

## Online Presentation Guidelines

Dave Palmer – Instructional Media Agent

These guidelines are intended for all online presentations regardless of the format, but address Articulate specifically.

Articulate is a program that compresses PowerPoint files, whether narrated or not, and converts them to Flash format for use on the Internet. These presentations are intended to be hosted online or placed on a CD. These presentations are most effective when used to introduce the audience to Extension resources including publications and websites.

The online audience is vastly different than a live audience. Online presentations must meet the expectations of that audience and conform to their needs. Creation of the presentation must be done with the understanding that the audience cannot ask questions. It must provide information in as simple and clear a way as possible.

One major difference of online audiences is their notoriously short attention span. Most online videos average 4 minutes or less. For this reason it is suggested that you:

- 1) Create an overview of your presentation no longer than 4 minutes and,
- 2) If your presentation is longer than 10 minutes, break the presentation into multiple segments each being 10 minute or less.

The overview will act as a visual “headline” to draw the audience to the longer visual segments.

In addition, it is recommended that you create or provide handouts or publications for those clients that want more details or who prefer to read information. These documents should be real publications, not copies of the slides. A webpage created to host each presentation, and to contain handouts, publications, and links to further resources can be highly effective.

At the end of each segment of the presentation, take a minute to promote the next segment. At the end of the last segment, remind the audience about the publications and other resources on the accompanying webpage.

The quality of the presentation will be greatly improved by the preparation of a script in advance of the narration.

Keep the PowerPoint itself and all the resources used to create it, such as images and scripts. At some point the presentation may need to be updated or re-created. Having the original resources will greatly simplify the process.

## **PowerPoint suggestions**

- One key message per slide.
- Begin each slide with a declarative statement that reflects the key message.
- Organize the slides to follow your argument.
- Place the most important points first and last.
- Use a single, simple font
- Limit text to six lines per slide and eight words per line.
- No graphs or charts with small text.
- Use a clean simple background with high contrast text.
- Use bold, italics, and underlining sparingly.
- Ensure the font, bullets, and margins are consistent across slides.

