

New Open Source ColdFusion Shopping Cart

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I have tried a handful of ColdFusion shopping carts and I have never been happy with them. They tend to do more than I need, but not in the way that I need it. That they don't work quite as I need isn't a problem. That they are difficult to modify is.

After a few frustrating experiences, I finally decided to build a shopping cart the way I always wanted one to work. The real difference between this cart and others is that it assumes that you will have to modify it. Rather than give you 90% of what you need and making it hard to do the other 10%, it gives you closer to 60% of what you need, but makes it extremely easy to get the other 40%.

The result is a free, open source, shopping cart program that I call [StarterCart](#). While it is very slim on features, it does provide some significant advantages over other shopping cart programs that I have seen.

Perhaps my favorite feature of StarterCart is that it can easily integrate with products defined outside of StarterCart itself - even from multiple different sources. So, for example, if you have a site that already lists model car sets and train sets that your client sells in store and those are each stored in separate tables, it would be easy to hook them both up to StarterCart so that a user could purchase either (or both) kinds of products in a visit.

StarterCart also has its own built-in product management system, but it is bare-bones. The intent is that you can easily customize this to fit your needs.

Another great aspect of StarterCart is that it has a wide set of supported platforms thanks in part to its internal use of [DataMgr](#) and [cfpayment](#). On a related note, if you want to build your own cart from scratch then I would highly recommend you take a look at cfpayment - it is a really great project.

Among the things StarterCart doesn't yet support, however, is calculation of shipping rates. This is simply because neither of the sites on which I have implemented the cart have shipped products.

StarterCart is still in beta, but will likely have a very slim feature set when it is launched to full 1.0 gold. I do hope, however, to get a more complete feature set over time if there is interest and contribution.

Even if the feature set grows somewhat, I plan to tilt it more towards easy modification than a complete out of the box solution. This is written to be something that a programmer can use to easily create a solid shopping cart for their client, not something that an end user could download and use to set up a cart on their own.

StarterCart is built on the [Neptune framework](#) and does require it to be running on a site to work. Fortunately, Neptune itself should work along side other frameworks.

On that note, this is the second Neptune program I have released since I [released the beta of Neptune](#). Hopefully I can keep up this pace for a bit. The Neptune program specs for StarterCart:

Size (uncompressed)	1.88M (122 files across 25 folders) cfpayment: 1.75M (46 files across 18 folders) other code: 0.13M (76 files across 7 folders)		
Exposure		Any Version	Current Version
	Installations	2	2
	Time	2 years	6 months
	Configurations Used	Modified	Modified
	Engine	Tested?	

Supported CFML Engines	ColdFusion MX 6.1	
	ColdFusion MX 7	YES
	ColdFusion 8	YES
	ColdFusion 9	
	OpenBD 1.X	
	Railo 3.X	

StarterCart does not handle logins and users for the administration area of the cart. Fortunately, you can use the ["Admins" program](#) (or something similar) to handle that for you.

If you are looking for a ColdFusion shopping cart, but StarterCart doesn't seem like what you are looking for, here are some other options that are currently available:

Cart	Cost	Source	Notes
CF Shopkart	Free	Open Source	
Meld MiniCommerce	Free	Open Source	Requires Mura
QuickEStore	\$99	unencrypted	
Cartweaver	\$250	unencrypted	
cf_ezcart	\$250	unencrypted	
CFWebstore	\$400	unencrypted	
SiteDirector	\$495	unencrypted	
AbleCommerce	\$995	encrypted	

By my count, this makes StarterCart one of only two free and open source ColdFusion shopping carts ([cfCommerce](#) looks like it stalled).

I have only used StarterCart on two sites so far. I am eager for it to get a little bit more mileage and then I can call it 1.0 gold and start working on new features. In that vein, if you have ideas for features you would like to see then I would love to hear them. The cart does have [documentation](#), but I am sure it needs some work. I am certainly open for suggestions on that as well.

StarterCart is open source and free for any use and can be [downloaded from RIAForge](#).