

# TUTORIAL: How to turn graphs into images

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## Graphs from outside sources

The first thing to note is that any image composed of pixels that is copied and then reduced in size (or enlarged), will lose definition. Any text in the image – as in a graph - will disintegrate or become too small to read. This is unavoidable whatever software is involved.

## Graphs self-created in MS Excel

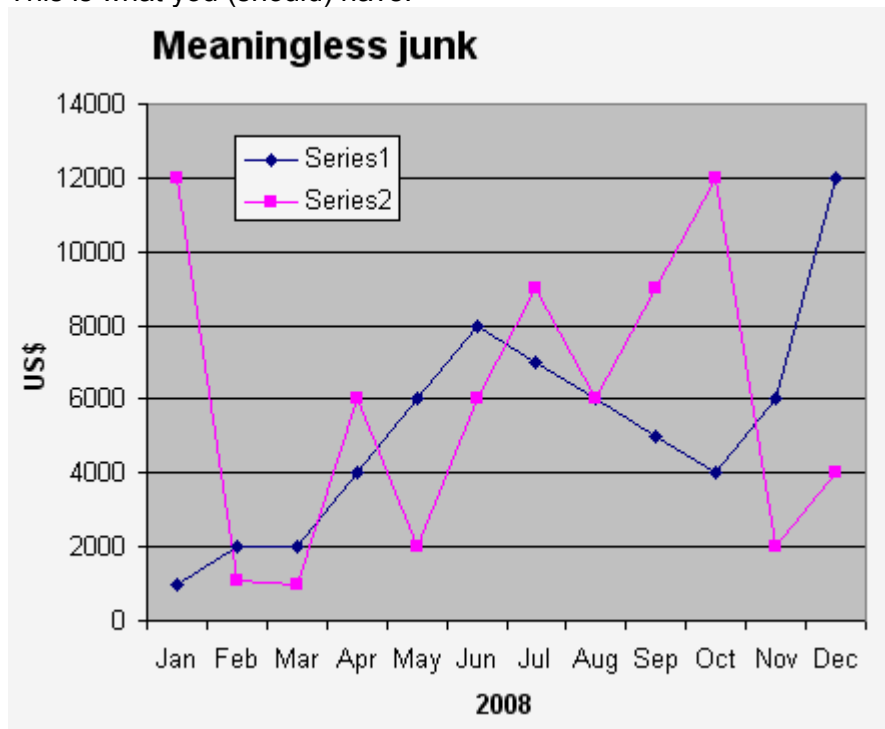
*This looks complicated and time consuming, but after a bit of practice the steps after creating the graph to saving it as an image take under 2 ½ minutes (I have timed myself, without rushing).*

1. Please download the Excel attachment sent to you by email, “graph demo”, and click on the “Chart 1” tab. You can use this to execute the steps detailed below.
2. **Chart 1** is a graph I created, using the Excel default settings, with no additional formatting. Obviously it is much too big to be used in a blog post. It must be reduced without losing legibility. We want to reduce the size of the graph without reducing the size of the text.
3. Right-click anywhere in the white space outside the graph and select “Format chart area” from the pop-up menu that appears.
4. Click the “Font” tab. At the bottom of the panel you will see a box called “Auto scale”. IT IS UNCHECKED NOW BECAUSE I HAVE MADE IT SO, BUT WHEN YOU CREATE YOUR OWN GRAPHS IT WILL BE CHECKED, BY EXCEL DEFAULT. Click on it to uncheck it. You will need to do this each time you want to resize a graph. Click OK.
5. Now, click anywhere in the grey area of the graph itself. The graph area is now defined by little black boxes and a heavy dotted line. Place your cursor on the bottom right corner. Your cursor becomes a double-headed diagonal arrow. Click and drag the black box diagonally inward. Release the cursor. The graph will reduce to whatever size you have made it, while the text remains its original size. The result should look something like **Chart 2**.
6. Unfortunately the title and legend were left behind when we resized the graph area, and we need to fix that now. Click on the title, “Meaningless junk”. It should now be defined by black boxes and a dotted line. Click and hold the cursor on one of the black boxes, and drag the title into position above the graph. Change it to bold and enlarge the font size to, say, 14, either by defining it and using the toolbar, or by right-clicking on it and selecting “Format title”. Make the axis titles bold too, the same way.
7. Click on the legend (Series 1, Series 2). It is now defined. Click and hold your cursor INSIDE the defining box and drag it to an appropriate position, above, below or inside the graph area. You should end up with something looking like **Chart 3**.
8. Now the graph is properly sized, we have to turn it into an image. Click Edit > Copy (or Ctrl c). Open MS Paint. Paste (Ctrl v).

9. The image brought a lot of white space along with it from Excel. We must crop it. Immediately after pasting, your cursor is a cross with arrowheads. Click and drag the graph closer to the top left corner of the image window to get rid of that white space. Do this now - you cannot do it later, I think.

10. Now to get rid of the white space on the right of and below the graph. Click somewhere OUTSIDE the image (NOT IN THE WHITE SPACE WE WANT TO GET RID OF – THIS IS STILL PART OF THE IMAGE). The window should now be defined by a thick dark grey line with tiny bluish boxes at the corners. Click and drag the bottom right corner box diagonally inward until the graph is surrounded by just a bit of white space.

This is what you (should) have:



11. Go to “Save as”, give it a name, and “Save as type” GIF (CompuServe). If that looks bad, save as 24-Bit Bitmap.

12. You can now insert your graph into a blog post. For help with that, see “Posting an image” under “Tools” on the home page of <http://blog.atimes.net/> .

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