



Active Blog

Excel Trick

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AutoShapes In High Impact Charts

Make your chart stand out from the crowd with AutoShapes! Example, suppose you have a line chart that compares the sales of notebooks and desktop PCs over the last quarter. Rather than have your audience spend time matching the chart's lines to the legend, replace the legend with callouts identifying the data series. Then, to emphasize that notebooks outpaced desktops in your sales data, combine the image of the chart with an AutoShape of a laptop, and this is how we do it:

1. Open the worksheet that contains the chart.
2. Right-click a toolbar and select Drawing.
3. Click AutoShape and go to Callouts.
4. Click Rectangular Callout.
5. Click and drag the mouse to create a callout near the line representing Notebook Sales.
6. Drag the yellow tip of the callout so that it points to the line.
7. Right-click the callout border and select Format AutoShape.
8. Click the Font tab and select White from the drop-down color box.
9. Click the Color And Lines tab and under Fill select Black from the drop-down color box.
10. Click OK.
11. Click inside the Callout and type Notebook Sales. Resize the callout as needed.
12. Repeat steps 3 through 11 for the Desktop Sales Callout.
13. Delete the Legend, if necessary.
14. Select the chart, and press [Ctrl] while selecting the two callout shapes.
15. Click Draw in the drawing toolbar, and then click Group.
16. Click AutoShapes and then click More AutoShapes.
17. Scroll to the image of the laptop and double-click.
18. Click and drag a corner of the laptop shape to enlarge it.
19. Click and drag a corner of the chart to resize it to fit within the laptop shape's screen.
20. Move the resized chart to position it within the laptop screen.
21. With the chart still selected, click Draw in the drawing toolbar.
22. Go to Order, then click Bring To Front.
23. With the chart still selected, press [Ctrl], and then click the laptop shape.
24. Click Draw in the drawing toolbar, then click Group.

By grouping the AutoShapes with the chart, you can now work with the combined AutoShapes as you would any other graphic object. For example, you can resize it as a whole, or copy and paste it to a PowerPoint slide or Word document.

If you require additional information or assistance with this item, please give us a call.