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Tutorials and Add-ins for Microsoft Excel, Word and PowerPoint

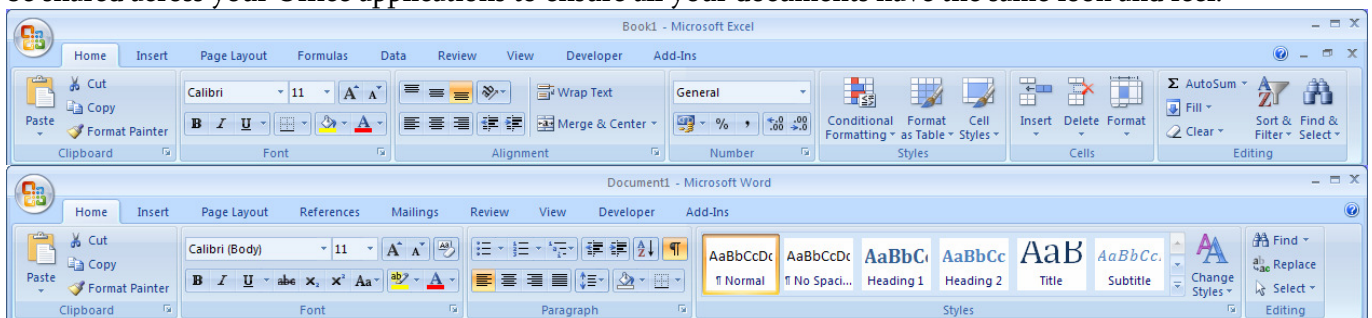
November 2007 - Letter from the Editor

Welcome to the six edition of the BetterSolutions.com newsletter. I must first apologise for there not being a newsletter or any website changes for the previous three months this was due to us relocating to a new office and also having a sudden increase in consultancy work. This edition however is our longest yet and we are keen to make up for lost time. We have concentrated on Office 2007 in this issue because there are a large number of changes and enhancements which users should be aware of.

I would also like to wish all our clients and readers a Merry Christmas and best wishes for 2008, without your support and encouragement the website and newsletter would not be what it is today. The website is in its fourth year now and is proving to be a great resource for both reference and learning, with the number of visitor's slowly increasing month on month. We are very pleased with the progress made but realise there is still a lot more to do. 2008 is going to be another busy year with our efforts focusing on our Utility Add-ins and SharePoint integration. SharePoint will provide us with a large number of benefits including discussion boards and document libraries. Just as the Microsoft Office applications have become the standard for your desktop, we believe SharePoint will become the standard for team collaboration.

Microsoft Office 2007

There are a number of changes in Office 2007 but some of the most significant have to be the Ribbon, the new XML file formats, the introduction of Themes and the new Smart Art graphics. The Ribbon is the area at the top of the application that replaces all the previous toolbars and drop-down menus. The Ribbon is organised into different tabs that group related commands together. The default file format is now XML although you can still save files in the binary format when you need backwards compatibility. A theme is a set of formatting specifications that can be applied to text, charts and objects to give them a consistent format. Themes can also be shared across your Office applications to ensure all your documents have the same look and feel.



support@bettersolutions.com

This email address is the one you should use when you have any problems or questions with Microsoft Office and you want some FREE help and advice. Sending us your questions will not only mean that you get a reply immediately but will also allow us to publish the answers in the next issue which will help other people as well. We spend a lot of time checking and testing the information to ensure that it is accurate but if you do spot any mistakes or anything that is wrong then please tell us. We are always looking for ways to improve our products and services and always welcome constructive criticism. If you have any comments or suggestions regarding this newsletter and the content contained inside it please tell us.

News and Related Information

Microsoft Office Application Recovery (MOAR)

The Microsoft Office Application Recovery tool is installed by default and provides you with a way to potentially recover data when a Microsoft Office application stops responding. This tool is designed to work with Office 2002 and 2003 in conjunction with the Auto Recovery feature. The next time your Excel or Word stops responding this tool offers you an alternative to terminating the program using Windows Task Manager. The next time you have a sudden crash, select (Start > Programs > Microsoft Office > Microsoft Office Tools > Microsoft Office Application Recovery). This dialog box will display a list of all the Microsoft Office applications that are currently running and will list the status next to each one.

Recover Application - This forces the selected application to recover any unsaved data, close and then restart. Any recovered files will be listed in the Document Recovery task pane when the application restarts. This caption changes to "Restart Application" for Outlook and OneNote.

End Application - This forces the selected application to close without recovering any unsaved data.

Cancel - This closes the dialog box without taking any action.

Please refer to the following knowledge base article <http://support.microsoft.com/kb/292502> for more details.

Office Migration Planning Manager (OMPM)

This was first mentioned in the June 2007 issue and is a collection of tools that enable you to prepare for migration to Microsoft Office 2007. For the most part, documents created in Office 2003 and earlier should behave the same in Office 2007 however there will be a few instances where files might require some manual intervention or analysis to ensure consistent behaviour. The Office Migration Planning Manager contains the following:

- Command line directory scanner that can scan files for potential issues and generate XML log files.
- Utilities to help analyse and create reports based on the results from these log files.
- The Office File Converter that can convert specific files to the new Office 2007 file formats.
- The Version Extraction Tool that can extract the different versions embedded inside Word documents. This functionality has been removed in Word 2007.

This collection of tools can also be used to identify all the Microsoft Office files that contain VBA code, although it won't be able to help you with any macro conversion problems.

Windows Vista - Program Compatibility Assistant

The Program Compatibility Assistant is an automatic feature of Windows Vista which detects known compatibility issues in older programs. After running this program you will be notified if there are any problems and what the suggested fixes are. If the compatibility issue is serious it might block or stop your program from running altogether. If this happens you can check online for possible solutions. This is not to be confused with the Program Compatibility Wizard (mentioned in the July 2007 issue) which can be run manually if you notice any compatibility issues.

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Your Questions and Problems

Office 2007 - Why did Microsoft replace the toolbars with a ribbon?

Basically it was a combination of two things. Too many users complained about not being able to find the commands they were looking for and users were also asking for functionality to be added that already existed. It is easy to see how the number of commands has outgrown the original menu system and that more submenus and more dialog boxes was not the solution. The new user interface is task-based, presenting you with commands and options based on your current task. The new Microsoft Office System button appears in the top left corner of all the new Office 2007 applications and provides easy access to all the document specific commands.

The new Ribbon interface has significantly reduced the number of dialog boxes you have to open to perform everyday tasks; however unlike the previous toolbars and menus this interface cannot be personalised. You only get one customizable toolbar and the more advanced features are definitely harder to find.

Office 2007 - Do all the applications have this new ribbon interface?

No. Not all the applications that fall under the Microsoft Office System umbrella have the new ribbon interface. Excel Word, PowerPoint and Access all have the new ribbon interface. Outlook has not been fully converted although the windows for creating an email and adding an appointment do have a ribbon interface.

Office 2007 - Why have Microsoft changed the default file format to XML?

All the applications in Microsoft Office 2007 are based on the new Open Office XML file format. By using an XML based file format it makes sharing, updating and reusing content extremely easy. It also reduces the file size and improves security and reliability. In Office 2000, Microsoft released an initial version of an XML based format for Excel. In Office 2002 a new file format for Word was released. These two formats were later incorporated into Office 2003 and known collectively as the Office 2003 XML formats. For more information please refer to the following article: <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/products/ha102058151033.aspx>

Office 2007 - Can I open the XML file formats in a previous version?

Yes, this is possible because the Open XML formats are backwards compatible with Office 2000, 2002 and 2003. If you do not have Office 2007 installed on your computer then you will need to install the Microsoft Office Compatibility Pack for Excel, Word and PowerPoint 2007 File Formats. Once this compatibility pack has been installed you will be able to open, edit and save files in the new Open XML file formats from within Office 2000, 2002 and 2003. This compatibility pack can be downloaded free of charge from the Microsoft website.

There is also a Microsoft Office Isolated Conversion Environment (MOICE) tool that can be downloaded in addition to the Compatibility Pack. This tool was previously mentioned in the May 2007 issue and can be used with Office 2003 and 2007 to convert files from the old binary file format into the new XML file format. Converting files in an isolated environment provides a way or pre-processing any potentially unsafe binary files. MOICE currently supports the following document formats: .doc, .ppt, .pot, .xls, .xlt, .xla. To Install MOICE, you must have the Compatibility Pack for Word, Excel, and PowerPoint 2007 File Formats installed.

Office 2007 - New Features & Improvements

Excel 2007

One of the biggest improvements has been to the size of the worksheet. You can now have up to 1 million rows and 16,000 columns. Users no longer have to work on multiple worksheets or in other applications when they need to analyse large amounts of data. Conditional formatting has been improved and three new visualisations have been added (data bars, colour scales and icon sets). Tables have replaced lists and table headings replace column headings automatically when you scroll large tables. You can now sort on multiple columns and sort by colour or icon set. Table formatting has been improved with the new cell styles and the charts have a much better finish. The new Page Layout view displays your worksheet in a view that displays the print area, margins and ruler as well as making headers and footers a lot easier to work with. There is also a completely new interface when working with pivot tables.

Word 2007

The introduction of Live Preview combined with the concept of Themes has to be one of the most significant changes not just in Word but in the other applications as well. Users are now presented with a clear set of possible formats, rather than a complicated dialog box with numerous options. Using galleries in conjunction with styles has simplified the process of creating professional documents leaving the dialog boxes for those who need greater control. Adding footnotes, citations and references is now a lot easier and the mail merge functionality has got a completely new interface. The equation editor has been replaced with a new integrated Equation Tool and the mail merge functionality has also got a new interface. The new Document Inspector lets you easily remove hidden or unwanted metadata and the new Building Block functionality gives you the ability to quickly reuse content. Microsoft also provides an add-in that can be downloaded to allow documents to be saved and exported in PDF format. More on this particular feature in the next issue.

PowerPoint 2007



The most significant changes in PowerPoint have been to the Smart Art graphics and charting features. Microsoft Graph has been removed and has been replaced with fully integrated Excel charts. The diagram features have been completely re-written with additional diagram types plus the formatting and the overall finish looks a lot more professional. There is a new Slide Gallery to enable you to save and reuse your favourite slide layouts and finished presentations. There is a new Presenter view as well as support for custom layouts. You can now even select discontinuous text by holding down the Ctrl key.

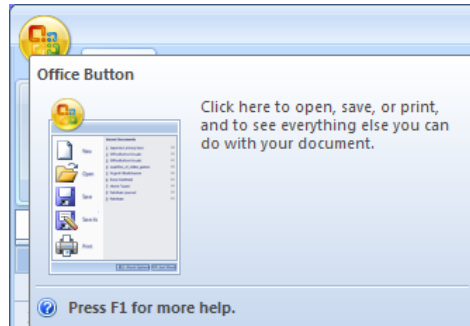
Outlook 2007

Outlook still contains the earlier toolbars and menus but the new ribbon does appear when you create a new email or add a new appointment. Don't be fooled into thinking that not much has changed though; there have been significant improvements below the surface. The most significant are the To-Do bar, attachment previewing, instant search and email colour categories. The To-Do bar displays your calendar, appointments and tasks all in one panel down the right hand side. Certain file type attachments are now viewable from within the previewing pane of Outlook so you don't have to open them in a separate application. There is a new category colouring feature to help you locate, manage and prioritise your emails as well as improved filtering on the Junk Mail folder.

Excel 2007 - Office Button

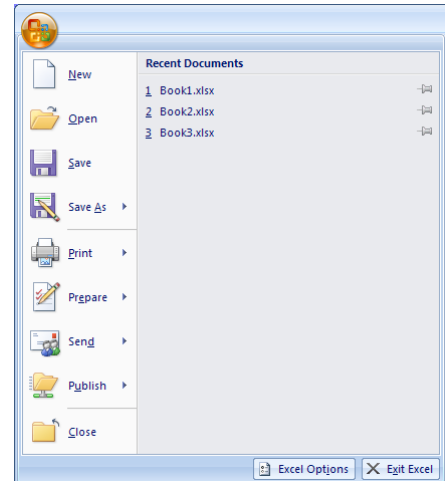
Using the Office Button

The File menu in all the previous versions of Office contained the commands for basic file operations including New, Open, Close, Save, Print etc. In Office 2007 these commands can all be accessed from the new

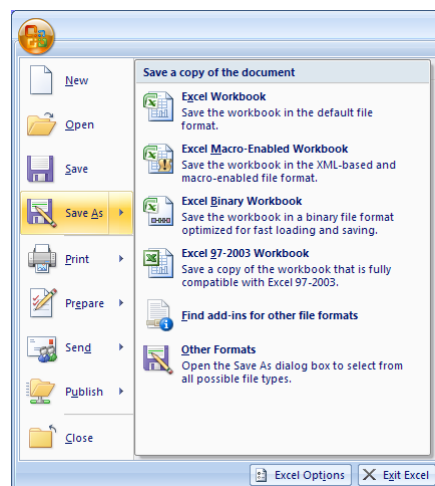


Office Button which can be found in the top left corner of the application. The Office button is present in all the Microsoft Office

2007 applications and provides a central location for all the commands that relate to the document you are working on. Hovering over this button with your mouse will display a large screen tip. Clicking on the Office



Button with your left mouse button will display a large panel that resembles the old File drop-down menu. This panel is divided into two parts. On the left you will see all the familiar commands. Some of these are buttons and some are buttons with extension menus. The panel on the right will change automatically depending on which command on the left you select or hover over.

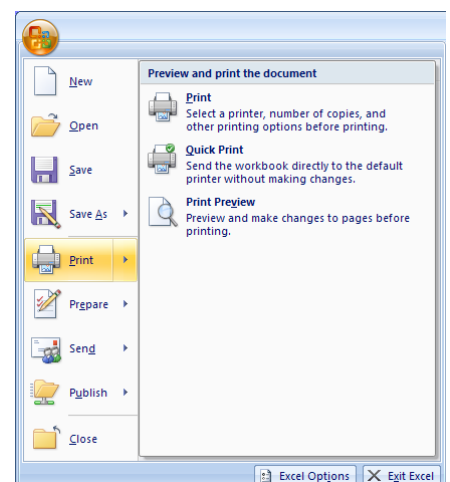


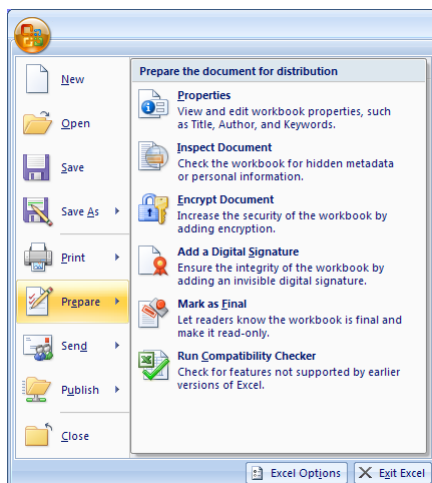
The Recent Documents panel is displayed on the right initially when you first click on the Office Button. You can make sure files that are frequently used are always listed by clicking the pin on the right.

The “New”, “Open”, “Save” and “Close” commands are buttons that can be quickly pressed. The “Save As” and “Print” commands are buttons that can be quickly pressed plus they have an arrow next to them. This is a little confusing because an arrow in previous versions has indicated an extension menu. Hovering over the “Save As” or “Print” command (as opposed to clicking on it) will display the corresponding commands on the right giving you more options. If you want to see the additional commands but don’t want to waste your time hovering over the command you can click on the arrow instead.

The file extensions have changed in Excel 2007 but most of the commands are the same. I am sure for most of us the transition from Excel 2003 to 2007 is going to be slow, so the best file format to use when saving your files is going to be the “Excel 97-2003 Workbook” option. Saving your files in this file format will ensure that other people will be able to open your files in earlier versions without any problems.

You will also be pleased to hear that the “Print” button on the left displays the Print dialog box as opposed to the Quick Print button. In Excel 2003 we had a Quick Print button on the Standard toolbar which was often pressed accidentally.

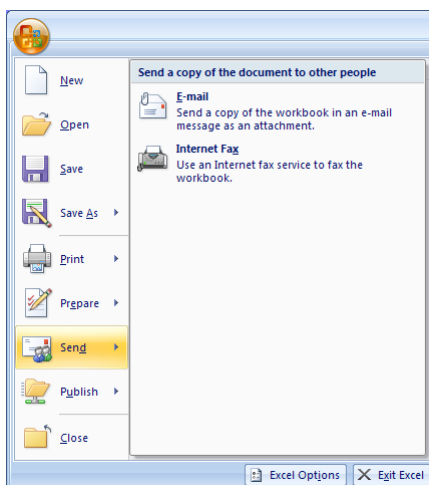




The Prepare extension menu displays options to let you inspect, protect, sign and finalise your documents and the commands are consistent in all three applications. The “Prepare”, “Send” and “Publish” commands are just extension menus as you would expect and clicking on them displays the additional commands on the right. All the commands on the “Prepare” extension menu are new except for Properties. In Excel 2003 the document properties dialog box was accessed using (File > Properties). In Excel 2007 these properties are now displayed in a new Document Information Panel at the top of your document. You can access the old File Properties dialog box by selecting Document Properties at the top and choosing Advanced Properties.

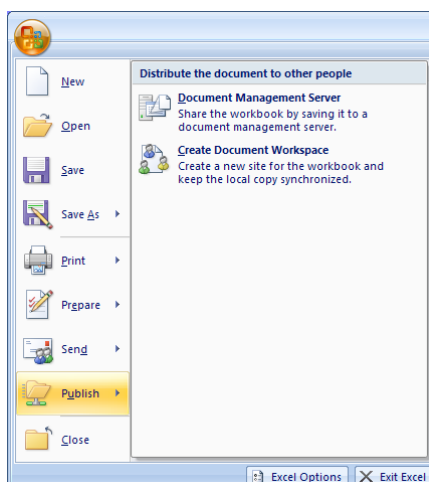
The “Inspect Document” command provides a central location for you to examine documents and remove sensitive information. Sensitive information that you might want to remove could include: comments, annotations, document properties, hidden rows and columns, hidden worksheets and other invisible content. The Document Inspector can also identify problems with your headers and footers.

The “Encrypt Document” command allows you to quickly add a password that is required to open a document. In Excel 2003 this could be achieved in a number of different ways including from the (Tools > Options)(Security tab). This option has been removed from the Excel Options dialog box in Excel 2007. If you want to add a password to modify a document you need to use the Save As dialog box and select (Tools > General Options).



The “Add a Digital Signature” command allows you to add a digital signature to a document as a way of verifying a document’s integrity. An invisible digital signature is not visible within the contents of the document itself, but recipients of the document can determine that the document has been digitally signed by viewing the document's digital signature or by looking for the Signatures button on the status bar at the bottom of the screen.

The “Mark as Final” command gives you an easy way of preventing changes to a final version of a workbook. This will automatically make the file-read only as well as disabling all the editing commands. This is not a security feature as it can be easily switched off but more of a way of preventing accidental changes.



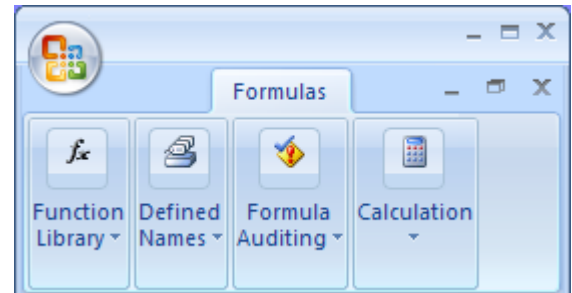
The “Run Compatibility Checker” command will check your file for anything that might not be compatible with previous versions of Microsoft Office. For example any Smart Art graphics will be converted into a single object that cannot be edited in earlier versions.

The “Document Management Server” enables you to save your document to your own document server. This will display the Save As dialog box defaulting to My Network Places so you can quickly upload the file to your server space.

The “Create Document Workspace” displays the Document Workspace panel where you can enter the URL of the workspace you want to create.

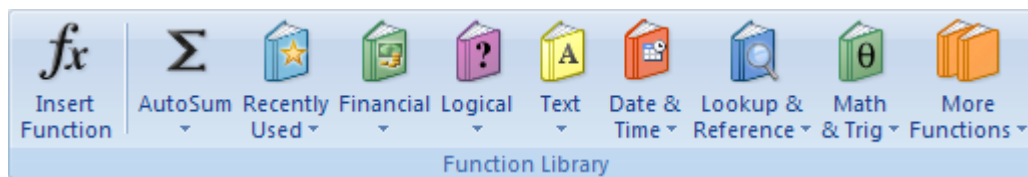
Excel 2007 - Formulas Tab

This is one of the tabs that will be used the most and you will be pleased to hear that not much has changed. The most noticeable change will be the new Formula Auto Complete. When you start typing a function into a cell, you will see an auto complete drop-down list of every function that starts with those letters. You have still got the Analysis ToolPak add-in which can be loaded but all the worksheet functions are now installed by default. Twelve new worksheet functions have also been added.



Function Library

The Insert Function command displays the familiar Insert Function dialog box and apart from an additional "Cube" category nothing has changed. The AutoSum is a button for those quick summations and is also a drop-down list when you want to use a different function. They have also removed the Auto Calculate functionality

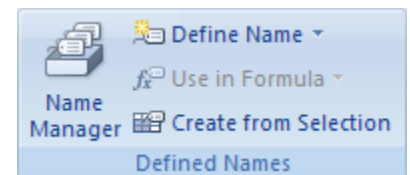


from the status bar and replaced it with permanent Average, Count and Sum totals. This can be a great time

saver when you are analysing large amounts of data. The Recently Used drop-down list is a bit more useful than it was in Excel 2003 because it remembers your functions not only when you use the Insert Function dialog box but also when you use one of the category drop-down lists. The other six category buttons list all the functions in that category in alphabetical order. This is definitely a big help. The Information, Statistical, Engineering and Cube functions can all be accessed from the "More Functions" drop-down list. The help provided for these functions is still very limited and they seem to have forgotten to include a "Database" category drop-down. Maybe it will appear somewhere else.

Defined Names

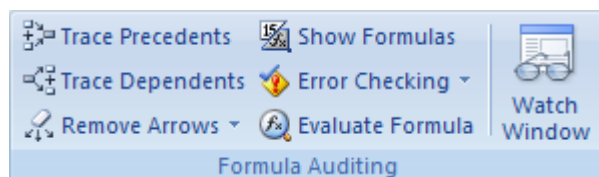
A new Name Manager dialog box has been added to replace the old (Insert > Name > Define) dialog box. This new dialog box lists all the named ranges (both workbook and worksheet) and also lets you quickly add, find and delete them. You can make multiple selections as well as sorting on every column. We were tempted to include a Named Range Manager tool in one of our Utility add-ins but that may not be needed now since this new dialog box provides all the necessary functionality.



The Define Name dialog box has been replaced with a new "New Name" dialog box. This allows you to quickly define the level of the named range and also includes a box for additional comments. Any comments you do include will be displayed as Auto Complete tooltips when you are entering your formulas. All the dialog boxes can be resized making named ranges a lot easier to manage. The "Use in Formula" drop-down makes it a lot easier to insert named ranges into formulas and also gives you access to the previous (Insert > Name > Paste) dialog box. The "Create from Selection" lets you create named ranges automatically based on the values in the selected cells. This replaces the old (Insert > Name > Create) command. The (Insert > Name > Label) command is no longer available since Natural Language Formulas have been removed in Excel 2007.

Formula Auditing

This command set contains all the commands from the Formula Auditing toolbar and the functionality has not changed at all. The “Remove Precedents” and “Remove Dependents” commands have been moved to the Remove Arrows drop-down list and the “Trace Error” has been moved to the “Error Checking” drop-down list.

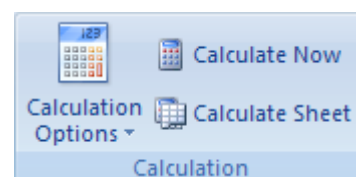


The New Comments button has been moved to the Review command tab. The Evaluate Formula and Watch Window commands are very useful and are now in much more prominent positions. The Watch Window lets you monitor (or watch) the values in other cells and ranges while you are

editing and is definitely a feature that is not used enough. Circular References have been moved to the Error Checking drop-down list. If your workbook contains more than one circular reference you will only be told about them one at a time. Any circular references that exist in your workbook will be automatically highlighted with a Blue arrow. This functionality is exactly the same in Excel 2003.

Calculation

The Calculation Options drop-down provides a quick and easy way to toggle between Manual and Automatic calculation. The calculation options can still be accessed from the (Excel Options > Formulas tab). The number of iterations can only be changed from the Excel Options dialog box. The “Calculate Now” and “Calculate Sheet” buttons are a great addition and the (F9), (Shift + F9) and (Ctrl + F9) shortcuts obviously still work.



New Worksheet Functions

Excel 2007 sees the introduction of 12 new worksheet functions and the most significant addition is the IFERROR function. Previously if a user wanted to catch an error they would have to use a combination of the IF and ISERROR functions.

AVERAGEIF – Returns the average of all the numbers in a range of cells that satisfy a condition.

AVERAGEIFS – Returns the average of all the numbers in a range of cells that satisfy multiple conditions.

COUNTIFS – Returns the number of cells with a value that satisfy multiple conditions.

IFERROR – Returns a value or if that value generates an error it returns a different value.

SUMIFS – Returns the total of all the numbers in a range of cells that satisfy multiple conditions.

There are also 7 new cube functions that can be used to return data from Analysis Services cubes.

CUBEKPIMEMBER – Returns a key performance indicator (KPI) property and displays the KPI name.

CUBEMEMBER – Returns a member or tuple from the cube.

CUBEMEMBERPROPERTY – Returns the value of a member property from the cube.

CUBERANKEDMEMBER – Returns the nth or ranked member in a set.

CUBESET – Defines a calculated set of members or tuples by sending a set of expressions to the cube which creates the set and then returns that set.

CUBESETCOUNT – Returns the number of items in a set.

CUBEVALUE – Returns an aggregated value from the cube.

Formulas Tab Summary

This tab is definitely well organised and has everything you should need for working with formulas and functions. The most significant changes are the quick access to the functions listed by category, the new Name Manager dialog box and of course the new IFERROR worksheet function. The missing Database functions category is a mystery but I am sure there is a reason it has been excluded.