Presenting a Talk Using Slides

30th May 2006
Advantages

- Can be prepared beforehand.
- Allows one to practice and perfect the talk, especially getting order of ideas and details correct.
- Allows one to concentrate on the presentation and not to worry about working out details — they are already on the slides.
Advantages (Ctd)

- Allows greater interaction with the audience.
- Pictures, photos, graphs, figure and tables are all professional in appearance.
- Can be re-used!
Always have a title page containing

- Name of speaker
- Title of talk
- Affiliation
- Collaborators
Acknowledge any assistants, such as grants and colleagues early in the talk.
Use a large enough font so that slides are visible from the back of the venue.

Do not have too much (crowd, overfill) per slide.

Leave good top, bottom and side margins.

Dot points or hyphens structure your slides.
Your slides are only a guide to you and the audience, so you do not need complete sentences — just dot points are sufficient. In particular you do not need to have too many details on your slides.
Use *colour* for effect.

Identify separate ideas for the audience by making them *look different*.

Liven up your slides with pictures, photos, cartoons, ...
Spend about a minute per slide, more if there are difficult concepts, definitions, formulae, that the audience needs to ponder or read.

Give sufficient time and slide space to important concepts.

Use drama effectively – such as giving an important point or formula a slide by itself with perhaps just one sentence on it.
Determine beforehand which slides you can skip without losing anything from your talk, in case you are short of time.
Familiarise yourself with the venue.
Walk around to the back to see what your slides look like from there.
Practice with friends to see if you are audible at the back.
Get a feel for the venue and make sure you are comfortable with the surroundings.
Familiarise yourself with the workings of the equipment.
Use a Pointer

- You see what the audience sees.
- You focus the audience on what you want them to see.
- Covers your nerves!
- Makes you look more confident and visible.
- It gives you something to do with your hands!
Prepare your Talk

- Define your talk. You cannot cover everything you have done in your thesis, so be selective.
A latex style that produces professional looking pdf slides such as this. The advantage is that you can simply import selected parts of your thesis and make up your talk very easily. It also allows you the full power of \LaTeX for Mathematics type setting. See me for a manual and sample.
Practice with friends, colleagues, me and get feedback!