

PowerPoint

Everything You Wanted to Know...

By Lin Laurie

About Me

- Developed custom financial applications in the 1980's. I've been a technical writer since about 1989 when I was a software developer and realized that I liked doing training and documentation more than I liked developing software.
- Was recruited to work at Microsoft in 1989 and my first project was the Windows 3.1 Software Developer's Kit Application Programmers Interface Reference Manual.
- Graduated from the University of WA Technical Writing Certificate Program in 1993 and worked for Joe Welinske doing online help development, editing his online help journal, and also wrote a chapter in his second online help book.
- Became a certified RoboHelp and Captivate trainer in 1994 and started my own company.
- Got my Masters in Educational Technology in 2006 from UW.
- Currently work at LinLaurie.com doing training and documentation work.

Agenda

- Lin Laurie on “Learning about PPT,” including Pecha Kuchu and digital media (two new ways of using PPT).
- Frances Albrecht on "Calming the Chaos," Lessons Learned from Leading an Upstart Documentation Initiative.
- David Hicks, "Building Blocks to Write Effective Requirements," Four things a technical writer can do to craft effective requirements statements.
- Angela Seguel, "Technical Communicators: What We Do and Why It Matters," a Pecha Kuchu presentation to help us describe what we do.

History of PowerPoint

- Created by Robert Gaskins and Dennis Austin at Forethought, Inc.
- First released in April of 1987
- Initially created to run on Macintosh computers only
- Purchased for \$14 million 3 mos. after it was first released
- Became part of the Office Suite for Mac in 1989 and 1990 for Windows

Original Intent to Today

- Designed to provide visuals for business presentations and overhead transparencies
- In 1992 it introduced video output of virtual slideshows and over time completely replaced physical transparencies and slides
- Now used to create input to online courses, digital media that is saved as PDF documents, and other materials and other output that extend way beyond the original intention or imagination of its creators

Layouts – Original¹

- Originally design was just 4-6 bulleted entries per slide at a font size of 12-24 points per slide
- 40 words per slide (anything more impeded understanding)
- Presenters would speak to the bullet points but leave details off the slides
- Use more graphics and less text

1. Richard E. Mayer, U.C. Davis, Santa Barbara (wrote 30 books on PPT slides and quoted on Wikipedia.)

Layouts – Over Time

PowerPoint added:

- Ability to include animations, transitions, and other features
- Added more abilities to add images



Used Differently Depending Upon Needs

PPT and Documentation All-In-One Example:

- Requirement: 40 hours to produce an 8 hour class with a PPT that included having something for students to use to write notes on.

Example: <C:\Users\Lin\Documents\Portfolio\Introduction to Technical Writing\Introduction to Technical Writing.pptx>

- When printed out it as a PDF, it operates as a document and can be used by students to take notes on
- Can be used as a PPT and works as a teaching presentation tool

Used Differently Depending Upon Needs

Speedy Delivery Example (PechaKucha or blah blah):

- Requirement: Concise, fast-paced presentation style that keeps the excitement level up through multiple speaker events.
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gZJc8PB2DsQ>
 - 20 slides each for 20 seconds – 6 minute and 40 second total presentation
 - Primarily images – little to no text
 - Slides automatically timed to move
 - Adapted in America to being called speedy or quick presentations

Best Ways to Use PowerPoint

- Use an interesting template that will compliment but not overwhelm your presentation
- Use lots of visuals – embed a movie if it makes sense in your story
- Keep your use of text to a minimum
- Less is more when it comes to transitions – use one type if any
- Keep it simple but address the requirements