

How many times have you been using a computer and thought “I wish it could do?”. Well – it probably can: you just haven’t found out yet!

Leaving aside making the tea or doing the shopping – (oops, it can do the shopping) it can do a lot.

These developments come from feedback of bright ideas. Users ask for certain things to be possible and the software writers eventually oblige. They have to, of course, or another firm will introduce the facility and snaffle their customers.

I mentioned previously the major changes that Ceri told us were incorporated into Microsoft Office 2007. (The new file extensions that make the file more transportable. The “Ribbon” tool bar that makes things easier to find.)

Ceri toured around other improvements as well.

The Ribbon contains a Quick Access toolbar that can be customised to allow you to select what you want even more conveniently.

Keyboard Shortcuts are always useful and the system has been improved to give you a selection of shortcut keys in the context of what you are doing.

Live Previews: most options now have live previews. If you want to change the font, font size, colour, themes, tables etc, hover the mouse over the option and it will preview it before you decide whether to select it. This is particularly handy if you are tweaking fonts as it saves lots of clicking.

Dialogue box launcher is another feature that gets you to the bits you want much more efficiently.

A Mini Tool Bar accompanies a right-click in Word or Excel to increase the options immediately available.

SmartArt Graphics allow you to easily turn text into striking visual layouts to communicate your ideas more effectively.

Chart production from a Word table automatically takes advantage of the power of Excel spreadsheets.

Inserting sections of text already fully formatted is possible using a gallery of Quick Parts that you can create precisely to suit your needs.

Word 2007 displays a running word total in the status bar for easy monitoring.

Contextual Spell Checking enhances its work with contextual spelling which makes sure you use the right word in the right place e.g “there” and “their”.

There is now a dedicated Equation Builder for the mathematically minded.

Ceri succinctly explained a number of other improvements throughout the Office suite: Excel for spreadsheets; Access database; Outlook and Powerpoint. There seems to be something for everybody. That would imply that the users’ comments are being heard and acted upon. Hooray.

All Ceri’s notes are available for download from our website penarthcomputerclub.co.uk.

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In Brief

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