

Keynote for Attorneys: Tips to Try This Alternative to PowerPoint for Case Presentation

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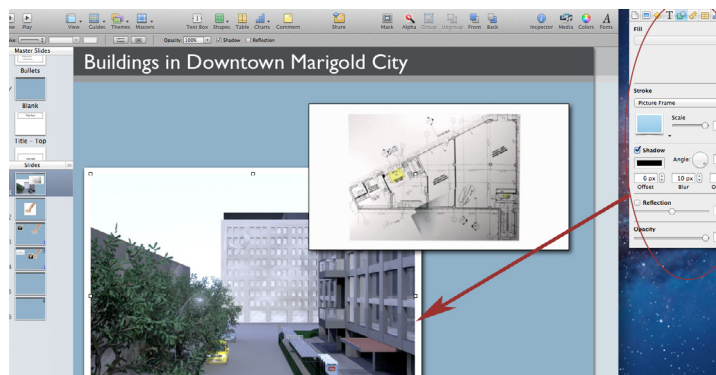
I just finished reading Walter Isaacson's remarkable biography of Steve Jobs, which I highly recommend. It's a great read, and it inspired me to develop this post on how to use Keynote for Macs. Keynote is a program that Steve Jobs demanded his team create for his product unveilings because he was so frustrated with Microsoft's PowerPoint, which he found useless and would never use.

In my mind, there is simply no question that Keynote is a superior product for many reasons, including: (1) it's a Mac program, so it's well integrated with all aspects of the Mac laptops and iPad; (2) it embeds videos in the file itself, unlike PowerPoint, which "links" the videos to the main file—and these links can and do get lost when the file is being copied, often during the stress of trial; (3) Keynote also accepts as video any format that your QuickTime player supports such as MP4 videos, which are better quality than Windows Media; and (4) Keynote also supports very high resolution and much better drawing tools, as well as standard template background designs.

To encourage attorneys to give it a try as an alternative to PowerPoint for presenting your case, I asked Cogent Legal's associate designer, Anna Reeser, to write the following Keynote tips and tricks. You can purchase the Keynote App for \$19.99 from the Apple App Store if you do not already have it. To get started, view a Keynote tutorial on the Apple website, and then try the following steps to create a powerful presentation.

Place & Format of Images & Videos

Keynote makes it easy to edit media within your presentation. To place an image or .MOV video, just drag and drop the file into your slide. Always select the image you want to edit and have your "Inspector" panel open; the "Inspector" will affect whatever image you have selected.



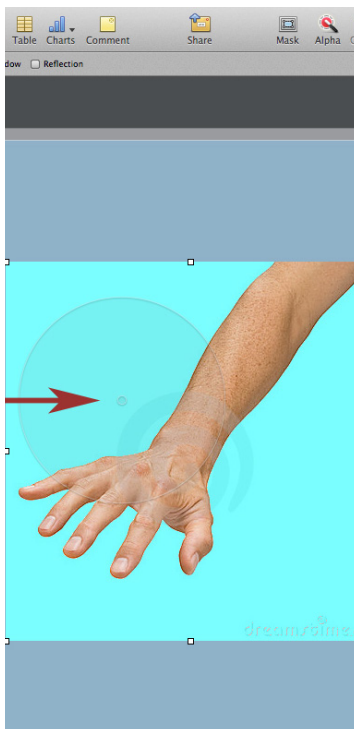
A screen shot showing how the Inspector Tool can be used to format a picture with a drop shadow in a Keynote slide.
([click to enlarge](#))

You can add a line border or picture frame using the “Graphics Inspector” section of the “Inspector” panel. You can also select a drop shadow or reflection to give the presentation some dimension.

This section also lets you change the opacity of the image or video. To change the size and placement of the image or video, you can use the handles and manipulate it manually. Or, to keep your dimensions exact, punch numbers into the “Metrics Inspector” (ruler icon). For video, you can set start and stop times, choose a poster frame, and adjust the volume using the “QuickTime Inspector” (Q icon).



A screen shot showing the use of the QuickTime Inspector. [\(click to enlarge\)](#)



Instant Alpha

This is a fun and useful tool. When you drag in a JPEG of, say, a person with a white background, Keynote makes it easy to cleanly delete the background. Just click the “Alpha” icon in the top formatting palette (red dot with a pen). A dialog box will instruct you to drag your cursor over the colors you want deleted—in this case, drag over a section of white.

Then the background disappears, leaving the person image crisp. PNGs with white backgrounds tend to show up transparent in

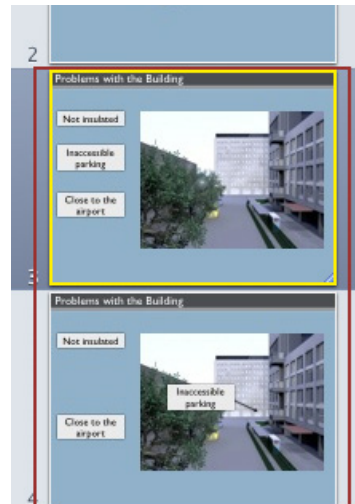
Keynote. This can be convenient if you planned to delete the background anyway, but if you want it there, try saving as a JPEG instead.

The red arrow is pointing to the Alpha tool, which is the dot surrounded by a circle. As you use the Alpha tool, you can drag the cursor to change a white background to a shade of blue, indicating the highlighted background will be deleted. [\(click to enlarge\)](#)

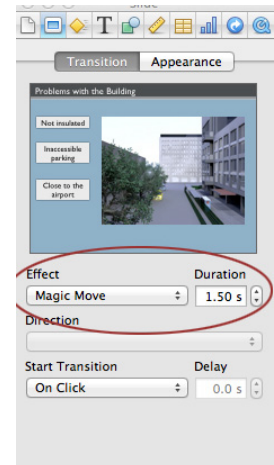
Transitions, Magic Move

The “Slide Inspector” (blue square icon) lets you add cinematic transitions to your slides. A simple fade between two different slides looks really nice. But you can also use transitions to make a simple animation. If you want to move a text box from the left to front and center in the following slide, use the Magic Move transition. To do this, just duplicate your first slide (Control-click and select duplicate). In that second copied slide, move the text box to your desired final placement.

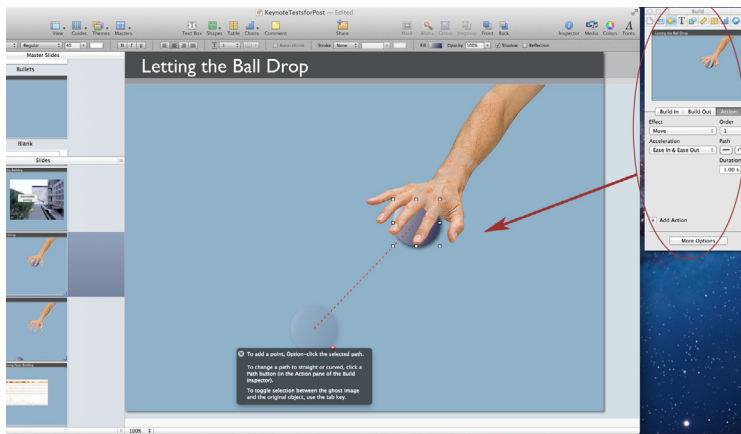
You can also change the opacity of the other images and text for greater effect. When you play the slides, the text box will smoothly transition from its position in Slide 1 to its position in Slide 2.



Using the Magic Move, the third slide above is duplicated, and then the text box moves to the center of the graphic in the duplicated slide to point to the detail. [\(click to enlarge\)](#)



With the Inspector tool, on the Transition tab, you can choose the Magic Move function and set its duration. [\(click to enlarge\)](#)



Use the Build Inspector tool to animate a graphic within the slide. [\(click to enlarge\)](#)

the animation will play on its own. You’ll see a red line and ghost image appear on the graphic. That’s the graphic’s path, and you can manipulate it by selecting one end of the line and moving it. Preview the animation by clicking inside the Preview window of the “Build Inspector.”

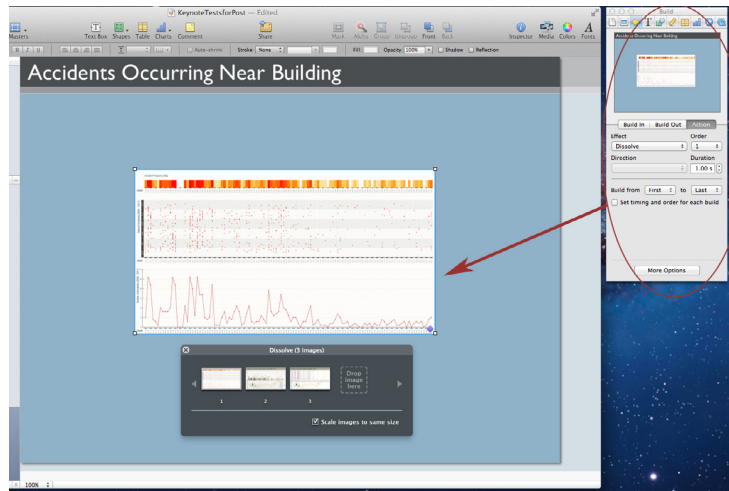
Custom Move

This technique allows you to animate a graphic within a slide instead of using a transition. With your graphic selected, go into the “Build Inspector” (yellow diamond icon) and select “Action.” Then select “Move” from the effects dropdown.

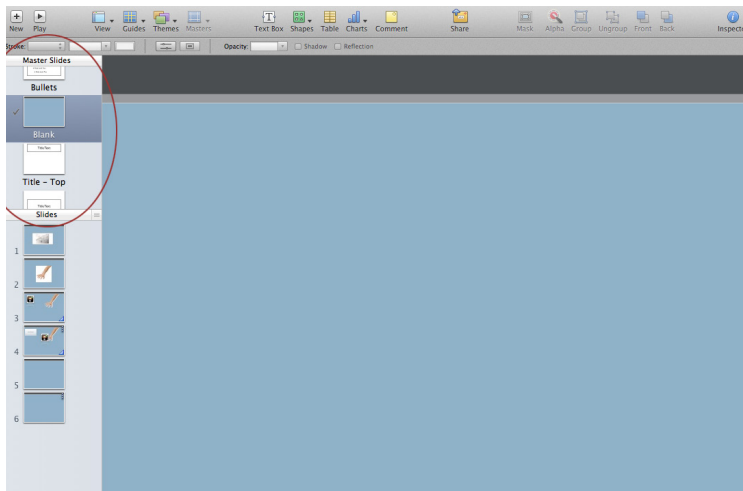
Click “More Options” and select “Start Automatically After Transition”—that way the

Smart Build

The “Smart Build” creates a slide show of multiple images on a single slide. To create one, go to Insert > Smart Build > Dissolve in the main menu bar. A dotted box will appear with a row of small boxes below. You can drag and drop images into the main box and use the small boxes below to edit the order in which they appear. You can edit other properties of the slide show in the “Build Inspector,” such as the speed of the dissolve and whether or not it starts automatically.



Use the Dissolve box with the Build Inspector to build a slide show of several images in a single slide, thus “building” the presentation of information. [\(click to enlarge\)](#)



This screen shot shows the Master Slide View, where you can create your own background template for the entire presentation. [\(click to enlarge\)](#)

bars in Illustrator, simply select the shapes and hit command-C. Then open the master slides by going to the “View” menu and clicking “Show Master Slides.” Select the blank slide and hit command-V to paste the Illustrator shapes into the slide.

The images will come in as a single PDF that appears in the “Inspector” panel. You can also create shapes in the master slide within Keynote. Just click the shape icon in the menu

Master Slides

Keynote has many appealing pre-made templates, but if you’d like to use an original slide layout, use a master slide. First, choose your slide size. Open the “Inspector” panel and click the “Document Inspector” (page icon). You can select a suggested size based on pixel dimensions (800 x 600, 1024 x 768, etc.) or choose custom slide size. If you have already created a slide layout in another program, match your slide size to that. If you made your background color



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just above your workspace. Choose the rectangle and create your background and header shapes. Change colors and outlines using the “Graphics Inspector” (shapes icon) in the “Inspector” panel.

If you would like Cogent Legal’s assistance in creating a Keynote presentation, please [contact us](#).

Morgan Smith is the owner of [Cogent Legal](#), a litigation graphics and trial strategy firm based in the San Francisco Bay Area that develops clear and compelling visual presentations for attorneys to use in mediation or trial. Services include animations, 2D and 3D graphics, medical illustrations, PowerPoint or Keynote presentations, interactive timelines, videos, strategic consulting and trial support. Cogent Legal integrates the legal expertise of a successful trial attorney with the creative and technical talent of a design firm.