



# PRESENT AND CORRECT

## PART 1

Today presentation is everything!

BY JANE SMITH

It seems that today presentation is everything! The lasting impression people are left with will be based largely upon presentation whether that be presentation of ourselves as people, our homes if we are selling them or the companies that we work for. In our professional lives presentation is especially important if we want to achieve our objectives. Much business is won or lost through the way a proposition is presented. For the office products dealer it's a booming sector on all levels. This three-part feature will examine the different ways to present in a commercial situation,

from pitching for new business to running a sales conference, and the products and tools available to help do the right job.

### PREPARATION IS KEY

A friend once gave me a piece of advice 'fail to prepare and you prepare to fail!' and, from personal experience, I have found her to be right. A lot of our preparation comes to us naturally from many years of practice. But sometimes it is good to recap and to think of where good sales opportunities lie in terms of your customers' need to present.

**First of all identify your objectives:** what is the message you are trying to get across, what do you want your audience to remember and what action do you want them to take?

### Next: your audience.

Who is it? How many people are you trying to reach, who are they and where are they? Will you be able to deliver your message in person or have to rely upon contacting your audience through the internet or post.

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will need a heavier weight paper so that the images look sharp and there is no show through on the other side. You may decide that using a 100% recycled paper will give the desired impression, or double sided printing to show economy.

Next is whether to bind or put the document into a folder or binder. It could be that a ring binder or a personalised presentation binder is the most relevant? Or for a professional finish use a comb, wire or thermal binding system. If you are looking for a straight-forward document wallet or folder, there are some very nicely designed polypropylene products available to set your document off beautifully.

The move away from centralised support has also led to smaller machines being developed, intended for personal use. Small, personal machines also offer a good sales opportunity, as the supplies stored by the desk are conveniently within reach and will be used. Another way in which machines are being developed is to take account of the fact that the boundary between home and office is getting more blurred, with homes increasingly becoming 'the office' or an extension of the office. This converging market is giving an opportunity for the provision of business machines that will adapt to both the workplace (for professional results, speed and flexibility) as well as the home (simplicity of use and stylish designs).

In terms of the binding market the strongest growth is definitely in the budget sector with demand highest for small format, portable machines and electric binders. Comb binding still dominates accounting for approx 65% of all machine sales, with other methods such as wire, coil, perfect binding and thermal binding following behind.

There are some important considerations in choosing the >>

***There are three distinct areas to explore:***

- **Documentation**
- **Multimedia Presentations**
- **Training and Conferences**

*To take each one in turn:*

**DOCUMENTATION**

Whatever your objectives, it is almost without exception that you will need some sort of documentation to deliver your message or to back up your face to face presentation. Whether you are responding to a tender or enquiry, pitching for a new contract, or delivering a high powered multimedia presentation and need to supply 'leave behind' packs, it is important to think about the impression you are trying to make.

In the past we have been used to dedicated support staff to take care of actually producing the documentation once the manager had generated the content. However, this administrative 'back-up' or centralised support is now a thing of the past and today most of us work very independently and find ourselves responsible for preparing our own.

Today it's easier than ever to produce slick, professional presentation documents on a computer and most of us have access to one and our own dedicated printer. Don't forget to think about the impression you are trying to make and choose suitable materials for both printing and binding. If your document has a lot of colour and/or photography you

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best method of binding depending on what you are trying to achieve with the document. For example if you are producing a working document that needs to be frequently amended then it is better to use say a comb, coil or strip binding method. For further information about the best binding method you can contact any of the big manufacturers such as GBC, Acco, Esselte or Fellowes.

Apart from presenting written reports and proposals there are times when we want to professionally present other kinds of documentation/information such as signs, important information, etc. There may also be a need to protect the information against heavy use or potential spills. This is when a laminator becomes a vital 'document finishing' tool.

Laminators are seeing tremendous growth with increases in sales of up to 40% in the last 12 months. These days they are much more affordable and their benefits more widely recognised. Again the convergence of work and home environments means that smaller, more compact machines are the order of the day. Ease of use and speed are especially important with fast warm up times becoming an important feature too.

Ways to use a laminator are endless for projects at both home and at work. It's amazing, but once you own a laminator you'll be surprised just how much you use it! There will definitely be an identified need within your customer base from these examples:

### @WORK PROJECTS

- Telephone lists
- Signs
- Adverts
- Point of Sale Displays
- Posters
- Maps
- Specification Sheets
- Badges and Membership Cards

### @HOME PROJECTS

- Photos
- Children's Drawings
- Recipes
- Bookmarks
- Telephone Lists
- Coasters for Drinks and Table Mats
- Diplomas and Certificates
- Photo Jumbles and Collages

Perhaps it would be useful to carry a small laminator into customer meetings with you and offer to laminate something for them. ■

*Next month we'll look at the multi-media presentation area, followed in our third final instalment to explore the whys and wherefores of good training and conferences.*

## THE RIGHT RATIO

Televisions, monitors, LCD / plasma panels and projection screens come in a variety of different formats. It's important to use the best one to suit your application, so, with the help of AV distributor TCI, here's a short guide to the three standard versions you can use:



■ **SQUARE FORMAT (1:1 ratio)** – This is probably the most versatile screen, as it will accommodate all projection formats. Ideally suited to all forms of projection, including multimedia and 35mm slide, a square screen is best selected if an overhead projector is to be used, thereby allowing OHP transparencies to be shown in either portrait or landscape format.

■ **VIDEO FORMAT (4:3 ratio)** – This is a format similar to the traditional television screen in that the width is slightly wider than the height of the image to be viewed. Many multimedia projectors and all 35mm slide projectors adopt this format as standard. Usually supplied with black borders, widescreen images can be viewed on this type of screen.

■ **WIDESCREEN FORMAT (16:9 Ratio)** – As with the latest television sets, widescreen projection screens are considerably wider than they are high and are ideal for use in home cinema and similar applications. Usually supplied with black borders, other formats can only be viewed by leaving a white space to the left and right of the image.

