

# OFICINA BLOG -Dakota Findley: PowerPoint or Prezi: Which Will Tell Your Story Best?

## PowerPoint or Prezi: Which Will Tell Your Story Best?

*This is a guest post by **Dakota Findley***

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Delivering a speech or presentation to a group of people? You [need a visual aid](#). Visual aids not only help keep the audience focused, but they can enhance the overall experience of your presentation and prevent audience boredom.

There's been a lot of negativity lately about PowerPoint, but many of those bad feelings come from poorly designed PowerPoint presentations. PowerPoint slides aren't meant to be something the presenter reads directly from, nor should the presenter attempt to cram every word they plan to say into the overall slide show presentation.

When done well, PowerPoint still offers quality options and many benefits to presentations, but there's another type of presentation that's become popular: Prezi.

People tout Prezi as the answer to PowerPoint, but in reality, they serve very different types of presentation styles. The tool you choose depends entirely on the kind of experience you want your audience to have. Let's take a look at the benefits and drawbacks of both and how you can decide which one is best for your presentation.

# **PowerPoint**

PowerPoint is a straightforward, workhorse presentation deck that allows you to summarize information for your audience and keep them on track.

It helps with linear storytelling or presenting in which all the information builds on the previous information, and there are logical introductions and conclusions.

## **How it Works**

PowerPoint works best with simple fonts (only one or maybe two) and using only highlighted points instead of typing out paragraphs of information.

Think of how you might outline a text to study for a test. The format of PowerPoint works much the same way and is intended as a focused guide for your audience. Delivering the slides is a matter of using the outline without reading the slides directly. Never turn your back on the audience.

It's best at getting the audience to a stopping point. All the information builds to one conclusion or summary.

## **Pros**

- PowerPoint is easy to manipulate, and most anyone who has used a computer will be familiar with the program's design. It provides templates for simple drag-and-drop text and pictures, plus video capability. It is excellent for introducing the topic of the presentation and highlighting key points just as headings do in an article.
- At the end of the presentation, the slides are printable so you can send the audience home with the highlights and resources to remind them of the core of your presentation.

## **Cons**

- To be honest, a lot of the drawbacks are due to user error. PowerPoints tend to look the same because people rely on the pre-created templates

and boring fonts.

- If your story or presentation isn't linear, then you're faced with flipping back and forth through slides, which looks unprofessional, or recreating slides over and over, which seems redundant. It also can't be used for free because it is part of the Office suite, and Mac users might find that converting to Keynote loses some formatting.

## **Prezi**

Prezi is a newer presentation software that uses motion, space, and zoom to create effects that mimic the freer flow of conversation or non-linear storytelling. When you need to build information to a wow factor, or you are attempting to inspire your audience to take action through a pain point, Prezi's dynamic presentation is the best choice.

### **How it Works**

Prezi doesn't use slides. Instead, it uses a "path" design that leads viewers from information point to information point.

The main points on the path are clickable, and each click zooms in so that the audience can see the details. Returning to different points is easy because as you zoom back out, all the clickable headings are visible.

This is a more intuitive setting that doesn't have you flipping through slides or exiting presentation mode to the dreaded computer view to find a piece of info again.

Prezi is best at getting your audience to a starting point. The information presents a scenario or story, and your audience should leave fired up to take action at the end.

### **Pros**

- One of the great features is that in exchange for making your presentation publicly searchable, you can use the presentation software for free, which

is great if [you're trying to reduce expenses](#).

- It starts with a virtually blank canvas, so each presentation tends to be more creative and less like one thousand other presentations. It is excellent for non-linear storytelling, and for presentations where you know you'll be returning to the same piece of information again and again.
- Even though it's about seven years old, it's still less familiar than PowerPoint for many audiences, giving it the instant wow factor. It's excellent for inserting sound files and other kinds of media.

## Cons

- It takes more time to create a quality Prezi presentation because you have to start from scratch. If you're looking to create a quick presentation in a couple of hours, you might find yourself out of luck.
- Prezi does offer a few preset templates, but these are very limited in scope and less customizable than PowerPoint templates. Prezi shines when you start from scratch but is very limiting otherwise.
- You have to upgrade to a paid version if you plan to keep your presentation private, and unless you upgrade, you won't be able to work on your presentation offline.
- A huge downside is that Prezi presentations aren't printable. You'll have to alter the format of your presentation or create an entirely different printable handout to give your audience the recap handouts.
- Ultimately, if you aren't very tech-friendly, it can be a steep learning curve to use Prezi, unlike the ubiquitous PowerPoint format.

## Which is Best?

In the end, the software you choose will depend on what sort of conclusion you want your audience to reach and what sort of experience you are designing for your presentation.

If you want them to leave informed with a synthesized conclusion, PowerPoint is your winner. If you want to inspire your audience to see the big picture and to make their own judgments and take action, Prezi is the clear choice.