



Claudyne Wilder

# Improve your existing visuals without spending a fortune

*Claudyne Wilder is a trainer, professional speaker and author of several books, including Point, Click and Wow! A Quick Guide to Brilliant Laptop Presentations and The Presentations Kit: 10 Steps to Selling Your Ideas. Contact her at Wilder Presentations, 617.524.7172, claudyne@quik.com.*

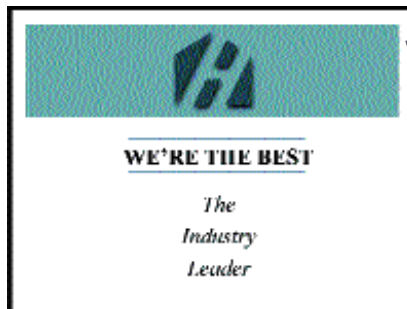
*David Fine is co-author of Point, Click and Wow! A Quick Guide to Brilliant Laptop Presentations and creates brilliant laptop presentations. Contact him at 416.489.6110.*

**Editor's Note:** Welcome to *Before & After*, a new column that will help you design more powerful presentation visuals. Each month presentation consultants Claudyne Wilder and David Fine will critique and redesign a reader-submitted presentation and showcase their work in a before-and-after format. This month, Wilder used three different slides from some of their past clients to emphasize common design errors. If you'd like to have your presentation critiqued in a future column, see the box at the bottom of the next page.

John Burt wasn't happy with his laptop presentation created in-house. Yes, he could modify and update it himself, but it looked so plain — like every other PowerPoint presentation. He urged his assistant to investigate options for creating a better quality presentation.

Burt is part of a growing trend — CEOs and other senior executives who carry their companies' stories in high-impact electronic presentations on their laptop computers. Once such a strong core presentation has been developed, it can easily be modified for different audiences. At a moment's notice, the executives can change, customize or fine-tune elements of their presentations to fit a new audience — shareholders, bankers, customers, suppliers and employees.

CEOs want classy-looking presentations and the ability to change them (or to have their assistants change them) on the fly. New software developments combined with advances in laptop capabilities now make it possible to have the best of both worlds — an expensive-looking presentation that is also user-modifiable. This can be achieved by creating hybrid presentations using a range of software programs all linked into one cohesive format. The screens most likely to be changed by the user (text, certain charts or other information) are created in PowerPoint. Other elements are created in a variety of more advanced programs. Here are three specific ideas for enhancing your presentations.



BEFORE



AFTER

## The Animated Opening Module:

### We're the Best

**Before:** This simple screen showing the company's logo is plain. It is focused on the company, but not on the customer. It could easily have a picture to add visual interest and excitement — pictures are easy to find and add to a title screen.

**After:** First, we reduced the size of the company logo. The audience usually isn't very interested in the logo. We added customer pictures and images that reflect the audience mix. (Hint: If your audience mix changes frequently, you should make several title screens, each reflecting a different audience. The presenter can then choose which title screen to show). We wanted a strong opening to grab the audience's attention. We know that agendas are useful to share right at the beginning of a talk. The agenda lets your audience know the key areas you plan to cover. In this case, four key phrases — investor messages repeated throughout the presentation — appear on the slide during the opening 30-second module. Pictures and words are choreographed on the screen to provide an upbeat feeling and image for the company.

**Process:** The visual is the first screen of an animated opening that has been inserted into a PowerPoint presentation. It is a 30-second, self-running sound-and-action module created in Macromedia Director (as an .EXE file). Clicking on the screen title initiates it.

## The Upscale Chart:

### "%" of Work Force Self-employed

**Before:** This chart has some problems. First, the title is not very descriptive. Second, the 3D effect makes it almost impossible to see the exact percentages. Many people think 3D charts are always the best, but that is not true, because they often make seeing exact numbers difficult. Third, the phrase, "As a percentage of all workers," isn't interesting to view.

**After:** This revision of the title more clearly explains the content. By putting "%" in the title, the audience knows the numbers are percentages. The trend line makes it easier to see the growth. And when you include the 1975 and the 1995 percentages, the audience can see the increase in the number of self-employed people has almost doubled. You no longer need the phrase "As a percentage of all workers." And notice the addition of the word "Market" at the top of the

screen. This presentation has many sections, so to keep the audience aware of which section the presenter is discussing, the section name will always appear at the top. Section titles are especially useful when discussing different products. You can put one on a sidebar or at the bottom of the page.

**The Build:** As a background, the blank chart and title come up. Second, the number "9" comes up on the screen. Third, the trend line appears, showing the percentage of the work force that is self-employed. Fourth, the number "17" appears. In this order the presenter can tell a story about how the increase occurred. Finally, the presenter brings up the trend line for the future and discusses key points about the future.

**Process:** The chart is an example of a simple, bright chart. It was created in Photoshop, since it is not likely to be updated frequently. The animation was done in PowerPoint.



## The Custom-Designed Background: MDS

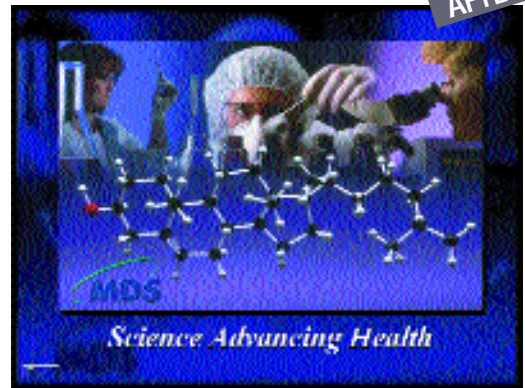
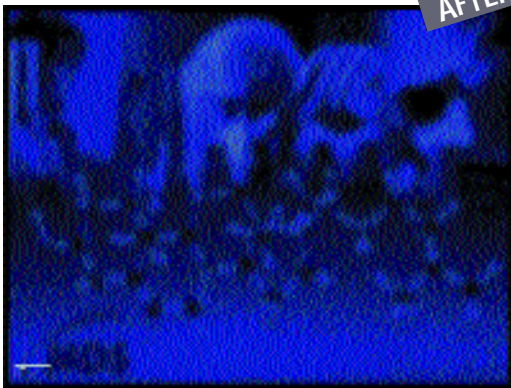
**After:** In this case, no "before" example exists, because executives at MDS Inc., a major life science and health care company, didn't want a simple colored background, nor did they want to use one of the software programs' numerous templates. Many companies want a custom design that gives the presentation a unique feel. This is becoming more important as audiences now recognize some of the backgrounds taken from the major presentation software programs. A company does not want to show up and see that its competitor's presentation uses the same background.

MDS Inc. wanted a new custom look created. After going through the checklist I use at the launch of every new project to determine a client's

preferences, this image emerged. The look was carefully crafted to reflect images in the company's annual report, supplemented by stock photos. A dark blue, slightly blurred ver-

sion of the image provides the background for the body of the presentation.

**Process:** Photos were scanned in. The image was then manipulated in Photoshop and inserted into PowerPoint. ■



## Get your presentation critiqued for 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.



Claudyne Wilder

# Sell your ideas with a savvy use of graphics and words

*Claudyne Wilder is a trainer, professional speaker and author of several books, including Point, Click and Wow! A Quick Guide to Brilliant Laptop Presentations and The Presentations Kit: 10 Steps to Selling Your Ideas. Contact her at Wilder Presentations, 617.524.7172, claudyne@quik.com.*

*David Fine is co-author of Point, Click and Wow! A Quick Guide to Brilliant Laptop Presentations and a creator of laptop presentations. Contact him at 416.489.6110.*

In creating a product-oriented sales presentation, there's always a fine line between saying too much or too little about the product. You will notice in these examples that we cut some text, assuming that the audience needed to hear less and absorb more. To keep the clutter to a minimum on the screen, we also removed the logo. Since the word *Nature<sup>2</sup>* appears on so many screens, it wasn't necessary to use the logo.

If your company has strong name recognition, you may not need to include the name on every screen. If you want your audience to remember the product or company name, then you must decide how many times to show it to them.

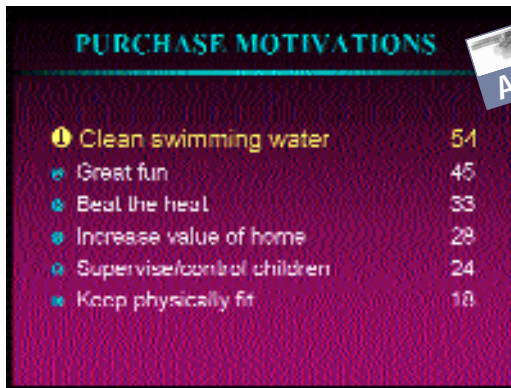
I recommend using your logo on your opening slide, but ask yourself if it really adds anything to the rest of the slides. If the answer is no, leave it off.



BEFORE

**Put your most important info on center stage**

**Before:** This screen shows a quote from an industry research expert. That is not the visual's most important point, yet it is given center stage. The title doesn't describe the visual's real point. And the font size used for the motivations is too small.



AFTER

**After:** We titled the visual to indicate what is most important, deleted the quote and formatted everything in a larger font size.

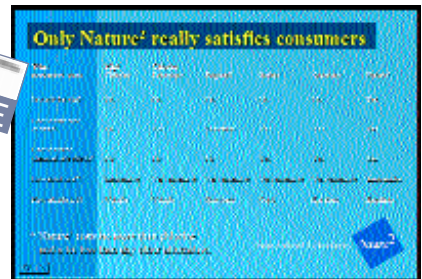
**The Build:** We decided to build this visual to add suspense and variety to the screens. The build starts at the bottom and goes up the list. We chose to show the most important motivation last. This screen is a good one to use for interaction with the audience.

## Use tabular comparisons to beat your own drum

**Before:** Here we have a table. The point is not to look across and notice each category, but to look down and see that *Nature<sup>2</sup>* satisfies consumers. Also, the presenter can speak the sentence that now appears at the bottom of the slide. If the presenter is worried about remembering that point, it can be built to come onto the screen after the table is discussed.

**After:** First, we made a real table. And we put *Nature<sup>2</sup>* first. We want the audience to see *Nature<sup>2</sup>* as they start looking at the chart from left to right. And we want *Nature<sup>2</sup>* to stand out, so we made the column a different color. We deleted some words and shortened the features in the far left column. You want to make it easy for your audience to compare products, and you want your product, naturally, to appear the best.

BEFORE

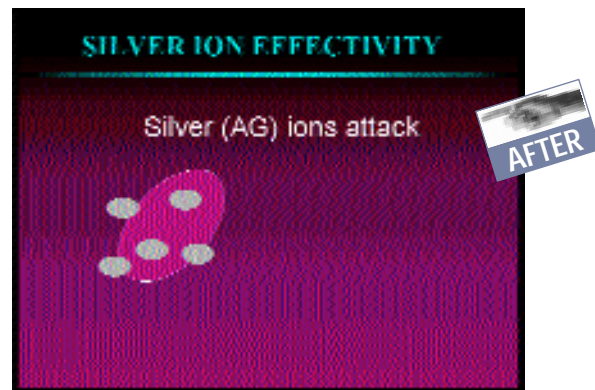
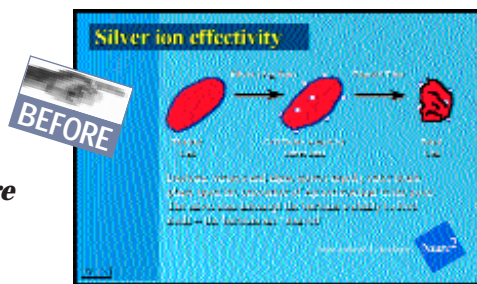


AFTER





**Creative builds are great ways to communicate complex ideas**



**Before:** This screen includes a sentence. If this sentence is already visible, what is the presenter going to say? The screen also labels the cells. Again, the presenter has less to say if everything is shown on the screen.

**After:** The revision of this screen is created as a build. The presenter can then talk as the pictures and words appear. Creation of the word *destroyed* was done in Microsoft WordArt.

**The Build:** First the healthy cell appears then the silver ions come in from all directions on the screen — this seemed like an appropriate screen in which to use some fun builds. Then the destroyed cell comes up with the word *destroyed* moving on top. Afterward, the words *bacteria*, *viruses* and *algae* appear. These words could be left off, depending on whether the presenter thinks he will remember to say them.



**Categorize large lists for quick reference**

**Before:** Here we have a list of all the great things about Nature². The problem is that the list is long, so the audience members gasp internally when seeing the screen. They are wondering whether the presenter is going to speak about each item. Meanwhile, the presenter is wondering how to go through this list without being boring or monotonous.



**After:** First, we made the title more explicit. Then we put the list items in categories. The audience can grasp three categories more easily than a list of more than 15 points. Also, the presenter can say, for instance, "Here are all the reasons Nature² ranks No 1. I want to speak about the science area." This makes it easier for the presenter to present.

**The Build:** If the presenter chooses to talk about each category, the categories can be done as a build. ■

**Get your presentation critiqued for 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.



David Fine

# Punch up your financial data with creative charts, builds

David Fine is founder of Fine Communications Inc., an investor relations firm specializing in high-quality multimedia laptop presentations for use in all types of business settings. He is also the co-author of *Point, Click and Wow! A Quick Guide to Brilliant Laptop Presentations*. Contact him at 416.489.6110, [finecom@interlog.com](mailto:finecom@interlog.com).

David shares the "Before and After" writing duties with his "Point, Click and Wow!" co-author, Claudyne Wilder. Contact her at Wilder Presentations, 617.524.7172, [claudyne@quik.com](mailto:claudyne@quik.com).

**W**e have all seen presentations of financial or quantitative information that fail to hold our attention. But financial presentations don't have to be boring.

## Four ways to avoid boring your audience to death

There are four key ingredients to an effective financial presentation.

**Ensure there is a reason for each visual.** Each screen should exist for the purpose of making a point — not just to show a condensed version of the company's

balance sheet or income statement.

**Guide the eye to the main point.** The key point of each screen should jump out at the audience. If it takes 30 seconds for the audience to determine the message, you've lost the audience's attention for that period.

**Less is better.** The most common trap is cluttering the screen with too much of everything — too many numbers or charts with multiple lines. This defeats the basic purpose of a visual, which is to highlight a key point, not act as

a script for the speaker. If the speaker needs a script, write one for him. But don't put it all on the screen!

**Use pictures and builds to hold the audience's attention.** The big advantage of electronic presentations — builds — is a powerful tool in conveying bite-size pieces of financial information. A five-year bar chart of steadily increasing earnings is a lot more impressive if each bar glides onto the screen than if the entire chart appears at once.

## BEFORE



## An animated pie chart is the best way to communicate percentages of a whole

**BEFORE:** This international company presented global sales information in a straightforward table showing revenues by geographic area. The point of the visual is not clear, the eye tends to wander and there are no builds. The one favorable point is the amount of information — the visual is not cluttered.

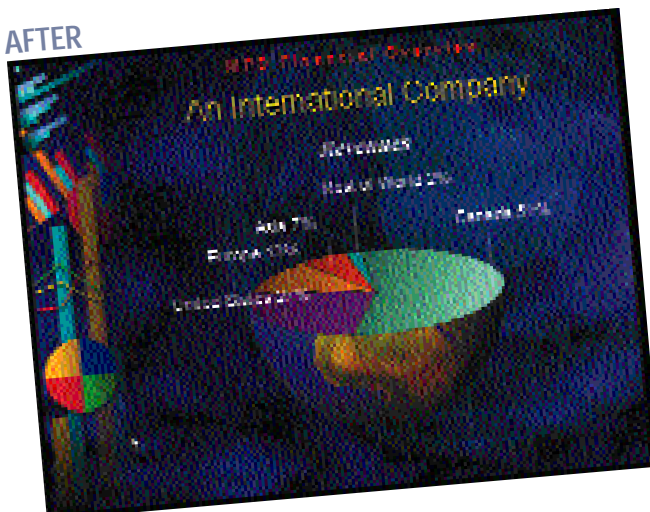
**AFTER: 1** First, the designer added a custom-design look to the entire presentation with a distinctive element for each section on the left-hand side. The chart design on the left indicates the visual is part of the financial overview section.

**2** To highlight the key point of the visual, we changed the title to "An International Company" — a far more exciting title than the previous "Breakdown of Revenues."

**3** Using advanced design programs (Corel Dream and Photoshop), an interesting three-dimensional pie chart was created to replace the table of numbers. This has the dual effect of showing the information visually, in a pie, as well as adding a global feel.

**4** Finally, the pie was animated with each component entering the screen separately. The spiral build creates a sense of anticipation as the components appear and helps to hold the audience's attention.

## AFTER



## Pictures with directional arrows help the audience focus on the key message

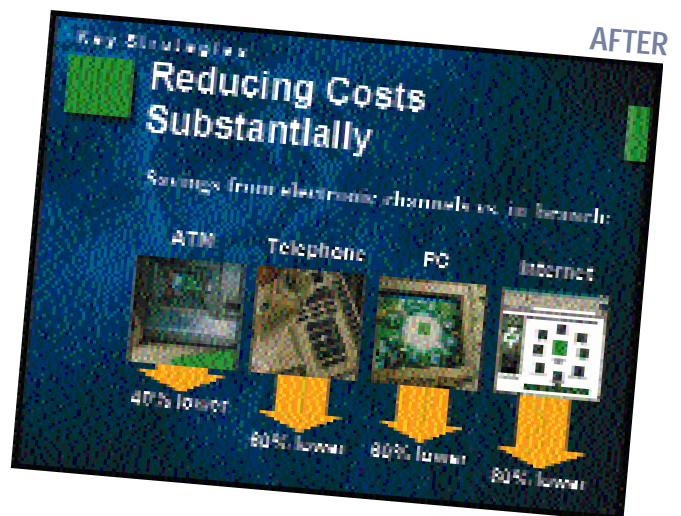
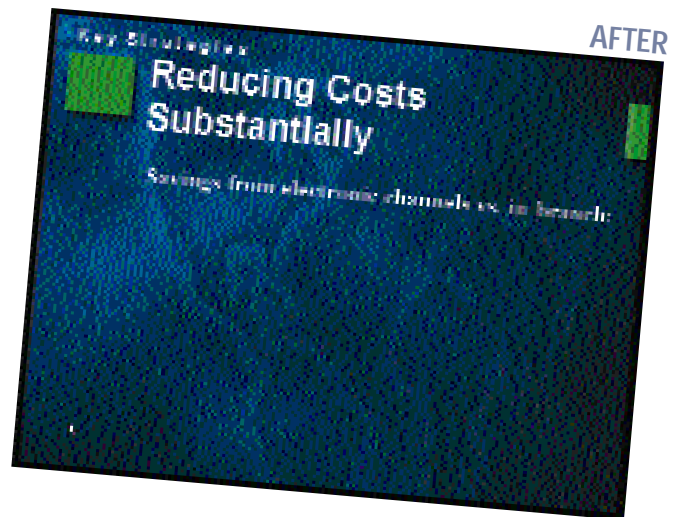
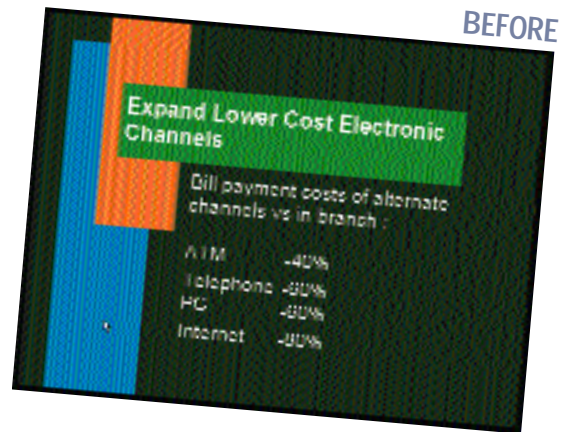
**BEFORE:** This savings-and-loan company wants to show it is saving money by encouraging clients to shift to lower-cost electronic channels. The point of the visual is somewhat confusing. The eye tends to be drawn to the numbers, but exactly how they relate to the title is not obvious. Pictures and builds would definitely add to the impact of the visual.

**AFTER: 1** The company contracted with our firm to design a custom template with a subdued blue map of the world as a backdrop. Designer templates always differentiate your presentation and ensure that it will never look or feel like anyone else's.

**2** Wording changes were made to allow the audience to quickly grasp the point. The new title, "Reducing Costs Substantially," clearly states the point of the visual. It also prepares the audience more effectively for the information that will appear momentarily on the slide. The previous title, "Expand Lower Cost Electronic Channels," is a good one, but it would fit a quite different slide — one showing a trend line of an increasing share of the company's transactions moving through electronic channels. This would be a good follow-up visual. The wording of the subtitle was also tightened to better explain what the audience is looking at.

**3** Pictures of each electronic channel, with arrows and builds, were added to deliver the message more powerfully. The picture of each channel builds separately. The picture appears first, then the arrows build (a "wipe-down" build). And the number builds last.

The result is a simple, clean and highly effective visual, with the key point reinforced as each of the four channels complete their build sequence. ■



## Get your presentation critiqued for 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.

## Correction

In the January 1998 issue of *Presentations* a printing error distorted the colors on page 43 of the Before and After column.

Cyan ink was used on the magenta plate and magenta ink was used on the cyan plate. We apologize for any confusion this may have caused. If you have questions about the exact color usage, feel free to contact the authors directly.



Claudyne Wilder

# To increase understanding, highlight the important stuff

*Claudyne Wilder is a trainer, professional speaker and author of several books, including Point, Click and Wow! A Quick Guide to Brilliant Laptop Presentations and The Presentations Kit: 10 Steps to Selling Your Ideas. Contact her at Wilder Presentations, 617.524.7172, claudyne@quik.com.*

*Claudyne shares the "Before and After" writing duties with her "Point, Click and Wow!" co-author, David Fine. Contact him at 416.489.6110, finecom@interlog.com.*

This is a test. Find the information. Sort through the numbers. Compare the information. Then make a recommendation. You have 15 seconds.

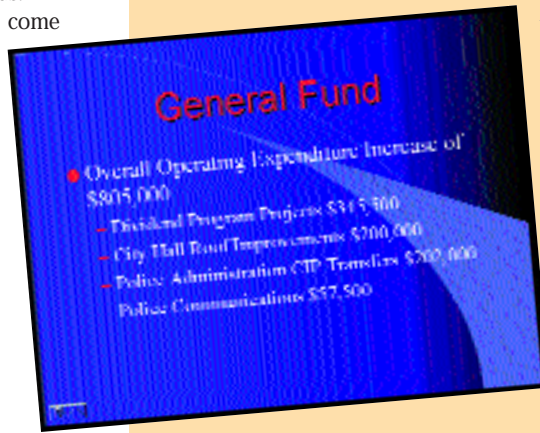
If the information hadn't come to you in the form of screen after screen of numbers, complicated charts, bulleted text, clip art and photo collages, you might have had a chance. Unfortunately, the person presenting the information made it too difficult for you. You wanted to understand the information, but...

The truth is, people really do want to understand what you are saying. As a presenter, it's your responsibility to make that task as pleasant and interesting as possible. You can begin by organizing your information intelligently.

Let's start with the numbers problem. People are used to processing numbers in columns, so go ahead and display them that way — but don't display so many numbers that people can't read them. If you find yourself saying, "I know you can't read this, but..." take it as a clue to do some numerical trimming. If your audience needs all the numbers, give them a hard copy and present only the highlights onscreen.

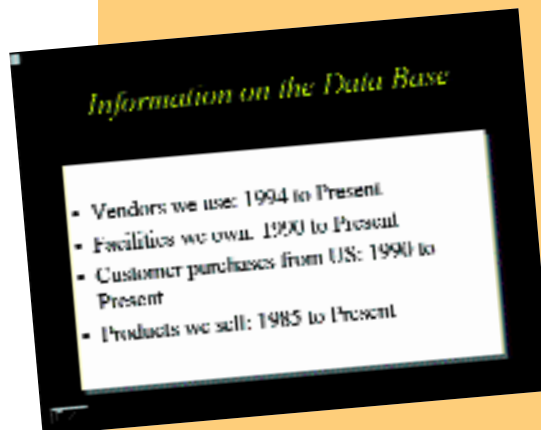
What's the best way to deal with information that happened over a period of time? People usually comprehend such information faster when it is presented in a time line or flowchart. The trick is to make your time line so simple that the information is self-evident. That way, you can spend your precious speaking time interpreting and adding value to the information on the chart.

## The numbers



**BEFORE:** The numbers here are not very easy to read because of the layout, the background design and the serif font. If we kept this layout, we'd take out the bullet in front of "Overall" and change the remaining bullets and title to a color other than red. The color red used with finances tends to make audiences nervous.

## The time line



**BEFORE:** The data here is presented in bulleted phrases. It is hard to sort out and difficult to tell which piece of information came first. Plus, the way it is set up, the presenter is forced to go through each bullet.

## Get your presentation critiqued for 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.



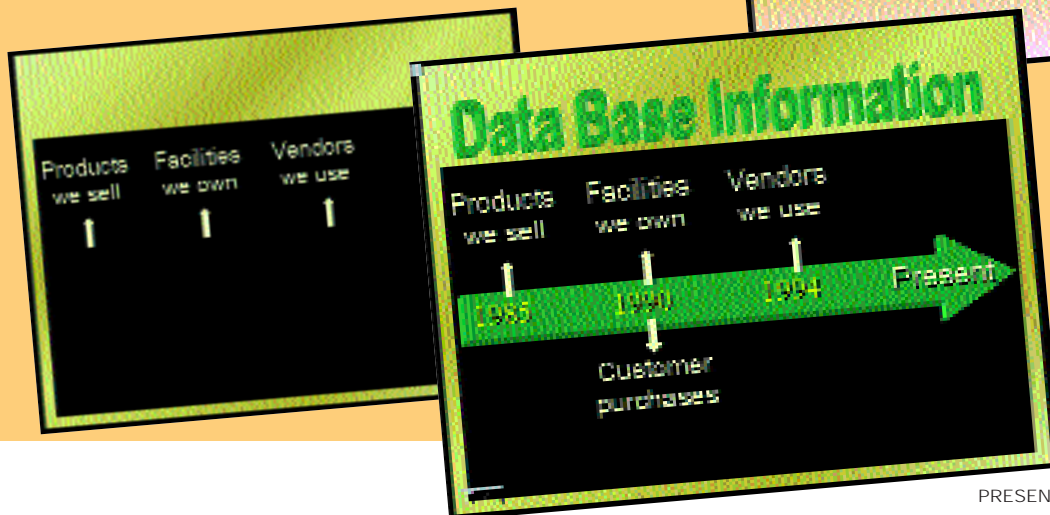
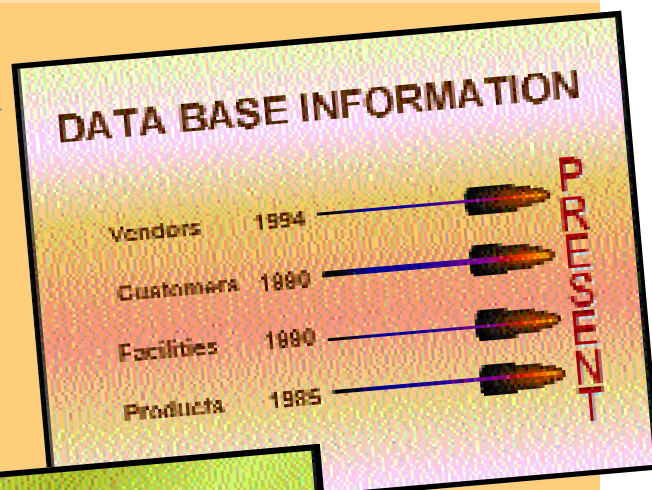
◀ **AFTER:** We removed the background to make the numbers more readable. Then we put the key number first. Again, depending on how much the presenter has to say about each of the expenditures, they can be built (presented one by one) or displayed all at once.

**AFTER:** Here's a different design based on the presenter's need. The presenter wants to explain the individual expenses before showing the final number. So instead of drowning in a sea of numbers without context, the audience will understand precisely why the presenter's news is so shockingly good — a message they shouldn't miss.



**AFTER:** The information is presented in a see-it-at-a-glance fashion, leaving the presenter with the more interesting task of explaining how the information is important and what it means for the future. The presenter doesn't have to read each year's events. She now has the choice of building the screen, uncovering the information by year, or, if she needs to quickly display the information and move on, she can bring it up all at once.

The arrow design was taken from a PowerPoint slide master. The background was made by going from FORMAT to BACKGROUND to FILL EFFECTS to PRESET. Our Preset choice was wheat.



◀ **AFTER:** Here the presenter can have fun building the information by year. This type of layout lends itself to a build.



Claudyne Wilder

# Builds and pictures make fund raising come alive

*Claudyne Wilder is a trainer, professional speaker and author of several books, including Point, Click and Wow! A Quick Guide to Brilliant Laptop Presentations and The Presentations Kit: 10 Steps to Selling Your Ideas. Contact her at Wilder Presentations, 617.524.7172, claudyne@quik.com.*

*Claudyne shares the "Before and After" writing duties with her "Point, Click and Wow!" co-author, David Fine. Contact him at 416.489.6110, finecom@interlog.com.*

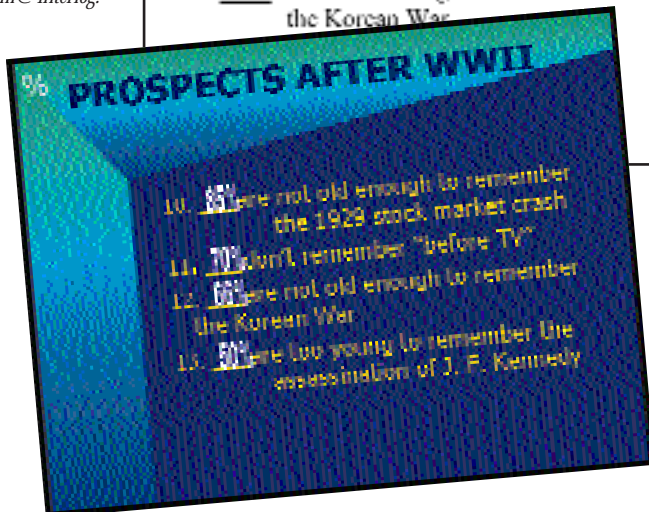
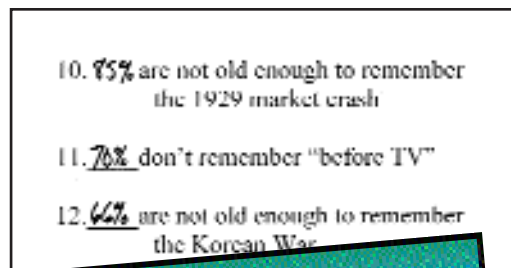
**R**aising money in this day and age is difficult. Judith Nichols presents to charities to help them understand how the fund-raising world is changing and to teach them how to raise money more effectively. Until now, her visual aids have been primarily overheads with text. Judith now wants to move into the electronic age but can't be too slick about it — so she submitted a presentation to us for an overhaul.

The presentation we prepared for her is done in PowerPoint Office 97. Fortunately, her visuals lend themselves to electronic presenting and her presentation contains lots of interesting statistics. We used

builds to make the statistics easier to comprehend, and pictures to bring her text and quotes to life.

Judith's presentation can be divided into three categories: statistics and information on how the world of donors is changing, action items charities need to consider, and, finally, motivating quotes and phrases. These three topic areas are interspersed throughout her presentation.

To communicate to the audience which topic is being addressed at what moment, we created two icons: One, the check mark, represents actions for the audience to consider. The other icon, the percentage sign, tells the audience to consult a previously distributed handout of percentages and numbers.



## Create screens for audience interaction

**BEFORE:** The screen for this slide was text with the numbers written out.

**AFTER:** To make the presentation more interactive, audience members receive a statistics handout with the percentages and figures left blank. During the presentation, audience members fill in the figures as Judith builds them onscreen.

You may wonder why the phrases are numbered 10, 11, etc. It's so audience members can easily find them on the handout. The statistics were done in WordArt. We could have used pictures to represent each of the statistical events in the presentation, but that was a slicker approach than Judith wanted.

**THE BUILD:** If Judith decides to break the audience into groups and let them brainstorm answers to these four questions, she won't build the phrases. But if she decides to interact with the whole audience and have them guess as a group, she will build each phrase. The statistics are built with the PEEK FROM LEFT custom animation.

**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 consid-

ered 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.



## Use photos to illustrate key points and quotes

Judith's presentation included many quotes and key points written in text, in the middle of a screen. This is the part of the presentation that cried out for some color and photos. Different images were used to add interest to the key points. These screens are the fun, imaginative part of the presentation. They give the audience a breather from processing the statistics and action-item screens.

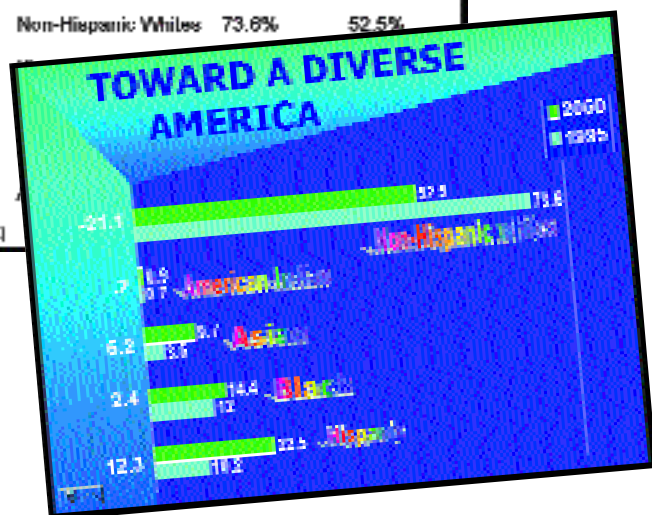
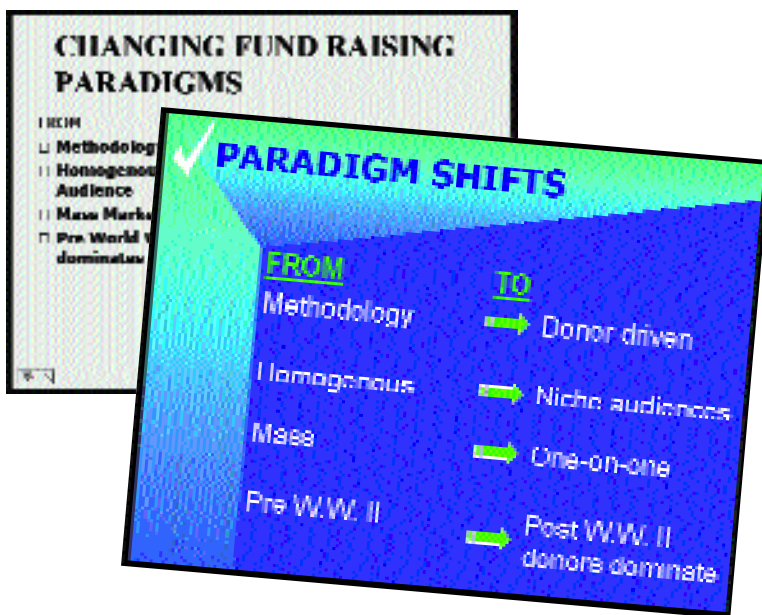
**THE BUILD:** Here's how we custom-built the animation. "From Now On" slides onto the screen by using the CUSTOM ANIMATION to PEEK FROM LEFT. Then, "In Transition" and the photo are placed using ZOOM IN FROM SCREEN CENTER.

## Cut the words

**BEFORE:** Too many words, some redundant, others unnecessary. Also, the empty-box bullets make it look as though something is missing.

**AFTER:** We pared down the words and made each thought a separate text box to give us options for animating them. The check mark in the upper left is used throughout the presentation to signify action ideas for the audience.

**THE BUILD:** First, "From" and "Methodology" APPEAR. The "To," the arrow and "Donor Driven" WIPE RIGHT. We use the same formula for the rest of the screen where the From's APPEAR and the To's WIPE RIGHT.



## Use charts whenever possible

**BEFORE:** Many audience members will become frustrated when they attempt to decipher the differences between 1995 and 2050. If you tell them the numbers are percentages, you don't have to include the percentage sign by each number.

**AFTER:** We created the chart with the exact look we wanted, then ungrouped it. We then grouped it so race and percentage difference appear first, then the bar charts for that race. It took a while to get races and numbers correctly grouped, but it looks wonderful when it's animated.

**THE BUILD:** The race and percentage difference use ZOOM IN animation to grow onscreen. We kept the bar charts simple. The bar charts use APPEAR animation. ■



David Fine

# Chart a clear course for better financial graphics

David Fine is founder of Fine Communications Inc., an investor relations firm specializing in high-quality multimedia laptop presentations for use in all types of business settings. He is also the co-author of Point, Click and Wow! A Quick Guide to Brilliant Laptop Presentations. Contact him at 416.489.6110, [finecom@interlog.com](mailto:finecom@interlog.com).

David shares the "Before and After" writing duties with his Point, Click and Wow! co-author, Claudyne Wilder. Contact her at Wilder Presentations, 617.524.7172, [claudyne@quik.com](mailto:claudyne@quik.com), or [www.wilderpresentations.com](http://www.wilderpresentations.com).

Creating charts is an essential part of most presentation design. But all too often, rather than highlighting key points clearly, charts are unclear and end up needing a lengthy explanation to be understood.

A chart is created for a reason. The most common mistake is to simply put a chart showing sales or earnings into a presentation without identifying the reason for its existence. One of our clients recently insisted that we include a summary of the company's balance sheet in their presentation. The financial analysts were complaining that the company had not discussed its debt-to-equity ratio, because the information was buried in the balance sheet but not readily apparent. A simple debt-to-equity pie chart did the trick.

## Grasping the point with a chart

In this example, we take a table of data that breaks virtually every presentation rule and move it up, step by step, to become an effective chart.

1996 Financial Results (in millions)		
	1995	1996
Gross sales	436.1	413.1
Net income (loss)	(30.1)	26.6
Earnings Per Share	(1.03)	1.12

### BEFORE:

#### The rule-breaker table

This table contains a summarized income statement for the company. The point is not clear. Is it to show improved efficiency — higher earnings on lower sales — or is it simply to show a turnaround in the bottom-line earnings? Also, using red is a no-no in financial presentations. A chart would help significantly.

## Some handy rules of thumb for charts

**1 Guide the eye to the main point:** The key point should jump out at the audience. Use arrows, animation or a different color to guide the eye to the main point.

**2 The fewer lines the better:** A chart should be clear and simple. One powerful data series (line or row of bars) per chart is preferable. Using too many lines, or using different axes for multiple lines, is confusing.

**3 Use an axis scale or data points — but not both:** If you are putting data points on the actual line or bar, there is no need to clutter the axis with a scale. It is redundant.

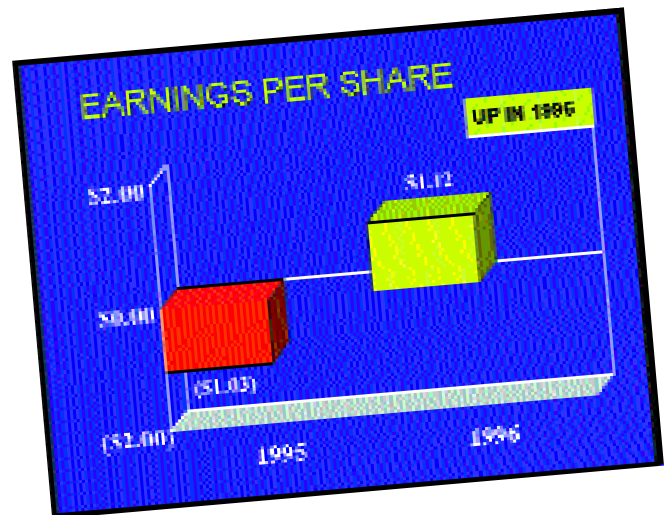
### Get your presentation critiqued free!

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](mailto:claudyne@quik.com). Only presentations selected for redesign will be returned to the sender.

### AFTER: Step 1 — The rule-breaker bar chart

Having decided that the key point is to show the improvement in earnings per share, the presenter created a chart. But the chart breaks most of our rules. The bright red loss in 1995 draws the eye to that bar rather than pointing it toward the improvement in 1996. Because the bars show the values on top, the data on the y-axis is redundant and therefore unnecessary clutter. The lines around the chart are also unnecessary. Also, 3D bar charts are notoriously confusing — it's difficult to see exactly where the top is. A simple, elegant 2D bar chart would work better.



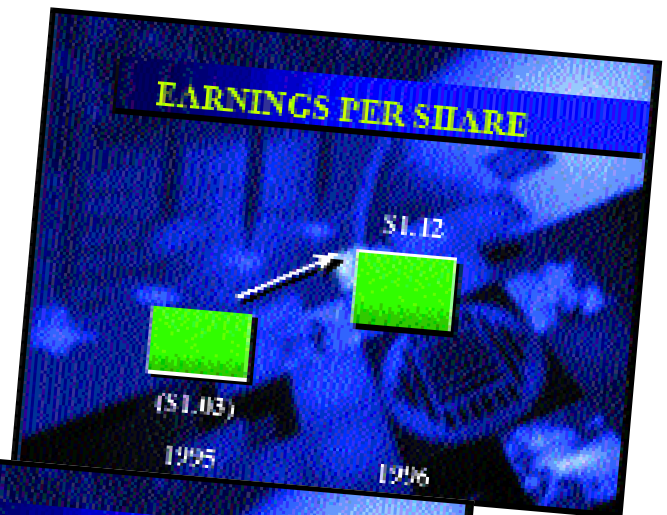
### AFTER: Step 2 — The basic bar chart

Making the improvements above gives us a basic bar chart. Note its simplicity. The arrow guides the eye to the 1996 bar and highlights the improvement. The words “Up in 1996” have been replaced with more meaningful information — “New strategic alliance” — which helps explain the reason for the turnaround. A few basic design effects such as shadows and shaded fills have been added to enhance the visual appeal. While greatly improved, we can still do more with this chart. Any ideas?



### AFTER: Step 3 — The high-impact chart

The content remains the same but we now add animation effects and further upgrade the visual appearance. The chart now builds. First the 1995 bar appears (a “wipe up” animation) as the speaker explains the loss. To highlight the improvement, the arrow appears, followed by the 1996 bar. As the new strategic alliance is explained, the words appear. To further enhance the overall appearance of the presentation and the image of the company, a custom-design look was created for the background. The result is a strong overall message with the audience quickly grasping the improved earnings per share derived from a new strategic alliance. ■



- 4 Remove details: Grid lines, footnotes and other details detract from the key point. Remove them whenever possible.



Claudyne Wilder

# Dynamic builds are the secret key to effective charts

*Claudyne Wilder is a trainer, professional speaker and author of several books, including Point, Click and Wow! A Quick Guide to Brilliant Laptop Presentations and The Presentations Kit: 10 Steps to Selling Your Ideas. Contact her at Wilder Presentations, 617.524.7172, claudyne@quik.com, http://wilderpresentations.com.*

**D**ST Belvedere develops portfolio accounting and performance measurement solutions for institutional investment managers. The company wanted to upgrade its core presentation so that it looked a little fancier and, more important, was interesting to deliver.

To accomplish this, we first redesigned the charts. DST Belvedere wanted to leave copies of the presentation screens as handouts, so the theme of each chart had to be pointed out. Otherwise, they wouldn't make any sense later.

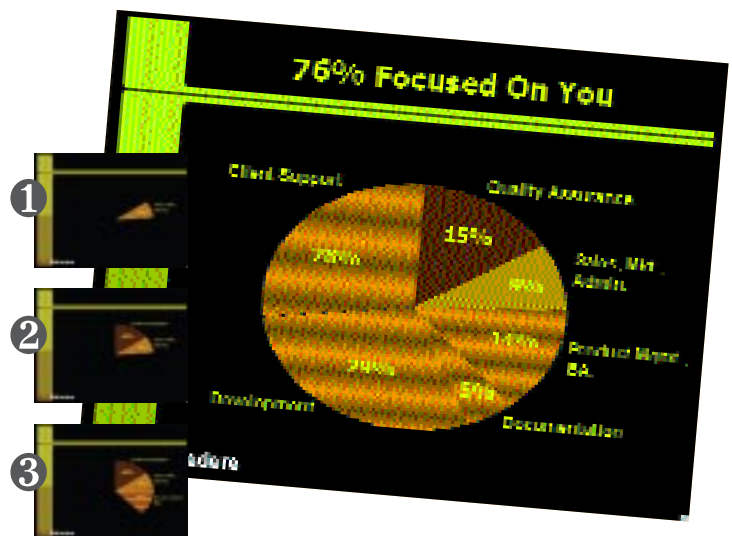
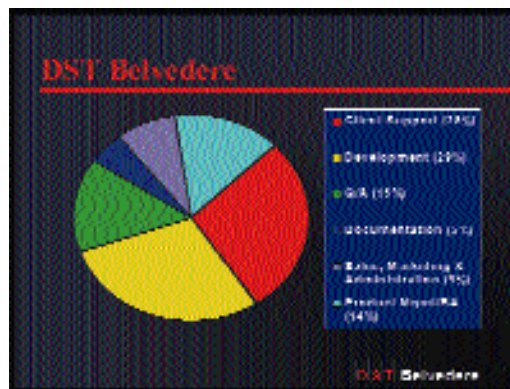
Next, we looked at each diagram and asked: What is the key message? Using the answer, we redesigned each one into a simpler graphic.

Finally, we combined the company's business and strategy screens with simple, short words that tell the audience about Belvedere's business and product. Many of us have sat through a whole presentation and, at the end, wanted to ask, "What is it you really do?" This screen answers that question.

The finished version replaces static, graphically confusing screens with dynamic, simple graphics and well-timed movement that communicate DST Belvedere's key messages.

## Use informative titles

**BEFORE:** To make sense of this pie chart, the audience must look back and forth between the legend and the chart. Also, the legend takes up a lot of space.



1

2

3

4

5

**AFTER:** The statistics and labels are now contained in and attached to each individual pie slice. The title, "76% Focused On You," concisely sums up the point of the chart.

**THE BUILD:** Each pie slice is grouped with the percent number and label. Each grouping comes in with the STRETCH FROM LEFT, STRETCH FROM RIGHT, or STRETCH FROM BOTTOM CUSTOM ANIMATION. The slide title APPEARS last.

### 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.

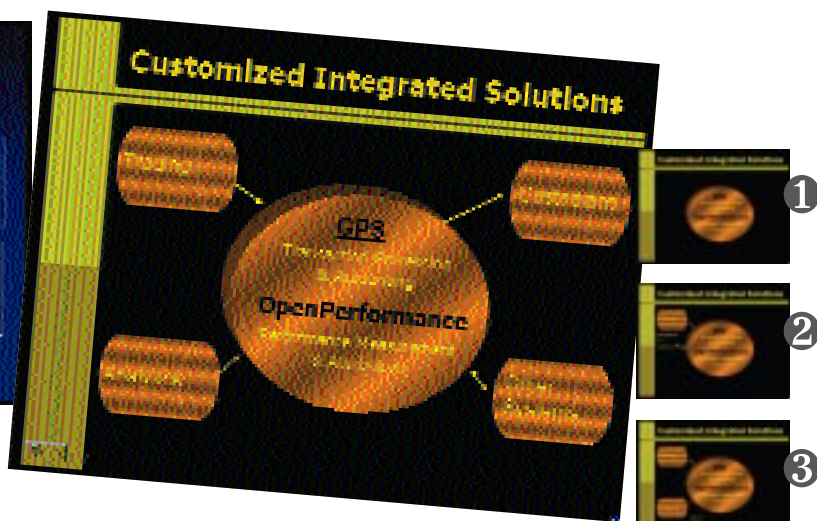


## Chunk your information

**BEFORE:** DST Belvedere used a couple of text-only screens to talk about its business and strategy. Here you see one of those sentence screens, featuring a long, rather clunky phrase.

**AFTER:** The key chunks of information about the business are listed. The hardest part is figuring out how to name the chunks. We broke up the sentences into their key components. Then, using as few words as possible, we fleshed them out and arranged them in easy-to-digest bullet points.

**THE BUILD:** We used the WIPE RIGHT build for each of the points because our eyes naturally move left to right as we read. This screen is a good build transition when the presenter provides extra information for each bullet point.



## Limit the text in diagrams

**BEFORE:** Static and confusing, this screen didn't take advantage of PowerPoint's ability to add and remove text for emphasis. It also did little to communicate DST Belvedere's vision of itself as a company on the move.

**AFTER:** We gave the chart a more dynamic look and matched it with our template. Notice that the colors in this diagram and the colors on the pie chart are similar. Not many charts or diagrams were included in this presentation, so we stayed with the same color combination.

**THE BUILD:** As the screen comes up, the circle in the middle anchors the slide. "Trading" WIPES RIGHT, then the words below it APPEAR. After "Analytics" WIPES RIGHT, the words below "Trading" disappear, and so on.

By making the words associated with one piece of the graphic disappear on the next mouse click, we were able to keep this chart uncluttered. But even after the information disappeared, a reminder of the systems DST Belvedere supports remained onscreen — helping both the presenter and audience remember them.



Claudyne Wilder

# Your graphics should tell the story behind the numbers

*Claudyne Wilder teaches and licenses her Presentations Point, Click & Wow! seminar to companies and consultants. She 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.*

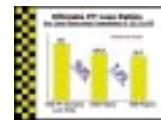
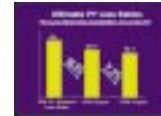
**P**ilgrim Insurance is bidding to be the insurance carrier for Commonwealth Automobile Insurers. They have turned in their proposal and now must give a presentation — complete with persuasive graphics.

The “before” examples are charts imported from Excel. Each of the charts has an important story to tell, but in each case the graphics don’t communicate the story as clearly or as compellingly as they could. The “after” visuals are designed to emphasize key points and make

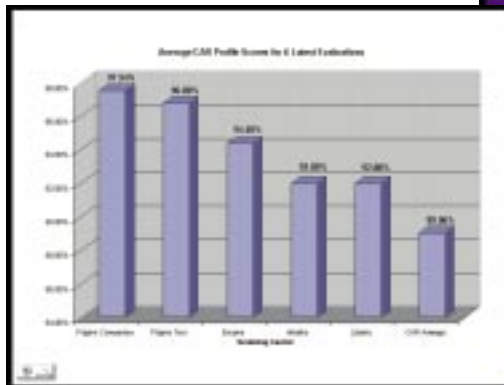
sure the audience understands Pilgrim’s essential message: Pilgrim Insurance outperforms the competition.

When designing the new charts, a decision had to be made about how the background should look. At right is an example of the same chart with two very different looks: one with a conservative purple background, the other with a checkerboard design that plays off the taxicab aspect of Pilgrim’s business.

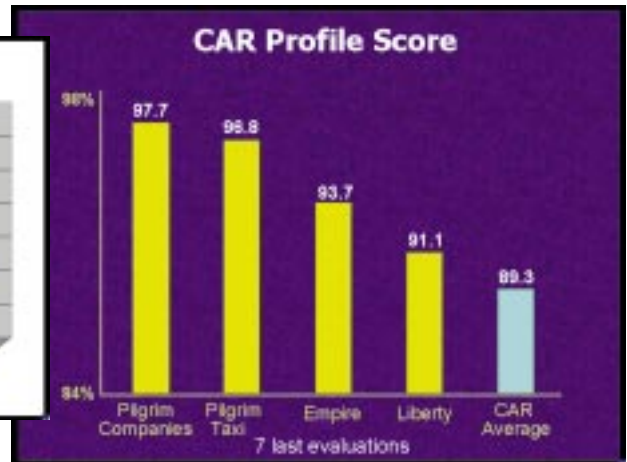
The deep purple background is classic and simple. It contains a little bit of texture, but that’s about all. The black-and-yellow checkered look suggests automobiles and action and adds an element of whimsy to the presentation. In real life, Pilgrim Insurance chose the purple, but wanted to have a yellow cab zip across the screen on the first and last slide.



## EXAMPLE 1: Build a bolder, simpler chart

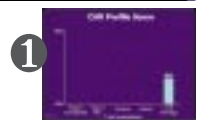


**BEFORE:** This chart was imported from Excel. While they may be nice to look at, 3D bars can be confusing because some people read the front of the bar and some read the back. For precision and clarity, 3D isn’t always the best choice.



**AFTER:** Notice that we made the “CAR Average” a different color to emphasize how much better Pilgrim is performing by comparison.

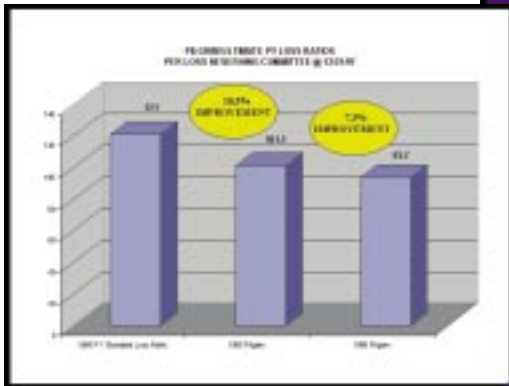
**THE BUILD:** The blue “CAR average” is the first element on the screen. Then “Liberty” and “Empire” (Pilgrim’s primary competitors) appear together using WIPE UP (from CUSTOM ANIMATION). Then “Pilgrim Taxi” uses a WIPE UP, followed by “Pilgrim Companies.” The company’s story is told concisely with Pilgrim’s bars soaring past the competition.



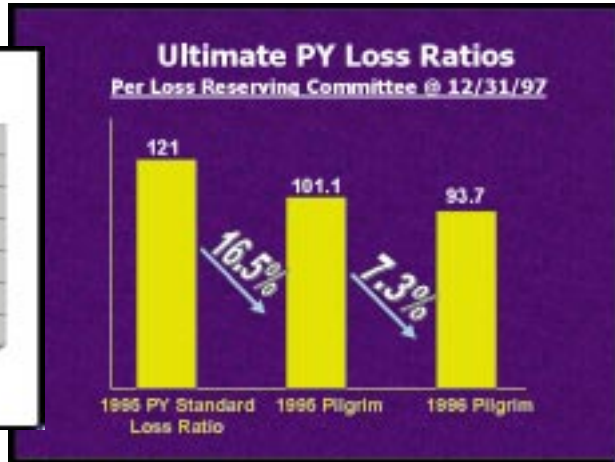
### Get your presentation critiqued free!

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: Make the numbers tell a story



**BEFORE:** This Excel chart has an important story to tell, and that story could be much easier to understand and appreciate. As with the first example, the 3D effect — among other things — gets in the way.

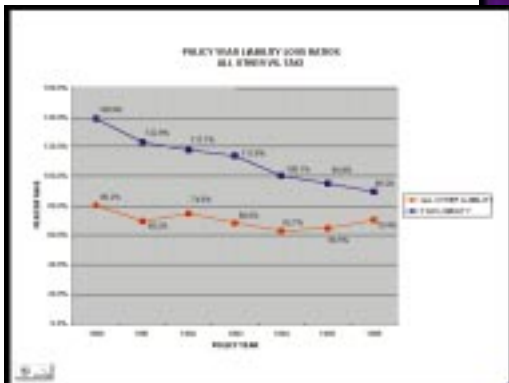


**AFTER:** There's a crucial story to tell here in the declining loss-ratio numbers, but for maximum impact the statistics need to be broken down and presented sequentially. In this case, it is much more effective to reveal the statistics one by one and connect them with an arrow that reinforces the key message.

**THE BUILD:** First, the "1995 PY Standard Loss Ratio" WIPES UP, followed by "1995 Pilgrim." The story gets interesting when "16.5%" WIPES DOWN, illustrating how impressively Pilgrim has beaten the standard loss ratio. To continue the story, "1996 Pilgrim" WIPES UP and the "7.3%" arrow WIPES DOWN, showing how Pilgrim has beaten its own 1995 record.



## EXAMPLE 3: Break out important information



**BEFORE:** This chart also comes from Excel. It includes lots of numbers — are always a challenge in charts. Notice also that the legend is backwards from the colors, adding further confusion.



**AFTER:** The original chart had too many numbers to show all at once. The chart's story is that the numbers have gone down. To make the percentages stand out, we put them in a box. Otherwise, they must compete with the lines on the chart.

**THE BUILD:** "138.9 and "113.6" APPEAR. Then "18%" ZOOMS IN. Next we go to the bottom trend line, where "80.2" and "68" APPEAR first, then "15%" ZOOMS IN. After that, "89.2" APPEARS and "21%" ZOOMS IN. Finally, "70.4" APPEARS, then "-4%" ZOOMS IN.





Claudyne Wilder

# Simplify and organize your information for better slides

*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.*

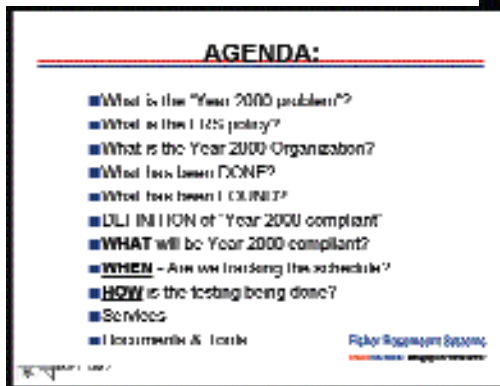
*Assisting Wilder is presentation design and training consultant Jennifer Rotondo, 770.421.9867, rotos@mindspring.com.*

Fisher-Rosemount Systems Inc. has developed close to 100 presentations on different subjects ranging from corporate meetings to product/services overviews. About 90 percent of its presentations are given electronically and the company's commitment to presenting is evident from its state-of-the-art presentation facility, where it hosts more than 300 customer visits yearly.

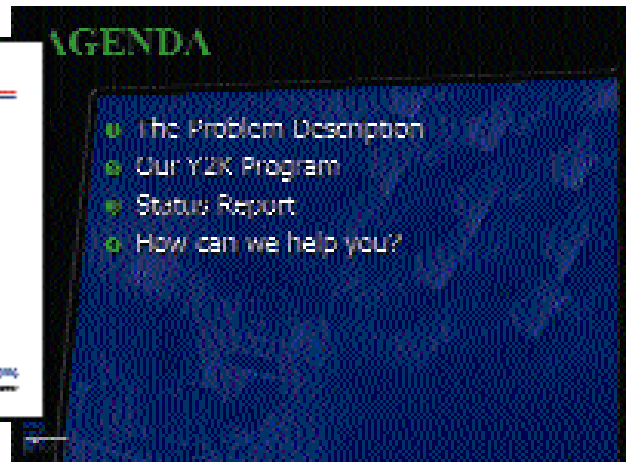
Fisher-Rosemount wanted to add a new look to its presentations with a different background. The background, created using Photoshop, is made up of three images: brushed steel, a keyboard and two co-workers. To make all of them the same color, we colorized them (in Photoshop: IMAGE to ADJUST to HUE/SATURATION, click the COLORIZE box under the SAVE button, then slide the HUE tab to

the left toward the blues). The company also wanted to learn how to cut down on the busy details in some of its slides. One of the questions we repeatedly asked company representatives was, "How can this information be chunked into groups?" Their answers helped us decide how to restructure the agenda and the flow chart.

## EXAMPLE 1: Be specific



**BEFORE:** This agenda is too long. Audience members take one look at all those bullet points and inwardly groan — not the best way to start a presentation. Also, it doesn't look as though the presenter has organized the information in any meaningful way. It just looks like a laundry list of information.



**AFTER:** We shortened the agenda so that the audience isn't overwhelmed. We numbered agenda points so the presenter can say, "Here is my agenda. Before I start, let me say a word about No. 4." Numbering the points makes it easy for the presenter to point them out and discuss them.

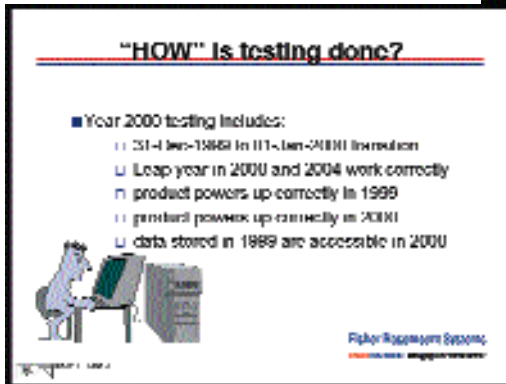
**THE BUILD:** There is no build. The presenter doesn't want to discuss each one, so there is no need to build them. Rule of Thumb: Don't build points unless you plan to say a sentence or two about each point you build.

## Get your presentation critiqued free!

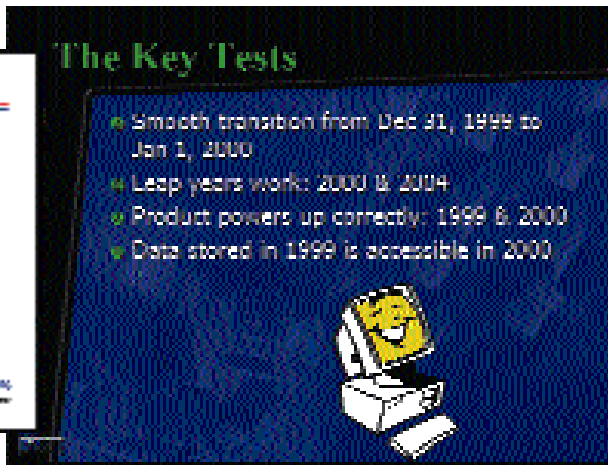
Do you have a presentation that falls flat or blends into the crowd? It may simply need an injection of energy, organization or individuality.

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: Eliminate redundancy



**BEFORE:** This slide's title doesn't fit with the content. Also, some words appear more than once in the slide. Rule of Thumb: Space is limited, so try to keep words from appearing more than once on the same slide.

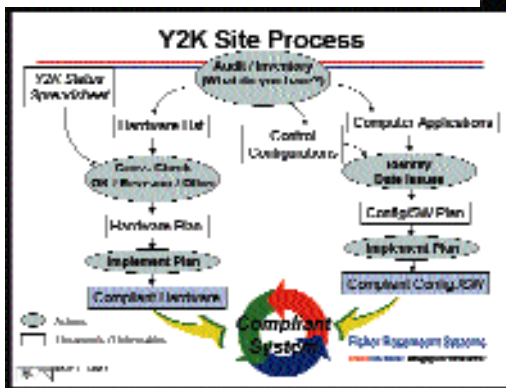


**AFTER:** We made the title more accurate and listed the tests as simply as possible.

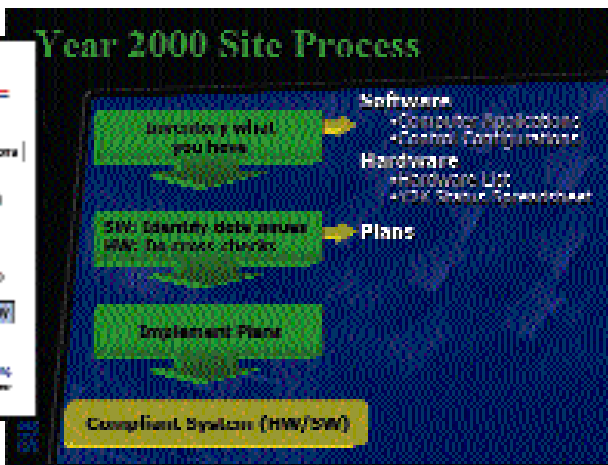
**THE BUILD:** Each of the four points WIPES RIGHT. Finally, the computer with the yellow screen ZOOMS IN FROM CENTER.



## EXAMPLE 3: Break down busy charts

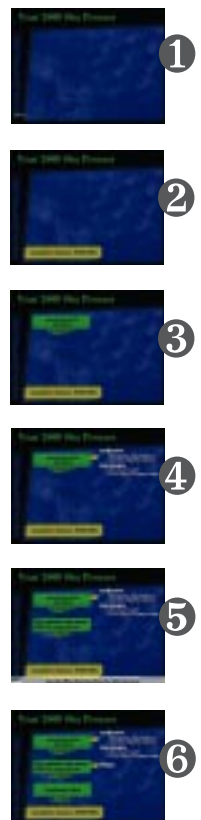


**BEFORE:** This flow chart is too busy. There are circles, squares, different colors and a lot of redundancy in the text. Basically, the hardware and software process is much the same. This chart makes the process look more complicated and confusing than it really is.



**AFTER:** We simplified the process as much as possible. We combined the hardware and software into one process to look clearer and more organized. Also, we eliminated all the different-shaped boxes and circles, and replaced them with block arrows from the Autosshapes menu of PowerPoint.

**THE BUILD:** First, the goal stated at the bottom — Compliant System (HW/SW) — SWIVELS and the presenter starts the story by discussing the goal. Then "Inventory" WIPES DOWN. The yellow arrow then WIPES RIGHT and the text APPEARS. Next, "Identify date issues" WIPES DOWN, the yellow arrow WIPES RIGHT and "Plans" APPEARS. Finally, "Implement Plans" WIPES DOWN.





Claudyne Wilder

# Reduce clutter and verbiage to simplify your slideshows

*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.*

**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.

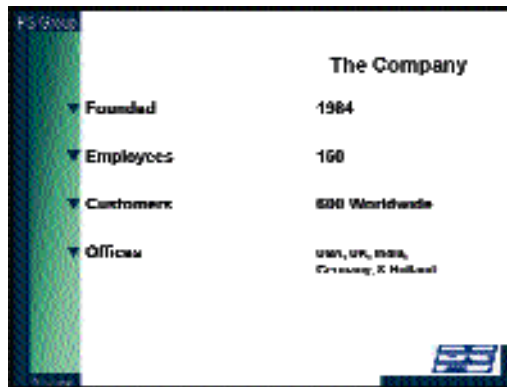
When we changed the background, we took off the words *PS Group* because they were cluttering the screen. The PS logo in the bottom corner is enough to identify the company, plus the audience is reminded where the presenter is from.

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.

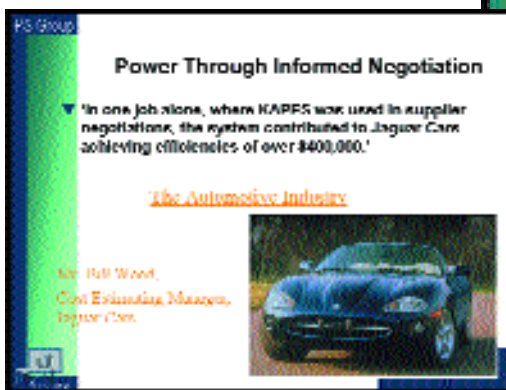
**THE BUILD:** Build these bullets only if the presenter is planning to talk about each item.

## 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

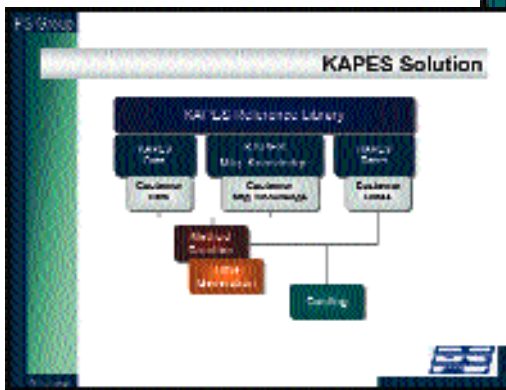


**BEFORE:** This slide has too many colors and no central point of focus. This was the shortest quote the company provided, but we would have preferred a shorter one. With quotes, the shorter the better; you don't want your audience to spend a lot of time reading them.

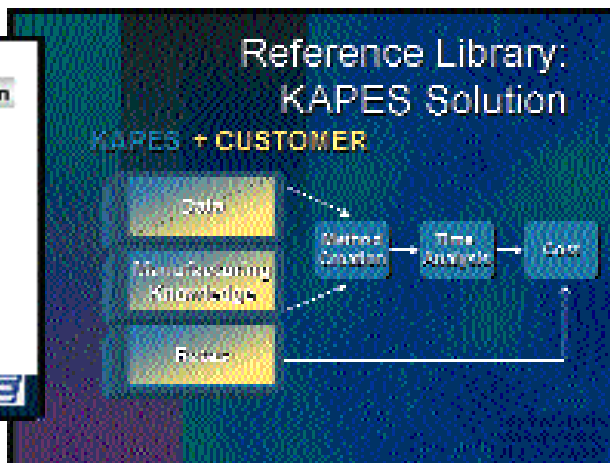


**AFTER:** The photo is now in the center and we made it a bit bigger. The title has been shortened and moved up to leave more room on the screen. The placeholder for many of the titles is too low on the screen, so we moved it up in the master to give us more room for photos and diagrams. The quote has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





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.*

*Co-writer Jennifer Rotondo is a "new media" consultant specializing in electronic presentations. She teaches her own Advanced Power-Point Design Seminar. Contact her in Atlanta at 770.421.2476, rotos@mindspring.com., or visit www.creativemindsinc.com.*

# For a more professional look, choose better colors and fonts

**R**obert Oxley is a trainer and consultant for firms and individuals in the kitchen and bath industry. Oxley customizes his own presentations, but realizes that to reflect the degree of professionalism he wants, his slides could use an upgrade.

Throughout this particular presentation, Oxley used many graphics, but they didn't match the message as well as they could. In Example 1, we tried to emphasize

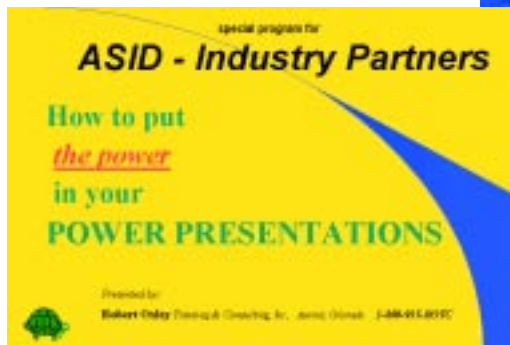
the human aspect of Oxley's training and consulting business, as well as give Oxley's name a brand-like quality that it didn't have before. And in examples 2 and 3, the central message of the slides — process and preparation — was hiding in the small type. We retitled both slides, using as few words as possible to hit the core message.

The presentation also needed more consistency in the fonts and color scheme. Oxley's previous

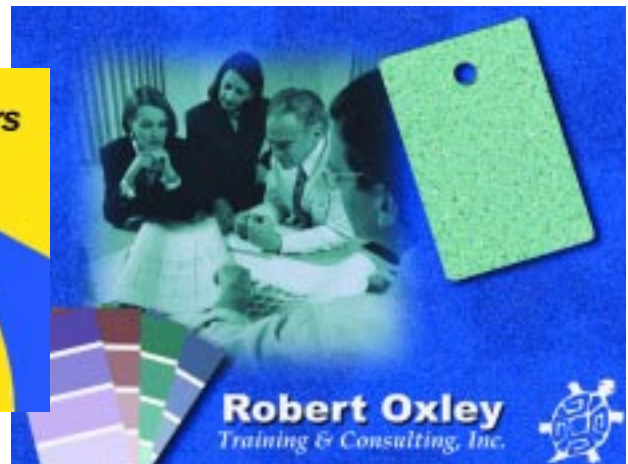
color scheme didn't match his message as well as it could, and he tended to use too many fonts, which makes the slides look a little busy.

We improved both by introducing a different color scheme and choosing one main point — Oxley's consulting expertise — to focus on. With that and a little Photoshop image manipulation, we were able to give Oxley's slides a much more sophisticated and effective look.

## EXAMPLE 1: Match colors to presentation



**BEFORE:** This screen contains too many words, too many fonts and too many different colors. Consequently, the message isn't clear.



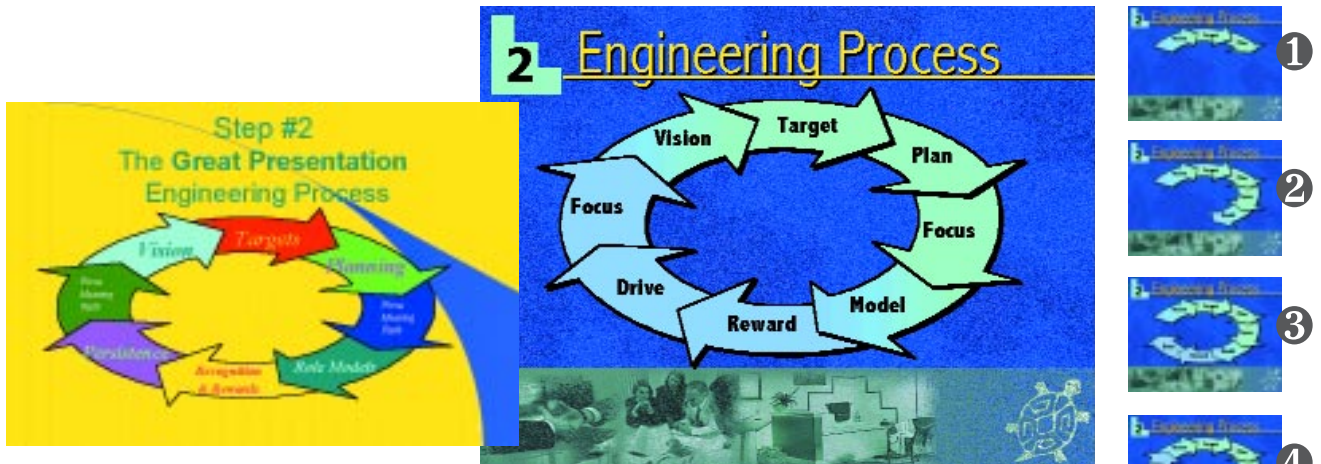
**AFTER:** We selected a calmer color — blue — to fill the main background area, then used green as a stimulating accent color. We scanned in color swatches and the countertop sample, then used stock photography to represent design professionals. The colors of the countertop and color swatches were chosen specifically to keep the color scheme within the same hue. We also colorized the stock photograph in Photoshop. Here's how: OPEN the image in Photoshop and select IMAGE to ADJUST to HUE/SATURATION, then click the check box for COLORIZE and slide the HUE bar to the right and the SATURATION bar to the left.

### Get your presentation critiqued for 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: De-clutter your message



**BEFORE:** Using different colors and font sizes for each process is confusing. It makes some elements in the process look more important than others, which may not be the case. The arrow colors also clash, and the background is so bright that it competes with, instead of enhances, the message.

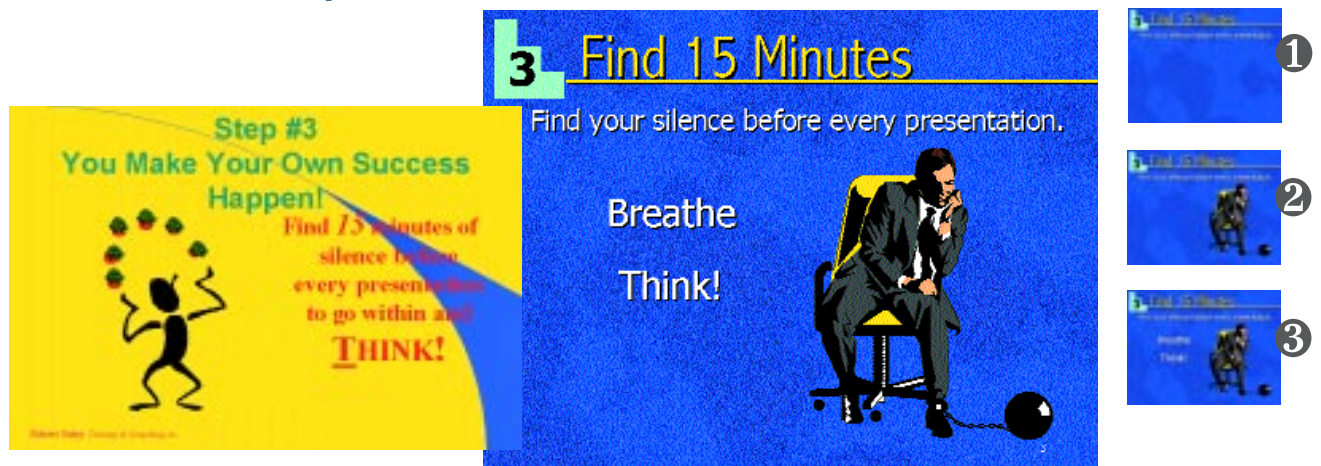
**AFTER:** To portray this as a process, we used colors that blend into each other. We simplified the process by choosing single words to describe it. We also changed the font to Abadi, which takes up less room. This made it easier for the words to fit into the arrows.

The arrows were clip art from the original presentation. First, we UNGROUPed the clip art in PowerPoint to convert it to a Microsoft Office drawing. This allowed us to manipulate each individual arrow. We also simplified the color of the arrows, which places more emphasis on the information as a whole. The title, too, has been shortened, and we used a graphic to represent the step number.

Note: This is the background for the rest of the presentation. We used the photo from the cover and added two others. We colorized each, just as we did on the cover, then created a dissolve band to draw the attention from the photos to Robert Oxley's logo in the lower right-hand corner.

**BUILD:** 1) *Vision, Target and Plan* WIPE RIGHT. 2) *Focus and Model* WIPE DOWN. 3) *Reward and Drive* WIPE LEFT. 4) *Focus* WIPES UP.

## EXAMPLE 3: Get to the point



**BEFORE:** This screen's message is to find a quiet place and think before giving a presentation, but the clip art suggests that speaking is a frantic juggling act. Also, the message *Find 15 minutes* goes over the background and isn't framed effectively.

**AFTER:** In addition to condensing the verbiage, we felt the presenter could add some humor here, thus the executive with the ball and chain. Here the presenter can say, for instance, "Force yourself to take time before your talk. Even if it means chaining yourself down for 15 minutes." For a change of pace, we also took off the pictures at the bottom and made our figure as large as possible.

**BUILD:** 1) *Find your silence before every presentation* is on the screen. 2) The man with the ball and chain CRAWLS RIGHT. 3) Finally, *Breathe and Think!* SPLIT VERTICAL OUT.



Claudyne Wilder

# Computer slides, easy-to-print overheads really *can* coexist

*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.*

*Co-writer Jennifer Rotondo is a new-media consultant specializing in electronic presentations. She teaches her own Advanced PowerPoint Design Seminar. Contact her in Atlanta at 770.421.2476, rotos@mindspring.com., or visit www.creativemindsinc.com.*

## The client

Gene is the value engineering officer for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in St. Louis. He prepared this PowerPoint presentation for the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Sacramento, Calif. The objective of his presentation was to persuade the NRCS to conduct an engineering study on some of its projects.

Gene is in the habit of using overheads for many of his presentations. But when choosing background colors, he tends to opt for white because it makes printing transparencies that much faster

and easier. Though this is often an expedient solution, it does not always result in dynamic slides.

For this presentation, Gene needed a background that's easy to print out, in case he has to use overheads. At the same time, he also wanted a background that would look good in a computer-based slideshow. Our goal was to create a background that could serve both purposes.

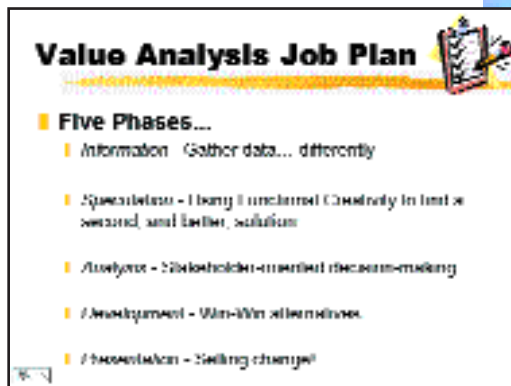
## Two presentations in one

To create a background that was both easy to print and easy on the eye, we started with a simple back-

ground design. We decided to use a background with an environmental feel because of the nature of the organization to which Gene was presenting. PowerPoint's Whirlpool background did the trick.

We also needed to include some white space to allow for the use of overhead transparencies, if necessary. To do this, we created a white rectangle for the bulleted text on the slide master. Then we inserted two long, thin rectangles where the white meets the background, which makes the white rectangle look like an inset. (See Example 2.)

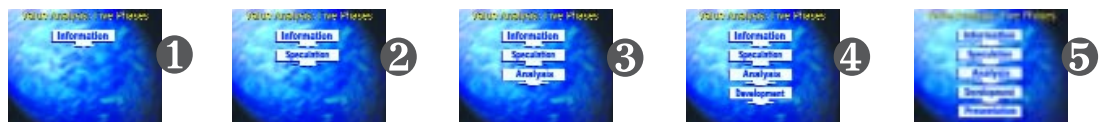
## EXAMPLE 1: Use builds to add interest



**BEFORE:** Because Gene is describing a process here, this is an ideal situation for a build. Only the phase names should be shown. The rest can be verbalized.



**AFTER:** To make this screen stand out, we replaced the white background with PowerPoint's Whirlpool design. To create the arrows, we used a block arrow from AutoShapes, gave it a shadow, then used one of the WordArt designs for the words.




**BUILD:** We decided to play with the builds on this one, making each one different: 1) *Information* SWIVELS. 2) *Speculation* CRAWLS FROM LEFT. 3) *Analysis* CHECKBOARDS DOWN. 4) *Development* uses FLY FROM BOTTOM-RIGHT. 5) *Presentation* ZOOMS OUT. If Gene finds himself speaking to a conservative audience, he has the option of making all the phases WIPE DOWN.

## EXAMPLE 2: Show, don't tell

**Function Analysis - the heart of the Value Methodology**

- What does this device do?
- Don't call it by its name!
- Use a verb-noun definition.

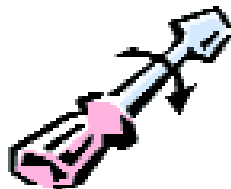


**BEFORE:** This screen should illustrate the point of not calling an object by its name, but using a noun/verb definition instead. Whenever you have the opportunity, it is better to *show* than to *tell*. Also, the green square doesn't really enhance the transfer-torque device (otherwise known as a screwdriver).

**Function Analysis discovers...**  
The Other Solutions to a Problem

"What else will accomplish the required function?"

- Verb-noun description (transfer torque (to enable a screw to hold objects together))
- Other functional uses
  - Stir point
  - Pop-nail
  - Dig hole
  - ?



**AFTER:** To communicate the value-engineering approach to problem-solving, we made the heading simpler and gave an example. It is now easy to understand how other solutions can be arrived at by breaking down an object's function into verbs and nouns.


**BUILD:** 1) "What else will accomplish the required function?" APPEARS. 2) The screwdriver image DISSOLVES. 3) Verb-noun description bullet point WIPES DOWN.



## EXAMPLE 3: Two slides in one

**Analysis Phase**

- Keep the Stakeholder in mind. Do you really understand their needs?
- Which solutions offer the best combination of operational effectiveness, quality and life-cycle savings?
- First identify and rank the criteria, then rank the alternatives.



**BEFORE:** The important information is buried in the text and the slide doesn't illustrate how the analysis phase fits into the overall process.

**Information**

- Process
  - Identify the criteria
  - Rank the criteria
  - Prioritize the alternatives
- Questions
  - Which solutions offer the best combination of operational effectiveness, quality and life cycle savings?
  - Does the solution meet Stakeholder needs?

**Speculation**


**Analysis**

**Development**

**Presentation**

**AFTER:** We want the audience to see how the phase being discussed relates to the four other phases, so we put the phase diagram on the left. The phase under discussion is colored yellow; the others remain light blue. If Gene wants to print overheads, he can use the white-box option we have built into the slide master and it will still look good. So, essentially, he has two presentations in one.

**BUILD:** 1) The phase diagram is on the screen, minus the phase that is being discussed. 2) *Analysis* SPIRALS in. 3) The bullet phrases WIPES DOWN. 🗑️





Claudyne Wilder

# Reader's suggestion makes numbers more meaningful

*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.*

*Co-writer Jennifer Rotondo is a new-media consultant specializing in electronic presentations. She teaches her own Advanced Power-Point Design Seminar. Contact her in Atlanta at 770.421.2476, rotos@mindspring.com, or visit www.creativemindsinc.com.*

In the August 1998 issue of *Presentations*, we suggested some changes to a presentation made by Pilgrim Insurance to Commonwealth Automobile Insurers. One of our readers, Howard Rohm, recently wrote with some suggestions of his own. We liked them so much we decided to share them with you.

Rohm is management support systems director for Highland Technology Services Inc.

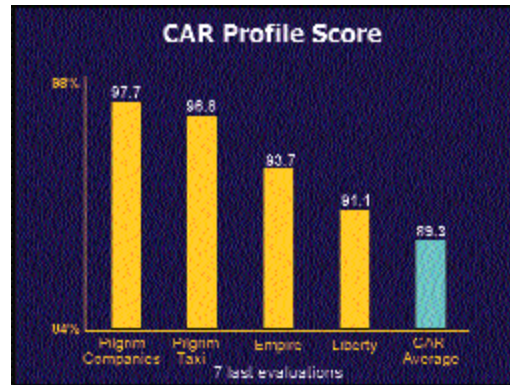
What we like most about Rohm's approach is his creative way of looking at the information contained in our slides.

"The goal of analytical charts should be to turn data into information, so giving readers a summary or conclusion in the title is usually a good idea," Rohm writes. "I re-titled the charts to give readers a 'bottom line.' This is especially important in a sales pitch. Once Pilgrim leaves the client's office, the charts need to be self-explanatory, so that others who did not see the presentation can judge the merits of Pilgrim's proposal as well.

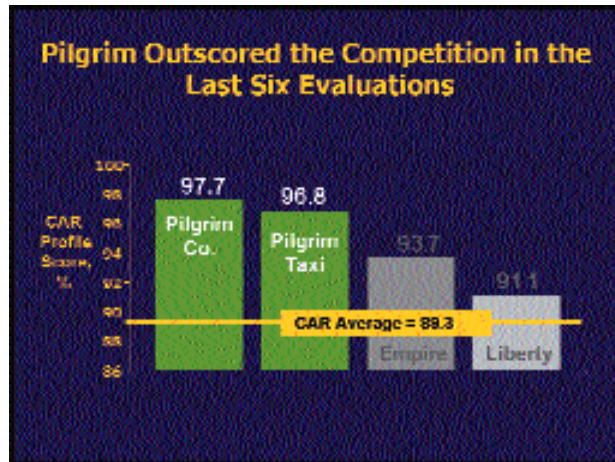
"The charts should convey a 'We're the best option' message for Pilgrim," he continues. "If every chart in the presentation communicates that message, Pilgrim's chances of coming out on top are that much better."

Here, our original suggestions appear as the "Before" slides, and the revised slides based on Rohm's suggestions appear as "After" slides.

## EXAMPLE 1: Colors emphasize, separate



**BEFORE:** In the August 1998 "Before & After" column, we chose to make *CAR Average* a different color to emphasize Pilgrim's high rating relative to the auto-insurance industry.



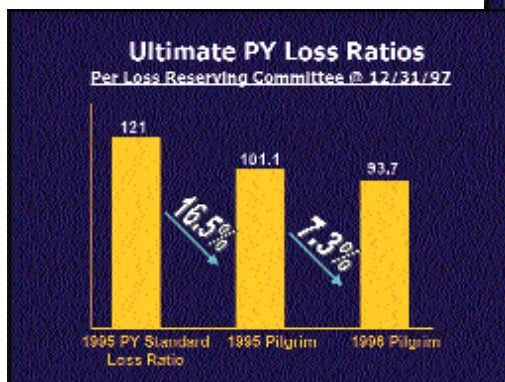
**AFTER:** "Color can be used to highlight Pilgrim's performance and de-emphasize the performance of the competition, as can text placement and font choice," Rohm says. He suggests adding colors to the graph to separate Pilgrim from competitors Empire and Liberty. "Pilgrim Co. and Pilgrim Taxi are part of the same family; Empire, Liberty and CAR Average are not."

Rohm then separates the CAR Average value from the others by turning it into a horizontal line. "CAR Average is not a company; it's an industry average of all companies combined," he says.

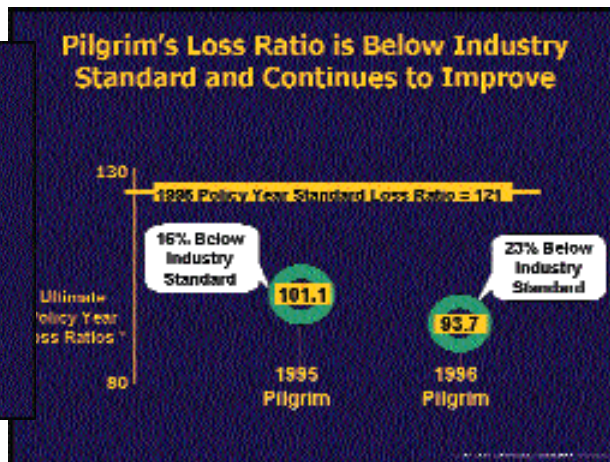


**THE BUILD:** 1) CAR Average APPEARS. 2) Empire and Liberty APPEAR. 3) Pilgrim Taxi WIPES UP. 4) Pilgrim Co. WIPES UP.

## EXAMPLE 2: Represent the average separately



**BEFORE:** There's a crucial story to tell in Pilgrim's declining loss-ratio percentages. In our August column, we suggested illustrating this story by connecting the bars with arrows that emphasize the drop.

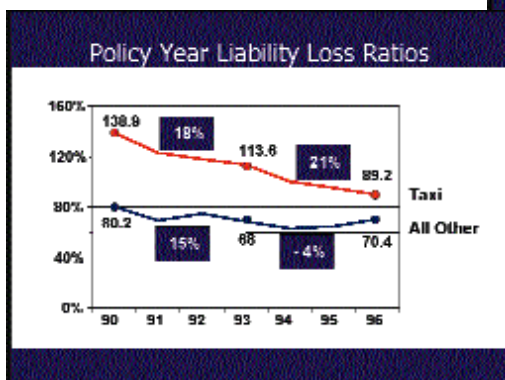


**AFTER:** Here, again, Rohm suggests representing the average value as a horizontal baseline rather than another bar because 1995 Policy Year Standard Loss Ratio is an industry average, not another company.

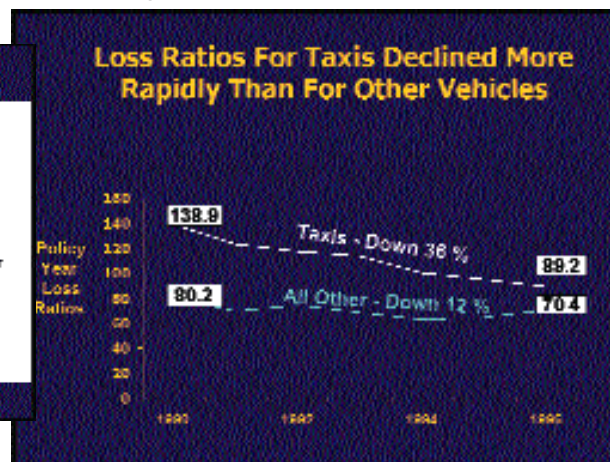
Rohm also suggests getting rid of the downward-sloping percentage arrows, since these have a negative connotation at first glance.

**THE BUILD:** 1) 1995 Policy Year APPEARS. 2) 101.1 and 1995 WIPE DOWN. 3) 16% WIPES RIGHT. 4) 93.7 and 1996 WIPES DOWN. 5) 23% Below WIPES RIGHT.

## EXAMPLE 3: Simplify numbers for clarity



**BEFORE:** To illustrate Pilgrim's declining loss ratios, we used a line graph and broke out the important information in easy-to-read boxes.



**AFTER:** Rohm agrees with this approach, but suggests ways to make the message even clearer. First suggestion: Eliminate the data points because they aren't essential.

His second suggestion is to eliminate raw percentages in favor of phrases that spell out the key message. "Don't force people to struggle with a new numbering convention," he says. Make the chart as easy to understand as possible.

**THE BUILD:** 1) 138.9, Taxis - Down 36% and 89.2 are GROUPED, then WIPE DOWN. 2) 80.2, All Other - Down 12% and 70.4 are GROUPED, then WIPE DOWN. ■



Claudyne Wilder

# Drug awareness presentation wakes them up with style

*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.*

*Co-writer Jennifer Rotondo is a new-media consultant specializing in electronic presentations. She teaches her own Advanced Power-Point Design seminar. Contact her in Atlanta at 770.421.2476, rotos@mindspring.com, or visit www.creativemindsinc.com.*

**G**ary Loar is a prevention specialist with the School Board of Polk County, Fla. He works at the Mark Wilcox Center, an assessment facility where students land when they violate the district's zero-tolerance drug policy. One of Gary's jobs is showing parents how they can prevent their children from smoking marijuana. When presenting to parents, his objective is to teach them constructive ways to discourage their children from using drugs.

When we looked at Gary's presentation, we noticed he didn't spend enough time giving parents specific, concrete ideas. In eight out of 10 of his slides he was informing parents about why children use marijuana and how they

get it. Only two illustrated what parents can do. We felt that at least half of his slides needed to be devoted to prevention ideas.

In this presentation, the nature of the topic gave us room to do some unusual things. In most presentations, you want to use the same background throughout. In this case, however, we completely changed the background part way through the presentation.

The first segment of the presentation covers marijuana and how it affects people; the second segment is about prevention. When Gary shifts to prevention ideas, we thought, it would be appropriate for the look of the presentation to change as well.

We also decided this presentation could use some sound. Sound is rarely appropriate in a business presentation, but this talk seemed to beg for something different. Most parents probably assume that this sort of presentation will be dull and boring. So why not wake them up at the beginning with some sound?

## EXAMPLE 1: Wake 'em up



**BEFORE:** This slide is too hard to read in all caps. Plus, in Gary's build, he made each point dim to white after he discussed it. These points are important, though, so the audience should be able to see them the entire time. Otherwise, they aren't memorable.

**AFTER:** We had fun with this slide, which is one of the first ones in the talk. Each parental role builds using the BOX OUT animation, and a different sound punctuates each one. The sounds are intended to be humorous. For instance, the cash register "cha-ching" used with the word *banker*. Our goal with this slide is to wake up the parents a little and get them into a good mood, even though the discussion topic is difficult.



**SOUND BUILD:**  
Lawyer: WHOOSH  
Banker: CASHREG  
Door Mat: GLASS  
Butler: DRUMROLL  
Mechanic: CAR BRAKE  
Fairy Godmother: CHIMES  
Apologist: RICOCHET

## EXAMPLE 2: Use a clear time line

**"IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE I SHOULD KNOW?"**

**- CAUSES ACCIDENTS**

Metabolite:	Approximate Length of Time in Plasma:	Cause:	Cause: Visual, Mental, & Motor Impairment:
THC:	7-8 hours	Yes	Yes
OH-THC:	4-6 hours	Mild, if any	Yes
C-THC:	3-6 days	No	Yes

**BEFORE:** Here, Gary showed the effects of marijuana use over time, but he shifted mid-stream from hours to days, making the information more difficult to follow.



**AFTER:** This slide is an ideal place to use a time line. We kept the actual time in hours, rather than switching to days, so that the comparison would be more direct.

**THE BUILD:** 1) The time line appears on the screen; 2) *Visual, mental, motor impairment* SWIVELS; 3) *Giggles, Slurred Speech* WIPES RIGHT; 4) *Sweet Munchies* WIPES RIGHT; 5) *Impaired Judgment, Accident* WIPES RIGHT; 6) *70s* ZOOMS IN slightly, the *X* SPIRALS IN.



## EXAMPLE 3: Make the most of key points

**AS PARENTS, HOW CAN WE PREVENT USE OR INTERVENE**

- \_ TALK TO THEM ABOUT DRUGS
- \_ STAY UP WHEN THEY COME HOME
- \_ RANDOM DRUG SCREENS
  - ⊗ URINE SCREEN
  - LOW THRESHOLD
  - IF POSITIVE, GET A NUMBER
  - ⊗ HAIR TEST
  - 90-DAY WINDOW

**BEFORE:** Next, Gary was going to tell the parents what to do, but he bunched too many of his key points on one slide.

**Talk To Your Children...**

- ◆ Make statements:
  - ◆ Marijuana can ruin your G.P.A.
  - ◆ Marijuana is more harmful than tobacco for cancer risk.
  - ◆ Marijuana leads to harder drugs.
- ◆ Ask questions:
  - ◆ What's hard about saying "no"?
  - ◆ What do your friends who use it say to you?
  - ◆ How do you think it could affect your future?

**AFTER:** We changed the background so that parents know Gary is now talking about proactive measures. We designed it so the background comes up blank at first, except for the words *Talk To Your Children...* . This gives Gary an opportunity to make a verbal transition as well.

**THE BUILD:** The build here is very simple. We did CUSTOM ANIMATION using STRETCH FROM LEFT, and grouped the build by paragraphs.

- 1) *Make statements* and the bullet points under it STRETCH FROM LEFT.
- 2) *Ask questions* and the bullet points under it also STRETCH FROM LEFT. 📺





Claudyne Wilder

# Top-drawer slideshow fits the bill for top-dollar trainer

*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.*

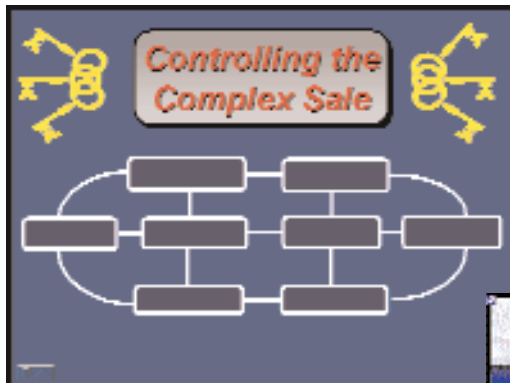
*Co-writer Jennifer Rotondo is a new-media consultant specializing in electronic presentations. She teaches her own Advanced Power-Point Design seminar. Contact her in Atlanta at 770.421.2476, rotos@mindspring.com, or visit www.creativemindsinc.com.*

Rick Page is the founder and president of The Complex Sale Inc., which provides training and methodology for sophisticated sales strategies. Rick wanted to enhance a two-day workshop to match the needs of his client — a large corporation that makes large sales.

Rick's presentation zeroed in on six "keys" to help a salesperson make a big sale — a process that would otherwise be complex and confusing. His content was very structured and well organized for this training session, but he needed fancier graphics and a consistent background. He also needed to learn how to use slide animations when giving examples and explaining theory.

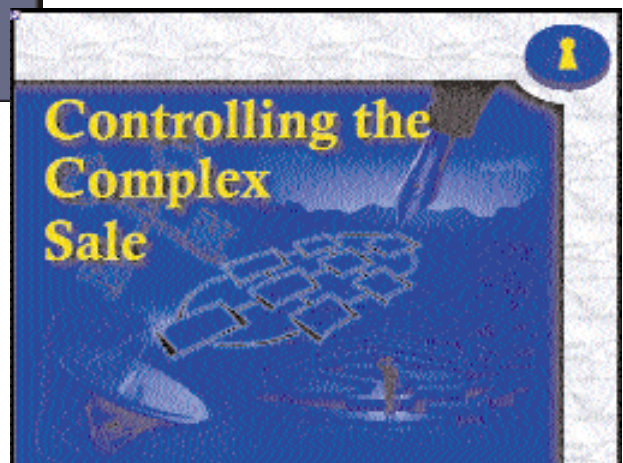
To accomplish this, we began by creating a new background for Rick's slideshow. Then we used Photoshop to create some customized images, and gave some of his old slides a new conceptual spin — a look that is at once more graphically sophisticated, simpler to understand and ultimately more persuasive when it comes time to close that big deal.

## EXAMPLE 1: Create a 'look'



**BEFORE:** This slide needed a new look — a better way to display the concept of Rick's six "keys." Here, the focal point was Rick's chart-like company logo, not his message. To graphically represent the slide's message, we needed to de-emphasize the logo.

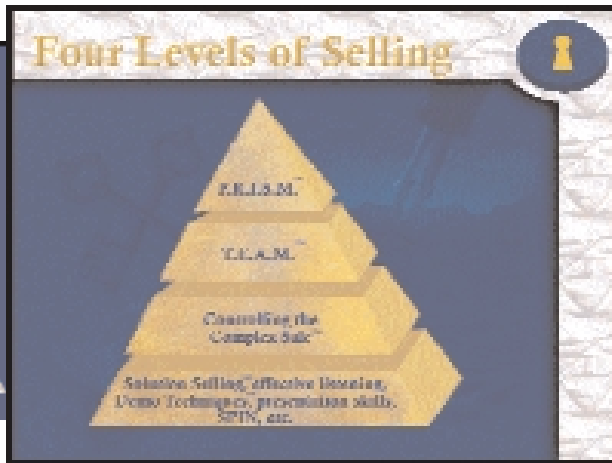
**AFTER:** Every company needs a "look," so we first turned our attention to the background of Rick's slides, selecting visuals from the main points of his presentation. The man looking over the maze represents how confusing a large sale can be for a salesperson; the keys in the corner represent Rick's six keys to a complex sale; the satellite dish represents another concept Rick discusses in his presentation. In the center is The Complex Sale's logo, drawn with a fountain pen. We framed this center piece with an outside border filled with a subtle pattern.



## EXAMPLE 2: Update stale graphics



**BEFORE:** In a somewhat dated-looking graphic, this pyramid represented three levels of selling. The importance of the arrow wasn't defined, and we thought that the pyramid lacked depth and the colors should be more inviting. In any case, Rick's concept had expanded to *four* levels of selling, so the pyramid had to be redone.

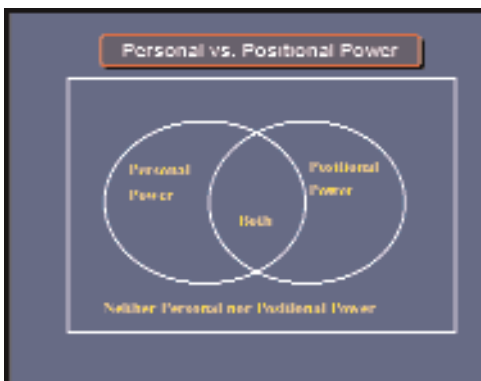


**AFTER:** We enhanced the graphics in Photoshop, first importing the pyramid from PowerPoint's clip-art gallery, then copying the art to Photoshop, applying filters, and importing it back into PowerPoint. You'll notice we took the arrow off as well. The information on the arrow distracted from the slide's main point (the pyramid) and was something we thought would be better presented orally, not visually.

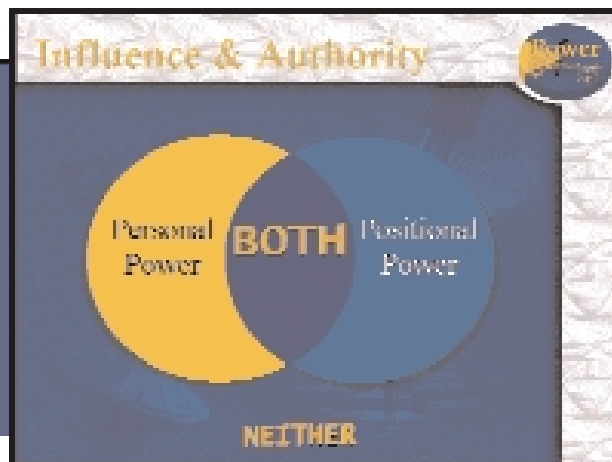


**BUILD:**  
The entire pyramid WIPES DOWN. (For step-by-step direction in Photoshop, see [www.creative-mindsinc.com](http://www.creative-mindsinc.com).)

## EXAMPLE 3: Use bolder, better fonts



**BEFORE:** Conceptually, the graphic makes the point, but it needed to be more powerful and easier for the eye to comprehend. As it was, the main point was buried, and the image seemed transparent because it had no fill. Furthermore, using a sans-serif font for some of the text would make it easier to read.



**AFTER:** We kept the graphic simple, but added colors to each circle. The piece where the colors intersect became darker to symbolize their merging. To ensure the circles were the same size, we created one circle and copied and pasted it, then moved the circles until they overlapped in the center. Finally, we selected both circles and aligned them from the top; DRAW, ALIGN OR DISTRIBUTE, then ALIGN TOP. We drew the center piece using the Freeform tool: AUTOSHAPES, select LINES and then FREEFORM. The text *BOTH* and *NEITHER* are 3D WordArt with a drop shadow. In the top right corner, we put a key to tell attendees that we were now discussing the *Positional Power* section. ■



**BUILD:**

1. *Positional Power* WIPES LEFT.
2. *Personal Power* WIPES RIGHT.
3. The center piece DISSOLVES. *BOTH* ZOOMS IN SLIGHTLY.
4. *NEITHER* APPEARS.



Claudyne Wilder

# A compelling story beats a mountain of facts every time

*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.*

*Co-writer Jennifer Rotondo specializes in designing and creating multimedia presentations. She also teaches a one-day Advanced PowerPoint Design seminar. Contact her in Atlanta at 770.421.2476, rotos@mindspring.com, or visit www.creativemindsinc.com.*

**A**coustic Dimensions is a firm in Addison, Texas, that specializes in acoustical design and audiovisual technologies. Its team of consultants advises people involved in the design of performing-arts centers, stadiums, religious facilities, recording studios and screening rooms on how to use sound and lighting to full advantage. But the presentation we saw, which they primarily use for sell-

ing to churches, needed a bit more variety in its look and feel.

Most of the time, staff members say, their clients know what Acoustic Dimensions is and what it does. But potential clients often need to be reminded of the breadth and depth of the company's experience to appreciate the possibilities the firm has to offer.

The "Before" presentation was solid in many ways, and included

some wonderful photographs. But its pictures and text needed to be integrated into the presentation's key points. We ended up showing Acoustic Dimensions how to tell a compelling story — the story of how it turns a client's visions into reality — not just share the hard facts. A good presentation isn't only photos and charts, it's a narrative that should contain all the elements of a good story.



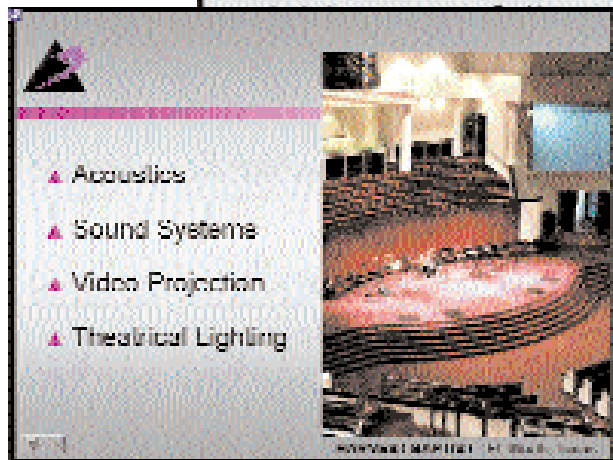
**EXAMPLE 1:**

## Open with a photo

We liked Acoustic Dimensions' original look and retained it in the "After" version. The background slide stays up on the screen before the start of the presentation, letting people know they're in the right room. When the presenter is ready to start, the *What we do* points appear.

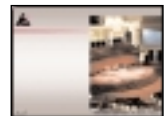


**BEFORE:** This staff directory, one of the first slides the audience sees, is not a motivating way to start a presentation. The audience doesn't know these people. Even if the presenter explains how important these individuals are to the business (even with arrows to give the illusion of movement), it makes more sense to introduce the company itself before introducing the staff.

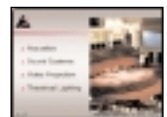


**AFTER:** We start with pictures and stories about what Acoustic Dimensions does so the audience can relate. Right from the beginning, the presenter is telling the story of how the company works with clients. This helps lay the foundation for what follows.

**THE BUILD:**



1) The picture of the interior of the Harvest Baptist Church ZOOMS IN, along with the words *HARVEST BAPTIST*. Now the presenter can talk about the church and about the acoustic and lighting needs the company met.



2) *Acoustics, Sound Systems, Video Projection and Theatrical Lighting* STRETCH FROM LEFT, providing a visual reminder of exactly what Acoustic Dimensions did for the church.



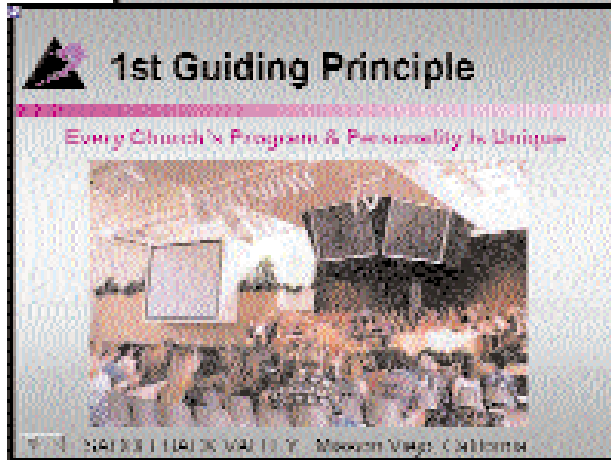
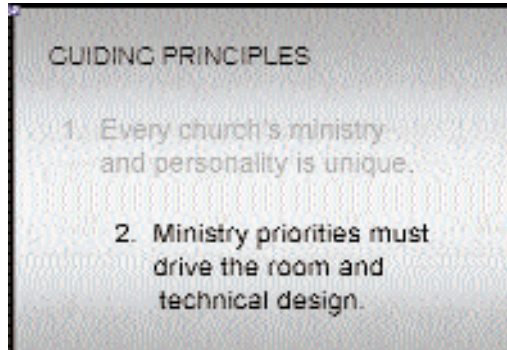
**EXAMPLE 2:**

## Link the story to something real

**BEFORE:** The text is big, but we wanted to make the most of the opportunity to clearly illustrate each of the *Guiding Principles*. These principles need to come alive by being linked to some real projects.

**AFTER:**

A good presenter can explain how each project was actually carried out — as here, with the first *Guiding Principle*.



**THE BUILD:**

1) *1st Guiding Principle* and *Every Church's Program...* are onscreen.



2) The photo and *SADDLEBACK VALLEY ZOOM IN*.



3) Because one of the church's unusual aspects is its music ministry — Saddleback's services vary from rock to classical to gospel to mellow jazz — and because Acoustic Dimensions' sound system was designed to accommodate this, the presenter can play some of the music here, then talk about the system's design.

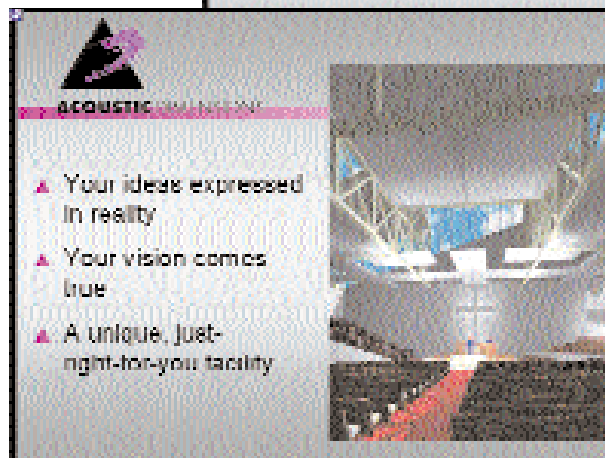
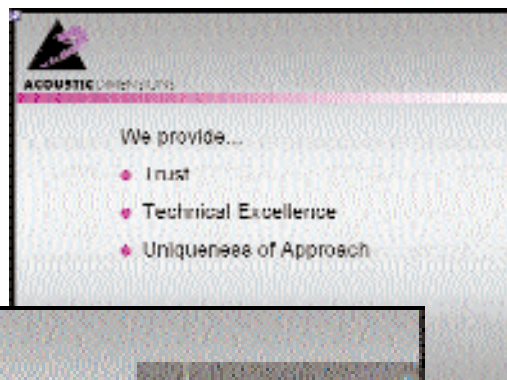


**EXAMPLE 3:**

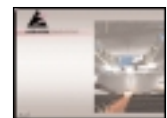
## A happy ending never hurts

**BEFORE:** The original ending didn't engage the audience's emotions. We wanted a close that stated what benefits a prospect could expect — and took the opportunity to showcase another of the company's gorgeous pictures.

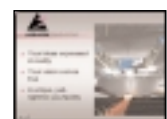
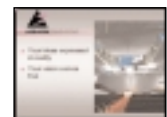
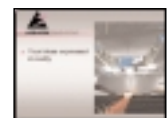
**AFTER:** Now we state how the client will benefit when it hires Acoustic Dimensions, with a picture that says it all, guaranteeing a happy ending.



**THE BUILD:**



1) The picture is onscreen.



2) Each of the points *STRETCH FROM LEFT*.



Claudyne Wilder

*Claudyne Wilder is a professional speaker and co-author of Point, Click & Wow! A Quick Guide to Brilliant Laptop Presentations. She teaches the seminar "Winning Presentations: Development, Design and Delivery With Confidence." Contact her in Boston at 617.524.7172, claudyne@quik.com, or visit www.wilderpresentations.com.*

*Co-writer Jennifer Rotondo specializes in designing and creating multi-media presentations. She also teaches a one-day Advanced PowerPoint Design seminar. Contact her in Atlanta at 770.421.2476, roto@mindspring.com, or visit www.creativemindsinc.com.*

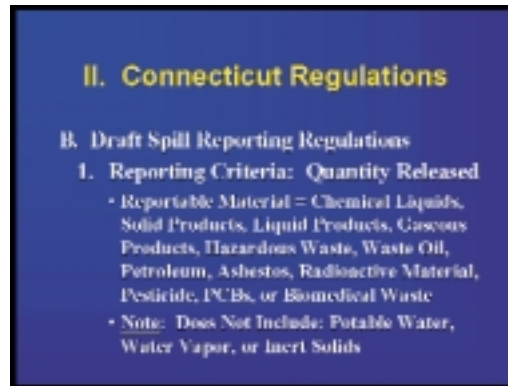
# These environmental issues demanded concise treatment

Presenting technical information well is always a challenge, but it can sometimes be vital to a community's health and safety. In this month's PowerPoint seminar we look at a hydrogeology company in Connecticut that needed to inform state industries about what to do in case of toxic spills. HRP Associates is required by Connecticut law to explain state and federal regulations to its clients. It does so in straightforward terms, giving real-life examples and paraphrasing and simplifying the law's extremely technical language.

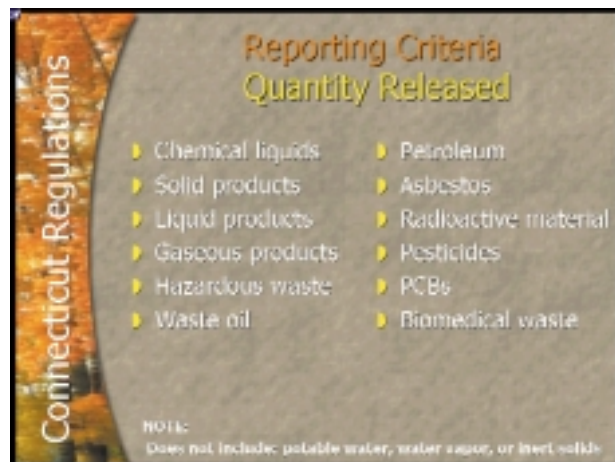
HRP Associates, founded in 1982, specializes in environmental and civil engineering. With a professional staff of more than 80, the company offers twice-yearly training seminars on a variety of environmental-compliance topics, all with a PowerPoint component. But the company felt that the format and design of its presentations had become redundant and routine. Nearly all featured white or yellow titles on a standard dark-blue background, with few graphics — an industrial-strength look without much appeal.

We suggested a few text changes to make HRP's "Introduction to Environmental Regulations" seminar easier to understand. For instance, we made each slide's main point into its title, rather than a generic heading such as "Example #1." (We created a slide bar to use when the example number had to be included.)

## Make slide titles as specific as possible



**BEFORE:** In HRP's original presentation, state environmental regulations took up seven slides — each titled *Connecticut Regulations*. Here, the list of materials takes the form of a long, difficult-to-read sentence.



**AFTER:** We retitled the slide to indicate its main point, reportable materials, and made the list easier to read and see — viewers can quickly glance at each one. Another boost to easy reading: We capitalized only the first letter of the first word after each bullet.



**BUILD:**  
We animated the audience's attention.

1) The title WIPES RIGHT.



2) The list of *Reporting Criteria* APPEARS, first on the left ...



3) ... then on the right.



4) Finally, the note at the bottom APPEARS.



**5. Example #1**

- During unloading, a truck spills 10 gallons, or approximately 125 pounds, of trichloroethylene onto an outside concrete pad at a manufacturing facility. This pad contains no cracks and the spill was cleaned up within one hour. Who should this release be reported to?
  - a. NRC
  - b. SERC
  - c. LEPC
  - d. All (a-c)
- Note: RQ is 100 lbs, not a

**AFTER:** We set up the truck-spill situation in bullet form, making it quicker and easier to read. We debated putting the answers inside a picture of a truck, but instead we opted for a simple, clean look.

**Truck Spills Trichloroethylene**

- 125 pounds (10 gals)
- Outside on concrete pad at a manufacturing facility
- Pad contains no cracks
- Spill cleaned up within one hour
- Note: RQ is 100 lbs, not an EHS

Who should this release be reported to?

**A) NRC B) SERC C) LEPC D) All E) None**

## Sometimes, simple is better

**BEFORE:** The slide's title, *Example #1*, didn't illuminate its main point. And the description of the truck spill was a little difficult to read. The answers, however, were easy to see.



### BUILD:

- The title, *Truck Spills*, WIPES RIGHT.
- 2-3) The situation text PEEKS FROM LEFT, grouped by first-level paragraphs so that each bullet point comes up separately. This way the presenter can discuss each point as it appears.
- 4) The question DISSOLVES.
- 5) The presenter clicks again, and the answer choices ZOOM IN.

## Organize your flowcharts

**BEFORE:** The title, again, needed to make the main point clear. The flowchart was easy to read, but organizing it differently would make it easier for audience members to understand what they needed to do and when they needed to do it. The slide also needed to emphasize that these behaviors were not optional, but crucial to obeying the law.

**5. Example #3**  
Release Reporting Under CERCLA  
40 CFR Section 302.6

```

    graph LR
      A[Release] --> B[Hazardous Substance]
      B --> C[That equals or exceeds a Reportable Quantity (RQ)]
      D[From a Vessel or Facility] --> E[Into the Environment]
      E --> F[Within a 24-Hour Period]
      C --- G[=]
      F --- G
      G --- H[Notify NRC Immediately]
      G --- I[And]
      G --- J[Publish Notice in Local Newspaper]
  
```

**Release Reporting Under CERCLA**  
40 CFR Section 302.6

- Hazardous substance release into environment
- Equals or exceeds a reportable quantity
- From a vessel or facility

Notify NRC Immediately

Within 24 Hours

Publish Notice in Local Newspaper

**AFTER:** We took the flowchart's elements and concentrated on the most important ones for the three boxes. The audience didn't need to know every single possible event.



### BUILD:

- The title WIPES RIGHT.
- The three boxes on the left WIPE DOWN one at a time; the three lines WIPE RIGHT, and *Within 24 Hours* ZOOMS IN.

The *Notify NRC* and *Publish Notice* text blocks ZOOM IN together. ■



Claudyne Wilder

# Creating a visual story can punch up even the driest text

*Claudyne Wilder is a professional speaker and co-author of Point, Click & Wow! A Quick Guide to Brilliant Laptop Presentations. She teaches the seminar "Winning Presentations: Development, Design and Delivery With Confidence." Contact her in Boston at 617.524.7172, claudyne@quik.com, or visit www.wilderpresentations.com.*

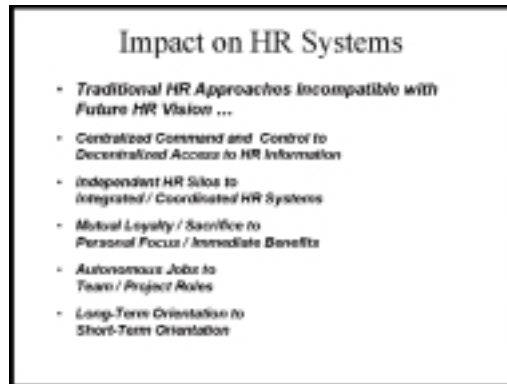
*Co-writer Jennifer Rotondo specializes in designing and creating multimedia presentations. She also teaches a one-day Advanced PowerPoint Design seminar. Contact her in Atlanta at 770.421.2476, roto@mindspring.com, or visit www.creativemindsinc.com.*

**P**resenters frequently find themselves having to take dry content and make an interesting, animated presentation that sells the product or the message. This month, we'll focus on how to transform text slides into something audiences will remember with pleasure.

We worked with Levy & Associates, a company in Providence, R.I., that sells a compensation software program, HRCompass. The program is designed to help human-resources professionals meet the challenges of the organization of the future. To sell it, Bob Levy had to give a 40-minute talk to 50 HR directors. He gave us the text; we created a presentation that was varied in its look and animation.

We found ourselves focusing particularly on the background of the slides. It's generally good advice to consider the whole presentation — the subject, the ideas, the audience — before you design (or redesign) the background. We started with the look of another background that the client found appealing, then redesigned it in Adobe Photoshop to meet our needs. We opted for a simple look with lots of space, because we needed room to show screen captures. We also saved a place on each slide to showcase the name of the agenda item: a black box in the top right corner. Because this box is embedded in the background, it isn't visible when slides are printed in pure black-and-white. We wanted the box to show up, so, on the slide master, we drew a black-outlined box around the black square. Now, when the slide prints, there is a border around the text.

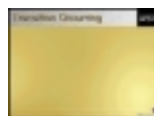
## Add tables for variety



**BEFORE:** The text in this example compares a traditional HR approach with what should be its response in the future. Text that compares elements such as time or products can often be made more interesting by converting it to a table.

	Present	Future
HR Information	Centralized control	Integrated access
HR Functions	Independent	Integrated
Employee Focus	Mutual loyalty Sacrifice	Personal focus Immediate benefits
Jobs	Static	Dynamic
Orientation	Long-term	Short term

**AFTER:** We quickly created a simple table with rectangles. First, we copied and pasted four identical rectangles and distributed them evenly. To distinguish between rows, we alternated between light- and dark-yellow SEMITRANSSPARENT colors. Next, we used the text tool to type in all the categories, aligning each column to the left. Finally, we added a line to separate the categories from the information. To animate the chart, we grouped each row together.



**BUILD:**  
1 The title  
WIPES RIGHT.



2 Present and Future WIPES RIGHT; the vertical line WIPES DOWN; HR information WIPES RIGHT.



3 Each succeeding row WIPES RIGHT on a mouse-click.

## HRCompass® Overview

- **HRCompass® Modules**
  - Job Descriptions
  - Internal Job Evaluation
  - External Market Pricing
  - Job Information Directory
  - Organization Cost Analysis
  - Others in Development

## Graphics work to separate content

**BEFORE:** Here, the text describes the software program's six modules, which we intended to illustrate with screen captures. We needed a graphic that separated the screen captures from each other, giving the presenter the chance to talk about each module.



### BUILD:

1 As a new module is introduced, the slide shows the modules already discussed.

2 On a mouse-click, this new module's shape STRIPS RIGHT-UP for emphasis.

**AFTER:** We based our graphic on a six-pointed asterisk. At first, the points of the star are empty squares; they filled in as Levy discussed each module. The outlined box around *Organization Cost Analysis* indicates that this is the module under discussion. We designed the rectangles so that even when the slide is printed in pure black-and-white, the current module stands out.

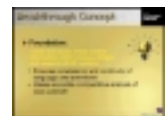
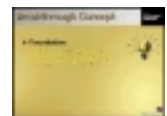
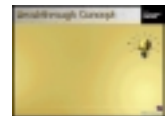


## HRCompass® Overview

- *How does it work?*
- Cornerstone .. coded data bases of job content information underlies all HR systems
- Ensures consistency and continuity of language and definitions
- Makes accurate comparative analysis of jobs possible

## Icons illuminate the text

**BEFORE:** Levy & Associates had a lot of information to convey, so we had a lot of text slides like this one to design. Our task became to find a way to vary these slides' look, and to appropriately use pictures. We also needed to decide when and where to build the text (have it appear bullet by bullet on a mouse-click), and when to have it appear all at once. To avoid tedium, we tried to build elements only when there was a lot for the presenter to say about each level.



### BUILD:

1 The grouped rays around the light bulb automatically BOX OUT.

2 The first bullet point and sub-points WIPE RIGHT; the definition under the bullet CHECKERBOARDS ACROSS.

3 Then, each sub-bullet WIPES RIGHT. ■

## Breakthrough Concept

### ► Foundation:

coded data bases of job content information which crosses, bridges and supports all HR systems

- Ensures consistency and continuity of language and definitions
- Makes accurate comparative analysis of jobs possible



**AFTER:** We substituted *Breakthrough Concept* as a more informative title than *Overview*, using a light bulb to get across the concept of an innovative idea. To make it more interesting, in the animation we ungrouped the light bulb, grouped the rays around the bulb together, then grouped all the elements of the bulb together. We also felt that the information under *Foundation* was a definition of sorts, so we put it in a different color. For the sub-bullets underneath this, we decided to build the text.



Claudyne Wilder

*Claudyne Wilder is a professional speaker and co-author of Point, Click & Wow! A Quick Guide to Brilliant Laptop Presentations. She teaches the seminar "Winning Presentations: Development, Design and Delivery With Confidence." Contact her in Boston at 617.524.7172, claudyne@quik.com, or visit www.wilderpresentations.com.*

*Co-writer Jennifer Rotondo specializes in designing and creating multimedia presentations. She also teaches a one-day Advanced PowerPoint Design seminar. Contact her in Atlanta at 770.421.2476, roto@mindspring.com, or visit www.creativemindsinc.com.*

# Use theme-oriented design to avoid the dreaded 'data dump'

Seasoned presenters know that the underlying theme of a presentation essentially dictates its content and design. This means that every slide needs to enhance and expand upon a central theme. For the San Bernardino County (Calif.) Social Services Group, the underlying theme was, "Yes, you can take a test and pass. Here's how."

The county's original instructor-led presentation was intended to prepare social services personnel for the civil-service testing process, helping them gain a competitive edge. The course was put online for students who couldn't attend in person, as well as staff members working in remote locations. But it's hard to avoid making a slide presentation into a "data dump" rather than a theme-oriented talk. For every slide, the designer needed to ask, "Will this information be relevant to my audience?" And, "Does my audience need to know this for me to accomplish my objective — or am I just confusing listeners with excess data?"

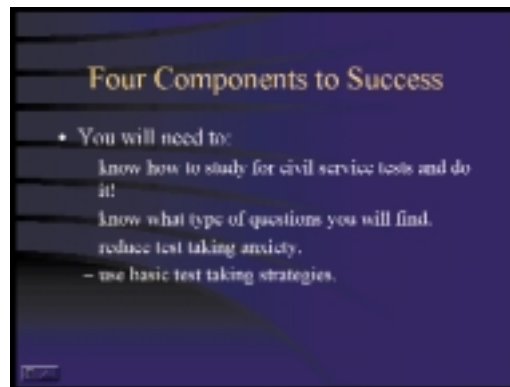
We began by reducing the number of slides and the amount of unnecessary information. If more information was needed, we suggested that it be included in notes to the speaker and user. That way, those who grasp the information can quickly proceed through it. Adding audio might be another solution — but, in this case, we couldn't assume that all users at remote sites had sound cards in their computers.

Here you can see the three backgrounds we designed for this presentation. The one with the arrow that reads, "You can suc-

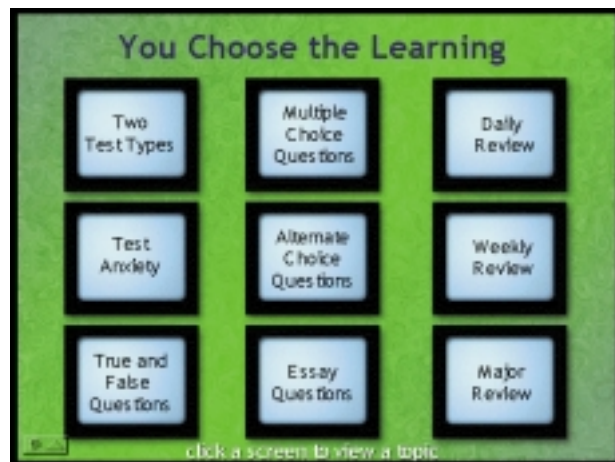
ceed!" reinforces the central theme, reducing the test anxiety of the person reading the presentation. The plain green background is used for slides with a lot of information, such as the one

headed, "You Choose the Learning." The green and white background ("You Pass the Test") adds even more variety to the slide design.

## Let the user control the agenda



**BEFORE:** This slide gives the agenda for the presentation. Because it's supposed to stand alone (there usually isn't a human presenter), we wanted to liven it up and give the viewer more control.



**AFTER:** Instead of introducing a basic linear presentation, we emphasized interactivity. The user can navigate to different parts of the presentation by clicking on the slide's "TV screens." This approach has a better chance of relaxing the reader. (When someone gives this talk live, he or she can jump from this slide to different points of the presentation.)

To set up the hyperlinks, we created boxes around each TV screen with no fill color and no line color. Then we selected SLIDE SHOW → ACTION SETTINGS and used the MOUSE CLICK tab. We selected the radial button HYPERLINK TO, then clicked the DOWN arrow. Finally, we clicked on SLIDE to choose the destination of the hyperlink.

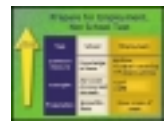
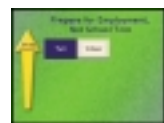


### Academic versus Pre-employment Tests

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Academic tests:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>are usually standardized for efficiency</li> <li>measure Achievement</li> <li>are prepared for by relearning and being familiar with the lesson objectives</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pre-employment tests:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>are usually standardized for efficiency and cost</li> <li>measure Aptitude (your ability to do the job)</li> <li>are prepared for by knowing the "nuance" of the institution</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
---	---

## Use a table to emphasize what's important

**BEFORE:** This slide summarizes everything on the previous six slides — *lots* of information. Having to absorb all the different types of tests might well make a test-taker nervous, which is not the point of this module.



**BUILD:**

1 The first two rectangles, headed *Test* and *School*, are grouped together, and they WIPE RIGHT. The third rectangle, *Employment*, DIS-SOLVES automatically.

2 Each succeeding row appears, using the same effects.

**AFTER:** Using rectangles, we combined the information into a table. We differentiated each column by color and used animation to add emphasis to the most important part, the Employment test.

The background and arrow were created in Photoshop using Metacreations Eye Candy 3.0 for the swirling effect and shadow levels.

### Prepare for Employment, Not School Test

You can succeed!

Test	School	Employment
Questions measure	Knowledge of facts	Abilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Logical reasoning</li> <li>Problem-solving</li> </ul>
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bar exam</li> <li>Driving test</li> <li>Written</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SAT</li> <li>GRE</li> </ul>
Preparation	Memorize facts	Know scope of exam

### Test Anxiety and Test Scores

Average range scores

Your place in the range depends on the average scores of the people tested in your group.

This is commonly called a bell curve.

It is situated precisely in the middle of the range.

Test scores: Fail scores | Average average-passing scores

## Give only the information your audience needs

**BEFORE:** The message of this slide is that the test-taker will pass if his or her scores fall within a certain range. This is all the information the viewer needs.



**BUILD:**

1 The first line of text on the bottom WIPES RIGHT.

2 The second line WIPES RIGHT, followed by the bell curve.

3 The third line of text, then the two vertical lines on the curve and the words *Middle Range* APPEAR.

### You Pass the Test

Middle Range

- A postcard tells you your score
- Your score is placed on a bell curve
- If you are in the middle range, you pass

**AFTER:** The builds tell the story.

The new background creates a frame central to the slide's theme. We created the bell curve using the DRAWING tool bar, AUTOSHAPES, LINES and FREEFORM to draw the base line and two burgundy lines. We typed *Middle Range* within the bell curve.



Claudyne Wilder

*Claudyne Wilder is a professional speaker and co-author of Point, Click & Wow! A Quick Guide to Brilliant Laptop Presentations. She teaches the seminar "Winning Presentations: Development, Design and Delivery With Confidence." Contact her in Boston at 617.524.7172, claudyne@quik.com, or visit www.wilderpresentations.com.*

*Co-writer Jennifer Rotondo specializes in designing and creating multimedia presentations. She also teaches a one-day Advanced PowerPoint Design seminar. Contact her in Atlanta at 770.421.2476, roto@mindspring.com, or visit www.creativemindsinc.com.*

# For added flexibility, build around a common theme

Every day, Scott Ransom plays many roles, especially during his presentations. In addition to being an associate professor of obstetrics and gynecology at a prominent college, the doctor is director of an organization devoted to community health programs and the director of Clinical Resource Management for a large integrated health-delivery system.

Whenever Ransom prepares for a presentation, he typically looks through several existing presentations and pulls together a set of slides to suit his purpose.

Although the key points are different for each presentation, his story line — "always consider the service, clinical and cost areas in physician performance" — is essentially the same.

To create a template flexible enough to be used in a number of different situations, we built a slide around Ransom's primary theme and turned it into a background. (Next month we'll show you how we used this themed graphic to vary the background look.)

To make the purple background, we created five paths in

Photoshop, then selected a light and a dark purple color, alternating the foreground to background gradient in each. For most of his presentations, Ransom will start with the first image you see here, which sets the tone. After he explains the significance of the image, he can move on to whatever agenda he likes. Because his presentations all revolve around the same themes, he can develop whatever story line he wants for a given situation and customize his slides to illustrate it, using the same basic format.

## Match shapes to underlying message



### BEFORE:

This image is too flat to illustrate the complexity of how these three areas of health care are linked together. It doesn't give the audience a feel for the nature of what is being discussed.



**AFTER:** We made the gold balls in Photoshop by using the Marquee tool to draw a circle on a new layer. We filled the circle (EDIT → FILL) with gold, then applied a filter (FILTER → RENDER → LIGHTING EFFECTS) and used the Spotlight filter to give the ball a 3D look. We COPIED and PASTED the circle to create the main graphic. Next, we drew an oval on a new layer with the Marquee tool. We created a line around it (EDIT → STROKE) and filled the center with the gold. We then added the purple text and gave the balls and the oval a drop shadow.

### Get your presentation critiqued for 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.



### Three classes of outcomes

- Clinical outcomes
  - medical outcomes: complications and therapeutic goals (includes functional status measures (patient perceptions of medical outcomes))
- Service outcomes
  - satisfaction: patients and families, communities, professionals, purchasers, and employees (includes access issues (e.g. waiting times))
- Cost outcomes
  - just another outcome of a clinical process (includes the cost of the burden of disease)

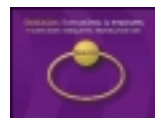
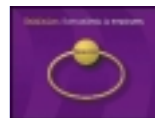
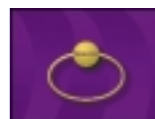
## Give yourself cues, but not too many

**BEFORE:** There is far too much information on this slide, and nothing graphically interesting to draw the eye in.

**AFTER:** The audience has already gotten the big picture; now we break it down. The words themselves act as reminder notes and Ransom has the option of changing these words at a moment's notice, depending on his audience.

### Satisfaction: from patients to employees

▶ Access Issues: waiting times, returned phone calls



**BUILD:**

1 The slide transition to this graphic image is a BOX OUT.

2, 3 Next, the words at the top ZOOM IN FROM SCREEN CENTER.

## Less info = better story

**BEFORE:** The presenter cannot be a storyteller if all of his information appears on the screen at once. Besides, the meaning of the 0-to-100 scale isn't evident on the slide.

### Expert consensus?

"The practitioners, all experts in the field, were then asked to write down their beliefs about the probability of the outcome" ... "that would largely determine his or her belief about the proper use of the health practice, and the consequent recommendation to a patient."

Fig. 1. A Method for Assessing Health Practices & Documenting Practice Policies: The Explicit Approach. Philadelphia, PA: The American College of Physicians, 1992, pp. 14

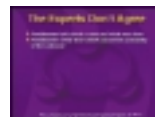
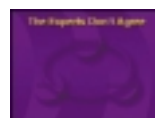
### The Experts Don't Agree

▶ Practitioners told about a case and what was done  
▶ Practitioners wrote their beliefs about the probability of the outcome

Good 0 20 40 60 80 100 Bad

Fig. 1. A Method for Assessing Health Practices & Documenting Practice Policies: The Explicit Approach. Philadelphia, PA: The American College of Physicians, 1992, pp. 14

**AFTER:** We made the title more informative, cut out the words to make the nature of the experiment easier to understand, labeled the 0-to-100 scale, and colored and GROUPED the dots.



**BUILD:**

1 The title PEELS FROM TOP.

2 The experiment and the reference APPEAR.

3 The line, scale and numbers WIPE DOWN.

4 The dots then WIPE UP in groups. ■



Claudyne Wilder

*Claudyne Wilder is a professional speaker and co-author of Point, Click & Wow! A Quick Guide to Brilliant Laptop Presentations. She teaches the seminar "Winning Presentations: Development, Design and Delivery With Confidence." Contact her in Boston at 617.524.7172, claudyne@quik.com, or visit www.wilderpresentations.com.*

*Co-writer Jennifer Rotondo specializes in designing and creating multimedia presentations. She also teaches a one-day Advanced PowerPoint Design seminar. Contact her in Atlanta at 770.421.2476, roto@mindspring.com, or visit www.creativemindsinc.com.*

# Vary slide backgrounds to add flexibility and function

**H**ow do you keep the same feel of a background after changing its look? As we did last month, we're taking a look at presentations from Scott Ransom, who delivers a variety of health-related presentations in his multiple roles as a doctor, college professor, hospital administrator and director of a community health program in Detroit.

Last month, we created a custom background and three themed icons that address common areas covered in Ransom's presentations. Using this themed approach to the icons, Ransom has the flexibility to create different customized presentations using the same basic slide structure. This month, we created three individual slide templates that can be used for different subjects.

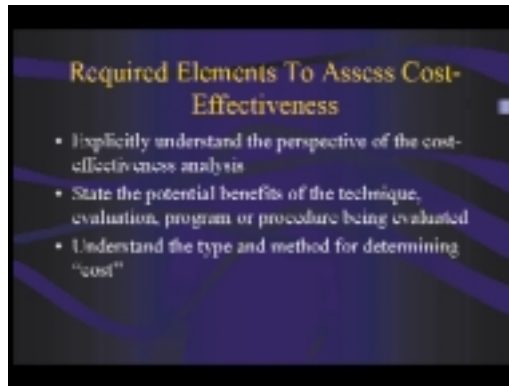
By simplifying the text and using themed icons to organize slides by subject, we created three background looks for Ransom to use: plain, without an icon; one with an icon in its center; and one with a black center. We also gave him separate looks for all slides that list article titles and ones showing photos.

With this variety of slide configurations at his fingertips, it's easier for Ransom to pull together his content. If, for example, he is doing a pre-

sentation on "service," he can quickly organize the slides according to the format that works best, then link them to the "Service" icon. This

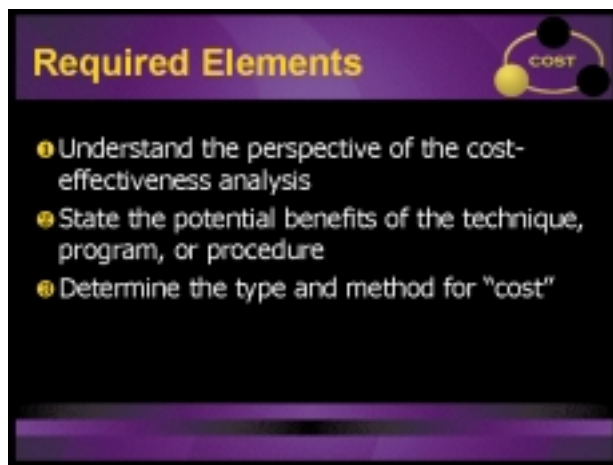
structure provides Ransom a flexible format, within which he can create numerous presentations, depending on his audience and goals.

## Use icons to identify agenda items



### BEFORE:

There are too many words after the bullets, and the title is long.



**AFTER:** Fewer words get the point across faster; we used a themed icon (upper right-hand corner) to highlight the issue of cost. Because the audience can quickly see the slide's focus, we took *Cost-Effectiveness* out of the title. (It's also a good idea to use numbers when discussing requirements, objectives or steps.) For the background, we used a black box in the middle of the slide to display text and diagrams.

## Get your presentation critiqued for free!

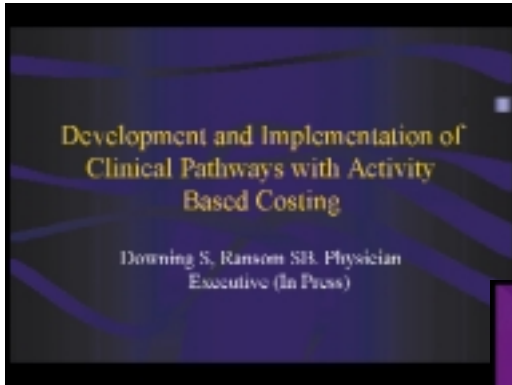
Do you have a presentation (with charts and graphs) that falls flat or blends into the crowd? It may simply need an injection of energy, organization or individuality.

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.



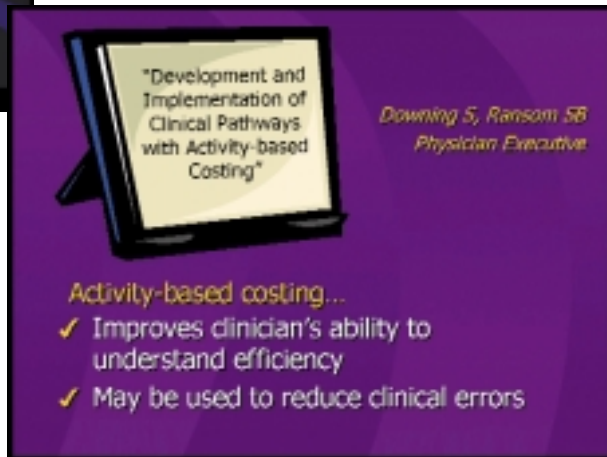
**BUILD:** The bullets WIPE RIGHT, grouped by first-level paragraphs.

## Create an icon for interest



**AFTER:** We created a background that tells the audience that this slide is about an article under discussion, enclosing the article's title in a frame. At the bottom, we list a couple of key points about the article to help the audience (as well as Ransom) remember the reference.

**BEFORE:** Ransom generally begins a presentation by showing the name of an article and its author, then explaining a couple of key points from the article. He uses a slide like this one to jog his memory. In longer presentations, he might show five or six similar "article slides," which are visually uninteresting but important to his presentation nonetheless.

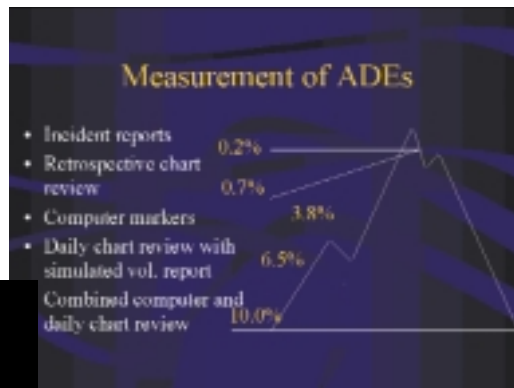
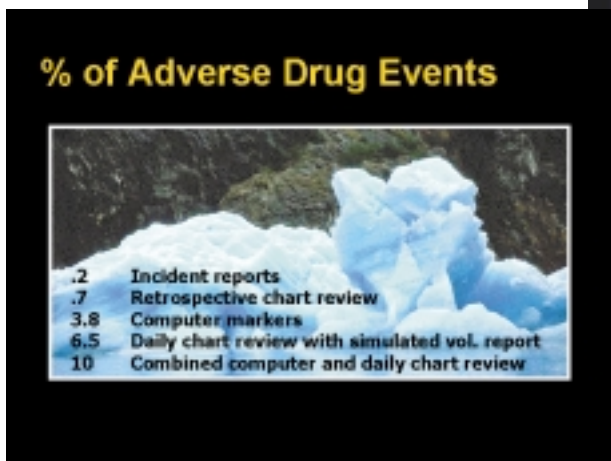


### BUILD:

- 1 With the picture frame on the screen...
- 2 ...the name of the article ZOOMS OUT SLIGHTLY.
- 3 The points ZOOM IN, and the author's name APPEARS.

## Let a photo tell the real story

**BEFORE:** There's an important story here: the high incidence of adverse drug events (the ADEs of the title). But this slide tries to do too much, and a somewhat confusing chart dilutes the story's message.



**AFTER:** Ransom's point was that people hear about only a fraction of the adverse drug events that occur — the tip of the iceberg, as it were. So we varied the slide template a bit: Using an image of an iceberg we found on the Internet at [www.eyeoniceiland.com](http://www.eyeoniceiland.com) (which also gave us permission to print it here), we used PowerPoint's picture toolbar to make it brighter.



### BUILD:

- 1 The title ZOOMS IN over the iceberg picture.
- 2, 3, 4 The percentages ZOOM IN by first-level paragraphs. ■



Claudyne Wilder

*Claudyne Wilder is a professional speaker and co-author of Point, Click & Wow! A Quick Guide to Brilliant Laptop Presentations. She teaches the seminar "Winning Presentations: Development, Design and Delivery With Confidence." Contact her in Boston at 617.524.7172, claudyne@quik.com, or visit www.wilderpresentations.com.*

*Co-writer Jennifer Rotondo specializes in designing and creating multimedia presentations. She also teaches a one-day Advanced PowerPoint Design seminar. Contact her in Atlanta at 770.421.2476, roto@mindspring.com, or visit www.creativemindsinc.com.*

# Two different backgrounds try to have all the answers

This month's column should probably be called "After & After" because it shows how two different backgrounds and templates can transform a presentation. We designed the presentation for answerfriend.com, an Internet startup company in Cambridge, Mass., that builds targeted programs ("answerfriends") to give people expert information on such topics as the weather, wine, allergy medications and so forth. The idea is that, when you need an answer to a specific question, you can go right to answerfriend.com and get it, rather than getting 1,387,297 hits, most of them useless, on a standard search engine. This presentation was designed for the company's pitch to venture capitalists.

Many of our readers ask, "How important is my background, really?" Our answer: It can make or break your presentation. Your background colors and styles send subtle messages to the audience. If you customize your background, you're saying, "My identity is important and I am different from my competitors." Your audience also looks to your background for clues that you know what drives the field. A financial company, for example, doesn't want red in its background, since red ink has negative connotations in the financial world.

The blue-and-green background you see here was chosen because those colors connote wisdom and trustworthiness — good feelings for answerfriend.com to project as it tries to persuade other companies to give it capital. We chose the gold background because it projects a sense of power, prestige and confidence.

## Emphasize the headline

In two versions of the same slide, we numbered each of the three presentation sections to highlight the three ways the company planned to make money; this one shows the profits of advertising on the answerfriend Web site. We highlighted this slide's critical point about cash flow by boxing it with a different colored background. If time constraints don't allow the presenter to talk about the topic in depth, he or she can discuss just the headline. For the build, we experimented with CrystalGraphics PowerPoint Transitions software, using the 3D transition TRANSITIONS II OPEN UP for each of the three ways the Web site might make money from advertisers.



**BUILD:**  
1 Everything  
APPEARS on the  
screen.



2 The *Cash flow*  
line WIPES RIGHT.

## Show off the company

	answerfriend.com	Co A	Co B	Co C
User experience	Excellent	Poor	Poor	Poor
Speed	Fast	Slow	Slow	Slow
Interface	Excellent	Excellent	Poor	None
Scope	Targeted	Broad	Broad	Targeted

	answerfriend.com	Co A	Co B	Co C
User experience	Excellent	Poor	Poor	Poor
Speed	Fast	Slow	Slow	Slow
Interface	Excellent	Excellent	Poor	None
Scope	Targeted	Broad	Broad	Targeted

We designed this table in PowerPoint. We created one rectangle and copied and pasted it three times, using ALIGN LEFT each time. Then we added the words in text boxes, using ALIGN TOP to position the boxes. The two columns on the far left are ALIGNED TOP; the others are ALIGNED CENTER. Finally, we GROUPED each row. To show off how good answerfriend.com will be, we had a gradient-filled box come up over this column after all the information was presented. This prints nicely, and it really makes *answerfriend.com* stand out.



**BUILD:**  
1 The *User experience* line WIPES RIGHT.



2 The next two lines each WIPES RIGHT.

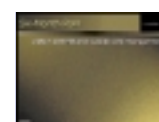


3 The last line WIPES RIGHT, and a BOX OUT comes up behind the *answerfriend.com* column.

## Make your timeline understandable



By building the timeline down and controlling the builds, the presenter can speak for some time about each month's work. We got the arrows from AUTOSHAPES, then added a shadow to them.



**BUILD:**  
1 *Six-Month Plan* and a brief description APPEAR.



2 Each numbered month, and the text to its right, WIPE DOWN. ■



Claudyne Wilder

*Claudyne Wilder is a professional speaker and co-author of Point, Click & Wow! A Quick Guide to Brilliant Laptop Presentations. She teaches the seminar "Winning Presentations: Development, Design and Delivery With Confidence." Contact her in Boston at 617.524.7172, claudyne@quik.com, or visit www.wilderpresentations.com.*

*Co-writer Jennifer Rotondo specializes in designing and creating multimedia presentations. She also teaches a one-day Advanced PowerPoint Design seminar. Contact her in Atlanta at 770.421.2476, roto@mindspring.com, or visit www.creativemindsinc.com.*

# Customizing a background to fit your client's image

For this month's design, we worked with Lagano & Associates, a communications company in Clearwater, Fla. The firm was preparing a proposal for the Tampa, Fla., firm Celotex, which sells commercial and residential building materials. Recognizing the importance of visually dramatic graphics, principal Pam Lagano gave us the text slides, which were created in PowerPoint, and asked us to do some magic.

The background was clearly going to be important, so we considered our options. First, we could make the background represent Lagano & Associates, creating an image they could reuse for other presentations. Second, we could make it represent Celotex, the company to whom they were presenting. Or third, we could create a generic background not connected with either company. We rejected the third option right away, because a sales presentation demands a customized background. Eventually we settled on the second. Even though we could only use the Celotex background once, it was worth it. When you create a look to represent them, clients know you spent time, energy and money on them.

From brochures about Celotex's products and services, we scanned in images to make a photo collage for the opening slide — one that showed the facade of a brick house on one side. For slides without much text, we kept the same house image, but added icons to represent the Celotex product line. For graphic slides, we cut back on the icons

to give us room to display other information.

Throughout the slideshow, we used 3D transitions from CrystalGraphics PowerPlugs software. The TWIRLING DIAMOND effect worked especially well for us, adding interest and a change of pace; see especially our second slide here, under "Use more than words," for an example of this.

## Surprise them at the opening



The original text show didn't include a special opening, so we created one. We began with only the Celotex logo onscreen, nice and simple. Then, as the presenter begins, the screen segues into a collage that illustrates Celotex's business. You could start any presentation by highlighting your prospect's company this way. Or you could emphasize your listeners' interests, perhaps adding a list of reasons to be in the audience.

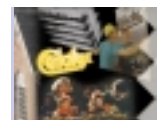
### Get your presentation critiqued for free!

Do you have a presentation (with charts and graphs) 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.



**BUILD:**  
1 The logo  
APPEARS.



**2** The slide's  
transition is  
RANDOM BARS  
VERTICAL.

## Use more than words

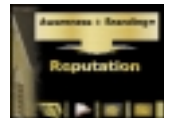


**BEFORE:** These are simply words up on a screen, practically begging for an image to help bring their message home.



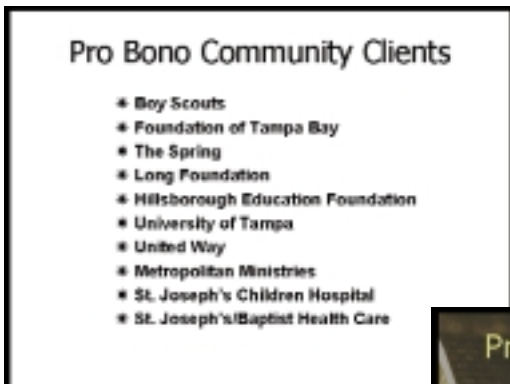
**BUILD:**  
1 The slide uses PowerPlugs' TWIRLING DIAMOND TRANSITIONS II transition.

**AFTER:** No matter what time pressures we're working under, we frequently add an image or picture to a text screen. Here, we used an AUTOSHAPE arrow, then added a shadow underneath it — an easy way to make a slide look more professional, and to avoid the "text only" syndrome.



2 *Awareness + Branding* WIPES DOWN; *Reputation* automatically ZOOMS IN SLIGHTLY.

## Show your lists simply and quickly

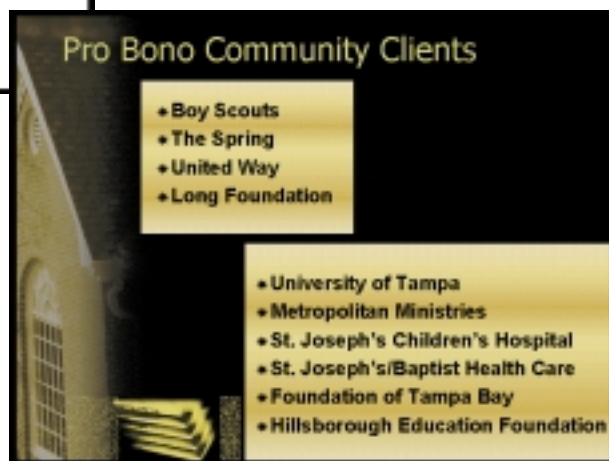


**BEFORE:** Celotex had several long lists of clients that Lagano wanted us to include in the presentation. We didn't want the names flying in from all directions, but we also didn't want them to appear all at once on the screen — that's a lot to have to digest quickly.

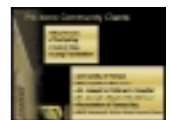


**BUILD:**  
1 With the gold boxes on the screen, we again used the TWIRLING DIAMOND transition.

**AFTER:** We put the lists in two boxes, sorting them by length of name. (That was the category that worked for us; you could use any criteria that fit the presentation.) The presenter can stop and talk about each list before moving on to the next one.



2 The list at the bottom of the screen BOXES OUT.



3 The top list also BOXES OUT. ■



Claudyne Wilder

*Claudyne Wilder is a professional speaker and co-author of Point, Click & Wow! A Quick Guide to Brilliant Laptop Presentations. She teaches the seminar "Winning Presentations: Development, Design and Delivery With Confidence." Contact her in Boston at 617.524.7172, claudyne@quik.com, or visit www.wilderpresentations.com.*

*Co-writer Jennifer Rotondo specializes in designing and creating multimedia presentations. She also teaches a one-day Advanced PowerPoint Design seminar. Contact her in Atlanta at 770.421.2476, roto@mindspring.com, or visit www.creativemindsinc.com.*

# Creating a presentation to match an updated message

**C**MD Group, based in Norcross, Ga., had a problem. With 13 partners and six affiliates, the company provides proprietary information in various formats to the construction industry. CMD offers a number of products to different groups, each of which requires its own marketing and sales materials. But the company's marketing department, having recently redesigned all CMD's printed sales material, needed to integrate the new look into its presentations.

So CMD asked us to create a tool whose message would be consistent with the new printed portfolio — and with the new CMD Group corporate image. We designed a master presentation from which salespeople could pull slides for "mini-presentations" specific to their audiences. We restructured CMD's materials with three components — Project, Products and Cost & Estimating — representing each with an icon.

We kept the same primary design throughout the presentation, changing the background elements to differentiate each section. In all, we created four separate backgrounds, including a blank background for general information and three that were specific to each component.

## Get your presentation critiqued for free!

Do you have a presentation (with charts and graphs) 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.

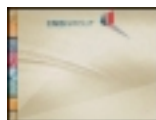
## Use logos with caution



**BEFORE:** Putting all your affiliates' logos onscreen might seem to be an easy way to show who your partners are. But, because CMD has so many, this approach didn't work.



**AFTER:** Because it was important for the audience to know the names of CMD Group's affiliates, we spelled them out on the slide.

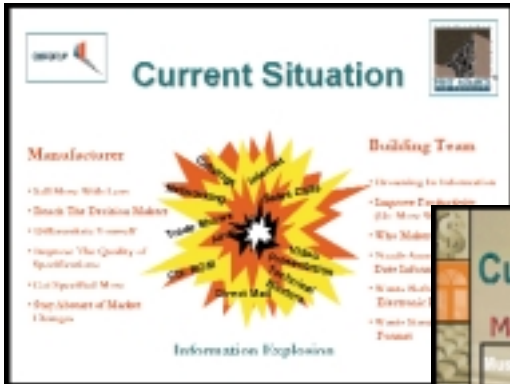


**BUILD:**  
1 **CMD GROUP**  
DISSOLVES onto the screen.



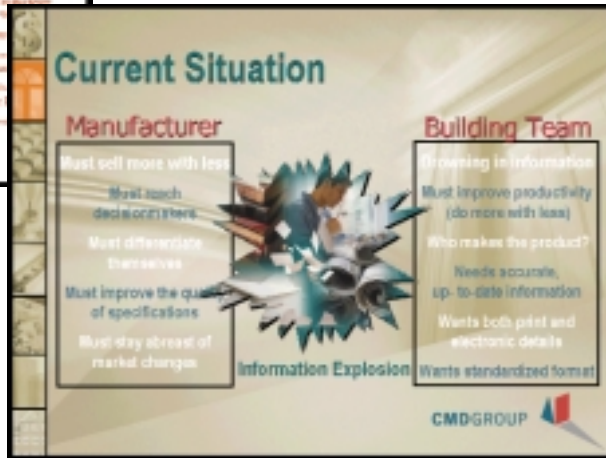
2 The names  
PEEK FROM TOP.

## Cut and reorganize your information



**BEFORE:** This slide gave the viewers two challenges: The font (Times New Roman) was hard to read, and the data needed to be divided into more-understandable pieces. The text on top of the image added to the confusion. Remember, most images can stand on their own; it's up to the speaker to talk about their meaning.

**AFTER:** After changing the font to Arial Narrow, we turned to the picture. *Information Explosion* needed to be an image, so we let our imaginations loose. First, we created a collage of photographs in Photoshop, placing each photo on its own layer. We copied PowerPoint's "starburst" clip art into Photoshop, selected that image (SELECT → LOAD SELECTION), then clicked the INVERT box and OK. With the selection still loaded, we clicked on each layer, then hit the Delete key to erase the part of each picture that fell outside the starburst shape. We saved the whole thing as a TIFF file and imported it into PowerPoint. Using this image as a centerpiece, we reorganized the data into different headings and subheadings, using white text for the main points, blue for secondary points.



### BUILD:



1 The heading BOXES OUT.

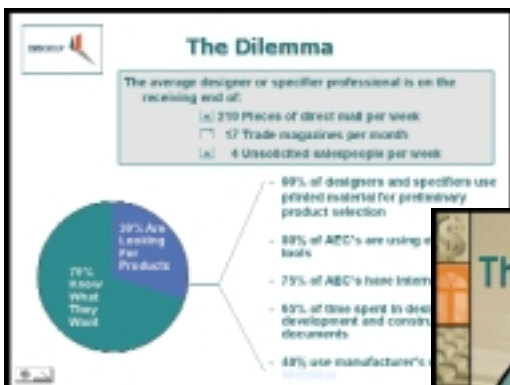


2 The exploding image ZOOMS IN SLIGHTLY.



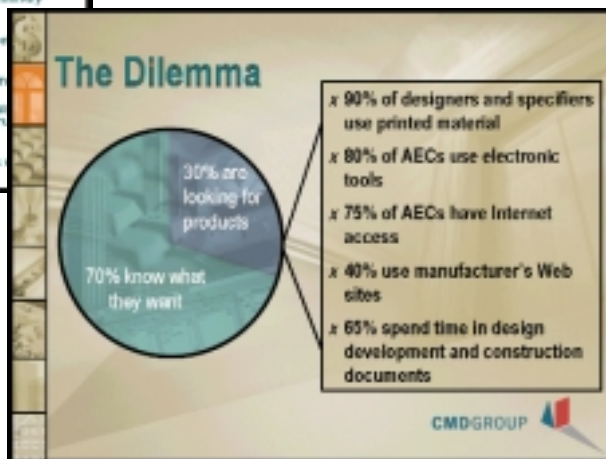
3 The text for *Manufacturer* and *Building Team* BOXES OUT on either side.

## Use less information



**BEFORE:** The box, the circle, and the text to the right of the circle all competed for the audience's attention. Clearly one of them had to go.

**AFTER:** Again, we created a collage of construction pictures in Photoshop. After merging the photos into one layer and putting them into a circle, we used Photoshop's Polygon Lasso tool to select the small pie piece. After this section was selected, we colored it blue: IMAGE → ADJUST → HUE/SATURATION; click the COLORIZE box, then drag the HUE bar to the left. We hit SELECT INVERSE and followed the same procedure to color the rest of the pie green. Then we cut down the text to fit the new shapes and imported the whole picture into PowerPoint.



### BUILD:



1 The circle WIPES RIGHT.



2 The information in the box SPLITS HORIZONTAL IN.



Claudyne Wilder

*Claudyne Wilder is a professional speaker and co-author of Point, Click & Wow! A Quick Guide to Brilliant Laptop Presentations. She teaches the seminar "Winning Presentations: Development, Design and Delivery With Confidence." Contact her in Boston at 617.524.7172, claudyne@quik.com, or visit www.wilderpresentations.com.*

*Co-writer Jennifer Rotondo specializes in designing and creating multimedia presentations. She also teaches a one-day Advanced PowerPoint Design seminar. Contact her in Atlanta at 770.421.2476, roto@mindspring.com, or visit www.creativemindsinc.com.*

# Make an already successful presentation even better

**F**rank Giordano is someone who just can't leave well enough alone. A project manager for the past four years with Automatic Data Processing's Emerging Business Services division in Fort Washington, Pa., with 20 years of management and business experience, he's become something of an expert on return on investment, or ROI. The presentation that the division asked him to create explaining ROI was well-received by both its audiences: EBS's training staff and the senior staff of its development and support organizations. Even so, Giordano sent in his presentation to us for review.

## How we changed it

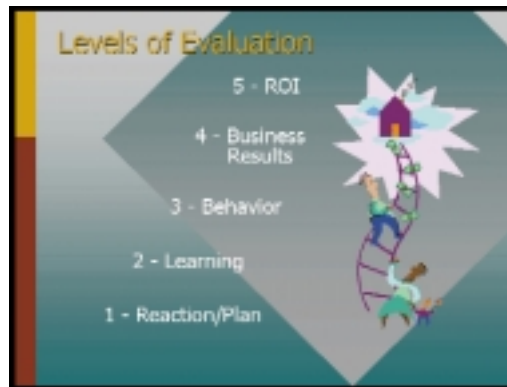
Giordano wasn't required to use a special company background for his slides, but the one he originally chose was too busy for his numbers to be easily read. We simplified it for legibility — and to convey the clarity he is selling.

We also suggested Giordano refocus his titles to follow his presentation's underlying theme, emphasizing the point of view he wanted to reinforce. You'll find what he came up with here. A dollar-bill image throughout the redesigned presentation also carries the message. The slide in

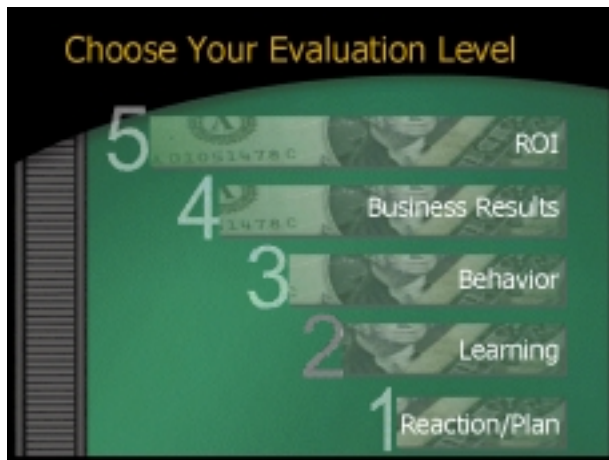
Example 3 shows a number to once again remind the audience how ROI can sell a project. Depending on the audience, this slide might be the only one

Giordano would have to show. He could have the more-detailed slides in HIDE mode, ready to put on screen only if someone asks for more specific information.

## Make your images match the story



**BEFORE:** This slide undersold ROI; it should be the most prominent choice on the screen. In addition, the clip art didn't really fit with the message Giordano was trying to convey — that ROI evaluation gives you the best way to sell training.



**AFTER:** The dollar-bill clip art, which sets the theme for the entire presentation, expands for each evaluation level.

## Get your presentation critiqued for free!

Do you have a presentation (with charts and graphs) 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.



**BUILD:**  
1 The first evaluation level, *Reaction/Plan*, is onscreen.

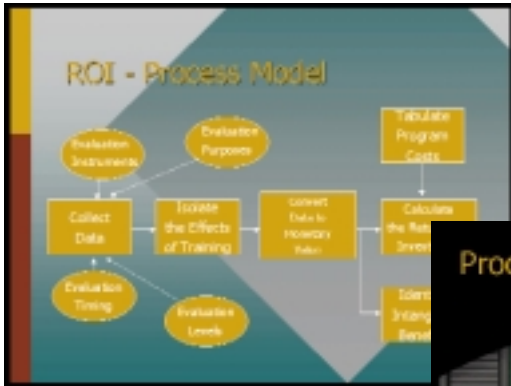


2 From level two to level four, the images WIPE DOWN when the mouse is clicked.



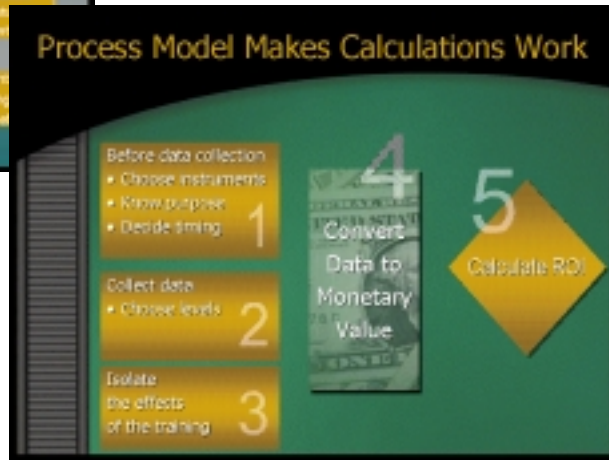
3 The most salient choice, *ROI*, ZOOMS OUT SLIGHTLY.

## Cut and reorganize your information

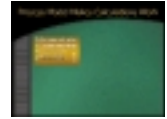


**AFTER:** We broke down the information into smaller pieces. When the fourth point came up, we used the dollar-bill image again.

**BEFORE:** People process and remember information more clearly in "chunks," so this slide needed its flowchart data divided into more understandable pieces.



**BUILD:**



1 The first point is on the slide when it is shown.

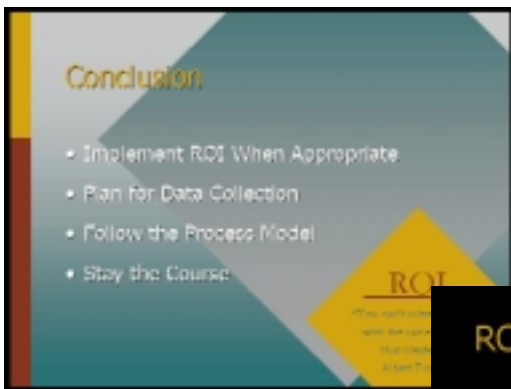


2 The second through the fourth points WIPE DOWN in turn.



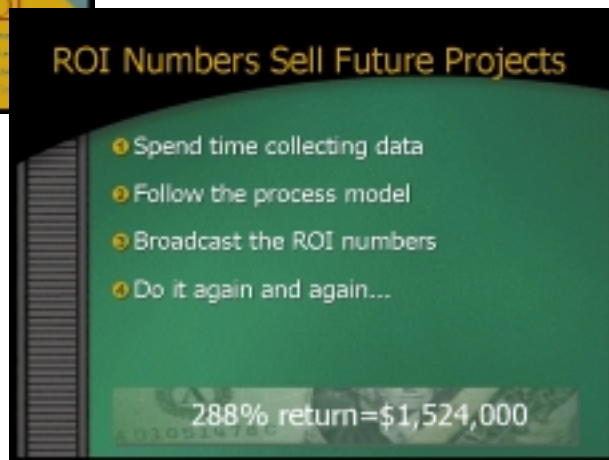
3 The fifth point ZOOMS IN.

## Sell your recommendation



**AFTER:** Our new, more interesting title tells listeners what they need to do. More importantly, it reminds them of the ROI number that is the point of the whole presentation — a good place to leave the audience.

**BEFORE:** At the end of the presentation, you want to give your audience the next steps to take — it's the place to clinch the sale, not to provide still more information. The message in this slide was diluted by the extra quote. And since slide titles are a persuasion tool, we recommend against using such titles as *Conclusion* or *Summary*.



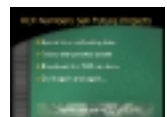
**BUILD:**



1 The first three bullet points WIPE RIGHT.



2 The ROI number at the bottom and the dollar-bill image ZOOM OUT SLIGHTLY.



3 The last bullet point WIPES RIGHT.



Claudyne Wilder

# Don't just share the services; share the benefits as well

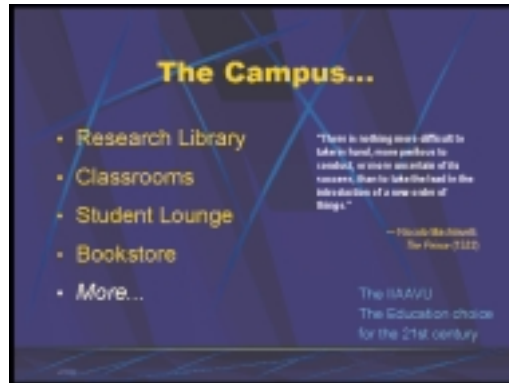
*Claudyne Wilder is a professional speaker and co-author of Point, Click & Wow! A Quick Guide to Brilliant Laptop Presentations. She teaches the seminar "Winning Presentations: Development, Design and Delivery With Confidence." Contact her in Boston at 617.524.7172, claudyne@quik.com, or visit www.wilderpresentations.com.*

*Co-writer Jennifer Rotondo specializes in designing and creating multimedia presentations. She also teaches a one-day Advanced PowerPoint Design seminar. Contact her in Atlanta at 770.421.2476, roto@mindspring.com, or visit www.creativemindsinc.com.*

Insurance agents who want online service can now turn to the Independent Insurance Agents of Americas (IIAA). This trade organization, based in Alexandria, Va., recently added a "virtual university" to the services it offers independent insurance agents around the country. To get the word out, IIAA director Bill Wilson created a presentation to encourage agents to sign up for the new service. Then he came to us for ideas about how to present the information more concisely.

It was crucial that this presentation teach independent agents how the virtual university will help them build a larger and more committed clientele. But Wilson's original presentation simply explained what the organization offered, without saying what those services meant for the customer. If the presenter wasn't good at translating features into benefits — or if the presentation was being shown on a continuous loop at a kiosk — the prospect might not realize the actual value of the virtual university. To change that, in the redesign, we focused on benefits, starting with the first slide.

## Sell the benefits



**BEFORE:** This slide simply lists some of IIAA's services, and the quote is not particularly inviting. Buried in the corner is a comment about IIAAVU (Independent Insurance Agents of Americas Virtual University), which is the most important part of the slide.

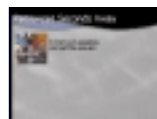


**AFTER:** The new title, *Resources Seconds Away*, now lists a benefit along with the service: Many IIAA members live in rural areas and don't have quick access to the organization's resources except online. We reinforced this message with five pictures, each telling the audience what they'll get from these services.

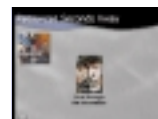
### Get your presentation critiqued for free!

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

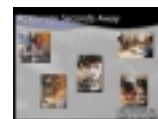
To have your material considered for a Before & After redesign, send your presentation on a Windows-compatible floppy disk to Claudyne Wilder, Wilder Presentations, 57A Robinwood Ave., Boston, MA 02130; 617.524.7172; claudyne@quik.com. Only presentations selected for redesign will be returned to the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



**BUILD:**  
1 The *Experts* picture SPLITS HORIZONTAL OUT, then the benefits WIPE RIGHT. The words disappear on the next mouse click.



2 In turn, each picture SPLITS HORIZONTAL OUT, then the words WIPE RIGHT — and disappear on the next mouse click.



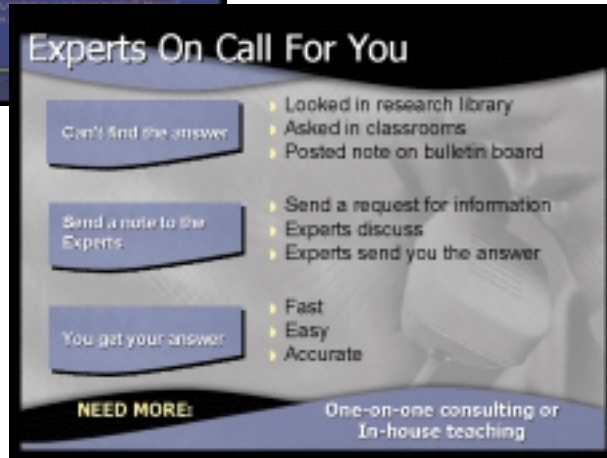
3 Finally, the *Research Library* picture SPLITS HORIZONTAL OUT, then the words WIPE RIGHT.

## Cut and reorganize your information



**BEFORE:** This slide covers a key service in detail — a service whose value to the viewer needs to be explained as well. And the cartoon figure didn't really say *expert* to us.

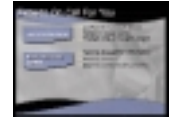
**AFTER:** We set up the redesigned slide as a story, building it so the speaker can take the audience through a real situation as he or she talks about each point.



### BUILD:



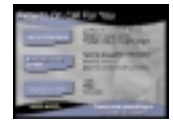
**1 Can't find the answer** PEEKS FROM TOP, then the text points WIPE RIGHT.



**2 Send a note** PEEKS FROM TOP, then the text points WIPE RIGHT.

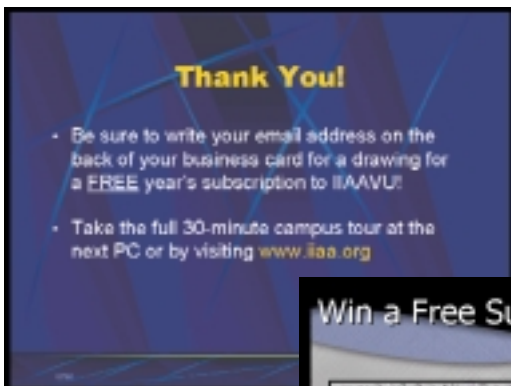


**3 You get your answer** PEEKS FROM TOP, then *Fast, Easy* and *Accurate* text WIPES RIGHT.



**4 NEED MORE:** ZOOMS IN. *One-on-one...* WIPES RIGHT.

## Get audience information up front



**BEFORE:** This slide came at the end of the presentation when the audience is preoccupied with getting coffee or going to the next presentation. Our solution is to put it up front and make it more visually interesting.

**AFTER:** This slide now follows one that briefly explains IIAAVU's business. It has one purpose: to get each member of the audience to provide his or her name, address and e-mail address. Now the slide is clearly organized to focus on that point.



### BUILD:



**1 The lines *Win a Free Subscription to...Our On-line University*** WIPES RIGHT.



**2 The Web site home page image ZOOMS IN, while the right-hand text WIPES RIGHT.**



Claudyne Wilder

*Claudyne Wilder is a professional speaker and co-author of Point, Click & Wow! A Quick Guide to Brilliant Laptop Presentations. She teaches the seminar "Winning Presentations: Development, Design and Delivery With Confidence." Contact her in Boston at 617.524.7172, claudyne@quik.com, or visit www.wilderpresentations.com.*

*Co-writer Jennifer Rotondo specializes in designing and creating multimedia presentations and is a certified Microsoft PowerPoint expert. Contact her in Atlanta at 770.421.2476, roto@mindspring.com, or visit www.creativemindsinc.com.*

# A consistent theme helps create a clearer message

James Montague Jr. works at College Board's New England Regional Office in Waltham, Mass. The presentation he submitted to us is one he gives to the parents of students who want to go to college and are curious about the costs involved. His objective is to help parents understand how colleges assess the amount of financial aid for which the students may be eligible.

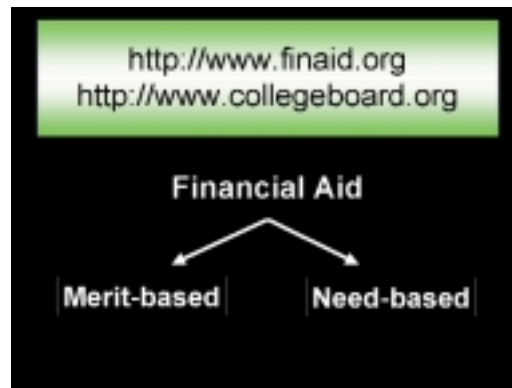
Montague has about 11 slides, with different shapes on each one. Most presentations we see contain primarily text slides, so he takes a more creative approach than most with his use of graphics. But even though he is on the right track by thinking graphically about his message, the presentation needs a consistent design theme.

To achieve this consistency, we simplified some of his slides and suggested he reduce the number of shapes in them. Remember, the key to a successful presentation is a little bit of variety, not a lot. It's best to use some text slides, some with pictures, some with charts and some with shapes. A good rule of thumb is to change your format every fourth slide, so you vary the look enough to keep the audience's attention.

Montague also likes a black background but indicated that we were free to give his presentation another look. Because of the flowcharts and other images, the new background couldn't be too busy, so we used a simple blue graphic with lines and circles embedded in

it. This also helps keep the presentation's design theme consistent. We selected pictures of college students to customize the presentation a little more, but we set them off to the side and dimmed them so Montague could use the entire slide for his graphics and charts.

## Create an inviting background



**BEFORE:** This slide's background should identify the organization: The College Board. Also, Montague ran into the same problem many people do: He wanted money-related clip art but didn't have hours to look for something better.



**AFTER:** We took some pictures from College Board's Web site and also found other related photos on the Web. Because money is the topic of this presentation, we included a dollar-bill texture behind the words *Financial Aid*.

### Get your presentation critiqued for free!

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

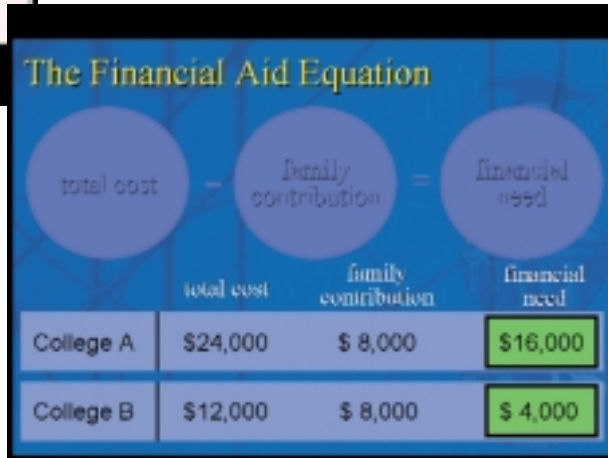
To have your material considered for a Before & After redesign, send your presentation on a Windows-compatible floppy disk to Claudyne Wilder, Wilder Presentations, 57A Robinwood Ave., Boston, MA 02130; 617.524.7172; claudyne@quik.com. Only presentations selected for redesign will be returned to the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

## Match the build to the story

	College A	College B
Total Cost	\$24,000	\$12,000
- Family Contribution	\$ 8,000	\$ 8,000
= Financial Need	\$16,000	\$ 4,000

**AFTER:** First, we changed the title to better describe the slide's main point. We broke the two ideas apart, putting emphasis on the equation. We illustrated each piece of the equation with a circle, which continues the presentation's design theme. Next, we broke the supporting information into two rows. We created the rectangles and text, **ALIGNED** the text **CENTERED** with each rectangle and then **GROUPED** each row together.

**BEFORE:** This slide is trying to explain two concepts at the same time. It gets the point across, but it could be clearer. The slide's main point is the financial-aid equation. That's what the parents want to learn about.



### BUILD:



1 The equation **WIPES RIGHT**, then **dims to blue** ON NEXT MOUSE CLICK.



2 The three titles **STRIPE RIGHT DOWN** as part of the equation.



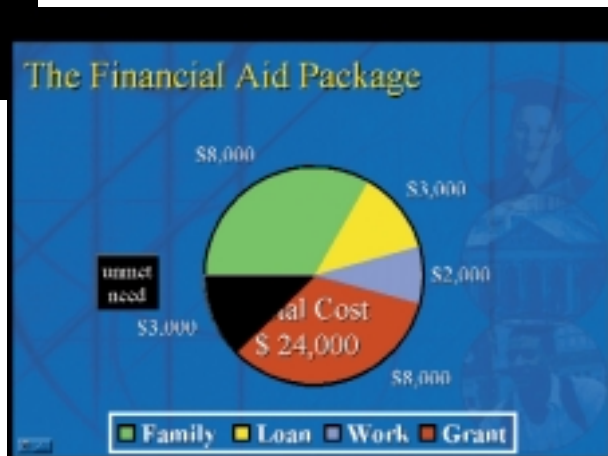
3 Each college row is **GROUPED together**, and they both **WIPE RIGHT**.

## Match your shapes to your message



**AFTER:** Together, these costs equal the whole college-expense package. The best graphic to show pieces of a whole is a pie chart. This lets the parents know at a glance the variables that play into the costs associated with getting their children a college education.

**BEFORE:** This slide breaks down the total cost for college. When the cylinder shape is used and the animation is set to **WIPE UP**, the costs appear to be growing.



### BUILD:



1 The family piece **WIPES RIGHT**.



2 Loan and work pieces **WIPE LEFT**.



3 The grant piece **WIPES UP**. **■**



Claudyne Wilder

*Claudyne Wilder is a professional speaker and co-author of Point, Click & Wow! A Quick Guide to Brilliant Laptop Presentations. She teaches the seminar "Winning Presentations: Development, Design and Delivery With Confidence." Contact her in Boston at 617.524.7172, claudyne@quik.com, or visit www.wilderpresentations.com.*

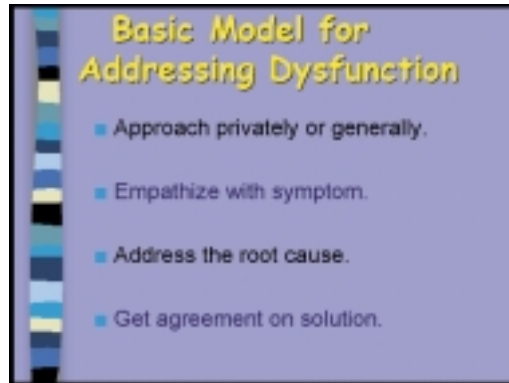
*Co-writer Jennifer Rotondo specializes in designing and creating multimedia presentations and is a certified Microsoft PowerPoint expert. Contact her in Atlanta at 770.421.2476, roto@mindspring.com, or visit www.creativemindsinc.com.*

# Incorporate some humor when the subject allows it

**M**ichelle Jones is a community planner who works at the Center for Rural Development in Richmond, Va. She is also a trainer who works with community groups or non-profit boards. When she submitted this presentation, she asked us to add as much energy and as many creative design features as possible. Her presentation lends itself to the addition of pictures and animation. The more entertaining she can make the subject, the better chance she has of convincing the participants to incorporate her ideas at future meetings.

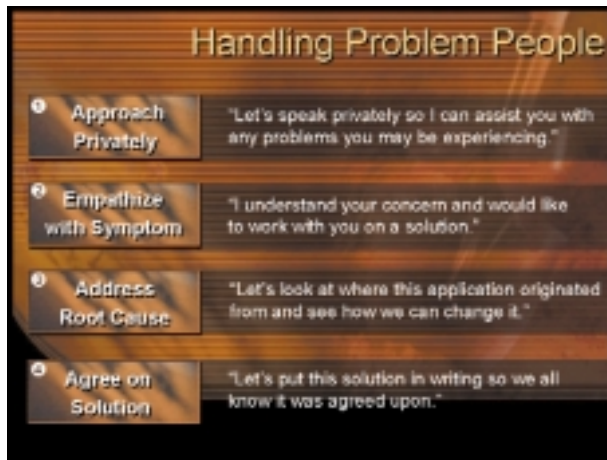
Jones' original presentation was a relatively standard PowerPoint slideshow that used a Microsoft-provided template and bullet points. Much of the information is good, but we tried to devise more creative ways to deliver it. We designed the background to focus on community and breaking ground for new development. In the first example, we thought it would be more helpful to give examples of *how* to deal with difficult people. In the second and third examples, we illustrated the emotional content of the slide with well-chosen clip art, since emotions are best conveyed with pictures and graphics rather than with words.

## Vague statements need examples



a bit dramatic. Also, the word *basic* gives the impression the methods are either easy, unimportant or both.

**BEFORE:** This slide explains the basic methods for dealing with difficult people, but that's about all. It doesn't show how the model works in a meeting, although it easily could. The psychological jargon in the title is



**AFTER:** We created boxes in Photoshop with a marbled gradient, then applied a pattern with the same color scheme for the background. Text boxes were placed over these boxes. Additional text boxes were placed to the right with examples of the main boxes' content. We placed a black, semitransparent rectangle behind the text to enhance readability.

### Get your presentation critiqued for free!

Do you have a presentation (with charts and graphs) 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.

### BUILD:



**1** The title STRIPS RIGHT-UP. (All titles in the presentation have this animation).

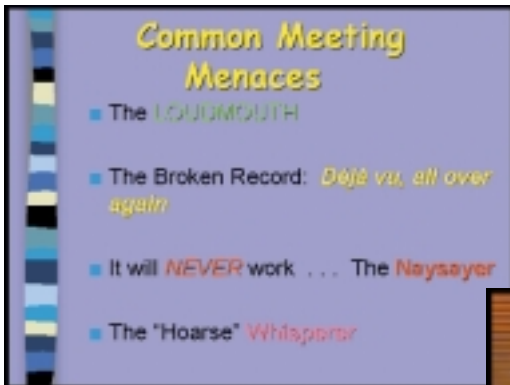


**2** The topic box WIPES DOWN; the example text immediately WIPES RIGHT.



**3** In each successive slide, the next box WIPES DOWN and the text WIPES RIGHT.

## Use clip art when you can



**AFTER:** Throughout the presentation, we inserted clip-art images to humorously illustrate the concept of problem attendees. Rather than being listed with bullets, the types of menaces appear with corresponding clip art.

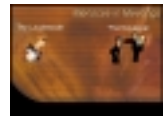
**BEFORE:** This slide tries to convey how to deal with difficult people in a meeting. Since emotions are involved, pictures or animation would be a natural fit.



**BUILD:**



1 The title STRIPS RIGHT-UP.

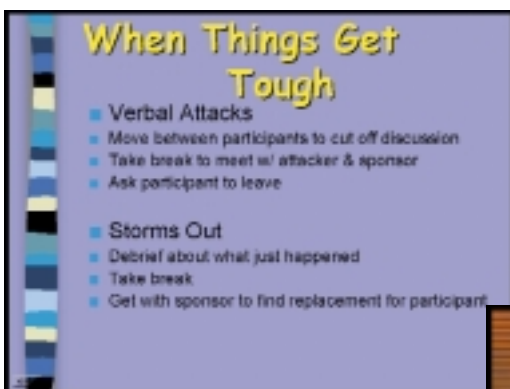


2 The three "menaces" ZOOM IN clockwise on a mouse click.



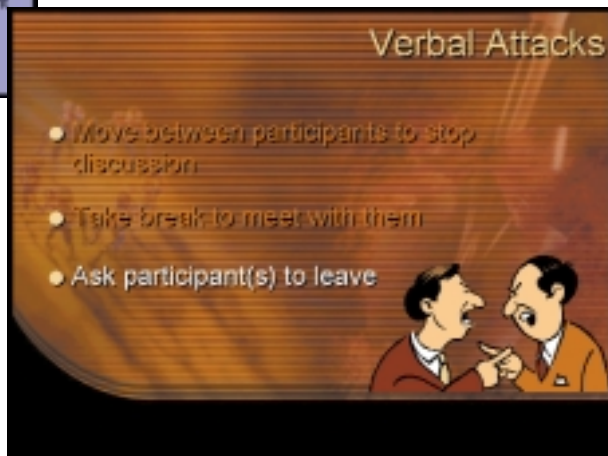
3 Gold text at the bottom WIPES RIGHT automatically.

## Separate key points



**AFTER:** We used the same clip-art image on the remaining slides, because the three points associated with it all deal with handling emotionally volatile situations. The picture helps the audience visualize these emotions.

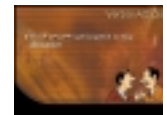
**BEFORE:** This slide demonstrates two excellent ways to handle different types of problem people. Each method is important enough to justify a separate slide, though.



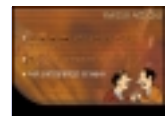
**BUILD:**



1 Title STRIPS RIGHT-UP. Clip-art image DISSOLVES IN.



2 Bullet text FLIES FROM LEFT on a mouse click.



3 With each new bullet, previous one takes on the background color.



*Claudyne Wilder is a professional speaker and co-author of Point, Click & Wow! A Quick Guide to Brilliant Laptop Presentations. She teaches the seminar "Winning Presentations: Development, Design and Delivery With Confidence." Contact her in Boston at 617.524.7172, claudyne@quik.com, or visit www.wilderpresentations.com.*

*Co-writer Jennifer Rotondo specializes in designing and creating multimedia presentations and is a certified Microsoft PowerPoint expert. Contact her in Atlanta at 770.421.2476, rotos@mindspring.com, or visit www.creativemindsinc.com.*

# A consistent theme can help build a strong message

**E**lectronic Systems in Virginia Beach, Va., is a reseller that sells, rents and leases technology products. In keeping with its motto, "Your One Stop Technology Shop," the company also provides technology consulting services and training.

As many businesses have, Electronic Systems has watched the Internet become a source of increased competition, but the company's managers have also recognized that the online world represents a potential source of new customers. They wanted a presentation that would make online customers aware of the company's services, but — when it came time to actually buy — would give Internet surfers

enough compelling reasons to visit Electronic Systems in person. Consequently, the presentation had to focus on what makes Electronic Systems different from a store on the Internet.

We decided that a good theme for this talk would be "technology made easy for you," since one of Electronic Systems' biggest selling points is that people don't have to go anywhere else. To get this message across, the company needed a background that reflected its technological expertise, as well as its staff members' consulting skills. In Photoshop, we designed a light blue and white template that suggests both technological competence and a global reach.

The first example shows audi-

ence members how Electronic Systems can solve their problems. The second slide shows the business' success story — how it has grown into a \$100-million business during the past 20 years. To personalize this growth, we suggested that, while presenters show this slide, they also tell their audience the story of a customer who has grown with the company.

The third slide is about one of Electronic Systems' business services — system integration. The slide's title reflects the benefit to the customer — allowing them to focus on their business, rather than on the technology. The information is presented in brief bullet points, allowing the speaker to talk about each point as thoroughly as necessary.

## Start with a cohesive story

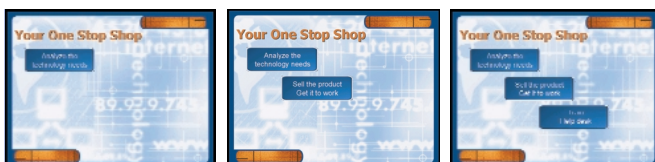


**BEFORE:** Electronic Systems' original opening slide shows almost everything the company does, but not in a logical or interesting framework. It delivers too much information that isn't organized well.

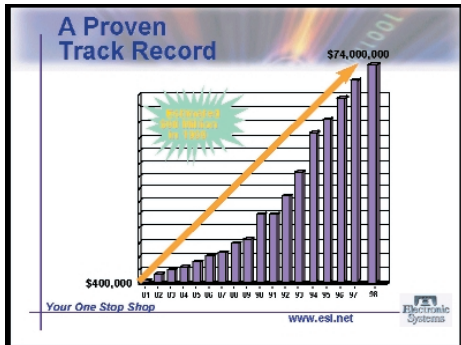
### BUILD:

- 1 Analyze... box SPIRALS in.
- 2 Sell... box SPIRALS in.
- 3 Train... box SPIRALS in.
- 4 Provide... box SPIRALS in.

**AFTER:** The first slide tells the audience how the company works with customers. Each point builds as the presenter tells a client's story, which helps audience members pinpoint their own needs.

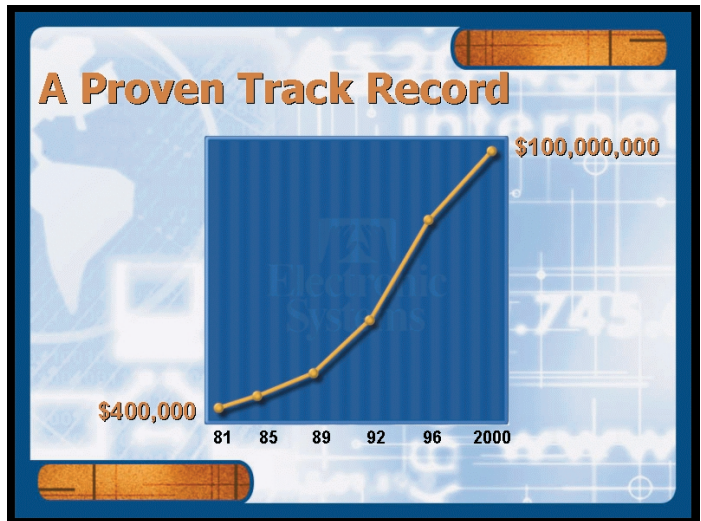


## Build a chart to fit the message



**BEFORE:** This slide's purpose is to show the company has grown. This is an "imaginary" chart in that the numbers are not exact, but the audience doesn't need to see every year's numbers.

**AFTER:** We simplified the chart with a bold trend line that makes the key point: Electronic Systems has continued to grow (i.e., "Trust us, because we will be around to keep your business going").



**BUILD:**

- 1 A Proven Track Record WIPES RIGHT on the chart slide.
- 2 The two dollar numbers APPEAR.



## Sell benefits as well as features

**Total Systems Integrator**

- Connectivity innovator:
  - Full line of networkable copiers, fax machines, digital duplicators and color copiers
- Hardware & software
- Peripherals
- Internet
- Help Desk
- Networks

Your One Stop Shop [www.esi.net](http://www.esi.net) Electronic Systems

**BEFORE:** This slide was one of eight that showed the services and products offered. The picture seems a little off center.

**AFTER:** We incorporated a new background for all the slides describing the company's services and products. In each slide, the service type is on the left and the title states the benefit of that service. For eye appeal, we also included a picture of the service or product, which we found on the Web at [www.photodisc.com](http://www.photodisc.com).

**BUILD:**

- 1 Total Systems Integration is seen on the slide.
- 2 The slide's title WIPES RIGHT.
- 3 The bullet points WIPE RIGHT one at a time. ☑

**TOTAL SYSTEM INTEGRATION**

**Concentrate on Your Business**

- ▶ Connectivity innovator
  - › Networkable copiers, fax machines, digital duplicators and color copiers
- ▶ Hardware, software, peripherals
- ▶ Internet
- ▶ Help Desk
- ▶ Networks



Claudyne Wilder is a professional speaker and co-author of Point, Click & Wow! A Quick Guide to Brilliant Laptop Presentations. She teaches the seminar "Winning Presentations: Development, Design and Delivery With Confidence." Contact her in Boston at 617.524.7172, claudyne@quik.com, or visit www.wilderpresentations.com.

# Use some creative flair with pie charts and poor photos

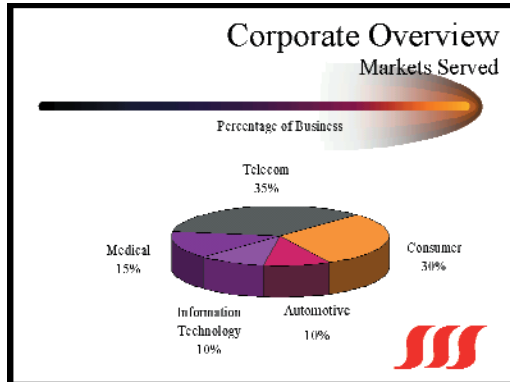
Triple S Plastics is a growth-oriented company that offers an all-inclusive selection of services from concept to design in a number of different fields. Its diversified operations manufacture products for the telecommunications, consumer products, automotive and medical markets worldwide. Operating from strategically located facilities in Michigan, New York and Texas, the company offers such services as prototyping, tool development and assembly and other secondary operations.

As many companies do, Triple S Plastics has been using the same slides for quite a while, particularly in presentations that its staff members deliver multiple times. The company didn't want to change the content of its slides dramatically but did want to update them. So this month we'll concentrate on how to freshen some of the most common business-related images, including a pie chart.

In the first slide, we thought about making each pie slice a picture of the industry it represented, but decided that would look too cluttered when shown as a whole.

In the second slide, we gave an example of what you can do if you have no choice but to use a picture that isn't good or clear. In the final slide, we added some zest to a slide representing Triple S's manufacturing process and services.

## Make the pie a pie

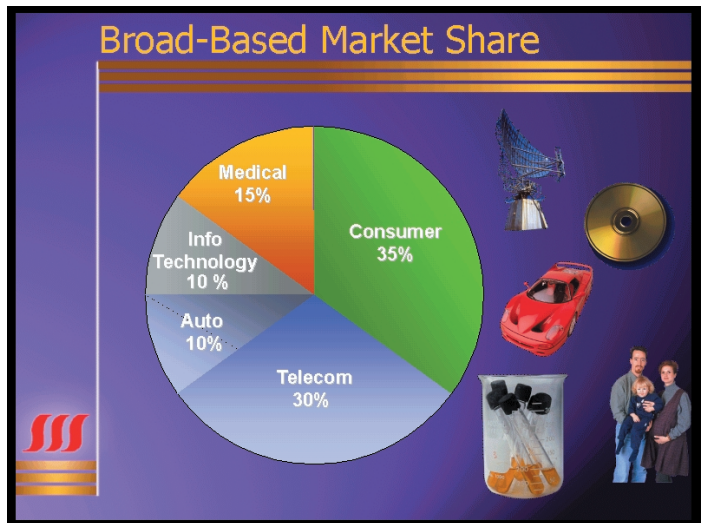
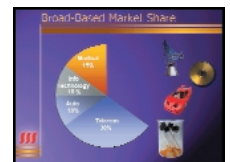
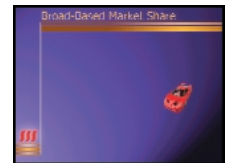


**BEFORE:** This pie chart isn't clear or impressive. The numbers are in Times New Roman font, so they are difficult to read. But more important, the slide doesn't convey the feeling of a tremendous amount of business.

**AFTER:** First, we made the pie look like a pie. It's easier to read and the colors stand out. For the build, we start with the smallest slice and build to the largest. After each picture zooms in, the corresponding pie slice appears with a WIPE. (We also could have made each image disappear on the next mouse click, so that by the last slide, the audience sees only the pie chart.)


### BUILD:

- 1 The car image ZOOMS IN.
- 2 Then the *Auto* slice WIPES RIGHT.
- 3, 4 The CD picture ZOOMS IN; the *Info Technology* slice WIPES RIGHT. Each succeeding image ZOOMS IN and its pie slice WIPES in the appropriate direction (WIPES DOWN, WIPES LEFT).
- 5 After the family image ZOOMS IN, the *Consumer* slice WIPES UP, completing the pie chart.




## Touch up marginal photos

Triple S Plastics, Inc.  
Southwest - Tucson, Arizona



- 92,000 sq. ft. - 33 presses (55-500 T)
- Assembly and finishing operations
- ISO 9002
- Injection molding is supported by a Motan material drying and conveying system and polymer systems regrind units



**BEFORE:** This picture is of poor quality, too small and crowded to the side by the text.

**BUILD:**

- 1 92,000 square feet ZOOMS IN, then disappears on the next mouse click.
- 2 The text APPEARS all at once.



**AFTER:** In Photoshop, we cut out the building's foreground and background. We smoothed and sharpened the borders and applied a GAUSSIAN BLUR to hide defects. Then we applied a LENS FLARE to make it appear as though the sun is shining and adjusted the brightness and contrast for more glow. We changed the title to make it more benefits-oriented and changed bullets to check marks.

Expertise From Prototypes to Production



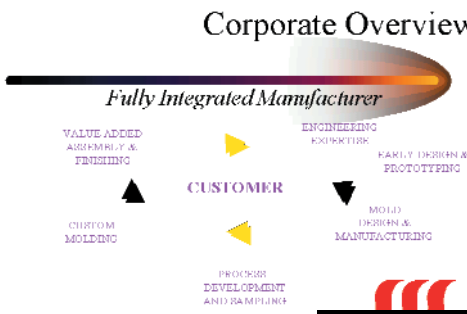

- ✓ ISO 9002
- ✓ 33 presses (55-500 T)
- ✓ Assembly and finishing operations
- ✓ Injection molding: supported by a Motan material drying and conveying system and polymer systems regrind units



## Find an image that works

Corporate Overview

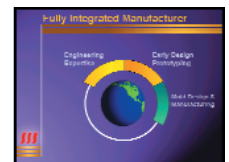
Fully Integrated Manufacturer

**BEFORE:** Even though it's supposed to illustrate integration, this slide didn't look integrated.

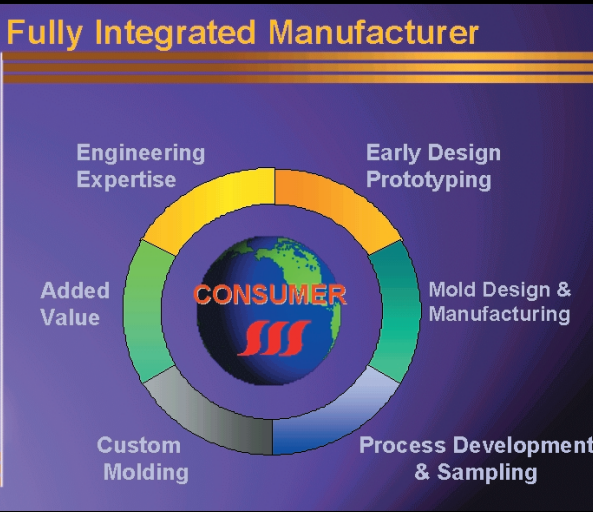

**BUILD:**

- 1 Fully Integrated Manufacturer, a spinning globe and a white ring are seen on the slide.
- 2 Engineering Expertise, Early Design and Mold Design WIPE RIGHT in turn, each on a mouse click.
- 3 Process Development WIPES LEFT.
- 4 Custom Molding and Added Value each WIPE UP on mouse clicks, completing the doughnut.
- 5 The words Consumer and SSS ZOOM IN FROM SCREEN CENTER.



**AFTER:** To communicate the feel of a high-tech company with global reach, we used a colored ring, or doughnut, to represent its manufacturing process. Each segment indicates a part of that process. We used two colors for graduating the segments, which gives them depth. We used the Bank Gothic Light BT font for a high-tech look. The globe is an animated GIF that turns continuously. ☑

Fully Integrated Manufacturer



*Claudyne Wilder teaches and licenses to companies and consultants her seminar "Winning Presentations: Development, Design and Delivery With Confidence." To receive her free monthly e-newsletter "Presentation Points," contact her in Boston at 617.524.7172, claudyne@quik.com, or visit www.wilderpresentations.com.*

*Co-writer Jennifer Rotondo specializes in designing and creating multimedia presentations and is a certified Microsoft PowerPoint expert. Contact her in Atlanta at 770.421.2476, rotos@mindspring.com, or visit www.creativemindsinc.com.*

# Message-focused images can be very persuasive

James Inman, Executive Director of Cherokee County, SC Development Board uses this presentation to introduce his community, Cherokee County, S.C., to industrial development prospects — people who might bring jobs to the area. The audience generally includes such company representatives as the vice president of human resources, the vice president of real estate and the CEO. The presentation is designed to sell these decision-makers on the idea that Cherokee County is a great place to locate a plant or distribution center for their company.

The original slides offer a straightforward, linear presentation of the facts, but not much more. We decided to improve the slides' focus on the key selling points and to use hyperlinks to add flexibility to the overall presentation. In the revised slides, four images in the bottom right represent Inman's four selling points: location (a water tower), transportation (the airport), labor (people ready to work) and quality of life (a family-friendly area). We decided to show these points in the background template's bottom border to make them more memorable and to reinforce the message. Also, each photo contains a hyperlink to that section of the presentation, so

Inman can go to any section at any time.

This is a good example of how to use hyperlinks to make a presentation interactive. Suppose Inman is talking to two company executives. With the presentation structured this way, he could open by asking what they want to hear about first. The executives then have some control over the information they receive and Inman doesn't have to guess where their interests lie. The result is better communication. (To learn how Jennifer Rotondo created the four icons and the background, go to her Web site at [www.creativemindsinc.com](http://www.creativemindsinc.com).)



**BEFORE:** This slide is about air travel, but you wouldn't know it from the image shown. Also, it doesn't say anything about the audience's real concern, which is, "If we relocate here, can people easily fly into and out of the area?"

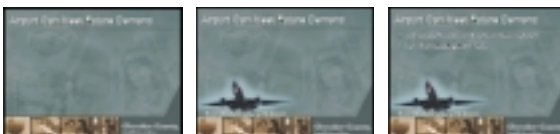
## Use images that illustrate the slide's message

**AFTER:** We introduced an airplane to instantly suggest the slide's message to the viewers. Now they know the information has something to do with flying. We also changed the title to reflect the audience's interest.

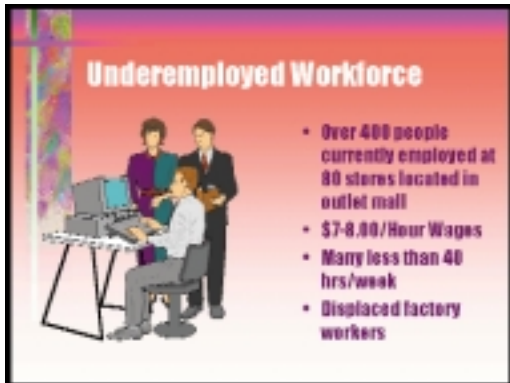


**BUILD:**

- 1 The title PEEKS FROM LEFT.
- 2 The airplane STRIPS LEFT UP.
- 3 The bullet points WIPE RIGHT.

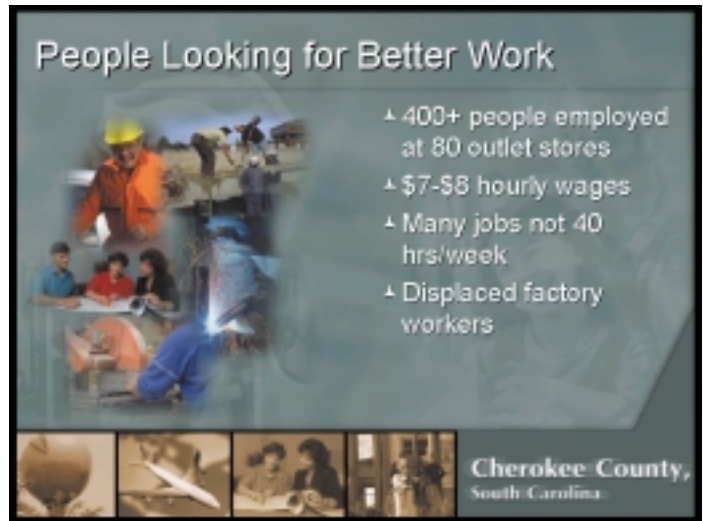


## Employ persuasive words and images



**BEFORE:** This image appears to be outdated, too small and crowded to the side by the text.

**AFTER:** We changed the title to "People looking for better work" and substituted photos that effectively represented people doing many types of work.



### BUILD:

- 1 The title PEEKS FROM LEFT.
- 2 The work-force photos SPLIT HORIZONTAL OUT.
- 3 The bullets WIPE RIGHT, grouped by first-level paragraphs.

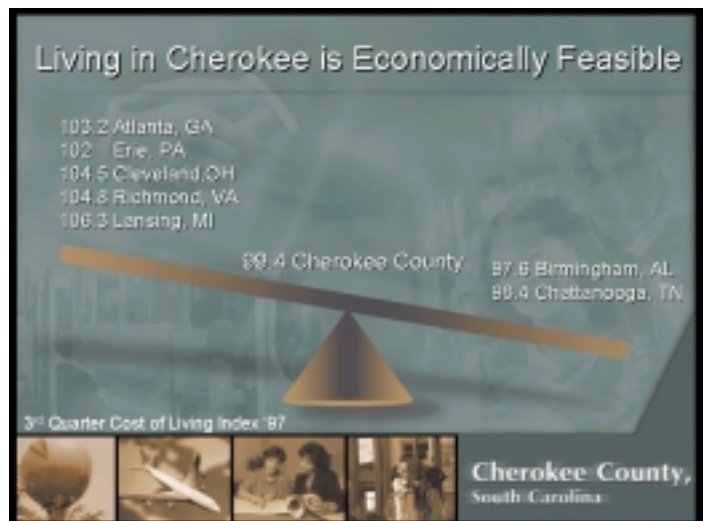


## A chart isn't always the best choice



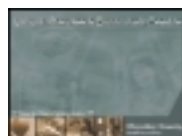
**BEFORE:** This slide's point is to show that the cost of living for cities in Cherokee County is lower than in some other cities, but when most people look at charts, they automatically think the highest line on the chart is the best. Because the important point here is in the middle, we shouldn't use this style of chart.

**AFTER:** We divided the information into two groups of cities, those with a cost of living below and above Cherokee County's. Now the audience can easily compare areas. We put Cherokee County at the center of the graphic so it would stand out while the presenter talks about its virtues in relation to cities on either side.



### BUILD:

- 1 The title WIPES RIGHT.
- 2 The city stats APPEAR all at once.





*Claudyne Wilder teaches and licenses to companies and consultants her seminar "Winning Presentations: Development, Design and Delivery With Confidence." To receive her free monthly e-newsletter Presentation Points, contact her in Boston at 617.524.7172, claudyne@quik.com, or visit www.wilderpresentations.com.*

*Co-writer Jennifer Rotondo specializes in designing and creating multimedia presentations and is a certified Microsoft PowerPoint expert. Contact her in Atlanta at 770.421.2476, rotos@mindspring.com, or visit www.creativemindsinc.com.*

# Use subdued backgrounds to create easy-to-read slides

The work of the 340 scientists and support staff at BASF Bioresearch Corp. (BBC) in Worcester, Mass., concentrates on new treatments for autoimmune diseases, prevention of transplant rejection and biopharmaceutical contract manufacturing. Joshua Froimson is BBC's quality engineering manager. For this presentation, members of his audience come from all areas of the biopharmaceutical manufacturing operation, and his goal was to introduce and explain BBC's validation program. He asked us to update his slides.

Froimson's initial presentation was on the right track. He had clear "chunks" of information categorized for easy understanding. He had an image of an umbrella

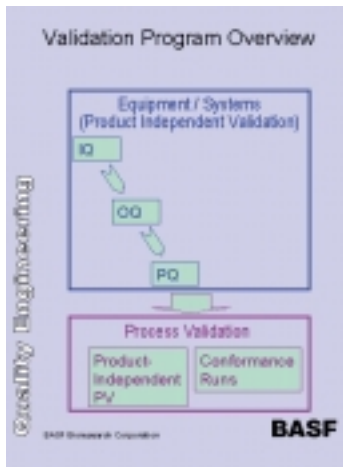
to make his point. And, best of all, we didn't have to reduce his information — he had already cut it back to the essentials.

Because his presentation's core content was quite usable, we concentrated our efforts on giving the slides an updated look. First, we redid the background. Froimson gave us some photos of products BBC uses, and we scanned them into the background. We also scanned in some test-tube images from its corporate flyer. Because Froimson shows charts and processes, we kept the background subdued so the information would be easy to see and read.

Jennifer Rotondo created the background by starting with a pattern from the Creatively Corporate

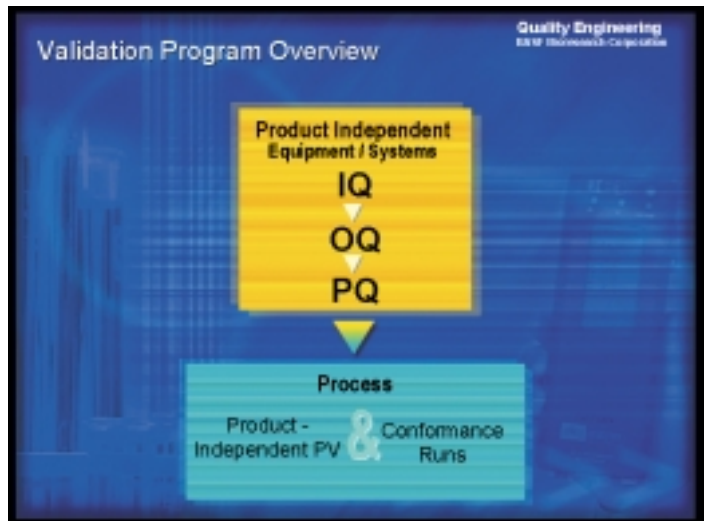
templates on her Web site ([www.creativemindsinc.com](http://www.creativemindsinc.com)). She then added the two pictures the client provided. She colorized the test-tube picture by selecting IMAGE → HUE/SATURATION, then clicking the COLORIZE box and sliding the HUE, SATURATION and LIGHTNESS bars to match the blue background. She added a LAYER MASK and airbrushed most of the right side in black so she could only see a portion of the test-tubes. Finally, she added the second picture of the hand-held device and changed its LAYERS display to SOFT LIGHT and its opacity to 50 percent. Also, Froimson's presentation was laid out vertically, but we changed it to a horizontal format to make the background pictures and the words fit better.

## Don't layer same-color boxes



**BEFORE:** Because the boxes are the same color as the background, viewers have difficulty seeing the two boxes as two separate steps. Also, the arrow between the two boxes is not in proper proportion, and the top three boxes would look better aligned vertically.

**AFTER:** Because the slide title already says *Validation*, we didn't repeat it below. We created a solid gold box to represent the product and a solid teal box to represent the process.

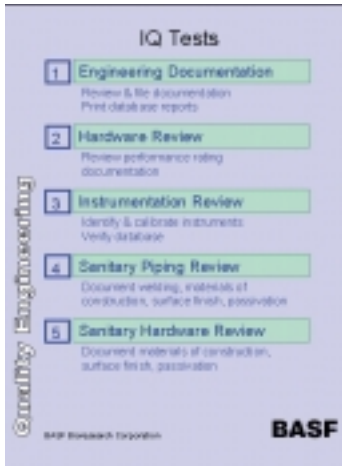


### BUILD:

The two boxes and the arrow between them each WIPE DOWN with a mouse-click.



## Limit the number of boxes

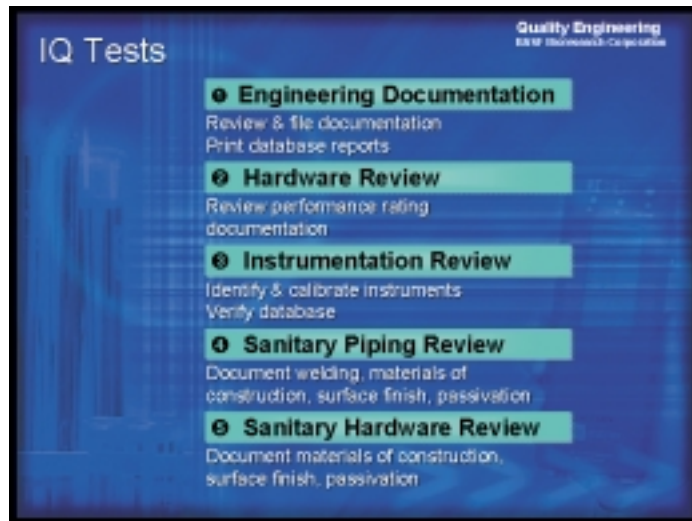


**BEFORE:** It's interesting to have the number boxes separate from the name of the tests, but this leads the eye to read down the five number boxes first, not across to each process and then down.

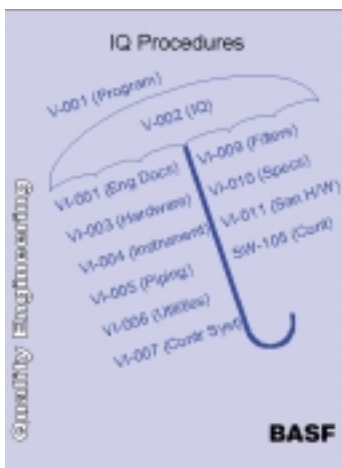
**AFTER:** We put the numbers inside the test-name boxes, filled each box with a teal gradient and made all subtext the same color. Also, we removed one of the BASF names; one is enough.



**BUILD:** Each box WIPES RIGHT on a mouse-click, and its white subtext APPEARS. This way the presenter can control when the next test's information appears.



## Use realistic images



**BEFORE:** Froimson uses the umbrella analogy as he explains each procedure. We decided he should straighten the umbrella and text to make it easier for the audience to read and understand. We also thought the umbrella needed to be a more substantial image.

**AFTER:** We used a more realistic picture of an umbrella and kept it vertical, the way an umbrella really works. We then fixed the text that falls under each side of the umbrella by aligning the names of the procedures using the tab key.



**BUILD:** The text under the umbrella on each side WIPES DOWN on a mouse-click.





*Claudyne Wilder teaches and licenses to companies and consultants her seminar "Winning Presentations: Development, Design and Delivery With Confidence." To receive her free monthly e-newsletter Presentation Points, contact her in Boston at 617.524.7172, claudyne@quik.com, or visit www.wilderpresentations.com.*

# Chart only as much data as your audience needs

**D**ebbie Pruent is president and COO of Allison-Fisher International in Southfield, Mich., a leading marketing and communications research and consulting supplier to the automotive industry. Her presentation is part of a "state of the brand" report provided to clients at least once a year. It indicates how successful individual car and truck makers have been in stimulating demand and brand equity. (For confidentiality, the names have been changed here.)

Pruent asked us to help make her presentation slides simpler and

to give her some ideas about what to do with the charts.

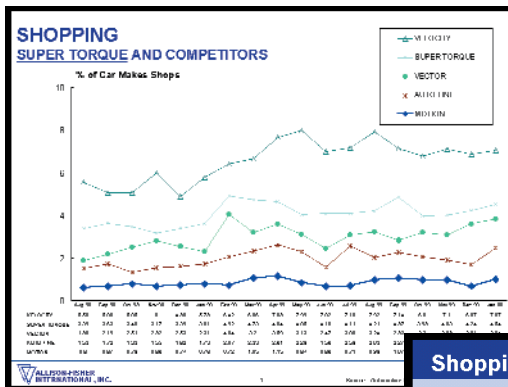
First, we changed the background color. When bright white is used as a background for electronic slides, the harsh contrast is not easy on the eyes. Instead, we chose a light-blue background, to make the information easier to read and more comfortable to the viewer. If Pruent wants to print the charts for a handout, however, the file can be easily adjusted to print in black and white.

For the type font, we chose Arial Narrow, because it allows us to use a larger font size and make

the letters fit into a small space. We increased the font size of as many numbers and words as possible so the audience can read them on the screen. We also looked for all the places where words and numbers were repeated on the same slide; we removed the redundancies and any data that didn't need to be seen or discussed. Finally, using a dark blue bar, we defined an area at the top of each slide for a section heading (24-point font size); the slide title is below the section head in a slightly larger font (27-point font size).

*Susan Miller is the creative director and a partner of Visual Media Group, LLC, Hightstown, N.J., a firm that designs and produces presentation and marketing materials, including slides, print, multimedia, Web and video. Contact her at 609.918.1100 or smm@visualmediagroup.com.*

## Save some information for the handout



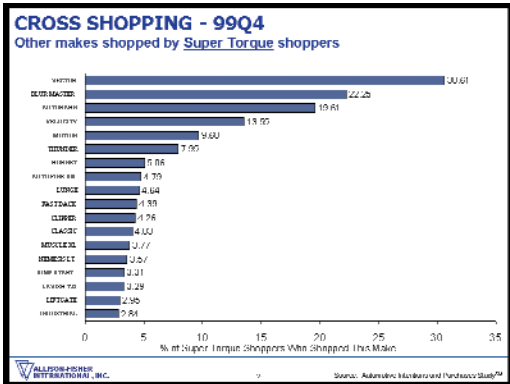
**BEFORE:** The numbers under the trend lines can be put in a handout. They are unreadable on the screen, so there is no reason to show them. Also, the legend in this slide is unnecessary. (If you do need a legend, though, we suggest putting it in the upper right, as shown here.)

**BUILD:** Each of the trend lines with a product name WIPE RIGHT.

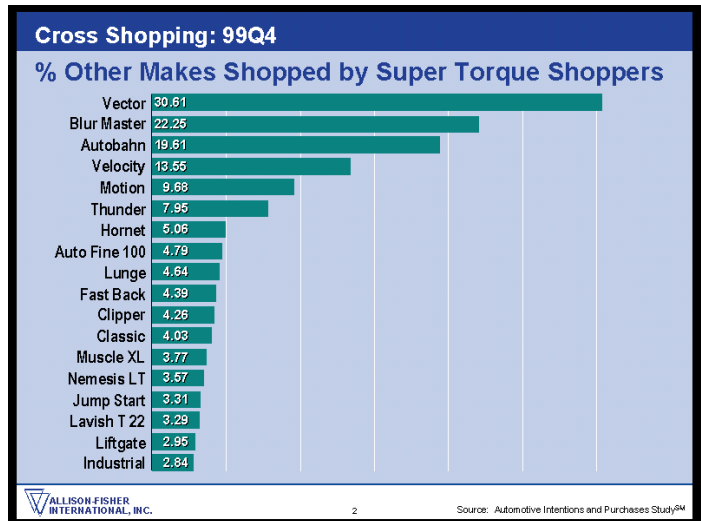


**AFTER:** We used Arial Narrow for better readability. We changed the y-axis to eight instead of 10 after deciding that common scales between slides were unnecessary for comparison. We also removed the years at every month and put the labels by each trend line.

# Put numbers and names closer together



**AFTER:** We changed the car name font to Arial Narrow and enlarged its size. We moved the numbers next to the car names and capitalized the first letter of each word. All these changes improved readability and created stronger correlation between each car make and its percentage.



**BEFORE:** This sort of chart forces a viewer to scan across from the car make to the number. Also, the capitalized car names are hard to read.

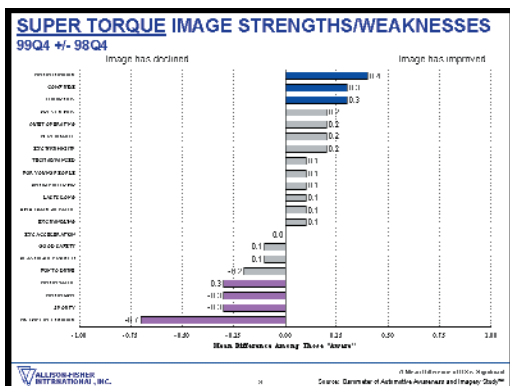
**BUILD:** We built this chart in groups starting with the lowest percentages first. All WIPE RIGHT.

1 Industrial through Motion percentages WIPE RIGHT.

2 Velocity and Autobahn WIPE RIGHT, followed by the rest.



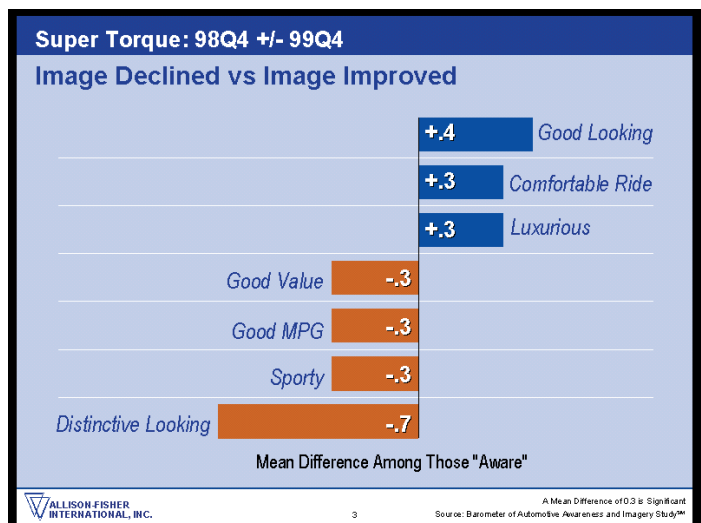
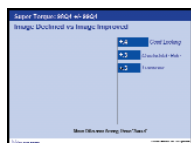
# Show only the most important information



**AFTER:** We only kept the information that is statistically significant. Again, we used the Arial Narrow font, enlarged the font size and took out the zeros. We eliminated the x-axis because the values are now shown on the bars.

**BEFORE:** Not all the information is equally important, but it looks that way on this chart. The audience only needs to see the most important information. If you want to, you can have a hidden slide ready with the extra information, in case someone asks about it.

**BUILD:** The Image Improved bars WIPE RIGHT, while the Declined bars WIPE LEFT.





*Claudyne Wilder teaches and licenses to companies and consultants her seminar "Winning Presentations: Development, Design and Delivery With Confidence." To receive her free monthly e-newsletter Presentation Points, contact her in Boston at 617.524.7172, claudyne@quik.com, or visit www.wilderpresentations.com.*

*Co-writer Jennifer Rotondo specializes in designing and creating multimedia presentations and is a certified Microsoft PowerPoint expert. Contact her in Atlanta at 770.421.2476, jennifer@creative mindsinc.com, or visit www.creative mindsinc.com.*

# Organize data into logical chunks to prevent wordiness

**D**eryck Spooner is a field representative in the government relations office for The Nature Conservancy in Washington, D.C. His job is to help The Nature Conservancy (TNC) state chapters lobby their state and local elected officials for public funding through ballot and legislative initiatives.

He asked us to give him some ideas about how to use more than sentences or phrases on his visuals. First, we printed the whole presentation and laid the hard copies on a table. By looking at all the slides this way, we could

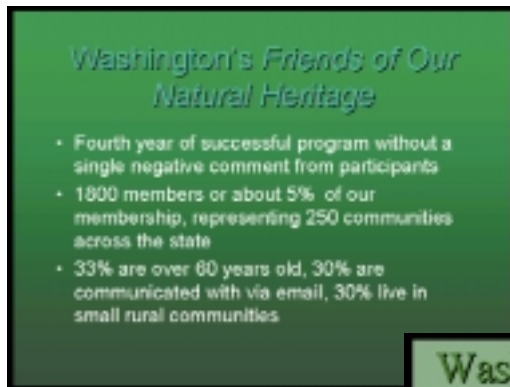
see he had a number of slides about what state chapters have accomplished using Volunteer Action Networks. We made two templates for those slides. Now, whenever he is discussing a state project, he has templates for the information. That forces him to organize the data in a certain manner, which makes it easier for the audience members to follow and, hence, to get excited about creating a Volunteer Action Network in their state.

We also set up a title template for him. You'll see that it provides two lines for the title. The top title,

which we call the "subheading," is the state's name and remains the same on the following related slides. The slide's actual heading is below the state's name and is specific to the information on that slide. The subheading stays in the same location on every slide, and we only animated the heading, not the subheading.

Also, pictures can be used to add interest. We used a collage of pictures in the background along the slide's top edge. The pictures were found in the group's monthly publication. We scanned them and muted the colors to make a wonderful heading background. ■

## Emphasize the benefits



**BEFORE:** This slide should show the information and statistics in a simple, easy-to-read way. Full sentences are hard to read and awkward for the presenter to talk about.

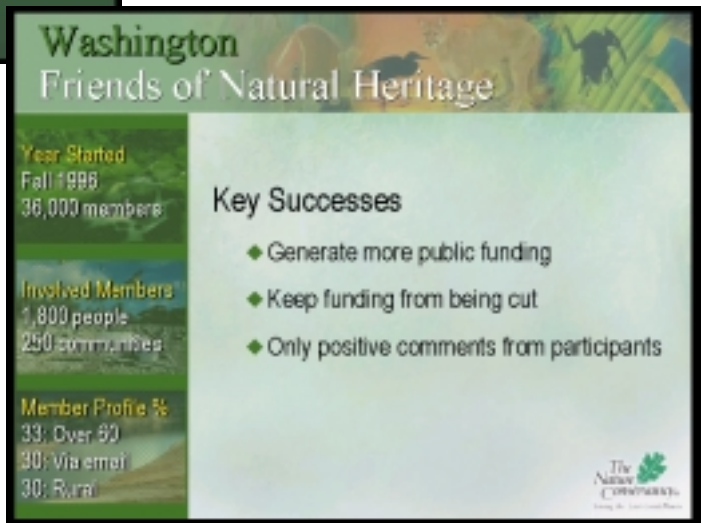
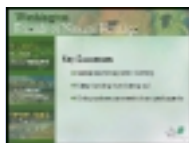
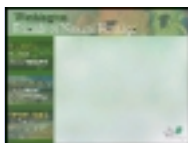
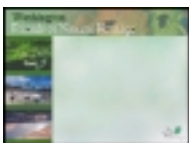
**AFTER:** We added pictures down the left and made sure they were all the same size by using the **FORMAT** → **PICTURE** → **SIZE** tab. For legibility of the text, we drew a rectangle using **AUTOSHAPES** to cover all three pictures. While it was still selected, we chose the **FILL COLOR** bucket on the draw toolbar, selected darker green from **MORE FILL COLORS**, and then clicked the **SEMITRANSPARENT** BOX. We placed the statistics over the screen and pictures and then grouped the statistics with the screened box.

**BUILD:**

**1** "Friends of Heritage" WIPES RIGHT all at once.

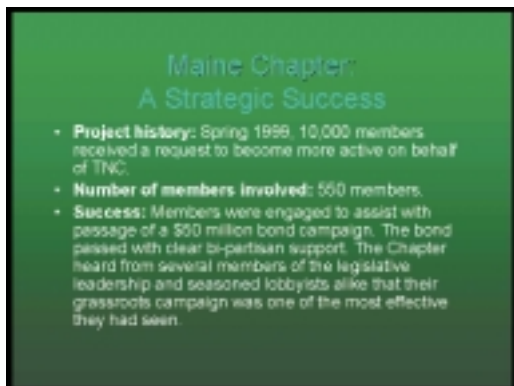
**2** The statistics over the pictures WIPE DOWN.

**3** The bullets WIPE RIGHT, GROUPED by paragraphs.





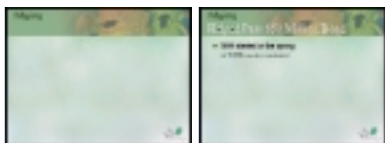
## Highlight result in the title



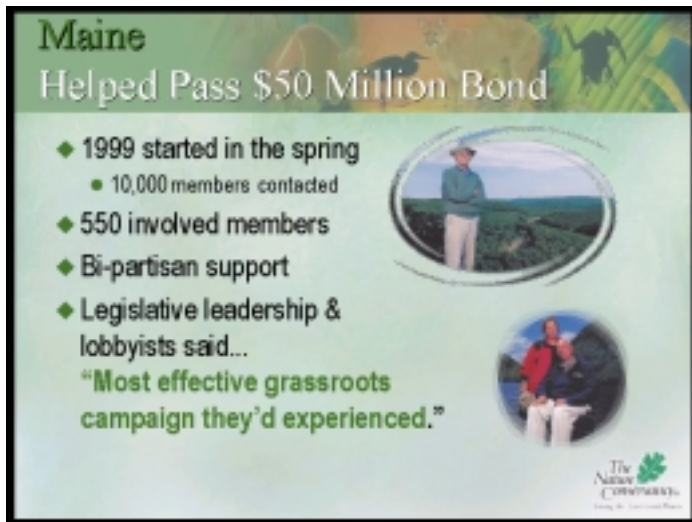
**BEFORE:** The point of this slide is how the Maine chapter helped pass a bond, and that should be the title of the slide. We also felt it needed some images with the last bullet.

**BUILD:**

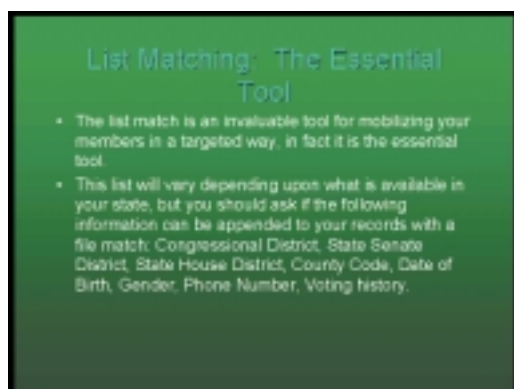
- 1 The subheading "Maine" is on the screen when the slide appears.
- 2 The bullets WIPE RIGHT → GROUPED by first-level paragraphs.



**AFTER:** Here we used CrystalGraphics PhotoActive FX Still Photo Effects, Volume I. You can see two different effects when the photos appear automatically with the last bullet point. The top picture is EDGES → SPIRAL, and the bottom picture is EDGES → OVAL WASH.



## Use a timeline



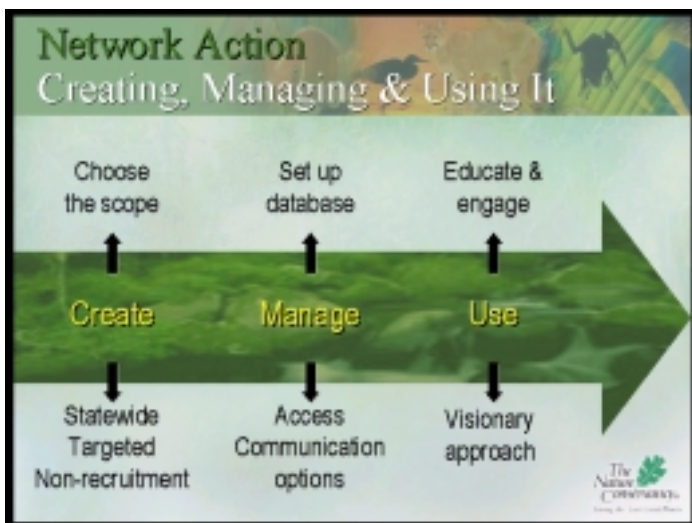
**BEFORE:** Always organize your information into chunks, especially if you want your audience to follow your suggestions. This slide is mixed in between many slides discussing access, the network and education. The audience has no clear path to follow.

**BUILD:**

- 1 The first chunk, "Create," BOXES OUT.
- 2 The next chunk, "Manage," BOXES OUT.



**AFTER:** We organized the information about the database into three sections and used these to create a simple timeline. We used the AUTOSHAPES → BLOCK ARROW → RIGHT ARROW and filled it with another picture. You can fill any AutoShape with a picture by drawing an AutoShape, select it, click on AUTOSHAPES, then going to FORMAT → AUTOSHAPE → FILL → FILL EFFECTS → PICTURE.





*Claudyne Wilder teaches and licenses to companies and consultants her seminar "Winning Presentations: Development, Design and Delivery With Confidence." To receive her free monthly e-newsletter Presentation Points, contact her in Boston at 617.524.7172, claudyne@quik.com, or visit www.wilderpresentations.com.*

*Co-writer Jennifer Rotondo specializes in designing and creating multimedia presentations and is a certified Microsoft PowerPoint expert. Contact her in Atlanta at 770.421.2476, jennifer@creativemindsinc.com, or visit www.creativemindsinc.com.*

# To sell ideas, images and words must show emotion

**A**s you'll recall from last month, Deryck Spooner is a field representative in the government relations office for The Nature Conservancy (TNC) in Washington, D.C. Last month we worked on three of Spooner's slides; this month we redo three more.

Spooner's job is to help TNC state chapters lobby their state and local elected officials to generate public funding through ballot and legislative initiatives. For the opening slide, we asked Spooner to

consider what pictures and words he wanted to have flashing on the screen while his audience waits for his talk to start. Using his ideas, we put together a montage of animals for the top bar of the slides and animated the words that go with them. (See [www.creative-mindsinc.com](http://www.creative-mindsinc.com) for a sample view and more specific directions about the design.)

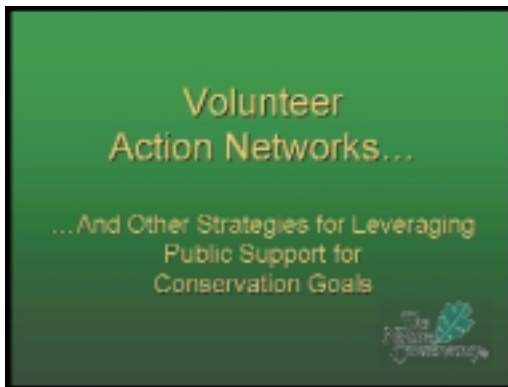
Many presenters have a tendency to share data rather than tell a story. But people need examples, emotion and a vision to be moti-

vated. Spooner's initial presentation was too data-oriented. In the slides we revised, we made it easy for people to understand what they would need to do to set up a Volunteer Action Network.

Spooner's objective is to have people start saying to themselves, "We could set up a Volunteer Action Network and get some support for saving the river from overdevelopment." We included the screen-capture with the e-mail to show people in the audience how easy it is to send an e-mail asking people to participate in a campaign.

Overall, our advice is to be ruthless with your slides. Ask yourself, "Will the words, pictures and images on this slide help me carry out my presentation's objective?" If not, delete them. ■

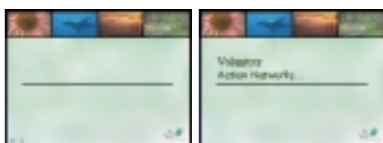
## Set the tone before you talk



**BEFORE:** This is a clear opening slide, but it doesn't excite curiosity. Also, the subhead "And other strategies..." detracts from the real message. Spooner's presentation needs to focus on his most important objective: encouraging the audience to start Volunteer Action Networks.

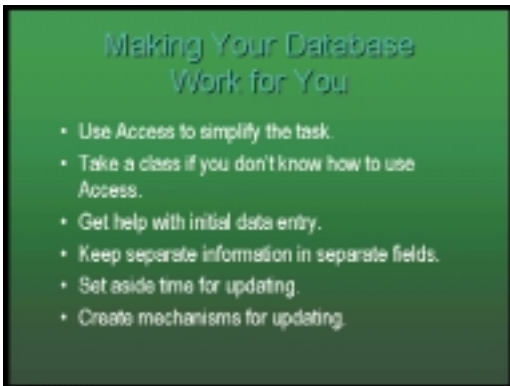
### BUILD:

- 1 The movie is set to play automatically.
- 2 The title WIPES RIGHT automatically after 3 seconds.
- 3 The text WIPES RIGHT automatically after 6 seconds.



**AFTER:** Opening slides, especially when shown on a laptop, can be extravagant and full of animations. To excite curiosity, think of your first slide as a preview, especially if you are trying to convince people to do something.

## Make the steps clear and concise



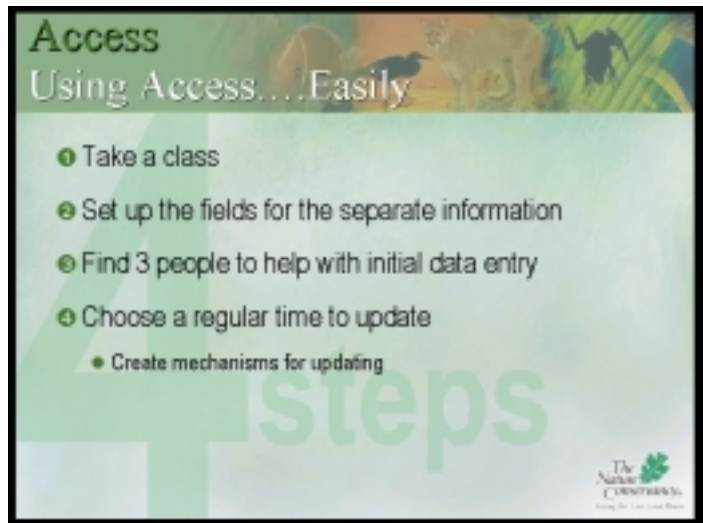
**BEFORE:** This slide's message is, "Don't worry, Access isn't that difficult to use." But Spooner has six items on the list, none of which are explicit. Also, this slide needs to reach out and grab viewers, not overwhelm them before they start.

### BUILD:

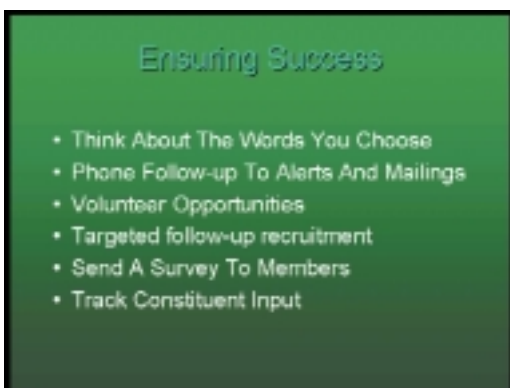
- 1 The title **WIPES RIGHT** automatically, immediately.
- 2 The WordArt **DISSOLVES** onto the screen automatically after 0.1 seconds.
- 3 Each bulleted text item **WIPES RIGHT** on a mouse click.



**AFTER:** First, we shortened the list and defined the tasks more clearly. Then we added some WordArt; creating "4" and "steps" separately in Arial type. We then made the words transparent, placed them on the page and **GROUPED** them. We also numbered our items so the audience can see at a glance that they have to complete only four steps.



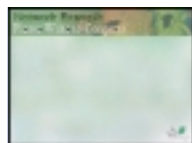
## Give examples when you can



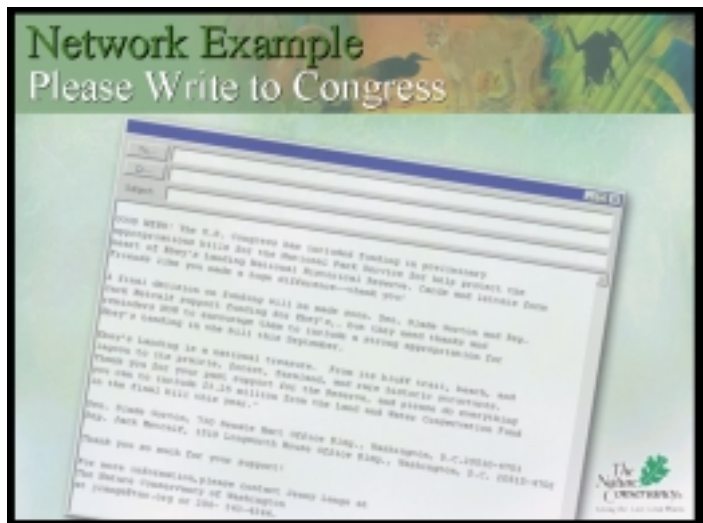
**BEFORE:** Here we come to the crux of the talk, which is how valuable using Access can be. But the words on this slide convey no emotion. Also, the bullet points don't express parallel ideas, so some of them don't make sense at first glance.

### BUILD:

- 1 The title **WIPES RIGHT** automatically.
- 2 The e-mail picture **DISSOLVES** onto the screen automatically after 0.1 seconds.



**AFTER:** We put an actual example of an e-mail on the screen. Now Spooner can talk about creating the e-mail, to whom it should be sent and how follow-up is done, referring to e-mail examples in the handouts.





*Claudyne Wilder teaches and licenses to companies and consults her seminar "Winning Presentations: Development, Design and Delivery With Confidence." To receive her free monthly e-newsletter Presentation Points, contact her in Boston at 617.524.7172, claudyne@quik.com, or visit www.wilderpresentations.com.*

*Co-writer Jennifer Rotondo specializes in designing and creating multimedia presentations and is a certified Microsoft PowerPoint expert. Contact her in Atlanta at 770.421.2476, jennifer@creativemindsinc.com, or visit www.creativemindsinc.com.*

# For more flexibility, try illustrating key concepts

**B**irute Regine and Roger Lewin are co-authors of the book *The Soul at Work: Embracing Complexity Science for Business Success*. Their business consultancy, Harvest Associates in Cambridge, Mass., brings complexity science principles to businesses struggling with transformation and change. One of their biggest challenges is translating key ideas from their book into presentations to be given around the world. They gave us some basic slides and asked us to work some magic.

Given so much leeway, we took some liberties with this presentation. We decided their presentation should look distinctive, since they are asking businesses to consider a new, powerful way of

thinking. We had a choice of making a fancy background and keeping the slides simple or using a simple background and making the slides more complex and varied. We chose the latter approach.

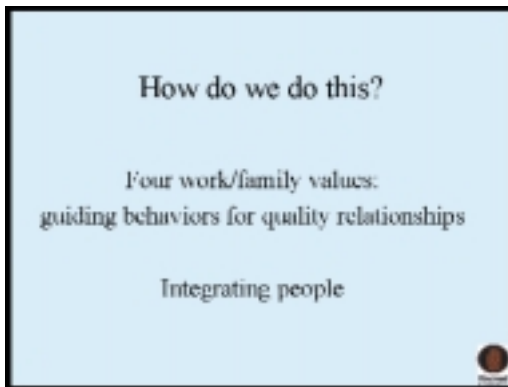
We made the background green for a couple of reasons. Green is the color of harmony, growth and relaxation. It is also a good color to use when you want to receive feedback during your talk. Some of Lewin's and Regine's talks will be to executive think-tank groups, so we structured the slides with the idea in mind that they would have back-and-forth discussions with executives, not simply stand up to speak for an hour.

Next, we decided to add some PowerPlugs features. The first slide

example is for an introduction to a section of their talk. Imagine this scenario: Regine and Lewin start their presentation and the audience is listening, wondering what these people who wrote this unusual book have to say. Thirty minutes into the talk, to change the energy in the room, the 3D title animation is shown (see the first example).

Another unusual effect is the photo you see in the second example. This looks fantastic when animated and it really emphasizes the importance of mutuality, of people working together toward a common goal. (To see these PowerPlugs features in action, go to [www.creativemindsinc.com](http://www.creativemindsinc.com) and view the Design Tips page for more details.)

## Change the pace every now and then

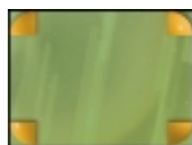


**BEFORE:** We removed the "How do we do this?" question. This is a transition sentence, and it works better to say it rather than to show it on a slide.

**AFTER:** We put only the title of this section on the slide and used the POWERPLUGS → 3D TITLES → VOLUME 1 → PIECES. The text rotates in the center of the slide as the four pieces of the graphic rotate in each corner. This comes with sound effects, but we elected not to use them.

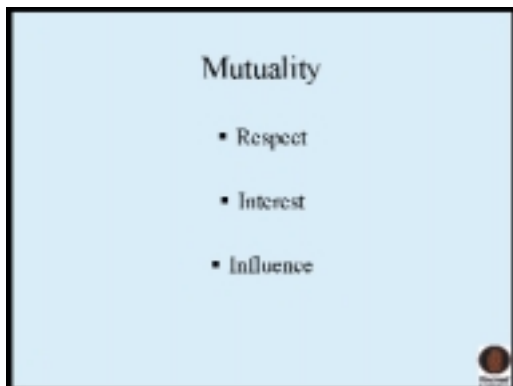


**BUILD:** The animation comes up automatically. We suggested they loop it so it could be showing in the background as they give their introduction to this section.



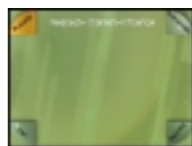


## Keep all points visible

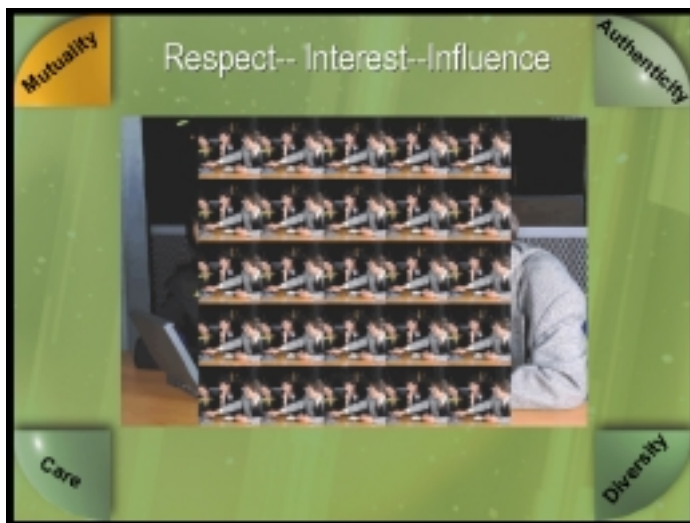


**BEFORE:** With this slide, all the audience sees is the illustration of one value — mutuality. But including all four values on several slides will make them easier to remember.

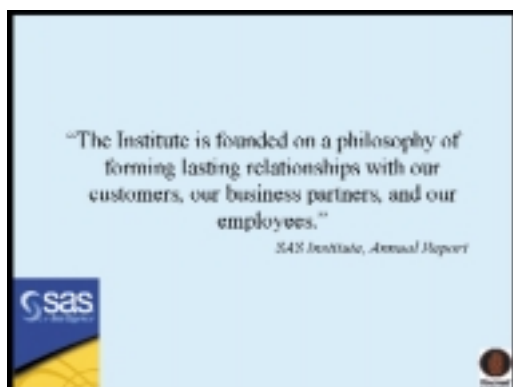
**BUILD:** The photo animates in, going from the many images you see in the example to one image.



**AFTER:** The audience can see all the values, and the value being discussed is highlighted. We did this by creating a 3D ball in CrystalGraphics 3D IMPACT! Pro and saving it as a JPEG. We opened the ball in Photoshop, cut it into quarters and placed each quarter in its respective corner. We added a small drop-shadow for a little depth. Then we took a photo and used POWERPLUGS → PHOTOACTIVE FX → VOLUME 2 → FULL IMAGE EFFECT → MANY TO ONE.



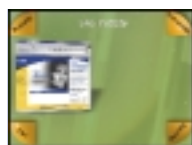
## Use the company's Web site



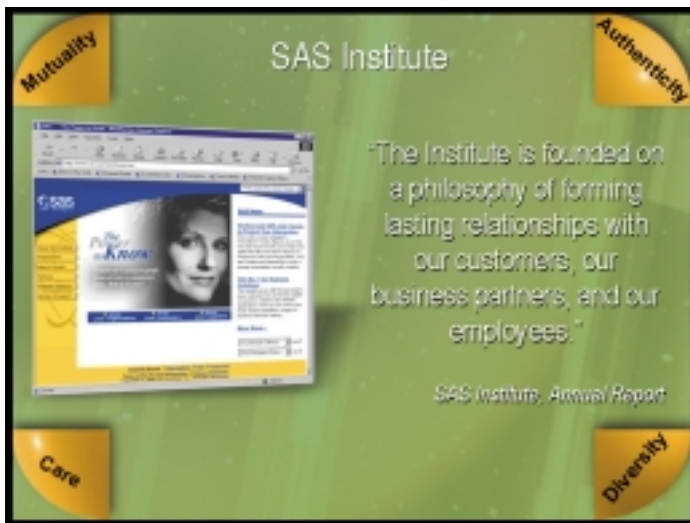
**BEFORE:** This slide illustrates one way to talk about a company by using a quote and showing its logo. But more can be done.

**BUILD:**

- 1 The Web site picture is on the screen.
- 2 The words ZOOM IN FROM SCREEN CENTER.



**AFTER:** Web sites are hot right now. What better way to highlight a company than to show its home page? Here's how we captured it to put on the slide: We went to the SAS site. On the home page, we hit the alt key and print-scrn keys simultaneously. This copies what is seen on your screen. Then, we went into Photoshop and pasted this picture in a new layer over our background. We used EDIT → TRANSFORM → PERSPECTIVE to make the left side of the Web page larger. Finally, we added a subtle drop-shadow.





Jennifer Rotondo specializes in designing and creating multimedia presentations and is a certified Microsoft PowerPoint expert. Contact her in Atlanta at 770.421.2476, jennifer@creative mindsinc.com or visit www.creative mindsinc.com.

Co-writer Claudyne Wilder teaches and licenses to companies and consultants her seminar "Winning Presentations: Development, Design and Delivery With Confidence." To receive her free monthly e-newsletter Presentation Points, sign up at www.wilderpresentations.com or contact her in Boston at 617.524.7172.

# Removing clutter makes slides clean and effective

The client we are working with this month has chosen to remain anonymous, but the challenges of the slides are worth a look. This company's presentation involves a lot of information in the form of charts and tables. The challenge was to make the slides clean and informative without overwhelming the audience.

This client is concerned that he cannot always control the presentation-room lighting, so a dark slide background could be a problem. He also needs to show several product photos. Taking these two factors into consideration, we chose a clean white background for our redesign. By doing so, we can ensure that the charts will be

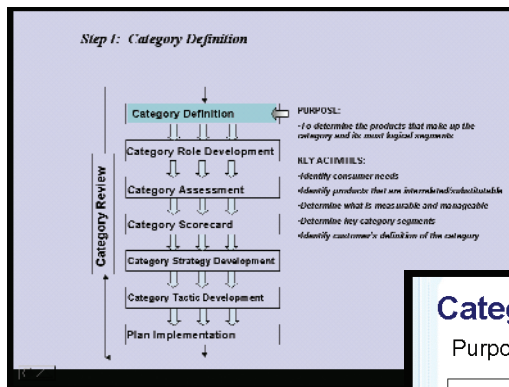
easy to read and the photos will stand out. The white background also gives him an easy way to add a customer logo. Since most logos he uses from clients' Web sites are framed in a white box, he can easily put a logo on a slide.

To improve the design, we spruced up the PowerPoint graphs in Adobe Photoshop. In the second example, the rectangular marquee tool was used on a new layer, to create rectangles with gradient fills for the cylinder bodies. Then, on two separate layers, we switched to the elliptical marquee tool to create ellipses for the cylinders' tops and bottoms and filled them with the same gradient. Keeping all three pieces on separate layers, we

assembled the bars. Then we added a shadow layer below the bottom ellipse layer. Using the rectangular marquee tool, we drew a rectangle, filled it with black and then used a Gaussian blur for effect. We then reduced the transparency to 30 percent.

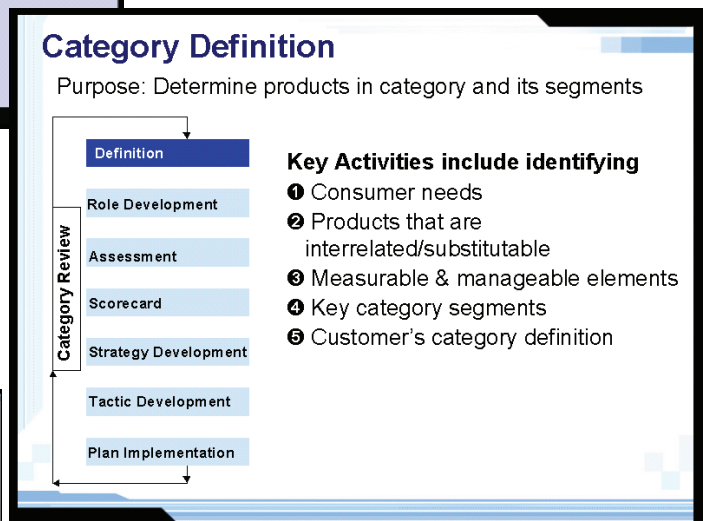
The third example also called for some Photoshop work. We created a new layer above the chart layer and, using the elliptical marquee tool, drew circles to overlap the pies and filled them with color. Next, we made this layer 50-percent transparent. We then used the polygon lasso tool to draw the small piece and fill it with green. We followed the same procedure to draw the third piece and fill it with purple. ■

## Highlight what's important



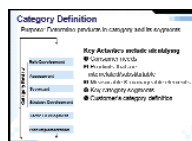
**BEFORE:** The focal point of this slide is unclear. The diagram should be moved to the side. Also, the text to the right of the diagram is too small to read and the word *category* appears several times.

**AFTER:** The category definition's purpose is increased in size and moved to the top. The diagram size is also larger. Within the graph, we used a darker color and animation to differentiate this slide's focus. The activities are numbered so the presenter can easily identify each key point. Also, space for a product picture is available under the text.

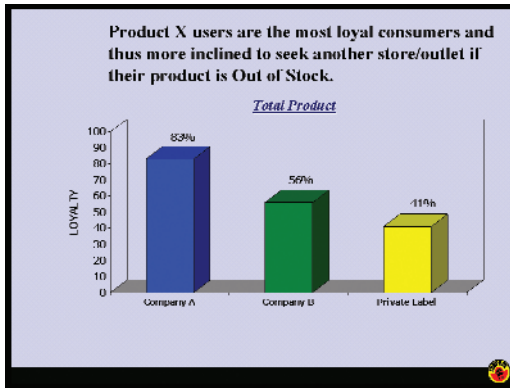


**BUILD:**

- 1 Graph and text appear on the slide.
- 2 Focus text WIPES RIGHT ON a mouse-click.



## Use subtitles to make your point

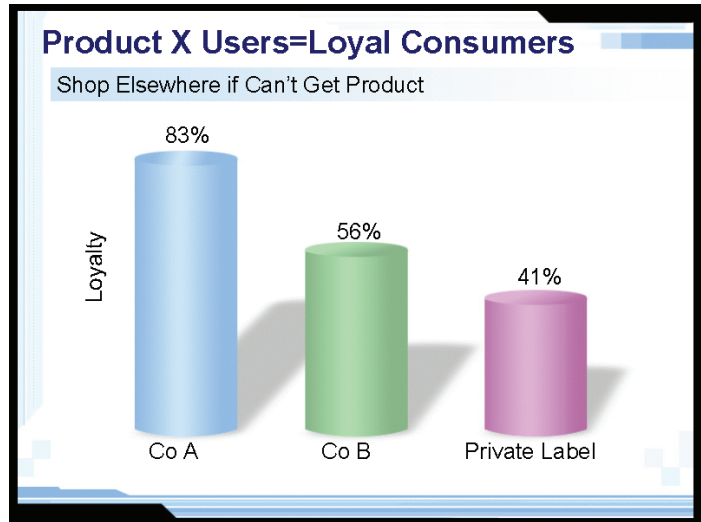


**BEFORE:** With the key numbers above the bars, the 3D perspective is too severe. Also, the numbers on the Y axis are unnecessary when the percentages already appear on the bars.

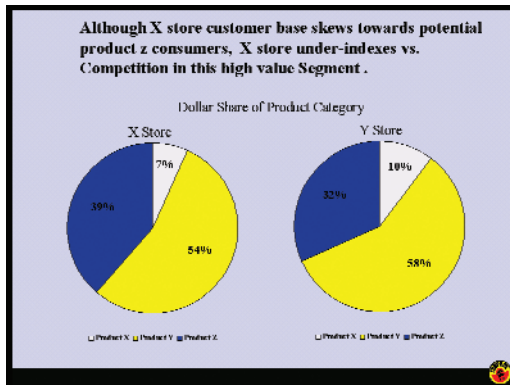
**AFTER:** The new cylinders better represent the slide's color scheme. The title is shortened and the subtitle makes the key point. If you wanted to animate this, you should start with the least important data (in this case, Private Label) and finish with the most important (Company A).

**BUILD:**

- 1 On a mouse-click, the Private Label bar WIPES UP.
- 2 The Company B bar WIPES UP on a mouse-click.
- 3 The Company A bar WIPES UP on a mouse-click.



## Pare down titles and legends

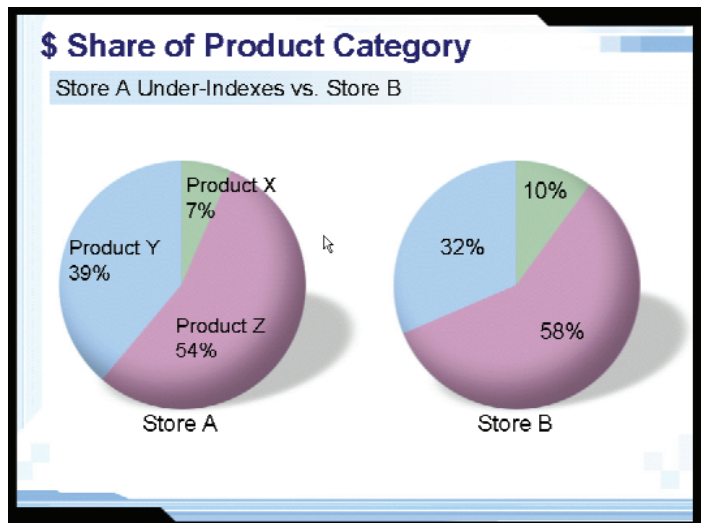


**BEFORE:** This slide title is confusing and difficult to read in the Times New Roman font. The numbers are also in Times New Roman, which is inconsistent with the Tahoma font used in the other slides. Finally, the legend is repeated twice.

**AFTER:** The title states what the pie slices are, making it easy for the audience to grasp. The chart colors follow the slide color scheme and the bottom legend is left out. The audience can easily grasp the information needed by reading the title and the slide percentages.

**BUILD:**

- 1 The title and subtitle appear on the slide.
- 2 On a mouse-click, both pie charts appear with the RANDOM BARS HORIZONTAL effect.





Jennifer Rotondo specializes in designing and creating multimedia presentations and is a certified Microsoft PowerPoint expert. Contact her in Atlanta at 770.421.2476, jennifer@creativemindsinc.com or visit www.creativemindsinc.com.

Co-writer Claudyne Wilder teaches and licenses to companies and consultants her seminar "Winning Presentations: Development, Design and Delivery With Confidence."

# Design slides that prompt audience interaction

As a leader in the aerospace and defense industry, Ensign-Bickford Aerospace & Defense Co. of Simsbury, Conn., is no stranger to giving client-based presentations. Mike Voisine, new business development director, brought us the company's presentation slides with a common request: to create a set of updated slides that are easy to customize. In addition, he wanted a convenient way for the presenter to interact with the audience.

To promote interaction, a presenter must have slides and content that reinforce and encourage audience feedback throughout the presentation. Creating slides that ask questions gives the audience an opportunity to express their

interests, opinions and feelings about your subject.

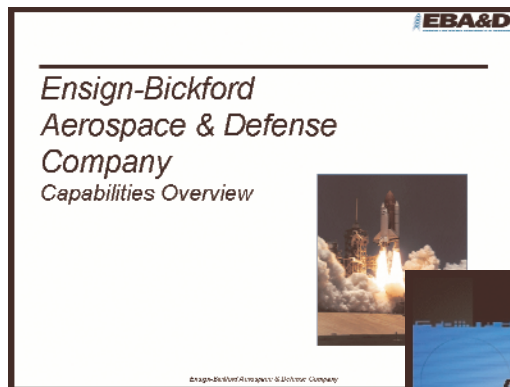
With that goal in mind, we built stopping points for interaction into the slides. We created a question area on the bottom of each slide. The presenter does not have to use the question area on every slide, but this design approach gives the presenter an opportunity for interaction whenever he wants it.

The opening slide illustrates how to immediately engage the audience. The key question for the audience appears with a mouse click at the beginning of the presentation. This instantly sends a message to the audience that this will not be a 30-minute monologue. From the beginning, the

presenter encourages audience members to talk about their interests. This is also helpful for presenters who aren't comfortable or don't have a lot of experience engaging an audience. The question on the slide does the hard work, getting things started.

The second slide's goal — to establish company experience in the field — isn't related to interaction, so instead of a question, a map graphic outlines company locations. The third slide outlines Ensign-Bickford's successes and programs. Space at the bottom lets the audience indicate what it wants. Again, this provides an entry point for the presenter to learn what the audience needs and to adjust the message accordingly.

## Visually strengthen the opening slide



**BEFORE:** This slide gives a rather plain opening impression. First, the slide needs a place for the name and logo of the audience's company. Second, the picture should be accentuated in a more interesting way.

**BUILD:**

- 1 "Capabilities Overview" WIPES RIGHT on a mouse click.
- 2 The audience logo and name WIPE RIGHT on a mouse click.
- 3 The bottom question WIPES RIGHT on the next mouse click.

**AFTER:** For the photo, we drew a circle and then choose FORMAT AUTOSHAP → COLOR → FILL EFFECTS → PICTURE. Now the image's frame complements the background's circular elements. Doing so also frees space to insert the audience's company name and logo.



## Unclutter company information

**Background**

EBA&D's Parent, EBI, has diversified holdings in a wide variety of manufacturing industries.

The Energetic Products Subsidiary, The Ensign-Bickford Company (EBA&D), Traces roots to 1836 in as Manufacturer of Safety Fuse

EBA&D Maintains Presence as Worldwide Leader in Non-Electric Initiation Systems for Mining and Blasting, with several International JV's/Subsidiaries

EBA&D Aerospace entry in 1956; First Manufacturer of Linear Shaped Charges (LSC) and Mild Detonating Fuse (MDF)

Aerospace Presence Evolved to Separate Subsidiary, EBA&D

**BEFORE:** Too much information appears on this slide, making it difficult to follow, and the picture competes with the world map image. Also the company's name shouldn't be repeated.

**AFTER:** The company information is organized with the key data headings in bold, making it easier to read. We eliminated the picture and used only the world map to provide a cleaner look.

**BUILD:**

- 1 The slide title and the background are shown.
- 2 Bulleted text items WIPE RIGHT on a mouse click, one at a time.
- 3 With the last text item, the graphic appears automatically with a RANDOM BARS HORIZONTAL effect.



**Separate Subsidiary for Aerospace**

**Started:** 1836 as Manufacturer of Safety Fuse—The Energetic Products Subsidiary

**Aerospace Entry:** 1956 as first manufacturer of linear shaped charges and mild detonating fuse

**Diversified:** wide variety of manufacturing industries

**Worldwide Leader:** Non-electric initiations systems for mining and blasting, with international JV's/Subsidiaries

## Integrate pictures and key points

**Our Aerospace & Defense Heritage**

EBA&D's roots are in High Reliability, Strategic Missile and Launch Vehicle Ordnance Systems

**Strategic Missiles**

- Polaris/Poseidon
- Minuteman
- Trident C4/D5
- Peacekeeper
- Small ICBM

**Launch Vehicles**

- Mercury/Gemini
- Apollo/Saturn
- Shuttle
- Titan
- Delta
- Atlas
- Pegasus/Taurus

**Common Core of Products**

- Ignition Systems
- Separation Systems
- Destruct Systems

**BEFORE:** The photos, text boxes and arrows compete for attention, so the eye doesn't know where to look. The photos need to be integrated into the key points on the slide.

**AFTER:** The pictures are matched to the text elements. The "Common Core Systems" title and accompanying effect show that the missiles and launch vehicles have these systems in common. Finally, the question at the bottom invites audience discussion.

**BUILD:**

- 1 The Trident photo and bullet points APPEAR on a mouse click.
- 2 On the next click, the Shuttle photo and words APPEAR.
- 3 "Core Systems" text ZOOMS IN on a mouse click.
- 4 The question WIPES RIGHT on a mouse click.



**Missile/Launch Vehicle Ordnance Systems**

**Strategic Missiles**

- Polaris/Poseidon
- Minuteman
- Trident C4/D5
- Peacekeeper
- Small ICBM

**Common Core Systems**

Ignition  
Separation  
Destruct

**Launch Vehicles**

- Mercury/Gemini
- Apollo/Saturn
- Shuttle
- Titan
- Delta
- Atlas
- Pegasus/Taurus

What is the reliability of your systems today?