

# Turn Lackluster PowerPoint Presentations into Multimedia Extravaganzas

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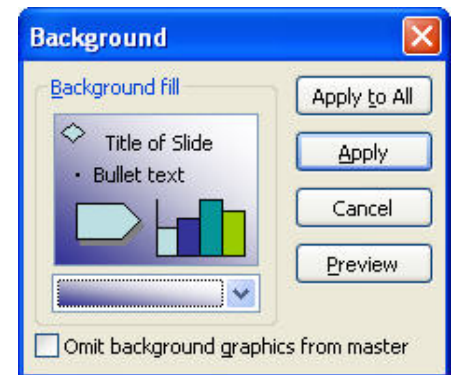
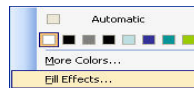
Session #121 Saturday, July 16, 2005 1:15 pm to 4:30 pm

Come on, admit it – you’ve dozed off, or at least daydreamed, during a typical PowerPoint presentation at your workplace. Today’s culture is packed with fast-moving TV ads, action-packed movies, and elaborate music videos and yet, every day, PowerPoint presentations given in our organizations consist of screen-after-screen of mind-numbing, bulleted text read to us by someone whose idea of fun is to watch a traffic light turn green. Your PowerPoint presentations don’t have to be like that. You can keep your audience engaged and engrossed by applying professional multimedia techniques to your presentations. In this session, we’ll explore how to use animated objects, photographs, recorded music, and video clips to take your presentations from mind-numbing and uninspired to motivating and imaginative.

## Backgrounds

Backgrounds are one of the most powerful and under-utilized features in PowerPoint. Because of the almost universal reliance on ready made templates, most people have decided that background fills are an unnecessary bother. But backgrounds give you ultimate control over the look and feel of your presentation and can provide the personal touch needed to make that extra, special presentation. To customize a presentation’s background, start by accessing the Fill Effects dialog box:

1. Right click a slide or thumbnail and then, choose Background from the short-cut menu.
2. Select Fill Effects from the drop-down menu to open the Fill Effects dialog box.



## Fill Effects Dialog Box

It is worth your time to become intimately familiar with the Fill Effects dialog box. You will use it not only for slide backgrounds, but also to fill AutoShapes and placeholders (including WordArt), and to embed photographic backgrounds. (Handy when you want to make certain that no one will lift or move the photograph.)

Each tab of the Fill Effects dialog box opens a different page with a wide variety of fill effects to choose from. The sample window shows you exactly how your choice will look. Follow the same procedure to apply a background from any tab in the Fill Effects dialog box:

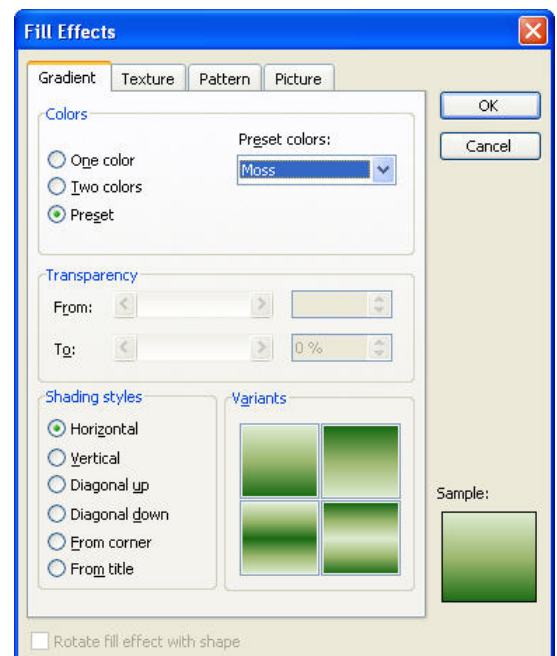
- When you are satisfied with the effect, click OK. This returns you to the Background dialog box.
- Click Apply (to current slide/object) or Apply to All to change all the slides in your presentation.

Below is a description of the tools in each tab of the Fill Effects dialog box.

## Gradient Tab

This tab has a number of effects ranging from awesome through refined.

- Choose any one or two colors (Click More Colors to access the full color pallet), or Preset colors (Rainbow, Fire, Gold, Autumn, etc.) to see a selection of color combinations.
- Set the degree of transparency you want to apply to each color by sliding the From and To slide bars or entering percentages in the boxes on the right.
- Choose a shading style and pick one of the four variants from the graphic selection boxes.



### Texture Tab

This tab offers a quick way to apply both color and texture. While there is not a lot of flexibility (you cannot easily change colors, for example), a number of the textures are quite beautiful as offered.

### Pattern Tab

The Pattern tab is especially helpful when you will be printing in black and white, or need to provide a visual means of making fine distinctions between colors (sections of a bar graph, for example).

### Picture Tab

Use this tab to insert a photograph as a background. Clicking “Select Picture” opens the Select Picture Browser. Navigate to the photograph you want and click Insert.

**NOTE: Photographs inserted as screen background fill cannot be edited. Use photo-editing software to make any changes you want made to the photograph before inserting it.**

**HOT TIP:** Whenever you come across a photograph you think you might be useful in a presentation, save it in a presentations photographs folder. Keep adding photographs as you find and/or use them. You may also want to purchase a CD of royalty free media. These are quite inexpensive, and are usually indexed by subject.

## Creating your own Drawing Objects

Although you may not think of yourself as an artist, you can create your own drawing objects to add variety, versatility, and graphic appeal to your slides.

### *Formatting AutoShapes, Placeholders and Other Objects*

Select any object, AutoShape, WordArt or placeholder on your slide and double-click, or from the menu, choose Format ► Object/AutoShape/WordArt/Placeholder. The same dialog box (with different names) opens for all of them. The only differences between them are that the Text Box tab is only active for placeholders and the Picture tab is only available for Pictures.

### Colors and Lines Tab

- Click the arrow on the Fill Color drop-down box to open the Fill dialog box. It works exactly like the Background Fill dialog box discussed in the previous section. Use this to format the object’s fill properties.
- Use the Line section of the tab to create a border for an object and to format – you guessed it: Lines!
- And the Arrows section for .... Yup...Arrows.

### Size Tab

Use this tab to adjust the size of your objects. If you are working with a picture, make sure the “Lock Aspect Ratio” box is checked – unless, of course, you want to distort the picture.

**HOT TIP: Use the scale percentages to achieve size consistency for multiple images.**

### Position Tab

Use this tab to position objects precisely (to 1/100<sup>th</sup> of an inch) horizontally and vertically from the top left corner.

### Picture Tab

This tab is used to crop images; adjust color, brightness and contrast; and most importantly, to compress images. This is essential for maintaining a presentation of manageable size. Photographs can take up a huge amount of space on a disk.

### Text Box Tab

Use this tab to set margins, position or rotate text, enable word wrap and allow resizing of the text box to fit text. (This is important if you want to maintain a consistent font size.)

### Web Tab

This tab is used to insert alternate text to display in a web browser while objects are loading.

## Design and Layout of Objects

### Copying objects:

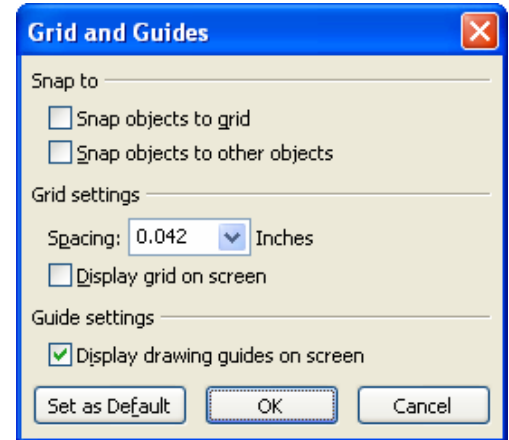
When you copy and paste an object, it ends up superimposed over the original object – no matter where you try to paste it. Instead of copy and paste, to insert a copy in a new location:

1. Select the object.
2. Hold down the Ctrl key.
3. Drag the object to a new location.
4. Release the Ctrl key.

### Customize Drawing Guide Positions

PowerPoint gives just one horizontal and one vertical guide line. If you don't want to show a full grid, but want to be able to align to more places than the center, you can add guide lines. To create guide lines where YOU want them:

1. From the menu choose View > Grid and Gridlines.
2. Enable Display Drawing Guides On Screen.
3. Select a guide line.
4. Hold down the Ctrl Key while dragging the guide line to the desired location.
5. Release the mouse and the control key.



### Using the Drawing toolbar

Keep the Drawing toolbar on your desktop at all times! This is your most valuable resource for design and layout. (Tools > Customize > Toolbars > Drawing)



Many of the Drawing toolbar buttons have arrows that open valuable pop-up menus. It is worth your time to learn how to apply every item on every toolbar. Below are examples of some of the possibilities:

**Semi-Transparent Fill**

**AutoShapes > Basic Shapes > Cube**

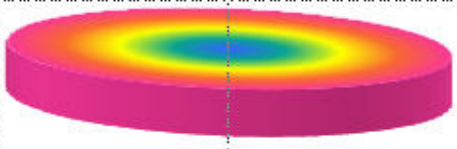
Format AutoShape > Colors and lines > Color > Fill Effects > Picture > lock picture aspect ratio and rotate fill effect with shape > set fill transparency to 50%

**Format Object Painter**

This wonderful tool lets you duplicate formatting from one object to another.

Click the object with the formatting you want to duplicate. Click the Pick Up Object Format button. Click the object you want to take on new formatting. Click on the Apply Object Format button. Presto! The second object is transformed

**Rotate a 3-D AutoShape**

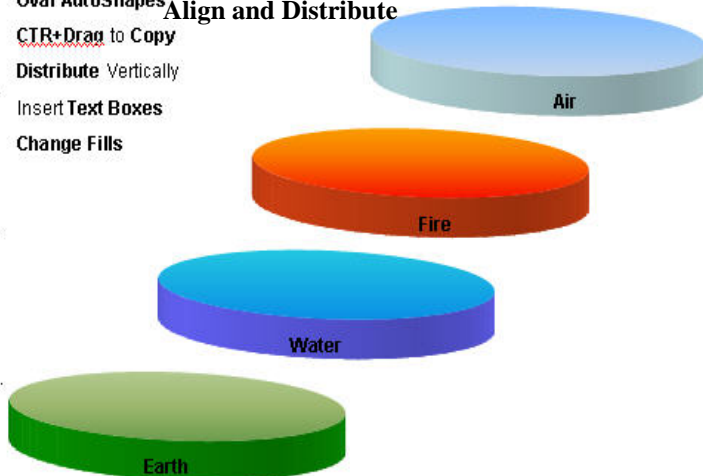


**Add the 3-D toolbar to your desktop:** View > Toolbars > Customize > Toolbars > 3-D Settings

**Rotate the Object:** Select the object > click the Tilt up or Tilt down button until the desired effect is achieved.

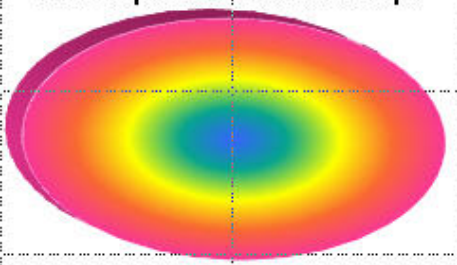
**Align and Distribute**

Oval AutoShapes  
 CTR+Drag to Copy  
 Distribute Vertically  
 Insert Text Boxes  
 Change Fills



Air  
Fire  
Water  
Earth

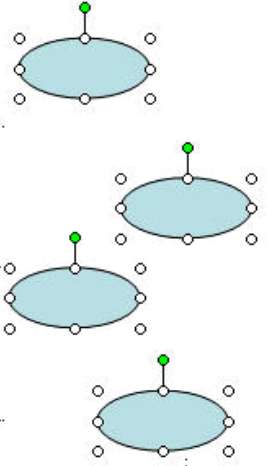
**Add Depth to a Flat AutoShape**



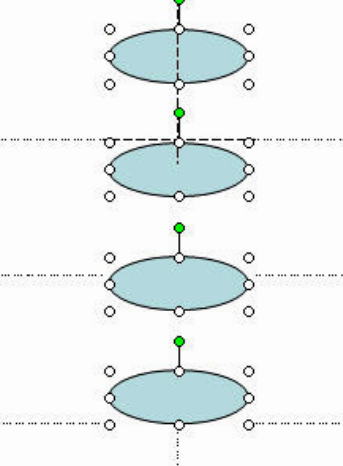
**Click and draw an Oval shape**

**Fill the AutoShape:** Format AutoShape > Colors and Lines > Colors > Fill Effects > Gradient > Preset > Rainbow II > Fill Effect from Center > Rotate fill effect with object > OK

**Make the AutoShape 3-Dimensional:** Click the 3-D button on the drawing toolbar and select a 3-D Setting.



Select all objects by drawing a rectangle around them



Draw > Align or Distribute > Distribute Vertically  
 Draw > Align or Distribute > Align Left

## Making the Transition: Slide Show to Multimedia

**WARNING:** Next to presenters reading slides, the most common complaint about PowerPoint presentations is the use of gimmicky animations and/or annoying sounds.

### Sound

Use sound only to enhance your presentation's message. If you can't explain how and why you are using a specific sound in your presentation, it probably shouldn't be there. On the other hand, carefully selected sound can make a good presentation great. Sound is most often used for kiosk presentations. However, it may also be used for segments of a presentation when the presenter is not speaking. For example,

- Introduction: Create a self-timed introduction to the topic or speaker.
- Cameo: Insert recorded narration from someone other than the presenter with appropriate background slides.
- Intermission or break : Insert a 10-minute music clip to play while count-down slides are projected.

### Linking and Embedding Sounds

Sounds are embedded when they are:

- In WAV format and smaller than the setting in Tools > Options > General > Link Sounds With File Size Greater Than N Setting.
- Used as a Slide Transition (WAV only).
- Recorded as narration: the option to link is NOT an option.

All other sounds are linked.

Sound files are system resource hogs. When working with sound it is wise to shut down any unnecessary programs. If your sound file is too large to embed, move it to the same folder as your presentation **before** you link it to PowerPoint.

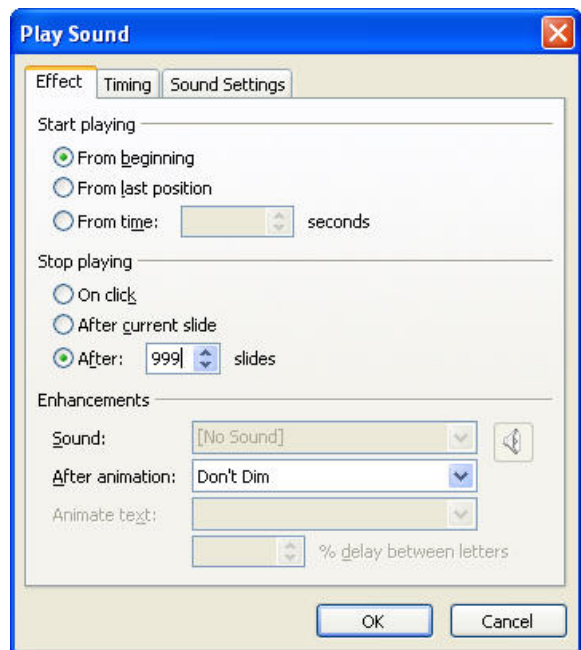
### Inserting Sound Clips

There are two ways to insert a sound into a PowerPoint presentation.

- Insert sound into a slide: Use this method if you have other animations on the slide. This allows you insert the sound exactly where you want it relative to other animations. You can see how the sound works on the advanced timeline.
- Insert a sound into a slide transition: This is usually the best choice for sounds that start when a non-animated slide appears. (NOTE: This method can only be used with .wav sound files.)

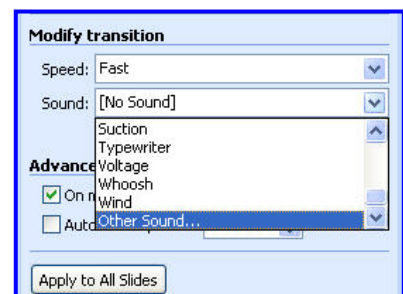
To insert sound into a slide, follow these steps:

1. In Normal View, click Insert > Movies and Sounds > Sounds From File. The Insert Sound dialog box opens.
2. Navigate to the sound clip you want. Select and click OK.
3. PowerPoint will ask if you want the sound to play automatically. Say yes. (You can always change it later in the Custom Animation task pane.)
4. A sound icon appears on your slide. TIP: Drag the sound icon off the slide if you have set the sound to play automatically. (You'll never need to click it.)
5. Right-click the sound icon and choose Custom Animations to open the Custom Animations task pane.
6. Click the drop-down arrow beside Media > Effect Options to open the Play Sound Dialog Box.
7. Effect Tab: You will most often want to start the sound from the beginning. If you want the sound clip to play across slides, or just want to be certain that it plays all the way through, get into the habit of setting "Stop Playing After" to 999 (or some other huge number). This won't stop you from inserting another sound, but it will ensure that your sound will play until it ends or bumps into another slide with an inserted sound (whichever occurs first).
8. Timing Tab: Use this tab to set the event when the sound begins: On Click, With Or After Previous, Delays And Triggers.
9. Sound Settings Tab: Click the sound icon to open the volume control. Set volume level or mute the sound here. Enable the "Hide Sound Icon During Show" check box. Click OK.



To insert sound into a slide transition, follow these steps:

1. In Slide Sorter View, right-click the slide you want your sound to start with and choose Transition to open the Transitions task pane.
2. Click Sound, Other Sound, Browse to locate sound you want.
3. Select the sound. Click OK.



## ***Synchronizing Slides and Sound***

**NOTE: PowerPoint doesn't have a mechanism for maintaining synchronizing sound between slides. Sound and video clips are synchronized with a specific slide or animation: the one you used as an insertion point.**

This means that after you have spent countless hours synchronizing a slide show or presentation to a favorite CD track on your machine, there is no guarantee that it will remain synchronized on someone else's machine. In fact, you can't even count on it remaining synchronized the next time you play it on the same machine you used to create it!

But what if it's absolutely essential that you synchronize a group of slides within a presentation (your CEO's introductory comments, for example)? The two best solutions are:

1. **Create a movie clip:** Insert the slides into Microsoft MovieMaker or some other video editing program and synchronize with the sound in the video timeline. Render the movie and insert it into a PowerPoint slide in the presentation. (Insert ➤ Movies and Sounds ➤ Movie from File.)

**Advantages** to this method are:

- This is the easiest way to synchronize sound and slides.

**Disadvantages:**

- Video usually is rendered in too low a resolution to look good as a full screen projection.
- Most video editors do a good job of creating transitions between slides, but they won't reproduce any animations you have placed on the slides.
- You can never be sure that another computer will have the correct player installed.

2. **Insert multiple sound clips:** Use a sound editing program like Sound Forge to cut the original sound file into pieces of ten seconds or less in length. Insert each sound clip sequentially into separate slides (or into separate slide transitions if you are using .WAV sound files). Time the slide transitions precisely so there are no noticeable breaks in sound when the presentation is played.

**Advantages:**

- There is no loss in resolution of the slides.
- The presentation will play in any windows machine.
- The sound is embedded so there are no links to break a media player.

**Disadvantages:**

- This is slow, tedious work. Don't attempt it when you are short of patience or time!

## **Transitions and Animations**

Truly awesome animation is more often subtle than flashy, and always fits the mood and theme of the presentation. Many if not most of the flashy effects found in PowerPoint animations and transitions should only be used in presentations you are going to show to your family and/or very good friends

### ***Transitions***

Transitions determine how one slide moves to the next one. Like all motion, use transitions carefully. As a general rule, seldom use more than two transitions (and never more than three) in a presentation.

**NOTE: In PowerPoint, transitions are always assigned to the ENTRANCE of a slide.** So if you want Slide A to fade smoothly into Slide B, you need to assign a "Fade Smoothly" transition to Slide B.

You can apply transitions in either Slide Sorter or Normal View. Right-click any thumbnail or slide and choose Slide Transition to open the Slide Transition task pane.

1. Select the slide or slides the transition will be added to.

2. Scroll through the list to select the transition you want. **Tip:** Check the AutoPreview checkbox at the bottom left of the Transitions task pane to see an immediate preview of the transition. If you don't like one transition, just try another.
3. Choose the speed you want for the transition.
4. Choose to have the slide advance when you click the mouse and/or after a specific length of time.
5. Choose to apply the transition to the selected slide(s) or to all slides. **Warning:** If you have selected an automatic time for the slide you are working on, it will be applied as part of the transition to all of the slides. Applying a transition to all slides can create a real mess if you have animations on any of your slides.

## Animations

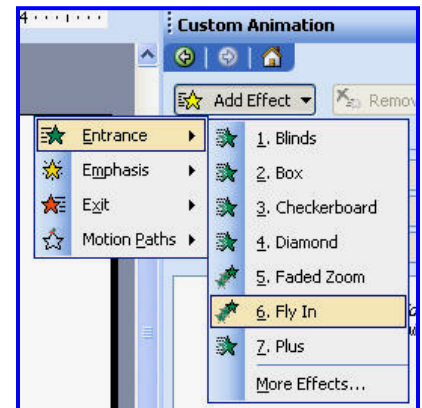
Animations are applied to individual objects on a slide. They affect how the object first appears (Entrance); Any special effect – like growing, shrinking or spinning - the object undergoes while it is on the slide (Emphasis); The manner in which the object leaves the slide (Exit) and the path(s) the object follows during any of the previous activities (Motion Path).

The problem with animation is that it is too much fun! It's really easy to get carried away with them, and nothing will annoy your audience more than loud sounds, laser typewriting and flying objects that appear for no apparent reason. Be careful not to overdo your special effects!

## Animating Objects

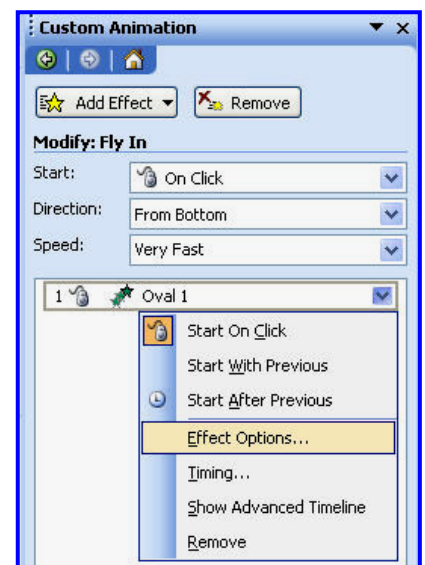
### Applying Animation to an Object

1. Right-click an object.
2. Choose Custom Animation from the short-cut menu.
3. The custom Animation task pane opens with an active Add Effect Button.
4. Choose the category of Animation you want (Entrance, Emphasis, etc).
5. The available options in that category will display in the right side of the task pane.
6. Choose the effect you want. If the AutoPreview box is checked you will see a preview of the effect. If you don't like it, just keep on checking others.
7. When you choose an animation, the animation is entered in a central window of the task pane and the upper section changes to allow you to add another effect to the same object, Modify or Delete the effect.



### Modifying an Animation

1. Choose how you want the animation to begin (with the previous activity; after the previous activity, or when you click the mouse).
2. Choose what direction your object will enter from (depart to if working with Exit).
3. Choose the speed of the animation (Very Slow, Slow, Medium, Fast, or Very Fast).
4. If your animation is requires even finer tuning, click the arrow beside the animation to open a drop down menu.
5. Choose Effect Options to open the Effect Options dialog box.



### *Effect Options Dialog Box*

1. On the Effect tab you can change the direction of the effect, smooth out the start or end of the effect (applause, bomb, etc.), or have the object fade after it finishes its song and dance.
2. On the Timing tab you can change the trigger event that starts the effect, delay the start, change the speed, and make the animation repeated a specified number of times – or until you click to stop it.

**Follow the above steps for each additional animation you want to add.**

### *Multiple animations*

Click the arrow beside any animation and Choose **Show Advanced Timeline**. This visual aid is essential for fine tuning the timing of multiple animations.

### **HOT TIP**

When working on complex animations, dock the task pane horizontally for better animation control. Simply click on the task pane title bar and drag to the bottom of the screen. The task pane docks horizontally.



## PowerPoint And Video (excerpts) by Geetesh Bajaj, June 18 2004

For the complete article, visit: <http://www.indezine.com/products/powerpoint/ppvideo.html>

### **Introduction**

Inserting video clips into PowerPoint is usually easy - and PowerPoint allows ample control over how you want the video to play while in slide show mode. However, video in itself comes from disparate sources - from camcorders to stock footage libraries and in-house rendered content to downloads from the Internet. An amazing number of video formats actually are bestowed with an even more amazing numbers of codecs. And if you don't know what this format and codec thing means, you have come to the right place! Read on...

### **Sourcing Video**

**Digital Camcorders and Cameras:** These camcorders record straight to a digital video format that can be transferred to your computer through an IEEE 1394 (Firewire) interface port - this can be saved to a video format like AVI, MPG or WMV that PowerPoint can understand. Many digital cameras also allow you to shoot video clips. Digital camcorders start from US\$500 and a good digital camera that can also record video costs less than that.

**Webcams:** Webcams attached to your computer allow recording live video while you sit in front of your PC. Most webcams include a built-in microphone. Webcams cost between US\$100 and \$200.

**Video Stock Libraries:** Many a time, you want to add video in the beginning of a presentation to create a splash. For instance you might want to show a collage of medical video clips before you are speaking to an audience about medicine. Luckily, it is easy nowadays to locate stock video footage for most subjects - they are indeed more expensive than stock images but prices are coming down and I know of at least one vendor who sells stock videos intended for PowerPoint presentations for just one dollar per clip! Most clips are usually available in both WMV and MOV formats for use in PowerPoint for Windows and Mac respectively.

**Video Capture Devices:** Various video capture devices allow you to digitize existing VHS or analog camcorder content to a format that PowerPoint can understand. Costs vary between US\$200 and \$1000, depending upon the video capture quality and features.

### **Formats and Codecs**

It is easy to recognize the format of a video file - the extensions themselves identify the format. For instance, a video file which ends with the extension name AVI is what is usually called the AVI (Audio Video Interleaved) format. Apple QuickTime videos more often than not use the MOV and QT extensions. MPEG movies of all types use the MPG and MPEG extensions and WindowsMedia videos are recognizable with the extension WMV or ASF. You get the pattern now and we'll discuss this in more detail in a while.

Codecs are different beasts altogether - at last count there were more than a hundred unique codecs for the AVI format alone! So what is a codec?

We all know that audio and video files can be huge in terms of size - if I record one Mini DV worth of video footage to my hard disk, it occupies nearly 13 GB of space! There has always been a need for some technology that could squeeze the size of such files without deteriorating the quality. This entails both coding and decoding - let's look at this example:

I just recorded a two minute sound using my microphone - it's size leaves a lot to be desired - so I use a coding algorithm to reduce its size. Later, when I want to play it back, I used a similar decoding algorithm. Now, what I am essentially doing is coding and decoding - in other words I am using a 'codec' - this is actually an abbreviation for coder/decoder.

Well known codecs for the AVI format include Cinepak and Intel Indeo. Apple QuickTime codecs include Cinepak and Sorenson.

### **Video Formats**

Video formats are not too much of a problem - most videos fall under these categories:

**AVI:** AVI has been around for the longest time and PowerPoint is usually happy with this format unless it has been rendered using a non-standard codec. PowerPoint can play and control these files natively.

**MOV:** Apple QuickTime files can be played easily on Windows based machines using the free QuickTime Player application - however PowerPoint can only play QuickTime content rendered using the Cinepak codec. This includes almost all QuickTime videos that conform to the standards of QuickTime 1, 2 and 2.5. Since version 3, QuickTime uses the more efficient Sorenson codec by default and PowerPoint cannot use any videos rendered using this format.

**MPG, MPEG:** All flavors of MPEG files use this extension. Typically MPEG 1 movies play well in PowerPoint - and they are the best option if you need to create a presentation that needs to be played on both the Windows and Mac versions of PowerPoint. MPEG 2 movies usually are not that easy to play in PowerPoint - they are more reliant on both hardware and software and usually may not work in PowerPoint even if they do play well in Windows Media Player.

**WMV, ASF:** When Microsoft first introduced the WindowsMedia format, both audio and video files used the ASF extension. Later, Microsoft started using the WMV and WMA extensions for video and audio respectively. For all practical purposes, WMV and ASF are identical although the Windows Media 9 Series uses only the WMV extension.

**Flash:** PowerPoint, or for that matter, Windows itself, does not consider Flash as a native video format. However, Flash movies can be successfully played within PowerPoint using the Shockwave Flash ActiveX control.

**FLI, FLC:** This is Autodesk's animation format, used more for animation than video. The best option is to convert your FLI or FLC file to a format like AVI.

**RM (RealVideo):** PowerPoint and RealVideo don't work together at all. The only way to make them work is to link a RealVideo file to a hyperlink or Action button in PowerPoint. It is not elegant but it works and you do get PowerPoint's infamous virus warning box!

**DivX:** As long as your DivX videos end with an AVI file extension and you do have the DivX codec installed, PowerPoint has no problem with DivX.

**VCD:** VCD video files usually have the DAT extension - for all practical purposes they are MPEG-1 videos and several tools including freeware applications can convert VCD DAT movies to MPEG files without any problem.

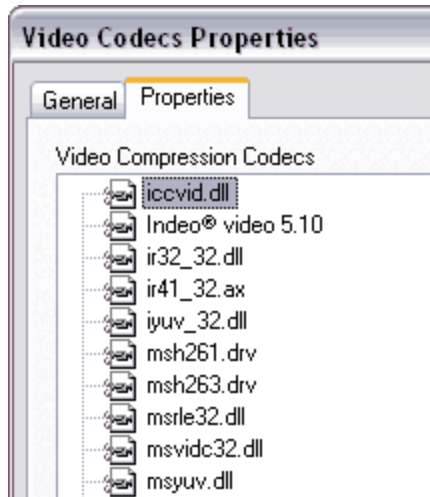
**DVD:** DVD is more of a problem area since it is not too easy to convert (or decrypt) DVD VOB files to MPEG-2. Even if it were easy, there are several copyright issues involved. However, there are third party tools that allow you to play DVD movies right inside PowerPoint.

### ***Which Codecs Are Installed?***

You can only convert between the codecs that are installed on your system. In Windows 9x and ME, you could view the codecs installed on your system through the Multimedia applet in the Control Panel. Windows XP no longer contains that applet - to view the codecs installed on your system in Windows XP, you need to:

1. Open the Control Panel. If your Control Panel is in Category View, choose Sounds, Speech and Audio Devices | Sounds and Audio Devices. If your Control Panel is in Classic View, choose Sounds and Audio Devices.
2. Click the Hardware tab of the resultant tabbed dialog box.

3. Scroll down the Devices listing to 'Video Codecs', select it and click the Properties button.
4. The Properties tab of the resultant dialog box will provide you with a list of installed video codecs.



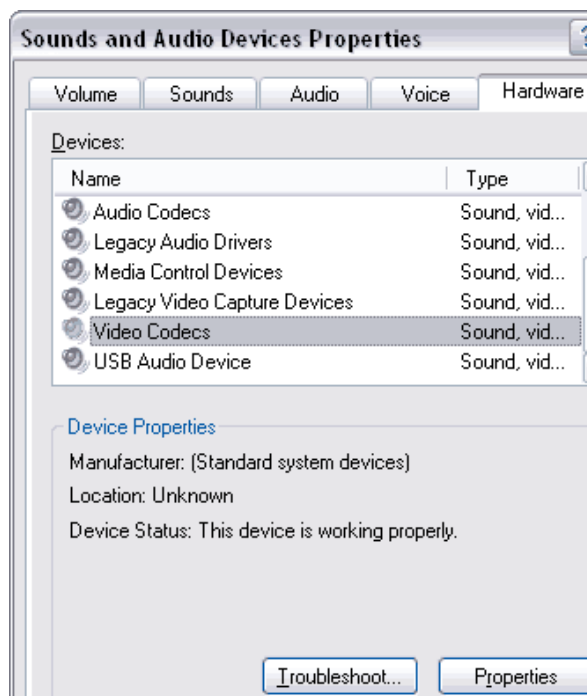
### PowerPoint and Codecs?

All audio and video files use a codec. In effect, PowerPoint needs to decode these codec-transcoded media files when they have to be played.

PowerPoint by itself does not decode the audio and video files - rather it uses the MCI player (all PowerPoint versions before PowerPoint 2003). PowerPoint 2003 uses both the MCI player and Windows Media Player - you'll find more info about how PowerPoint 2003 deals with multimedia files in this informative article by Andrew May on the Microsoft site, [How PowerPoint 2003 Plays Multimedia Files in a Presentation.](#)

### Insert Video

Normally, you'll insert video clips into PowerPoint using the Insert menu options. When you choose a video, PowerPoint prompts you if you want the video to play automatically - unless you have some reason for the video to play on a mouse click, it is a good idea to accept this option. You can always change this behavior or edit it using the Custom Animation task pane.



1. Navigate to the slide where you want the video inserted in a new or existing presentation.
2. Choose Insert | Movies & Sounds | Movie from File... and choose the required video file.
3. PowerPoint prompts you if you want the movie to play automatically or only when clicked - choose your option. It is a good idea to choose the automatic option if you are not sure since removing that behavior is usually a one-click operation - adding that behavior on the other hand takes several steps.

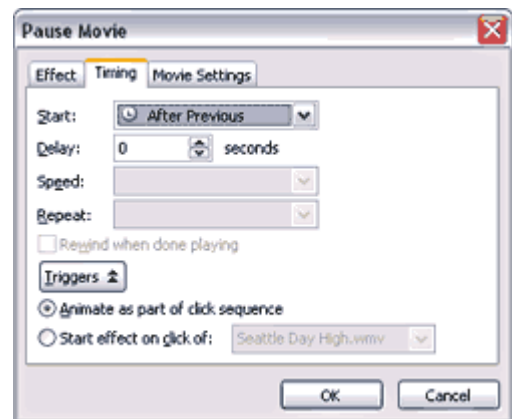
If you need to change the behavior of inserted videos to play automatically, follow these steps:

1. Select the movie. Choose Slide Show | Custom Animation. In PowerPoint 2002 and 2003, this will activate the Custom Animation task pane - in older versions this will display the Custom Animation dialog box.
2. **PowerPoint 97 and 2000:** Place a check mark next to the movie in the slide objects box (top left). Then, select the Automatically 00:00 seconds after previous event in the Start Animation section of the Order and Timing tab.

**PowerPoint 2002 and 2003:** Click the downward pointing arrow next to the name of the movie file in the Custom Animation task pane and choose Timing from the resultant menu. Choose the After Previous option in the Start drop down box and choose 0 seconds for the Delay option.

**Resize Videos:** You can resize your video once it is inserted in a slide. Once you select the video, you'll see eight handles around it - four on the corners and the other four between the corners (on the sides).

- Drag it from the corner handle to resize it in the same proportion on all sides.
- Drag it from the side handle to resize it without proportion.
- Drag it from the corner or sides with both the Ctrl and Shift keys pressed to resize it from the center.



PowerPoint allows you to insert AVI, MOV (older versions only), MPG, WMV and ASF video formats natively. For these formats, you'll be allowed much control in the form of timing, video size and appearance.

**Fade Videos:** Sometimes, you might want a video clip to fade in before it starts playing - it is always good to have a video clip appear subtly rather than have it appear and play all at once, especially since PowerPoint does not allow you to fade just the audio part of the video.

1. Select the inserted video clip, right-click and choose Custom Animation. This will activate the Custom Animation task pane.
2. Choose Add Effect | Entrance | Fade within the task pane. If Fade is not one of the options visible, choose Add Effect | Entrance | More Effects... option. In the resultant dialog box, choose the Fade option under the 'Subtle' category of animations.
3. By default, PowerPoint chooses the 'On Click' option to initiate the fade effect - change that to 'With Previous' so that the video fades in without any intervention while playing.
4. You might also want to adjust the speed of the fade - by default, PowerPoint chooses Medium, but you also have the Slow, Very Slow, Fast and Very Fast options to choose from.

You can also add a nice border to your video clip in PowerPoint itself. This ends up often looking like a frame.

1. Select the video clip, right click and choose the Format Picture option.
2. Choose the 'Colors and Lines' tab and choose a Line Color. You can also choose and alter the line weight, style and dashed attributes of the line (border).

**Tip:** For a very different effect, choose a weight of at least 10 points and then choose the 'Patterned Lines' option in the Color dropdown menu. A striped or checked border that's somewhat thick can provide a very elegant look. Try and use light colors for patterned line borders since you don't want the border to be more attractive than the video itself!

### ***Link Videos (for unsupported formats)***

For other formats, especially ones like RealVideo and QuickTime (newer versions), sometimes the only route open is to link the videos from a hyperlink or Action button.

1. To link a video file, select text (or portion of any text), an Action button or even an inserted picture or AutoShape.
2. Right-click and choose Action Settings.
3. In the Mouse Click tab, click the downward arrow button in the Hyperlink To area and choose the 'Other File' option.
4. Navigate and choose the video file that you want to play. Click OK.

Now clicking on whatever has been provided an Action Setting attribute will initiate the associated program in slideshow mode. If you have linked to a RealVideo movie, this might initiate RealPlayer or the QuickTime player in case you have linked to a MOV video. In all cases you will have to close the video clip independently of PowerPoint.

**Tip:** You can use the linking technique to initiate any associated program from within PowerPoint, even non-video files.

### ***Insert Video Objects (Video with Play Controller)***

PowerPoint also allows you to insert video objects within a slide - the advantage in inserting such video objects is that you'll get a video controller along with the video itself while PowerPoint is in slide-show mode. Thus you can stop, pause and play the video right within PowerPoint.

1. Navigate to the slide where you want your video inserted in a new or existing presentation.
2. Choose Insert | Object.
3. In the Insert Object dialog box, make sure that the 'Create new' radio button is selected and choose the Media Clip option (you could also choose the Video Clip option).
4. PowerPoint's menus will metamorphose to Media Player's menu options - choose Insert Clip provides several options including Video for Windows (for AVI videos) and DirectShow (for MPG, WMV and ASF movies) - the other options are to insert sound objects.
5. Choose Edit | Options and place a check next to the Auto Rewind option. You can also choose whether you want a control bar should be visible while the video plays. By default, this option is selected. Click OK.
6. Click anywhere outside the video object - you can reposition and resize your video.

Normally, video objects play when clicked - if you want the video to play immediately with the slide:

1. Select the video and choose Slide Show | Custom Animation. This will activate the Custom Animation task pane.
2. With the video object still selected, choose Add Effect | Object Actions | Play.
3. Change the default Start value from On Click to After Previous.
4. Specify in the "Stop playing" group how many slides you want the playlist to continue playing through. If you want all the videos to play on a single slide choose the Stop playing after current slide option.

Since a playlist can include either audio or video, the playlist object will appear and behave like a Movie object in PowerPoint for video. For sounds, it will appear as a black rectangle on the slide (where Windows Media visualizations will appear for audio).

### ***Full Screen Videos***

PowerPoint 2003 allows playing of full screen videos in a presentation:

1. Right click the video object and choose Edit Movie Object.
2. Check the option that reads 'Zoom to full screen'.

You'll also find options to loop the movie or rewind it after playing within this dialog box.

### ***Video Editing with Windows Movie Maker***

You might want to explore Windows Movie Maker, a video editing application that is part of Windows to do basic video edits like adding credits to video or inserting transitions between different video clips. Windows Movie Maker can only export to the WMV format which PowerPoint has no problem accepting.

### ***Copyright Implications***

There's one factor that can never be stressed enough and that's about copyright. Never assume that you can use a video clip in a presentation if it is not yours or licensed to you. To use a video clip that is or contains copyrighted work, you need to receive explicit permission from the owner of that content in writing.

### ***Running Smooth Videos***

What do you do if your video clips don't run too well within PowerPoint? Videos do require more system resources than most other media and some steps can go a long way in helping you run smoother videos. Here's some help - do remember that you don't have to follow every idea listed here. Some ideas are from my friend, TAJ Simmons.

1. Don't run any programs in the background that can be avoided - these include instant messengers, camera or webcam software, your PDA connectivity application, etc. Also, it's a good idea to disable your screen saver.
2. Close all open programs except PowerPoint.
3. Defrag your hard disk often so that it can function optimally.
4. Upgrade your video RAM - also upgrade your system RAM if possible.
5. Make the next 'event' in PowerPoint something very simple - you don't want PowerPoint trying to assemble a "zoom" bitmap while it's trying to play the video.
6. Right-click the movie within the slide, choose the 'Edit Movie Object' option and check the option 'Hide while not playing' in the Movie Options dialog box.
7. If you are creating your own video files, try making them "fade from black" in the actual video file since it helps to hide the fact that PowerPoint often stutters before playing the video file.

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