

Resources for Presenters — Digital Showcase

The Digital Showcase is a relatively recent addition to the IUT conference, first featured at our Washington, D.C. gathering in 2010. Unlike the more traditional paper sessions, the Digital Showcase offers considerable flexibility in the format of your presentation. You can give a talk, demonstrate software, Skype with your collaborators at home, or show a video that illustrates how your favorite digital technology can be used in today's classroom.

1. Preparation

As with other sessions, the Digital Showcase works best when you narrow your focus and rehearse your presentation ahead of time. Don't try to tell us EVERYTHING about your project; just tell us the MAIN things. And please be respectful of the time limit on individual presentations, as determined by your Moderator. It is only fair to give other presenters equal time.

Successful digital presentations can be exciting. Unfortunately, however, as a Digital Showcase presenter you will be more dependent on technology than other conference participants. Murphy's Law states that whatever can go wrong WILL go wrong, and at the worst possible time. Digital presentations seem all too often to obey Murphy's Law.

Thus it is up to you to take precautions. If you are going to demonstrate academic software on your laptop, make sure you have given it a trial run (perhaps more than once) before the session AND bring hard copy handouts to the Digital Showcase just in case. If you are going to project slides or a video, make sure your computer has an adapter that will fit standard projectors, or better yet, bring a USB flash drive we can plug into ours. The best way to counteract Murphy's Law is to think about what could go wrong and plan your solution ahead of time.

2. Giving Your Presentation

Please remember that not everyone in your audience is a native speaker of English (or Spanish—the other language used for presentations at past IUT conferences). So try to speak slowly and clearly. Nervousness may lead presenters to rush; therefore try to deliver what you have to say at a pace that seems TOO slow to you. That probably means it's just right for everyone else.

In addition to respecting the time limits for presentations (see above), it is equally important for you to leave time for audience questions and comments, especially at the end. IUT conferences are interactive — we believe in active learning, after all! And audience participation is one form of active learning. Since many of those attending your session are themselves experienced teachers, their contributions will enrich your talk. Try to leave **at least five minutes** at the end for questions, and more than that if you can.

3. Concluding the Presentation

Remind your audience of the main point(s) of your part in the Digital Showcase. This will help them remember what you did and said. If you have not asked for questions before, do so now.

If you have handouts and there have been no technical glitches during your talk that require early distribution, distributing the handouts should also wait until the END of your presentation. If you distribute them too early, that will just distract from your talk. (Just as experienced teachers wait until the end of class to hand out corrected exams or papers, you should wait as well.) If you run out of handouts, you can collect the email addresses of those participants who request one and email them a pdf as soon as possible. **Waiting longer than a week to do this is a bad idea.** You may forget to send the promised pdf or, worse, the person who requested the handout may soon have other things on their mind.

NB: If you have any questions regarding the Digital Showcase format, please contact Janina Lenger or James Wilkinson at iutconference@gmail.com.