



Put the POWER back into PowerPoint

Put the POWER back into PowerPoint

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Craig Strachan

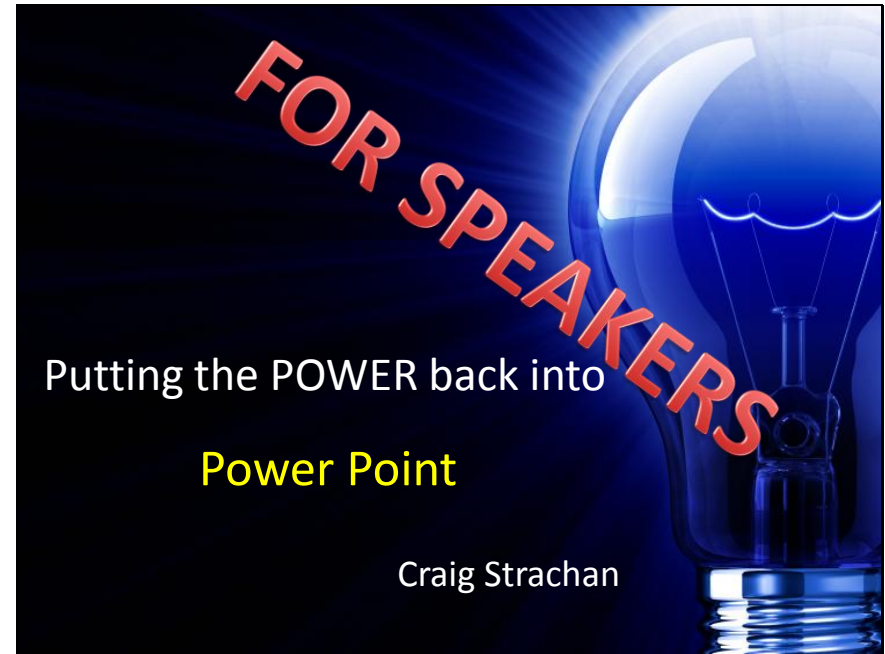
Keep Talking!

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1.1st edition.



Introduction

Introduction

What is the purpose of Power Point?

The key purpose of Power Point is to visually enhance a presentation. It is a tool that can be used to

- Illustrate key points
- Simplify complex ideas
- Provide a high-level overview of the structure of a presentation
- Summarize key points

However, the reality of Power Point is very different. It is used far too often for the incorrect reasons:

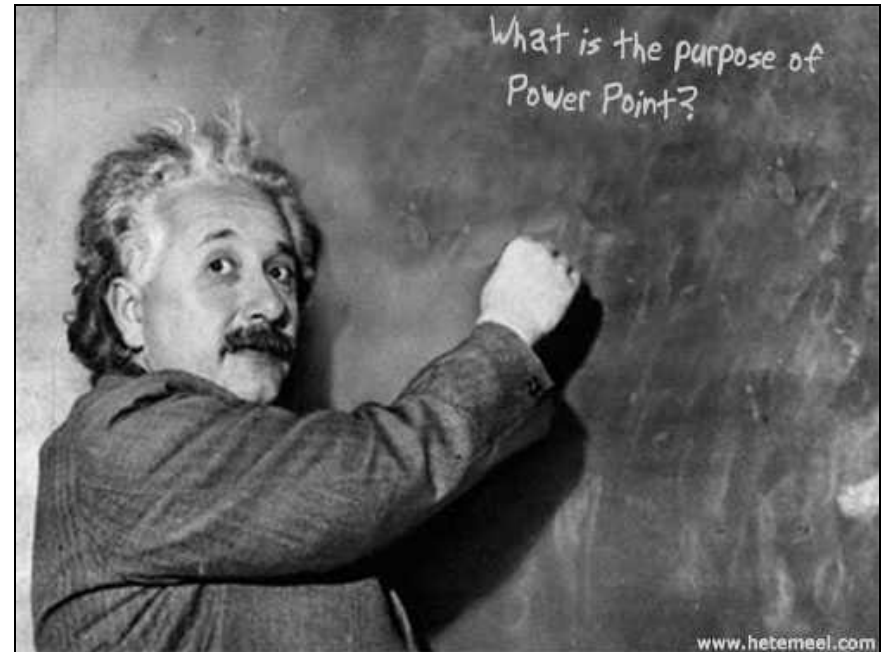
- As speaker notes or q-cards
- As a replacement for handouts
- As a substitute for a poorly prepared presentation

Remember that Power Point is a visual medium, not an auditory medium. It is great to enhance and add to your message, but it cannot replace your message.

The results of bad slides can be*:

- Bad communication
- Bad relations
- Less money
- Poor communication
- Less training

* Alexei Kapterev - www.realtimestrategy.ru



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Bullet Points

Bullet Points

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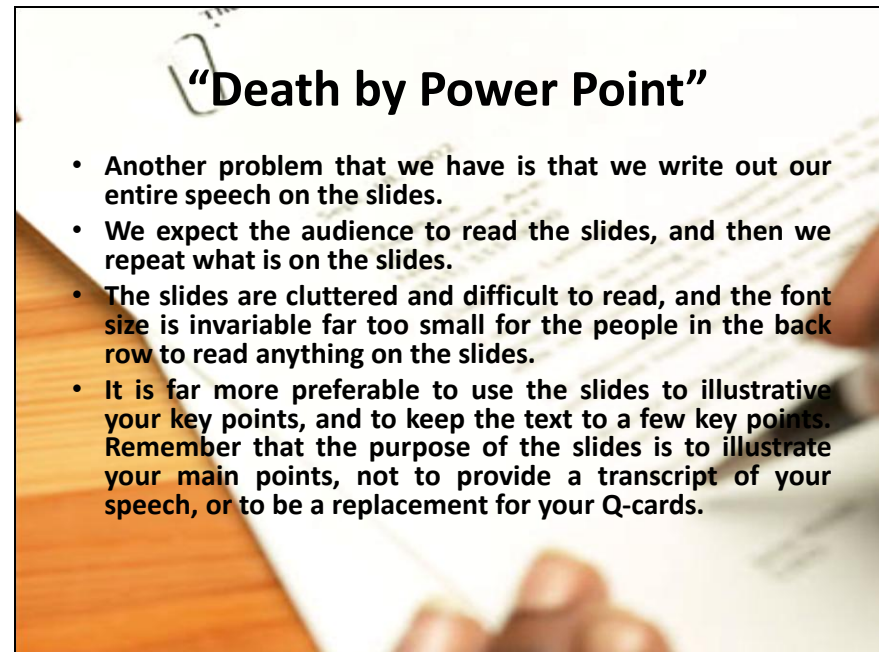
Writing out your entire speech as bullet points, and then reading it to the audience is problematic.

- The bullet points are difficult to read – there is too much text on the screen, and the font size is too small
- Reading the bullet points to the audience defeats the points of the speech – why not just print it out and hand it out if you are going to read the entire slides?
- How can you focus on the audience if you are focusing on your slides?
- Your audience will spend their time reading your slides, and not listening to your presentation.
- Your audience can (in general) read, so you don't need to read the contents of your slides

Remember, we don't speak in bullet points, so why do we insist on speaking in them? When reviewing the slides, ask yourself the question *"are the slides there to help me as the speaker, or are they there to help the audience?"*

Writing your speech

A common trap is to write your speech out as bullet points, and then use that as the basis of your presentation. What you have actually done is to create speaker q-cards that you are simply displaying on the screen. Using Power Point to create your q-cards is fine, but then create separate slides for your actual



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presentation.

You can put the bullet points into the handouts if necessary. This also gives you the space to provide more details on the bullet points.

Bullet Points

Kill the bullet points

Kill the bullet points – simplify your slides to enhance and add to your presentation. The slides are not the presentation.

In Toastmasters, we say that “facts tell while stories sell”. Well, in Power Point “bullet points tell, while pictures sell!”.

You can always put the bullet points into the handouts, so that the people attending your presentation have something useful to refer to later.

You have a great medium available – use it!

Examples

This slide provides a concise list of issues pertaining to global warming, but it is boring. The presenter can speak about the issues, but you don’t need to see a written summary on the screen. Rather show a powerful picture illustrating your point, and put the bullet points in your notes.

Have a look at the next slide, and decide whether you prefer this slide, or the next slide.

Global Warming



- The earth is warming up
- Glaciers are melting
- Sea levels are rising
- Climate patterns are changing
- Carbon emissions are rising
- Forests are dying

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Bullet Points

This slide is awful.

- Too much text on the screen
- Small fonts
- It looks cluttered
- You are going to lose your audience while they try to read the slide

If all of your slides are like this one, you might as well email your presentation out and not speak, since everything that you are going to say is on the slides.

Motivation

- People prefer rewards over punishment – it is better to reinforce your instructions with the promise of a reward than with the threat of punishment.
- Misused rewards de-motivate people – if you overuse praise or reward the wrong people, team members will lose their respect for you and their motivation to do well.
- People like to do meaningful work – when people believe what they are doing is important, they will feel good about their work and want to do it.
- People must believe you – team members must know that you will do what you promise.
- People want you to act like a leader – team members do not like indecision, disorganization, or lack of direction in their leader. They want you to provide clear direction and purpose and not to retreat when you are confronted with tough decisions or difficulties.

Bullet Points

When using bullet points

- Less is more
- Few and simple fonts and colours
- Use the 7x7 rule (no more than 7 words per line, no more than 7 lines per slide)
- Check spelling and grammar
- Keep the slides appropriate
- Do not read the slides to the audience!

Motivation

- People prefer rewards over punishment
- Misused rewards de-motivate people
- People like to do meaningful work
- People must believe you
- People want you to act like a leader

Fonts

Fonts

Fonts

Keep your fonts large, clear and simple. Ensure that your font size is at least 32 points. Too many fonts makes your slides messy.


Complex fonts are difficult to read. The audience will spend more time trying to understand what is on this slides, rather than listening to your presentation. Some fonts (such as comic) are “trivial” fonts. Using them will have an impact on the tone of your presentation (do you want to use a font called “comic” in a board presentation?).

Ensure that you stick to standard Windows fonts. If you use non-standard fonts, your slides might not appear correctly on a computer that does not have the fonts that you use installed.

Walk to the back of the room, and check your slides are clear and easy to read.

Here is a list of fonts installed with Windows XP.

<http://www.microsoft.com/typography/fonts/winxp.htm>.



Fonts

- Too many fonts can be confusing
- *Too many fonts makes your slides messy*
- *Use standard fonts*
- *The font can affect the tone of your presentation*
- Some fonts (such as comic), are trivial
- *Script fonts are difficult to read*

Sound & Video

Sound & Video

Sound & Video

Be careful when using sound and video. It can be an effective tool to enhance your presentation. However, it does add more complexity.

When using sound, ensure that there is an effective speaker system to play the sound through, and then you can connect it to your computer. Laptop speakers will not be loud enough.

Video needs to be high-quality, with good sound. If not, your audience are going to struggle to see and hear the video, and you will lose them.



Logistics

Logistics

Beforehand

Check the following with the meeting organizer:

- What time?
- When can you setup?
- What equipment do they provide?
- Who is the audience (size, age, demographics etc)

At the Venue

Get there early, and setup well beforehand. If possible, do a dry run at the venue beforehand. This will ensure that you know then venue, and know where all of the connections are.

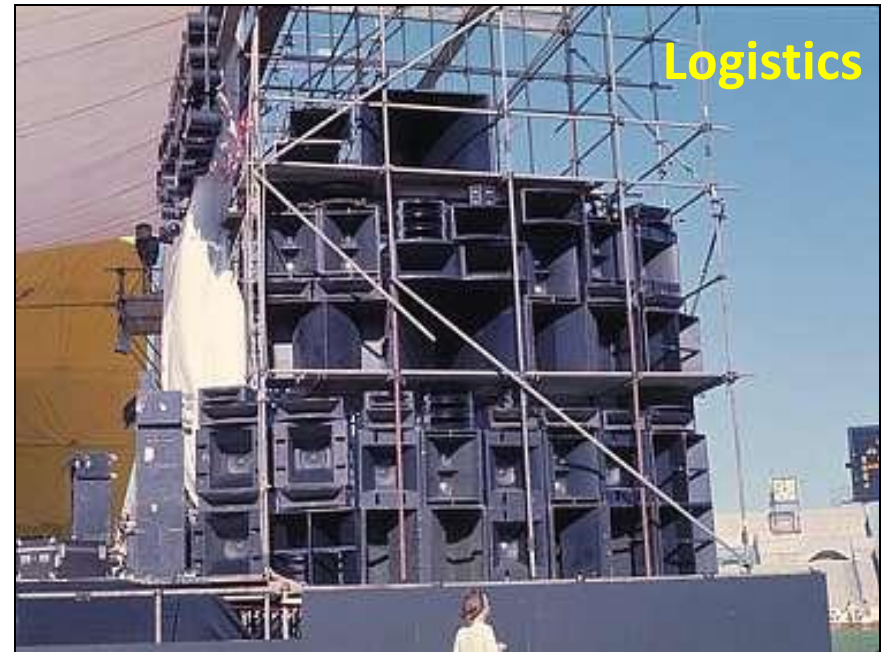
Technical Logistics

Find the AV (audio-visual) guy, and make friends with him (or her). He will be able to assist you with any technical issue that you may encounter, from finding an extra extension cable to getting the projector to work with your laptop. Know your equipment, or find somebody that does.

Remember to run the laptop off mains power, and switch off power-saving, screen savers and email clients (there is nothing more embarrassing than a public preview display on an email from your mum about your socks (or worse)).

Use a presenter mouse, and a remote microphone. This will free you to use the stage.

Position the laptop so that you can see it while facing the audience - this means that you don't have to turn your back to the audience when looking at a slide.



Packing

Packing

What to Pack

Consider bringing the following, and make a checklist so you don't leave anything behind:

- Presentation on various medias (CD, memory stick etc – just in case)
- Backup of presentation in a separate bag
- Slide printouts
- Handouts
- Spare extensions (power and monitor)
- Extension lead
- Multi plugs
- Microphone / sound system
- Masking tape
- Laptop & power supply
- Wireless (presenter) mouse
- Power cables
- Spare batteries (9 volt for microphone, and any other batteries you use. Eg for the remote pointer)
- White-board / flip-chart pens
- Conference packs / handouts
- Back of room sales items (books, CD's etc)
- Business cards
- Nametag
- Printed introduction (for the MC to use to introduce you)
- Change of clothing - in case somebody spills coffee all over you just before you speak
- Directions to venue!

The venue should supply - but check with them!

- Projector



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- Screen
- Microphone / AV gear
- White-board
- Flip-chart

Packing

Powerful Presentation Alliance

www.powerfulpresentationsalliance.com

Our Pragmatic Mission

Provide an International vehicle for professional speakers to receive recognition attesting to their commitment of Presentation Excellence. This allegiance provides meeting planners peace of mind when hiring a member of the Powerful Presenters Alliance.

Code of ethics

1. Only use PowerPoint when needed to convey your message.
2. Always be in the room one hour before the presentation to setup.
3. Only use high-resolution graphic images on PowerPoint® slides.
4. Never, ever, read any slide or piece of text from a slide to an audience.
5. Always use a remote presenter to advance slides.
6. Always black out the slides when making a point or telling a story.
7. Restrict the use of text, transitions and special effects on slideshows.



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