

10 key enhancements in PowerPoint 2007

Creating impressive slideshow presentations just got easier with Microsoft's latest version of PowerPoint. With a new interface, new templates, and new artwork and formatting options, PowerPoint 2007 makes it a no-brainer for you to give your presentations a polished, professional look and convey information in ways that grab and keep your audience's attention.

Let's take a look at some of the key enhancements and new ways of doing things in the new PowerPoint.

#1: The Ribbon interface

The new user interface that's common to the main Office 2007 programs has gotten all the attention — and not all of it positive. It takes some getting used to, but many users who've given it a chance find it to be more intuitive and quicker to use than the old menu system.

The Ribbon uses tabs to group commands and features in logical, task-oriented categories. In PowerPoint 2007, in addition to the familiar Home, Insert, Review, View, and Add-ins tabs, which are common to other Office programs, you'll find tabs labeled Design, Animations, and Slideshow that are dedicated to those presentation elements, as shown in **Figure A**, **Figure B**, and **Figure C**.



Figure A: The Design tab allows you to choose page setup, themes and background.



Figure B: The Animations tab makes it easy to create animations and slide transitions.

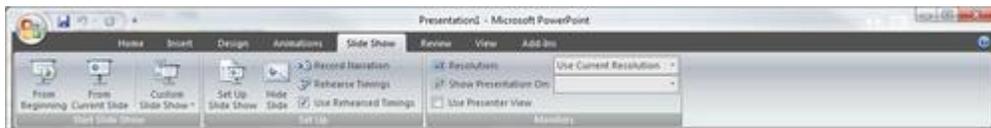


Figure C: The Slide Show tab is used to set up and play the show and control monitor settings.

#2: The Quick Style gallery

The new Quick Style gallery, with new themes, helps you to put together professional-looking presentations much more quickly because you don't have to select colors and style options individually. Now you can be sure that your graphics elements, tables and charts all match. When you apply a new style or theme, all of these elements change so that they go together and use the same color set.

You can choose from many built-in color schemes, as shown in **Figure D**, or you can create your own custom themes.



Figure D: You can select from built-in color themes or create your own.

When creating a new custom theme, you can set colors for various components, as shown in **Figure E**.

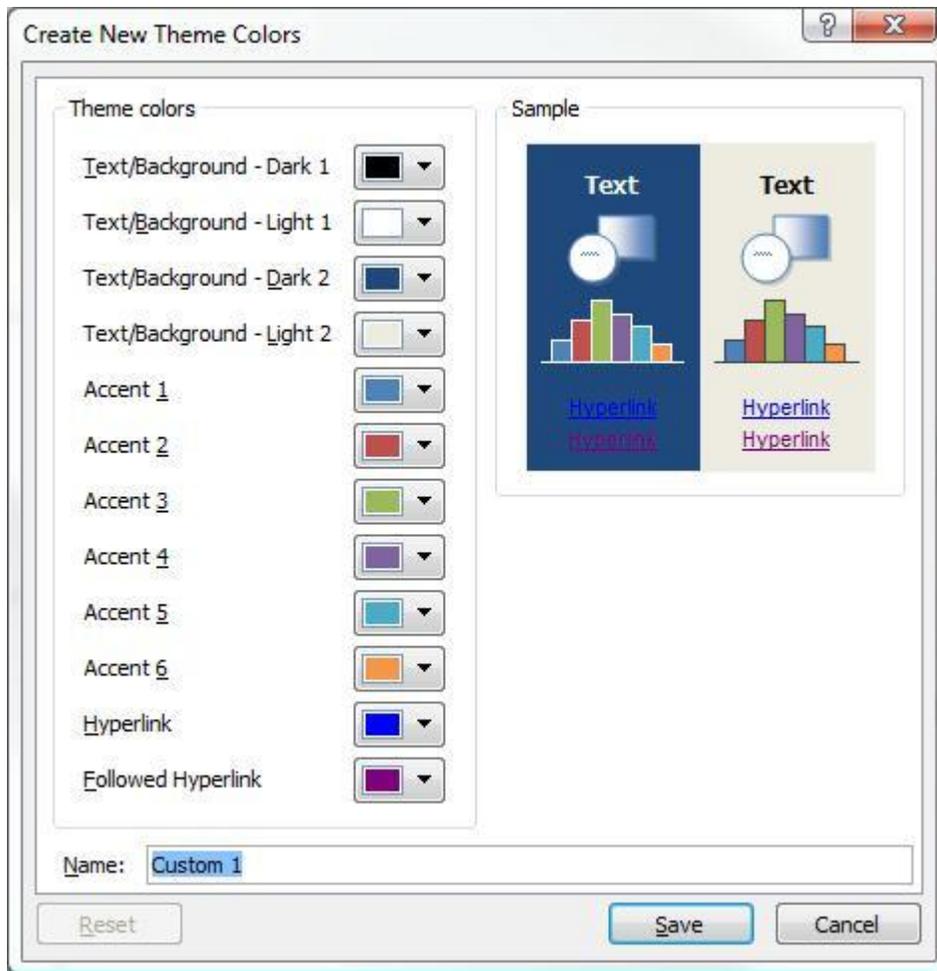


Figure E: You can set colors for many elements when you create a custom theme.

The Quick Styles gallery changes to coordinate with whatever theme you've selected, too. That means that elements such as SmartArt graphics will be automatically color coordinated with the rest of the elements in the presentation.

#3: SmartArt

With PowerPoint 2003, you can insert WordArt or AutoShapes, but PowerPoint 2007 adds the concept of SmartArt. SmartArt graphics are visual representations of information and ideas that are color coordinated and preconstructed for common purposes, such as listing a number of components or subjects, showing hierarchical relationships, illustrating the steps of a process or procedure, creating a matrix, and so forth.

SmartArt graphics are easily added from the Insert tab, and as **Figure F** shows, you have dozens of graphics to pick from.

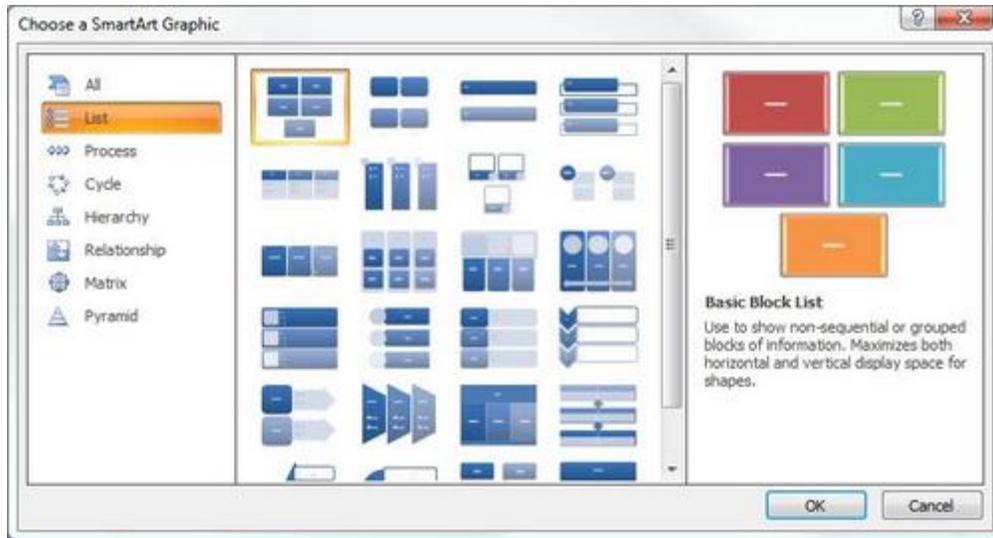


Figure F: SmartArt graphics help you dress up a presentation quickly and easily.

When you've inserted a SmartArt graphic, the Design tab opens and changes to provide options for editing the graphic you've selected. You can change colors or apply a 3D effect to the graphic by selecting from SmartArt Styles in a drop-down list, as shown in **Figure G**.

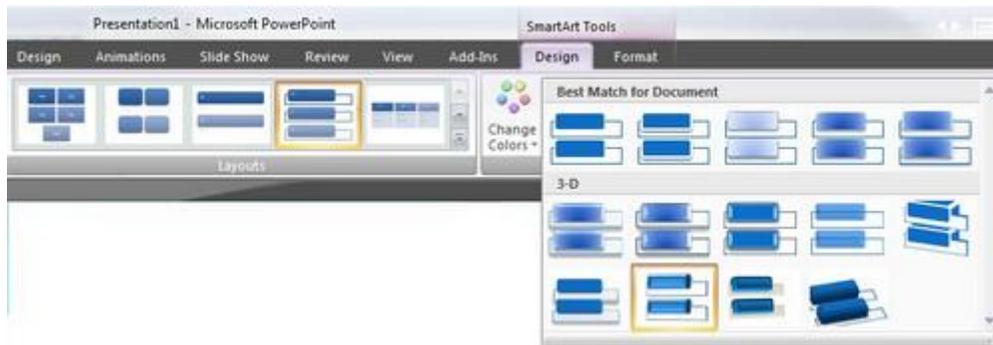


Figure G: SmartArt graphics can be edited to change colors or apply 3D effects.

#4: Better tables and charts

Tables and charts are important elements of many slide presentations, and PowerPoint 2007 makes it easier to create and edit them. It's simpler to cut and paste information from Excel spreadsheets, and adding a table or chart to a slide is a point-and-click operation that's done from the Insert tab.

There are also many more built-in chart styles, as shown in **Figure H**, and they're easier to select and work with.

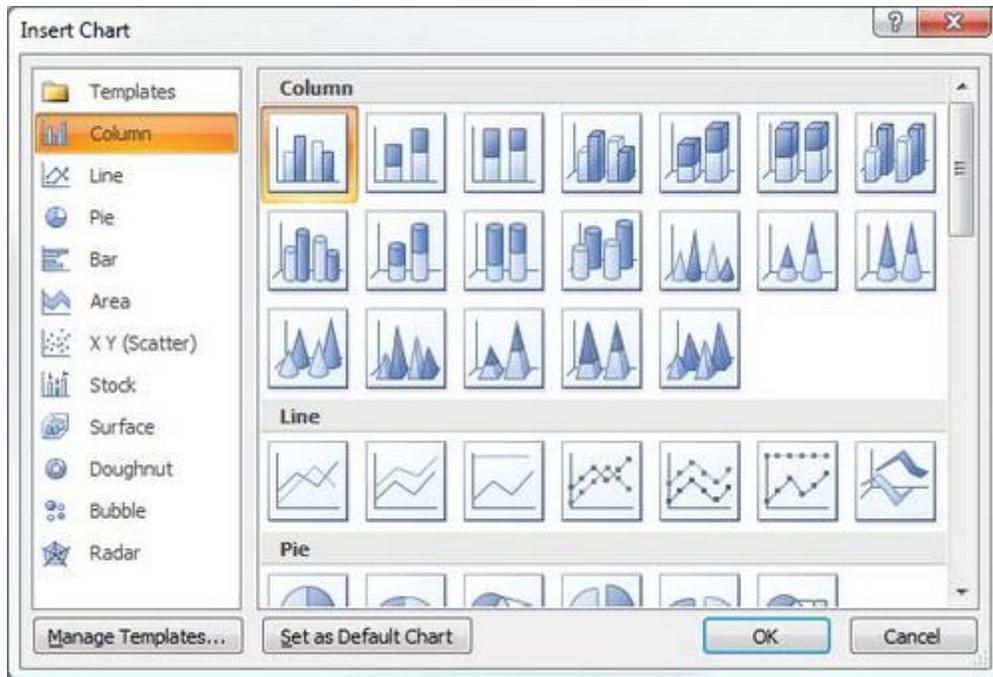


Figure H: Selecting and working with charts is easier in PowerPoint 2007.

The new Table insertion tool makes it simple to highlight the columns and rows that you want your table to contain, as shown in **Figure I**.

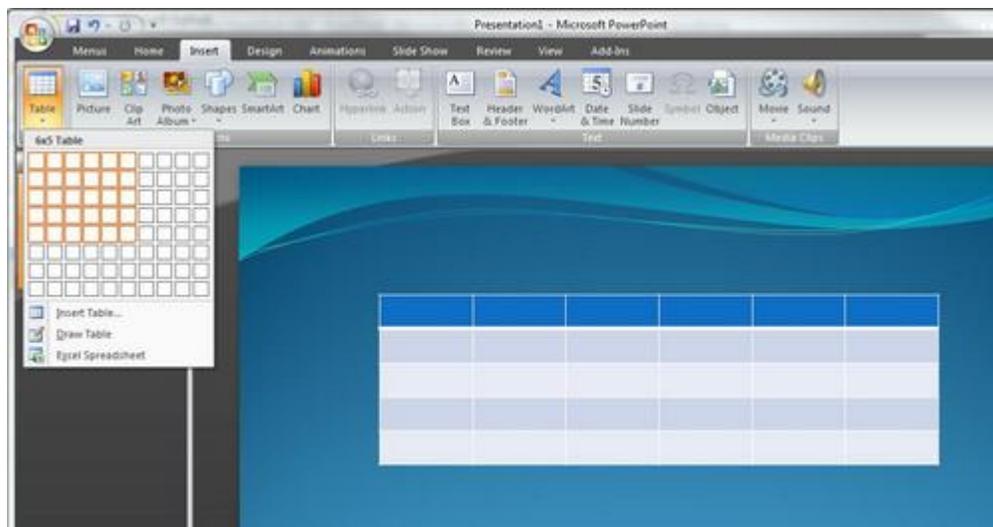


Figure I: Columns and rows appear in your slide as you highlight boxes in the Table tool.

#5: Live preview

One of the coolest and most useful features of PowerPoint 2007 is the live preview feature. You can see how various color themes, fonts, and effects will look on the slide before selecting them.

For example, if you click the Colors down arrow in the Themes section of the Design tab, as you scroll through different themes, they are instantly displayed on the slide.

The same thing happens as you move your cursor over different fonts in the drop-down box shown in **Figure J**. The font instantly changes on the slide so you can see exactly what it will look like if you select that font.

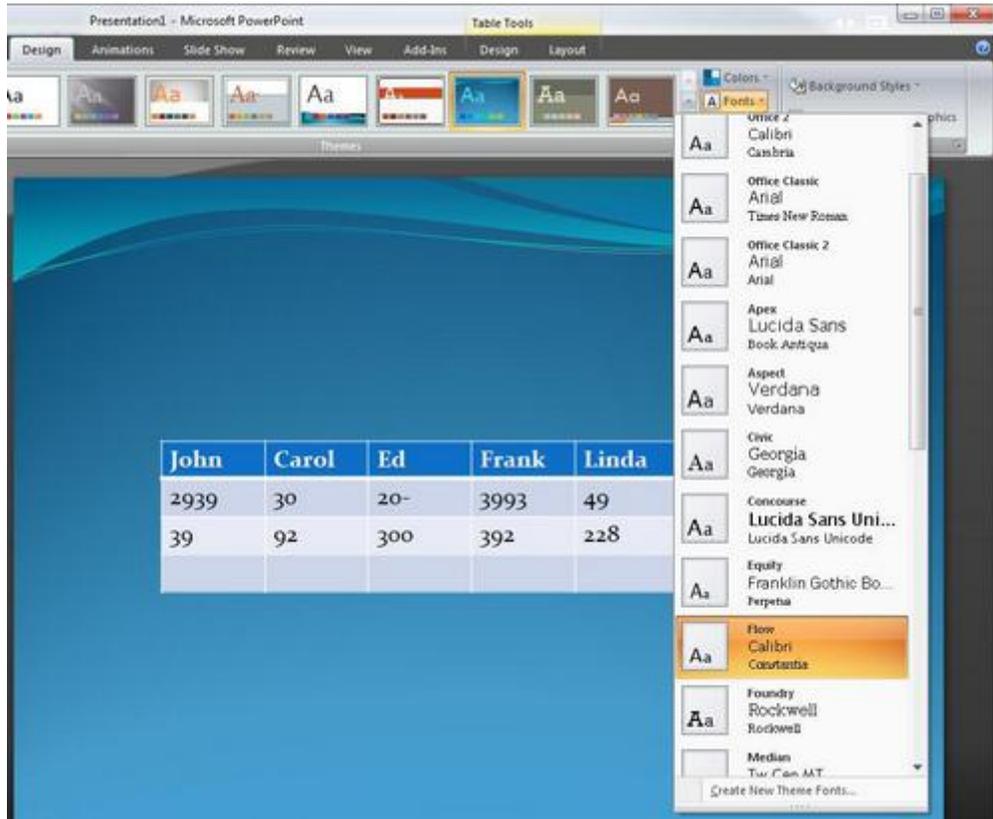


Figure J: Fonts, colors and effects change instantly as you highlight them so you get a preview of exactly how they will look on the slide.

#6: Presenter view

Another new feature in PowerPoint 2007 is the ability to run the presentation on one monitor while the audience views it on a second monitor. In Presenter view, what you see on your monitor (for example, your laptop) and what the audience sees on the second monitor (for example, the projector screen) are different.

The audience sees only the slide itself. But you see the current slide along with your speaker notes and previews of the next several slides in sequence. You can click any of those slides to go to it instantly, and you can darken or lighten the audience screen without affecting your own.

To turn on Presenter view, you select the Slide Show tab, click Set Up Slide Show from the Set Up group, and select the Show Presenter View check box in the Set Up Show dialog box, as shown in **Figure K**.

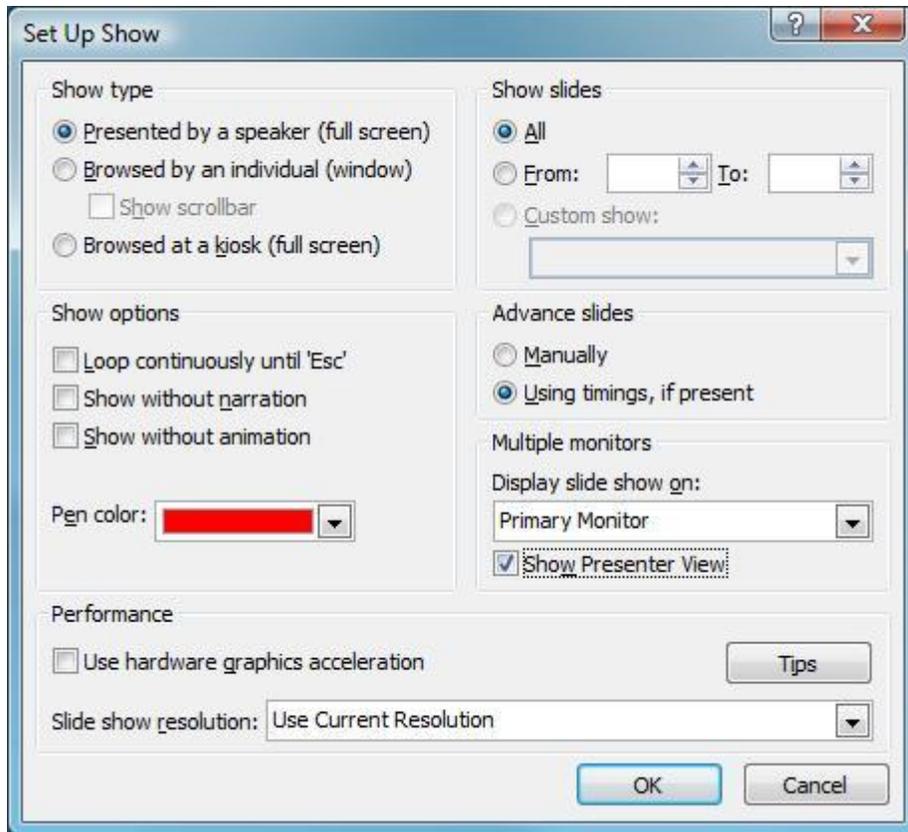


Figure K: You can select Presenter view in the Set Up Show dialog box.

Figure L shows the Presenter view that appears on your monitor on the left and the slide that displays on the audience's screen on the right.

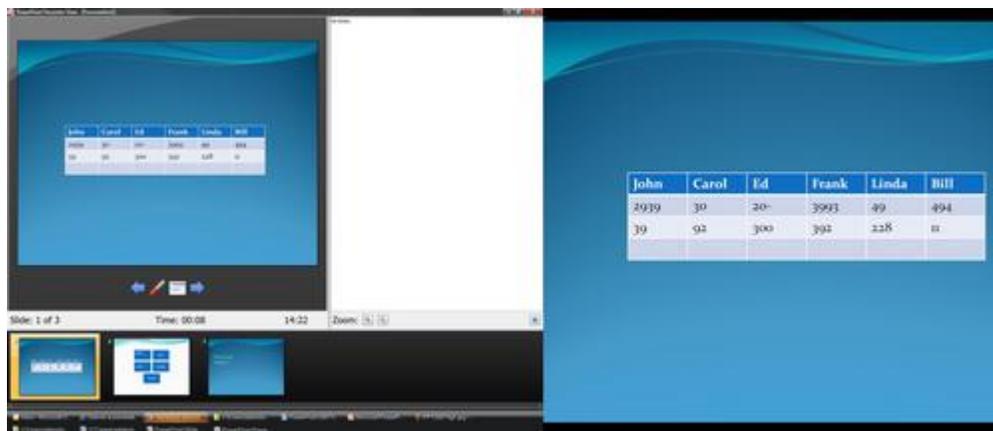


Figure L: Presenter view displays speaker notes and slide previews on your monitor and only the slide on the audience's screen.

#7: Smaller file size, better file format

Elaborate slide presentations can result in very large file sizes, especially if you use many graphics, embed video, etc. This may make it difficult to e-mail PowerPoint presentations to others because of mailbox limitations.

The new XML-based file format used by default in PowerPoint 2007 (.PPTX) reduces file sizes because the files are compressed. This makes them significantly smaller, sometimes up to 75 percent. XML-based files are also easier to recover if some elements in the file are corrupt or damaged.

If necessary for compatibility with older versions of PowerPoint, you can also save files in the PowerPoint 2003 (.PPT) format.

#8: Save as PDF or XPS

Now you can save PowerPoint presentations as PDF or XPS files. This makes it easier to share them with people who don't have PowerPoint or who are using non-Microsoft operating systems, because these are standardized formats that can be opened across platforms.

Saving in one of these fixed-layout formats also ensures that your presentation will stay exactly as you created it, since they can't easily be edited. It's also easy to print files saved in PDF or XPS, since "what you see is what you get" in terms of the layout.

To save PowerPoint 2007 presentations in PDF or XPS, you first need to [download the free add-in from Microsoft](#). Once you install the add-in, just click Save As on the Office menu and select PDF from the Save As Types drop-down list.

#9: Remove hidden information

Office 2007 programs, including PowerPoint, benefit from the new Document Inspector feature that makes it easy for you to check your presentation to ensure that no hidden personal information or other metadata is contained in the file before you share it with others. Especially if the presentation has been through a review process, there could be comments, annotations, and so forth, still contained in the file but not immediately visible. You might not want others to be able to see your presentation notes or off-slide content, either.

To use the Document Inspector, select Prepare from the Office menu and then select Inspect Document, as shown in **Figure M**.

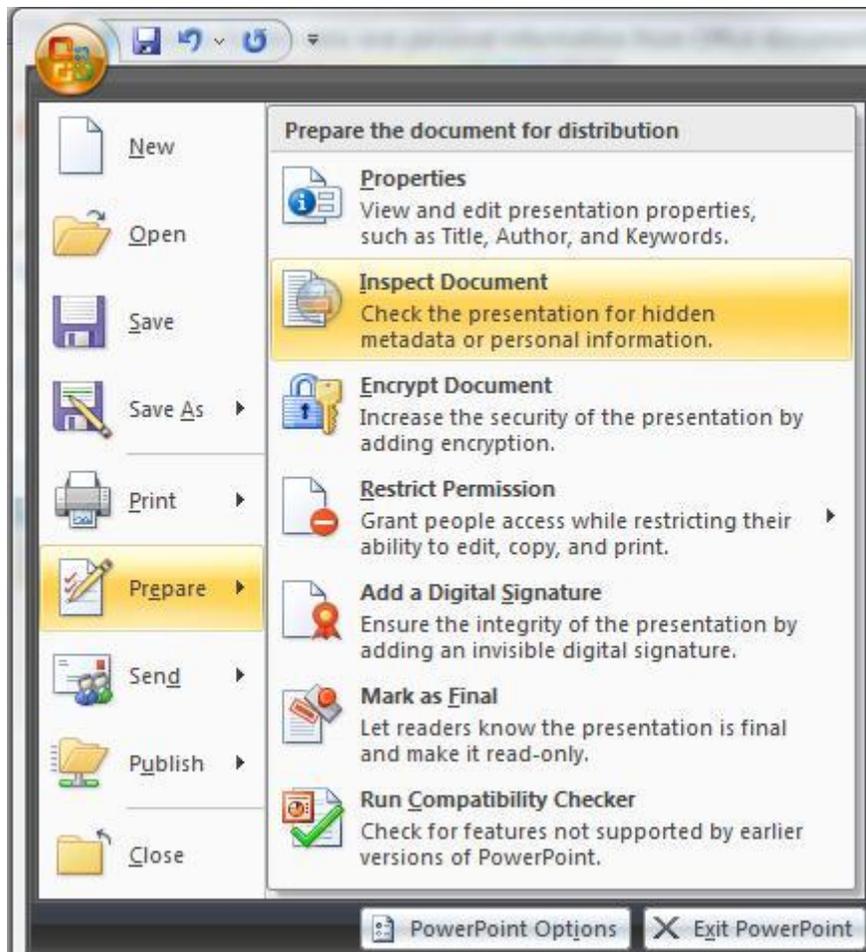


Figure M: You can inspect your presentation for hidden data before distributing it.

#10: Secure your presentation

Sometimes, the information we include in our PowerPoint presentations may be confidential. For example, you might have a slideshow prepared for company executives that contains trade secrets or financial information about the company. There are more ways than ever built into PowerPoint 2007 to help you protect sensitive information in a slide show:

- You can add digital signatures to the PowerPoint file to authenticate the identity of its creator and to verify that the content hasn't been changed since it was signed.
- You can encrypt the presentation.
- In the Windows Rights Management Services environment, you can restrict permission so that users with whom you share the presentation can't copy, print, or edit it.

All of these security mechanisms can be invoked from the Office | Prepare menu