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What is a slide show?

A slide show is a collection of photographs you can display on your computer. Each photograph may be annotated with a caption, a block of descriptive text, and a sound file. While slide shows are normally distributed on a floppy disk, they can also be stored on other removable media or transmitted electronically from one computer to another using a modem and the appropriate communications software.

Depending on the type and size of the images in the slide show you may be able to fit as many as 50 photographs on a standard 3.5" floppy disk. This provides a convenient way to deliver high quality photographic images that can be viewed on any computer running Microsoft Windows 3.1 or later.

To display a slide show, all you need is a copy of the Digital Light & Color Slide Show Viewer which is available at no charge and which you are free to copy and distribute freely.

While slide shows contain black and white images with 256 grays and/or color images with 16.7 million colors, the Slide Show Viewer automatically adjusts the images to display as well as possible on your computer, even if it is not currently configured for 24-bit color.

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Technical Details

The slide show viewer menu

The slide show viewer always displays the menu icon in the upper left corner of the screen. Clicking on this icon pops up the slide show viewer menu. Double clicking on the menu icon exits the slide show viewer.

The menu contains the following commands:

Load Slide Show...

Preferences...

Manual/Auto/Shuffle Play

Help (F1)

About Slide Show Viewer...

Exit (Alt-F4)

The slide show tool bar

When you are displaying an individual slide full-screen, the viewer displays a tool bar next to the menu icon in the upper left corner of the screen:

To activate a tool, simply click on its icon. If you leave the cursor over one of the icons, the slide show viewer will automatically display a short descritpion of the action of the icon. The actions associated with the different tool bar icons are described in detail below:

Menu

Clicking the menu button displays the <u>slide show viewer menu</u>. Double-clicking this button exits from the slide show viewer back to Windows.

Previous Slide/ Next Slide

Clicking the previous slide button goes back to the preceding slide in the slide show. If you are viewing the first slide, then it goes to the last slide. Clicking the next slide button advances to the next slide in the slide show. If you are viewing the last slide, then it goes to the first slide.

You can also use the keyboard to advance to the next slide or to go back to the last one:

To advance to the next slide, press **Space**, **Enter**, or the **Right Arrow** key
To go back to the previous slide, press the **Left Arrow** key

Zoom In/Zoom Out

Clicking the zoom in button magnifies the current slide, making its image larger. The maximum zoom magnification is 2X. If a slide is displayed larger than the available screen space, you can click and drag the image in the direction you want it to move to scroll it.

Clicking the zoom out button shrinks the current slide.

Display Slide Show Overview

Clicking this button returns to overview mode, displaying thumbnails of all the images in the slide show.

Loading a slide show

You can either view a slide show directly from a floppy disk or, for faster performance, you can copy the contents of the diskette to a directory on your hard disk.

To load a slide show, select the **Load Slide Show...** command from the menu and select the name of the overview file for the slide show you wish to view from the floppy disk drive or directory containing the slide show. Overview files always have the extension **.ss**. This reads in the overview file which contains information about the slide show and then automatically displays miniatures of all the images in the slide show.

Viewing a slide

Viewing a slide

If you are in overview mode, just click on the image you want to view and it will be displayed using the full screen. You can enter overview mode at any time by clicking the Overview button on the tool bar.

To advance forwards or backwards through the slide show, simply click on one of the arrow buttons on the tool bar.

If the current slide has an associated description and the Show Descriptions preference setting is turned on, the description will automatically be displayed in a resizable window. You can minimize the description window if you wish to get it out of the way.

To play a slide show and automatically cycle through the slides, you can select **Auto Play** or **Shuffle Play** from the menu. This causes the slides to be displayed continuously either in sequence or in random order. To return to overview mode, press any key or click the left mouse button.

You can zoom in on a slide to see more detail by clicking the Zoom In button on the tool bar. To shrink a slide back down, click the Zoom Out button. If a slide is larger than the available screen space, you can click and drag the image to scroll it.

Viewing Options

Manual/Auto/Shuffle Play

You select the play mode by choosing the appropriate item from the menu.

Manual Play
In manual play mode, you decide when to advance to the next slide by clicking the previous or next slide icons on the tool bar

Auto Play
In auto play mode, the viewer automatically cycles through all the slides in the slide show in sequence. You can adjust the time delay between slides from the Preferences... command. To return to manual play mode, press any key or click the left mouse button.

Shuffle Play
In shuffle play mode, the viewer automatically cycles through all the slides in the slide show in random order. You can adjust the time delay between slides from the Preferences... command. To return to manual play mode, press any key or click the left mouse button.

Viewing options

To alter the way slides are displayed, select **Preferences...** from the menu. These settings are automatically saved when you exit the Slide Show Viewer and restored when you begin your next session.

Background Color
You can set the background to black, gray, or white according to your preference.

Show Captions
You can toggle the one-line caption display on and off.

Show Outline
You can toggle the outline displayed around each slide on and off.

Show Descriptions
You can toggle the display of slide descriptions on and off. If descriptions are turned on, then, a description window is automatically displayed over each image that has descriptive text associated with it.

Sound
You can toggle sound on and off. This lets you play a slide show silently if you wish.

Loop
Normally, in auto play or shuffle play mode, a slide show automatically repeats until you stop it. If you disable looping, the slide show will automatically revent to manual play mode when it reaches the end.

Auto Play Time Delay
You can enter the number of seconds to pause between slides when you are running in Auto Play or Shuffle Play mode. For no delay, enter zero.

Since the slide show viewer must read each slide, decompress it, and possibly dither it to match your display characteristics, the actual time delay between slides may be longer than the one you select -- what you are actually specifying is the minimum time delay between slides.

Exiting the slide show viewer

To exit the slide show viewer program, select **Exit** from the menu or type Alt-F4. You can also exit the viewer by double clicking the menu icon in the upper left corner of the screen.

How your computer displays images

Two parts of your computer cooperate to display information; your display adapter and your monitor. The display adapter is usually a card inserted into your computer which creates a video signal which is sent to your monitor by a cable. The speed, number of displayable colors, and resolution of your display are determined by your display adapter. Your monitor accepts the video signal generated by your display adapter and creates a visible image on its screen. The size and clarity of the image are mostly determined by your monitor.

You can display a slide show on a computer running Microsoft Windows using almost any display adapter. Different display adapters have different color capabilities and most can be configured in a variety of ways. Unfortunately, there is no standard method for changing the resolution and number of colors; refer to the documentation that came with your system for more information on reconfiguring your display hardware.

To determine how your display adapter is currently configured, select About Slide Show Viewer from the menu. The current display mode is displayed in the dialog box.

Resolution

The display on your monitor is made up of an array of tiny dots called pixels. A pixel is a little like grain in a photograph; the more pixels your have the finer the detail you can resolve. Standard display resolutions are 640x480, 800x600, 1024x768, and so on. The apparent clarity of the display is also influenced by the number of colors (see below).

Number of colors

For the most photorealistic display, full 24-bit color is the best choice. A 24-bit color display adapter can display up to 16.7 million different colors. The next best setting is 15- or 16-bit color (32,768 or 65,536 colors); for most uses this is fine, although you may notice some slight "banding" in areas of your images that have very smooth color variations (such as clear blue skies).

There is a slight reduction in image quality when you go to an 8-bit (256 color) display mode, and another, much larger reduction when you go to 4-bit (16 color or VGA mode). Finally, a 1-bit display (black and white only) gives the lowest image quality.

Launching the slide show viewer

When you create a Program Manager icon for the slide show player, you can add the name of a slide show to the end of the command line to automatically open that slide show when you launch the viewer. The viewer recognizes the following command line:

VIEWER.EXE <slide_show_name.ss> <**auto**|**shuffle**>

You can add the optional keyword **auto** or **shuffle** at the end of the command line to start up in auto play or shuffle play mode. If you omit the keyword, the viewer will start up in overview mode.

Whenever you run the slide show viewer with no command line, it first looks to see if a slide show called AUTOPLAY.SS is present on the floppy disk in drive A (if any). If there is one, the viewer automatically runs the slide show in auto mode. Further, if a file called VIEWER.SES is present on the same floppy disk, it is used to override the default VIEWER.SES file located in the Windows directory. This file contains all the preferences settings for the slide show viewer, such as the time delay between slides, background color, etc.

Technical Details

A slide show consists of an overview file which has the extension **.ss** and a collection of compressed thumbnail and slide image files. A thumbnail is simply the small version of the image the viewer displays in overview mode. All the thumbnail and slide files from the same slide show have the same base filename as the overview file. Thumbnail files have an extension made up of a T followed by a 2-character image identifier. Slide files have an extension made up of an S followed by a 2-character image identifier. If there is a sound associated with a particular slide, there will be a WAV file present with an extension made up of a W followed by a 2-character image identifier. Image identifiers start with the digits 0..9 and continue through the alphabet A..Z. All thumbnail and image files are in standard JPEG format. The overview file contains image captions and descriptions and optimized 236-color palettes for each slide.

How to make your own slide shows

Digital Light & Color offers a complete line of software for doing photography on your personal computer. With this software you can:

* Convert you photographs into a form your computer can read

* View and enhance your photographs right on your computer screen

* Create electronic slide shows

* Print your photographs using your own printer

* Order permanent, photographic-quality color prints of your images from our print service

For more information, contact Digital Light & Color at:

Digital Light & Color
P.O. Box 382908
Cambridge MA 02238

(617) 489-8858   Voice
(617) 576-1062   FAX

World Wide Web: http://www.dl-c.com
EMAIL (sales information and customer service): info@dl-c.com
EMAIL (technical support): support@dl-c.com

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