How COM Works

COM (Component Object Model), which was once known as OLE (Object Linking and Embedding), can be used to insert a file into another document in two different ways: linking and embedding. An embedded file, such as the one in our graphical example, will simply be placed into another document. But a linked file will retain a connection to the original, so any changes made to the inserted file in its new document will be reflected in the original.

COM can also be used for sharing resources. For example, one large database in a corporation could be shared by individual employees, thus saving the space that would be required to install the database on each individual computer. Additionally, everyone will have access to the new information immediately after the database has been updated.
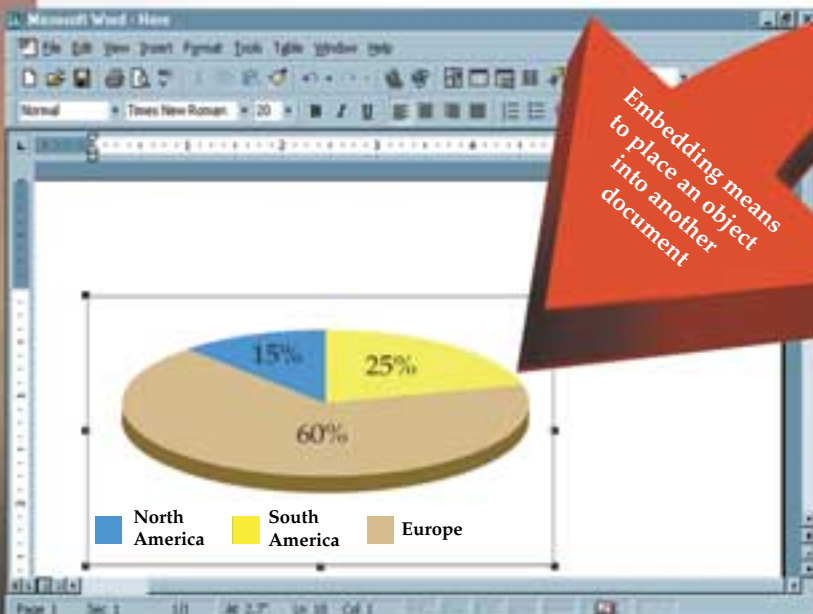
Linking

http://www.smartcomputing.com

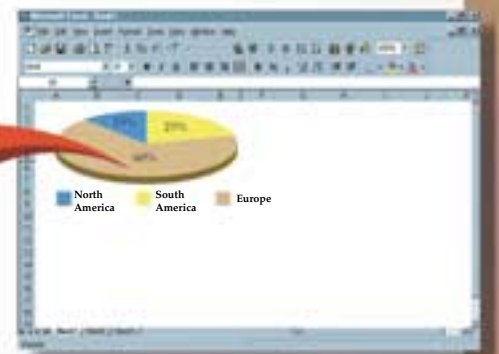Linked files retain connections to original data; any changes will alter the original file

Linking: The hyperlink to the Smart Computing Web site will automatically reflect any changes made to the site.

Embedding

North America   South America   Europe

Embedding means to place an object into another document

15%   25%   60%

North America   South America   Europe

Embedding: Changes made to an embedded Excel file won't be reflected in the original document as there isn't a link between them.

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