

# Random Thoughts

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from William Blinn Communications

TECHNOLOGY • MARKETING • COMMUNICATIONS

## OneNote Should Be Included with Office

**B**ridge is included with nearly every individual Adobe application and with every suite the company sells. Adobe does this because the application is an advantage to the user of any Adobe application. Microsoft should do the same thing with OneNote.

When I start gathering information for a product review, I use Microsoft's OneNote to store my thoughts and comments, reference information, and testing plans. As the review progresses, I add information to OneNote and start writing the review. When the review nears completion, I copy it from OneNote to Dreamweaver. This is a process that I started with OneNote 2007 and it's even better with the Office 2010 version.

OneNote has a new file format. You'll need to convert existing files to the 2010 format if you want to use some of the new features or if you want to store OneNote files in Microsoft Live. The good news is that Microsoft has done 3 things that make this utterly painless:

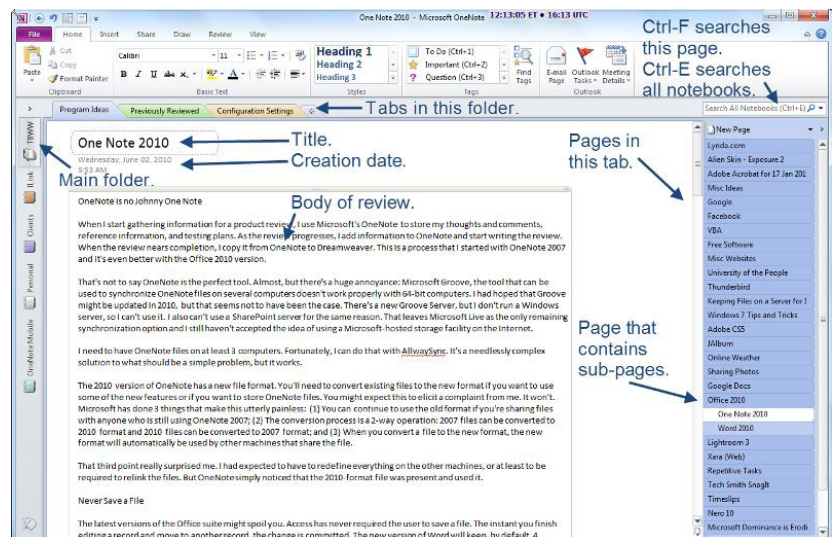
(1) You can continue to use the old format if you're sharing files with anyone who is still using OneNote 2007; (2) The conversion process is a 2-way operation: 2007 files can be converted to 2010 format and 2010 files can be converted to 2007 format; and (3) When you convert a file to the new format, the new format will automatically be used by other machines that share the file.

### Never Save a File; Never Lose Data

**T**he 2010 version of the Office suite might spoil you. Access has never required the user to save a file because the instant you finish editing a record and move to another record, the change is committed. Now Word will keep, by default, 4 unsaved documents for up to 4 days so that even if you type a quick note, print it, and then close without saving, you can get it back. The same is true for Excel. For this to work, Autosave must be turned on and you must have the document open at least long enough for Autosave to have run once. By default, that's every 10 minutes, but you can change it.

Like Access, OneNote never requires you to save a file. I still occasionally press Ctrl-S ("save") at the end of a

paragraph, but Ctrl-S doesn't save the document. It doesn't do anything. New text is committed immediately and, if you're working on a local shared file, more than one person can edit a single document simultaneously. Although I haven't seen this in action, I presume it functions the way Word's new collaboration features work: Instead of locking the entire document, the edit function locks only the paragraph that's open in the editor.



### Getting Organized

**O**neNote's structure may seem complicated at first, but it's really an example of extreme simplicity. The top level of organization is the notebook (I think of it more as a filing cabinet or a major category). For example, I have a TechByter cabinet, along with other cabinets for clients, personal information, work, and information that's synchronized with OneNote Mobile.

Next come folders. You might think of these as drawers in a filing cabinet. For TechByter, I have folders (drawers) that contain program ideas (projects I'm still working on), previously reviewed products (the review is complete, but I retained my notes for later use), and configuration settings (needed when I'm setting up a computer).

The lowest organizational level consists of pages and sub-pages; I view a page more like a file folder because it can contain a lot of different things. The sub-pages are

## Tickets - Active

- Assigned/Not Started
- Assigned/Working
- Development
- Feedback
- Resolved/Closed

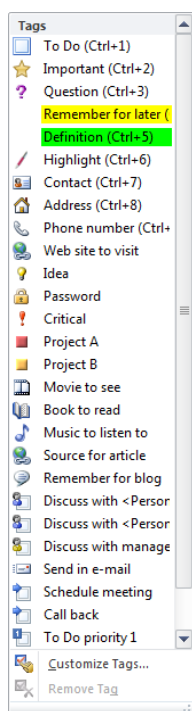
Ticket #	Description	What's Done	Who	What's Next
59817 ssmith	? 99999999 - GM WINDDOWN Enrollment for KARMAK Open: 27 Aug 2009 By: mmerriman	I'm working the VS part of this ticket. Prepared a list of questions for John Lebel 8 Jun 2010. Analysis of (lousy) file 15 Jun 2010.		Parse and test.
68685 ssmith	? GMDataShare - Enrollment received for DSI system	DMS doesn't provide VS data. Working with dealer to determine if there's something we can obtain. Dealer has MS Access database. May be able to provide a file from that system. Still waiting for the dealer to provide data 7 May 2010. ETA question to Paul Bishop 12 May 2010. File was promised for last week. Nothing received. ETA question to Paul Bishop 24 May 2010. File was sent by e-mail and PGP encrypted. We do not have the encryption key and cannot open the file. Requested that Bishop follow instructions 7 Jun 2010. Earliest we'll receive a test file is 16 Jun 2010.	Dealer	Obtain data from dealer
75204	99999999 - OnStation Dealers with Incomplete Parts Records Open: 9 Feb 2010 By: bblinn	Conference call 10 Jun 2010: 1. Ljdija will open a ticket WRT SOP. 2. 76383 will be closed and future issues will be dealt with individually. 3. Blinn will review VS/RO WRT specifications.	Me	

helpful for big projects such as reviewing Microsoft's Office Suite 2010 and Adobe's Creative Suite 5, both of which contain a lot of separate components.

As you're conducting research, you might find it useful to dock OneNote on the right side of the screen. This leaves most of your screen available for searching and reviewing. As you find information that you want to include in a report, you can paste it in to the OneNote panel.

Copy and paste is much improved. By default, it includes a link to the original document and all of the source formatting. If you don't want the formatting, you can tell OneNote to paste only the text. In some cases, I want formatting but in most cases I don't. In OneNote 2010, I can specify the default as *paste plain text*. When I want more, it's easy to change the settings after pasting text in. To retain source information for attribution, you'll want to leave enabled the function that includes a link to the site or document the text came from.

The Find function is better, too. Ctrl-F searches the single page you're on. Ctrl-E searches every page in every tab in every folder and presents a list of locations.



## Tagged!

The ability to tag a paragraph helps organize text. During the time I'm writing a review, I might write something that I haven't confirmed. Pressing Ctrl-4 places a purple question mark in the left column as a reminder that I need to confirm this point before I complete the report. By default, OneNote has about 3 dozen pre-defined tags.

You can modify or delete these and add your own. The first 9 tags may be applied via keyboard shortcuts (Ctrl-1 through Ctrl-9).

I've defined tags for ideas (1), work that's started (2), work that's assigned to someone other than me (3), work that needs additional research or more information from someone (4), and completed tasks (5).

To clear a tag, simply use the same keyboard shortcut that you used to set

the tag. And, yes, individual paragraphs may have more than one tag.

In addition to placing a symbol in the left margin, the tag can format the text (color, bold, italic, underline) and add a background highlight color.

## It's Not Word

OneNote 2010 offers basic styles for headings, bullet points, numbered lists, and such, but it's not a word processor. You can also add math equations and OneNote supports the conversion of hand-written text or math equations to text or math equations on screen if you have Windows 7.

The ability to send text to or receive information from other parts of the Office suite continues from the previous version.

## How Much?

OneNote is available in the larger Office suites, but you can also buy the product individually (\$90). It's available in the Home and Student Edition (\$150 for up to 3 computers) and students could really use OneNote in compiling research notes. The Home and Student edition includes Word, Excel, and Powerpoint in addition to OneNote.

The first time I saw OneNote, I didn't understand it; possibly that's because it didn't do a lot in that first iteration.

The second time I saw it, I liked it and started using it.

With OneNote 2010, the program has been improved to the point that it's an essential part of my daily workflow. That's why this is an application that Microsoft should include in every version of the Office suite! **B**

## ICANN: Sex Exists

After shooting down the idea several times, The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) has finally admitted that "xxx" might be a good top-level domain. On the Internet, pornography is easily found and difficult to exclude. The xxx top-level domain would make it easier to classify and organize.

It's a bad idea according to the adult entertainment industry and a variety of religious groups. The purveyors say that dot-xxx domains will stigmatize the industry. The religious groups say it will make pornography more prevalent. Politics does indeed make strange bedfellows.

ICANN has agreed to proceed on a proposal from ICM, a Florida company, to create the new top-level domain. ICM says its goal is to create an area for pornography—but one that is clean, doesn't serve viruses to visitors, and doesn't house credit-card thieves.

If you want porn, you could visit the xxx domains. If not, block the entire top-level domain. Easy. **B**