

RESOURCE | DATA VISUALIZATION CHECKLIST

Data visualization is a graphical representation of your results, data and information and is an essential part of any data analysis project. Follow below checklist to make your analysis understandable and interesting to the end users.

CHECKLIST

#1: KEEP IT SIMPLE

Avoid using complex animations, ornamental illustrations or patterns if they don't serve any purpose. Consider minimal design. All information should be easy to find. You should aim for the clean look. As for the content replace the complicated vocabulary with the everyday language. Include additional explanations if needed. Your visualization should be concise, without unnecessary elements.

#2: PRESENT IN THE LOGICAL ORDER

Don't forget about the cause-effect relationship. Everything should be connected and form one whole. Your visualization should have a beginning, middle and ending parts. You can start with a summary of the project and end with suggestions for the future analysis.

#3: ENSURE CONSISTENCY

Don't use elements that contradict each other. If you start with the funny and friendly tone and then you change into super corporate, formal tone, this is not comfortable for the user. If you use justified text and you suddenly change to the left aligned text it creates confusion. Size of the buttons, margins, look of the footer should be consistent throughout the visuals.

#4: HIGHLIGHT THE KEY INFORMATION

Not every piece of information is equally important. Decide what numbers and conclusions should be remembered. And then make them visible. Change their appearance to attract. Animate them. Put them in the top left corner which is usually read first or add an icon next to them.

#5: CHOOSE THE RIGHT CHART TYPES

Not every chart is suitable for every piece of information. Some charts work better than others in certain situations. You should know when to use each chart. Also, remember not to distort proportions in your chart as it leads to misleading conclusions.

#6: SURPRISE THE USER

You want to visualize the results of your data analysis in a professional manner. But under no circumstance you should be boring. And nothing wakes up as effective as a surprise. Include something unexpected in your visuals. It can be an interesting analogy, or a joke, or what if scenario showing the alternative solution, or a music that suddenly plays or a photoshopped photo. Be creative.



#7: USE DIFFERENT TYPES OF MEDIA

You have plenty of options at your disposal. Text, infographics, videos, sound, tutorials, animations, interactive content, photos. They all help you to present your points better and to engage the user. And usually the best idea is to create a mix of different elements.

#8: AVOID THE CLUTTER

Elements should not be too close to each other, always keep the healthy amount of negative space. Too much information in a layout and the message will be lost.

#9: PLAY WITH COLORS

Using color is a great way to evoke specific emotions. Each color has a different connotation. Red is associated with passion and love. Black with elegance and authority. Grey is good for formal and practical presentations. Orange is used for portraying fun and creativity. Think what tone you want to achieve for your data visualization and amplify it with the correct use of colors.

#10: ATTRACT WITH TYPOGRAPHY

Typography is the style or appearance of text. First of all you should choose a font that is easily readable. Don't include more than two to three different fonts in your data visualization to avoid inconsistency. Play with the size and weight of the text to emphasize different elements.

