

TECHNOLOGY IN OUR LIVES

Technology To Help You Creatively Communicate

(NAPSA)—When people hear the words “digital media,” most think about digital music rather than creative new ways they can communicate. But with digital media usage reaching new levels—nearly 60 percent of households with an Internet connection and nearly one in four companies use digital media—new digital media technology has emerged that is changing the way people communicate and express their creativity.

If you're familiar with Microsoft PowerPoint, which is used to create and organize slides for presentations, you might be interested in one of the hidden jewels available for PowerPoint, Microsoft Producer for PowerPoint 2002. This downloadable add-on for Office XP allows users to combine audio, video and slides into a standard slide deck presentation that can be viewed on demand with a Web browser.

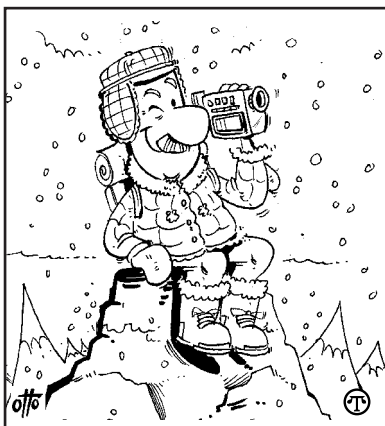
Microsoft Producer was originally designed to ease communication, and businesses were among the first to see the value of using Producer for employee training and corporate presentations. For example, instead of sending training manuals to its staff at 550 stores, RadioShack Canada Ltd. plans to use Producer to deliver training to employees right on their desktops.

Because it is easy to use, people from all walks of life are using Producer to communicate in creative new ways. Producer presentations are now showing up in places you might not expect, from an elementary school in Texas to the top of the world's highest mountains.

In the Classroom

Take, for example, the fourth-grade class at Akin Elementary School in Wylie, Texas. With the help and direction of their teacher, the students are using Producer to bring book reports to life by creating the report in PowerPoint, recording their presentation on video and then bringing all the components together. Each child was then able to share their presentation with their parents on a PC during an open house. With Producer, Akin Elementary can also make it possible for students to share their presentations with friends and family across the country through a Web browser.

“This is a great experience for my students,” says Debbie Gove, fourth-grade teacher at Akin Elementary. “It not only teaches them presentation skills, but also allows them to be imaginative and expressive in their presentation of the report.”



Digital media can help companies, classrooms and individuals have the world at their fingertips.

To the Top of the Himalayas

Ed Viesturs, professional mountaineer, also sees unique value in using Producer. During his expeditions, he captures stunning images—still photos and video—of the cultures, the landscapes and, of course, the mountains he encounters. During his endeavor to be the first American to climb all of the world's 8,000-meter peaks without supplemental oxygen, Viesturs uses satellite phones to transmit digital images, as well as video and audio, in the form of dispatches that highlight the progress of his climbs. His management company uses Producer to combine these dispatches into a multimedia experience that his fans can view online.

“Now people can follow the journey of the team by actually seeing the images and video that we capture along the trip and hearing the audio dispatches almost in real time from the mountain,” Viesturs explains.

While the Akin Elementary fourth-graders, Ed Viesturs and the folks at RadioShack Canada use Producer for different purposes, all realize the value of using digital media elements to communicate more effectively in many diverse environments. The next time you need to make a presentation, keep in mind the new digital media tools that can bring it to life and help you communicate more creatively than ever.

For more information on Microsoft Producer for PowerPoint, visit <http://www.microsoft.com/office/powerpoint/producer/>. To see how Ed Viesturs uses Producer, visit <http://www.microsoft.com/office/viesturs/default.asp>. To see how the Akin Elementary fourth-grade class uses Producer, visit http://www.wylieisd.net/tech/train/simmanars/student%20products/akin_gove/tobie_akin_jamesbowie.htm.