THE DO'S AND DON'TS OF INFOGRAPHIC DESIGN

FROM HUBSPOT & VENNGAGE

Picture this: you sit down at your computer to start creating an infographic. It's the first infographic you've created, and you couldn't be more excited to show it off to your readers.

You think nothing could go wrong, open a blank document, and realize it: you're not a designer. What now?

These days, anyone can make an infographic with the availability of free graphic design software and templates. Unfortunately, the explosion of free tools has created an influx of poorly-designed infographics around the web.

Luckily, we'll teach your how to avoid poor design so you can create expert-level infographics your audience will actually want to share, and that will help grow your audience!

By the end of this guide, you'll know how to:

- Use spacing, color, fonts, and icons to make your infographic pop

- Layout your infographic to create a fluid design

- The do's and don'ts of data visualization

- And much more about creating beautiful infographics!

We've loaded this guide with tons of examples of great infographics to use as inspiration and tactics you should avoid. Ready to get started?

LAYOUT AND SPACING

One of the hardest things to get right when you start designing is figuring out how to layout and space your elements. There aren't hard and fast rules, and yet, you can still do layout "incorrectly."

In an infographic, there are so many different elements, graphics, and text boxes that have to come together, which means it's easy for your layout to get convoluted and messy.

While the rules aren't necessarily set in stone, there are some general tips and tricks that can help you get the hang of proper layout so you can create something aesthetically sound.

DO: Include A HUGE Title Card

More often than not, infographics are too large to be shown in full on social media. Although the content may be great, trying to show the whole graphic makes it hard for the reader to actually determine what the content is about.

That's where the spacing of your title section comes into play. Anytime you design an infographic to be shared, make sure to have a large, readable title section. Doing so will help your readers quickly understand the infographic when they're browsing through social media feeds.

Take a look at these two infographics below. They are exactly the same, but the one on the left has a much larger title font size.

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Which one would you click on if you saw it on your Twitter or Pinterest feed? Most likely, you'd click the version on the right because the bigger text makes it easier to decipher.

Some infographics, like the next examples, are smaller in size. However, including a large and legible title is just as important. The large text in the example on the right draws the reader's eye and helps give contextual clues more immediately than the left-side version.
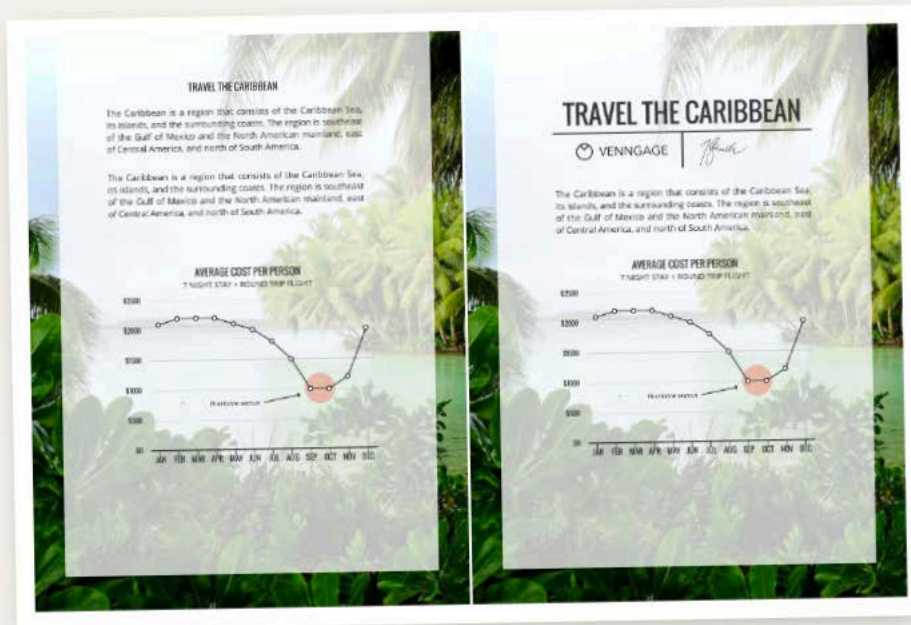
GET THE TEMPLATE!

A large title card can also be repurposed as a featured image for a blog or social media post promoting the infographic. Here's an example:

Turn Your Poll & Survey Data into an infographic
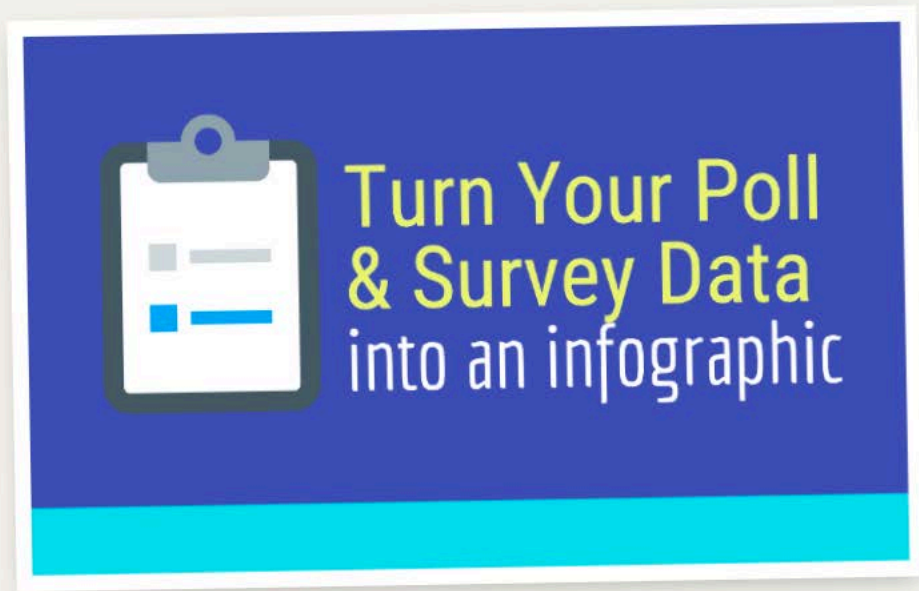
GET THE TEMPLATE!

Instead of displaying the full infographic, the title card can be used a social image that points to the link where the infographic lives. Without the layout of a large title area, repurposing the title section is more difficult.

DO NOT: Use More Than Two Columns

One of the easiest ways to torpedo your infographic is to try to make it too complex or busy. You really should never need to use more than two columns of text, graphics, icons. or data in your infographic. Here are a few examples of two-column layouts:
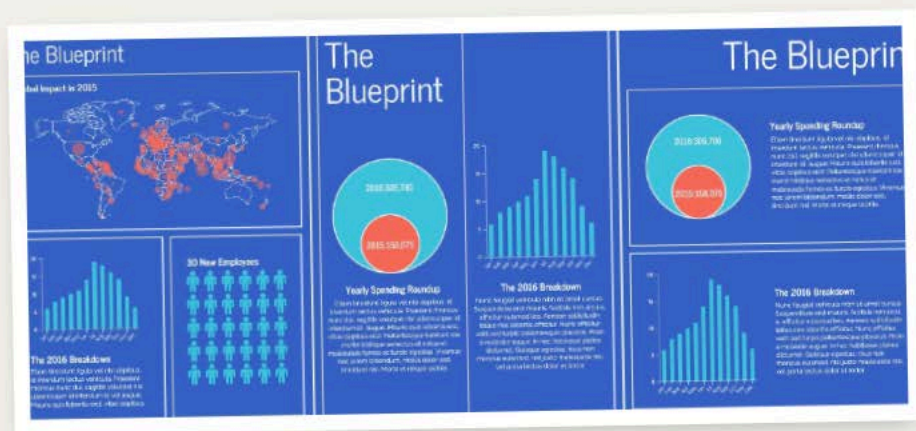
GET THE TEMPLATE!

By using only two columns to present the data, you can keep your content organized and legible. Using more than two columns lends itself towards making the text and graphics smaller, which creates a more difficult experience for the reader. Instead, keeping your content within two columns makes your content legible from any device, including mobile.

Want more examples of this principle in practice? Here are a few more:

PRO TIP: Your columns don't have to be the same width in order for this rule to apply. You can use different sized icons, text, or graphics for differentiate design elements while still ensuring that your content is legible and organized.

For example, the infographic below has one skinny column for the icons on the left and one wider column for the main display text.

7 Things Every Recruiter Must Do to Thrive Now!

You must be a better version of yourself to thrive as a recruiter in 2016. But how? **Start with these seven crucial action points:**

1. Reincarnate yourself as a born-again 'digital native'.

Kill off all your fears about being too old to learn new technologies. Enrol in courses and find a 'reverse mentor', a 'young-un' in the office who can show you the digital ropes.

2. Use your 'neck-top' more than your laptop.

Commit to making a conscious decision every time you are about to type an email. Ask yourself, "what outcome am I looking for here and what is the best way to achieve that outcome?" Don't be afraid to use the phone.

3. Build your personal digital brand.

You need to be seen as different; a thought-leader in your space. Learn how to use LinkedIn, Twitter and blogging. Embed social in your everyday recruitment activities.

4. Reinvent yourself as a 'skills hunter'.

The best candidates will not come to you. You need to identify them. This involves digital sourcing, phone sourcing and active social sourcing, where you use social sites as a database of candidates that you target and hunt down.

5. Hone your seduction skills.

Recruiting is about engaging with people in a sophisticated way. It must be tailored to each target recruit, and requires the ability to create interest, to craft a message that will get a response, to qualify prospects and crucially and the ability to phone-source.

6. Fix your candidate interaction.

Traditional sourcing channels will become less effective. Referrals, recommendations and repeats will be a major source of unique candidates for you. Start with this very simple candidate care charter. You need to be seen as different; a thought-leader in your space. Learn how to use LinkedIn, Twitter and blogging. Embed social in your everyday recruitment activities.Twitter and blogging. Embed social in your everyday recruitment activities.

7. Commit to a year, indeed a career, of continuous learning.

New skills, technologies, channels are emerging all the time. You have to stay on the edge, constantly beta-testing, and refreshing your skill-set. You own your career.

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Most great infographics have some sort of element that ties it all together. We call this element the "backbone." A backbone is a consistent design element used for organizing the flow of the infographic. The backbone could be anything -- like an icon, line, or layout -- but it's generally a design element that helps the readers' eye flow through the direction of the content within the infographic.

Graphics and icons are effective for not only getting the reader's attention but guiding their eyes down the page. Establishing a visual guide is essential if you want your creation to be useful and easy-to-grasp.

Establishing a backbone could include many different tactics, so we'll go through a few examples few examples to help you visualize it.

In this infographic, the centered icons are the backbone of the infographic, because they help organize the text as separate elements for the reader.

7 Things to Do
Before A New Hire's First Day

Onboarding isn't an event. It's a process, and it starts
even before your new hire starts their first day.

1. Welcome Packet

Don't wait until the first day to introduce your organization. Send your new hire
a welcome packet that includes the latest articles about the company, a fun
personal note, and something from the team.

2. Paperwork

Benefits, contracts, anything else that needs signing — make sure you get these
out of the way before day one. *These documents take time to read over and
understand, so don't waste time on the first day doing paperwork.*

3. Culture Video

Send them a video that highlights your organizational culture. Get testimonial
from current employees, showcase fun activities, and the everyday activities of
the workplace.

You can also use icons that are formatted right or left aligned to the other content by using icons in a grid like in the example below:

10+ SURPRISING FACTS AND STATISTICS ABOUT PRODICIVITY

1. You can complete technological work faster and to a higher quality standard while listening to music than while not.

2. Workers show better time management, interpersonal performance and effectiveness on days where they exercise in the morning before work.

3. Tuesday is the most productive day of the week.

4. Adults who regularly get between 7.5 and 9 hours of sleep per night can be up to 20% more productive.

5. After working 40 hours in a, productivity decreases by 50%.

6. Modest ambient background noise of about 70 decibels stimulates the creative centres of the brain, increasing your capacity for abstract or creative thought.

Another way to use icons as the backbone is by alternating their position from left to right with each section:

9 IDEAS

SO YOU CAN CREATE
A PRODUCT QUICKLY

USE YOUR JOB EXPERIENCE

Do you have a particular skill, expertise or career experience that people would pay to learn more about?

TEACH SOMETHING

If there is a topic you want to know more about, there is no faster way to become an expert than to teach it.

TAKE COURSES

If you're looking for fresh ideas, take a course in your niche and use it as a jumping-off point to create your own product.

USE YOUR LIFE EXPERIENCES

Another way to establish a design backbone is by using lines to connect important sections, like in the next example:

APPLE TIMELINE

Products to Watch Year by Year at
Apple's Worldwide Developers Conference

WWDC 2006

Mac OS X Leopard
The sixth major release of Mac OS X.

Mac Pro
Featured 250GB storage & 1GB RAM.

Time Machine
Automatically backed up your Mac to an external hard drive.

Spaces
Created space to accomplish tasks. Apple's first attempt at multitasking on the Mac.

WWDC 2007

Safari for Windows
Brought the Safari browser to Windows platforms but was discontinued in 2012.

iPhone Web Apps

DO: Use Lines, Borders & Color To Denote Sections

Another great way to help people quickly move through an infographic is to visually break up the content by using lines, alternating colors, or borders strategically to allow readers to mentally distinguish sections of content as separate concepts.

The example on the right is a great example of how color can help break up content effectively to make an infographic more appealing. By using a different background color in the right version, the designers better segregated the concepts being presented. Plus, adding a splash of color helps call out a section you especially want to point out to the reader. In contrast, the example on the left looks doesn't have a focal point, which makes the reader scan longer to understand the content.

In the next example, the designer used two different background blocks to denote separate sections.

How To
Normalize Your
Content's Social Shares

Even if your content doesn't get as many shares as the top sites, your content might be performing better than you think. To get an accurate picture of your audience engagement, you need to **normalize your shares.**

The Formula
To Normalize Your Shares

The formula is simple:

Number of Social Shares	÷	Number of Social Followers	=	Normalized Shares

Look At

Total shares per blog post 📣

Shares per blog post by social media platform f 🐦 📌 in

Analyze your normalized average shares **month over month** and over a **six month** period.

Why You Should
Normalize Your Shares

Having an accurate picture of your audience engagement will allow you to adjust your content strategy to target weak spots, such as:

Post Frequency
Once a week?
Three times a week?

You can accomplish the same goal of separating sections by placing lines strategically. Take a look at how disorganized and confusing the infographic on the left looks. By adding lines to separate some of the sections, the designer adds a bit more organization to the chaos.
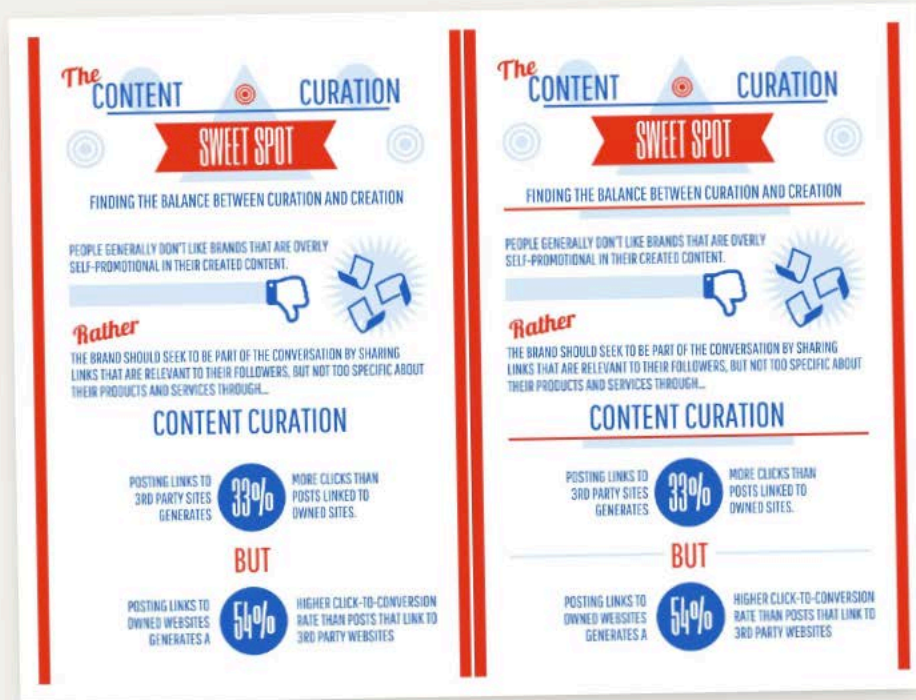
You can also use lines to highlight important ideas and create focal points for the reader.

White space (sometimes referred to as negative space) is the space around and between design elements in any design. It may sound basic, but putting elements too close together can create a bad design.

Poor layout can throw off an entire infographic. Like picking fonts, it takes time and practice to master spacing. If you take anything away from this guide, remember: white space is key to any good design.

When used correctly, white space can help draw the reader's eye directly to important sections on your infographic. The more space around text, the more the text stands from the rest of the content.

Take a look at this example:

Design Trends

2017

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1 **LOUDER &
BRIGHTER COLORS**

There will be a shift away from muted and neutral
colors, like whites, grays and black, to bolder and
brighter colors.

---

2 **BOLD
TYPOGRAPHY**

Strong typography and daring mixed font
combinations will fight against the ever dwindling
attention spans of readers, and saturation of content.

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The creator is able to point the reader towards the important headers and text without overwhelming the audience with content. Effectively, white space really just makes the infographic easier to read.

In contrast, take a look at this version of the same infographic with less white space:

Design Trends

2017

1 LOUDER & BRIGHTER COLORS

There will be a shift away from muted and neutral colors, like whites, grays and black, to bolder and brighter colors.

2 BOLD TYPOGRAPHY

Strong typography and daring mixed font combinations will fight against the ever dwindling attention spans of readers, and saturation of content.

All of the content on the two infographics is the same, but you can see that the second example is less clear, harder to read, and less aesthetically pleasing to look at than the first example. The only thing that changed is the white space. See why it's so essential to good layout?

DO NOT: *Ruin the Infographic with a Busy Sources Section*

It's always important to cite your sources in your work -- this includes infographics. But too often, designers add a list of lengthy, busy and distracting links at the bottom of an infographic instead of incorporating the sources section into the design in other ways. See below:

Infographics with sections for lengthly source links do not add visual beauty nor do they help the reader understand the infographic any better. For example, what sources are associated with which pieces of information throughout the infographic? Additionally, most infographics are shared as static images, which means none of the links are actually clickable for the reader.

4.

Put in place an escape route, such as what to do in an "active shooter" situation.

5.

Put in a "tip line" to allow employees to report situations that make them uncomfortable.

Sources

https://venngage.com/blog/graphic-design-trends/
https://venngage.com/blog/infographic-marketing/
https://venngage.com/blog/create-your-own-infographic/
https://venngage.com/blog/visual-content-marketing-statistics/
https://venngage.com/blog/graphic-design-trends/
https://venngage.com/blog/infographic-marketing/
https://venngage.com/blog/create-your-own-infographic/
https://venngage.com/blog/visual-content-marketing-statistics/
https://venngage.com/blog/graphic-design-trends/
https://venngage.com/blog/infographic-marketing/
https://venngage.com/blog/create-your-own-infographic/
https://venngage.com/blog/visual-content-marketing-statistics/
https://venngage.com/blog/graphic-design-trends/
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https://venngage.com/blog/visual-content-marketing-statistics/
https://venngage.com/blog/graphic-design-trends/
https://venngage.com/blog/infographic-marketing/
https://venngage.com/blog/visual-content-marketing-statistics/

VENNGAGE *Create an infographic at venngage.com*

Instead, include references with user experience in mind. Perhaps you just include an email address for the reader to request more information. Or add one short link at the bottom that brings the reader to a full citation webpage elsewhere. For example:
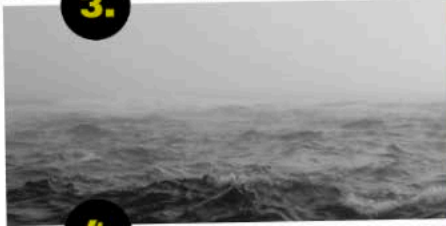
3. Think through the possible warning signs and create the steps for dealing with someone exhibiting angry behavior or talking about doing violence.

4. Put in place an escape route, such as what to do in an "active shooter" situation.

5. Put in a "tip line" to allow employees to report situations that make them uncomfortable.

Sources
For more information go to venngage.com/infographic-2

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Using these methods, you can properly cite where information is coming from without disrupting the design of the infographic.

Fonts/Typography

Picking the right fonts is exceptionally hard because besides the fact that there are thousands of options, the "right" font is subjective. Different designers have different fonts tastes, and any designer could any number of fonts in their designs. Getting good at choosing the right fonts in your designs is difficult, but here are a few guidelines to get you started:

DO: Stick to The Primary Categories of Font Families

If you don't know much about typography, here's the biggest thing you need to know: there are three main categories of font families: serifs, sans serifs, and display fonts. Each has different purposes and common uses among designers.

Serif fonts are fonts that have small lines or embellishments attached to the letters. These embellishments are called "serifs." Common fonts such as Times New Roman and Merriweather are examples of serifs.

How are they used? One common argument is that serif fonts should be used as body text because it's easier to read them in large blocks of text. However, this preference mostly stems from historical precedence: we're used to reading Times New Roman in books and white papers, therefore there is the precedence that the font type is generally "easier to read" in large bodies of text. When you're first starting out, it's a good idea to keep this use in mind.

Serif Fonts

Merriweather

Lora

Arvo

Times New Roman

Sans serifs are fonts that do not have small lines or embellishments attached to the ends of letters. Some of the most popular fonts in this family include Roboto, Helvetica, and Arial.

How are they used? While serif fonts are considered to be best for body text, sans serif fonts are considered to be better for section headers, captions, lists and titles in your infographic. Still, many designers on the web tend to use them for body text as well, so it's mostly a matter of preference and trend.

Sans Serif Fonts

Roboto

Oswald

Open Sans

Lato

Display font families are fonts that are more playful by design. The might be cursive or handwriting fonts or just funky fonts meant for specific types of design.

How are they used? Generally speaking, [most designers agree](#) that you should really only use display fonts as headers to set the mood and theme of your design. Typically, display fonts are used as a focal point in a design so that it draws the reader's eye to one spot. Some popular display fonts include Lobster, Alfa Slab One, and Unica One (see below).

DISPLAY FONTS

Lobster

Poiret One

Chewy

Alfa Slab One

When it comes to choosing fonts, there are millions of options. That said, experienced designers tend to have strong preferences for which fonts to use and which fonts not to use. If you're not sure where to begin, try using a tool like Font Pair to get designer-recommended font groupings.

DO: Match the Theme of the Infographic

Now that you know what the main font categories are, we'll move on to using them in practice.

The first step to picking fonts is to think about the theme or topic of your infographic. Are you trying to convey a playful or serious tone? Humorous or dark?

Then think about the audience and intent of your infographic. If the goal of your infographic is to share data, you probably want to make the infographic look more professional than cartoonish. Alternatively, if your infographic is meant for kids, it might be more appropriate to use cartoonish display fonts.

Sometimes, it helps to take a look at other infographics to grasp how you should think about thematic design.

In the example below, the author decided to use sans serif fonts throughout. The result is a very minimalist and futuristic design that correlates well with the topic: online learning.

7 ADVANTAGES OF TAKING
ONLINE CLASSES

?

01.

Variety of programs & courses

From traditional four-year universities to completely online career colleges, higher education today offers a variety of options for students. This means that no matter what students wish to study, from nursing to neuroscience, they can find online the courses or degree programs they need.

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In contrast, the creator of the next infographic used a mix of serif fonts and sans serif fonts, creating a very sleek, classic look that pairs well with the topic of cooking.

Home Cooking Magic

Eating has become a tributary to socializing, a sidekick of sorts. And yet it is commonly held that people who cook at home tend to consume fewer calories, fewer carbohydrates, less sugar, and less fat than those who cook less, don't cook at all.

Nutrition

Eating at home, on the other hand, allows you to cut out what you may deem unnecessary in your diet. You're in control of the food you cook and the food you consume.

Family Bonding

Family dynamics can greatly improve with more at home, family meal times. This is also a great teaching tool for parents to instill healthy eating habits in their children.

Savor Your Food

The physical act of preparing your meals will lead to a newfound appreciation for the food you consume. Being more aware of what you consume when you prepare it will make you eat less.

Save Money

Eating dinner out is expensive! It is a lot more cost-effective to purchase groceries than ordering take out every night. This strategy will improve your finances and cut down on stress.

http://www.healthfitnessrevolution.com/top-10-health-benefits-cooking-home/

The next infographic showcases a different serif font. Through the use of bright colors and easy-to-read fonts, the infographic feels very whimsical. Could the author have used a different font family in it? Of course! The point is the font that was chosen subjectively, by the designer, to fit the theme they were aiming for.

Sea Change at Work?

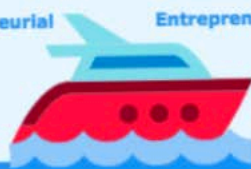## 8 Entrepreneurial Skills to Float Your Boat

Skills for entrepreneurial thinkers and doers

Entrepreneurial decision-making

On-the-job entrepreneurial skills

High stakes navigation skills for sea changes at work

1 Find Your Sea Legs

Think on your feet

Navigate out-of-depth situations

Use the elements to your advantage

2 Raise the Bar on Resourcefulness

Get things done with limited resources

Know when to ask for help vs. D.I.Y

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There's no right answer when it comes to picking fonts for your infographic. Instead, try to think about typography as a complementary element of your whole theme. Choose with purpose, not just because you like a font you see in a list somewhere.
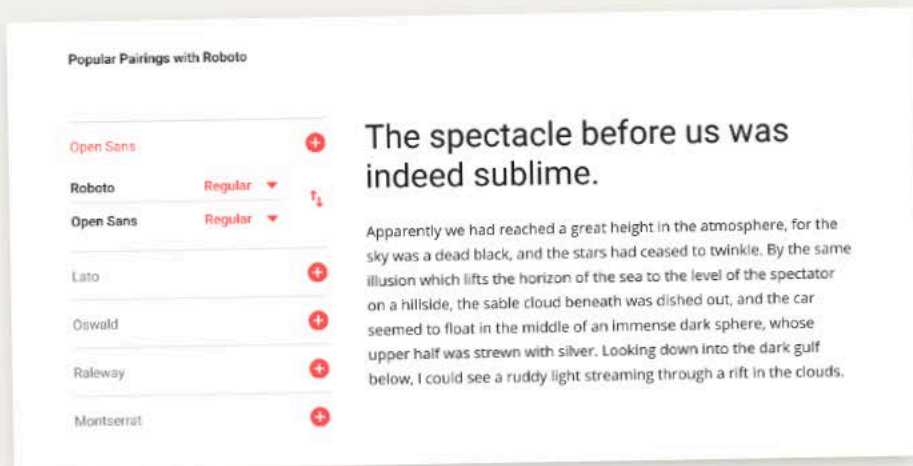
DO: Pick A Font Palette & Stick To It

It's not enough to just pick a few fonts and use them however you want. To make a well-designed infographic, it's important to establish for yourself what sizes, weights, and fonts you're using throughout different sections. In other words, creating a font palette will keep your design consistent and improve the overall look of your infographic. Just like choosing a color palette, you need to find fonts that work together and then assign them to different parts of your infographic.

No idea where to start? Here a few tools to help:

Google Font tool - made up of about 800 different font choices and shows you what particular fonts will pair well together. For example:

Popular Pairings with Roboto

Open Sans

Roboto   Regular ▼

Open Sans   Regular ▼

Lato

Oswald

Raleway

Montserrat

The spectacle before us was indeed sublime.

Apparently we had reached a great height in the atmosphere, for the sky was a dead black, and the stars had ceased to twinkle. By the same illusion which lifts the horizon of the sea to the level of the spectator on a hillside, the sable cloud beneath was dished out, and the car seemed to float in the middle of an immense dark sphere, whose upper half was strewn with silver. Looking down into the dark gulf below, I could see a ruddy light streaming through a rift in the clouds.

Font Pair: This blog makes finding fonts that go well together (by font category) easy by showing you examples in action on a simple browser.

Once you have a few font options in mind, you can start creating your font palette. In general, most infographics will have about 5 parts to a pallet.

Note: this does not mean you need 5 different fonts.
Here's an example of how a font pallet might be broken up based on the organization of your infographic:

- Main Title
- Section Title
- Headers
- Descriptors
- Body Text

In general, you shouldn't be using more than 2-3 different font families. Instead, use different weights and colors for different sections, but keep the fonts consistent.

In this next example, the font palette uses two different fonts with different weights and cases to create 5 unique parts of the pallet:

4 Ways to Keep Employees From Jumping Ship — 1

So how do companies keep employees on board? — 2

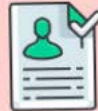STRATEGY #1 — 4
Write good job descriptions.

Make sure the job description gives candidates a clear picture of the position and company.

Include easily digestible lists of desired skills and job duties and a revealing company description.

STRATEGY #2 — 3
Use effective recruiting tactics.

Create an employee referral program that allows current employees to help with recruiting. — 5

Uncover a candidate's long-term qualifications.

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Here is an example of font palette you could use to create your own hierarchy.

Font Palette Example

1. Arvo - 30pt

2. Arvo - 24pt

3. Raleway - 16pt

4. RALEWAY - 12pt

5. Raleway - 10pt

DO: Match Fonts With Icons

Picking icons to use with your headers and fonts can be another area of difficulty for first-time designers.

When it comes to icons and fonts, great pairings can be achieved just by keeping the style consistent throughout.

For example, take a look at the infographics below:

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The infographic on the left conveys a certain feel of professionalism because the strong title font contrasts with the minimalism of the icons. Additionally, all of the fonts match each other, which helps to create an organized structure. The example on the right, on the other hand, uses four different fonts that don't have the same level of contrast with the icons.

Here's a good rule of thumb: if your icons are minimalist, light, and thin, trying using strong fonts in contrast.

Alternatively, if you're using bolder, fuller icons, use a minimal font in contrast. Here's an example demonstrating that effect:

THE
coffee
GUIDE

espresso
A strong black coffee made by forcing steam through dark-roast aromatic coffee beans at high pressure in an espresso machine.

cappuccino
This hugely popular coffee drink has become a staple. A true cappuccino is a combination of equal parts espresso, steamed milk and milk froth.

americano
A single shot of espresso added to a cup of hot water. Many coffee houses have perfected it, however, and the result has become a creamy, rich based coffee.

caffe latte
A popular drink in America probably due to its sweet, mellow flavor. One shot of espresso is mixed with 6 to 8 ounces of steamed milk, then topped with foam.

caf mocha
This is a cappuccino or a caffe latte with chocolate syrup or powder added.

caf au lait
This traditional French drink is similar to a caffe latte except that it is made with

In the next example, the font icon on the left has good contrast because the icon is meant to stand out. The version on the right, however, doesn't have the same level of contrast, making the focal point harder to navigate.
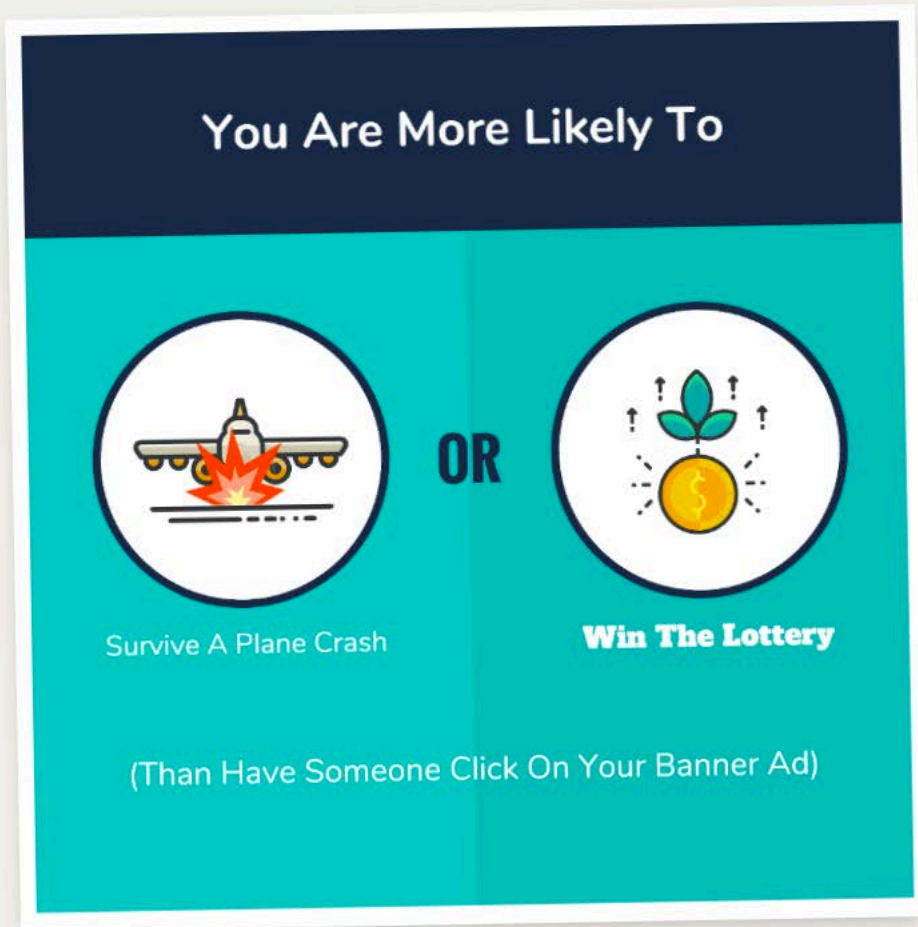
GET THE TEMPLATE!

DO: Align Everything

Design alignment refers to how you place similar elements in proximity to one another. Poor element alignment makes for a poorly-designed infographic and can be distracting to the viewer.

Alignment is a part of placing every single graphic, text, header, and element on your infographic. When you're in the design process, have a mental checklist:

- Are all of my headers aligned in the same vertical axis (left, right, center)?
- Is there the same amount of space between my headers and body text elements?
- Is there the same amount of space between my sections?
- Do my lines end and begin in the same proximity to the elements they're placed next to?

Here is an example of how elements should be lined up for consistency and elegance:

My Yearly Goals / 2017

No. 01

Financial security refers to the peace of mind you feel when you aren't worried about your income being enough to cover your expenses. It also means that you have enough money saved to cover emergencies and your future financial goals.

Financial Security ✓ ....
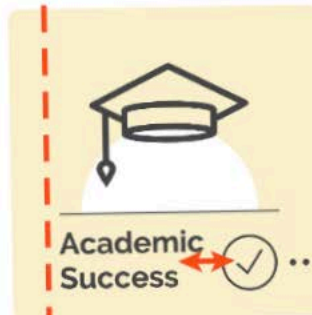
No. 02

Student success is defined as academic achievement, engagement in educationally purposeful activities, satisfaction, acquisition of desired knowledge, skills and competencies, persistence, attainment of educational outcomes, and post-college performance.

Academic Success ✓ ....

No. 03

Realize that fitness should be a lifetime commitment with ever-changing goals and expectations, and it should help you live a longer, healthier life.

Health & Fitness ✓ ....

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Make sure to place the same types of elements - body text, headers, graphics, etc. aligned in the same position relative to the other object within and outside of its section. If you have three sections with a header and body text, each header should be aligned with the other headers, and the same is true for the body text. In addition, there should be equal amount of space between the three different sections.

Here's an example of an infographic with perfect alignment:

✔ CHECKLIST FOR WINTER

TOQUE
This is the common name for a knitted winter hat. The term toque is unique to Canada and northern areas of the United States close to the Canadian border.

BOOTS
Make sure you have well insulated and waterproof boots for those cold winter days. Your toes are going to thank you in the end.

SOCKS
Just like boots, thick warm socks are essential in foot warmth. It doesn't hurt to have a couple of pairs handy either. No one likes cold toes.

GLOVES
Not only are these guys going to keep your fingers warm from the blistering cold, but will assist you in snowball making. Gloves are one of the most important pieces of clothing you could forget on cold days.

SCARF
Scarf's are highly under-rated these days. Not only do they block the wind from getting in the little cracks of your jacket, but add a stylish feel to your overall winter attire.

JACKET
A nice warm jacket is your life preserver in any winter situation. Even if it is a little funny looking, how would anyone survive below freezing temperatures without one?

GET THE TEMPLATE!

Icons

Do you ever looked at an icon on a page or infographic and thought, "That doesn't make sense with that content"?

When it comes to icons, make sure the icon represents the subject matter so that they add to your content rather than distract from it. No visualization should ever be used for the sake of, "just having something there." Any visualization you use, icons included, should be chosen with purpose based on the message you're trying to convey to the reader. Luckily, we have some tips for choosing icons like a pro.

One way to make sure an icon is useful is to include a label or text with it. Unless the icon is universally understood, it helps to explain any graphic element with textual clues.

Imagine if you saw the infographic on the left below. Would you be able figure out what the icon meant without the textual clues below? Probably not.
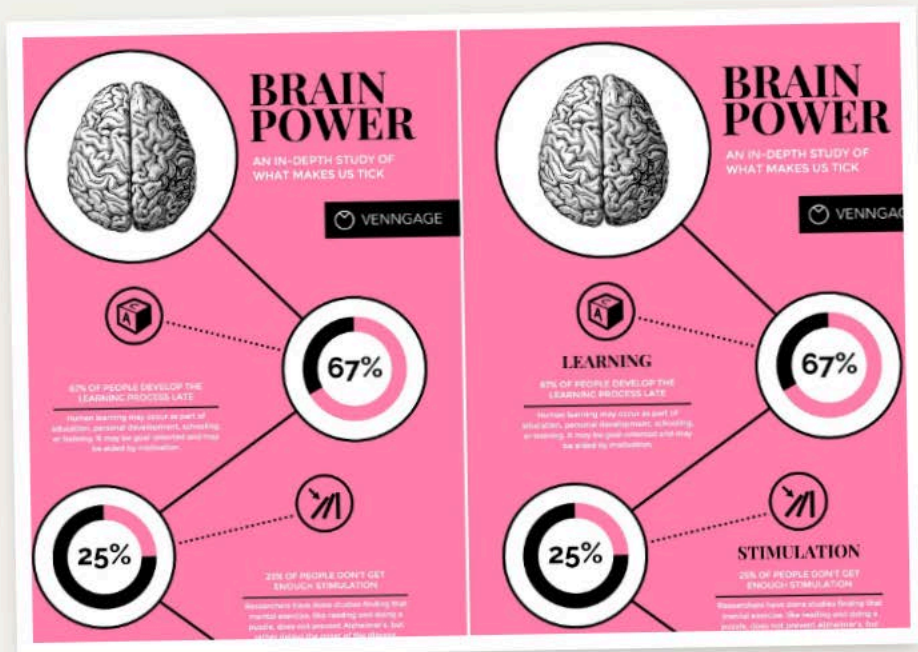
The icons and text work together to paint a complete picture of the idea.

Here is another example of the need for labels alongside icons. Without labels, you're stuck wondering what each section is about, making it harder to skim the material.

On the right, the labels and icons work in tandem to give context.

Icons shouldn't be used just for the sake of aesthetic appeal. Instead, icons need to have purpose in both concept and look.

For example, take a look at the infographics below on the left and right:
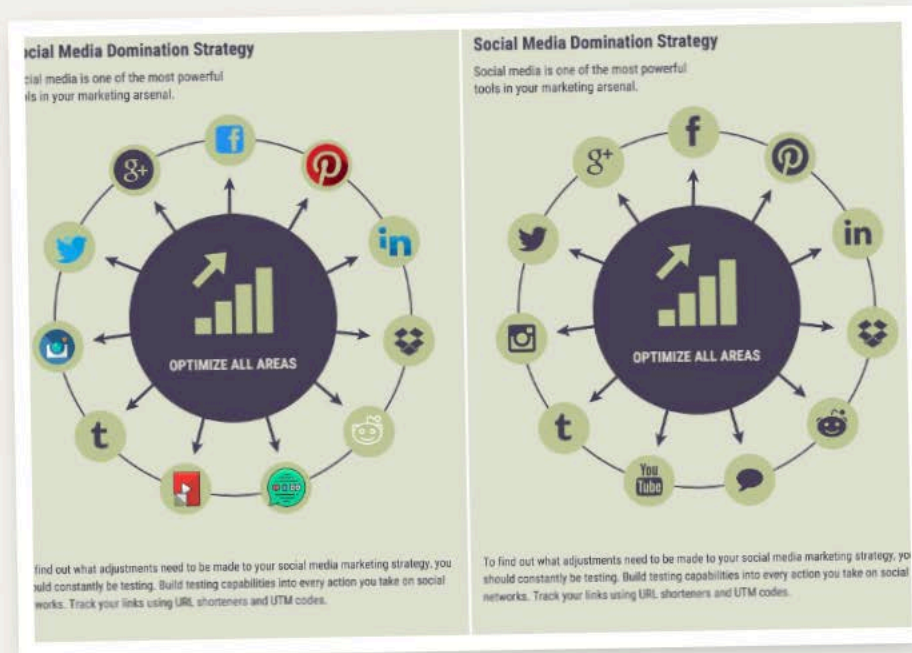
GET THE TEMPLATE!

While the infographic on the right looks professional and consistent because all the icons are created in the same style, the icons on the left look out of place and inconsistent.

Why does this matter? Instead of focusing on your content, readers get stuck looking at your odd icon choice.

Here's a final example of how poor icon matching ultimately distracts from the content of an infographic:
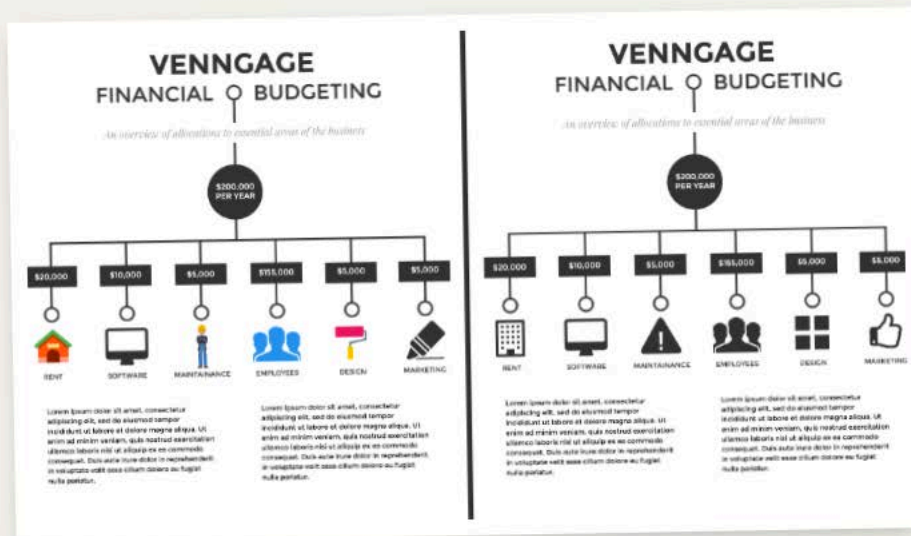
Instead of paying attention to the budget numbers highlighted in this infographic, your eyes are instead drawn directly to the different colored icons on the page. Remember: contrasting color is used to highlight important sections and points, but in this case, the color draws your eye to something that you don't want to be the focal point.

Icons in infographics should always add to the content, not detract or distract. Sticking to this mantra and will help you create useful and beautiful infographics!

DO: Use Icons For Quick Context

One of the easiest way to immediately add information and order to your infographic without using words is icons. Whether it's identifying a certain brand, item or group, icons can help establish context quickly. They help break down complex data or information for consumption.

For example, in the infographic on the right you can quickly get an idea about what the individual sections are about. The icons make it very easy to quickly skim the section skim the sections while still providing a backbone for the graphic.

On the left side, the check marks DO fit the overall theme of the infographic but DO NOT help the reader understand the content. Therefore, the effectiveness of the icons is lessened.

DO NOT: Avoid Icon Backgrounds

If you are looking for an easy way to make a batch of icons look spectacular, try using a background shape or border around icon.

Take a look at these next examples to see the tactic in practice:

GET THE TEMPLATE!

By using different background colors for your icons, like in the example above, you can quickly establish that each point is different from the others and make it easier for the sections to stand out from one another.

Anchors are focal points that help tie a section together. Using icons as anchors gives content a focal point. They also provide subtle organization and context to the text they anchor.

For example, below we used icons to anchor the many different social media descriptions on the timeline. By adding icons, it adds flow and context to the timeline and helps pull your eye down the infographic.
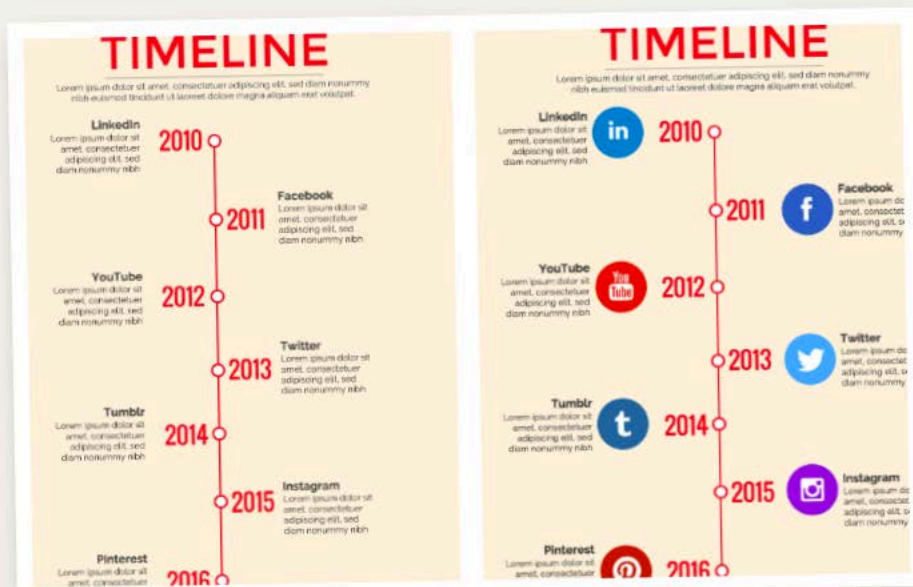
In contrast, the example on the left is lacking. There is less context, flow, and organization. **In short, icons are the anchors that help keep ideas organized.**

Here is another example template with of icons being used as anchors:
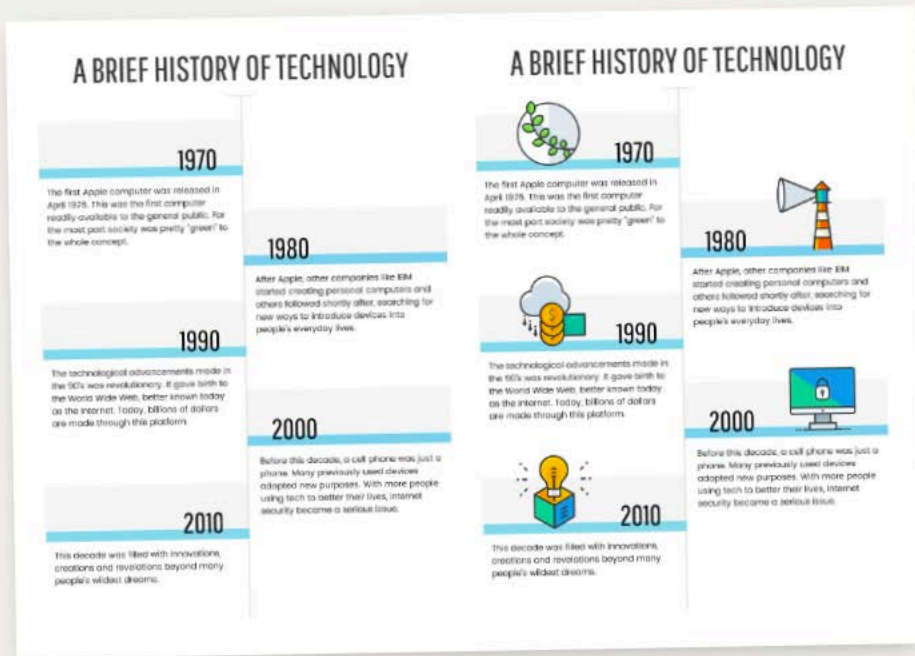
GET THE TEMPLATE!

These icons provide context for each section and make the whole infographic more visual.

Color

Let's be honest with ourselves: we are not all designers. But that doesn't mean we can't fake it 'til we make it and learn the basics in the meantime. One important basic? Using color effectively in your designs.

The right color selection can say as much about your infographic as the content contained in it. Color is a powerful design element because it helps you convey emotion, create themes, and add contrast to your design.

But, using the wrong colors can dilute the ideas you're trying to share or confuse the reader. Here's an example of how color is used to help convey a point:

Design
Trends

2017

1 LOUDER &
BRIGHTER COLORS

3 GOOGLE FONTS

Google Fonts are universal across multiple platforms. And a majority of these 810 different fonts are free to use.

GET THE TEMPLATE!

In the example above, one of the points is using "louder and brighter colors." Can you image if we'd used dark and dull colors in that section? It would have completely taken away from the point of the text content.

Using color to invoke a certain emotion is another important consideration. In the example below, the designer used a blue theme for an expert roundup. Blue is commonly used by companies to signify trust. Just by picking the right color they were able to subconsciously put more trust into the information and ideas presented.

1 **Dan Tyre**
Director at HubSpot
🐦 @dantyre

"The 3 ways I deal with negative feedback:
1. Don't take it personally.
2. See if I can learn something from the experience.
3. Consider the source."

2 **Oli Gardner**
Co-Founder of Unbounce
🐦 @oligardner

"The only time I get negative feedback these days is when I look at speaker feedback. When people respond negatively, I spend all my time focusing on that negative feedback. I feel bad about it for a while."

3 **Peep Laja**
Founder of ConversionXL
🐦 @peeplaja

"Negative feedback: unless it comes from people I actually know and who know me, I just ignore it. The caravan moves on."

4 **Alexia Vernon**
President at Alexia Vernon Empowerment
🐦 @AlexiaVernon

"I would start by saying what can I learn from this and sometimes what we can learn is how to give better feedback to other people. Try to receive their emotions and then see how you can respond."

5 **Vera Jones**
President of Vera's Voice Works
🐦 @veravoiceworks

"The first thing I ask: is this a reliable or relatable source, and is there usable value in this criticism? The second question: Is there any truth in the feedback, and if so, is there reasonable opportunity for me to change and improve?"

6 **Christopher Penn**
VP Marketing Technology at SHIFT Communications
🐦 @cspenn

"Part of dealing with negative feedback is understanding the relationship between what you are saying and what people are picking up or reading. The other part is to dig into what that feedback is actually saying and what can we turn that negative feedback into."
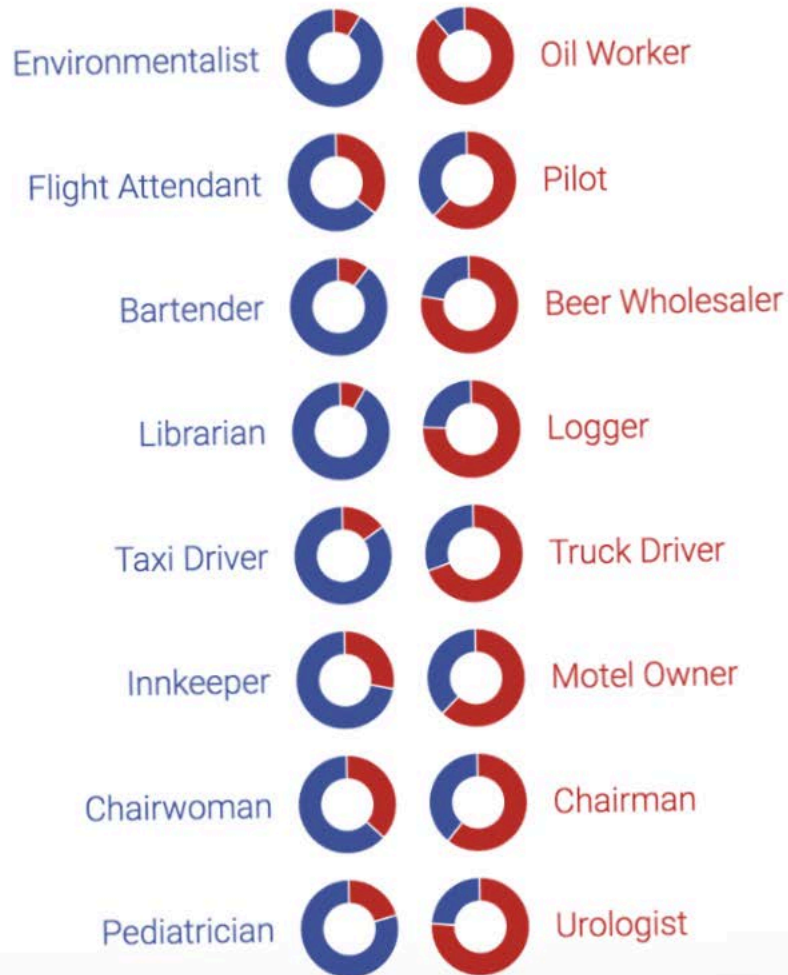
GET THE TEMPLATE!

Want more information on using color and your design? Here's a helpful blog post.

Another way to subtly use color is to signify different groups based on their distinctive colors. For example, this award winning infographic splits data on the U.S. political parties based on their representative colors.

Democratic vs. Republican occupations

| Democratic	Republican
Environmentalist	Oil Worker
Flight Attendant	Pilot
Bartender	Beer Wholesaler
Librarian	Logger
Taxi Driver	Truck Driver
Innkeeper	Motel Owner
Chairwoman	Chairman
Pediatrician	Urologist

The designer made it very easy to quickly compare the information and grasp the point.

Finally, don't forget about color fitting the content logically. For example, an infographic about the environment would be strange without green in the color scheme. Why? Because green is associated with the environment.

If you are talking about a health issue, a white or simple color scheme would be best. For example, in the infographic on the right the white creates a feeling of cleanliness, health and vitality. And the one on the left just looks off, even though the colors are very similar.
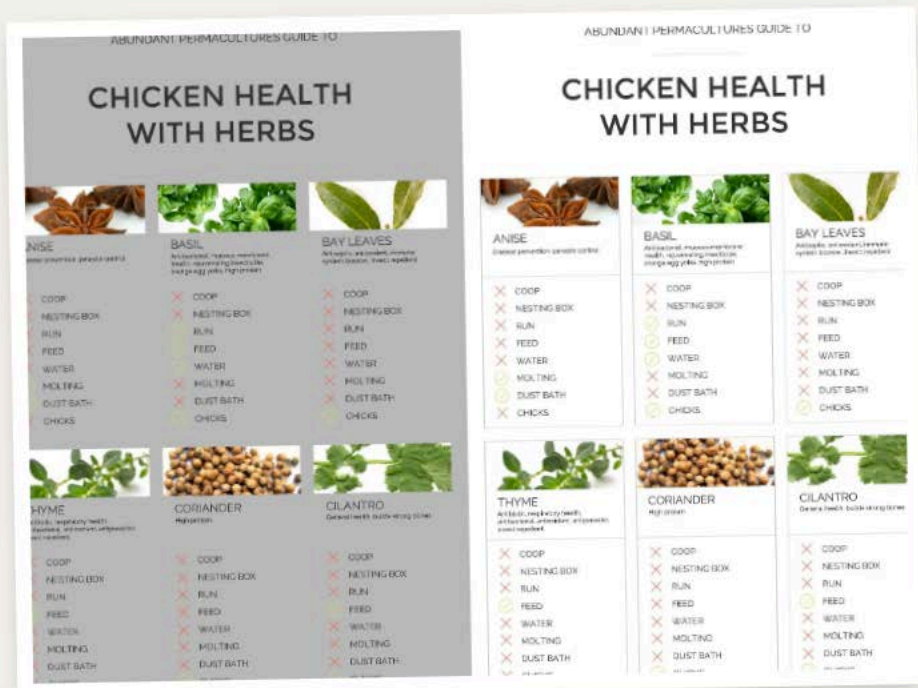
DO NOT: Avoid The Color Wheel

The color wheel is your friend when it comes making a compelling scheme. It may be a low tech way to match colors, but it also has been used by creatives for hundreds of years.

If you remember elementary school art class, then you know that there are a three main ways to find color harmony. There are different color themes you can use that are developed from the color wheel to create the perfect color scheme.

Analogous schemes are colors that are next to each other on the wheel. These color schemes are commonly found in nature and help create a sense of harmony.

Analogous
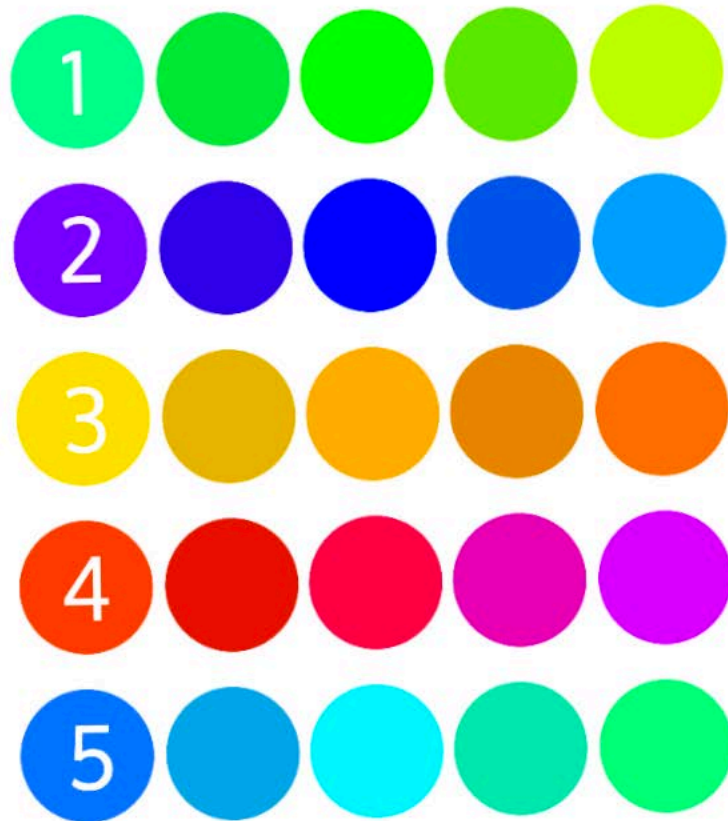
Here is an example of an infographic that uses an analogous color scheme:

How To Get Close To Anyone

01 KNOW

Get to know them. Make them feel understood and validated. See them from their own perspective.

02 CARE

Show them you care about their well-being. Be engaged with them. Demonstrate investment in them.
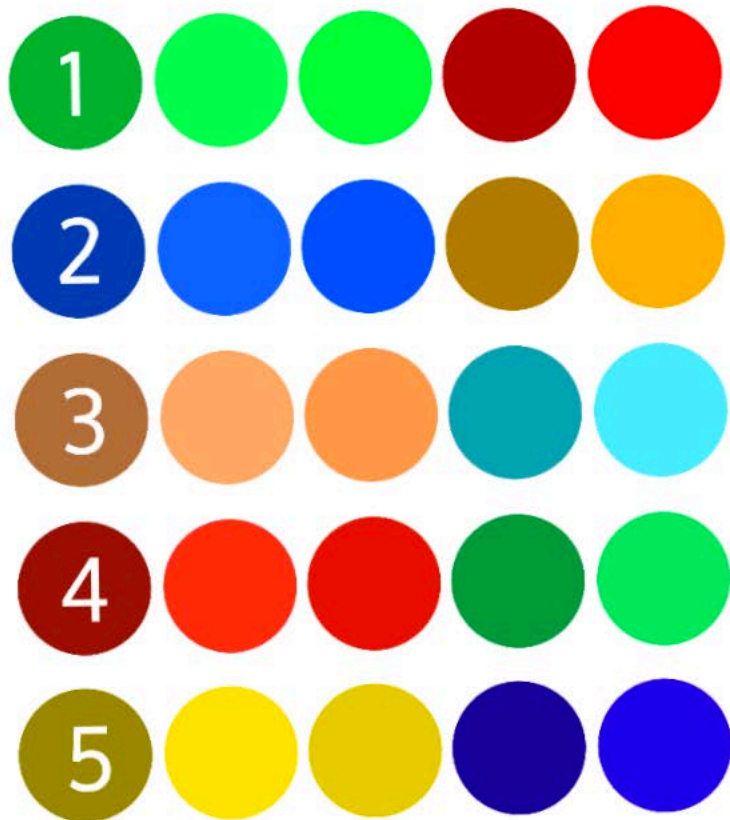
03 CREATE

Create a relationship culture. Develop rituals and routines. Give meaning to the moments you share.

GET THE TEMPLATE!

Complementary schemes involve using colors that have the highest contrast. These color schemes should be used if you want to make certain elements stand out from the rest or if you would like your design to feel very vibrant and dynamic.

Complementary

1				
2				
3				
4				
5				

Here is an example of an infographic that uses a complementary color scheme:

PLANNING AHEAD

WAYS TO KEEP YOUR COMMUTE STRESS FREE

001.

WEATHER

ALWAYS CHECK THE EXPECTED FORECAST

Checking the daily forecast allows you to plan your commute safely. If rain is expected, take public transit. If the weather calls for sunshine, go ahead and bike or walk. Enjoy your commute and seize the day!

002.

ROUTE

PLAN YOUR ROUTE BEFORE YOUR TRIP

Planning your route ahead of time can save you the stress of potential road blocks along the way. Stay clear of construction zones and if your biking, pick a bike friendly route to ensure a safe and stress free commute!

GET THE TEMPLATE!

Monochromatic schemes use different tints, tones, and shades of a single color. These color schemes are great if you want to use only a few shades to create a very simple infographic. For example, you can use a monochromatic color scheme if you have lots of graphs or charts in your infographic that need to highlight separate data points.

Monochromatic
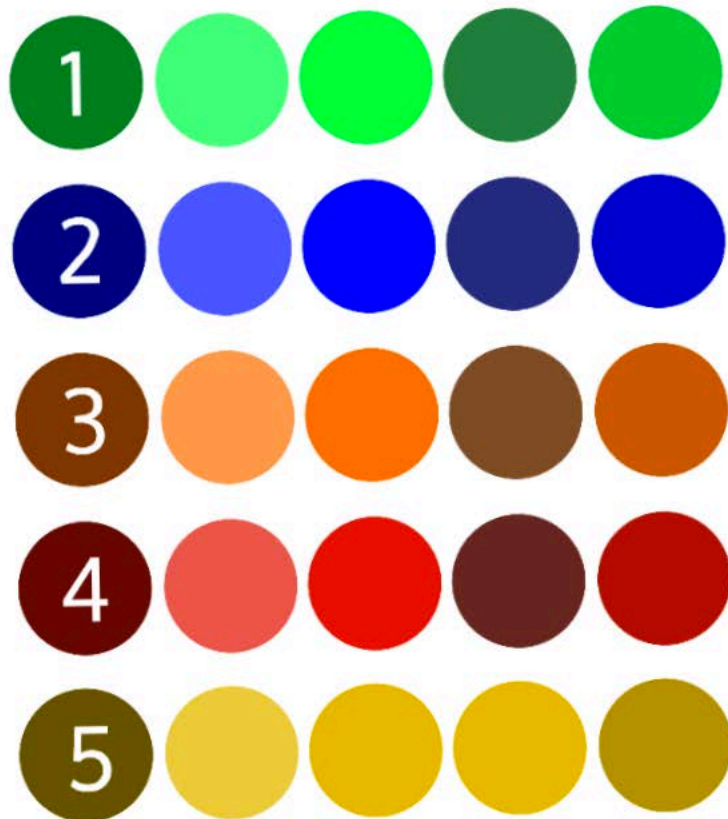
Here is an example of an infographic that uses a monochromatic color scheme:

Proven. ✓ 4 Ways to Keep Employees From Jumping Ship

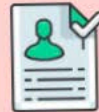## So how do companies keep employees on board?

STRATEGY #1
Write good job descriptions.

✓ Make sure the job description gives candidates a clear picture of the position and company.

✓ Include easily digestible lists of desired skills and job duties and a revealing company description.
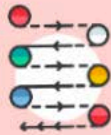
STRATEGY #2
Use effective recruiting tactics.

✓ Create an employee referral program that allows current employees to help with recruiting.

✓ Uncover a candidate's long-term qualifications.

STRATEGY #3
Create an onboarding program.

✓ Up to 20% of employee turnover happens within the first 45 days of employment.

✓ Offer an onboarding manual or video that introduces all essential processes, people, tools, and products.

STRATEGY #4
Conduct performance reviews.

✓ Give employees and managers the opportunity to offer feedback.

✓ Hold quarterly or annual reviews for your employees.

GET THE TEMPLATE!

Need more color inspiration? Check out [this article](). There are over 30 examples of color schemes that you can use right now.

DO NOT: Start Without A Color Plan

Now that you have created an exceptional color scheme, it's time to assign those colors to elements in your infographic.

When creating a color plan, try using your content outline as a guide. Doing so will help you visualize your color plan and organize the design before you start.

Color Plan Example

- ◯ Main Header
- ◯ Section Headers
- 🔵 Body Text
- 🔴 Icons
- 🟣 Background
- 🔵 Embellishments

For a color plan to be effective it should include colors for headers, sub headers, body text, icons, background and body text.

EFFECTIVE LANDING PAGE
DESIGN ELEMENTS

Every landing page design should have a clean, professional look and feel.

03.

02.

04.

01.

05.

01. USE IMAGES SPARKINGLY

Depending upon your market, a high-quality image will increase conversions, but too many will distract the customer from the opt-in area or other call to action.

02. PUT ON A HAPPY FACE

If you use an image of a person, they should be looking at the offer and smiling. The person in the image should be similar to your target audience.

03. RESPONSIVE AND MOBILE

Make sure every landing page is responsive and mobile. Well over 60 percent of users are now using mobile devices.

04. BLACK VS. WHITE

White backgrounds convert better in business niches; darker backgrounds do better in the entertainment industry (i.e., bars and restaurants).

05. FIRST NAME AND EMAIL ONLY

Every additional field you add to an opt-in form, the lower your conversions will be. If you have a sales team and really want to ask for a phone number, make it optional.

Usually, it is best for an opt-in form to be above the fold; however, you must test as in some cases having the form at the bottom of the content converts better.

GET THE TEMPLATE!

When creating data visualizations, it's important to use color with intent. In other words, what do the colors represent and are they telling the right story with the data?

One way to display data without using too much color is to use tints and tones of the same color. To do this, you first need a color to start with: in this case, we selected a dark blue.
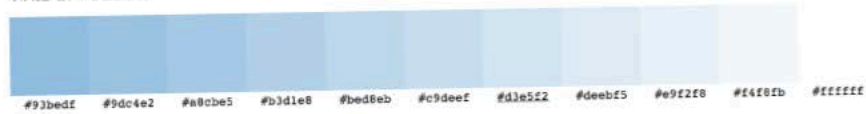
Then, plug your colors hex code into a color tool, like Adobe Color CC to find all of the shades and tints you can use in your data visualization.

For example, here's a graphic showing the 20 tints and tones of the blue chosen for this specific color scheme:
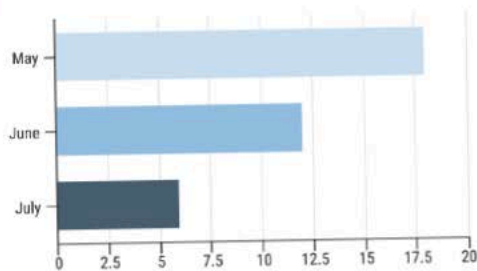
Shades of #93bedf

| #93bedf | #84abc8 | #7598b2 | #66859c | #587285 | #495f6f | #3a4c59 | #2c3942 | #1d262c | #0e1316 | #000000 |

Tints of #93bedf

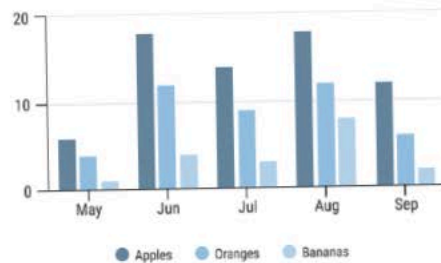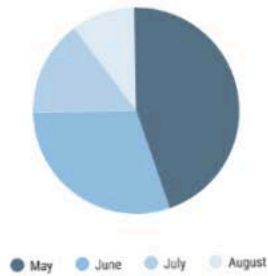| #93bedf | #9dc4e2 | #a8cbe5 | #b3d1e8 | #bed8eb | #c9deef | #d1e5f2 | #deebf5 | #e9f2f8 | #f4f8fb | #ffffff |

Here are a few examples of graphs and charts using the color spectrum above:

Want more information to help you choose colors for your data visualizations? .

DO: Use Your Brand Colors

You already have a battle-tested color scheme in your logo or branding. Why not use it? Use one of your brand colors to create a few palettes like we did with the Venngage brand colors below:

Brand Palettes

Then use that color palette on an infographic! For example:

7 ADVANTAGES OF TAKING
ONLINE CLASSES

?

01.

Variety of programs
& courses

From traditional four-year universities
to completely online career colleges,
higher education today offers a variety
of options for students. This means
that no matter what students wish to
study, from nursing to neuroscience,
they can find online the courses or
degree programs they need.

02.

Lower total costs:

Online programs can be a more

Graphs/Charts

Data visualizations make complex data easy to understand for your readers.

When writing about data-heavy topics, your job should be to break down complicated information so the reader understands it more easily. Sometimes, when you have lots of data to work with, it can be hard to decide which points and takeaways are the most important to share.

There's usually no need to visualize every single piece data available in order to tell a compelling story. Instead, aim for simplicity and focus when approaching a data-driven infographic.

The most successful visualizations convey their meaning in seconds and actually add to the overall story being told.

The infographic below is a perfect example of simplified design. The first section uses a pie chart effectively to convey the message that there are is a ton of spam around hashtags. The visualization used on the left, in contrast, is harder to understand and doesn't tell the story as simply.
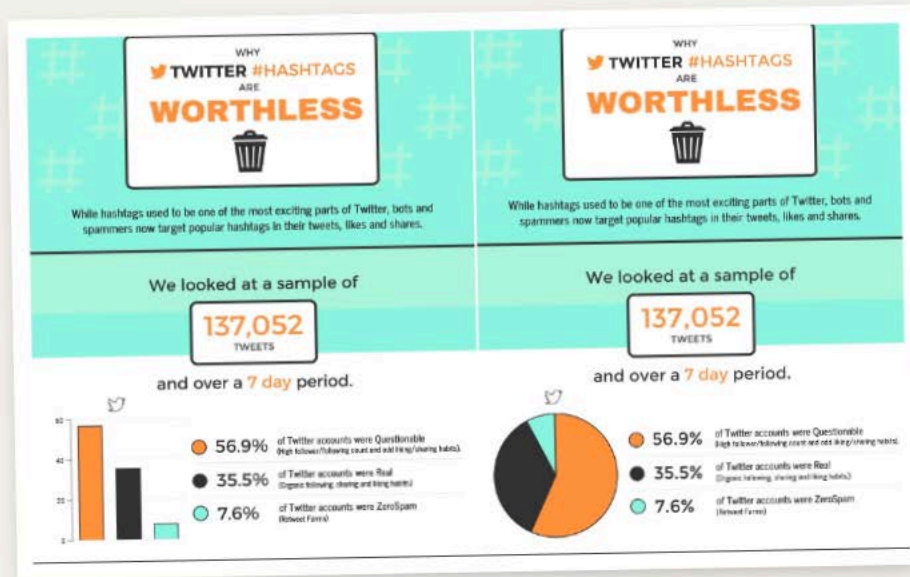
In the same infographic, the author used 30 visualizations to represent the idea that spam affects different hashtags across the board. Although there are 30 visualizations presented, the use of color allows the reader to understand the concept quickly and dig in more if they so desire.

Business-related hashtags with the most spam

QUESTIONABLE   REAL   ZERO SPAM

#Advertising #Business #ContentMarketing #Design #DigitalMarketing #EmailMarketing

#Entrepreneur #GrowthHacking #InboundMarketing #InfluencerMarketing #Marketing #MobileMarketing

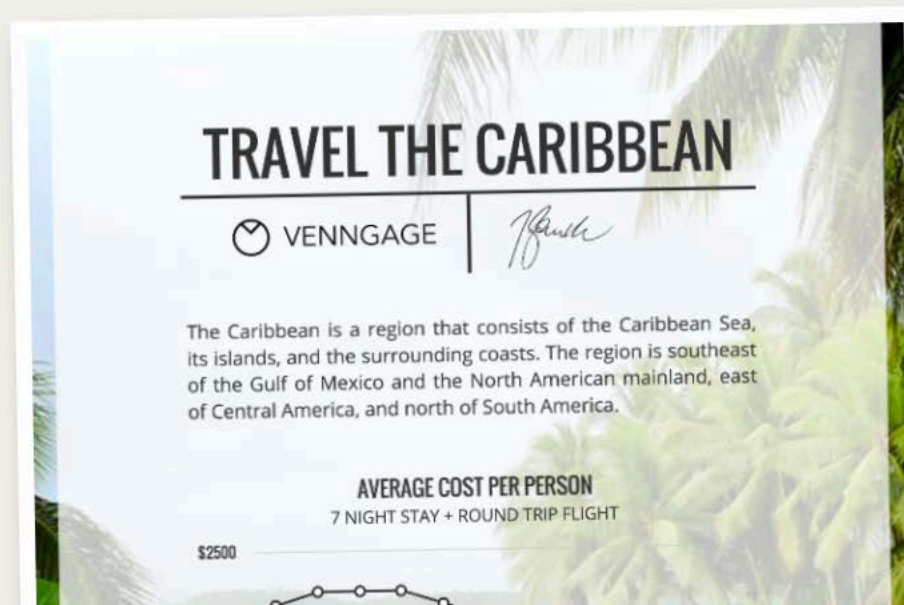#OnlineMarketing #PR #Sales #SEO #SocialMedia #Startup

The simpler you can keep a visualization the more useful it will be for your reader.

DO: Highlight Important Data

Sometimes it doesn't matter how simple your visualizations are; if the reader can't tie the information together, the message of the infographic will be confusing. That's why it's essential to highlight the important parts of any graph or chart. This doesn't mean you have to use giant arrows or yellow highlighter on every infographic, but it does mean you should learn to design focal points on the infographic with intention.

For example, in the graph below, the designer used a simple circle and arrow to draw attention to an important part of the graph that they wanted the reader to understand.

TRAVEL THE CARIBBEAN

VENNGAGE

The Caribbean is a region that consists of the Caribbean Sea, its islands, and the surrounding coasts. The region is southeast of the Gulf of Mexico and the North American mainland, east of Central America, and north of South America.

AVERAGE COST PER PERSON
7 NIGHT STAY + ROUND TRIP FLIGHT

$2500

By adding a caption pointing to the circle, the designer was able to convey the message of the graph and give context to the reader quickly. If the context was different the reader wouldn't automatically know that prices were low due to hurricane season. The simple highlight makes all the difference.

In another example, a designer added a small dotted line to compare the monthly sales goal to actual growth. This gives context to the data being presented so that it means more to the reader. Sure there was sales growth! But compared to what goal?

DO NOT: Forget Legends, Titles & Labels

Without titles, legends, and labels, your reader will not have enough context to interpret a data visualization. **Data visualization rule #1: never forget to add vital context to your charts and graphs.**

Below, the graphs in the example compare data from different questions and show the percentage of their answers. Without a color-coded legend, the data would be impossible for the reader to interpret.

5.4% said they used GIFs and Memes most frequently

14% said they used Charts and Data Visualizations the most.

15.2% said that Videos and Presentations were used most frequently.

35% of marketers stated that stock photos were used most frequently.

30.4% said that used original graphics such as infographics more frequently.

✓ **3** WHEN ASKED WHICH TYPES OF VISUALS HAD THE HIGHEST ENGAGEMENT:

5% of marketers said that GIFs and Memes performed best

7.6% of marketers stated that stock photos had the best impact, despite being used most frequently

20.2% said that videos and presentations performed best

41.5% of marketers surveyed said Infographics and original graphics were the most engaging

25.7% of marketers stated that charts and data visualizations performed best

GET THE TEMPLATE!

Labels give the reader interesting information about the graph or the data and make sure the reader has the whole story. In the infographic below, by including the tons of coffee under each country the data becomes immediately more useful -- it's not just comparative, but it also gives exact figures.

Coffee Consumption
Tonnes of coffee consumed by Top 5 countries

France
202 Tonnes

Italy
211 Tonnes

USA
971 Tonnes

Germany
425 Tonnes

Brazil
969 Tonnes

Source

You can also use labels to quantify your data without making it look out of place. In the example below look at how well the labels in the second graph fit into the rest of the infographic. They're a clear part of the design, but they also provide key information for the visualization.

EMAIL MARKETING STATISTICS

SUBJECT LINES WITH FEWER THAN 10 CHARACTERS HAVE A

49.73%
OPEN RATE

U.S. COMPANIES SEND MORE EMAILS THAN THE GLOBAL AVERAGE

1.47 MILLION
✉ PER MONTH

1.38 MILLION
✉ PER MONTH

DO NOT: Use Random Color

Remember all of the color scheme tips and trips we covered earlier in this guide? Don't forget to include those colors in your data visualizations! Avoid lazily choosing colors for your charts and graphs and instead make sure your charts fit in with the theme of your design.

Remember, if you need lots of color variations for your charts, it's always an option to use tints, tones, and shades of your color schemes. That tactic is perfectly suited for differentiating pieces of data without swaying from your color scheme.

In the example below, the color scheme is made up of just 2 main colors. But, the pie chart made use of tints and tones to stay within the color scheme.
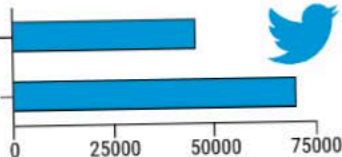
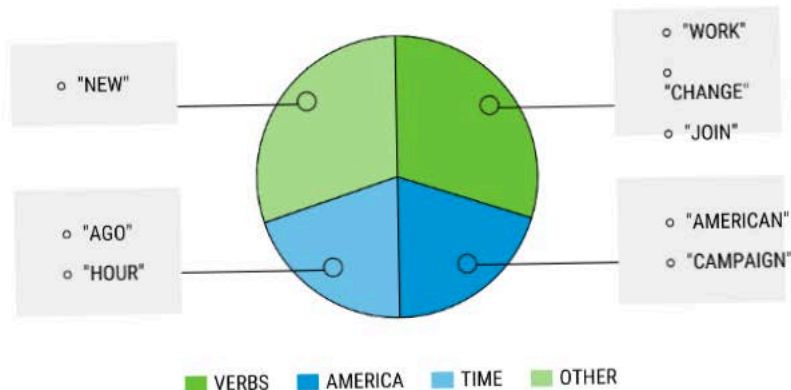# BERNIE SANDERS
DEMOCRATIC

FOLLOWERS | TWITTER 53.81% | INCREASE

ANNOUNCEMENT DATE
AFTER 30 DAYS

0   25000   50000   75000

TOP TWEETED TERMS | PERCENT

- "NEW"
- "WORK"
- "CHANGE"
- "JOIN"
- "AGO"
- "HOUR"
- "AMERICAN"
- "CAMPAIGN"

■ VERBS ■ AMERICA ■ TIME ■ OTHER

Now that you're familiar with the do's and don'ts of infographic design, it's time to start putting your knowledge to work. Just remember: the best way to get better at design is practice.

No one's first infographic is their best design ever. But, between the tips in this guide and the other resources available to you, you'll be creating amazing infographics in no time!

Looking for some great infographic templates to get you started? Check out the Venngage infographic templates library.

Once you're started creating amazing infographics, use HubSpot Marketing Free to turn those infographic visits on your website into leads!

Credits:

Created with images by PublicDomainPictures - "easel frame billboard"