

PRESENTATION & the



by Nolan Haims

After spending time working with Apple's new iPad, I've come to a few conclusions about what this new type of machine means for on-screen presentation.

HOW DO YOU PRESENT ON THE IPAD?

First, let's address the ways you can present a traditional on-screen presentation such as a PowerPoint or Keynote file.

1. **iPad Keynote Application** - Apple created a version of their excellent PowerPoint-like desktop software specially for the iPad. The good news is that you can import (via iTunes) existing Keynote presentations as well as PowerPoint files into the iPad Keynote application, edit and then play them off the device. You can even hook up the iPad to an external monitor with an extra adaptor. The bad news is that the Keynote version of the iPad is much more limited in functionality than the desktop version. Almost any imported Keynote presentation will lose something on the iPad including many animations, object groupings, unsupported custom fonts, hyperlinks, unsupported image files, etc.



PowerPoint files can also be imported into and run out of iPad Keynote, but you're liable to lose even more functionality than with a native Keynote file.

Some problems can be fixed as iPad Keynote is capable of editing and even creating new presentations from scratch. But it's a chore. And still limiting.

2. **PDFs** - Turn your presentation into a PDF and the iPad will be happy to display it. However, there is no easy way to get a PDF onto the device. You can email it to yourself, or post it online and view it in the Safari browser. Or you can use a 3rd party PDF viewer app such as GoodReader or PDF Reader Pro which will allow you load PDFs via iTunes. PDF apps are currently a little clunky, but should rapidly improve.



3. **Movie** - Turn your presentation into a Quicktime movie file. PowerPoint and Keynote for the Mac will do this for you, although neither creates clickable Quicktime movies anymore, resulting in a self-playing movie with timed transitions and little control.



4. **iBook** - The iPad is an incredible book reader and fortunately, it can import any book saved in the universal ePub format. Unfortunately, it's not the easiest thing to create or convert to ePub. Adobe InDesign can do it as can a number of other apps such as the free [Calibre](#). An ePub

document is more complicated than a PDF and, obviously, it's more suited to text-heavy documents. User-created ePub book creation is still in its infancy and it will get better as people learn the tricks to getting best results.

5. **Photos** - Surprisingly, the iPad's simple, but fast and elegant Photos application impressed me the most as a presentation tool. Save your entire presentation as a series of JPEGs, drop them into an album in iPhoto and sync photos to your iPad. Each album appears as a stack of photos which you easily open and navigate with your fingers. You can even pull a mini filmstrip navigator at the bottom of the screen to rapidly scroll forwards and backwards through your series of photos (slides) or jump to a particular one.



If you put different sections of your presentation into different photo albums, you can use the Photos home screen as a type of visual table of contents to move to different parts of your deck.

And it is this non-linear method of presentation navigation which really led me the realization that the iPad does not want to be used for linear presentations...

APPLE'S MISSED OPPORTUNITY TO REINVENT PRESENTATION



Whether speaker-guided in a large auditorium or self-guided on a computer screen, traditional presentations are linear. While PowerPoint is capable of creating web-like interfaces with hyperlinks to internal slides and user triggered animations, 99% of presentations start on slide 1 and move forward until the last slide.

Apple makes a big deal of the fact that the iPad Keynote app has been customized for the device. While there are a few new features and some innovative solutions for editing presentations on the iPad, mostly what Apple did was take away features and functionality. If anything, this is just "Keynote Light." The iPad iWork Suite costs about 1/3 of the desktop version. And you get about 1/3 of the programs' capabilities.

While one can easily argue that the iWork apps Pages (for word processing & layout) and Numbers (spreadsheets) are useful to have on the iPad, their true domains will always be robust computer environments for creation and usually printed documents for consumption. Keynote, however, lives and breathes on a screen and is natural fit for the iPad. But Apple only ported the convention of linear presentation to a smaller screen with the iPad. They should have rethought presentation, the way they rethought web browsing and making phone calls on the iPhone.

3-DIMENSIONAL INFORMATION



Perhaps because of the intimacy a user has with the iPad (cradling, touching, always in literal physical contact with its information), the presentation of information can no longer only be linear. Can you imagine only being able to read a newspaper from top to bottom, left to right, one page after another?

The newspaper was perhaps the first 3-Dimensional information device. You could read it linearly, but nobody ever did (or does.) Get an overview from the front page, maybe read some headlines or articles, then jump to the sports pages, jump to the stock pages (but only to check the value of your own stocks), jump to the crossword and spend 1/2 hour, then move to the classifieds (but only the cars for sale section, and skip all the truck ads...)

The New York Times, Wall Street Journal and USA Today apps are good examples of how information wants to be delivered on the iPad. From a central landing page, it is up to the user to decide how he or she wants to receive the information before him. He can scan headlines quickly or read articles deliberately and slowly. She can read every word (but we know she won't.) He can interact with the weather section, click an ad and buy a product or watch a video trailer for the movie review he just read. She didn't create the content, but she is now in control of it.



The iPad demonstrates that users want, need and can handle control of information generated by others.

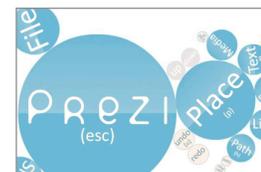
They need to interact. They will not tolerate passivity.

3-Dimensional Information is also meant to be consumed quickly. A user *can* spend as long as they wish digesting this new form data, but they will most often use their intimate and physical control of the information to move through it quickly, scanning and receiving the way one might learn about a home for sale at an open house walk through. The new age of Twitter and texting is a rapid one involving far more data in far smaller units.

3-DIMENSIONAL PRESENTATION

Non-linear presentation is not a new concept. Navigable websites are a form of this as are interactive CDs, flash modules and the most obvious example: computer gaming.

Non-linear presentation has even been trailblazed by the innovative team behind the [Prezi](#) software—technology and design that couldn't be more of a natural fit with the iPad. One hopes they will create an app for the iPad, but currently the Flash-based software means it is persona non grata in Cupertino.



The iPad should and is capable of heralding a new era and style of on-screen presentation.

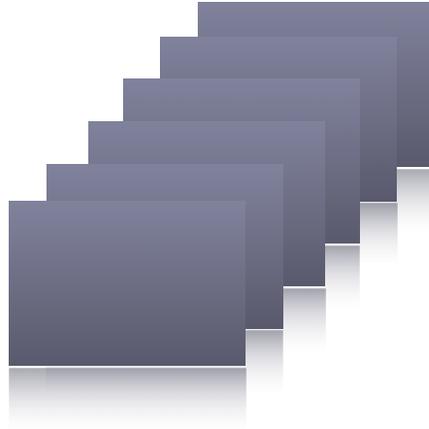
3-Dimensional Presentation is...

- Detailed and comprehensive
- Modular & layered
- User-navigated

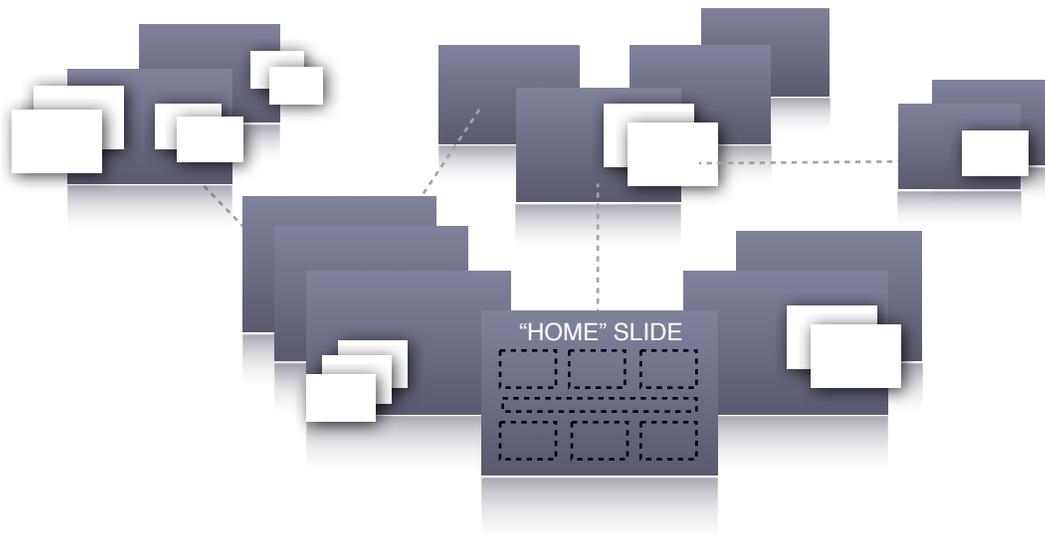
3-Dimensional Presentation is not...

- Linear
- Intended to be consumed in its entirety

Traditional Linear Presentation



3-Dimensional Presentation





1984



2003



2010...

WHAT IS NEEDED FOR THE IPAD: NEWLY CONCEIVED PRESENTATION SOFTWARE



Keynote is an elegant and effective presentation tool. PowerPoint is robust and pervasive and will take a healthy leap in functionality with the release of Office 2010. What neither of these programs allows for is 3-Dimensional Presentation.

Like the iPhone, the iPad will prove its use and necessity with third party apps. The hope is that the iPad's revolutionary design and functionality will create an opportunity for a 3rd party developer—or for Apple itself—to create 3-Dimensional Presentation software that will create “decks” that fully utilize the iPad. And one hopes that as the iPad will usher in a new era

of computer interactivity (touch screen competitors, for example), 3-Dimensional Presentation will emerge on platforms other than the iPad.

How will “iPad Keynote 3D” (or whatever this first app will be called) work? Here are some possible features and terms...

- Insert “Slide within a slide”
- Insert floating pop-up menu
- “Make item 2-sided” (e.g. flip image around to place text or image)
- “Convert bullets to buttons”
- “Light Table 3-D” (ultra zoom out exploded view of all slides)
- Home screen templates (similar to newspaper front page templates)
- Jump to... (slide, web page)
- Insert website (keep live or use current screenshot of)
- “Create Linear Show” (specify linear order of slides for a one touch traditional slideshow for user)

Does it all sound very *Minority Report*? Yes. Yes, it does.



* * *



Think different.

1997



Present different.

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