# A Comparison of Text Control & Windward

**If you're working with document generation, be aware of the plentitude of options out there.** The Windward Solution and Text Control are two of the most popular choices. Windward's product team has created this comparison to help you understand the merits of both.

**Throughout its lifetime, Text Control has done one thing consistently:** It surrounds the user in a great ecosystem, but then fails to capitalize on it. Text Control gives the user limited software on a text editor that looks like Word but will never be quite as good.

Although Text Control has features unique to itself, like the ability to track changes made in a template and create reports without the need of a third-party text editor, that's about it. To get started in Text Control is a struggle, since they have a very limited number of tutorials, leaving the user to have to look through pages of specifications and follow photos and guides. After barely getting started, I realized that Text Control also lacked a lot of functionality. They failed to make wizards to help the user along and only added five types of tags. Sure, you can choose to go for Text Control and spend hours trying to work with their extremely limited tools, but in the end, it'll feel like a watered-down version of Windward Designer.

**Windward helps with this process by providing the user with a huge database of tutorials along with more functional tools.** Getting started with Windward Designer, is quick and easy with the help of Windward's tutorials. The functionality of Windward Designer is great, since it's capable of creating complex documents in easy steps, with the help of multiple Wizards, whether it's for setting up a data source or creating a new tag. Windward Designer also provides sixteen tags, ready to go. The table below provides an overview of Text Control and Windward, and its selection of key features.

**Product Comparison Table**

| FEATURE | TEXT CONTROL | WINDWARD |
|---|---|---|
| **Designer Environments** | Web.TextControl (HTML5-based rich text editor) | Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint |
| **Template Formats** | DOC, DOCX, PDF, XLSX, RTF | DOCX, XLSX, PPTX, HTML |
| **Output Formats** | CSS, PDF, PDF/A, DOC, DOCX, HTML, RTF, GIF, PNG, JPG, BMP, WMF, EMF, TIF, XML | PDF, Printer, HTML, DOCX, WORDML, RTF, XLSX, XLS, PPTX, TXT, PostScript, EPS, SVG, PNG, JPG, GIF, BMP, CSV |
| **Customization** | Only has five default tags, no tag specific handling, no POD's, no scheduled reports, no debugging option, no color-coded tags, etc. | Free form design allows users to intuitively make layout and formatting changes in Office a tool they know. Create modern looking reports that impress clients. |
| **Data Selection** | No data selection wizards. Drag and drop is not supported. | Drag/Drop Intuitive SQL, XPath, JPath (JSON), SalesForce, and OData wizards |

| | | make selecting data as easy as creating an email filter. |
|---|---|---|
| **Data Sources** | SQL, ADO.NET, ODBC, XML | All SQL supported data sources plus<br>• File Based (XML, XLSX, Access)<br>• Web Based (Salesforce, JSON, REST) |
| **Support** | Minimal internet presence. Lacking video tutorials on how to get started and more advanced report generation. | Windward provides the user with YouTube tutorials, free webinars, forums to discuss issues, strong internet presence, and more. |
| **Learning Curve** | Minimal video tutorials. Need to follow pictures in the beginning to understand the product. Follows the basic design of Microsoft Office Suite. | Easy design template in tools you know through the Microsoft Office Suite, create tags with drag and drop design/wizards. |
| **Products** | | |
| **Designer** | **Windows Forms**<br>**WPF**<br>**ActiveX** | **Windward Designer**<br>**Developer System** |
| **Server** | **ASP.NET** | **Engine Licensing (Core or Thread)**<br>**Engine 2 Core/Thread**<br>**Test Systems – ½ of Production** |
| **Cloud** | **ReportingCloud** | **N/A** |

**Designer Environments**

Text Control uses an HTML5-based rich test editor that is eerily similar to that of Microsoft Word. However, the biggest difference between the two is Text Control's ability to be define a document template, without the restriction of a third-party editor. When it comes to placing charts, shapes, SmartArt, and other Microsoft Word features, Text Control's editor works just as well. However, that's when the similarities end. Although looking like Microsoft Word, Text Control's editor will never match the level of sophistication and practicality that Microsoft Word has attained over the years.

For Windward Designer, the environment is within Microsoft Office, ranging from Word to PowerPoint and even to Excel. By simply navigating to the Windward Tabs on the Microsoft Ribbon, the user has access to all the reporting tools. From there on, the user can create a report with Windward Designer without the worry of having to learn any new software.

**Tag Creation**

When creating a tag in Text Control, the user must first choose from one of five different tags. Once selected, the user sets the properties of the tag and then the tag is placed where the user's cursor is. The tag selection is limited however, with only IF, IncludeText, Date, Next, and NextIF tags, and the lack of wizards makes creating tags tedious and difficult. I found myself constantly having to look at tutorials and online guides for the creation of a simple table that iterates over data. Given the rather limited toolset that Text Control provides, the user is left hoping for more functionality.

Meanwhile, creating a tag in Windward is simple and easy. By simply going to the Windward Artist tab in the Microsoft Office Ribbon, the user can select from a plentitude of tag options and edit the tag properties through simple steps thanks to the Tag Editing Wizard. Once a tag has been created, Windward provides the option to save the tag within a POD, allowing for the tag and it's properties to be reused in a simple and efficient manner. With these advanced reporting tools, creating a complex document is a breeze.

**Coding Knowledge**

Both Text Control and Windward Designer require no knowledge of programming when creating a new report. Instead, they allow for an Engine to do all the heavy-lifting, saving the user time, money, and resources.

**PDF Templates**

Text Control allows for the use of PDF's as a template, however, since PDF's don't store the information of the original file, it's impossible to get the original formatting. Text Control made a nice and innovative attempt, but in the end, this feature will most likely be unnecessary.

**Summary**

Windward offers convenience and a host of ease-of-use features unavailable to Text Control users. With Windward you can:

- **Free your templates from formatting restrictions.**

  Use Office's styles, charts, tables, shapes, and more to add life and clarity to your documents.

- **Report as you should: directly in the native Microsoft application.**

  Windward produces your document to spec so you can continue working with your documents even after generation.

- **Select your data in a single step through intuitive wizards.**

  Don't struggle getting data into your reports, let Windward's drag and drop wizards do the heavy lifting for you.

- **Combine tags, styles, and formatting all in reusable components.**

  Windward's PODs feature allows capture of data sources, tags, text, charts or any combination of each, even entire documents.

# Try Windward Today!

Visit www.windward.net and **download a free, 14-day trial** or **schedule a live demo**.