

Visual Display of Data
in the Age of Twitter, Mobility, Web, Excel, and PowerPoint:
Concise, Communication-Efficient, and Communication-Effective Graphs

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Abstract

I have long advocated and delivered simplicity in graphic design. The current popularity of concise wireless text messages, the widespread use of mobile phones and other devices with compact displays, and now the iPad, all reinforce the case for simplicity of information delivery.

This nearly-two-hour tutorial about design and construction covers not only graphs suitable for small screen mobile devices, but also for management reports, web pages, slide presentations, hardcopy, articles in journals, magazines, or newspapers, or for use as companions to spreadsheet tables. It also provides two excellent ways to produce dynamic graphs without requiring the viewing user to have any extra plug-ins installed. By dynamic graphs I mean: (a) web-enabled graphs with pop-up labels (and a forward-and-backward link to/from a spreadsheet of the input data); and (b) animated graphs that can be deployed on a web page or in a PowerPoint slide. (Also covered is how to insert graphs and tables directly to PowerPoint slides.)

For the case of a bar chart, a pie chart, and a line chart, the presentation includes the stepwise process of going from the minimal code for a default graph to the code needed to create a recommended communication-efficient and communication-effective alternative. For other example graphs only the needed final code is provided in the slides, or references are provided if the code is too voluminous.

Introduction

This is a nearly-two-hour tutorial on communication-effective design, construction, and delivery of graphic reports, for new or experienced users of either Version 9.1.3 or Version 9.2 of SAS/GRAPH. The slides are available to MWSUG 2010 conference attendees via email request to the address listed below.

References

For much of the author's prior work on SAS/GRAPH, ODS, graphic design, etc., published after 1995, do an author name search in the treasure trove of SAS conference proceedings papers (SAS Global Forum, SUGI, PhUSE, MWSUG, etc.) at www.lexjansen.com. See also my quarterly column in *VIEWS News*.

Author Information

Your questions, comments, and examples of other work on this topic or related topics are welcome.

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A SAS user since 1978, Dr. LeRoy Bessler has shared his knowledge and experience with other users at conferences throughout the USA and in Montreal, London, Heidelberg, and Dublin. Though a SAS generalist with long experience in Base SAS, SAS macro language, and SAS tools for access to non-SAS data, his special interests include communication-effective visual communication and reporting, web information delivery, highly formatted Excel reporting, SAS/GRAPH®, ODS, creation of unique tools to support the SAS BI server and its users, and Software-Intelligent Application Development for Reliability, Reusability, Extendibility, and Maintainability. He is a regular contributor to *VIEWS News*, the web newsletter of the VIEWS International SAS Programmer Community.

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