

# UnderstandIT

From **MAY DAY CONSULTING LIMITED** in association with **Facilitators International LLP**

A publication designed to inform and enable businesses to understand the implications, costs and advantages of using Information and Communications Technology. Distributed through Chambers of Commerce.

## MICROSOFT SECURITY ESSENTIALS

As this edition of *Understand IT* goes to print, the much-hyped Microsoft FREE security software is being launched.

The free product can be downloaded from the Microsoft web site and was originally code-named "Morro". It will now be known as Security Essentials.

Microsoft is placing no restrictions on its use, and will not even require online registration. It will, however, only run on genuine, authenticated copies of Microsoft Windows XP and Vista. It will also be available for the new Windows 7 later in the year.

This product joins an existing community of free security software applications, including:

- AVG
- Alwil Avast
- Avira Antivir
- Comodo

If you are looking for better security for your PC, then we suggest you look at the above products. We will give you a more in-depth look at the Microsoft product in the next edition of *Understand IT*.

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## FREE SECURITY SOFTWARE AND THE BRITISH SME

A survey recently published by Panda Security, a Spanish provider of security products, indicated that British SMEs were the largest users of free security solutions in the world.

Their survey showed that 57 percent of British businesses with a security system, used free software, whereas the European average was only 38 percent. The conclusion drawn from this fact is that British businesses recognised the need for security solutions, but were not prepared to spend much on it.

However, the problem with free software, is the quality of the protection provided – although it is better to have a free solution, rather than no protection at all.

Surprisingly, the survey also showed that British businesses suffered fewer infections than their European counter-parts – 38 percent compared with 51 percent reporting at least one infection.

More worryingly, nearly a quarter of British SMEs (22 per cent) were not using, or were not aware that they were using, any kind of security solution!

## OFCOM REMOVES SOME RESTRICTIONS ON BT

Since the privatisation of British Telecom in the 1980s, BT has been operating under strict regulatory control by OFCOM and its predecessor OFTEL. The reason for the control over BTs' activities resulted from its monopolisation of the telecommunications infrastructure in the UK. The intention was to break up this monopoly, introduce competition and bring benefits to consumers.

These objectives have now been largely achieved, with significant competition in the market, and a wide array of choices for the consumer.

Whilst controls on BT will continue in some areas, OFCOM have now announced a withdrawal of restrictions on the provision of promotional "bundling" of fixed analogue services by BT. This decision is based largely on the current market which is now highly competitive, with around 12 million homes and small businesses using providers other than BT. By comparison, BT has around 14 million customers, so the playing field is now considerably more level and they are no longer a dominant force in this area.

Digital services provided by BT will continue to be controlled for the time being.

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## MS EXCEL HINTS & TIPS

More help for those who are relatively new to Microsoft Excel:

### *Converting text case*

Users of Microsoft Word will probably be familiar with the feature that allows the conversion of high-lighted text from one case to another e.g. upper case to lower case or title case.

Although MS Excel is a spreadsheet application that is primarily designed to handle numerical data, there is often a need to include text within a spreadsheet. We were recently provided with an Excel workbook that had been created by a client and it contained significant amounts of text, but it had been entered in cells within a number of columns and in capital letters. Re-typing this large amount of text would have been lengthy and time consuming. Fortunately, there is a method of achieving what is required in this situation.

In the same way that Excel uses built-in functions for carrying out complex mathematical and other calculations, there are also functions that allow the manipulation of text.

There are a few text functions, but the principal ones related to text formatting are:

=proper()

=lower()

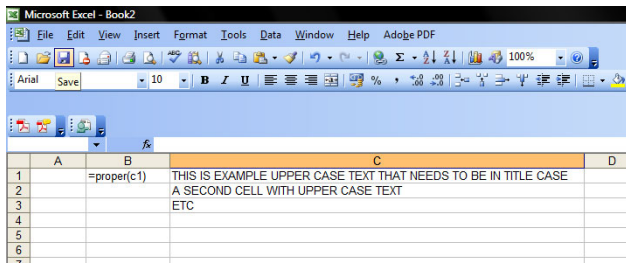
=upper()

The argument for these functions (to be inserted within the parentheses) can be either (a) a piece of text typed in, which will be converted (this doesn't really make too much sense as you might as well type the text in the correct case in the first instance), or (b) a cell reference.

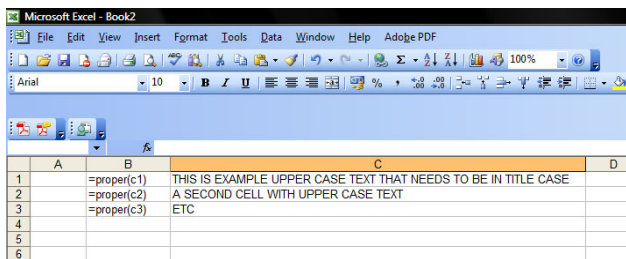
The effect is that the cell in which this function is placed will then result in the text located in the inserted cell reference being displayed in the specified case (Upper, Lower or Proper).

Given the example worksheet we were provided with, we needed to convert the upper case text to title (or proper) case, in which each word begins with a capital letter. We just followed these steps:

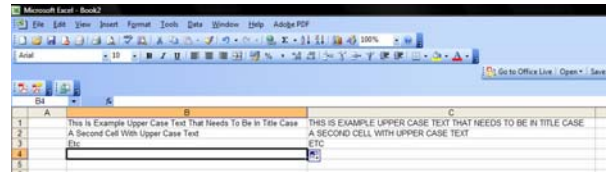
1. Insert a new column (say column B, adjacent to the column containing the text concerned (column C).
2. In the first cell in Column B (B1), enter the function =proper(c1) and hit enter. The upper case text contained in cell C1 will now be displayed in cell B1, but in title case, as required.



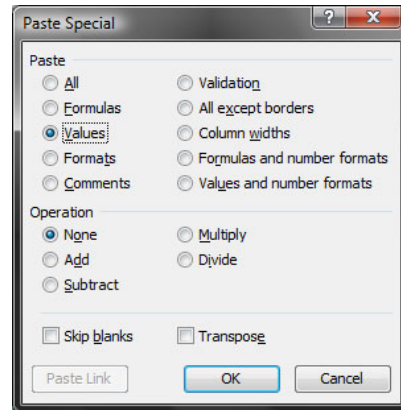
3. It is now a simple task to copy the function in cell B1 to the remainder of the cells in column B.



4. All text contained in the corresponding cells in column C will now be displayed in column B, in title case.



5. Next, highlight the cells containing the new title case text that you require, in column B, and copy them to the clipboard (EDIT, COPY).
6. Finally, paste the cell range into the corresponding cells in column C, replacing the upper case text with the newly formatted text. To do this, you will need to use EDIT, PASTE SPECIAL, and select VALUES from the options.



7.

This copies just the values from the cells in column B and not the functions beneath the values.

8. Finally, you delete column B, as it is no longer needed.

Q.E.D.

## ANOTHER ONLINE OFFICE SUITE

To underline the growing trend that we have outlined in earlier *Understand IT* articles, for online office-type applications, Cisco, the major network hardware manufacturer appears to be planning to join Google and Adobe in an effort to capture a piece of this potential future market away from Microsoft.

Industry watchers feel that Cisco probably has a good start, since it already has a major slice of the networking hardware and software market comprising many of the world's largest enterprises. Cisco is already offering an online platform for sharing information and services via its WebEx Connect service offering.

The prize for these contenders is a piece of the Microsoft market which contributed around US\$60 billion in sales in their last fiscal year.

We wish to acknowledge with thanks that some of the material contained within this publication has been sourced from Computer Weekly, PC Pro, BBC and other reputable sources..

May Day Consulting Limited and your Chamber of Commerce have endeavoured to ensure the accuracy of the information contained in this publication, but do not accept liability for any inaccuracy or omission contained within it.

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