

PowerPoint 2003® and Tablet Technology

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Introduction

With the release of PowerPoint XP®, you had the ability to annotate your slides, or other people's slides if you installed the handwriting tool that came with Microsoft Office XP®. This feature is also present in Microsoft Office 2003®. For those using a tablet with the Windows XP Tablet PC® operating system, this tool is built into the operating system and provides more flexibility than if you were working on a desktop or traditional laptop computer.

At this time, none of the screen magnification programs will work functionally on the tablet operating system. Since it is just some fine tuning on the display aspects of screen magnification and their speech components that are needed, I am assuming that this will be "fixed" in the near future. This document assumes that they will, so includes some tips for people using screen magnification.

Entering Information on Slides

On a tablet computer, using your handwriting, you can enter text onto a slide through the Input Panel and have it converted to more readable text. This is an alternative to using either the on-screen keyboard or an external keyboard. It is suggested that you use the writing pad instead of the Write Anywhere mode. Using the Writing Pad will give you guiding lines for writing on. It will also give you access to some of the common keystrokes such as Enter, Tab, the Arrow keys and the Spacebar.

If you are not using a tablet operating system, you will need to add a tablet mouse/pen to the computer to do this. You could use the existing mouse, but this requires a lot of practice and visual dexterity to get it to do exactly what you want. You also need to install the handwriting tool in Microsoft Office XP or later. This process is covered in the document [Using a Tablet Mouse/Pen on a Non-Tablet Operating System](#) on the Karlen Communications web site.

The main difference with PowerPoint on a tablet and non-tablet is the seamlessness of tools and not having to attach another peripheral to the computer. The ability to use handwriting is an integral part of the tablet operating system.

You can use handwriting to enter information in either the slide or slide notes.

Annotating Slides on a Tablet

While you are presenting your slide show, you can bring the audience's attention to important points, or create an annotation to revise your slides once the presentation is done. Using the pen tool, you can do this on the slide you are showing instead of having to go back to the slide view and enter the text manually. Note that if you are using a screen reader, you will have to switch to the Slide Notes and enter any annotations manually.

Annotating slides during your slide presentation will create an object/text box. The handwriting is not converted to text while the slide is in slide show mode. If you are using a screen reader, you can find ink objects by pressing Tab while in slide view, which will take you to an ink object and your screen reader will tell you that it is an ink object and whether it affects any other object such as the title edit box or the text edit box. However, because it is handwriting, you will not be able to read it. Because ink objects can be positioned over title and text edit areas on a slide, they may overlap these edit areas and this is what your screen reader will indicate.

If you have instructors who provide their slides after a class and have use the annotation tool, you will need to have them translate any annotations and put them in the Slide Notes section of the file.

You will want to set your pointer options before you begin speaking. Currently there is no mechanism to set your default slide show pointer to a pen style or ink colour.

To annotate your slide show, press F5 to launch the slide show.

If you need to modify the pointer, press the AppKey to bring up the context menu and then choose Pointer Options. By default, the Arrow is chosen. Use the Down Arrow to choose either the ballpoint pen, the felt tipped pen or the highlighter. You can easily use all of these by coming back to this option in the context menu. However, you don't want to over use these so that your presentation begins to look messy and unreadable. When you are reviewing your presentation, plan for what pen and ink you will use. Keep it simple and less is sometimes more!

You might also want to change the ink colour which is red by default. Remember the segment of the population that is red/green colour blind. Red might not appear readable on your slide colour scheme. Test this before you start your presentation. You want the audience to see the comments you made, and you want to be able to find them easily. To change the ink colour, press the AppKey and choose Pointer Options> Ink Colour which has a sub-menu of pre-determined colours. You can choose to coordinate ink colours with the current slide design, or choose from a standard list including black, blue, yellow and so forth.

If you are using screen magnification, you might want to use the felt tipped pen as it will appear a bit larger on the screen. The ballpoint pen is a fine small dot that moves as your mouse pointer and sometimes it is difficult to see, especially if it is the default colour, red.

Once your annotation is entered, press the Esc key once to get out of annotation mode, then press Esc again to stop the slide show and return to the slide view. You will be asked if you want to keep the changes you've made to the slide show. Press Alt + K to keep changes. If you choose to keep the annotations, they appear in a text box on the slide. They are inserted as ink objects, not text in the slide.

You can use the digital pen to tap the screen while in Slide show mode to advance the slides. Because the button on the digital pen is configured for a left mouse button, you will have to use the AppKey to bring up the context menu to move forward or backward in a slide show. The alternative is to use either the on-screen keyboard or an external keyboard in combination with the digital pen.

If you are using a tablet operating system, it is easy to switch input modes on the Input Panel which means there is less interruption of your presentation. If you are using an external keyboard, it is even more seamless to your audience. Each screen reader also has keystrokes for working in the various views of PowerPoint.

As with other tablet tools and their integration with Microsoft Office 2003, the tools are embedded in the operating system on a tablet; while they are add-in components of Microsoft Office on a non-tablet operating system. The tablet operating system provides more global access to speech, handwriting and the on-screen keyboard.

You can use these tools in combination with Narrator and magnifier.

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