



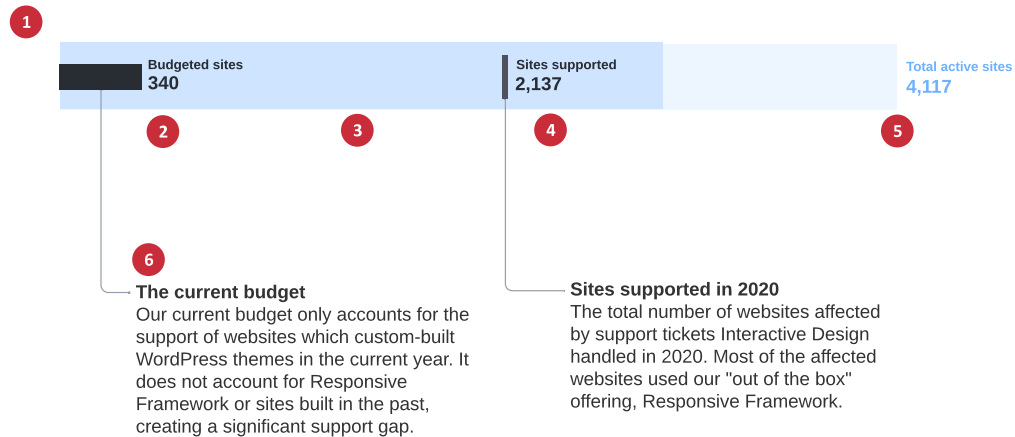
# Week 5 Assignment: Bar Chart

Information Visualization Theory and Techniques (2022)

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## Website Support Gap for Interactive Design Fiscal Year 2020



### Context

Over the past several years, leaders in my department had to justify budget shortfalls and request funding from our university president. The end result of this story was a change to our business model. In this bullet graph, I imagined my boss asked me to demonstrate why a gap in the budget occurred, and what was required to close it. I demonstrated this by visualizing a large gap in support budget, which significantly affected our group.

I explained the gap using annotations and compared planned number of supported sites in budget to actual sites supported. I imagined this chart as part of a presentation, and for this slide only the parts of the bullet graph which explain the gap are labeled and annotated. The next slide would show a variation of this same graph which focuses on the projected budget needs, which are in blue in the background, building the story to a conclusion.

Note: this graph contains fictional data and is only intended to demonstrate what I've learned in this class.

### Techniques Used

- 1 A bullet graph, which is a variation on a bar chart that specializes in comparing a featured measure with other measures, shows a clear gap between budgeted sites and actual sites supported (Few, 2013).
- 2 Instead of relying on scale marks, direct labeling of data is used to facilitate comparison (Wong, 2013). Totals are written in a larger font to emphasize the large gap between budgeted support and actual support, while labels are set smaller to reduce distraction (Knaflic, 2015).
- 3 The x-axis is removed to avoid redundancy with the direct labeling approach (Knaflic, 2015).
- 4 The most important pieces of data are assigned the color with the most contrast (Knaflic, 2015). Data in the bar and comparison value is colored black, in alignment with bullet graph standards (Few, 2013).
- 5 Shades of blue are used to connect total active sites and ideal performance in the bullet graph (Knaflic, 2015). Following best practices for bullet graphs, these background colors use luminosity, not hue, to encode scale (Few, 2013).
- 6 Two annotations explain why a gap between budgeted and supported sites exists today to help give critical context to the two key pieces of data the graphic focuses on (Knaflic, 2015).

## References

Few, S. (2013a). *Information dashboard design: displaying data for at-a-glance monitoring* (2. ed). Analytics Press.

Few, S. (2013b, October 10). Bullet Graph Design Specification. *Perceptual Edge*.

[http://www.perceptualedge.com/articles/misc/Bullet\\_Graph\\_Design\\_Spec.pdf](http://www.perceptualedge.com/articles/misc/Bullet_Graph_Design_Spec.pdf)

Knaflitz, C. N. (2015). *Storytelling with data: a data visualization guide for business professionals*. Wiley.

Wong, D. M. (2013). *The Wall Street journal guide to information graphics*. Norton.