

# **X-FeatureComparison module for X-Cart 4.0**

## **User Manual**

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## General information



**X-FeatureComparison** is an X-Cart add-on module that enables your customers to use feature-based comparison service.

Unless a customer comes to your store with his mind set on a specific product, he is likely to browse and compare different products trying to determine which product will be right for him.

Feature-based comparison service facilitates the process of choosing the right thing by a customer: the user enters a desired combination of features, and the system then determines the product or products that provide that combination. For instance, if a customer is looking for a mobile phone, but is not yet sure as to its model, he can pick the desired mobile phone features (e.g., dual or triple band, light weight, replaceable covers, or programmable ringtones) and immediately buy the phone that matches the requirements. Visitors can also pick a product and compare it side by side with other products, so the customer can pick a product that he likes, and then compare other products against it to see if there are any better choices.

Using **X-FeatureComparison** module provides the store admin/provider users with the following abilities:

- to group products into product classes
- to define features specific to product classes
- to assign class-specific features to products
- to create multilingual names for product classes and class-specific features.
- to search for products by their product class

The customers get the ability:

- to search for products by features
- to compare products of the same class with one another

**X- Feature Comparison** is a reliable and up-to-date solution that makes your business competitive.

You can purchase it at [www.x-cart.com](http://www.x-cart.com).

# Installation and Configuration

## System Requirements

For the successful installation and work of the module you need an already installed X-Cart 4.0.12 or later.

## Module Installation

To install the module you have to perform the following actions:

1. Download the module distributive (x-fcomp-x.y.z.tgz, where x,y,z are the numbers of the module version) from File area/Software distributives.
2. Uncompress the x-fcomp-x.y.z.tgz file and copy the files to X-Cart directory.
3. Run in the browser the installation script [http://www.yourhost.com/xcart\\_dir/install-xfcomp.php](http://www.yourhost.com/xcart_dir/install-xfcomp.php)
4. Enter your authentication code, accept conditions of the License Agreement and press "Next" button.

**Note.** The authentication code is issued on completion of X-Cart installation. It is used to prevent unauthorized re-installation of X-Cart and to install X-Cart modules (if you decide to purchase them). If you forgot the code, you may look it up at any time in include/install.php file.

5. Installation script will copy the files and make all the necessary changes in the database.
6. After module Installation is completed, you need to log in as Admin and
  - enable *Feature Comparison* from the *Modules* section
  - set the module options in *General settings/Feature Comparison options*.

X-Cart Gold and Pro module installations do not differ.

## Setting up Feature Comparison options

To set up the options affecting the work of Feature Comparison module in your store:

1. Select **General settings** from the *Administration* menu.
2. Click the **Feature Comparison options** link in the section menu.
3. Set up the following options:
  - **Display the list of products to be compared in the menu column:** Select this check box if you want to enable your customers to add products they want to compare to a special list appearing in the 'Comparison list' box in the menu column. If you leave this check box unselected, the link 'Add to comparison list' will not be displayed, so there will be no way for your customers to use the 'Comparison list' box.
  - **The maximum number of products in the comparison list in the menu column:** Specify the maximum number of products which a customer will be allowed to add to the Comparison list.
  - **Maximum number of products which can be shown on the feature-based comparisons page and on the Product details page in the form of a select box. If the quantity of products for comparison exceeds the number specified here, product selection will be done in a popup window:** Specify the maximum number of products for comparison that will be able to appear in a select box.
  - **Maximum number of products which can be compared:** Specify the maximum number of products that a customer will be allowed to compare at a time.
4. Click on **Save** to apply the changes.

## X-FeatureComparison administrative interface

The administrative part of X-FeatureComparison module is handled by the store administrators and providers. In X-Cart GOLD the store admin/provider fully controls the work of the module. In X-Cart PRO providers adjust their store sections to work with the module, while the store admin regulates the work of the module in general (by adjusting the Feature Comparison options) and carries out the function of supervision which in case of necessity enables him to interfere and edit the providers' settings pertaining to the module.

After X-FeatureComparison module has been installed and configured, you need to use the store admin/provider interface to do the following:

1. Define product classes (types of products which can be compared).
2. For each of the defined product classes set up product class options, or features (parameters on the ground of which the products belonging to the class will be compared).
3. Assign appropriate product classes and product class options to the products in your store.

**Note:** In X-Cart PRO each of the store providers defines his own product classes (and features) and assigns these classes to his own products. Unless 'Single mode' is turned on, PRO providers are not allowed to edit the product classes defined by the other providers. Admin account users, however, can edit any product class irrespective of the class owner.

### Adding, updating and deleting product classes

Product classes can be defined in the 'Product classes' section of the store.

X-Cart PRO providers can access this section by clicking the **Product classes** link in the *Products* menu.



**Picture 1:** 'Products' menu.

X-Cart PRO admin and X-Cart GOLD admin/provider can access the same section via the **Product classes** link in the *Management* menu.



**Picture 2:** 'Management' menu.

In the 'Product classes' section existing product classes appear in the 'Product classes' form. Before any classes are defined, the 'Product classes' form is empty.



**Picture 3:** 'Product classes' form.

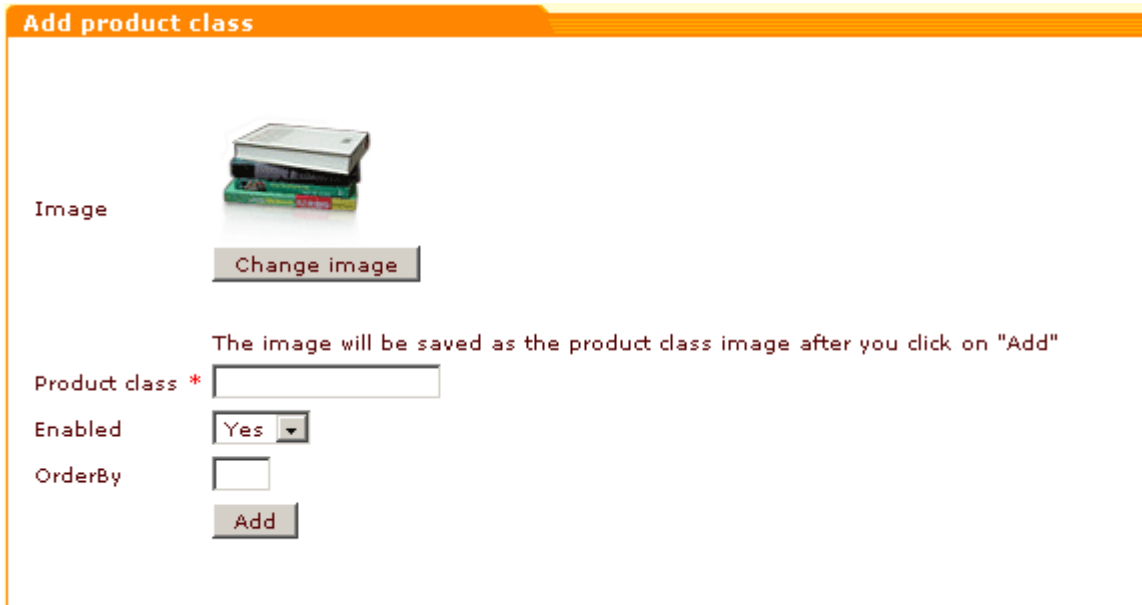
To create a new product class:

1. Click the '**Add product class**' link in the section menu. The 'Add product class' form will appear.



**Picture 4:** 'Add product class' form.

2. If necessary, add an icon for the product class being created (Icons associated with product classes appear on the 'What are you looking for?' page in the customer area along with the product class titles):
  - a. Click on the 'Change image' button below the default 'No Image Available' picture. Confirm you desire to change the default image.
  - b. Use the 'Image selection' window to select the image file which you want to use as the product class icon.
  - c. Click on **'Apply'**. The new image will appear in the 'Add product class' form, replacing the default 'No Image Available' image. (Please note that at this point the image is merely selected, not saved. It will be lost if you refresh the page.)




The screenshot shows a web form titled "Add product class" with an orange header. The form contains the following elements:

- An "Image" label next to a small image of a stack of books.
- A "Change image" button below the image.
- A text instruction: "The image will be saved as the product class image after you click on 'Add'".
- A "Product class \*" field with a text input box.
- An "Enabled" field with a dropdown menu currently set to "Yes".
- An "OrderBy" field with a text input box.
- An "Add" button at the bottom.

**Picture 5:** Creating a product class ('Books'). An icon for the product class has been selected.

3. Enter a title for the product class into the 'Product class' field.
4. Specify whether the class should be shown to the customers or not by selecting *Yes* or *No* from the 'Enabled' selectbox.
5. Specify the position number of the product class in the list of product classes ('OrderBy' field).

**Add product class**

Image 

The image will be saved as the product class image after you click on "Add"

Product class \*

Enabled

OrderBy

**Picture 6:** Creating a product class ('Books'). Example of a completed 'Add product class' form.

6. Click on '**Add**'. As soon as the product class is created, you will be informed about it by a message in the 'Information' box.



**Picture 7:** 'Information' box message informing you of the successful creation of the product class.

After the creation of the new product class, you can see another form appearing in the place of the 'Add product class' form. This new form is titled 'Modify product class'.

The screenshot shows a web form titled "Modify product class" with an orange header. In the top right corner, there is a "Language" dropdown menu set to "English". The main content area includes an "Image" section with a stack of books and a "Change image" button. Below this is a "Product class \*" dropdown menu with "Books" selected. There are also "Enabled" and "OrderBy" dropdown menus, with "Yes" and "1" selected respectively. A "Save" button is located at the bottom of this section. A horizontal line separates this from the "Product class options" section. This section features a table with headers: "OPTION", "OPTION TYPE / FORMAT", "ENABLED", "ORDERBY", and "VARIANTS". Below the table, it says "Options are not defined!". Underneath is an "Add new option" section with a form containing a text input field, a "Text field" dropdown menu, a "Yes" dropdown menu, and a "VARIANTS" input field. A large grey rectangular area is to the right of these inputs. An "Add" button is at the bottom left of this section.

Picture 8: 'Modify product class' form (for the class 'Books').

This form allows you to modify the details of the product class you have just created (if necessary) and to define product class options (features) for it. You can turn to modifying the product class details (image, title, availability, or OrderBy position number) and defining product class options (features) at once, or put it off till later (The 'Modify product class' form can be accessed at any time by clicking on the title of the product class which you want to modify in the 'Product classes' form). To find out how to modify a product class, please refer to the 'Modifying product classes' section of this User guide.

To add more product classes, use the **'Add product class'** link in the section menu.

To return to the list of product classes ('Product classes' form), click the **'Product classes list'** link in the section menu. You will see the product classes you created in the form of a list in the 'Product classes' form.

Product classes

[Check all](#) / [Uncheck all](#)

<input type="checkbox"/>	PRODUCT CLASS	ENABLED	ORDERBY
<input type="checkbox"/>	Books	Yes	1

**Picture 9:** Created product classes in the 'Product classes' form  
(the only product class is 'Books')

The 'Product classes' form in X-Cart GOLD and in the Provider area of X-Cart PRO contains a 3-column table (**PRODUCT CLASS / ENABLED / ORDERBY**). In the Admin area of X-Cart PRO the table includes 4 columns (**PRODUCT CLASS / ENABLED / ORDERBY / PROVIDER**). The **PROVIDER** column allows the store admin to find out who created this or that product class.

Product classes

[Check all](#) / [Uncheck all](#)

<input type="checkbox"/>	PRODUCT CLASS	ENABLED	ORDERBY	PROVIDER
<input type="checkbox"/>	Books	Yes	1	admin
<input type="checkbox"/>	CD disks	Yes	2	admin
<input type="checkbox"/>	T-Shirts	Yes	3	admin
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mobile phones	Yes	4	provider
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cameras	Yes	5	provider

**Product class owners**

**Picture 10:** Created product classes in the 'Product classes' form  
(as is displayed in the Admin area)

You can change the availability status of your product classes and the order in which they are displayed right in the 'Product classes' form. To do so, select Yes or No from the **ENABLED** selectbox, change the product class position number in the OrderBy field opposite the title of the appropriate product class and click on '**Update**'. The changes will be saved.

To delete a product class, select the check box next to the title of the product class you would like to delete and click on '**Delete selected**'. The product class will be removed from the list. (You can use the **Check all** / **Uncheck all** links to select or unselect all the check boxes).

## Modifying product classes

Modification of a product class is done immediately after its creation (when the 'Modify product class' form is displayed automatically) or later (by calling on the 'Modify product class' form with a click on a product class title in the 'Product classes' list). In any case, the 'Modify product class' form can be used for editing the product class details defined at the time of the class creation and for defining product class options (features) characteristic of the class.


### Modifying product class details

To modify the details of a product class:

1. Open the 'Modify product class' form.

**Modify product class**

Language

Image 

Product class \*

Enabled

OrderBy

**Product class options**

OPTION	OPTION TYPE / FORMAT	ENABLED	ORDERBY	VARIANTS
Options are not defined!				

**Add new option**

**Picture 11:** 'Modify product class' form. 'Books' class is opened for modification.

2. If necessary, change or delete the class icon.  
To change the icon, click on the '**Change image**' button, select the image with which you want to replace the old one and click on '**Apply**'. The new image will appear in the 'Modify product

class' form. (Please note that at this point the image is merely selected, not saved. It will be lost if you refresh the page.)

To delete the icon, click on the **'Delete image'** button.

3. If necessary, change the product class title, availability status and OrderBy position number.
4. Click on **'Save'**.

### Managing product class options (features)

To define product class options (features):

1. Open the 'Modify product class' form. Scroll down to the 'Product class options' section of the form.

**Product class options**

OPTION	OPTION TYPE / FORMAT	ENABLED	ORDERBY	VARIANTS
Options are not defined!				
<b>Add new option</b>				
<input type="text"/>	Text field	Yes	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="button" value="Add"/>				


**Picture 12:** 'Product class options' section of the 'Modify product class' form.

2. Use the 'Add new option' subsection to add product class options:
  - a. Enter a name for the new option (**OPTION** column).
  - b. Use the selectbox in the **OPTION TYPE /FORMAT** column to select the option type (Please refer to the 'Notes on options types' section of this User guide to get information about the types of product class options).
  - c. Select *Yes* or *No* from the selectbox in the **ENABLED** column to specify whether the feature should be displayed to customers or not.
  - d. Enter a position number of the option in the list of product class options (**ORDERBY** column).
  - e. If applicable, specify available variants for the option being created: enter the variant names in a column, each variant starting from a new line (**VARIANTS** column).
  - f. Click on **'Add'**. The option will be created and added to the list of options in the 'Product class options' section of the form.
  - g. If applicable, specify the format in which concrete values of the option should be displayed (**OPTION TYPE /FORMAT** column, below the option type selectbox). Click on **'Update'**.

h. Repeat steps a-h to add more product class options.

**Modify product class**

Language English ▾

Image 

Product class \*

Enabled Yes ▾

OrderBy

**Product class options**

	OPTION	OPTION TYPE / FORMAT	ENABLED	ORDERBY	VARIANTS
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text" value="Catalog idx"/>	Text field ▾ <input type="text" value="Input box"/> ▾	<span style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 2px;">Yes</span> ▾	<input type="text" value="1"/>	-
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text" value="Cover type"/>	Single option selector ▾	<span style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 2px;">Yes</span> ▾	<input type="text" value="2"/>	Soft Hard Lux
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text" value="Publisher"/>	Text field ▾ <input type="text" value="Input box"/> ▾	<span style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 2px;">Yes</span> ▾	<input type="text" value="3"/>	-
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text" value="Pages"/>	Numeric field ▾ <input type="text" value="1000000"/> ▾	<span style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 2px;">Yes</span> ▾	<input type="text" value="4"/>	-
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text" value="With CD"/>	Boolean field ▾	<span style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 2px;">Yes</span> ▾	<input type="text" value="5"/>	-
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text" value="Language"/>	Multiple option selector ▾	<span style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 2px;">Yes</span> ▾	<input type="text" value="6"/>	Russian English German French

**Add new option**

Text field ▾
Yes ▾

**Picture 13:** 'Modify product class' form. Product class options are defined for the class 'Books' (Example).

To delete product class options (features):

1. In the 'Product class options' section of the 'Modify product class' form select the check boxes next to the names of the product class options which you want to delete.
2. Click on '**Delete selected options**'.

To modify product class options (features):

1. In the 'Product class options' section of the 'Modify product class' form change the necessary product class options' settings.
2. Click on '**Update**'.

To modify the variants of a product class option:

1. In the 'Product class options' section of the 'Modify product class' form click on the option variants which you want to modify. The 'Variants setup' box will appear below.

The screenshot shows a portion of the 'Modify product class' form. At the top, there are several rows of options, each with a checkbox, a name, a data type dropdown, a 'Yes' dropdown, and a numeric value. The 'Language' option is selected, and its 'Variants setup' dialog box is open. This dialog box has a title bar with a close button (X). Inside, there is a list of four variants: Russian, English, German, and French, each with a checkbox. Below the list are two buttons: 'Delete selected variants' and 'Update'. Underneath these is a section titled 'Add variant' in red, which includes a text input field and an 'Add' button. At the bottom of the dialog, there are two more buttons: 'Delete selected options' and 'Update'. The background form shows the 'Language' option with a value of 6 and a list of languages: Russian, English, German, and French.

**Picture 14:** 'Modify product class' form. 'Variants setup' box is opened for variants modification.

2. Use the 'Variants setup' box to modify the contents of the variants section:
  - a. To rename one or more of the existing variants, change the names of the variants you want to rename and click on '**Update**'.

- b. To delete one or more of the existing variants, select the check boxes next to the names of the variants you want to delete and click on **'Delete selected variants'**.
  - c. To add a new variant to the list, enter a name for the new variant in the 'Add variant' subsection and click on **'Add'**.
3. Click on the X ('Close' sign) in the top right corner of the 'Variants setup' box. The box will be closed.

In a multilingual store, names of product classes, product class options and option variants can be entered in different languages.

To enter multilingual names:

1. Select the necessary language from the **Language** selectbox in the top right corner of the 'Modify product class' form. The page will be refreshed and the product class title, product class options and option variants fields will be emptied allowing place for you to enter new names in the selected language.
2. Enter the product class name into the 'Product class' field and click on **'Save'**.
3. Provide names for the product class options and click on **'Update'**.
4. Click on each of the option variants links, provide new names for the variants and click on **'Update'**.
5. If you need more languages, repeat steps 1-5.

### Notes on option types

X-FeatureComparison module supports the following option types:

- Text field
- Single option selector
- Multiple option selector
- Numeric field
- Boolean field
- Date field

These types determine the way in which providers and customers will be able to input data into the fields corresponding to product class options.

*Text field* is a simple text field into which custom text can be entered. Any characters entered into a field of this type are regarded as text. This option type requires the option field format to be specified (*Input box* or *Text area*, depending on the amount of text that needs to be entered).

*Single option selector* is a field displaying a predefined set of values from which only one can be selected. This option type requires variants to be provided.

*Multiple option selector* is a field displaying a predefined set of values from which several values can be selected. This option type requires variants to be provided.

*Numeric field* is a field that allows users to enter numeric values so they are treated as numbers (which allows customers to search for products using number ranges). This option type requires the option field format to be specified.

*Boolean field* is a field from which only one of the two values can be chosen: *Yes* or *No* (signifies presence or absence of some feature).

*Date field* is a field that allows users to enter dates (customers can search for products using date ranges). This option type requires the option field format to be specified.

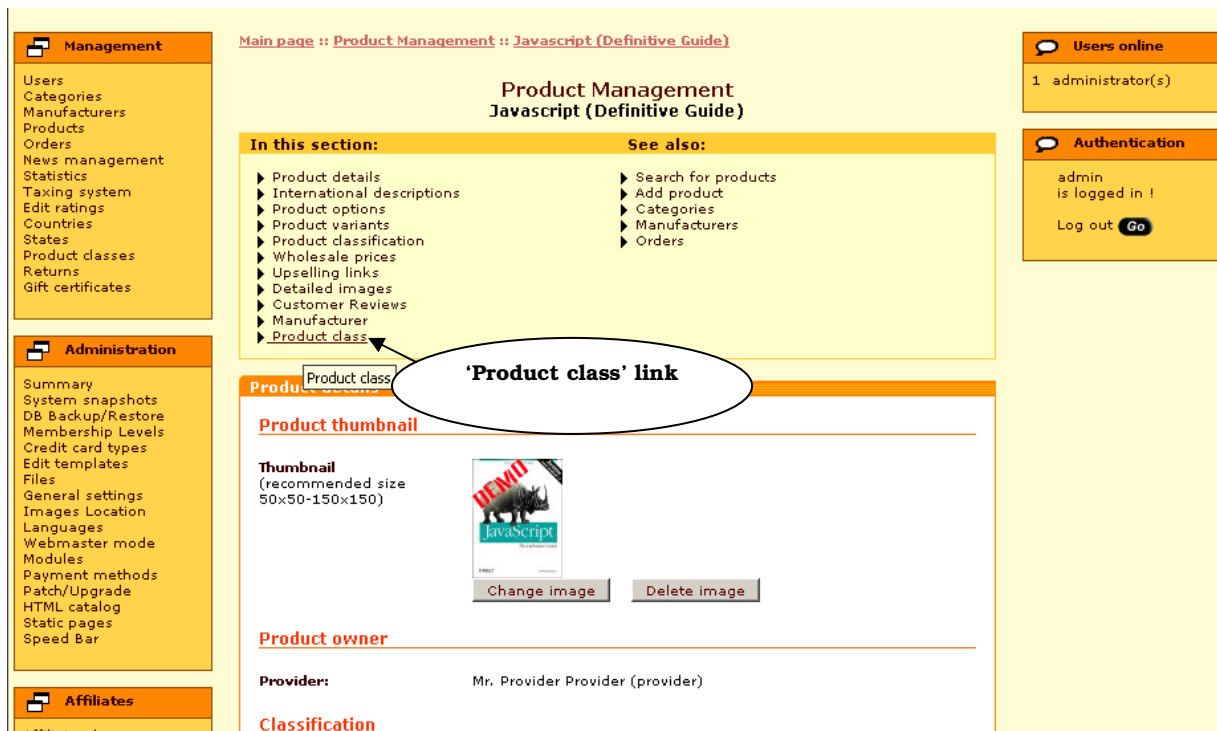
## Assigning product classes to products

After the necessary product classes have been defined, they need to be assigned to the products for which you want to allow comparison.

**Note:** It is not necessary that all the products in the store have a product class: assign product classes only to the products which can be compared.

To assign a product class to some product:

1. Find the product and open it for modification.
2. Click the **'Product class'** link in the section menu.



**Picture 15:** 'Modify product' page. The product 'Javascript (Definitive Guide)' is opened for modification.

'Assign product class' form will appear. As the product has not been assigned to any product class yet, 'Undefined' appears in the 'Product class' selectbox.



**Picture 16:** 'Modify product' page. 'Product class' subsection with 'Assign product class' form.

- Use the selectbox to select the product class to which you want the product being modified to be assigned.



**Picture 17:** 'Assign product class' form. The product class 'Books' is going to be assigned to the product 'Javascript (Definitive Guide)'.

- Click on 'Apply'. The product class will be assigned. The 'Product class options' form will appear below the 'Assign product class' form (The set of fields in the 'Product class options' form corresponds to the product class selected for the product).

**Product class options**

Catalog idx:

Cover type:

Publisher:

Pages:

With CD:

Language:   
 Russian  
 English  
 German  
 French

Hold 'Ctrl' key to select more than one entry.

**Picture 18:** 'Product class options' form (for the class 'Books').

- Use the option fields in the 'Product class options' form to assign the necessary option values to the product being modified.

**Product class options**

Catalog idx:

Cover type:

Publisher:

Pages:

With CD:

Language:   
 Russian  
 English  
 German  
 French

Hold 'Ctrl' key to select more than one entry.

**Picture 19:** Example of a completed 'Product class options' form (The product class option fields are completed with values specific for the product 'Javascript (Definitive Guide)').

- Click on '**Update**'. The changes will be applied.

**Note:** If you need to assign the same product class to a number of products, it is not necessary to open these products for modification one by one. Use group editing: find the products, select the check boxes next to them in the 'Search results' list and click on '**Modify selected**'. Click the '**Product class**' link in the section menu. You will see the 'Product list' form with the selected products and 'Assign product class' and 'Product class options' forms below it. Select the necessary product class from the drop-down list in the 'Assign product class' form, select the check box next to it and click on '**Apply**'. The product class will be assigned to all the products in the 'Product list'. Treat product class options in

the same way: enter the necessary values into the product class options fields, select the check boxes next to the fields whose values need to be the same for all the products being modified and click on '**Update**'. You can make sure the product class and product class options' values have been applied correctly by clicking on the names of the products in the 'Product list' form.

## Searching for products with defined product classes

The store administrator can search for products by product classes. When X-FeatureComparison module is installed and enabled, the 'Advanced search options' section of the search form in the Admin area includes 'Product classes' field. This field is a selectbox from which you can select the product class to which the product being searched for belongs.

The screenshot shows the 'Advanced search options' section of a search form. It includes the following fields:

- Manufacturers:** A dropdown menu with options: 'Manufacturer is not specified', 'ExampleBooks', and 'ExampleHousehold'.
- SKU:** A text input field.
- Product ID#:** A text input field.
- Provider:** A text input field.
- Price (\$):** Two numeric input fields with a minus sign between them. The first field contains '0.00'.
- Quantity:** Two numeric input fields with a minus sign between them. The first field contains '0'.
- Weight (lbs):** Two numeric input fields with a minus sign between them. The first field contains '0'.
- Availability:** A dropdown menu.
- Product classes:** A dropdown menu, which is highlighted by a callout bubble labeled 'Product classes' field.

Below the 'Advanced search options' section is the 'Additional options' section, which includes:

- Free shipping:** A dropdown menu.
- Shipping freight:** A dropdown menu.
- Global discounts:** A dropdown menu.
- Tax exempt:** A dropdown menu.
- Min order amount:** A dropdown menu.
- Low limit in stock:** A dropdown menu.
- List price:** A dropdown menu.

A 'Search' button is located at the bottom of the form.

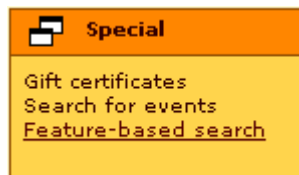
Picture 20: 'Product classes' field in the 'Search' form.

# X-FeatureComparison customer interface

## Using feature-based search

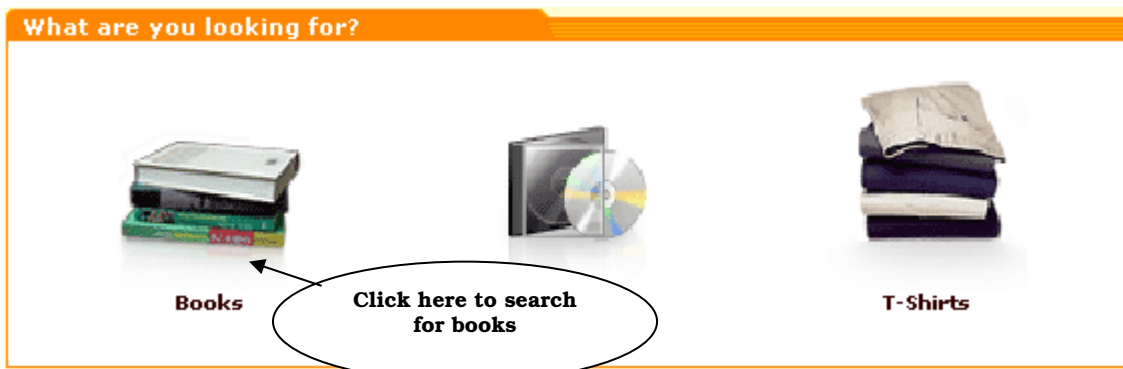
Feature-based search allows your customers to find products within defined product classes by certain features specific to these products.

To use feature-based search, your customers need to click the **Feature-based search** link in the *Special* menu.



*Picture 1: 'Special' menu.*

Clicking this link opens the 'What are you looking for?' page where your customers can select the type of products they are interested in (in fact, the customers select one of the product classes defined in the admin/provider interface). For example, if the classes are named 'Books', 'CD disks' and 'T-shirts', and the customer is looking for a book, he should select 'Books' by clicking on the appropriate link or icon.



*Picture 2: Available product classes.*

After selecting the desired product class, the customer will be provided with a form in which he will be able to specify parameters for feature-based search (If the selected product class is 'Books', the form will be called 'Books features').

**Books features**

**Note:** It is not necessary to fill out all the fields. You can specify values only for the features relevant to you.

ISBN:

Cover type: ANY

Publisher:

Pages: From:

To:

With CD: ANY

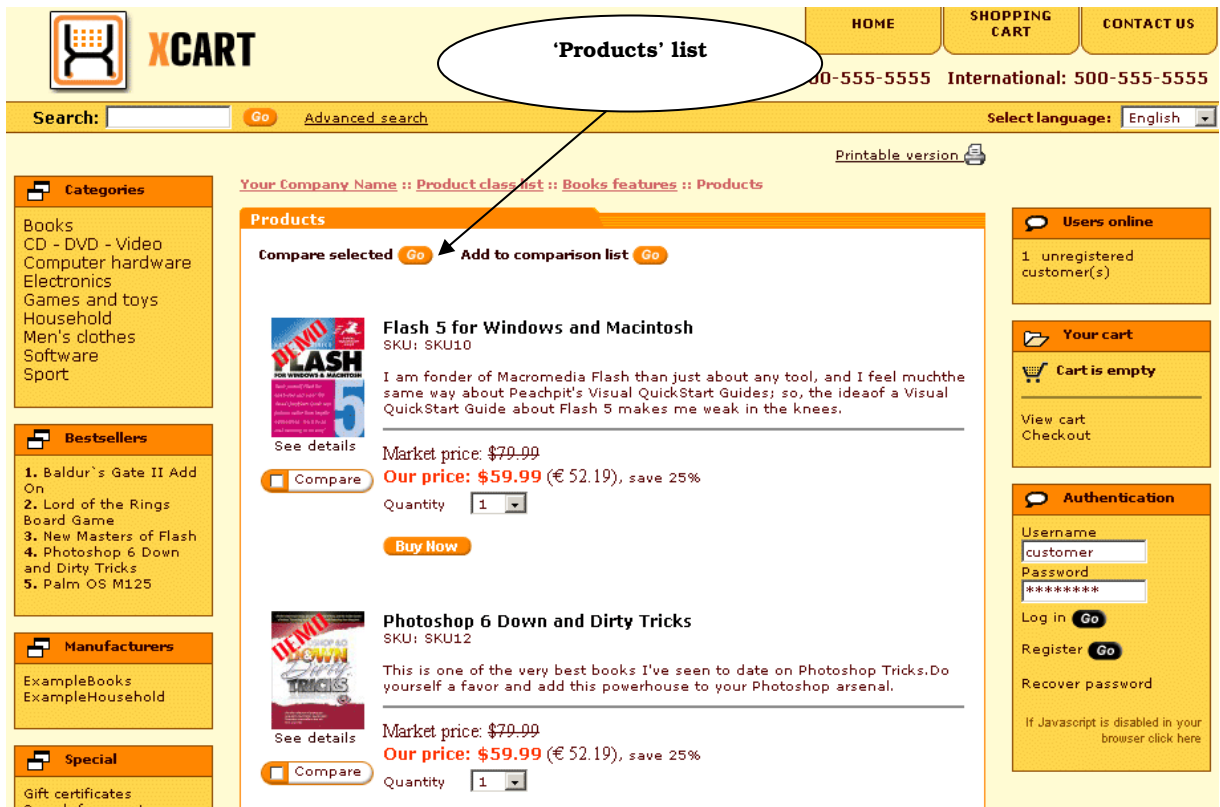
Language:   
Russian  
English  
German  
French

Hold 'Ctrl' key to select more than one entry.

**Picture 3:** 'Books features' form (Example).

The set of fields in the form will vary from one product class to another, depending on the product class options (features) assigned to different classes in the admin interface. The customer only needs to provide values for the fields relevant to his search and to submit the form.

The products found by the search query will be displayed in the 'Products' list.



Picture 4: 'Products' list displaying the feature-based search results (Example).

The found products can then be compared with one another.

## Selecting products for comparison

In X-FeatureComparison module customers can compare products assigned to the same product class (In other words, customers can compare a photo camera with another photo camera, but they cannot compare a photo camera with a book).

Customers select the products they want to be compared and then the module juxtaposes the selected products in the form of a table (the so-called 'Product features chart'). The Product features chart allows your customers to compare products by separate features (the features by which products can be compared are defined by admin/provider for each product class individually).

The module offers three alternative ways in which a customer can go about adding products to the Product features chart:

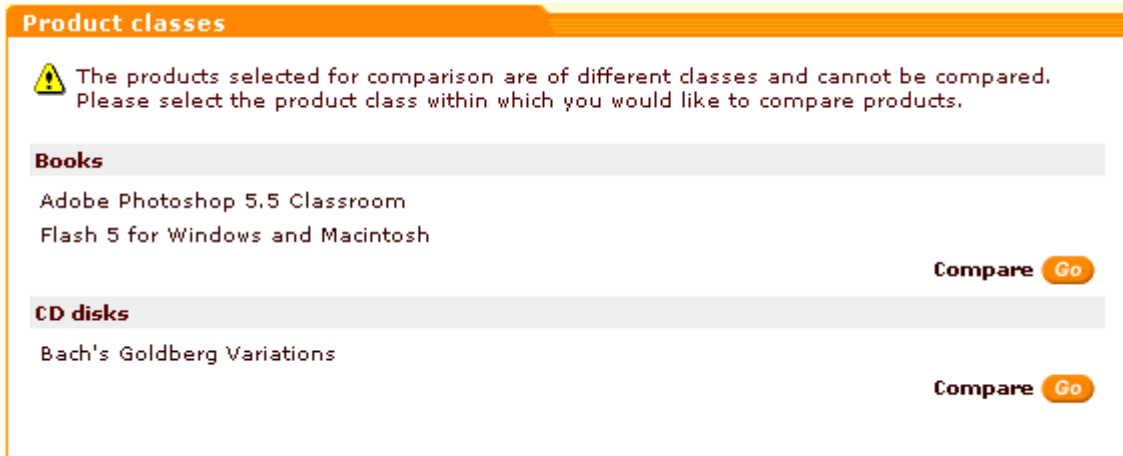
1. The first of the three ways is as simple as selecting the **'Compare'** check boxes next to the products which need to be compared and adding them directly to the Product features chart with one click on the **'Compare selected'** link.



**Picture 5:** Adding products to the Product features chart using the 'Compare selected' link.

**Note:** The maximum number of products which a customer is allowed to select for comparison is defined in the *General settings/Feature Comparison options* section of the administrative interface ('Maximum number of products which can be compared')

If the customer selects for comparison products which belong to different product classes, he will receive a warning message in the 'Product classes' form prompting him to select just one class with which he would like to continue working.



**Picture 6:** Warning displayed to a customer if he selects for comparison products belonging to different product classes.

To compare the products within this product class, the customer needs to click the 'Compare' link corresponding to it.

2. The second way involves using the so-called 'Comparison list'. While browsing the Products list, a customer selects the 'Compare' check boxes next to the products which need to be compared and, by clicking the 'Add to comparison list' link, adds them to the 'Comparison list' (A special box appearing in the menu column in which a list of products selected for comparison can be stored until the customer requests the operation of product comparison to be carried out. The empty 'Comparison list' is not displayed).



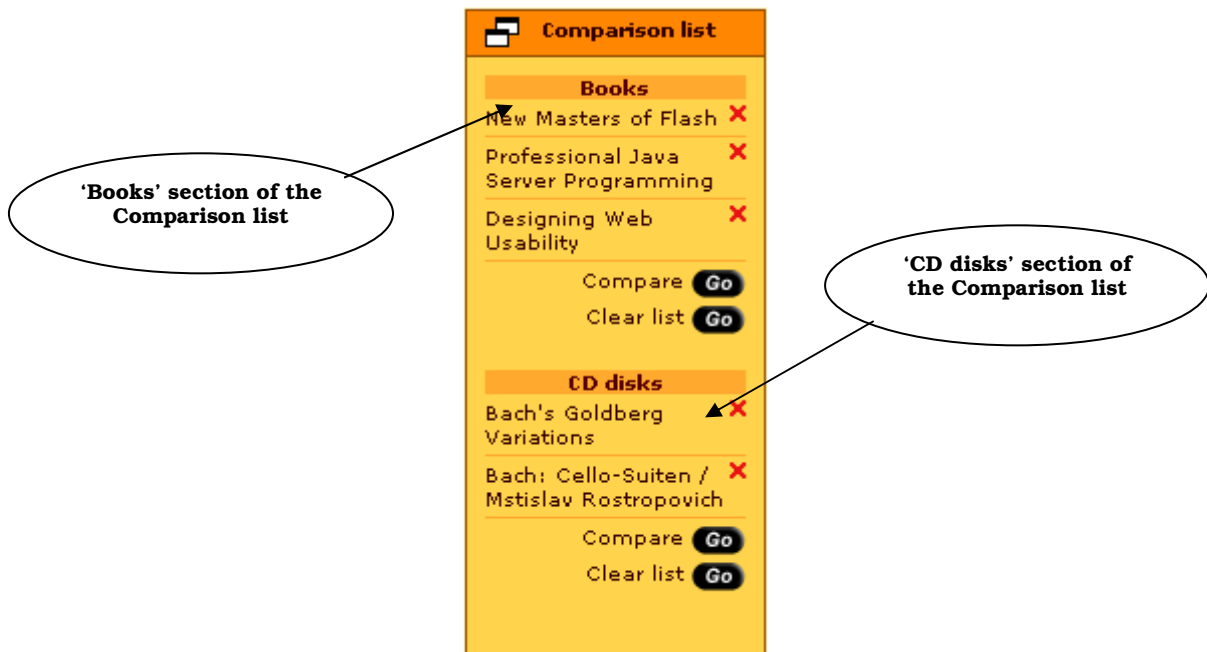
Picture 7: Adding products to the Comparison list (1).

Another way a customer can add a product to the 'Comparison list' is by going to the product details page of some product and clicking on the 'Add to comparison list' link there.



Picture 8: Adding products to the Comparison list (2).

If the products selected for comparison belong to different product classes, the Comparison list will be divided into sections, so each of the involved product classes has its separate comparison list.



**Picture 9:** Comparison list divided into 2 sections (Books and CD disks).

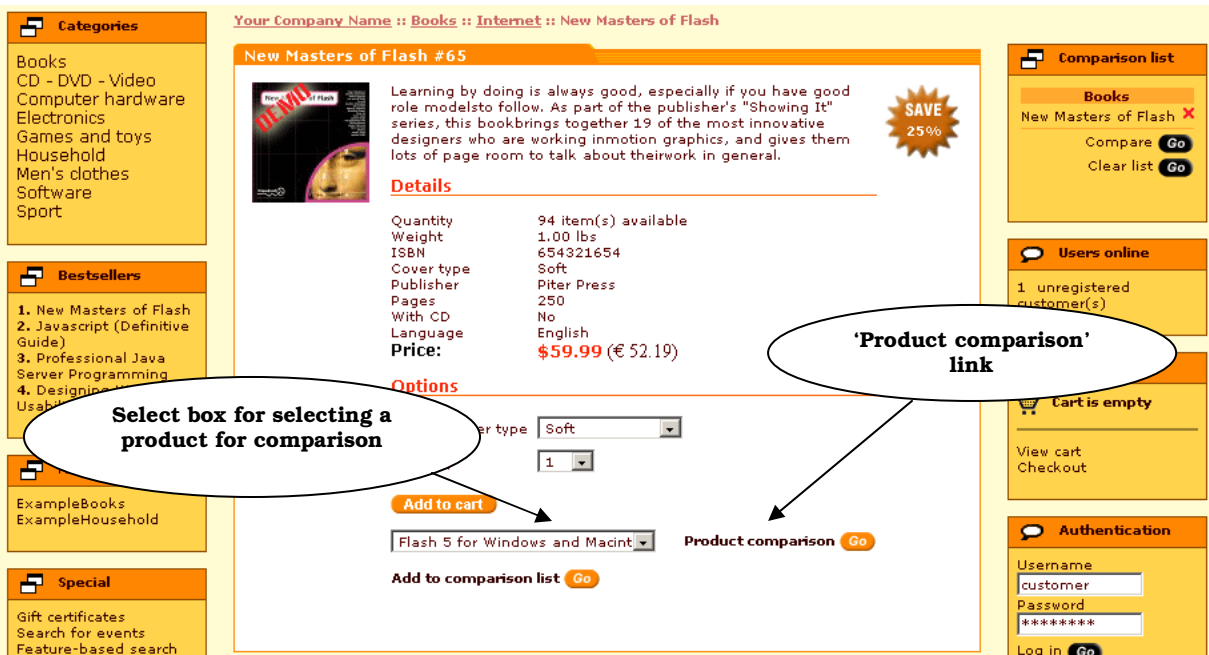
The Comparison list is completely editable, so your customers are allowed not only to add products to the list, but to remove some or all of the products from the list. To remove a specific product from the Comparison list, a customer needs to click on the red X sign next to the name of the product in the list. To remove all the products from the Comparison list (or from a section of the Comparison list), a customer needs to click the **'Clear list'** link at the bottom of the list (or below the corresponding section of the Comparison list).

To compare the products contained in the Comparison list (or in a section of the Comparison list), a customer needs to click the **'Compare'** link at the bottom of the list (or below the corresponding section of the Comparison list). The products will be transferred to the Product features chart where the customer will be able to compare them.

**Note:** If you want to enable the Comparison list for your customers, please select the *'Display the list of products to be compared in the menu column'* option in the *General settings/Feature Comparison options* section of the administrative interface. Do not forget to set the Comparison list capacity (*'The maximum number of products in the comparison list in the menu column'* option).

3. The third way allows adding pairs of products to the Product features chart: a customer can go to the product details page of some product and request comparing this product with some other product of the same product class. The product with which the initially chosen product will be compared is selected from a selectbox on the product details page. Both the products (the one

whose product details are displayed and the one selected from the list in the select box) are added to the Product features chart when the customer clicks the 'Product comparison' link next to the select box.



Picture 10: Adding products to the Product features chart from the product details page.

**Note:** More products of the same product class can then be added one by one to the Product features chart using the select box below the Product features chart.

**Note:** The maximum number of products which can appear in selectboxes can be defined in the *General settings/Feature Comparison options* section of the administrative interface ('Maximum number of products which can be shown on the feature-based comparisons page and on the Product details page in the form of a select box. If the quantity of products for comparison exceeds the number specified here, product selection will be done in a popup window').

## Comparing products

No matter what method was used for selecting the products for comparison, they finally appear in the Product features chart.

Product features	Products		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Adobe Photoshop 5.5 Classroom	<input type="checkbox"/> Flash 5 for Windows and Macintosh	<input type="checkbox"/> New Masters of Flash
<input type="checkbox"/> Catalog idx	654321987	321654987	654321654
<input type="checkbox"/> Cover type	Hard	Soft	Soft
<input type="checkbox"/> Publisher	Dialectics	Dialectics	Piter Press
<input type="checkbox"/> Pages	460	318	250
<input type="checkbox"/> With CD	✓	✗	✗
<input type="checkbox"/> Language	German	English German	English
<input type="checkbox"/> Remove selected features	<input type="checkbox"/> Remove selected products		

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Picture 11: Product features chart.

The 'Product features' column displays a list of features by which the selected products are compared. The 'Products' section displays the products which are compared. According to the default chart layout, product features are displayed vertically and products are displayed horizontally.

If the customer believes some feature is not essential for the comparison, he can remove this feature from the chart. To remove a feature, the customer needs to select the check box next to it and to click the **'Remove selected features'** link at the bottom of the 'Product features' column.

**Product features chart**

Product features	Products		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Adobe Photoshop 5.5 Classroom	<input type="checkbox"/> Flash 5 for Windows and Macintosh	<input type="checkbox"/> New Masters of Flash
<input type="checkbox"/> Catalog idx	654321987	321654987	654321654
<input type="checkbox"/> Cover type	Hard	Soft	Soft
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Publisher	Dialectics	Dialectics	Piter Press
<input type="checkbox"/> Pages			250
<input type="checkbox"/> With CD	✓	✗	✗
<input type="checkbox"/> Language	German	English German	English
<input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Remove selected features</a>	<input type="checkbox"/> Remove selected products		

Photoshop 6 Down and Dirty Tri

Picture 12: Removing a feature from the Product features chart.

The removed features are excluded from the chart, however, they appear above the chart in the form of links from which they can be restored. The customer can restore any of the removed features at any time by clicking the '**Removed features**' links corresponding to these features.

**Product features chart**

Removed features: [Publisher](#)

Product features	Products		
	Ad	Downloads	New Masters of Flash
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Catalog idx</b>	6543		654321654
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Cover type</b>	Hard	Soft	Soft
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Pages</b>	460	318	250
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>With CD</b>	✓	✗	✗
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Language</b>	German	English German	English
<input type="checkbox"/> Remove selected features	<input type="checkbox"/> Remove selected products		

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Picture 13: Restoring a feature from a link.

If needed, the customer can exclude one or more products from the chart. To remove a product, the customer needs to select the check box next to the name of the product and to click the **'Remove selected products'** link at the bottom of the 'Products' section of the chart.

**Product features chart**

Removed features: Publisher

Product features	Products		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Adobe Photoshop 5.5 Classroom	Flash 5 for Windows and Macintosh	New Masters of Flash
<input type="checkbox"/> Catalog idx	251921987	321654987	654321654
<input type="checkbox"/> Cover type		Soft	Soft
<input type="checkbox"/> Pages		318	250
<input type="checkbox"/> With CD	✓	✗	✗
<input type="checkbox"/> Language	German	English German	English
Remove selected features	<u>Remove selected products</u>		

Photoshop 6 Down and Dirty Tri **Add product**

*Note: A callout bubble points to the 'Remove selected products' link with the text: 'Click here to remove the product 'New Masters of Flash' from the chart'*

**Picture 14:** Removing a product from the Product features chart.

The removed product is excluded from the chart, however, it is added to the list of products in the selectbox below the chart and it can be restored from the selectbox at any time.

**Product features chart**

Removed features: Publisher

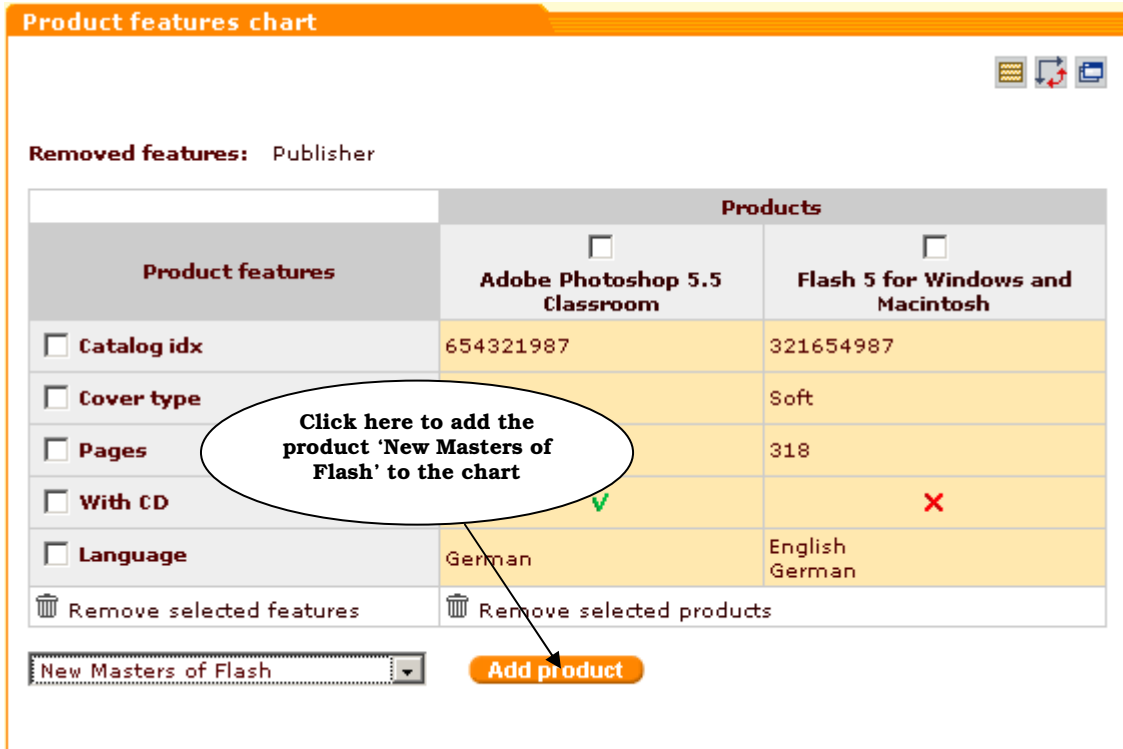
Product features	Products	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Adobe Photoshop 5.5 Classroom	<input type="checkbox"/> Flash 5 for Windows and Macintosh
<input type="checkbox"/> Catalog idx	654321987	321654987
<input type="checkbox"/> Cover type	Hard	Soft
<input type="checkbox"/> Pages	460	318
<input type="checkbox"/> With CD	✓	✗
<input type="checkbox"/> Language	German	English German
Remove selected features	Remove selected products	

**Add product**

- Photoshop 6 Down and Dirty Tricks
- Microsoft FrontPage 2000
- New Masters of Flash
- Professional Java Server Programming
- Designing Web Usability
- HTML 4 for the World Wide Web
- Dreamweaver 3 Bible : Gold Edition
- Javascript (Definitive Guide)

Picture 15: Removed product added to the list in the selectbox.

To restore a removed product from the selectbox or to add a new product to the chart, select the necessary product from the selectbox and click on the 'Add product' button.



Picture 16: Adding a product from the selectbox to the Product features chart.

**Note:** The maximum number of products which can appear in the selectbox can be defined in the *General settings/Feature Comparison options* section of the administrative interface ('Maximum number of products which can be shown on the feature-based comparisons page and on the Product details page in the form of a select box. If the quantity of products for comparison exceeds the number specified here, product selection will be done in a popup window').

When some feature is common for all the products displayed in the chart (for example, all the books have the same publisher), this feature is displayed against a lighter background, so the whole line is highlighted, which makes the similarity more conspicuous.

**Product features chart**




Product features	Products	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Adobe Photoshop 5.5 Classroom	<input type="checkbox"/> Flash 5 for Windows and Macintosh
<input type="checkbox"/> Catalog idx	654321987	321654987
<input type="checkbox"/> Cover type	Hard	Soft
<input type="checkbox"/> Publisher	Dialectics	Dialectics
<input type="checkbox"/> Pages	460	318
<input type="checkbox"/> ...	✓	✗
<input type="checkbox"/> ...	man	English German

Remove selected products

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**The highlighted feature ('Publisher: Dialectics') is common for all the products being compared**

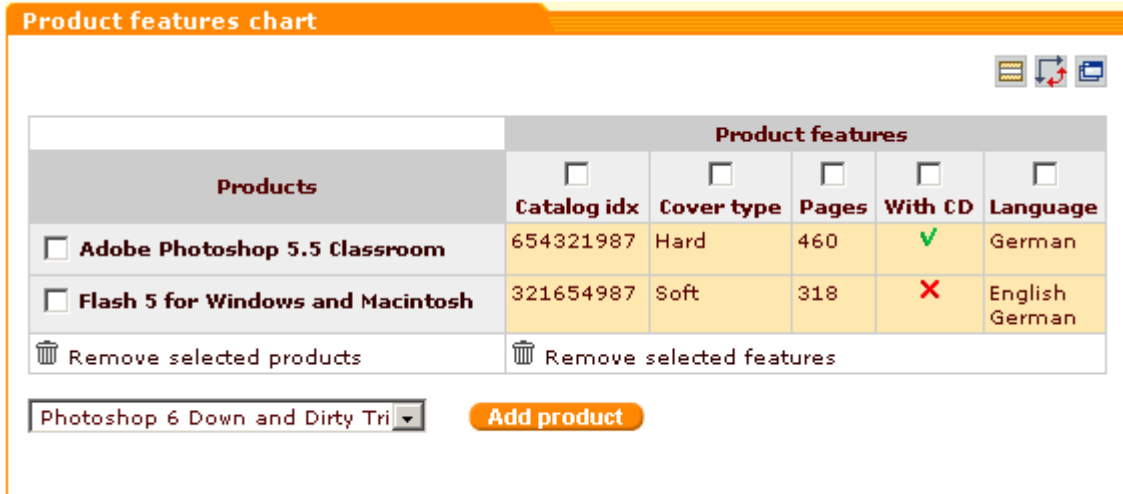
Picture 17: Highlighting of the feature common to all the products in the Product features chart.

For convenience the customer can hide the features common for all the products in the chart, so that only the differences are shown. To conceal all the similarities, the customer needs to click on the  icon. The lines with the 'common' features will be removed from the chart. The look of the icon will also be changed: . Clicking the  icon, the customer can restore the lines showing similarities in the chart.

Product features chart		
Product features	Products	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Adobe Photoshop 5.5 Classroom	<input type="checkbox"/> Flash 5 for Windows and Macintosh
<input type="checkbox"/> Catalog idx	654321987	321654987
<input type="checkbox"/> Cover type	Hard	Soft
<input type="checkbox"/> Pages	460	318
<input type="checkbox"/> With CD	✓	✗
<input type="checkbox"/> Language	German	English German
Remove selected features	Remove selected products	
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <span>Photoshop 6 Down and Dirty Tri </span> <span style="background-color: orange; color: white; padding: 2px 10px; border-radius: 5px;">Add product</span> </div>		


Picture 18: 'Publisher' line is hidden as common for all the products in the Product features chart.

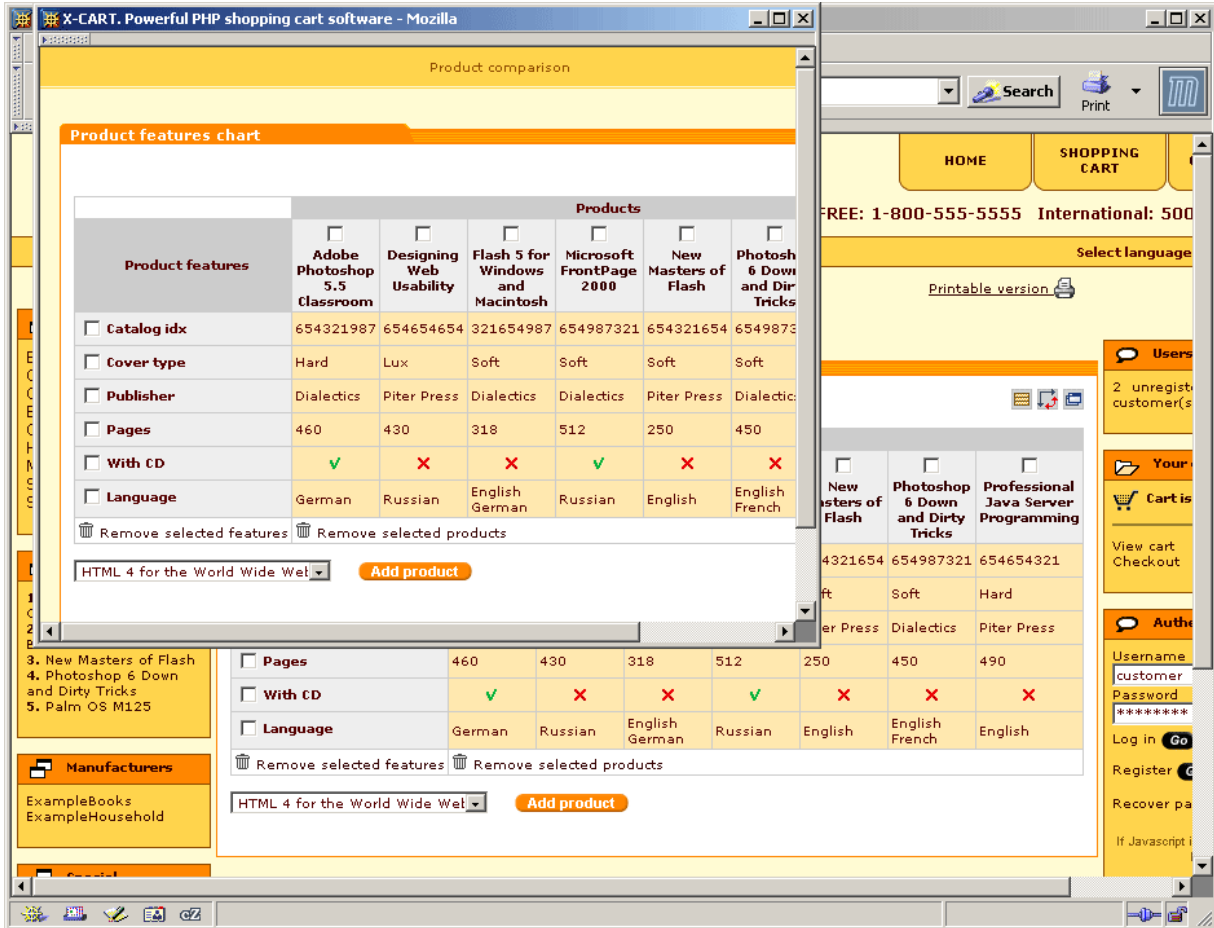
Sometimes it may be convenient to rearrange the Product features chart so that the product names are displayed vertically (in a column), and the product features are displayed horizontally next to them (in other words, to flip the coordinate vectors of the chart). This functionality turns out especially helpful if the number of products being compared is much greater than the number of involved features (Great numbers of products make the chart too wide to fit into the screen. Arranging the products vertically can help the customer to deal with the problem). To flip the coordinate vectors, the customer needs to click the  icon.



Picture 19: Product features chart after flipping the 'Products' and 'Product feature' vectors.

Clicking the same icon once again reverts the chart to its original state.

If flipping the chart vectors still does not help to make the process of working with the chart any better, the customer can resort to getting the module to display the whole chart in a separate window, so that the chart can be scrolled separately without having to scroll the whole store page. To get the chart to be displayed in a separate window, the customer needs to click on the  icon.



Picture 20: Product features chart displayed in a separate window.

## Appendix

Here is a list of files included into the module.

### **INSTALL.X-FCOMP**

```
install-xfcomp.php
choosing.php
comparison.php
comparison_list.php
feature_image.php
popup_fc_products.php
```

#### **admin/...**

```
classes.php
```

#### **provider/...**

```
classes.php
```

#### **modules/Feature\_Comparison/...**

```
choosing.php
classes.php
comparison.php
comparison_list.php
config.php
func.php
html_catalog.php
product.php
product_class.php
search_define.php
```

#### **skin1/modules/Feature\_Comparison/...**

```
add_comparison_list.tpl
admin_menu.tpl
choosing.tpl
classes.tpl
compare_checkbox.tpl
compare_selected_button.tpl
comparison.tpl
customer_menu.tpl
feature_image.tpl
popup_product.tpl
product.tpl
product_buttons.tpl
product_class.tpl
product_list.tpl
product_selector.tpl
products_check_js.tpl
```

#### **skin1/images/...**

```
yes.gif
no.gif
popup.gif
change.gif
filtr.gif
compare1.gif
compare2.gif
compare3.gif
nofiltr.gif
compare_mark.gif
delete_record.gif
```

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