# ◆ *Word Tips for Editors*

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Can't live with it, can't live without it—that was the premise of this interactive and fun session on Microsoft Word tips for editors conducted by the Inera team of Bruce Rosenblum and Nathan Day. Inera's eXtyles strives to make the Word environment more editor friendly.

Rosenblum pointed out that Microsoft Word is the most widely used word-processing application and that Microsoft spends a lot of resources on tuning the product for authors but not for editors. Although Office 2007 brings radical changes to Microsoft Word—including a new user interface, a new XML-based file format, and a new mathematics editor—there are substantial challenges to overcome for editorial and production operations that have built workflows around earlier versions of Word. Having said that, Rosenblum and Day went on to provide tips to fine-tune Word for editorial purposes.

They discussed features of the Tools menu, including the Options and Customize dialogues. One of their recommendations was increasing the list of recently used files by setting it to the maximum of nine. For spelling and grammar issues, the speakers emphasized the use of custom dictionaries and pointed out the ability of Word to add them. However, Day pointed out, one of Word's confusing features is the "AutoCorrect" feature. If this feature is not turned off, Word will automatically reformat text as you type it. Rosenblum noted that this feature of Word played an important role in Dan Rather's firing from the CBS *Evening News*: A memo that Rather cited during an investigation of President Bush's military service was shown to have been fraudulent because it contained a superscripted ordinal indicator ("1$^{st}$" rather than "1st"), which became available in office document typography only with the introduction of Microsoft Word and was unavailable on typewriters of a 1970s vintage.

With regard to other formatting preferences, if an editor prefers straight quotation marks to curly quotation marks, this change can be made by deselecting that option on the "AutoFormat As You Type" tab in the "AutoCorrect Options" menu. Another big issue for editors is removing the special coding inserted by reference-management software (such as EndNote) to facilitate editing of references and citations. The coding can be removed by using the following commands: Select All (Ctrl+A) followed by Unlink Fields (Ctrl+Shift+F9).

A particular crowd favorite was the split-screen option, whereby two parts of a document may be viewed in the same Word window. That option highlighted the fact that many Word features are difficult to see or locate. The screen splitter, for example, is activated by selecting a very small bar above the vertical scrolling arrows; it appears to be little more than architectural ornamentation until it is clicked.

Another useful tool explored by Rosenblum and Day was "Find and Replace". It is especially helpful in documents that have complex formatting, such as superscripts. They also demonstrated the "Format Painter" tool, which appears as a paintbrush icon in the tool bar of Word. Most attendees were unaware of it. The Format Painter can be used to reapply similar formatting throughout a document—a big time-saver for meeting deadlines.

Rosenblum and Day noted similarities between the 2007 and 2003 versions of Word and highlighted new features in Word 2007. One complaint of Word 2007 users is that it saves documents as .docx files, which are not compatible with Word 2003. To get around the problem, they suggested downloading the .docx compatibility pack from the Microsoft Web site, which allows Word 2003 to open documents in the new file format.

Rosenblum noted that the team at eXtyles is constantly discovering hidden options embedded deep in the folds of Microsoft Word and encouraged users to spend some time getting to know Word. The take-home message of the workshop: despite all its bugs and idiosyncrasies, Microsoft Word can be an editor-friendly tool. ◕