Wired to the World

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Is there life after PowerPoint? Several new presentation software systems have recently come on the market to "awaken" your online presentation skills. Prezi (www.prezi.com) is one that works rather well and is available in a free web version and a "pro"[fessional] added feature version for a fee. Prezi moves your presentation away from the Microsoft PowerPoint slide by boring slide format, to a flash based visually moving application. You can see how it works by checking out the presentation by Scott Wheat on the Science of the Renaissance (http://prezi.com/voimy5yas1gz/). A nice quick start guide to the Prezi system, can be found here: http://activehistory.co.uk/updates/history-teachers/prezi-a-quickstart-guide-for-teachers-and-students/.

Basically to get started in Prezi you sign up for a free account on their web site, logon, click on the "my" [account] tab at the top of their screen, and select "Create a new Prezi" orange colored link on the left panel. Next you title your presentation, choose a style, and press the create button. That's all there is to it. Then you are presented with a "canvas" into which you can click and drag [mouse around] navigation features of the Prezi software. In the upper left hand portion of your screen there is series of small blue circles that contains the navigation/editing menu. Using these circles you can add text; place, position, and zoom objects; add pictures, sound and video; frame presentations [similar to PowerPoint screen templates]; draw lines between concepts [connect the dots]; specify the animation order of your Prezi; preview what you have created; and finally save the Prezi to workspace on the web. The free Prezi account gives you 100MB of storage, while the other for fee plans allows for additional online storage space and offline desktop use of the software. To show your presentation using the free account you must log on to Prezi via the Internet. This is not a particular burden since in most cases you will have internet access for presentations at most venues, however the for fee plan does allow you to store Prezi files on a your local hard drive.

Prezi uses a place, position, and zoom tool called the "Presentation Zebra," to view, scale and rotate objects in your presentation. You can view a video on the use of the Presentation Zebra at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5qhM8N_l-x8. The Presentation Zebra eliminates a lot of the resizing, moving and rotating hassles that you find in PowerPoint. If you purchase the fee version you can receive a desktop version of the software which allows you to create, edit and show your presentations offline via a local computer. You can view the desktop manual here: http://prezi.com/desktop/. There is also a free trial version of the desktop you can download. The fee version including 2000MB of online storage and the desktop local editor is current $139.00 a year. Prezi also offers an intermediate 500MB account without the desktop editor for $59.00 a year. Educators and students can receive 500 free MB by signing up at http://prezi.com/profile/signup/edu/. Prezi in short is a neat new interactive way to display graphically your presentations to your audience.

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- To submit you must login, if needed you can register using the link in the header.
- We use the *Chicago Manual of Style* (15th edition, 2003).
- We have a rolling deadline, articles are juried when received.
- Publication of approved articles is in about 3-9 months depending on space available.
- For additional information, contact Ralph Scott scottr@ecu.edu.