



think-cell chart case study

Read the whole story

Using think-cell chart, the efficiency in creating and altering charts can be improved by a factor of 3 to 5 compared to the current best practice in top-tier business consulting firms.

The complete, 57 page study is available for free at <http://www.think-cell.com/chartstudy>

Motivation

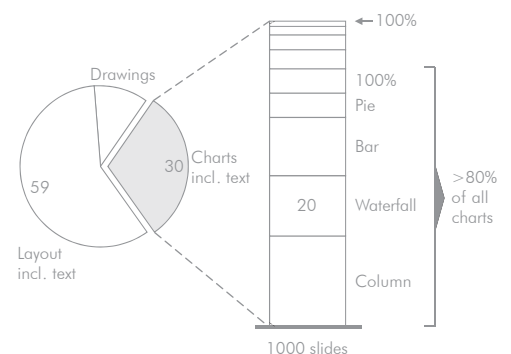
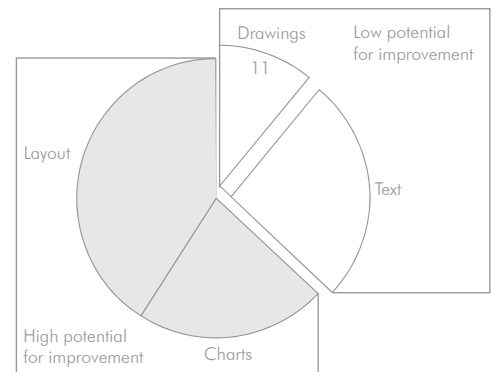
Consulting firms spend a large share of their resources on client communication. Most leading firms employ specialists to translate their consultants' findings into convincing client deliverables. Still, anecdotal evidence from consultants and graphics experts indicated a large potential for improving slide creation efficiency.

Starting from these indications, we spent 6 months conducting interviews and observing work flows to thoroughly understand the problem. We then used test scenarios to quantify our qualitative impression. We strongly focused on software efficiency. We cooperated with one of the top-tier strategy consulting firms and attained their permission to publish this study.

Potential for improvement

The pie chart to the right shows the distribution of a graphics expert's working time at the customer's site. Both slide-specific drawings and typing text offer only limited potential for improvement. 22% (30% including text typing) of the time is spent on the production of business charts and 41% (59% including text typing) is spent on arranging text, drawings and charts to create the final slide layout. Both producing charts and slide layouts have a high potential for improvement, because charts and slide layouts are usually standardized within a consultancy and bound by common design rules.

The breakout chart shows that only a few chart types account for a large fraction of all used charts in the cooperating consultancy. Hence, we focused this case study on the impact of using think-cell chart while creating and altering charts of these types.





Study setup

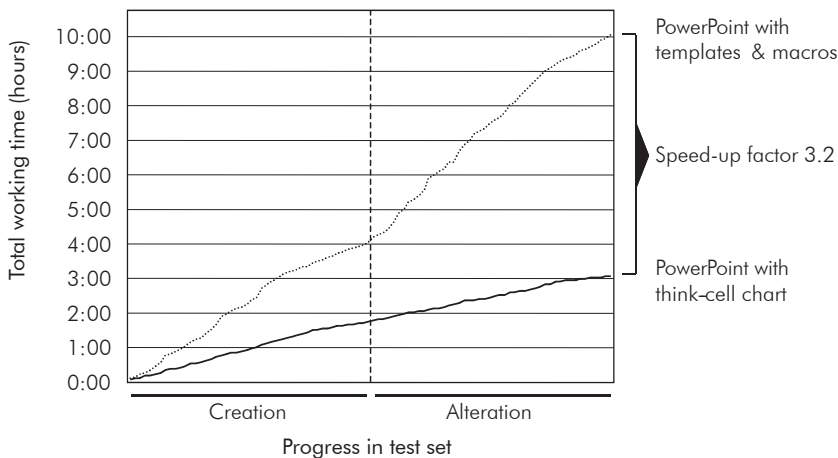
To quantify the impact of think-cell chart, we selected a set of 48 typical charts from a portfolio of archived real slides. We looked at two scenarios.

The first scenario simulated the typical creation process: A highly experienced graphics expert turned 48 sketches into PowerPoint slides. We recorded the time required to create the charts.

For the second scenario we printed the slides created in the first scenario, annotated them with typical changes a consultant would make, and handed them back to the graphics expert. We again recorded the time to incorporate the changes into the slides.

Results

The main finding is illustrated by the line chart below. It shows the accumulated time for creating and changing the charts.

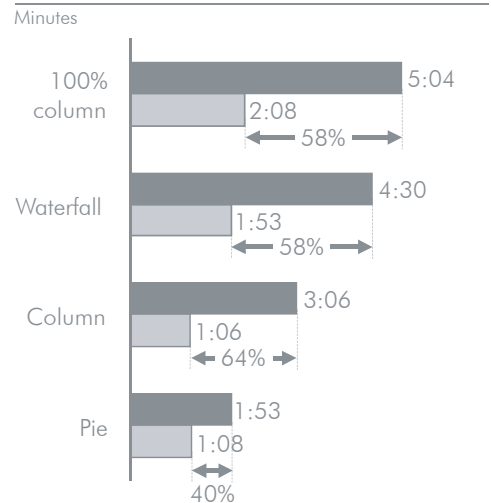


The accumulated time for finishing the test set using PowerPoint together with templates and macros was over 10 hours. The accumulated time for finishing the test set using PowerPoint with think-cell chart was approximately 3 hours. This implies an overall speed-up factor of 3.2.

The bar charts to the right break this result down to the four chart types we included in our test. All chart types benefit quite evenly from using think-cell chart, especially in alteration where a speed-up factor of up to 5 is realistic.

■ PowerPoint with templates & macros
 ■ PowerPoint with think-cell chart

Average creation time



Average alteration time

