Seven Secrets of Successful Software Demos

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What we'll cover in this session

- Screen-based capture compared to full-motion recording

- Demos compared to simulations

- Strengths and weaknesses of the available tools

- #1 Size matters

- #2 Allow learners to control the pace

- #3 Apply the modality principle

- #4 Use zooming and panning for demonstrations

- #5 Focus learners' attention on the right area

- #6 Avoid spoon-feeding learners in simulations

- #7 Aim to match behaviour of application exactly

Two ways of capturing/recording software tasks

- Full-motion recording

- Screen-based capture

Most tools specialise in **one** of these two types of capturing/recording

Simplified workflow for full-motion recording
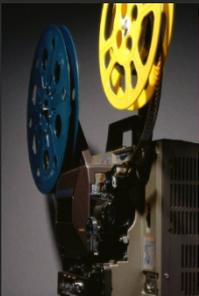
Record Full Motion Video

Edit within tool (limited capability)

Trim unwanted sections, add callouts, add transitions, add Zoom-n-Pan effects, etc.

Publish to Flash or video format

Formats typically include FLV, MP4, FLV, SWF, EXE

The advantages of capturing full motion video

- All screen activity is faithfully recorded

- Custom mouse movement is possible

- Demonstrations may appear more natural

Simplified workflow for screen-based capture

Capture Static Screenshots

Manual or automatic recording

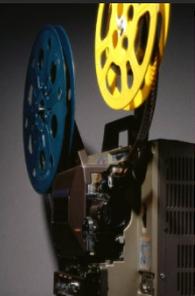**Edit within tool**

Add transitions, captions, | highlights, interactions, etc.

Publish to Flash or video format
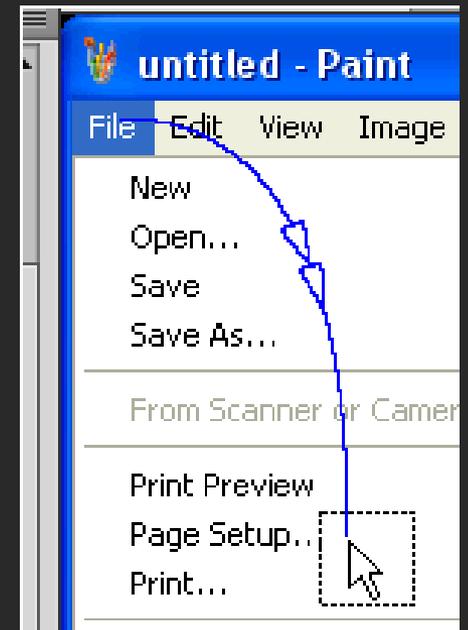
Demonstration | Simulation

Advantages of capturing static screenshots

- Don't have to worry about timing or mouse movement during recording

- Relatively easy to edit the recording:
  - Add new or missing slides
  - Remove unwanted slides
  - Edit slides
  - Control the pace of the playback

Advantages of capturing static screenshots

- Possible to publish as interactive simulation:
  - Successful user action causes transition to next slide

- Mouse not captured as part of static screenshot
  - Mouse movement can be removed for simulation
  - Tool adds "perfect" movement based on the mouse position on consecutive slides
  - Re-position the mouse during editing
  - Speed up / slow down the mouse movement
  - Easily add audible and visual click effects

Demonstrations compared to Simulations

Demonstration	Simulation
• Learner **watches** • Passive • Mouse pointer moves and clicks automatically • Typing happens automatically • Pace may be dictated by demo	• Learner **participates** • Active • Learner moves and clicks own mouse pointer • Learner types any required input • Pace dictated by learner

Tools

- Full-motion recording

Tool	Key Strength	Potential Weakness
Camtasia Studio	• Zoom-n-Pan	• Can't import .swf files from other tools

Tools

- Screen-based capture (SCORM compliant)

| Tool	Key Strength	Potential Weakness
Adobe Captivate	• All-round feature set	• Zoom and pan
Atlantic Link Capture Point	• Automatic playback modes	• Zoom and pan
Qarbon ViewletBuilder	• Win, Mac, and Linux versions	• Uptake

Tools

- Screen-based capture (no SCORM support)

Tool	Key Strength	Potential Weakness
ComponentOne DemoWorks	• Range of output formats	• Zoom and pan
MadCap Mimic	• Similar UI to MadCap Flare	• Similar UI to MadCap Flare!

Other low-price alternatives are available:
- Tanida Demo Builder
- FlashDemo

#1 Size matters

- Flash files normally play back at fixed size

- Recording size becomes playback size
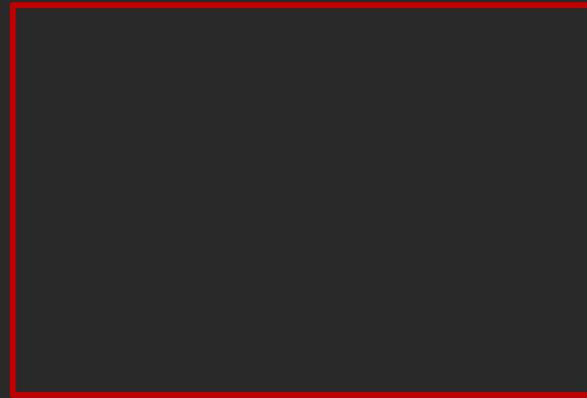
- Aim for the lowest screen resolution that your users may have

Creating resizable Flash demos

- Use 100% for width and height settings in calling code

- For example:

```
SWFObject("1CustomerJourney.swf","Captivate",
        "100%", "100%", "10", "#CCCCCC");
```

Note: My experience is that this does not work in Firefox unless you omit the DOCTYPE declaration on the calling HTML page

#2 Allow the learner control the pace

- Not an issue for simulations

- Demonstrations: insert regular "pause points"

#3 Apply the Modality Principle

- Learners benefit from multimodal instruction (visual + spoken)

- Demo + audio

  is more effective than

  Demo + text

  Mayer (2005c)

The Redundancy Principle

- Demo + audio

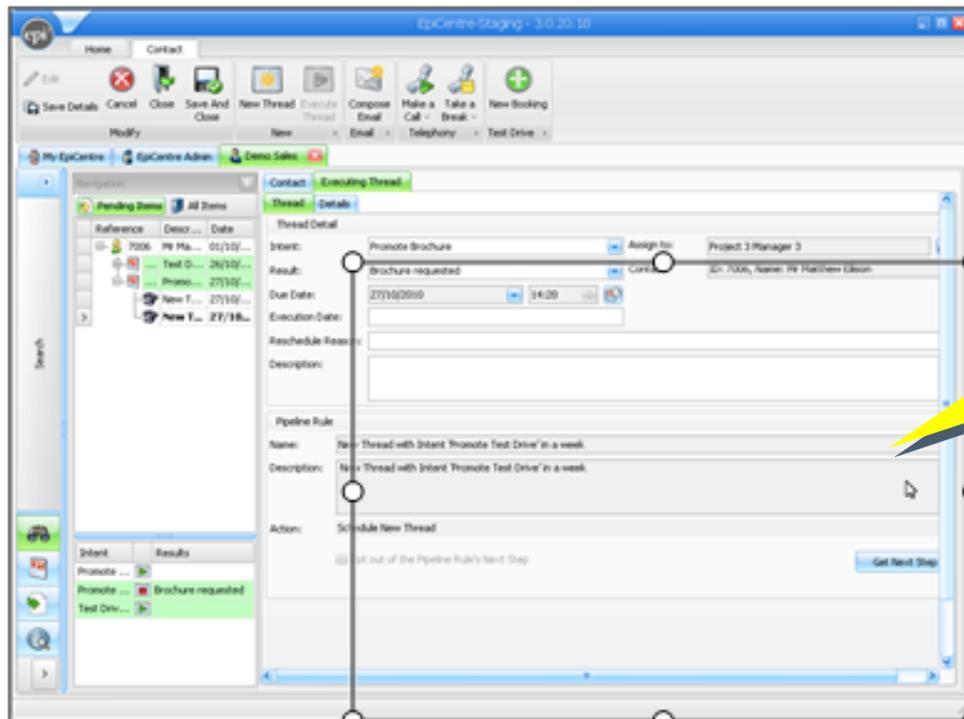 is more effective than

  Demo + audio + text

- If you have to use text and audio, make sure they match

#4 Use zooming and panning for demonstrations

- Use to give context **and** detail for large-screen apps

- Not possible for simulations

- Should not require full-motion video recording

Zoom-n-Pan – Camtasia 7.0's killer feature

Zoom-n-Pan keyframes on the timeline

Keyframe can be dragged, modified, or removed
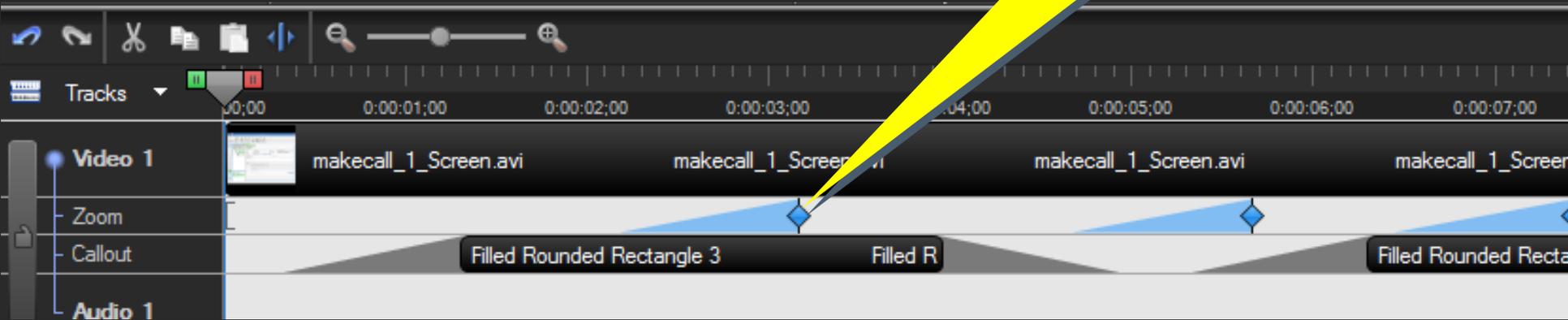
Key features of Zoom-n-Pan keyframes
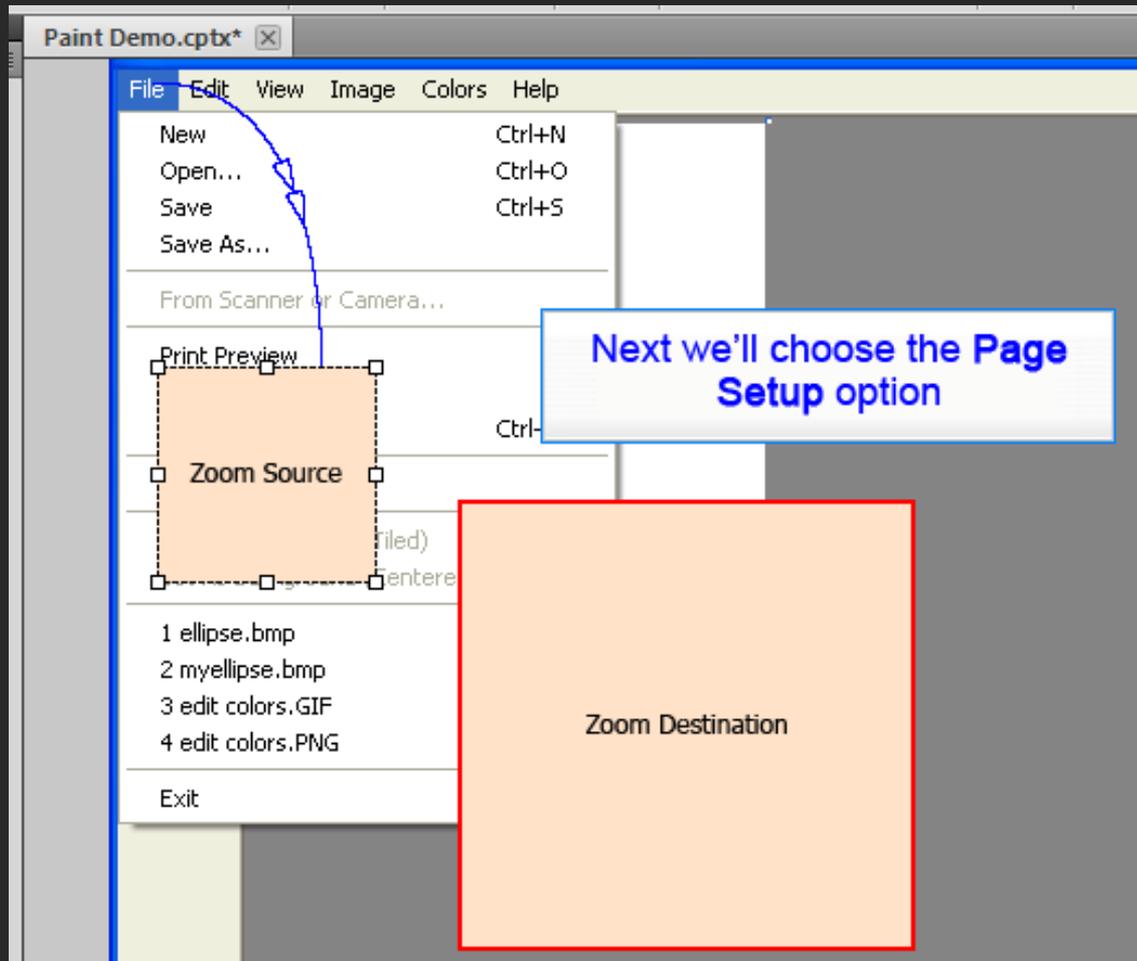
- Keyframes added post-recording

- Keyframes only affect the final published video, and don't touch the source video

How about Captivate's Zoom and Pan capabilities?

- Zoom Areas can be added post-recording
  - Magnify selected area of the slide

How about Captivate's Zoom and Pan capabilities?

- Panning can be used during the recording
  - Transitions recorded as full motion video
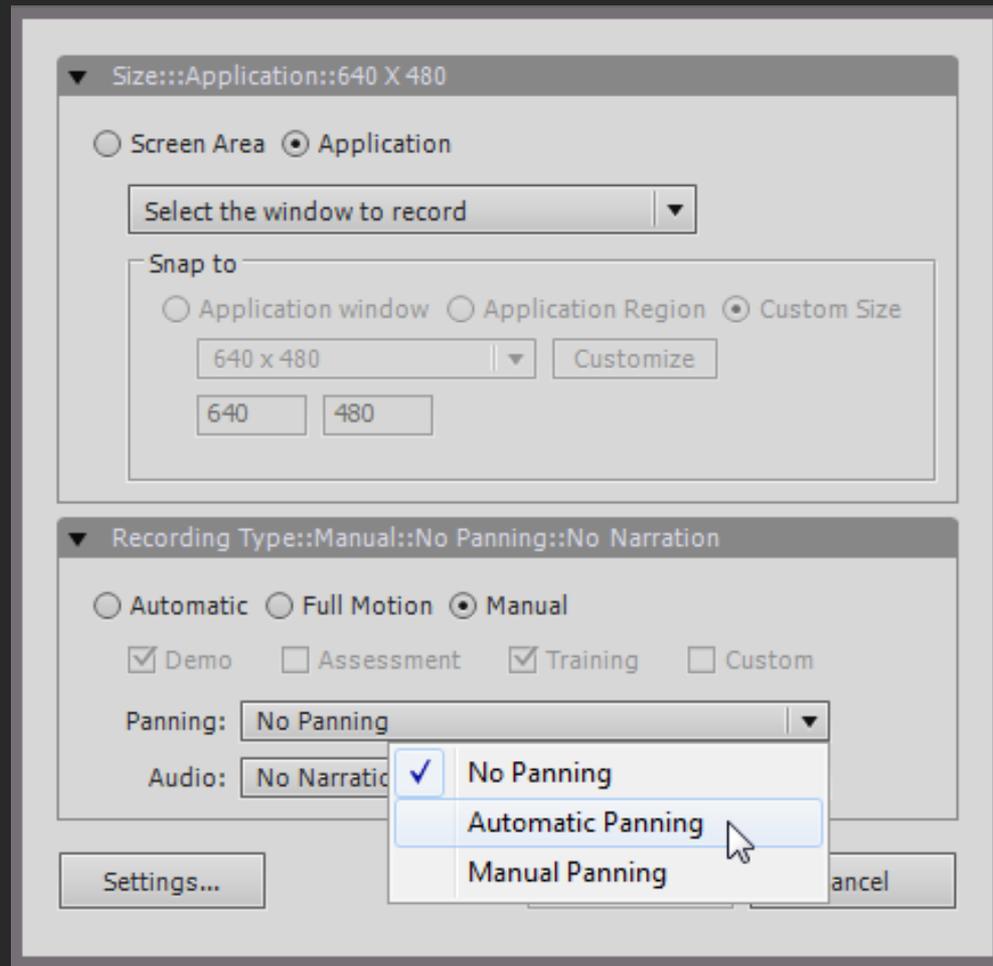
Why you might need both tools

- Use Captivate for:

  - Easily updatable demonstrations and simulations where a full screen view is acceptable throughout

- Use Camtasia for:

  - Rich demonstrations where panning and zooming is required

Case Study – background

- User assistance for contact management and communication software

- Used by agents in high pressure Contact Centre environment

- Require simple step-by-step instructions with optional demonstrations

- User assistance displayed in vertical pane within application UI

Example of user assistance topic

Set your Online Status

By setting your **Online Status** you can choose whether or not you will send and receive communications.

You can do either of the following:

- Set your overall online status, which affects all communication channels

- Set your online status for a specific channel, such as Telephone

To set your overall online status

- Click one of the three status indicators 🟩, 🟨, or ⬜

Show me

To set your online status for a specific channel

- Use the drop-down list beneath the channel name

Show me

Starts demonstration

Issues determining recording strategy

- No demonstration recording tool was installed on application computers

- Rapidly evolving application UI

- Very little screen estate available for display of demonstration

As a result, I needed:

- Static screenshot capture
  AND

- Post-recording zoom and pan

My workflow for creating demonstrations

1. Capture screenshots using Alt + PrintScreen
2. Create Image SlideShow from screenshots using Captivate
3. Fine-tune timing and mouse movement within Captivate
4. Publish to Flash
5. Play within Adobe Flash Player, and record using Camtasia Recorder
6. Add Zoom-n-Pan keyframes and Callouts within Camtasia Studio
7. Publish to Flash

#5 Focus the learners' attention on the right area

- Don't use conventional "static" highlight boxes

- Prefer instead:

  - Spotlighting (greying out everything else)

  - Animations

- For simulations, consider:

  - Time-delayed pointers

  - On-request highlights
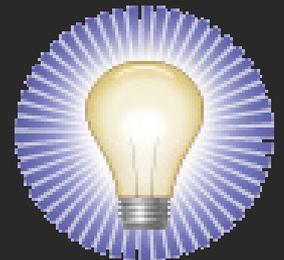
#6 Avoid spoon-feeding learners in simulations

Instead of this:

Click **File**

Consider this:

Select the required menu

Use in conjunction with an
on-demand "Hint" facility

#7 Aim to match behaviour of application exactly

- Include mouse-over effects

- Include drag-and-drop actions

- Show pauses, transitions, and intermediate "Loading" screens

May require full-motion recording

- Less easy to achieve for simulations

#8 Bonus tip! Avoid re-inventing the wheel

- Use templates
  - Introductory and summary slides
  - Project settings
  - Publishing settings
  - Useful multimedia items and resources
- Or base new projects on existing projects
- When creating demonstrations and simulations, use a single source
  - Multimode recording
  - Show Me / Try Me / Test Me

References and further reading

- Mayer, R E (2005c). Principles for managing essential processing in multimedia learning: Segmenting, pretraining, and modality principles. In R.E. Mayer (Ed.), *The Cambridge handbook of multimedia learning* (pp. 147-158). New York: Cambridge University Press

- *e-Learning and the Science of Instruction: Proven Guidelines for Consumers and Designers of Multimedia Learning*, Ruth C. Clark and Richard E. Mayer, 2nd edition (2007)

- *Trainers guide to authoring tools: users tell you what works, what doesn't, and why*, 2010, TMR Publications, http://tinyurl.com/6g7s3zx

- *Want to Create Engaging Screencasts?* TechSmith, http://tinyurl.com/2ertj6v

- Matthew's blog on Adobe Captivate, http://blogs.highlander.co.uk/tag/captivate/

Questions?

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