Using PowerPoint for Digital Signage
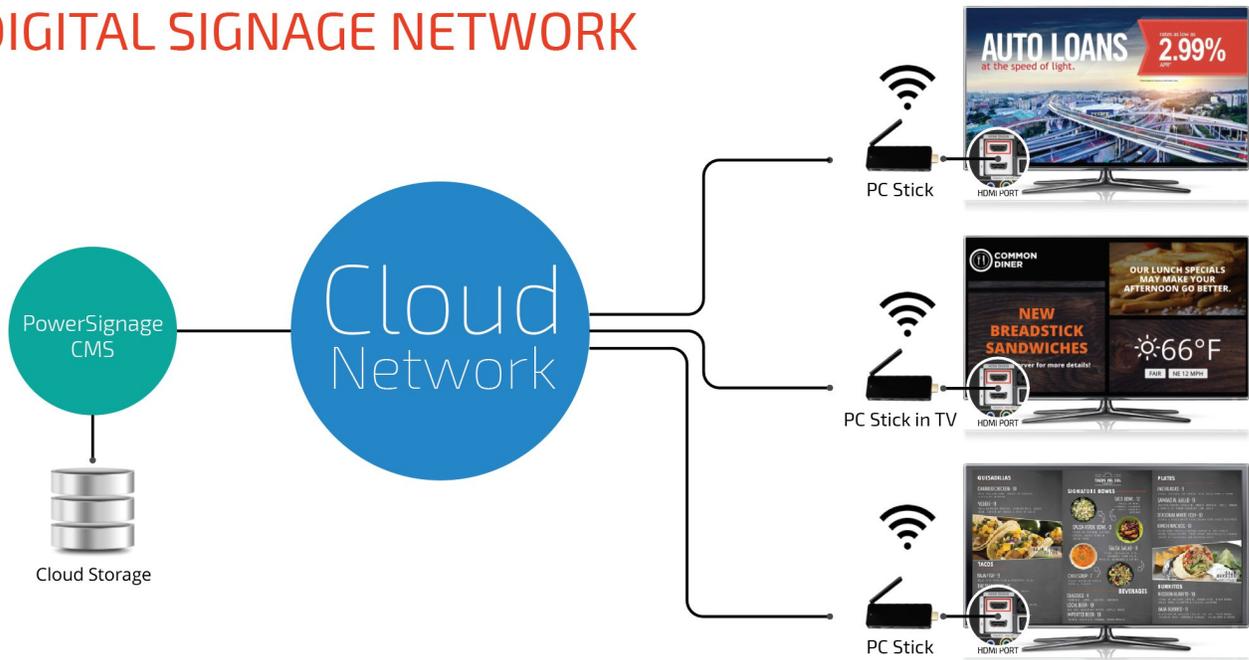
PowerSignage – PowerPoint to Digital Signage

PowerSignage[tm] is a low-cost, cloud-based digital signage service. It includes a hosted content management service (CMS) which is used to upload, store and manage PowerPoint signage presentations. PowerSignage uses low-cost PC sticks running our PowerPlayer[tm] client software to download and display PowerPoint signage presentations on your TV points.

DIGITAL SIGNAGE NETWORK

With PowerSignage you create digital signage using _only_ PowerPoint. There is no proprietary authoring software to learn. PowerSignage supports _native_ PowerPoint files—there is no need to convert your presentation into video or export the slides as image files. Simply use your web browser to upload PowerPoint presentation files to our CMS and assign them to TV points for automatic display.

For more detailed information please download our _PowerSignage CMS User Guide_ from our website:

> http://www.powerdigitalsignage.com/resources

The remainder of this document will provide you with the necessary steps for using PowerPoint to create digital signage.

1.0 Using Microsoft PowerPoint for Digital Signage

Microsoft® PowerPoint® is an ideal tool for creating digital signage content because of its ease of use, wide range of supported multi-media formats, animation features and the wealth of free and low-cost design templates. To use PowerPoint for digital signage there are two things you must do: make your presentation self-running—ensuring each page is displayed for a specified time—and to configure it to run in a continuous loop. Normally a PowerPoint presentation *only* advances, slide-to-slide, with a *presenter* clicking their keyboard or mouse. And, by default, when the presentation reaches the last page it will simply end—the presentation will not automatically loop back to the beginning and continue running.

1.1 - Make Your Presentation Self-running

Open your presentation in PowerPoint. To make the presentation self-running click the *TRANSITIONS* tab on the main menu. On the far right of the *TRANSITIONS* sub-menu there is the *Advance Slide* section. For each page in your presentation uncheck *On Mouse Click* and check *After* checkboxes in this section. Enter the number of seconds (or minutes) you want the particular slide to be displayed. If you want the same display time for all your slides click the *Apply To All* icon. In the example below (see Figure 1) the first page will be displayed for 15 seconds before moving to the next page in the presentation.

Figure 1- Self-running PowerPoint Presentation
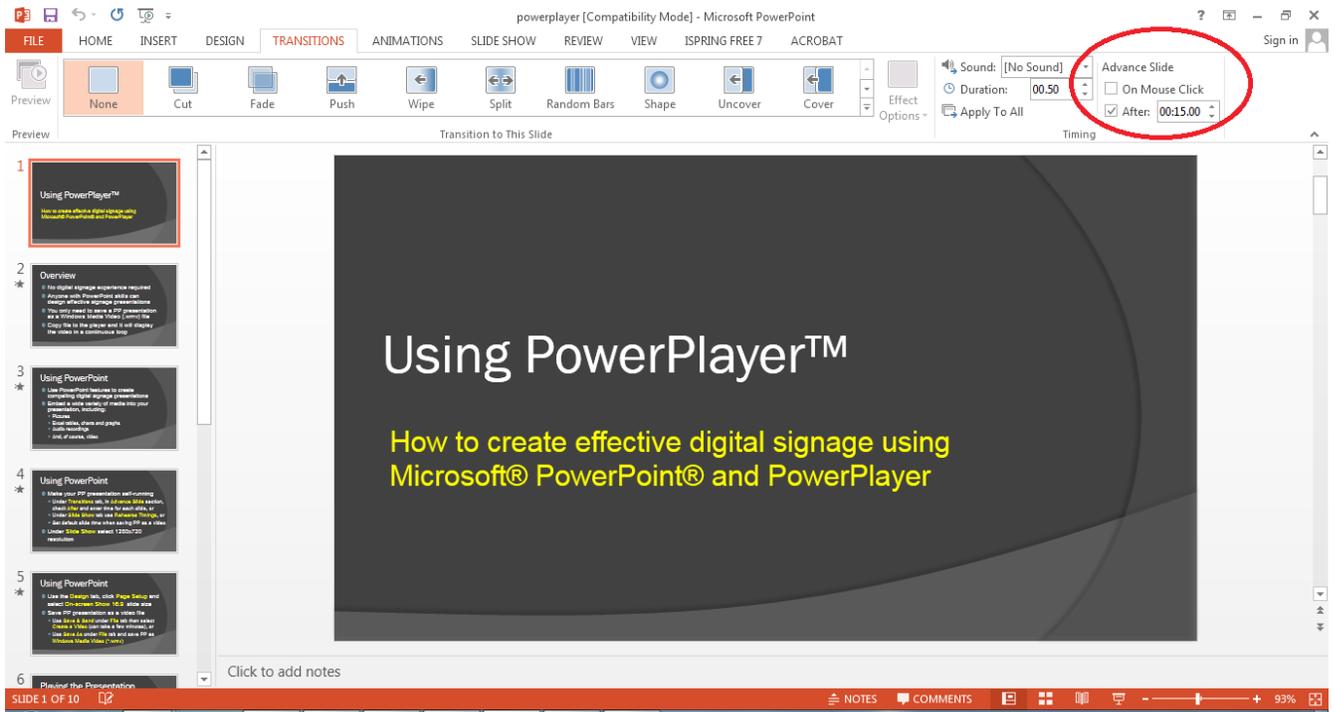
1.2 - Setup Kiosk Mode – Loop Presentation

By default, when a presentation reaches its last page PowerPoint will not automatically advance (loop back) to the starting page. PowerPoint will quit the presentation after displaying the last page the specified time.
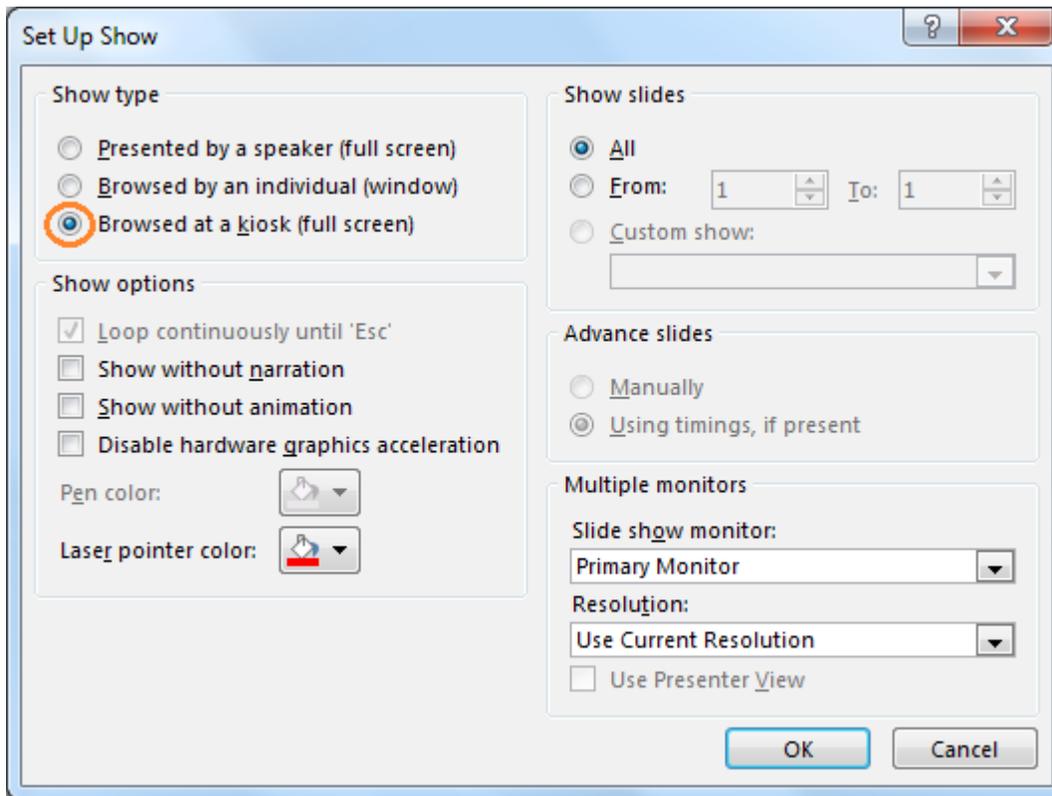
To continuously loop the presentation select kiosk mode. To setup kiosk mode select *SLIDE SHOW* tab from the PowerPoint main menu. From this sub-menu click the *Set Up Slide Show* icon.

Figure 2 – Kiosk Mode (Continuous Looping)
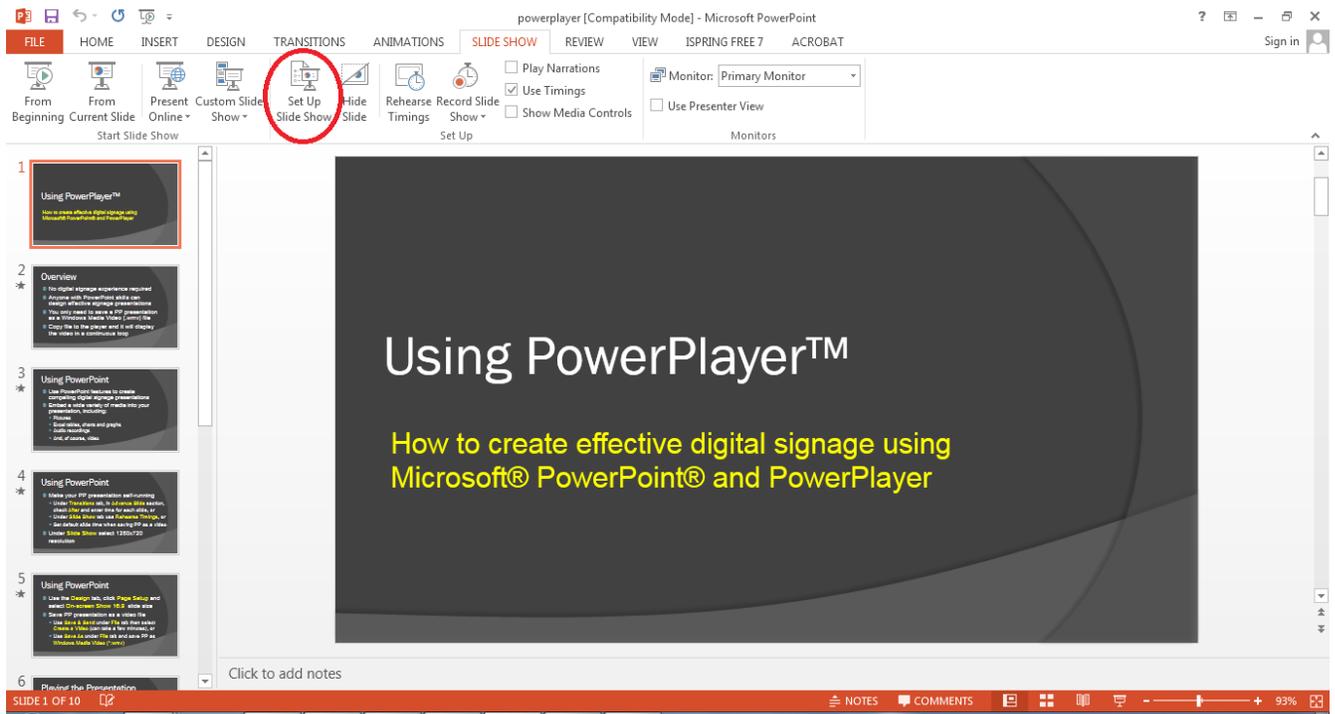
After clicking the Set Up Show icon the *Set Up Show* dialog box is displayed which is used to configure how your PowerPoint presentation will be displayed (see Figure 3 below).

Figure 3 – Setup Kiosk Mode for Presentation

Select *Browsed at a kiosk (full screen)* option and click *OK*. After this is done your PowerPoint presentation will automatically run at full screen and loop the presentation continuously.

1.3 - Widescreen Signage Display

Starting from PowerPoint 2013, by default, when a presentation is created it is setup for widescreen—*landscape*—with a 16:9 aspect ratio. For digital signage this is what you normally want as this is the physical aspect ratio for standard TVs. With earlier PowerPoint versions the default is set for a 4:3 aspect ratio.

To confirm (or manually configure) widescreen orientation for your signage presentation select the PowerPoint *DESIGN* tab and click *Slide Size* icon at the far right side. After clicking *Slide Size* make sure *Widescreen (16:9)* is selected in the *Slide Size* drop-down list.

Figure 4 – Slide Size Drop-down
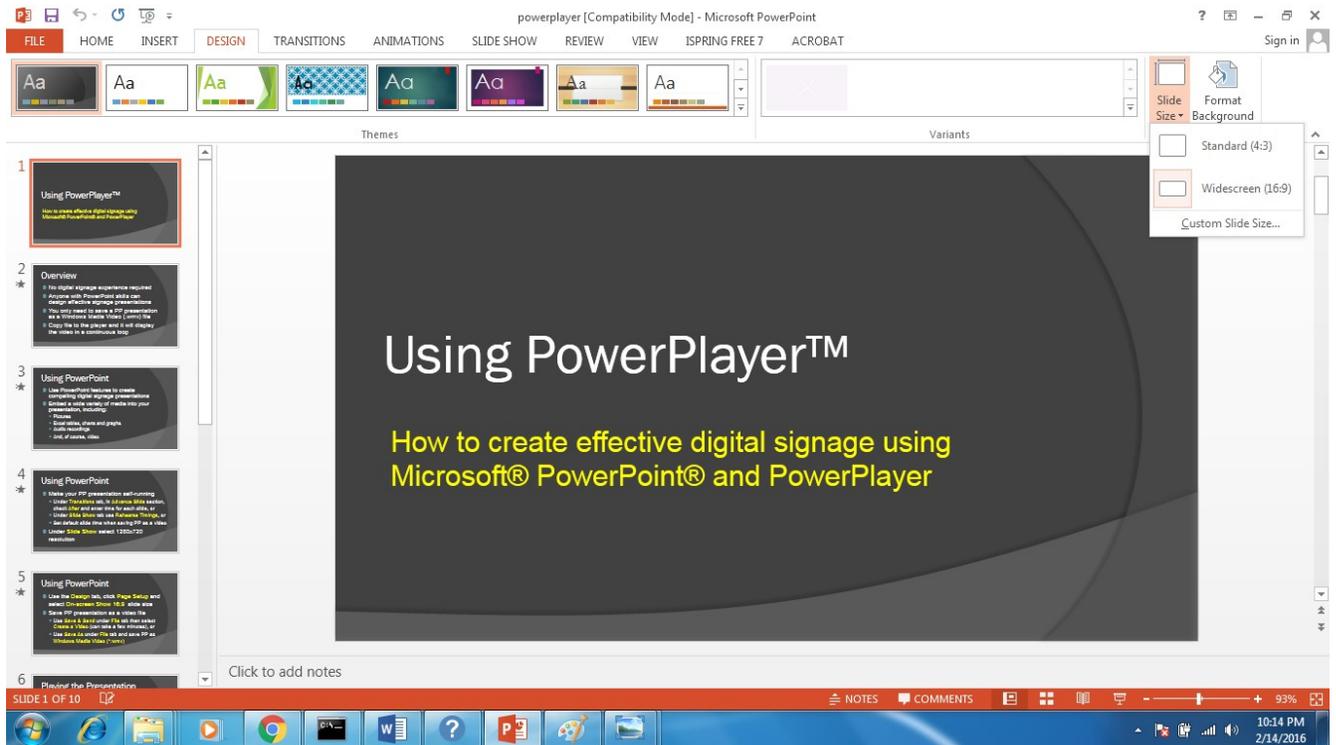
1.4 – Portrait Display Orientation

To specify portrait (vertical) orientation for your PowerPoint presentation select the *DESIGN* tab and click *Slide Size*. Select *Custom Slide Size* from the drop-down list (see Figure 4). The *Slide Size* dialog box will be displayed. Select the *Portrait* option in the Orientation/Slides section in the dialog box and press OK.

Figure 5 – Slide Size Dialog Box for Portrait Orientation
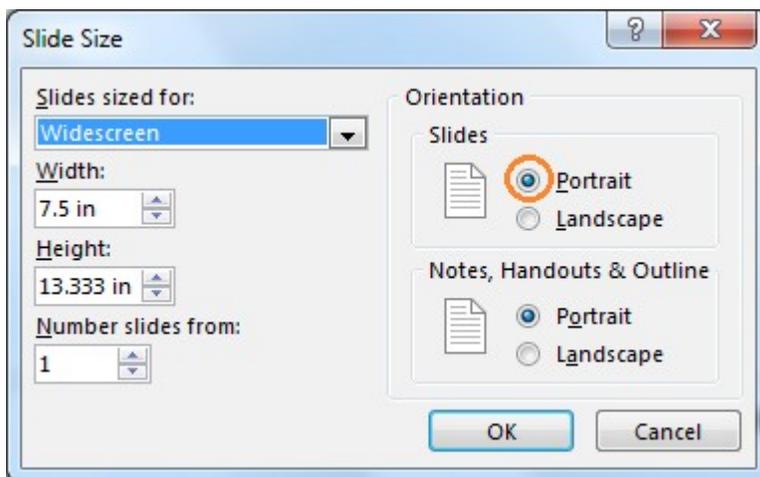
Important note: If you plan to display digital signage in a portrait orientation you should make sure that your PC stick/signage media player is also configured to display a portrait orientation on your TV screen. All Windows based PC sticks/signage media players have a graphics controller that supports both landscape and portrait TV display orientation. Normally, you simply right-click any free space on the desktop and select *Graphics options* from the displayed context menu. From there select the option for portrait orientation.

1.5 – PowerPoint Font Issues

It is possible that fonts used by your presentation will not be available on your PC stick/signage media player. In this case PowerPoint running on the PC Stick/signage media player will use the "*best available font*". To work around any font problems embed your fonts into the presentation file. When the digital signage presentation is shown the correct fonts will be displayed.
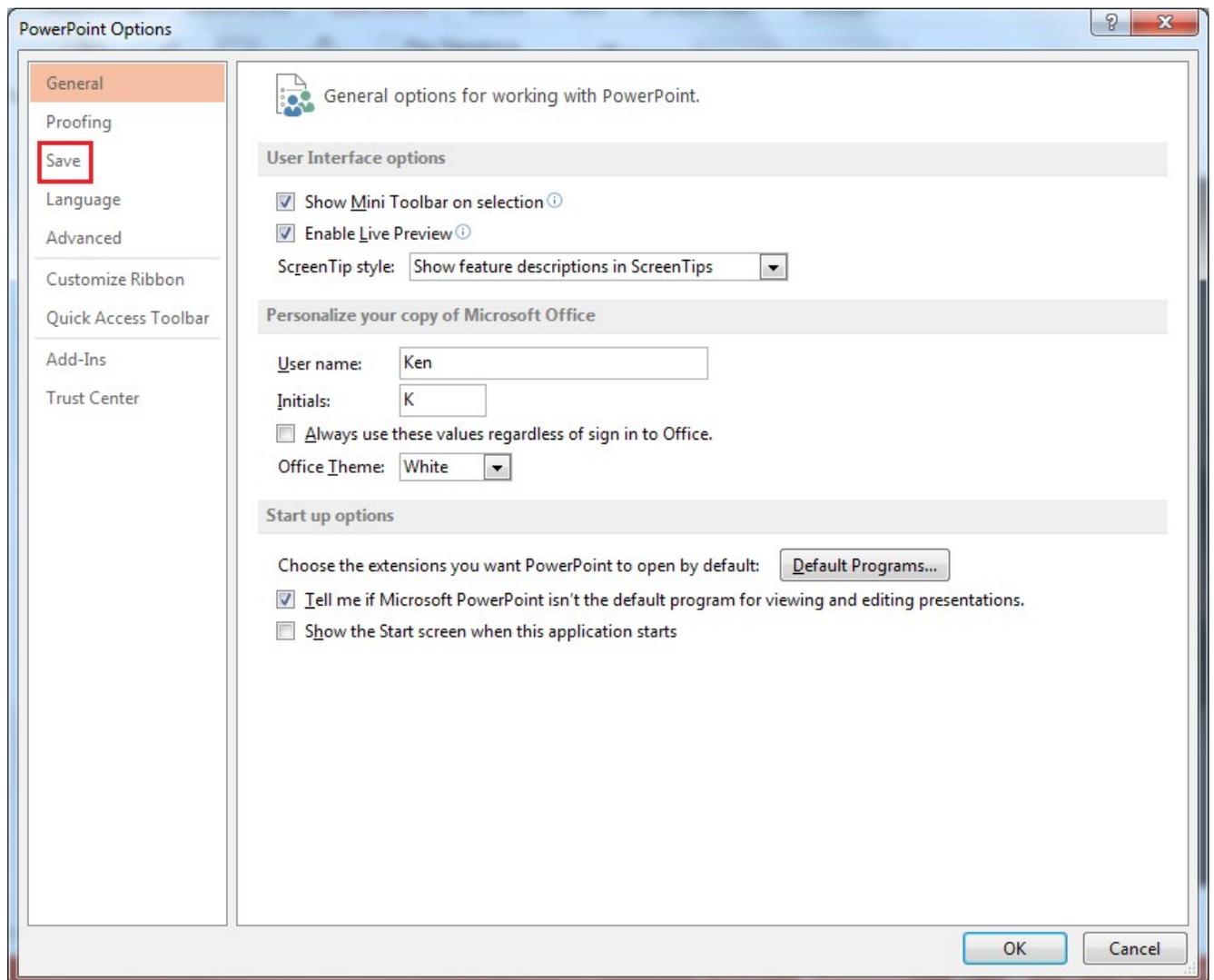
To embed fonts into your presentation file select the *FILE* tab which will display the File menu.

Figure 6 – File Menu
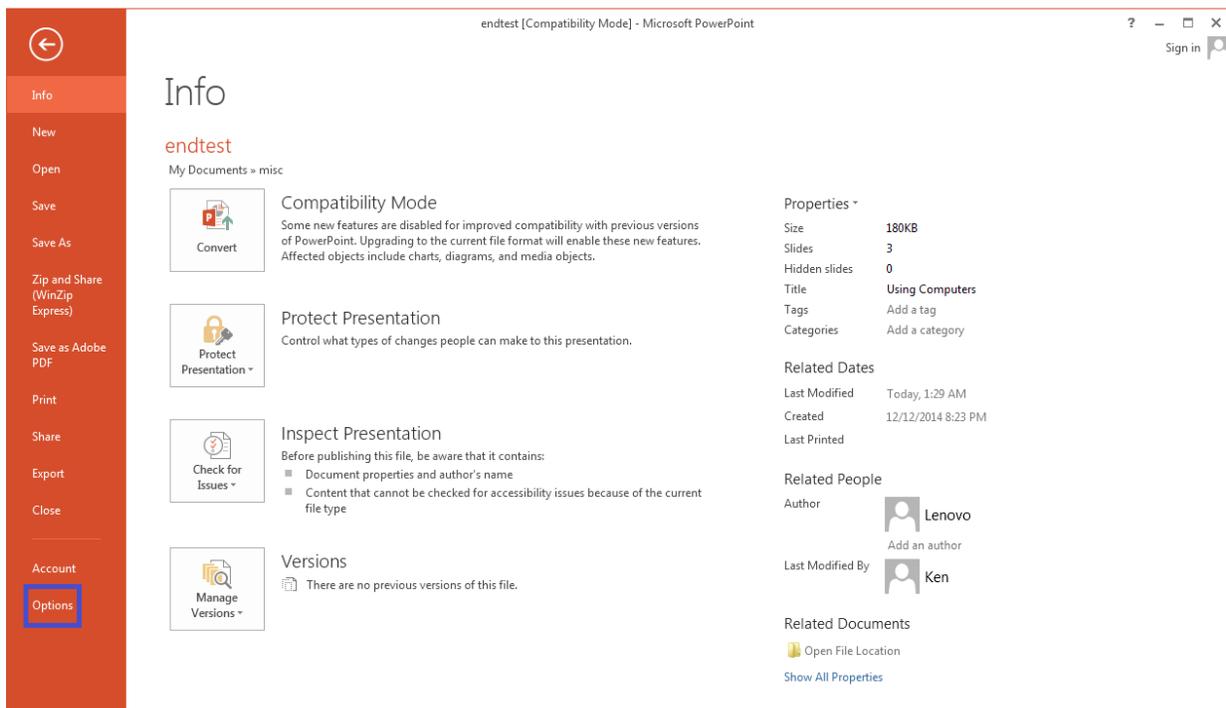
Click *Options* from the File menu command list. This will display the PowerPoint Options dialog box.

Figure 7 – PowerPoint Options Dialog Box

From the *Options* dialog box click the *Save* option. The right side panel will then display all of the PowerPoint save options. Check the *Embed fonts in the file* checkbox and click *OK*. After this point, anytime you save this presentation, PowerPoint will automatically store any required fonts into the presentation file. When PowerPlayer displays the presentation the correct fonts will be shown.

Figure 8 – PowerPoint Save Options – To Embed Fonts
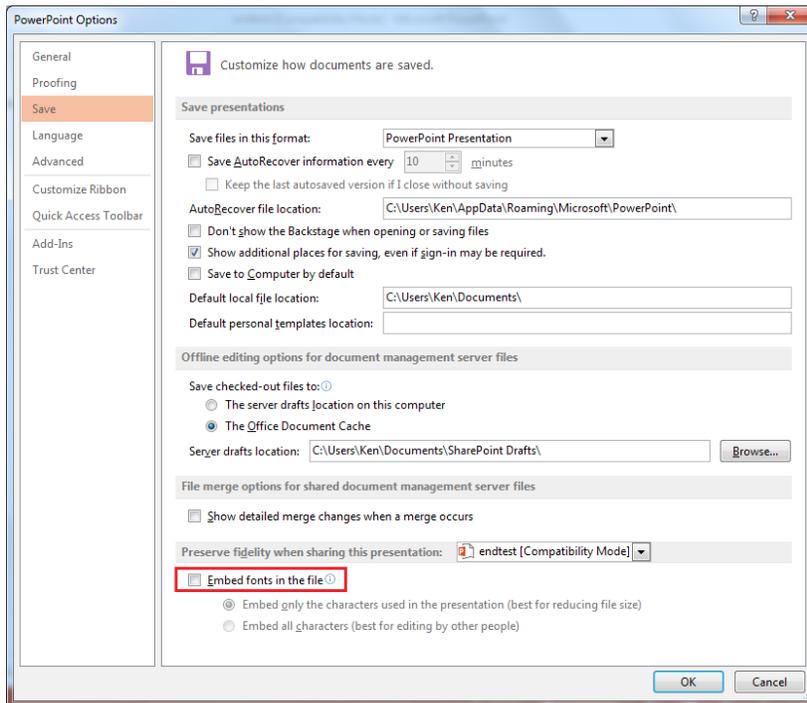
Important note: It is important and practical to test your digital signage presentation on your PC before using it for digital signage. Press the F5 key in PowerPoint to start your presentation on your PC. The presentation should run without the need for keyboard/mouse clicks and automatically loop at the end, playing in a continuous fashion.

1.6 - PowerPoint Viewer Feature Limitations

To lower cost, our PowerPlayer^{tm} signage media player runs the *Microsoft PowerPoint Viewer* software to display your signage presentations. According to Microsoft the viewer supports all standard PowerPoint product features except:

- Running macros or external programs
- Opening linked or embedded objects
- Information Rights Management (IRM) presentations

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