

# Power Persuasion

**POW!**



**Craig Ball**

## Contents

*The contents include updated articles about electronic presentation published in TRIAL magazine, Law Technology News, the ABA's SOLO magazine and others. Please pardon an occasional overlap in treatment, but each article largely offers different ideas and suggestions.*

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## Banish Boring Bullet Points

Some years ago, data display maven and Yale Professor Edward Tufte caused a minor stir when he called PowerPoint “evil” and sniped that “Power corrupts. PowerPoint corrupts absolutely.” [*Wired*, Issue 11.09, September 2003]. Regrettably, Tufte, like so many others, only knows PowerPoint at its most banal; but, judging presentation software by bad PowerPoints is like judging all women by Paris Hilton. Truth is, even Microsoft doesn’t know how to use PowerPoint to its best advantage. Where do they get those awful templates and wizards?



You can perform amazing feats and be a more effective advocate using presentation software; but, you’ve got to set aside nearly all you know about PowerPoint and the ways you’ve seen it used. Cast out PowerPoint the Huckster and embrace PowerPoint the Persuader!

## Start Simple...and Grow

It’s a mistake to wait until the eve of mediation or trial to start building a presentation. Instead, use PowerPoint throughout the case—as you interview witnesses, work with experts, and conduct discovery. Forget slide templates. Begin your presentation with a white background and black type, or vice versa. Start inserting your visual evidence, photos, video, deposition excerpts, maps, graphs, key documents, jury issues, and so forth, each on a single slide.

Don’t worry about appearance or order at first—and certainly waste no time on bells and whistles like animated titling or sound effects. Simply load every visual you might use into the presentation, resizing the images for effective viewing. At this stage, the program is just a vessel to hold your visual anchors. As you gather new visuals, insert

them into the presentation. Don't forget audio evidence, too. Voice mail, recorded statements, and 911 calls can all be dropped into PowerPoint.

Once your visual evidence and demonstrative exhibits are in PowerPoint, you can easily access them. Though PowerPoint is a linear presentation tool, it also provides direct access to any slide (type the slide number, then hit "Enter") and can hyperlink from any object in any slide to any other slide, file, or external application. As the case develops, you'll return frequently to your presentation—to show a photo to a witness, a medical illustration to a doctor, or a deposition video clip to the court during a motion hearing. Along the way, you'll add titles, labels, highlighting, and animation, as well as determine slide order, keeping what works and dropping what doesn't. The presentation evolves with the case, and a polished product emerges gradually as your skill level grows.

### **Animate to Instruct**

PowerPoint's ability to animate text and "enhance" it with grating sound effects has long been abused. "Cute" animated effects quickly become fingernails on a blackboard when repeated. So, if you make it move, make it move for a reason lest you detract from your message.

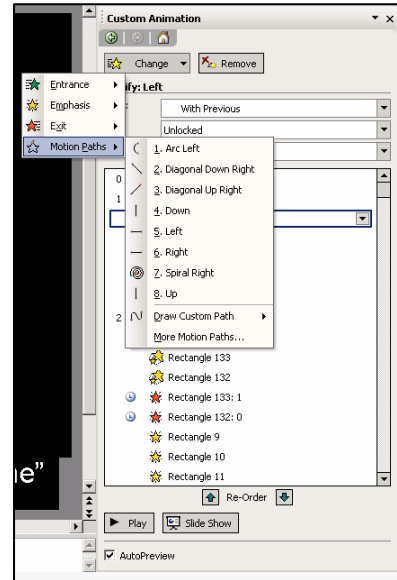
Animation done right and for a purpose is stunningly effective at increasing comprehension and focusing attention. The animation capabilities in PowerPoint versions 2002-2007 offer better ways to bounce text on, off, and around the screen. But, PowerPoint animation is capable of so much more when applied to "objects," PowerPoint's term for visual elements placed on a slide. You can make objects fade in or out, change in size, or follow a precise motion path. But it's the ability to animate multiple objects at the same time and tightly control their entrance, movements, and exit that puts the power in PowerPoint. You can even apply animation effects to the same object simultaneously, allowing, for example, an object to follow a defined path while also rotating and growing.

You needn't be a rocket scientist or run Pixar to build dynamic courtroom and mediation presentations. With a little patient tinkering and creative thought, any PowerPoint user can turn out animations rivaling those once produced only by professionals. You can animate complex mechanical processes, reconstruct auto and air crashes, depict needed safety features in operation, or re-enact medical procedures. I've used PowerPoint to animate process flow leading to a petrochemical plant explosion, the operation of a computer's hard drive, and intersectional collisions. I've also used it to depict complex money trails in fraud cases and to bring an investigating officer's drawing of a wreck to life, making his hand-drawn cars collide as if the police report were enchanted.



To experiment with motion path animation, draw a rectangle on a blank slide representing a car. PowerPoint includes a toolbar of basic drawing tools (if you don't see it on-screen, choose the "View" menu and select "Toolbars," then "Drawing"). Right-click on the rectangle and choose "Custom Animation" from the pop-up menu. Select "Add Effect," then "Add Motion Paths," "Draw Custom Paths," and "Curve."

Click on the center of your rectangle and drag a motion path for the object to follow, clicking at every point where you'd like your "car" to change direction. You may want to superimpose some rotation on the object to better mimic the real world. To do so, left-click on the rectangle and again select "Add Effect" from the "Custom Animation" menu, then "Emphasis" and "Spin." Menu options allow you to adjust the amount, speed, and direction of spin. You can instruct the spin to start with the motion path you've previously created (select "Start with Previous"). Now adjust the settings to achieve fluid movement.



Once you know how to animate an object, you can layer multiple effects or animate several objects at once or according to a time line you control. This conceptual version of the wreck built with rectangles may suffice, but you might want to increase the sophistication of your image by, e.g., animating a top view of a vehicle against a background of an aerial photo of an accident scene.

Movement lends itself to a host of events other than car wrecks. Almost anything that changes over time, from flow charts to time lines to cash flows, is easier to grasp through animation, with the added advantage that when you control movement, you control where the jury looks and when.

From client presentations to prepping witnesses to ADR proceedings, your animation efforts will pay off. It rarely matters if lawyer-created animations are admissible because most cases never get to trial. But even in court, if there is a competent sponsoring witness vouching for the fairness and accuracy of your depiction, most judges will admit it. Head off objections by giving an advance copy of your presentation to opposing counsel. If all else fails, you may get it admitted with an appropriate limiting instruction.

### Banish Bullet Points

Titles and bullet points are not your message. Your PowerPoint message flows from you as advocate and from your visual evidence. Use bulleted text sparingly, as speaker notes or to orient your audience so they aren't left wondering, "Which witness is he talking about?" If a cause of action or contractual duty requires that five conditions be met, bulleting those five points makes sense. Otherwise, keep bullet points to a

minimum, and where you can use something else, perhaps a document or photo, do it. Above all, respect your audience. *The jury can read.* A presenter commits an unforgivable sin by reading slides aloud.

### **Manage Focal Transitions: Moderator, Lecturer or Narrator?**

People can neither listen to two speakers at once nor read and listen at the same time. So, if the jurors are reading your slides, they aren't hearing you. Fortunately, most have no difficulty simultaneously watching and listening.

As between you and the screen, where do you want the jury's focus? If you're presenting a video deposition excerpt that needs to be seen and heard, you're just the moderator and it's important you remain silent and even avoid the jurors' field of vision so as not to distract them. Alternatively, when you've got something to say that demands the jurors' focus, you don't want their attention ping-ponging between screen and lecturer. Instead, either insure that the visuals cease to draw attention or put your self into the visuals, such as by moving alongside the screen and gesturing. Fading the screen to black is an unequivocal way to signal a shift in focus. Make this transition clear and crisp—not jarring--so jurors know it's time to look at you.

In between these two poles, strive to narrate a screen filled with visually rich and engaging silent images and animations. A superb example of this is Al Gore's case for global warming in the Oscar-winning documentary film, "An Inconvenient Truth." He lays claim to the audience's ears but surrenders their eyes to the screen. You want to be the jury's trusted instructor, presenting a "documentary" of the evidence that equips them to reach the correct verdict. Focal transitions are useful in controlling the rhythm of your presentation. Used well, jurors stay awake and alert. Used badly, jurors don't know where to look and become frustrated and tired.

### **Redemption**

At nearly all of the scores of speeches I give each year, someone asks, "What program did you use for your presentation?" They're amazed that it's just PowerPoint. Free of templates, unburdened by a mind-numbing succession of bullet points and brimming with strong visuals and purposeful animation, PowerPoint shines. Professor Tufte got it wrong. PowerPoint isn't evil. It's just misunderstood.

## Winning with PowerPoint

*Jurors better understand what they can see. Putting key elements of your case into a visual presentation will help you organize your thinking and enhance your powers of persuasion*

Ever watched a trial on *Boston Legal* or *Law and Order*? Of course, a real trial can't fairly be compared to those pumped-up spectacles, but dramatic and fast-moving trials on the tube foster high expectations in real life. Trial lawyers can't meet all those media-stoked hopes, but there is one juror expectation we can fulfill: We can be interesting and prepared.

To avoid a boring trial and help prepare your evidence, add structure and dash with presentation software. Other industries have relied on Microsoft PowerPoint for years. The program is easy to learn and use, and it gives trial lawyers a simple, polished way to present information—jury charges, photographs, deposition excerpts, video clips, animations, graphs, and sounds. Changes on the fly are a snap. It's not the only presentation product, and perhaps not the best, but it's the standard by which all others are judged.

You probably already own a copy of PowerPoint, because it came with your computer or as part of Microsoft Office. Most users barely scratch the surface of PowerPoint's capabilities, and some err at the outset by using its banal templates to structure a presentation. You can get the most from PowerPoint by forgetting the other presentations you've seen and using it—at first—as a simple way to organize, access, present, and enhance visual evidence.

Suppose computers are not your strong point or you lack the time or interest to develop skills. You may prefer to have someone else create your presentation. Even if you don't build your own PowerPoint slides, you need to learn enough about how it's done to be able to make simple changes as needed. Be sure you know the program well enough to reorder slides, blank the screen, add or remove text, save your changes, and restart the presentation should you need to reboot. You need to be able to alter your demonstrative evidence in response to changing strategies and the court's rulings.

**PowerPoint forces you to focus on a coherent presentation, helps you define the key points of your case, and frees you from relying on notes.**

Just constructing a PowerPoint presentation for trial or mediation hones your advocacy. PowerPoint forces you to focus on a coherent, linear presentation, while helping you to define and identify case making points. Best of all, using PowerPoint frees you from reliance on notes, so you're not chained to a lectern or leafing madly through a legal pad.

The Internet was around for years before it leapt into the public consciousness, but hardly anyone paid attention until it acquired a new dimension: pictures. We are wired

for sight and programmed early for "show and tell," not just "tell." The most compelling stories end with the assertion, "I saw it with my own eyes." Our ability to retain information is 6.5 times better when we see and hear information, compared with only hearing it. Visual persuasion is powerful, and technology makes it easy.

Harnessing the power of visual persuasion and getting the most out of PowerPoint require that you ask at every step, "How do I depict that?" You also need to have a camera at the ready—a digital camera is easier, but a film camera and scanner will do—and you can't be shy about photographing case-related people, places, and things. In an injury case, for example, consider taking digital video or photographs of the scene, witnesses, injuries, vehicles, buildings, signs, debris, and even bumper stickers. The last can reveal political affiliation, attitudes about drugs and drinking (a la "Don't Follow Me, I'm High") and even attitudes about safety. Here's a picture of an 18-wheeler proudly dubbed "Flirting With Disaster." Imagine the value of such a photo if this truck's driver had caused a fatal collision? [Of course, some might properly question whether the idiot using the cell phone camera while driving at highway speeds was not the one *truly* flirting with disaster].



What you're seeking is a visual "anchor" for every idea you want the jury to accept and retain. These images—like hieroglyphics or icons on a computer's desktop—serve as visual shorthand for testimonial and documentary evidence. When jurors assimilate both sound and imagery, they forge links between different parts of their brains. This cross-linking improves both retention and recollection. Then, either the spoken message or the associated images can stimulate recall

Videorecord every deposition, but if budgetary constraints make that impossible, don't leave without snapping a few photos of the deponent. You can do more with video equipment. Using low-cost video-conversion services or video-capture devices that cost \$10 to \$50, you can transfer images from VHS tapes to digital clips. Then, you can drag-and-drop them into a PowerPoint presentation, edit them on your PC, and digitally project them from your computer. If you, your staff, or your court-reporting service synchronize video time-codes to the deposition transcript, discrediting an opponent's witness can be almost as easy as highlighting an inconsistent statement and clicking "Play."

Imaging technology has become powerful, accessible, and affordable. Many digital cameras with 7-10 megapixel definition cost less than \$200 and provide direct-to-digital

convenience. Analog video cameras are inexpensive, and full-page color flatbed scanners cost as little as \$50—enabling you to manipulate, enhance, and resize conventional photographs and documents using your computer. Even devices that allow you to burn your own DVDs have slipped below \$50. DVDs, which offer content menus and hours of high-quality video, have become a common means to store and share graphics-rich PowerPoint presentations and digital video.

## **What You'll Need**

### **Hardware.**

Although Microsoft's recommendations are less demanding, I suggest running PowerPoint 2003 on a computer with a 1 gigahertz or faster processor, at least 512 megabytes (MB) of memory (RAM), and 32 MB or more of dedicated video memory (VRAM). This will ensure smooth playback of presentations, especially those including video and animation.

For portability, choose a quality laptop over a desktop. Toshiba, IBM, and Dell currently make good, reliable laptops. Look for a model with a rewritable CD drive (CD-RW) or, better yet, a DVD recorder so you can burn larger PowerPoint presentations onto a disc. Laptops with a composite video (NTSC) output—a video signal that is compatible with a television's (most computer signals aren't) can connect to the monitor of a conventional TV if a digital projector is unavailable.

### **PowerPoint Software**

The latest version is PowerPoint 2007, included in all versions of the Office 2007 software suite. Though I keep trying to like it, I'm still no fan of the 2007 version and suggest that you stick with the 2003 version that's a part of all Microsoft Office XP versions of Office. In 2007, Microsoft entirely revised the user interface in its Office tools to feature what it calls "the Ribbon. The laudable idea behind the Ribbon was to put all controls in one place. Unfortunately, for anyone comfortable with PowerPoint, you'll tear your hair out hunting down common actions hidden in that darn Ribbon!. The most important reason not to spend money on PowerPoint 2007 is that it doesn't do much notably better than the 2003 version you already own. However, if you only have older versions of the program, like PowerPoint 97 or 2000, upgrading is long overdue since the latest versions have more sophisticated animation tools that add real polish to your presentations.

### **Presentation Tools**

There are several ways to display a PowerPoint presentation—ranging from a standard television screen to a laptop—but the best approach is to use a digital video projector and screen.

Three years ago, it wasn't possible to get a small, bright, high-resolution projector for less than \$3,500, a hefty sum for a device most trial lawyers will only use a few times a



year. But these projectors now cost as little as \$600. If you're not sure you will use the projector often enough to justify the investment, you can borrow or rent one.

If you decide to buy your own projector, it should support high-resolution graphics (at least XGA 1024 x 768 pixels) and image brightness of at least 1200 ANSI lumens. Less bright units can be troublesome in courtrooms with lots of ambient light. Keystone correction, which compensates for image distortion when the projector is used at an angle to the screen, will help offset awkward courtroom arrangements, and a remote control will let you roam the courtroom untethered.

The lowest-tech part of the package can make a substantial difference in the success of your presentation. Better-quality screens feature higher reflectivity, returning more of the projected image to the viewer's eye and making it appear brighter. Courtrooms are notoriously challenging places to set up a projection screen so that the jury, judge, opposing counsel, and court reporter can all see it well. A projector and screen that support rear projection may be a useful solution. Always visit the courtroom in advance, and ask the judge, bailiff, clerk or other court personnel about the court's preferences. Setting up your screen and projector may entail a little creative choreography and the indulgence of the court.

Since you are working with documents, you'll want to get the largest screen that will fit the dimensions and layout of the courtroom and the distance between projector and screen. The Deluxe Insta-Theater screens from Da-Lite Corp. ([www.dalite.com](http://www.dalite.com)) are a good choice for their easy setup and sturdy aluminum case. Many courtrooms have a screen available, but be sure it's what you need and where you need it before leaving your screen at the office.

### **Start Simply and Build**

It's a mistake to wait until the eve of trial to start building a presentation. Instead, use it throughout the process—as you interview witnesses, work with experts, and conduct discovery. Forget the templates and begin your presentation with just a white background and black type, or vice versa. Start inserting your visual evidence--client photos, scene video, maps, graphs, scans of key documents, bullet points, jury issues, and so forth--each on a single screen (or "slide" in PowerPoint parlance). I like to scan in the covers and relevant pages of the codes or standards my opponent violated, to make those obligations "real" to the jury.

Initially, don't concern yourself with appearance or order. Also, don't waste time on bells and whistles like animated titling or sound effects. Just load every visual you might use into the presentation, resizing the images for effective viewing. At this stage, the program is just a vessel to hold your visual anchors. As you gather new visuals, insert them into the presentation—and make sure you periodically back up your work. Don't forget audio evidence, too. Voice mail, recorded statements, and 911 calls can all be dropped into PowerPoint.

Once your visual evidence and demonstrative exhibits are in PowerPoint, you can easily get to them. Though PowerPoint is a linear presentation tool, it also provides direct access to any slide (type the slide number, then hit "Enter") and can hyperlink from any object in any slide to any other slide, file, or external application. As the case develops, you'll return frequently to your presentation—to show a photo to a witness, a medical illustration to a doctor, or a deposition video clip to the court during a motion hearing. Along the way, you'll add titles, labels, highlighting, and animation, as well as determine the slides' order, keeping what works and dropping what doesn't. The presentation evolves with the case, and a polished presentation emerges gradually as your skill level grows.

### Video

Most video needs editing before you show it to a jury, and video depositions are more effective when distilled to a 15- to 30-minute excerpt. Once, lawyers had to hire expensive video editors or manage a crude edit with two VCRs. Now, computers, digital camcorders, video-capture devices, and video-editing software have made video production relatively cheap and easy. Entirely adequate video-editing programs like Microsoft's Windows Movie Maker 2 can be downloaded for free, and excellent alternatives with more features cost less than \$100. A new product, Adobe Premiere Elements does just about everything its powerful older brother, Adobe Premiere, can do but for a fraction of the price.

Video editing software can also breathe life into static images. You can use the pan, fade, and transition features of a video-editing program on scanned photos and drawings to inject a Ken Burns-style dynamic element. Adding suitable background music may touch hearts in mediation or final argument.

Once you have digitized video, the magic begins. You can drag-and-drop video segments directly into PowerPoint or use hyperlinks to connect the presentation to video segments stored on CD or DVD. In PowerPoint, video objects can be manipulated like almost any other graphic—animated onscreen or started and stopped in a carefully orchestrated sequence. A compelling technique for mediation or final argument might be a slide where headshots of eyewitnesses appear like still photos in an album, then leap to life, one after another, testifying about the same key issue.

A compelling technique for mediation or final argument might be a slide where headshots of eyewitnesses appear like still photos in an album, then leap to life, one after another, testifying about the same key issue.

### Animation

The ability to animate text (and "enhance" it with grating sound effects like screeching tires) has long been overused in PowerPoint presentations. The animated effect that's intriguing the first time you see it is like fingernails on a blackboard by the 10th time.

Animation is banal and distracting when misused, but when done right it's stunningly effective at increasing comprehension and drawing attention to what's important.

PowerPoint's animation capabilities offer more than just ways to bounce text on, off, and around the screen. You can make objects on a slide fade in or out, change in size, or follow a precise path. More important, you can animate multiple objects at the same time and tightly control their appearances, movements, and disappearances. You can also apply animation effects to the same object simultaneously, allowing, for example, an object to follow a defined path while also rotating and growing.

With a little patient tinkering and creative thought, any PowerPoint user can turn out animations rivaling those once produced only by professionals. You can animate complex mechanical processes, reconstruct auto and air crashes, depict needed safety features in operation, or re-enact medical procedures. I've used PowerPoint to animate a petrochemical plant explosion, the operation of a computer's hard drive, and a collision at an intersection. It was easy to bring an investigating officer's drawing of the scene to life, making his hand-drawn cars collide as if the police report were enchanted. Adding the screeching tires sound effect to that presentation made a point!

You may question whether animations created by an attorney rather than an expert are admissible as evidence. Most of the time, it doesn't matter because ninety percent of all cases never get to trial. Moreover, if there is a competent sponsoring witness who can vouch for the fairness and accuracy of your animation, most judges will allow their use irrespective of who created it. Savvy opponents will know to object if the animation distorts reality, but many will just let it roll in unchallenged. When all else fails, seek to use it with an appropriate limiting instruction.

To experiment with this type of animation, open a blank PowerPoint document and begin by drawing a rectangle to represent a car. PowerPoint includes a toolbar of basic drawing tools (if you don't see it on-screen, choose the "View" menu and select "Toolbars," then "Drawing"). Right-click on the rectangle and choose "Custom Animation" from the pop-up menu. Select "Add Effect," then "Add Motion Paths," "Draw Custom Paths," and "Curve."

Click on the center of the rectangle and drag a motion path for the object to follow, clicking at every point where you'd like your "car" to change direction. You may want to superimpose some rotation on the object to better mimic the real world. Left-click on the rectangle and again select "Add Effect" from the "Custom Animation" menu, then "Emphasis" and "Spin." Menu options allow you to adjust the amount, speed, and direction of spin. You can instruct the spin to start with the motion path you've previously created (select "Start with Previous"). Now adjust the settings to achieve fluid movement.

**Building your animation skills will take time and experimentation, but the unexpected benefit is that it's a great deal of creative fun.**

Once you know how to animate an object, you can layer multiple effects or animate several objects at once or according to a time line you control. This conceptual version of the wreck built with rectangles may suffice, but you might want to increase the sophistication of your image: Apply the same techniques to create, for example, an aerial view of a vehicle animated against a background of an aerial photo of the accident scene.

Building these skills will take time and experimentation, but the unexpected benefit is that it's a great deal of creative fun. Plus, imagine the intimidation factor when your opponent learns who created those animations that so impressed the adjuster!

### **Presentation Tips**

When presenting documents with PowerPoint, show the jurors the untouched document as scanned, before adding any lines, boxes, circles, or other embellishments. If the original document is in evidence, assure jurors that they will be able to see it. Never enhance a document with PowerPoint in a way that might be construed as concealing or misrepresenting evidence. Juries are quick to fault counsel who appears to be hiding anything.

Remember, the documentary evidence intimately familiar to you is brand-new to the jury. People read at different speeds, and no one will be happy if you remove a document before he or she is through reading it. Adjust your presentation pace to the jury's and don't go to the next slide or enhancement until the entire panel is ready.

Even the best on-screen presentation can strain eyes, necks, and attention spans if it goes on too long. Use variety in presenting exhibits. Break up your presentation with flip charts, three-dimensional evidence, even the familiar blowup mounted on a foam board.

Depart from the on-screen presentation to underscore the importance of key evidence. For example, if one document is the smoking gun, don't debut it on-screen, undistinguished from other exhibits. Instead, reverently bring forth the paper original and cradle it in your hands like the crown jewels. The change in focus and format spotlights the "in the flesh" evidence.

Many an unprepared presenter has been stymied by the lack of a cable, extension cord for AC power, power strip (you will need at least two power connections, three if you use amplified speakers), or a small table to hold the projector. Running cables across the floor can create trip-and-fall hazards, so have a large roll of gaffer's tape to secure them. Gaffer's tape doesn't leave a sticky residue like duct tape does, and it's stronger and easier to use than masking tape.

If your presentation includes sound, see if you can tap into the courtroom sound system or bring your own amplified speaker system. *Always* check out the courtroom well

before setup, and plan accordingly. Remember, just because there is an outlet on the wall doesn't guarantee that it has any juice.

Computers are flexible, powerful, and persuasive—but they can fail. Always have a Plan B for those times when the laptop won't boot or the projector bulb burns out. Have a copy of your presentation—and the PowerPoint portable viewer application that comes with the program—on a CD-ROM or a thumb drive. That way, you can borrow another system and get going again.

Keep a spare projector bulb on hand, or have someone (perhaps an audio/visual rental company) prepared to bring a working projector to the courthouse. Know where the nearest computer equipment vendors are located, and carry their phone numbers. In a pinch, many laptops can be attached to a television monitor; be sure yours can.

Most important, recognize that the same short attention spans and appetite for stimulation that make Gen-X jurors respond well to visual persuasion also give them a short fuse when technical snafus delay the proceedings. Be ready to move on if your fixes don't work.

My most successful PowerPoint presentations serve to support and supplement my powers of persuasion by clearly and efficiently portraying the evidence and my client's contentions without distortion or distraction. Digital presentation keeps me from forgetting to make a key point. Freed from using notes, I can more easily engage the jurors, use gestures and body language and maintain eye contact. PowerPoint helps me stay on message, yet remain flexible enough to adapt on the fly as the evidence evolves. Best of all, I know I'm using the visual persuasion jurors find most compelling and memorable. Acquiring a high comfort level with presentation technology may take some work, but the effort it demands is rewarded each time I rest my case.

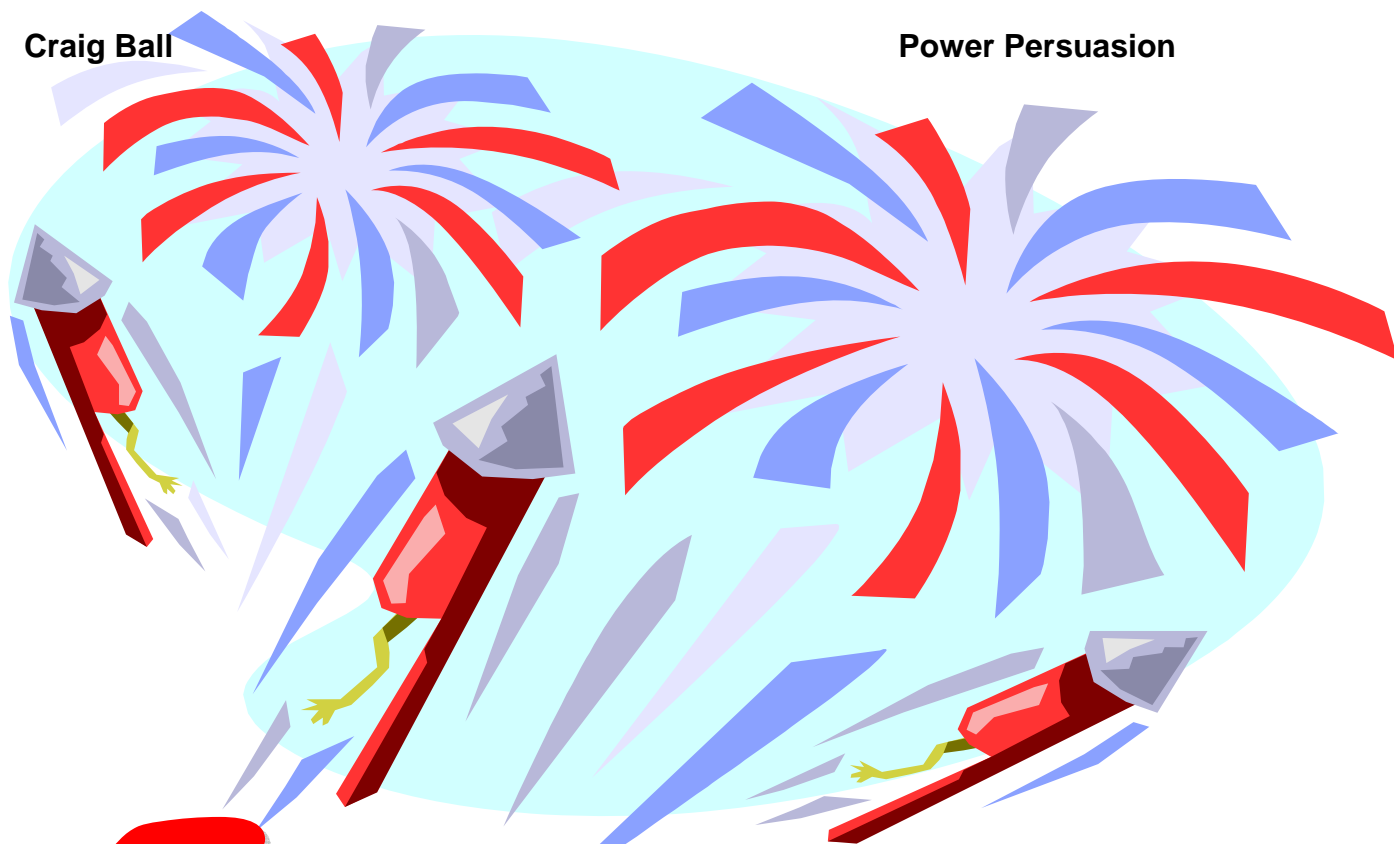
### Learning More

You can teach yourself the basics of PowerPoint in a single evening, but to hone your skills, check out the specialized tutorials found in the PowerPoint area of Microsoft's Web site ([www.microsoft.com/office/powerpoint/](http://www.microsoft.com/office/powerpoint/)) or review the postings in one of the PowerPoint newsgroups, which you can find by searching the "Groups" section of most major Web portals, like Google, MSN, or Yahoo. Two good (albeit pricey) books specifically for lawyers and each now in second editions are available: *PowerPoint 2002 for Litigators* by Deanne Siemer and Frank Rothschild (National Institute for Trial Advocacy, \$69.95), and *Persuasive Computer Presentations: The Essential Guide for Lawyers* by Ann Brenden and John Goodhue (American Bar Association Law Practice Management Section, \$79.95).



Craig Ball

Power Persuasion



# **6** *Ways to Add PowerPoint Pizzazz to Mundane Documents*

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## **Six Ways to Add PowerPoint Pizzazz to Mundane Documents**

A trial lawyer's greatest enemy is boredom.

One way to beat back the boring trial is to add digital dash to routine documentary evidence with presentation software packages like Microsoft's PowerPoint. You probably already own a copy of PowerPoint, either because it came with a computer or as part of Microsoft Office. If it's gathering dust on your system, why not put it to work enhancing the sort of mundane documents lawyers work with every day? If you have Corel Presentations or Apple Keynote, you can use them to create most of these enhancements, though the steps will be a little different.

### **What You're Going to Need**

#### **Tools to Create the Enhancements**

You don't need much to get started, and chances are you already have it all:

#### **Computer**

If the computer you have now is a PC successfully running Windows with any flavor of operating system from Windows 98 forward (e.g., Windows 98, ME, XT, 2000, XP or Vista), or if you're using a late-model Mac, you've got all the computing power you need to do the tasks discussed in this article. If you're still running Windows 95 or if your processor speed is under 450MHz, you're long overdue to treat yourself to a new system. Prices have tumbled so far, you'll be amazed at what you can get for under \$600.00, but be sure whatever you buy has a DVD recorder that will allow you to burn larger PowerPoint presentations onto optical disk for portability.

People often ask me what kind of computer they should buy. I recommend electric (because the diesel-powered units are noisy). Seriously, there's no pat answer--what you buy depends upon what you plan to do with it. Typical applications, like e-mail, word processing, bookkeeping and web surfing, place only modest demands on a computer, enabling you to get by with almost any "starter" PC being sold today. Although Microsoft's recommendations are less demanding, for PowerPoint 2003 I recommend a system running a one gigahertz or faster processor, with at least 256 megabytes of memory (RAM) and 32 MB or more of video memory (VRAM). However, for PowerPoint 2007 on a PC, you'll need to be running Windows XP (with service pack 2) or Vista. For the courtroom, choose a quality laptop over a desktop. Toshiba, Lenovo (formerly IBM), Gateway and Dell currently make some of the best and most reliable laptops. The Apple MacBooks are spectacular machines, but sadly PowerPoint for Mac is something of a dud.

#### **PowerPoint Software**

The latest version is PowerPoint 2007, included in all versions of the Office 2007 software suite. Though I keep trying to like it, I'm still no fan of the 2007 version and

suggest that you stick with the 2003 version that's a part of all Microsoft Office XP versions of Office. In 2007, Microsoft entirely revised the user interface in its Office tools to feature what it calls "the Ribbon. The laudable idea behind the Ribbon was to put all controls in one place. Unfortunately, for anyone comfortable with PowerPoint, you'll tear your hair out hunting down common actions hidden in that darn Ribbon!. The most important reason not to spend money on PowerPoint 2007 is that it doesn't do much notably better than the 2003 version you already own. However, if you only have older versions of the program, like PowerPoint 97 or 2000, upgrading is long overdue since the latest versions have more sophisticated animation tools that add real polish to your presentations.

### **Document Scanner**

This is where folks start to get nervous about whether they have the right scanner. Don't. Let me put it this way; if your scanner is less than about five years old and cost you more than thirty bucks, it's almost certainly up to the task. If I had to make a recommendation, any current USB-compatible model made by Visioneer, Fujitsu or Hewlett-Packard is a sound choice. I prefer a scanner with a reliable automatic document feeder, but even a simple flatbed scanner will suffice for purposes of preparing a PowerPoint. Most people's unhappy experiences with scanners involved their use as optical character recognition (OCR) devices, but here we are using the scanner only to grab an image of a document.

### **Tools to Present Your Work**

Once you've created lively documents, you're going to want to display them. There are several ways to do so, ranging from printing out your work on a transparency and using an overhead projector to putting them on a standard television screen to just gathering a small audience around your laptop display. But, the best approach by far (and, of course, the most expensive) is to use a laptop computer, digital video projector and screen.

### **Laptop Computer**

You don't have to use a laptop to display your PowerPoint, but clunky desktop systems and monitors are a pain in the neck to transport, and handheld alternatives may limit your ability to use animation, transitions and multimedia. In the courtroom, a laptop allows you the essential flexibility to make changes on-the-fly and adapt to the court's rulings.

The same criteria advanced above for selecting a computer apply to choosing a laptop, but there are a few unique wrinkles. A DVD-ROM and USB 2.0 ports to connect thumb drives are a must. I look for laptops that offer a composite video (NTSC) output allowing me to connect directly to the monitor input of a conventional television set when a digital projector is unavailable. A hefty ration of video memory (>32MB VRAM) dedicated to the laptop's video adapter helps PowerPoint presentations run smoothly, especially when you're dealing with video and animation.

Before you buy a new laptop, be sure to take a look at the latest tablet PCs. The ability to pivot the screen away from the keyboard and to write directly on the screen is a plus for use in court and at mediation.

### **Digital Video Projector**

Video projectors have tumbled in price and can be purchased for as little as \$600 . They climb into the thousands of dollars as you add miniaturization, brightness and more features. Even a replacement bulb for one of these gadgets can set you back hundreds of dollars. Accordingly, infrequent users elect to borrow or rent a projector as needed. More and more, courthouses, mediators and bar groups are making these devices available. Ask around.

If you decide to buy your own projector, it should support a minimum native XGA (1024 x 768) resolution and 1200 ANSI lumens image brightness. You need lots of lumens for a clear picture in a courtroom with lots of ambient light. Keystone correction helps you compensate for awkward courtroom arrangements and a remote control affords you a longer leash.

### **Projection Screen**

The lowest tech part of the package can make a substantial difference to the success of your presentation. Higher quality screens have higher reflectivity, returning more of the projected image to the viewer's eye and making for a brighter appearance. Courtrooms are notoriously challenging places to set up a projection screen without figuratively treading on someone's toes. As soon as you begin using projection in your presentations, you will appreciate the universal reluctance to accept a less-than-optimum viewpoint. Trying to set up such that jury, judge, opposing counsel and court reporter are all well-served is no mean feat with a single projector and screen, and to do so may require a little creative choreography and the indulgence of the court. Sometimes, a projector and screen that support rear projection are useful solutions.

Since we are working with documents, you will want to get as large a screen as will work given the dimensions and layout of the courtroom and the distance between projector and screen. I'm partial to the Deluxe Insta-Theater line of screens from Da-Lite Corporation (<http://www.dalite.com>) because of their ease of set up and integral aluminum case. Here again, many venues already have screens available for your use; but, be sure it's what you need and where you need it before leaving your screen at the office.

### **Miscellany**

Many an unprepared presenter has been stymied by the lack of a cable, extension cord for AC power, power strip (because you're going to need at least two power connections, three if you use amplified speakers) or even just a small table on which to place the projector. Running cables across the floor can create trip-and-fall hazards, so a large roll of gaffer's tape is worth having on hand to tape them down. Gaffer's tape doesn't leave the sticky residue of duct tape, and it's stronger and easier to use than

masking tape (though all will suffice in a pinch). If your presentation includes sound, consider whether you can plug into the room sound system or if you will need to furnish and position amplified speakers. *Always* check out the courtroom sufficiently in advance of set up and plan accordingly. Anticipate complications—a bulb burning out, a computer malfunction--and have a back up plan ready. Finally, remember that just because there is an outlet on the wall doesn't guarantee that it's got any juice!

## **Getting Started**

### **Scanning the Document**

The first step to adding pizzazz to a mundane document is getting the document in a digital format that can be dragged, dropped and manipulated in PowerPoint. A scanner takes a picture of a document and converts that document image to a file in a particular computer-readable graphic format.

### **File Formats**

Though some scanners use proprietary formats incompatible with other applications, all support the ability to save or export an image to one of the many standard graphics formats. For our purposes, we want to save the scanned image as a JPEG (pronounced jay-peg and also abbreviated JPG), PNG or TIFF. Consult your scanner's manual or help file to ascertain how to create these formats with your model. If your scanner is set to scan directly to the Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF), note that the Adobe Acrobat program allows you to export to JPEG, PNG and TIFF.

Although it's common to use the JPEG format for scanned photographs and the TIFF format for scanned documents, I tend to use JPEG for both since JPEG tends to create the smallest file size. I recommend you stick with JPEGs unless your results are unsatisfactory. A common PowerPoint mistake is creating and using too large an image file for a given document when a smaller file would suffice. As the number of slides in your PowerPoint presentation grows, these unnecessarily large images start to slow the program and can adversely impact the presentation. Setting your scanner to create the optimum file size from the start can prevent headaches later on.

### **Scan Resolution**

Your scanner will allow you to set the resolution and color depth at which it scans. Resolution is measured in dots-per-inch (dpi). For an ordinary business document, scanning at a resolution greater than 150 dpi does little to enhance your presentation and saddles you with an excessively large file. For screen projection, you may be satisfied with a scan at 75 dpi, so play around with the settings to find the best balance between file size and legibility. Gravitate to higher resolutions only when you anticipate greatly enlarging a small area of your document in a call out (more about this later) or printing your slides to paper.



### Color Depth

Color depth describes the amount of data assigned to each picture element (“pixel”) in an image. If a pixel can only be black or white, then you only need a single binary digit (“bit”) to describe it, but if it be any of millions of colors, the string of data needed to describe the color is very large. Multiply that data times the thousands or millions of pixels in a scanned image and you’ll have some notion why color depth settings dramatically influence file size. Unless your document is in color, there is no need to choose a color depth setting other than “grayscale.” Even for documents with highlighting, colored logos or marginalia in colored ink, a color depth no greater than 256 is almost always sufficient and will optimize file size. Just as too much color depth is undesirable, too little can produce unacceptable scans. Choosing the “black and white” color depth setting for many documents frequently results in a harsh, high-contrast image unfaithful to the original—much like a late-generation generation photocopy. Stick to grayscale where possible.

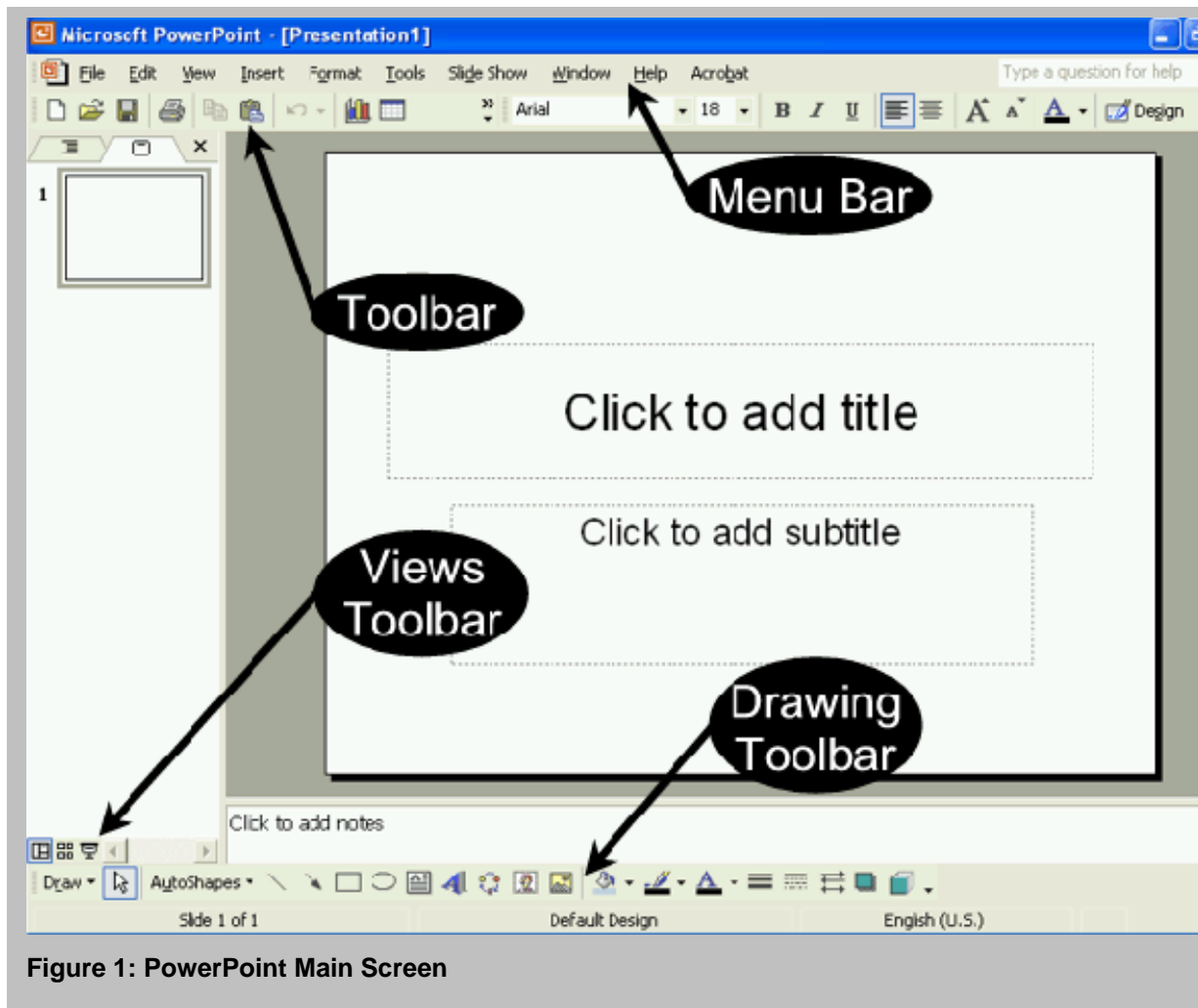


Figure 1: PowerPoint Main Screen

### Getting Scanned Documents into PowerPoint

As a rule, there are three ways to accomplish almost anything in PowerPoint. You can select the desired action from the menu bar. You can use a keyboard shortcut—a key combination that initiates the desired action. You can use the mouse to drag-and-drop or select an action icon from the toolbar. To better understand this flexibility requires an acquaintance with the program's interface. PowerPoint allows users to customize the way the program's many menus and icons appear on their screen; consequently, your screen may look a bit different than Figure 1 (preceding page), but rest assured the buttons and menu choices I describe are there, if you hunt around a bit.

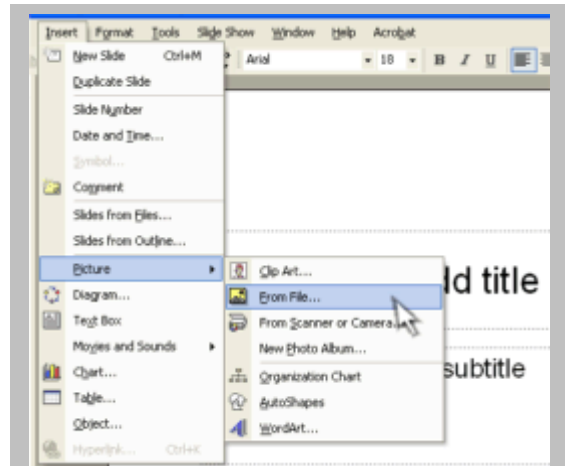


Figure 2: Insert Picture Menu

Although PowerPoint supports scanning directly into your presentation, these examples assume you've scanned your document, named the file and saved it as a JPEG. If so, start PowerPoint and, if asked, select "Blank Presentation" and "Blank Slide." To insert your scanned document into the blank slide represented by the large white box filling most of your screen, select "**Insert**" on the menu bar, then "**Picture**," then "**From File**." (Fig. 2). From this point forward, let's simplify a selection sequence like this one by expressing it as **Insert>Picture>From File**. You can have achieved the same result by simply clicking the "Insert Picture" button on the Drawing Toolbar. (Fig. 3). Either way, the program will open a picture selection window (Figure 4) for you to locate and select your scanned document. Remember: your scan is a picture of the document, not its text.

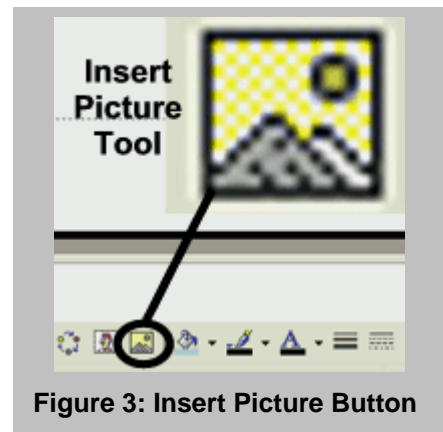


Figure 3: Insert Picture Button

As soon as you select the scanned document, it will appear in the slide window and you can then reposition it by left mouse clicking and dragging it or resize it by clicking and dragging on its sizing handles—the small circles at the corners of the image. Be sure and resize using just the corner handles as using the side handles will distort the aspect ratio of the document. By right clicking on the image and selecting "**Format Document**," the menu which appears affords you considerable control over image attributes including (by selecting

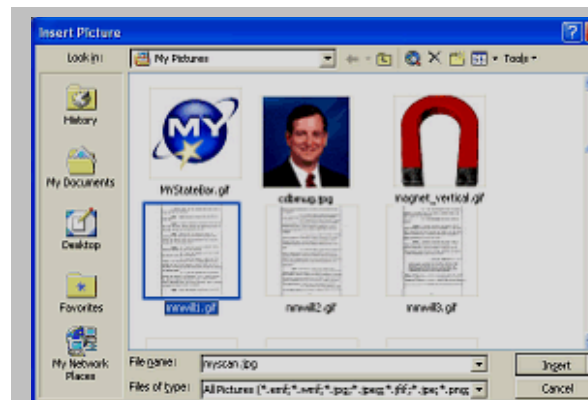


Figure 4: Picture Selection Window

the menu's "**Picture**" tab) the ability to adjust the brightness and contrast of the image. This is a quick, handy way to improve the legibility of washed-out or too-dark images.

### **Backgrounds**

It's a good bet that your inserted document is a white piece of paper sitting atop a white background. Documents tend to get lost on the page when this happens. Instead, make your document stand out by changing to a darker background. To do so, simply select Format>Background from the menu, then click the down arrow on the right side of the colored block. If you don't see the background color you prefer, click on "More Colors" and a color wheel will appear. Then just select the background color you want by clicking on it. Close the selection menus by clicking "Okay" and then "Apply." I tend to use plain black backgrounds with white documents, but any dark color will suffice to help the viewers to focus.

### **Document Enhancement Techniques**

The first thing you might notice about the scanned document you inserted in your PowerPoint is that it's pretty hard to read, particularly if it is mostly 10- or 12 point typed text. Don't worry about that. If your documentary evidence is like most, only a few key words or passages are crucial to your case. They're what you want the viewer to remember. The rest of this article will describe half a dozen easy-to-master document enhancement techniques that will help a viewer to identify, understand and recall the parts of the document you wish to emphasize. These techniques are:

- Underlining and line linking;
- Boxing and circling;
- Retyped call outs;
- Zoomed call outs;
- Transparent coloration; and,
- Negative Coloration

### **Caveat**

Juries are very sensitive to the notion that a lawyer may seek to keep information from them, and they are quick to fault counsel who appears to be hiding anything. Consequently, never use an enhancement in a way that might be construed as concealing or misrepresenting evidence. When presenting documents via PowerPoint, it's important to begin by affording the jurors a view of the scanned document; that is, the entire page in its pristine condition, before any lines, boxes, circles or other embellishments. If permissible and accurate, assure the jury that the original of the document is in evidence and will be available to them to be reviewed in its entirety. Remember also that documentary evidence with which you are intimately familiar is brand new to the jurors. People read at different speeds, and everyone responds negatively when a document is taken away from them before they are through reading it. Adjust your pace to the jury's. Don't allow your PowerPoint presentation to proceed to the next slide or enhancement until the entire panel is ready.

### Break It Up

Even the best onscreen presentation can get tedious and strain eyes, necks and attention spans if it goes on too long. Strive to employ varied ways to present exhibits. Break up your presentation with the old reliable flip chart, three-dimensional evidence, even the familiar blow up on foam core board. Use a departure from onscreen presentation to underscore the import of key evidence. For example, if one document is the smoking gun, don't debut it onscreen, undistinguished from all other exhibits. Instead, reverently bring forth the paper original and cradle this all-important exhibit in your hands like the crown jewels. The changes in focus and format spotlight the "in the flesh" evidence.

### Have a Plan B

It's flexible, powerful and persuasive. But it's still a computer, so you must have a Plan B in place for those terrifying times when the laptop won't boot or the projector's bulb burns out. Be sure to have a copy of your presentation (and the PowerPoint portable viewer application that comes with the program) on a CD-ROM or a thumb drive. Then, at least you can borrow another system and get going again. Keep a spare projector bulb on hand, or have someone—perhaps an audio/visual rental company—standing by to bring a working projector to the courthouse. Know where the nearest computer equipment vendors are located and keep their phone numbers at hand. In a pinch, many laptops can be attached to a television monitor, so be sure you select one that can. Most importantly, know that the same short attention spans and appetite for stimulation that make Gen-X jurors respond to visual persuasion give them a short fuse when technical snafus delay the proceedings. Be ready to move on if the first few fixes don't take.

### Underlining and Line Linking

If you were passing a document on to someone and you wanted to draw attention to something in it, you'd probably draw an arrow to that part, underline it, color it with a highlighting marker or maybe draw a circle or box around it. Simple, effective computer enhancement techniques are instantly clear because they do much the same thing.

Suppose you want to draw attention to certain passages in a document by underlining them. All you need to do is click a few icons on the Drawing Toolbar near the bottom of the PowerPoint screen (Fig. 5), drag your mouse across the pertinent places in the



Figure 5: Drawing Toolbar

document and you're there. The same is true for drawing pointers, lines and arrows. Let's walk through it step-by-step.

### Underscoring

Once you've inserted your scanned document into your PowerPoint presentation and determined what passage you want to underscore, simply click the "**Line**" tool icon on

the Drawing Toolbar (Fig. 6) and place your mouse pointer at the beginning of the passage you want to underline. Note that when you selected the line tool, your mouse pointer turned into a set of crosshairs. Click and hold the left mouse button while you drag the crosshairs toward the end of the line or passage. When you release the mouse button, a line should appear under the text. *HINT: I like to hold down the Shift key while I do this because it forces the program to draw a perfectly straight line (unlike me, PowerPoint can draw a straight line!).*

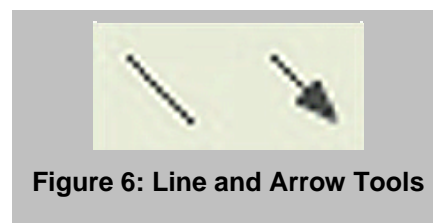


Figure 6: Line and Arrow Tools

To change the thickness of the line you've just drawn, click the "**Line Style**" button (Fig. 7) on the Drawing Toolbar and pick the line thickness and style you prefer. To change the color of the line, click the "**Line Color**" button (Fig. 8) on the Drawing Toolbar and click the color you want. Repeat this procedure as often as needed to underscore all the text you want to emphasize. If you need to change a line previously drawn, select it by placing your mouse pointer on the line and left clicking. The line is selected when sizing handles (tiny circles) appear on each end. You can select multiple lines by holding down the Shift key while you select them or by holding down the left mouse button and dragging a box around them.



Figure 7: Line Style Tool



Figure 8: Line Color Tool

Don't fret if you underline the wrong passage or mess up in some other way. The most marvelous keyboard shortcut in PowerPoint (and most other Windows applications) is **Ctrl-Z**, because it undoes the last thing you did. Hit Ctrl-Z several times, and Windows undoes the last several things you did. Want to redo something you've undone? No problem, just hit **Ctrl-Y**. These two keyboard shortcuts will spare you a lot of frustration. Naturally, you can access Undo and Redo from the Edit menu too.

## Arrows

Drawing an arrow is as easy as underscoring. Just left mouse click the "**Arrow**" tool icon on the Drawing Toolbar (Fig. 6), then click and drag the crosshairs from the place where you want the end point of the arrow to be to the place where you want the arrowhead to be. Voila! If you didn't get your arrow position exactly as desired, it's no problem. You can click and drag the sizing handles to reposition the endpoints or you can click and drag on the shaft of the arrow to move the entire arrow. Once you've got it where you want it, you can customize everything about the arrow you've just drawn. While the arrow is still selected (or after selecting it by left mouse clicking on the shaft of the arrow), click the "**Arrow Style**" tool icon on the Drawing Toolbar (Fig. 9) and select the arrowhead size and style and line thickness and style you prefer. As with most actions in PowerPoint, you can achieve the same result in various ways, e.g., you could double click the arrow to



Figure 9: Arrow Style Tool



bring up the Arrow Style options menu. You could also select **Format>AutoShape** from the Menu Bar or hit **ALT-O** twice to get to the same place. More than one way to skin a cat!

## Linking

Sometimes you need to draw attention to a relationship between parts of the same document or between two documents. The line and arrow drawing techniques are well-suited to these tasks. Try drawing a line or a two-headed arrow between two parts of a single document or experiment with inserting *two* scanned documents side-by-side on the same PowerPoint slide, then drawing draw lines and arrows between them, as in Fig. 10.

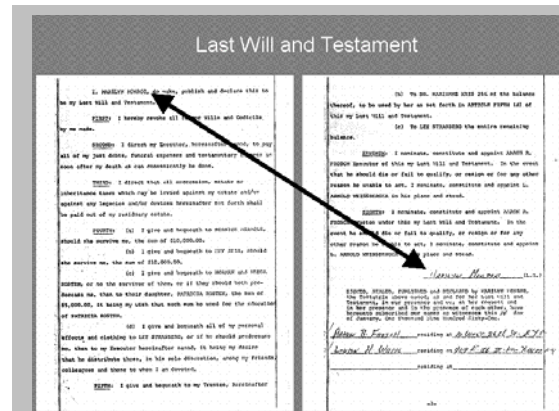


Figure 10: Arrow Linking Documents

## Animating Enhancements

Much of the power in PowerPoint lies in its ability to animate screen objects. Judicious use of PowerPoint animation permits you to control the flow and focus of your presentation while adding kinetic interest—pizzazz—to static and mundane evidence. Movement can be used to express passage of time, exchange of consideration, trajectory of a bullet, flow of product through a pipeline, routes taken by vehicles, propagation of a family tree or crossing off items on a list, just to name a few. Once you develop a comfort level with PowerPoint animation, all sorts of creative uses will occur to you, but use care to insure the animation doesn't get in the way of the message. A frequent mistake of PowerPoint users is an infatuation with pointless animation. If your text or enhancement doesn't need to bounce or tumble into the slide, then don't do it! Animation should be as subtle as possible (or entirely absent where it serves no purpose). Don't cry wolf! Reserve dramatic animation for emphasis of dramatic points, and be mindful of objections to inappropriate emphasis. What you can do in argument you may be prohibited from doing in jury selection or with a witness.

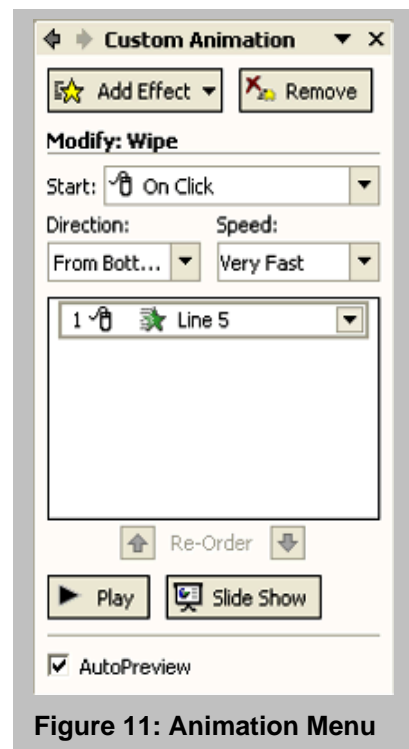


Figure 11: Animation Menu

To add animation to a line, arrow or any screen object, right click on the line, arrow or object, then select “**Custom Animation**.” The Custom Animation menu will appear (Fig. 11). In PowerPoint 2002, you would then select “**Add Effect**” and be prompted to choose an animation effect from any of four categories of effects: **Entrance**, **Emphasis**, **Exit** or **Motion Paths** (Fig. 12). Entrance effects set the way in which a screen object appears on your slide. Emphasis effects animate objects while onscreen, leaving them onscreen after animation. Exit effects set the way in which a screen object leaves the slide, and Motion Paths enable an object to move around the screen during presentation on a path you select or create. When you select “Entrance,” a partial list of entrance effects will appear. If you don’t see the entrance effect you want on the partial menu, select “**More Effects**” for a complete list. For example, to cause the arrow in Figure 10 to appear to be drawn from the typed name to the signature, right click the arrow, select **Custom Animation>Add Effect>Entrance**, then select the *Wipe* effect as its entrance animation effect. I could then customize the animation, selecting “*From Left*” from the “**Direction**” option (so the arrow appears to be drawn from left to right) and “*On Click*” from the “**Start**” options (setting the action that will start drawing the arrow across the screen, from name to signature). If you want to see how the animation will look in your presentation, click the “Play” button, or click “Slide Show” to run your presentation from the current slide.

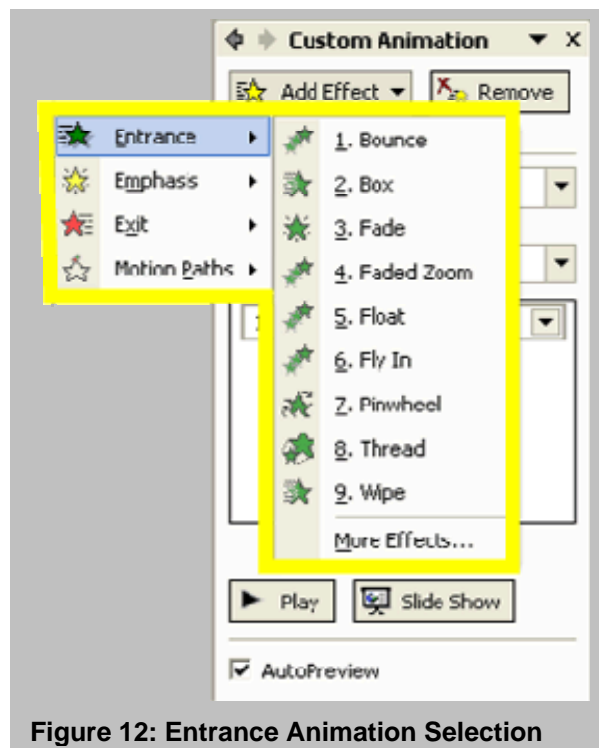


Figure 12: Entrance Animation Selection

The variety of animation options may seem daunting at first blush, but you will quickly come to appreciate the high degree of flexibility and creativity these choices afford. The ability to choreograph animation to match the pace of your presentation, apply multiple overlapping animation effects to a single object, allow multiple objects to animate at the same time, adjust animation speed and control a host of other customization choices is invaluable in a courtroom persuasion tool.

### Boxing and Circling

Boxing and circling around text or other features of a document—especially when paired with a well-chosen animation effect like “*zoom out slightly*”—are great ways to focus a viewer’s attention and serve as the perfect preludes to the text callouts described later in this paper.

To draw a box or circle around text, click either the **Rectangle** or **Oval** tool on the drawing toolbar (Fig. 13). Then, in the slide window, click and drag a rectangle or oval around the passage to be highlighted. Don't worry about perfect size or placement just yet as the shape you've drawn needs a little work. First, the shape is, by default, filled with an aqua color that blocks the text. To clear this fill color and make the box or circle transparent, find the **Fill Color** paint bucket icon on the drawing toolbar and click on the down arrow to its right, then select "No Fill." Now, just as we did before, use the "**Line Style**" (Fig. 7) and "**Line Color**" (Fig. 8) tools on the Drawing Toolbar to select the line thickness, style and color you prefer. Use the sizing handles to precisely size and position your shape and enclose the text or other content you want to emphasize. I find a red or yellow line at six point thickness works well. **TIP:** *If you want the shape you draw to be a perfect square or circle, hold down the Shift key while you draw it. This will maintain the correct aspect ratio and keep you from inadvertently drawing a rectangle or oval.*

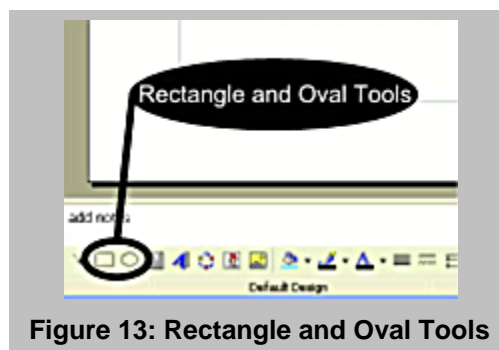


Figure 13: Rectangle and Oval Tools

### Positioning

Although the sizing handles will suffice for positioning most enhancements, sometimes you just want to grab and move an enhancement without (or before) resizing it. As in many Windows applications, when you left click on and select the shape you've drawn, you will note that, when you position your mouse pointer anywhere on a filled object or on the fuzzy outline edge of an unfilled shape, your pointer changes to the Move pointer, a four-pointed arrow like that in Figure 14. While the move pointer is visible, you can left click and drag the object anywhere on or off the slide. You can also use the arrow (cursor) keys to nudge the object in precise increments and in even finer increments if you nudge it while holding down the CTRL key.



Figure 14: Move Pointer

### Animating your Box or Circle

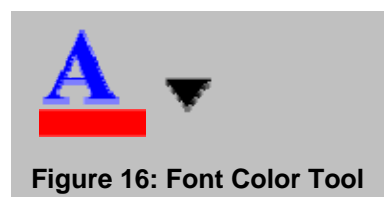
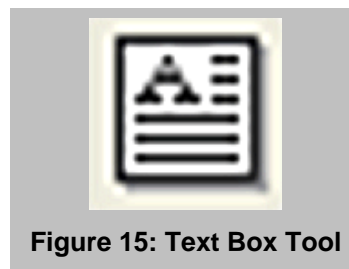
The procedure for adding an animation effect to your enhancement is really no different for a box or circle than it was for a line; however, one entrance effect I highly recommend is "**Zoom**," with the zoom method set to "*Out Slightly*." This causes your outline to appear somewhat larger than the document region to be enhanced and then contract until it stops at the dimensions you selected. It's quick and clear, without being distracting.

### Adding Text

So far, these exercises have centered on overlaying simple line drawings like boxes on top of scanned documents. But, sometimes you need to put text in those boxes, or perhaps annotate a scanned photograph. Creating a text box is as simple as clicking

on the “Text Box” icon on the drawing toolbar (Fig. 15) and drawing a text box in the same way you created an empty box, except the box you create with the text box can contain—big surprise here—text!

To create a text box, just click the Text Box icon, position your pointer (which now looks like an arrow pointing down to the baseline of your text) on the slide, draw the rough outline of the box and start typing your text. You can control, text color, font size and style and a host of other text options in PowerPoint exactly as you do it in other Microsoft Office application. Note that the drawing toolbar contains a handy “**Font Color**” icon (Fig. 16), but, of course, you can also add and customize text boxes using the Insert and Format options on the menu bar. You can also animate text boxes and their contents as you would any other object on a PowerPoint slide.



### Callouts

Boxing or underlining text is useful, unless the highlighted text is so small onscreen that viewers can't read it. This is a common issue when working with letter size documents on PowerPoint slides, but one that can be resolved easily by adding callouts to your slide. You've probably seen callouts before, likely added to documentary evidence that's been blown up and mounted on foam core board. A callout simply denotes and magnifies selected text in a document, usually displaying it in the margin at a size sufficiently large to allow jurors to read the passage “called out” from the page. Mounted document enlargements with callouts are effective and they still have their place in your arsenal of demonstrative evidence; however, they have drawbacks, too. Mounted enlargements with callouts are expensive, running anywhere from \$150.00-\$400.00 per page. They can be tricky to transport, especially on a windy day, they require easels, and they are set in stone (well, in foam, anyway) and can't be altered on the fly when the court orders particular matters excluded. On the other hand, you don't have to boot them up, you don't need a projector and they never crash, except perhaps on those same windy days!

Callouts fall in two varieties, which I distinguish as “**Retyped Callouts**” or “**Zoomed Callouts**.” The difference between them is that the text called out in a retyped callout has been keyed into the text box. In a zoomed callout, the text called out is an enlarged segment of the document. Each has their advantages. A retyped callout is usually easier to read and to fit on a slide without obscuring the source document. A zoomed callout is the “real” document and, for some, that makes it more persuasive. Where there is any question about what the document says (as occurs with handwriting or poor copies), zoomed callouts forestall claims of misrepresentation. Where legibility is an issue, the retyped callout has the edge.

### Retyped Callouts

To create a retyped callout like that shown in Fig. 17, insert your source document in the slide and box the text to be highlighted using the techniques previously described. Be sure to resize the document to afford room for your callout, unless you want the callout to cover part of the source document.

There are then two ways to complete your callout. The simplest is to use PowerPoint 2000 and 2002's built-in callout feature. To do so, click **"AutoShapes"** on the drawing toolbar and select **"Callouts"** from the AutoShapes menu (Fig. 18). Choose the style of callout you prefer, then click and drag from the edge of your boxed text to the margin area reserved for your callout. PowerPoint will create a filled text box ready for your insertion of the highlighted text by retyping it into the text box. Before you start typing, resize and reposition the text box for the best appearance. You can also use the drawing toolbar to change the text box's background color. Use the "Font Color" tool to select the color for your text before you type because if both background and text colors happen to match, you won't see your text at all.

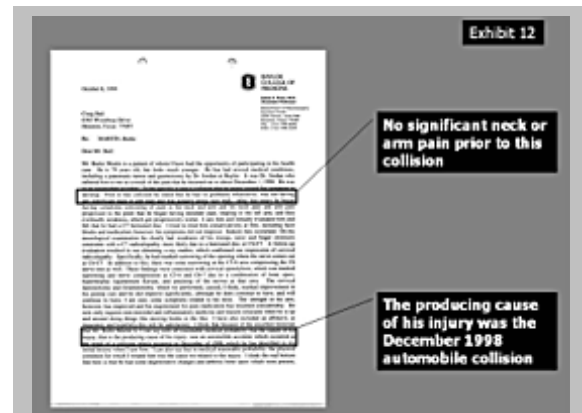


Figure 17: Retyped Callout

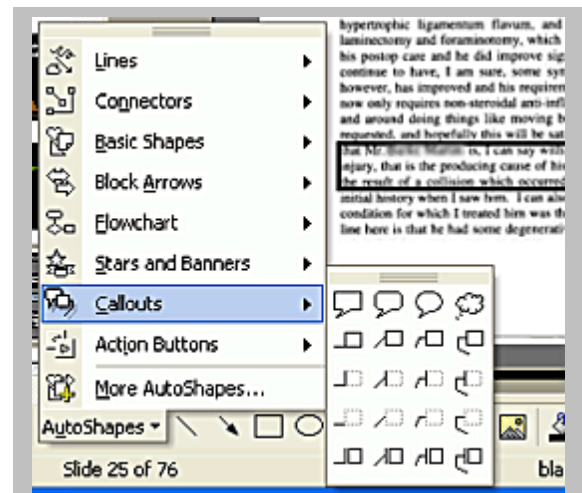


Figure 18: Callouts Menu

The second way to fashion a retyped callout is to combine the skills you learned previously to draw a line or arrow combined with a text box. Doing so can give you a bit more precise control over the individual stylistic elements of the callout; but for those whose copy of PowerPoint includes the callouts feature, using the feature is easier and faster.

### Zoomed Callouts

Creating a zoomed callout is a bit more involved than creating its retyped sibling, and sometimes the results are less than stellar, especially where the source document scan is of poor quality. However, a successful zoomed callout can be a slick and impressive piece of demonstrative evidence, as Fig. 19. The trick to a zoomed callout is cutting out from a duplicate of the source document just the text you want to emphasize and then resizing the excised text. To get started, insert your source document in the slide and box the text to be highlighted using the techniques previously described. Here again, resize the source document to afford room for your callout. Zoomed callouts tend to be



about twice as wide as the source text, so leave plenty of space below your source document unless you don't mind the callout overlapping and concealing part of the source document.

Now, select your source document (if not already selected) by left mouse clicking on it and type CTRL-D to duplicate your source document. The duplicate should appear atop and slightly offset from the source document. We will use the duplicate to cut out the emphasized text. The duplicate should already be selected, so click on the “Crop” tool on the drawing toolbar (Fig. 20). Note how the sizing handles on the duplicate have changed into cropping handles. By clicking and dragging on these, you can crop out everything on the duplicate document except a rectangle containing your emphasized text. Just crop roughly at first, leaving wider margins around the emphasized text than you want in the final product, because you can crop again after you've enlarged the text. When finished, click the Crop tool button once more, and the cropping handles will again become sizing handles. Click on a corner sizing handle (not a side handle, which will distort the text) and stretch the cropped text until it is roughly the size you want for the zoomed callout. Note that your text may become somewhat blurred as you enlarge it. Strike the best balance you can between clarity and size. After you've enlarged the selected text, you can again click on the Crop tool to fine tune the margins. It's should be easier to accomplish with precision now that the text is enlarged.

Once your enlarged text is the right size, drag it to its intended location. You might want to box the enlarged text by selecting it, then clicking on the Line Color tool. You can adjust the line thickness, style and color just as before. Now, to complete your callout, just draw a line or an arrow from the edge of the boxed text in your source document to the edge of the enlarged text.

### Grouping and Animating Callouts

Judicious use of animation reinforces the impression that the enlarged text is emerging from the source document. To add animation to a callout, you need to employ an additional step because callouts are comprised of more than one object, e.g., the boxed text, the line or arrow and the text box or enlarged text. Though you could animate each object and adjust their settings to appear simultaneously, the easier approach is to “group” the callout objects before you apply an animation effect to them. To group objects, they must first all be selected. To do so, hold down the Shift key while you select each of the objects you wish to group. Once selected, group the objects in any

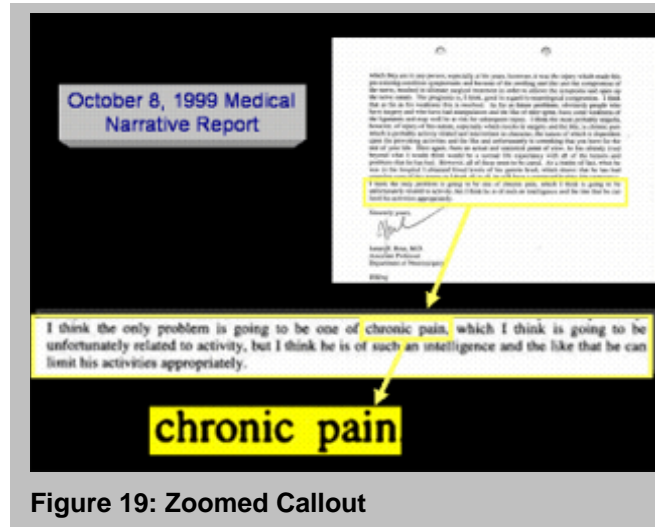


Figure 19: Zoomed Callout

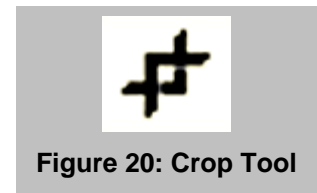


Figure 20: Crop Tool

of three ways. You can group the objects by typing CTRL+SHIFT+G or by clicking the word “Draw” on the drawing toolbar and choosing “Group,” or by right clicking on the edge of any of the selected objects and selecting Grouping>Group. Once grouped, the selected objects become one object until ungrouped (CTRL+SHIFT+H).

Now that you’ve grouped the callout components, apply an animation effect to the group. You might want to use the *Wipe* entrance effect for a retyped callout and a *Faded Zoom* entrance effect for the zoomed callout. You can even tier callouts as shown in Fig. 19, where the block of text is first enlarged, followed by the enlargement of a single phrase within the block. Experiment until you find something you like, but remember, the goal is *communication*, not coolness.

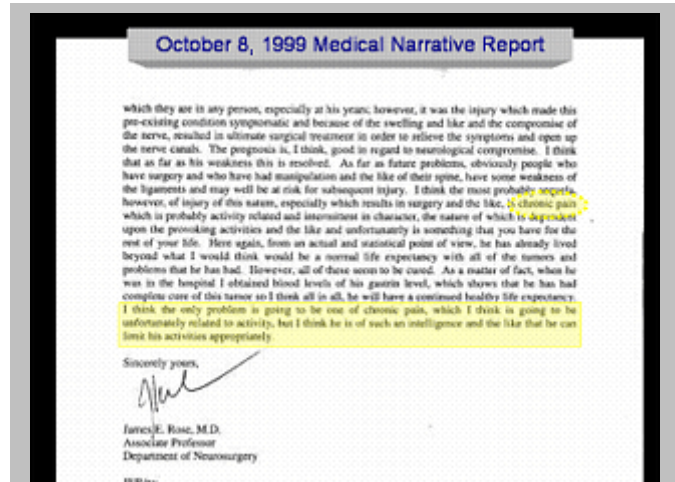


Figure 21: Transparent Coloration Highlight

### Transparent Coloration

When you use the Rectangle tool to box in text, by default PowerPoint created a filled rectangle, which you then must clear of the fill color to reveal the text below. What if instead you could make the color translucent so that it could be used much like a highlighting marker, to emphasize blocks of text? It can (Fig. 21). When you create your rectangle or oval, instead of clearing it by clicking on the down arrow to the right of the **Fill Color** paint bucket and selecting “No Fill,” select “the “More Fill Colors” option. This will open the **Colors** menu, with its honeycomb containing all the standard fill colors (Fig. 22). Select a suitable highlighting color by clicking on its color (bright yellow is always an excellent choice for highlighting), and then locate the “**Transparency**” slider at the bottom of the Colors window. Move the slider to about 85% transparency. I find the optimal range to be something between 70-90% transparency, depending upon the highlight color selected and the brightness and contrast of the document being highlighted. Too much transparency and the effect is lost, too little and you can’t make out the highlighted text through the “haze” of color.

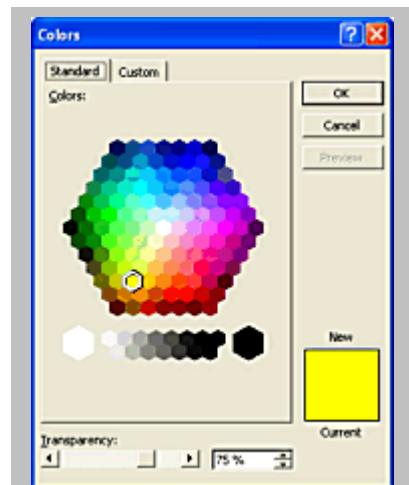


Figure 22: Colors menu

### Negative Coloration

Just as you can emphasize parts of a document using transparent coloration, conversely you can add emphasis by shading the entirety of the document *except* the

part you want to highlight. In Figure 23, the entire document save the emphasized text has been obscured by six black rectangles, each abutting another, surrounding the highlighted text, and all set to 75% transparency. Their margins have been eliminated by setting the Line Color to “No Line.” The net effect is that the unshaded area of text jumps out. Grouping the shading rectangles, then using animation effects to fade them in, followed by enlargement of the emphasized text in a zoomed callout, is a very effective combination (and one frequently used to good effect by many television news shows, in particular “*Sixty Minutes*”).

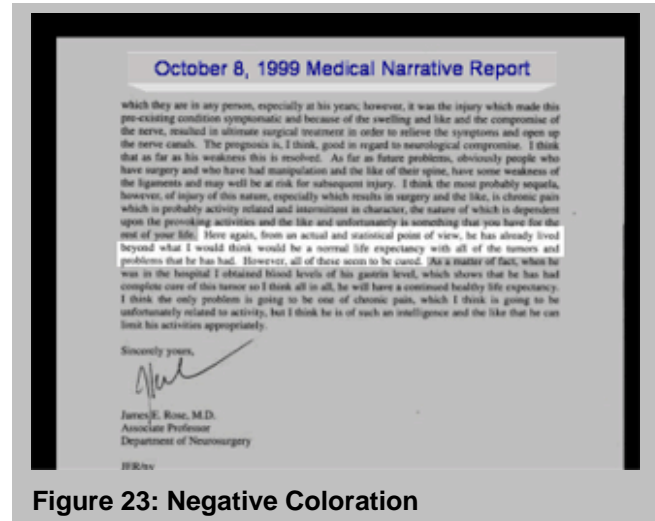
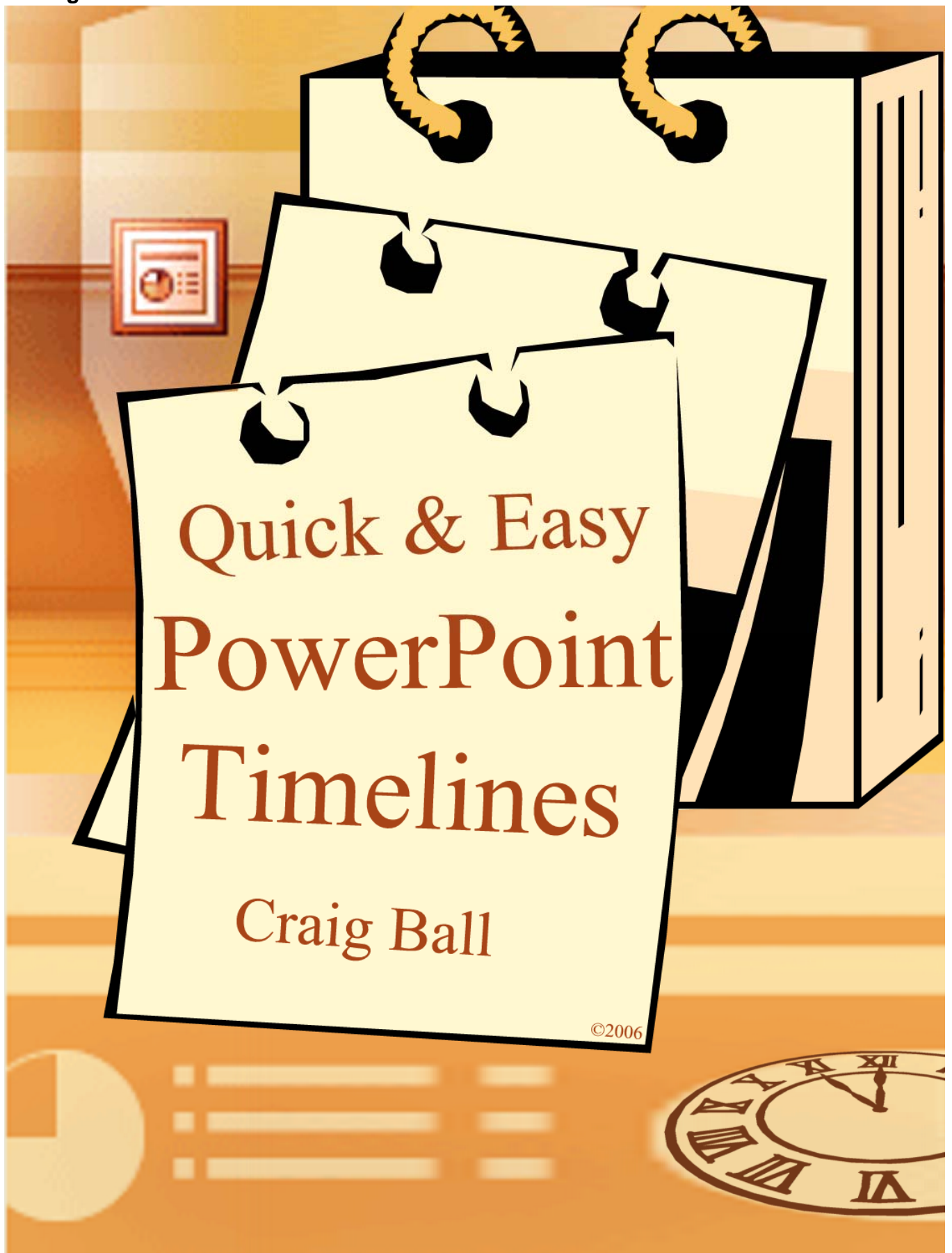


Figure 23: Negative Coloration

### Last Words

Keep in mind that the enhancements discussed in this article are just a small sampling of the exciting things presentation software can do to enhance your advocacy. By combining the rudimentary drawing skills just discussed—drawing, styling and animating lines, arrows, rectangles, ovals and text boxes—you can build increasingly complex and interesting enhancements like animated time lines, process drawings, flow charts and so on. If you pair your fertile imagination with these basic techniques, plus the more advanced ones you will come to know as you experiment with PowerPoint, you may find that not only will your presentations be less boring; you might even find yourself having a little fun with this stuff!



## Quick and Easy PowerPoint Timelines

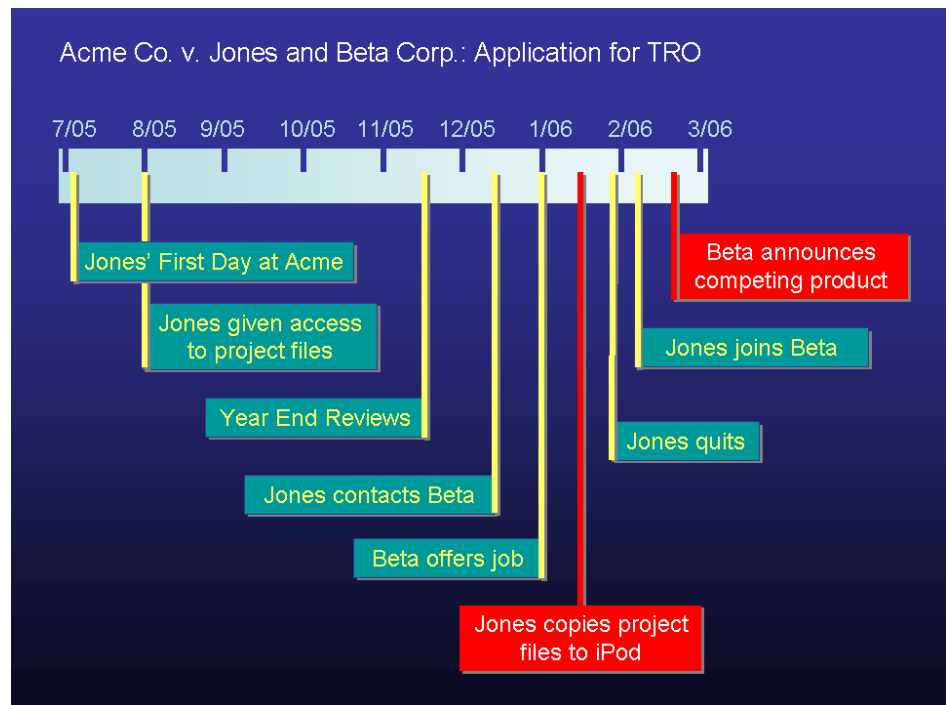
Timelines are visual chronologies that tell a story. They are tried-and-true persuaders with broad application in many kinds of litigation. In expert hands, a timeline functions as the backbone of the evidence--easily understood by every juror and sequentially laying out the events in issue. Timelines also help counsel build a coherent narrative, detect and expose inconsistencies and highlight noteworthy clusters of activity and inactivity.

Building timelines once meant choosing between hiring a graphics firm and going into battle with a felt tip marker and roll of butcher paper. Today, top-notch timeline creation software programs like TimeMap ([www.casesoft.com](http://www.casesoft.com)) make timeline creation a snap. There is probably no product out there better suited to the task than TimeMap. But if you only have the occasional need to create a timeline, or you want to use a product you probably already own, you can make good looking, persuasive timelines in PowerPoint. This paper walks you through the process, step-by-step.

### Step One

Forget templates, and begin, as you always should with PowerPoint, by getting to a blank slide. If PowerPoint included a title or bullet point box on the slide, delete them and set either a solid white or black background using the Format>Background menu. You can dress things up later. Right now, we want to keep it simple and construct the timeline on the right.

Decide what time span you need to depict. A single PowerPoint slide isn't wide enough to cover more than about a dozen divisions with labels horizontally, so you may need to insert a time break (usually a zigzag interruption) to indicate that the interval is not to scale. Alternatively, you can break your timeline into two slides and use transitions to move between the timeline segments (more on this later). For this exercise, let's keep the timeline compact enough to fit on one slide.







Locate the Drawing toolbar (see above). If it's not visible, use the View>Toolbars menu to check "Drawing" and it will appear onscreen, either floating free or docked to another tool bar. Using the Rectangle tool on the Drawing toolbar, click and drag a horizontal band to serve as our timeline. Use the Fill Color tool on the Drawing toolbar to select a color for the timeline that contrasts with both the background and the text and line colors you'll use. Steer clear of distracting hues (e.g., violet) and colors like red or green that send a message you may not mean to convey. If you'll be placing your event labels below the timeline, position it about one-third of the way down the page to leave room for titles. If you plan to add event labels both above and below the timeline, center it on the slide both vertically and horizontally.

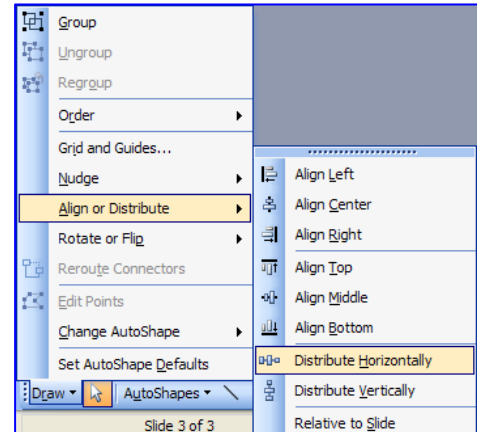
### Dividing our Time

Now, we want to add time division markers. Though there are many options, keeping it simple, we'll use a series of short vertical lines spaced along the top of the timeline rectangle. Draw the first marker using the Line tool on the Drawing toolbar to click and drag the desired length of the line. Because these lines need to be perfectly vertical, constrain the line to vertical, horizontal or 45° intervals by holding the Shift key as you click and drag. Practice this, as it's a shortcut you'll use frequently. When the length is right, use the Line Style and Line Color tools on the Drawing toolbar to create a pleasing marker. Click and drag the marker to place it at the top left edge of the time line to denote the start of the interval.

**TIP:** Hold the Shift key while drawing lines to constrain the line to vertical, horizontal or by 45° intervals

Now, we need eight more identical markers and we want them spaced evenly across the timeline. We could do this manually, but hand drawn will never be exactly the same length and the spacing will be hard to get right without a lot of tweaking. Instead, let PowerPoint do the work for you! Select the marker you just created and type CTRL-D (for duplicate). A perfect copy of the marker should appear, offset by default to the right and below the original. Click and drag on the copy, placing it to the right of the first, about 1/8<sup>th</sup> of the way to the right. Don't worry about being precise. Close enough is good enough for now. Hit CTRL-D six more times and six more perfect copies should cascade across the slide, each alongside its predecessor, spacing to the right by about 1/8<sup>th</sup> of the line width. Close to what you want, but probably not close enough.

To get the spacing and alignment just right, click and drag the rightmost marker (the last duplicate) and place it at the end of the timeline to denote the end of the scale. Then, while holding the Shift key, click on each marker to select all eight markers (or box them to select them, but be careful not to inadvertently select the time line). With all markers selected, find the Draw pull down menu on the Drawing toolbar (typically at the leftmost edge). On the Draw pull down menu, hover over Align or Distribute and click on Align Top. All the markers should have lined up across their tops like good soldiers. Next, open the Draw menu once more, again hover on Align or Distribute and click on Distribute Horizontally. If you've done this correctly, the markers should be aligned with one another and evenly distributed along the timeline. Now, all you need to do is hover over any of the markers (while all are still selected) and use the cursor keys (the arrows on the keyboard) to tweak them into the perfect vertical placement with respect to the timeline.



If something went wrong, don't despair; instead, hit CTRL-Z to undo the errant steps and start again.

**TIP:** CTRL-Z is the "oops" key. Each time you click it, PowerPoint backs out of whatever you've done, step by mistaken step.

### Adding Events

Now, let's use the same techniques to add labels to the markers. Click Insert>Text Box and place the first label above the first marker on the far left. If the text box is filled, click Fill Color on the Drawing toolbar and select "No Fill." Type in the appropriate date (7/05 in our example) and use the sizing handles on the edges of the text box along with the Font Size and Font Color buttons on the Formatting toolbar to set a legible label. Now, use CTRL-D to make labels for each marker, then align and distribute them in the same manner as the markers. Finally, edit each label to reflect the appropriate date.

### Save and Group

Now is a great time to save your work. If you're happy with the timeline, you can guard against accidentally messing up the alignment and spacing by selecting everything you've drawn so far (click CTRL-A to select everything on the slide or drag a box around all the timeline objects) and grouping them as a single unit. To do this, right click on any of the selected items and click on Grouping>Group. Now, you can move the timeline, along with its markers and labels, as one object.

**TIP:** When you Group multiple objects on a slide, they become a single object that's easier to move, resize and animate.

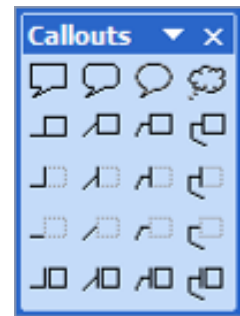


### Add Text and Connectors

Now, let's add text and connectors to describe significant events and place them in time. There are many effective ways to create event labels and link them to the timeline; but, still keeping it simple, we'll focus on just two: text boxes and call outs.

Insert a text box and size it appropriately. If desired, choose a pleasing fill color for the box that contrast well with your preferred font color, then type in text describing the event. Keep the labels clear and concise. Align the center or either edge of the text box with the point on the timeline corresponding to the event and draw a line from the box to the timeline. Don't forget to hold down the Shift key to keep the line perfectly straight. Choose the line color and style (thickness) that's looks best to you, but seek to maintain some element of visual consistency with the box and text. That is, have the line color match the text color or the box fill color to make it easier for a viewer to link the two elements back from the timeline. Repeat this process for each event label, until all events are positioned on the page and linked to the timeline.

Another approach to event labels is to use Call Outs, a type of PowerPoint Autoshape. To add a call out, locate the Autoshapes pull down menu on the Drawing toolbar and select Callouts on the submenu. PowerPoint will offer a choice of twenty callout styles as seen in the figure to the right. Try the square cartoon speech balloon in the upper left corner of the menu. Add the text of the event label to the speech balloon and then locate the yellow diamond at the point of the speech connector. You can click and drag this yellow diamond to reposition the pointer. Note that the pointer shifts to emerge from the side of the callout nearest the yellow diamond. Drag the yellow diamond to the appropriate point on the timeline. Now, you can select and reposition the call out text box and the pointer will hold its position on the timeline. Try this using the other callout styles until you find the style that works best.



You'll likely find that connectors overlap labels when you'd prefer that the lines from one event label pass behind another event label. PowerPoint layers objects in the order added to the slide. Newer objects overlay older ones. Fortunately, object ordering is adjustable by right clicking on any selected object and poising the mouse pointer over Order on the context menu. Another menu will pop up, allowing you to choose to bring the selected object to the front of the object "stack," shift it to the back or move it backward or forward, layer by layer. It sounds a bit complicated, but it's easy in practice. Just imagine that every object sits on a transparent plastic layer, collectively like sheets of acetate laid atop a poster. Changing the order of a PowerPoint drawing object is like repositioning an acetate sheet toward the front or back.

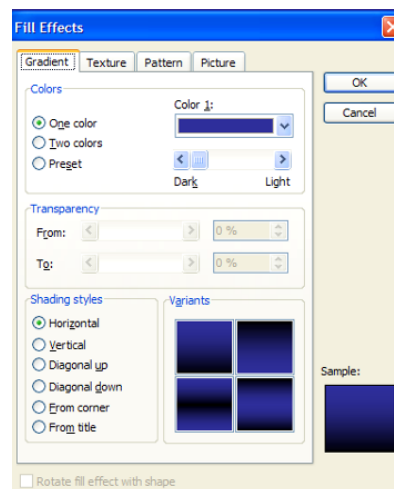
**TIP:** You can use the Order tool to move objects in front of or behind other objects, like clear plastic overlays.

## Finishing Touches

Once you've achieved proper placement of the labels and connectors with respect to the timeline, striving for a sequence that's clear and logical, you can add a few bells and whistles to the mix. For a professional touch, use a gradient background and fill, add some shadowing to the event labels and connectors, then animate the events to control the viewer's focus during presentation.

### Gradient Background

To add a gradient background, select Format>Background from the main menu. A Background menu box will appear. Find the pull down color menu just below the thumbnail of a bar graph and click the down arrow. Select Fill Effects and, on the Gradient tab, click on the "One Color" radio button. For a darker background, choose a medium to dark hue for Color 1 (I get good results using royal blue or navy blue). Then, drag the Dark-Light slider to Dark. Ignore the transparency settings. Choose a Shading Style (the Horizontal styles work well here) and one of the four variants of each style. Click OK to close the Fill Effects menu and Apply to close the Background menu.



### Gradient Fill

To add a gradient fill to the time line bar, you must first ungroup the elements of the timeline if you've previously grouped them. Do this by right clicking on the timeline group and selecting Grouping>Ungroup. Select just the rectangle serving as the timeline then, using the Fill Color pull down menu on the Drawing toolbar, select Fill Effects. Use the same technique just described for adding a gradient background to create a **vertical** gradient fill on the timeline. Use a lighter gradient to denote recent events on the scale.

### Shadowing

Adding some shadow to the connector lines and event labels gives them a three-dimensional character and helps them stand out, especially for those who have difficulty telling colors apart or when the timeline must be converted to grayscale for printing. Simply select the connectors and boxes you want to shadow (you don't need to ungroup them if you're applying the same effect to all elements of the grouping), then click Shadow Style on the Drawing menu and select your preferred style (right). The slight drop right style (Shadow Style 14) is subtle and effective. You can use the Shadow Settings menu to adjust shadow offsets, transparency and color.



### Animating your Timeline

Adding animation to your timeline can really bring it to life. Plus, it allows you to control the viewer's focus and build your narrative gradually. To animate a timeline built from

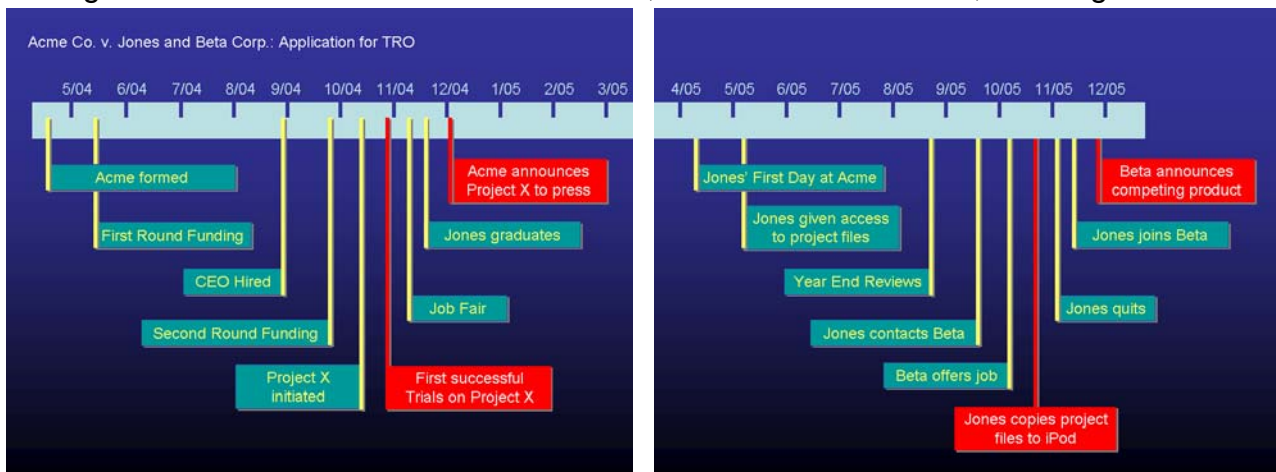
text boxes, we need to first group the event label and the connector by selecting them both (Shift-Left Click on each) and then right clicking to choose Grouping>Group. Once grouped, each event and its connector will animate as one object. This step isn't required if you built your timeline from AutoShape Callouts because they are already a single object.

After you've grouped the events, as needed, right click the first event you'd like to appear and select Custom Animation. A Custom Animation will appear on the right side of your screen. Click on the "Add Effect" button, then on "Entrance" in the submenu. Finally, select "Wipe" from the list of effects and click OK. By default, the Wipe effect will have a direction of wiping in from the bottom of the slide (Direction: From Bottom). For event labels located below the timeline, change the direction to "From Top." Repeat this process for each event label and connector group, from earliest event to most recent. Correctly completed, when viewing the presentation, you should be able to introduce each event to the timeline by hitting the spacebar or clicking the mouse.

### Spanning Slides

If you find that there are too many events to address or the time span is so long that it won't fit on a single slide, you can span the timeline across two slides and use slide transitions to support scrolling forward or backward in time.

To accomplish this, use identical timeline bars for each slide (use Copy and Paste to insure consistency). On the first slide, position the timeline segment to end precisely at the right slide border. On the second slide, continue the timeline, but begin the line

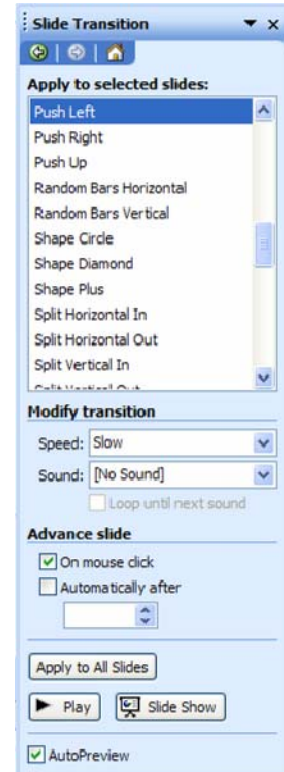


precisely at the left slide border, being careful to insure that both timeline segments occupy the same vertical position in both slides. Match each slide's background and timeline segment fill color to the other. The goal is to achieve visually seamless transition between slides.

With the first slide (left timeline segment) in the editing window, select Slide Show>Slide Transition from the main menu. Choose Push Right from the list of transitions and set the speed to Slow. Now, open the second slide (right timeline segment) in the editing window, and set the slide transition to Push Left and the transition speed to Slow. If you've done everything correctly, you should be able to use the left and right cursor buttons on the keyboard to scroll back and forth between slide one and slide two. If all lines up on the slides and the colors match, the effect should be of moving along the timeline in both horizontal directions.

### You Did It! Now Improve It.

There are literally thousands of ways to enhance and customize your timelines with PowerPoint. Once you've mastered the basics, don't be timid about trying something new, but avoid pointless flash. Be sure the enhancement or animation you add promotes clarity and persuasion. Simple is best.





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Craig Ball is a Board Certified trial lawyer, certified computer forensic examiner and electronic evidence expert. He has dedicated his career to teaching the bench and bar about forensic technology and trial tactics. After decades trying lawsuits, Craig now limits his practice solely to serving as a court-appointed special master and consultant in computer forensics and electronic discovery, and to publishing and lecturing on computer forensics, emerging technologies, digital persuasion and electronic discovery. Craig's award-winning e-discovery column, "Ball in Your Court," appears in Law Technology News. He has consulted or served as a testifying expert in computer forensics and electronic discovery in some of the most challenging and well-known cases in the U.S. Named as one of the Best Lawyers in America and a Texas Superlawyer, Craig is a recipient of the Presidents' Award, the State Bar of Texas' most esteemed recognition of service to the profession and of the Bar's Lifetime Achievement Award in Law and Technology.

### **EDUCATION**

Rice University (B.A., triple major, English, Managerial Studies, Political Science, 1979); University of Texas (J.D., with honors, 1982); Oregon State University (Computer Forensics certification, 2003); EnCase Intermediate Reporting and Analysis Course (Guidance Software 2004); WinHex Forensics Certification Course (X-Ways Software Technology AG 2005); numerous other classes on computer forensics and electronic discovery.

### **SELECTED PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES**

Law Offices of Craig D. Ball, P.C.; Licensed in Texas since 1982.  
Board Certified in Personal Injury Trial Law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization  
Certified Computer Forensic Examiner, Oregon State University and NTI  
Certified Computer Examiner (CCE), International Society of Forensic Computer Examiners  
Admitted to practice U.S. Court of Appeals, Fifth Circuit; U.S.D.C., Southern, Northern and Western Districts of Texas.  
Member, Editorial Advisory Board, Law Technology News and Law.com (American Lawyer Media)  
Board Member, Georgetown University Law School Advanced E-Discovery Institute  
Member, Sedona Conference WG1 on Electronic Document Retention and Production  
Special Master, Electronic Discovery, Federal and Harris County (Texas) District Courts  
Instructor in Computer Forensics, United States Department of Justice  
Instructor, Cybercrime Summit, 2006, 2007  
Special Prosecutor, Texas Commission for Lawyer Discipline, 1995-96  
Council Member, Computer and Technology Section of the State Bar of Texas, 2003-  
Chairman: Technology Advisory Committee, State Bar of Texas, 2000-02  
President, Houston Trial Lawyers Association (2000-01); President, Houston Trial Lawyers Foundation (2001-02)  
Director, Texas Trial Lawyers Association (1995-2003); Chairman, Technology Task Force (1995-97)  
Member, High Technology Crime Investigation Association and International Information Systems Forensics Assn.  
Member, Texas State Bar College  
Member, Continuing Legal Education Comm., 2000-04, Civil Pattern Jury Charge Comm., 1983-94, State Bar of Texas

Life Fellow, Texas and Houston Bar Foundations

CLE Course Director: E-Discovery A-to-Z (NY, Chicago, SF, Boston, Washington, D.C., Minneapolis, Miami, Houston, Seattle, Atlanta, Denver, Philadelphia) 2004-7; Electronic Evidence and Digital Discovery Institute 2004-7; Advanced Evidence and Discovery Course 2003; 2002; Enron—The Legal Issues, 2002; Internet and Computers for Lawyers, 2001-02; Advanced Personal Injury Law Course, 1999, 2000; Preparing, Trying and Settling Auto Collision Cases, 1998.

Member, SBOT President's "Vision Council" on Technology, 1999-2000; Strategic Planning Committee Liaison, 2001-02; Corporate Counsel Task Force 2001-02

#### **ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS AND HONORS**

2006 Recipient of the State Bar of Texas CTS Lifetime Achievement Award for Law and Technology

The March 2002 CLE program planned by Mr. Ball and Richard Orsinger entitled, "Enron—The Legal Issues" received the Best CLE of 2002 award from the Association for Legal Education

National Planning Committee, Legal Works 2004 (San Francisco)

Recipient, State Bar of Texas Presidents' Award (bar's highest honor), 2001

Faculty, Texas College of Trial Advocacy, 1992 and 1993

Adjunct Professor, South Texas College of Law, 1983-88

Listed in "Best Lawyers in America" and Selected as a "Texas Super Lawyer," 2003-2006

Rated AV by Martindale-Hubbell

#### **LAW RELATED PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS**

Craig Ball is a prolific contributor to continuing legal and professional education programs throughout the United States, having delivered over 450 presentations and papers. Craig's articles on forensic technology and electronic discovery frequently appear in the national media, including in American Bar Association, ATLA and American Lawyer Media print and online publications. He also writes a monthly column on computer forensics and e-discovery for Law Technology News called "Ball in your Court," honored as the 2007 Best Regular Column by Trade Association Business Publications International and as the 2006 Silver Medalist by the American Society of Business Publication Editors as both "Best Feature Series" and "Best Contributed Column." The presentation, "Craig Ball on PowerPoint" (a/k/a "PowerPersuasion") is consistently the top rated educational program at the ABA TechShow.