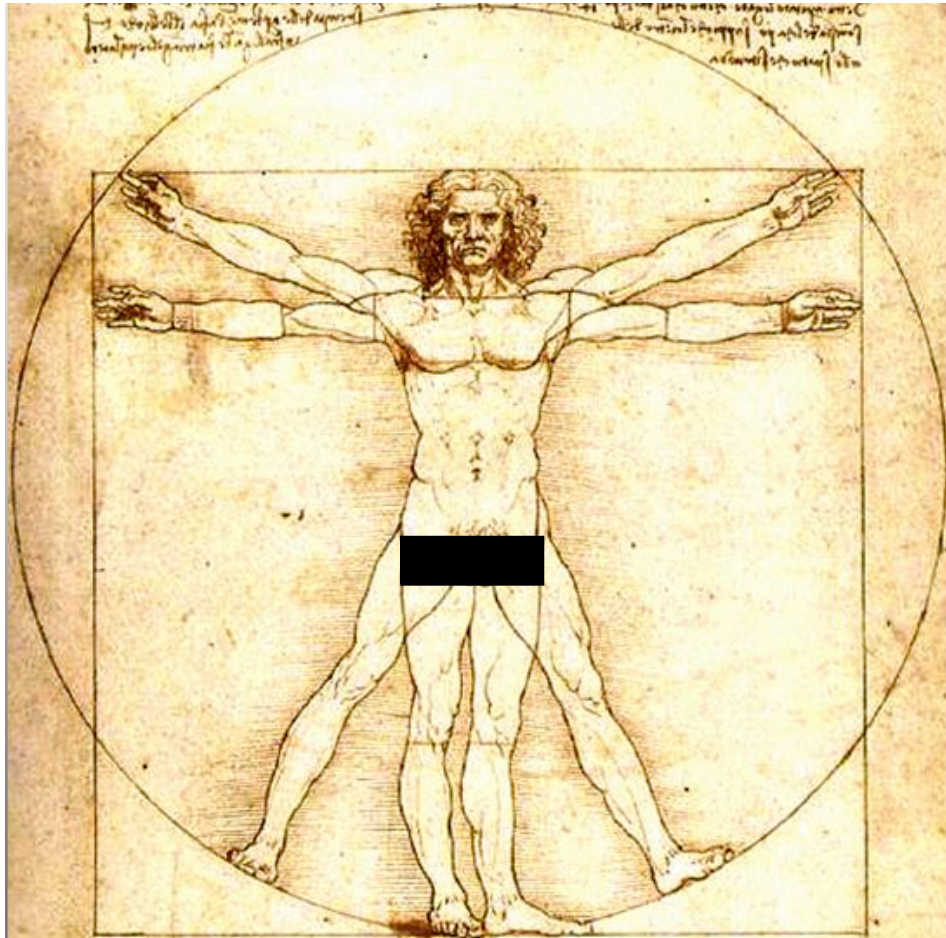


Presentation Skills for PowerPoint

Guidelines



WVU OIT Technical Support Services
304-293-4444 (Help Desk)

Presentation Theory

One of the most important things to remember when learning any presentation software is to put your audience first. Ahead of ego and what you want, think about what the audience wants. If you start off with this mindset, you're on your way to creating engaging and informative presentations.

Above all else, a presentation should be a companion to what you have to say. It shouldn't be a script you read from, nor contain the bulk of the information you want to get out. The best presentations don't overwhelm.

Here are two examples to illustrate the difference between overwhelming and informing:



Bill Gates explains how Microsoft's Live Platform will be the center of your digital life.

Steve Jobs explains how Apple will be the hub of our digital devices.



PowerPoint Do's and Don'ts

Do

- Organize** your thoughts on paper before working with PowerPoint.
- Use** the Outline View for preparing the text part of your presentation.
- Spell check** your content.
- Use only appropriate graphs, charts and images** that closely follow or complement the concept expressed in each slide.
- Divide topics** across multiple slides. Keep text to a minimum. Limit your bullets to no more than 6 concise points. Don't get trigger happy.
- Stay consistent** in titles, backgrounds, colors and slide transitions.
- Use opening and closing slides** so that the audience won't see PowerPoint before and after the presentation. For example an introduction slide and a summary slide.
- Save your work** frequently (Ctrl+S).
- Backup your work frequently** (any time you make a major change, if possible).
- Use appropriate fonts:** big and clear (sans-serif). If possible, test your slides: run the slide show and see if you can read your slides from the last row of the room where you will be presenting, with the lighting set as it will be for your presentation.
- Use appropriate colors:** not too bright, high contrast, consistent. Remember that what looks good on your monitor does not necessarily look good on the big screen.
- Create contrast with font size and colors.** Not everyone can see well. When you design your slides, keep in mind your audience might include people with partial sight and color deficiencies.
- Learn to navigate** your presentation in a non-linear fashion. PowerPoint allows the presenter to jump ahead or back without having to page through all the interim slides. Practice moving forward AND backward within your presentation. Audiences often ask to see the previous screen again. Make a cheat sheet with the slide numbers of important points within your presentation. During a running presentation, you can type the number of a slide and hit Enter to jump immediately to that point.

-Distribute a Handout: Print your PowerPoint presentation (in “handout” format, three or four slides per page). Make copies for everyone in your audience. They will appreciate the hardcopy if they get lost, or for note taking.

-Plan Your Logistics: Ask your hosts in advance if they will provide a computer, or if they expect you to bring your own. If the former, will their version of PowerPoint be able to read yours? Do they expect you to have your presentation on a floppy disk? A CD-ROM? Always have a backup plan by bringing the presentation on floppy & CD. You can also email it to the host.

Make sure you have all adapters, cables, and hardware lined up well before start time.

If you use a wireless mouse, a laser pointer, etc., practice with them before your presentation. It's a good idea to make sure your setup works in the room you'll present in.

-Practice, Practice, Practice: Test your presentation and your PowerPoint skills in advance. Use a real projector and a real screen in a real conference room—with the lights on. Make sure your presentation is readable, looks right on the screen, and you know the material. Check your colors, contrasts, and font sizes. Go to the back of the room and look at your presentation. Is it clear? Is it easy to read text? Are the images identifiable at a distance?

Don't

-Don't use too many pictures and/or graphics *per slide*. This can take focus away from more important items like keywords and relevant data.

-Don't rely on the program's Autosave feature

-Don't put everything you present on the slides. Remember, slides are a visual aid. If you overstuff them, your audience will end up reading the slides and won't pay attention to you. Crowded slides are a turn off and obscure your main points.

-Don't use different colors / fonts on every single slide.

-Don't use bright or distracting colors. They will strain your audience's eyes.

-Don't use too many animation effects: They are VERY distracting for the audience. Use animation only to make a point and not to make your presentation more interesting (use content to do that!). Stick with the same backgrounds, styles and transition effects throughout your presentation.

-Don't run experiments at the last minute.

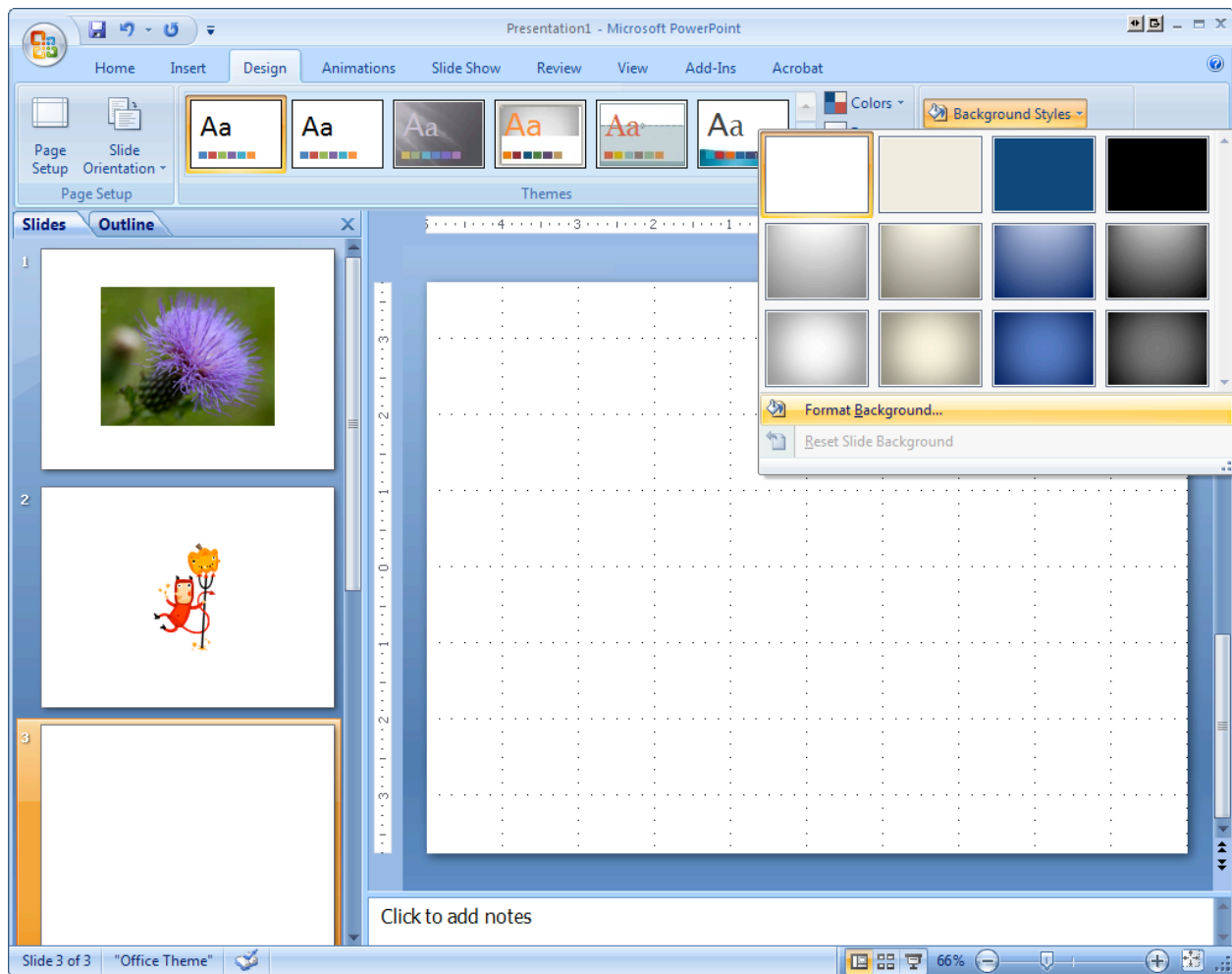
Creating Custom Backgrounds in 2007

Creating an attractive background for your slides is easy in PowerPoint 2007. The Design tab offers just three sections; Page Setup, Themes, and Background. You can quickly choose preset options, modify them, or make your own.

Create a New Slide.

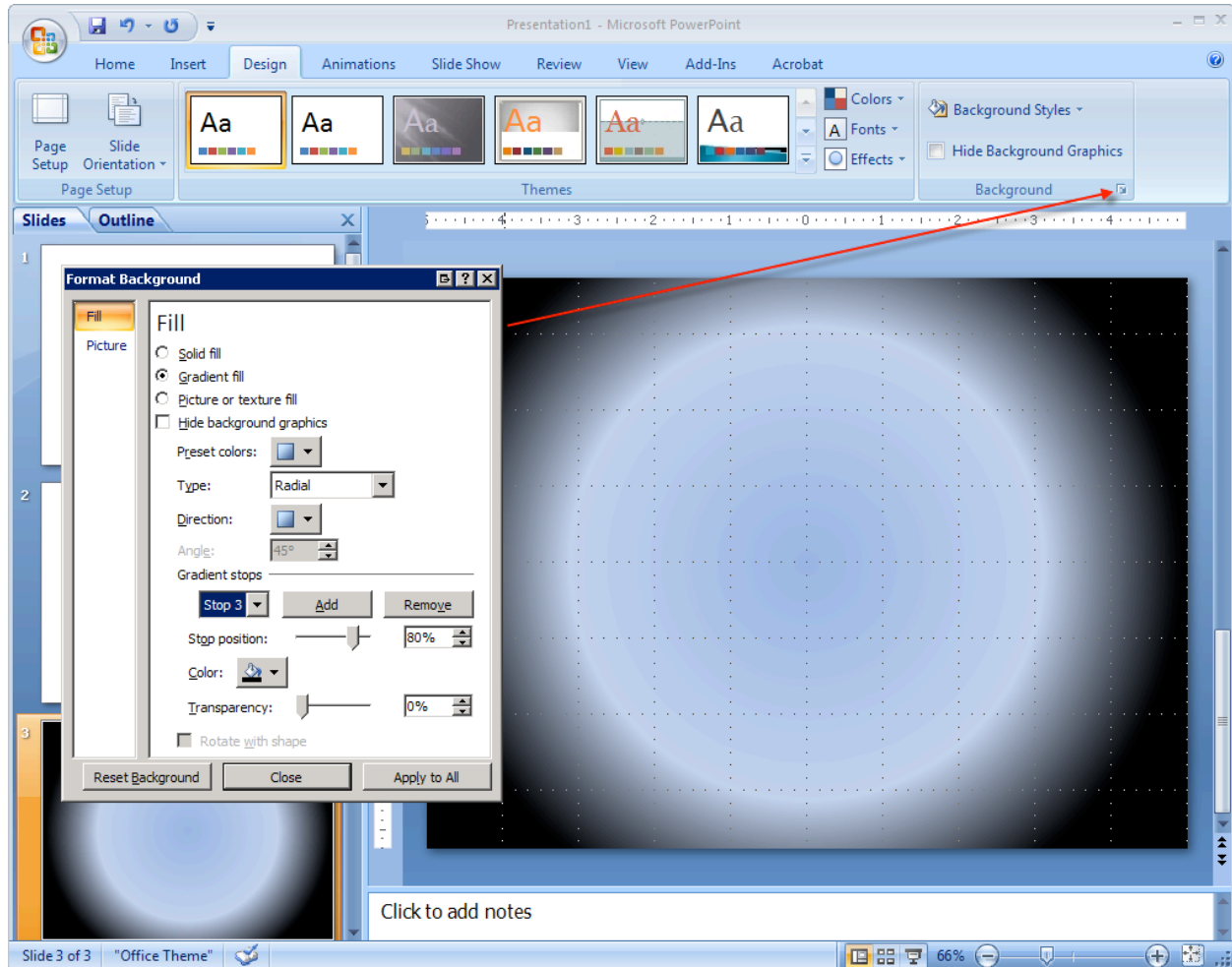
Click on the Design Tab.

Click on Background Styles in the Background section:



As you mouse over the different preset backgrounds, you'll get a live preview of your choices. *Choose one and click to select.*

When you've chosen a background to start from, you can modify it to your tastes. *Click on the More Options call out in the bottom right of the Background section:*



The Format Background window opens.

Play with the options here, changing the background however you want.

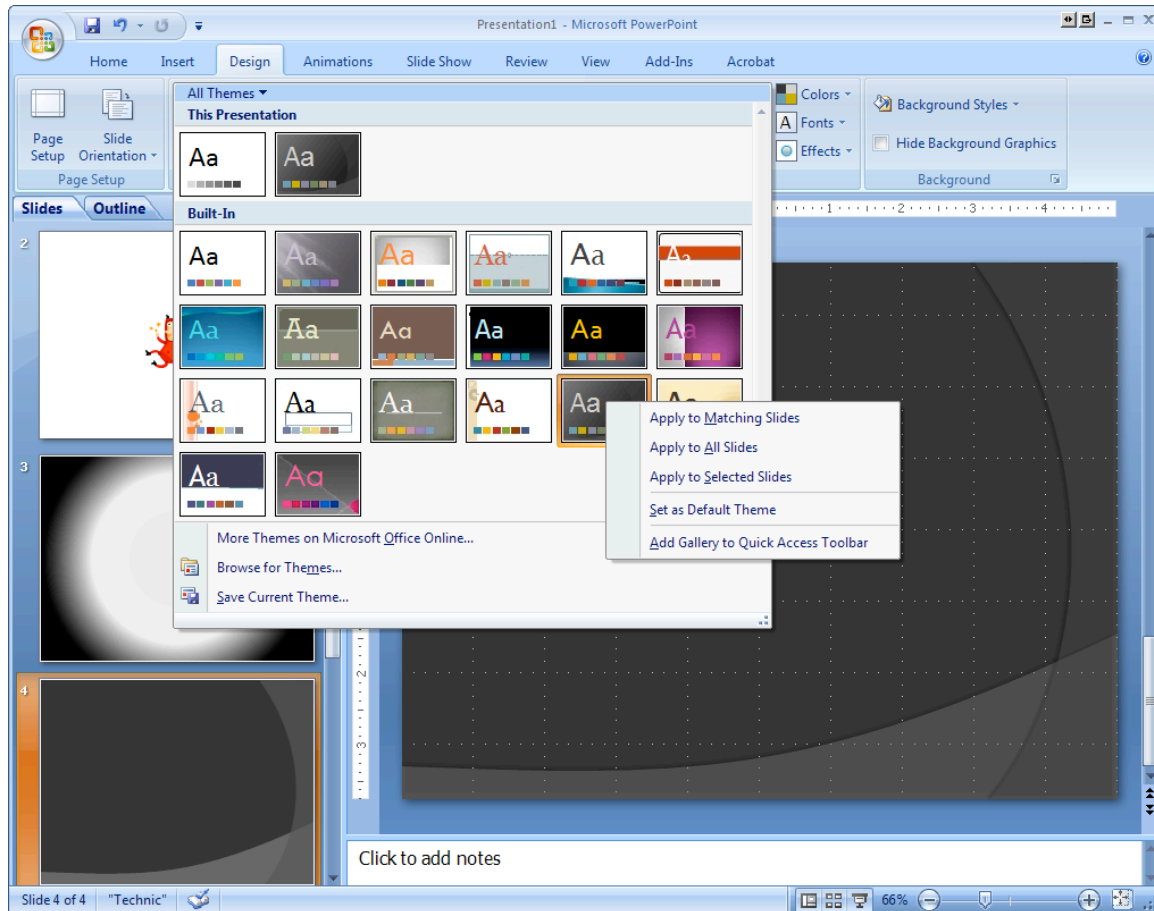
When you are satisfied with your Background, *click Close*.

Themes 2007

What were Color Schemes and Templates in 2003 are now Themes in 2007.

PowerPoint 2007 streamlines the slide customization process. Backgrounds, color schemes, and font choices all blend together in Themes.

To access the different themes at your disposal, click on the Design tab. Examine your options in the Themes section:

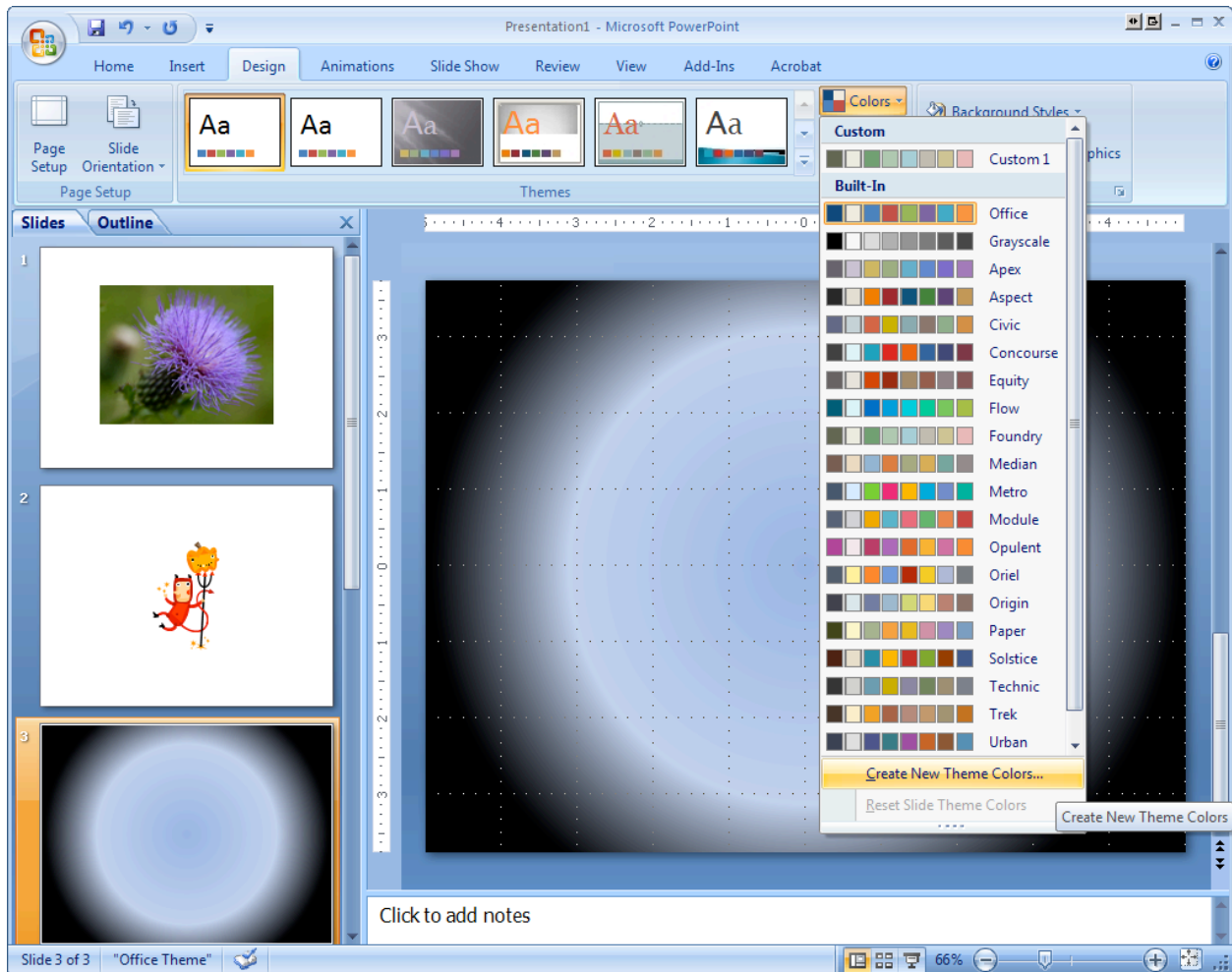


You can change the text and default colors for your theme, too.

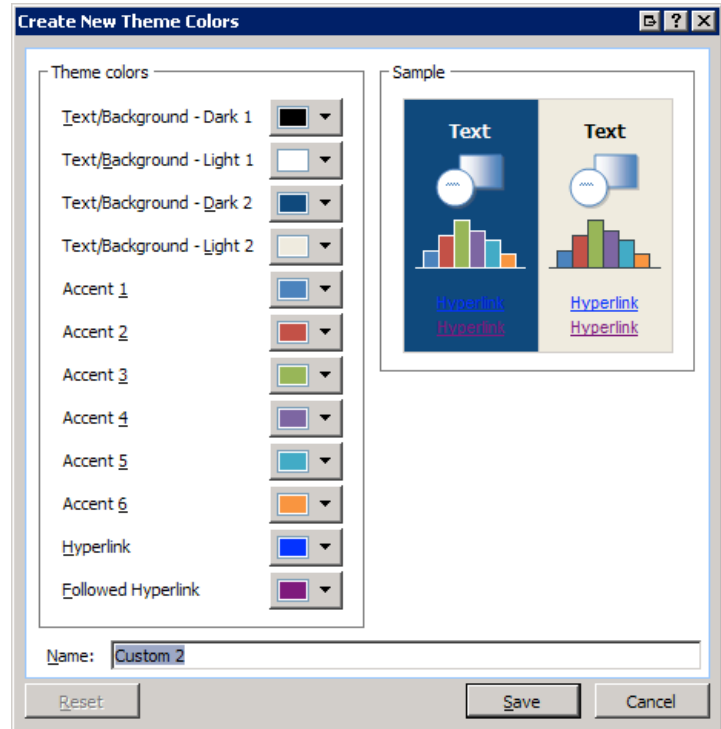
Click around and explore these options.

Colors

You can choose preset Color Themes for your slides, or create new ones:

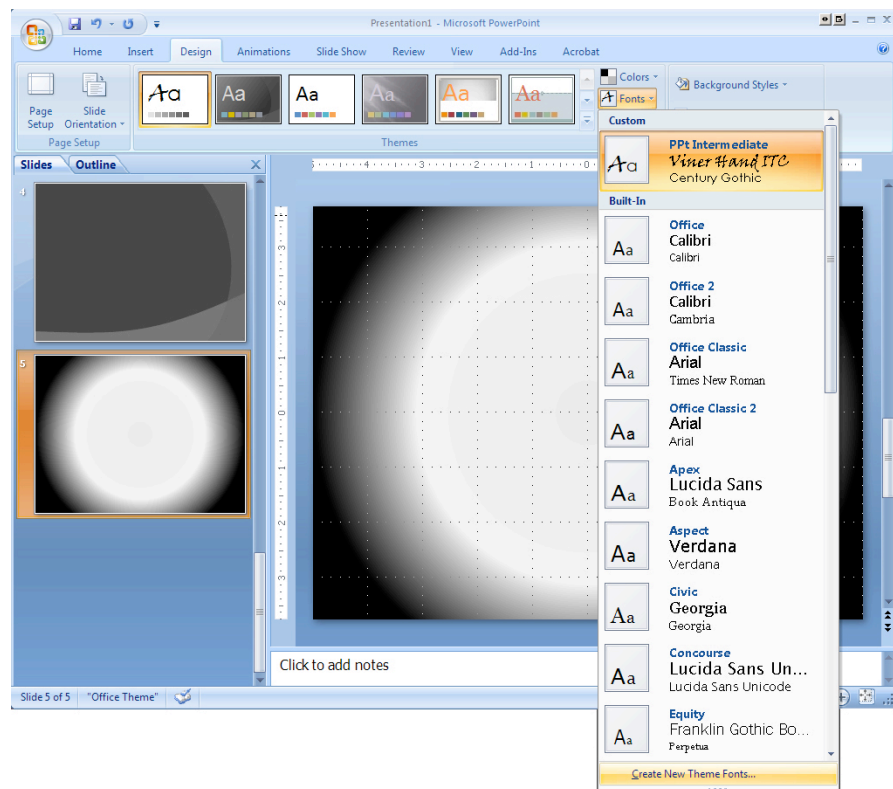


If you choose to create your own Theme Colors, the Create New Theme Colors window has two main sections- *as you change colors under Theme colors, you get a preview under Sample*:

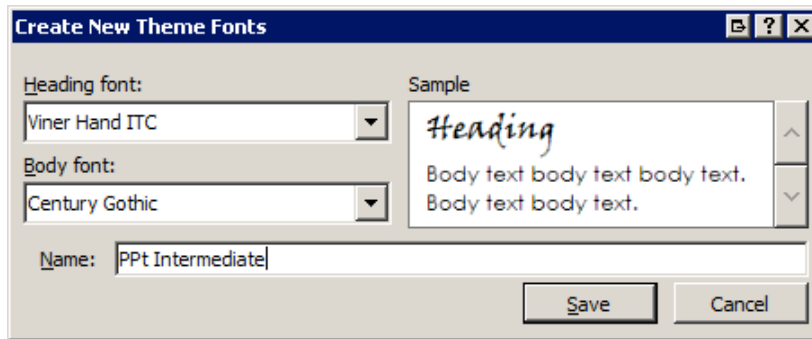


Fonts

You can choose the current font on the Fonts pull-down menu:

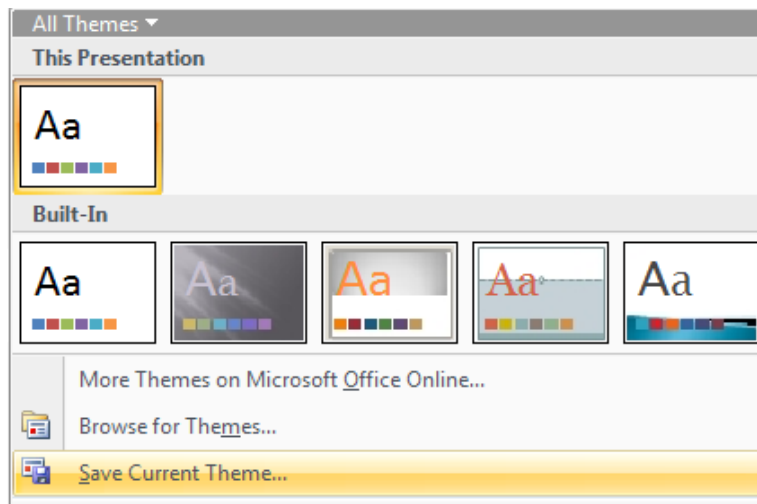


If you create your own Theme Fonts, the *Create New Theme Fonts* window allows you to set default Heading and Body fonts:

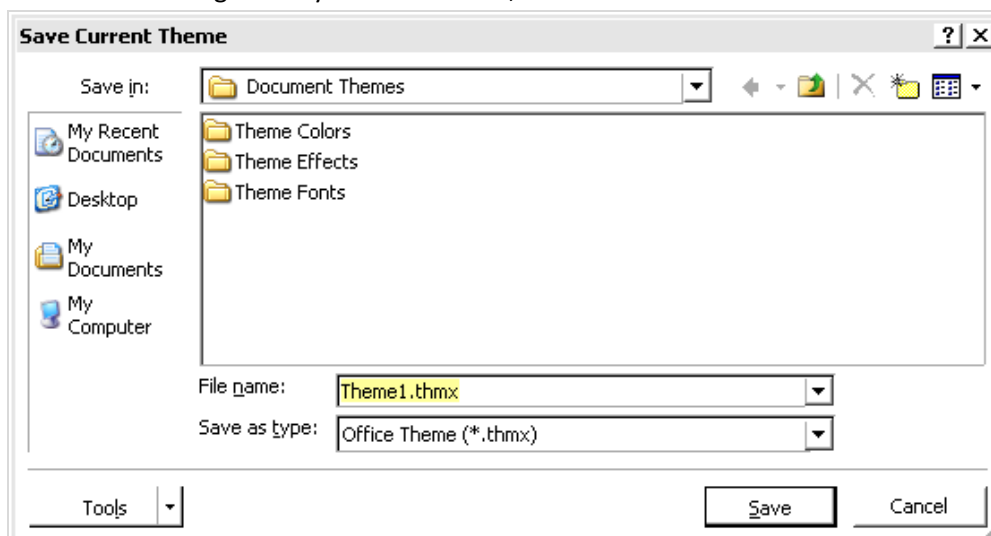


If you've found a combination of looks you want to keep, save your theme!

On the bottom right of the themes in the Themes section, click on the expand button to get the All Themes menu. Click on Save Current Theme:



Choose something to call your new theme, and save for later use!

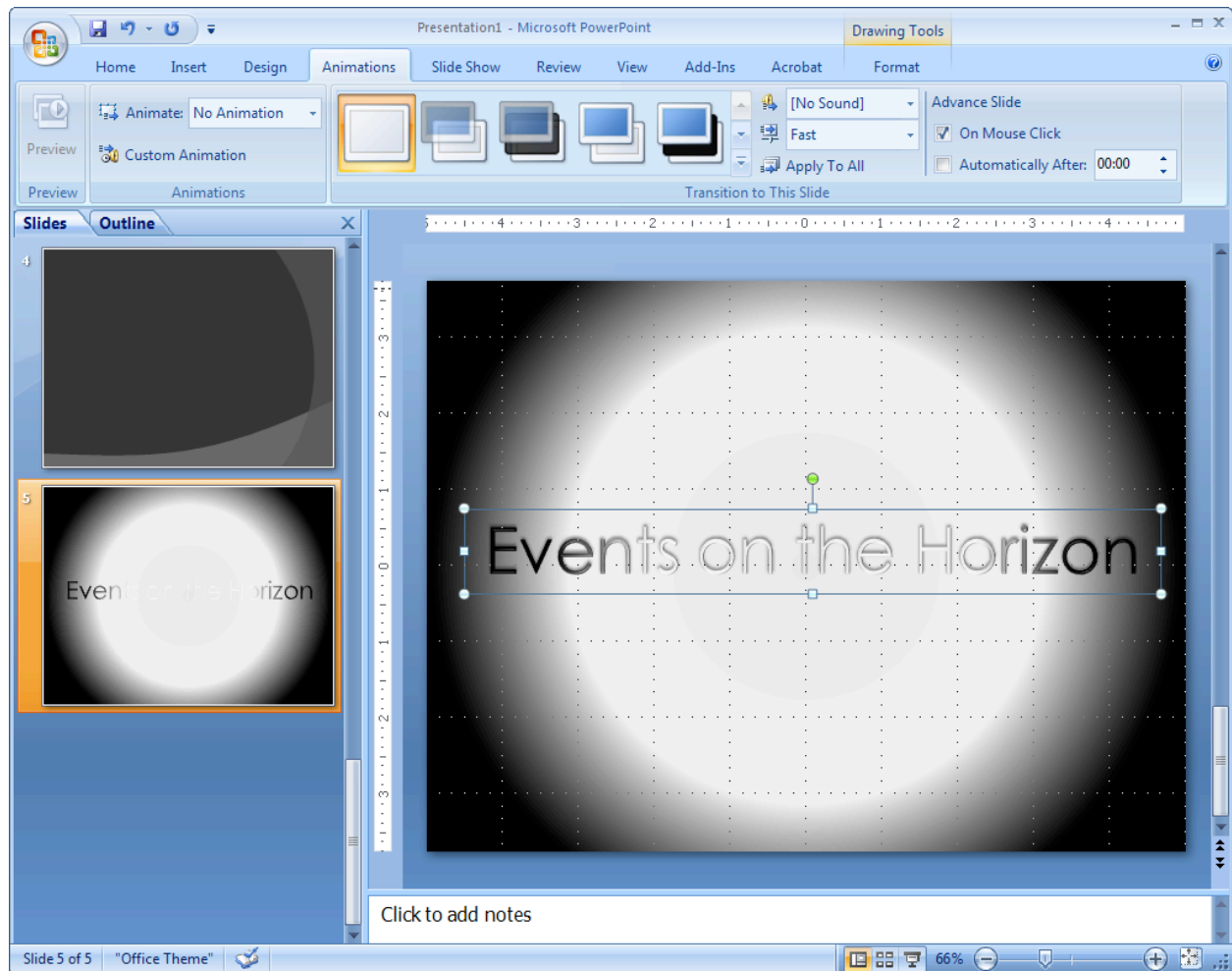


Applying Animation Effects

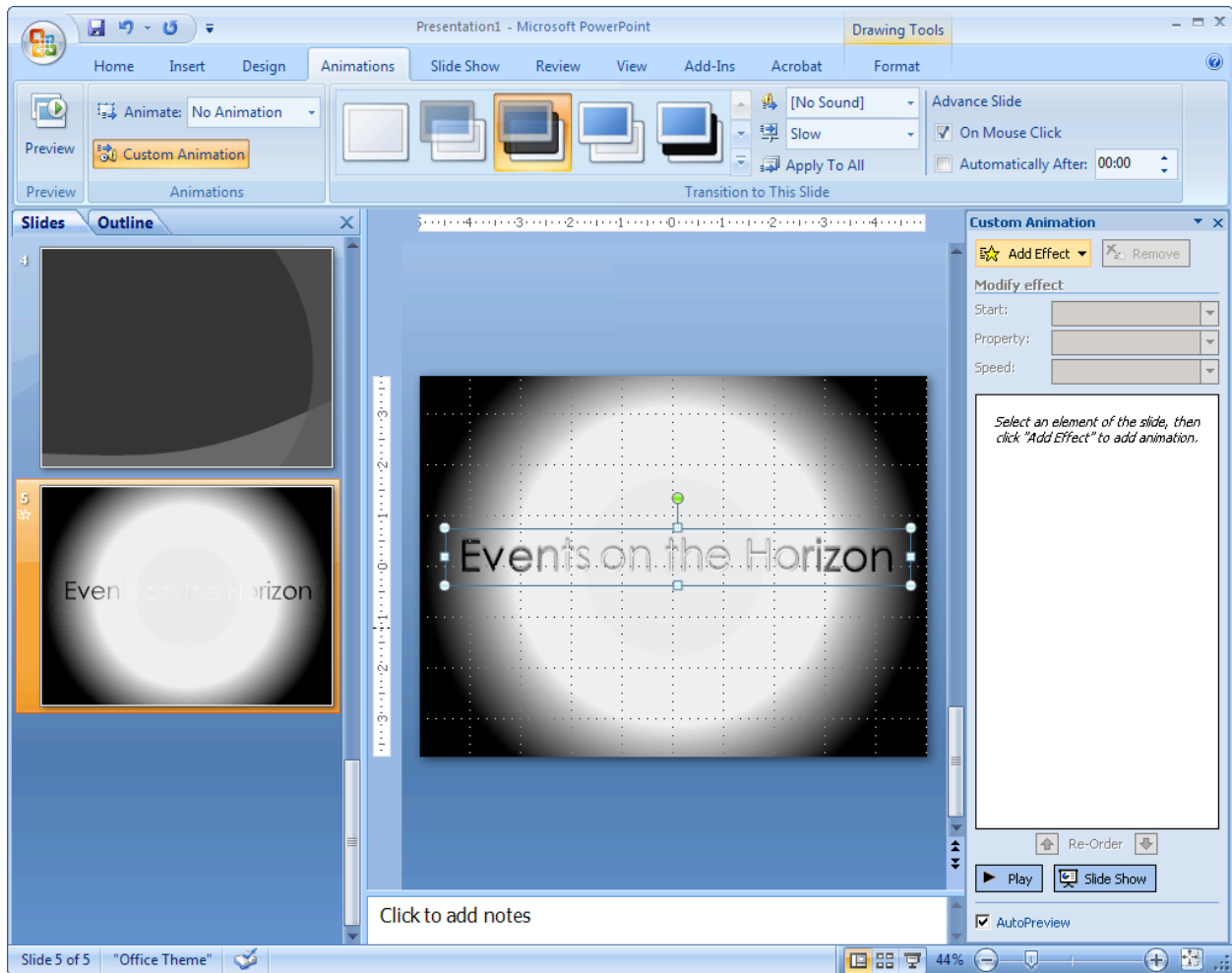
Compared to PowerPoint 2003, animations are set up a little differently in 2007.

Add some text to your slide, and make sure it's selected.

Click on the Animations tab to bring up your animation-specific tools:



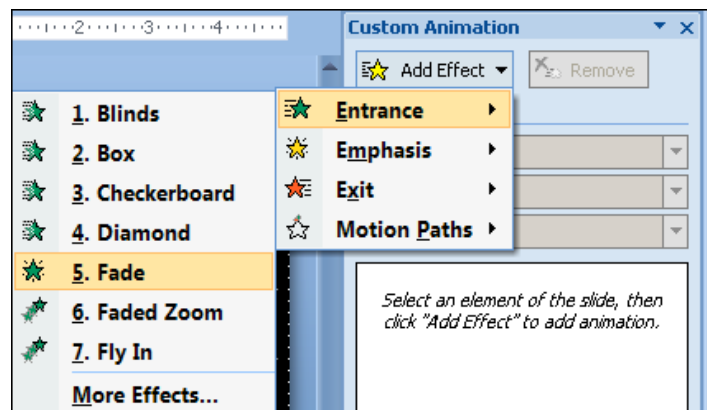
On the lower left of the Animation Ribbon, click on Custom Animation:



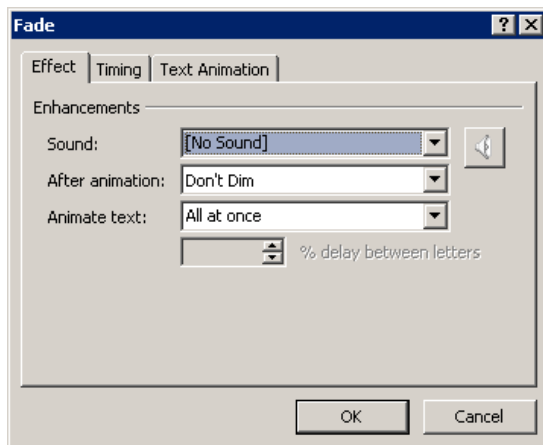
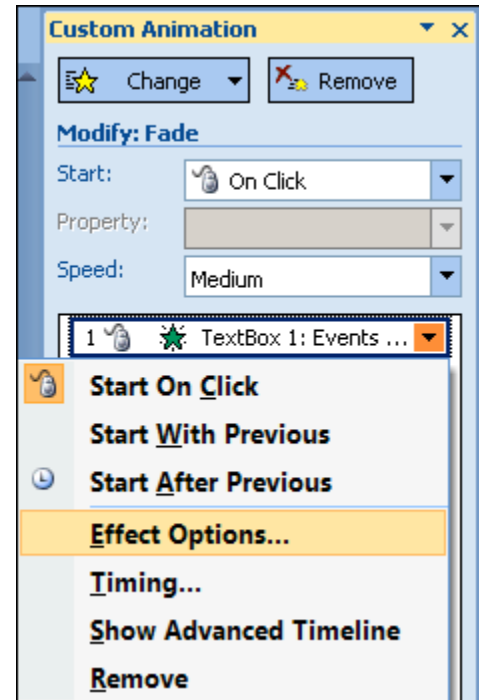
The Custom Animation section pops up on the right side of your screen. This area helps you keep track of animations, order, and any changes you make.

Click on Add Effect in the Custom Animation section.

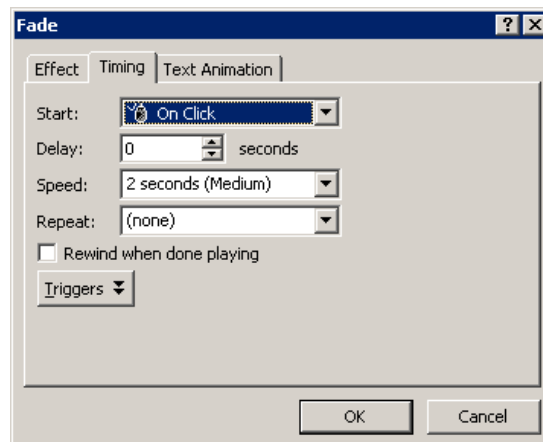
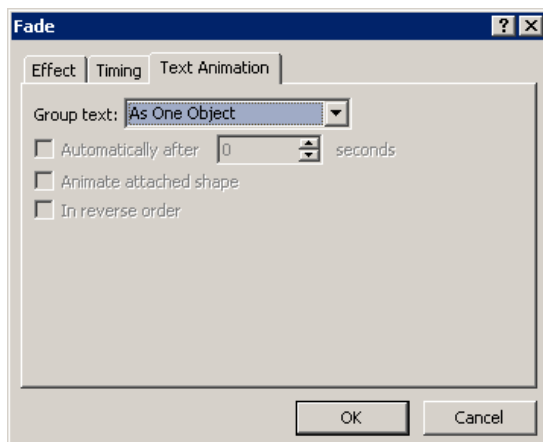
Choose Entrance> Fade to apply this animation to our text:



You can change various options of your animation by clicking the down arrow to the right of the animation that appears in our custom animation list:



Your three main choices for modifying your animation are Effect, Timing, and (in this case) Text Animation:

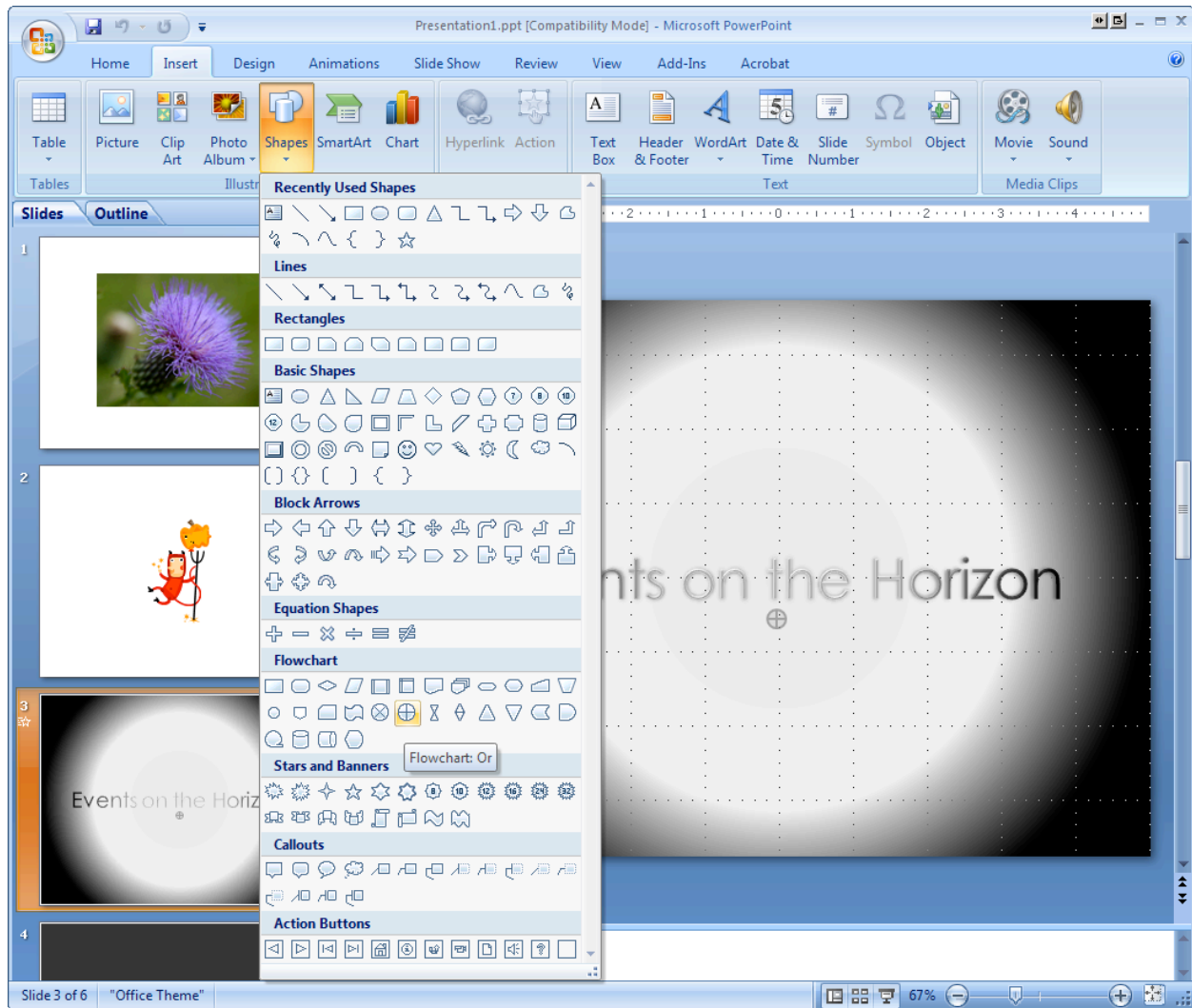


Adding Interactivity

An easy way to expand your presentation is to link to content outside your own slides.

Let's do this using a simple hyperlink.

Under the Insert tab, click on Shapes in the Illustrations section:



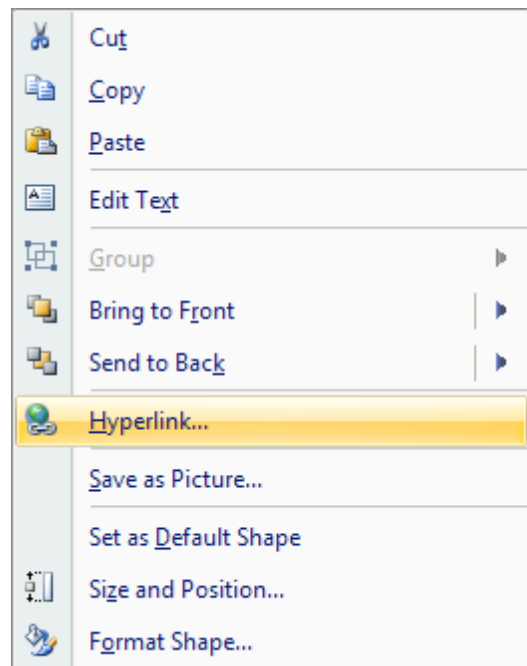
Select the symbol that looks like a targeting reticle (crosshairs) under Flowchart.

After moving the shape in to position, right click on it:

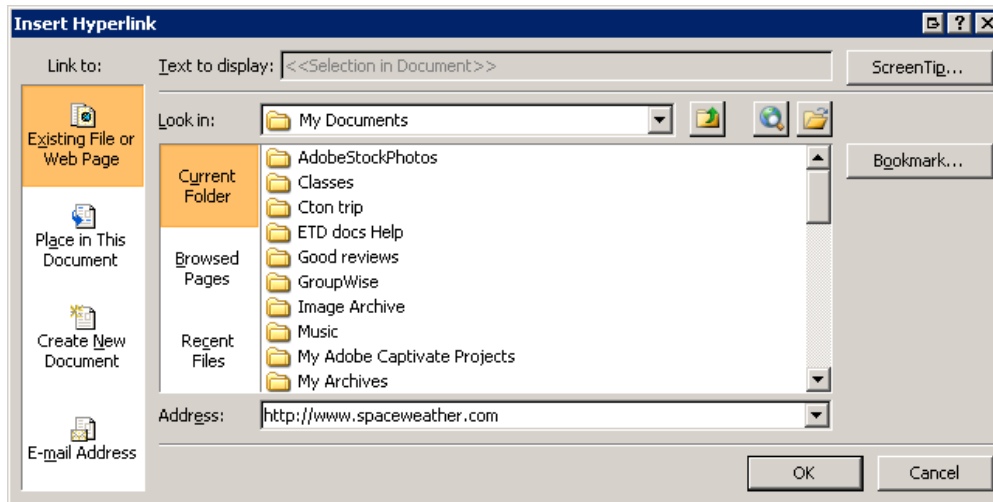


In the menu that appears, *click on Hyperlink*:

Many commands and adjustments are only a right click away. Never be afraid to explore your options by right-clicking!



In the Insert Hyperlink window that appears, type in a web address to link to:



Now when you run your presentation, you'll be able to click on the symbol to have PowerPoint open the link in a web browser. If you mouse-over the shape, you'll see the hyperlink pop up in a little info box:



Your PowerPoint presentation still runs in the background, and when you close your web browser, your presentation will start back up where you left off.

Afterword

-Animations, graphics, and backgrounds should never exist at the expense of your content.

-All things should enhance and supplement your presentation.

-Your slides should help engage your audience, not distract them.

-Don't forget your job as a presenter- to inform, educate, and (hopefully) entertain.

And remember, you can prevent PowerPoint poisoning!



Links

lynda.com Video-based tutorials for just about everything you'll use day to day, barring specialty applications specific to a job (eCampus, MAP, etc.).

presentationzen.com One of the go-to gurus of presentations.

ted.com Want to see the cutting edge for presentations? People who do this for a living, and who engage their audience play here.

presentationmagazine.com Good info, but don't get overwhelmed!

Four links is all you need to greatly improve your familiarity with PowerPoint *and* help you shape a better delivery for your information. Good luck!