Milestone 1: Write Up

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The biggest barrier to communicating an idea to a wide range of people is relatability. Keeping a concept relatable to as many people as possible was the focus of my dashboard, and there are few things more universally relatable than driving an automobile. Even those that do not drive understand how prevalent automobiles are, and it is in a direct comparison with automobiles that I found the context into which to put airline safety. This dashboard was created for internal use to prompt discussion of next steps, but also in an attempt to reach team members in the same way it was made to reach the public.

Front and center, it was important to identify that even though there are several airlines on the upper end of the fatalities graphic, the reality is that for every 100 million kilometers traveled there are one average 93 deaths at the “deadliest” airline. To the right, average annual fatalities for each mode of transportation is a simple and clear indicator of how much riskier driving an automobile is than flying, a fact further driven home by the bottom left graphic in which total fatalities for two timer periods are shown. This bottom left graphic also shows that even though each mode of transportation has gotten safer over time, travel by automobile is still far riskier.

The two remaining graphics, while able to stand on their own as points of information, really shine with the context of the other three dashboard portions. The bottom center graphic may at first seem counterproductive, showing that even though the United States’ population has risen it has also gotten safer to operate an automobile, however its primary purpose lies in showing that even after a decrease in yearly automobile fatalities the number is still over 30 thousand. Together with the bottom left graphic it shows that in a fourteen-year span there were just 3 thousand airline deaths, while in that same timespan the least amount of automobile deaths in just one year was over 32 thousand. The final graphic in the bottom right is intended to be a wrap-up of the safety comparison between airline and automobile travel, showing that for every 100 million kilometers traveled automobiles account for 99.65% of deaths between the two modes of travel.

While a pie chart can most easily be manipulated to reflect distorted data, I feel that in this scenario it is a strong tool for the dashboard. The intent of the chart is to illustrate how little the airline industry accounts for fatalities in modes of travel and achieving that by showing how one color (the airline industry) is nearly impossible to see made a pie chart the best tool for representing that data. As for color, I each statistic was given its own color that remained static across each graphic to make it as easy as possible for viewers to follow. While attempting to keep color distraction to a minimum and focus on the data, I used colors along the same palette line of a green-blue, with the red chosen for auto fatalities to quickly illustrate to readers the distinct modes of travel. Finally, though requiring additional use of color, a light background was added to the title of each graphic to more clearly indicate the distinct points of information being communicated.