Designing an Effective Online Presentation

The Anatomy of a Killer Online Presentation

One of the first steps in creating a virtual presentation is to format it in a way that will work on-screen.

1. Make it Simple
2. Use Visuals
3. Make it Interactive

Keep it Simple

- The most effective online presentations are simple and straightforward.
- Overcrowding your slide with information can make it more difficult for your audience to engage with the information you are presenting. You want them to be able to listen to what you are saying, read your slides, and take in your visuals.
- Use a plain background for your slides, preferably white or a lighter color, and focus each slide on only one point or idea. Don’t stuff too many bullet points or text into your slides.
- Center your text or leave wide margins in case the edges of the slides are cut off for some of the participants.
It is tempting to put a ton of information onto your slides. Remember that the audience will get more out of your presentation if they are listening to you rather than rushing to read the information on your slides!

For accessibility reasons, use a text color that stands out from the background. Use a large and bold font that doesn’t require participants to strain their eyes, especially if they’re viewing your slides on their phone.

Resources on How to Create an Accessible Presentation

It is very important to make sure virtual presentations are accessible. These efforts allow all participants, particularly people with disabilities, to effectively engage with presented content.

Click this box to view a page with accessibility information for presenters!

Presenting with Google Slides

Google slides works similarly to Keynote and Microsoft PowerPoint, but it allows for cross-device collaboration and seamlessly integrates into Google’s Cloud saving platform, called Drive. If you are using slides in your presentation, you must use Google Slides. When screen sharing, make sure the attendees cannot see your notes below the slides. Alternatively, keep your notes in another program or printed out. The following links will help you prepare your google slides presentation!

Click here to learn more about the benefits of using Google Slides.

Click here to learn how to make your Google Slides interactive.

Click here to learn how to screen share Google Slides to zoom.
When developing a slide deck presentation, you may want to look into the 10-20-30 rule: 10 slides, 20 minutes, 30-point font. Although 10 slides does not seem like much, your audience will get more out of your presentation with less information presented on-screen. Of course, you'll need to adapt this guideline for the allotted time frame for this event.

**10-20-30 Rule**

Charts and graphs. Visualizing data is extremely helpful for many people, and can bring your presentation to life. Use a bar graph, pie chart, or other visual to back up your point or show a trend within your research findings. Not only will it add some color to your slides, it will make it easier for your audience to interpret the data.

Maps. If you're presenting geographic data, use maps to orient your audience about the location(s) you are discussing.

Icons and illustrations. Adding creative graphics like icons, infographics, and illustrations can break up walls of text, make your information look more visual and interesting, and help explain your point better.

Videos. Adding videos into your slides is a great way to make your presentation more engaging. Videos can help you explain a point more clearly, show a product in action or give some background information on your subject. You can embed YouTube or Vimeo videos into your slides or screen share them directly. If you're concerned about time, consider playing a video silently in the background while you discuss your research findings.

Stock photos. If used intelligently, stock photos can add value to your slides by helping you set the tone, tell a story or visualize an idea. You can also use relevant stock photos in the background with text overlay to add some color to your slides. Ensure that the text is still clear and easy to read.

**Visuals make information much easier to digest and retain than plain text. They also help make your presentation memorable!**

Here are some types of visuals you can use to make your presentation more engaging:

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**Know Your Desired Key Takeaways**

Engaging public speakers introduce a human dimension to their presentations and take their audiences on a journey. They lead their audience along, continuously sparking their interest! To ensure audience retention, an effective presenter divides their presentation into digestible chunks of information both in their slide decks and when speaking.