Infographic Design Basics

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Breaking down infographics

1. Message
2. Content
3. Design
1. Message

What are you telling the audience about?
What is the **focus** of your infographic?

- Pick one aspect of your research and use that to shape your story

Summarize what your research is about

Highlight the impact for sustainable agri-food systems

- So what – who cares?
2. **Content**

What should you include in an infographic?
What is plain language?

Communication your audience can understand the first time they read or hear it.

Material is in plain language if your audience can:
- Find what they need
- Understand what they find
- Use what they find to meet their needs
Focus on the audience

Plain language is audience specific

"Language that is plain to one set of readers may not be plain to others"

Plain language is just good writing!
Why use plain language?

- Improve accessibility to information
- Support dissemination
- To keep your audience reading/listening (or at least not give them a reason to quit)
Plain language writing tips

- Avoid acronyms
- Use common words whenever possible.
- Use technical terms only whenever necessary
- Organize information logically
- Use an easy-to-read format
- Write concisely
  - Use descriptive verbs and avoid clutter
- Write clearly
  - Write with an active voice

National Institutes of Health (NIH) Plain Language Training. Available online: https://plainlanguage.nih.gov/CBTs/PlainLanguage/login.asp
Developing the content

- Prepare a new body of text for your infographic
  - Narrow the focus
  - What is your take home message?
- Distill the information
  - Eliminate all but the vital information
  - Reduce your information to concise statements
  - Reinterpret text as charts, graphs, icons or illustrations
  - Make your main title catchy and clear

Why should your audience care about your research?
3. Design

What should you include in an infographic?
INFOGRAPHICS VS.

Long-form text, which while containing more information, tends to cause the reader to tune out sooner. How can infographics make your research more engaging and accessible? ...zzzzz
Infographic facts

- Infographics are 30x more likely to be read than text
- 65% of the population learns best visually than via text
- 50% of the human brain is dedicated to visual learning
- People tend to remember only 20% of what they read
- The human brain tends to filter out 99% of the sensory information it encounters
- However, it notices novel information
Let's look at another example

- 80% of people consume junk food daily
- One in five children worldwide is either overweight or obese
- Some of the main sources of empty calories include sweetened drinks, fries, red meat, and desserts
- The percentage of children walking to school on foot has decreased from 20.2% in 1980 to 8.3% in 2015
- The total calories consumed daily by the average adult has nearly doubled from 1550 in 1980 to 3000 in 2015
Design principles

1. Form
   ▫ Visually appealing
   ▫ Colours are harmonious
   ▫ Well chosen typefaces

2. Function
   ▫ Serves its purpose
   ▫ Easy to read and understand

3. Feeling
   ▫ Stays on message
   ▫ Cohesive mood throughout
   ▫ Evokes proper emotional response
The placement of content should be balanced throughout the graphic.

**Symmetrical**: equal on both sides

**Asymmetrical**: skewed but uses white space

**Radial**: arranges objects around a central point
Layout - examples

Symmetrical

Asymmetrical

Radial
Alignment

- Ensure that text and graphics are aligned. Use a template and gridlines to help align your elements to each other.
- Aligning objects properly keeps a design clean and avoids the messiness of randomly placed objects.

https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/infographic-design
Repetition

- Strengthens the overall look and ties different elements together to help keep them organized and consistent.
- Text, colour, background colour and image styles can all be used to achieve repetition.
- Can also be used to draw attention to an element.
Proximity

- Creates organization by grouping similar or related elements together. Proximity can include visually connecting elements using placement, colour, typeface, size, etc.
Contrast

- Use contrasting colours to highlight the most important element of your poster
- Contrast directs your audience to what’s most important
White space

- Avoid cluttering the design by leaving plenty of space between elements.
- Creates shape and can help highlight the most important pieces of information in your design.
- Never underestimate the power of simplicity.
Colours

- Start with 1 or 2 harmonious colours
- Choose colours associated with your subject matter or that are prominent within the graphics of your project.
Typography

- Pick **2-3 fonts** and stick with them for the entire poster.

  **Sans Serif** - lacks decorative features on ends of letters. Cleaner and easier to read.

  **Serif** - contains decorative features on letters. Better for more traditional projects.

  **Display fonts** – many different styles. Best for small amounts of text (titles, headers) and more graphic-heavy designs.

- It is always acceptable to use only one typeface and bold the heading.
Steps for making an effective infographic

1. Story
Identify the key focus/story the infographic needs to convey to the audience. Pick 2-5 key findings to drive the story.

2. Think of the big idea
Think broadly beyond the narrow academic audience. Have a very explicit, catchy and simple headline.

3. Remember your audience
The aim is to make research accessible and they likely aren’t familiar with your research area.

4. Design
Pick your images, icons, colour schemes and typography.
General rules

▪ **Use text wisely:** If the text was removed, could you still understand the idea your infographic conveys?

▪ **Lean towards the visual:** People are naturally drawn to images over text. The key point is that infographics are easy on the eyes and simple to read. Add icons to support and explain the text.

▪ **Include a visual hook:** Capture the intended audience’s attention. Ideally this also gives the audience an idea of what the infographic is about.

▪ **Visualize data consistently:** Use consistent style and scale for your data visualizations throughout the infographic.
Design best practices

- Use classic fonts – easiest to read
- No more than 2 or 3 typefaces in a project
- Avoid CAPITALIZATION in the body text
- Aim to not have text smaller than 28pt and never smaller than 12pt
- Stick with one icon style
- Use proper alignment – usually left
- Do not mix text sizes and weights
- Create contrast between text and background – dark text on light background is best
- Keep spacing consistent
- Never underline – use italics
What have past students made?
This study advances the conceptualisation and operationalisation of consumer engagement in the context of online brand communities (OBCs). Past scholarship has only partially addressed the dimensionality of engagement and the different engagement foci, and these oversights have important theoretical and empirical consequences. This study contributes to the nascent stream of research that aims to theoretically refine and operationalise engagement by espousing the duality of engagement with two engagement foci (brand and community) and seven sub-dimensions of consumer engagement. Using qualitative data from consumers and experts, three survey data sets based on English and French samples, and two pools of mirrored items (one for each engagement focus), the study develops and validates a dual-focus 22-item scale of consumer engagement that can be used to operationalise engagement with various consumer engagement objects.
Pigs of Instagram

Network analysis was used to determine the connections between Ontario swine herds and service suppliers to understand the emergence of porcine epidemic diarrhea virus (PEDV) in 2014.

What was done and what was found

1. Feed Supplier
2. Big data
3. Network analysis

Research benefits: Contributions to the future

- Industry collaborations and data sharing
- Variability and velocity
- Data analysis
- Pig health and productivity
- Knowledge translation and transfer
- Improve feed health

Contact for more details:

Ontario Veterinary College, University of Guelph
MSc, PhD candidate

Why You Should Carrot—All About Controlling Carrot Weevil

Carrots constitute the largest value to the Canadian economy of any vegetable. The use of carrots is worth $130 million. Over 100 carrots will feed 380 baby carrots.

Carrots are healthy, delicious, and under attack!

Carrot weevil (Crusafonius quirosi) is a pest that damages carrots and reduces the yield of carrots. The carrot weevil is controlled by using alternative control measures such as traps, pheromones, and biological control agents.

We can fix this!

- Daily feeding by 2-3 weeks
- Shift cultivar application 2 weeks earlier
- Reduce damage by 50% and yield loss by 30%
- Reduce damage by 300%

Who else knows about this?

Everyone! Using KTT strategies:

- Exchange and share best practices
- Collaborate with multiple stakeholders

Pigs of Instagram

Network analysis was used to determine the connections between Ontario swine herds and service suppliers to understand the emergence of porcine epidemic diarrhea virus (PEDV) in 2014.

Climate change may cause dramatic temperature fluctuations and thermal stress. Thermal stress has a negative impact on the health and productivity of susceptible animals.

Breeding sheep resistant to climate change

D. Nayfar, Z. Li, B.A. Mallard, A. Caneva, C. Basset, H.A. Kamran

The cortisol connection

Cortisol is a hormone released during times of stress. Cortisol can be used as a proxy for stress.

The research plan

- Heat shock proteins (HSPs)
- Caspase activity
- Cell proliferation
- Cell survival

Previous research

- Characteristics of thermal resistance

What we expect

- Sheep with a cold stress response will be more thermal resistant than PEDV
- Selection for increased thermal resistance

Expecting big benefits

- Improved animal welfare
- Improved production efficiency
- Reduced use of antibiotics
- More sustainable feed and food production

working towards

Breeding sheep resistant to climate change

D. Nayfar, Z. Li, B.A. Mallard, A. Caneva, C. Basset, H.A. Kamran
**Resources**

**Infographic creation** – remember size requirement is 3’x4’ (landscape orientation)
- Piktochart.com
- Canva.com
- Venngage.com
- Infogr.am
- PowerPoint

**Colours**
- Flat colour ideas: [http://www.flatuicolorpicker.com/](http://www.flatuicolorpicker.com/)
- Create colour combinations: [http://paletton.com](http://paletton.com)
- [https://color.adobe.com/create](https://color.adobe.com/create)
- Picking map colours: [http://colorbrewer2.org](http://colorbrewer2.org)

**Contrast**
- [https://contrastchecker.com/](https://contrastchecker.com/)
Resources

Plain language
- Plain language editor - http://www.hemingwayapp.com/

Free images
- https://www.pexels.com/
- https://unsplash.com/
- https://pixabay.com/

Free icons
- https://thenounproject.com/ – attribution depends on selection
- http://aiconica.net/ – no attribution required
- http://flaticons.net/ – no attribution required
- https://www.flaticon.com/ – attribution required