

# What's New in Microsoft Office 2010?

## By Ron McDermott

April's General Meeting was highlighted by MHCUG President Jeff Dowley's very detailed presentation, "What's New in Microsoft Office 2010?" The physical demands of Office 2010 require a larger hard drive footprint (not quite double), but the ram memory requirements are very similar. Office 2010 can now save files in .pdf, as well as .odt formats.

Jeff started by pointing out the general features found throughout Office, chief among them being the next evolutionary step in the development of Office's new ergonomic interface, "The Ribbon". Found previously in Office 2007, the 2010 implementation is a context-sensitive banner of commands/features activated by selecting tabbed headings. "The Ribbon" has the virtue of grouping similar tools/capabilities physically as well as visually, and hovering the mouse over a tool/icon results, in many cases, in a preview of the output created by selecting that icon/tool. This preview feature is expanded from what was available in Office 2007. "The Ribbon" is user customizable; again, to a greater extent with Office 2010. As in Office 2007, there is a slider in the lower-right corner that allows for page magnification (or reduction), and hitting the 'Alt' key displays aids for employing shortcut keys to operate the visible tabs/commands. Brand new in Office 2010 is "Backstage View" which provides under-the-hood information related to your document: available backups, metadata, etc. Also new, Office now has built-in photo editing options. Some Web-based software is also now included; SkyDrive, which allows for "cloud" storage, and elements of SharePoint, which enable augmented capabilities within Office for the purpose of multi-user collaboration.

Jeff went on to point out the new features found in individual components of Office.

Word:

Word 2010 has expanded the capabilities of the outline view available in Word 2007 to include the Navigation Pane. In this expanded view, a document may be edited at outline level. Moving content around, re-ordering content, etc can be done by simply moving the headings. This is much more efficient than doing block cut-and-paste operations over long documents. This is also the view used for searches.

In addition to photo editing tools, Word now allows for Multi-photo overlay capabilities, so you can layer photos to produce a single image that incorporates multiple photos. These can also be added to the existing SmartArt capabilities.

Excel:

Sheets can be assigned trust privileges to avoid repetitive cautionary prompts. Protected Mode viewing allows for visually scanning sheets without allowing program/command executions to take place. This offers some protection from malicious files. Cells can now contain graphics through the use of Sparklines. These can include charts, icons, etc. Excel natively supports multi-core chips. PowerPivot is an extension that will handle very large data sets, and Excel 2010 now has expanded PivotTables capabilities. Included in Excel 2010 is the Solver add-in from Frontline Systems. This is not the same "solver" that old-timers may recall - TK Solver – but it has the same functional capability.

Outlook:

Outlook can be configured to clear prior content in email threads, avoiding ever-growing responses in ongoing conversations. You can also use an "ignore button" if you've subscribed to a thread, but later decide you would like to abandon it. Subsequent messages are re-routed to trash (junk?). Calendar Groups can be used to access all the calendars for the members of a Team. Contact info can now be retrieved without exiting the message page. Voicemail can now be converted into email.

We didn't have time to explore the new Powerpoint features.

Office 2010 has a large base of both expanded and new capabilities, a new and flexible interface, and there is a LOT to learn if you want to become expert in its use. Jeff's presentation, however, showed that many of these changes have been made in order to make Office more intuitive, more easily configured, and to level out the learning curve. Jeff's presentation was well-received, and his PowerPoint presentation can be found at: : <http://www.mhcug.com/presentations/office2010.ppt>.