

## ISNA()

As a business consultant who works heavily with Excel, one of the problems I find with spreadsheets is the infamous “#N/A” error. Even if this does not effect other calculations, it gives the impression that the spreadsheet may have errors and is not to be trusted. This discussion may seem simple but this is an overview and additional study or classes may be needed.

There are several ways to correct this.

1. The cosmetic way is to delete those formulas that produce the “#N/A”. Bad!
2. You can use the ISERRR function to eliminate them. This may hide real errors and it should be used with great caution.
3. You should use the ISNA function to only eliminate this error and notify you of any other error in your formula.

This can be especially important with Lookup’s (Hlookup, Vlookup, Lookup, Match, and index functions). If you do not know how to use LOOKUP’s, Trust me. ☺

If all is well you will get the referred to number.

	E	F	G	
7	1	1	1	VLOOKUP(F7,E7,1,FALSE)

When the lookup criteria is missing or not of the correct type, etc. you will see the “#N/A” error.

	E	F	G	
7	1	1	#N/A	=VLOOKUP(F10,E10,1,FALSE)

If you make a mistake in one of the key words, you will receive a “#NAME?” Error. If you had used the iserror function, you would not know you made an error.

	E	F	G	
7	1	1	#NAME?	=VLOOKUP(F13,E13,1,FALISE)

A Vlookup needs to reference a column that is included in the associated range. In the example below, the range is only one column and the reference number is set to 3. If you do not know how to use the various lookup functions, “You should”. For now just except that this formula will not work. As in the error above, using the ISERROR function would hide the error but would provide you with incorrect information.

	E	F	G	
7	1	1	#REF!	=VLOOKUP(F16,E16,3,FALSE)

The correct way to eliminate the #N/A error is listed below.

	E	F	G	
7		1	0	=IF(ISNA(VLOOKUP(F13,E13,1,FALSE)),0,VLOOKUP(F13,E13,1,FALSE))

This statements tells Excel if the VLOOKUP() results in an #N/A error then put a 0 in cell 'G' else complete the VLOOKUP()

The ISNA function can also be used in if statements.

	A	B	C	D	E
1					
2		#N/A	0	=IF(ISNA(B2),0,B2)	
3		6	6	=IF(ISNA(B3),0,B3)	
4					

The example above shows a simple example on how to use the ISNA function in an IF statement. In this case, if the value in cell B2 is #N/A then place a 0 in C2. Otherwise, place the number from B2 in C2.

The IS functions are:

- ⇒ ISNA
- ⇒ ISERROR
- ⇒ ISERR
- ⇒ ISBLANK
- ⇒ ISLOGICAL
- ⇒ ISNONTTEXT
- ⇒ ISNUMBER
- ⇒ ISREF
- ⇒ ISTEXT

Learning the use of these functions will give you greater flexibility as well as creating presentations that are more pleasing.

Learning some the many functions and there use can be daunting. One way to get specific help is to have a trainer set-up training classes, on specific subjects, at your Company. Check my website (<http://www.lwmweb.com/>) for upcoming seminars or contact me ( [LWM@LWMWEB.COM](mailto:LWM@LWMWEB.COM)) for in-house seminars for your company. On the other hand, you can study the many Excel books currently available.

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