The Story of the Ribbon

Jensen Harris Principal Group Program Mgr. Office User Experience Team

Why am I here?

08



- Office 2007 introduced a totally redesigned user experience
- How and why did it happen?

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Office 2007 Timeline	
August 2003 • Product Cycle Begins	
September 2005 • First Public Demo of the New Office UI at PDC	
November 2005 • Beta 1	
May 2006 • Beta 2	
November 2006 • Released to Manufacturing	



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Good Enough

"Good Enough"

- Conventional wisdom:
 - "Office is good enough."
 - "People only use the same 5% of Office."
 - "Everything I need was in Office [95, 97, 2000]."
- Asking real people told us a different story:
 - "I'm sure there's a way to do this, but I can't figure out how."
 - "Office is so powerful, I would be better at my job if I knew how to use it more."

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The user interface was failing our users.

User Interface Breakdown

- We added new features...
 ...but hardly anyone found or used them
- Office seemed increasingly complicated...
 ...and that seemed to get worse every year
- People want better ways to get things done...
 ...but they assume nothing will ever change

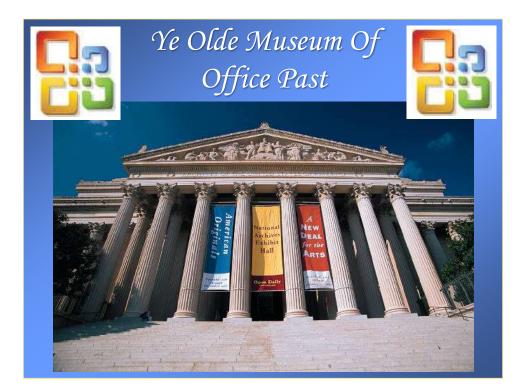
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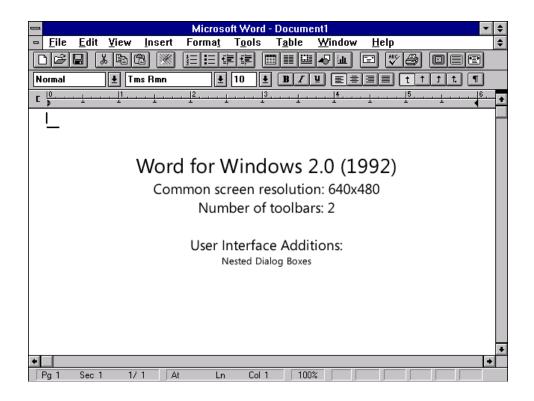


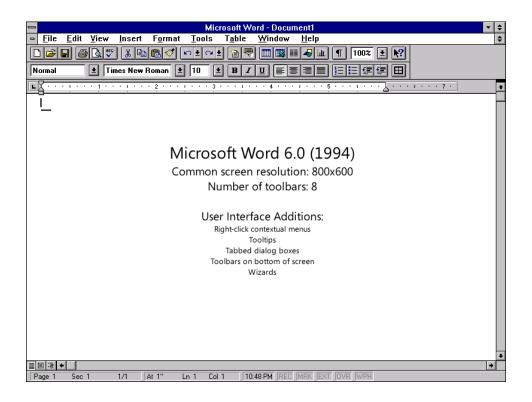
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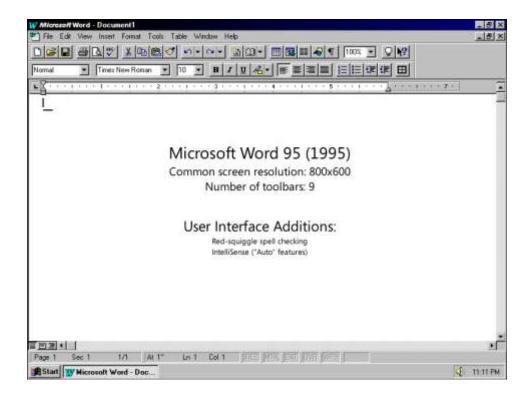
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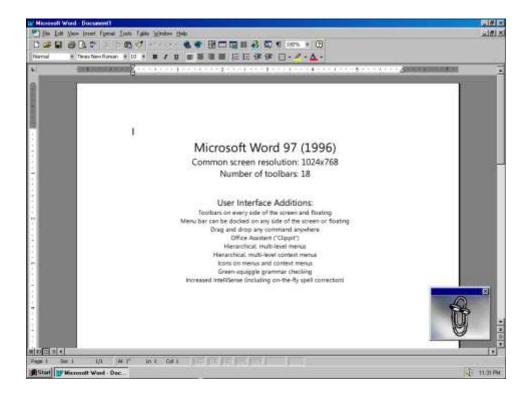




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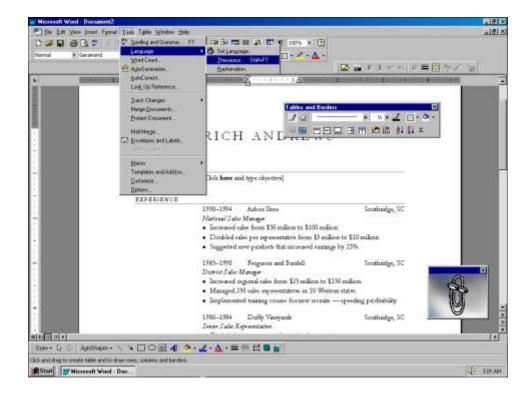
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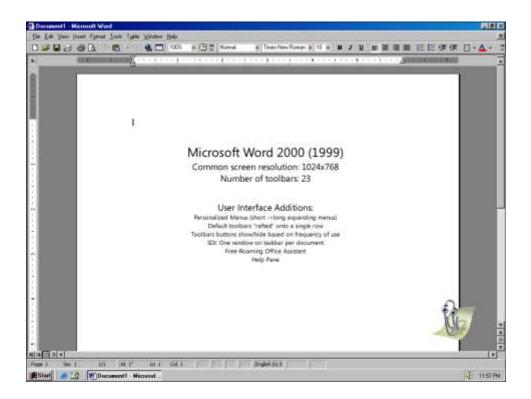




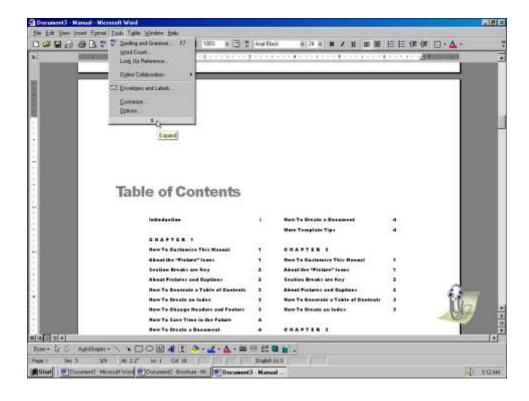
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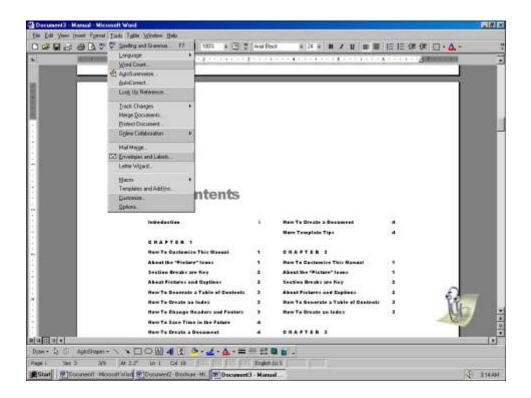
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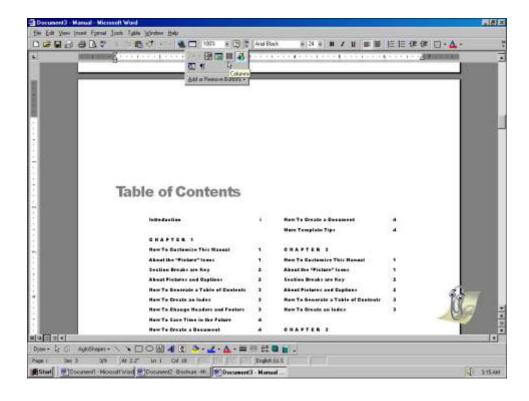


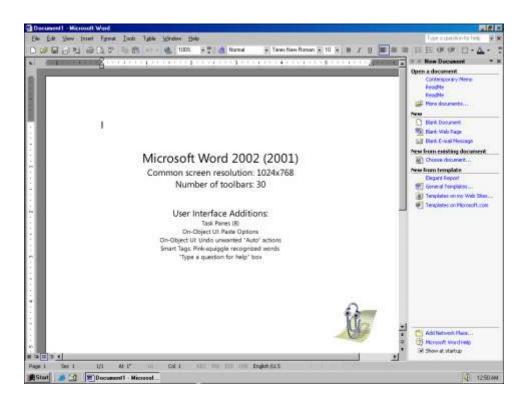
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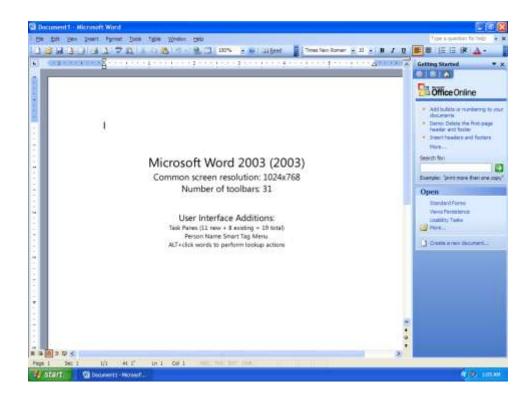
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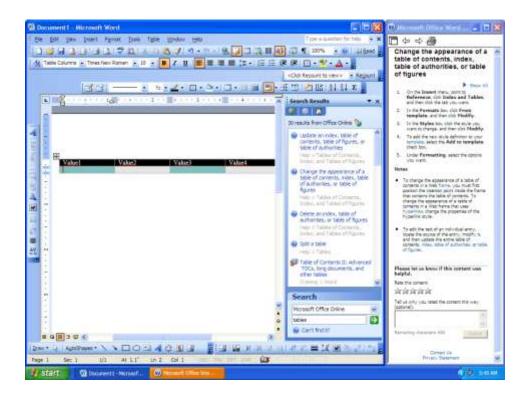




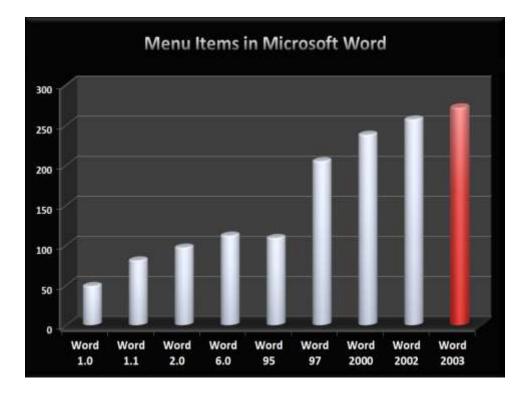
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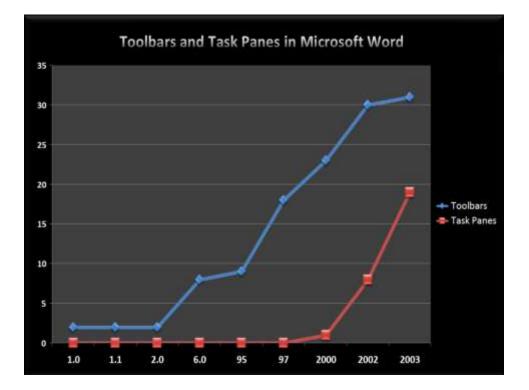
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Why a New User Experience?

- Menus and Toolbars were designed for less full-featured programs
- The feature set of Office had grown and stretched existing UI mechanisms to the limit
- It was harder to find functionality than it was a decade ago
 - "There must be a way to do this..."
 - "I don't even know where to start looking."

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A new user interface was needed...

...to reawaken the soul of the software.

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The New UI Framework

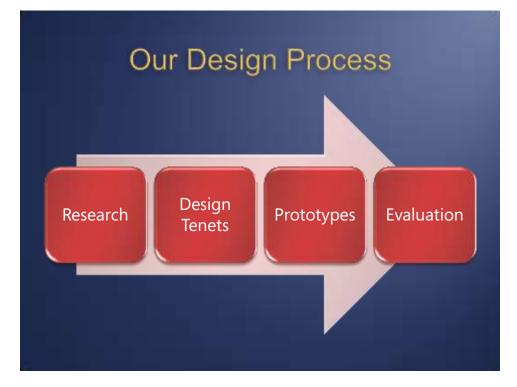
- The Ribbon
- Galleries
- Live Preview
- Contextual Tabs
- Quick Access Toolbar
- Mini Toolbar
- Enhanced Tooltips

- Enhanced Status Bar
- Live Zoom
- Customizable Status Bar
- KeyTips and Keyboard Navigation
- Streamlined Options
- Context Menus
- Office Menu

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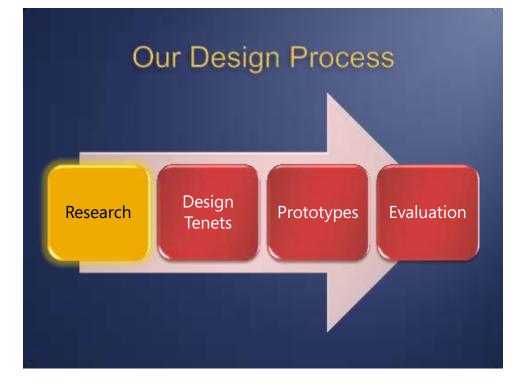
Results-Oriented Design

- Think about *features* instead of *commands*
- Present functionality at a higher level
- Illustrate features by their results
- Use galleries to get the user close to the result they want to achieve as quickly as possible
- Visual! Tactile! Responsive!
- Compare to: Command-Oriented Design



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Art: Language and Emotion

- User interface is the language by which software communicates to a human what it's capable of
- People have an emotional relationship with their computer
 - On average, Office users spend more 1-on-1 time with Office than with their spouse

Art: Learning From Real People

- Visited people at their workplace
- Visited people in their home
- Invited people into our labs for freeform working and discussion
- We amassed over 10,000 hours of video of people using Office

How did people <u>feel</u> when using Office?

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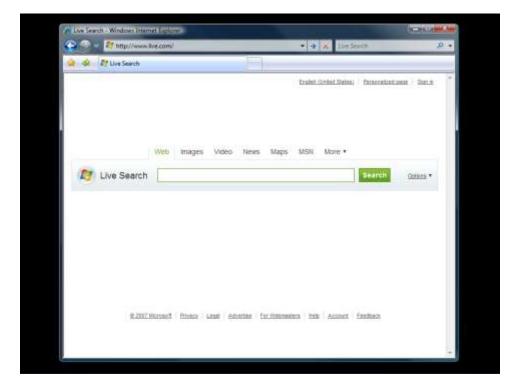


Revelation:

The "Sense of Mastery" was gone

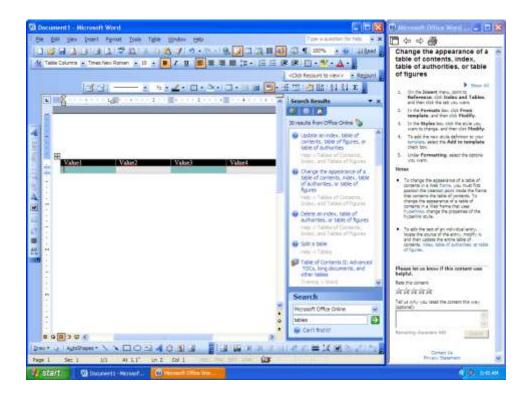
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Science: The Role of Data

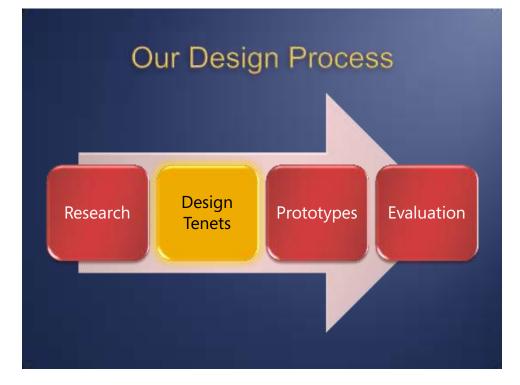
- Over 3 billion data sessions collected from Office users
- ~2 million sessions per day
- Over the last 90 days, we've tracked
 352 million command bar clicks in Word
- We track nearly 6000 individual data points
- We couldn't have done this without data!

Science: Using Data

- Which commands do people use most?
- How are commands commonly sequenced together?
- Which commands are accessed via toolbar, mouse, keyboard?
- Where do people fail to find functionality they're asking for (in newsgroups, support calls, etc.)?

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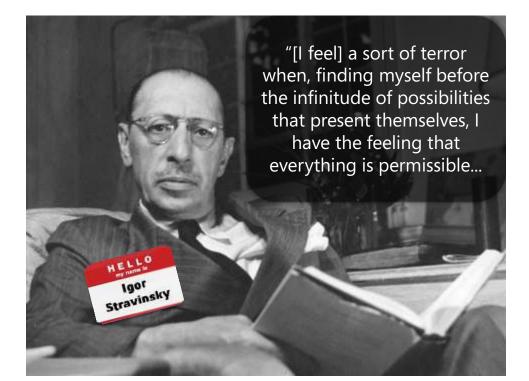




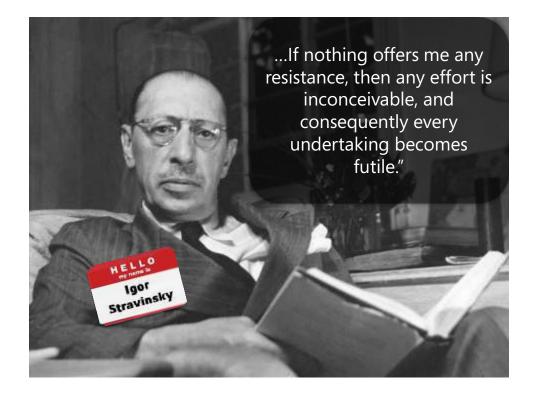
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UI Redesign Goals

- Make the software easier to use
- Help people save time
- Help people to discover more of the power of Office
- Help people create beautiful, powerful documents

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Our Design Tenets (Summer 2003)

- A person's focus should be on their content, not on the UI. Help people work without interference.
- Reduce the number of choices presented at any given time.
- Increase efficiency.
- Embrace consistency, but not homogeneity.
- Give features a permanent home. Prefer consistent-location UI over "smart" UI.
- Straightforward is better than clever.

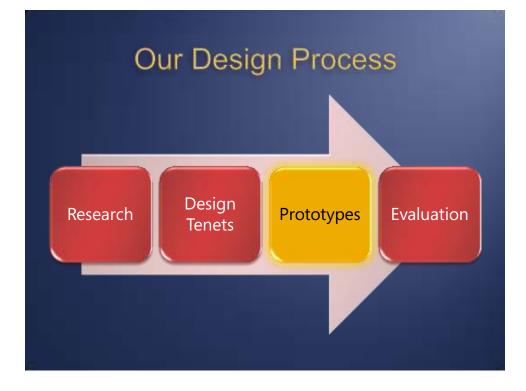


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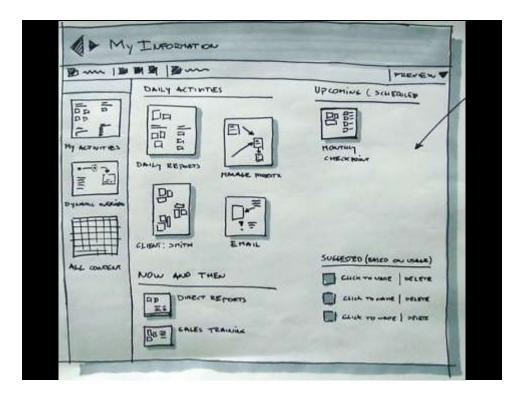
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Prototypes

- You can do anything in the world. What should you do?
- Hundreds of discrete prototypes were created
 - Over 25,000 images alone
- Everything from scratches on the whiteboard to elaborate Flash prototypes
- Lots of late nights...

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Conceptual Prototypes

- First step: Conceptual Prototypes
- Designed to explore a few key concepts deeply (as opposed to broadly)
- A few examples:
 - The Configurator
 - Fluid Menus
 - The Strawman
 - Full-Page UI
 - Ring Task Guide

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How Different Should It Be? (September – October 2003)

Designing the Office UI

prototypes

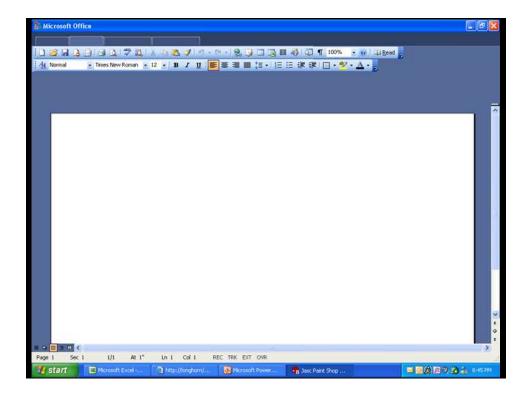
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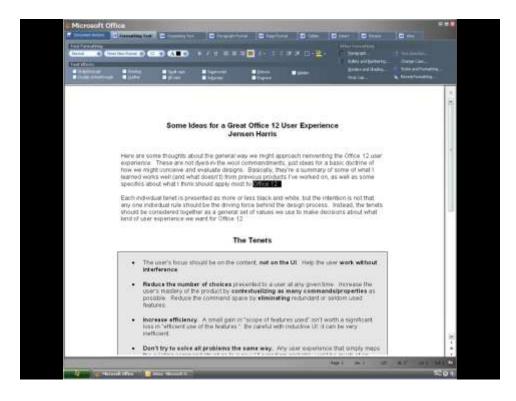


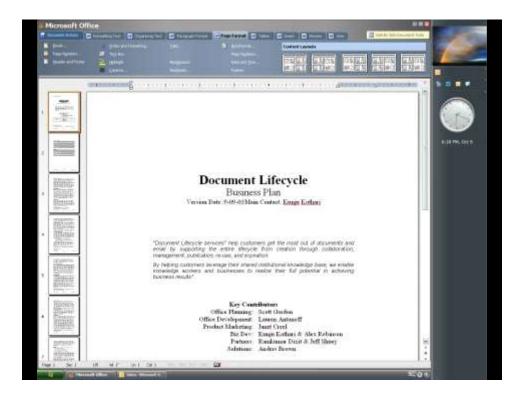
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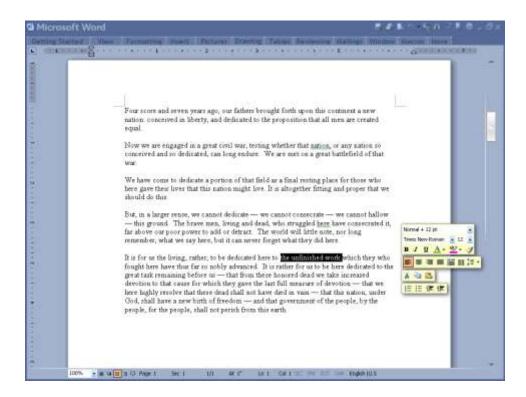


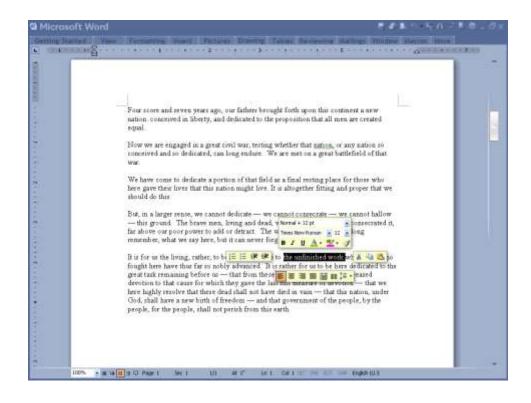
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Floating Nearby (August - October 2003)

Designing the Office UI

prototypes



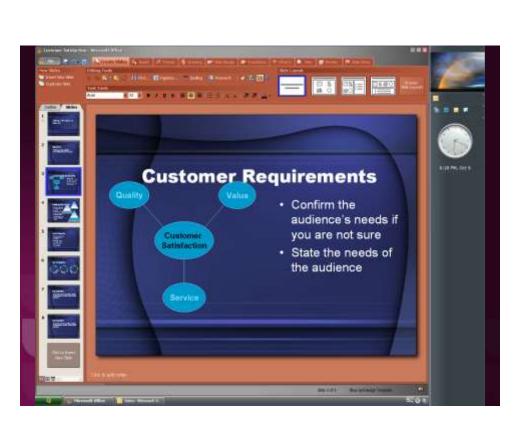


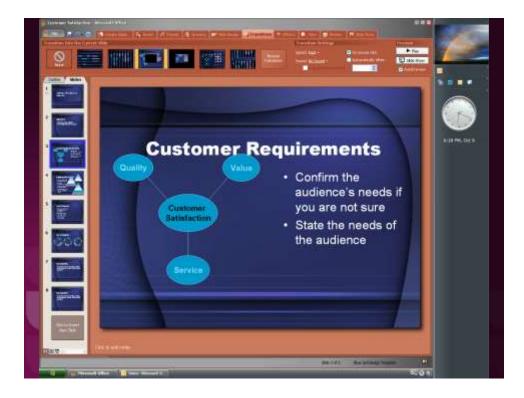
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	Four score and seven years ago, our fathers brought forth upon this continent a new nation. Conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.	
	Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that <u>nation</u> , or any notion so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war.	
	We have some to dedicate a portion of that field as a final verting place for those who here gave their lives that this nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this	
	But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate — we cannot consecrate — we cannot hallow — this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who straggled <u>here</u> have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember, what we may here, but it can never forget what they did here	
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	It is for as the living, rather, so be dedicated here to are unifinited works which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us — that from there honored dead we take increased develop to that assue for which they gave the last full measure of divotion — that we here highly resolve that there dead shall not have died in wan — that the nation, under God, shall have a new birth of firedom — and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not periab from this earth	

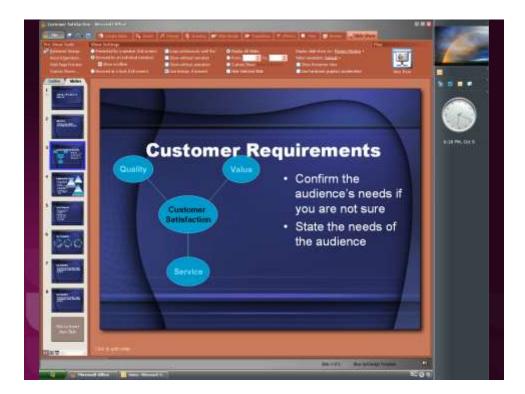
Tomatoey (October 29-31, 2003)

Designing the Office UI

prototypes







Ribbon on the Side (November 2003 – May 2004)

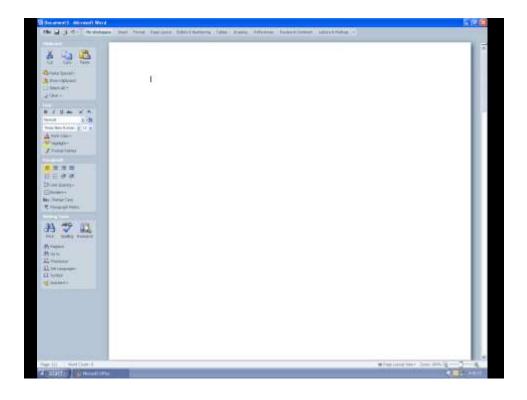
Designing the Office UI

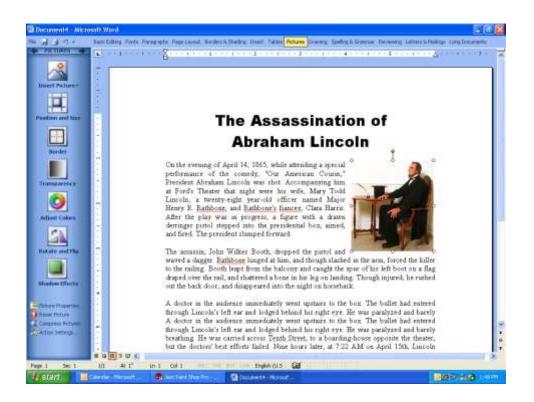
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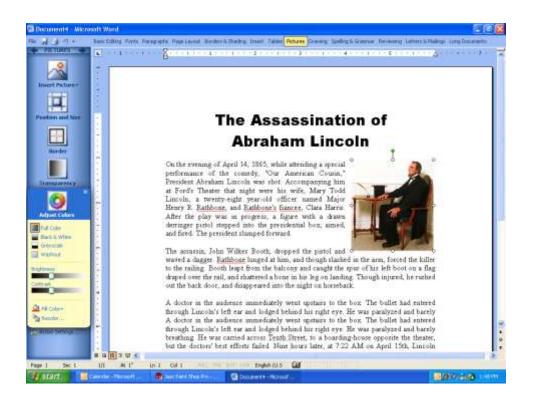
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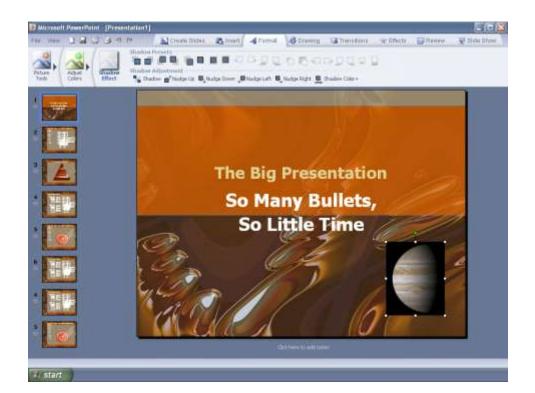
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Scaling: Slidey Tabs November 2003

Designing the Office UI

prototypes





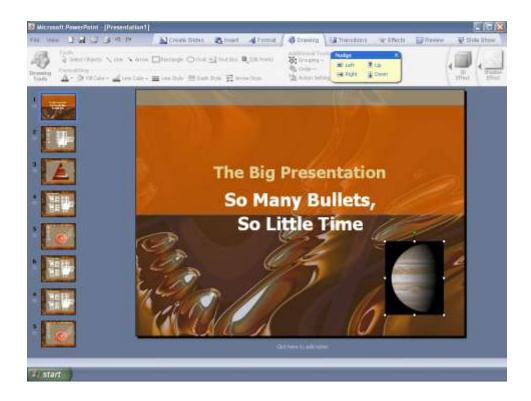


Scaling: Dialogettes November 2003

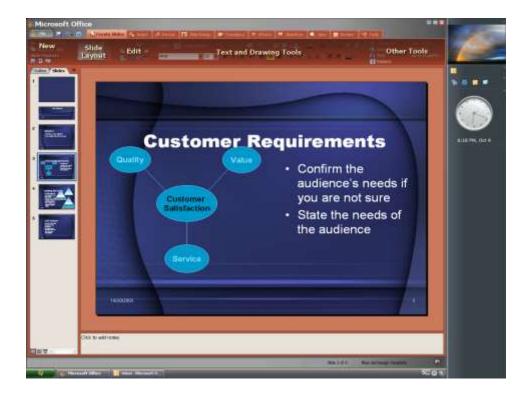
Designing the Office UI

prototypes



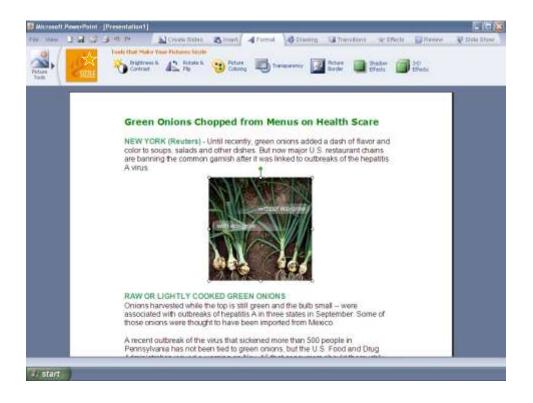




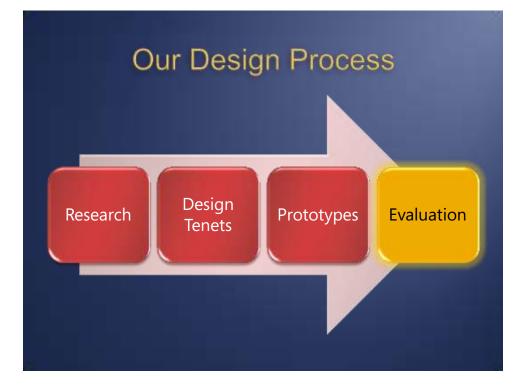












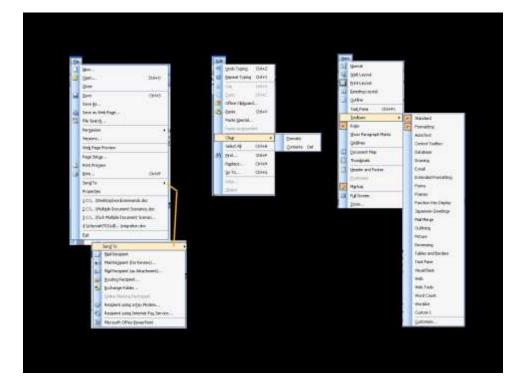
Evaluation: Is it Good or Not?

- Beta Users (internal and 3 million external)
- Anecdotal Feedback (blogs, forums)
- Benchmarks and Metrics
- Observations and Interviews
- Usability Studies (around the world and remote)
- Card Sorts and Paper Prototypes
- Surveys
- Longitudinal Usability Studies
- Long-Term Deployments (5 months+)
- Truman Show
- SQM (Customer Experience Improvement Program)

Longitudinal Usability

- Measures the impact of the product on someone over a number of months
- Rich, direct feedback mechanisms (both anecdotal and raw instrumented data)
- Studying learning curve, feature depth of usage, efficiency
- The single most valuable source of actionable feedback for us

Feature Organization



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Evaluating Feature Organization

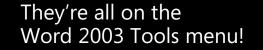
- Card Sorts
 - Physical and Virtual
- Feature Affinity Research
- Command Loops
- Beta Feedback
- Longitudinal Usability

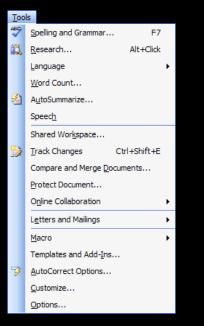
Needed to keep getting fresh eyes!

The Myth Of Ideal Organization Game Show

What Do These Have In Common?

- Find out the current number of words
- Turn on speech command and control
- Create a SharePoint Document Workspace
- Print Envelopes
- Open the Visual Basic Editor
- Turn on hyphenation
- Merge the contents of multiple documents
- Start a web conference
- Tweak AutoCorrect settings





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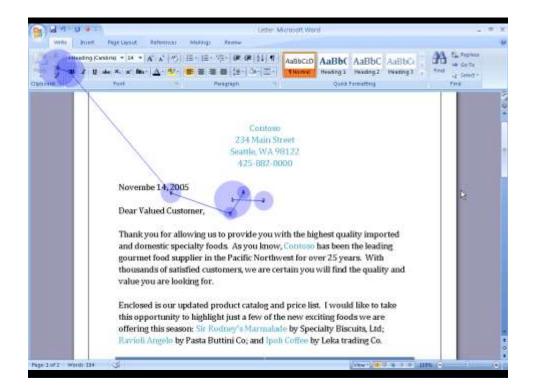
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Eye Tracking

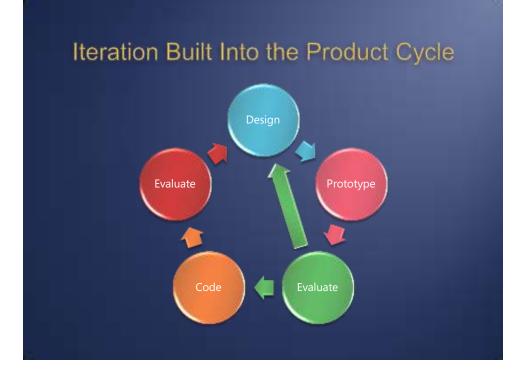
- Learn how people interact with the UI by watching where they look
- Two types used:
 - Heat map
 - Gaze tracking
- Help to understand linguistic similarities and differences
 - Right-to-left reading languages
 - Vertical text languages

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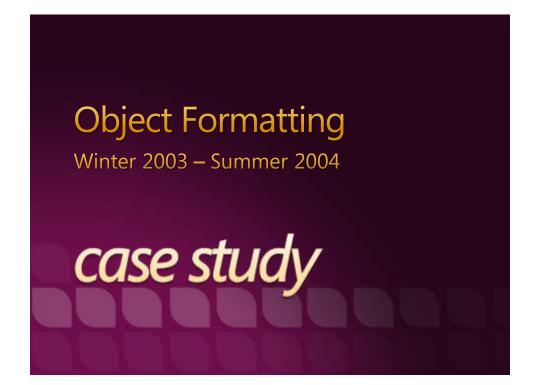


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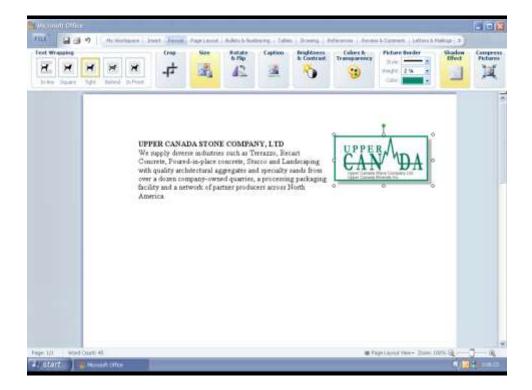
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Planning to Iterate

- Planted the "culture of iteration" in the team
- Time to iterate was accounted for in the dev schedule
- Certain things we knew we'd need to do 3 times to get right
- Our architecture was designed to make it possible for us to iterate late in the cycle
 - Only way to respond to longitudinal usability



Try 1: The "Format" Tab Case Study: Object Formatting

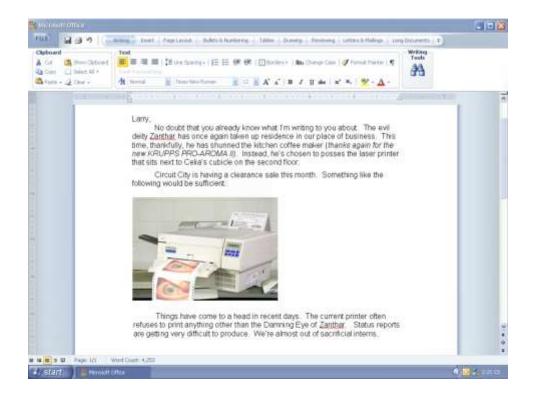


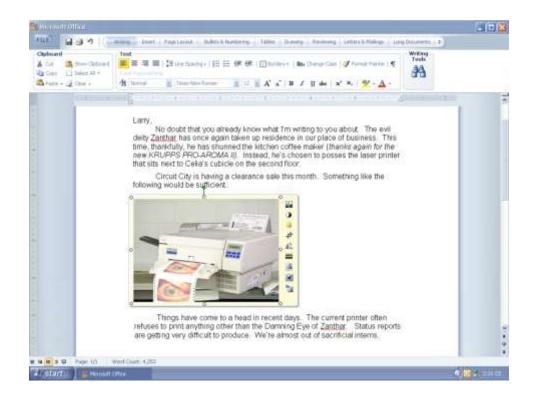
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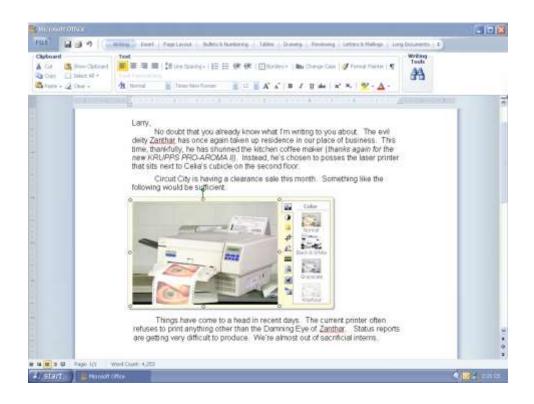
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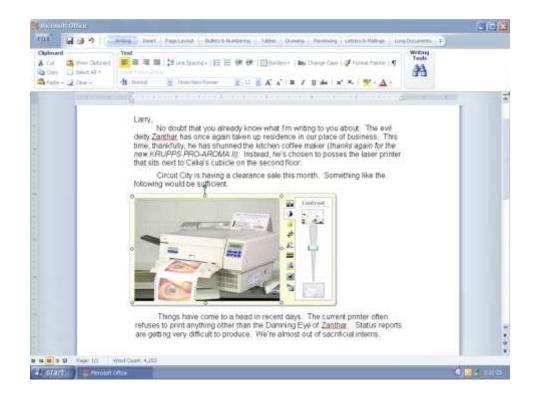
Try 2: On-Object Commands

Case Study: Object Formatting



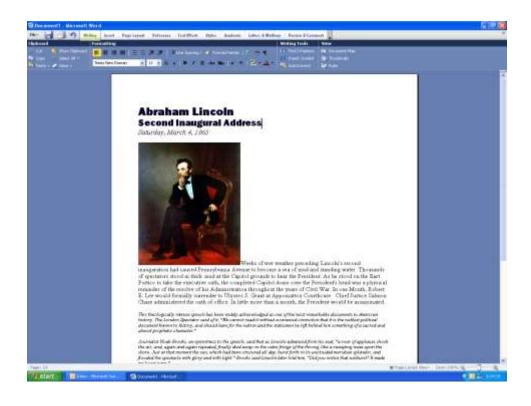






Try 3: Immersive Experiences

Case Study: Object Formatting

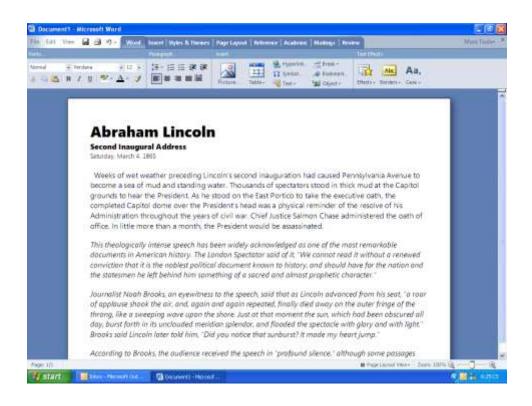




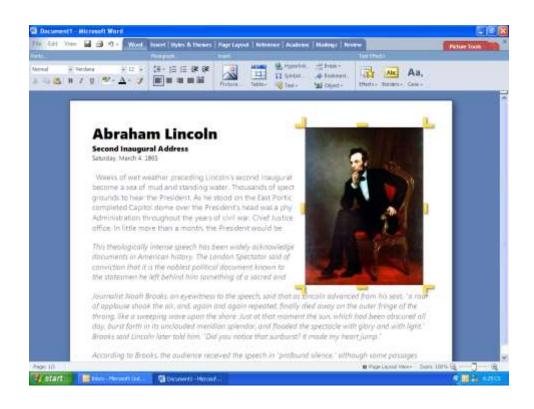
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Try 4: Contextual Tabs

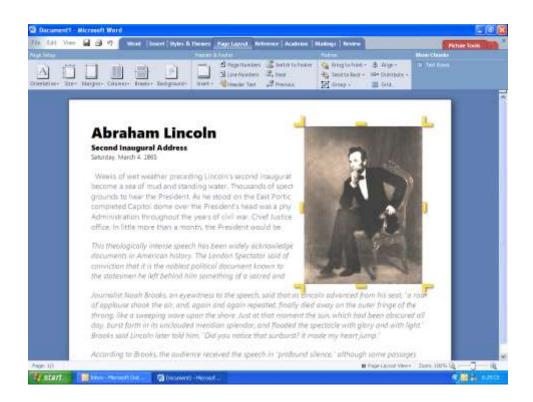
Case Study: Object Formatting









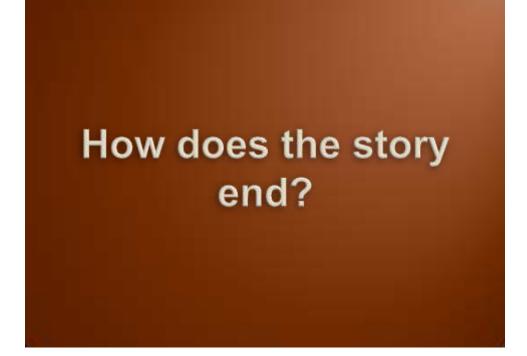




Try 5: Contextual Tabs with Eat Dismiss Clicks

Case Study: Object Formatting





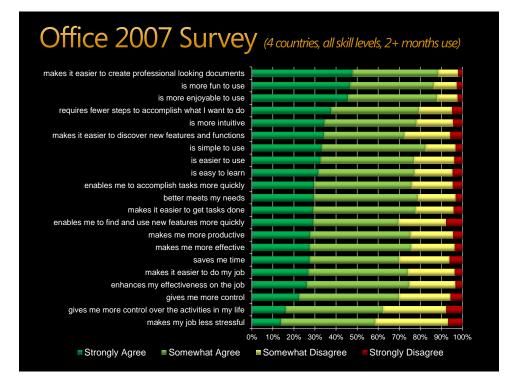
Attention to Design Pays Off

 PC World: #1 Most Innovative Product of 2007

- Consumer Electronics Show (CES):
 2007 Innovations Award in Software
- Office 2007 #1 on Amazon.com software

Flashback: UI Redesign Goals

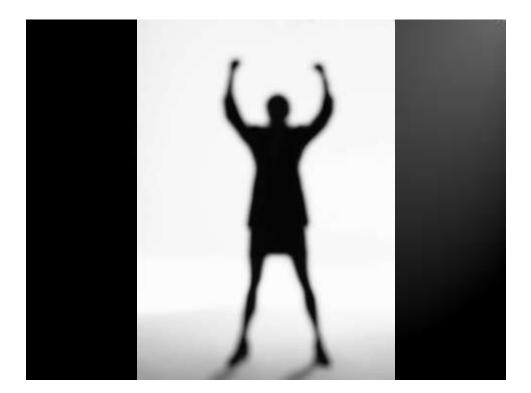
- Make the software easier to use
- Help people save time
- Help people to discover more of the power of Office
- Help people create beautiful, powerful documents



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Questions and Answers

My Office User Interface Blog: http://blogs.msdn.com/jensenh



