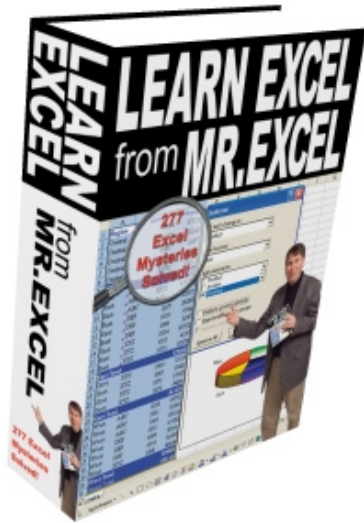




Free Preview – Week #43
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This week - 7 topics about cell comments. Originally introduced as Cell Notes, these aren't just for notes anymore!

LEAVE HELPFUL NOTES WITH CELL COMMENTS

Problem: You have figured out a particularly confusing formula in Excel, as shown in Fig. 1146. You want to add a note to the worksheet to remind yourself how the formula works.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1	Region	Product	Quantity	Unit Price				
44	East	DEF	300	22.38				
45	East	ABC	800	19.55				
46	West	ABC	1000	19.25				
47								
48	Revenue							
49		ABC	DEF	XYZ				
50	East	=SUM((\$A\$2:\$A\$46=\$A50)*\$C\$2:\$C\$46*\$D\$2:\$D\$46*(\$B\$2:\$B\$46=B\$49))						
51	Central	80003	2257	73814				
52	West	62711	15809	22950				
53								

Fig. 1146

Strategy: Use a cell comment. In addition to 16.7 million cells on a worksheet, you can also store a comment for every cell. Typically, cell comments show up as a red triangle in the corner of the cell. Hover the mouse over the cell and the comment will appear.

- 1) Select the cell where you want to add the comment. From the menu, select Insert – Comment. A comment box appears with your name in bold on line 1, as shown in Fig. 1147.

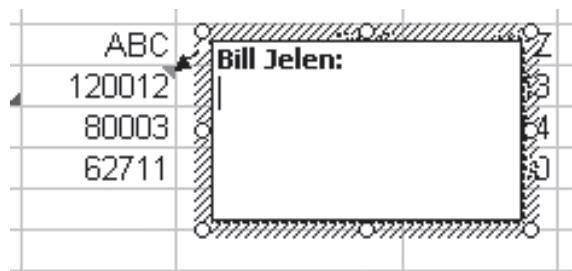


Fig. 1147

- 2) Type a comment, as shown in Fig. 1148.

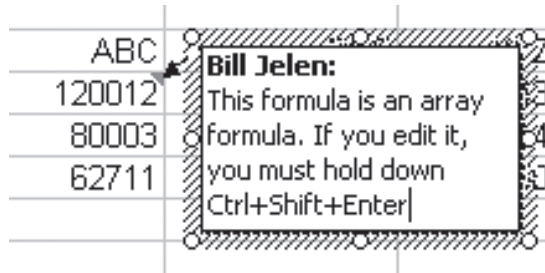


Fig. 1148

- 3) Click the mouse outside the comment box to complete the entry of the comment. Only a red triangle remains in the cell to indicate the presence of a comment there, as shown in Fig. 1149.

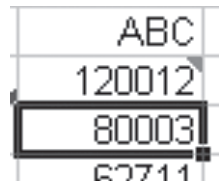


Fig. 1149

When you hover your mousepointer over the cell with the red triangle, your comment box will pop up like a tooltip, as shown in Fig. 1150.

**Part
IV**

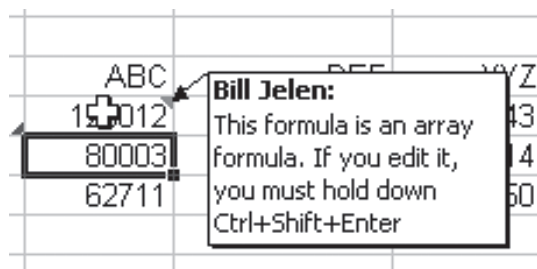


Fig. 1150

Additional Details: To delete a comment, right-click the cell and choose Delete Comment. To edit a comment, right-click the cell and choose Edit Comment.

The above information is based on the assumption that you are using the default settings for comments. There are additional settings available on the View tab of the Tools – Options dialog. On this tab, you can

suppress the appearance of the red comment indicator or force all comments to be shown at all times, as shown in Fig. 1151.

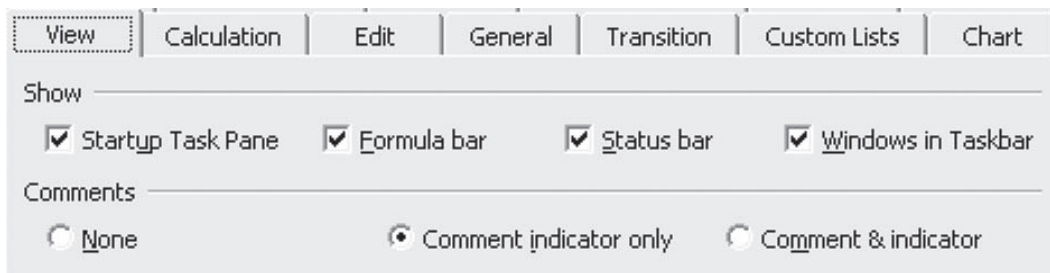


Fig. 1151

Gotcha: If you have a comment in a row above the freeze panes line, you will notice a bug. The comment will appear normally if you have scrolled the worksheet to the top, as shown in Fig. 1152.

	A	B	C
1	Region	Bill Jelen:	
2	East	Valid values are East,	
3	Central	Central, or West	
4	East		
5	Central		

Fig. 1152

However, if you have scrolled down to other pages in the worksheet, the comment is truncated, as shown in Fig. 1153.

	A	B	C
1	Region	Bill Jelen:	
30	West	DEF	300
31	West	DEF	300

Fig. 1153

Summary: Adding comments to a cell is a great way to leave notes for yourself to help you remember something about a formula later.

Commands Discussed: Insert – Comment

CHANGE APPEARANCE OF CELL COMMENTS

Problem: You type a very long comment into a cell. The comment is longer than the comment box will display, as shown in Fig. 1154.

Strategy: You actually have complete control over the size and appearance of the comment box. Right-click the border of the comment and choose Format Comment.

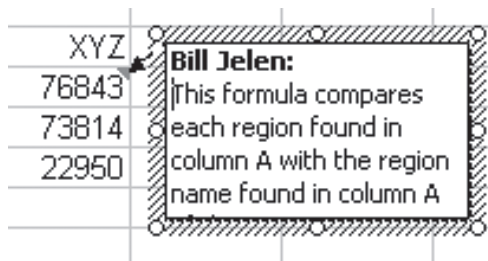


Fig. 1154

Caution: Watch for a strange behavior when formatting comments. If you notice the image in Fig. 1154, the border around the comment is comprised of diagonal lines. If you right-click and choose Format Comment when the diagonal lines appear, you will get this truncated version of the Format Comment dialog, as shown in Fig. 1155. The only options available are on the Font tab.

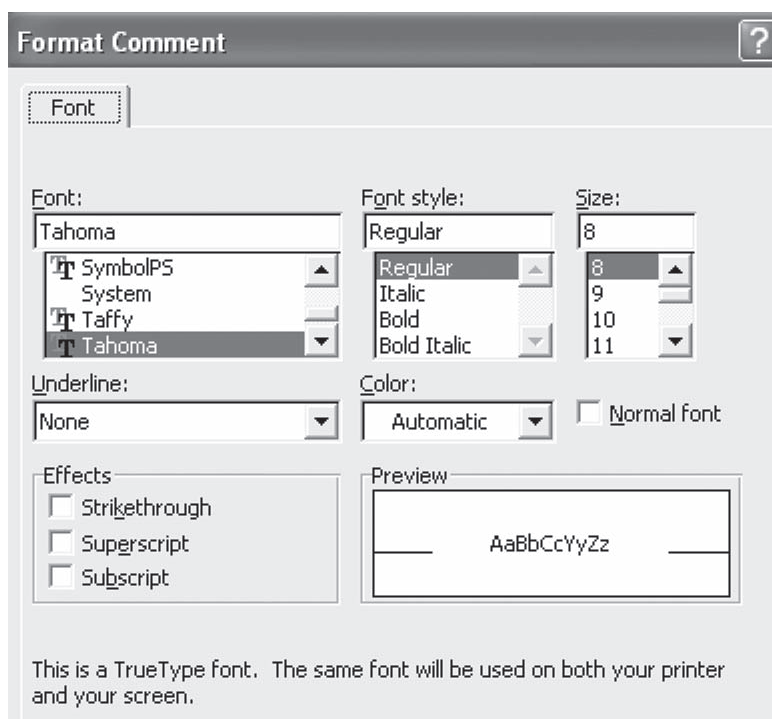


Fig. 1155

To get the complete set of formatting options, you must first left-click on the diagonal lines border. This will change the diagonal lines to dots as shown in Fig. 1156. You can now right-click the dots and choose Format Comment.

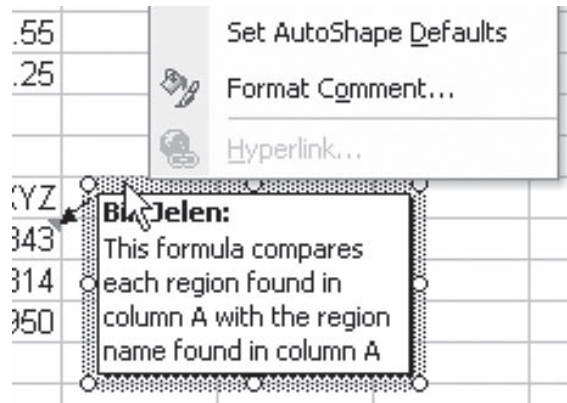


Fig. 1156

This will display the complete Format Comment dialog, as shown in Fig. 1157.

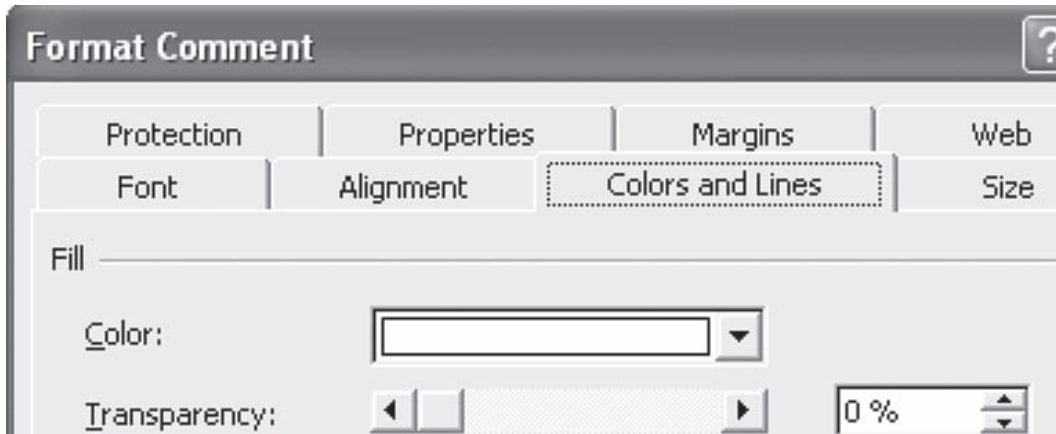


Fig. 1157

To adjust the size of the comment with precision, use the Size tab, as shown in Fig. 1158.

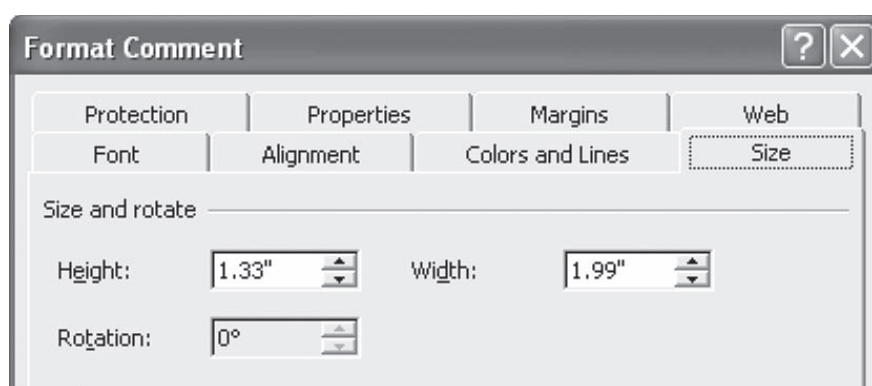


Fig. 1158

Enter a new size so that the entire comment will appear, as shown in Fig. 1159.

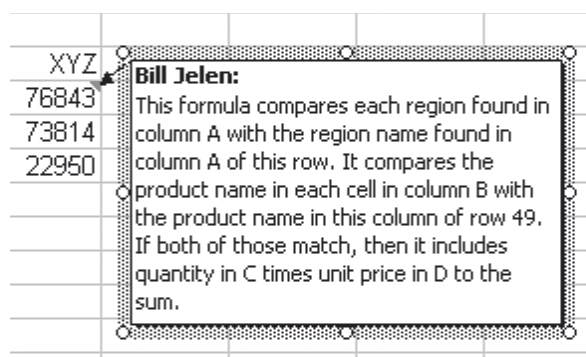


Fig. 1159

Additional Details: It is also possible to change the boring yellow comment as shown above to a nicely formatted comment. The following comment has a green-to-white gradient and is semi-transparent so that you can see the underlying cells below the comment, as shown in Fig. 1160.

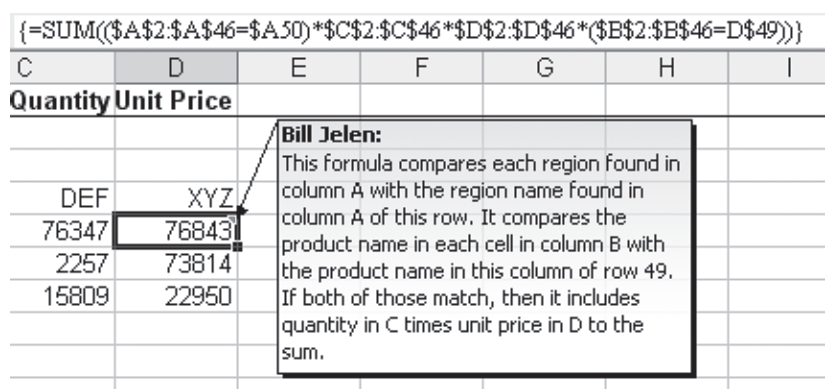


Fig. 1160

- 1) On the Format Comment dialog, go to the Colors and Lines tab, as shown in Fig. 1161.

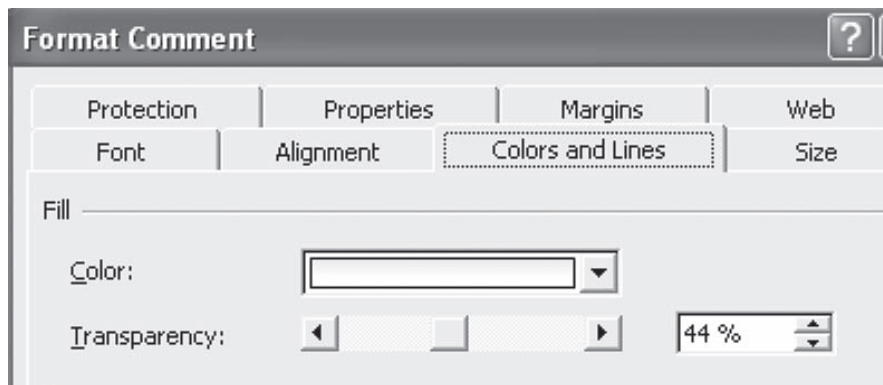


Fig. 1161

- 2) In the Fill section, Color dropdown, select Fill Effects, as shown in Fig. 1162.

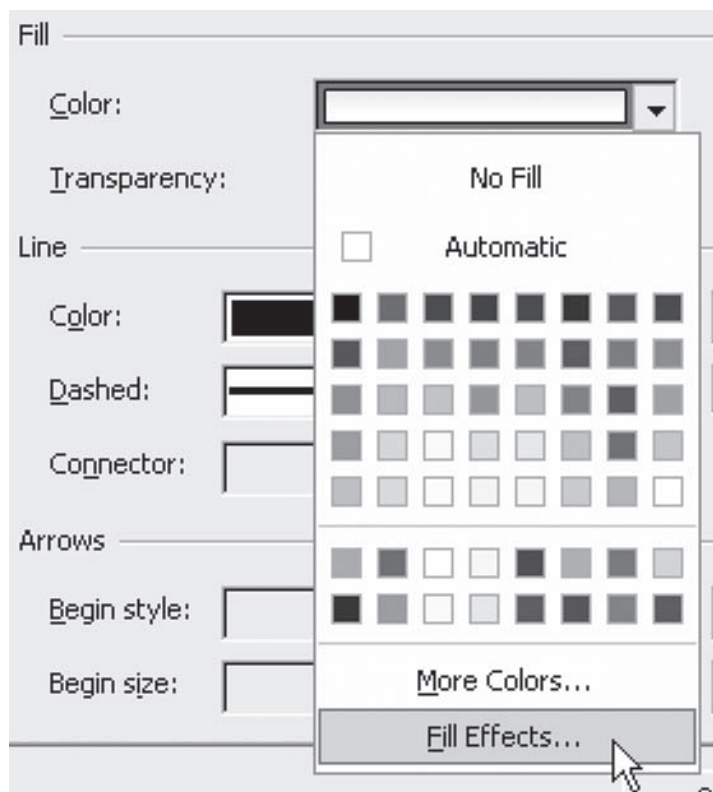


Fig. 1162

- 3) On the Fill Effects dialog, choose the Gradient tab. Choose Two Colors, green for Color 1 and white for Color 2. You can adjust the transparency for each color independently, as shown in Fig. 1163.

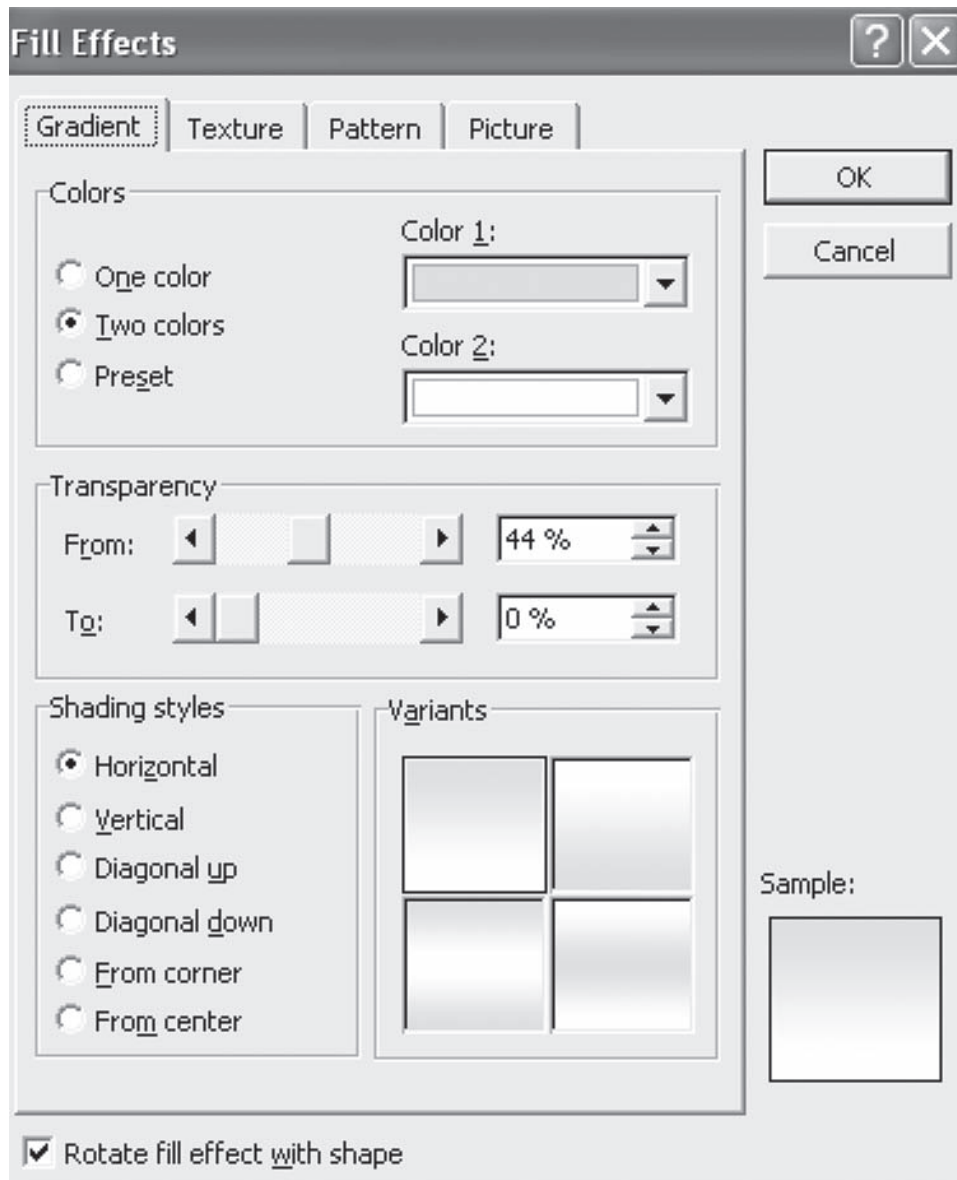


Fig. 1163

Summary: You can replace the default yellow comments with a variety of sizes and formats to increase interest in the workbook.

Commands Discussed: Format Comments

FORCE CERTAIN COMMENTS TO BE ALWAYS VISIBLE TO PROVIDE A HELP SYSTEM TO USERS OF YOUR SPREADSHEET

Problem: You are sending out a worksheet to managers and division vice presidents in order to get their budget for next year. You need to include specific instructions for many of the cells in the worksheet.

Strategy:

- 1) Use cell comments.

For each comment that you want to display 100 percent of the time, right-click the cell and choose Show Comment, as shown in Fig. 1164. This will force those comments to be always visible.

- 2) Use color coding.

Make all comments meant for managers green and the vice presidents' instructions blue. When a manager or vice president opens the file, they will have an easy-to-follow visual roadmap through their budget worksheet.

Additional Information: By default, comments will not be printed. There are two alternative settings to control the printing of comments. From the File – Page Setup dialog, go to the fourth tab, Sheet, as shown in Fig. 1165.

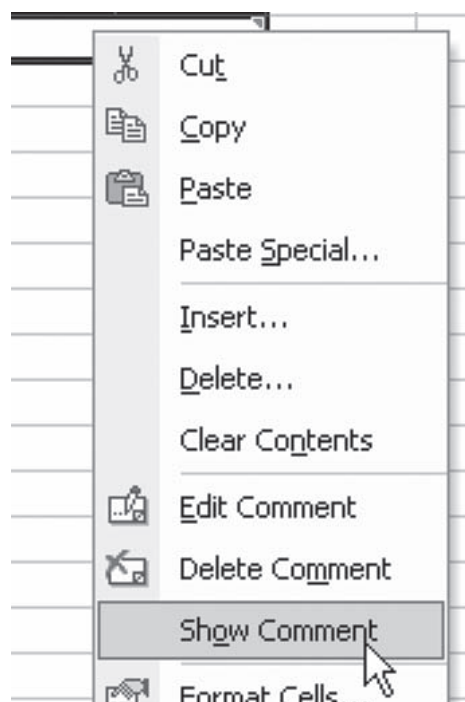


Fig. 1164

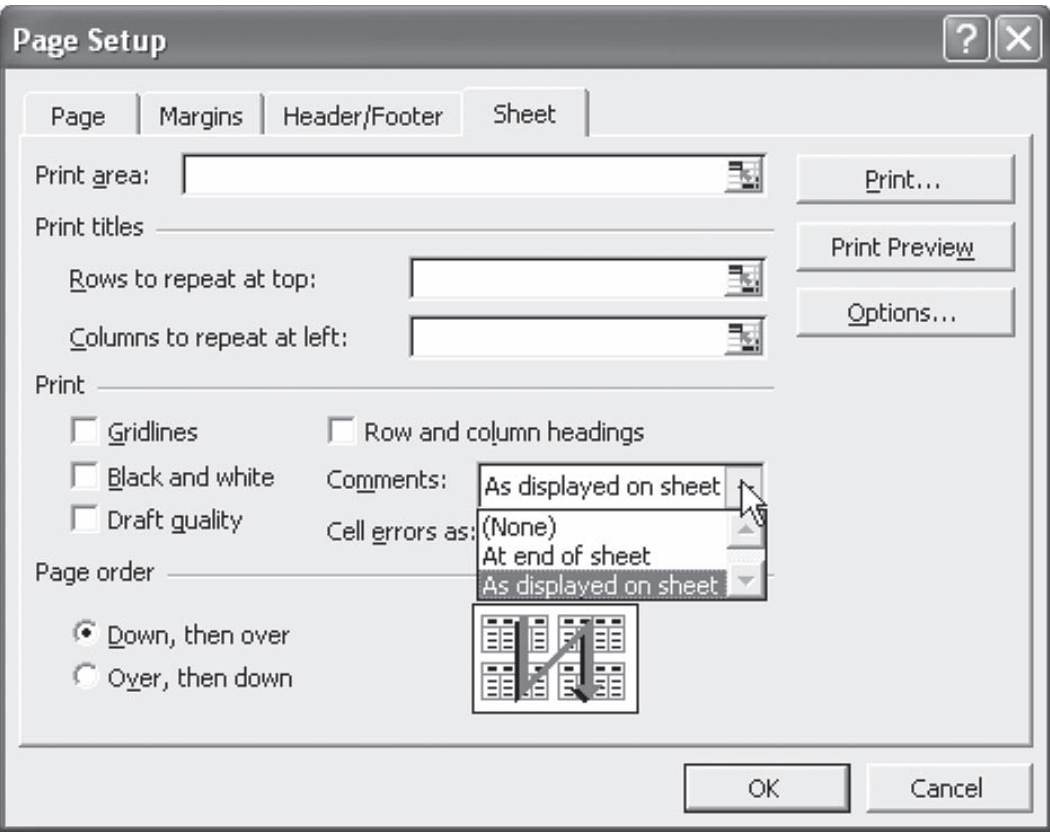


Fig. 1165

Use the comments dropdown to control the printing of comments. If you select As Displayed on Sheet, then the comment boxes will print in the size and format that you have set up for all of the displayed comments, as shown in Fig. 1166. This setting will not print comments that are hidden with only the red triangle visible.

XYZ COMPANY
BUDGET PLANNING PROCESS

Department:
Completed by:
Date Submitted:
Approved by:
Date Approved:

Enter your department name here. Please do not abbreviate.

Fig. 1166

If you select At End of Sheet, the comments will print in a separate section at the end of the printout, as shown in Fig. 1167. The only drawback with this method is that the comment printout indicates that a certain comment is attached to cell A50. Unless you print row and column headings, there is no way for the reader of the printed document to know which value on the sheet is located in cell A50.

Cell: A1
Comment: Bill Jelen:
 Valid values are East, Central, or West

Cell: B50
Comment: Bill Jelen:
 This is an array formula. To edit it, you must use Ctrl+Shift+Enter

Cell: D50
Comment: Bill Jelen:
 This formula compares each region found in Column A with the region name found in column A of this row. It compares the product name in each cell in column B with the product name of this column of row 49. If both of those match, then it includes quantity in C times the price in D.

Fig. 1167

Summary: Use the Show Comments feature to keep comments visible in order to provide an on-screen guide for someone who has to use your spreadsheet.

Commands Discussed: Show Comment; File – Page Setup – Sheet

CONTROL NAME THAT APPEARS IN COMMENTS

Problem: When you insert a comment, the name displayed in bold is something like “XYZ Company”, as shown in Fig. 1168.



Fig. 1168

Strategy: You can change the name that is displayed in the comment.

From the menu, go to Tools – Options – General. At the bottom of the General tab is a field called User Name, as shown in Fig. 1169. Change this field to the name you would like displayed in the comment.



Fig. 1169

Additional Information: It is impossible to suppress the name appearing in the comment. Even if you change the above field to a blank, Excel will pick up the computer user name.

If you want to have a comment without the name, select the name and press Delete or simply backspace through the name. Typically, the name will appear in bold and the comment that you type will appear in normal font, as shown in Fig. 1170.



Fig. 1170

When you backspace through the name and then begin to type, Excel will be in bold mode and any comment that you type will appear in bold, as shown in Fig. 1171.



Fig. 1171

To turn off the bold mode, hit Ctrl+B before you begin to type the comment.

Summary: You can change the name that appears in the comment by using the General tab of the options dialog.

Commands Discussed: Tools – Options – General

CHANGE SHAPE OF COMMENT TO A STAR

Problem: As shown in Fig. 1172, you have a comment in a cell. Jazz up your spreadsheet by changing the shape of the comment into a starburst or any other AutoShape.

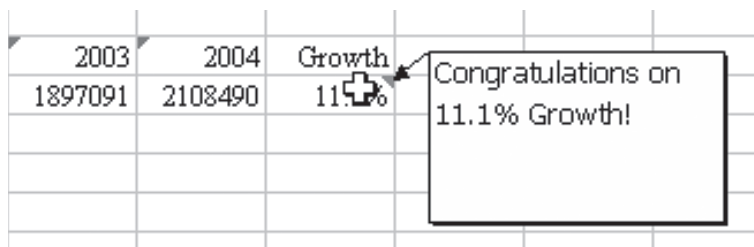


Fig. 1172

Strategy: You can change the shape of a comment. Follow these instructions.

- 1) From the cell, right-click and select Edit Comment. Diagonal lines appear, as shown in Fig. 1173.

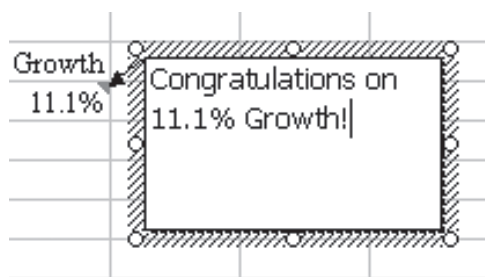
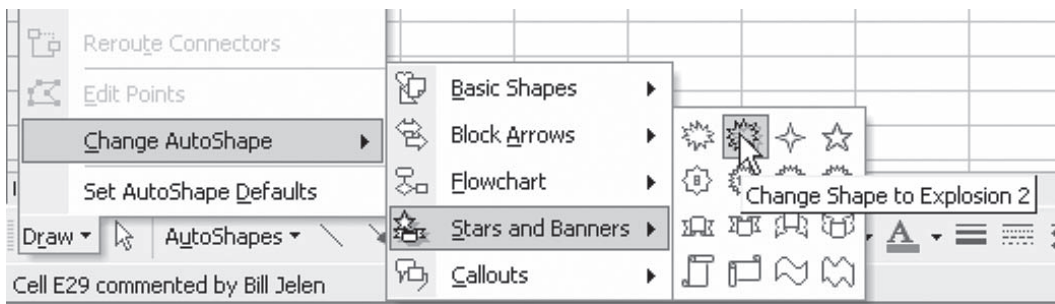


Fig. 1173

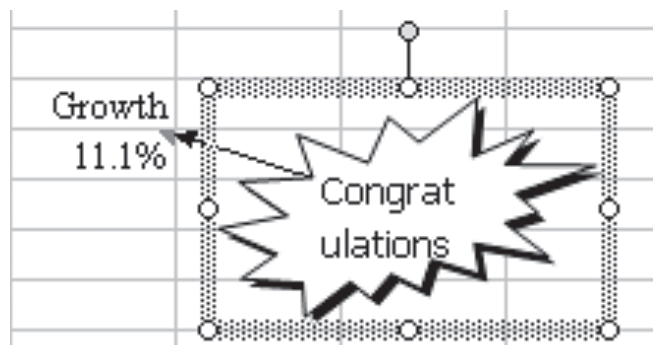
- 2) Click on the diagonal lines to change the comment from edit text mode to edit mode, as shown in Fig. 1174.

*Fig. 1174*

- 3) If you do not have the Drawing toolbar displayed, choose View – Toolbars – Drawing from the menu.
- 4) On the left side of the Drawing toolbar is a dropdown called Draw. Choose this dropdown. From the menu, select Change AutoShape.
- 5) From the flyout menu, choose Stars and Banners. From the next flyout choose Explosion 2, as shown in Fig. 1175.

*Fig. 1175*

The comment will change from a rectangle to a starburst, as shown in Fig. 1176.

*Fig. 1176*

- 6) Grab a corner white Fill handle and drag to make the shape large enough for the text, as shown in Fig. 1177.



Fig. 1177

- 7) Right-click the dots border and select Format Comment. On the Alignment tab choose to center horizontally and vertically, as shown in Fig. 1178.

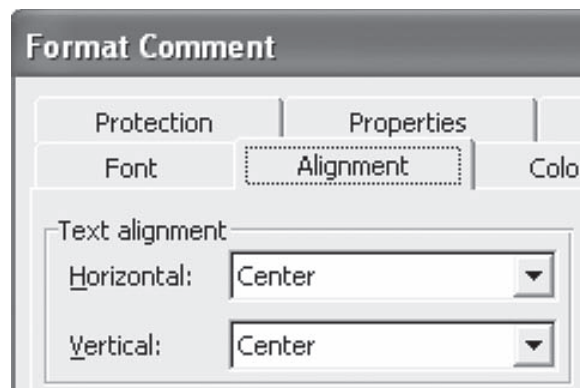
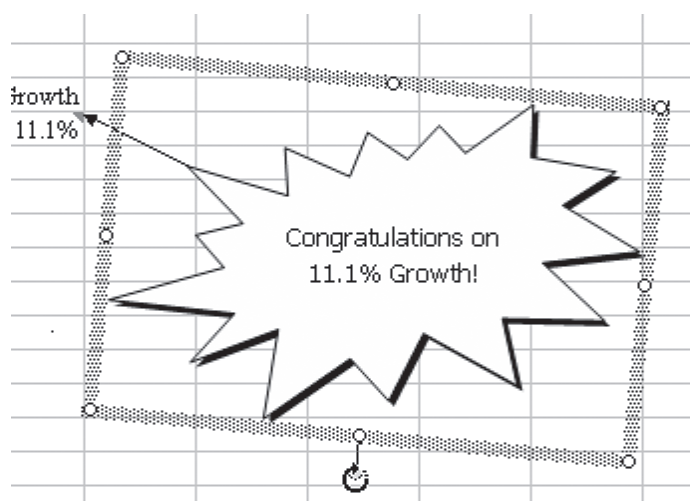


Fig. 1178

Result: The comment will appear as a starburst, as shown in Fig. 1179.

*Fig. 1179*

Additional Information: Grab the green rotate handle and rotate until you have the shape that best fits the text, as shown in Fig. 1180.

*Fig. 1180*

Summary: Using the Draw button on the Drawing toolbar, you can control the shape of a comment.

Commands Discussed: View – Toolbars; Draw – Change AutoShape

ADD A POP-UP PICTURE OF AN ITEM IN A CELL

Problem: As shown in Fig. 1181, you have a product catalog in Excel. Your sales reps will show the list of items to the buyer in a retail store. It is a pain to go back and forth between Excel and the product catalog. Can you have pictures appear on demand in Excel?

	A	B	C
1	New Sunglasses for Summer		
2			
3	Item #	Order	
4	SG073		
5	SG197		
6	SG207		
7	SG878		

Fig. 1181

Strategy: Add a pop-up picture to the cell. By hovering the mouse over an item #, the picture will appear. Follow these steps.

- 1) Select cell A4. From the menu, select Insert – Comment.

The default comment will have your name as the default text, as shown in Fig. 1182.

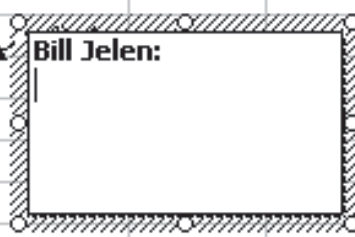
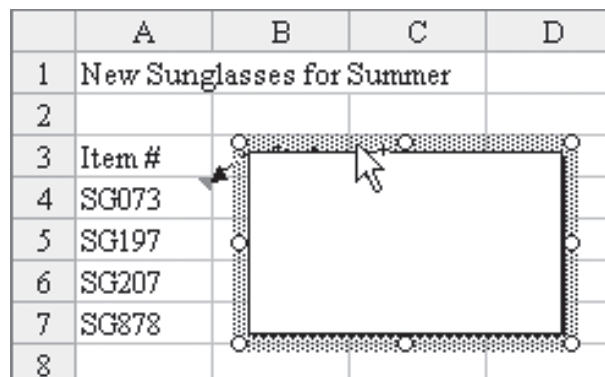
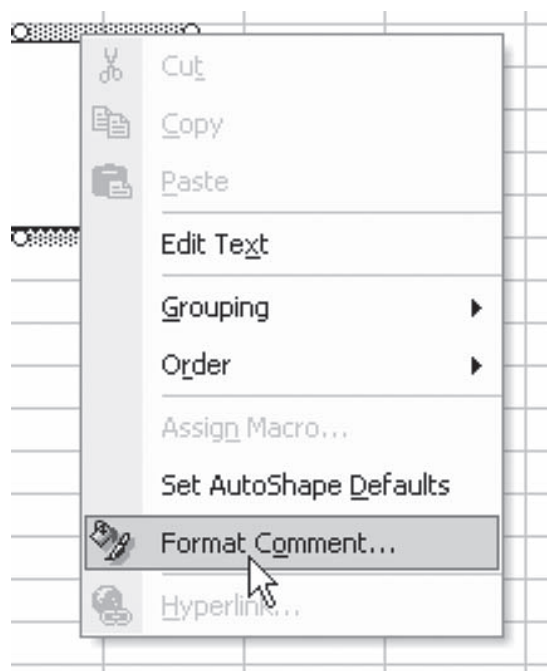
	A	B	C	D
1	New Sunglasses for Summer			
2				
3	Item #			
4	SG073			
5	SG197			
6	SG207			
7	SG878			
8				

Fig. 1182

- 2) Backspace to clear out the text in the comment.
- 3) Using the mouse, click on the diagonal-lines border in order to change the border to a series of dots, as shown in Fig. 1183.

*Fig. 1183*

- 4) Right-click the dotted border and select Format Comment, as shown in Fig. 1184.

*Fig. 1184*

- 5) There are eight tabs in the Format Comment dialog. Go to the Colors and Lines tab. In the Fill Color dropdown, choose Fill Effects..., as shown in Fig. 1185.

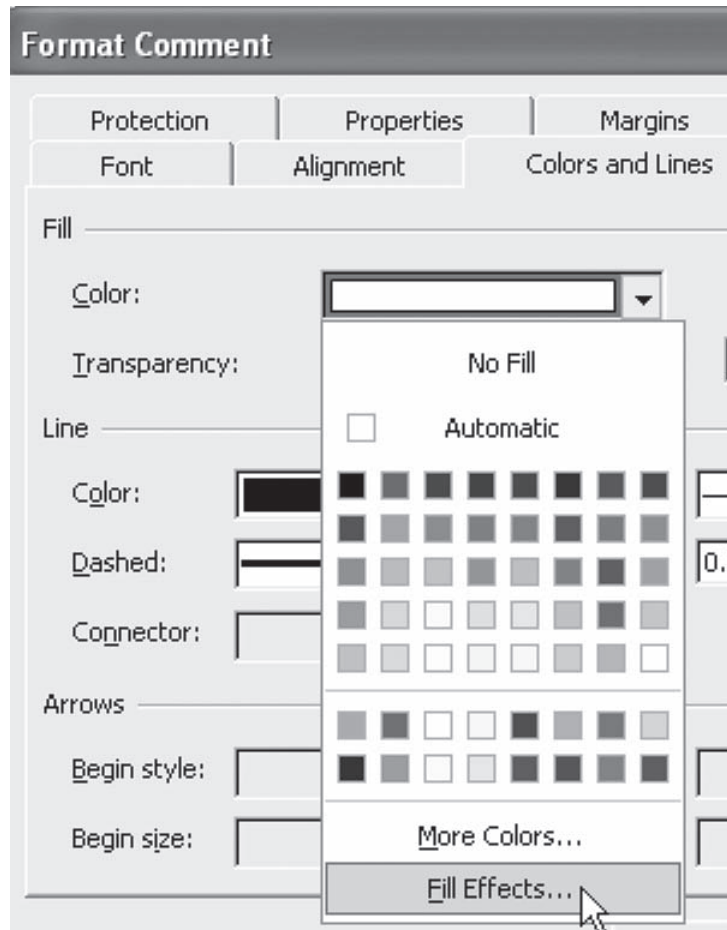


Fig. 1185

- 6) There are four tabs in the Fill Effects dialog. Choose the Picture tab and then choose the Select Picture... button, as shown in Fig. 1186.

- 8) On the Fill Effects tab, select OK, as shown in Fig. 1188.

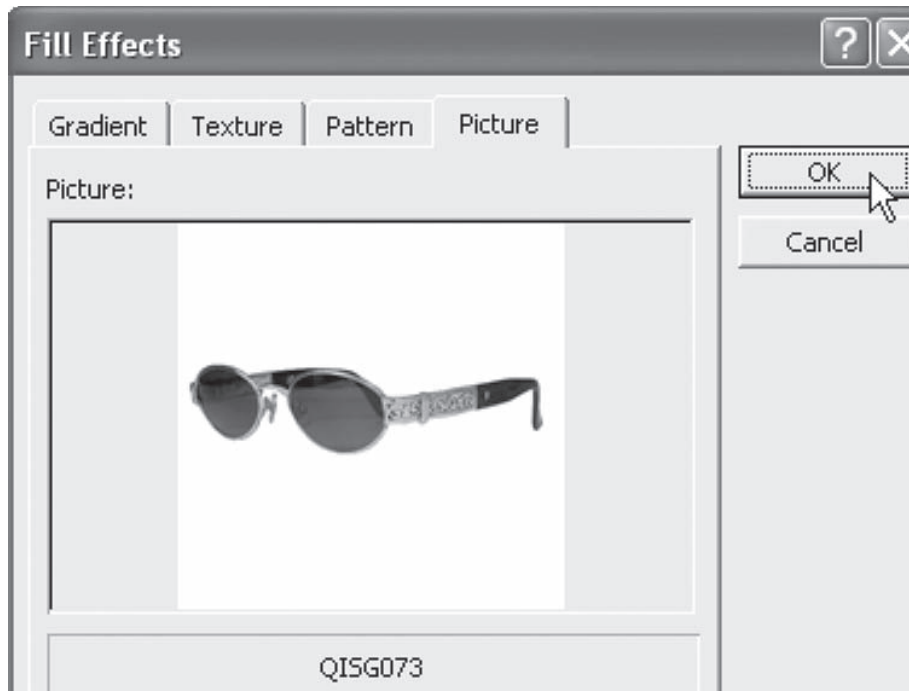


Fig. 1188

As you return to the Format Comment dialog, a squished version of the image will appear in the Color dropdown. Don't worry – the actual comment will look better.

- 9) Choose OK to close the Format Comment tab.
- 10) Use the lower right handle to resize the comment, as shown in Fig. 1189.

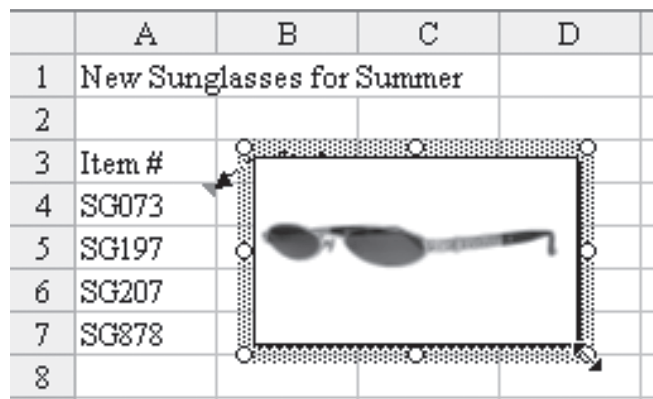


Fig. 1189

A red triangle appears in cell A4, as shown in Fig. 1190.

	A	B	C
1	New Sunglasses for Summer		
2			
3	Item #	Order	
4	SG073		
5	SG197		
6	SG207		
7	SG878		
8			

Fig. 1190

As promised, a picture of the product appears when you hover the mouse icon over the cell, as shown in Fig. 1191.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	New Sunglasses for Summer						
2							
3	Item #						
4	SG073						
5	SG197						
6	SG207						
7	SG878						
8							
9							
10							
11							
12							
13							
14							
15							
16							

Fig. 1191

11) Repeat these steps for each item in the catalog.

Summary: Everyone thinks of Excel as being strictly for numbers. Adding pop-up pictures is a great trick to make your spreadsheets more of a sales tool.

Commands Discussed: Insert Comment; Format Comment

ADD A POP-UP PICTURE TO MULTIPLE CELLS

Problem: You gave this book to your manager for Boss' Day. He saw the previous trick, about adding a pop-up picture to a cell, and wants you to add pictures to dozens of cells, as shown in Fig. 1192. Adding pictures is one of the most tedious tasks in Excel.

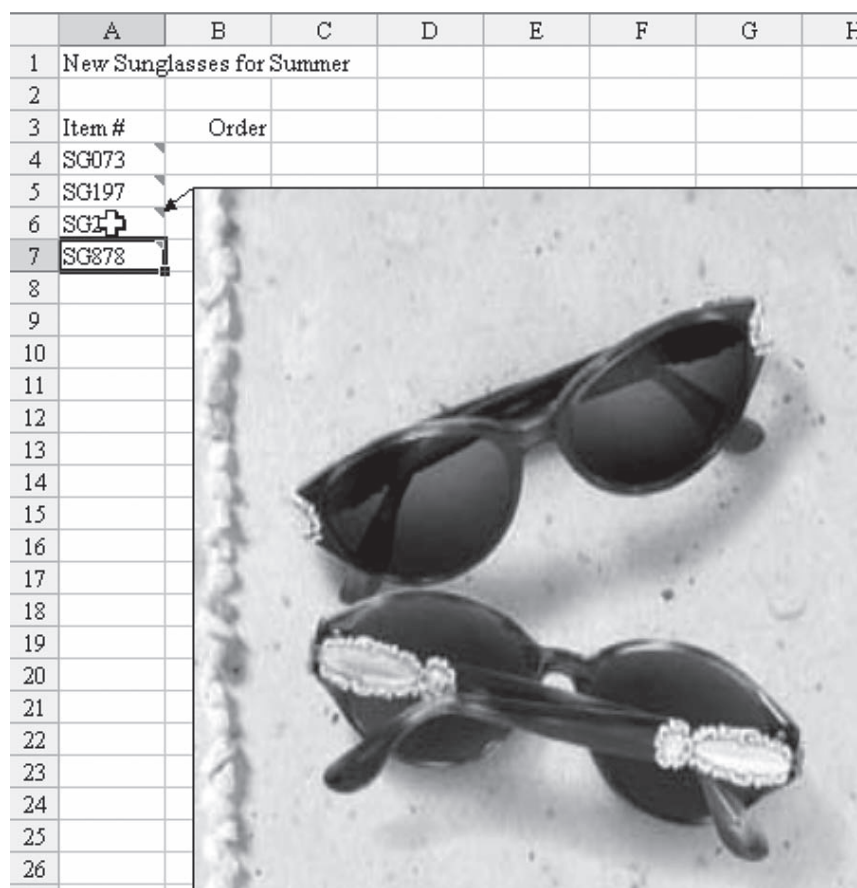


Fig. 1192

Strategy: A VBA macro can be used to speed up a lot of jobs. I would never attempt this particular task without it, especially because the macro is so simple.

Enter these few lines of code in the VBA Editor. Select the dozens of cells. Run the macro. Pictures are added to every cell in the selection.

```
Sub AddABunch()
```

```
For Each cell In Selection
```

```
    MyPic = "C:\Qimage\QI" & cell.Value & ".jpg"
```

```
    With cell.AddComment
```

```
        .Shape.Fill.UserPicture MyPic
```

```
        .Shape.Height = 300
```

```
        .Shape.Width = 300
```

```
    End With
```

```
Next cell
```

```
End Sub
```

Additional Details: For the complete guide to learning VBA, check out *VBA & Macros for Microsoft Excel* from QUE.

**Part
IV**

The above macro works because all of our company pictures are in the same folder with a common naming scheme.

Summary: A few lines of VBA code can turn a horribly monotonous job into a few seconds of work.

Commands Discussed: VBA