

Slide Charts and Calculators

Slide charts are a very cool tool, and applied correctly, they can get really impressive results.

Let me tell you a story.

In the spring of 1998, about 3 months after I started my job at Synergetic, we had a marketing consultant named John Fox of Eaglecross helping us out. I've learned a number of cool things from John, and this one is the biggest "home run" that John ever hit when he was working with us. It was the "fieldbus comparison chart."

Once again, this is a geeky thing that only a few people in certain corners of the world would ever care about – *that's true of most things that people will write white papers about, by the way* – but the principle applies anywhere.

At the time, our industry was in a massive race to shake out a bunch of competing standards. There were about ten different networking standards that various manufacturers were promoting, and there was a **ton** of debate and confusion. We had a chart on the web (www.synergetic.com/slidechart.htm) that showed the specs of these various networks, and it was very popular. Lots of other sites linked to it, and it was clear people wanted this information.

**Chaos + Disagreement + Debate + Confusion =
A Place Where You Can Raise Your Voice And Be Heard!**

Synergetic's Unique Selling Proposition was the fact that we had computer cards for all these networks, and **one** software interface. For product developers, we could simplify this ugly situation, because regardless of "who won" (the winners were not to become obvious for another year or so) we could supply you with a solution.

So for publicity, we cooked up a **fieldbus comparison chart** which showed all the different networks and what their specs were. At the time all the magazines were writing articles about this stuff, and it was a very hot topic. It was **the** central debate in the industry.

Keep in mind, nobody really knew who we were. We bought a booth at the national manufacturing trade show, the smallest booth they'd sell us, and we brought a couple thousand of these slide charts and started handing them out.

It was *crazy*. People loved these things. By the end of the show, five or six vendors – even trade organizations – were handing out our chart at their booth, too. People would look at them and say "Wow, that could come in really handy." Sometimes they'd study this chart for a few minutes and ask questions. Of course it had our phone number and website address too.

People Took These Things Home – And Kept Them In Their Desks!

That, my friend, is the key. **Give them something they will KEEP.** So here's what happened next.

First of all, we got sales simply because this created 'brand recognition' from the person having something with our name on it.

Second, distributors who sold related products would call us up and ask us to send 25 or 50 or 100 of them, because they were giving a seminar or something and they wanted to hand them out to their customers. This put us on the map with many of the distributors around the country.

Third, all the trade magazines wrote this up and told the world about it. People were calling and asking for them for six months. (Actually we made these things and sent them out with every catalog for about 2 years.)

Finally, we actually had a lady from one company – a Fortune 500 company – call me and ask if she could *buy* 1000 of them. I don't know if she even knew they were free.

"Hello, I'm calling to ask how much your slide charts cost."

I said "How many do you want?"

"We're having a sales meeting in about 2 weeks, and we need 1000 of them, one for each of the reps that's coming in. How much are they?"

I put the phone on hold and ran into El Presidente's office.

"Mike, a lady wants to *buy* 1000 of these. How much do they cost us to make?"

Mike says, "A little less than a buck."

I thought for a minute, I decided that 93 cents sounded good. I picked up the phone. "93 cents each," I said.

"OK, then I'll write you a Purchase Order for \$930.00, is that OK?"

"That'll be fine."

And that's how I sold a case of free advertisements for \$930 to a Fortune 500 company.

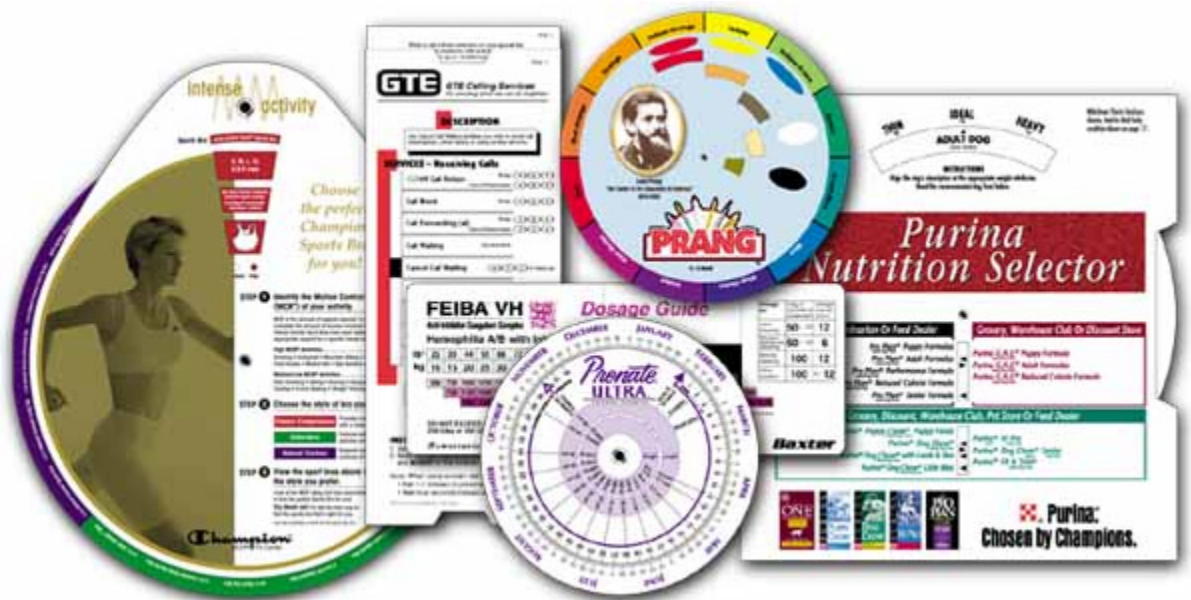
If you come up with an information widget that's as relevant to your market, you'll hit a home run like that, too.

So What Can You Do With Slide Charts?

I've included some samples from the Datalizer company (www.datalizer.com) so you can see. I'm not sure there's any such thing as a "typical example" but some applications are:

- Selector charts for medical and chemical applications
- Reference charts for technical subjects
- Calculators for sizing or parts matching
- Schedules and timing charts
- Wheel charts for cataloging various aspects of problems

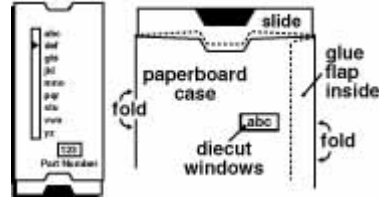
There are charts for pregnancy stages, sizing tires, nuts and bolts, and even the most detailed math formulas. The possibilities are endless.



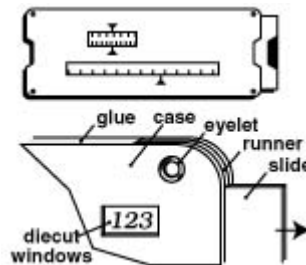
OPTIONS

Courtesy Datalizer Company

Folded Paperboard: Our most economical style, folded paperboard is the right choice for light-weight uses, direct mail and higher quantity orders. Add a flap for additional copy / art and a higher perceived value.



Eyeletted Paperboard: Our most popular choice, includes durable paperboard along with edge-glueing and metal eyelets. Durable enough for most applications and looks great!



Wheel Charts: These fun to use dials work well for point-of-purchase applications and portray your information in an easy to use format. No slide to fall out and targets your message right at the point of sale.



Plastic Charts: Best for medical or industrial applications and where the slide chart needs to last in a workplace environment. Available in folded, eyeletted and wheel chart formats.

Special Features: Many options are available for your special uses. We offer individual packaging with product information sheets, hole punching for binders or hooks and plastic pouches for that up-scale look. Consider a high-gloss U.V. coating or film lamination for moisture protection as well.