



9 TIPS TO UNLEASH THE POWER OF DATA VISUALIZATION

Data visualization uses visual elements like charts, graphs, or maps to represent data. It translates complex, high-volume, or numerical data into visual representations that are easier for people to process.

While researchers have always used visual representation of data in their reporting, data visualization tools, such as DisplayR, Tableau, and Power BI, improve and automate visual communication for accuracy and detail.

HERE ARE 9 ESSENTIAL TIPS TO IMPROVE YOUR DATA VISUALIZATION:

TIP #1:

Start with the Data, not the Chart. Understanding the data – and the story it tells – is critical for effective data visualization. So, don't automatically reach for your go-to PPT chart! Look over the data and consider what the best way to communicate that data would be.

TIP #2:

Consider the Audience. Who is going to use the insights in the data visualization? C-suite, Customer Service staff, lower levels of management, or others? Different types of audiences prefer different ways to see information. Additionally, think about the literacy level of the audience, as well as multilingual capability and language fluency. Are your audiences all familiar with the jargon and technical language used in the visualization? If not, you might want to simplify it to make it more understandable.

TIP #3:

Consider the Media. Will the data visualization be statically displayed as an infographic, in a presentation, or perhaps a sales piece, or must it be dynamically displayed in an online dashboard? Different media require different displays of information.

TIP #4:

Determine whether you need to update periodically or automatically filter and re-display the data in additional reports. If you need to update the data, for example, in a tracking survey, or when you need to produce static reports filtered by different views, consider an automated rather than a static report. That will save you time and increase your reports' accuracy.



TIP #5:

Have Fresh Eyes Review the Data Visualization Before Finalizing. Have someone with less context than you review your data visualizations to ensure your intentions come through. Sometimes, when you are very close to a visualization you have created, it isn't easy to see how others could misinterpret it. Your reviewer can also help you identify ways to clarify your data visualization to avoid confusion.

TIP #6:

Make it Visually Appealing. Make sure the data visualization draws your audience in. This may seem obvious, but intelligent design can have a big impact on whether your audience engages and utilizes your content.

TIP #7:

Don't Forget the Tried and True. Advanced visualizations are not always better – sometimes, the tried and true bar charts and others are the best way to communicate that specific data.

TIP #8:

Don't Forget about Tables. Tables can be an excellent medium for data visualization if formatted helpfully. Some researchers believe data visualization is all about getting away from tables, but tables may be the best way to show the data, particularly when you have many dimensions. Conditional formatting and annotations can do wonders for improving tables.

TIP #9:

Colors can Matter. Consider how you integrate brand or client color schemes alongside colors that represent positive and negative aspects of the data. For example, it's natural for people to relate red with “bad” and green with “good” in many scenarios. And brighter colors will draw eyes to that portion of the data visualization. The important thing is that the colors you choose aid in the audience's interpretation of the data.

Data visualization is a form of visual art that grabs our interest and keeps our eyes on the message. If we can see something, we internalize it more quickly. Data visualization can make it easier to find AND convey insights to clients. And it makes you look good to your clients!

Check out our website <https://researchresults.com/data-visualization-analytics/> for examples of how Research Results integrates data visualization into our services!!

If you'd like to learn more about how Research Results uses Data Visualization to help our clients look good, contact **Ellen Pieper, Chief Client Officer**, Ellen_Pieper@researchresults.com, or 919-368-5819 today!