Howto present at the T3CON

a guide to a perfect presentation[*]

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Thank you for reading this document. I tried to make it as short as possible. So even if you think you know everything about presentations, take some minutes to follow. You might get another insight of what we expect at the TYPO3 conferences, and it will be easier for you to make a good presenttion.

From T3CON06 on (this was the second TYPO3 conference in 2006) we video taped every presentation. Take this chance to have a look at your presentation afterwards and try to see what could be improved. Trust me: *Every* presentaiton can be improved!

<div style="text-align: right">

have an appropiate amount of fun
Jürgen Egeling

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This note is divided into four sections:

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try at least to read the key ideas, and maybe you want to skip thru things that are obvious for you. But as the document is short enough, I really recommend to read everything, if you miss things, your presentation might be ruined. You have been warned!

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[*]Based on: How to Present a Paper: A Speakers's Guide by Bob Spillman and Ian Parberry

1 What to say and How to say it — choice and organisaiton of the material to be presented

Communicate the Key ideas Make sure that your talk emphasizes the key ideas and skips over what is standard, obvious, or merely complicated. e.g.: If you talk about `tt_news`, do not explain what news are, try to explain what makes it different from other news systems.

Don't get Bogged Down in details Details are out of place in an oral presentation. This rule cannot be over– emphasized. The audience generally wants an overview of the work so that they can determine whether additional details are worth pursuing.[1]

When showing functionality, do not show the details, just show "it works", not how. (No code listings please)

Know your audience Make sure that your talk is prepared at the right level. Think through the average level of expertise in your audience and present your results accordingly. Don't try to impress unless it is a job interview. The audience of the TYPO3 audience, mainly consists of TYPO3 professionals like yourself. What's obvious to you is most likely obvious to them. Try to convey what you have learned when developing what you are presenting.

Structure your talk A good speaker always lets the audience know exactly where they are and where they are headed. Your presentation should be broken into several distinct parts, each with its own objectives and style. Each part should have ist own (sub)title screen. The audience should be steered gently from one part to the next.

Use an organized approach
  1. *Introduction:*

    Define the problem in less than five minutes you should make clear why it is a problem. If you do not tell the audience what problem you are talking about, they cannot follow the rest of the talk.

    Motivate the audience Explain, why this is a problem. Show the big picture. Do not tell them trivial statements.

    consider putting a conclusion in the ntroduction This might help the audience to follow, if they know in what direction you are heading.

  2. *Body:* This should be the major part of your presentation.

    Abstract the major results Describe the key results of the presentation. You will probably have to get a little technical here but do so gradually and carefully.

    Explain the significance of the result Focus on anything unexpected or crucial to supporting your conclusions.

    Use probs and pictures If possible, bring something to show. If you cannot use anything physical, try to use some good pictures. A picture tells more than 1000 words. Use this, to catch the audience.

    Avoid tables, file listings, . . . basically avoid everything that uses more than 10 lines on the screen. It cnanot be read, and people cannot follow. It looks like fly–shit, and basically the audience will think it is. They won't see it, they won't believe it. Better

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[1] „The secret to being a bore is to tell everything." - Voltaire circa 1718

show the examples of the code, but never code pieces. Albert Einstein explained the world with

$$E = mc^2$$

and you should not take more words for your presentation.

Have a Purpose and Conclusion for Each Slide Always ask yourself „Why do I need this slide?" Does it help support my conclusion or is it peripheral to the talk? Consider putting a written conclusion at the bottom of each key slide. Each slide should have a point that is being made. Don't force the audience to conclude for themselves. They may get it wrong!

3. *Conclusion:* Your aim here is to restate the lessons learned in a short, concise manner.

Hindsight is Clearer than Foresight You can now make observations that would have been confusing if they were introduced earlier. Use this opportunity to refer to statements that you have made in the previous three sections and weave them into a coherent synopsis.

Be open about problems Be open about any uncertainties in your work. This way you may defuse antagonistic questions during question time.

Indicate that your talk is over Tell the audience that your talk is over, and be oopen for questions, that certainly will come. Save enough time in your time schedule for questions. If more questions arrive than could be answered, think of having a „birds of a feather session[2]" with the people that are interested in knowing more.

2 Getting Through to the Audience — presentation style

Once you have collected all your material and prepared your talk the way we stronlgy suggest, your next hurdle is, when you find yourself in front of the audience.

Practise your talk Do a verbal practise of your talk. It would be great, if you could do this in fromnt of a test–audience, but if no test audience is available, do a verbal practise on your own.

Don't try to remember every word you will say, just get the „red line" of your talk memorised. The rest will come during your presentation.

Use repetition Tell the audience at the beginning, what you are going to tell them, tell them during the the main talk, and repeat this at your conclusion. Do not be afraid to repeat things. It might be too much for yourself, but never forget, that in your talk it is the first time, the users are told the ideas. So give them a chance to remember them.

Convey enthusiasm If you are nit enthusiastic about your topic, why should your audience be? It's *your* topic, so try to get the audience excited about the fact, that they are allowed to listen to a great talk.

Use humor Although humor should not be a major focus at the T3CON, it can play a very powerful role in keeping the audiences attention. Remember that your goal is to educate the audience, not simply to present material to those who care to listen. Humor and enthusiasm are useful techniques to reach this goal.

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[2]http://t3con07.typo3.org/bof.html

Don't overrun [3] There is very little that is more exasperating than listening to a talk that drags interminably past its scheduled finishing time. The quality of a talk is almost always inversely proportional to the time that it over-runs. Unless it is explicitly stated otherwise, when you are told that the talk is to last for 45 minutes, plan to talk for at most 35 minutes, and leave 10 minutes for question time. If in doubt about the proportions, then enquire. Don't try to cover too much material.

Things that could be said in 35 minutes could be said in 34 minutes as well. Things that could be said in 34 minutes, could be said in 33 minutes, . . . (repeat the last sentence, until you use an appropiate amount of time for your talk.)

Maintain eye contact Spread your attention among the audience, and try to avoid talking only to one group, even if only this one group matters. Kepp short eye contact with various persons. This gives them the feeling that you actually talk to them.

Control your voice and motion Control your voice. Do not talk too loud and do not whisper. At the T3CON we have a microphone for each talk, which is used best with a normal voice. Do not use „hype" or „fashionable" words. The audience might not understand you.

Do not try to make wild gestures and use natural gestures. If you do make or say something embarrassing DO NOT STOP. Stopping would point your audience to this thing. Just continue and keep going.

Do not start with an apology Do not try to cover your nervousness with sentences like „I really didn't have enough time to do my presentation. . . ?" What would you think as part of the audience, if the speaker did not prepare well?

3 Visual and Aural Aids — proper use of presentation style

Slides We highly recommend using a presentation program like Microsoft Powerpoint or something similar you are familiar with.

Technik At the conference we will have beamers, that can use SVGA input with 1024x768 pixel at 60Hz. Even if its cooler, and your notebook can provide a different resolution, we simply cannot use it. So be sure, use our test lab that we provide about 2 hours before your talk.

pictures A pictures tells more than 1000 words. This is true! So use pictures in your talk and do *not* use much text.

4 Question time

Save some time for questions! At the T3CON the regular timeslot is 45 minutes. As you see I am speaking of a *timeslot* not of your presentation time! So you basically can talk about everything, but not over 45 minutes.[4]

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[3]„What orators lack in depth they make up to you in length." – Montesquieu, 1767
[4]Sorry, this joke works better in german.

You should make sure, that you also think of the following minutes, that get eaten up in your 2700 seconds:

Your presentation time in detail	
Hardware Malfunction	X^5
Presentation loading	10
Looking for the glass of water, drinking	15
Hello to the audience	20
each slide	90 – 120
Thank you to the audience	20
questions	360

Which gives you about 37 minutes for your talk. As you want to be save, you should assume that your talk will last 35 minutes. A rough guess is, that your talk than should have between 23 and 18 slides. You'll find out exactly how much time you use, if you practise your talk *verbally*.