

## Presentation Software for Any Budget

Classic multimedia studies reveal that using visuals along with a verbal presentation increases the listeners' retention of the information by more than 40 percent! Another study reflected that generation Xers are receiving well over 50 percent of their daily information from sources other than newspapers. It is also said that the average American watches TV more than seven hours a day. With TV and now the multimedia features of the Internet, information is continually being presented to consumers (and factfinders) in a multimedia format. Just as we had to transition from a horseless carriage to an automobile, now we need to transition from verbal presentations to multimedia presentations.

Multimedia presentations can include text, images, graphics, audio and/or video. Combining these different formats can have a substantial impact upon the listener in controlling the focus and attention of factfinders. It adds immediacy and realism to dry exhibits and it increases a factfinder's understanding by simplifying complex issues. It also enables you to control the flow of your case without wasting time, and saves money by expediting the proceedings.

With several new entries into the presentation software arena, the user has several options to choose from when selecting a multimedia presentation software package. There are generally two categories of presentation software: generic and legal-specific. Generic presentation software has some limited built-in features that may

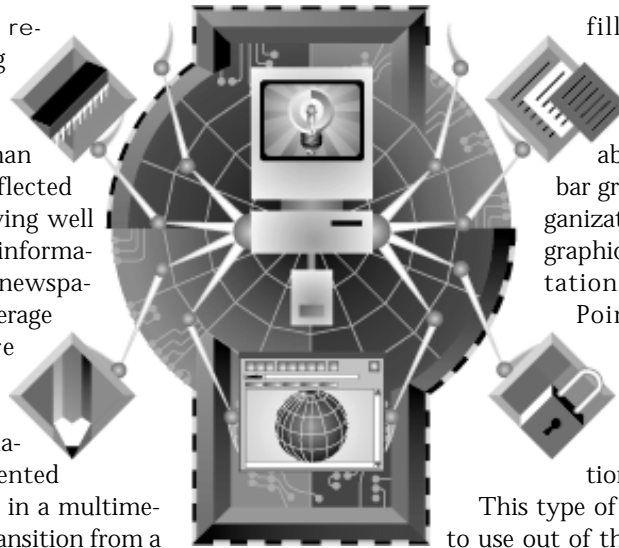
fill your presentation needs. Most common of the generic presentation graphical programs are the ones that enable you to create bullet slides, bar graphs, pie charts, timelines, organization charts and a host of other graphical depictions. Generic presentation software includes Power Point™ (www.microsoft.com), Lotus Freelance Graphics™ (www.lotus.com), Astound (www.astound.com) and Corel Presentations™ (www.corel.com).

This type of presentation software is easy to use out of the box and provides a number of user-friendly features including tutorials, pre-defined graphic templates and clip art. They offer a basic set of drawing and annotation tools. They generally come with a "screenshow" feature that enables you to arrange the created slides in whatever order is best suited for the presentation, as well as hyperlinks that enable you to move to any part of the presentation immediately. These programs also enable you to create multimedia presentations using graphics, sound, text, animations and even live video inserted as OLE objects. They generally permit the user to output the presentation to paper for trial blowups, overhead transparencies, 35mm slides or for display through an LCD projector or monitor.

Often, special "niche" graphics software can provide valuable assistance in your cases. Two such niche packages are VISIO™ (www.visio.com) and ABC FlowCharter™ (www.micrografx.com/flowcharter/). These graphics programs enable the user to create specific relationship "type" charts that can then easily be used with a general generic or special legal presentation program. The programs provide numerous stencils to assist in depicting "relationships" important in your cases.

There are several presentation software programs that were developed specifically for the needs of the legal profession and are able to display exhibits, animations, graphics, sound, video and any other type of information that has been digitized. These presentation packages include Sanction, TrialDirector, Visionary, TrialPro and Anix.

It is important that when you present a case to a legal



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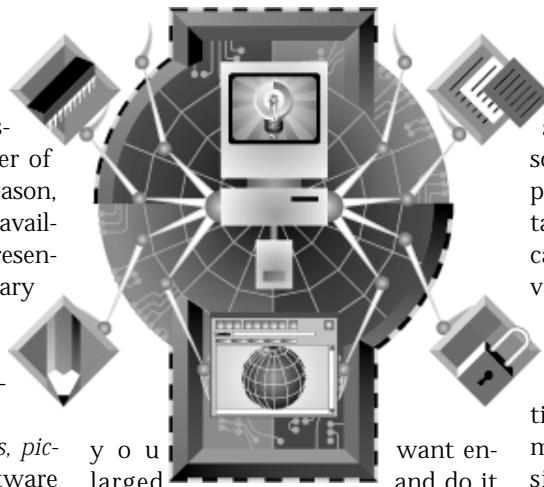
audience that the digitized evidence can be highlighted, annotated or displayed in a way to assist in persuading the factfinder of your client's position. For this reason, it is important to focus upon the available features of legal-specific presentation software. The features vary depending on the software package, but questions to ask in selecting a package should include the following:

- *Retrieval of document images, pictures or graphics*—Does the software enable the user to print out bar code labels and then retrieve the images by swiping a bar code reader over the bar code? Can you type in the name of the exhibit filename to retrieve the image? Does the software permit a touchscreen effect to retrieve the image? (You would essentially touch the computer screen on a particular menu choice and the image would appear.) Does the software permit you to pull up an exhibit menu and select the exhibit by clicking on a mouse?

- *Drawing on Exhibit*. One of the most powerful ways of focusing a factfinder on the important parts of your evidence is to draw on the critical parts of the document or exhibit. This can be done by using a pen-based drawing instrument such as a light pen that connects into your computer, a mouse, or, if you are using a touchscreen, your finger. It generally permits you to draw on the exhibit in a variety of colors and block portions of the exhibit for highlighting in different colors. Also, arrows, circles and other highlighting features are generally available.

- *Database Integration*. Does the software have its own database capability, and/or does it integrate with popular database programs such as Summation and Concordance?

- *Exhibit Manipulation Features*. Does the software permit you to manipulate the size of an exhibit and place two or more exhibits together on the same screen? Once your exhibit is on the screen you can use a mouse, pen-based system or touch screen to mark off the portion that



you want enlarged and do it instantly. Does the software allow you to place two documents side by side or in top and bottom display? One effective presentation technique is to bring up two different exhibits side by side or one on the top and one on the bottom. This would be done either to show the inconsistencies in the two documents, or how they both are supportive of the same point.

- *Video*. Does the software permit editing and displaying video depositions or other video segments? Some software systems enable you to split screens to show video, synchronized text, exhibits and sound at the same time. Annotations can be made real-time to the video and other digitized content and then saved to a computer file.

- *Other Presentation Software Features*. Other features include note searching, video review and editing capability, scanning capability, organization of documents by witness folders and cases, scripting or layering capability with markup save features, saving annotations for later use by the jury or appellate courts, and synchronizing video with text.

The main modules of a presentation software program are the presentation, database (built in and/or integration with popular database software products) and a video deposition module. Below is a minimum comparison of some trial presentation software packages. It is suggested that before buying that you contact the company to discuss your needs and any particular questions you have re-

garding the software.

- *Sanction* ([www.verdictsystems.com](http://www.verdictsystems.com)). This recently released software package contains all three primary modules—presentation, database and depositions—as well as the capability to time-stamp your own video for subsequent synchronized playback. It is offered for \$395 for a single user license.

- *Visionary* ([www.digitalpractice.com](http://www.digitalpractice.com)). Combines the three main modules for a cost of \$1,295 for a single user license while TrialPro ([www.trialpro.com](http://www.trialpro.com)) costs \$795 for a single computer license.

- *TrialDirector* ([www.indatacorp.com](http://www.indatacorp.com)), formerly TrialLink, is the granddaddy of trial presentation systems. All three modules cost \$1,295; \$895 for TrialDirector and Document Director without the Deposition Director; and half price for a briefcase version to install on your laptop if the main program is purchased.

- *Anix* ([www.doar.com](http://www.doar.com)) is unique because it is an add-on to the PowerPoint presentation program with added features for the legal profession. This new software tool that runs with PowerPoint® enhances presentations with “on the fly” editing, a zoom feature and annotation of images, photos and documents. Also, you can create moving visual aids such as maps and design diagrams.

There are a number of graphic, image and animation service bureaus that will prepare your images and graphics for presentation and, if you need, assist you in the courtroom. Some service bureaus to consider are inData ([www.indatacorp.com](http://www.indatacorp.com)), Verdict Systems ([www.verdictsystems.com](http://www.verdictsystems.com)), Lex Solutio ([www.digitalpractice.com](http://www.digitalpractice.com)), TrialPro ([www.trialpro.com](http://www.trialpro.com)) and Doar Communications ([www.doar.com](http://www.doar.com)).

Multimedia presentations should be the norm in our cases for many reasons. The rest of the world expects presentations that provide multi-sensory stimulus to learn and decide the merits of products and services, so why shouldn't this same technology be used in the courtroom?