Less is best: Effective poster design & data visualization

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POSTER DESIGN

When designing your poster, remember *less is best!* Give the most important info prime real estate (*ahem* random data vis), and organize your info in a logical flow. Use section headings to guide the viewer. And use colour strategically – to denote categories or highlight important info. But don’t overdo it *(rainbow puke = no no).*

DESIGN TIPS & TRICKS

✓ Font sizes: 90-150 for title; 50-72 for headings; =>32 for body text
✓ Dark text on a light background is easiest to read
✓ Choose colours with high contrast & colour combos that are colourblind-friendly
✓ Word count: 500-800 words
✓ White space is your friend
✓ Use informative labels and captions

PRINCIPLES OF DATA VISUALIZATION

• *Do* use objects and attributes appropriately to denote relationships
• *Don’t* make anything 3D or use pie charts if you can avoid it
• *Do* use pre-attentive attributes to your advantage
  • Encoding categorical items? Use SHAPE and hue
  • Encoding quantitative values? Length and 2D position are best, but width and size will also work
• *Don’t* clutter your viz with extraneous labels, colours, design, etc.
• *Do* adhere to the data: ink ratio! a.k.a. “data looks better naked” *(http://www.darkhorseanalytics.com/blog/data-looks-better-naked)*

POSTER CONTENT

• Choose a title that immediately communicates your message
• Don’t paste your whole report onto a poster
• Use bulleted lists where appropriate
• Think of your poster as the abstract or summary for your report; distill the information to include the most important elements

TOOLS & RESOURCES

• Poster templates: [http://colinpurrington.com/tips/poster-design#templates](http://colinpurrington.com/tips/poster-design#templates)
• Tableau Public: [https://public.tableau.com/s/](https://public.tableau.com/s/)
• ColorBrewer: [http://colorbrewer2.org/](http://colorbrewer2.org/)
• NounProject: [https://thenounproject.com/](https://thenounproject.com/)

References


Graphics

mechanical instrument by Aha-Soft from the Noun Project
Bar chart by Austin Andrews from the Noun Project
thumbs up by Bruno Landowski from the Noun Project