COMMERCIAL DESIGN 12 LONG

INFOGRAPHICS

SHOW, DON’T TELL

Data Visualization:

Our job, as designers and artists, is to communicate visually, for those who think with the “right-side” of the brain, that is: visually and spatially, rather than with words and symbols. Reading a long article is fine and dandy but is it always the most effective way of communicating? I would argue no. I, like a lot (most?) people, would way rather look at a picture. How can we most efficiently and effectively communicate large and complex amounts of information through the visual language? A good infographic has a simple and easily understandable internal logic that, once understood, allows almost instant access to complex relationships. It’s beautiful (nice to look at) and simple to understand, and, at its best, compels us to learn more.

Step 1

**Investigate Infographics on the internet**. Google search “best infographics” or…. www.bestinfographics.com, www.best-infographics.com, look them up on pinterest, google-search data visualization.

Just spend some time getting familiar with the form

Notice:

* The wide array of topics covered
* How information is sorted, organized and structured.
* A good infographic will be very easy to understand.
* A good infographic will draw you in and make you want to learn more.
* Some are good and some are not so good (at minimizing the need for words)
* Some are boring
* Some are just silly.
* Some are beautiful (these are usually the best ones – why?)

Step 2

**Decide on a topic** that you would like to investigate and present as an infographic. Make sure it is something that you are VERY interested in and that you will be able to find facts, figures and numbers about the topic that will translate in your design.

The topic could be something you research through books or the internet or could be something you investigate locally, for example by polling fellow students or walking around the neighbourhood and recording facts about it.

* Research, record, and write down your sources (you will need to hand these in)

Step 3

Familiarize yourself with **the language of Infographics**.

Investigate what kind of devices we have at our disposal and what are each best suited for?

* Diagrams
* Charts (pie, flow etc…)
* Graphs
* Maps
* Text (should be minimal and broken up into small explanatory and easy to digest blocks)
* Any others you can think of?

How do we use the elements and principles of design:

* Colour
* Line
* Value
* Saturation
* Size

Find examples of the use of each in infographics that you find on the internet.

Step 4

**Rough draft**

* Write down everything you can about your topic
* What do you want to communicate? What types of info?
* Start thinking about how you can communicate the various types of information.
* Start drawing out your graphs, charts and diagrams. See the evaluation criteria for requirements)
* Do you need a legend? - a graphic explanation for how to use your infographic?
* What do you think your colour scheme will be?
* Have one dominant element in your project supported by a few smaller elements. Each one should chart and communicate a different aspect of your topic. The dominant element should be visually the most interesting (could be a diagram or otherwise really cool and beautiful)
* Do rough drafts of separate elements of the project as well as what the final project will look like.
* Make sure you read through the entire assignment so that you can plan out and consider each element.

Step 5

Start building your **infographic elements**.

What kind of tools can you use?

* Adobe Indesign will be used for composing the overall layout of your project.
* Adobe Illustrator can be used to generate whatever diagrams you need. You may either generate the diagram within the program or you can use the “live trace” function on a hand-drawn element. You may also use the “live paint” function to colour your project.
* You may also find some online content generators. You can find some at onlinechartgenerator.com or you can investigate others through google search. Warning that your teacher probably has not investigated these very thoroughly so you’ll probably be on your own in figuring them out.

Step 6

**Compose your infographic** in Adobe Indesign.

* The document should be 11” x 17” and can be either horizontal or vertical.
* Create a template with the number of columns that will appropriate for your requirements.
* It should include a title (catchy) and a subtitle (informative)
* Remember to align all elements.
* Choose your fonts to be readable and appropriate to the style and spirit of the project (and have a max of 2)
* Background colour?
* Make sure that you have a balanced composition.

Step 7

**Export and Print**

**Evaluation**

/10 Topic and Research

* Topic is rich and interesting. Research is thorough. Sources are submitted.

/10 Rough drafts

* Roughs reflect a thorough investigation into data visualization devises and demonstrate an evolution of solution.

/10 Technical

* All methods and tools used to construct the elements of your infographic are professionally executed and appropriately used.

/10 Composition and formal qualities

* composition is balanced and dynamic. Colour scheme is evident and successful. Design of project is unified.

/10 Legibility

* Is your project easy to read and understand? Does it require explanation or is it inherently logical and communicative?