Principles of Visualization

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What makes for a good visualization?

Graphical excellence is the well-designed presentation of interesting data—a matter of **substance**, of **statistics**, and of **design**. (Tufte, 1983)

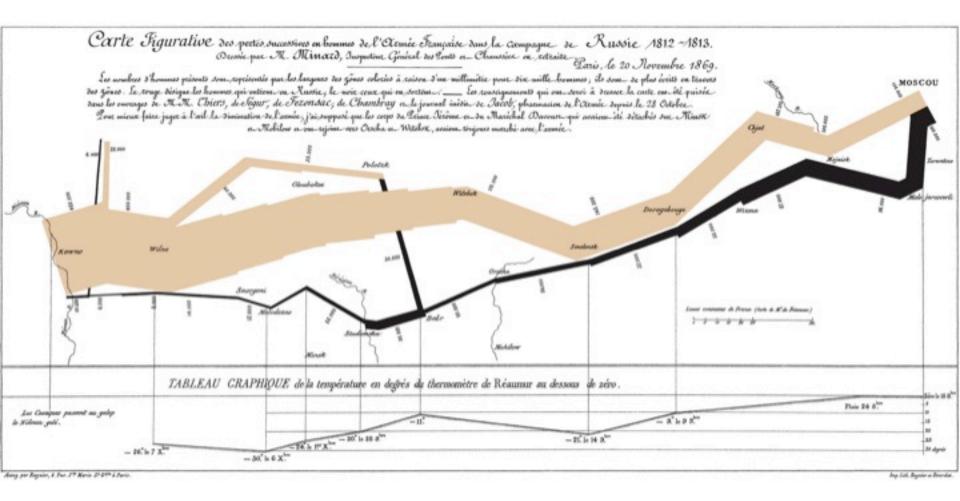
complex ideas communicated with

- clarity
- precision
- and efficiency

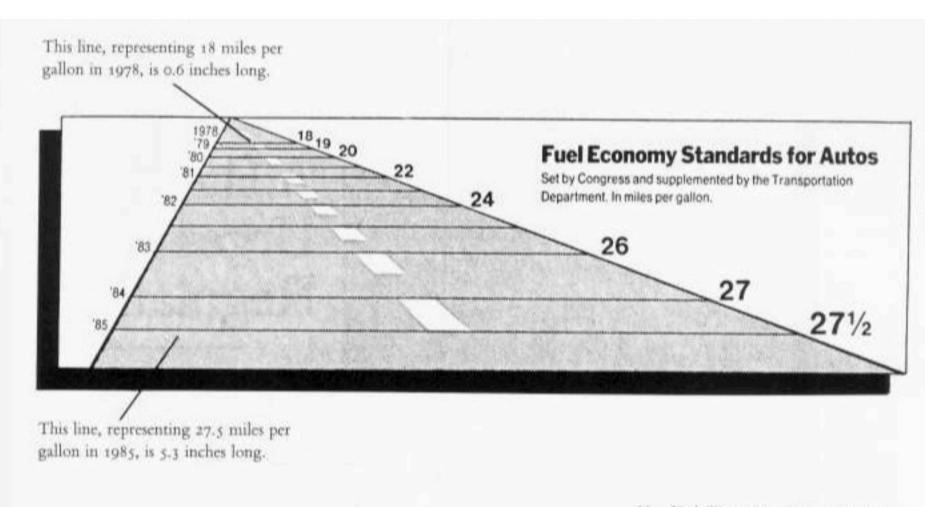
Efficient

the greatest number of ideas
in the shortest time
with the least ink
in the smallest space

Multivariate

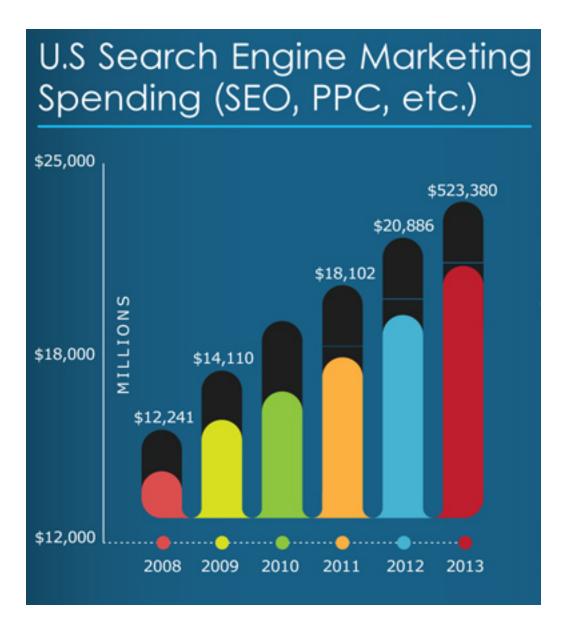


Truthful

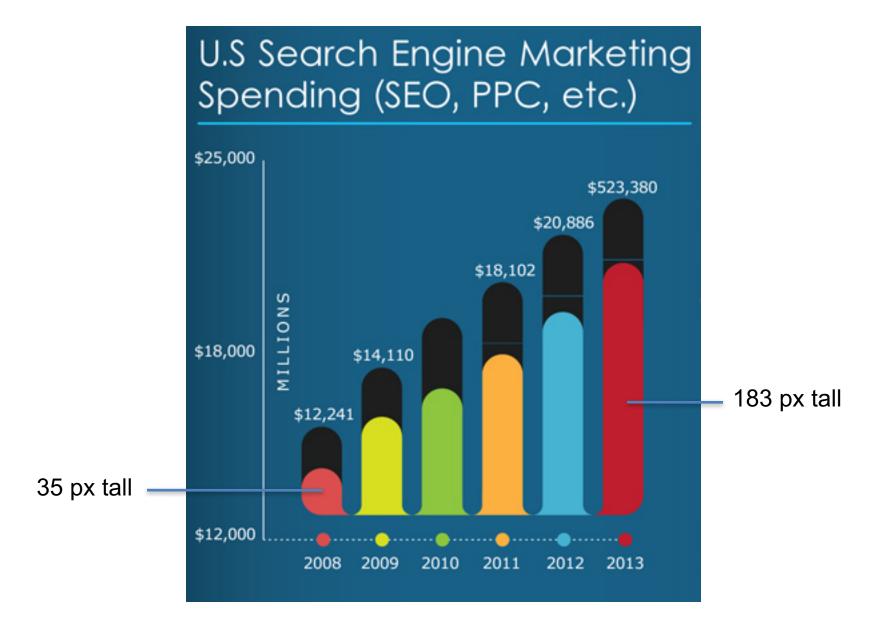


Graphical integrity

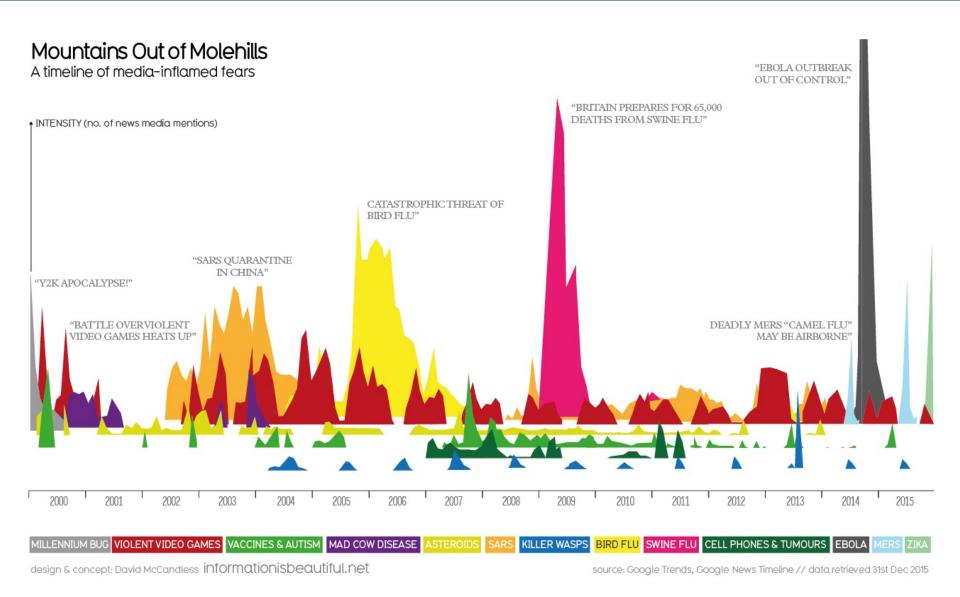
Representations of numbers directly proportional to their numeric quantities



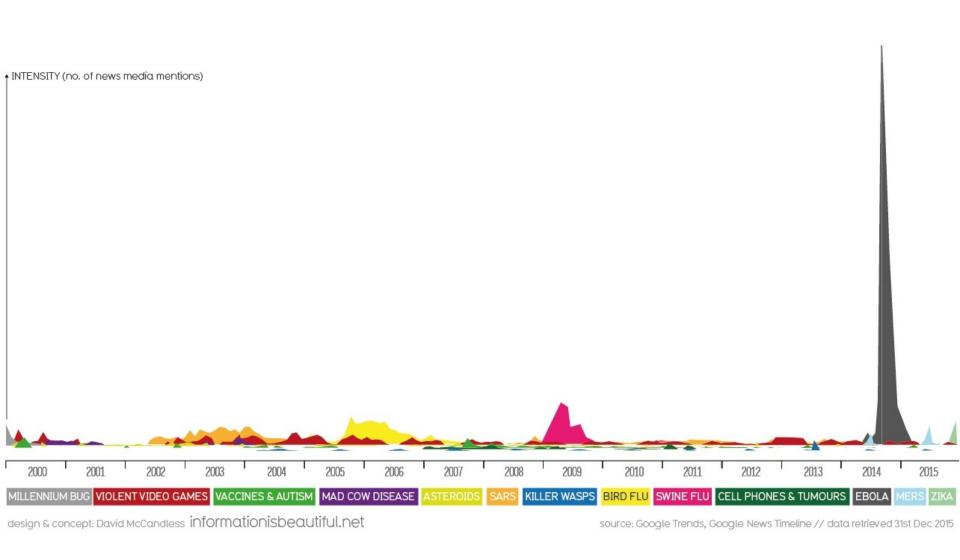
Lie factor = (size of effect shown in graphic) / (size of effect in data)



Clear and thorough labeling

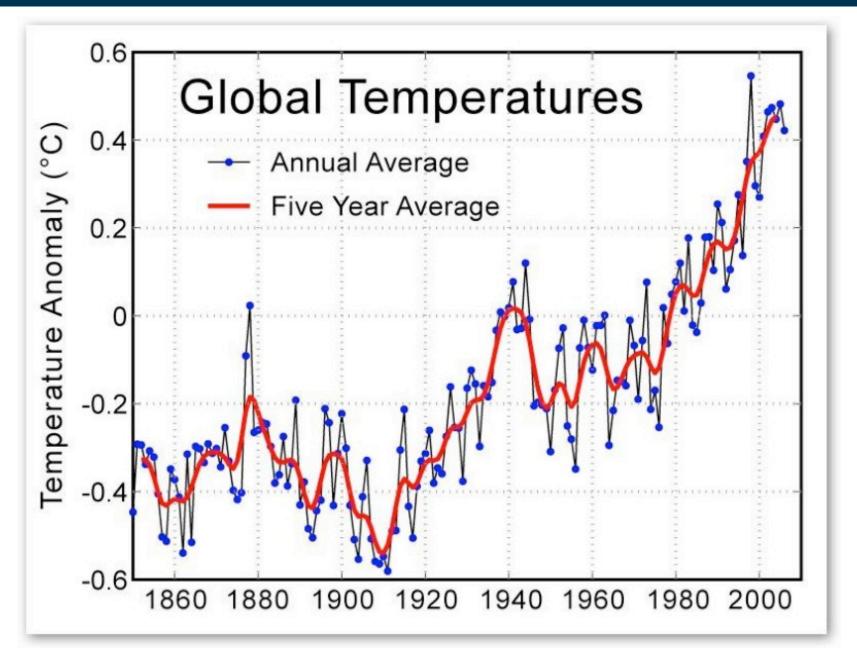


http://www.informationisbeautiful.net/visualizations/mountains-out-of-molehills/



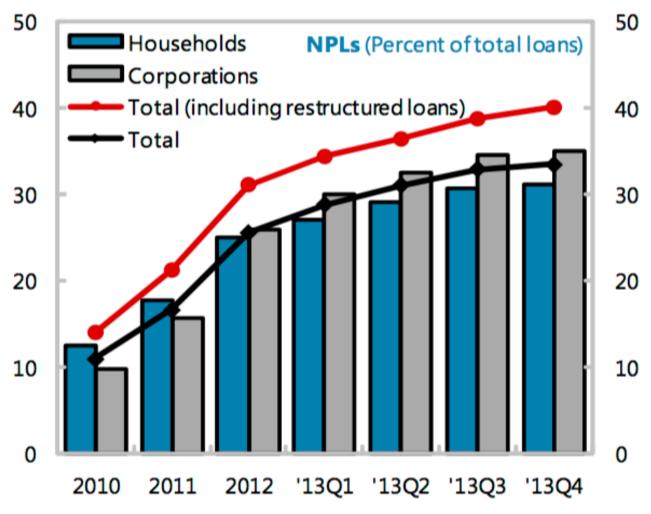
http://www.informationisbeautiful.net/visualizations/mountains-out-of-molehills/

Provide context



(Image: Global Warming Art)

Show data variation, not design variation

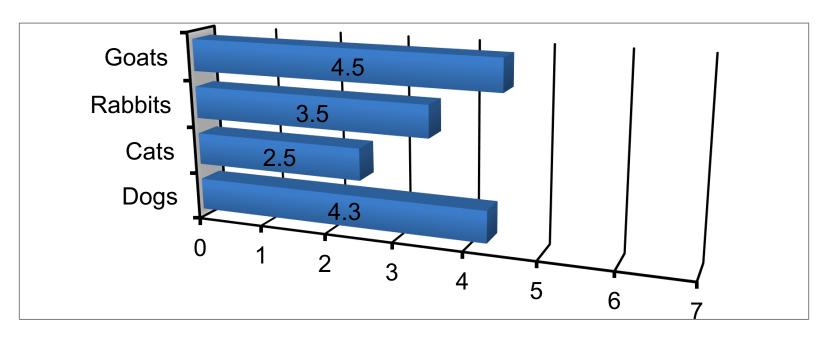


Sources: Bank of Greece; and IMF staff calculations.

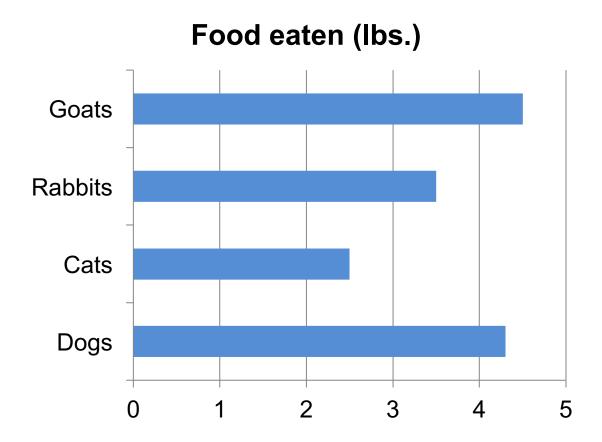
https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2014/cr14151.pdf

data-ink ratio = (data ink) / (total ink to print graphic)

Food eaten



Food eaten (lbs.)



Beyond Tufte

User-centered design (study user needs, prototype, test, iterate)

Interaction (can update data and manipulate views)

Aesthetics (minimalism can be taken too far)

Berkeley school of information