Visual Storytelling through Infographics

TAG Conference

November 6, 2018
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Data Can Be BORING!

FREE! Raising Your Network's Technology IQ
Getting Started with Mobile Outreach
FREE! Website Domains: Getting, keeping, and working with a website address
Making the Most of Social Networking Sites
Optimizing Your Website

The response: this information is tracked at the recipient level:

- people who opened the email: 8 (88.9% of emails rec'd)
- people who clicked through: 2 (25% of emails opened)
- people who forwarded the email using the send-to-a-friend feature: 2 (25% of emails opened)
Visual Data Is Compelling…

- Give “non-number people” access to critical information
- Present your data in a new and interesting way (not to mention trendy)
- A picture is worth a thousand words
INTRODUCTIONS

...When Used In the Right Way

A bad infographic can be really bad:

- Wastes your time
- Hurts your credibility
- Negatively impacts your brand
What We’ll Cover

Defining Goals and Finding Data
Storytelling
Creating Infographics
Defining Goals and Finding Data
Defining Your Audience

Who are they and what do they care about?
Do You Have a Story?

What do you want to accomplish?
What does your data say?
What’s the best story to tell with your data to meet that goal?
What Is Their Preferred Format?

Numbers?

Stories?

Does the answer vary for each type of information?
How Will You Use the Infographic?

DEFINING GOALS & FINDING DATA

Data Book

One-Pager

Social Media

1 in 8 Nebraska households don't know where their next meal is.
Prioritize What You Can Do

Make sure what you plan to do is manageable.
Where Can You Find the Data?

You already have access to a lot of information... You just have to find it.

1. Use what you already have.
2. Look for public data.
3. Consider a survey.
What Summary Stats Would Be Useful?

What can you straightforwardly pull from the data?

- Number of women helped
- % of women in your service area in need of help— and how many you were able to help
- Number of women + children helped
- Number of children affected by abusive husbands
- Increase in % helped since you started serving them
- …what else?
Beware of Bias

Make sure you’re not just seeing what you want to see.

Bending your data to suit your story will impact your credibility in the long run.
Discussion Questions

• What audience are you targeting?
• What goal do you want to achieve?
• How does it fit into your communications mix?
• What approximate message do you want to convey?
• What data will you use?
Moving From Numbers to Stories
Stories are universal.
Stories make facts “sticky.”
Stories shape our identities.
### Explaining Stories & Compelling Stories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Explaining Stories</th>
<th>Compelling Stories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Illustrate a point, paint a vivid picture, or put a complex issue in human terms.</td>
<td>Give readers the chance to imagine themselves in the story—they are drawn into a shared experience and are called on to act.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Explaining stories don’t by themselves compel readers to act.”</td>
<td>“Your organization is not the hero. The donor is the hero.”</td>
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Explaining Stories—Context and Narrative

FROM ONE TO MILLIONS

It all started on July 15, 2014 with golfer Chris Kennedy and quickly spread from his social network to others living with ALS. Within six weeks, more than 2.5 million people participated and/or donated including many celebrities worldwide.

$115,000,000

Raised nationally

The ALS Association and its 38 chapters nationwide reached an all-time donation record.

$220 MILLION

Raised worldwide

New York Cares
Explaining Stories Can Have a Point of View

CRISIS IN SOUTH SUDAN

NEW NATION TORN APART
Conflict in the world’s youngest country has spread across the nation, creating a severe humanitarian crisis.

As of August 2014. Source: UN OCHA http://www.unocha.org/south-sudan
Compelling Stories Have Problems to Solve

Why Help Guinea?

There is No Limit Foundation

66% of drinking water is contaminated

Poverty in Africa begins with lack of clean water. Dirty water exposes Guineans to water related illnesses, which claims the lives of thousands annually.

70% of the population lives on $1.25 per day

71% of the population is illiterate

Parents cannot afford to keep their children in schools. Schools are poorly managed: overcrowded.
Compelling Stories Have Emotional Content

How the War in Syria Hurts Children

4 Million
Syrian children need emergency help.

6.8 Million
Syrians are in need, many with limited access to humanitarian aid.

1 in 3
children have been hit, kicked or shot at.

7,000
Innocent children
have been killed, with many more maimed, tortured or raped.

Save the Children
3

How Do You Find Your Story?
Start With Some Data Points

Based on your goals, pull a couple of numbers that you feel might be relevant.

- 357 people provided with groceries
- 3,400 in the metro area aren’t confident of where their food will come from
- 72% of those served have at least one child at home
Brainstorm What They Mean

What do they explain? What do they mean to you as an organization? Define why they’re important.

- There are very few hungry people in our metro area comparatively.
- We feed so many hungry children.
- There are so many more people who need our services.
Think About What’s Changed Over Time

Why are these changes important? What do they mean?

We’re feeding so many more people without new funding—imagine what we could do with your help.

The proportion of hungry people is growing much more quickly than we can serve.

More and more of those who need food assistance are children under 12 years old.
Pick a Compelling Storyline

From your brainstorm, pick something that feels important, rings true, meets your goals, and supports your data.
4

What Kind of Infographic?
Infographics Have Many Dimensions

- Shareable
- Digestible
- Interesting
- Appealing
- Content-Rich
FROM NUMBERS TO STORIES

Shareable

Infographic Report

Introduction
Over the past few years, nonprofit organizations have been under increasing demand to become more "data-driven." We have only to measure our work more closely, track a number of organization and program health metrics. Organizations of all sizes are now swimming up to their eyeballs in data—but how do we make sense of it all?

Data visualization has been around for a while (in the order of centuries)—as long as people have wanted to make visual sense of information. Indeed, visualizing is a relatively recent extension of that discipline, and have risen in importance to help nonprofits present and make sense of their data in a more digestible format. Social networks like Facebook and Pinterest are now flush with these graphics, from simple charts and graphs to minimalist diagrams to full-color illustrations. We’re no longer as overwhelmed with images as we once were with data.

With Infographics so common on the Internet, one would expect them to be cheap and easy to make. Unfortunately, that’s not true. Depending on how involved you were a graphic task, working with a designer can cost thousands of dollars. Making a good infographic yourself will take time to create, as well as knowledge and experience with design principles. And you can’t make an infographic without data—you’ll need time and experience to analyze the numbers and find a story that you want to tell. As a result, most of the examples you see are created by larger nonprofits or-for-profit companies—organizations with the resources to devote to creating good infographics.

But even a small nonprofit can find value in using infographics to meet their goals and convey their data in a clear, easy-to-understand format. That’s why Elsieware has written this guide as a text to help you think through the process of creating an infographic. We’ll cover what defines an infographic, and help you learn how to create one that presents your data in a comprehensive and easy-to-understand way.

What is an Infographic?
[INTRO EXAMPLE—FROM JOE]

An infographic is essentially any combination of information and image. This can cover a wide range of visualizations, from basic pictograms and photos, to diagrams and bar charts, to maps, to charts and tables, up to full-page packages of photos and charts. That’s a wide range, and some of those graphics convey a lot of data; others, very little.
[SPECTRUM OF VISUALIZATIONS—FROM JOE]

At the left end of the spectrum we have basic visualizations that are easy to digest, but don’t convey a lot of information, like pictograms, icons, and photos. Histograms are fairly widely used, where a picture or icon represents some segment of the data set. For example, each house represents 100 families. Homes in the state. While a picture says a thousand words, it doesn’t contain a lot of data. A caption is...
FROM NUMBERS TO STORIES

Digestible

I contain as much sugar as seven Reese Cups.

Takes time to digest

Quick and easy to scan

Digestibility
Interesting

FROM NUMBERS TO STORIES

Speaks to Heads

Interest

Speaks to Hearts
Appealing
Content-Rich

FACT:

96% of women who find and treat breast cancer early will be cancer-free after five years.

get yourself checked today. www.breastcancerawareness.com

DO YOU KNOW
ONE OF THE
16 MILLION?

Any day now, the U.S. Supreme Court will issue its decision on whether to uphold or strike down the health care reform law. Hanging in the balance are millions of Latinos who need access to affordable care. Most of the changes would kick in after 2014, but here’s what the Supreme Court decision puts at stake for Hispanics:

WHAT HEALTH COVERAGE LOOKS LIKE NOW:
16 MILLION HISPANICS ARE UNINSURED.
THAT’S ONE OUT OF EVERY THREE UNINSURED PEOPLE IN THE U.S.

IF HEALTH CARE REFORM WERE IN PLACE TODAY:

3.1 MILLION ADDITIONAL LATINOS COVERED BY MEDICAID/CHIP
1.5 MILLION MORE LATINOS WITH COVERAGE THROUGH THEIR JOBS
1.4 MILLION ADDITIONAL LATINOS WITH PRIVATE “NONGROUP” PLANS

LATINOS WOULD HAVE THE GREATEST INCREASE IN INSURANCE COVERAGE:

10.9% OVERALL
8.6% WHITE
15.1% BLACK
18.2% HISPANIC
10% ASIAN/OTHER


Superficial Info goes to Meaty Info

Depth of Content
How Do You Want to Frame It?

Is it a simple issue or a complicated one?
Is the glass half full or half empty?
What combination of numbers and text?
Do you want the numbers to appear larger or smaller?
To Do After the Conference:

Think it through for your organization.

- Brainstorm a few stats from your data.
- Define the story you want to tell.
- Think through the approximate kind of infographic you want to create.
From Data To Infographic
Exploring Data Clarity

A Look at Transportation and Tardiness for 2012

- % Times Tardy vs. Transportation
- # Times Tardy by Method of Transport
- # Times Tardy by Grade Level
- # Times Late on Talk Day vs. Rest of Week

Transportation and Tardiness vs. Student Impact in 2012

- Retired Bus Delays
- # Tardy Who Take the Bus

Impact of Tardiness on GPA
Exploring Visual Clarity

Pizza in the City

- # of Pizzas Delivered
- Most Requested Toppings:
  - Cheese: 20%
  - Pepperoni: 19%
  - Mushrooms: 10%
  - Onion: 5%
  - Other: 5%

- Cost of Pizza
- Avg. Cost of Pizza ($)

Pizzaville

Plain Slice

% Who Like Plain Slice: 50%

McPizza

Plain Slice

% Who Like Plain Slice: 33%

% Who Like McPizza: 90%

Data is made up; not based on actual, real-world statistics or evidence.
Choose the Right Charts

Both charts contain the same info. But the second is far easier to read and comprehend.
Make Your Data and Visuals Work Together

HEALTH SPENDING SLOWS
Health expenditure in Australia increased by just 3% between 2012/13 and 2013/14, which was lower than the average annual growth rate of 5% across the past decade, a report by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare reveals.

Main Piece of Data

Add context

Add context

Attribution

Source: Australian Institute of Health & Welfare
Designer: Julianne Bull

A Clear Call to Action

What do people want to do after reading your infographic?

What do YOU want people to do?

Do these match?
Be True to Your Data

- Don’t mix and match
- Don’t make the data fit your story
- Don’t imply data means something it doesn’t
- Use current data
Two big things to get across here:

First, your data should tell a story (with a beginning, middle, and end). For data people, this would be thinking of what's statistically significant, what implies correlation. Your data person finds that story, and brings it to your designer to explain it to people who don't understand data.

Second, your data should be real. Attribute your source(s) - no plagiarism. Be honest and transparent, so people can check your work and know that you didn't make it up.

Also, don't misrepresent your data. Different sources/surveys/studies have different samples, sample sizes, etc. If you put data from two different sources next to each other, people will think that it came from the same place.

Also, think about time period. Don't combine data over time for the past decade with data over time of the past year.

[this is all basic science stuff]
Karen Graham, 10/17/2018
D.I.Y. or Designer?

Designer, almost always.
Unless…
…You or someone on the staff knows what they’re doing.
…The concept is super simple.
The Available Tools Aren’t a Magic Bullet

They won’t replace the need for graphic design skills for more customized infographics.

They’re best for either templated or very simple graphics.
Microsoft Excel allows you to analyze data, create charts and graphs.
CREATING INFOGRAPHICS

Some Design Software

Illustrator

Photoshop

Adobe Creative Suite: Includes Photoshop and Illustrator. Available at discount from TechSoup.
CREATING INFOGRAPHICS

PowerPoint

Microsoft PowerPoint

Pros: You already have it.

Cons: Not as much control as Illustrator or Photoshop.
Free Online Tools

Easel.ly

Infogr.am

Canva

Pros: Free, easy-to-use, often includes stock templates
Cons: "Cookie-cutter" infographic, not a magic bullet
Tableau

**Pros:** Powerful and customizable

**Cons:** Less powerful in the free version... or expensive
Maps

Rising Education Levels in Washington
In 1990, there were 3 counties in which over 25% of the population had a bachelor’s degree or more. In 2008-2012, there were 11.

How much will a dental check-up cost in

Tableau

Infogr.am
Working with a Designer
How to Find a Designer

- Look for designers with experience using data.
- Ask other nonprofits and your network for recommendations.
- Check local art schools for responsible students.
Cost

Infographics are expensive
Shop around
Sell designers on your mission
Look to art schools for responsible students
What to Bring to Your Designer

- Your data
- What you think the data says
- The story you want to tell
- Examples of how to present the data
- Your thoughts on how the infographic should look.
- Infographics that you like.
- Examples of your organization’s brand and design.
8 Start Small
What Are You Going to Bring Back?
Your Key Questions

What audience are you targeting?
What goal do you want to achieve?
How does it fit into your communications mix?
What approximate message do you want to convey?
What data will you use?
Where Can You Start?

Think about goals and pieces of data that you can start with right now.
Don’t Wait For New Technology

Start with what you can do now, and make needed technology improvements over time.
If You Feel Overwhelmed…

• Pick one story.
• Choose a single set of data.
• Use PowerPoint or a free tool to represent it graphically.
• Start somewhere!
Questions?

Ask Idealware…
On Twitter: @idealware
On Facebook: /idealware
THANK YOU