FT Story Playbook: Charticle

([link to the millennial moment article](#))

Where can I find it?

You can choose the 'Charticle' template when you create a new story in Methode under the World, Companies, Markets, FastFT and Features baskets.

What is it good for?
- Charticles are a good format for **explainers**; particularly when you are explaining changes in data.

- The best charticles have one of two attributes:
    - A clear narrative arc (Each chart is a chapter in the story)
      i.e. [The effects of EU migration on Britain in 5 charts](#)
    - A clear structure (Each chart addresses a different topic area)
      i.e. [Emerging markets checklist: a guide to the key economies](#)

What is it not good for?
- If you don't have data that tells readers something of value

- If you are not clear about the point being made by *each* chart

What other good charticles have we've made in the past?

[The millennial moment — in charts](#)
By Cale Tilford

[3,453 days and $18tn later, the US bull market hits record run](#)
By Nicole Bullock and Brooke Fox

[The huge disparities in US life expectancy in five charts](#)
By Alan Smith and Federica Cocco

How long does it take to make one of these?

The hardest and most time-consuming things about charticles are assembling the data and coming up with the story. The time needed varies from story to story, but expect it to take at least a day to do both, if you are starting from scratch.

After you have the story structure and the data, it will take about a day to do the rest: get the words in order, charts made, editing, revise and web production, etc.

It's possible to complete a charticle as an overnight story (i.e. commission at the beginning of the day and have it ready to publish by 5am the next morning), but in general this should be seen as a format that requires **2-3 days** to put together.

Detailed Production Guide

Who do I need to talk to

- Someone to make the charts:
  - Contact the graphic team. Request through Asana. You can always reach the on-duty graphics editor at _____@ft.com
- Someone to assemble the data:
  - This will likely be a collaboration between the reporter and the stats desk.
- Someone to compile the words. Ask for:
  - An introductory paragraph, ideally no more than 200 words
  - Text for each chart. Ideally no more than 150 words per chart.
- Ask Kevin's design team for:
  - A master image for the article
- Notify the social media team:
  - Charticles tend to do well on social media

What do I do

Commissioning

- On a piece of paper (or a google doc), sketch out the structure of your charticle. Either do this with the reporter or ask the reporter for this. What you want is:

    - The nut graf for the charticle
    - Write a headline for *each chart*.

- Working with the reporter and the stats desk, decide what data is needed for each chart and how to get it.

- Create an entry for the story in Asana, and assign graphicsbot to the story, making sure you specify in the story name that it is a charticle.

- Ask the reporter for the words

Production

- Create a new story in methode, and choose the "Charticle" template.

- Copy or write in the intro par and text accompanying each chart

- In methode, Find the chart images made by the graphics desk. There will be between 2 to 3 images for each chart (Small, Medium and Large - sometimes there's only Small and Medium). Drag them into the corresponding slots in the image set.

- Write headline, insert master image, and other web furniture

- Fill out metadata, and run tansa

- Release to web-revise

Headline

- If the format is part of the appeal of the article, make it clear in the headline - i.e.
  The point I am trying to make in five charts
  Five charts that show that something is on the brink of disaster
- But don't feel that you have to use 'in charts'

If you run into trouble…

Please talk to Neil Way (_____@ft.com), Robin Kwong (_____@ft.com), Richard Martin (_____@ft.com), or the creative producer on your desk.

The graphics team is: _____@ft.com
The stats team is: _____@ft.com

LONG HEADLINE [MAX 65 CHARS]
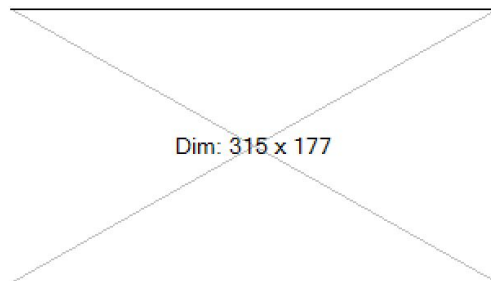**[Long headline]**

SHORT HEADLINE [MAX 50 CHARS]
[Short headline]

STANDFIRST [MAX 85 CHARS]
[Standfirst]

STORY PACKAGE HYPERLINK **[Story package hyperlink]**

MASTER IMAGE

Dim: 315 x 177

[Insert author]

[Write your introductory paragraph of text here: What context do readers need to know before they look at the charts below? Keep this to <200 words if possible.]
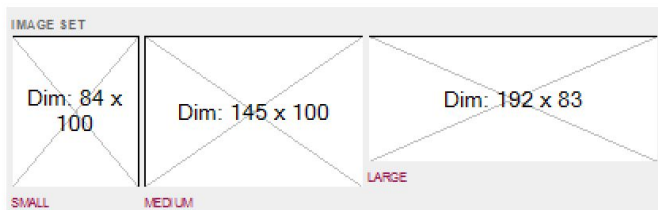
[Charticles are good for explainers; particularly when you are explaining changes in data. Good charticles tend to either have a compelling narrative arc where each chart is a chapter, or a clear structure where each chart addresses a different topic area.]

[See here for a good example: https://www.ft.com/content/6ada0002-9a57-11e8-9702-5946bae86e6d]

[Insert section heading]

[Write your section text here. This is a good place to explain 'why', or inject personality into the piece with quotes. Ideally, keep this to <150 words.]

[Please be aware that Image Sets don't work on preview. This is a known tech issue. Sorry.]

IMAGE SET

Dim: 84 x 100

Dim: 145 x 100

Dim: 192 x 83

LARGE

SMALL   MEDIUM

[Insert section heading]

[Write your section text here. This is a good place to explain 'why', or inject personality into the piece with quotes. Ideally, keep this to <150 words.]

[Please be aware that Image Sets don't work on preview. This is a known tech issue. Sorry.]

IMAGE SET

Dim: 84 x 100

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