

The political party that wants to ban PowerPoint

A group of people in Switzerland are trying to outlaw the world's favourite presentation software

Julie Bindel, Sunday 28 August 2011 20.00 BST

[Switzerland](#) could become the first country to outlaw PowerPoint presentations if a new party runs in the October parliamentary elections. Matthias Poehm, founder of the Anti-PowerPoint Party, claims that €350bn could be saved globally each year by ditching the scourge of public speaking. Poehm believes that the [software](#) takes people away from their work and teaches them little. "There is a solution," he says. "A flipchart."

On leaving academia seven years ago I vowed that I would never use PowerPoint again. I still speak at conferences, though, and have been known to rant at organisers when asked in advance for my PPT presentation. I inform them that I will be turning up with a set of index cards on which I have jotted down key points, but will not be boring my audience to tears with fiddly slides consisting of flying text, fussy fonts or photo montages.

Call me old-fashioned, but I believe in having a real discussion about ideas as opposed to force-feeding an increasingly sleepy crowd with numerous graphs and bullet points projected on to the nearest wall. Sometimes I wonder why we even bother showing up to hear a colleague elucidate on their thesis, when we are helpfully posted an advance printout of the presentation. As the speaker is building to a crucial statistic, delegates have long finished and are doing the crossword instead.

If Poehm gains 10,000 signatures his party is free to run candidates in the election. So far fewer than 300 people have put their names to the cause. Unfortunately I don't think a move to Switzerland is on the cards for me.



PowerPoint is ubiquitous, but some people really hate it. Photograph: Alamy