

ALPHA 360

Film, Photo, Post-prod, CGI,
Print, Digital media, etc.

User Manual

The greater your master AlphA, the more professional and high-quality your responses will become, resulting in increased margins.

2025

Alpha All-in-One
Budgeting Program



Summary

- If you observe **V4.x**, it means a new features.
- Use hyperlinks visible upon hovering over them
- Use cmd F to search for keywords.
- Open as a PDF, it is a better UX.

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Brief History

In the early 2000s, professionals were missing an essential tool to respond to bid offers and produce professional quotes for advertising films. And above all, without errors!

The basic tool was there but considered austere and sometimes reviled: Excel. However, by digging a little deeper, we realized that Excel was programmable...

...20 years later, continuously nourished by clever and rigorous user feedbacks, we are proud to present our latest, AlphA 360, the complete and ultra-specialized reference tool for quoting multimedia content productions.

Today, AlphA is no longer just Excel, which over the years has lost its austere image in favour of power and flexibility, but a tool integrating other languages to interact with platforms, share, communicate...

A professional
tool designed
BY and FOR
professionals!

The vision

Creating beauty is good, but well creating beauty with is even better!

Autonomous, an AlphA file IS the program in itself, accessible from any location, connected or not!

Making a quote for a film or any advertising content requires a demanding know-how. It is tedious, delicate, complex, but a must.

This requires a precise and error-free tool, which is no small feat. AlphA contains more than 700,000 formulas (yes, you read that right!) all chiselled to be fast and error-free, and incidentally 50,000 lines of code.

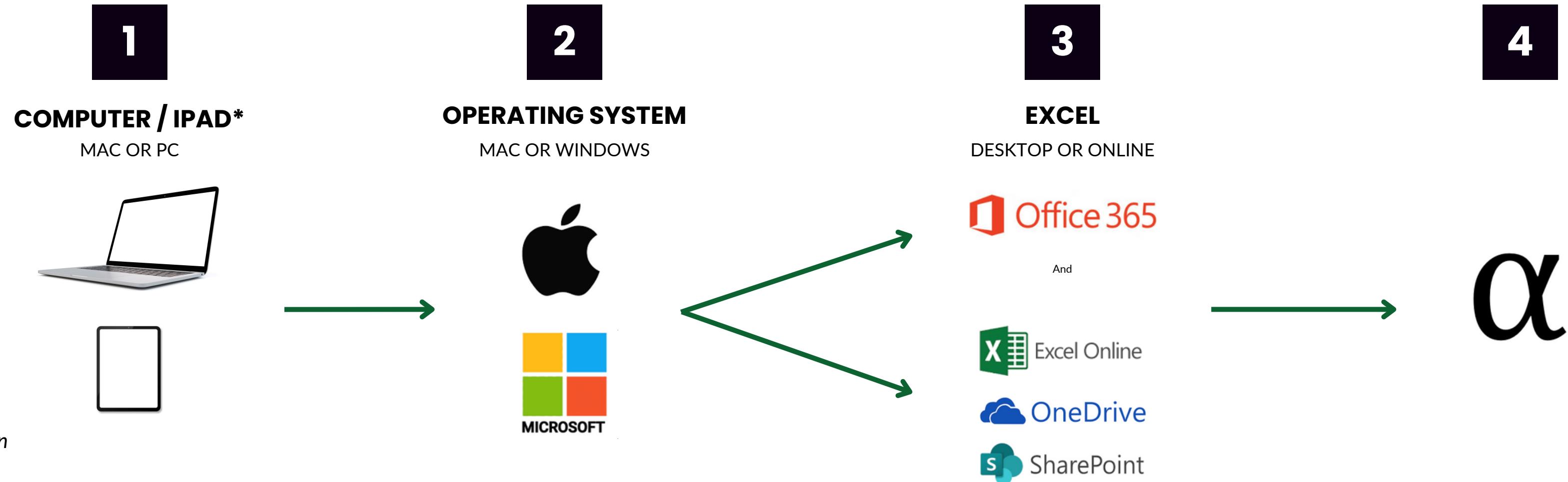
Making a quote certainly requires experience but also time. So you need a tool:

- Fast in calculation, capable of automating repetitive tasks,
- Flexible because all projects are prototypes,
- With professional functions to anticipate real margins, create additives, reports, manipulate exchange rates, multilingual, etc.,
- Allowing a subtle knowledge of production costs and therefore the optimization of margins,
- Secure, powerful, autonomous and confidential (because off-platform).

AlphA is all that!

Prerequisites

The value of a production chain is that of its weak link!



Two essential rules:

- 15-20% available disk space
- Reboot regularly to clear memory

The latest operating system update is recommended, though not mandatory.

- Excel 365 is advised for the desktop version.
- AlphA must be located on OneDrive or SharePoint for co-editing and/or used with Excel Online.
-->Also synchronizes with the desktop version

Basics

Welcome to
the Matrix!

- A Project Program
- Interact with AlphA
- Flexibility
- Import - Export - Sync
- Diagnosis - Repair
- Create - Duplicate - Delete
- Rebuild

A Project Program

All project quotes consolidated into a single document!

Rate Cards

They cover all expertise in the fields of commercial content production (film, photo, image & sound post-production, print and digital)

Main Quote

A main quote is an extensive quote with a clear distinction between domestic & Prod. Service costs, and with a detailed Summary.

Additive

An additive is a light quote that is usually made after a main quote has been sold and the project is greenlighted (*confirmed*).

List of Quotes

An automated list that summarizes of all created quotes, with their status, total, margin and categorised by four modes: Quote, Working Budget, Actuals, and Account Log.

Merged Summary

Whether quotes are main quotes or additive. Ideal tool for projects with multiple countries and/or Prod. Services.

Petty Cash Expenses

A statement of costs incurred by technicians considering account advances received between them or with the Production House, exchange rates and VAT.

Account Log

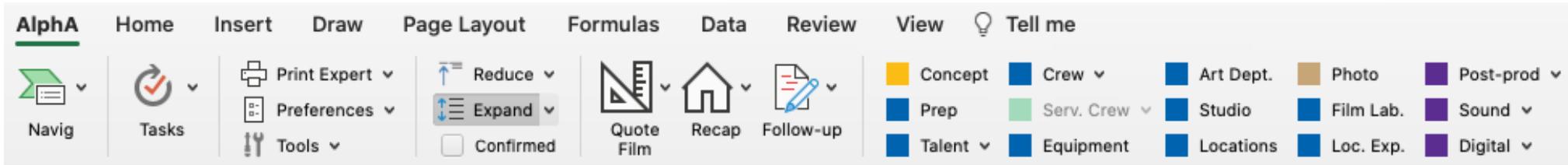
The Account Log is a sheet in which expenses are entered in the form of accounting documents opposed to a quote where they can be broken down in a “business” way.

Interact with Alpha

In 5 ways...

1 Dynamic Alpha Ribbon

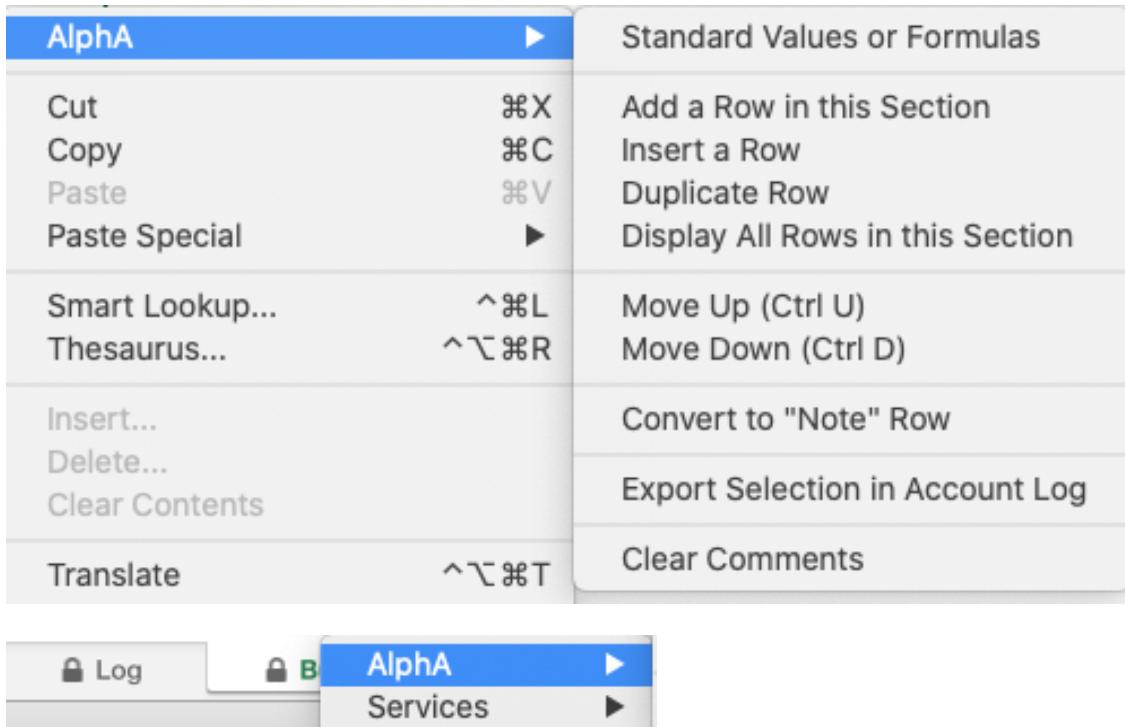
Dynamic hybrid controls (button/menu) according to the active sheet.



> Tip: For the button effect, click in the middle, for the menu effect, click on the v to the right of the button.

2 Right-click (or ctrl-click)

- Within a cell, a row, or any selection in the sheet



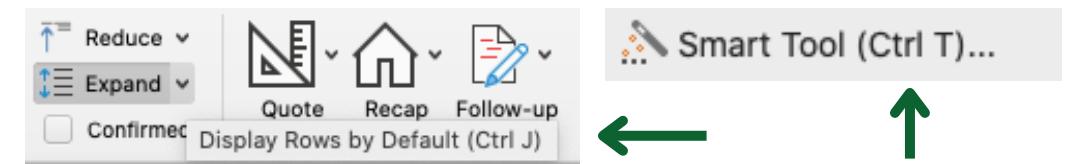
- Also, on the tab

3 Left-click (double-click)

Enter 1, Y (yes), or clear Nb and Qt; retrieve the default expense titles; access the sections from the Summary, etc.

4 Keyboard shortcuts

They appear when the mouse hovers over a button or within menus (Ctrl D, J, K, M, R, T, U, Y).

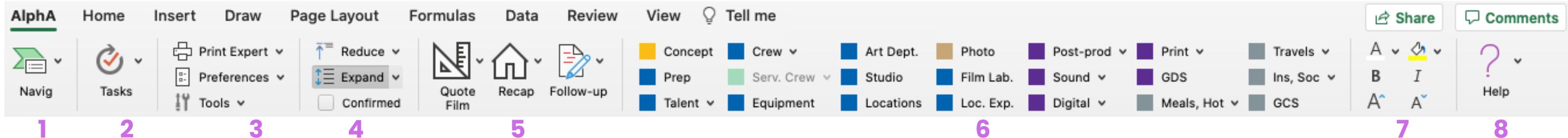


5 Enter where it's allowed...

A tautology to emphasize the fact that if a message such as "Remove protection from sheet..." appears, you don't enter where you should.

Focus on the Quote Ribbon

Buttons & menus



1 Navig

- About AlphA
- Select a client logo among a maximum of 15
- Select a language English or French for the content (what's printed for the client) and for the user (menus).
- Access to sheets hidden by default (Rate Cards, Log, etc.)

2 Tasks

Complex automated processes (new quotes, import, export, etc.)

3 Print, Preferences, Tools

Print, configure a quotation or the whole workbook, diagnose, repair

4 Reduce & Expand, Confirm

- Configure row visibility (e.g., hide/show unused rows)
- Confirm a quote upon greenlight (e.g., accepted by the client, sold)

5 Quote, Summary, Follow-up

6 Navigation buttons within a quote

Rapidly navigate through sections and subsections of a quote

7 Formats

Fonts, colours, etc.

8 Help

Access to this guide, the glossary of terms used in AlphA, the license key, etc.

Flexibility

Each project is a prototype.

✓ Fully configurable, fully recoverable V4.0

- Modify titles of section and subsections, in the quote and the Summary
- Hide entire sections by default
- Configure the default rows display to make either an extensive or a simplified template, depending on the project type.

✓ Protected formulas. So what!

Some formulas are protected because of their essential function in calculations, while others can be safely overwritten or modified. These can be retrieved through right-clicking. Give it a try!



BR3177	Conception & Coordination
RÉCAPITULATIF	

✓ Enter your own custom formulas

Requires some proficiency in Excel but many do.

✓ Go "off-track"

A red triangle or a colour change means an "off-track" entry. It indicates that a default value or formula has been modified. If necessary, you can retrieve with a right-click.

A. DESIGN & COORDINATION



1. Consulting, Sales	
1 Strategy Director	1
13 Social Contributions	not incl. in ST. 1 62.00%
Total A. DESIGN & COORDINATION (excl. soc. contrib. France)	

✓ Formatting

Unlike a web platform, AlphA offers considerable flexibility in customizing formats such as fonts, colours, sizes, and more, via the usual Excel menus.

✓ Smart copy & paste

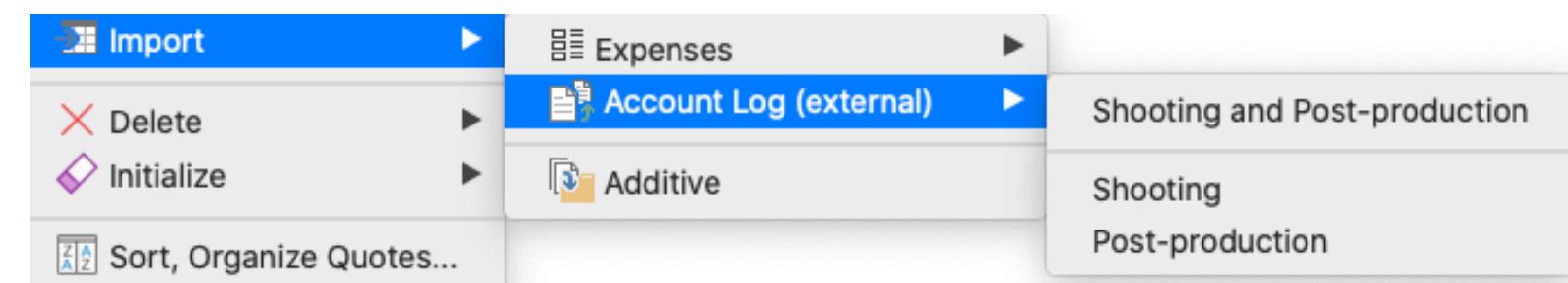
- Ctrl C - Ctrl V is dangerous and therefore disabled by default (it is an option).
- Instead, use **Ctrl C - Ctrl V** to paste only values, thereby avoiding any disturbance in the formatting or the formulas.

Import - Export - Sync

No unnecessary re-entries!

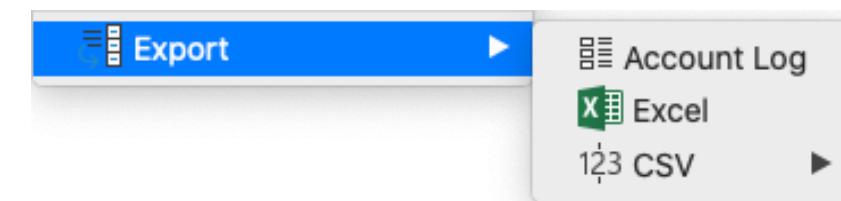
✓ Tasks > Import

- Rate Cards from another AlphA file
- Main quotes
 - All or part of it
 - From a different or from the same AlphA file
 - Additives from another AlphA file
- Additives from another AlphA file
- Account Log, entirely or in part from the same AlphA file



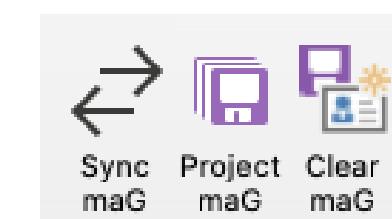
✓ Tasks > Export

- Export expenses in quotes into the Account Log
- Anything in PDF
- In Excel (main quotes or additives, in expanded or reduced mode **V4.0**)
- In CSV



✓ Sync **V4.0**

Sync the Account Log in real-time with maG management platform.



Diagnose & Repair

AlphA resolves nearly all issues!

✓ Automated file & computer diagnostics

- On opening, AlphA checks the date of the last reboot and the free space, two critical parameters for computer performance. **V4.0**
- Manually with Tools > Other Maintenance > Metrics.

✓ Error Checking

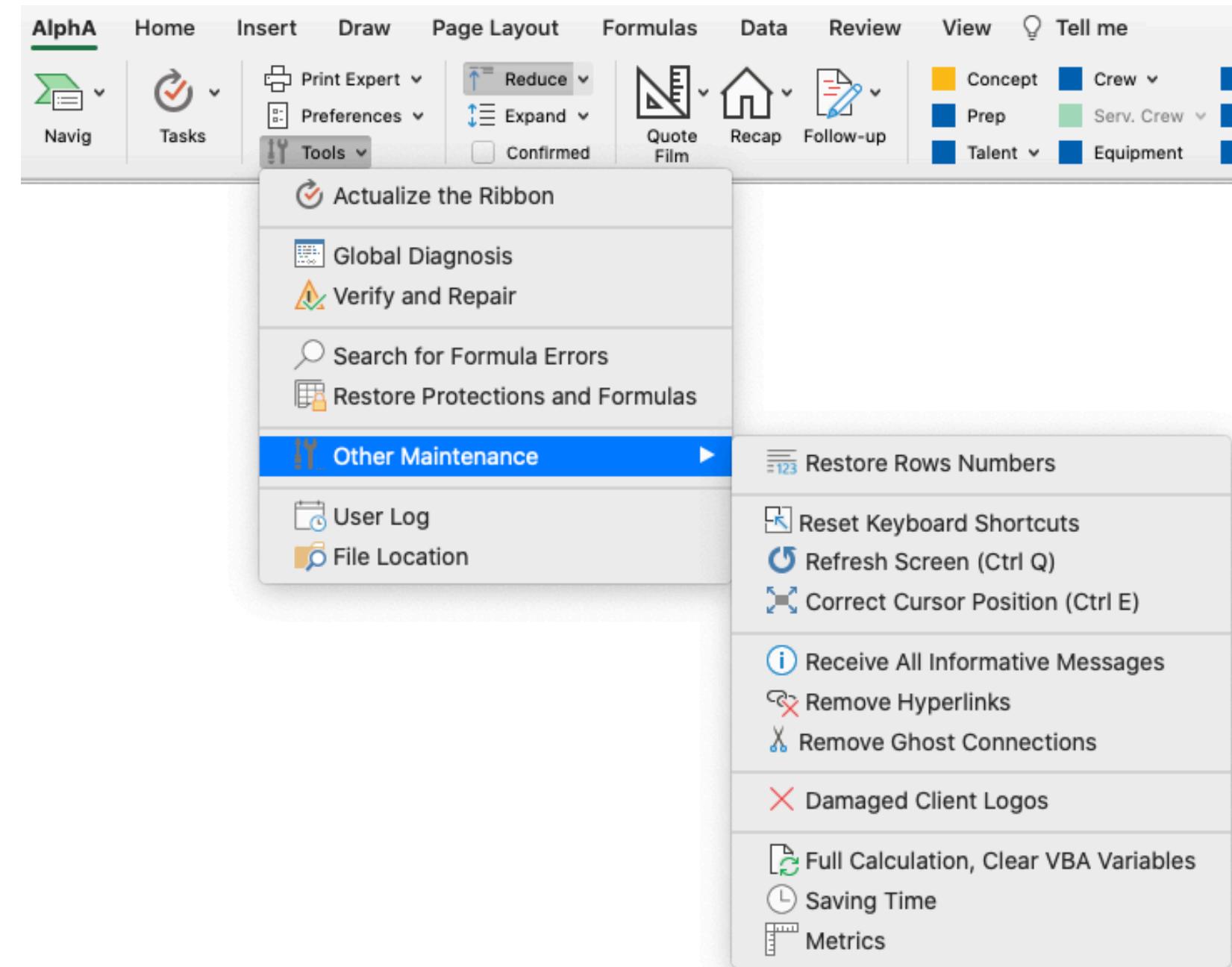
AlphA searches for errors and circular references. **V4.0**

✓ Repair

AlphA corrects any errors in the background during saving or printing.

✓ Tips

- *Tools > User Log*: File usage history
- *Tools > File Location*: If you can't find it in the Finder

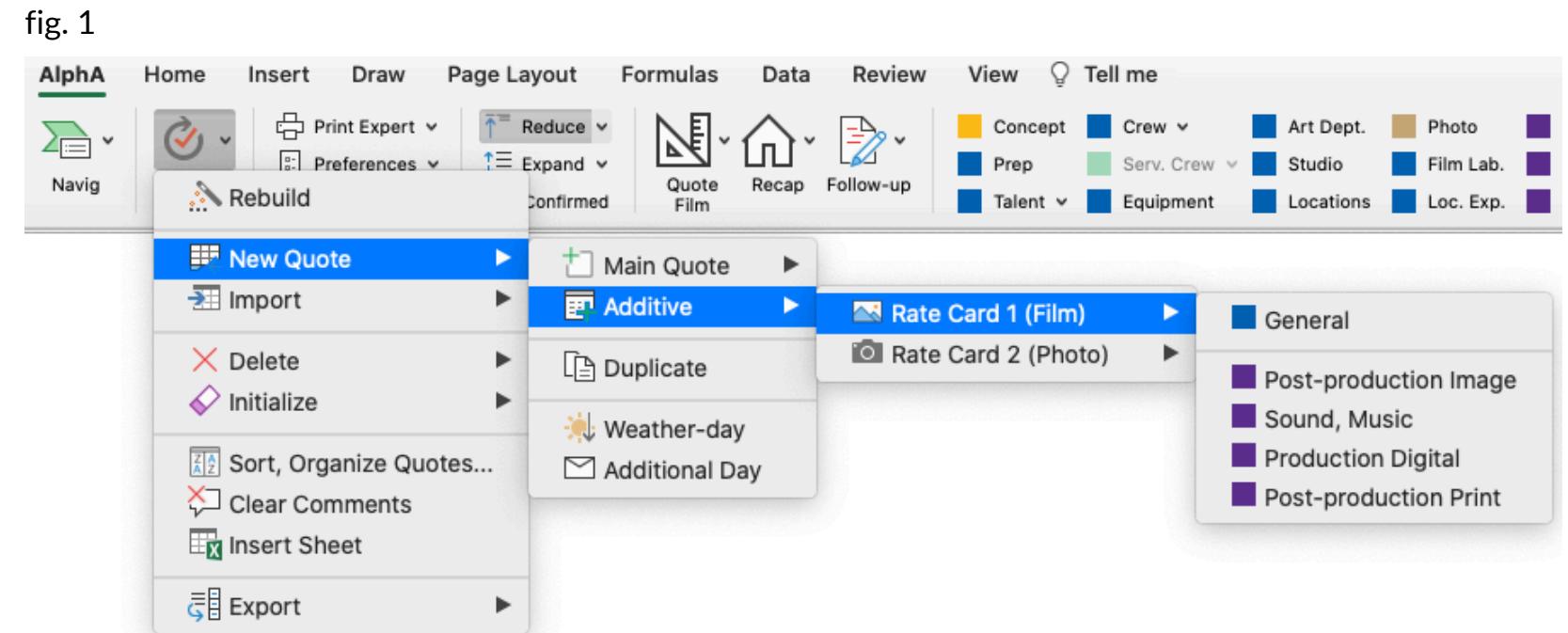


Create - Duplicate - Delete

Automated complex tasks

Create additional quotes (fig. 1)

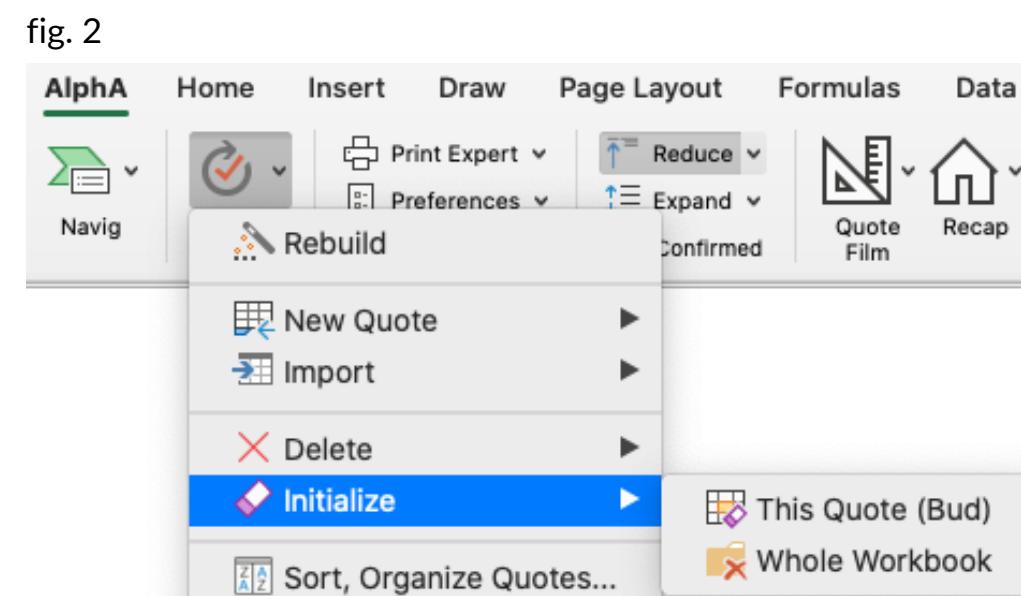
Main quotes, various types of additives, according to the default Rate Card, weather-related days.



Duplicate quotes (fig. 1)

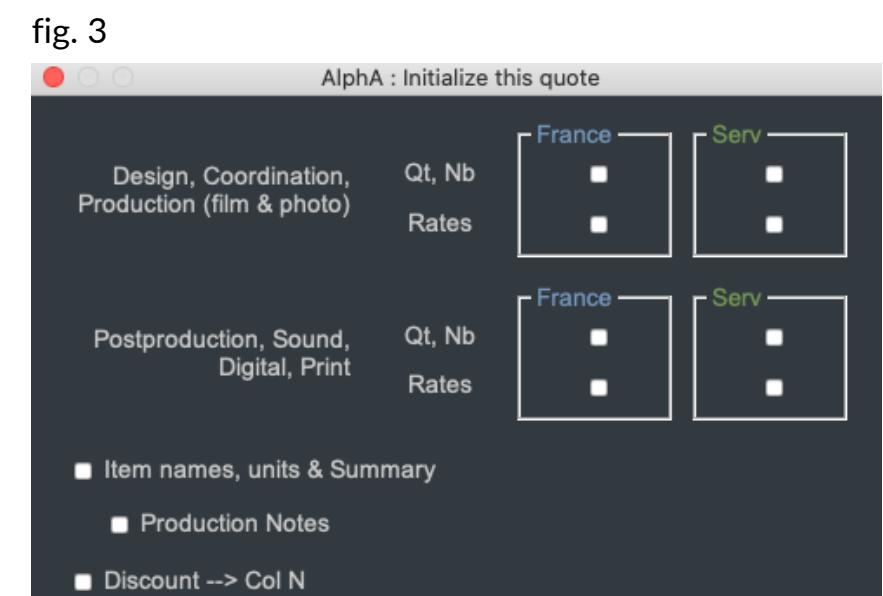
Initialize (clear) a main quote by sections (fig. 2)

Swiftly and securely clear specific sections, data and restore default formulas.



Initialize (clear) the whole AlphA file (fig. 3)

Enables to create of a virgin template if one is not available.



Rebuild

Tasks > Rebuild

The perfect cure in the event of a malfunction and also for updating AlphA!

✓ Principle

Migrate all client (logos, license key) and user data (quotes, log, etc.) into a "clean" version. **V4.2**

--> *Without the need to retype anything (neither cells formats nor custom formulas)!*

✓ Step 1

- Download the generic template (without logo) at decoherences.com.
- Open the template.
- *Tasks > Rebuild* (fig. 1) and select the file to be rebuilt in the Finder.

✓ Step 2

- Enable macros and click OK on any messages that appear.
- Select the items to rebuild (fig. 2), then click OK.

✓ Tip 1

- The file to be rebuild can remain open and not even have been saved.

✓ Tip 2: Cheat Excel when the unsaved file can not be found

- If the file to rebuild is open but not found in Finder, take any AlphA file, duplicate it on your desktop and rename it with the exact name of the file to be rebuilt, then choose it during rebuild.

fig. 1

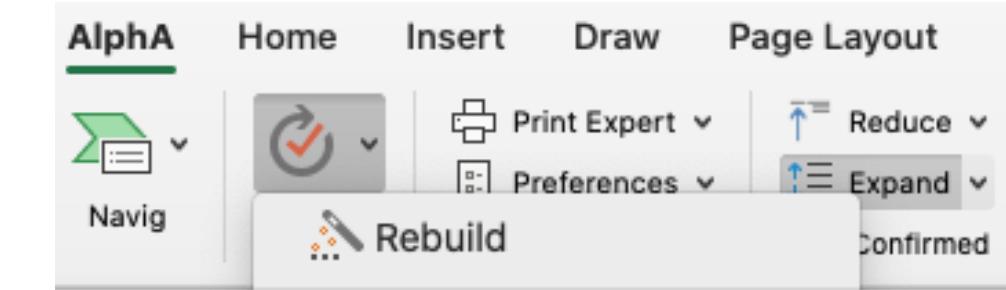
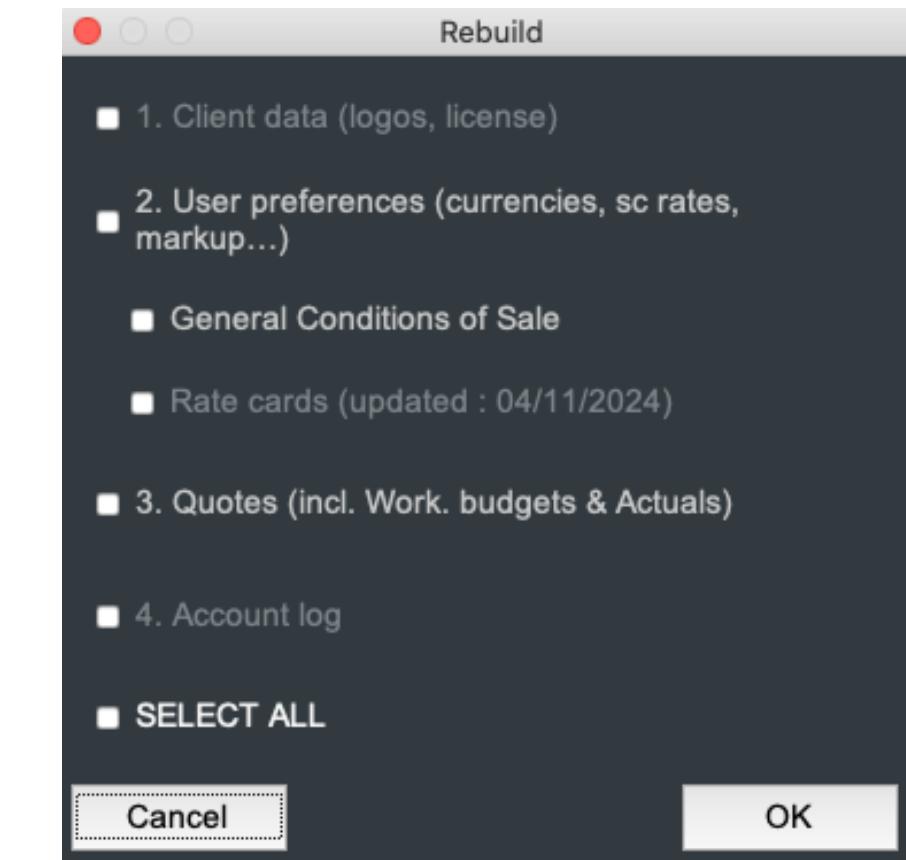


fig. 2





Of course, all this works only if, upon opening, you...

...ENABLE MACROS

Enjoy!

Rate Cards 360 V4.0

also referred to as *price lists*



All expertise in
a single quote!

- Conception & Coordination
- Production
 - Image, photo
- Post-Production Image
 - Video, CGI, retouching
- Postproduction Sound
 - Audio, music, digital, rights
- Digital Production
 - Supervision, production, assets, web dev
- Post-Production Print
 - Supervision, exe, engraving, retouching, model, Epsons
- Global Delivery Service
 - Air masters, upload

Principle of Rate Cards

Navig > Rate Cards

✓ Default titles, units & sales rates

Rate Cards include standard titles, units, and rates that will be automatically retrieved when entering a quote.

There are two types of Rate Cards (fig. 1):

- One with a film base and a photo section **V4.0**
- the other with a photo base and a film section **V4.0**

fig. 1

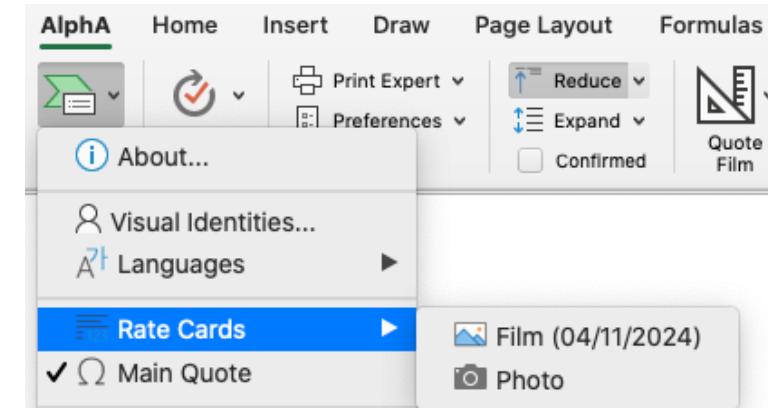
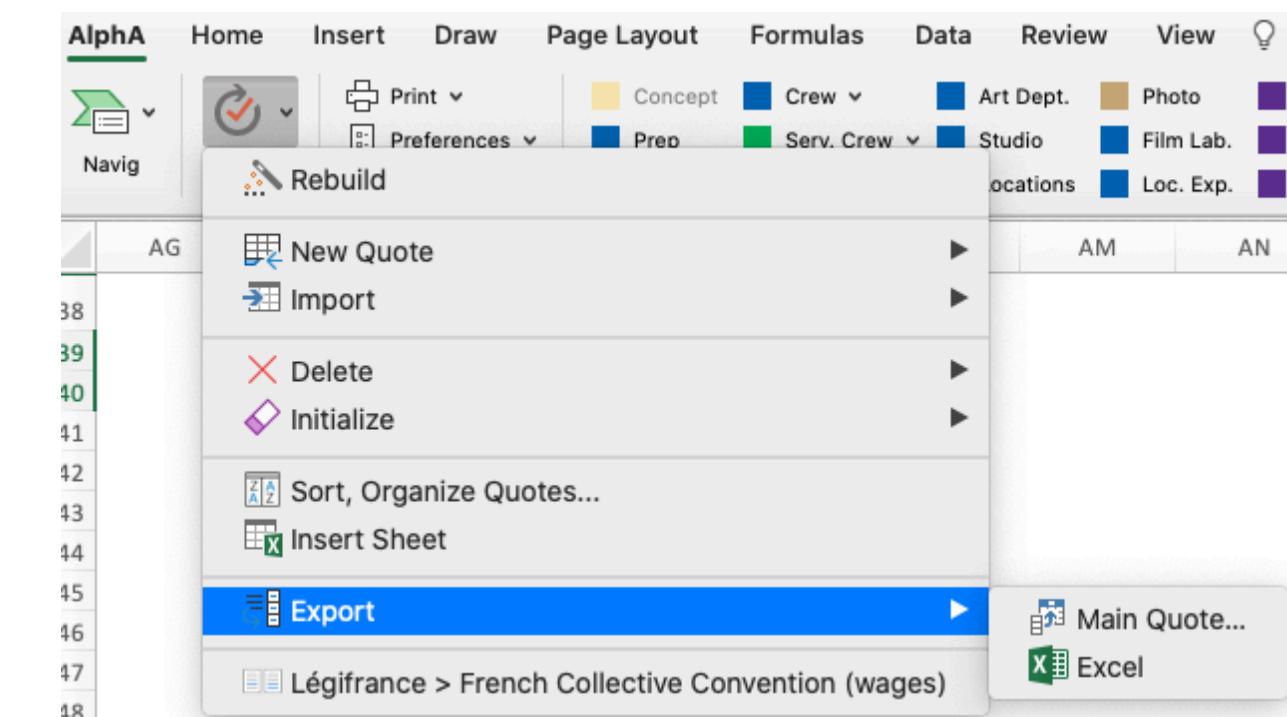


fig. 2

04/11/2024	Cost prices		In-house costs	
Sale prices	Rates€	Date	Rates€	Date

fig. 3



✓ ...But also costs rates (fig. 2)

In a Rate Card, you can also enter costs rates and exclude some “in-house” items considered as overheads costs.

- Why? To assess and anticipate actual margins.
- How? With the Working Budget & Actual Expenses in each quote, and by activating the option to retrieve the costs rates instead of sales rates entered in the client’s quote.

✓ Configure your default Rate Cards

- To access the various contractual rates within a quote with the right-click
- For France, crew wages may have already been entered, however, it is your responsibility to enter your own rates.

✓ Transfer Rate Cards into a main quote (fig. 3)

Export the default titles, units, or rates if you wish them to be visible instead of only appearing when entering a quote.

summary

Additional New Features in Rate Cards V4.0

More comprehensive and better structured

Additional rows in sections

3000 is the maximum number of rows of expenses in a main quote... It should be more than enough!

Many titles have been added or revisited.

Our professions are constantly evolving...

Stylist, Makeup & Hair sections revisited

Two distinct sections within the *Shooting Crew* section

Two sections for Transportation, simpler!

- All technical vehicles in *Equipment*
- All production vehicles in *Location Expenses*

Meals, Hotels, Per diem

- A *Preproduction* section in *Meals*
- A *Per Diem* section similar to that of the *Hotels* section

Postproduction revisited

- More concise and comprehensive
- Also in *Pre-production* (animatics, etc.)

A *Budgeting Software* line by default in Miscellaneous

The objective is to “sale” AlphA as a production tool for projects, as AlphA is frequently required by agencies and advertisers.

Two additional insurance rows of with %.

Main Quote

versus an additive (simpler quote)

All cases
(or almost)
are provided for!

- Configure a Quote
- Enter a Quote
- Manipulate Columns
- Manipulate Rows
- Quantities, Numbers, Rates
- Summary
- Working Budget & Actual Expenses
- Print

Configure a Quote

Preferences > User /ctrl Y

The initial step when starting a quote!

1 Alpha mode

- *Classic*: if you do not use a production service
- *Classic Exe*: If you use a production service
- *Exe*: If you act as a production service for a client using AlphA

2 Summary

The *Two blocks* option enables you to separate *Travel, Insurance, and Social Contributions* sections when they are not subject to overheads.

3 Agent commission & insurance

- Include social contributions in agent commissions calculation. **V4.0**
- Include markup and overheads in insurance calculation **V4.0**

4 Deactivate expertise and entire sections **V4.0**

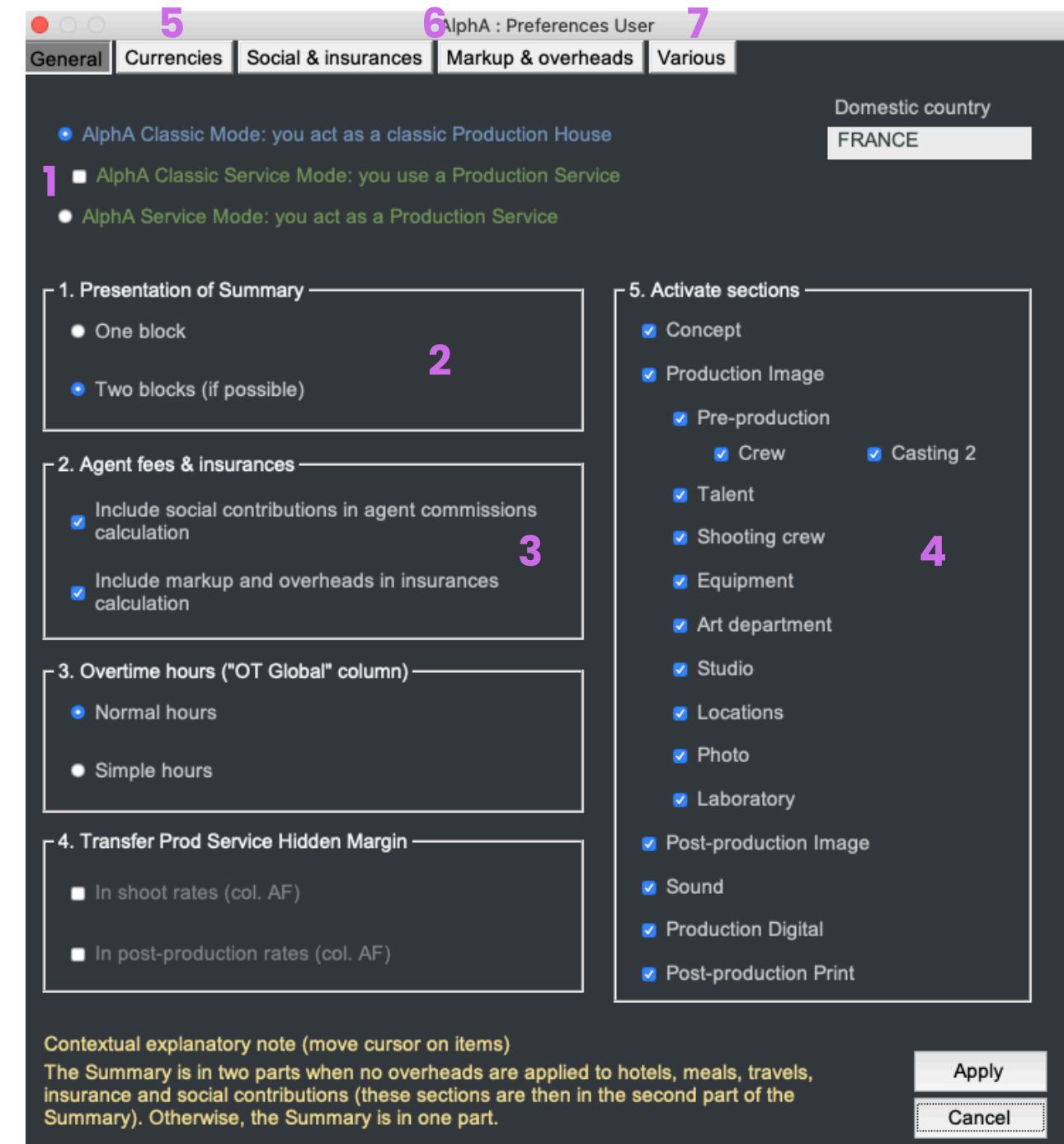
5 Currencies used in the project

6 Default rates

- Social contributions, insurance, markup & overheads
--> You can still modify them manually in the quote.

7 Productivity

Automatic colour change, copy & paste, double-click, etc.



Entering a Quote

Blue for domestic, green for Prod. service!

4 TCO2										Domestic				Prod Service				
								31,275 €/31,275 €		0 €/0 €								
								Shoot +%		Shoot +%								
								Post +%		Post +%								
Qt	(Nb	Unit)	Rates €	Total €	SC	%Ag	Serv	%Mk	%Ov	Qt	Nb	Rates	Qt	Nb	Rates	Qt	Nb	Rates
4.3. Miscellaneous (incl. Post-production)																		
3181 Translations			Fee			15.00		10.00										
3182 Storyboard			Fee			15.00		10.00										
3188 Helicopter	2	3	Fee	5,000.00	30,000.00	15.00		10.00		2	3	5,000.00						
Total B. PRE-PRODUCTION																		

- ✓ — The area is printed for the client.
- ✓ ----- The area is printed for the client, as an option.
 - SC: Enter Y (for Yes) if the item is subject to social contributions.
 - %Ag: Agent commission (e.g., enter 10 for 10%)
 - Enter Y if an item is a Prod. service expense
 - Mk & Ov: percentage of markup & overhead per row
- ✓ You may enter in all areas except are crosses (✗)

And even if you occasionally notice that the cell contains a formula...
- ✓ In the blue area, enter domestic expenses
- ✓ In the green area, enter Prod. Service expenses
- ✓ Qt is the quantity of the left item, Nb the number of units.

In the example above, we see 2 helicopters for 3 days each (a lot!).

Tip: Double-click to enter 1 or Y, to clear cells, to retrieve formulas or to restore default values. This applies nearly everywhere! Give it a try!

Manipulate Columns

Quote button

1 Default Rate Card (Film or Photo)

Only if the quote is empty.

2 Client Currencies

- Client 1 currency corresponds to the currency of the first total.
- Client 2 currency is for the second total in a different currency.

3 Overtime

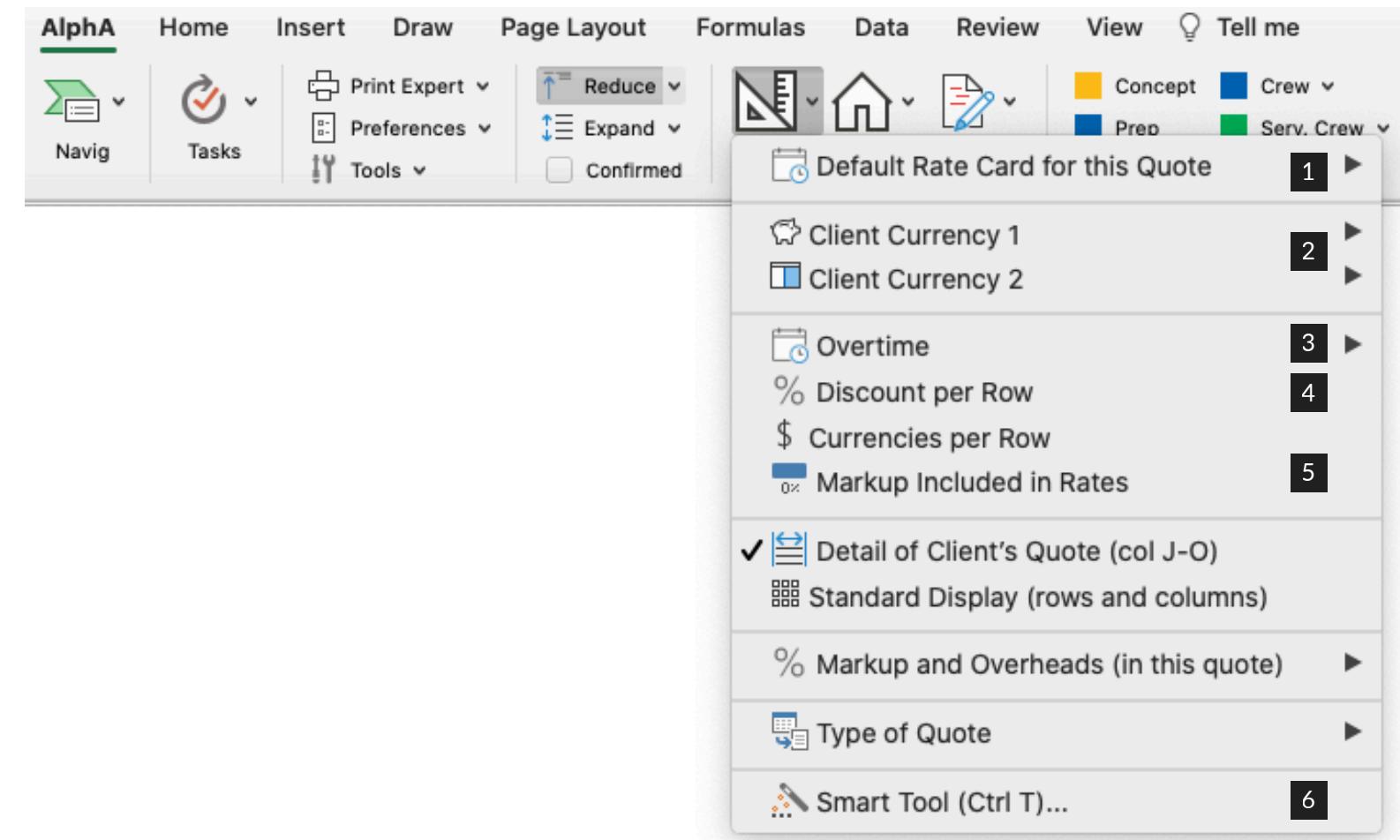
- They are calculated for the whole shoot rather than on a daily basis.
- 4 types of overtime hours **V4.0**
- Enter the details of hours or modify the formulas in the calculation area that will be displayed.

4 Discounts

A crucial function for reducing rates while indicating the client that it is exceptional (enter 10 for 10% in the Disc column).

5 Currencies per row & Markup included in rates

- Currency per row enables to enter an expense in a specific currency which will be automatically converted into the reference currency.
- Markup included in rates: Commonly employed to hide a markup such as the one of the Prod. Service, though it may serve other functions as well.



6 Smart Tool / ctrl T

- Add or subtract shooting days. **V4.0**
- Create exchange rate scenarios.
- Analyse a quote by large masses that are typically broken down in the quote (e.g., Art department with materials + crew + social contributions). **V4.0**

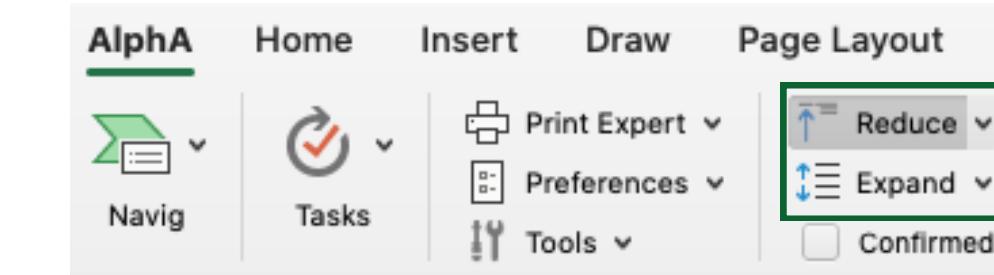
Manipulate Rows

The “vertical accordion” and an enhanced context menu (right-click)

✓ Reduce / Ctrl K (fig. 1)

Hide unused rows.

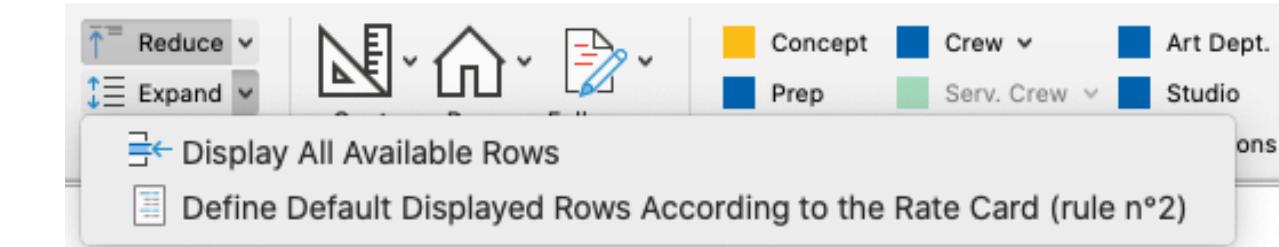
fig. 1



✓ Expand / Ctrl J (fig. 1)

- With the button effect, display the default rows.
- With the menu effect (v), adjust the display of rows. You can precisely modulate the default size of sections. (fig. 2)

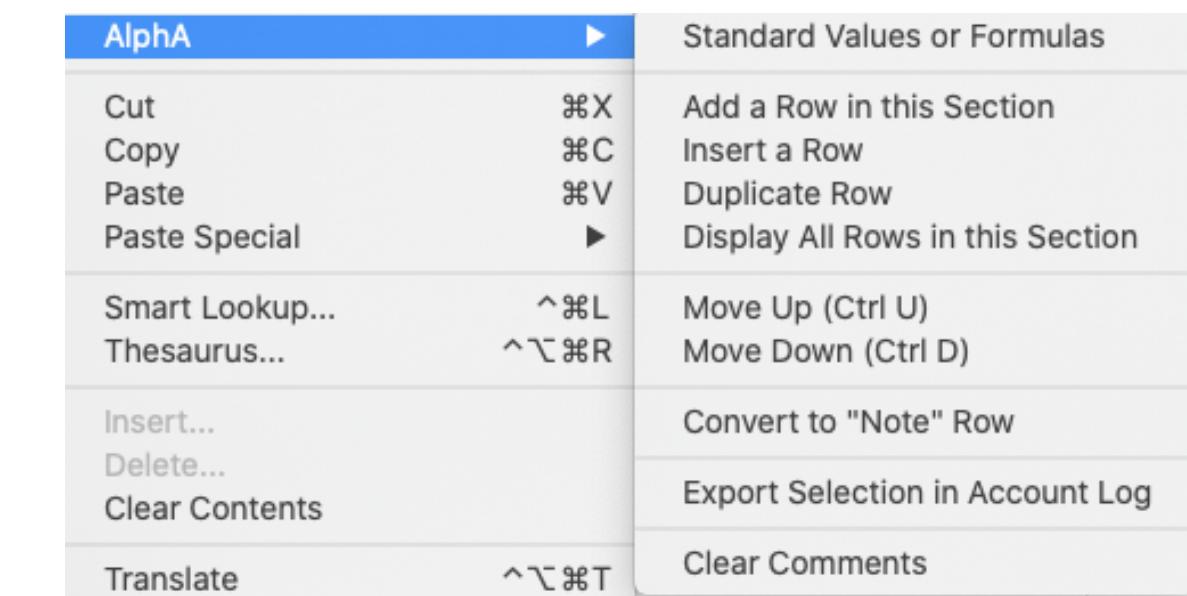
fig. 2



✓ Right-click on a cell or a row (fig. 3)

- Add a row in the section
- Insert a row **V4.0**
- Duplicate a row **V4.0**
- Display all rows within in the section
- Move up a row (Ctrl U) **V4.0**
- Move Down a row (Ctrl D) **V4.0**
- Convert to note **V4.0**
 - Enables in reduced mode the display of a row with a zero total.
 - For entering comments, detailing a forfeit and more.

fig. 3



Quantities, Numbers, Rates

Precision & adaptability

Use the right-click to...

Enter days based on shooting phases / Ctrl M V4.1 (fig. 1)

- With the right click in the Nb column, open a form in which you enter days for pre-production, recces, fittings, tests, loading, stand-by, travel days, pre-light, shooting, and wrap
- Optional recall for the client (see the box in fig. 2)
- This function enables to enter all the crew without for using the *Preproduction* which can also be permanently hidden in *User Preferences*.

Conversion of wages under an alternative contract V4.0 (fig. 3)

Convert one or more wages for an alternative contract (short 8h, long 8h, short 12h, long 12h, week). For France...

Conversion wage <> invoice V4.0 (fig. 4)

Convert one or more wages into invoices by including social contributions, the percentage of which is indicated at the end of the section. This process can be reversed.

fig. 1



fig. 2

	Solab2	Qt	(Nb	Unit)	Rates €	Total €
6.2. Production Unit					11,334.26	
3461 Line Producer			1	Day	809.59	11,334.26
Total B. SHOOTING CREW			1			11,334.26

fig. 3

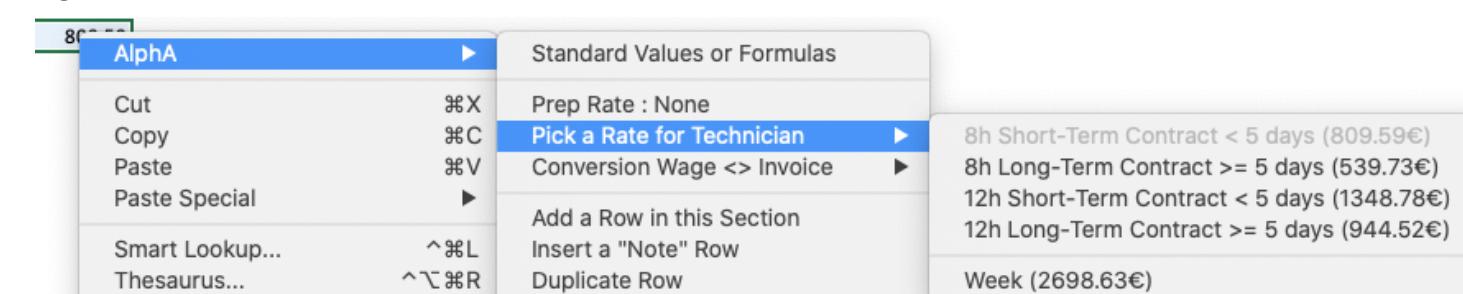
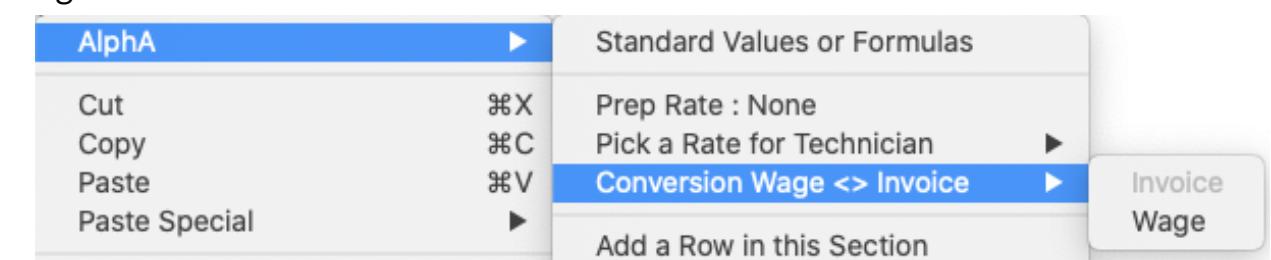


fig. 4



summary

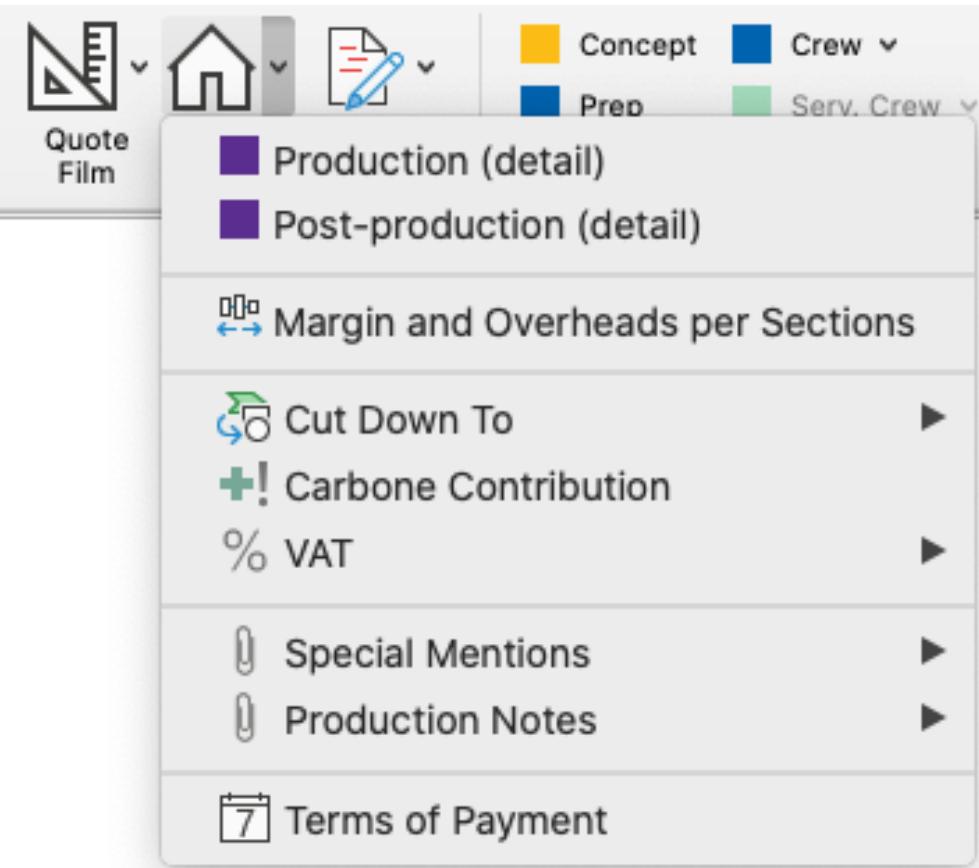
Summary

Recap Button / Ctrl R

Sometimes the only page that client read (and still not all of them). On the other hand, cost controls...

Display modes

- 2 Levels of detail in *Production* and *Postproduction* **V4.2**
- Distinction between domestic and Prod. Service totals
- Markup & overhead amounts (hidden by default unlike %)



Display special mentions

- The director's cost including of social contributions
- Total overtime including social contributions, **V4.0**

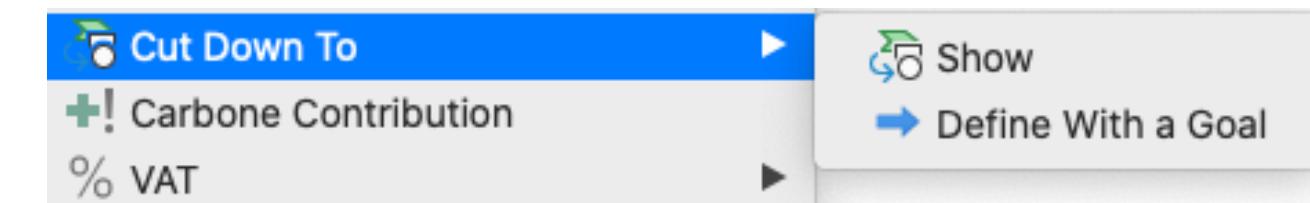
Detailed terms of payment

Calculate the terms, the first payments (up to two), and the balance in detail.

--> Either by respecting the GCS by default recommended by the UPC (for France) or by adjusting manually the parameters in a designated window.

Focus on the Cut Down To

- Expression meaning that we negotiate the total of the quote to a fixed price. Ultimate solution after having reduced production costs, a final commercial effort (therefore on the margin).
- Calculate the *Cut Down To* amount using a margin goal based on an amount, a markup rate, or a gross margin rate. **V4.0**



Working Budget & Actuals

Follow-up button
Also concerns additives...

Principle

- Anticipate the actual margin by estimating purchases.
- Anticipate negotiation by assessing the maximum *Cut Down To*.
- Prepare the Account Log (the Follow-up will be exported in the latter)

1 Anticipate the margin with the Working Budget

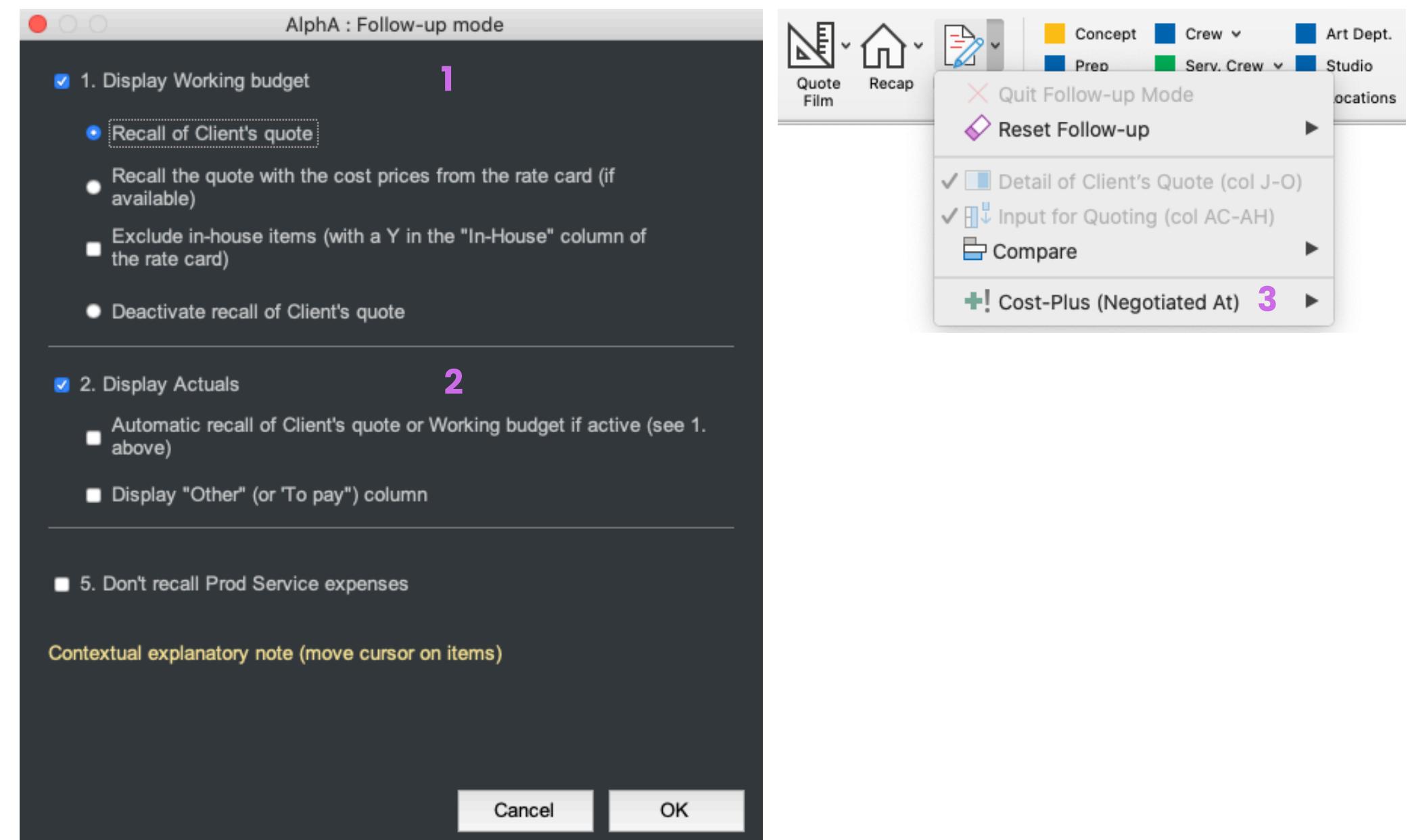
- Activate this mode prior to start a quote.
- Automatically recall the quote (avoid the need for re-entry).
- Adjust the Working Budget (Qt Nb, Rates) while entering the quote.

2 Prepare the Account Log with Actual Expenses

- Use this mode once the project has been greenlighted.
- Automatically recall the quote or the Working Budget.
- Adjust totals in rows.

3 Cost-Plus mode V4.0

- Apply a specific margin to the sub-total of the Working Budget or the one of Actual Expenses.
- Define the margin with a target (amount or percentage).



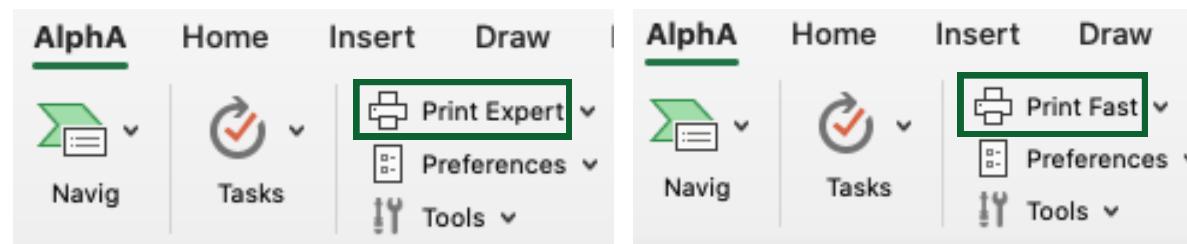
Print

Print Button / cmd P

✓ Principle

2 printing modes for quotes:

- *Expert mode*: with a configuration interface (fig. 1)
- *Fast mode*: launches print directly



✓ How to switch from one to the other?

Use the Print menu to enable or disable Expert mode. (fig. 1)

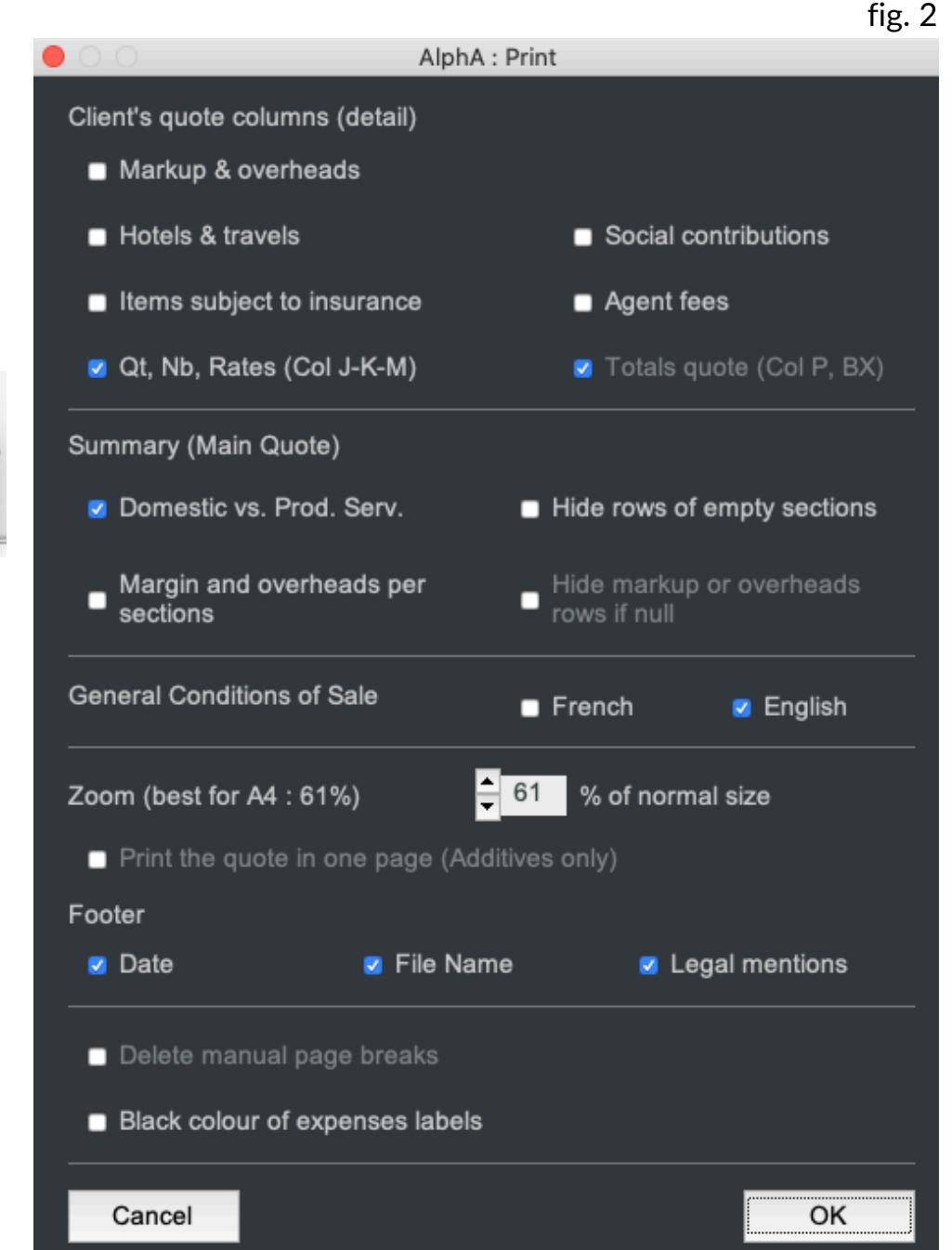


✓ Focus on the *Expert mode* (fig. 2)

- Print columns (margin & Ov, social contributions, insurance, agent commission, etc.)
- Hide empty sections in Summary. **V4.2**
- Hide Margin and/or Overheads rows in Summary and memorize this config, if empty **V4.2**
- Configure Footers **V4.0**
- Change the colour of titles to black **V4.0**
- Print in landscape orientation (useful in Follow-up mode). See the Help button in the Print menu. **V4.0**.

✓ Tips

- Printing detects if the quote is in Follow-up mode (so that you don't send the Working Budget to the client!)
- Use the *Help* of the Print menu for a personalized printing (without AlphaA parameters).
- On PC, it may be useful to use PDF Creator.



Other Functionalities

Functionalities,
yes, but
for
professionals!

- Additional Quotes
- List of Quotes
- Merged Summary
- Petty Cash Expenses
- Account Log
- Administrator Preferences
- New Additional Features of AlphA 360

Additional Quotes

Tasks > New Quote

Significant reserves of margin

Principle

A project usually has several quotes, sometimes from the start if we must compartmentalize, but this is generally the case once the project is greenlighted (*confirmed*).

Additional quotes fall into 2 categories:

- Main quotes
- Additive quotes (commonly referred to as *additives*)

Confirmed quotes are consolidated in the Account Log.

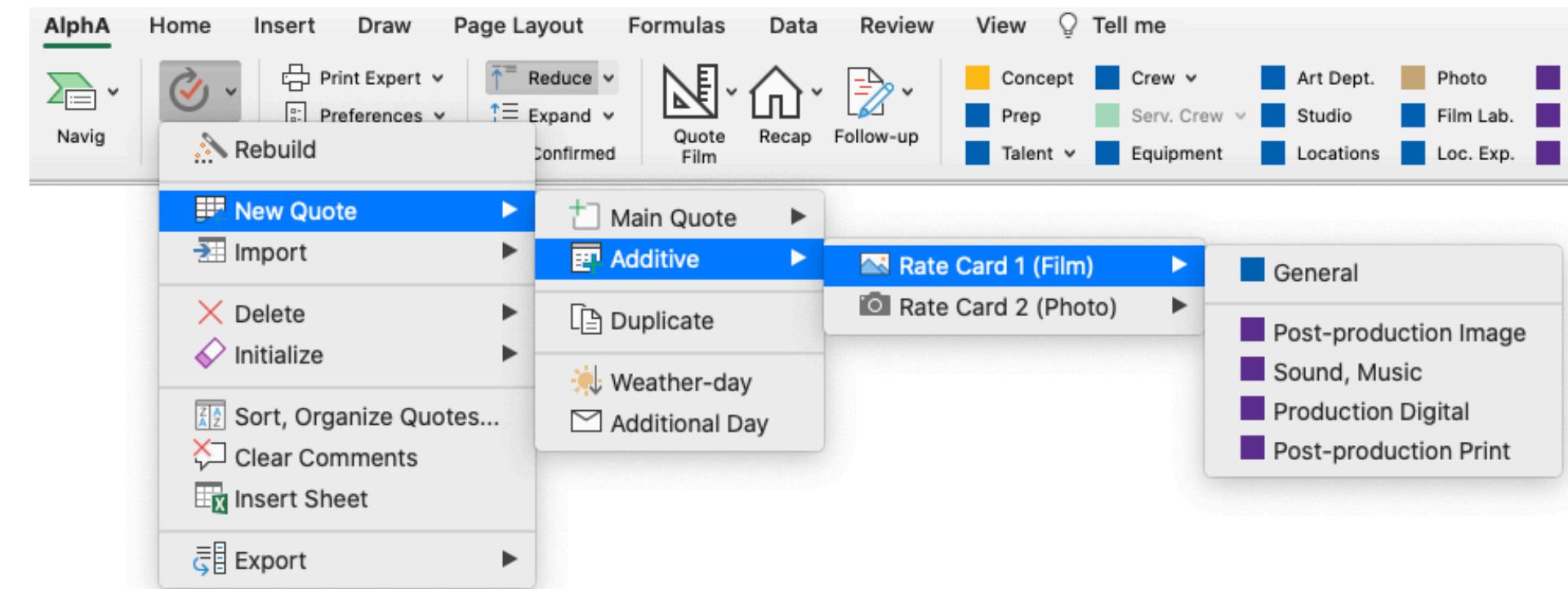
Advice

Selling additives is crucial. To achieve this, it is imperative to (1) avoid any contingencies expenses line in the quote and (2) generate detailed production notes that explicitly outline what is excluded.

Focus on *additives*

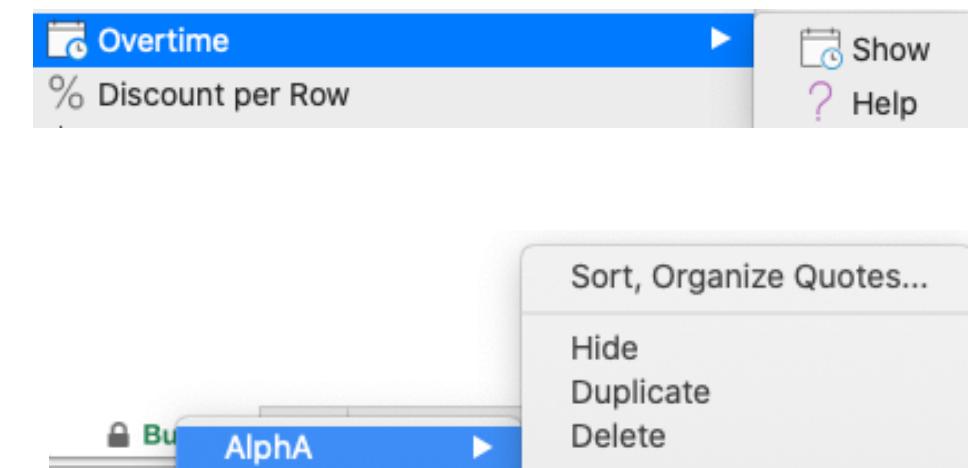
These are straightforward quotes that function as the main quotes. The only significant differences are:

- Enter data directly in client's printed section.
- A simplified Summary



Tips

- For an overtime additive, use *Overtime* > *Help*.
- Edit quote tabs (name, position, etc.) with a right-click on the tab.



List of Quotes

Navig > List of Quotes

A synoptic view of the project

✓ Principle

Automatically summarize all the quotes with their total and margin, along with by their status (fig.1), specifically:

1. Confirmation
2. Fusion

and presented in the 4 modes (fig. 2):

3. Quote
4. Working Budget
5. Actuals Expenses
6. Account Log

✓ How?

Use the ribbon buttons (fig. 3) to:

- Sort quotes
- Filter quotes
- View by category of expenses (quote, Working Budget, etc.)

Fill the confirmation and merged status in the provided columns. (fig. 1)

fig. 1

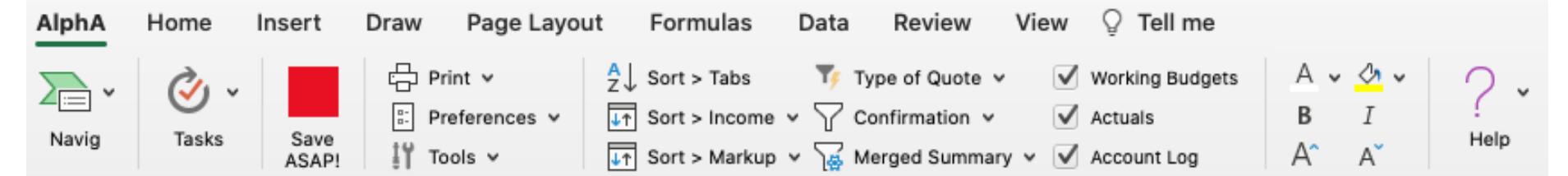
Name	Description	Tab	Confirmed	Merged	"\$"	Income	Cost	Margin	%
Quote N°		Bud	1	1	€	80,111	66,417	13,694	17.1%
Additive Shoot N° 2		AddG_1		1	€	1,293	1,043	250	19.3%
Additive Shoot N° 3		AddG_2			€	1,293	1,043	250	19.3%

fig. 2

Confirmed quotes (2/3)	Quotes			Working Budgets			Actuals			Account Log				
	Income	Cost	Margin	%	Cost	Margin	%	Cost	Margin	%	Cost	Margin		
Main Quotes (incl. WD, Add. day)	80,111	66,417	13,694	17.1%		80,111	100.0%		80,111	100.0%		80,111	100.0%	
General Additives	1,293	1,043	250	19.3%		1,293	100.0%		1,293	100.0%		1,043	250	19.3%
Additives Post-production Image														
Additives Sound, Music														
Additives Production Digital														
Additives Post-production Print														
Total	81,403	67,459	13,944	17.1%		81,403	100.0%		81,403	100.0%		1,043	80,361	98.7%

Carbon print : 8.8 tons of CO2 (estimated by Carbon Strategy Consulting Company)

fig. 3



✓ Tips

- The upper table (fig. 2) presents the result for confirmed quotes.
- Access quote tabs by double-clicking on each entry in the list. (fig. 1)
- The blue rows represent confirmed quotes. (fig. 1)

Merged Summary

Navig > Merged Summary

For complex projects

✓ Principle

Merge various summaries of:

- Main quotes
- Additives **V4.0**

✓ Why?

It can be beneficial to compartmentalize quotes:

- When a project needs multiple Prod. Services as it is often the case with shooting across various countries.
- When the client needs distinct quotes based on distinct expertise (film, photo, digital, print, etc.).

✓ How?

- Enter a 1 in the “Merged” column of the List of Quotes to merge one quote with another.

✓ The merged Cut Down To

- Although it is theoretically the sum of the Cut Down To of each merged quote, the Cut Down To in a Merged Summary can be manually adjusted. **V4.0**

Quotes : Quote N° , Additive Shoot N° 2

MERGED SUMMARY		Total€	%Mk	%Ov
A	Design & Coordination	1,000.00	15.00%	10.00%
B	Production Image	54,776.42	15.00%	10.00%
C	Post-Production Image			
D	Post-Production Sound & Music			
E	Production Digital			
F	Post-Production Print			
G	Global Delivery Service			
ST1	Subtotal 1 (A -> G)	55,776.42	15.00%	10.00%
Ov	Overheads (10.00% of ST1)	5,577.64	+ -	-
H	Meals, Hotels & Per Diem			
I	Travels			
J	Insurances	2,676.72		
K	Social Contributions	9,006.25		
ST2	Subtotal 2 (Ov -> K)	17,260.61		
L	Subtotal 1 & 2	73,037.03		Overall margin
Mk	Markup (12.40% of L-Ov)	(10.3% of M)	8,366.46	+ 13,944
M	TOTAL W/O VAT	(GM = 17.13%)	81,403.50	17% (19%)

summary

Petty Cash Expenses

Navig > Petty Cash Log

Expenses, advances, reimbursements, as well as exchange rates and VAT, this is becoming quite complex!

✓ Principle

Monitor the expenses of each crew member to get the balance of their account, taking into consideration advances and reimbursements received from fellow crew members or from production.

✓ Why?

Because it is complex to find your way around when exchange rates, VAT and cross-exchanges between the Production house and crew members (director, manager, set designer, unit managers, etc.) are involved.

✓ How?

- Enter the names of crew members with their functions in the list (fig. 1).
- Enter the expenses of the production manager (fig. 2)
- Enter the expenses of the other crew members (fig. 2)
- Enter advances and cross-exchanges (fig. 2)

✓ Tips

- Add entries to the list (fig. 1) using the Tasks menu. **V4.0**
- Add expenses rows with the right-click. (fig. 2)
- Export an expense row to the Account Log using the right-click.

List of crew members with cash expenses

Name	Function	Balances (€)
	Line Producer	

fig. 1

Expenses line producer

Name	Nature	Date	Type	Various	Total VAT	Cur.	Rate in €	VAT%

fig. 2

Others expenses

Name	Function	Date	Type	Various	Total VAT	Cur.	Rate in €	VAT%

Advances & refunds

From whom?	Function	Date	Type	Various	Amount	Cur.	Rate in €	

Account Log

Navig > Account Log
or Wrap

✓ Principle

Enter project expenses in the form of accounting documents (wages, notes of expenses, invoices, etc.) which are then compared with quotes.

--> *This presentation is different from that of the quotes in which the expenses are broken down by sectors or production phases.*

✓ How?

- Import all expenses from confirmed quotes into the Log.
 - From quotes with *Tasks > Export*
 - From the Log itself with *Tasks > Import V4.0*
- Merge expenses corresponding to single documents with the right click. (fig. 1)
- Add other expenses with the + buttons.

✓ Good to know

Amounts entered in Working Budgets and Actual Expenses are also exported to the Account Log (in priority actually).

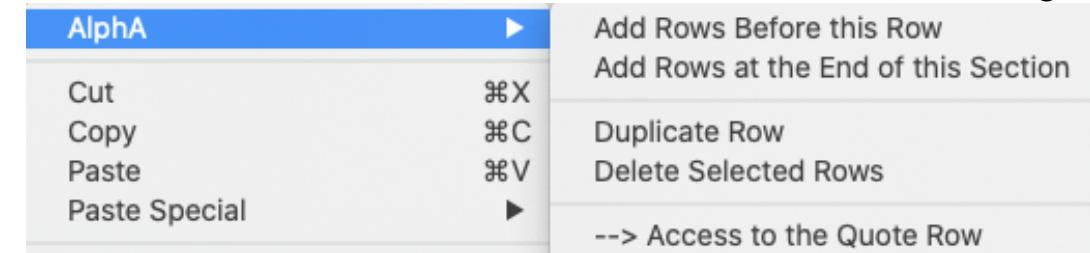
✓ New features

- Qt, Nb, and Rates of quotes are imported into the Notes 2 column of the Log. **V4.0**
- Names of crew members and suppliers entered in the Notes column of quotes can be imported into the Log. **V4.0**
- Delete all rows associated with a specific quote (*Tasks > Delete*). **V4.0**
- Deactivate the Cut Down To in quotes with the button *Config > Cost Plus*. **V4.0**

summary

✓ Right-click on a cell (or a row)

fig. 1



✓ Configure, compare, filter, sort V4.0

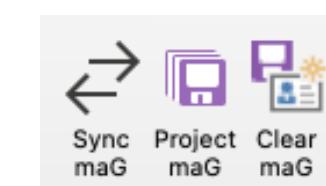


✓ Group and hide columns F to K to ease entering data V4.2

--> Config button

✓ Synchronize with maG V4.0

maG is the management platform specialized in the activity of producing multimedia content (advertising, 360, cinema) to collect, dematerialize expenses, enter them in Account Log and accounting, etc.



Administrator Preferences

Preferences > Administrator

A tool for managers

✓ Principle

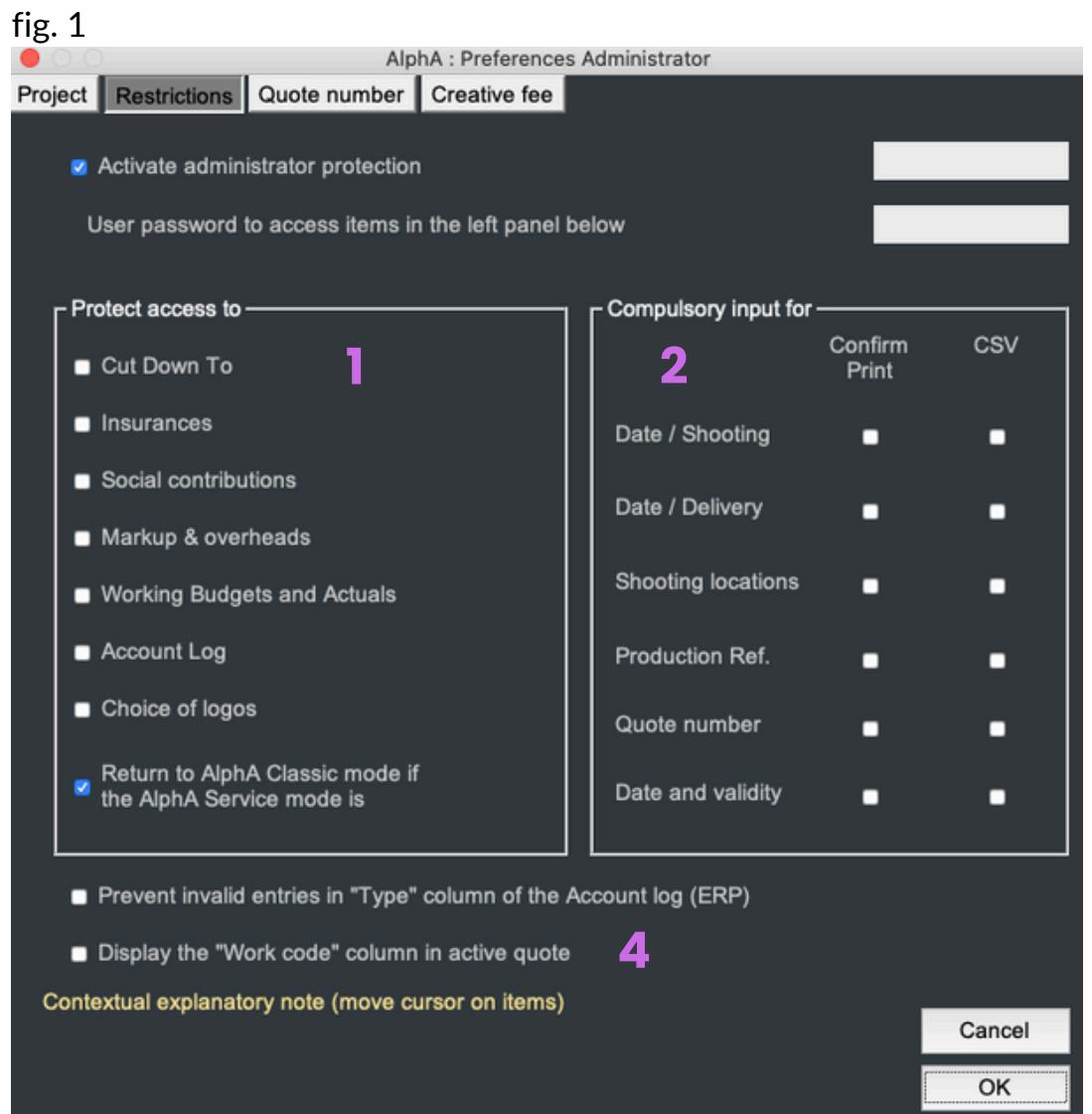
- 1 Restrict access to some functions and rates. (fig. 1)
- 2 Force the entry of essential elements (date, validity, quote number, etc.) prior to print, to export. (fig. 1)
- 3 Configure the quotes numbering. (fig. 2)
- 4 Access the *Work Code* column of quotes. (fig. 1) **V4.0**

✓ How?

- Activate protection in the *Restriction* tab. (fig. 1)
- Enter the administrator and user passwords. (fig. 1)
- Configure access and numbering. (fig. 2)

✓ Tip

If the automatic number of a quote has been deleted or altered, restore it using the right-click.



Additional Features of AlphA 360^{V4.0}

...

In AlphA,
details are not
details!

- Retrieve a rate from a quote wherever it is in the Rate Card.
- Delete comments in a selection with the right click.
- Obfuscate a password.
- Mention the VAT in each row of a quote (button *Recap > VAT > Help*).
- Rate Cards have navigation menus identical to those of a quote.
- Display of the % of gross margin in the top banner of the Working Budget and Actual Expenses (with also the same to recall those of all confirmed quotes).
- Insert hyperlinks (e.g., to access invoices from the Account Log).
- Add of several *Help* buttons in the menus.

Last updates 4.3 / 4.4 / 4.5

April / June / November 2025

Improvements

V4.5

- "I" instead of "Y" in the "Ins+" column of the Equipment section of a quote
- Taking into account any errors in user-defined formulas during rebuild
- Adding a Help menu to the Insurance button explaining the calculation method
- Memorize the "Client Quote Detail Columns" and "Quote Entry Columns" options (accessible in the Tracking window).
- Automatic correction of errors due to drag-and-drop in the Account Log
- In the Account Log column grouping, column F (Total of the Account Log Summary) is displayed.
- Alert regarding the risk of synchronization to the Cloud (and method to cope with it)
- Hide temporarily columns LK and/or HK in the Account Log
- Exported quote rows in Account Log are sorted with ascending key.
- CleanOfficeForMac tool

V4.4

- Memorize the print options : Hide empty rows in the Summary, GSC and Footer
- Tasks > Export > Excel enables to print a PDF in the same way as the normal procedure.
- Ctrl L shortcut to access to Meals/Hotels and avoid scrolling through post-prod.
- Automatic repair of quote confirmations if necessary.
- Full rebuild of the model of the additives

V4.3

- Addition of overtime in Grading and Animation in postproduction
- Distinguish between Markup and Overheads when included in insurance premiums.

Bug fixes

V4.5

- VAT rows in an additive quote are hidden when importing an additive in reduced mode.
- Rebuilding a V3 (client logo) from a V4 was buggy because the V3 file did not appear.
- The "+" button for grouped columns in the Account Log is no longer blocked.
- Formulas for titles are now preserved in additive quotes during reconstruction.
- Fixed formulas for calculating equipment insurance in Followup / Actuals
- Automatic repair if there is a Ref# line in the List of Quotes (incorrectly deleted quote)
- In Account Log/Post-production/Suppliers, retrieve Total formula if foreign currencies are used.
- Rows exported in the Account Log take into account the Y Exe in the Quote Followup section.
- Quotes switch to extended mode if sheet protections are corrupted (for manual reconstruction).
- Correction of formulas (col. Nb) so that there is no difference between Reduced and Extended view

V4.4

- Fixed the "Strike through contents when printing" bug on some PCs.
- Complete rebuild in AlphA Exe mode
- Domestic crew is now duly hidden in an additive in AlphA Exe mode
- Cancelling of metrics checking on Windows
- Correct conversion of an amount with decimals in an additive
- Correction of the calculation of insurance of an additive (if mark-up & ov. included)

V4.3

- Correction of an error in overtime / Editing Section
- Correction of the average markup rate recall of social contributions in the Summary
- Correction of an error in the verification of the global markup

Old Updates 4.2

February 2025

Improvements

- Hide columns F to K in the Account Log to ease filling it.
- Enter a license key offline.
- Choose the items subject to insurance in Equipment and Vehicles.
- Hide the GDS section in User Preferences.
- Addition of the columns "Ordered", "Invoiced" and "Delivery" in the list of quotes
- Replace a markup rate with 0 in menu Quotes > Margins and Overheads.
- Modify wages with the right click in discontinuous ranges.
- Click on the cross in User Preferences to close them.
- Obfuscation of passwords
- Prevent Ctrl C - Ctrl W in merged cells as it creates a bug.
- Automatic rebuild procedure identical to version 3.52 (simpler)
- Import client data into a generic template with quotes already entered.
- Clear notes from the Follow-up when initializing a quote (with color removal).
- Export Quote > Rendering: if there are duplicates in row numbers, warn but not prevent.

Bug fixes

- Save-As (problem related to access permissions with some Macs)
- Renaming tabs
- Shortcuts Ctrl J, Ctrl M
- Improved stability when changing logo
- The Cut Down To in the Merged Summary is included in the Account Log and the List of Quotes.
- Empty sections of the Summary are displayed correctly after printing.

- The Recap > Production button displays all rows correctly.
- Production notes are printed if the GCS are unchecked in the print window.
- Export a quote to Excel in reduced mode
- Delete empty rows from the Account Log does not erase the whole log.
- Data validation in the "Expertise" column of the Account Log, section Post-Prod/Director.
- Contextual menu to get a rate if the item does not exist in the Rate Card
- Correct updating of markup rates in reduced mode of an additive
- Correct recall of the Prep in Exe crew section
- Correct recall of the Exe amount in the banner
- Confirmation and consolidation of quotes
- Complete rebuild of the List of quotes and the Merged Summary
- Complete rebuild in AlphA Exe mode V4.4
- Import of column I content into a main quote
- Import of markup rates in rows containing formulas in AC col (Qt)
- Display of panes when reactivating a section in the Preferences
- Disabling automatic saving when opening on OneDrive
- Double-clicking on the rows of the List of Quote allows to access the quote.
- The "Quote Entry Columns" button no longer hides the J-O columns.
- Activation of the formulas of the Working Budget while Actual were activated.
- The SC column in the Follow-up is no longer hidden if they are deactivated in Preferences.
- In Follow-up mode, removal of the "Center on several columns" format of the BG column

Collaboration and Co-editing

V4.0

in real time!

Enhance your
experience by syncing
with Excel Online!

- Prerequisites & Principles
- Share
- AlphA Light & Excel Online
- Co-edit

Prerequisites & Principles V4.0

Drive on the Cloud...

Computer & iPad

Excel Desktop

Versions: Office or Microsoft 365

OneDrive or SharePoint (intranet)

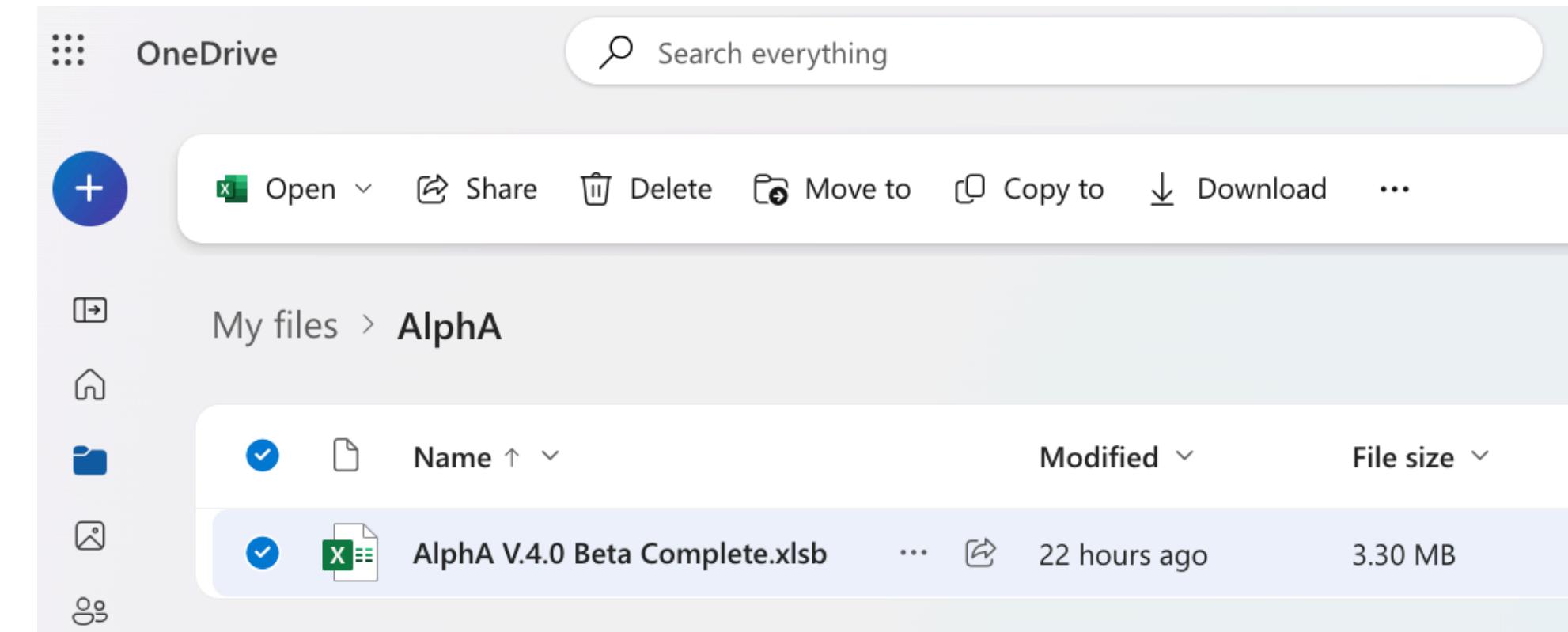
An Alpha file must be on OneDrive or SharePoint.

What can we share?

- A folder and its content
- A file
- Section of a file (sheet or range)

With what solutions?

- Excel Desktop (only the master file)
- Excel Online



Clearing the browser cache can be highly beneficial...

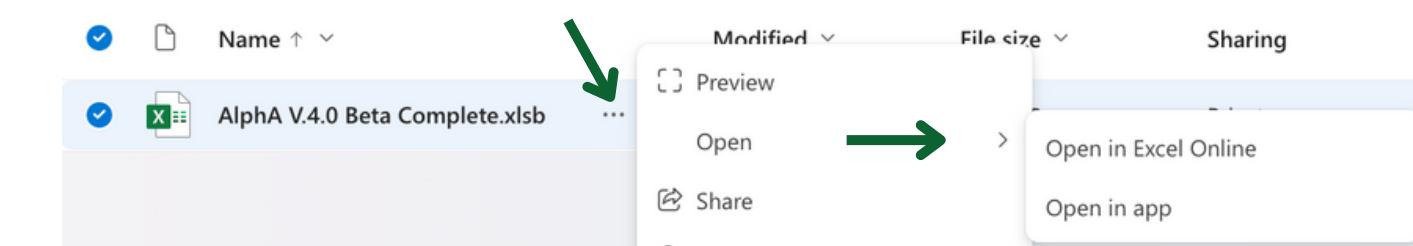
- Mac
- Safari: Command + Option + E
 - Firefox: Preferences > Privacy & Security > Cookies and Site Data > Clear
 - Chrome: History > Clear Browsing Data
- Windows: Ctrl + F5

Share V4.0

You can share AlphA file with Excel Online in real time!

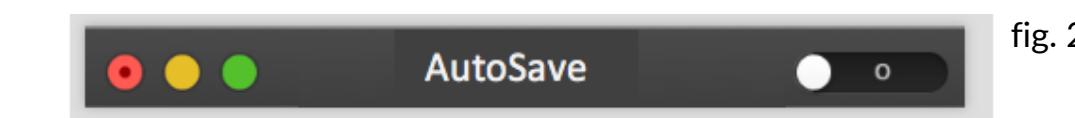
Open an AlphA file (fig. 1)

- With Excel Desktop with all features (by activating macros)
- With Excel Online and AlphA Light (see next page)



Share in real time (fig. 2)

Before any modification, activate the AutoSave option on opening.



Share a file in 3 ways:

- Excel Desktop: Share button (fig.3)
- Excel Online: Share button (fig. 4)
- OneDrive: With the ... next to the file name



Invite collaborators and manage their access (fig. 5)

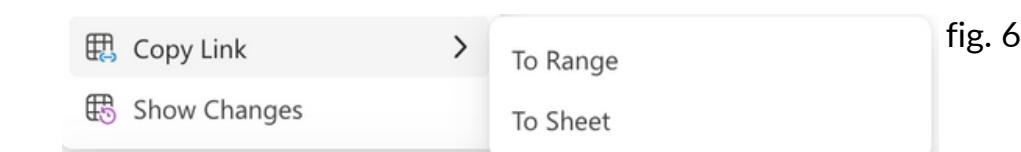
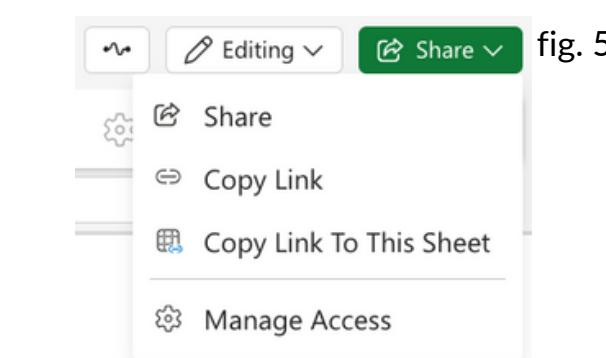
Access to the shared document

- With the link received by email or copied into the browser, collaborators open the file on Excel Online (not with Excel Desktop if you want to keep the sync - Microsoft limitation 2025!).



Share only part of a file (fig. 6)

- Select the sheet or the range then right-click > Copy link.



AlphA Light V4.0

An add-in to use and share your AlphA files also with Excel Online!
And there was light...

✓ Principle

Use AlphA on Excel Online with the basic features of the desktop version (make a quote, print, etc.)

✓ And if that is not enough? (fig. 1)

For complex actions like additives, imports, etc., open AlphA with the desktop application.

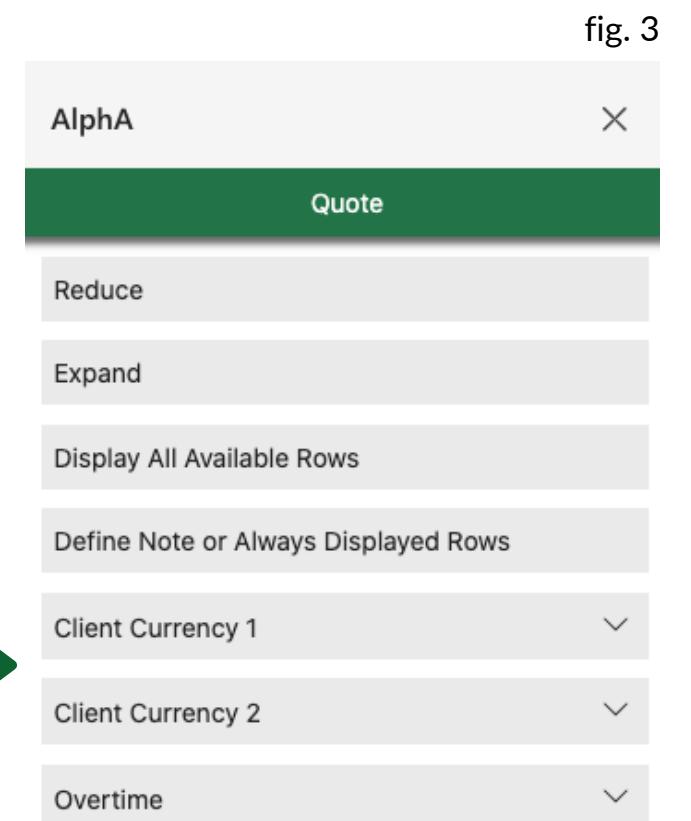
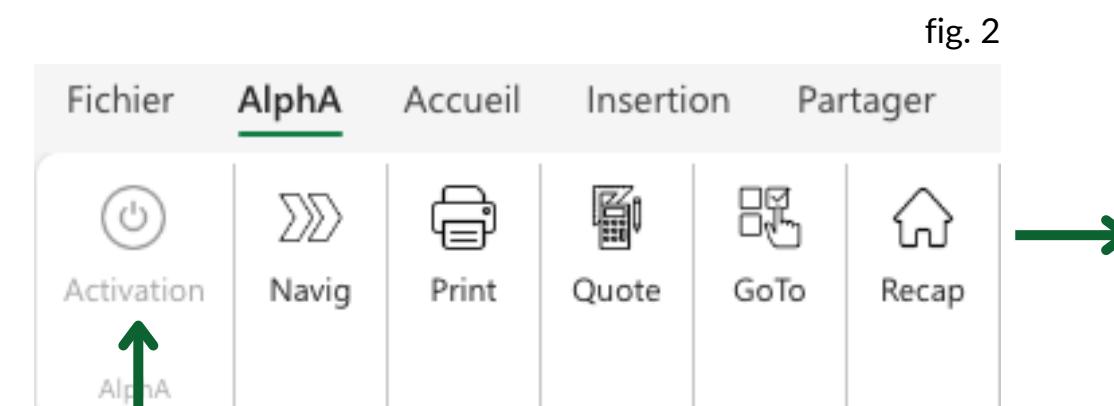
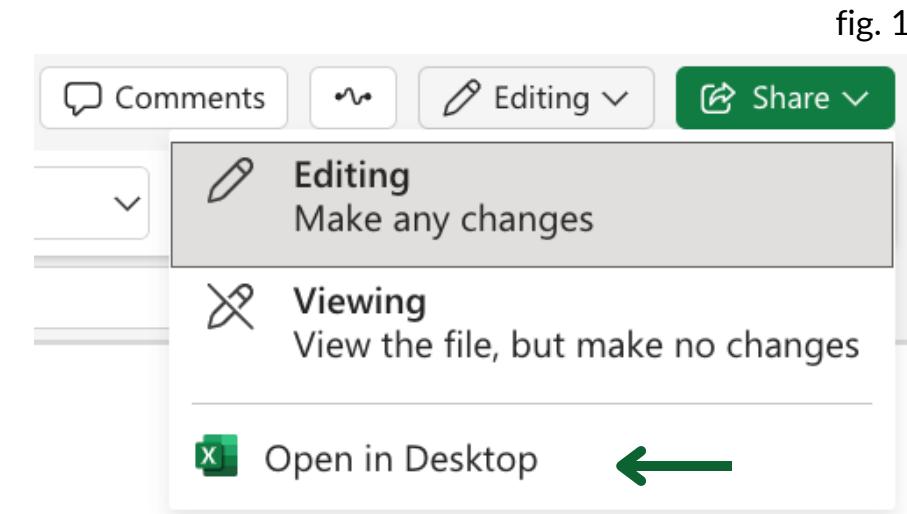
--> *Beware of losing the synchronization, incidently!*

✓ Install AlphA Light

Click [here](#) for precise guidance

✓ Use AlphA Light (fig. 2 & 3)

- Activation
--> You need to sign into your Microsoft account.
- The buttons (Navig, Print, etc.) open a vertical panel with AlphA features.
--> *More features will be developed in the future...*



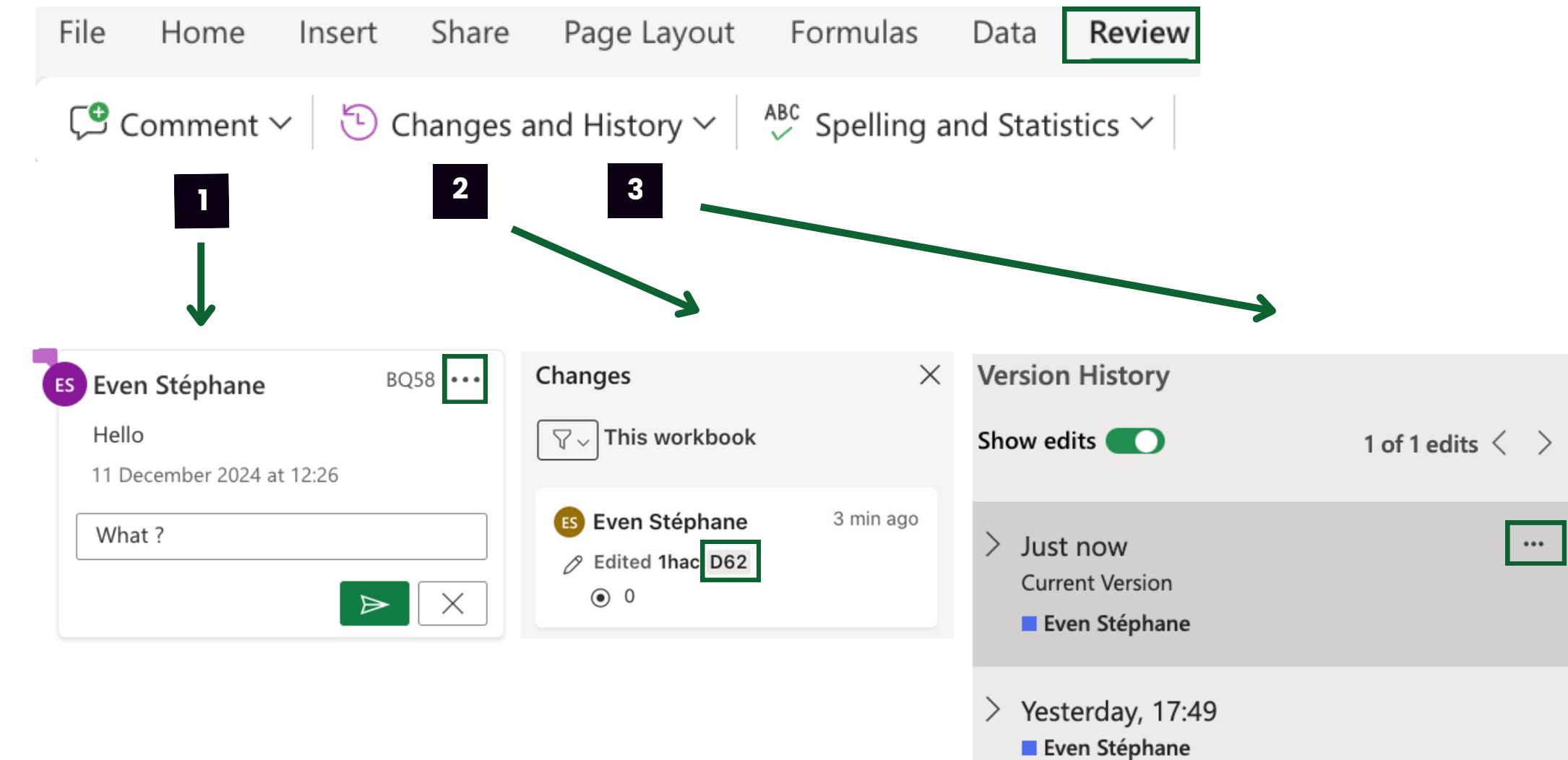
Co-edit V4.0

With both Excel Desktop and Excel Online!

1 Communicate between users

Review > Comments

--> Show conversations in vertical panel or in cells.



2 Who does what?

Review > Changes

--> Click on cell addresses to access the cells.

3 Version history

Revision > History

--> Download old versions

Other Considerations...



You are an
AlphA user!

- What an AlphA User Should Know
- Glossary
- Troubleshooting
- Business Tips

What an AlphA User Should Know...

...regarding AlphA, naturally!

- Master the terms and concepts used in AlphA (margin vs gross margin rates, quote vs budget, Follow-up vs Account Log, etc.). To do this, there is the Help > Glossary menu.
- Do not use the *Bud* tab as a model for titles and rates but rather the Rate Cards except to make a model with quantities and numbers (of days).
- Centralize all the quotes for a project in the same file even if they are provisional quotes (for different production scenarios for example). It is not necessary to have duplicate files (it avoids having several open).
- Double-clicking on a cell whose formula is protected allows you to view what it refers to.
- Never use dangerous characters in the file name or in its path (its folders). These are #, < \$ + % > ! ` & * | { ? " = } / : \ @ []
- To create a specific additive model, do not use the general model (*Navig > Model for Additives*). Instead, create an additive normally, configure it as desired, do not confirm it, then duplicate when needed.
- Modify the client's contact information under the logo in the Summary.
- Disable the "Enable macros" message in Excel preferences > Security tab.
- If ### appear in some cells, change the font size.
- Temporarily set the **domestic or Exe items to 0** by entering -100% in the +% cells of column AE in the ribbon (top), which is used to include a % in the rates.
- View the **total of the Exe sub-sections in the Exe currency** using the Quote button > Client Currency 2 and select the Exe currency.
- Display a **VAT per row** by adding a currency named "VAT" in the Preferences, then display the Client Currency 2 column using this currency.
- Add **your own formulas** in the columns on the right (BO...) or in the Qty and Nb columns. They can even reference a custom sheet using your settings (Task > Insert Sheet).
- Remember to use Ctrl C - Ctrl W (not Ctrl V) to paste values (even in blocks).
- The Insurance button menu explains how they are calculated.
- Any formula that can be deleted (try it!) can be deleted without affecting the calculations.
- Consider using **double-click and right-click** in the Qty, Nb, and Rates cells, and elsewhere as well...
- Right-click in the Nb cells of the Technical Crew section to **enter days per shooting phase**, thus eliminating the need to use a Wages section in Prep.
- Underused but worthwhile menus to explore: **Tools and Smart Tools**.
- **Export your quotes to Account Log** and then clean them up (by merging the rows, etc.)
- **Hide columns used only for printing purpose** (> Quote button) and those used for entering a quote when you are in Followup mode (> Track button).

Glossary

To misname things...

Help > Glossary

ADDITIVE	IN-HOUSE EXPENSES	OV	QUOTE MODE	CUT DOWN TO	SALES RATES
Simplified quote (as opposed to a main quote) to create of a "light" estimate.	"In-house" refers to an expense that is internal to the production house.	Overheads	Display mode to assess the project's cost for the client. The Follow-up columns are hidden.	Amount manually entered in the Summary to freeze the total of the quote with a fixed amount.	Rates used for quoting
BUDGET	SC	MERGING	FOLLOW-UP MODE	RATE CARDS	MARKUP RATE
Quote that has been confirmed.	Social contributions	Merge multiple quote summaries.	Display mode for executing a Working Budget or Actual Expenses	Sheet (Rcard) featuring the standard titles and rates	The Markup Rate (Mk) is a percentage calculated by dividing the margin (e.g., 250) by the quote subtotal (e.g., 1,000). In this instance, the rate is 25%.
WORKING BUDGET	ACTUAL EXPENSES	TITLE	COST RATES	MERGED SUMMARY	GROSS MARGIN RATE
In Follow-up mode, columns used to forecast purchases on a line-by-line basis, maintaining the same level of detail as in the quote (Qt, Nb, Rate) without altering the quote.	In Follow-up mode, columns used to monitor actual expenses on a line-by-line basis in comparison to the total of each expense outlined in the estimate.	Designation of an expense item	In Follow-up mode, cost rates, rather than selling rates, are used to estimate the project's cost price by referencing the rates in the cost prices column of the Rate Card, if available.	Sheet (Cons) used to merge summaries from various quotes. It is used in scenarios involving projects with multiple Prod. Services, for instance.	The Gross Margin rate (MB) is a percentage calculated by dividing the margin (e.g., 250) by the total of the quote (e.g., 1,250). In this instance, the rate is 20%.
CONFIRMATION	QUOTE	LIST OF QUOTES	PROJECT	ACCOUNT LOG	
Validation of a quote that will serve as the basis for a sale with invoicing.	Spreadsheet detailing the estimated production costs.	Sheet (Res) containing a list of all quotes with their total, working budget, actual expenses, confirmation & merge status.	Alpha workbook containing all spreadsheets (main quotes, additives, log, etc.)	A sheet (Log) used to enter all expenses in the form of accounting documents (wages, invoices, etc.) and facilitate a synthetic comparison of these expenses with all confirmed quotes.	
COUNTER VALUE	PROD. SERVICE	MARGIN ON DISBURSEMENTS			
In quote mode, the column located to the right of the "Total" column displays amounts in a different currency.	Executive Production or Production Services	This margin discards internal expenses from the production cost (items designated with a Y in the "In-house" column of the Rate Card).			
		MG			
		Margin			

Troubleshooting / Mac

Normally, step 1 and 2 should be enough....

1. RESTART THE COMPUTER

Some advice:

- Check that Office is activated
- Start Excel and open a blank file before opening an AlphaA file
- Test another AlphaA file. If the error does not reoccur, rebuild the file.

If it doesn't solve the problem, continue...

2. AUTOMATIC MAC OFFICE CLEANING

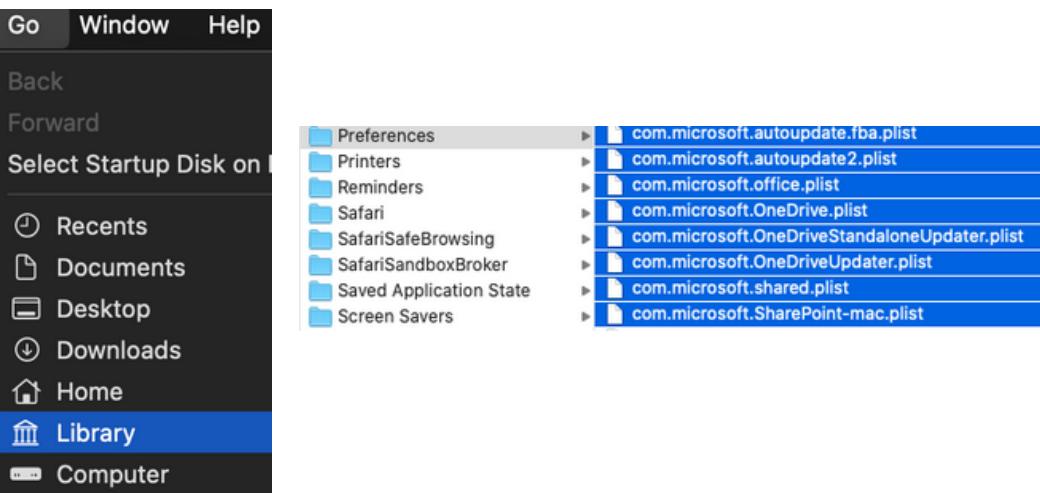
Use [CleanOfficeForMac](#) tool, an open-source tool developed by AlphaA (safe).

Or

Do it manually but it is less complete...

3. MANUAL MAC OFFICE CLEANING

- Close all open applications (*cmd* + *esc*)
- On the desktop, activate the Go menu and click on Option. The folder Library appears in the menu.
- In Library / Preferences, delete the files starting with *com.microsoft*



- In Library / Group Containers, delete the file *UBF8T346G9.Office*
- Empty the bin and restart the computer
- Perform a rebuild of the AlphaA file if necessary

4. SAVE SPACE

- Quit all open applications
- Delete attachments in emails (they will still be accessible in Mail).
 - Library > Containers > com.apple.mail > Data > Library > Mail Download
- Remove unnecessary apps with AppCleaner
- Remove unnecessary languages with Monolingual (free)
- Clean up duplicates with dupeGuru (open source, free)
- Archive cluttered files to a hard drive

5. CLEAN WITH ONYX

- Install Onyx for Mac (open source, free)
- In the Maintenance tab, check all the options on the page (and possibly others with the Options button).
- Other utilities (e.g., Clean My Mac) are not recommended, especially if they are paid.

6. REINSTALL OFFICE (RADICAL)

- Uninstall Office [here](#) or search for it on Google: Uninstall Microsoft Office for Mac.
- Reinstall Office from your Microsoft account

7. REINSTALL OSX (ULTIMATE)

- Due to the automated migrations usually performed when acquiring a new computer, errors from the old one and incompatible applications are often found in the new one.
- It is always better to reinstall everything from scratch (and especially Microsoft Office), but it takes a little longer.

Troubleshooting / PC

Normally, step 1, 2 and 3 should be enough....

1. RESTART THE COMPUTER

Some advice:

- Check that Office is activated
- Start Excel before opening an AlphA file (warm start)
- Test another AlphA file (if the error does not reoccur, rebuild the file)

If it doesn't solve the problem, continue...

2. MOVE THE FILE TO A TRUSTED LOCATION

1. Open Excel
2. Go to "Options"
 - a. Click File (top left)
 - b. Select Options
3. Go to "Trust Centers"
 - a. In the Options window, go to Trust Center (in the left menu)
 - b. Click Settings
4. Add a Trusted Location Folder
 - a. In the left menu, click Trusted Locations
 - b. Click Add New Location...
 - c. Select a folder on your PC (e.g., C:\Trusted\)
 - d. Check the box "Subfolders in this location are also trusted."
 - e. Click OK
5. Move your file into this trusted folder and open it

3. ENABLE MACROS

- Open Excel and follow steps 2 and 3 above to access the Trust Center
- In the left menu, click Macro Settings
- Select Enable macros with notification or Enable all macros (not recommended, potential security risk)
- Click OK, close, and reopen the file

If it doesn't solve the problem, continue...

4. DISABLE MICROSOFT DEFENDER BLOCKING

- Windows 10
 - Go to Settings (Win + I) → Update & Security → Windows Security → Virus & threat protection
 - Windows 11
 - Go to Settings (Win + I) → Privacy & Security → Windows Security → Virus & threat protection

If Defender is blocking access, try adding it to the exceptions:

- Open Windows Defender
 - Press Windows + I to open Settings
 - Go to Update & Security → Windows Security → Virus & threat protection
- Add an exception
 - Click Manage settings under "Real-time protection."
 - Scroll down and click Add or remove exclusions
 - Click Add exclusion → File
 - Select your .xslb file

5. UNLOCK THE FILE VIA POWERSHELL

- Open PowerShell as an administrator (Win + X → "Windows Terminal (Admin)")
- Type the following command, replacing the path with the path to your file: `Unblock-File -Path "C:\Path\To\YourFile.xslb"`
- Press Enter and try opening the file again.

Business Tips

Which only bind the person who wrote them...

Nothing replaces
experience, but
one has to start
somewhere!

- In order to prepare the negotiation, anticipate the real margin of each quote by creating a Working Budget while you enter the client's quote.
- You can export the Follow-up of each quote (working and/or actuals) in the Account Log, saving considerable time while being sure not to forget any of the expenses entered in the quotes.
- One of the goal is to be able to sell additional quotes once in production because they usually are a significant margin reserve. However, do not forget to have them signed by the client and obtain the purchase orders.
- To reach the previous goal, the quotes must be detailed with very precise production notes that mention what is excluded in the quote.
- Do not include contingencies, this would ruin the goal above.
- Break down the forfeits that group together several expense items. This is an effective strategy during negotiations.
- Do not forget to enter the date and validity of the quotes, especially if exchange rates are involved.
- During negotiations, insist on the negligible points...
- Never send your AlphA file (Excel) to a client unless you protect it with a password (never give the password!).
- At the risk of insisting, it is essential to master the concepts of margin rate and gross margin rate (see the glossary).
- If you have time, it is always better to enter in detail the quote of the Prod. Service in AlphA. You will know it better to negotiate with the Prod. Service and the cost control. You will also be able to modify it in AlphA without waiting for a revision of the Prod. Service. And if you do not have it, take it (the time)!
- It is not recommended to send the Prod. Service quote to the client. In theory, it does not concern them in the same way as other suppliers. But in practice... (see previous point to avoid this).
- If they accept it, send to the Prod. Service your AlphA template previously configured in Exe mode so that they fill their part in it. You can then import it.
- Only share your Account Log if you are relatively sure of the margin you announce.
- It is advisable to read the General Conditions of Sale (GCS) at least once. You will be surprised to see how good it is (full of suspense and twists)!

THANKS!

You are now ready to use AlphA 360.

Thanks to your feedbacks, AlphA will continue to improve to meet new requirements, yours as users, but also because our professions are evolving rapidly in these times of technological disruption.

The greatest room for improvement lies in the online version which, while forging ever closer links with the web, will also see its functionalities come closer to the desktop version.

In any case, AlphA will always remain independent, autonomous, and free!

Stay in touch!