Speech-Over

Starting-Up Fast with Speech-Over Professional

Contents

Welcome

Welcome to our series "Starting-Up Fast with Speech-Over"!

It's our goal to get you into the driver's seat as fast as possible so that you can experience the full speed and power of Speech-Over Professional to produce a great narrated presentation.

I am happy to answer any questions about Speech-Over Pro and to suggest how to best apply Speech-Over Pro to benefit your organization. Feel free to contact me at joel@speechover.com.

In addition, it is possible to demo the software for you on Skype with sample text that you provide.

Let's go!

Joel Harband, CEO, Tuval Software Industries

#1 Starting Up

Download and run the Speech-Over Professional exe file and it will install automatically. On the registration page, choose the 30-day free trial.

Important: Speech-Over is an add-in to PowerPoint and appears as a menu or ribbon item when you open PowerPoint.

For best results, view the tutorial:

Download and Installation

If you are still having problems installing, please contact us at **support@speechover.com**

On-Line Tutorials

See all of our on-line tutorials. Videos on each topic help you get started quickly.

Initial Preferences Settings

View the tutorial Setting Initial Preferences to learn about the Speech-Over preferences to set before you begin working with Speech-Over.

Setting Initial Preferences

Office/PowerPoint 365

If you are running Office/PowerPoint 365:

- Use the Desktop version of PowerPoint (PowerPoint 2010, 2013, 2016, 2019) installed with Office 365 (On PowerPoint 365 menu: Edit with PowerPoint). All versions of Office 365 include a Desktop version of PowerPoint except Business Basic and Enterprise E1, F1, F3.

- Work with a copy of the PowerPoint presentation on a local disk like MyDocs and not on the "cloud disk" OneDrive (the default for PowerPoint 365)

#2: Adding a Narration Clip to a Presentation

Adding a narration clip to a presentation is the first task you will want to learn. Speech-Over makes it quick and easy.

In this chapter, I'll give you tips on how to create a narration for a slide from individual narration clips. I'll also explain how to order the clips in the sound track.

There are two common situations: static, non-animated slides and dynamic, animated slides. Speech-Over can easily handle the narration of both types of slides.

Static Slides – Slide Narration Clip

For example, let's say you have a transcript of a lecture that was given using static (not animated) slides and you want to create the narration from the transcript so that it speaks in the background of each slide.

You add narration to the background of a static slide by selecting the screen background - rather than any specific object - with the cursor before invoking the Add Narration Clip dialog and then adding the text to be spoken on that slide - creating what we call a *slide* narration clip.

You can add more than one slide narration clip on a slide and reorder them if necessary with the Clip Organizer. This lets you use multiple voices on a slide.

For more details, see the tutorial:

Adding Narration to a Slide Background

Dynamic Slides – Shape Narration Clip

Let's say you have a sequence of text bullets or a complex drawing with many parts and you want the voice to describe each bullet or each part individually. Speech-Over does this by animating the object to draw the viewer's attention as the voice speaks about it. For example, the bullet or drawing part appears or comes in when the voice describes it. We call this a shape narration clip.

Add narration to a screen object by selecting the object with the cursor before invoking the Add Narration Clip dialog. If a visual animation effect already exists for the object, Speech-Over just adds the narration media effect. Otherwise, Speech-Over adds a visual animation effect as well.

For more details, see the tutorial:

Adding Narration to an Animated Screen Object

Speech-Over

Automatic Voice Synchronization

Speech-Over takes a unique approach to creating a synchronized voice narration for a PowerPoint slide: instead of recording a narration for the entire slide and having to coordinate the narration with the slide visual animations, Speech-Over lets you add narration clips directly to individual slide graphics and text bullets and automatically synchronizes them with the slide animation effects to create a continuous multi-media effect.

Advantages

This method has important advantages:

- You save the time-consuming step of synchronizing the slide narration.
- Because the synchronization is precise, the narration explains visually complex slides more effectively.
- You can easily change the slide narration by changing and reordering the narration clips.
- You can easily mix different voices and different audio sources on a single slide.
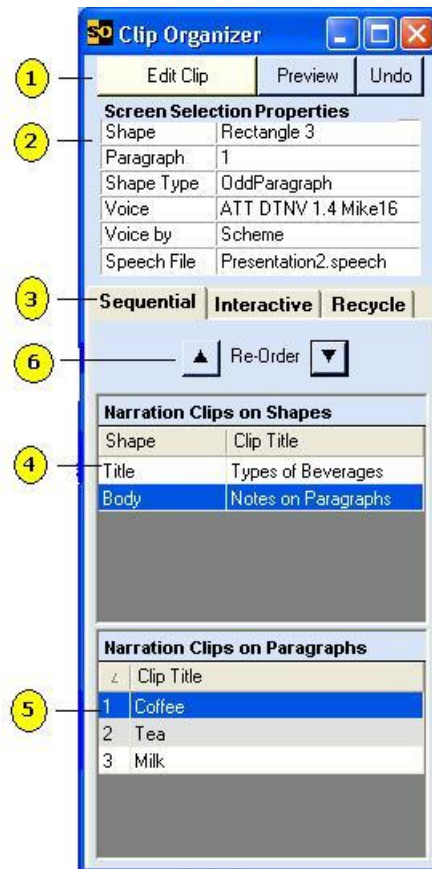
Interactive Clips on Shapes

You can create interactive narration clips that are associated with specific PowerPoint shapes. They play each time you click the mouse on the shape.

Select the shape, invoke Add Narration Clip and click the check box Make Animation Interactive in the Animation tab.

#3 Clip Organizer Dialog - Reordering Clips

The Clip Organizer is the main dialog for viewing, editing and ordering the collection of narration clips on a slide. It is launched from the menu Speech-Over/Organizer or from the Toolbar Clip Organizer button. Its functionality is described in the following sections.

1. Speech-Over Commands

For convenience, the main Speech-Over commands can be executed from the Clip Organizer by these buttons, including: Add/Edit Narration Clip to shape or to slide, Preview slide show, and Undo.

2. Screen Selection Properties

Displays the properties of the currently selected PowerPoint screen object, the properties of the speech voice associated with the selected object and the speech file name.

3. Sequential Tab

This tab contains detailed information about the sequential narration clips defined for the slide and lets you perform editing operations on them. Sequential clips are animated in sequence -- either automatically or by page click as specified in the Add Narration Clip dialog Animation Tab.

4. Narration Clips on Shapes

This grid displays narration clips on shapes and slide. Each row of the display represents a narration clip. The columns identify the clip by shape name and the clip title, as defined in the Add/Edit Narration Clip dialog. Selecting a row selects the associated shape on the PowerPoint screen. Right-click on the row displays a context menu that lets you perform editing operations on the clip.

Note: A text frame like a Placeholder or Autoshape is displayed on the Narration Clips on Shapes display with the title "Notes on Paragraphs" as shown in the second row in the figure above. Selecting that row displays narration clips for the text frame paragraphs on the Narration Clips on Paragraphs display**.**

5. Narration Clips on Paragraphs

Displays narration clips for individual paragraphs in a text frame when the frame is selected in the Narration Clips on Shapes display.

Re-Ordering Narration Clips

By default, narration clips are animated in the slide show in the order they appear on the Narration Clips on Shapes display. To reorder the animation sequence, re-order the rows using the up and down arrow buttons.

Note: You can only reorder clips on shapes or on the slide. Narration clips on paragraphs are always animated in the paragraph order.

Controlling the Clip Narration Order

You can select whether the order of the narration clips (and slide animations) is determined by the Clip Organizer or by the Custom Animation panel. This preference is set on the Speech-Over/Preferences/Animation tab.

The options are:

- Animate shapes in the order they appear on the Organizer panel –

The narration clips will occur in the order that the they appear on the Speech-Over Clip Organizer dialog (described above). This setting is convenient when you add narration to a new presentation or to an existing presentation that has no animations   defined.

Note: With this selection, any change you make on the Custom Animation panel may be overridden by the Organizer.

- Animate shapes in the order they appear on the Custom Animation panel –

The narration clips will occur in the order that the shapes appear on the PowerPoint Custom Animation panel. This setting is convenient when you start with a presentation that is already animated and Speech-Over adds narration media effects to the existing visual animation effects.

Note: With this selection, changes in the shape order on the Organizer have no effect.

#4: Making Voices Realistic

Now that you've installed Speech-Over Professional and created a narration clip successfully, we're going to give you some tips on how to make those voices get your message across in a very realistic way.

Real Voices

First I'd like to mention that the reason that premium voices Rod and Tracy sound so realistic is because they are actually recorded from real people. The recordings are broken up into phonemes - building blocks from which any sentence can be created. The voice products are actually data bases of these phonemes. The speech engine knows how to put them together according to the text you provide.

Even so, the voices still need some guidance in order to say the text in the way you want them to. This mail is devoted to the methods that let you do so.

You can make text-to-speech narration more realistic, understandable and interesting by paying attention to the following areas:

- Spoken style
- Punctuation
- Speech Modulation
- Pronunciation
- Multiple voice combinations
- Background music and effects

Note that not all voices react in the same way to the tips in this section.

Spoken Style

Remember that a speaker uses a different style of language that a writer. Writing spoken text is more like writing a play.

- **Short sentences** -- Use short punchy sentences, phrases, even one-word phrases like "Oh", "And", "Hey", "Look," set off by commas. For example, "And, we also ..."
- **Slang --** Use informal language, slang phrases, perhaps humor in measure.
- **Create a personal bond** -- Compensate for the artificial voices by creating a personal bond with the listener, perhaps by having the voice say something personal about itself or endowing it with a character.

Using Punctuation for Effect

Correctly punctuating the text is a critical part of making the spoken text sound realistic and easier to understand. Here are some tips:

- **Comma** -- The comma is perhaps the most important punctuation mark you can use. It divides sentences into shorter phrases. Use them liberally to get the exactly phrasing you want. Use them even when not grammatically correct if it makes the sentence more clear.
- **Colon** -- The colon introduces an expectant pause. Use it for lead-in phrases. For example, "there are two cases: "
- **Question and Exclamation marks** -- Use these also when appropriate. Most voices recognize them.
- **Hyphen** -- Use the hyphen to control phrasing and accents in successive words or in a single word. Connect successive words with hyphens to cause the voice to phrase them together. Alternatively, separate a single word into syllables with a hyphen to cause the voice to shift the accent to a different syllable. Note: don't confuse the hyphen with the longer em-dash, which is reserved for silent pauses.
- **Period** -- End sentences with a period. The voice uses it to make a proper ending and to introduce a delay before beginning the next sentence.
- **Reorder Sentence** -- Sometimes you will need to reorder or restructure the sentence to get best results.

Speech Modulation

Speech controls let you add SAPI speech modulation tags to make the speech more expressive. The voice settings for speed and volume in the Speech-Over Preferences let you set absolute values for these voice attributes. The speech controls in the Clip Text tab let you change the voice characteristics during the speech relative to their absolute values.

The controls enter symbols or tags into the clip text at the point where the change occurs. These tags can be deleted manually from the text box. The tags are special characters that cannot be entered with the keyboard, only with the buttons provided.

You can enter the following modulation in the Clip Text tab text box:

Delays -- you can introduce delays in the voice by entering symbols in the text. There are three types of delays available:

The recommended rule for setting delay times is comma:em-dash:period:paragraph = 1:2:4:8. These delays are adjustable in the Preferences/Elocution Tab.

To introduce a delay into the text, proceed as follows:

An em dash (--) delay with a default time of 0.5 secs,

A short rhetorical pause denoted by a vertical line (|) for separating a sentence into clauses for better understanding. See Using Rhetorical Pauses in Speech-Over Help for guidelines on how to use rhetorical pauses,

A paragraph delay (paragraph symbol) with a default time of 2 secs. The paragraph symbol will also be entered when you press Enter twice in a row. To remove any delay, just delete its symbol.

Delay between slides. You can create a delay between slides by adding a delay at the end of the text of the last narration clip on a slide. Add two paragraph symbols at the end of the text to create a delay of 4 seconds between slides.

Place the cursor in the location at which you want to introduce a delay. The location must not be inside a word. The delay buttons are activated

Click the delay button you require. The delay text symbol appears at the cursor location,

To add an another delay, click the delay button again. Another symbol appears, indicating that another delay is added to the first.

To remove a delay, just manually delete the text symbol from the text.

Speed -- you can increase and decrease the speed of the voice, in units of two in a scale of -10 : +10. Position the cursor where you want the speech to change and click on the right-pointing triangle to increase the speed and the left-pointing triangle to decrease the speed.

Volume -- you can increase and decrease the volume of the voice. There are two settings: full volume (100%) and half volume (50%) . Position the cursor where you want the speech to change and click on the left bracket for maximum volume and on the right bracket for half volume.

Pitch -- you can increase and decrease the pitch of the voice, in units of two in a scale of -10 : +10. Position the cursor where you want the speech to change and click on the up arrow to raise the pitch and click on the down arrow to lower the pitch.

Emphasis -- you can have the voice emphasize a word or phrase. Position the cursor before the word or phrase to be emphasized and click on the "!!" and then position the cursor after the word or phrase to be emphasized and click on the "!!" again. Alternatively, select the word or phrase to be emphasized and click on "!!". The symbol is inserted before and after the selected section.

Note: Words can also be emphasized with Rhetorical Pauses.

Voice Quality -- If the voice is thin or scratchy you can raise its quality in the General Preferences tab. By default, the voices are Radio quality. Note that the higher the voice quality, the larger the sound file that is produced.

For more details, view

[Adding Speech Tags--Making Voices More Expressive](#)

[Getting Eloquent](#)

Phonetic Editor

TTS voices occasionally fail to read correctly complex words such as legal, chemical, or biological terms. In addition, they will sometimes put the accent on the wrong syllable of a word.

Alterations in spelling (intentional mispelling) can frequently improve correct pronunciation. For example: "jenerate" instead of "generate".

Note: To avoid having the misspellings appear in the subtitles, enter the subtitle text in the Subtitle tab on the Add Narration dialog and uncheck the check box.

Acapela Voice Tools have a pronunciation editor that has a phonetic editor to produce the exact pronunciation of a word. Access the editor in the Add Narration dialogs.

Multiple Voice Combinations

An effective way of keeping the viewer's attention is to use multiple voices, for example, male and female, by using an appropriate voice scheme. Use the voice preferences to select an appropriate voice scheme or create a new one.

Background Music and Effects

You can enhance the narration by adding background music or other effects to a slide.

Background Music and Effects

#5: Handling Sound Files

Now that you've installed Speech-Over and created a narration clip successfully, it's time for some helpful tips about how to handle the sound files that Speech-Over produces.

Linked and Embedded Sound Files

Each time you create a narration clip Speech-Over stores it as a linked sound file in a subfolder called PresentationName_MediaFiles. When you play the presentation in its original location or if you create a Flash file from the presentation, these sound files are recognized and accessed.

You can choose to have the sound (media) files linked to the presentation. This preference is used to avoid embedding the sound files in the presentation so as to keep the presentation file size small. Another advantage of linking the media files is that linked files don't interfere with the background sound files. If you move or copy the presentation, linked sound files must be copied also, with the media directory. This is the default setting.

Alternatively, you can choose to have the sound files embedded in the presentation. This preference is used to package the sound files in the presentation for portability: the sound files automatically go along with the presentation.

Select the preference in General Preferences, At least one of these two preferences must be checked; it is possible to check both of them.

#6 Packaging Your Presentation

PowerPoint Package to CD

Use the PowerPoint File/Package for CD command to put the presentation on a CD. The media files are automatically packaged so they can be heard at the destination.

Alternatively, this method lets you copy the presentation to a designated folder.

The recipient does not need to have PowerPoint installed; the PowerPoint Viewer is included.

Packaging as a PowerPoint pps File

Package the presentation as a pps file using a zip file as follows:

1. In Speech-Over/Preferences/General, make sure the check box: "Use relative path for sound file" is checked. If this preference was not checked when you added the narration clips, perform SpeechOver/Refresh All Slides.
2. When you are done adding the speech, save the ppt as a pps (PowerPoint Show). A pps file will play the full screen show automatically
3. Zip the pps file and the media files folder [PresentationName]_MediaFiles together
4. Send the zip file to the destination
5. The recipient should put the zip file in a directory and extract the contents to the directory preserving the directory structure.
6. The recipient clicks on the pps file to play it. The recipient needs to have PowerPoint installed.

Packaging as an Executable PowerPoint pps File

Once you have the presentation packaged as a zip file, as in the previous section, you can use the WinZip Self Extractor to convert the zip file to an exe file. You set the Extractor to launch the pps file on extraction.

This is the easiest way for the recipient to play your presentation - he only needs to double click on it.

#7: Integrating the Narration with Shape Animations

In this lesson, I'll give you tips on how to integrate the narration you produce with the slide animations.
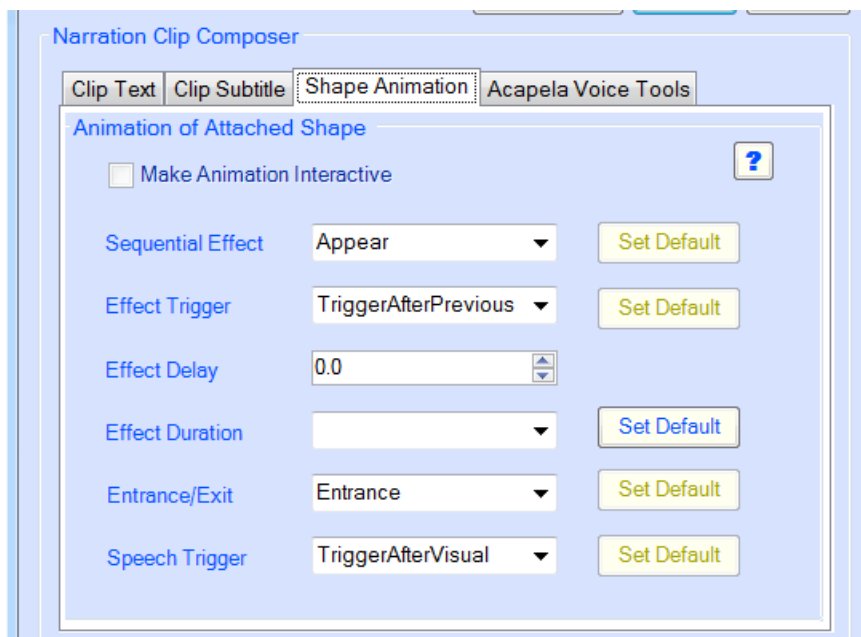
Dynamic Slides

Let's say you have a sequence of text bullets or a complex drawing with many parts and you want the voice to describe each bullet or each part individually. Speech-Over does this by animating the object to draw the viewer's attention as the voice speaks about it. For example, the bullet or drawing part appears or comes in when the voice describes it.

Add narration to a screen object by selecting the object with the cursor before invoking the Add Narration Clip dialog. If a visual animation effect already exists for the object, Speech-Over just adds the narration media effect. Otherwise, Speech-Over adds a visual animation effect as well.

Controlling Timing and Sequencing of Animations

SpeechOver lets you control the timing and sequencing of the visual animation effects as well as the timing of the speech media effects relative to the visual effects in the Shape Animation tab of the Add/Edit Narration Clip dialog.

Sequential Effect -- You can set or change the effect type for the sequential event. A combo box provides a selection of common PowerPoint entrance effect types. If you require an effect that is not in the list, type in its name in the combo box, for example, Stretch, Strips,

Wheel. Alternatively, use Custom Animation to define the visual animation and Speech-Over will recognize it.

Effect Trigger -- You control the animation flow by setting or changing the PowerPoint effect trigger, as follows:

- **Trigger After Page Click** -- This effect is triggered by a mouse click on the screen. Use this trigger for sequential animation which is controlled by the user with mouse clicks
- **Trigger With Previous** -- This effect is triggered together with the previous effect. Use for simultaneous animation of sequential shapes - no user control
- **Trigger After Previous** -- This effect is triggered after the previous effect has completed. Use for continuous sequential animation - no user control.

Effect Delay -- Sets the delay of the animation relative to the previous effect. The default is 0. The delay applies to the start of the visual effect or the speech effect, whichever comes first - according to the setting of the Speech Trigger (see below).

Effect Duration -- Controls the speed of the animation. The default is the duration assigned for this effect by PowerPoint [PowerPoint Default].

Entrance/Exit -- Choose the effect among Entrance, Exit and Entrance-Exit. The default is Entrance.

Speech Trigger -- You can control when the speech effect is played relative to the visual effect. For example, you might want have the voice speak only after the object has finished its animation; or have the voice speak together with the animation for example as the object flies in; or have the voice complete speaking before the object appears on the screen. These three options are chosen as follows:

- **Trigger After Visual** -- The speech effect is played after the visual effect has completed
- **Trigger With Visual** -- The speech effect is started together with the visual effect
- **Trigger Before Visual**-- The speech effect is played and completed before the visual effect begins

Interactive Effect -- You can set or change the effect type for the interactive event. A combo box provides a selection of common PowerPoint emphasis effect types. If you require an effect that is not in the list, type in its name in the combo box, for example, Teeter. This combo box is active when the Make Animation Interactive checkbox is checked.