

Welcome!

Welcome to the 11th issue of the CyberText Newsletter. The aim of this quarterly newsletter is to help make you more proficient by sharing some productivity hints and tips, to let you know (occasionally) about some of our services, and to provide information that you may find useful. If you'd like me to address a particular aspect of productivity, let me know.

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Word 2003: View Two Docs

Word 2003 has a very neat trick that allows you to view two documents side-by-side without using the Document Compare function. In other words, the documents aren't compared and marked up as with Doc Compare - they are laid out side-by-side so you can do a visual check of them. And you can synchronise the scrolling of the documents too so that you don't have to change focus or jump between each one as you work through them.

To activate this function, open the two documents you want to view at the same time, then select **Window > Compare Side by Side with [doc name]** from the menu bar. The docs rearrange themselves on the screen so that they are equally spaced side-by-side and a floating toolbar displays. One of the buttons on this floating toolbar is the Synchronous Scrolling button - click it to turn it on and off.

This new feature beats arranging or splitting windows manually and trying to move through the documents at the same time. What used to take a while to do, and caused a lot of frustration, is now a snap!

Book Recommendation

Some years ago (1991?) Bill Bryson wrote a book about the English language ("The mother tongue: English and how it got that way"). I finally got to read it recently while on some trains, planes and ferries in North America. I'm sure it is nowhere near as well-researched as Robert McCrum's "The Story of English" (or its companion TV series that I watched when I lived in Canada in 1986), but Bryson's book is no doubt an easier read as it skips along through all sorts of fascinating snippets of interesting facts about English words and their origin. By the way, the origins of some individual words in the full Oxford English Dictionary fill more space than the whole of this book - so don't expect an academic treatise. However, as a quick read that sheds some light on some of the idiosyncrasies of how we say, spell, and use various words, I recommend it.



Outlook Holiday Dates

Did you know that you can adjust Outlook's holiday dates so that they better reflect your business, state, country etc.? One client needed to set specific dates that weren't part of the standard Australian public holiday dates that Outlook provides, so with a little bit of investigation I found out how easy this is to do! (yes, I get asked to do all sorts of things!) So I thought I'd share it with you.

Before you start, you need to know what country or countries your Outlook holidays are already set to. These instructions are for Outlook 2003 but should be very similar for all other Outlook versions.

1. Open Outlook, then select **Tools > Options** from the menu bar.
2. On the Preferences tab, click the **Calendar Options** button.
3. On the Calendar Options window, click the **Add Holidays** button.
4. Note which countries' check boxes are ticked, then click **Cancel**.
5. Click **Cancel** twice more to close all the open windows.

Now that you know what countries are set, you can change the default holiday set for each one.

1. Find the **outlook.hol** file on your computer. Use the **Start > Search** function, or take a look in your **C:\Program Files\Microsoft Office\Office11\1033** folder. (**Note:** If you are using an earlier version of Office than 2003, the Office11 number will be different - e.g. Office10, Office9 etc. Substitute your Office version for 11.)
2. When you find the outlook.hol file, right-click on it then select **Open With...** from the menu.
3. In the Open With window, scroll down until you find **Notepad**. Select it, then click **OK**. The outlook.hol file opens in Notepad and lists all holidays for all countries, in country order.
4. Find the country (or countries) your Outlook uses. (**Quick tip:** Press **CTRL+F** and type your country's name into the Find box, then click **Find Next**.)
5. In your country's list of holidays, type in the name of your special holiday and its date, using exactly the same format as the other holidays (i.e., **<name of holiday>,<year>/<month>/<day>**). Do not put in any spaces, except in the name of the holiday.
6. Repeat step 5 for any other holidays you need to add. If the holiday is an annual event and you know the dates, add dates for the next few years.
7. When you have finished, count how many holidays you have added and add that number to the total number of holidays next to the country's name at the beginning of its list. (If you remove any dates, subtract that number.)
8. Save and close the file. You're done!

Word: Open at the Last Position

One of the annoying things about Word is that when you close a document then re-open it, it always opens at the beginning. This is fine if you have a one or two page document, but when you are working on a 100 page Word document it can be annoying to have to scroll to where you were. (Yes, you can press **CTRL+SHIFT+END** to skip straight to the end of the document, but what if you were working in the middle?)

There is a quick solution to this problem: As soon as you open the document, press **SHIFT+F5** - this will take you back to where the cursor was when the document was last saved - no matter who saved it or when.

AuthorIT: Variables

Someone last year at an international conference publicly called me the "Variable Queen" (thanks, Char!) - an honorific I was reluctant to accept until I realised that I use variables everywhere in AuthorIT. They save me typing time and allow me to make sure that strings of text etc. are spelled and formatted correctly every time.

If you are using AuthorIT, I co-presented a demonstration session on "AuthorIT Tips and Tricks" at the latest STC Conference (Baltimore 2004) with Char James-Tanny. My section consisted of three tips - on variables, release states, and version control.

For a copy of the presentation slides and handouts, go to: http://www.cybertext.com.au/tips_ait.htm. One handout details how I have used variables, with lots of examples. If you're not using variables already, use some of these examples to generate your own ideas for your AuthorIT projects.

(Note: Variables are only available in the Workgroup and Enterprise editions of AuthorIT.)

Pet Peeves



Not so many pet peeves this issue, but here are some pronunciations to ponder...

* "Heinous" is pronounced "HEE-nus" or "HAY-nus" depending on where you live, NOT "HEENY-yus" as I heard a TV News announcer say the other night.

* "Mischievous" does not have an extra "i" in it, so it should be pronounced "MIS-che-vus" not "mis-CHEEVY-yus".

For a list of the 100 most commonly mispronounced words, go to <http://www.yourdictionary.com/library/mispron.html>

They also have a list of the 100 most commonly misspelled words at: <http://www.yourdictionary.com/library/misspelled.html>

Considering Hiring a Consultant?

Before you do, read this article first: "How to get more out of the consultants you hire" at:

<http://www.darwinmag.com/read/040104/consultants.html>

Travel Tips

After another great experience travelling in North America, here are a couple more travel tips:

* If you are a member of your local motoring organisation (e.g. RAC/NRMA in Australia, AA in the UK, CAA in Canada, AAA in the USA), you have reciprocal rights with other motoring organisations. In the US and Canada this means you can go into any AAA or CAA shop (located in all major cities and some minor ones) and get Tour Guide books and maps of everywhere you intend to travel for FREE! The Tour Guide books list accommodation (including ratings, facilities, directions and prices) and restaurants, and are updated every year. Maps are for regions, states, cities - in fact, pretty much wherever you want to travel. And in AAA shops you can stock up on maps for anywhere in North America. I went to an AAA shop in Connecticut and got maps for the north east US region as well as maps and Tour Guides for Vancouver and British Columbia in Canada.

AAA: <http://www.aaa.com/international.html>

* Want to travel the Inside Passage but can't afford cruise ship prices? A cheap alternative is to use BC Ferries or Alaska State Ferries (from Washington state). I caught the Inside Passage ferry from Port Hardy on Vancouver Island to Prince Rupert (near the Canada/Alaska border). The 16 hour ferry trip was awesome in its beauty - and cheap too! I paid less than \$300 CDN for the ferry ride, a designated seat on the ferry, and the transport of my rental car. Compare that to cruise ship prices... And BC Ferries aren't little boats - the Inside Passage ferry can take over 300 vehicles.

BC Ferries: <http://www.bcferries.com/>

Alaska State Ferries: <http://www.dot.state.ak.us/amhs/>

Geek Quote:

Overheard at a conference:
WAN, LAN, thank you Ma'am!

News

Conferences: I attended the Australasian Online Documentation and Content Conference in Sydney at the end of April, then the 51st Annual Conference of the Society for Technical Communication in Baltimore in May, where I co-presented a session. Both were great learning experiences and I came away recharged and enthused!

I kept a 'blog' (word derived from from 'web log') of my thoughts and experiences, including the travel experiences, which you can read at: http://www.cybertext.com.au/conferences_2004.html - there's a link to the conference and travel photos from this web page too, including the Inside Passage photos.



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