Power Point Alternatives: Tools for Creating Non-Linear Presentations

Option 1: Prezi. Prezi (http://prezi.com) is a tool that allows users to create presentations on a single large canvas and then zoom in and out over different sections as the users present. Prezi offers several different account options. These range from a free Public version where all content a user creates is public to a Pro version for $159 a year which allows users to work offline and keep content private to Edu versions for students and teachers. Prezi offers free access to a number of useful tutorials and cheat sheets for new users at http://prezi.com/learn.

Pros	Cons
1) The novelty of moving around the screen can immediately grab the audience and help keep them engaged.	1) Too much zooming in, out and around can be disorienting or cause motion sickness in your audience.
2) Prezis can give a sense of spatial relationship (i.e. geographic distance or overview versus details).	2) The novelty of Prezi as a tool can distract from the substance of the presentation.
3) Zooming in on details is more seamless and dynamic than moving between increasingly detailed photos.	3) Only a limited number of "themes" are available, meaning that users have little control over color selection.
4) Multiple plans make it easy to balance capabilities with price.	4) JPEGs can sometimes look grainy in Prezi.
5) It is capable of seamlessly integrating media, particularly YouTube videos, which can be embedded with just a link.	5) Prezis are difficult to share with audiences; the only way to print a Prezi is as a large image of the entire canvas.
6) The Prezi website offers a wide array of training materials and also includes many "reusable" Prezis that can be used as a starting point for any project.	6) The Prezi user interface can make it difficult to arrange items with precision at times and framing specific sections of the presentation requires practice.
7) All users may attend the free webinar Prezi offers each Thursday at 9 am PST.	7) Only the Pro and Edu Pro versions allow users to work offline.
	8) The free, non-education plan requires that all presentations be made publicly available and include the Prezi logo.

Option 2: Ahead. Ahead (http://ahead.com) is another service that can be used to create zooming presentations and, in fact, it is marketed as a tool for creating websites and media walls as well as presentations. Currently there are two plans available, a free plan that only allows public presentations and has limitations on storage and number of visitors, and a Pro plan that offers more features for $35 a month. It has many of the same pros and cons as Prezi but additional factors are described below.

Pros	Cons
1) Ahead offers easy-to-use templates for presentations, Pecha Kucha and websites as well as a blank starting point for more ambitious users.	1) In addition to the issues with too much movement, Ahead has the added limitation that slides tend to start out blurry and then slowly resolve to clarity.
2) The Ahead user interface makes it easier to create content and then drag and drop it into the desired pattern.	2) Ahead uses Flash, meaning that presentations cannot be played on iPhones or iPads.
3) A wide array of file types can be imported into any presentation or website.	3) Presentations and websites can be slow to load. Problems loading seem to be more prevalent than with Prezi.
4) The user interface is made to mimic the InDesign interface, making it easy for InDesign users to learn.	4) Ahead is entirely browser based, meaning that there is no option to present without an internet connection.
5) There is a comprehensive tutorial to walk new users through the process of using the application.	5) Ahead is still in beta, which means that it is more likely to continue to change unexpectedly.
6) The free plan does not require that the Ahead logo be included on presentations.	