Fundamentals

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Fundamentals

Concepts

> ⊘ You should be familiar with PHP and Object-Oriented Programming before attempting to write your own module.

PrestaShop was conceived so that third-party modules could easily upon its foundations, making it an extremely customizable e-commerce software.

A module is an addition to PrestaShop that enables any developer to add the following:

- Provide additional functionality to PrestaShop.
- View additional items on the site (product selection, etc..).
- Communicate with other e-commerce players (buying guides, payment platforms, logistics...)
- etc...

The company behind PrestaShop provides more than 100 modules for free with the tool itself, enabling you to launch your business quickly and for free.

More than 750 add-ons are also available at the official add-ons site.
These additional modules were built by the PrestaShop company or members of the PrestaShop community, and are sold at affordable prices.
As a developer, you can also share your modules on this site, and receive 70% of the amounts associated with the sale of your creations. Sign up now!

PrestaShop's technical architecture

PrestaShop is based on a 3-tier architecture:

- **Object/data**. Database access is controlled through files in the "classes" folder.
- **Data control**. User-provided content is controlled by files in the root folder.
- **Design**. All of the theme's files are in the "themes" folder.

PrestaShop's 3-tier architecture

Object / data	Data control	Design
Database access is controlled through files in the "classes" folder.	User-provided content is controlled by files in the root folder.	All of the theme's files are in the "themes" folder.

This is the same principle as the Model–view–controller (MVC) architecture, only in a simpler and more accessible way.
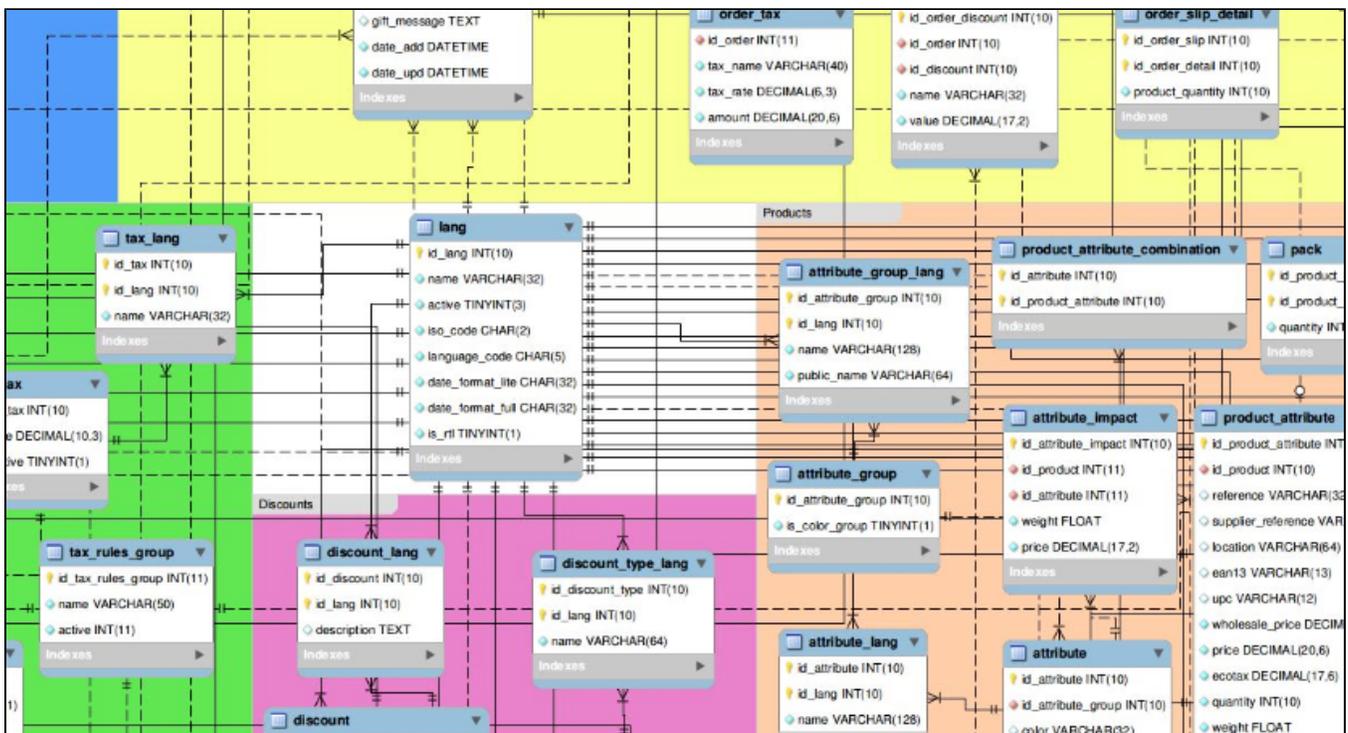
Our developer team chose not to use a PHP framework, such as Zend Framework, Symfony or CakePHP, so as to allow for better readability, and thus faster editing.

This also makes for higher performances, since the software is only made of the lines of code it requires, and does not contain a bunch of supplemental generic libraries.

A 3-tier architecture has many advantages:

- It's easier to read the software's code.
- Developers can add and edit code faster.
- Graphic designer and HTML integrators can work with the confines of the `/themes` folder without having to understand or even read a single line of PHP code.
- Developers can work on additional data and modules that the HTML integrators can make use of.

Database schema

You can download the PrestaShop 1.4.7.2 SQL schema in PNG form (8 Mb), or in the original MySQL Workbench file format (you will need MySQL Workbench to view it).