



## The Advantages in Upgrading MS Office

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Microsoft Office is the most commonly used suite applications in the workplace today. It is essential to perform almost all daily office tasks. For most of us, working without Outlook or Word is inconceivable to think of. Despite the central role that MS Office plays in the business workplace today many businesses are still running Office 2003 or older and not upgrading to Office 2007. When deciding whether or not to upgrade it is best to compare 2003 to 2007 and see if the advantages over the older version make it worth upgrading.



Word 2007 has some major improvements in terms of how the interface looks, making it easier to find what you need visually. This reorganization of the toolbar may take some getting used to for long time users of Office, but overall this new design speeds up everyday tasks by putting common tools that

were previously buried in menus right at your fingertips. Another major change is Word 2007 now supports a new document format, DOCX. This new format allows for better security and makes it easier to recover files when Office closes unexpectedly. However, users can still save in the traditional DOC format, which will allow older versions of Office to open the documents.

In Power Point the major difference between 2003 and 2007 lies mostly in the use of templates. Users have more choices with templates in Power point 2007 than 2003, and 2007 has many more effects for them as well. The ribbon feature, combined with the live preview feature, which is also found in all of the other Office programs, allow users to immediately preview the effects of the multitude of templates without making any permanent changes to their presentation.

In Excel 2007, enhancements have been made to the list functionality, which make lists easier to use. Also, the ribbon feature has been designed completely different from Excel 2003's File, Edit, and View menu bar. There are seven tabs

across the top which represent all the core tasks you would need in Excel. All the related items have been group together under each tab for the convenience of the users. This allows the user to create a multitude of charts with only a few clicks.

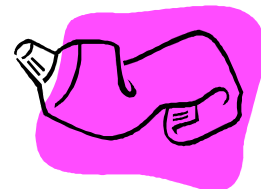
Overall the new and improved interface can initially be hard for long time Office users to adopt, but in the end it increases productivity and makes it easier to turn out better looking results faster. Added to that, Office 2007 is now more secure than ever, thanks to new file formats and better encryption on password protected documents. Price-wise, Office 2007 is comparable to Office 2003, but 2007 does use more computer processing power and should only be run on newer computers (less than 3 years old) with at least 1GB of memory. If you would like additional information on Office 2007 and whether upgrading is the right step for you, contact M&H Consulting at [support@mhconsults.com](mailto:support@mhconsults.com), or call us at 866-964-8324 and a technician will be happy to help you.

## How to Repair a CD With Toothpaste

When CDs were released we were told about their "indestructibility". But soon after, some of us have been brutal with our new CDs they were seen as not the immortals they were believed to be. Commercial CD repair kits are expensive, but there is one thing that can repair CDs that isn't. What's that? Toothpaste.

### Things You'll Need:

- Toothpaste
- Access to water
- Scratched CDs
- Paper Towel



### Steps:

1. Take out your CD. Examine the back. If you're anything like a normal CD user, there are a fair amount of scratches on the back. Some can be fatal - some aren't. Small ones are nothing serious, but can grind down the quality. If some of it has chipped away, then the CD can't be saved.
2. Get a tube of toothpaste. Yes, toothpaste. Believe it or not, toothpaste has many other applications rather than cleaning one's mouth. Squirt a circle just on the outside of the inner circle. Use your index finger to spread the toothpaste.
3. Leave the toothpaste on about five minutes.
4. Wash off the toothpaste with cool tap water. Make sure you get all of the toothpaste off.
5. Dry off the CD with a paper towel. A paper towel because some clothes aren't always soft and can cause further damage.
6. Make sure there is no excess toothpaste left.

There you go. You have a minty fresh CD, good as new.

### Tips:

Use regular white toothpaste, for best results. Anything else may cause varied results. Be sure to leave the toothpaste on for five minutes, no less.

### Warnings:

Avoid using warm water if you choose to run the CD right after the repair. as it may overheat your CD player or whatever it is you use to play CDs.



## What is a VPN and Why Do I Need It?

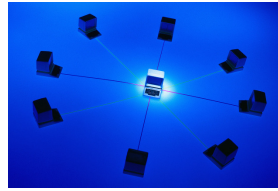
Steve Stryhalaleck

Have you ever wanted to work from home but you had no way to connect to the files in your office? Do you have employees that travel a lot or go to client sites and they need to access files in the office?

Have you ever been in a coffee shop and you see a business person effortlessly edit, send and move files on his laptop while connected to his office? You get to talking to him and you find out that he works for a large corporation, and you think to yourself there is no way that my company can afford a network feature like that?

The fact is that a small business can actually afford these features. This technology is called a Virtual Private Network or VPN and the above example is just one of a few different features that a VPN offers. VPNs allow your company more options to grow by allowing for new opportunities that would not have been available before. They can also be a very cost effective way to allow your network to grow with your

company instead of you being held back by limitations.



A VPN connection can also allow the ability to connect multiple office locations and have them integrated into one network which would allow them to share files between multiple locations, just as if they are in the same building. This can save you money over time. In the past, to be able to accomplish the same result a company would need to have a dedicated network line between the offices and this can be quite costly as there is a monthly charge associated with this. Once a VPN is set up, the cost to maintain it is minimal.

A VPN connection also allows users to be able to work from home, on the road, or from client sites and connect to the office network. It allows em-

ployees to access the company's files securely, and more efficiently. This can all be done with just a laptop or a home desktop without needing to access another computer in the office.

One downside to a VPN connection though, is network speed. With a VPN connection you would be connecting to the office network through the Internet, which in almost every case is slower than the local network in the office. This means if that if it normally takes a few seconds to open a large database file, spreadsheets, or pictures when at the office, they may actually take a minute to open over a VPN connection.

M&H Consulting is always available to answer any questions that you may have with any technology. If you would like to inquire about implementing a VPN solution for your company you can reach us at 866-9MH-Tech or [info@mhconsults.com](mailto:info@mhconsults.com).

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