**Designing Infographics with Piktochart**

Learning Outcomes

1. Students will view and critique examples of infographics, in order to gain

exposure to best practices in infographic design.

1. Students will utilize the basic features of Piktochart, in order to gain experience employing best practices in infographic design.

Class Description

This 50 minute workshopwill provide an introduction to best practices in creating infographics including advice on selecting a design, incorporating data, and structuring a story. Workshop participants will have the opportunity to gains hands on experience using Piktochart, a free infographic app and presentation tool. Participants are encouraged to come to the workshop with an infographic topic in mind as well as data they would like to work with.

Pedagogy

The workshop encourages reflection and evaluation. Workshop participants are provided the opportunity to critique examples of infographics. This process requires that learners consider the utility of different resources in creating an infographic.

The workshop encourages critical thinking. Workshop participants are asked to utilize text and graphics to communicate information on a topic to a specific audience.

Active Learning Strategies

1. The instructor will share examples of both exemplary and poorly designed infographics. Workshop participants are asked which design elements are effective and why. As participants respond the instructor creates a list, which serves as advice on best practices. This strategy addresses the preferences of auditory (responding, debating) and visual learners (viewing graphics in order to create a written list).
2. After students have begun familiarizing themselves with

Piktochart and have chosen a theme to work with they will select graphics and / or text to insert into that theme. Participants may chose examples of graphics and text provided by the instructor or select their own.

Participants are given the opportunity to practice using the basic features of Piktochart by creating a rough outline of an infographic. This is followed by a think-pair-shair activity. Participants are asked to consider the following questions: What did you / would you do to tailor the infographic to your targeted audience? What do you see as the major challenges in creating an infographic?

This strategy addresses the preferences of tactile learners (manipulating a design) and analytic learners (sequencing elements of a design in order to have maximum impact).

1. The opening and closing questions for the workshop promote critical reflection through considering what one would like to learn by attending the workshop and what one has taken away from the experience.

What do you need to be prepared?

The instructor will need: a browser logged in to Piktochart and infographic examples prepared. Also necessary is an example data set (see page 14)and the powerpoint on best practices. Handouts (see page 12 and 13) and evaluation forms (page 10) will need to be printed in advance. The instructor may also opt to print the infographic examples that are reviewed to enable participants to view content at their own pace.

Introduction (5 minutes)

1. Briefly introduce onself, request that participants log into computers as they are filtering into room, pass out handouts.
2. Introductory question: “Do you have a topic in mind for an infographic?” Participants have the opportunity to respond.
   1. Set realistic expectations regarding what can be covered in the time allotted.
   2. Describe the outline of the workshop through reference to handout.
      1. Viewing examples and creating a list of best practices
      2. Overview of Piktochart + hands on experience and a group activity
3. Emphasize asking questions if there is a point of confusion.
4. What is Piktochart? Why is this a useful tool?
   1. Easy to use, doesn’t require as high a degree of technical knowledge (as more advanced tools such as Adobe Illustrator and Indesign do). Drawbacks: less room for creativity, adaptability, depth.
   2. There are multiple versions of Piktochart available, the workshop will utilize the free version. The paid version offers a variety of additional features and tools and can be purchased by students and educators at a reduced rate.

Lesson

Following the introduction, the instructor will proceed to share examples of infographics with the class. **(10 minutes)**

**Well constructed infographics (select two of the options below)**

Child Mortality

<http://pinterest.com/pin/54746951691616633/>

30 Ways to Promote Your Blog Posts

<http://pinterest.com/pin/54746951691630003/>

U.S. Medicare

<http://piktochart.com/2012/09/u-s-medicare-implications/>

Why is pinterest so addictive

<http://www.flowtown.com/blog/why-is-pinterest-so-addictive>

**Not so well constructed infographics (select two of the options below)**

Health care demographic

<http://visual.ly/scaring-america-badly-designed-health-care-infographics>

Size of the mobile market

<http://sfew.websitetoolbox.com/post/Mobile-Markets-Pi(e)tiful-Use-of-Charts-5847576>

When social media attacks

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/davezilla/3850094704/in/photostream/>

America’s violent crime rates

<http://www.economist.com/node/14340578?story_id=E1_TQPQDVSR>

For each infographic, workshop participants are asked which design elements are ineffective / effective and why. As participants respond the instructor will use the whiteboard to make a list, which will serve as advice on best practices.

The instructor will briefly mention the following points if they are not addressed in the discussion (these points will be discussed via a Powerpoint presentation).

1. **Using compelling data that tells a story**.

Infographics should have a message or story that will resonate with viewers. One should strive to create a meaningful and engaging narrative that users will remember and want to share.

1. **A minimalist approach to design.**

Clarity in design is key. One should consider the following questions in evaluating an infographic: has the information been edited down to its most essential components? Is the infographic easy to skim? Does the layout make sense? Are the content groupings organized so as to lead the user through the infographic in a logical progression? Is the data evenly distributed throughout the infographic or is it feeling too top, right, or bottom heavy? Does the visual theme that you’re using make sense for the topic and the message you’re trying to deliver? Do your colors complement one another or are they off putting?

1. **Rich graphics.**

Strive to go beyond placing a few pie charts and bar graphs in your infographic. Infographics that stand out to users are rich with visually appealing imagery that effectively presents the message. If you have opportunities to show data visually do so.

1. **Succinct and engaging wording.**

If the text is confusing or verbose the infographic will not communicate its intended message no matter how compelling the design or imagery. Make every word count and edit thoroughly. Be sure the infographic contains a list of or links to current data sources.

1. **Multiple hierarchy levels**.

Your infographic should offer a strong overall message as well as multiple levels of the story in greater detail. There should be an unconscious hierarchy that is well organized for the eye to scan and understand what is important and what is less important, much like the experience one has reading a good website or newspaper.

1. **Include a take away message.**

Your infographic should include a punchline or call to action. Consider the take away message as being analogous to a paper’s thesis.

Following the discussion of best practices in infographic construction participants will move on to hands-on work with Piktochart. **(10 minutes)**

1. Participants will create Piktochart accounts in order to follow along with instructor’s description of basic features. Observing is fine as well.
   * 1. Accounts can be created by going to magic.piktochart.com (signing up for account should take less than 1 minute).
2. The instructor will then demonstrate using some of the basic features of Piktochart via the overhead projector

**Using themes**

Brief overview of different themes available in the free version of Piktochart. These provide formatting for you.

**Adding an item from the icons library**

Everything works via drag and drop.

**Inserting / uploading images**

Look for the upload image icon in the lower left. Simply drag and drop the icon onto the canvas to upload you images.

**Changing text / fonts**

Piktochart uses text and font tools similar to MS Word.

**Tools -> Creating charts**

Go to “Tools” in the bottom menu and then drag and drop “chart” into the infographic. Importing excel file is an option, can also input data by hand. Options: bar, line, pie.

**Background / Moods**

Changing the size of the canvas, editing layouts, rearranging layers.

You can click on the + button in the upper right menu to add blocks. You can also increase the size of the canvas to 600, 800, 1280px. Add / delete blocks.

**Resizing / rotating**

Every icon that is not locked, can be easily resized. Once clicked, the boundaries of the icon will show. To resize in equal proportions, hold the shift key down while enlarging/minimizing the size of the icon. For enlarging: there is an extra dot on one of the four sides of the icon boundaries. Click and hold to rotate the direction of the icon.

**Output**

Can save as png, jpeg, html.

Participants are then given the opportunity to practice using the basic features of Piktochart by creating a rough outline of an infographic.

**Example:**

**Smartphone Use Statistics**

[pull up word doc with data for example, see pg. 13]

Instructions to participants will be; “Take ten minutes to practice entering text / graphics into the theme that you’ve chosen and adjusting elements of that theme to suit your data as well as a specific audience, if you’d like. **(10 minutes)**

This is followed by a think-pair-shair activity. Participants are asked to consider the following questions:

**“What did you / would you do to tailor the infographic to your targeted audience? Did you face any unexpected difficulties in using Piktochart?”**

Participants are given 2 minutes to reflect on these questions before sharing their responses with someone adjacent to them. Participants are then asked to share their responses with the group as well as any insights that were gained through their pair discussion (there may not be enough time for each group to respond). **(10 minutes)**

Conclusion (5 minutes, 4:45 – 4:50)

1. Review main points – best practices, basic features of Piktochart
2. Reflection question: What aspect of designing infographics / using Piktochart do you feel will be most challenging? Alternative question: What was the most unexpected thing that you learned today?
3. Questions?
4. Mention campus resources available to help students with finding and using data.

d. Thank participants for coming to workshop

e. Pass out participant feedback forms

**Workshop Evaluation: Designing Infographics with Piktochart**

1.) The session that you attended included hands-on use of the infographic tool Piktochart. How would you rate this?

Not useful Somewhat useful Useful Very useful

2.) The session that you attended included instructions on how to use Piktochart. How would you rate this?

Not useful Somewhat useful Useful Very useful

3.) How would you rate the session as a whole?

Not useful Somewhat useful Useful Very useful

4.) What was the most valuable aspect of the session?

5.) Is there anything that we could do to improve this session?

Additional comments:

**Handout Side 1**

Designing Infographics with Piktochart

Instructor: NAME (EMAIL) -- feel free to contact me at any time with follow up questions about the workshop.

**Workshop Outline**

Introduction

Critiquing infographic examples

Overview of Piktochart

Using themes

Adding an item from the icons library

Inserting / uploading images

Changing text / fonts

Creating charts

Adjusting layouts

Resizing / rotating items

Individual work

Think/pair/share activity

Conclusion

**Handout Side 2**

**Macintosh HD:Users:ryneleuzinger:Desktop:infographics:handout 2.pdf**

**Smartphone Use Statistics**

**45% of American adults and two-thirds of all young adults not own a smartphone.**

**The percentage of U. S. adults who own a smartphone increased from 35% in 2011 to 45% in 2012.**

**68% of those living in households earning $75,000 own smartphones.**

**A majority of adult cell owners (55%) now go online using their phones, and 17% of cell phone owners do most of their online browsing on their phone.**

**41.5 messages are exchanged each day by the average smartphone user. 109.5 messages are exchanged each by young adults aged 18 – 24.**

Credit: http://www.pewinternet.org/Reports/2012/Smartphone-Update-2012.aspx