Illegal Alien Apprehensions Along the Southwest Border (1960-2017)

What area along the Southwest Border has the most illegal alien apprehensions since 1960?

The dataset that I am using to help reinforce my point was one I found on Data World that has all the arrests made by the border patrol and local authorities in each of the regions for the years 1960-2017, as well as a total for the entire Southwest for those years as well. This data will allow me to see the areas that have more or less arrests throughout the last 57 years in the nine areas the data has been recorder from; Big Bend, Del Rio, El Paso, El Centro, Laredo, Rio Grande Valley, San Diego, Tuscan, Yuma, and the Southwest border totals.

Tableau allowed me to bring much more to the visualization then any other software I could have used like excel, Tableau allows you to convey your thoughts much more precisely as well as accurately. It allows you to show specific things that you want to, rather then making the audience work for the information, it’s right there as clear as day. Being able to show color differences allowing you to bring your readers attention there without having to make them work to get there. Limiting the cognitive load that the audience has when they are looking at your visualizations the more room in their mind to think about the question in which your asking and answering here in the data you are presenting.

My final project workflow consisted of many different things along the way. It started with the importing of the data that I had found on Data World and now downloaded to my laptop. After the data had been imported into Tableau now, we could start our visuals. The first visual I constructed consisted of a line graph that displayed the 9 areas and the southwest border totals from 1960-2017. This visualization had a few additional alterations made to it in order to better convey my message. I made a parameter that was at 315,000 arrests a year to display the fact that there are only two areas that do besides the southwest border totals. In this graph I also altered the color of the two that exceeded the 315,000 arrests a year parameter I set. Clearly showing that San Diego in 1986, as well as Tucson in the year 2000 were the two worst points for dealing with illegal alien apprehensions. This graph now is ready to quickly and concisely convey my message to the audience that San Diego and Tucson are the two areas with the most illegal alien apprehensions.

My next visual was another line graph that I had then removed the Southwest border totals to allow me to get a closer image that you could then see the trends as well as differences between the 9 different areas that the data had been taken from. Allowing the audience to see the difference among the different location, as well as the ways the years affected the data as well. Using the same parameters, I had used in the previous visual of 315,000 arrests per year to allow the audience to have a constant point to refer to throughout the story I am telling in order to convey my message. I also keep the colors consistent with the previous graph as well to limit the amount of work or the cognitive load that the audience needs to endure when visualizing my data. This allows them to take a close look on the number of illegal alien apprehensions over the past almost 60 years in 9 different locations, clearly displaying the answer to my question of where along the southwest border are there the most illegal alien apprehension which is, San Diego in 1986, and Tucson in 2000. After making these annotations to the graphs I then made sure the tool tip was portraying the proper data that I needed in order to enhance my graph and in this case it was. Displaying the areas as well as totals for the years as you move around the graph. Allowing the audience to be able to quickly find out desired numbers to compare to those that are clearly displayed by my annotations.

Now comes the text table that displays the data from which we have been constructing all the graphs from in a clear and proper text table that is easy to read and quick to understand. Using the nine different locations as well as the southwest border totals to compare their yearly numbers.

After looking at all the information, as well as reviewing my clearly made visuals and following my well-constructed story it has left me with two different places that seem to stand out among the rest. Those two places are San Diego (1986) and Tucson (2000). These two places although have similar numbers themselves they certainly do separate from the rest. San Diego in the year 1986 had 629,656 and Tucson in 2000 had 616,646 illegal alien apprehensions, while no other location had ever been above the 315,000. This was why I chose this number for my parameter, allowing the audience to see that there is twice as many people being apprehended in these locations at these times compared to the rest of the locations.