

A map may distort quantitative information.

Geographic sizes are not related to population density. Occurrences in Arizona counties which are very large geographically would seem significant where occurrences in New York State would seem insignificant although the population is much denser.

A thin data set or "out of context" information can create a "Gee Whiz" graphic.

A thin data set should always be suspect. Example: Presenting only one year of one state's traffic data takes information out of context. How about other years? How about other states?

Were other factors involved such as weather, road conditions, change in tourism? One bus accident in a previous year could be distorting the data as presented.

Ways to improve data graphics.

Lose the grids or at least subdue them. Legends are unnecessary if you label the data. Start and stop years at data points, don't need to show years for which there is no information. Run axis labeling horizontally. Use actual numbers for data points on the graphic.

Data ink

is information carrying ink. It is the non-erasable core of a graphic. It must be present for understanding.

When a pie chart the best vehicle for the visual display of quantitative information?

When the graphic is depicting percentages or parts of a whole

The best pie chart format

Start at the 12:00 o'clock position and proceed clockwise from largest to smallest.

This provides clear and easy comparison of the segments.

Ways to maintain user friendliness in a data graphic.

Words are spelled out, mysterious and elaborate encoding is avoided.

Words run from left to right.

Little messages help explain the data.

Elaborately encoded shadings, cross-hatching, and colors are avoided; instead, labels are placed

in the graphic itself; no legend is necessary.

Graphic attracts the viewer and provokes curiosity.

Colors, if used, are chosen so that color-deficient and color-blind can make sense of the graphic (blue can be distinguished from other colors by most color-deficient people).

Type is clear, precise, modest; lettering may be done by hand.

Type is upper-and-lower case, with serifs.

Graphic computer, better than hand wrought image for:

Great precision

Professional typographic production

Quick duplication

Programmed special effects

Easy editing and revising

Hand wrought image better than graphic computer for:

Creative discovery due to interaction of tool, surface, technique

Creative speed and freedom during brainstorming stages

No size/color constraints

Unlimited media selection for finished art

Pieces of information needed to design a visual mark for a business client.

a. Nature of the business/product or service

b. specific task (logo, symbol, etc.)

c. audience for the visual

d. communication objective (company image to project)

e. competition (difference from the competition)

f. parameters, application of visual (how will a mark be used)

g. future goals of company (expansion, redirection, etc.)

h. deadline

i. budget