

Using Microsoft Office 2007 Common New Features in the User Interface

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About Microsoft Office 2007

The Microsoft Office 2007 suite of applications represents a significant change in the way users interact with the software. The redesigned user interface represents the most significant change since the Office 95 version was introduced more than a decade ago.

This handout provides a summary of the new features in the user interface that are common to most of the applications in the suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access, and Outlook). Additionally, file extension differences and version compatibility management are also discussed.

File Extensions and Version Compatibility

The Microsoft Office 2007 applications now utilize four-letter file extensions to differentiate file types. Table 1 summarizes the new file extensions compared to previous versions.

Table 1 - Application File Extensions

Application	Old Extension	New Extension
Access	.mdb	.mdbx
Excel	.xls	.xlsx
PowerPoint	.ppt	.pptx
Word	.doc	.docx

Files that were created in versions of Office earlier than Office 97 will not open in the 2007 applications. Files created in applications from Office 97 and later are fully compatible with the 2007 suite. By default, when a file created in Office 2007 is saved, it is saved with the new four-letter file extension. Files can be saved so that they are compatible with Office 97-2003 by using the **Save As** feature in the application.

Files saved with the Office 2007 file extensions are not backwards compatible, that is, they will not open in earlier versions of the application. It is possible, however, to download and install a free application from Microsoft called the **Compatibility Pack** that will allow users who do not have Office 2007 to open an Office 2007 file in earlier versions of Office. The **Compatibility Pack** can be found at the Microsoft Web site.

The Office Button

The **Office Button** is found in the upper left corner of the application window (see Figure 1). Clicking the **Office Button** will open the **Office Button Menu** (see Figure 2) that contains features that are usually common among the applications of the Office Suite such as **New**, **Open**, **Save**, **Save As**, and **Print**.



Figure 1 - The Office Button

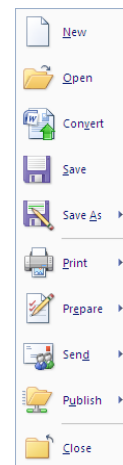


Figure 2 - Office Button Menu

The Ribbon

The **Ribbon** is the most striking new feature of the user interface in the Office 2007 applications. All Office applications use a **Ribbon**. The **Ribbon** is divided into a series of tabs, and each tab is divided into a series of groups (see Figure 3). The **Ribbon** replaces the menu and toolbar structures that were found in previous versions of Office. By eliminating these structures, users are presented with multiple groups of commands that are grouped by function. Groups and tabs are not customizable. If desired, the **Ribbon** can be minimized by right-clicking anywhere on the **Ribbon** and selecting the [Minimize the Ribbon](#) option. When minimized, only the tabs will be visible.

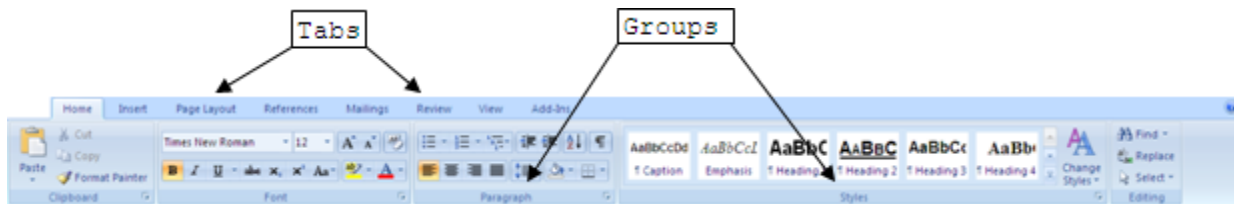


Figure 3 - Example of a Ribbon with the Home Tab Active

CONTEXTUAL TABS

Contextual tabs are tabs on the **Ribbon** that only appear when specific objects are selected. Examples of such objects include charts, tables, and images. Figure 4 is an example of a set of contextual tabs. The *Design* and *Layout* tabs would normally not appear on the ribbon. They are present only when a table is selected, which activates the *Table Tools* contextual tabs. Contextual tabs can be identified by the coloration of the identifier that appears above the other tabs. In Figure 4, the yellow shading identifies the contextual tabs.

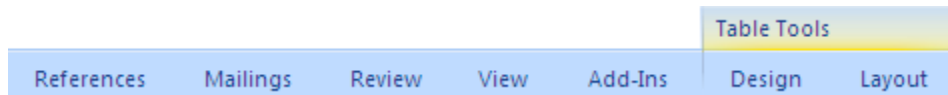




Figure 4 - Example of Contextual Tabs

The Quick Access Toolbar

The **Quick Access Toolbar**  is located on the right side of the **Office Button** above the **Ribbon**. The **Quick Access Toolbar** is customizable, meaning that the user can add or remove specific commands that will make them readily accessible instead of scrolling through the tab structure. Customization options are available by clicking the *Customize Quick Access Toolbar* drop-down arrow  at the right edge of the toolbar and selecting from the options available on the drop-down menu (see Figure 5). Selecting the [More Commands...](#) item will open the *Word Options* dialog box and provide additional customization commands (see Figure 6).

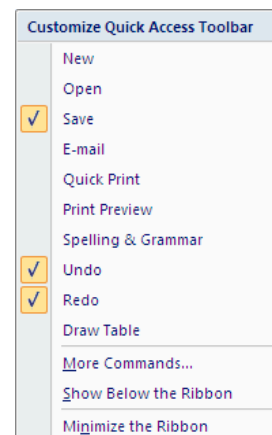


Figure 5 - Customize Quick Access Toolbar Drop-Down Menu

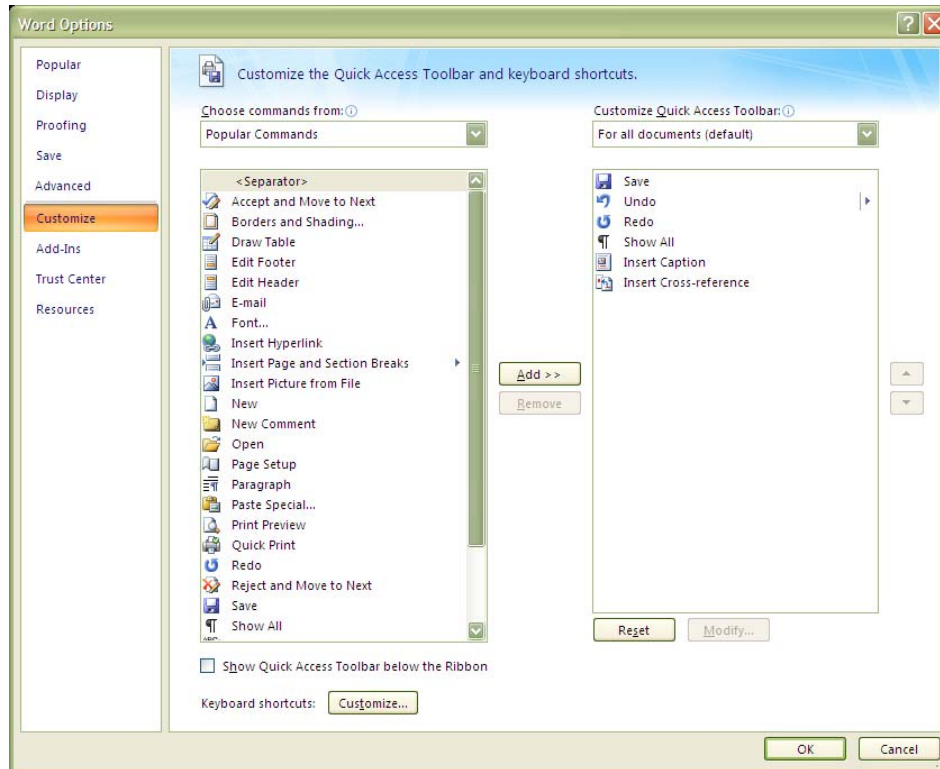


Figure 6 - Word Options Dialog Box (Customize Options)

The Mini Toolbar

The **Mini** toolbar is a semitransparent toolbar that appears whenever text is selected. The toolbar is a collection of commands to help the user manage fonts, font styles, font sizing, alignment, text color, fill color, indentation levels, and bullet features (see Figure 7). When text is selected, the **Mini** toolbar will appear as a semitransparent object. To activate it, place the mouse cursor over the toolbar. To deactivate it, click anywhere in the application window.

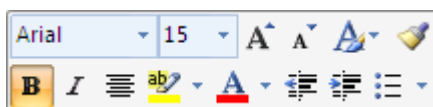


Figure 7 - The Mini Toolbar

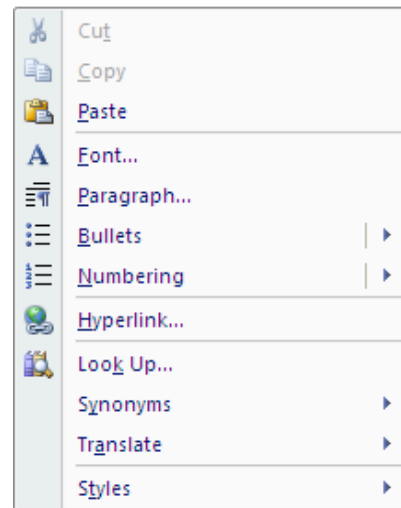
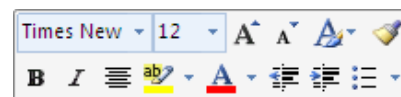


Figure 8 - Mini Toolbar/Pop-Up Menu Combination

Super Tooltips

Tooltips were originally used in Office applications with toolbars. Their purpose was to identify the buttons on the toolbars in case the user did not recognize the function provided by the button. Users could activate a tooltip by hovering the mouse over the button. Super tooltips function the same way as the older tooltips except that they provide more information. Figure 9 is an example of a super tooltip. Super tooltips often (but not always) provide a graphic image of the function, in addition to a more expanded explanation on the capabilities and limitations of the function.

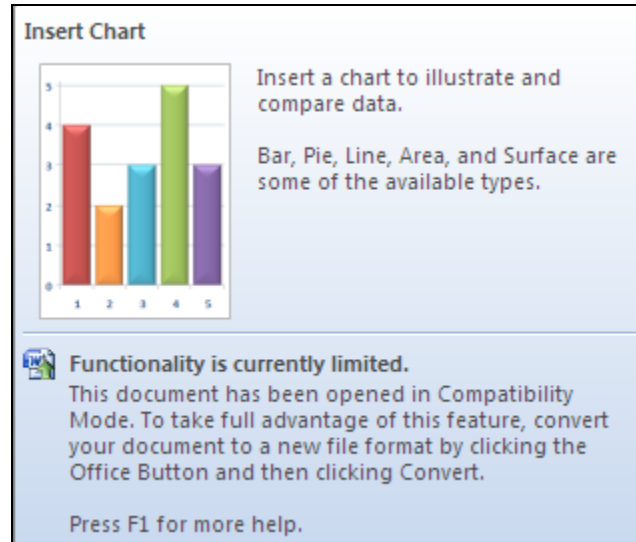




Figure 9 - Example of a Super Tooltip


Dialog Box Launchers

Dialog Box Launchers  are shortcut buttons located in the lower right corner of a group on the **Ribbon**. They are used to open dialog boxes that contain more options for the user to choose from. Most of the dialog boxes are the same as in previous versions of Office. Examples include the *Font*, *Paragraph*, or *Page Setup* dialog boxes. Not every group on the **Ribbon** has a dialog box launcher.

The Zoom Slider

The **Zoom Slider**  is a new option that replaces the magnification tool in previous versions of Office. The **Zoom Slider** is located in the lower right corner of the application window. The control is always present in an application, except in Access, when it is only present when a report object is open. The **Plus** and **Minus** buttons on the control magnify or shrink the view in increments of 10%. The **Slider Control**  allows the user to magnify or shrink the view in increments of 1%.

Quick Style Galleries

Quick Styles are the same as the styles that were available in the **Styles and Formatting** task pane in previous versions of Office. They are displayed in galleries on the **Ribbon** which makes them readily accessible. Figure 10 is an example of a **Quick Style Gallery** as it appears in collapsed form in the *Styles* group on the Word **Ribbon**. The **Quick Styles Gallery** can be expanded (see Figure 11) by clicking the **More** button . As in previous versions of Office, styles can be modified. Right-clicking on a style opens a pop-up menu (see Figure 12). Selecting

the **Modify...** option opens the *Modify Style* dialog box (see Figure 13) where style attributes can be changed.



Figure 10 - Styles Group on the Word Ribbon



Figure 11 - Example of Expanded Quick Style Gallery

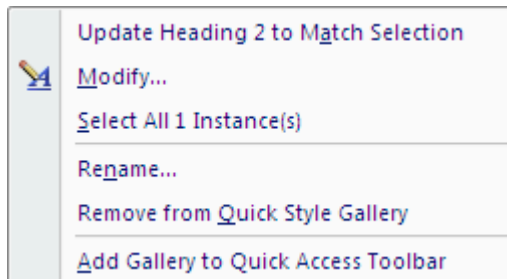


Figure 12 - Style Pop-Up Menu

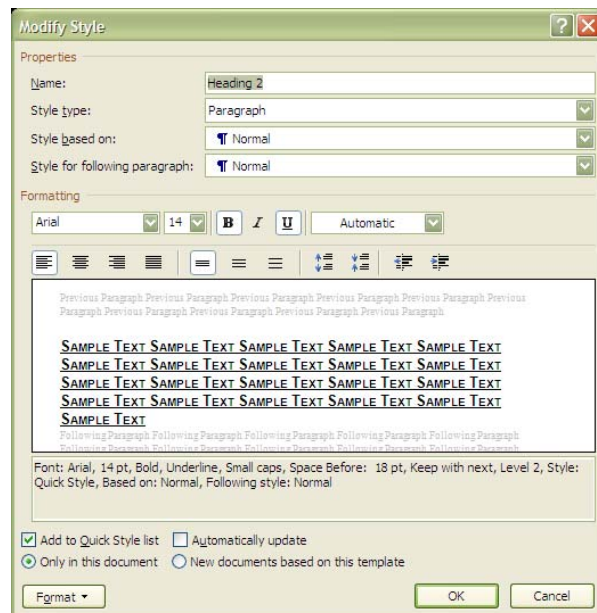


Figure 13 - Modify Style Dialog Box

Live Preview

The *Live Preview* feature allows a user to see the effect of formatting changes without having to apply them. When a portion of text is selected, *Live Preview* automatically previews the text with the new formatting options as the mouse is moved over buttons or styles on the **Ribbon**.

Live Preview does not make any permanent changes to a document. Rather, like its name suggests, it simply allows you to preview changes.

SmartArt

SmartArt is a new feature in Office 2007. *SmartArt* is a visual representation of information and ideas that combines text and graphics so that information can be shown in a more visually enhancing manner. Figure 14 is an example of *SmartArt*. When the *SmartArt* graphic is placed on the slide, text can be automatically entered. The advantage to using *SmartArt* is that the user does not have to draw any of the graphic shapes. They are automatically created when the graphic is selected.

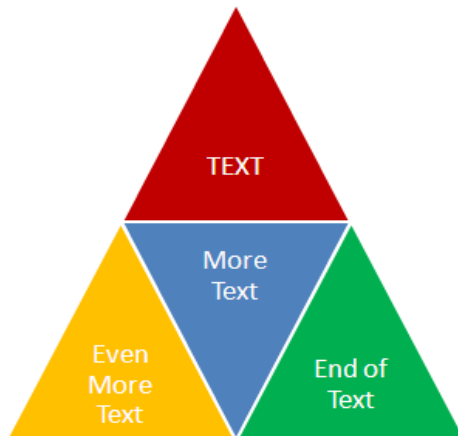


Figure 14 - Example of SmartArt

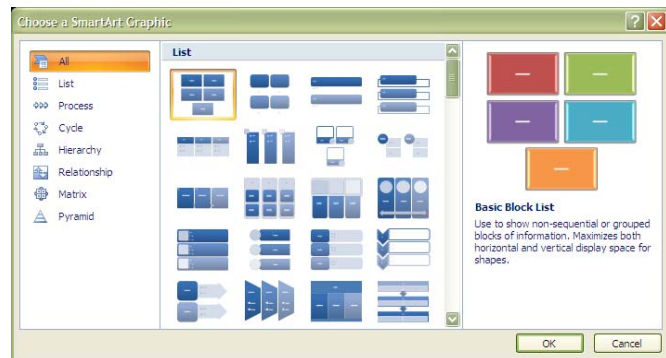




Figure 15 - Choose a SmartArt Graphic Dialog Box

To incorporate a *SmartArt* graphic onto a slide:

1. Select the *Insert* tab on the **Ribbon**.
2. Click the **SmartArt** button in the *Illustrations* group. The *Choose a SmartArt Graphic* dialog box opens (see Figure 15).
3. Select the category in the left column of the dialog box; select the graphic in the *List* section of the dialog box. A description is provided in the preview pane on the right side of the dialog box (see Figure 15).
4. After the graphic is selected, click the **OK** button. Text can then be entered by clicking in any part of the graphic where “[Text]” appears.

NOTE: Text can also be entered by clicking the **Expand/Collapse** button  on the left edge of the graphic and opening the *Type your text here* dialog box (see Figure 17). Click the **Close** button  when finished and the text will automatically appear in the graphic.

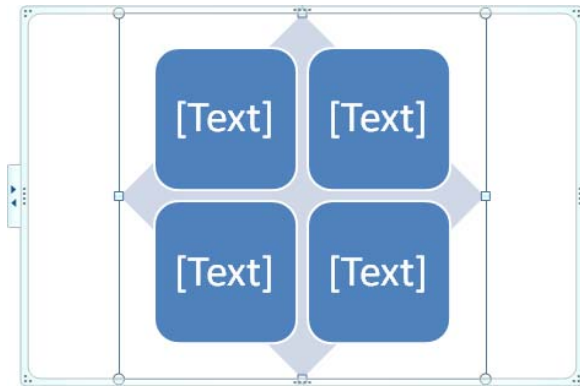


Figure 16 - Sample Blank SmartArt Graphic

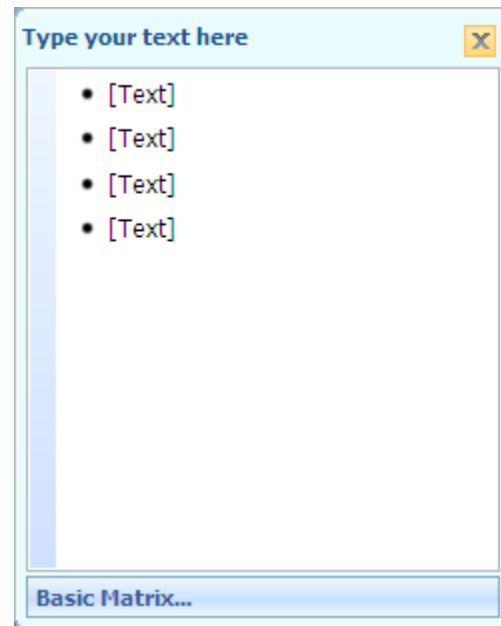


Figure 17 - Type Your Text Here Dialog Box

The *SmartArt* graphic can be formatted if a different appearance is desired. To format the graphic:

1. Select the object so that the sizing handles are visible as in Figure 16.
2. Right-click anywhere inside the object and select the **Format Shape...** option. The *Format Shape* dialog box opens (see Figure 18).
3. Choose the appropriate options until the desired formatting effects are displayed by the graphic.
4. When finished formatting the graphic, click the **Close** button.

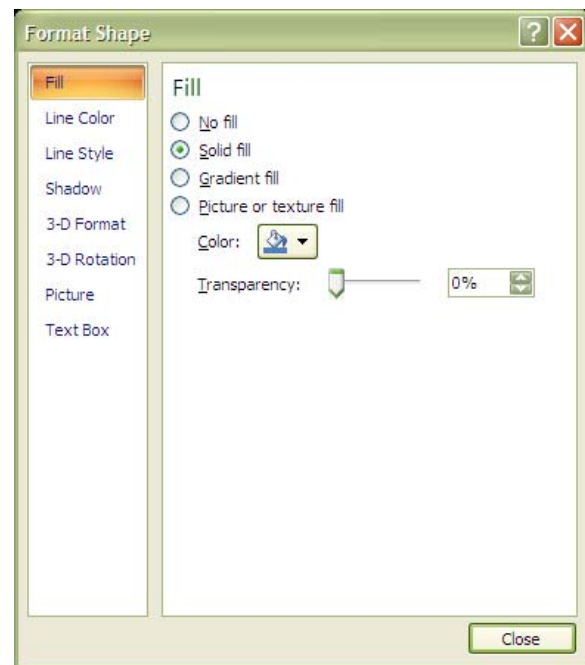


Figure 18 - Format Shape Dialog Box

Chart Galleries

Previous versions of Office did not allow for the creation of charts in Word documents or PowerPoint with the same functionality as Excel. Users were restricted to embedding an Excel Chart Object into a document or using the Microsoft Graph utility to create charts in applications other than Excel. Office 2007 now integrates the full capabilities of Excel into charts created as part of a Word document or a PowerPoint presentation.

To create a chart:

1. Select the *Insert* tab on the **Ribbon**.
2. Click the **Chart** button in the *Illustrations* group (see Figure 19). The *Insert Chart* dialog box will open displaying all the available charts in the **Chart Gallery** (see Figure 20).

- When the chart type is selected and the **OK** button has been pressed, Microsoft Excel will open and the user can enter data that will be directly linked to the chart. The data and chart attributes will be stored in the application, not as a separate Excel file.

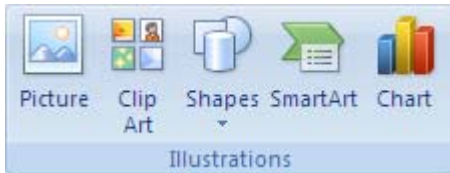


Figure 19 - Illustrations Group

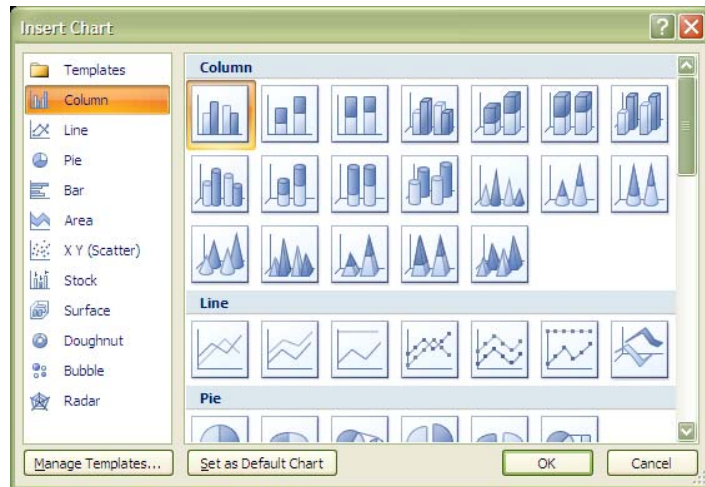


Figure 20 - Insert Chart Dialog Box

CHART TOOLS CONTEXTUAL TABS

The three *Chart Tools* contextual tabs contain the tools necessary to modify and enhance the chart. Contextual tabs are not visible or activated until the chart is activated. Figure 21, Figure 22, and Figure 23 identify all of the groups in each of the contextual tabs. All of the *Chart Tools* available in Excel are now also available in Word and PowerPoint.

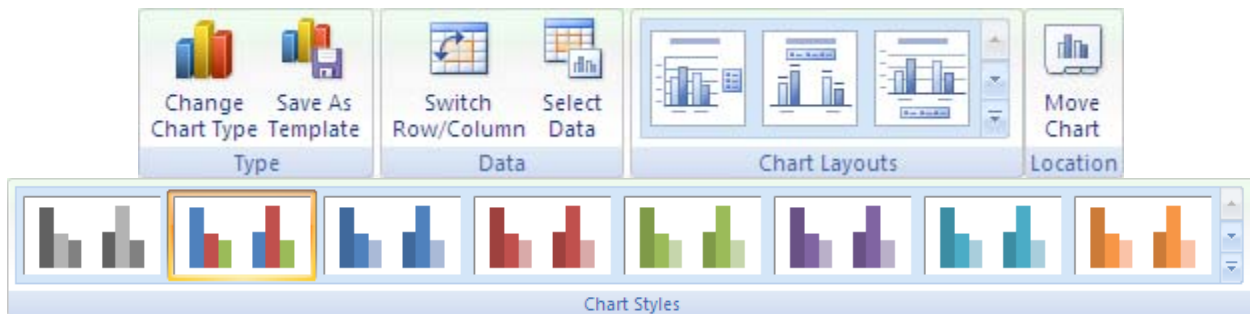


Figure 21 - Design Contextual Tab Groups

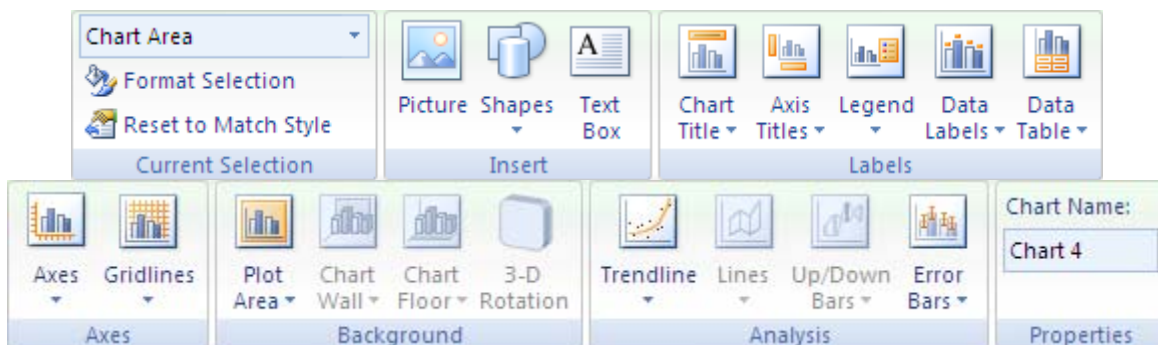


Figure 22 - Layout Contextual Tab Groups

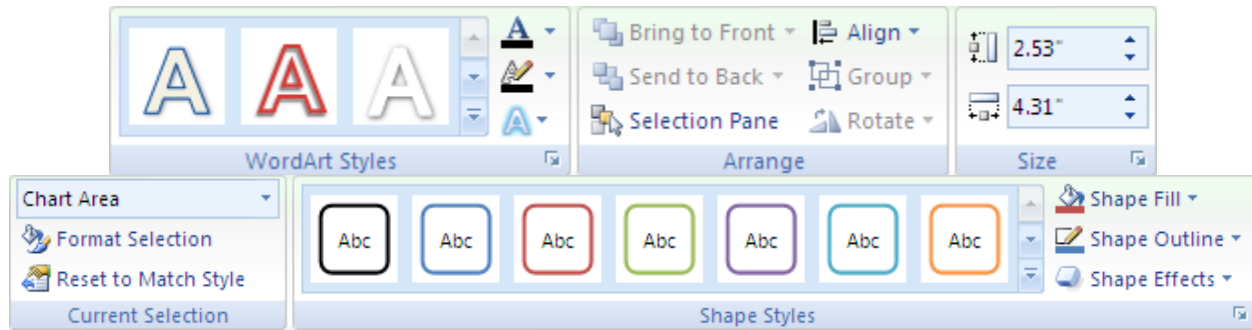


Figure 23 - Format Contextual Tab Groups

Setting Application Options

Office 2007 applications have selectable options and customizable features just like previous versions. The steps to access the application options are similar for all Office applications. The following example accesses the Word 2007 options.

To access the application options:

1. Click the **Office Button** to view the **Office Button Menu and Options** (see Figure 24).
2. Select the **Options** feature in the lower right corner. The application *Options* dialog box opens (see Figure 25).
3. Select the category from the menu on the left side of the dialog box, and then select the options or features from the appropriate section.
4. To apply selected options and features, click the **OK** button to close the dialog box.

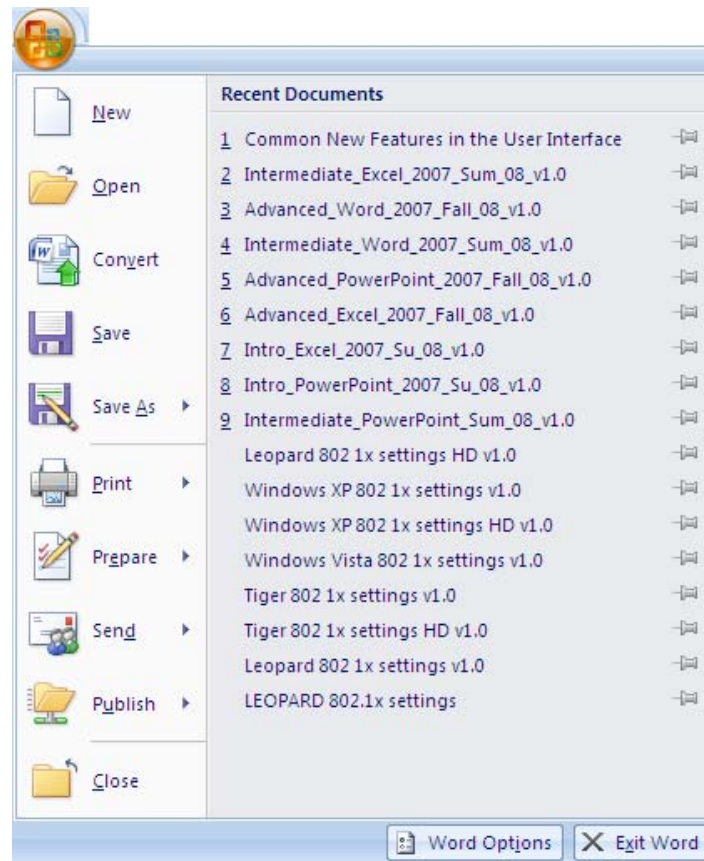




Figure 24 - Office Button Menu and Options

NOTE: The **Push Pin** icon  that appears in the **Recent** menu can be used to “pin” a file to the list of recent files. This means that it will not disappear from the list until it is “unpinned.” When a file is pinned to the list, the shape of the icon changes appearance to .

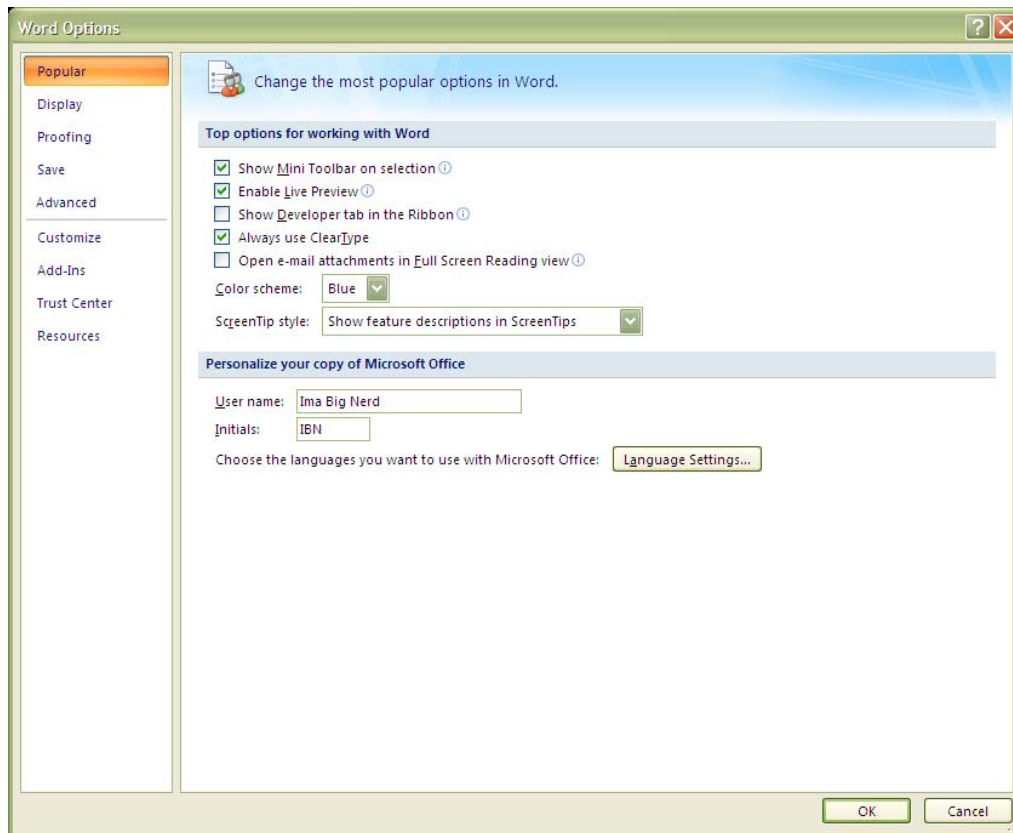


Figure 25 - Application Options Dialog Box

Managing File Properties

Unlike previous versions, Office 2007 allows file properties to be displayed and edited in the user interface while the document is in edit mode. When opened, the **Properties Panel** appears just below the **Ribbon** (see Figure 26). The Panel will remain open and accessible for editing file properties until it is closed. To open the **Panel**, click the **Office Button**, select the **Prepare** option, and then select **Properties** from the menu.

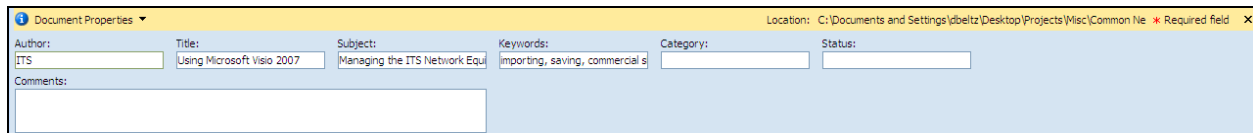


Figure 26 - File Properties Panel

File properties can be customized using the same dialog box that was available in previous versions of Office. To open the *Properties* dialog box, click the **Document Properties** drop-down arrow in the **Properties Panel** and select the **Advanced Properties** option (see Figure 27). The *Advanced Properties* dialog box will open (see Figure 28). The tabs on the dialog box contain information and features that the user can access or even modify..

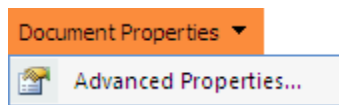


Figure 27 - Accessing the Properties Dialog Box

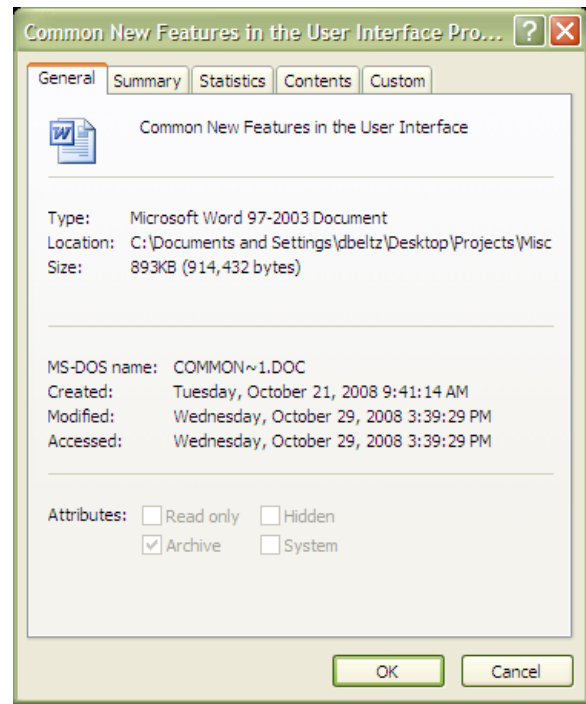


Figure 28 - Properties Dialog Box

The Document Inspector

Another new feature in Microsoft Office 2007 applications is the *Document Inspector* feature. Files may sometimes contain hidden or personal information that a user may be unaware of, or does not want to share with others if copies of the file will be distributed. Personal information can also become embedded in the form of metadata when file properties are set. The *Document Inspector* will identify any potential information that a user may want removed before distributing a file and give the user the option to remove it.

To use the *Document Inspector*:

1. Click the **Office Button**.
2. Select the **Prepare** option.
3. Select the **Inspect Document** option. The *Document Inspector* dialog box opens (see Figure 29).
4. Users are presented with six categories of information that the *Document Inspector* will search for. Each of the categories can be either selected or deselected by the user with the associated check boxes.
5. When the categories have been selected, click the **Inspect** button.

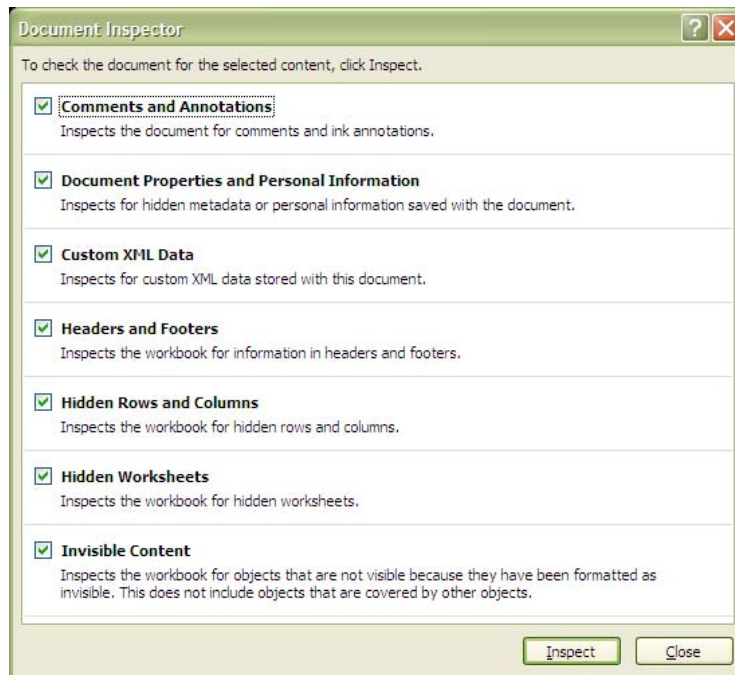


Figure 29 - Document Inspector Dialog Box

6. When the *Document Inspector* completes its search, the *Document Inspector Results* dialog box will open (see Figure 30).
7. If any potential personal information is found within the document, the user can choose to ignore it or eliminate it by clicking the **Remove All** button.
8. The user can re-inspect the document by clicking the **Reinspect** button, or, if no further actions are needed, click the **Close** button.

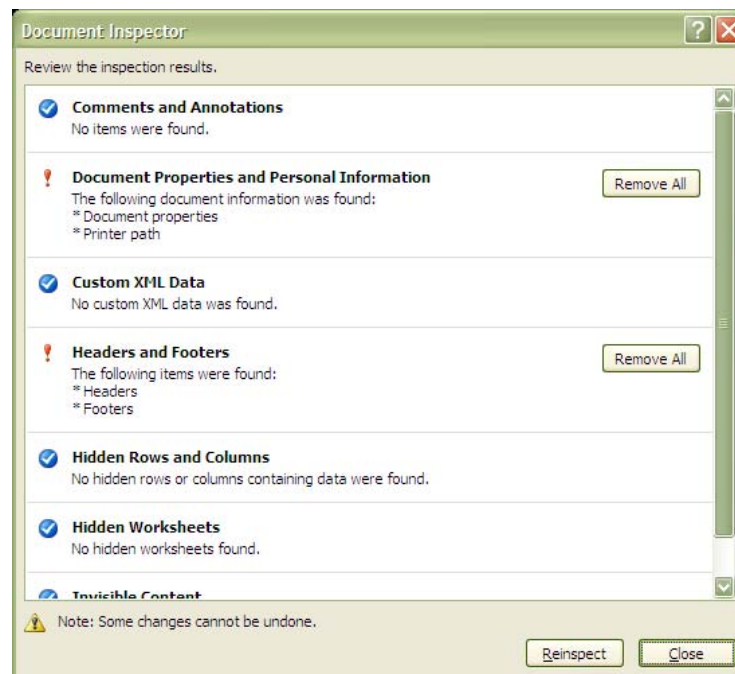


Figure 30 - Document Inspector Results Dialog Box

The Compatibility Checker

A new feature in several of the Microsoft Office 2007 applications is the *Compatibility Checker*. The *Compatibility Checker* will inspect workbooks, documents, or presentations created in an

Office 2007 application to see if the worksheets contain objects such as *SmartArt* that are incompatible with earlier versions. The following example shows a compatibility check from Excel 2007. Other applications run the *Checker* in a similar manner.

To run the *Compatibility Checker*:

1. Click the **Office Button**.
2. Select the **Prepare** option.
3. Select the **Run Compatibility Checker** option. The *Microsoft Office Excel Compatibility Checker* dialog box opens (see Figure 31). Any incompatible items will be identified in the dialog box.
4. Click the **OK** button to close the dialog box.

NOTE: If no incompatible items are identified in the file, the dialog box will still open and indicate that no incompatible items were found.

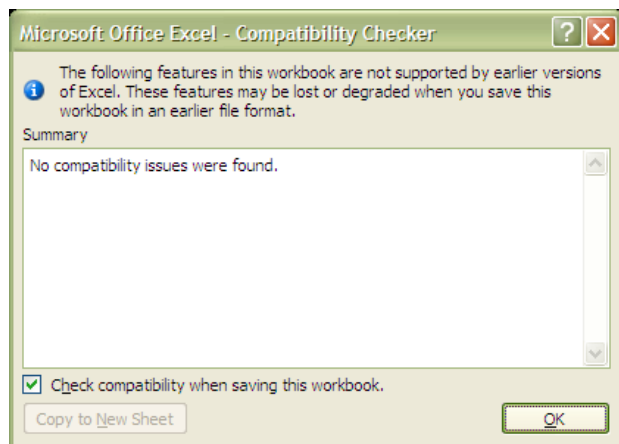


Figure 31 - Microsoft Office Excel Compatibility Checker Dialog Box

By default, Excel and other Office 2007 applications will check the backwards compatibility of any presentation, document, or worksheet when it is saved in the Office 97-2003 format. If no incompatible items are found, the *Microsoft Office Compatibility Checker* dialog box will not open. If an incompatible item is identified and the user proceeds to save the item, the incompatible item will be degraded so that the file will open in an earlier version. For example, *SmartArt* objects will be converted to non-editable images that will open in the earlier version.