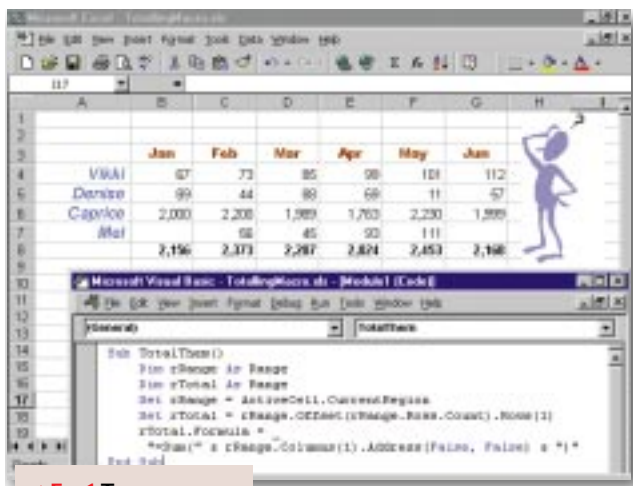# You can count on it

**Is totting up specific items in an Excel list driving you to distraction? Stephen Wells shows you an alternative way to do it. And, how to total something before you know it.**

```
Sub TotalThem()
    Dim rRange As Range
    Dim rTotal As Range
    Set rRange = ActiveCell.CurrentRegion
    Set rTotal = rRange.Offset(rRange.Rows.Count).Rows(1)
    rTotal.Formula = _
      "=Sum(" & rRange.Columns(1).Address(False, False) &
")"
End Sub
```

Last month, a reader was asking for a way to count the number of many items in an Excel-filtered list. I suggested three methods: Data, AutoFilter, which changes the SUM tool to SUBTOTAL; inserting the SUBTOTAL function yourself; or using the built-in Data, Subtotal feature. He later came back to me and clarified that he didn't want a total of all the items in a column, but the number of specific ones, like a column of text test results with Bs and Fs in it.



▲**Fig 1** The simple macro at the bottom automatically adds totals to the foot of the table, no matter how wide or deep

The COUNTIF function could be used here.

If you want to find the number of Bs in column M, and the answer is to be displayed in another column, you would enter

```
=COUNTIF(M:M,"B")
```

If it's to go in the same column, you instead might use

```
=COUNTIF(M2:M100,"B").
```

**Here's a variation,** asked for by another reader. He wants to include a macro within a programmed application which will enter totals at the foot of all his columns when he doesn't know how many columns or rows there will be. Fig 1 gives an example. Imagine the table on the worksheet with row 8 blank.

1 **Open** the Visual Basic Editor using Alt+F11.

2 **Enter** the short listing given in Fig 2. Save your work.

3 **Click** within the worksheet table. Press Alt+F8, then Enter. The macro will enter the totals in row 8. If you want row 8 to be blank and the totals in row 9, change line 5 of the listing so that .Rows(1) reads .Rows(2).

What the macro does is look at the current region. This is the area around the cell you clicked, going as far as the first blank row and column. Then it offsets this by one (.Rows(1)) or two (.Rows(2)) rows. It then inserts as many SUM functions as are called for, which in this example is six.

As Fig 1 shows, there can be blank cells in the range and the macro will ignore graphics. To avoid displaying a zero beneath the labels in column A, uncheck the Zero values box under Tools, Options, View. If you have Excel 97, instead of entering the macro, you can load the file TotallingMacro.xls which is on this month's cover-mounted CD-ROM. This worksheet offers the same example.

## Protection measure

It's a rare month when I don't receive a plea for a method to stop other people in an office changing a reader's Excel workbook. Typically, they have protected all or part of it with a password and then given the password to a friend. Said friend then copies the file with another name and steals their work. Few people have the patience to study the complex rules of Excel formatting, so this tip will usually slow up such pesky miscreants.

☛ **Choose** Format, Cells, Number, Custom and in the Type box, enter (*all on one line*):

```
"Property of Fred Smith"
;;;"Property of Fred Smith"
```

Use your name instead of Fred Smith. Set the Alignment for the cell to Horizontal, Centre. You can also add to the mystery by changing Font, Colour, to an

## A FREE HAND

Microsoft offers a number of useful interactive web sites which help you troubleshoot an assortment of common Excel problems. Keep the Excel file open which demonstrates your quandary while you view the pages. You will be asked to try solutions to your problem as you move through the questions and answers. One such site is at http://support.microsoft.com/support/tshoot/xlfile7.asp.

# Questions & *answers*

**Q** I saw your answer concerning the Euro symbol for Office97. What about us users of Office95?

ALEKSANDAR RASPOPOVIC

**a** *There are developments on this situation breaking every day. Have a look at www.eu.microsoft.com /windows/euro.asp and download the file W95_Euro.exe.*

**Q** In an Excel spreadsheet to calculate income, expenses and profit I want to run a macro depending on the outcome of the calculations. If there is a profit, one macro will run, and if there is a loss, a different macro will run. Will the IF function do this? If not, is there another function that will?

ADRIAN EMERSON

**a** *Funnily enough, dear old supposedly outdated SuperCalc used to allow you to run a macro from within a function (like the IF function) but I don't believe Excel will, on the worksheet at least. However, you can run a macro within an IF statement in a macro. What you have to do is write a macro which includes the IF statement*

*(with your required macro in it) and have the first macro triggered by an event. The event could be as simple as any mouse click.*
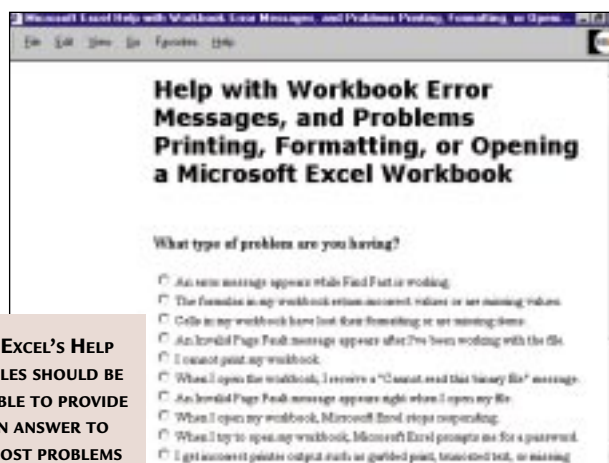
**Q** I have a list of all the BBC TV and radio transmitters in the UK and when they are planned to be temporarily shut down for essential maintenance in the next two years. The file has a sheet for all 80 main transmitting sites, each sheet with a chronological list of work to be done. I need to convert this to a single sheet with transmitter names along the top and dates down the left-hand side, and a sort of "bar graph" arrangement where a coloured filled-in bar represents a shut-down period. This would be a lengthy task to complete manually, but I would be able to do it.

▶ **EXCEL'S HELP FILES SHOULD BE ABLE TO PROVIDE AN ANSWER TO MOST PROBLEMS**

Because the information in the spreadsheet is constantly changing, I would like to put a "button" on the

spreadsheet somewhere which will activate a macro which automatically does all of the above. Then, at the end of each day, I can just hit the button and obtain an up-to-date version of the converted spreadsheet.

PAUL GARNHAM

**a** *Why don't you look at the "Run a macro from a button or graphic control" document in the Help files. You could also take a look at "Consolidate data" which covers five ways of doing what you want. You might find a*



**Help with Workbook Error Messages, and Problems Printing, Formatting, or Opening a Microsoft Excel Workbook**

**What type of problem are you having?**

*PivotTable is a solution that works for you. There is nothing in your description that seems unusual to me. It's just a matter of getting down to it.*

## PLUS (AND MINUS) POINTS

**R**ichard Baines says he is having a problem trying to make decimal points line up. Excel recommends that you use the Accounting format rather than the Currency format. But if you want to show negative amounts with brackets, rather than a minus sign, you'll need to use one of the offered Custom formats or create your own. In this case, to get positive numbers to line up with negative numbers, insert an underscore before the final bracket _).

intriguing brown or purple. Whatever the user tries to enter into the cell, whether a word, number or formula, it will display

"Property of Fred Smith". Entering a negative number or a zero will just produce a blank cell. You can have those entries produce the phrase, too, if you repeat it in the custom format after the first and second semi-colons, respectively. OK, so if they right-click the mouse and choose Clear Contents, the message will disappear. However, when they try to enter something else in the cell, irritatingly, "Property of Fred Smith" will return. It will also defeat the Delete key. And, you can save this worksheet with another name and Fred will *still* appear. Cut and Paste would beat it, so hold down Alt and drag the scissors button off the Standard toolbar. Then choose Tools,

Customise, leave that box open and choose Edit on the menu bar. Now drag the Cut command to anywhere on the Customise box. Close the box. And now

*It's a rare month when I don't receive a plea for a method to stop an Excel workbook being changed*

it's gone. He or she could still use Ctrl+X or alternatively the Shortcut menu (which can be changed in Word only), but hopefully by this time the troublemaker will have given up messing around.

### PCW CONTACTS

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