

37n New Audio-Visual Presentation Software for Internet and Pc

D. T. Wu

This talk is to introduce a new audio-visual presentation software product, LivePresent™. LivePresent™ can create slide presentations with audio and pointer movements that rival live presentations, using only a PC with a microphone and speakers, and avoiding the need for expensive audio-visual recording studios. Since the software has extensive editing capabilities for audio and pointer movements, it greatly minimizes the time consuming tasks of editing and re-recording video, which in the case of live recordings uses expensive audio visual equipment. The presentations can be viewed from the Internet with a PC or a Mac, or directly from a PC or a Mac. A dial-up connection is sufficient to view the presentation from the Internet. During viewing of the presentations, you can jump to any slide, pause, fast forward and rewind the presentation. The slide presentations are organized automatically for ease of navigating during the preparation of the presentation, which eliminates the time consuming task of using audio-video recording equipment.

LivePresent™ can be used to develop presentations for distance learning, remote collaborations, training, marketing/sales promotions, and sharing of presentations with colleagues in remote sites. Its use saves time and expenses of traveling and improves communications.

To create a slide presentation, you first capture images or slides directly from your PC monitor, in any frame size you select. After importing the image/slide via this screen capture, you may add audio and/or pointer movements to the slide. The end result is a slide presentation with audio and pointer movements, which rivals a live presentation.

The unique features of the software are its capabilities for editing audio and cursor movements. For audio editing, you can delete, copy, cut, insert, increase volume, and add echo effects. To edit audio, you first select an audio segment by dragging with the mouse, and you can then delete the segment. Afterwards, you can insert another audio segment by first inserting the mouse at any place you select and then recording with your PC microphone, or inserting a previously recorded audio file segment via import or copy and paste. You can delete pauses or add pauses by inserting silent segments. You can adjust volume and add echo effects.

Pointer movements can be recorded when you record audio or when you listen to the playback of a previously recorded segment. To record pointer movements, you simply move the pointer in the captured slide/image on your monitor after you activate the Pointer Record button. For pointer movement editing, you can edit both the position of the pointer and the time when the pointer appears on the slide. The positions of the pointer movements are represented by “anchor” pointer markers on the slide. The time corresponding to the positions of the pointer are represented by the time markers corresponding to these “anchor” pointer markers. These time markers are shown along the side of the audio wave profile, which greatly simplifies the editing tasks. To edit the position of the pointer, you simply drag the “anchor” pointer marker to any position you select. To adjust for time, you drag the time marker along the time line.

When you prepare a presentation for viewing at a later time, you will always find that you may have spoken incorrectly for a few sentences or a few words. The audio editing capabilities of LivePresent™ greatly simplifies and minimizes the time for the audio recording tasks since you do not have to re-record the whole presentation. Similarly, if you notice that your pointer is not at the place you intended or the “anchor” point markers appear too early or too late, simply edit by dragging the “anchor” pointer marker and the time marker. You do not need to re-record the movements for the whole slide.

After the slide presentation has been completed, an html file and the associated Macromedia flash files are automatically created. These files can be viewed with Macromedia Flash Player in any browsers, such as Internet Explorer®, Netscape®, or Mozilla Fire Fox®. The browsers and the Flash Player can be downloaded free of charge from Internet. While LivePresent™ can only be used on a PC to create presentations, presentations created with LivePresent™ can be viewed using a PC or a Mac.

LivePresent™ has its own internal FTP client for uploading files to the servers. Access to viewing the presentations can be controlled using the licensing features which are available in customized versions of LivePresent™. Software for discussion forum associated with each presentation will also be available in future releases.

LivePresent™ can be used to improve communications, understanding and learning. In distance learning, the students can listen to lecture presentations prepared with LivePresent in addition to learning by reading, doing homework assignments and taking tests. The learning experience will be similar to that of attending a “live” lecture.

In distance collaboration, it is much easier to communicate by showing graphics - medical images, graphs, tables, designs – and discussing these images by pointing to the graphics while talking. This is now possible with LivePresent™. The completed short communication can be uploaded to Internet for viewing by the collaborators.

Audio visual training is very effective if it includes both audio and visual presentations of the training materials, and if it allows the students to take the training courses at their own convenience. LivePresent™ can be used to prepare such training materials with both audio and video recordings and the resultant training materials can be viewed at the convenience of the students using a PC or a Mac. The key advantage of using LivePresent™ is that it is much easier, less expensive and less time consuming to prepare effective presentation, in comparison to using audio-visual recording equipment in a studio.

Audio visual presentations are commonly used in marketing and sales promotions. LivePresnet™ is a cost effective tool in the preparations of such presentations.

Multi-national companies have sales/marketing, manufacturing and research and development groups in many locations. It is expensive and impractical to transport workers to different locations. LivePresent™ takes the presentation to the employees instead of transporting the employees to the presentation. Presentations can be recorded using LivePresent™ and uploaded to Internet for viewing by workers around the world at their convenience without having to be concerned with travel time or time zone differences. .