

# PowerPoint

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*PowerPoint* is a product of Microsoft Corp., 16011 NE 36th Way, Box 97017, Redmond, Wa. 98073. (206) 882-8080. \$395.00.

Minimum hardware requirements are: Macintosh Plus, SE or II with at least 1 mb of memory and two 800k drives or a hard disk.

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Capturing the interest of viewers is a first priority item among teachers and other professionals who use media in their presentations. PowerPoint, one of the growing number of PC slide programs becoming available, is one more tool that can be used to achieve this goal. While this program was not intended to replace a graphic artist, it does give the ordinary presenter the ability to create professional looking slides. And, as a fringe benefit, control over the content, sequence and production time has been returned to the user.

## *Basic Features*

PowerPoint can be used to produce 35mm slides, overhead transparencies, on-screen computer slide shows and paper-based flip charts. Sample presentations for slides and transparencies have been provided as starting point models for new users. A full set of graphics tools to create circles, squares and lines make up the heart of the drawing package. Once the images have been created, they can be moved, resized and outlined or filled with patterns, textures and color. A spelling checker has also been included with the word processor. The word processor, of course, can be used to create text slides, multi-level bullet charts and word charts or to label diagrams, graphs and tables. In each case, multiple fonts, type sizes and type styles are always available to the user. A find and replace feature has also been incorporated into the word processor. The searchfunctionfmds and replaces words orphrasesin all slides, notes, handout pages, and master templates.

### *Import and Export Capabilities*

The text and graphics used to create the slides do not have to originate with PowerPoint, they can be imported from other sources. For example, while PowerPoint does not have an outliner built into it, it can import text from other outliner programs such as MORE or ThinkTank. If the outline is properly organized, PowerPoint will automatically use the text to create text slides. In the graphics area, clip art and charts created by programs such as MacDraw, MacPaint and Excel can also be imported through the use of standard Macintosh cut and paste techniques. Similarly, graphics created with PowerPoint can also be exported to other compatible programs.

### *Printer and Recorder Support*

The Apple LaserWriter or ImageWriter can be used to print out paper copies of slides, note pages or handouts. Overhead transparencies can be made directly if transparency material is substituted for paper or from paper masters if they are run through a standard thermal copier. 35mm color slides, on the other hand, required a film recorder. If a film recorder is not available locally, the slide can be sent to Genigraphics via a modem. Once the data is received, Genigraphics will produce the slide and send it back to the user via return mail. For the presenter note pages, a miniature of the slide is automatically created on the note page along with space for presenters to add their notes. The same process is used for the creation of learner handouts. Miniatures are automatically created on the page with the choice of printing 2,3, or 6 slides per page being left to the discretion of the user.

### *Documentation*

As is characteristic of most Macintosh software, the documentation is very user friendly and extensive. Chapter 1, tells the user what hardware is required and how to install the program. Chapter 2, the quick tour, helps the user get acquainted with the basic features and operation of the program. Chapter 3, gives step-by-step tutorial instruction on the use of each option. Chapter 4, adds the dimension of working with color and Chapter 5, serves as the reference chapter.

### *Recommendations*

PowerPoint represents the distillation of many years experience in producing computer generated slides. It is a powerful, user-friendly, graphics tool that combines the collective wisdom of many typographers and graphic artists. For example, when working in color, after the user selects a background and foreground color for a slide, PowerPoint brings up a menu of six appropriate complimentary colors that could be used in other parts of the graphic. This helps the user avoid making inappropriate color choices which ultimately, may detract from the message being presented. After doing the introductory tour, the new user will be familiar enough with the basic features of the program to begin to produce high quality slides. However, like all powerful programs, it

will take the casual user some additional time and experience to become completely familiar with all of the program's capabilities. The creation of good graphics is always a time consuming process and most presenters have a limited amount of time available to produce slides, handouts and notes. Compared to the time required for their production by traditional methods, PowerPoint is certainly a step in the right direction.

#### *Similar Programs For Other Systems*

Showoff, from Broderbund Software, is available for the Apple II computer. It is an excellent program for creating and displaying computer generated graphics. It does not yet however have the capability to output the graphics to a film recorder. For the MS-DOS world, there is the upgraded version of the aging Harvard Graphics program available from Software Publishing. It is easy to use and ideal for creating word charts. It is also the only PC slide program for the MS-DOS operating system that contains a built in spelling checker.

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#### REVIEWER

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