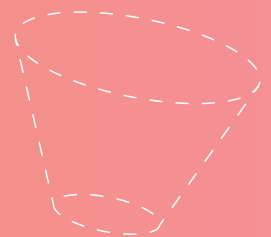




SALES FUNNEL

PICKING THE RIGHT CHART



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YOUR FIRST DASHBOARD



You're ready to build your first dashboard the problem is you don't where to start. What type of chart should you use, or should you display the data in a table or list?

Most dashboard and reporting tools give you dozens of options to create a new dashboard the problem is the wizards that suggest the chart or table to show the data doesn't always choose the correct the graph for your situations. This PDF was created to help you narrow down your choices and pick the correct charts/graphs and/or tables that is correct for your project.



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THE RIGHT CHART



The problem with a chart suggested by your dashboard/report tool is that it may choose a chart that doesn't match what you're trying to convey.

































The solution is to pick the chart based on the message you want to get across. For example, if you want to display values that change through time whether that be yearly, monthly, weekly, etc. then you can choose either a dot plot, line chart, vertical bars or vertical boxes. Use a dot plot when you don't have a value for every interval of time. Use a line to show overall patterns or trends and to compare. Use vertical bars or a columns to show individual values and to compare. Or use vertical boxes, known as boxplots or box and whiskers, to display how a distribution changes through time.

THE MATRIX



Below is a matrix of charts with their relationships and when to use them. The key to using this matrix is the make sure your message matches what you want to communicate.

Notice that the matrix does not have pie charts. Pie charts communicate information poorly. Stay away from 3D instead use @-d position with the is the most common attribute used to identify categorical items; hue (color shading) is the second most effective attribute for associating value with categorical items.

	Points	Lines	Bars	Box	
Featured Relationship Time Series Values display how something changed through time (yearly, monthly, etc.)					Don't use pie charts because they communicate information poorly
Ranking Values are ordered by size (ascending or descending)					Message any of the following words: Change, Rise, Increase, Fluctuate, Grow, Decline, Decrease, Drop Point shape (square, circle, triangle or diamond): the first attribute used for encoding categorical subdivisions only when applied to quantitative values Larger than, Smaller than, Equal to
Part-to-Whole Values represent parts (proportions) of a whole (for example, regional portions of total sales)					Rate or rate of total Percent or percentage of total Share Account of 5 percent Plus or minus, variance Difference, Relative to
Distribution The difference between two sets of values (for example, the variance between actual and budgeted expenses)					Frequency, Distribution, Range Concentration, Normal curve, Normal distribution, or Bell curve
Comparison Counts of values per interval (for example, counts of people by age intervals of 10 years each)					Increase with, Decrease with Changes with, Varies with Caused by, Affected by, Follows
Geospatial Values are displayed on a map to show their location					Geography, Location, Where, Region Territory, Country, State, City
Normal Comparison A simple comparison of values for a set of unordered items (for example, products, or regions)					This is bigger than that This is the biggest of all This is almost twice as big as that These two are far bigger than all the others
NOTES					* Only use 10 patterns as a last resort for printing your graph on paper or photographing it distribution, and only printing a not as option. If you only need a few categorical subdivisions, distinct shades of gray (e.g., black, dark gray, medium gray, and light gray), which are variations of color intensity, usually work better than 10 patterns * Line styles don't work as well as color because lines are usually used to represent the pattern for an entire series, so breaks in the lines undermine our perception of the continuous series of values as a whole * A table provides a way to view additional correlations between several quantitative variables simultaneously. The example on the right displays four quantitative variables: profit, sales, shipping costs, and discount percentage for 10 states. With the states sorted by profit in descending order, we can use the table to display to see whether any other columns of data lines, and if not other a corresponding high to low value pattern, indicating a positive correlation, or an opposite low to high pattern, indicating a negative correlation.



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CLEAR COMMUNICATION



By not choosing the correct graphs you'll be communicating something different than you intended. You're at risk of leading the users of your dashboard to the wrong conclusion. If you use the correct graphs you'll communicate a clear understanding of the data that will help your users make informed decisions.

Contact us to schedule a 30 minute call and let us help you with your dashboarding or reporting projects.



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