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If you can't read this edition click <http://www.nda.com.au/newsletters/june10.pdf> for the full copy.

Last month I was enjoying breakfast at my brother's house in the USA, when he warned me that his robot was about to start work. Sure enough, on the stroke of 10am, there was a brief electronic fanfare from the next room and around the corner came a robot vacuum cleaner, intent on its mission of serving humanity. For the next hour we watched intrigued as the little dweeb scooted from room to room, over carpets and boards, negotiating chair legs, disappearing under sofas and chests of drawers, before retiring to its docking station to recharge before the 10am reveille on the following day.

Needless to say my wife was completely won over. Paradoxically this was because I do the vacuuming (she has a dust allergy) - but I don't do it very well. The task is far removed from the interesting-things-to-do-next area of the brain and performed infrequently with the same level of enthusiasm normally reserved for gutting chickens. To be honest, we live in a dusty house.

So, once back in Oz again, for a promised Mother's Day present I bought a [Roomba model 560](#) robot vacuum cleaner on Amazon. Since then our old home has never been cleaner and Helen wakes up in the morning without a dust headache. The dweeb has also provided us with hours of entertainment trying to figure out the algorithms used to control its movement. It seems to be a combination of a coordinate-based system to ensure complete coverage combined with an element of randomness. It works harder on dirty areas and spends considerable time chugging away under beds and other hard-to-access areas neglected by the previous cleaner.

When you empty its dust container after each use you can tell by the diminishing amounts of debris that daily vacuuming really does make a difference (just so long as it's not me doing it). Check out the video [here](#) - with apologies for the poor exposure at the start.

Nigel Davies
Director, NDA

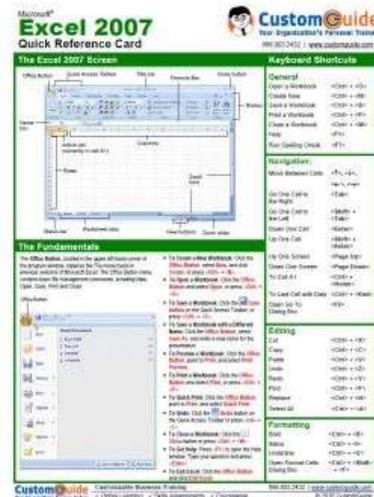
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Office 2007 Quick Reference Guides

Quick reference guides, or 'cheat sheets', can be helpful in making the transition to new software. While looking around for some suitable Office 2007 material for a client I came across these excellent guides for all recent versions of Office at the [CustomGuide](http://www.customguide.com) website. They are full colour, downloadable in PDF format and free to save and reproduce.

Available Microsoft guides include Word, Excel, Access, PowerPoint, Outlook, Internet Explorer, Project, Publisher, Visio and SharePoint. There are also guides for Flash, Acrobat, PhotoShop, DreamWeaver and several other applications.



Hardware tip

The only things more annoying than a sticking mouse are North Korea and anything with the word 'wellness' in the title. You move the mouse and the pointer doesn't; you try again and the pointer stops one pixel short of the button you wanted to click on and freezes; you smack the mouse on the desktop and the pointer jumps to the other side of the screen.

After battling with an increasingly erratic mouse I belatedly discovered Microsoft's [Wireless Mobile Mouse 4000](http://www.microsoft.com/hardware/wireless/mobilemouse4000). Being a wireless mouse there is no cord to restrict movement but its best feature is something called BlueTrack sensing technology, a combination of infra red and optical laser, which works on virtually any surface, including the shiny desktop that defeated my previous mouse.

It comes with a minute wireless sensor that slots into a spare USB port and the AA battery for the mouse is included in the delivery packaging. \$39.95 and recommended.

Newspaper apps for the iPad



Bacon sandwich meets iPad newspaper app

For years the print media has suffered declining circulation figures as readers turned to the Internet and media web sites for their daily news. So when Apple announced the iPad many newspapers saw in its portability, colour screen, gesture-driven user interface and WiFi / Next G Internet connection an opportunity to charge for a daily electronic version of their publication.

The Australian was first out of the blocks, releasing an electronic version on the local iPad launch day. Being a newspaper addict of many years standing I had to try it.

Examine the adjacent photo and you will see the electronic newspaper has both advantages and disadvantages over its paper cousin. On the credit side, the small form factor is more sociable at the breakfast table as it does not entirely block out a partner who might be sitting on the other side of the table in the way that a broadsheet newspaper can. On the debit side you can't remove the Letters page and hand it over for your partner to read.

The iPad's touch screen is definitely not breakfast friendly. Unless you want the screen to be covered in finger prints you have to keep one hand in a bacon sandwich free zone to turn the pages. This prevents you from taking the more serious two handed approach to breakfast – but maybe iPads were designed for the muesli set?

As far as content is concerned, the electronic edition carries many of the same articles as the paper newspaper of the same day, but not all. There was no mention of local boy Richie Porte's magnificent performance in the Giro d'Italia and several segments from the Weekend Australian were missing entirely.

Perhaps the most significant deficiency is that you lose the ability to scan a full page of newsprint and dip in and out of articles as they catch your attention. The small screen of the electronic version forces you to manually select an article by its heading, perhaps close a pop up advert, and then manually return to the list of headings after you have read the article. You can swipe the pages from side to side to move to the next article within a segment, though.

On the credit side, the daily electronic edition is updated several times during the day but I'm not sure this is what people want. Newspapers are for consumption in the early morning to find out what happened overnight in the rest of the world. Early evenings are for PM on the ABC and the SBS news and late evenings are for Lateline. In between times, media apps for Google Desktop provide a constant feed of news, sport and weather information.

On price, the electronic version wins hands down at \$4.99 per month in comparison with \$1.50 per day for the paper version. Does this overcome the physical limitations of the iPad and make it a winner? Not for this reader - in its present form it is a pale imitation of the hardcopy Australian. Further developments are planned and perhaps with integrated video and embedded URLs to expand on stories the app may have more success.

What's on at NDA this month

Two for ones

This month we have some excellent 'your friend flies free' offers:

Hobart

[Project 2003 and 2007](#) 10/11 Jun – **two for the price of one \$480**

[QuickBooks](#) 28/29 June – **two for the price of one \$570**

[Training Delivery](#) 24/25 June – **two for the price of one \$570**

Launceston

[Office 2007 Conversion](#) 4 Jun (am) – **two for the price of one \$195**

Devonport

[Project 2003 and 2007](#) 8/10 Jun – **two for the price of one \$480**

Induction sessions for diploma qualifications

We are holding induction sessions for clients who are beginning diploma qualifications in Project Management, Information Technology and Business Administration. The qualifications will be presented either through intensive classroom sessions, workplace projects or a combination of the two.

Federally Funded Project Management and IT Diplomas

NDA applied through Skills Tasmania to have the [Diploma in Project Management](#) and four [Diplomas in Information Technology](#) added to the approved pathways list. Following the successful addition of these qualifications, funding is now available to the employer for eligible staff*. We therefore invite applications from people wishing to enrol in either of these qualifications. This is in addition to the funding that is already available for diplomas in [Management](#), [Business](#) and [Business Administration](#). **Please note that this funding is not available to state or federal government employees.**

* Eligibility for any State or Federal funding has to be determined by an Apprenticeship Centre.

Forthcoming Training Courses

NDA is now able to release the following courses for stand-by enrolment, some at significant discounts on standard rates (**to obtain the discount, please phone Kristina on 1300 765 736** and mention this email when making bookings):

Hobart – IT courses

[Excel Introductory 2007](#) 7/8 Jun – standard rate \$480

[Excel Intermediate 2007](#) 8/9 Jun – standard rate \$480

[Excel Advanced 2007](#) 9/11 Jun – standard rate \$480

[Project 2003 and 2007](#) 10/11 Jun – **two for the price of one \$480**

[Visio](#) 10 June – standard rate \$285

[MYOB Setup and Operation](#) 17/18 June – standard rate \$570

[PC Basics with Windows and Office 2007](#) 21/23 June – standard rate \$480

[QuickBooks](#) 28/29 June – **two for the price of one \$570**

Hobart – Business Skills courses

[Superior Customer Service](#) 3 Jun – standard rate \$285

[Training Delivery](#) 24/25 June – **two for the price of one \$570**

[Conflict Resolution & Assertiveness](#) 30 June – standard rate \$285

Launceston – IT courses

[Office 2007 Conversion](#) 4 Jun (am) – **two for the price of one \$195**

[Excel Basics 2007](#) 7 June – standard rate \$240

[Internet Basics](#) 9 June – standard rate \$240

[Excel Advanced 2007](#) 9/11 June – standard rate \$480

[Word Basics 2003](#) 15 June – standard rate \$240

[Word Introductory 2003](#) 15/17 June – standard rate \$480

[Access Introductory/Intermediate 2003](#) 16/18 June – standard rate \$480

[Word Intermediate 2003](#) 17/21 June – standard rate \$480

[Word Advanced 2003](#) 21/23 June – standard rate \$480

[PC Basics with Windows](#) 21 June – standard rate \$240

[Outlook 2007](#) 28 June – standard rate \$240

Launceston – Business Skills courses

[Superior Customer Service](#) 3 Jun – standard rate \$285

[OH&S in the Workplace](#) 11 Jun – standard rate \$285

Devonport – IT courses

[Project 2003 and 2007](#) 8/10 Jun – **two for the price of one \$480**

[PC Basics with Windows](#) 21 June – standard rate \$240

[MYOB Setup and Operation](#) 29/30 June – standard rate \$570

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