

Matching Screen Resolutions For Recording a PowerPoint Show

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Title:	<i>Matching Screen Resolutions For Recording a PowerPoint Show</i>
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Abstract:	When creating a slide show, you have the choice to define the slide format as a width:height ratio. There are three predominant ratios used with PowerPoint and if you record your PowerPoint, matching the display format for different display formats (YouTube, tablets, wide screen displays, projectors, ...) can be problematic.
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Other documents:	<i>Design Your PowerPoint Slide Show For Different Project Display Formats.pdf</i>
Supplemental files:	<i>Screen Resolutions for Recording a PowerPoint Show.xlsx</i>

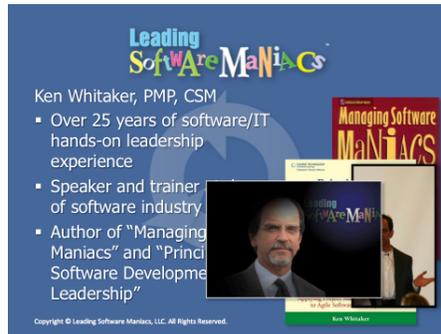
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Introduction

In an earlier article, *Design Your PowerPoint Slide Show For Different Project Display Formats*, I discussed how screen resolutions (the number of pixels per inch) and width:height ratios for your PowerPoint slide show needed to match the projector you're going to display on.

If you've ever seen a presentation created in 4:3 (width:height) ratio looks on a widescreen projector you'll know just how skewed it can look (Figure 1).



Standard 4:3 format



Widescreen (WXGA) 16:10 format

Figure 1 Comparing a standard PowerPoint using two different slide show formats

The instructions presented in this article apply to Mac OS X or Windows platforms and to PowerPoint or Keynote.

Although text may scale correctly, any graphics will squeeze up and not look quite right. The same is true if a presentation created for 16:10 looks on a standard projector display. Yuck!

When recording using screen movie capture programs, like Techsmith's Camtasia or Adobe Captivate, you'll need to understand how your display screen resolution needs to be set to match the output format you want it to be viewed on (say, with YouTube). You may have noticed that some videos on YouTube have black bands on either side of the video (Figure 2).

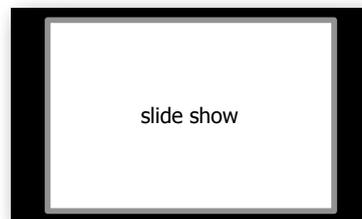


Figure 2 Displaying a 4:3 movie (slide show) on a wide screen format (YouTube)

Matching the Screen Resolution to the Aspect Ratio

Creating Your Slide Show

In PowerPoint you have three basic page formats to choose from when you create your slide show:

- On-screen show (4:3) *default*
- On-screen show (16:9)
- On-screen show (16:10)

As long as you don't have to display your recorded slide show on anything but a normal screen (the old CRTs or most tablets like the iPad), the default 4:3 slide (page) format works great. If, on the other hand, you want a widescreen format, you'll have to use either the 16:10 (preferred) or 16:9 set up instead.

Is there a single way to design a slide set up that will work for both? Yes, as long as there are **no** graphics on the background master slide or on any of the slides.

Otherwise:

You have to create two PowerPoint Slide Shows!

Yessir! One for the standard display screen and one for widescreen settings.

Before You Record

With most displays now widescreen and so many display resolutions to choose from, what setting matches any of the three PowerPoint on-screen formats? You might be surprised to learn that display manufacturers really try hard to match each setting (like 1920x1080) to one of the three. The 1920x1080 resolution popular with many 23" widescreen LED displays matches the 16:9 width:height ratio!

Before you record, you'll want to change your display dimensions to match the output resolution as close as you can. The result will be that the recording should take up the full region of the display: no more black bands!

The Screen Resolutions for Recording a PowerPoint Show.xlsx spreadsheet provides several worksheets that show you all of the resolutions for a specific Apple display. For example, Figure 3 shows the different screen resolutions for the iMac 27-inch display (2011 model).

iMac 27 2011 Model			4:3		16:10		16:9	
	Width	Height	Width	Height	Width	Height	Width	Height
	4	3	16	10	16	9		
Template	Width (px)	Height (px)	Width:Height		Width:Height		Width:Height	
Default	2560	1440	4.00	2.25	16.00	9.00	16.00	9.00
	1920	1200	4.00	2.50	16.00	10.00	16.00	10.00
	1920	1080	4.00	2.25	16.00	9.00	16.00	9.00
	1680	1050	4.00	2.50	16.00	10.00	16.00	10.00
	1600	900	4.00	2.25	16.00	9.00	16.00	9.00
	1344	756	4.00	2.25	16.00	9.00	16.00	9.00
	1280	1024	4.00	3.20	16.00	12.80	16.00	12.80
	1280	720	4.00	2.25	16.00	9.00	16.00	9.00
	1024	768	4.00	3.00	16.00	12.00	16.00	12.00
	800	600	4.00	3.00	16.00	12.00	16.00	12.00

Figure 3 How the iMac display matches the three most-popular width:height ratios

The default 2560x1440 display resolution for the 27-inch model uses the 16:9 width:height ratio (you can see by the checkmark), whereas the only 4:3 settings are either 1024x768 or 800x600. The spreadsheet has predefined worksheets for 2011 and 2012 Apple devices (including the iPad). Surprisingly, if you run Windows under Apple's Boot Camp, the supported display settings may be slightly different!

A Final Word

You can modify the Width and Height cells of the spreadsheet you downloaded with the article as you wish. Modify one of the existing worksheets or modify a copy of one of the pre-built ones. One warning for Camtasia users: make sure your canvas settings are set up to the display resolution you recorded your PowerPoint on. Otherwise, Camtasia will automatically resize your recording to fit its current canvas. (I found out THAT the hard way!)

Bio



Ken Whitaker of Leading Software Maniacs® (LSM) has more than twenty-five years of software development executive leadership and training experience in a variety of technology roles and industries. He has led commercial software teams at Software Publishing (remember Harvard Graphics?), Data General, embedded systems software companies, and enterprise software suppliers. Ken is an active PMI® member, Project Management Professional (PMP)® certified, and a Certified ScrumMaster (CSM). Sources for LSM's material come from case studies, personal leadership experience, the PMI *Project Management Book of Knowledge (PMBOK® Guide)*, and Ken's leadership books: *Managing Software Maniacs*, *Principles of Software Development Leadership*, and *I'm Not God, I'm Just a Project Manager*. PM University, <http://www.pmuniversity.com>, is a new addition to Leading Software Maniacs' online, eLearning curriculum focused on pragmatic project management and software leadership courses. Ken is also the creator of PM Chalkboard, <http://www.pmchalkboard.com>—the fastest way to learn basic project management principles with entertaining, no cost tutorial videos.

Ken also has written a number of articles and books on topics that should help the creative professional including his popular *InDesign to Kindle* eBook.

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