Linking up

Excel 97 offers a number of ways in which to exchange information between a workbook and a web page; Stephen Wells explains how. Plus, Excel 97's hyperlink capabilities.

A worksheet which is specially designed to accept data from a particular web page is called a Web Query. To run one, you choose Data, Get External Data, Run Web Query, then select the particular Query you wish to run from the Run Query dialog box. Excel 97 includes four of them, as I mentioned last month, but one of these is "Get More Web Queries". At present, if you run that when connected to its source, you can download an active sheet with 36 more Queries.

If you have your own web page, it's easy to add a range of a worksheets:
1. Open the page with your usual browser.
2. Choose View, Source, so you can see the HTML code.
3. Where you want the new worksheet data to appear, insert a blank line and then
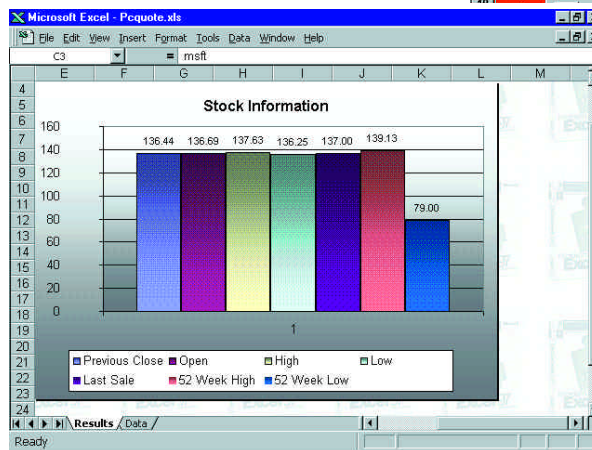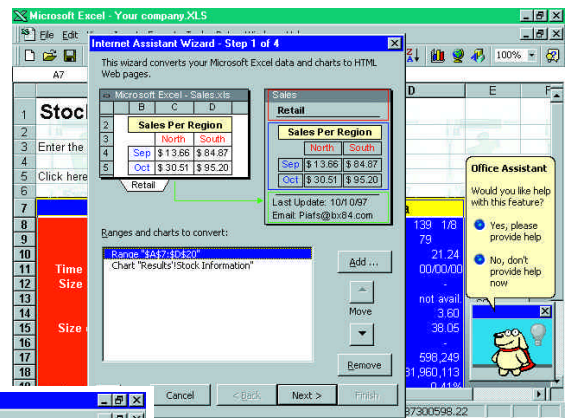`<--##Table##-->`
4. Save this edited file.
5. Open your worksheet in Excel and select the range you want to add to the web page.
6. Choose File, Save as HTML (Hypertext Mark-up Language). This starts the Internet Assistant Wizard (Fig 1) and you follow a few simple steps. These include browsing to select the .html file you've prepared for accepting the data. When you've finished, the range will appear on the web page.

You also use this Wizard to prepare a worksheet as a web page. It works much better now than when I previewed it last October. If you just accept all the defaults, the Wizard selects enough of the first range of your worksheet to fill a web page, then it

Fig 1 (right) It is easy to save a range of your worksheet as an HTML-coded web page, automatically, using the Internet Asst. Wizard

Fig 2 (below) The Excel 97 Web Connectivity Kit includes a template for converting downloaded data into charts

creates a new HTML-coded page complete with header, footer and table. This can be opened in Microsoft Explorer or your other favourite browser.

Excel 97 also makes it easy to add an Excel form to your web site which can be used for collecting information for a database. This might be for taking orders from users, or requests for information, or just recording comments. You first create the form in Excel with cells where users will enter their data. Then choose Tools, Wizard, Web Form to open the Web Form Wizard which asks you to select those cells on your worksheet that you wish to have

the user fill in, and the labels you wish to give them. It then automatically produces a new .xls file and companion .idc, .htx, and .mdb files. You supply these four files to the web page administrator and you can open the new .xls file, which looks like your original, with a Submit Info button added. This Wizard works best with Microsoft Access 97 and Microsoft Explorer 3.

On this month's cover-mounted CD I've included the complete Excel 97 Web Connectivity Kit. It's the definitive guide to developing sophisticated web sites for Excel users. It also helps you to create special pages on Excel worksheets that will automatically elicit information from company intranets or specific internet web sites. You can learn how to pull daily sales, stock or financial reports from a company intranet server straight onto a worksheet. The Excel 97 Web Connectivity Kit includes an example of converting downloaded data into charts (Fig 2).

Meanwhile, back in the office…
The hyperlink capability of Excel 97 can also be used to improve links with files on an office network, or on your own disks: hard,

or mounted floppy. If you just want a hyperlink from one Excel worksheet to another without the use of a formula, the easiest way is to select the worksheet data in the destination workbook and then use the right mouse button to drag the information to the worksheet cell that contains the text, button or graphic for the hyperlink. When you release the right mouse button, click Create Hyperlink Here on the shortcut menu (Fig 4).

It's also easy to create a hyperlink between a worksheet and a Word document or a PowerPoint slide. Say you have the text, SEE REPORT, in a cell and the report referred to is a Word document. Just select the cell and then click the Insert hyperlink button on the standard Excel 95 toolbar (or press Ctrl+K). This opens a dialog box where you can browse to find the Word file. Click OK and that's all there is to it. The words SEE REPORT are now an automatic link which opens the Word file when you click them.

As you were
Last month I was saying that Excel 97 allows you to use row and column labels as references, assuming that you've checked the "Accept labels in formulas" box under Tools, Options, Calculation.

I mentioned that in the beta version I tried, this feature easily got confused when one of my labels was "Current Assets" and another was "Current". I also said that if the column heading was a formula, like =B1-1, instead of 1995, then I received an error message even though the sheet displayed

Fig 4 You can create direct hyperlinks simply by dragging a cell from one Excel 97 worksheet to another and right-clicking

1995. I've since received the final version (if there ever is a *final* version) and can report that both of these minor problems have been corrected.

VBA changes
The Excel 97 Visual Basic object model has extensive changes to support new and improved features in Visual Basic for Applications in Office 97. Many objects, properties and methods have been replaced. To provide backward compatibility, most of the replaced components have been hidden rather than removed. They don't show up with the object browser although the existing code that uses the hidden components still works. When you write new code you should use the new objects, properties and methods.

The first thing to get used to is that macros are not displayed on module sheets any more although they are still stored with the workbook. To create or edit a macro you choose Tools, Macro, Visual Basic Editor (or press Alt+F11) and three windows open (Fig 3). Visual Basic now features a single, consistent editing environment for Office programs similar to working in standalone Visual Basic 5.0. Each Excel
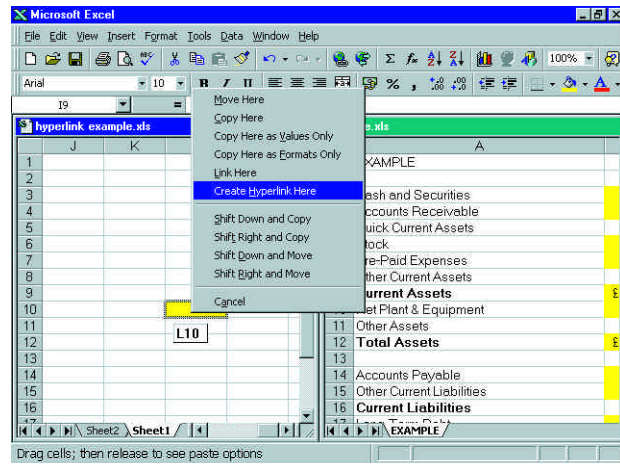
workbook has a project associated with it. There is an improved code editor, a hierarchical object browser, a multipane debugger, a Properties Window and a Project Explorer to help you view and organise the code and objects in your project.

If you open a workbook created in earlier versions of Excel, Excel 97 preserves macro and dialog sheets and converts module sheets into modules in the workbook's Visual Basic project.
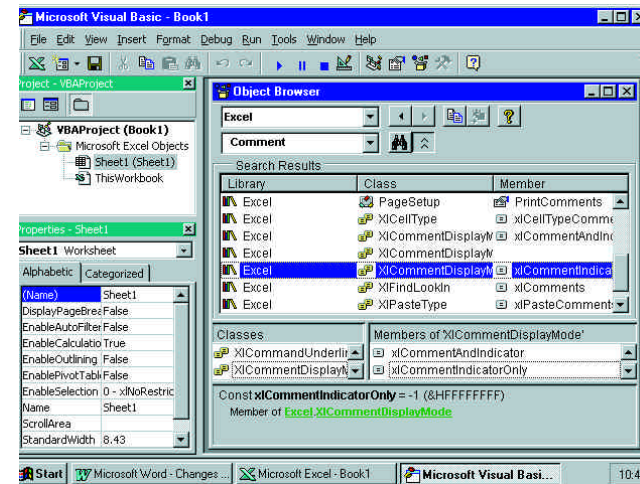
You can run and edit Excel 4.0 macros and Excel 5.0 and 7.0 dialog sheets. To view them, just choose Tools, Macros (or press Alt+F8). You can even add new macro or dialog sheets by right-clicking a sheet tab and then clicking Insert on the shortcut menu. However, it is recommended that you create new macros and dialog boxes in the Visual Basic Editor.

The three largest areas of change in Excel 97 Visual Basic are Shapes, UserForms and Command Bars.

Shapes are drawing objects. The Shape Object is for formatting or modifying a single shape. The Shapes Collection is for modifying all the Shape objects on a specified sheet, such as AutoShape, freeform or OLE objects. The ShapeRange Collection is for modifying a group of Shape objects which you specify.

A UserForm Object is a window or dialog box that makes up part of a custom application's user interface. The UserForms Collection is a collection whose elements represent each loaded UserForm in an application. The UserForms collection has a Count property (which specifies the number of elements in the collection), an Item property (to specify a specific collection member), and an Add method (for placing a new UserForm element in the collection).

CommandBar Objects in Office 97

EXCELlent changes in Excel 97

■ The Chart command on the Insert menu now starts the Chart Wizard. On step four of the Chart Wizard, you can specify whether the chart is inserted as an embedded object on a worksheet or on its own chart sheet.
■ The Office Assistant has replaced the TipWizard from versions 5.0 and 95, and includes Answer Wizard IntelliSense technology from version 95. When you need Help, just click the Office Assistant button and ask the Assistant a question in your own words. When a yellow light bulb appears in the Assistant, a program tip is available: click the light bulb to see the tip.
■ Cell notes are now called comments. Use the Comment command on the Insert menu to create a comment. You can view comments in the same way that you used to view notes: by resting the pointer over a cell that has a comment indicator (this is a red triangle in version 97) in the upper right-hand

corner of the cell.
■ The Info Window feature is no longer available in Excel 97. To locate cells that provide data to formulas, use the Auditing toolbar.
■ The Shared List command has gone from the File menu. In Excel 97 you can use shared workbooks to create and edit formulae, change formatting, create and change charts, and even add sheets. To share a workbook, click Share Workbook on the Tools menu.
■ Sound notes have also been dropped from Excel 97.
■ To start the PivotTable Wizard, choose the PivotTable Report command on the Data menu.
■ The View Manager command has disappeared from the View menu. Use the Custom Views command on the View menu to save a custom view of a workbook. Custom views have been integrated into Excel 97 and this command no longer requires an add-in program.

Fig 3 The new Visual Basic editing environment is the same in every Office 97 application and it's all graphically orientated

control the toolbars, menu bars, and shortcut menus in a workbook. Not only can you create and modify custom toolbars, menu bars and shortcut menus for a tailor-made Visual Basic application, but you can also modify any of Excel's own built-in toolbars and menu bar. You can present the features of your application as individual buttons on toolbars or as groups of command names on menus. Because toolbars and menus are both considered to be command bars, you use the same kind of controls for both.

Having installed Office 97, you can find much of the information you need about these changes in the vbaxl8.hlp file. Some useful snippets are in the file xlread8.txt.

Office 97 includes an MS Query Add-In to convert external data ranges which are in Excel 97 format to Excel 5 for Windows 95 format. This is not so much for making Excel 97 data available to version 5/95 users, as for allowing Excel 97 users to run macros created in Excel 5.

Right on the button
I recently received a fax from Jeff Forrest, who is working in Paris for a company that has internal email only. Jeff offers the tip that if you run out of suitable button designs

On the *PCW* CD-ROM

If you have Excel 97 and Word 97 installed on your computer, you can use the Excel 97 Web Connectivity Kit described here. From the cover CD, copy the self-extracting zip file, WEBCNKIT.EXE, into the folder of your choice on your hard disk and double-click on the icon to expand the files. Follow the instructions in WebCnKit.doc to use the various sample files. Descriptions of the files are in this document's appendix.

for your macros in Excel, you can borrow one from Word.

If you have MS Office 95 or 97, start Excel and Word. If you choose View, Toolbars, Customise, Commands, All Commands in Word, you're offered a wide choice of button designs, any one of which can be dragged onto any toolbar (temporarily).

Right-click on this button and choose Copy Button Image. Drag the button off the toolbar to dispose of it, then switch to Excel. Whenever the Toolbars Customise dialog box is open, the same shortcut menu is available in Excel, so now you can right-click on the button which starts your macro and choose Paste Button Image. This new button will be stored in the Normal.dot template and will stay on the toolbar until you wish to remove it.

A case in point
In his correspondence, Jeff also included a macro for changing the case of selected text. I entered and checked his module and it worked fine, but as I had covered that subject extensively (in my January column), I wasn't going to mention it.

But then I received an email from Andy Male: "I read with interest your article on changing the case of text within Excel. I'm using Excel 5.0 and have successfully created a macro button that will change the case of a single cell. I am trying to amend the macro so that I can change the case of a single cell, or a selected range, but despite hours of effort I have failed. The macro I'm using for the single cell is:

```
Sub titlecasecell()
    ActiveCell.Value = Application.
Proper(ActiveCell)
End Sub"
```

So all of a sudden, Jeff's macro became immediately useful. He had written:

```
Sub MakeProper()
Dim myCell As Object
For Each myCell In Selection
If Left(myCell.Formula, 1) <> "="
```

```
Then
myCell.Value = Application.Proper
(myCell.Value)
End If
Next myCell
End Sub
```

I sent this to Andy, who replied: "Thanks for your help — that cracked the problem. I guess it's simple when you know how!" I hope they both see this so that Andy knows where the solution came from and Jeff knows that he did a good deed.

Keyboard conundrum
Roy Small emailed me with an interesting dilemma. "I have a persistent keyboard problem with Excel 7.0 and Word 7.0. When I type a repeating comma (,,,,,,,) I get repeating (.....) full stops. It only happens in these two applications and I have tried reinstalling twice, but to no avail. In the Turnpike editor and in Wordpad there is no problem. My system is an Escom P60 with 16Mb and Win95. Word 5 and Excel 5 did not have this problem. All the country settings are correct.

"I am loathe to delve into the registry unless I know what I'm looking for. I would appreciate a pointer in the right direction if you are aware of this problem."

I replied: "If you're getting correct results with other software, then it can't be a keyboard mapping problem.

"You might check all the AutoCorrect and AutoText options. If anyone else has used your PC, they might have changed something, either consciously or inadvertently. Also (and this is something that often frustrates me) languages are set in every template. You can't just set English (British) once. It can turn back to English (US) or, perhaps in your case, Swedish or something, in different templates.

"If it's any comfort, it's not a bug in Excel 7 or Word 7 as nobody else has had the problem as far as I know."

He responded: "Brilliant, Stephen. I can't thank you enough. It was indeed the AutoCorrect setting. I don't understand why or how it ever got set that way because only I use this machine and I have never found that setting dialog before. Changing the setting in Word also affects Excel."

Contact