



Claudyne Wilder

*Claudyne Wilder is a professional speaker, co-author of Point, Click & Wow! A Quick Guide to Brilliant Laptop Presentations and author of The Presentations Kit: 10 Steps for Selling Your Ideas. Contact her in Boston at 617.524.7172, claudyne@quik.com, or visit www.wilderpresentations.com.*

*Assisting Wilder is presentation design and training consultant Jennifer Rotondo, 770.421.9867, roto@mindspring.com.*

# Reduce clutter and verbiage to simplify your slideshows

**P**S Industry makes planning and estimating software and sells it to manufacturing companies. A few of the goals it had for this particular presentation were to:

- **Create a new background look.** The old background didn't look cohesive enough. A new background needed to be simple because the company didn't want to omit the background every time it needed to use a diagram — and it uses lots of them.

- **Make the presentation easier to give.** PS Industry wanted the presenter to be able to look at a screen and instantly know how to talk about it, so the information on the slides had to be more tightly focused.

- **Make the charts illustrate the key points.** The company wanted the presenter to be able to tell a story with the charts, using the key points on the slide as a guide.

- **Make the builds more creative.** In addition to making the builds more interesting, PS also wanted the builds to reflect the story being told on the screen.

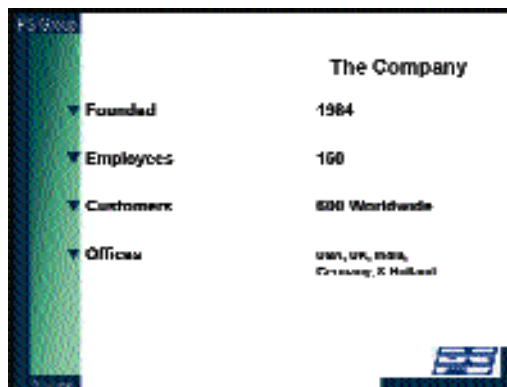
When we changed the background, we took off the words *PS Group* because they were cluttering the screen. The PS logo in the bottom corner is enough to identify the company, plus the audience is reminded where the presenter is from.

In creating the boxes and arrows, we also decided to use a limited palette of colors. Too many colors in a slide can detract from a slide's central message. If you are illustrating how one element builds on another, the elements themselves should be of similar colors

— or they won't look as though they belong together.

To accomplish PS Industry's objectives, we essentially created a cohesive background, cut out some words and used fewer colors to unify the presentation's overall look.

## EXAMPLE 1: Rewriting company history



**BEFORE:** It's difficult to read each bullet on this slide because your eye is forced to go from one side to the other. Also, bullets placed on a different-colored background make it difficult to see that the phrases are connected to the ones on the right side.



**AFTER:** Company statistics come first. This makes it easy for the presenter to talk about them at whatever length she wishes. The bullets now fit with the design of the background and the presenter's options for discussing the statistics are left very flexible.

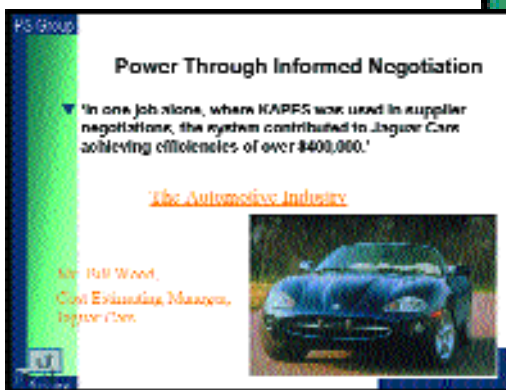
**THE BUILD:** Build these bullets only if the presenter is planning to talk about each item.

## Get your presentation critiqued free!

Do you have a presentation that falls flat or blends into the crowd? It may simply need an injection of energy, organization or individuality.

To have your material considered for a Before & After redesign, send your presentation on a Windows-compatible floppy disk to Claudyne Wilder, Wilder Presentations, 57A Robinwood Ave., Boston, MA 02130; 617.524.7172; claudyne@quik.com. Only presentations selected for redesign will be returned to the sender.

## EXAMPLE 2: Spicing up a benefit slide

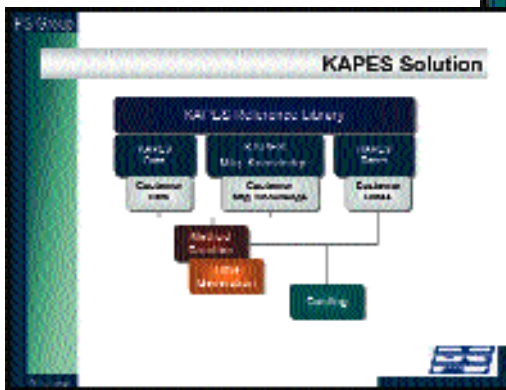


**BEFORE:** This slide has too many colors and no central point of focus. This was the shortest quote the company provided, but we would have preferred a shorter one. With quotes, the shorter the better; you don't want your audience to spend a lot of time reading them.

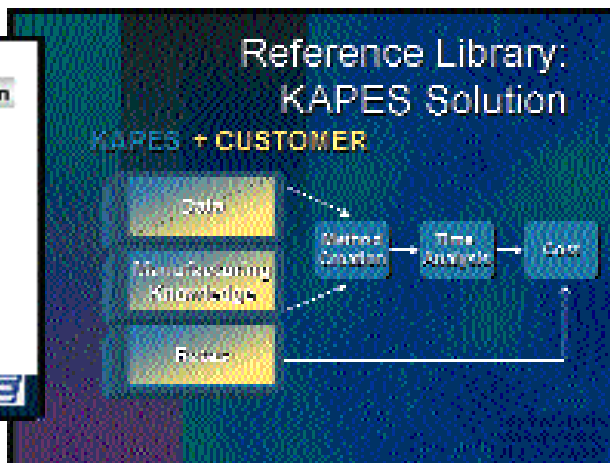


**AFTER:** The photo is now in the center and we made it a bit bigger. The title has been shortened and moved up to leave more room on the screen. The placeholder for many of the titles is too low on the screen, so we moved it up in the master to give us more room for photos and diagrams. The quote has been shortened to emphasize the cost-savings point.

## EXAMPLE 3: Simplifying a process explanation



**BEFORE:** This slide repeats a lot of the same words. For instance, *KAPES* appears on the slide five times, and the word *customer* appears three times. Also, the colors don't go together very well and the lines depicting the flow are hard to follow.



**AFTER:** We used *Reference Library* for the title because it is the central point of the slide. The company is illustrating how its reference library helps reduce and control costs. This slide now builds the story of how the customer can control and reduce costs using the KAPES information.

**THE BUILD:** 1) *KAPES* and the three boxes are already on the screen. 2) *Customer* APPEARS. 3) The three boxes turn yellow as they WIPE DOWN. 4) *Method Creation* WIPES RIGHT. 5) *Time Analysis* WIPES RIGHT. 6) *Cost* APPEARS and the long arrow is set to WIPE RIGHT automatically. □

