



## Creating figure captions, table captions, and links to in-text references in Microsoft Word

By Gary Michael Smith,  
Senior Member, Houston Chapter

Even with the plethora of fancy-schmancy desktop publishing (DTP) programs such as Quark XPress, Adobe PageMaker, or Corel Ventura that are available for efficient document layout and design, many of us still are relegated to using standard word processing software such as Microsoft Word. As a result, we have to learn to be as industrious as possible in using some of the program's less-known useful features. For instance, after painstakingly performing endless global searches and replacements to correct in-text references to figures and tables, I finally learned how to actually link figures and tables with their captions and with their in-text references.

Linking figures and tables to captions and to in-text references lets editors quickly and accurately update both the captions and their references within the text. This article demonstrates how to accomplish these tasks in Microsoft Word.

### Figure captions

1. Position the cursor below the image, then press Enter to insert a blank line.
2. Select the image by clicking on it with the left mouse button.
3. Open the Insert menu and select Caption... to display the options for captions (Figure 1).
4. In the Label: field, select Figure.
5. In the Position: field, select "Below selected item".
6. Click the "Numbering..." button to display the options available for numbering the image (Figure 2). If you are using chapter-based numbering, ensure that the "Include

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- chapter number" checkbox is selected, and define which style marks the beginning of the chapter (here, "Heading 1"). Select a separator in the "Use separator" field to distinguish between the chapter and figure numbers.
7. In the Caption: field, type the figure's title.

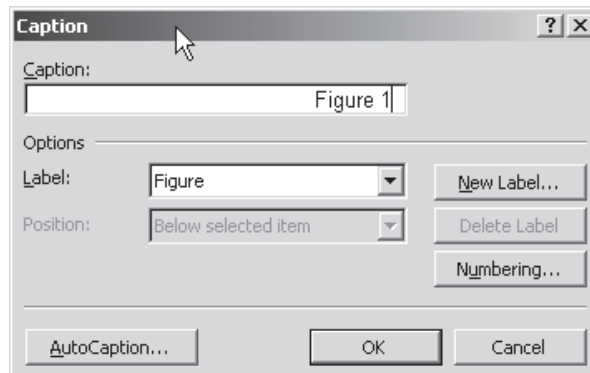


Figure 1. The Caption dialog box.

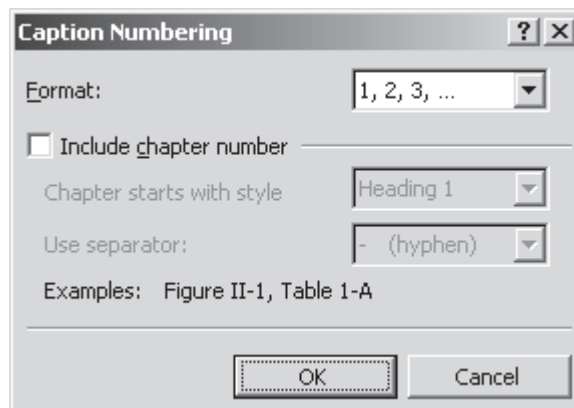


Figure 2. The Caption Numbering dialog box.

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## Editorial: Don't let the errors stand unchallenged

By Geoff Hart



Everybody agrees that the current state of science education is pitiful, but nobody does anything about it. At least, that's been the conventional wisdom until recently. Physicist John Hubisz (Hubisz@unity.ncsu.edu) has been fighting a losing battle to correct the problems for decades, but now hopes to leverage the power of the Internet and its activist communities to make a difference. At the Science House Web site ([www.science-house.org](http://www.science-house.org)), sponsored by North Carolina State University in Raleigh, Hubisz is an active participant in providing online learning resources for science teachers. In particular, he's provided a resource that he hopes will grow rapidly: online reviews of current science texts ([www.science-house.org:8530/middleschool/reviews/](http://www.science-house.org:8530/middleschool/reviews/)), and lists of their errors, which are sometimes quite egregious (e.g., a map showing the equator running through Florida).

The American Association for the Advancement of Science is also working to provide our children with a better science education. Their Project 2061 has the goal of reforming "K-12 education nationwide so that all high-school graduates are literate in science, mathematics, and technology". Have a look

at their Web site ([project2061@aaas.org](mailto:project2061@aaas.org), [www.aaas.org/project2061/](http://www.aaas.org/project2061/)) for details on the project and links to miscellaneous useful information.

As scientific communicators, we obviously have a keen interest in explaining science to diverse audiences, including the public. That task is much easier if our audiences have some basic understanding of science, and providing that understanding is the role of science teachers. How can you play a part? At a minimum, point your children's teachers to these two Web sites and encourage them to consult the available reference material, including Hubisz's reviews. If you're feeling more ambitious, contact Dr. Hubisz or AAAS and offer to help out. If, like me, you're a fan of science fiction, check out Julie Czerneda's Web site ([www.czerneda.com/nolimits.htm](http://www.czerneda.com/nolimits.htm)) for details on her *No Limits* project, a classroom resource to help teachers stimulate interest in science using science fiction as a teaching resource. Point your local teachers to this great resource.

It would also be interesting to get STC involved in these efforts, both to increase the Society's visibility and to increase our SIG's visibility within the society. Any volunteers?  $\Omega$

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*"The true scientist has to be intent on cooperation in a communal enterprise, or it will not work at all. And to the extent that we know well, and love deeply, we are all true scientists. So we will keep inventing that community of trust."*—Kim Stanley Robinson, Antarctica

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## Letters to the Editor

### More data on data

Methinks Brer Gosler (the Exchange, V9:2) is flogging a putrefying Percheron. In engineering, at least, data has been singular for at least 30 years and probably more. I have been knocked from my sturdy steed numerous times while tilting at this particular windmill. The only place I know at present where datum is still used in engineering is in land surveying. There, datum line has a specific meaning. —Dan Wise, Associate Fellow, Birmingham Chapter

### Other work opportunities

My significant other had a post-college job as a production editor on a medical journal and encouragement from her boss helped her decide to go to medical school. So she happens to be one of those doctors who writes well. As a consequence, she has developed quite a series of patient handouts to explain the limited number of conditions she encounters in her specialty and to guide patients through the self-care and follow-up they require. This material merely

reinforces what she conveys to her patients orally.

Her patients love the handouts, which are now in use by other physicians in her specialty, but most doctors I've encountered have very little of this kind of material. Usually it's a brusque sentence while I'm in the room and an illegible scrawl at the bottom of an all-purpose patient instruction form with a couple of boxes checked. If my condition is one for which there is a printed brochure furnished by a drug maker, the doctor may hand me that, too. That, it seems to me, is a golden opportunity for some entrepreneurial tech writer to exploit. I don't think there is a big opportunity with primary care providers (PCPs). They deal with too many different conditions and don't get paid well these days. But I think there is a real opportunity with specialists. So call up your PCP and ask for referrals! (They're used to that, right?) Specialists deal with a limited range of conditions and many would probably welcome a chance to get their handouts spruced up, edited, or written in the first place.—Dick Margulis

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## Proposed merger with the ES&H SIG: the Science SIG perspective

*by Geoff Hart, Science SIG manager*

On page 4, Hillary Hart, manager of the Environmental, Safety, and Health Communication SIG explains why she proposes a merger between our two SIGs. As you'll see, I'm in favor of the merger. I've polled the Science SIG e-mail discussion group (see page 8), and the responses thus far have been largely positive; the only serious concern that's been raised is the risk of undermining what we've accomplished as a SIG. If we can retain our SIG's unique strengths and enhance them by adding members from ES&H, I recommend that we proceed with the merger. If you disagree, please let me know by e-mail so we can discuss it. If nobody raises an unresolvable objection, Hilary and I will formally propose to STC that the SIGs be merged by the end of the year. Then, of course, comes the challenge of choosing a new name for the SIG. Stay tuned.

Serious objections, of course, have to be discussed, and our e-mail discussion group is the best place to do that because it permits immediate and interactive discussion. We had some minor problems with the software that runs the list, so if you didn't receive any of the messages discussing the merger, log into the Web site and check your subscription information. **Ω**

*(continued on page 4)*

## Proposed merger with the ES&H SIG: the ES&H perspective

by Hillary Hart ([hart@mail.utexas.edu](mailto:hart@mail.utexas.edu))  
Manager, ES&H SIG

For the last couple of years, I have been talking informally with ES&H SIG members about the possibility of merging with the Science SIG. Why? Well, for one thing, our SIG is pretty small—it's actually the smallest Special Interest Group within STC, fluctuating somewhere around 300 members. This size makes it difficult to rally volunteers or resources to be as effective as we could be for our membership. The second reason is that many ES&H members are members of both SIGs and are unclear, as are the managers, about what the differences really are. Medical writing probably belongs in Science Communication, but what about writing that focuses on the relationship between public health and prescription drugs. Is that health and safety writing or is it medical? What about writers at the national labs? A lot of environmental work goes on there, but surely they are "science" writers?

What are the benefits of combining the two SIGs? Answer: more resources. And thereby, more stability. Geoff Hart, recently appointed manager of the Science SIG, says, "... given the small sizes of our two SIGs, it might make sense to merge and pool our resources." Geoff cites these advantages of a merger: "More bodies, more dialog within the SIG, and more of a presence at STC, which means more security. STC's budget has been hit reasonably hard by the dotcom meltdown and the travails of the

high-tech industry, and they're looking to trim costs wherever possible. Small SIGs are an obvious target."

The Science SIG is a lot larger, about 800 members, so a combined SIG ought to have a membership of slightly over 1000. We cannot seem to determine, easily, how many of you are members of both SIGs, but I suspect at least 20%. So we might not break 1000 in membership, but that's still a significant increase for the Science SIG. And you'll only have to join one SIG next year!

A merger means a bigger budget and more leaders within the SIG to serve you. Science has a terrific content-laden newsletter (but no Web site); ES&H has a terrific-looking and functional Web site (but a very irregular newsletter). As long as we make sure both Web site and newsletter contain content relevant to environmental, safety, health, and science writers—to those working in a regulatory environment and those working in a research or science environment—the merger should provide significant advantages.

At the last STC annual conference, in Nashville, I informally polled about thirty members of both SIGs and found good enthusiasm for a proposed merger. *But we want to hear from you.* Please let us know your thoughts about the merger. We can make this happen before the end of the membership year (February '03), but we need to know that the great majority of you are in favor and there is not some major drawback we haven't thought about. Let us know your thoughts, whether pro or con. Ω

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*"The tendency of pop Darwinism—which, in one form or another, has been shaping American culture for well over a century—is to look at what we want, explain it in terms of what our genes want, and then suggest that what our genes want is what we really want. Our genes' hidden agenda—namely their own proliferation in human bodies, from here to eternity—is supposed to be our agenda... This is like saying that our felicity lies in achieving a state of entropy or heat death, which seems to be the agenda of the subatomic particles that must, in the last and rather tedious analysis, set in motion all our desires."*

—Evan Eisenberg, *The Adoption Paradox*

*“Figures and tables...” (continued from page 1)*

**Note:** Most Word dialog boxes let you select and copy text from the document, then paste it into a suitable field. For longer captions, this shortcut can save lots of typing.

8. Click the OK button. The formatted caption appears below the figure, and remains linked with the figure thereafter.

### Table captions

1. To link the caption to the table, begin by placing the cursor in the topmost cell of the table. Open the Table menu and select Insert Rows.
2. Position the cursor in the new row, then select that entire row. You can do so in two ways:
  - move the mouse cursor to the left of the row until it turns into a right-facing arrow, then click the left mouse button, or
  - position the text cursor in the first cell and move through each subsequent cell in the row using the arrow keys while holding down the Shift key.
3. Merge all cells in the new row into a single cell by opening the Table menu and selecting Merge Cells.
4. Remove any unnecessary shading and borders by clicking inside the row with the right mouse button, selecting “Borders and Shading” from the popup menu, and deselecting any unnecessary border and shading options.
5. Open the Insert menu and select Caption... to display the caption dialog box.
6. In the Label: field, select Table (Figure 3).
7. In the Position: field, select “Above selected item”.
8. Click the “Numbering...” button to display the options available for numbering (Figure 2). If you are using chapter-based numbering, ensure that the “Include chapter number” checkbox is selected, and define the styles used to define the start of the chapter and the separator.

9. In the Caption: field, type the table’s title.

**Note:** Most Word dialog boxes let you select and copy text from the document, then paste it into a suitable field, which can save lots of typing for longer captions.

10. Click the OK button. The formatted table caption appears above the table. If too much space appears between the caption and the top of the table, you can decrease the spacing by highlighting the caption, opening the Format menu, selecting Paragraph..., and changing the size of the spacing in the Before: and After: fields.

**Note:** If the top border of the table disappears, you can restore it by highlighting the entire top row of text in the table (not the caption), clicking on the selected row with the righthand mouse button, and selecting Borders and Shading.... Select the Borders tab, then add the desired borders.

### Creating an in-text cross-reference to a figure or table

Once you’ve created the captions for figures and tables, you can save considerable revision time by linking automatically to them. To link to a specific caption:

1. Position the cursor where you want the in-text reference to appear.
2. Open the Insert menu and select Cross-reference.... The screen in Figure 4 appears.
3. In the Reference type: field, select Figure or Table. The “For which caption” field displays all figures and tables that you have defined.

*“Once you’ve created the captions for figures and tables, you can save considerable revision time by linking automatically to them”*

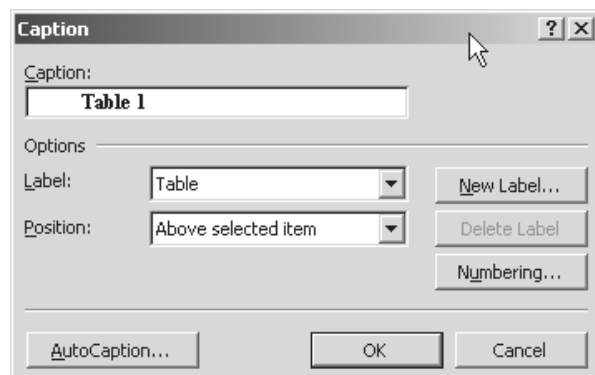


Figure 3. Selecting the “table” type of caption.

*(continued on page 6)*

*“Figures and tables...” (continued from page 5)*

4. In the “Insert reference to:” field, select Entire caption. This will ensure that the words “figure” or “table,” the chapter number (if any), and the image number appear in the link. (You can edit the results, but don’t delete or retype either the chapter or figure number; these are links maintained by Word, and retyping either one may break the link.)
5. Ensure that the “Insert as hyperlink” box is checked.
6. In the “For which numbered item:” field, select the appropriate figure or table title and click the Insert button. The caption title now appears in the document as a link.

#### Updating in-text references

1. Select the caption text.
2. Press the keyboard’s F9 key.
3. The in-text reference to the figure or table caption will automatically update to reflect the actual caption.

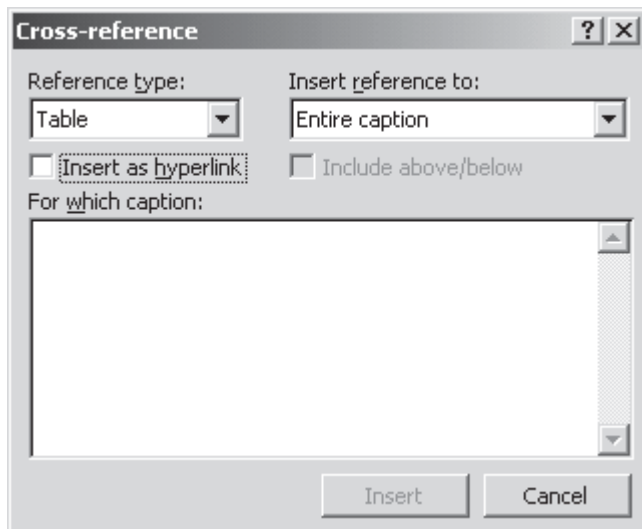
#### Using continuing headings for tables in Microsoft Word

Occasionally, we find that our tables span multiple pages. Fortunately, there’s no reason to manually regenerate the column headings and table caption on each page. With a few keystrokes, Word lets you ensure that your

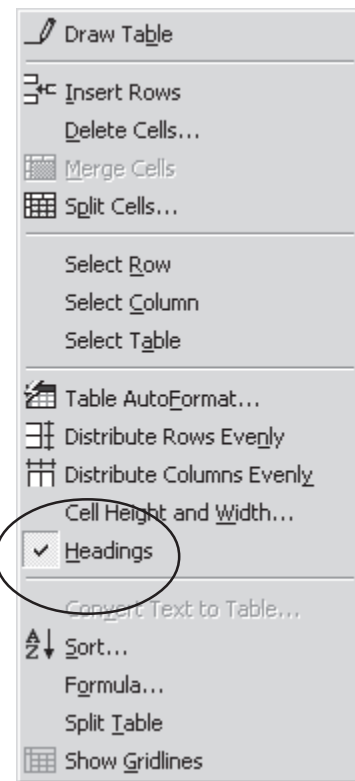
caption and column headings will appear at the top of the table on all subsequent pages.

When a table spans several pages of a document, it’s very helpful to readers if you repeat the column headings on those pages. Once the table has been created and formatted, select the column headings (row of cells) that you want to repeat on each page, then open the Table menu and select Headings (Figure 5). The Headings menu choice will henceforth display a checkmark whenever the cursor is positioned in these cells, and the column headings will now appear at the top of the table on all subsequent pages. However, you will not be able to edit these headings on those pages; changes to a column heading must be made in the cells that contain the headings at the beginning of the table.

*“With a few key-strokes, Word lets you ensure that your caption and column headings will appear at the top of the table on all subsequent pages”*



*Figure 4. Inserting a cross-reference.*



*Figure 5. Confirming that a table cell has been set to act as a “heading”.*

*(continued on page 7)*

*“Figures and tables...” (continued from page 6)*

### **Adding the table caption to the continuing header**

Naturally, a table will also have a caption to identify its title. If the table flows onto multiple pages, it's always a good idea to reidentify the table on each page so readers won't have to flip back to the first page of the table to find the title. Following the instructions earlier in this article, create a caption for the table in the first line of the table rather than as a separate paragraph outside the table.

Once you've created the table caption, highlight the entire row that contains it. To remove borders from this cell (or apply borders, if that's your preferred style), open the Table menu and select Borders and Shading... Click the Borders tab, and beside the Preview portion of the box, select or deselect border options until you achieve the desired effect. Once you've formatted the cell appropriately, open the Table menu and select Headings. As was the case for the column headings, the table caption will now repeat on each consecutive page and will only be editable on the first page of the table. **Ω**

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*“False facts are highly injurious to the progress of science, for they often endure long; but false views, if supported by some evidence, do little harm, for every one takes a salutary pleasure in proving their falseness.”—Charles Erasmus Darwin*

*“I don't think you can be a true democracy unless you understand the important scientific issues of modern life, especially in the environmental and energy fields.”—Arjun Makhijani*

## **Style guidelines for submitting journal manuscripts**

*by Geoff Hart*

Just as no two editors agree on every detail of editorial style and no two writers will take the same approach to describing a concept, so it is that journals tend to have their own idiosyncratic stylistic quirks. Although a superbly written manuscript about exciting, well-designed research will always be published—eventually—and a journal's copyeditors will help authors to follow house style, following the journal guidelines in the first place greatly reduces the barriers to publication. Some journals even explicitly state that they'll return manuscripts unread if they don't meet the journal's formatting and other submission guidelines.

One powerful tool offered by the Internet is the ability to find guidelines to authors on a publisher's Web site. For example, check out the guidelines to authors published by Elsevier (<http://authors.elsevier.com/>) and the National Research Council of Canada ([www.nrc.ca/cgi-bin/cisti/journals/rp/rp2\\_jour\\_e](http://www.nrc.ca/cgi-bin/cisti/journals/rp/rp2_jour_e)) for guidelines from these two major publishers.

Where you can't find a specific journal's style guidelines, it's generally wise to follow a good subject-specific style guide. Some of these are also available online, such as the “Uniform requirements for manuscripts submitted to biomedical journals” ([www.cma.ca/cma/common/displayPage.do?pageId=/staticContent/HTML/N0/12/publications/mwc/uniform.htm](http://www.cma.ca/cma/common/displayPage.do?pageId=/staticContent/HTML/N0/12/publications/mwc/uniform.htm)).

Do you have a favorite online style guide? Share it with us! While I'm on the subject of sharing, let me formally introduce you to Alane Alchorn ([alchorn1@llnl.gov](mailto:alchorn1@llnl.gov)), who has volunteered to begin getting our SIG's Web site up and running. If you come across other useful online references, please contact Alane with the information. **Ω**

## Join us on STC's Scientific Communication SIG mailing list!

STC runs an Internet-based e-mail discussion group for the Science SIG. It's a quiet, friendly place to turn for help if you've got questions concerning scientific communication. If you'd like to join, point your Web browser to <http://lists.stc.org/cgi-bin/lyris.pl?enter=stcscsig-L>

There's no cost to join, and you can expect a very low volume of mail. Of course, the more people join, the more traffic there'll be, so please join. It's a great way to make the SIG work for you.

Two other mailing lists of interest to Science SIG members:

**Copyediting-L:** discussions of editing in all its various forms. To subscribe, send the message "subscribe copyediting-L Your name" (with no quotes, and with your actual name instead of "Your name") to [Listserv@listserv.indiana.edu](mailto:Listserv@listserv.indiana.edu)

**Techwr-L:** discussions of the tools and travails of the technical writer. To subscribe, send the message "subscribe techwr-L Your name" (with no quotes, and with your actual name instead of "Your name") to [Lyris@lists.raycomm.com](mailto:Lyris@lists.raycomm.com)

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