PowerPoint Archive Script

Features, Issues, Resolutions, & References

How to build script?

- Different utilities like unoconv are avalible
  - https://askubuntu.com/questions/11130/how-can-i-convert-a-ppt-to-a-pdf-from-the-command-line

- A VBS script can be built – code available online:
  - https://superuser.com/questions/641471/how-can-i-automatically-convert-powerpoint-to-pdf

- A Python program can be built – code available online:
  - https://stackoverflow.com/questions/31487478/how-to-convert-a-pptx-to-pdf-using-python

PPT files cannot committed unless closed

- It appears that unless the PPT file is closed, Git is not able to commit it to the repo.

- There are other solutions for source control of MS Office docs, but Git is what I use for my workflow. Although less than ideal, this can still work for a first version.

Unable to open file

- Using the code I found online, it does not appear to work with relative paths. Going to use OS to build an absolute path.

Unable to debug with VS Code and virtualenv

- By default, the configurations for debugging do not work. Looks changing the path will fix it.
  - https://stackoverflow.com/questions/37642045/use-virtualenv-with-python-with-visual-studio-code-in-ubuntu

Set arguments from terminal

- Use Python's sys.argv to set input & output file names
  - http://www.pythonforbeginners.com/system/python-sys-argv

Check to validate input

- Use os.path.isfile to validate that the input ppt file exists
  - https://stackoverflow.com/questions/23459095/check-for-file-existence-in-python-3

Watch a directory for changes to ppt file

- When a ppt file is changed, the script should fire off and convert to a PDF. Will use python watchdog module
  - https://stackoverflow.com/questions/18599339/python-watchdog-monitoring-file-for-changes
- Issue with watchdog – module installed but unable to access members. Maybe Python 3 issue?
- Strange – the __init__.py is empty for the watchdog module. Google hasn't turned up anything. Attempting to find an alternative solution.
- Instead of python, maybe use Powershell script to watch folder?
  - https://stackoverflow.com/questions/29066742/watch-file-for-changes-and-run-command-with-powershell

Watch a directory for changes to ppt file

- So far none of the attempts have really worked. Never mind the fact that I don't quite understand what they are doing.

- So I'll opt for a solution I know will work, and one that I can build myself: poll every second to see if file changed.

- Not elegant, and not really ideal (OS should handle it…) but it will do for now. Hopefully I'll refactor this in the future.

After publishing pdf, commit to local git

- The git repo will sit at the same level of the PPT. This could mean having a git repo within a git repo.

- On second thought, this is a mistake. Without the ability to do diffs with git, this does not make a lot of sense to me. In the future, maybe I will find version control worthwhile with MS Office docs.

Now to polish

- What needs to be done?
  - Add support to go up a directory via ".."
  - Add comments and other docs
  - Restructure the file format? Not sure what is standard for python projects
  - If the PowerPoint window is already open, do not close it.
  - Add help strings? Test

Starting the script

- Attempted to use Powershell to kick off the process, but I need more time to learn the fundamentals. Attempts to use solutions from the internet have failed me.

- In mean time, using python script as the entry point.