

MULTIMEDIA
SERIES

Click, Drag, Engage
Developing Persuasive Multimedia



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It's said that **a picture is worth a thousand words**. Research demonstrates that audiences shown identical presentations with and without photos have a **>50% higher rate of retention** of those which display images.¹ Viewing photos provides **improved comprehension** when compared to reading text, due to inefficiencies in the way we read, (interpreting words and sentences as series of small pictures that are time-consuming to understand). **Creatively chosen** visual representations offer audiences **memorable** perspectives, and impart meaningful, relevant imagery that endures.

Memories Endure

Persuasively-designed multimedia provides a wealth of opportunities to share your ideas **quickly**, **effectively**, and **visually**. Interactive elements can be creatively designed to stimulate the senses, elicit emotions, and promote discovery. Often entertaining and inspiring, usage of multimedia is intended to provide audiences with a **deeper** and more **memorable** understanding of the ideas presented.

However, the over-use of multimedia can be counterproductive, resulting in audience overload and diminishing the impact of your message. In order to provide the most effective presentation to your audience, the multimedia you develop should strive to meet the following criteria:

Provide Context

Audiences are able to better understand your concepts and ideas if **visual cues** are used to highlight the **organization** of your presentation materials. Create a **frame of reference** for your visualizations, including the **specific** terminology and [architecture](#) for the main ideas needing to be conveyed. Interactive, animated diagrams provide an excellent way for audiences to build mental images of difficult-to-understand, abstract ideas, providing a glimpse into concepts otherwise imperceptible. However, supplying **context** and establishing **clear reference points** for these graphic representations is critical in providing the audience with **lasting connections**.

1. The 12 Brain Rules (Pear Press, 2013) by John Medina

Connect Words and Images

Multimedia should **stimulate comprehension** and **deepen** understanding of the concepts presented. Connect your images with several keywords to impress your concepts more deeply in your audience's subconscious. It's been shown that audience understanding improves significantly when associated **words** and **pictures** are presented concurrently (as opposed to consecutively).

Less is More

Audience comprehension improves when all nonessential elements (words, pictures, and sounds) are **eliminated**. Be careful to maintain focus on the **primary** objective of your presentation. Your presentation should also offer **consistent navigation**, allowing viewers to focus on the concepts presented, while, at the same time, providing the flexibility to dig deeper into the ideas as needed, further stimulating increased information retention.

Utilize Video to Inspire

Videos enable you to stimulate **multiple senses** concurrently. They combine visual, auditory, and emotional inspiration to express concepts memorably, and **with impact**. Below are some video production pointers:

1. To begin, create a basic **outline** of the points you wish to highlight.
2. Use the outline to form a script. Consider that audiences retain more when words are presented **conversationally**, rather than more formally.
3. Create a simple **storyboard** for each line (or few lines) of the script, to describe the visuals targeted to complement the copy.
4. Ensure your script is on point, and contains enough **intrigue** to capture the audience's attention. (Consider your audience and **their** overall goals when scripting dialog, selecting metaphors, and crafting humor.)
5. The quality of your **audio** must be outstanding. While audiences are somewhat forgiving for poorly produced video, low-quality audio is less excused, and reflects badly on concepts being presented. To improve sound recording, try to (1) use a good quality **microphone**, (2) record in a small space with blankets or **sound dampening** pads on the walls, and (3) **normalize** the audio to balance gain and reduce background noise.

Be Concise

Today's audiences expect to be **quickly** engaged, or they will become quickly disengaged. Keep your **messaging** short and on point. Utilize **interactives** with strong visuals to express **complex** ideas with simplicity and ingenuity. If your volume of content is unavoidably extensive, **divide** your message across a series of **short**, approachable segments.

Be Real

Audiences are more receptive to multimedia presentations that address them in a friendly **human** voice. Avoid “talking heads” or **computerized** voices, as these may tend to dilute your message and weaken a presentation's credibility. Live presentations and authentic human voices are the **most influential**, engendering an enhanced level of **trust** and [a more personal connection](#).

Keep Sound Effects Subtle

Overuse of sound effects can **diminish** the success of your presentation. Audience perceptions can easily be swayed by unfortunate sound choices. Limit sound effects to only those that emphasize a **specific** concept or point.

The above tips offer suggestions for developing **more persuasive** interactive multimedia presentations, that can improve your audience's understanding, acceptance, and retention of your concepts. **Well-designed multimedia content** enhances presentations, engages audiences, and communicates your concepts in unforgettable style.

Other Resources

- ▶ [The WOW Factor – Multimedia-Enhanced Content](#)
- ▶ [And the Answer is... Game Shows!](#)
- ▶ [Interactively Convincing – Enhancing the Communication of Ideas](#)
- ▶ [Multimedia for Demand Generation – Helping Leads Find You](#)