

# Communicating Through Infographics

Communicating Through Infographics  
An Infopeople Webinar

Wednesday, November 14, 2011  
12:00 Noon – 1:00 p.m. PST

Presenter: Dawne Tortorella  
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Infopeople webinars are supported by the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act, administered in California by the State Librarian.

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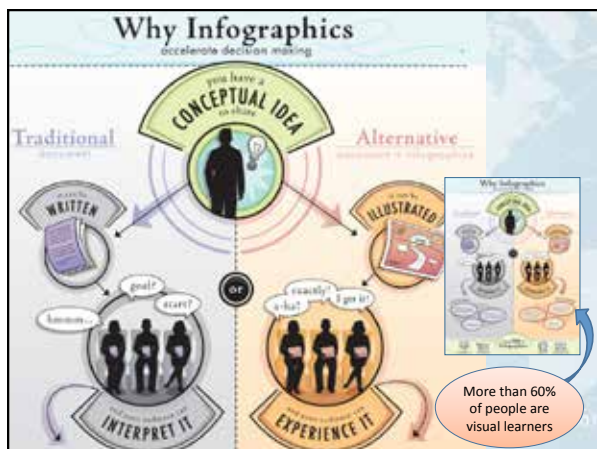
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### Agenda

- Infographics, Origins and Species
- Big Data, Local Meaning
- Visualization Tools
- Creating an Infographic

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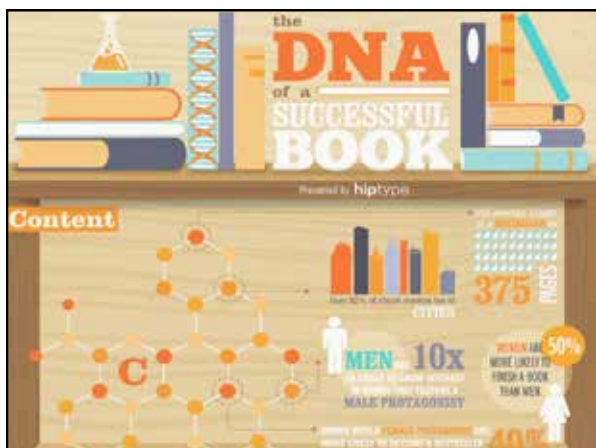
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# Communicating Through Infographics




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**Definition**

*“Infographics provide a format that utilizes **engaging** visuals that not only appeal to an audience hungry for information, but also aid in the **comprehension and retention** of that material.”*

Infographics: The power of visual storytelling  
Lankow, Ritchie, & Crooks

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**Clash of the Titans: Tufte vs. Holmes**

**Tufte**

- Pioneer of data visualization, information design
- Academic (Yale) – statistician
- Believes you should omit graphic elements of the design that do not communicate specific information
- Avoid “chartjunk” and Powerpoint

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# Communicating Through Infographics

### Clash of the Titans: Tufte vs. Holmes



**Holmes**

- Created "explanation graphics"
- Publishing – *Time*
- Believes stories can be more memorable and impactful
- Importance of appeal through visual metaphor
- Recent studies have shown his explanation graphics aid in retention

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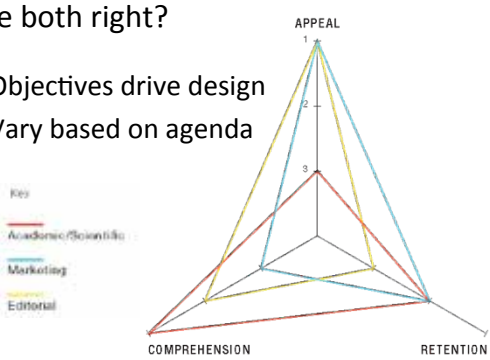
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### Are both right?

- Objectives drive design
- Vary based on agenda



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Figure 1.6 Infographic priorities by application. p. 38  
*Infographics: The power of visual storytelling*

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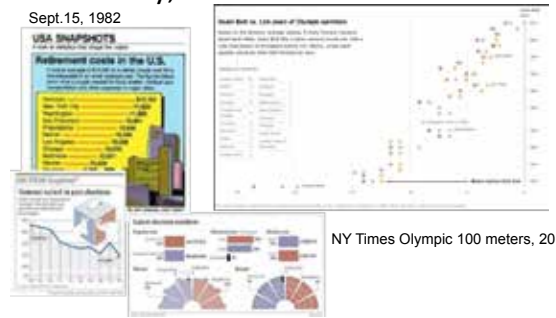
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### USA Today, NY Times

Sept. 15, 1982



USA Snapshots

Retirement costs in the U.S.

NY Times Olympic 100 meters, 2012

Nov Election, 2000

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# Communicating Through Infographics

**Typical Infographic Signature**

- Vertical presentation
- Tells a story
- Uses metaphor
- Summarizes data
- Cites data source(s)

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**Poster Art**

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**Does this graphic?**

- Tell a story
- Provide a metaphor
- Reflect data accurately
- Reinforce the intended message

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# Communicating Through Infographics

## Big Data, Local Meaning

- Public datasets
- APIs and access to big data
- Tracking local data



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## IMLS Public Library Comparison



[http://www.ims.gov/research/public\\_libraries\\_in\\_the\\_united\\_states\\_survey.aspx](http://www.ims.gov/research/public_libraries_in_the_united_states_survey.aspx)

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## Pew Internet Data Sets



<http://pewinternet.org/Data-Tools/Get-The-Latest-Statistics.aspx>

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### Census Data – Local Scoping



<http://2010.census.gov/2010census/popmap/>

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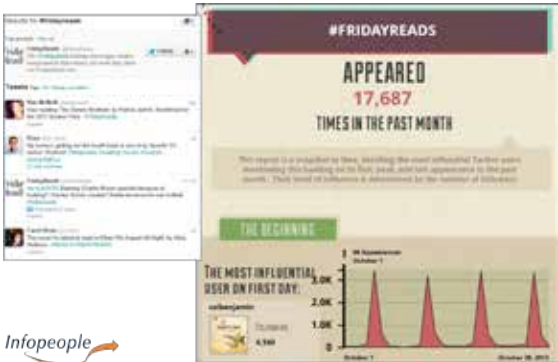
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### Big Data & APIs



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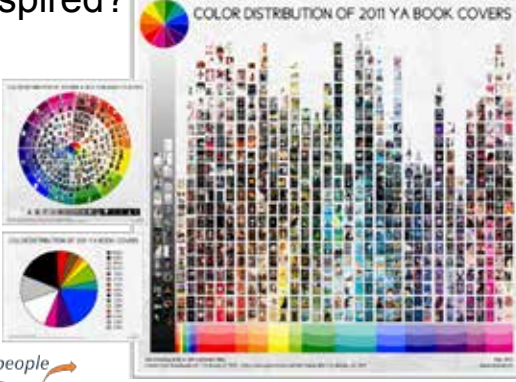
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### Inspired?



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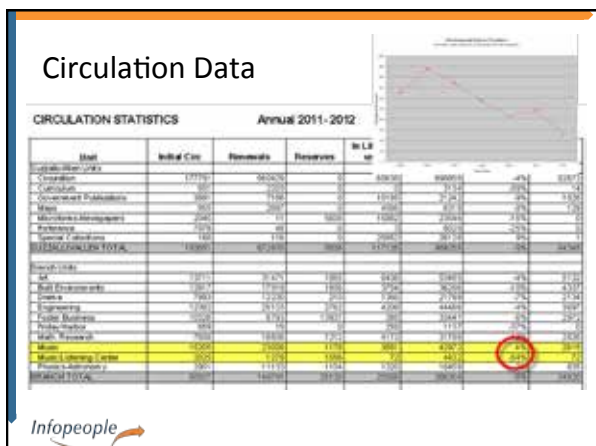
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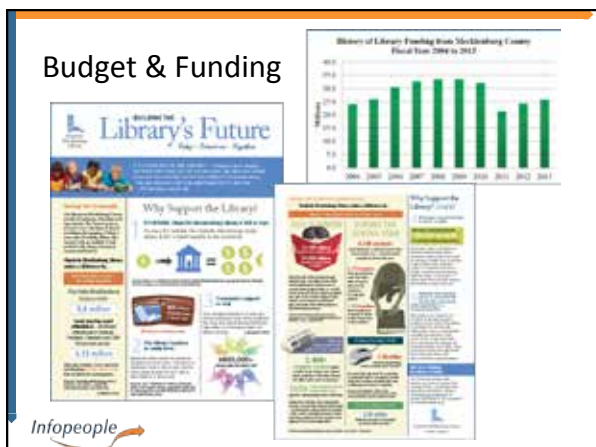
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### Visualization Tools

- Free tools for analyzing data
- Free design tools
- Visualization services
- Daily tools – Excel, Photoshop, Illustrator

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# Communicating Through Infographics



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# Communicating Through Infographics

**Common Traps: Accuracy/Critique**

- Properly cite your data
- Include methodology for data collection and reporting
- Use supplemental data that relate to the service area
- CHECK YOUR MATH



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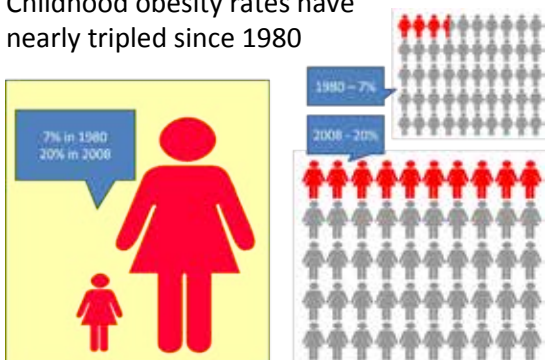
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**Childhood obesity rates have nearly tripled since 1980**



7% in 1980  
20% in 2006

1980 - 7%

2006 - 20%



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**Creating an Infographic – Step-by-step**



Plan

Research

Design

Tell a story



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# Communicating Through Infographics

**Case Study – ALA “Weather the Storm”**

- Based on 2 years of research
- Executive summary, detailed data findings, methodology cited & online

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**Does it tell a story?**

- Incorporates metaphor
- Leads the viewer on a journey
- Targets message

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**This?**

“Strategic vision and careful management have helped U.S. public libraries weather the storm of the Great Recession, supporting their role as a lifeline to the technology resources and digital skills essential to full participation in civic life and in the nation’s economy. Libraries continue to transform lives by providing critical services and innovative solutions to technology access, in spite of years’ worth of consecutive and cumulative budget cuts.”

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# Communicating Through Infographics

Or this?

- Consider design, stormy to sunny
- Transition from bad to good
- Call to action at the end

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the DNA of a SUCCESSFUL BOOK

Powered by hiptype

Content

Fine Print:  
SOURCE: data compiled from e-readers by Hiptype

375 PAGES

10x

50%

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Thank You!

Contact Info for Dawne

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Twitter: [dawne](https://twitter.com/dawne)

LinkedIn: [www.linkedin.com/in/dawnetortorella](http://www.linkedin.com/in/dawnetortorella)

Pinterest Infographics Board - [pinterest.com/dtortore/infographics/](https://pinterest.com/dtortore/infographics/)

Scoop.it Infographics Creation Curation Thread - [scoop.it/t/creating-infographics](https://scoop.it/t/creating-infographics)

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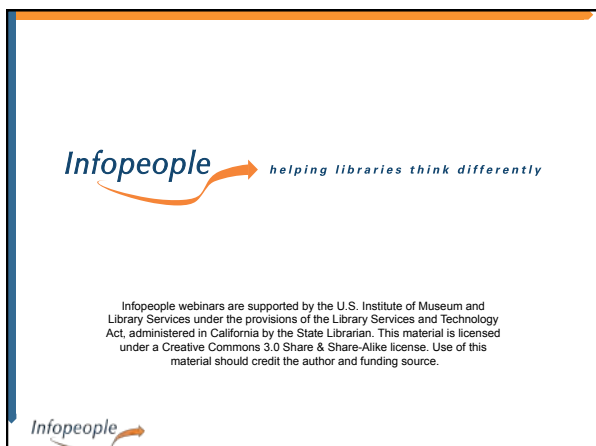
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# Communicating Through Infographics



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