

Preparing Your Presentation

There are many elements that need to come together to make a compelling presentation. At the highest level, these can be broken down into three areas: content of the paper, how it is organized on the slides or posters, and how it is presented. Let's look at each of these in more detail.

The ***content of the paper*** begins with the criteria that were used in scoring the original submission: Originality, quantitative content, clarity, and interest to MTT-S. Your paper was accepted for presentation, so you have the right content. As you are preparing your presentation, keep in mind the main points you want to convey:

- What is the problem or challenge that motivated the work?
- What are the unique contributions and the significant results?
- Give all the pertinent contributions and results. The time is limited, so you won't be able to go into detail on all aspects of the work, but don't skip over significant aspects of the work. How was it designed? Is there something interesting or unique about the fabrication? Are the reported results complete?
- How does it compare to previous work on this topic?
- How does the performance, size and/or power consumption compare to similar work?
- A table or a graph comparing your results to the current state of the art is often very helpful.

The second area to consider is ***how the paper is organized*** on the slides or the posters if it is an interactive forum paper. There are two main aspects to this consideration. The first is the order of the ideas. There are no absolutes with respect to the order of how the ideas are presented, but there are some good rules of thumb. If you are presenting a 20 minute paper, a short outline slide that is repeated once or twice is useful to help keep the audience synchronized with your presentation. Begin by introducing work. What is the problem or challenge? Does the solution follow similar approaches to solving the problem or is it different? What is the main result or contribution? Next give the technical details of the work. Cover all the main contributions. How does it compare to other work in the field. Finally, summarize the paper. A single slide – maybe two – is sufficient. Repeat the main contributions and the next steps for the work. Note a little bit of repetition of the main contribution is not only acceptable, it is important.

The second aspect of how the content is organized is the clarity of the content on the slides. It is often helpful to think about your presentation on two levels. The first is from the top level – what is the main message of each slide. It is best to limit each slide to one main idea. Flip through your presentation considering only the main idea of each slide. Does the flow of the main ideas go smoothly with one idea leading to the next? Is the flow of ideas complete and does it explain all aspects of the work? Next, look at your slides from the detail level. Do the details on the slide all relate and support the main idea of the slide? Is the slide cluttered with too many details and too many words?

The third area to consider is ***how the paper is presented***. This means both the presentation on the slides and the oral presentation at the symposium. Is the font consistent and properly sized? The font size of the text in the bullets should always be greater than 14 point, and the font size in graphs and labels on illustrations should always be greater than 12 point. Is color used sparingly to emphasize the main points or is it overused so that the slides are 'busy' and confusing. Finally, practice your presentation to colleagues. Do this early and often. The early practice runs will serve as a check that the ideas from one slide to the next flow smoothly. The later practices will help perfect your delivery. Memorize the main points of the slide and the transition to the next slide. The details of the slide are often easy to recall when you are comfortable and confident with the main themes and the transitions.

Finally, additional help is available to make sure your presentation will be among the best at the symposium. There is a guide from Joseph White on the IMS2009 web site (<http://www.ims2009.org/instr/tpc/JFWhite.pdf>). The presentation is a little dated since electronic presentations were not the standard in 1996, but the content on how to prepare the presentation is still very useful.

The IMS2009 web site has an IMS2009 template that also contains suggestions on preparing your presentation (http://ims2009.org/instr/tpc/IMS09_Slide_Guidelines_RC2.ppt). The use of this template is encouraged but optional; however, it does contain useful information that will make your paper stronger.

You will also be receiving an email from your session chairs requesting to review your slides before the symposium. We will require all authors to submit their presentations. We believe the presentations will be stronger if they are reviewed by an experienced colleague familiar with the technical field.