instructions are available at the click of a button (at [miva.com](http://miva.com)), providing helpful insight and guidelines into harnessing the power of Store Morph Technology.

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