

Microsoft Office 2007, the first thing that comes to my mind is a dinosaur; well at least that was my opinion of office 2007 before I tried it. After much deliberation I decided to upgrade to 2007 (my older version was Office XP). My only concern was that like other computer users, I don't want to work on software that is slow or reduces my productivity. I read up on the minimum system requirements and once I was convinced that my laptop was compatible did I consider upgrading to Office 2007.

### **The installation**

So here is my impression of the installation procedure, minimalist is an understatement; I popped the DVD in the drive and up came a small window that had two buttons Upgrade or Customize. I Clicked on upgrade, the next screen was a progress bar with nothing more than a message saying that Office 2007 was installing, that's it no percentage, no files being copied, nothing just a green progress bar.

I have a 1.73 GHz Centrino processor with 512 MB RAM, the software installed for 10 whole minutes. I mean I have nothing against minimalism but I was panicking for a moment there. Anyway finally another screen popped up telling me that 2007 was installed.

So what was my overall impression of the Office 2007 installation? Well there is no way I can't comment on the lack of detail, its okay if you are a first time user the lack of detail will not make a difference, however in my case there was a genuine reason for concern, the software had been installing for 10 minutes before it finished and my laptop may not be high end but its not slow either.

### **First Impressions**

After the time it took to install the software I was under the impression that the software would be slow, but guess what, if anything Word actually loaded up much faster then before! For once Microsoft came up with a product that was faster than its predecessor. Kudos!

The document opened and I was greeted to a completely different interface, Office 2007 is based on a 'Ribbon' interface and the drop down menus are gone, instead I see a massive bar on the top with everything I need actually visible in large icons, don't know what to make of the ribbon yet, will probably have to work on it for more time.

Pretty much everything is the same as Office 2007, there is insert, page layout tools, and references but there are a few new things in there as well the review option. The usual file menu is now available by clicking on the new logo for Office 2007 (which is probably inspired by some minimalist artist like Frank Stella). But anyway all in the entire look is definitely different and so far I like it and have had no trouble with using the new interface at all. In fact to be honest it's quite a refreshing change to the boring interface that I previously had. In fact for a change I think Microsoft is actually getting their act together.

## **Under the Hood**

Time to pop the hood and take an in depth look into what exactly is going on and what are the real features of 2007, since half my day is spent in front of the laptop using Word, I can already see that the interface is different, there is a much needed formula writing tool integrated into word, instead of having to use a third party formula writer I can now write formulas within Word. Another major advance in the software is IRM (Information Rights Management) which allows users to protect documents and other files. I had to download the IRM service for windows but once that was done I could effectively protect my documents from illegal access.

The Excel interface is also a little different and I feel that it's becoming increasingly simpler for people with no previous experience with spreadsheets to use Excel. However like all things in life not everything is hunky dory. I have Acrobat 8 installed on my laptop and guess what? Not compatible with 2007, I had to upgrade my version to 8.1 and only then I was able to get my good old 'save as PDF' button back into Office, but I guess compatibility issues are a part and parcel of upgrading software.

Also Office seems to have a new file format for saving all my word documents the extension is .docx which, after further research I realised is the latest format for word documents only; problem is I am not sure it's compatible with all previous versions of windows. So I now have to make sure that all my documents are saved in the 'Office 97-2003' format. Which again is to be expected when you upgrade to a newer version?

## **The Verdict**

Okay here is how I am going to play this one:

Speed: 4.5/5

Look and Feel: 4.5/5 (The best so far, I hear with Vista it is absolutely breathtaking)

Ease of use: 4.5/5 (Not bad at all)

Tools and features: 5/5 (No doubt the most comprehensive office suite today nothing comes close)