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9/27/2017

The data display I want to critique is from how-to-fix-a-toilet.com. How-to-fix-a-toilet.com is a website that tracks people’s Google searches over time for tutorials on how to do things like fix a toilet, get a girlfriend, or do the cup song from *Pitch Perfect.* The website is only one page with a long scroll bar, and as you scroll down you find lots of text describing the data’s context, some small animations and charts, and even interactive tables that scale the cells based on how many times that specific query had been searched for.

The first thing to stick out to me was the text. It is very text heavy, and not all of it was really relevant or essential to understanding the data. It was so much that I was a little hesitant to critique it as a data set, but even though there is a lot of text it doesn’t take away from the data at all. It’s incredibly clear where the data starts if someone wanted to scroll through the site and just get right to the meat, but the text adds some context to the data. There is a line next to the set that shows how often people have to search how to boil an egg that makes a remark about how much basic information humans appear to have lost and makes the reader think about how many things they may have taken for granted.

Next, the data. There are a lot of different methods of displaying the information deployed here, but they all work pretty well. The most prevalent type is the table-style, where each cell is labelled with a search query, a minimal animation of the most popular one, and interactivity where if you hover over the cells, it gives a link to the Google search for that term, and a score of the relative number of searches for that query compared to everything else in the table. There are multiple tables for different “themes” of searches, like a cooking one, a romance one, a general home maintenance one, and a couple more.

There are also some line graphs that chart searches over time, making easy to see how fast the cup song fad faded, and some iconographs that are populated with icons representing the relative amount of searches for a specific search. These ones have less base information, but they are still very useful. Overall, I’d say that how-to-fix-a-toilet.com was very effective in its data visualization.