The Advantages and Disadvantages of PowerPoint

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☰ WHAT'S COVERED

In this lesson, you will learn how to weigh the advantages and disadvantages of a particular presentation software. Specifically, this lesson will cover"

1. PowerPoint— Advantage or Disadvantage for the Presenter?
   a. Advantages
   b. Disadvantages

1. PowerPoint— Advantage or Disadvantage for the Presenter?

PowerPoint is the most popular presentation software. It is regarded by many as the most useful and accessible way to create and present visual aids to the audience.

On the other hand, others believe it has created its own mind-set which forces presenters to spend countless hours thinking in PowerPoint and developing slides. A political party has even formed to ban PowerPoint in Switzerland. Depending on one's perspective, it seems that many advantages could easily be viewed as disadvantages.
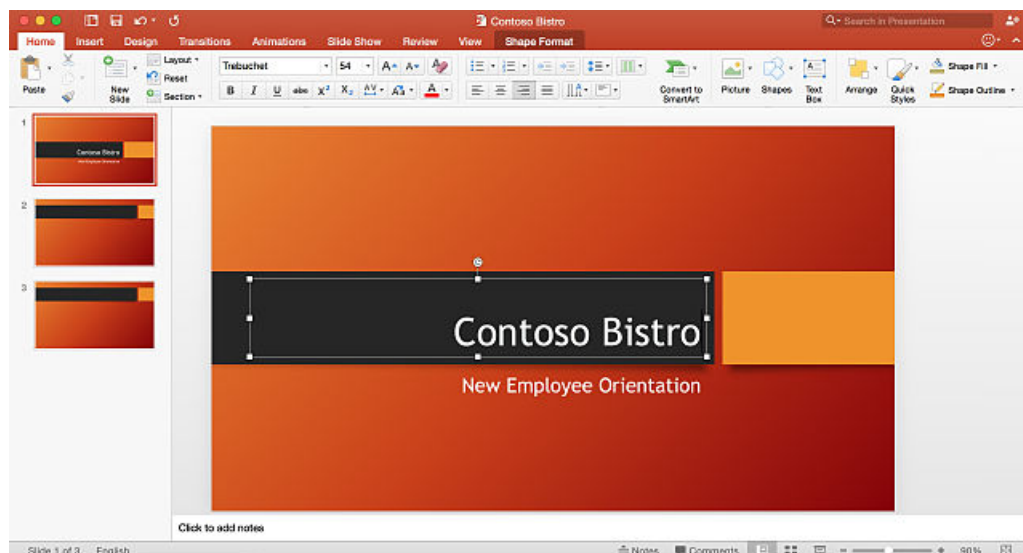
Look over the list below to see where you stand— with or against PowerPoint.

📄 TERM TO KNOW

PowerPoint
An electronic slide presentation created and presented using the program (verb) to communicate to (an audience) by electronic slides.

1a. Advantages

Design:

Quick and easy: The basic features are easy to master and can make you appear to be organized, even if you are not.

Simple **bullet points**: It can reduce complicated messages to simple bullet points. Bullet points are a good basis for a presentation and remind the speaker of main points and the organization of the message.

Easy to create a colorful, attractive design: Using the standard templates and themes, you can create something visually appealing, even if you do not have much knowledge of basic graphic design principles.

Easy to modify: When compared to other visual aids such as charts, posters, or objects, it is easy to modify.

Easily re-order presentation: with a simple drag and drop or using key strokes, you can move slides to re-order the presentation.

Finally, PowerPoint is integrated with other products that allow you to include parts of documents, spread sheets, and graphics.

Delivery:

Audience size: PowerPoint slides are generally easier to see by a large audience when projected than other visual aids.

Easy to present: You can easily advance the slides in the presentation one after another with a simple key stroke while still maintaining eye contact with the audience.

No need for handouts: They look good visually and can be easily read if you have a projector and screen that is large enough for the entire room.

📄 TERM TO KNOW

Bullet Points
Bulleted items – known as bullet points – may be short phrases, single sentences, or of paragraph length; used to introduce items in a list.

1b. Disadvantages

Design:

Design power pointless: Gives the illusion of content and coherence, when in fact there is really not much

substance or connection between the different points on the slides.

PowerPoint excess: Some speakers create presentations so they have slides to present rather than outlining, organizing, and focusing on the message.

Replaces planning and preparation: PowerPoint is a convenient prop for poor speakers, as it can reduce complicated messages to simple bullet points and elevates style over substance.

Oversimplification of topic: The linear nature of PowerPoint forces the presenter to reduce complex subjects to a set of bullet items that are too weak to support decision-making or show the complexity of an issue.

Feature abundance: While the basic features are easy to use and apply, a speaker can get carried away and try to use all the features at once rather than simply supporting a message. Too many flying letters, animations, and sound effects without seeing much original thought or analysis can be a real issue. In many cases, the medium shoves the message aside.

Delivery:

Basic equipment required: You will need to have a computer and projection equipment in place to display the slides to the audience.

Focus on medium, not message: Too many people forget that they are making a presentation first and that PowerPoint is just a tool.

SUMMARY

In this lesson, you learned that some people regard PowerPoint as the most useful, accessible way to create and present visual aids; others believe it has its own mind-set which forces presenters to spend countless hours thinking in PowerPoint and developing slides. **Advantages of PowerPoint** include the ease of use and ability to create a smooth presentation flow, while **disadvantages** include the inability to represent the complexity of certain topics and the need for basic equipment to present the slideshow.

Source: Boundless. "The Advantages and Disadvantages of PowerPoint." Boundless Communications Boundless, 17 Mar. 2017. Retrieved 3 Jun. 2017 from

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