GET THE SCOOP ON... How Outlook processes information = New features in Outlook 2007 = Ribbons, dialog boxes, toolbars, and more = New to Outlook 2007

Outlook Is More Than an E-Mail Program

f you're like most people who use Outlook, chances are you think of it as an e-mail program that also happens to include some other features that you've looked at and maybe used occasionally. If Outlook is the program installed for you on your office PC and you work in an Exchange Server environment, you may also think of it as a calendar and meeting management application. I have a different idea about what Outlook is. Outlook is an *information processor*. More specifically, Outlook is a *personal* information processor.

What do I mean by that? Think about the other applications included with Microsoft Office, which is how most people come to have Outlook installed on their PCs. Microsoft Word is a word processor. Microsoft Excel is a number and data processor. Microsoft PowerPoint is an idea processor. That's what PCs are used for — processing "stuff" and turning it into, well, other stuff. Word is used to turn thoughts, interactions, and conversations into documents like letters, reports, and books. Excel converts numbers and other data into charts, reports, balance sheets, and forecasts. PowerPoint, when used well, can distill ideas into compelling presentations, and so on.

Outlook processes information that is personally meaningful to you into actions and commitments. It helps you organize, store, retrieve, and share that information. Outlook provides tools for creating, organizing, and using information, which include:

- E-mail
- Contacts
- Calendar
- Tasks
- Notes
- Activities

To be sure, there are any number of applications you can use that touch one or more of these information areas. But there are only a few applications that address all of them, and none enjoy the advantage of being included in the world's most widely installed productivity suite. Microsoft has designed Outlook to be an essential and tightly integrated piece of the Office environment. With this newest version of Outlook, even if you've been using Outlook for a while already, you are going to be amazed at the new look and features. This chapter is designed to take you on a short tour of the new look and feel and let you know what's new and what's improved.

E-mail

E-mail is the most frequently used and best understood of Outlook's capabilities. No matter what kind of e-mail environment you work in, Outlook provides a powerful set of features for working with your messages. You may use Outlook to connect directly to your Internet Service Provider (ISP) to send and receive your e-mail. This is commonly referred to as Internet Mail mode. This book assumes you use Outlook in this way.

One of the great new features in Outlook 2007 is the account creation tool that can figure out most of the settings for you when you set up a new e-mail account (see Figure 1.1). All you need to provide is the e-mail address and your account ID and password, and Outlook fills in the rest of the information required to get your account set up.

There are four common protocols used to send and receive e-mail. Outlook supports them all.

dd New E-mail Account Internet E-mail Settings		
Each of these settings ar	e required to get your e-mail accoun	it working.
User Information		Test Account Settings
Your Name:	John Doe	After filling out the information on this screen, we
E-mail Address:	john.doe@bigco.com	button below. (Requires network connection)
Server Information		Test Account Settings
Account Type:	POP3	Test Account Setungs
Incoming mail server:	mail.bigco.com	
Outgoing mail server (SMTP):	smtp.bigco.com	
Logon Information		
User Name:	john.doe	
Password:	*****	
₹ F	temember password	
Require logon using Secure	Password Authentication (SPA)	More Settings
		< Back Next > Cancel

Figure 1.1. The Add New E-mail Account dialog box in Outlook 2007 is used to set up Internet e-mail accounts.

Exchange Server

Outlook can also connect to a Microsoft Exchange Server to send and receive information. Microsoft Exchange Server provides organizations with the ability to serve up e-mail, calendar, and contact management services to its employees and provides great tools for sharing information, managing meetings, delegating tasks, providing Web access to your Outlook information, and integrating messaging (voice mail, fax, instant messaging, and Internet news).

Setting up an Exchange Server account works a bit differently than setting up an Internet mail account because the server administrator has a lot of control over what information resources your account is permitted to view and access.



Hack

While this is not an Exchange guide, most of the information in this book is every bit as applicable to an Exchange user as it is to folks using Outlook in Internet Mail mode.

POP3

POP3 is the most common type of e-mail account offered by ISPs. The important thing to know about POP3 e-mail is that when you receive e-mail from the server, it is typically delivered to your PC and deleted from the server. You can change this behavior, but many ISPs place limits on how much e-mail you can leave on their servers and for how long. Figure 1.2 shows the Internet E-mail Settings dialog box's Advanced tab where you can modify these preferences. You access the Internet E-mail

nternet E-mail Settings			×
General Outgoing Server	Connection A	dvanced	
Server Port Numbers			
Incoming server (POP3):	110 Use	Defaults	
This server requires	an encrypted o	connection (SSL)
Outgoing server (SMTP):	25		
Use the following type	of encrypted co	nnection:	None 🖌
Server Timeouts			
Short 🐨	Long 1 minute		
Delivery			
Leave a copy of message	es on the serve	er	
Remove from serve	rafter 10	🔹 days	
Remove from serve	when deleted	from 'Delete	ed Items'
	(OK	Cancel
	1	OK	

Figure 1.2. Outlook's default settings for POP3 accounts are set to retrieve mail to your PC.

Settings dialog box by clicking the More Settings button in the Add New E-mail Account dialog box pictured in Figure 1.1.

IMAP

Internet Mail Access Protocol (IMAP) differs from POP3 and works more like Exchange Server in that e-mail resides on the server and is synchronized to your PC. The primary advantage of IMAP is that your e-mail is stored on the server and can be accessed from more than one PC.

HTTP

You probably recognize HTTP from your Web browsing experiences. The acronym stands for HyperText Transport Protocol. In Outlook, the HTTP protocol option is used to connect to Web-based e-mail services like Microsoft's HotMail.

Contacts

Outlook is a powerful contact manager. You can associate contacts with both calendar and task items and use the Outlook Journal to track your interactions with each contact in your list. Outlook can also access Microsoft MapPoint or online services to generate a map to a contact's location, dial the contact's phone, and more, as pictured in Figure 1.3.



Figure 1.3. Outlook makes it easy to initiate a wide range of actions for any contact in your list.

In the previous release of Microsoft Office (2003), Outlook received a thorough makeover in terms of general navigation and e-mail reading.

In Outlook 2007, there are even more changes. You explore these changes later in this chapter, but it's worth noting right here that no view in this version of Outlook has had more work done to it than the calendar. That's welcome news actually because this view was most in need of a thorough redesign.

The new calendar finally shows not only the appointments you have set for each day but also the tasks you've assigned a due date that falls on that day or in that week, as shown in Figure 1.4. While earlier versions of Outlook provided the Task Pad as an option in the calendar view, it required significant adjustment to be really useful. With each day's tasks now displayed directly below the day's events, getting a handle on your commitments for each day has never been easier.



Figure 1.4. Outlook 2007 features a completely redesigned calendar, with an integrated task list for each day, improved navigation, and a much more attractive and easy to read display.

Tasks

The Tasks view in Outlook has also been refreshed for Outlook 2007 and uses the same color categories as the Calendar. What's more important is that Outlook 2007 puts your tasks front and center in every view with the addition of the new To-Do Bar, which you can see in Figure 1.5. The To-Do Bar is now accessible in all Outlook views and can be conveniently collapsed to the right edge of the screen when you don't need it using the Show/Hide button at the top of the bar. The Navigation Pane on the left side of the main Outlook Window can be displayed or hidden the same way. By default, the To-Do Bar contains the current month's calendar, the day's tasks, and the Task Input Panel (called the Task Pad in previous versions of Outlook), which displays upcoming tasks and provides an area where you can instantly create a new task item. Chapter 14 describes how the To-Do Bar can be customized to present task information in the way you find most useful.



Figure 1.5. The new To-Do Bar.

Notes

If ever there was a feature in Outlook that screamed for attention, it's the Notes tool. About the best thing I can say is that it hasn't gotten any worse in this release. If you need to capture a quick note — the kind of thing you might scribble on a sticky note — then the Notes feature works just fine. Otherwise, there are far better places in Outlook to capture information.

Other applications, such as Microsoft Office OneNote can integrate nicely with Outlook and provide a much better environment for notetaking and information management. Integration with other Office applications and third-party programs is discussed in Chapter 17.

Journal

Outlook's Journal has gotten a bum rap in my opinion. I regularly encounter people who have a vague sense that there's something bad about Journal — some reason that's hard to articulate as to why they

shouldn't be using it. I think I know why. If you use Journal to track your interactions with every contact in your list, Outlook's data files can grow to an enormous size. If, on the other hand, you use Journal to track your interactions with your most important contacts (your boss, your direct reports, your customers, your family), you will have an amazingly detailed record of every interaction - e-mail, meeting, phone call, and task - available at the click of a mouse button (see Figure 1.6). Chapter 11 discusses in depth just how useful the Outlook Journal can be.



Figure 1.6. Outlook's Journal can automatically track every interaction with key contacts. You can also manually create Journal items to track specific calls or other activities with any contact.

What's new in Outlook 2007?

Microsoft Office 2007 may very well be the most ambitious redesign of the productivity suite ever. This new edition introduces sweeping user interface (UI) changes in the core Office System applications (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access, and Outlook), a new graphics engine, and a new XML-based file format for Office documents. In Office 2003, Outlook was the bright, shiny object of upgrade attention. In Office 2007, it might appear that Outlook has taken a backseat to the other core Office applications. Not so, although there is a bit of UI multiple personality syndrome at work. If you're already familiar with Outlook, the changes to the main display views will be apparent, but at first glance these views do not appear substantially different from previous versions (see Figure 1.7). Spend a few minutes exploring Outlook 2007, and you soon discover that there are a number of significant improvements and enhancements, even in these standard views. Jensen Harris, a member of Microsoft's Office development team who has blogged extensively about the UI redesign in Office 2007, has written that there are more than 40 unique application experiences in Outlook and that it is the program most often used to read, write, and edit content in the Office suite.

The radical changes in Outlook's UI appear in the windows used to create and edit items like e-mail messages, appointments, and tasks. The shell — the main interface used to view your Inbox, calendar, and task list — has been updated but retains the familiar look of Office 2003.



Figure 1.7. The main Mail view in Outlook 2007 uses the now familiar three-pane view introduced in Outlook 2003, freshened up with a new color scheme and a few additions like the search box.

The first reaction nearly everyone has when they see the new Office UI is "what were they thinking?" It's that different. A number of members of the Office design team have been interviewed about the new UI design, and they all point to a few common themes:

- The standard File, Edit, View, Help menu paradigm has been around for a long time and has become the standard way applications present their features.
- Usability testing prior to beginning the new design revealed that most users of Office applications spend a lot of time looking for less frequently used features. This is called the "I know it's in here somewhere" quandary.
- In these usability interviews, many Office users said that they know they use only a fraction of the power and capability in Office applications.

The radical new look of Office 2007 applications

Office 2007 is Microsoft's attempt to almost completely reinvent how you interact with Office applications. I say almost because not every menu has been eliminated and not all Office applications have undergone this makeover. The Office product line (now called the Office System) has expanded considerably over the years and now includes a number of specialized applications that many users of the core Office suite may have never used. A good example is Microsoft Office Visio, an application for generating structured diagrams, architectural and engineering drawings, and advanced charts. Another is Microsoft Office Project, a powerful tool for managing complex projects. Neither of these applications has adopted the new look used in the core Office suite.

The programs that do get the new user interface are Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook (except for the shell), and Access.

These are the programs that people use the most, and the design team really wanted to concentrate on making the document authoring experience better, so they started with the programs most centered on document creation.



Inside Scoop

Office 12 was the prerelease code name for Office 2007. Microsoft, like many software companies, uses temporary names while software is being developed and tested. Windows Vista, the newest version of the Windows operating system, was known as Longhorn while it was being built. The next version of Windows already has a code name — Vienna.

Armed with this information, the design team set out to reinvent how Office applications would manifest themselves to the user.

While the content creation interface in Outlook has undergone a radical transformation, the main views in the application have been enhanced in more subtle fashion. The overall effect of these changes is a more colorful and customizable application for managing all of your personal information. Unlike Word or Excel, where you work in a single application interface, Outlook provides a number of different views that are dependent on the type of information you're working with. Each of these main views is supported by a content form for creating new items and editing and reviewing existing items.

The Mail view, for example, presents a main view that allows you to perform the following activities:

- View the contents of your Inbox as a list.
- View the contents of individual e-mail messages in the Reading Pane.
- Organize mail by creating and using folders.
- Tag e-mail messages with category labels and action flags.
- Delete already read and unwanted e-mail.
- Convert e-mail messages into calendar appointments or tasks one of Outlook's coolest tricks that is covered in Chapter 12.

When you need to create a new e-mail message, you invoke one of Outlook's content forms - in this case the New Mail form, shown in Figure 1.8. It is in these forms that Microsoft has made the decision to implement the new Office UI.



Watch Out!

In previous Outlook versions, you could choose Word or Outlook as your e-mail editor. In Outlook 2007, Word is the only option. The transition may be challenging for those who have used Outlook's editor in the past.

Follow	up on the n			
Message Insert Options Format Text				
Paste Copy Paste Copy Paste Copy $B \neq U = 2 + A + E = 2$				
Clipboard	5			
This message has not been sent.				
Send Cc				
Account Subject: Follow up on the new contract				
Attached: BigCo contract draft.doox; IReview contract proposal.ics				
Hello Jane: My manager asked me to follow up with you to check on the status of the c				
We're currently scheduled to meet with you at BigCo world headquarters of Please let me know if this is still a convenient time to meet.				
Thanks, Bob				
Bob Jones Account Executive SmallCorp LLC Office: 111-555-6515				
bob.jones@smallcorp.com				

Figure 1.8. The New Mail dialog box in Outlook 2007 uses the new Office 2007 UI.

Other important changes to be aware of are to keyboard shortcuts. Some of the key combinations have changed but adapting to the new shortcuts is not terribly hard. Fortunately, Ctrl key shortcuts, such as Ctrl+B for bold, remain exactly the same. The Alt key accelerators have changed, but Office 2007 provides a visual overlay that displays all of the available accelerators when you press the Alt key, as shown in Figure 1.9.



Figure 1.9. The Alt key accelerators.

Common elements of the new UI

The most striking aspect of the new Office user interface is the near total absence of the menus and toolbars you've become accustomed to using. These familiar interface components have given way to a set of visual devices that look nothing like any previous version of Office.

The Ribbon

The first thing you see in the composition forms is something Microsoft calls the Ribbon. Figure 1.8 shows a portion of the Message Ribbon in the New Mail message window. Stretching across the top of this and every content form in Outlook is a horizontal bar containing the Office button used to access file commands, a series of tabs labeled with common functions like Write and Insert, and a colorful display of commands and options appropriate to that function featuring a number of large, intuitive icons.

The Ribbon can be minimized so that only the tab names are displayed to provide a document-only window to work in. This is especially helpful when you are working on a laptop or Tablet PC with a smaller screen. With the Ribbon visible, double-click any of the Ribbon's tabs to minimize it. Double-click any of the tabs again and it is restored. You can also set a preference to have the Ribbon appear in a minimized state by default in all new documents.

Contextual tools and the MiniBar

One of the important design goals Microsoft set for Office 2007 was to move frequently accessed commands closer to where you are currently working. Your mouse logs many miles traveling up to the menus or toolbar and back to the spot in the document you are working in every day. Windows has tried to cut down on all that mousing around by displaying a context menu that appears with a click of the right mouse button.

Most PC users have learned to use these context menus. Office 2007 takes the concept to an entirely new level. When you select text in any of the

Hack

Office 2007 provides a much-improved environment for Tablet PC users. Tapping on the Ribbon controls is significantly easier than navigating menus with the pen. The Tablet pen button can be used to produce a right click, which provides access to a complete set of formatting options for composing or editing content.

content creation forms in Outlook, a new command palette called the MiniBar, shown in Figure 1.10, appears ghosted above the text you selected. If you move your cursor closer to the MiniBar, it darkens and becomes a miniature toolbar you can use to apply Bold, Italic, Font Size, Color, and other common formatting commands. Move the cursor away from the edge of the MiniBar, and it fades away. This is particularly helpful when you are working on an e-mail message, appointment, or task item and have switched to the Insert tab on the Ribbon. The MiniBar puts commonly used formatting options right at the tip of the cursor rather than forcing you to switch tabs, make your formatting changes, and then switch back.

Right-clicking on a selection of text opens a context menu as in previous versions of Outlook but adds the MiniBar as well to make quick formatting changes a snap.



Figure 1.10. Mouse over a selection of text and the MiniBar fades into view.

Dialog boxes and dialog launchers

With all of these sweeping changes to the primary interface you use when authoring or editing documents, you may be wondering just how deeply these changes go. The good news is that the dialog boxes you've become accustomed to using for making compound changes to a document or selection of text haven't changed very much. But, because the Ribbon has replaced the menus formerly used to access those dialog boxes, how you access them has changed.

Take a closer look at the Ribbon; you can see that some of the groups have a small arrow in the lower-right corner. This is a visual clue that there are additional commands available for that group of commands. When you mouse over one of these arrow icons, you see a Super Tooltip — a small window appears that explains what clicking on the arrow does. Figure 1.11 shows a preview of the Clipboard Pane that appears when you mouse over the Clipboard button's arrow icon in the Ribbon. If you click the arrow, the Clipboard Pane opens on the right edge of the composition area.



Figure 1.11. Mouse over the arrow icon on a group in the Ribbon to get a preview of the dialog box or pane it opens. Click the arrow to make it happen.

Quick Access toolbar

One of the ways Outlook users have enhanced their use of the program in the past is by customizing the toolbars in the main views and content forms. Customizing the toolbars in the main views is done exactly as in previous versions. I show you how to remove toolbar items you don't need and enhance or add the ones you do use in Chapter 14.

The new UI provides a different way of creating your own custom toolbar. The Quick Access toolbar (QAT) can be displayed in the Ribbon itself or as a new, window-wide strip directly below the Ribbon. You can add and remove commands using the down-arrow icon at the right end of the QAT. By default, the QAT appears above and to the right of the Office button in the upper-left corner of the window in what is called small mode. Figure 1.12 shows the QAT in this default position. Figure 1.13 shows the QAT displayed in large mode as a window-wide toolbar below the Ribbon. I have added a number of commands I commonly use to the QAT in this figure.



Figure 1.12. The QAT is in its default state above the Ribbon, called small mode.



Quick Access toolbar - large mode

Figure 1.13. The QAT is in large mode below the Ribbon with custom commands added.

The new Office button

The sole drop-down menu in the new Office UI is a new version of the File menu that is accessed from the Office button in the upper-left corner of the content window. All of the commands that relate to document usage and sharing reside on this menu. The Ribbon is focused on creating, editing, and using content. The new File menu contains application-wide commands for saving, sharing, and sending documents. In Outlook 2007, the File menu provides a quick way to create a new Outlook item, send a message, or print the current item. Figure 1.14 shows the new File menu. If you look carefully, you can see an option labeled Editor Options in the lower-right corner of the menu. This is another way to access the Application Settings dialog box in addition to the link on the QAT menu.



Figure 1.14. The new File menu in Outlook 2007.

Live preview

Outlook 2007 generates a real-time preview when you scroll through formatting options. If you are trying to decide on a font or color scheme to apply to a new e-mail you are composing or formatting a table or diagram you have inserted, Outlook now updates the message for you as you mouse over each option in the font or style menu. This is an extraordinary time-saver compared to the old method of selecting the font menu, scrolling to a particular typeface, and clicking to select that choice. Live previews allow you to see exactly what your message looks like instantly and provides the ability to experiment with a variety of formatting options.

Outlook 2007 exclusive

Above and beyond the common, sweeping UI changes to the Office authoring environments, Outlook 2007 has been enhanced in a number of ways specific to managing and interacting with your personal information. These changes make it easier to deal with the ever-increasing number of e-mail messages, appointments, and tasks in your busy life. By design, Outlook presents a lot of information on the screen no matter which view you happen to be using. If you've used previous versions of the application, you'll immediately notice that Outlook 2007 has a cleaner, more organized presentation that puts more information at your fingertips without creating additional visual clutter.

The To-Do Bar

In previous versions of Outlook, you were disconnected from your calendar and task list when you were working with e-mail. I have always found this to be a serious problem because e-mail is where requests for new appointments and actions that require attention often originate. When you receive an e-mail from a customer or coworker asking if you can attend a meeting, previous versions of Outlook forced you to switch views, determine your availability, and then switch back to respond.

In Outlook, incoming e-mail can be instantly converted into calendar events or tasks. This capability is one of Outlook's greatest strengths and is discussed in detail in Chapter 12. In Outlook 2007, you can, for the first time, see your calendar and tasks at the same time you are processing newly arrived e-mail. This saves time and allows you to make better decisions about these incoming requests. The new To-Do Bar, pictured in Figure 1.15, puts all of this information at your immediate disposal.

The To-Do Bar can be collapsed to a thin strip at the right edge of your screen by clicking the chevron (>>) at the top of the bar. When collapsed, the To-Do Bar displays your next appointment running vertically down its length. You can opt to open a quick view of the To-Do Bar by clicking anywhere on the collapsed strip. It disappears again as soon as you click anywhere else on the screen. Chapter 14 shows you how to customize what is displayed on the To-Do Bar and its Task Input Panel.

The To-Do Bar is off by default in the Calendar but its visibility persists on a per module basis, so you can have it on in Mail view but off everywhere else if you want. The To-Do Bar's visibility is controlled using the To-Do Bar command found on the View menu.



Figure 1.15. The To-Do Bar makes your calendar and tasks accessible without switching views.

Improved Calendar views

Most Outlook users agree that reading e-mail was the biggest area of improvement in Outlook 2003 with the introduction of the Reading Pane. In Outlook 2007, that distinction goes to the Calendar, which has been thoroughly redesigned and improved. In much the same way that the To-Do Bar provides a more integrated view of your calendar and tasks when working in other views (especially e-mail), the Calendar view has been enhanced to incorporate the task items due on each day into its presentation. Other enhancements include a better way to view your personal calendar alongside a shared calendar, a new task entry field in the Day view, and quick access tabs at the edge of the Day view calendar to jump to your next and previously scheduled appointments, pictured in Figure 1.16.

Day	v Week	Month				
€	January ∃	16, 2007		Search Calendar		ې 🗸
	16		Tuesday			*
8 am						×
	(Click to add appointme	nt		
1000	Marketing review	000				
1100						
12 pm	Disposing lunch with I					=
100	Joe's Italian Ristorante	2				-
200						
300						
4 00			*****			
	Show tasks on: Due Da	ate	Start Date	Due Date	Reminder Time	*
Tasks	Send draft to legal		Tue 1/16/2007	Tue 1/16/2007	None	UV -

Figure 1.16. The Calendar in Outlook 2007 has been given a fresh new look, with an integrated task view and improved navigation.

Instant Search

One of the greatest frustrations faced by Outlook users is finding information once it has been filed away. While Outlook has offered search capabilities in previous versions, the truth is, they did not work very well. The interface was difficult to use, and the results from a simple search were too large to be very useful. You literally had to search through the search results to find what you were looking for. In fact, this same issue has vexed Windows users on a more general level as well.

These search deficiencies lead to the development of a number of thirdparty solutions including Google, Yahoo!, Copernic, and others. Microsoft's MSN division even jumped into the game with their own desktop search utility. All of these general Windows solutions, as well as Outlook-specific organizational add-in programs, are discussed in Chapter 16. The good news is that Outlook 2007 includes a significantly better search feature. It works so much better than in previous versions that you may decide it's all you really need. Search is now available in every Outlook view in the form of a simple search box that can be expanded to reveal additional criteria for more powerful queries as shown in Figure 1.17.



Figure 1.17. Outlook 2007 provides a powerful search tool in every view of the program. An e-mail search is pictured here. Note how matching terms are highlighted.

RSS subscriptions

The rapid growth in the popularity of blogs and Web sites offering RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feeds has been nothing short of phenomenal. There are millions of blogs and Web sites you can subscribe to so that the newest information available is delivered directly to you. In addition to Web-based services that allow you to subscribe to and read RSS-delivered content, a relatively new type of application called an RSS aggregator has become popular to manage these functions on your PC. This new approach to acquiring news and other interesting content has largely taken place since the last version of Outlook was released, and a third-party add-in like NewsGator has been required if you wanted to subscribe to and read information delivered via RSS directly into Outlook.

Outlook 2007 provides a basic set of features to allow you to subscribe to RSS feeds without the need to use additional software. While not as powerful as some third-party products, the addition of RSS to Outlook is



Bright Idea

RSS feeds can often replace e-mail newsletter subscriptions. Many newsletter publishers now offer RSS feeds that allow you to subscribe to specific categories of information you are interested in. These feeds are more immediate than newsletters and arrive as soon as new content is published.

a welcome addition. Chapter 6 explains how to use Outlook to aggregate and read RSS feeds.

Improved Categories

Outlook Categories can assist you in filtering and searching for tasks, appointments, and contacts. In previous versions of Outlook, viewing Categories was not a part of the out-of-the-box experience and required some customization to views to make them useful. Categories are much more visible in Outlook 2007, and they're colorful too. Each category in Outlook can now have a color associated with it, which affects the display of calendar and task list items. Prior to Outlook 2007, the only way to color code items was using labels that only applied to calendar items. In Outlook 2007, tasks and e-mail messages can now use the color coding associated with categories to make visual searching much faster. Figure 1.18 shows the Color Categories dialog box where you can create, edit, color code, and assign categories to any of these items in Outlook.

Color Categories		2 🗙		
To assign Color Categories to the currently selected items, use the checkboxes next to each category. To edit a category, select the category name and use the commands to the right.				
Name	Shortcut key	New		
 Blogs Books Business Important Personal Software Someday/Maybe Travel 	CTRL+F2	Rename Delete Color: Shortcut Key: CTRL+F2		
		Cancel		

Figure 1.18. Outlook 2007's improved Color Categories dialog box makes extensive use of color to help you tag and visually identify related items.

Just the facts

- Outlook is much more than just an e-mail client and provides a unique and powerful environment to manage all of your personal information.
- The new user interface in Outlook 2007's content forms and other core Office applications eliminates conventional menus and toolbars and puts all of the commands and features you need right in front of you.
- Unlike other Office 2007 applications which use the new Ribbon exclusively, Outlook 2007 retains conventional menus and toolbars in its main views.
- In the new Ribbon, the Quick Access Toolbar allows you to keep the commands you use most often in a single, easily accessed place.
- The new To-Do Bar keeps your appointments and tasks available in every view.
- Outlook 2007 provides powerful new built-in searching.
- Outlook 2007 eliminates the need for additional software to subscribe to RSS feeds.