



Swiss political party tries to ban PowerPoint

A political party in Switzerland believes that PowerPoint and other presentation software costs the nation more than \$2 billion in lost productivity.

by Chris Matyszczyk @ChrisMatyszczyk July 5, 2011 9:27 AM PDT



The Swiss might have been slightly late in giving women the vote (1971 was the year), but they still believe in certain progressive forms of democracy.

One of these seems to be helping a fascinating political party in its quest to have PowerPoint banned from the country. The party is called the APPP. Yes, [the Anti-PowerPoint Party](#).

It's an organization that has, at its core, the firm belief that the Microsoft presentation software is a waste of fine Swiss resources. Indeed, it believes that PowerPoint costs Switzerland 2.1 billion Swiss Francs (about \$2.5 billion) every year. You will, no doubt, be desperate to learn of its mathematical model. Well, it says 11 percent of Swiss people have to attend PowerPoint presentations on average twice a week. At each of these presentations is a minimum of 10 people.

It then makes an estimation that some might find conservative, some not. It says 85 percent of people are demotivated by these presentations, from which number it leaps to the billions of francs in lost productivity.

You will be stunned into singing Depeche Mode's "Everything Counts in Large Amounts" when I tell you the party only needs to get 100,000 signatures in order to hold a national referendum on banning PowerPoint and other similar software.

In a statement, the APPP's founder, Matthias Poehm, says solemnly: "I have an operating principle that always helps me: I don't want to be right, I only want the best result. [In] over 14 years of public-speaking training, I have noticed that the use of [a] flip chart beats PowerPoint in 95 [out] of 100 cases. This is not wishful thinking on my part but proven experience."

Let's hear it for the **flip chart**. And while we're hearing it, we might smile at **the knowledge imparted by PCWorld** that Poehm is trying to sell a book called "The PowerPoint Fallacy." (If you join the party, you get a 10 euro discount off the book.)

Poehm explained to PCWorld that this really is an important issue: "This issue will be raised in the awareness of the all people who still don't know that there is an alternative to PowerPoint, and with this alternative, you, probably, achieve three to five times more effect and excitement with the audience than with the PowerPoint."

Microsoft, PowerPoint's maker, has reportedly refused to comment so far (I have contacted the company too) on this political threat to its fine software.

Perhaps 11 percent of you will be sitting in a PowerPoint presentation this week. Please examine carefully whether it motivates you or does the reverse. Then consider whether your life will be improved by turning the APPP's manifesto into a global movement. ■
