

Narration and Recording Tips (excerpts from Impatica Tips, Volume 01-06, May 31, 2005)



Narration is a critical component of Internet or e-mail delivered presentations. Here are some suggestions to make your narration more engaging and effective:

- Be brief and to the point. Online viewers have a very short attention span and they are only a single click away from leaving. The narration for each slide should be no longer than one minute and preferably less than 30 seconds.
- Use a script. Even though you may be highly effective as a stand-up or impromptu presenter, your online presentation does not benefit from your presence and charisma. More importantly, you do not have the benefit of watching and gauging your audience's reaction and perhaps modifying your delivery accordingly.
- Edit and re-edit the script to produce the shortest possible way of delivering a clear, concise and focused message.
- Identify the author of the presentation. Often viewers like to know who is speaking to them. Consider including a picture of the author, even if it is not the narrator, of the presentation
- A sound recording studio with a professional-quality microphone is available in the Media Center. However, we tested several inexpensive microphones, and found that the Plantronics (.Audio 10) PC Microphone worked very well. At less than \$10, it does a good job of capturing voice quality and minimizing background noise. This microphone can be purchased online at www.outpost.com (Fry's Electronics) under **audio accessories** or at www.walmart.com under **electronics >> computer accessories**.


Recording TIPS

If you do use a small microphone (like the Plantronics Audio 10 pictured to the left) using the microphone port, here are some tips to help minimize the background "noise:"



- Turn off any fans, air conditioning, and florescent lights.
- Move away from your computer tower -- the fan can be noisy.
- Face an open area when you are recording -- sounds can bounce off of walls or computer monitors and cause an echo.
- Experiment positioning the microphone different distances from your mouth to find the optimal position -- about one foot away is usually ideal.
- Don't shout, but try to project your voice so it is heard about 6 feet away.

To check out the sound quality and volume on your computer (the directions for your computer may differ from these) :

- Left click on the audio icon  on the bottom right corner of the screen to make sure that the "mute" box is not checked.
- Right click on the **audio icon >> open volume control** to open up the **Master Volume** window
- In the **Master Volume** window, check **mute** on the "**line in**" control column. Every other control should be active.
- If you don't see microphone listed, click on **options >> properties** and click on the box next to microphone to add it to the **Master Volume** window. Click **OK**
- Still in this **Master Volume** window, click on **options >> advanced >> microphone boost**

To add the narration to PowerPoint slides:

- Check your quality levels before you begin. Open your PowerPoint presentation. Click on Slide Show menu >> Record Narration. Then, select PCM format, and select the following set of attributes: **8.00 KB, 16 bit, Mono, 15KB/sec**.
- Click on Insert >> Movies and Sounds >> Record Sound. Then record your narration for each slide, making your voice as animated as possible.
- Before you Impaticize your files, check to make sure that you have the most current version of Impatica – 3.3.3h. If not, you will need to remove the old version before you install the new version. Installation information for Impatica is at:
- When you have completed the narration and are ready to Impaticize your files, click on the Media tab.
 - Under **Wait for Sound** – select “at end of slide” to have the slide advance when your narration is finished
 - Under **Sound Format** -- select “Compact”.