

East SIG Report – May 2023

After welcoming members to the May meeting of East SIG, host Frank Maher outlined the nights agenda below:

Presentation 1: **Q&A** with George Skarbek

Presentation 2: **PowerToys** by George Skarbek

Presentation 3: **DJI Drones** by Frank Maher

Presentation 4: **Using Mail Merge for Creating Name Labels** by Rod Jones

Presentation 5: **AI Assistance in the Home** by Dave Botherway

Q&A by George Skarbek

Question 1: My DVD writer icon has disappeared from Windows File Explorer list. When I looked in Device Manager the DVD appears there and identifies itself correctly as a Pioneer. When I right click on Pioneer and select Properties it states “This device is working properly”. However, it still doesn’t show up in File Explorer.

As a last resort I inserted a music CD into the drive and it started playing. The DVD player then appeared in File Explorer with its correct drive letter, W. When I took the CD out, the DVD drive icon disappeared again. I now know the drive works, but I’m confused why this is happening. Have I got a problem with Windows?

Answer 1: With a normal drive, if it doesn’t have a partition table on it, the operating system won’t identify it. You don’t need to do that with an optical drive.

[Dale Gardner Berry] I’ve just checked my Windows 10 File Explorer and the optical drive doesn’t appear. I put a CD in the drive and up it came in File Explorer. I wasn’t aware of that feature, so it looks like this issue is normal behaviour.

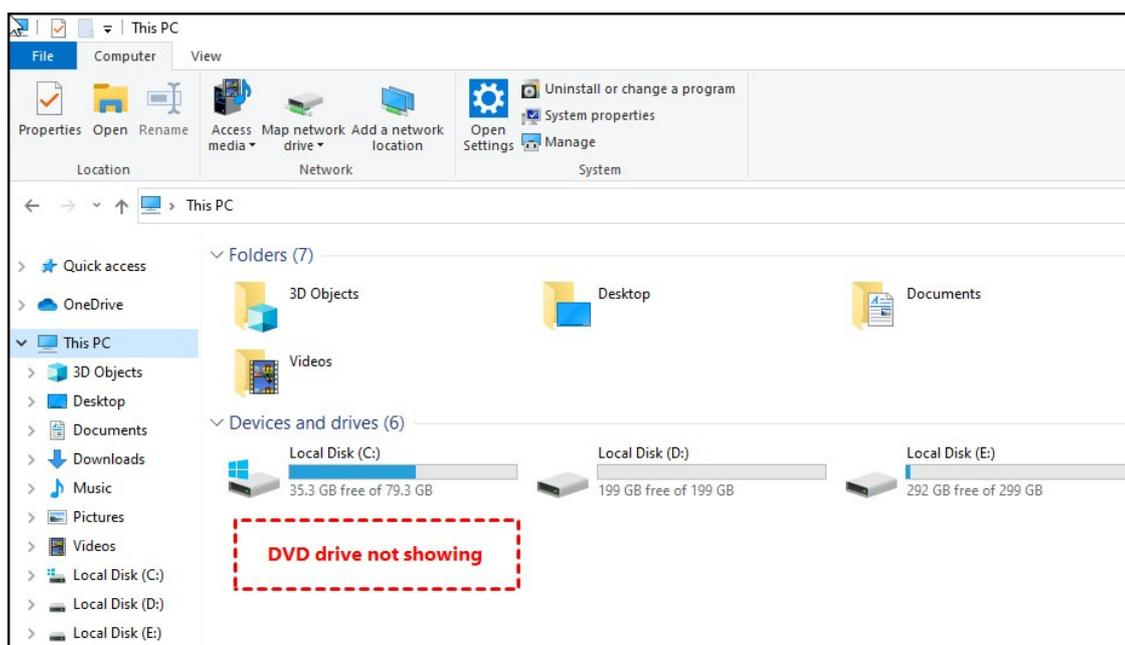


Figure 1 – Windows File Explorer with missing DVD Drive

Question 2: I wish to discontinue my Microsoft 365 subscription but find my Desktop, Documents, Music, Pictures & Videos have been placed in the OneDrive folder, and stored in the cloud. I tried to move the Desktop folder to the PC but everything on my desktop disappeared. I then had to move the Desktop folder back into OneDrive. How do I put everything from OneDrive into the “This PC” folder?

Answer 2: You need to disconnect OneDrive from the PC before you can transfer the contents to the “This PC” folders, otherwise it will instantly sync back again.

1. Open OneDrive, click the OneDrive tray icon
2. Click “More” then click “Settings”.
3. Under the “Account” tab, click “Unlink this PC” and follow prompts then “OK”.
4. Next click on the “Backup” tab and uncheck all the check boxes,
5. Next select the “Manage Backup” button and uncheck all the check boxes on that screen
6. Click “OK” and close.
7. You should now be able to move folders shown under OneDrive to your “This PC” folder.

[Peter Carpenter] In regards to moving Windows assigned folders, there is a location tab in the properties of each folder. The location tab of those folders shows where Windows assigns the Desktop, Documents, Videos, Music & Pictures folders. You can move the OneDrive assigned folders, to the location Windows assigned them on installation, using the Location box in the folder Properties. I don’t know if you can move your own files or whether you have to log on as an Administrator

[Neil Muller] The OneDrive problem mentioned is similar to an issue with DropBox syncing files in the cloud from an earlier meeting. Figure 1 from the August 2021 issue of PCUpdate (page 23) depicts how DropBox altered the Window assigned locations to a DropBox folder. Peter’s suggestion to use the “Location” tab to move folders from OneDrive, was the same technique used to move folders that DropBox syncing had reassigned.

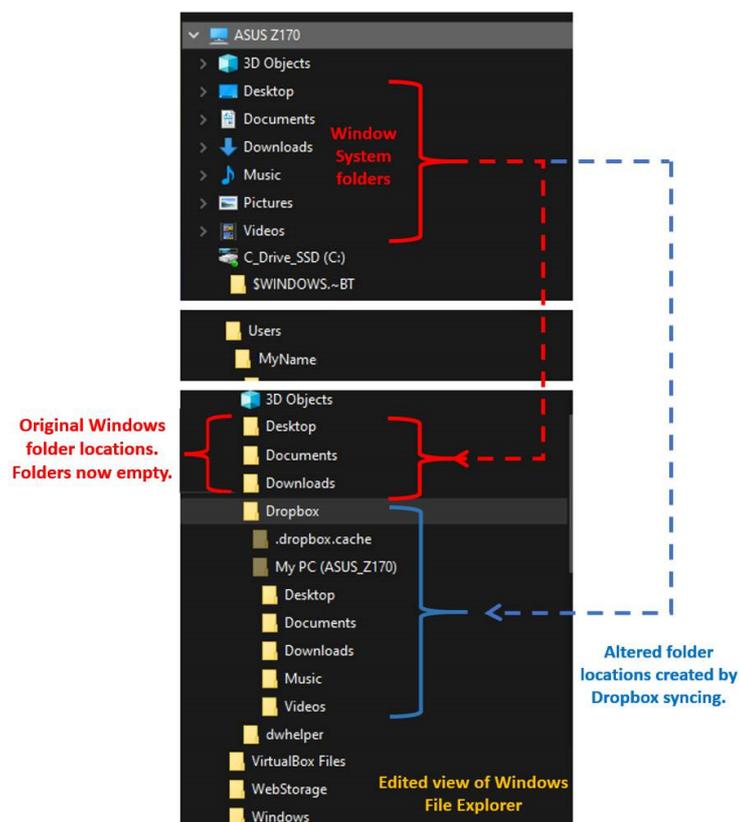


Figure 2 – DropBox changes to Windows File Structure

Question 3: I received an email from Microsoft recently stating they are not going to support Windows 10 beyond 2025. That means people like me with a relatively recent laptop, that can't be updated to Windows 11, will become defunct.

Answer 3: For most people the operating system is not that important. What is important is programs you use, such as Mail, Excel, Word, VLC, Photoshop etc.

[Reply] I'm concerned that Windows 10 security patches will cease at the end of 2025.

[George] There will no longer be new features updates for Windows 10, but it's likely security patches will still be available after that date. At that time, Windows 12 may be available, with features that may be useful to you. You may then find it worth updating to a new laptop.

Microsoft PowerToys by George Skarbek

Microsoft PowerToys is a suite of small utility programs aimed at enhancing productivity in Windows. PowerToys is free and contains tools for both general and more advanced Windows users. The suite of programs is constantly being added to, with the current version at 0.70.0.



Figure 3 – Microsoft PowerToys

PowerToys can be downloaded from the Microsoft store or from Github (<https://github.com>). Installation of PowerToys installs a PowerToys icon in the system tray and runs when Windows starts.

George outlined and briefly described each of the utilities listed below, enlarging on those he felt would be of use to most members.

- General – displays the PowerToys version number, appearance and behaviour.
- Always On Top – enables you to pins a window on top of all other windows
- Awake – keeps your PC from shutting down, without the need to manage power and sleep settings. It could be used in situations where programs might need to run all night.
- Color Picker - Pick colours from any currently running application. As you hover the mouse cursor over a colour, the hex code for that colour is displayed. Color Picker also copies the colour to the Windows clipboard and has an editor that holds a history of previously picked colours.
- Fancy Zones – produces complex window layouts to quickly position windows into the layouts created.
- File Locksmith – is a Windows shell extension to find out which processes are using the selected files and directories.

- File Explorer add-ons – these enable "Preview Pane" rendering in File Explorer to display SVG icons (.svg): Markdown (.md) and PDF file previews.
- Hosts File Editor – is a utility for managing hosts files.
- Image Resizer – is part of File Explorer and is used to resize images in established presets, different qualities and file formats. It can be useful when sending images to others.

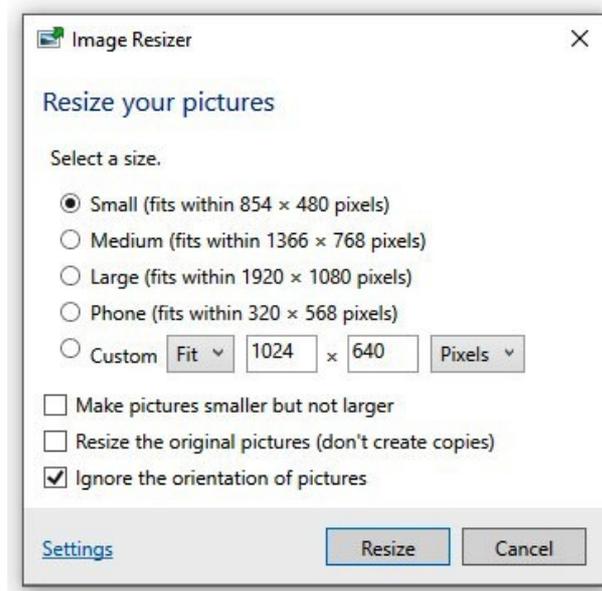


Figure 4 – PowerToys Image Resizer

- Keyboard Manager - allows you to customize the keyboard by remapping keys and creating your own keyboard shortcuts.
- Mouse utilities - add functionality to improve your mouse and cursor. This app locates your mouse's position with a spotlight that focuses on your cursor.
- Paste As Plain Text – enables you to paste text stored in Windows Clipboard as plain text by excluding any text formatting. This is achieved using a shortcut key combination or from a context menu.

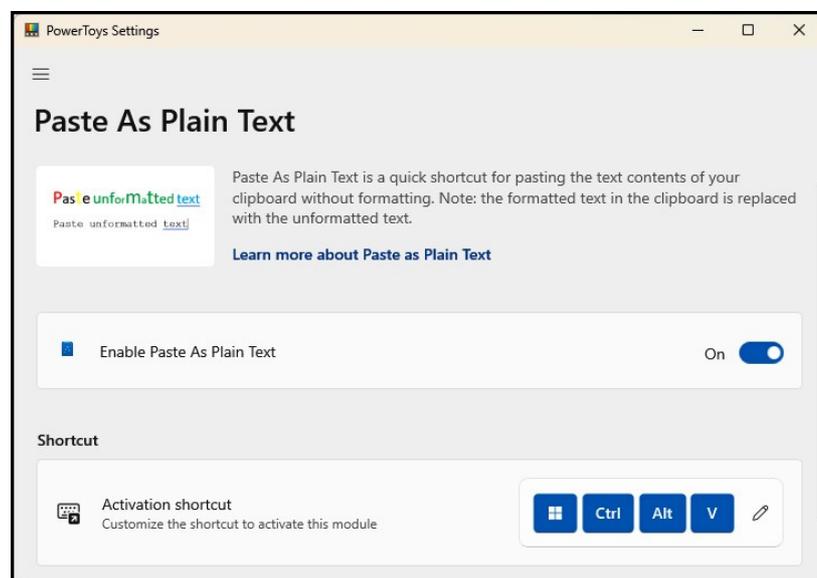


Figure 5 – PowerToys Paste As Plain Text

- PowerRename – can bulk rename files in File Explorer by right clicking on the files and selecting “PowerRename” from the context menu.

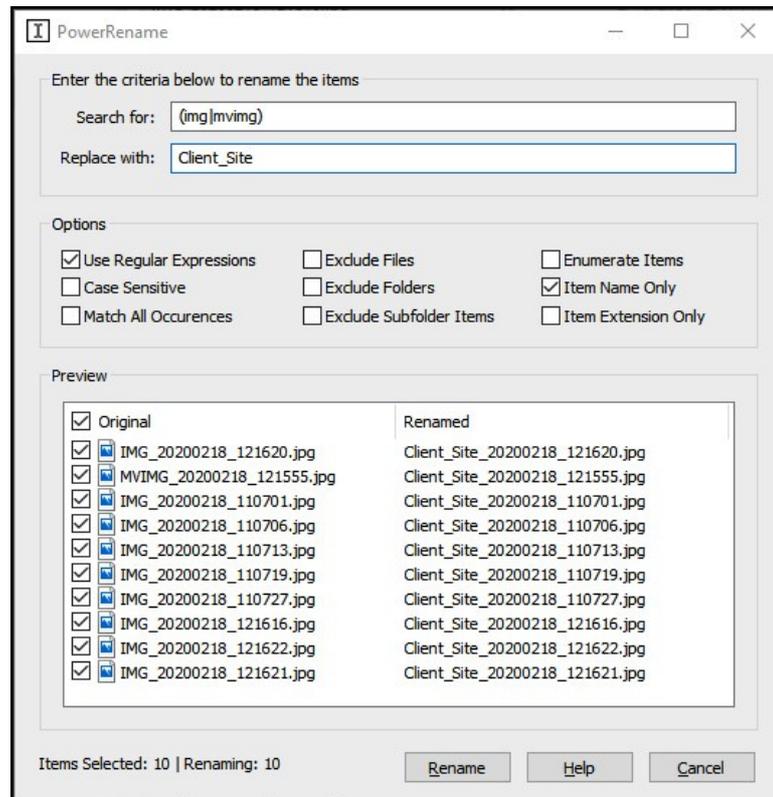


Figure 6 – PowerToys Power Rename

- PowerToys Run - PowerToys Run is a text-based application launcher. It also features a search feature to quickly find files.
- Quick Accent - provides a quick way to type accented characters when you’re using a keyboard that doesn’t support those characters.
- Registry Preview - lets you see exactly what a REG file will do to the Windows Registry before you run it.
- Screen Ruler - lets you measure a selection on your computer screen in pixels.



Figure 7 – PowerToys Screen Ruler

- Shortcut Guide – this is an overlay screen that displays the most common shortcut commands that use the Windows key. The overlay is enabled by selecting and holding the Windows + Shift + / keys.

- Text Extractor - uses optical character recognition (OCR) to extract text and copy it to the clipboard. After making a rectangular selection on your computer screen, Text Extractor extracts the text which can then be pasted into Notepad or a Word document.

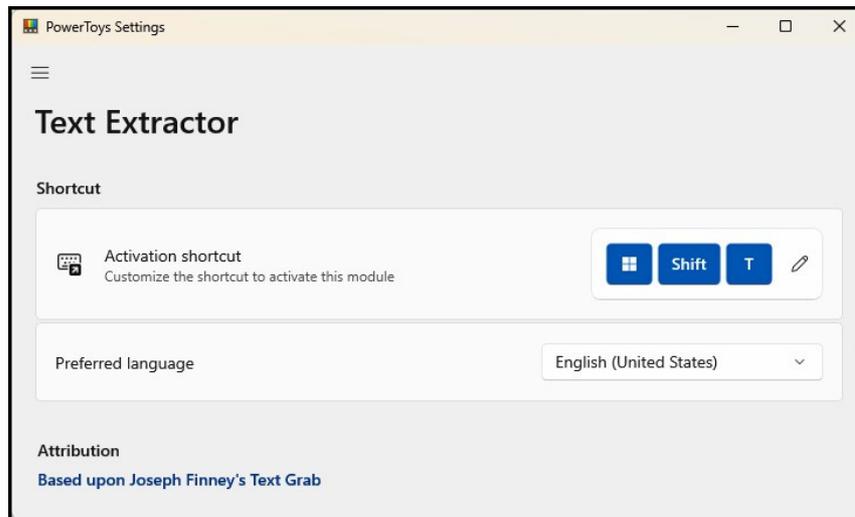


Figure 8 – PowerToys Text Extractor

- Video Conference Mute - gives you global keyboard shortcuts for quickly muting your microphone and turning off your web camera. They work in every Windows application, not just video conferencing tools like Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and Google Meet.

For those wishing for a detailed explanation of each of the PowerToys utilities, PCmagazine is a good reference at

<https://au.pcmag.com/windows-xp/68059/7-unique-ways-to-enhance-windows-10-with-microsoft-powertoys>

DJI Drones by Frank Maher

DJI is a Chinese technology company headquartered in Shenzhen. DJI manufactures commercial drones for aerial photography and videography. It also designs and manufactures camera systems, gimbal stabilizers, propulsion systems, enterprise software, aerial agriculture equipment, and flight control systems.

DJI accounts for around 76% of the world's consumer drone market as of March 2021. Its camera drone technology is widely used in the music, television and film industries. The company's products have also been used by military and police forces. Recently DJI has become the first drone manufacturer in the world to receive the C1 Class Rating with its Mavic 3 drone.

To showcase the capabilities of DJI drones, Frank played 2 videos from YouTube featuring 2 of DJI's top performing drones.

DJI Mavic 3

The first video was titled "Flying Above Everest" using a DJI Mavic 3 drone. This is a short 2-minute video with stunning scenery that is well worth watching. The video can be viewed on YouTube at <https://tinyurl.com/yck8un8t> or <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zz9oI3B6v4c>



Figure 9 – DJI Mavic 3 Flying Over Mount Everest

The Mavic 3 is DJI’s flagship drone. Its main features are:

- The Mavic 3 is a radio-controlled Quadcopter with an advanced auto return
- 46-minute flight time.
- A dual-camera setup in a 3-axis gimbal.
- Two cameras comprise a 20MP camera with a wide-angle lens with 4/3" CMOS from legendary camera maker Hasselblad and a 12MP telephoto camera with 1/2" CMOS that captures 4K video with its 28x hybrid zoom.
- The video quality of the wide-angle Hasselblad on the Mavic 3 offers up to 5.1K resolution and DCI 4K at 120 fps. DCI (Digital Cinema Initiatives) is the 4K format used by digital cinemas and has a resolution of regularly 4096 x 2160 pixels.
- Maximum 15km video transmission
- The 12.8 stops of dynamic range and an adjustable aperture from f/2.8 to f/11 enables the drone to handle nearly any lighting condition and deliver low-light footage with less noise.
- GPS and Omnidirectional Obstacle Sensing navigation
- At the time this report was written, the Australian price for the DJI Mavic 3 drone is around \$2,800.

DJI Inspire 3 Cinema Drone

The second video “Introducing DJI Inspire 3” shows what the future of aerial cinematography will look like. The video can be viewed at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T5IgH_IL7I or <https://tinyurl.com/9732zsu5> and again makes fascinating viewing.

Main features of the DJI Inspire 3 are:

- An X9-8K Air full-frame camera which can record 8K video in both Cinema DNG and Apple ProRes RAW.
- 3-axis, gimbal camera, custom-built for the Inspire 3.
- A new 1/1.8" First Person View (FPV) camera with double the Display field of view (DFOV) of the Inspire 2. Together these two updates to the Inspire 3 help capture professional footage and complex shots
- A customizable obstacle avoidance system and built-in centimetre-level RTK GPS accuracy.

- High-precision Real Time Kinematic (RTK) GPS positioning delivers centimetre-level flight accuracy.
- Omnidirectional sensing system to improve flight accuracy and safety.
- Spotlight automatic object recognition and tracking.
- The RTK, Omnidirectional sensing and obstacle avoidance system enable the capture of repeatable professional footage and complex shots.
- A robust O3 Pro transmission system supports 1080p/60fps live feeds and an ultra-low latency of 90ms within a 15km max range.
- It is also equipped with a dual native ISO to capture exquisite detail and minimal noise, even in low-light environments.



Figure 10 – DJI Inspire 3 Cinema drone

Using Mail Merge for Creating Name Labels by Rod Jones

When tasked with preparing name labels for a residents' meeting at his new apartment, Rod saw an opportunity to improve his computer knowledge, while simultaneously acquiring a new skill. Microsoft Word Mail Merge seemed ideal for the task, so Rod set about investigating how to go about it. The first port of call was YouTube and an excellent introduction video by Kevin Stratvert at <https://tinyurl.com/ytsy8d4p> or https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Efb_oMgxEs



Figure 11 – YouTube banner – Main Merge Tutorial

After watching the above video, Rod demonstrated the process he used to create his name labels.

1. The first step was to compile the database needed by Word to create the Name labels. This involved Rod creating an Excel spreadsheet with the information needed for his labels. His spreadsheet comprised 5 columns of data, with a row for each person. Column headings were:

Column A - First Name,
Column B - Second Name,
Column C - Apartment No.,
Column D - Mobile Number &
Column E - Email address.

These headings were later picked up from Rod's Excel database by Mail Merge and the contents of each row (person) inserted into a field on the label template in Word

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	First Name	Second Name	Apartment	mobile	email		
2	Rod	Jones	4.11	0402069619	rtraveller@gmail.com		
3	Lee	Jones	4.11	0495741996	ltraveller@gmail.com		
4	John	Hall	5.12	0400369657	atraveller@gmail.com		
5	John	Swale	5.13	0490577419	straveller@gmail.com		
6	Kelvin	Cording	7.11	0406960690	ctraveller@gmail.com		
7	George	Skarbek	8.02	0574190490	gtraveller@gmail.com		
8							
9							
10							
11							

Figure 12 – Rod's Mail Merge's Excel Database

2. The next step was to open a new blank Word document, select the "Mailings" tab, then "Start Mail Merge". When "Start Mail Merge" is selected, a drop-down menu appears where Rod selected "Labels".

When the "Label Options" window opens, select the "Page Printers", "Label Vendors" (Avery A4/A5 in Rods case) and the product code for the label sheet layout purchased to print the name labels on. The formatting for the label template selected then appeared in Word.

3. Again under the "Mailings" tab, click on "Select Recipients" and select "Use an Existing List" from the drop-down menu. Rod then navigated to the location of his Excel spreadsheet created in step 1 and selected that Excel file.

Once the spreadsheet was recognised by Mail Merge, Rod selected the sheet containing his data from the "Select Table" window that opened. Before clicking on "OK" to confirm the sheet, Rod noted that the tick box at the bottom of the window stating, "First row of data contains column headers", was ticked. The label template appears on screen, with the cursor sitting on the first label.

4. Next the "Edit Recipients List" was selected. This is where all the names in the database spreadsheet appear. As Rod wanted to print labels for all people in the database, he ticked all the names and pressed "OK". This step now ensured Mail Merge was connected to the database.

5. With the cursor on the first label,click on the “Insert Merge Field”. A drop-down list opens displaying Rod’s spreadsheet headings where Rod selected “First Name”. This inserted the first field <<First_Name>> at the cursor’s location. Rod then pressed Enter and added <<Second_Name>>, <<Apartmnet_No>> etc. to complete the label.

Tip: Highlighting any of the fields e.g.<<First_Name>>, enabled Rod to alignment the text (centring in Rod’s case) and to set the font type and size.

6. Once all the fields for the first label had been set, Rod selected “Update Labels”. This added the fields entered on the first label to the second and subsequent labels.
7. Rod then selected “Preview Results” to confirm the details and formatting on the first label was correct prior to printing.
8. When Rod was satisfied with the formatting of his name labels, he selected “Finish & Merge” then selected “Print document” from the dropdown menu. As Rod didn’t have access to a printer, he created a pdf which was later printed at Office Works for \$0.60 per page.

Tip: when printing, select “fit”, otherwise Rod found the labels slowly crept down the page and didn’t fit onto the label.

9. Rod then saved the Word file as a Word Template (.dotx) for future prints or updates.

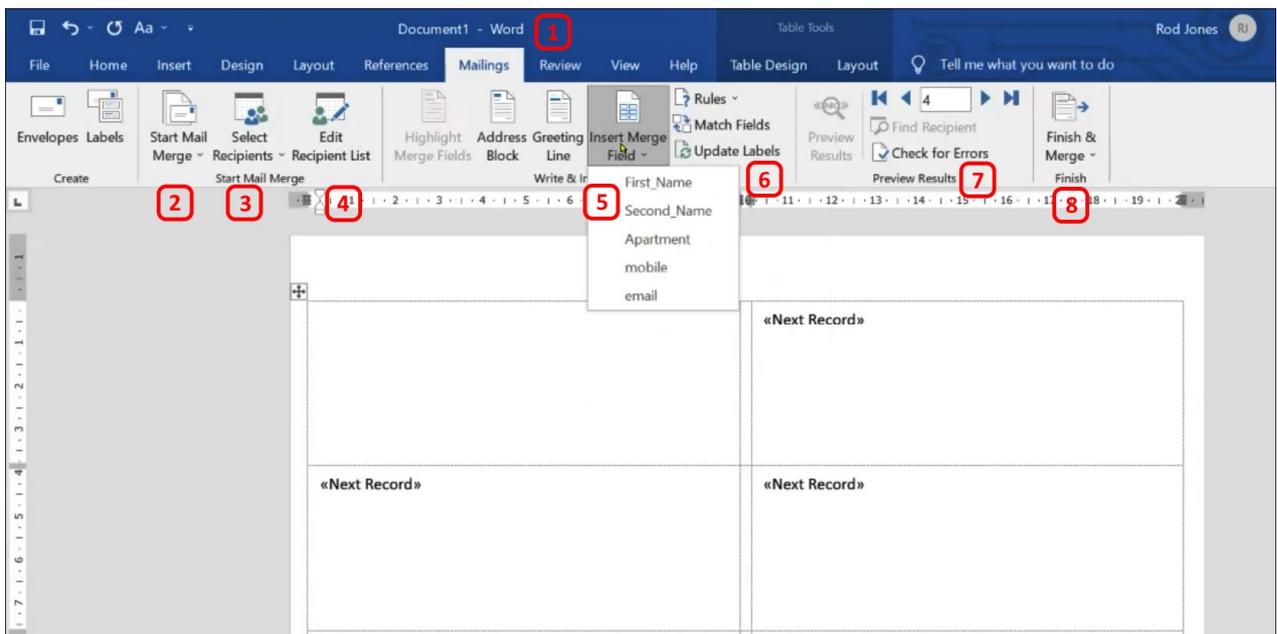


Figure 13 – Numbered Mail Merge Steps

AI Assistance in the Home by Dave Botherway

The final presentation of the night was by Dave Botherway on AI Assistance in the Home. At the February meeting Dave posed a number of technical questions to ChatGPT. This month Dave posed 4 questions with replies in real time that might be useful in the home. The answers to Dave’s questions were extensive, on topic and detailed. Due to the length of the responses from AI ChatGPT, I’ve only included the full reply to 2 of those questions in this report.

Question: My house is super cluttered. Help me create a to-do list, a schedule with reminders.

ChatGPT Answers: Sure, I can help you create a to-do list and schedule to help declutter your house.

Here are some steps to get started:

1. Assess the clutter: Start by walking through your home and identifying the areas that need decluttering the most. Make a list of all the rooms, closets, and storage areas that need attention.
2. Prioritize: Decide which areas need attention first. It's best to start with the areas that are causing the most stress or inconvenience.
3. Create a to-do list: Break down each room or area into smaller tasks that can be completed in a shorter amount of time. This will make it easier to tackle the decluttering process and keep track of your progress. For example, instead of just putting "clean out the garage" on your to-do list, break it down into smaller tasks such as "sort through tools", "donate old sports equipment", "throw out broken items".
4. Schedule: Set aside specific blocks of time for decluttering each day or week. Make sure to be realistic with the amount of time you have available and don't try to tackle too much at once. Add these blocks of time to your calendar or planner.
5. Set reminders: Use reminders on your phone or computer to help you stay on track. Set reminders for when your decluttering sessions are scheduled to start and end, as well as reminders for specific tasks that need to be completed.
6. Enlist help: If you have family or friends who are willing to help, don't hesitate to ask for their assistance. You can also hire a professional organizer if you need additional help and guidance.

Here's an example to-do list and schedule:

To-do list:

- Sort through clothes in the closet
- Donate old books to the library
- Organize kitchen cabinets
- Declutter the garage

Schedule:

Monday: 9am-10am - Sort through clothes in the closet

Tuesday: 3pm-4pm - Donate old books to the library

Wednesday: 2pm-4pm - Organize kitchen cabinets

Thursday: 9am-11am - Declutter the garage

Reminders:

- Monday at 9am - Start sorting through clothes in the closet
- Tuesday at 3pm - Drop off books at the library
- Wednesday at 2pm - Start organizing kitchen cabinets
- Thursday at 9am - Start decluttering the garage

Question: Planning a 4-day holiday in Lakes Entrance for July. What activities would you suggest, what restaurants and what clothes should I take?

ChatGPT Answers: Lakes Entrance is a beautiful coastal town located in the eastern part of Victoria, Australia. Here are some suggestions for activities, restaurants, and clothing that would be suitable for your 4-day holiday in July:

Activities:

1. Explore the Ninety Mile Beach, which is one of the longest uninterrupted beaches in the world.
2. Take a scenic drive along the Great Alpine Road and enjoy stunning views of the Gippsland Lakes.
3. Visit Buchan Caves, which are limestone caves featuring stalactites, stalagmites, and underground rivers.
4. Go fishing on one of the many jetties or charter a boat for a deep-sea fishing experience.
5. Take a cruise on the Gippsland Lakes and spot dolphins, seals, and other marine life.
6. Visit the Lakes Entrance Fishermen's Co-Op and taste some of the fresh seafood.

Restaurants:

1. The Waterwheel Beach Tavern: This restaurant offers beautiful views of the ocean and serves delicious seafood and steak dishes.
2. The Boathouse Restaurant: This restaurant offers a relaxed atmosphere and serves fresh seafood, pasta, and wood-fired pizza.
3. The Esplanade Resort and Spa Restaurant: This restaurant offers a fine-dining experience with stunning views of the Gippsland Lakes and serves modern Australian cuisine.
4. Albert & Co Cafe: This cafe serves breakfast, lunch, and coffee and is located in the heart of Lakes Entrance.
5. Trawlers Seafood Kitchen: This restaurant is located in the heart of the fishing fleet and serves fresh seafood.

Clothing:

In July, Lakes Entrance can be quite chilly, so it's best to pack warm clothing. Here are some suggestions:

1. Waterproof jacket
2. Warm sweater or fleece
3. Long pants or jeans
4. Comfortable walking shoes or hiking boots
5. Scarf and beanie or hat
6. Swimsuit and towel (if you plan to take a dip in the heated swimming pool or indoor spa)

I hope these suggestions help you plan a wonderful 4-day holiday in Lakes Entrance!