

Microsoft Office Productivity

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Information Systems Protection

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Business Skills

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From the Editor

One of the most exciting aspects of Microsoft Office 2007 is its focus on creating documents, spreadsheets and presentations that look similar. We'll show you how to use Word 2007 themes so your documents can have the same appearance as other related Office projects.

We'll also help you buff up on SQL Server security measures with some tips on keeping your host locked down. You'll rest easy at night knowing your company's data is safe.

Finally, you'll learn a terrific method for managing team projects by making sure that each team member understands her role and responsibilities. Your project will run smoothly with this easy-to-implement technique.

MICROSOFT OFFICE PRODUCTIVITY

Build Word 2007 documents that seamlessly match your other Office files

Great news! Microsoft's Office 2007 themes not only cut down on the tedious formatting work you used to do in each application, but the new iteration of professional and attractive themes ensure your documents look polished and professional right from the start. Microsoft expanded its integration of Office themes in 2007 so you can get the same great look across all applications. You can instantly create a set of documents, spreadsheets, and presentations that represent your company's image, simply by starting with a theme in Word.

What is a theme?

A *theme* is a set of design elements that you apply to a document to take the guesswork out of formatting. Themes include a color scheme, fonts, and special effects. Once you select a theme, Word applies its formatting to your document automatically.

Word uses your theme's color palette in its theme design. The palette includes 12 main colors and various shades of each so you can choose to apply one that's darker or lighter.

The theme-specific color palette appears above the standard color palette whenever you're performing a task that involves color. This way you can choose from a color that matches the rest of your document's look. Also, if you hover over

a theme-specific color in the palette, a ToolTip will let you know what the color is intended for: text, the background, or accents.

Hidden colors: You'll only see 10 out of the 12 theme colors in your color palette because two of the colors are reserved for visited and unvisited hyperlinks.

Finally, the theme's special effects influence your text and objects. These effects range from subtle to standout, as shown in **Figure A**.

Apply a theme

You'll find your document themes on the Page Layout ribbon. Click on the Themes

button to open a palette of theme icons. As shown in **Figure B**, there are 20 built-in themes. You can also choose More Themes On Microsoft Office Online to download additional themes from Microsoft's website.

Preview it: If you want to see how a theme will change your document's look, hover over its icon in the open Themes palette and watch the live preview take effect. The existing fonts, colors, and effects change to match the theme.

Don't break away from the theme

It's important to know how breaking away from your theme affects your document. For example, let's say you decide to apply a standard color to a page border instead

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of one of your theme colors. If you later change your document's theme, Word won't update the border you manually formatted.

The moral of the story is this: To get the most mileage out of a theme, stick to it. It makes global changes much easier later down the road. However, using themes doesn't mean there's no room for artistic expression. If you want to make changes, you can

modify the theme itself instead of making manual changes to a document.

Modify a current theme (or build your own)

Themes may sound restrictive, but Microsoft actually gives you a lot of control over how you want your theme to look. Notice in **Figures A** and **B** that there are Colors, Fonts, and Effects buttons to the right of the Themes

button. You can use these buttons to tweak a theme by changing specific aspects of it. For instance, you may want to keep a theme's color palette, but would prefer different fonts. You can make that adjustment by choosing a different selection from the Fonts button's dropdown palette.

Once you have a theme the way you want it, open the Themes button's dropdown palette again and choose Save Current Theme. Word prompts you to name the theme and save it

as a .thmx file so you can access the theme through Excel and PowerPoint as well.

If you want to find a theme that you've already saved, click the Browse For Themes

button on the Themes button's dropdown palette.

Where are themes stored? If you're looking in Windows Explorer, the Document Themes folder is a subfolder of the main Templates folder, usually found at C:\Documents And Settings\Username\Application Data\Microsoft\Templates\Document Templates.

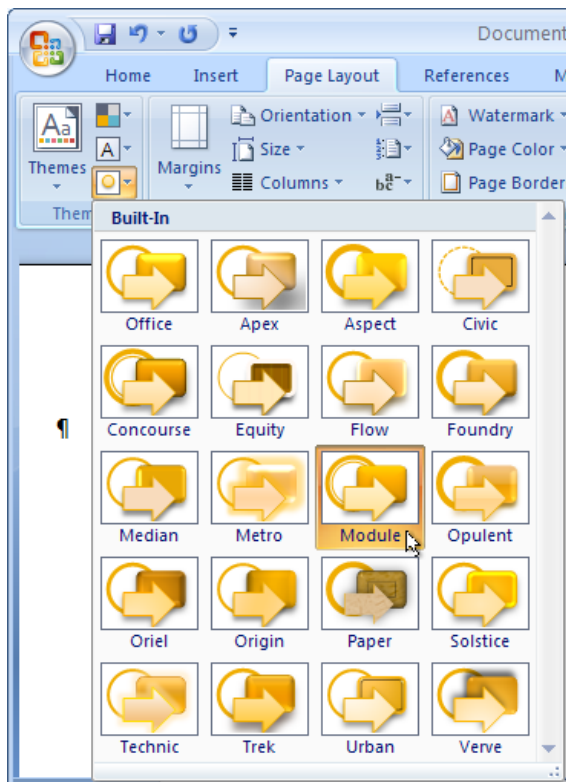
Combine themes with templates

It's a good idea to apply a theme in your Word templates. Not only does this save users from a lot of formatting work, but it ensures that the document matches the templates you use in Excel and PowerPoint. And, you can create a branding effect by building a theme that builds off your company logo.

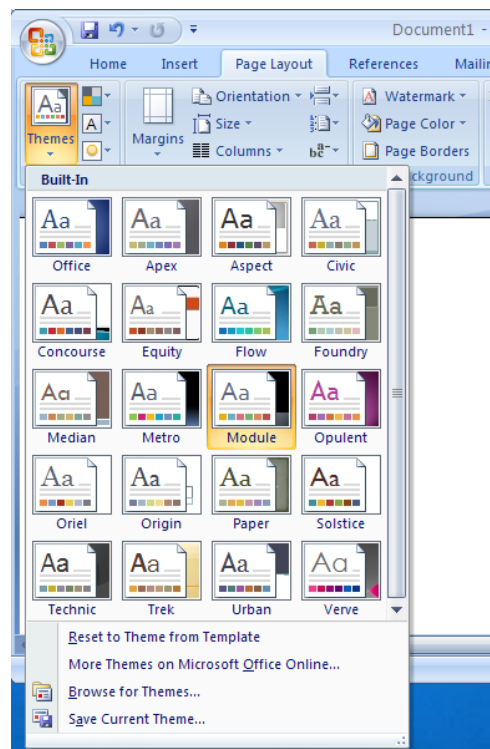
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A Use Theme Effects to give your Word objects a specific and uniform look that carries over to other Office applications.



B A theme dictates your document's fonts, colors and special effects.

15 ways to keep your SQL Server host safe and sound

As DBA, you're probably acutely aware of your responsibility for the health and well-being of the database. And if you're like most experienced DBAs, you've taken the time and effort to establish security policies and implement the built-in mechanisms SQL Server provides to secure the database. But as every security expert will tell you, the best strategies involve layers.

The database is at the center of most IT infrastructures and certainly needs to be independently hardened against intrusion and misuse. However, if you want a truly secure database, you'll need to reach out to the adjacent layers. That means safeguarding the machine and operating system hosting the database, as well as the network connecting the database server to other systems. We'll show you 15 ways you can reduce your database's exposure to security problems in these areas.

General (OS-independent) tips

Our list of tips isn't in any particular order of importance. It's up to you to decide which ones to implement, and in what order. Evaluate your situation and decide which deserve your attention right off the bat based on your particular environment. That said, we'll begin with general tips

and then zero in on certain things to do with your Windows configuration to keep the database host safe.

Tip #1: Secure the infrastructure

Make sure the SQL Server host is in a locked room with limited access, redundant power, and fire protection systems. Don't just assume that this is the case. Check it out yourself or confirm it with the administrator responsible for that machine.

Tip #2: Dedicate the host to SQL Server

Seek to make the SQL Server host dedicated to the database. This makes it easier

to secure because only privileged accounts can gain access and there's less need to focus on file permissions. Nonetheless, watch file permissions on any files containing passwords and user account information, along with data, configuration, audit, log, and control files.

Tip #3: Don't neglect patch management

Keep the operating system patched regardless of which OS is in use. You might not actually be the one doing

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the patching, but you should check it regularly and raise the issue if necessary.

Monitor security alerts issued by Microsoft, and patch the software promptly. Check the Microsoft security website at www.microsoft.com/technet/security/current.aspx for information on security alerts. A little way down the page, you'll find a section called Search By Product/Technology, featuring a Product/Technology dropdown box from which you can select SQL Server 2000 and other products.

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Tip #4: Avoid internet-facing

It's best not to have the SQL Server host directly accessible from the internet. This means that putting a web server or application server on the same machine is a bad idea. Web servers and application servers should access the database from another machine within the local network.

Tip #5: Evaluate your hardware strategy

Take a look at the hardware strategy involving the database. Security isn't only about hackers; it's also about availability of the database. If you aren't using RAID or some other disk-mirroring solution, you should do so. Look at disaster recovery and determine what would happen if the SQL Server host crashed and was offline for several days.

How to deal with overlapping responsibilities

When it comes to dealing with host and network security, the subject of domain becomes all important. In many organizations, it may be difficult to tell where the DBA's domain stops and the system administrator's domain starts. Some system administrators are downright anal about their network and machines (as some DBAs are about their databases). In other organizations, the DBA may have full control over the database host, but will still likely hand off responsibility for the network interface to the sys admin.

You could argue that separating duties related to database host security between the DBA and sys admin is beneficial to general security. After all, it's potentially dangerous for one individual to have ultimate control over a valuable IT asset. Either way, if you're the DBA, it pays to be informed regardless of whether host security is a personal responsibility or a matter for discussion with system administrators.

Tip #6: Audit the backup plan

Pay close attention to the SQL Server host backup plan. If you're doing an online backup to another disk on the host machine, verify that those files are getting copied to tape at some point. Check the file permissions on backup files and encrypt them if necessary. Keep an offsite backup of the database in a secure location.

Tip #7: Enforce strong passwords for admin accounts

It's important to enforce strong passwords on all accounts, but particularly on the privileged administrative accounts. Set up automatic password expiration, and lock accounts subjected to five successive login failures.

Tip #8: Secure the traveling database

Beware the traveling DBA or developer who totes around a complete copy of your development or production SQL Server database. If the laptop is lost or stolen, a knowledgeable party could find themselves in possession of a treasure trove of confidential information.

There are products available using house-key sized USB tokens and the Advanced Encryption Standard (AES). Without the token, the laptop is completely impenetrable. When ready for use, simply insert the token into the USB port and enter the password.

Tip #9: Assess host vulnerabilities

A third-party vulnerability assessment (VA) can be an extremely valuable tool to provide security benchmarks and to measure the effectiveness of security measures. Hire a vendor that specializes in VA to perform a test against your SQL Server host to gain an appreciation of where the greatest vulnerabilities lie. You should perform assessments on a regular basis, quarterly or annually, because the security landscape is continually shifting.

Tip #10: Guard against insecure applications practices

Although guarding accounts is more of a database issue than a host issue, if an application uses, say, sa to access the

database, that's a clear case of something outside the database that may put the database at risk.

And while it may seem like an obvious mistake, the reality is that many developers use the sa account to access the database in their software, simply because that saves them from having to manage permissions. In addition, sometimes commercial software defaults to using the sa account unless the administrator configures it to use a different account.

The worst offenders, of course, are applications that store the sa password. ASP and ASP.NET applications may store this information in a file such as global.asa or web.config. So, to expand upon the concept mentioned in Tip #2, it's smart to make sure that any application, on any machine that uses the database, doesn't overly expose the password of sa — or any other account.

Tip #11: Tighten up if necessary

Where tight security is necessary, consider implementing a solution for network traffic encryption to encrypt *all* traffic to and from the server. You might also want to look into an Intrusion Detection System (IDS). These are complicated tools and not for the feint of heart. Seek expert advice and assistance before attempting to implement an IDS.

Tips for Windows

Clearly, securing Microsoft Windows is a big part of securing the host. Viruses are always an issue, and hackers have been known to target Windows vulnerabilities out of spite. So let's take a look at a few tips that will help you keep Windows attacks from jeopardizing SQL Server.

Tip #12: Disable unnecessary services

Use the Services Administration applet to disable all services that don't necessarily need to run. If you're unsure as to whether a particular service is in use, the first step is to learn more about it. What functionality does it enable? If you're still not sure, use the time-tested method

of turning it off and then listening for distant screams. (This strategy isn't recommended immediately prior to going on vacation.)

Tip #13: Put SQL Server on an NTFS partition

Make sure that SQL Server is installed on an NTFS partition so you can assign proper file permissions. Take particular care to remove unnecessary access to the parent folder containing SQL Server files, and make sure that files inherit the permissions you set for the parent folder.

Tip #14: Regularly scan for viruses

Even though your Windows host might not have an email client or server, it's

still a good idea to scan for viruses.

Well-protected network perimeters can still be infiltrated by unsecured wireless networks, modems capable of answering phone calls, and unwitting insiders.

Tip #15: Consider using disk encryption

Take file system security a step further by encrypting the SQL Server data file disk partitions with the help of a third-party product, or by using Windows Encrypted File System (EFS). EFS uses a private key for each file. If the private key is lost, a recovery agent provides a backup of the private key. Store the private key of the recovery agent someplace other than on the computer it's protecting. Beware, however, that disk encryption comes at a price in terms of performance.

Now that you have some new ideas ...

Before you charge off to the system administrator's cubicle, remember that good communication is central to good security. If you're tackling some of these strategies yourself, make sure you tell the guys and gals with ultimate responsibility for the machines. Take stock of the present situation, research precise methods of improving host security, and write up a thorough report.

Security is a relative term

Lastly, bear in mind that the road to better security is never-ending. You might never make it through all 15 tips contained here. Just prioritize them, set some goals, and approach the task as you would eating an elephant — one bite at a time. 🍷



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A practical method for defining team roles and responsibilities

There are a variety of problems and challenges that managers may have to overcome to meet their projects' objectives: changes in scope, uncertain economic conditions, technical difficulties, or poor estimates. Yet, aside from these common management challenges, managers must also deal with another class of issues and problems that are related to individual and team effectiveness. The underlying cause for many project problems is that managers haven't clearly defined team roles and responsibilities.

Building a clear definition of team members' roles and responsibilities is one of the most basic and powerful responsibilities of a manager. The negative impact of failing to adequately define responsibilities always surfaces at a critical time, and consumes team energy that's more productively used to address other project issues.

Four steps to defining team roles

You should follow a simple four-step process when you first define your team's roles and responsibilities. We'll discuss each of these steps in more detail later in this article.

Step 1: Do your homework to understand your client and team. What roles and responsibilities are expected?

What would be most effective? As the manager, this will put you in a position to facilitate the team process more effectively and to best utilize the strengths of each individual.

Step 2: Let the team members know that they will participate in an exercise to identify and document roles and responsibilities. They must complete a simple document that identifies their individual mission statements and then lists key functions they will perform. See **Figure A** for a sample form they can use for this step. Team members will individually complete this document as a "homework" assignment.

Step 3: Review the individual write-ups as a team. Discuss them, modify them, and come to a mutual agreement. It's

in these face-to-face discussions that you clarify the team's perceptions and generate much of the process value.

Step 4: Document and distribute the results. Everyone gets a copy of the complete package.

First, do your homework

Don't just facilitate. It's important that you start by understanding the capabilities and expectations of your team members as they relate to this project, and how to build on their strengths. The process will require your leadership to optimize the results.

Many times, a client will select key team members. Generally, this means there's a preconceived definition of those members' roles. This is something to investigate and understand. If

you don't agree, don't ignore it; negotiate the issue with the appropriate people. In addition, it's very likely the client had a say in picking you as the manager. Have a discussion with the client to clarify any expectations regarding your exact role. It's very likely that your client has a vision of how your strengths will be best employed.

Review contracts or agreements

Make sure that you understand the contractual responsibilities of any contractors on your team. It would be wrong, for example, to ask an engineering group to generate project estimates if your construction manager has already signed up for that task. This can easily happen because contracts are often based on boilerplate

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documents and not read in detail. Team members may let others perform their contractually assigned tasks — many people like to avoid certain types of work — yet the willing parties may not be the best ones to do the work; reviewing contractual responsibilities with the team will help avoid these situations.

Know your team

When making choices for who will be responsible for specific project work, it really helps to have an understanding of a person's track record, technical background, and interpersonal skills.

As the manager, you may want to have discussions with other managers to get their input. You may also want to talk to other project stakeholders and the past clients of team members. All of these techniques provide information to help develop a team's roles and eliminate some possible problems.

Review corporate job descriptions

Large companies that routinely undertake sizeable projects typically have detailed job descriptions for most project team members. Before

entering into a roles-and-responsibilities-definition exercise, you should read and understand job descriptions. Clarify any questions with the appropriate manager. Generally speaking, avoid creating a significant deviation from the company guidelines without approval.

Understand the high-risk areas of the project

Before entering the roles-and-responsibilities exercise with your team, understand what will be the most difficult and highest-risk elements of the project. For example, will it be the software programming, a particularly nasty utility design issue, or the mechanical equipment design? Whatever the case, you'll then find an area for the team to focus on during your roles-and-responsibilities exercise, ensuring that all are clear on these most critical functions.

Communicate expectations

One of the best ways we've found to introduce the roles-and-responsibilities-definition process to the project team is to take a few minutes at a project team meeting and ask each person to discuss any problems they may have encountered on previous projects caused by poor definition of roles and responsibilities. You can refer to each of these examples as lost productivity, and you can identify the types of problems

you want to avoid by clearly defining each team member's role.

This type of process will allow you to avoid problems created by misunderstanding responsibilities — problems that usually appear when it's too late to recover.

Explain your worksheet

Describe your worksheet and its two main areas, asking each person to express their individual mission statement and key functions. The team members should complete and submit their worksheets to you a few days before a special team meeting you'll hold to discuss and clarify the responsibilities. We advise that you don't compress this activity into a standing team meeting. Allow about 10 to 15 minutes, on average, per individual when scheduling the meeting. In addition, consider leading off the group discussion meeting with an exercise aimed at getting to know each other better.

Have an example

When explaining the worksheet to team members, it's helpful to demonstrate an example. What better way to provide this than to complete a worksheet for your own position?

You may get pushback

One thing you should be prepared for during this phase is *pushback*. One or

Project Team Roles and Responsibilities

Job Description: Project Manager

Name: John Doe

Date: 9/21/03

Mission Statement:
Overall responsibility of the project to the client. Lead the project team and ensure that project goals are met in a way that results in an extremely satisfied client and project team.

Key Functions:

1. Facilitate a Project Requirements Document with the client
2. Ensure a detailed project schedule is developed, statused, and updated
3. Ensure a detailed work breakdown structure is developed.
4. Ensure budget estimates are developed and approved.
5. Document and implement a change management process
6. Follow client's project process
7. Work with functional managers to staff the core project team
8. Develop a project resource plan
9. Provide a written monthly status report to the client
10. Conduct weekly project team meetings
11. Create and implement a project recognition plan
12. Develop written roles and responsibilities for each core team member
13. Ensure the project team is aggressively optimizing results for the client

A
This sample team member worksheet captures the key functions for one team member.

more team members may not see the need to follow this process. You might hear some common reservations like the following:

- “We know what our jobs are; let us do them.”
- “This is such a straightforward project that this is a waste of time.”

Being prepared to logically answer these complaints is the best offense. In addition, the exercise of referring to problems on past jobs helps diffuse the issue.

Facilitate a group discussion

As we mentioned earlier, we recommend a dedicated work session for the group discussion, along with the completed worksheets. In the spirit of making this a team-building exercise, have the exercise somewhere out of the ordinary.

Everyone should get a complete package of submitted worksheets at the start of the meeting. After discuss-

ing and refining the manager’s input, go through each person’s worksheet individually. Have the worksheets ahead of time. If advance reading of the worksheets reveals a volatile or controversial situation, consider resolving that issue before the group meeting.

Your goal is to encourage group discussion and debate. Clarification can only happen through an exchange of ideas. As the facilitator, it’s vital that you ask for clarification if a statement isn’t clear. It’s also imperative to put special focus on areas of high priority, or where there are known problems.

Document and distribute

It’s crucial that you maintain the results of the team exercise. Take responsibility for making changes to the input sheets and circulating the results to the whole team. Post the results on the project’s bulletin board, intranet Web site, or other repository. Review the results of your

exercise with functional managers and the client.

Put the simple process into action

You can avoid project problems caused by improper perceptions of team members’ roles and responsibilities. We’ve discussed one method for defining the roles and responsibilities of each team member; our method is very basic, but with adequate

preparation and effort, it will do the job. We’d also suggest you supplement this process with a project schedule that clearly identifies responsibilities for task activities. Meeting notes and action item lists should also clearly assign responsibility for tasks. Finally, continually monitor the project team’s performance throughout the project for role-related problems. Resolve any resulting problems quickly and thoroughly. 🌐

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