

By Susan Harkins

A year's worth of work turns into a lot of tips and how-to's. I admit I have my favorites. And often, my favorites are also your favorites. That trend has remained true for 2010, so I'd like to revisit the Office tips I liked the most in 2010.

## 1: [Edit a Word document in Print Preview](#)

Print Preview lets you view a document as it will appear in printed form. You can see all the formatting, columns, pictures, header, footer -- everything. Wouldn't it be nice if you could make changes right there in Print Preview? Well, you can, but how you do so, isn't obvious. Click the Magnifier icon on the Print Preview toolbar to disable that tool. In Word 2007, uncheck Magnifier in the Preview group on the Print Preview toolbar. When you do so, the insertion point reverts to the I-beam you're used to working with in Normal view. Edit away!

This behavior has changed a bit with Word 2010. Add the Print Preview Edit Mode command to the Quick Access Toolbar. It's not exactly the same, but it's close enough.

## 2: [A Find and Replace trick for inserting new text](#)

Find and Replace tricks are always a big favorite because they quickly take care of big jobs, such as inserting new text. For example, to add a newly acquired title to your name every place your name appears in a document, you could search for every occurrence of your name and add the title manually, but there's a simpler way: Use the ^& code in the Replace With value.

The ^& code tells Find and Replace to add the text in the Find What entry to the replacement text. In our simple name example, you'd use the following settings:

Find What: John Doe  
Replace With: ^&, MCSE

You can use this technique to insert text both before and after an existing string.

## 3: [Add a quick comparison chart to a worksheet](#)

Excel is a master at charts, but you don't always need all its bells and whistles. Sometimes, you just want to visually compare values. For example, the sheet shown in **Figure A** lists units sold per person. Because the list is short, a quick glance is all you need to determine that Bill sold the most and Kate sold the least. If that's all you need, a quick sort will display the highest and lowest values in a longer list, but a sort won't give you a feel for the overall performance -- you can't compare values. That's where the bars to the right come in. They look complex, but they're the result of Excel's REPT() function.

In cell C2, I entered the following function:

```
=REPT("|",B2)
```

Then, I copied that function to C3:C9. The results allow you to visually compare each value to the others. This is one of my favorite tricks. It's easy to implement and the results are effective.



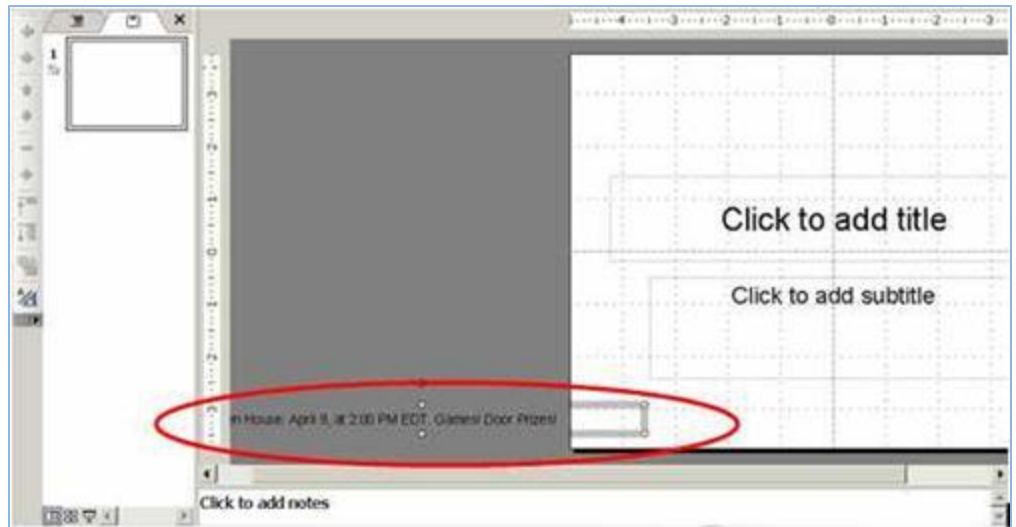
10. From the Repeat drop-down list, choose Until End Of Slide.
11. Click OK.

Press [F5] and watch the message you entered into the text box enter the screen from the right, scroll across the bottom edge, and off the left edge.

You might want to tweak the

timing just a bit. The scroll should be slow enough to

read but not so slow that readers lose interest. Add the ticker tape effect to the Master Slide if you want it to appear on all the slides in the presentation. This technique isn't for your average presentation -- save it for those lively discussions where the presentation and the audience have a sense of humor.



**Figure B**

## 6: [How to sum values in an Excel filtered list](#)

Using filters, you can quickly limit data to just the records you need to see. Summing filtered records is another matter. **Figure C** shows a filtered list. You can tell by the row numbers to the left that many rows are hidden. (We'll skip how the actual filter works. To learn more about that, read [How to use And and Or operators with Excel's Advanced Filter](#).) Unfortunately, the SUM() function doesn't return the result you might expect, because it evaluates all the values in D14:D64, not just the visible values. There's no way for the SUM() function to know that you want to exclude the filtered values in the referenced range.

The solution is much easier than you might think. Simply click AutoSum and Excel will automatically enter a

SUBTOTAL() function instead of a SUM() function. This function references the entire list, D6:D82, but it evaluates only the filtered values, as shown in **Figure D**.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
		Product Name	Unit Price	Units In Stock	Units On Order	Reorder Level	
1	ID						
2			>=50				
3							
4							
5	ID	Product Name	Unit Price	Units In Stock	Units On Order	Reorder Level	
14	9	Mishi Kobe Niku	97	29	0	0	
23	18	Carnarvon Tigers	62.5	42	0	0	
25	20	Sir Rodney's Marmalade	81	40	0	0	
34	29	Thüringer Rostbratwurst	123.79	0	0	0	
43	38	Côte de Blaye	263.5	17	0	15	
56	51	Manjimup Dried Apples	53	20	0	10	
64	59	Raclette Courdavault	55	79	0	0	
83				2099			
84							

## 7: [Quickly fill blank cells in Excel](#)

In a report, repeating the company name from record to record might be distracting to the reader. On the other hand, blanks in a spreadsheet, like the one in **Figure E**, can be troublesome, if not downright destructive. If you acquire a sheet like this, you should fill the blanks (assuming the blanks represent the previous entry).

You might consider typing the entries, but there's a quicker way:

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	ID	Product Name	Unit Price	Units In Stock	Units On Order	Reorder Level	
2			>=50				
3							
4							
5	ID	Product Name	Unit Price	Units In Stock	Units On Order	Reorder Level	
14	9	Mishi Kobe Niku	97	29	0	0	
23	18	Carnarvon Tigers	62.5	42	0	0	
25	20	Sir Rodney's Marmalade	81	40	0	0	
34	29	Thüringer Rostbratwurst	123.79	0	0	0	
43	38	Côte de Blaye	263.5	17	0	15	
56	51	Manjimup Dried Apples	53	20	0	10	
64	59	Raclette Courdavault	55	79	0	0	
83							
84							

**Figure D**

1. First, select the range that contains blanks you need to fill. Don't select the column header cell -- just the range that contains actual data. Using the example sheet above, the range is A2:A11.
2. Select Go To from the Edit menu or press [Ctrl]+G and then click the Special button. In Excel 2007, choose Go To Special from the Find And Select drop-down list in the Editing group on the Home tab.
3. Select Blanks and click OK. Excel will select all the blank cells in A2:A11.
4. In the first selected blank cell (A3), enter an equal sign and point to the cell above. The cell is already selected, you don't have to actually click A3.
5. Press [Ctrl]+[Enter] and Excel will copy the respective formula to all blank cells in the selected range.

At this point, the range contains literal values (the original values) and formulas that repeat those literal values. To replace the formulas with their results, select the range (A2:A11) and choose Copy from the Edit menu. In Excel 2007, click Copy in the Clipboard group on the Home tab.

Select Paste Special from the Edit menu. Then, select Values and click OK. In Excel 2007, choose Paste Values from the Paste drop-down list in the Clipboard group on the home tab. You just replaced the formulas with literal values, as shown in **Figure F**.

	A	B	
1	Company Name	Category	
2	Aux joyeux ecclésiastiques	Beverages	Côte de f
3		Beverages	Chartreu
4	Bigfoot Breweries	Beverages	Sasquatc
5		Beverages	Steeleye
6		Beverages	Laughing
7	Cooperativa de Quesos 'Las Cabras'	Dairy Products	Queso Ca
8		Dairy Products	Queso M
9	Escargots Nouveaux	Seafood	Escargot:
10	Exotic Liquids	Beverages	Chai
11		Beverages	Chang

**Figure E**

	A	B	
1	Company Name	Category	
2	Aux joyeux ecclésiastiques	Beverages	Côte de f
3	Aux joyeux ecclésiastiques	Beverages	Chartreu
4	Bigfoot Breweries	Beverages	Sasquatc
5	Bigfoot Breweries	Beverages	Steeleye
6	Bigfoot Breweries	Beverages	Laughing
7	Cooperativa de Quesos 'Las Cabras'	Dairy Products	Queso Ca
8	Cooperativa de Quesos 'Las Cabras'	Dairy Products	Queso M
9	Escargots Nouveaux	Seafood	Escargot:
10	Exotic Liquids	Beverages	Chai
11	Exotic Liquids	Beverages	Chang

**Figure F**

## 8: [How to add a watermark to your Word documents](#)

A watermark is a picture or text that appears behind a document's contents. It's usually a light gray or other neutral color so it doesn't distract too much from the document's purpose. Usually, a watermark identifies a company or the document's status. For instance, a watermark might say *confidential* or *urgent* or display a symbolic graphic. Adding a watermark to a Word document is a simple process:

1. Click the Page Layout tab.
2. Click Watermark in the Page Background group.
3. Choose a watermark from the gallery or choose Custom Watermark. The Printed Watermark dialog presents three options. You can remove a custom watermark or insert a picture or text as watermark.
4. Click OK once you've made your selections.
5. If you're using Word 2003, add a watermark as follows:
6. From the Format menu, choose Background.
7. Click Printed Watermark.
8. To insert a picture as a watermark, click Picture Watermark. Then click Select Picture, navigate to find the picture file, and click Insert. To insert a text watermark, click Text Watermark and select or enter the text you want.
9. Set any additional options.
10. Click OK.

The watermark, like the one shown in **Figure G**, will display as part of the background on every page. Adding a watermark to a document is simple, yet effective.

## 9: [Get instant sums using Excel's Status bar](#)

Have you ever been sitting in a meeting and had someone important ask for a total or deficit that you just didn't have in your sheet? It's uncomfortable. Everyone stares at you while you enter the appropriate function. It doesn't take that long, but it makes you feel (and perhaps even look) incompetent, even though you're not.

If you're lucky, you can just select the first blank cell adjacent to a single column or row and click AutoSum. That's not so bad, but what if someone wants a subset evaluated? Maybe they want to know the first and second quarter sales for both the north and south regions. It's still easy but requires a bit more finger work -- and when you're under a lot of stress, you make mistakes.

The next time you need to quickly evaluate values, use the Status bar. You can sum or average a range of values without entering a thing. You can just as easily determine the minimum or maximum value in a range. You can even count the number of entries in a range, all without entering a single function or formula.

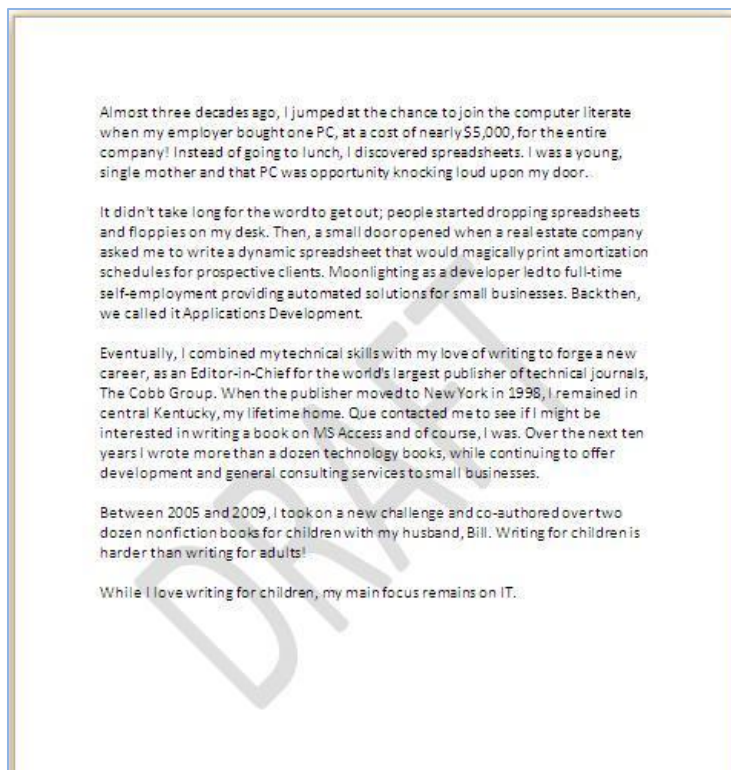


Figure G

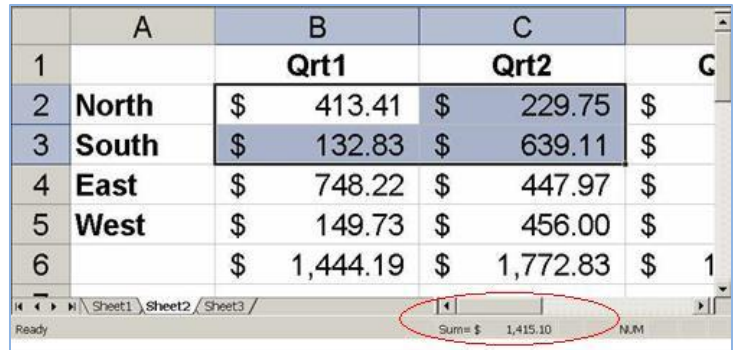
## My 10 favorite Office tips of the year

Simply select the values in question and view the right side of the Status bar. For instance, to quickly discern the sales for the north and south region for the first two quarters in the sheet shown in **Figure H**, select B2:C3. When you do, the status bar displays

Sum= \$ 1,415.10

just to the left of the NUM indicator. Notice that the Status bar identifies the resulting value as the sum of the selected range. That's because you can

right-click the Status bar and choose from a list of operations. Using this handy feature, you have the answer with just a few clicks. Nobody has to wait, and you look efficient and in control!



	A	B	C	
1		Qrt1	Qrt2	C
2	North	\$ 413.41	\$ 229.75	\$
3	South	\$ 132.83	\$ 639.11	\$
4	East	\$ 748.22	\$ 447.97	\$
5	West	\$ 149.73	\$ 456.00	\$
6		\$ 1,444.19	\$ 1,772.83	\$ 1

Figure H

## 10: [Create an email shortcut for speedier messages](#)

Most of my email messages go to the same few people -- sometimes the same person may hear from me several times in one day. Frequently entering the same address is inefficient, even with Outlook's AutoComplete feature. If you send a lot of mail to the same person, create an email shortcut on your desktop. When you want to send a message, just double-click the shortcut to open a blank, pre-addressed message, ready to go.

To create a desktop shortcut for sending messages to the same person, do the following:

1. Right-click the desktop, choose New, and then select Shortcut.
2. In the Create Shortcut dialog, type mailto:emailaddress. Don't enter any space characters between the mailto: component and the email address.
3. Click Next and enter a descriptive name for your email shortcut.
4. Click Finish.

To use the new shortcut, just double-click it. Outlook (or your default client) will open a mail window and fill in the To field using the address you provided when you created the shortcut. Write your message and send! This is also a good solution for ensuring email goes to the right recipient if you have two or more contacts with similar names.

## Additional resources

- TechRepublic's [Downloads RSS Feed](#) **XML**
- Sign up for the [Downloads at TechRepublic](#) newsletter
- Sign up for our [10 Things Newsletter](#)
- Check out all of TechRepublic's [free newsletters](#)
- [10 mistakes to avoid when working with multiple worksheets](#)
- [10 things I can never find in PowerPoint 2007/2010](#)
- [10+ ways to screw up your database design](#)