PRESENTING
TO WIN

*The Art of Telling Your Story
and Designing Your Slides*

JERRY WEISSMAN
Author of *In the Line of Fire*

Praise for the Third Edition of *Presenting to Win*

"Read this book and get a Masters Degree in effective communications in one afternoon. The executive teams that we have invested with have used Weissman's communication techniques to dramatically improve team productivity and shareholder value."

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"*Presenting to Win* is the shortest path to applause for any presenter. It will be your bible for the PowerPoint Age. It's loaded with easy actions and real examples that really work. I've used them. I know."

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"*Presenting to Win* is an essential read for any CEO who intends to raise capital, wishes to elevate the visibility of his/her company in the financial community, or aspires to more credible communication with the company's employees."

—Irwin Federman

General Partner, U.S. Venture Partners

He hath brought many captives home to Rome

Whose ransoms did the general coffers fill:

Did this in Caesar seem ambitious?

When that the poor have cried, Caesar hath wept:

Ambition should be made of sterner stuff:

Yet Brutus says he was ambitious;

And Brutus is an honourable man.

You all did see that on the Lupercal

I thrice presented him a kingly crown,

Which he did thrice refuse: was this ambition?

Yet Brutus says he was ambitious;

And, sure, he is an honourable man.[18]

By the end of his speech—one of the most famous of all of Shakespeare's soliloquies—Marc Antony, with a sharp twist of irony, has proved Brutus' rationale false, and the citizens in the crowd shout out in agreement.

But Argument/Fallacy is a risky option for business presentations for these important reasons:

- Begins negatively
- Sounds defensive
- Raises issues the audience might not have considered

However, just as it did for Marc Antony, the technique can serve to turn the tables.

Turning from the Bard back to business:

Shortly after my work with the Cisco IPO roadshow team, the company asked me to coach other executives. One of them was Philippe Brawerman,

then president of Cisco EMEA (Europe, Middle East, Africa), who had a most urgent mission. He had just learned that Cisco lost out to Wellfleet, one of their main competitors, on a very large bid to provide products and services to Opel, a subsidiary of GM.

Undaunted, Philippe asked the CEO of Opel for one more meeting. In his presentation, he began by complimenting Opel for having chosen Wellfleet, listing the value of the features of his competitor's product offering. But then Philippe went on to show how Cisco's offering not only matched those features, point for point, but, in many ways, exceeded them.

Later Philippe added, "What turned the deal was to be able to explain to the CEO that Wellfleet features were technical. Cisco had a business vision to accompany our customers."[19] Audience Advocacy.

The Opel executives changed their mind and gave the contract to Cisco.

Today, Wellfleet, having been through a merger and an acquisition, is a part of Nortel Networks, the telecommunications conglomerate, while Cisco is a public company with a market capitalization north of $200 billion.

Philippe's presentation was actually a composite of Argument/Fallacy and the next two options, Features/Benefits and Compare/Contrast. The point being, you can combine Flow Structures, but limit them to two or three—and *not* all 12.

An example of pure Argument/Fallacy comes from my Stanford friend, Ben Rosen. When he was the chair of the board of Compaq during its public company days, Ben often spoke at investment conferences. At one such conference, he titled his presentation "Seven Reasons Why NOT to Invest in Compaq." Listing the seven reasons from negative analysts' reports, Ben rebutted them one by one. When he was finished, the inescapable conclusion was that Compaq stock was indeed a good buy.

Ultimately, HP came to the same conclusion and acquired Compaq for $25 billion.[20]

9. Features/Benefits

This is the most conventional choice for organizing product launches. The presentation proceeds through a series of Features of a product or service, and each one is accompanied by the Benefits to the customer or client.

Features/Benefits in Action

Cisco's Philippe Brawerman added a twist to this popular format by demonstrating how the features of Cisco's products were better than Wellfleet's.

💻 *(Video 7) Zoomtopia 2020: Opening Keynote*
https://youtu.be/2IM9C2kF4ao?t=3166

Ray Dalio, the billionaire hedge fund manager of Bridgewater Associates and a prolific author, brought his structural skills to a launch pitch for Dot Collector, a new software product he developed for Zoom. At Zoomtopia, the annual Virtual Zoom User Conference, Dalio used the Features/Benefits structure, starting with a Feature:

> *Here's how it works. If you want to give someone feedback or tell them what you think, simply select the attribute, rate it, and write them a note. They will do the same with you. It's like giving 360-degree feedback in real time. All of the dots are automatically saved and summarized in a grid…*

Benefits:

> *…so it's easy to see the highlights or drill down into whatever anyone is thinking.*

Feature:

> *[Dot Collector] even produces automatic summaries of the meeting for those who want to see it later.*

Benefits:

> *Over time this data paints rich pictures of people and their performance, which is invaluable for helping people in their teams improve. It's great for reviews, too.*[21]

Features/Benefits is the structure of choice for sales pitches because it puts the customer front and center. Audience Advocacy.

10. Compare/Contrast

By listing a series of key factors of a product or service that you and your competitor(s) share and then comparing the performance differentials of those factors, you can demonstrate your superiority.

As with Argument/Fallacy, this option has several risks. By bringing up another company, you may sound defensive. If you criticize them, you may sound contentious. Finally, you may create a conflict with someone in the audience who may have a direct connection with the other company. This is particularly relevant in finance, where some investors, to spread their risk, own shares in multiple companies in a given sector.

Most presenters, however, sail full speed ahead to differentiate their businesses.

Compare/Contrast in Action

(Video 8) Oracle's Infrastructure Strategy for the Cloud and On Premise: Oracle OpenWorld 2019
https://youtu.be/5A-_iJTL0ec?t=58

At the Oracle OpenWorld conference, Wim Coekaerts, Oracle's senior vice president, Operating Systems and Virtualization Engineering, compared and contrasted his company's technology with that of Microsoft and Amazon:

> *[W]e're a little bit unique in terms of being a cloud vendor. That is, the hardware we use, the software we use as an operating system, and the infrastructure piece, the virtualization layer—all that stuff is exactly the same as what we provide to our customers on-premises. And that sets us apart from other companies like Amazon with AWS, Microsoft with Azure, because you don't know what they run.*[22]

Compare/Contrast is the option of choice for startup companies seeking to raise capital because their potential investors could very well be considering other players in the same market.

When Tomer Tagrin, the CEO of Yotpo, an e-commerce marketing platform, set out to raise a $230 million round of financing for his company, he knew that he had to differentiate Yotpo from many others in the crowded space.[23] To indicate how many different services and applications exist to market to consumers,

Tomer designed a slide called "The Tech Stack," which showed how customer data is siloed (see Figure 5.7).
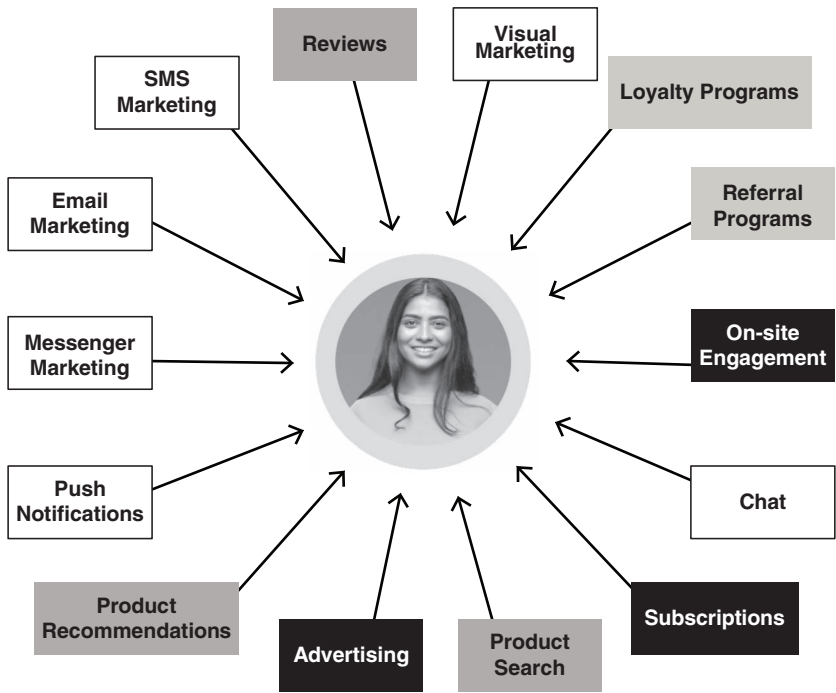
The Tech Stack

Figure 5.7   *The Tech Stack*

Then, to demonstrate the Yotpo strategy of unifying the siloes, he showed another slide that showed how Yotpo integrated those applications into one application layer (see Figure 5.8).
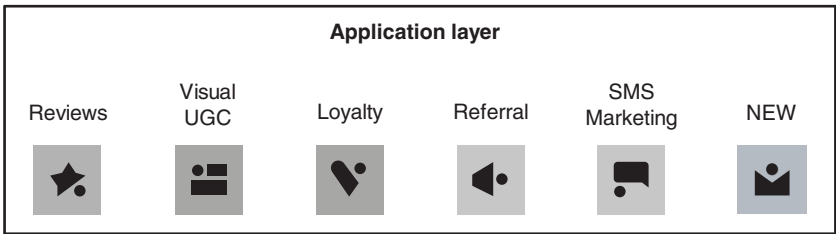

Figure 5.8   *The Yotpo Application Layer*

In the next slide in the sequence, Tomer went on to show that the application layer is just one part of "The Yotpo Multi-Product Platform" (see Figure 5.9).
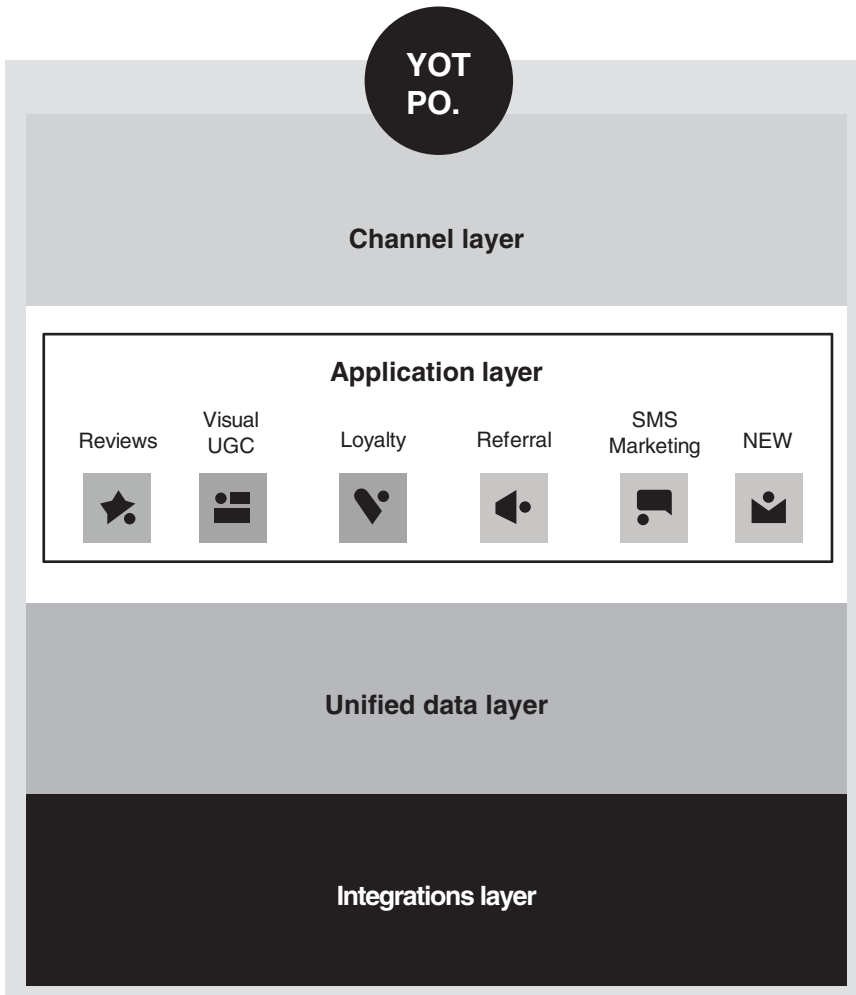

Figure 5.9   *The Yotpo Multi-Product Platform*

Tomer's presentation is an example of the well-known successful business strategy of providing a "one-stop shop."[24]

When Philippe Brawerman compared and contrasted Cisco with Wellfleet, he demonstrated Cisco's superiority and won the business.