

Microsoft Office users will soon be encouraged by Microsoft to upgrade to the 2010 edition. The current version is Office 2007.

For people like me (still happily using the 2003 version) Ceri gave us a glimpse of what we are missing by showing us the major improvements incorporated into the 2007 edition.

It will be useful when we have to decide whether to stick with 2003; pick up a cheap offer for 2007 or go the whole hog to 2010 when we know what it is all about. Accordingly there was much interest in the clear and thorough tour that Ceri gave.

The feature most affecting the Luddites using 2003 is that there are new file types. It is also the feature that is easiest to come to terms with.

The familiar “.doc” file extension became “.docx” for straightforward documents. This allowed the software to recognise the use of XML (Extensible Markup Language). This is introduced to make information more usable over the Internet. It also means that 2003 needs help to open the files.

2003 users can visit the Microsoft website and download a free compatibility package to enable them to open the later “.docx” files. (2010 users have the facility to save their documents in an earlier format if they so wish.)

The same download enables access to the other new types indicated by “.docm” if the document contains macros or “.dotx” and “.dotm” similarly if they are templates without or with macros. A Macro is just a set of internal instructions contained in a document.

The download will cover similar new file types in the other parts of the Office package. These changes apply to the way the computer works in the background.

There are also improvements in the way the computer presents itself to the user.

The most noticeable of these is the “Ribbon”. Ceri explained that users of the earlier versions needed to be aware of the existence of the variety of Tool Bars that were available for special parcels of work. For instance, there are controls to help format and build a table within a document, but it requires knowledge of how to open a special toolbar for Tables. Now there is the word “Tables” on the Ribbon where one click will open a Table tool bar.

This principle is applied to many more of the previously hard-to-find features that many people had never become aware of.

Even better, once you have created a table, if you click inside it at any time the table Tool Bar automatically appears and remains until you click outside the table and it goes away. Now THAT is an improvement!

*The next meeting will be on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> March. Chris will be giving Part 2 of his talk about setting up a personal website. Visitors and new members always welcome. For more information ring Howard on 029 20708439.*

## **In Brief**

### **Computer Club**

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