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Preface

If you type "Mambo" into a search engine, you get a ton of hits. Testing this with Google resulted in almost six million references. But only some of these concerned themselves with the Afro-Cuban style of music and dance made popular by the movie *Dirty Dancing*. Most lead to one of today's most popular content management systems, namely Mambo. Mambo comes with an array of features described in detail in this book. One of the most captivating features is that Mambo is completely free. That is, all you have to invest is your time to learn how to work with the software; you don't have to buy it.

It wasn't always like that. Mambo was originally a commercial, not an open-source system from the Australian company **Miro** (<http://www.miro.com.au/>) based in Melbourne. In the year 2002, in order to increase the number of users, the company split off a division. Now two versions of Mambo are in existence: "Mambo CMS" which continues to be a commercial product and "Mambo Open Source", "MOS", or simply "Mambo", which, by contrast, is made available under the GNU Public License (GPL); Mambo is continuously being enhanced by an ever-growing number of volunteers.

There are, however, delay problems: In the middle of August 2005, the main developers got together and left the project and set up their own project, Joomla!. Several reasons are given for this, copyright issues, the GPL license, and some other matters.

The situation is most definitely suspenseful. Does that mean that Mambo is dead? Not at all. The former core developers continue to be available to the Community. It is possible that two open Mambo versions are on the way: The "official" version and that of the "defectors". Maximum compatibility should, of course, be retained, particularly in view of extensions to the system. The already existing and current Mambo version 4.5.2 is the benchmark until the fog lifts a bit.

Now you know who works *on* Mambo, but who works *with* Mambo? There are various target groups: *developers* build their own extensions and adapt Mambo to their needs. *Web designers* sketch new layouts and designs in order to make a Mambo website look really good. *Users* only want one thing, to use Mambo, to change a few settings, and to fill it with content.

The book you are holding in your hands is dedicated primarily to administrators, designers, and developers. For users, Packt has published *Building Websites with Mambo* [ISBN 1-904811-73-6]. This book delves into the depths of the system and focuses on customization. You will learn to create your own layouts and attach external modules (a shop, a forum, a document management system, among other things, and more) to the