

Show-and-Tell Software

*Here's a roundup
of presentation-
software products—
how to use 'em and
where to get 'em.*

BY HAIDEE E. ALLERTON

A flipchart and a few overheads just don't make the grade anymore.

In a recent online discussion among training professionals, many were lamenting the lack of quality and impact of many of the presentations they see. Generally, they said that most presentations lack pizzazz. But how can that be, considering all of the glitzy off-the-shelf presentation-software packages that are out there?

Perhaps the growing range and increasing sophistication make presentation software seem too high-tech if you aren't a computer whiz or graphics guru. But, in fact, most packages are designed to be easy to use.

It's important to remember that presentations are still about show and tell, but with expanded possibilities—thanks to such multimedia capabilities as graphics, animation, video, and sound. The *show* has progressed from aiming a pointer at a flipchart to electronic displays with moving

BEST TIPS

Here are some tips from Microsoft for using PowerPoint 97:

- ▶ To change the same presentation for different audiences, Custom Show lets users designate which slides for which audience. PowerPoint 97 will show only those slides and save all of the versions in one custom show, making it easy to locate multiple versions and save hard disk and network resources.
- ▶ The Pack and Go wizard of PowerPoint 97 can compress a presentation, including sounds and video linked to it, and then spread it across multiple floppy disks. You just run pngsetup.exe on the first floppy and your presentation will be restored to its full fidelity.

Here are some specific tips from Lotus for using Freelance Graphics 97:

- ▶ When commenting on a file in TeamReview mode and space is a factor, create a quick comment notation. That will automatically size the box to your comments.
- ▶ SmartIcons speed up work considerably. One set remains throughout the process; the second set is task-specific, changing to accommodate the job at hand.
- ▶ Check the Lotus Web site for plug-ins and options. You can view a Free-

lance Graphics presentation and use the Save-and-Go option to save one or more compressed presentations to floppy disks or specific drives.

Here are some general presentation tips from Software Publishing's *The Simple Art of Presentation!* featuring Harvard Graphics:

Preparation.

- ▶ *What?* Be clear about the ideas you want to present.
 - ▶ *Why?* Is your message important enough to take people away from work? Stick to motivational or broad concepts, not nitty-gritty detail.
 - ▶ *Who?* Who should present, not always obvious, and who is going to be the audience?
 - ▶ *When?* Try not to present before or after lunch or too early for travelers. Don't intrude on people's key work times.
 - ▶ *Where?* In-house is more convenient, but be sure to visit an external facility before the presentation.
 - ▶ *How?* Choose materials and visuals that complement the content and your presentation style.
- Transparencies and hard copy.**
- ▶ Use dark-colored text on a light background.

images; the *tell* has transformed from talking heads to the use of music and sound effects.

And there are questions: How do you use digital video? What are hidden slides? What kind of hardware do I need? Can I deliver my presentation on my company's intranet?

To help you sort out the options, *Training & Development* surveyed several leading presentation-software providers. The 1997 Presentation Software Roundup lists various products with information on their features, platform requirements, network capabilities, prices, and licensing fees. And it tells you how to contact the suppliers directly.

Here's to powerful presentations! ■

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SOFTWARE STATUS

Here are some results from a survey of business and education users of presentation software. More than 200 respondents described what brand of products they use most often, for what applications, and what their criteria are for selection. (All percentages have been rounded off to the nearest whole number.)

► Maintain a margin of at least three-quarters of an inch from the edge of the page.

► Use at least 18 pt. sans serif typefaces for headlines, smaller for body copy.

Charts.

► Introduce one idea per chart.

► Use short words and sentences.

► Use no more than 6 to 8 words per point.

► Use no more than 50 words per chart.

Color.

In Western cultures,

► *red* is associated with danger, stop, and heat

► *blue* with water, cold, rest, and calm

► *yellow* with cheerfulness, caution, and alertness

► *white* with pureness, clarity, and sterility.

Yourself.

Don't forget the presenter as well as the presentation.

► Dress appropriately.

► Be mindful of your body language and mannerisms.

► Look confident.

► Don't pace.

Top three tips.

► Prepare.

► Practice.

► Relax.

PRODUCT	PERCENTAGE OF USERS	Use master, templates, wizards	70%
PowerPoint	58%	Edit objects/images	70%
Harvard Graphics	34%	Scan images/photos	69%
Freelance Graphics	18%	Create organization charts	65%
WordPerfect		Draw objects/images	65%
Presentations	15%	Edit scanned graphics/images	62%
Persuasion	14%	Prepare speakers' notes	56%
Astound	6%	Create 35mm slides	45%
Compel	3%	Prepare audience notes	44%
Bravo	3%	Type text in outliner	37%
Action	2%		

APPLICATIONS	FREQUENCY OF USE	EMBELLISH FEATURES	NUMBER OF CASES
Internally		Import graphics	92%
Training	72%	Import files from other applications	78%
Staff meetings	58%	Use color palettes	64%
For other people in the organization	43%	Export files to other applications	59%
Business plans	36%	Use transitions	56%
Status reports	30%	Use builds	50%
Externally		Layer slides	46%
Conference presentation	73%	Jump/branching capability	22%
Sales and marketing	52%		
Customer-service training	37%		
Other	8%		

CRITERIA	OF CASES	DELIVERY FEATURES	NUMBER OF CASES
Compatible with operating system	57%	Audience handouts	78%
Easy to use	51%	Overhead transparencies	78%
Quick to learn	41%	Electronic presentation	71%
Inclusion in suite	35%	Large-screen presentation	59%
Availability of package	33%	Multimedia presentation	43%
Published ratings	22%	On-screen annotation	32%
Multimedia capability	20%	Transfer to video floppy	19%
Cross-platform capability	20%		
Presentation organization	16%		
Presentation delivery method	15%		
A particular software feature	13%		
Technical support available	12%		
Other	11%		

PRESENTATION FEATURES	NUMBER OF CASES
Spellcheck	85%
Create overheads/bulleted lists	84%
Create charts	82%
Prepare handouts	81%
Create tables	80%
Use symbols/images	78%
Format text	75%
Create masters, templates, wizards	73%

The information is reprinted with permission from "The Status of Presentation Software Usage in the Workplace," Office Systems Research Journal (Spring 1997) by Marilyn R. Chalupa, assistant professor in the College of Business Education and Office Administration at Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana.

1997 PRESENTATION SOFTWARE ROUNDUP

Company	Product	Price	Platform	Network	Product Features	Support Features	Description
Adobe Systems San Jose, CA http://www.adobe.com 800/685-3505	Persuasion	Individual price: \$395	Windows Windows 95 Mac/Power PC	Stand-alone	Clip Art Microsoft NT Media Import Capable Audio Import Capable Internet Capable Intranet Capable	Demo Templates Tech Support	Create on-screen, slide, Tutorial/help and Web-based presentations that combine audio, video, graphics, and text applications.
AMT International Inc. Panama City, FL http://www.amtcorp.com 904/913-8354	Interactive Brochure	Site license: \$295	Windows Windows 95	Stand-alone Microsoft NT	Clip Art Templates Internet Capable Intranet Capable	Tutorial/help Tech Support	Create interactive multimedia presentations that run direct from a floppy, CD, or the Web with no install.
Apple Mountain Software Inc. Highlands, NC http://www.apmntsoft.com 704/526-4457	Helpmasters	Individual price: \$23.95	Windows Windows 95	Stand-alone	Clip Art Templates	Tutorial/help	Fast, easy way to create professional quality PowerPoint presentations.
Astound Inc. Palo Alto, CA http://www.astoundinc.com 415/845-6200	Astound 2.0	Individual price: \$249	Mac/Power PC	Stand-alone	Clip Art Templates	Demo Tutorial/help Tech Support	Everything beginners to advanced presenters need to create professional, multimedia presentations.
Astound, Inc. Palo Alto, CA http://www.astoundinc.com 415/845-6200	Astound 3.0 and 4.0	Individual price: \$249	Windows Windows 95	Stand-alone Microsoft NT	Clip Art Templates Media Import Capable Audio Import Capable Internet Capable	Demo Tutorial/help Tech Support	Create on-screen, slide, and Web-based presentations faster, smarter and with more flexibility.
Asymetrix Corporation Bellevue, WA http://www.asymetrix.com 206/462-0501	Compel 2.0	Individual price: \$49	Windows Windows 95	Stand-alone Microsoft NT	Clip Art Templates Media Import Capable Audio Import Capable	Tutorial/help Tech Support	Everything you need to create interactive presentations and integrate an array of multimedia features.
Claris Corporation Santa Clara, CA http://www.claris.com 800/544-8554	ClarisDraw	Individual price: \$199	Windows Windows 95 Mac/Power PC	Stand-alone	Clip Art Media Import Capable	Tutorial/help Tech Support	For the nonartist who requires speed, reliability, and versatility in basic presentation and graphics tasks.
Claris Corporation Santa Clara, CA http://www.claris.com 800/544-8554	ClarisImpact	Individual price: \$99	Windows Windows 95 Mac/Power PC	Stand-alone	Clip Art Template Media Import Capable	Tutorial/help Tech Support	Fast and easy way to create and edit business charts and diagrams for all your presentation needs.
Confluent Inc. San Francisco, CA http://www.confluent.com 415/586-8700	Visual Thought	Individual price: \$695	Windows 95	Stand-alone Microsoft NT	Clip Art/Shapes Templates	Tech Support Internet-Capable	An enterprise diagramming and flowcharting tool for presenting organizational processes.
Corel Corporation Ottawa, Ontario http://www.corel.com 613/728-8200	Presentations 3.0	Individual price: \$99	Windows Windows 95	Stand-alone Microsoft NT IBM	Clip Art Templates Media Import Capable Audio Import Capable	Tutorial/help Tech Support	Provides the tools you need to present your ideas quickly and effectively.
Corel Corporation Ottawa, Ontario http://www.corel.com 613/728-8200	Presentations 7	Individual price: \$79	Windows 95	Stand-alone Microsoft NT	Clip Art Templates Media Import Capable Audio Import Capable Internet Capable	Tutorial/help Tech Support	A wide variety of transition effects, 3D tools, and Clip Art images allow you to tailor your presentation to fit your data.
D'Pix Columbus, OH 614/299-7192	Peeping ROM LE	Individual price: \$129.95	Windows Windows 95 Mac/Power PC	Stand-alone	Clip Art		Royalty-free, photographic images including backgrounds and textures to enhance presentations.
DSP Solution Mountain View, CA 415/919-4000	SuperLink Plus	Individual price: \$400 Site license: \$2,595	Windows Windows 95	Stand-alone Novell	Intranet Capable	Demo Tutorial/help Tech Support	Easy to use and allows the creation of presentations that combine audio, video, graphics, and text applications.
Gordon Instruments Inc. Orchard Park, NY http://www.gordon-instruments.com/ 716/662-5353	Electronic Slide Show	Individual price: \$395	Windows Windows 95	Stand-alone	Templates	Tutorial/help Demo Tech Support	Easy-to-use software for creating dual-image (and single-image) presentations for comparative studies.
Interactive Media Corporation Los Altos, CA http://www.imcinfo.com 415/948-0745	Special Delivery 2.0	Individual price: \$399	Mac/Power PC	Stand-alone	Clip Art Templates Media Import Capable Audio Import Capable	Tutorial/help Tech Support	Allows users to create interactive multimedia presentations without the use of scripting, timelines, or other complex interfaces.

1997 PRESENTATION SOFTWARE ROUNDUP

Company	Product	Price	Platform	Network	Product Features	Support Features	Description
Lotus Development Corp. Cambridge, MA http://www.lotus.com 617/577-8500	Freelance Graphics	Individual price: \$355 Site license available	Windows Windows 95	Stand-alone	Clip Art Templates Media Import Capable Audio Import Capable Internet Capable Internet Capable	Demo Tutorial/help Tech Support	Enables users to develop presentations easily, which can be viewed via LANs/WANs, the Internet, or intranets.
Lucent Technologies Maitland, FL 407/662-7254	Panorama	Individual price: \$695	MS-DOS	Stand-alone	Templates	Demo Tutorial/help	An interactive multimedia authoring program for MS-DOS that wraps high-end capabilities in an easy-to-master package.
Merlin Software Irvine, CA http://www.merlinsoft.com/merlin 714/453-9563	Proposal Wizard Pro	Site license: \$1,795	Windows Windows 95 Mac/Power PC	Stand-alone Microsoft NT	Templates Internet Capable	Tech Support	Proposal-generating software for designing complex systems and presenting to potential clients.
Merlin Software Irvine, CA http://www.merlinsoft.com/merlin 714/453-9563	Proposal Wizard Lyte	Site license: \$695	Windows Windows 95 Mac/Power PC	Stand-alone Microsoft NT	Templates Internet Capable	Tech Support	Proposal generating software for designing complex systems and presenting to potential clients.
Microsoft Corporation Redmond, WA http://www.microsoft.com 206/882-8080	PowerPoint 97	Individual price: \$339 Upgrade: \$109 Site license available	Windows 95	Stand-alone Microsoft NT	Clip Art Templates Media Import Capable Audio Import Capable Internet Capable Intranet Capable	Demo Tutorial/help	Easy to use and allows the creation of presentations that combine audio, video, graphics, and text applications.
NeoSoft Corp. Bend, OR http://www.neosoft.com/-neosft/ 541/389-5489	NeoBook Professional	Individual price: \$199.95	Windows Windows 95	Stand-alone Microsoft NT	Clip Art Templates Media Import Capable Audio Import Capable	Demo Tutorial/help Tech Support	Create interactive multimedia presentations, CBT, sales materials, catalogs, courseware, reports, and other applications.
Paul Mace Software Ashland, OR 503/488-2322	Expo 1.0	Individual price: \$399	Windows Windows 95	IBM	Intranet Ready	Demo Tutorial/help Tech Support	Windows multimedia authoring system for creating high-performance multimedia presentations.
Software Publishing Corp. Santa Clara, CA http://www.spco.com 408/537-3000	Harvard Graphics 4.0	Individual price: \$295, Site license available	Windows 95	Stand-alone	Clip Art Templates Media Import Capable Audio Import Capable	Demo Tutorial/help Tech Support	Presentation software that can easily create powerful, effective visuals, whether the user is a novice or pro.
Spirit of St. Louis Software Chesterfield, MO http://www.spiritsoft.com 800/709-6090	AuthorSoft	Individual price: \$99.99	Windows Windows 95	Stand-alone	Clip Art Media Import Capable Audio Import Capable	Demo Tutorial/help Tech Support	Create interactive multimedia presentations without scripting or programming knowledge required.
Tegrity Inc. San Jose, CA http://www.tegrity.com 408/369-5150	Digital Flipchart	Individual price: \$2,495	Windows 95	Stand-alone Microsoft NT	Templates Tech Support	Tutorial/help	An innovative meeting and classroom productivity tool that makes it easy to organize, document, and distribute information in-house or on-the-road.
Three D Graphics Los Angeles, CA http://www.threedgraphics.com 310/553-3313	Compadre	Individual price: \$49.95	Windows	Stand-alone	Templates	Tutorial/help	The tools you need to maximize PowerPoint for Windows.
Visual Engineering San Jose, CA 408/452-0605	Ovation!	Site license: \$349	UNIX Windows	Stand-alone UNIX	Clip Art Templates Media Import Capable Internet Capable Intranet Capable	Demo Tutorial/help Tech Support	Full-featured presentation software for UNIX and Windows environments.

Editor's note: This listing is based on a survey of multimedia product vendors conducted in March, 1997. The listing represents responses deemed relevant to the training community and is not a comprehensive listing of all presentation software. No effort was made by *Training & Development* to verify information provided by vendors on their presentation products. The survey information was gathered, compiled, and organized by Ryann K. Ellis, editorial assistant for *Training & Development*.

Key to Product Listings

Platform: Operating system on which presentation software is based.
Network: Ability of multimedia developed using software to operate on different network systems.

Product Features

Clip Art: Stock art and graphics included.
Media Import Capable: Ability to integrate video clips into presentation.
Audio Import Capable: Ability to integrate sound clips into presentation.
Internet Capable: Multimedia developed using software will operate over phone networks.
Intranet Capable: Multimedia developed using software will operate over corporate networks.

Support Features

Demo: Demonstration version of software available.
Tutorial: Built-in tutorial and/or help features.
Description: Provided by vendor.